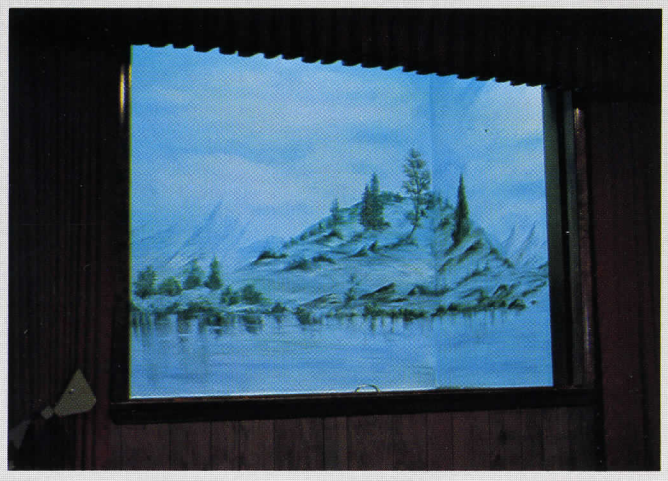
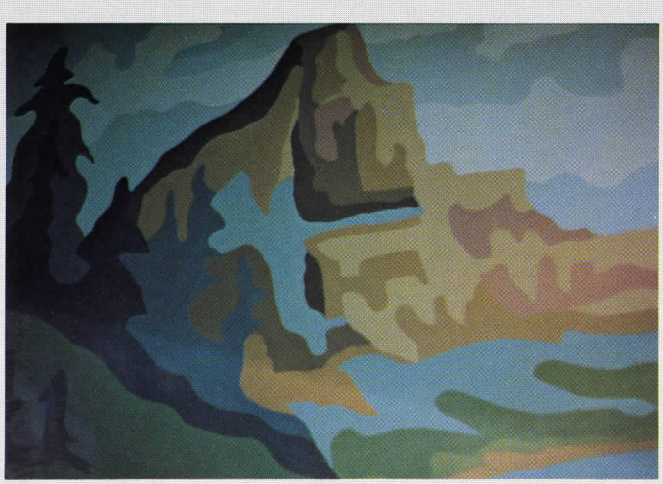
Goldenseal

West Virginia Traditional Life

Volume 6, Number 2 April-June 1980





Above: Baptistry painting, Madigan Avenue Church of Christ, Morgantown. Photograph by Jack Welch.
Left: Baptistry painting, Chester Church of Christ, Hancock County. Photograph by Jack Welch.
Below left: Detail of painting by E. R. Kerr, Pine Grove Church of Christ, Wetzel County. Mr. Kerr painted by a modified paint-by-number technique. Photograph by Jack Welch.

"A Heritage of Regional Landscapes: Appalachian Baptistry Paintings," by Jack Welch, begins on page 41.

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Norman L. Fagan *Commissioner*

Ken Sullivan
Editor

Margo Stafford
Editorial Assistant

Colleen Anderson and
Patricia Cahape
Graphic Design

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Goldenseal

A Quarterly Forum for Documenting West Virginia's Traditional Life

Volume 6, Number 2 ✱ April-June 1980

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COVER: The Helvetia Star Band leads the way to the annual church picnic, about 1910. David Sutton's photographic essay on the historic Randolph County Swiss community begins on page 9, and his "Ella Betler Remembers Helvetia" on page 23. Photograph by Walter Aegerter.

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Vandalia Gathering

The fourth Vandalia Gathering is scheduled for Memorial Day Weekend, May 23-26. As usual, Vandalia will be held on the grounds of the Cultural Center at the Capitol Complex in Charleston, and inside the Center itself.

Vandalia, West Virginia's annual folklife festival, offers the finest of our state's traditional music and folk arts and crafts. A schedule of events was not available when GOLDENSEAL went to press, but Vandalia will feature performances, craft demonstrations, and music contests throughout the weekend. Photographs on this page, by Rick Lee, are from the 1979 Vandalia, whose theme was "West Virginia Country Music During the Golden Age of Radio."

Vandalia 1980 is sponsored by the West Virginia Department of Culture and History, with all events open to the public at no charge. Come join us for this celebration of West Virginia's traditional culture!

current programs·festivals·publications

"Back Porch Music Time"
Tom Rodd, who wrote about his West Virginia Public Radio series "Back Porch Music Time" in the October-December 1978 GOLDENSEAL, has announced that the traditional music program returned to the air this spring.

"Back Porch" programs are taped on location in the field, often in the musician's home — and sometimes on the back porch. Listeners to the original series were treated to weekly half-hour shows featuring some of West Virginia's best known traditional musicians. Some of these—champion fiddlers Woody Simmons and Mose Coffman, for example—have been the subjects of GOLDENSEAL stories, and Rodd reports that feedback from his 1978 article turned up several performers to be featured in the new series.

The National Endowment for the Arts' Folk Arts Division awarded a grant for the new series in October 1979, and Rodd has been traveling throughout West Virginia since that time recording new material. The NEA grant is sponsored by the Creative Garden Theater of Grafton.

West Virginia Public Radio broadcasts across most of West Virginia through a network of FM stations in Beckley, Buckhannon, Huntington, and Charleston. GOLDENSEAL readers may consult the West Virginia Public Radio *Guide,* available from WVPN-FM, Building 6, Suite 424, Capitol Complex, Charleston 25305, for the schedule for the new "Back Porch Music Time."

Folks
Garret Mathews, feature writer for the *Bluefield Daily Telegraph,* has recently published *Folks,* a collection of the best of his newspaper stories from the past several years. The subjects of Mathews' human interest articles are drawn from all across the *Telegraph's* wide circulation area in the Virginia-West Virginia border country.

Mathews writes of the retired miner who fires Pocahontas Fuel Company pop bottles from a homemade cannon, and of "Sweetie," the jukebox - accompanying dog that sings for a living in a Mercer County beer joint. He writes with sensitivity of a young high school girl among the Jolo serpent handlers, and of Oceana boxer Benny Toler, "The Fighting Coal Miner." Mathews' work has brought him into contact with mule traders, an armless coon hunter, and Monroe County homesteaders. He found a Wyoming County woman furrier who will happily skin anything but possums, and will skin those when she has to. "Money is money," she figures. Mathews includes several insightful accounts from the great coal strike of 1977-78, from both sides of the picket lines.

Folks is a well-bound paperback of 166 pages, with photographic illustrations. It may be ordered for $6.00, plus 50¢ postage and handling, from Garret Mathews, 1314 Ronceverte Street, Bluefield 24701.

Public Events at Fort New Salem, 1980
Fort New Salem, near Clarksburg, is a re-creation of a frontier Appalachian settlement of 1790-1830, providing a setting in which the crafts, culture, and historical lifestyles of the original Scotch-Irish, English, and German settlers of the area can be presented to visitors. The men and women of Fort New Salem are involved in the everyday pursuits of western Virginians in the pre-industrial era. The apprenticeship system flourishes, and craft shops are staffed by young people learning the traditional fundamentals of a trade.

Originally the project of a Salem College folk arts class, Fort New Salem now houses the College's Heritage Arts Program, which offers a B. A., minor, and associate's degrees in the area of folklife studies, designed to train professional craftspeople for occupations in crafts, teaching, or for outdoor museum careers. The Program also offers workshops, research opportunities, and apprentice experience in the folk arts and crafts to the public.

Fort New Salem's regular public season will run Wednesday through Friday, 10 a. m. to 4 p. m.; Saturdays, 10 a. m. to 5 p. m.; and Sundays, 1 p. m. to 5 p. m. Weekday activities feature the traditional Appalachian crafts and culture presented by the Heritage Arts students. Weekends offer a costumed re-creation of frontier lifestyles and events. Admission is $1.50 for adults, 50¢ for children.

The Women's Yellow Pages
The West Virginia edition of *The Women's Yellow Pages* began four years ago as the dream of project director Mary Lee Daugherty, who first realized the serious lack of information for and about West Virginia women while teaching a women's studies course at Morris Harvey College. The ensuing search for information resulted in the recently published *Women's Yellow Pages,* intended as a comprehensive resource manual to provide women with the facts they need to effect desired changes in their lives.

The book contains 65 articles divided into eight major subjects: employment, education, food and nutrition, health, childrearing, money management, legal services, and politics. In addition to the articles, the book also contains referral listings of resources to help women find their own solutions to problems. It is not intended as a women's liberation book. While some articles do touch on contro-

versial issues, the book takes no stands, instead presenting more than one alternative for dealing with any given situation.

The manual was researched and written by 50 women and men from around the state, and developed by the staff of the Women's Research and Resource Center of Charleston. The state edition is the fifth book in a national series, and the first volume in the series to be published for a rural state. Other source-books were developed for Boston, New York City, and New England. The book has also been chosen by West Virginia University as the basis for a 13-part television series.

Priced at $4.95, the West Virginia edition of the *The Women's Yellow Pages* is available at newsstands, drugstores, bookshops, and college bookstores throughout the state.

More Films on West Virginia and Appalachia

The April-June 1979 GOLDENSEAL published "Films on West Virginia and Appalachia," a complete listing of state and regional movies owned by the West Virginia Library Commission. Since that time more films have been added, and Steve Fesenmaier of the Library Commission's film services division offers the following update.

All Library Commission films may be borrowed through county public libraries anywhere in the state.

Almost Heaven, Grafton, West Virginia
22 min. Color
1976 Griesinger Films
A disquieting and sympathetic look at a small town in West Virginia. Radio newscasts reporting Nixon's disposition on the Watergate tapes are interwoven with the lives of everyday West Virginians. Wives disclose drinking problems, people comment on marital disharmony, and a tatooed man discusses his philosophy of life.

Anonymous Was a Woman
30 min. Color
1977 Films, Inc.
Frequently when a piece of folk art was given the attribution "anonymous," it was the work of an unknown girl or woman. Because they did not have an awareness of themselves as "artists," but rather as mothers or daughters just adding a little beauty to household goods, they did not sign the sampler, quilt, rug, or needlework. An exploration of one of America's richest and most indigenous cultural heritages. Part of The Originals: Woman in Art *series.*

Fool's Parade
98 min. Color
1971 Columbia Pictures
Davis Grubb's novel of Moundsville prison brought to the screen. Starring Jimmy Stewart, Anne Baxter, and George Kennedy. Three ex-cons are released from the prison hoping to establish their own store. The local banker hires Kennedy, the prison guard, to prevent them from cashing a check which would uncover his own crime. Shot on location in Moundsville prison and local community.

Help Us Protect Our Land and Our Miners' Lives
1½ min. Color
1979 Omnificient Systems
Three 30 second television public service announcements: 1) Mine Health and Safety; 2) Strip Mine Regulations; 3) History of Federal Regulation. Created by Robert Gates of Charleston.

The Invisible Universe
15 min. Color
1976 Capital Film Laboratories
An award-winning look at one of the wonders of the world, the National Radio Astronomy Observatory in Green Bank, West Virginia. Made by three astronomer-filmmakers who actually worked at Green Bank. The film is being used as part of the tour of the facility in Pocahontas County.

John Jacob Niles
32 min. Color
1978 Appalshop
A portrait of the famous folksinger and balladeer of the Appalachian Mountains. An 86 year old preserver and performer whom Time magazine has hailed as "the Dean of American Balladeers." He was a factor in bringing about the folk music revival of the 1920's and '30's.

Strip Mining in Appalachia
29 min. Color
1979 Appalshop
A committed documentary which uses the classic techniques of the newsreel to show the mute, devastated land. Reports from coal mining executives as well as interviews with the people whose land, rivers, and streams have been victims of this controversial operation.

True Facts . . . In a Country Song
28 min. Color
1979 Burt/Chadwick
A rare look at the life of a West Virginia music family, the Lilly Brothers of Raleigh County. The true facts of an Appalachian family are revealed in their songs, including "Hide Me in the Blood of Jesus," Sailor Boy," "Come Early Morning," "Sittin' on Top of the World," "We Shall Meet Again," "Gathering Shells from the Seashore," "What Will I Leave Behind." The two filmmakers are West Virginians who work in photography and other media arts.

New Look for West Virginia History

West Virginia History, the scholarly quarterly published by the Archives and History Division of the state Department of Culture and History, sports a new look in the current issue. The journal has a redesigned cover and a substantially revised format throughout, including the capacity to print a limited number of photographs per issue.

Improvements in the surface appearance of *West Virginia History* symbolize more important underlying changes in editorial policy. A statement in the current issue notes that a "major objective is to make the quarterly a completely juried publication through the use of an active editorial advisory board. It is hoped that this will result in improved content to place *West Virginia History* on a par with other scholarly publications in the field." The statement adds, however, that this "does not mean that the pages of the journal will be closed to all but the established academic scholars," and encourages amateur historians to continue to contribute to the quarterly.

Overseeing the restructured journal is a new editor, Professor William T. Doherty. Dr. Doherty is Professor of History at West Virginia University, and former chairman of the History Department there. He will be assisted in his editorial duties by an editorial advisory board, including faculty members of colleges and universities across the state and members of the West Virginia Historical Society.

The subscription price for the "new" *West Virginia History* continues at the old rate of $5 per year. Subscription orders and other correspondence should be addressed to *West Virginia History,* Archives and History Division, Department of Culture and History, Capitol Complex, Charleston 25305.

letters from readers

GOLDENSEAL welcomes letters of general interest from readers. Our address is Department of Culture and History, The Cultural Center, State Capitol, Charleston, WV 25305.

Webster Springs, WV
November 12, 1979

Editor:
By accident, I discovered your interesting magazine, and I was amazed that such an informative magazine was sent out free, even to out-of-state folks.

This is a marvelous way to advertise and promote our Wild and Wonderful West Virginia. It brings to my mind the song "West Virginia Hills," and I love these West Virginia hills and I always will.

Thanks for showing the public what West Virginia really is and for helping make our state the great state that it is.

Please enter me for a subscription to GOLDENSEAL, and I will be forever your grateful hillbilly.
Sincerely,
Mrs. Mabel Cutlip

McDowell County Coalfields

Granville Summit, Pennsylvania
November 23, 1979

Editor:
I have been offered your October-December 1979 GOLDENSEAL to read and am enjoying it very much. I was born and lived in Berwind, McDowell County, where my father was a lumber inspector. He worked in that area in 1915-1920, after having been in the Cass area for a time. We moved to Pennsylvania, and I have returned to McDowell County twice. In 1942 when we were there they were making "briquettes" from the very fine coal. This past summer we found not much going on at all. The company store had burned and the railroad station was gone. The homes were in poor condition and it was a depressing sight.

I found the two houses we had lived in and talked to the occupants of one. I also talked to the post mistress, who was very kind.

On our way home we visited Pipestem Park and Dam and the New River Gorge Bridge, which we found very interesting.

Two years ago we had a very enjoyable trip to the Cass Scenic Railroad and Museum area. I think you have done a wonderful job promoting West Virginia. It is a Wild and Wonderful state and I am proud to claim it as *my* state.

I would be happy to receive a copy of your quarterly, and shall share it with my Pennsylvania friends. Please put me on your mailing list.
Very truly yours,
Margery W. Anderson

Black Culture

Crab Orchard, WV
November16, 1979

Editor:
My son, William Chaffin, who is Deputy Director of Programs at Raleigh County Community Action Association, brought me my first copy of GOLDENSEAL. He knew that my family and I would be excited about it because of the article "Homecoming" that appeared in the October-December 1979 issue.

Our excitement is caused by the fact that we know these people and have known several of them for a long time. The Lavenders, the Wileys, and Queen Schoolfield. They are beautiful people and they are our friends. The fact that they are black and we are white makes no difference. It's just great that you should do an article like this and use real people.

It was nice to read about the Lilly Brothers, too, because they are also hometowners.

Your magazine will give anyone who reads it an insight of what it means to be a West Virginian or a product of Appalachia. It means a lot to me because I was born and raised here, have never been away, except for short visits, and never had any desire to leave.

I want to ask you, please, to put me on your mailing list. I can hardly wait to get another issue. I read the whole thing and enjoyed every page of it.
Sincerely,
Patricia Chaffin

Phoebia G. Moore, M. D.

Fairmont, WV
November 31, 1979

Editor:
I would very much like to be placed on the mailing list for GOLDENSEAL magazine.

I have been informed about the publication by Rev. Arthur Prichard of Mannington, who published an article concerning Dr. Phoebia Moore, also of Mannington (October-December 1979). Dr. Moore successfully treated me for typhoid fever when I was six years old. I am now 82, having been retired from 41 years of teaching chemical science at Fairmont State College.

If you have any copies left concerning Dr. Moore, I would appreciate having one.
Respectfully yours,
Cleo D. Haught

Morgantown, WV
November 13, 1979

Editor:
Either your publication is one of the best kept secrets in West Virginia or I am less informed than the average state resident. At any rate, having seen your October-December issue, through the kindness of a friend, may I congratulate

your staff for the quality and beauty of GOLDENSEAL.

The article on "Phoebia G. Moore, M. D.," should provide inspiration and guidance to those faculty and students who today are seeking attributes in our prospective candidates for the School of Medicine. To this end I shall bring the publication, and this article in particular, to the attention of the members of the Committee on Admissions.

If at all possible, I would genuinely appreciate receiving a copy of the October-December issue, and of course would also request the addition of my name to your mailing list.

Sincerely yours,
Morton H. Friedman, Ph.D.
Associate Professor of Anatomy
West Virginia University
School of Medicine

Midwives' Tales

Harrisville, WV
November 10, 1979

Editor:
I read with interest your article concerning three of the "Granny" midwives in the latest issue. I am also a lay midwife, practicing in the northwestern part of West Virginia, and would dearly love to talk to any or all of those three fascinating ladies.

Two of my children were born at home and I've attended 35 births in the past three years. There is now a definite trend back to keeping birth in the home. Soon, no doubt, the politics of the medical establishment will challenge parents' rights as far as their choice of birthing situations. Should be an interesting confrontation of old and new technology. Perhaps West Virginia can once again pioneer the development of a lay midwife program designed to promote individual responsibility and health care. There are a great many of us out here in the hollers, striving for self-sufficiency and individual freedom, creating a lifestyle whereby we can take care of ourselves. Births in the home are only a beginning.

Thank you once again for an enjoyable article.
Sincerely,
Vicki L. Bartz

Hillsboro, WV
November 17, 1979

Editor:
Just wanted to let you know that I especially enjoyed your article, "Midwives' Tales." These ladies seem to have a very gentle, patient approach to birth. Perhaps this is why they had such excellent statistics (only one infant death, unrelated to home birth, and no maternal deaths, in over 500 birthings.)

Maybe some of our technologically-oriented obstetricians could benefit from these ladies' knowledge of watchful non-interference in the birthing process.
Sincerely,
Shay Huffman

Buffalo, Putnam County

Imlay City, Michigan
November 26, 1979

Editor:
In your GOLDENSEAL, Volume 5, number 3, Mr. Sullivan interviewed John Davis of Buffalo, Putnam County. I am familiar with lots of names and recall a lot of happenings in Putnam County.

My roots go deep in West Virginia, especially in Putnam County. My great-great-grandfather, Jonathan Hill, settled on the head of Eighteen Mile Creek in the late 1700's or early 1800's. My grandfather, Jacob Rogers, also settled near there at the close of the Civil War. My dad, John Rogers, married into the Hill family in 1880. I was born in the vicinity and also lived near the Great Kanawha River at Midway, five miles from Buffalo, a number of years. All my childhood memories are there.

I love West Virginia and my friends and relatives there. I want to be a help to John Davis, who is asking for old pictures for historical purposes. I am 88 years old and have lived in Michigan a number of years, but my heart lies in West Virginia. I would like to be placed on your mailing list. Your magazine is wonderful.
Sincerely,
Flora Arledge

Boyd Henry, Gunsmith

Brookville, Pensylvania
November 10, 1979
Editor:
I would appreciate a copy of the April-June 1979 issue of GOLDENSEAL. If at all possible, I would also like to be on the distribution list for future issues.

Dr. George Shumway, publisher of the Longrifle Series books, forwarded to me the article on Boyd M. Henry, Gunsmith, written by Dr. Elaine Foster. For the past six years I have been doing research for a book in the Longrifle Series on the Gunsmiths of Jefferson, Clarion, and Elk counties, Pennsylvania. I was of course delighted to see that Mr. Henry had knowledge of several gunsmiths in my area of interest.

Aside from the fact that my father was a transplanted West Virginian, another family of gunsmiths that I am studying came out of your fair state. The William Sink family, consisting of the father and sons John, David, Joseph, and Jacob, all gunsmiths, worked in Cameron in the 1857-1870 period. David enlisted in the 11th Virginia Regiment at Burning Springs, and following his discharge worked over in Marietta, Ohio, with A. C. McGirr.

I thoroughly enjoyed all aspects of Dr. Foster's article. West Virginia has always had a love affair with hunting and the muzzle loading rifle. I am sure you are aware that for the past two years "Buckskinners" from West Virginia have hosted the National Muzzle Loading Rifle Association Eastern Rendezvous at Nancy Hanks.
Sincerely,
Russell E. Harringer
Commanding General
Jefferson County Longrifles

Growing Up in the Coalfields

After reading her first GOLDENSEAL, Birdie Kyle of Alexandria, Virginia, sent us the following remarkable letter. Mrs. Kyle grew up in Fayette County, and on Cabin Creek in Kanawha County. She now works for Senator Jennings Randolph in Washington, and says "West Virginia is never far from my thoughts."—ed.

Editor:

I have just finished reading the October-December issue of GOLDENSEAL, and I wonder how many I have missed, and what I have missed in past issues. It's truly a most wonderful publication.

I am a native West Virginian, born in Fayette County at MacDunn, but raised up on Cabin Creek in the coalfields, from the age of 10—my father left Koppers Coal Company and went to work for Truax Traer in 1945. My truest memories, then, are of Cabin Creek's coal towns—not of Fayette County—but I have a picture of myself sitting on the bottom step (at one year old) of the house in which I was born, a one-room abandoned railroad boxcar. When I was little, my older sister tormented me when she felt like it by calling me "old Boxcar Bill." I don't remember which made me the maddest — being reminded that I was born in a boxcar, or being called "Bill" when I was a *girl!* Probably both.

The article beginning on page 68, entitled "West Virginia Coal Company Scrip" is my favorite. How I remember the mixed feelings we had about coal company scrip. If you went down to the coal company store to purchase groceries, you "drew" scrip. If you needed so-called "dry goods" you charged them — and those charges along with whatever scrip you "drew" were taken out of Dad's pay on payday. Many times, my father picked up an empty envelope trying to feed 12 children, and clothe them—we "drew" a lot of scrip, I can tell you. Scrip could make you schizophrenic. You had to decide between two evils: drawing scrip and having no cash on hand — or not drawing scrip so that Dad could draw a payday, by trying to stretch the groceries and home-canned food in the meantime. Usually, our family, due to its size, lost the scrip battle.

I do recall, though, that you could "draw" a $2 bill—but I don't think you could do it daily, perhaps only once a week. That $2 was expected to do a lot of things it couldn't do even then — it couldn't pay for school lunches for 12 children, and take everyone to a movie once a week, even if the fare was only 15¢ (and it was). Of course, we could have packed our lunches; but "light bread" was too expensive to purchase in the quantities needed to pack 12 lunches, and we were much too proud to pack a biscuit sandwich. (Now, of course, biscuits are a treat, and we would be proud to take a biscuit sandwich anywhere any time.) My Mom tried to save the $2 in cash so she could pay for our school books (oh, yes, they had to be bought back then—in cash). But books were mandatory at our house —school books and encyclopedias, no comics. The Bible, of course, was very acceptable reading material.

On page 27, the pictures of the coalfields of McDowell County remind me of the ones on Cabin Creek—not that coal towns varied much from one place to another in my experience. The picture, though, shows the coal tipple—something I have tried to describe to my own children and acquaintances, for the tipple was every bit as dominant in the coalfields as the company store.

I can see the chute leading up that mountain towards the men who were (in my day) hand-loading coal that would shoot downwards to the tipple and into the waiting jaws of the ever-present black coal cars, raising huge clouds of "bug dust" that wafted in every direction and settled on everything — including my mother's newly washed, starched curtains drying on the curtain stretchers on the front porch. Lord, how we washed those curtains and those windows.

The coal cars, full of coal, sat on the sidetrack, being switched further away from the tipple to make room for more. Finally, late at night, the engines came (steam, not diesel) and switched the cars back and forth along the sidetrack, away from the main rail line. All night long the hissing and clanking of coupling and uncoupling coal cars kept you company if you were awake in the dark— but it didn't scare you. It made you comfortable, because you knew that along with that engine and those coal cars, came humans, real people, and they were out there in the dark, calling to one another and laughing. You knew they'd watch out for you and keep away monsters and ghosts (and this was especially comforting to a little girl whose older brother and sister had regaled her with graveyard stories just before bedtime). I used to feel really sad when finally the loaded cars were all hooked together and the engine was at the front, the red caboose I knew was on the end, and the steam engine whistle blew as it entered the main rail line and took the coal away. Next morning, when it was light, there as if a miracle had happened, were empty cars waiting to be filled with the coal my father, and other fathers, sons and brothers, loaded by hand and sent down the mountain.

The GOLDENSEAL pictures remind me of the miners in their work

gear, and the little carbide lamp attached to their hard hats—and we loved to help put carbide in the little pop-top hole in the bronze lamp that would light Daddy's way down in the mine. And we knew our mother had put an extra "treat" into the lunch bucket so Daddy could "bring us something" from work. But that was only for little ones—and you never knew quite whether to be proud, or sad, when you outgrew being "little" enough to get a treat from the lunch bucket. Even then, the treat had a funny taste, and really wasn't all that good; that wasn't the point. Daddy had gone down in the dark mines that morning, and the treat was proof positive that he had returned.

We were not unaware of that terrible wailing sound of the tipple whistle when a mine disaster had occurred. Even community grade schools turned out and headed for the tipple to wait for the man-trip to come down that little track from the top—carrying the miners who always "came out" when an accident occurred, if it was fatal. One knew, if one's Daddy didn't get off that final run, it must be him that got hurt, or killed. Or, with shining hope, we would then tell one another that Daddy had stayed behind to help—and it was true every time for me. Because my father was never killed *in* the mines; he died six years ago of black lung. But many of my friends and neighbors watched and waited for one who never came—not, at least, climbing off that man-trip bringing the live ones out and down.

I remember those drafty old houses with their splintered floors, where the linoleum didn't quite reach far enough, and how cold they were in the winter. It's true that only those standing right in front of those coal burning grates were warm, and then only one side at a time. I've built many a coal fire in those grates in each room of the house except the kitchen.

Ah, the kitchen stove was a wonder—it had a tank on the side that heated the water for the returning miner's bath before dinner. Each of us children (of the 12—10 girls and 2 boys) had to take turns getting up each winter morning and "building the fires"—kitchen having first priority since it takes a good hot oven to bake bread every morning. My older brother told me that if I'd slip outside, across the narrow dirt road, and onto that sidetrack where the coal cars waited, and if I'd lift the trap on the "dope boxes" on those cars and grab a handful of "dope" (I don't know the real name for "dope," and I don't know why it was there)—but if I'd do that, and bring the dope back to the kitchen stove, its greenish slick cottony bulk would burn like mad and start that kitchen kindling and coal to burning in no time. He was right. He cautioned me not to get caught, or I'd surely land in jail. It was a long time before I figured out he was probably kidding about jail!

In the picture (page 27) with the coal tipple and sidetrack, the houses perched atop the hill just above, really just squatting there, look more "affluent" than the ones on Cabin Creek—or at least some of them are a great deal bigger. Imagine a family of 14 in various stages of growth and noise, living in a coal company house of 4 rooms, one of them the kitchen, and you will imagine wall-to-wall double beds, and you won't be wrong. You had to have a lot of seniority to get a "big" house, big enough to accommodate a large family. It was cozy in winter, though. All the houses had front and back porches. We sat out there in summer, and our mother would build "gnat smokes" to keep the bugs away. It worked, too. I wonder how many readers of GOLDENSEAL remember how to build a gnat smoke?

