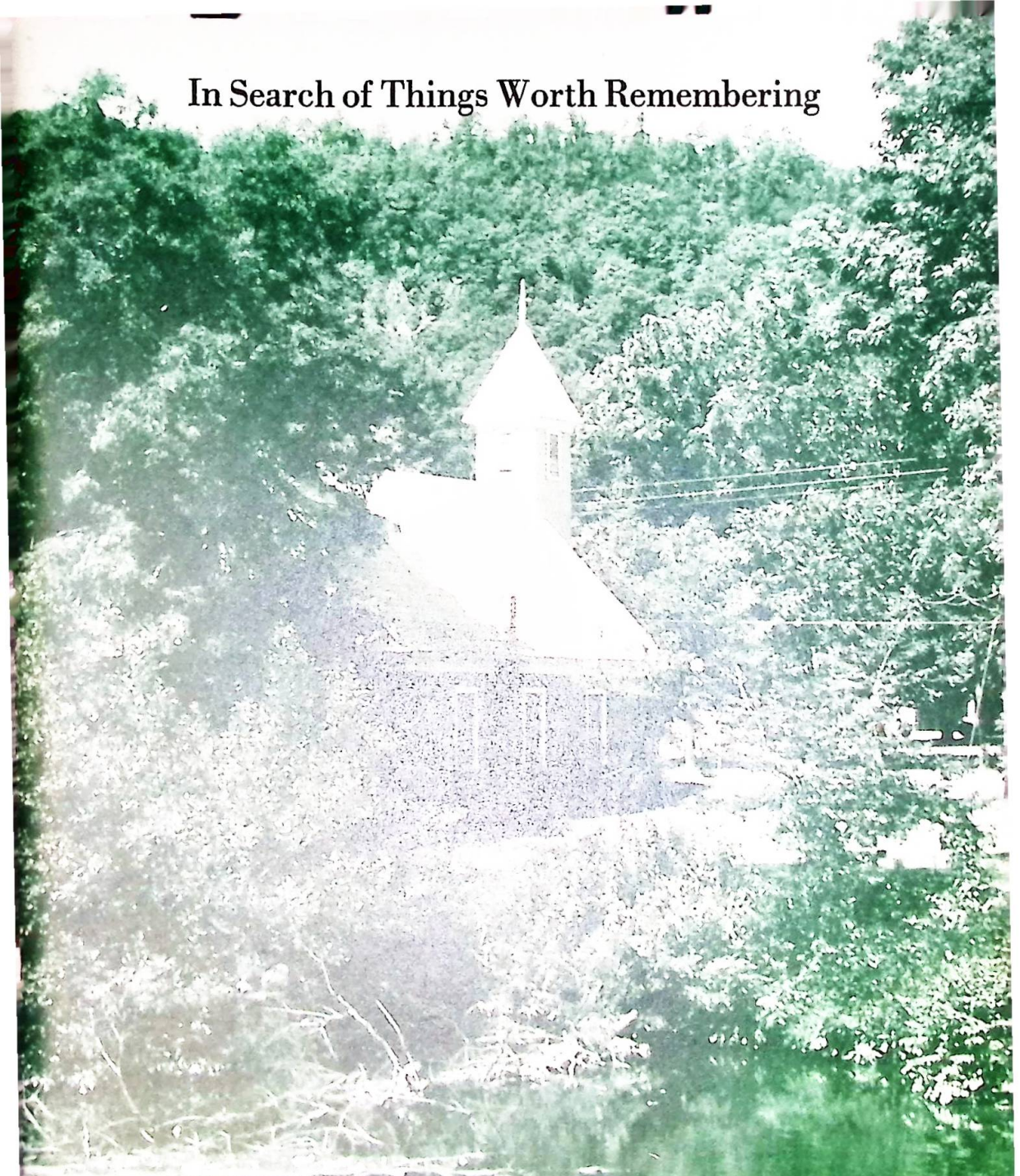


In Search of Things Worth Remembering



Clinostone

Spring 1976

In Search of Things Worth Remembering

As we continue in search of things worth remembering, we have come to realize that experience is the best teacher and enthusiasm the best motivator to accomplish the goals we have set. However, when enthusiasm wanes, as it did with this, the second issue of Clingstone, Volume II, determination provides us with the necessary energy and the belief that this issue will be better than the first.

We became disappointed because we ran into many dead ends in our quest for information about moon-shining. We hope to be able to put that story in a future issue of Clingstone. But we do think that the stories in this issue will be of interest to you.

Come journey with us to Inman and meet the man who owns the smallest horse in the world. Climb up Glassy Mountain and visit with three sisters who still believe in the old ways of life. Learn how to tat; and listen to three magistrates talk of trial justice. And read about old-time religion. We sincerely hope you find pleasure in this, the second issue of Clingstone, Volume II.

We wish to thank you, the reader, for your response to the first issue of Clingstone, Volume II, and we hope you will enjoy our second issue just as much, if not more. The pride we take in our magazine stems from you. If you have any ideas, information, or suggestions for stories, don't hesitate--please let us know. We need your continued support and friendship, for without your help, we could not keep Clingstone going.

OLD TIME RELIGION

Interviewed By: Sandy Gaither, Vickie Burns, Bill Perry, Mark McLemore, Jimmy James, Michael Gooding, and Jeff Loftis.

Transcribed By: Sandy Gaither, Vickie Burns, Michael Gooding, Jimmy James, and Jeff Loftis.

Photography By: Perry Williams, Wesley Boyd, Jim Helminski, and Bill Perry.

Religion is ever-present, although the ways of worship are always changing. In this article, we have attempted to look at some of the older customs and traditions of worship which have meant so much to the people of this area.

An old time revival meeting is the subject of an original poem by Dave Wilson, and Rev. J. Roy Robinson explains for us some of the phrases in the poem as he recalls the revivals and tent meetings he attended as a youth. Mrs. Edna Duncan adds her memories of worship and revival at Zoar Methodist Church, one of the older churches in the Greer area.

Except in the mountain areas, there are not many itinerate ministers these days. What is it like for a minister serving several churches at one time? Rev. Grady Forrester, who was an itinerate minister in the early part of his ministry, tells us what it was like and shares several interesting stories. Rev. Rufus Glenn and Mrs. Morgan DeShields also helped us here by giving us background information on itinerate ministers.

Another tradition we were interested in was the old time camp meeting. The Wesleyan Methodists still hold camp meeting every summer in Greer, and we interviewed several people closely associated with these meetings: Rev. Marshall Rampey, Mrs. Florella Miller, and Mr. R. V. Fox.

Perhaps reading these interviews will bring back some memories for some of our readers. Perhaps remembering will help us bring back some of the spirit of old time religion to today.

THAT OLD TIME RELIGION

Potbellied stoves that sat before the aging pulpits
Echoed with well-prepared and windy sermons
That had been collecting within since the first time
Some tobacco-chewing parishioner raised a lid
At the beginning of point number three
To empty himself of his overload.
The church stood erect on the
Firm foundation of fervent believers
Who met for revival during lay-by time:

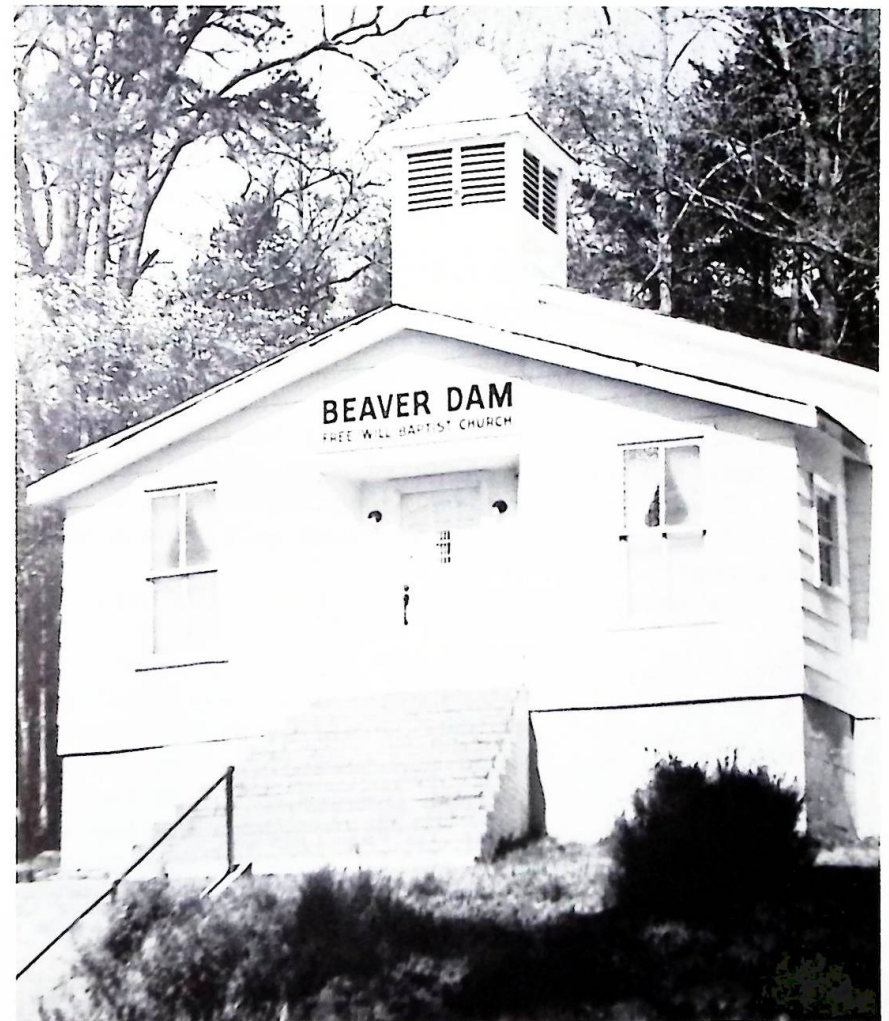
That two week period
At the end of July
Or beginning of August
When corn was laid by
And wheat was not
Yet white unto harvest.

The mourner's bench overflowed with saints
Concerned for the souls of loved-ones
Whose hardened hearts held them back
From an eternal salvation and everlasting joy.
Funeral home fans waved in the hands
Of all as the heat from the day
And thoughts of Hell's fire in eternity
Brought sweat to both brow and brain.
Aisles were lined with tear-filled sinners
Whose hearts had been touched by the
Never-ending prayers raised in their behalf,
And the inspiration of a visiting minister.

Those were the days of the old time religion
That have given way to central heat in expensive
buildings
Built on firm foundations of brick and mortar,
And to formal dress and a laying by of bad habits
For the two hours of Sunday morning services
That demand of us more than we're willing to give.
There are no mourner's benches and few mourners left
To concern themselves with the souls of others.

Tears are shed during empty emotional encounterings
By those whose hardened hearts are softened for the
moment
And hardened again by the mention of prayer
And the thoughts of an inconceivable Hell
Preached by inspired men of God in an ever-changing
world.

