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Magazine of the

Jefferson County Historical Society

Volume LXVI
December 2000

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Magazine of the

JEFFERSON COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY



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"No man is fit to be entrusted with the control of the present who is ignorant of the past, and no people who are indifferent to their past need hope to make their future great."

"History by apprizing them of their past will enable them to judge of the future; it will avail them of the experience of other times and other nations; it will qualify them as judges of the actions and designs of man; it will enable them to know ambition under every disguise it may assume, and, knowing it, to defeat its views."

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JEFFERSON COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Organized May 21, 1927
Post Office Box 485
Charles Town, West Virginia 25414

OFFICERS

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Emeritus Officers—Frank Buckles, Mrs. John A. Washington.
Membership—Open to all who have interest in the history of Jefferson County. Annual dues of $5.00 may be sent to Membership Secretary, P.O. Box 485, Charles Town, WV 25414, after the beginning of the fiscal year on January 1.

PUBLICATIONS

One copy of the Magazine is mailed to each person holding a paid membership. Until the publication of next year's Magazine, members may purchase additional copies for $6.00 each; order these from The Society, Box 485, Charles Town. Original volumes or facsimile reproductions are available to all persons at $7.00 per Magazine.

The Society also has copies of various books available:

The Washington Homes of Jefferson County. $10.00 mailed.

Michael D. Thompson, *Calendar and Index to Recorded Plats in Jefferson County, West Virginia (Virginia) Courthouse, 1801-1901.* $25.00 mailed.

Between the Shenandoah and Potomac: Historic Homes of Jefferson County, West Virginia. $45.00 mailed.

Burials in Jefferson County, West Virginia, 1978-97. $18.00 mailed.

Growing Up In Charles Town: History and Memory

Saul Viener

President Stealey, Members of the Jefferson County Historical Society, and hometown friends, ever since Professor Stealey invited me to speak at this, the Annual Meeting of the Society, I have been flooded with precious memories and heartfelt emotions. Not only is this a signal honor, but even more, you have given me something which happens all too seldom, a happy opportunity to re-visit my childhood, to once more grow up in Charles Town.

I am as grateful for your invitation as I am to the Almighty for having brought me to this festive and meaningful occasion.

How did it happen that I was born in Charles Town, West Virginia?

I am the youngest child of two immigrant orphans who had fortunately come to America from Lithuania, met here and were married September 2, 1902 in Philadelphia. Had they not come here they and their children would have been slaughtered by the Nazis and their willing helpers in Lithuania. The newlyweds moved to Shippensburg, PA where my father continued his efforts to buy scrap iron, metal and rubber products to be shipped to mills, a modest entrepreneur.

In 1907 my father was en route by train from Pennsylvania to Staunton, Virginia, to investigate a possible business venture. Another passenger was a prominent Jefferson County farmer and businessman, John Engle. During the journey there was a chance meeting of these two men. Mr. Engle told Hyman Viener about Jefferson County and Charles Town, providing details of economic opportunities and the possibilities of living here. When the Staunton situation proved unsatisfactory my father decided to stop here before returning home.

Charles Town looked like a good place to live and there could be possibilities for a livelihood. Promptly renting a house and stable, he returned to Shippensburg where my mother, always cooperating, always sharing responsibilities and challenges, responded favorably. Though a small town of perhaps 3,000 persons, Charles Town proved to be all for which they had hoped and labored to achieve.

It happened that my parents, Hyman and Rebecca Viener, nineteenth century Pilgrims in a New Land, were motivated to pattern their lives on

the Judaic principles that the world rests on Prayer, Education and Justice. In Hebrew "Justice" is "Tzedakah" which can also mean philanthropy. According to our ancient calendar, we read the Pentateuch, the Greek Word for the Five books of Moses: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy, during the course of the 12 months of the year. This week we conclude the very last section of the Book of Numbers which not only instructed those about to enter the Holy Land how to conduct themselves, but how succeeding generations should live. To accompany each Scriptural portion is a lesson from the Prophets. Upon this occasion it is Jeremiah who proclaimed for all eternity: "Seek the welfare of the city wherein you dwell, and pray unto the Lord for it. For in its welfare, shall be your peace."

These were the ideals of young Hyman and Rebecca Viener who came to Charles Town in 1907 with a very young daughter, Sarah, and a son, Harry. The children had been born in Shippensburg. Tragically, Sarah died at the age of eight. No doubt, some of you will remember Harry who served in the Charles Town City Council in the 1930s.

Several pieces of correspondence have survived from those early years. Incorporating business and family matters, my father's brother, Harry, writes, "First, write how your business is. Have you gotten a horse? Now if you can come sometime with all of your little family, you will be welcome guests, and we can have a good time together. Greet everyone for me. We wish you all the best in luck." Sustaining family ties was as important as livelihood because travel was not easy nor inexpensive.

Distance and dislocation also gave rise to growth and fulfillment because my seven brothers and I were able to grow up free, free to live openly as inheritors of the faith and rituals of Judaism while absorbing the rich history of our Charles Town as well as the miracle of the American republic. Thus, we were beneficiaries of the blending of two worthy traditions. And now I stand here today endeavoring to capture something of the past and to give it meaning.

My parents' first house was located on the site of the Western Union office of my youth and across from the Post Office. Later they moved to a house of North George Street just about where the street curves toward Ranson. Near them were Dr. and Mrs. Pittman and their daughters. I recall that in later years their daughter, Marie, who had married and moved to either Strasburg or Williamstown, VA, frequently returned to Charles Town to visit her parents and would always include my folks.

Across the road from the North George Street house was the Goetz Saddlery factory and beyond was the Goetz residence. Colonel George, who had served in the First World War, his brother, Mr. Hiram, and even their shy sister, Miss Jenny, were all friends of my parents and even part of my childhood. About 1917 our family moved to a spacious brick house which had been built by Senator Campbell at 300 South George Street. At that time the family included Harry, Joseph, Louis, Jacob, Rueben and Maurice. Eli was born October 13, 1918 in the new house. Then on March 2, 1921, I arrived. Jake often tells the story that he was playing outside when Dr. Abner Albin came out of the house and reported, "Oh, it's another boy!" and proceeded elsewhere. It was becoming a routine announcement, I guess.

My remarks today are not just a personal journey because it provides me with an opportunity to pay tribute to those good people who helped my parents by offering hospitality and friendship, and some helped my father start his business. Charles Town proved to be all for which they had hoped and labored to achieve.

To help prepare me for today's talk, John Stealey was kind enough to send me two copies of our Magazine which I found to be very good. I was so favorably impressed with the quality and contents that I just couldn't read it fast enough. I remembered when Miss Virginia Lucas had the fatal automobile accident. Then, among many memories, was "Skinny" Hammond, my classmate, and the story of his aunt Camilla Wilshire's restoration and preservation efforts. When I turned to the membership lists and the officers my mind became a "VCR" flicking backward and forward, images upon images, rediscovered, reorganized, refreshing.

Walking was the order of the day in those years before obtaining a driver's permit. At long last when I could take that driving test it proved to be a horror because of the difficulty of trying to get up the hill at Kearneysville because you had to change gears in the process! On a long ago Saturday, not unlike today, our neighbor, Miss Bettie Weirick, would amble across the South George Street to make sure that all was in order for Sunday morning Mass in St. James's Catholic Church. Next door to the church was the Bishop residence where my mother and her boys were always welcome by Miss Margaret and her mother. Once they placed me on a little chair in the garden and took my picture.

Perhaps this was one of the times when Mrs. Bishop would share her concerns with my mother about her author son, John Peale Bishop, who lived so far away. Was this while he was writing the sensational novel,

"Act of Darkness"? Sensational, of course, because it was based on something which had happened here. I recall that some years later when I had learned about the book I asked for it at the old Charles Town Library. I was told in somewhat frigid tones, "We don't carry that kind of book!" I don't think that I ever did read it, but I managed to learn about its background.

Back across the street I could often be found at the home of my special friend, Roger Merchant, who lived with his grandmother, Mrs. Moler, in the house between the Weirick sisters and the Eby residence. Beyond them was where Miss Mamie and Miss Hannah Howell lived and beyond the alley, Miss Christine Washington and then the Amblers. The Methodist parsonage was across the street. Do you remember the Reverend Rosenberger and his attractive family?

One evening last week while trying once more to revise another draft of today's remarks, the telephone rang. A voice exclaimed, "This is Cathy Butzner from Fredericksburg. I just had to speak with you because today's mail brought a notice about your speaking in Charles Town. I've been thinking about you and your family all afternoon. I can still see you and your mother walking with you and Eli on an afternoon stroll. Maybe it was your Sabbath. Do you remember that you had curls? I tried writing down the names of all you children, but I'm missing a few. Whom did I leave out?" All sorts of memories and stories flowed, and when there was a brief pause I acknowledged her thoughtfulness and exclaimed, "Catherine Todd Beltzhoover Butzner, how wonderful!"

I filled in the family gaps, identifying those who had died and that Jake and I were the only ones left. Cathy recaptured memories and experiences long forgotten. By 'phone we traveled the Charles Town landscape from one street to another connecting the past with those who might still be part of the families who were neighbors and part of my life as well as hers. Bowling, Trapnell, Phillips, Moore, Rissler, Huyett, McCormick, Wysong, Conklyn, Getzendanner, Baylor, her father, George, and mine. Finally, our telephone visit ended. Reluctantly, I replaced the instrument, holding on to it, continuing to feel the joy as I shed tears of appreciation for an unexpected and unforgettable preview of what today might have in store for me.

Oh, make me a child again for tonight! Implores the poet.

It has been almost three-fourths of a century since my father took me by the hand, and we walked down Academy Street, sometimes described as the "alley", away from our house for about two and a half blocks to

what appeared to be a very large brick building. It was the Graded School, and I was about to start my schooling. I can still see my father standing along the wall with other fathers and mothers in Louise Gardiner's first grade classroom.

Growing up in Charles Town for this Viener also meant following seven older brothers who had passed this way before, and some of whose teachers became mine. All of this had both its positive and negative aspects. "Just you wait until you get into this teacher's class or that one." Sometimes it was constructive; sometimes it was pure devilment. After all, I was the youngest and smallest in my family.

Occasionally, the suggestions were indeed constructive such as Eli telling me about the Sixth Grade teacher Mrs. (Annie Darke) Baker who would read some very good stories. "One will be about a mongoose, a little animal in India, RIKI TIKI TAVI, and it's going to be wonderful." And it was! Of course, it was Rudyard Kipling at his best.

If memory serves me correctly, Mrs. Baker had taught all of the Viener "boys". In addition, she had taught the members of quite a few other families because I recall frequent observations, comparisons and criticisms along such lines. I also remember one other little episode having to do with the morning ritual of marching into the auditorium "two by two" while one of the teachers kept the Victrola going. In the early years it may have been Miss Turner and later, Mamie Howell. However, no conversation was allowed. Silence was the rule, but one morning I just had to say something to my fellow marcher, Sherman League. Naturally, it was of such importance that he needed to respond. After all, whatever it was just could not wait!

No sooner had we returned to our classroom when we were singled out for the entire class to learn of our misdeeds. As I tried to shrink as far as I could into my seat, and the same for poor innocent Sherman, I could see Mrs. Baker writing our names on a corner of the blackboard near the door, announcing to the world that each of us would have to remain either 15 or 25 minutes after school ended.

Now, I really don't recall whether we began geography in Lucille Webster's Fourth Grade class or history in Anna Rissler's fifth. Did Mary Bradshaw teach us in both the second and third grades? Miss Mary Engle, tall and wearing long skirts, taught another section of the third grade. She was a sister of the man who told my Father about living in Charles Town. Recess was often in the basement of the Graded School building with Madeleine Morris in charge. She married Clarence Hamrick, a CHS

science teacher. It seems to me she was an assistant to Mr. Denny, our Principal, and didn't he teach us geography at one point?

From Mrs. Baker's upstairs corner room we could see the Charles High School Building which included the Junior High School, our next step in our advancing education. We would find procedures and schedules different from the Graded School. Mr. Hurley, would be our new Principal, but we knew something about him because his son, David, was in our class. Upon reflection, I guess we were beginning to think that we were maturing, but now all these years later it was a farewell to an innocent and happy childhood era. The next six years would bring new experiences, new friends and even new teachers.

When I entered the Seventh Grade Eli was a freshman and Maurice a junior in High School. Both were active in after school programs so I remained somewhat in the background, but when I reached the freshman class one of the rewards was Latin, taught by Miss Martha Phillips. This was an important first for me, an introduction to another language and an expansion of my knowledge. It was an exciting challenge, the classics interpreted by an excellent teacher. Another first was French in my junior year, an interest which continued into my college years and beyond.

One ecumenical memory was learning a French Christmas Carol in preparation for an Assembly in the Auditorium. Later someone commented that he did not know that I could sing that well. I replied that I didn't either, but I certainly was loud! Poor Elise Hill, our teacher, suffered from an allergy to chalk dust so periodically unnamed members of our class would beat the erasers against the blackboard frames before she entered the classroom. With my own allergies in adulthood I guess penance is being enacted!

Mrs. Dick taught us algebra in our first two years of high school followed by Mr. Hurley and Plane Geometry. In my Senior year I continued with mathematics by taking Solid Geometry. The popular and often repeated "joke" about not being able to see through it prevailed, of course. Science subjects were really not my favorites. Fresh from college and Shepherdstown native, Max Derr, taught Biology. Then in my Senior year there was Physics with Ted Elliott. They were both younger than the remainder of the faculty which helped. It seems to me that I constructed some sort of project for Physics which failed to fulfill the design and purpose. However, we had fun in those classes and even absorbed some knowledge.

The Junior-Senior Prom was certainly a highlight as Spring arrived.

The Juniors arranged the event in honor of the Seniors. Everyone had a good time with preparations and then the event, a dinner and some remarks followed by dancing. The following year, as Seniors, of course, we were the guests. My dancing had not improved. Graduation was only a few days ahead.

School teachers were always welcome guests in our home, not unlike other homes. Without making light of the seriousness of their responsibilities of keeping in touch with the families of the children they taught, I would like to think that there was another reason for calling on my mother. We had a flourishing grape arbor in the backyard behind our garage. Every year Mom made wine, sweet and rather pleasant to taste, especially if your were only 8 or 10 years old. In addition, depending on the season, there was a supply of fruit cakes which had been soaking in some of that wine. If we were out of fruit cake there was always another kind of cake and a small goblet of wine which were served to all visitors, including our teachers.

My growing up in Charles Town was a bit different from my friends and classmates, but in a very positive way. Judaism is largely home oriented. Even though we had no local house of worship, the Sabbath and Festivals were scrupulously observed and maintained within our home. The High Holidays in the Fall were the most significant. Business came to a halt, and in succeeding years we all went to Martinsburg, and then Baltimore, and, finally, Washington where my parents and older brothers remained affiliated with one congregation until their deaths. As children we welcomed the holidays because we were excused from school. Nevertheless, we had to make up all of the work which was missed.

In the very early years before my arrival my parents retained a tutor who lived with us in order to provide religious instruction for the older boys. However, by my time, when the Martinsburg synagogue began to grow, it hired an acting rabbi who filled all the needs including religious instruction in the neighboring areas. For as long as I can remember we were affiliated and involved in the Martinsburg congregation. My father had been one of the founders, and my mother was active in the Women's Auxiliary.