I remember John L. Lewis; we had a picture of him, framed, on the mantle (all coal company houses had mantles over the fireplace coal grates). Beside his picture, also framed, was FDR. I grew mighty tall before I figured out they weren't respected relatives on whom we could depend for better times, but respected and revered leaders—one of the coal miners' union and the other of a desperate nation. But I loved to listen to the sound of their voices on the radio—and if we didn't care to listen, we had better be quiet because it was tantamount to treason to make a noise during those fireside chats that might cause one to miss a single word of what was being said.

I remember my first day of school (and yes, it's true we walked miles to school in those days, snow or shine), but what makes my first day of school memorable is the total, devastating disappointment! Somehow I had come to believe that if Franklin Roosevelt, a household word, was the greatest man in the world, and if the second greatest segment of humanity were, as I was led to believe, teachers, then it was reasonable to expect that Eleanor Roosevelt would be my teacher. She wasn't. I cried. The new teacher understood, and at the end of my first day, I was certain I did not care that much; my teacher was nice, and she gave me a ride home so I wouldn't have to walk. I backslid only once on the way home, thinking how much more exciting it would be to arrive home in teacher's car if teacher *was* Eleanor! I was a celebrity, nonetheless, and soon forgot my longing for Mrs. Roosevelt.

Children are impressionable — and my whole life and that of my family during my "formative" years revolved around John L. Lewis and Franklin Roosevelt. Those are my earliest, and clearest memories. It has been a long time since I remembered, though. Somehow GOLDENSEAL brought it all back.

But mostly I feel that GOLDENSEAL preserves our mountain heritage, and keeps it for us so that we can take it out and enjoy it, much like any other treasure we tuck away, sometimes for long periods, in a safe place—knowing it's there, feeling good knowing it's there, and looking forward to taking it out and dusting it off to admire it over and over again. I'll be up half the night as it is remembering millions and zillions of things—sad and funny and tragic and lovely. Thank you.

Sincerely,
Birdie Kyle

A West Virginia Swiss Community

The Aegerter Photographs of Helvetia, Randolph County

Photographic Essay by David Sutton

"I used to shut my eyes and imagine the transformation that would be wrought in these mountains by a colony of Swiss, who would turn the coves into gardens, the moderate slopes into orchards, the steeper ones into vineyards, by terracing, and who would export the finest of cheese made from the surplus milk of their goats."

—Horace Kephart
Our Southern Highlanders, 1922

In the early 20th century, during one of the periodic "discoveries" of Appalachia, it was common for outside observers to bemoan the alleged shiftlessness of the native mountain population. Horace Kephart and others speculated that a colony of thrifty Swiss immigrants, with generations of Alpine living behind them, might make better use of the harsh regional terrain.

Kephart, John C. Campbell, and other writers generally confined their travels to the southern mountains, and they found no Swiss community upon which to test their cliche. However, had they visited West Virginia in any of the decades after the Civil War, they would have encountered just such a settlement in the mountains of Randolph County. They would have found that the Swiss did indeed prosper in the new land, and they probably would have gone away with a feeling of vindication in their theory.

The Randolph County community was Helvetia, founded in 1869 and named for the Latin name for Switzerland. The Helvetia settlers were German-speaking Swiss, who had spent their first years in America in Brooklyn, New York. There they had organized the Gruetli Verein to provide fellowship and search for a permanent home in some other part of the United States. It was this "verein," or club, that sent the first scouting party south to Randolph County.

Leaving Brooklyn in October, the advance party traveled by train to Clarksburg, and then by wagon, horseback, and on foot to the present site of Helvetia. Although discouraged by the wilderness condition of the area, they reported favorably on land prices and West Virginia hospitality. After some debate, members of the Brooklyn Swiss group decided to migrate to Randolph County.

By the end of 1869 several families had made the trip. They were soon followed by others, bearing such names as Zumbach, Karlen, Merkli, Metzner, Betler, Hofer, and Teuscher, all of which would become prominent in Helvetia history. Building first a "settlement house" which the original families shared in common, and which was later given over to newcomers as they arrived, the Swiss set about acquiring land and gradually clearing individual farms. Lots at the village center were reserved for the shops of craftsmen, and in 1872 the first general store opened its doors.

The early years at Helvetia were a time of building houses, barns, and shops from the abundant timber of surrounding mountainsides. More importantly, Helvetians were building a community. The first families were joined in the 1870's by German and Swiss immigrants from other parts of the United States, and some directly from Europe. In 1873 a German Reformed congregation was organized, and a decade later its members constructed a fine church building. A school was established in 1875. Over the years Helvetia flourished, and by the turn of the century several hundred people lived in the village and surrounding area.

Among those coming to Helvetia a few years after first settlement was the Gottfried Aegerter family, arriving directly from Switzerland in 1885. Like most of his neighbors, Gottfried Aegerter made his living mainly as a farmer, but he brought an important avocation to his new home. Aegerter was an amateur photographer, with skills and

The photographer, Walter Aegerter, about 1910.

equipment which he eventually passed on to his youngest son Walter, born in Helvetia in 1894. The Aegerters, especially Walter, left a complete photographic history of Helvetia for the late 19th and particularly the early 20th century, including the photographs in the following pages.

The Aegerters approached their hobby seriously, constructing a special building on the family farm to serve as a darkroom. The building, which is still standing, had a window opening in the north wall with a tightly-fitted shutter. This wooden shutter or door was solid and completely opaque, except for a small red light filter in the center. When the photographer desired natural lighting, the shutter was opened to admit the soft northern light. The shutter was closed during handling of negatives and other light-sensitive materials, allowing only filtered light to enter the darkroom—thus providing the equivalent of the modern photographer's red safelight.

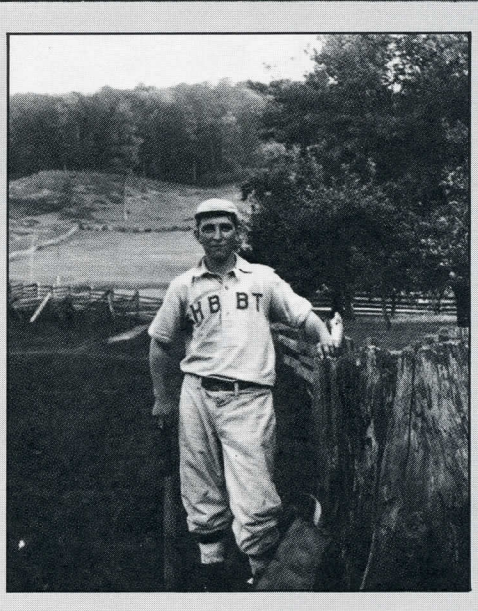
The photographic process used by Walter Aegerter and his father was that of dry plate negatives, which became popular with American photographers in the early 1880's. In this method treated glass plates were used instead of film, with the plates developed into photographic negatives in the darkroom. Although notoriously breakable, glass plate negatives store well under the right conditions. Hundreds of the Aegerter negatives have survived, and the following photographs are original prints made directly from the old negatives in 1979.

Rick Lee of the Department of Culture and History photo lab and Craig Merriam of Elkins assisted David Sutton in photographic processing for this article.—ed.

David Sutton is now working on an exhibit of 40 historical photographs of Helvetia, including many of those in this issue of GOLDENSEAL. The exhibit will be on display at the Cultural Center, at the Capitol Complex in Charleston, with the opening coinciding with the beginning of the Vandalia Gathering on May 23.

Right: The Haslebacher homestead, a typical mountaintop farm at Helvetia.
Below: Looking southeast into Helvetia, about 1910.

Below: Helvetia village center during a community event, about 1910. The Helvetia Star Band in the foreground, with the horsedrawn "swing" or merry-go-round behind them, to the left. Left to right along the dirt main street is the Gottlieb Daetwyler home, the Daetwyler cobbler shop, and community store. In the background and at right angles to the main street are, front to back, the George Betz home, barn (with cupola), and grist mill.
Above right: Visitors at the Gottfried Burkey farm, on Turkeybone Mountain near Helvetia, about 1910.
Below right: The Burkey sisters, Greitly, Mary, and Elizabeth, read their German-language newspaper.
Far right: Arnold Metzner, an enthusiastic member of the Helvetia baseball team, about 1920.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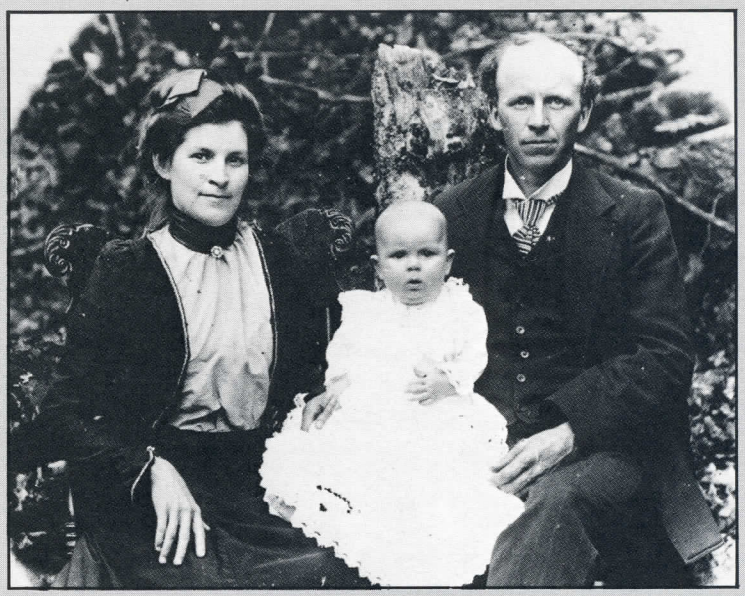
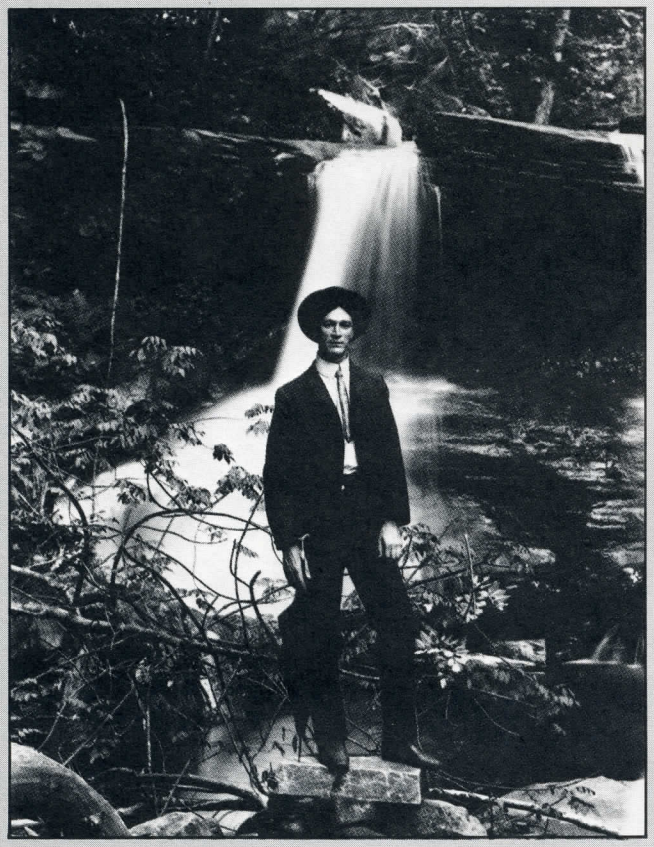
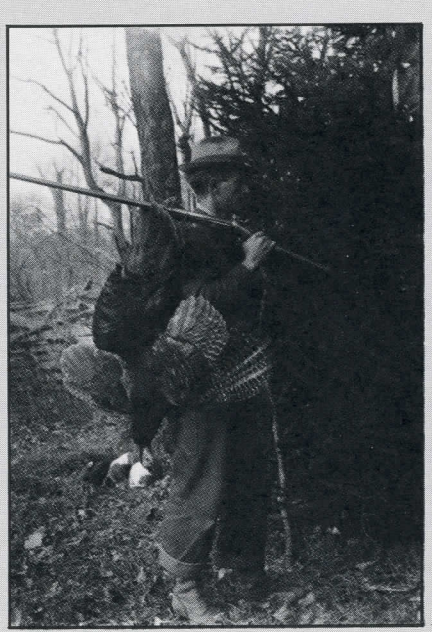
Below left: Unidentified child, possibly in the Aegerter yard.
Below right: Unidentified family.
Bottom: The family of George and Bertha Teuscher Sutton. David Sutton's father, Edward, is seated in George's lap. Son Harley wears World War I uniform in this 1918 photograph.





Top: The Gottlieb Fahrner family, January 1903. Gottlieb Fahrner, like other early settlers, had been in the United States for some years prior to the founding of Helvetia in 1869, and displays medals earned in Civil War service.
Above: Unidentified young man by mountain waterfall.
Opposite: The Marti brothers and sisters, second generation Helvetians, about 1906.

Upper left: The photographer's family, about 1908. Father Gottfried Aegerter passed his skills and camera equipment on to youngest son Walter (center front), who made these photographs of Helvetia.
Upper right: Gottfried Aegerter home between Helvetia and Pickens. Photographer Walter Aegerter grew up here.
Below left: Merrymaking at the Aegerter home, about 1915.
Below center: Olga Aegerter at her organ.
Below right: Cousins Ernest Burkey and Olga Aegerter pose for the photographer, about 1912.



Left: Ed and Emil Metzener with rifles and hunting dog.
Below: Alfred Teuscher with a catch from his traps. Note box trap at right.
Bottom: Gimmel and Marti boys enjoy a Sunday beer in the woods, about 1905.
Opposite: Drinking at Aegerter farm, about 1920. This cabin, left standing as an outbuilding when the family's fine frame house was built, was the Aegerter's original home.

Upper left: Charlie Balli, Alvin Vogel, Alfred Koerner, and Arnold Metzener with a catch of wild turkeys.
Lower left: Horsedrawn log cars on wooden tramway, probably about 1910. Loggers carry the longhandled cant hooks used in handling logs.
Upper right: Mr. and Mrs. Ernest Hassig in their garden.
Below: Clara Lehmann surveys the family ginseng crop. The slatted shed provided shade to the plants, which normally grow in the woods.

Clee Sayre, John Karlen, and Bill Karlen display the tools of logging. John Karlen was Ella Betler's father.

Ella Betler Remembers Helvetia

Interview by David Sutton

ELLA BETLER is a third generation Helvetian, the daughter of a Karlen and a Rush. Her grandparents, Swiss immigrants on both sides, were among the early settlers who established Helvetia and nearby Adolph in the years after the Civil War. Ella herself was born in 1906, *in the outlying "Hilltop" area.*

Ella came of age in the second and third decades of the 20th *century, and her memories are those of change. By this time control of the community had passed to her parents' generation, the first American-born Helvetians, whose ideas were not always in keeping with those of the first settlers. Although Helvetia preserves much of its European heritage to this day, Ella remembers that Swiss ways and especially the original German dialect had begun to erode by the early years of the century.*

The First World War, which subjected German-speaking Americans to suspicion and persecution, hastened the "Americanization" process. Ella's generation was the last to be formally educated in German, and generally they spoke it only to grandparents. When the time came to educate her own children, Ella remembers that her husband declined to teach them German. "We live in America," she recalls him saying, "so we'll just talk English and be done with it."

In other ways, however, things remained much as they had been. Helvetia continued to be a tight-knit village, with community life revolving around periodic festivities at the Star Band Hall and the adjacent village green. Between holidays, residents worked hard and appear to have prospered. Some men were drawn into the booming timber industry, but most Helvetians continued to work mountain farms.

Ella Betler at home. Photograph by David Sutton.

Ella Betler herself is from a farm family, and later brought up her own children on a farm. In the following pages she shares childhood memories of life on her parents' and grandparents' farms, and describes the cycle of the agricultural work year from a woman's viewpoint. This article is edited from three interviews done at Helvetia in 1979.

Ella Betler. My parents' names were John and Emma Karlan. My mother was a Rush. She lived in Adolph which isn't far from here, about 12, 15 miles. My father was born up on the hill not far from where he grew up, where he bought land and started to farm after he was married. And he cleared the land and built the house till he had at least one room. Then they moved up in that one room, and he kept building as he had time. He built the house all by himself and he built the big barn and all the buildings that was there. I sometimes think of all the building that he did.

There was six of us children that they raised, my father and mother. And they lost two. There was one set of twins and the one twin died when he was eight months old, I believe. A little girl died when she was three years old, with diphtheria. Them days when they had diphtheria, it was very serious. They had the little girl, my little sister, in a room all by herself. And my aunt would stay with her. It was so contagious that we would crawl up on the outside ladder to look in the window at her. Finally I guess it was too late and she passed away. She died. Everybody was so afraid of being around that my father made the little casket for her. He had a little glass right up by her face. The day of the funeral—I was only about four years old or five, I guess—I can still see my father carrying that little casket out in the front yard and resting it on chairs while they had the funeral.

Otherwise, my father and mother got along fine. They would saw wood and clear the land, and I remember the big piles of logs that burned when they had a clearing. They would have the neighbors come in and burn big piles of logs and stumps and things. We planted our corn in the clearing, as we called it. We would take a shovel plow and a couple of us younger ones would stick a stick where they planted the corn so they'd know where the next row went. No matter how small, we was big enough to follow and put the sticks in. Later they'd have the corn planter, but we'd still have to put sticks so they'd know where to go with the next row.

I stayed with my grandparents when I was five years old, because my mother had typhoid fever. So I stayed up at my grandparents'. And, of course, my grandfather was a very stern man. He had a beard and a mustache, and I often say I never saw him smile. My grandmother was a lovely person. She was very good to us and would get us things to play with once in a while. But we had to sit down on a chair lots of times.

I remember their parlor, as they called it them days. She would say if I was good, real good for a long time, I could go walk through the parlor. And I can close my eyes to this day and see that parlor just the way it was—every picture. I would just start from one place and go clear around, you know, and look at everything real slow. One of those roller organs was one of the things that fascinated me. You know, they have the rolls, and you turned it and it would play. Very nice. Why we didn't preserve it, I don't know. They had one of them and they had one of those mirrors like everybody has. And over that was some peacock feathers. I don't know where they got them. I never found the story about that, but I saved some. They had a table in the middle of the floor, and there was an oilcloth on it with Washington, DC, with the capitol on it. It was a black oilcloth and it had this in white. How I just loved to stand there and look at the capitol of Washington, DC.

And she would have candy for us. At the Valentine this year I saw these little candy hearts with little verses, and it made me think she had a package of that in her bedroom. And if we was good all day and quiet, maybe she'd give us one of those little candies. It was on a little table and nobody ever bothered anything. We were taught not to touch things. I would stand on tiptoe and look down in that package to see how much was in it. I wouldn't touch it.

The thing I was mostly afraid of when I stayed with my grandmother was that they had a bull. Oh, it was a big black thing, and it carried on. At butcher day when they'd water the cows and let the bull out, I was so scared that he'd come in the house even. I was just, you know, five years old. My Uncle Bill lived with them, and sometimes in wintertime they were husking corn and they'd say, "Do you want to go over to the barn?" And I would. The barn had cows on both sides, and you went up the middle. I was so scared the cows would bite my head, I would bend down and go past them right quick, and go up where my grandfather and Uncle Bill were husking corn. My grandmother would go over to the barn with me, so nothing would get me. And then I would climb clear up on the platform. I was still afraid the bull would come in there.

David Sutton. Did you ever visit your other grandparents at Adolph?

EB I never saw my grandmother there. But we went to see my grandfather. He was such a different type of person. He smiled all the time, and he always had candy for everybody. He'd buy candy and he'd sit in there and just sit and smile and talk. He had white hair and a nice beard and he was always so kind and smiling.

DS Did the very first settlers want their children to learn English?

EB No. Definitely not. Not the early ones. We wouldn't be allowed to say an English word in front of my grandmother. They were very proud of their language. My sisters and brothers couldn't even talk English when they went to school. But I could, because they would come home from school and talk English and I would learn it. But I had to talk Swiss to my grandmother when I stayed up there.

But then later people started to talk English. During World War I, people was afraid to even hardly talk Swiss, 'cause some people that didn't know better thought we were sympathizers with the Germans, which we wasn't. We were all good citizens. But people were thinking. They didn't realize that Switzerland and Germany was two different places. That's why we wouldn't teach the children Swiss anymore. My husband, Arnold, could talk Swiss so good, and they'd often say, "Why don't you teach your children?" And he said, "No, we live in America, so we'll just talk English and be done with it."

DS So people really started speaking English when they started school?

EB Yes. That's right. In those early days. The first settlers didn't do nothing but talk Swiss. And you see, our church was Swiss, or German. The sermon was preached in

German and the songs were in German. I remember them well. That's why I know these German songs, the tunes of them.

DS Can you tell me what a typical day would be like when you were growing up? What would you do in the morning and what would you do in the afternoon and evening?

EB I was sort of my dad's girl as soon as I was big enough to work. I didn't like it in the house. My two other sisters were more in the house. But I always went with my dad. I really, I guess, helped him more than my brother did. We'd pick rocks, or whatever had to be done. I even plowed and I would harrow when I was just young, because I liked to do it with the team of horses.

Ella Betler at the Helvetia fair, September 1977. Photograph by Norton Lewis Guskey.

And in the evenings we would visit our neighbors. We would go and see our neighbors, in summertime when the evenings were long. And we would get together and just play hide and seek or whatever we would be playing. But we were never lonesome or anything.

On Sundays we always went to church. We'd go to Sunday School together and stay for church and come home. We always went to Christian Endeavor in the evening again. That just meant everything to us because that was our way to get together, the young people. And, of course, on Sundays we would visit people. I remember we used to go up to my husband's farm. Their parents were dead then, and Bertha and Arnold was keeping the farm, and George and Jim was there. And, of course, John Betler's children came, and Otto Betler's children came, and Stadlers and us went up. We always had a great gathering there on Sunday. We always enjoyed it. Maybe it was because Bertha was always so good to us and fixed things for us.

The band would practice up over at John Betler's, and we would go listen to them. I can remember the first time when we went. The men played their cards — Yass games. That came from over in Switzerland. And the young people would have someone play music. The Burkeys usually played music, and we would dance. That's where we learned to dance. We'd dance in the living room. The men would be in the kitchen around the big table, and we would dance in the living room. Then later on I think they did get a victrola that you wound up by hand. And we got records and we'd play them.

We did waltzing mostly, I guess. I mean the place wasn't hardly big enough to do square dancing. Whenever we had a place big enough we did some square dancing, with just maybe eight of us or so. But it was mostly waltzing and, oh, the Helvetia Polka, as we called it. We always had it. And then we did something we called the one step, which was done to the Silver Bell and Red Wing and those.

I guess when I was young the music was mostly furnished by the Rosses. They came down from Newlon. And they were great, great players! The old man was crippled up and he'd play that violin and bend over and they all just played great. They would never charge anything. They came up here. It was all free, and people just enjoyed being together. I think that's what it was. And then the Burkeys and the Zumbachs played after the Rosses. They played always so much. And it was beautiful music. So we always had that for entertainment, then when we grew up we'd go to dances in the hall. The Star Band Hall, that's where we went.

DS When you first learned to square dance, were you dancing four couples in a set?

EB Definitely. Now, Creed Ross was our figure caller. And he would see that everybody had their couples, so many couples in a set, four couples in a set. It was really good, and nobody got angry if you didn't do it right or if you made a mistake.

DS Now, did Creed call from the floor or did he call from up front?

EB He usually got them started and then he would dance, too. But he would call so loud that they'd hear him good. I think there was a time when there was a caller up on the stage. But he had a good loud voice and it just seemed that ev-

erybody could hear him or he'd go back and show them. If someone wasn't doing it right he'd go back and help them, you know. Nobody really got too much mixed up.

We would start dancing at maybe 7:00 p. m. or 8:00 p. m., and we never stopped till 12:00. And nobody sat around, waited. Soon's the music started everybody was dancing. We always started early, and danced all along. Never got tired. Work all day and come down to the dance and walk home. We walked down, danced four or five hours, and walked home.

Then the other thing that we had for amusement was the box suppers. We had that a lot, you know. Now, in the box suppers, the girls would fix a box and you'd put in maybe a sandwich or a piece of chicken and maybe some cake or a piece of pie or whatever it was and maybe candy, and it was like a shoe box. We'd wrap it up in nice tissue paper and put ribbons around it and decorate it, but you never put your name, so they wouldn't know. I mean it would be hid. And then the auctioneer would take a box up and they'd bid on it, the boys. I think the biggest, the highest priced was around $15.00. I guess this man was going to be sure to get that girl's box. And at that time, why, we thought that was a fortune!

Another thing we did for entertainment was when we had our Sunday School picnics. They had it below Helvetia. They would put a stand up, and they'd have ice cream and bananas and oranges. And we thought that was the greatest thing there ever was, because we didn't get that everyday. We'd buy a cone of ice cream and whatever we had the money for. And then play games.

The Fourth of July they always had a stand there at the Star Band Hall. They would make their own ice cream. My husband (we wasn't married then) was in the band, and the band members would have to go down and get everything ready for the Fourth of July. And then they had the old swing, and it was run by a gasoline engine. My Uncle

Ella Betler is the fifth child from the left, second row, in this Haslebacher School group picture. Teacher Nellie Been stands at rear. Photographer unknown, about 1916.

Bill had a little old Ellis engine, I believe it was called, and it would run with that. The swing had blue seats, and there was two in a seat, two could sit in a seat. You'd go around so long for so much money. Maybe you'd be in there dancing a while and then you'd go out, your partner and you'd go out and take a swing ride.

DS Do you remember the beginning of the Helvetia fair?

EB According to the history, we had our first fair around 1918 or '17. There's some doubt, but I think it was around that time. We had a really nice fair and it grew and grew. That's one of the reasons they built this other hall. They couldn't keep things at the [Star Band] hall, because they always had dances and things there, and they didn't have room for the fair.

We would bring our exhibits down. We started out with cattle and everything. I remember I had canning mostly, when I was in 4-H.

DS This is 4-H Club?

EB Yes. I was in 4-H, I guess, up to the time I was married. We had our own club; "Hilltop 4-H Club". My first project was chickens. I think it was 15 eggs you had to have for a setting, I ordered them and put them down at the 'lower place', where we had sheep, and I set the hen there. They were Plymouth Rock.

John Betler was our leader. He had a horn, a trumpet, I think is what you call it. I remember he taught us to sing "America the Beautiful". He played it on the horn, and we'd sing after him.

One year there was the fair at Wheeling and he said he'd take two of us—he was going and he would take two of us. And Elsie Dulaney, Elsie Betler at that time, and I got to go. I think the club paid our way. We went with John Betler and that was the first time we went out of Helvetia or Pickens, I think. We went on the train up to Wheeling. I'll never forget, it was the Hotel Windsor. I don't know whether it's up there yet or not, but it was a big hotel and it had an elevator. We never heard of an elevator, of course, before, neither. We was up maybe on the third or fourth floor, and so Elsie and I

would walk down and ride up the elevator. Elsie and I often talk about us going with John Betler to the fair. It was a great thing for us. We would have been about 13, 14 years old, I guess, or maybe 15, not more than that.

Our schoolhouse was where we had our socials and things when we went to school. We had the double seats, of course. There was always two sitting in a seat, and there was the wide place for your books. And I think Nellie Asper and I always sat together. There was always two sitting together. We had the recitation seat up front, and the teacher had her desk. I lived about a mile away. A little over a mile we had to go to school. And it was uphill. I never could go uphill that fast, but we always got there. And they'd ring the bell. Sometimes we wouldn't be very close and we'd have to rush like everything to get up there in time to get to school. And then we'd play games. We'd play deer. I don't know why we played such a dumb thing as deer, but some of them was dogs and some was the hunters and the rest of us were deer. We'd run all over those woods clear over to the Burkey place. Anyways, we did that when we were young. Then later on they had a victrola that they turned by hand, and we got records. That's when we were about 15. They would let us dance at recess and at noon.