Dave Wilson



*We would like to thank Mr. Dave Wilson for allowing
us to use his original poem.*

We interviewed Dr. J. Roy Robinson, a well-known Baptist minister, now retired, who resides in Greer, S.C. Dr. Robinson was very helpful to us by giving us some interesting information on tent meetings, evangelists, and old time revivals.

Jeff: How long have you been a preacher?

Robinson: 40 years. That's about long enough isn't it? Baptist. I was pastor of First Baptist Church in Greer for 10 years. I came in 1946. Left in '56 to go to Charleston. I retired last year.

I had an uncle who was a Presbyterian minister. When I was about 12 years old, I felt the Lord wanted me to be a preacher. It's a strange experience. You just feel that's what the Lord wants you to do. I've never doubted that that's what the Lord wanted me to do.

Michael: Do you remember any old-time country revivals?

Robinson: Oh yes! Sometimes they would last for two weeks. There were quite a number of tent revivals. In the '40's and 50's these fellows would come. I heard some of the old timers--Billy Sunday, Cyclone Mack, just a nickname. Shouted more. Had a mourner's bench. Didn't have as much preaching then as we do now. The country church had church only once a month, twice a month.

Jeff: How were the revivals different from ours today?

Robinson: They lasted longer. It wasn't anything for a revival to last two weeks, sometimes three. When I was pastor in Greer, we had a two-week revival. A fellow Penson was the football coach. We had cooperation with the school (Davenport), and they would let you come to the revival in the morning at 8:00 o'clock. You were not late until 9:00. Then the football team came down several nights. The Lord saved a bunch of those football players. We had a large number. Now you can't do that.

Michael: What was the mourner's bench?

Robinson: Baptists never had much of that. Methodist, Church of God, and Holiness had it more. It

was just a place down at the front. There was a banister around the pulpit and a level like a step. You'd get down and some Christian would come up and ask how they can help.

Michael: What was lay by time?

Robinson: The time of the revival. You boys go back a long way. Greer has changed from a country town, to a mill town, to a city town. My wife lived in the country, and they always had their revival the second week in August. The reason is you plow and plant in the spring. See, we come out of a country background. Before they picked the crop, they had that time.

I taught school in Cherokee county because I couldn't get a job preaching. We let the children out to help on the farm.

Everybody came to the revival. Hardly anyone joined the church except during the revival.

You boys wouldn't believe it, but when I was your age, the Sunday night service was the biggest crowd of all. There wasn't much else to do. It was sort of like the drive-in we have around here. You would sit with your date. I remember very distinctly we'd have twice as many people Sunday night as Sunday morning.

"Something extra about a tent-excitement."

You've got to realize preaching has come a long way. Today preachers are expected to finish high school and college and go to the seminary, and some even require doctorates. But in those days, you had fellows that just come out of the mill, just finished high school. Of course, these fellows were better preachers. Something extra about a tent--excitement. It was something different. People who wouldn't go to a church would go to a tent. Those boys were good preachers, good singing.

They were conservative preachers. They were preaching some of the popular sins of that day. I was more evangelistic.

I was saved in a tent meeting. I went with three

other boys my age. I think I just went to get away from home. We didn't have cars. We didn't even have bicycles. I went down and accepted Christ. Then the next Sunday I went and joined my church.

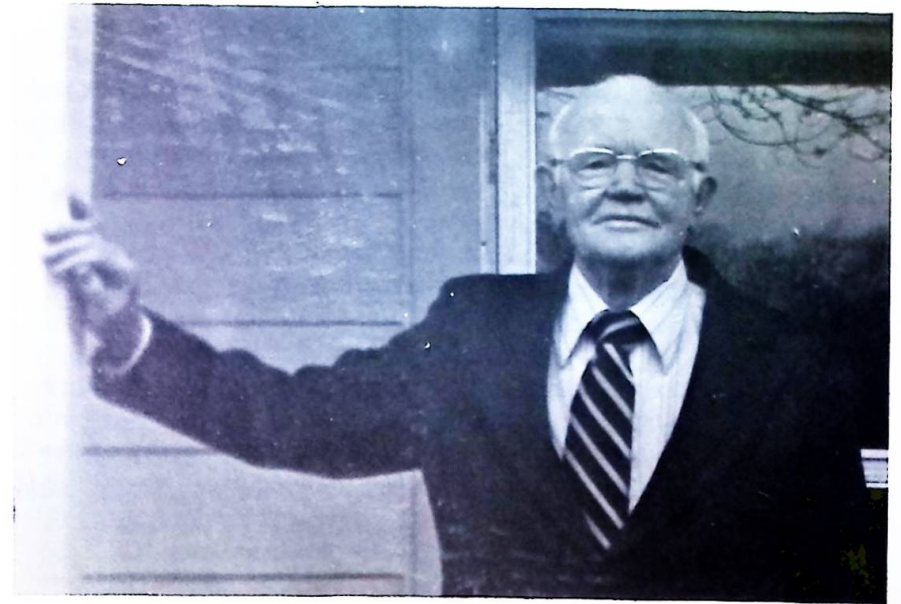
I've held every office in the Baptist church, just about. I was a Sunday School teacher at 17. I was ordained a deacon when I was 19 years old. I began to preach when I was 23. Yea, I've been in it a mighty long time because I'm 66 years old now.

One aspect of old time religion that is fading from prominence is the itinerate minister. According to Rev. Rufus Glenn, a retired Methodist district superintendent, the itinerate ministry developed from the ministers who came to America from England in colonial times and served several churches simultaneously.

An itinerate minister travels from church to church. These ministers might preach in the morning, afternoon, and again at night, each time alternating to a different church.

In the early days, groups of people would meet at someone's house. Later, many of these groups organized churches served by itinerate ministers or circuit riders. Sometimes, they would meet under brush arbors. Mrs. Morgan DeShields of Greer described brush arbors as shelters made by placing tree limbs or brush over two posts or trees that had been cut and set up at an angle, forming a roof to protect the people from the sun and weather. Brush arbors became common meeting places, especially for long services.

There are still a few itinerate ministers in this area, serving mostly small rural churches. Rev. Grady Forrester of Greer was an itinerate minister in his earlier years of preaching. He now serves at a small Methodist church near Campobello. Rev. Forrester gave us vivid descriptions of some of his experiences as an itinerate minister and shared some of his ideas on how preaching has changed.



Rev. Grady Forrester

In the beginning of my ministry, I was an itinerant minister because I had four churches for two years, then three for one year, then two for one year, and, finally, one church from there on out. I guess they got to where they couldn't trust me with more than one. No, it was a matter of economy and the change of time. When the economy began to go up and folks began to move into new sections, the church got more members and could pay a living salary.

I guess my preaching today is about as up to date as it was when I started. Just depends on the man and his theories, what he believes, and whether he thinks he has to holler or just talk to people. So as far as the message is concerned, it's practically the same as the olden days. If you go back before I started preaching, it has changed a great deal. We used to have most all the preachers who could holler and beat the pulpit and preach hellfire and damnation. They'd make all kinds of propositions to be sure they caught you on something you did that they said was wrong, and you'd go to hell. Say, for instance, they'd start off by making you make a commitment to

Christ. They intended to shell out the things that were wrong: smoking, chewing tobacco, drinking liquor, or telling lies and all these kinds of things, until they captured everybody and got 'em up to the altar. Then they'd holler and pray and try to be converted. It was a great emotional stir. We still have that kind. They try to frighten you into the Kingdom of God.

Jeff: Did you ever have anything to do with brush arbors?

Forrester: Oh yes. We'd have our Forrester reunions there. The only brush arbor I know of that remained a campground was one in Simpsonville. When I was a boy we attended these brush arbors. The arbor stayed there until I became preacher, and a church was built beside it. We used the old arbor more for summer revivals, and we'd have a lot of tent meetings back in those days.

We asked Rev. Forrester to share some of his most interesting experiences from his itinerate ministry.

COMMUNION. In my first pastorate, I had four churches. Each had a little billboard telling where the pastor and his family would go for lunch every Sunday. There was this lady about 85 or 90, and she always had the new preacher at her house for lunch. She'd send her granddaughter and grandson out to ask the preacher to come to their grandma's for lunch. Well, I said, "No, thank you." Then they said, "Oh, Grandmother is going to be mad. She always has the preacher first."

So I went on over for lunch, and she gave me all the clues. She told me everything: how to preach, what all I had to do at the church serving communion, and so forth. She said: "They've built a little pigtroth on the chancel rail for you to put your communion cups in. There has never been a cup put in there yet, and it'll never happen. Methodists go up to the altar for communion, and you hold the plate and let them put the glass back on the communion plate."

Well, I forgot about that the first time I served. I just did it like I'd always seen it done, and that is to pass the bread and the wine, then, let them put their cups in the pigtroth. When I got to her, she reached out and grabbed hold of the communion plate, got her cup of wine, and held on to that plate. Well, she drank her wine and popped the cup down on the tray. It was a wonder she hadn't broken all the cups. Then that reminded me that I did not serve communion the way she had told me. The next time I carried it around, I held it so far from her she couldn't get hold of the communion plate. Then I slipped on by her, and she had to put her cup in the pigtroth.

So after the service, I went back to the door, and she was gathering up the communion cups and so forth. We leave an offering on the chancel for the needy, and there were dollar bills and change laying on the chancel. Well, not everybody drinks all that's in their cup, so there's always a little left. I was back in the back, and I could see her gathering up the cups. She was pouring the little bit of wine left in the cups on those dollar bills. Everybody had left from the church and I went back where she was. She said to me, "I want to show you what a mess you've made with this indecent way of serving communion. Look here, got wine all over these dollar bills."

I had seen her pour it on them, so I just took my handkerchief, took the money, and cleaned the wine off. I told her, I'd love to have a barrel full of dollars soaked in wine.

*"I had to carry them on
their honeymoon"*

WEDDINGS. A widow and widower came to get married. They had a little girl that belonged to one of them. I started the wedding service, "Dearly beloved, we are gathered here..." and so forth. Well I went on and said, "It's an honorable day, instituted by Christ," and she said, "Well, you know that's right, isn't it?" She started talking back to me as I went

on. So I said, "If your vows are kept, and you don't violate them, and if you honor the heavenly father, then your wedding shall be complete in him and you'll have a haven of peace." Then she said, "Now I think we'll get along together. We've known one another all our lives."

It took a good long time to marry her because it was more of a conversation than a ceremony. When she'd quit talking, I'd go along with the ceremony. When the ceremony was over, the man got out his billfold and handed me a dollar. I said, "Thank you, sir." Well, he handed me another dollar, and I said, "Thank you!" (He did that seven times with a pause every time he gave me a dollar.) It was beginning to get a little embarrassing. So, I gave one of the dollars to the little girl. Well, they came to the ceremony by bus and when they were ready to leave they had missed their bus. So I had to carry them on their honeymoon.

