Goldenseal

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The New Science and Culture Center

Hardy County Banjoist at 92 • Logging in Southern Counties: 1918—1930 • Monongalia Resident of 1826 Log House • Huntington Model Maker and Painter

Goldenseal

A Quarterly Forum for Documenting West Virginia's Traditional Life

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STATE OF WEST VIRGINIA

Arch A. Moore, Jr.
Governor

through its
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COVER Clarence Tross, the subject of articles between pages 7 and 15.

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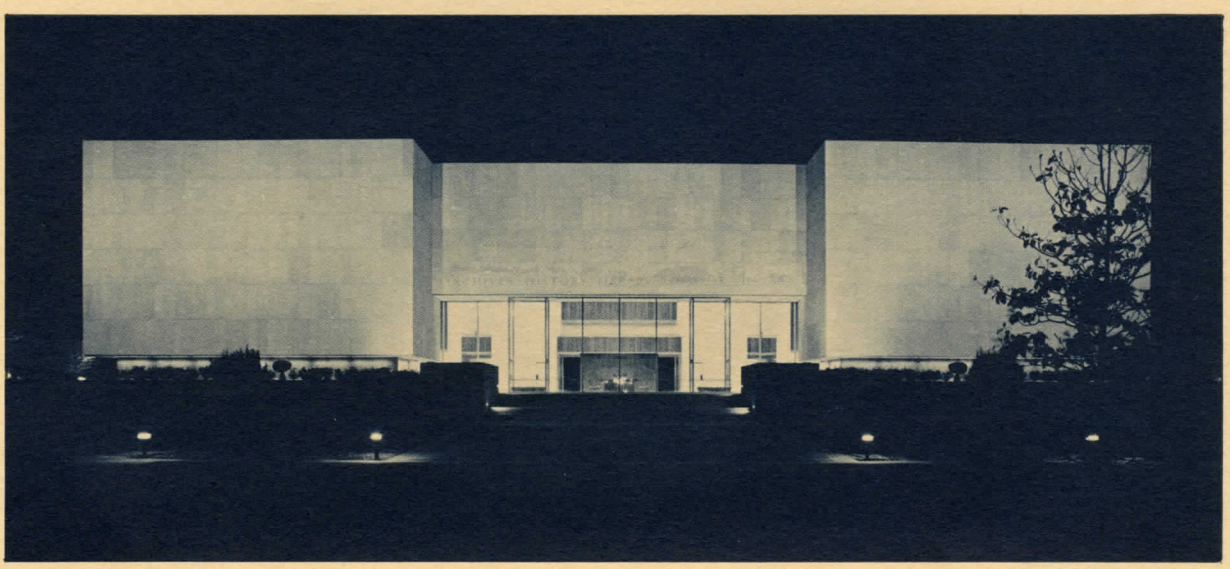
SCIENCE AND CULTURE CENTER



The new Science and Culture Center, just west of the State Capitol, opens July 11. The messages below are from the Governor, the Director of the Center, and the heads of the agencies housed in the new building. *Goldenseal's* new office is also in the Center.

ARCH A. MOORE, JR.
GOVERNOR

West Virginia has experienced in the recent past a great surge of progress, the evidence of which is apparent to even the most casual observer. And yet, no matter how much industry has grown or how many miles of highway have been built, these statistics give only a very incomplete indication of our development.

When we consider mankind's history, those epochs in which civilization took quantum leaps forward are not remembered primarily for their industrialists,

their businessmen, or their engineers. Rather, these epochs are remembered for their artists. The names of Michaelangelo, Da Vinci, and Raphael are much more familiar than the great scientists of whom these artists were contemporaries.

With the completion of West Virginia's new Science and Culture Center, the citizens of our State can be proud that we have not been so occupied with business-as-usual, nor did we fail to take time out to appreciate the subtleties of the human dynamic or the heights to which the human spirit can soar. The Culture Center is a statement that we living in West Virginia have within ourselves a sensibility and a consciousness that fosters that which is considered art.

And yet, the building--this beautiful facility, gleaming, shining, and new--in and of itself, does not heighten either artistic expression or our appreciation of it. Any building is but a tool that must be experimented with by persons willing to expend the time, talent, and effort in learning how to use it. The center will be a forum to which will come artists from throughout the State in a mutual bond of shared purpose, the creation of art; although the expression of that ideal in terms of the media used will be quite diverse.

The building will become a focal point, a fulcrum, a catalyst, the spoke of a wheel. The building should be viewed as but a milestone on a very long, not-always-easy journey, the exciting part of which, in many respects, still stretches before us. The Culture Center, therefore, is part of a process begun long ago and a process that shall continue as long as men draw breath.

In a basic sense, the Culture Center is a community facility, the community being the State of West Virginia. To this center the citizens of the Mountain State can come to study our past in the State Archives and Museum, to consider our present in the library, the theater, and in the constantly changing exhibits, in order to formulate for themselves an awareness and appreciation of our future potential as a people and as a civilization.

Thus the importance of the Culture Center should not be seen merely in the completion of another building, but rather in the consideration of that elemental quality of man that yesterday gave rise to art, that today is manifest in the completion of this important center for art and learning and that tomorrow will contribute to our progress and development as we continue our journey forward through time.

NORMAN L. FAGAN, DIRECTOR
SCIENCE AND CULTURE CENTER

The Science and Culture Center is a building of which all West Virginians can be proud. The watchword throughout is quality. It was designed to reflect the grandeur of the Mountain State and the warmth of its people. But it is not just a physical presence--rather the coming together of forces dedicated to the complete development of every West Virginian. The library is here to expand our minds. Programs in the Arts and Humanities increase our sensitivity to our environment. The Archives and History Department and the State Museum provide an understanding of who we are, where we are, where we came from--which can help us decide where we're going and how to get there. Seminars, lectures,

conferences, and festivals will be held at the Center; and through exhibits and performances it will showcase the creativity of West Virginians. It is indeed what a government institution should be, a resource for all the people.

FREDERIC J. GLAZER, EXECUTIVE SECRETARY
WEST VIRGINIA LIBRARY COMMISSION

The West Virginia Library Commission considers itself "the place to go when you need to know." Yet before the Science and Culture Center, who knew where or how to find the Library Commission? After its founding in 1929, the West Virginia Library Commission remained merely a paper agancy, without either budget or staff, until a first appropriation was made in 1941. During the next 35 years of the Agency's nomadic existence, six different locations housed the Commission and its collections. Our last addresses extended from two buildings in Kanawha City to a house on Quarrier Street, with the river between our offices and our book stacks.

Now for the first time since its inception, all functions of the Library Commission will be under one roof. The Information Center of the State of West Virginia is now capable of performing services commensurate with the style, splendor, and excellence of these facilities. Access to information from an updated microform catalog listing over 3,000,000 volumes from libraries in the State will be instantly available to the knowledge seekers visiting the Center. Supplementing our own holdings is a TWX linkup to every major library in the U.S. Tie-ins to national data banks and other information services will complete our network of utilizing all sources to extract information.

Significantly, the warmth and splendor of the reading room indicate that libraries can be inviting, exciting places and not limited to traditional foreboding recessed corners at the end of rows of book stacks. The individual study rooms reflect an atmosphere as convenient and comfortable as one's private study. These accomodations will attract and appeal to the more than casual browser.

A statewide film service providing over one thousand 16 millimeter film titles from which to choose is the newest program to be undertaken by the Commission. Two projector screenings on a continuous schedule will enable drop-in visitors to preview new and classic films any time of day.

To additionally appreciate the Science and Culture Center West Virginians need only to visit their local public libraries to detect the improved services available from the library support programs emanating from the Center. These include microfilming operations, graphic arts, photo, and printing activities. For the non-print user, visual history and children and adult library video projects will be produced, as well as recording facilities for special requests for the blind and physically handicapped. A library within a library on the exhibit level contains materials for the direct service area covering 12 counties.

The Golden Age of State Librarianship has been entered with the West Vir-

ginia Library Commission's occupancy of the Science and Culture Center. Our library programs are dedicated to achieving the grandness and greatness of the facility itself, and West Virginians will be able to boast of the finest and most complete array of State Library programs to be found anywhere in the nation.

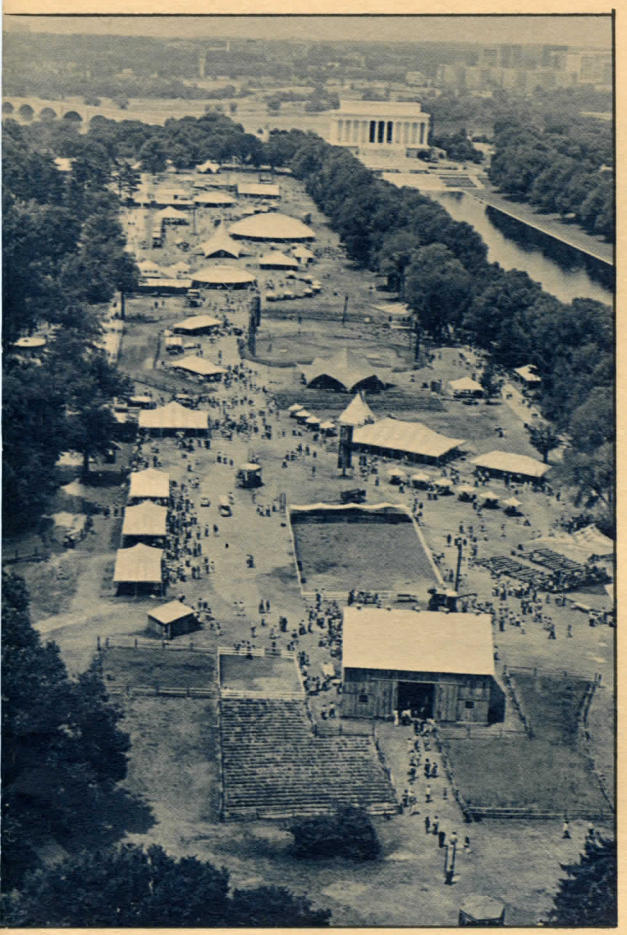
PEARL M. ROGERS, ACTING DIRECTOR
WEST VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF ARCHIVES AND HISTORY

The Department of Archives and History was created by the Legislature in 1905, and it is divided into two sections, the Library and the Museum. The Library was established in 1833 at Lewisburg but found a permanent home at Charleston in 1885; and it furnishes information to many organizations and individuals including historians, genealogists, writers, college students, speech makers, newspapers, press correspondents, and public officials.

Our true purpose is to collect and preserved the history of our State, to collect for permanent preservation papers and documents relating to the settlement of the State, the period of reorganized government of Virginia, the formation of West Virginia. Further, there are reports and records of the various state officials and such works of history, biography, and kindred subjects as are usually found in such collections, together with the works of West Virginian authors and such others which will properly illustrate the bibliography of the State. We maintain an Archival Section pertaining to the above and a Museum Section illustrative of the history and science of the State as well as social conditions and life of its people, past and present.

We are empowered to purchase new road markers as well as to protect, preserve and display those in existence. The Department, with the help of the State Historical Society, publishes quarterly a history magazine.

Too long the history of our State has been ignored, hidden, and neglected. But in this Bicentennial year, with the final great move to the new Culture Center, we look forward to giving service to you our favorite people in 1976.



Folklife Festival site as seen from the Washington Monument.

Many West Virginians Invited to Smithsonian Institution's Festival of American Folklife

The Smithsonian Institution established the Festival of American Folklife in 1967, and for this Bicentennial year it has greatly expanded its presentation of living traditions, or the music, dance, food, crafts, and occupational skills of people throughout the country. One of the several parts of the festival is called "Old Ways in the New World"; descendants of earlier immigrants to the United States from some 30 countries will also take part in the Washington, D.C. events over the summer.

This year's festival is running from June 16 to September 6 and operates Wednesdays through Sundays. The National Park Service is co-sponsor of this "great national family reunion," whose attendance is expected to be as much as 100,000 visitors a day.

From July 7 through 11 over two dozen West Virginians have been invited to participate in the festival and represent the Upland South, one of the eight regions of the country carved out by the sponsors. The huge festival occupies a 50-acre park between the Lincoln Memorial and the Washington Monument and will also present components called African Diaspora, Native Americans, Working Americans, Transportation, Children's Area, and Family Folklore Center. Altogether, over 5,000 musicians and craftspeople will participate.

Visitors who drive to Washington are urged to park their cars without charge and take shuttle bus service for nominal fares to the festival. Parking is at the Robert F. Kennedy Stadium and the Ft. Meyer/Pentagon parking lots. All events at the festival are free.

Craftspeople

Jon Averill, Elva Ayers, Peter Christianson, and **Dow Gill.** Farmers. Sandstone (Summers Co.). These residents from and near Sandstone will demonstrate horse handling and calling, sled making, and sorghum milling. For the last, cane from Mississippi is expected to be used.

Cabin Creek Quilts.

Stella Monk.	Ohley (Kanawha Co.)
Alberta Johnson.	East Bank (Kanawha Co.)
Blanche Griffith.	McCorkle (Lincoln Co.)
Nema Belcher.	Jordan's Creek (Kanawha Co.)

The four expert quilt makers are or have been board members of the six-year-old cooperative. All members work in their homes to make quilts and other patchwork items which are sold widely in this country and abroad. The cooperative was organized by Volunteers in Service to America (V.I.S.T.A.s).

◁ (Photograph by Earl Benton, Charleston *Daily Mail*.)

Pemberton Cecil. Mountain toymaker. Wileyville (Wetzel Co.). The retired oil field worker, his wife Nova Lee, and daughter Arminta, a hammered dulcimer player, will be at the Festival for its three-month duration. They have labored all winter making toys, and family and friends here will continue making them to send to Washington all summer long.

J. E. Dillon. Blacksmith. Beaver (Raleigh Co.). Born in Summers County, the 86-year-old lifelong smith has worked on his own, in lumber camps, for the State Road Commission, and briefly for the C & O Railroad. His work has been revered and studied by his younger occasional apprentice, Michael Snyder, for several years. (Photograph by Douglas Chadwick.)

Michael Snyder. Blacksmith. Wymer (Randolph Co.). A native of the State, a 1963 graduate of West Virginia University, and a former journalist, Snyder works full-time as a smith mainly with traditional tools and copies or adapts traditional designs.

George Connard Wolfe. Stone and woodcarver. Bergoo (Webster Co.). Wolfe, in his forties, is a carpenter by trade. He began carving in stone by creating grave markers for neighbors and has since carved people and animals in stone and wood.

Musicians

Carper Singers. Singers with guitar and tambourines. Kelly's Tank (Mercer Co.). Fred Carper plays the guitar for this group that belongs to the Holiness sect. The group includes his wife and three other women in their family. They are all younger members of an isolated community near Princeton whose present religious and musical practices flourished there in the nineteenth century.

Hazel Dickens. Singer, guitarist. Washington, D.C. One of the more celebrated of the West Virginians at the Festival will be Ms. Dickens, who was born in Montcalm (Mercer Co.) and moved some years ago to Baltimore, Maryland. Her recordings with Alice Gerrard on the Rounder label are extremely popular, and a forthcoming record of her singing alone is anxiously awaited by her fans. She is a talented songwriter and has written two songs about her native state. (Photograph by Tom Screven.)

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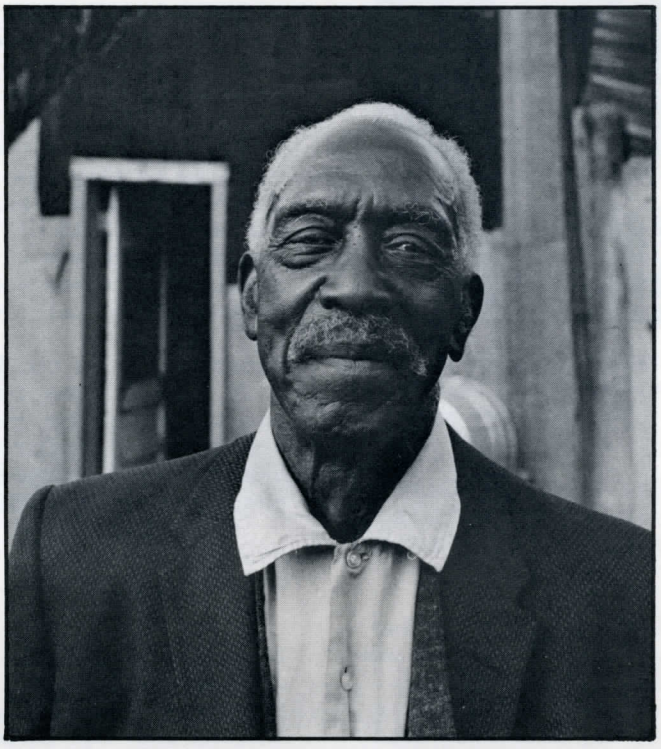
Clarence Tross: Hardy County Banjoist

By Kip Lornell and J. Roderick Moore
Photographs by Carl Fleischhauer



Clarence Tross. November 1975.

