Goldenseal

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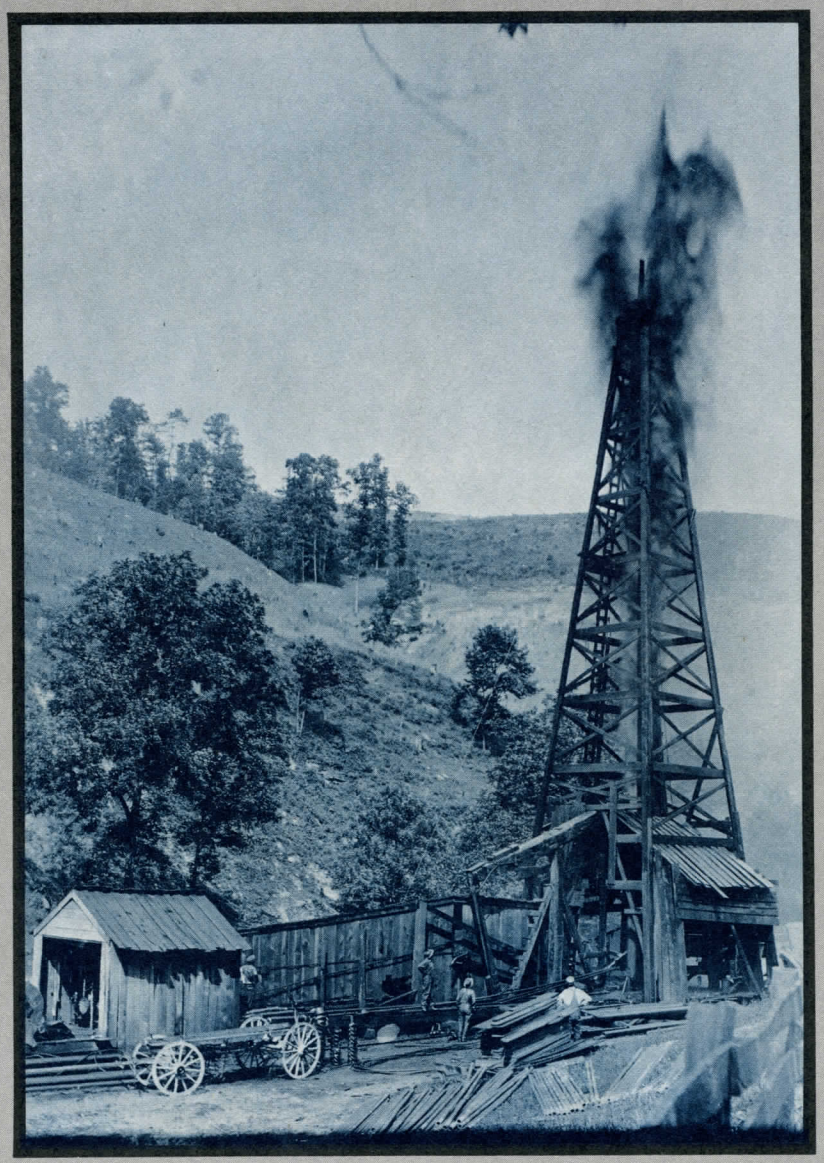

The Early 20th Century Oil and Gas Boom

Auburn, 1913-1929 • Teaming with Horses and Wagons •

Ritchie County Oil Man

A New Look at the Beginnings of Mothers Day

Goldenseal

A Quarterly Forum for Documenting West Virginia's Traditional Life

Published by the

STATE OF WEST VIRGINIA

John D. Rockefeller, IV
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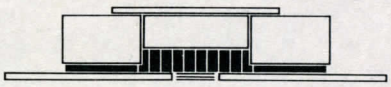

through its
Department of Culture and History

Norman L. Fagan *Commissioner*

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Phone 304-348-0220.

COVER: The first oil well near Coxs Mill [Gilmer County] drilled by Ira D. Cox in 1917 on the farm of Claude Bowyer. Photograph by Perry Cox.

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Current: PROGRAMS • FESTIVALS • PUBLICATIONS

University's Mountaineer Week

The West Virginia University Student Foundation will present the 30th Annual Mountaineer Week November 6 through 12. Mountaineer Week is the work of over 300 University students aiming to rekindle "West Virginia's spirits and traditions." Forty-three exhibits are planned for the four-day Arts and Crafts Fair with 75 craftspersons displaying their work which, among others, include tole painting, leather crafting, quilting, weaving, pottery making, and wood carving.

A student arts and crafts exhibition is also to be held, enabling younger members of the University community to display their talents. This fair has increased in size and popularity each year, and this year a new dimension is to be added. Daily workshops will be held for those interested in learning more about pottery making and other crafts.

Other events of Mountaineer Week include a quilt show to be held at Elizabeth Moore Hall, a muzzle-loading rifle demonstration on the Evansdale Campus November 12, an old-time and bluegrass fiddlers contest at the Creative Arts Center November 12, and student-oriented contests of doughnut eating, beer chugging, tobacco spitting, and beard growing.

For more information write or call the West Virginia University Student Foundation, P.O. Box 894, Morgantown, WV 26505. Phone 304-296-8251.

Logan County History

A limited-edition history of Logan County has been published by Robert Spence, a native son. The hard-bound book called *The Land of the Guyandot* is the first history written about the county in 48 years. Nearly 600 pages, it contains 200 photographs and 4 maps. The book traces the growth of Logan County from Indian and early pioneer settlements through industrial development and expansion and relates how all have affected the land surrounded by the Guyandot River. The author quotes many earlier writings and records the reminiscences of several of the county's older citizens.

Robert Spence is a newspaperman who is a descendant of one of the first German settlers in Logan County. You may order *The Land of the Guyandot* from Robert Spence, 147 Justice Ave., Logan, WV 25601. The cost is $25.00.

WVU Folklore Courses

Undergraduates at West Virginia University may enroll in four folklore courses offered in the Department of English. Courses in the Introduction to Folklore (140); Regional and Occupational Folklore (141); Folk Literature: The Ballad (240); and the Folklore of the Southern Appalachian Region (241) provide both range and depth for students wishing to learn about oral tradition and folkloristics.

Two new options became available beginning with the fall term of 1977. In addition to supervised collecting experience, students enrolled in any of the four courses may choose to engage in the development of an archive and computerized retrieval system. A second option for students is to produce and contribute to a proposed folklore newsletter, *Ridgerunner,* which students hope to issue monthly. Features will include a calendar of festivals and workshops, interviews, and record and book reviews. Students currently working on *Ridgerunner* ask anyone with pertinent information to send it to *Ridgerunner,* c/o Dr. Barry Ward, Department of English, West Virginia University, Morgantown, WV 26506.

There's a New Parent for the Heritage Trunk

By Dolly Sherwood

The key word is "trunk" as the Department of Culture and History announces the adoption of a five-year-old "child," the West Virginia Heritage Trunk program. The takeover signals the start for the first out-reach program undertaken by the newly formed Department of Culture and History under Commissioner Norman Fagan.

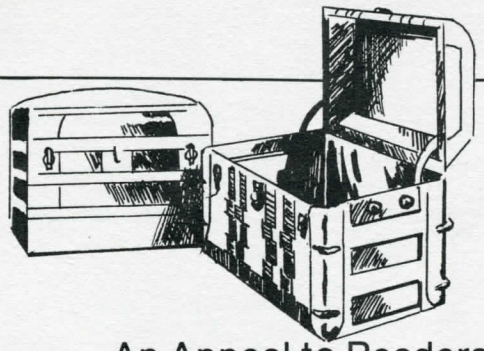
Funded originally in 1972 by the West Virginia Arts and Humanities Council for The Children's Museum of Sunrise, Inc. in cooperation with the West Virginia Department of Education, the project was designed to supplement and enhance West Virginia Studies curriculum throughout the State.

Antique camel-back trunks that travel to the classroom contain clothing to be tried on, a dulcimer, puppets, a quilting project, toys, letters, and documents, all representing the daily lives of everyday people who might have lived in West Virginia's first decade or thereabouts. A Teacher's Guide prescribes 36 roles so each student can assume the identity of someone who played a part in West Virginia's heritage.

The West Virginia Heritage Trunk program has enjoyed national recognition and attention as an innovative way of making history come to life. The program was most recently publicized in an article in the *Smithsonian* magazine of June, 1977.

Lynn Budde is coordinator for the West Virginia Heritage Trunk under its new parentage at the Department of Culture and History. The extended concept includes a trunk for each of the State's counties, so that every eighth grader will have an opportunity to participate in the program.

There is also the potential for adding new spice with the ingredients of local history. Local residents may want to share something of their heritage or their skills in the old crafts with the eighth graders of their county. Letters and documents can be specific to each county as well.



An Appeal to Readers

Do you have or know where there is a camel-back trunk from the turn of the century or before? They should measure 36" in length to accommodate a dulcimer. They need not be in A-1 condition, for willing hands will restore them. If you are able to help locate a trunk, contact Lynn Budde, Department of Culture and History, Science and Culture Center, State Capitol, Charleston, WV 25305, or phone 304-348-0220.

But, first, the trunks must be garnered from attic, basement, or barn before the project can be realized. "If you have an old camel-back trunk, which measures approximately 36 inches in length, 20 inches or thereabouts in height that you are willing to give on behalf of your county, sing out," says Lynn Budde. "The pecking order of progression—or which county gets its trunk first—will be established on a first-come, first-served basis."

Aware that this is no small order, Ms. Budde is confident that there will be a ground swell in the grass roots so that restoration and development of the trunks can move quickly. Lydia McCue, Social Studies Specialist for the West Virginia Department of Education is hoping for an enthusiastic take off and a quick response. "We are constantly getting requests for the Trunk program from our eighth grade teachers. West Virginia Studies needs this material urgently," she says, and adds with her own sense of urgency, "I hope there will be a deluge of trunks."

Dolly Sherwood wrote and developed The West Virginia Heritage Trunk program and is currently acting as planner-adviser to the Department of Culture and History.

A Glimpse at the Early 20th Century Oil and Gas Boom
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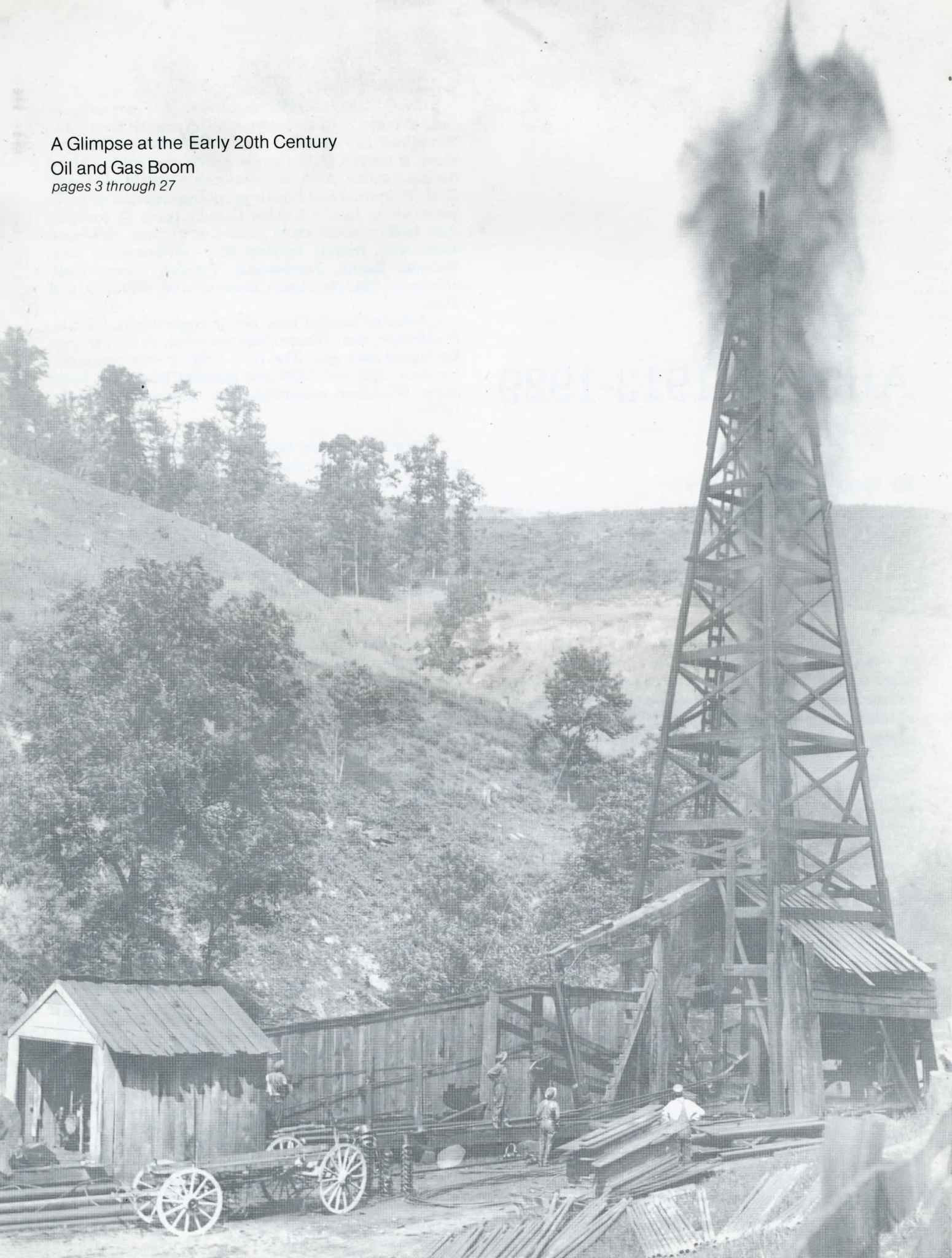


Auburn, 1913-1929

By Mary Lucille DeBerry
Photographs by Perry Cox and Gary Simmons

"I don't think Auburn has decreased or increased in size. To me, almost every house is there that was there when I was a child. But in the first part of this century, the town of Auburn was a community that absolutely depended on itself for its existence, its pleasures, its prosperity, or its failure. Hundreds of little communities at that time were self-sustaining. What made Auburn unique was the people who lived there."