*"Then you'd put 'em under
muddy water, and they'd
look like drowned muskrats."*

BAPTISM. Our discipline as far as baptism is concerned is that the person joining the church may have his choice of sprinkling or pouring. Now we're accused of sprinkling, but I've never seen but one baptism when they used sprinkling. We mainly pour, which is having a hand full of water and putting it on your head and holding it while the minister speaks. Now we got our method of sprinkling from the Old Testament. This was when the first baptisms were started by Moses. Moses would get a branch of broomstraw, it's called a hyssop in the Bible. He'd dip this hyssop into clean clear water, so says the scripture, and he'd give that broomstraw a big swing and baptize the whole congregation. Now there are a few Methodists that I know of that use a rosebud and dip it in the water and sprinkle it that way. It was right cute.

While I was a little boy they had a pool on the side of the church, and when it'd been raining for a few days they'd have a baptism set for Sunday. There was a pipe that'd run from a creek to fill up the pool. I have seen them just baptize them in just plain red muddy water. Sometimes there'd be a string of pretty little girls in white dresses starched real stiff, and they led them down in that ole muddy water. There was so much starch in those dresses, you'd have to have two or three people to push the skirts under water to keep from showing too much. Then you'd put 'em under muddy water, and they'd look like drowned muskrats.



Mrs. Edna Duncan

Mrs. Edna Duncan has attended Zoar Methodist Church most of her life. Understanding that Zoar is one of the oldest churches in the Greer area, we went to talk with Mrs. Duncan about her earlier memories of Zoar.

Mrs. Duncan: I joined the church when I was ten years old, and I'm 82. That would throw it 70 years. But I've been going to church all my life. My father

would carry me to his Sunday school class and put me on his lap. I don't imagine I was over four years old.

When they had the beginner's class, we'd have little cards with Bible verses. Our mothers would teach us the memory verse because we couldn't read. The teacher would call the roll, and we'd answer with a short memory verse.

*"They got so happy they'd
cry out and holler."*

Every August they'd have a revival, just country people. The old ladies wore black bonnets, white black skirts, and black shirts. The skirts would come down to the ground.

My grandmother had three sisters; there was a revival going on and they shouted. They got so happy they'd cry out and holler. The first time I ever saw them I couldn't understand why they did that.

Back during the Civil War, I remember my mother saying that when slaves would die, they'd bury them under this big oak tree at Zoar. I remember my mother would show me. They would have a place in one corner for the slaves because they carried them to the church to worship.

When I was young, the young people didn't have cars; they'd have carriages or wagons. My brothers would hitch up the mules to the wagon and go around the neighborhood and get up the people for the revival.

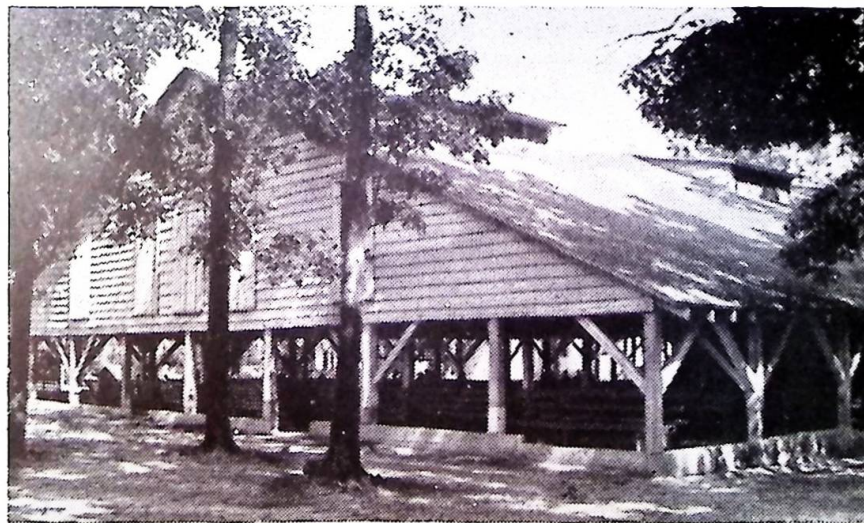
Later in the afternoon, people in the community would gather at some house and crowd around the organ and sing. We called it "singings." During the spring, when I was young and courting, we'd go to Chick Springs in a buggy to get water and be a'going.

After church on Sunday night, after they had a few cars, they'd get just a carload or two and they'd go to each other's house and just have a good time. It wasn't like it is today. We grew up in the country, and just anybody like me didn't think about running around. Things were quite different then.

Another tradition of old time religion that is almost lost today is the traditional camp meeting. In years past, various churches used to hold these yearly revivals where people would come and camp for a period of one to two weeks. Camp meeting was a time of spiritual revival and fellowship, and the crowds often numbered in the thousands.

Today, there is one religious group in this area still keeping the tradition alive. The Wesleyan Methodists hold camp meeting every summer at their camp grounds in Greer, as they have since 1918 when the first meetings were held under a tent. Although some of the customs and traditions of the Wesleyan meetings have changed with time, the spirit of the occasion remains.

We asked three people who have attended the camp meeting regularly, Rev. Marshall Rampey, Mrs. Florella Miller, and Mr. R. V. Fox, to share with us some of their experiences from this annual week of revival.



The old tabernacle at the Wesleyan Methodist camp grounds in Greer.



Rev. Marshall Rampey

A Wesleyan Methodist minister and a teacher at Byrnes High School, Rev. Marshall Rampey is devoted to the Greer Camp meeting. He gave us a bit of the history of the camp, along with information on its present status. He spoke also of his memories of attending and of those people who made camp meeting special.

Sandy: How many years have you been attending the Greer camp?

Rev. Rampey: All my life. Well, I'm 51 now, so I can remember most of my life. I think I've only missed one camp since I've been living. That was during the war. I can't remember when I first attended cause I was carried there when I was a baby. My mother and father, they attended all the camps until they died.

Sandy: Since you've attended the camp all your life, could you tell us some of the changes in the camp over the years?

"They would put up tents."

Rev. Rampey: I think the whole basic concept of camp meeting has changed over a period of the last few years. See, used to, camp meeting would be where you'd go and camp, and that's why those buildings are there that were built back in the 20's and 30's. You didn't think in terms of conveniences as you do today. You just had a place to sleep. In fact, when I used to first go, they didn't provide too much of a sleeping place. They would put up tents. One was a women's tent. They had boxes in the tents, and you'd fill them up with straw. Then, you'd fix what you call a "straw tic." That's where you get the idea of camp meeting--you would go and camp.

But now it's more like a camp "drive-in" meeting. Very few people stay on the grounds at night. Some lived nearby so they'd go home, and those who didn't live nearby would depend on motels for sleeping quarters. So your campers are really very limited now as you think of camp meeting. Now there's a few camps where this isn't true. There's one down in Georgia that I attend occasionally; you may have 2,500 people at camp overnight.

Camp meetings started in Cambridge, Kentucky. They were started by the Presbyterians, and then the Methodists joined with them. Actually, the Methodists promoted the old camp meeting idea. We are of Methodist heritage, and so this was somewhat of a carry-over from the old tradition of camp.

"They did not believe in the holding of slaves."

Sandy: What is the difference between Wesleyan Methodists and the Methodist Church?

Rev. Rampey: The Wesleyan Methodist Church came out of the Methodist Church about 1845. They basically came out over the slave question. They did not believe in the holding of slaves. Then, too, they did

not accept the episcopal type of government which means having a bishop. They pretty well remain a congregational type of government. They have remained a very orthodox type church. They believe in the inspiration of the Bible. We are still considered part of the Methodist body as a whole, but we are separate in feeling.

*"There was what you would
call a ring meeting..."*

Sandy: We've understood that people from all over the nation used to come to the Greer camp. How does this statement stand as of now?

Rev. Rampey: No, not anymore. I think this is because we have not kept pace with the real trend. Another thing is I don't think there is the idea of camp meeting like there used to be. When I was younger, we used to have visitors from various states like Indiana, California, places like this. What it is now is people do not come and stay. It's usually people who come to visit relatives and, in turn, visit the camp. People many times use it as kind of a homecoming type thing. They used to come there as children, so they come to visit some of their friends.

Sandy: Could you tell us anything about the different activities that are held at the camp.

Rev. Rampey: There was what you would call a ring meeting where someone in the middle of a ring of people would confess his sins. But now the youth today would call it something like a rap session, maybe. What they're doing is relating their personal experiences to their lives.

Sandy: The preachers at the camp meetings, were they mainly from out of town?

Rev. Rampey: Yes, I don't fully understand the reason for this, except for the fact that they feel it is best to hear someone from out of state. They may come from North Carolina, Georgia, or Indiana. In fact, this summer we had one from Michigan, Florida, and Kansas. The object is to expose the local people to a different ministry. In other words, it brings a

different context and a bit of a different setting.

Sandy: Could you tell us a few things about the people that attended? Like, for instance, Mother Godfrey?

Rev. Rampey: Yes, I knew her all my life. This part I can not confirm, but they have always told me she was a great prayer. I've heard them say repeatedly that her knees always stayed callused from praying all day. I have seen her when she had the spirit of the Lord. Her two favorite words were "Look up." I look back now and know now why she said those words; we're always looking down when we need to look up. But she would do a dance called a "Holy Dance."

Sandy: She'd just do the dance without any music?

Rev. Rampey: Yes, she might would go down to the front of the tabernacle, and it wasn't a fast-paced dance. It was just a little step that she had. You've heard of Holy Dances in the Bible; you read about them. I think she had the Holy Dance. I think people as a whole would rather see her get blessed than hear the preacher preach. People would respond, too. I've seen people come forward in greater numbers as a result of her having danced. She just had this effect, this spirit of the Lord working through her.

*"People... would rather see her
get blessed than hear the
preacher preach."*

Sandy: Why do they call her "Mother" Godfrey?

Rev. Rampey: She was an elderly woman. She also had a large family. She was one of the traditions of the camp. It was my privilege to go into her room the night she died. I had been asked to go because her pastor was sick. The children said not to be disturbing; she was in a coma and wouldn't know anything. I went in; I didn't say anything to her. I just bent over her bed and started quoting the 23rd Psalm. Instead of her being in a coma, she started quoting it with me. She said it word for word and verse for verse until we finished. They thought she was all but dead in a coma. She did die that night, but at least she was aware of the Bible.

Sandy: What about R. C. Kendrick?

Rev. Rampey: He would be called the father of the camp as we know it today. He was born in North Carolina, but he spent almost his entire ministry in this immediate area. I believe he was a foreman in one of the plants when he really got started with the camp.

Sandy: Are there any other ministers that stand out in your mind?

Rev. Rampey: There is a Rev. Hames in Greer. He was one of the early leaders of the founding of the camp and has been very instrumental in bringing in a number of the preachers. He did this type of preaching most all of his life.

