Vol. 19, No. 3 • WEST VIRGINIA TRADITIONAL LIFE • Fall 1993 • $3.95

Goldenseal

From the Editor: Renewal Time

It's fall, and that means subscription time again. We're shooting for a hundred this year — and as the old spiritual says, "ninety-nine and a half won't do."

That's right. For the first time ever, GOLDENSEAL is budgeted to be 100 percent self-supporting in fiscal year 1993-94, which runs through next June 30. That means no subsidy from state tax dollars, zero. If we can't pay our own way, we won't be here.

Pardon the bluntness, but I had to stress that the situation is a serious one. Serious but not hopeless, I hasten to add. Otherwise I'd be out job hunting, rather than bothering you with this. We have been hovering at about 95 percent for a couple of years, actually, thanks to cost cutting on our part and increased support from readers such as you. So another way to look at it is that we need to do five percent better.

And we are by no means friendless in our efforts to make the magazine self-sufficient. GOLDENSEAL gets plenty of vital indirect support from the state, in the form of rent-free offices, utilities, photographic services, and so forth. This represents the generous and ongoing backing of our publisher, the West Virginia Division of Culture and History. We appreciate that and expect it to continue.

What our budget covers is the rest of it, which is to say the overwhelming biggest part of the cost of publishing your magazine. Call it our out-of-pocket expenses, if you have big pockets or a good imagination. Things like printing, nearly $100,000 by itself, and postage, at about $40,000, as well as staff payroll, designer pay and freelance fees, to name the bigger items. It adds up to better than a quarter-million dollars this year.

That's what we need from you. Not you individually (though I'd be tickled to talk to anyone with that kind of money who might want to start an endowment fund for a worthy magazine I know of!) but from you and the thousands of other readers like you. If you have been reading GOLDENSEAL for long, you know we expect subscribers to pay $15 each year. That is the same price as last year and the year before, incidentally. We'll keep it there as long as we can and do our best to give you your money's worth in the meantime.

GOLDENSEAL began as an entirely free publication, our very earliest readers will recall. It also began with a circulation of about 1,000 and a budget of only a few thousand dollars per issue. Both mushroomed, and money got tight.

We began our innovative "voluntary subscription" system in the early '80's and continue to rely on it today. I'm afraid things have become less voluntary over the years, for reasons most readers will understand, but our methods remain largely the same. Let me explain, since your participation is essential.

Here's how it works: The fall GOLDENSEAL, the one you have in your hands now, is the first issue each fiscal year. We are officially broke then and begin our annual fundraising by sending a reminder to everyone on the mailing list at that time, asking them to renew their subscriptions. This reminder letter will go out in a few days. Please watch for yours.

The effect is to "lump" most subscriptions in a fall-to-fall cycle. We know this may be an inconvenience to some, and we apologize. Most readers seem to get used to it, especially once they understand that it allows major savings in postage and other costs and consequently helps to keep subscription prices down. The difference between doing a mass mailing at bulk postal rates, versus tens of thousands of individual first-class letters, is substantial, as you can imagine.

That's not the way *Time* and *Newsweek* do business, but then they have giant circulation departments and we've got one lady working at it part-time. It is the way we have put GOLDENSEAL into the black, however, something practically unheard of for a small publication. We want to continue with this simple system as long as it works for us.

And by the way — the fiscal year began July 1, so the clock is running. You'll be hearing from me soon. Let me hear from you.

With that said, let me bring you up to date on the news around here: You may not notice much change — and believe me, that suits us just fine — but we have both a new designer and a new printer beginning with this issue. Anne Crozier of A.C. Designs replaces Mother Wit Graphics, whose good efforts over the years we appreciate. Anne works for two weeks per issue, designing and laying out the magazine — all done on computer nowadays, of course.

After that, Anne's work goes to Watkins Printing Company, our new printer. Only new this year, actually, for we are old friends with the company and with the Watkins family. They printed GOLDENSEAL for at least three years during the mid-1980's. We recall them as among our best printers and look forward to working with them again.

Finally, I want to get your advice on future plans. As hard as it is to believe, GOLDENSEAL turns 20 years old a couple of issues from now, and we need your suggestions for what to do about it. We are toying with the idea of a 20th Anniversary issue reprinting the best stories and pictures since volume 1, number 1.

Please let us know if you think that is a good idea. If so, which articles are your favorites? We will appreciate it if you thumb through old issues and let us know what you like.

In the meantime, my sincere thanks for helping GOLDENSEAL reach this important milestone. Most magazines don't, specialized regional publications in particular. We are proud to have made it and hope we can count on you to continue to help.

Your chance to do so will arrive in the mail soon.

—Ken Sullivan

Letters from Readers

GOLDENSEAL welcomes letters of general interest from readers. Our address is The Cultural Center, 1900 Kanawh Blvd. East, Charleston, WV 25305-0300. Published letters may be edited for brevity or clarity.

April 19, 1993
Richmond, Virginia
Editor:
Only those of us who were raised in the '30's, '40's, and '50's in the coal camps of southern West Virginia *really* know what it was like. My old schoolmate and football teammate at Marsh Fork High, Johnny Vergis, did a superb job in capturing the uniqueness of that experience [in his Spring '93 article on the Raleigh County town of Edwight]. Many thanks to Mr. Vergis, and to your staff for selecting his fine article for publication. I am sure it was appreciated by your many readers who grew up under similar circumstances.
Sincerely,
William M. Sharpe, Jr.

More on Marbles

June 16, 1993
Huntington, West Virginia
Editor:
As an enthusiastic former mibster, I enjoyed "Champions with Dirty Knuckles" [by Richard Ramella in the Summer '93 GOLDENSEAL]. As a participant in the Huntington tournaments during those halcyon days of the early 1950's, I was pleased to have known all those national champions from that era. Those were great tournaments, well organized, and the competition was spirited and popular with hundreds of people attending.

M. KAPLAN - *HERALD-DISPATCH*

Fred Burns in 1967.

I was concerned, however, that your otherwise thoroughgoing article failed to recognize the state and national leadership of our local tournament director when the Huntington tournament produced four national champs. Fred Burns, the sports editor of the Huntington *Herald-Dispatch*, organized this remarkable event during the 1940's and 1950's. Those of us who participated in Fred's tournaments will always be thankful for his dedication and drive to ensure that we all had fun and an experience to remember as we learned what life and competition is about through the great game of marbles.

Spring meant marbles and marbles was Fred Burns and his marble rink, constructed each year at the intersection of 10th Street and 5th Avenue.
Sincerely,
L. D. Egnor
Judge, Sixth Judicial Circuit Court

Coming from a judge, we figured we had better take this as an order to do better. Fortunately, the Herald-Dispatch *had a picture of Fred Burns which they were kind enough to loan us. We present it at left for Judge Egnor and others who recall Mr. Burns's work with the children of Huntington.—ed.*

Daily Life at DeSales

April 9, 1993
Mentor, Ohio
Editor:
I recently received the Winter 1990 GOLDENSEAL from a friend.

I really enjoyed the article [on DeSales Heights Catholic school in Parkersburg]. In 1946-48 I attended DeSales Heights as a boarding student. I last visited the sisters in 1989 and was surprised to hear of their moving.

The article brought back many memories. To name just a few:

Everyday at 4:00 o'clock a bell rang and we all stood in line for one slice of homemade bread with appl butter.

We stood at attention once a wee by our beds, divided from eac other by white curtains, wit dresser drawers opened for inspec tion. If order wasn't found demer its were issued. The end of eac week demerits were read in stud hall. If you had too many you didn' get to go downtown that weekend

Weekly we stood in line for a large tablespoon of Cascara — whether we needed it not. I doubt if anyone enjoyed it.

I could go on, but the most important thing is that the sisters loved us.

I would also like to mention your articles on the Ohio River and the barges and boats. My father, Lloyd Stephens, born in Elizabeth in 1901, told me many stories of the river. He said he learned to swim in the Ohio River. His cousins used to toss him off a barge, and if he couldn't swim back they would extend a pole and catch the straps on his overalls.

When I saw the photos in your magazine I knew how the river must have looked when Dad was a boy.
Sincerely,
Charlotte Stephens

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Goldenseal

Volume 19, Number 3 Fall 1993

COVER: The Pioneer Farm of Twin Falls State Park interprets 19th century mountain life. "On Bower's Ridge," beginning on page 36, fills in details from the family which actually lived there. Photo by Michael Keller.

PHOTOS: Doug Chadwick, Greg Clark, William Creasy, Paul Fansler, Jim Harter, Hunter Johnston, M. Kaplan, Michael Keller, John Sibold, Danny Williams

luefield Buildings

uly 25, 1993
luefield, West Virginia
ditor:

found the article entitled 'Bluefield's Biggest" by Stuart McGehee, which covered the former West Virginian Hotel and men-

The Law & Commerce Building.

tioned a number of buildings by one of West Virginia's finest architects, Alex B. Mahood, quite interesting. The author does a splendid job.

However, Bluefield's first modern office building, the Law & Commerce Building, begun in 1911 and completed in 1913, was omitted. It was the first fireproof office building erected in Bluefield, a seven-story structure, at a cost of approximately $260,000. It continues as one of the better office buildings in Bluefield.

David Edwin French, my father-in-law, a well-known attorney, politician and businessman, organized the corporation erecting the Law & Commerce Building. He was the largest investor in the holding company, and his heirs retained the largest portion of shares until the building was sold. Mr. French was a member of the West Virginia State Senate from 1910 to 1914. He was a candidate for the Democratic nomination for governor in 1916.

The building is now owned by Ten Realty Company. I knew Alex B. Mahood very well and was told by him many times that it was the best fireproof building in the city for years. A number of Bluefield's law firms, as well as other prominent businesses, occupy offices in the building today. Frank Easley, another prominent businessman with varied interests, including coal, held a sizable share in the building. He and his son maintained that interest in the building and its operation until it was sold in the early 1980's.

I also enjoyed "Marbles in the Mountain State" by Richard Ramella.
Sincerely,
Lena G. French

Debby Jackson's sidebar accompanying the McGehee article indicated that the Law & Commerce Building was the project which brought Mahood to West Virginia. We appreciate the extra information.—ed.

June 31, 1993
Sunset Beach, North Carolina
Editor:
I have a question which I believe you can answer, regarding the Summer 1993 GOLDENSEAL.

In the picture of Bluefield at the bottom of page 20 a several-tiered round structure stands out — what is it? Looks like a football stadium or maybe a roundhouse.

I passed the magazine on to a neighbor and he was perplexed.
Very truly yours,
C. Neale

Roundhouse is right. The Bluefield train yards served as a major Norfolk & Western maintenance center, and rolling stock was serviced in this roundhouse. Old railroaders may have to correct us on the details, but our understanding is that a locomotive was first moved onto the single track of the big turntable in the center of the roundhouse. The turntable could then be rotated to match the track of any of the service bays, which were located around the sides.—ed.

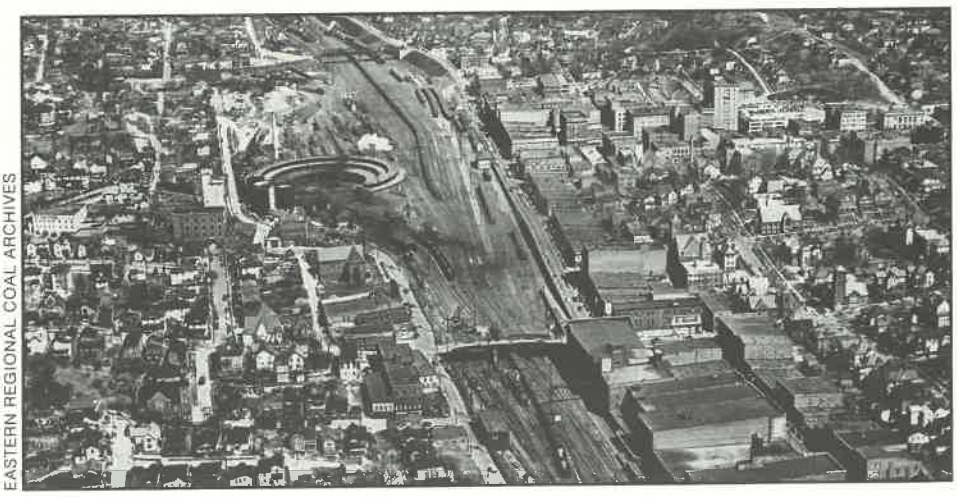
Elk River Memories

April 30, 1993
Cincinnati, Ohio
Editor:
I just wanted to drop a line to say I enjoyed reading Juliette Fortner's first published article, "Granny and Paw," in the Winter 1992 issue of GOLDENSEAL. She should have started writing long ago.

I was drawn to her article by its first sentence, "I was born in 1935 and grew up in the Elkview area...." I knew right away I must know her. Then when I saw her name I immediately recognized it as the majorette who drove all of us ninth grade boys to distraction. She graduated from Elkview High School in 1953 and I graduated in 1956. I was raised over in Pinch.

The article reflects a lot of love for her foster grandparents. Why is it when we're growing up that our grandparents seem so wonderful, but our parents just don't seem to understand us?

Just the mention of Judge Wertz's place, and Levin Brothers store, Rock Lake, Little Sandy, and chicken every Sunday (my job was cutting off their heads with a hatchet) brought back lots of memories. We must be getting old to love to reminisce so much!
Sincerely,
Joe Fields

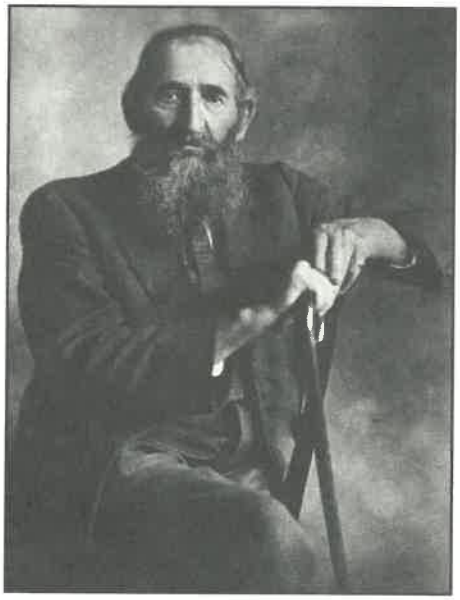


EASTERN REGIONAL COAL ARCHIVES

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 event announcements and review copies of books and recordings, but cannot guarantee publication.

Famous Feud



Devil Anse Hatfield, courtesy State Archives.

Appalachia's Hatfield-McCoy Feud has been the subject of novels, articles, movies, plays, and several major historical studies. In the last quarter of the 19th century the two families waged a private war on the Tug River border between West Virginia and Kentucky. The violence resulted in the murder of at least a dozen people, and one person was executed by hanging.

In 1971 the Reverend Shirley Donnelly published a book about the famous feud. Donnelly authored the popular column "Yesterday and Today" for the *Beckley Post-Herald* from 1955 until his death in 1982. He was an Oak Hill pastor whose passion for preaching was matched by his enthusiasm as an amateur historian. Donnelly, the founder of the Fayette County Historical Society, "spent a long lifetime fooling with the history of this state," as he put it.

Donnelly wrote that he was "of the opinion that the Hatfield-McCoy Feud is the greatest story that has ever taken place in this state!" His *Hatfield-McCoy Feud Reader* is a compilation of stories, newspaper articles, and photos reflecting that opinion. Much of the material came from Donnelly's 1957 columns on the feud.

Recently Thomas In-Prints reprinted the Donnelly reader. The 45-page softbound book sells for $4.95 in area bookstores and is also available by mail. Readers may contact Thomas In-Prints at 88 Imboden Street, Gauley Bridge, WV 25085.

Southern Mountain Folksongs

People who sing folksongs and people who study them rarely use the same books. Singers want books with singable melodies, complete lyrics, and a readable layout. Folklorists want information, cross-references, and footnotes.

W. K. McNeil's *Southern Mountain Folksongs*, recently published by August House Publishers, has much to offer both groups. The traditions of the Appalachians and the Ozarks are the sources for the new book's 36 songs, and the result is a nice blend of music and information.

The songs are arranged by theme — religious songs, comic songs, songs about love and lovers, etc. Some, such as "I'm Working on a Building," "Old Joe Clark," and "Cindy" are familiar, but most of these songs are seldom printed.

McNeil presents the songs as though he expects the reader to sing them. The music is clearly written, and the lyrics are complete. Singers who also play an instrument will appreciate the fact that most of the songs can be sung without turning pages.

Each song is preceded by an introduction, usually a page or two, with information about the song's background, other similar tunes or alternate titles, and the source. At the end of the book is a listing of printed sources, old and new recordings, and books and articles for further information.

Southern Mountain Folksongs sells for $12.95 paperback and $24.95 hardback. It may be purchased in bookstores or directly from the publisher. Send mail orders, including $3 postage, to August House, P.O. Box 3273, Little Rock, AR 72203.

Herbs Make the Difference

Many West Virginians grow herbs for fun and some for profit, and they will all have a chance to get together to compare notes this fall. The second annual Herb Conference of the West Virginia Herb Association is scheduled for October 22 through 24 at the Mid-Mountain Conference Center in Flatwoods. The 1993 conference theme is "Herbs Make the Difference."

WEST VIRGINIA HERB ASSOCIATION

Workshops are geared for both herb professionals and amateur enthusiasts. Exhibits and demonstrations of "all things herbal" are planned, according to association president Nona Conley. The West Virginia group has roughly 170 members and is open to anyone in the herb business or with an active interest in the uses of herbs. The herbalists formed their association to provide educational programs, increase consumer awareness of herbs and their products, and create a network for all "herb people."

On Saturday, October 23, the public is invited to attend the Flatwoods

meeting. Readers may call (304)524-705 or (304)269-6416 for more information on the West Virginia Herb Association or the upcoming conference.

Hardy County Musical

Billed as "an original musical of the South Branch Valley," *The Secret Place* premieres this fall at the historic McCoy-McMechen Theatre on Main Street in Moorefield. The play was adapted from a book by Roy Goodmiller that tells the story of the fictional Smithson family in 1905 Hardy County.

Jane E. Jopling, a WVU county extension agent, wrote the script and directs the play. Stephen G. Smith of Hardy County composed the original music and serves as musical director for *The Secret Place*. Smith is especially proud that the play is being produced locally with 50 people from the town working together to bring the story to the stage.

The first performance, part of the 1993 Hardy County Heritage Weekend, begins at 7:30 p.m. on Saturday, September 25. Tickets are available at the door and cost $5 for adults and $2 for students and children. Additional performances will be held on Sunday, September 26, at 2:00 p.m. and on October 1, 2 and 3. Show times for those dates are 7:30 p.m., 8:00 p.m., and 2:00 p.m.

Advance tickets may be purchased by writing The Secret Place, P.O. Box 95, Old Fields, WV 26845. Ordering information for Goodmiller's book is also available from the above address.

Fort New Salem

Fort New Salem of Salem-Teikyo University in Harrison County is doing its best to replicate 19th-century frontier life. The fort is a "living history" settlement representing the culture and crafts of Western Virginia during the period of 1770-1830.

In early October the museum plans to capture the spirit of harvest time of two centuries ago. Its 1993 Harvest Festival is scheduled for the first two weekends in October, the 2nd and 3rd and 9th and 10th. Fort New Salem's director Carol A. Schweiker promises plenty of apple butter making, craft demonstrations, good food and good music.

For the first weekend the emphasis is on traditional heritage skills. There are demonstrations scheduled in blacksmithing, tinsmithing, candle and soap making, and natural dyes. The second weekend highlights food, with demonstrations in early food preservation methods and hominy making. There are also plans for the reenactment of a frontier wedding.

Crafts and music are a big part of both weekends, and the music is different each day. The entertainment includes performances by Linda Sigismondi on mountain dulcimer; fiddler Betty Perry; Country Class, an old-time gospel group; and the string band Friends and Neighbors.

Admission is $4 for adults and $1.50 for children 6-12. For more information contact Fort New Salem at (304)782-5245.

Night of Illumination

In November a "Night of Illumination" is planned across the nation and in West Virginia to spotlight public works built during the Depression. The special event, coordinated by the Franklin D. Roosevelt Library in Hyde Park, New York, celebrates the 32nd president's Works Progress Administration. It is being held in conjunction with a major exhibition at the library titled "Building America: Public Works of the New Deal Era."

The Tygart Dam near Grafton was a major WPA project. Photographer unknown, courtesy State Archives.

Created in 1935, the WPA gave relief to America's needy during the Great Depression, providing work for 8,500,000 unemployed Americans during the eight years it existed. The construction program alone resulted in 651,000 miles of roads, 125,110 buildings, and 78,000 bridges. Many airports, public utilities and recreational facilities were either built or improved.

"Building America" celebrates those public works projects still in use across the country — landmarks such as the National Zoo, Skyline Drive, and the Grand Coulee and Hoover dams. West Virginia has many such works, including the Beckley Courthouse, Charleston's South Side Bridge, the city swimming pool in Wheeling, Taylor County's Tygart Dam, and the Chestnut Lodge at Camp Washington-Carver in Fayette County.

State historical officials will decide which West Virginia sites will be lighted on the night of November 8, when participants will throw a switch illuminating major projects in each state and the District of Columbia.

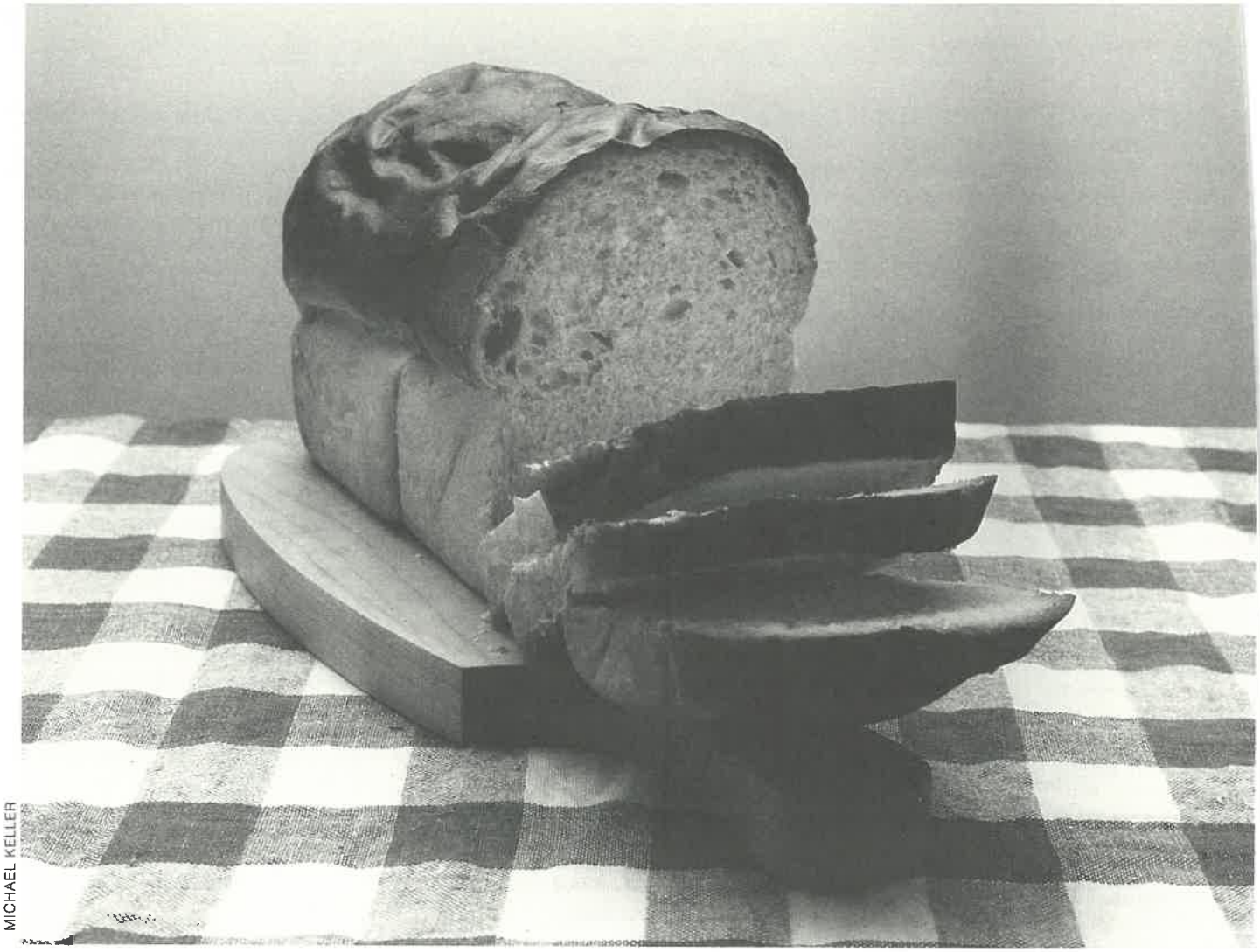
Also Noted with Interest

Buck, A Life Sketch of James H. Harless: biography by Ruel E. Foster and Robert B. Conner, published by West Virginia University Press, WVU Library, Morgantown, WV 26506. Price: $25

"Friends & Neighbors": cassette by Ray Hicks, Tim Hicks, Chris Mooney, Scott Pearson, Cathy Pheasant, the music ranging from "straight ahead bluegrass to obscure tunes." Recorded by Frozen Sound Studio, contact Ray Hicks, 107 Ridgeley Road, Morgantown, WV 26505; (304)599-2888. Price: $8

Only One: a children's book by Marc Harshman with illustrations by Barbara Garrison, published by Cobblehill Books, 375 Hudson Street, New York, N.Y. 10014. Price: $12.99

"Pretty Little Dog": cassette by Danny Williams with Tom King, Mike Furbee, traditional instrumentals performed on dulcimer, fretless banjo, guitar and fiddle. Recorded by Frozen Sound Studio, contact Danny Williams, 364 1/2 Patteson Drive, Suite 168, Morgantown, 26505; (304)345-6171. Price: $10



MICHAEL KELLER

Salt-Rising Bread

By Margaret Barlow

Except for weekends, Mother made baking-powder biscuits three times a day in a big black 84-biscuit bread pan. That's right — 84, three times a day. We were a sizable Pocahontas County farm family with hired help, hard workers and big eaters. And Mother's biscuits were small, the size of the Calumet baking powder can she used as a cutter. Some of our neighbors used quart lard cans as cutters which produced huge biscuits, but not Mother. Her biscuits were small and tidy.

Sometimes she made yeast dough, and we had Parker House rolls to complement a special meal. I remember how she used to roll them out on the doughboard, spread on some rich butter, and cut them to fold. Then she learned in Farm Women's Club that the time-honored cook at Jackson's Mill had a more efficient method for making rolls. He would take a small amount of dough, roll it into a ball, pat it out in his hand, put some soft butter on one side, then fold and pinch the roll together and place it in the pan. From that day onward, Mother made her Parker House rolls in this manner and taught her daughters to do likewise.

But Mother's specialty was salt-rising bread. When I was growing up we almost always had salt-rising bread on a weekend. It was the rare Saturday that the kitchen was not steaming hot from baking salt-rising rolls and loaves, plenty for the weekend to give more time for rest on the Sabbath. We had a warm loaf for Saturday supper, day-old salt-rising bread all day Sunday,

and some that was only slightly stal- ng on Monday morning. I can never forget the smell of the fermented rising, the overpowering heat of the kitchen and the rich aroma of the baking. As soon as the rolls could be touched I would have one with mounds of cow butter, a term we used to distinguish the dairy product from that of apples, pears and peaches. It was rare for me to stop after only one roll.

Freshly churned sour cream butter, chicken gravy, or sliced garden-ripe tomatoes are all especially wonderful with salt-rising bread. Dressing for Thanksgiving dinner with a salt-rising base and plenty of sage is outstanding. Milk toast made with it is good too, though regular toast is my favorite.

Salt-rising bread is heavy, with a pound cake consistency though it hangs together like bread. It was originally made in the days when leavening agents were not easy to buy or save. For many years this bread was a Southern cook's pride. Now, the art of making salt-rising bread is almost obsolete.

No yeast is used. Salt-rising bread is leavened by a mixture of raw potatoes, flour, sugar, soda, hot water and sometimes cornmeal. This mixture is usually prepared, or "the risin's set," the evening before and left to stand in a warm place overnight. If the rising ferments, or "comes" (a process that is likely to take 10 or more hours), there will be a foam on the top of the liquid by morning. If this foam does not appear by mid-morning, a wise cook will throw out the rising and plan to try again another day. Rising that takes too long to come will not make tasty bread.

The liquid from the fermented rising is mixed with enough flour to form a medium stiff batter. This is left to rise in a warm place for about an hour. After being poured in a large container and mixed with the flour, lard and salt, it is divided and turned onto a floured surface for kneading. Loaves are formed, then left to double in size before they are placed in a moderately hot oven to bake. An average yield is six medium loaves and a pan of rolls. Bread baking from the time the liquid is removed from the rising to when the baked bread is taken from the oven is about four hours.

I have never met anyone who was impartial to salt-rising bread. Those who like it consider it food for the gods, finding its characteristic odor of fermented potatoes most agreeable. Those who do not like it have many rude things to say, including likening the smell to that of the common mountain outhouse. It was never served at Mother's table without a substitute provided, even if it had to be stale biscuits. Mother seemed to remember who of her regular eaters and members of the community did or did not like her bread. She always took a few loaves to picnics, potluck church dinners, and to homes where there was sickness or death. Through the years salt-rising bread became her trademark.

I have never met anyone who was impartial to salt-rising bread. Those who like it consider it food for the gods. Those who do not have many rude things to say, including likening the smell to that of the common mountain outhouse.

Setting the rising for this unique bread was often part of the chore talk among the neighborhood women. Getting a good rising was not easy. If there was trouble getting the rising to ferment, they would mull over the possible reasons for its failure, carefully examining the effects of each ingredient on this process. They would speculate whether last year's potatoes were too old to use. Sometimes their hunches would lead them to buy new potatoes at the store before the current year's crop was ready to dig. Other times they considered the flour, although good cooks usually thought their choice in flour was foolproof. Some women wondered whether they were trying to bake in the wrong sign of the moon, but the making of salt-rising bread was one activity in Mother's life that was not dictated by the moon.

The women also talked about how the fire influenced the bread. The firewood — where it came from, the way it was cut, the kind of fire the wood made — provided fuel for endless discussion. In those days, bread baking took a woodbox full of wood. I used to help carry the stove wood, splinters and all, to fill the woodbox on the back porch.

The capacity of a stove to make good fires for bread baking was of utmost importance when a cooking range was purchased. When we chose a new Home Comfort range in the summer of 1939, just after my first year in school, Mother asked about the quality of the bread that could be baked in its oven. The salesman had unexpectedly stopped by our farm near Dunmore to show the new range with its white speckled enamel. During his demonstration Mother often referred to the performance of her own mother's Home Comfort stove, and that of my Grandma Barlow's and of a near neighbor, Mrs. McGlauchlin.

As I recall, this salesman indicated that the oven would heat to perfection by a firebox that would take extra long, somewhat green wood — the kind we always seemed to have plenty of in our woodshed. He assured her that bread baked in that oven was almost always brown as a biscuit. A problem with our old Foster range was wood simply would not heat the oven.

Sadly, I must report for the record that despite the promises of the stove salesman, that miracle of a 1939 Home Comfort range still heated best with short, dry wood. In order to get the oven warm enough for baking, the range needed to be near red hot. The kitchen steamed with the heat, as did all its inhabitants. On a warm summer day bread baking rendered the kitchen almost unbearable. To make the best of it we would also

start one or two long-cooking pots of food like beans, boiled ham, hanovers or cabbage on top of the stove while baking bread.