Lucille Cox DeBerry

"In the mid-1920s, at the height of the oil and gas drilling, Auburn was really booming. There was a bank, a post office, two hotels, a garage, a movie, a confectionary, two barber shops, two general stores, a furniture store, a lumber mill, the photo gallery, a doctor, and three blacksmith shops. It's sad, today, when you think about what a bustling little place it was 50 years ago."

Winnifred Brown Scott

TWO LONG-TIME residents of Harrisville in Ritchie County where kinship counts for a lot—Winnifred Brown Scott and Lucille Cox DeBerry—share a couple of the same ancestors making them double cousins. Another relationship also binds them. Both Winnifred and Lucille spent impressionable early years living in the Ritchie County town of Auburn. And both possess vivid memories of their childhood there with friends bearing such surnames as Bee, Britton, Burns, Farnsworth, Fiddler, Gluck, Hall, Hardman, Sinnett, Smith, Sommerville, Williams, and Zinn.

Auburn, located near the triangle where Ritchie, Doddridge, and Gilmer Counties meet, is best known for its oil and gas. The first drilling was sometime between 1885 and 1890 and resulted in several large wells. Winnifred remembers the later drilling of the 1920s.

Winnifred Brown Scott. At its biggest Auburn had about 190, 200 residents in addition to the drillers, men working on pipelines, and teamsters hauling in equipment for the wells and supplies for the stores.

About 1926 the drilling slacked off and the pipelines were installed. In 1927 they graded the road from Pullman to Auburn and there were a lot of road builders in town. Then by 1929 the boom was over.

Winnifred's father used to say, "Everyone needs some Bone Creek water in the spring and in the fall." Bone Creek was the name of the original settlement. It had another name, Newberg, until 1872 when it was finally called Auburn. Winnifred tells about the first settlers.

WBS In 1834, three men came to Bone Creek. Timothy Tharp, Andrew Law, and Robert Sommerville all came from Harrison County. Timothy Tharp was the first miller, had the first store, and ran a tannery. Andrew Law was the first postmaster, and Robert Sommerville must have just farmed. All still have a very few descendants living in or near the town.

Schools

A native of Auburn, Winnifred was born in a house at the upper end of town toward Cox's Mill. In 1917, when she was three years old, her parents bought a farm below Auburn toward Pullman and Berea. They lived there briefly before moving to Moundsville. The Browns came back for visits and then moved back home in 1922 in time for her to begin the second grade at the Auburn School.

WBS Within a radius of three miles there were four schools besides Auburn—Big Run, Hall School, Sunrise and Moonrise—and some of those schools would have more than 30 students. So there were a lot of people living out in the country too.

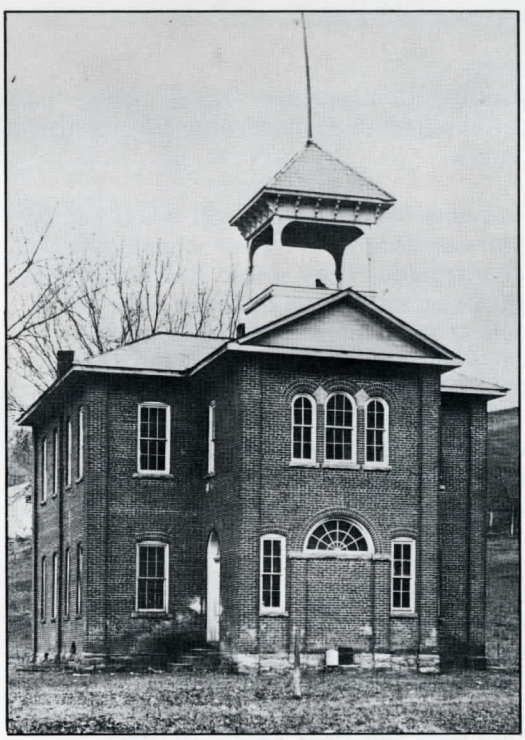
Winnifred Brown and Lucille Cox were Auburn playmates in 1917 when they sat for a photograph in Perry Cox's studio.

Lucille came to Auburn in 1913 when she was seven years old and lived there, during the week, for five school terms.

Lucille Cox DeBerry. I went to school in Auburn because on the farm where I lived I either had to go to Holbrook and walk a little over a mile or go to Summers and walk a little over a mile. My great-grandmother and my father someway thought I was a frail child so it was arranged, instead of walking a mile in the mud every day, that I would go to Auburn and live with my Aunt Rose and Uncle Perry Cox. They didn't have any children and they rather liked me, and I had spent a good bit of time with them.

One thing about the community of Auburn was the interest in education. Everybody in Auburn sent their children to grade school, and almost everybody in Auburn sent their children to high school in Harrisville or Pennsboro. That was much the same as sending them away to college because parents had to provide room and board for their children. They couldn't turn them out in the open streets. They either had to rent a place where they could live or arrange for them to stay with relatives. They couldn't travel over a dirt road to Auburn every day, and of course school buses were unheard of. Now at one time—and that was after I left Auburn—they did have a year or two years of high school in the school building over there, but they never had a full, four-year high school.

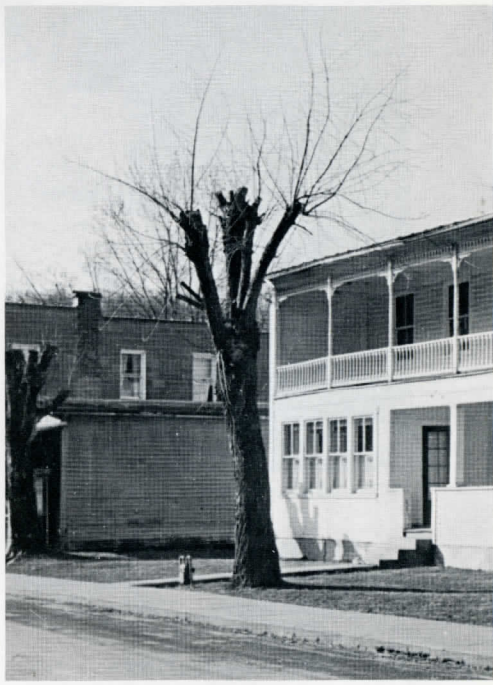
Education was very, very important to the people of Auburn. I think that's because outstanding people had come into the community who provided an inspiration for good education.



The Auburn School was built about 1890. The first six grades were taught downstairs. Most students were eager to get upstairs for the seventh, eighth, and ninth grades and, for a few years, the second year of high school. Photograph ca. 1920.

Below. Lucille Cox stands to the right of her teacher Hazel Goff Perrin in this picture of first and second graders for the 1913-14 school year at Auburn. Both Mrs. Perrin and Audrey Law Calhoun, who taught these children in the fourth grade, still live in Ritchie County.

Center. The Smith Hotel stayed open for a number of years after the 1920s oil boom and still stands. It is now a Methodist parsonage. Photograph by Gary Simmons.



The Economy

The inclination to associate "rural" with "poverty" has to be avoided when discussing the Auburn of Winnifred's youth.

WBS Everyone was fairly well off when I lived there. They were drilling in everyone's backyard and all over the countryside. They would finish one well and start right in on another one. There were but a very few people around there that didn't make money in some way from the drilling. They either had wells on their farms, or they had their land leased from which they'd get a pretty good amount of money. Sometimes the companies never drilled on someone's farm, but they paid as big as $300 to $400 a year just to lease the land in case they wanted to drill on it.

She recalls overhearing a group of women planning how to help someone at Christmas time. And they could find only one family that needed anything! Lucille concurs and speaks of earlier days.

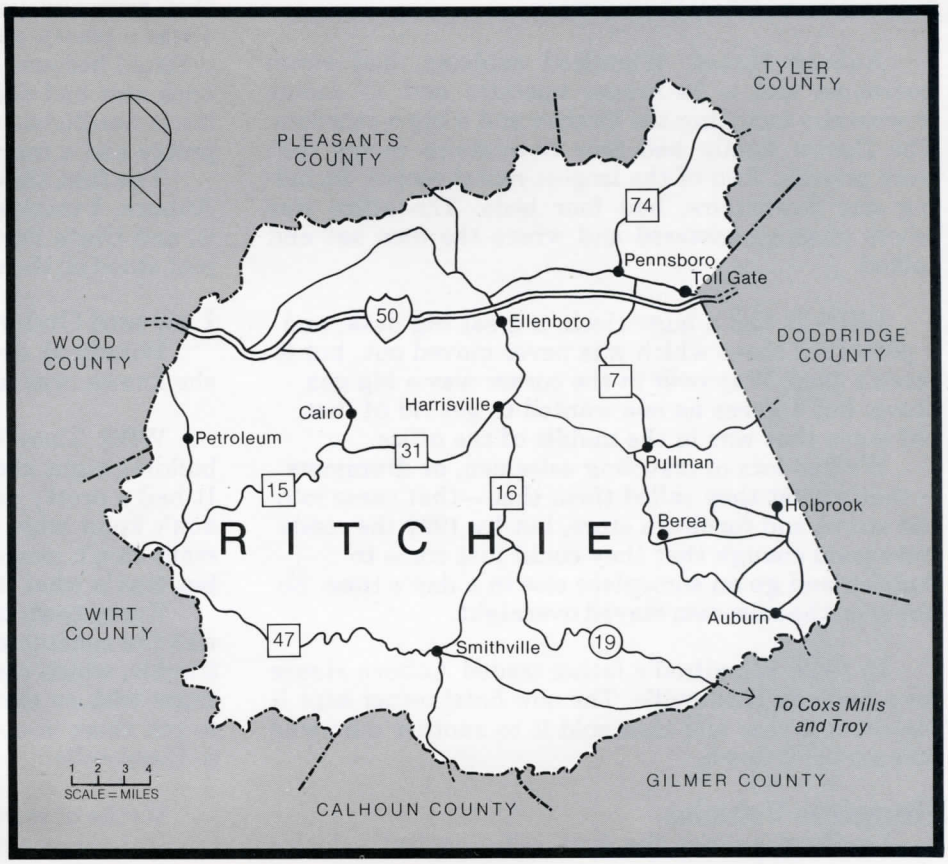
LCD There were few poor people in town. Everybody had enough to eat. Some people had nicer clothes than the others, but I don't think there were any real, real poor people. And I don't know where in the world they made their money. At that point it was before the oil and gas boom of the '20s. I just don't know what they had for cash income—and they had some. I'm sure, for instance, that they paid Uncle Perry cash for pictures [he had taken for them]. Everybody seemed very, very busy, but I don't think people worked away from home.

Most of the people around Auburn did have little farms that went out into the hills. They brought their corn and their wheat into the mill and got it ground into flour or meal. I can't think of anyone who didn't at least have a vegetable garden. You just raised everything you ate. You brined it or pickled it or canned it. You dried a lot of things, beans and corn.

The families produced almost everything they needed. You had your own hogs and cured your own meat. You had plenty of pork. You had your own chickens. Some people had geese and ducks. If you didn't grow geese and ducks, you could buy them or trade for them. They'd kill lambs and beef. Almost everyone had their own beef.

You did have to buy salt and sugar, and you bought oranges. Oranges, at the time, were a real treat. You usually had oranges at Christmastime.

I think, if people had any money to spend, they'd spend it for dishes or glassware. The stores in Auburn carried lovely things. They carried beautiful china dolls and nice toys at Christmastime and piece goods because almost everybody made their own clothes. It was very rare to get a nice boughten dress



from Sears and Roebuck.

Hotels

Winnifred's family ran one of the town's two hotels, Auburn House, from 1923 until 1929. It was built during the early drilling.

WBS I've tracked it back to 1888 and that's probably when V. A. Powell built the hotel. At least ten people owned it before Dad bought it in 1923. Most hotels in small towns were just houses where they had a few extra rooms. This was strictly a hotel.

When we had the hotel, it was hard to find enough room in Auburn to keep all these people. From one end of town to the other, on each side, there would be wagons parked of a night. They'd get into town, and of course that meant finding places for everyone. They just had to stay in private houses. And they used the barns for their horses. Most people then naturally had a barn.

I can remember when the Smith Hotel [the town's other hotel] added on. It was a house, and they added on eight or nine rooms. There was sort of an agreement between my father, Emery Brown, and Port Smith and his son Bryan, who owned that hotel later. Both hotels were almost in the center of town on opposite sides of the street. Smith's used the upper end of town. The people would rent rooms to them and let them use the barns. And the lower end of town we used. Everyone had a bedroom all ready—every night—everyone that had an extra place. A lot of drillers stayed out in farm homes too.

Floss Brown, Winnifred's mother, was in charge of lunches for the men who stayed in their territory.

WBS They packed 70 pails in one night. I don't know how many times, but that's the most they could remember packing. Mom always had at least four, maybe five, girls working and I think they worked the clock around.

I can't remember when there wasn't someone in that big kitchen. They had two stoves, each with eight burners, and they had the warming tile in an extra room off the kitchen. There were always pies. Mary Drain worked at the hotel, and she was a great pie baker. Mary, I think, baked pies all day long. Most men preferred pies to cakes.

In the winter they couldn't count on the mail getting in from Parkersburg with the bread. One time the weather was so bad that the mail didn't come for two or three days, and apparently the bread must have been old to start with. They were in great, big, tall boxes—48 loaves of bread. Dad opened the first box, and he said, "This doesn't smell good." They started opening it, and it had just all gone bad. He sent it all back! Anyway, when the

bread appeared like that, they had to rush over to Gluck's Store and get flour and yeast and start making bread for all those people.

Auburn House, Winnifred explains, had seven bedrooms and a bathroom upstairs and 11 rooms downstairs including the kitchen and a big washroom. The Brown family had four downstairs rooms that were private. Two of the largest rental rooms, including one downstairs, had four beds. The office was where guests registered and where the men sat and talked.

WBS It had a huge clock, a great big desk, and a potbellied stove which was never moved out, but it wasn't used. Way over in the corner was a big gas stove, but I guess no one wanted to get rid of that old stove that was in the middle of the office.

We had lots of traveling salesmen, or drummers —that's what they called them then—that came into the stores and furniture store, but by 1929 the roads were good enough that they could just come to Auburn and go on someplace else in a day's time. So not even the salesmen stayed overnight.

