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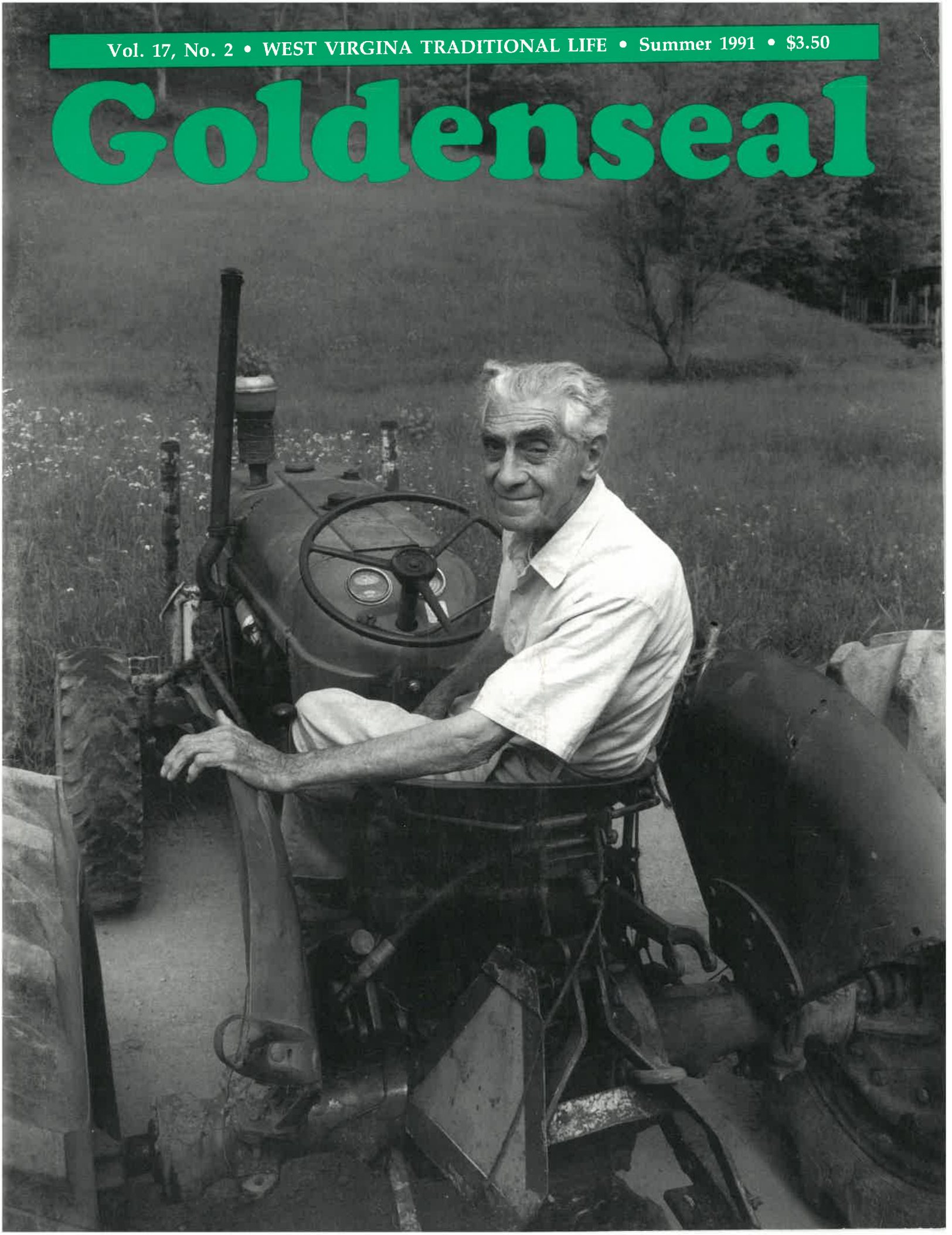
Goldenseal



Travelers will see the familiar "West Virginia Handcrafts" star in a new location this summer. Signs have gone up on the West Virgina Turnpike advertising handcraft sales at the new service plazas at Morton and Bluestone. Turnpike craft sales are supervised by the crafts marketing unit of the West Virginia Division of Culture and History.

The handcrafts logo, adapted from a traditional quilt pattern by GOLDENSEAL designer Colleen Anderson, is the mark of excellent handiwork. Crafts sold where the symbol is displayed have been selected by a jury of craftspeople and represent the best West Virginia has to offer. Follow the star for the finest American craftsmanship.

Quilts '91. The big annual quilt show at the Cultural Center opened Memorial Day Weekend at the Cultural Center in Charleston. Five quilters received awards at the evening Vandalia concert on May 25, with a sixth quilt added to the West Virginia Permanent Collection through a special purchase award. The 31 quilts will remain on display through September 2.

Published for the
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Goldenseal

Volume 17, Number 2 Summer 1991

COVER: Melvin Wine is a Braxton County farmer and fiddler who will receive prestigious honors in Washington this fall. Susan Leffler's story begins on page 9. Cover photo by Michael Keller.

PHOTOS: Doug Chadwick, Greg Clark, Hal Dillon, Michael Keller, Susan Leffler, Doris Radabaugh, James Samsell, Hali Taylor, Bernard Wills, Carey Woofter

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.

The Dunkles of Deer Run

January 31, 1991
Green Bank, West Virginia
Editor:
Thanks for the article, "The Dunkles of Deer Run." The little community of Deer Run is where I lived for 22 years, before making Pocahontas County my home. I remember a few of the people in the story and, of course, visit the

present residents of the homeplace. The combined country store and post office in the story was owned by my grandparents.

You took me home again — and to think this is the first copy of our new subscription. I can't wait for your next issue.
Sincerely yours,
Linda Stewart

More Squirrel Tales

March 20, 1991
Mathias, West Virginia
Editor:
We have just received and read your spring issue and have subscribed since GOLDENSEAL first came to our attention several years ago. I don't have any stories to add to those concerning the massive squirrel migrations, but I do have two hunting accounts which may be of some interest.

I had these two squirrel experiences during my hunting days. The first, undeservedly, made me look good; the second, deservedly, made me look bad.

The first time, I was sitting against a tree early in the morning, watching and listening for any activity around me. I spotted a squirrel up in the top of the tree. It was a very tall tree and barely light, but I could see well enough to fire my shotgun. *Two* squirrels came tumbling down, though I had never seen the second one.

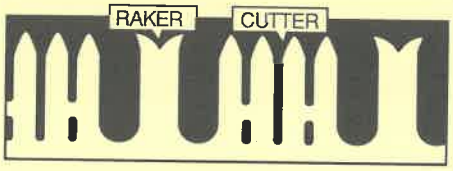
The second time, I had taken a feed sack along with me, feeling optimistic that I might get my limit for a change. The squirrels were chattering in different directions, and I was lucky enough to get my first one rather early. Throwing him in the sack, I sat against a tree and waited for my next opportunity. A few moments later I was amazed to see my "dead" squirrel crawling out of the sack and moving a few feet away from me.

I knew a second shot at close range would have ruined any chance for eating the squirrel. I decided it would be best to let him move some distance away and then shoot him again. However, he suddenly made a quick move to the right and behind a tree while I was meditating. When I moved around to see him on the other side, he was out of sight. That was probably 45 years ago, and he is still out of sight.

That was the time I learned that when a squirrel gets on the other side of the tree, he is long gone. I didn't get my limit that day or any other day — but then I shouldn't have expected to, when I couldn't keep the ones I got.
Sincerely,
Raymond Daugherty

Crosscut Saws

March 23, 1991
Wenatchee, Washington
Editor:
The story of the crosscut saw by Tim Stark is quite true, as I've used one many years in all kinds of weather. I grew up in hardwood country, and all of our wood was cut with a crosscut. A sharp saw that was "set" right was almost a pleasure to use, and logging camps always had at least one saw filer who was busy every day and some evenings. He "had to be good or go down the road."



The saw teeth are "cutters" and "rakers." The "cutters" were a fraction of an inch longer and did the actual cutting; the "rakers" raked the sawdust out of the cut. The pattern of the teeth was two or three cutters with a raker in between. The filer used a tooth gauge to get the proper adjustment. When cutting wood or felling trees with lots of pitch in the wood, we used kerosene or coal oil to keep the saw from sticking.

In the big woods of the West and Northwest, 12- or 14-foot saws were common, and the pullers stood on springboards set in notches several feet up the trunk of the tree, with a large notch or undercut to help the tree fall in the right place. Some of those big cedars were large enough for one or two musicians and three couples to dance on the stump. Others had small houses built onto the stump, and one or two in the Northwest had post offices. One log made a load for a flatcar and contained enough lumber to build a small house.

Most of the crosscuts I used were Seminole or Atkins, and the hand saws with these brands were good musical saws.
Walt Thayer

Maybeury Disaster

April 3, 1991
Tequesta, Florida
Editor:
"The Great Maybeury Railroad Disaster," reported in your spring 1991 issue of GOLDENSEAL is, I think, the most interesting article I've read in the magazine during the nearly ten years that I've been a subscriber. The superb photographs have been skillfully reproduced and printed.

The classic work devoted entirely to railroad disasters is Robert C. Reed's book, *Train Wrecks*, published at New York in 1958 by Bonanza Books. Reed's book contains many photographs and drawings; it also contains 13 chapters, including one titled "Derailments" and another titled "Bridge Disasters." I can find no mention in either chapter or elsewhere in Reed's book about the Maybeury disaster and I'm puzzled as to why the story of that dreadful catastrophe was not included.

I am puzzled, too, as to why brakeman James C. Ball (poor fellow!) apparently didn't check the train's braking system before his consist left the gravity railyard to begin its journey into the coalfields, through the tunnel, and toward the trestle.
Sincerely yours,
John C. Neely

March 18, 1991
Charleston, West Virginia
Editor:
The story in the spring issue on the Maybeury railroad disaster stirred memories. This wreck was the most spectacular event of my childhood in McDowell County. Through the GOLDENSEAL article I was able to relive the experience just as I did in 1937. I read and reread every account of the event in the *Welch Daily News* and the *Bluefield Daily Telegraph*.

The day after the wreck my dad took my brothers to Maybeury. I begged and pleaded to go, but Mother said it was no fit place for girls. However, we were allowed to stay up past bedtime until they returned. We listened intently to their description of the tragic scene. In the years that followed when driving from our home in Pageton to Bluefield, and passing under the Maybeury trestle, some mention was always made of that fateful day in June 1937.
Sincerely,
Mary Cook Dean

Water Mills

March 18, 1991
Clendenin, West Virginia
Editor:
I enjoyed the three very interesting articles on gristmills in the spring GOLDENSEAL. When I was a small boy in the early '30's, we lived on a farm at Barren Creek about seven miles from Clendenin. After the corn crop was harvested in the fall, my father, mother and I spent endless hours shelling the yellow corn by hand. We each had blistered hands after shelling out about 500 or 600 pounds of corn grains.

We hauled the heavy sacks of shelled corn and corncobs by horse and sled to Snyder's gristmill, located along the Elk River about three miles away at Queen Shoals. We had to use paved State Route 4 for about half the distance to the mill, but it wasn't too dangerous since there wasn't much traffic in those long-ago days.

We would have about 100 pounds of the corn ground into meal for our corn bread and cornmeal mush and the rest ground up into "chop" for the horse, cow, pigs and chickens. Dad even had the corncobs ground up to mix with the chop to feed the horse and cow.

Nothing ever tasted better than the corn bread and cornmeal mush that my mother made from that freshly-ground corn.
Sincerely,
Ottis L. Dilworth

May 4, 1991
Bowie, Maryland
Editor:
Congratulations on your spring issue. I find your articles on mills very interesting. Mr. Kendall, a mill worker who lived in Capon Bridge, Hampshire County, showed me mill sites in the area and explained the operation. Because of the unreliability of water power, most mills converted to engine power before discontinuing operation. Many mills were destroyed by floods. It seems that no farms were more than ten miles from a mill in the 1800's.

A mill in fairly good condition is still

The Bloomery Mill. State Historic Preservation Office photo, 1970.

standing at Bloomery, north of Capon Bridge. Behind the old Bloomery iron furnace there is a group of pawpaw trees growing. Their fruit is very good.

By the way, the iron industry of West Virginia would make an excellent article. There were many iron furnaces spread over the mountains and almost forgotten now.

I salute GOLDENSEAL for reviewing a way of life that was good.
Best regards,
Maurice Miller

Home Comfort Stoves

January 28, 1991
Mt. Alto, West Virginia
Editor:
The article on the Home Comfort range brought back memories. Forty years ago my family exchanged the comfort of one for an electric range when we moved into a new house. We parted with our Home Comfort for the price of $60 from the new owner, Mr. Estil Hill, in the Leroy-Liverpool area of Jackson County.

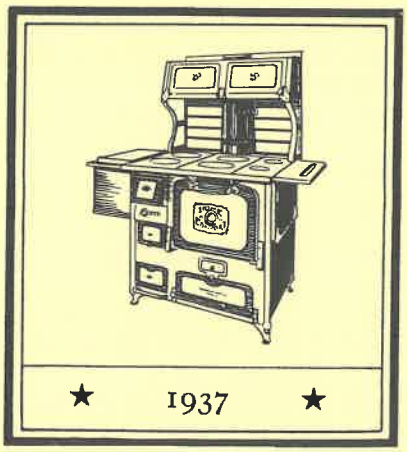
My son, then just starting to school, never forgot the warmth and comfort of that stove. Time passed. He grew up. Forty years later, having built a log house in the woods on a Pennsylvania mountain, he went searching for a wood-burning cook stove to occupy a place reserved for it in the basement of his new home.

A search through countless advertisements failed to produce anything worthwhile. Then I reminded him as to where our Home Comfort range had gone and gave him Mr. Hill's telephone number. One call was all he needed. Mr. Hill no longer had the stove; he did have the copper water

tank and knew where the stove could be found.

The search for this treasured piece of Americana was coming to a close. The stove was duly located in a weed patch, reunited with the water tank, and — for the same price of $60 — a family treasure was soon on the way to a new place in Pennsylvania. There it will give warmth and comfort to more generations of Smiths. Their cats will love it too.
Cornelia Kessel-Smith

February 12, 1991
Wheeling, West Virginia
Editor:
Carolyn Ferguson's article, "Home Comfort," in the winter GOLDENSEAL reminded me of a conversation



with a classmate, Harrison Culver, over 50 years ago at Williams College. This was during the mid-1930's, and he was bemoaning the fact that their family business was being adversely affected by the electrification of the farms and easier travel to cities where competing stoves were available. The Culver stoves were all sold by their own salesmen visiting the farms, as you mention. Frequently they were invited to stay overnight, which usually meant a sure sale.

Your story is now in their museum located at the Culver Military Academy, which was founded by their grandfather.
Yours truly,
David B. Dalzell

The Culver family founded the Wrought Iron Range Company, manufacturer of the Home Comfort stove, in 1864. — ed.

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.

Huntington Railroad Exhibit

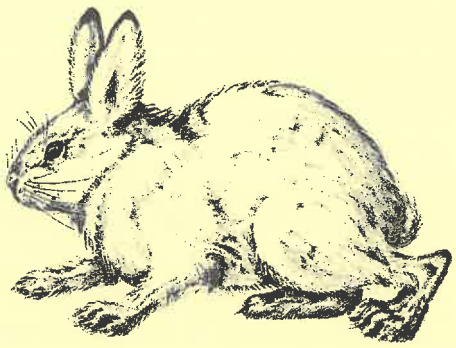
The Huntington Museum of Art is opening a special exhibit dedicated to the railroad in West Virginia. The show, titled "Agent of Change," will run from July 21 through November 10. It "examines the central role railroads have played in shaping our region's rich heritage," according to the museum. Historic artifacts, photographs, paintings and prints borrowed from museums and private collections will be exhibited.

The railroad has played a major role in Huntington's history. Collis P. Huntington, founder of the city, selected the site as the western terminus of his Chesapeake & Ohio Railroad in 1869. Within a few years his workmen had linked the new city to America's burgeoning railroad network. According to Laura E. Armitage, a C&O historian, "Steadily, obdurately, with workers jubilant one day and defied by obstacles the next, the track was laid west from White Sulphur. Other forces worked east from the Ohio River, where the railroad brought a new community named for C&O's president."

The Huntington Museum of Art is offering group tours of its "Agent of Change" exhibit. You may contact the tour coordinator by calling (304) 529-2701. Regular hours are 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday and noon to 5:00 p.m. on Sunday. Admission to the exhibit is free for children under 12, $2 for adults and $1 for students and senior citizens. On Wednesday admission is free.

Skinks, Scutes, Newts and More

The WVU Extension Service has produced a series of publications about West Virginia wildlife and natural resources. There are 13 large-format booklets addressing plants, birds, animals, and the unique wilderness areas of Dolly Sods and Canaan Valley.



The plants books include ferns, trees and shrubs, aquatic and wetland plants, and winter botany. The series on West Virginia birds encompasses books on common birds, winter birds, night birds, and hawks. Another book features illustrations and descriptions of 41 types of wild animals. There's also one for dragonflies and another for scales, skinks, scutes and newts.

The Dolly Sods and Canaan Valley guides are 24 and 32 pages long, respectively. They are well-designed with original illustrations; maps; checklists for mammals, plants and birds; references; and a page for notes. They sell for $6 each. Other publications range from 8 to 94 pages in length with prices from $1 to $6. All prices are postpaid.

For further information, contact Norma Jean Venable, West Virginia University, Natural Resources Program, 1074 Agricultural Sciences Building, Morgantown, WV 26506-6108.

Songs and Poems

Poet and writer Colleen Anderson recently released a cassette album of original songs and poems. "Fabulous Realities," a collection of 11 songs and

two narrative poems, was produced by Jim Martin at Dry Ridge Recording Studio in St. Albans. Other West Virginia musicians, including Bob Thompson, Ron Sowell and Julie Adams, join Anderson on the recording.

The new cassette "grew out of dreams and disappointments, lovers and friends, unexpected joys, hard losses, and a streak of plain silliness," according to Anderson. Songs include a ballad in the style of the Carter Family, a jazz waltz, and an offbeat country-western tune, "Get Me to the Chocolate on Time," which won a first place award at the Appalachian Humor Festival in Berea, Kentucky, in 1983. Other songs have been featured on West Virginia Public Radio's "Mountain Stage."

Anderson works as a graphic designer, and has done design work for GOLDENSEAL since its inception in 1975. Her songs and poems reflect the influence of West Virginia, her adopted home. One composition, "West Virginia Chose Me," is a bittersweet love song to the Mountain State.

To order "Fabulous Realities," send $10 to Colleen Anderson, P.O. Box 525, Charleston, WV 25322. The price includes handling charges and a lyric sheet.

West Virginia Grown

A recent publication of the West Virginia Department of Agriculture boasts some of the finest homegrown foods and handmade goods for sale in the Mountain State. *A Taste of West Virginia* profiles nearly 20 West Virginia agricultural businesses and the people who operate them.

The products vary from apples, honey, spices, jellies and herbs to basketry and candles. There are specialty items such as gourmet goat's milk cheese, toffee, maple sugar candies, shittake mushrooms, and Italian-style peppers and sauces. One Pendleton County operation packages homegrown organic meals for backpackers and other outdoors enthusiasts. The farm businesses stretch from the Eastern Panhandle to the central counties and from Wetzel County on down to the southern counties of Nicholas and Monroe.

A Taste of West Virginia is informative and fun to read. The 40-page catalog includes photographs of business owners and their products, along with costs and ordering information. All items carry the "West Virginia Grown" endorsement which guarantees that the products are indeed from West Virginia and that they meet a high standard of quality.

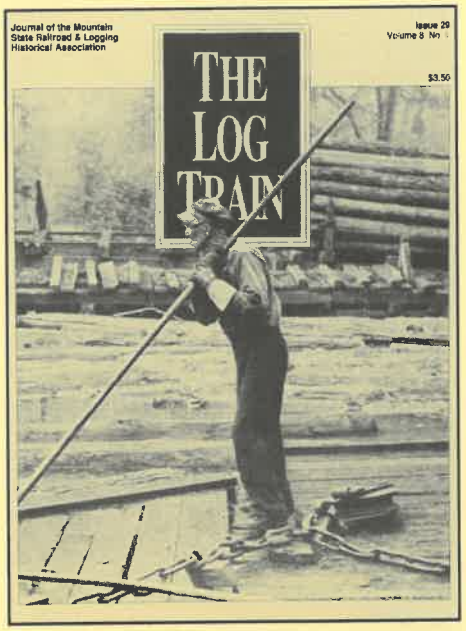
For a copy of *A Taste of West Virginia* write to Catalog, West Virginia Department of Agriculture, 1900 Kanawha Boulevard East, Charleston, WV 25305-0170. The cost is $2 each.

Railroads and Logging

The Log Train, a publication of the Mountain State Railroad and Logging Historical Association, begins its eighth year with a new look. Volume 8, Number 1 features a handsome new design and improved printing and graphics throughout.

New editor George Deike thanks Max Robin, Gerald Futej and staff for bringing *The Log Train* to this point and promises more good articles on the railroads that served West Virginia's lumber and coal industries. There are also general articles planned on skidders, loaders, switchbacks, bridges and logging locomotives.

Deike promises that the quarterly magazine will continue to focus on the Mountain State and its railroad and logging history. The current issue gives a good idea of the magazine's interests, with such articles as "Living in a Mill Town," "More on the West Virginia and Pittsburgh Railroad," and "Preserved West Virginia Geared Locomotives."



The MSR&LHA is a nonprofit organization headquartered at the historic sawmill town of Cass, Pocahontas County. Membership costs $20 annually, and members receive a newsletter as well as *The Log Train.* The association offers other items for sale, including a yearly calendar of historic photos, a video on Shay locomotives and lumbering, and books.

For more information write to MSR&LHA, P.O. Box 89, Cass, WV 24927

GOLDENSEAL Indexed

Cornelia Alexander recently completed a 16-year GOLDENSEAL master index listing articles, authors, photographers and story locations for the years 1975 through 1990. Bound copies may be purchased from the GOLDENSEAL office.

The 126-page index includes GOLDENSEAL stories from its first year of publication up through Volume 16, 1990. Articles are cross-referenced under more than 100 subject headings ranging from "Agriculture" through "Writers and Writing." Separate sections index stories by authors, photographers and locations.

The GOLDENSEAL master index is a valuable research guide, previously used only at the magazine office, the State Archives, and the reference library of the State Library Commission. You may order a copy by sending $20, plus $2 postage and handling, to GOLDENSEAL, Cultural Center, Capitol Complex, Charleston, WV 25305.

New History of Cass

Roy B. Clarkson recently published *On Beyond Leatherbark: The Cass Saga,* a new history of the sawmill town of Cass and its surrounding logging and railroading operations. Clarkson, a WVU professor, previously wrote *Tumult on the Mountains,* the best known history of the West Virginia timber industry.

Cass, now a state park and a major Pocahontas County tourist attraction, was built by the West Virginia Pulp and Paper Company at the turn of the century. Clarkson's book offers over 200 photographs of the town, its people and its environs, as well as an extensive text. More than 100 pages of appendices, notes, lists, and related material will be of special interest to historians and railroad and logging buffs.

Trainman Cody Burdette draws water for a Cass locomotive.

Clarkson, a professional botanist, begins his book with a look at the awesome natural wilderness upon which the Cass operations were built. He then proceeds through the history of the company, sawmill, railroad, and town. He ends with the town's industrial decline and the later establishment of the popular Cass Scenic Railroad.

On Beyond Leatherbark, a 625-page hardback, sells for $30 in bookstores. Mail orders, including $2.50 postage and handling (and 6% sales tax from West Virginians), may be sent to the distributor, Trans Allegheny Books, 114 Capitol Street, Charleston, WV 25301. *Tumult on the Mountains* may be purchased for $25 from the same source.

Book Review:

The Past is a Key to the Future: A History of Terra Alta, West Virginia, and Its Vicinity, by Betty Whittaker White.

This authoritative history, by a former Preston County librarian, is the first scholarly treatment of one of West Virginia's most beautiful localities. In fact, it is the most impressive historical work on Preston County since Oren F. Morton's 1914 county history.

This book is a must for anyone wishing to do serious research on the Terra Alta region and a necessary addition to any local history collection. It is well written in a narrative and, at times, almost anecdotal manner. White has obviously spent a major part of her life gathering data on the Terra Alta area, and her labor is evident. This is a full history of the town and region. The book begins with the physical and geological features of the area, aboriginal culture, and then goes on to treat every era from Indian and pioneer days to the present.

White's book is not simply an account of general events and trends. The author gives a thorough treatment to nearly every aspect of public life; from church histories, educational development, medicine, civic organizations, and cemeteries to historic buildings, great natural disasters, fires, and much more. She notes when important public buildings and residences were built and when, all too often, they were lost.

The book also chronicles the lives of significant individuals in the area, from the great to the simply interesting. White gives us a good biography (as well as a rare photograph) of the 1920's boxing heavyweight, "Fighting" Bob Martin, and mentions the local connections of Lorraine Petersen, the model for the Sun Maid Raisin girl.

The Past is a Key to the Future is a 619-page hardback, lavishly illustrated with historic photographs, drawings, and maps. It also provides an excellent bibliography, detailed chapter-by-chapter notes, and a complete index. This is a work that will quickly become the standard reference for the history of the Terra Alta area. It also is immensely readable.

The Past is a Key to the Future may be purchased, for $40 plus $2.50 for postage, from the author at P.O. Box 123, Terra Alta, WV 26764, and is also available through McClain Printing Company, Parsons, WV, for $44.90.

—Michael J. Pauley

Summersville Gospel Sing

One of West Virginia's largest gospel sings is held each summer at the Edgar Kitchen farm in Nicholas County. "Singing in the Mountains" brings nearly 50 gospel groups together with such performers as the McGlothlins, Joyaires, Suttle Family, Dixie Melody Boys, Florida Boys, and the Chuck Wagon Gang. Farrell Johnson is MC for the event.

The Kitchen farm is also known for its annual Bluegrass Country Music Festival which takes place each June. The early summer event brings in such names as Bill Monroe and the Bluegrass Boys, Porter Wagoner, The Nashville Grass, and Little Jimmy Dickens.

The "Singing in the Mountains" 1991 dates are August 9 through 11, starting at 9:00 a.m. on Friday and Saturday and lasting until midnight. The hours are 9:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. on Sunday. Free camping is available, and food is sold on the grounds.

Daily admission is $14 on Friday and Sunday, and $15 on Saturday. Three-day tickets may be purchased for $36, or in advance for $34. For more information write to Edgar Kitchen, P.O. Box 96, Summersville, WV 26651; or call (304)872-3145.

A Guide to Upshur County

The Upshur County Historical Society recently published an unusual brochure which provides a detailed description of the county's history. Noel Tenney did the research, design and graphics for the publication, which is designed to serve either as a folded brochure or a flat poster.

The brochure, "Historic Upshur County," outlines county history from 1765 up through the recent past. One side has a chronological listing of events. The first entry concerns brothers John and Samuel Pringle, deserters from the British army, who lived in the famous "Pringle Tree," a big hollow sycamore along the Buckhannon River. Later entries describe the county's growth, its early settlers and industry, churches, schools, and banks.

Prominent Upshur historical figures are highlighted as well — from Laura Jackson Arnold, sister to General Stonewall Jackson, to Daniel D. T. Farnsworth, the second governor of West Virginia. Historic sites such as Fidler's Mill, the county's only remaining gristmill, are also included.

To order the "Historic Upshur County" brochure send $1.50 per folded copy or $2.50 for each unfolded copy to the Upshur County Historical Society, P.O. Box 2082, Buckhannon, WV 26201.

New Robert E. Lee Book

The Civil War battles most critical to West Virginia history took place early in the war and in the southern part of the state. Contending armies struggled there to establish who would control the western mountains, ultimately determining whether it would be possible to organize a new state. Robert E. Lee himself took a hand in the fight, trying to resolve squabbles between his local commanding officers while working unsuccessfully to hold the region for the Confederacy.

Lee's role is the subject of *Robert E. Lee at Sewell Mountain*, recently published by Tim McKinney. In his previous book, *The Civil War in Fayette County*, McKinney outlined overall military events in that pivotal county at the head of Kanawha Valley. His new book looks in greater detail at one part of the story. *Robert E. Lee at Sewell Mountain* explores the great man's role in what McKinney characterizes as "a little-known campaign in a well-known war."

Robert E. Lee, as a U.S. Army officer before the Civil War. He grew the famous beard in West Virginia.

Robert E. Lee at Sewell Mountain, a 148-page hardback from Pictorial Histories Publishing Company, sells for $11.95 in bookstores. The book may also be purchased for $14 postpaid from Trans Allegheny Books, 114 Capitol Street, Charleston, WV 25301.

Stonewall Jackson Jubilee

Jackson's Mill near Weston will host the 18th annual Stonewall Jackson Jubilee from August 30 through September 2. The Jubilee celebrates West Virginia's heritage with music, traditional foods, crafts, contests, art and quilt shows, a Civil War reenactment unit, and an antique steam engine show, among other events.

Music and crafts highlight the annual Jubilee. The musical emphasis is on the traditional, as banjos, fiddles, dulcimers and singing fill the air. The programming reflects the performers' backgrounds — most are rooted firmly in mountain traditions — from the storytellers to the scores of musicians who entertain continuously throughout the four days of the Jubilee.

Crafts are displayed and sold in the barn at Jackson's Mill. Craft demonstrations in such skills as glassblowing and the needle arts are presented. Competitions and exhibits add to the fun. There's the West Virginia State Pie Baking Contest, the Turkey Calling Contest, square dancing, children's games, woodchopping demonstrations and more.

Stonewall Jackson Jubilee advance tickets sell for $8 for the full four days. Regular admission is $4 per day for adults and $1 for children under 12. Children are admitted free with an adult on Friday and Monday. Senior citizens pay $2 on Friday and Monday and $3 on Saturday and Sunday. For more information contact Peggy Doyle, P.O. Box 956, Weston, WV 26452; (304)269-1863.

Real Roadside Dining

"At the first glance I thought it was a log/I put my foot on the brake and lowered a cog/Then I saw him slither and to my surprise/An eight-foot rattlehead — snakes alive..." These words are in a new recipe book with a twist, *Gourmet Style Road Kill Cooking and Other Fine Recipes*, by Jeff Eberbaugh.

The outdoor enthusiast has put humorous road kill recipes to verse. In the first part of his book, readers are treated to such delights as Pothole Possum, Ditch Line Deer Meat, Tom Cat-Tom Flat, Groundhog Hoagy, and Copperhead Sandwich Spread.

While Eberbaugh admits that these dishes are not really intended for human consumption, the second section of his book is devoted to "Real Old-Time Favorites," with actual recipes for bear, rabbit, brook trout, frog legs, and creasy greens, among many. These were collected from the more rural counties of the Mountain State, and some are Eberbaugh's own favorites that he prepares using the wild game he hunts.

Road Kill Cooking is a loose-leaf book with an unforgettable cover. The cost is $7.95 per copy, plus $3.00 for shipping and handling. Orders may be sent to Gourmet Style Road Kill Cooking, P.O. Box 13592, Sissonville, WV 25360.

John Hershey, Saddler

By Joseph B.C. White

John Hershey was a saddler and harness maker. He worked his trade well into his 80's, trying to make do by selling belts and fancy English saddles after the farmers went to tractors and sold their horses and mules or pensioned them out to pasture. He was the last to ply his craft in our little town.

His shop was in the rear section of a massive brick building that had been standing since before the Civil War, just three blocks from the river. At one time the main entrance led to one of the busiest saloons in Parkersburg. In Prohibition years the saloon became a grocery store, but through it all Mr. Hershey labored on in the same location.

In good weather Mr. Hershey would wheel out onto the sidewalk a life-sized plaster horse on which he would display his wares — this week a stock saddle and bridle, last month a set of black work harness, and on Saturday morning a favorite, a light carriage harness in warm natural brown. On clear winter market days when all the farmers came to town, he would buckle on a bright blue webbed halter with matching blue stable blanket. Day after day that good gray horse would stand patiently, staring with unblinking eyes into the windows of the Busy Bee Barbershop across the street or at the passengers who stared back from the big orange trolleys as they clattered past.

The shop's entry room was dimly lit in spite of the big window, yet it always seemed cheerful and inviting.

In a row by the window were half a dozen saddles, each on its own stand, the products of saddlers in St. Louis and Omaha. Near the door were two of Mr. Hershey's masterpieces, identical in design. One was smooth leather in rich mahogany; the other a deep brown with all but the seat stamped in a simple basket weave pattern.

Shelves were crammed with saddle blankets of various colors, yellow collar pads and boxes of red, white and blue tassels. Long wooden pegs, set deep into the brick walls, held bridles, halters, collars, gleaming metal bits, stirrups, spurs and harness bells.

In the second room there were two more plaster horses standing side by side, one with head arched, the other with head tossed high in heroic pose. Hitched to an imaginary wagon, black harness contrasting with their gray coats, they pulled loyally, showing off the work of the craftsman who had blended yards of leather, links of steel chain and shining handfuls of nickel and brass into pulling harness that would last a teamster's lifetime. The thick walls were draped with great sets of harness for draft horses, gleaming with nickel studs in geometric designs, blending like so many stars, brass hame knobs glowing like little suns.

There was a pervading fragrance of new leather throughout the shop that was almost intoxicating, rich and lasting on the memory, sharp, tangy and clean. Few smells are so rich in memory's coin. Even a whiff of leather dye or neat's-foot oil today brings back whole visits to that shop, bearing details and shadows like the score of a memorable motion picture.

At the very rear of the shop, in a long narrow room, Mr. Hershey worked his mastery at a cluttered bench set into the wall. Two south-facing windows poured light onto his work area. Here the saddler sat alone for hours that lengthened into years, bringing works of art into being. An oak-framed Regulator clock ticked beside the doorway, its saucer-shaped pendulum swinging in relentless repetition.