Of course, these few stories and memories do not probe the depths of Jewish-Christian relationships in our country at large or elsewhere in the world. As children we heard stories of prejudice, even hatred which had been part of our parents' lives in Europe and at times in America. In Charles Town I can not recall any unpleasantness. Yes, there were

incidents about which my parents had spoken, and there were evil people who did not hesitate to point out that we were Jews, and did it unkindly. However, it was their loss to shun us.

The Jews of Charles Town comprised a small minority, five or six families at the most. I believe that when my parents arrived in 1907 they found the unmarried Palmbaum brothers, Meyer and George, merchants and owners of the Palm Hotel. Also in Charles Town was the Theodore family which ultimately had five daughters. Ike Herz, his sister, Miss Lena, and their mother lived there. The Blums and Manstofs arrived somewhat later.

Do you remember Mr. Herz, his courtly manners, his very good men's furnishings store which could compare very favorably today with Brooks Brothers or Paul Stuart? He was a very responsible citizen and had envisioned a beautification plan for the heavily traveled road between Charles Town and the Bloomery. The County adopted a plan of planting climbing rose bushes at intervals on either side of the road. The pink roses flourished but not like Herz because a reckless driver on Main Street struck him down. It was fatal and a major loss to our community. Miss Lena, now alone, moved to Baltimore.

Many of my favorite memories surround the Festival of Passover in the Spring for which there are many customs and requirements. The house, and especially the kitchen, had to be thoroughly cleaned in order to remove any kinds of leavened bread or foods. We even went to Bush and Perry's dairy farm for the cows to be milked directly in to our containers. It was also a great opportunity to explore the farm and play with the Bush children. Provisions for Passover had to be obtained elsewhere, Baltimore, in the early years, which involved a long drive by automobile, almost three hours or more each way. For the parents it was a challenge, but for the children, an adventure. Needless to say, large quantities of everything were required for our expanding family. However as each year passed it became necessary to purchase extra Matzo, the unleavened bread, to accommodate an increasing number of friends and neighbors. Thus, commemorating the Exodus from Egypt took on meaning for others in addition to our family. Not until my college days did I become more aware of how my friendships were weekday associations and not for Sunday. My local friends were, for the most part, faithful churchgoers. In my younger days Saturday evening and Sunday were lively because my other brothers came home from Washington for the weekend. Our house was filled with people and considerable activity. It was fun. By the time I

entered my third year of college some of the "boys" (Joe and Reuben) had married. Maurice also married, but remained in Charles Town. Reuben and Jake had transferred to Richmond so we saw some of them less frequently.

Concern for the less fortunate was always an obligation in our household. It was frequently implemented because the Great Depression brought men seeking basic necessities. It was not uncommon when these unfortunates knocked at our door they were brought to our table for something to eat.

Others who came across our threshold were men who traveled into remote and rural America on behalf of Jewish concerns. These collectors would bring news of friends or family whom they had seen before reaching Charles Town. In turn, they would carry news from here to their next destinations. After all, this was many years ago when some aspects of life in a small town were not unlike frontier days of an even earlier era.

Thus, childhood and early teens passed. Suddenly, I was one of the 1938 graduating class of Charles Town High School. The small protected world of childhood and Charles Town was coming to an end. Our lives were about to change, a change beyond anything we may have ever realized. With every passing year the significance of that juncture, entering college and then going off to war takes on additional meaning. Although my older brothers had gone away to college, Georgetown University and the University of Pennsylvania, to the latter through the encouragement of Dr. Stanley Shugart, long time professor at Penn and family friend. He came home every summer and winter holiday to visit his mother who resided near what became the Pitts Movie Theatre on Main Street.

I really did not want to leave home so happily I joined a number of my high school classmates who enrolled in Shepherd College and became daily commuters. Teaching was my goal. In that first year I was challenged and inspired beyond anything previously experienced in Dr. Ruth Scarborough's survey course in Modern European History. As soon as I could in the next few years, I enrolled for every history course offered by Dr. Scarborough and Charles Town's own Dr. Millard Bushong who had joined the faculty. By this time history had become an important part of my life. It helped provide insight into the culture and experience of growing up in Charles Town, the interweaving of threads which were becoming the fabric of my life.

For Jews a sense of history is critical and essential. Dr. Scarborough

introduced me to the forces of history through the centuries. In the process of preparing this memoir I could not refrain from reflecting on some of the academic changes which had occurred during my growing up. There were changes in the study, interpretation and understanding of our nation's history and the variety of people who helped make it so. Regional history expanded as did serious considerations of inequalities and prejudice even though the concept of religious freedom established by our Founding Fathers existed, anti-Semitism existed. It could be found in the quota system for Jewish applicants to many universities as well as faculty opportunities. All of this, of course, was different from the characteristics of the town where I had grown up. Within the last half century much has changed. Now, American Jewish scholarship is offered at universities as an important academic discipline.

In 1942 when I reached the age of 21, I registered for the Draft. After graduating from Shepherd I applied for a commission in the United States Naval Reserve as had my brother, Jake. Before a month had passed I received my order, commissioning me as an ensign and instructing me to report on August 1 at the Cornell University Naval Training School, Ithaca, NY. We soon had to return to Washington to be fitted for all the uniforms required. On the evening prior to my departure I donned my formal white uniform for photos taken on the lawn. Afterwards, my father and I took a farewell stroll into town to see folks and, I guess, to be seen. I was the second of the four Viener sons who would enter the service in World War II. Eli went into the Air Force while Louis, Jake and I saw Navy duty. Jake went to the Philippines after I returned from Australia. Eli spent time in Greenville, SC and Dayton, Ohio while Louis was at the Boston Navy Yard.

The two months at Cornell were increased by two at Harvard. I was ordered to Hampton Roads for embarkment to "Base Left", an unknown destination. Time to come home briefly was allowed after which my parents and Harry drove me to Norfolk for an overnight with friends. The next morning, Christmas Day, Harry drove me to the Naval Base. As we pulled away I was not brave enough to look back at my Mother and my Father.

After six long weeks at sea we arrived at our hitherto mystery destination, Brisbane, Australia. It was January 31, midsummer and the most gorgeous flowers everywhere. Not only flowers but also in due course four more natives of Charles Town. The magic still worked. Francis Printz, another Naval officer such as I, Reddy Riddleberger, Air

Force, Millard Trussell, also Air Force, and Bill Moler, Army. My Navy buddies never did get over the fact that there were five men from that little town in West Virginia.

Brisbane proved historic for another significant reason for it was there that I met Jackie, and after a year's courtship we were married.

Within a few months after we were married I was detached from my assignment with the South West Amphibious Forces and returned to the States. Jackie and I were fortunate to travel on the same ship to San Francisco where I was to receive further orders. Here, too, there was a Charles Town connection because Reddy Riddleberger had been transferred to the San Francisco area, and his wife, Kitty, had come to stay with him. It was her father, Dr. Albin, who had ushered me into this world, and now, Kitty did everything possible to help Jackie, this new citizen-to-be, and to make her welcome. It was the beginning of a loving and memorable friendship.

I was ordered to report to Naval Air Station, Sanford, Florida, and to serve as the Communications Officer. Interim leave to come home was included. Sanford proved a pleasant tour of duty, but, more importantly, our daughter, Helene, was born there. The war and my navel career soon ended and off to West Virginia University I went.

As some of you know, I did not go into teaching. Instead I joined the family firm in Richmond where our son, Philip, was born. Richmond is a wonderful community rich in history, national, regional as well as religious, even some occasional opportunities to teach.

It was also in Richmond that friendly people made us welcome and with them there were opportunities and challenges to work for the common good. Not unlike my formative years in Charles Town there were mentors who inspired me and encouraged me, and to whom I am eternally grateful. All of this has given me an extraordinary gift, the privilege of coming home to grow up again. Will you not agree with me that we have shared precious memories and perhaps, thereby, made something of a little history which now is all our own?

My friends, it has been observed that neither sober history nor departmental records lend themselves to that sort of semi-historical, semi-biographical gossip which is one of the objects, as it is certainly one of the charms of an historical society.

For this one-time first grader today has been a shining moment to be very much treasured all the days of my life. What a splendid morning this has been. May its radiance linger for all of us for a long time to come.

I thank you very much.

Editor's Note—Mr. Viener delivered this presentation to the Jefferson County Historical Society on Saturday, 29 July 2000, at the Civil Center, Old Charles Town Library.

Charles Town Resident Nathaniel Willis Washington

Gerald Lee Ward



Nathaniel Willis Washington, 1905

Nathaniel (Nat) Willis Washington was born April 6, 1881, at Braddock House, Charles Town, Jefferson County, WV. Braddock House was built by his father Bushrod Corbin Washington in 1871. Braddock, a Victorian style house, is located a mile and a half southwest of Charles Town along the road to Claymont. The house gets its name from the nearby "Braddock's Well" dug by General Braddock's troops in May of 1755. Braddock's troops accompanied by George Washington, on their way to Fort Duquesne, camped on Washington's Bull-skin property.

Nat was a member of Charles Town's oldest family. Charles Washington (1738-1799), his 3rd great granduncle, founded Charles



Claymont Court

Town when he laid out the town on 80 acres of his property. Nat's great grandfather, Bushrod Corbin Washington (1790-1851), inherited the Bullskin property from his father Corbin Washington (1764-1799) who built Claymont Court on it in 1820.

Nat's father Bushrod C. (1839-1919) and his mother Emma Edwards (Willis) Washington (1843-1930) were married in 1864 and had three children. She was the daughter of Thomas Hite Willis of Rock Hall, Charles Town, WV. Bushrod's first wife, Catherine Thomas Blackburn (1840-1876), was the daughter of Dr. Richard Scott Blackburn, of Weehaw, Clarke County, VA. They had nine children in their twelve-year marriage.

In the Charles Town Zion Episcopal Churchyard, lot 45,[1] there are grave markers for Emma and Bushrod. They are not buried there as their interment is in Almira, Washington. They are laid to rest with their three children: Nat Willis (1881-1926), James Cunningham (1883-1926) and Peachey Ryland (1884-1926). His daughters Jane Farlie (1868-1911), Hanna Lee (1871-1917), Katherine Blackburn Washington War (1871-1940) are buried near him. Also buried in Almira's cemetery are Katherine's two children, Janet Farlie Ward Wallace (1904-1995) and

1 "Tombstone Inscriptions VI Zion Episcopal Churchyard (Northwest section)," *The Magazine of the Jefferson County Historical Society* Volume XXXIV (December 1968): 45,73.



Weehaw

Charles Henry Ward (1907-1993) and one great grandson Corbin Scott Castleman (1917).

Nat was raised in the beautiful Shenandoah Valley. It was relatively unchanged following the recent "Great Conflict." Its inhabitants had felt the ravages of a war that had swept back and forth through their valley like a tide ebbing and flooding between the lunar like pulls of North and South. The scars of the discord ran deep for some of the survivors of the conflict. Nat's father, B.C. Washington, retained the romantic dreams of the "Virginia plantation days" that had passed into history but, had not been forgotten. He tried to reenter the Virginian Gentleman's agrarian life style in 1865 when he returned to Claymont at the end of the war. Bushrod's wife, Catherine, whom he married in 1864, had shared the burden of the war economy along with the other Washington women and their children who maintained Claymont during the hostilities. The end of the Civil War brought with it the harsh reconstruction economic conditions that were vastly different from their pre-war life style in Jefferson County.

Bushrod's father, Thomas (1812-1854), had died intestate and his mother, Rebecca Janet Cunningham (1820-1890) had since remarried. Her second husband, the Rev. Edward W. Syles, had four children from a previous marriage. Near the end of the Civil War they moved, as missionaries to China. They then moved to Japan and eventually retired



Catherine, ca 1864



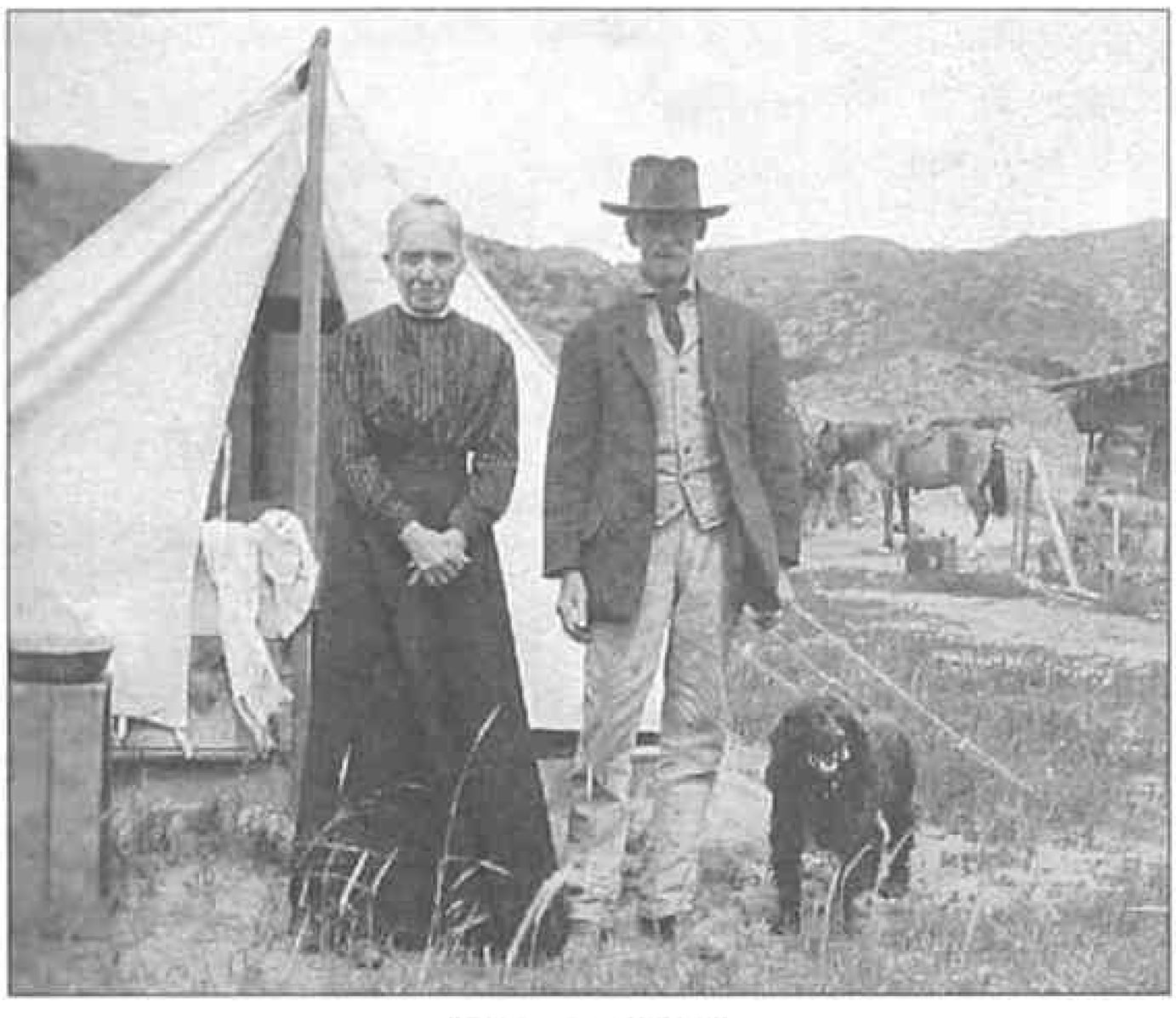
Bushrod, ca 1880

in England with her daughter, Anne Thomasina Ewing.