The summer before I went away to college, it was time to buy yet another cooking range. This one was electric and had been demonstrated in the Monongahela Power Company showroom in Marlinton. Again Mother's questions focused on bread baking. This range would make it possible for us to have fresh bread in our kitchen without the chore of having to fill the woodbox or the discomfort of the overwhelming heat. We kept the old Home Comfort to cook our breakfasts, take the chill of mountain mornings from the kitchen, and heat the water in the tank.

Times were changing. We already had another convenience that made salt-rising bread more readily available. My brother Calvin had saved his money and bought an International Harvester deep freezer when they were new on the market. Soon Mother discovered that salt-rising bread could be frozen and kept for a long time as fresh as the day it was baked. Having this bread to eat when we wanted it never detracted from our family's sense of its specialness, but the coming of refrigeration added to neighborhood talk. Women spent hours discussing whether frozen salt-rising bread was more crumbly than that fresh from the oven. I never could see that it mattered.

My sister Nancy and I used to talk about the first time we made a concerted effort to lose weight. During that week my father and brothers were traveling to Grandpa's farm in Edray to help with the hay making. For their noon dinner Mother made sandwiches with biscuits and salt-rising bread. She baked her salt-rising bread three times that week. How could we resist? No amount of piano practice or reading could keep us from the fresh warm rolls and butter, so I gained three pounds on my first diet.

No, I have never baked the bread myself. Sometimes I think about gathering together all the necessary equipment: a large yellow pyrex bowl for mixing the fermented liquid with the flour, an aluminum dishpan to mix the dough, and some big black bread pans that will hold three good sized loaves. I already have a small red pyrex bowl like the one Mother used for the initial rising, and a warm place to leave it overnight. And most importantly, I still have two of Mother's salt-rising recipes.

But it wouldn't be the same, any more than bakery bread is the same as homemade. For salt-rising bread means much more to me than just something good to eat, as wonderful as it is for that. It is a part of my special memories of home and of the loved ones who populated my Pocahontas County childhood. There is a lot of me — and I'm glad of it — which can be wrapped up under farm and family and salt-rising bread.

Mother Barlow's Bread

Mary Margaret Barlow, our author's mother, was using electric appliances and Pam cooking spray by the time she got around to writing down her instructions on making salt-rising bread, but the spirit and the tasty product remained the same. Mrs. Barlow, who died in 1991, wrote the following at her daughter's request:

I set my "rising" about 6:00 or 7:00 p.m. the night before I want to bake bread. I slice 2 medium-sized potatoes in a stainless steel bowl, add 2 tablespoons sugar and pour in about 3 cups of boiling water, add 1/2 teaspoon soda and 1 teaspoon baking powder. Then add a heaping tablespoon of flour, cover and keep in a warm place.

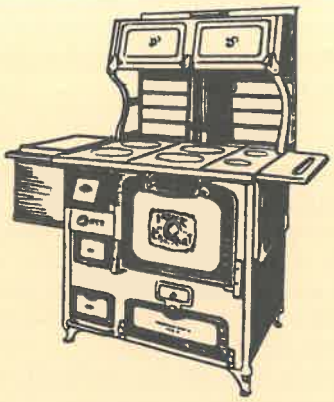
The next morning the mixture will have a deep white foam — and an odor. I keep my mixture warm by [setting it in] water in an electric skillet. Let the water get warm enough that you can put your fingers in it. Do not turn the skillet too hot.

Pour this liquid in a large bowl and beat in enough flour to make a stiff batter. I turn my oven just till it clicks, set in the bowl, cover and let rise until double in bulk — very light and bubbly.

I pour warm water over the remaining potato mixture, about 2 cups. Set it aside in a warm place, and this will get foamy again while the batter rises in the bowl.

I sift about 7 pounds of flour in a dishpan. Make a large hole in the center, add 2 tablespoons salt, 4 tablespoons sugar, 3 tablespoons Crisco. Mix well — add some of the foamy water and 2 or 3 cups of hot water and the batter.

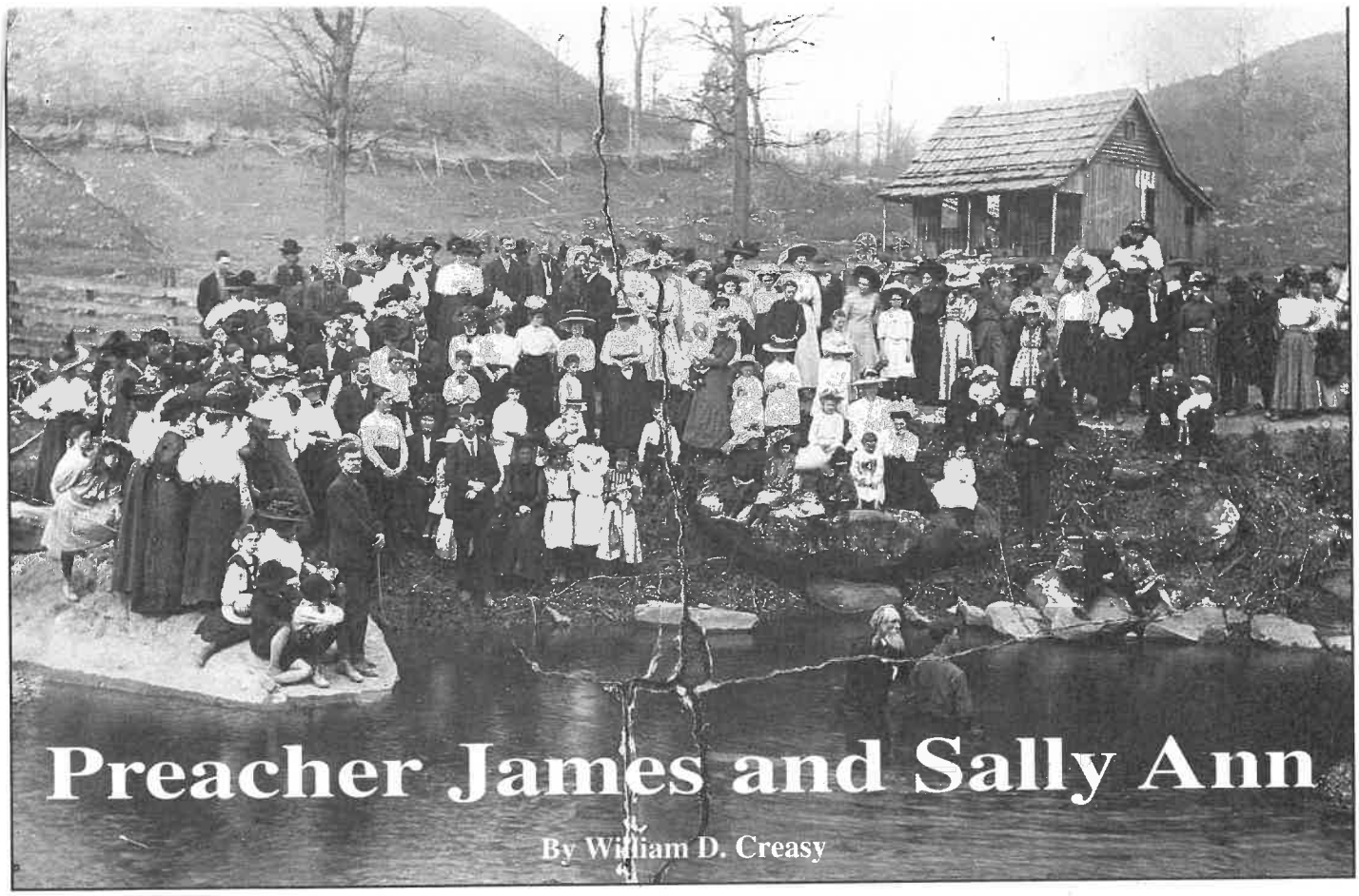
Knead all of this into a stiff dough that can be handled easily — smooth and elastic; knead at least 10 minutes. Form into loaves. I knead each loaf several minutes using cooking oil to keep from sticking. Put in well-greased pans. I use Pam; in the past I used lard or Crisco.



I put these loaves in my barely warm oven to rise until double in bulk. Then I turn on the oven to 350 degrees for 45 minutes. I rotate loaves in the oven after about 20 minutes. Turn off oven and leave a while longer, maybe 10 minutes.

Turn loaves onto a cloth or rack. Grease with margarine and cover with waxed paper for a while.

I have picked up a few ideas from people and other recipes through the years. Gray Hiner told me over the phone how to use the electric skillet. I also saw her using cooking oil to make up loaves. Your grandmother always used butter.



Preacher James and Sally Ann

By William D. Creasy

James Brown was in the soul-saving business. Here he baptizes a convert in Big Beaver Creek, about 1914. Photographer unknown.

During the year 1845 in the village of Birch River, Virginia, a son was born to Elizabeth Brown, the wife of Colonel John Brown. He was the tenth and last child of the family, and they named him James Frame Brown. Seven years later and some 16 miles distant in the village of Frametown, a daughter was born to Melcina Louise Scott and Richard Scott. They named her Sarah Ann, and she was called Sally.

When Sally was young the Scott family moved from Frametown to Birch River, so she and James grew up in the same community. Eventually these two would marry and rear a family of ten children of their own. My mother, Rose Zanna Brown Creasy, was their fourth child.

James became a good carpenter, a fair blacksmith, learned how to farm, and by the time he was an adult knew a good deal about doctoring animals and humans. Sally learned those things considered to be proper for a successful woman of her time. She became an excellent cook and knew how to sew, both by hand and with a treadle sewing machine. She went to school and learned reading, writing, and arithmetic. By the time she reached adulthood, she too knew a good deal about doctoring and about caring for children.

Meanwhile, big events were taking place in the world beyond Birch River. The War Between the States had begun. In 1861 General Rosecrans moved his Union army through the area on the way to Summersville and the Battle of Carnifex Ferry.

An army coming to remote Birch River was a most unusual event in the lives of everyone, especially the children and young people. Sally, my grandmother, had a calf her parents had given to her and of which she was duly proud; the Yankees killed her calf and ate it. She was eight years old at the time, and she never quite forgave them. Her religious beliefs did not permit her to hate, but she certainly had no love for Yankees.

The soldiers did many other things not appreciated by the villagers. They used fence rails for firewood, robbed beehives, stole apples, and killed a man named Young. For the most part the people of Birch River were sympathetic to the Southern cause.

My great-grandparents, the Scotts, owned a general store at this time. Apparently most of the operation of the store was done by Melcina, Sally's mother and my great-grandmother. When the soldiers would come into the store, looking behind pictures, under counters, and in drawers, Melcina would boldly ask them if they expected to find Southern sympathizers in such small places.

Eventually General Rosecrans sent one of his officers to Colonel Brown, James's father, to ask him which side he favored, the North or the South. Upon returning the officer told Rosecrans, "Colonel Brown is either the smartest man I have ever met, or else he is the damndest fool I have ever met. I learned nothing."

While the army was in the Birch River area the native men of eligible age went into hiding. A system of communication was set up between those in the hills and those in the village. The women would hang sheets on their lines — one

Above: Sally Ann as a young girl during the Civil War. She never forgot the Yankees' insensitive foraging habits. Photographer unknown, about 1862.

Left: James and Sally Ann Brown in mature middle age. James had been preaching for more than 20 years when this portrait was made in 1905. Photographer unknown.

sheet meant one thing, two sheets meant another, and so on. Had these men remained in the village they would have been made to work for the Union Army or even inducted.

At the time all this took place, James Brown was 16 years old. He remained in the village, thinking he was too young to be bothered. Not so. The Yankees forced him to take a team of oxen that belonged to his mother and haul a load of supplies as the army moved on to Carnifex Ferry. He was present when that battle was fought.

This incident and the way the citizens of Birch River were treated induced James to join the other side. Two of his brothers, Mac and Israel, also joined the Confederate Army. Eventually Mac Brown was listed as missing in action and never heard of again. Israel Brown died of smallpox in a Northern prison. James served in Company A, 14th Infantry, and fought through a number of battles, including Gettysburg and Droop Mountain. He was present at Appomattox when Lee surrendered to Grant. He returned home unscathed and lived to be 75 years old.

James did not call himself a dentist, he simply pulled teeth. I believe the record was 13 at one time.

It was after the war in the year 1868 that James and Sally were married, a union that lasted until they were parted by James's death 52 years later. Their first home was on Mill Creek, where they did both farming and timbering. Some of their choice walnut logs were floated all the way to Charleston, via the Birch and Elk rivers. Later they purchased land just opposite the village of Birch River. There they farmed and established a watermill for grinding corn, wheat, and other grains. Remains of the old mill race can still be seen. The house has long since been replaced, but the stone cellar house can be seen from Route 19 today. Nine of their ten children were born in the Birch River area.

While the family was still living there, Grandfather began preaching in the Baptist Church in 1882. He was ordained in 1884 and continued to preach for the rest of his life. Opportunities for securing a formal education were limited, but James educated himself to a remarkable degree. Some said he spoke eloquently.

Grandfather was a circuit rider in Nicholas County for many years during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Travel was not easy at that time in West Virginia. Crooked dirt roads wound over ridges and up hollows. Preacher James did most of his traveling on horseback or in a buggy or hack, and sometimes walked when distances were not

too great. He died just as the automobile was beginning to make inroads in his remote region.

During the winter only the vigorous could travel, and even the preacher stayed home at times. It became next to impossible to hold services. People were buried but funerals were often delayed. Baptismal ceremonies were usually put off because of the temperature of the water in the streams where baptizing was done, but not always. James was known to have once broken a thin layer of ice on Big Beaver Creek to baptize an ardent convert. He said that he saw an angel on that occasion.

People caught up on their religion in the spring. They gathered wild blossoms for their services, giving a stately little tree of the rose family its name. The tree was called the service berry or simply the service tree, usually pronounced "sarvice" in the mountains. Later in the season the service tree produces red, sweet berries which make tasty pies and cobblers.

The quality of circuit preaching varied from preacher to preacher, but the butions they made were substantial. They did much more than point the way to heaven. James carried his dental forceps with him. He did not call himself a dentist, he simply pulled teeth. He knew nothing of modern methods, but in his time and place he performed a valuable service. I have been unable to learn just when and how he got started pulling teeth, perhaps during his stint in the Confederate Army.

Around Birch River anyone with a bad tooth could go to the Brown residence to have it pulled. If Grandfather was out in the field working, Grandmother would hand the suffering visitor both pairs of forceps — a light pair for pulling front teeth and a heavier pair for jaw teeth. The patient would then go to where the men were working. The dentist chair was likely to be a log.

When James removed a tooth, he would instruct the patient to rinse with warm water several times over a few days. My mother told me that she never heard of a single serious infection. There was no anesthesia, and even a little nip from the bottle was forbidden since Preacher James didn't believe in that. Sometimes more than one tooth was pulled and occasionally many more — I believe the record was 13 at one time. There was never a charge of any kind for these favors.

The original Alderson Church, a few years before its demolition in 1950. Our author recalls that Preacher James seemed especially at home here, with some of the family always in the congregation. Photo by William Creasy, 1946.

Alderson was a masterpiece, as so many of those old churches were. It had floors of beautiful oak boards of uniform width. The walls and ceiling were of yellow poplar which had been planed by hand.

On one of his trips as a circuit rider, James learned of a farm for sale at the confluence of Little Beaver Creek with Big Beaver near the village of Beaver, south of Birch River but still in Nicholas County. After consulting with his family he bought this property. There was considerable good farm land here, both on the small plateaus and in the flood plain of the two streams.

The family moved to the new location in 1895 and for a time lived in a log house already standing on the property. While living in the log house, James and his sons proceeded to build a more suitable abode. I remember the new house well. To me as a child it was a grandiose structure, with its two stories and big porches above and below. A large virgin white oak tree was left standing at one end, later removed for fear it might damage the house during a storm. Behind the house was a hand-dug well.

When James was not preaching,

The Browns occupied a substantial farmhouse on Big Beaver Creek. Our author's mother, Rose Zanna Brown, stands at left, with Sally Ann and Preacher James seated on the porch. Photographer and date unknown.

farming, or pulling teeth, he liked to go hunting. He and his sons would sometimes travel by horse and wagon into the higher mountains and stay for several days. On one shorter hunting trip he and one son had been hunting for several hours and were on their way back home. They eventually came to their own farm and entered one of the pasture fields where a dozen or so sheep were grazing, one buck and the rest ewes.

It was about that time that James heard nature's call, proceeded to drop his pants, and assumed the position. The buck sheep just couldn't resist. He came at a gallop, struck my squatting ancestor from the rear, and knocked him forward on his face. James jumped up, grabbed his gun in a fit of temper, and was going to shoot the sheep. His son intervened, telling him that was no way for a minister to act.

Sally kept up her activities. She ran the household, and her house was always immaculate. I remember her china closet. It was made of oak wood and curved glass. In addition to the china kept inside, she used it to store honey and maple syrup in small containers. One of the few times I stayed overnight at her house she fed me hot biscuits and honey for breakfast, heavenly.

I remember her crying bitterly when her youngest son, Virgil, went into the service during World War I. Virgil lived to serve his country again during World War II, and Grandmother was still living to worry about him. This large family lived to an average age of 79 years. Among the children there were housewives, secretaries, one law officer, teachers, and three medical doctors.

When James died in 1920, Sally's life changed. For some time she lived with Virgil at the homestead. Eventually Virgil, who was still single, moved to Charleston and accepted a position with the police force. Soon after this Sally also moved to Charleston where both she and Virgil lived with Molly, one of her daughters, and Molly's husband Ellis. About this time Sally began making fairly frequent visits to other members of her family.

About that time Preacher James heard nature's call, proceeded to drop his pants, and assumed the position. The buck sheep came at a gallop, and struck my squatting ancestor from the rear.

She tried to live her beliefs. She said to me one day, "When I am straightening up around the house I always place the Bible on top of other books hoping that it will be read more than it is." Without pushing her views too far, she was always ready to point out the superior qualities of the Baptist faith.

Once when she was visiting our home she told me two stories. One was about an illness she had experienced at an earlier time, perhaps due to some sort of poisoning. In any case, she thought she was going to die. "I seemed to be standing by a little stream that was flowing by my feet. It was the river of life. It didn't frighten me at all. I thought, 'I have nothing to fear and can easily step across if necessary.'" She lived many years after this incident.

I was about 25 at this time, and she was beginning to worry that I would never marry. In her second story she told me about a woman who had a daughter who was 25 years old and still unmarried. One day the mother sent her down to the creek, which was some distance away. She instructed her to select and bring back the very straightest stick she could find. She was not, however, permitted to select the stick on the way back.

The daughter started toward the stream and kept trying to find a more and more perfect stick. Suddenly she was at the stream and had to return with no stick at all.

In case I missed the point, Grandmother explained it. "This is what sometimes happens to young people," she said. "When they search too long for someone too perfect, they get no stick at all."

At one time in earlier life Sally and James were traveling to a preaching assignment in Clay County, riding in a hack. They came to the home of Bandy Bill Mullens and stopped to get something to eat.

The Mullens family were generous, high-quality people, but at that

time they were poor. There was coffee to drink, but no cream on the table. To everyone's surprise, James handed a cup to one of the young boys of the family and said, "Son, you go out there to where the cows are grazing and get a little milk for my coffee." The young fellow took the cup and in a few minutes returned with James's milk.

During the long period of their productive years, James and Sally did many things to further the cause of the Baptists. James helped L. J. Huffman organize the Long Baptist Church in 1885 and served as its pastor from that time until 1909. He was the pastor of Birch River Baptist Church for 14 years. The last four of these years he was living on

James Brown's old Bible survives today. It looks perfectly at home in the pulpit of a West Virginia country church. Photo by Michael Keller.

Beaver Creek and had to travel a considerable distance. He organized the New Hope Baptist Church and served as its pastor for some time.

As a circuit rider many of his assignments overlapped. At one time or another, James served as pastor at Richwood, Cowen, and even Webster Springs, which was a great distance from his home. He organized Little Union Baptist Church in 1890 and was its minister for 30 years. It was at this church that he preached his last sermon on August 22, 1920. He died the following September 3.

James handed a cup to one of the young boys of the family and said, "Son, you go out there to where the cows are grazing and get a little milk for my coffee."

He was also active at the Sand Run and Beall's churches and many others. Preaching had to be a labor of love for the pay was very low. His salary at Little Union was $50 a year, paid monthly. Grandfather, as I knew him in old age, was almost a God-like figure to me, a small child. He even had the beard and stern nature.

He earned his place in life by hard work, dedication, and impeccable character. "People lose more time waiting for it to rain than they do while it is raining," Grandpa said. And, "I would rather wear out than rust out."

The Alderson Church building was constructed during the year 1889. It was built with lumber furnished by Lewis Creasy and John Hancel Creasy, my paternal grandfather and great-uncle, respectively. They furnished the logs and sawed them into lumber on their up-and-down water-driven sawmill on Big Beaver Creek.

Alderson was a masterpiece, as so many of those old churches were. It had floors of beautiful oak boards of uniform width. The walls and ceiling were of yellow poplar which had been planed by hand, leaving faint tracks of the tools used. All the lumber was cut from virgin timber and there was not a knot to be seen. The church sat on a grassy knoll among white oak trees, recalling the song, "Church in the Wildwood."

It was at Alderson Church that I heard Grandfather James preach. He seemed to be very much at home there. Some of his family, always including Sally, were in the audience every time. He stood back of the lectern which had been constructed of beautiful chestnut wood and on which lay his big reference Bible. He was quite forceful, although he held his congregation's attention better than mine. I remember my mother hushing me sternly as he preached his rather long sermon.

I consider myself fortunate to have grown up in rural West Virginia early enough to have known these people of the past generation. It is with pride and lingering respect that I recall them, especially Preacher James and Sally Ann.

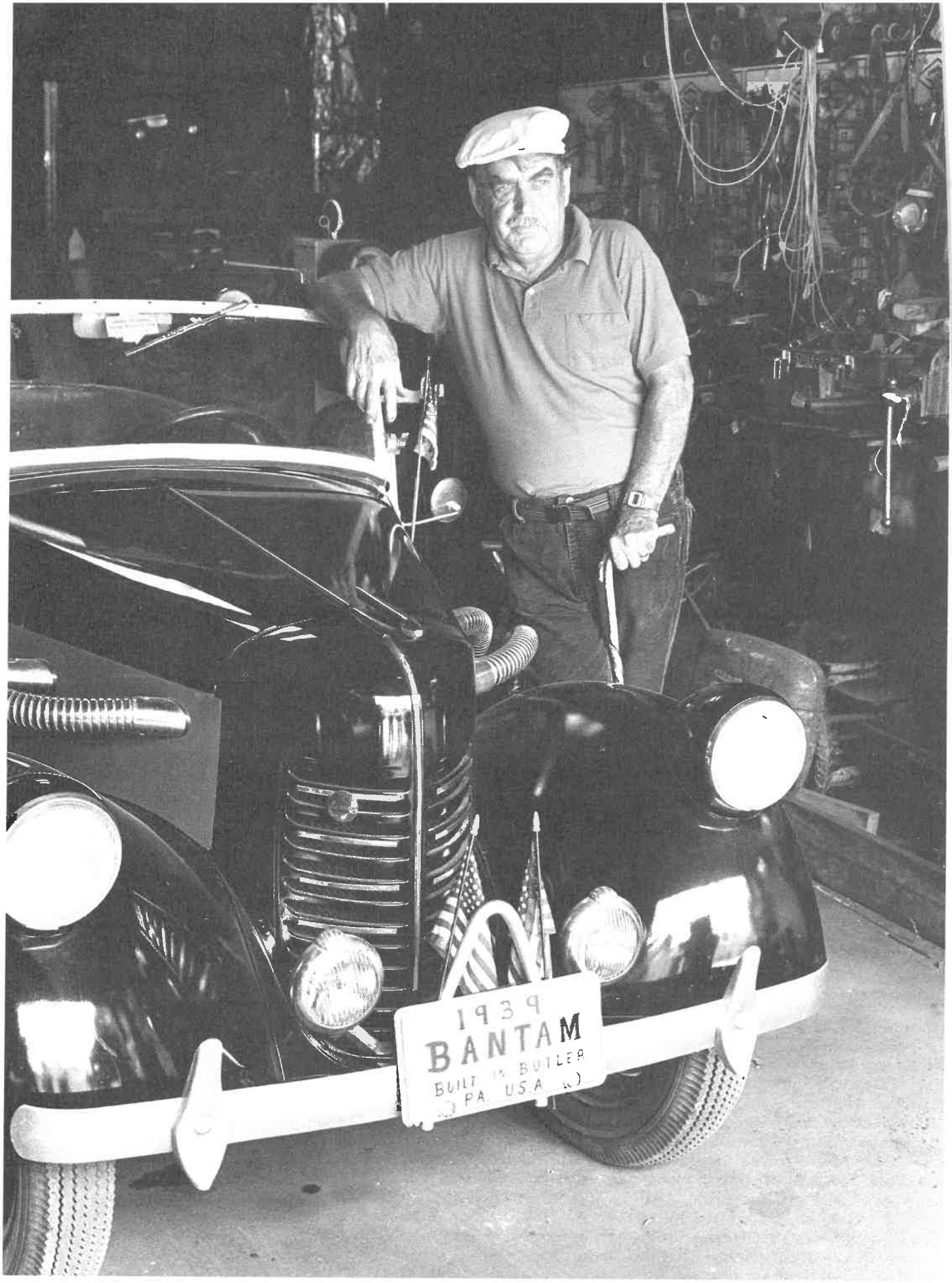
Another Nicholas Circuit Rider

Thomas In-Prints of Gauley Bridge recently reprinted *Memories of a Mountain Circuit*, an account of a young preacher's experiences as a 19th century Nicholas County circuit rider.

George Cleaton Wilding of Mason County was ordained as a Methodist preacher in the late 1860's and assigned to the remote Nicholas circuit for a year in the early 1870's. He served Gilboa, Muddlety, Summersville and roundabout, with churches bearing such names as Glad Tidings, Wilderness, and Promised Land.

The back country was an eye-opener to the young preacher from the Ohio Valley, but he located a good "Methodist horse" and went cheerfully about the Lord's business. He left excellent descriptions of mountain life and work, and an affectionate portrait of the people. "It was the most moral community in which I ever lived," he wrote. "You seldom heard an oath, and I did not see a drunken man during the entire year."

The 78-page paperbound book sells for $7.95 plus $1 postage and handling from Thomas In-Prints, 88 Imboden Street, Gauley Bridge, WV 25085.


1939
BANTAM

"Not a Going Business"

Ed Weaver's Service Station Museum

By Bill Moulden

Photographs by Doug Chadwick

In 1935, when he was five years old Ed Weaver dragged his first piece of junk into the house. It was something he had found in an unofficial trash dump across the creek down back of the family service station. His mother made him take it back.

Mrs. Weaver won that skirmish, but it was to be a long battle. Soon Ed's need to collect stuff overwhelmed her, and it began piling up in and around the house and gas station, which is in Burlington on U.S. Route 50. You will find Burlington about 10 miles west of Romney, on the Mineral County side of the Hampshire-Mineral line. A startling view of Sawtooth Mountain can be seen looking east from there.

There is a movement nowadays to get travelers off the interstate highways and back onto these older routes where they can sample some local color — see some real people and great local scenery — and get away from the heavy traffic and steady diet of fast food that the four-lanes offer. This Eastern Panhandle stretch of Route 50 would be a good place to start, where folks like the Weavers hold out living examples of life as it was a half-century ago.

To further situate the town, Burlington is three miles east of Fried Meat Ridge, which is, Ed claims, the official name. He says the story behind the ridge's name was told to him in 1950 by old-timer George White. Ed Weaver is very specific about dates, names and events, and I have found no reason to question his memory.

It's a safe bet that Ed Weaver has the shiniest '39 Bantam in Mineral County. It's one of many cars to steal his heart.

It seems that during the Civil War Union troops were on that ridge looking for Confederate encampments. They spied some covered wagons and, assuming they carried supplies for the Rebs, attacked and burned them. Turned out they carried meat a farmer was bringing to market. Old-timers claim that on a hot July day you can still smell the bacon cooking around Burlington.

Ed and Catherine Weaver raised a family and painted cars, while Ed collected and dealt in antique machinery. "You've got to sell junk to buy junk," Ed says.

Cars first came to Burlington just after the turn of the century. One of the first was owned by Dr. Frank Baker. It was a 1902 Holman. Mineral County people hang onto the good things, and the doctor's son Phil still keeps the old car in running condition. He displays it often at antique shows. Phil, a commercial artist, is a longtime friend of Ed Weaver's and has helped him find items for the museum.

Gasoline for those earliest cars was hand-pumped from barrels at the Burlington General Store, and later from tanks. Ed has the first hand pump used with a gas tank at the general store. It dates from 1910.

It was in 1924 when Great-uncle Frank Bell started the gas station which is now Ed's Service Station Museum. A 1928 picture shows Frank's three granddaughters, Twila, Laura and Gloria Bell, standing in front of the three gas pumps beside Route 50. Except for the girls the pumps stand alone in that photo, as the station house wasn't built until later. Ed has reclaimed his uncle's pumps, and they stand today in front of the museum with some others. Phil Baker helped restore the gas company emblems on some of the old pumps.

It was in 1924 that the road received its first hard pavement, mandated and paid for by the federal government. West Virginia took advantage of the federal generosity, as we still have a way of doing, but Uncle Frank told Ed that Maryland initially balked at making its part of the road.

If you look at a map today you will see that west of Burlington U.S. 50 goes through about ten miles of Maryland before reentering West Virginia in Preston County. After West Virginia got its part done there was still this gap through Maryland. According to Frank, cars going west would come to a barrier at the Maryland line. They would take it down and make their way through farm yards and fields, and up dry creek beds, until they came to paving again in West Virginia to take them on toward Grafton.

Maryland eventually bowed to public pressure and finished its part of the highway. The resulting traf-

As these photos show, Ed Weaver started off on two wheels. The Indian motorcycle (below), more than he could handle at that age, actually, was left for the duration of World War II by an unidentified soldier. Photographers unknown, both about 1942.

fic kept the family gas station in business until 1980, Amoco all the way.

Ed's father, George Weaver, took over in 1942 and, about a year later, gave Ed his first motorized vehicle as a reward for his starting to help out at the station. It was a 1940 "American" brand motor scooter.

Ed soon got acquainted with a more exciting set of wheels. It was one day around 1942 that a black soldier came into the station pushing a motorcycle, a four-cycle Indian model. It had a broken chain. The soldier said he had overseas orders and couldn't wait to have the motorcycle fixed. He asked if he could leave it and George Weaver pointed to a corner of the garage. The soldier thanked them and then headed on down Route 50 toward Europe, walking. "If I come through the war alive, I'll come back for it," he said.

Several years followed and Ed Weaver turned 10 and then 11. He liked to push the Indian up a nearby hill and coast down. He would do that for hours, thinking about the war and that soldier.

Sure enough, one day the man walked back into the service station, in uniform but with his discharge papers in an envelope under his arm. The Weavers helped him get his cycle running and off he sped. "I never knew his name, where he came from or went to," Ed says today.

Ed got his own motorcycle in 1947, an English James model, the only new vehicle he ever bought. Graduating high school, he began a career as an auto painter in a shop built under the house where he lives today, next to the station.

Ed's first automobile was an old one, a 1909 two-cycle Reo. He sometimes had as many as a dozen old cars he had repaired lined up alongside his workshop. He would trade and deal in his younger days, but he doesn't do that anymore.

And Ed Weaver didn't confine himself strictly to rubber-tired rolling stock. In his collecting heyday he came across a miniature railroad engine and cars. He constructed 650 feet of track for it, laid around the station property, and operated it for the kids.