A noisy stitching machine often drowned out the sound of the clock, driving thick waxed thread deep into layers of sturdy leather. The stitches marched down long rows in minutely even paces, binding slabs of "bull-hide," as he called it, into leather tugs that were stiff with newness. Years of wear and layers of sweat and oil would render them supple, but they would remain strong and reliable.

On a separate bench there might be a stock saddle in for repair or a new one in progress, built up from a sturdy wooden tree. In bins along the wall there seemed to be miles of belting stock, coils of leather strapping in various widths from which new halters would emerge — headstalls, blinders, throatlatches, reins, nosebands. Here were the future jack straps to support neck yokes, bellybands, cruppers and breeching straps.

Once Mr. Hershey made a halter for my 4-H feeder calf from the measurements I gave him. When I paid for it, he filled my jacket pocket with a handful of nickel studs and showed me how to set them into leather at his own bench, looking over the tops of his wire-framed glasses with smiling gray eyes that were clear and gentle.

The old clock no longer ticks off the time in Mr. Hershey's workroom. Both he and his shop are gone now, although the building still stands. I walked by recently, thinking of the plaster horses, the bins of fresh-smelling leather and the great sets of harness Mr. Hershey fashioned at that sun-drenched workbench. I thought of all the acres of sweet earth his harness had helped turn, how many stacks of fragrant clover, how many loads of lumber, how many thousands of wagon miles his handiwork had made possible.

Today saddle shops are mostly chic western tack stores with silver-mounted show saddles, huge belt buckles in silver and turquoise, blue jeans, western boots and black English riding helmets for little girls.

I prefer the memories of Mr. Hershey. They still flourish in my mind. The sight of the sun streaming in behind to give his wire-white hair a dazzling halo remains fresh, although it has been more than 40 years since I watched him work. The fragrance of that shop dwells lightly on my senses like reruns of an old movie in which John Hershey sits alone, bent over his bench, sure hands holding the tools of his trade as he worked his wizardry with raw leather.

Melvin Wine

Text and Photographs by Susan Leffler

On a chilly spring evening last April, musicians and fans of traditional Appalachian tunes packed the old wooden pews of the former Methodist Episcopal Church in Sutton, now the Landmark arts center. It was a mixed crowd. There were young women with dangly earrings and faded denim skirts, gray-haired ladies in polyester pants suits, balding men with "Support Our Troops" printed on their T-shirts and tobacco bulging in their cheeks.

A few rows from the stage, in the middle section, sat a beaming silver-haired gentleman in an old felt hat and a red plaid shirt. His hands, gnarled from years of work, quietly thumped his knees, keeping time to the music.

This was the guest of honor, Braxton County fiddler Melvin Wine. The occasion was his birthday, which friends and family have celebrated for the last few years with an informal concert. Melvin turned 82 this year.

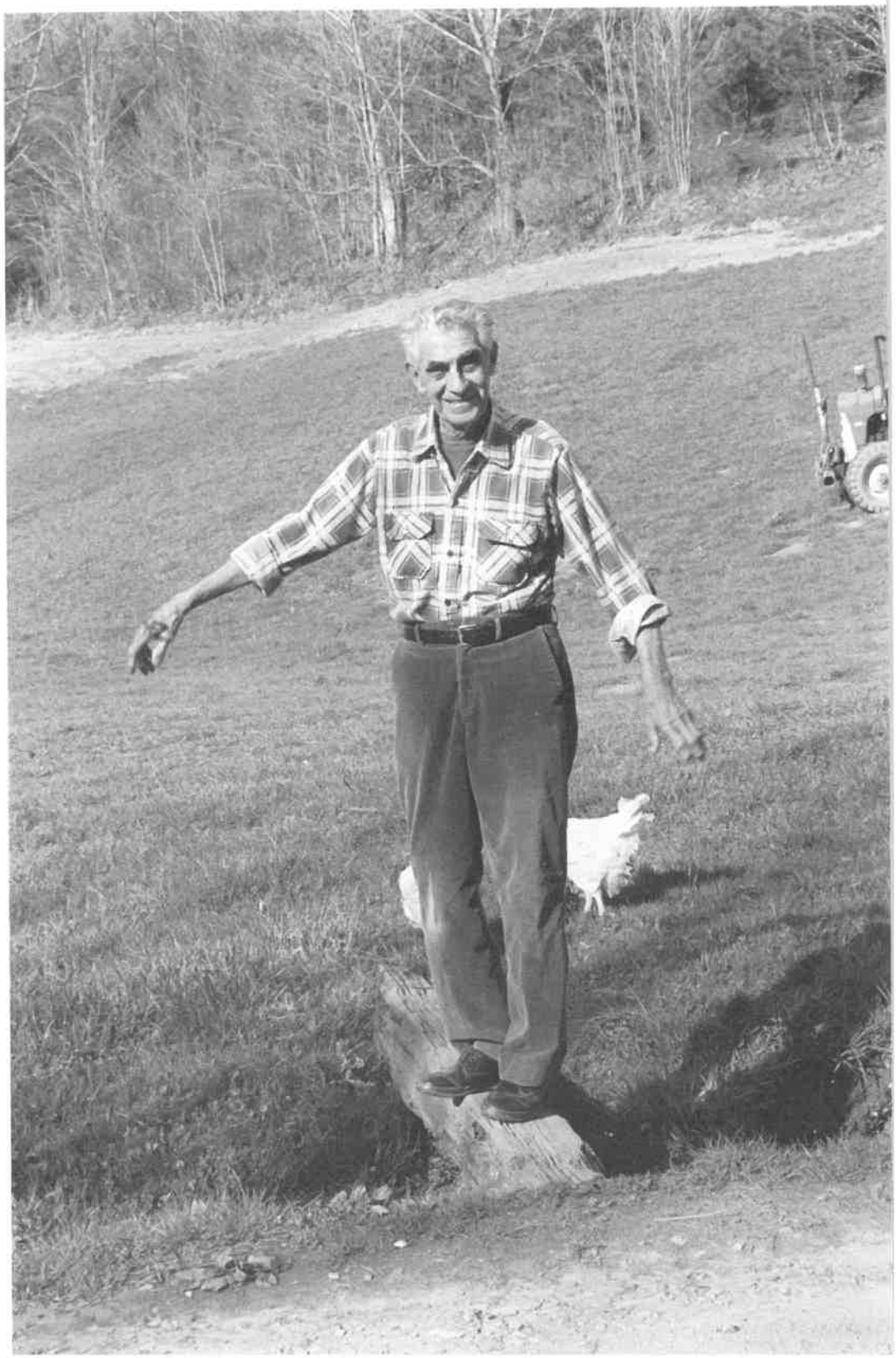
"Come on, Grandpa, play something," shouted one of Wine's 77 grandchildren and great-grandchildren. "Yeah Dad, do 'Whiskey Before Breakfast,' " yelled another member of the Wine clan.

So Melvin Wine quietly walked to the front and started to play his fiddle. The crowd jumped up stomping and cheering. Brandy, an 11-year-old granddaughter in ruffled pink satin and patent-leather tap shoes, clogged across the stage. Baby Danielle, the youngest Wine at the celebration, gurgled and headed for Grandpa at a fast crawl before being grabbed by her mother.

Melvin Wine has played for very different audiences. Government officials, diplomats, and college students have applauded him at the Smithsonian Institution, at the Wolftrap Farm Park near Washington, at Swarthmore College in Pennsylvania, and other places far from his central West Virginia home.

The crowd attending Wine's birthday celebration included many of

Melvin Wine has balanced a life of hard work, traditional music and a commitment to church and family. He turned 82 about the time this photograph was made.



West Virginia's top traditional musicians. They came to pay tribute to the man as much as the fiddler.

One of those present was Mack Samples, president of the State Folk Festival at Glenville, and a fine old-time fiddler himself. Samples called Wine "a true traditional musician," one who worked hard and lived close to the soil and to his family.

"While he is an excellent fiddler, he views other segments of his life as more important," explained Samples. "This is what separates the real traditional musician from those who play traditional music for a living, or who try to."

Wine lives with his wife of more than 60 years, Etta (pronounced Etty) and their granddaughter, Toni, near Copen. They raise cattle, chickens, and hay on their 120-acre farm nestled in a hollow at the end of a gravel road. But Melvin says his sons and a hired hand do most of the outdoor work these days.

"I just run out of steam," he says. "I got black lung and arthritis, and when I try to work out on the farm much I just give out."

The Wine household may be short of steam and even breath but not of love or cooperation, as I found out on a recent visit.

It's late afternoon and Toni, who's 33, comes home from her work at a job-training and rehabilitation center in Sutton. She's had a learning disability and speech impediment since childhood and has spent most of her life with Etta and Melvin.

"They taught me everything I know," she says. "I wouldn't be able to talk or walk if it wasn't for them." She's now taken over the responsibility of caring for Etta when Melvin's away.

Toni sets the table and Melvin takes some cube steaks out of the freezer. Etta supervises from the next room. "Honey, you get that pan nice and hot before you try to fry those steaks," she cautions Melvin.

Etta had a stroke eight years ago and is partially paralyzed. She spends most of her days in a recliner chair facing the front window. "My job now is watching the hollow," she jokes.

And from the looks of it, teaching her octogenarian husband to cook. She listens carefully to the grease sizzling and then warns him not to put too much flour on the meat or "it won't brown up nice."

Melvin grins and says he hasn't quite gotten the hang of fixing country-fried steak, but that he gets up every morning and makes biscuits that are as good or better than anyone's. I've tried them. He's right.

After dinner Toni does the dishes and Melvin starts to tell me about his life and music. He says that he was born in 1909 near Burnsville. His father Bob played the fiddle and his mother, Elizabeth Sandy, sang ballads and hymns. Some of Melvin's earliest memories are of lying in bed at night and hearing his father make music.

"Some of those tunes he'd play in the night would just touch me," he remembers. "I don't know why. One of them, 'Lady's Waist Ribbon' used to make me cry. There was just something about it that bothered and overjoyed me."

Melvin never really went to school. When he was nine he started playing the fiddle while his father was out cutting timber or working as a farmhand for neighbors.

He taught himself to play "Bonaparte's Retreat" and finally worked up the nerve to play for his father. After that Bob Wine taught his son the tunes he'd learned from his own father, Nels, and Grandfather "Smithy." These included "Cold Frosty Morning," the title tune on Melvin's first album, and "Hannah at the Springhouse," the title tune of his cassette. Like most old-time musicians, Melvin never learned to read music.

"My dad, if I didn't play right, why, he'd get behind me and grab a-hold of my arm and show me how to do it," he says. "We played so near alike that he could note the fiddle and hold it and I could use the bow, or vice versa."

Wine Wins National Heritage Fellowship

We received exciting news just as this GOLDENSEAL went to press, when the National Endowment for the Arts named Melvin Wine as one of 16 winners of the prestigious National Heritage Fellowships. The $5,000 awards are given to America's top practitioners of the traditional arts.

The fellowship recipients are nominated on the basis of authenticity and excellence in their field and for their efforts to pass on their expertise to younger generations. Wine was nominated by Gerry Milnes, folk arts coordinator for the Augusta Heritage Center in Elkins. Milnes, a younger fiddler, has played with Wine and documented the man and his music for several years.

"As a fiddler, Melvin's repertoire of old-time tunes and his authentic style of playing have been an inspiration to all of us who've learned from him. As a person, his generosity and warmth have left their mark on us, too," says Milnes.

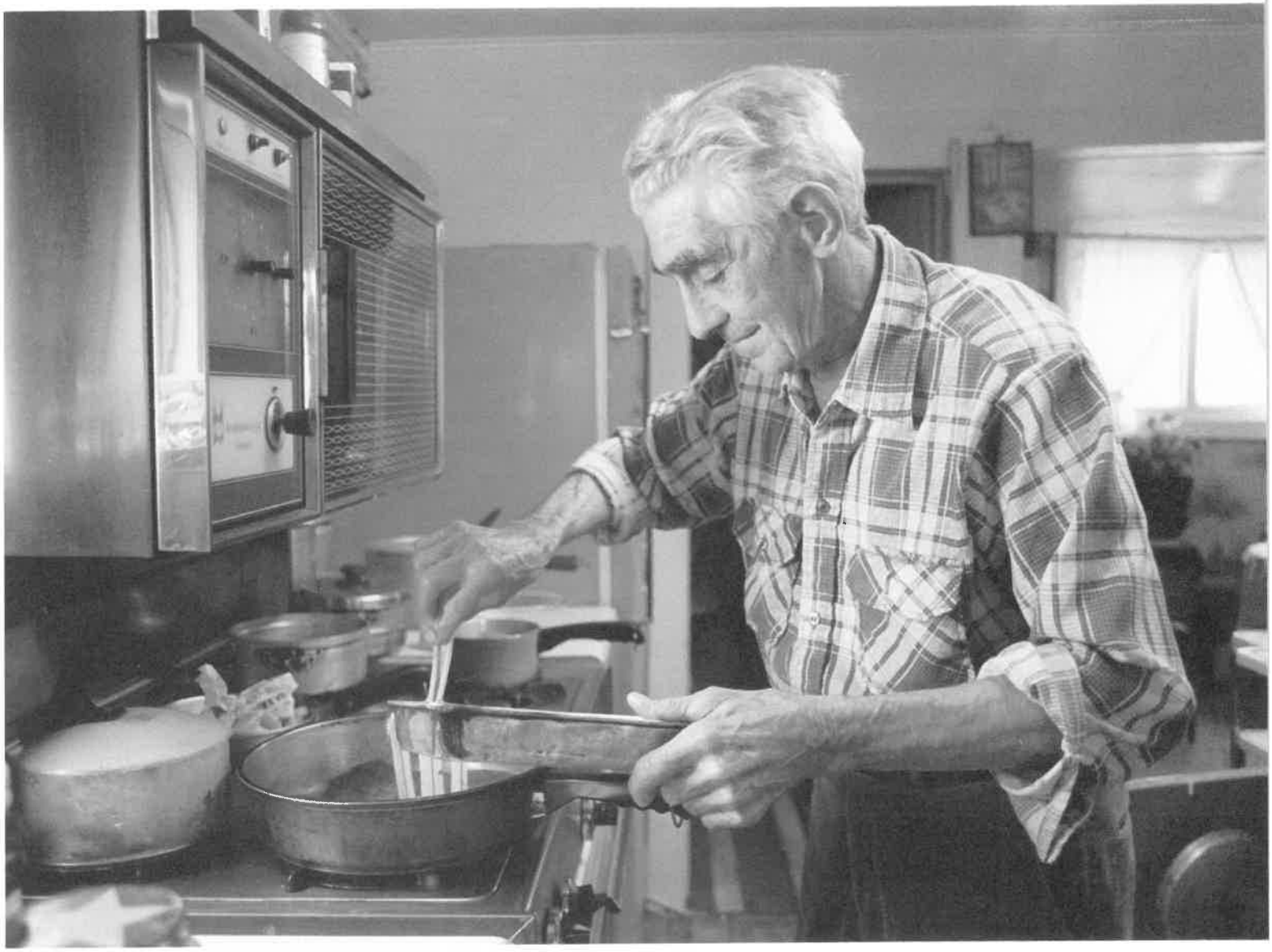
Wine is only the second West Virginian to win the annual fellowship in its 10-year history. The first was ballad singer Nimrod Workman of Mingo County.

Other past winners include John Lee Hooker, Clifton Chenier, Dewey Balfa, and Elizabeth Cotton. Wine and this year's winners, among them legendary bluesman B. B. King, will be honored at a celebration in Washington in September. The event will include a Congressional reception at the U.S. Capitol and a concert.

When reached by telephone for a reaction to the news, Melvin said he was thrilled and that there'd be plenty of use for the money. "My kids were so excited, they wanted to charter a bus and go up to Washington right now," he added. "The old lady, she wants to go too."

Then Etta Wine grabbed the phone. "I'll kill him if he doesn't take me," she laughed.

— Susan Leffler



Melvin has learned to cook since wife Etta had a stroke. We understand his biscuits are as good as anyone's.

Sometimes Melvin's love for music carried him a little beyond what he was willing to admit to his dad. "My father had a sorrel horse. It had a red tail and it had some white in it," he recalls. "I went out and I snooped some hair out of that horse's tail and put it in the fiddle bow. Dad was really wondering about that, how I got that nice bow string. It was really pretty."

When he was 13 Melvin won a fiddler's contest at Gassaway, beating an old man named Bailey, the longtime champion. Bailey told Melvin that he was having a hard time making a living, so the teenaged fiddler gave him the prize money.

"I've felt good about that ever since," chuckles Melvin, dark eyes twinkling under huge bushy eyebrows.

About that time he and his brother Clarence started playing music at the Burnsville movie theater. Clarence played the banjo and mandolin, and together they'd entertain the audience while the projectionist changed reels.

Although there were ten children in the Wine family, Melvin was closest to Clarence. They shared many good times, including playing music at fairs, log rollings, and bean stringings.

Melvin often played for parties. Soon he started courting Etta Singleton, who called square dances and played the banjo and guitar. In 1930 they walked three miles to a preacher's house and got married. The newlyweds set up housekeeping in a two-room shanty where years before loggers had come to warm their hands while timbering the area.

Melvin went to work in the mines. His boss tried to spread the scarce work around by hiring more people than he needed. Unfortunately, this reduced the amount of coal each miner could load and thus reduced each man's pay. Melvin often earned no more than a dollar a day.

He got discouraged and hit the road with Clarence and with Etta's brother, William "Ace" Singleton. They played music on the streets of Fairmont, passing the hat. On weekends, Melvin took his meager earnings home to his new bride.

The three musicians' most memorable adventure was their first airplane

Above Left: Brother Clarence Wine (left) and Melvin were music-making buddies. They played together in Braxton and neighboring counties. Photographer and date unknown.

Above right: Etta and Melvin (standing, holding hands) raised a large family. They are Denzil, Elmer, Jerry and Rita (kneeling, left to right), and Havonda, Lewis, Grafton, Letcher, Susie and Junior (standing, left to right). Photographer and date unknown.

ride. They were walking to a square dance when they spotted a crowd gathered around two small open-cockpit planes. The trio started playing, and eventually the pilots invited them to go for a spin. Melvin and Ace climbed into one plane, and Clarence crawled into the other. Melvin has never forgotten what came next.

"When that thing started up, why me and Ace both tried to dive into the little space under the control panel," he recalls. "But we couldn't fit. I tell you, we was scared! Well, we got over that once we got level and everything was going alright. Then my neck scarf blew off somewhere over Gassaway. When the pilot lit down, he dipped too low and the propeller caught some old swamp weeds and turned her right up on her end. We was up in the air and the nose was right in the ground."

They climbed out and pulled the plane down on the level. Meanwhile the other plane landed near them. The pilot told them to get back in and they'd taxi to the landing field. Melvin declined, saying he'd walk. "And Clarence looked right at his pilot and said, 'I ain't no buzzard, and I ain't flying no more,' " laughs Melvin.

A little while later, something happened that changed Melvin's life for the next two decades.

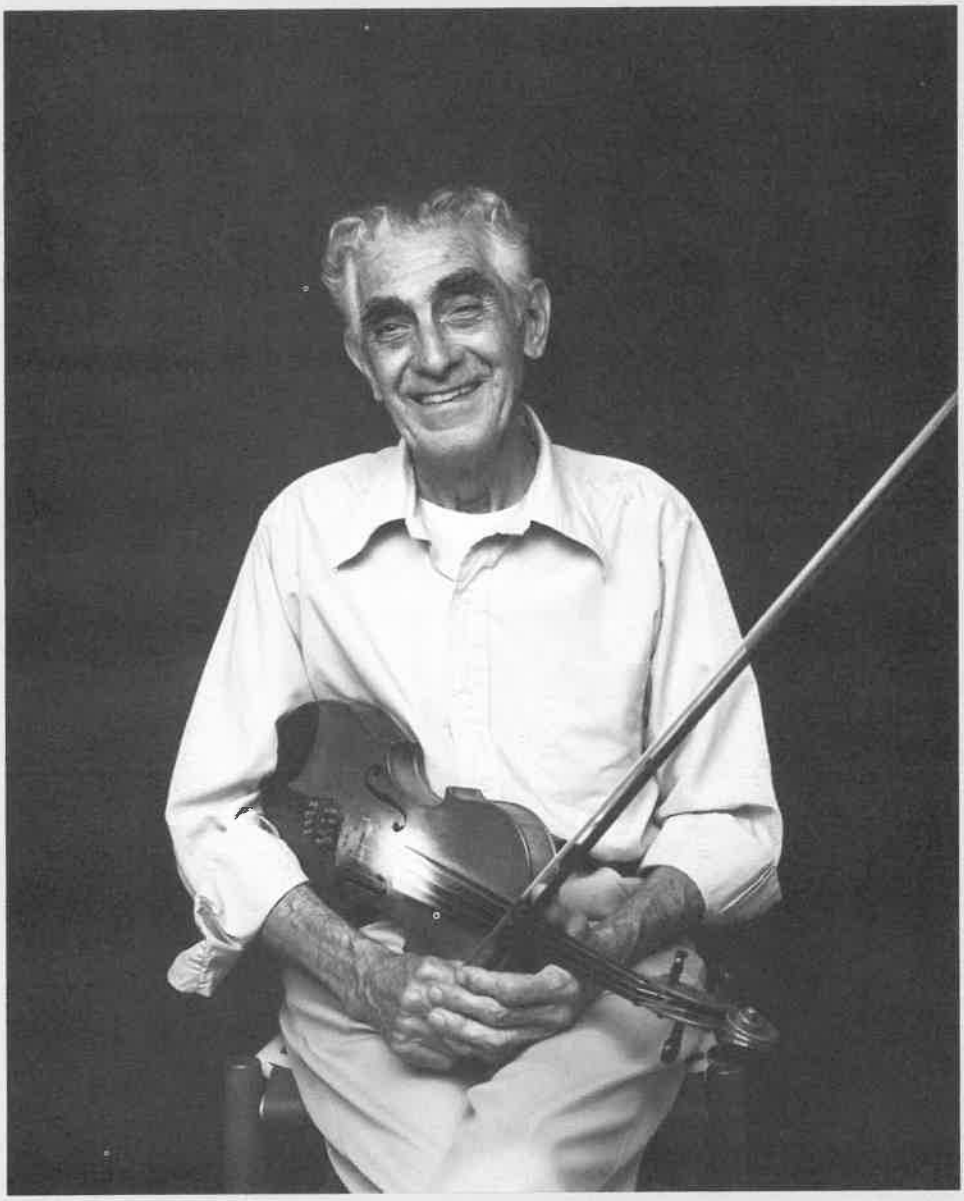
He was playing for a party when an older man started dancing with a 12-year-old girl. As Melvin tells it, the old man was bragging at the top of his lungs about the fact that he could dance with someone so young and pretty. A woman on the other side of the room told him he shouldn't be talking like that, at which point he swore at her.

"And he fell dead right there," says Melvin. "I tell you, people run over me and knocked me down trying to get out of there. It was a scary time. That man, he left this old world in a hurry."

Melvin took the incident as a sign and stopped playing the fiddle for more than 20 years.

"Then I became a shovel operator in

Mr. and Mrs. Wine married in 1930. Etta played the banjo and guitar and called square dances in earlier years.



The 1981 Vandalia Award winner. Melvin Wine, a regular at the Vandalia Gathering and other festivals, won the first Vandalia Award in 1981. The award, West Virginia's highest folklife honor, recognizes a lifetime of accomplishment in the perpetuation of our traditional culture. This official Vandalia portrait was made by Michael Keller in 1986.

Melvin gave up fiddling for 20 years, taking up the instrument again in the 1960's. Here he fiddles at the 1984 Stonewall Jackson Jubilee.

the mines," he chuckles. "A *hand* shovel operator."

He worked in and around the mines for 37 years in Webster, Gilmer, Braxton and Lewis counties. He was seriously injured only once. He still has a huge knot on one knee that he shows to spice up the story of the day an iron bar sliced into his leg. The injury kept him off his feet for nearly three years. By then, he and Etta had four children.

"We lived on $8 a week during that time. Workmen's Compensation. Can you imagine that, with all those mouths to feed?"

Melvin finally was able to start working again by having friends help him get down into the mine and riding out on a coal car at the end of the day. "I stuck to it," he says. "I loaded more coal than anybody there on the hill. I had a strong back and a weak mind."

For nearly ten years he had to work away from home for weeks or months at a time. When he was working nearby, he'd leave on foot before dawn and get home after dark.

Etta remembers those hard times well. "I've picked 500 bushels of corn with the kids and then stayed up canning all night," she says.

The couple eventually had ten children. Nine were born at home, some with the help of Melvin's mother who was a midwife. Etta says she taught them all to share and to work. "I couldn't be raising no lazy kids in those days," she says.

She also made sure they went to school and kept up with their studies. Nearly all the Wine children graduated from high school and several went on to careers in nursing or electrical work.

"Their mother was a hard boss," laughs Melvin. "She ramrodded 'em. But they all say now they wouldn't have been raised any other way."

At one point Etta almost died of typhoid fever. She had been misdiagnosed and was taken off the operating table minutes before having surgery that the doctor later said would have killed her. The experience was so powerful that both Etta and Melvin turned to the church and were saved. Both were baptized in the creek near their house.

"It really made a change in our lives," Melvin says. "The lights burnt

brighter. Peoples' faces shone more.''

Etta goes to church several times a week and Melvin has been superintendent of the Copen United Methodist Church for 50 years.

During the time that their children were growing up, Melvin went from mining to timbering. Then he tried running a sawmill and a trucking company. He ''almost lost his shirt'' several times but eventually bought the farm where they still live. He paid the place off in four years.

Religion, raising a family and his lingering memory of the rowdy old man collapsing on the dance floor had cooled Melvin's interest in music. It was the early 1960's before he started playing the fiddle again on a regular basis. He gives credit to his granddaughter, Kelley, whom he was babysitting at the time.

''She got unruly, and I was trying to get her to quiet down. So I went and got my fiddle and played for her. It did the trick. I thought that this must be a gift, and I shouldn't give it up.''

Melvin started playing at the nearby West Virginia State Folk Festival at Glenville, and to his surprise, started winning fiddle contests. Soon he found himself surrounded by eager young fiddlers anxious to learn the old tunes he'd picked up from his father.

''One song I played, 'Jump Jim Crow,' the young people just hungered after that one,'' Melvin says. ''I played it so many times at Glenville, I wore the feathers off the crow.''

He says the young players' enthusiasm really inspired him. Gradually he started remembering tunes he hadn't heard or played for years. The stories that went with the songs also began to come back. Sometimes these are of great interest themselves, often offering theories about the origins of a tune.

For example, Melvin says that ''Soldier's Joy'' got its name from a Civil War incident involving his great-grandfather Smithy. According to the story, the Yankees caught Smithy helping Confederate troops. The Northerners forced him to walk to Virginia to sign an oath that he would never collaborate with the enemy again. During the long trek, the Yankees learned that their prisoner was a fiddler and asked him to play for a dance. One tune they especially

Melvin's Music

Melvin Wine's music is available on the LP, ''Cold Frosty Morning,'' and the cassette, ''Hannah at the Springhouse.''

''Cold Frosty Morning,'' on the Poplar Records label, includes ''Old Sledge'' which Melvin learned from his father and from Jack McIlwaine, a Webster County fiddler who was locally well known between the two world wars. The record also includes ''Down by the Old Garden Gate,'' a tune Melvin remembers his parents singing. His son Grafton accompanies him on guitar. Along with the music Melvin tells several stories from his younger days. There are extensive liner notes by Carl Fleischhauer and Alan Jabbour, and photographs by Fleischhauer, the record's producer.

''Hannah at the Springhouse,'' a cassette produced jointly by Augusta Heritage Records in Elkins and Marimac Recordings of New Jersey, offers a wide variety of Melvin's work. Included are ''Bob Wine's Tune,'' named for his father; ''Boatsman,'' which Melvin adapted from a banjo tune his brother Clarence used to play; and ''Betty Baker'' which he plays solo. Melvin is accompanied on many tunes by Gerry Milnes and Ron Mullennex, two younger musicians who have been studying Wine's style and songs.

''Cold Frosty Morning'' and ''Hannah at the Springhouse'' may be purchased at The Shop in the Cultural Center, Capitol Complex, Charleston, WV 25305. The cassette is $8 and the LP is $10. Include $2.50 for postage and handling and 6% sales tax if you live in West Virginia.

Passing good music and sound values down to younger generations are important in Melvin Wine's mature years. Here he plays with apprentice John Gallagher for the obvious enjoyment of great-granddaughter Danielle.

Melvin's life and music are rooted in the land of Braxton County. He says his sons and hired help do most of the heavy work nowadays.

enjoyed didn't have a name so they dubbed it "Soldier's Joy."

Melvin's music and recollections made him a popular attraction wherever he went. He soon became a regular at the prestigious Glenville festival, winning the fiddle contest for players over 50 years old an unprecedented seven times. You'll also find him at the Vandalia Gathering in Charleston and the Augusta Heritage Arts Workshops and Festival in Elkins.

Last year Melvin taught fiddle as part of the Augusta folk arts apprenticeship program, instructing 34-year-old John Gallagher, an Elkins carpenter. John says he was attracted by Wine's music, which he describes as having a "beautiful ancient quality." He was also drawn to Wine himself because of his warmth and openness. Gallagher, who grew up mostly in metropolitan Washington, was fascinated by the Wine family's attitudes toward each other and toward life. He wanted to understand where the music came from, so he'd often spend all day playing music with Melvin and then stay the night.

"I guess spending so much of their lives near the earth really challenged them to try harder at everything and to get their priorities straight, to figure out what was really important in life," says Gallagher. It seems that Melvin Wine, who says he feels an obligation to pass his music on to the younger generation, is passing on the values of a simple lifestyle as well.

Folk Arts Specialist Hired

The West Virginia Division of Culture and History has expanded its folklife program with the addition of a statewide Folk Arts Project. The project, with major funding from the National Endowment for the Arts, is designed to document the work of the state's traditional artists, craftspeople and musicians.

Folk Arts Specialist Susan Leffler will work closely with the GOLDENSEAL staff. She will occasionally write for the magazine, and plans a series of short radio programs to be called "Radio GOLDENSEAL."

Leffler, the former news director of West Virginia Public Radio and a founder of the Friends of Old-Time Music and Dance, produced "Recollections," a popular oral history radio series in the early 1980's. She also produced dozens of radio specials from the State Folk Festival at Glenville, the Augusta Heritage Arts Workshops and Festival at Elkins, and hosted Public Radio's live coverage of Vandalia for many years. Leffler has a degree in history from American University, and recently spent five years in Central America reporting on everything from regional warfare to cultural traditions.

If you wish to recommend West Virginians for documentation under the Folk Arts Project, please write to Susan Leffler in care of GOLDENSEAL.

Charles Town photographer Tim Sinn was the local coordinator for the 1941 Jefferson County movie project. He recently donated the original film to the State Archives. Photo by Hali Taylor.

The Way We Were

Jefferson County, 1941

By Bill Theriault

If you lived in Jefferson County during World War II, maybe you went to the premiere of *See Yourself and Your Town in the Movies* at Charles Town's Old Opera House. You paid your 25 cents, slipped into a hard, narrow seat in the darkened theater, and watched the images taken in April 1941 move silently across the screen.

Maybe you glimpsed your grandfather or mother or brother. Or even yourself: A small, thin kid in short pants or bib overalls shyly glancing into the eye of the camera. Or a pretty young woman in a polka-dot dress leaving Ranson's Perfection Garment Company, pretending the camera wasn't there.

But the joy of recognition was soon replaced by a feeling that something was missing. Things had changed dramatically since the movie was filmed. Now your mother was working the night shift at the factory. Your brother was on an island somewhere in the Pacific.

Jefferson County just wasn't the way it had been in the spring of 1941. And it would never be that way again. America had entered World War II at year's end, and new wartime realities colored the view of moviegoers looking back on the last spring of peacetime.

Or maybe you were a War Baby who grew up in Jefferson County, and saw the film years later. Probably you glimpsed the movie screen as you passed J. C. Penney's store window on Washington Street in Charles Town. Or maybe Tim Sinn showed it to your Boy Scout Troop. For you, the movie brought other thoughts

People in funny clothes. Buildings that weren't there any more. Neat-looking old cars. An uncle who never came home from the war.

By the time I saw the film, it was more than 45 years old. As a newcomer to Jefferson County, I could identify only a few landmarks: The Charles Town Racetrack. Jefferson Rock. Some of the older buildings on Charles Town's Washington Street. The people filing by were anonymous.

The background was unrecognizable.

Listening to the old-timers try to identify the image of a man chewing on the stub of a cigar, I realized that much of the film's significance was preserved only in the memories of a dwindling number of senior residents. Soon there would be no one left to give names to the silent people and vanished places. Then the old film would truly be silent. A living link to our past would be lost.

And that was when Jim Surkamp and I began the journey back into the past to identify all those people and places. Working under a grant from the West Virginia Humanities Council and the Bank of Charles Town, we set out to discover how the original film was made and to add a soundtrack to the silent picture.

Our efforts first took us to see Tim Sinn, the retired racetrack photographer who had supervised the filming in 1941. Tim has been the keeper of the film for the last half century, showing it to numerous civic and school groups and, more recently, making videotaped copies available.

Without Tim's efforts, the film

Workers leave the Perfection Garment Company in this series of frames from the 1941 movie.

might never have been made. And without his thoughtful preservation of the original 16mm film footage, this important record of West Virginia life might have disappeared years ago.

The cameraman from Amateur Service Productions of Lancaster, Pennsylvania, reached Charles Town on April 15, 1941, to begin six days of shooting. Tim Sinn explains that the movie was a fund-raising project sponsored by the Charles Town Lions Club. Local businesses would appear in the film if they made a donation. Churches, civic groups, and important landmarks would be included at no cost. Most of the money would be raised by showing the film to the public, and the proceeds would buy eyeglasses for needy children. According to a contemporary article in *The Spirit of Jefferson*, the county newspaper, the production was to be in "newsreel" format. An optimistic Lions Club scheduled the first showing of *See Yourself and Your Town in the Movies* for April 24, only three days after shooting was to end.