Rebecca had expressed her concern to Bushrod during the war that the United States government might take Claymont as a reprisal because of his war activity. Bushrod wrote her from Ft. Delaware, where he was imprisoned, that he reasoned this was not the case as Claymont was officially owned by all of Tom Washington's heirs, not just the ones who were in rebellion.

The United States government did respect the Washington property. The only deliberate damage done to Claymont by the United States troops was when they captured James Cunningham Washington (1847-1865) and his cousin, Herbert Lee Alexander (1846-1866) while they were on leave from the Confederate army. They were accused of being spies and in reprisal General Philip Sheridan issued orders to run off the cattle, leaving one milch cow, and to burn the rail fences. There were sixty-five sheep, three large oxen, one large imperial bull, 4 milch cows, eight head of young cattle, eighty head of hogs and three hundred bushels of wheat and the fences gone when the Yankees finished.

Bushrod's two brothers, George (1842-1863) and James (1847-1865) were casualties of the war. The other living siblings, Thomas Blackburn (1851-1923) and Anne Maria Thomasina (1854-1909), went with their mother to China. Hanna Lee (Washington) Alexander (1811-1881) with her children and Catherine were living at Claymont by war's end.

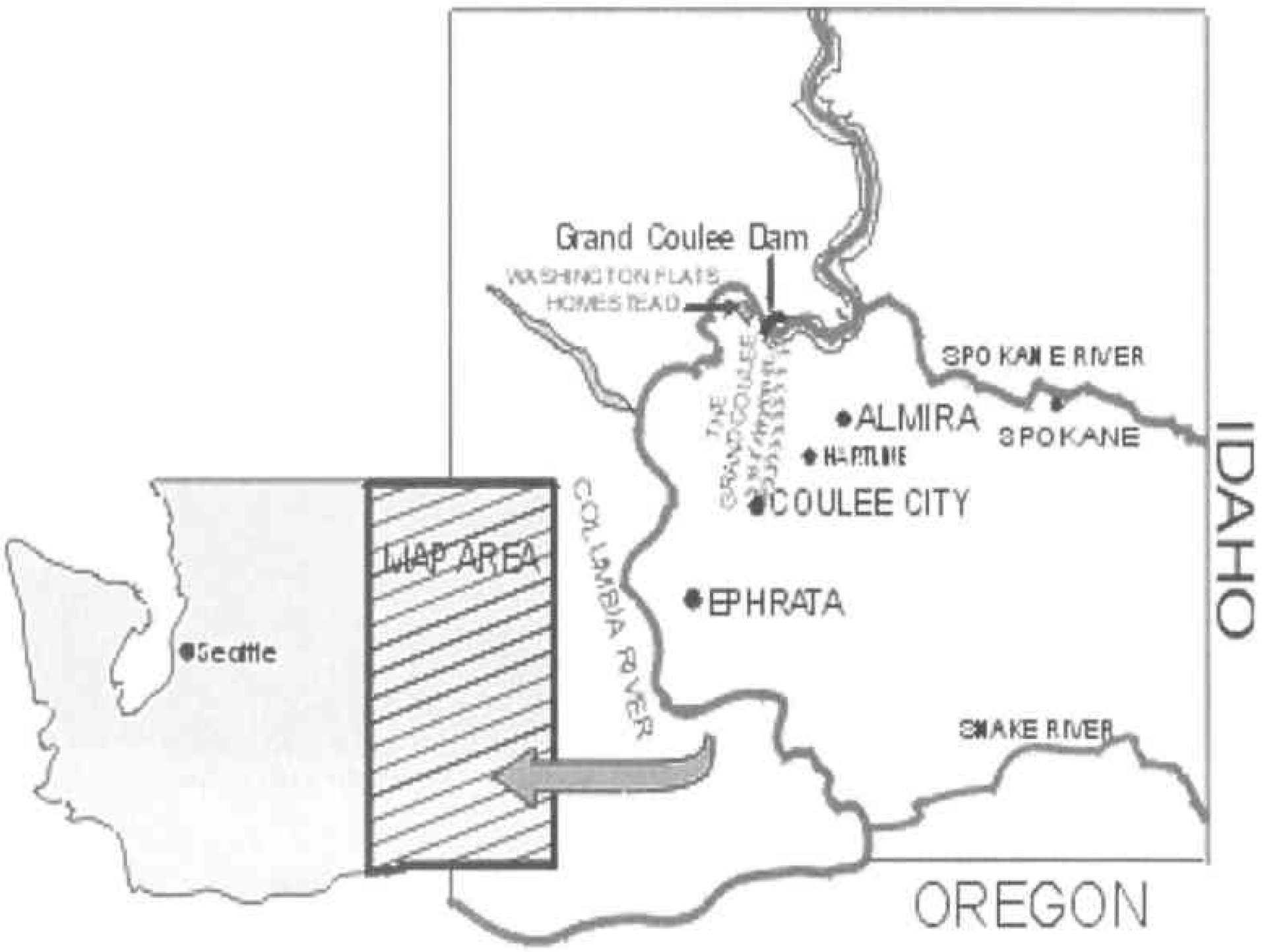


Emma, 1910

Bushrod had gone to war as a farmer and returned home with every desire to return to farming. Although the war and reconstruction caused hardships, Bushrod prevailed in the task as he farmed Claymont, Richwoods and Braddock. He raised his eleven children in the timeless fashion of "old Virginia" with strict southern and religious beliefs. He also gave them the benefit of a proper education. Both boys and girls attended academies at Charles Town.

Nat studied law at the West Virginia University where he was a member of Beta Theta Pi Fraternity. While there he was the first family member to work at menial labor. Nat worked in a steel mill in Pittsburgh to earn the money for school. His options were to work in the coal mines or in the steel mills, and he took the latter as the least of the two evils. Upon completion of his studies on April 11, 1904, he obtained a 'Certificate of Examination' in law and procured a starting position in a Charles Town law office. There he prepared for his bar exam. He was admitted to the bar by the Supreme Court of Appeals of West Virginia on September 5, 1906.

James Cunningham Washington, Nat's younger brother, was the first Washington to migrate to the state bearing the family name. In 1905 he worked as an accountant for Weyerhaeuser, one of the Pacific Northwest's lumber giants. The Newport lumber camp was located about forty miles north of Spokane, Washington near the Idaho boarder.





Jim Washington, 1905

The Spokane economy acted as a magnet, drawing migrants into its bosom which spread out into the surrounding country. Spokane, Washington State's second largest city, was the center of the Inland Empire's railroad hub for the Great Northern, Northern Pacific, Milwaukee, Union Pacific and Spokane, Portland and Seattle railroads. From Spokane all the Inland Empire's agriculture, forest and mining products could be transshipped south, east, or west.

Jim Washington may have written Nat of the many job opportunities for a young enterprising lawyer available in the booming Inland Empire. For whatever social or economic reasons that may have precipitated his move west, Nathaniel Willis Washington migrated from Charles Town in 1906 to Washington State. It could have

been for any number of reasons. It may be, as his son, Nat junior said, "By being jilted by Col. Angus W. McDonald's granddaughter Kate." Economics more than amour likely played an important part in his decision to move west. The West was booming and West Virginia was still suffering the aftermath of the Civil War reconstruction and the 1890s depression.

The economy in West Virginia may not have held an attraction for this young lawyer. There certainly was not a shortage of attorneys in Charles Town which certainly had plenty of legal work writing up land deeds and wills. West Virginia did not hold the same opportunity for Nat. He could become intensely immersed in the development of such a vast and unsettled area as was available in Washington State. Like the California bound Jefferson County Forty Niners, the new century men were heading west for the opportunities and freedom of the Pacific Northwest.

The Pacific side of Washington State was experiencing an ebbing boom economy with the winding down from the Alaskan Gold Rush. While on the east side, the agricultural importance of the area was just emerging. Wherever irrigation was available, mostly along the Spokane, Polouse and Columbia rivers, apple orchards, grapes and hop vineyards flourished in what was once, less than 50 years before, considered worthless sagebrush country.

The Big Bend country of the Columbia lies west and south of Spokane and was sparsely populated in 1900. The inhabitants, mostly farmers, were counted in the hundreds, and ranches were so large they were measured in sections. It contains some of the best wheat growing land in the world. Warm days and cool nights during the grain growing season, and the right amount of rainfall produce more than 20 bushels an acre. In 1910, the Big Bend grain crop was worth $10,000,000. During harvesting season, it was common for twenty horse teams to pull combines with five to ten teams working in unison spread out across the bountiful golden fields.

In 1906, at age 25, Nat activated his law career by opening a law practice in Almira, WA a small Lincoln County town, 90 miles west of Spokane. Almira was named for its founder's spouse, Almira Davis, when it was incorporated in 1886. When Nat stepped off the train, its population was at a twenty year high of 368.

Almira was situated at the western terminus of the Central Washington Railroad tracks. The tracks were built for the train to pick up wheat from the Big Bend grain elevators. The train may have been at a dead end, Nat

was not. [The train would have to back-up to Spokane.]

Nat was beginning a new life cycle. He took up residence at the only boarding house in Almira. The Hotel Almira having been lost in "the fire of 1903." He was one of two eligible bachelors living at the boardinghouse. His attributes were: he was the only lawyer in town and he was a young and a handsome well-spoken southern gentleman. His personality was described as a person with an even temperament and disposition with a slight West Virginia drawl. He opened a law office on the ground floor of the bank building in town and soon became the city attorney.

Another resident of the boarding house was Miss Gladys Fuller (1890-1969) from Port Orchard, WA. Gladys was the new school mistress for Almira. At age sixteen, she was just starting her career in teaching, that would eventually span five decades. She later would attend Central Washington University earning her degree in education. She ended her career as the Superintendent of Public Instruction for the State of Washington.

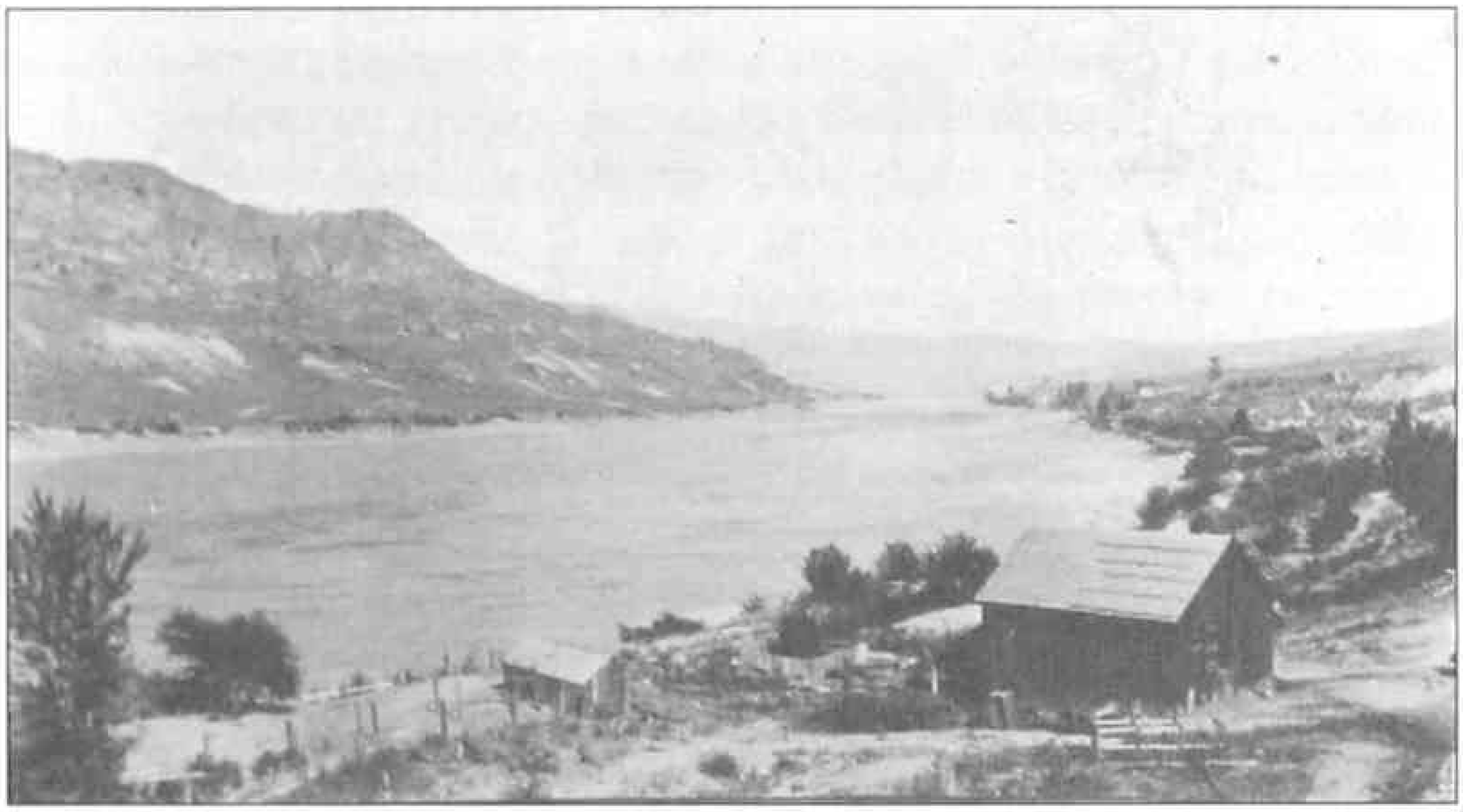
Nat, like his father, older brother Bushrod and many of his ancestors, became a Freemason. In 1908, he petitioned Almira Lodge No. 127, F&AM for the degrees in Masonry. He became an active lodge member and served as the Lodge's Master in 1910. The records show his continuing activities in the Grand Lodge of Washington's annual meetings. Tom Holman, Grand Master of Washington was going to participate in the 1923 dedication of the George Washington masonic Memorial, in Alexandria, Virginia. Nat gave him a historical letter to take with him to the ceremony.[2] The letter, dated March 2, 1825, was to the Honorable Bushrod Corbin Washington, a Mason and owner of Mount Vernon. The letter was written by Thomas Sipple Jr., Grand Master of New Hampshire. In it he suggests a Masonic Memorial be built at Mount Vernon in memory of George Washington the Mason. The letter stated several Grand Lodges would provide funds. A memorial was built 100 years later by the Masons in Alexandria, Virginia.

In 1908, Nat's father, mother, sister Peachey (1884-1926) and his sister Eleanor's (1867-1894) two sons John (1892-1985) and Corbin Washington Castleman (1893-1989) followed the vanguards of Jim and Nat to Washington State.[3] Their first stop was in Spokane where Bushrod bought a home on the south side's fashionable Cliff Avenue and opened a

2 *Masonic Tribune*, Page one, Vole. 7 No. 42, October 20, 1923, Seattle, Washington.

3 *Spirit of Jefferson*, April 7, 1098, Charles Town, WV.

downtown real-estate office. Within two years, John and Corbin Castlemen had moved to Montana to join their Aunt Kate on her homestead.