I feel that camp meetings as we have known them in the traditional sense are maybe another one of those institutions of the past. People do not have time or will not take time to go and spend ten days at a camp because we live at a different pace from what they did back then.

They tell me back in the early days, people, when they'd carry the wagon, used to hitch the milk cow to it and take their cow to camp. I've read this in the book in the old camp meeting in Kentucky. This is when the Methodists and Presbyterians would go and stay. They would have as many as 50 thousand people there, and they didn't have any amplifying system. They'd divide them up and put them on the fields in groups of about three or four thousand people, and they'd have the preachers preach to these groups.

Really, the traditional camp meeting has passed. Everybody in Greer used to turn out for camp meeting. The young people used to go. I may be wrong, but I think we're in a changing world. The church will have to change--not change our message, just change our approach.



Mr. R. V. Fox

The oldest living member of the Wesleyan Methodist church in South Carolina, Mr. R. V. Fox attended the camp meeting the first year it started in Greer. Mr. Fox now resides at the Veterans' Home in Columbia, and we would like to thank him for allowing members of the Clingstone staff to visit and talk with him.

Perry: When did you first come to Greer?

Mr. Fox: I came in the last part of 1904. Greer was just a little flagstation. I don't guess there were half a dozen brick buildings in Greer at that time.

Perry: Where did you live before you came to Greer?

Mr. Fox: I lived, was born and raised in the mountain part of Tennessee. I'm a Tennessee Hoozier, mountain hoozier.

Perry: What made you want to move out of the Tennessee mountains?

Mr. Fox: There's nothing up there in the way of making a living. I went into the army to get out of the mountains. It was the only chance I had. You couldn't get a job hardly nowhere.

Sandy: Mr. Fox, how many offices did you hold in the Wesleyan Methodist church?

Mr. Fox: I had about every office in the church, the local church, I mean. I don't know how many offices

there was, but there were several of them.

Sandy: Where was your church located?

Mr. Fox: My church was on Poinsett Street and the camp was on Snow Street.

Sandy: Was the church a one room church?

Mr. Fox: It was one room when I first joined back in 1908. It was a nice brick church.

Sandy: How many generations of your family have attended the camp?

Mr. Fox: Well now, just my generation I reckon, and my family.

Sandy: What were some of the problems you had to face with having an open tabernacle?

Mr. Fox: Well, of course we were under that tent until they built the tabernacle. It wasn't out in the open at that time. They had cabins built around. Some people had their home, and then some had the cabins. Of course, now the Tabernacle Association has cabins all around.

Sandy: Did you attend all the services held there at the camp?

Mr. Fox: Pretty well all of them.

Sandy: How many services were held in a day?

Mr. Fox: Sunday early, prayer meeting. At ten o'clock they had another service, just a short service. At two o'clock they had a prayer service, and then there was a night service.

Sandy: How was the music at the camp?

Mr. Fox: It was good. They had piano back then. They didn't have organs like they do today.

Sandy: Did they have any choirs?

Mr. Fox: Yes, They had the choir made up of different churches.

Sandy: Were there a lot of children that attended the camp?

Mr. Fox: Oh yea, there were a lot of children. They had a special building for the children. During the camp there would be some of the women folks that would stay and watch after the younger ones.

Sandy: Were there any type of games that the children played?

Mr. Fox: Well, I don't reckon there was any games played now. There might have been in the building and during the recess. But there wasn't nothing like ball games.

Ever since she has been old enough to remember, Mrs. Florella Miller has been attending the Wesleyan Methodist camp meetings in Greer. We visited Mrs. Miller at her home in Duncan, and she was happy to share with us her experiences and fondest memories of camp meetings, along with some freshly baked cookies.

We are the "old-fashioned Methodists." We came out of the mother church, the Methodist Church. The main reason the Wesleyan Church was established was because of slavery. We did not believe that one man had the right to be master over another.

The present camp ground, where it is located now, is not the first location. For a few years it was located in other towns before it was in Greer.

People attending come from all over the state. Now we have had people from as far as California, some from New York, and all various parts of the country. The Greer camp is very famous. It's well known all over the United States. You can go to any state and run upon someone at sometime or another that knows about Greer camp. It's one of the largest camps in the South. Several years ago it was estimated on a Sunday that between 2,000 and 2,500 people were attending, so it was a good size camp. I think now, perhaps, we would not have more than a thousand Sunday morning, perhaps not that many. The people stay at their own churches, it seems, more on Sunday morning; however, there are still pastors who call off their morning services and attend.

I was always impressed with the music at camp meeting. We have always had the regular church hymns, and, over the years, I don't think they've changed very much because they've stood the test of time. I don't think the real old hymns like "Amazing Grace" and "When the Roll Is Called Up Yonder," will ever grow old. They are standard hymns, and we still sing them today.



Mrs. Florella Miller

Sandy: Could you describe some of your earliest memories about camp meeting?

Mrs. Miller: Now when I was a little girl, I started attending the Greer camp with my great-grandmother, and it was two weeks at that time. My family (we lived in Anderson, S.C.) would prepare the meal for all day long on Sunday because we left real early Sunday morning. We would go and carry all of our belongings, our clothes, and things we needed, and my great-grandmother had a room. Now they have dormitories, but back then, right underneath where the choir is now, there were a few rooms. The ladies, elderly ladies mainly, would rent those rooms. That was one of my great-grandmother's favorite places; we always had a room underneath there. You carried regular straw, what they call "straw tic." You filled it up with clean fresh straw, and, of course, you always carried your own bed linens and anything you wanted to put in your room. We slept just as well on that sticky straw; it'd stick you in the ribs, but we didn't hardly notice. We were at a camp meeting and didn't care.

The first tabernacle was just a wooden building, and at that time it was not enclosed. There were canvas curtains that we'd let down in case it rained,

and I have been there when the roof leaked. That was after the building was getting a little older. When we'd have those bad storms, and the rain just poured, it seemed like for hours, the crowd stayed on, and nobody seemed to move. I suppose we all felt like the Lord would take care of us. I think we were in the safest place there could be.

The new building is quite an improvement over the old one. Of course it's a lot more comfortable. We have an organ, and a piano and more conveniences than the other tabernacle had.

Sandy: Did you face any problems back then with the camp since you weren't as modernized as today?

Mrs. Miller: I don't think people noticed because I think they were so interested in attending the camp. I can remember one of our conference presidents at that time was Rev. R. C. Kendrick. He was a local Greer preacher, and he always made you feel like you were on holy ground when you put your foot on that camp ground. We never realized we had any problems. In fact, when I first started attending, there was a pump. You had to go out and get your water by this pump.

Sandy: At the camp, would they hire people to help with the cafeteria duties or would those who attended the camp volunteer their services?

Mrs. Miller: As far as I remember, they've always had cooks. There was, of course, one dietician who was in charge of the whole procedure. Some times the youth of the camp would wash the dishes and set tables and do things of that nature. Back years ago, a lot of the work was done by youth because they were really glad to do that. They got free meals from washing dishes at the camp.

And speaking of the camp ground meal, when I was a little girl, we only served two meals daily. You can imagine how hungry a growing little boy and girl get, and my grandmother would always go out to a neighborhood grocery store and purchase fruits and candies and cookies to fill in between meals. I always thought that was so much fun.

I can remember, on occasions, there was an elderly minister, Rev. Riley Garrett. He would come in, oh, maybe the noon meal, and we'd be so

hungry, and he'd say, "Now let's sing." All the group would have to sing. Maybe he'd just take all the time in the world he wanted to sing, and then they would pray. He would call on some minister or some layman and have them pray. They didn't always say "God is great. God is good. Amen." They would pray and pray. As children your friends would say, "I'm starving and I wish our dear preacher would cut it short," but he didn't always cut it short. He'd pray till he was finished. I can remember those times, and they were dear times. I appreciated them.

Sandy: What were the services like? Is there any service that stands out in your mind?

Mrs. Miller: We usually had two evangelists, one who would preach in the morning and one at night. But there's just been so many special services, that it would be very hard to pick out a particular service. Many times there would be altars completely filled with people, and I have known times when they would have a second altar call. You felt like the Lord was so prevalent there till you were almost afraid to move. People would not even want to go out of the building until the last Amen was said because it was just such a holy place to be.

We have had marvelous evangelists. We have had some from all over the nation. Rev. H. Robb French is still living. He is in his 90's, and he has been an evangelist about six or seven times at the Greer camp. Then we've had Rev. Jessie Whitecotton, Rev. E. E. Shellhammer, and just so many of the world-famous evangelists. We have been quite fortunate. Now not all of them have been Wesleyan ministers. Some have been from other holiness denominations.

Sandy: Who were some of your favorite people who attended the camp?

Mrs. Miller: Mother Godfrey just passed away several years ago. She was an old-timer and quite well-known in the Greer area. But some of the real old-timers were Mrs. Janie Nimmons and my own grandmother, Mrs. Garrison. Mrs. Sherman, Mrs. Davis . . . there were ever so many of the older people, and Mrs. Rampey, who shouted all over the campground. They were just Godly ladies. You could see the shine and the glow

on their faces. You didn't doubt that they had good religion. You knew they had salvation and that it was real and not a put on.

Rev. Charles Wireman is quite an old-timer. He is still living and, in fact, I heard him preach last year. He was a Kentucky outlaw who really was rough. He has given his life story in this area numbers of times. Ever so many people from all denominations have gone to hear him. He was really converted. He had lived in the hills of Kentucky, and he had killed a man one time. He was with an outlaw group, and he didn't mind shooting and scaring people to death. He said many, many a time he just scared people to death 'cause he was so mean. He didn't mind fighting. He was quite a rough character. But when he was converted, he heard a lady praying one night at her home, and as he passed by the gate, he stopped to listen. She was calling his name in prayer. He said that was enough for him. They were holding a meeting in town in the Methodist Church, and he went to church and was converted. He was one of the most feared outlaws in Kentucky. Now he is the dearest and most humble soul you've seen in the world.

*"It's been a blessing over
the years to so many people."*

Sandy: Would you ever notice a change in some of your friends' lives after having attended the Greer Camp?

Mrs. Miller: Those who would go to the altar and those who would get a real saving knowledge of Christ would have a changed life, and they would be glad to tell you that they had changed. They witnessed to it, they testified to it, and you could tell the change. It was not only something they said, but you knew they had changed because they had changed their habits and, in most cases, their way of dress. They had changed in every way. The camp would not mean too much if there was not a change. It just wouldn't be camp really if you didn't change.

Tatting



Mrs. Ruby McCrackan lives on Grove Street in Greer. I met her after one of my contacts (Mrs. Merlie Greene) told me that Mrs. McCrackan had been tatting for about sixty-one years. When I went to see her, she showed me how to tat and gave me some recipes.