Then we learned to crochet too. I remember one teacher was teaching the older ones to crochet but they didn't want us little ones around. So I'd have to stand way off. I asked my mother for a crocheting needle and my sister, Clara, was helping me. She got thread and I did a handkerchief. It was an awful crocheted thing. They didn't want us little ones around, you know, when they were learning to do those things.

The teachers would not allow you to tear your books up or write in your books or waste paper. They were very strict about that when we were younger. And I think the first year I went to school there was one of the boys got a whippin' every blessed day from this teacher. It bothered me so much that I just hated to go to school because I knew that boy'd get a whippin'. And he really got a whippin'. He wouldn't be doing that bad, but maybe he tore a paper or did something.

DS Now which school was this?

EB Haslebacher School up on the hill. It was called the Haslebacher School.

DS Do you have any idea how it got that name?

EB Well, I think it was mostly Haslebachers at that time. And then Lena Haslebacher taught several years maybe. We had anywhere from 20 to 28 students. All of them had all the classes from the first through the eighth. And we had to take our examination for the diploma that they took in them days. We had to come to Helvetia to the schoolhouse down here to get to take our examination.

DS At what grade did you finish in?

EB The eighth. And then I think a few of us went the year after we had our diploma just to go, because we didn't have nothing to do. We wasn't old enough to go off to work, and we went to school because we thought it was nice to go and we had a really good time. And then later on, of course, a person went off to work till he got married. Well, there was a few like Louie Stadler that went to high school at Buckhannon. That was the closest high school, or Elkins. The rest of us had to get housework. That's all we had.

DS Do you remember the German school?*

EB No, my two sisters went to the German school. They went and they would bring the things home, but I wasn't old enough to go. And then they quit. We went to catechism when we was anywhere from 12 to 13 years old. We didn't start before that at all. Up to that time they always had everything German yet, you know, the Swiss. Reverend Nuenschwander was the first one that came that had the English catechism and that was when I was in it. The others all had the German. Every other Sunday he had a German service. We all went to church whether we understood it or not.

We were Swiss but the language was German, and my dad would read his German paper. Some things I could understand, but there is a lot of difference between our Swiss language and the written German language. But my dad had a German paper called *Lincoln Free Press,* and then the Bibles, of course, were German-written. He would read them, but we never got too much out of it because it was words that we didn't quite understand. So when Reverend Nuenschwander started to preach one Sunday of English that made such a difference. He thought he would never get to teach us right by not being able to express himself, but I think he was wonderful. He was a very strict man, but I think he was about the first preacher that I wasn't afraid of.

DS Do you know why the church later decided to switch to Presbyterian?

EB Well, later on they just couldn't get very many preachers. Poor Mr. Rufener was there how many years, I can't remember. Many, many years. He came, I think, right after Neunschwander. And, my goodness, I think he only got $600 a year. After he left, they got this Presbyterian, Robinson, in. And, of course, he went ahead and preached for us. But the closest Reformed Church was at Wheeling. So, they just talked it over. Then, finally, I guess while Reverend Robinson was here is when they decided to turn Presbyterian.

This was his first charge. His child was born while he was here. He had five or six churches. He was one of the busiest preachers I've ever saw, but he was so good with everybody. He would go visit everybody, go sleigh riding, skipper

* In addition to attending public school, Helvetia children studied German and the catechism in special classes at the community church. At the time, German was the language of worship in the German Reformed Church.

riding,* everything with the young people. That's when we started to go Christmas caroling at Christmas time. He'd come up past our place and then we'd all go together, went up by Burkeys and clear around the hilltop.

DS Who took the leadership toward changing over to Presbyterian?

DS Do you think it was Robinson that had the initial idea?

EB Oh, yes. He tried to show them the advantages it would be, because they could go to different places, you know. There's so many Presbyterian churches and schools and everything right close to Elkins. And I don't think there's too many of us that's ever been sorry.

DS When was it then that you got married?

EB In 1925 I got married. I married a Swiss boy, Arnold Betler. I'm the only one in the family that married Swiss. I feel very proud of it. We bought my uncle's farm, where my grandparents lived. We moved up there, and that's where we was 'till in '54. Then our son bought the farm and we moved down here. We were down here 10 years before my husband died. But while we were there he was a great farmer. He liked to farm.

They had this Farming for Better Living Program, and we joined that. They came over and they helped us a lot. For instance, they had women that would help you plan your home. I wanted a new kitchen. I'd planned for 25 years to get a new kitchen, and it was always something that we couldn't get, but I'd have all kinds of plans. Finally, this one lady came and she helped, and we planned it. And then it was during the war, I guess, that Fred Zumbach started to build it. Then Fred got sick and died, so Rudolph took over.

In Farming for Better Living you had to keep a record. You had to keep a record of expenses. We had to keep a count of what we bought and what we sold. And how much we canned and all that. We got several prizes. They always had a big dinner at Elkins or Clarksburg then. And it seemed every time when we got a big prize we couldn't go for some reason. We got first in '42.

DS Was there a feeling among some of the old Swiss that their sons and daughters should marry other Swiss?

EB Well, I think they would sort of like them better, you know. But there wasn't enough Swiss boys to go around, I don't think. Anyways, I was the only one of my sisters that had a Swiss man, and my children would be Swiss.

DS And you had how many children?

EB I have seven children, five boys and two girls. And during the Depression we had, I guess, three of them. The Depression didn't bother us too much. We had a lot of crops.

Then during the War we couldn't buy sugar. That was when we had our stamps, wasn't it? You had to get stamps to buy your sugar and things. You got so many stamps, and if you used them up you couldn't get any more of them, you know. So we planted cane. We got us a cane press. My dad and my husband got the cane press and we raised cane and pressed cane syrup. John Betler and the Zumbachs raised it. They went from home different places to help each other and cook it. Now the Zumbachs made big pans, two of them or three, and that really helped a lot to cook the syrup down. We used cane molasses instead of sugar.

As far as clothes was concerned we used our feed sacks, and made our children clothes. Many times I was up at 10:00 p.m. or 11:00 sewing. Even the underwear we made. I remember in a 1930 catalog, or '31, I looked and the underwear, undershorts, was 10¢ a pair. I sat up till 10:00 o'clock making some, because I didn't have the 10¢ to send. Really, we didn't have no money. I know we sometimes hunted all over the place for 2¢ to get a stamp to mail a letter. We couldn't find even 2¢ in the house. But to me it was happy days, 'cause you pulled together. We didn't complain. We just pulled together and made everything reach and do. And helped each other.

We went visiting one time and they were complaining. Of course, they didn't have a farm like we did and they said, "My goodness, aren't you worried about this Depression or doesn't it bother you?" And I said, "No, we have plenty to eat, and we have feed sacks to make the clothes." And maybe some people would give us clothes to make over. We had relatives in New Jersey that would send us a box every so often. Really we had nothing to complain about. I know maybe some people had it harder.

We didn't have to go and get no welfare. We didn't have to get no help. Everybody helped themselves. The only time was once when Arnold was in Pickens, and I think that Mrs. Pete Swint had material in, and sweaters. She saw him, and she told him to come in and get something. He said, "Well we don't need it. Others may need it worse." She said, "Just come in, because it's for the school children." And I think she gave him a sweater and a few yards of material, maybe two or three yards of material. That's the only help we ever did get. And it really wasn't welfare. There was no money, but we never went cold or we never went hungry.

DS You were telling me one time how you learned to quilt.

EB Well, we started to quilt to make covers. First we started just cutting up old wool coats that were worn out, wool pants. We'd cut them up of an evening in squares and then sew them together for our covers on our beds. Then after we had the feed sacks we could use them. You know when you sew for your children you have pieces left, even if it is from sacks. I kept on quilting to this day, and I like it better then any other hobby I have. This year I think I made about six of them. Not all by myself, but I did most of them.

* A skipper consists of a short post and seat mounted on a single ski, the rider balancing his weight as on a bicycle. Skipper riding on the steep slopes remains a popular winter sport in Helvetia.

At that time we had the Rufeners here, which was still in the Reformed Church. Mrs. Rufener was such a great sewer of everything, and quilting. I don't think I went to help quilt at hers because if you didn't do it right she took them out after you were gone and did them over. Everybody knew that. I did go back to see Mrs. Hofer. I think I learned more from Mrs. Hofer's quilting than anyone else, 'cause she was a great quilter. And her mother was. We had quilting parties, from one to the other.

And then another thing, going back to our good times, was the woodcuttings. The men always had their woodcuttings, and in the evening they would play cards. We always had wood. Nobody bought coal them days, unless they had it on their own land. I think the Zumbachs had opened a coal mine, and up above our place the Cowgers had a coal mine open, but I think our stoves were all more just for wood. Everybody helped each other have woodcuttings. Maybe there'd be 12, 14 men. They would saw with the crosscut saws. They didn't have the power saws. Then some would split and then pile them up. They would take the horses and bring the logs out of the woods and have a big pile of logs ready to saw. They kept the woods clean. They would bring all the dead trees or the bad trees and cut them, and bring them down closer to the homes and cut their wood. That's where they had their good times.

DS Tell me what Fashnacht* celebration was like when you were growing up, Ella.

EB Well, when we had our Fashnacht it was really celebrated on that night regardless whether it was Monday night or Tuesday night or when. When we were young, before we could go to the dance, we would go from home to home dressed up like they do at Halloween now. They would give us candy and cookies. Then, when we got bigger everybody went to the dance. But they really didn't dress up down there, when we went to the dance. It was just traditional for us all to have the Fashnacht dance. It was just one of those special dances like Old Year's Eve, we called it. Now it's called New Year's Eve. We've always had that. And of course the Fourth of July, and then in between we had dances.

DS Do you remember making cheese at your house?

EB Yes, years ago it seemed all of them made cheese. Every farmer had cheese, that had cows. My mother made cheese as long as I can remember. She made it everyday, regular. More than maybe some of the farmers. We sold them down to Silica, to C. I. Thayer. That's where the railroad was, and he shipped them away. For ages we'd carry them down, and it was about five miles from our home down to Silica. And then later I rode the horse and took them on the horse. We got 25¢ a pound for them, and we thought we was doing wonderful. And then later, when I was making cheese on the farm, people started to come to buy cheese. I always got rid of all my cheese, but I think it was around 50¢ a pound. Maybe 75. I'm not too sure but I don't think it ever was

(Continued on Page 59)

The Helvetia German Reformed congregation was organized shortly after the village was settled in 1869, and built this fine church in 1882. The church later converted to Presbyterian, due to a scarcity of German Reformed ministers in West Virginia. Aegerter photograph.

* "Fashnacht" or the night before fasting, was traditionally celebrated on Shrove Tuesday, the evening before Ash Wednesday and the beginning of Lent. The German celebration corresponds to Mardi Gras in some Catholic cultures.

"Parables in Picture Form"
The Art of Patrick J. Sullivan

By Gary Baker

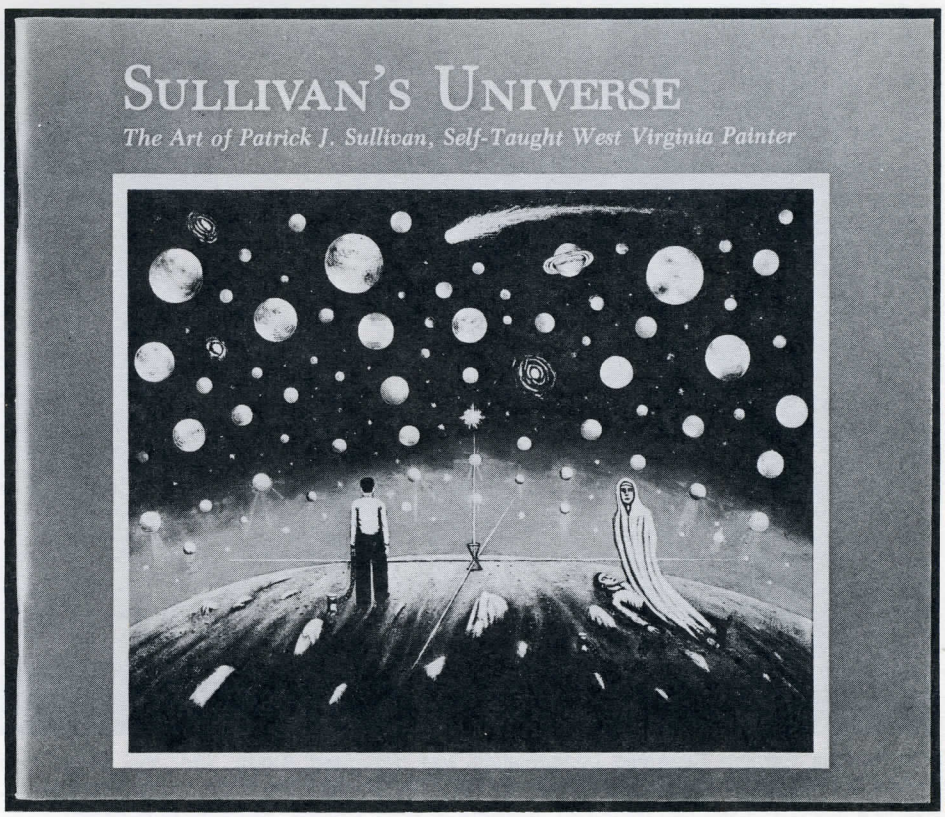
"IF my work helps others to think, I mean really think in the true sense of the word, then I am achieving my goal. To get anywhere without making people think doesn't interest me . . . I want my canvases to be of the kind, that when viewed will hit them as it were and, make them think and know life in its rich fullness, its truths, for all is truth. You remember the old saying: "A lie is the truth in disguise." It is my intention to bring truth out in all its glory on my canvases—if you will a sort of parable in picture form."

So wrote self-taught West Virginia artist Patrick J. Sullivan (1894-1967), one of the most original allegorical painters in the history of art. Unlike most artists of the past and present, Sullivan chose for his subjects his own thoughts. Symbolism was the vocabulary through which he expressed his thoughts. The systems of original and traditional symbolism employed in his canvases were frequently labyrinthian and call to mind baroque allegories and panels from 15th century Flemish altar pieces.

Sullivan produced most of his paintings in the late 1930's and very early 1940's, while he was employed first as a house painter and then as a steel worker in Wheeling. The sale of these paintings never brought him enough money to enable him to become a full-time artist, but his art received national attention at the time. Sullivan's first three completed original works were shown in New York at the 1938 Museum of Modern Art's exhibition, "Masters of Popular Painting: Modern Primitives of Europe and America."

In the ensuing years Sullivan's work has continued to be held in high regard by the relatively small group of people who study and love 20th century folk art. A number of the major books on folk art published over the past four decades either refer to Sullivan or include illustrations of his works. In 1978 when the staff of the Oglebay Institute-Mansion Museum decided that the time had come to mount a comprehensive exhibition of Sullivan's work and publish a catalog/monograph, no more than four of Sullivan's paintings had ever been shown together, and only five paintings had been published. A grant from the Arts and Humanities Division of the Department of Culture and History of the state of West Virginia made the exhibition and its accompanying catalog a reality. Every movable surviving Sullivan work (a total of 15) which could be located was borrowed for the exhibition. Lenders to the exhibition included New York art collectors, The Museum of Modern Art, and the artist's family. The exhibition, "Sullivan's Universe: The Art of Patrick J. Sullivan, Self-Taught West Virginia Painter," was shown at the Oglebay Institute-Mansion Museum in Wheeling from April 1 through June 30, 1979. It then traveled to Charleston, where it was shown in the Cultural Center from August 10 through September 9. At these showings, Sullivan's work was seen by thousands. The exhibition catalog makes his work permanently accessible to the public.

Copies of the "Sullivan's Universe" exhibition catalog are still available from the Mansion Museum, Oglebay Institute, Wheeling 26003.



Most of Sullivan's paintings are landscapes. He was once asked if he painted landscapes because he was from the country. His answer was an emphatic "No." Unlike many of the self-taught (Sullivan disliked the term "primitive") American artists who preceded him, Sullivan's background was urban/industrial rather than rural/agricultural. Patrick Joseph Sullivan was born in Braddock, Pennsylvania, on March 17, 1894, the youngest of 12 children of Irish immigrant Redmond Sullivan and his wife Mary. When Patrick was two years old his father died and his mother was forced to place him in an orphanage, where he remained until he went to work in a sheet iron mill in McKeesport, Pennsylvania, at the age of 15. In about 1911, he moved with his mother to Wheeling, West Virginia, where he worked in the mills until he got a job as assistant playground manager. In that capacity he became interested in house-painting.

From 1916 to 1919 he served in the army, being first stationed on the Mexican border and then in Brooklyn. The sense of dignity and high standards of personal behavior that he was to display in later life were apparently evident in him even as a soldier. Years later in May of 1942 he wrote his young friend, James W. Morris, who had recently been drafted:

"What do you think of the army by this time? It isn't as tough as some think. I always followed these simple rules:

1. Be obedient to your superiors.
2. Be kind and obliging to your comrades.
3. Do your work with that degree of skill which will (without a doubt) make the other fellow's heads swim.
4. In camp, on pass, no matter where you might be, remember you are a soldier and a gentleman.

I tried mightly to follow the above rules during my service and found they work and work perfectly."

Following his stint in the army Sullivan returned to Wheeling, which he made his permanent home. For a time he continued to work on the playgrounds, but then took a job with American Railway Express Company, where he met Martha Ritter. The two married on March 13, 1920. Unfortunately, their firstborn, a son, died about an hour after his birth on March 11, 1921. The Sullivans were later blessed with two healthy daughters. In his wife Patrick Sullivan found a continuous source of strength and encouragement.

Top: Sullivan as a World War I soldier. Photographer unknown. Courtesy of the artist's family.
Bottom: "Christ at Twelve," c. 1930. House paint on a tea towel. Courtesy of the artist's family.

Somehow Patrick J. Sullivan became interested in art. As a child living in an orphanage he had sketched what he later recalled everyone thought was meaningless stuff. As an assistant playground manager he tried his hand at painting pictures on make-do supports like cardboard and old window blinds. None of the sketches Sullivan produced as a child or the paintings he created as a young man has come down to us. His two earliest surviving works, "Christ at Twelve" (c. 1930) and "Near Eastern Landscape" (c. 1931), were part of the group of at least four works he is known to have painted in the early 1930's. (These included a self-portrait of the artist in his army uniform and another landscape, both now lost.)

Painted on a tea towel, "Christ at Twelve" may be considered representative of Sullivan's early works. It is the product of an eye already well developed, but it significantly differs from Sullivan's later works. If we did not *know* that he painted it, we would be unable to attribute it to him with certainty. It is copy work. Sullivan's desire to paint had not yet become a desire to make an original statement.

However, the work is not a slavish copy of the model which he chose; it is a detail from a larger work by Hoffman of the same title. Sullivan later wrote to his friend and patron Sidney Janis:

"This painting of Hoffman I always considered effeminate. Anyhow I copied it on a common tea towel with left-overs from house

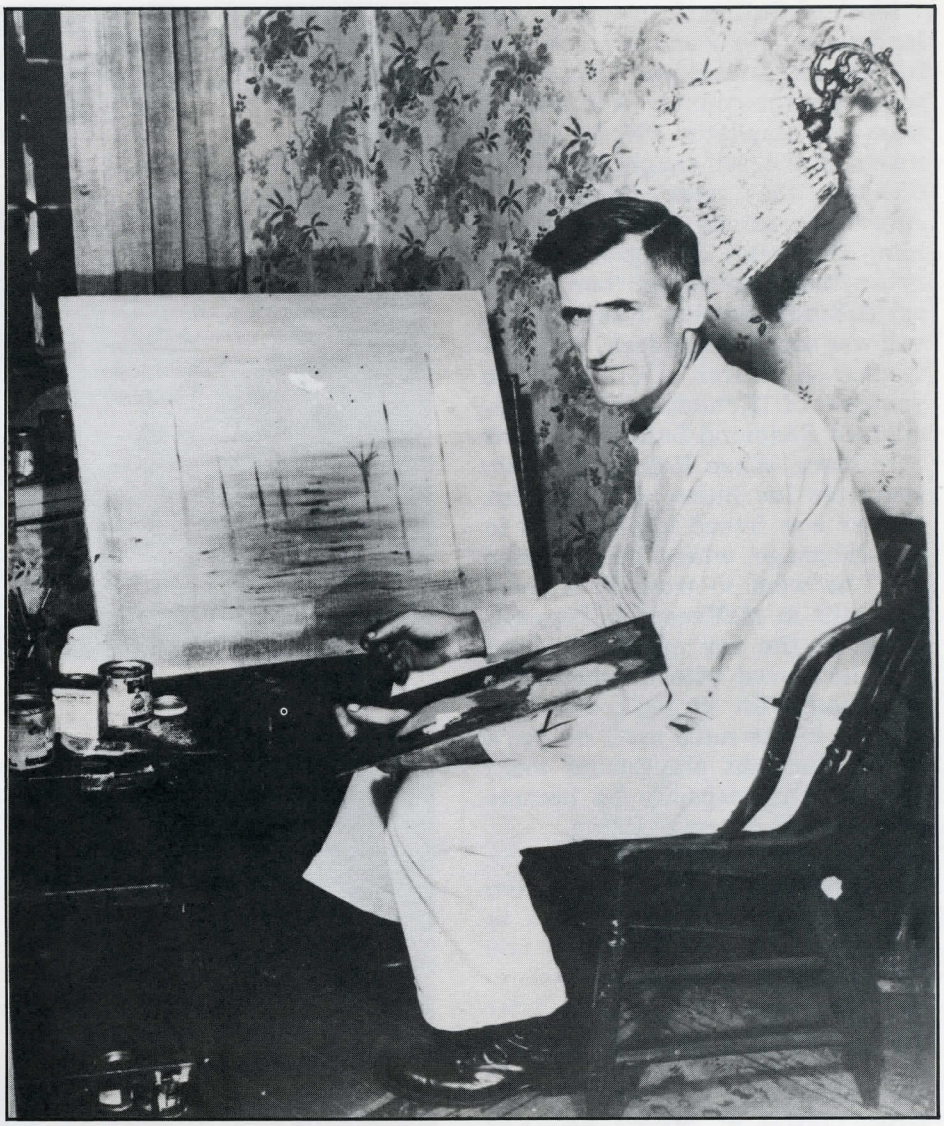
jobs. In my copy I made the nose longer (more like a Hebraic nose) I made the shoulders more rugged looking and I put just a tinge of the 'Adam's apple' in the neck. In short I made a good-looking masculine Christ-child. (I certainly do not like an effeminate-looking Christ.)"

In 1936 Patrick J. Sullivan of 619 Main Street, Wheeling, had few houses to paint, and he turned his brushes to paint his "first all original canvas," "Man's Proscrastinating Pastime." Sullivan's elder daughter, Martha Farley, recalls that he painted this work in an attempt to recreate a vision he had had in a dream. Over and over he asked himself what the vision meant, then he painted.

Upon the completion of "Man's Proscrastinating Pastime," Sullivan wanted to find out if he had any talent as a painter. Opinions were sought from a number of people who "knew" art in Wheeling. Mrs. Sullivan located James W. Morris, then a first-year art student at Ohio State University. Morris, who became one of Sullivan's best friends, later recalled:

"I went to his home one afternoon to see the picture with the idea that I was just going to see the work of another dabbler. I was speechless when I saw the strength and feeling that permeated the canvas . . . Pat asked me if I thought his painting was good enough to enter in Independent Artists' Show at the Grand Central Palace in New York . . . I emphatically told him that he should send his painting to the show. He built a wooden shipping carton and sent the painting to New York."

Not long afterward Sullivan received a letter from art collector Sidney Janis, whose keen eye had spotted "Man's Procrastinating Pastime" at the show. After a further exchange of letters, Janis bought the work and encouraged Sullivan to continue. Largely under the auspices of Sidney Janis, Sullivan's works were given relatively wide currency in the late 1930's and early 1940's. Illustrations of Sullivan's work appeared in *Art News* and the popular magazines *Newsweek* and *Cue*. Furthermore, Sullivan's work appeared in major exhibitions along with the works of major 19th and 20th century painters including Edward Hicks, John Kane, and Andrew Wyeth. In 1942 Sidney Janis devoted a rather long chapter of his book, *They Taught Themselves: American Primitive Painters of the 20th Century*, to Patrick Sullivan and his art. The book remains essential reading for anyone seriously interested in the work of Patrick Sullivan and 20th century American folk art.



Patrick J. Sullivan at work in his Wheeling bedroom-studio. Photographer unknown. Courtesy of the artist's family.

Sadly fortune did not follow fame. For a while, Sullivan had reason to expect that he could make a career of his art. By August of 1940, however, it had become painfully evident that he could neither earn a living as an artist nor rely on house painting to pay his bills. He was deeply in debt. For a short time he and his wife tried to make ends meet by selling washing machines. With the young men being taken into the armed forces, the 47-year-old Sullivan then finally found a job in the fabricating department of Wheeling Steel Corporation's Beech Bottom Plant. This job left him too tired to paint. On October 31, 1941, he left the Beech Bottom Plant for a "better job at the water works," but after the completion of "Tranquillity" later in that year he painted only sporadically.

"Man's Procrastinating Pastime." 1936. Oil on canvas, 22½" x 27½". Courtesy Sidney Janis Gallery, New York.

"Haunts in the Totalitarian Woods," 1939. Oil on canvas, 24¼" x 30¼". The Sidney and Harriet Janis Collection, The Museum of Modern Art, New York.

Sullivan's most productive period of painting lasted only six years. In that six years he is known to have completed 11 works and destroyed another two before their completion. Painting only in his spare time with his laborious technique, Sullivan was unable to produce more than three paintings in a year. The slow rate at which he worked probably kept him from becoming a full-time artist as much as did the art market of the late 1930's and early 1940's, which was hardly ready to receive naive symbolist paintings.

The approach that Sullivan took to his art was that of a craftsman; time meant nothing to him when he was in pursuit of perfection. He

first primed his canvas with two inch house-painting brushes. A photograph taken of him in the bedroom/studio where he worked shows vertical lines drawn on a primed canvas (presumably to indicate the position of trees), but Sullivan usually did little preliminary drawing beyond this.

Newspaper served as Sullivan's palette. The paint that went on the palette was generally house paint in paste form from one pound cans. This was occasionally supplemented by tubes of artists' colors, when lesser quantities of a given color were needed. He preferred earth colors because he thought they were more permanent. To increase the richness and brilliance of his colors, he frequently added egg yolk to his linseed oil.

In sharp contrast to the tightly worked appearance of his paintings, he was very loose and relaxed when he painted. James W. Morris remembers him wiggling paint around and experimenting with it. Sullivan applied paint to the canvas with small "dime store" camel's hair brushes which he used down to the last remaining bristles. Hastening the drying time of the paint with japan dryer, a paint additive, Sullivan built up the paint in layers, creating an embossed effect similar to that of a relief map. Some of the resulting raised areas project as much as a quarter of an inch from the surface of the canvas. Sullivan frequently rubbed selected areas of his paintings lightly with sandpaper to enhance the texture of the picture plane.

The images which Sullivan so

"Tranquillity," 1941. Oil on canvas, 26" x 30⅜". Collection of Dr. and Mrs. Norman F. Laskey, New York. Photograph by eeva-inkeri.

Tranquillity

In these days of nerve-wracking events, it would be well for the artist to wield his brush in the furtherance of a let down in emotional disturbances which are inimical to the welfare of a mighty nation such as ours.

Certainly, if viewed in a logical manner, one is instantly aware that man cannot function to a high degree of efficiency if constantly emotioned by antagonistic occurrences . . . We must be ever at the helm of the emotional ship and guide it safely through troubled waters, viewing everything with a quiet reasonableness that will surely result in nothing less than an exact conclusion.