Between Moorefield and Petersburg lies Durgon, a small settlement shown only on the most detailed map of West Virginia. The village consists of a small variety store and a small church. At the variety store you need to stop and pick up a key which unlocks the gate that guards the small dirt road leading to Clarence Tross' home. The lock is placed on the gate to safeguard against poachers, Mr. Tross has said.

There is nothing unusual about the way this 92-year-old banjoist lives--with a grandson, off the main road in a small wooden house in rural northeastern West Virginia. What makes him such a unique figure is that he is very likely the oldest black man in America who remains a vital performer on the banjo, an instrument of Afro-American origin.

When most people think of the banjo, they probably think of bluegrass pickers like Earl Scruggs or Eric Weissberg. If they are interested in old-timey banjo playing, then performers like Uncle Dave Macon, Wade Ward, or Fred Cockerham will more than likely be mentioned. The music played by Clarence Tross is the antecedent of both of these styles, although it is linked most directly with the "claw-hammer" playing practiced by the old-timey banjoist. Indeed, since the banjo was brought over to this country by the slave, it can be safely stated that blacks were the first people in this country to play the instrument. Because Mr. Tross began playing banjo in about 1895 and learned most of his tunes from his father, Andy Tross (born ca. 1850), we believe he represents the oldest tradition of banjo playing to be found in this part of the country.

Clarence Tross was born on December 12, 1884, within sight of the home where he now lives. His parents, Lucy and Andy Tross, were both slaves. They had been owned by Ned Baker until emancipation and lived in a house near the large Baker house. Lucy Tross came to West Virginia from her birthplace in Jamestown, Virginia, but her son remembers very little of her, as she died when he was a child. Andy Tross lived until about 1910 and was the person who inspired young Clarence to begin picking the banjo.

One of the most interesting of Tross'

Picture taken "about 30 years ago." Left to right, Mr. Tross' son Robert Andrew Tross, his wife Sally Duffy Tross, and Mr. Tross. Photographer unknown.

remembrances concerns the black musical activity found around Durgon 75 years ago. He made a revealing statement concerning accordion players.

I just don't know about the white people playing accordion much. They did, though. I know of one white fellow, Mr. Billy Baker, he used to play accordion. He's dead now. I think there were a couple of other white people, way back, who used to play accordion too. There wasn't much of them playing accordion, it was mostly the colored man playing accordion. They played for dances around here. Fiddle, banjo, accordion--all used to play together for dances.

Except for the accordion playing of black Cajuns in southwestern Louisana, a black accordion tradition has never flourished, as far as we know, so it was surprising at first to hear of one in West Virginia. The explanation for its existence might be the pattern of settlement in the northern and eastern parts of the state. The immigrant groups that came to the area where Mr. Tross lives were primarily German and probably settled in the region in the 1830s and 1840s. Most likely the accordion was a popular instrument brought over from Europe. At some point, for an unknown reason, it became an instrument of the black musician, and by the 1880s or 1890s it had fallen out of favor with the German immigrants.

A second item of interest was Mr. Tross' description of how banjos were made when he was young. Nowadays, of course, store-bought banjos are common, but in the 1890s when you were poor and lived far away from general or variety stores you made your own banjo with maerials found at hand. At the age of about eight, Clarence made his own instrument.

I went out and caught a groundhog, set a trap and caught a groundhog, took off the hide and put it in the ashes. I let it sit here for several days, then took my knife and slit the hair off it. We used to buy cheese in a hoop, a round hoop. We took carpet tacks and tacked it (the hide) around. Then we would take an old piece of wood and use it for the neck--a piece of oak wood. I was just learning to play, and they wouldn't let me have theirs. Went to a horses tail, took my knife out and took the hair off. We stretched them out and used banjo strings out of them. Went clump, clump. That gives you some idea of what we had to do. Always put five strings on my banjo.

Naturally the banjo had no frets on it. Most old-timers remember when fretless banjos were the rule, and it was roughly World War I before the commerical fretted banjos were commonly found in the rural enclaves of the Southern Mountains.

Mr. Tross also explained the process his uncle, Mose Tross, went through in order to construct a fiddle.

He went out and got him a piece of sort poplar wood and planed it real thin. Then he put it in hot water. Then he got this here wood glue. Then he went out into the woods and got him one of these here white oak saplings. Took and shaved it off nice. It was green then. The poplar was for the top and the bottom. It was catgut strings he used. It looked pretty much like fiddles do today.

According to Tross, his Uncle Mose was a fine fiddler and played with his father on many occasions. The tunes he can remember his uncle playing are "Soldier's Joy," "Arkansas Traveler," and "Leather Britches."

Finally, Mr. Tross remembers his father playing bones to accompany people dancing. The use of percussive instruments is a strong one in the Afro-American heritage. In some rural areas of the Deep South, Dave Evans and other researchers have turned up small groups of black musicians who feature a homemade fife and two or three drums to set up a complex polyrhythm. Reports on slave music indicate that bones were often used by blacks to accompany dancing. We have never before met a musician who could actually remember a black man practicing this technique; certainly it was not commonplace after the turn of this century.

Mr. Tross' home in Hardy County.

Andy Tross took four beef bones and placed two in each hand (one between his thumb and forefinger, the other between his forefinger and index finger) and kept time for dancing while a fiddler and banjoist played the tune. Mr. Tross, not surprisingly, calls this technique "beating the bones" and makes the interesting analogy that its role was much like that of a drum. A descendant of this device is the spoons, which people often play today at informal musical get-togethers.

Mr. Tross' repertoire is quite wide in range. We believe there are three distinct streams of music at work in his playing. First, there are the songs which at one time were popular tunes. These amply demonstrate George Foster's theory that "folk" and popular cultures work in a symbiotic relationship, feeding off one another. These particular songs of Tross' are ones that have passed from popular culture into a stage in which they are now part of his "folk" repertoire. They are picked rather than played clawhammer style. His renditions of these songs are not nearly as dynamic as his playing of the older, more traditional tunes. He is not as confident playing them as he is with the pieces he learned from his father. These songs include "You Are My Sunshine," associated with Jimmie Davis, a governor of Louisiana; "Casey Jones," which Mr. Tross learned after hearing it played on a steam organ of the traveling Sun Brothers Show, a carnival, presumably; and "Roundtown Gals."

Two unexpected songs from this group, "Oh, Susannah" and "Carry Me Back to Old Virginny," were written by Stephen Foster in the mid-1840s. They are quite uncommon items in the folk repertoire of rural black musicians, and in our several years of collecting, recording, and studying black folk music this is our first encounter with songs like them. Stereotypically they have been associated with a lazy black man sitting on a fence strumming his old banjo while a Mississippi steamboat slowly rolls by. This is one throwback to a foolishly romantic conception of black life in the Old South and should have disappeared along with the notion that all blacks ate watermelon. As far as we know these so-called "coon" songs were never a strong part of the repertoire of black folk musicians and may have been transmitted through the medicine or minstrel shows.

Secondly, Tross plays tunes that have been vehicles for old-time musicians for many, many years. They are picked clawhammer style, which he terms "beating it out" or "beating the banjo," and are fairly universally known. "John Henry" heads this group, which also includes "Soldier's Joy" and "Turkey in the Straw."

Mr. Tross at home with his son, Sonny.

Finally, we come to the most important segment of his repertoire, those songs that are unique to Mr. Tross or unusual variants of better known songs. Our guess is that they reflect the older black banjo tradition in general. For the most part, they are songs he learned from his father, and, like most black banjo tunes we've heard in the last few years, they have very little melodic content. The emphasis is instead on the rhythmic complexities of a piece, and they become intense, stark statements. An analogy might be the guitar patterns of the Mississippi bluesman, Charlie Patton, whose song "Mississippi Bo Weevil Blues" contains some of the same qualities.

There are several songs unique to either Clarence Tross or to West Virginia. One is "Old Man Can I Have Your Daughter?", which is the first tune he learned some 80 years ago from his father. It has a simple AB tune, and he picks it with his thumb and forefinger. Another West Virginian has recorded a version of this song; Burl Hammons performs it on the Rounder Records LP, *Shaking Down the Acorns*. Mr. Tross can remember only a few words to this song. Also he plays two quite pleasing instrumentals. "Pretty Little Girl Get Your Foot Out of the Sand" is similar to the A part of "Sally Ann." The other he calls "Hipplecreek," and it is nearly the equal to "Pretty Little Girl...."

Actually, his titling to "Hipple Creek" is confusing. When he performs it with words, the song is clearly the well known piece, "Cripple Creek." This interesting titling could be considered an understandable mistake, except Tross clearly states he also performs a piece he calls "Cripple Creek." He insists "Hipple Creek" and "Cripple Creek" are two separate songs, although he declined on our visit to play his version of "Cripple Creek."

There were three songs he played which had rather complete texts. One is clearly a version of "Cindy." He first heard it as "Miss Lucy Neal Down in the Cotton Fields," and he commented that he heard the song as "Cindy" much later, after he heard his father play it. In searching through the Folklore Archives at the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill, we could not locate one version of "Cindy" with lyrics like his.

Old Miss Lucy Neal down in the cotton field,
If I had her by my side how happy I would feel.
Ain't I gone, ain't I gone, down to Arkansas.

Today I might get married, tomorrow might be gone.
Next day might be sitting down in old Arkansas.
Refrain.

If I had a needle and thread so that I could sew,
Sew Miss Lucy to my side and down the road I'd go.
Refrain.

Old Jim Thorne courting that girl. I was courting her too.
The only way to get that girl was to put on my long tail blue.
Refrain.

Kneebone had the coffee pot and Henry had the spout;
Every time Kneebone wanted coffee, Henry poured it out.
Refrain.

A second song that had both a banjo part and lyrics unfamiliar to us was "Going Back to Baltimore." The text is:

Fare you well, Miss Dandelion. (x2)

I'm going back to Baltimore, pick this tune and pick no more.
I'm going back to Baltimore, hop light ladies on the floor.

Hop light ladies on the floor, that's what makes my banjo roar.
Fare you well, Miss Dandelion, I'm going back to Baltimore.

Charleston ladies get mighty bold, pass by
the gate and pay no toll.
Fare you well, Miss Dandelion, I'm going
back to Baltimore.

I've got a gal in Baltimore, streetcar run
right by her door.
Fare you well, Miss Dandelion, I'm going
back to Baltimore.

Finally, he performs a song with a tune similar to "Georgie Buck" but with lyrics that are almost totally different. He calls this "Sorry I Left My Father's Home." Like the two previous songs, it was sung by his father.

Oh, me, oh, my, sorry I left my father's
home.
The day I left my father's house, that the
day I left my home.

Oh, John Brown is dead, last word he said,
never let a woman have her way.
If you let her have her way, she led you
astray. Never let a woman have her way.

It's rock, darling, rock, rock, oh, rock,
Lord knows.
Going on this rock, hound tree'd a fox.
Hunt when I ready, Lord knows.

Going down the street, catch the first
girl I meet.
Nobody's business but my own. Nobody's
business but my own.

Bloodhound on my track, sheriff on my
back.
Get to the shanty, Lord knows. Get to
the shanty, Lord knows.

The second verse of this song is commonly found in "Georgie Buck," while the last verse has been sung by a number of blues musicians, including John Hurt in his song, "Payday," and the Mississippi Shieks' version of "Bootlegger's Blues." Tross plays "Sorry I Left My Father's Home" in his "beating out" style, and there are strength and vitality in it, as well as in his performances of the other older pieces. Surely in his performances of these there is more spirit than there is when he plays more recently acquired songs. Indeed, it is the older, "blacker" portion of his repertoire that is his most exciting music.

In Clarence Tross' words and music we capture a unique glimpse into black rural music as it has existed in one section of West Virginia since the turn of the century. He affords us a singular opportunity to record and preserve the Afro-American banjo style that ultimately serves as the precurser for the intricate banjo styles of today.

Lewis Miller (1796-1882), *Black musicians and dancers*, watercolor on paper, ca. 1850. Appx. 7" x 9". Courtesy Virginia State Library, Richmond. The watercolor was painted in Lynchburg, Va., during one of the Pennsylvania self-taught genre artist's trips to Virginia. He painted a number of similar scenes in which bones were played.

A Slave's Son But Not a Slave

By Mary Lucille DeBerry

In a treasured little book--a book older than he is--
(A religious book of some sort)
Is the date: December 23, 1884...
The date when he was born.

His parents and his aunt were slaves.
But Mr. Abraham...Lincoln freed them.
Mr. Abraham said he would if he ever got the power.
And he did. And that was good.

After the war, his father worked--helping to build a lime kiln.
He carried ties up the mountain; he dug out the rock.
His father bought 30 acres of land on Cattail Run
And built the tiny log house where this son was born.

His father's land, then, came to him...
And he kept up the taxes on it.
It's his--this land--until he dies
(And that's all the longer he needs it, he says with a laugh).

At age 19, he saved his money and he went to school
From December until April of that year.
He paid 25 cents a day for board--money he'd earned and saved.
He wanted to learn to write his name. And he did.

Then he went to work, for 50 years, at the Big House, Hickory Hill.
Not on a hill and no hickory trees. Walnut and oak--No hickory.
(That's the way they named things in the old days)
A big brick house built by slaves.

He worked outside, making hay shocks;
In the barn, currying horses;
All over the farm, doing what was wanted...
Until time for him to retire.

Then the mister said
"Why not do easy, garden work for the missus?"
She talked to him nice; she was good to him.
But, oh, she made him work! (Have you ever worked for a lady?)

He walked, for 50 years, the 2 miles each way, each day
From Cattail to Hickory Hill and back.
No hickory trees and no cattails...
(But in the old times they liked those names.)

Four miles a day for 50 years--
Through sunshine and rain and snow and spring.
And it may be--as hard as it was and is--
That this man has everything!

A roof and walls for shelter.
Wood stoves for heating and cooking.
Two kerosene lamps for light.

A banjo for music.
A hounddog for company.
Mountains for his view.

Rabbits that play within his sight
In front of the roofless cabin
Where he was born.

Sharp, vivid memories.
A ready laugh.
And lots and lots of friends.

His eyes look, after 90 years,
As though they might not see.
But they see...His eyes see clearly.
They see the beauty of the house where he was born.

November 19, 1974

The Welton home, Hickory Hill, where Mr. Tross worked for about 50 years.

Thermond L. Fletcher: Self-sufficient Farmer, Artist, Musician

Interview and Photographs by Marcia M. Sontheimer

This article is based almost entirely on a tape recorded interview with Thermond L. Fletcher in his cabin on December 24, 1975.

Walking toward the cabin one's first impression is of stepping back 100 years in time. In fact that is nearly what you have done. On Route 2, north of Rivesville (Monongalia Co.) at the bottom of a narrow valley is a picturesque one-and-one-half story log cabin built in 1826, and little has changed since then. Enduring Civil War skirmishes, it stands when most of the neighboring cabins have been replaced by modern homes or trailers. The cabin is in a peaceful setting of ferns, overgrown scrubs, and a stately old spruce.

This is the home of Thermond L. Fletcher, a 67-year-old bachelor, who lives alone in much the same style, without electricity, running water, central heating, radio, or TV, as his father and grandfather did before him. He is a small, thin man standing about five feet, six inches tall and has a full head of gray hair and sparkling blue eyes. His interests vary from managing his six-acre farm to American history, drawing and painting, weaving baskets, crocheting, baking bread and pies, writing poetry, playing the pump organ and numerous other musical instruments.

Marcia Sontheimer. About when did your family settle in this area?

Thermond Fletcher. They came from Virginia--well, it was all Virginia back then, but, you know, what is Virginia today. As far as I know, the deed to this property goes way back to October 1824. My great-grandfather, Adam Valentine, built the original section of the cabin in about 1826 and on 48 acres of ground. The deed you can still see in the courthouse if you do some searching.