Tatting is a process of making lace by hand. It produces delicate motifs. The tatter loops and knots cotton or linen thread that is wound around a small shuttle. A hard-twisted yarn is used to add to the beauty of the picots, or decorating loops, on the edge of the lace. Tatting is used for collars, trimmings, insertion work and doilies.

Connie: How old were you when you started tatting?

Mrs. McCrackan: Well, do you know how old I was when I started tatting? I was nine years old, and if I live till December 28 coming, I will be seventy years old. I started crocheting women's socks when I was twelve years old. I have done a little bit of everything in my life. I fooled with electricity, I've worked on cars, I cut grass, I've helped poor people out and I am thankful that I could do it.

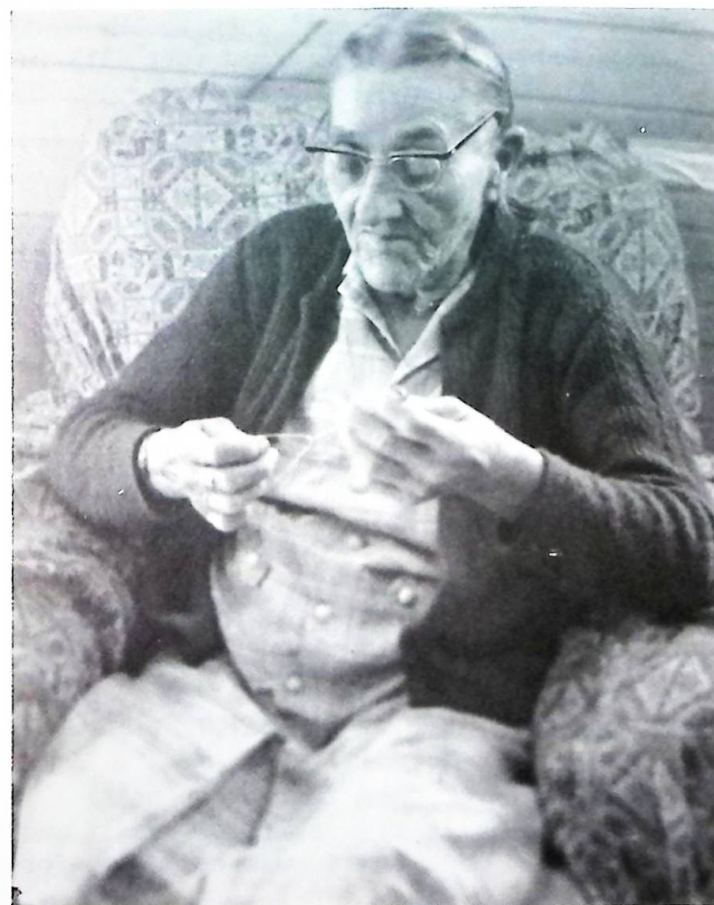
Connie: What did you make from tatting?

Mrs. McCrackan: I made brassieres with tatting and made tatting to go on princess slips, you know, the top of the slips, and made the straps and all with tatting.

Connie: Who taught you how to tat?

Mrs. McCrackan: I learnt myself. I seen it in a book. I didn't have the book, but somebody else had it. One of my girlfriends and I seen it. Then I said, "I've got to know how to do it." Well, I got me some thread, and then I went to working with a small stick, and then I got me a tatting shuttle.

Back then you could get them at any dime store you wanted to. I make tatting to sell it and make tatting to go on pillow cases and everything and just work myself up that way. I didn't have anybody to help me. Mama didn't let me go anywhere, only to school and back or church and back until I got older. So I had to have something to occupy myself with. I learnt to make tatting first. Well, I seen a book then with crocheting in it. Well, I'd look at it, and I'd read and study it. And I went to make crocheting and I made a great big, wide crocheting thing and made slips and sold them. And people would just go wild over that tatting and crocheting. And they just went wild over that knitting of them socks. I took that up with myself. I just looked at the book and just started to make the socks.



Connie: Do you remember the name of the book?

Mrs. McCrackan: I can't remember the name of the book, but it showed all kinds of tatting and stuff in it. That you can make things any color that you wanted to.

Connie: What kind of thread do you use?

Mrs. McCrackan: Cotton thread with a hard twist is usually used in the making of tatting, but other types of thread and yarns can also be used. But I have not been able to find tatting shuttles. I make my own. I use wood, but some are made of steel and plastic. I can whittle a tatting shuttle out of a piece of wood.

Connie: How long is a tatting shuttle?

Mrs. McCrackan: A tatting shuttle is about four inches long.

Connie: Do you have anything that has tatting on it?

Mrs. McCrackan: No, not now I do not. My house burned down and everything I owned went with it. I tried to save some things, but I couldn't. I had lots of stuff that had tatting on it that I had made and crocheted. I had a lot of scarves that had tatting on them.

Connie: Have you ever made any other kind of lace?

Mrs. McCrackan: No, just tatting to go around scarves and stuff like that. I've taken and made round tatting scarves. I made 52 sets of scarves when I was 12 years old. I never got them made until someone said that they wanted them. Well, I said it was going to cost them, and they said that it did not matter how much it cost. I would make one scarf in oblong shape and two small round ones.

Connie: How much would you get for making a set of scarves?

Mrs. McCrackan: Well, I tell you they liked them so much that they gave me up to \$14.00 for a set. This was in the year 1919, too. Time flies so fast that I can't remember back now. But I can set down, and I can make tatting just as good as I could when I was 12.

Connie: Did you ever make tatting to sell?

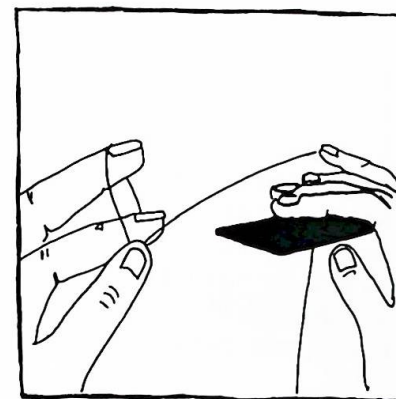
Mrs. McCrackan: Well, I made it for myself and to sell. Anyone who ever saw it was hollering for it.

I can do most anything that I want to. It was hard to learn to tat. I would get so far pretty good, and then it would knot upon me, and then I would throw the knotted part away. Then Mama would say that I was just wasting that thread. Then I would say, "Mama, I am paying for it." That was the only way I could learn to tat. She did not think that I could do it, but I did. I kept on making different things.



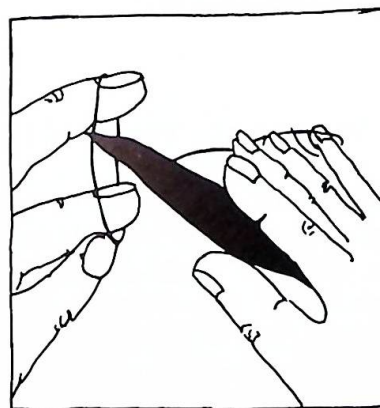
The way that you tat is with the left hand, grasp the free end of the thread between thumb and forefinger. Spread the other fingers and bring the thread around them to make a circle.

Hold securely with thumb and forefinger. Bend the little finger toward the palm to catch the thread, and extend the middle finger to make the circle tight. The middle finger does most of the work of drawing up stitches.



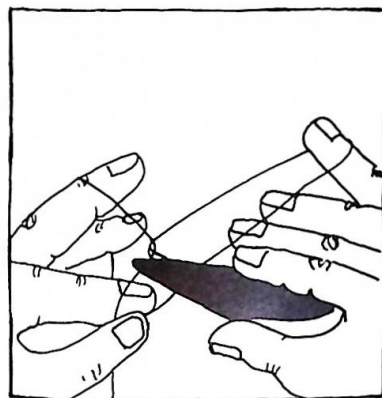
How to Make a Double Stitch

With the right hand, be sure to hold the shuttle by the flat sides, pointing to the left hand, and with the thread coming from the back of the bobbin. Extend little finger of right hand to support the thread.

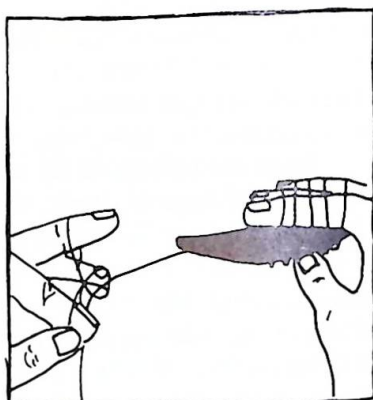


Without turning the shuttle, slide it first under, then over the thread held between middle and forefinger of your left hand.

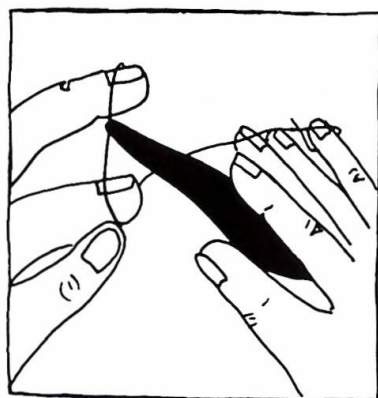
Then you drop your middle finger of the left hand. Draw the shuttle thread tight; a loop will form with the thread around the left hand.



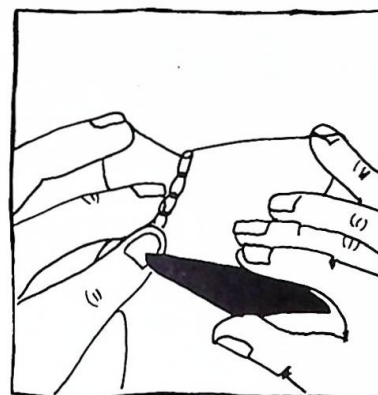
Extend the finger that you dropped of your left hand, sliding the stitch down the shuttle thread which is held taut, making a tight stitch between thumb and forefinger.



Second Half
of Double Stitch



To make the second half of stitch, you hold the shuttle in a horizontal position. Then you slide the shuttle first over, then under the thread between the middle and forefinger of the left hand. Draw up.



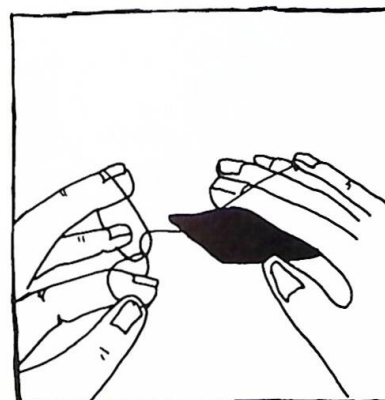
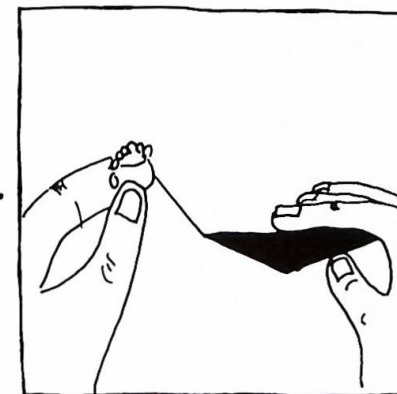
To Make a Ring

All tatting is made of rings, chains, and picots. The rings and chains are the whole of the design and the picots are used for decoration and for joining.