Shortly after the cameraman arrived, Tim packed him into Owen Child's 65-horsepower airplane so they could get aerial shots of the county from Charles Town to Harpers Ferry. And then they were off.

Flying directly over Washington Street, the camera passed the courthouse, the old Charles Town High School, the Jefferson Hotel, and the race track. The Charles Town you see from the air has a lot more open space than you can find today. Traffic is light, and people park any way they want.

From Charles Town the plane heads east, approaching Harpers Ferry through the mist. Over there you see the Potomac River bridge that washed out in 1942 and the outlines that mark the site of the armory buildings, now covered with fill. This is an old

The Movie Man Remembers: Tim Sinn

Eighty-one-year-old Tim Sinn is one of those newcomers to Jefferson County. He arrived in 1935 and began work at the Potomac Edison power plant at Millville, above Harpers Ferry in the Shenandoah River. Even then, Tim was interested in photography. Eventually this interest turned into a lifetime profession.

For a while during the late '30's, Tim left Jefferson County to manage a photo lab in Washington, but he returned in 1939 to accept the job as photographer for the Charles Town Race Track. He held that job until he retired in 1964, first taking publicity shots and photos of horses and owners in the winner's circle.

During that 25-year period, it was Tim's camera that recorded the important changes that occurred in thoroughbred racing in Jefferson County, including the construction of Charles Town's rival racetrack, Shenandoah Downs [GOLDENSEAL, Spring 1989]. When the racetrack started making movies, Tim became the moviemaker, and when they switched to televising races he ran the TV camera too. He changed with the times.

Back in 1941 when the Jefferson County film was made, movies were something that you saw other people in. Important people. Thinking back, Tim remarked, "I guess 90 percent of those people in our movie were never in a film before. It was an adventure to be in a film. I think that's why the Charles Town Lions Club supported the project."

Tim's own experience with a movie camera doubtlessly influenced the Lions Club's decision to make *See Yourself and Your Town in the Movies.* And it was Tim's prodding that got the cameraman from Lancaster, Pennsylvania, to do some of the filming in an airplane.

Tim noted, "It was my idea to do the aerial photography. Owen Childs had a plane and he was a good friend of mine. He offered to take me and the filmmaker up. The photographer didn't want to go 'cause he had never flown. You can tell that from the pic-

Harpers Ferry, weathered and still scarred by the Civil War. It, too, is now gone forever, absorbed into Harpers Ferry National Historic Park. Heading back toward Charles Town, the plane passes over Ranson Circle, Hyman Viener's junkyard, and the Norfolk & Western freight station before it touches down.

With their feet firmly back on the ground, Tim and the cameraman filmed the guys at the Independent Fire Company on George Street. Their chairs lined up in front of the fire engines, the men sit, smoking and joking, watching the traffic, hailing the passersby. Small boys sit at the edge of the group, listening and watching. Waiting for the fire bell that will send the engines streaking down Washington Street. Learning how to be a fireman.

The filmmakers visited another firehouse, as well. Not content to be filmed sitting down, the volunteers at Charles Town's Citizens' Fire Company staged a fire drill. Watching the men jump on the fire truck, race down the street, and set up the hoses at the old graded school playground, you can't help wonder where they would be in the next few years.

Tim Sinn makes a couple of brief appearances in the film himself: A tiny figure waving at the cameraman from atop Jefferson Rock. And, camera in hand at a Lions Club luncheon, taking pictures of the man who was taking pictures.

The film contains a few dozen sequences, each lasting a minute or two. And within those sequences are dozens of individual frames that tell a story. The segments seem to be arranged in no particular order, a little more disorganized than even a newsreel format would suggest. "It looks like tossed salad," said Jim Surkamp the first time he saw it. And I grudgingly admitted that *See Yourself* tures he took. You can see he was moving the camera quite a bit. I know he was nervous."

Tim remembers the first showing of the movie clearly, although he can't pinpoint the exact date. "We showed it two times, I think at 25 cents a head," he said. The newspapers failed to record the event, although it clearly occurred during World War II.

Thinking back to that first show, Tim recalled, "The Old Opera House was not opened so we had to clean it up. I helped clean the pigeon dirt from the floors because the building had no roof. You could see the sky through the roof on the Opera House. We washed down every seat in the place, cleaned it up really good. It hadn't been used for years."

The Old Opera House didn't officially reopen until the end of the war, when it was renovated and made into a movie theater. Today, it offers a full season of plays as well as acting workshops. This April, the Old Opera House celebrated the 50th anniversary of the film's creation by becoming a movie theater, once again, for a day. Tim donated the aging original film to the State Archives and received the Distinguished West Virginian Award for his preservation efforts.

Faced with this new fuss over the old film, Tim frankly admits he's surprised at the interest. When the film was first made, he never dreamed that people would still be watching it 50 years later.

After many years of hard service, the original 16mm film is a little the worse for wear. It's brittle and pockmarked by an occasional burn hole. Thinking of the many years of use the film received, Tim smiled. "You'd be burned out and brittle too if you were as old as it was," he pointed out.

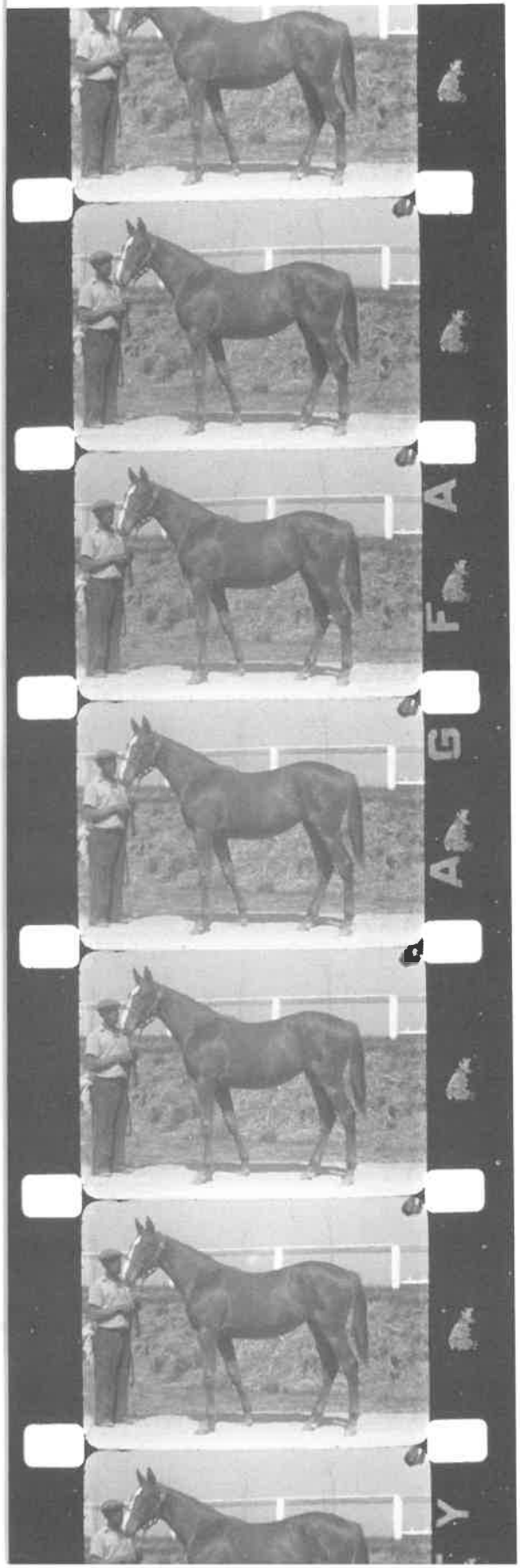
These days, Tim has set aside his camera and returned to an even earlier love — singing. From 1931 to 1936, he sang for Don Hagar's Southerners orchestra in Frederick, Maryland. Sixty years later, he's at it again, singing lead for a barbershop group in Winchester, Virginia.

Thinking back even further into his past, Tim recalled that he used to make money selling ice cream from a little red wagon and serving as a caddie at the Fountainhead Country Club in Hagerstown. The last time I visited his house, neither a red wagon nor a golf bag were in sight. But you just can't tell what Tim Sinn will get into next.

—Bill Theriault

The Citizens Fire Company staged a fire drill for the movie. Here their truck arrives at the scene.

Horse racing was a prime Charles Town attraction in 1941 as it is today. This trainer shows a fine thoroughbred.



and Your Town in the Movies was no film classic.

Tim Sinn explained that the cameraman took the film home with him to be developed and edited. He promised that it would be ready to show in a couple of days. But the days turned into weeks and weeks into months. Then came Pearl Harbor, and the Lions Club film was the furthest thing from most people's minds. Finally, when many folks thought the film had been lost, the edited version was delivered.

We don't know how much of that original footage ended up on the cutting room floor. The film's sponsors predicted that the movie would run almost an hour and a half, but the edited version that came back was just a little more than 50 minutes long. We do know that the film editor didn't know one end of Jefferson County from the other.

So the film that was made isn't quite what it was intended to be. Nor would Jefferson County ever again be quite what it was in the spring of 1941. And there wasn't much anyone could do about it. Even the people who first saw the movie at the Old Opera House understood that they were looking at a way of life irretrievably changed.

Despite the poor editing job done 50 years ago, the film still has a lot to say in 1991. For many older residents, seeing the film opens a floodgate of memories. As the theater lights come on, they file out, happy but a little sad too. And for those of us who don't know the way it was, the film is as important for what it omits as for what it includes.

Clearly this is a view of Jefferson County as seen by Charles Town residents. Harpers Ferry and the Washington homes quickly flicker by. Shepherdstown doesn't appear at all. And there's a lot left out even in Charles Town. The world we see is one of churches, and schools, and prosperous businesses. A town with no pool halls, or saloons, or shanties. A town that appears to have more gasoline stations than places of worship. A world of demure working women and men with cigarettes dangling from the slits of their smiles. Bright, shiny cars and company trucks.

Some of the film sequences simply record people posed uncomfortably in front of the camera, or self-consciously trying to stay in motion. After all, it is supposed to be a moving picture. The best individual frames within each sequence capture people at ease going about their daily life.

We see plenty of real people doing real work: George Collis at People's Supply grinding cornmeal and bagging flour. Men at Hyman Viener's junkyard breaking down scrap metal to load onto railroad cars. Ben Dolman loading up the van at White's Market. A man tying up stacks of freshly cut cardboard at the Halltown Paper Box Company.

If we can measure by the length of the film sequences, Viener's junkyard seemed to have held the most fascination for the filmmakers. We see hill after hill of metal interspersed with the shells of old cars, engine blocks, an electric automobile, piles of tires.

Then the camera lingers on a large heap of metal. Most viewers today won't recognize the objects glinting in the morning sun, but the folks watching the movie during World War II knew them well: Mountains of plowshares.

The thriving farm community that supported the Charles Town economy is glimpsed only briefly in the film. There is a flock of sheep in front of a barn. An aerial view of plowed fields. A truckload of corn arriving at People's Supply.

If you talk to the old farmers, they'll tell you that more than those plowshares disappeared in 1941. That's when the Tabb family in Leetown and the Donleys at Molers Crossroads traded in their horses and mules for tractors. There weren't enough men around for horse farming.

And there wasn't much call for harness, either. Business at Ranson's Harness Factory was dwindling, its product no longer needed by the military. At its peak during World War I, the factory employed more than 300 people, but in April 1941 only 14 workers were left. Soon the factory would close. Now the long brick building has vanished too, replaced by the structures erected by Dixie-Narco, a company that makes vending machines.

Jim Surkamp and Tim Sinn spent

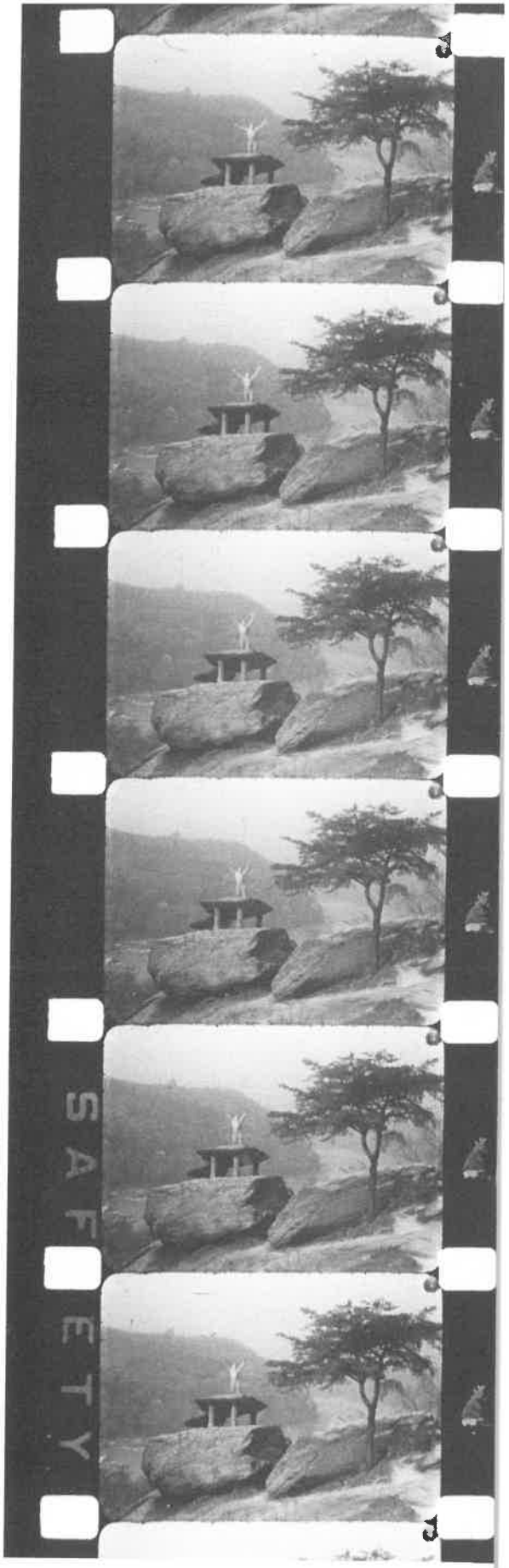
See Yourself and Your Town is from an earlier and simpler age, long before home video and shopping mall cinemas. Photo by Michael Keller, equipment courtesy State Archives.

months replaying these scenes, trying to identify the parade of churchgoers and factory workers that file across the screen. I spent my time shooting hundreds of 35mm negatives and slides from those tiny motion picture frames.

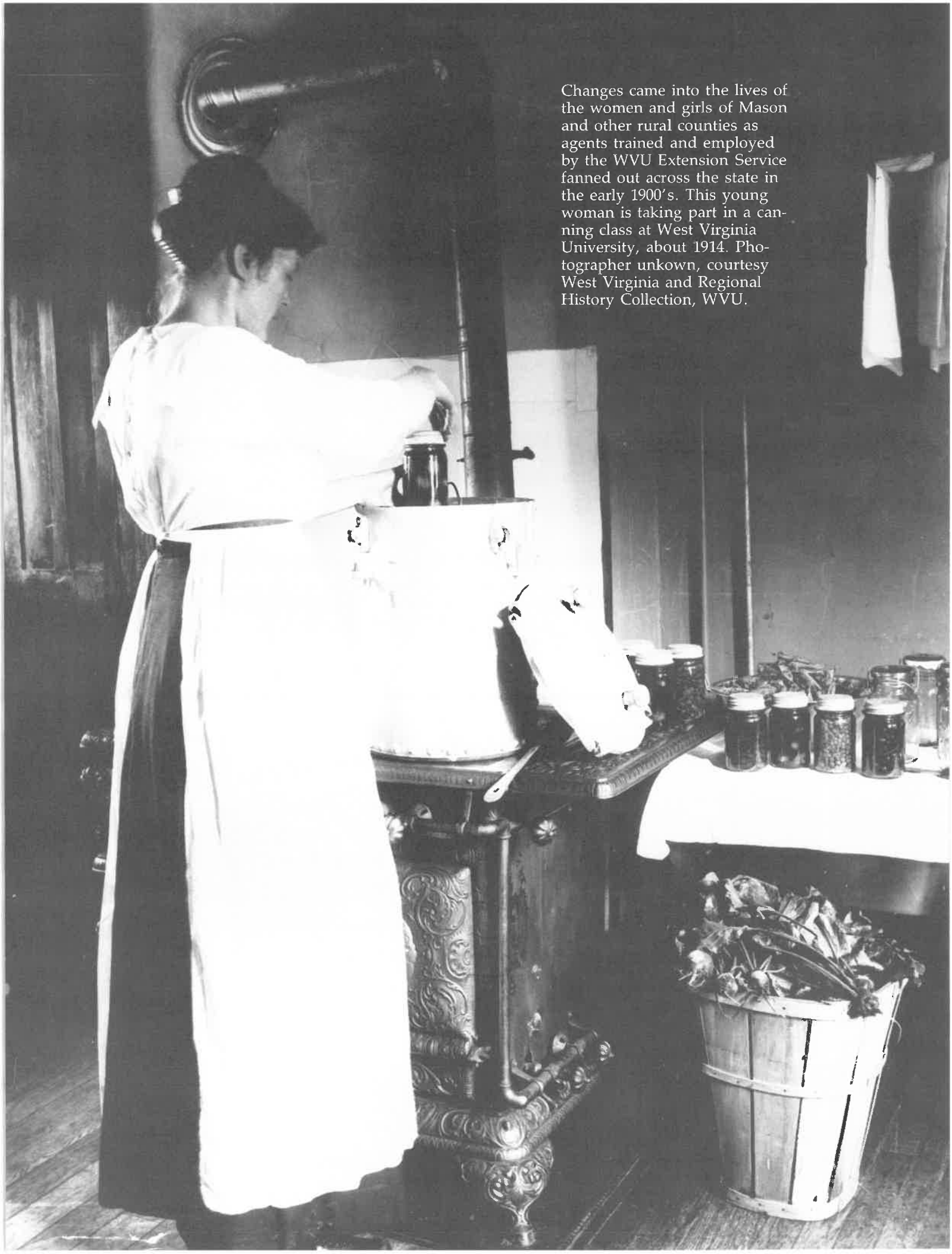
When it came to making a modern videotape version of *See Yourself and Your Town in the Movies,* we debated all of the ways the film could be "improved." Correct the inverted or reversed images. Rearrange the sequences into some kind of logical order.

In the end, we did none of that. Tampering would have created a new film, not preserved the old one. So we left the pictures alone and produced a sound track that gives the viewer a sense of what it was like to live in Jefferson County in 1941.

And it was different, believe me. If you walk down Washington Street in 1991, you may still see a few of the folks that posed for that Pennsylvania cameraman a half-century ago. Some of the buildings have changed very little. Most of the old buildings have vanished, however, and most of the people, swept away by the five decades that have intervened. The way of life recorded in *See Yourself and Your Town in the Movies* is gone forever, but thanks to the historic film, it won't be forgotten.



You'd never know it, but Tim Sinn himself was the man waving from the top of Jefferson Rock.



Changes came into the lives of the women and girls of Mason and other rural counties as agents trained and employed by the WVU Extension Service fanned out across the state in the early 1900's. This young woman is taking part in a canning class at West Virginia University, about 1914. Photographer unkown, courtesy West Virginia and Regional History Collection, WVU.

Canning and Camping

Girls' 4-H in Mason County

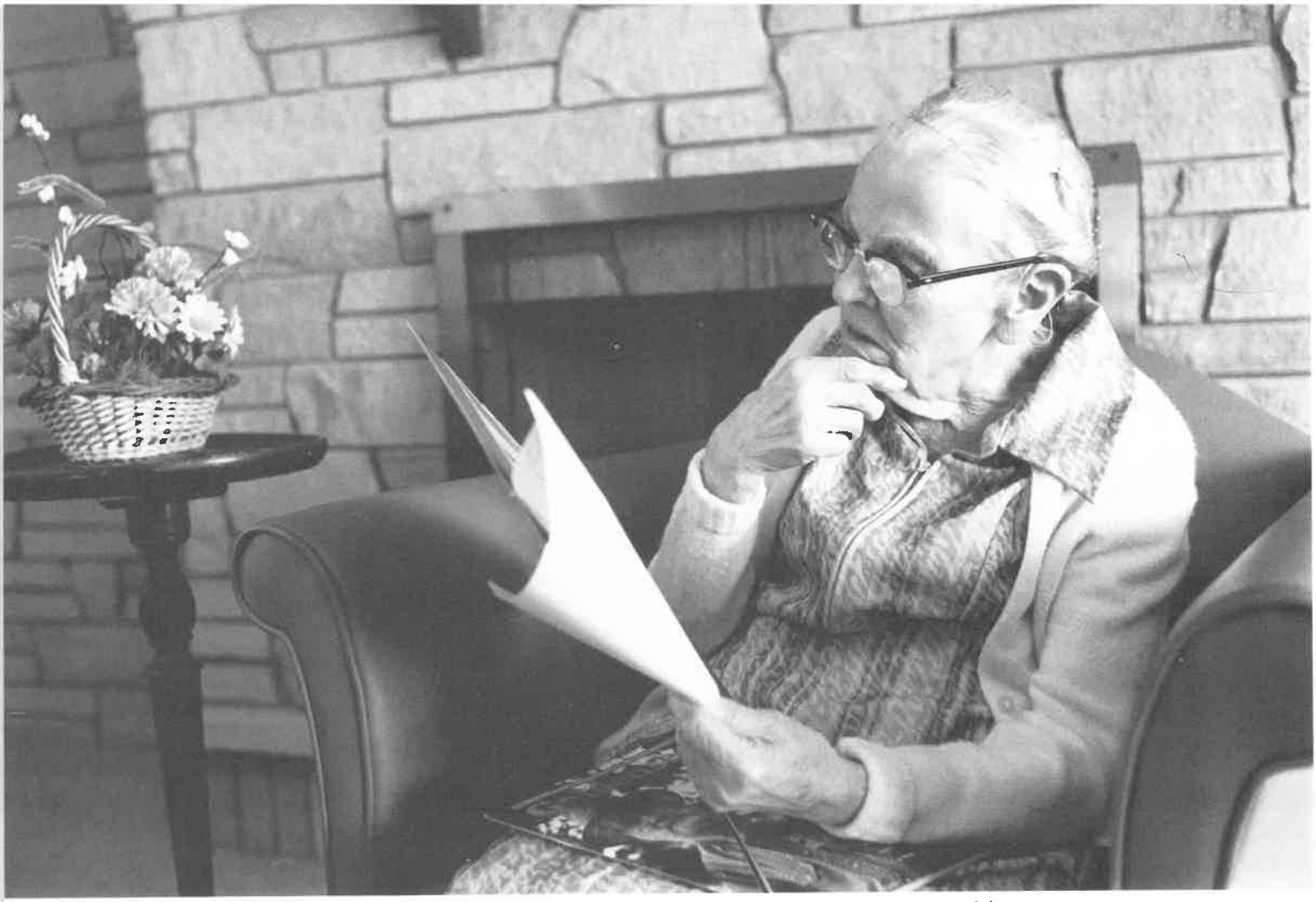
By Joseph Platania

June marks the beginning of summer camp for thousands of West Virginia boys and girls active in one or more of a dozen different organizations. The largest is the state 4-H Club, which annually provides camping for an estimated 12,000 young people.

The first 4-H summer camp in the nation was held in West Virginia, in 1915 in Randolph County. Other county camps sprang up in succeeding years, with Mason County among the earliest.

Since the early 1940's, Mason County 4-H camps have been held at Southside on U.S. Route 35, about a dozen miles up the Kanawha River from Point Pleasant. In the same vicinity, the first camp was held in 1918 on the grounds of the Beech Hill Methodist Church. The camp was called the "Canning Club Girls Institute" and it was located in a grove of trees near the Beech Hill church from Monday, July 22, to Friday, July 26, according to a newspaper account at the time. Those in attendance were "Miss Sadie Guseman, State Demonstration Agent, Mrs. Ethel B. Reynolds, County Agent, and 20 club girls."

The Mason County canning club, about 1915. Organizer Ethel Burdette Reynolds stands at rear, in black hat, with Genevieve Lewis (wearing tie) in front of her. Photographer unknown.



Mildred Lewis Roush followed her sister Genevieve in the canning club and participated in the first Mason County camp in 1918. Photo by Michael Keller.

"Miss Guseman often had to blaze her own trail with a wash boiler and other equipment in the back of a buggy."

The fun and adventure of that early gathering of rural children are still clear in the memory of Mildred Lewis Roush of Point Pleasant, who attended as a 15-year-old.

"It was a girls' camp. We were organized into three tribes: Mingos, Shawnees, and Delawares. There were six or seven of us in each tribe; I was a Mingo," recalled Mrs. Roush, now 87, in an interview.

She remembered the vesper services held near sunset "on the brow of the hill." One evening local farmers loaded up two wagons with hay and took all of the girls on a hayride. "We sang our club songs and gave our yells as we rode on the wagons," said Mrs. Roush.

The girls' club leader, county agent Ethel Burdette Reynolds, had organized the camp. Miss Guseman gave canning demonstrations for the girls.

Mildred Roush recalled that she, her older sister Genevieve, and two other girls shared a tent. The campers slept on straw-filled mattresses. Because of a tent shortage, several girls slept on the floor of the Beech Hill church.

Mildred had enrolled in the canning club, originally called a "girls' tomato club," through her school. Her brother was in a corn club, an early agricultural club for rural boys.

She recalled that her first club project was growing a patch of tomatoes, then canning them and other vegetables. Later, it was just canning. Sister Genevieve had joined the club several years earlier. In 1914 or '15 Genevieve won a trip to the 4-H Prize Winners' Course in Morgantown. Mildred later had the opportunity to go to Morgantown but didn't get to make the trip because of an epidemic that was spreading in the state at the time.

Meetings of the tomato club were held at members' homes, including Mildred and Genevieve Lewis's. It was no coincidence that mothers learned too. Mrs. Lewis had always canned, Mildred recalled, and now Ethel Burdette Reynolds showed her how "to cook the vegetables inside the

William H. "Teepi" Kendrick, lecturing here at Jackson's Mill, was the founding spirit of West Virginia 4-H. Photographer and date unknown.

jar." Previously, Mildred's mother and other gardeners had cooked before canning. Food was often contaminated before sealing and much of it spoiled. Ethel also introduced club girls and rural homemakers to a pressure cooker developed for use in canning, said Mildred.

She added that through the canning club, which later became a 4-H club, she became acquainted with girls from other parts of the county.

Mildred's membership in that early club was during a time of rapid expansion of the 4-H movement across West Virginia and throughout the nation [GOLDENSEAL, Summer 1984]. Its forerunners had been agricultural clubs run exclusively for farm youth.

The clubs were among several innovations adopted around the turn of the century to encourage the American farmer to modernize techniques and improve productivity. In this effort, agricultural colleges helped groups of rural boys to scientifically farm selected crops. These early clubs were named for the crop they raised, such as corn clubs. Later, clubs were started to teach rural girls about food preservation and homemaking.

West Virginia got into the act in 1907 with the creation of an Extension Department at West Virginia University. That summer a boys' corn growing contest was held in Monroe County. The Extension Department furnished each boy with 300 grains of good seed corn and local farmers conducted the contest. In November the winners exhibited their corn at the courthouse in Union.

The idea was so successful that other counties soon followed suit. Arrangements were made for girls' contests, where they could exhibit homemade bread and jellies for prizes.

In 1913 William H. "Teepi" Kendrick was named West Virginia's agriculture youth club agent. It was Kendrick's vision and determination, more than that of any other person, which changed the direction of the 4-H movement and gave it significance.

At about the same time that Teepi Kendrick was appointed state boys' club agent, Sadie R. Guseman of Delaware was hired to take charge of the girls' clubs in West Virginia. Following her appointment in July 1913, Guseman lost no time in setting up canning, cooking, and sewing schools for clubs in several counties. "Miss Guseman often had to blaze her own trail with a wash boiler and other equipment in the back of a buggy," says a history of 4-H clubs in West Virginia.

Because of the growing interest by girls, Miss Guseman employed ten women as part-time county home economics leaders to help her establish girls' clubs across the state, using funds provided under the federal Smith-Lever Act. Ethel Burdette Reynolds got her job in this fashion.

Mrs. Reynolds recalled her hiring in an unpublished 1963 account of early 4-H work in Mason County. She reported that in 1914 the county "Superintendent of Schools, C. D. Ball, requested me to come to his office and meet Miss Sadie R. Guseman,* State Agent for Girls' Tomato Clubs. Miss Guseman told me that I had been recommended to be Mason County

"Train fare and paying to take the ferry boat across the river was about the limit of my expenses. People in the country did not charge to feed me or my horse."

*Reynolds used a phonetic spelling, "Gooseman," throughout her report. We have corrected it to Guseman. — ed.

Sadie Guseman, state girls' club agent, stands at right rear (in hat) in this group of Extension Service workers. The occasion was Founder's Week in Morgantown, 1920. Photographer unknown. Courtesy McClain Printing Company, Parsons.

"This club work was so new that my title had not been fully decided. Sometimes I would get mail with Agent, Mason County Agent or Demonstrator, and at one time I had the title of Collaborator."

Agent to work with the members of the Tomato and Canning clubs.... Miss Guseman said she had visited some of the county schools with Mr. Ball and explained the club work to the children and membership cards had been given to them. The cards were to be signed by parents and returned to the Superintendent of Schools."

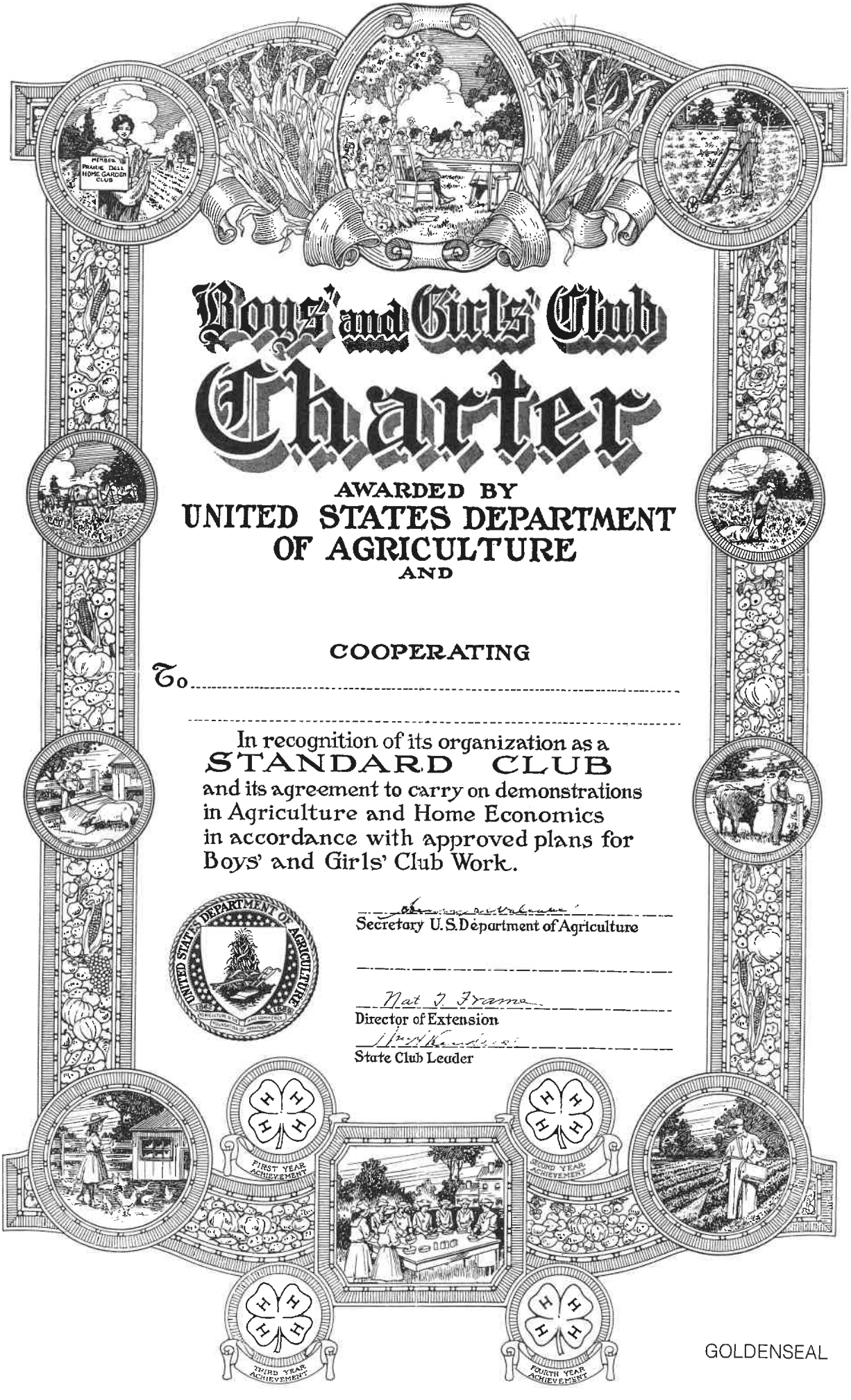
Reynolds accepted the position, figuring it was "a new job of teaching, but not anything like classroom teaching." Certainly it was not a desk job.