A 1957 feature article in the Cumberland, Maryland, *Sunday Times*, described Ed's "Amazing Array of Antiques." There is a picture there of his sister Ruth behind the wheel of a 1929 air-cooled Franklin. As well, there is a picture of the 27-year-old Ed Weaver. "You were a handsome dog," I said on looking at it recently. "I don't know about that," Ed mumbled.

Ed and his wife Catherine are both from Headsville, not far from Burlington. Son George is a professional fire fighter in Virginia. George comes home for summer vacations and usually gets the railroad going for the grandkids. Ed says that he can't afford the insurance he would need to re-open his train line to the public.

The soldier said he had overseas orders and couldn't wait to have the motorcycle fixed. "If I come through the war alive, I'll come back for it," he said.

There are four grandchildren altogether. Daughter Janey is married to Darren Roberts, an auto mechanic, and they live in Burlington. Catherine works in the town library, in the old train station. In their younger days, Ed says, Catherine would help him paint cars.

So, through the years, Ed and Catherine Weaver raised a family and painted cars for a living, while Ed collected and dealt in antique machinery. "You've got to sell junk to buy junk," Ed says.

He is pretty much through with all that now. The Service Station Museum he has spent a dozen years putting together is not for profit. "I don't make a nickel out of it," Ed says, neither bragging nor complaining. There is no admission charge, and there are no signs announcing it. I went right past on my first visit, and Ed says that many other people stop looking for auto service. He finally penned a sign on

The interior of the private museum preserves motoring artifacts as well as mementoes from Ed's life. The snazzy pedal car was his as a boy and has been used by his son and grandson.

the door, "This is not a going business," to take care of that.

Bad health forced Ed to stop painting cars two years ago. He warns that when visitors stop he may not feel well enough to come over from the house and talk to them.

But they do come, from all over the world. There's a spiral notebook on the counter for visitors to sign. Just leafing back a few months I saw many of our states represented as well as Canada, Spain, Wales, Sweden, Denmark and Sri Lanka. Many of the foreign visitors are from Germany. No doubt it is a coincidence, but Ed notes that about three-fourths of the Burlington townspeople have German roots.

The Service Station Museum has had visitors from every inhabited continent. Ed says folks have visited from every European country but Portugal. He's on the list for senior citizen tours. They like places that don't charge admission and prefer displays, like Ed's museum, that provide opportunities for reminiscence. On the station wall Ed has a framed letter from one such group, including an array of pictures they took when making their visit.

Bob Lenhart of Morgantown is Ed's close friend and fellow collector. A retired carpenter, Bob has known Ed for 20 years or more. They spot items for each other and go to antique auto shows together. Bob and Ed started calling themselves "industrial archaeologists," and Ed has that on his business card. But Bob told me that maybe their title should be "industrial garbagologist." You don't have to worry about these folks taking themselves too seriously.

Ed wanted me to include his public thanks to Bob and Phil Baker for the help and friendship they have given him throughout his work on the Service Station Museum.

Along with founder Frank Bell's original pumps out front, there is a tall orange-colored pump with a clock face. According to Ed this was the first electric gas pump ever made. There's another one there with Amoco painted on the round white globe on top.

Ed showed me a small gas hand pump which he first spotted lying in a field over towards Moorefield. He found the farmer who owned the field and commenced negotiations, eventually trading a set of tools he had in his trunk for the pump. The deal included delivery, so the farmer loaded the pump on his truck and brought it to Burlington. Ed offered this story as an example of the different ways he has come by the items for his museum.

Inside the station in a corner there is an antique rolltop desk that Uncle Frank installed. A dozen or so of those old motor oil bottles, the ones with the conical tin pouring spouts, are stacked on top of a Coca Cola cooler. We should get back to using reusable bottles, for oil and Coke both. It would cut down the trash created by the cans and plastic containers we use now. I believe Ed will agree that change doesn't always mean progress.

The Coke cooler is the first electric model, he says. There are cabinets, themselves antiques, with all manner of gas station memorabilia on display. There is a large collection of toy cars, the realistic kind that look like the big ones.

Ed also has a warm feeling for those bigger toy cars that kids pedal up and down the sidewalk. He has several of those, carefully restored, on display. He has the one he played

on as a kid and shows pictures of his son and grandson, both playing in that same authentically restored pedal car.

The shelves are jammed with all kinds of stuff that classic gas stations had on sale, even some old candy bar boxes. Do you remember when a Baby Ruth cost a nickel?

On the counter you will find an antique cash register to collect the nickels. There are several antique calculating machines. These unwieldy items have now been replaced by calculators you can hold in your hand that are powered by light. Now that's progress I can approve of.

Out front Ed has a couple of old Subaru autos, the first ones brought in by an American entrepreneur who hoped to market them here. But they wouldn't pass American safety standards, and so we had to wait a while longer for Subaru. Ed says, "they still run, but they make a lot of noise."

Back in one of his work areas Ed showed me a 1939 Bantam sports car, sometimes called the American

Left: The garage building has collected signs, shrubs and ivy over the years, but is still basically the same structure as before.
Below: The gas station by the side of Route 50 was a going concern in 1962, as the photo shows.

Austin. He had it under a protective cloth. It was made in Butler, Pennsylvania. "When you see Lee Iococca on TV claiming that Chrysler made the first Jeep, don't believe it," Ed explains. "The Bantam Company made the first one."

I'd believe Ed over Lee any day about stuff like that. Besides, a 1992 *Smithsonian* magazine cover story backs him up on the Bantam Jeep prototype, although other companies brought the little war machine into mass production.

Also in the garage was the car that Ed drives today, a 1979 Cadillac Coupe de Ville. It looked in mint condition and Ed says he gets 21 miles to the gallon. I believe that too.

This shed, part of the original Weaver's Garage complex, once housed Ed's used car operations.

At first, Ed was wary about having an article published. A ways back the *Baltimore Sun* did a piece on him and his collections, and the night after it appeared his place was broken into. But it seems that some of his friends convinced him that folks who read GOLDENSEAL are not going to go out burglarizing. Bob Lenhart told me that one of his collecting finds was a stack of old GOLDENSEAL magazines. He has a copy of the very first issue and now subscribes. So Bob encouraged us to do the article.

Walking around with Ed I found another good reason for his confidence. It's a big black Labrador retriever, named "Bear" for obvious reasons. I jumped a foot when he came at me until Ed assured me he was safely restrained. But at night, he's the guard and, I can vouch, a very effective one.

As we walked around, I mentioned that my uncle had favored Packards. Some of my early pictures, with my brother, sister and cousins, show us sitting on the running board or in the rumble seat of vintage Packards.

Ed then gave me a recitation on Packards, their strengths and weaknesses, and how they went out of business in 1951 because of their inability to modernize. I'm sure that you could mention any make of car to Ed and get a good history of it.

While we stood there talking about Packards, a car pulled off of Route 50 and parked. A young man got out and came over to join us. He said he was from Woodbridge, Virginia. His visit gave me the opportunity to edge away as he took over Ed's attention.

There is much more around there than I could possibly describe. Maybe some will call it junk, but to us old-timers it is a treasure trove. But the real treasure is Ed Weaver himself — the display of his knowledge and the results of a life of saving and collecting. He gives his wisdom freely, along with a lot of hard technical information and a good dose of wry humor.

In addition to Ed Weaver's auto museum, Burlington is also home to the annual Old-Fashioned Apple Harvest Festival. The town marks its 20th apple harvest event this year. The dates are October 2 and 3 on the grounds of Burlington United Methodist Family Services, adjacent to the Burlington Historic District.

The main attraction is the town's famous apple butter. It is prepared open-kettle style from local apples. Other tasty apple cuisine includes apple "burgers," funnel cakes, lots of homemade baked goods, and hand-pressed apple cider.

The public is invited to bring lawn chairs for the bluegrass and gospel music performances this year. The 1993 festival will also have arts and crafts tents, an open-air flea market, handmade quilts on exhibit and for sale, an antique automobile show, games for the children, and a 20th anniversary parade.

Burlington's 20th Old-Fashioned Apple Harvest Festival runs from 10:00 a.m. until dark on Saturday and from 1:00 p.m. until dark on Sunday. For more information contact the Reverend Lynn Beckman, Festival Headquarters, P.O. Box 96, Burlington, WV 26710; (304)289-3511.

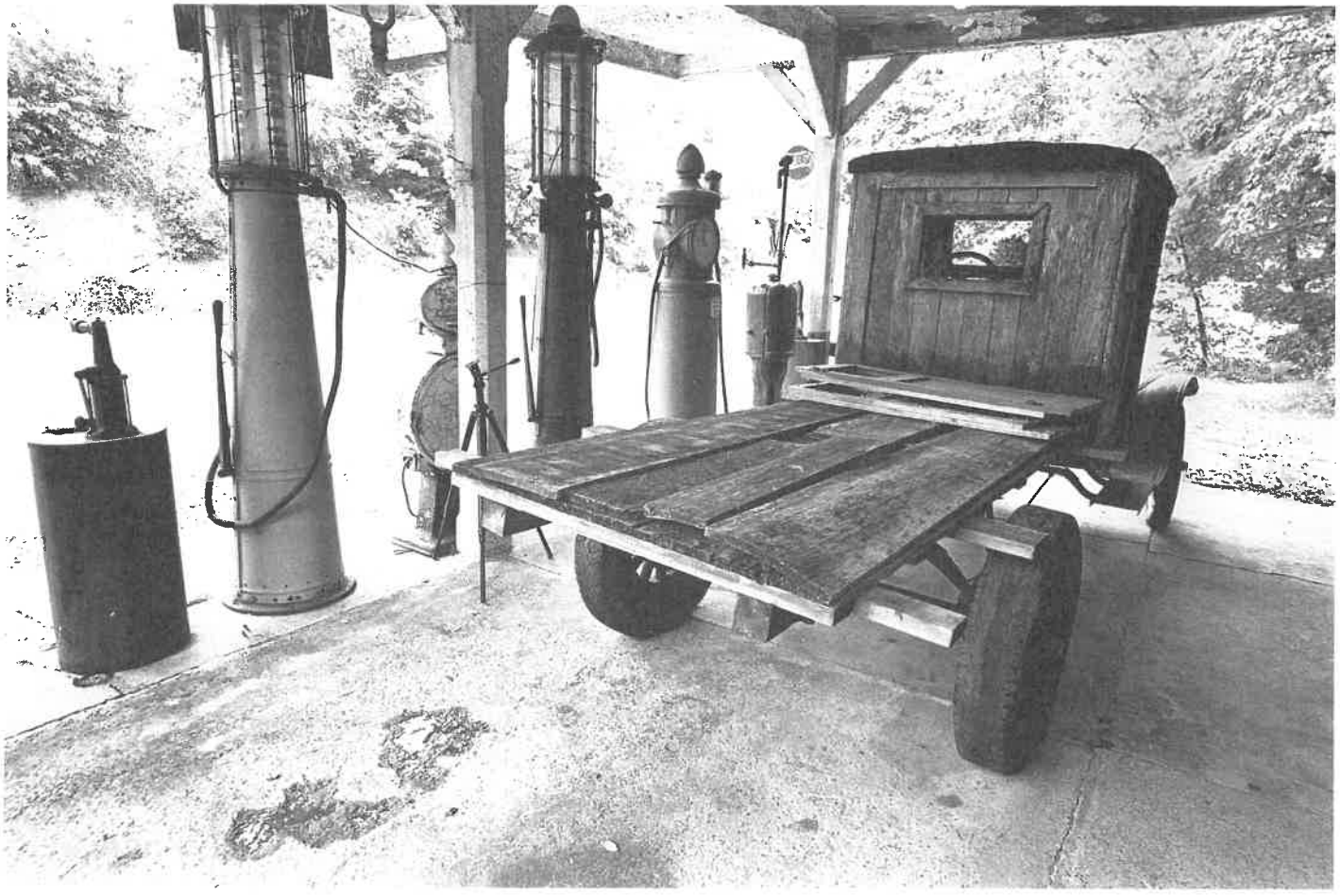
Ed and his buddy Phil Baker, right, collaborate on their collecting and other projects. Here they enjoy the authentic loafer's bench.

It was chilly when I visited Ed. I want to come back in warmer weather, when the kids are playing in the dust and the townsmen are sitting out front on what Ed calls the loafer's bench. "You need a shovel around here sometimes," Ed says, "especially during hunting season."

I'll be poking around for a picture or some other reminder of my first car. It was a 1934 Pontiac coupe, already old when I bought it for $95 in 1949. Being around Ed Weaver and his Service Station Museum makes me wish I had kept it.

I want to come back when the kids are playing and the townsmen are sitting out front on the loafer's bench. "You need a shovel around here sometimes," Ed says, "especially during hunting season."

Ed's place is not a going business, but chances are you can find someone there to tinker with a Model T flatbed. This one is gassed up and ready to roll into history.



Getting Ready for Life
The Douglass High School Story

By Joseph Platania

Photographs by Michael Keller

Frederick Douglass (1817-1895)

A dinner dance accompanied by a band playing songs of the '50's, '60's and '70's culminated a week of activities marking the 1993 reunion of Douglass High School held at the Holiday Inn on Route 60 East, just outside Huntington. The reunion, which ran from July 5 to July 11, offered tours of the old school building at 10th Avenue and Bruce Street in Huntington.

This was not a class reunion but a school reunion, almost a big family reunion. It was a gathering of nearly 500 former students who attended a school that no longer exists. For these men and women, middle-aged and older, it was a sentimental journey back to a place that has special meaning in their lives.

Jim Venable, a 1953 graduate and chairman of the 1993 reunion committee, says that this sixth reunion also marked the centennial of the first graduating class in 1893.

Alumni were notified of the reunion by a newsletter that is published twice a year and mailed to 1,000 former students, who call themselves "Douglassites." Venable estimates there are as many as 1,500 Douglassites worldwide. Many Huntington families had several generations who went through the school.

Desegregation brought an end to all-black schools in West Virginia. In the spring of 1961, Douglass graduated its last class and closed its doors on an era of Huntington history. Students transferred to other city high schools and to a nearby junior high. This might have been the end of the story, but in 1973 the first Douglass reunion was held. It was the brainchild of Huntington resident Marion "Bunche" Gray and Nelson Bickley, a Charleston attorney and 1946 graduate.

Mrs. Gray, a 1937 graduate, said the idea of a reunion "was something we were constantly talking about. But we needed someone with the charisma to take it on the road. Nelson had it."

The first reunion was held in July 1973, and 600 attended. The next came in 1978 and then in 1983, which also drew about 600 Douglassites. The reunions began to be held about every three years. The July 1986 reunion drew around 1,000 people, including alumni, their families and friends.

The 1990 reunion was the largest up to that time with between 525 and 550 alumni, who, with their families, friends, and former teachers numbered between 1,200 and 1,500 people. They came from as far away as Alaska, Nassau, the Bahamas, and the Virgin Islands. One came from Europe. Five descendants shared a scholarship of $2,500 for their college training.

One way or another, all African-Americans who grew up in Huntington during that era were Douglassites. It was the only high school black children from Cabell County and neighboring Wayne were allowed to attend. The other 13 junior and senior high schools were for whites.

And Douglass was more than a school. It was the hub of the black community. "A Douglassite isn't only a graduate," Bunche Gray has said. "It's anyone who walked the

A group of Douglass High students during the school's later years. Photographer unknown, 1955.

Marion "Bunche" Gray, class of '37, is one of the founders of the Douglass reunion.

halls."

Nancy Smith Robinson, a 1946 graduate, said that people used to meet at Douglass to talk about problems affecting the community. Parents participated in school affairs, from raising money for new band uniforms to acting as chaperons.

"Commencement night was the biggest night of the year in the black community," James Venable said.

Retired Huntington lawyer James W. Gipson of the class of 1946 was one of nine children who all graduated from Douglass and went on to earn college degrees. "Many of my teachers were in school with my mother, and my mother went to Douglass," he said.

Alumni say these teachers helped prepare them for a hard world. "She told us the truth," Mrs. Gray says of one former teacher. "She said, 'When you get out in the world, there's going to be a big stick out there hitting at you.' She was right. She had prepared us. Douglass got us ready for life."

One thing Douglass couldn't prepare them for was losing the school itself. And so, like pilgrims returning to a holy shrine, Douglassites come back.

African-Americans have lived in Huntington since the city was founded in 1871 by railroad magnate Collis P. Huntington. Several hundred blacks occupied various parts of the new city. In the fall of 1873 the City Council approved the first school for black children, to be located in a small church on the corner of 12th Street and 6th Avenue. That year the school had 43 pupils with an 80 percent daily attendance rate, states an article by Dr. Ancella R. Bickley, a retired administrator at West Virginia State College and a Douglass graduate. According to several different sources, the first teacher was Julia Jones of White Sulphur Springs.

In 1875, the school was moved to a log cabin meeting house on Norway Avenue, across from Spring Hill Cemetery. After a few years the school was again moved, this time into Holderby Chapel, a frame structure "which stood on the edge of a three-acre grove of beech trees," according to an early history of Douglass School. The school operated with different teachers until 1882. That year W. F. James and his wife, Susie, were employed as teachers. After five years at his post, Mr. James suddenly died. Seven years later his wife also died, the victim of an epidemic. The school history praises these two pioneer teachers for "the lasting work they did for boys and girls in the community."

"She said, 'When you get out in the world, there's going to be a big stick out there hitting at you.' She was right. Douglass got us ready for life."

Several years later, the first black high school was established in response to an appeal to the Huntington Board of Education. A six-room brick building with a basement was built at the corner of 8th Avenue and 16th Street (now Hal Greer Boulevard) at a cost of $15,000. The faculty consisted of a handful of teachers with only one instructor for the upper grades. The principal was William T. McKinney.

The school was named for Frederick Douglass (1817-1895), an escaped slave who rose to national prominence as an editor, journalist, orator, and abolitionist. Douglass was the first black American to hold high office in the U.S. government, including appointment as minister to Haiti. His words, "One with God is a majority," are carved on the cornerstone of the current Douglass building.

Douglass was one of the earliest black high schools in West Virginia.

The Douglass seventh and eighth grades, about 1905. Teacher Joshua Hatchett stands at left. Photographer unknown.

Douglass High School, 1929. This building at 10th Avenue and Bruce Street was dedicated in May 1924. Photographer unknown.

It is predated by the Lincoln School, founded in Wheeling in 1866. Lincoln was among the first public schools established for blacks in the United States.

The first graduating class of Douglass High School in 1893 was composed of three members: Mathew Colley, Belle Turner, and Boston Scott. Ten students made up the 1895 graduating class.

In 1897 McKinney resigned as principal and was succeeded by Carter H. Barnett, a graduate of Denison University and the son of the Reverend Nelson Barnett, one of Huntington's early pastors. Barnett lengthened the curriculum to four years and added several new courses of instruction. Two classes graduated during his years as principal.

Following Barnett's resignation in 1900, Carter G. Woodson, who had recently completed two years of study at Berea College at Berea, Kentucky, was appointed principal. Woodson had been among Douglass's first students. According to records, he finished the high school curriculum in 18 months and was one-half of the graduating class of 1896. Under his supervision a library was begun, and three classes graduated during his years as principal. Woodson resigned in 1903 to resume his education at the University of Chicago. Woodson became an eminent historian, regarded by many as the father of black history.

In 1903, R. P. Sims was named principal, and the faculty grew from seven to eight teachers. Sims, a graduate of Hillendale College in Virginia, served three years. He was succeeded by J. W. Scott, who had been assistant principal under Barnett. During his tenure the school expanded its curriculum and added several rooms. Also, a portable building was set up on the Douglass schoolyard.

Several years later, the Board of Education authorized construction of a ten-room brick addition to Douglass at a cost of $40,000. It was a fireproof, two-story wing that contained a laboratory for physics and chemistry, a domestic science room, a library, an assembly room, and an office. "The rooms are large and well-lighted," said a contemporary account, adding that the faculty had grown to 20 teachers with a monthly $1,500 payroll.

A school history reports that in 1914 Douglass was inspected by the state high school supervisor and "was found to meet all of the requirements of a first class high school." In 1919, records show student enrollment as 501, with 126 in the high school and the rest in the school's lower grades. The faculty included ten teachers for the junior and senior high school grades. The building had 20 rooms, as compared with the original six, and was valued at $80,000.

According to a 1919 edition of the student newspaper, the *Tank*, the curriculum included courses in English, beginning and advanced algebra, beginning and advanced Latin, general science, mathematics, agriculture, "word analysis," physics, French, American literature, art and music. That year there were 14 teachers, seven men and seven women. They all had college degrees, from such institutions as Wilberforce, Ohio State, Hampton College, West Virginia State College, Howard University, Ohio University, Carnegie Tech, and the University of Illinois.

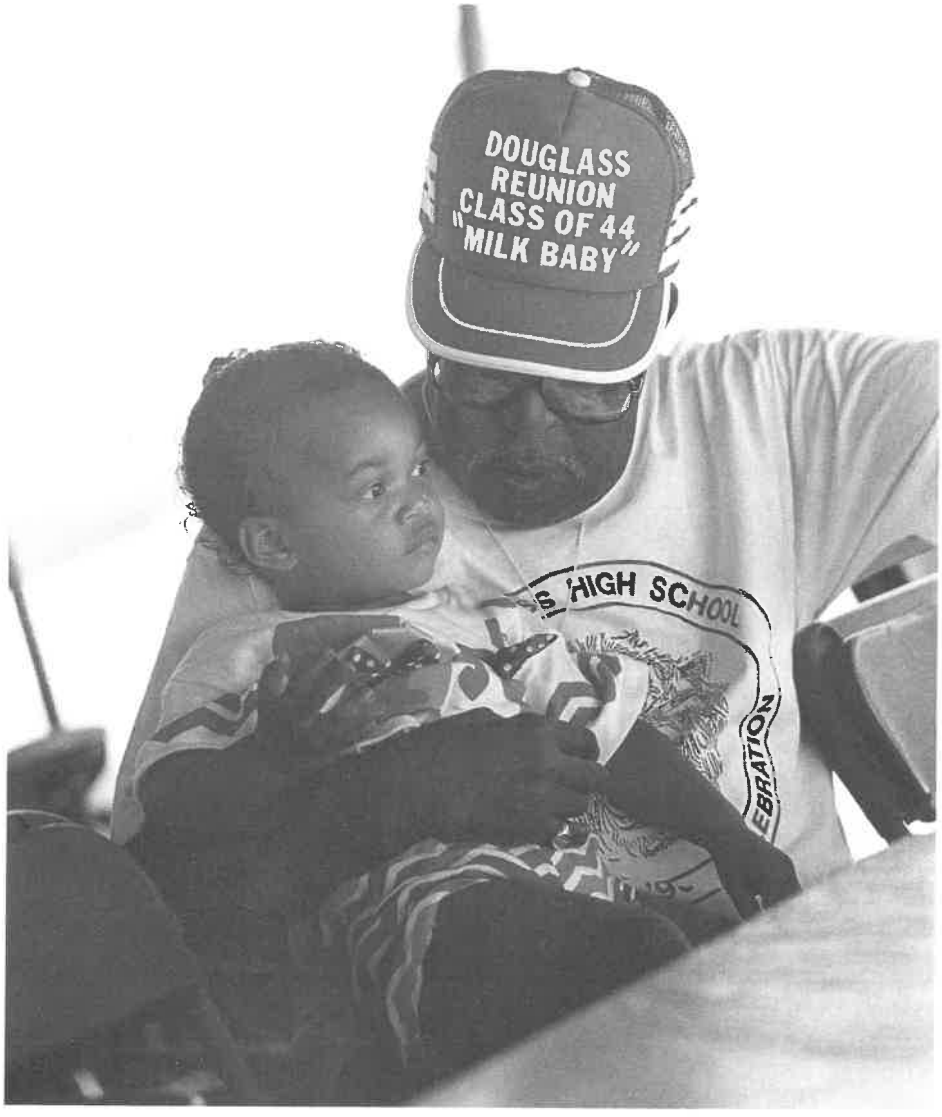
Nellie Francisco of Huntington was a 1911 Douglass graduate. Her recollection of her years when she wore the blue and white was still vivid even at age 88 when she was interviewed in 1978.

"When Douglass closed, we lost closeness. It's not that we were against desegregation. We just hoped integration could come with the same closeness."

"There were four in my class," Mrs. Francisco recalled. "The graduation took place in the Huntington Theater and at that time the girls had a dress for baccalaureate, one for graduation, and one for the reception that followed."

The first group to wear robes to commencement was the class of 1926, according to Edna Duckworth of Huntington who was a member of that class. "I remember paying

Reunion Scenes: Jim Sam, class of '41, and retired teacher Thelma Gordon (above) are still proud to wear the Douglass wildcat. Rolland "Milk Baby" Page socializes with Jasmine in the photo below.



about $2 or $3 for rental [for the robes] and the class parading all around town in the hot June weather to show them off," she recalled.

The 1920's were a period of growth and expansion at Douglass. In 1924, enrollment stood at 605 with 185 in the high school. There was a faculty of 25 teachers with a monthly $4,600 payroll.

A major advancement in black education in Huntington took place in 1924 when Douglass was expanded at the corner of 10th Avenue and Bruce Street at a cost of approximately $160,000. A three-story, dark red brick building was constructed to replace the original school on 8th Avenue. The old Douglass was renamed the Barnett School. The new building was dedicated on May 4, 1925.

Dr. Bickley explains that the frame structure on 10th Avenue was moved to Huntington's west end and became McKinney Elementary School, which served black children in that area for many years.

In 1925, Harry Davis Hazelwood, a graduate of Muskingham College in Ohio and a member of the Douglass faculty, was appointed principal of the newly-built school. He served in that capacity for 24 years, the longest tenure of any Douglass principal.

During the Hazelwood administration, Douglass became recognized as a full-fledged high school. In 1927, it was accredited by the North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools, a recognition which placed it in the first rank of high schools in the nation.

The school offered a range of extracurricular programs, according to Dr. Bickley. Douglass "fielded varsity athletic teams, developed a choir and band, brought significant speakers and reformers to the community, produced plays and operettas, and continued the tradition of community involvement," she writes.

During the postwar era, Douglass had one of its largest enrollments with 425 students in the 1947-48 school year. At that time there were 17 teachers conducting classes in the main building and two instructors in the trade school in a nearby facility.

In 1950 Douglass had its largest graduating class, with 55 members. According to records, the smallest graduating classes had had only two members, in 1896, 1902, 1903, and 1914.

All of the teachers at Douglass were black and they emphasized African-American culture and history. Among those educators was Revella Hughes, a well-known singer, musician, and music teacher. Miss Hughes, a Douglass graduate, supervised music for the city's black schools and organized and coached the Douglass marching band from 1932 to 1942 before returning to New York and her music career. She designed the school's blue and white band uniforms and wrote the school song.

James Hagood, a 1943 graduate who was in the school band, fondly recalls Revella Hughes. He states that whenever Miss Hughes took some of the band before a local service club such as the Rotary, she would invariably be asked to sing "The Indian Love Call." Mr. Hagood, who now is retired, was band director at Man High School for many years.

The legendary Zelma L. Davis coached at Douglass for 40 years, a record unequalled by any other West Virginia high school or college coach. Hired in 1915, Davis coached all sports at the school before retiring in the 1950's. He established the football program and led his teams to 11 state championships among the black schools; he won 234, lost 60, and tied nine. From 1935 through 1938, Douglass teams won 33 games in a row. Four times the basketball teams went to the black national tournament. The school's most famous athlete was Hal Greer, who became the first black athlete at Marshall University and later a star with the Philadelphia 76ers.

Lenora Fulwood of Huntington, who taught music at Douglass from 1950 until the school closed, recalls that the faculty was a close-knit group that got along well with the administration. Fulwood says that discipline and attendance problems were "no more than usual," and the average class size was around 25 pupils.

Zelma L. Davis won 234, lost 60, and tied nine. From 1935 through 1938, Douglass teams won 33 games in a row.

Most students were enrolled in a college preparatory curriculum, Fulwood states, but there also was the trade school that offered courses such as woodworking, machine shop, printing, radio and TV repair, and mechanics, as well as driver's education. Evening classes in such programs as upholstery also were offered to students and to the community.

In addition to Carter Woodson

Edna Duckworth recalls "parading all around town" in June 1926 as her graduating class showed off its robes.

The class of 1958 poses for its official portrait in front of the historic school. The classic entryway, shown below as it appeared at the 1993 reunion, has changed little during the school's seven decades.

and Hal Greer, Douglass graduates who achieved prominence at home and in other parts of the nation include educators at every level, politicians, business leaders, and bankers. Two graduates were among the first group chosen to train and serve as black pilots in Italy during World War II.

Graduate Joseph A. Slash, who was Douglass's last principal, became the first black superintendent of schools in Cabell County, and, to date, the only black county schools superintendent in West Virginia history.

Revella Hughes earned a bachelor's and master's degree in music before pursuing a stage career in New York, appearing with such stars as Eubie Blake, Fats Waller, Duke Ellington, and Cab Calloway. Miss Hughes was choral director in Broadway productions and the leading lady in an all-black musical. She had returned to Huntington to care for a sick parent during the years she taught at Douglass. In May 1985, Marshall University con-

A Distinguished Alumnus:

Carter G. Woodson

Carter Woodson is recognized nationally as the "Father of Black History," but few West Virginians know that Huntington was his hometown. That historical fact isn't well known even by Huntingtonians.

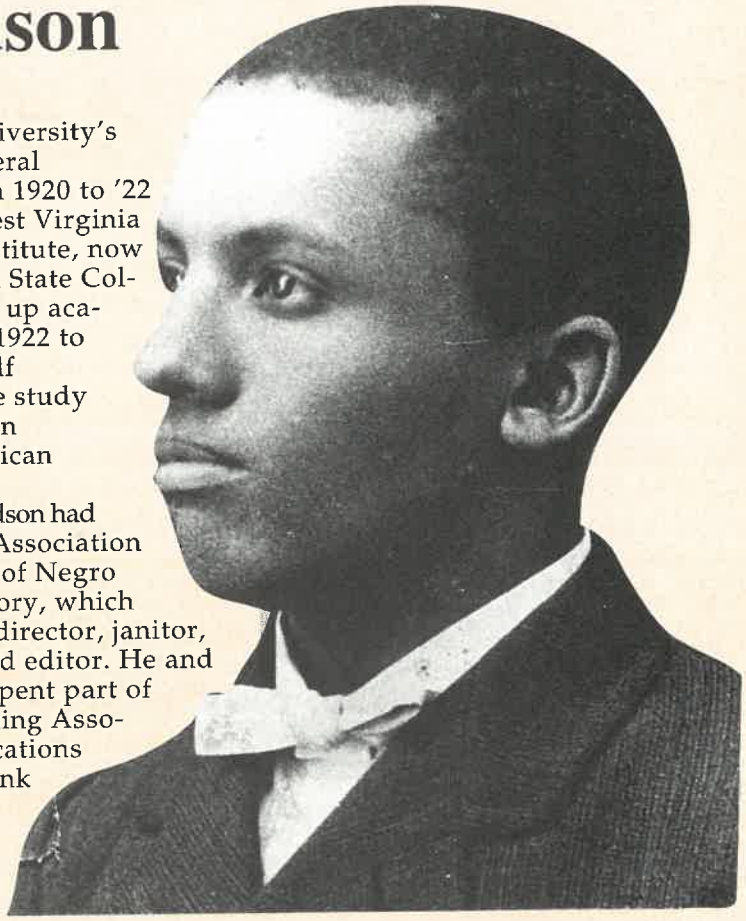
Woodson's accomplishments as the author and lecturer credited with saving American black history from oblivion have been more appreciated elsewhere. The University of Virginia and the University of Tennessee have built library wings in his honor. In 1984, Woodson was commemorated on a U.S. postage stamp as part of Black History Month, an outgrowth of the Negro History Week he organized in 1926.