After you make several of the double stitches, draw up the thread on the shuttle so the first and last stitches touch and they give you a ring.

To Make a Picot

To make a picot you make the first half of a double stitch, but as you slide it into position, stop about one-fourth inch from the preceding double stitch. Make the second half of the double stitch; then slide entire double stitch close to preceding double stitch. The resulting loop is a picot. A picot means only the loop and does not include the double stitch which fastens it.



Interviewed and Written
By: Connie Shaffer
Pictures by: Jim Helminski

J. C. Williams: He Bred the Smallest Horse in the World.



J. C. Williams was born and raised in Holly Springs, South Carolina. He now lives in Inman with his wife and 175 American miniature horses. When we talked with Mr. Williams, it was evident that he is a man doing the work he loves--not just for the money, but for the fulfillment and satisfaction of loving and caring for his little horses.

Mr. Williams has many champion horses on his horse farm, Dell Tera. Two of them were on exhibit at the Astro Dome for the National Championship Rodeo. One of his miniature horses will soon be seen traveling and performing in the company of the Andonesian Lippizan Stallions.

Among his prize horses, there is one that stands out from the others, Little Bit. The National Enquirer, hearing about Dell Tera's Little Bit, and checking with the Guinness Book of World Records, verified her as being the smallest horse in the world.

In spite of his gold mine of horses, Mr. Williams is a down to earth person. He lives life to its fullest by doing what he enjoys most--taking care of his 175 miniature horses.

We've been breeding down for these small horses for about 15 years. When we moved here, we had about seven. We had a bigger animal than we have now, and we bred them down with a smaller stallion. Each year we are getting smaller and better.

There're just two mini horse breeders in South Carolina, myself and Martimer Hauge down at Roebuck; he's the gentleman who came over from Belgium. There're only two in North Carolina. We're one of the largest breeders of little horses in the world. It wouldn't be very fair of me to say I'm the largest because I really don't know. But we're right up at the top of the ladder with good lines and with the number of animals, too.

A lot of these breeders advertise that they've got the world's smallest horse. I don't contradict them because that's petty stuff. But we believe Dell Tera's Little Bit is the smallest horse in the world.

"She was a 12 inch foal."

She was a 12 inch foal. She'll probably be 21 or 22 inches when she's grown. The little one eats about as much grain as a pimento cheese cup would hold. We breed for size now, you see. We always dreamed of having a horse 12 inches. There's no telling how many thousands of pictures have been made of this little horse. Everyday somebody's by here to see her. A couple of days ago, a lady was here from Anchorage, Alaska.

I think that's the cutest little horse we've ever had. I just love that little horse. You can lead her in the house or in the car. She'll just get up in the car with you or go anywhere you want to go, and she doesn't fuss when she leaves her mama. That National Enquirer came twice and made pictures of her. They made around 1000 pictures of that one little horse. And that little horse ran and played for them to take pictures just like she was a professional. But finally, about the end of the day, she got tired, and everytime they'd try to get her to do something, she'd lie down. She wouldn't get up. I said, "You took enough pictures today. She's tired. Let's quit."

When Little Bit was on television from Greenville, I guess we had over 1000 people over here. We just let 'em loose. And then one day we found one little horse that someone had taken and beat its eye out, and we found one shot. We just had to close the place to people. You know, things like that just sickened me out on people cause we were a good fellow to 1000 people, and then somebody does something like that to you. And they were smoking in this barn with all this hay in here. People just have no respect for you. I love company and I love to talk to people, but when things like that happen . . .

When Little Bit was born, we stayed up several nights with her. She was so tiny, she was a little bit weak when she was born, and we bottle fed her two or three nights before she was able to nurse her mother. Other than that, well, a lot of people watch their horses when they go to foaling, but I tell you,

you can watch one for 30 days, turn around and go get a drink of water, and she'll have one that quick (snaps fingers). So there's no use. We never have a problem with 'em anyway. We put 'em in a special place out here in the field when they go to having a foal. And we had, I guess, 35 foals going in there last year. Lost one . . . so that's a pretty good record.

The only time you have a problem with any animal, I think, is when you put them in an abnormal condition, something that is not of their nature, housing them up. They get along much better outside than they do when I keep them in this old shacklety barn. They are prone to have colds when you keep them inside because it's hard to keep them out of a draft, and a draft is what gives a horse a cold. So you turn them outside and there's no draft out there.

"I just love that little horse."



Mr. J. C. Williams and Little Bit.

I usually go through my herd at least once a day, and I can look at 'em and tell you if one's sick. I went over in the field awhile ago and found one that was sick. They'll usually be standing with their head down and have a sad look in their eye--not an alert look. If I catch one that looks a little weak or a little droopy, I usually bring it in the barn and start feeding it grain.

"Everything you learn, you have to learn it the hard way."

I learned everything I know about horses out of books and from practical experience. One problem I had when I first moved here was we had fescue in the field. The first year I lost every foal I had for the simple reason that there was something in that grass that made the bag tough that the foal was born in, and the foal suffocated--actually drowned. When they were being born, they'd plop on the ground, and the bag they were in was so tough till you could take a knife and hardly cut it. I wrote Clemson University, I wrote the University of Georgia, I wrote the University of Oregon, and, finally, I wrote the University of Kentucky about this. They couldn't tell you one thing. All they knew was that you had to take them off this grass about six or eight weeks before their foal was born and feed them on grain. Well, I knew that. All these years I've been experimenting with them and feeding them kelp, a form of seaweed meal from Norway. Last year we fed 'em kelp. That didn't seem to help any.

The only thing I've ever found that would help is to put them in a field that has very little fescue in it and lots of weeds and anything that's wild, and then I'll feed them a little bit of corn. Man, they'd have these colts just like pop-corn poppin'.

Everything you learn, you have to learn it the hard way. A lot of breeders just getting started will call me for advice now, and I'm glad to help 'em if I can. I wish I had known somebody when I first started that I could have called to learn these things without having to go through all these years of hard knocks.

"If you're gonna work cheap, you're gonna work for yourself."

This is all I do. It's a full time job, and most days the day's not long enough. Of course, being by myself, it is quite a job. There's a lot of fencing to do and things like that. You don't really get it done. If you're gonna work cheap, you're gonna work for yourself. I want to do something I like.

You often wish your grandchildren or some of your children would be interested in something like this with all the years we've put in it. Young people, they're not interested in something like this. They're interested in boats, and hunting, and fishing--something that costs money, not anything that would make money.

I have one person helping me. He comes in on Saturdays. He's already talking about a car. There's just an in-between age that they're interested in something like this. It's either old men or young boys.

"He learned... all he wanted to....

He learned that it was hard work."

I had a boy here that was 22 years old. He came one day. He'd been here two or three times. He wanted to come on weekends and help me just to learn about them. So he came two Saturdays and worked. Naturally, I didn't work him too hard 'cause he didn't know much to do. The next Saturday I called and asked his aunt if he was coming to work. She said no, that he had something important to do that day. So I haven't seen him since then. He learned in two weekends all he wanted to learn about it. He learned that it was hard work.

We don't ask a lot of money for these horses that we want to sell. Of course, some of them that you don't want to sell, you put a higher price on them. The two we sent to the Astro Dome, I didn't want to sell 'cause I wanted to keep 'em and breed from 'em. Everybody, they'll keep prodding you: "Yeah, you would sell it for something." I tell 'em, "Yeah, I want to sell 'em. I'll take \$10,000 a piece for 'em." That eliminates a lot of gab, you see. That's what I tell 'em, and I haven't had any calls.

"We can look out any window
and see a horse."



"I'd rather do this
than anything I've ever done."

I had a lot of people calling me about buying Little Bit, a lot of side show people. One guy called me and I said, "Well, I just don't want to sell it." And he said, "Well, you would sell it for enough money." I said, "Well, it'd be a lot of money." And he said, "What do you call a lot of money?" I said, "\$50,000." And he said, "That is a lot of money."

We built this house where we can look out any window in the whole house and see a horse. Now we're about to enclose the back porch with glass to make a room out of it. We can just sit out there and look at the horses.

I think it's a very interesting hobby; it's the scarcity of the little horses. If they weren't so scarce and rare, I wouldn't be getting this publicity. It's the joy of knowing I can come out to my stable, look into these stalls, and see one of these little horses. My wife says if she had four legs and a tail, she would get more attention.

I've done a lot of things in my time, but I'd rather do this than anything I've ever done.

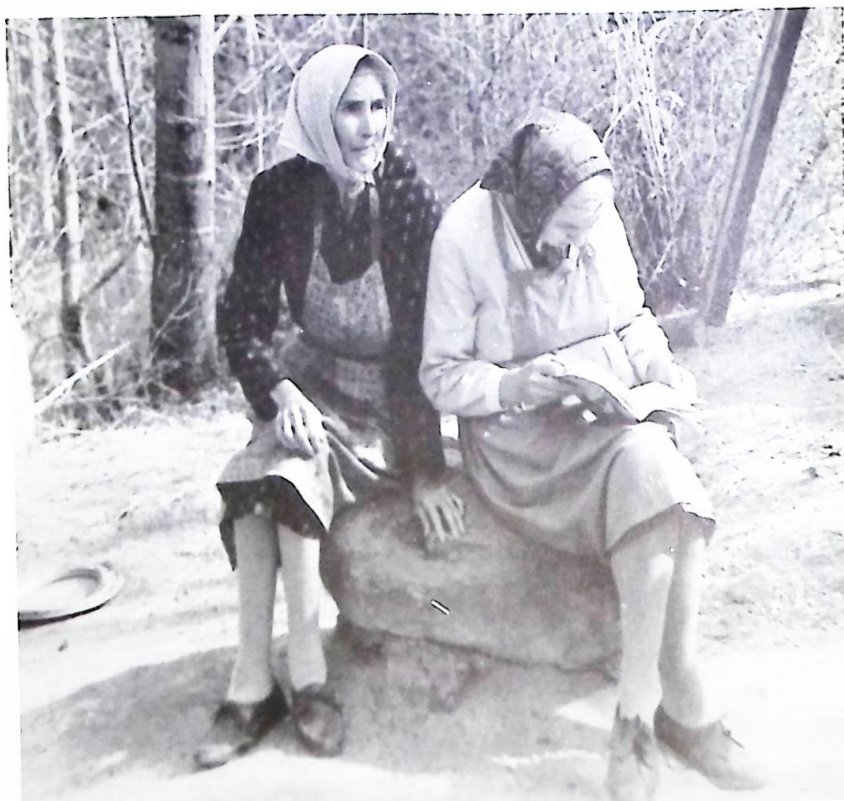


*Interviewed by: Ann Duncan, Kathy Johnston,
Perry Williams*

Transcribed by: Perry Williams, Kathy Johnston

Photographs by: Perry Williams

THE PLUMBLEY SISTERS— A DIFFERENT WAY OF LIFE



Interviewed by: Michael Gooding, Jeff Loftis, Perry Williams, Mark McLemore, Susan Hill, Connie Shaffer, Vickie Hiott
Transcribed by: Vickie Hiott
Photographs by: Perry Williams

If you go to Glassy Mountain, you might come to realize that not everyone who has the chance conforms, or has the desire to conform, to life's modern ways. The Plumbley sisters are an example of this type of life.