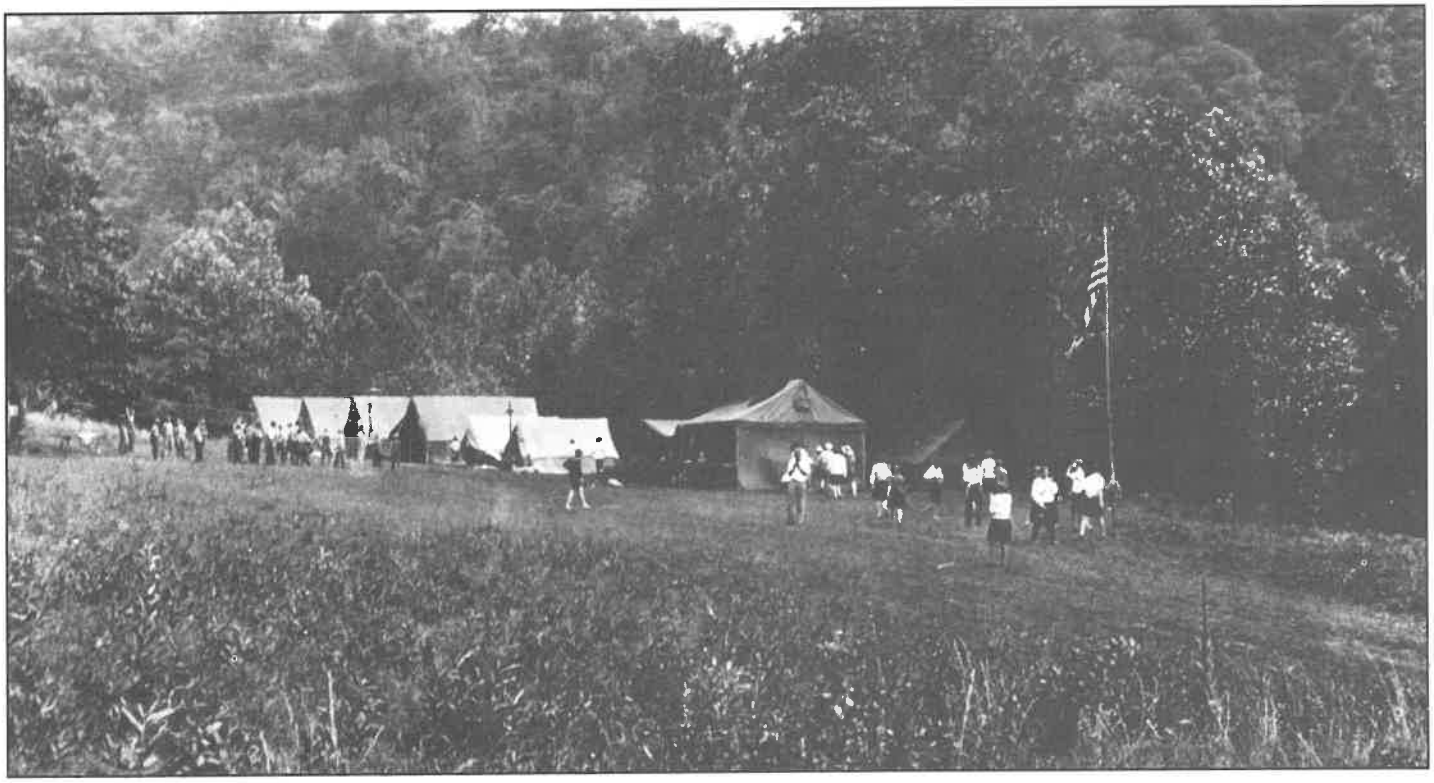
"Miss Guseman said I must have a horse and buggy," she reported. "For a while my salary was $25 a month, working three days a week and about seven months a year. I never did work a full year through as the work was only for the growing and canning season. My expenses were allowed but they did not amount to much; at one time I turned in an account of $2.25. Train fare and paying to take the ferry boat across the river was about the limit of my expenses. People in the country did not charge to feed me or my horse."

So from 1914 to 1919 Ethel Burdette Reynolds was a familiar face in the rural countryside of Mason County, first driving a horse and buggy and then a car as she visited farm families. It was no simple matter to get around in a county with few good roads and a major river down the middle, she recalled.

She gave examples in her 1963 report. "Let's take a trip up the Leon way by meeting a train at 7:00 a.m.," she wrote. "I could hire a horse and buggy, cross the ferry and visit on the south side of the river. If I went as far

Facing Page: Rural boys' and girls' clubs were endorsed by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. This 1930's club charter bears the signature of "Teepi" Kendrick. Courtesy Dorsey Resource Center, Jackson's Mill.


MEMBER
PRAIRIE DELL
HOME GARDEN
CLUB
Boys' and Girls' Club
Charter
AWARDED BY
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT
OF AGRICULTURE
AND
COOPERATING
To
In recognition of its organization as a
STANDARD CLUB
and its agreement to carry on demonstrations
in Agriculture and Home Economics
in accordance with approved plans for
Boys' and Girls' Club Work.
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Secretary U. S. Department of Agriculture
Nat T. Frame
Director of Extension
State Club Leader
FIRST YEAR ACHIEVEMENT
SECOND YEAR ACHIEVEMENT
THIRD YEAR ACHIEVEMENT
FOURTH YEAR ACHIEVEMENT



Above and Facing Page: Later Mason County camps were held at the Musgrave farm on Old Town Creek. These scenes are from the 1926-'28 era, with the group of seated children beefing up for their camp newspaper class. Photographers unknown, courtesy Mason County Cooperative Extension office.

"...can you imagine an independent farmer being told by his child that he must sign his name to a card so that she could join a Tomato Club? He had never heard of such a club..."

A Tour of Jackson's Mill

Historic Jackson's Mill: A Walking Tour by Michael M. Meador is now in its second printing. The 73-page, softcover book is a comprehensive walking guide to the Lewis County 4-H facility, site of the boyhood home of General Stonewall Jackson.

The new edition is expanded with additional text on historic and present-day Jackson's Mill and more pen-and-ink illustrations by Meador. Since the first book, eight years ago, Jackson's Mill has undergone a number of changes. Work is underway to restore the historic lower area to its mid-19th century appearance. There are plans for the reconstruction of the Cummins Jackson house and the restoration of a working gristmill and sawmill.

Overall, Jackson's Mill has undergone a general sprucing up with a new entrance, freshly painted buildings, and the installation of sidewalks and bridges. Bill Frye is the new director of the historic facility.

Meador's book offers two tours. Both begin and end on the porch of the Mt. Vernon Dining Hall. Tour I is of the Lower Camp going back toward the familiar Old Mill at the entrance. Tour II is of the Upper Camp behind the dining hall.

Meador has been active in 4-H since childhood. He grew up in Mercer County and served as the extension agent in Boone County for four years. He is a recent graduate of the West Virginia School of Osteopathic Medicine.

Historic Jackson's Mill: A Walking Tour may be purchased for $9, plus $1 for postage and handling. Orders may be sent to Meador Book Fund, c/o Jim Morris, Chairman, Route 1, Box 27 AAA, Enterprise, WV 26568. Proceeds from the sale of the book will be donated to the West Virginia 4-H Foundation.

as Big Sixteen Creek or down to Beech Hill I had to stay another night. If I wanted to go in the other direction from Leon, I rode horseback and that was another night to stay over. All of this does not seem possible. Now we have our bridges, our hard roads and our cars. Most of the places that I visited in 1914, taking such a long time, can be reached now in 30 to 40 minutes."

Reynolds was the first person in the job, and she worked out the details as she went along. "This club work was so new that my title had not been fully decided," she recalled. "Sometimes I would get mail with Agent or County Agent; Mason County Agent or Demonstrator; and at one time I had the title of Collaborator."

Part of her work was organizing the girls' clubs. At first many parents didn't understand what the government was trying to do in this regard, according to Reynolds. "Now, I ask you, can you imagine an independent farmer being told by his child that he must sign his name to a card so that she could join a Tomato Club? He had never heard of such a club and the child did not understand it well enough to explain what she had heard at school. Many cards were returned unsigned," she reported.

The Smith-Lever Act, the appointment of local club agents such as Ethel Burdette Reynolds, and the enthusiastic leadership of state club agents gradually began to make a difference in the club program. Kendrick traveled more than 16,000 miles and addressed nearly 8,000 people in public meetings in 1914 and 1915. Lectures about improved farming techniques were given at farmers' meetings throughout the state.

Mason County saw its share of the action. "Miss Guseman, Mr. Kendrick... and others would come to the county and spend a week," Reynolds recalled. "Lectures were given on livestock of all kinds, poultry, crops, fruit, vegetable gardens and spraying. We always had a Canning Demonstration and the club girls would give yells and sing their club songs. These were wonderful meetings. The people would come for miles by wagon, horseback and buggy; and the basket dinners were something to think about."

Reynolds continued to enroll girls

"These were wonderful meetings. The people would come for miles by wagon, horseback and buggy, and the basket dinners were something to think about."

across Mason County. A tomato club girl had to be at least ten years old and have one-tenth acre of ground for her garden. She had to care for her plot, grow tomatoes with special seed furnished by WVU; stake, prune and spray the plants, and keep a record book. "The Record Book, five tin cans of tomatoes, and one glass jar of tomatoes were to be brought to the county seat for exhibit," she later wrote. "Prizes were offered with first place winner getting a paid trip to Morgantown for a week."

Seventy-five years ago the idea of summer camp for farm boys and girls, even those in agricultural clubs, seemed far-fetched. But with the new 4-H organization behind them, summer camps for rural children soon became a reality. Camps and institutes of three to five days began to spread in 1916, just a year after the Randolph County experiment. The county 4-H camps were held during the summer months under the supervision of the agricultural agent and the home demonstration agent, assisted by district agents and students from WVU.

By 1920 the county camping program had spread to more than half of the state's counties. Mason was in the forefront. Following the 1918 camp,

The Place, the Plans and the People

Organizing the 1918 Girls' Camp

Ethel Burdette Reynolds, county girls' club agent, was put in charge of organizing Mason County's first 4-H camp in 1918. It was a considerable job. "I had a big headache now," she later wrote. "The time, the place, the food, the plans and the people made my head almost burst."

Actually, those elements came together surprisingly well. First the time was chosen, Reynolds remembered. Then "the people at Beech Hill offered the church and church grounds for the place," and of course she had the cooperation of the "wonderful 4-H girls and their friends" from the outset. Gradually all the obstacles were overcome, and 45 years later Reynolds felt that the girls still recalled the first camp with pleasure.

Reynolds recalled the details in this excerpt from her 1963 report:

There were people in the county who thought I was crazy and said I was leading their girls astray. Who ever heard of taking a bunch of girls, going out and sleeping on the ground in tents; cooking and eating — no telling what? In spite of everything 25 girls were anxious to attend camp. Miss Guseman came to help me, thus, we had 27 people at the first venture of 4-H camp in Mason County.

Some people have said that this camp at Beech Hill was not the first camp in Mason County. Earlier one of the corn club agents and a few corn club boys camped a few days on the river bank below Henderson. But the camp at Beech Hill of 4-H girls has been recognized as the first 4-H Girls' Camp in Mason County.

A list of food and necessary things for camp was sent to all the girls. I may have forgotten some of the things, but this about covers all for each member: Straw tick, covers, pillow, sheet, pillow slip, plate, knife, fork, spoon, cup, or glass, clothing, one head lettuce, three onions, one dozen eggs, one gallon potatoes, one dozen ears of corn, beets, 25 cents, butter, tomatoes, fat meat, sugar, salt, jelly, green beans.

I used the 25 cents to buy bread, Mother's oats and three dozen bananas. Everything was taken to camp Monday morning and the perishable things stored in the cellar at the home of a club girl. The live chickens were also kept at her home. I furnished the cooking vessels, spoons, pans, pot for boiling water, some coffee, tea, and flour for gravies. Miss Guseman had a 25-quart steam pressure canner. We had good things to eat even if we did not have any conveniences. If you have never eaten corn in the husk, or potatoes in their jackets roasted in the wood coals and smothered in good old country butter, you have missed a lot of enjoyment.

As many girls as could arrived at camp early Monday morning and began getting everything ready for the thrill of their lives. For some of these girls it was the first trip away from home. Also, they were meeting new friends. Why not be thrilled and excited?

A pit was dug in the bank above the creek and a large piece of sheet iron was laid across this pit to make the top of our stove. It smoked some until a neighbor brought us an old stove pipe. Another neighbor brought us planks to be used to make a work table. I had

If you have never eaten corn in the husk, or potatoes in their jackets roasted in the wood coals and smothered in good old country butter, you have missed a lot of enjoyment.

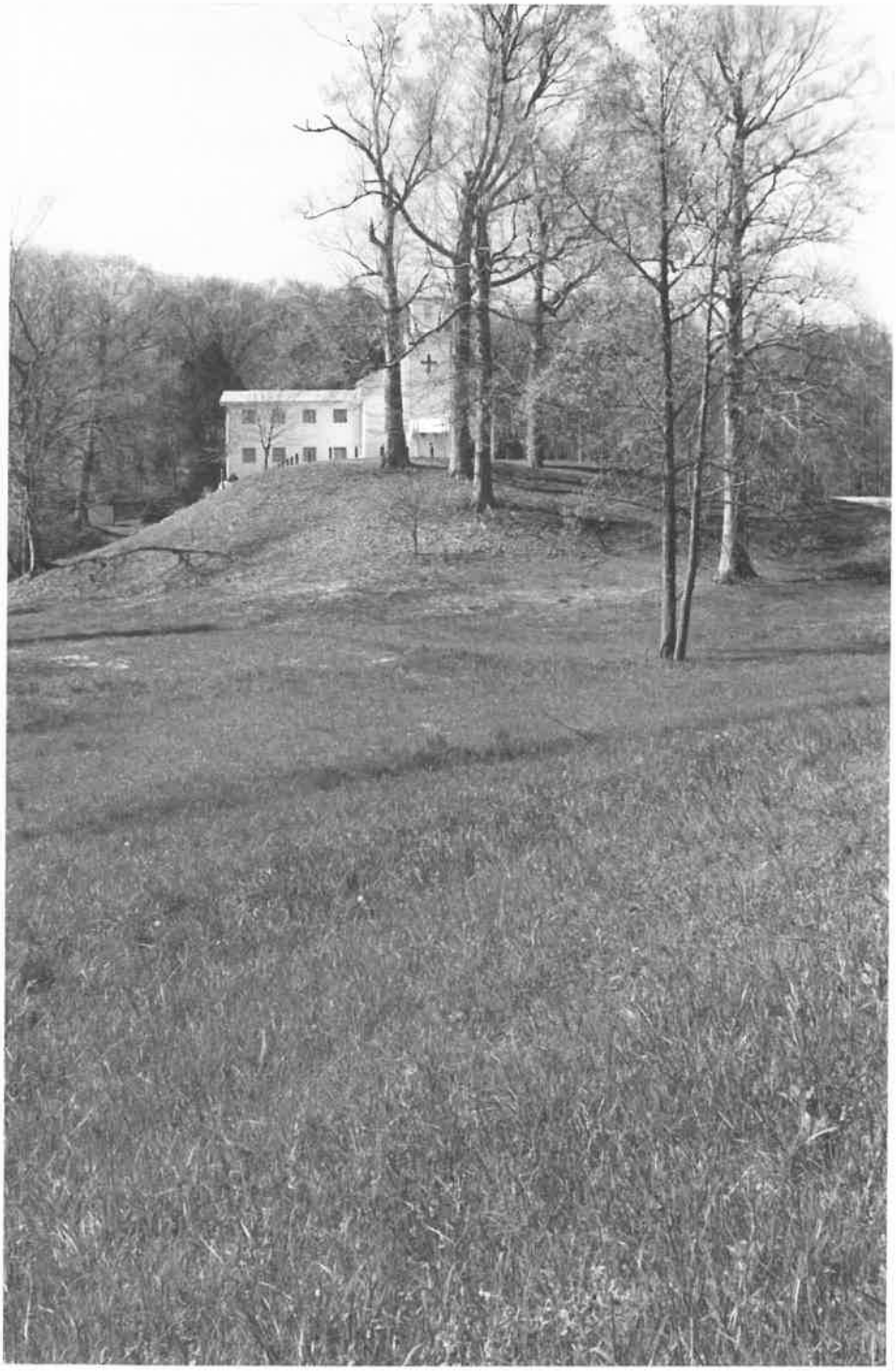
there was another in 1922 with 55 members attending. Later camps were on the Musgrave Farm, just north of Point Pleasant on Route 62 in the Camp Conley area. The farm was along Old Town Creek, according to records.

In 1926 a total of 105 attended Mason County 4-H camp, including 88 members, 12 local leaders, two state leaders, the county agent, and two cooks. The campers lived in tents, washed their eating utensils in the creek and sterilized them in a kettle of boiling water. The boys were divided into two tribes, the Ottowas and the Shawnees. The girls belonged to the Mingos, Delawares, and Wyandottes.

The camp succeeded in promoting interest in club work, according to a report by the county agent. "Visitors Day we had a crowd of visitors who seemed very much interested in the program and admired the way the camp was being handled," the agent wrote.

The record of the 1927 camp reports that instructors were sent by the WVU Extension Department to help teach the 95 boys and girls in attendance. The following year's camp drew 93 4-H'ers, 39 boys and 54 girls. Classes that year were held for leaders as well

The first Mason County 4-H camp took place on the grounds of the Beech Hill Methodist Church. "Could there have been a better place?" Ethel Burdette Reynolds asked.



borrowed a big tent and some small pup tents and the girls put these up. Miss Guseman slept in the tent with part of the girls and I slept on the floor in the church with the other girls.

By afternoon all the girls had arrived. I had made four trips to Point Pleasant and two or three to the river to meet girls and their baggage. Miss Guseman and I were very tired, but not the girls. Supper was prepared, eaten and dishes washed in the creek that ran by the camp. Mr. Sommers had threshed his wheat and had nice, sweet smelling straw. He gave the girls all they needed to fill the straw ticks for their beds. Never were there 25 happier girls, going up the road to the straw shock to get the straw for their beds. You could hear them laughing, whooping and singing as they carried the ticks or sat on them to rest.

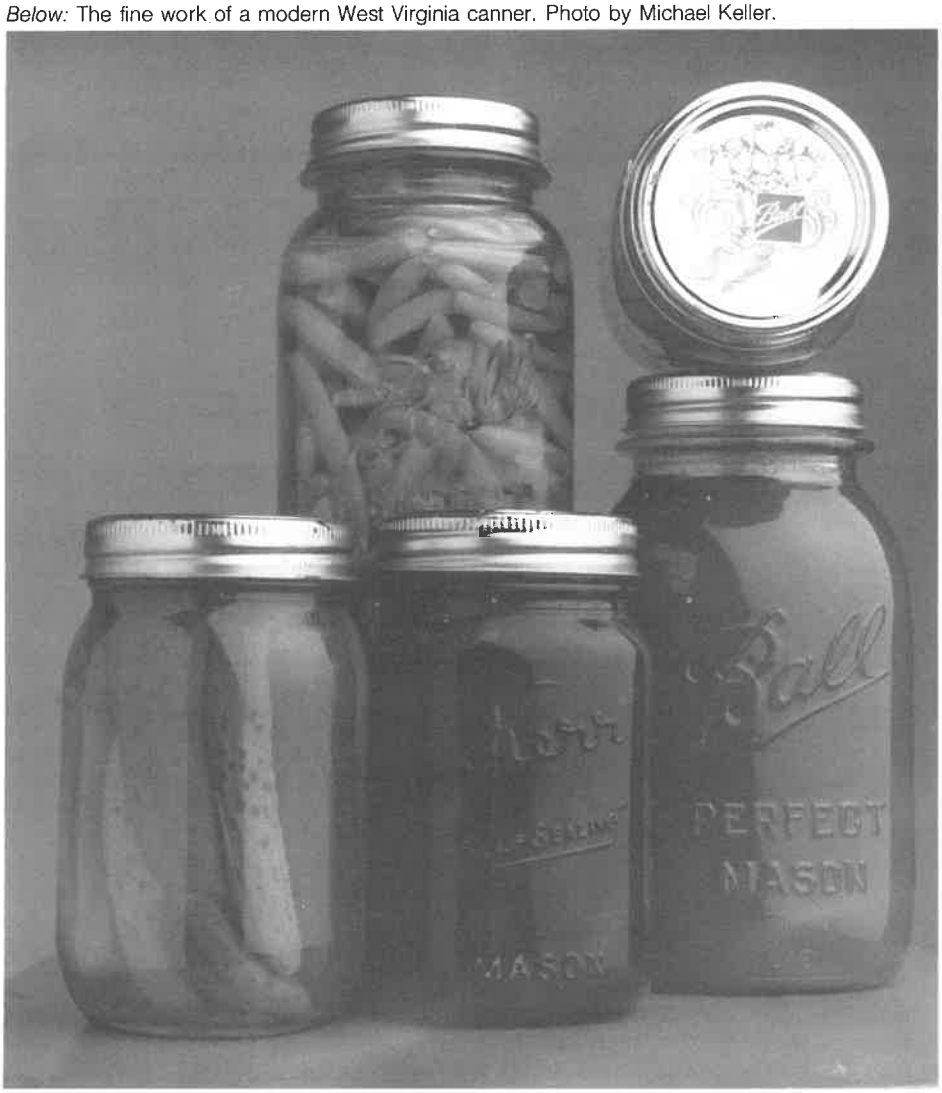
The beds were made; clothes and personal belongings were stored in the church and the time for vesper had come. This was the time that all the campers enjoyed, and looked forward to as the highlight of every day. That first vesper was spent in discussing our club work and what we hoped to get out of this first 4-H camp. The fourth H was explained by Miss Guseman, and Luke 2:52 was read. We had prayers and songs, all led or suggested by the club girls. We had lanterns for light and we did not keep them burning late but retired early to our straw tick beds.

The neighbors around Beech Hill gave us all the milk we needed, fruit to use and water for cooking and drinking. Please remember that we had no ice, refrigerator, no electricity. We were living in the "good old days."

—Ethel Burdette Reynolds

Above: Mason County youth continue to enjoy summer camp. This is the Mingo tribe from a 1989 camp, led by chief Lynn Bates and sagamore Ann Hendricks, (both kneeling). Courtesy Mason County Extension.

Below: The fine work of a modern West Virginia canner. Photo by Michael Keller.



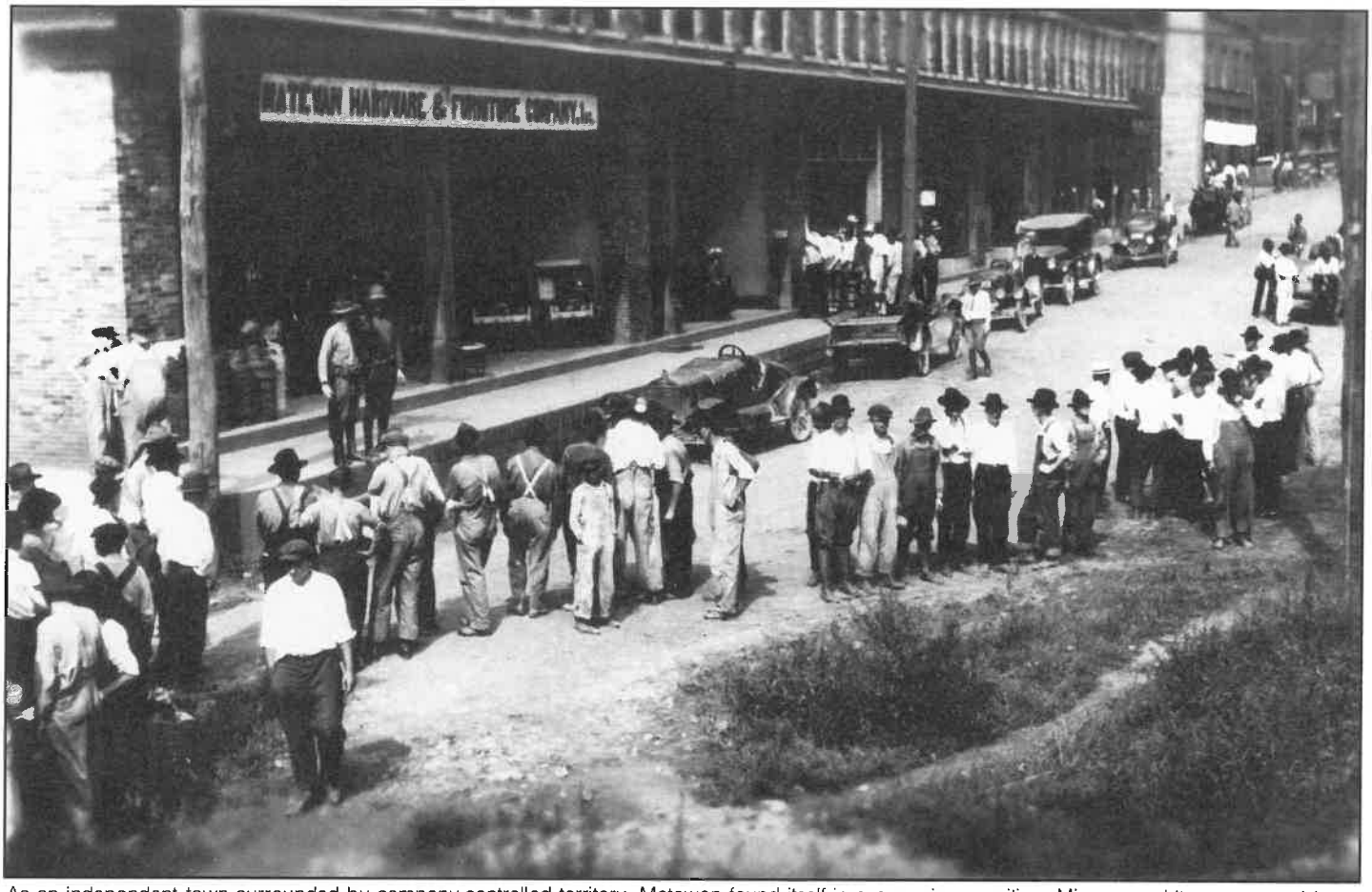
as for campers, with a class in basketry and a class in child psychology by the school superintendent.

The 1929 camp on the Musgrave Farm had 107 in attendance and lasted from July 29 to August 3.

Camp classes of that era included stenciling and making purses for girls, and stool making, knot tying, and first aid for boys. There also were classes in music, belts, personal development, kites, and swimming.

Beginning in 1942, Mason County 4-H camps were held at Southside, the present location. There were 125 campers in 1942, including 39 boys, 66 girls, and various 4-H leaders, state workers, extension agents, and teachers. By now more time was devoted to conservation and preservation rather than to crafts. Stress also was placed on recreation.

The 4-H clubs have changed since Ethel Reynolds and Mildred Roush's time, and even since the '40's. Mason remains largely a rural county, but in many other areas more members now come from cities and suburbs than from farms. Whatever the member's interest and wherever he or she lives the goal of learning by doing has remained the same, as West Virginia 4-H'ers strive to fulfill the club motto "To make the best better."



As an independent town surrounded by company-controlled territory, Matewan found itself in a precarious position. Miners used it as an organizing center, as shown in this union relief day scene. Photographer and date unknown. Courtesy State Archives.

The Gunfight at Matewan

An Anniversary Speech

By Lon K. Savage

The Mingo County town of Matewan pauses each spring to remember the bloody massacre of May 19. The 1920 shootout between striking union miners led by Matewan police chief Sid Hatfield and Baldwin-Felts detective agents in the employ of the coal company was a turning point in West Virginia labor history. Hushed up for decades, the battle has been commemorated publicly in recent years as the people of Matewan and surrounding communities reevaluate this part of their past. In 1989 they invited Lon Savage, author of the popular Mine Wars history, Thunder in the Mountains, *to speak. The following article is adapted from his speech.*

To me, Matewan is hallowed ground. Right here, Sid Hatfield and Mayor Testerman and the miners of Matewan faced off with the Baldwin-Felts detectives in one of the greatest gunfights in America's history.

And right over there by the river was the site of the little white church where the miners of Matewan signed up for the United Mine Workers in the spring of 1920, knowing that it would cost them their jobs and in many cases their homes.

And over there, Anse Hatfield was killed in that summer of 1920.

And down at the other end of these buildings was where Mayor Testerman and later Sid Hatfield and Jessie, his wife, operated their store.

And down the river a piece was the Lick Creek tent colony, a fabulous place in those troubled times.

And that was near Williamson and the courthouse where Sid and more than 20 other Matewan boys were tried for murder of the Baldwin-Felts detectives in the winter and early spring of 1921, in what was then the biggest trial in West Virginia's history. They were found innocent because the jury apparently thought those Matewan boys did right when they killed the Baldwin-Felts detectives.

And all around Matewan the Three

Days Battle was fought in the spring of 1921, a virtual reign of terror all along the Tug Valley.

And over there, where the depot stood, was where Sid and Jessie and Ed Chambers and his wife, Sallie, caught the train for Welch on that morning of August 1, 1921, for what turned out to be Sid and Ed's last trip.

And of course, across the river on top of that mountain is where Sid and Ed lie buried.

And if that isn't enough history for you, across the river is where the Hatfields tied three McCoys to a pawpaw bush and shot them dead. And all around here are memories of the old coal culture, coal camps, company towns, company houses, company stores, scrip, and all that.

These are things, people, and events of tremendous interest to all the people of America and, in fact, to people the world over.

That's why I have come to love this town of Matewan. It's a place of history, where people are known to stand up for what they believe in, a place where people have character. The Matewan area has more to brag about than even it realizes. That's what I want to talk about.

Maybe the best way to talk about it is to compare what happened here with a similar event elsewhere. Do you remember the story of the shootout at the O.K. Corral?

If you're like me, you have some hazy recollection of it but don't remember the details. To refresh your memory, it was a famous gun battle in Tombstone, Arizona, in 1881. Wyatt Earp was the law enforcement official. He and his two brothers shot it out with five members of the Clanton gang in the O.K. Corral. Just about everyone is familiar with that famous movie scene, in which Wyatt Earp and his two brothers walk slowly, silently, three abreast, their guns in their holsters, down the streets of Tombstone to the O.K. Corral, where the five Clantons waited, guns ready to kill the Earps, as they've told everyone in town they would.

The suspense mounts as the Earps draw near the corral. People scatter and look down at the scene from upstairs windows. The Clantons reach for their guns, and everyone starts shooting. It was over in seconds. Wyatt Earp was in the thick of it, shooting from the hip in all directions. At the end, three of the Clanton gang were dead, and the other two fled, one bleeding. Both of Wyatt's brothers were wounded but not seriously. Wyatt stood triumphant.

That is a scene known throughout the world. It has been in movies, television, books, plays, dances, musicals, poems — in Europe, Asia and Africa. There aren't many places left in the world that that story hasn't reached. It has become a part of American mythology.

Yet, that story is no better than the

This rare photograph of the two principal figures of the Baldwin-Felts Agency shows Thomas L. Felts at left foreground and W. G. Baldwin lying down. The circumstances are unknown. Photographer and date unknown, courtesy Eastern Regional Coal Archives.

Sid Hatfield, Jessie Testerman Hatfield and Cable Testerman were tragic figures at the center of the Matewan story. Taking Sid's side in the altercation with the Baldwin-Felts agents, Testerman was the first to fall in the shootout of May 19, 1920. Jessie, his widow, married Hatfield within two weeks. She was widowed again the following summer when Sid was repeatedly shot while walking by her side up the Welch courthouse steps. Photographers unknown. Sid Hatfield photo courtesy State Archives, others courtesy Jack Testerman.

story of what happened here at Matewan in 1920.

Sid Hatfield had a lot of the characteristics of Wyatt Earp — with Wild Bill Hickok, Jesse James, Billy the Kid, and Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid thrown in.

The drama preceding the shootout at Matewan was as great as at Tombstone, as the Baldwin-Felts detectives threw miners' families out of homes at gunpoint and the miners' fury rose to a boil.

They say 30 shots were fired at the O.K. Corral. At Matewan, more than 100 were fired.

Three men were killed in the O.K. Corral. At Matewan, ten were killed.

The similarities go on. After the shootout at the O.K. Corral, Wyatt Earp's enemies tried to get him in court on a murder charge, and when that failed they ambushed him and his brothers on two occasions, wounding one brother the first time, killing the other brother the second. Wyatt Earp survived.

After Matewan, Sid's enemies tried to get him, too, in the courts, with murder charges against him and the other Matewan boys. When that failed they ambushed him, shooting him and Ed Chambers on the courthouse steps at Welch in one of the most brutal slayings in our history.

The Matewan story has still more. During all of this, there was almost constant guerrilla warfare along the Tug Valley in 1920 and 1921, a time of terror. And after Sid's murder, 10,000 coal miners rose in rebellion, armed themselves, and marched across the state toward Mingo County to drive out the Baldwin-Felts detectives and everything they stood for. They fought the Battle of Blair Mountain in which tens of thousands of shots were fired, planes dropped bombs, and 15 to 20 men were killed before President Harding sent in troops to restore order.

Tombstone can't match that. On balance, the O.K. Corral can't hold a candle to Matewan. Yet how Tombstone has capitalized on its history!

I recently talked with a woman who said she had grown up in Matewan, but she had never heard of the historic events that took place here until after she was married. When I came up through the public schools of West Virginia, like all the other kids I took periodic courses in West Virginia history. We learned about Indian mounds, Blennerhassett Island, how the state was formed in the Civil War, how the state capital was moved from one city to another, and about the contributions of the coal industry.

But in all those West Virginia history courses, I never heard of Sid Hatfield or the Matewan Massacre or the Battle of Blair Mountain.

It's ironic. We learned of Bacon's Rebellion in neighboring Virginia 300

Coalfields Vacations in the Mine Wars Era

By Harry M. Brawley

Suppose for a moment that this is the summer of 1918. A Charleston family is planning a vacation trip to the little Fayette County community of Cunard to visit their daughter. Would they be able to jump in a car and in about an hour and a half arrive at their destination? No such luck. In the first place, there probably would be no car, and if there was one, there were few paved roads outside of towns. It took the 1920 Good Roads Amendment to the West Virginia constitution to get our modern highway system off to a slow start.

My mother and I made such a trip to Cunard, where my sister's husband was the mine superintendent for the Coal Run Coal Company. These were troubled times in the coalfields, but the only difficulty we encountered lay simply in the travel arrangements.