Born in Buckingham County, Virginia, in 1875, Carter Woodson migrated to Huntington with his parents in 1893. His father, former slave James Henry Woodson, came to the West Virginia city to work on the crew that built the Chesapeake & Ohio Railway shops, according to Woodson's niece, Belva Clark.

Woodson graduated from Douglass High School in 1896. He then went to Berea College in Kentucky to study for a teaching certificate. He had earlier worked for a while in a Fayette County mine and returned to that county to teach elementary school from 1898 to 1900. He went home to Huntington in 1900, serving as teacher and principal at Douglass from 1900 to 1903. He resumed his education at the University of Chicago, where he received his bachelor's and master's degrees, according to local historian Dr. W. K. Elliott.

In 1912, Woodson became the second black to earn a Ph.D. from Harvard University. (W.E.B. DuBois was the first.) Later, he went on to study at the Sorbonne in Paris. Woodson served as dean of Howard University's School of Liberal Arts and from 1920 to '22 as dean of West Virginia Collegiate Institute, now West Virginia State College. He gave up academic life in 1922 to devote himself entirely to the study and promotion of Afro-American history.

In 1915 Woodson had founded the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History, which he served as director, janitor, researcher and editor. He and an assistant spent part of each year selling Association publications out of the trunk of a car, and speaking wherever they found an audience. His most important published work was the college text, *The Negro in Our History*. He founded the influential *Journal of Negro History* in 1916.



Carter G. Woodson's 1897 Berea College portrait. Woodson, a Douglass High School graduate, served as principal there from 1900 to 1903.

At his death on April 3, 1950, Carter Woodson was at work on a projected six-volume *Encyclopaedia Africana*. Huntington attorney Herbert Henderson, who taught black history at Marshall for 13 years, called Woodson "the black intellect of his day. When he could not find anyone in the white-owned publishing business to print his history on black America, he went out and started his own publishing firm. His books on black history are as valid today as when he wrote them. They are quite readable and extremely accurate."

Woodson never married. He spent most of his life in Washington, visiting family members in Huntington from time to time through the years. He purchased the Artisan Avenue house now occupied by Belva Clark for Bessie Woodson Yancey, his sister and her mother.

"Uncle Carter would visit Huntington on his way to speak somewhere," recalled Mrs. Clark, "but the people here never paid much attention to him. He was never asked to speak in Huntington. Uncle Carter gave his life to preserve black history. He was afraid if he didn't do it, our heritage would be lost."

—Tim R. Massey

This was excerpted from a larger article in the Winter 1987 GOLDENSEAL.

ferred upon Hughes an honorary Doctor of Music degree.

Emma Bass Williams, class of 1959 and the 1993 reunion co-chairwoman, remembers the school's nurturing environment. "Our teachers always went the extra mile," she said. "They tried to give us the very best education had to offer. The teachers knew Douglass was all we had."

In 1954, the United States Supreme Court in its landmark decision in Brown vs. Board of Education, said that separate was not equal, and ruled as unconstitutional racial segregation in the public schools. That year Douglass was one of 33 all-black high schools in West Virginia with a combined enrollment of 7,558 students and 353 teachers, states a booklet prepared by the 1988 West Virginia Conference on Black History.

In the years following the Brown decision, enrollment at Douglass gradually declined, and the last graduating class in 1961 had 19 members. The building did not remain closed for long. In 1963, it was remodeled and reopened as a school for special education children and renamed Fairfield School.

In 1981, the school was again remodeled, this time into offices for the board of education and as a center of student testing. While it continued to be used for these purposes, in March 1985, at the urging of local citizens and at the request of the Cabell County Landmarks Commission, the Douglass name was restored to the building. That year Douglass was placed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Douglass affected nearly every black family in Huntington as it educated at least three generations of the city's youth. "Douglass was more than a school," James Venable states. "Along with the churches, it was the glue that held the black community together."

"Douglass was more than a school. Along with the churches, it was the glue that held the black community together."

Others agree. "When Douglass closed, we lost that closeness," said Nancy Smith Robinson. "It's not that we were against desegregation. We just hoped integration could come with the same closeness."

In the decades since Douglass closed, the African-American population of Huntington has declined significantly. The area around the school has deteriorated. Nevertheless, former students are dedicated to preserving the school's name and legacy for future generations.

Venable recognizes that the Douglassites are an aging group, and that adds urgency to the task. "Our youngest Douglassites are about 46," he says. "We're establishing a scholarship foundation and some other things to make sure the memories continue to exist. I think we've come a long way, but we need to make sure our young people understand what their past is all about."

Many black West Virginians experienced both segregation and integration in the public schools. Nobody wants to go back, but those who attended an all-black school like Douglass say that it promoted a feeling of unity and community pride which is hard to find today. "I'm not sure there could ever be another Douglass in this day and age," Emma Williams says of her alma mater.

Don't get the idea that the Douglass High School reunions are somber, backward-looking occasions. They are not. The reunions offer a good time, with this year's event featuring a golf outing, bowling tournament and sock hop. But James Venable keeps the more serious purpose in mind.

"The school played an important role in a time when our country was separated on the grounds of race," he said. "Despite everything, its students were able to achieve and advance, and do all the things Americans dream of doing.

"That success is something to celebrate."

What's a school without a band? These Douglass musicians were caught at a nighttime function in 1955. Photographer unknown.

Lefty the Barber
Still Clipping at Cass

By Louise Burner Flegel

Photographs by Doug Chadwick

A $3 haircut? Impossible? Not if you are in Cass and drop in at Lefty's Barbershop just up the street from the Cass Scenic Railroad depot. As the fastest left-handed barber in the county, perhaps the state, Lefty has been cutting hair, listening to jokes and tall tales, and passing on the news in his delightful manner for more than 40 years. He has seen changes all around him, in his shop and especially in the town of Cass.

Lyle E. "Lefty" Meeks, one of nine children, was born on December 25, 1919, in Stony Bottom, just a few miles down the Greenbrier River from Cass. He attended grade school at the Stony Bottom School through the eighth grade.

Every Saturday night Lefty and his brothers would walk to Cass to enjoy the entertainment. "You could sit on the bridge and laugh all night at the crazy things going on in Cass," he recalls today. All of the houses and hotels were full, while three beer gardens, a restaurant and a movie theater kept everyone busy on the weekends. Every other week there was a square dance.

"In those days if a boy had ten cents, he could buy a hotdog and a pop and was living high on the hog," Lefty says.

Before entering upon his life's profession of keeping the male citizens of Pocahontas County looking sharp, Lefty Meeks worked in the Civilian Conservation Corps camps on Williams River and at Thornwood. He remembers doing mostly road work and clearing fire trails during the two years he was in the CCC. Then he enlisted in the U.S. Army

and served in Germany, France, Belgium and England. "Germany puts you in the mind of West Virginia," he says. "It's really pretty over there."

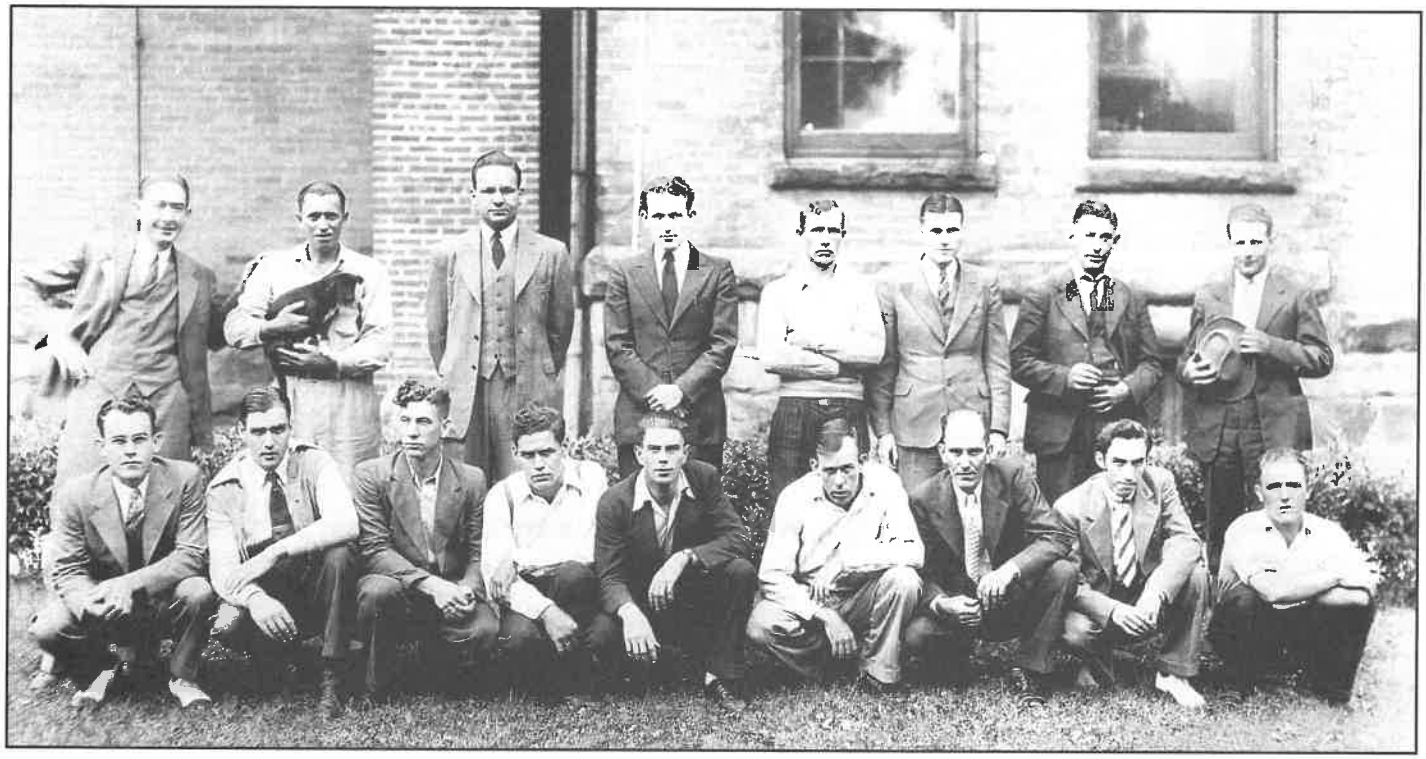
Lefty began his training as a barber in 1948 at the Wheeling Barber College, and then returned to Pocahontas County and worked for one year as an apprentice under Clyde "Butch" Wilmoth, who had a flourishing business in Cass at the time. In 1949 Lefty opened his own shop up the road in Durbin. When Butch Wilmoth quit barbering in 1950 to take a job with the railroad, Lefty bought him out and decided to keep the shop in Cass. There were two other barbers in Durbin, but Mr. Wilmoth's departure would leave Cass barberless. His shop was in a great location and already had many faithful customers. Lefty kept all of them and added lots more in the next 43 years.

When asked why he decided to become a barber in the first place, Lefty is forthright. "Well, I was sitting around waiting for a haircut one day and thought 'That looks easy. I think I could do that.'"

After working a year at a chemical plant in Akron, he and his brother decided to apply to a barber school there. "They were all full, and it would have been a year before we could get in, but they suggested we try the Wheeling Barber College," Lefty remembers. "My brother chickened out, but I was accepted and in six months I was a barber."

Cass, one of West Virginia's most prosperous sawmill towns earlier in the century, has had an up and down history in recent decades. Lefty has watched much of it standing behind his barber chair. In 1950 the big Mower Lumber Company sawmill was still in production at Cass, but in 1960 it closed down and there were few jobs left in the area. Most of the people of the town had to go somewhere else for employment, so the population decreased sharply. Even today the people who live here mostly work elsewhere and must travel more than 50 miles to Elkins or 70 miles to Lewisburg to find a large supermarket or department store.

The original owners, the West Virginia Pulp and Paper Company, later Westvaco, built Cass during the boom years of the logging industry at the turn of the century. At its peak the mill and related operations employed 2,000 men, most of whom lived in or near the town. Later sold to Mower, the mill and the town thrived until 1960. When Mower shut down, the entire town and the mill were sold to Walworth Farms, Inc. Cass became nearly a ghost town. Not much went on until the State of West Virginia bought first the logging railroad in 1963 and then the entire town in 1977 for a state park.



Lefty dressed up for his induction into the Army in June 1942. He stands third from right in this photograph made on the Marlinton courthouse lawn. Photographer unknown.

Since then the town and the surrounding area have evolved into a major tourist attraction, at least in the summer. Thousands flock into Cass to ride the old steam trains that once carried loggers into the mountains and brought timber down to the mill by the river. The number of employees of the state park doubles during the busy season, and some of the old company houses have been renovated for rental to tourists. In April, the Cass Country Store, a bed and breakfast, several museums, and one or two craft shops in the restored company houses on Main Street open. Cass

Cass Country Novels

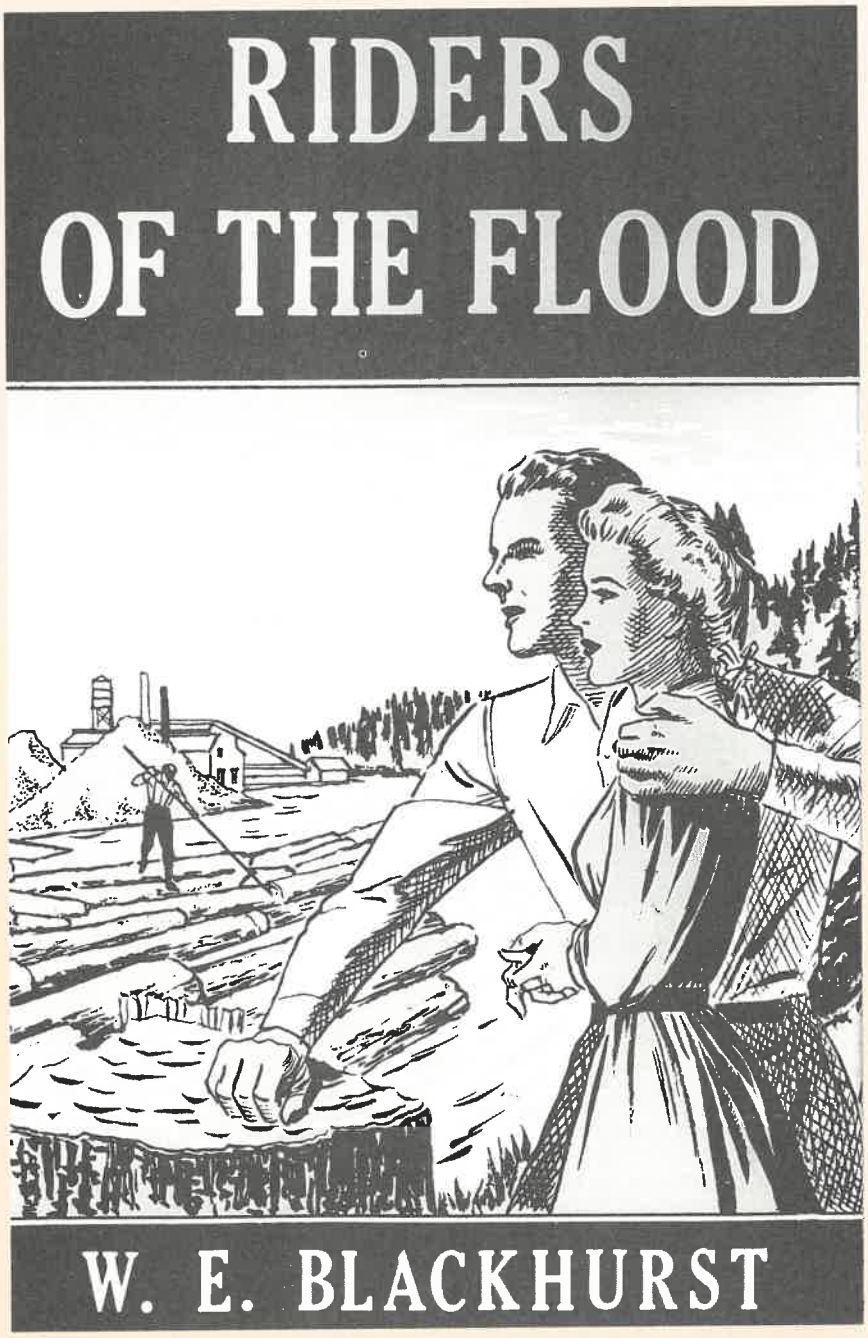
"From a talkative barber Duncan received a haircut and a shave for a quarter and a volume of information for nothing," begins a passage in W. E. Blackhurst's 1954 novel, *Riders of the Flood*. "The history of the mill, the town, and its people rolled from the barber's tongue in a never-ending torrent."

Maybe the novelist had someone like Lefty Meeks in mind when he wrote that. Certainly he was thinking of Cass or a place very much like it. Blackhurst, a Cass resident who died in 1970, was a Pocahontas Countian who grew up in the era when timber was still king in the Greenbrier Valley.

His novels fictionalize the story of the industry and the people in it. *Riders of the Flood*, the first and perhaps the best of the books, describes log drives on the Greenbrier River in the days before the railroad pushed up the valley.

Blackhurst's other novels have similar themes. *Sawdust in Your Eyes* (1963) presents "a whole town full of interesting people," apparently Cass itself. *Of Men and a Mighty Mountain* (1965) deals with the logging of Cheat Mountain. *Mixed Harvest* (1972) chronicles the story of a native mountain family reacting to the changing world around it.

These four books are still in print in hardbound editions with colorful dust jackets. They sell for $17.50 each, except $12.50 for *Of Men and a Mighty Mountain*, at the Blackhurst Wildlife Museum in Cass. Send mail orders, including $2.50 postage per book plus six percent sales tax from West Virginians, to Blackhurst Wildlife Museum, Box 65, Cass, WV 24927.



comes alive for a short while.

Winter is different. The old CCC road from Cass over to the Snowshoe area was recently paved and officials hope to rent the lumber company houses to skiers. But mostly the town reverts to its quiet emptiness in the winter. Lefty's barber shop is the only business open then. The few year-round employees of the state park report to work. Postmistress Maude Moore and Lefty greet the townspeople who wander "downtown."

Lefty and his wife Lois were married in 1947 and have one daughter and three grandchildren. Lefty says the grandchildren are his "pride and joy." Papaw, as they call him, spends much of his free time chauffeuring the kids around Pocahontas County.

Lefty and Lois live in a house in the Blackhurst Addition in East Cass, across the Greenbrier from the main town. For a few years they lived in one of the company houses

The June 1948 graduating class at the Wheeling Barber College shows Lefty in the third row, second from right. Photographer unknown.

on Front Street. And when Lefty first came to Cass he had an apartment in the big building right across the street from his shop, known as the boardinghouse, one of the many buildings being renovated as part of historical Cass. He prefers living on the other side of the river, he says, because being too close to work "keeps you on call all of the time."

The Flood of 1985 ravaged through the east side of Cass. It is a memory that Lefty recalls with a faraway look in his eyes, as if it's something too painful to remember and too important to forget. His house was filled with five feet of mud and water on November 4. He and Lois spent the night in the upper floor of the Cass Inn listening to the roar of the river and the sound of debris hitting the walls. The next day he had to shovel mud away from the back door in order to get into his house.

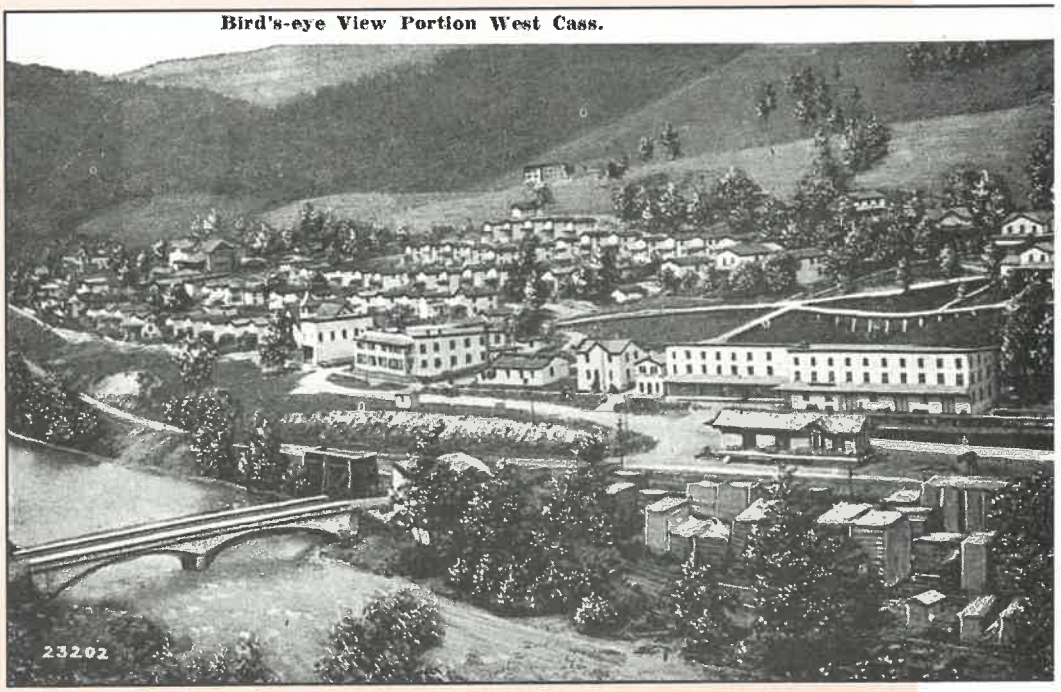
"We lost everything we had. It was just like starting over," Lefty recalls.

"But one thing about living in the country — people will chip in and help. The only way we made it was that so many rolled up their sleeves and helped us. People were so nice to give and to come back day after day to help us dig out. When all of these people that I knew from the shop came to our house to help, my wife would ask, 'Who are these people?' and I would tell her this one or that one, all friends."

"I was sitting around waiting for a haircut one day and thought, 'That looks easy. I think I could do that.'"

The entire business section of East Cass was destroyed by the flood. A block of buildings that started at the bridge and ended at the corner of Dirty Street had been a busy restaurant and hotel area. The buildings along the east end of the bridge were so badly damaged, they were all eventually torn down. Now the corner is a rolling grassy area with a sign welcoming visitors to the state park. The scars of the flood are gone, but those who remember Cass as it was before November 1985 are taken aback at the changed appearance as they drive into town. Once they cross over the bridge, the renovated "new" look of old Cass is

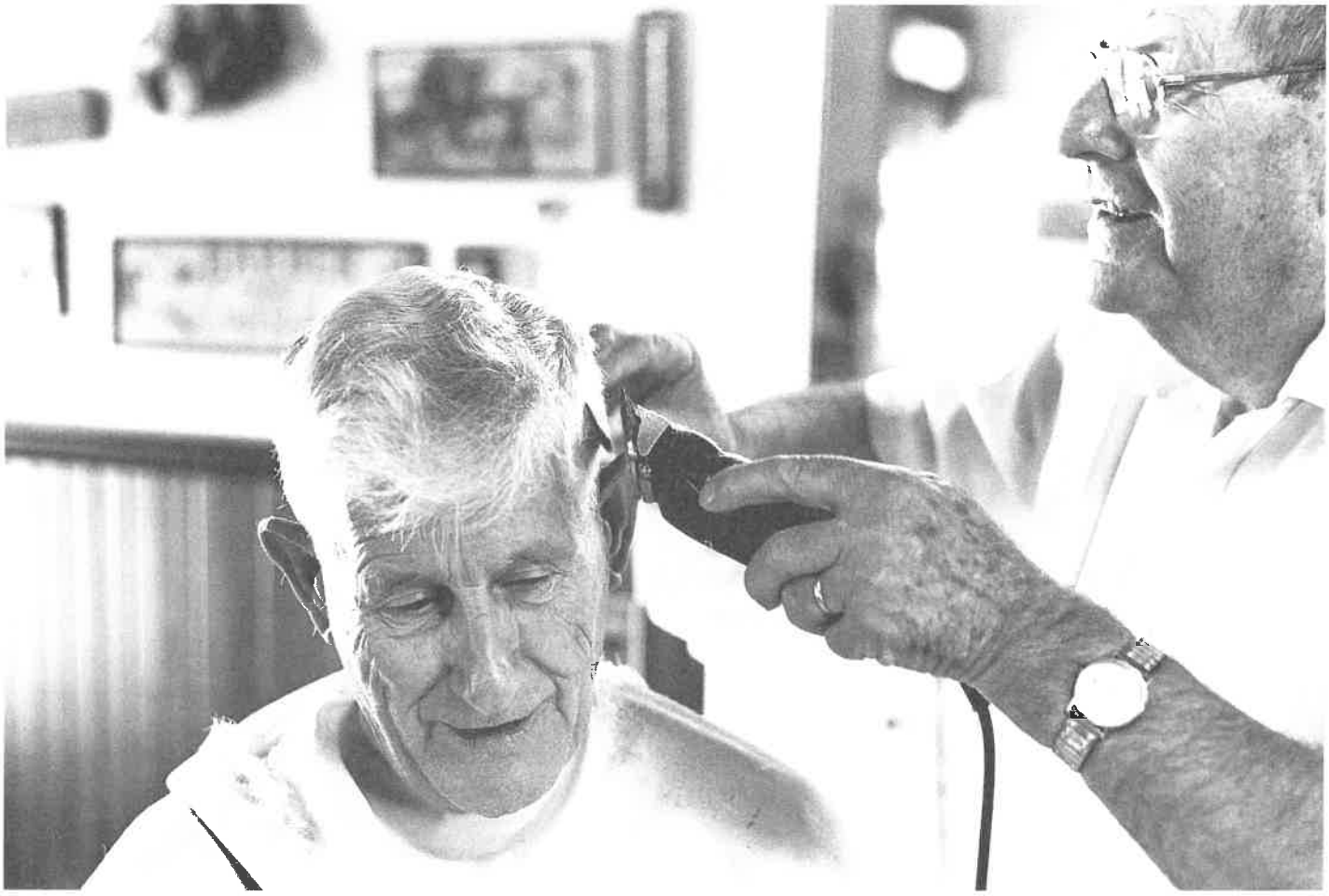
Cass and the People of Cass



As shown in the early postcard view (right), Cass was a substantial town in its heyday. The town's livelihood was the big West Virginia Pulp and Paper band mill, upstream and not visible in this picture. Today a visitors parking lot occupies the site of the lumberyard in the right foreground, with the Scenic Railroad ticket station now in the depot just beyond. The building now housing Lefty's Barber Shop, diagonally across from the church, had not been built at this time.

Most of the residents of Cass were mill workers, but the big sawmill also supported countless woods workers of the sort shown below. These men, commonly called "wood hicks," pose here with the tools of their trade.

Both pictures courtesy State Archives.



O. J. Meikle of Green Bank has no doubt that Lefty has the best barber shop around. He drives to Cass for haircuts regularly.

familiar.

Greeted by the traditional red and white barber pole, the visitor to Lefty's sees even more of the past inside his shop. Several signs are strategically displayed along the wall next to his mirrors, mostly barber humor. One claims no responsibility for the loss of an ear. The sections of fold-up seats that line the two back walls came out of an old silent movie house. The theater stood at the far end of Main Street next to Kane's Grocery Store, which closed a few years ago. Lefty isn't sure how old the seats are. They were in the shop when he took it over, and the theater was probably put up in the early part of the century.

At the end of a long building on the west bank of the Greenbrier River, just downstream and up the hill from the depot and bridge, the barber shop retains its traditional flavor but has been upgraded for comfort recently. For more than 40 years Lefty had to climb down the steep hill on the river side of the building to fire the coal furnace that heated not only his shop but the entire building. This furnace also heated his water, so he had to stoke it year round. Cold winter nights saw Lefty making one or two trips over to the shop to keep the fire going, so as to have heat and hot water when he opened for business in the morning. Last year the state put in electric hot water, electric heat and storm windows. Now Lefty says he's "got it made!"

"I've had a good time here. I sometimes wish I had had a tape recorder hidden somewhere, but some of it I could never play for anyone!"

The building, which is in the part of town that was added to the state park in 1977, has performed many functions during its lifetime. It housed a fire truck and emergency vehicle for the Bartow-Frank-Durbin Fire Department for years before Cass formed its own volunteer unit. Now the local firefighters have a new building on the west edge of town, and that part of the old building is used for storage. In the late 1970's, a craft shop occupied the rooms on the other end of Lefty's building. The owners sold high quality handmade crafts, and even had a kiln over the hill near the river. Now the space is used as

The seats were in the shop when Lefty took it over in 1950 and in Cass a long time before that. They came from the town's movie theater.

the Cass Clothing Center, run by the churches of the area during the summer months. Lefty has seen many neighbors come and go as he continued to clip and trim.

Lefty is also a left-handed banjo player, meaning that he turns the instrument over and plays it upside down — a real trick on a five-string. His band, unofficially named the Cass Rangers, hasn't been active for the last few years since the death of one of the members, Carl Davis. But Lefty fondly recalls the evenings at the shop after closing time when the town folks would gather around as he, Carl and Thurmond Cosner would tune up on their "regular ol' hillbilly music." Sometimes they would play at cake walks and other community functions in Cass and surrounding towns.

When asked how he learned to play, Lefty assured me that he was self-taught. "My mother used to play the five-string, and I would watch her fingers. Then I just picked it up and learned to play. Now, I never was professional or anything, but we sure had fun." To play now he thinks he would have to replace some old strings and practice quite a lot. "It's just not the same since Carl died," he says.

Lefty is old enough to have lost other friends along the way, but mostly his memories are pleasant ones. "I've had a lot of laughs," he says. Lefty mentions some of the more memorable experiences he's had, everything from small boys who refused to sit in the chair, or who threw up due to nervousness, to high-class customers who were offended by the jokes of the local crowd.

"I've had a good time here," he concludes. "I think that's what's kept me going all these years. I sometimes wish I had had a tape recorder hidden somewhere, but some of it I could never play for anyone!"

Nowadays Lefty is talking about retiring and going into gardening full time, but it won't be easy to give up the barber shop. Not easy for him, or easy for the town of Cass to lose its only barber. From the wooden floors to the porcelain sink to the stuffed squirrel perched in the corner, Lefty's place is the center of town.

He took time off a while back to nurse a broken bone, leaving a sign on the door: "I hope to be back soon but if your hair gets too long I have plenty of ribbon at the house."

That won't work if Lefty quits for good.

On Bower's Ridge

Family Life in Wyoming County

By Richard Ramella

Nine-year-old Charlie Bower rode through Boxley community with a half-gallon of buttermilk on a summer day in 1915. He had brought the milk from his nearby farm home, and he intended to sell it to one of the new mining families with no farm of their own.

With the opening of coal mining operations, Charlie's family had found a close, eager market for the plenitude of food they produced on their Wyoming County farm. On a previous visit Charlie had sold a gallon of greens for 15 cents, and he hoped to repeat his success.

Today, Charles Bower is an 87-year-old Princeton resident and the author of informative family histories which supplied some of the background to this story. He is one of four surviving children of Wiley Columbus Bower and Christine "Teenie" Belcher Bower, who lived on the Bower's Ridge land that is now part of Twin Falls State Park. The other three are Sally Bower Neal, 82, of Mullens; Woodrow Bower, 80, of Alderson; and Matilda "Tilda" Bower Bare, 91, of Beckley.

