

ESTATOEE

A QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF THE YANCEY HISTORY ASSOCIATION
Volume V, Number 3
September, 1990

ESTATOEE (es-tä-tó-ē): Also spelled Estootowie in early records. A Cherokee Indian place name, shortened to Estatoe/Estatoah, from which the Toe/Towe River designation is derived.

Officers of the Association (1990):

President: James Byrd
Vice President and Program Chair: Lloyd Bailey
Treasurer: Linda Deyton
Secretary: Theresa Coletta
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Minutes of the Previous Meeting:

The Summer Meeting of the Association was held at the Yancey County Library in Burnsville on June 16, 1990, at 7 p.m. The topic was "Folk Music and Musicians in the Toe River Valley," discussed and performed by Mr. Bruce Greene of Celo, N.C. A large collection of words and music, recorded in our area in 1918 by Cecil J. Sharp, was reproduced in the newsletter. In addition, Mr. Walter Hoyle (of

Penland, N.C.) discussed his grandfather's (Doc. W. Hoppes) life and reputation as a musician. (See photographs in Cabins In The Laurel, facing pp. 198, 289, 293.)

The business meeting centered upon our funding of (and the acquisition of a grant in the amount of \$2000 for) continued excavation of the Native American site at the Cane River Middle School. The site will continue to be developed, possibly leading to a restored village, traveling exhibits for educational purposes, and training opportunities for student archaeologists at the college level.

The McElroy house (Rush Wray Museum) has been declared a regional historic site, which is a significant step for securing funds for restoration. Current plans are to combine the Museum site with a County Visitors' Center on Main Street below the former.

Future Programs:

Dr. Melvin Webb's "History of Medicine in Yancey County," Part II, is scheduled for June, 1991. Other possible topics: The Photographs in Cabins In The Laurel; A History of Burnsville Academy.

The Current Program:

"A Photographic Journey Through Old Yancey," by Joan Y. ("Jody") Higgins. A volume on this topic is in preparation.

Volumes With Collections Of Photographs
From The Toe River Valley

McCourry, Donald L. A number of small volumes privately printed in 1989. All should be available in regional libraries.

Among the titles are:

A Look Back To The Old Days (92 pp.)

Lost Cove (59 pp.). Especially valuable.

Old Time Ways of Living (87 pp.)

The Country Side In Perfect Form (102 pp.)

See also:

Biography of Ed Barnett (1985; 350 pp.)

Us Poor Folks and the Things of Dog Flat Hollow (John Blair, Publisher, 1975, 165 pp.)

Driggers, Carrie Johnson. Mountain Folks Then And Now. (Photographs arranged by Donald L. McCourry. Privately printed, 1990; 153 pp.) Should be available in local libraries.

Dawley, Thomas Robinson, Jr. The Child That Toileth Not. New York: Garcia, 1913 (2nd ed.). Material about Yancey (with several interesting photos) may be found in Chapters XXVII ("Egypt") and XVII ("Reports of the Families Gone to the Mills").

Higgins, Jody (ed.). Common Times: Written and Pictorial History of Yancey County. Burnsville: Yancey Graphics, 1981 (2nd printing, 1982; 83 pp.)

The State (magazine). For list of articles, see Estatooe, I, No. 2, pp. 4-5.

Wilson, Charles Morrow. Backwoods America. Chapel Hill: U.N.C. Press, 1935. Although the text is about the Ozark Mountains in Arkansas, the photos were reportedly taken in the Toe River Valley and East Tennessee. The photographer was Bayard Wootten (whose work also appears in Sheppard's Cabins In The Laurel).

The H. H. Brimley Collection of photographs (N.C. Dept. of Cultural Resources, Archives and Records Section, Raleigh, N.C.) contains 50-100 large glass-negatives taken in Yancey Co. around 1900. (Lloyd Bailey has prints of most of the interesting ones, and some may be published by Yancey Graphics in a forth-coming volume.)

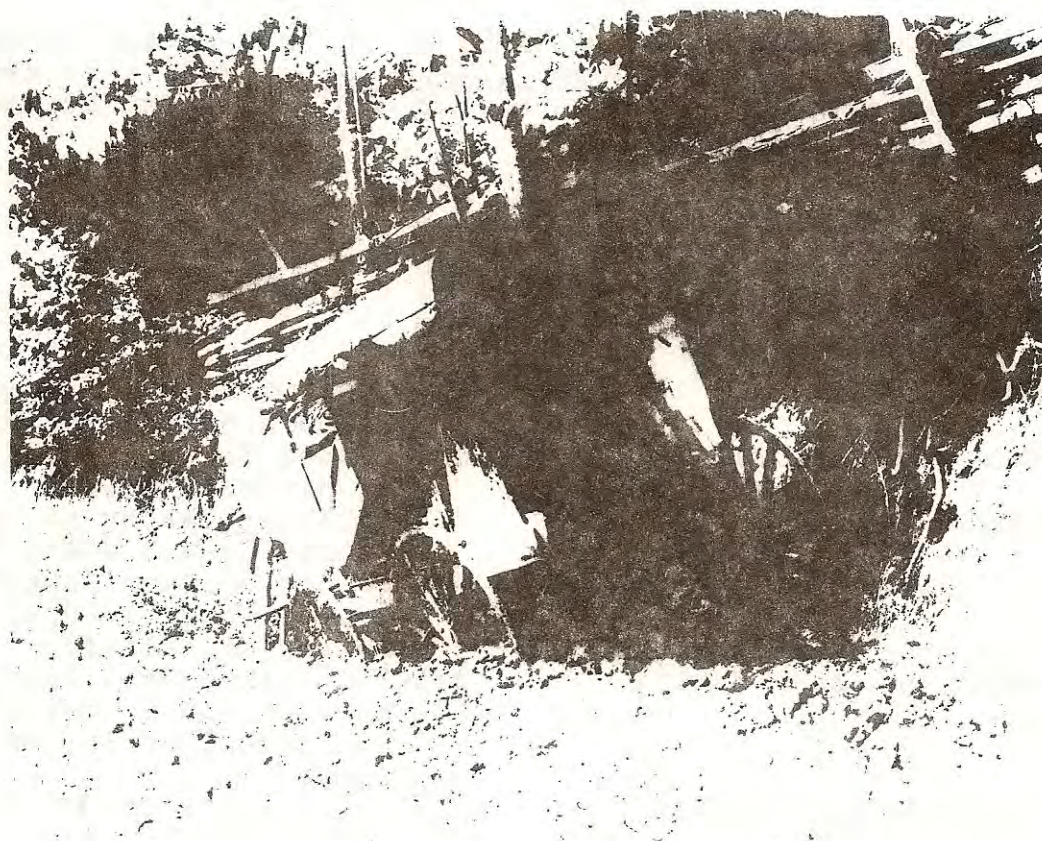
Bailey, Lloyd R. A History of the Methodist Church in the Toe River Valley. Burnsville: Celo Printing, 1986. Many photographs of old buildings, groups, and individuals, some prior to 1900.