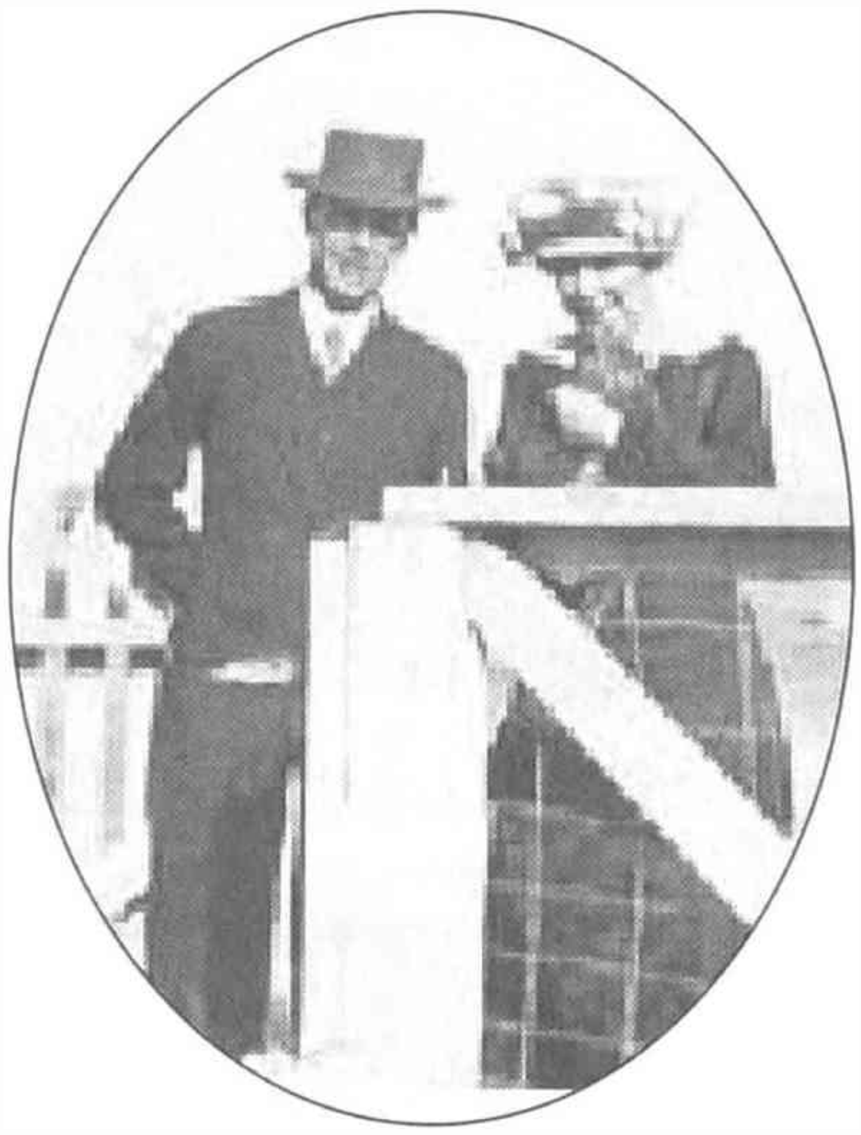
View from the ranch on the west bank of the Columbia. Looking south towards the site where the Grand Coulee Dam was built.

Bushrod C. Washington would move, in 1910 from Spokane to the ranch on the Columbia River. Bushrod had bought two homesteads of 650 acres each from two homesteaders who gave up on bench land farming. Peachey, Jim and Nat filed for three adjoining 650 acre homesteads. The ranch site is on the west bank of the Columbia River. The river turns towards the north at the Coulee Dam site. It flows north for twelve miles before turning west again forming the Big Bend country of the Columbia basin. The ranch is one mile downstream from the present day Grand Coulee Dam.



Left to right: Peachy, Nat, Jim, Emma, and B.C., on the ranch.

Nat maintained his law practice in Almira, traveling the twenty miles by rutted road to the ranch either by buckboard in the dry season or on horseback when it rained. The road crossed the mouth of the Grand Coulee, a very large dry valley extending 26 miles south from the west bank of the Columbia River to Coulee City. The road skirted along an outcropping of granite bedrock polished by ancient glacier action. This outcrop of bedrock would in the future play an important part in Nat's life.



**Nat & Gladys,
Ephrata 1916**



**Gladys and the twins,
Glenora and Roberta, 1918**

Nat and Gladys Fuller, after a seven year courtship, married in 1913. The wedding was at her parents' western Washington home in Port Orchard. Their marriage would span only thirteen years, ending in Nat's tragic death. Shortly after their marriage they moved to Coulee City at the southern end of the Grand Coulee. Their union produced four children. Three lived to maturity: Nathaniel Willis, Junior (1914), Glenora Gertrude (1917) and Roberta Ryland (1917-1987).

Life in the Big Bend was not without hardships. The Washingtons lost their second son, Francis Daune (1916) three days after birth. While in Coulee City, Gladys suffered a slight wound on her leg that eventually turned gangrenous causing the leg to be amputated.

In 1916 Nat ran for Prosecuting Attorney of Grant County. After his election to this position he and Gladys moved south twenty-six miles to

the county seat in Ephrata. Being an elected official his legal and civic activities took on herculean proportions. In the courtroom his pledge was, as he said, "to secure simple and exact justice." Wealth, power, or influence never diverted him from his pathway. The records are full of his actions as he built on the stratum of his legacy.

His private law practice records are full of actions he took to help small ranchers secure their legal property rights. For him equal justice meant equal opportunity. Whenever in the course of development the possibility for economic gain becomes apparent, the speculators, honest and dishonest alike, came forward. Many absentee Big Bend land owners were approached by entrepreneurs to sell their "worthless land" at below potential value. Some wrote to Nat for his opinion. His reply to one Mr. C. M. Hein from Minneapolis, MN was typical. He cautioned him to pay the taxes and hold on to the land until irrigation came to the basin.

Nat's popularity was not solely with the establishment of respectable citizens living in the Columbia Basin. Nefarious men also sought him out. One afternoon a young bandit robbed the bank at Wilson Creek north of Ephrata. When the posse caught up with him a gun battle ensued resulting in the bandit's death. When the young bandit was identified it turned out to be Babe Pruitt, who had served one night as the mayor of Ephrata. Nat Washington, the County's Prosecuting Attorney, was asked, by the boy's father to preach the funeral sermon. The elder Pruitt was himself considered an unsavory charter as he was a former member of the post war William Clark Quantrell's Kansas Raiders.[4]

The Ku Klux Klan was trying to, but never did, obtain a foothold in the Northwest. One of the group approached him to join their cause. He may have figured Nat to be a bigot like himself. How wrong he was! Nat always stood tall for democracy as he was a Freemason and a Democrat. He knew well the consequence of obsession of idolatry and bigotry.

Nat may have left West Virginia for economic reasons but West Virginia never left him. In his handsomely worded Memorial Day observance speech given May 25, 1921 at Almira, Washington, he spoke as a patriot with tolerance for his beloved West Virginia home:

> "... a war was lost, and the stern marks of war remain visible. In every little town and village there are hundreds of unmarked graves. A single marble shaft dedicated to the unknown dead often serves as the only monument for these hundreds. No one who pauses to

4 George Sunborg, *Hail Columbia*, page 14, 1954, The Macmillan Co., New York, NY.

inquire who is honored, is concerned whether he wore the blue or the gray, and nowhere would you find one who has an unkind word for those who fought on either side, of that terrible struggle, where, brother fought brother, and neighbor fought neighbor. . . . each side fought for a principle it considered sacred. But the people of the south were quick to recognize that their defeat was the happiest outcome, and that their success would have been a calamity if our great nation was left divided."

Irrigation was a topic of enormous interest to those pioneers trying to ranch in the Big Bend area. Growing anything other than wheat in the Columbia Basin was difficult and very unpredictable at best. Most Columbia Basin ranchers therefore raised wheat and some cattle. For a stable farm economy however, water for irrigation in predictable amounts was essential. With irrigation, the soil at the Washingtons ranch produced a wide variety of crops including melons. Bushrod had already begun to plant an apple orchard similar to the one he had at Claymont. His problem was not the lack of water. His problem was that the coyotes ate the melons and the rabbits nibbled on the tender shoots of the seedling apple trees.



The current pump after a flood.

On the Washington flat's ranch they used a "current pump" to force river water up almost ninety feet to the bench land for irrigation. The pump used the river's current to power a long sweep oar attached to a piston. The river current pushed the oar down stream until it reached a trip used to raise the oar out of the water. A spring then pulled it back upstream for the next pump cycle. Due to almost daily river, stage height,



Hanna Lee, B.C. and Nat Washington irrigating from the ranches spring.

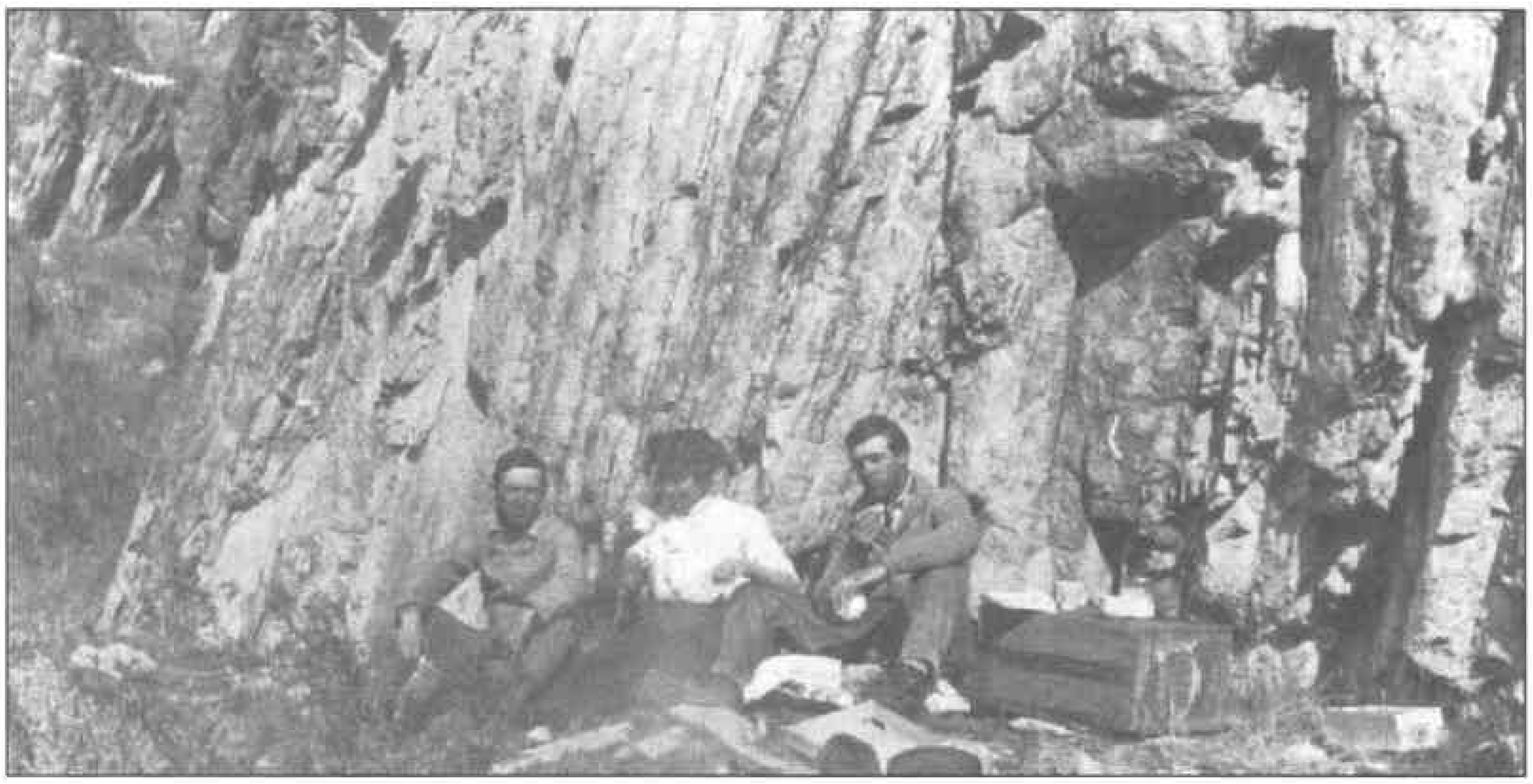
fluctuation it either left the pump arm high and dry, flooded or broken. The current pump, as good as it was, proved not to be a practical pump design for use on the wild upper Columbia River. On other ranches, wind mills were often used to pump water from deep wells. The Washington's had a spring that generously supplied more than enough water for their domestic use, livestock and irrigation of the farm kitchen garden,

The September 28, 1892 *Spokane Spokesman*, on page 5, reported there was local talk of building an irrigation dam on the Columbia River at the Grand Coulee. Twenty-five years later, people of the Big Bend were very sympathetic to any cause that would bring irrigation into the Columbia Basin. It was during this time that Nat was first introduced to what was probably the single most important topic in the Columbia Basin, irrigation[5], or more precisely the need for it. Everyone it the basin would benefit from irrigation, not just farmers. Nat and others felt that now was the right time to build a dam. The big question of the day was — What is the best and cheapest method to bring irrigation into the Columbia Basin?

In 1919, the Washington State Legislature created the Columbia Survey Commission. This act officially launched the development of the Columbia Basin for power and reclamation which included irrigation. On July 4, Nat attended a talk given in Ashton, WA, by Mr. Frederick S. Harrington,[6] who was planning to run for the State Legislature. Mr.

5 George Sunborg, *Hail Columbia*, The Macmillan Co., New York, NY

6 Margaret Thompson, *Space for Living*, page 86, 87, 1944, Metropolitan Press, Portland, Oregon.



Jim, Peachey and Nat at the Grand Coulee on the ranch.

Harrington was expected to speak in-favor of the Grand Coulee dam project. He surprised everyone. Instead he campaigned for a gravity system proposed by the private Washington Water Power Company of Spokane.

Nat said his concern was if it, the private power company, had control over the power and irrigation the people's rights would be abridged. He did not like this private corporate situation because of its wealth and its consequential control of public policy. The democratic solution, he said, was for government to hold ownership of all natural resources, in perpetuity, for every citizen's benefit.

In December of 1919, the early report from the Columbia Survey Commission came out favoring the gravity system and private power development. In its study, the State Commission considered building a dam only 180 feet tall. They said it only needed to be high enough to furnish electricity for pumping water for irrigation. They also stated the cost of operating pumping machinery for the Coulee Dam irrigation project would be prohibitive. The report ignored the asset of developing public power for sale. In other words, the report favored a proposal by the private Washington Water Power Company. Nat and others were opposed to the report's results. Nat vowed to fight it to the end of his life. He said "he would attack the report's findings against the Grand Coulee site."[7]

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7 Margaret Thompson, *Space for Living*, page 109, 1944, Metropolitan Press, Portland Oregon.

The Commission's report on the load bearing conditions on the Grand Coulee site stated "The construction of a dam of such dimensions in a river as large as the Columbia, even on an ideal foundation, appears to be highly impractical, if not impossible." The State Commission's report also stated the dam's foundation, as proposed, would have to go 150 to 250 feet down to bedrock. They estimated the cost of excavation to bedrock as not being practicable. The report further stated the wild nature and the large size of the Columbia River would make it impossible to construct a dam at Grand Coulee. Proponents of the dam pointed out two other large dams had been constructed on large rivers, namely the Assouan on the Nile and the Keokuk on the Mississippi. The handling of the river water during construction of those dams was just as difficult as that of the Columbia River at the Grand Coulee site.

Nat was familiar with the enormous size of the granite rock outcrop at the mouth of the Grand Coulee from crossing it on his many trips from Almira to the ranch. He also knew about high quality granite rock from growing up in the east. With this knowledge, he said, he expected the exposed granite rock cliffs of the Grand Coulee would extend down and under the river bed.