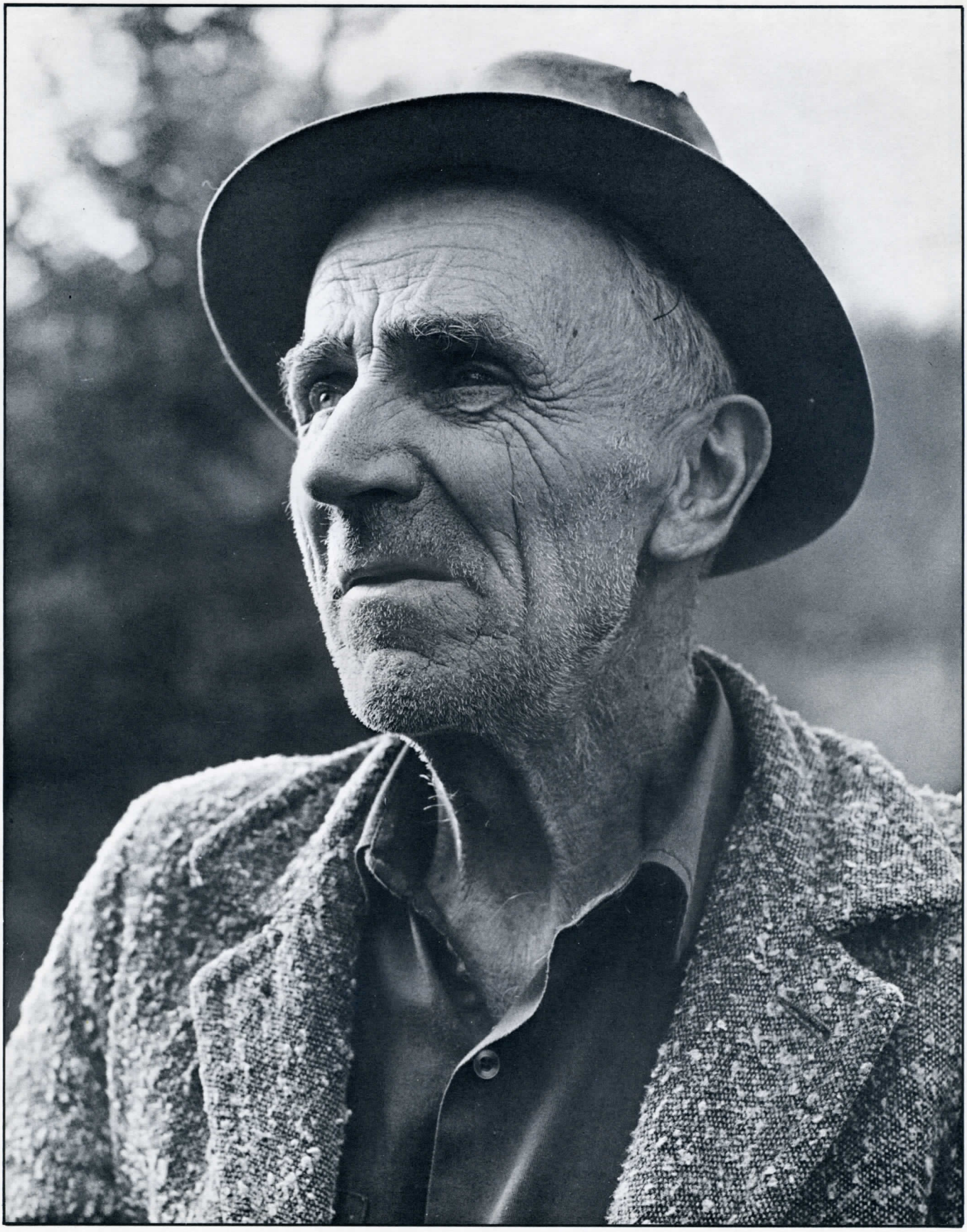
MS You mean in the Morgantown courthouse?

TF Yeah. Now, later through some mismanagement (probably during the Civil War) those acres were lost to the family, so now I have only six acres. If you look outside you can see the chimney stones of a cabin that was much older than this cabin. I don't know anything about it, though.

The square cabin is approximately 18 by 21 feet on a solid stone foundation. Its log walls were built in the traditional German method with square corner notchings which would automatically drain rainwater away from the house to prevent rotting. Wide open spaces were left between each log and a caulking of mud, stones, wood chips, and lime were used to make the cabin weathertight all year long. The cabin is a large, comfortable room containing two small windows and a fireplace on its eastern wall. Behind a latched door and curtain to the left of the fireplace is a narrow winding staircase leading to a roomy attic with overhead beams and three tiny windows. Under the cabin is a low, damp cellar which he uses for storage and keeping perishables.

MS How large is the fireplace?

TF It is six feet two inches wide, I believe. You can measure it if you like.



Thermond L. Fletcher, 1975. Photograph by Dan Harris.

(above) The rear view of Fletcher's cabin. The hen house for 13 chickens is on the left. (opposite) Fletcher at the gate that is joined to the cabin.

It was filled in some when they (his parents) put in the woodwork.

MS Do you still use it for cooking or heating the cabin?

TF I use it some for cooking. See those? (Motioning toward an old waffle iron, large stew kettle, an open fire skillet with three legs, and two tea kettles by the fireplace) I sometimes take the skillet and others outside and use them over a fire. Still work fine. Only when it gets real cold do I use it to heat the cabin. I've got a small grate over there (pointing to an old unvented gas stove on the wall opposite the fireplace where a gray kitten naps) that gives me all the heat I need, and there's the wood stove in the kitchen. It's an old Torch Light Stove patented in 1865. I do most of my cooking on it. In the oven I bake my own bread and pies. In the summer I make preserves from grapes from behind the kitchen or peaches the neighbors give me. My mother taught me to cook and I can cook most anything. I was starting to make a mincemeat pie when you came, to celebrate Christmas and all.

MS Am I interrupting you?

TF No, I'd kinda like to set a spell.

MS When was the kitchen added to the rest of the cabin?

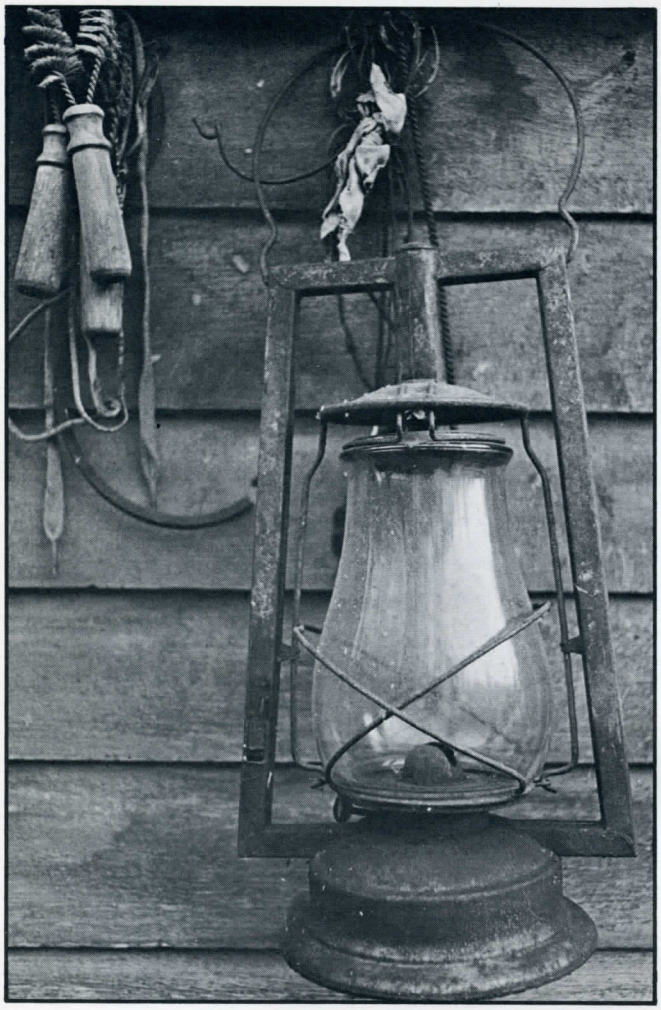
TF It was built in 1909, I believe, the year after I was born. That is when my parents put up all the woodwork in the cabin and around the fireplace. They used timbers from another old cabin. It has a small fireplace I use some for heating.

MS Do you ever wish you had running water?

TF Running water is fine, but I'd have to remodel to have it inside, and that's too much trouble. I dug a seven foot well in 1923 a ways from the house and also have a spring that never goes dry in the summer. I don't mind dipping from the well.

MS That is an interesting lamp hanging over your head. Do you know how old it is?

TF It was my mother's. Don't know



Every winter morning, Fletcher uses for chores an old oil lantern that hangs outside the kitchen door.

how old it is, but it's real interesting. Never seen many like it. It's kerosene, you know. There's two more with chimneys on the organ. Use them at night. I light two real little ones at Christmas and put one in each window. Used to have large gatherings here at Christmas time. You see the pine outside? I remember when we had it inside in a tub of earth. We even had to bend its top 'cause it was too big for the ceiling. Then we covered it with fruits and candies and candles on the floor all around it. That was the same year I got the organ. Don't know the exact year. It was a pretty sight. After Christmas we planted it outside the cabin.

MS Have you always lived here?

TF I was born on June 16, 1908, and have lived here as long as I can remember. I was adopted by Charles Benjamin and Ida Fletcher, being related some ways to them. I'm not sure how. They had a daughter in 1906, but she died when she was six months old. So then they got me. My foster grandparents were William Valentine--he was the youngest of six children--and Phebe Musgrave Valentine. My foster father was Charles Benjamin Fletcher who died in 1925, but I don't know how. That's always been a mystery to me. My foster mother was Ida Ilovinia Valentine Fletcher, and she died on July 31, 1947. It was rumored that I had a twin brother, but I never knew for sure.

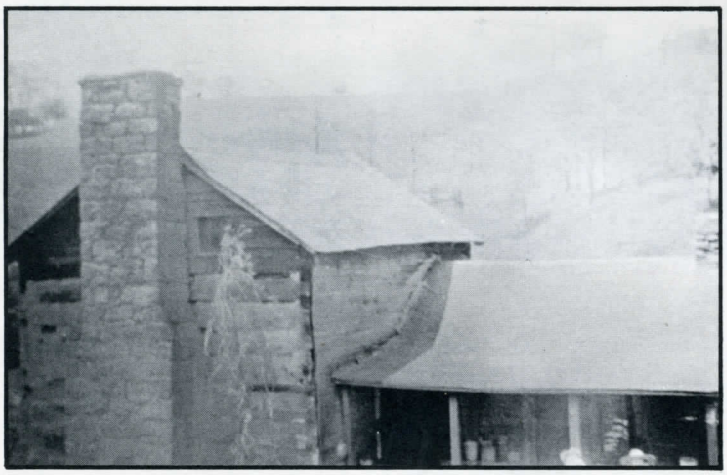
I've never married and have lived alone these last 28 years, but I never get lonesome. There's enough to do here taking over the working things and keeping things going. Until now I had a cow or two and chickens. Now I have just chickens, my goat Jody, and that kitten there.

I was a lone child. There was some families with children here on the ridge, but I didn't get to play with any often. Too much work to do here. We never had a horse. I'd have liked to have had one. Sometimes the neighbors took us in their wagon to do trading. I remember when I was six years old we traveled on a dirt road the two miles to Rivesville. We went in "Potts" and Clarabell Smith's road wagon. They was neighbors on the ridge. Its floor was covered with straw to make it easier to set in. I don't know what they got, but we did trading with butter and eggs. We started back towards home--remember, then we had two creeks to cross there, because there weren't bridges at that time. It was late afternoon and getting dark and a-thundering and a-thundering. The team, you couldn't pace them too hard or too fast. They got real scared. We made it to Thorton Baker's cabin and got inside before the storm broke. We all set together and said a prayer to Our Lord to protect us and save us from the storm. It was a terrible storm and it did pass, but it left the road real mucky like.

MS What's it like out here in the winter?

TF Well, sometimes real bad. The one real big snow that I can remember--let's see, that was in 1950. It came in on the day after Thanksgiving. There was drifts five feet in places in front of the cabin where the gates are and almost three feet all around the cabin. The porch was filled in. Couldn't let the cows out for the snow. Had two then. I dug a way from the barn in there around the corn patch to the water and then dug a channel wide enough to haul two buckets of water and squirm through the channel there and carried water to the barn. Didn't get out for a while but played the organ and read a bit. You see, I have four sets of encyclopedias.

(left) Fletcher's parents, Charles Benjamin and Ida Ilovinia, shortly before their wedding. Photographed at a studio in Fairmont. (below) Fletcher and his mother in 1920 when he was 12. Photographers unknown.



(above) 1930s photograph of cabin. The heads of Fletcher and his mother are barely visible at the bottom right. (right) Fletcher's mother photographed near the time of her wedding. Photographers unknown.

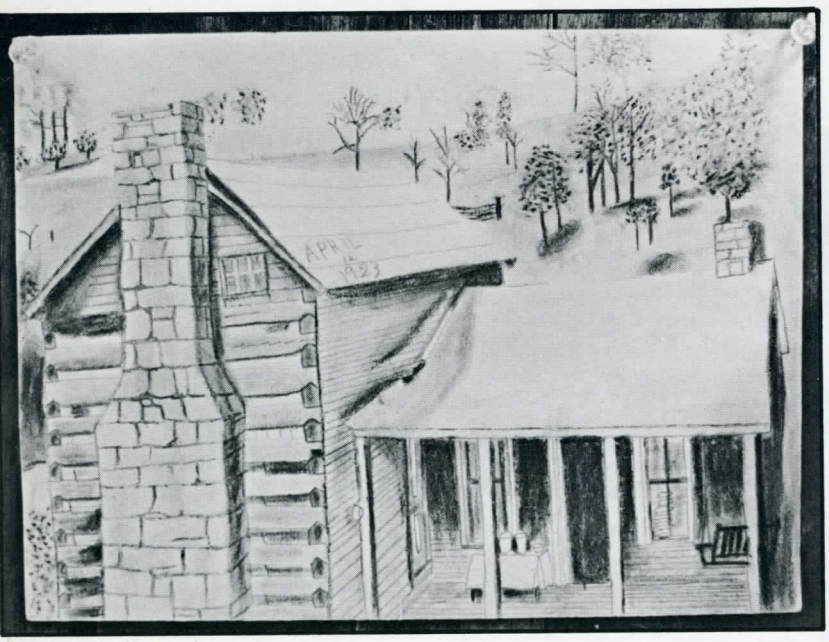
MS Did you ever go to school?

TF I'm basically self-taught but went six years to the one-room schoolhouse down at Pharoah's Run. It's no longer standing there. It had eight grades with 18 students. Miss Pirsen was my teacher. She gave me my first Valentine and I've still got it. I only went through the sixth grade. Then I got the whooping cough and my mother didn't want me to go to school no further. There was a fuss, but I didn't stop learning. I borrowed a 1900 history book from Cora Valentine, my cousin, and read the whole thing. Always did love history, 'specially of New England and Pennsylvania. I feel the real American roots are in the Northern part of the country. The South had Confederate problems, but the North was the backbone with its pure American spirit.

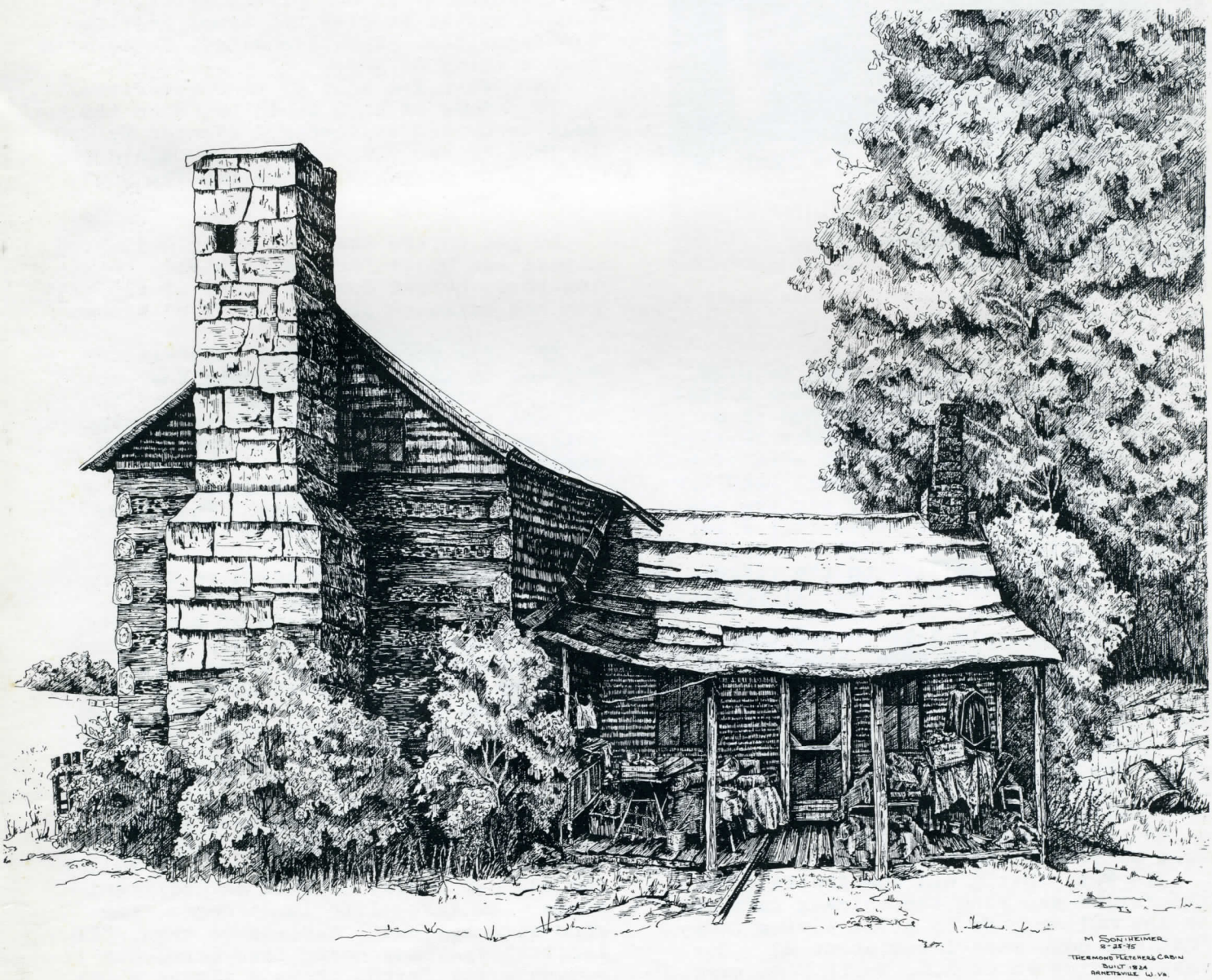
MS What do you think of this being America's Bicentennial year?