Artists should assist, therefore, in portraying work that will help keep the nation calm and cool in all its deliberations so that it may have the full use of its prowess to erase from this earth the foul, nauseating thing called, Naziism.

Does it not, then, behoove the artist to portray constructive not destructive work; uplifting not depressing. He should strive for and portray in his work national emotional stability as against emotional upheaval. A wise man, of the oldest civilization on this earth, once said, "A picture tells more than ten thousand words." This is very true and brings to mind the power of the artists' brush. He should be careful in the use of it and help all he can with his powerful weapon to help the nation with every stroke he applys to canvas.

It is my sincere wish, that those who look upon "Tranquillity", will be emotioned the way the artist intended: That it will give them a feeling of tranquillity which is sorely needed in today's emotionally upset world.

—Patrick J. Sullivan

Original manuscript in possession of Sidney Janis

painstakingly created are powerful. Frequently, they are also disturbing. He repeatedly wrote his friend and patron Sidney Janis that he painted to make people think. This is certainly evident in each of the 11 works that Sullivan completed in the years from 1936 through 1941. The first of these, "Man's Procrastinating Pastime," is an excellent example. In it Sullivan addressed himself to the struggle of good and evil in the mind of man. Its statement is expressed in a system of symbolism so complex and original that its message would be beyond our understanding if he had not written a short essay on his intentions.

Four men appear in a dense forest representing the subsconscious mind of man—its trees, beech and chestnuts, symbolizing the fruit mind bears. One man buries another man who looks exactly like himself. He represents mankind "burying the evil part of himself deep in the mind." A tall man with a knife and an ax in his belt and club in his right hand motions with his left arm toward a clearing in the forest. He is the good part of man urging man "to get out of the deep mind—out into the conscious or clear light of day and perform good deeds and hide or bury his evil self that way." His club "symbolizes courage; the ax, will power and the knife, intellect"—qualities the artist felt necessary for a successful life. The short grotesque figure on the left is Sullivan's personification of sin. Sullivan wrote:

"The large head denotes the cunning of sin; the red sleeves are for passion; the black collar and pale tie for death and ruin, the cream waist for the apparent ease one has while in sin; the blue trousers for the allure of sin. The bony hands, jointless fingers and the large cumbersome feet are what I call paradoxical hands and feet. If one is willing, sin may easily catch up and hold with little or no trouble. However, if one is not willing, sin with bony hands and jointless fingers and large pedal extremities couldn't catch up with a person in a thousand years of moons."

The fallen tree and broken branches represent sins. The beech trees are rotten — bad mind, but even the broken branch on one of them is still green—"there's good in any broken life." The three dark trees (chestnuts) stand ready to bear the fruit of man's good deeds. According to Sullivan: "Man is always procrastinating trying to hide his evil self instead of courageously showing his good part and performing good deeds — hence the title "Man's Procrastinating Pastime."

Sullivan's coloring is gloomy and the imagery grim, yet the work is relatively optimistic. It depicts the evil in man, but shows there is hope for man if he will show his good part by performing good deeds. The tone of "Man's Procrastinating Pastime" clearly reflects Sullivan's devout Roman Catholicism, yet neither it nor the majority of Sullivan's other works can be considered religious art. Most of Sullivan's works do have significant religious overtones, but this merely reflects Sullivan's personal emphasis on Christian morality. Sullivan's elder daughter, Martha, recalls that when the wife of one of his friends made the comment that he was a painter of religious art Sullivan promptly pointed out that not all of his paintings were religious. Indeed, some of his works have no identifiable religious overtones whatsoever. These chiefly consist of themes dealing with the events of the day.

"An Historical Event" (1937), his second completed work, represents the heart of Edward VIII at the time of his 1936 abdication to marry the American divorcee, Mrs. Wallis Simpson. In it Edward tends Wally Simpson as a rose in the garden of his heart, while a figure of cupid directs a British lion bearing the British flag and the crown on his back off the canvas.

In "Haunts in the Totalitarian Woods" (1939), which was painted 20 months before the signing of the Triple Axis pact, Sullivan shows Hirohito, Hitler, and Mussolini (from left to right) rampaging through the totalitarian woods of Europe and Asia. According to Sullivan:

"They have arrived at the end of the (their) woods, as it were, and beyond it looks blackish and uncertain. Suddenly three spectres appear before them, awesome spectres attired in the authoritative colors of their respective governments. They look, they halt. They are fearful. These mad men wait to pull their swords out, but they

"A Hunting He Would Go," 1940. Oil on canvas, 26¼" x 36⅛". Collection, The Museum of Modern Art, New York.

"Solitude," 1938. Oil on canvas, 20¾" x 24". Courtesy, Sidney Janis Gallery, New York.

"Trinity," 1947. Oil on canvas, 18¼" x 22⅜". Gift of Mrs. Hugh B. Scott, Collection Oglebay Institute-Mansion Museum.

don't—they are really scared. They see paths to get to Britain and France. They see a hurdle (mound) to get over before they can get to the U. S. . . . On looking further they see that Britain, France and the U. S. Chamberlain, Daladier and Roosevelt seem to come from the same cloud . . . For the time, at least, these mad men have been halted. Thru' appeasement, it is true, but mostly thru' fear of the combined forces of democracy."

Sullivan painted "Tranquillity" (1941) as his contribution to help calm the United States in the face of the inevitable clash with the Axis powers. Patrick Sullivan's sense of timing was incredible; he sent the completed work to Sidney Janis on December 1, 1941, one week before Pearl Harbor. It is distinct from the other works painted during his six most productive years in two ways. Firstly, Sullivan made virtually no use of symbolism in "Tranquillity"; his intent was not to make people think, but to calm them. Secondly, "Tranquillity" contains the only anamorphic detail observed in his art. Sullivan pointed out this optical illusion to Sidney Janis: "After you have looked at Tranquillity awhile turn it to your right and look at it sidewise. You will notice the mountains form a sleeping figure. The figure is really resting in a calm, peaceful manner."

The imagery of "Tranquillity" is bold and its color pleasing. It does have something of the hypnotically soothing effect that Sullivan intended. However, it is not as bright today as it must have been when it was freshly painted. The varnish has beaded up into little brown splotches which mute the bright colors and give the entire painting a softer appearance than it originally had. (The white flecks seen on the painting are areas where paint has fallen away—probably at fault is Sullivan's heavy use of japan dryer.)

"A-Hunting He Would Go" (1940), Sullivan's only genre scene, shows a man "pleading with his girl not to be angry because he is going hunting," while his buddy and hunting dog wait anxiously.

Above: "The Fourth Dimension," 1938. Oil on canvas, 24¼" x 30¼". The Sidney and Harriet Janis Collection. The Museum of Modern Art, New York.
Below: "Tranquillity," 1941. Oil on canvas, 26" x 30⅜". Collection, Dr. and Mrs. Norman F. Laskey, New York.

Of the man and his girl friend Sullivan wrote: "Their meeting place denotes the moral qualities of the lovers. They meet, not in some secluded place, but right at the crossroad paths. The tree between them denotes the obstacle that, womanlike, all women place between her and her loved one in an argument."

Sullivan did not consider this painting one of his more serious works. On March 25, 1941, he wrote Sidney Janis: "I am surprised about 'A-Hunting' being well-received in member room showing. Of course, as I thought all along, something in a light vein appeals to them mostly. It's all very strange to me—I suppose most people emote thru' the medium of the flesh rather than the intellect. Anyway they are interested and that is something."

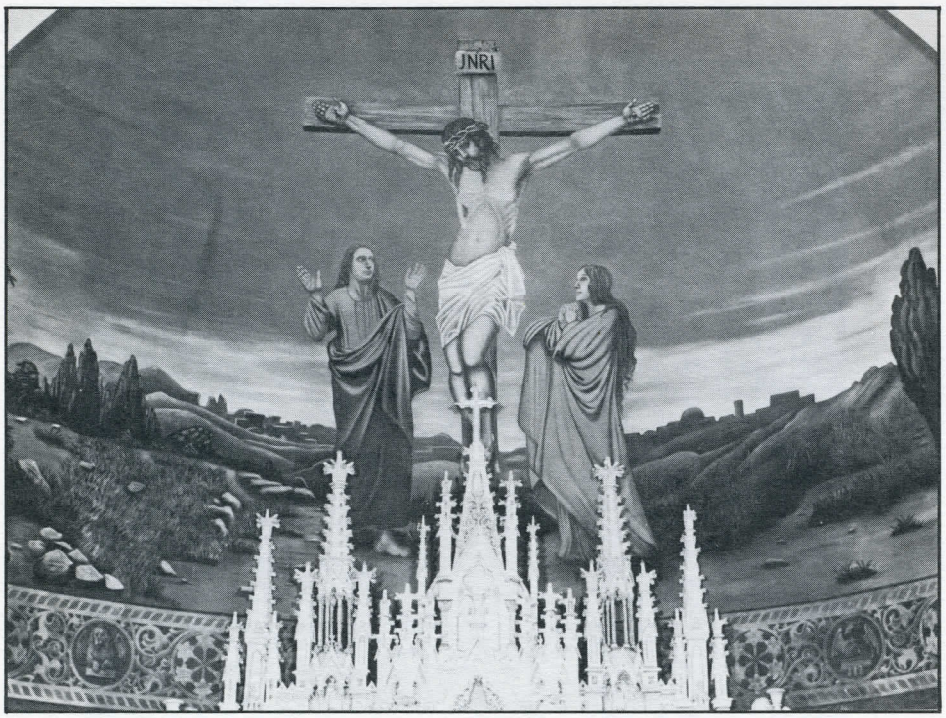
The rest of the paintings created by Sullivan in his six most productive years have religious overtones which range from mild to strong. The titles of his missing works for which no illustrations could be found indicate this—"Why Should the Spirit of Mortals Be Proud?" and "Cathedral." A political work which he destroyed in a rage when Ethiopia fell to Mussolini's forces was to have been called "Will the Spirit of Solomon or Caesar Prevail?"

Sullivan as a Christian did not separate his faith and its teachings from his world view. In "A Rendezvous with the Soul," "The Fourth Dimension," and "Solitude" he affirmed his belief in the immortality of the soul. But only "Solitude" is incontestably Christian in its viewpoint. In "A Rendezvous with the Soul" he shows an old man walking toward the figure of his soul in an autumn forest. A green tree branch above the soul represents rebirth. Certainly this painting stems from Sullivan's faith, but since even the ancient Egyptians painted their god Osiris green to symbolize rebirth it cannot be said that this work is uniquely Christian in message.

"The Fourth Dimension," considered by many to be Sullivan's most striking painting, is itself devoid of Christian symbolism although more than one viewer has connected the red hourglass at the center with the Holy Grail. The hourglass represents time, which is the fourth dimension, and the rays emanating from it represent the first three: height, width, and depth. The message, which is not in strict accord with Christian theology, is that while man lives he is a finite creature chained to earth, when he dies the chain is broken and his spirit becomes infinite. However, Sullivan's thinking in this work did stem from Christian belief, for in describing the spirit's infinity in his theme he quoted the Bible: "End there is none and there never was a beginning." (Interestingly, Sullivan destroyed an earlier version of "The Fourth Dimension" with brightly colored planets, which he had worked on for months, because it didn't please him. James Morris recalls that he painted the surviving version in half the time.)

There is absolutely no question that "Solitude" (1938) is an expression of Christian belief. It *is* a religious work. Sullivan told his daughter, Martha, that it represented "Christ alone in the physical world." A large green tree with a cross formed by lighter foliage dominates the landscape. In the background is Golgotha. The green tree symbolizes the resurrection of Christ. On either side of the tree are fallen trees representing the two thieves. From the fallen tree on the right, the traditional position of the thief who was saved, springs a new tree — Sullivan's way of showing the hope of rebirth and salvation that the resurrection of Christ brought to mankind.

"Crucifixion," 1942. Mural, Sacred Heart Church, Wheeling. Photograph by Mr. Edward Martin, Gruber Photography.



Embittered by his inability to make a living as an artist, Sullivan painted only five major works during the last 25 years of his life. Three of his last five major works are properly considered religious art. He painted the first, a mural depicting the Crucifixion, in the apse of Sacred Heart Church in North Wheeling in the fall of 1942. Sullivan did not consider this to be an original work for he overpainted (or in his words, "rebuilt") an existing mural. Although he carefully followed the drawing of the original, he remade the work in his own distinctive style—simplifying, sharpening and intensifying all of the details. Sullivan "embossed" the figures of St. John, the Virgin Mary, and the dead Christ. To symbolize the purity of the Virgin he tried to make her look younger because he felt that sin aged. He darkened the sky because he felt that the existing bright sky was an inappropriate background for the Crucifixion.

Sullivan, then employed as a watchman at Continental Roll & Foundry, worked every evening for a month to complete the overpainting. Perhaps the idea that the work was being done in the service of God and the desire to complete it as soon as possible so that the scaffolding could be removed from the sanctuary inspired Sullivan to work at what was for him a fast pace.

After an interval of five years Sullivan painted "Trinity" (1947). According to his friend Harry Holbert, Sullivan tried to effect a mysteriousness in color and composition which would be in keeping with the

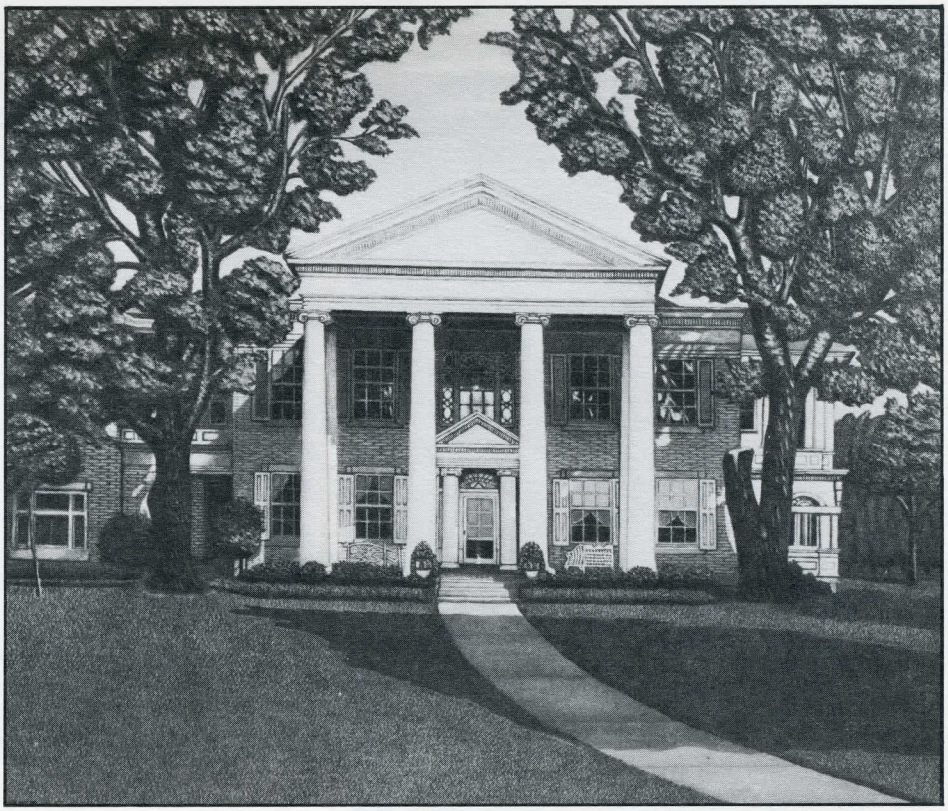
mystery of the Trinity. Sullivan explained his visionary landscape:

"The three mountainous rocks in the distance, the three trees in front of the rocks and the three streams represent the Trinity. The streams are the ever active creative force. Though the creative force is ever active, yet, there is a reservoir of power (reservoir in center foreground) in reserve at all times—inexhaustible. Trees and other growth represent the spiritual force permeating the universe."

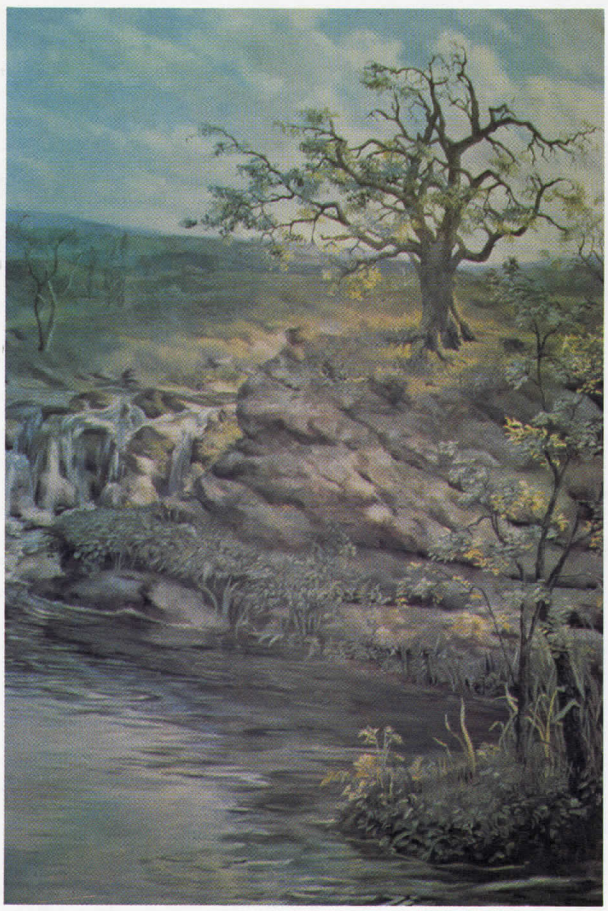
In 1950 Sullivan was commissioned to paint "The Mansion Museum." Since it was intended as a portrait and he worked from a photograph, it contains none of the symbolism that we associate with his style. In 1959 he painted his version of the New Jerusalem in "The Gates of Hell Shall Not Prevail." Unfortunately he left no written record of his intent, but the recollections of his daughter Martha and careful study indicate that much of its imagery is freely adapted from Revelation. In the sky light comes from a representation of the Trinity which is seated in a cloud—Sullivan's version of the great white throne. A man holding a Bible is led by a priest to a grassy plain surrounded by mountains — the new city of Jerusalem. Satan leads a Russian bear representing atheism off the canvas.

In this painting Sullivan confidently expressed his faith in the eventual triumph of Christ in the modern world. It was his last expression of faith in paint, but by no means his last expression of faith. Although Sullivan was to paint only one more canvas—a landscape for his wife (begun in 1964, it contains no symbolism), he wrote essays on religion and the nature of faith. At his death on August 31, 1967, the landscape remained unfinished. In accordance with his request, his wife destroyed his essays. Patrick J. Sullivan's last essays will forever remain a mystery, but his paintings add a spiritually rich and varied dimension to America's artistic heritage and will continue to speak to future generations.

"The Gates of Hell Shall Not Prevail," 1959. Oil on canvas, 22¼" x 26⅜". Courtesy of the artist's family.



"The Mansion Museum," 1950. Oil on canvas, 26⅛" x 30". Collection, Oglebay Institute-Mansion Museum.



Left: Detail of painting by Dorothy Decker, Vienna Baptist Church near Parkersburg. Photograph by Jack Welch.
Above: Painting by Dorothy Decker, Vienna Baptist Church. Photograph by Rick Lee.

A Heritage of Regional Landscapes: Appalachian Baptistry Paintings

By Jack Welch

Throughout Appalachia, and in West Virginia especially, one finds a unique form of landscape painting which has both regional and spiritual dimensions. These paintings decorate the wall space above the large baptistry pools in those church buildings in which the ancient ritual of baptism by immersion is practiced. Baptistries have been the source of artistic expression for many centuries. The one at the cathedral in Florence, Italy, for example, dating from the fifth century and containing originally a pool for immersion, is decorated with beautiful bronze doors, white and green marble, and intricate interior mosaics. The most ancient excavated Christian church building is located at Dura-Europos in Syria and dates from the year 240. This church ruin contains an immersion-type baptistry, and although there were no other paintings in the church building, the walls above and around the baptistry were, like those in Appalachian church buildings, painted with scenes.

Opposite: Painting by Richard Liming, Wileyville Church of Christ. Photograph by Jack Welch.

Appalachian baptistry paintings are both similar to and different from those of the Dura-Europos church. Both have no paintings anywhere other than around the baptistry, both have immersion as the means of baptism, and both are indicating through art something about the importance of baptism in the Christian experience. The Appalachian paintings differ, though, in some ways. There are no people ever in the Appalachian landscapes, and this difference is probably attributable to the Reformation negative reaction to the many images in the Roman Catholic Church. Statues of people, paintings of people, and carvings of people are even now not used in these churches, not even in the baptistry scenes. Secondly, the Syrian church depicted the good shepherd, some miracles of Christ, and the women going to Christ's tomb whereas the Appalachian paintings mostly depict landscapes of the region, although there are some instances of mountains that look like the Rockies or of mountains that are fantastical creations.

It is here, in these Appalachian scenes, that one can begin a discussion of the meaning and significance of these paintings, because what they offer to even a casual observer is a series of views of the Appalachian countryside. What exactly do they reveal about the Appalachian region, and what, in particular, do they reveal about West Virginia?

One can see specifically some of the insights of these landscapes by looking at the painting in the Wileyville Church of Christ in Wetzel County. This is a primitive painting (that is, one done by a person who has had little or no formal art training), and it is a painting of vivid colors. Basically the painting celebrates the vitality of the Appalachian scene: the swift-flowing waters, the vivid autumn colors, and (at the right) an enticing country road. The artist was Richard Liming of Follansbee, Brooke County, who did the painting in return for carpentry work that some men in the congregation had done for him. The yellow forsythia bush near the stream is a seasonal anachronism, but the color and the joy of the plant's spring renewal no doubt conveyed emotions that the artist wanted in his painting.

Appalachia in springtime can be found in the two baptistry paintings by Dorothy Horn Decker in Parkersburg. The paintings hang

in the Emmanuel Baptist Church and in the Vienna Baptist Church. They both show a sun-streaked landscape with delicately leaved trees that are just beginning their season's growth. The scenes are both very inviting, calling one to step out into the freshness of Appalachia and hike across the land. There are rounded hills in the distance that remind one of the hills that surround the Ohio Valley, just back from the deep valley that the river has cut. The sky, too, is worth noting because although there is some sunshine in both these pictures, there are also high, cumulus clouds, exactly the kind that typifies the Appalachian sky in which we have a very high rainfall (averaging about 39 inches per year in Wood County and 53 inches per year in Tucker County).

Trees, too, are vital in these landscapes, and in these two paintings there are trees that cover the distant hills and trees scattered throughout the closer meadows. However, there are prominent trees near the streams in both Decker paintings, trees that are very strong, heavy, and permanent, as one is likely to find here in West Virginia. These trees, one a sycamore, the other possibly an oak, add a protective tone to the scenes. Another subtle addition to these paintings is a fish that is swimming in the fast-moving stream below the sycamore in the Emmanuel Baptist Church painting. It's a convincing fish, one that seems about to dart on down the stream out of the visitors' vision. The fish, apart from any spiritual or symbolic measure, is saying that this water is life-supporting and fresh, certainly a goal for all the streams in the region. In leaving these paintings by Decker, one admires the delicate shading, the rich nuance of color, and the flickering quality of the sunlight in the paintings. If these are not masterpieces by this artist, they are very close to it.

Painting by Dorothy Decker, Emmanuel Baptist Church, Parkersburg. Photograph by Rick Lee.

In an interview concerning these paintings, Mrs. Decker indicated that she wanted something natural and sunny and that she had intended a West Virginia scene, although she did not copy either scene from a particular location. She also related that she had graduated as an art major from Meredith College in North Carolina and that she teaches in her own art studio in Parkersburg. According to the church records, she was paid $500 in 1969 by the adult Bible class at the Vienna Baptist Church for that painting. About two years later she was approached to paint the landscape for the Emmanuel Baptist Church. There is a sign at the back of that church building indicating the source of funds for the painting: "In Loving Memory of Mr. William E. Spiker and Mr. & Mrs. S. F. Fleming, The Baptistry Painting is given by a Friend of William Spiker and Russell J. Fleming."

A baptistry painting that takes on a somewhat exotic flavor is found in the Church of Christ at Hundred, Wetzel County. Here the sky reflects something of the natural way color is reflected on an overcast day, but the river grass looks like an oriental or African river, not unlike some conceptions of the Nile in which Moses was hidden. One is almost reminded a little of the exotic paintings of the primitive French painter, Henri Rousseau, whose tigers and dark-skinned people emerging from the tall river grass are familiar to students of 19th century art. The distant mountains in this painting do not seem Appalachian either, since they are less rounded than ours and seem to have no trees on them. The sky, however, has familiar, billowing clouds. One structural element worth noting is that the doors by which one may enter the baptistry have also been painted into the scene. Although the exact identity of the artist of this painting has not yet been determined, the date for this painting is reckoned at being in the 1930's, when the baptistry itself was added to the building in a general remodeling project.

The baptistry landscape at the Madigan Avenue Church of Christ in Morgantown provides a strong sense of the shape of the Appalachian landscape. Here hills come down to the stream which snakes through them, and in the distance one sees the haze that gives the rounded hills there a smoky appearance. Comparing this painting with the landscape of the Cranberry Glades, one sees that the land is in fact shaped exactly as the baptistry painting indicated, and that the sloping hills in the distance have the subtle, blue haze hanging over them, giving them an aura of mystery.

In Chester, Hancock County, at the Church of Christ, one finds a landscape that is both Appalachian and fantastical. For example, the water in its breadth and color is much like the Ohio River which runs just a few blocks from the building. The sky, too, has that predominantly cloudy appearance that is so frequent in the region and in the paintings. However, the sharp mountains in the left background give the scene an appearance reminiscent of Nordic mythology. Certainly there is no place in Appalachia where one may find these glacier-like mountains, but there is on the right a large, rounded mound with trees and bushes of various sorts sprouting up. Some have seen this scene as something from a fantasy story with mythological creatures inhabiting the far mountains, but at least one person has noted that the large central mound is not unlike an old gob pile left by some long-abandoned coal mine. It could just as easily be considered an ancient mound of some of the Ohio Valley's prehistoric peoples.

This painting in Chester was completed in two distinct stages. Originally only the back wall was painted, but when the blank right side of the baptistry wall was observed by those people sitting on the left side of the building, they requested that the church elders bring the painter back to continue the painting around the corner. This painting was the second that had been created in this building. The first was painted in about 1953, then was covered over (but is still partly intact) when the building was expanded and remodeled.

The painting with the most surprising technique is found in Pine Grove in Wetzel County. The overlapping quality of blues on blues and greens on greens in this painting brings to mind the paint-by-number technique. The artist, E. R. Kerr, a member of the congregation, in fact in 1961 did take some paint-by-number scenes which he had done to the elders and asked them to choose the one that they liked best for a baptistry painting. When the decision was made, he took the chosen, small painting to the baptistry, etched the scene 15 feet tall in chalk, then began applying the oil paints directly on the plaster. The job took him three months, but after nearly 20 years the painting is in almost perfect condition with no signs at all of deterioration. Of course, this scene is not Appalachian, reflecting some western Utah or Idaho. But the cloudy skies and the lack of people as well as the presence of water are similar to other baptistry paintings of the region.

A painting of that part of Appalachia where the mountains are deep and misty can be found at the Church of Christ in Cameron, Marshall County. Here the mountains are surrounding a lake, providing a painting of enclosed tranquillity. The congregation is merely looking out into the scene, as though from a mountainside. The colors, too, being predominantly green and blue, are very restful. The painting was done on two large pieces of plywood by Roy Burkett, Jr., of Limestone, West Virginia.