With Nat's leadership and encouragement, the Grant County Commissioners wanted more information concerning the feasibility of building a dam at Grand Coulee. They instituted a program to conduct an engineering study of the area. Charles Duncan, the county engineer, was surveying for a road from the top of the Grand Coulee down to the river. They expanded this project so he could also make the first engineering survey of the Grand Coulee Dam site.

In January 1920 men from the six Big Bend counties, who were favorable to building the Grand Coulee Dam, fortified with Duncan's engineering survey, formed an organization solely to promote and lobby for the Grand Coulee Dam. The Columbia River Dam and Irrigation Association was launched with Nat elected as its first President. He immediately started work on a public funded and controlled project to build the dam. In 1921, according to the *Grant County Journal*,[8] Nat was very successful in lobbying the Washington State Legislature for state approval and funding. He secured a legislative appropriation of $50,000. A substantial portion of this money was for conducting the first core drilling inspection of the Grand Coulee bed rock.

8 Editor, *Grant County Journal*, February 25, 1921, Ephrata, Washington.
9 *Hail Columbia*, George Sunborg, page 59, 1954, Macmillan, CO. NY., NY.

The geology in the Columbia Basin on the surface is made-up of exposed unstable igneous or volcanic rock. The assumption was the granite rock, exposed as an outcrop at the mouth of the Grand Coulee, could have been deposited by glaciers. However, it turned out during the early stages of the Columbia Basin formation, granite rock was formed deep in the crust of the earth and later uplifted. It was much later in geological time when the Columbia Basin was flooded by volcanic flows upwelling from the earth's core. These flows formed the exposed volcanic rock that now makes up the Columbia Basin surface geology. Approximately 40 million years ago glaceration formed an ice dam at the mouth of the Grand Coulee polishing the granite cliffs. The proponents of the dam knew about the ice dam for more than 25 years. One of them said "if nature can do it why can't we?"

The information obtained from these first cores was challenged by proponents of the gravity system. It was announced in the *Spokesman Review* that the cores from Grand Coulee were flawed with rotten rock and pointed out the futility of continuing with the Grand Coulee dam project. Nat wrote D.C. Henry of Portland, Oregon, a Reclamation Service expert,[9] to come to Grand Coulee to examine the cores. Upon Henry's examination it proved that high quality granite bedrock was under the whole proposed dam site. This confirmation was not news to Nat and the rest of the supporters of the Grand Coulee Dam project. It supported their thesis. Nat debated the facts endorsing the Grand Coulee Dam on several occasions in Spokane, Seattle and Olympia. He consistently maintained the Grand Coulee site was the best place to build a large dam on the Columbia River.

There were several strong opposition parties with counter proposals of their own to provide power and irrigation to the Columbia Basin. There was a 1913 plan by the Quincy Irrigation District backed by the Washington State Geological Survey. This was to use an "enormous siphon" to carry water from lake Wenatchee, high in the Cascade Mountains, down and across the Columbia River. It would have to run up and over a head land where it could drain through a series of open canals twenty miles into the Quincy area.

Another, and one of the biggest counter proposals, was that of the Washington Water Power Co. Its proposal was to construct a canal between the outlet of Lake Pend Oreille, in Northern Idaho, to the Spokane River in Washington. The proposal was multilevel: (1) to put more water into the Spokane river up stream of their Spokane Falls

hydro-electric power plant and (2) to divert the plant's tailrace water into canals for Columbia Basin irrigation. The effect of this plan was to increase the power and profits generated by the power plant. The project gained popular support from some property owners nearer to Spokane in the eastern portion of the Columbia Basin. The Washington Water Power Co., to demonstrate its good faith and gain support, began to install power poles in the middle of winter in the frozen prairie. (Power to the whole Columbia Basin did not develop until the Rural Electrification Act was passed by Congress in 1936.) After the completion of the Coulee Dam in 1940, public power became available in some areas; however, many Big Bend ranchers waited until after the Second World War to obtain electricity.

In addition to the Pend Oreille project, the Washington Water Power Co., made a Federal License application for a new power dam. This proposed dam was to be on the Columbia River upstream of Grand Coulee, at Kettle Falls, WA. This application perturbed Nat and the other members of the Columbia River Dam and Irrigation Association. The Washington Water Power Co.'s proposed projects for power and irrigation did not appear to the advocates of the Grand Coulee Dam project big enough in magnitude. To them, it did not ensure the quantity of water needed to irrigate the entire 450 square mile Columbia Basin. It also did not fit into their political continuum by having the government keep public control of public resources.

The caveat was if the Kettle Falls Dam received the license first there would be a direct conflict between it and the Grand Coulee Dam project. The paradox was the two projects were mutually exclusive. If Kettle Falls Dam were to be licensed first then Grand Coulee Dam could never be built. The Grand Coulee's enormous height of 350 feet would back up water for 151 miles and submerge the proposed Kettle Falls site.

Many people in the Columbia Basin felt the Washington Water Power Company's plan for the Kettle Falls Dam was just a subterfuge to stop Coulee Dam from being built. They thought the Kettle Falls plan would never be built if licensed as Washington Water Power Co. only wanted to halt the Grand Coulee Dam project in order to stop public power. The Grand Coulee project proposed to produce electric power for sale in direct competition with the Washington Water Power Co. Irrigation water if pumped with cheaper non-peak energy into the Grand Coulee and distributed by gravity, would cost less. This was proven by the United States Bureau of Reclamation in its feasibility studies.

A new dimension was added to all of these counter proposals and maneuvering for irrigation and power on June 25, 1920. The National Democratic Convention was to be held at the Hotel Cliff, in San Francisco, California. Nat campaigned to be a delegate to the convention and was elected. The twice weekly round-trip sailing from Seattle to San Francisco cost $62.50. He and Frank Bell, Grant County Treasurer, the second Washington Delegate sailed from Seattle aboard the Pacific Steamship Company's SS Admiral. The convention was not supposed to take more than a week out of his busy schedule. It turned out to be the longest National Democratic Convention on record, lasting two weeks.

In the pre-convention interview with the editor of the *Coulee Country Record*, Nat expressed himself as being in favor of a strong plank favoring the League of Nations. He said "that America has given her word and it's up to the nation to stand back of it." He also took an active part in the deliberations of the plank of the League of Nations. At the convention he also came out in favor of a plank on women's suffrage.

According to the July 2, 1920, *Grant County Journal* of Ephrata, Nat Washington was chosen to write the Reclamation Project plank portion of the National Democratic Platform. He carried to the convention a locally endorsed resolution in favor of public controlled irrigation districts. He promised to present it on the convention floor. "The convention," he said, "will have to deal with the subject of private monopoly of natural resources. It is the most prominent domestic issue, and the beneficiaries for all the favor seeking corporations are massing their forces to oppose government ownership in any way in any form. With the corporations-controlled press they grossly misrepresented the experience of the government to control the natural resources."

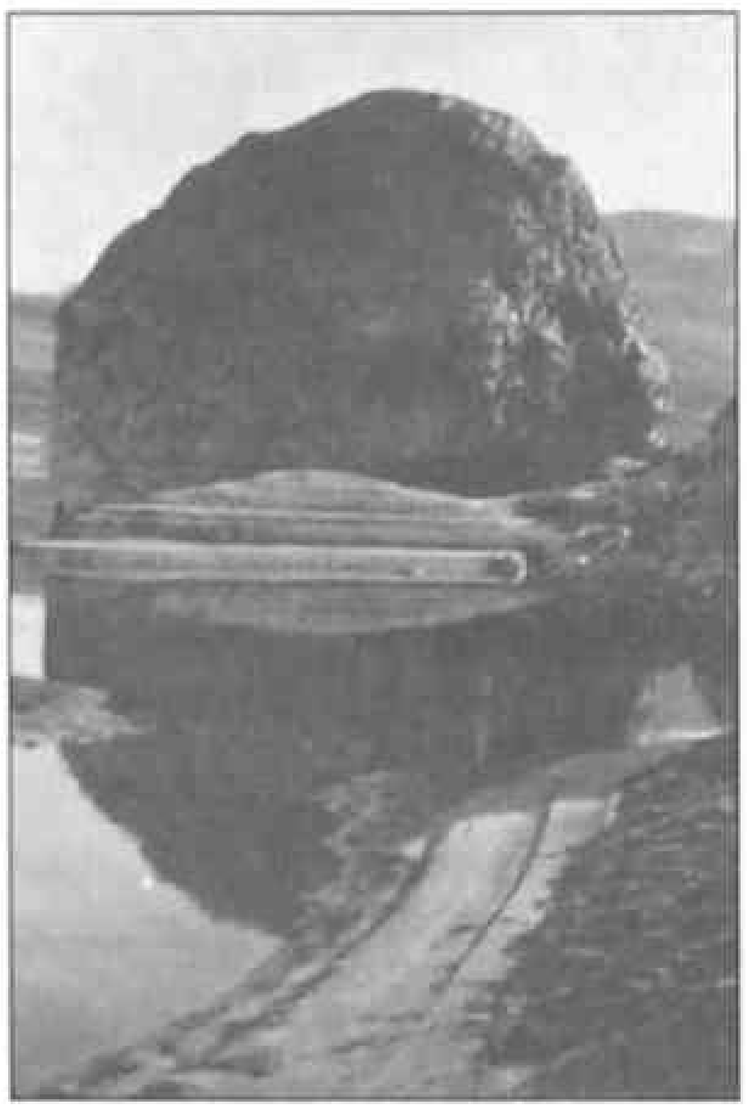
At the convention, Nat's greatest accomplishment, for the State of Washington, was when he introduced the Washington State Public Power Resolution to the delegates. He was a member of the committee that introduced the resolution endorsing Public Irrigation Districts into the Democratic Platform's plank. He worked on this committee with Franklin D. Roosevelt and John W. Davis of West Virginia. Davis, formerly the ambassador to the Court of St. James, England, was a West Virginia favorite son candidate for President of the United States. Nat voted for him on every one of the forty-four ballots cast. James M. Cox became the convention's nominee for President. He choose Franklin D. Roosevelt as

10 *Columbia River Power for the People*, page 20, Bonneville Power Administration, Portland, OR.

his Vice Presidential running mate.

Roosevelt, after the convention as the candidate for U.S. Vice President, made a campaign swing through the Pacific Northwest. He later often mentioned his visit to Washington state. He said he "Had caught a glimpse of the promise of the Columbia River development."[16] Nat Washington's association with him at the convention played an important part in his 1933 decision, as President Franklin D. Roosevelt, to approve the Columbia Basin Project.

Nat always served the people of the Columbia Basin to the best of his ability. To quote the *Grant County Journal* (June 9, 1922) on the occasion of Nat's running for reelection, "... Mr. Washington is so excellently



Sand bar on the Columbia River at the ranch.



L-R: Annie Hopkins, née Washington, Roberta Washington, Elizabeth Hopkins, Glenora Washington and Nat Washington taken at Soap Lake on the day before they drove to the ranch.

fitted by training, ability and temperament for the position that it is considered likely that no candidate will appear against him on either ticket." He ran unopposed and was reelected as the Grant County Prosecuting Attorney.

In 1924 he was encouraged by many people of the state to run for Governor. The *Willipa Harbor Pilot*, a Pacific County newspaper, located half way across Washington State from the Columbia Basin, ran an editorial favoring Nat's candidacy. Its warm and salutatorian endorsement was evidence of the high esteem held for him throughout Washington State. He decline the offer because he said "he was filling out Judge

Jeffrey's term as Grant County Judge and he would rather see, as a candidate for governor his friend, Mayor "Doc" Edwin Brown of Seattle."

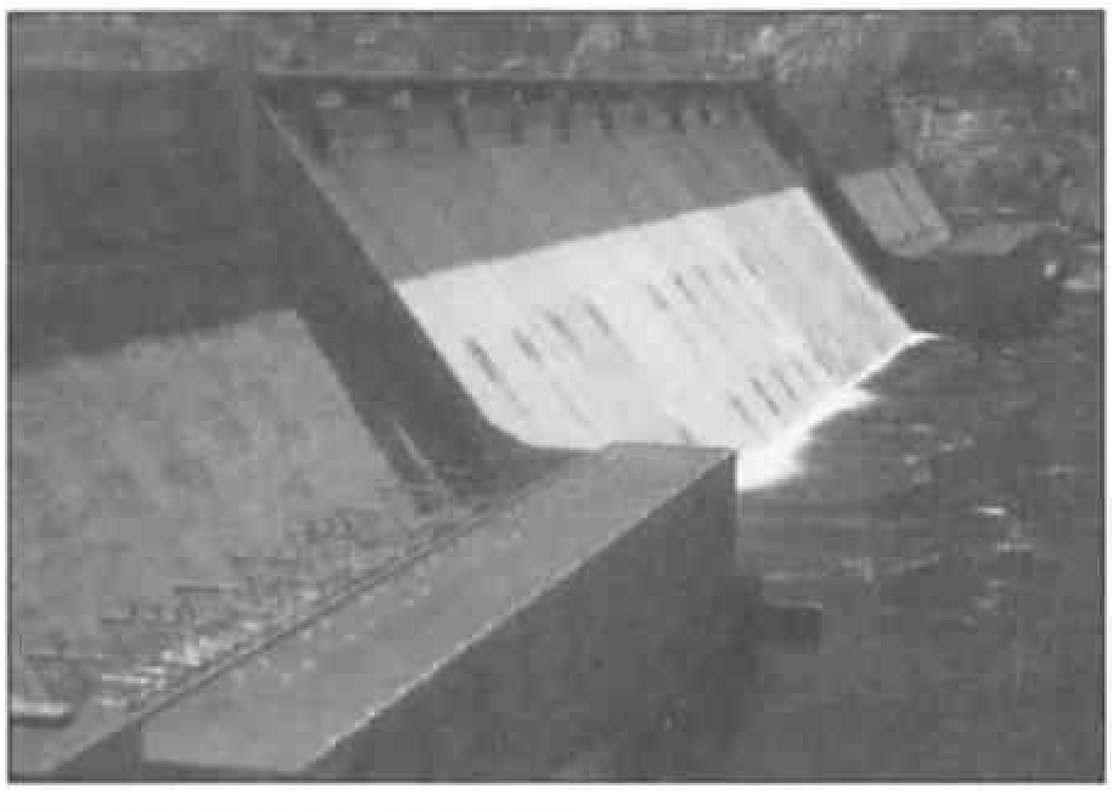
By 1926, the fifty mile car trip from Ephrata to the ranch could be made in just a couple of hours. Whenever the opportunity arose Nat would join the family at the ranch. Such were the events in Nathaniel W. Washington's life that led to the fateful day of July 10, 1926. Nat with his son Nat junior, brother Jim, sisters Peachey and Annie Washington Hopkins, who was visiting from Kentucky with her daughter Elizabeth, and his mother Emma were all at the ranch. The family had gathered on a sand bar below the ranch house for a joyous family outing.

The river had raised the night before covering a big sand bar with about a foot of water. Nat was teaching twelve year old Nat junior how to swim in a shallow backwater where the water was calm and warm. Jim was swimming in the main river channel where the water ran cold and swift. Suddenly Peachey began to scream. Jim had stepped off the sand bar, disappeared beneath the water and had not surfaced. Nat dove in, swimming through the area where Jim had disappeared. Nat was a strong swimmer, but as he made pass after pass through the area, looking for Jim, he tired. The current unexpectedly caught him, sweeping him helplessly downstream. The family pushed driftwood out into the current for Nat to catch hold of. Peachey, out of desperation and anguish, jumped into the water in a vain attempt to help. Not being a strong swimmer she sank quickly from sight. Her hat, as Nat junior said, "Floated to the surface, its ribbons making it look like a wreath." Nat and Peachey were quickly swept downstream, out of sight by the great power of the mighty Columbia River.