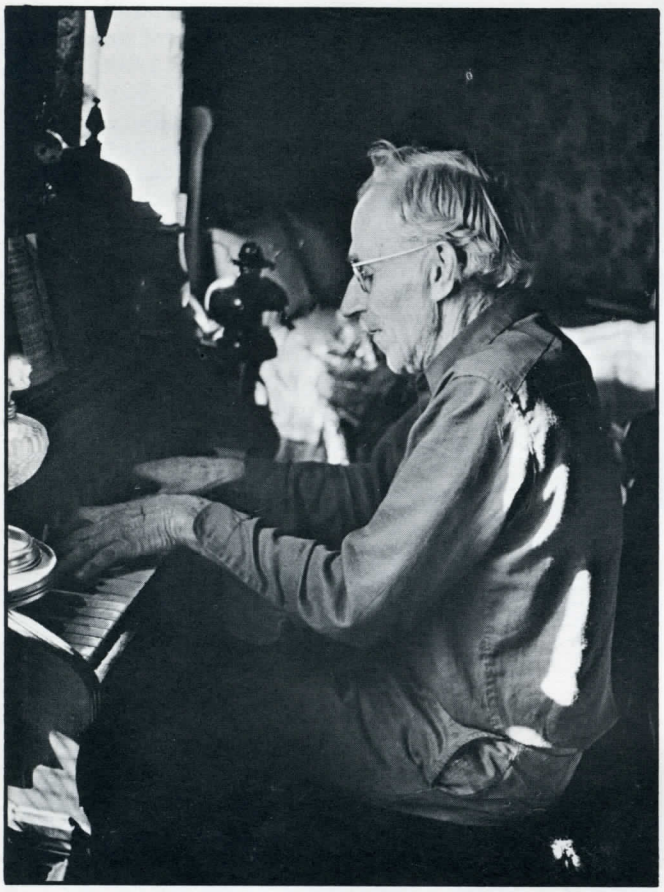
TF Well, I'm real interested in it being the 200th year and all. I'd kind of like to hold an open house to give honor with a gospel sing. Don't know yet how it would be done. Why, when I was younger, on the Fourth July, we'd crack off a few fireworks--not many big ones, thunderbolts and them on a stick--and fire off the shotgun. But then you always heard so much crackling around. I'd get my bit in. Now my point is getting the flags out. One hung out of each attic window last year, and that shows good from the road. I drew some pictures showing it.

MS Oh, do you draw?



(opposite) Fletcher with his goat Jody in front of cabin. (left) Fletcher's drawing in 1929 of his cabin. April 12, 1923, is the date a new roof was put on. Charcoal. 8" x 10". (below) Pen and ink drawing of Fletcher's cabin by Marcia M. Sontheimer. August 25, 1975. (Built around 1826, it is near Arnettsville, W. Va.)





Fletcher playing and singing Christmas carols at his 60-year-old pump organ.

TF Yes, but I didn't start to draw until I was about 20 or so. Took a real interest in it. I even enrolled in a course through the mail from New York on art. From there I learned to work with the artist oil colors, charcoal, and the water colors. I would copy picture post cards and the like for hours 'til I got them just right. Did a lot of pencil drawings of the families on the ridge. I'd set right down and draw. If you like, I'll show you some.

MS Yes, I would like to see them.

TF I'll get them then. (getting up from his wicker chair, he goes across the room and returns with a large cardboard box filled with drawings) Here's a pencil sketch from nature of Bluebell, my cat. She was blue and gray, but she's drawn too big for the room. Never seen a cat that big, have you?

MS Can't say that I have, but it is very nice. Who is this man?

TF Why, that's old Joe Arnett. He's the fellow who runs the chicken farm down in the hollow. He is still living today. That was done when I was about 20. Now, that drawing is of A.C. Smith. He was the son of "Potts" Smith from the ridge. He was a wild one, but he had his good points.

MS Do you still draw?

TF When there's time.

MS I have been admiring your organ. Do you play?

TF Yes, taught myself. I can also play the harmonica, the autoharp, and the guitar. But that's an interesting story. You see, my mother went to school for a couple of years and learned the gospel songs. She loved to sing. I guess I learned from her. Then there was an auction in Hagans, a town up the road a piece. I went and bid on this old pump organ and got it for $23.00, or was it $25.00? It wasn't hard getting it here, 'cause it comes in two parts and they just loaded it on the back of an old pickup truck. I taught myself to play the hymns and the old favorites. Then I'd sing. To me it's been a thing of joy.

MS What are some of your favorites?

TF Some of them would be "When the Roll is Called up Yonder," "Nearer My God to Thee," and "Swanee River." Would you like me to play a piece or two for you?

MS Yes.

He got up and searched among scattered papers and books for his glasses. Locating them, he sat down in front of the organ and began to play a number of hymns.

TF I'm having a small gathering of friends in this evening--maybe four or five--to sing and honor Christmas. You're welcome to come back again this evening to join us. Would you like to hear a few carols now?

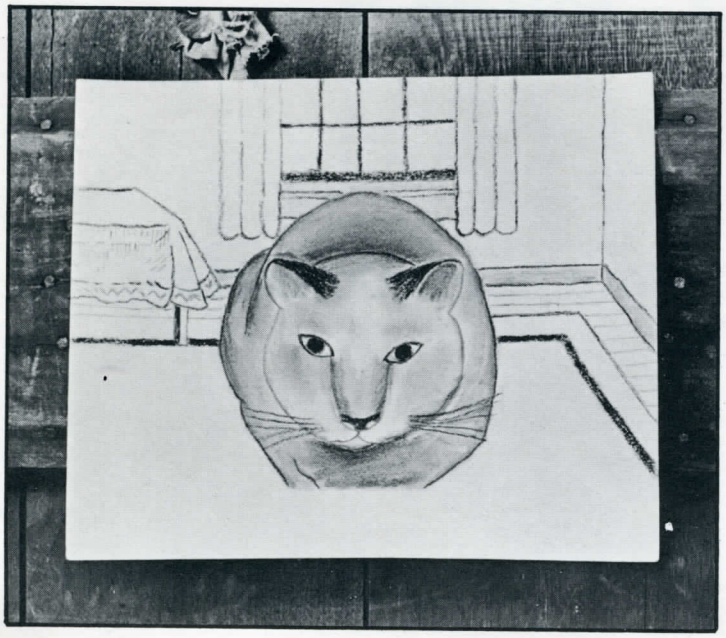
MS Sure would, but I don't think I can come back this evening. Thank you anyway.

Mr. Fletcher turned again to the organ. The kitten had hopped up into his lap and burrowed deep in the folds of his thick, gray sweater and purred loudly. He fingered through an old dog-eared hymnal until he found the carols and then began to play and sing in a strong tenor voice "Oh, Little Town of Bethlehem," "Silent Night," "It Came Upon a Midnight Clear," etc. What a marvelous way to spend a Christmas Eve.

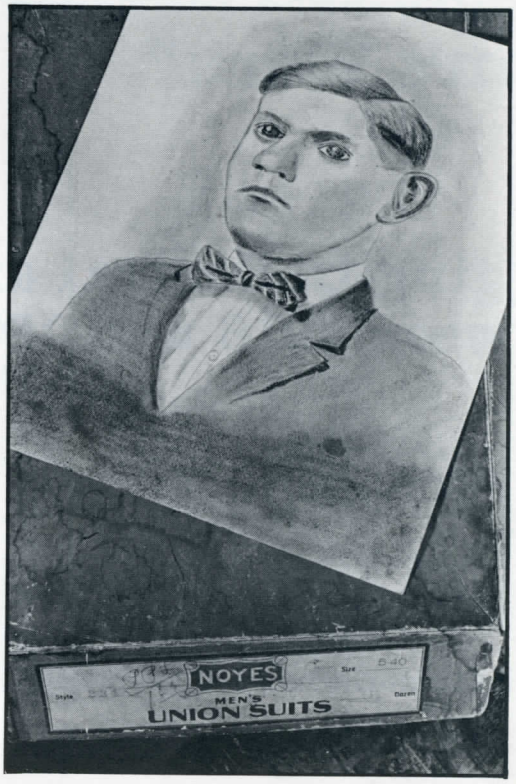
Here is a man who is almost self-sufficient, and to him time has little meaning--when today we depend upon the dollar for all our bodily as well as spiritual needs. He takes life as it comes, the good with the bad. And, as he says, "It isn't always easy going down here, but if you have the faith, there's always a way."

Early Drawings by Thermond L. Fletcher

Blue Bell, the cat. c. 1928. 8" x 10".



A. C. Smith. Undated.



Joe Arnett. c. 1928. 8" x 10".

Cordelia Valentine Smith (Aunt Dee). Undated.

Benjamin Matheny "Doing a Man's Work"

Logging in Central and Southern Counties Between 1918 and 1930

Text and Photographs by Alicia Tyler

I never got to know my grandfather, since he died when I was three years old. Henry Gross worked in logging most of his life, so I am told, and was the engineer on a logging railroad in Swiss (Nicholas Co.) during the early 1900s, the heyday of West Virginia's logging boom. The extent of that boom is a mind-boggler. Roy Clarkson, a biology professor at West Virginia University, reports that the State's lumber production reached a peak of almost one and one-half billion board feet during the year 1909. Incredible as it may seem, Prof. Clarkson estimates that between 1870 and 1920 more than 30 billion board feet of lumber were cut in West Virginia, or enough to build a boardwalk 127 feet wide and two inches thick around the earth's equator, or make a walkway 13 feet wide and two inches thick the average distance to the moon.

The only clues I'd ever had to my grandfather's life were a handful of old photographs taken at the Flynn Lumber Company in Swiss of Grandad and his beloved Climax locomotive, the mainstay of logging tramroads in the State, and Roy Clarkson's stirring account of the early West Virginia lumber industry, *Tumult on the Mountains**. Happily, I discovered another source of logging lore in the person of Benjamin Matheny, a retired Union Carbide Corporation employee, who worked not only at a logging operation in Swiss, but also in lumber camps through the counties of Webster, Pocahontas, Fayette, Greenbrier, and Clay during the last years of old-time logging. As he sums it up: "I guess I've done it all. Drove teams, drove grabs (device used to fasten a trail of logs together), swamped (cleared the ground of underbrush and fallen trees for road construction), built roads, pulled a crosscut saw, run a crew, used a Caterpillar tractor--they were just coming in when I left the woods."

If Benjamin Matheny is representative of his breed, then Roy Clarkson's description of the West Virginia lumberjack, "stalwart, independent, and industrious," appears to be right on the mark. Mr. Matheny was born in Clay Co. in 1905. The oldest of five children, he went to the woods after his mother died and the family broke up. He was thirteen years old. His first job was as a water boy, carrying water to the crew in the woods

* 1964, McClain Printing Co., Parsons, W. Va.

Minnie and Benjamin Matheny at home, March 1976.

for the Birch Valley Lumber Company at Tioga (Nicholas Co.), and he kept the supplies squared away at the camp commissary. The following year he went to work as a regular hand, "doing a man's work."

Helping the Cook

Benjamin Matheny. Lots of camps I been in had as many as 28 teams of horses --that would be about 56 head in one barn. That's a lot of horses. One hundred to 125 men. That was back on the Williams River for the Cherry River Boom and Lumber Company. I would try and get in the kitchen in the wintertime, get me a job working as a flunky helping the cook. (Chuckles) I worked outside in summers. You had to get up early though, about three o'clock in the morning, and start up the fire in the cookstove. Of course, it never was out, it just banked down.... And you put the coffee on, which was usually in a 100-pound lard can, and you just put the ground coffee, tied it in a white cloth and throwed it in the can and let it boil, see.

One camp I remember, Taylor and Gum's camp, I worked in the kitchen there awhile, and we'd fry 12 dozen eggs. Well, you didn't fry 'em; you broke 12 dozen eggs in one big bread pan...and you put 'em in the oven. The evening before, why, you sliced a bushel of potatoes and fry it for breakfast. And, of course, you had to have meat on the table during the day, and you'd just cut up a whole quarter of beef, cook it at one time. I used to work with a cook by the name of Farley Crites. He always baked his own bread and baked biscuits of a morning. I forget how many loaves of bread we'd bake, but we baked a hundred pies a week. Most of them were cherry. Fruit pies mostly. And he could bake the best vinegar pie I ever ate. It's on the order of a lemon pie, and he's the only man ever I knowed to bake it."

Harvesting Hemlock Bark

BM. Well, we usually worked 'bout all the daylight. Worked for Joe Comfort one time, and it was in June when the days was long. And you'd peel bark, you'd peel tanning bark in the summertime when the sap was up so it gets off the log, you know. I went there and he wanted to know if I could peel bark and I told him I could, I could spud or fit either one. The fellow that's fittin' for the spud, he will take his axe and just split the bark on top of the log, right down the tree...and about every four feet he'll ring the bark through to the wood clear around, or as

far as he can reach. Well, the spudder's job is to come along with that spud (a chisel-like tool) and take the bark off of the log. And it'll come off in sheets four foot long, halfway around the log going each way, see.

And I asked him what he paid and he said, "I'll tell you what I'll do," said, "I'll pay $7 a day and give you two meals by lamplight and two meal a-running." And that was in June, so you know about how long the days were. And he was right. You are breakfast before daylight, and about ten o'clock they'd bring something to the woods to eat. And then about three o'clock they brought something else, and you come in when it got dark. (He pauses) The average wage then in the woods was about $2.75 to $3.00. Top man was about $3, except in bark harvest, and then if you were good, you might go to $7--if you were good enough, and you'd work long enough hours.

A Day's Work in the Spruce

BM. And as for Grover Greathouse, he was another fellow that wanted the work done. And he'd only let you work 30 days. If you wanted to stay over 30 days, he'd just fire you. He said he got everything out of a man that was good in 30 days, and he wanted you to go out and rest awhile. (Laughs) Me and Paddy used to go out to town and throw a good 'un for about three days, and then come on back and go to work.

We was working on top of Black Mountain and it was solid red spruce. You could be under there in the middle of the day and the sun shining bright, and it looked like dusty dark it was so thick and heavy overhead. And Grover Greathouse run a five-man cutting crew. One man (a fitter) would notch the tree, he'd cut a notch in it the direction he wanted that tree to fall, see. You had two men on the crosscut saw to cut it down; they'd cut it down and log it up into lengths. They used two men they called knot-bumpers. They would trim all of the limbs off of them logs, and run 'em out until they came down to about four inches in diameter. Anything down to about 12 inches would to to logs, and then 12 inches on down to four inches --we're speaking about spruce timber now-- they cut as pulpwood and they'd haul that in long poles. And then they'd throw all of the brush out of the road, so the road would be clean.

Grover Greathouse expected the two of us sawing on the docks to cut a carload of pulpwood a day. On a month's run, it would average about 11 cord to the car. And when you have 11 cord of wood and saw it with a crosscut saw, you've done a day's work. And he expected one team to skid that wood and what logs there was mixed with it down the hollow road, and he expected the cutting crew, the five-man cutting crew, to cut it and get it ready in the woods. That was nine men, and Grover said the logs paid the labor and the food, and the pulpwood was clear. Clear money to him.

The Flying Dutchman

BM. And that was the first place I ever saw any dope in the woods. I was in my late teens, I reckon, and a fellow came through and he was with some organization, some order that was supposed to be beneficial, and if you joined it you got your membership card. It was about the size of an operator's license and a quarter of an inch thick. An old wood hick there they called the Flying Dutchman put me up to join it. It was only ten dollars, and I just throwed that membership card in my suitcase.