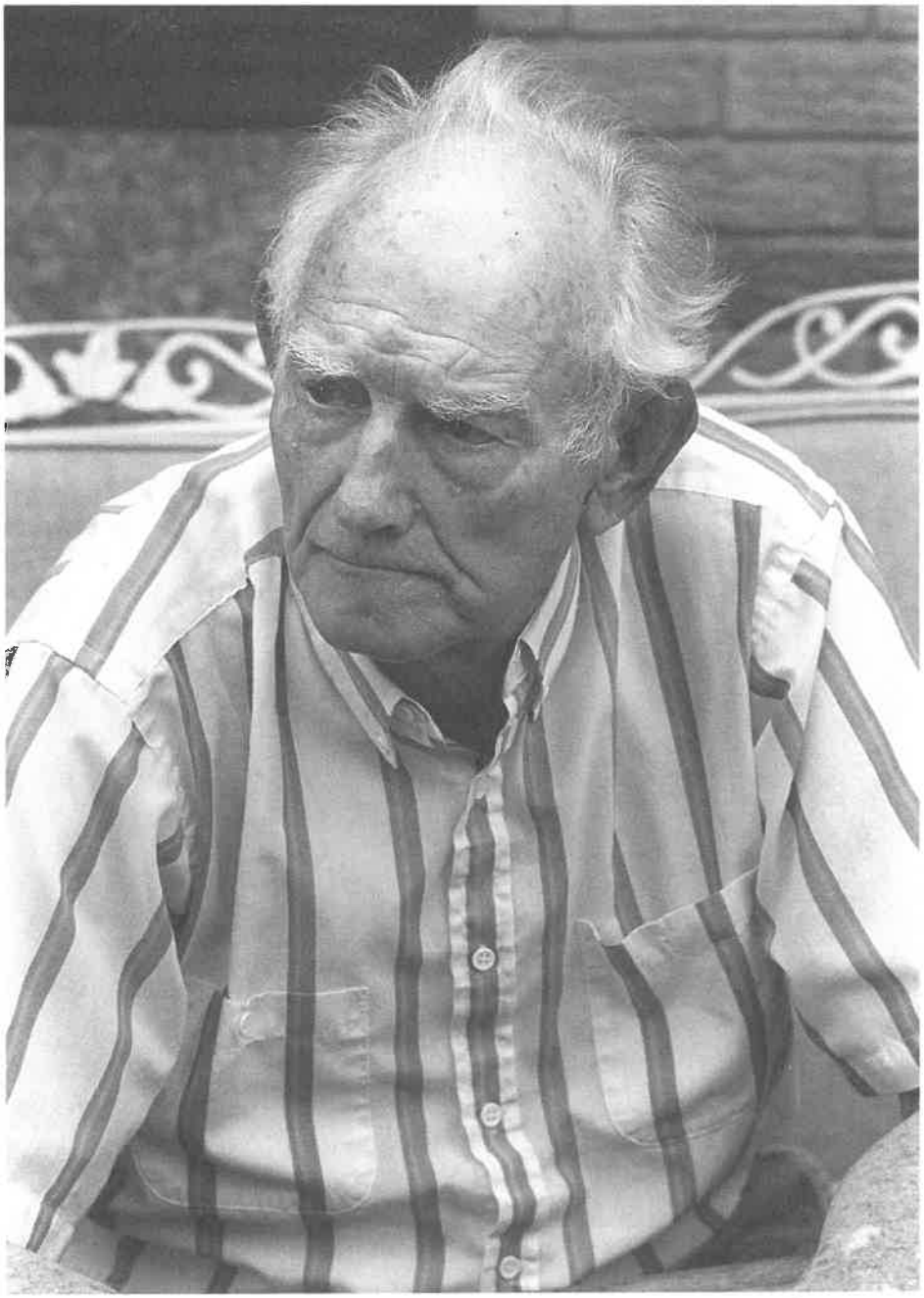
Father Wiley Bower with Charlie and Susie, about 1908. The purebred Hereford bull, Curly, was one of Wiley's investments to improve the farm. Note the counterweight at the top of the gate behind. Photographer unknown.

The "Pioneer Farm" at the park is a vestige of the home in which all of them were born and where they lived in those days of hard work, good food, high humor, and sudden tragedy. The state has rehabilitated the property as a generic mountain farm, but the people who grew up there prefer to remember it as the Bower homeplace.

As it turned out, young Charlie had to give his buttermilk in place of a refund to his disgruntled customer from the previous trip, quickly learning that problems accompanied opportunities in the free enterprise system.

But there would be plenty more chances. With the blooming of towns like Itmann, Tralee, Mullens, Otsego and Maben, a new force made itself evident. Old residents who had farmed the land before 1890 were confronted by abrupt industrial development. Land companies offered cash for acreage and mineral rights. Developers were hungry for timber for railroad construction, to shore up coal mine passages, and to construct housing. And there was a new population made up of people of different colors, customs and appetites.

"When I was about three, Dad took me to the field and gave me a small hoe. He said, 'While I'm gone, you cut everything in sight.' When he got back he asked, 'Where are the corn and beans?'"



Charlie Bower lives in Princeton today. His writings on family history provide important information on family farming during the coal mining era. Photo by Michael Keller.

The 12 Bower children, borne by their mother in 18 years from 1897 to 1915, entered the world on the cusp of the old and the new. The family's story begins at the end of the Civil War. In 1866, Hamilton and Virginia Ray Bower and three children left their ruined farm in Ashe County, North Carolina, for a new life in the new state of West Virginia. In a wagon pulled by one horse, they crossed a series of ridges and came to Wyoming County. They acquired a cabin that had been built about 1835.

Charles Bower says that it consisted of two rooms, one 20-foot-square downstairs and one the same size upstairs. The roof of the cabin was covered by clapboards, split with a froe. In 1869 Hamilton and Virginia bought the house and 66 acres of land for $2.27 back taxes. During the same year they acquired 94 adjoining acres for $2.62 back taxes.

Wiley Bower was born March 25, 1867, in a corner of the downstairs room in which all his children were later born. Hamilton Bower died in 1870, and in 1871 Virginia Bower bought another 300 acres of adjoining land from a relative.

Virginia was unable to care for all her five children, so the three oldest sons went to stay with another family and worked for their board and keep. They attended a school near where they lived. Remaining at the remote home far from the school were daughter Cynthia and son Wiley, who never learned to read and write. "Our grandmother was very strict and thrifty," Sally Neal has been told of Virginia.

Actually, Wiley Bower did manage some formal education — a full half-

There were a bunch of Bowers at Bower School, including Jeanette, standing third from left; Matilda, in front of her; Charlie, seated seventh from right; and Lucy, by Charlie with her hand on his shoulder. Teacher Mary Meadows is the lady in black. Photographer unknown, about 1911.

day at age 12. But on that very day his brothers talked him into going away with them. They had found jobs laying track for the new Norfolk & Western Railway between Elkhorn and Davy in McDowell County. They each earned $1.10 a day and got by on a dime-a-day budget. By living beneath a rock cliff, they avoided the $2.10 weekly board and lodging cost other workers paid. This first trip away from home was to set a pattern in Wiley's life. Even after his family was established, he at times found it necessary to work away.

It was during one of those work trips that Wiley met Teenie Belcher, whose family lived near Welch. Teenie's ancestors had pushed into the area as early as 1820. She was 23 and he was 28 when they wed on the day before Christmas, 1895.

The young couple settled in the cabin where Wiley had been born, on land considered to be worn out. His mother lived with them until her death a few years later. Wiley and Teenie bought the family home and 37 acres of land for $600. In 1903 they sold out to the Pocahontas Land Company, a coal industry concern, for $5,296. Then they leased the farm and several hundred adjoining acres. They bought back the land, without the mineral rights, and 100 more acres for $5,000 in 1925.

The birth order of the Bower children was not encouraging to a farm family needing manpower. The first six were girls: Jeanette in 1897, Florence in 1898, Lucy in 1899, Matilda in 1901, Martha in 1903 and Susie in 1904. Florence died at age seven, and Martha at 16 months.

Charles was born in 1906, followed by Amanda, who survived only 17 months. Then came David in 1909, Sally in 1911, Woodrow in 1912, and Mabel in 1915. David died as a young adult, and Mabel survived only to age 11.

"Because there were no boys for such a long time," Sally says, "the older girls did much of the farming work. When Tilda was 12 years old she operated a harrow. She also drove a wagon drawn by two or four horses. My brother Charles was old enough to operate the brake for her. She did most of the raking of hay on the farm by the time she was 13. She, Susie and Lucy were quite skillful at sawing logs."

Sally is not joking when she adds, "For heavy work my father hired men."

Jeanette did not do as much outside work as the other sisters. Her mother taught her to sew, and she made most of the clothing worn by the family. She also served as scribe for Wiley, writing his letters and preparing checks for his "X".

Sally says they all learned to work early. "When I was about three years old, Dad took me to the field and gave me a small hoe. He said, 'While I'm gone, you cut everything in sight.' So I did. When he got back he

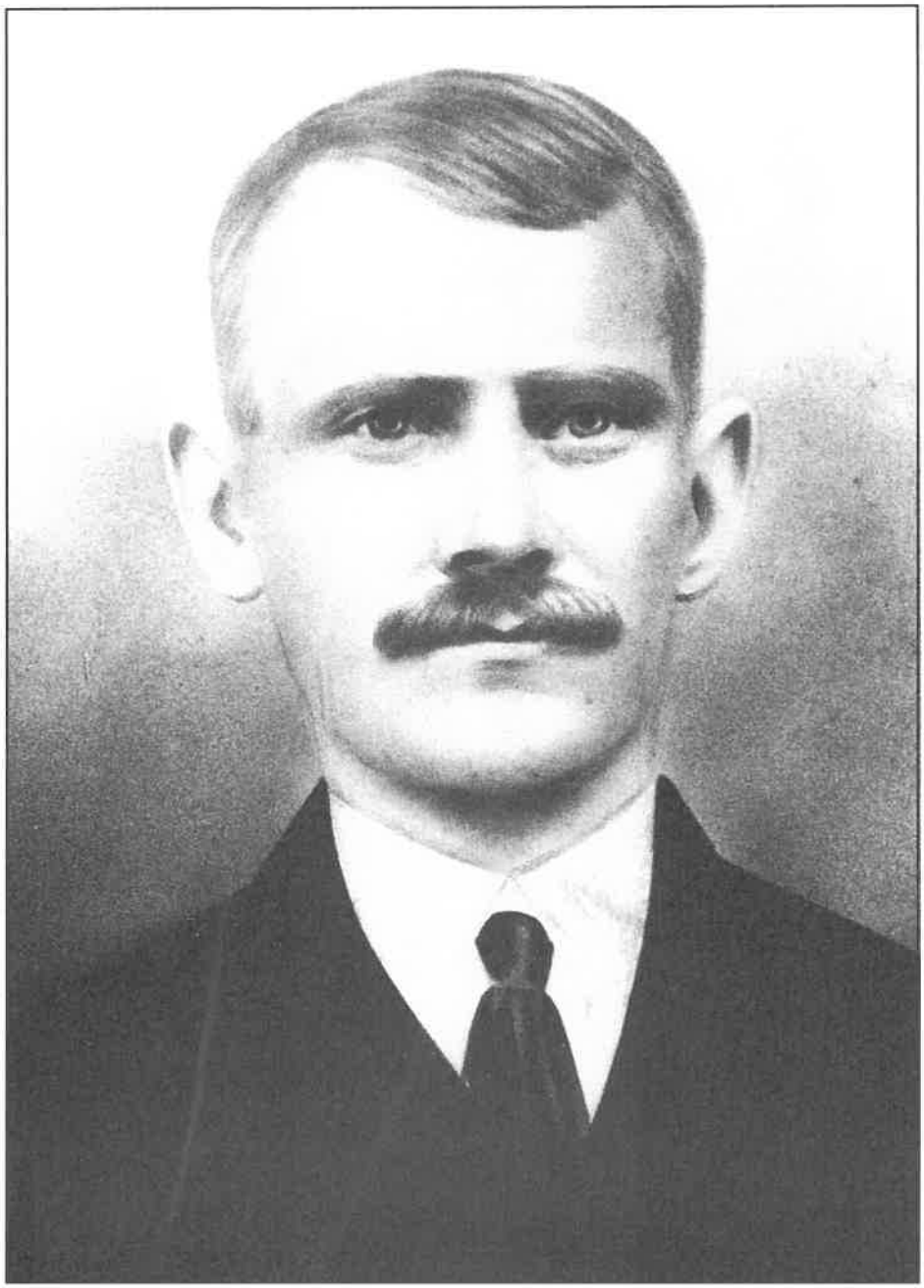
asked, 'Where are the corn and beans?' But I had followed his instructions exactly, and I wasn't punished.

"He was so strict that when we were little we were relieved when he would go off for a while. With mother we could do anything we wanted to, but he had his rules."

Wiley was both stern and loving to his children. He was generous to family and community. He had a puckish sense of humor. Some said he was obstinate, in that once he made up his mind about a matter, no amount of argument could sway his opinion. He gained many friends and some enemies and seemed to enjoy having both.

"People sometimes didn't understand him because he was so strict in his outlook," Sally says. "Someone would come through our area and ask, 'Is this where Wiley Bower lives?' He'd say, 'What kind of man is he?' They'd reply, 'Well, some say he's a son-of-a-' — and you know the other word — 'and others say he's a good man.' Dad would reply, 'Well, whichever he is, you found him. Hook up your horse and come in.'"

"On her 86th birthday, Tilda told me the $40 she earned from blackberry sales had paid for the navy blue suit and accessories she wore at her wedding. She said, 'I had a little left to spend on my honeymoon.'"



Log house living had its advantages. Charles recalls in his book, *The Bower Homestead*, that Wiley used a little jennet mule to haul logs for the fire — and he didn't stop at the front door.

"The mule walked into the big room, pulling the log behind," Charles wrote. "Wiley would lead the mule to a point directly in front of the fireplace, and as close to it as he could get it. Then he'd take the mule loose from the log and someone would lead the mule out of the house."

But by 1915 the Bower cabin was crowded. Wiley's half-brother John Severt built a big seven-room frame house around the original log house. Years later, when state workers razed the farmhouse, they discovered the 1835 log structure within and preserved it after the land became a park in 1965. This cabin is the main attraction at the Pioneer Farm today.

Looking back, the Bower children realize what a heavy burden Mother Teenie carried. "Bearing 12 children took its toll on her health," Sally says, and bearing children was by no means all she had to do.

She did most of the garden work. She cooked three meals a day. If the family was working far afield, she delivered the noon meal on horseback. Sally remembers outdoor meals of "steaming hot corn bread, green beans and potatoes cooked together, fresh tomatoes, all kinds of fruits, and fresh peas with thickening." Teenie washed clothing on a board with rainwater caught in barrels. Each year she preserved hundreds of jars of food, made and

Family members say that Wiley always pointed out that the tie was painted on in this portrait of him. Photographer unknown, about 1885.

mended much of what the family wore, and kept peace among the children.

Teenie is remembered for her skill at tying oats and shearing sheep. When oats were harvested, the younger children bunched the sheaves and were followed by Lucy and Teenie, who tied them in neat bundles as skillfully as the men.

Sheep shearing time was dreaded by the children. Some years there was a flock of up to 500, which preferred the shelter of the woods to the fields. Sally says, "It was the job of the youngest children to hold the sheep, not one of which was eager to be held or shorn. The hardest job of all was catching and herding them in the barn. After the shearing, which could take two days, we took the wool to the Guyandotte River, where it was washed and dried thoroughly. Then it was Mother — and never one of the girls — who carded the wool, spun it into yarn, and knitted the socks and mittens the family wore throughout the winter months.

"Daddy took a great deal of the wool to a market at Cedar Bluff, Virginia. With some of the money he received from the sale, he purchased wool blankets, several of which were given to the children when they got married. Some of the blankets are in use today."

Brother Charles has recorded his vivid memories of the large supply

The Great Itmann Pig Invasion

When Itmann was built Wiley Bower was "ready to put a hog under every house," according to a family history written by his son Charles. Wiley regularly carried pigs with him on his trading trips to town and on one trip at least one sow escaped. The misadventure produced a humorous clash between old and new ways in the mountains.

Like other mountain families at the time the Bowers had verifiable claim to many free ranging hogs, whose ears had been distinctively notched. Some of these animals resided on the farm. Others fended for themselves in the forested hills beyond the farm and in time became nearly wild.

The sow may have already been pregnant when her Itmann sojourn began, for things started happening fast. Pigs gestate in about 114 days, there can be 14 to 27 per litter, and the new generation is ready to reproduce in about eight months. It didn't take long before there were plenty of pigs in Itmann.

Many people were charmed by the piglets in the streets and threw out scraps for them. But soon enough, the number of pigs exceeded the level of general amusement. At the height of the event, there were more than 100 Bower pigs loose in Itmann.

Among the unamused was the recently arrived coal company physician, who found hogs underfoot on his rounds to visit the ailing and considered them a health hazard. He demanded to know whose pigs these were and was told they belonged to Wiley Bower. The doctor put out the message that Wiley Bower was immediately to come to town and take his pigs home.

"You tell that doctor that my hogs were here when he came, and they will be here when he is gone."

Even had Wiley been willing to comply with the physician's demand, it would not have been a simple matter to remove the pigs the several miles from the town to the farm. Hogs are not noted for their eagerness to go in the direction suggested by humans.

But Wiley wasn't willing, though he got the doctor's orders soon enough. It didn't take Western Union to get the message to him. With a fight brewing there are always eager couriers. Wiley inferred an imperious tone which didn't set well with his mountain spirit. He replied, "You tell that doctor that my hogs were here when he came, and they will be here when he is gone."

This response in turn quickly reached the doctor. Threats and taunts volleyed between the two men for several weeks. People began to talk.

The two finally met. Wiley was passing through Itmann on his wagon. The doctor was astride a horse. Wiley had the advantage. He knew it was the doctor, but the doctor did not know him. Wiley struck up a conversation and worked things around to the topic of the errant pigs. He asked whom the doctor held responsible and what the doctor might do to the culpable party.

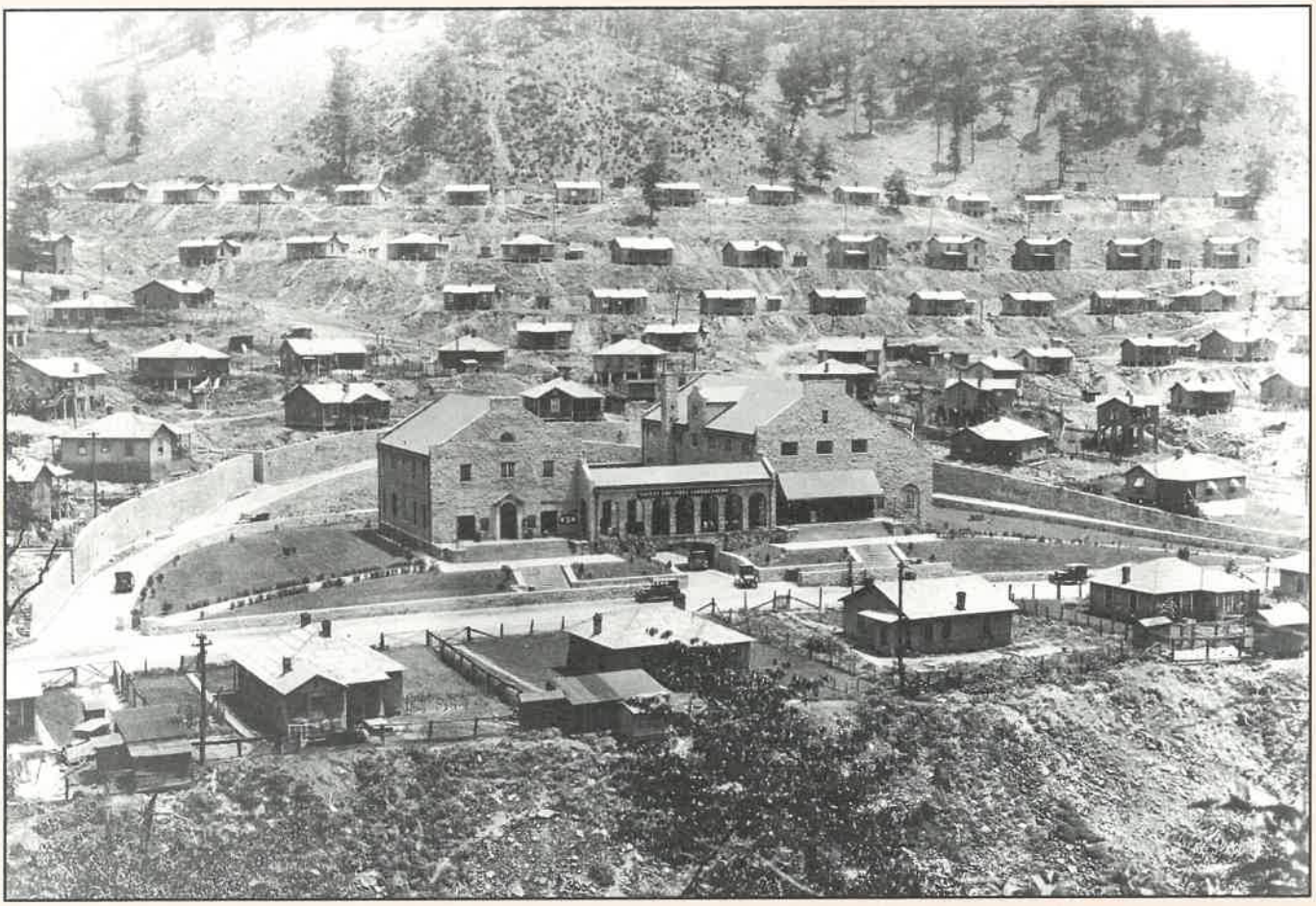
The physician took the bait. Charlie, who was 11 years old and present at the time, recalls that the doctor went on at length about the mayhem he would visit on Wiley Bower if they ever met — breaking every bone in his body, tearing him into little pieces, stomping the remains into

of foodstuffs maintained by the family. The pantry contained two barrels, one filled with store-bought wheat flour, the other with cornmeal ground at a nearby grist mill from corn grown on the farm.

"Near the back porch was a log building which is still there. This building was used as a smokehouse," Charles says in *The Bower Homestead*. "Wiley would not kill a hog if he didn't judge it to weigh 500 pounds when dressed. Every fall he would kill 10 or more big hogs and...one or more big beef cows. Some of the beef would be put in cans, especially the choice steaks, and the remainder would be dried and stored in the smokehouse.

"Under this meat house was a room made of field stones and concrete," Charles continued later. He said that his mother would have that cellar "chucked full" of canned food — "beans, beets, corn, peaches, apples, huckleberries, blackberries, raspberries, cherries, molasses, apple butter, canned pork, canned beef and mutton....She always tried to have at least 1,000 cans of the fruits, berries and produce."

Most of those jars were half-gallon size, Charles added, noting there were also many other glasses and jars filled with preserves and jellies. His mother also kept barrels of kraut, pickled beans and corn, and even pickled kale or mustard greens. Some of the family's pota-



The Bowers were glad to have Itmann as a market for their farm, but sometimes the old ways of doing things clashed with the new. The pig crisis was a good example of that. Photographer unknown, 1920's, courtesy Eastern Regional Coal Archives.

the mud, that sort of thing.

Wiley got off the wagon, identified himself, and invited his opponent to dismount and go to work.

The company doctor paled, kicked both spurs into his horse's ribs and galloped off to his office.

As Wiley predicted, long after the physician had finished his work and departed Itmann, the pigs continued their investigations of coal camp life. There were still Bower pigs there as late as 1930. By then the Great Depression was underway, and the problem soon took care of itself. The pigs inexorably became ham, bacon and sausage with no more than a few squeals in the night.

"Many people ate our hogs there without paying for them," according to Wiley's son Charles.

—Richard Ramella

toes, apples, turnips and pumpkins were kept in the cellar as well.

It was a long road to those days of plenty. For years Wiley worked as a timber contractor in various places in southern West Virginia. He farmed on the side, helped by his wife and children. In time the family began to produce more than it needed. Much they gave away. Wiley and Teenie were hospitable people who fed and sheltered hundreds of guests over the years. A full larder was a source of pride.

Also, Wiley looked for markets for the excess food the farm produced. The first target was distant Pocahontas, Virginia, the first coal mining town in the area. Later, Wiley regularly drove a double-yoked oxcart about 30 miles across the mountains to Keystone, McDowell County, in the Elkhorn Valley along the new rail line that was bringing in workers and taking out coal. Among the goods he sold were fully dressed chickens for 15 cents each. The cash he earned paid the taxes and bought seeds, fertilizer and a few extras. Other local farmers were doing the same thing. The market trip to Keystone took a week.

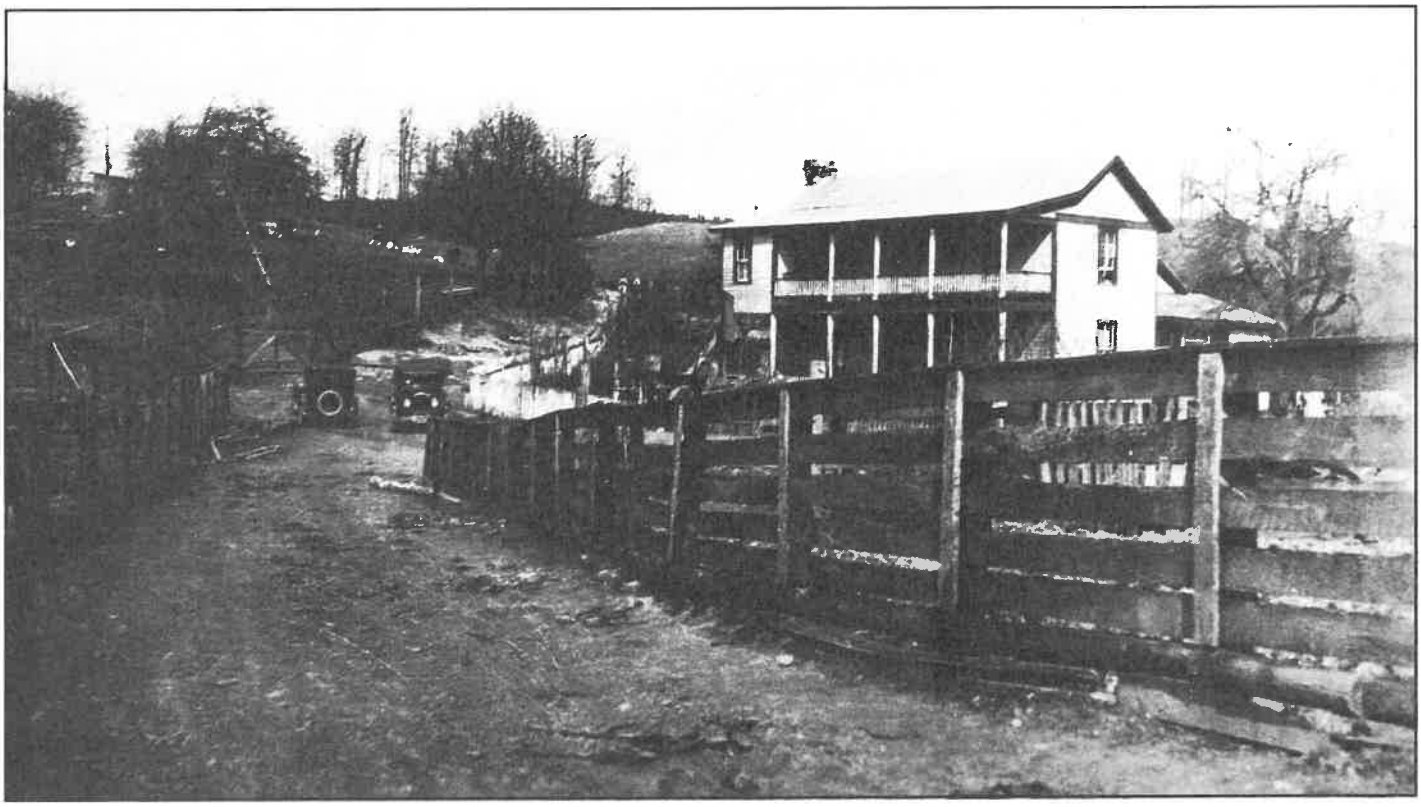
Sally tells of a way the children earned their own money. "Blackberry season was a special time at our home. Most of the family except Mother and Daddy stayed in the fields picking berries from morning to night. Big juicy berries were plentiful. My brother David kept the road hot from Bower's Ridge to Itmann and Mullens, peddling blackberries house-to-house on horseback. In peak season he made two trips a day. I can see him now, riding one horse and leading another.

"Mother had carefully placed the buckets containing berries in clean white flour sacks, which were then secured on the most gentle horses we owned. David usually had two buckets, each of which held two and a half gallons of berries, on each side of each horse. I'm sure the trips were tiring, and he fussed terribly because he was the one designated to be berry peddler. He was compensated somewhat for the aches and pain by the $2 fee each family member paid him. We all got to keep the money made from the sale of the berries we picked.

"It didn't take much to make Woody, Mabel and me feel rich," Sally continues. "On her 86th birthday, August 2, 1987, Tilda told me the $40 she earned from blackberry sales had paid for the navy blue suit and accessories she wore at her wedding. She smiled and said, 'I had a little left to spend on my honeymoon.'"

Above: Like many of her family, Sally Bower Neal became a teacher. This portrait was made during her first year, 1931, photographer unknown.

Below: The Bowers farmed hundreds of Wyoming County acres from their big farmhouse. This picture was made during the family's heyday, about 1927, photographer unknown.



The simple life on Bower Ridge had its pleasures. For example, Santa Claus had a unique method of dealing with the large family. On Christmas Eve the oldest children were sent to an apple tree about 200 yards from the house. They always found a big burlap bag filled with oranges and candies.

The Virginian Railway brought the new industrial world close to home when it passed through nearby Maben. Ritter Lumber Company had operations there. The company built a large boardinghouse, also called a clubhouse, and workers were housed there while their homes were under construction.

With his experience as a logging camp cook, Wiley hired on as first chief cook at the boardinghouse. On his first day he told the workers when to expect meals and asked them not to bother the food between times. That night he was kept awake by the rattling of pots and pans in the kitchen. At 3:00 a.m., when the men were still cooking for themselves, he announced, "Boys, I'm leaving here before someone gets hurt." Wiley ate breakfast in his own house on Bower's Ridge that morning. Except for a few brief contract jobs, it was the last work he sought away from home.

By 1916 local farmers were eager for a market less distant than Keystone. Isaac Thomas Mann had the answer to their problem. Mann was a principal stockholder in a coal operation planned for a brand-new coal camp whose name was formed from his initials and surname — Itmann.

Throughout 1916 the work at Itmann continued. Roads were hand-dug. Houses were constructed, both in the Guyandotte River bottom and along terraced hillsides. They were solidly built but cold in winter due to lack of insulation and underpinnings. The castle-like company store remains standing today. This remarkable building was made by predominantly Italian masons, who quarried the rock across the river and transported it to the site by teams of oxen.

"Itmann sure was a lifesaver for the family," says Charles. "When people moved into town, Wiley Bower took care of their produce on

MICHAEL KELLER

Mountain Farming, Old and New

The Pioneer Farm, a popular attraction at Twin Falls State Park, represents a lifestyle earlier than what the current generation of Bowers recalls. The original log cabin (above) was expanded in 1915 into a large frame farmhouse (shown below as it appeared in 1965), during their childhood. The new house was the headquarters to the thriving commercial farm described in this article, replacing the self-sufficient log cabin era. The family's increasing prosperity may be seen by comparing the size of the new house to the old cabin, whose shape is visible as the rear annex.

Sally Neal in the side yard of the Pioneer Farm. Photo by Michael Keller.

a regular schedule. They knew when to expect his wagon." The new coal town was just south of Bower's Ridge.

It was difficult for the company store to stock perishable food because of the lack of refrigeration. The coal camp people welcomed the Bower farm wagon, which carried fresh produce, milk, butter, eggs, fruits in season, and dressed pork, beef and poultry, including chickens, turkeys, ducks and geese. Mine management approved the family peddling in the camp.