James C. Washington's body was found the next day just below the sandbar where he had disappeared in a few feet of water. Peachey R. Washington and Nathaniel W. Washington's bodies were found two days later forty miles downstream. The *Grant County Journal* (Ephrata, Washington), 23 June 1926, on page one, reported:

> "Bodies of N.W. and Peachey Washington are Recovered - The Bodies of N.W. Washington, Grant County prosecuting attorney, and his sister, Miss Peachey Washington who were drowned July 10, while swimming in the Columbia River in northeastern Douglas county were found in the Foster Creek eddy at Bridgeport 40 miles below the scene of the drowning.
>
> The body of the prosecutor was discovered about noon Saturday in a boom of wood which had drifted into the eddy. The sister's body was

found at 6 a.m. close to the place the other was seen. The two bodies were bruised where they had been washed over rocks in being carried downstream. They were left in the water until arrival of the undertaker from Almira.



Grand Coulee ca 1945



Grand Coulee with third power house ca 1990

Internment of the bodies took place at the Almira cemetery at 9:15 Saturday Night in the presence of a large number of friends. People from Ephrata, Coulee City and Almira met the procession from Bridgeport at the cemetery.

The congregational minister at Almira read by the light of a lantern, the Episcopal burial service at both graves, after which the Masonic fraternity read the burial service of the order at the grave of N. W. Washington. It was solemn and impressive at an hour that accentuated the tragic events."

With his West Virginia background, Nat Washington brought to Washington State his deep conviction of righteousness. The record of his life is evidence that he held in the highest esteem the rights of free men to chose their own destiny. Many people have stepped up to take credit for the building of the Grand Coulee Dam. Nat's son stated, "Nat was a friend and political associate of former U.S. Senator Clarence C. Dill from Spokane. It was largely through the efforts of Nat and Frank Bell, Senator Dill's secretary and former Grant County Treasurer, that Senator Dill became sold on the great possibilities of the Coulee Dam. Significantly, it was Senator C.C. Dill, who became the most ardent supporter of the dam in the United States Senate. He went to President Roosevelt, shortly after his 1933 inauguration, and prevailed upon him to commence immediate construction of the dam."

Nat's six year involvement as the President of the Columbia River Dam and Irrigation Association has gone unnoted by many historians because Nat did not live to see the conclusion of the project. The work he did was germane to the official proposal and acceptance of the Columbia Basin Project. In 1952 at a dedication of the dam's irrigation canal at Coulee City, Gail Matthews of Ephrata was a speaker. Nat's widow, Gladys, asked him why he had not given Nat credit for any of the work he had done. Matthews replied "accolades are for the living."

Nat had been very popular with the residents of the Columbia Basin. People who knew him held his memory in high esteem decades after his death. Margaret Thompson's book "Space for Living" a novel of Grand Coulee and Columbia Basin life has many passages of high praise for his efforts to establish public controlled irrigation for the Columbia Basin. In 1972 Mr. Waite Stevenson, who had known Nat fifty years before, spoke with misty eyes in veneration of him. He told of what the loss of such a good man meant to the Columbia Basin. Waite, who ran the ferry across the Columbia River just above the ranch, was not an eye witness to the tragedy. He was at the general store when Nat Jr. ran to the Scotts ranch for help. Waite ferried one of the Scotts sons across the river so he could go to Nespeleem where the only phone in the area was located. Waite later joined with other men in a rescue party.[11]

Nat's life's work was as a lawyer but, his public work for Washington State on the Columbia Basin Commission as a politician was by far his foremost legacy. Nat's adroit leadership, during the formative years of the commission set up the system in politics that would in 1933 lead to the signing, by President Roosevelt, of the Grand Coulee Appropriation Bill under the Reclamation Service. His opus lead to the building of the Grand Coulee Dam which is heralded as the single most important event in Washington State history.

To quote Charles B. Sterns,[12] "It's easy to have fantastic dreams. But it takes courage, guts and determination to make those dreams practical. The Grand Coulee Dam and the Columbia Basin Project is a monument to that courageous band of men who rose to the challenge. Whatever honors these men have been given in the past or whatever honors their memories shall receive in the future, it will not be enough."

---

11 1972, personal conversation with the author at Edmonds, WA.

12 *Columbia River Power for the People,* A History of Policies of the Bonneville Power Administration, DOE-BP7 1980, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation.

David Keplinger of Shepherdstown and His Descendants

Mrs. Joyce Ann McKee Jackson



John Keplinger, son of
David and Elizabeth (Cost) Keplinger
of Shepherdstown, VA (Now WV)

The Keplingers came to America from Betzdorf or Cadolsburg, North Bavaria, Germany. The German spelling is Koepplinger, in America there are many different spellings such as Caplinger, Koblinger and Kipelinger.

The early Keplingers were craftsmen, blacksmiths, millers and weavers, in America they became land owners and farmers. They were simple hard working people. It is an old tradition, "there are no lazy Keplingers."

This family history is written on Martin Keplinger's sixth son, John Adam, and John Adam's youngest son, David Keplinger of Shepherdstown, VA/WV and his descendants.

Table of Contents

HUSBAND: Martin (CAPLINGER) KEPLINGER 14 Sept 1732 Palatines came on ship "Johnson" of London David Crockett master
Born _____ Place (KOBLINGEN) GER PA Archives Vol 17 2d series p. 49
Chr. Swamp Lutheran ch Will p 29 of Notes MB Keplinger
Marr. 12 June 1733 1749 Place m by Rev John Casper Stover PA 22 Nov 1748
Died _____ Place _____
Bur. Swamp Luth ch PA Place 20 April 1749 Montgomery Co PA Elder or Deacon Swamp Falkner
HUSBAND'S FATHER Hanover Lutheran Church HUSBAND'S MOTHER Luth Ch New Hanover PA
HUSBAND'S OTHER WIVES

WIFE Anna Maria Catarina Catharine SCHNEIDER
Born 22 March 1713 Place (of Hanover PA)
Chr. Bp 23 March 1713 Place
Died _____ Place
Bur. _____ Place
WIFE'S FATHER Johann Jacob SCHNEIDER WIFE'S MOTHER Maria Helena baptismal records Maria Magdalena Magdalena NICHICKER father Heinrich b 1689 Ger d 1764 PA
OTHER HUSBANDS Stepdau of John Mathias [illegible] Germany emigrated from Bonfeld

SEX M F	CHILDREN Given Names	Surname	BORN Day	Month	Year	WHERE BORN Town	County	State or Country	DATE OF FIRST MARRIAGE To whom	WHEN DIED Day	Month	Year
1	John George	KEPLINGER			1735							d Frederick Co MD 1765
2	John Peter	KEPLINGER			1737				Eva 4-14-1761 Barbara Hannah EMSTER			1790
3	John	KEPLINGER			1739							
4	Johann Martin Jr	KEPLINGER	?		1740/41				Elizabeth Walling 3-28-1774			
5	Johann Jacob	KEPLINGER	Bp 25 Apr 1757		1741?				2nd Anna Maria Blizzard			
6	? JohAnAdam	KEPLINGER	Bp 1746						(2d Maria) 19 March 1774 Margretha GRIMM			1842
7	may have gone to Shen Valley prior to Rev.		6-	20-	1746							
8	David	KEPLINGER										
9	Day											
10												
11												

To indicate that a child is an ancestor of the family representative, place an "X" behind the number pertaining to that child.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION
Farmer of McCalls Manor from his Will. p. 132 of History in J.W. Keplinger history. Today Berks Co Elder (or Deacon) in New Hanover Swamp Lutheran Ch, the oldest Lutheran Ch in Amer.
N Bavaria in Franconia or the Palatinate is cradle of

OTHER MARRIAGES
From book: 18th Cent Emigrants from German Speaking Lands to NO AMER Vol I The Northern Kraichgau by Annette Kunselman Burgert. The PA Ger Soc Breinigsville, PA 1983 p 225 PA records: Old Goshenhoppen Luth KB Mont Co: Elder of the church (1751) Conrad Schneider, aged 52y b 17 Mar 1699 in Treschlingen in the Schwabischen Kreiss. Fatherwas [illegible] Both Reformed. In 1732

Martin Keplinger landed at Philadelphia, Pa., on September 19, 1732, arriving on the "Pink Johnson" of London with David Crocket, from Rotterdam, as the shipmaster.

On 12 June 1733 Martin Keplinger marries Catherine Schneider of Hanover, Pa., and are the parents of six children. He owned and operated a farm at Berks Co., Pa., and was active elder at one of the oldest Lutheran churches in America.

Martin and Catherine's youngest child, a son, John Martin Keplinger (born 20 June 1746, died 1842), came to Frederick Co., Md., around 1772. J. Adam Keplinger marries Margaret Grimm, 1774, daughter of Andrew and Fredericka (Dubs) Grimm of Washington Co., Md. They were engaged in farming there and later moving to Winfield, Ohio.

J. Adam Keplinger and Margaret were the parents of eight children:

1. Jacob, b. 1775, d. ca. 1848, married Elizabeth Hiteshew. Residence: Washington Co., MD.

2. J. Adam, b. 1777 d. ca. 1842, married Magdalena Schmutz. Residence: Washington Co., Md., Shepherdstown, Jefferson Co., VA/WV and Tuscawaras Co., OH.

3. M. Magalenia, b. 1779, married Michael Showman. Residence Maryland and Jefferson Co. VA/WV.

4. Catherine, b. 1780 d. 1863, married Henry Snyder. Residence: Jefferson Co., VA/WV/Tuscawaras, OH.

5. Elizabeth, b. 1783 d. 1854, married John M. Rohrer. Residence: Rohrersville, Wash. Co., MD.

6. Joseph, b. 1785 d. 1871, married Catherine Snyder. Residence: Washington Co., MD/Winfield, OH.

7. Johannes, b 1789 d._____, married 1st Mary Smith, 2nd Margaret Robinson.

8. David, b. ca. 1791 d. 25 April 1853 at Shepherdstown, Jefferson Co., VA/WV. Married Elizabeth Cost, daughter of Frederick and Magdaline (Baker) Cost before 1816. Residence: Shepherdstown, VA/WV. David and Elizabeth Keplinger were the parents of one child, John, that is known, born 15 Dec. 1816, died 28 May 1901.

David Keplinger purchased Lot #17 with house located on German St., Shepherdstown, VA/WV, 31 Jan. 1816, Deed bk. 9, pg. 380. David made a living as a shoemaker and farming. (Elizabeth's brother, Samuel and wife Barbara (Keedy) Washington Co., MD, were also engaged in the business of shoemaking). Church Affiliation: St. Peter's Lutheran.

John Keplinger married Catherine Maria Hamme, daughter of J. Jacob

NAME KEPLINGER, Adam

BORN 20 June 1746; Bp 17 Aug PLACE McCall's Manor, Phila. Co, PA *

MARRIED 29 Mar 1774 PLACE Frederick Co., MD **

DIED PLACE

BURIED AT (perhaps) Broadrun Cem. Tuscawaras Co., OH

RESIDED AT Washington Co., MD; ca 1802 to Jefferson Co. (W)VA

OCCUPATION farming CHURCH AFF. Lutheran

MILITARY SERVICE

FATHER Joh. Martin KEPLINGER MOTHER(Maiden Name) Catharina SCHNEIDER

OTHER SPOUSE

R. Dowdakin
Jan. 1996

* Montgomery Co. formed 1784

** Washington Co. as of Sept. 1776

SPOUSE Margrethe GRIMM

BORN ca 1750-55 PLACE Frederick Co., MD **

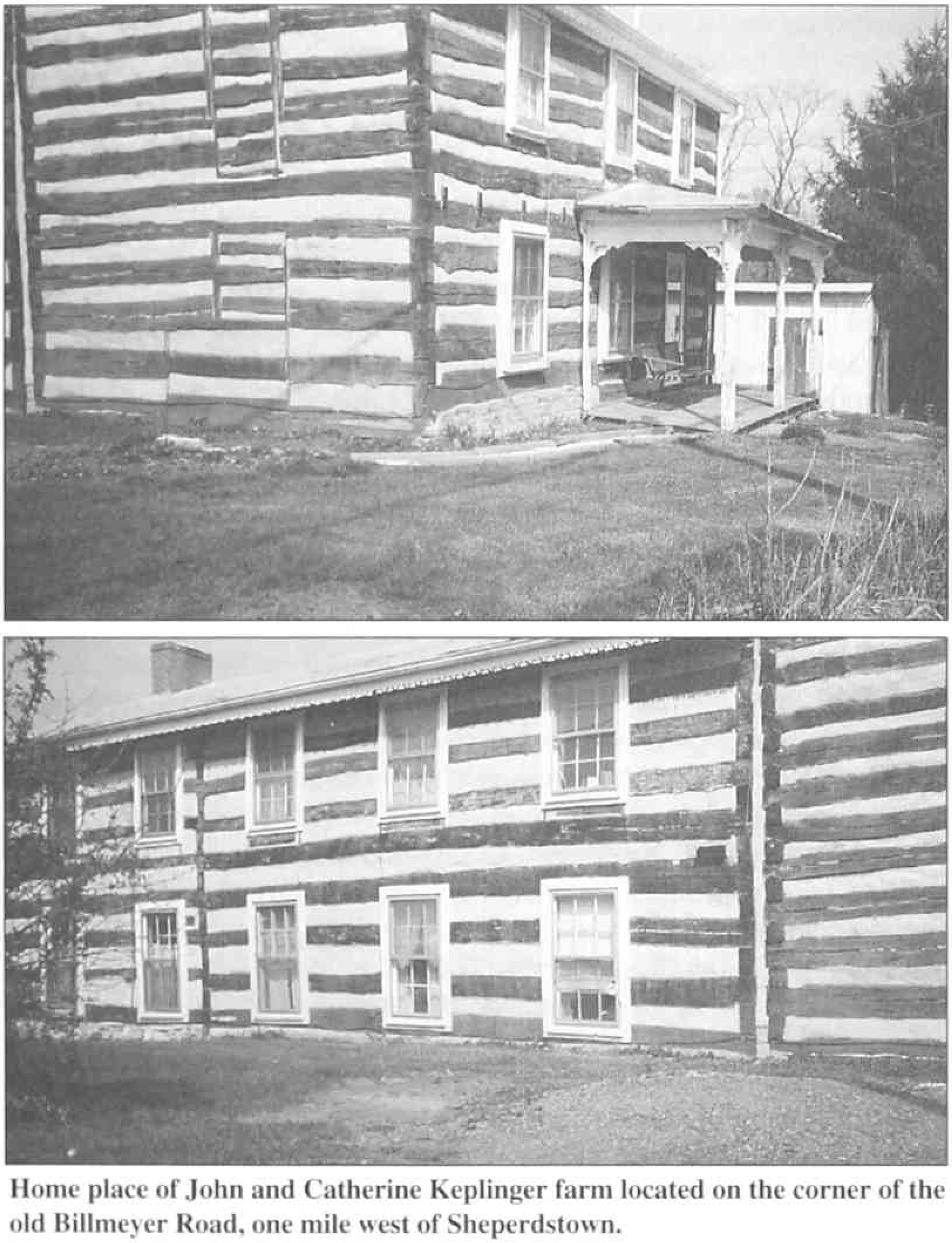
DIED 1830 PLACE Winfield, Tuscawaras Co. OH

BURIED AT Broadrun Cem. Franklin Twp. Tuscawaras Co.