In 1929, Winnifred's father traded Auburn House for a home in Harrisville. The new hotel owner kept it for about a year and then sold it to another man who tore part of it down.

Horseless Vehicles

Lucille describes the first self-propelled vehicles she saw in Auburn.

LCD The first horseless carriage [about 1913] was a little electric buggy. Frankie and Bruce Watson lived in the upper end of town right around the church. She was the most stylish woman in town. She had the prettiest clothes. He was tall and thin, and I don't have the slightest idea what he did unless he carried the mail someplace. Anyway, they got this little electric buggy, and they would drive it up and down through Auburn.

They both wore dusters. He wore a cap and goggles, and she wore a big wide-brimmed hat with a blue veil tied over it. They both sat up real tall and straight and went up and down the streets of Auburn.

Now, the streets of Auburn were dust in the summertime and mud in the wintertime, and they had stepping stones that stuck up, and the wagon wheels could go between the stones. When there were wagons going up and down and buggies going up and down, they splashed mud on the stones. Then they were slick on top, and there were a lot of disasters in stepping across the stones. One day, I stepped on a stepping stone that had mud on it and kerplunk! Right down in the middle of the mud I went! I was a mess from top to toe and had to go back home and get scrubbed up.

In 1914, I expect, my father had the first [gasoline powered] automobile, a Model T Ford, and it was beautiful. It was a model that came without the front doors. I never got to ride up front because they were always afraid I was going to fall out. Now, I was a pretty good-sized kid, and I was quite deflated because I had to sit in the back seat. The back seat had doors. The Model T had great big brass headlights on it that I thought were very, very pretty and a funny, a very peculiar sounding horn.

The first time my father drove it down through Auburn, I think everybody in town went out to see it, and Uncle Perry took a picture of that. People just stood on the street and watched it go along.

Law and Order

Winnifred describes one building that, as far as she knows, was never used.

WBS There was a jail. It was a little tiny building right above Mr. Williams' blacksmith shop. It had a pretty good-sized window in the front, and I don't know what kind of bars, but it had bars. I really don't remember of anyone being in that jail, but that's what it was for.

Every town had a constable. Ralph Sommerville was the constable in Auburn. Maybe if they had any trouble, which could have been possible during those times with so many people there, maybe it was just to put them in overnight till they could bring them to Harrisville.

Myths of rowdy men and a bawdy nightlife are ill-founded concerning Auburn.

WBS Well, the men that worked on the wells worked 12 hours and sometimes longer if something went wrong. With that kind of work, they just came into the hotels and mostly went to bed and slept and got up and went back. The teamsters, too, were worn out when they'd come from those long drives they'd make, particularly in the winter fighting through the mud and snow. And a lot of these men worked on the pipeline. They had a bonus of some kind. The quicker they could get through, the more they earned. They would work 18, 20 hours a day. I think they were all just too tired to cause any commotion.

Really, I just don't remember much of anything unruly. Sometimes in somebody's barn they played some poker, but outside of that there just never was any trouble. There wasn't any place to buy anything to drink except some place over in Gilmer County up a hollow around Cox's Mill where, occasionally when I was old enough, I'd hear it said that someone went over to a certain place to get some moonshine, but, for everything that was going on, it was a very quiet place.

Professions

Lucille and Winnifred both remember traveling dentists, but different ones. They do, however, recall the same doctors.

LCD I remember the dentists coming. Dr.

Left. Javan Bush (fourth from left) was owner and operator of Auburn House from 1912 until 1914. This is a postcard reproduction of an original photograph taken about 1913.

Below. Ira Cox, who lived on a farm five miles from Auburn, drove the first Model T Ford into town in 1914. Among the buildings in the background—along with a gas street light, wooden sidewalks, and a gas line on the street—are the first bank building, Auburn House, and the Gluck Store.

Stoops from Pennsboro and his son were the dentists, and they came and stayed a whole week. Everybody in town had dental work done then, mainly teeth pulled. My first filling probably was done by Dr. Stoops.

WBS In the fall, or maybe in the spring, Dr. Clem Morris came from Smithville to Auburn House. He would stay three months to do dental work in the big room downstairs. You wouldn't have that much to do in one small town, so that's the way the dentists did years ago. They would go around from place to place and stay three or four months.

One time Dora Gluck brought her son Joe to get something done, and he wasn't very happy about it. His mother went back to talk to my mother, and Dad was in there. Doc was getting ready to grind, and Joe kept scooting down and down. And Dad got the biggest kick out of it. Doc said, "You might as well sit still 'cause I'll get you when you get on the floor anyway."

LCD There were two doctors in Auburn, Dr. N. E. Eddy and Dr. J. C. Lawson. They were marvelous men. They must have been good doctors because they evidently saved a lot of lives, and people had a lot of confidence in them. They were very important people, the doctors.

WBS Dr. Lawson came sometime before 1900 because he died, I think, in the 1940s and he was in Auburn over 50 years. He married an Auburn girl, Minta Bush. He was the first doctor we ever had there who had been to medical school. He was the old-type doctor who went wherever he was called, any place at any time.

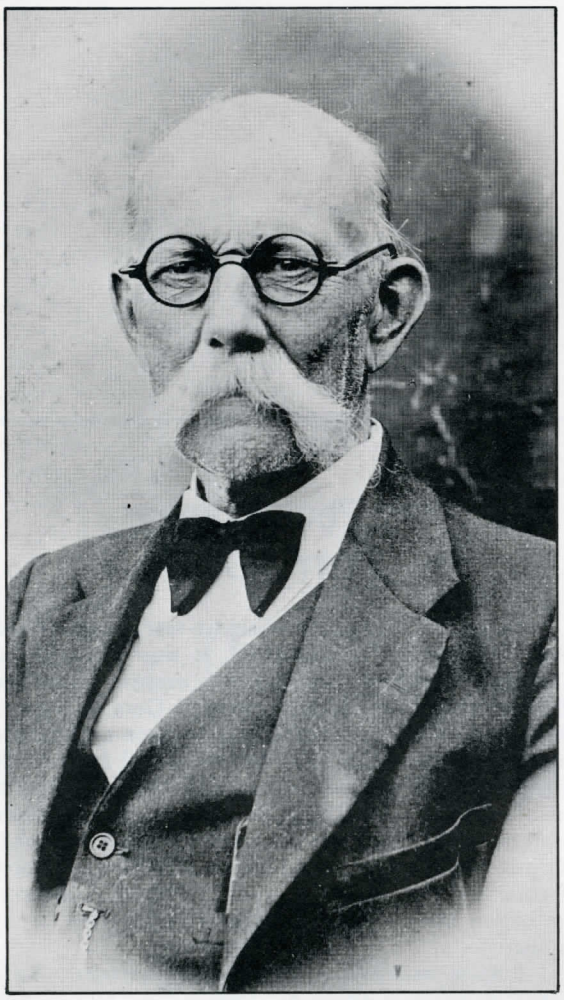
Dr. Eddy was there, I think, about 1910 until 1918. Later, in the '20s, I can remember Dr. Harlan.

LCD They had doctors and school teachers, but they didn't have a lawyer. They had some people that did surveying. They had some people that wrote wills and some people who drew up some deeds. They were not always just exactly legal, and they caused the attorneys in the county seat of Harrisville an awful lot of trouble in later years, trying to decipher or figure out what these men were doing when they wrote the wills and the deeds and made the surveys. But it was a very independent community.

Occupations

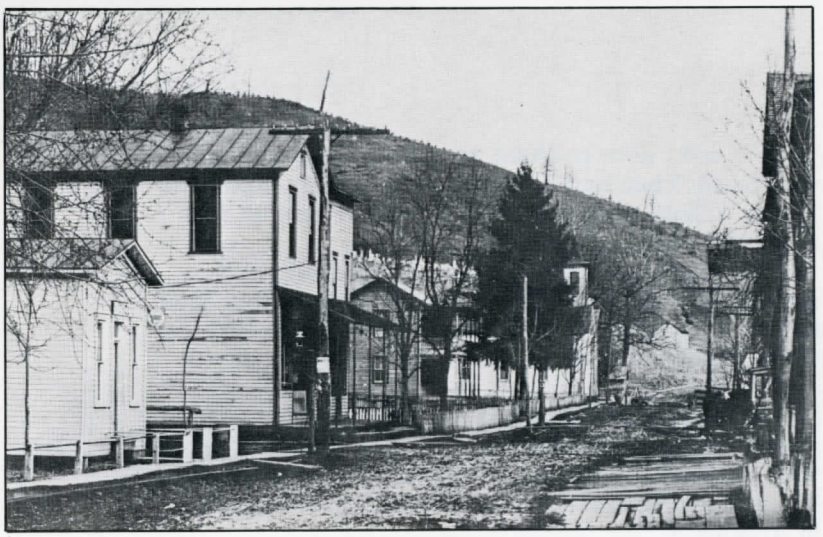
Lucille explained how she spent her time as a child.

Horses, standing in front of the building Perry Cox would later use for a photo studio, are decked out in lanterns. Photograph ca. 1920 by John Hall, an Auburn resident.



Left. J. C. Lawson, M.D., an 1883 graduate of Jefferson Medical College in Philadelphia, served the community of Auburn for half a century.

Below. The main street of Auburn ca. 1905. From left to right, Bee's Barber Shop, Amos Furniture Store (later Perry Cox's Furniture Store), Gluck House (later the Smith Hotel), the Methodist Episcopal Church, and the jail.



LCD I watched people work. I watched them make things. I watched Uncle Perry take pictures. I watched Aunt Rose trim hats, and every once in a while I watched Aunt Kate Ward trim hats too. And I watched Dora Westfall fit dresses on people. I don't know why; I just seemed to be interested in what they were doing.

They had two hat shops in Auburn. My Aunt Rose had one hat shop. Maybe that's the reason I've always liked hats so much. They came in boxes, and they didn't have any trim on them. They were just the big straw hats, leghorns, and great big wide-brimmed hats. Then the flowers and the feathers and all the trimming came in separate boxes. I always got to look and see. Little diagrams came along with them to show how to make hats, and how to trim hats, and how to fold them up on one side and let them slant on the other.

But she had a rival in the millinery business. Aunt Kate Ward lived just down the street two or three doors, and Aunt Kate was pretty good at decorating hats too. Aunt Kate carried a few other items of clothing in her little store. Aunt Rose never had anything but hats, but she did sell some pretty hats. She did that in between operating the telephone switchboard.

Then the dressmaker Dora Westfall lived up what we called "the alley." She made beautiful dresses for a lot of people, just lovely dresses. If you'd show her a picture, she would make it. She made all my fussy little dresses after my great-grandmother didn't sew any more.

WBS And we had a piano teacher, Lilly Tharp Allman. Everyone came from all over. I met a lady at Glenville who lived way over on Bear Run, and she rode horseback from over there once a week to take her piano lessons from Lilly Allman.

Lucille was intrigued by the individuality of the people in Auburn, particularly the businessmen.

LCD There were a lot of characters. Everybody in Auburn was a character. Now, I just know they were!

Next to the hotel was the Gluck Store—run first by Joseph Gluck and then, when I remember, by Howard Gluck. He always made jokes, and children loved him. And he told good stories. The men liked him and the men sat around his store a great deal. It was a pretty nice store; they carried a lot of nice merchandise. Later Mr. Gluck's brother-in-law Walter Sommerville bought an interest, and it became the Gluck and Sommerville Store.

The Rymer Store was across from the blacksmith's shop and Lewis Rymer was the dearest man. He carried such lovely china and glassware and real stylish clothes for women.

Mr. Rymer and his wife Dell lived next door to

us, and next door to them were Mr. Gluck and his wife Dora. Then on the other side were Mr. and Mrs. Hayes Elliott who ran the bank. They were all real nice neighbors.

Mr. Zed Bee had the barber shop. The most gorgeous collection of barber bottles was on his shelf in just a little bitty office building where he did all the haircuts and shaves and the barber work.

According to Winnifred, Mr. Ed Bee had a blacksmith shop as did Casper Allman and Amos Williams, who followed the same trade as his father and grandfather, making him the third generation of blacksmith in Auburn.

LCD We used to stop on our way to school and watch Mr. Williams shoe horses. And there was, down in the lower end of town toward Berea, a grist mill where you took corn and wheat to get it ground into flour. [The miller, J. K. P. Connolly, later converted it into a lumber mill.]

We've forgotten Albert Britton! He was a terrific cabinet maker and a builder. He could construct anything. He built beautiful furniture. He had great knowledge of engineering because he built the Auburn Methodist Church, and they said he couldn't do it, that it wouldn't be possible for a church to have an arch across the way the Auburn Methodist Church has. Many of the new modern buildings have that same big wooden arch all the way across to hold up the roof.

Now, one of the most interesting places was the harness shop. Uncle Nal Hardman (whose name was really Ernally) had the Harness Shop, and it was just a fascinating place. He had all types of bright shiny rings and things you put on the harness. He made very well-made and ornate harnesses and saddles trimmed with all types of celluloid. I think colored celluloid is what they had in those days. It was way before plastic but it looked like plastic. And the bright shiny brass knobs that were on the hames were just beautiful; they were solid brass. He had children of his own, about my age, and he didn't mind people around. No one ever seemed to mind me around if I stayed out of the way.

Organizations

The first organizations in Auburn were religious

The Photographer
Perry Cox

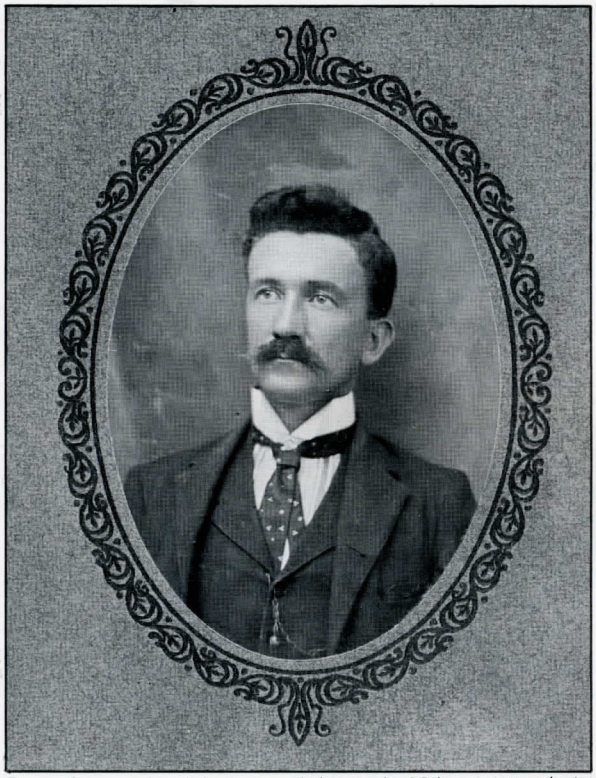
To Lucille, the place where he worked was Uncle Perry's Studio. To Winnifred, it was Cox's Photo Gallery. Winnifred was told by a cousin, Mona Cox Reaser, that Perry's older brother George went to Texas when he was young and became a photographer. When he came back to Cox's Mill for a while, Perry worked with him. George then decided to return to Texas and sold or gave his photography equipment to Perry, saying it would cost too much to ship it and that he would buy new cameras back in Texas. By that time, Perry was living in Auburn so he began working in the little building next to his house.