A painting in marked contrast to the peaceful Cameron painting is in the Mill Creek Baptist Church near Ripley in Jackson County. This painting by Frances Reed has the troubled blue of a storm, and it seems, when looking at it from a pew in the church building, to be reflecting a blue light, although it is lit with regular, untinted lights. The painting has the most troubled of cloudy skies, as though a storm were brewing. The trees surrounding the water are gnarled and swirling, as though also being stirred by a troubling force. This painting exhibits an impasto technique in which paint is, especially in the rocks of the foreground, piled onto the masonite. The effect of this thick paint is to deepen the rocks and trees themselves, making them even more rough than the colors would indicate.

A surprising development in baptistry decoration can be found at the Church of Christ in Ripley, which, because it used instrumental music in worship, is usually classified as a Christian Church. The congregation placed a vinyl wallpaper mural on the baptistry wall, but one of the members, Betty Turley, decided to touch up the wallpaper and expand the scene. One can see the extent of her work by examining the same mural which was used in the North End Church of Christ in Parkersburg. The existing trees were darkened by Ms. Turley, and the mountains and water were expanded to the left so that the scene covers the entire area behind the baptistry itself. This expanded portion of the painting includes some clouds, some rounded hills, and some meadows with forests at their edge, an altogether Appalachian scene. Wallpaper murals were found in church buildings in the West Virginia communities of Whitehall, Weirton, and Dunbar.

A completely realistic painting with a large waterfall motif can be found at the Church of Christ near Scott Depot, a few miles west of Charleston. The space above the baptistry here extends all the way to the ceiling, a height of about 20

feet. The artist chose to place a waterfall in the distance, and then have the water flow forward to the baptistry scene itself. In 1974 Duane Bush, a teacher at Hurricane High School and a member of the Baptist Church, spent several weeks painting this scene on the plaster wall. He had submitted several sketches to the congregation, and after one had been chosen, he commenced the painting, doing it in his spare time. Records show that he received $160 for his work. The amount paid, though, says nothing about the enjoyment that the congregation receives from the painting. All seem to love it, and the painting is known and liked by many in the community.

The paintings themselves all must be accessible and capable of being contemplated by the congregations. If they are offensive in some way, they will not be tolerated. In the churches where communion is taken only once a month, the paintings are usually kept covered but opened on the Sunday of the communion service, indicating something of the assumed spiritual worth of the paintings.

Although these landscapes are interesting to anyone concerned with the way that Appalachia is perceived by its artists, there is a spiritual aspect of these paintings that cannot be ignored if one wants to understand them in some depth. Why, for example, have churches chosen only the baptistry to adorn, leaving in most cases the remainder of the building bare? The baptistry in these buildings is located just behind the pulpit, and the area receives the entire attention of the congregation. If it is a blank space, it calls attention to itself merely because nothing is there. People naturally want to fill that space, and while some merely hang a curtain over the space, others have chosen to paint a picture there.

Further considering that these paintings are above the large immersian pools, one asks how that rite is involved? Christian baptism in these churches is a rite for adults that must be chosen (infants are not baptized), and it is a rite that accomplishes several spiritual ends. Baptism re-enacts the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ as well as washing away one's sins so that the baptized person might rise to "walk in the newness of life" (Romans 6:1-4). Finally, baptism is the rite whereby one receives "the gift of the holy spirit" (Acts 2:38), so that for most of these churches, baptism is a religious activity of supreme importance. It is only natural, then, that it be given some artistic expression.

A third reason for the decoration of the baptistry lies in the fact that many Appalachian baptisms previously took place in streams near the church buildings where the preaching and worship took place. If one has seen some of these baptisms, with the congregation gathered around a natural pool at a swift-flowing stream, perhaps singing hymns while the sun plays lightly on the trees and grasses, then one knows something of the aesthetic environment that has surrounded the baptism of thousands in the region. Some have wanted to re-capture this aesthetic of the outdoors by bringing the outdoors inside through the medium of painting.

Closely connected with this impulse to re-create the outdoors is the controversy that existed in some churches in this century when people began to build baptistries indoors. Some preachers believed that baptism was valid only if it was done in running water. Jesus

Left: Chester Church of Christ, Hancock County. Photograph by Jack Welch.
Center: Emmanuel Baptist Church, Parkersburg. Photograph by Rick Lee.
Right: Vienna Baptist Church, near Parkersburg. Photograph by Rick Lee.

himself had been baptised in Jordan, which was a free-running stream, and his disciples should do no less, the argument went. The paintings thus formed a little bridge in this controversy, providing at least a semblance of the desired free-running waters.

One of the interesting religious aspects of the paintings is that there are very subtle religious symbols within the naturalistic West Virginia landscapes. For example, the fish in the painting of the Emmanuel Baptist Church reminds one that the fish was an ancient Christian symbol and that the spelling of fish in Greek was an anagram which spelled out "Jesus Christ Son of God Savior." The oak tree on the hill above the pool in the Vienna Baptist Church subtly reminds one of the cross of Calvary, with its heavy limbs outstretched.

Even more intriguing are the crossed trees in several of the paintings. The Wileyville painting has crossed birch trees on the left while the Morgantown painting has crossed birch trees on the right. The painting at the Church of Christ in Cameron also has crossed pine trees on the right.

These symbols indicate the religious quality of the paintings that slips in (perhaps even subconsciously), and makes statements about the Christian experience to the viewers of the paintings. These symbols in their subtlety do not violate any doctrinal taboos, but the symbols do honor the Christ and his death, without which no Christian religion would be possible.

Perhaps the deepest religious notion that is offered in the paintings is the idea that salvation may be obtained here and now—not heaven now, of course, but salvation from sins and incorporation into the body of Christ, the church. One does not have to journey to Jordan, the paintings are saying, and one does not have to go beyond the region in which one lives. Salvation is here and now in Appalachia. The living waters which support the abundant animal and vegetable life here can also cleanse one of his sins. Furthermore, the paintings without exception provide an exhilarating view of the water in which the viewer almost yearns to wade or dip or plunge. One thinks of the refrain of that old baptismal hymn: "And sinners plunged beneath that flood lose all their guilty stains."

The baptistry paintings, then, serve to proclaim the universal message of the Christian religion. But the means of the message is Appalachian, West Virginian, or even as local as the very neighborhood of the church building itself. The paintings link the region to the most ancient of Christian traditions, but they also provide a new view of that tradition by incorporating into it the beauties of the Appalachian landscape.

Other outstanding baptistry paintings can be found at the Church of Christ in Pennsboro, the Church of Christ in Wellsburg, the Huntington Avenue Church of Christ in Morgantown, the Lynn Street Church of Christ in Parkersburg, and the Grand Central Avenue Church of Christ in Vienna.

Professor Welch is planning to discuss these paintings and any others that he can document in a forthcoming book. If any of GOLDENSEAL's readers know of such paintings, they may inform Professor Welch by calling or writing to GOLDENSEAL.

Painting by Frances Reed, Mill Creek Baptist Church, Jackson County. Photograph by Rick Lee.

Frances Reed and the Mill Creek Baptistry Painting

Born in 1904, Frances Reed did not begin painting until tragedy darkened her life. Her oldest daughter died at age 24 on the occasion of the birth of her first child. Because Mrs. Reed was close to this daughter, she entered a period of depression. She continued, however, to work hard in and around her house and farm on Frozen Camp Creek Road (near Gay, Jackson County). One day while housecleaning she passed her daughter's suit that was hanging up. She remembers a faint odor of cloth that day and then a voice which said, "You paint." She went immediately and concocted some painting utensils of rags, cotton, iodine, animal medicine, and other things. She painted that day and has been painting regularly ever since.

Her work comes exclusively from her inward conceptions; she never looks at models or scenes. In fact, she thinks that the truest kind of painting is this kind of expressionistic conception. Through the years she has painted animals, people, flowers, and woodland scenes, one of the best of the latter being in her own kitchen, painted directly on the wall.

When the Mill Creek Baptist Church, which she and her husband Walter attend, built a new building, Mrs. Reed wanted very much to create a baptistry painting but she said nothing, not wishing to push herself forward. The congregation wanted a painting, though, and one day asked her to do them a "favor" and provide the church building with a painting. As a result of a vision, she had already conceived how the painting would look.

The creation of the painting in 1972 was a memorable day in her life. She assembled a huge piece of masonite (about six feet by ten), all the acrylic paints she needed, and her brushes. She knew what she wanted to create, and she began painting with inspired zeal. She had her husband there to help, and she painted with her brushes and with her hands as well. Mrs. Reed recalls that she "painted like wildfire," and by the end of that day, her painting was finished.

Mrs. Reed sees this painting as her inward conception of the Jordan River, and "the trees are thirsty like people for salvation." The tone of the painting she describes as "peace and contentment and serenity." When asked about why there were no people in the painting, she said that she thought they would detract from the message of the minister.

Although Mrs. Reed has done many paintings and has exhibited in the region, the baptistry painting is certainly one of her most original conceptions and is probably her best work.

"The Jackson Mystery"
Dr. I.C. White and Mannington's First Oil Well

By Arthur C. Prichard

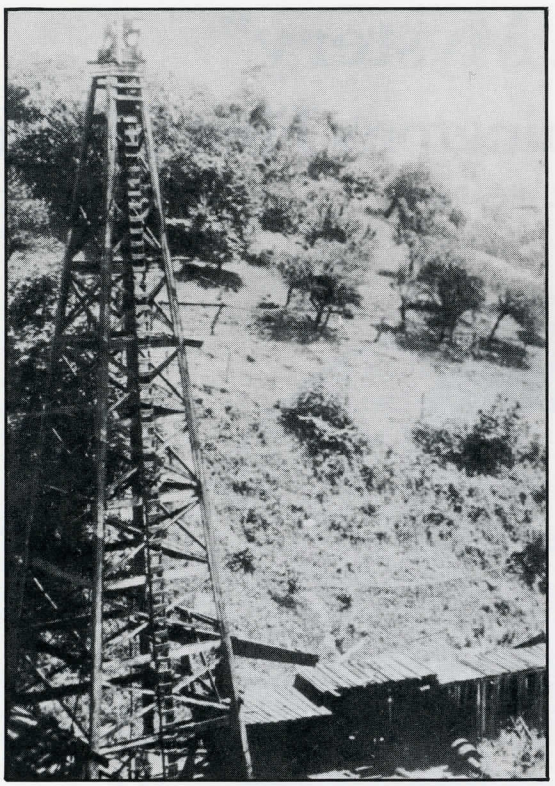
Dr. Israel Charles White. Engraving by J. R. Rice & Sons, Philadelphia; courtesy West Virginia Collection.

Excitement swept through Mannington District in 1889 when on the Fleming Hamilton farm, a half mile south of Mannington, drilling for oil began. In an area where the main occupations were farming, lumbering, tanning hides, and storekeeping, there was elated talk that a new industry was about to be born—the oil business, which would bring jobs, people, and perhaps much money.

However, two things moderated the excitement. First, there weren't any existing oil wells within 20 miles. In the second place, practical oil men, those who had learned the business from working in the western Pennsylvania oil fields, declared Mannington was too far west of oil territory. Following the successful drilling of a shallow well near Titusville, Pennsylvania, in 1859, oil deposits had been discovered by adventurous drillers moving southward. Judging from where oil had been found at Mount Morris, Pennsylvania, just north of the state line, many oil men thought the oil belt, if it continued into West Virginia, would be considerably east of Mannington.

Yet Dr. I. C. White, geologist at West Virginia University, said the geological structure was such that he was convinced the belt swung to the southwest from Mount Morris and passed under Mannington.

Many oil operators, or, as Dr. White referred to them, the "oil fraternity," held geologists in low repute. Some oil people declared, "Geology has never filled an oil tank." Another said if he wanted to make sure of a dry hole, he would



Left: The Hamilton No. 1. Known as the "Jackson Mystery" because of tight security surrounding its drilling, the T. M. Jackson and Company well on the Fleming Hamilton farm was the first in the Mannington field. Photographer unknown, courtesy Claud Kendall.
Right: Arthur L. Prichard, the author's father, was a partner of Dr. White in early oil ventures in Mannington. Photographer unknown, courtesy Mrs. Harold D. Stark.

employ a geologist to select the site.

But persisting, Dr. White in the winter of 1888-89 came to Mannington, seeking financial backing for the drilling of one or more wells to test his theory regarding the location of oil and gas. He interested my father, A. L. Prichard, in the project. I. C. White was no stranger to our family, as he and Dad's older brother, Charles Albert "Bert" Prichard, were schoolmates at West Virginia University from 1867 to 1869, beginning years for the University. Father, a cousin of his, A. W. "Ab" Prichard, also of Mannington, and Clarence Smith, a Fairmont friend of Father, joined Dr. White and T. M. Jackson to form T. M. Jackson and Company. Mr. Jackson, a professor of civil engineering at the University, was chosen president of the company, Dr. White became its treasurer, and Dad the secretary. Due to Father's position in the organization, he and White exchanged many letters during the geologist's years of activity in the Mannington oil field. Dr. White's correspondence, at least the messages he received, are in the West Virginia University Library archives, and give considerable information about the opening years of the Mannington oil and gas ventures.

Years of study and observance had preceded Israel Charles White's formulating a theory about locating oil and gas accumulations. Born November 1, 1848, on a farm in western Monongalia County, then part of Virginia, he had been reared there by intensely Methodist parents, Michael and Mary Ann Russell White. As a youth he had been a keen observer of his natural surroundings. Studying at West Virginia University, he earned a B. A. and an M. A. there, and another masters degree at Columbia University in the 1870's. Afterwards he received a Ph. D. from the University of Arkansas. He went to work as a geologist on the Second Geological Survey in Pennsylvania in 1875, and was associated with the Survey for nine years. In addition, he became a professor of geology at West Virginia University.

Working on the Pennsylvania Survey, White received training which led him to accept and employ a structure theory regarding the location of natural gas and petroleum (then often called rock oil).

Dr. White wrote that Professor Edward Orton of Ohio had expressed well the structure theory: "Relief or structure is the essential element in the accumulation of large quantities of either oil or gas, for if the rocks lie nearly horizontal over a wide area we find, when we bore through them, 'A little oil, a little gas, a little water, a little of everything, and not much of anything;' while if the rock reservoirs be tilted considerably, so that the small quantities of oil, gas, and water in all sedimentary beds can rearrange themselves within the rocks in the order of their specific gravities, then and then only can commercial quantities of each accumulate, provided the reservoir and cover are good."

In other words, gas, oil, and water would naturally arrange themselves according to weight, if given

the chance. In a tilted sedimentary rock formation, gas would rise to the top, oil would be a little lower, and water, being the heaviest, would settle to the bottom.

Believing firmly in his structure theory, Dr. White received financial backing from a group of people, and from 1884 to 1886 leased a half-million acres in Monongalia, Marion, Wetzel, Marshall, Tyler, Pleasants, Doddridge, Harrison, Ritchie, Wood, and Wirt counties. Many of the investors were Pennsylvania politicians. When it became clear the drilling wouldn't be in their state, the Pennsylvanians withdrew their support, and the leases had to be dropped for lack of money to renew them. It was exceedingly unfortunate for all concerned, as the area leased included the major oil and gas fields of a later time.

When early in 1889 T. M. Jackson and Company began leasing land in and near Mannington, rumors spread through the area. Initially the organization had the advantage of two local people, "Ab" Prichard and Father, seeking leases. However, it wasn't long until other people, some from Mannington, began competing for desirable sites, with the results that the price rose and leases were more difficult to secure.

As work at the Hamilton well proceeded, an activity that became customary in unproven oil fields began—that of spying, scouting, or rooting out information about the well's progress. Watchers and visitors appeared on the Hamilton farm. The drillers and tool dressers employed on the well were questioned, both on the job and in town after working hours. As the drilling went deeper, guards were placed at the well, to keep people at a distance. Whether it was done at the first well is uncertain, but on one or more of the later wells the lower portion of the rig was boarded up, to keep spying eyes from having a good look at the work.

According to the *Mannington Times*, a weekly newspaper, "Billy the Weasel," a Standard Oil Company scout, watched one of the Jackson wells, using field glasses. He twitted my father about the progress being made with the well, which the company thought was a secret. Saloons were good places to get off-duty oil workers talking. At times a few drinks would loosen tongues to the point valuable information was devulged.

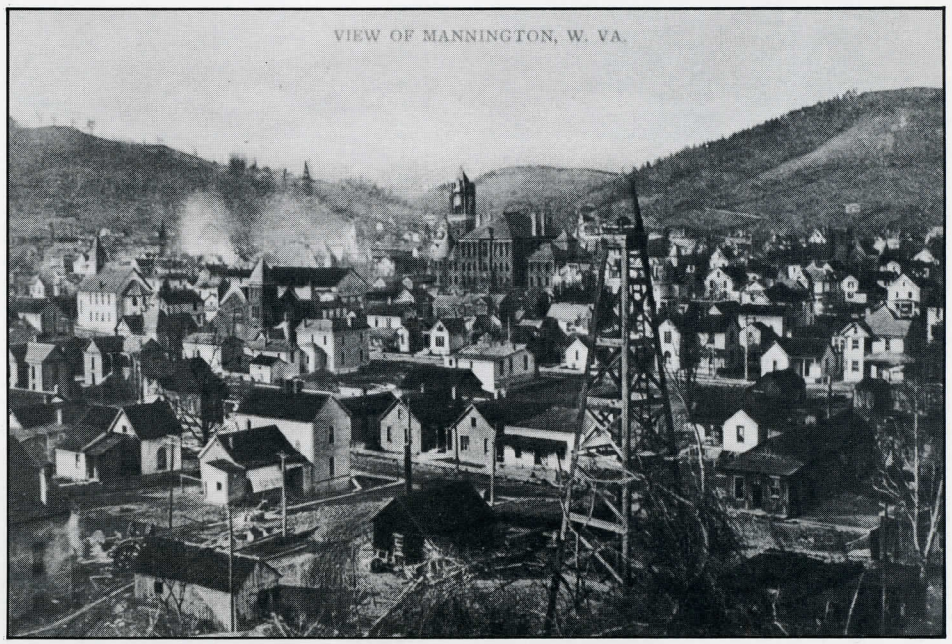
But general secrecy was maintained around the drilling of Mannington's first well. Nearing its completion the Hamilton No. 1 was named "The Jackson Mystery," for little could be learned concerning it. A reporter wrote, "When I visited the well today, the driller and one guard were there and they knew nothing about it."

As the bit sank deeper and deeper into the earth, more people entered into the local oil business. Among them were three brothers, Frank, Caleb, and William P. Burt, operators of a large tannery in Mannington. The Burt Oil Company entered the scramble for leases, and began drilling inside the town limits on land adjoining their tannery. A hill separated the Burt land from the Hamilton farm on which the Jackson Company was drilling.

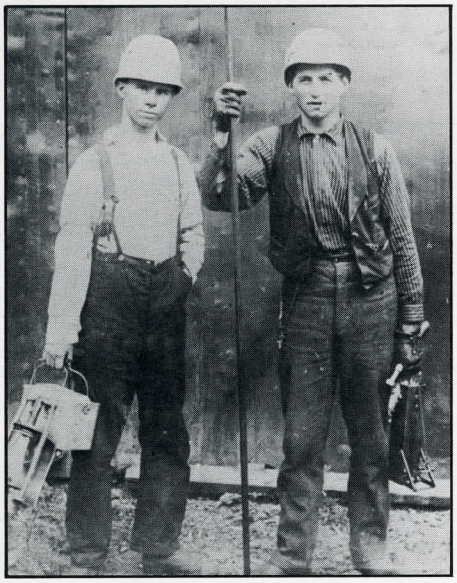
At that time, the Jackson firm itself seriously entered the scouting business. Father wrote Clarence Smith, "Flem H. (Fleming Hamilton) is watching over hill and will report as soon as any move is made . . . Ab is out (watching) today." In a letter to Dr. White he stated, "There is nothing new and we are watching as closely as we can. Ab is out and Judge (Burchinal) is here, gives us an additional force."

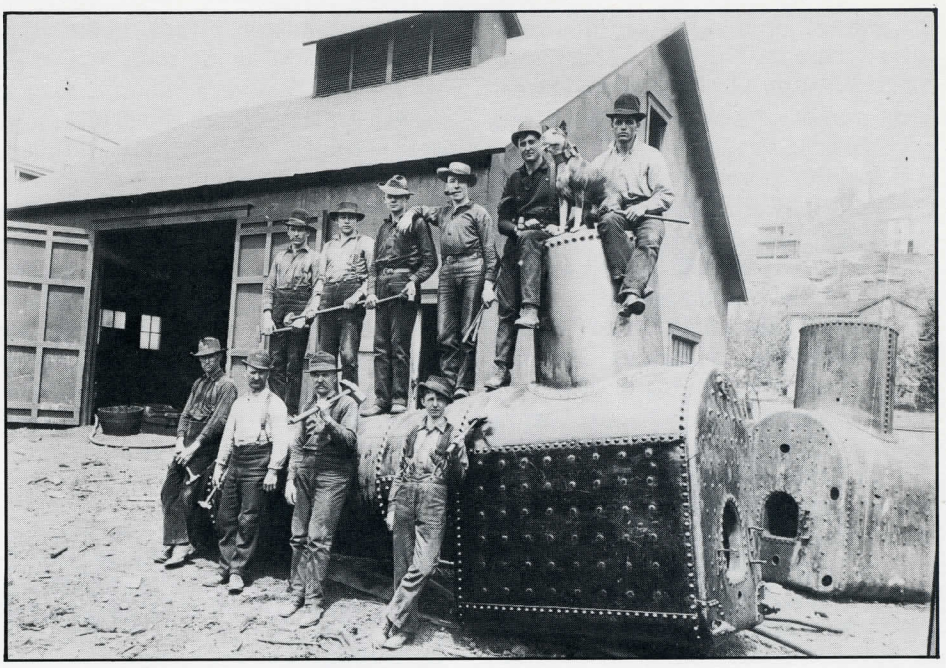
Helping to inform them of activities related to the entire area was a man who Dad referred to in letters as "Jerry, the scout." To Dr. White he wrote, "Jerry, the scout, was down today; have not got . . . to his report yet." Again, "Jerry, the scout, went to Plum Run yesterday."

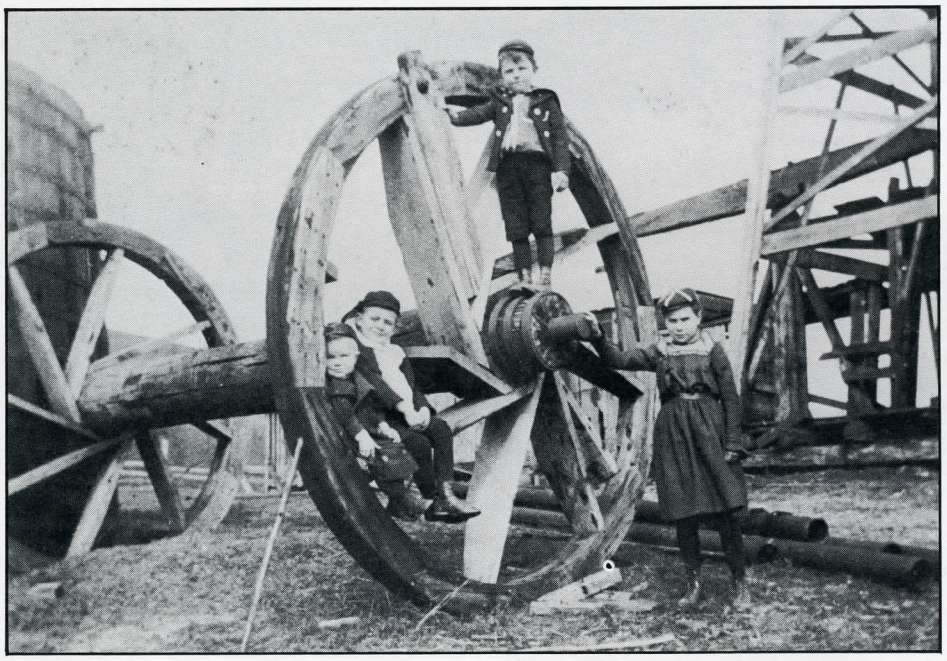
Another source of information was through relatives or friends. A letter to White from Father included, "Burts are getting along swimingly [sic] but are troubled some with cave the same as we were—by the way I have a log of it so far and in strict confidence I send it to you to look over and compare with ours. Show it to Jackson and no other and never say a word about it to a living soul. I got it through W. P. Burt, my brother-in-law . . . I have the promise of a record of it as she progresses which I will forward to you as I get it which may be of some value to you



Postcard view of Mannington, about 1905. Photographer unknown.







or us in the future . . . Please keep the Burt record strictly confidential for it may keep me from getting balance of same."

The morning of October 11, 1889, Mr. Garber, the head driller of the Hamilton well, hit oil in the Big Injun Sand, where Dr. White predicted it would be. Mr. Garber shut the well in, as they had agreed to do, and efforts were made to reach Dr. White, who was traveling somewhere in the state.

When a postal card from White, dated October 12, was received, Father, drilling contractor A. J. Montgomery, and Clarence Smith rushed off messages to him. The letters reveal some of the excitement and the competitive activities present at the birth of an oil field.

Mr. Montgomery wrote, "We have a tiger up here, which if you wish to hold, you must come at once and help, or it will get away."

Father's message was, "You had better get here just as soon as you possibly can as *it is here* and plenty of it and we can not hold it much longer. We have been having Jackson telegraphing all over the State for you but he says he could not find you. From all appearances *it is* good for 500. No coding. Come quick."

Mr. Smith's letter of October 16, "I reached home last night from Va. Jackson met me at Grafton with the joyful intelligence that the well at M was all right. I could not get much information from him on account of the fact we were watched but he told me enough to make me think we had a good well. They have some fine oil. Montgomery says the best he ever saw . . . They got two barrels and then pored [sic] back what they did not want and destroyed every vestige of the oil . . . It is generally known that we have oil but the amount is unknown. I have wired Jackson to come up tonight. If he comes we will go to Mannington and try to keep Montgomery quiet. Wire me when you reach Grafton. I tell you 'old man' you are a 'made man.'"

The news of the well was suppressed only a few days. According to Eugene Thoenen, author of *History of the Oil and Gas Industry in West Virginia,* the *Wheeling Intelligencer* announced on October 19,"Great Strike, the Jackson Well, Mannington, Marion County, is a Gusher." On October 21, the headlines blared "Eureka — Marion County fully demonstrates she is

Far left: Charles E. Stillings and an unidentified fellow employee of the Eureka Pipe Line Company, with rod to measure oil in company storage tanks. Photographer unknown, early to mid 1890's. Courtesy Dr. Sam Stillings, Mannington.
Left: Workers pose outside the South Penn Oil Company Boiler Shop, Main Street, Mannington, about 1900. South Penn, a member of John D. Rockefeller's Standard Oil Trust, was a powerful presence in the early West Virginia oil fields. Photographer unknown.
Below left: Unidentified children play near a Mannington oil well of the 1890's, possibly one of those belonging to the Burt Oil Company. Photographer unknown, from the collection of the late Dr. D. D. Hamilton, Mannington.
Right: Teamsters with shipment of oil field equipment outside the Eureka Pipe Line Company's Mannington office. Eureka was another Standard Oil subsidiary. Photographer unknown, courtesy Dr. Sam Stillings.

in Oil belt . . . Real Estate advances over Hundred percent in two days . . . speculators arriving on every train . . . town crazy."

Unfortunately, however, the well was not a gusher. Although some days it produced 10 to 20 barrels, cave-ins and operational difficulties kept it out of production part of the time. The price for oil was also against the Jackson Company. While the oil was listed as Mt. Morris oil (now called Pennsylvania grade, a premium oil) and at first brought the company 97½¢ a barrel, the price dropped below 60¢ by 1892. Actually, their November 1, 1892, sale gave them only 51¢ a barrel, a great contrast to the $29.50 some Pennsylvania oil sold for in November 1979, when this was being written.