FATHER Andreas GRIMM MOTHER(Maiden Name) --

OTHER SPOUSE

CHILDREN :all born Lower Antietam Hundred	BORN DATE PLACE	DIED DATE PLACE	MARRIED DATE & PLACE
JACOB	betw. Dec, 1774-Jan/Feb 1775	betw. May-Sep 1848 ae 73-7-15 n.d.	Elizabeth HITESHEW Aug.4-1800 Hagerstown, MD
ADAM	ca 1777	ca Feb 1842 Tuscawaras Co OH Dover Twp.	Magdalena SCHMUTZ 10 Sep 1812 (prob. Funkstown MD)
MAGDALENA (Polly)	2 Aug 1779 Bp 23 Sep 1779	after 1848	Michael SHAWMAN Mar 1799, MD res. (W)VA, Jefferson Co.
CATHERINE	31 Aug 1781 Bp 24 May 1782	25 Oct 1863 Adams Co. IN	Henry SNYDER (1777-1846) ca 1803 to Tuscawaras OH bef. 1820
ELIZABETH (Betsy)	13 Oct 1783 Bp. 12Jun 1784	16 Aug 1854 Rohrersville MD Locust Grove Luth.	John M. ROHRER (1778-1850) Dec. 1801 Catherine SNYDER (1795-1882)
JOSEPH	17 OCT 1785-6 Bp 11 Mar 1786	5 Apr 1871 Winfield OH bu. Broadrun Cem	(?) 22 Sep 1814 nr Boonesboro MD
JOHANNES res. Funkstown	13 Sep 1789 Bp 5 Dec 1789		1) Mary SMITH 20 Apr 1811 2) Margaret ROBINSON 17 May 1824
DAVID shoemaker Shepherdstown, (W)VA	ca 1791 MD? CONFIRMED 1811 SHEPHERDSTOWN VA/WV	25 APRIL 1853 SHEPHERDSTOWN VA/WV ELMWOOD CEMETERY	Elizabeth -- COST CA 1797 bef. 1816 MD.? 23 APRIL 185



Home place of John and Catherine Keplinger farm located on the corner of the old Billmeyer Road, one mile west of Sheperdstown.

and Maria Margaret (Baugher) Hamme of Martinsburg, Berkeley Co., WV formerly of York Co., PA of German descendant. "Kate" was an active member of the St. Peter's Lutheran Church with the honor of being the first president of the Women's Missionary Union having to hold this position at her death. She and John had just celebrated their 50th Wedding

Anniversary on January 8th when she passed away (b. 31 Dec. 1819, d. 18 May 1890). John and "Kate" and all their children and spouses are buried at the Elmwood Cemetery, Shepherdstown, WV. On 10 Nov. 1908 a stained glass was installed at St. Peter's Lutheran Church in memory of John & Catherine by members of the Keplinger family. There were eight other church members who contributed toward this beautiful glass window.

John Keplinger was a farmer, owned and operated The Black Rock Farm, a dairy and farm located on the corner of the old Billmeyer Road, just off Rt. 45 and 1 mile west of Shepherdstown. The old log house is still standing today. It is not known how old this house is. John purchased the property on 30 Jan. 1847, Deed Bk 28, pg. 391 from Charles T. and Virginia Butler. Keplinger was a mail carrier. He and his family would have their very lives in danger as it was during the Civil War. Union soldiers would come and search their farm and home for letters that may contain information for Confederates. Their daughter, Annie M. (later Mrs. Mayberry McKee) would visit her sweetheart over the state line of Maryland with smuggled items, a new pair of shoes or food, under her layered petticoat skirt. J. Keplinger was elected as Town Recorder for Shepherdstown 1844 to 1846. The Keplinger Homestead stayed in the family until 30 Nov. 1918 when their daughter Miss Maria "Miss Coopsie" Keplinger sold the farm to William T. McQuilkin.

Children of John and Catherine (Hamme) Keplinger:

1. Jacob Hamme Keplinger, b. 4 Oct. 1840, d. 7 Jul. 1857. Death caused by drowning in Patapsco River, Baltimore Co., MD. Marital status: single.

2. Betty Virginia Keplinger, b. 23 Jul. 1842, d. 22 Aug. 1846. Death caused by drowning in grandmother's cistern at Martinsburg, VA/WV. Marital status: single.

3. Annie Margaret Keplinger, b. 20 Jul. 1844, d. 12 Dec. 1908. Married Mayberry McKee, son of Hugh and Catherine Jane (Roush) McKee on 13 Feb. 1868. They were the parents of seven children. Residence: owned farm near Vanclevesville, WV. M. McKee, Civil War Veteran, Co. B, 1st VA Reg. Cavalry C.S.A.

4. John Frederick Keplinger, b. 22 Feb. 1846, d. 29 Dec 1923. Married, late in life, to Elizabeth Moorehead "Lizzie" McKee, sister of Mayberry McKee, on 6 Nov. 1889. No children. Civil War Veteran: Co. F, 1st VA Reg. Cavalry C.S.A. Captured by Yankees near the Keplinger farm while hiding with his younger brother, "Will", age 10, "Fred" stepped forward to draw attention away from his brother who was

immediately arrested on 22 Aug 1864. Sent to Elmira Prison and released 21 Jun. 1865.

5. Kate McPherson Keplinger, b. 2 Nov. 1847, d. 20 Jun. 1915. Married David Shepherd Orendorff, son of Jacob and Sarah Ann Greenwood, on 15 June 1869. David's parents' plantation was located three miles west of Shepherdstown, off Rt. #45. They were the parents of six children. The Orendorff's farmed in the Shepherdstown area until about 1876 when they moved to Georgia and later to Denison, Texas where they died and are buried.

6. Maria Cooper "Coopsie" Keplinger, b. 6 April 1849, d. 1 Oct. 1944. Marital status: single. "Miss Coopsie" having to live through the Civil War (1861-1865) era could recount many interesting incidents that took place around the Shepherdstown area during that struggle right up to the day she died despite her advanced years of 94. In 1939, she was given the honor of being the oldest living resident of Shepherdstown to be driven across James Rumsey Bridge during its Dedication Ceremony. She resided at 312 West German Street with her black faithful attendant, Mrs. Nancy Wells. "Coopsie" purchased her home on 4 Dec. 1920, being Town Lot #7, DB. 119, pgs. 405-406.

7. Harriet Baugher "Hattie" Keplinger, b. 9 Feb. 1851, d. 29 Dec. 1921 at New York City, NY. Married John Reynolds Hill, son of Elizabeth (Folk) and David Hill resided at New York City, NY. They were the parents of 4 children.

8. Charles David Keplinger, b. 1 Jul. 1852 d. 29 Sept. 1933 married Maria Adeline "Ade" Harp on 24 April, 1884, daughter of Van and Elizabeth Harp who was a Tailor. David was a farmer in his younger years later becoming a hardware store clerk and a carpenter in the Shepherdstown area. He and "Ada" were parents of one child.

9. William Cost "Will" Keplinger, b. 7 Dec. 1854 d. 14 Feb. 1892 at Bellefonte, PA. Marital status: single. "Will" formed a partnership with his friend when they bought out a Drug Store in Bellefonte and became a registered chemist and druggist known in three states.

Miss Coopsie Was a Survivor

"Miss Coopsie" was loyal to her God, to the Southern Confederacy and Shepherdstown. She was just twelve when the War Between the States (1861-1865) began. Her parents', John and Catherine Keplinger, home was located on Old Billmyer Road just one mile west of

Shepherdstown. Their farm was always under suspicion by the Federals Troops.

Her father, a U.S. rural mailman, would carry letters through the opposing lines. When Coopsie became older about fifteen she helped him by concealing letters about her body when crossing the state line to Maryland.

Miss Keplinger recalls one frightening incident when their home was being searched by the Yankees:

> Both she and her mother had hidden many letter upon their persons, in the bodice and under their skirts, with one package of letters still in her hands. She heard the soldiers in the house. As the Union soldiers ascended the stairway, she in desperation cast the package upon the bed and tossed a soiled garment over it. The bed was searched, under the pillows, in the springs, and under the feather tick, but never searched the middle. Coopsie was so frightened yet she had to keep a straight face and felt her heart to cease to beat. It was a relief to see them go.

After the Battle of Antietam, Maryland, hundreds of the wounded soldiers were cared for in Shepherdstown using the churches. The town was two and a half miles from the battlefield. Many of these southern boys in Grey died and are buried in the Confederate Lot at the Elmwood Cemetery. Miss Coopsie worked with the ladies of her church in making bandages and preparing food for the workers.

The Southern Memorial Day Observance was claimed in 1862 as the first Saturday in June.

Miss Keplinger along with many young ladies of the area not only carried homegrown flowers to lay on the graves but also cut sod to cover the fresh dug graves. Since Coopsie never married, did she have a sweetheart to be a casualty of the war?

As Miss Coopsie advanced in age she would go about her Christian duties by using her tall cane to walk down town determined to perform her errands on her own. Often she would have to call on her friends for help back up the hill to her home on 312 West German street.

Each year in the early spring she would start her garden in the back of her house and most always end up developing pneumonia. Her doctor would despair, but Miss Coopsie would just look at him with a light in the eye that defied death.

In 1939 the James Rumsey Bridge was dedicated. Miss Keplinger was

given the honor of being the oldest living resident of Shepherdstown to be driven across the bridge, at the age of ninety, in the first car officially to cross to Maryland.

Miss "Coopsie" Keplinger was a survivor, she lived through four wars and her allegiance to the Southern Cause never faltered. She passed away 1 Oct. 1944 in her 95th year.

A Tribute written by Mrs. M.S.R. Moler, Representative of the United Daughters of the Confederacy Shepherdstown Chapter #128. The Shepherdstown Register - January 13, 1944, The Martinsburg Journal, January 11, 1944.

Minutes of the First Meetings of the Jefferson County Historical Society

Compiled by Carmen Creamer

The Jefferson County Historical Society recently acquired the minutes of the first meetings of the Society. The Copybook containing the minutes was sold with a number of other items at the sale of Thornton T. Perry's collection last year. An unedited transcript of the minutes is presented below.

On the 21st of May, 1927[1], a meeting as held at the Court House in Charles Town for the purpose of organizing a County Historical Society. This meeting was called to order by Miss Ella May Turner, who represents Jefferson County in the West Virginia Historical Society.[2]

A.D. Kenamond was made temporary chairman, and Mrs. Lynne Grantham temporary secretary and treasurer.

A constitution previously drafted by a committee was read by W.H.S. White. Said constitution was discussed at some length and several changes made.

The following membership committee was appointed,

H. L. Snyder, chairman
Mrs. Lynn Grantham
Miss Ella May Turner
Miss Sallie Lee Powell
Mrs. S.T. Knott
Miss Susan Gregg Gibson
Dr. W.E. Dittmyer
Capt. H. C. Getzendanner
Henry T. McDonald
Marshall McDonald
Mr. D. W. Border

Those sponsoring the organizing of the Jefferson County Historical Society have reason to be encouraged by the interest evinced at this meeting.

1 An article published in the *Magazine of the Jefferson County Historical Society* in 1967 (Vol. XXXIII, page 14) points out that this was the same day Charles Lindbergh landed in Paris after his solo flight from New York across the Atlantic Ocean.

2 The 1967 article indicates Miss Turner was recruited by Andrew Price, the president of the West Virginia Historical Society.

There being no further business the meeting stood adjourned, to meet for permanent organization the first Saturday in August.

Mary T. Grantham (Mrs. L. F.)
Temporary Secretary

Saturday afternoon, August 6, 1927, a meeting for permanent organization of the Jefferson County Historical Society was held in the old college building in Shepherdstown.

The minutes of the meeting held at the Court House in Charles Town on the afternoon of May 21, were read and approved.

The constitution and by-laws were surveyed briefly by W.H.S. White.

An instructive letter from Dr. Louis Knott Koontz of California was ready by A.D. Kenamond. This letter showed that Dr. Koontz had spent time and thought upon historical research.

H.L. Synder, editor of the *Shepherdstown Register* made a short talk, in which he stressed the amount of historical material which Jefferson County possesses.

The next thing in the order of business was the election of officers. This as the constitution calls for was done by ballot. The following were elected,

A.D. Kenamond, President
Miss Susan Gregg Gibson, Vice President
Mrs. L.F. Grantham, Recording Secretary
Miss Ella May Turner, Corresponding Secretary
Miss Carrie B. Wilson, Treasurer

The election of a curator was postponed until a future meeting. There were thirteen nominations made for members of the Board of Directors. The following six were elected.

Miss Sally L. Powell
H.L. Synder
Miss Letitia Cary Ambler
Dr. Walter E. Dittmeyer [sic]
Mrs. G. B. Shaull
Marshall McDonald

After the report of the membership committee the total enrollment was sixty-nine. This as well as the goodly number in attendance foretells enthusiasm as well as interest in the work undertaken by the Jefferson County Historical Society.

It was moved, seconded and so ordered that the November meeting of the organization be held in Charles Town. There being no further business the meeting stood adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Mary T. Grantham (Mrs. L.F.)
Recording Secretary

A meeting of the board of directors of the Jefferson County Historical Society was called by the president for October 24, 7:30 p.m. This meeting was held at the old Rumsey house, the home of Mr. and Mrs. A.D. Kenamond.

The following directors were present

A.D. Kenamond
Miss Susan Gregg Gibson
Mrs. L.F. Grantham
Miss Ella May Turner
Miss Carrie B. Wilson
H.L. Synder
Dr. Walter E. Dittmeyer [sic]
Miss Sally L. Powell

The work of the society was discussed and President Kenamond emphasized the fact that the aim of the Jefferson County Historical Society should be to reach out and broaden, and not to narrow down to local history only.

Dr. Dittmeyer reported one new member. Tracy L. Jeffords. Mr. L.F. Grantham reported nine,

Dr. E.H. Bitner
Miss R. Helen Bates
Miss Leila H. Bitner
Mrs. May S. Grantham
Bishop R.E.L. Strider
Mrs. Jones F. Hoyle
Mrs. R.H. Border
Rev. Hunter Davidson
Mrs. Hunter Davidson

The following standing committees were appointed,

{Page Missing?}

Mrs. A.D. Kenamond, Mrs. Mary E.Y. Wynkoop, and Mrs. Llewellyn

Potts were present at the meeting. When the business was finished, dainty refreshments were served by Mrs. Kenamond, assisted by Mrs. Potts.

Respectfully submitted,
Mary T. Grantham (Mrs. L.F.)
Recording Secretary

Upon invitation of Miss Duval, Jefferson County Historical Society met at Peterkin Hall, St. Hilda's Hall, November 5, 1927, at 7:30 p.m.

The meeting, consisting of approximately sixty members, was called to order by A.D. Kenamond, president of the organization. In his introductory remarks he referred to the three historical societies that had been organized in Jefferson County before this one.

The minutes of the August meeting were read by the secretary and approved. A motion was made by Mrs. A.D. Kenamond that a committee be appointed to secure a suitable place for what Jefferson County Historical Society may collect of curios and antiques. Said committee as appointed by the president consisted of,

Miss Katherine Riddle
Miss Susan Gregg Gibson
Thos. R. Moore.

The question of the need of a Record and Minute Book for the Society was brought up. The sentiment as expressed was for a substantial well bound book, and against the loose leaf type. The decision was left to the executive board.

Upon motion of H.L. Synder it was decided that Jeff. Co. Historical have suitable membership cards. {Added}

An encouraging letter from the secretary of W. Va. Historical Society was read by Miss Turner, corresponding secretary.