About two weeks after that, I got into my suitcase--I was going to write a letter one day--and I picked that thing up and it felt soft. I got to looking at it, and someone'd slit it along the side. And here that card was hollow with paper pasted over, and whatever was in it had been taken out. It was some of this heroin. A lot of the old wood hicks used it. They called it "snow"...and what they'd do is take a little bit and put it in the hollow of their hands and snuff it up their nose. Why, it would drive 'em crazy as bats. The ones that used it, we called 'em "snow birds."

I never did use any of it, I never did taste it. That's the only time I ever got tied in on it. I figured it was the old Flying Dutchman that done it, and I hopped him about it. He said, "Ah hell, it was worth that just to find out about it, wasn't it!" (Laughs)

A Bill James Drive

BM. I worked with another fellow on a cutting crew one time. His name was James, Bill James. If he took a notion to leave camp or something, he'd always make a big drive. The old man knew his timber, and he always used his own axe. He'd get back and notch one tree so it would fall into another one, and it would lodge there, it wouldn't fall clear down to the ground. You sawed it wherever he notched it, didn't matter where it was. And then he'd get back and he'd notch another one into that. He was an expert at it...and he'd keep on until he'd have five or six trees, all of 'em hanging in-

Some of Mr. Matheny's lathe-turned objects are made from woods like oak, cedar, sumac, cherry, and apple, but he prefers working with walnut.

to one, you know. And then he'd get back, and he'd have another one picked out that would knock 'em all down, see.

And we'd saw it off, and it would fall and knock the whole thing down. Slide it right down into the hollow road. And then he'd jump in and lay all the logs off, and then he'd just stick his axe up over his shoulder and take up over the hill. And that's the last you'd see of him, maybe for three or four months. That was known as a "Bill James drive".... He wouldn't stay until you had sawed 'em up, he'd just go in and draw his money and leave. Yeah, he'd just drive the road full of brush. It would take the knot bumpers ever so long to clean the road out again.

A Hard But Interesting Life

Benjamin Matheny wound up his logging career in 1930. "I pretty near had to quit skipping around, because my children were getting big enough to be in school, you know. I didn't want to change 'em around." Jobs were also becoming scarce, and the old-time logging era was coming to a close. Caterpillar tractors were just beginning to replace horses in skidding the logs down the hollow roads to the landing, where they awaited shipping by rail or by water to the sawmill. Mr. Matheny's last work in the woods was operating a Cat for the Birch Valley Lumber Company, the same company he had worked for as a water boy some 12 years before.

Mr. Matheny describes logging as a "hard life," but adds that it was an interesting one. The pleasure and good humor with which he recalls his days in the woods are unmistakable. Logging offered a man the freedom to work when and where he pleased. No job examination was required. As Mr. Matheny explains it, "If you could do the work, all right, if you couldn't they just fired you, and that's all there was to it. I've had as many as five jobs in one day in the woods. If I started to work and it didn't suit me, I'd just throw the tools down and go on."

Retirement Years

The needs of a growing family--Benjamin Matheny and his wife Minnie raised 11 children--required greater security; and Mr. Matheny found it at the Union Carbide plant at Alloy, where he worked as a turbine engineer for 36 years. Since his retirement six years ago, he has enjoyed a style of life as independent and on-the-go as it is resourceful and hard-working. According to Mrs. Matheny, in the wintertime her husband is usually busy in his woodworking shop by 8:30 in the morning, and their Fayette Co. home is filled with a variety of beautiful and useful objects which he has turned on his wood lathe--goblets, small bowls, large fruit bowls, candle holders, and even a few toys. In the spring the Mathenys begin a cycle of planting, cultivating, harvesting, and canning, and their one-third-acre garden provides ample food for friends and family alike. Much of the harvest is preserved with the help of another product of Mr. Matheny's handiwork, an outsized pressure canner capable of holding 24 half-gallon or 47 quart jars at one time.

Benjamin Matheny may have settled down to raise his children, but nowadays they are an inducement to travel. The large Matheny family, which through the years has grown to include 27 grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren, is scattered all over the country. Before putting in their garden this spring, the Mathenys enjoyed vacations visiting family in both Florida and California. Not that the spring planting interferes with their wanderlust; after the lettuce, potatoes, and onions were in, the Mathenys left for a fishing trip on the Williams River, where he had worked as a logger so many years before. In retirement, Benjamin Matheny once more can come and go as he pleases, and it is a freedom he jealously guards in a world of nine-to-five routines and appointments. When I called a few days in advance to schedule this interview, Mr. Matheny was happy to oblige, but then he added, "Be sure and call before you come up. We're in and out of here a good deal."

The five photographs on pages 30-32 belong to the author and came down to her from her grandfather. Photographer unknown.

Logging at Swiss in Nicholas County Around 1909

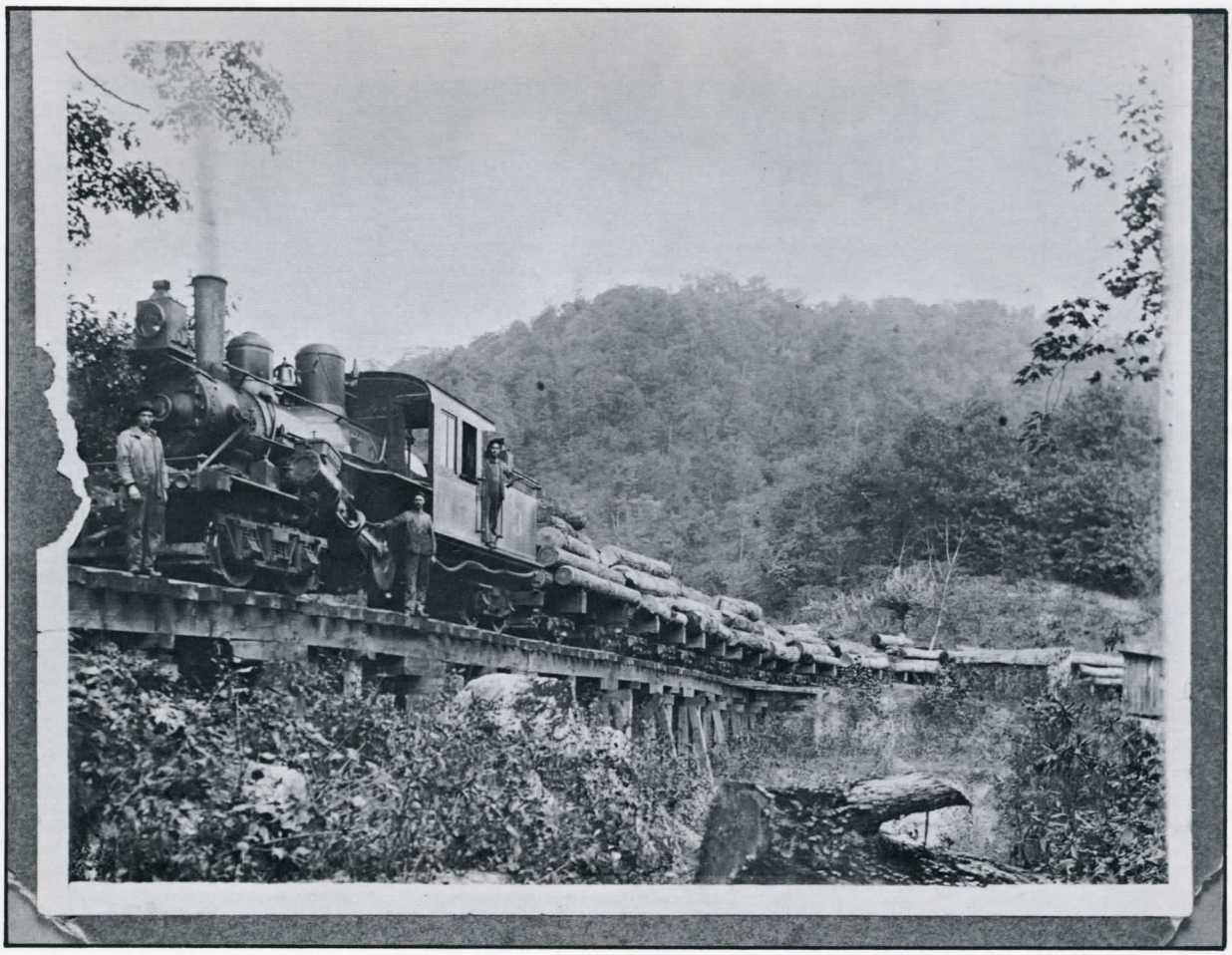
After the cutting, logs were skidded to the rail head by teams of horses and loaded on special flat cars by a steam-powered log loader. This machine moved from car to car by means of rails on top of the cars. See photos ① and ②. This method of logging prevailed from the early 1880s to the early 1930s then Caterpillar tractors replaced the horses and the log loader received a diesel motor.

The last Climax engine built was delivered in 1929 and is essentially a duplicate of the one in photo ④. It was used for 30 years in the woods near Swandale (Clay Co.). It is now in a museum in Pennsylvania.

(below) A loaded log car and the traditional method of moving logs from the woods to the mill. The long-handled tool held by some of the men is called a peavey. Henry Gross, the author's grandfather, is on the far left, and her great-grandfather, Winfield Copeland, is on the far right. Copeland was a cruiser, a man who estimated the amount and value of standing timber. (opposite, above) A steam operated log loader and teams of horses. (opposite, below) On the way to the mill, the Flynn Lumber Company's engine (see overleaf) stops on a trestle.

①

②



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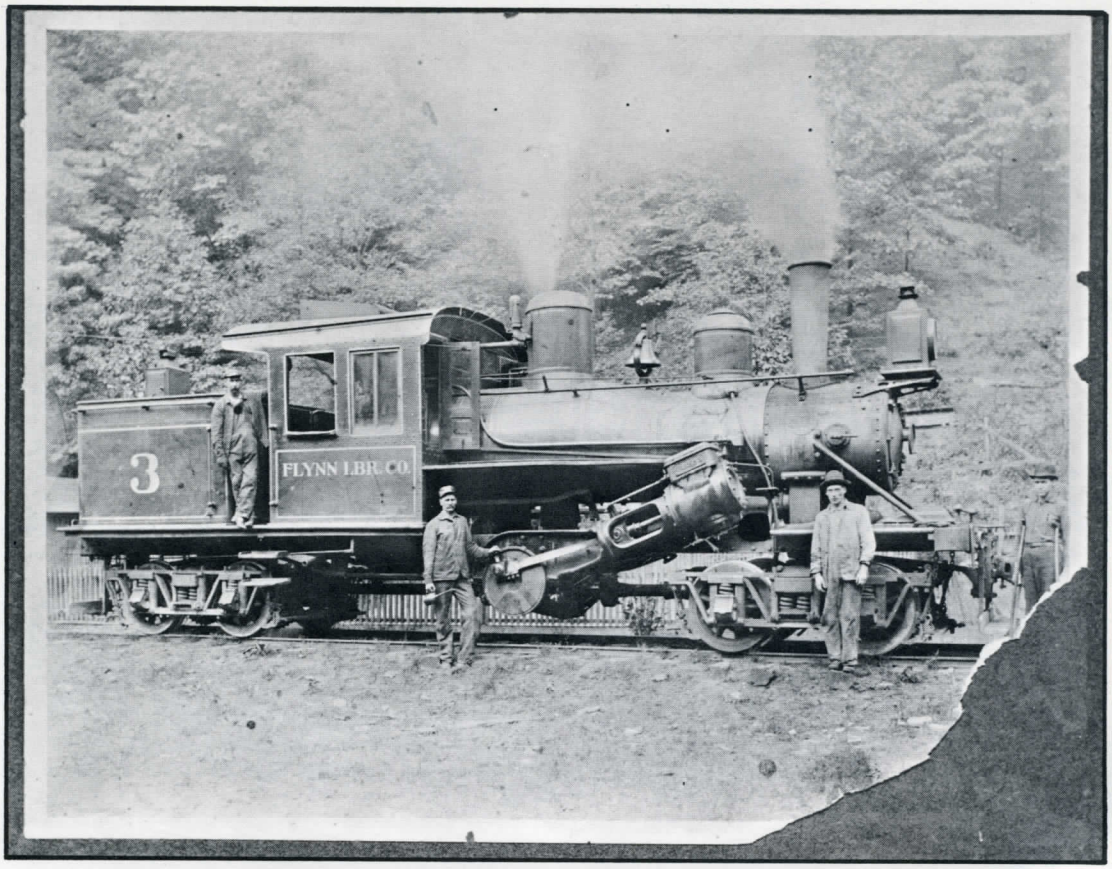
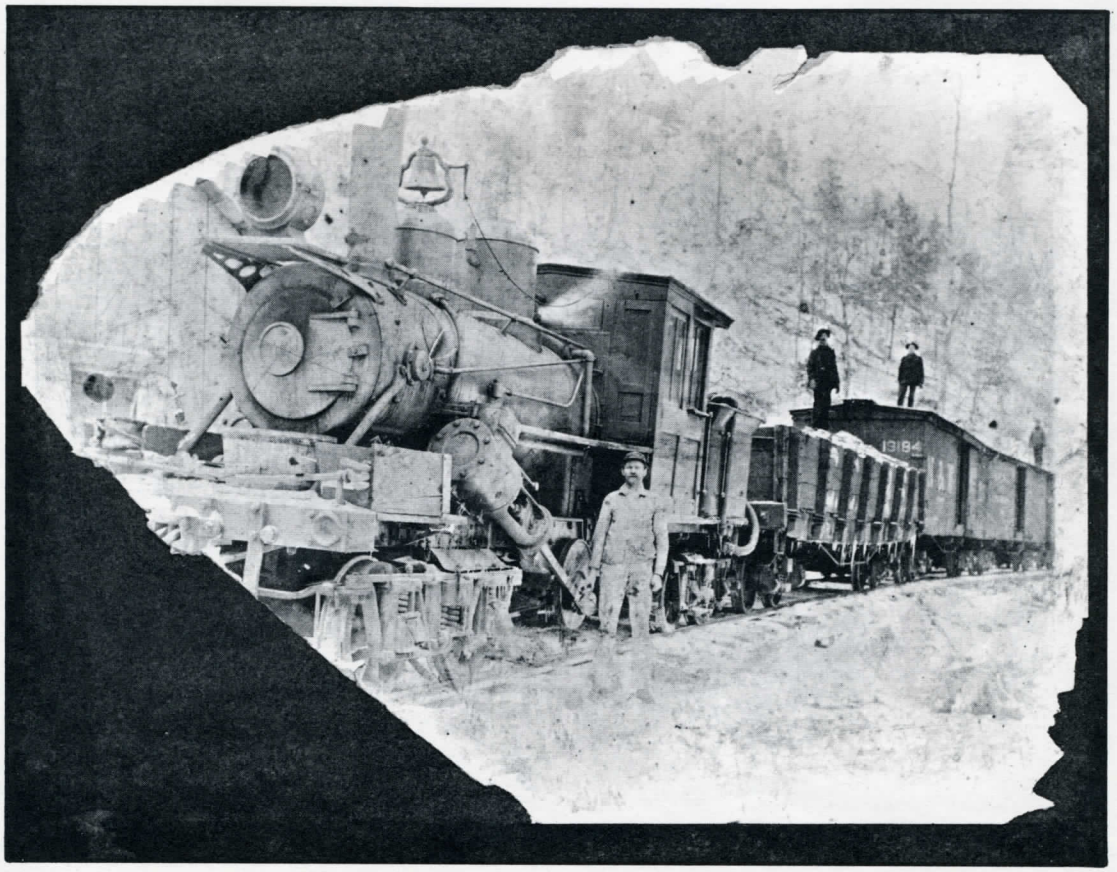


④

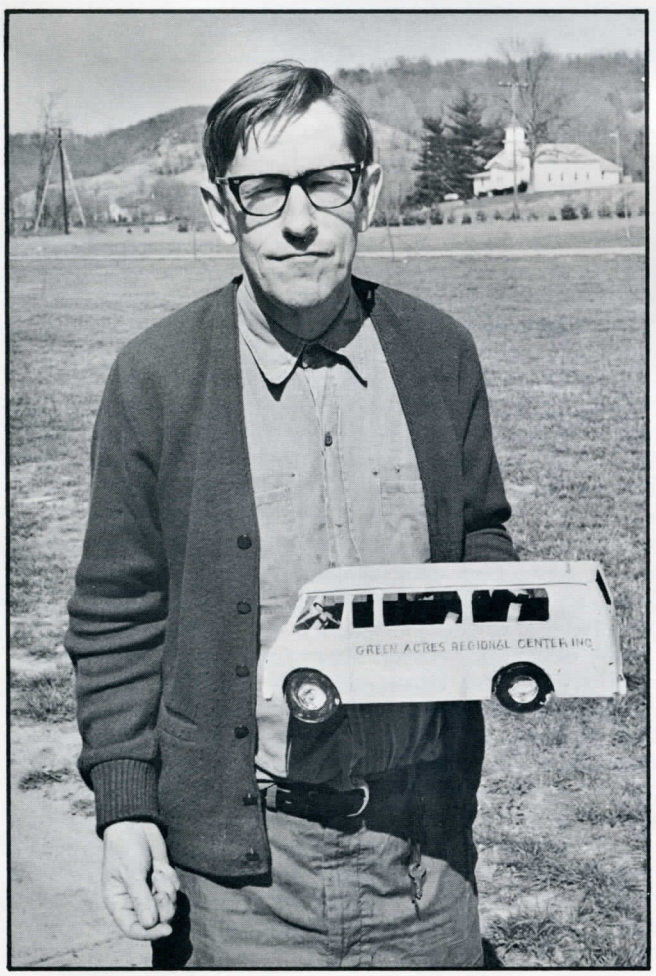
(above) The train crew for the Flynn Lumber Company's Climax-type steam logging engine No. 3. Left to right, Troy Douglas, Henry Gross, an unidentified man, and Ed Ford. (below) An older Climax-type engine with a wooden cab.