First, we were driven in our pony-powered buggy to the Charleston C&O station to catch an early train. Hours later we reached Sewell. Then we took a horse and wagon for a bumpy ride down to the New River. There we transferred again, this time to a johnboat, to cross the river. Now the real fun began. My brother-in-law, T. S. Ray, met us with two horses, one for him and one for mother and me. The horses looked big compared to our ponies in Charleston, but we enjoyed the plodding ride up the side of the mountain to the coal camp.

Our hosts lived in a white house facing a gigantic lawn. There were horses, cows, and pigs running loose in the yard, and ducks and geese on a nearby creek. I was used to ponies and chickens at home, but I was intimidated by all the animals staring at me here. At first I wouldn't leave the big front porch, but finally got my nerve up and found many new friends among the calves and colts. Pigs were a complete mystery to me, although I soon learned to love the little ones.

Another curiosity was the company store, which intrigued me. It was a large barn-like building filled with everything from postage stamps to plows and stoves. This was my first contact with coal company scrip. I had always thought that money was coined only by the government, but I was wrong. Customers here made their purchases with metal discs issued by the company and good only at the company store.

On this trip I was introduced to the crank-type telephone. It rang incessantly, and it amazed me how our hosts knew when to answer their calls. Their party-line ring was two longs and a short, but since it was ringing all the time one had to pay attention. Everyone on the line could listen in, and if a caller talked too long he was roundly cussed out.

When our visit ended, we reversed our travel plan — horses off the mountain, johnboat across New River, the C&O to Charleston, and the pony cart home. What a vacation!

The next time we visited my sister and her husband he had a new job with the Raleigh-Wyoming Coal Company. He was superintendent of their operation at Edwight, a few miles above Whitesville in Coal River country. It is such an easy trip today — drive to Marmet, cross Lens Creek Mountain, and turn left on State Route 3. Follow that to Whitesville and on to Edwight. Simple? Not in 1920.

First, we took an interurban trolley from Charleston to Cabin Creek. Then we changed to a passenger coach on the end of a short freight train. We rode that way to Eskdale, where the

years ago, and the Whiskey Rebellion in neighboring Pennsylvania 200 years ago, but we didn't learn of the miners' rebellion that our own parents took part in, right there where we were going to school — and the miners' rebellion may have been the largest of the three.

Apparently our historians and our parents were ashamed of that history. They were embarrassed. They weren't comfortable bringing up all that strife and bitterness again.

But you know, that history did happen. It happened right here in May 1920, and it spread to other parts of the region in the months afterward. It's part of a conflict that began before the turn of the 20th century, and that conflict continues to this day in the coalfields of Appalachia. It is a conflict that is as American as the Wild West. There is bitterness and strife in it, just as there always was and always will be in most important historic events.

The Battle of Matewan and the events that followed it in 1920 and 1921 constitute one of America's greatest stories and an important part of our history. The people in West Virginia and the Appalachian region are great, not despite these events but because of them. We should not be proud despite the events, we should be proud because of them. John Sayles, maker of the movie *Matewan*, recognized this when he said the story of Matewan and the events that followed is a story that "is as much a part of our heritage as that of the Alamo or Gettysburg or the winning of the West."

So let's treat it the way we treat the Alamo and Gettysburg and the winning of the West. Let's stop quarreling about who was right and who was wrong. There was enough right and wrong for everyone on both sides, just

car was switched to a train going to Whitesville. From there the car was backed into Edwight.

In 1922 my brother Jennings took a job with Raleigh-Wyoming as office manager for their large shaft mine at Glen Rogers in Wyoming County. He was there about 30 years, and I visited him often. The first time I went, I took the C&O from Charleston to Deep Water and then changed to a coach bound for Page. There we were shuffled around and coupled to a train going to Glen Daniel, and finally on to Glen Rogers.

This was a fair-sized town. The men were organized into three softball teams — the Grease Monkeys (tipple workers), the Rat Tails (underground miners), and the Cream Puffs (office workers). They played fast ball, and that made the job of the umpire very important. One day when the regular umpire didn't show up, I was asked to substitute. I was a college boy at the time and foolish enough to accept. It was a raucous afternoon with lots of spirited arguments but no violence. No calls to "Kill the umpire!" even though my brother was a Cream Puff. But I was thankful when it began to rain, and we called off the game.

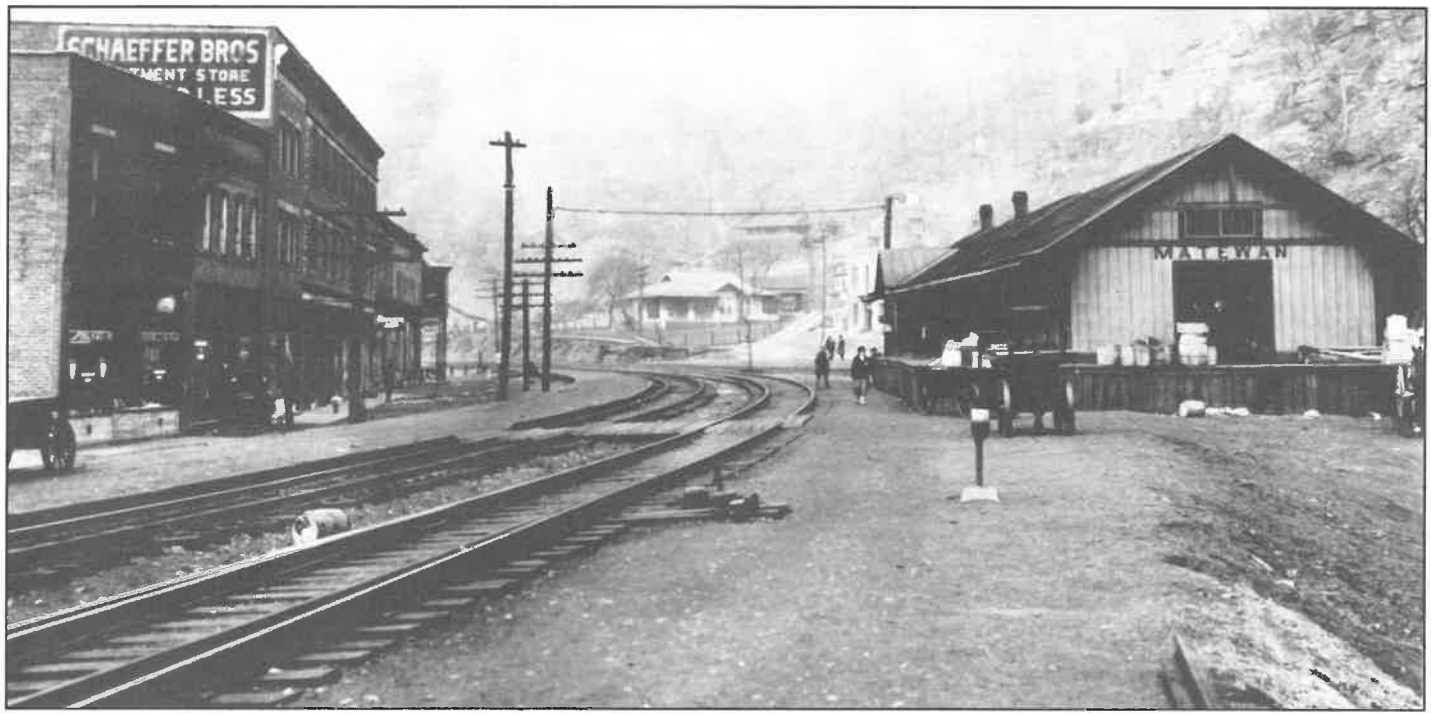
Glen Rogers was well organized with clubs and churches. There was a Boy Scout troop and my brother was scoutmaster. One of his scouts later became West Virginia's youngest governor up to that time. He was William C. Marland, who served from 1953 to 1957.

The small, largely non-denominational churches were an important part of life in the coalfields. Some were served by itinerant preachers, others shared pastors. If the church service was in the morning, Sunday school was in the afternoon, and vice versa, with a picnic at noon either way. Never before or since have I attended so many church picnics. The local church was a social as well as a religious center.

The ministers were by no means ignorant bumpkins. I heard a lot of interesting Bible interpretation from them. One old-timer was preaching on the story reported in the Acts of the Apostles where a sorcerer was trying to bargain with Saint Peter for the power to work miracles. The usual translation has Peter saying, "Thy silver perish with thee!" But the coalfields preacher said, "Can you imagine old rough Peter saying that? He more than likely said, 'You can take your money and go to Hell!'"

I have since reflected that although these were the climactic years of the violent Mine Wars in southern West Virginia, I recall no mention of labor troubles during my youthful visits with management families. No doubt the system was designed that way, to keep unpleasant realities from intruding on domestic life. It had the intended effect, in my case at least, for I found my biggest coal town adventures definitely in the getting there, threading my way through the network of roads and railroads of that long-ago era.

Our author recalls travel as an adventure in the coalfields. Whitcomb Boulder by the C&O's New River line was a landmark of the Cunard trip. Photo by Doug Chadwick.



The shootout scene viewed from the east. The gunfire was concentrated toward the far end of the block of buildings at left. Courtesy Norfolk & Western Railway Archival Collection, Virginia Polytechnic Institute.

as there was at the Alamo and Gettysburg and the winning of the West — and at the O.K. Corral.

Let's tell everyone our history; let's brag about it; let's revel in it. Acknowledging and telling our history may even change the way we see ourselves. If the history of violence in Appalachian mining is ever to change, it will happen with an acknowledgment, a full airing, and an understanding of that history.

Now, at long last, it appears we are beginning to give our history the respect it deserves. Sayles's movie probably has done more than any other one thing in that regard. Denise Giardina's novel, *Storming Heaven,* based on events in Mingo County, has made the Book-of-the-Month Club lists. Historian David Corbin's work has shown us much about miners' lives in that troubled time. John Alexander Williams, one of West Virginia's foremost historians, has done much to tell about these forgotten events and to bring a needed balance to West Virginia's history. But there's a lot more to do.

Now, the town of Matewan, the states of Kentucky and West Virginia, the National Park Service, the Army Corps of Engineers, are working together to develop a revitalization strategy for this area that includes increased recognition of the historic events which took place on this site and in this area. I say, more power to these people and to these efforts.

For the future, let the novelists, poets, moviemakers, TV producers, dramatists, musicians, and historians come in and interpret our story, and reinterpret it and re-reinterpret it all they want and as they can. Let's do all we can, too, to preserve this rich history and to tell it to all who visit us or want to learn about us.

It will help Matewan. It will help West Virginia and this region. It will help the nation in better understanding us, as well as understanding its own history. It will improve the way others see us. Most important, it will help us understand ourselves and improve the way we see ourselves — the way we like ourselves. And that will change things for the better more rapidly than almost anything else we can do.

The historic block is now undergoing restoration to its 1920 appearance. This recent photo shows Hatfield Building facades under construction. Photo by Michael Keller.

Thomas L. Felts was a dangerous man, hated throughout the coalfields. He traveled widely from his Virginia home. Photographer and date unknown, courtesy Eastern Regional Coal Archives.

The Dust Settles

Felts Papers Offer More on Matewan

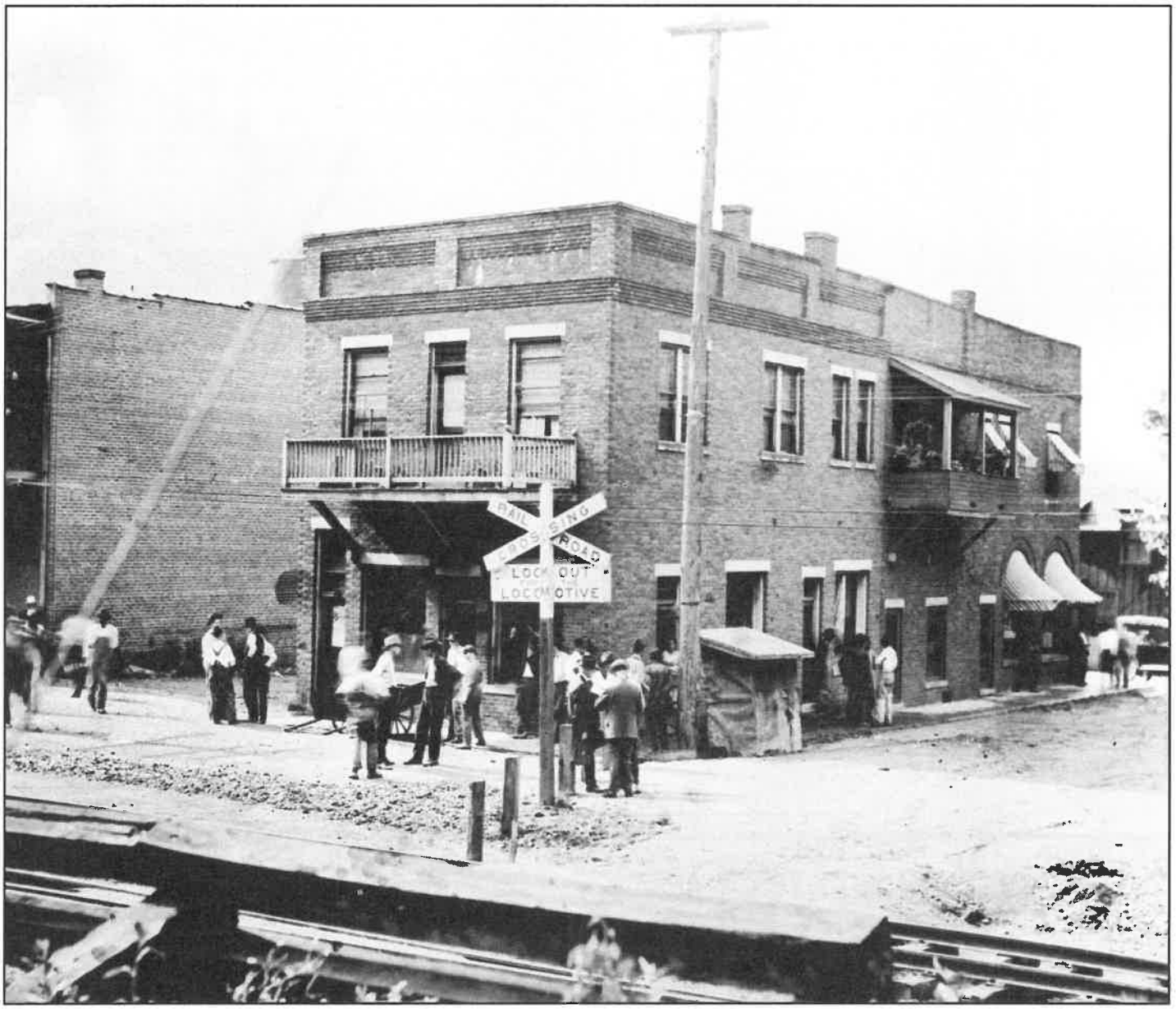
By Topper Sherwood

"Dear Tom," the letter begins, "Except My sincear sympthey. I am sending you a List of names. The ones checked are Murders & The rest are witnesses. I would advise That They be arested & Put under Bond."

The letter is dated May 20, 1920 — one day after Thomas Felts's brothers, Albert and Lee, were gunned down by a group of angry men in Matewan, Mingo County. Tom Felts managed the Baldwin-Felts Detective Agency in Bluefield, hiring Lee, when he could be pulled away from his timber business, and working Albert full-time. The Felts agency, in turn, was employed by coal companies to insure — often by force — that the United Mine Workers union never gained the foothold it sought in southern West Virginia.

But now Tom Felts was engaged in more urgent business, the investigation of a bloody assault on the agency itself. On May 19, the two Felts brothers and ten guards had cleared five Stone Mountain Coal Company houses of miners who'd broken corporate policy by joining the union. After an early dinner at the Urias Hotel, the detectives were confronted by Matewan police chief Sid Hatfield and at least 20 other men in and around Tom Chambers's hardware store. The resulting shoot-out ended in the deaths of seven guards and three townspeople, including Matewan Mayor Cable Testerman.

The sympathy letter quoted above is part of the newly-surfaced Felts Collection — scores of memos, reports, and news clippings kept by Thomas Felts following the ambush in Matewan. The papers, discovered last year in a warehouse and acquired by the Eastern Regional Coal Archives in Bluefield, include what appear to be excerpts from the earliest reports of Felts's undercover detectives in the field. Furtively composed, the agents' original reports were signed with clandestine code names: "Operative No. 9," "Operative No. 31," and "Operative No. 19." The agents sent their detailed findings to a Bluefield



Part of Felts's challenge was to reconstruct the scene of the shootout which claimed several employees, including two of his brothers. The above photo is a contemporary view of the area where much of the shooting happened, with the Matewan post office in the corner building. The Chambers hardware store is in the building at left. The trial model (below) shows these buildings at the near end of the historic block. The modern photo (facing page) shows the scene as it appears today, with the post office facade bricked up and a newer building in the old vacant lot. Above photo courtesy N&W Railway Collection, VPI; model photo courtesy State Archives; new photo by Michael Keller.

post office box, maintained by the agency under a false name.

"It is generally being talked among the men here that Sid Hatfield shot and killed A. C. Felts and [detective] C. B. Cunningham," Operative No. 31 writes, in a filing dated May 23rd. "I have discussed the matter with several eye witnesses, all of whom seem to be of this belief."

"Reese Chambers and Sid Hatfield," says another report, "received credit for killing the majority of the Baldwin-Felts men."

Of the Baldwin-Felts agents, only the identity of "No. 9" is well-known today. Charlie Everett Lively, a trusted union member who doubled as a Baldwin-Felts employee for more than a decade, had moved into the region in January or February. After linking up with several union locals, he cleverly opened a restaurant in the same building where UMW organizing meetings were held. His Matewan eatery became a popular hangout for union members, allowing Lively to hear about the gunfight firsthand.

Above: Felts worked through agents such as C. E. Lively, who originally operated as undercover agent "No. 9" at Matewan. Lively later testified at the Sid Hatfield trial and murdered Hatfield at Welch the following year. Photographer and date unknown, courtesy State Archives.

During the next few months, the secret company agent held many conversations with the battle's surviving principals and eventual trial defendants — Sid Hatfield, Reece Chambers, Fred Burgraff, and others.

"Sid Hatfield said he was standing in the door right next to A. C. Felts when the shooting started," says one of Lively's reports, "but A. C. Williams, Raymond Chambers, Fred Burgrass (sic), and others say he was not."

Most of Felts's agents reveal their sources of information and, in cases of second-hand material, where *those* people allegedly had heard it. Taken together, the Felts documents offer a fascinating account of what was being said and heard by people in Matewan and Williamson following the shootings. The picture emerges of a sizeable network of spies extracting evidence from a provincial community whose anger and fear had driven some of its members to unparalleled violence.

Overshadowing the entire conflict that spring were the competing cam-

paigns launched by the United Mine Workers and the Operators Association of Williamson Field. The coal association represented 56 operations, whose owners had agreed to compel all their employees to sign "individual agreements." The agreements, dubbed "yellow-dog contracts" by miners, pledged laborers to remain nonunion and never to work near union members. In their new organizing effort, UMW activists decried the contracts — along with the presence of company police, the Baldwin-Felts guards.

With such volatile issues, the secrecy maintained by both sides, and the sheer number of people involved, solid information on the "Matewan Massacre" was hard to come by — even for those who lived there. Thomas Felts's agents sent many conflicting accounts of what actually happened on that drizzly day in May 1920. One report, dated June 11, offers Hatfield's version of the battle, told to the reporting agent by a mutual friend in Huntington: "Mr. Felts fired from his coat pocket, mortally wounding Testerman, and then fired over his shoulder at Sid Hatfield, killing [Matewan resident] Tot Tinsley instantly . . . At this time, Sid Hatfield opened fire, killing Albert Felts."

Tom Felts subsequently ordered the author of that report, Operative No. 19, to spend more time in the area. Felts's goal was to build a case. "I want No. 19 to spend the next ten days or two weeks in the Matewan fields," he wrote, "in order to pick up all information he possibly can between this time and the time the grand jury meets, on June 21st."

Some of the agents' reports echo a siege mentality, with at least one Felts correspondent suggesting that union sympathizers virtually controlled the entire area. Nonetheless, this man felt, "we will not find any one of the better class, either in Matewan or Williamson, accept (sic) those directly connected with Sheriff Blankenship or Sid Hatfield, who are in sympathy with them."

The town's volatility during the grand jury investigation worried Felts and his men.

"I am afraid that the important witnesses will be intimidated and probably killed," wrote one correspondent on June 27. "The witnesses who are afraid of their lives are as follows: Squire A. B. Hatfield, Ance (sic) Hatfield, Janie Mullins. Others are afraid to fully express the fact, due to having to leave town. I was advised by property owners that they were making efforts to dispose of their holdings in the town for fear of being killed."

It was reported that Anse Hatfield, a Matewan hotel proprietor and not the Devil Anse of feud fame, had been threatened. Anse, who had testified against Sid before the grand jury, received a note, saying, "Arrange your business if you have any. You have not got long to live."

In this case, at least, the fears were well-founded. A few weeks later, Anse Hatfield was killed on the front porch of his Urias Hotel. Sid Hatfield was charged in connection with that shooting, in addition to the killings of May 19.

For all the new information they offer, the Felts papers are bound to raise as many questions as they resolve. The role of Isaac Brewer, for example, may deserve a closer look.

"A man by the name of Deskins . . . said he saw Brewer go into the front of the [hardware] store and went back to the rear and shoved his pistol right over someone's shoulder against A. C. Felts' temple," says one memo.

Lively writes that witness Jesse Stafford told an agent that "Isaac Brewer called to Hatfield to come over to the hardware store, and A.C. [Felts] let him go, and then followed him over there. Stafford also said just as the shooting started, Brewer told A.C., 'You have a warrant for the wrong man (meaning Sid Hatfield), you are not going to take him,' and then the shooting started."

Another memo says: "Dr. R. M.

New Mine Wars Book

The West Virginia mine wars were a deadly serious business, as indicated in labor spy C. E. Lively's testimony before a 1920 U.S. Senate committee:

> Senator McKellar: If you had disclosed your connection with the detective agency, do you suppose the miners would have let you in there at all?
>
> Mr. Lively: Let me in there?
>
> Senator McKellar: Yes.
>
> Mr. Lively: I think they would have turned me over to the undertaker.

Lively, the Baldwin-Felts undercover man at Matewan, escaped the miners' wrath, as it turned out, although he soon had a hand in sending some of their allies to the undertaker. The above exchange between Lively and Senator K. D. McKellar is included in *The West Virginia Mine Wars: An Anthology.* The new book by labor historian David Alan Corbin was recently published by Appalachian Editions of Charleston.

The West Virginia Mine Wars is a collection of primary material, including much other Congressional testimony, and contemporary press accounts. Among the journalists included is James M. Cain, who went on to become the famous author of *The Postman Always Rings Twice* and other mystery novels. Cain covered the mine wars for the *Atlantic Monthly,* the *Baltimore Sun* and other publications.

Corbin, author of the influential *Life, Work, and Rebellion in the Coal Fields,* is a West Virginian now working for the U.S. Senate. He notes in his introduction that he failed to hear about the mine wars in 12 years of public schooling in West Virginia. He hopes that his new book will help to change that.

The West Virginia Mine Wars is a 165-page paperback. It may be bought for $9.95 in bookstores, or by sending the purchase price plus $2.50 postage and handling to Trans Allegheny Books, 114 Capitol Street, Charleston, WV 25301. West Virginians should add 6% sales tax.

The widows of Sid Hatfield and Ed Chambers outside the U.S. Senate. The two women traveled to Washington to testify before Senate hearings on coalfields violence in September 1921. Photo by Harris and Ewing, courtesy West Virginia and Regional History Collection, WVU.

Music, of Williamson, owner of the Mingo Republican Paper, was in the office today and volunteered...that Isaac Brewer fired the first shot and that he evidently killed A. C. Felts."

Witnesses at the trial later placed Brewer in the store *between* Sid Hatfield and Albert Felts when the shooting started. Testimony also indicates that Brewer — who had drawn his gun and was wounded in the opening volley — faced the doorway that framed Felts and Testerman, giving him (along with Hatfield) an open shot at both.

Despite the evidence against him, though, charges against Brewer were dropped after he struck a deal with the prosecution and agreed to testify against Hatfield and the rest.

Another ongoing question is the tangled relationship of Sid Hatfield, Sid's ally Cable Testerman, and Testerman's wife, Jessie. Three days after the shootings, one Felts correspondent reported that "the concensus (sic) of opinion among the citizens of Matewan is that Sid Hatfield shot Mayor Testerman himself, for the reason that he (Hatfield) is in love with Testerman's wife."

This issue became public a week or so later, when Hatfield and Jessie Testerman were discovered together in a Huntington hotel. The couple, who had purchased a marriage license that day, were wed after spending a night in jail on charges of "improper relations." Thomas Felts used the incident to publicly declare that "Hatfield shot Testerman to get him out of the way." Hatfield countered with his story that Albert Felts had killed Mayor Testerman with the first shot of the gunfight.

Other reports from the Felts papers offer more information on the romance angle:

— "Old Aunt Jane Chafin, made the statement [that] there was a terrible lot of talk about Sid Hatfield and Mrs. Testerman, and it was believed Testerman knew all about it and sooner or later there would be a killing."

— "Tom Hatfield told Mr. Gates that on one occasion, sometime in the year 1917, Testerman's wife tried to get him to kill her husband."

— "Conductor Griffin says that Pullman Conductor

says that Mrs. Testerman made the statement to him on the train...that Sid Hatfield killed her husband."

Sometime after the court acquittal of the Matewan defendants — and after Lively and other Baldwin guards later gunned down Hatfield on the courthouse steps in Welch — the detective agency apparently produced a bitter account of Sid and Jessie's lives. Sid, "the Terror of the Tug," is taken to task for a history of violence, gambling, and bootlegging. In the "Record of Mrs. Sid Hatfield," Jessie is portrayed as "a lewd woman" from "a very young age" who had been "kept" by Testerman before he married her. The document says Testerman had quarreled with and "whipped" his wife the night before the battle, and that Jessie had "sent a note to Sid, in which she told him to watch her husband, the Mayor."

Sid Hatfield's tomb stands vigil over the more peaceful Tug Fork country today. The mountains of West Virginia loom behind Hatfield's grave, which is on the Kentucky side of the river. Photo by Michael Keller.

But, more substantially, a reading of the Felts papers shows the extent to which people in the southern coalfields were subject to a system of frontier justice. Felts's private detective agency held a great deal of authority in bringing the Matewan case to court, and apparently filled requests for information from Governor John Cornwell. Thus, with the unofficial nod from the highest levels of state government, Felts was able to go ahead with his investigation by private police force. He pursued the matter vigorously.

"I want to get Tyree to look this man up immediately and...if necessary, have him arrested and interviewed," says one of his memos.

"A man named Moore...showed great prejudice against the detectives, and sympathy for the other side," says another.

"Look up this man Moore."

And finally: "A. D. Dickey, cashier of the Matewan Bank ...is believed to know a good deal about the shooting...However, he would not [tell everything he knows] while he is under the present influences. Investigate Dickey and find out if he is married; how much salary he is getting at the Matewan Bank; if he is an efficient cashier and if he is a man worthy of a better job, and it might be he could be pulled away from there and given a job elsewhere, in which case he might tell all he knows."

Such correspondence underlines the remarkable power Felts commanded from his Bluefield office. Considering that he was brother and employer of the victims, his influence in the prosecution — his apparent ability to subpoena, interrogate, and even relocate witnesses — contradicts modern ideas of blind, impartial justice.

The Felts papers further serve to remind us how intensely divisive the ambush and coal strike were. The memos and other documents portray Matewan as a rough-and-tumble town, thick with personal and political vendettas. At the same time, the detectives' reports, while remarkably cool in their approach, carry a quiet sense of vengeance of their own. The sides were clearly drawn.

Ultimately, the shooting likely will continue to be seen as an act of rebellion against industrial authority, vividly personified by the Baldwin-Felts guards. As one elderly Matewan resident put it: "I don't know how many [were killed]...But I do know they'd have liked to kill 'em all." ✱

A Matewan Checklist

Those wanting to learn more about Matewan and the West Virginia Mine Wars should check the following recent works:

- *Life, Work, and Rebellion in the Coalfields: The Southern West Virginia Miners, 1880–1922,* by David Alan Corbin (University of Illinois Press, $12.95 paperbound). This scholarly history treats the miners' rebellion in social context.
- *Storming Heaven,* by Denise Giardina (Ivy Books/Random House, $3.95 paperbound). The Matewan story broadly fictionalized by a daughter of the coalfields. McDowell Countians will recognize the historic photo of Hemphill on the cover.
- *The Autobiography of Mother Jones,* by Mary Harris Jones (Charles H. Kerr, $12.95 paperbound). A highly readable if often embroidered account of the famous labor organizer's adventures in West Virginia and elsewhere.
- *Thunder in the Mountains: The West Virginia Mine Wars, 1920–21,* by Lon Savage (University of Pittsburgh Press, $9.95 paperbound). A very successful popular history by the author of our article.
- *Matewan,* a film by John Sayles (Red Dog Films). This movie shot on location in the Fayette County town of Thurmond played for weeks in coalfield theaters. There is graphic violence unsuitable for young children.

The above books may be found in public libraries or purchased in regional bookstores. The movie *Matewan* may be rented in a VHS video version.

The original Wetzel County homeplace. Milton and Cassie Taylor and four children are visible here. Photographer unknown, early 1900's.

Family Farming

By Lorna Chamberlain

There were three sets of children in our big family, his, hers and theirs. Although neither parent had ever been divorced, each had lost a mate by death. Only then did they join together to form the happy family that I recall from my Ohio County childhood.

My parents had grown up before the turn of the century in the same community, St. Cloud on the Monongalia-Wetzel county line. Hundred was the nearest village of any size. Dad and Mother had even attended the same school, though Dad was seven years older than Mother.

Milton Taylor, my father, was orphaned early in life. From then on he lived with aunts and uncles and wherever he could find a home. When he reached manhood, he and his brother Charlie took Horace Greeley's advice and went west. They landed in Oklahoma in time for the big land boom. Close to 2,000,000 acres of land the government had purchased from Indian tribes was being given away. Dad and Charlie took part in the most spectacular land rush of all, when the Cherokee Outlet was opened in the fall of 1893.

There at dawn, at the sound of a gunshot, the two brothers and thousands of other eager land seekers raced to claim homesteads of their own. You had to plow a line around the land you claimed, to designate that it belonged to you. Both Dad and Charlie were successful in claiming a place.

Each young man erected his own little hut out of sod and began to till the land. Things worked out for both of them. Uncle Charlie married a school teacher he'd met and eventually moved on to a prune farm in Oregon. Dad kept horses and put himself through veterinary school, receiving two diplomas from the Western Veterinary College in Kansas City, Missouri.

Dad got married and soon had two children. Tragically, his young wife died six weeks after the second birth. Dad was left with two babies, the oldest just two. Frantically, he wrote to an unmarried sister and begged her to come just as soon as she could.

Aunt Mattie came, but for her the West was a shocking experience. Life on her brother's ranch was not what she'd expected it to be. The coyotes kept her awake at night. There was always a wind blowing across the prairie. She was in a land of isolation, a place where everything was unfamiliar, where you could expect to see a snake the size of a log and not be surprised at the sight. She begged Dad to sell out and come back to West Virginia.

The ranch was the place Dad had chosen, where he wanted to live, where he felt he belonged. It was pure heartbreak for him to sell out and turn his back on all those things. But it seemed that that was what he'd have to do to keep his housekeeper. And once he made up his mind, he did it. He moved home to Hundred and hung out his veterinary shingle. Aunt Mattie was content to get back among their own people.

Meanwhile, Cassie Hennen, the woman who became my mother, had been making her way in the world. She was the youngest daughter in a big family. It became her lot to care for her ailing parents during their last years, even though she was only a teenager. Her father was generous with her when he died. He willed her

the Wetzel County homeplace and all its furnishings, and his favorite riding horse by the name of Dan.

Mother soon met and married Smith Wade, a young man who'd grown up in nearby Jollytown. He'd never been used to farm life, but with Mother's assistance he began to learn the ways of a farmer. Their first baby was my half-brother Raymond. Two years later, when my mother was expecting their second baby, her husband took pneumonia while doing his spring plowing. Six weeks later he was dead.

Smith Wade died in May. Mother was expecting their second baby in July. Her grief and advanced condition sent her to bed before the funeral. She used to tell us that the last time she saw her husband was through the bedroom window. She said they propped her up, moved the bed close to a window, and then carried him by in an open casket.

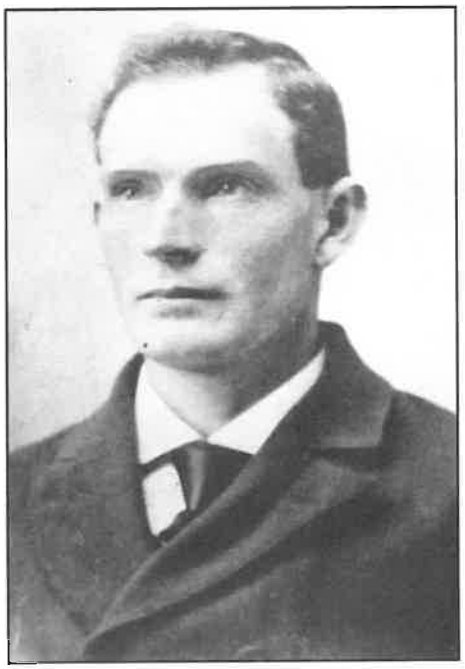
The new widow was left on a lonely farm, with a two-year-old son and another baby coming. She said it was easy enough to get help with the farming. What she couldn't keep was live-in help, someone to stay with her on the lonely nights. Hired girls came and went, but mostly she had to look after herself.

Prowlers came around. One night, upon hearing a disturbance in her chicken house, she went to a bedroom window and fired off her revolver. The chicken thieves made a quick getaway.