The following were elected to membership,

Dr. H.T. McDonald
Mrs. Jones F. Hoyle
Mrs. Ralph Border
Mrs. May S. Grantham
Rev. Hunter Davidson
Bishop R.E.L. Strider
Miss Helen B. Pendleton
John Bennett
Dr. E.H. Bitner

Miss Leila H. Bitner
Mr. Wm. J. Young
Mrs. Wm. J. Young
Miss Nellie G. Turner
Miss R. Helen Bates
Miss Mynna Thurston
Mrs. B.D. Gibson

The members of the eleven committees appointed at a recent directors' meeting were requested to get together for a few minutes and discuss their respective work.

Those present were then entertained and instructed by the following program.

An address, Formation of Jefferson County by F.L. Bushong.
A paper, Early Settlements in Jefferson County by Miss Helen B. Pendleton.
An original poem by Rev. Hunter Davidson.
The meeting then stood adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Mary T. Grantham (Mrs. L.F.)

March 15, 1929

The Jefferson Co. Historical Society met at 7:30 this evening in the Woman's Club room in Shepherdstown. The meeting was called to order by President A.D. Kenamond. Miss Ella May Turner read the minutes of the meeting of the Executive Committee held in Harpers Ferry January 12th. The minutes were adopted and ordered to be inscribed in the records.

Miss Wlson, the Treasurer reported that there is in her hands a balance of $174.81. Fifty members have paid up their dues for the current year. Miss Turner, Chairman of the committee on {?} suggested amendments to the constitution and by-laws, presented the following amendment to article VII, section 1, to the Constitution. The same was accepted and ordered to lie over until the next meeting of the Society.

Dr. H.T. McDonald reported that the bills authorizing the appropriation of money for the marking of historic spots in Jefferson County had failed of passage in the West Virginia Legislature. President Kenamond made a supplementary report giving additional facts in regard to this project.

It was, on motion ordered that the Committee on marking historic spots.{?}

Miss Mynna Thuston[sic] spoke on the matter of raising the sum of a thousand dollars to purchase "the oldest house" in Shepherdstown, now owned by F.S. and D.B. Lucas.

Miss Violet Dandridge, Miss Lila Willis were elected members of this Society.

Miss Sallie Lee Powell presented to the Society a copy of the speech of Hon. Wm. L. Wilson in Charles Town on October 17, 1896.

Hon. Tracy L. Jeffords, a member of this Society read an interesting paper of the subject, "Building of the Railroads Through the County."

Mr. H.L. Synder gave an entertaining talk on the history of the Potomac River in Jefferson County.

Trivia

Being a collection of historical material and relevant observations on Jefferson County offered by the Editor for the delectation of his readers on occasion as pieces come to hand. The editor respectfully urges readers to submit contributions to Trivia.

Imboden's Dash Into Charlestown

by Lieut. F. Carter Berkeley

Charles Town Farmers Advocate, 20 December 1924, page 2

About the 15th of October, 1863, General Imboden's Brigade was encamped in Rockingham County, Va., when he received an order from General Lee to proceed to Berryville, meet General Stuart there, and, in conjunction with him, make an attack on Harper's Ferry and Charlestown and, if possible, capture both. General Sullivan's (Federal) Brigade was at the ferry; and the 9th Maryland (Federal) Regiment of Infantry and a squadron of cavalry were at Charlestown, which is eight miles from the ferry. General Imboden had to guard all the gaps in the mountains from Beverly to Harper's Ferry, and, consequently, never had his full brigade in camp together at one time. At this time he had less than one-thousand men with him.

I had the honor to command a section of the McClanahan's Battery in the brigade.

Some years ago a Yankee major, giving an account of the capture of Charlestown, said: "The 'Johnnies' had some pretty darned smart officers during the war, and some of them that did the most effective work were the least heard of. Imboden was one of them. He was a smashing good soldier, had the true instincts of a cavalryman, and was as much at home in the saddle for a three-day ride to raid an outpost as he would have been playing bean poker for apple brandy in a crossroads grocery in the Shenandoah Mountains."

Now, nothing delighted a Confederate soldier's heart more than to be ordered to the lower valley of Virginia. They used to speak of it as the "land where the flowers always bloomed and birds always sang." They never failed to meet a warm and cordial welcome there from the noble women, who were so devoted to the cause we were fighting for. Every

man from that section able to carry arms was in the Confederate army.

Our advance arrived in Berryville later in the evening of the 17th of October and drove a scouting party of the enemy out of town. We did not find Stuart there, as we expected, our scouts reporting that he could not cross the Shenandoah River on account of high water. The General decided to attack Charlestown alone if he could find out what there was there. A council of war was held and Major Davis volunteered to go to the vicinity of Charlestown and find out. To this the General agreed and went into camp to take a short rest before his return. The Major knew two renegade Southerners who lived within a mile of the place, and he aroused one of them about midnight and demanded the information he desired. The man told him that his brother, who held a position under the bogus Yankee Virginia government, was in the town; that the loyal people there were very much incensed against him; and that he was afraid he would be handled roughly if he was captured. But he said that if the Major would allow him to get his brother out he would give him the information desired. This was agreed to, and the Major obtained the necessary information and returned to camp in time for us to get to Charlestown by daybreak.

The rays of light from the approaching day began to peep over the Blue Ridge, and a long stretch of fog hung over the Shenandoah like a lake reaching toward the ferry. The landscape around the town was dotted with handsome country residences, for Charlestown is in the midst of a rich farming country. The town lay sleeping before us, the inhabitants little dreaming that their friends and deliverers were so close around them or that they would soon be awakened by the boom from Confederate horsemen dashing over their streets. I was with my section on the Berryville Pike; and my orders from the General were that as soon as the pickets were driven in we should make a dash for the courthouse, where the enemy was quartered, and open on it promptly, as there was no time to lose.

My boys were enthusiastic when they heard the order and were eager for the command to move. The General sent Captain McNeil and his adjutant, Capt. F. B. Berkeley, in with a flag of truce to demand an immediate and unconditional surrender. Colonel Simpson, the officer in command, gallantly replied: "Come and take us if you can." We met them just before we got to the courthouse, and they said: "Hurry up, Lieutenant; they have refused to surrender! The building is loopholed, and you will have to be quick, or they will kill your men before you can

unlimber."

As we entered the town a small boy came out of a house, and I called him to show me the way to the courthouse. His eyes sparkled with excitement, and he said: "Take me up behind you, and I will show you." When we got near the courthouse he said: "As soon as you turn that corner you can see it." I said to the youngster: "Now you get off; for they will fire on us as soon as they see us, and you might be killed." He replied: "O, please let me go along with you; I am not afraid." I had to pull him off my horse, and as he struck the ground he called after me. "I am going, anyhow." And he did, sure enough.

As we turned the corner I saw the Yankees standing at the big windows with their guns in their hands. The courtroom was on the second floor. Just as we got unlimbered I heard the Yankee officer give the command to fire; and as I gave the same command they poured a volley into us, but, strange to say, did not kill a single man. We fired several times rapidly, and soon the courthouse was obscured by the smoke. I discovered that they had stopped firing, so I gave the command to my men to cease firing. When the smoke cleared away, I saw the enemy had gone. We were so close and the room was so high that our shots had gone under them, and I found that we had only wounded one man, a field officer. Poor fellow! He was lying, horribly wounded, on the courthouse steps. He had on a beautiful sword, which he said had been presented to him and which he asked to be allowed to retain. We fixed him as comfortable as we could and laid the sword by his side. The enemy had gone out of town by the Harpers Ferry Road, but were almost immediately charged by the 18th Regiment and threw down their arms. Capt. Julian Pratt made a dash for the color bearer and secured the colors. Colonel Simpson broke through our lines and struck out for the ferry with Harry Gilmor in hot pursuit, but reached the troops coming to his relief before Harry overtook him. A lucky man!

As soon as I saw the Yankees were out of the courthouse I sent two men with a wagon and four horses, which we discovered hitched up near the courthouse, to go in and load up with plunder, for the Yankees had left everything behind in their flight. I especially gave orders to get all the knapsacks and blankets possible. I did not see my captain any more until the next day at Front Royal. We were looking forward to having a supply of blankets and clothing to last the company through the winter; but, to our bitter disappointment, the men had loaded the wagon with drums — thirteen drums of all sorts and sizes. I turned them over to Colonel Smith,

of the 62nd, and he organized a fine drum corps.

The General came along and said, "Hurry up and get out of town, for the enemy are coming heavy force from Harper's Ferry." Capt. Frank Imboden was put in charge of the prisoners; and he took them through the town at a double-quick followed by the small boys, black and white, yelling and jeering at them. We followed and found the streets full of girls waving their handkerchiefs and cheering with wild delight; but they soon changed their tune when they found that we were going to leave them again in the hands of the hated enemy. They begged and entreated us to stay; and although we hated to do it, we had to go, and go fast, for a much larger force than we had came into one end of the town as we went out of the other.

I tried to get the girls to leave the streets, so that I could rake it with a parting load of canister; but they were too enthusiastic to do so, and we would not have risked a hair of their heads to kill a thousand Yankees. The enemy followed us as far as Berryville and made several desperate and gallant efforts to recapture their friends, making it warm for us and giving us a running fight all the way. We fired our guns en echelon, some firing and some retreating. Several times they came near capturing them. At one place, I remember especially, they got on our right flank and within a few feet of us before we could turn our guns about, when Major Gilmor charged them and saved us. Just as he made the dash at them his horse was killed, but in a second he was on another horse and right after the man who had shot his horse. In the charge he recaptured two of our men that the enemy had taken.

The Yankee major in his account says: "Imboden, with half a dozen shells and a volley or two of carbine and pistol shots and considerable dash, had scooped in pretty nearly as many as his own force numbered. Our folks were never very proud of that day's work. The whole day was a stern chase; but occasionally, when Imboden was pressed too closely and was in need of time to keep the prisoners and plunder ahead out of the way, he stopped long enough to give us a sharp taste of fighting that showed the metal that was in him."

In another page of the major's history he says: "Our guns were well at work; and as Minor was short of officers, I was directing one of his sections when, with a whoop and a yell, out of a thick undergrowth a little to our rear came a couple of Harry Gilmor's squadrons, with that dare-devil sabreur leading them, not more than fifty yards away, and, of course, it did not take them long to 'git there.' The rush was so sudden

and unlooked-for that our support gave way; and Gilmor made straight for our guns, rode right over and past them, sabers slashing and pistols firing as they went. I had been tugging like blazers at my revolver, but could not get the blamed thing out; and as they rode over us a long-legged, red-headed fellow made a vicious slash at me over the wheel. I promptly dodged under the muzzle of the gun, and he did not reach me. 'Fours, left wheel!' rang out, and they came back before you could draw your breath. I laid for the 'son of a saber' that had reached for me before, for I had got out my gun by this time. I did not see my red-headed friend; but a handsome, dark-mustached youngster a boy in looks, was making a point to run me through. Dern my buttons, gentlemen, if that saber did not look as long as a fence rail! I dropped flat under the gun's axle, and the boy swept past. As far as my experience goes, that dash of Gilmore's was one of the handsomest things of the kind that occurred during the war."

The major was mistaken about the two squadrons. Harry hardly had one with him at the time.

The poor prisoners were on foot, and we were mounted; so they had a hard time of it, but as soon as their friends stopped the pursuit we gave them a good rest. We got safely back to our camp in Rockingham. Our loss in killed and wounded was not great.

Roger J. Perry

Editor's Note: Readers of the account may wish to refer to Paul E. Barr, Jr., and Michael P. Musick, eds., "'They Are Coming!' Testimony at the Court of Inquiry on Imboden's Capture of Charles Town," *Magazine of the Jefferson County Historical Society*, LIV (December 1988): 15-53.

Picnic

The Society's picnic occurred on the traditional first Wednesday of August, which was the 2nd day this year. Mrs. Elizabeth H. (Betsy) Wells took charge of the affair, and her good and diligent efforts ensured its success. Carmen Creamer, Garland Moore, and other members greatly assisted the effort.

The picnic was held at Morgan's Grove Park, on Route 480 and Old Ridge Road near Shepherdstown. Many of the approximately 150 people in attendance, who had not previously seen the new pavilion and facilities at the park, were pleasantly surprised with their adequacy and quality.

Dr. John E. Stealey III announced that the occasion would be the last picnic over which he would preside. He expressed his gratitude to Society members for their good support during his twenty-year presidency. Stealey introduced his successor, Mrs. Thomas C. G. (Nancy) Coyle and wished her every success.

Stealey then presented a fifteen minute talk about the historic meaning of the location at Morgan Grove, the notable events that had occurred there, sketches of the previous owners and residents, and the importance of Town Run and its springs to the area. The area is now part of the fairly extensive Morgan's Grove Historic District on the National Register of Historic Places as result of the sustained efforts of Diana Suttenfield. Several members commented about their interesting recollections of Morgan Grove fair.

At the conclusion, Mrs. Coyle called on Mr. Roger J. Perry who conveyed a complimentary and informed appraisal of Stealey's work as president of the Society. He asked that the group acknowledge the contribution, and it did so with an enthusiastic ovation. Stealey responded that he appreciated the display and highly treasured the opportunity that the Society afforded him in introducing him to many delightful and fine county residents.

Announcement

In October 1999, Dr. John E. Stealey III conveyed to the board of directors his wish to be replaced as the president of the Jefferson County Historical Society after twenty years of service. He set no termination date so that the board would have ample time to search for a successor. Also, Stealey conveyed his willingness to continue to serve as editor of the Society's *Magazine* in the immediate future if the board wished him to do so.

The board of directors appointed a search committee composed of Mr. Robert W. Butler, Mr. Jack R. Huyett, and Mrs. John D. Lowe, Jr. Mr. Butler served as chairman. In due course, the committee and board asked Mrs. Thomas Claiborne Green Coyle of Charles Town to be the Society's president, and she graciously consented to assume the position.

Mrs. Coyle, née Nancy Casto, is a native of Charleston, West Virginia. After attending Kanawha County schools, she graduated from Randolph Macon Women's College at Lynchburg, Virginia. Later, she attended Marshall College and did Master's degree studies in social organization at Ohio State University.

She has an extensive civic career, having served on the boards and as an officer of numerous community organizations in Charleston and in Jefferson County. Mrs. Coyle has served two terms on the board of the Jefferson County Historical Society and on the Jefferson County Historic Landmarks Commission. She has written for the Society's *Magazine* and aided in the composition of *Between the Shenandoah and the Potomac: Historic Homes of Jefferson County, West Virginia*. An active Presbyterian, she currently is a member of the Jefferson County Garden Club and the Friday Morning Book Club. Mrs. Coyle has an interest in antique furniture and is the proprietor of Little Encounters and Antiques.

Her family consists of her husband, Mr. Thomas Claiborne Green Coyle, five children, and ten grand-children. She and her husband now reside in Charles Town.

Board Resolution

The Board of Directors, on behalf of the Society, would like to express its gratitude for the twenty years of service of Dr. John E. Stealey III as President. His position as a professional historian has brought a special quality to the society which few others such as ours have the privilege to enjoy. His professionalism has been prominent in the contents of our journal and his choice of speakers at our meetings. By his leadership we can proudly say that we have been held to the highest standards in preserving the history of Jefferson County through books, letters, papers, publications and forums. That he is willing to continue as Editor of the Journal gives us encouragement that the society will continue to preserve the past with interest, accuracy, and dedication.

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