Early in 1890 the Burt Oil Company's first well came in, producing 100 barrels daily. The presence of oil at Mannington was confirmed, and the oil rush began in earnest. Since it was a "daisy" of a well, the Burts named it "Daisy No. 1," and followed it with a series of Daisies—No. 2, No. 3, and so forth.

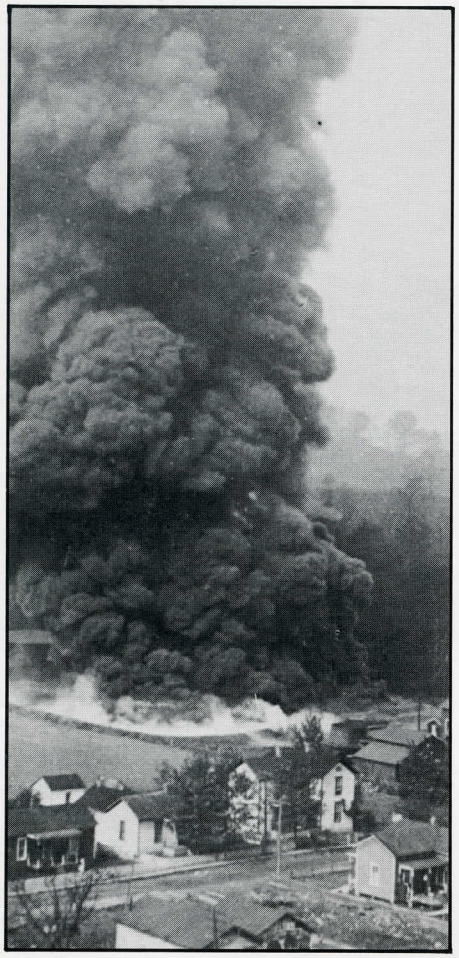
Wanting to verify the structure theory, Dr. White persuaded the other members of the Jackson Company to drill a well in what, according to the theory, should be gas territory. He selected a site on the Charles H. Hibbs farm on Salt Lick Run, a little less than two miles south of the Hamilton well, reasoning that there the Big Injun rock reservoir was tilted high enough to be in the gas belt. The derrick was begun in December 1889, but numerous drilling difficulties delayed the well's completion. In the meantime, Dr. White and associates started other wells in search of oil. Finally on December 22, 1890, the Hibbs well came in as a good gas producer in the Big Injun Sand, verifying Dr. White's theory. It was among the first wells to provide gas for the town of Mannington. Later it was purchased by the Hope Natural Gas Company and produced gas for commercial use until 1927. The Harry P. Hibbs family, now living on the farm, still gets enough gas from the well to operate a cook stove. In 1978 the Hope Company returned to the farm to drill a well that produces gas in commercial quantities.

Dr. White's success in testing the structure theory at Mannington had far-reaching results. First, it opened the Mannington oil-gas field. In an address at a Geological Society of America meeting December 29, 1891, he stated: "Since this Mannington test well was drilled, about 200 others have been sunk along the belt, as previously defined by me, between Mount Morris and Mannington; and the correctness of my theoretical work has been demonstrated by the drill in opening up along this belt through Marion and Monongalia counties one of the largest and most valuable oil fields in the country. Fewer dry holes have been found along this belt than any other oil belt known to me, not more than 5 per cent of the wells drilled within the defined limits proving totally dry."

Oil and gas were responsible for much of the growth and business of Mannington from 1890 to 1917. From a village of some 700 people in the late 1880's, it grew to nearly 4,000 inhabitants by the time of the first World War.

As Eugene D. Thoenen pointed out, "The importance of the location of this well by this method was that it was heralded as the first well to be located from purely geological considerations by a scientific geologist in uproven areas and at that depth." This helped bring practical oil men and geologists closer together. Many of the "oil fraternity" began listening to geologists. Dr. White reported with satisfaction that "a great victory was won for geology, since it taught the practical oil men once for all that they could not afford to disregard geological truths in their search for oil deposits."

There continues to be some debate on structure theory among



geologists, who still have much to learn about locating oil and gas accumulations. Some have felt that White and others pushed the theory too enthusiastically. However, there is no doubt that White's work helped the geological profession and the oil and gas industries take a giant step forward in the search for those precious natural resources.

In locating the Mannington Field, Dr. White advanced his career greatly. In 1897, he became West Virginia's first State Geologist, a position he held for 30 years. Both the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad and the Hope Natural Gas Company retained him as a consulting geologist. He was president of the American Association of Petroleum Geologists, and the Association of American State Geologists, and a delegate to the International Geological Congress, St. Petersburg, Russia, in 1897, and to the Paris Congress in 1900. White was chosen Chief of the Brazilian Coal Commission for 1904-06. West Virginia University honored him with an L. L. D. degree, and the University of Pittsburgh made him a Doctor of Science.

When I entered the University as a student in 1926, Father suggested I become acquainted with his friend, Dr. White, which I did. I found the famous geologist to be a friendly, interesting person. When White died a year later, on November 25, 1927, the press called him "West Virginia's most distinguished citizen."

Although Father remained in the oil and gas business only a few years, leaving it to build an electrical plant to supply Mannington with its first electricity, his younger brother, Fred, continued for 21 years. Uncle Fred, working for the B & O in Clarksburg when the oil boom in Mannington commenced, heard a fellow railroad employee say, "People who profit from the oil boom are those who sell oil well supplies. Those who drill sometimes get good wells and make money; then they are liable to drill some dry holes and lose money. But the sure money-makers are fellows who sell oil well materials."

Uncle Fred quit his job. Although only 22 years old, he opened, with Father's help, an oil well supply store under the name of F. A. Prichard and Company in our town. For many years he operated it successfully, but when the local oil field activities began to slacken, he sold the business. This was in 1912.

Today Father, Uncle Fred, and other Mannington oil and gas men are dead. The turn of the century boom is only a memory. To ensure that the memory itself is not lost, the West Augusta Historical Society of Mannington District has placed a stone marker at the site of the first well, to commemorate the work of I. C. White and others. Through the cooperation of Jack Raber, present owner of that portion of the old Hamilton farm, the Society plans to make the important site accessible to the interested public.

Upper: Storage tank fire on May 11, 1905, destroyed 8,000 barrels of oil at the Eureka Company's pump station at Downs (now Rachel). Photographer unknown, courtesy Margaret Furbee Gordon.
Lower: Pyles Fork Avenue in downtown Mannington during the oil boom of the 1890's. Heavy oil field equipment churned dirt streets into seas of mud during bad weather. Photographer unknown, courtesy Patricia Blackshire Kruza.

Blennerhassett Island
Report on a Wood County Archaeological Dig

By Diane Casto Tennant

Photographs by Dennis Tennant

The luxuriant foilage of Blennerhasset Island made early excavation difficult. Connecting paths were cut through the undergrowth, some of it more than five feet high.

AMONG the dense weeds and huge trees of Blennerhassett Island, archaeologists are digging through a violent political history into the villages and gravesites of ancient Indians.

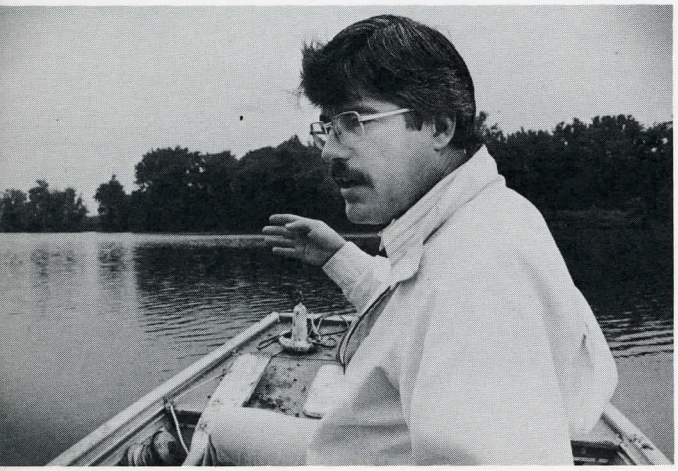
Last summer's excavation of three sites on Blennerhassett confirmed the opinion of historian Ray Swick—"It's been an island cursed by fire."

Swick works closely with Daniel Fowler, executive director of the Blennerhassett Historical Park Commission. Both have been involved in the excavation of the island's former residencies, both Indian and colonial, as they work toward the formation of a state-operated historical park.

The Blennerhassett Historical Park Commission was established by the state legislature in 1975 to develop educational, cultural and recreational resources concerning the island. The Commission is composed of 15 members, appointed by the governor for terms of four years each. The Commission is state-funded, although it can solicit for private funds and receive revenue bonding.

Blennerhassett Island is located in the Ohio River at Parkersburg. It is approximately five miles long and one-third mile wide. Presently owned by E. I. duPont de Nemours and Co., the island's varied history begins with prehistoric Indians

Below: Daniel Fowler, executive director of the Blennerhassett Historical Park Commission, outlines the island's history as the boat approaches the landing site.
Right: David Fuerst, archaeologist with the West Virginia Geological Survey, holds a piece of an Indian skull, discovered in the grave pit in which he is kneeling.
Far right: Excavation continued into November on the site of an Indian village, discovered by digging sample trenches such as this one. The burial pit of an Indian is protected by plastic in the background.



who settled there 120 centuries ago. It continues through time to include the earliest known store in Wood County, along with the most beautiful mansion in America at that time, the home of Margaret and Harman Blenerhassett. The site of gardens filled with rare plants and the first divorce proceedings in the old Northwest Territory, the mansion is better known as the location where Aaron Burr allegedly conspired to undermine the young United States government. Blennerhassett himself, an elegant English immigrant, was arrested for his part in the 1804-07 plot, but unlike the tragic Burr was never actually tried for treason.

Less known are the ruins of George Neale Jr.'s brick mansion, two blockhouses built to guard against Indian attacks, or the existence of fluted spear points—some of the earliest artifacts made in North America. "Basically, everything that is represented by prehistory in West Virginia is represented at the island," said Fowler.

A large concentration of fluted Clovis spear points is found on Blennerhassett Island. The flints used for making these points could be easily found in the gravel shoals around the island. These points are of the same type found imbedded in the remains of mastodons and mammoths in other parts of the country.

"This kind of spear point has been found throughout the United States, but nowhere do they seem to be more concentrated than on Blennerhassett," explained Fowler.

The ethnic identity of the Indians who made those points may never be known. "That's one of the fascinating problems that archaeologists have been trying to work on: who were the original Indians of the Ohio Valley," said Fowler. "The island is a very, very special place in terms of history and archaeology."

Historians suspect that the original Indians were Shawnee or Algonquin speaking people. "Of course, the Indians spoke many different languages, too," added Swick.

Indians of North Carolina and New York spoke the same language, indicating that they were once the same people, said Swick. When the early white settlers arrived, they created a tremendous disruption on the continent by displacing the Indians and transmitting new diseases which wiped out entire villages.

"Another factor that limits research is that some of the best sites for villages are the sites of big cities today," said Fowler.

Indian villages were the major focus of last year's work on the island. Six skeletons have been discovered in these villages so far. One skeleton was found lying in a flexed position under what archaeologists believe was a refuse pile for the village. The skeleton was found when a sample trench was dug to determine the archaeological value of the site.

Similar trenches have revealed the boundaries of the village, as

well as campfires and postmolds from Indian houses. The village itself was discovered when archaeologists found bits of pottery and flint around a groundhog hole, brought to the surface by the unwitting excavations of the animal.

Similar luck led to the finding of the Blennerhassett mansion in 1973. The foundation stones were believed to have been removed after the house burned in 1811 and used in the construction of George Neale Jr.'s mansion in 1833.

"There was never any reason to believe that anything could be found," said Fowler. "We started in an area that was said to be near Blennerhassett's well. Fortunately, we intersected a curving wall there."

The curving wall turned out to be the foundation of a portico of the horseshoe-shaped mansion. Further excavation revealed the foundations of the central house and the outlying dependencies at the ends of the graceful curve.

Periodic flooding of the island

Blennerhassett Mansion

Harman Blennerhassett set out in 1800 to build an English estate in the midst of the wild Ohio Valley. He succeeded in building the elegant mansion that was considered the most beautiful house in the East during its day.

The estate was, in reality, a Southern mansion dedicated to culture and entertainment in the style of the plantations of Virginia, Georgia, and the Carolinas. The Blennerhassetts kept at least a dozen slaves on the island, which ostensibly led to the mansion's destruction by fire in 1811.

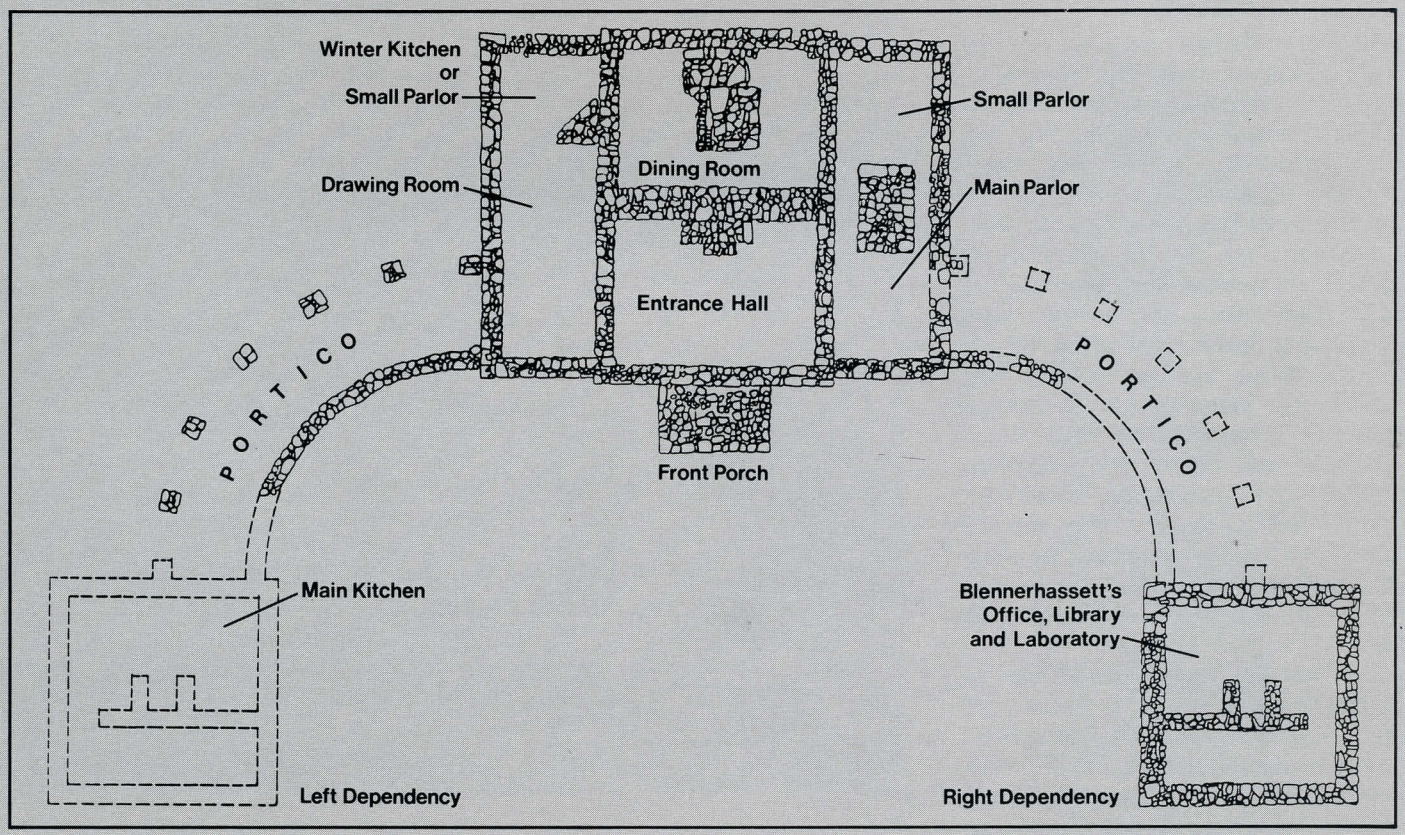
Finished in 1800, the Palladian-style house cut a graceful horseshoe into the landscape of Blennerhassett Island. The main house measured 54.8 feet long by 35.5 feet wide. The curved porticos sweeping to each side measured 42 feet long, with each dependency 26 feet square. The entire elliptical front of the house measured 135 feet from one dependency to the other.

Steps led to a front porch four feet off the ground. Guests who entered by the main door found themselves in a large entrance room, facing a stone fireplace in the center of the house.

To the left of the entrance room, guests passed through folding doors with silver doorknobs into a drawing room. The room was paneled in walnut. Unlike modern hollow-wall construction, the underlying walls were made of solid oak logs standing on end.

A grey marble fireplace stood in the center of the left wall, with a gold and marble clock on the mantle. Niches cut into the walls around the room contained plaster copies of statues. An alabaster lamp and vases decorated the room. A full-length, gold-framed Venetian mirror hung on one wall, complemented by the oriental rug that covered the floor. Paintings hung on the walls, including two large portraits of Margaret and Harman Blennerhassett.

On the right-hand side of the entrance hall was the large parlor, also with a fireplace in the center of the outside wall. Directly behind the two large rooms were two smaller parlors and the dining room. Historians



believe the smaller of the parlors may also have served as a winter kitchen to prevent food from becoming cold in being carried from the main kitchen in the left wing.

The mansion's dining hall was located directly behind the entrance room, between the small parlors. A stone structure found in that room has not yet been identified.

The second floor of the house contained two guest bedrooms located above the drawing room and main parlor. The master bedroom was located in the front of the house, directly over the entrance hall. Bathrooms were located in the rear of the second floor.

The two curved porticos on either side of the main house led to two square dependencies. Harman Blennerhassett had his library and laboratory in the right wing, with the main kitchen located in the left dependency.

The entire house contained 36 glass windows in a day when most houses boasted one or two windows covered with greased paper, which admitted light but no air.

The Blennerhassett mansion burned to the ground in 1811 in a mysterious fire. However, the elegant furnishings of the house were not destroyed, having been sold in two public sales held in February and July of 1807. Some of the furnishings have been located in private collections throughout the world, but two of the most desirable—the portraits of Margaret and Harman Blennerhassett—have never been found.

The Blennerhassetts kept a wherry for transportation to and from their island. The wherry was a slim pleasure boat with sharply pointed ends, which could be rowed swiftly by a servant. A model for the boat was shipped to the Blennerhassetts from England, in a day when most people traveled the Ohio River in canoes.

Blennerhassett Island played host to a number of famous persons, both during the existence of the mansion and after its destruction.

Aaron Burr and his daughter, Theodosia, visited the mansion at least three times in 1805 and 1806. Theodosia Burr was supposedly the most educated woman of the time, being the first American woman to possess the equivalent of a college degree. She studied French, Italian, Latin, German, mathematics, chemistry, logic, horseback, fencing and pistol shooting. She and Margaret Blennerhassett were close friends during a time when most local women disliked Mrs. Blennerhassett for her social position and manners.

Other visitors to the island included Lewis Cass, later governor of Michigan, U. S. Secretary of War and American Minister to France in the 1830's, U. S. Senator, and Secretary of State under President James Buchanan. Cass and his bride honeymooned on the island in 1806.

Henry Clay visited the island in 1807, followed much later by Walt Whitman in 1849, who commemorated his visit in a poem.

Various sporting events were held on the island, including an exhibition boxing bout around 1900 by heavyweight champion Gentleman Jim Corbett. The Cincinnati Reds baseball team played a game on the island about the same time. The most recent visitor to the island who would be recognized by many was author Gore Vidal, who wrote a book on the life of Aaron Burr.

has concerned many who contend that a flooded park would be of little value. Flooding has never blocked the archaeologists' work; in fact, it has been of more benefit than harm.

"If it hadn't been for flooding in past centuries, many things there might not have been preserved," Fowler explained. "The fate of nearly every major building on the island has not been determined by flooding, but by fire."

Fire destroyed the Indian blockhouse and some early residences as well as the Blennerhassett mansion. Concerning the mansion, the mysterious fire that destroyed it has been attributed to many sources, including intoxicated slaves trying to warm themselves, or slaves smoking hemp for the narcotic effect.

Swick prefers the latter theory. According to early newspaper accounts, a boatload of slaves returning from a party overturned in the Ohio River, causing one to drown. The rest returned to the mansion. However, said Swick, they went to the right wing of the mansion instead of to the slave quarters in the left wing. They took a fire with them, so they were not going to warm themselves. It is possible, he said, that they were going to smoke hemp.

"Oddly enough, when we excavated the mansion site and got to that section, there was a fireplace hearth that had burned hemp in it," said Fowler.

The burning of the mansion ended an 11-year period of culture that the Blennerhassetts brought to the island. Classical music, chemical experiments and parties were common on the island then, as were exhibitions and actual sports events. The Blennerhassetts also imported rare plants and shrubs for their gardens and hothouses. The largest yellow poplar tree east of the Mississippi River still stands on the island, surrounded by a bird sanctuary set up in 1790.

"I don't know what the factors are that influenced man to build there and do so much there," said Fowler. However, those factors are

still attracting man to the island.

An agreement between Borg-Warner Chemicals and the Blennerhassett Historical Park Commission was announced last fall. Under this agreement, the Commission will locate antiques, manuscripts and printed material relating to Blennerhassett Island that are held in private collections throughout the world. Borg-Warner Chemicals will purchase these artifacts and documents and display them at various Parkersburg locations until a permanent museum is established.

Other industry involvement on the island has not pleased the Commission as much. Ohio River Sand and Gravel, a McDonough Company, attempted to surface mine the island for gravel. A court decision stopped both the mining and dredging around the island last summer.

Although the company claimed that no historical sites would be affected, Fowler contends that historical sites are located in the area which the company proposed to mine. "There are many areas of the island that we suspect a good bit about but we don't know much about," he said.

These include the James blockhouse and trading post located near the head of the island. Harman Blennerhassett, George Neale Jr., and George Rogers Clark are all credited with living in or near the site of the blockhouse at one time or another.

The Backus blockhouse on the lower end of the island—owned by Elijah Backus, who sold the island to Blennerhasset—followed the fate of other wooden structures on the island, burning to the ground in 1970 after allegedly being struck by lightning or burned by duck hunters.

While the mining action remains unresolved on appeal for now, selected clearing of undergrowth on the island is being conducted for the park. The state plans to build an orientation center and picnic area, develop transportation to the island and study renovation of the brick Neale mansion.

The actual wilderness and wildlife of the island would not be disturbed.

"I don't think you'll find very many places on this continent as pretty. It's virtually unspoiled," said Fowler. "Blennerhassett stands still and reflects back on earlier times and earlier values."

One of the few wooden structures to escape destruction by fire, this house has yet to be identified. The height of undergrowth is evident in this scene, where a path has been cleared to the site of the Blennerhasset mansion.

(Continued From Page 29)
more than a dollar. And that always gave us quite a bit of money. I know we kept track of it and I thought we was rich — maybe we made $20 in a month or so.

But now most of the young people don't even like to make cheese. They say it's too much work. But we just took that in with our everyday living. I mean I had seven children, but I still made cheese. And maybe my house wasn't as spotlessly clean as some of them, but I had to do the sewing and I washed on the washboard and I made cheese. We were married up there for 30 years, and I made cheese. Then we came down here, and we wasn't down here long till my husband bought a cow and I made cheese. I made two cheese everyday and I had visions of my cellar running over with cheese.

All the other families, farms had cheese. So there was no trouble for anyone to come through here and find cheese. If you didn't have any, you'd say, "Go up to John Betler's, they have cheese. They make cheese all the time." I don't think there was a farmer that didn't make cheese. Stadlers made it, Martis made it, the Betlers made it. Your grandmother, the Schneiders, made it. The Teuschers made it. Nobody had to go away from here for cheese. And now when someone comes and wants cheese, I have to tell them nobody has any, most of the time.

DS Well, Ella, when you grew up on a farm and then later when you lived on a farm yourself and raised your children there, there were certain things that you had to do each year and certain ways that you always took care of planting and harvesting and things. Could you start in the spring and just kind of go through all the things that had to be done on the farm?

EB When I lived with my dad and mother they would start out early, even when the snow was on the ground. They hauled manure out and got things ready, because they did everything with horse and plows. And then at that time he did a lot of clearing. He would clear in the winter and then they'd have to get the stumps out, and then we'd plant. But then after it was cleared off it was much easier.

Then later when I married, I lived on a farm not far from my father's. My husband did some clearing, too, in about February. Seems to me that the weather was nicer then, because in February or March he would do a lot of the work. He didn't work away then. He would haul the manure out, and then he'd start plowing on the nicer days. He would always plow early and then by the time the frost was over and everything was ready, the ground would be real mellow and fall apart.

That's why they plowed early. I think they started in March, if the weather was halfway right. That's what I think is such a difference now when they have the tractors. They don't plow till they're ready to plant, usually. They just plow and plant. Back in other days, they always let the ground freeze over, and it would be much nicer to work with. We didn't have the machinery then that they do now. But the ground was much nicer to work with then.

They'd plow for the oats first, and get that all ready and then they'd have the corn. They planted corn of course all the time—too many acres sometimes. We also had wheat. We sowed fall wheat. Sometimes if the weather was nice they did do some plowing in the fall ready for the next summer. That must have been a Swiss habit. Then they sowed it in the fall wheat. They had a good mill over at Zumbach's. That's where we would take our wheat to get ground.

DS What crops did you grow on the farm?

EB Well, I think at that time we had corn and potatoes and oats and wheat, and we also went into soybeans. That was more just for hay. We didn't get the soybeans to shell out to eat. They'd just cut them at a certain stage because they told them that that was good for the ground. They would plant soybeans, and the cattle and sheep and everything liked the soybeans when it was cut at a certain time. And then we also planted cane for cane molasses. We went into that because we had a cane mill.

DS What else did you have to do in the spring?

EB Well, after the crops were planted it wasn't long till they harrowed the potato fields. When they were just small they would go through and get the weeds. And then later we'd start hoeing the corn and the potatoes. We did get a cultivator that would go through the corn, and that helped us a lot. And we would of course get our gardens planted, and our truck patches. If there was more manure to be hauled in the meadows then we did that too. There was a lot of the manure that had to be hauled out. Then they would get the lime and put it on the meadows at certain times. That was in spring before the grass got so big. Seemed it all went past so fast that we'd be ready to make hay before you turned around.

DS How did you do the hay?

EB Well, they had a mowing machine with the horses. They would cut it with the mowing machine, and of course we had the big rake. Later we had a tedder*, but at first we used to have to turn the heavy hay by hand with just a fork.

DS What were the hay rakes like that you used?

EB Well, the big hay rakes had a lot of teeth down and you'd have to step on a lever and it would drop the wind rows. It would make big rows. The children had to follow with the hand rakes and see that we took all the hay in. The Swiss was very particular. They'd go in all the corners of the fences and get everything out and the fence rows had to be cleaned out. We'd have to take the little rakes to get that out.

DS What did you do after that?

EB When hay was drying, we were still hoeing corn to keep the corn nice and clean, the corn fields, you know. The wheat would come in early, because it was sowed in the fall. They'd cut it with a cradle,

* A tedder is a machine for stirring and spreading hay to hasten drying and curing.

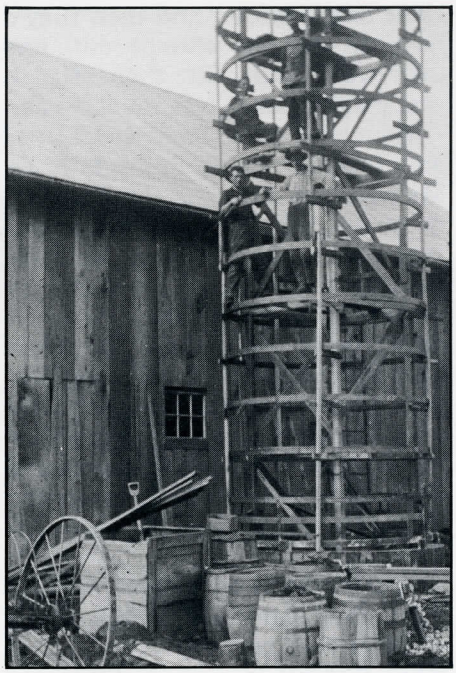
a grain cradle. They did that for years, and made bundles and tied them up and made shocks like they do in the Amish country yet. Then, after the wheat was in, usually the oats would start to get ripe. Before we was even through with the hay, sometimes the oats would come. We'd do that the same way we did the wheat. In later years, they got an attachment to put to the mowing machine, a kind of rake or something. It would pull it over and would drop it off and it was much easier. It would go faster than by hand, by cradle.