Lucille watched a great many pictures being taken in front of the same background and usually with people seated on one of two little available chairs.

LCD It seems to me, looking back, there were always people having their pictures taken. He used a camera with a black cloth over it that he hid behind and told you to smile and you didn't always smile. It might have been a little scary for a child. It was an old foldy-up accordian camera that stood on a tripod. When he got ready he put a glass plate in and stood behind the cloth and took the picture.

He did his own developing, and his fingers rather bothered me. They were always stained with the chemicals from developing. The ends of his fingers were always brown, just real brown.

Uncle Perry dabbled in other enterprises too. I remember right after he bought the furniture store and the undertaking establishment from W. H. Amos, somebody's baby died and Uncle Perry had this funeral. He came in and he was all upset and distressed and he said, "Now listen, this undertaking



Perry Cox made all but one of the early 20th century photographs accompanying this article.

business is not for me, and I'm not gonna do another job." As far as I know he never did.

He was evidently a pretty good photographer. Not only did he work in his studio but he went out and took pictures of picnics and reunions and weddings and many happenings in the community. —*M.L.D.*

ones. Methodist Episcopal and Baptist congregations built churches in the 1840s. Two later churches shared the same building, the United Brethren and the Methodist Protestant [M. P.]. The M. P. church had burned, but both Winnifred and Lucille remember the M. P. parsonage where the Reverend Emery Burns lived for 16 years.

Patriotic groups were popular. Although the Veterans of the Grand Army of the Republic had discontinued their Auburn chapter, the Sons of the Veterans remained active well into the 20th century.

The town of Auburn had at least two bands. Brooks Fleming directed a brass band in the '20s, or before, and Fred Wilt conducted another one in the early '30s.

Three lodges had chapters in Auburn: the Modern Woodmen, the Maccabees, and the oldest group, the Knights of Pythias. Their hall was over the Gluck and Sommerville Store and their emblem is still visible on the old building. Winnifred remembers attending one Knights of Pythias event.

WBS I realized a long time afterwards that when Matthew M. Neely, who was born over at Cove [District of Doddridge County], was there for this one big oyster fry that he was a United States Senator, but I never heard anyone say that at the time. He was in the kitchen with Rose Cox and Nell Sommerville and my mother helping fry the oysters. He had a big white apron on. He was having the time of his life, and everyone seemed to know him but didn't seem to be impressed because he was a senator. Apparently he belonged to that lodge, maybe not the one there in town but some place, because he did come several times.

Recreation

Ice cream was a grand attraction to the children of Auburn. Winnifred says she will never forget the chocolate sodas at the confectionary.

WBS And in summer, before we had a confectionary, Ralph Sommerville always made homemade ice cream and sold it up in the furniture store in a little room.

LCD The ice cream came every Saturday in big freezers. It was opened up, and you bought an ice cream cone for a nickle. We all stood in line to get

our ice cream—every kid in Auburn and all the kids up and down the road.

Mrs. Pearcy used to bring all her children. Mrs. Pearcy just fascinated me. She reminded me of the old woman who lived in the shoe. She was a beautiful woman. She wore big leghorn hats, and she drove a buggy with two very fast horses. She would come trotting those horses up through Auburn, and she had these children with her. There were children in the seat and children hanging on the back of the buggy and children standing up as they dashed up through town every Saturday to buy things at the store and to get the kids ice cream . . . .

I played paper dolls because June Elliott got *McCalls* magazine every month, and it had paper dolls in it. I would sit on her porch on the proper day and wait until she came from the bank with her *McCalls* magazine, and she would open it up, sit down, and pull out a whole page of that doll.

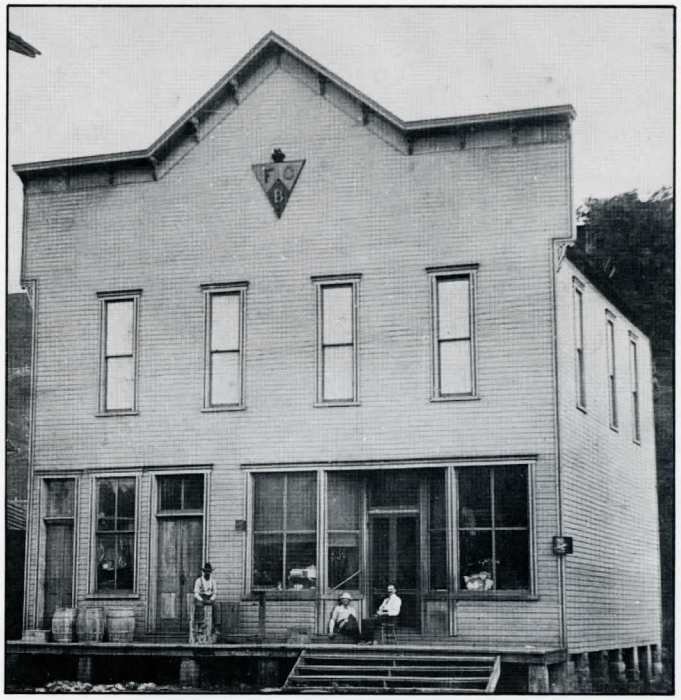
We went to church; we went to Sunday school. The schools had literary programs and debates. You met around in houses and played music, banjo, guitar, fiddle, and sang.

You played hide and go seek, you hiked, you skated. You coasted in the winter, you went swimming in the summer. There was a swimming hole down below town. We never thought about not having anything to do! You had to do some work. You had to wash a few dishes and set the table and do a few errands. And of course the men sat around and told stories. There were no places where you could not go or where you could not be seen.

Oh, I must tell you about going to my first play. My first play was in Auburn and it was up in the lodge hall over Howard Gluck's Store. It was *Uncle Tom's Cabin.* They brought in benches, not very good benches, but benches. The place was full, and they had hound dogs and they were chasing Eliza over the ice! It was very dramatic, and I was just really excited over it, and I think everybody else was too. They took Little Eva up to heaven, and they pulled her up on a wire and the wire got stuck, and she fluttered and flopped around, and they couldn't get her up and they couldn't get her down. They put the play on without a curtain, and the men had to go up and unhook Little Eva and bring her down manually, and she just never got to heaven. I remember the hound dogs; they howled so ferociously while we were up in that little room. But that's the only play that I can remember seeing in Auburn. There wasn't a theatre at that time.

Winnifred remembers a movie theatre and athletic events.

WBS The theatre, I think, began about 1924. It was in the upstairs over the Farnsworth Garage. Mark Farnsworth started it. Mark wasn't well, and soon Rose and Perry Cox rented the whole thing and ran the movies. There was a player piano there, and their foster daughter, Alda, played the piano



The Gluck store and Knights of Pythias lodge hall (top floor) served also as a community center.

between reels. Back then there would be a reel, and then they had to wind and rewind and had this little bit of time. The piano was up front, and Alda always played it—mostly waltzes and "The American Patrol" and a few patriotic rolls that were on it.

The one thing that I remember the best was a serial, and the name of it was *The Masked Rider.* That went on for at least three months, and no one would miss going to the movie on Saturday night . . . they wanted to know who the masked rider was.

Finally, just when it was almost over, I remember my mother and Nell Sommerville deciding that it was the girl. I thought, "Oh! That's ridiculous." But it turned out to be the girl! It cost ten cents to see a movie, for everyone, and there was always an intermission about halfway through. I think the movie ran until about 1929.

When we first came back from Moundsville, Auburn had a baseball team. They played right above the farm where we lived. The Jim Sommerville Bottom it was called. That's where one of the big wells was drilled in the 1800s. You could hear that hissing for years. I don't know whether they ever capped that or not. But there was a big meadow there where they played ball. Later they played up in Auburn, from about '26 until the '30s. They really had a good ball team. They had players from around Conings and Troy, including an outstanding pitcher, Perry McQuain. The Gilmer County men would play with Auburn rather than their own because Auburn had such a good team. They played all over the

The main street of Auburn today. Photograph by Gary Simmons.

country, and people followed them around wherever they went to play.

Before I left, tennis was the craze. When I moved to Harrisville, there wasn't any tennis, not a tennis court in Harrisville, but there were at least three in Auburn. One was right in the middle of town. Talmage Sommerville had a tennis court and J. S. Goode had a tennis court. After we moved to Harrisville, I just wanted to be back home in Auburn as much as I could to play tennis.

Auburn Today

Even though most of the homes are occupied, Winnifred comments on the lack of business and commerce.

WBS There's one store where the second bank building used to be. That building was remodeled and that's the only store. All the other businesses are gone. I guess the people who live there work someplace else. I expect some of the women work in the garment factories in Harrisville and Pennsboro, and I don't know what the men do because you can't make a living, an actual living, on a farm anymore.

Auburn no longer is a center of activity—for work or for recreation—as it was when Winnifred Brown Scott and Lucille Cox DeBerry were children. The self-sustaining little towns of the first quarter of this century, and maybe even the close ties and daily contact between neighbors, no longer exist.

Palmer Hill, Oil Man

Interview by Gary Simmons

PALMER HILL, a Tyler County native who lives in Pennsboro [Ritchie County], has worked in the oil and gas business all his life. When he was 14 he left school and took a job as a tool dresser, a kind of all-around helper at a well site. He kept learning the myriad tasks involved with drilling and maintaining wells, and in the 1940s he and a partner launched their own contracting firm. In the 1950s he went into business for himself. He has drilled wells throughout north central West Virginia, and today, at 72 he still maintains wells in Ritchie County.

On August 16, I visited him at his home and talked with him about his life's work. Portions of our tape recorded conversation follow.

Gary Simmons. When did you first get involved in drilling oil and gas wells?

Palmer Hill. Oh, when I started working steady on them, it was along in the fall of '21.

GS What did you do then?

PH Dressed tools.

GS What's tool dressing?

PH That's helping the driller on a drilling well. You're just a helper, you see. Back in them days there was four men on a well, and two of them would be the drillers and two of them toolers, you see. The driller, of course, was the head man and you done what was necessary to keep him making holes, to get along, you see.

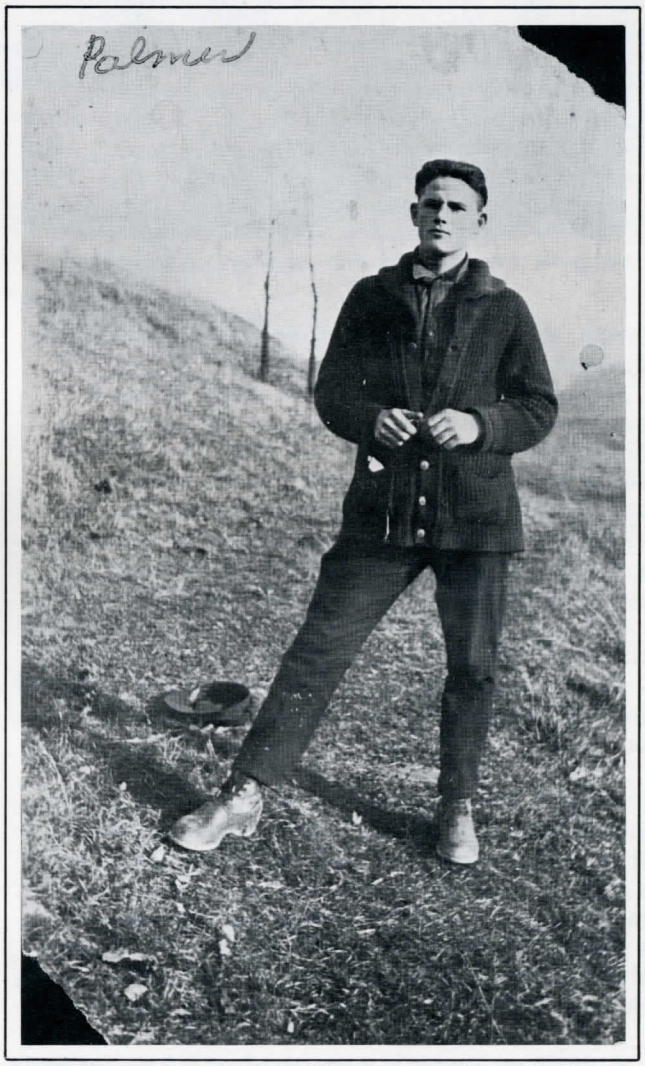
GS Now where was this? That was in Ritchie County, you say, right?

PH Yeah, I would say that first work was around Auburn, West Virginia.

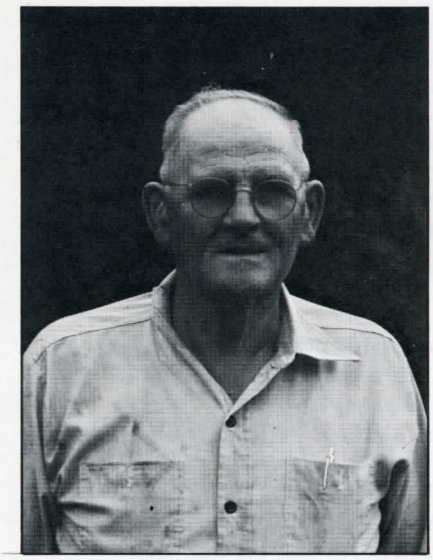
How They Drilled

GS Can you describe what it was like?