These three sisters, Miss Ellen Plumbley, Miss Lou Ann Plumbley, and Mrs. Deler Plumbley Good live on the mountain in a house that has no modern facilities. Miss Ellen Plumbley and Miss Lou Ann Plumbley have lived on the mountain all of their lives. After Mrs. Good's husband passed away, she returned home to live with her sisters.

These ladies used to make their own soap, quilt, and can their own food. But they told us that of all the things they did, they enjoyed working in the gardens most of all. They sleep on feather mattresses, which they made themselves. However, time has taken many of their cherished activities away from them, as they are not able to continue doing them.

We found the Plumbley sisters to be very warm and friendly as we talked with them about their feelings about life and religion; their beliefs, their experiences, and their remembrances.

Perry: Have you been living in this house all your lives?

L.A.P.: No. We bought this house in 1919. We lived a way back over the mountains then.

Perry: How many years did you live at the old house?

L.A.P.: Well, I's about 9 years old when we moved over here.

Mike: How much land do you own?

L.A.P.: We're supposed to own a hundred acres with this place.

Mike: Do you have running water?

E.P.: Yeah, we got water in the house. We got a spring, and we run the water from the spring into the house, and it runs all the time. We never cut it off.

Mike: Why don't you have electricity?

E.P.: We tried to get it, they wouldn't let us have it. We tried to get telephones, they wouldn't let us have them either. But now, if they came through, I wouldn't have it. I just don't want it.

We tried and tried to get them to let us have it to the church out here, and they wouldn't let us have it. Now people's a buyin' and buildin' on this new road here, and if it came through, I'd tell them, "Heck no, we don't want it!"



"We bought this house in 1919."

Mike: What do you do for heat?

E.P.: Wood. We burn wood.

Jeff: Do you chop it yourselves?

E.P.: Our nephews do it. I can't cut wood. I ain't touched no wood this winter.

Mike: Did you ever have a car?

L.A.P.: We don't, but the boys have. None of us can drive.

"We'd put a chicken in a coop..."



...set the traps around it."

Jeff: What kind of transportation did you use back then?

L.A.P.: Oh way back yonder, we used to have some mules and wagons, ole sleds.

Mike: Someone told us you did some trapping. Did you do it mainly to catch animals that were killing your chickens?

L.A.P.: Yeah. We'd put a chicken in a coop, make us a hen nest, put eggs in it, and set the traps around it. We'd catch a fox or maybe a wildcat, a possum or a pole cat.

Jeff: Were they traps that would catch them on the leg or something?

L.A.P.: Yeah. . . Catch 'em by the foot.

Mike: What did you do with the animals?

L.A.P.: We'd kill 'em.

Mike: How did you kill the wildcats?

L.A.P.: Sometimes we'd shoot 'em, sometimes we'd kill 'em with a stick.

Susan: Did you ever catch anything to eat?

L.A.P.: Not nothing, 'cept a 'coon or somethin'.

Mike: You didn't have any trouble when you tried to kill those pole cats?

L.A.P.: You take one, shoot it, and kill it dead, . . it won't throw no scent.

Mike: Are snakes a problem up here?

L.A.P.: Well, my sister, she got bit by a rattler. Got bit twice by one in 1960.

Mike: Did you have to carry her to the hospital?

L.A.P.: Yeah, she went to Greenville General.

Mike: How did you get bit?

E.P.: I was sawing some wood. It bit me twice before I seen it. It scared me a lots worser than it hurt me. It bit me twice on the leg. I think I must have stepped on it. I didn't see it until after it done bit me and was crawling off.

"...my sister, she got bit by a rattler."

L.A.P.: You know when we got her to the house, I took a razor blade and split it. And then I took a mayonaise bottle and put it on there and sucked the blood out. Well, I liked to killed her leg from having it so tight. Doctor told me next time to loosen it about every ten minutes and let the blood go on. But I liked to killed her leg.

Mike: How long did you stay in the hospital?

E.P.: I went on Tuesday and came home on Saturday. I don't believe there's as many snakes up here now as there used to be since them motorcycles and all are up here now. I believe they're leaving out. They don't like a fuss. But I kill every one I see. I'm just as afraid of a black snake as I am a rattler. I don't want to have nothing to do with none of them snakes.

Mike: Is there much moonshining up around these parts?

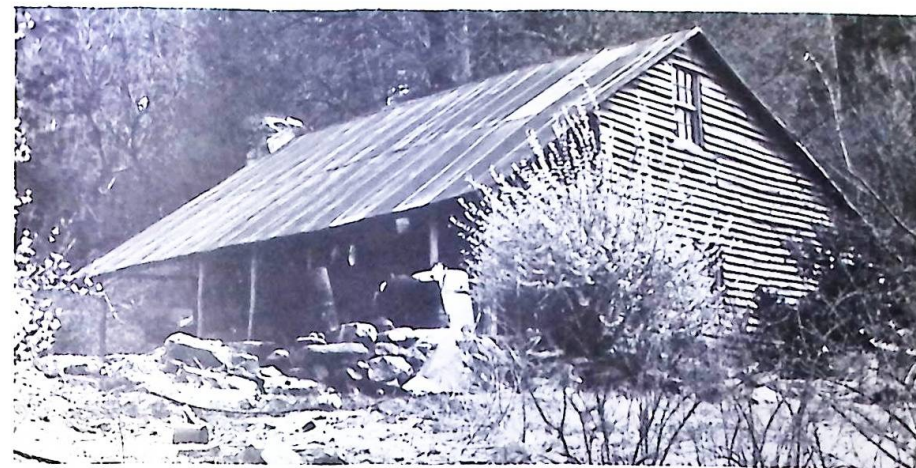
L.A.P.: No, no they not. They used to be a lots up here. But not no more. The law's too bad up here. There's not hardly a day that the highway men and deputy sheriff or something aren't up here.

Mike: Why do they come up here?

L.A.P.: All of them motorcycles.

Jeff: Did you ever see any stills around here?

E.P.: I've seen 'em. The law cut out all them moonshine stills. If they'd have let the stills and liquor go on, this dope wouldn't be so bad.



Mike: Do you think teenagers are much different now than they were when you were a teenager?

E.P.: Well gosh yeah! I know they are.

Mike: How are they different?

E.P.: Well, they're on this ole dope and everything now, teenagers is, most of 'em.

Mike: Do you think parents were stricter on their kids back then, than they are now?

E.P.: No, I don't think they treated 'em as bad back then as they do now. Now when we was a growin' up, we didn't have no daddy. He died when I was 5 years old. But my mama, when she'd tell me anything to do, I'd always do it. Course, she never did whoop us none, nor nothing. But when she'd tell us to do something, we'd do it.

Jeff: What did teenagers do back then?

L.A.P.: Back when we was growing up, when teenage boys, like you all come up here, they'd come--but they wouldn't be no dope, nor no liquor, nor no beer, nor nothing. They'd come and go to church, and maybe take their sweethearts home, and then go on home.

E.P.: And there weren't no liquor stores nor none of these beer joints nor honky tonks and one thing or another.

Mike: What do you mean by honky tonks?

L.A.P.: These ole dance halls.

Susan: You don't believe in dancing?

L.A.P.: No sir, I don't believe in dancing. . unless it's for God.



"...when she'd tell us to do something, we'd do it."

Mike: Do you all feel that way?

E.P.: We never been at a dance.

Mike: So you think teenagers have changed for the worse now?

E.P.: Yeah, there's some good ones, but I swear there's not many of 'em. You come up here on Saturday and Sunday and just listen around and watch around.

Mike: Don't you think that might have come from parents not being as strict?

E.P.: No, I tell ya'. You can raise kids good. Some of 'em you can raise up as good as a preacher can raise theirs--and you know how good preachers is supposed to be--they'll turn out to be mean ones.

Vickie: Do you think kids getting cars earlier, and going more, has a lot to do with it?

L.A.P.: I believe that does.

E.P.: Well, I tell ya'. They turns 'em loose a whole lot younger now than they used to.

Vickie: Do you think the youth of back then had more respect for their elders than the youth of today?

E.P.: Oh yeah! Back then when the parents got old, they weren't put off in these ole nursin' homes and one thing or another. The kids would tend to 'em.

I know when my mama got down sick, she was in bed for one year, and we took care of her.



A toolshed used by the Plumbleys.

L.A.P.: And my daddy was down how long? I can't never remember seeing my daddy walk a step, and we took care of him. Waited on him.

Susan: Did you ever raise any children?

L.A.P.: Nothing but some of our nephews. We raised two of them. Just like one of the family. See, their mother got killed when they's two and four years old, and we raised 'em. We call 'em our boys. She got killed by lightening and we took 'em and raised 'em. She's holding the baby's hand when the lightening hit her and killed her. It singed every bit of hair off a place on his head. We thought he was killed, too, but he lived.

Susan: What do you remember best about your parents?

L.A.P.: I remember best about 'em being so good. Anybody come along. You'd tell 'em you's hungry, and they'd give you somethin' if they'd have had it. They'd have done anything for you they could, in any-way.

"I don't worship money, it's too big a worship."

Susan: How important is money to you?

L.A.P.: Well, it's not too much.

Susan: How about honesty and kindness? Is that a big part of your life?

L.A.P.: That's right. I don't worship money; it's too big a worship.

Mike: What church do you go to?

E.P.: Mountain Hill Baptist Church.

Mike: How long have you been going there?

E.P.: All of our lives.

Mike: Do you read the Bible often?

E.P.: Yeah, all the time.

Mike: Do you think everybody should read it more than they do?

E.P.: I believe they ought to. I believe times would be better. I don't believe there'd be as much stealin' and all going on if they'd read their Bibles.

L.A.P.: And I don't think anybody can read the Bible too much. You can read it a thousand times and go back, read it again, and there'll be something new for you.



"And everybody just look closer to God."

Susan: Do you have any advice for young people as to how they can lead better lives?

E.P.: Well, they should go to church every Sunday and listen to the preachers and take the preachers' advice.

Mike: Have you done all you wanted to do and led a happy life?

L.A.P.: Yes sir. If you'll look ahead and just keep looking to God, you can make it a whole lots better. And everybody just look closer to God.

Magistrates: An Age Old Tradition

Interviewed by: Jimmy James, Robert Martin, Vickie Hiott, Sandy Gaither, Vicki Burns
Transcribed by: Vickie Hiott, Jimmy James
Photographs by: Perry Williams, Jim Helminski

Inspired by a story on CBS's "60 Minutes" on magistrates, the Clingstone staff decided to do some research of our own. While not always agreeing on the issues we asked them to discuss, all three magistrates we contacted shared a common interest in the story and wanted to help in any way.

Carey Werner, a full time magistrate in Greer, S. C., granted us not just an interview, but a peek at what a magistrate really is like.

Next, we met Jeff Brown, the owner and operator of a grocery store in Greer, who considers his job "full time work with part time pay." His store is not just a place of business, but also a place where just about everyone in the neighborhood comes to sit and chat and is even transformed into a courtroom at times.

Finally, we ventured to Inman, S. C., to interview Magistrate Manning Edwards, and we were very glad we did. He had done his homework on the history of magistrates, and he took us all the way back to the 17th century. That seems like a good place to start.

Edwards: There's been no major change in this country since the 17th century in the magistrate system, which originated in England (until 1913 in this country, all a man had to be to be a magistrate in the early part of our country here was an upright and just man in the community). Once a fellow was elected a magistrate in colonial times (that's when it started in South Carolina), it usually went on down from one generation of his family to another. It was more or less an honorary position.

At one time in England, the magistrates supervised roads, prices, wages and even saw that the bakers and candlestick makers had their weights and measurements right. They could even commit a man to a death sentence in the presence of a lawyer. The state governors appointed these men in our country as temporary magistrates.



Magistrate Manning Edwards

Now, in 1969, the college of general studies of the University of South Carolina took over an order to give magistrates in this area an education. Most magistrates are non lawyers. We're constitutional officers, and the only way that we can be done away with is by an act of the legislature that will get us out of the constitution. So nobody can really fire us but the government. Today, most of us magistrates and courts like mine, we handle civil cases up to \$200, a total of maximum fine on any traffic violation, and other things in our court is \$100 or 30 days. That's sorta the magistrate system.

*"Honesty and common sense
make a magistrate."*

I've been a magistrate for eight years. As for as enjoying the work, it's never monotonous because it's an experience. We learn a lot from those who come in, from lawyers and those convicted. We've got some people who are regular criminals that are as smart as lawyers. When they come into court, sometimes it's interesting to see what they say and what they do.

The qualities that make a magistrate, I think, would be honesty and common sense. It's more of a practical thing. Most of the cases that come into my court are traffic cases, assault and batteries, husband leaving wife and kids. They come to me first and then are transferred on up to family court in Spartanburg. Magistrates handle and issue all warrants for any crime whatsoever, from murder, to rape, on down to the simple things such as petty larceny. Really, the magistrates handle around 85% of the cases in Spartanburg county. Some magistrates in some of the counties in South Carolina handle as much as 95% of the cases.

Sandy: Is there any particular case which it was interesting to work with?

Edwards: You might call them interesting, but there's not a particular case that I like. You don't like to send any body to jail, nor do you like to fine them.

A lot of times you'll hear, "Oh, that mean ole judge," but, really, it's not our trial. That's where we first got our name was trial justices, to be fair.

Sandy: Can you tell when and if a person is telling the truth?

Edwards: Oh yes, after you've been in it a long time, it's pretty easy. But still, when you're put on a stand and sworn to tell "the truth, nothing but the truth, so help you God," we presume they're telling the truth. But! When we charge the jurors they can disbelieve any part of that testimony, and the same way with me. We try to ask sensible questions and try to get sensible answers, but it's not always true. They don't always tell you the truth.

Vickie: What is the difference between a judge and a magistrate judge?

Edwards: It's the same thing, trial justice. They're trying to get us to wear robes now, like big judges, particularly on cases. But a magistrate is elected by the people. The judges are nominated by the legislature.

*"We're trying to keep the peace
more than we are trying
to fine people."*

Staff: How much time do you spend as a magistrate?

Edwards: I have three court days a week here in Inman, but that's the minor part of my work. Most of it is done at home. Say, if somebody has broken in, we have to fill out bonds and search warrants. Sometimes it takes an hour to fill out a search warrant. We're on call 24 hours a day. Yet we're called part time magistrates. We don't sit in courts everyday.

Staff: Do you ever feel sorry for a poor man with a stiff fine?

Edwards: Well, certainly. It's a law now that if a man can't pay a fine, I can set up a break down and let him come in every week and pay it. Another new order is letting a man sign his own bond. We're try-

ing to keep the peace more than we are trying to fine people.

Staff: Have you ever wanted to get out of magistrate work?

Edwards: Yes, plenty of times. Some days it goes along smooth, and then it doesn't. We all make mistakes.

Magistrate Carey Werner was a most cooperative contact. After taking the phone off the hook and promising us all the time we needed, he patiently answered all our questions.

Jimmy: How did you become a magistrate?

Werner: Magistrates in South Carolina are appointed by the governor on the advice and consent of the State Senate. We are directly responsible to the governor. The Constitution requires that a magistrate be of reputable character and well thought of in his community. It does not spell out any educational qualifications. I have two years of law. A law degree is not required.

We have 21 magistrates in Greenville County. Only six have county-wide jurisdiction. The others are township magistrates--Oneal, Glassy Mountain, Traveler's Rest. Our forefathers must have felt this would bring the judge closer to the people.

*"My first desire in seeing anyone
appointed magistrate would be
common sense."*

Jimmy: What qualities does it take to become a good magistrate?

Werner: My first desire in seeing anyone appointed magistrate would be common sense. The law, as it's written, and common sense are very parallel, more so than one might think. It's really not as involved as

we've been led to believe. We all know right from wrong, and, basically, that's what the criminal law is--common sense and, of course, honesty and a reputable character.



Magistrate Carry Werner

Jimmy: How far would you consider common sense to go?

Werner: I don't think that any judicial office, whether it's magistrate, county judge, or Supreme Court Justice, should be required to be lawyers. The Federal Supreme Court does not require that their members be attorneys, regardless of the gravity of the judge's jurisdiction. Common sense and fairness place 99 44/100's of it. Legal training certainly would not

be a disadvantage, but I've got my doubts about it being a requirement.

Jimmy: Do you enjoy your work?

Werner: Yes. Needless to say, it's got its disadvantages. If you really let it get on your nerves, it would take the pleasure out of it. You feel, after a period of time, you are making some contribution. It's rewarding.

In South Carolina, all criminal cases, regardless of the seriousness, whether it's spitting on the sidewalk or murder, originate in the magistrate's court. All the cases are different. I've always felt when I got the time I'd like to write a book. I think one advantage of being a magistrate over a circuit court judge is you have a chance to see a little more humor interjected. People think of the judge as being the old gray-haired man in the black robe. If you can put a person at ease, they're more comfortable and more apt to tell you the truth. I like to operate as informally as I can and still stay in the realm of dignity.



Common sense and compassion are very important. If they leave and they feel your only purpose is to punish them, you have failed.

*"If you'll let me loose, I'll catch
the last one that left."*

I had one case last week; the sheriff picked this man from Charlotte up for public drunkenness. Locked him up in the county jail. He stayed over there for about three days, and nobody came to get him out, so they brought him over to stand trial. He told me he wanted to plead guilty. He acknowledged that he was drunk. I wasn't going to detain him any longer. I said, "William, if I did let you loose, would you promise me to catch the next bus to Charlotte?"

He said, "If you let me loose, I'll catch the last one that left."

They appreciate being helped. They'll come back to see me. It's very rewarding to have people to thank you regardless of the situation they've been in.

"It's inclined to make you cynical."

Staff: Can you give us an example of some of the most unusual excuses you've gotten?

Werner: I know the boy involved in this didn't expect me to believe it. He had stolen a car from the cemetery. He said he felt that since the car was parked at the cemetery, the guy that owned it might be buried there. You learn to expect things. It's inclined to make you cynical. You wonder from the very beginning if they are telling the truth. I wish it didn't.

Staff: Have you made any observations to tell whether a person is telling the truth or lying?

Werner: A guy that's lying will usually repeat himself. He's more insistent. He's more nervous, too.

Jimmy: Have you ever had second thoughts about a case?

Werner: No. I can honestly say that I haven't.

A magistrate's court is the only court in South Carolina in which you can walk in off the street and talk to the judge. Say a person comes in, and he wants to sue his neighbor. Lot of times to save a person some embarrassment, I'll call 'em. More often than not, they'll come in. You save them court costs, you may save a friendship, and you save the court's time. It's better all around.

A person who is well off really doesn't need the services of a magistrate as does a poor person. The cases in which the person needs you are more rewarding.

I don't really know when the term magistrate first came in, but the term and the office of magistrate date back to biblical times. Somewhere in the Bible, Jesus was taken before a magistrate. We can say we get blamed for everything.

"Treat him decently."

This is my philosophy. If you find a person guilty, he knows he's guilty. Treat him decently. Let him see you have some interest in him and a little bit of respect for him.

Jeff Brown has been a magistrate for 20 years and, according to his firends, he is the same as he was when he first started--fair. He is a fair man who tries to treat everybody the same. Jeff Brown is dedicated to his job and his community. Mr. Brown hadn't been out of the hospital 24 hours after surgery, and we found him back on his job serving the community to the best of his ability.



*"I've been
a
magistrate
20 years."*

Magistrate Jeff Brown

Brown: I've been a magistrate twenty years. I was running a grocery store on 507 Poinsett Street, and several of my friends approached me about running for magistrate. I ran, and I was defeated on the first go round. I ran two years later and won by a large majority by beating four in the race. I've been magistrate ever since. I plan to be running for another term.

I have an office just up the street. I do a lot of my work right here in my store. It's a part time job, but it's full time work with part time pay.

I have legal training from the University of South Carolina. I still go to school now. A magistrate should have legal training. He should be taught because it is necessary. He should go to school and learn the law. A magistrate should be level-headed and treat people like you want to be treated yourself. I think a good honest level-headed man means more than

a college education. Some with a college education don't have a broad mind. If they didn't have an education they wouldn't have enough sense to get home and back.

I have all kinds of cases. I handle any kind of case from a murder case down. Narcotics more than anything else. Breach of the peace is next. I'm interested in all my cases little or small or large.

A judge is supposed to be open-minded and listen to both sides in the court room. You listen to both sides. Don't make up your mind until you get into court. See, hear, and listen and make your decision. You go by the evidence. After I pass on a case I don't worry about it.



"Young man, be careful.

Crime don't pay, one cent."

Yea, they always come back and thank me even if I convict them because it's the way I approach him. I tell him, "Young man, be careful. Stay out of trouble. Crime don't pay one cent. Straighten up and be a man." I enjoy helping the people. If I put a man on the chain gang I treat him just as nice as if I had turned him loose. I tell him to straighten up and be a man when he comes out.

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