DS After you had the hay in wind rows, how did you get it to the barn and how did you store it in the barn?

EB Well, they had hay wagons. Now some had sleds, but we had a hay wagon. They made a big frame on the regular wagon and it had boards out so they could put a lot of hay on. They would pile the hay up on this wagon and somebody would be up there stomping and taking the hay up. The others would rake and pitch—two of them would pitch, one on each side. The others would rake where the wind rows were, the women or young people. Then they'd haul it to the barn. If it was steep so that they'd be afraid they'd lose it, they'd tie it down with a rope. They took it in the barn, and they had those hay forks that were run by a horse. The fork would come down and they'd put it in the middle of the hay load. Somebody was out with the horse. There was pulleys. Then the horse would take it, and the fork would go up and take the hay back over in the hay loft. Then you pulled another rope and it would drop down.

DS And how did you take in the oats?

EB The oats was just hauled in by wagon. We would pile it up nice. Someone was up on the wagon, and they would pile the sheaves up. If it wasn't too dry they would take it in the barn and stand the sheaves up till they thrashed them, so it would dry out and not ruin the grain. Otherwise they would put it down in layers. The wheat was done the same way as the oats.



Silo building at the John Betler farm. Internal bracing would be removed once the silo was completed. Photograph by Walter Aegerter, date unknown.

DS You would thrash both the oats and the wheat?

EB Yes.

DS Tell me about how they used to go about thrashing?

EB Well, my dad bought a thrashing machine. My uncle that lived up on the other farm got an engine and he had it put on a wagon. His team would pull the wagon with the engine and my dad's team would bring the thrashing machine. They would go from farm to farm and be gone sometimes almost two months to get all the thrashing done, 'cause they would go clear down Upshur County and different places. They didn't come home. They would stay all night where they thrashed last. Then later my husband went with my dad, and they went out thrashing.

DS Well, tell me about this grinding up at Zumbachs'.

EB They did a wonderful job. During the Depression people came there and brought their wheat and they would make whole-wheat flour. Then they would make the other kind, a better grade. They left more bran or something in the whole-wheat. A lot of people wanted the whole-wheat, but the other flour was really very much better. It was pretty white. The bread was nice.

DS Did most everybody take their wheat to Zumbachs'?

EB Yes. They came from all around to go there with their corn for cornmeal and wheat for the flour.

DS Would they charge a little bit for the grinding?

EB They would take so much toll. So much cornmeal, so much flour, so much everything. They'd keep so much, a certain percent, very small. If they couldn't use it, they could sell it to someone else. No cash money unless they sold some. And then, of course, they had their sawmill, too, and people took their logs there to get sawed.

DS How about the gardens that you planted? What all was in them?

EB Well, I guess we planted pretty large gardens. We had about everything, at least tried everything. There was beans and of course corn, the sweet corn. Pole beans and other beans, and a lot of spinach and parsnips and carrots, beets, just about anything, lettuce, onions, a lot of onions—just about anything you can think of.

DS Whose job was it to take care of the garden?

EB Well, I think the women did that, because the men were usually pretty busy. But, now, they would help hoe it once in a while. I mean if they had time. But the women did the gardening, of the neighbors that I know of. And I know I did, too. The men would get a plow and harrow it, and it was in very good shape so that you could work in it. We also planted a lot of flowers—we always had our flowers around the edges!

DS Did you plant things by the signs?

EB Some, some of it. Some people said to make beans climb the poles, they had to be planted when the moon went up or else they would stay on the ground. Sometimes it seemed like it was true. My husband wasn't too much for it. He said we planted in the ground, not in the moon.

Now my dad and mother was more particular about it. My dad did a lot of carpenter work, and if

he put a shingle roof on he'd never put it on when the moon was going up. It had to be going down so that the shingles would stay down. And I really think there is something to that, seems like.

They always had shingle roofs on all the buildings practically, and they made the shingles themselves. And they'd shoe the horses themselves mostly. If the wagon wheels' spokes broke or the rims come off, we had wheelrights. There were blacksmith shops. The Paulis and the Zumbachs had them, because you know it was very easy to get something broke. They could even make wagons.

DS When it came time to dig the potatoes how did you dig them and where did you store them?

EB They dug them with a shovel plow—you know, a shovel plow is just a one-horse plow. And it would go way down and open up the row. We'd go a few yards and then stop to pick them up, unless we had a lot of children to pick them up fast enough. Then go a little farther and pick them up. We had sacks along the road to empty our buckets into. They'd go through a row about three times or four with a shovel plow. The first time the potatoes would just roll out, and it's just something to see.

DS Did you usually grow just about as many potatoes as you needed?

EB No. We always sold potatoes. That always gave us an income. We could sell them at Pickens and different places, and we also sold them sometimes to the hospital at Buckhannon, St. Joseph's Hospital. If we had to go to the hospital for operations or anything, they would always take potatoes or anything we had for pay. They were wonderful. Because they knew the people up here didn't have too much money to pay out. They would even take chickens! We really always appreciated it.

And then later, they'd cut the corn, and make it in shocks and there was shocks all along. When the corn was all in shocks and the nice pumpkins laying there it was always just a beautiful sight to see. You see pictures of it now sometimes in the magazines, and it was just like that. After the corn was dry, they started to husk it. Took it to the barn, husked it, shucked it, or whatever you want to call it. They would always try to get it all done by Christmastime, because if you had a big field it took a lot of time. Sometimes the neighbors helped each other, too. They'd get others to come and help shuck corn. They'd sort it and put it in their corn crib, where the air would go through it. They had wire around it, you know, so the rats and the mice can't get in.

DS How about taking care of the animals? Do you remember much about that process?

EB Yes. They would put them in their barns, and we always kept them in in wintertime at nights, or even in daytime if there was snow. They'd just go out to water. We'd take the corn fodder after the corn was husked and run it through a corn cutter. It was run by an engine, and it would just push the fodder through and shred it. We always used all the corn fodder that we raised. They would take it down and feed each cow a big box of that, and then the hay. They always ate it all. And then, of course, the straw from when we thrashed was used for bedding. They always had a special hay for the horses. They were supposed to have more timothy hay for horses, or orchard hay. The clover hay was for the cattle and the sheep.

DS How did you take care of preserving things for the winter?

EB Well, as soon as the vegetables were ready to can, we would start canning. Of course, we gathered fruit, like blackberries. That came pretty early. It was always right after we got haymaking done. We'd all go out and pick blackberries. They grew around everywhere. We'd even take the little ones along and set them down, and we'd pick berries and in the evening we'd can them. We usually canned anywhere over 100 to 150 quarts of blackberries, plus making a lot of jelly and jams, because no one bought jelly and jams like they would now. We made enough to do. Then the apples would come to can and we'd can apples. When the garden came, we'd can beans. We'd always can a lot of beans, and the carrots and the beets, and all that stuff had to be canned. We did a lot of canning because that was for the whole winter.

DS How did you can?

EB Well, we had just a water bath at the beginning. And then later on in my time we had a pressure canner, which would cut the time in half. I think we won a pressure canner in the Farming for Better Living contest. They were kind of expensive. The beans, when we used to have to boil them in the water bath, had to cook three hours on the stove, where the pressure canner was 25 minutes. So it really went a lot faster. And the same way with corn and all that. A lot of people are afraid of pressure canners, but there's nothing to be afraid of if you know what you're doing.

DS And how about drying?

EB Well, we used to dry apples. The farm which we bought later had a regular drying house. It had a little stove in it, and sliding trays on both sides. It was almost like a corn crib. It was an oblong building, and the little pot-bellied stove was in the center to make the heat. I still dry my apples. And they'd dry beans. Sometimes you string the beans and hang them out in the sun, and some dry them in the oven. Not have much of a fire. That's where it's nice when you have a wood stove with not too much heat.

We also made a lot of apple butter them days. We would make it in the great big copper kettle outside, and maybe 20 gallons at a time. We always used a lot of apple butter. We would have apple cuttings, you know, where people would come and neighbors would all get together. I think all the neighbors around did that. And, of course, then we would have cane molasses time, where they cooked cane molasses. We pressed it with the mill that's still on the farm. The horse brings the pole around, and that grinds the stuff and then presses it. Then you cook it in pans.

Making hay at the Hofer farm. Henrietta and Ernest Hofer stand in front of haystack. Photograph by Gottlieb Hofer, date unknown.

They would help each other do that, too, the neighbors.

DS Did your family butcher in the fall?

EB Yes, we always did. We butchered probably a beef and maybe about three or four hogs. I remember way back when there was chestnuts yet, years ago. They'd turn the hogs out in the woods, and by the time come to butcher they'd be fat from the chestnuts that they had eaten. You wouldn't have to fatten them up much. When they husked the corn they always sorted it, and there was always the pig corn and the good corn. And then they would finish fattening the hogs with the corn. But they would be doing wonderful in the woods when there was that many chestnuts, which is a thing of the past.

DS Did people normally let their livestock out in the woods?

EB Yes. Definitely. Even our milk cows. We used to have to hunt way down over the hills and valleys to get them. They were in the woods.

DS And when would you turn them out?

EB Well, in the spring — it would be about May, sometimes, they would start. We'd have maybe pasture enough around, and then later on they'd go roaming farther. We had vacant farms around, and they'd go there. We haven't talked anything about sheep, either, have we?

DS No.

EB Well, they all had sheep, too. Everybody had a few sheep, and it was always a problem in wintertime to take care of the lambs, or towards spring when the lambs would come. They would have to be very careful with them so that they wouldn't get too cold, and see that they nursed the right mother and everything. And if they didn't claim them we'd have to pet them sometimes.

DS Now what do you mean by pet them?

EB Well, they'd have to take them in and make a bottle like for a baby. You could get regular nipples for lambs. You'd get lamb nipples at any of the stores here in Helvetia. You'd put them on a bottle, and you'd just take the milk from a cow and warm it and then feed them. They would come eat it, just suck the bottle like anything. They were very much liked as pets. They'd follow you around, and we used to have quite a few as pets. I know one time we had one that was really mine. She was such a nice lamb.. And when it came time for my husband to sell the lambs, I said, "How many you got?" He said, "Well, so many and the pet lamb." I said, "You're not selling the pet lamb." So we kept it as a ewe, but it was always a pest. Nobody liked it, 'cause it followed everybody around.

DS Did you use the wool from the sheep?

EB Yes. They always had shearing time. Now they have machines, but then they had the regular sheep shearers. Two or three would come, and they'd help. They'd put them on the platform. And then they would have hobbles, they called them, put across all four legs and tied it. They had holes in them. Then they'd hold them, put the strings on them and they couldn't kick. One of the children could hold the hobbles, those boards, and one hold the head. They'd shear them pretty fast. I think the women were just as good shearers as the men were.

We'd always have enough wool left to make our comforts for the winter. My mother did a lot of spinning and she always did keep nice wool for the spinning. We'd have the wool cards and we'd card the wool, and have it for our comforts. But the rest of the wool we'd sell. That would be one way of getting some money, too.

DS What else did the children do around the farm?

EB Feed the chickens and gather the eggs, and carry in the water. We didn't have water in the homes like they did later. Those are the little things that had to be done every evening.

We had to help with the meals and keep the floors clean. My mother thought the floor had to be swept three times a day, after every meal. They were wooden floors, of course, and they were kept clean and scrubbed. And, of course, the beds to be made and all. But I think the wood and the water was the most important that we had to be sure to bring in. We had corn shellers to shell the corn. You'd put an ear of corn in and turn it, and it would shell. We'd have to shell the corn always for the chickens. The children did that.

And, of course, we had to go get the cows. That was a far way to go sometimes. My brother and I when we were young went down to get the cows at the other farm, which belonged partly to my dad. We was coming through the piece of woods and all at once the cows run and we didn't know what was wrong. We looked up and we see a wildcat going down through the field, through the woods. It was going past, but the cows were really scared of it. We always had to get the cows, and then put them back in the pasture. I thought it was fun. The horses the same way —when the horses were through working, we would take them to the pasture. And of course get them again.

DS What did you usually have for meals?

EB We always had well-ballanced meals. We made, of course, a lot of sauerkraut. We planted beans, like soup beans and yellow-eyed beans, in the cornfield. And then we would pull them out and shell all the beans out. Maybe we'd have a bushel of beans shelled out if we had a lot of it planted. That was something we did of an evening, too. We would have plenty of beans and sauerkraut. And then, of course, we had canning, too. We had our own meat, and we always stuffed sausage. And we had bacon and ham and shoulder that we fried, and of course the canned beef and things. So we always had at least one meal with meat. In the mornings we had plenty of eggs and, of course, we had cheese. For some reason they always had a lunch at about three or four o'clock in the afternoon. And that was a Swiss style, of having it at between three and four o'clock in the afternoon. That was our lunch. Now they say that lunch is the dinner. We called it breakfast, dinner, lunch and supper.

DS So you ate four times a day?

EB Four times a day! When we was making hay or doing things like that. Not otherwise, maybe, but when we were working hard on the farm we always had four meals. My uncle was a bachelor and lived on the farm up there where we bought later. When we made hay up there, he would make cornbread with a lot of sugar in it. That was our lunch then, at three o'clock or four. I remember that.

DS What would be a typical menu for supper, let's say?

EB Well, now, we always had a big dinner. That was our main meal. You would have beans and potatoes. Always potatoes. Beans and potatoes, and meat of some kind. Either ham or beef. And we would have applesauce, and maybe canned pears or blackberries. We canned a lot of pears because we had pear trees. And, of course, cornbread. We had a lot of cornbread at noon for some reason.

Then for supper I would warm up what was left. I'd fry the potatoes and they would be good with the cheese. We always made our own bread, homemade bread and butter, and of course there was jelly and apple butter and all that. But we always had just sort of warmed-over then. We had the wood stove, and before noon we'd bake and do things, and we had a good fire. And then in the evening when it was so warm we just didn't want to cook too long.

DS You had a lot of potatoes?

EB Always. We always had plenty of potatoes around to eat. We had them for breakfast, also. And I'd cook a big kettle of oatmeal or cream of wheat, and then potatoes and eggs and all that. It was a big meal.

DS Now, when we have leftovers after a meal, we just put them in the refrigerator. How did you keep things without a refrigerator?

EB Well, we put them down in our cellar. We just took and left them in cans or in their dishes, and then covered them up and set them on the ground floor. It was always wet, kind of damp in a cellar. And it was always cold in there. We did the butter the same way, and the milk. But a lot of the places had what they called spring houses, where they had a stream of water running through. It was sort of a water trough. That water would keep running through it, and that made it wonderful to keep milk sweet and keep butter and all those things. But you know the potatoes and the beans or anything like that would last for one day. You had to use things up in the next day or so.

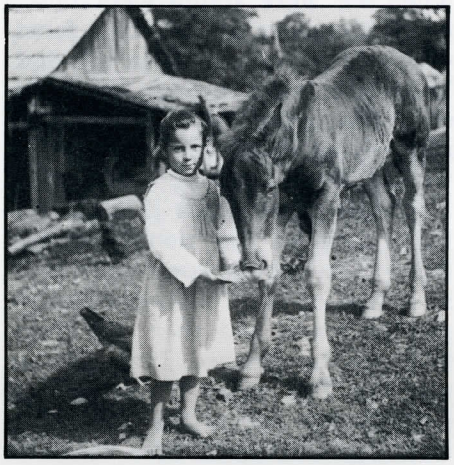
DS Can you remember the Helvetia Farm Men's Club meeting?

EB Yes, I should say! We was very proud of the Men's Club meetings, 'cause they started a lot of the things, you know, and they'd have the County Agent come in. It was quite an exciting event when the County Agent would come in to the farmers and help them. The first County Agent I remember well was Haulderson. He went with my dad up there in the cornfield and he was showing him how to cover the corn, you know. I can see him yet. They would just go right out in the fields and show the men how to do things, the farmers. They were very interested, and this locality was one of the first ones that the County Agent would come around.

DS Why do you think that most of the younger generation now has gone away and not stuck with farming?

EB Well, I think there was just not enough money in it. Like I said, they couldn't make a living on a farm unless they bought a lot of machinery, and if you buy a lot of machinery it's running into money. So unless you would inherit a farm or something it would be hard to make a living in these hills here. I had five boys and I think every one of them would love to be on land, with cattle and things. They like it but they can't make a living at it. They would love to have a place where they could keep a few cows. That's what most of them have been trying to do, but it's just hard to get a place like that.

And I don't know if the women would be satisfied, you know. I sometimes wonder what they'd do if they had to carry the water in and wash their clothes on a washboard. It was just the way of life for us. We didn't get the water in our house up on the farm and the electric till just a few years before we left the farm and moved down here. You just did those things and



Unidentified child with colt on a Helvetia mountain farm. Photograph by Gottlieb Hofer, date unknown.

you did the best you could. But I think if you'd have to go back, that would be the hard thing. We just grew up that way. That's why it didn't bother us. We had it a little better than our parents did. We finally got us a washing machine with a motor on it. We didn't have electric but we got one with a motor on it. Then finally, right before we left, we had a bathroom and we had running water.

But my father and mother never had all that stuff till when they got older, and they moved down here in the little trailer. They got the electric stove and they had a little bathroom and they had an oil heater. I got so tickled—my dad just didn't know what to do with himself. It was like a playhouse to them.

It was so different then. Every evening you had to go carry your wood in right quick. You had to carry your water in. I think they couldn't do it now, 'cause they're used to a better way of life. It might be alright for a vacation to go out in the country on a farm and live a few days or a week or so. Just to camp out. But if you'd have to make a living that way it would be a different story.

DS Can you remember when the electricity came in?

EB Well, let's see. We only had it about three or four years before we moved off of the farm. We moved off in 1954, so we didn't get electricity up there till about 1950 or 1948, '49. And then we had got the water in the house. We used gravity force. Made a big cistern up against the hill. I kept thinking I was more happy for the water, almost, than the electric. The water was such a wonderful thing—that you didn't have to run out and get water right quick all the time. We got one of those tanks that hooked to our stove and made hot water, so we really had some hot water before the electric. But after we got the electric, then we got the bathroom and everything.

We didn't stay there more than about five years after that, and then moved down here. That's when our son Delbert took over. It didn't bother me so much, but I would have hated to give it up to strangers. And we wouldn't have, 'cause we never thought about leaving the farm. But then our son wanted to farm, and my husband wasn't well. He wanted to stay on the State Road crew and work, so it suited us fine this way. Of course, when we got here we built a barn and we had a cow, and then we had two cows, I made cheese as long as he lived. Ten years I made cheese here. And we had pigs, and chickens. We had our butter and cream and cheese and meat. I always said we had everything but the hard work down here.

Special thanks to Robin Price for transcribing this interview.

summer craft and music events

GOLDENSEAL's "Summer Craft and Music Events" listing is prepared three to six months in advance of publication. Information contained in the listing was accurate so far as we could determine at the time the magazine went to press. However, it is advisable to check with the organization or event to make certain dates have not been changed.

April 10-12
Heritage Days (Parkersburg Community College) — Parkersburg

April 12-13
Woodcrafter's Weekend (Prickett's Fort) — Fairmont

April 12-14
Buyer's Market (Cultural Center) — Charleston

April 18-20
Salem College Heritage Arts Festival
(Fort New Salem) — Salem

April 26-27
Festival of Traditional Music (Prickett's Fort) — Fairmont

April 26-27
Braxton County Arts and Crafts Festival — Gassaway

April 26-28
Buffalo Soldiers Afro-Appalachian Heritage Festival
(Central Charleston Community Center) — Charleston

May 9-11
Fox Fire Presents the Appalachian Flatpicking Championship
(Fox Fire Camping Resort) — Milton

May 14-25
West Virginia Heritage Festival
(Huntington Galleries) — Huntington

May 16-18
Potomac Highlands Bluegrass Festival
(Potomac Highlands Park) — Moorefield

May 18
Maifest (Bavarian Inn) — Shepherdstown

May 22-25
Webster County Woodchopping
Festival, Inc. — Webster Springs

May 23-25
Early Bird Bluegrass Festival (Cox's Field) — Walker

May 23-25
Vandalia Gathering 1980 (Cultural Center) — Charleston

May 24
Prickett's Fort Open Daily — Fairmont

May 24-25
Fort New Salem Opening Weekend — Salem

May 30-June 1
West Virginia Strawberry Festival — Buckhannon

May 31-June 1
Memorial Weekend, Fort New Salem — Salem

June 1
Rhododendron State Outdoor Art and Craft Festival
(State Capitol Grounds) — Charleston

June 5-7
Calhoun County Wood Festival — Grantsville

June 7-8
Mountaineer Open Horseshoe Tournament — Ronceverte

June 13-15
9th Annual Mountain Heritage
Arts & Crafts Festival — Harpers Ferry

June 19-22
West Virginia State Folk Festival — Glenville

June 20-22
Monroe County Arts and Crafts Fair — Peterstown

June 20-22
Wild 'N Wonderful Weekend
(North Bend State Park) — Cairo

June 21-Aug. 31
"Hatfields and McCoys" and "Honey in the Rock,"
outdoor musical dramas (Cliffside Ampitheatre,
Grandview State Park) — Beckley

June 27-29
West Virginia Regatta Festival — Sutton

June 30-July 5
Sistersville Lions July 4th Celebration — Sistersville

July 3-5
July Jamboree (City Park) — Fayetteville

July 3-7
Mountain State Art & Craft Fair (Cedar Lakes) — Ripley

July 4
Frontier Fourth Celebration (Prickett's Fort) — Fairmont

July 4
South Charleston 4th of July Celebration — South Charleston

July 4-5
Charleston July 4th Riverfront Festival — Charleston

July 4
Franklin Firemen's 4th of July Celebration — Franklin

July 4
Weston Volunteer Fire Department Independence Day
Celebration (Lewis County High School
Athletic Field) — Weston

July 4
Keyser Kiwanis 4th of July Celebration
(South End Recreation Park) — Keyser

July 4-6
Independence Day Celebration (Fort New Salem) — Salem

July 6-Aug.8
Augusta Heritage Arts Workshops
(Davis and Elkins College) — Elkins

July 10-Aug. 30
Fort New Salem Folk Arts and Crafts Workshops — Salem

July 11-13
Pioneer Days — Marlinton

July11-13
Quilt Show (North Bend State Park) — Cairo

July 19-20
Arts and Crafts Festival (Oglebay Park) — Wheeling

July 19-20
8th Annual Moundsville Open Horseshoe Tournament — Moundsville

July 22-26
4-H and Wood County Fair (Butcher Bend 4-H Camp) — Mineral Wells

July 25-26
8th Annual Old Time Fiddlers & Bluegrass Convention (Glenwood Park) — Princeton

July 25-26
10th Huntington Square/Round Dance Festival — Huntington

July 25-27
7th Annual Pocahontas County Mountain Music and Bluegrass Festival — Huntersville

July 28-Aug. 2
Magnolia Fair (Surosa Ball Park) — Matewan

July 28-Aug. 2
Jackson County Junior Fair — Cottageville

Aug. 4-10
Tyler County Fair — Middlebourne

Aug. 5-8
Berkeley County Fair — Martinsburg

Aug. 5-9
Mason County Fair — Point Pleasant

Aug. 6-9
Wirt County Fair — Elizabeth

Aug. 6-9
Cherry River Festival — Richwood

Aug. 8-9
Augusta Mountain Music and Crafts Festival (Davis and Elkins College) — Elkins

Aug. 8-10
8th Annual Logan County Arts and Crafts Fair (Logan Memorial Field House) — Logan

Aug. 8-10
West Virginia State Square and Round Dance Convention (Salem College) — Salem

Aug. 11-16
Nicholas County Fair — Summersville

Aug.14-17 and 21-24
"The Aracoma Story," outdoor drama (Chief Logan State Park Ampitheatre) — Logan

Aug. 15-17
Square Dance Festival (North Bend State Park) — Cairo

Aug. 16
Ice Cream Social — Lubeck

Aug.16-17
Lilly Reunion (Raleigh County Armory/Civic Center) — Beckley

Aug.16-23
State Fair of West Virginia — Fairlea

Aug. 22-24
West Virginia Bluegrass Festival (Cox's Field) — Walker

Aug. 22-24
Lincoln County Tobacco Fair — Hamlin

Aug. 24-Sept. 1
Charleston Sternwheel Regatta Festival — Charleston

Aug. 25-30
Jefferson County Fair — Charles Town

Aug. 25-30
Hampshire County Fair — Augusta

Aug. 26-30
Mannington District Fair — Mannington

Aug. 29-Sept. 1
Cairo Days Homecoming and Celebration — Cairo

Aug. 29-Sept. 1
Stonewall Jackson Heritage Arts and Crafts Jubilee (Jacksons' Mill State 4-H Camp) — Weston

Aug. 29
Sternwheel Regatta Art and Craft Fair (Capitol Street) — Charleston

Aug. 29-Sept. 1
Appalachian Arts and Crafts Festival (Raleigh County Armory/Civic Center) — Beckley

Aug. 30-Sept. 1
West Virginia State Horseshoe Tournament (City Park) — Parkersburg

Aug. 30-Sept. 1
Septemberfest — Fairmont

Aug. 31
Roane County Homecoming (Roane County 4-H Grounds) — Gandeeville

Aug. 31-Sept. 2
West Virginia Italian Heritage Festival — Clarksburg

Sept. 2-4
Hick Festival — Hendricks

Sept. 4-7
Kanawha County Fair (Camp Virgil Tate) — Charleston

Sept. 8-13
Frontier Days — Shinnston

Sept. 11-14
West Virginia Oil & Gas Festival — Sistersville

Sept. 13-14
Helvetia Community Fair — Helvetia

Sept. 14
Camp Meeting and Hymn Sing (Pricketts' Fort) — Fairmont

Sept. 15-16
Country Roads Fall Festival (Hawks Nest State Park) — Ansted

Sept. 15-20
King Coal Festival — Williamson

Sept. 18-21
Treasure Mountain Festival — Franklin

Sept. 20-21
18th Annual Harvest Moon Arts and Crafts Festival (City Park) — Parkersburg

Sept. 25-27
West Virginia Molasses Festival — Arnoldsburg

Sept. 25-28
Preston County Buckwheat Festival — Kingwood

Sept. 26-28
5th Annual Fall Mountain Heritage Arts and Crafts Festival — Harpers Ferry

Sept. 26-28
Golden Delicious Festival with string music (Bradley Field) — Clay

Whiskey Days

By Rebecca Browning

The hard times of the Great Depression were "whiskey days" for many West Virginians, when otherwise law-abiding citizens turned to illegal distilling as a financial last resort. The adventures of the amateur moonshiners are still vividly recalled, in tales usually told for the private consumption of family and friends. However, three residents of Raleigh and Summers counties agreed to share their memories for publication, providing confidentiality was maintained. For that reason, all names have been changed in the following article, and we are printing no photographs.—ed.

"Back in the '30's, I made five gallon of whiskey. Made it on a cookstove," Mr. Sadler said. We were sitting at the breakfast table where family and community history have been distilled into myth for at least 40 years.

"Yes, and I helped him," Mrs. Sadler said. "We like to died laughing."

"And we had a good time. We stayed up all night long making that whiskey. And it was good. Good whiskey."

"How did you know how to do it?" I asked.