The mine at Itmann went into production in 1917. Charles and Sally remember the decade following as glorious years for the family, although marred by the death of 11-year-old Mabel Helen Bower in 1926. "Mable was the baby and had more potential than anyone in our family," says Sally.

It was during the new time of prosperity that Teenie and Wiley Bower were most able to share the plenty they and their children produced.

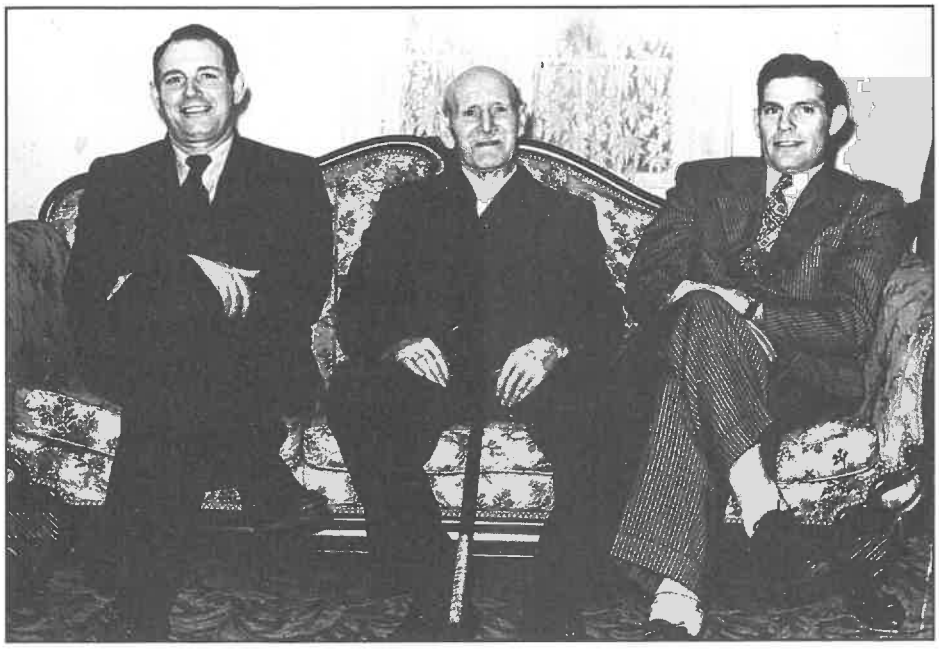
"We always felt our home was a free boardinghouse," Sally says. "Jeanette and Lucy once brought through the hills the entire Otsego school to spend the weekend. David and I often brought several students from the Saulsville school home with us. At Christmas once, Tilda brought several friends home with her from Alderson Baptist Academy. They spent almost a week with us. During the Depression, when miners in Logan County went on strike, Daddy's nephew and family of eight spent the summer at our home."

The pinnacle of Bower family hospitality occurred in September 1928, Sally says. "The Regular Baptist Church, of which Mother was a devout member, held an Association in a grove not far from our home. Several hundred people attended. The meeting started on Friday and ended on Sunday. The biggest part of the congregation had Sunday dinner at our house in response to Daddy's invitation. In that day and time, no one would have dreamed of serving a meal cafeteria-style. About 244 people ate from plates that had to be washed so 10 more people could be served at a time at the high homemade table. We started serving soon after 12:00 o'clock and finished at 4:00 p.m.

"The day before, Mother cooked an entire sheep, and it was all eaten that day. That night about 75 persons stayed at our home. Many of the men slept in the hayloft at the barn, others in the house on beds and on the floors. Still others slept on the upstairs and downstairs porches which extended across the entire front of the house. Some slept in the yard on the ground.

"How mother and my sisters prepared breakfast the next morning for so many people, I could never muster a guess. The cooking was done on a wood stove. The dishes were washed with water that was carried half a mile. We had a good well in the yard, but it always managed to go dry in late summer or early fall."

Teenie died in March 1930 at age 58. "Mother was one of the calmest, bravest souls I've ever known," Sally says. "Her faith in God sustained her." She was found by a neighbor, felled by an apparent stroke while doing outside chores. The neighbor took her into the house and stayed with her until Wiley returned. She died two weeks later, surrounded by relatives and friends.



Wiley Bower's life's work was largely accomplished by the time this photograph was made in the 1950's. He is flanked by sons Woody (right) and Charles. Photographer unknown.

In 1933, brother David was killed by lightning while helping his father bind oats. After attending Concord College in Athens, David had taught four years of school and married. His son was born a month after his death. David Lee Bower, Jr., deaf from early infancy, was reared on the farm. "David lived with Daddy and me from an early age," Sally says, adding that he was educated at the state school for the deaf at Romney.

"No one would have dreamed of serving a meal cafeteria-style. About 244 people ate from plates that had to be washed so 10 more people could be served at a time at the high homemade table."

Wiley Bower lived 29 years past his wife's death, remaining on the farm until the late 1940's. He farmed less as he aged and the local market declined. As transportation improved, grocery stores were established in towns throughout the area, and there was a gradual decrease in the need for truck farms.

Wiley kept to the old ways. When the house's carbide lighting system became obsolete, he refused to switch to gas, even after a company ran its main line close by in 1924. In 1931, when Sally was earning a teacher's salary, she offered to pay for gas installation, but he refused. He told her, "We've done without it all these years. We don't need it now." He continued cutting firewood for the cook stove and fireplace as long as he lived on the farm. When he first saw a television in operation, he remarked that its best use would also be as firewood.

"After Mother died, Daddy didn't keep a red cent for himself," Sally says. "When he sold timber or property, he always divided his earnings eight ways to his six living children and to the children of two deceased family members."

In the summer following his 80th birthday, Wiley raised his last garden, sharing the produce. After that, he spent most of his remaining years with daughter Lucy and son-in-law George Ballard in Beckley. Summer months were spent with Jeanette, Tilda, Charles and Sally.

Shortly before he died at age 91 in 1959, Wiley counseled Sally to look after the family and those around them. "Be good to Dave, be good to one another, be good to everybody," he urged.

The farm was willed to Woodrow and Charles. It became public property in 1965, taken for Twin Falls State Park. The original cabin was preserved and repaired with old lumber found on the place. The inside has been modernized and is occupied by caretakers. The smokehouse and other outbuildings remain.

Wiley is buried near the homestead, among his people in the Bower cemetery. The family graves go back to the late 19th century, and the Bowers and their kin continue to be buried there today. The cemetery has been held out from the park around it, a place for the people who knew this land best to come to visit and ultimately to come to stay. It is a special enclave, reserved to the family for its use in perpetuity, a place to recall the Bower heritage on Bower's Ridge.

Chickens range freely on Bower's Ridge, as in times past. The place is now farmed by a caretaker. Photo by Michael Keller.

The West Virginia WWII Home Front:

Ashford General Hospital

The Greenbrier Goes to War

By Louis E. Keefer

In his famous novel, *Lost Horizon*, James Hilton created a fantasy hideaway of perpetual youth and springtime known as Shangri-La. During the second World War, there was another one right here in West Virginia. After the Greenbrier Hotel was purchased by the U.S. Army and changed into the Ashford General Hospital, newsmen grandly called it "the Shangri-La for Wounded Soldiers." For men recently back from the mud, dirt, and blood of combat, the hospital made James Hilton's fantasy seem second-rate.

Shortly after the war began, the Army decided that it was faster and cheaper to buy civilian properties

and convert them to hospitals than to build new ones. Although many properties were acquired, the genteel West Virginia vacation spot was arguably the most famous of them all.

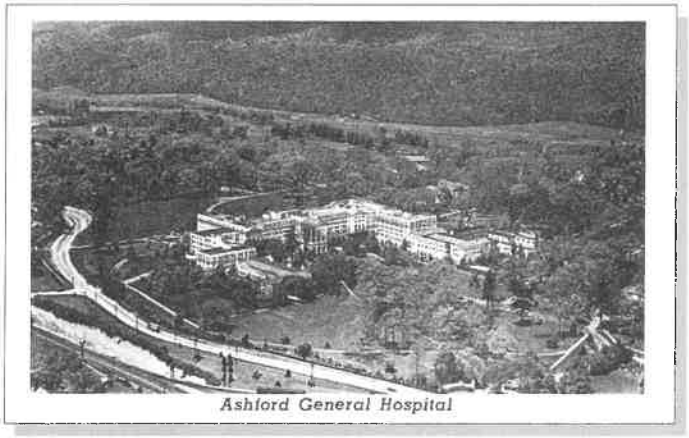
From the standpoint of logistics and available facilities, The Greenbrier was an obvious choice and — because it had already served as an internment center for enemy diplomats — the War Department knew it well. The government bought the property from the Chesapeake and Ohio Railway for $3.3 million. Many changes had to be made: modern operating and recovery rooms created, elevator capacity increased, dental and X-ray labs equipped, and laundry and kitchens expanded.

The new hospital was named for Colonel Bailey K. Ashford, an Army physician famed for reducing the death toll of epidemic diseases in Puerto Rico. The dedication ceremony (deferred to 1943) was attended by U.S. Army Surgeon General Norman T. Kirk, West Virginia Senator Harley M. Kilgore, the Duke and Duchess of Windsor, and a crowd of 5,000 visitors.

The Greenbrier as it appeared in war time. The occasion shown here is the celebration of VJ Day, August 16,1945. Photographer unknown, courtesy The Greenbrier.

"Ashford Hospital was unlike any military post I'd ever seen. We didn't salute officers and weren't subject to any duty. We ate at tables with snow-white linen tablecloths and napkins. I played a lot of golf."

The hospital's first patients, a full trainload of overseas veterans transferred from the Army's Tilton General Hospital in New Jersey, arrived on November 20, 1942. After that, the hurt and wounded just kept coming. While Ashford admitted and treated soldiers and airmen with a wide range of wounds and diseases, it was to become most famous for neurosurgery and vascular surgery. Eight hundred of its 2,000 beds were set aside for neurosurgical patients, and 875 for vascular surgical patients. The remainder were for general medical patients. By the time it closed its doors in mid-1946, its doctors had treated 24,148 sick and wounded, and performed 11,346 operations.



The small picture cards in this article are from souvenir photo packets sold at the Ashford Post Exchange.

Even not counting its patients, the hospital had a larger population than its host town of White Sulphur Springs (1940 population: 2,093). At its peak, Ashford engaged 45 doctors, 100 nurses and 500 enlisted men. Helping them were 200 WACs, 35 civilian nurses, 100 nurse's aides and cadet nurses, some 500 civilian employees, and scores of Red Cross volunteers. The maintenance of grounds and buildings was handed over to 700 German prisoners of war.

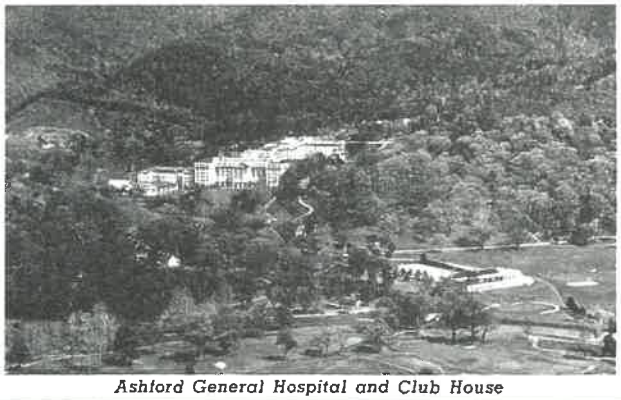
The commanding officer in charge of the complex was Colonel (later General) Clyde M. Beck of Memphis, Tennessee, who had served as a surgeon with the 90th Infantry Division in World War I. Colonel

Captain George R. Clark of Wheeling, assistant chief of the Orthopedic Section at Ashford General Hospital, checks the leg brace of Private Chester Badger. U.S. Army photo, courtesy The Greenbrier.

Beck was a popular leader who was often seen on his rounds with his big Doberman Pinscher, "Red."

Thanks to the Army's policy of sending men to hospitals near their homes whenever possible, a goodly number of Ashford's patients were native West Virginians. Families, friends, and good-hearted people from throughout the state came to visit and help the men toward a swift recovery. Others volunteered as nurse's aides, therapists, teachers and tutors, or simply as occasional entertainers. During the hospital's four years upwards of perhaps 10,000 West Virginians may have had first-hand experience of it.

Warren G. Cox grewup in Richwood,served with the Sixth Armored Division,andwas wounded near Bastogne, Belgium, on January 6, 1945. He arrived at Ashford six months later with his chest wound still healing. As it did, he spent less and less time there, returning only for fresh dressings. On one visit home he married his high school sweetheart, Ella Vesta Fitzwater.



Ashford General Hospital and Club House

"Ashford General Hospital was unlike any military post I'd ever seen," Cox recalled in a recent inter-

Enemy Diplomats at The Greenbrier

Before its transformation into a military hospital The Greenbrier had already completed an important stint of wartime service, as a sort of gilded cage for enemy aliens trapped in the United States by the outbreak of hostilities.

It was soon after the Japanese attack at Pearl Harbor, that the Greenbrier Hotel was, in historian Robert Conte's words, "transformed from a private luxury resort into the focal point of international diplomacy." Between December 19, 1941, and July 8, 1942, the resort hosted 1,697 Japanese, German, Italian, and Hungarian diplomats and other enemy notables the U.S. government considered dangerous. These "guests" enjoyed all the resort's famous amenities, with the tacit understanding that American diplomats would be cared for equally well until an exchange was arranged.

The enemy diplomats lived high at The Greenbrier and took plenty when they left, according to Conte.

"Because they were not permitted to carry American dollars home with them," he wrote in his recent history of the resort, "they converged on The Greenbrier's shopping arcade spending their soon-to-be-worthless dollars on fine prints and expensive antique silver. All of the shops were rapidly depleted of their entire inventory until one bright entrepreneur produced a stack of department store catalogs and the buying spree began anew. When the Germans departed, two extra railroad baggage cars were required to transport all their newly acquired merchandise."

While The Greenbrier staff always treated their foreign guests correctly, it was not unknown to play tricks on them. One of the hotel's musicians reportedly bribed a diplomat's English-speaking child to patrol the corridors singing "God Bless America." Guests glared but kept diplomatic silence. And, on occasion, the hotel organist was said intentionally to treat his German audiences to such vexing selections as "The White Cliffs of Dover," a popular song which had come to symbolize British defiance of the Nazis.

Arrangements for exchanging U.S. and enemy diplomats were at last completed, and all the foreigners were sent home by July 1942. The big hotel's emergency service as an internment center had lasted a chafing 201 days. The enemy VIP's had not always been on their best behavior, sometimes deliberately burning cigarette holes in carpets, scarring furniture, and even using bedroom ceilings for dart practice. But harassed bellmen, maids, waiters, and porters had the last laugh, when it was reported that the diplomats had paid them a total of $65,000 in tips for services redered.

— Louis E. Keefer

Dr. Robert S. Conte's The History of The Greenbrier: America's Resort, *published for The Greenbrier by Pictorial Histories Publishing Company, is now in its second printing. You may purchase the book for $25 at the resort or order it for $28 from The Greenbrier, White Sulphur Springs, WV 24986.*

view. "We wore either civilian or military clothes. We didn't salute officers and weren't subject to any duty. We ate anytime within a two-hour period, at tables with snow-white linen tablecloths and napkins. I played a lot of golf on The Greenbrier and Old White courses. That was great for a young man who'd caddied on a little nine-hole course with sand greens in Richwood and who'd learned to play with only a brassie, a five iron, and a putter."

Though most Ashford patients were soldiers and airmen who had been wounded or fallen seriously ill overseas, some were hurt in various stateside accidents. Nancy Walls, a former commander of the West Virginia Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary, says that her husband, Carlos H. Walls, Jr. was severely hurt training with the 104th Mountain Infantry at West Virginia's Seneca Rocks. He was rushed to the Ashford General Hospital and remained unconscious 30 days.

"I visited him every weekend," says Mrs. Walls, "riding the bus from Keystone that stopped right at the hospital's main gate. Carlos had had a head injury, lost an eye, and wasn't expected to live. At first, it was like he'd had a stroke. He had to learn to walk and talk all over again. After he was better, we'd just walk around the grounds hand in hand. He was discharged after three months, but he's always been disabled. Today, he's senior vice commander of the West Virginia Disabled American Veterans." Mr. Walls has since been elected state commander of the DAV.

Colonel Clyde M. Beck, Ashford commanding officer, and "Red," his Doberman. Photographer unknown, courtesy The Greenbrier.

Elizabeth Board was a nurse from Ansted. A Mountain State Memorial Hospital graduate, she was a pediatrician's nurse in Charleston before going to work at Ashford. Her husband was in the service. "I was assigned to the orthopedic section, where most of the men were bedridden. Some had wheelchairs and many were depressed over a loss of limbs. Sulpha drugs and penicillin — both then very new — were our main stays in fighting infections.

"Many things at The Greenbrier had been kept much the same as in peacetime — the main dining room with its beautiful crystal chandeliers, the comfy lounge chairs in the lobby, the organ room, and so on. Many of the elevator operators, the

Organ Room, Ashford General Hospital

Lobby, Ashford General Hospital

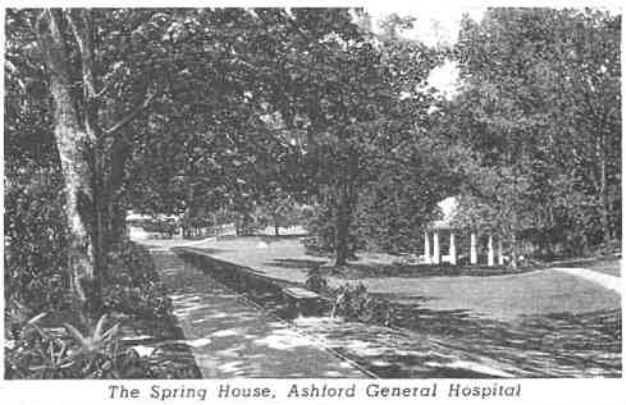
maids, and other people who had worked in the hotel had also been retained. Our off-duty entertainment was shopping downtown, strolling around the grounds, seeing free movies, and perhaps going out for snacks at the Pines."

Melvin R. Schwing was born and raised in New Martinsville. When he was inducted, he was put into limited service, and sent directly to Ashford as a member of the 3590th Medical Detachment. "We were quartered in brick barracks south of the C&O station, and connected to the hospital by a bridge over the tracks," he recalls. "The dirt road up to the Non-Commissioned Officers Club on Kate's Mountain went right past us.

"My main job was in the post office, an eight-to-five job in a cubby hole no bigger than someone's living room. Because I'd played trumpet in my high school band, I soon joined the hospital dance band that was just starting up. We played at all the hospital dances and in nearby towns, too. That was fun, but a sight that has stayed with me for 50 years was a trainload of wounded coming in from Europe. They were so young, and so many had been terribly hurt, but I never saw a happier bunch of fellows in my life. They'd survived the war alive!"

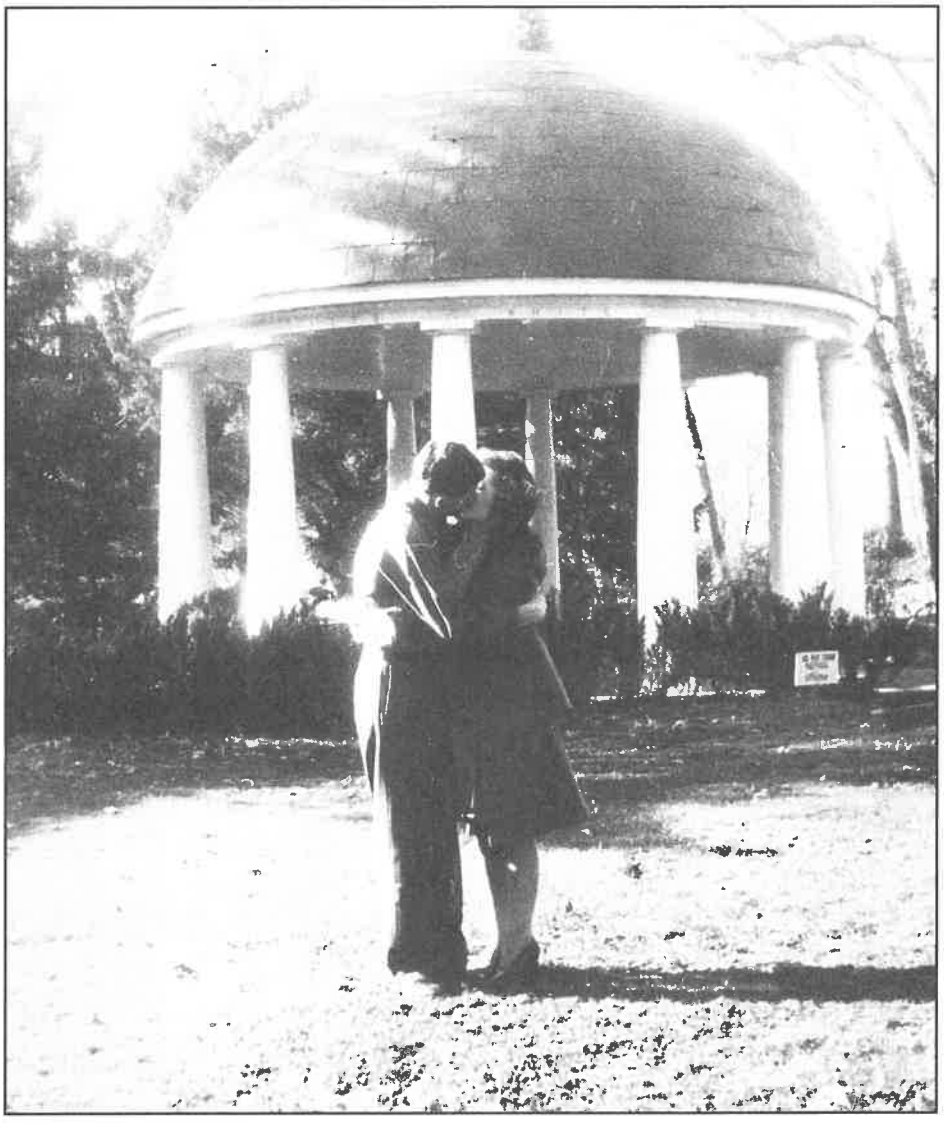
Maxine Flint, who was born in Alderson, says The Greenbrier was her "Sunday outing" as a child. Away at business school when her mother saw a newspaper advertisement about jobs at Ashford, she took the civil service test and was hired as a secretary in the hospital registrar's office. "I helped to check in all the ambulatory wounded. Many were so happy to be home again, they couldn't say it often enough. Following D-Day the registration lines were longer, and we were extra busy. The litter cases bypassed us, of course, straight to the wards.

"Most of the civil service girls like myself lived in the Lester Building —

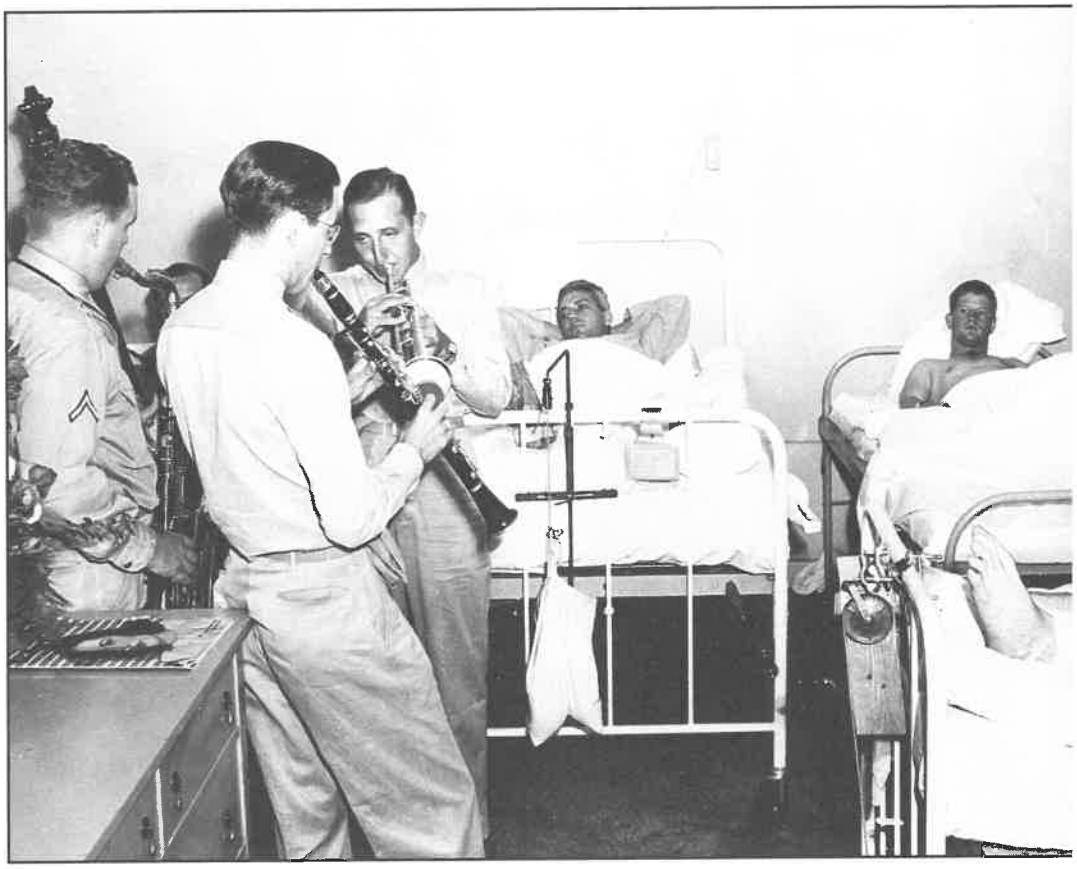


The Spring House, Ashford General Hospital

"A sight that has stayed with me for 50 years was a trainload of wounded coming in from Europe. They were so young, and so many had been terribly hurt, but I never saw a happier bunch of fellows in my life."



Love blooms in war time, but seldom in surroundings so pleasant. Nancy and Carlos Walls, here enjoying each other's company by the historic spring, met at Ashford. Photographer unknown, 1943.



The monotony of ward life was relieved from time to time by visiting entertainers. A military ensemble performs in this scene. Photographer and date unknown, courtesy The Greenbrier.

torn down only a few years ago. We had maid service and got all our meals free. We were told not to date the patients, but we did anyway. And I tried just about all the sports — riding, golf, tennis. I even threw some flies at the rainbow trout in Howard's Creek. Some of us went downtown with the boys to watch them bowl. It was absolutely amazing what some of the boys could do, whether in casts, on crutches, or in wheelchairs."

Elizabeth Jones, who grew up around Bluefield, was a student at the Greenbrier College for Women during the war. "We GCW girls spent a lot of time at Ashford. We dressed up in our gowns, an Army bus would come collect us, and we'd go to the monthly dances. There were soft drinks and sandwiches, and a live band. The music was typical '40's — Tommy Dorsey, Benny Goodman, and Glenn Miller. The young men in wheelchairs sat on the sidelines and watched. A few girls would stand with them, not wanting anyone to feel left out.

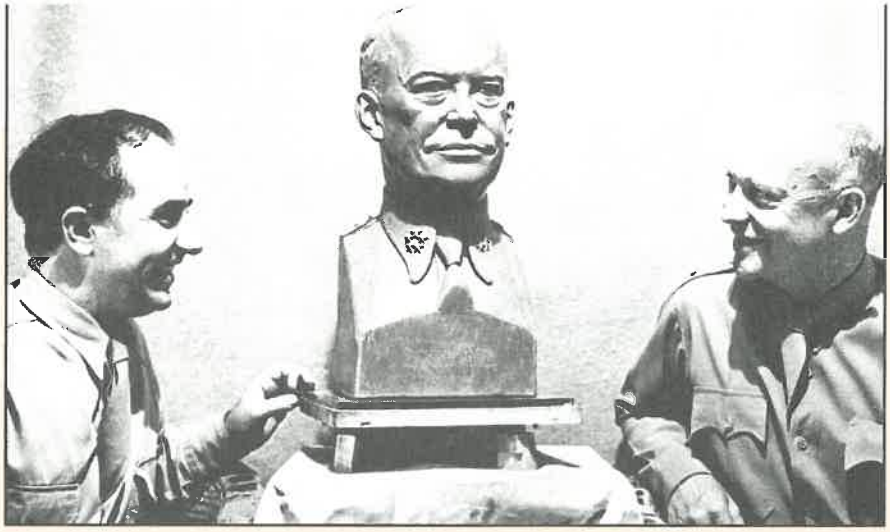
"The music was typical '40's — Tommy Dorsey, Benny Goodman, and Glenn Miller. The young men in wheelchairs sat on the sidelines and watched. A few girls would stand with them, not wanting anyone to feel left out."

"Sometimes on Sundays, we would visit the wards, talking with the men, writing letters for them, just doing whatever we could to be friendly and useful. Before Christmas, some girls shopped for gifts the patients could mail home. Many of the men — boys, really — had been grievously hurt and also were terribly homesick. Because many of the girls had brothers or fathers serving overseas, helping those men was like helping our own loved ones."

Jack Carte was a teenager whose family ran the Hotel Hart in White Sulphur Springs. It was nearly always filled with the families and friends of men at the hospital. A big sign out front advertised rooms at $1.50 a night. "Walter Pidgeon was a guest at our motel when he visited Ashford in 1945," Jack says, recalling an actor of the day. When I heard him singing in the bath — he had a wonderful voice — I ran downstairs to tell my parents, then we all gathered at his door to eavesdrop. He stayed with us three or four days, and was a warm, likeable man. Everyone at the hospital loved him.

"I was something of a mascot to the men because I delivered their morning newspaper, the *Charleston Gazette* — over 200 copies on weekdays, 500 copies on Sundays. Once in Colonel Beck's office, I met General Eisenhower, who was at Ashford for some needed rest and relaxation. What made the deepest and most lasting impression on me, however, was the courage shown by our returned combat veterans. Some of them, even men with their arms and legs in casts, would race downhill to the Casino in their wheelchairs. I'd push them back up to the main building. To me, every man was a hero. Never once did I hear anyone

Ashford General Hospital Recreation Center



Archimedes Giacomantonio and General Eisenhower, with the clay model for Giacomantonio's bust of Eisenhower. Photographer unknown, 1945; courtesy The Greenbrier

Ike's Bust

The Sculptor Remembers

The accomplished sculptor Archimedes Giacomantonio was employed by Ashford General Hospital to assist plastic surgeons in reconstructive surgery on troops wounded in World War II. He also did at least two busts while there, of Colonel Clyde Beck, Ashford's commanding officer, and General Dwight D. Eisenhower. In 1975 at the request of The Greenbrier staff Giacomantonio furnished in his handwriting the following account of his sessions with Eisenhower:

The clay used to create the model for the bronze cast of the sculptured portrait of General Dwight D. Eisenhower came from and was dug up on the grounds.

The sittings took place on the porch of "Top Notch," the cottage occupied by the general and his family in the fall of 1945. The general had just returned from World War II in Europe and was in White Sulphur Springs for a checkup at the Ashford General Hospital. The Greenbrier Hotel had been converted to a military hospital at that time.

This was the first sculpture he had ever posed for. We spent seven days working on the clay model. We chatted about many subjects. His wife Mamie and son John would join in the conversations. Another participant in the talks was Mr. Dowd, his father-in-law. We discussed Leonard Volk, the Civil War sculptor who made the death mask of Abraham Lincoln. Dowd and Volk [had been] friends.