⑤

The Seldom Seen Work of Huntington Model Maker and Painter

Text and Photographs by Laurence Karasek



John Guerrant Smith holds one of his cardboard models, a minibus he rides periodically from Huntington Hospital to Green Acres Regional Center, Inc. Minibus, L. 10".

Few people know of the West Virginia artist, John Guerrant Smith. His work came to my attention recently as a result of a newly formed art therapy program at Huntington Hospital, one of the State's five mental hospitals. This program is funded by both the National Endowment for the Arts and the West Virginia Arts and Humanities Council. One of an unknown number of folk artists, John Smith is a long-term Hospital resident. His work is part of that loosely defined alternative American art being discovered everywhere in the United States.

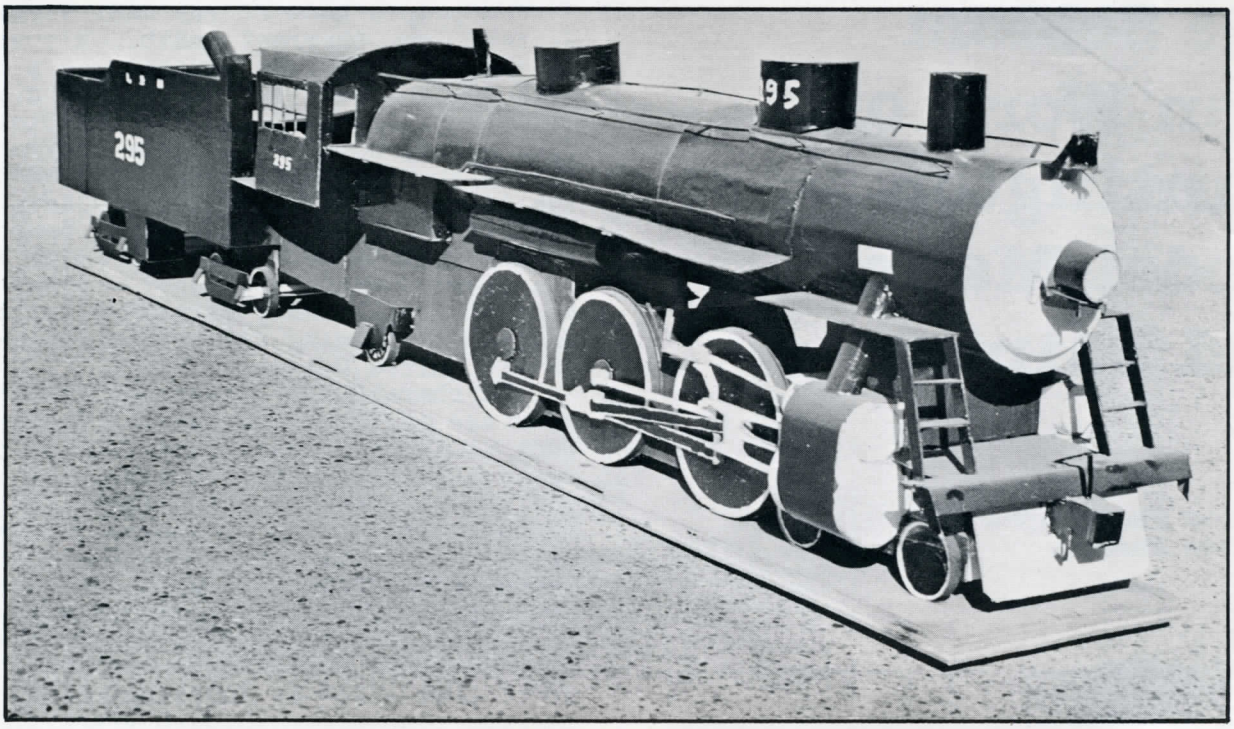
The therapeutic effects of creative work are an important part of the treatment at the hospital. Art therapy reveals hidden talent in a situation where the intense individualism exhibited in the behavior of the residents is unremarkable. With often severe personal handicaps, a resident's even slight achievement is significant. John Smith's remarkable work is a pioneering effort like that of other self-taught artists who never lost sight of inspiration and who express themselves through whatever means come to hand.

Mr. Smith was born in 1928 in Callaway, Virginia, where his father was a Presbyterian minister. As a child he completed the first grade at seven but never adapted to another school when the family moved. He often talks about that period in Callaway and still yearns to return to his father's church.

My first teacher was Miss Ruth--Miss Ruth Robinson. She was a good school teacher. That's where I started drawing when I was about 12. She had infantile paralysis. That was in Callaway, Virginia, near the Blue Ridge Mountains of Virginia, Franklin County. Callaway was a country village. I remember what it looked like, farms and houses on hills--a farmhouse on every hill.

At the age of one John Smith suffered severe burns on his left hand from falling on a cookstove while learning to walk. His father has said the accident "might have had some bearing on his reluctance to talk during childhood and youth even to the time when he entered the hospital in 1952. That was one of his problems." Rev. Smith took him to Huntington Hospital late in 1952, and, apart from two trial visits to his family in 1954 and 1965 and regular Christmas visits, Mr. Smith has remained hospitalized since the age of 24.

The youngest of six children, Smith showed an interest in art from an early age. He began by painting several versions of the church in Lost City (Hardy



Co.), which he reportedly sold for a dollar each. The money, partly a motivation, was less important than the pleasure of the work. His father, Rev. Smith, commented, "Even in La Grange, Georgia, at the age of 11 and 12, he was so wrapped up in his art that school did not appeal to him." The boy is said to have been jealous of his brother Franklin's model airplanes and made his first ones in a sort of rivalry. The brother did not think much of John's planes, which he felt were "out of proportion." When Smith moved to Valley Center, Virginia, he painted landscapes and portraits. The most he is said to have received for a portrait was $25.00.

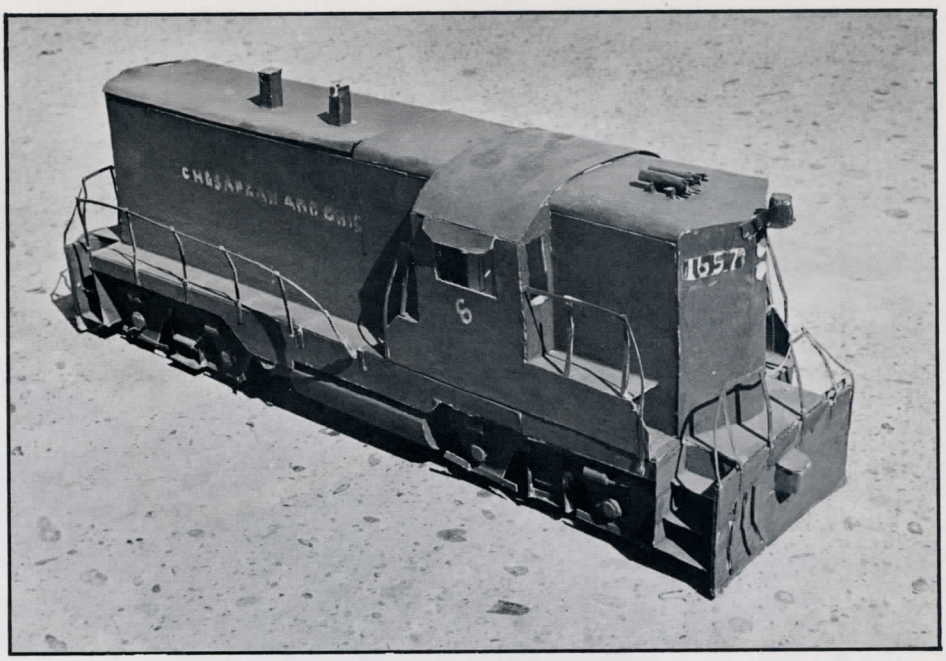
Mr. Smith's father, who is now 87 years old, reportedly still owns many of his son's early works, but the whereabouts of others made since the 1950s is uncertain. A brother thinks most of Smith's early work has been thrown away, yet he has at least five oil paintings, still lifes and landscapes made in a prolific period when the artist was between the ages of 12 and 18.

An intensely shy person, Mr. Smith talks reluctantly but reveals a passion for factual detail and dimensions of the kind needed to structure detailed models of vehicles and buildings. Fascinated by the idea of monumental scale, he builds locomotives "because steam engines are very big." While on a bus in Huntington once he "saw men who only came to the top of the wheels of the engine." The rail yards are within walking distance of the hospital, and his information comes mostly from observation. He makes his various models by drawing careful plans first, measuring and calculating each part, which is then constructed from cardboard and Elmer's glue purchased from a shop outside the hospital. He points out that he pays for all materials himself.

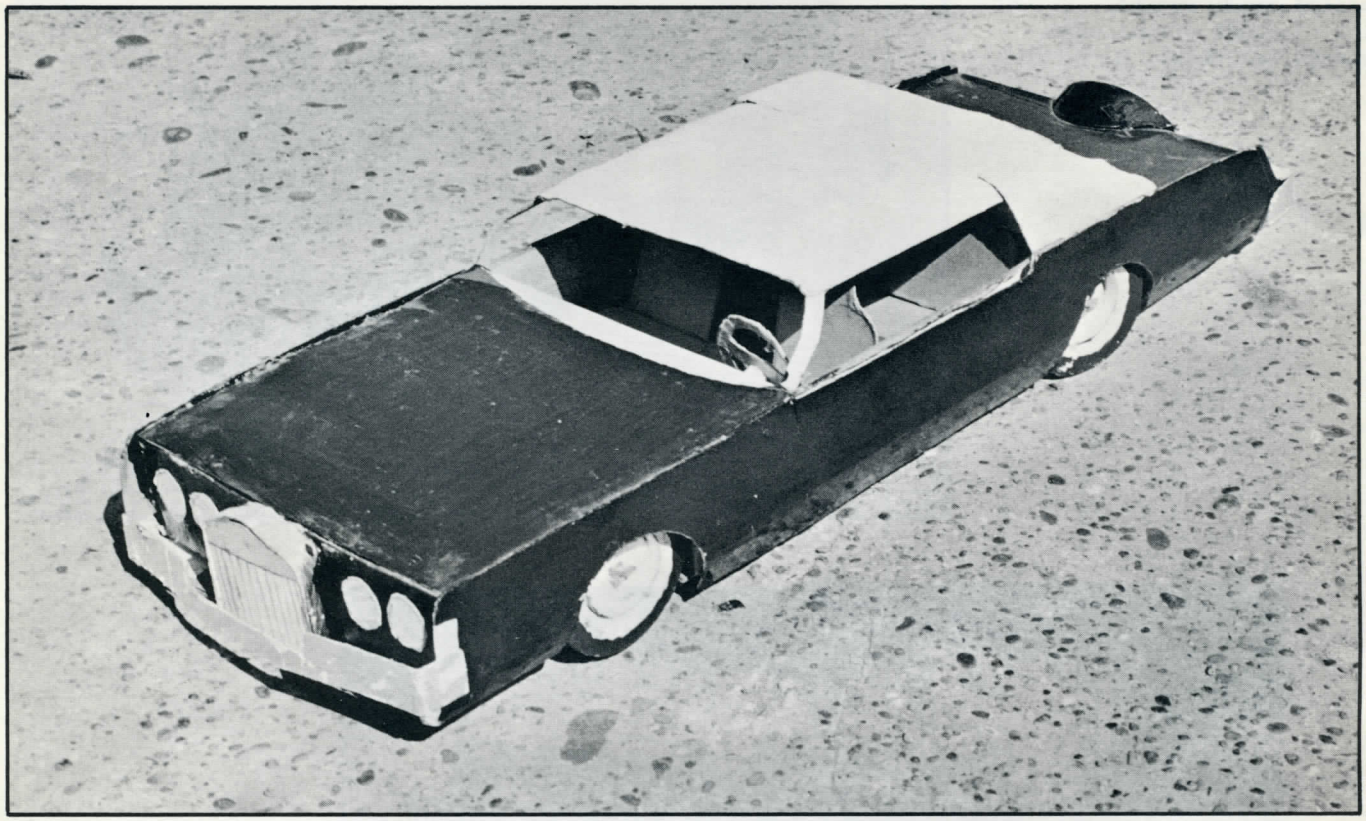
Over the years he has made dozens of train engines, stagecoaches, covered wagons, models of the Capitol Building in Washington, and even, as rumor goes, the White House. Most of this work is probably lost, since no one has compiled a record of his work over the years. He usually creates the models for a circle of people associated with the hospital. One project, a large mural of a West Virginia farm signed "John Guerrant Smith 1968," can still be seen on the end wall of the hospital's greenhouse amidst the plants. Quite often, apparently, his models are damaged in the ward hallway where he works in the evenings and on weekends; pieces get "crushed or thrown away."

The re-creation from imagination of the real world in cardboard and glue is an arduous process. Smith transforms these simple materials, bit by bit, into the mechanically intricate trains, cars, and trucks. Details, reconceived as parts of the whole, become new visual compositions. The black and white wheel sets of his wood burning locomotive have the impact of certain modern abstract painting. In his

(opposite) Steam engine. L. 48", H. 11". (right) Diesel engine, Chesapeake and Ohio. L. 24".



(left) Closeup of stagecoach. (below) Model of a stagecoach. L. 31", H. 10".



Lincoln Continental. L. 14".

Lincoln Continental the familiar forms of the automobile become the kind of parody of restatement that in the 1960s came out of contemporary artists' fascination with ordinary objects. Smith's car is entirely his own creation with enough subtle tension in its difference from the shiny original to give commonplace lines new meaning. His struggle to translate factual information by a slow process of measuring, drawing to scale, cutting cardboard shapes, gluing these together, and finally painting is a sculptural technique which expresses the medium as much as the image. Smith's cardboard models are an impression of the objective world--horses galloping, wheels turning, and cardboard buckling slightly to remind us of the handwork involved.

One wonders if the artist's making pictures and models with his family's encouragement was a substitute for communicating verbally. Smith exhibited the behavior of a mute until he received medical treatment in his late twenties. Social orientation, as with many artists, has come through the experience of his work. Smith is a well regarded personality at the hospital, where he is admired and respected for his efforts as an artist. As a voluntary resident, he would leave if he could but feels he has been hospitalized too long to make the necessary adjustment. His perceptions of the world outside are framed by the hospital routine he has known for so long.

Perhaps our need for another kind of aesthetic, different from academic art, is greater now; the primary level images of folk art reassure us of our identity in this time when there is much concern over the loss of traditional values. Artists like Mr. Smith show us, through simple techniques and images, the kind of transcendance everyone understands. His work asserts the willingness to be spontaneously real, to do and be what you want--whatever, whenever, and however it pleases you. That personal frontier of the imagination knows no particular time or place and is found in anyone with the ability to be creative for its own pleasure. No training or ideological affiliation is necessary.

We remember the personalities of folk artists, their vision, and the striking things they make. Although they might be otherwise unknown to us, their works often are remembered because their lives are sometimes difficult and their works often impermanent, ephemeral images secretly enshrined in everyone's imagination.

The Mystery of Rosbys Rock

By William C. Blizzard

Rosbys Rock is a tiny Marshall Co. village on Big Grave Creek a few miles east of Moundsville. It was once a U. S. post office but is no more.

Nothing could be less midnight-mysterious or more midday-certain, it would seem, than Rosbys Rock. The name of the little town is enshrined in an official ruling, promulgated in 1933, of the U. S. Geographic Board. "The town name," said the Geographic Board, in effect "is Rosbys Rock. No more and no less." The Board went on to rule that the town name was *not* Rosbbys Rock, or Roseby Rock, or Rosbbysrock.