Another time, when she was at work in her kitchen, she heard a noise in the living room. Moving to the doorway, she saw a stranger sitting there in front of the open grate. She stepped back into the kitchen and seized the broom before asking him what he wanted.

Fumbling for words, he finally said, "I just want to get my feet warm."

"They ought to be warm enough by now, so get up and be on your way," she ordered.



Milton Taylor as a young man. He went west as an Oklahoma homesteader before returning home to settle down. Photographer and date unknown.

This picture of the Taylor family and friends shows Milton (second man from left), Aunt Mattie to Milton's left rear, and Lorna, our author, fourth from right. Photographer and date unknown.

This portrait shows mother Cassie Taylor in mature middle years. Photographer and date unknown.

She said he got up, eyeing her as she stood ready to bash him with the broom. Slowly he moved to the door and went out. With great haste she locked the house, and then watched out the window to make sure he went down the road. From that time on she kept her doors locked.

One day, the man who was managing the farm came to tell her that there seemed to be something wrong with Dan, her horse. He told her there was a new veterinarian in Hundred, and Mother asked him to make the call.

So that was how the young widow met up with the man she'd followed in school so many years before. After they renewed their acquaintance, I'm sure they found many things to talk about. And I'm sure that Dan got a lot of medical attention in the next few weeks.

After Dad and Mother were married they didn't move to our Ohio County farm right away. My brother Kay was born on Mother's family farm near St. Cloud. So was I. They used to tell me that I was a year old the day they moved to Ohio County. Dad was the one who wanted to make the move, because he thought the opportunities for a practicing veterinarian would be much greater there. There had been droves of horses in the West, but their numbers were dwindling around Hundred. Things looked better in Ohio County, Dad thought.

He picked a fine farm east of Wheeling, near the Pennsylvania border. Mother never saw the new place ahead of time, since it was close to 100 miles from St. Cloud. Afterwards, she always said that Dad must have chosen this 200-acre farm because of its many springs and the lay of the land and not because of the house. Hilltops were broad and fields were the rolling kind, not straight up and down like those on the Wetzel County farm. To an Oklahoma homesteader finding a farm with many springs must have been like finding a gold mine.

Mother put carpenters to work on the house right away. In those days carpenters came to your house and stayed there, with room and board, until the job was finished. There were no cars to take them back and forth.

Dad had lost one of his two children, so our combined family had five children by the time of the big move. Dad and Mother made seven of us. We needed room to grow. Mother had the partition between the dining room and the kitchen taken out. She had a front porch put on, where before there'd been only a stoop over a big stone.

Farm life, before the advent of electricity and modern equipment, was hard. We children all had chores to do. We had to hoe corn, help with the garden, and many other things. When it was berry picking time we'd have to go to the berry patch early in the morning, almost every day. The older you were, the bigger the bucket you were given to fill.

When Dad started to build a dairy herd, we learned to milk, even if we were only seven or eight years old. At first only one cow would be assigned. That was increased as we got older. At six o'clock every morning and six o'clock every evening, we had to show up to milk our cows. At times there'd be 35 to 40 cows, and when you're milking that many you need all the help you can get. There was no milking machine.

Sister Tillie never had to help with the milking. Because she was the oldest girl and responsible for the dishwashing and other things in the house, I think Mother took pity on her. She didn't want Tillie to become a slave for a big family, as often happens to the oldest girl. Tillie took great delight in teasing us about it. Let us head for the cow barn and Tillie would head for the piano. While we were milking she'd play and sing just as loud as she could, always with the door open to make sure we could hear. She wanted us to know that she was happy and carefree.

Tillie didn't have to help with the milking or hoe corn or look for turkey nests or haul hay shocks, or go to the garden and pick buckets full of peas or green beans, or do many of the things the rest of us had to do. But when our sister Lydia was born, two months prematurely, Tillie proved to be a godsend.

Today Lydia would be hospitalized and placed in an incubator. She barely weighed three and a half pounds. Tillie carried her around on a pillow, fed her water out of an eye dropper, kept her snugly wrapped in warm blankets and hovered over her night and day. She was so thoughtful and good about taking care of Lydia that everybody said that she ought to become a nurse some day. And eventually she did.

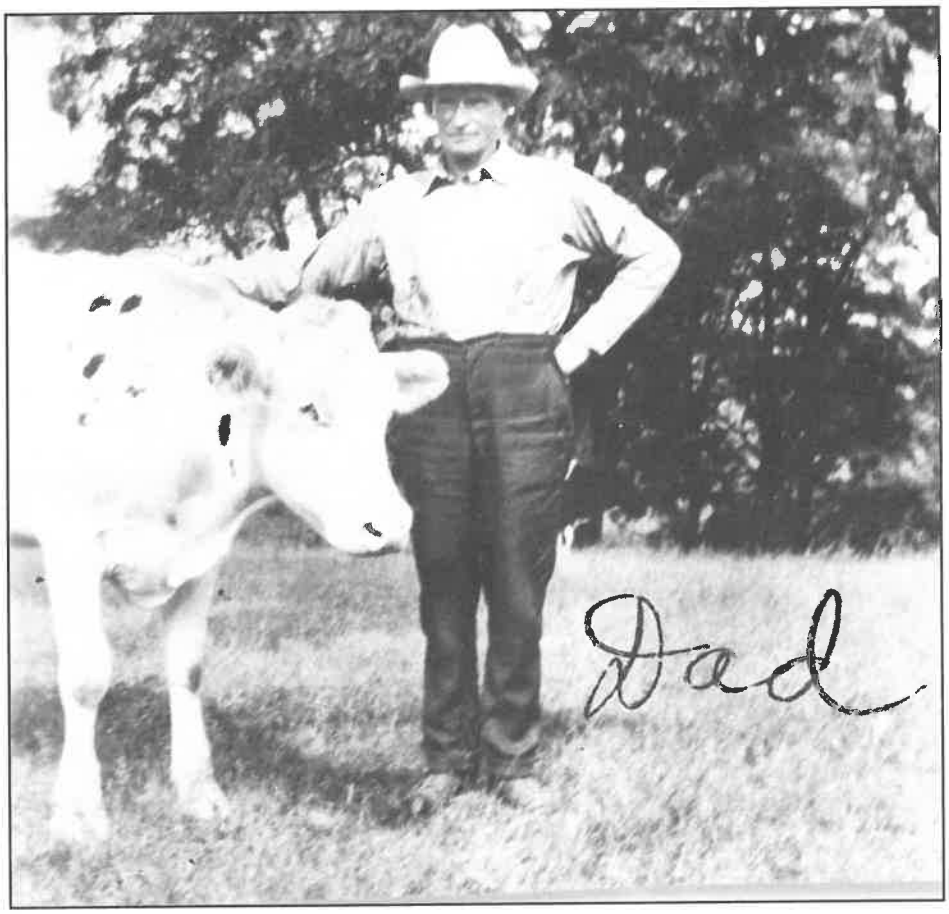
We all had our good traits and our bad traits. Sometimes, when a fierce battle would be raging someone would shout, "Anyhow, you're only my half-sister and that's why I hate you!"

In that upstairs playhouse we'd hold church services, and someone would be bold enough to preach a sermon. We'd have funerals with maybe a bird carcass to mourn over. We'd play school, with a teacher who'd paddle everybody. Often we'd just play family. Tillie would always act as mother, doling out discipline and spankings.

We would pick raspberries from up and down the lane. We'd spear the berries over long timothy grass straws and hurry back to our playhouse with them. Someone would go for cream and sugar, and for cookies, which you could always find at our house. We'd have a special kind of lunch.

On a farm, summers are the busiest time of the year. It's both planting and harvest time, the time of the year that can make or break you, depending on how you handle things. Haying came right in the middle of it.

Let Mother hear that, or be told, and the one who'd said it would not only have to apologize openly but offer a



Milton Taylor made a living as a veterinarian and hard-working farmer. Photographer and date unknown.

Tracking Turkeys

Looking for turkey nests took hours. Once you found out what it was like you were always trying to push this job off onto someone younger, someone who didn't understand how hard it was to find a turkey nest.

Chickens would lay their eggs in chicken houses, ducks and geese near a pond. No nest was hard to find. Turkeys made their nests in the woods.

In our woods we had squirrels, raccoons, possums, ground hogs, snakes and all kinds of egg-loving wildlife. Why would a turkey choose to lay its eggs in that kind of environment? But they always did. They'd hide those nests under brush heaps or logs or in rocky crevices, then cover them over with leaves. You found them only by following the turkey.

We planned accordingly. When it was nesting time for turkeys we penned them up until mid-morning. Then we'd let them out and trail them in search of their nests.

When the turkey was first released from its pen it would take off so fast that you'd feel sure it was going to drop its egg before it reached the nest. Then that turkey would spot you following it, and the meandering would begin. As soon as you reached the woods you knew to hide behind a tree or a log, anywhere to stay out of sight. As long as it could see you it would never go to its nest. It became a game of you trying to outsmart the turkey before it outsmarted you

—Lorna Chamberlain

kiss to the one who'd been offended.

There was plenty of work to do on the farm, but there were also many hours of play time. Across from the house sat a two-story building, where 25-pound bags of flour and sugar and all kinds of supplies, such as kerosene for lamps and barrels of salt and bran, were kept. We called it the "flour house." We had a summer playhouse upstairs. We'd climb upstairs on a wall ladder, get everything fixed up with worn-out chairs and carpet and such, and we and our friends would gather there of an afternoon.

Since our nearest neighbors were the Parks children, some of them would usually be there. When my brother Kay wasn't visiting Glen Parks, Glen was at our house visiting Kay. Two closer friends never lived. Glen might come barging in half-a-dozen times a day. He was just like one of the family.

It was not a boring time. Dad usually had four or five meadows that had to be harvested. The timothy grass would be cut with a mowing machine, then raked mechanically and piled into shocks. Some of the hay was taken to the barn and stored in the haymow, and the rest of it had to be stacked in the field.

Dad always did the stacking. He was an expert at building haystacks. We brought the hay to him. Two or three of us would ride on harnessed horses, and there'd be a long rope attached to the back of each horse's harness. We'd carefully guide our horse to rope in a hay shock, completely encircling it with the long line, then someone on the ground would hitch the rope's end back to the harness. Then we'd drag it to where the stack was being made. It would be unhitched, and we'd take off for another.

I suppose it took two or three hours to build a haystack. It always seemed to me that Dad waited to do the meadow that was farthest away last. And it always seemed that that would be the day when we'd have the year's worst thunderstorm.

As soon as I'd hear Dad say, "You kids get yourselves ready to go to that hayfield out on the hill where the line fence is," I'd shudder. The day would be hot as blazes, humid and sticky. My first thought would be about some wild thunderstorm brewing. There

were times we'd been caught there in that place.

I'd watch the sky as Dad loaded up the wagon with all the things we'd need, even jugs of drinking water. It'd take about half an hour to get there, and get the haystacking under way. When the haystack was about halfway up — and it'd always be a big one — I'd notice the sky over to the west was getting black. Pretty soon I'd hear the rumbling of thunder.

As soon as I had taken my hay shock in I'd say to Dad, "I heard it thunder. Hadn't we better start for home now?"

My oldest brother, standing alongside the stack pitching the hay up to Dad, would grin but say nothing. "Remember how it was the last time?" I'd remind Dad.

"When you start to build a haystack you've got to stick with it until it's finished," Dad might say. Or else, "It isn't going to storm for at least two hours. Get those shocks in here so we can finish this job."

A haystack has to be cone-shaped so the water can cascade down over it and not settle in to mold or mildew the hay. When you're building a haystack, you don't dare stop.

The sky would grow darker and the thunder would rumble louder. "Let's start for home now," I'd plead. "If we wait any longer we won't make it."

Dad would no longer answer me. He'd concentrate only on stacking hay until the thunder would burst open the skies and the rain would pour down in torrents. By then he'd have the stack almost finished. Hastily adding the last cap to the cone of the haystack, he'd come sliding down.

With lightning exploding everywhere and the hills quivering with thunderclaps, we'd all climb down under the wagon. Someone would take the ropes from the horses' harness, and they would be turned loose to race back and forth around us with their harness and chains rattling. If anyone started to cry Dad would say calmly, "Why, what's wrong with you? It's real cozy under here. We're not even getting wet."

He might put his arm around you to make you feel secure before adding, "We stuck with it until we got it finished. Always try to do that!"

Usually I'd whimper, "I just knew this was going to happen." ✱

Mattie and Milton in later years. The family credits Aunt Mattie with setting her foot down and bringing Milton back from the West. Photographer and date unknown.

The Man Who Fed the Animals

Nap Holbrook and the Early Days at Watoga

By Maureen Crockett

Last September I drove the dirt road at the top of Workman's Ridge in Watoga State Park with my friend, Ancella Bickley, and Mark Mengele, the park's assistant superintendent. As we approached the 100-year-old Workman cabin, Mengele began spinning a tale of a young couple, Nap and Alta Holbrook, who had lived here back in the 1930's. Nap began a long natural resources career there, raising wild animals in pens near the cabin, and he and Alta built a marriage that endures to this day. The story of their life at the top of our largest state park sounded like a Garden of Eden.

My friends and I walked around the silent, empty cabin set in a grassy meadow filled with wildflowers. Only hikers see it these days because the road up here is kept barred and locked.

Mark Mengele assured me that the Holbrooks were still alive and well. "They live up near Newell in Hancock County," he said. Three months later I was sitting in Nap and Alta's living room.

Nap explained how different the wildlife situation was a half century ago. Nowadays, we must drive defensively even on four-lane highways due to an exploding population of deer in West Virginia. Flocks of wild turkeys have become common. Back in the 1930's, though, even people in our mountainous eastern counties could hunt for weeks without catching sight of a deer, and spying a wild turkey might be a once in a lifetime event. The West Virginia Conservation Commission, forerunner of the Department of Natural Resources, decided to bring these two species back to viability.

An agent for this change would be a teenager from Huntington. In 1933, Napoleon Tiverton Holbrook, a 17-year-old then working on an Ohio farm, read about the Civilian Conservation Corps in a newspaper, then hitchhiked to Ironton to enlist. The CCC sent him to Fort Knox, Kentucky, for shots. He told them he had a great curiosity and wanted to go west. "They half listened," he joked recently. "They sent me to West Virginia."

Holbrook's unusual first name brought him immediate attention at CCC Camp Watoga, where the present Watoga State Park is located on the Greenbrier River in Pocahontas County. Captain L. H. Headington asked, "What's your name?" Holbrook answered, "Napoleon."

"I thought he died years ago," Headington said. "I'll call you Nap." He did and it stuck.

At first Nap had a variety of assignments, including fetching the mail from across the Greenbrier River at Seebert. When the river was up, he rode over on a cable stretched from bank to bank. "I would sit on this little seat, hanging from the cable." In winter he would swing across the turbulent river filled with ice floes.

Nap earned $30 a month, $25 of which was sent home to his family. He had his room and board and recalls that there wasn't much to spend money on around there, anyway.

Then more interesting work began. "Go out and take care of game," he was told. Nap thought he would be working with one of the leaders, Lyle Hultz, so he was surprised when Hultz left him in the woods by himself. Night was coming on. "I set up my tent. By the third day I loved it."

Nap's new home was a 16-by-16 army tent on a wooden platform. He had a three-lid stove for cooking and heat, a cupboard, kerosene lamps and a homemade table, but no windows, so he opened the door for daylight. Out on the hillside was a spring, and Nap toted his water in a bucket. In winter, water left inside the tent overnight would be frozen when he woke up in the morning. "I heaped up snow around the outside of the tent for insulation," he recalled.

Nap kept animal feed in the back of the tent. One night he heard something tearing through the canvas wall. "I picked up my .22 and shot from the bed. The next morning I went outside in back of the tent and found a dead sheep."

He figured the stray was from the Busch farm, located where the Watoga stables are today. "When I went over to explain, I was surprised the family was not angry, especially because they hardly knew me." As time passed, the Busch family became Nap's friends; their son would come over to help him feed the animals.

In those years, the young man had a restricted diet. "I never had much green stuff; I lived on coffee, eggs, potatoes, and pork and beans," he recalled. After a year and a half Nap suffered acute indigestion that landed him in the Huntington Veterans' Hospital for a month.

He kept deer and turkeys inside an eight-foot fence that enclosed about 12 acres. The idea was to nurture the animals along, then release them in different counties to bring back a resi-

Nap Holbrook on a recent return visit to the historic Workman cabin in Watoga State Park. Photo by Doug Chadwick.

dent breeding population. Fifteen mule deer and fawns were brought in from Michigan and white tails came from Wisconsin, Nap recalled. Every spring more deer came for Nap to feed.

In the winter, he would trap animals and care for them in the pens. He watched wild turkeys' nests, carefully covering them with leaves. One year he found 15 eggs, slipping some from nest to nest because turkey mothers tended to walk away with a newborn chick, leaving remaining eggs to fortune. He caught turkeys to inoculate them against disease.

Outside the Camp Watoga area, a bootlegger had set up business. Late in the evening, he would come out of the deep woods to play checkers with Nap, then would slip away into the night.

Some CCC boys discovered the still and took his liquor. When the boys went back to steal again, the moonshiner was ready. He had moved the still and the boys couldn't find it. When they built a fire to see better, he shot his rifle into their fire.

The CCC was an official program of the federal government, set up along military lines and administered by the U.S. Army. The shooting incident was taken seriously, Nap said, and the authorities confiscated the man's rifle, at least for a few days. Nothing stopped the flow of illegal whiskey, however. Back then, Nap recalled, everyone strolled around Watoga with a canteen of moonshine.

Though only 18, Nap Holbrook had a man's job and many responsibilities. Yet there was still plenty of boy in him. The CCC crews had finished the lake, but there were rules against swimming because there were no lifeguards and the place was dangerous. But Nap and the young Busch lad would slip in after hours for a cool dip.

Then he discovered a more compelling diversion. Alta Dean, who lived on a farm north of the present park area, first entered his life when she came with three of the Busch girls to see the animals. Alta, still a student at Marlinton High School, entranced Nap, and soon he was crossing the mountain to see her.

Courting involved much walking. Saturday nights, the CCC camp would show a movie. Nap would walk over the mountain, walk back with Alta and her brothers, see the movie, then head over the mountain again to take Alta home, and finally back to his tent.

Alta's brother and one of the Busch boys decided to play a trick on Nap, but Nap was tipped off by one of the Busch sisters. At dusk, two boys with bandanas over their faces and their heads covered by hats crept up to his tent. They held knives. Nap unloaded his shotgun. They knocked. Nap shoved the gun into one boy's stomach and they lit out into the night.

Folks also played pranks on the lad while he was away from his unlockable home. Nap might find all his clothes stuffed into a shirt and pants, then hung up as a dummy. Some-

times the surprises were pleasant ones, maybe a bouquet of flowers on the table. Other times he would find a freshly baked pie. Nor was his home impervious to unexpected animal visitors. Once he woke in the night to find a weasel on the table looking down at him.

When Nap fed the fawns with warmed bottles, he would squirt milk on their foreheads so he would know which had been fed. One became a special pet. The scrawny fawn touched Nap's heart and he named it Goober; it would try to follow him when he went to court Alta. Goober would walk with Nap past the Busch property, where a fence stopped him. At one o'clock in the morning when Nap was coming home, he would find the yearling lying there at the base of the fence, waiting for him.

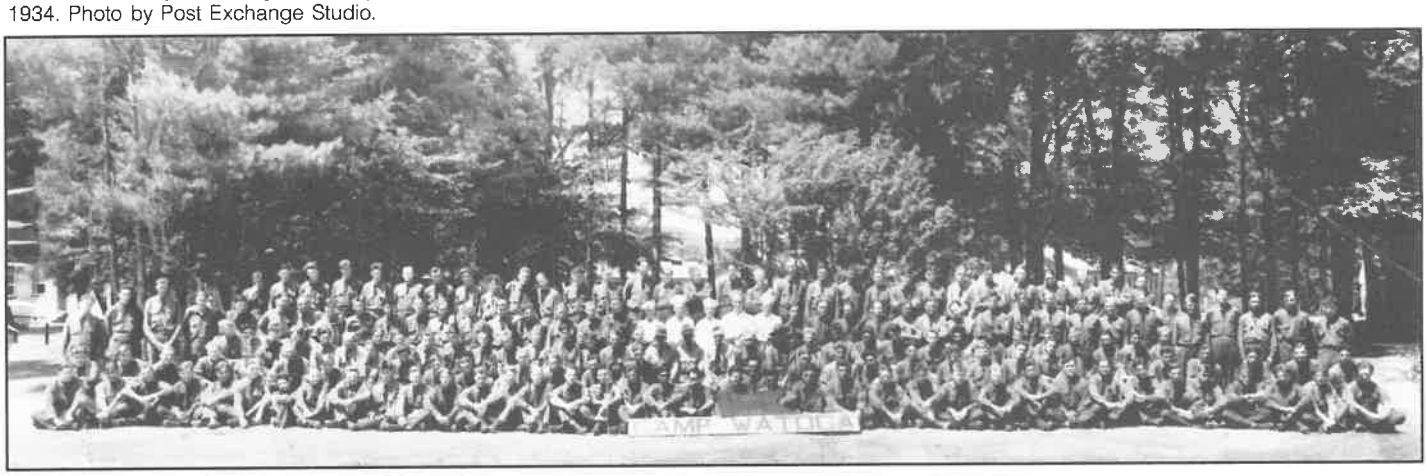
Sometimes Goober slept in the tent, but that arrangement disturbed Nap's sleep. "His hooves would go 'tap, tap, tap' on that wooden floor and he'd wake me up, so I didn't let him in often. He'd follow me around like a dog." When Nap ran, the deer ran beside him.

After Goober became a pet, he was given the run of the place. When he tried to follow Nap off park property, Nap would walk back to put the deer safely inside the enclosure, where he could not get hurt. Goober lived near Holbrook for two years, then disappeared. "Dogs might have killed him," he surmises today.

Nap Holbrook struck up no such relationship with most of the wildlife he raised. His work was all business,

Above: Nap with "Goober" in the mid-1930's. This area, the site of the first Watoga game pen, is now occupied by a parking lot. Photographer unknown.

Below: Like many West Virginia state parks, Watoga began as a Civilian Conservation Corps project. This is the personnel of Camp Watoga in 1934. Photo by Post Exchange Studio.



part of an ambitious restocking program. The deer were taken to several counties and let loose to establish themselves in the wild. Rounding them up in their 12-acre enclosure was hard work. Once Nap had a yearling caught, he thought, at the end of a long alley that ended in the lake. "The deer tried to jump over me. Its stomach hit me in the face and knocked me down. I ended up with a bloody nose."

After two years of tent living, Holbrook married Alta and brought her back to his canvas home. They lived there several months, then in February 1937 moved into what is now Watoga cabin 20. Three men had been living in the place and it was filthy. "We kept the fireplace going, but as we scrubbed with hot water, the floor froze as we cleaned it."

Since married CCC boys could not stay in the camp, Nap was discharged. Then he was hired back immediately as an LEM — "local experienced man" — with a salary increase. Now he brought home a munificent $45 a month.

His wildlife work continued much the same as before, now with the encouragement of his bride. "He fed the fawns with a bottle covered by a nipple, as you would feed a baby,"

Paraphernalia from Nap's early service, including typewritten game sighting report, first-aid and snakebite kits, and wildlife management manuals. Photo by Michael Keller.

Middle Mountain Cabins

The Monongahela National Forest was home to young Nap Holbrook, when he and his bride lived comfortably in the small Workman cabin at Watoga. Recently other cabins in West Virginia's largest national forest were placed on the National Register of Historic Places. The Depression-era log structures are known as the Middle Mountain cabins and are located in Randolph County.

The main Middle Mountain cabin was built by another protector of West Virginia's natural resources who called the Monongahela Forest home — Don Gaudineer [GOLDENSEAL, Winter 1983]. Gaudineer was a forest ranger who moved to Thornwood, then headquarters for the forest's Southern District, in 1926. His most noted accomplishments were in fire detection and prevention, new roads and trails, reforestation of burned and farmed-out areas, and the construction of phone lines for communication among foresters working in the field.

Gaudineer constructed Middle Mountain cabin in 1931 with the help of a building manual, using the giant red spruce trees around him. Two additional cabins were built by Civilian Conservation Corps workers in 1940. The Middle Mountain cabins are still used today by visitors to the Monongahela National Forest.

Tragically, Gaudineer perished in a fire at his family home the same year he built his famous cabin. The U.S. Forest Service dedicated Gaudineer Lookout Tower as a memorial to the ranger. Later Gaudineer Knob and Gaudineer Scenic Area, a 140-acre tract of virgin red spruce, were also named in his honor.

Legendary forester Don Gaudineer built the first of the Middle Mountain cabins in 1931. Today it's a National Historic Register property. State Historic Preservation Office photo, 1989.

You could tell it was a Sixties crowd, even without the dated sign. The conservation camp chalks up another 25 years this summer. Photo by Hal Dillon.

A Half-Century of Nature Work:

The Conservation Camp Turns 50

During the summer of 1941 a group of young Mountaineers gathered in Webster County to learn about nature and how to enjoy its provisions while protecting natural resources. This year a similar group, young enough to be the grandchildren of the first, will do it again. The 1991 West Virginia State Conservation Camp marks the 50th annual camp, a milestone in a long tradition.

Camp Caesar, the county 4-H camp located between Webster Springs and Cowen, is home to the historic Conservation Camp. Professionals from several fields teach classes, demonstrate field techniques and supervise outdoor activities. This camp has been a catalyst for lifelong friendships, professional relationships, and productive careers. From the Potomac River to the Tug Fork and from the Ohio eastward to the Blue Ridge, all of West Virginia has been influenced by its programs.

This annual camp is conducted by several organizations, including both state and federal agencies. The West Virginia Division of Natural Resources takes a lead role, along with the Department of Education, the WVU Extension Service and other organizations. Agency staff members and others teach classes, conduct special activities and assure a safe camp. The West Virginia Wildlife Federation and other private groups help to sponsor the camp and individual campers.

Conservation Camp takes place in early summer each year, traditionally mid-June. Counselors and instructors begin to arrive on Sunday afternoon. This is a time of renewing old ties and settling in before the arrival of the new campers. Junior leaders, last year's top campers, also make camp on Sunday. They receive staff briefings from the camp chairman and others.

Campers arrive at Camp Caesar on Monday morning, not knowing what to expect. Parents and students mill around with luggage, duffel bags, and blankets. A long registration line forms and then melts into the campus-like atmosphere that will prevail throughout the coming week.

For almost 30 years camp dawn has been the domain of Hal Dillon, a Division of Natural Resources communications supervisor. Anyone who has been to Conservation Camp during Hal's tenure will recall his rousing "Good Morningggggggg!" They cannot forget Hal's little green truck with the big speakers on the roof. Camp alumni describe how Hal points that truck at each dorm's front door and announces that it is indeed time to get up. He plays a pop version of reveille between stops.

Campers are organized into four groups, appropriately called the Forest Rangers, Wildlife Managers, Strip Croppers, and Conservation Officers. After breakfast, the groups break off to attend classes. Three 50-minute courses are taught each morning. Over four days each camper is exposed to 12 morning classes on such subjects as Wildlife Management, Law Enforcement, Nature Trails, Water Conservation, Reclamation, Parks and Recreation, Forest Protection, and Soil Conservation.

Afternoons are reserved for the outdoors. Conservation officers supervise shooting ranges for rifles, shotguns, and archery. Field trips provide direct experience in conservation work. Afternoon activities also include outdoor cooking, safe boating, and other subjects.

Each evening is filled with recreation. Traditional summer sports such as volleyball and softball occupy some of the campers' free time. Campfire meetings encourage esprit de corps. The Forest Rangers, Wildlife Managers, Strip Croppers, Conservation Officers, and Knotheads (staff) compete with group yells, group songs, and group skits.

A special campfire is held the last night of camp. Awards are presented and junior leaders are announced for the coming year. These outstanding campers are chosen by staff and peers. New staff members receive gold maple leaf pins signifying their contribution to West Virginia's future.

Most students attend camp on scholarships provided by various organizations. Groups of sportsmen, garden clubs, private industry, and government agencies have all sponsored scholarships for promising young people. The Conservation Camp is the oldest ongoing program of its kind in the United States, indeed a wild and wonderful West Virginia tradition.

— Robert Jacobus

Alta said. ''He would call, 'Come, babes,' and they would scamper to him from all directions off the hills.''

Nap's new in-laws loaned him Bet, one of their old mules, as a work animal. The wily beast was a good worker, but difficult to manage. Nap recalled that catching Bet that first time was difficult. He finally cornered the mule, rode it home to the cabin, and put it in the deer pen.

''The next morning when I looked out, I couldn't see Bet,'' Nap recalled. He ran out to find the mule lying dead on the grass. Now, 53 years later, he still doesn't know what happened. Alta, listening again to the story, said, ''Maybe he ate the deer bran and choked.''

When Nap told the Deans that Bet had died, they accepted it well. ''They just figured it must have been his time,'' he told me. But now what? The large animal's body lay there in the deer pen, too big for the young couple to remove. Their solution was a tad grisly. ''We dug a hole next to him; when it was deep enough we tipped him in, but his four feet stuck up several feet above the hole. We had to cut his legs off,'' Nap remembered.

By the time Alta had their first child, Allen, Nap was earning $60 a month. Watoga State Park opened that year, and state parks chief Tom Cheek decided the animal pens should be moved away from the public. That meant moving the Holbrooks too. Up on the mountain away from everything was an historic place known as the Workman cabin. There was no phone, no electricity.

Above and Below: The vehicles grew more modern and children and a necktie appeared as Nap advanced in age and responsibility, but the Holbrooks remained an outdoors, truck-driving family. Alta Dean Holbrook, shown below right in about 1949, shared the full family life and a long career as Nap moved from early federal programs into the state park system. Photographers unknown.

This shotgun was already old when a friend gave it to Nap during his Watoga days. Assistant superintendent Mark Mengele checks it out. Photo by Doug Chadwick.

Civilian Conservation Corps workers helped Nap fix up the place, then he built a porch and an extra room, since taken down. Nobody came out there. The young couple and their infant son had some hectic, scary times, but they loved it.

Nap built tables and cupboards, bought a Warm Morning cook stove and they had a metal bed. Nap built a root cellar down the hill by a stream. When I visited the place last fall, ruins of this outdoor refrigerator were still there.

Last winter I sat in the comfortable living room of the Holbrooks' Hancock County home, listening. "Sounds like a hard life," I said, but they both smiled and shook their heads. Fifty-three years later, surrounded by all the comforts they could want, Nap and Alta did not feel they had been deprived in their youthful days on the mountain.

Still, it was not an easy life. Their path to civilization was a rough road down the ridge, and Nap was given a truck to use for his work. For visits, they would walk over the ridges to Alta's family home, do their socializing, then walk the six miles back.

Once they made the long trek in November, carrying Allen through the 20-degree weather over to the Deans, then home. When they arrived back at the cabin, Nap started to light the fire and discovered he was out of matches. Then he couldn't start the truck. Alta and the baby got into the bed and piled the covers on. Nap started walking down the mountain to the CCC camp. Finally luck turned his way; he came upon a CCC work crew and borrowed their matches.

The Holbrooks faced other hazards, big and small. At one time Nap had over 200 wild turkeys to catch and dose with lice medicine. When turkey lice infested the cabin, Alta would crush pennyroyal and scatter it around the log house. The lice left.

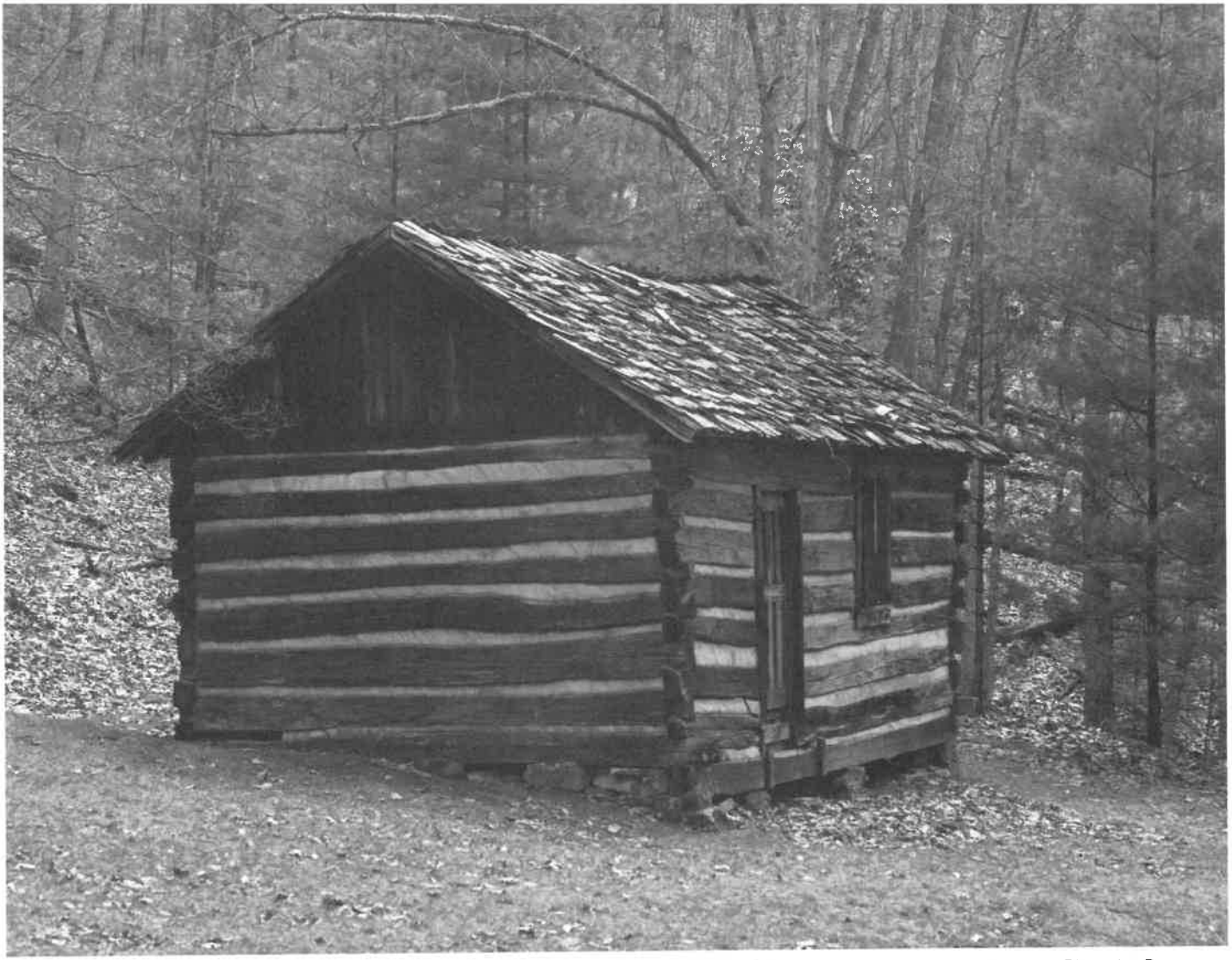
The turkey pen had no cover on the top, although its roost area was protected from the weather. Nap opened the gate for the turkeys to leave in the morning, but all came home at night, even the young

Nap also kept raccoons, as well as turkey and deer. As time passed, conservation officers would come to his valley on Workman's Ridge for the animals. Inside the large pen was a smaller one, surrounded by a ten-foot-high fence and baited with food so deer could be lured in and captured. Once inside, a sliding door kept them enclosed.