PH Well, we had an old wooden standard rig then, steam engines, drilled with steam, and drilled with rope instead of wire. We worked 12 hours, most of the time around the clock when we started one well till we got done. Take about 30 days on a well then, about an average time . . . A driller and a



Fifteen-year-old Palmer Hill in 1920. Photograph by his sister Gladys S. Hill.



Palmer Hill, 1977. Photograph by Gary Simmons.

tooler was on a shift. How the tool dresser got his name: it was his job to dress the bits and keep them out to the gauge so they'd run in the formations.

GS No, I don't know what you mean.

PH Well, you have all different formations in drilling a well. You have limestone; you have sandstone; you have what they call red rock or clay, and blue clay, and white clay, and different ones, and different shelves. These different formations would wear a bit out of gauge. You had to keep that bit out to the gauge so you could keep your hole at the same size going down, so your casing would go [into the hole].

GS So, dressing the tool was more or less sharpening the bit?

PH Yeah, that's how he got his name, but he had a lot of other work to do along with it. He really had a lot of work. He had that boiler to watch to keep steam up; well, he just had everything that went along with it. It's pretty hard to tell just everything because you was working some phase of it all the time, either making something or repairing something or keeping equipment in shape to operate. In them days you didn't run to town and get something. You did it yourself out there [at the well site].

GS Would both crews stay out there at the site?

PH Well, we were called the morning or afternoon tower, and the afternoon tower men would go on at noon and work till midnight, from 12:00 to 12:00. Then the morning shift would come on at 12:00 and work till 12:00 noon.

GS Where would you sleep?

PH Well, we'd go to a boarding house. We'd just board with farmers around, you know, and spend our time off tower and then go back and get right at her again . . .

I don't know, it seems like a dream anymore to me to think about all the things we had to go through with to drill a well back there.

GS For example.

PH Well, we just didn't have the equipment at our hand to work with like we have today. We'd have a handsaw, two hatchets, and a mattock and shovel, augers—it was all woodwork—and stuff like that. Well, today an auger's just as useless to you about as a toothpick working around a well . . . because there's no use for them.

GS Now, would you drill—well, you'd take about 30 days to drill the well—would that be the final—

PH That'd be to drill it in . . . Then, if you didn't get a natural well, you'd have to shoot it and then clean out after you shot, and if you'd get an oil well, you'd have to tube it and put it in production.

The Shooter

GS Okay. What did the shooter do? Can you describe it?

PH Well, he'd take and use "glycerin" [nitroglycerin] back in them days. He poured it in a can, and he had a reel and his line. He'd run this down, and he'd set it right in the pay, his "glycerin," you see.

GS What's the pay?

PH Well, the pay's where you get your gas and oil. A lot of times I saw as many as five or six pays in one well. Well, they would judge that by the formation or the sand that you'd get the oil in—or gas. Maybe they'd pass up two or three of them pays. They wouldn't do a thing with them. They'd figure out the ones that they wanted to shoot, and that's where they would set their "glycerin" in, in those formations where they thought they'd get the most results. Then after he'd set it in there he just made a squib, what they called the squib which was nothing but dynamite in a little tin tube, and he'd light the fuse and drop it in the hole. They had it figured out just how long it'd take it to drop down there, and that's how long they made the fuse. When that went down, that dynamite would go off and set the "glycerin" off, ignite it and the well was shot.

GS And if you're going to get oil you're going to get it then?

PH Not all the time. I've seen them after they were shot; they'd be a-flowing in ten minutes. Then I have seen them that made very good wells, that we'd clean out for a few weeks and you'd have to pump it out. It depends on how much gas that you got with your oil and rock pressure. A lot of things had to be considered. Usually a well that don't have much gas won't flow. For an oil well to flow good, it's got to have a lot of gas with it, you see.

GS Now, you said for an oil well you would have to tube it. Does that mean putting steel casing down?

PH No. Well, of course, you already got what's called your production string in there, you see, set down the formation where you can shut off all the caves and water and stuff like that, and this tubing is just two-inch tubing that you run down with a barrel on it. Then you run rods down and . . . fasten what was called cups right onto your rod that runs down and sits in a receiving nipple at the bottom.

GS Anyway, tubing meant to set up a pumping mechanism?

PH To set up a pumping mechanism to pump the oil out, yeah.

Equipment and Tools

GS And would you build a pipeline to the well?

PH Oh, yes, you have to lay a gas line to them. Then you have to set a tank for your oil. Back in them days, the pipeline people would lay a pipeline. They would lay a line to hook this tank up, you see, and they'd take the oil right from the tank. They still don't do that very much any more. They haul it mostly in trucks. Anymore they have to build roads in to them, and they just haul it to their stock tanks with trucks.

GS Now, when you first started working in the oil and gas business, were they drilling a lot of wells?

PH Oh, I expect that right here in Ritchie County that there was at least 200 string of tools running at one time.

GS How did that affect life in Ritchie County?

PH Oh, pretty good. Ritchie County always has been a pretty good county for the oil and gas business, about one of the best in the state over a long period of years . . . Ritchie County, if there's any way of knowing, has really put out a lot of oil and gas in the last 50, 60 years. Those wells drilled right here below Pennsboro in 1895, some of them

Men laying a pipeline. Location and date unknown. Photograph by Perry Cox.

are producing right today. They don't make very much, but they're taking a little oil out of them, a little gas yet, you see.

GS Who manned these oil rigs?

PH You mean who built the rigs?

GS Who built them, and who drilled them?

PH Well, back in the days when I started in, there was what was called rig builders that went around and just built rigs. That was all they did was build rigs. Then, back in them days it was either horses or mules or cattle that moved the stuff in to you; there was no trucks. Along about '22 or '23 your solid tire trucks began to come into this country, but they just made long trips. Then they'd use horses or mules to move it [equipment] on into the locations. Back in them days, because we didn't have bulldozers, when we made a road to a well, we did it with a mattock and shovel. That's the only way we had. You take today, you finish a well up, and you call a bulldozer out, and he'll make your tank grades and stuff like that there and use iron tanks. Back in them days, when I first started in, I had to learn how to set a wooden tank. I had to dig my own bottom, lay my own false floor, and set the tank, put the hoops on her, and cork her—and they'd hold, too.

GS Was that part of your job as a tool dresser?

PH Yeah. Oh, of course they had crews that didn't do nothing else but set oil tanks and stuff like that. But we always had to have a storage tank to hold our water, you see. With steam we'd set a 250 tank.

GS Two hundred and fifty gallons?

PH Two hundred and fifty barrels. There wasn't many tubers and drillers that could set a wooden tank, but I just—the man I was working for told me, "You just as well learn. Somebody has to do it." He gave me the measurements, and I started in to it, and I made her hold. So I got better at it as I went along. You know what I mean?

All-around Man

GS How many occupational specialties were involved in the oil and gas industry at the time you started out?

PH Oh, it'd be hard to just pinpoint it right off, but you take what we used to call an all-around man—a man who could go out here and build his own rig and drill on the well—he could do any of it, you know, any part of it. But there was never too many around that could do that, you see. I suppose I can recall in my career maybe 50 fellows that I really knew and worked around. Of course, there was more of them around the country, plenty of them, I suppose . . .

GS Did people usually just have one job?

PH Well, I wouldn't say just one job. It'd depend on what you'd call one job. Just like when I'd go to set a tank— if the crew was out there, or the driller, or even after I went to drilling—I'd maybe take the tool dresser that was going to work with me on the well and set the tank. Of course, he

Hill and Henry Stevens (right) began an oil and gas contracting business in the '40s. Photograph taken about 1945 by Mr. Hill's wife Irene.

was helping, you see. And then even before, I have had drillers to help me set the tank because they didn't know how to set it. 'Course then they done what I wanted done. Then when we started the well—started drilling—I done what they said, you see. So that just worked vice versa. But there was always somebody around that knew how to do it. Somebody in the crew, if there was anything special, would know what to do, you see . . .

GS You said earlier that they were drilling 200 wells at a time here in Ritchie County.

PH Oh, yes, I would say that that would be a very conservative figure. At Auburn, at the time I was over there, right in that one field, right in that one section right around Auburn there, there was around 30, 35 strings of tools running.

Prosperity

GS So, all that drilling must have really affected the way of life here, didn't it?

PH Oh, sure. Back in them days, the jobs took the slack out of things. There was a lot of people who worked at it. Thousands of people worked at the oil and gas business back in them days—lots more than does today. But we've got so many ways of doing things today where it don't take the men to do it like it did back in them days.

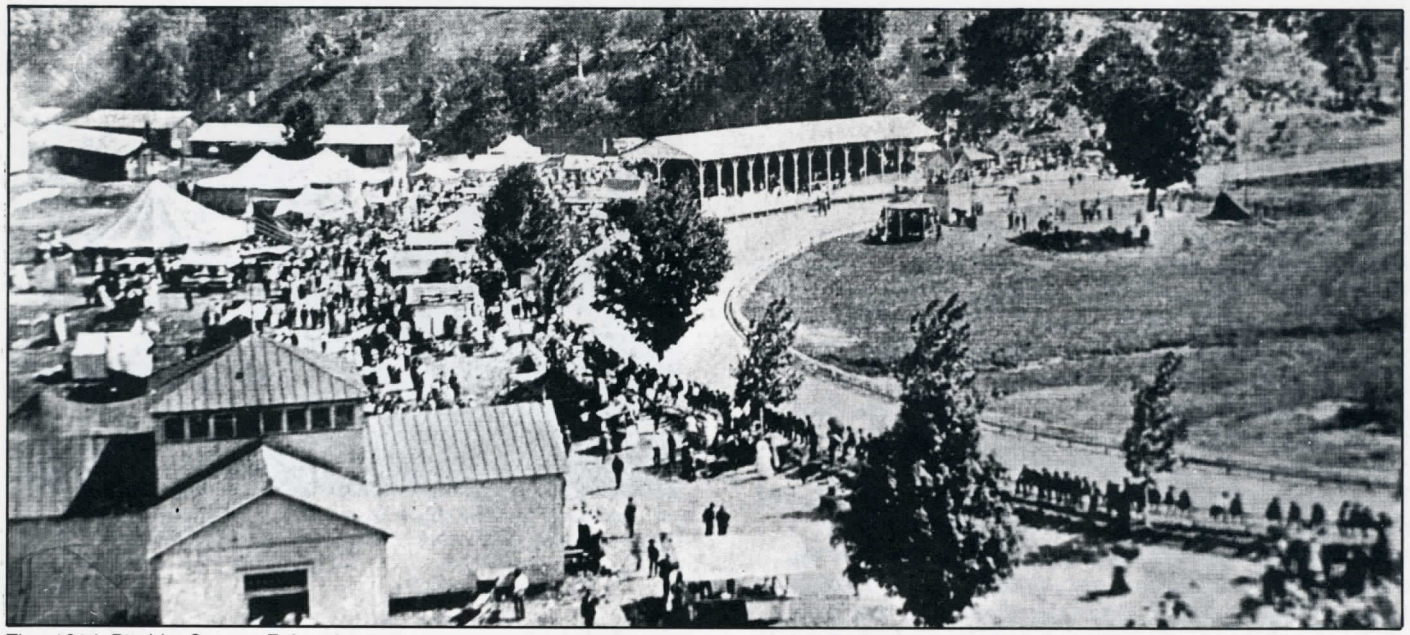
GS So were there new businesses resulting from the oil and gas industry? Hotels, restaurants, and boarding houses?

PH Oh, sure. I would say that back in them days we had three banks right here in Pennsboro. I would say that that contributed to a lot of it. Then the glass factories went to moving in here because they could get cheap gas, you see. I just don't know; I don't think they paid over ten cents a thousand for it at that time.

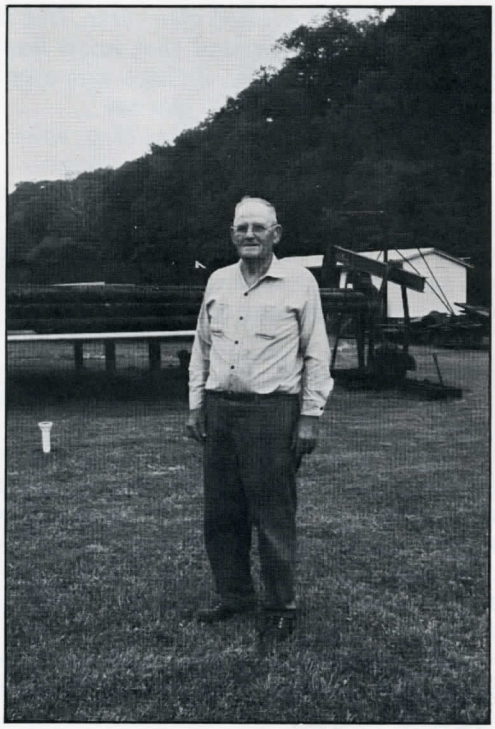
GS Now the '20s was when there was a lot of drilling going on. A lot of people had work.

PH Oh, sure. Yes.

GS That was also the prohibition era, right?



The 1914 Ritchie County Fair, also known as the Pennsboro Fair. Photographer unknown. From the collection of Dean Six of Harrisville.



Hill still maintains wells in Ritchie County. Photograph by Gary Simmons.

PH Oh yeah, 1914 is when they voted the whiskey out of West Virginia, and right after that to get their whiskey they had to go to Marietta after it.

GS Now, see, that's what I was wondering about. You've got all these men working real long hours, who are going to look for some recreation.

PH Well, you know back in them days we didn't—we had a pretty good time, but it was mostly playing jokes on one another and doing things like that. Of course, they had a little bit of liquor, and they'd go to picture shows. Of course, the old Pennsboro Fair, we always shut down and went to it. I believe in 1887 is when it started. I'm not positive, but I think that's the year, 1887. That went on up till in the '40s, you see. Right after World War II it played out. But that was an event we all attended every year. We'd shut the well down; we'd figure some way. If we thought that we was going to be in the cave, we'd shut down before we got into the cave, so we'd be off to go to the fair. There wasn't much to do like there is today . . . But I don't know but what we didn't have as good a time—maybe better times—in them days than we do today. I know I did.

GS Was it hard work?