Nothing could be more official. Nothing could be clearer. Nothing could be less of a mystery. Yet the strong language of the federal ruling--a cannon blast, so to speak, to obliterate a mouse --is a basis for suspicion. Why the vehemence? Why the necessity for ruling out specific alternate names? Therein lies the mystery of Rosbys Rock.

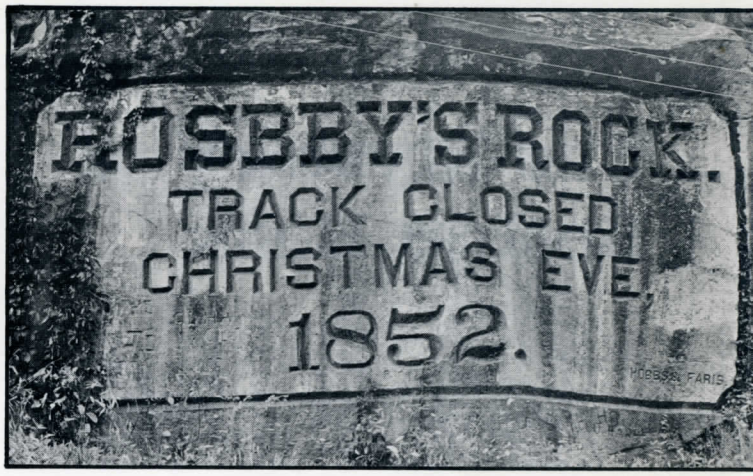
Rosbys Rock, the town, is named for a nearby sandstone boulder of enormous proportions. In the shadow of this boulder, on the bank of Big Grave Creek, glisten the rails of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad. The B&O rails have glistened there since December 24, 1852. At that point, at that time, in the shadow of this boulder, the rails creeping from Wheeling were joined to those advancing from Baltimore.

The joining of these rails marked the attainment of the goal implicit in the name of the B&O: a railroad linking the city of Baltimore with the Ohio River. This railroad construction had been going on since July 4, 1828--almost a quarter of a century--and its completion represented the first great railroad achievement in the United States. The site of the completion, therefore, is of great historical importance, not only in B&O history in particular and in railroad history in general, but also in the history of West Virginia and the United States. For westward development in this country depended in large part upon the steel rails that slashed and stabbed into the heart of the continent.

What park, therefore, at the site, commemorates this historic achievement? What towering monument tells the visiting public, with an appropriate inscription, of the significance of this spot? You can't say there's a monument at the spot, aside from the before-mentioned inscribed rock. There certainly isn't a park. Visitors may get there by walking a half mile or so up the railroad track or about the same distance up a dirt road and then wading Big Grave Creek.

But the spot is marked. I mean, of course, by the rock, the enormous sandstone boulder, that gave a name to the village of Rosbys Rock. The boulder bears an inscription, professionally done, noting that the B&O track was closed at this point on Christmas Eve, 1852. In letters nearly a foot high, deeply carved into the smoothed face of the boulder, the world is told that this is Rosbby's Rock. That's no typographical error on my part, or on the part of the printer; that's the way it's spelled: Rosbby's, with two "b's" and an apostrophe; and therein lies a mystery.

West Virginia historians generally, including J. M. Callahan, Edward Hungerford, and Morris P. Shawkey, have spelled the name "Roseby's," theorizing that the first "b" in Rosbby's should have been an "e." Most popular writers, or writers hoping to be popular, have followed their



lead. But the old West Virginia Guide* spells it "Rosby's," and, as before noted, the U. S. Geographic Board has ruled the name of the nearby village to be, officially, Rosbys, without the apostrophe.

The 1933 ban by the Geographic Board of thenceforth impermissible variants indicates that such variants, prior to the ruling, were much used by townspeople and others. The ruling, of course, was intended to end such confusion, at least as far as the postal system was concerned.

An explanation for the name is given in Hamill Kenny's *West Virginia Place Names*, quoting Hungerford. According to this explanation, the man in charge of B&O construction in the Moundsville area was named Roseby Carr, and rock and town were named for him. The stonecutters, Hungerford theorizes, simply made a typographical error. This theory may be right; at least, I cannot prove it wrong. But it does not, to me, seem reasonable. Typographical errors are easily made by someone using a typewriter, linotype, or other machine. They even occur, infrequently, with pen or pencil. But for a professional stonecutter to make such an error doesn't seem likely. After all, it takes a while to cut a large letter into stone with a chisel and hammer; the errors of an instant, easy to make with a mechanical instrument, are difficult to make with tools requiring slow, deliberate, precision handcrafting.

The stonecutters who carved the lettering on the stone at Rosbys Rock were employees of a firm named Hobbs & Faris. Hobbs and Faris may, in fact, have done the actual cutting. In any case, the firm name is carved as a signature on the large inscription. It is probable that Hobbs and Faris were local artisans, for both surnames appear today in Moundsville and Wheeling telephone directories. Even if their stone lettering were done some years after 1852, it is probable that they knew the local B&O superintendent, a prominent man, and would be unlikely to misspell his name. I do not think Rosbby's is a misspelling of Roseby's, though I realize this is the accepted explanation. What, then, is the true explanation?

I can't explain it conclusively, but I believe the road to truth lies in a two-volume history written by Peter Boyd in 1927, titled, *History of Northern West Virginia Panhandle*. Boyd's history contains by far the most detailed account of the completion of the B&O in the Moundsville-Wheeling area. On page 265 of Volume I Boyd writes: "The last spike connecting up the great Baltimore and Ohio system from Baltimore to the Ohio River at Wheeling was driven by John Teigmeirr, assistant road master, on the 24th of December, 1852, at precisely 5:20 p.m., in the presence of Roseberry Carr, then general superintendent of the main track, his son, who was assistant road master, Mr. Bender, division engineer, and probably between 200 and 300 section hands and laborers, who heartily toasted the completion of their handiwork."

Boyd says the general superintendent's name was Roseberry Carr, and, until contrary evidence is produced, I will believe him. Roseberry is a common name in all of Appalachia; Roseby and Rosby are not. I believe that "Rosbby's" may be an attempted abbreviation of "Roseberry's" or a phonetic representation of the general superintendent's nickname, spelled the way it was pronounced.

In any case, the building of the B&O to the Ohio River, completed at this spot, was one of the great engineering feats of all time. It was also, needless to say, of prime importance historically. Of interest to tourists? Of course. A spot that should be made prominent by a suitable commemorative project easily accessible to visitors? Indeed so.

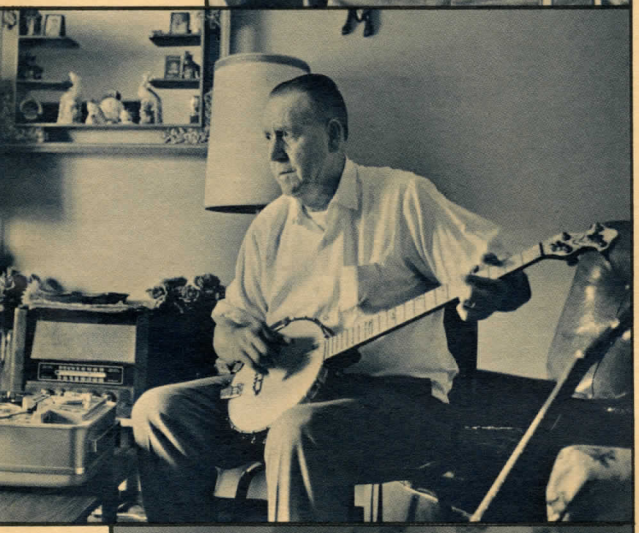
J. M. Callahan writes of the importance of the completion of the B&O: "Nor were its benefits economic alone. The parts of the country which it touched are bound together into a closer social and political union than had before been realized. It was a large factor in determining the political destiny of West Virginia, the military strategy of the Civil War, and the continued integrity of the American Union."

If there is a dark mystery to Rosbys Rock, there is also a lesson as clear as a sunlit day after new-fallen snow: Let West Virginia realize and make known its assets, rather than burying them in weeds and brush upon obscure country roads.

* *West Virginia*, "A Guide to the Mountain State," compiled by workers of the Writers' Program of the Work Projects Administration in the State of West Virginia. 1941. Oxford University Press, N.Y., N.Y.

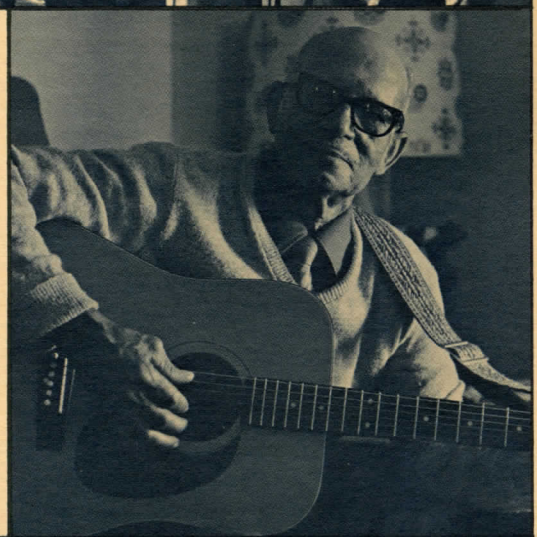
continued from page 6

Wilson Douglas. Fiddler. Maysel (Clay Co.). Among numerous old-time musicians from Clay County, Douglas is one of the youngest, 54, and yet one of the most accomplished. There are around 400 fiddle tunes in his repertory. His master was his much revered late neighbor, French Carpenter; and he also came under the influence of Ed Haley, another renowned fiddler. (Photograph by Carl Fleischhauer.)

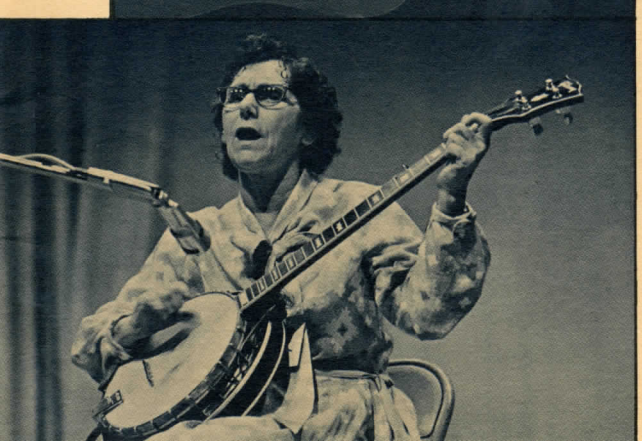


Delbert M. Hughes. Fiddler. Charleston (Kanawha Co.). Mr. Hughes moved to the State in 1935 from Stearns, Kentucky. He is 70 years old and worked as a coal miner for 52 years. He has played the fiddle since he was around eight years old. He and knowledgeable listeners consider his playing style a particularly early type, even for old-time fiddling.

William O. Iman. Fiddler, banjoist. Charleston (Kanawha Co.). Known less widely than nearly any of the Festival participants, Mr. "Bill" Iman has greatly impressed several scholars of old-time music who have heard him play. Years ago he played for many square dances in Clay and Kanawha Counties and in recent years has often made music with friends. Having a tape recorder has probably helped him keep as nimble as he is. (Photograph by Carl Fleischhauer.)



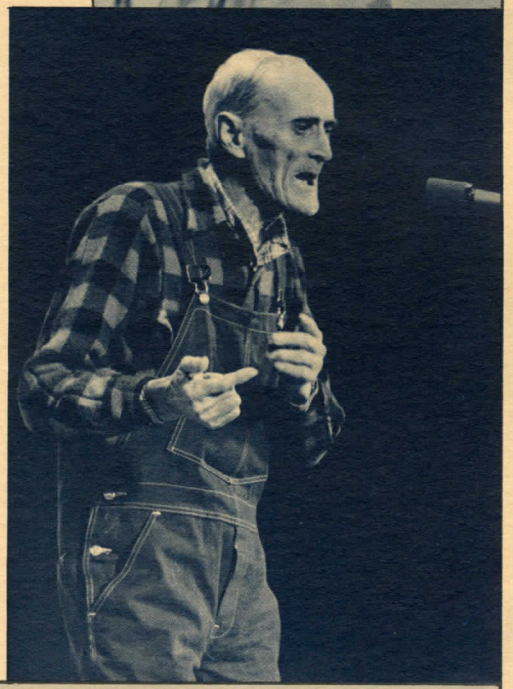
E. E. (Elva Edward) Johnson. Singer, guitarist. Meadow Creek (Summers Co.). A retired railroader, Mr. Johnson plays and sings both traditional hymns and ones he wrote. He is 79 years old. In late August he expects to perform at the John Henry Folk Festival near Charleston. (Photograph by Robert Gates.)



Phoeba Parsons. Banjoist. Orma (Calhoun Co.). and **Harvey George Sampson.** Fiddler. Nicut (Calhoun Co.). Mrs. Parsons is known well especially to those who go to the Morris Family and West Virginia State Folk Festivals. She delights audiences not only with her playing but also with humorous tales and stories. She and her neighbor, Mr. Sampson, enjoy playing together whenever they can. (Photograph by Carl Fleischhauer.)

"Uncle" (John) Homer Walker. Banjoist. Glen Lyn, Virginia. Born in Summers County 78 years ago, Mr. Walker was a farmer before he retired. His clawhammer playing is considered a link to quite old black music in the Mountains. He now lives about two miles from the West Virginia-Virginia border. The banjo he plays was made by the Clay Countian, Jenes Cottrell. (Photograph by Carl Fleischhauer.)

Melvin Wine. Fiddler. Copen (Braxton Co.). A native of Braxton County, Wine has farmed, worked in timber, and mined coal during his 67 years. He first won a prize in the fiddlers' contest at the Folk Festival in Glenville in 1958 and has collected many more top prizes there in the years since. (Photograph by Carl Fleischhauer.)



Nimrod Workman. Singer. Chattaroy (Mingo Co.). A native of Kentucky, Workman mined coal there and in West Virginia the better part of his 81 years. He sings traditional ballads and hymns as well as songs he composed, many of them topical songs. His songs and stories related to coal mining and the organizing of the United Mine Workers of America Union have been particularly valuable to historians and folklorists. (Photograph by Jim Pate.)

Phyllis Boyens. Singer, guitarist. Charleston (Kanawha Co.). Boyens, at 29, is one of the youngest of the Nimrod Workmans' 11 living children. She has sung alone and with her father widely in the Eastern part of the United States. She began singing at four in their Baptist Church in Chattaroy where she was born. (Photograph by Carl Fleischhauer.)

Current: PROGRAMS • FESTIVALS • PUBLICATIONS

AUGUSTA WORKSHOP HAS FIVE-WEEK SCHEDULE

The Augusta Heritage Arts Workshop for five weeks this summer is offering a full schedule of courses in regional arts and culture. Davis and Elkins College will again house the community-sponsored project of the Randolph County Creative Arts Council. The program is designed to provide training for both new craftspeople and the experienced. There is a weekly fee of $30 for West Virginians, and on-campus room and board are offered at $45 for seven days. Fees for out-of-state residents are slightly higher. Camping facilities in nearby Monongahela National Forest are available.

Workshop Schedule

July 5-Aug. 7 (only 5-week class)
- Musical Instrument Construction ($50 fee)
  - Paul Reisler

July 12-24
- Appalachian Music
  - Jimmie and Loren Currence
- Basketry I & II
  - Dorothy Thompson
- Pottery I & II
  - Marvin Smith and Susan Smith
- Spinning
  - Bert Kerns
- Appalachian Cultural History
  - Dr. Patrick Gainer and Don West
- Weaving I & II
  - Bernice Coffman and Olive Goodwin
- Wood Sculpture
  - Mike Patton

July 26-August 7
- Appalachian Music and Folk Dancing
  - John McCutcheon
- Basketry
  - Rachael Nash
- Clay Prospecting & Processing
  - Marvin Smith
- Pottery I & II
  - Marvin Smith and Michael Souter
- Vegetable Dyeing
  - Beatrice Bannerman
- Weaving I & II
  - Bernice Coffman and Olive Goodwin
- Glaze Calculations
  - Charles Scott
- Kiln Building
  - Bob Anderson

For complete information write the workshop at 4 Randolph Ave., Elkins, W. Va. 26241 or phone 304-636-0006 or 636-1467.

MINERS' ART GROUP FORMED

The Miners' Art Group is a budding arts development organization spearheaded by two young coal miners who paint. The two artists, Andy Willis and Blue Lamb, are virtually self-taught, and they seek to stimulate the less visible culture of the region. Willis has stated, "The group wants to locate artists--painters, poets, songwriters--who portray the life of working people in the Appalachian Region, particularly those in coal mining communities." Showing the work of a number of artists, the two organizers and their families have begun exhibiting at art and craft fairs and at other community functions in the Kanawha Valley. They are eager to expand the group and urge creative people to contact them at Box 692, Belle, W. Va. 25015. The Miners' Art Group will soon publish its second topical poster and will send information on request.