Loading the deer was tough. "The deer would go wild and butt the fence. One caught its hoof in my pants pocket and ripped my pants all the way down," Nap said.

"We would scoot crates up to the sliding door. It took three men to catch a deer and shove it in a crate." Nap's crew would load the crates on a truck; then the animals went to new homes in Pendleton, Pocahontas, Randolph, Webster, Greenbrier, Ritchie and Hardy counties.

On one of their infrequent trips to



The Workman cabin stands strong after more than 100 years. It is still used for overnight shelter by hikers and horseback riders. Photo by Doug Chadwick.

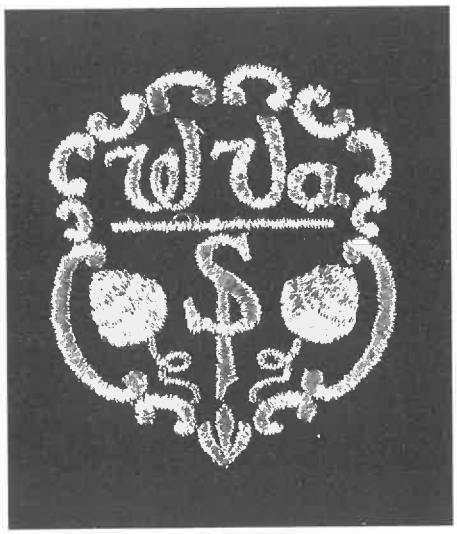
Marlinton, Nap bought tobacco and a pipe. He drove home and set about lighting up for the first time. Alta sat near, reading. "The first pipeful was good, the second okay, but the third made me sick. I opened the door for air and fell right back, flat on the floor. Alta thought someone at the door had hit me, but I had only fainted. That was my last runaround with tobacco."

In the summer of 1938 there were few animals to nurture so Nap was given a new task — killing vermin. The state's list of vermin was broken down into two sections, ground vermin and winged vermin. These days, it seems like all animals except tsetse flies are shown reverence for their place in the chain of life, but 50 years ago certain unfortunates were routinely killed — including many species of hawk, weasels, mink, foxes, rattlers, black snakes, water snakes, bobcats, skunk, crows, and wild dogs.

Nap showed me that old vermin list. As I read it, I wondered what sort of quandary this presented the game protector. I asked, "What did you do?"

"I shot rattlers in the areas where we had a lot of visitors," Nap replied. Other critters he didn't bother.

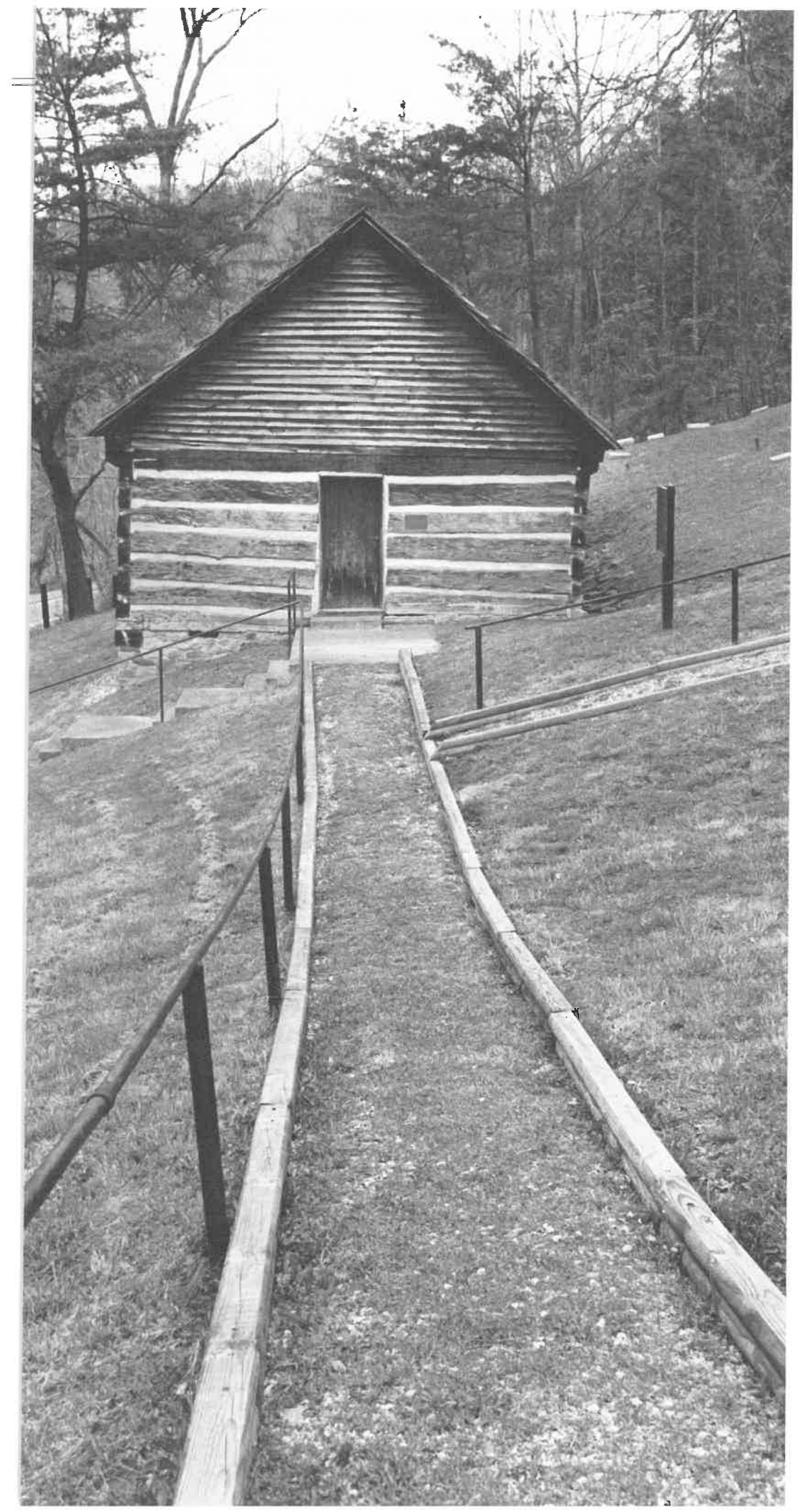
In that summer of little game, Nap did more park work. He would help the guests, many of whom were



unfamiliar with lighting a kerosene lamp or other skills of cabin living. "None of them knew how to start those stoves," he remembered.

In 1939 when Nap's father was dying in Huntington, he left Watoga. He got to his dad's bedside three hours before he passed away. Opportunities were better for a young man outside the mountains, so Nap worked as an inspector in a defense plant until 1945.

The lure of outdoor life brought him back to West Virginia state parks when the war was over. For the rest of his working life, Nap was a superintendent at Droop Mountain Battlefield, Holly River State Park, and finally Tomlinson Run State Park, from which he retired in 1981. He and Alta still love Watoga. They visit, remembering when they were a young married couple living in a tent or in an old cabin at the top of the mountain. They don't talk much about hardships; what they remember is excitement and joy.



Job's Temple, a physical reminder of the 19th century sectional differences that split America and created the state of West Virginia, is now on the National Register of Historic Places.

Job's Temple, a Gilmer County landmark, is a log church, one of few remaining in West Virginia. At one time, perhaps when Gilmer was part of Virginia, there were log churches scattered through each county. Most have been lost through neglect or replaced with frame or brick buildings.

There was one such church located at Pisgah, only three miles away, but it was destroyed by fire over a hundred years ago. It is from the Pisgah Church that Job's Temple originated. The congregation split in the mid-1850's over the same wrenching and divisive issues which were breaking America apart at that time. A number of people from the Pisgah Church, some of whom had children buried in its cemetery, preferred the Southern side of the national debate. They decided to build their own house of worship.

Construction of the new church was begun shortly before the outbreak of the Civil War. When the great conflict began, building work appears to have been suspended as some members of the congregation entered military service. As far as is known, little if anything was done toward finishing the project until after the war ended in 1865. Meanwhile, West Virginia had become the 35th state. Hence Job's Temple, begun under the jurisdiction of one state, was finished under that of another.

The land on which the log church was built was donated by Jonathan and Margaret Bennett. The original site consisted of "one acre and nine poles, more or less," according to the deed recorded at the Gilmer County Courthouse. Apparently construction was begun well before the church body owned the land, because the site

Job's Temple
A Gilmer County Landmark

By James Woofter
Photographs by Michael Keller

was not deeded by the Bennetts until 1872. In 1913, and again in recent years, more land was donated so that the church grounds now comprise some four acres.

Job's Temple was organized as a Methodist Episcopal Church, South, at DeKalb, Gilmer County, State of West Virginia. The original trustees were Levi Snider, N. W. Stalnaker, William H. Stalnaker, James A. Pickens, Edward T. Gainer, Salathiel G. Stalnaker, and Christian Kuhl. Of that number, three were later buried in the church cemetery.

Job's Temple stands near Job's Run, a minor tributary of the Little Kanawha River. The fact that the church was named for the stream, and not the other way around, is documented in the writings of the Reverend E. B. Jones, pastor from 1889 to 1893. The Reverend Jones wrote that his church took its name "from a small run on which the Temple is situated, the run being named in honor of Job Westfall, who was the first settler on the run." Another account identifies Westfall as an itinerant preacher and says that he was active in founding Job's Temple.

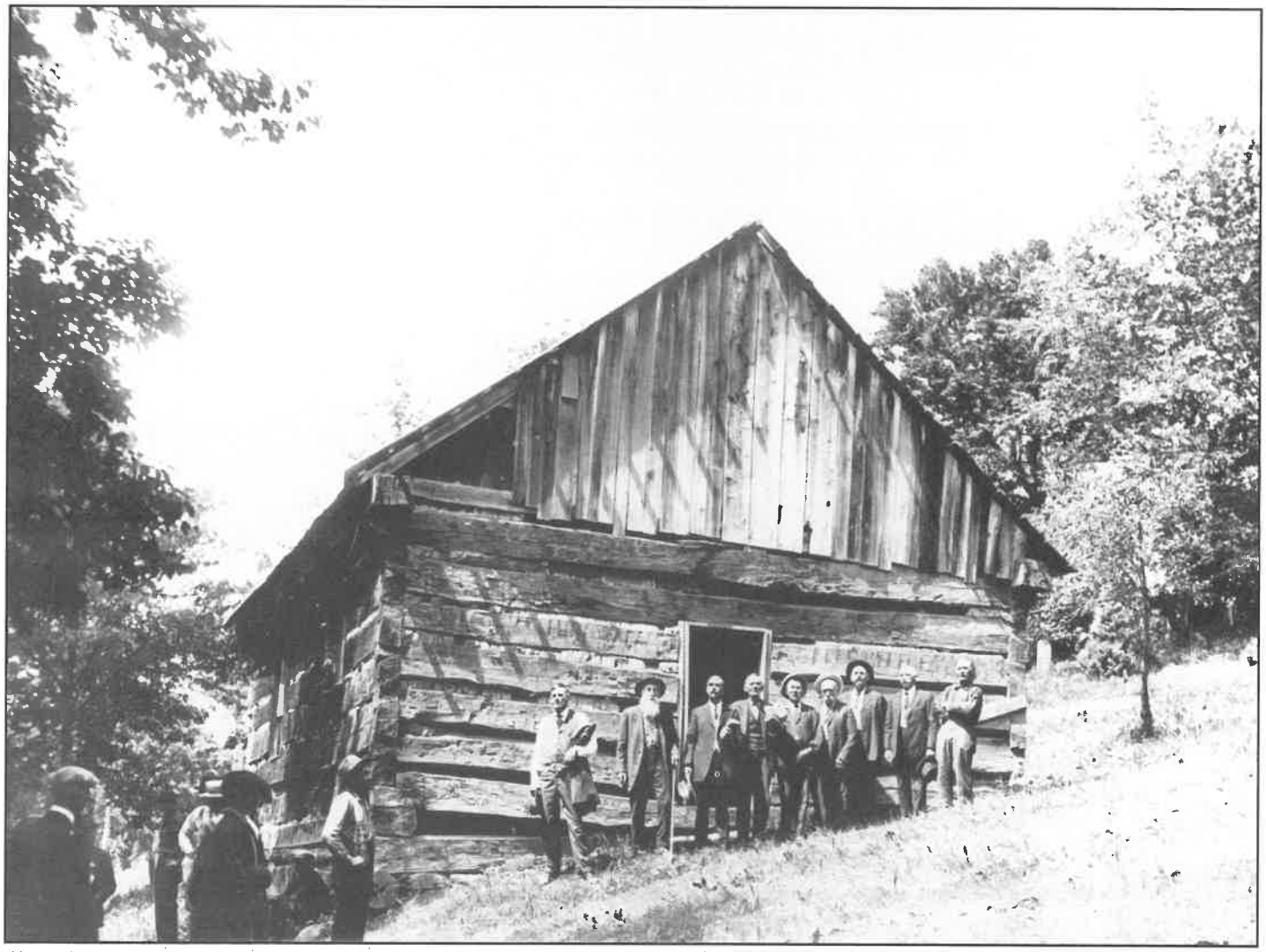
The church was built mostly with yellow poplar logs, hand-hewn and hand-dressed, all well over a foot square. They were chamfered and notched in the manner then customary and seem not to have slipped appreciably over the decades. The big logs were chinked and daubed with local clay mud, consistent with construction procedures in use at the time. As far as is known, all but the bottommost log on the lower side are original. One can only wonder at the difficulty of lifting the 30-foot logs into the interlocking position they hold today.

The roof was made of wooden shingles or clapboards. The outside measurements of Job's Temple are approximately 24 by 30 feet. Many of today's houses have recreation rooms of greater dimensions.

Inside, the ceilings and walls were made of hand-planed yellow poplar boards, many of which are almost two feet wide. A representative of a Charleston architectural firm, when examining the church several years ago, noted that the wall boards were the finest examples of hand planing she had ever seen.

Job's Temple is laid out much like other country churches. A slightly elevated platform in the front part of the sanctuary served as a pulpit. On

The church and grounds have not always been as well kept as they are today. This photo by Carey Woofter was made sometime before 1918.



Above: Local public interest reached the action point in the 1930's. This group of concerned citizens, photographed sometime before 1937, includes the Reverend General Lee Ingram (before door, holding book) and the Reverend Lemuel Vannoy, the second man to the right of Ingram. Photographer unknown.

Below: Homecomings were an established tradition by the 1940's. This photo shows Jesse E. Bell, his mother Lora Bower Bell, and her half sisters Clara Stalnaker Young and Maude Stalnaker Canterbury. Photographer unknown. August 1946.

it three wooden stands, or lecterns, were placed. One was used by the minister. The other two were used by other participants in the worship service or served as lamp stands when artificial light was needed. Two of the three stands now in the church are believed to be original. Oil lamps were also placed on shelves along the wall.

The benches used when Job's Temple was first built were made of split logs with wooden legs driven into holes bored in either end. None of the original seats remain. They have been replaced by backless plank benches made in more recent decades by local artisans. The two angled "mourners' benches" which now flank the altar are probably also not original, but they are believed to resemble those actually

used when the church was built.

When it was active, Job's Temple was a member of the Conference of Southern Methodist Churches. That membership ceased in 1912 and the church did not have a regularly assigned pastor after that.

Over the years Job's Temple has been used for a variety of purposes aside from that of a church. In former times, singing schools were conducted there each year. Traveling singing masters taught the shape-note method of singing to the members of Job's Temple and other area residents. One such master was Bill Bush. Singing schools permitted the introduction of new songs into the community, in that age of no radio or television and very few newspapers. The schools also served as social gatherings for local people. My mother attended singing schools at Job's Temple in her youth and remembered them fondly.

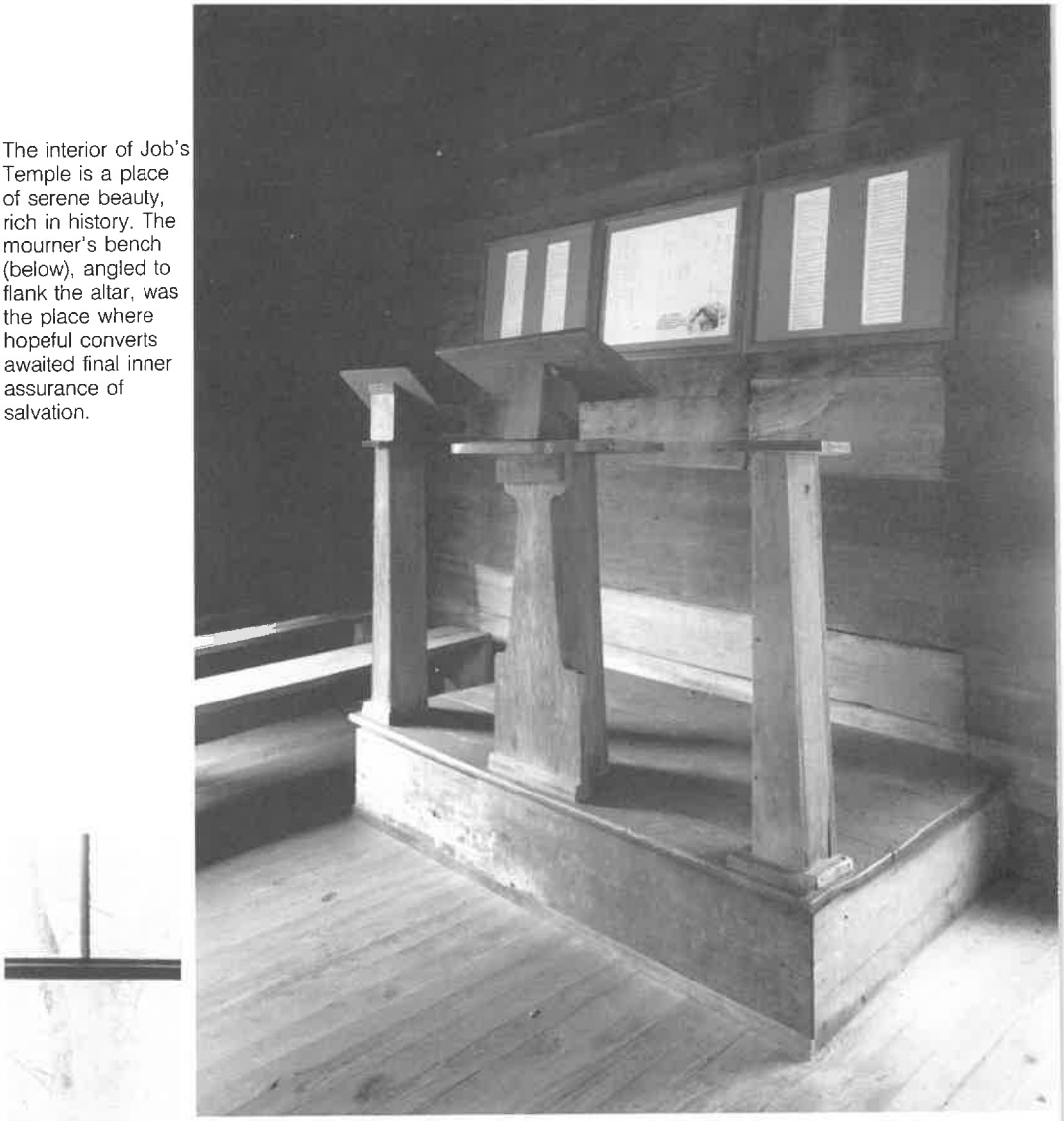
The sturdy church building gave shelter when needed. One new family even set up housekeeping in Job's Temple. In other instances local families whose homes had been ravaged by floods on the Little Kanawha sought temporary refuge there.

More recently the old church has served more as historic shrine and local landmark than as an active facility. It comes to life twice each summer. In June all the Belles, the older ladies representing West Virginia counties at the State Folk Festival at Glenville, come to the temple for a religious service concluding the three-day festival. And of course, the big annual homecoming occurs each August.

Several ministers served as "pastor of the charge" at Job's Temple during its half-century of active service. They included Joseph Jenkins, J. S. Pullen, William Virden, E. R. Powers, Hazel Williams, C. S. Walmsly, and others. The Reverend Jones is said to have held a protracted meeting that lasted six weeks and reaped 160 conversions to the faith.

The church rolls included Gainers, Pickenses, Bealls, Stalnakers, and other prominent family names of the area. You will find the same names on the gravestones in the church yard. The first grave in the Job's Temple cemetery was that of Margaret Stalnaker Pickens who died February 18, 1870, at the age of 18 years. She is said to have requested to be buried in the "new cemetery."

The interior of Job's Temple is a place of serene beauty, rich in history. The mourner's bench (below), angled to flank the altar, was the place where hopeful converts awaited final inner assurance of salvation.



The Pickenses and Stalnakers, representing some of the earliest settlers in Gilmer County, have more of their people buried at Job's Temple than do any other families. Thirteen members of the Pickens family and 35 Stalnakers rest there. Lambs, Maxwells, Riddles, and Woofters are among those who lie beside them. Like any country graveyard, the Job's Temple cemetery includes people who were born, lived and died in the neighborhood, as well as others who spent their early lives there, left for a time, and were returned for burial. There also are some who came from elsewhere, lived out their lives in the community and were buried there.

Some 60 years ago Job's Temple had fallen into a serious condition of disrepair due to lack of use and poor maintenance. Writing in *The Glenville Democrat*, the late Ed Orr described his first visit: "Surrounded by weeds and approached only by a steep, winding path, I found the log church which is the only spot in Gilmer County to earn mention in the historical section of the Blue Book of West Virginia this year. After noting the unkempt surroundings, the thing that impressed me was the sturdiness of the structures in days long gone by. Slowly, though surely, the building that once was a community center of another century is now disintegrating — crumbling away in spite of all the efforts that have been made to preserve it."

Local poet Carmen Rinehart Moss captured the scene more poignantly in a poem from the same era. Moss's last stanza runs as follows:

> Job's Temple — built to honor Him
> Who once five thousand fed,
> Now stands deserted by the road,
> And guards its sacred dead.

Moss had grown up on Grass Run, two miles from Job's Temple, and her mother had once belonged to the congregation. Her 1930 poem no doubt speaks for many others with similar roots.

Fortunately the demise of Job's Temple foreseen by Orr and feared by Moss was not to be. Instead, Ella Maxwell and Lona Woofter, two local women who had worshiped at the Temple in their youth, joined forces in 1934 to consider what could be done

Clothing styles have changed, but otherwise the Job's Temple homecoming spirit remains the same today as in this scene from several decades ago. Photographer and date unknown.

Job's Temple Homecoming

"Dad looked forward to homecoming as a child would to Christmas," said Lucille Stalnaker. Lucille, the daughter of Robert and Orpha Stalnaker, lives near Glenville. Her Pittsburgh cousin, Mildred Fiser Sheets, daughter of Harry and Viola Stalnaker Fiser, expressed similar sentiments. "My father lived from year to year for Job's Temple homecomings."

Homecoming is still a special event for those who gather each year on the second Sunday in August. It has taken place every year since 1936 (except for 1943, 1944, and 1945 because of gasoline rationing) at the historic log church nine miles west of Glenville.

Nestled on a steep hillside overlooking the Little Kanawha River, Job's Temple stands as a monument to the sturdy pioneers of DeKalb District of Gilmer County. The church has been restored as much as possible to its former state and placed on the National Register of Historic Places. The nearby cemetery is the resting place of many of the families and their descendants who helped to organize Job's Temple as a Methodist Episcopal Church, South, when feelings in the community differed regarding the bitter North-South issues of the late 1850's.

Byron Rinehart of Charleston attended the first homecoming in 1936. "It was a small gathering," he recently recalled, where he "mostly met kinfolks and had a good time." The second homecoming was evidently bigger. According to newspaper articles, there were several hundred in attendance in 1937. Big crowds were common in the early years, although a decline occurred in the '60's and early '70's with the passing of many early participants.

The morning worship service, held inside the Temple without the benefit of electric lights, includes a sermon by a local minister. The Reverend Robert H. Nicholas, pastor of Sand Fork Baptist Church, has preached at the last five homecomings. The afternoon program is presented from an outside platform with the crowd seated in the grove of trees. Afternoon speakers have included educational, community, and political leaders. Robert C. Byrd has spoken four times, first in 1958 as a Congressman, and as U.S. Senator in 1975, 1976, and 1986. Senator Jennings Randolph came by helicopter in 1974.

William F. Gainer, the assistant superintendent of schools in Wood County, was the afternoon speaker in 1989. He is the grandson of the Reverend Levi Gainer, who preached the first homecoming sermon in 1936. Dr. H. Darrell Woofter spoke last year.

Programs in earlier years included choirs and groups from area churches — Tanner, Trace Fork and Walnut Grove, to name a few. The Gospel Tones Quartet of Mt. Pisgah Baptist Church have provided music for the past several homecomings. The members are Johnie and Wilda Kuhl, Jay Chambers, and Don Bailey. Johnie is descended from Conrad Kuhl, one of the builders of Job's Temple. Christian Kuhl, also related, was one of the original trustees.

In earlier times those attending the homecomings spent days preparing a delicious meal with all the trimmings for anyone who might stop by their area or table on the grounds. (And the old-timers will tell you that there were some "regulars" who came simply to fill their plates every year.) Families had unwritten reservations on picnic areas from year to year. Lunch is now catered and served in a picnic shelter constructed in 1988.

Just getting the food there was sometimes a problem in the old days, especially for those living across the Little Kanawha. Ruth Stalnaker Miller remembers carrying food a half-mile to the river, then crossing in a boat before making the additional two-mile trip by car. "A week was spent preparing dinner," her sister, Gladys Stalnaker Coberly said. "Lots of chickens were killed and many pies were baked."

In the past a special work day was scheduled prior to homecoming to spruce up the church grounds for company. Clarence Maxwell, son of Charles and Ella Woofter Maxwell, served as chairman of the Job's Temple upkeep committee for many years. His sister, Mildred Maxwell Cogar, prepared the interior of the church for homecomings and any other time a service was planned. In more recent years, the grounds have been kept tidy by Earl Wilson of near Glenville. Earl tells me he has "left a lot of sweat on that hillside."

This year's homecoming will take place on August 11, and you are invited. The worship service begins at 10:30, followed by a business meeting, lunch, and the afternoon program. Come expecting a Gilmer County good time and plan to stay the day.

—Doris M. Radabaugh

The Gospel Tones — Jay Chambers, Don Bailey, Wilda Kuhl, Johnie Kuhl — have performed at the last several homecomings. Photo by Doris Radabaugh, 1988.

to save the historic building. By then the roof was badly damaged and some of the original ceiling boards had rotted. The fence surrounding the site was down in various places and both domestic and wild animals roamed the cemetery at will.

Maxwell and Woofter organized a movement to restore Job's Temple. In 1934, they started the treasury with $16.86 which they had solicited from individuals — mostly in dimes, nickels, and pennies. These were Depression times, remember.

Soon a group of local people went to work to restore the historic building. They put on a new tin roof. They repaired the floor and ceiling. They put in new windows and did numerous other things to preserve the old structure. All this was done by donated labor.

The first Job's Temple homecoming, organized to celebrate the success that had been achieved, was held at the church on August 14, 1936. A loosely-knit organization known as the Job's Temple Association was formed at that meeting. Charles "Boone" Maxwell was elected its first president, and Pearl Pickens its first secretary.

The Reverend Levi Gainer delivered the sermon at the first Job's Temple homecoming. In the afternoon B. W. Craddock, local attorney, and Carey Woofter, the husband of Lona and registrar at Glenville State College, spoke briefly of the community's early settlers and of those who lay in the cemetery. The collection for that day was $20.16.

As time passed, more improvements were made around the church and grounds. Concrete steps were installed as part of a walkway from the adjacent state highway to the church. The late Harry Fiser of Pittsburgh, whose wife's parents are buried at Job's Temple, set concrete headstones and footstones for the graves that did not already have markers. He also cast and installed the concrete fence posts that are still in place around part of the site. A concrete speakers' platform was built near the entrance to the church. A maintenance and upkeep program was begun for the building and grounds.

In December 1978, the Job's Temple Association was incorporated, thus formalizing the organization that had functioned unofficially since 1936. The

corporation is now responsible for the continued repair and upkeep of Job's Temple, administering a program designed, insofar as practicable, to preserve the historic property in perpetuity.

In 1979, Job's Temple was listed on the National Register of Historic Places, pursuant to the provisions of the National Historic Preservation Act. The log church is the only site in Gilmer County to have achieved the distinction of being placed on the National Register.

When work was first begun to rescue the Job's Temple church and grounds, there were 67 graves which had only unlettered fieldstones. We were fortunate to find among the papers of the late Carey Woofter a plat of the cemetery which he and Ella Maxwell had drawn about 1917. From that paper we learned who was buried in many of those unidentified graves, the relatives and friends of whom had left Gilmer County or long since died. People still living in the area helped us identify the graves of those who had died after 1917 and whose names consequently were not on the plat. Combining the information, we were able to identify all the graves in the cemetery except six. The Job's Temple Association authorized the purchase and installation of granite identification markers for the 67 graves.

So Job's Temple still stands as it has for well over a century, guarding the sacred dead, as Carmen Moss's poem has it. Perhaps more important is its continuing service to the living, as a rallying point and a symbol of our Gilmer County heritage.

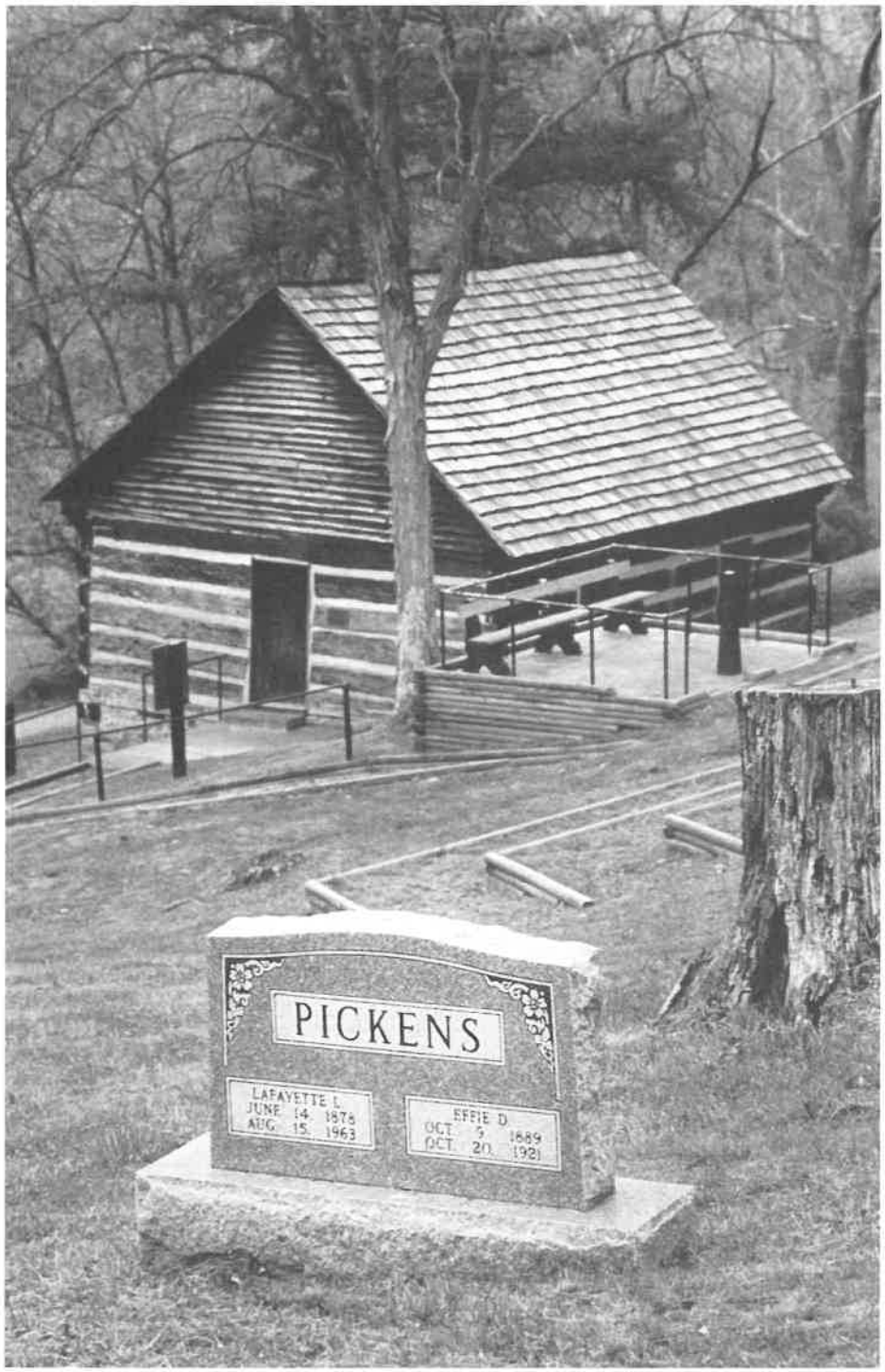
You can see that best at homecoming time. The local motel fills up, as people flock in from far away. That's the way it's always been, according to Stanley Pickens, current president of the Job's Temple Association. "My out-of-town relatives — brothers, sisters, and cousins — would be coming home from a long way for the Job's Temple gathering," he recalled. Visitors stayed with local relatives in the old days, but the homecoming spirit remains the same.