PH I'm telling you it was hard work. Yes. it was! We used to say all you had to have was a weak mind and a strong back.

GS Was it good pay?

PH Well, yes, in them days, yeah. We got three and four dollars for 12 hours, and boy, that was top money around. A lot of the other jobs they was only getting a dollar and a half a day, you see, for working back then. Yeah, that was top money. When you got up there, you was in the King Row there when it come to the money problem. Then, I would say maybe 90 percent of the time, you never got paid until you got the well done. That's when you got your money. Unless you got fired; then you'd get it pretty quick.

Teams and Teamsters in the Mannington Oil and Gas Field

By Arthur C. Prichard

THE DISCOVERY OF OIL in the Mannington area the fall of 1889, and the finding of natural gas there shortly afterwards, were to affect the region and its people greatly. Among other results was the increase in jobs. To obtain the oil and gas required much labor.

While few Mannington-area men in 1889 had experience in oil field work, many were able-bodied willing laborers who found employment in the new field. Although rig builders, drillers, tool dressers, and other experienced oil and gas men swarmed in from outside, primarily from the Pennsylvania fields, local workers, mainly from the nearby farms and lumber-timber operations, found new jobs.

Hard Work and Bad Roads

To get the rig timber, pipe, boilers, tanks, engines, cables, and other materials and supplies to the leases where wells were to be drilled required a tremendous amount of work because the wells were located up hollows, on hillsides, and some places where there were no roads. The roads which did exist were of dirt. Since the farmers and timbermen had horses, the oil and gas companies found a good supply of teams and experienced drivers locally. These men and their horses were put to work. And what work it was when the weather was uncooperative! In rainy spells some roads became seas of mud. At times in the 1890s when the mud was axle deep on the town's main streets, four to six horses were needed to pull an empty wagon. Once the muck was so deep at a swampy place on Water Street alongside the Phillips Tool Shop, near the center of Mannington, a horse sank in far enough to drown. It wasn't unusual to have six or more teams pulling a loaded wagon to a well site.

Pictures taken by Mannington resident James I. Phillips and others in the 1890s show the difficult task the teamsters who hauled oil field equipment had in traveling the wet rutted roads.

Bill Porter, a veteran teamster of a later era who still lives in Mannington, recalls when the Hope Natural Gas Company had a lease about to expire and decided at a late date to drill a well on it. The site chosen was high on a hillside, a long distance from a county road, with no road on the farm leading to the site. It was a rush job without enough time to build a road and bring in the materials and equipment in an orderly manner. Many extra men and horses were put to work on the project. Road building and the hauling of materials went on simultaneously. Porter remembers they used 14 teams of horses to haul the boiler up the hill.

The condition of the roads affected the oil and gas field development, slowing it down during rainy seasons. Drier, summer weather and heavy freezes in the winter helped speed up the hauling of the necessary materials. Some sleds were put into service in place of wagons during the winter.

Horses and Wagons

The amount of hauling connected with the oil and gas development and operation was immense. S. N. "Doc" Elliott, now 96 years old, who began working in the oil and gas field when young, remembers when such a large number of horses and wagons were required to transport materials for the oil business that, although teams would appear at 6:30 a.m., line up, and the loading begin, there were days when some wouldn't have their loads until the afternoon.

While many farmers and lumbermen furnished horses and drivers, especially when the boom began, and to a lesser extent later, teamster contractors and livery stable operators entered the picture at an early date. Among these were John T. Hopkins, Jacob J. Lee, Austin and Rhodes, W. E. Congleton, Jess Mason, H. C. Goddard, Joe Lazear, Tom Flowers, "Daddy" Pratt, T. Floyd, Dave Hicks, Charles Snodgrass, Harmon Stealey, (Mr.) Hazel Tucker, Dr. O. C. Bradley, and W. D. "Bill" Smith (which later became W. D. Smith and Son when Bill's son Winston joined the firm). A later development came when many of the oil and gas companies got their own teams and put teamsters on their payroll.

In 1892 or 1893, when the local oil field activities were increasing rapidly, a young man from Greene County, Pennsylvania, with a team of horses, came to town in search of employment. Within a few years he had 100 teams working for him in Mannington, Wallace, Fairview, and other nearby oil towns, hauling for companies. He was W. D. "Bill" Smith, a remarkable figure of the boom days who became a legend. Six-feet-four-inches tall and, in later years weighing 325 pounds, Bill was a man of action and of colorful, salty speech, widely known and well-liked.

"Bill" Smith Legends

Smith's main horse barn was between Water Street and the railroad tracks. In those days numerous

Right. Teams, teamsters, and workers hauling for their company, the Hope Natural Gas Company, in the Mannington Field. Photographer unknown. Courtesy of Paul Murphy.

Below. Water Street in Mannington about 1900 before it was paved. A horse was said to have drowned in a hole on this swampy street during the oil excitement days. Photographer unknown. Courtesy of James F. Beaty, Jr.

Bottom. W. D. "Bill" Smith, an outstanding figure in the teaming business and in the community in the early oil-and-gas-field days of Mannington. Photographer unknown. Courtesy of Branson Morris.

men "rode the rods." When Smith would see a strange man hop off a freight train or walk along the tracks, he would call out, "Are you hungry?" And if he was, Smith would give him money for a meal.

It is said that Smith was the first man to lay a pipeline over the Allegheny Mountains. On that job he circumvented some of the difficulties of hauling large amounts of pipe over rugged and muddy terrain by taking the pipe on sleds during the winter and stringing it along the route the line was to take. Russell "Young Dick" Rittenhouse still tells of going along with one of Smith's crews when Smith laid a pipeline from Hastings [Wetzel County] to Canton, Ohio.

I, myself, remember numerous things about Bill Smith as I was nearly 11 years old when he died. I recall his size and the zip he put into things. His Water Street barn was located between the present post office building and Phillips Tool Shop. While horses were kept on the ground floor of the building, the second floor housed a number of his teamsters. On some spring and summer mornings, when the warm air was conducive to keeping the sleeping-room windows open, Smith, on the way from his home near ours, would let his men know of his coming. On reaching the south end of the swinging bridge, which joined the extension of Locust Street with Water Street, he would yell to awaken his workers, a block away. By the time he arrived at the combination barn and rooming house, his men would be up and stirring. His shouts also awoke us and members of other families living in the neighborhood.

Also standing out in my memory is the day in 1915 when he was buried. I watched as his large casket was taken to the cemetery on one of his boiler wagons pulled by six white horses. The driver was Dick Rittenhouse, one of Bill's most capable and faithful teamsters.

Above Left. W. D. Smith and Son's horse barn on Water Street, Mannington in the early 1900s. From left to right: boy unknown, W. D. "Bill" Smith, Dr. Stockman (veterinarian), teamster, and blacksmith unknown. Photographer unknown. Courtesy of C. Jack Wise.

Above. Richard "Dick" Rittenhouse, one of Bill Smith's best teamsters. Photographer unknown. Courtesy of Russell and Ron Rittenhouse.

A Revered Ex-slave

Richard "Dick" Rittenhouse had been born a slave on Gregory Run in Harrison County, Virginia, (now West Virginia) in 1850. When very young he and his family were moved to the Bennet Rittenhouse plantation in the Teverbaugh section of Marion County. Dick became an excellent handler of horses, and in the early 1890s began driving teams for Bill Smith.

Will Christy recalls an incident which occurred 60 or 70 years ago. Dick hauled a boiler to the lease where Will was working. When shown where the men wanted the boiler placed, Dick drove the wagon alongside the spot and threw a chain over the boiler. He unhitched one horse and fastened the animal to the chain. Standing in front of the horse and without putting a hand on the animal, Dick directed it by talking so the horse inched the boiler off the wagon onto the selected place with a finesse which impressed Christy.

C. Jack Wise recalls something which he witnessed about a half-century ago: "Once, when I was in the lower grades and was on my way home, I saw Dick do a thing which I didn't understand at the time. He was driving two or three teams up town when one of the horses slipped and fell to the pavement. The horse began struggling. Immediately Dick got to the horse and sat on its head. It seemed such a strange thing to do, yet the animal quit kicking and struggling. When it had quieted, Dick unharnessed the horse and got it to its feet. Dick's prompt action probably prevented the animal from injuring itself and maybe kept it from hurting the other horses."

Mrs. David (Margery) Norton knows much about Dick Rittenhouse as he and other men employed by Bill Smith often stayed overnight at her grandfather's house near Margaret [Harrison County]. Often Smith would contact her grandfather, James Copenhaver, two days in advance of his teamsters' arrival. Many times Dick would be on a big wagon loaded with oil field materials, a wagon pulled by four teams. Behind him two men would be driving a smaller wagon, carrying feed, horse blankets, and tools to be used in case of a breakdown. Hitched to the back of the second wagon would be an extra pair of horses, to help get the large wagon over steep hills.

"My mother used to say, 'Dick could drive five teams of horses as easily as most men drive one or two teams.' Also my mother said, 'Dick always had to see the horses were cared for, watered, and had their feed bags on their heads before he ate. If it was cold, he would see the horses' cold-weather blankets were fastened on them before he would come into the house. The men working with him waited for Dick, and they ate together. Also they always wanted to stay together, and we would put them in a big bedroom with two large beds and cots. Once in the winter, when they were returning to Mannington with empty wagons, they came to our house very late at night. It seemed that earlier they had stopped at a big farmhouse and had asked to stay all night and to buy feed and shelter for their horses. When the horses were cared for, Dick and the four white teamsters with him entered the large house. The farm woman said, 'The meal is ready,' but turning to Dick, she told him, 'You'll have to wait to eat.'

"The other teamsters told her, 'If that's the case, we'll not eat here. We'll not pay for the food you've

fixed for us, nor for the horses' feed, and when we get back to Mannington, we're goin' to report you to Mr. Smith.'

"They then drove on to our house, getting there about 1:00 a.m. All were suffering from the cold, but Dick the most. The men had to help him into the house. put him by a big fire, and wrapped a heavy coat around him. Mother said Dick wouldn't rest until the others went out to check on the horses."

A Death Pact

Dick Rittenhouse and Bill Smith developed a close friendship. They agreed that when one of them died the other would drive the body to the cemetery. If Dick's death came first, Bill would use six of his best black horses, but if Bill's death preceded Dick's, the latter would drive six of their best white horses.

It happened that Bill died when only in his late 40s. I well remember the sadness of the day in 1915 when Dick drove his employer's body to its last resting place. Standing on the sidewalk on Pleasant Street, I watched the funeral procession go by, with Dick holding the reins, controlling the six beautiful white horses which pulled the improvised hearse, a large boiler wagon. Tears streamed down Rittenhouse's cheeks, and those who followed the procession to the Mannington Cemetery declared he cried all the way.

Dick outlived his friend and employer 29 years, and when in January 1944 he died, he left behind a great host of friends. Friendliness and loyalty must run in the Rittenhouse family, as a son, Russell "Young Dick," has one of the widest circles of friends of anyone in town. In 1924, after having been employed part-time by J. B. Lazear, Russell started working full-time for Lazear in a furniture store and undertaker's establishment on Clarksburg Street. He has worked there ever since, although the ownership has changed. The present proprietor is Jack Bailey. When, many years after Bill Smith's death, Smith's widow died, Russell Rittenhouse drove the motor hearse bearing her body to the cemetery.

Workers, Bosses, and Townspeople

The era of teaming with horses in the Mannington oil and gas field lasted more than 40 years. While the first well was drilled here in 1889 and some motor trucks began seeing service in the local field in the second half of the 1920s, horses were used into the 1930s.

Many hundreds of men teamed occasionally or regularly during the more than four decades of horse-powered transportation for the industry in and around Mannington. Some of the teamsters, in addition to Dick Rittenhouse, were John Efaw, Charles Moore, Joe Gill, Glen Floyd, Bill Porter, Fred Rupp, Billy Calvert, Sam Armstrong, Ed McCarvey, Everett Grant, Henry Fowler, Ira Rush, Bob Holbert, "Toady" Huff, Hazel Tucker, Arthur Glover, Luther Batson, Lonnie Merrifield, ____ Carson, and William "Bill" H. Murphy.

While at work Bill Murphy was severly injured by a horse. His employer, the Hope Natural Gas Company, offered him a cash settlement or employment for as long as he wished to work. He chose the latter and was one of the last two men employed by the Hope as teamsters, the other being Bill Porter.

Henry Merrifield was team boss for Bill Smith, and Pete Yost held a similar position with the South Penn Oil Company, which had a barn not far from the present city hall.

Other skilled people needed to keep teams in service were harness makers, blacksmiths, and veterinarians. A harness maker, who saw long service locally, was Alva Jackson "Jack" Wise. Sometime after he, as a youth, had learned his trade under Bill Scott in Wana [Monongalia County], Jack came to work for Bill Smith in Mannington. When Winston Smith, Bill's son who continued the teaming concern two years after his father's death, sold the business to the Hope Natural Gas Company, Jack began working for the Hope, and continued in that company's employment until his retirement. Among other harness makers who worked during the oil and gas years in Mannington were H. J. Starzman, W. R. Erwin, and Lem Hess.

Among the blacksmiths who plied their useful trade in our city in years gone by were John Pitner, Mike Ryan, Billy Bell, Charles Snodgrass, and Sherman Fankhauser. I remember how fascinated I was when, as a boy, I would watch a blacksmith shoe a horse. The flying sparks, the smell of the heated forge, the sound of a hammer on hot iron, the clang of a hammer hitting the anvil, and the smith nailing a shoe to a horse's hoof greatly interested me. Sometimes a by-product of watching a blacksmith at work was to get a horseshoe nail, with which a finger ring could be made.

Dr. Stockman, Dr. Geiger, and Dr. O. C. Bradley were among the doctors of veterinary medicine in the earlier days of Mannington. Dr. Bradley also had a livery and feed stable, all of which must have kept him very busy.

"Shooting with Glycerin"

While there were many different kinds of wagons used in hauling materials, equipment, and supplies in the oil and gas business, such as road wagons, heavy buckboards, boiler wagons, lynch-pin truck wagons, a "shooting" wagon or buggy which carried nitroglycerin held a special place in people's interest. Drivers of the vehicles were regarded with awe, for handling the explosive was exceedingly dangerous. Even a few drops left in what seemed an empty container could cause an explosion forceful enough to kill nearby people and animals. Many deaths of those handling the substance came from various accidents, a dropped container, a run-away team, an upset buggy, a spark, or even a jarred container or shell.