The general was aware of his wide "peripheral view," known anatomically as exotropia. This means his eyes pointed a little to the left and right instead of straight ahead. He had a habit of speaking out the side of his mouth. He tried to correct this. The right side of his face was more developed than the left side, evidenced by two small lines over his right eyebrow. I noticed the lack of sideburns in front of his ears. He said, "They just never grew." His skull was massive and he wore an oversized hat.

[The] three sittings that I originally requested turned out to be seven because he wanted to see this project completed in his presence. He gave me the extra sittings and cooperated to the fullest extent.

—Archimedes Giacomantonio, New York City, December 18, 1975.

cry or complain."

Elizabeth (Bettie) Taylor Carter was secretary to Charleston Mayor D. Boone Dawson when she was asked to bring together a group of young women to entertain servicemen. "I recruited most of the first girls, mainly people I knew, and then they recruited other girls, and so on. Most were single and most worked. We called ourselves the 25th Battalion because it sounded sort of military.

"We did a lot of things around the Charleston area, but we soon began going to White Sulphur Springs to visit the men in the hospital. Groups of 20 or 25 of us made the four-hour train trip every two months. The trains were crowded, and more than once I stood or sat on my suitcase the whole way. We were 'hostesses' at Saturday dances, staying over to go visiting through the wards on Sundays. We had mighty sore feet afterwards — some of those boys could dance and some could not. And those big, heavy GI boots could do a lot of damage!"

Although many personal accounts of Ashford General Hospital accen-

Ashford General Hospital Swimming Pool

tuate the positive, the good times that the men and their visitors had, the hospital was in business to repair wounded soldiers and airmen. And that could be a very grim business. Many patients remember weeks and months, and often more than a year, of painful recovery. Some healed enough to return to duty, but many others returned home with some degree of permanent disability.

Ralph Fisk was severely wounded while serving with the 39th Combat Engineers in Italy. Many weeks later, his hospital train pulled into the White Sulphur Springs station at 2:00 a.m. "I'd expected to see a lot of city lights, but there weren't any. They took me out a window — I was a litter case — and took me to the hospital by ambulance. I had 20

Above: The WACs barracks shown here were among the housing units built on the grounds of the resort. The utilitarian structures came down after the war. Photographer unknown, mid-1940's.

Below: The "25th Battalion," a group of young women organized to offer hospitality to the staff and patients at Ashford, hosted this festive event. Photographer and date unknown.

Elizabeth Taylor Carter was asked to bring together a group of young women to entertain servicemen. "We called ourselves the 25th Battalion. We had mighty sore feet afterwards — some of those boys could dance and some could not."

operations in the next 12 months, most of the time wrapped up like a mummy in a hot, uncomfortable cast. I felt like a pin cushion with nurses coming every hour to give me shots of penicillin.

"One day, my favorite Gray Lady brought along her daughter, Ann, and it was love at first sight. After that, Ann'd come up on Sundays to push me around in my wheelchair, or her dad would come get me and some other fellows to come have Sunday dinner with them. Though I was originally from Indiana, soon after the hospital discharged me in early 1946, I came back and married her. We've lived in her hometown of Ronceverte ever since — very successfully and very happily. Although I never regained the complete use of my leg, I got around well enough until 1965, when I finally had it amputated."

By common agreement, Ashford General Hospital provided the best medical and surgical services and the finest place to recuperate the U.S. Army could provide. Once sufficiently well, patients could use the

The military personnel who departed White Sulphur after the war kept their memories and some nice photos of mountain scenery. Sergeant Harlan "Shorty" Ganote ran the commissary store. Photographer unknown, 1943.

famous indoor swimming pool, or hike and bike, play golf or tennis, try their hand at ping pong, take lessons in practically anything, attend dances, listen to organ concerts, see USO shows and celebrity performances by people like Ed Wynn, Irving Berlin, Esther Williams, and Doris Day, and generally begin to work themselves back into the swing of civilian life again.

The hospital officially closed its doors on June 30, 1946. While rumors multiplied, most of the main buildings sat vacant for months. The Chesapeake and Ohio Railway wasn't sure it wanted the old hotel again. Others, including the town of White Sulphur Springs, weren't quite sure they could afford the famous resort property.

In the end, the C&O bought The Greenbrier back for slightly less than the 1942 selling price, transferring the airport to municipal ownership. After extensive refurbishing, The Greenbrier held a grand, four-day reopening party in April 1948. The strikingly beautiful Greenbrier is today one of America's premier resorts and health care centers.

Some who were there during the war years return again and again. Although many familiar sights remain, long gone now are the commandant's house, the WAC and medical detachment barracks, the Lester Building, and the Army-built gymnasium. For the visitors who come trying to recapture the hospital's wartime atmosphere, something else is missing: the GI "wheelchair brigade" sitting around in the sun laughing and daydreaming of going home to loved ones and starting their lives again. It seems so long ago.


"The Lake," Ashford General Hospital


18th Green and Club House, Ashford General Hospital

Francis Gallagher, right, and other Greenbrier waiters pose before serving a pheasant dinner to the presidential party at the North American Summit Conference, March 1956. Photographer unknown, courtesy The Greenbrier.

Migrating to the Mountain State:
An Irishman Comes to The Greenbrier

By Francis J. Gallagher

This story begins with myself as a young lad on the rugged northwest corner of Ireland, on the shore of the wild Atlantic Ocean. It was beautiful country, but unemployment forced many people to emigrate as soon as they could borrow or earn the fare abroad.

Relatives remember me as a bright kid who always asked questions. Dad taught me to spell long before I started school, and I could read by the time I was six years old. "Learning is the lightest burden you will ever carry," he told me on our strolls by the sea.

I loved to fish in the ocean with two Gaelic-speaking fishermen friends. At night while World War II was raging, I could hear the guns roaring out to sea. Our home was close to the shipping lanes between Liverpool, England, and the North American cities of Baltimore and

An Irish passport and a seaman's log were the official documents governing Mr. Gallagher's early travel. The log (bottom) shows his service in 1951 aboard the *Queen Mary*. Photo by Michael Keller.

New York. I could see the smoke from the steamers and often wondered what it would be like to see the rest of the world.

When I was nine years old my mother passed away, and an older sister became the matriarch of the family. I left school at the eighth grade as did most of my peers, because my father didn't have the money to send me to boarding school.

At 16 I got a job washing bottles in a pub in Belfast, Northern Ireland. My first pay came to 15 shillings, just a little over $2. I had to pay over half for my room and board. When I found out that one of our customers worked in the Harland and Wolf shipyards I asked him about getting a job on the ships. Vessels were being converted from troopships to passenger liners after the war was over.

It was then that I heard that a huge resort in West Virginia was hiring experienced hotel waiters, so I took a weekend off and caught the train south. I liked what I saw.

I was overjoyed when I secured a mess man's position on the 23,000-ton liner *Strathaird* which was bound for London, Egypt, Arabia, Ceylon and Australia. I enjoyed every port along the way. "The Suez Canal is beautiful at night with the powerful spotlights shining on the camels in the desert," I told my friends when I returned home to Ireland. The boys with whom I had gone to school would sit wide-eyed.

My next berth brought me closer to my American future. The *Queen Mary* was plying between New York and southern England at the time, and I applied for the lofty position of waiter at the Cunard Line at Southampton.

"We have a full crew for the *Queen* but we have the *Aquitania* leaving for Halifax, Nova Scotia, in two hours," said the personnel manager. "I'm ready," I said, before realizing I had left my uniforms with a friend in London. I rushed to the nearest uniform shop and bought two sets of the required garments and sailed for Canada within the hour. The 45,000-ton *Aquitania* with its four red-and-black stacks rocked and swayed as it cleared the land and headed into a northwest gale.

When I landed in Canada, my life changed again. I met a young Lebanese-Canadian, Margaret Saab, and fell in love. I saw her every three weeks until I was transferred to the giant, 84,000-ton *Queen Mary*. Arriving in my new port of New York, I called my heartthrob from there. We decided to get married and live in New York. I had no trouble finding work at the Waldorf Astoria, and we found an efficiency apartment in Brooklyn. When baby Patricia arrived one year and ten days after the wedding, we were overjoyed. I sent a telegram to my dad, telling him. Margaret and I soon realized that we would have to move, especially when Margaret learned that she was pregnant again.

It was then that I heard that a huge resort in West Virginia was hiring experienced hotel waiters, so I took a weekend off and caught the train south to look the place over. I liked what I saw at The Greenbrier. I liked how the slow pace of the mountains and the friendliness of

The Gallaghers were West Virginians by the time this 1958 portrait was made. The children are Margaret, Sean and Patricia. Photographer unknown.

the people contrasted with the New York rush, and how the rent for a big house in White Sulphur Springs was cheaper than for a cramped apartment in Brooklyn.

Two weeks later we had bought a used 1949 Dodge, and on March 18, 1955, a new family moved to the Mountain State. The people at the personnel office of The Greenbrier were helpful in explaining where to have the utilities turned on and the phone connected. I wrote my dad again, telling him that we now had a phone and a car, just like the bank manager back home in Ireland. Margaret Jane, number two, came in August. Life was great. I worked as much overtime as I could get, and we saved our money.

"This is almost like Ireland," I would tell Margaret, "because everybody knows their neighbors." In the grocery store, the doctor's office, or in church the local people chatted and visited with us newcomers. One family brought venison, another a bag of apples, while an other introduced us to apple butter.

In two more years Sean came into the world, and the lady next door offered to take care of the "younguns" until Mama was fully recuperated. This would never have happened in New York. When baby Eva Claire joined the clan in 1959, the family was complete, just like the movies.

Two weeks later we had bought a used 1949 Dodge, and on March 18, 1955, a new family moved to the Mountain State.

I bought a used alto saxophone, and on my days off we would go on picnics. The children would gather wood while I tended the fire. Mama got out the red-and-white check-

ered tablecloth and cooked the meal. After the repast, I played the saxophone. Irish reels and jigs reverberated through the valleys while the kids danced. Mama kept time clapping. Sherwood Lake, just a half-hour drive away, often found us swimming in its waters or sunning on the beach. We were home at last.

In early spring 1956 the boss called me into his office. He announced that a very important group was arriving at the hotel. Important indeed! President Dwight D. Eisenhower was hosting the prime minister of Canada and the president of Mexico. My boss told me that I would be working full time in the Eisenhower suite and serving all the meals there. I was given the rest of the day off, for the next several days would be long ones.

I was shaken and honored at the same time. The Greenbrier had ordered special gold table service for this important event. I was warned not to break any dishes as I served breakfast, lunch and dinner according to protocol in the privacy of the presidential suite.

Reporters and the Secret Service were issued small pins to wear in their lapels, their passport to the seat of power. President Eisenhower played golf with Sam Snead, and it was rumored that Sam lost the game that day. I was many times in the room with the president and his brother, Dr. Milton Eisenhower. "Only in America," I thought. This event became known in the history books as the North American Summit Conference.

As I learned more about my new home I discovered that many Irish immigrants had preceded me to the Mountain State. The first had come among Western Virginia's earliest settlers, before the American Revolution. Another surge followed when the potato crop, Ireland's staple food, failed in the 1840's. Over one million Irish perished from hunger, and anyone who could emigrated to America. They continued to come for decades, many to work on the railroads and in the coal mines, and more than a few made their homes in West Virginia.

The immigrants were so poor they carried only their Celtic heritage to the New World. When they settled in these beautiful mountains they kept their music, dance, poetry and storytelling alive. This heritage became an integral part of our mountain culture and is evident each year at Charleston's Vandalia Gathering and other festivals.

So I followed many countrymen when I became an American citizen. The big moment for me came in the federal court in Bluefield on a June day in 1957. "Hear Ye! Hear Ye!" the bailiff announced. "The United States District Court is now in session, the Honorable Ben Moore presiding. All rise." Long, lithe and blackrobed, His Honor swiftly walked to the bench, and we all sat again.

"Today I will welcome 42 new Americans," Judge Moore announced. He went on to question the prospective citizens about their understanding of our system of government. I'll give you his words as I recall them.

"You in the third row, how many branches in our government?" he asked. A young man stood up and said in a Scottish accent, "Three, Your Honor."

"And you in the fifth row, name one of the branches, please." An elderly man and a well-dressed

President Eisenhower takes time out for golf with Sam Snead during the 1956 visit. Snead's advice for improving Ike's backswing: "Stick your butt out more, Mr. President." Photographer unknown, courtesy The Greenbrier.

young lady stood up. You could tell by their faces that they were nervous. The young lady answered, "Your Honor, my Papa is not so good with the English." The judge looked at the attorney from Immigration and Naturalization, who nodded, and then he allowed the young woman to speak for her father. "Executive, Judiciary, and Legislative," she promptly answered.

Then he looked at me, and I froze. I could feel the tension, but with my wife by my side I calmed down. "Who is the U.S. Secretary of State?" I got to my feet right away and answered, "John Foster Dulles," loud and clear. That was an easy one. I had met the man who appointed Dulles to the job.

That night, June 14, 1957, there was a party at our house. Tom Connelly, a hotel employee, played Irish and American tunes until the wee hours. About ten o'clock the manager of The Greenbrier came to welcome the new American. He shook my hand and said, "Now you are really one of us." As he was leaving Tom played the national anthem. Then we all sang *The West Virginia Hills*, and the party went on.

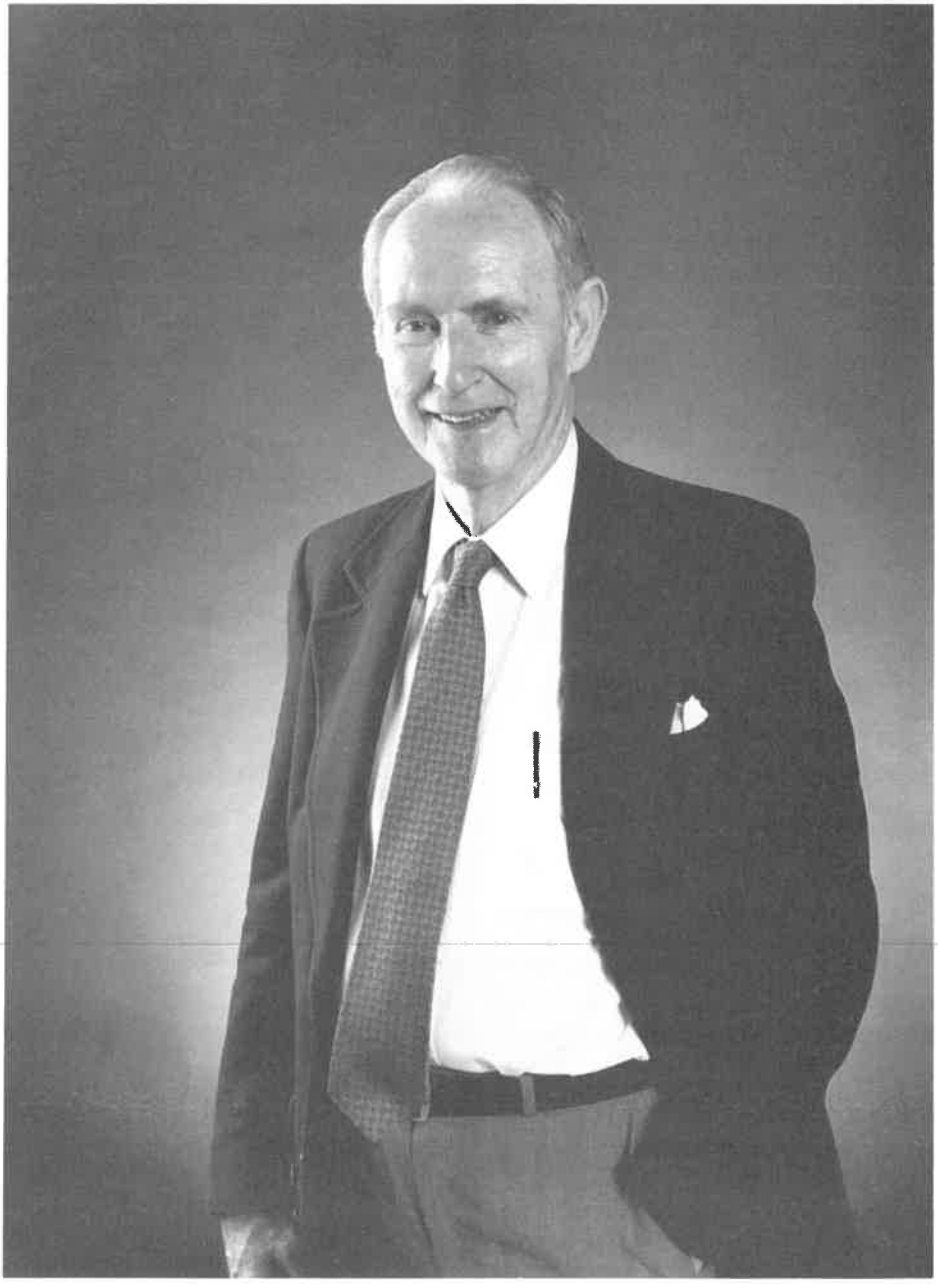
In two more years Sean came into the world, and the lady next door offered to take care of the "younguns" until Mama was fully recuperated.

That was a high point, and another was when my father visited from the old country. But our family life in America has not always been smooth. Deep tragedy rocked us several years ago with the loss of children's dear mother, in a car accident. She had gone to Blacksburg to fetch our daughter home from VPI for Christmas vacation. I knelt in prayer with the children late that night and we vowed to go on as a family.

With her optimistic example in mind, we were able to do that. The children moved away for lives of their own, and I later remarried. We all keep in touch. I have retired from The Greenbrier and continue to live in White Sulphur Springs. I remember the Ireland of my boyhood, and always will, but these other green hills are my home now.

Right: The Gallaghers got together again last summer. Daughter Patricia stands at left, then Francis, Sean, Margaret Jane and Eva Claire. Photo by John Sibold.

Below: Francis Gallagher, relaxed in retirement. Photo by Michael Keller.



Twin walnuts at Twin Falls. These trees were photographed across the state from our author's Eastern Panhandle, underlining his point that black walnuts grow all over West Virginia. Photo by Michael Keller.

Falling Where They May: West Virginia Walnuts

Text and Photographs by Paul Fansler

When Europeans first came to the New World they found black walnut (*Juglans nigra*) trees in abundance. They discovered that the nuts were prized by Indians as a food crop, and quickly learned that the presence of the trees themselves was an indicator of soils well suited for raising crops. In those days slash and burn agriculture was practiced in North America as it is today in the Amazon rain forest, so black walnut trees were among the first to fall. They became scarce in many areas.

I've read that black walnut trees of 15 to 20 feet in circumference once were common, with logs of 40 to 50 feet before the first limb. This was due in part to simple longevity, for black walnut trees are known to live over 200 years. Some measure the age of walnut trees not in years but in the duration of great families.

Trees that survived early settlement and later use were nearly wiped out during World War I, because of demand for the durable wood for gun stocks and airplane propellers. It is rare today to find black walnut trees with diameters over three feet, or more than 60 feet tall.

But things are looking better. In the last 50 years I've seen walnut trees increase considerably. Today they can be found along most every country road in my home territory and long-time stomping ground, the Eastern Panhandle counties of Morgan, Berkeley and Jefferson.

The black walnut's natural range is from Connecticut west to Minnesota, southward to Florida and west to Texas, but it's found in all 48 contiguous states. There are more than 100 known varieties in America alone and an estimated 500 sub-species throughout the world.

Today, black walnut is by far our most expensive native wood. Walnut furniture, old and new, is sought after the world over. With individual trees selling for several hundred dollars and sometimes much more, on the stump, walnut log rustling is occasionally a problem in rural areas of West Virginia.

Most nut trees are attractive, and it is hard to find any tree more impressive than a well-grown black walnut, especially one standing apart. They make lovely, large ornamental shade trees and are widely used for this purpose in many parts of our Mountain State.

It's one of our last trees to leaf out in spring and tends to drop its leaves early in the fall, however, and if you don't like walnuts, they are a big chore to clean up. And don't plant black walnut trees near other plants you value. The tree roots exude juglone, a substance

that most plants, except bluegrass, find toxic.

At one time, farmers planted black walnut trees near their barns. They thought this toxin kept flies away from their stock. Even today you'll see many barns with spreading black walnut trees nearby.

The butternut (*Juglans cinerea*), sometimes called the "long walnut" by West Virginians, is first cousin to the black walnut. It covers about the same territory, except it's hardier and can stand temperatures as low as -50°F, thus ranging farther north and in the higher elevations. The butternut is a considerably smaller tree than the black walnut.

Butternut wood is light in color, strong, and warp resistant. Dried, it's a wood carver's favorite. The nuts can be harvested and eaten in the same manner as black walnuts. However, they do have a distinct flavor that offends some palates. My kid won't touch them.

There are some butternut trees in my part of West Virginia, but not a lot that I know of. The only place I've found very many is in Sleepy Creek Public Hunting and Fishing Area, which is located on the Berkeley-Morgan county line. They grow right on top of Third Hill Mountain, and freeze out most years. In 1991, a very strange spring here in the Eastern Panhandle, our weather warmed early, then turned bitter cold. That fall we found exactly one nut from the butternut trees at Sleepy Creek.

Both black walnuts and butternuts often go unharvested today. I guess it's because they're such a labor-intensive treat. Most nuts are left where they fall and are either ground up by passing traffic or rot on the ground.

Even squirrels can't keep up with the abundance. The bushy tails are important to the big nut trees, however, and seem to have a symbiotic relationship with them: Walnut trees provide food for squirrels and they, in turn, propagate the trees by planting their nut seeds out away from the parent tree. A walnut seedling came up in my tomato patch last spring, 100 yards from the nearest walnut tree.

The nuts grow inside a protective green husk, which browns and softens with maturity.

Being from the old school of 'waste not, want not,' I can't stand to see anything go unused. So, in late September or early October, my brother and I gather black walnuts, two heaping bushels with the husks removed, and store them for several weeks to dry.

We have found it's best to remove the outer husks where we find them. All you have to do when they are ripe is lay them on a firm surface, such as a paved road or hard-packed ground, then stomp them with a rolling motion. The hulls come right off. Wear old shoes, because they stain something awful.

Some people carry them home, spread them on their driveway, then run over them again and again with their motor vehicle. The official West Virginia Black Walnut Festival cookbook says to find the nearest 1978 Oldsmobile Super 88 and go to it. That sure messes up the paving.

I've tried drilling a hole in a board, a bit bigger than the nut itself, then placing the unhusked walnut over that hole and hitting it with my hammer. The hull stays on the board, the nut pops through. That will work, but it's messy too.

When handling any part of walnut hulls or freshly hulled nuts always wear leather or rubber gloves, or use tongs. If you don't, you'll be carving your Christmas turkey with brown-stained fingers. If you have a choice, don't take the extra large or extra small nuts. Medium-size walnuts seem to have the least percentage of bad meats.

That outer husk should be removed as soon as possible, because it holds stains that in time will migrate through the shell into the meat, coloring it and giving it an off taste. Then store the walnuts single-layered in a dry, airy place, warm enough not to freeze.

To me there is nothing more peaceful than those days at the end of summer. They are almost seasonless — benign, windless, absent of heat or cold. An altogether pleasant time to be alive and gathering walnuts along what my brother and

Tough nuts require sharp teeth, and West Virginia gray squirrels are well-equipped. This one is our author's regular helper.

I call "Walnut Lane," actually County Route 17/1 in Jefferson County.

Most weekdays there is almost no traffic to contend with, and one black walnut tree after another lines the road. But be forewarned here: Combine a speeding car and one large falling walnut and your windshield will lose. I know.

One day some gals with a DC license on their convertible stopped to ask us how to get to Harpers Ferry. After I gave them their directions, one asked if we were gathering crab apples. I told her, no, we were gathering black walnuts. As they pulled away I heard her tell her friend, "Those hillbillies were pulling our leg."

Oh well, we're used to city people in the Panhandle these days.

Two bushels of husked nuts, cracked out, yield enough kernels for both our families, plus some for friends. A good rule of thumb is that one pound of dried black walnuts in the shell produces about two cups of nut meats. Bought in the supermarket these would set you back about three bucks a cup, and not have anywhere near the flavor of the fresh ones.

And, speaking of thumbs, cracking black walnuts can be tricky. First you need a hard surface, like stone or steel. Out back I've mounted an old steel railroad tie plate on top of a four-by-four cedar post, set in concrete, then built myself a redwood bench beside it. My 16-ounce hammer works best as a cracking tool. I enjoy it. It's the kind of simple, repetitive work that occupies your hands while leaving your mind free. On warm days, even in winter, I get hours of pleasure sitting out there busting walnuts.

Black walnuts appear to be round, but they're not. They're always a little oblong, and if you hit them on the pointy end they will crack best. You will also get out larger kernels this way. If you soak them in a pail of water overnight, they crack easiest, without shattering. If you're a fisherman, the pungent water left in the pail can be poured on the ground to bring earthworms to the surface.

Walnut meats should be stored in air-tight containers, then frozen. Kept this way, they'll retain their fresh taste almost indefinitely. Because they don't lose their flavor during cooking, walnut kernels are without equal in pies, candies, cakes and cookies. They are rich in vitamin A, high in protein, and contain zero cholesterol.

Behind our house is a wooded, primitive area. One day as I was cracking away, a gray squirrel suddenly appeared right at my feet. It began picking up walnut crumbs I'd dropped, so I cracked it some whole walnuts.

From that day on whenever it noticed me cracking walnuts, the squirrel was right there for its handout, Johnny on the spot. Our cat Snowball and that squirrel lived under one shaky truce until Snowball's death.

There are plenty of other uses for black walnut products. The sap of the tree can be tapped and boiled down to render a sweet liquid that tastes just like maple syrup. (Strange as it may seem, this has also been done with beech, butternut and hickory sap.) Our early ancestors squeezed oil from the kernels, then used it for cooking and as lamp oil. A bread flour can be made from walnut kernels.

The outer husks of black walnuts and butternuts make a powerful dye, and not just for fabrics. When I was a boy we always soaked our new steel traps in walnut husk dye. It took away the shine and covered

up our human smell as well.

The dye can be made by soaking the husks in water overnight. Boil them for about two hours the next day, before straining the liquid into a dye bath.

Legend has it that Christ's robe was dyed with walnut husks, and that is just part of the ancient lore of the walnut. In Roman times, whole walnuts were thrown at bridal couples much as we throw rice today. Maybe it was to warn them that marriage can be a lumpy proposition.

The Romans also used poultices of dampened walnut hulls, left on their hair overnight, to remove all traces of gray. Old-time folks thought if you threw walnuts under a witch's chair it rendered her immobile.

The Greeks thought highly of walnuts, saying that while man lived on acorns the gods feasted on walnuts. They used them as cures for any number of ailments, especially of the brain, because walnuts resembled the head and the kernels are shaped much like the human brain.

Even the hard shells have their uses. They may be coarsely ground as an abrasive in sand blasting and finely ground for fillers in plastic and glues. The recent restoration of the Philippi Covered Bridge used ground walnut shells in an epoxy mix to replace wood lost in the fire. Ground shells have been used as cleaning compounds for jet engines and in drilling for gas and oil.

There is an old saying brought over from England: "A woman, a dog, and a walnut tree; the more you beat 'em the better they be." That reflects the rough thinking of earlier times and doesn't agree with our philosophy here in the Panhandle. We prefer to treat the women with respect, leave the dogs alone, and let the walnuts ripen and fall of their own accord.

Author Paul Fansler at work with his cat, the late Snowball.

West Virginia Black Walnut Festival

Paul Fansler isn't the only one who values the black walnut tree. The town of Spencer has celebrated the tough nut since 1955. Over the years its annual West Virginia Black Walnut Festival has grown from a one-day program to a major four-day event.

This year the Black Walnut Festival runs from October 14 through 17, Thursday through Sunday. There will be agricultural and livestock exhibits, competitions such as the black powder shoot, music, a flea market, crafts and quilt displays, a weekend carnival, a petting zoo, and a children's parade on Friday. The Saturday Grand Parade brings the Roane County town to life with marching bands, majorette corps, clowns and all types of floats.

One thing that hasn't changed over the years is the fact that folks are there to celebrate and sell black walnuts — and plenty of them. The food is a big draw for visitors, and festival planners have published a cookbook of award-winning recipes for all kinds of cakes, pies, candies and breads. There's even a Black Walnut Pawpaw Ring.

The 126-page softcover book gives a history of the festival and offers tips on how to harvest black walnuts via the "city method" and the "country method." Can you guess which one requires the safety goggles, rubber gloves, mallet, chisel, and first aid kit?

The *Black Walnut Festival Cookbook* sells for $8, plus $2 postage and handling. Send mail orders to West Virginia Black Walnut Festival, P.O. Box 1, Spencer, WV 25276; (304)927-1780.

Aftermath of the Maybeury train wreck. Photo by Bernard Wills, 1937, courtesy Eastern Regional Coal Archives.

Remembering the Maybeury Train Wreck

It looked like N&W fast freight No. 85 was "riding on fire" when it jumped the Maybeury trestle in June 1937. That's according to an eyewitness who was closer to southern West Virginia's worst train wreck than he wanted to be. Betty Fleming recalls the disaster from another perspective, that of an anxious child in a local railroader's family. We publish her account here, as a supplement to Stuart McGehee's Spring 1991 GOLDENSEAL article:

It was June 30, 1937, early evening. Laura and I had eaten supper (that was what it was called in Keystone — dinner was eaten at noon) and had met, as best friends do in the summertime, to while away the hours until dark and time to go inside. The back alley behind our houses was a great place to play. There was almost no automobile traffic, it was level, so we could ride bikes or play ball, and our mothers could summon us easily. Level spots in our McDowell County town weren't plentiful.

Dad was working on a mine shifter on the railroad on this particular day. He was a locomotive fireman whose hours were long and irregular. The work was hard.

The regular whistles had blown at the roundhouse at 6:00, 6:20 and 6:30. The mine whistle had also blown its reminders. The whistle we heard next was chilling. It was the wreck car whistle in the railroad yard with an urgency we had never heard before, and we never heard it again quite like that. The steam whistle gave several short blasts, frantically repeating the pattern over and over.

Laura and I realized that something bad, something of major importance, had happened. One of the first men we saw was Mr. Jim Cook, a portly locomotive engineer. He was running down the alley carrying his lunch bucket — and Mr. Cook was not built to run. Looking at his face we could see apprehension about the task facing him.

"What's happened, Mr. Cook?" we asked as he rushed past.

"No time to talk." He huffed on by, trying to catch his breath and keep running.

As other men came hurrying by, what had happened. Bad news does travel fast, especially in a small town dependent on mining and railroading, both dangerous occupations.

Train No. 85, a time freight out of Bluefield heading west had been running down Coaldale Mountain. With a string of 89 freight cars behind it, the engine apparently was rolling at a pretty good rate of speed. The brakeman was riding in the "monkey box," the small compartment on top of the tender, which holds the coal and water to fuel the engine. He reported later that the train seemed to be running away, picking up speed as it roared down the mountain. There seemed to be no braking power.

The engine was just approaching the trestle at Maybeury when the train left the tracks. The engine and 53 cars piled up from the ground to the top of the high trestle. The huge boiler exploded. The noise must have been horrible.

The sound we heard next was chilling. It was the wreck car whistle in the railroad yard with an urgency we had never heard before.

crossing the footbridge over Elkhorn Creek to report for duty, Laura and I looked at each other, wondering what in the world was so awful.

All this time the wreck car whistle kept blowing its mournful sound. It was only minutes until the train pulled out of the yards, picking up speed as fast as the steam engine could take it.

There was such an eerie feeling and everything was so scary that it took a few minutes for the thought of my dad to register. Then with all the speed we could muster, Laura and I ran to my house.

"Mother, Mother, which way did Daddy work?" we asked.