"I knowed how to do it. I know how to make it," Mr. Sadler said. "I been around several stills where they's making it. I never did work with a still, but I been around several where they's making it."

"Why did you do it?"

"How come me to make it? How come me to make that five gallon of whiskey?"

"Yeah," I said.

"Well, when I made that five gallon of whiskey, I was a-working. And I hadn't gotten a check from my employer. He didn't have no money."

"Who were you working for?"

"I was working for Maple's Garage."

"Here in Beckley?"

"Here in Beckley. And I was living on Whitestick Street."

"Were you married then?"

"Yes," said Mrs. Sadler. "Had a little one toddling around." She laughed.

"We just decided, well, we'll make us a little run," Mr. Sadler said. "And I had the whiskey sold before I ever made it. So I made it, sold it, throwed away my outfit, and quit." We all laughed.

"I think we taken the worm* from that over at Streeter and threw it down behind a log," Mrs. Sadler said.

"Well, anyhow," Mr. Sadler said, "I made some money at it. And you could get cash for your—"

"Liquor," she finished.

"You could get cash for your liquor, that day and time," he said. "And back there, 50¢ I'd say was equal to—"

Mrs. Sadler said "15" while her husband said "20 dollars." She laughed.

"You couldn't—" Mr. Sadler continued. "School teachers! School teachers couldn't get their money! The checks, the checks of the county—school teachers couldn't get them cashed. They'd go to places and the stores, they'd cash 'em and hold 'em till the school got some money."

"How was it people could afford liquor?" I asked.

"Uh," Mr. Sadler said, laughing, "they could afford their liquor when they couldn't afford nothing else."

"They could always afford their liquor," Mrs. Sadler said.

"They could always afford their liquor," Mr. Sadler said. "And buddy, I'm a-going to tell you now, that was terrible times. During that time, when I was working in the garage, I have had men to come by, when I was making that whiskey and during them whiskey days, I had men to come by the shop, that garage there, their feet wrapped in burlap bags for shoes, ten degrees below zero. They was five or six of them. 'Where in the world you all going?' I said. 'Washington.' 'Why Washington?' 'Well, we're old soldiers. We can't get nothing to eat. There's nothing to work at. So we're going to Washington to join up with the rest of the gang, and see what we can get.' So."*

"They went up there and slept right around the White House, you know," Mrs. Sadler said. "Around the—"

" 'Round the White House," Mr. Sadler finished.

"Uh huh," Mrs. Sadler said.

"Slept in the lawn, didn't they?" Mr. Sadler said.

"Yes," Mrs. Sadler said. "Just ruined it."

"Tracked it down," Mr. Sadler said. "No shoes, no clothes."

"And you know, who was it?" Mrs. Sadler said. "What president did we have?"

"Had Hoover," Mr. Sadler said.

Mrs. Sadler laughed.

"You remember Mr. Hoover," he said to her.

"I sure do," she said.

"Mr. Hoover didn't know as much as a kid coming out of the eighth grade about running the country."

"Sam, he was a brilliant man. Mr. Hoover was a brilliant man," Mrs. Sadler said. "He just didn't know, didn't know how to manage the—"

"The United States."

"Yeah. He didn't know how to manage — he knew how to give away. He was Wilson's man that gave to foreign countries. Wilson, you know, during the war? Wilson appointed him to give to foreign

*The spiral-shaped copper condenser on a whiskey distillery.

*The "Bonus Army" of unemployed World War I veterans marched on Washington in 1932, demanding immediate payment of promised military bonuses. Congress eventually refused to do so, and in July President Hoover ordered the Army to remove the camping veterans from the capital. Chief of Staff Douglas MacArthur then used cavalry, tanks, bayonets, and tear gas to evict the old soldiers. Although Mr. Sadler recalls the marchers passing through Beckley in winter, the first thousand arrived in Washington in late May.

countries. And that was all he could do,"* Mrs. Sadler said.

"Now," Mrs. Sadler continued. "You talk about a whiskey deal. What would force you to make whiskey back in that time?"

"Wouldn't you have made it?" Mrs. Sadler said.

"And I'll ask you," Mr. Sadler said. "Wouldn't you have made it, little girl? Or anybody else. You'd have made it before you'd starve to death."

"There wasn't hardly anybody over there at Streeter but what made liquor," Mrs. Sadler said.

"Did they take it to Hinton, or Beckley, or—?" I said.

"Took it to Hinton and Beckley, yeah," Mr. Sadler said. "They come in and hauled it away. Hauled it away in cars. So. I decided, well, these people are so hard up, I think I'll haul a load for 'em to Beckley. They want me to. Back in that day. I took ten gallon of whiskey in a Model T Ford. I think that was my first or second trip with that whiskey."

"Second, I think," Mrs. Sadler said.

"And I went out to Jumping Branch and out there was the law. Had the law, had the road blocked. Had rifles. So, I looked, and I saw 'em as I was coming around the bend of the road, and I saw them with the road blocked and these rifles in their arms. I whups this Model T around, go back the other way. And I noticed that their car was a good ways from them. They was running to get in their car while I was turning around. I outrun them with that Model T Ford and got away with that ten gallon of whiskey—" he paused to chuckle "—and never was caught. And I got to thinking, on my way, my God, what am I doing it for? Just to help a friend. Liable to get caught, put in the pen for I don't know how long. What for? What am I doing it for? I wasn't getting a dime out of it. Just maybe gasoline. So I quit. Did not haul no more."

* Herbert Hoover, a mining engineer by training, was appointed by President Woodrow Wilson to take charge of various American relief programs in Europe during and after World War I.

If making whiskey on the kitchen stove seemed risky, hauling it was worse, so Mr. Sadler found a way to cash in on the moonshine boom from a safe distance.

"In the Depression, whiskey was a big deal. I had this repair shop, washing machines, what have you, here in Beckley. Had a fellow to come to me, say, 'Mr. Sadler, you're the very fellow that I need to make me a still.' I said, 'I could make you one, but I cannot assemble it. I can make you parts for it, but now you'll have to assemble it. I can't do that for you. I'm afraid of it. But I can make it for you.' He said, 'What's the biggest tub you can make?' I said, 'Well, I can get you a-going within three or four days here, with a 40-gallon tub. A 40-gallon copper still.' He said, 'My God, will it be copper?' I said, 'Yes, it'll be copper, and it'll be reinforced.' 'Well, can you make me a cap for it?' 'I'll make everything, out of copper.' I made that still out of copper."

"I went out to Jumping Branch and out there was the law, had the road blocked. I outrun them with that Model T Ford and got away with that ten gallon of whiskey."

"Where did you get your copper?" I said.

"It was a washing machine tub. Easy Washing Machine tub with cups in it, which the cups were very easy moved," Mr. Sadler said. "All I had to do was put a pipe on the bottom of the tub, and make a cap for it, and made a worm for the top of it, and that's all the pieces that I needed to make for it, was the worm and the cap."

"The manufacturer made the washer out of copper?" I said.

"The manufacturer manufactured the washing machine out of copper to start with. So, this fellow come up to the house here several different times. I did not care about him coming to my house."

"About what year was this?" I asked.

"Back in '40, '41, '42, wasn't it?"

"I guess," Mrs. Sadler said.

"About '41, '42," Mr. Sadler continued. "So, he come and looked at it, and said, 'That's exactly what I want.' Said, 'You've got the very thing I want.' I says OK. He paid me. Carried it away. In about 30 days, might have been 60 days, I was up town, up close to the courthouse, and I saw that washing machine tub, and it was my still."

"The law had got it," Mrs. Sadler said.

"Law had got that still and cut it, axed it, looked like a pole ax, a double bit, had cut holes all through it. Through the lid. I looked at it, knew it was mine, knew it was the one I'd made." He laughed. "Well. They'd done ruined that man's still. I'd call you his name, but I don't want to embarrass him. Maybe he's still living, I don't know. I don't want to call his name. I know his name.

"So later on he come back, said, 'You have another washing machine tub?' 'Yes sir, I got another one.' He said, 'They caught that one.' 'Did they?' 'Yeah.' I says, 'Didn't they catch you?' 'No, I wasn't there. But they got my still.' 'Well, you want another one like it?' 'I'd like to have another one exactly like it.' I said, 'Alright, I've got another tub like it, I'll make you another one.' OK. So, he taken that still back down to Sand Lick, that new one that I had made.

"Sand Lick's between here and Charleston, maybe 12 miles from over Glen Daniels. And he kept that one awhile. That one was gone for a long, long time. He just made lots of whiskey with it. But you know what? They got it. They give it the same treatment. I see at the courthouse later on, they cut that'n up. So this man did not come back to me no more for any more stills. But anyhow, I was taking all of them washing machine copper tubs that I had back in that time, and making stills out of them."

"How many did you make?" I asked.

"Oh, I guess I made seven or eight. I didn't have anything to keep me busy at the time. But I had to make them and keep quiet about it. Although I wasn't doing anything wrong. I wasn't making no whiskey, but I was making the stills to make it."

Mr. Sadler told of seeing whiskey flow from stills in streams as big as his thumb, a sizeable thumb, and told how his favorite coon dog Spot was shot dead for trespassing in a remote White Oak Mountain hollow owned by a local moonshine magnate.

"That was about the time when Tobe the mule saved Mrs. Sadler's brother Joe from going to the pen for making moonshine," he said.

Mrs. Sadler nodded yes. One of her younger brothers, Joe Wickham, who later made a fortune in timber, spent some of his evenings as an adolescent tending fires at the family still. His involvement ended with an incident that landed another brother, Claude, and their sister Esther's husband, Leighton Westhill, in the state penitentiary at Moundsville for a two-and-a-half year stretch.

"How did they get caught?" I asked. "Wonder if Joe would talk about it?"

"I know," Mrs. Sadler said. "I know how they got caught."

"I know how they got caught, too," Mr. Sadler said.

Both the Sadlers were quiet until I prodded them. "Well, tell me about it," I said.

"Uh, I won't tell you the name of the person, because we love 'em," Mrs. Sadler said, "but she just said, "There's a spring at Daddy's place,' I think is the way she said it, 'that needs to be stopped.' And that was all she said.'

"I think why she said it," Mr. Sadler said, "Her sweetheart was up in that part of the country then —"

"He wasn't her sweetheart, he was her husband," Mrs. Sadler said.

"—hanging around this still. Very good friend of Westhill and—"

"The Wickhams," Mrs. Sadler said.

"—and the Wickhams. And he got to drinking that stuff. So I guess maybe he was helping them a little bit, too, but anyhow, he got to drinking and he went home to his wife, and she just told the law there was a spring up there."

"She didn't." Mrs. Sadler said. "She didn't tell the law.'

"She did," Mr. Sadler said.

"No, she didn't. She told her relatives that, and they told the law. She don't know that I know that today," Mrs. Sadler said.

"That's all, that's how it come about," Mr. Sadler said. "They would use this mule to go down to the still. And Joe was hauling wood. Back in that day and time you had to fire a still by wood. They didn't know how to use gasoline or kerosene burners. They built them a fire and Joe was hauling wood with a mule. And he noticed every time he'd go after a load of wood that the mule would perk up its ears and look at something. So he went back and told Leighton, he says, 'Leighton, I'm being watched. I'm going to quit.' 'What are you going to do?' 'I'm going home, that's what I'm going to do.' So he went home."

"Leighton told him to go on," Mrs. Sadler said.

"Told him, 'Go on. Go home if you want to.' So anyhow, they got Claude to help. They had to have somebody. So, they's running whiskey all that night. Well, the revenuers didn't come in on 'em of a night. They waited till daylight."

"Caught them at the still?" I asked.

"No," said Mrs. Sadler, "they didn't catch them there."

"They went home for breakfast and they caught 'em there," said Mr. Sadler. "Said they watched 'em, and knowed what they's doing, knowed where their worm and everything was at and where their still was at, and they knowed all about it," he said. "Got the warrant for Joe, but—"

"Never did read it," Mrs. Sadler said.

"Never did read it," Mr. Sadler agreed.

"And went and got Claude," Mrs. Sadler said, "and they didn't even have a warrant for Claude."

The two men, Leighton Westhill and Claude Wickham, were sent to Moundsville prison for a five-year term, leaving their wives, Esther and Maria, to — in Mr. Sadler's words—"scratch out a living on the hillside as best they could."

"And I'm going to tell you, that was something," Mr. Sadler said.

"That was hard," she said.

"That was hard. They was already having hard times. And there wasn't no money allotted to them like they are today. You didn't have no DPA, nor WPA. None of that. Them women made it the best they could till their men come home. When the men come home, why they got to faring better. But even at that, there wasn't no work. Wasn't nothing for them to do. If it wasn't for the women, they would have been better off in the pen and stayed there, 'cause there wasn't no work for them to do. They wasn't no money. They wasn't nothing. Mr. Hoover was running the country. You know, that wonderful Republican president. I never will forget him."

"I never will either," Mrs. Sadler said. "And a man come out there at the store and told me Mr. Hoover was wonderful. He was at a meeting at Charleston, I guess, where Hoover spoke, and Hoover said that a man didn't need more than a pair of overalls and one dollar a day, is all a man needed. This man said, 'I heard him say it, and,' he said, 'he was right.' " She laughed. "That's all he got."

The community of Streeter in Summers County revolved around a post office, a grist mill, and a general store. The store went bankrupt early in the Depression. Forty years or more of forest growth now covers the area where most of the community stood. A Missionary Baptist church stands near the site of the mill.

Generations of Wickhams and three other families grew up, married, and died there. When Claude

Wickham died several years ago, his body was brought back to the Wickham family cemetery to lie beside his sisters, brothers, and his father, once the proprietor of the general store and the teacher at the one-room school where most of the children were educated. On a visit to the cemetery with the Sadlers we found the woman who Claude first married, in work clothes with a rake in her hand. She had just finished mowing the grass.

Maria Ellis Wickham's mother was Spanish, her father was a Texan who supervised a sugar plantation on a Caribbean island. Claude Wickham met her when she was a very young girl, while he was stationed with the Army on the island during World War I. He married her and brought her back to Streeter where she learned to speak the local dialect of English. She reverts to it now when she is at ease.

In the '50's she attained bachelor's and master's degrees in education, but long before that she was teaching in Streeter's one-room school. The families of her students were involved in moonshining, as they had been for generations, but it was only a supplemental income.

"They farmed," Maria recalled, "but farming wasn't enough, and they had to make a little extra money some way, and that was about the only way they could make it. And they didn't think that they was breaking the law, and they didn't think that they was doing anything that they shouldn't do. Because all they were trying to do is make a little extra money so they could buy clothes and things for their home, and some of them bought farming machinery. And they were going to help themselves the best way they could."

"Do you know of anybody that's moonshining up here now?" I said.

"No, I don't know of any going on."

"I don't think there is any," Mrs. Sadler said.

"People is gone on DPA, and they get stamps. There's a way to live now without moonshining," Mr. Sadler said. "That moonshining was the only deal back then. You couldn't live without moonshining."

"Who did they sell it to?" I asked.

"Oh, they had their customers," Maria said. "They were in town."

"Lawyers," Mr. Sadler said. "And . . . "

"And then they usually would sell it wholesale to somebody," Maria said. "And they got it away from here."

"I knowed lots of people that bought it," Mr. Sadler said.

"And nobody, as far as I know, nobody would hardly ever turn anybody up with it, report them," Maria said.

"Somebody turned up the Wickham brothers and Leighton Westhill," I said. "What about that?" There was a long pause before Maria spoke.

"That moonshining was the only deal back then. You couldn't live without moonshining."

"Well, Claude, Claude got caught," Maria said, "but when he got caught it wasn't his—"

"His fault," Mrs. Sadler finished.

Maria explained that Claude was taking the place of another man that night, "somebody that is very respected, and a good man now." The other man "was just making a run because he wanted to get married and he wanted to save a little money. And he had to do something that night and Claude took his place. And the officers raided them that night and caught Claude. And Claude had to pay for somebody—but he never opened his mouth. I never did. Nothing was ever said."

"Did you know that he was going to make moonshine that night?" I asked.

"No," Maria answered, "he didn't tell me, he just told me he was going to spend the night with Leighton and Esther. And we just said alright. You know how they used to do that," she said to the Sadlers. "Go help them get wood or something."

"When did you find out, then?" I asked. "The next day?"

"Found it out when they got 'em," Maria said.

"Did they come to the house and get him?" I asked.

"No, they come up to Leighton's," Mrs. Sadler said.

"They come up there and got 'em, and they really didn't catch 'em, they just saw Claude hiding, helping hide it," Maria said. "And he hid it so well. Somewhere back where that pond is now. They [the revenuers] walked all around it and over it and couldn't find it. They had to tell them where to look."

"He told them?" I said.

"He told them. I wouldn't have done it, but Claude did," Maria said. "That's the difference in us. I wouldn't have said a word."

"Some of that Claude and Leighton come and dug it up after they got out," Mr. Sadler said. "They didn't tell them where all of that was."

"No," Maria said, "they didn't. And they [the revenuers] take them five-gallon jugs and bumped them together and broke them up."

"What did you do while Claude was in prison?" I asked.

"I did housework for people," Maria said.

"Just did the best you could, didn't you?" Mrs. Sadler said.

"You couldn't teach then?" I said.

"Oh," she said, "I didn't know, I didn't even think about teaching then. All I did was, I stayed home that summer with Esther. She had a new baby. And she had to have somebody, so I stayed with her. The baby was born in May, I think, and I come up here and stayed with Esther. Esther and me raised a garden and canned fruit and did the best we could. We didn't have milk for the kids. I had to go all the way to Raleigh to get buttermilk," Maria said. "They give it to me."

"Well, well," said Mrs. Sadler.

"Were you mad at your husband for doing that?" I said.

"No, no!" Maria said, and Mrs. Sadler echoed "No!" "You don't get mad at people for doing that!"

"For doing what they have to do," Mrs. Sadler said.

"That's something, one of the things you don't have nothing to say about," Maria said. "I wasn't much to get mad. Well, anyway, he come over to stay all night with him [Leighton], and I didn't know it, but they caught him that night. Or they saw him that night. They went up to Leighton's the next morning and slipped up on him. And he could have—"

"Got away," Mrs. Sadler said.

"—got away. He had a chance because he said he saw old Tobe, an old mule grandpa had, and Tobe was smart and mean. And he said old Tobe—he looked out the window, and old Tobe's ears was a-doing this way. And he said, 'I knew somebody was up there,' and he said, 'I knew just about what to expect.' He felt that he knew what was going to happen. But he thought about Esther and then he didn't want to cut out on Leighton. He thought about the boy that was with them—he was what? about 16?—anyway, they didn't want to tell on this boy because he's young. He knew Lee just had the one arm. So he stayed. They didn't really see Claude make it. They saw Claude help hide it. And they watched him from the top of the hill."

"Who was it that caught him?" I asked.

"It was Hayden Hutchens and—"

"And Eugene Boggs," Mrs. Sadler said.

"They were the officers. And Hayden Hutchens' daughter was married to Claude's brother. Hutchens was a Republican, too. Something like that," Maria said. She and the Sadlers laughed. "Everyone on the Democrats but them, but they say no, they say Hayden Hutchens and Eugene Boggs are Republicans. Anyway, Claude, he gave me all the money he had in his pocket. He said, 'Here's all the money I have.' That was 34¢.

"So, that summer I was sleeping upstairs and there was no windows upstairs there, just boards across the windows. I had my little baby with me, and I went upstairs to sleep, and the only thing I was afraid of was them screech owls. They go through there, those windows, you know, and whew! Sometimes I'd go down and get in bed with Esther. I knew what they was doing, but they was giving me the shivers. And somebody told me if I had a lantern and turned the light on, they'd quit doing that.

"We had a lamp, but didn't have any bulb. So I went down to Jumping Branch to get some groceries, and rode a mule without a saddle and stirrups. That's the way I rode him because that was all we had. The kids found an old sidesaddle at the Harvey place, and we put that thing on, put the saddle on, and it went under the belly of the mule, you know." Everyone laughed. "We couldn't get it to stay on. Anyway, I took 20¢ out of my 34¢, and bought a lantern globe. Well, I didn't have sense enough to put it in something and fix it so I wouldn't drop it, so when I got on my mule, the man, Mr. Flint, handed me the bulb, and the mule reared up — down went my bulb and broke."

The memory provokes only hilarity now, and she and the Sadlers all laughed.

"Twenty cents!" Mr. Sadler said. "Gone!"

"My 20¢ out of 34 was gone," Maria said. "Then I had a toothache so bad it was killing me, some of my teeth was hurting real bad. And not one penny did I have to have my tooth pulled. I couldn't borrow it, couldn't nobody give it to me. It cost a dollar to have your teeth pulled then. So Grandpa come from Raleigh, said somebody say they'll buy the tires off Claude's new truck that was in the shed. They give me a dollar apiece for those tires. So they give me a dollar apiece for them, and I used one of those dollars to go and get that tooth pulled. I never will forget that. Used the other money to buy me a pair of shoes and the baby a pair of shoes for winter."

"What did Claude say about prison?" I asked. "Do you remember what it was like?"

"He wasn't allowed to," Maria said. "They check every letter that went out, what is it they call it?"

"Censor," Mrs. Sadler said.

"Censored everything," Maria said. "And every time they'd send something back, they wrote to me, told me what to say and what not to say to him, and I was careful not to say anything to make him dissatisfied more than I could help. And I wrote to him all the time. Stamps were 2¢ apiece then, wasn't they? I managed to get the stamps and we wrote to him and we told him about home, about the kids and things, and he wrote me once a week. I had a little box camera that I brought from my home. I had pictures of me and the baby made, and sent them to him. Sent pictures of the baby—and I never could get him to smile, hardly ever. And I remember him writing a letter back saying, 'Well, [the baby] must have had nails for breakfast, because he was so mean-looking."

Mr. Sadler related the story of Claude Wickham's and Leighton Westhill's return from prison, and the end of their part in "the whiskey deal."

"They got out in two years on good behavior. So they sent 'em back from the pen, and I picked them up at Prince and brought them here at home. They had issued them a suit each. Their suits was just alike. Striped. I said, 'Where did you get your pretty clothes?' They said, 'They furnished them at the pen.' Shucks. 'Give you any money?' 'Yes, they give us a little money. Paid our train fare back to Prince'."

"I forget whether they give them $10 or what," Mrs. Sadler said.

"Didn't give them a whole lot," Mr. Sadler said. "They come back here and I taken them in my car over in the country to their homes."

Leighton Westhill, according to Mr. Sadler, dug up the whiskey he had hidden before he went to prison, sold it, took his family and left. Claude Wickham went to work in a sawmill. "And," said Mr. Sadler, "if you want to know more about it, you'll have to ask the boys on White Oak Mountain."

in this issue

GARY E. BAKER, a native of Wheeling, has been the curator of the Oglebay Institute-Mansion Museum since the summer of 1976. In May of that year he received his B. A. degree from the College of William and Mary in Virginia, where he majored in the history of art and in history. In the summer of 1978 he received further training in Boston University's summer Institute at the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston. Baker organized the exhibition "Sullivan's Universe: The Art of Patrick J. Sullivan, Self-Taught West Virginia Painter" and authored the catalog for that exhibition. He is current president of the Wheeling Area Historical Society and a member of the board of directors of The Friends of Wheeling, Inc.

REBECCA BROWNING has written retail advertising copy for a department store, did press releases for the West Virginia University News Service, worked as an administrator at WWVU-TV in Morgantown and at WSWP-TV in Beckley, and did promotion and advertising for Theatre Arts of West Virginia, Inc. She lives in Mabscott and sells home improvement products for a Beckley contracting company.

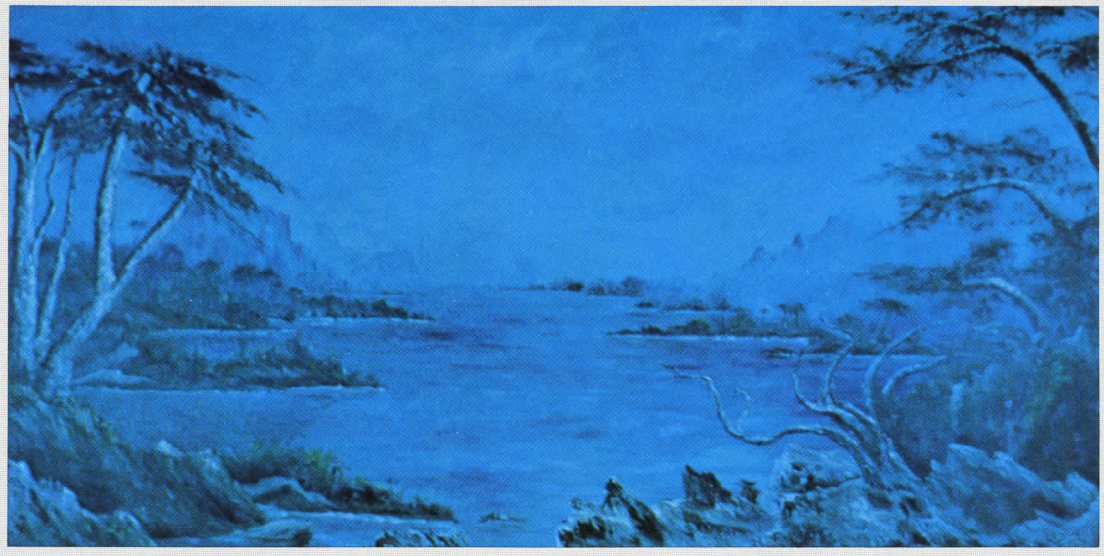
ARTHUR C. PRICHARD, born and reared in Mannington, was graduated from Mannington public schools, West Virginia University, and McCormick Theological Seminary (Presbyterian) of Chicago. Mr. Prichard served as the pastor of churches in Ohio and Pennsylvania and in Wheeling and Mannington before retiring 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 Silas Ritchie in the January-March 1980 issue.

DENNIS TENNANT was born and raised in Monongalia County. He served as a photo intern at the *Charleston Daily Mail* before his cum laude graduation in journalism from West Virginia University. He was a 1977 finalist in the Hearst national photojournalism competition, and also placed in several photography clip contests, sponsored by the West Virginia News Photographers' Association. He is currently employed as staff photographer for the Morgantown *Dominion-Post.*

DIANE CASTO TENNANT, a native of Ripley, Jackson County, graduated cum laude from West Virginia University in 1978 with a degree in journalism and a minor in wildlife management. She has been employed as a news reporter for the *Raleigh Register* in Beckley and at the *Parkersburg News,* and was the recipient of a state first place award for spot news reporting in 1979. A freelance writer, she is currently employed as a graduate assistant at WVU where she is working towards her master's degree in journalism. Mrs. Tennant is the wife of photographer Dennis Tennant.

DAVID SUTTON is a native of Helvetia, Randolph County. His great-grandfather immigrated to Helvetia directly from Switzerland in 1872, and many of the family have continued to live there since. David graduated from Davis and Elkins College in 1977, with degrees in religion and sociology, and is now working under a grant from the West Virginia Humanities Foundation to collect the oral history of Helvetia.

JACK WELCH, a native of Hancock County, is Coordinator of the Program for the Humanities at West Virginia University, teaches Appalachian literature, and oversees the Appalachian Studies majors there. He is currently at work on a book on Appalachian baptistry paintings, and has an excellent slide show/lecture on the subject. His last contribution to GOLDENSEAL was "Shape-note Singing in Appalachia: An Ongoing Tradition," written with Alice Fortney Welch and published in April-September 1978.



Top: Painting by Frances Reed, Mill Creek Baptist Church, Jackson County. Photograph by Jack Welch.
Above: Mrs. Frances Reed and husband Walter, at home on Frozen Camp Creek, Jackson County. Photograph by Jack Welch.
Right: Painting by Duane Bush, Church of Christ near Scott Depot, Putnam County. Photograph by Jack Welch.

"A Heritage of Regional Landscapes: Appalachian Baptistry Paintings," by Jack Welch, begins on page 41.

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