Top Right. A Mannington oil field wagon, axle deep in mud. Photograph by James I. Phillips. Courtesy of Mrs. Helen Singleton and Mrs. Katherine Lutes.

Opposite. William H. "Bill" Murphy, well-known teamster for the Hope Natural Gas Company. Photographer unknown. Courtesy of Paul Murphy.

Above. Alva Jackson "Jack" Wise pictured with a sewing horse. This photograph was taken when Jack was learning the harness-making trade, an occupation he worked at for many years. Photographer unknown. Courtesy of C. Jack Wise.

Above Right. Walter R. "Doc" Clelland, long-time handler of nitroglycerin, in his "shooting" buggy. Note the tin containers, or shells, fastened on the buggy's side. The nitroglycerin was carried in containers in boots on the wagon. Photographer unknown. Courtesy of Mrs. Lida Clelland McNeely.

Right. Six teams of horses pulling an oil field wagon on Buffalo Street, Mannington in the late 1890s. Photograph by James I. Phillips. Courtesy of Mrs. Helen Singleton and Mrs. Katherine Lutes.

Opposite Page. William J. Hopewell, a nitroglycerin "shooter" for the Marietta Torpedo Company, was blown to death after shooting a well near Mannington August 1, 1912. Photographer unknown. Courtesy of Mrs. W. E. Hopewell.

Nitroglycerin was used in "shooting" a well, a process accomplished by skillfully lowering the explosive material to a specified sand (rock) and blasting the sand in order to make it more porous and thus increase the flow of oil. Pouring the "glycerin" from a container into a tin shell, or torpedo, then lowering the shell in the well by using a cable, the nitroglycerin man would prepare for the shot. Then he would drop an iron weight, called a "go-devil," down the well and the "glycerin" was exploded.

"Aren't you afraid of 'glycerin'?" someone asked Walter R. "Doc" Clelland, a "shooter" for about half a century, most of which he worked in the Mannington area.

"No, but I sure respect it," he replied.

Clelland began working in the Jacksonburg [Wetzel County] area for the Marietta Torpedo Company, manufacturers and handlers of nitroglycerin, when he was about 26 years old. In 1915 the company transferred him to Mannington. Some time later, when he decided the pay wasn't high enough for the danger inherent in the work, Clelland and another "shooter," "Shorty" Cooper, went into business for themselves. After Cooper's retirement, Hudd Clelland, a younger brother of Walter, became his partner.

Emmett Mockler wrote of Walter Clelland telling of a close call he once experienced. Walter and an assistant, in a "shooting" buggy carrying 600 quarts of nitroglycerin and pulled by four horses, had to drive around a town which prohibited such explosives inside the corporation limits. They detoured by way of an old abandoned road. Coming to a break in the road which the horses couldn't cross, the men devised a way of pulling the buggy over the break with a rope. Partway across the rope broke, and the buggy, with enough explosive to destroy a hillside, upset and rolled over twice. It was the men's lucky day; there was not an explosion.

One of Hudd Clelland's close calls came after the partners had replaced their horses and "shooting" buggy with motortrucks to transport the nitroglycerin. Hudd, hauling a load of the explosive, accidently ran into the back of a farmer's wagon. Fortunately for everyone, the nitroglycerin truck hit only some of the loose hay loaded on the wagon and didn't come into contact with anything solid. Perhaps it was a matter of

luck that a fatal disaster was avoided.

Deaths by Explosion

As far as I know, the largest nitroglycerin explosion in the local field occurred on Little Whetstone in about 1897 when two men and their horses were blown to bits. The explosion took place near a "glycerin" storage building, called a magazine. These repositories were solidly built structures, generally constructed in the hillsides in isolated areas. An oil field employee, pumping a well near the storage magazine, saw one of the "glycerin" men doing an unheard-of thing, tossing nitroglycerin containers to the other. Immediately the pumper ran into an oil well's belt house and threw himself on the floor. Shortly afterwards there was a terrific blast.

S. N. "Doc" Elliott, then 15 or 16 years old, was on the porch of his family's home on Main Street in Mannington, some two or three miles away. Elliott remembers hearing the explosion, seeing their front door swing and hearing the windows vibrate from the force of the blast. Running most of the way to Little Whetstone, he came upon a great hole in the ground and a group of people looking for the remains of the nitroglycerin men and their horses. About all that was found were little bits of harness and flesh, and a necktie, still tied, hanging in a tree a considerable distance away. The pumper was seriously injured but he recovered.

Goffe Sturm, who lived on the family farm about four miles from the explosion, was with his grandmother when the blast happened. As the day was clear and sunny, they couldn't understand what caused the noise, and it was several days later before they learned of its source.

The consensus in this area about the explosion on Little Whetstone was that nitroglycerin and whiskey don't mix safely.

A Mannington newspaper of August 1, 1912, reported the death of William J. Hopewell, an employee of the Mariette Torpedo Company, when he was shooting a well near Glover Gap about seven miles from Mannington. After having used two-and-a-half cans of nitroglycerin in the well, he had carried the two empties and the half can of the explosive to the shooting buggy. Some people were not far away when the well was being shot and had been watching him, but they were not looking at Hopewell when he reached his buggy and team. It was there the accident took place. The buggy, animals, and Hopewell's body were blown almost to atoms; portions of the remains were found as far away as 100 yards. He had injured an arm some days previously, and the supposition was that, although he was a very careful handler of the explosive, he had lost control of the containers because of the injured arm and had either dropped a container or had struck some portion of the wagon with it. No one else was hurt by the blast. William Hopewell was well-known and greatly liked by Mannington people. His wife was Blanche Christy, a daughter of the Eugene Christys, long-time inhabitants of our town.

The danger from even small amounts of nitroglycerin is great. Handlers of the substance, when accidentally getting the explosive on their clothes, change clothes and explode their dangerous garments. Fred Huey recalls that his uncle, Dempsey Huey, a nitroglycerin shooter, would blast out tree stumps on a Huey farm with so-called empty used containers which held only a few drops of "glycerin."

Several years ago a newspaper reported an incident involving two Mannington District boys. They saw a young rabbit and gave chase, attempting to hit it with rocks. When the rabbit ran into an old deserted shed, one of the boys heaved a stone at the disappearing bunny. The rock hit an empty, used nitroglycerin container, and the resulting explosion damaged the building and sent the boys to a hospital for treatment. The reporter didn't know what happened to the rabbit.

The horses and men who handled them played an important role in the Mannington oil and gas operations for many years, but the coming of motor vehicles gradually brought changes to the oil and gas transportation system, and a very colorful era came to an end.


GIVEN BY
WEST VIRGINIA FEDERATION
OF BUSINESS &
PROFESSIONAL WOMEN'S CLUBS
1975-76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"But After All Was She Not a Masterpiece as a Mother and a Gentlewoman . . ."

By Marie Tyler-McGraw
Photographs by Gary Simmons

IN THE WEEKS that followed her mother's death, Anna Jarvis jotted down, on dozens of small pieces of scrap paper, reflections on her mother's life. She intended to put the thoughts together into a biographical memorial to her mother to be distributed among her mother's old friends in Grafton. It seemed to her to be a fitting tribute to the energetic and intelligent mother she deeply mourned. Miss Jarvis never finished the written memorial to her mother. Instead, she founded Mother's Day.

Anna Maria Reeves Jarvis, mother of Anna Jarvis, was a local legend at the time of her death. Without ever stepping beyond the limits of what was considered acceptable and respectable in a nineteenth century lady, she had organized women, given lectures, worked for peace, and fought disease, all on a local level. She did this so well and so effectively that her courage and goodness became a part of the local folklore, and stories about her were preserved through several generations in Taylor County. Still, without her daughter's strenuous and successful efforts to commemorate her, legend would have faded as the descendants of the people whose lives she touched died or moved from the area. It is because of her daughter's efforts that we can know something about this woman to whom the first Mother's Day was dedicated.

Opposite. Leaded glass panels, recent additions to the Mother's Day Shrine.

Anna Maria Reeves was born in Culpepper County, Virginia, in 1832, the daughter of a Methodist minister. The family moved to Philippi, Virginia, when Anna was about ten. While her father had a Methodist church at Philippi, Anna met and married Granville Jarvis of Grafton. It was 1850 and she was 18 years old.

Six years later she had borne six children and four of them were dead. All but one of the dead children had been born healthy. They died from diptheria, scarlet fever, whooping cough. It was an age in which illness in children was swift and fatal. Anna Maria Jarvis knew there was a relationship between these deaths and the outhouses near the homes, the lack of air and sunshine in many windowless rooms, the milk from sickly cows, the flies buzzing on plates of beef left sitting out in summer kitchens. She organized a Mother's Work group to combat these conditions in the community. Their motto was "Mother's Work—For Better Mothers, Better Homes, Better Children, Better Men and Women." The mothers acted as a direct community action task force, working to have piles of garbage covered, old outhouse areas filled in, eliminating spoiled milk and meat, promoting a campaign for airing and cleaning houses, and caring for the ill.

Their efforts seemed to be leading to some real improvement in community health when the Civil War came to Barbour County and changed the function of the Mother's Work group. Barbour County was deeply

Portraits of mother and daughter hanging at the Shrine. Photographer(s) unknown.

split between Union and Confederate sympathizers. Mrs. Jarvis saw the paramount need of the community as being reconciliation between neighbors, and this was the goal which she and the Mother's Work group pursued throughout the war.

One highly dramatic and myth-like story told about Mrs. Jarvis shows why she became a local legend and was held in such high esteem by her neighbors. The first land battle of the Civil War took place at Philippi and the first soldier killed was killed there. Tempers were short and passions ran high as the young soldier's body was brought into town. A request was made for a prayer to be offered over his body by one of the assembled townspeople. It was a moment of high tension, as most of the men present were armed and any provocative statement might have set off a partisan battle. Anna Maria Jarvis, a tiny red-haired figure, came forward and prayed over the dead soldier. The crowd became calm and dispersed peacefully. Other legends describe a woman above the battle, one who embodies the culture's highest ideals and preserves them through the stresses of war. During the Civil War, Mrs. Jarvis and her group of women reportedly nursed soldiers of both armies, emphasizing that they were not concerned with the men's loyalties but with their health.

At one point during the war, a traveling Methodist minister spent the night in the Jarvis home. He was aware of Mrs. Jarvis' leadership role in the church and suggested to her that she assist him in taking the Southern sympathizers from the church and establishing a separate Methodist Church South. Mrs. Jarvis responded that the church would never be split if it was in her power to prevent it and advised the minister to go home and work for peace.

The best known and most widely recorded of Mrs. Jarvis' enterprises came at the close of the Civil War and was intended to be a form of Mother's Day. It was conceived by Mrs. Jarvis as a family picnic day honoring mothers and was to be called Mothers Friendship Day. Her real goal for this event was to reunite old neighbors alienated from each other during the Civil War. She made sure that a special invitation went out to each veteran, Union and Confederate, and to his family.

The picnic was held in a large field near Pruntytown. Mrs. Jarvis arranged for the wife of a former Union officer to come dressed in grey and for the wife of a former Confederate officer to come dressed in blue. These two ladies led the families in singing "Dixie" and "The Battle Hymn of the Republic." Mrs. Jarvis offered a prayer for unity and all sang "America." Old friends, neighbors, and cousins embraced and many cried openly. The day was acclaimed a great success.

Mrs. Jarvis had hoped that the event would become an annual one and that once the work of reconciliation was done the yearly celebration would be to honor mothers and their work. For reasons that are not

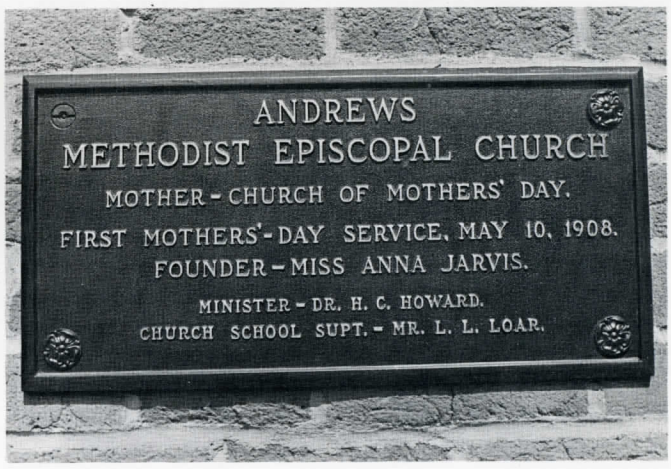
clear, there was never another Mother's Friendship Day, although Mrs. Jarvis never forgot the idea.

For the rest of her life, and especially in her Sunday school work and lectures, Mrs. Jarvis often referred to the need for a special day set aside to honor mothers. She lectured in local churches and to local organizations on "The Great Mothers of the Bible" and spoke in the Pruntytown churches on "The Value of Literature as a Source of Culture and Refinement." She also lectured on "The Great Value of Hygiene for Women and Children" and on "The Importance of Supervised Recreational Centers for Boys and Girls."

Mrs. Jarvis' daughter Anna was born in 1864 in Webster [Taylor County] about four miles from Grafton. She was the second daughter to be called Anna, the first one, nicknamed "Annie," having died. Within a few years, the Jarvis family moved to Grafton where they lived until the death of Granville Jarvis in 1902.

In Grafton Mrs. Jarvis was deeply involved in the work of Andrews Methodist Episcopal Church, where she was both a Sunday school teacher and junior superintendent of the Sunday school for 25 years. The story is told that one day, when the 12-year-old Anna was a member of her mother's Sunday school class, Mrs. Jarvis mentioned in a prayer that she hoped someone someday would finish the task of establishing a memorial Mother's Day.

Whether or not this was the moment at which Anna Jarvis, the daughter, committed herself to



Top. Mother's Day Shrine. Photograph by Gerald S. Ratliff.

Above. Plaque at the entrance of the Shrine.

Interior of the Mother's Day Shrine. Photograph by Gerald S. Ratliff.

completing what her mother had begun, it is certain that she remembered that moment after her mother's death in 1905.

The young Anna Jarvis was very close to her mother and identified with her strongly. She knew that her mother had borne 12 children and that all but four had died. She knew that her mother's grief over the dead children had never subsided. Twenty-five years after the death of her seven-year-old Tommy, Mrs. Jarvis had to turn away to hide her tears at meeting another young Tommy in a Philadelphia department store. Her daughter recorded this incident and wondered, " . . . if such sorrow . . . would have been felt by a father."

She also knew that her mother regretted her lack of formal education although her intelligence and her abilities were apparent to all. On one of the pieces of scrap paper she wrote "Opportunities for acquiring an education limited, never ceased to regret the fancied loss. Broadly and well-educated herself. Normal school."

Anna Jarvis, the daughter, was a well-educated woman. She had attended Augusta Female Seminary in Staunton, Virginia, for three years and pursued a rigorously academic course of study. She taught in the Grafton High School for seven years after college. She was of that first generation of college-educated American women which also included Jane Addams. All their lives these women searched for ways to use their

abilities and training, since so few occupations and activities were open to them other than teaching. In *Twenty Years at Hull House,* Jane Addams describes her education as "the snare of preparation" and recounts a near nervous breakdown before she decided to put her energy into social work and settlement houses. Other women from this college-educated group became the suffragettes of the early twentieth century.

The younger Anna Jarvis, who clearly saw what limits had constrained her mother's life, took a different approach to the problem. Although many of her comtemporaries felt the solution to the problem of woman's status lay in more political and economic opportunities for women, Anna Jarvis hoped to memorialize and recognize women for the unacknowledged lives of work and sacrifice which she saw epitomized in her mother. She sought to give her own mother and all mothers higher status in society through public recognition of and increased respect for their life's work in the home and community.

On the first anniversary of her mother's death, Anna Jarvis met with several friends and planned a memorial service for her mother for the next year. In May 1907, the private service was held, and in 1908 the first public service was held at Andrews Methodist Episcopal Church in Grafton as a memorial for all mothers. In the next few years Miss Jarvis contacted businessmen, clergymen, politicians, and industrialists in her search for support for a national Mother's Day. She received significant support and encountered little opposition. The time seemed right for such an enterprise.

In 1910, Governor Glasscock proclaimed a statewide Mother's Day in West Virginia. In 1912, the general conference of the Methodist Church, meeting in convention, officially recognized Mother's Day as a special church day and recognized Andrews Methodist Episcopal Church in Grafton as the Mother's Day Church. In 1914, just six years after the first memorial Mother's Day service in Grafton, President Woodrow Wilson signed into law a House resolution making the second Sunday in May the national Mother's Day and calling for a display of the flag on that day.

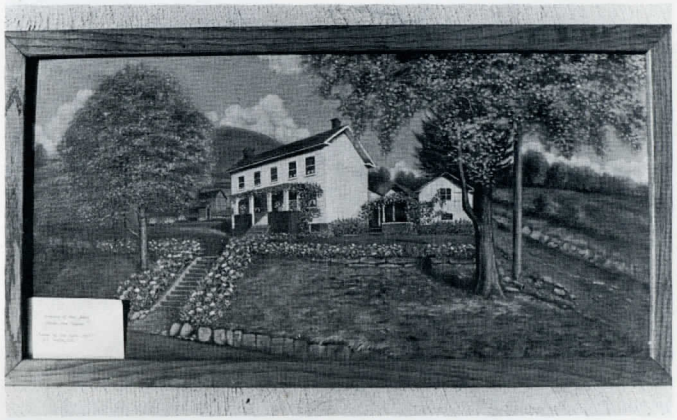
The proclamation read, in part:

> Whereas the service rendered the United States by the American mother is the greatest source of the country's strength and inspiration; and
>
> Whereas we honor ourselves and the mothers of America when we do anything to give emphasis to the home as the fountain head of the state; and
>
> Whereas the American mother is doing so much for the home, the moral uplift and religion, hence so much for good government and humanity: Therefore be it
>
> *Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America . . .*
>
> That the second Sunday in May shall here-after be designated and known as Mother's Day . . .

Anna Jarvis described the day that President Wilson signed the proclamation as the most exciting of

Below. Painting of Anna Jarvis' birthplace at Webster by Vina Hughes Stull. The painting hangs at the Shrine.

Bottom. A recent photograph of Anna Jarvis' birthplace. Photograph by Gary Simmons.



Anna Jarvis in a photograph thought to have been made at the time of her mother's death. Courtesy of the Prints and Photographs Division of the Library of Congress.

her life. The rapidity with which a national Mother's Day came into being was in part due to her organizational work and persistence and in part due to the temper of the times. The period from the turn of the century to World War I was an era of steadily increasing public enthusiasm for reform and change in American society. The peak years of 1913 and 1914 saw two Constitutional amendments become law and legislation passed to control monopolies and to monitor banking practices, after years of effort by Progressive reformers. At the same time, a large and strong feminist movement was agitating for women's rights, especially the right to vote. Mother's Day seemed a good idea both to those who wanted more status for women and to those who wanted to reemphasize the traditional role of women as guardians of domestic virtue.

There is evidence that in later years Anna Jarvis became disappointed with the direction that Mother's Day took. Politicians in several cities attempted to use Mother's Day celebrations to gather votes. She protested this and forced at least one major rally in New York to be cancelled. She wrote letters to editors complaining of the commercialization of the day through sales gimmicks, especially cards, candy, and flowers. "Give Mother what she wants or don't give her anything" was the message Anna Jarvis repeated through the 1920s and 1930s.

What she believed Mother really wanted was a day of true communication and closeness with her children, one in which the mother's work was acknowledged and the values on which it was based were reaffirmed. Her special fear was that mothers would be forgotten by their grown children. Mother's Day gave meaning to the lives of millions of anonymous women who lived, worked, and died without pay, honors, or recognition. Mother's Day, she felt, could justify and sanctify those lives. Of her own mother, she said,

> "If this mother of eleven (live) children, whose ambitions had been restrained by the ties of motherhood, homemaking, years of frail health, and finally the financial losses of my father, had led a selfish life and devoted herself as faithfully to her own pleasure and ambitions as she did to those of others, her achievements would undoubtedly have brought her unusual honors, and made her a woman of prominence in her undertakings.
>
> "But after all was she not a masterpiece as a mother and a gentlewoman . . ."

The body of folklore that grew up around Anna Maria Reeves Jarvis as an angel of mercy and a paragon of virtue should not be seen as merely nineteenth century sentimentality. Nor should her daughter's efforts to memorialize her mother's life be seen as enshrining domestic sainthood for women while rejecting any other role. The mother for whom Mother's Day was founded was a vigorous and pioneering woman of strong convictions. She was an organizer and a hard worker, not afraid to speak her mind. Her daughter was also a woman of vigor and conviction who spoke publicly about her concerns. Without her daughter's commitment, we could never know this much about a rural mother of 12 in Barbour and Taylor Counties, West Virginia, in the nineteenth century.

They were too busy to keep diaries. Only their deaths are recorded in the local newspapers. Stories about them die out. How many more have been lost?

SOURCES

Kendall, Norman Festus. *Mother's Day: A History of its Founding and its Founder.* (Grafton, West Virginia, 1937).

Wolfe, Howard H. *Mother's Day and the Mother's Day Church.* (Kingsport, Tennessee, 1962).

West Virginia Collection/ West Virginia University. File folder of clippings from West Virginia newspapers about Mother's Day plus programs from first Mother's Day celebration at Andrews Methodist and programs from the fiftieth Mother's Day at the same church. Microfilm (one reel) of papers of Anna Jarvis loaned to West Virginia University for copying and consisting of notes on her mother's life and final illness. Papers also included temperature charts, obituaries, notes of condolence—all related to her mother's illness.

Letters from Readers

GOLDENSEAL welcomes letters of general interest from readers. Our address is Department of Culture and History, Science and Culture Center, State Capitol, Charleston, W V 25305.

Cochran, Georgia
June 8, 1977

Editor:
Please add my name to your mailing list for GOLDENSEAL. I have seen this magazine in the library at Georgia College, Millidgeville, Ga. and think it is unique. We are a teaching family and could put this magazine to good use.

Sincerely,
Mrs. Jesse Hamby

Chapel Hill, North Carolina
June 9, 1977

Editor:
Just this note of appreciation for the April-June issue of GOLDENSEAL . . .

Wil and I were in the Vista program '70-'71 and were assigned (thank goodness) to the Elk Valley and have some understanding of Clay County. Now I want to return—with magazine in hand—for a new look.

Sincerely,
Mrs. Edna Morse

Chicago, Illinois
June 12, 1977

Editor:
I have become familiar with your publication through a friend who gets it. I believe you are doing a great job in helping to preserve a significant aspect of American life. As a teacher of American history, I would very much like to have a subscription to GOLDENSEAL.

Sincerely,
Robert W. Blythe

Richwood, WV
June 15, 1977

Editor:
Thanks for the set of GOLDENSEAL. You are to be congratulated on a fine job. These will become part of my "see, but don't buy and you'll get shot if you steal" items in my bookstore-museum. Look in some time. Personally, I don't think there's a bookstore in the world like it. And it just might serve as a GOLDENSEAL job for you. For which, I wouldn't mind at all, learning the expensive way, that Richwood, while it might now and then read a book, certainly doesn't have the filthy habit of buying one.

Very truly yours,
Jim Comstock

Colorado Springs, Colorado
August 30, 1977

Editor:
I recently saw a copy of GOLDENSEAL, Volume 3, Number 1, January-March 1977. I cannot tell you how much my entire family enjoyed this Special Clay County Issue. I grew up in Widen and attended school there. Many of the names were familiar and the pictures all "too familiar." My mother still lives in Widen.

Sincerely,
Joan Grogg

Tulsa, Oklahoma
September 27, 1977

Editor:
Your publication GOLDENSEAL impressed me a great deal, and I would appreciate your sending me the magazine. I own property in the State, so the histories and photos are quite important.
Thank you,
Yvonne Kojundic

Rivesville, WV
October 3, 1977

Editor:
A friend loaned me a copy of GOLDENSEAL . . . July-September 1976. I would love very much to get a copy of it, as Mr. Thurmond Fletcher is a neighbor of mine and he drew a picture of me . . . in 1923. This is all in this book . . .

We love West Virginia and think one would have to travel a lot to find a place to call Almost Heaven . . .

Thank you,
Joseph E. Arnett

Alderson, WV
October 11, 1977

Editor:
I thank you for including my letter in the July-August number of the GOLDENSEAL. . . . there are a few errors perhaps due to my handwriting.

The ship that took us overseas was the Tenadoris and not Tenadon's. Underhill should not be Manderbill.

Very truly yours,
Harry Hill

Corrections

In the interview with Dr. Alan Jabbour in the last issue (Vol. 3, No. 3, July-August 1977) on page 14 references were made to Pennsylvania County, Virginia. It should have read *Pittsylvania* County, Virginia. In the caption for the photograph on page 60 in the same article one might be unable to identify the subjects. From left to right were Steve Reed, Henry Reed's grandson; Dean and Gene (Steve's father), Henry Reed's twin sons; and Dr. Jabbour. Dr. Jabbour in the mid-1960s took the photograph of Henry Reed [1884-1968] on page 12.

In the same issue credit to *West Virginia History* failed to accompany John E. Stealey, III's review of *West Virginia: A Bicentennial History* on page 62. The editors of the quarterly journal generously permitted us to reprint Dr. Stealey's book review.

Membership in the West Virginia Historical Society, which is "organized solely for educational, civic, benevolent, and philanthropic purposes," includes four issues of *West Virginia History*. The standard annual membership is $5.00 a year. Other types of membership are contributing member, $10 or more a year; life member, $100.00; county or local society $10.00 a year. Checks are made payable to the West Virginia Historical Society and sent to the Executive Secretary, W.V.H.S., Science and Culture Center, Charleston, WV 25305.

In This Issue

MARY LUCILLE DEBERRY, a native of Ritchie County, has for the past 11 years been on the staff of WWVU-TV in Morgantown. She appears regularly on the nightly current events program, *The Mountain Scene Tonight,* where she tends to specialize in the production of history and human-interest features. A graduate of West Virginia University, she 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 the Yale School of Drama before going into the field of television. She is a 1977 recipient of a first place award from the National Federation of Press Women and a State 4-H Alumni Recognition Award. This is her second contribution to GOLDENSEAL.

ARTHUR C. PRICHARD, born and reared in Mannington, was graduated from Mannington public schools, West Virginia University, and McCormick Theological Seminary (Presbyterian), Chicago, Illinois. He has been employed as boys' director and coach at a Presbyterian mission school on the Navajo Reservation at Ganado, Arizona. Mr. Prichard also served as the pastor of churches in Ohio and Pennsylvania and in Wheeling and Mannington before retiring in 1970. He was a moderator of Wheeling Presbytery and the Synod of West Virginia for his denomination. In 1969 the Soil Conservation Service chose him the Conservation Minister of West Virginia, and Davis and Elkins College honored him with a Doctor of Divinity Degree. For 25 years Mr. Prichard was chairman of the Good Samaritan Project in Korea, a missionary organization which helped operate two Christian agricultural training schools in South Korea. He chairs the board of directors of the Buffalo Creek Watershed Association, which works for flood control in Marion County. He has had articles in *Wonderful West Virginia, West Virginia University Magazine, Monday Morning,* (a U.P. Church publication), *The West Virginia Hillbilly,* and the Fairmont *Times-West Virginian.* He and Mrs. Prichard produced the color slide set, with script, "It's West Virginia!" for the West Virginia Department of Education—a program used in the schools throughout the State in teaching West Virginia subjects. Photography, operating a tree farm, traveling, and writing are Mr. Prichard's hobbies.

MARIE TYLER-MCGRAW was born in Clarksburg and grew up in Bridgeport. She is an assistant professor of American History and Folklore at the Loudoun Campus of Northern Virginia Community College. She has two daughters and says she ponders a good bit about the social implications of motherhood. She keeps her 1953 Golden Horseshoe and her children's baby teeth in her jewelry box.

Goldenseal
A Quarterly Forum for Documenting
West Virginia's Traditional Life

Department of Culture and History
Science and Culture Center
State Capitol
Charleston, West Virginia 25305

Address Correction Requested