"He's westbound, thank goodness. The wreck cars are eastbound," she told us. Mother knew the code of the whistle, which told the direction the wreck train was headed.

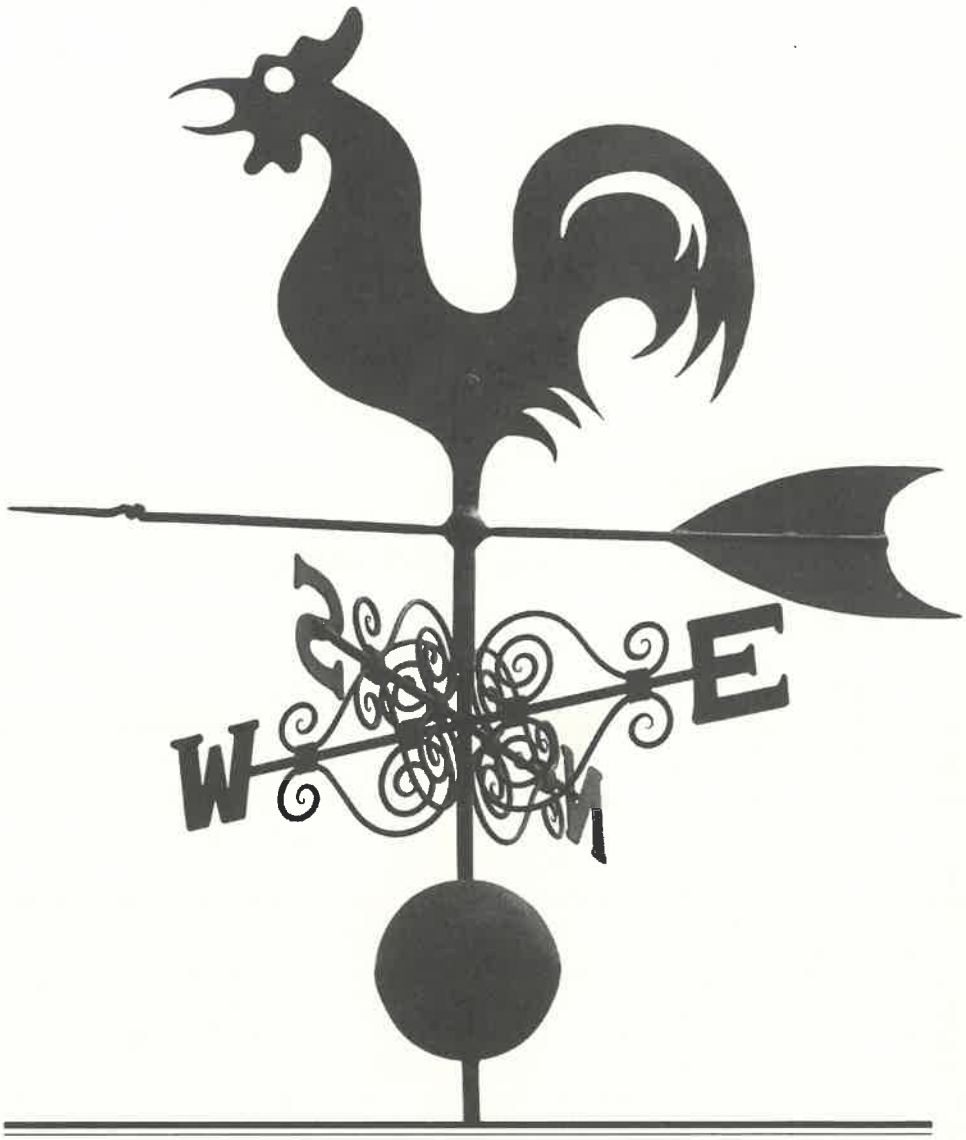
It was a while before we heard

The brakeman was thrown from the engine and lived until the next day. The engineer, fireman, and one person walking underneath the trestle were killed instantly.

It was weeks before the wreck was cleared away and the main line again in use. Sightseers gathered in great numbers. Our family could not resist going to see such a sight. It was impressive, freight cars smashed one on top of the other like giant toys thrown by a careless child.

I rode a train over the Maybeury trestle and a car under the trestle many times afterwards, and each time vivid memories came to mind. They still do. To this day, I clearly remember that haunting wreck car whistle, blowing and blowing on that warm June evening in Keystone.

—Betty Johnson Fleming



Steve Gordon's weather vane knows which way the wind blows. Photo by Danny Williams.

The Mountain Heritage Arts & Crafts Festival

By Malcolm W. Ater, Jr.

The Mountain Heritage Arts & Crafts Festival, held twice annually in Jefferson County, has come to symbolize West Virginia's rich tradition of quality craftsmanship. Originally conceived in 1971 by Francis Frye and Herb Martin as a means to raise money for the Chamber of Commerce, the idea of a craft festival was hardly embraced with uncontained enthusiasm by the county fathers. Francis was president of the Chamber's board of directors and Herb was a director himself, but the remaining 14 directors remained skeptical.

"It took us every bit of six months to convince our board of directors to sponsor the festival," recalls George Vickers, then manager of the Jefferson County Chamber of Commerce and today the executive director. "Many of the board members were bankers, retailers, industry people and the like, and to their way of thinking an art and craft fair was risky."

But Francis and Herb persisted and finally the other members came around, on the condition that George take charge of raising the money to pay for lumber, power lines, advertising, and everything else necessary to make the festival a success. The local Lions Club stepped in to help, but the first show in 1972 was hardly a financial bonanza; 100 craftspeople exhibited their wares and the festival netted a modest $1,500 profit.

Much has changed. Held the second week in June and the last weekend in September, the Mountain Heritage Arts & Crafts Festival has built a powerful reputation through the years. The name "Mountain Heritage" proved so popular that it had to be registered, at a cost of $4,800. This summer's show was cited by *Early American Life* magazine as one of the "25 Best Craft Shows" on the East Coast. The authorative Harris List of craft shows went so far as to make it a top-16 pick for 1993.

Visiting the festival grounds in June made it easy to understand why the show ranks high on everyone's list. Blue skies and comfortable temperatures, coupled with the sweet scent of the honeysuckle that rings the fair grounds, made the festival a delight to attend.

More than 200 craftspeople displayed their work. The displays were broken down into different categories, including leather and sheepskin; jewelry; dolls and stuffed animals; paintings and folk art; baskets; metals; pottery; quilted items; dried flowers and herbs; stained, etched and blown glass; weaving; toys; and wood furniture. Miscellaneous displays featured everything from wooden farm tools to homemade breads and West Virginia honey.

Craftspeople showed off their skills in open-air tents, often demonstrating to visitors the step-by-step process of their handiwork. Whether it was the bending of willow branches into furniture, weaving straw into brooms, molding clay into pottery, carving wood into delicate birds or collectibles, or making candles from hot beeswax, the interest of inquisitive onlookers never

Harpers Ferry twins Eric and Ryan Zombro check out the wares at a toy booth. Photo by Hunter Johnston.

waned. Questions flowed freely.

You can't help but get engrossed. It's hard not to pause when you hear the tink-tink-tink of a pewter maker's hammer as he transforms the metal into art or listen as a craftsperson plays his handmade musical instrument. You may want to examine the sturdy furniture that ranges from tables and corner cabinets to beds and rolltop desks, or perhaps allow your mind to take you back to your youth as you stare at the old-fashioned carousel horses crafted from West Virginia basswood.

You'll find jewelry to fit all tastes, daintily painted flower arrangements made from thin wood shavings, Tiffany-style lamp shades made popular in another era, adorable hand puppets that somehow swallow their food right in front of your eyes, and cornshuck dolls. You may want to buy a bowl that was fashioned from a block of wood that morning, or try on lambskin gloves and hats. Interested in outdoor photography or the art of calligraphy? You'll find plenty of examples.

The aromas that fill the fair grounds can be sinfully distracting to someone on a diet. Plan on lunch and dinner with snacks in between, so you'll have a chance to sample as much as possible. Among the choices are barbecued chicken and spare ribs, crab sandwiches, soft pretzels, apple butter cooked on the grounds, fresh fruit concoctions, and of course the usual menu of burgers, dogs and fries. Relax and eat your meal on a bale of hay as you listen to the live entertainment that features Appalachian folk music and bluegrass.

"Many of the board members were bankers, retailers, industry people and the like, and to their way of thinking an art and craft fair was risky."

There's plenty of good things to take home and share with friends, too. Homemade breads are a fixture, not the kind you find in your local grocery store. There are hearty German varieties and other loaves flavored with pecans, blueberries, apricots, peaches, cheddar cheese, or sweet potatoes and raisins. Then there are the common jellies such as blackberry or mint, and the not-so-common jellies like ramp and pepper. Bottles of vinegar can be found flavored with every kind of ingredient imaginable, including one favorite that actually features a floral bouquet inside the bottle. Other popular items include different honies and mustards, dessert sauces, salad dressings, and maple syrup and candies.

Nowadays the festival has something for everyone, but success didn't come about by accident. George Vickers and others have worked hard throughout the years. They realized right away that high standards were critical, and they learned that the way to assure high standards was to make Mountain Heritage into what craftspeople call a "juried show."

Like other festivals, they learned that lesson by trial and error. During the early years, a selection committee of local volunteers decided who would be allowed to enter the show. But this exposed planners to

Fair goers check the offerings at the Mountain Heritage Arts & Crafts Festival in Jefferson County. Photo by Hunter Johnston.

charges of favoritism, that "friends of friends" were getting in while quality craftspeople were turned away.

In 1976 the Chamber of Commerce tried using slide presentations, where craftspeople would anonymously submit slides of their work. This proved to be even less desirable, according to George. "You wouldn't believe how great some people could arrange their displays on a slide, but when you saw their work it was awful."

Finally in 1977 the earlier systems gave way to a team of disinterested outsiders, and a new era of quality workmanship began. Their unbiased opinion weeded out all but the best entries, and visitor response to that year's show was so overwhelmingly favorable that strict guidelines for selection have been followed to this day.

To enter an exhibit, a craftsperson must first submit different examples of his work to a three-person jury. To keep ideas fresh and allow for different outlooks, new jurors from outside the area are selected every year. This is not inexpensive. The jurors are paid a daily salary, along with meals, lodging, and transportation.

Crafts are judged only against other crafts in the same field, such as pottery, woodwork, or metals. Each year there are 18-25 different categories represented, including a "mixed" category.

The jurors spend three days examining the sample crafts, carefully scrutinizing material, workmanship, function, and design. Skill and quality must be shown in every craft. The jurors also meet with the individual craftspeople. Each will be graded on his knowledge and attitude, as craftspeople are expected to act as unofficial hosts to the many visitors.

"We don't worry about competition. If there's a problem, it's not the competition's fault, it's our fault. We have one overall theme, and that is quality of crafts."

Old-time willow porch furniture is popular once more. Rick Pratt shows how it's made. Photo by Hunter Johnston.

After all the scores are tallied up, only the top ten finishers in each category are invited to the fair. The competition can be fierce, with more than 1,000 craftspeople sometimes applying for the 200 or so slots available.

Although many of the them come from West Virginia, there is a sizable portion of entrants from up and down the East Coast. Peter and Jenny Chapman, from Bent Mountain, Virginia, made their third appearance at the fair last June. Peter specializes in three-dimensional animal puzzles, and he thinks the rigorous judging is good for the show. "I like the way things are done because the judges have the actual craft in front of them. It's a good way of maintaining quality."

The Mountain Heritage Arts & Crafts Festival is a boon to Jefferson County with the money it generates. "The festival has been a godsend to so many businesses in the county," explains Francis Frye. "And it's enabled the Chamber of Commerce to have a real impact helping with the county's economic growth."

Gary Zittle, owner of a sweet shop in nearby Shepherdstown, sized up the situation as he served tasty whole-grain German breads, muffins, and specialty cakes to festival goers. "It's been a big benefit to the county businesses in general, not only from the tourists but from the craftspeople and their families that stay for four or five nights. A lot of money is being spent."

Blacksmiths have the hottest work at the summer craft fairs. Here Steve Gordon turns away from a faceful of smoke. Photo by Jim Harter.

And as they say, it takes money to make money. Putting on a successful show is no small challenge, and not cheap. The days of low overhead are long gone. The operating cost for each festival is between $90,000 and $100,000, with the money going for tents, advertising, brochures, entertainment, security and parking, electricity, port-a-johns and what have you.

But once expenses are deducted there's still a nice profit for the Chamber of Commerce, though George Vickers slyly refuses to get into specifics. Adults are charged $4 to enter the festival while children are charged $2, and with the large crowds it's easy to see money pouring into Jefferson County. Additionally, each craftsperson pays $150 for a 16-by-16-foot space or $75 for half that. Each craft booth pays 15% of its gross sales, strictly on the honor system.

Surprisingly, the bulk of the work for each festival is handled by only three people. George Vickers, of course, does much of the contractural work, while Mary Via concentrates on working with the craftspeople. Eileen Chambers, who handles the secretarial work, ties up loose ends. "We each have certain duties to perform, and we do them as best we can," points out George.

There are many factors that go into determining a festival's success, including weather, other craft shows in a 100-mile radius, and whether or not the visitors are buying the merchandise. But George is not one to fret. "We don't worry about competition," he says. "If there's a problem, it's not the competition's fault, it's our fault. We have one overall theme, and that is quality of crafts.

"We emphasize good, wholesome family entertainment," intones George. "The craftsmen have to abide by our rules — proper dress, polite manners, and becoming conduct. If a person can't abide by those simple rules, we ask them to leave." Fortunately for everyone involved, the craftspeople are just as eager as George to leave a good impression with the thousands of visitors.

Said Tom Tucker, who was visiting the festival with his wife Kim from nearby Martinsburg, "This show is top-of-the-line in craftsmanship and everything else. It represents West Virginia at its finest. It's something that everyone can be proud of. We have a very special heritage in West Virginia and it's something more people need to learn about."

So do that. Take Tom's advice and learn more about West Virginia's heritage. If you missed the June installment of the Mountain Heritage Arts & Crafts Festival plan to attend the last weekend in September. You will be glad you did.

Artists' & Craftsmen's Guild

This year is the Year of the American Craft, and it also marks the 30th anniversary of the West Virginia Artists' and Craftsmen's Guild. The statewide, nonprofit educational group was chartered in 1963 "to encourage and promote the development, marketing and preservation of the arts and crafts in the State of West Virginia," says guild president John Brunell, adding that it was started during the first Mountain State Art & Craft Fair at Cedar Lakes. To this day the organization is involved in the fair as the only non-government sponsor.

The Artists' and Craftmen's Guild exhibits quality crafts at state fairs and festivals and helps its members earn a living as independent artists and craftspeople.

The guild's newsletter, "Handprints," contains news items for working artisans and includes features and reprints on such subjects as effective slide presentations of craft work, job opportunities, fairs and festivals, advertising, and apprentice programs. The group is funded by membership dues, workshop fees, fund-raising and marketing activities, and private contributions.

The guild's current membership is around 250, though "Handprints" goes to 500 people including all Mountain State Art & Craft Fair exhibitors. Membership in the West Virginia Artists' and Craftsmen's Guild, not limited to craftspeople, is $15 for students, $20 for individuals, and $40 per family. For more information contact John Brunell at P.O. Box 968, Charleston, WV 25324; (304)346-1376.

Mountain Music Roundup

Notes by Danny Williams

The Bing boys just want to have fun.

For many years now, the **Bing Brothers** band has been playing some of the finest authentic mountain music anywhere, and having a rousing good time doing it. Whether the band is playing in a theater or a parking lot, their exuberance inevitably spills over into the audience, making these young men a favorite of true mountain music fans.

Finally, a little bit of the fun is available "to go," on the Bing Brothers' first recording, "Just for the Sake of It" (cassette — $10). Brothers Mike (mandolin), Dave (fiddle), and Tim (banjo), and friends **Danny Arthur** (guitar) and **Greg Gibson** (bass) serve up 16 selections in a wide variety of styles. Individually, these pickers are masters of their instruments, and collectively they have that special sound which comes from years of collaboration.

Purists will appreciate the Bings' sources. Several of the tunes and arrangements on this tape, like "Waynesboro" and "Red Rocking Chair," come from the legendary Hammons family of Pocahontas County. The Bings, whose roots are in Wayne County, spent a lot of time with the Hammonses and others, developing their art in a way which cannot be matched by learning tunes from recordings or books. The cassette also credits **Frank George** and **Jim Wheeler** as sources.

Several of the tunes are seldom heard or recorded. Others, such as "Sally Ann," "Blue Eyed Miss," and "Cumberland Gap," are more common, but they are rarely done with such precision or joy. "Cruel Willie" is a modern ballad, but it fits perfectly here because it is fine music and good fun.

Jobs and families have scattered these musicians around the state, and it is rare now to hear all five of them together in person. This tape will bring them together for you.

* * *

In the past few years, much attention has been paid to the life and art of Braxton County fiddler **Melvin Wine**. A new video, "Old Time Music Maker: Melvin Wine" (videotape — $25), provides still another angle on the development of this unique man and his music.

The video centers on a conversation between Wine and his friend **Gerry Milnes**, folklorist with the Augusta Heritage Center in Elkins. Though the background of his life is one of hard work and tough times, Wine's memories are positive ones, stories of love, family, and fun. Two memorable anecdotes recount Wine's riding an airplane for the first time, and beating his father in a local fiddle contest.

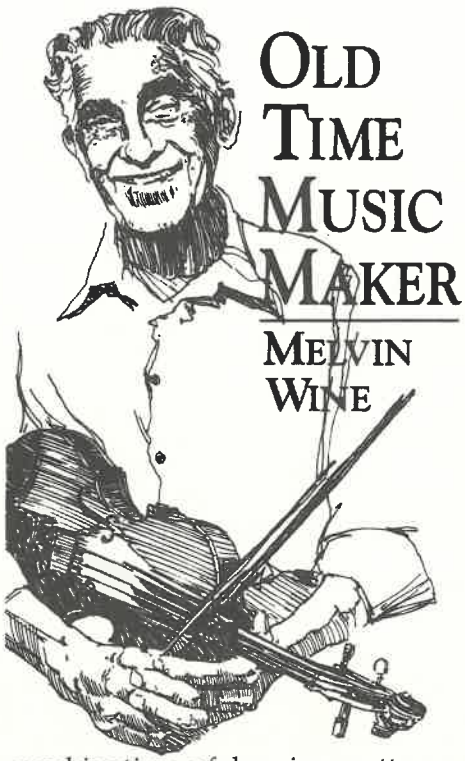
Like many of the musicians of his generation, Melvin gave up fiddling for many years. Music was a pastime, not a necessary part of the serious business of making a living. The Wines raised ten children of their own, and at least ten others who needed help. After about 15 years without fiddling, Melvin took up his instrument again when he discovered that music was the greatest aid in babysitting his granddaughter.

Melvin is shown in concert in Washington, after his acceptance of a 1991 National Heritage Fellowship from the National Endowment for the Arts. There are also scenes from Wine's annual picking party in Sutton, and from his work at Augusta. He is also shown performing one of his most valued activities, sharing his unique style with younger musicians in informal jam sessions.

The half-hour video also features several fine old photographs of West Virginia life and work in the '20's and '30's, and Jim De Wildt's drawings of some of the stories Wine tells. "Old Time Music Maker" is directed by Bob Boles, Summers County musician **Jimmy Costa's** old roommate at Greenbrier Military Academy.

* * *

Listen to the masters of West Virginia fiddling, and soon you will be able to distinguish their different sounds. Each has his or her own



combination of bowing patterns, rhythms, tone, and repertoire, and the range of styles is remarkably wide.

The first fiddler you will recognize and remember will likely be **Wilson Douglas**. Heir to the rich tradition of Clay County music, Wilson has a sound all his own. Now his music is available on a new tape, "Common Ground" (cassette — $9).

On previous recordings, Wilson offered some of the many rare tunes he plays, including unusual pieces learned from his mentor, the late, legendary Clay County master **French Carpenter**. This time, he sticks primarily to the mainstream mountain repertoire; nearly all of the 20 tunes on the new tape are played by most experienced fiddlers in the state.

The sound, though, is all Wilson Douglas. He uses short bowings, giving the music a strong bouncing rhythm. He uses drones as a persistent background, and often lets the bow slip along the string for an accentuating squawk. Even when he plays fast, he never sounds like he's in a hurry.

Kim Johnson plays banjo on this tape. She has been Wilson's musical partner for several years, and her spare, thoughtful playing perfectly accents the fiddle's lead.

Mark Payne, one of the most active musicians in the state, adds rhythm on guitar.

Wilson won the Division of Culture and History's annual Vandalia Award in 1992.

* * *

Glen Smith's father learned old-time clawhammer banjo in the days when mountain banjos were home-built and had no frets. When mass-produced, fretted banjos became available, Mr. Smith and other older pickers found ways to make the new instruments play like the ones they had learned on. Glen recalls that his father once filed the frets off a banjo and covered the fingerboard with a piece of glass, a novel way to produce the old-time sound on a modern instrument.

Glen is a fiddler himself, but his music, available now on a new tape titled "Four Miles To Cumberland" (cassette — $9.50) reflects the same combination of ancient mountain roots and newer musical styles. "Angeline the Baker" and "Katy Hill" are dance standards from over a century ago, and are still known by most old-time fiddlers. "Dusty Miller" and "The Lady of the Lake" are old tunes not often heard these days. "Stone Mountain Rag" and "Dickson County Blues" feature the swinging sound of the '40's, when Glen was most active as a young performer.

All of the dozen tunes on "Four Miles to Cumberland" have the Glen Smith sound — hard-driving rhythm, imaginative arrangement and phrasing, and judicious use of the old-time growly sound.

David O'Dell, one of the finest of the younger banjo pickers, adds his own distinctive sound to Glen's. David also produced the recording. Parkersburg resident **Vernon Lockhart** brings several decades of guitar experience to the project. **Tom Ammons** adds the low notes with his bass.

Glen Smith has been spreading his music for a long time. He has traveled with bands, entered (and won) contests, and performed at fairs and festivals. He is known among musicians as a man ready to share his living room or porch for a long, intense picking session. With the release of "Say Old Man" a few years ago and "Four Miles to Cumberland" this year, a small part of Glen's vast repertoire becomes available to everyone.

The cassette tapes are available from the artists or anyplace real West Virginia music is sold, including The Shop at the Cultural Center in Charleston. You may order the Melvin Wine videotape from Communicraft Productions, P.O. Box 352, Glen Arbor, MI 49636.

MICHAEL KELLER

We regret the loss of traditional musician Tom King, who died at Sutton on July 18.

King was a versatile musician, best known as a guitarist but also a dulcimer player and clawhammer banjo champion. Over many years he contributed to West Virginia's leading festivals, including Jackson's Mill, Cedar Lakes, Augusta, Glenville, and Vandalia.

"At many festivals the quality of the festival depended on Tom," said fiddler Bob Taylor. "There will be a lot of spots left vacant," he added, referring to King's frequent role as back-up man at fiddle and banjo contests.

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If you want to complete your GOLDENSEAL collection or simply get acquainted with earlier issues, some back copies of the magazine are available. The cost is $3.95 per copy. A list of available issues and their cover stories follows. To get your back copies, mark the issue(s) you want and return with a check for the right amount to GOLDENSEAL, The Cultural Center, 1900 Kanawha Blvd. East, Charleston, WV 25305-0300.

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____Summer 1986/The Draft Horse Revival
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____Winter 1990/Sisters of DeSales Heights
____Summer 1991/Fiddler Melvin Wine
____Fall 1991/The Zekanys of Logan County
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In This Issue

MALCOLM W. ATER, JR., was born in Virginia and educated at Old Dominion University and WVU. He moved to the Eastern Panhandle in 1983 and now teaches special education students at Harpers Ferry Junior High, works as a sportscaster for WRNR in Martinsburg, edits the *Good News Paper*, and is president of Educational Comics in Shepherdstown. His last contribution to GOLDENSEAL appeared in Spring 1990.

MARGARET BARLOW grew up in Dunmore. She attended Marshall University and has a Ph.D. from George Washington University. She has published articles in professional journals, trade magazines, and the *Washington Post Magazine*. Her last contribution to GOLDENSEAL appeared 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.

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

WILLIAM D. CREASY, a native of Nicholas County, received a B.S. from West Virginia Tech. After serving in the Navy, he went on to earn his master's and Ph.D. from WVU and Iowa State, respectively. Professor Creasy taught botany until his retirement. His last contribution to GOLDENSEAL appeared in Spring 1992.

PAUL FANSLER, retired from C&P Telephone, enjoys raising tomatoes in his native Martinsburg. He says he began writing a few years ago "just to see if I could do it," and so far has published in *Petersen's Photography*, *Wonderful West Virginia*, and *National Gardening*. His last contribution to GOLDENSEAL appeared in Fall 1992.

LOUISE BURNER FLEGEL is an English teacher at Pocahontas County High School, and a former adjunct instructor at Shepherd College. She has a B.S. and M.A. in English education from WVU. She lives with her family near Cass. Her last contribution to GOLDENSEAL appeared in Fall 1992.

BETTY JOHNSON FLEMING is a native of Keystone, McDowell County. She attended Marshall University, became a medical technologist and worked in Parkersburg, Washington, and Fairmont before settling in Marietta, Ohio. This is her first contribution to GOLDENSEAL.

FRANCIS J. GALLAGHER, born in Ireland, has been a West Virginian for the last 38 years. He is retired from The Greenbrier in White Sulphur Springs. A member of West Virginia Writers, he took up writing as a hobby ten years ago and studied under Maryat Lee of Eco Theater, Pinckney Benedict and others. This is his first contribution to GOLDENSEAL.

HUNTER JOHNSTON, originally from Williamsburg, Virginia, has lived in Jefferson County since 1984. He works at Air Photographics of Martinsburg and does freelance photography. He is a graduate of the Rhode Island School of Photography. This is his first contribution to GOLDENSEAL.

LOUIS E. KEEFER, a frequent contributor to GOLDENSEAL, was born and raised in Wheeling and educated at Morris Harvey College, WVU and Yale. He is the author of *Italian Prisoners of War in America, 1942-1946: Captives or Allies?* and is now working on another book on the World War II era. Keefer says the people he quotes in his GOLDENSEAL article are "only but a few" of those he has talked with. His last contribution to GOLDENSEAL appeared in Spring 1993.

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

BILL MOULDEN, born in Washington and raised in Maryland, lives in Morgan County. He has had an extensive career in corrections and now works as a consultant and freelance writer, contributing editorials to the *Hagerstown Herald*, among other publications. His last contribution to GOLDENSEAL appeared in Spring 1991.

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 Summer 1991.

RICHARD RAMELLA, was born in Maitland, McDowell County. His first writing job was with the *Welch Daily News* when he was 17. He now lives in California and publishes a computer magazine. His last contribution to GOLDENSEAL appeared in Summer 1993.

DANNY WILLIAMS is the folk arts specialist for the Division of Culture and History.

Farewell to Louise McNeill

West Virginia lost a considerable chunk of itself with the death last June of Poet Laureate Louise McNeill.

McNeill published *Mountain White*, her first book, in 1931. *Gauley Mountain*, her most acclaimed work, followed in 1939. She published *Time is Our House* in 1942, *Paradox Hill* in 1972, and *Elderberry Flood* after becoming poet laureate in 1979.

Her most productive years came in old age, with the publication of *Milkweed Ladies* in 1988, the reissue of *Gauley Mountain* in 1989, and the publication of *Hill Daughter* in 1991. She collaborated on the 1991 radio version of *Gauley Mountain*. She occasionally freelanced for GOLDENSEAL during this period.

The photograph at right shows Louise McNeill in her prime middle years, at home in Morgantown. Her funeral was held on West Virginia Day, June 20, 1993, under an apple tree in the yard of Cabin Creek Quilts at Malden.

STATEHOOD (1861-1863)

How was West Virginia made?
By rifle-gun and burnished blade,
And by a careful coup d'etat
That got around the Federal law.

How was West Virginia born?
By the war-dogs she was torn,
Scourged with battle,
Lashed by thorn.

How did West Virginia come
into statehood?
By the drum.
By the paper and the pen —
Written by the Wheeling men —
Drawn with lines upon a map,
Bounded by the ridge's gap,
Bounded by the river's stream,

Bounded by the bullet's scream.

West Virginia's anguished birth?
Out of Freedom's rocky earth,
By the lawyer, and the sword,

By the brothers' blood that poured.

By Louise McNeill
from *Elderberry Flood*

Louise McNeill (1911-1993)

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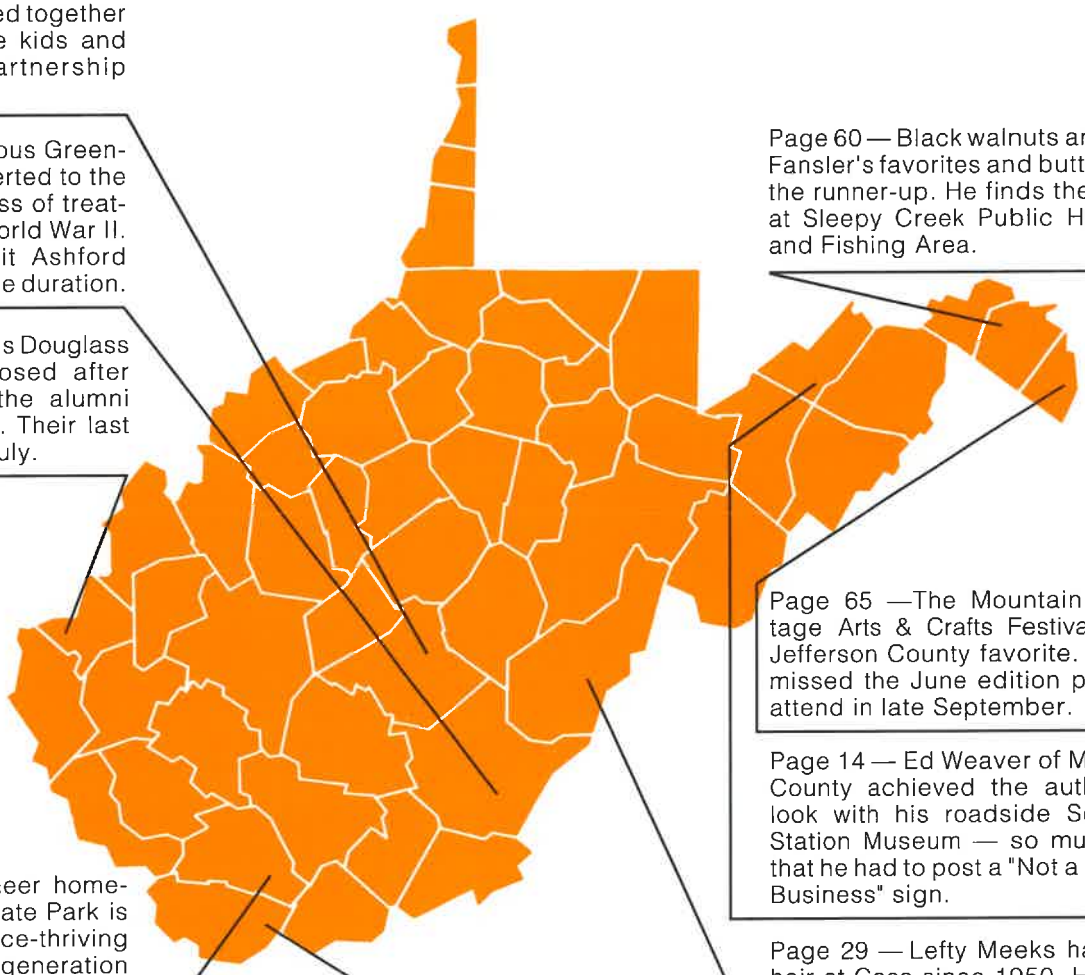

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