NEW HISTORICAL LIBRARY-MUSEUM IN PHILIPPI

Late in May the Barbour County Historical Library-Museum opened in Philippi. Adjoining the Public Library, the new facility is sponsored by several local agencies and organizations. At this writing, a regular schedule has not been established; hours for the Library-Museum may be learned by phoning 304-457-3700 between 1:00 and 4:30 p.m. Acquisitions on view now include Civil War artifacts from the collection of the late town physician, Dr. Elmer Myers, as well as papers and manuscripts of Ida L. Reed, an area songwriter and poet who gained an international reputation.

PICTORIAL HISTORY OF CIVIL WAR PUBLISHED

A book, *The Civil War in West Virginia*, A Pictorial History, has recently been published by its author, Charleston native Stan Cohen. Containing over 140 photographs, many of them old views of Civil War sites paired with new ones, the 200-page volume also contains ten maps. Included in the book is

a concise history of the conflict. Mr. Cohen was a West Virginia University graduate in geology in 1961, and he now lives in Montana. *The Civil War in West Virginia* is available in many State bookstores, or it may be ordered by sending $5.95 plus $.18 tax (for W. Va. residents) to Pictorial Histories, 4103 Virginia Avenue, S.E., Charleston, W. Va. 25304.

BOOK, *West Virginia USA*, EXPECTED THIS SUMMER

The much publicized book, *West Virginia USA*, will be off the press later this summer than mid-June, as originally announced. Harry Seawell, whose Parkersburg firm Seawell Communications is publisher, attributed the delay to their careful efforts to achieve accuracy in the volume's history articles and also to a decision to add 16 pages, bringing the total to 208.

The plentifully illustrated book has been described as a journalistic treatment of the State's history, present life, and expectations for the future. Two writers and a photographer, all State natives, were hired for the production of the book. Jerry Ash, co-publisher of the Preston County *News*, and Strat Douthat, Huntington correspondent for the Associated Press, wrote most of the articles; and many of the new photographs were made by Bill Kuydendall, who recently returned to live in West Virginia after gaining an admirable reputation as a photojournalist and teacher. The 9 1/2" x 9 1/4" book is priced at $19.76. The address is *West Virginia USA*, 1056 Market Street, Parkersburg, W. Va. 26101.

NEW CRAFT AND MUSIC FESTIVAL PLANNED

A group of Clay Countians have planned a new outdoor craft and music festival for the weekend of July 30-Aug. 1. To be held on State Route #16 just north of Chloe, the Upper West Fork Arts and Crafts Festival will be at a community park bearing that name. The festival is designed as a non-profit event, according to the sponsors, who announced that "all proceeds are pledged to further (the promotion of) outlets for central West Virginia artists and craftsmen." Good traditional food is promised, and camping and free parking are to be offered. "All acoustic musicians" are invited to play and "may pass the hat for (their) pay." Craftspeople are asked to demonstrate if possible. There will be an admission charge of $1. For further information write the Upper West Fork Arts and Crafts Festival, Chloe, W. Va. 25235.

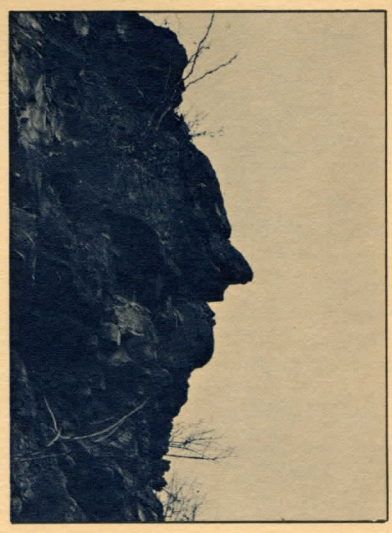
HISTORICAL MUSICAL AND NEW GALLERY SHOW IN WHEELING

On the evenings of August 19 and 20 in Wheeling a new musical production, *Time Steals Softly*, will be presented at Oglebay Park's Amphitheatre. The title of the musical is also the name of an historical novel written by Virginia Jones Harper and published in 1974 (Vantage, N.Y.,N.Y.). Ms. Harper adapted it for the staged version, and the music was composed by Robert Boury. Director Harold O'Leary and musical director Paul Criswell wrote the lyrics. Local actors and technicians have been selected. Ticket prices are $5 for adults and $2 for children.

Time Steals Softly is about a prominent late 18th and 19th century Wheeling woman, Lydia Boggs Harper, and it ends at the Civil War. The first exhibition in the nearby Mansion Museum's newly created Gallery of History will display material related to the Shepherd family and their home, Shepherd Hall. The gallery show will run through October. For more information write Oglebay Institute, Wheeling, W. Va. 26003 or phone 304-242-4200.

Correction

The photograph by Douglas Chadwick on page 38 of the last issue (Vol. 2, No. 2) was incorrectly placed. The face of the late President McKinley in the legendary McKinley Rock near Thurmond actually appears vertically, thus the photograph should have been set on the page as it is on the right.



Summer Craft and Music Events in West Virginia

Art and Craft Fairs

The following listing was furnished by the Arts and Crafts Division of the West Virginia Department of Commerce at the Science and Culture Center, State Capitol, Charleston, W. Va. 25305. For further information write the Division or phone 304-348-3736.

June 17-20	West Virginia State Folk Festival	Glenville
June 18-20	Rupert Country Fling	Rupert
June 25-26	Downtown Action Council Arts and Crafts Show	Morgantown
June 26-27	Oglebay Arts and Crafts Fair	Wheeling
June 30-July 4	Williamson King Coal Festival	Williamson
July 1-5	Mountain State Art and Craft Fair	Ripley (Cedar Lakes)
July 1-5	American Heritage Festival Week	Richwood
July 3-4	Old Guyandotte Days	Huntington
July 9-11	Pioneer Days	Marlinton
July 9-18	Marmet Bicentennial	Marmet
July 16-18	Virginia Point Days	Kenova
July 16-18	Monroe County Arts and Crafts Fair	Peterstown
July 19-25	Ohio River Festival	Ravenswood
July 29-Aug 1	Beverly Community Week	Beverly
July 30-Aug 1	Upper West Fork Arts and Crafts Festival	Chloe/Minnora
Aug 2-3	Watermellon Day Festival	Independence
Aug 11-14	West Virginia Water Festival	Hinton
Aug 10-14	Cherry River Festival	Richwood
Aug 13-15	Logan County Arts and Crafts Fair	Logan
Aug 18-22	Town and Country Days	New Martinsville
Aug 20-22	Appalachian Art and Craft Festival	Beckley
Aug 20-28	West Virginia State Fair	Lewisburg
Aug 27-29	John Henry Folk Festival	Charleston (Camp Virgil Tate)
Sept 3-6	Stonewall Jackson Jubilee	Weston (Jackson's Mill)
Sept 4-6	Tomato Festival	Hamlin
Sept 9-12	U. S. Coal Festival	Beckley
Sept 11	Hedgesville Heritage Festival	Hedgesville
Sept 13-18	Apple Festival	Grafton
Sept 16-19	West Virginia Oil and Gas Festival	Sistersville
Sept 17-19	Treasure Mountain Festival	Franklin
Sept 18-19	Harvest Moon Festival	Parkersburg
Sept 23-25	Molasses Festival	Arnoldsburg
Sept 23-26	Buckwheat Festival	Kingwood
Sept 25,26	Quilt Fair	Princeton (Brushfork Armory)
Oct 4	Dunbar Town Fair	Dunbar
Oct 3-10	Mountain State Forest Festival	Elkins

Old-time and Bluegrass Festivals

June 17-20	27th West Virginia State Folk Festival (College Auditorium)	Glenville
June 17-20	Goins Brothers Bluegrass Festival (Appalachian South Folklife Center	Pipestem
June 25-27	Webster Springs 3rd Annual Bluegrass Festival (Rt. 15)	Webster Springs
July 2-4	Butler Brothers Bluegrass Festival (Cox's Field, Route 47)	Walker
July 30,31	4th Bluefield Old-time and Bluegrass Fiddlers' Convention (Rt. 20)	Bluefield/Princeton
July 30-Aug 1	Butler Brothers Bluegrass Festival (Rt. 15)	Webster Springs
July 30-Aug 1	4th Pocahontas County Mountain Music and Bluegrass Festival	Huntersville
Aug 6-8	10th Pipestem Folk Arts and Music Festival (Appalachian South Folklife Center)	Pipestem
Aug 20-22	Bluegrass Festival (Potomac Highlands Park)	Moorefield
Aug 27-29	West Virginia Bluegrass Festival (Cox's Field, Route 47)	Walker
Sept 4-6	Butler Brothers Bluegrass Festival (Braxton County Recreation Park)	Sutton
Sept 24-26	Bluegrass Festival (Potomac Highlands Park)	Moorefield
Sept 25	Old-time Fiddlers' Contest (Harpers Ferry Caverns)	Harpers Ferry
Oct 3-10	Mountain State Forest Festival Open fiddle and banjo contest - *Oct 10, 1 pm*	Elkins

Books from Seneca Books, Inc.

When Seneca Books, Inc., of Grantsville, West Virginia, was started late in 1974, its intention was to publish original titles as well as reissues of material focused on West Virginia and surrounding states in Appalachia. The founders, Jeanne and Merrill Pollack, have said that they hoped to fulfill one of the essential obligations of a regional press--to do honor to the area that inspired the works.

As of now, Seneca Books has published five titles, which are described briefly below. They can be ordered through bookstores around the State or directly from the publisher. The address is P.O. Box 474, Grantsville, W. Va. 26147.

Shrubs of West Virginia. Nelle Ammons. Cloth, 144 pages. $6.95. Drawings and descriptions of 198 species of shrubs, as well as three pages of labeled drawings to help beginners learn the terminology and identify specimens in the field. The book also contains a key to identification; by a process of elimination one can "run down" any shrubs accurately. The book was published originally in 1950 as a West Virginia University Bulletin and had been long out of print until this reissue. The book also contains a list of included species, a bibliography, a glossary, and an index.

The Appalachians. Maurice Brooks. Paper, 346 pages. Drawings by Lois and Louis Darling, and with photographs. $6.50 Originally published ten years ago by Houghton Mifflin in a cloth edition, it is now available in paperback for the first time. Considered a classic, the book gives a delightful personally observed view of the entire Appalachian chain, from the Gaspe Peninsula to Georgia, with fascinating discourses on such matters as the range's geology, history, flora, and fauna. Preface by Roger Tory Peterson and John A. Livingston. Index.

The Wondrous Year: West Virginia Through the Seasons. Earl L. Core. Cloth, 208 pages. $8.50. Beguiling and erudite essays on the State's varied phenomena, vegetation, and natural wonders, arranged in a month-by-month chronology. Commentaries cover such diverse subjects as West Virginia's arctic and sub-tropical flora, its bogs and barrens, ginseng and haws, Ice Mountain, the Mound Builders, and the Cult of the Ramp Eaters. Index.

Folk Songs From The West Virginia Hills. Patrick W. Gainer. Cloth, 256 pages. $15.00. A collection of 108 songs with all the music newly engraved. Dr. Gainer collected the material over a 50-year period, and it represents a major sampling of the people's songs that have persisted in the oral tradition. The book is divided into five major sections, The Child Ballads, Other Ballads and Folk Songs, Choral Singing in the Mountains, Fiddle-tune Songs, and The Negro Contribution. Each section has its own introduction and there are background notes on each song. Bibliography. Title and first-line index.

Witches, Ghosts and Signs: Folklore of the Southern Appalachians. Patrick W. Gainer. Cloth, 192 pages. $7.95. The major portion of this book is a telling of ghost and witching stories passed along in the oral tradition. Additionally, there are illuminating and entertaining sections on The Speech of the Mountaineers, Traditional Activities and Customs, Folk Cures, Nature Lore and Rules for Farming, and Superstitions.

In This Issue

WILLIAM C. BLIZZARD was born at Eskdale (Kanawha Co.) on Cabin Creek on December 22, 1916. Of Scotch-Irish descent, his immediate ancestors became coal miners as the industry attained commercial importance in the late 19th century. He is a graduate of W. Va. University where his major was English literature, and he also studied writing at Columbia University, the New Institute of Cinematography, and the New School for Social Research, all in New York, N.Y. He was a World War II graduate of the U.S. Air Corps (Air Force) school of photography in Denver and spent nearly four years in this country and the South Pacific as a photographer and technician. For some 15 years he wrote for Charleston newspapers and has contributed to a score of national magazines, two encyclopedias, and a London newspaper. His articles, many illustrated, have appeared in business publications and such organs of social observation as *The Nation*, *United Mine Workers Journal*, and *Change*, The Magazine of Higher Education. An article by Blizzard appeared last year in GOLDENSEAL's Vol.1 , No. 2.

MARY LUCILLE DeBERRY is a native of Ritchie County who for the past ten years has been on the staff of WWVU-TV in Morgantown. She is seen regularly on the nightly current events show, *The Mountain Scene Tonight*, where she tends to specialize in the production of history and human interest features. She met Clarence Tross while on a film assignment and wrote her portrait of him that night. She is a Phi Beta Kappa graduate of W. Va. University and received her M.A. degree at the State University of Iowa--writing a thesis on Southern mountain drama. She taught speech and theater courses at Alderson-Broaddus College and did a year of advanced study at Yale University before going into the field of television.

CARL FLEISCHHAUER works as a reporter and photographer for WWVU-TV in Morgantown. A native of Columbus, Ohio, he graduated from Kenyon College and received his M.F.A. from Ohio University. In six years in West Virginia his "extracurricular" work has included the Library of Congress documentary record albumn, *The Hammons Family*, produced in conjunction with Dwight Diller and Alan Jabbour. He has exhibited photographs widely and has won a number of prizes. Fleischhauer is a periodic contributor to GOLDENSEAL.

LAURENCE KARASEK, born in London, England, studied painting at and in 1962 graduated from the Royal Academy with a Leverhulme Traveling Scholarship. Since then he has taught in colleges and universities in England, New Zealand, and this country. His first position here was in Colorado where in 1971 he began teaching at the University of Denver. He was director of the 1975 Appalachian Corridors Biennial Art Exhibition in Charleston. Also he served as associate professor of art at the W. Va. College of Graduate Studies. Recently he was named chariman of the art department at the University of Montana. His wife, Dorrit, is project director of an art therapy program at the Huntington and Spencer State Hospitals.

KIP LORNELL is a student in the graduate program in folklore at the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill. He has been interested in blues and other forms of black music for eight years and went to Chapel Hill "to escape the cold weather in (his native) upstate New York" and to be "in an area more conducive to field research." In 1972 he received a Youthgrant from the National Endowment for the Humanities to conduct research on rural blues in Georgia and the Carolinas. He has been a contributing editor for *Living Blues* magazine and has published articles in such periodicals as *Jazz Journal*, *John Edwards Memorial Foundation Quarterly*, *Blues World*, and *North Carolina Folklore Quarterly*.

J. RODERICK MOORE is a native of Fincastle, Va., and was raised in Welch, W. Va., where he was a student through high school. He received his B.A. degree from Virginia Polytechnic Institute and M.A. from New York State University in the American Folklife Program sponsored by the New York State Historical Association in Cooperstown. He is now associate director of the Blueridge Institute at Ferrum Collete, Ferrum, Va. He has held offices in the Virginia Folklore Society and is on the board of directors of the National Folk Festival Association. He has been a frequent consultant to public agencies and for writers in the field of folk art and crafts, and he has produced both folk music record albums and documentary films. As visiting curator, he has mounted several exhibitions of Southern folk art and crafts.

MARCIA M. SONTHEIMER, a Pittsburgh native, states that she is essentially a self-taught artist yet became seriously involved in art by visiting galleries while living for six years in Heidelburg, Germany. She is currently enrolled in the Board of Regents Degree Program at W. Va. University. She exhibited at a one-artist show at Oglebay Institute in Wheeling and also one presented by the Morgantown Art Association. Her work has often been represented in group shows in northern West Virginia and Pennsylvania. Her pen and ink drawings have appeared in such area publications as *Mountain Review*. Sontheimer is one of the co-founders of the Studio Group in Morgantown.

ALICIA TYLER, a research writer, was born and raised in South Charleston. She attended W. Va. University and W. Va. State College, where she received her B.S. degree in psychology in 1968. During the past decade she has worked in several State agencies, most recently as a research specialist for the Commission on Aging. Tyler's abiding interests are West Virginia folklore and history, and in 1974 she received a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities to conduct an oral history project in West Virginia labor history. Her hobbies include gardening, photography, and tracking down good storytellers.

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State Capitol
Charleston, West Virginia 25305

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED