Goldenseal

West Virginia Traditional Life

Volume 6, No. 1 January—March 1980


LILLY

Published by the

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Governor

through its
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History

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Inside the covers are scenes from the 1979 Lilly Family Reunion at Flat Top and Beckley. Yvonne Snyder Farley's article begins on page 31. Color Photography by Doug Chadwick.

Goldenseal

A Quarterly Forum for Documenting West Virginia's Traditional Life

Volume 6, Number 1 ✱ January-March 1980

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COVER: Leafie Lilly Harvey welcomes visitors to her home at Flat Top. Mrs. Harvey remembers early Lilly Reunions, beginning on page 35. Photograph by Doug Chadwick.

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From the Editor: Five Years of GOLDENSEAL

This issue marks GOLDENSEAL's fifth birthday, and my own first anniversary as editor. Much has happened in those years, and it now seems appropriate to pause and take stock.

Most obviously, the magazine has grown. Support of the Department of Culture and History and, before that, of the old Commerce Department and the Arts and Humanities Council, has been unfailing, and our progress has been steady. Since the first GOLDENSEAL, in April-June 1975, circulation has increased nearly sevenfold, from fewer than 2,000 to about 13,000 at present. The first issue was 40 pages long, pasted up from typewritten copy. GOLDENSEAL readers now receive a magazine nearly twice that size, with the finest typesetting, printing, and reproduction available.

More important, however, are the things that have not changed. In the first GOLDENSEAL, founding editor Tom Screven promised that the magazine would "serve not only as a device to preserve many aspects of the State's traditional life but also as a means of communication for students and enthusiasts of West Virginia's folklife."

The mark of GOLDENSEAL's success in honoring that promise lies in the variety of articles printed over the last five years. We have published on traditional music and crafts, folklore, and popular history. GOLDENSEAL has done feature articles on most of the 55 counties, and has touched every part of the state in some way. For the most part, our stories have come directly from the hearts and memories of West Virginia's people, as they recollect our state's past and reflect upon the importance of the past to the present and future.

This involvement of West Virginians in the GOLDENSEAL project has been critical to our success. The first GOLDENSEAL called upon readers to actively contribute to the work of the magazine. I renewed that call upon becoming editor last February, and am pleased at the enthusiastic response. We now receive hundreds of letters per issue, and glean many of our best ideas from this generous outpouring from readers. With limited staff and budget, this is the only way we can keep in touch with the interests of people across the state and with our many readers living outside West Virginia.

This anniversary issue includes a special request for reader participation. On page 71, you will find a survey questionnaire asking for information about yourself and your reaction to GOLDENSEAL. Survey results will be published in a special report in a later issue, and should give all of us valuable information about GOLDENSEAL readers. Your response will be especially helpful to the editorial staff, guiding us as we prepare future issues.

This GOLDENSEAL includes other features of a special nature. We are reprinting from Volume 1, number 1, Earl Core's essay about the goldenseal plant, commonly known as yellowroot. The lucid writing of Professor Core, retired botanist at West Virginia University, should dispel any remaining confusion concerning the naming of our magazine.

The fifth anniversary also seemed an appropriate time to share a glimpse of the GOLDENSEAL production process, as we do in the "Linotype" article. Linotype printing is a declining craft and it seems appropriate that GOLDENSEAL, dedicated as it is to documenting how West Virginians have traditionally worked as well as played, should be typeset on that fascinating machine this year. Delmer Robinson, a printer as well as a journalist, knows Linotype and he knows how to put it into words for the rest of us.

Finally, we are printing an index to Volumes 4 and 5, continuing the work done for Volumes 1-3 in the April-September 1978 GOLDENSEAL.

Looking back, it is impossible to credit all the people who have helped make GOLDENSEAL what it is. Tom Screven, of course, deserves first honors, for conceiving the magazine and guiding it through the difficult early years. Tom himself names Culture and History Commissioner Norman Fagan as "GOLDENSEAL's main grandaddy, angel, and booster." Present at the birth of Volume 1, number 1, and most issues since, has been designer Colleen Anderson. Colleen and Pat Cahape, her partner at Oh Susannah Graphics, continue to design GOLDENSEAL. They have been a particular help to me during my first issues, and are largely responsible for maintaining a sense of continuity during a rapid change of editors and printers.

Our underpaid and hardworking freelancers are too numerous to mention by name. Perhaps representative

of the 200 or so writers and photographers to pass through these pages are Arthur Prichard and Doug Chadwick. Prichard has authored a series of popular articles about his hometown of Mannington, and Chadwick has contributed dozens of photographs, bebinning with the second magazine. Gary Simmons and Michael Kline have published much good work in GOLDENSEAL, first as assistants to the editor and later as freelancers.

Apart from Simmons and Kline, a long line of staff members have labored over GOLDENSEAL. In my own first year, Margo Stafford has been invaluable as editorial assistant. Arriving at GOLDENSEAL a few days before I did, Margo has shared the daily rewards and frustrations of mastering a rapidly growing magazine.

The last people to touch the magazine before it reaches you are the printers. From the first, GOLDENSEAL has been printed inside West Virginia. Fairmont Printing Company has printed most issues, before being nudged out by Chapman Printing Company in the bidding for the current contract. The relationship between editor and printer is occasionally stormy, but the end result has been a quality product, from both companies.

What about the next five years? Certainly, GOLDENSEAL's birthday should not pass without mention of the problems that the magazine will continue to face. There is, of course, the matter of paying for a free publication of our quality and rapidly increasing circulation. Apart from that, there are the problems of managing a mailing list now growing at the rate of several hundred a month, and of mailing itself. There are the daily problems of printing and production, and of coordinating the work of writers and photographers all over the state. None of these will lessen in complexity in the coming years.

However, there has never been any problem of finding material for the magazine, nor of dedicated contributors to develop raw material into well-written and attractively illustrated articles. After five years, the West Virginia story appears to be inexhaustible, as does the generosity of individual West Virginians in sharing their own parts of that story for publication. So long as that's the case, GOLDENSEAL will have a job to do and future prospects will remain bright.

—Ken Sullivan

Goldenseal

By Earl Core

In the shadows of the mighty forest that covered the Appalachian, or Endless Mountains, and the hills to the west, the American aborigines before the coming of the European invaders had discovered hundreds of plants useful to them in various ways. Poles and bark of trees were used in housing; canoes were made by certain techniques, baskets and bags by others. Parts of some plants could be used for food; others formed the basis for alcoholic drinks; still others had remarkable narcotic properties. Many were used in the treatment of the various physical ailments that assailed their bodies.

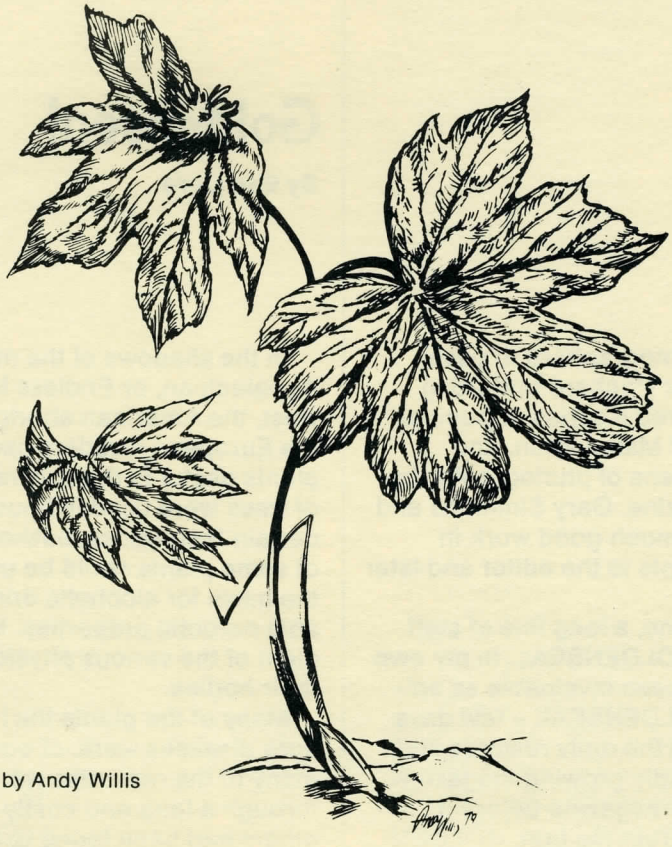
Many of the plants the Indians used in attempts to cure diseases were, of course, to no avail, as is true of many of the remedies we buy in drugstores today. But, through a long and costly process of trial and error, others had been found to be of value. When the Europeans came, this knowledge was transmitted to them, with the result that the valuable plants quickly came to be very scarce. Goldenseal is one of these.

Goldenseal is a member of the crowfoot family and has the Latin name *Hydrastis canadensis.* It is interesting to note that only one other species of *Hydrastis* is known to exist and it (*Hydrastis jezoensis*) is half-way around the world, in the forests of Japan.

Goldenseal is found in the rich soil of deep woods, and in moist places at the edge of wooded lands, flowering from April to May, fruiting in July. It was found originally from Vermont west to Minnesota and eastern Nebraska, and eastern Kansas. It was most abundant, however, in the Appalachians, where it has probably been growing since Mesozoic times, when dinosaurs roamed the forests and Indians were still millions of years in the future.

Nothing about the general appearance of the plant would have attracted the attention of the Indians. It is certainly nondescript in character; the plant is low, six to ten inches high, hidden by other forest herbs; the flowers are inconspicuous, lacking petals entirely, and with only three tiny, pinkish, early-falling sepals. The greenish-white stamens and pistils essentially constitute the flower, and it is not very noticeable. The fruit, unexpectedly, develops to resemble an enlarged red raspberry.

Perhaps it was the thick knotted rootstock, with its



Drawing by Andy Willis

bright yellow interior, that attracted the notice of the Indians. The color was pleasing to their eyes, and the root became the source of a yellow dye for their clothing and their implements of warfare.

A rootstock so handsome in color must certainly possess other virtues. Some of these, through experimentation, the Indians discovered: they used it as a general tonic, a stomach remedy, as an application to ulcerations. It even served as an insect repellent.

The fresh rootstocks, gathered in autumn, were chopped and pounded to a pulp, then perhaps boiled in water and the resulting liquid applied as a wash for skin diseases or sore eyes, or as a gargle for inflammation of the mucous membrane of the throat. For use as an insect repellent the Cherokees pounded the rootstocks with bear fat and smeared it on their bodies. The pioneers chewed the rootstocks to heal a sore mouth.

The results secured from the various uses were in general so satisfactory that the plant was highly valued by the aborigines, and also by the early settlers. The rootstocks were included for many years in the U. S. Pharmacopeia and commanded a high price, probably second only to ginseng. In 1909, for example, when most crude plant drugs were selling for five cents or less a pound, Goldenseal was bringing $1.50 a pound. It is no wonder that in many places it became completely extinct and in most places quite rare. Most of the drug is now secured from plants grown in cultivation. Production amounts to seven or eight tons of rootstocks annually. The wholesale price of the powdered root, in 1975, is about $50 a pound.

Its use in so many different ways could be explained by the fact that the rootstocks contain at least three alkaloids, hydrastine, canadine, and herberine. It is valuable as an astringent and thus helps in the treatment of ulcers and sore eyes. Whether the drug is really useful as a tonic or in treatment of stomach disorders is not known; perhaps it is only psychological, as is certainly true of many pharmaceutical preparations today.

A tincture, in alcohol, as prepared today, has a reddish-orange color, staining everything with which it comes in contact a deep yellow. It has a persistent bitter, then burning taste, no distinguishable odor, and a slightly acid reaction.

Many other common English names have been used, such as golden-root, orange root, yellow-root, yellow puccoon, eye-balm, ground raspberry, Indian turmeric, Indian paint, and Indian dye.

Reprinted from GOLDENSEAL, volume 1, number 1 (April-June 1975.)

current programs·festivals·publications

Buyers Market

The Department of Culture and History will present a Buyers Market for the sales and promotion of arts and crafts, which will run from April 11 through April 14 at the Cultural Center in Charleston. The purpose of the four-day event is to provide marketing assistance for artists and craftspeople, and is designed to serve as a showcase and marketing outlet to help support and promote production and careers. In addition to providing buyers and dealers for craft shops, specialty stores, department stores, and galleries with a marketplace to buy West Virginia crafts, the Buyers Market will also offer the public the opportunity to view and purchase quality art and craft products.

All work represented at the Buyers Market is original and handmade, and has been juried into the event by a special selection advisory committee. Members of the committee were Janet Fleisher, a gallery owner and art dealer from Philadelphia, and Daniel Brooks, president of Appalachian Spring, a Washington, DC, outlet for American handcrafts.

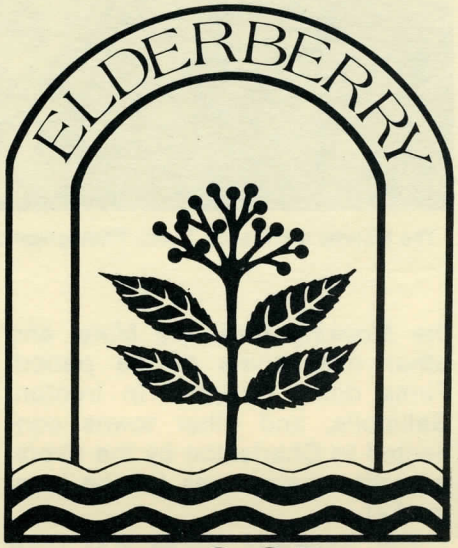
April 11 and the morning of April 12 are set aside for artists and craftspeople to meet with buyers and dealers. The afternoon of April 12, as well as April 13 and 14, are planned as retail sales days, and the public is encouraged to attend.

The Buyers Market is not an exhibition, and no awards will be offered. All work displayed will be for sale.

Second Anniversary of Hill and Valley

Hill and Valley, an Appalachian literary and cultural magazine, reached the two year mark in November 1979. In October, founder and editor Shirley Young Campbell noted that "after 22 issues, we're only $80 in the hole." She figures that's a good record for an independent small magazine, and looks forward to many future issues.

Hill and Valley is available in major bookstores in Morgantown and Charleston for $1.50 a copy, or for $15 a year by subscription. The address is 4512 Lancaster Avenue, Charleston 25304.



Gayrelle Sloman

FLOOD

BY

LOUISE McNEILL

Elderberry Flood, a collection of poetry by West Virginia Poet Laureate Louise McNeill (Pease), was published last fall by Elderberry Books of the West Virginia Department of Culture and History.

Louise McNeill Pease was born in 1911 on the Pocahontas County farm where her family has lived since before the Revolutionary War. She attended local country schools, and later Concord College and Miami University of Ohio, completing her education with a Ph.D. from West Virginia University. She began teaching in a one-room school at age 19, and taught for 30 years in schools and colleges across West Virginia.

Named Poet Laureate by Governor Rockefeller in 1977, Dr. Pease has published several earlier collections of poetry, including the popular *Gauley Mountain,* in 1939. Her work has appeared in *Atlantic Monthly, Harper's, Saturday Evening Post,* and other national magazines.

Much of the poetry in *Elderberry Flood* is of an historical nature, including a humorous account of Daniel Boone's short career in the Virginia General Assembly as the representative from Kanawha County:

"Daniel Boone"
It was certainly not in his early plans,
And certainly not in his nature;
But Old Dan Boone—and his record stands—
Sat in the Legislature.

He dressed himself in his deerskin clothes,
And he walked to Richmond City;
Enrolled himself "where the hot air blows",
And was then put on committee.

He sat two days. Then took up his gun,
Walked back to Kanawha River.
He had fought Shawnee, had fought Cherokee;
But *them lawyers* made him quiver.

Other poems range as far back as the Colonial period, while still others follow our state's sometimes violent labor history. "Buffalo Creek" commemorates the 1972 tragedy in Logan County.

Elderberry Flood is the first book publishing venture of the Department of Culture and History, under its new Elderberry Books imprint. Other books are expected to follow, including a volume of the best articles from the early years of GOLDENSEAL. Elderberry Books is distributing *Elderberry Flood,* and wholesale orders may be placed by book stores. Individual copies may be ordered for $10 from The Shop, Cultural Center, Capitol Complex, Charleston 25305.

Monroe 4-H Dance Program

On April 5, the Monroe 4-H Dance Team will present its second annual Homecoming Night dance program at Union High School, Union. Last year's program, held at the town fire station, was a popular event, and the Team hopes for still greater success at the high school.

The Dance Team will perform Morris, English, Irish, Scottish, and Appalachian traditional dances, in a program to commemorate the British Isles heritage of many of Monroe County's people. Live dance music will be supplied by Erdverkle, the Dance Team's own band. A special musical interlude will be provided by fiddler W. Franklin George. Other musicians will be featured throughout the evening, and Team leader Dennis White promises the music will range "from bluegrass banjo to Irish tin whistle and the bagpipes to ragtime piano."

The program begins at 7:30 p. m., and a donation is requested. GOLDENSEAL expects to have a photographer in Union for the festivities, and will publish photographs in a later issue.

The Monroe 4-H Dance Team. Photograph by Jesus Perez.

The Kanawha Valley, 1872

Augusta Press of Charleston has recently republished *The Kanawha Valley, Its Resources and Developments.* This 1872 business directory will be of interest to modern residents of Charleston and the Valley, and particularly to students of area history.

Kanawha Valley contains short promotional articles on various local industries of the time, including coal, timber, and salt, as well as descriptions of the area's history and climate. Of greater interest, however, are the dozens of commercial advertisements. The advertisements give a clearer view of the economic life of the post-Civil War Valley than do the rosy descriptions of the directory's supposedly non-commercial articles.

From these ads, 1872 Charleston emerges as above all else a river town. Lavish listings are given for the *Kittie Hegler,* the *Fannie Dugan,* the *Mocking Bird,* the *Mule,* and other river boats of the period. Firms doing business in Ironton, Gallipolis, and other towns connected to Charleston by the rivers, advertise their wares for the local market.

The Kanawha Valley was originally published by Gibbens, Atkinson & Co., publishers of the *West Virginia Journal,* one of the several Charleston newspapers advertised in this directory. The 64-page reprint may be ordered from Augusta Press, P. O. Box 1024, Charleston 25324, for $3.50 plus 50¢ postage and handling.

New Appalshop Catalogue

Appalachia's best-known film workshop, Appalshop of Whitesburg, Kentucky, released its new catalogue in the fall of 1979. *Appalshop Films* offers 30 films, whose topics range from traditional religion to the problems of strip mining in a fragile natural environment.

Appalshop films of particular interest to West Virginians include *Nimrod Workman: To Fit My Own Category; The Struggle of Coon Branch Mountain,* about social protest in McDowell County; and *Catfish: Man of the Woods.* The *Appalshop Show,* a sampler of excerpts from 12 Appalshop movies, shown on national public television in 1977, may be rented for $135.

All Appalshop films are for sale or rental, with rental prices mostly in the $30-$50 range. Copies of the catalogue are available free of charge, from Appalshop, Box 743-N, Whitesburg, Ky. 41858.

Bluegrass Labels Merge

Bluegrass fans will be interested to know that two of the field's top record companies have joined forces. In September County Records of Floyd, Virginia, announced that it had purchased Rebel Records, Asbury, West Virginia, in its entirety. The transaction was effective October 1, and included all existing rights and recordings, as well as albums yet to be released by Rebel.

Rebel Records was founded by Charles R. Freeland in 1959, and grew to be one of the most influential independent bluegrass labels in the country. Rebel was an important innovator in bluegrass, introducing such new-generation bands as the Seldom Scene and the Country Gentlemen. County Records will retain the Rebel name and its extensive catalogue, though headquarters and all operations will be transferred to Virginia.

letters from readers

Staunton, Virginia
September 21, 1979
Editor:
Just had the pleasant experience of seeing and reading GOLDENSEAL for the first time, and was delighted and excited with the format and contents.

Being a native West Virginian, growing up near Franklin, and both running a retail store and farming in the area for many years, many of your articles and pictures bring back nostalgic memories. We still visit West Virginia at every opportunity, as we have a host of relatives and friends to see.

I would very much appreciate being included in your mailing list. If a subscription is necessary for out-of-staters, please advise and bill the cost.

Keep up the good work.
Sincerely,
Aud W. Smith

Eustis, Florida
September 15, 1979

Editor:
A friend recently sent me a copy of GOLDENSEAL. I was born in West Virginia and lived in West Virginia until 1970, at which time I moved to Florida.

I was delighted with the copy of GOLDENSEAL. It is now almost worn out from being read by other former West Virginians now residing in Florida.

Will you please put me on your mailing list? I assure you that each copy will not only be read by me, but I shall share each copy with other former West Virginians living in this area.

All my life, I have collected information about West Virginia and its history.
Cordially yours,
Virginia Lee Ingle
(Mrs. John B. Ingle)

Rock Cave, WV
September 13, 1979

Editor:
My neighbor gave me a copy of this marvelous edition of the GOLDENSEAL (Volume 5, number 3). How we love it! I read the deer story aloud, and the musical section was great. My niece, Mrs. Valena Anderson Tiller, was raised in Elkins, and my sister was so happy there with all the good churches and good people. She went home four years ago to her heavenly home.

I think this magazine is wonderful. The **Foxfire** books tell of stories of long ago and are good. But our own West Virginia is just as good. I am 74 and remember how things used to be and how the neighbors helped one another, and still do. West Virginia is noted for that.

I don't mean to be like a pig in the trough, but I know some other people that would love this magazine.

Thank you, and if there is any charge let me know.
Gratefully,
Mrs. A. D. Anderson

Honaker, Virginia
September 10, 1979

Editor:
Please put me on your mailing list so I may receive GOLDENSEAL. My husband brought home a copy from the mines. Someone had brought it to him.

I have lived with the coal mines all my life. My father is a coal miner and I married one. They both work at Island Creek Coal Mines #1 at Keene Mountain, Virginia, as do two of my brothers. At one time I had four uncles working there also. I know the mines are much safer now than they used to be, but still there is danger everyday and you cannot help but worry about your loved ones.

GOLDENSEAL was so interesting I couldn't put it down. Neither could my husband, and he read it from front to back. We both truly enjoyed it. It was something we could relate to. We knew some of the people you wrote about.
Sincerely,
Connie Dye

Harrisonburg, Virginia
September 10, 1979

Editor:
I am a student at James Madison University and am enrolled in a Culture of Appalachia course. I am writing in regards to your magazine GOLDENSEAL. I was informed that this magazine is available free of cost, and I am very interested in receiving it. I feel it will benefit me in my class and also in my understanding of life in West Virginia.
Sincerely,
Leslie Barham

Charleston, WV
September 9, 1979

Editor:
"The Poet of Lawnsville," written by Bob Spence of Logan, which appeared in your July-September issue, brought back to me a flood of happy memories, and I feel that I would be guilty of rank ingratitude if I failed to inform you of how I feel about it.

The first memory is the fact that, back in the early '20's, while I was still a student at Charleston High School, my family had an Edison phonograph—not the old, old type that played cylindrical records, but a much later model which used disc records about a quarter of an inch thick. One of my favorites was "Ben Bolt," with words by Thomas

Dunn English and music by Nelson Kneass. On the "flip" side was, if I recall correctly, another tear-jerker of the same period in the middle of the nineteenth century. Its title was "Darling Nellie Gray."

I am slightly flabbergasted to note that, in Bob Spence's fascinating saga of English's career, he simply mentions that "Ben Bolt" was just a poem, and omits the fact that it was eventually set to music by Nelson Kneass, who admitted that his tune was based on an old German melody.

Another happy memory revived for me by Spence is the fact that, during my one and only visit to Logan, in 1938, I noticed in a prominent location in that city, a statue of Thomas Dunn English, commemorating the fact that he had been a distinguished citizen of that community, way back when it was called Lawnsville and later when its name was changed to Aracoma and eventually to the name it now bears.

My second bit of flabbergastery is that nowhere in Spence's opus is there a mention of that statue, which, as far as I know, is still there.

The closing paragraph of "The Poet of Lawnsville" reads as follows: "English himself considered 'Ben Bolt' to be twaddle, but it has outlived everything he did."

May I add something he used to say that I feel outlived many of the things he did. It just happens that, after studying medicine at the University of Pennsylvania in the 1830's, and starting a medical practice, he switched to law and studied it for three years. He was admitted to the bar, but later in life, after he gave his talents to politics and writing poetry, he used to say, "I was never lawyer enough to hurt me."

Sincerely,
Louis J. Kravitz

Bob Spence, a lifelong resident of Logan, says there has not been a statue of English there in his memory, and that older residents cannot recall one. However, the "Logan" historical marker does mention English and "Ben Bolt," as does the "Gauley Bridge" marker in Fayette County. Bob does of course note English's "never lawyer enough to hurt" comment, and in fact uses it as a sub-heading in his article.—ed.

Hometown, WV
September 5, 1979

Editor:
A copy of your GOLDENSEAL magazine was lent to me by a man in church. I enjoyed it so much. I would appreciate it very much if you could add my name to your mailing list, and I would love to have a copy of the July-September issue. I worked at this mine 30 years, starting in 1913. I worked 10 hours for 85¢. I am past 82 years old. I have been a minister for 45 years, serving these miners' families. I have buried perhaps 1000 of them and married off about 300 of their boys and girls. I'm still going, but not so fast.
Sincerely yours,
Rev. John King

Chloe, WV
August 25, 1979

Editor:
I have been receiving GOLDENSEAL since its inception and continually have been impressed with the overall quality of the magazine. The photography and layout are more stunning every issue and I'm a trifle embarrassed that I don't pay a penny for all this.

My suggestions and criticisms are directed mostly toward your tardiness in publishing. No doubt this is a problem you're aware of but perhaps you're not aware how frustrating it can be for your readership.

Most of GOLDENSEAL, thankfully, is timeless. It doesn't get thrown out with the daily newspaper. But your "announcement" pages should speak of the future or else be omitted. I generally receive six to eight weeks later than announced.

Perhaps an honest editorial statement would be in order about your deadline problems. It's the only dark spot in a magazine that glows all over.
Sincerely,
Paul Hernfels

Upon becoming editor in mid-February of last year, I inherited a magazine which was far behind schedule. Since then the GOLDENSEAL staff, designers, and printer have worked hard to put the magazine back on time. "Our" first issue (April-June 1979) was mailed in early June, July-September went out in mid-August, and October-December in the first week of November. If this issue reaches you by mid-January, I'll consider GOLDENSEAL to be back on schedule. Thank you for your criticism.—ed.

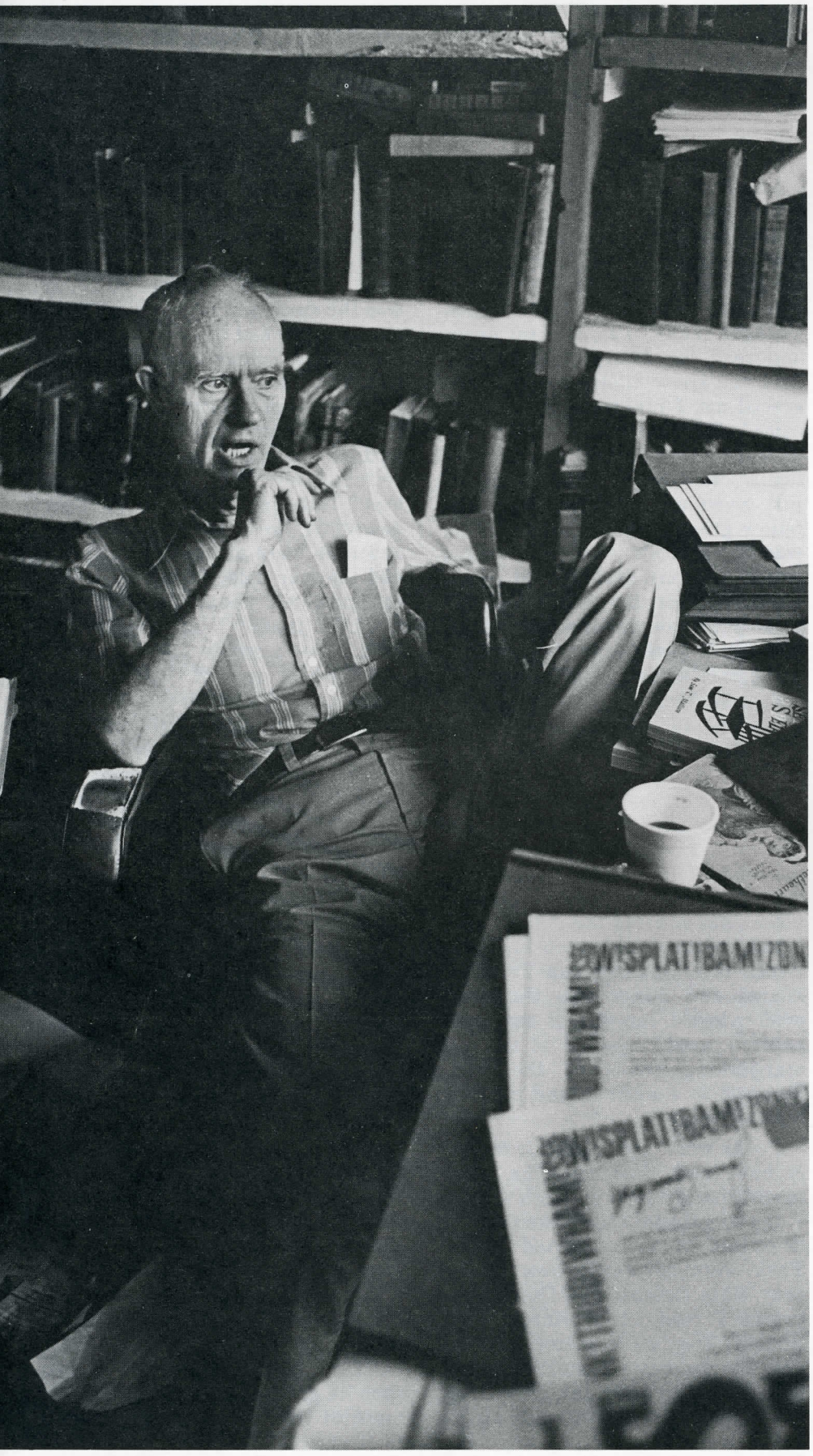
Fairmont, WV
August 27, 1979

Editor:
A few months ago I received a copy of your magazine. A good friend had sent in my name, knowing I would be very much interested. I enjoy it very much, and it brings back memories of old times and old friends.

I was and still am a country fiddler. I played many times with Skyland Scotty (Scot Wiseman) and Herb Morrison. Lots of names and pictures are very familiar to me as I played fiddle with the WMMN studio gang. That was back in the late 'twenties and early 'thirties. In 1932 at the age of 16 I won second place in a state contest at the Fairmont Armory. Bradley Kincaid was the special attraction there. In 1936 I fiddled with Frank Dudgeons' Original West Virginia Mountain Boys. We traveled over West Virginia, Ohio, and Maryland, Pennsylvania and Virginia. We were playing professionally. I did trick fiddling, and sang tenor with the trio. Numerous ones were with us at times, Joy Barker, Shirley, Cowboy Phil. I am enclosing a newspaper clipping of those times.

In 1937 I left radio and took a job in the coal mines. I was only going to stay in there a couple of years, but got interested in mining,

(Continued on Page 65)



Jim Comstock in his Richwood office.

Goldenseal Meets Hillbilly

An Interview with Jim Comstock

By Ken Sullivan
Photographs by
Doug Chadwick

THE *West Virginia Hillbilly* is probably the best-known newspaper in the state, and certainly one of the best-known of its kind in the country. For over 20 years Jim Comstock, founding editor, has been promulgating his unique blend of current events and West Virginiana from *Hillbilly's* Richwood offices, all tied together by a scrappy conservatism and nailed down by the cracker barrel philosophy of a country editor. Like any weekly paper, much of the contents of *Hillbilly* is of no more than passing interest, but the "Comstock Load"—Jim Comstock's personal realm on the back page of the paper—has featured some profound writing over the years. *Best of Hillbilly,* a 1969 compilation of Comstock's writing, is largely drawn from this weekly page, and the book portrays the wisdom gleaned from a long life in Nicholas County.

Comstock has said that he is in the business of pointing out what's good about West Virginia to outsiders, while telling West Virginians what's wrong with their state. GOLDENSEAL's mission, in documenting West Virginia's traditional culture, is somewhat different from that. Nonetheless, it is clear from our mail that we share many of the same readers, perhaps especially those *Hillbilly* refers to as "chickened-out West Virginians," in places like Arizona and Florida. Moreover, it is clear that Jim Comstock himself has become a cultural phenomenon, worthy of the attention of our readers as well as his. All considered, the occasion of

GOLDENSEAL's fifth birthday seemed a good time for our still-young magazine to consult with the old pro.

Consequently, photographer Doug Chadwick and I journeyed to Richwood to visit Comstock and *Hillbilly* one day last summer. We chased the man up and down Main Street, managing in the process to wangle invitations to the going-away luncheon for Pete Wallace, Comstock's understudy for the past few years. We finally cornered Comstock in the back room of Hillbilly Bookstore. I remarked that both the paper and its editor are pretty much West Virginia institutions by now. After quipping that "a lot of people think we should be in an institution," Jim Comstock settled down to talk about newspapering.

Jim Comstock. Newspapers? Oh, lord, I guess that's a real long story. It started about the fifth grade in a one-room school, Faulkner School on Hinkle Mountain, three miles up from Richwood. I had a teacher, George Long—he was, no doubt, a thwarted newspaperman. He didn't want to teach, he wanted to edit a paper. But everybody couldn't edit papers, and it takes a strong, staunch breed anyhow. So he became a school teacher. Now his Bible in this world was *Grit* newspaper. Not John Wayne's *True Grit,* but the old Pennsylvania non-true *Grit.* Well, he would bring that to school, and that was pretty much his text.

Then one day he said, "Why don't we have a Hinkle Mountain newspaper?" And so we edited a newspaper. We got a little 8½ by 11 paper and then he would run it off at night on his old Oliver typewriter at home. He would type it up using carbon papers. He produced about 12 copies, and the person who got that last one got a pretty dim view of it, of trying to read the thing. But we would pass them out among the people on Hinkle Mountain. And that was the newspaper. I was his roving correspondent. I would get the news and we would both write it up, see. Well, unconsciously, I was learning how to write, how to use language, how to put words together. In other words, it was a terrific way of teaching. But the other kids could go to hell, as far as he was concerned. Just me and he, that was all there was to it.

It's hard to believe that I never learned to read until I was almost ten years old. I went through the grades, and they must have thought I was retarded—everybody'd treat me gently, and pat me on the head. But a boy came to my house, much younger than I was, and sat down and read the funny paper to me. And you know, that just about disgraced me. I just thought, by jove, come hell or high water, I was going to learn to read! And I was practically self-taught. The family'd just given up. Like they said one fellow grew up in a family and he was 12 years old and never said a word. And one day he said something, and his dad said, "Well, all these years you never said a word." He said, "I never saw much of anything to talk about, particularly."

So, you know, after I learned to read, my lord, the printed word was God to me. I devoured books—out on work detail on the farm I took *Ben Hur* with me, I remember. *Quo Vadis* was one of my early books. My lord, I was living in a fool's paradise of literature. Nothing today, in all the wide scope of television, has equaled the delight that I had, starting with such books as *Heidi, Tom Sawyer,* and *Treasure Island,* and things like that, and even when I ran out of the good books I would read all of the old tear-jerking books of the past. *Tempest in Sunshine,* and all that kind of thing.

Books were very difficult to get. A new book then cost 75¢. That meant that I'd have to work almost a day to get that much money. The drugstore in town carried books. They were not really new books; they were Grosset and Dunlap reprints. I read all of Harold Bell Wright. They've forgotten him today, but he was a bestseller in my day. Harold Bell Wright. Zane Grey—my lord, I went through all of Zane Grey. There wasn't anything I didn't read. If it was printed, I read it. If it was a Prince Albert can, I read it. It was just simply the words were a living god! And I've used them ever since. They've been my tool.

I remember my first library was a shoebox. I carried that around with me—those were the books I owned. I remember I worked all week for a farmer one time and he said, "I'm going to give you some good books, good library." Well, it was the damndest fleecing anybody ever got. He had been at the political trough somewhere, and they had sent him these well-bound *Congressional Records.* Well, I looked at them and thought, "My lord, as much as I like to read I'm certainly not going to go through that." And I didn't. So I took them downtown to a second-hand store and they were all clean and pretty and the man said, "Well, sure, you can pick out about anything you want for them." I left them and I took away a whole lot—I remember a whole case of Guy de Maupassant. And I read that straight through. And there was Balzac, I remember reading. Oh, lord, it was heaven somewhat. And the second-hand store burned the next week. So I hadn't fleeced the man too badly. They would have burned up anyhow.

Ken Sullivan. Had your people lived here for generations?

JC No, not particularly. My people are of Dutch extraction, they were rather well-heeled people in New York. They came down to Wheeling, into the Ohio side, and my dad's people came into Putnam County. My dad then went to Point Pleasant to live. He was a telephone man, and he would go away, oh, for maybe a week, and he would help to put up telephone poles and wire. I remember we had climbers that he brought with him to the farm as souvenirs.

But when he went back to Point Pleasant one day and had to take his young family, wife and first child, out of the top story in a boat, then he decided he didn't want any more of that country. So he came to Braxton County and he lived at Gassaway, at Sutton, and then Rich-

wood started and he came here about 1907 or '08, something like that. The town was just simply nothing but stumps, and he put in the first telephone system. In fact, my dad says that the biggest mistake he ever made was to not take the company's offer to buy their stock. He didn't think the telephone was here to stay, so he didn't go for that.

I was born in this town. But the family came on with great rapidity and such frequency that my dad just couldn't keep us fed at all. So he moved to a farm where we could do it ourselves—in violation of child labor. So we moved up to one farm, and we ended up in a feud there. One of these old-time feuds. Boy, it was one hell of a mess. And then we moved over to a peaceful section of the world known as Hinkle Mountain—and it's still the gem of the earth. That was three and a half miles from town.

We only had eight months of school on a farm then, did you know that? The other month a farm boy should not be in school, he should be helping his parents. Well, I rebelled. I said that a farm boy should be as good as a city boy. The hell with that kind of malarky. So I refused to work on the farm. I went to town school and finished up. And the teachers took a shine to anybody who would walk three and a half miles just to finish up a month of school. They didn't know I was doing it to try to get out of the farm work. And so they made it easy for me. They paved the way. But I found out something—with the exception of arithmetic, I was from four to ten years ahead of any town student.

But the reason—you had very little distraction other than reading, or I did. And I read omnivorously. And then I had this good teacher, George Long. When you got one good man and you're his only student, he's your tutor, boy you can't fail. We found the other kids a little distracting at times.

This is strange to believe, but he did not want me to take that month off and go to town school. He said that the town schools contaminate

Comstock with customer in Hillbilly Bookshop.

country kids. To keep me from going he told me how far advanced they would be. Well, then I started memorizing the textbooks. You'd ask me when any author was born: Edgar Allen Poe, I'd say 1809-1848. Abraham Lincoln, 1809-1865. Oliver Wendell Holmes, 1809- . . . I was beginning to think everybody was born in 1809, of any importance. I knew all those things. I knew writers like Ernest Thompson Seton that the kids never heard of. Oh, I was head and shoulders above them. My lord, I knew the cause of the Civil War, who was mixed up in it, and these kids didn't know the Civil War from the American Revolution. In town.

Then I went through journalism

school—majored in journalism at Marshall, under Page Pitt. I came back and I taught school for eight years. During that time I called myself "foreign correspondent" to the *Clarksburg Telegram*. I wrote and was paid 10¢ an inch. I paid for the first house I lived in, at 10¢ an inch. You'd get $1 for a banner, if you had a nice murder—and we had some beauties in Richwood in those early days. My gosh! I could write a book on the murders that I have attended. They were just not great national headline stuff, but the most interesting type. Lord, just to think about them is something!

Then came the war and I was in indoctrination school. And on the Island of Guam I was put, by some strange miracle of bad maneuvering on the Navy's part, into a litho-offset engraving plant. The man looked at my card and he said, "I see you were a printer back in civilian life, along with being a schoolteacher." And I said, "Yes, I was." He said, "Well, start printing." Now, I'm supposed to be out there defending this country.

And there's an awful emergency on that island, a crisis—my lord, you think about the gasoline crisis, and nuclear warfare and things like that, but this was worse. Five thousand officers and they didn't have one Christmas card to send home! Christmas of 1945, I supose. So, the man told me to produce Christmas cards. And he said, "We'll have a modest little number because we know you can't do too much, say about 200,000!"

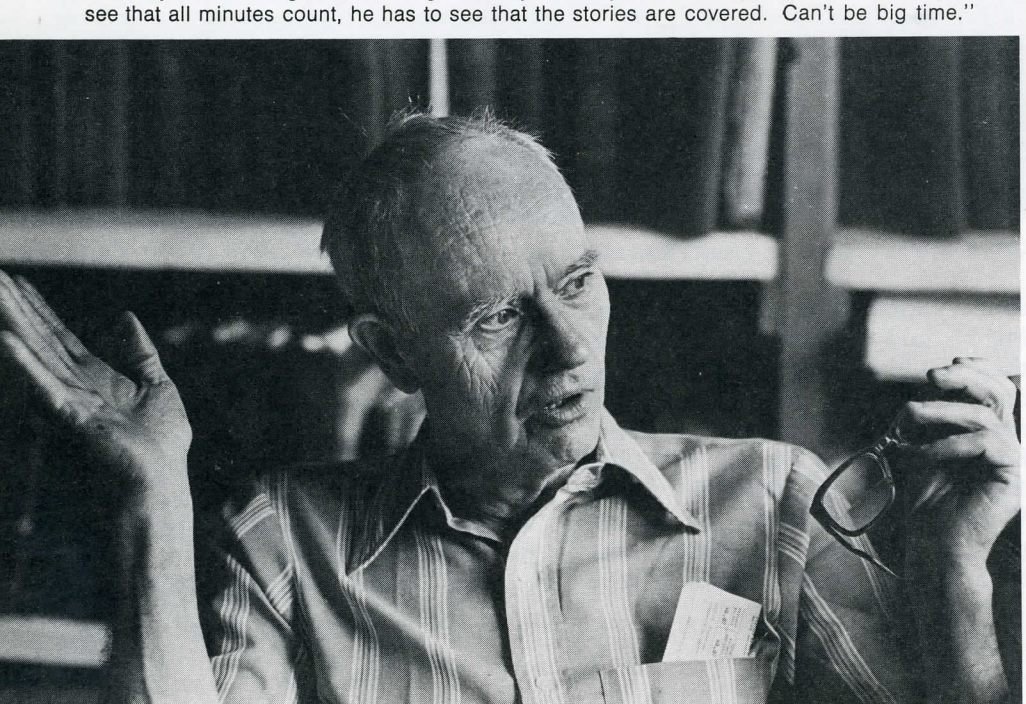
During this printing, I was assigned a yeoman. And this yeoman had a wife who was running his newspaper for him out in Minnesota. The paper was making money for the first time while she was running it, while he was in the service. And he talked me into it. He said, "There is nothing like the life of a newspaperman. My lord, that is the life of Riley, if there ever was one. Now, when you get home," he said, "start you a newspaper." And so that was the thing that I had in mind, starting a newspaper. He said the life would be so easy. Well, God will punish him, because it has never been easy, for me.

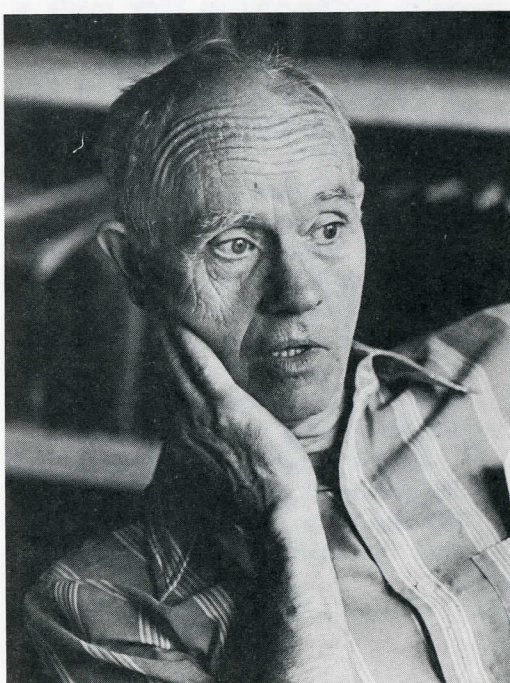
I started in 1946, launched the Richwood *News Leader* with my partner, Bronson McClung. 'Course, I started calling it the *News Letter*, but the Postmaster General in his wisdom said, "Is it a letter or a paper? If it's a paper," he said, "change the name, and if it's a letter, put a stamp on every one of them." Now, that's government for you. I learned early on that one. So we changed it to "Leader," which sounded much like "Letter." It was rather successful, a weekly paper.

But then in 1957, I announced to my partner that we were going to do what we had always wanted to do, and he said what was that, and I said, "We're going to start an all-state paper." and that was the beginning of *Hillbilly*. The idea was—is—to be a country, community paper for an entire state. I've tried to do that, and I think I've succeeded.

Well, now, when we started, I made out a list of 100 names of what I thought a paper should be. And Bronson and I would keep looking at the names, and we'd keep eliminating. And the one that we could never eliminate was "hillbilly." And we decided to chance it. But, boys, it was a red flag. I remember that right after we started the paper we got a letter from the acting president of West Virginia University, a highly educated man. He wrote back and said, "Your paper has been coming to this office. We would like to have it discontinued." He said, "It isn't so bad when I'm here and the mail comes, because I can take it to the wastebasket myself. But when I am gone, then it becomes the onerous duty," he said, "of my secretary. And nobody should expect a young girl to do a job like that. Please discontinue it." And then they say that the head of the Department of Journalism at West Virginia University one time tried to mathematically compute how many years I set back journalism with my kind of writing.

"When you're looking at the average country editor, you're looking at pretty much a genius in the field. If he's a successful editor, he has to see that all minutes count, he has to see that the stories are covered. Can't be big time."





Patrick Gainer, the great sultan of hillbilly-ese and so forth, will not have the paper in his house, and he tells all his audiences that it is scurrilous journalism. Oh, I've been in the audience when he didn't know I was there and it was very relishing. I sit there and take it because it embarrasses him when he does find out that I'm in the audience. Then he starts to say, "Well, now, we're good friends and all like that." And we are, strange enough. I mean, my lord, the man who wouldn't respect Pat Gainer would be a fool.

But after a while we decided that we were going to change the name. Because we had all this barrage against it. And I started calling it "Appalachian Log." I put it right under *Hillbilly,* "Appalachian Log," so they'd see it little and pretty soon it would become big and *Hillbilly* would be little, then that would stand altogether by itself. Well, I ran a poll and it was 30 to 1 to keep the word *Hillbilly.*

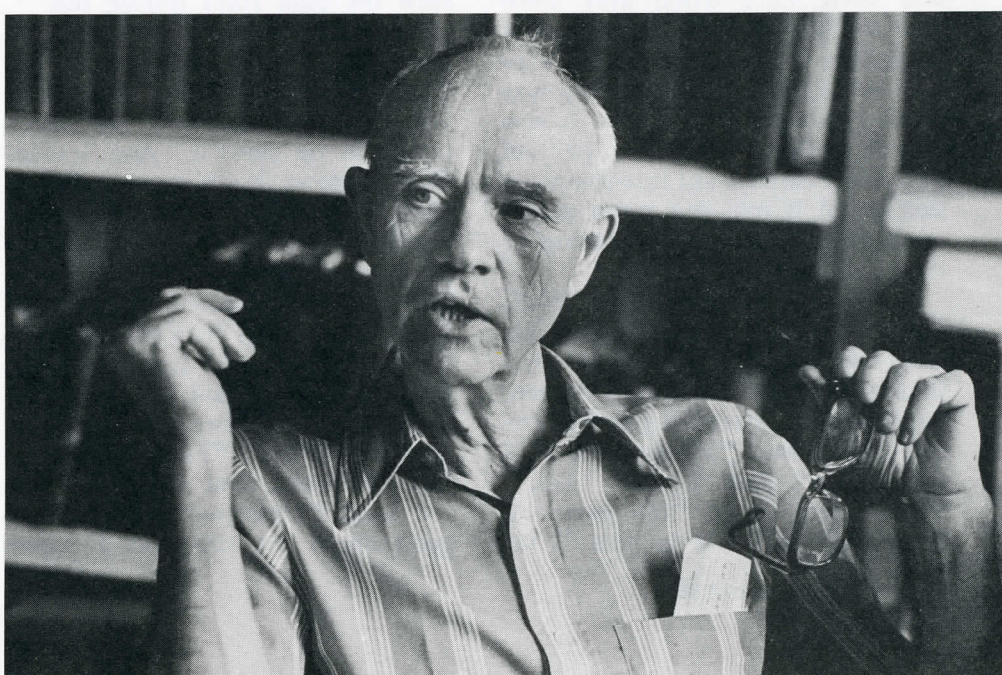
The paper, for the first year, just went out willy-nilly, not worrying about anything. We had $10,000 we'd put away and about 11 months later the bank called and they said, "Look, there's no money in the bank." Well, we decided to see what was wrong, and we decided we needed advertising. Our difference between profit and loss was $200 a week, which of course is chicken feed in this day and time. So I wrote a letter to 40 businesses in West Virginia, if they would take $5 ads each week, that would take me out each month. But when I heard from all of them except 37, I decided something had to give, so we dropped the paper. Quit it for a whole year.

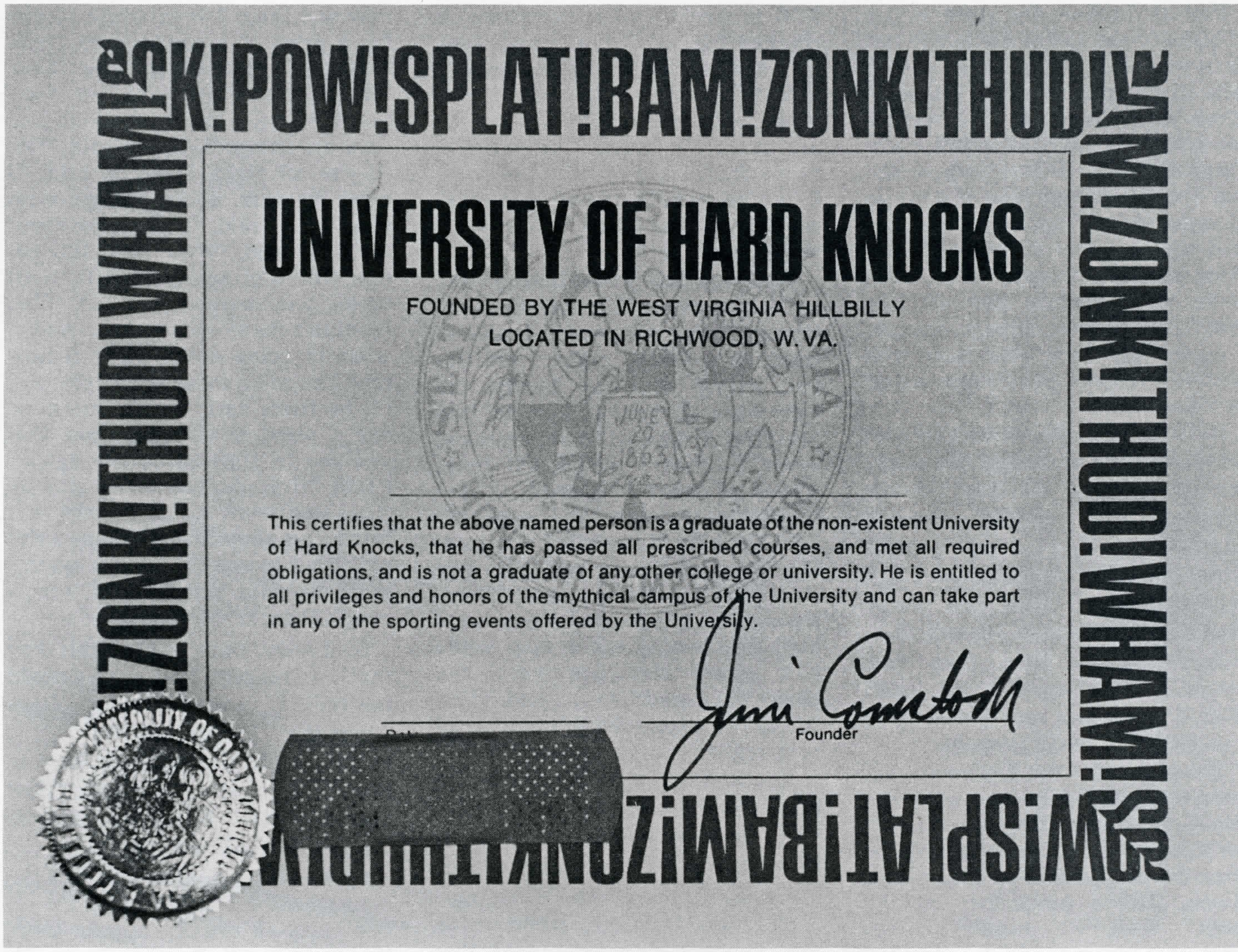
That was 1958. From 1958 to 1959, we had no paper. But there's a very strange thing happened. I was at home on a Friday night, I remember, sitting with my family, the kids were all young. And we had beautiful Methodist togetherness at home, in that I would tell them stories of what happened on the newspaper that day—and highly delight the kids. But while I was talking the phone rang, and my wife said what she always says, "Don't answer the telephone because anybody that would call a man while he's eating shouldn't have the phone answered." And I said, "Yes, but if the phone doesn't ring your cash register won't either."

And so, I got up to answer it, and the voice was young and it said, "My name is Melvin Miller." It says, "You don't remember me, but I'm calling you from Wheeling." And I said, "Oh, yes, I remember you. You're a Bethany student. You worked for the Wheeling papers. I've been using some of your stuff now and then. I even wrote to you for a print of a picture you made of a praying mantis one time. You're quite a photographer, too." I said, "Sure, I know all about you. How are things?" And he said, "Oh, they're all right, but," he said, "I want to talk about things with you." And I said, "Well, what about me?" He said, "Well. look, this paper, *Hillbilly,* you started it, went broke, you stopped it." Said, "You shouldn't have done that. And I want to come down there tomorrow, I'm going to leave tonight, and I'll be there early in the morning, and I want to convince you that you should start the paper again." I said, "Huh-uh. You better stay up there and work for somebody, and just forget about this, because we're not about to start the paper again." Well, he said, "I'll see you tomorrow." Then he hung up.

So I went back to the table and that was funnier than ever, I could tell them here was a young college punk that think's he can tell a couple of old professionals how to start their paper again. I said, "How does he know? What's he going to use for money?" And so forth.

So we all laughed at that, and the next morning I was back at the office early—I usually appear there about five or six o'clock in the morning. I'm an early riser; I can get all my work done by ten and





University of Hard Knocks diploma.

that's when the phone starts ringing. So, in front of the place there's this wee, little sports car—and it was back there when they were new to the town—it looked something like a cross between an ashtray and a spittoon. In it a boy was snoring. I knew who it was. It was Melvin Miller. I decided to just let him sleep. And I went into the place and swept it out, put some coffee on the hook and wrote a thing or two.

It was Saturday morning. Well, the kids in the town discovered his little car, and they woke him up—that was the first one they had seen. So he came in, stretching and yawning, and he said, "My name is Melvin Miller." And I said, "Yes, I know." And I said, "My partner's here, and we'll talk to you. What do you want?" I said, "Do you want a fast no or a slow no?" He said, "I've got a long time, I'll take a slow no. Just start telling me."

I said, "Well, we're not about to start the paper, but just to be friendly with you, why, you might tell us why you think the paper ought to be started." And I said, "Forty good businessmen didn't care whether it went." He said, "Well, that wasn't the point. Businessmen are usually something else. They're not interested in that." He said, "The things that you've done with this paper, it just proves it ought to go." I said, "Yes, but is there anything proves it ought to pay for itself?" "Yeah," he said, "we can work that out."

I said, "What particularly was good about my life that a paper would bring a boy down from Wheeling?" "Well," he said, "the time that you put the smell of the ramps in the ink. That was a good one." He said, "Well, how about the sexual behavior of the Richwood female?" Well, that was another satire I did, on Kinsey's book—you know, he'd written one about the sexual behavior of the American male. And he followed that up with the sexual behavior of the American female. I was a little bit disturbed with the possibilities of a third book.

So then there was the other one, about the time when we suggested that a man remove his own appendix. I mean, we didn't think anybody would take a thing like that seriously. We got in all kinds of trouble. Well, Melvin Miller said,

"That's what I call real newspapering." And I said, "Well, a lot of people don't."

You see, I had decided to write a satire. On "Do-it-Yourself." Remember that you couldn't pick up a newspaper that didn't have a column about "do-it-yourself." Women were putting everybody out of a job and putting their husbands into it. And I saw that as a great threat, and I wondered, now, what's the most ridiculous do-it-yourself? And then I thought about psychoanalysis. You'd sit in your chair and you'd ask yourself a question, then you'd go over and stretch out on the couch and answer it, and so forth. Well, that didn't go over, because, to begin with, the readers in West Virginia didn't know what psychoanalysis was. I mean, there hadn't been the preferrential primary between Kennedy and Humphrey, and things like that, to educate us.

And I tried another one. I worked with people who practiced the art, I read books on the subject, and I wrote it all up, typed it, and got it all ready to go to press and then I decided, "The world's not ready for that." And I put it aside. That was "You Can Embalm Your Own Loved Ones."

But the one that I did was the one "You Can Remove Your Own Appendix." I stopped this old doctor and I told him, I said, "Look, can you tell me how to remove your own appendix, and we'll syndicate it, split the fee, and make some money." And the money interested him very much. And so we came up on Sunday afternoon, and he told me how you could remove your own appendix. It's logical, and he said it would probably be fatal, too. So I wrote it all up, and, well, it made the papers. Made the Associated Press. The AP couldn't understand, couldn't believe I'd printed it, really.

So we got this fellow in England who wrote and wanted copies. He said he was having some troubles and he knew what was wrong. They had socialized medicine there, where you die of old age before your name comes up to the top of the waiting list. And he wanted to know how to remove his own appendix. And I remember, without thinking we sent it to him. We never did know what happened. And when I do "shuffle off this mortal coil" and go to my reward, I'm going to check with St. Peter and ask him how Mr. J. W. Fox was upon arrival, what was his condition.

And we talked all day with Melvin Miller. That afternoon, I said to him, I said, "OK, you're down here from Wheeling but you don't even sound like a West Virginian." So he confessed that he wasn't, that he was from Brooklyn. That he'd been in the service, that when he got out he picked up the *New York Times,* and there was an ad in there. Bethany College would trade a four-year scholarship for four years as campus photographer. And he said, "I was their boy." He said, "Now, it's four years later." Says, "I'll get my degree a month from now." Says, "I'm ready!" And I said, "Ready for what?" And he said, "For my life's work." I said, "What's that?" He said, "Running this paper."

I said, "You're serious, aren't you?" He says, "I am dead serious." I said, "OK, let's say you are. You want to start the paper. What would you do? What are you going to do? You're a young fellow, you've got a lot of dreams and all that; I'm heading up in years and I know something about the value of money. What would you do?"

He said, "You know, I thought you'd never ask that." Said, "You see that little car out there? I'm going to sell it. I can get $1,700 for it. That's going to grubstake me this summer. I'm going all over this state and I'm going to tell them what this paper is attempting to do. Somewhere I'm going to find some good business — coal mine, bakery, or something—that believes in West Virginia, too. And they're going to take enough advertising to keep your paper going *ad infinitum.* Clear on from the alpha to the omega."

I said, "OK, that sounds all right. You do that, and we will start the paper." Bronson, my partner, said, "Oh, no! Let's not tell him that. He's not going to sell the ads. We tried to sell ads. He thinks we didn't try, but we went out, we tried, we just couldn't sell them. He can't either." Well, I remember I said, "Well, you go ahead, you try."

Now this is very important to the story, he reached down and picked up a campaign card on the floor. When somebody was political and wanted cards, we printed them for him, and here's one that missed the wastebasket when we proofed it. He picked it up and he said, "What's your phone number?" I told him Viking 6-6217 or whatever. He wrote it down. He says, "I'll be calling you each week." Bronson said, "Collect?" He says, "No, no, I'm going to do you right, I'm going to treat you fair on that. After all, it's my paper, too," he says.

Then he got to the door and he stopped, and I knew he was going to ask that awful question and he did: He looked at Bronson and says, "Do you think I can do it?" And Bronson says, "No. I don't think you can do it. There's no use in any of us kidding ourselves. And you're old enough to know better. So there's just no use." So he turned to me. Said, "What do you think?" Well, by strange luck I was listening to a TV show the night before, and Noel Coward was being interviewed, and he was telling how to perjure yourself without telling a lie. So, I had his answer, I said, "Look, if anybody can, you can." And he said, "That's what I wanted to hear." So he went out and he shooed the kids off of his little old car and he pulled out of town.

I went home and I sat down at the table and was telling about the funny things that had happened—the funniest was the college boy who said that he could tell you how to run a newspaper. And we all laughed and the phone rang. And my wife says, "Don't answer it. Anybody who would call during supper hour shouldn't be answered." And I says, "The phone doesn't ring, the cash register doesn't either."

And I got up and I said, "Hello."

And the voice said, "Is this Viking 6-6217?" And I said, "Yeah, Doc." I knew the voice, knew who was calling me, it was the old doctor. And he said, "Well, yes, that's you, isn't it, Jim?" And I said, "Yeah, that's my number. Well, why were you calling me, anyhow?" And he said, "Well, I wasn't calling you. I was calling whoever lives at this number." And I said, "Well, I live at the number."

"Well," he said, "I got something to ask you. I found your number on a campaign card. Did you know somebody by the name of Melvin Miller?" Well, I said, "Yeah, I was with him all day today. A nice fellow, a little bit silly and wet behind the ears, you know, a college kid." Well, he said, "I don't know how well you knew him, or anything . . ." I said, "What do you mean, *knew* him? Why the past tense?" Well, he said, "Look, we're about both the same age, and there's no use of being babyish with you." He said, "Melvin Miller's dead." I said, "You mean the boy that I was with all day today is dead? He can't be! He just left town!" He said, "Well, was he in a little white sports car?" I said, "Yes, he was." He said, "Well, could he have gone to sleep?" I said, "Well, that's possible. He traveled all last night from Wheeling. It'd take most of the night." Well, he said, "We would like you to come down and identify the body."

So I went down and here was the boy, Melvin Miller. I thought, "My lord. What is there to life anyhow? The man had this dream." The happiest man in the world was Melvin Miller. At a turn in the road, he had realized everything he ever wanted in this world. And so few people do.

That spring, when I knew it was time for Melvin Miller to graduate and I saw the kids in this town walking around with their boxes, their graduation caps and gowns, going to baccalaureate, going to class night, going to this and that, I thought of Melvin Miller. You know, I just couldn't get him out of my head, and I said to Bronson the next day, I said, "Bronson, we're starting *Hillbilly* again."

Oh, Bronson screamed, as if I had prodded him with an electric pole. "No!" he said. "We're not going through that again! We lost money and I got kids just ready for college. No!" And I said, "Bronson, do we start it together or do we start it apart?" Well, he said, "We've done everything else together, haven't we? I'll go along." So we started *Hillbilly*.

And I tried to say, now what would Melvin Miller have done? Well, I covered the Legislature, I wrote the back page, "The Comstock Load," I found out that people like to know what a certain man thinks. I would try to be fair and square with people. I'm of a conservative nature, I don't believe people should live beyond their budgets, I don't believe that you have a right to pass the national debt on to an unborn generation. I don't believe any of that kind of thing. I propound those things, but then I have some fun, too.

Well, immediately *Hillbilly* became a success! It went from 3.000 to 10,000 and 10,000 to 15,000 just like that. And we've never made any attempt to ever sell the paper. Only, just what it would normally get from one reader to another. And so now it's taken on national circulation—kids want to take it with them because it was in the home, or someone wants to send it to somebody.

This brought a lot of interesting notoriety to me. I know I would go up to New York and sit down on Long John Nebel's show on WOR when he was living, and we'd sit from midnight 'til morning just talking. People calling in, and various things. And then I'd get all this mail when I got home.

One letter I got was from a girl. You could tell by the way it was handwritten—I don't know whether Women's Lib goes for the difference in handwriting now or not,

Ramps in the Ink. . .

The *Charleston Gazette* really suggested the idea, 'cause somebody brought the *Gazette* in one morning and said, "Smell this." Well, I said I had been for years, and they said, "No, no, this is a nice smell. This is the smell of perfume." Well, I opened it up and there it was. Chanel No. 5 or "An Evening on Prize Alley" or something like that. Some druggist got caught with too much perfume and he goes to the paper, "How do I sell all this perfume?" And they said, "Take a full-page ad." So he took a full-page ad and they said, "We will go to the ink fountain, we will put the perfume in, it'll pick up there, and you can smell it." Well, it worked!

Two weeks later somebody came in with a Beckley paper, and said, "Smell this!" And I was beginning to think, "My lord, illiteracy will never hurt West Virginia. We can smell our papers! We don't have to read 'em." So the Beckley paper had a coffee smell—some merchant caught with too much coffee.

So the idea came to me—it was ramp season—and when my partner came in that morning I said, "Look here's somebody brought in a paper that you can smell. Perfume, coffee. You know what we should do?" He said, "Oh, no! Let's not do that." Well, I said, "Let's not do what?" He says, "I know. Don't put any smell of the ramps in the ink." Well, we did. I should have listened to him. We got a reprimand from the Postmaster General, and we are probably the only paper in the United States that's under oath to the Federal Government not to smell bad.

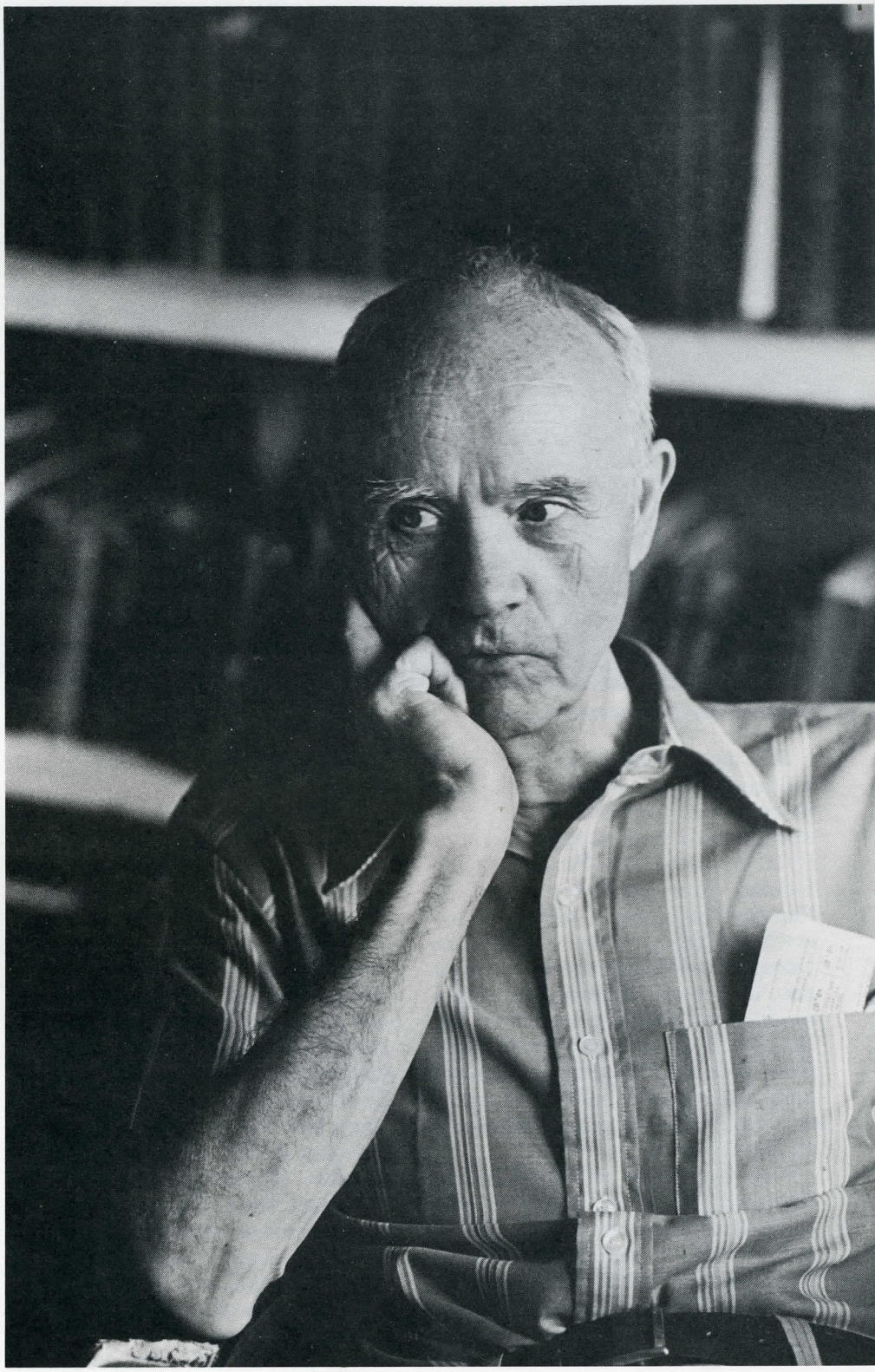
They notified me, it was beyond the call of duty of any postmaster to accept a noxious or offensive-smelling thing like my paper. And I told them, I said we'd never do it again. And just think what a handicap it is to print a paper in West Virginia and not smell bad, in competition with the other papers.

but you could could tell it was feminine handwriting. I opened it up, and it says, "Dear Mr. Comstock, You came to me while I lay sleeping the other night." Lord, I looked at the letter right quick, wondered where my wife was, read through it hurriedly and the girl says, "I was sleeping and suddenly I woke up, I couldn't go back to sleep, I turned on the radio. As if something told me to turn on that radio." She says, "I did." And she said, "You were telling a story about your paper. I want to subscribe to that. I think I would love it. But you were telling a story about a boy who came down from another place to get you to start your paper. And maybe he traveled all night and he was killed on the way home." She said. "That was a wonderful story. You know, that's the first time I ever knew how my brother was killed." Isn't that strange? She said, "We were a broken family, my mother and father parted, my brother went in the service." She said, "I moved out into Ohio, I never kept in touch. Then that night you told me the whole story." Very strange.

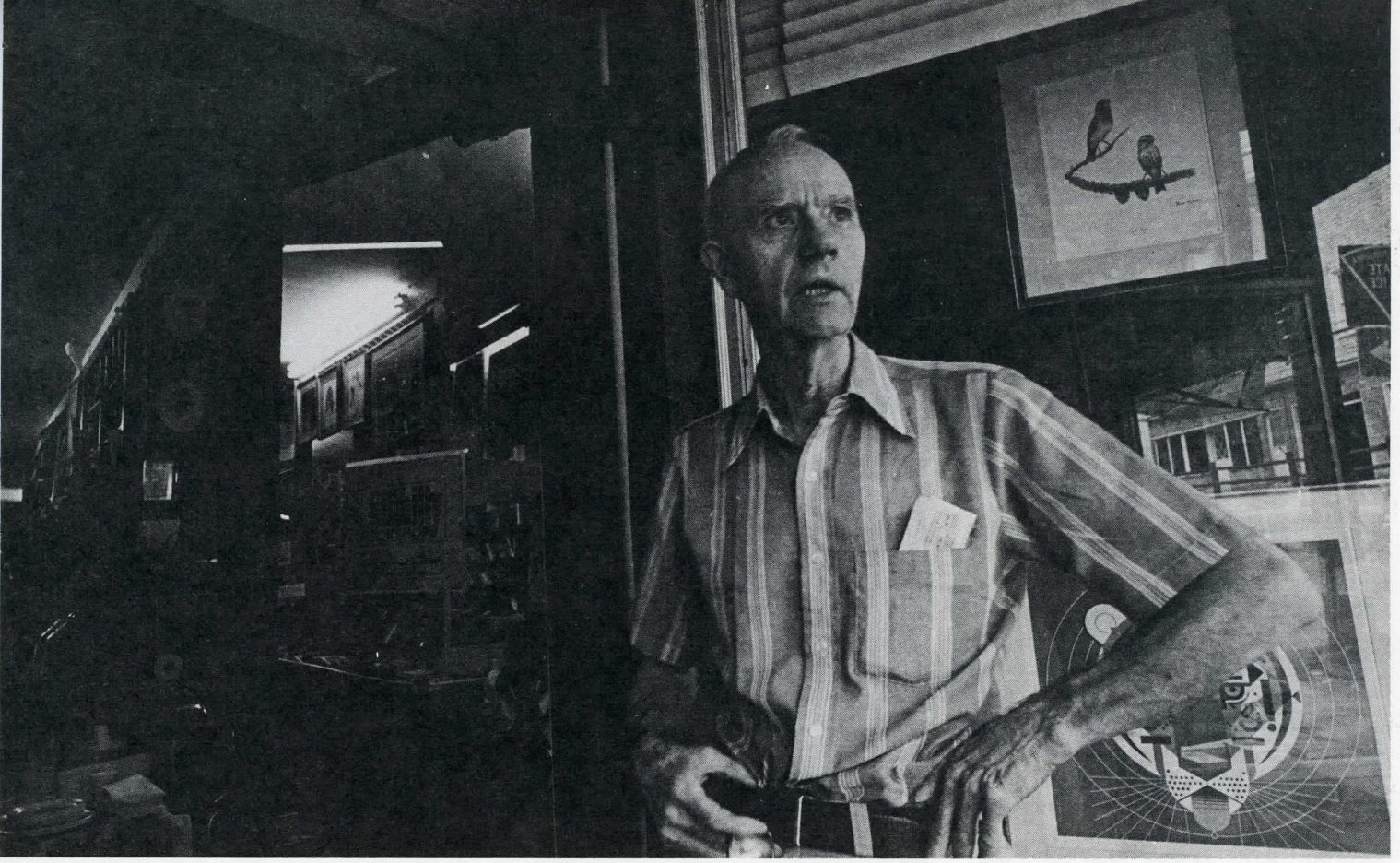
Then I've been on the John McNeil Breakfast Club—remember the one that they used to have? I've been given two doctorates down the years, from Marshall and Alderson-Broaddus.

It's hard to say, really, what the circulation is. I would say that, roughly speaking, we could have 50,000 readership a week; and a lot of it is out of state. And you'd be surprised how many people travel to West Virginia because of the paper. They use my travelogues as ways of traveling themselves. Oh, we have a lot of them. I got a letter from a woman last week that wanted to subscribe to the paper. She'd heard about it; they want to come to West Virginia and live; they don't want to live in Myrtle Beach anymore.

You'd be surprised how many people *Hillbilly* has brought to West Virginia to live who never heard of West Virginia. And they don't settle up on that eastern seacoast and become nuisances from Washington, like they do to Harper's Ferry. They just assimilate themselves into the state. And then you'd be surprised how many people I bring back on vacation. It's a strange kind of readership.



KS You mentioned a while ago about the back page and people wanting to read one man's opinion; also, I think you mentioned politics at the same time. You've certainly been outspoken politically, through the "Ma and Pa" column and some of the others. What is the political role of the country editor?



Comstock outside the Hillbilly Bookshop.

JC I don't know. I have no way of telling. Now, one time I ran a thing in the paper, a coupon. I wanted to know would you support Senator Byrd in view of the Panama Canal. I didn't know anything about the Panama Canal, but I just knew overwhelmingly West Virginians were not with him. I ran the coupon, and it was almost a hundred-to-one, you would never have believed it! Against Byrd. I would say from that Byrd couldn't be elected next time. I don't believe he could, and he is the strongest Democrat we have.

Now, a man up at West Virginia University who runs a polling sort of thing said that he could account for enough votes that defeated Rockefeller in his first running for governor—because *Hillbilly* was opposed to him. What he wanted to do that I never understood, he was going to absolutely abolish surface mining. For that reason I didn't think he would make a sound governor. The next time he changed completely, diametrically the other way.

KS Well, what about the "Ma and Pa" column? I know you've published a collection of excerpts of that.

JC Yeah, we've put that together in a book. It was a very fine sell-out, but of course it was a vanity published book. I printed it myself. But we've sold 5,000 copies, that's supposed to be rather good, even for some of the better books in New York. "Pa and Ma" pieces turned out to do very well. Oh, you'd be surprised. I remember a group in Charleston did a kind of musical drama out of them. Put it to music. They sent me the tape and I never did play it. It's around somewhere or other. The thing of it is the satire of dialect more than anything else. Some teacher wrote to me and wanted to know if that was the real way we spoke, and I said, "No, it's a satire on the way people *think* we speak."

I absolutely have finished a 50-volume encyclopedia of West Virginia. Fifty volumes. The picture book came in last week. That was the last link, and now we're mailing that out. I autographed 3,000 copies of that book. And I had to get it on an assembly line, 'cause I don't have that kind of time. A boy would open it up here and put it here, and I would autograph it, and Pete Wallace would autograph it, because he had collaborated with me on it. We averaged nine a minute, autographing.

KS Did I understand you to say that the bookstore grew out of the encyclopedia?

JC Right. I didn't have a shelf of books 20 years ago when I started the encyclopedia. I've worked for 20 years off and on on the encyclopedia. I've hired various people, I have writers galore who came here to write one part, you know. And they'd go away and you'd hire somebody else. And there were just divers hands.

I had one fellow by the name of Burmeister who came in from North Carolina hunting for a job. He looked like something that had been through the mill. He was a graduate of Columbia and he was a speed writer. I've never seen a man like it. He quit here after a year—oh, lord, I got work out of him. And he had one of these photographic minds. Simply he could read the page, you know, and get the whole idea just how you present that for

a child and an adult. Later, when we had the book analyzed by experts for reader age and so forth, they said he did it perfectly.

The strange thing about it is, he decided to start himself a paper up in Poughkeepsie, New York. And I suppose it was about as admirable an attempt and failure that I've ever seen. Now, there's a difference in being able to produce copy—it takes a hell of a lot more than that to run a newspaper. You've got to see that people read it, you've got to see that they like it, you've got to see that it's directed their way. There isn't any such thing as an accident in a general newspaper. You've got to see that ads are in. It's everything! When you're looking at the average country editor, you're looking at pretty much a genius in the field. I talked to a lot of people on dailys—they're good, you know. Like L. T. Anderson—he's always criticized me for my conservative views, that I say nobody should do anything if he hasn't met a payroll. Well, you know, that's a damn good idea to me, to meet a payroll. There's a lot of wastefullness that you wouldn't tolerate.

A weekly editor, if he's a successful editor, has to see that all minutes count, he has to see that the stories are covered. Can't be big time. Like this woman came to us one time, and she said, "The paper up the street said that you would print my kind of poetry." I said, "Yes, we'll print your kind of poetry. What have you got?" And it was a little memorial to her husband. I said, "That will cost you $2." And she was very happy and we just ran it over in classified and she became a cherished subscriber. Well, a few years later we bought that other paper.

Then there's the University of Hard Knocks. I send out a release to all the papers in the state and not a one of them carry it. Now they think it's a facetious thing, but it really isn't. Think of a man that's made a success of his life equivalent to a college man. Well, he would want to get together with other people. And it makes a worthwhile thing. Well, it was so good that Alderson-Broaddus discovered it, you see. And they've given us their campus. Once a year we go to their campus, and we hold our graduation there.

In other words, it's not a fly-by-night thing. You can buy these diplomas for $9 many places in the United States. But ours is an organization. We charge a hundred dollars. I give one page a week to it in the paper. Once a year then we go through all our books and we see how much money we have. When we did it the other day we had $1600 in the bank. OK, I did what we always do. We divided it in half and I sent one half to a crippled children's organization. That is our one charity. Once a year we divide that fund and send it. I don't mean that I'm one of these "bleeding hearts" for people, but I know something about crippled children, the kind of hard knocks they're going to take in life.

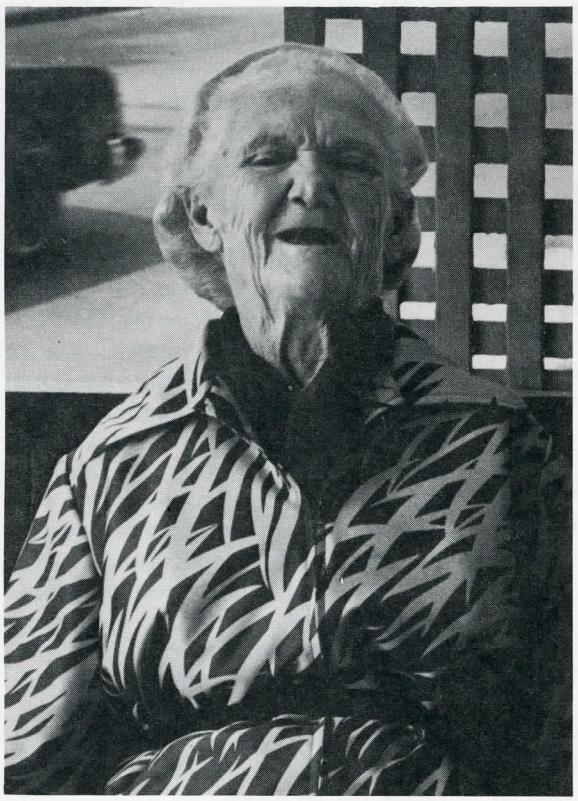
So that is our one gimmick. But they all have them. I went to Kentucky to make a speech one time, and there was an awful interruption, it was very awesome, the blowing of trumpets and down came the lieutenant governor, and he was introduced to me and I was made a Kentucky Colonel. Right away I got a letter from them, they wanted so much money. But it goes to fight cancer with. The Kentucky Colonels do a hell of a good job, with cancer. They're not a get-rich idea. Nobody makes any money off of the University of Hard Knocks. I wouldn't have it that way. To begin with, you wouldn't make enough to be grasping, anyhow, by the time we give the College a little something to help them along. And the College appreciated it, they have in their new building down there one great big suite for members of the University of Hard Knocks. They can go there, and that's their room, they can use the powder room or turn on the TV. If they're visiting in that part of the state, that's their home. I didn't make any promotion or ask for anything like that, it was just in recognition. I mean the idea can't sound that silly. But this year, the Knight-Ridder chain, or the Ridder-Knight or whatever the hell, sent a man to cover the University of Hard Knocks. And lord, did we get coverage. All over the United States.

KS Did I understand you to say that the *Hillbilly* is for sale a while ago?

JC Oh, yeah. The *Hillbilly*'s for sale. It's been for sale for a long time. And if I keep it for sale, I'll sell it to the right person. 'Cause that right person is going to come along. I had one man came this year and I found out that he was completely for the surface mining group. Now I don't mind giving surface mining all the space they want, as far as that's concerned, but I wouldn't want the paper to become a tool of a particular anything. Really. The tool I think I am is for the betterment of West Virginia. I've been pretty much for that. I don't think West Virginia is better than any of the other states, but I think it's as good.

KS Are you looking toward retirement now?

JC Oh, yes. You see, I'm 67 years old. Ten years from now I would be pretty much gone. And besides, I can see myself today. I'm not good. I'd give this paper right today, half of it, to a 22-year-old Jim Comstock. If he would come in here and do the things I did. Write in the car while his wife drives. Write in airplanes. Take your briefcase with you when you're on a trip, work, and then find that it's your whole life. People say, "Oh, life is more than work." But life isn't more than work if work is your life. The people who say there's more to life than work are people who don't like the job they're in, that's all. Whereas I can work 15, 16 hours a day, and I've always done it. And I don't believe that I'm anymore the wear and tear for it. I don't think it's even hurt me. I've had to fool the wife an awful lot, to make her think I was having a good time on a trip when she's driving along looking at the scenery while I'm checking a thesaurus or something. But if you bring me a 22-year-old Jim Comstock, half this paper is his.



"I told her, 'Now listen here, Sister Jones, I'm afraid of bullets and snakes!' Mrs. Jones got tickled and laughed, but she was good to me." Photograph by Lois C. McLean.

"I'll Teach You Not to be Afraid"

Monia Baumgartner Remembers Mother Jones

By Lois C. McLean

IN 1919, Mother Jones and members of District 17, UMWA, began an organizing drive among the miners of Mingo County. According to Howard B. Lee, author of *Bloodletting in Appalachia,* Mingo County was known as "Bloody Mingo" because of the many blood feuds among its inhabitants, the most famous being that of the Hatfields and McCoys. With the coming of the Norfolk & Western Railroad and the developing coal industry, the feuds were replaced by labor wars. The United Mine Workers of America, which had a brief foothold in the area at the turn of the century, was determined, in 1919, to bring industrial democracy to Mingo County.

As usual, the tough, fearless old Mother Jones was a willing crusader for the miners' cause. Mother's Mingo County exploits are remembered by her few compatriots surviving from the time. Living quietly in Beckley with her two daughters is one woman whose experiences in those days are as vivid as they were 60 years ago. She is 89 year old Monia Foutch Baumgartner.

Mrs. Baumgartner was born in Harlan County, Kentucky, on July 29, 1890. When she was 13 years old, Monia, her parents, four sisters, and three brothers moved to West Virginia. Her father, Bill Foutch, had taken a trip to West Virginia and decided he liked it there. Returning home, he told his family to pack up. They were moving to West Virginia. The family settled on Pigeon Creek in Mingo County, where Mr. Foutch, a carpenter, found work building houses for the Island Creek Coal Company.

According to Mrs. Baumgartner, Devil Anse Hatfield and members of his clan were neighbors and "many, many a time" old Devil Anse came to their home. He and Bill Foutch often went hunting together. She recalled one occasion when they killed a bear. After dragging their kill home, Devil Anse asked Monia to make him some "willow" tea. Following his instructions, she went out and stripped some bark off a willow and a peach tree. With these, a third ingredient which she couldn't remember, and boiling water, Monia made the first of many pots of willow tea for Devil Anse.

Cap Hatfield also lived nearby, but Mrs. Baumgartner's memories of him weren't as pleasant as those of his father. Once Cap Hatfield reportedly asked the local grocer to get him some cranberries. When the cranberries came, Mr. Adams, the grocer, forgot about Cap's order and sold the berries to his other customers. When the oversight was called to his attention, Mr. Adams was quoted as having said that Cap probably didn't know how to fix them anyway. Word got back to Cap and he came to the grocery store. When Mr. Adams saw him come in, he stuck out his hand and started to apologize. According to Mrs. Baumgartner, who was in the store at the time, Cap didn't wait to hear the apology but proceeded to lift Adams over the counter and

Mother Jones in a rare moment of rest. Date and photographer unknown. Courtesy of West Virginia Collection.

to "beat him to a pulp." After wreaking his revenge on the hapless Adams, Cap said, "That's how I fix cranberries," and left the store.

Tennis Hatfield, another of Devil Anse's sons, Monia remembered as a soft-spoken and mild man unless he was crossed. But Sid Hatfield, a relative who was the chief of police in Matewan before being killed on the steps of the Welch courthouse by Baldwin-Felts "thugs," was not like most of the Hatfields. He was friendly and told jokes. He'd take a glass of whiskey but he wouldn't get drunk. He could handle whiskey, it didn't handle him. He was good-looking and had a pretty wife.

Married at 16 to a miner, "who was as mean as a snake," Mrs. Baumgartner left him after the birth of their third child. She worked in, and later operated boarding houses for miners to support herself and her children. It was during this period that she was recruited by Mother Jones.

Mother Jones in Mingo County. Left to right: Charley Workman, Red Doyle, Mother Jones, Warren Hutchinson, Sid Hatfield, Andrew Wilson, Ezra Fry, and Dave Phillips. Hatfield, police chief at Matewan, was later assasinated on the McDowell County Courthouse steps by Baldwin-Felts gun thugs. Photographer unknown, 1920. Courtesy the West Virginia Collection and United Mine Workers District 29.

Mrs. Baumgartner recalls, "I first met Mother Jones at my cousin's home. There was a miners' meeting going on and Mother Jones was there. I was waiting on the front porch when Mrs. Jones came out. She looked at me and then walked up to me. She asked me my name and I told her. She asked me where I was from and I told her Pigeon Creek. She asked me what my father did and I told her he was a carpenter. Then she asked me how old I was and I told her I wasn't so old, but old enough. Then she looked at me closer and said: 'I'd like to have you go with me sometime.' I told her: 'Oh, Mrs. Jones. I can't go with you. You and me couldn't get along. You ain't afraid and I am.' She said: 'I'll teach you not to be afraid.' But I said: 'I'm afraid, Mrs. Jones, I couldn't go.'

"One day after that, she came driving up to our home in a little one-horse wagon. She stopped and called. 'Come go with me. I'm just going to make a little talk. We won't be gone long.' I asked her: 'Now there ain't going to be any danger, is there, Mrs. Jones?' 'Not much,' she answered.

"I went into the house and told my mother I was going with her and my mother said I'd better not go. It was dangerous to be with Mother Jones and I might get killed. But I went on and got in the wagon. You know that little horse pulling that wagon was the prettiest and fattest one I had ever seen. And it minded her just like a baby or just like a child."

When asked how Mother Jones looked, Mrs. Baumgartner replied, "Why, do you know what she had on from the skirt down? She was wearing a pair of men's overall pants! And a man's shirt! Yes, and some funny looking boots. They were sort of wool, men's kind and they come up high, like they'd protect her if she fell. She had a man's hat, too, pulled down on her head.

"When we got to the hollow, I noticed a lot of men alongside the road and I wondered what in the world was Mrs. Jones going to do here. Then she stopped the wagon and told me to get out. She got out and reached under the wagon seat and pulled out a great big club, made like a ball bat, but not so long. I asked her what she was going to do with that. She said that I ought to have sense enough to know what she'd do with that if someone bothered her or me.

"Well, we walked into those woods and there were a whole big lot of men standing around," Mrs. Baumgartner recalls. "Mrs. Jones

climbed up on a stump and she reached down and got a hold of my hand and told me to step up on the rock alongside the stump. Then she went to talking and I never heard such talking in all my life. Brother, she cussed like a drunk man. She said, 'You lowdown rascals, you. You know what's good for you and what's bad for you. You looks bad to me already.' You see, she was trying to organize the union. She'd say anything. Told them she'd bet they didn't have no breakfast and half of them didn't have no home to live in. That they'd better get someone in there that would do something for them so as they could live neat. Then all at once, KA-WHOOM! A bullet went right between our heads and I'm a-telling you that liked to scared me to death. I said: 'Now listen here, old woman, I'm getting out from here.' "

When asked what Mother Jones did, Mrs. Baumgartner replied, "She didn't do anything. Never a blink. She never paid a bit more attention than nothing. No, not a bit. She just said, 'Well, you can shoot again, you ————. You missed me that time.' At that the men got tickled and they got to laughing. Mother Jones said they were laughing 'cause the bullet didn't hit her between the eyes. I told her, 'Sister, you're gonna be left alone if you don't hurry up and come go with me!' I was just about ready to get a start out of that hollow and she seen I was scared. I told her, 'Mrs. Jones, you'd better hurry up now. You're gonna be left by yourself. I don't want to leave you and I won't. But I want you to hurry up and come on and go.'

"Then she turned to those men and she said, 'You dirty lowdown ————s, you. You know! You know what you're doing. You're rotten. You're lowdown. You go home tonight and sit down with your little children and with your wife. Sit down and take your pencil and clear paper and *write*. Just write how you're living and what you've got. And just let the world know how you're living, and what you could have if you'd do the right thing.' Then she jumped off that stump and said, 'That's my farewell word to you, but I'll tell you one thing. I'll get you in the end.'

"We walked out of there and she never looked back. When we were in the wagon, she told me: 'Now, don't you get scared. Just don't say too much about what was said or nothing. We'll be alright.' When we got to my house, Mrs. Jones came in with me and stayed awhile. But pretty soon, I could see she was thinking about something and she said she'd better get on. There was something she wanted to check on and she believed she could make it on home. She got up, hugged and kissed me and said, 'Now I'm going to come and get you again.' I told her, 'Yes, you will — if you can catch me.' "

Mother Jones did come back to visit young Monia several times, but she was never able to get her to attend another meeting. Each visit, it seems, was a memorable one for Mrs. Baumgartner. She told of the time when Mrs. Jones and she were walking in the woods when she spotted a big snake, "nearly two yards long," ahead of them. She remembers that she said, "'Mrs. Jones, look there. Look at that big snake. Come on, let's get away from here.' But Mrs. Jones walked on past it like she didn't even see it and said, 'Good lord, girl, if you aren't afraid of a bullet, you needn't be afraid of a snake.' I told her, 'Now listen here, Sister Jones, I'm afraid of bullets and snakes.' Mrs. Jones got tickled at me and laughed, but she was good to me."

Usually, when Mother Jones visited she only stayed for a few hours, but one time she did spend the night in Mrs. Baumgartner's boarding house. She recalls that Mother Jones acted like she wanted to sleep on the floor, in with the other boarders. Mother just asked her to make her a pallet near the fire. Mrs. Baumgartner said no, Mrs. Jones should sleep upstairs in a room. Mother Jones replied, "Well, it might be alright if I sleep in a bed once in awhile."

When asked if Mother Jones washed, changed clothes, or helped with the cooking when she stayed overnight, Mrs. Baumgartner remembered, "No, she didn't change clothes. She just pulled off those old britches and slept in the men's buttonhole pajamas she had on underneath them. I asked her if she wanted a pan of hot water to wash in and she said, 'Why do I want to wash? I'd wash and just have to turn around, scratch, and have to wash again." As for helping with the cooking, Mrs. Baumgartner firmly replied, "No, ma'am. Lord have mercy, no! She was dirty. Why, I wouldn't eat a bite that she cooked under no consideration. Nor my mother wouldn't either.

"But she was good to me and I was good to her. Yes, I was. I had to be, 'cause, well, I was afraid not to be good to her. To tell you the truth, she really acted like she didn't care for anything. What she said, what she done, or what she wore. She didn't care nothing and if she had anything to say to you, she'd come right out and say it like it was. Now, some of the miners didn't like her. They were afraid she'd jerk a gun and shoot their brains out. But they didn't talk sassy to her, no sir, 'cause the men were scared of her. Well, I know I was scared of her and there ain't many people I'm scared of.

"But let me tell you. She made up with some people that was society, you know, that used good English. Law, you ought to heard her put out them big words. Yes, indeed. But if she was with somebody her equal, she was just as mean as the devil, and she'd say or do anything to get you to laugh. She always liked a good laugh. She just never cared for nothing. You couldn't scare her. Why, one time when I told her she oughtn't to go someplace 'cause it was dangerous, she said the miners were being treated dirty and she was going to help them. Then she laughed and said, 'You only die once.' "

When Mrs. Baumgartner finished talking about Mother Jones, she laughed, then shook her head, and said, "There just never was anyone like her."

Aunt Nannie Meador and the Bluestone Dam

By Michael Meador

When first I was here, a single house
And a native forest broke to view;
The winding river was bright and clear
And we crossed it in an old canoe.
Beside this craft did our noble horse
Swim safe along. Not a boatman's oar
As then had dipped the crystal stream
Where now your city marks the shore.

But that was three score years ago,
What adventures urged us,—in our prime;—
And then, as now, what the future held
Was hid away in the chest of time.
We were hunting a home. My husband and I,
Where budding hopes would open to bloom;
But the woof we weave in the warp of life
Is never woven in fancy's loom.

We judge of the future, 'tis said, by the past,
What wondorous things are then in store
For those who will seek them, remembering this:
That brightest pearls are not found ashore.
And what of the three score years to come?
With the marks of a century creasing your brow,
Perhaps you will tell of the strange, strange past
As I'm telling you of the strange past now.

—"From a Conversation with an Aged Visitor"
J. M. Meador
Hinton, West Virginia, 1923

As a small boy I can remember my father many times stopping his 1951 Studebaker near the bridge which crosses Bluestone Lake on Route 20 between Princeton and Hinton. Together we'd walk out onto the bridge to stare into the water below and he would tell me stories.

Being young I was more interested in the motor boats and water skiers than in what my father would say, but gradually, after many stops and hearing the same stories over and over, certain details would begin to stick in my mind.

"On that mountain where those big pines are was the family cemetery. The graves are gone now," he'd tell me, and I would think, "Who would want to move a cemetery?"

"She had bed bugs which would bite all night. In the morning you'd complain and she would drag the mattress out to sun in the yard. Before bringing it in she'd dip a feather in kerosene and dab around at the seams. The bed bugs didn't mind, though—while she was sunning one side they would crawl to the other." I can remember thinking, "What's a bed bug?"

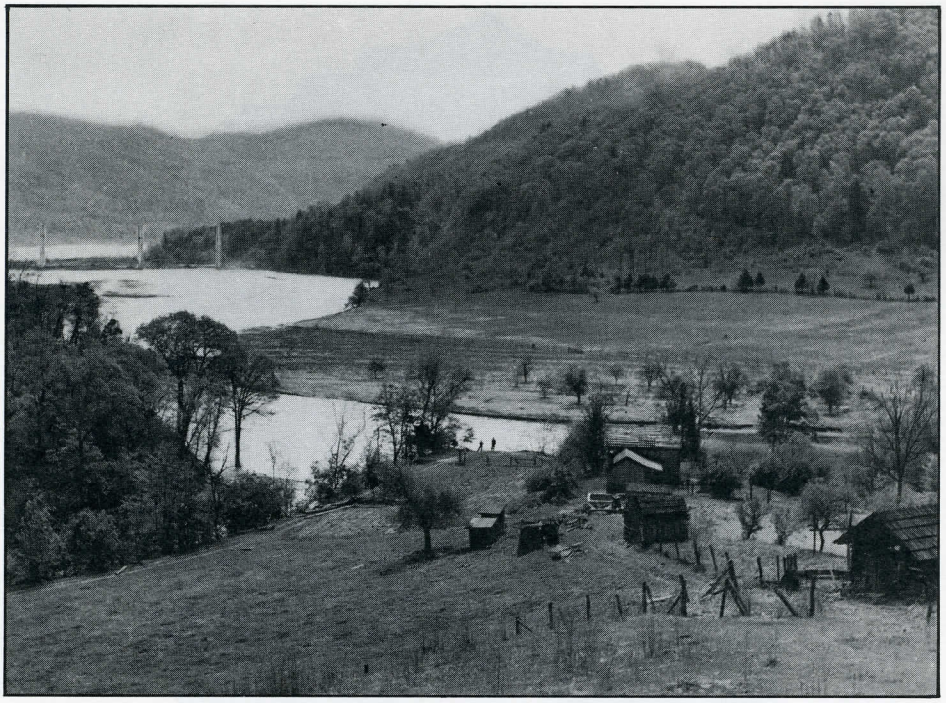
"There was a big pine tree in the front yard where her chickens always roosted," and in my mind I would see dozens of fat chickens smugly watching the world go by.

My father would tell me these stories and more about my great-grandmother Meador who was called "Aunt Nannie." She lived at one time in a big white frame farm house which stood far below where the bridge is now.

From the bridge we'd drive to the Bluestone Dam at Hinton to look down at the water rushing out over the spillway, and my father would tell me about dams and why they were needed, and why it was necessary to dam the Bluestone and New Rivers. Usually while on the dam I'd hear more stories about Aunt Nannie: about driving up from Hinton in a borrowed car to see her, and having to take a ferry boat across New River to get to her house. As I would stand with my dad on the dam I'd spit off the side and try to visualize what the little houses downstream would look like when the dam broke.

Because my grandparents lived in Hinton we made countless trips there while I was growing up in Princeton. It seems that on almost every trip as we'd cross the bridge over the Bluestone someone would mention Aunt Nannie or her house. Even when her name didn't come up I would find myself staring into the water trying to see what was buried there.

Aunt Nannie gained a face for me one day while I was prowling through my grandmother Meador's basement. In a very cold, moldy storage cellar I discovered a large charcoal portrait of a middle-aged woman with what I thought was a very sour face. Despite time and water damage, and the attempts of silverfish to destroy the portrait, Aunt Nannie had survived. My grandmother gave me the picture



Top: Bluestone Lake waters rise. The Meador homestead, demolished by this time, had stood near the bridge pillars at left rear. Photographer unknown, 1947.

Above: The Meador family at home, probably winter of 1894. Left to right: unidentified sharecropper and wife, Lizzie Meador, Nannie Meador, Lark Meador, Cleveland Meador, unknown, Willie Meador, three unidentified surveyors. Larkin Meador, Nannie's husband, had died a few years before. Photographer unknown.

along with a companion portrait of my great-grandfather, several old deeds to flooded property, fragments of faded letters and several photographs of people standing in front of the big frame house on the Bluestone.

Suddenly Aunt Nannie and her world came alive. I could see her and her farmhouse. The pine trees with the roosting chickens, the corn fields, the outbuildings, the sharecroppers, the big walnut tree, the family cemetery — all re-emerged from the lake in these pictures and documents.

Aunt Nannie was also alive in my immediate family's memory, and in the minds of my father's relatives. Whenever they'd get together they would talk about Nannie and her house. There would be long discussions about which room the pump organ was in, how many bedrooms had fireplaces, why the bed bugs never bit Aunt Nannie, and what was the best dish she cooked. Maps of the property, complete with detailed house plans, would be drawn and argued over. Things Aunt Nannie had used were family treasures to be handled reverently.

In recent years, as most West Virginians are aware, the attempt to build the Stonewall Jackson Dam in Lewis County has sparked tremendous controversy between the Army Corps of Engineers on one side and concerned citizens of Lewis County and West Virginia on the other. This controversy has affected me powerfully, in that one of the compelling arguments offered by opponents of the dam is the destructive effect the dam will have on the rich culture of the area to be flooded. "Whole family legacies will be wiped out," they claim. "The work of generations will be lost, historical sites will drown, and future generations living in the area will lose their sense of belonging." The Bluestone Dam did in fact do to my family what opponents of the Stonewall Jackson Dam fear will happen to them if that dam is completed.

Today, my family is obsessed with what lies beneath the water of Bluestone Lake. It is not possible for us to stand in Aunt Nannie's

garden spot or climb on the foundation stones of her house, as others can with their old family homeplaces. My family has been swept into the present with almost none of its past physically intact. Fortunately, Nannie Meador and her world have been preserved like a pressed rose through the pictures, stories, and letters which have been preserved, but for many of the families who left the Bluestone-New River valleys in the 1940's the past has been lost forever.

Aunt Nannie was born Willie Ann Mary Noell in Franklin County, Virginia, on October 27, 1857. Her father, Caleb Noell, was a veteran of the Mexican War, a book collector, and a Latin teacher. Nothing is known of her mother except that she was named Catherine. Willie Ann had an older brother, Caleb Cornelius, who had epilepsy and a deformed hand (the result of falling into a fire during an epileptic seizure). In time she would have a younger brother, Thomas, who died before his second birthday, in the summer of 1862.

While it is known that Willie Ann grew up in the war-torn valley of Virginia in the early 1860's, nothing has been passed down about her experiences. Shortly after the Civil War ended in 1865, father Caleb Noell brought his family into the new State of West Virginia. They settled in what was to become Summers County. Caleb's brother, Doctor Norborne Noell, had bought land near Green Sulphur Springs and set up a practice there prior to the war. It was undoubtedly due to his urging that Caleb decided to bring his family into the relatively wild and unsettled Bluestone River Valley.

During the winter of 1872 Willie Ann, known to her family as Nannie, was courted by Larkin McDowell Meador who lived on a neighboring farm and was ten years her senior. Larkin was the grandson of the Reverend Josiah Meadows, one of the Valley's first settlers and the founder of the Bluestone Baptist Church in 1798. Josiah had served in the Revolutionary War, fighting at the Battle of Vincennes. He was present at Yorktown when the British surrendered. For some reason, the children of Josiah Meadows were given the name Meador. It may be that a county clerk heard Josiah's last name pronounced with the intrusive "r" common to the mountain dialect and recorded what he heard.

Larkin's father, William M. Meador, settled himself in the Bluestone River Valley following his marriage to Celia Ann Ellison in the 1820's. He was what was then known as a "gentleman farmer" who dabbled in local politics. Occasionally he was elected to office. In 1855 he was chosen to represent Mercer County in the Virginia Assembly in Richmond. He was also elected Justice of the Peace for Mercer County in the 1850's, acquiring the title of "squire" for his efforts.

When spring broke in 1872 Lark and Nannie were married. She was 14 and he was 25. Following their wedding, the new couple moved into a large two-story frame house whose land was bounded on the left by the Bluestone River and on the right by New River. A front porch faced the mountains and the back of the house looked out upon the rivers. For its time and location the Meador's new home was quite outstanding, having several porches, four bedrooms, a parlor complete with pump organ, and a central hallway with a big staircase to the upstairs. A dining room and a kitchen were separated from the main house by a breezeway then known as a "dog trot." This house by the rivers was to be Nannie's home for the next 75 years.

Shortly after their wedding, Lark and Nannie began buying up parcels of land which bordered their property and in time acquired several hundred acres of land. To farm his land, Lark rented out his fields to sharecroppers. The two rivers regularly overflowed their banks, dumping fresh topsoil on the fields and allowing excellent crops to be grown.

Lark opened a small store at the mouth of Pipestem Creek shortly after his marriage. In the store

Opposite: Caleb R. Noell, Nannie's father. Ambrotype, c. 1850.

Above: Aunt Nannie Meador. Drawing by Patricia Cahape, from a photograph made about 1895. Photographer unknown.

Larkin Meador. Photographer unknown, c. 1885.

coffee, lamp oil, sugar and peppermint candy. Everything was carried, from calico to teething lotion. Often the storekeeper was called out of bed at night to sell castor oil or castoria to a neighbor with a sick child. From the abundant crops produced in their fields and the success of their store, Lark and Nannie Meador prospered.

Shortly before her first wedding anniversary in 1873, my great-grandmother gave birth to a daughter who was named Lula Ann. The new mother was 15 at the time.

Lula was a pretty little girl with curly hair, but she was never healthy. She became ill one day when she was seven years old but when she saw her father coming in she got up to meet him. Her legs refused to hold her. Polio then was a disease without a name. Lula was buried in a little cemetery on a mountain overlooking the Meador house and Bluestone River.

Shortly before Christmas in 1879 Nannie and Lark received a letter from Nannie's Aunt Mary Noell who lived at Green Sulphur Springs. Lula had only been dead for a few months and Mary obviously was trying to cheer up Lark and Nannie's Christmas. The letter gives an interesting glimpse into life in Summers County in the late 1870's.

Green Sulphur Springs
December 22, 1879

Dear Lark and Nannie,

You are undoubtedly beginning to wonder why I have not answered your letter, and as tardy correspondents generally commence with apologies, I will put in my excuses. About the time that I received your letter I was busy fixing Edgar off to school. A few days before he started, the Baptist (sic) commenced a protracted meeting here which lasted two weeks and we of course had a good deal of

company—The meeting proved to be a success as there were 20 odd accessions to the church—Edgar has gone to Rocky Mount (Franklin County, Virginia) to school. I believe he would have done as well at Concord but I object to the Society there, and as he has never mixed much in a refined circle I thought it best to give him some advantages in that respect.—I will now give you some town news.—Ann Withrow has a bouncing boy just a week old. It has a black head which makes it look a little suspicious on Norborne and Theo. Miss Lennie George and Mr. Jim Alderson were married last Wednesday evening and it's reported that Miss Bledsoe and Mr. Dolan from Hinton will be married soon. Peter Alderson is waiting on Alice Gwinn and it is thought they will marry if the old squire don't brake (sic) it off. He is very much opposed to it and I can't say that I blame him. I am expecting a dull Christmas unless you come down to see us.————I would like very much to go and see you all, but Norborne is very opposed to my going any where. We have a little boy that has been staying with us nearly four months. His father died and requested Norborne to take him and raise him or see that he had a good home. He is a smart pretty child and if I can find a good home for him I will give him up. Willie (Nannie's cousin) pettied (sic) him so much that he cried like his heart would brake (sic) when she left.————Norborne sends love to you all but there is no chance to get him to write anyone.————If you do not come be sure to write soon and believe me to be ever,
Your fond Aunt
Mary

In 1882, three years after Lula's death, Nannie gave birth to another daughter who she named Lizzie Orbison. Also in that year Lark petitioned the United States Postal Department for the creation of a new post office to be housed in his store.

When the document arrived from Washington, naming Larkin Meador Postmaster, it was discovered that the new post office had been unexpectedly given the name of "True." When Lark had petitioned the postal authorities he had not proposed a name for the post office but had ended his letter with the statement "all of the above is true." Someone in Washington either as a joke or an oversight had given the name officially to the new post office. True post office is now at a new location three or four miles up the mountain from the lake.

Nannie gave birth to a son in August of 1884. She named him Cleveland, probably in honor of President Grover Cleveland. Caleb Noell, Nannie's father, died at her home the following year. He was buried near Lula in the family cemetery. In the late summer of 1886 Nannie gave birth to another son. She named him Willie Green. Nannie, not quite 29 at this time, had been married for over half of her life.

Two years later in November of 1888, Lark Meador followed his father's political footsteps and was nominated for deputy sheriff of Summers County. While out campaigning he caught a cold, but chose to ignore its discomforts rather than take time from his politicking. November that year was particularly cold, wet, and miserable, and Lark found himself in bed before the election with what was then known as "pneumonia fever." He died a few days later on Novem-

Below left: Nannie's children, Lizzie, Willie, Lark, and Cleveland. Photographer unknown, c. 1895.

Below right: Sales staff of Parker's Department Store, Hinton. Cleveland Meador stands behind Mr. Parker, Lark Meador stands at right, and Willie Meador is seated at right. Photographer unknown, c. 1906.

ber 18, leaving Nannie with three small children and three months pregnant. My grandfather, born in April of the next year, was named Lark in memory of his father.

Nannie continued to operate the little store at the mouth of Pipestem after Lark's death, but found it difficult by herself to feed and clothe her children. In 1949 my grandmother, Ruth Price Meador, wrote that Nannie

> ". . . worked early and late to feed her little brood. Often she would pause in the midst of her hoeing or berry picking, push her faded sunbonnet back and gaze at the hills. From them, she seemed to gather new strength for her tasks."

Grandmother recalled that Nannie took in overnight guests, and never failed to feed the preacher:

> "Many drummers who drove through the country in the early days made the Meador home a stopping place. With them, they usually brought a boy to care for the team. They and other guests were usually given the front room upstairs. In it was a brass bed with a fat feather tick, homespun blankets and spread. A woven rag carpet covered the entire floor. A wash bowl, pitcher and slop jar were very much in evidence. Over the mantle hung an enlarged picture of William Jennings Bryan.
>
> When the circuit riders made their monthly visits, Aunt Nannie always brought the preacher home for dinner. They and the other guests were always served at the first table, over which the three boys presided with a limb cut from an apple tree—fanning flies. When it came their turn to sit down to dinner, the choice pieces of chicken were always gone and, much to their disgust, they dined on backs, necks and wings."

Though widowed young, Aunt Nannie never remarried. Grandmother recalled that "only one suitor ever came calling. He was known as the 'Squire.' The three boys, determined that they would have no step-father, gathered a lot of rocks and hid behind a clump of bushes one spring day when they knew he had planned to call. The surprised swain never came back.

The young widow aged, and the children grew up and left the family farm for city life in Hinton. Lizzie married a cousin, Ballard Shumate, and lived for a time near her mother but eventually they too moved to Hinton.

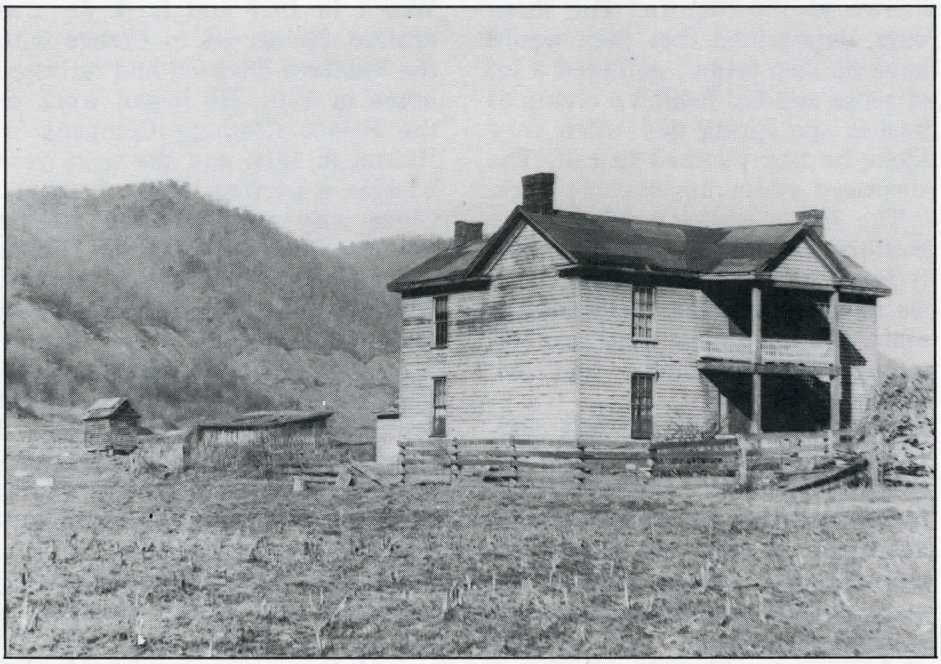
Aunt Nannie was not left completely alone on the farm when her children left. Her brother Caleb had moved into one of the upstairs bedrooms in the old house; he helped with chores around the place as well as providing companionship. Also there were families of sharecroppers living on the property.

The United States entered World War I in 1917 and Lark Jr. was drafted. He served in France with the Rainbow Division and returned home in 1918. He began work at the Palace Clothing Company in Hinton in 1919, and the next year became a partner in the business. Cleve, who was not drafted during the war, had remained in Hinton and gone into business as a baker. Willie also had gone into business for himself.

Aunt Nannie, who was 63 in 1920, hardly ever left her farm except for funerals. In 1922 she received news that Cleve had died of an apparent heart attack. He was 37. Six years later in 1928 Willie died suddenly at the age of 41.

In 1930 Lark's business went bankrupt due to the Depression, and he lost nearly everything he owned. Nannie managed to survive the Depression because of her self-sufficiency and simple lifestyle.

This giant walnut, behind the Meador home, was cut when the farm was cleared to make way for the lake. Aunt Nannie kept ashes from the burned tree in a jar on her mantle. Photographer unknown, 1946.



The house awaits demolition, 1947. Road cut for Route 20, then under construction, can be seen in background. Photographer unknown.

Because the Meador farm was located at the point where two rivers and a creek joined, floods were commonplace. Several times during the 75-year occupancy of her farm, Aunt Nannie had to take refuge in the second story of her house to escape rising flood waters. She maintained a high water mark on one of the walls so that the curious could see which years had the worst flooding.

In the 1930's the Army Corps of Engineers began work on the Bluestone Dam, which was intended to protect the Kanawha and New River valleys from devastating floods. Aunt Nannie, like all people who live on flood plains, dreamed of the day when something would be done to eliminate flooding, but as the Bluestone Dam neared completion in 1945 she began to dread the future, knowing she could not bear to leave her farm. She was 89 when the official notice came to move.

In 1946, workmen began clearing off trees and brush from Aunt Nannie's farm in anticipation of its innundation by the rising waters of Bluestone Lake. A giant walnut tree had stood in the backyard of the property ever since the house had been built in the 1870's. It predated the house by at least 50 years. The walnut was only one of the thousands to be sacrificed for the dam, but to Nannie it was special because of its connection with her life on the farm.

When the old walnut was cut down, its limbs were chopped off and burned. After the embers cooled Aunt Nannie went out with a bottle and scooped it full of ashes. She placed the bottle on the mantle in her bedroom where it remained until after her death.

Aunt Nannie's body was found on the morning of January 10, 1947, in the bed she had slept in for 75 years. She had been sick for a few days and people who had talked to her then remembered that she didn't want to get well. It was said she died of a broken heart at being ordered to leave her farm.

She was buried in Hinton rather than in the family cemetery on the Bluestone, because the cemetery was being moved to make way for the lake. The graves of Nannie's father and mother, her brother, her husband, her little girl and other friends and relatives were all moved to a cemetery in Jumping Branch. It is ironic to note that even in death Aunt Nannie was kept separated from her husband.

After the funeral winter set in and it was several weeks before her son Lark—the only member of her immediate family to survive her—could make the trip from Hinton to the farm to remove Nannie's belongings. When he arrived he discovered that someone had come before him and had stolen everything worth stealing from the house. It was said that the theft had been committed by an antique dealer from Princeton, but no charges were ever filed.

In a few months the house had been torn down and the dammed up waters of the rivers began rising into the fields, over the walnut stump, over the stumps of the pines where the chickens roosted and finally over the foundation stones of the old house itself. Eventually the water met the mountainside and rose to its present height, leaving memories of another world beneath its surface.

Today while driving across the bridge over Bluestone Lake it seems a dream that Aunt Nannie and her house could ever have existed. Her world was swallowed up by the water like a mythical kingdom.

Someday, like my father before me, I hope to stand at Bluestone Lake with my children, point across the water alive with motor boats and water skiers and tell them, "There was your history."

Aunt Nannie Meador in her early 80's. Work on Bluestone Dam had already begun when this picture was made around 1940. Photographer unknown.

Lilly Reunion, 1979

By Yvonne Snyder Farley

Photographs by Doug Chadwick

Yes, they have been a busy people
And they've been both wrong and right
And may do anything from preaching
Down to making roosters fight;
Now, no matter what they're doing
And regardless of their creed
They must have a big reunion
for it's just the thing they need. . ."

—From "The Lilly's"
By C. J. Lilly
Reprinted from the first
Lilly Reunion program

Sylvia Lilly, Leafie Lilly Harvey, and Opal Lilly Shumate embrace at the 1979 Reunion.

THE old Lilly Reunion grounds on Flat Top Mountain between Beckley and Princeton were quiet on the third Saturday in August, as about 30 people appeared to place a wreath at the grave monument of Robert and Frances Moody Lilly, founders of the West Virginia clan. Queen Anne's lace bobbled in the cool wind blowing across the farm field which once saw as many as 75,000 people at this time of year. This was the beginning of what is billed by its promoters as the "World's Largest Family Reunion."

Lifelong Flat Top resident Kermit Lilly, 62, stood on the knoll watching the activity and remembered, "The old grandstand was over to the left in those trees. The gypsies would come and set up down there. People really looked forward to the Lilly Reunion. You know, everybody was suposed to be part-Lilly. It was a beautiful time here on the mountain." He said he thought the reunions were never the same after the death of A. A. "Cousin Abe" Lilly of Charleston, who founded the reunions. Under Cousin Abe's leadership the Lillys held 15 reunions between 1930 and 1949. In 1977 the reunions were revived by Jack Lilly of Canton, Ohio.

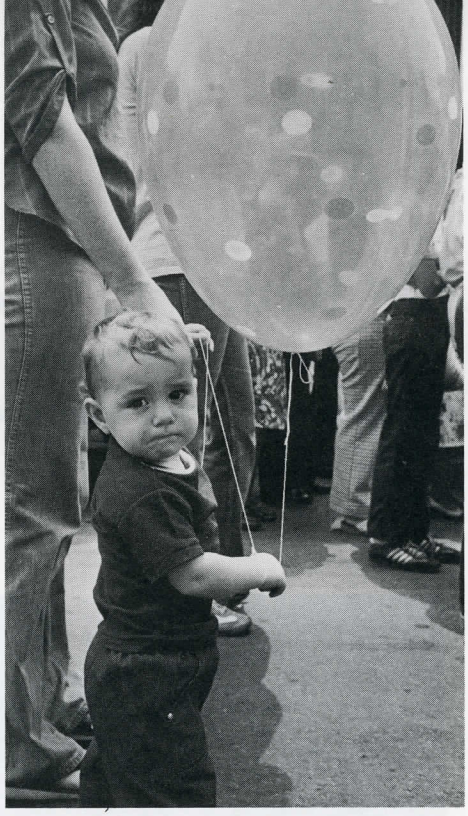
Also milling about the knoll were Norman Lilly, 84, and Albert and Doris Lilly, all of Oregon. Albert Lilly said this was his first time back to a reunion in 60 years—since he was six years old. "Norman phoned and told us about it. We wrote to Jack Lilly for more information. And here we are. My folks were born and raised here. I think it's wonderful. Everything seems so green, and I don't remember the hills being so rolling. I love those rolling hills." Norman Lilly, the other western representative, was sporting a "Lilly Clan of Oregon" pin. Both men said that every year on the last Sunday in July there is a reunion in Oregon for the Lillys from Washington, Idaho, and California. The numbers attending have dwindled, they think because "young people have something else to do," but they figure that when the young people get old, they'll begin to take an interest in such things.

The crowd was soon interrupted

by the booming voice of disc jockey Jay "Jaybird" Drennen, of WSLR radio in Akron, Ohio. Jaybird is the official master of ceremonies for the Lilly festivities. "Now folks, why don't we just surround the monument?" he said. Reunion president Jack Lilly told those gathered that this was the most sacred part of the reunion. "I'll place the wreath, Brother Orville will offer a prayer, and then we'll all go back to Beckley." He placed the wreath at the monument's side because of the gusty wind, and then offered to do it several times for the news photographers. After the prayer there was a little more talking and the photographers got a few more photos. Then the wreath was loaded up in a van and driven back to Beckley.

Most Lillys in these parts trace their ancestry to the long-lived Robert (1696-1810) and Frances Moody (1696-1806) Lilly, pioneer settlers at the mouth of the Bluestone River near Hinton in Summers County. Their remains were disinterred from the Summers County graveyard with the building of the Bluestone Dam and reburied beside the 14-foot stone monument at Flat Top in 1948. The Lilly family, which has traced its roots back to northern France, traditionally held its annual reunion near the present site of the monument. However, the current owner of the land where the reunions were held will not allow the property to be used for that purpose. The revived reunions now meet at the Raleigh County Armory/Civic Center in Beckley, the area's largest facility.

There was enough time to get back from Flat Top to Beckley and find a spot for viewing the 110-unit Lilly parade which would wind through the downtown business district. An open trailer with a fringed red Lilly Reunion banner was set up in front of the Raleigh County Courthouse steps on Main Street. Around noon, a small crowd had begun to gather across the street from the courthouse steps in front of the G. C. Murphy store. The



Saturday's parade through downtown Beckley.

usual courthouse benchsitters were already in place under the spreading trees and many people were munching hot dogs from a stand in front of Freddy's Restaurant. American flags lined the parade route.

A country band started the downtown festivities with a bouncy tune and the crowd began to clap in time with the music. Disc jockey Jaybird appeared on the trailer stage and began selling the dollar reunion programs. Then he introduced a band from Youngstown, Ohio, which struck up a Waylon Jennings' song for the bystanders. By this time Jack Lilly was in front of Murphy's, walking through the crowd shaking hands. Meanwhile the children had discovered a balloon salesman, and brightly colored helium balloons were dancing high above the crowd. Perhaps 10,000 people were present. There were Lilly's from all over the country on the sidewalks of Beckley, as well as many Raleigh Countians who were just out to see a parade.

Between musical groups, Jaybird

kept up a continual patter. He asked people in the crowd where they were from. He discovered someone from Texas and told a Texas joke. While he talked, a film crew wheeled their equipment across the street towards the trailer, to set up for the square dancers who were to perform.

Seated in a lawn chair across from the courthouse was local evangelist Virgie Lilly, 71, of Beckley. Her daughter from another part of West Virginia was nearby. No one back home, said the daughter, could believe that she was going to a family reunion of such magnitude. Virgie Lillie explained that she's a Lilly that married a Lilly." An elderly man standing near her chuckled when he heard that and hit his cane on the pavement, "Yessiree, she's a died-in-the-wool-Lilly!" Anyone who wanders long enough through several thousand Lillys will find endless numbers of "Lillys who married Lillys."

There was more music, square dancing, and finally a gospel quartet. People began moving out of the streets and onto the sidewalks as the U. S. Marine Color Guard turned the corner to the strains of gospel music. The Lilly Reunion parade would have to be labeled one of the most dazzling in Beckley in years. There were clowns throwing balloons to the children, several high school bands, antique cars, homecoming queens, pom pom girls, motorcycle units, a team of oxen, politicians, a stagecoach, the world champion professional fly-caster, a Kentucky frisbee team, floats, a huge camper with a "Robert C. Byrd for President" banner, showy horses, cheerleaders, six Belgian horses pulling a covered wagon, and much, much more.

For the Lillys, there were Curley Joe Lilly's great-great-great-great-great-grandchildren riding in a car, a Lilly Monument float, Cousin Abe Lilly's daughter, the reunion officers riding their own float, and many other family dignitaries waving to the crowds from flashy automobiles. By now the streets were overrun with Lillys and there was a feeling that they'd taken over Beckley—a town which, it's pointed out, has as many Lillys as Smiths in the telephone directory.

After the parade the Lillys and most of the crowd disappeared. A small and much different group watched the Appalachian Dance and Music Ensemble perform works created around the poetry of state poet laureate Louise MacNeill Pease. Dr. Pease read from her book, *Gauley Mountain,* and from *Elderberry Flood,* recently published by the West Virginia Department of Culture and History. Secretary of State A. James Manchin stayed around to do some old-time clog dancing with the people.

Everyone was welcome to the free Family Day celebration at the Armory Saturday night. Although the actual reunion meeting would be on Sunday, many of the Lillys and their friends showed up for more free music and socializing. Inside the Armory lobby a reception committee had a table by the door to register arriving Lillys. Not far away were several counters selling Lilly Reunion memorabilia. There was a Jack Lilly button, much like the traditional badges worn in the '30's and '40's, which featured the reunion president's photo in the middle with the words, "50th Year Lilly Reunion, 1930-1979" around the circumference. A family tree by Jack Lilly sold for $6. There were Lilly pens, pencils, calendars, and the Lilly coat of arms. Someone was selling little pitchers as reunion souvenirs.

A family group was gathered intently around the newly published family tree pasted to the window of the lobby. "Grandmother was a Meador . . . wait, here's Dad's mom . . . now his son, Calvin J., was my granddaddy," said one of them. The family tree poster was never deserted. A look at the over 7,000 names on the tree was staggering—the Meadors, Bashams, Moyes, Farleys, Neelys, and on and on. To master Lilly family genealogy would be a formidable project. There are, as they say, so many Lillys. And unless a Lilly knows quite a lot about his own direct ancestors, it can take time to track down on which "limb" of the tree he or she fits. By the end of the reunion, one begins to feel that just about everyone in Raleigh, Summers, and Mercer counties is a Lilly by one way or another.

Estelle Wells of Pontiac, Michigan, was back for the 1979 reunion

Secretary of State Manchin dances for the crowd.

The oldest Lilly present, Mamie Lily, 85.

and can remember looking at the family tree as a child during the earlier Flat Top reunions. "I'm the only kid that could find my grandfather," she said proudly. "They used to put it (the family tree) up on a post." She also recalled that those Flat top reunions were hot and dusty and that her family always took a picnic lunch along.

The biggest day of the 1979 reunion was Sunday. The Lilly family takes pride in the number and stature of politicians they can attract, regardless of party. And, as the Beckley paper pointed out, few West Virginia politicians seeking re-election would miss the Lilly Reunion. Traditionally, the Lillys have played host to governors, presidential candidates and the like. This year there were many state officials, including the governor. Ted Kennedy was invited, but declined. Billy Graham, the well-known evangelist, took a raincheck.

Inside the Armory auditorium there was a stage draped in red, white, and blue. A banner hung from the balcony announcing, "Welcome Lillys and Friends," the traditional greeting on reunion programs. A small girl was running around with a "Mama was a Lilly" sign hanging from her neck. Some of the performing artists had their records and tapes on sale by the stairs. Around the circular walls were long tables for various branches of the family to eat together. Many had brought picnic lunches from home, and there were several giant buckets of Kentucky Fried Chicken to be seen. At the end of some tables were identifying signs for descendants of "Bear Waller" Bob, "Miller Bob," "Curley Joe," and others. So far, said the officials, some 5,000 people representing 23 states had arrived. There was even a Lilly from West Germany. Some politicians had already arrived and were talking with the people. Former Republican governor Cecil Underwood stood at the end of one table autographing programs.

A cardboard replica of the Lilly Monument at Flat Top had been placed to the left of the stage. It was a convenient backdrop for the newspaper photographers and television interviewers who were on hand to cover the events. Reunion participants kept their eyes open for which television stations had cameras there and, more importantly, for a *Washington Post* representative who was rumored to be in the crowd. The 1979 reunion had been promoted in the media to an extent that would probably have left even the imaginative Cousin Abe breathless.

Karl Lilly of Charleston stood at the back of the proceedings and watched. Most of the people here, he thought, would be in about the same category he was—nine generations removed from Robert and Frances Moody Lilly. Meanwhile, there was a program going on. A highlight for some was the performance of former Raleigh County resident, Roger Lee Lilly — "Mr. Bluebird" and a Lilly Family celebrity. Some people sat quietly in their seats listening to the music and to Jaybird, while others roamed around the armory to the concession stands, the tables and the lobby.

James A Lilly, police chief of nearby Mabscott, sat with his family at the "Bear Waller" Bob clan table. "Bear Waller" was his great-great-grandfather. At the end of the table was a display photo of 78 of James Lilly's father's brothers and sisters and children at the old

(Continued on page 42)

Remembering Earlier Reunions

Leafie Lilly Harvey and Orie McComas (standing) in Mrs. Harvey's home at Flat Top.

Long after the Lilly Reunion Doug Chadwick and I returned to Flat Top on a cool October afternoon and visited with Mrs. Leafie Lilly Harvey, 82, and her lifelong friend and neighbor, Mrs. Orie McComas, 86. The two women sat with us in the living room of Mrs. Harvey's white frame house on the Raleigh-Mercer county line. As the crow flies the house is not far from the original homeplace of Robert and Frances Moody Lilly, founders of the Mountain State Lillys.

Mrs. Harvey's living room windows face the old Lilly reunion grounds and in times past she could sit and see and hear those big reunions of the 1930's and '40's from her front porch. We talked with the two Flat Top natives about those reunions and earlier times in their community.

Mrs. Harvey did most of the talking because, as was soon apparent, she has a good memory. "I'm about the oldest Lilly living around here. I get so many phone calls. I had three calls last week, people trying to trace their relatives." Mrs. Harvey has always taken an interest in her family history and has the original family tree done by Clark Lilly, although failing eyesight now prevents her from reading it. She remembers that her late husband would talk with her father "for hours and hours" about the Lilly family. During World War I Mr. Harvey was able to visit the Lilly's ancestral city, Lille, France.

Mrs. Harvey clearly remembers the first Lilly Reunion in 1930, which was said to have drawn some 5,000 people. Her father, Simeon P. Lilly, had wanted so much to see it, she said, but died in April, just a few months before the August reunion. Mrs. Harvey and Mrs. McComas, wife of the local doctor, attended that first reunion and every one that followed. Mrs. Harvey made sure to save a program from every reunion. Holding up the 1930 program she pointed to the words, "The Greatest Reunion of All Time," and said, "I don't know how they knew that then."

Flat Top was a very different community in 1930 than it is today with an interstate interchange just a few miles down the road. Electric lights didn't come until 1937 and the first paved road between Princeton and Beckley didn't arrive until around 1925. There weren't many cars in the community, and by today's standards people then were pretty much "grounded," said Mrs. Harvey. There were a few cars—the doctor's, Uncle Bert Lilly's, and one belonging to a brother of Mrs. Harvey. Still, the McComas family always kept two horses for the doctor to ride in his practice.

Flat Top was a farming community. "We grew everything we ate," said Mrs. Harvey. People bought their coffee and sugar at the store, but that was about it. Back then, said Mrs. Harvey with a laugh, eggs were 10¢ a dozen and coffee was 12¢

a pound. Sometimes, she recalled, her mother bought green coffee beans and roasted them in the oven at home because it was cheaper. Or sometimes they bought roasted beans and ground the coffee themselves. Both women remembered "Arbuckle" coffee which came in a package. They could save the coupons for free jewelry, and Mrs. Harvey remembered the thrill of a ring her mother ordered for her that way.

In a farming community people didn't have much cash, she said. Probably the most money Mrs. Harvey said her father had at one time was when he sold the mineral rights to his land. For entertainment, there were apple peelings, bean stringings, log rollings, and church activities. The community had both a Missionary Baptist and a Primitive Baptist Church.

It was to this isolated area that the Lilly clan (those who didn't already live there) and their friends came on the third weekend in August, for two days of singing, preaching, fellowship, and horse trading. Non-relatives were welcome, and it was said that everyone was an honorary "cousin" at the Lilly Reunion.

Prior to the reunion, a grandstand was constructed out of rough lumber donated by a saw mill and decorated patriotically. Mrs. Harvey said the grandstand stood in a "natural amphitheater" so that the crowd could see and hear. According to a history of the area written by the Shady Springs District Women's Club, several days before the reunion were spent in "cleaning the grounds, hauling trash, whitewashing trees, repairing seats and various other things." Ira M. Lilly was chairman of the grounds.

People stayed mostly with relatives and they came, even then, from as far away as California. If hosts didn't have enough beds, they slept guests on the floor. "We always had a houseful," said Mrs. McComas. Some of the crowd, especially "the menfolk," might have slept in Flat Top barns, recalled Mrs. Harvey. Mrs. Harvey, a retired teacher after "42 plus" years, said she and her husband never kept people because they were usually packed up around this time of year to leave for teaching assignments.

Mrs. Harvey said there was no carnival at the first reunion. According to the Women's Club history, that came later, when the Bullock Amusement Company was engaged. Their shows usually had a merry-go-round, ferris wheel, chair planes, and other carnival attractions. Mrs. Harvey remembered that many church choirs would come to sing at the Lilly Reunion. On the secular side, there were string bands. It appears that A. A. "Cousin Abe" Lilly took great pains to present an interesting program for the Lillys. The first program included a note from Cousin Abe saying:

"An effort is being made to have 'Pawnee Bill' come from Oklahoma to give us a visit and lectures. At the time of printing this program he has not promised to come but we have not lost hope. It is suggested that all who would like to have him at the reunion write him to come. He can be reached by addressing your letter to Pawnee Bill Lilly, Pawnee, Oklahoma."

Pawnee Bill, the Lilly's most famous cowboy, performed with Buffalo Bill's "Wild West Show" for several years.

Identification

Persons attending the reunion will be asked to wear a ribbon for identification. All persons, especially grown-ups, will make it easy to get acquainted with the crowd if the following instructions are carried out: All persons bearing the name of Lilly should wear a white ribbon, one and one-half inches wide and six inches long. All persons related to the Lilly family, but bearing some other name, should wear a blue ribbon of the size above described. Persons visiting the reunion but not in any way related to the Lillys, should wear a red ribbon of like size.

—Reprinted from the program of the first Lilly Reunion

PROGRAM

OF THE

FIRST

LILLY REUNION

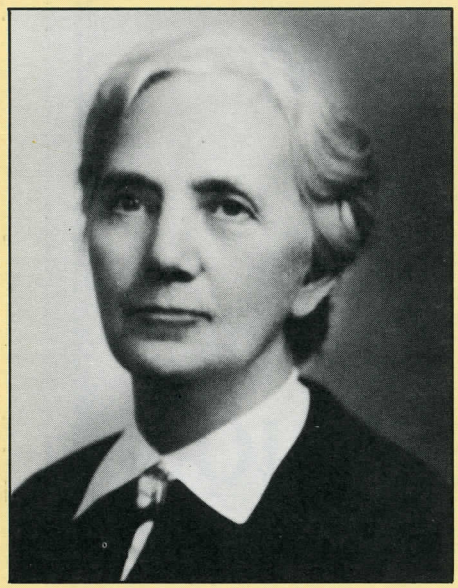
Flat Top, West Virginia

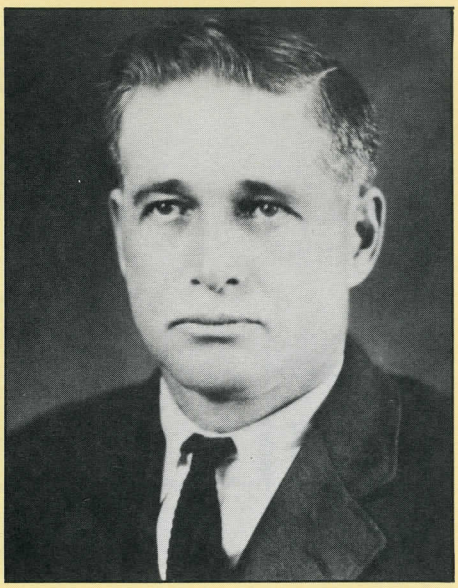
August 16, 17, 1930

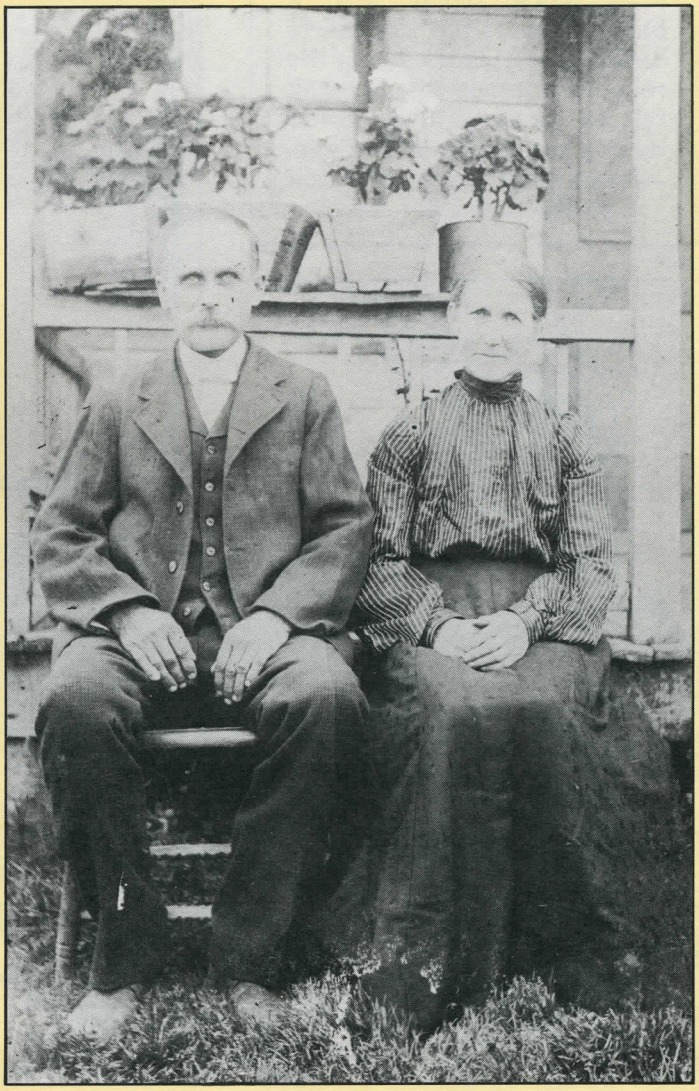
The Greatest Reunion of All Time

A. A. LILLY, President
T. H. LILLY, Vice President
JOE S. LILLY, Vice President
JAS. D. LILLY, Vice President
ADA M. LILLY, Vice President
A. Z. LILLY, Vice President
J. H. LILLY, Treasurer
C. J. LILLY, Secretary

Lillys Who Married Lillys In the large family, it was common for distant relatives to marry. Such was the case of Cynthia Jane Lilly *(top left),* daughter of "Miller Bob" and Virginia Gore Lilly *(bottom left),* and her husband Arthur B. Lilly *(center),* son of Simeon Preston and Sarah Davis Lilly *(below right.)* Daughter Alice *(top right* in 1913), now of Charleston, is a Lilly on both sides—or as one participant at the 1979 Reunion put it, a "dyed in the wool" Lilly. Photographer unknown, photographs courtesy of Alice Lilly Howie.





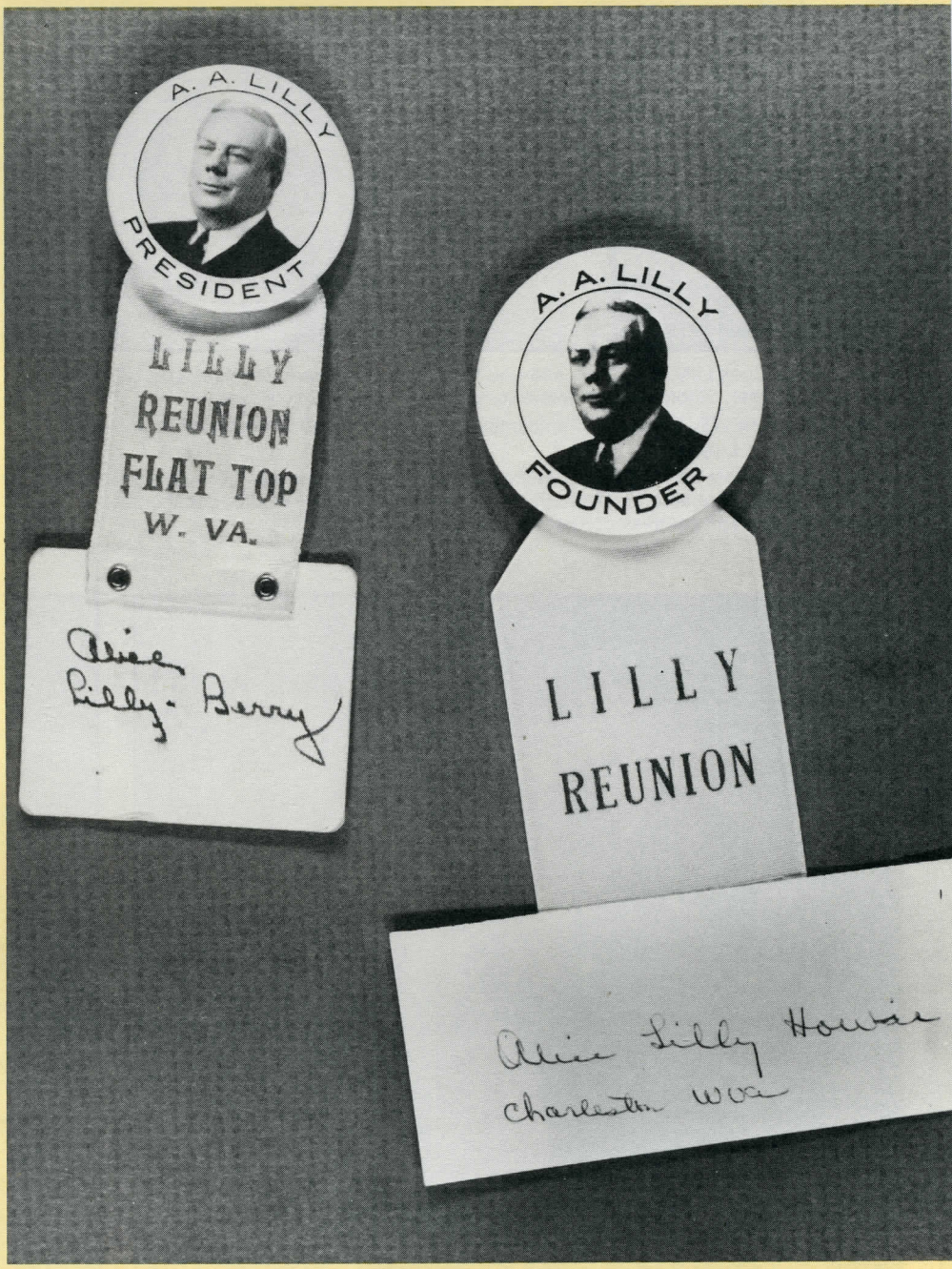


There were concession stands with hot dogs and soft drinks for the crowds. Mrs. Harvey said she remembers that she let a Mr. Bowling borrow a washtub to put ice in for his concession stand. After the reunion "he came up here and wanted to pay for it because he'd ruined the tub breaking up the ice." Many families brought their own picnic lunches.

The gates traditionally opened at 7 a. m., and the program ended early in the afternoon because there weren't any outdoor lights. As for the crowd's behavior, Mrs. Harvey disagreed with reports that there was moonshine drinking and some fighting on the outskirts of the grounds. If there was trouble, she said, Cousin Abe got the troublemakers out of the way. Cousin Abe was not above scolding a troublemaker himself. "I never knew of any fights or drunken brawls or anything. You couldn't get by with that now," she said. Mrs. McComas agreed.

As for politicians, Mrs. Harvey recalled, "We had everyone here but a president." There was even "Cousin" Harold Stassen in 1948. She had vivid memories of the Indiana radio preacher, Reverend E. Howard Cadle. She said he was well-known in his time and might be described as in the "Billy Graham category of preacher."

Despite the countless politicians who came to the Lilly Reunions, Mrs. Harvey insisted, "We don't allow politics to come up at the Lilly Reunion." But Paul Lilly of Lewisburg told me at the 1977 Lilly Reunion at Grandview State Park that the reunions were indeed highly political events, in the old days under Cousin Abe's leadership. There are, he said, Democrat Lillys and Republican Lillys, dating back to Civil War divisions. Cousin Abe was a Republican and was always accused by the Democratic *Charleston Gazette,* claimed Lilly, of using the Lilly Reunion to run for governor.



Alice Lilly Howie's identification buttons from the first Reunion in 1930, and from the one last summer.

He said the *Gazette* would refuse to publish a word about the reunion.. However, there was better cooperation from the *Beckley Post-Herald,* he said, because it had a Republican editor.

Political or not, Cousin Abe was the center attraction of the Lilly Reunions. No one who attended the older reunions ever fails to mention him. "I just wanted to go to hear him talk," said Mrs. McComas. Mrs. Harvey described Cousin Abe, an actual distant cousin of hers, as a natural master of ceremonies who had the "gift of gab."

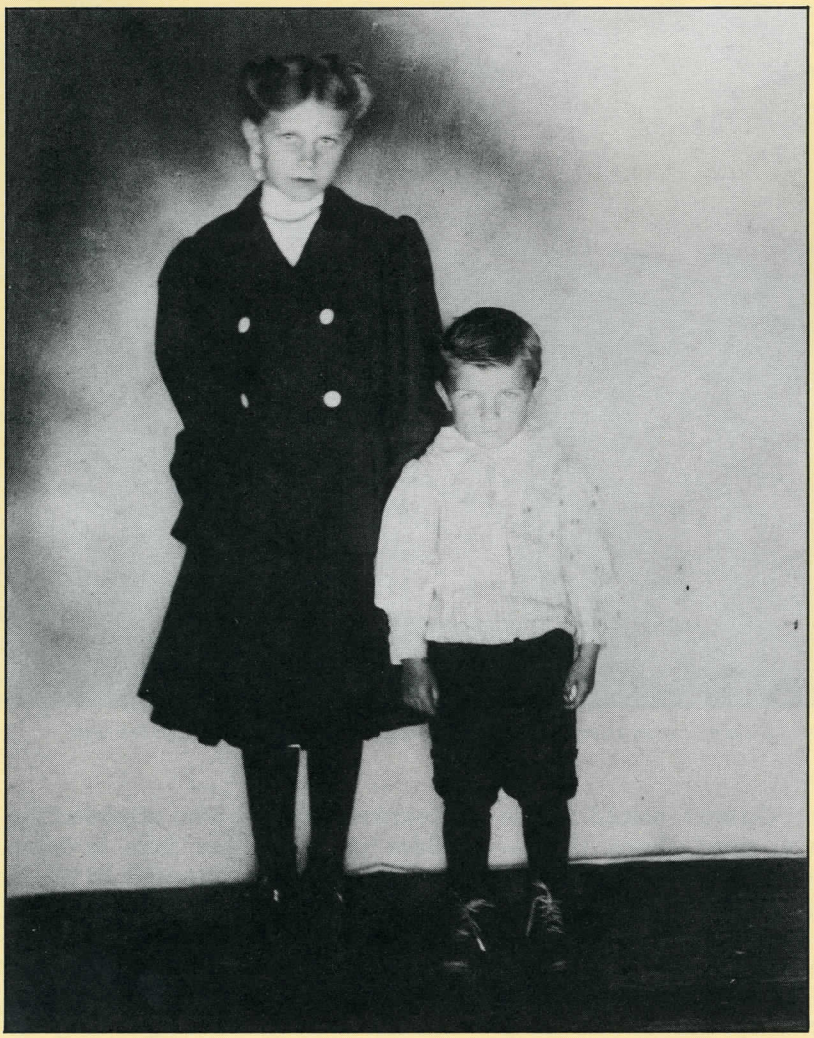
Above: Hilda Cook Lilly, Lily Cook, and Lou Lilly Cook, at an early reunion. Lou Lilly Cook was Leafie's sister. Photographer unknown, courtesy of Alice Lilly Howie.

Below left: Leafie Lilly Harvey with unidentified nephew, c. 1910. Photographer unknown, courtesy of Alice Lilly Howie.

Below right: Cynthia Jane Lilly as a young woman. Cynthia Jane was Leafie's sister-in-law, as well as a distant relation by birth. Photograph by H. W. Hicks Studio, Pocahontas, Virginia. Photograph courtesy of Alice Lilly Howie.

She explained that it was in Cousin Abe's nature to be able to talk. "He could talk to anybody about anything. He was always full of jokes and could tell them all day long. I've heard my daddy say that Abe could cry anytime he wanted. He had something that could move the audience right with him, have them accept his feelings." Lilly was in the best tradition of old-time popular oratory, extolling the virtues of family, God and country, in a prose that must have left his audiences spellbound. And it was Cousin Abe who began the tradition of entertaining and drawing those large crowds.

There is a famous story about Cousin Abe calling the Lilly Reunion to order. At the reunion opening he would rap his gavel and ask John Lilly to stand and lead the crowd in prayer. Seventy-five peo-



ple would stand up and start praying. Cousin Abe would rap his gavel again and say, "I didn't mean all the John Lillys—just John Lilly the moonshiner." At that, only 25 Lillys would begin to pray, goes the standard version.

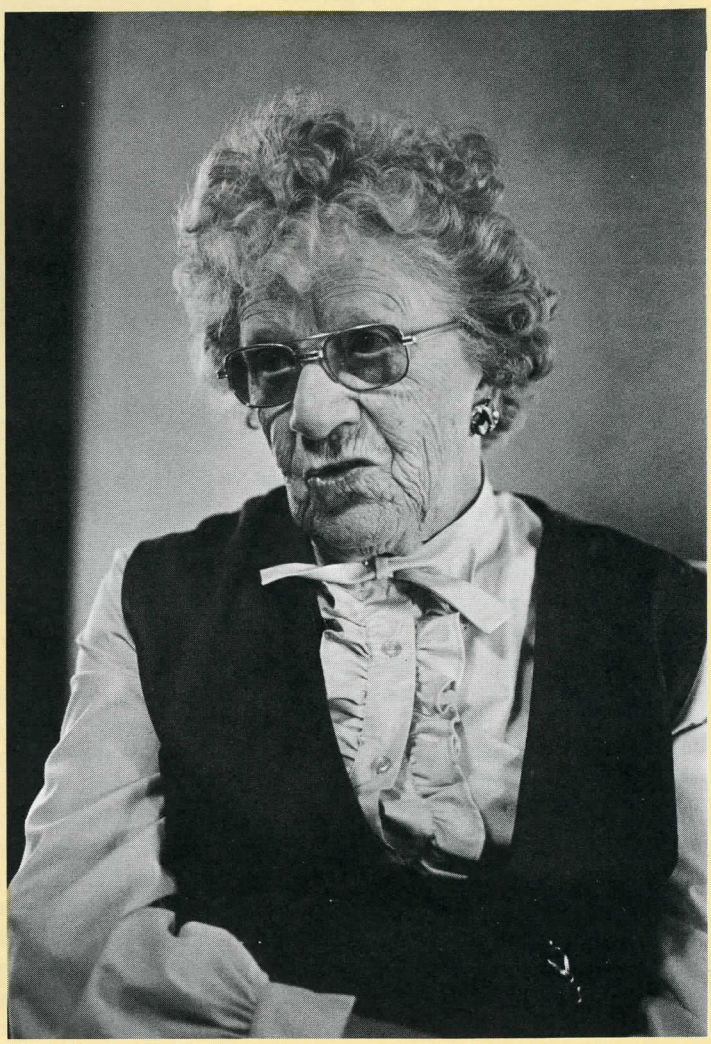
Because there were so many Lilly's, many had distinguishing nicknames. Mrs. Harvey said there was "Bear Waller" Bob Lilly who owned a piece of land where the bears would wallow. It tickled her to remember "Sockhead" Lilly, who always wore a wool sock down over his head for a hat. And there was Mrs. Harvey's sister-in-law's father, "Grinnin' Jim" Lilly, who always had a grin on his face. There were many more — "Jerusalem Jim," "Tom Tickle Breeches," "Buckwheat Jim," "Miller Bob," "Preacher Jim," and "Groundhog Bill."

Mrs. Harvey told the story of how her grandfather, William R. Lilly, got the nickname "Hickory Bill." She said he was stationed in the Confederate Army at Narrows, Virginia. One night, without the permission of his superiors, her grandfather took a horse and rode to Flat Top to see how his wife and family were doing. He had taken an army officer's horse and didn't take time to put a saddle and bridle on it. Along the way, she said, he grabbed a hickory limb, stripped it and used the bark for a bridle. He made it to Flat Top and was back again in Narrows the next morning to answer roll call without anyone ever knowing that he'd left.

Mrs. Harvey received her own name, "Leafie," from a 10¢ novel that her uncle was reading at the time of her birth in 1893. She used to have the book, but lost it.

Asked the difference between the old reunions and the revived ones, she said probably the greatest difference is that people don't know one another now. The earlier reunions were more family occasions, but if the reunions are now more commercial, she argued, "look at Christmas." She said, nevertheless, no matter what the difference, she firmly believes the Lilly Reunion is the greatest family reunion.

As the afternoon grew late, we left Mrs. Leafie Lilly Harvey and walked with Mrs. McComas to the front gate. The weather was getting colder and the next week, Flat Top would report snow flurries. It would be a long winter on the mountain. But next summer, if the organizers can swing it, Mrs. Harvey may again have a ringside seat for the reunion in Flat Top. She loves the Lilly Reunions.



(Continued from page 34)

a child at the 1949 reunion. There were six boys and six girls in his family. "About all the Lillys have big families," he said. "They really believe in keeping the family name going."

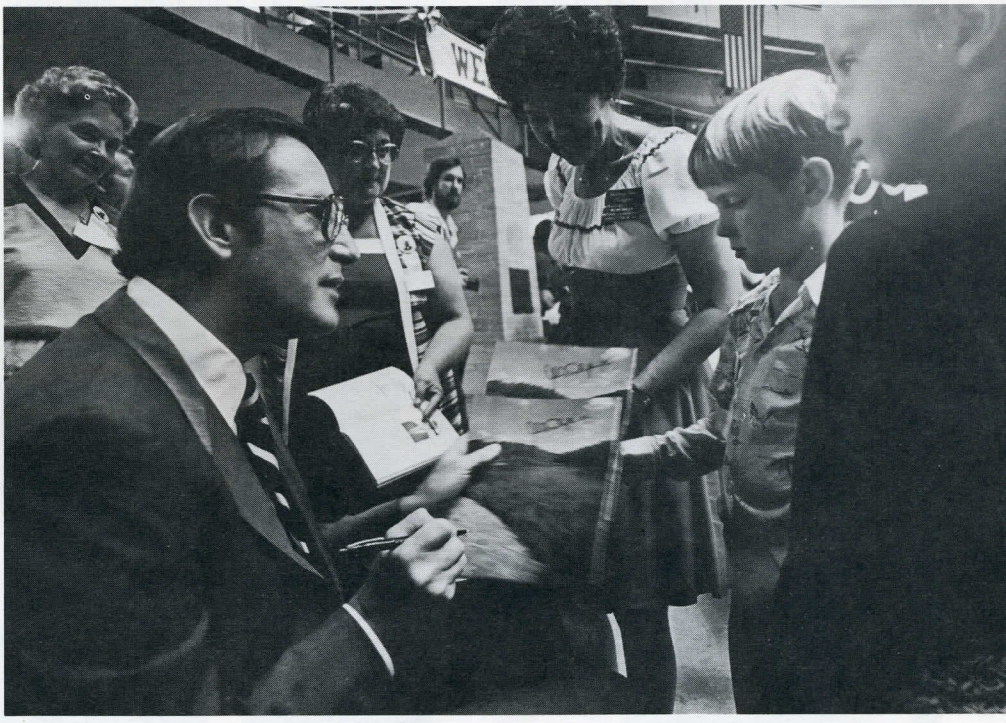
Among the politicians busily shaking hands and signing autographs was Congressman Nick Joe Rahall, who told the crowd that he has introduced a resolution in the U. S. House of Representatives to institute a National Family Day on the third weekend of August during the Lilly Reunion. There was West Virginia Secretary of State, A. James Manchin, who praised the Lillys for their patriotism and spent some time denouncing the well-known atheist, Madelyn Murray O'Hare. He concluded by saying, "God bless the Lilly family, may they always reign supreme. America will always be secure as long as we have Lillys to hold it together." There was applause and Jack Lilly was appointed a West Virginia ambassador of Good Will.

The Hillsman, a gospel quartet, broke up the string of political speeches with a song dedicated to all the "Lillys who've gone on to meet their maker." They sang "That Old Silver Haired Daddy of Mine." Then Jaybird Drennan was back to provide more of his humor.

The Lillys' own comedian, Cora Mays of Beaver, was highly visible throughout the festivities, dressed as the well-known Grand Ole Opry comic, Minnie Pearl. Her mother was, she explained, Delilah Lilly, daughter of "Groundhog Sam" whose father was "Groundhog Bill." Her father's grandmother was a Lilly, too, she added. Mrs. Mays has been doing the Minnie Pearl act for 15 years at local schools, amateur "Gong Shows" and other community events. "I just act natural," she said, "crazy." She had had a reporter riding with her in the parade, she said. Later on she and another person wearing a falseface did a little jig at the front of the crowd.

There was a buzz of excitement passing through the crowd as word got around that the governor was about to speak. Even the most uninterested were finding seats around the room in anticipation of his speech. The governor, John D. Rockefeller IV, came in quietly and sat in the corner by the cardboard monument waiting to speak. Finally Jack Lilly came to the stage to welcome the governor. Rockefeller spoke personally about his own family, and promised that next year he will issue a proclamation declaring the Lilly Family Reunion a state holiday to be honored by all West Virginia. "In West Virginia," he concluded, "every day is Lilly day."

Mamie Lilly, 85, of Beckley, was determined by officials to be the oldest Lilly present Sunday afternoon. She was sitting in the back at a table from which all the food had been cleared away. A resident of Flat Top for 47 years, she's been



Saturday and Sunday at the Armory. Governor Rockefeller signs autographs, *below left.*

to every Lilly Reunion held and said she was enjoying the 1979 one. "We used to walk to the reunion and carry our grub in a basket," she said. The mother of 10 girls and 3 boys said that when the Lilly Reunion came around she was glad to get to go. "The best thing I enjoyed today was bringing the food for all of them to eat." Her daughter, Jessie McVey, 50, said she can remember the reunions, too. "We'd buy new clothes, get up early, milk the cows and do the chores before it was time to go to the reunion." Their family liven then on an 85-acre farm, the women said. 'So many relations would always come home with us on a Saturday night," recalled Mrs. McVey.

But the real family historian was Mrs. Lilly's daughter, Willa Maddy of Beckley, who is writing a Lilly book which she hopes to complete soon. Mrs. Maddy has an ability to cut through genealogical confusion. Explaining her mother's lineage she said, "Now Randall Bob Lilly's daughter, Elizabeth, was Isaac Moye's grandmother. Mamie Lilly is Isaac Moye's wife. Elizabeth and Miller Bob were brother and sister." Mamie is also, she said, "the great-great-granddaughter of Drewry Farley, the man who named Pipestem."

"Back then," she said, "Mom had so many visitors that she cooked for days getting ready for the Lilly Reunion. There wasn't much going on in Flat Top in those days, maybe some 'hardshell' meetings in May or September where the men would swap horses. We'd be up by 3 a. m. getting ready for the Lilly Reunion." Mrs. Maddy remembered that before the reunion sweethearts would write to one another "See you at the Lilly Reunion." And the sweethearts would have a big time, she said. "There were hot dog stands, seems like I can smell them now." She remembered that there was "dust on those old dirt roads and it seemed like it would stifle you to death sometimes." The boys and girls would pick beans all day to have money for the reunions. She also recalled that there were moonshiners on Ellison Ridge road leading out from the reunion grounds. "You could even see them against the fence posts passed out."

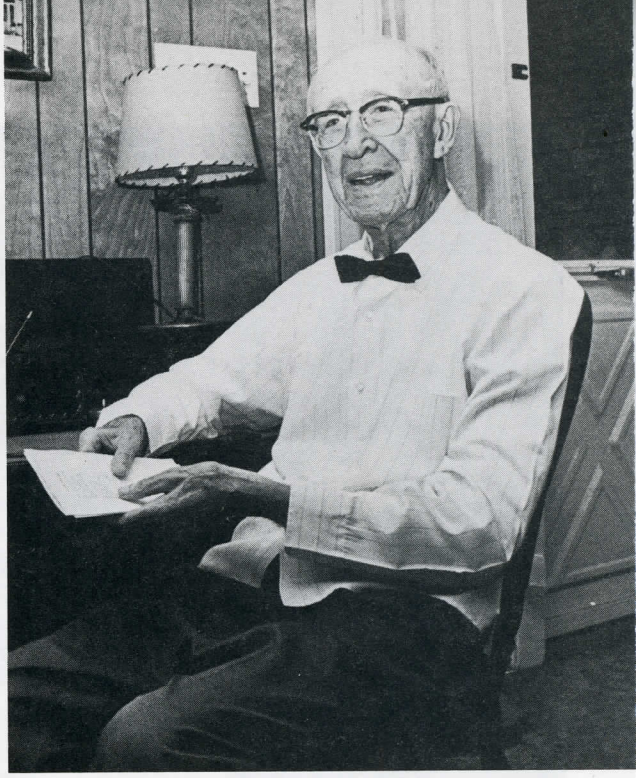
Mrs. Maddy has lived in Beckley for 22 years now but said, "I'm so sentimental, I say the birds don't sing here like they sing out on Flat Top Mountain." She thought that the big reunions of the 1930's and '40's had more younger people in attendance than today. There was, she thought, perhaps more closeness among the participants.

As the afternoon wore on, people began to leave the Armory. After the governor's speech, the television crews and newspaper reporters left. Another Lilly Reunion had come to a close. Standing on the steps of the Armory near where people were leaving, a Lewisburg Lilly was telling Lilly stories. He laughed and said, "I know all these Lillys. I know enough to hang everyone of them."

"The First Century is the Hardest"

A Morgantown Centenarian Reminisces On Glassmaking and Poetry Writing

By Norman Julian
Photographs by Ron Rittenhouse



"THE first century is the hardest," centenarian and retired glasscutter Oscar DuBois says. "But I have always been more interested in the future than the past." One hundred years old on September 7, 1979, Mr. DuBois remains active, and looks forward to his second century. On one of the three days I dropped by in preparing this article, he was busy digging plantain from his front yard. He greets visitors with enthusiasm, and during part of our interviews he walked about his living room as he talked.

When he flashes his frequent smile crowsfeet show a little around his eyes, sometimes he cups his ear to hear better, but there is little else to indicate he is of advanced age. He is still nimble in movement and facile with the language.

Mr. DuBois spent 60 years as a glasscutter and much of his life writing poetry, an occupation that has achieved for him some regional fame. The glassworking influenced his poetry. He has formed poems about the many Mountain State people he has known in making glass, a trade he began before the turn of the century.

His vivid memory spans not only the century but also the ocean to Belgium, where he was born in 1879 at Charleroi, about 10 miles from the French border. He recalls, "We had relatives on both sides of the line. Fact is, my father learned his trade at Aniche in France.

"About 1880 my father decided to come to America. I think he had kind of a pioneer disposition to travel. He was making very good money over there as a glassblower, because at that time the Belgians and the French were the world leaders. So my dad came over mostly for a change."

Oscar, his mother, and brother, 11-year-old Earl, came over 12 years later. In those years the elder Mr. DuBois had made several trips across the ocean to be with them.

"In a way it was a good thing I came over when I did, because I got a chance to go to school over there and learn some French," Oscar DuBois says. "I came to America when I was 13 and I didn't know a word of English." He was to learn, though, and his ability with the new language was to provide some of his most rewarding experiences in the New World.

"I remember after coming through New York harbor we got to our destination, Kane, Pennsylvania, on a Friday. The neighbor's boy came in and said, 'Well, you will have to come to school Monday.'

"Well, I said 'all right,' so I went to school that quick. That was an exceptional thing. I was lucky on that. In no time I picked up the English language. I sort of liked languages. I got along pretty well."

But Oscar's schooling was to prove sporadic. His father traveled around the eastern United States, mostly in Pennsylvania and New York, following the glassworking trade, a vagabond life at the time.

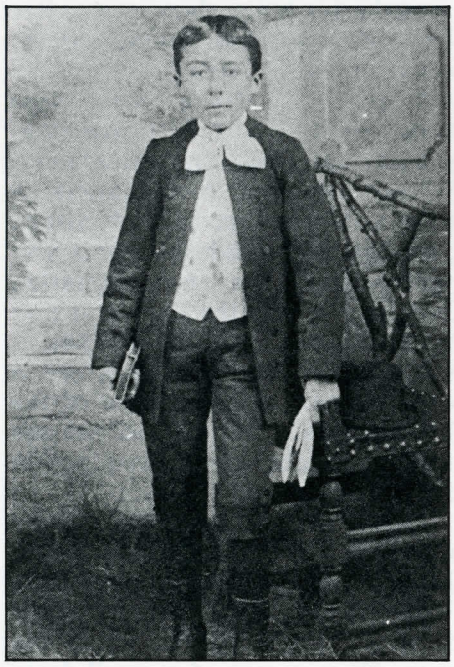
His father recruited young Oscar into the glass business when he was 18. He was unable to follow his dad as a "blower"—the best job in the industry — because he was not strong enough.

Oscar remembers, "The blowers were big guys 175 or 180, or sometimes six-footers who weighed 200 pounds. I used to watch them work to see how they could do it. But I was always skinny. I wore a loose coat to not appear so thin. I wanted to be a blower like my dad, you know. I was crazy about it.

"My dad didn't want me in the factory, but I sneaked around to the other end of the furnace and loafed with my uncle. I got to know all the blowers. It was an art, you know."

Even sheet glass was made by blowing in those days and Mr. DuBois pays the craftsmen their due. "A real skilled blower could keep that glass from getting hard too fast by a certain way of turning it. He could hold the cylinder of glass from which the plate glass was made, and he could keep the glass as it was being formed one-eighth of an inch thick, sometimes for 60 inches."

But Oscar notes that the blowers' professional tenure was limited. "Most of them quit by the time they were 55. They just ran out of wind. Some maybe stretched it out to 60."



Far left: Oscar DuBois at first communion. Belgium, 1890. Photographer unknown.
Left: DuBois as a young man in Morgantown. Photographer unknown, 1906.

Asked what they did then, he says, "They went to live with their children, or maybe on the farm to eat what they could get. But they were paid well while they were working. Some made as much as $30 or $40 a week and in those days that was big money. At the turn of the century the dollar meant so much, you know."

But because of his physical stature, Oscar was destined to become a cutter, a choice which enabled him to work to an age when no glassblowers were still active.

"There were four trades in the plant," Mr. DuBois recalls. "They were blower, gatherer, cutter and flattener. There was even a little jealousy among the trades, as foolish as it was.

"The cutting was very difficult. It was kept in families. My father was a very good friend of the manager, on account of his ability as a blower. So he told the boss that if he can't get that boy the job here he would have to go somewhere else. So I finally got in.

"I was 18 when my papers came —you had to have permisison from the union, you know, to cut glass. When my papers came, why, the manager said, 'Well, the boy's papers are here so tell him to go and learn with Mr. Redding.' Boy, was I scared to go meet him.

"The cutters sort of dressed up a little better. They worked days, see, in daylight. They were sort of what you might call the white collar group. Finally I worked up enough courage to go up to him and told him my dad told me to come over and learn to cut. Well, he says 'All right, tell you what to do. I have some shoes that need fixed. Take them over to the shoemaker.' So he gave me a little job there. Was I tickled! All right, so I was in."

Mr. DuBois came to work in West Virginia in 1901, among the hundreds of other French and Belgian glassworkers who came to the state at the turn of the century. These skilled immigrants formed the backbone of the West Virginia glass industry.

"I bought a ticket from Bradford, Pennsylvania, where I lived at the time. On the train, you know, but I only went that way as far as Pittsburgh because I found out there was river navigation from Pittsburgh to Morgantown.

"I landed in Pittsburgh after dinner sometime and I got the boat for Morgantown about three o'clock in the afternoon. We didn't get there until six o'clock the next evening. It was wonderful, a tremendous trip for me. Different foliage in the country, you know, and the hills and everything. They loaded baggage on the boat of people who were moving. Maybe from Pittsburgh to New Geneva, or Monongahelia, or Bel Vernon, or Point Marion, or Morgantown. They'd unload their furniture and stuff. They had a wonderful crew of colored people. They would make all kinds of comments and commotion as they worked.

"It was a steamboat and all new to me. At the towns, the arrival of the boat was a big thing. The people would come over to the quay and watch the boats come in, see who was coming in, what they were taking off or putting on. Then they would go home. At each town it was that way. It was an entertainment to see all this. When I got a vacation the next year I took the trip down and back again. The *I. C Wood* and the *Columbia* were the names of the steamboats I was on."

Morgantown was a much different place then than it is now. Mr. DuBois remembers, "There were no cars, you know. But there were still railroads. We got a house as near as possible to the plant so we could even come home for dinner at noon, see. Run home and run back. It would be better for the energy crisis if everybody did that today."

The first place Mr. DuBois worked in West Virginia was at the long-since defunct Marilla Glass Plant in the Morgantown suburb for which

the plant was named. Like many early glass plants, Marilla Glass was a worker-owned cooperative.

"We owned the plant," Mr. DuBois says. "All the men. Around 1900 it became sort of a fad to start cooperatives. That's what they called them, co-ops. So everybody would chip in $500. A hundred men —let's see—that was around $50,000 that the Marilla Plant cost. Thirty blowers and 30 gatherers and about five flatteners and ten cutters. About a hundred skilled men. And I had a hundred friends. Some of them—I guess most of them—had to borrow money from the bank."

Each of the cooperatives had its own rules, according to Mr. DuBois. Some were incorporated and sold some stock to outsiders, usually with a limit in an attempt to keep control of the company with its founders. But Mr. DuBois notes, "Glassworkers had trouble keeping their money," and only the Seneca Glass Plant remained a pure cooperative, owned and controlled by its original members or their offspring.

Housing was a problem then, as it is now in Morgantown. "There were no houses at Marilla at first," Mr. DuBois recalls. "Mr. I. C. White and Mr. Hershman owned that land out there. Anyway, they gave us a piece of it, about five acres to start our factory, so we could build the plant and then they could build houses. They would build one house and a blower or a cutter would buy it. And we would say, 'Do I get the next one, Mr. White?' 'Yes. Well, yes,' he'd say. He would take your name down and that was that. You had the house but you had to wait for it."

Walking, then, was the chief means by which people got around in Morgantown. "We would walk into Morgantown almost everyday," he says. "It was only about a mile. I've always liked to walk. If you're running around in an automobile, you can't talk to anybody. If you're walking you meet people. You know and as soon as one house was made more people. I've always done it. Later when I lived in Sunnyside up from Mountaineer Field I used to walk downtown every day. That was after I retired. I had a rule then that if it got below 20°, then I wouldn't do it. I was 92 when I got a shot of arthritis and gave it up. But I still walk in the house as much as possible. I hope to get back pretty soon to doing it outdoors."

Mr. DuBois worked ten years cutting glass at Marilla. Then, like his professional predecessors and contemporaries, he moved on. To the Morgantown Glass Guild for a while, then to the U. S. Window Glass in the same town, then to Fairmont Window Glass in Fairmont, and later to the Pittsburgh Plate, Adamston Flat, and Rolland Glass factories in Clarksburg.

Mr. DuBois blames automation for the rise and fall of so many glass factories. "They invented machines and instead of men making the sheets of glass the machines made it, as fast as paper almost. So 90% of the men were thrown out of work. I worked for 20 years when all the glass was handmade. But they were talking about machines even around 1900 and it took them eight or ten years, even 20 years, before getting it right. But finally they got it."

But that was several years after Mr. DuBois first came to Morgantown. Part of the reason he liked it there then, and why he continued to make his home there even after he worked in other towns, was because of the University.

"Woodburn Circle was here then," he recalls of the turn-of-the-century campus. "The old armory, where the new Mountainlair is now, was at the top of High Street. And the old president's home was there. And the Administration Building—it was the library at that time. What a beautiful building it still is. One thing I'd like to see is one tree that blocks a view of the building taken out, so you can see that beautiful street coming in from Clarksburg."

Mr. DuBois recalls that State Geologist I. C. White, who sold him his first house at Marilla, once lived where the Main University Library is now. "Right on the spot," he says. "It was sort of a small farm in town. He was a great geologist, a wealthy man. He discovered the Mannington pool of oil. He is the one who made the decision where to drill the well.

"He bought $2,000 worth of stock in our glass company. We had a limit in our company that nobody was allowed to own more than that. I guess we were afraid of some big shot getting it or something. But we finally lost the plant. There were lots of people who are sort of careless with their money. They would go borrow a hundred or two from the bank and they would give up their stock as collateral. First thing you know, the bank had the company anyway. So we lost out that way."

So Mr. DuBois was to follow others who worked his trade—and move on. "They were like gypsies, most of them," he remembers of his fellow glassworkers. "Most of them were following gas when they moved."

Mr. DuBois notes you need sand and abundant gas to make glass. West Virginia has both, and at one time more glass was made here than is made now. "Cheap gas is what brought the factories here," he emphasizes. "When we came to

Oscar DuBois, with wife Laura and son Charles, at home in Morgantown, 1910. Photographer unknown.

Morgantown we paid 7¢ a thousand feet for gas. It was half that price, cheaper in Clarksburg, and a lot cheaper in Huntington."

In 1913 the gas led him to his first job in Clarksburg and he worked there until he retired at the age of 77 in 1956. All but seven of those years were spent commuting each day from Morgantown. Those early years he would go down on Monday morning and come home on Friday evening. As he says, "I had a good house built in Morgantown and wanted to raise my family here."

DuBois is at the far left in this 1904 picture of glasscutters at Marilla Glass Plant. Photographer unknown.

Mr. DuBois was married in 1908 to the former Laura Rassart of Morgantown. They had two children, a son Charles, now himself a retired glasscutter, and a daughter Martha, a retired schoolteacher who lives at home with her father. Mrs. DuBois died in 1946.

"Most of those years, though, we commuted everyday, my brother and I and then my son, the three of us. We would go either Route 73 or Route 19. In the summer Route 73 was more favorable and in the winter Route 19 was, because the road was flatter. It was an old road then, but we had the best cars they made. I remember a 1932 Chevy and a 1938 Oldsmobile 8. We put more than 100,000 miles on each of them. The trip took about an hour and a half. At that time there was not too much traffic. So sometimes we would run as far as Fairmont and we'd meet maybe just one or two cars. Then between Fairmont and Clarksburg we'd meet two or three. So we made good time. But today you can make the trip in less than an hour on I-79.

"I worked three or four times at the Pittsburgh Plate and at Rolland. I worked the last 20 years at Adamston. I worked until I was 77. I guess I was about due to quit. But I was lucky. There was another man older than I was and he had quite a little pull—and he was 80 years old. He didn't quit until then. So I said as long as he is working I can work, too. So one time the boss cutter came around and says, 'Well, Oscar, you will be retiring soon, I guess.' I says, 'Heck no, I'm not retiring. I have only got 19 years here. I want 20 years of it.' And that was so I could get a pension. The boss cutter was an old friend of mine, so I could talk like that—sassy with them, you know. And when I got to be 77, I retired."

That was when Mr. DuBois began to spend more time with his poetry. He maintains that "the most important achievement for a man is to raise a family," but poetry was his life-long passion. He kept coming back to it.

"When I was busy working and raising the family I'd quit writing for as long as ten years," he recalls, "but I always started again."

His poetry appeared in print first in 1951 in the old *Echoes of West Virginia* magazine. He placed several poems there over a period of years. He wrote of the glassworkers, of West Virginia mountains and rivers and plants and animals, still among his favorite topics. He regrets that none of the big national magazines ever published any of his poems, perhaps because his work was limited to the regional life he has lived. But he corresponded with noted poet Louis Untermeyer and won a state prize from *Echoes* for the best sonnet of the year, "The Great Kanawha River."

In 1967, West Virginia University's English Department started a "Writers and Critics Forum." The forum was open to townspeople and one night Mr. DuBois walked in. He was discovered by Dr. Ruel Foster, past chairman of the English Department, and his poems were read for the audience by Professor Russell McDonald. Oscar was an instant success.

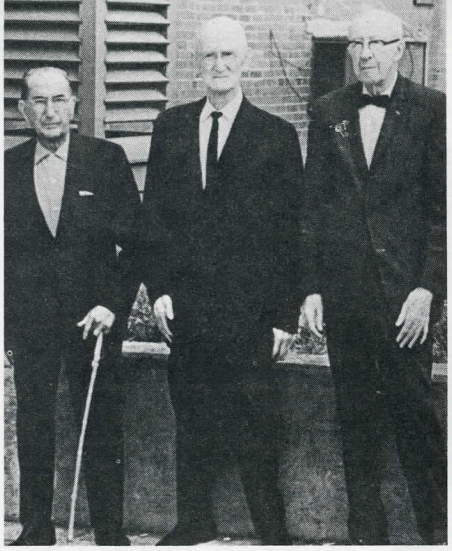
Panorama magazine of the Morgantown *Sunday Dominion*-Post featured him with a cover story, and he earned a regular following on its poetry page. Meantime he and Dr. Foster developed a strong working relationship. For years on his daily walk Mr. DuBois would pass Armstrong Hall, where Dr. Foster had his office. After they became acquainted he was an almost daily visitor.

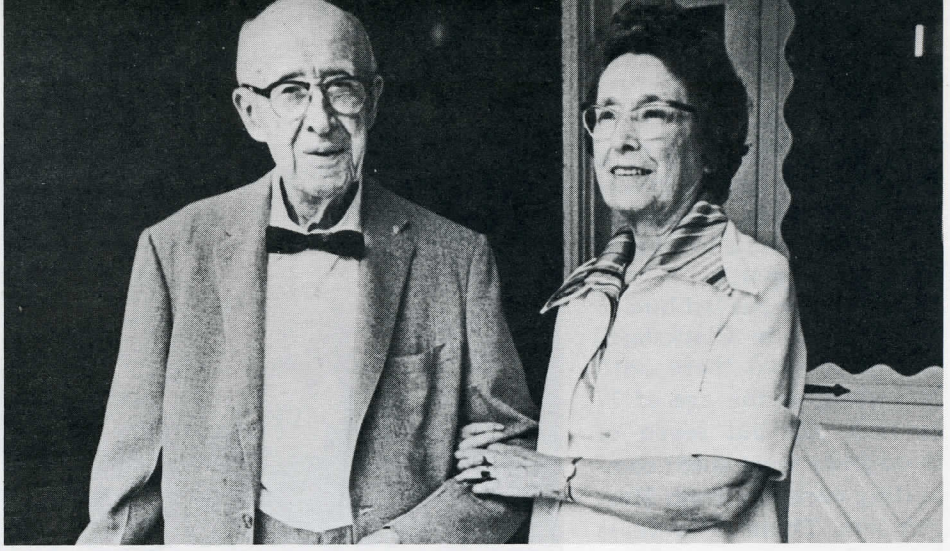
"My most successful year in poetry—would you believe it?—was when I was 90 years old," Mr. DuBois beams. "I wrote 1500 lines that were published. I only wrote one page at a time, a half-page, or sometimes only a couple of lines each day. But usually at that period I would write it and then run off to Professor Foster and sometimes he'd change a word or a line and sometimes he wouldn't. So next day I would write some more."

He notes that "especially when I was writing regularly for the newspaper I'd have to keep steady at my writing. I always had three or four poem ideas in my mind. I could write them down quickly, but when I had a reason to—because they would be in the paper—I'd do better. That went on for three or four years."

DuBois published two versions of his book, *Lichen and Moss,* and another volume, *The Hatfield and McCoy Feud and Other Poems.* The Morgantown Poetry Society named an annual contest and cash award for him.

He still works at his poetry. "It is





Left: Harry Bohlman, Alfred Quinant, and Oscar DuBois, all retired glasscutters from the Adamston Flat Glass Company, Clarksburg. All three gentlemen were past 90 when this picture was taken in 1970. Photograph courtesy of the *Clarksburg Exponent.*

Right: Oscar DuBois in 1979, with daughter Martha.

everywhere," he answers when asked where he gets his subjects. "Poetry in my early life played only a minor part. My work was hard and I had to rest to keep in shape for glassmaking. But, later I had more time."

Poetry is one of the things that still adds life to his existence beyond the precise measurement of years. He meticuously revises, and works a little nearly every day each week. "Like a recent Pulitzer Prize winner, I am lucky to write one good poem a month," he says.

Mr. DuBois still has his poetry, but he says he "misses my friends when they pass on." None older than he survives. "And I miss my ability to work physically as now I can only putter." He says he is religious, "but not a religious nut. It is ridiculous how many sects there are in America." He adds, "Like Abe Lincoln, I miss a lot of Sundays but I pray everyday."

West Virginia, where he has made his life for all but one year of this century, he now views as his homeland. "My homes became more important to me the longer I lived in them."

Oscar DuBois attributes his long life to "an inherited iron constitution;" but those who know him well wonder if his prudence and healthy mental attitudes haven't contributed as well. In closing he repeats: "The first century is the hardest." It's a line he has incorporated in a recent poem, "Looking Ahead." "It's an idiom," he says, "I had a good life."

Some Poems by Oscar DuBois

The Great Kanawha River

These are the placid waters in between
The filigree of town and country life
Between perennial woods and meadows green
And calm in soil reserved away from strife
Where Great Kanawha's winding silver braid
Embroiders West Virginia's capital;
A gleaming band of pristine crystal jade
That flows to guard mountain state citadel.
A bonny stream: Beloved Kanawha leaves
Birthplace of reivers' highland solitude
To lave the heart of hill land as it weaves
With native pride in depth and magnitude
Still deepening to flood the western gate
Altho too clannish to foresake the state.

Jake Felix

Many and various are the schemes
Jake Felix has on money making
And saving millions in his dreams
Is not beyond his undertaking.
He has great skill and he can take
An automobile all apart
And even if but half awake
He gets it back in shape to start.
Also to keep up with the times
A lot of gadgets he'll invent
And patents will bring in the dimes
On which Jake Felix is intent.
Then making window glass each day
And merely by increasing speed
In piece work for a better pay
He'll have it grow up like a weed.
However it is safe to say
As he pays bills and runs a car
With his first million on the way
Jake Felix won't get very far.

Seeking a Lily

My ideal was a lily fair
Raised in pure white with angel care
Until I found a rose on bright June morn
With deep fragrance and ready thorn.
Seeking a lily brought a rose
Maybe it was better—who knows?

Looking Ahead

How to get old is not too clear
Unless you live to ninety-nine
And stay around another year
For some good luck to come in fine.

Then you are one hundred years old
The first century is the hardest
But you are hoping times unfold
The years ahead to be the best.

Although with friends we'd never stay
No one can have more than one span,
When comes our time to go away
The Lord has made a Master Plan.

"A Real Good Life"

Silas S. Ritchie, Hardy County Mountaineer

By Arthur C. Prichard

SILAS RITCHIE is best described as an ingenious mountaineer. Born January 1884, on South Branch Mountain in Hardy County, West Virginia, he grew up there, as had his parents and grandparents. To sustain the rugged life on a mountainside farm, Silas either raised or resourcefully made many things necessary for his living.

When Silas was two years old, his father, Daniel Ritchie, a farmer only 29 years old, died of pneumonia, leaving the boy's mother, Clara Dove Ritchie, with four children to rear. Because of the difficulty of getting to a school—the nearest one, housed in a log building, was more than three miles away—Silas only attended school a few days. Yet he had a busy childhood on the farm, adding his efforts to those of the other members of the small family to support themselves. He helped care for the livestock, worked in a large garden, tapped maple trees, collected the sap, and made maple syrup and sugar. Not only when a boy, but through his mature years, Silas helped work the land to provide most of the provisions for the family. Other than buying salt, coffee, oatmeal, rice and some sugar, they purchased little food.

As a youngster Silas begun hunting small game. Starting with a muzzle-loader, he became a good shot. For many years the rabbits, squirrels, grouse, partridges, and turkeys he got by hunting helped feed the family. On a few occasions deer killed in season provided them with venison.

There were years when the sale of small game bought clothing for the family. Silas remembers receiving 15¢ a piece for bob-whites, 20¢ to 25¢ for large rabbits, and 50¢ to 75¢ for pheasants. "I never felt very comfortable shooting partridges. They're such pretty little birds," Silas comments.

When he had attained some size, Silas began working at logging in the woods, an occupation at which he labored many times during his life. It was hard and sometimes dangerous work, but the $1.50 a day he could earn was good pay. He became skilled in using an axe and a crosscut saw, as well as in handling horses to get the logs out of the woods.

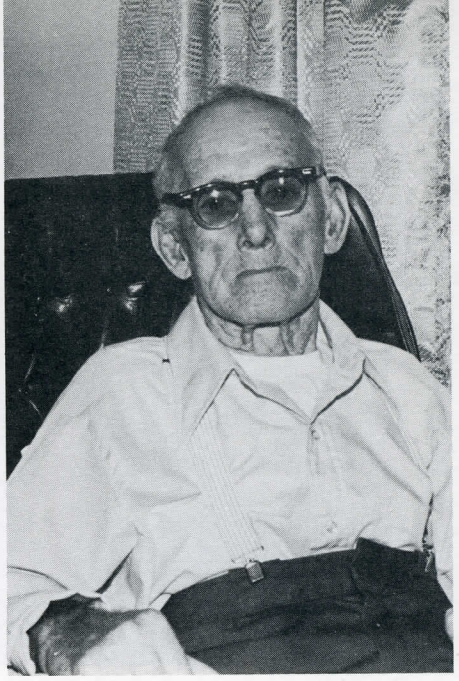
The most serious injury he received when working with timber came one day when he, using a team of horses, chains, and grabhooks, was snaking logs down a steep mountain. A fellow-worker above him on the mountainside was to keep watch for rocks which, if dislodged by the logging activity, might roll dangerously toward Silas. The man's warning call wasn't heard, and rolling stones hit Silas, breaking ribs in the front of his chest and in his back. As those managing the logging operation were short of labor, Silas continued working a few days, but finally the severe pain drove him to a doctor, who forced him to rest until the ribs healed.

"At about the same time," says Silas, "Nels Combs, who also was working in the woods, was killed by a large limb falling on him. There's some danger in getting out timber."

Although he worked in the forests in Hardy County, he also was employed as a lumberjack in the vicinity of Davis and Gormania. In fact, he lived in Tucker County two years when laboring in the woods near Gormania.

At times when working there, Silas walked back to visit his former home in Hardy County, a trip of 45 miles or more each way. He returned to live on South Branch Mountain in 1903.

When he was married Silas built the family home, a log house, a short distance down the mountain-



Silas Sylvester Ritchie was 95½ years old when this picture was taken in July, 1979, in Elliott City, Maryland. Photograph by Arthur Prichard.

side from the South Branch Mountain ridge road, and made most of the furniture. He had become skilled with tools, able to fashion many articles with a few simple implements, a saw, hatchet, hasp and knife. He had learned from his grandfather, Jonas Dove, who was a farmer skilled in making ordinary furniture and other articles of wood, such as spinning wheels, weaving looms, and carding machines. Through the years Silas' ingenuity came to light. Not only did he construct household and farm articles, such as chairs, tables, and sleds for neighbors, and repair machinery, but he devised special things to take care of unusual situations. Farming a mountainside, Silas fitted his wheelbarrows with brakes to help control them on steep land, and made fasteners for his gates.

To assist him in his hunting, he devised wooden turkey callers to bring those wary birds near him, and fashioned gunstocks and foreend stocks, for support under the gun barrels, and improved metal gunsights and chokes for his shotguns. The chokes served to concentrate the shot pellets as they left the muzzle of the guns.

Probably his best known creations were the violins—fiddles, he called them—he made with his penknives. Having learned to play a

Top left: Silas Ritchie and wife, Nancy Shipe Ritchie, in the late 1940's or the early 1950's. Photographer unknown.

Center left: Hardy County musical quartet of the 1950's which played at reunions, parties and dances in Hardy and nearby counties. Fiddlers—Silas Ritchie and Harry Displanet; guitarist—"Pete" See; banjoist—Wayne Straderman. Photographer unknown.

Below left: Silas, outside his log house in .. the early 1960's. Photographer unknown. .. Photographs courtesy of Theodore See.

Opposite: A chair made with simple tools by Silas 49 years ago and still in use. Photograph by Arthur Prichard.

fiddle, he thought he would make one in his spare time. Once he began playing the instrument he had made, someone wanted to buy it. So he made another, then another, and another. Most of these he made at night, after having worked a full day.

"I made 22 fiddles in all, selling them for different amounts. The last two I sold for $100 each." Laughingly he adds, "I once even traded a fiddle for two shoats."

They were good violins. Often with one he would play for local dances, sometimes with his son-in-law, Theodore "Pete" See, of Mathias, who accompanied him on a guitar. "There was the time I entered a fiddlin' contest at the Fisher radio station, playing on one of my home-made fiddles. I was real proud when I won the first prize of $10." But increasing years brought arthritis, which made it difficult for Silas to work with tools, so an end to "fiddle-makin'" came.

Through his long, full life there were difficult times. One such period was the early part of the Depression of the 1930's. With jobs being scarce, he found work with the WPA. Getting up at three o' clock in the morning, he'd walk down the mountain to Mathias or to the Cove, a distance of about 10 miles. After working all day, Silas would trudge up the mountain, pick up his lantern from where he had parked it at day-break, light it, and continue his trip by lantern-light, perhaps reaching home at eight or

eight-thirty. After doing a few chores, he would go to bed, only to get up around three o' clock the next morning and repeat the process. In rain, snow and zero weather he made the trip and did the work.

Occasionally he remained overnight with son-in-law Pete See, or with Pete's brother, Stanley See in Mathias. The WPA job afforded Silas an opportunity to support his family and himself, and although it required much effort, he was thankful for the work. His wages were $2.50 a day.

His daughter, Clara, now Mrs. Troy Storie, tells of other low-paying work for the family. At one time she and her grandmother, Emeline Shipe, cooked at a lumber camp for 63 hungry lumberjacks. She and Mrs. Shipe arose at three in the morning to start preparing food. They baked bread twice a day, using 25 pounds of flour in each baking. Huge quantities of meat and dumplings, chocolate gravy puddings, and vegetables were prepared, since working in the woods gave men big appetites. The two women worked seven days a week, being allowed one Sunday off a month. For this work her grandmother and she received the large sum of $3 a week apiece.

When Silas' first wife, Bessie Kettermon, died, she left Silas one child, a daughter, Odie. Later Silas married Nancy Shipe, and to the second union six daughters and two sons were born. All of his children, except Odie and one daughter of his second marriage, Flossie, who had married Pete See, are living.

"While at times it was rather hard living on the mountain," says daughter Clara Ritchie Storie, "we had a good life. We belonged to the Church of the Brethren in Mathias, but at times the distance made it difficult for us to attend. Often there were Church of the Brethren services in a school on the ridge. So we went there.

"Our parents taught us to be honest, to work and to live peacefully with other people. Many of the families of our neighbors and relatives were large, a number having eight to 12 children. They would visit us and we would go to see them, generally on Sundays. We children would play games with the other girls and boys, and we got along with very little quarreling or fussing. My father was like that. He got along with other folks. If someone did something unpleasant it. He just went his own way, not to him, he didn't make an issue of doing something unpleasant to the other. He's been a peaceful, pleasant man. Also he and my mother were hospitable, inviting visitors to eat and to stay all night, willing to share with others what we had."

In the late 1960's Mr. and Mrs. Ritchie, slowed by age, moved from their log house a few hundred yards up the mountain to a frame house beside the road. They hadn't been there long until Mrs. Ritchie died. Then in 1973 Silas listened to his daughter, Clara, and went to live with her and her family at Ellicott City, Maryland.

"It's been a pleasure having him live with us. I don't think he has complained of a single thing since he came here five years ago," Clara Storie says.

By the time he moved off the mountain his eyesight had become so poor he could barely see. However, in December 1975, cataracts were removed from his eyes, and his sight was restored. "It was like being born again," Silas explains. "Once more I could see, and how that helps living."

When asked about his life in the mountains, he replies, "I liked the mountains, the out-of-doors, and I had many friends there. Since moving here I've enjoyed going back to visit. Yet, I like living here; it's good being with some of your family and having conveniences, and I like the people too." His face lights up. "It's been a good life, a real good life."

"That's the Difference"

An Interview With Pemperton Cecil, Toymaker

By David Liden

Photographs by Skip Roberts

IN the process of putting together an audio-visual program highlighting the work and lives of a number of farmers and craftspeople in the Appalachian region I had the privilege and pleasure of spending time with Pemperton Cecil and his family, toymakers from Wileyville in Wetzel County. Pemperton's finely crafted wooden puzzles, lumberjacks, whimmydiddles, and jacobs ladders are entertaining kids and adults alike throughout the United States. But I suspect it is for another reason that he and his family were awarded the singular honor of being asked by the Smithsonian Institute to spend the entire summer of 1976 as exhibitors in the Bicentennial Folk Arts Festival in Washington. More than just a craftsman of longstanding, Pemperton is an exemplary figure in the transmission of folk history, skills, and wisdom to a new generation. Pemperton's success in drawing attention to the need and demand for time-tested, durable wooden toys has now encouraged others to use, write about and market these ideas. Part of the intention behind my program and this interview is to insure that people like Pemperton who are so important in the perpetuation of folk culture receive the full recognition they deserve for this new-found inspiration and know-how. This interview is the product of three visits with Pemperton and his family between 1977 and 1979.

David Liden. How long have you been making these toys as a hobby and as a full-time business?

Pemperton Cecil. As a child and even beyond that, we've always been self-sufficient in that that we need. I'm one of nine children raised during the Depression, so that pretty well speaks for itself. We got a pocket knife and from that time on you were on your own. We didn't get into the business 'til 11 years ago. It started as a hobby and kept going.

"You step on a plastic toy, maybe you spent $15 for it and it's gone. The toys we make, with any care at all, will last through several generations."

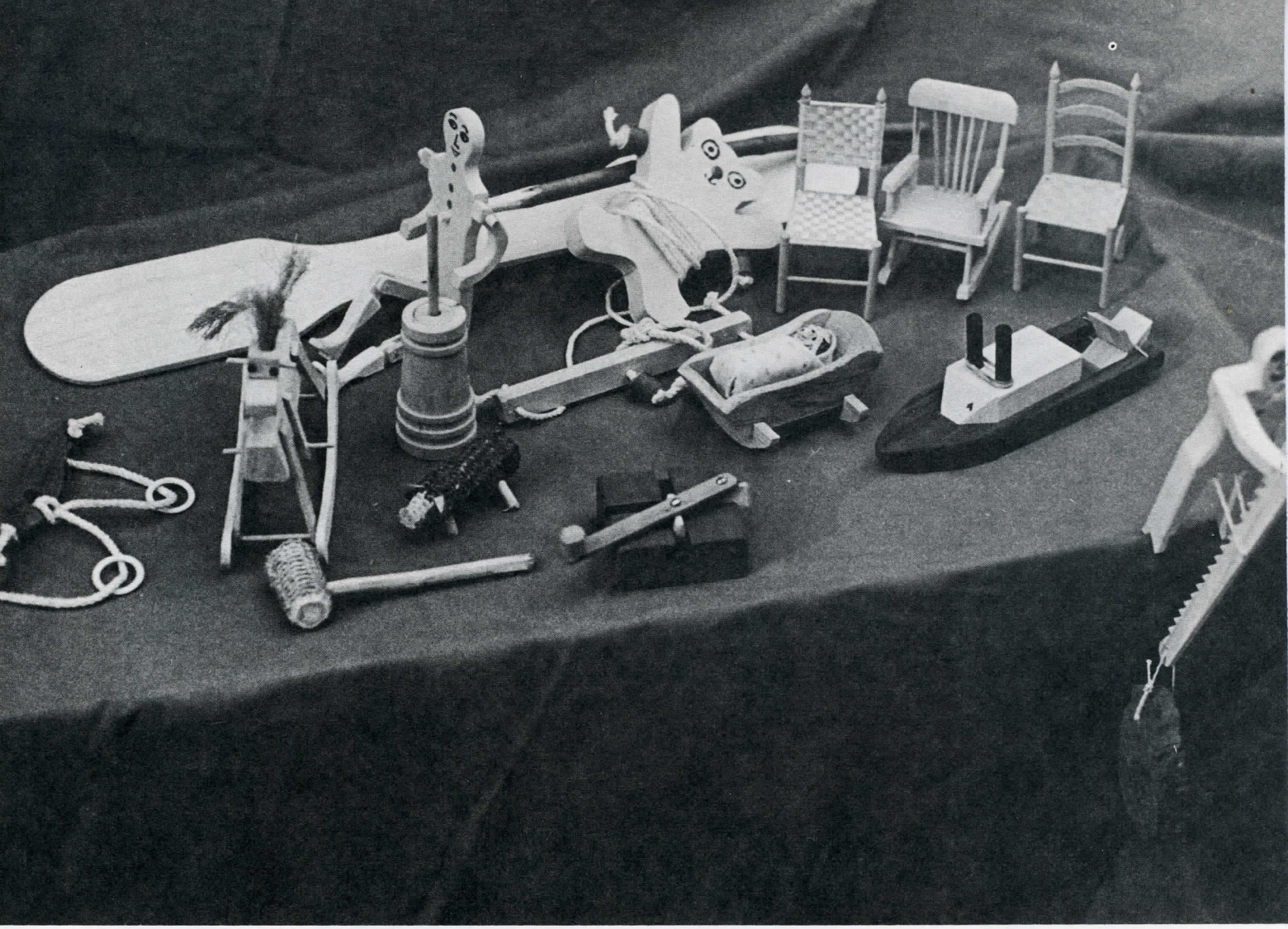
DL Where do the ideas come from, the puzzles, the games?

PC We call them mountain folk toys and they're all handed down generation to generation. Now, there's take-off ideas. If you power one thing with a rubber band, of course, ideas will come to you on how to power something else the same way, but the general idea has been handed down. Some of them you can trace back but the majority of them you can't even trace far enough back. That makes it a good thing in a way because anyone can copy it who wants to. It's impossible to patent a folk toy. Nobody can tell where it ever started.

DL Do you remember playing with these toys when you were a kid?

PC Several of them, yes. Like I said, we started it as a hobby and then a cooperative extension service wanted us to put on shows for the senior citizens and tell them what we knew about what we had. Getting back to the question of where the ideas came from, it's impossible to give credit to everyone who deserves it. Someone would come up at some senior citizen show and tell you "My granddaddy made this." And if he could get it on paper to where we could see what he was talking about, we'd go home and make it.

Pemperton Cecil, a man who enjoys his work.



A selection of Cecil toys.

DL What kind of wood do you like using?

PC Every kind you can think of that grows native. I prefer native wood. Anybody who works with wood knows the harder the wood the better the finish—wild cherry, black walnut. It depends a great deal on what you're going to make out of it. Some of your most expensive wood is not the best for certain things. Now black walnut, we put no finish on it. Black walnut, if it's not finished or filled on a day when the humidity is high the grain will raise, so even though its an expensive wood it's not always the best wood for the job.

DL So you try to find a lot of wood from around here? Do you cut the trees yourself from your own land?

PC Do you see that pile of wood there in the yard? That's wild cherry and that'll take probably three years for that to dry, air dry even enough to use, so we have to keep it out ahead. We've got a pile of black walnut up there in the barn that was cut this spring. Cut it while the sap's down, in the dormant stage I guess what it's called, and then it'll dry way quicker. Right now if you go out and cut it while the sap's up you get season crack or check. It'll crack up so much you can hardly use it.

And we do cut most of it—see, we have 43 acres—we cut most of our wood here on our own place. And then we scavenge for wood. If we can find an old barn or an old house that has the original virgin yellow poplar in it, why we'll get it. We prefer the oldest wood as possible. Some of our wood is over a hundred years old before it ever goes into a toy.

DL Is that because the older, dried wood isn't going to change on you, holes and pegs that have to fit together really carefully?

PC That's part of it. I suppose the biggest part of it is the lumber yards. The expense is so high to buy lumber, and it's not even cured dry enough. And then it gets to be an enjoyable thing just to hunt the wood and be able to, when you pick up a toy, know where that particular wood had come from. I may have hauled it from way-off some place in my old truck down there.

DL Do you ever do any planting, or do you figure they'll just take care of themselves so that what you use will be replenished in the future?

PC When I bought this place

Nova Lee Cecil accompanied her husband to the Smithsonian Folk Life Festival in Washington last summer. The Cecils stress that toymaking is a family enterprise.

somewhere around 20 years ago, a lot of these fields were clear and I had the soil conservation man come out and tell me what was the best thing to do to make it pay for itself. I wasn't going to farm it, it was too steep. I had some big yellow poplar trees at the upper side and he said just don't cut them and it'll seed itself. And now you can see these poplars, there's one standing here you can see for yourself has pretty fair saw logs in it. There's one standing here that was pretty much a bush when I bought this. So the whole farm is pretty well in yellow poplar. It's second growth. It'll never be the same as the old original poplar but it's still a good wood.

Now the old people will tell you that absolutely the second growth can never be yellow poplar. But I'm beginning to believe if it was left stand there for a hundred to two hundred years it would be. It's whiter and tougher while small and it's harder to work with. But I'm pretty much persuaded it'll be the same thing.

DL What about the tools you use. Do you pretty much devise the tools yourself?

PC To begin with, I made them all. I didn't have a lot of money so I made all my own tools. First turning lathe I ever seen, I made it.

DL How'd it work?

PC It worked pretty good. I turned enough on it to buy the one we've got now, it's an industrial lathe. I took a quarter-horse motor out of the bottom of a Maytag washer and powered it with it. I've seen the kind where they put a rope down from a tree limb and you only have to shove it one way, you pushed and the tree limb pulled it back up. I've tried to use them but they were a slow, slow process.

DL Do you find the kids around here still enjoy these kinds of toys or do you find them more interested in plastic, the kind they see on television?

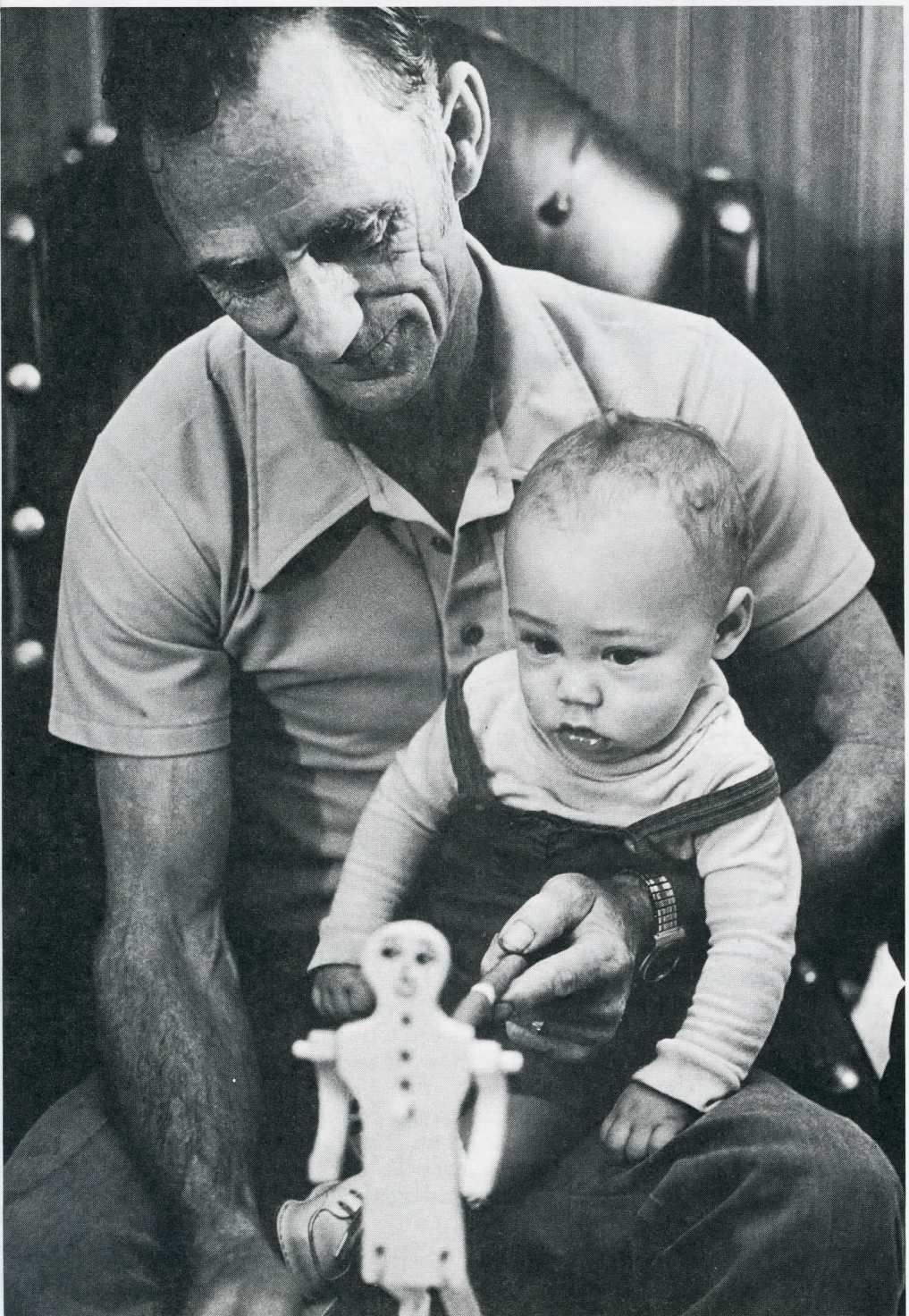
PC They're much more interested in the wooden toys—my grandchildren and the children I'm associated with. And I suppose plastic is made out of oil and it may come to an end.

'Course a good wood craftsman doesn't like the word plastic anyhow. It seems to be a cheap rip-off to me. You step on a plastic toy, maybe you spent $15 for it and it's gone. The toys we make with any care at all will last through several generations. So it's just plain

wasteful. I've never seen a plastic thing made that wouldn't have been better made out of wood.

My daddy was a jack of all trades. He lived to be 73. He could do almost anything, but some not so good. He could build as good a log barn as you've ever seen and split the clapboards and roof it. But later when they got to building houses he said a level and a square were two of the most useless items ever was invented. He called what he did eyeballin', so he wouldn't use them. Needless to say, his stuff didn't fit too good, but if you were going to lay up logs I guess they didn't have to. He was a blacksmith, a veterinarian. He used to say anybody could be a medical doctor and doctor people because they told you what was wrong with them, but it took a smart man to doctor a cow. Way he learned that was if someone had an animal that died near by he'd ask permission to cut it open and find out what killed it. He'd shear sheep, hunt ginseng, anything that would make a dollar back when he was raising us kids.

Pemperton Cecil at play with grandson Kriss. Mr. Cecil taught toymaking to children at the Smithsonian Folk Life Festival last summer.



Ginseng? Oh, I couldn't tell you what it was used for—oh, several different things, 'erbs, they pronounce it "herbs." Different people used it for medicine. At one time they were selling certain shaped roots in China for some kind of a good luck charm, and if you could find a ginseng root that looked like a man with a forked root on the bottom it was valuable. I don't know what but it's over $80 a pound.

DL How much of your work has to be done by hand or how much can be done by machine?

PC In our case it's all by hand, but there's a definition to "by hand." If we were talking about doing it all by pocket knife you couldn't buy your bread. We don't use any kind of a pattern machine or a duplicator. We use a free-hand knife on a turning lathe. If you were going to produce stuff identically exactly the same, you might as well buy it the way it is mass-produced. So it's all hand-made from the standpoint of no two being identical. You can pick up any two toys and look at them and they're not exactly the same. I wore out about three pocket knives and about every toy I make has some of my personal work on it. That's the difference—now I'm going to brag a little bit—that's the difference between a true craftsman and a fellow who pretends to be. There are people in the business buying everything they sell and selling it at a large profit and calling themselves craftsmen. I don't make much use of a person who'll lie to you. But a true craftsman takes pride in his work. I wouldn't buy and sell and join the guild and say I was a producer if I couldn't make them.

DL Have you seen any change in the quality of wood available nowadays?

PC It's like everything else, it's been wasted to the extent that

they're cutting small trees. It's not properly dried. You buy some new lumber and pay a big price for it and it just warps up every which way. Shipping it in from California, I suppose. You don't get near the quality. My land, you used to get poplar boards 24, 26, 28 inches wide. You can't get anything like that anymore.

DL How do you see your profession as a craftsman?

PC I'm not against what they call prosperity. I question sometimes whether it's really what they claim it is. Not too interested in money. I have great pride in what I can do, and would hope and try to encourage young people because it's part of our heritage. There are still people in the United States who think everybody in West Virginia is barefoot and don't know enough to come in out of the rain. It's not the craft, that's not the future of the nation—but a little bit of pride in every young person is. And if we don't have any pride in our own community what can we accomplish? Pride and independence is what my daddy would've said. We've always been independent. Now when I say "we" I'm not just talking about my family. Mountain people in general. The motto "Mountaineers are Always Free" means something to an older person, and what I'm trying to say is I'd like to see it mean as much to young people.

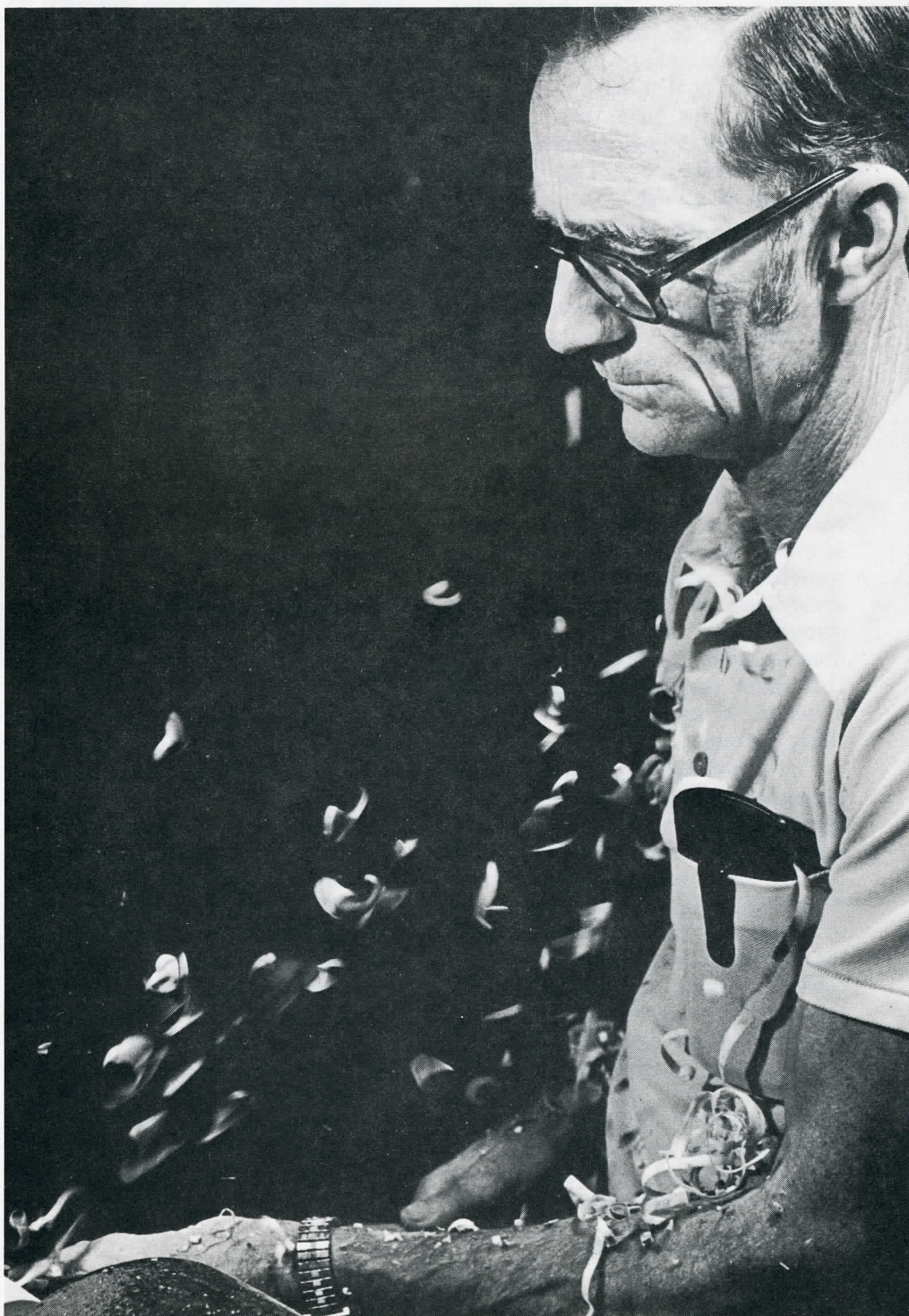
DL Seems like one of the reasons we're using up our resources and don't even realize it is because people are out of touch with the things that they need. The shelves are full, as though there's a never-ending supply. They don't have to provide for themselves any longer and make things from the basic resource into the product.

PC I don't have any education to talk with authority on anything, but I think it's designed that way intentionally. Make it fast, make it so it'll fall apart, then we'll have to make some more. I don't know how long that can keep on. Somebody's going to have to go back to the land one of these days. It's going to be hard and some of the young people are trying, I know that. We've got a good friend from the city who bought a farm up in the hollow. He wants the old ways and I think he's got the right slant. He doesn't want to go back to the real hard times, but he'd like to see it where people would settle down and talk. If you needed a neighobr he'd come over and talk with you a while.

Now, we've refused to live in any other way. Every person we meet is sized up individually, if he does us no wrong, and I think that's what we mean by freedom. To sit back here in these hills and listen to the whip-o-wills and the rabbits come up in the pasture almost to your feet. That's freedom. You may not have a lot of money but that's what it's all about.

But it seems in the present world that all anybody's thinking about is getting a great big house and

The toymaker at his lathe. All Cecil toys are individually hand-made, but power tools are used in the process.



everything, and wanting it right now. No sacrifice. or take any time to get it. And it just doesn't work that way, not continually. It's bound to end somewhere and that energy crisis is just one of the reasons.

Everybody's in a hurry. I doubt the majority of the people ever see that hill over there. Oh, they see it, they know it's there, but it's just a green tree. The majority of them probably don't know that one of them standing down there is a black walnut and the other's a weeping willow. They never stop long enough to look. They're running off somewhere on shift work or into the coal mine.

DL Do you have any feelings about the educational system today, about the kinds of things kids are learning in school?

PC Yes, I do. I think there's too much emphasis put on education for education only, just for that certificate or degree or whatever they get. But I think they're turning toward what they ought to have turned towards a long time ago, a vocational form of education. It does no good to educate a person for something they don't want to do anyhow. I think we need to turn our education to whatever that person is suited to. Now, wouldn't I be something sitting behind a desk someplace, or trying to doctor somebody? I never would have done a nickel's worth of good. But if I'd been educated along the lines of what I'm in, it'd be worth something to me.

You know already I had no education, because a man's English will give him away before anything else, though it's clear out of reason. I think our English was more true, Elizabethan English that came out of England. The words that they make fun of me about now, or a few years back, was right. When I went in the service they put a whole bunch of them together "run a way down yonder and fetch me some" . . . well, I guess that was true English. It's the American stuff we're talking now. We're out of every nation and we're all foreigners in a sense, unless it would be the Indians, and we've got those languages, all mixed up together, I suppose.

DL Do you think someone could have taught you the skills you have now, or did you really have to learn them yourself in order to do just what you wanted to with wood?

PC Well, the appreciation had to've been instilled somewhere when you were younger, I suppose. I see that in everything. I keep saying I've got no education but the thing is you've got to have been there sometime. Everyone of us kids had to work from daylight to dark in order to survive. Well, then you came to appreciate that that you learned to see. That's the key to the whole thing. It's not what you do but how much sacrifice and effort you're willing to put in to get it.

"To sit back here in these hills and listen to the whip-o-wills and the rabbits come up in the pasture almost to your feet. That's freedom. You may not have a lot of money but that's what it's all about."

DL How about superstitions? Do you have any when it comes to working with wood?

PC No, I don't have any superstitions where wood is concerned, I don't reckon. But somewhere a long while back someone said "Thou protestest too much." Perhaps I am superstitious and try to hide it. If we're talking about wooden items, we've got superstitions about you don't rock a rocking chair with nobody in it. That's bad luck. Or spin a chair on one leg. You don't carry a garden utensil through the house. There's a lot of them.

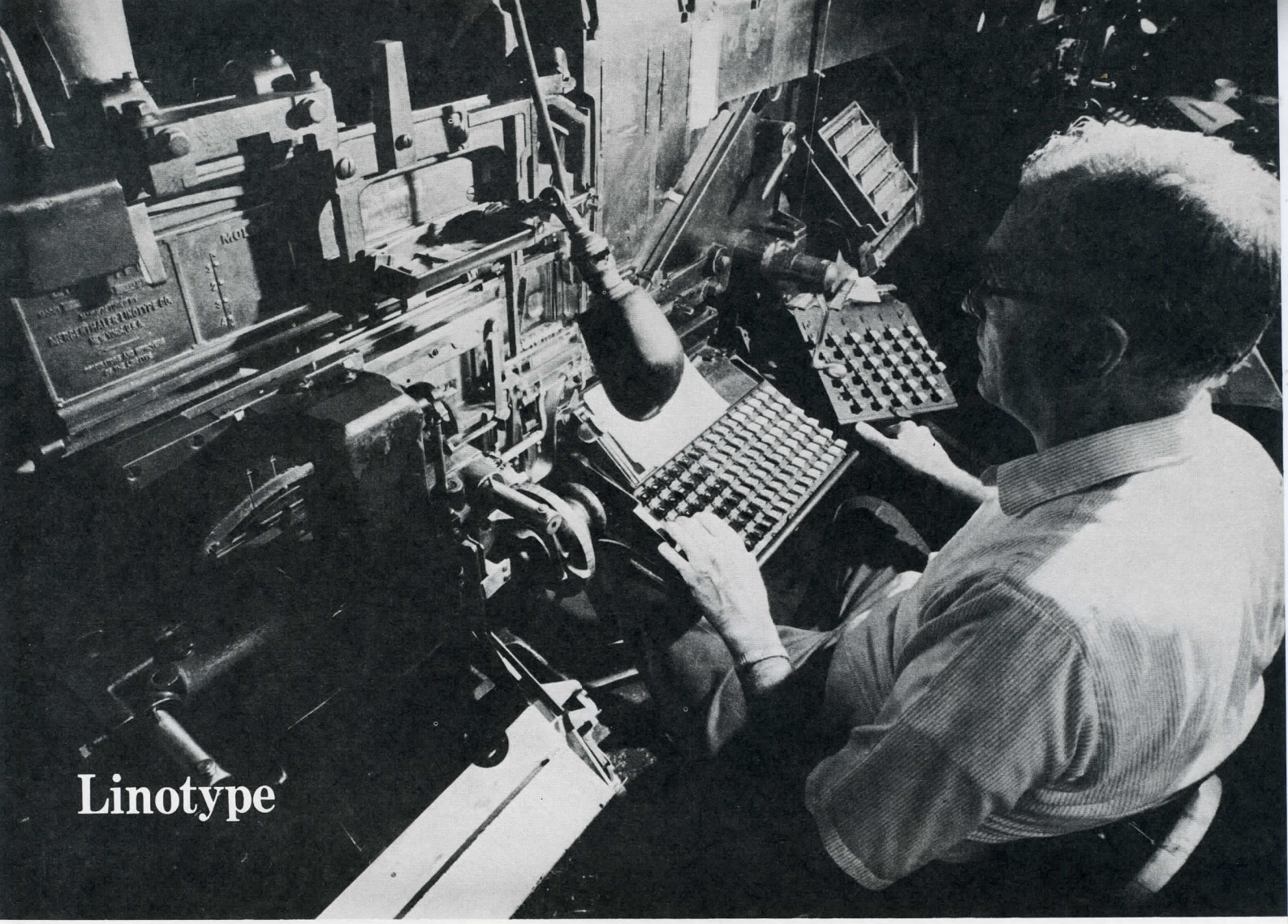
DL How about the seasons. Are they important when you're working with wood?

PC Yes, that's important, there's no question about that, but a lot of people would deny it. My daddy wouldn't have. He'd cut the wood in the right sign of the moon and you'd split your shingles at the right sign and you'd put them on the roof at the right time. One time in the sign he'd tell you the shingles would warp up and pull the nails right out of the roof, and at another time they'd lay flat. Now I know that's true and the only thing you have to do is try it. You can take a board and lay it out there on the ground and the ends will curl up, and you just leave it be when the moon changes and the ends will go down and the middle will curl up. There has to be something in it. Though some make light of it the signs do have something to do with it.

An old fellow down here told somebody "You plant your onions now in the light of the moon and they'll all come out on the top of the ground." It's the truth. You plant your potatoes in the dark of the moon and you'll have a hard time getting deep enough to get them. The signs do have something to do with it. If you want a scrub tree to die just stick a knife in it during the amber days and it'll die. If you don't want one to die you don't prune him or touch him during those amber days, sometime in the spring of the year. If you make pickled beans when the sign's in the bowels or the feet they'll stink you out of the root cellar. And of course we don't cut a tree unless it's no good or we need it.

DL Can you remember where your appreciation for wood came from?

PC That's kind of like asking me when I started playing the jews' harp. I can't remember that far back. I've always been in the woods. There's five generations of my people never been out of Wetzel County for a home. Appreciation for the woods? I suppose I was born with it.



Linotype

Operator Eugene Davis at the Linotype.

By Delmer Robinson

Photographs by Rick Lee

"Oh the printing shop is dirty and hot
And the fumes are thick from the melting pot,
And my soul is worn and frayed
As I bend and lean
To strike the keys of the mad machine
That Mergenthaler made."

—"The Linotypist's Love Song (Author Unknown)

THE words you are reading were typeset on the Linotype, one of the greatsest inventions of the latter part of the last century. A clanking, wheezing monster of a machine, it embodied the most advanced engineering of its time.

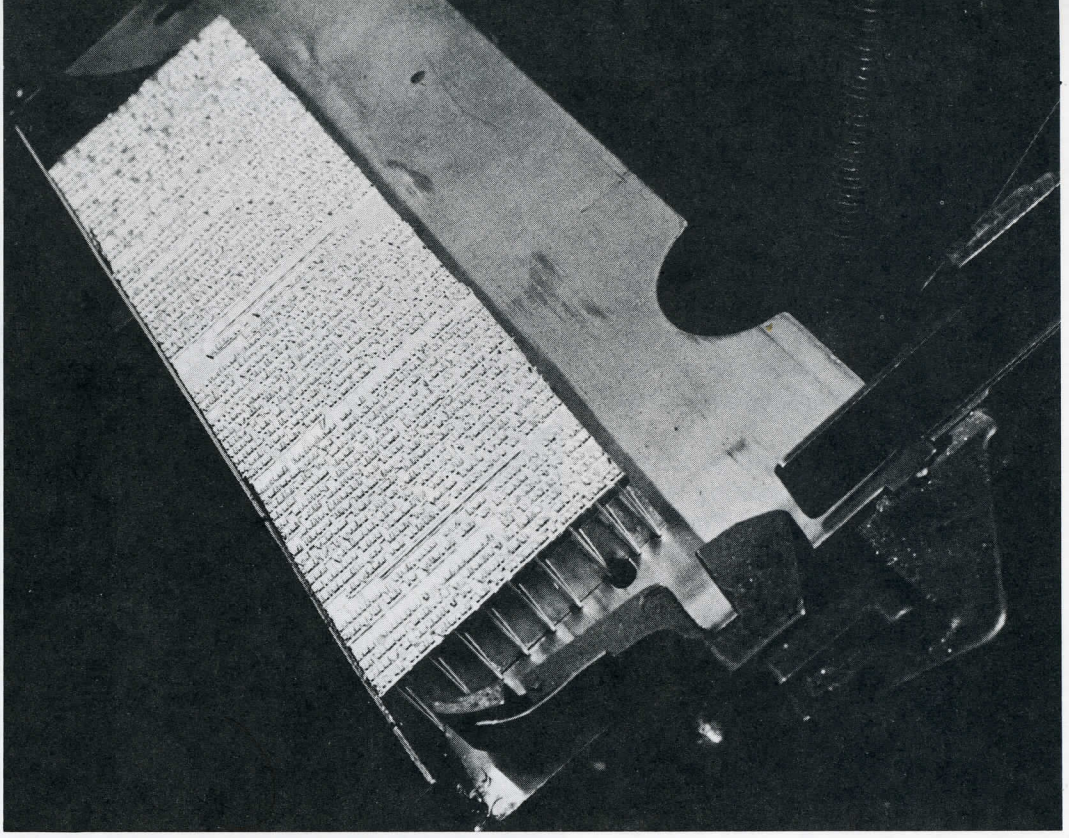
The Linotype made possible (with the rotary web-fed press) the big daily newspaper. It was the successful culmination of a long search (and a costly one: Mark Twain lost a fortune in the pursuit) for a typesetting machine. Invented by Ottmar Mergenthaler and first installed in 1886 in the plant of the *New York Tribune,* its benefits were obvious: it could set type eight times faster than the hand compositor laboriously picking out letters from individual boxes.

Linotype reigned supreme for more than half a century and those who operated the machines were among the elite of craftsmen, commanding premium pay. But progress is a two-edged sword, and at newspapers in West Virginia and elsewhere the complicated machines fell victim to automation and the electronic age. GOLDENSEAL, currently printed by the Chapman Printing Company, is among the few Mountain State publications now set in the "hot type" of the Linotype machine.

That Linotype has not entirely disappeared is due to several reasons: its versatility, its durability—and the quality of work that skilled, dedicated craftsmen can accomplish with it.

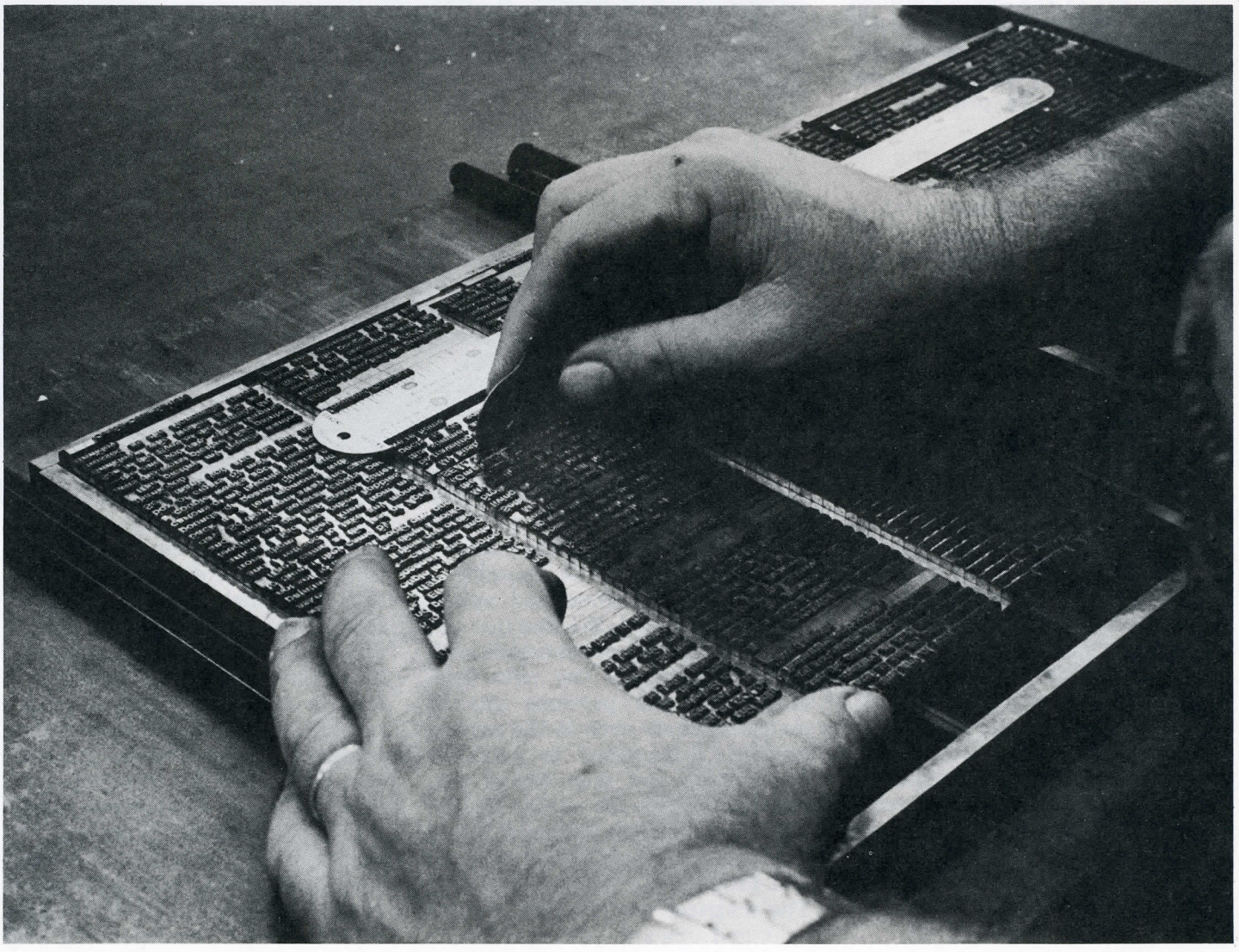
Jim Dodd, production superintendent at Chapman's Charleston plant, explained: "The Linotype can set a few lines for a business card, or the complex text of a medical journal. As yet there is no cold


LINOTYPE



Right: Slugs of type emerge from the Linotype, seconds after being cast from molten lead.

Below: Type for the October-December GOLDENSEAL is locked into place on metal page forms.



type composing machine that can do so many things so economically and so well."

Chapman's Charleston manager Dave Brumfield added: "It is fitting that a quality publication like GOLDENSEAL, that will be saved and treasured for years, be of the very best typography, and that means Linotype."

A visit to the backshop at Chapman's shows the painstaking work of the printers there. Foreman Grant Steele and makeup man Al Kincaid are examining a reproduction proof through a magnifying glass to detect imperfect letters, checking for minor inaccuracies that only the most observant reader could possibly notice.

At one Linotype is C. A. Smith, a veteran of more than 50 years at the trade, beginning while still in school at age 14 at a South Carolina weekly newspaper. "When I got out of school in 1931, college graduates couldn't even get a job pumping gas, so I stuck with printing," he said.

He entered the craft during the golden age of Linotype operators. James W. Loop, long-time printing instructor at Charleston High School, who trained more operators than any other man in West Virginia, recalled the Depression years: "At that time a journeyman operator made $40 a week, and the average worker (lucky to have a job) made perhaps a third that salary."

Smith continued: "The journeyman operator was the true knight of the road. He could always rely on a day's or week's work at the next town. Some operators were migrants, wintering in Florida during the 'season' there and heading north in the spring."

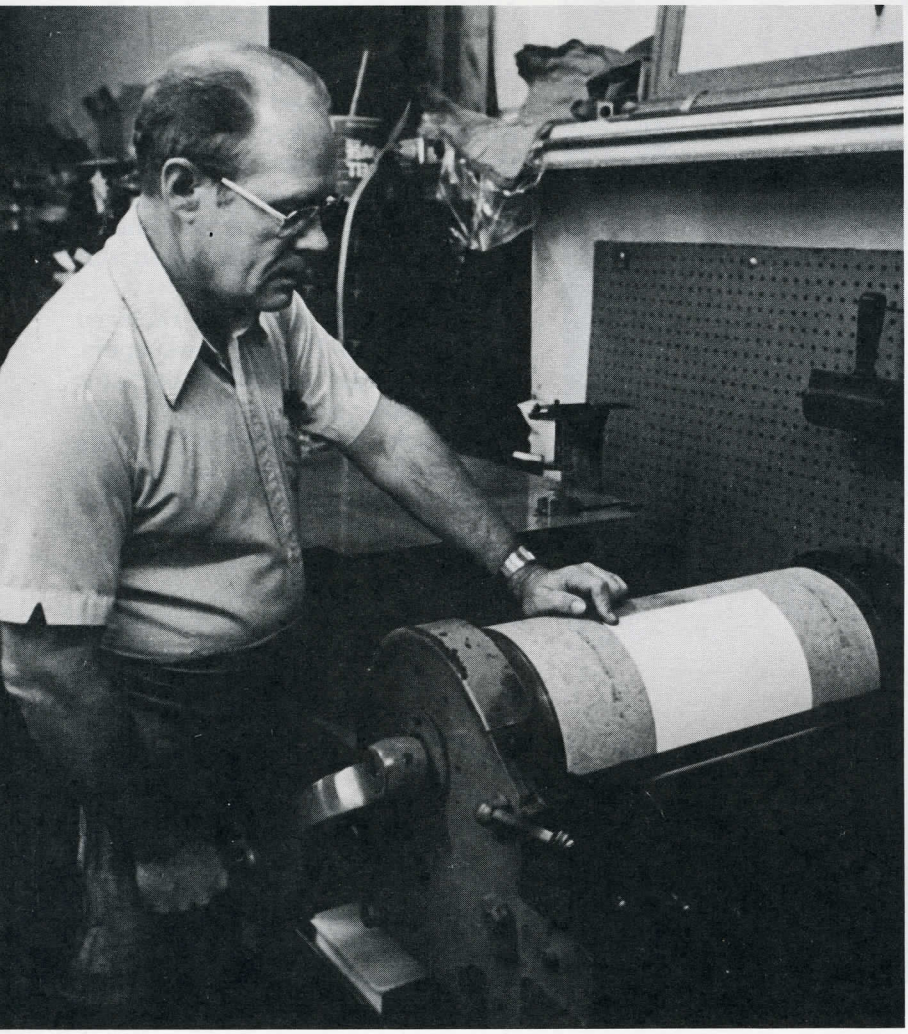
Why were operators able to command such high (for the period) wages? The reason lies in the fact that the Linotype is a wondrously complicated piece of machinery, with approximately 6,600 moving parts, all built to finer tolerances than the automobiles of the period.

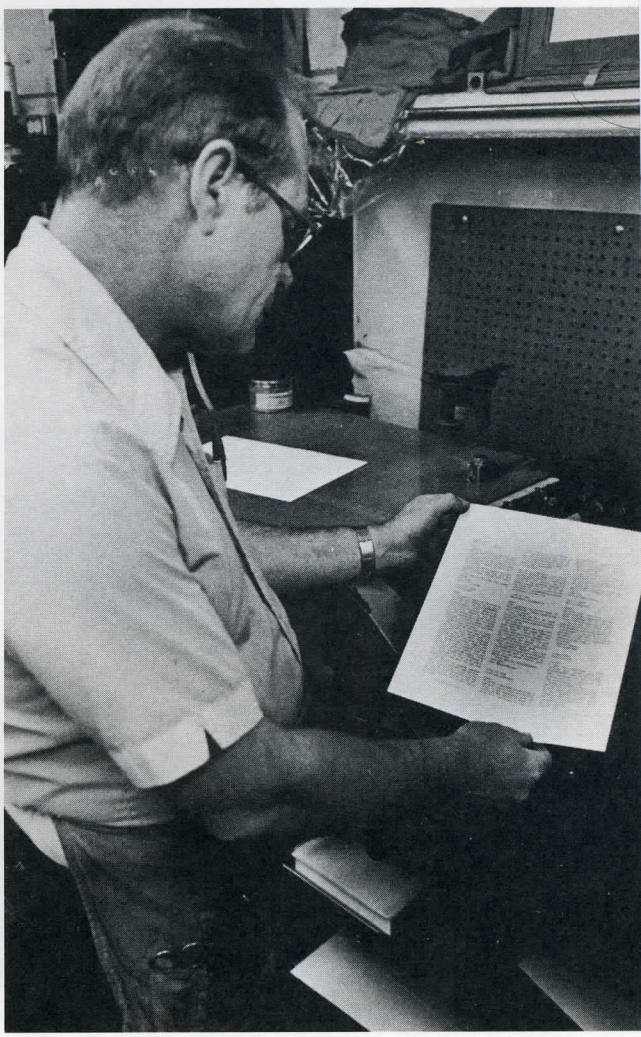
Mergenthaler Linotype Company gives this description of the functions of its machine:

"When the operator has manipulated the keyboard to assemble a line of type matrices and spacebands he forwards the line into the casting operation and proceeds with the assembling of the next line. Meanwhile, the previous line of matrices moves over to the casting position, is justified to establish fixed width and then locked into position before the mold. Molten metal is forced into the mold, filling the type characters in the matrices and forming the body of the slug. The matrices are released, carried over and upward (the spacebands meantime being removed and returned) and the distributor returns each individual matrix to its source. Meantime, the cast slug (line of type) is carried past trimming knives and ejected to the galley in orderly sequence. Thus there are several procedures in simultaneous operation and composition proceeds at a pace up to six lines a minute of body type on average measures."

In non-technical language, the Linotype casts individual lines of type from melted lead. The liquid metal is molded into the desired words from a corresponding line

Each page is checked for accuracy on handoperated proof press. At left, Al Kincaid planes page form on press, and, at right, scans the page proof. GOLDENSEAL is proof-read at least six times in the production process.

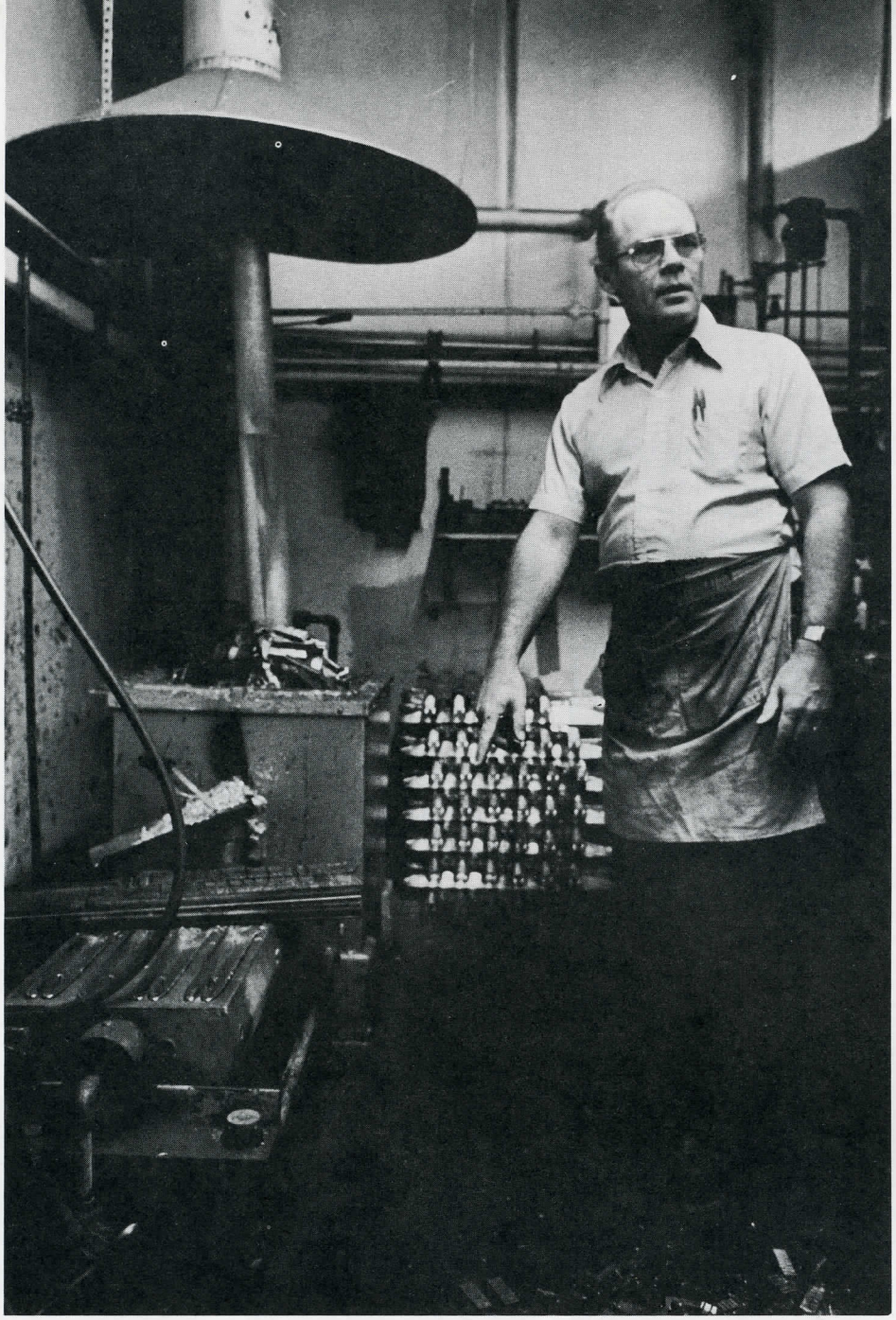




of brass typeface molds, or "matrices," which are put into place by the operator's work at the keyboard. The machine has its own built-in furnace, continuously melting down lead ingots for use in the casting process. Lines of type are custom made, and after one use the slugs are melted back into ingots in a recycling furnace located nearby. By contrast modern "cold type" systems usually employ some photographic process to produce typeset copy for printing. Jim Dodd notes that printing from cold type is a mixed, photomechanical process, while Linotype is strictly mechanical.

For GOLDENSEAL magazine, the type is set on two Model 32 Linotypes, with the principal type faces being Helvetica (a sans-serif type used in the front and back sections) and Excelsior (a news face).

Galley proofs (a galley is a tray about 24 inches long to hold the type slugs) are pulled and read at the shop. For GOLDENSEAL the proofs are used to establish a rough paste-up for placement on the page, with allowance made for illustrations. Returned to the shop, the type is corrected (an easy matter for the Linotype; more difficult for cold type), and the lead slugs are made up into pages, locked in place in forms. Again proofs are pulled for a second checking by GOLDENSEAL. Upon approval, a crisp, sharp "reproduction proof" on heavy paper is made, and sent to the Huntington plant for photographic negatives and plates to be made for offset printing. A final "blue line" proof, showing the magazine exactly as it will be printed, is checked at this stage. The



After use, type slugs and lead scraps are melted back into ingots for the Linotype in this recycling smelter. Note ingots stacked against rear wall.

cover, with full process color inside the front and back, is done at Chapman's Parkersburg plant.

Such a summary of the printing process fails to fully discuss the role of the craftsmen in every facet of the enterprise. For instance, in typesetting attention is paid to proper division of words based on strict principles. This is an attention that even a million-dollar computer system cannot be fully programmed to do, hence you see in the newspaper the word bridegroom sometimes hyphenated as "bridegroom." A computer handles but one line at a time. If a good Linotype operator finds himself faced with extra-wide spacing in a line, he will go back and reset several lines to avoid the bad break.

In page makeup, there is similar meticulous attention to detail. In a cold type operation, when type is short for a page, the customary procedure is to spread the paragraphs apart and insert extra white space, sometimes very obvious amounts. With Linotype, indetectable strips of metal are placed between each line of type to space out the column. These thin metal strips are one "point" in thickness (a point is 1/72nd of an inch).

There is another aspect of such craftsmanship: pride in work and respect for the equipment that makes it possible. Operator Smith said: "The Linotype has been good for me, and it's a good machine. The one Darrell Townsend is operating was bought in 1946, and the one I run was purchased in 1947. Good care has been taken of them, and they're just as good now as then."

Smith retired in October, although he will back from time to time, he says. Other craftsmen will continue the tradition.

The Linotype has been replaced on all but the largest newspapers. In its heyday, a skilled operator could make a very good living. Piecework was instituted at one Charleston newspaper following a printers' strike early in the Depression, and "swifts" flocked to it from all parts of the country. The machines were speeded up to increase production. A swift could set eight lines a minute, instead of the usual six, and his pay was consequently higher. But all good things must end, and Linotype was no exception. First came automation, with typists punching "idiot tape" that would be justified into lines by a "Teletypesetter" that activated the keyboard.

Then came the "cold type" revolution, begun by weeklies and small dailies which could no longer afford high-priced Linotype operators or the expense of training their own. They adopted a "strike on" process, little more than a glorified typewriter, at first.

Then came the age of electronics and photographic type, and finally computer terminals on which reporters wrote their stories to be transformed directly into type. The golden age of the Linotype was gone in the newspapers of the state.

But the "mad machine that Mergenthaler made" is still alive and kicking out slugs in many commercial printing establishments. And skilled craftsmen are using it to produce quality work.

(Continued from Page 8)

worked myself up to mine supervisor, and stayed till 1955, at the same time fidling on the side. Sometimes I was playing an appearance and would get home only in time to get to work. In 1955 I took a job as disc jokey at radio WMOD in Moundsville, and fiddled with Jake Taylor, a former WWVA country singer, who now was station manager for WMOD. I stayed there a couple years. Wages were getting big in coal, so back to the mine I went. I came off radio entertainment into the mine, then back to radio again, then back to the mine once more.

I am the only one I know of who is strictly a left hander, but learned to fiddle right-handed only. I started playing by note and the classics at about age 11. My Mom and Dad would listen, say I sounded real good, and then ask me to learn "Red Wing," or some of those tunes. They were country folks. So that I did. After a few years I had that Country sound, and no one could tell by my playing today that I studied music.

I also have had my troubles, in 1969 I had a spine operation, couldn't even hold a fiddle for a couple years. Then a little bit at a time I fought back, and after playing some again I met a band, The Green Valley Pioneers, here at Fairmont. They wanted me to fiddle with them. I did, and have been playing with them for many years. They asked me to write you, as your book is about people I have known and played with. They are young, a fine bunch of boys, and I think we have a good Country band. I now am 64 years of age.
Yours truly,
Charles W. Satterfield

Williamstown, WV
September 6, 1979

Editor:
Please put me on your mailing list to receive the magazine GOLDENSEAL.

I am a transplant from Ohio and have lived in West Virginia since 1922. I have traveled a lot and have been in 30 states but I still prefer West Virginia as a place to live. I came to West Virginia as a salesman for an Ohio County firm and covered all the counties of the state, so I am familiar with many of the places mentioned in the magazine.

I am 81 years of age, which makes me rather young to have had a father who served in the Civil War. He was from Virginia and when the state divided he joined the North and enlisted in the second West Virginia Cavalry. When the War was over he enlisted three more times. I am wondering just how many are living whose fathers' served in that war. I haven't run across any.

I am very truly yours,
W. P. Ormsby

Poca, WV
August 31, 1979

Editor:
I recently saw a copy of your GOLDENSEAL magazine and would like very much to be put on your mailing list. The articles I saw in your magazine brought back old memories.

I started to work in the mines in 1914 as a trapper for 87¢ a day and worked in them for 25 years. I started on Harmons Creek at the age of 15 years old.
Thank you,
W. H. Jones

Philippi, WV
August 26, 1979

Editor:
I read your magazine in the office of my podiatrist and enjoyed it very much. I particularly liked the April-June 1979 issue and would appreciate it if you could mail me one. In that issue was the story of the famous Latlip Family. I was friends with their daughter who married Picozzi. I haven't seen her for 12 to 14 years. I was wondering what happened to the Picozzis and in your April-June issue I found out. They had many friends in the Philippi area where they came every year to the Barbour County Fair. It is now fair time in Philippi and I would like to show the article to their friends.

Since my husband and I own Mellie's Restaurant we would like to have the magazine in our restaurant so others may read such nice articles. Thank you kindly.
Sincerely,
Mary Mellie

Vincentown, New Jersey
August 10, 1979

Editor:
On a recent trip back to my wife's home in Mannington, I happily came across GOLDENSEAL! While researching my wife's family tree, a good neighbor pointed out that some of the information I was seeking had recently been printed in GOLDENSEAL. I was asking how my wife's Lebanese ancestors came to settle in Mannington, of all places—and there it was, the complete answer in "Two Hundred Pounds or More — The Lebanese Community in Mannington" (April-September 1978).

I am an adopted son of West Virginia, having resided in Fairmont for several years. I would like very much to receive GOLDENSEAL on a regular basis from now on.

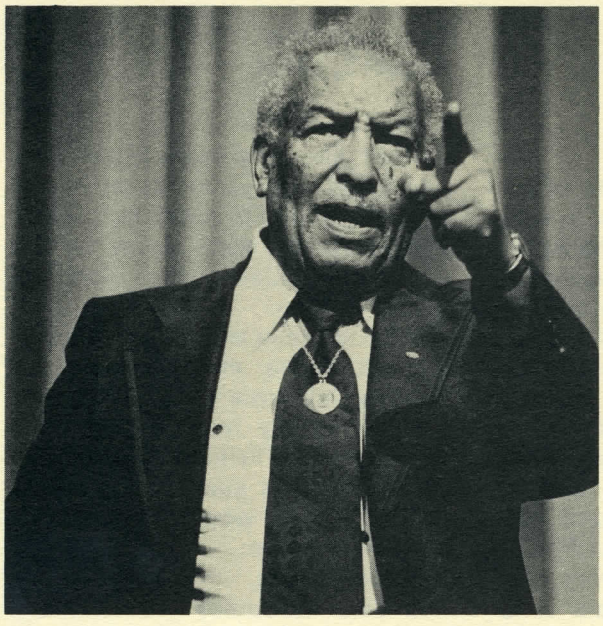
Thank you very much!
Sincerely,
Joseph M. Laufer

Bell, California
August 6, 1979

Editor:
I would like very much to have my name added to your mailing list for GOLDENSEAL. If possible, I would appreciate the back issues for this year, particularly the January-March edition.

West Virginia will always be considered home even though I've lived in California the last 25 years. I still visit my mother and other close relatives liviing in Clarksburg, Burnsville, and surrounding areas. GOLDENSEAL would sure provide a touch of home.
Sincerely yours,
Mrs. Jean McCauley

Above: The Gospel Revelations, Moundsville, performed on Saturday night. The Revelations are all State Penitentiary inmates, with the exception of former inmate Herb Turner (second from left). Photograph by Rick Lee.
Below: Dr. P. Ahmed Williams, Institute, did his "Growing up Black in Appalachia" presentation Tuesday evening. Photograph by Steve Payne.
Right: Howard Armstrong, left, and Ted Bogan, center, still perform under the name Martin, Bogan and Armstrong although Carl Martin has been dead for some time. The group was one of the better-known black string bands that played in West Virginia in the 1930's. Photograph by Steve Payne.

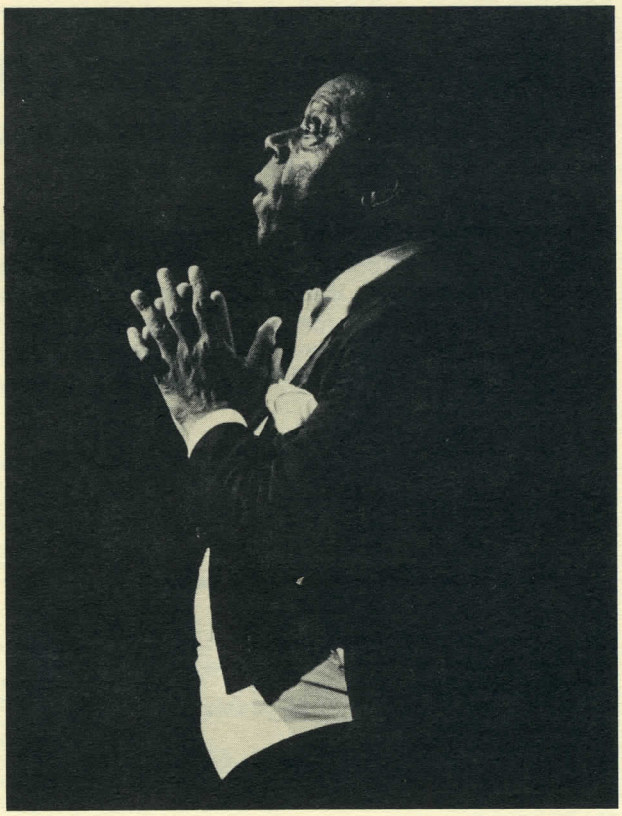


Black Cultural Festival

The first West Virginia Black Cultural Festival was held at the Cultural Center in Charleston from October 22 to October 28 of last year. Dedicated to the memory of Dr. Harrison Herbert Ferrell of West Virginia State College, the Festival brought thousands of West Virginians together for a week-long appreciation of our state's varied black cultural heritage.

The Black Cultural Festival was coordinated by Ethel J. Caffie, and sponsored by the Department of Culture and History. Governor Rockefeller opened the Festival with the unveiling of the Booker T. Washington memorial at the State Capitol on Monday morning and was on hand that night to welcome the overflow audience to the William Warfield performance.

A special "Black Culture in the Mountain State" issue of GOLDENSEAL was distributed to festival goers, and we offer this photographic report as a follow-up to the week's events.



Above: Renowned bass-baritone William Warfield opened the Festival with a Monday night program of "Old American Songs and Spirituals." Photograph by Steve Payne.
Below: Uncle John Homer Walker, formerly of Summers County, played traditional clawhammer banjo on Saturday afternoon. Photograph by Steve Payne.

goldenseal index

Volumes 4 and 5, 1978 and 1979

Articles which appeared in Volumes 4 and 5 are listed in this index. The index for the first three volumes appeared in the April-September 1978 double issue. In the subject index section each article is listed under its major subject areas. When more than one article appears under a heading the order is alphabetical by first word of title. Each entry is followed by the month and year, volume and number, and the page number. Page numbers shown throughout are the first pages of the articles. The short notices which appear in the regular department called "Current: Programs-Festivals-Publications" have not been indexed.

subject

author

illustration

Artists

Photographers

location

West Virginia Town, City, County

Outside West Virginia

goldenseal reader survey

On the occasion of GOLDENSEAL's fifth anniversary, we are asking our readers to respond to the following questions. The information provided will be of great help to us in planning future issues. We will publish a summary of survey results in the spring or summer GOLDENSEAL.

In the interest of confidentiality, it is not necessary to give your name or address.

I. GOLDENSEAL

1. How long have you been reading GOLDENSEAL? _____
2. How many people (friends, family members, etc.) read your copy of the magazine? _____
3. How did you hear about us? _____
4. How much of the magazine do you read? _____

II. Preferences

Which GOLDENSEAL features and topics interest you the most? (Circle your favorites.)

1. Interviews
2. Folklore
3. History
4. Music
5. Crafts
6. Folk Art
7. Ethnic or black culture
8. Letters from readers
9. Announcements of events, festivals, publications

III. Personal

1. How old are you? _____
2. What is your occupation? _____
3. Education? _____
4. Sex: Male _____ Female _____
5. Were you born in West Virginia? Yes _____ No _____
6. What state do you currently reside in? _____

IV. Suggestions or comments

_____

_____

_____

_____

Thank you!

Please detach this page and mail to:

GOLDENSEAL
Department of Culture and History
The Cultural Center
Capitol Complex
Charleston, WV 25305

In This Issue

DOUG CHADWICK was born in North Carolina and grew up in Maryland. He attended Reed College in Portland, Oregon, Evergreen State College in Olympia, Washington, and the Institute de Stato per Cinematographia et Televisione, a state school for filmmaking and video in Rome. Chadwick moved to West Virginia in 1970 and has worked on the staff of the *Fayette Tribune* and the *Raleigh Register.* He has shown his work in Beckley and Washington, D. C., and had a one-man show in March 1978 at Sunrise Art Gallery in Charleston. *True Facts . . . in a Country Song,* a film by Chadwick and Susan Burt, premiered at the Cultural Center in December. He has contributed periodically to GOLDENSEAL.

YVONNE SNYDER FARLEY is a native of St. Mary's, Pleasants County. She graduated from Antioch College in Yellow Springs, Ohio, and worked for several years as a staff member for Antioch's Appalachian Center in Beckley. She now lives in Beckley with her husband Sam, a coal miner, and son Luke. Yvonne worked most recently as a religion reporter for the Beckley *Post Herald,* and now does general free-lance writing. Her most recent GOLDENSEAL contribution was the Tams "Homecoming" piece which appeared in the October-December 1979 issue.

NORMAN JULIAN was born in Clarksburg. He has worked on a half-dozen newspapers in north central West Virginia, the past 13 years for the Morgantown *Dominion-Post,* where he was founding editor of *Panorama* magazine and editorial page editor. A graduate of West Virginia University's School of Journalism, he is the author of a book, *Mountains and Valleys.* He is now working on an adventure novel set in West Virginia.

DAVID LIDEN, originally from Massachusetts, came to West Virginia in 1972. David has a Ph.D. in political science from the University of Michigan, and has taught at Bethany College and Wheeling College. He is now the coordinator of the West Virginia Land Study, part of a six-state land use and ownership study funded by the Appalachian Regional Commission. David lives at Griffithsville, Lincoln County.

LOIS McLEAN is a Hoosier born in Indianapolis. A graduate of Purdue University, she married a West Virginian, William D. McLean, in Germany and came to his home state for the first time in 1959. Beckley has been Mrs. McLean's home since 1962 and Mother Jones and labor history her avocation since 1963. She is presently working on a definitive biography of Mother Jones. Mrs. McLean is the president of the West Virginia Labor History Association, and has contributed a number of articles to GOLDENSEAL dealing with some aspect of labor history.

MICHAEL MEADOR was born in Hinton and moved to Princeton at an early age. He attended Concord College and Marshall University, graduating with a degree in sociology. He is presently working for the West Virginia University Cooperative Extension Service as 4-H Agent in Boone County. His major area of interest is Appalachian Culture, with a particular interest in mountain music and dance. He plays a number of instruments, including the fiddle, banjo, dulcimer, and bagpipes.

ARTHUR C. PRICHARD, born and reared in Mannington, was graduated from Mannington public schools, West Virginia University, and McCormick Theological Seminary (Presbyterian) of Chicago. Mr. Prichard 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 Mr. Prichard received an honorary Doctor of Divinity degree from Davis and Elkins College. His most recent GOLDENSEAL contribution was the article on Dr. Phoebia Moore in the October-December 1979 issue.

RON RITTENHOUSE was born and raised in Mannington. Since 1975 he has been senior photographer for the Morgantown *Dominion-Post.* In recent years he has won several first place awards in the commercial and news categories of the Professional Photographers of West Virginia annual contests. His hobby is collecting old cameras and photographs, of which he has one of the largest private holdings in the state.

DELMER ROBINSON is editor of the West Virginia Living section of the *Charleston Gazette.* A native Charlestonian, he grew up next to a printing shop then located on Court Street and developed a fascination for the craft. He studied printing with James W. Loop at Charleston High School and entered the trade upon graduation. "There were a lot more job opportunities for skilled craftsmen in those Depression years than there were for cub reporters," he says.


MURPHY

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