And a special spirit it is. "I remember as a young boy growing up in Gilmer County the excitement and anticipation of the second Sunday in August," Stanley says. "I hope that these young people have the same feelings I had as a boy."

You Can Help

The Job's Temple Association is a nonprofit corporation established for the maintenance and support of the Job's Temple church and grounds. Tax-deductible contributions may be sent to Marguerite Wade, Secretary-Treasurer, Job's Temple Association, Inc., Route 77, Box 33, Glenville, WV 26351.

Job's Temple is a special place for those families whose people rest in the cemetery and a proud rallying point for all Gilmer Countians.



The CCC Continues

The Civilian Conservation Corps played an important role in West Virginia during a time of great hardship in the state and nation. One of the New Deal programs established by the Roosevelt Administration in 1933, it provided conservation work for young single men between the ages of 18 and 25 [GOLDENSEAL, January-March 1981]. Though the CCC ended in 1942, there are many reminders of its accomplishments in national forests and state parks throughout the state, including cabins, trails and bridges.

More than 55,000 West Virginia men were enrolled in the CCC, serving across the country. The state had more than two dozen camps itself, including the Watoga camp recalled by Nap Holbrook (page 50).

Today former "CCC boys" gather at five locations in West Virginia for annual reunions, according to Bill Riffle of New Haven, who helps put together the Camp Woodbine reunion near Richwood. The other reunions are at Camp Northfork, Petersburg; Little Beaver State Park, Daniels; Camp Horseshoe, Parsons; and Camp Kanawha, Charleston. Mr. Riffle says the Camp Northfork reunion is held in May and kicks off the CCC summer get-togethers.

Camp Woodbine's reunion will be held on Saturday, August 17. The day begins with registration, then a picnic lunch followed by a memorial service for deceased members, music and awards. Mr. Riffle says they often tour up the Cranberry River and those who wish may visit the site of the former CCC Camp Cranberry. This sister camp to Woodbine was also in the Monongahela National Forest. All that remains today is a sign commemorating the spot.

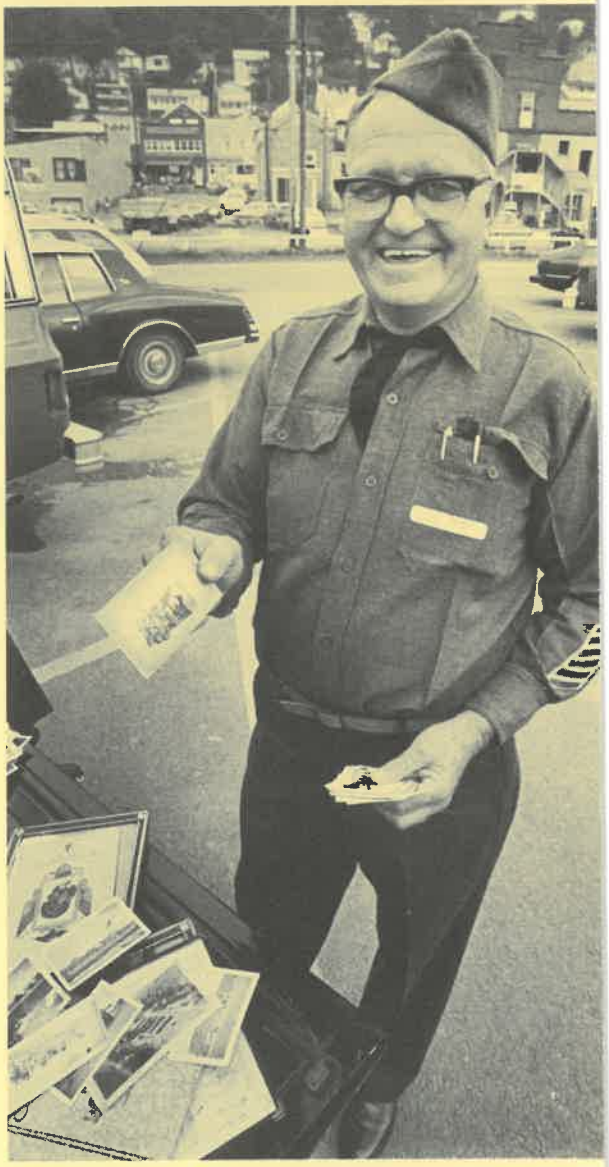
More than 100 former CCC'ers have registered for Woodbine reunions in recent years. The youngest CCC veteran there last year was 67 years old. Most participants are several years older and come from as far away as California, Arizona, Nevada, Florida, Georgia and Texas. One man found a mess kit near Camp Cranberry that he had buried there in 1936.

The public is always welcome. "It's a fun, sociable day. About the only thing we don't discuss are politics and religion," says Mr. Riffle.

Camp Kanawha's reunion is the last held each summer. It will take place on September 9 this year in shelters 8 and 9 at Kanawha State Forest. Calvin White of Charleston says he always gets there at 7:30 a.m. to start the day with coffee and donuts. Lunch is served about 12:30 p.m. and then the entertainment gets underway. This year it's the string band, Country Pickers.

As at other reunions, the main attraction at Camp Kanawha is good fellowship. The day is spent "milling around, looking at pictures, and reminiscing," according to Mr. White. Hiking the CCC Snipe Trail in Shrewsbury Hollow is part of the day's activity also. Former CCC members come to the Camp Kanawha reunion from Florida, Rhode Island, Tennessee, Virginia, Kentucky, and Maryland. "It's one big happy family for the whole day," says Mr. White.

Both men say that as the CCC employees from the 1930's get up in years, fewer remain to come to the reunions. Mr. Riffle says they have talked about forming a sons and daughters of the CCC organization. There is also a National Association of Civilian Conservation Corps Alumni. For more information about West Virginia's CCC activities contact Bill Riffle, P.O. Box 324, New Haven, WV 25265; (304)882-2293.



Above: "CCC boys" learned the business end of a shovel right away. This group was photographed at Camp Cranberry in 1935, photographer unknown.

Right: John W. Brogan enjoyed himself at a 1980 CCC reunion in Richwood. The uniform still fit after more than 40 years. Photo by James Samsell.

Lewis Wetzel engaged in ruthless border warfare most of his life. This engraving is from an 1859 biography, *Life and Adventures of Lewis Wetzel, The Virginia Ranger*, by Cecil B. Hartley.

Hero and Desperado

Reflections on the Reburial of Lewis Wetzel

By Gordon L. Swartz III

In the 1970's the Hare Krishnas had just begun to make inroads into Marshall County. Keith Ham, or Kirtanananda Swami Bhaktipada, had leased the first piece of property from Richard Rose and the Krishnas of New Vrindaban began.

Being new to the area, I had only heard rumors about this unusual religious sect, but my curiosity was whetted when I picked up a Krishna hitchhiker in late December one year. He got into the car and said, "Hare Krishna." I thought he had said "Merry Christmas," so I said "Merry Christmas" back. Later I realized that the situation was hilarious, but neither one of us laughed at the time.

When I engaged the hitchhiker in conversation, I learned that he had been staying in a barn on McCreary's Ridge and was a Hare Krishna devotee. But he was leaving, at least for a while, because, as he put it, "I fail to tolerate the cold." I might have said it a little differently.

It wasn't too many months until curiosity compelled me to take a drive down McCreary's Ridge from Route 250 to Wheeling Creek just to see where the Krishnas were living. I am sure there were many such curious people. At that time, the Krishna community was far from impressive, but that was in New Vrindaban's infancy. In the last 15 years there has been a lot accomplished on Limestone Hill Palace Road, as it is now known.

At the bottom of McCreary's Ridge at the intersection of the Limestone and Dallas roads, I saw a small weed-covered cemetery. Since I had time to spare, I stopped to look. I found one curious monument which seemed to be made of concrete in which various pretty stones had been embedded.

Then I came to a stone marked "Martin Whetzel," and a strange idea

came to my head. Next I saw a stone marked "Lewis Whetzel." That made me wonder if this was really Lewis Wetzel's grave. I couldn't imagine the famous frontiersman being buried in such a neglected place, but I seemed to remember that he did have a brother named Martin. The "h" in the name confused me, also. I didn't know what to make of it.

All that I knew of the real Lewis Wetzel at that time were the dry facts I had been taught in West Virginia History class in junior high school. But I also knew him as the glorified legend of Zane Grey's *The Spirit of the Border.* I had owned that novel as a child, and the fictional Lewis Wetzel had been a hero to me. I had also read *The Last Trail, The Last Ranger,* and *Betty Zane* by Zane Grey. These books turn the settling of Wheeling and the Upper Ohio Valley into a thrilling adventure. Grey researched his subject very well, probably because he was a descendant of the Zanes himself.

The Spirit of the Border makes Wetzel into a larger-than-life figure. "Like a mountain-ash he stood, straight and strong, his magnificent frame tapering wedgelike from his broad shoulders," Grey writes. "The bulging line of his thick neck, the deep chest, the knotty contour of his bared forearm, and the full curve of his legs — all denoted a wonderful muscular development.

"The power expressed in this man's body seemed intensified in his features. His face was white and cold, his jaw square and set, his coal-black eyes glittered with almost a superhuman fire. And his hair, darker than the wing of a crow, fell far below his shoulders, matted and tangled as it was, still it hung to his waist, and had it been combed out, must have reached his knees." Zane Grey closely follows 19th-century historian Wills De Hass in describing the physical man.

The preceding passage from the novel describes Lewis Wetzel after he had been captured by the Indian chieftain, Wingenund. This would explain the unkempt black hair. Wetzel's hair was perhaps his only vanity. Considering the life he led, knee-length hair must have caused him considerable trouble. He is said to have spent hours combing the burrs and tangles from his luxuriant mane.

This Marshall County grave is the second resting place of Wetzel's remains. Courtesy *Wheeling News-Register.*

Vanity in such a man seems a contradiction, and Zane Grey takes his lead from De Hass and other historians in offering an explanation. Wetzel must have felt "that if he cut off his hair it would seem he feared the Indians — for that streaming black hair the Indians had long coveted and sworn to take."

In other words, Wetzel wore his hair that way to antagonize his Native American adversaries. He took Indian scalps and flaunted his own beautiful locks.

The Lewis Wetzel of Zane Grey novels is the man I still picture when I imagine the West Virginia frontier. The actual man was feared as well as respected in his own time. After all, he was a cold-blooded killer. In one chilling story told about him, a friendly native had saved a captured Wetzel from burning at the stake. Once conducted to safety, Wetzel turned around and murdered his own rescuer. Wetzel never bothered to deny it later, dismissing his victim as "nothing but an Indian."

Zane Grey set out to give Lewis Wetzel a historical face-lift. In the introduction to *The Spirit of the Border,* Grey ends with "if it softens a little the ruthless name history accords him, the writer will have been repaid." I think Zane Grey accomplished what he set out to do.

The "Whetzel" tombstones stayed on my mind until I went to the Cameron Library to get some information on the real-life Lewis Wetzel. There I found a book written by a fellow Marshall Countian named C. B. Allman.

Mr. Allman had painstakingly researched the true story of Lewis Wetzel and written an informative biography entitled *Lewis Wetzel, Indian Fighter.* I highly recommend this book, because it paints Wetzel as a real man, neither totally good nor totally evil, but a man of his own hard time. The

Two illustrations of a single anecdote from Wetzel's life. The far right engraving is from Hartley's *Life and Adventures*, with the other from Wills De Hass's 1851 *History of the Early Settlement and Indian Wars of Western Virginia.*

Wheeling area demanded men like Lewis Wetzel in the late 1700's, and Wetzel was the best at doing what he did — killing Indians.

C. B. Allman quotes Wills De Hass's classic *History of the Early Settlement and Indian Wars of Western Virginia* in characterizing Wetzel:

"He loved his friends and hated his enemies. He was a rude, blunt man with few words before company, but with his friends not only sociable but an agreeable companion.

"His name and fame will long survive, when the achievements of men vastly superior in rank and intellect will slumber with the forgotten past. To us he was a desperado. In that day he was considered a great hero."

In Allman's postscript I found the information I wanted. The postscript was titled "Wetzel's Remains Return to West Virginia."

It seems that Wetzel had drifted south to New Orleans after the frontier passed beyond the Ohio Valley. He was imprisoned a second time there — the first time had been for the murder of an Indian in Marietta — but was a free man by the time of his 1808 death at age 45. The exact whereabouts of his grave remained uncertain for more than a century. Allman tells how Dr. Albert W. Bowser of Chicago had determined to find the remains of Lewis Wetzel and return them to the scene of Wetzel's home. The postscript tells of Dr. Bowser's research, his physical search, and the proof he obtained that he had actually found the remains of Lewis Wetzel.

So it was that Wetzel's remains were finally removed from their unmarked grave in the tiny hamlet of Rosetta, Mississippi, and reinterred at the McCreary Cemetery by the side of his brother Martin on Sunday, August 2, 1942.

Now that I had found the answer to my riddle, I was still disappointed. I wondered why someone would go to all the trouble to bring Lewis Wetzel's remains to such a forlorn, forgotten graveyard. I was not the only one with that question on my mind.

In 1983, Mr. John E. Koci, the principal of Centerville School in Jacobsburg, Ohio, brought a class of fourth and fifth grade students to visit the grave of the famous scout. The sight which met them was the same as I have already described. Koci and his pupils were, of course, appalled, and determined to do what they could about having the cemetery upgraded.

Although West Virginia Division of Culture and History officials now accept the Wetzel grave as genuine, evidently this was not always the case. When Mr. Koci first wrote the Charleston agency, he was astonished when the letter he received in response asked what had given him the impression that Lewis Wetzel was buried in West Virginia.

Mr. Koci next turned to the Marshall County Historical Society. He and his students sent letters urging some civic organization to clean up McCreary Cemetery. "I think you don't care about the McCreary Cemetery," one child wrote with the frank bluntness of a grade schooler. "I think you got to do something. . . . So get some people and start now."

In May of 1985, Gerald Plants, the new president of the Marshall County Historical Society, wrote Mr. Koci, assuring him that he also was interested in the cemetery, both as president of the society and as a Wetzel family descendant. He invited Koci to the upcoming meeting of the historical society, which was to feature a program by Wetzel authority William G. Klettner of Wheeling.

The meeting of May 20, 1985, was one of the best attended in the society's history. I had read about the event in the local newspaper and made it a point to be there. Over 200 people were at the meeting, many of them descendants of the Wetzels. Some of the participants were the same as attended the famous Wetzel-Bonnette reunions which took place in the Wheeling area in the late 1930's.

Sometimes nearly a thousand people had gathered at those reunions, for the Wetzels were a prolific family. C. B. Allman, the author of *Lewis Wetzel, Indian Fighter*, was the grandson of Lewis's brother, Jacob. Gerald Plants mentioned in his letter to Mr. Koci that he himself descended from Martin Wetzel. In doing research from news-

paper articles from the 1930's, '40's, and '50's, I found that quite a few people of advanced age attributed their longevity to being descended from the hardy Wetzel stock. Several of them claimed to be direct descendants of Lewis Wetzel, but since historians say that Lewis had no offspring I have my doubts.

Mr. Klettner gave his slide show. Earl Francis had some Lewis Wetzel memorabilia on display, including Wetzel's knife. Mr. Koci, the Ohio principal, spoke from the audience of his concerns about the McCreary Cemetery. I learned that, in addition to Martin and Lewis Wetzel, another brother, John. Jr., was buried there, as was their mother, Mary Bonnette Wetzel. It was an informative, entertaining meeting.

On May 2, 1988, the McCreary Preservation Society was formed to clean up the old graveyard. Gerald Plants is now chairman. I have interviewed Mr. Plants and his wife, Barbara, who is secretary-treasurer of the cemetery society.

McCreary Cemetery was finally cleaned up through the efforts of many volunteers. Luke Merinar, Dale Lowe, and Bill McWhorter are the trustees of the society at the present time. The society has grown to over 200 members, many from far-away states.

I asked Mr. Plants why the cemetery had gotten into such disrepair in the first place. Perhaps this was an unfair question, because there are hundreds of similarly neglected graveyards in West Virginia alone. The only reason people like Mr. Koci and I were concerned about this one was because it was the burial place of Lewis Wetzel. Mr. Plants said that he himself had six sets of ancestors buried in that little cemetery, but that it was the letters from Mr. Koci's students which finally goaded him into action.

I learned from Mr. Plants that McCreary Cemetery is located on land deeded to Thomas McCreary in 1788 by Edwin Randolph, the Governor of Virginia, for his service in the Revolutionary War. As late as the 1930's and 40's there was a man named McCreary who kept up the cemetery.

I asked Mr. Plants about the "h" on Lewis Wetzel's tombstone. He explained that there are many variations to the name. Most pioneers weren't sure how to spell their own names. Whoever petitioned the Veteran's Administration for Lewis's tombstone must have felt that there was an "h" in the name.

When I read a list of persons attending some of the Wetzel-Bonnette reunions, I saw many versions of the family name — from Wetzel to Whitsell. An appendix to the De Hass history says that the name originally included an "h" and that the Virginia General Assembly debated the spelling at length in creating Wetzel County in 1846.

Lewis's 1942 reinterment was an impressive ceremony, according to Mr. Plants. He was just a lad at the time, but he still remembers the pomp and ceremony of the military funeral. Apparently, Wetzel was accorded the honor for his frontier service. Although not a soldier in the strictest sense, he had fought many skirmishes in the Revolutionary period. Brother Martin, who fought in the Battle of Point Pleasant in 1774 and was among the defenders of Fort Henry in 1783, had received his own military funeral just two years before Lewis. Both ceremonies took place well over 100 years after the brothers' deaths, belated recognition of their service in a bloody era of West Virginia history.

The West Virginia Home Front:
More on the Maneuver Area

World War II infantrymen practice rock climbing in Tucker County's Blackwater Canyon. Army Corps of Engineers photo, March 1944.

As noted in the "Mule School" article in the spring GOLDENSEAL, the World War II pack-training school established near Elkins in 1943 was part of a much larger military maneuver area. Randolph County historian Don Rice provided the following additional information on the maneuver area. — ed.

An official news release from Washington on June 23, 1943, announced that army maneuvers would commence in Randolph and four adjacent counties to familiarize army units with "low mountain" and rough terrain operations under the command of the 13th Army Corps. Elkins was selected as the headquarters for the operations which were to be conducted in the five-county area on both National Forest and private lands.

Elkins and surrounding communities soon observed the movement of troops and equipment, with the arrival of truck convoys and special trains. Within a few weeks, 10,000 troops were living in tent cities within what had been vacant fields in Elkins and outlying communities. By early 1944, about 16,000 soldiers were being trained every eight weeks in terrain which had been selected due to its resemblance to European topography, particularly to parts of Italy.

The streets of Elkins were often thronged with soldiers. Local people said it was like Forest Festival days every time the masses of soldiers descended upon the town.

Service units, including a signal battalion, a quartermaster detachment, military police, a special services company, engineers, ordnance, and other support elements, were stationed in or near Elkins. Stuart's Park became the site of an army evacuation hospital. A transportation unit, consisting primarily of black soldiers, was encamped in the vicinity of what is now the Southgate and Riverview sections of Elkins. An army station hospital, consisting of seven frame buildings, was erected near the Davis Memorial Hospital on the south side of Gorman Avenue.

A signal corps battalion established communications throughout the widespread maneuver area by the use of telephones, telegraphy, teletype, radios and a carrier pigeon platoon. The pigeons were released on occasion near Alpena and returned to their lofts in the grove at Weese Park near Elkins. Unfortunately, our West Virginia hawks developed a craving for army pigeons, and their depredations soon reduced the carrier pigeon population to a small number.

An army special services company

stationed in Elkins provided entertainment and recreation for the soldiers during their off-duty hours. The local citizens were welcomed to the many performances at the YMCA and at Elkins High School. A special program on November 15, 1943, at the high school featured the first live radio show to be broadcast nationally from Elkins.

Unfortunately, our West Virginia hawks developed a craving for army pigeons, and their depredations soon reduced the carrier pigeon population to a small number.

By November 1943, the quartermaster unit had the job of procuring and distributing up to 25 tons of food per day for the thousands of troops in the maneuver area. A tent city, which was erected in the open field behind the Elkins High School stadium and on the old fairgrounds south of the school, housed many of the troops which assisted in distributing supplies from some of the nearby West Virginia Lumber Company buildings.

Artillery units, utilizing a 60,000-acre preserve for 105mm and 155mm howitzers, engaged in practice firing in the Dolly Sods and Canaan Valley areas. Notices were placed in the local newspaper to forewarn hunters and other citizens of the dangers of being in or near the impact zones during scheduled exercises.

Climbing was taught at Seneca Rocks and Blackwater Canyon, while improvised bridge crossings were made on Blackwater and Dry Fork rivers and at other sites in the five-county area. In July 1943, a detachment from Camp Hale, Colorado, arrived to teach assault climbing. This detachment organized a high-angle rock and assault climbing school at Seneca Rocks. An average of 180 men and officers went through the course every two weeks, assaulting the sheer and crumbling faces of these crags. Training called for everything from easy rock scrambling to extreme tension work with pitons. Particular stress was laid on the rigging and use of assault ropes and pulleys. Each group made two tactical night climbs on unfamiliar rocks.

Selected individuals representing units throughout the army were trained in rock climbing in order for each organization to have trained climbers for use as observers for artillery and infantry and to emplace infantry weapons in commanding positions. Qualified snipers and scouts were trained to get into difficult positions and also, by means of fixed ropes and artificial aids, to prepare routes for regular troops over terrain which ordinarily would be impassable.

From July 1943 through June 1944 over 100,000 men gained invaluable training in the West Virginia mountains which prepared them for combat overseas. These men were subsequently assigned to many fronts throughout the European Theater of Operations. One unit which trained here and served with distinction in Europe was the 94th Signal Battalion. The 94th saw action during the Battle of the Bulge in December 1944, and participated in the capture and crossing of the Remagen Bridge in March 1945.

Like other war efforts, the West Virginia Maneuver Area was a transient operation which left few permanent indications of its passing. Still its impact was considerable, if temporary. The arrival of the army had a significant effect on the local economy as business boomed at hotels and restaurants, and transformed the area in to what some contemporary observers called an "old maid's heaven."

—Donald L. Rice

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Going Down Bluestone in Old 85

I ran into reader Ron Lane of Indiana at last April's New River Symposium at Pipestem State Park. Ron had a lot on his mind, as always, this time including the historic Norfolk & Western train wreck at Maybeury, McDowell County. The June 30, 1937, rail tragedy was the subject of Stuart McGehee's article, "Riding on Fire: The Great Maybeury Railroad Disaster," in our spring issue.

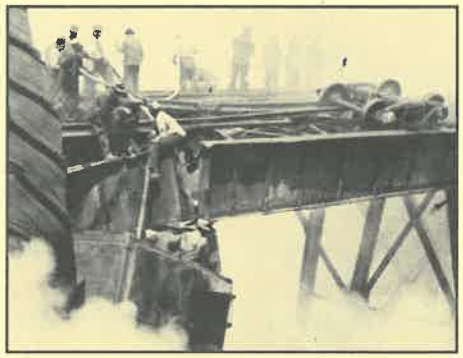
Ron, a train buff, mechanical engineer, and long-time GOLDENSEAL friend and supporter, provided further information on the fatal derailing of N&W Train No. 85. He pointed out that the incident was the subject of a chapter in Katie Letcher Lyle's popular train wreck book, *Scalded to Death by the Steam*, published by Algonquin Books in 1983. Lane directed my attention in particular to the folk ballad, "The Wreck of Old 85," which Lyle included in her chapter:

Old Eighty-five
Had a brave engineer,
To make up twenty minutes
He had no fear.
He went down Bluestone River
In old Eighty-five;
And when he reached the tunnel
He was doing ninety-five.

Chorus
Old Eighty-five
Going down the river;
Old Eighty-five
To Williamson on time;
Old Eighty-Five
Trying to make up twenty
minutes,
A manifest freight train
Which must go on time.

When he climbed upon his
engine,
Starting down the line,
He said to his brakeman:
"I am feeling fine.
And if I blow the whistle
You will know right then,
I'm going to be in Williamson
At half past ten."

When he reached the mountain,
He tried his brake;



The Maybeury wreck scene from the last GOLDENSEAL. Photo by Bernard Wills, courtesy Eastern Regional Coal Archives.

Manifest freight
And lives were at stake.
When he tried his air
The fire began to fly;
It seemed to his brakeman
Someone was going to die.

His fireman and buddy
Was his dearest friend;
"Unless this brake can hold her,
It's our journey's end!"
He said "Goodbye,"
And he shook his hand:
"I'll meet you over yonder
In the promised land."

Lyle came across the song at the Blue Ridge Institute at Ferrum College in Virginia. She indicated in her book and in a recent telephone conversation that she didn't know who wrote the ballad, saying it possibly was the work of Mr. Duff, the N&W station agent at Maybeury. We at GOLDENSEAL are interested in hearing from anyone who may know more facts about this song.

We also remain interested in West Virginia disaster ballads in general, whether about wrecks, mine explosions, floods, fires; murders, or simply love gone bad in the worst kind of way. Examples include "The Lincoln County Crew" from the summer 1986 GOLDENSEAL and "The Murder of Jay Legg," which we published in the fall of the same year.

Send your ballads to the Editor, GOLDENSEAL, The Cultural Center, Capitol Complex, Charleston, WV 25305.

— Ken Sullivan

In This Issue

HARRY M. BRAWLEY, a Charleston native, was born in 1909. He earned an A.B. in 1931 and an M.A. in 1932 from WVU. He has worked for WCHS in Charleston, as a teacher and principal in Kanawha County, and as a part-time professor at Morris Harvey College. He has published widely and was a member of the Charleston City Council. He last wrote for GOLDENSEAL in fall 1989.

DOUG CHADWICK of Pocahontas County was born in North Carolina and grew up in Maryland. He was educated in Oregon, Washington State, and Rome. Chadwick moved to West Virginia in 1970, has been a photographer for the *Fayette Tribune* and *Raleigh Register,* and now works primarily as a freelance panoramic photographer. He has contributed to GOLDENSEAL since our first year.

LORNA CHAMBERLAIN, a Wetzel County native, studied English at the College of Steubenville after graduating from Warwood High School near Wheeling. She is a freelance writer whose articles have been used in many publications. Her last contribution to GOLDENSEAL appeared in the winter 1990 issue.

GREG CLARK is photo preservation archivist for the Division of Culture and History.

MAUREEN CROCKETT was born in New York State and attended City University of New York, West Virginia University and other institutions. She lives in St. Albans and works as a freelance writer, photographer and illustrator. She contributes regularly to *Wonderful West Virginia* magazine. Her most recent article for GOLDENSEAL appeared in summer 1990.

ROBERT JACOBUS is wildlife manager at the State Wildlife Center in French Creek for the Division of Natural Resources.

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

SUSAN LEFFLER is the folk arts specialist for the Division of Culture and History.

MICHAEL PAULEY is an historian with the State Historic Preservation Office of the Division of Culture and History.

JOSEPH PLATANIA, a Huntington native, earned his B.A. and M.A. at Marshall. He has worked for the West Virginia Department of Welfare and the Veterans Administration, and is now a freelance writer. His last contribution to GOLDENSEAL appeared in the winter 1989 issue.

DORIS M. RADABAUGH is a native Gilmer Countian. A graduate of both Glenville State College and WVU, she has been a business teacher at Parkersburg High School for the past 27 years. She did the story on Job's Temple because she thought "it needed to be done." This is her first contribution to GOLDENSEAL.

LON SAVAGE, author of the popular West Virginia mine wars book, *Thunder in the Mountains,* is a native of Charleston. He graduated from Cornell University with a degree in history. He has worked as a newspaperman and for the last 25 years in university administration at Virginia Tech. This is his first contribution to GOLDENSEAL.

TOPPER SHERWOOD, a Charleston freelance writer, came to West Virginia when less than a year old. He was educated in Ohio and West Germany and served in the Peace Corps in Africa. He has worked at the *Charleston Gazette,* the *Charleston Daily Mail* and the Associated Press. He has published in *Time,* the *Boston Globe,* and elsewhere. His last contribution to GOLDENSEAL appeared in the winter 1989 issue.

GORDON LLOYD SWARTZ III, a native West Virginian, graduated from WVU with a degree in agriculture. He is now a coal miner at Consolidation Coal's Shoemaker Mine in Marshall County. The proud father of the largest set of twins ever born in West Virginia, he has written for *Twins* magazine among other publications. His last contribution to GOLDENSEAL appeared in winter 1987.

HALI TAYLOR, a freelance photographer and artist, is the children's librarian at the Shepherdstown Public Library. She grew up in California and studied photography at the University of California in San Diego. Her last contribution to GOLDENSEAL appeared in the spring 1991 issue.

BILL THERIAULT, of Jefferson County, manages the publishing division of a biomedical research and writing company. He is president of the Jefferson County Oral and Visual History Association and chairman of the county Historic Landmarks Commission. He last contributed to GOLDENSEAL in spring 1989.

JOSEPH B. C. WHITE, a Wood County native, now works in Pittsburgh as a lecturer and freelance writer. As director of the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy he had charge of Frank Lloyd Wright's famous "Fallingwater," and later managed natural resources and interpretation for the 13,000-acre park system surrounding Pittsburgh. This is his second contribution to GOLDENSEAL.

JAMES WOOFTER is a native of Gilmer County and past president of the Job's Temple Association. He earned an undergraduate degree from Glenville State College, a master's from the University of Alabama, and a Ph.D. from Columbia University. He retired from the U.S. Office of Education in 1978. This is his first contribution to GOLDENSEAL.

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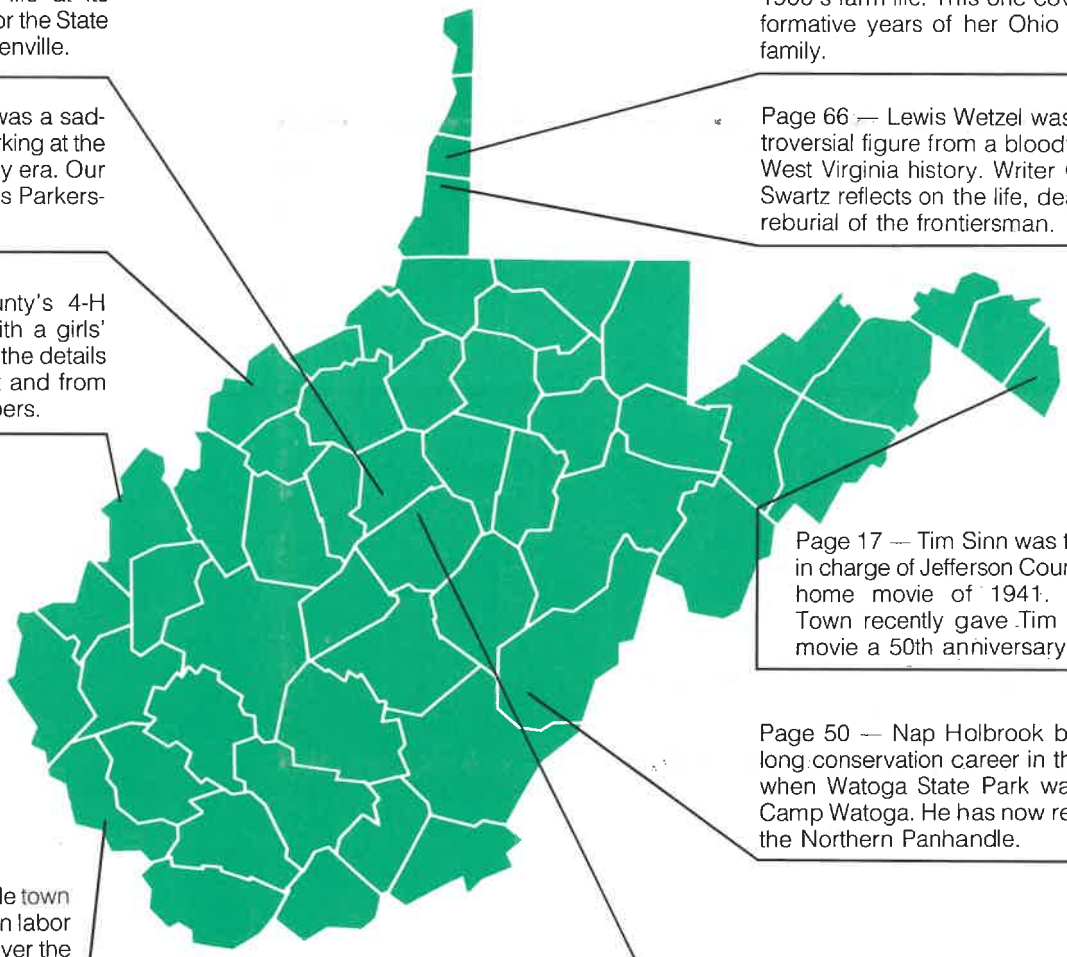

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