Yancey Record. A series of old photos was published in 1963 under the general heading, "Do You Remember?" Some of them are reproduced below.

Washington Co., Tenn. - Toe River Valley

Estatooe (IV, No. 2, June, 1989, p. 37) has a list of articles (from History of Washington County, Tennessee, 1988) that reveal family connections between that county and our own area. The following additional ones may now be listed.

<u>entry</u>	<u>page</u>
Cora Alice Burleson	270
Burleson-Diddle-Young Families	271
Isaac Oliver Carson Burleson	272
The Millard Burleson Family	273
Campbell Family	278
Floyd Eugene Dellinger	309 [his wife is the daughter of Maynard Wilhite of Jacks Creek]
Joseph Henry Edwards Family	321 [James Madison Byrd is "Gemat" of Mitchell Co.]
Paul Edwards Family	321 [Wilson Edwards is in 1860 Yancey Census #745; he is the father of Rev. Robert Edwards (p. 73, who mar. dau. of Ancel Bailey of Relief)]
Ralph Nathan Galloway Family	335-336 [Lilly Etta Bailey is the dau. of Sam B. Bailey and Harriett Buchanan of Big Rock Creek]
Calvin Booth Garland Family	337 [his father Holden Garland is on p. 339]
Lockner	407 [William Charles Lockner lived at Horton Hill in Yancey Co.; for the Wilhite connection, see p. 537]
Poteat	454
Augustus Satterfield	476-477
Slagle-Fleming	495
Treadway	519 [Eva Byrd is the dau. of Grover Byrd and Lilly Bailey of Mitchell Co.]
South Central	207 [Joe = Joel ("Kooch") Bailey for whom Bailey Bridge is named, is not a relative of the Baileys of the Toe Valley, but his wife Molly is the dau. of Mack Bailey (grandson of "Yellow Jacket" John)]
Brethren	73 [Pleasant View Church contains the grave of Ancel Bailey, grandson of "Yellow Jacket" John. Rev. Robert G. Edwards (see also p. 321) is his son-in-law.]



"Country Road" (76.9.10) This likely is G.D. (Garrett) Ray's wagon, used to take Mr. Brimley around the county on his photographic expeditions. (See the next photograph.) The condition of Yancey's roads, before the advent of modern road-making equipment, is here well illustrated. Many of her citizens will remember roads that were impassible in winter, with mud to the axle of wagons or to the belly of the oxen which were used to pull them. As long as such conditions prevailed, the isolation of the county was ensured. Access was first available through the railroads, which reached the area around 1900.



Thomas R. Dawley, The Child That Toileth Not, p. 354, part of the Chapter entitled "Egypt." The caption reads: "Man and wife and their home. Though the man has not much of anything else, he has a gun." Note especially the construction of the chimney, characteristic of the early 1800's or of areas where stone was scarce: wooden splits, laid in alternating rows, daubed with clay. Such chimneys often caught fire when the daubing wore thin.



Do You Remember?

Practically every resident of Yancey County in the 1920s at one time or another "put his feet under the table" in the building pictured above.

The Byrd Hotel was one of Yancey's first boarding houses and it was noted for the fine food that its various operators pleased before guests.

It was an extremely popular spot with Yancey Countians who came to Burnsville during court week, for auctions, and so forth.

Built and operated by Col. John Byrd, the findings of this photo taken in 1914 and being operated by Mr. and Mrs. W. C. (W.H.) Ramsey, both now deceased.

The Byrd house was located on what is now Green Mountain Street, opposite the site now occupied by Higgins Memorial Methodist Church. It burned in 1920.

Posing in the picture above are Mr. and Mrs. Ramsey and Mrs. Vastie Peterson on the lower porch, and the Ramsey's daughters, Linnie

(now Mrs. Ransom Higgins) and Vastie (now Mrs. Grady Ramsey) both of Burnsville on the upper porch.

In the automobile at right is Ransom Higgins and Chasella Cox. The youngster on the sidewalk is another Ramsey child, Savelly, now of Alexandria, Va.

The car, a 1914 Model T Ford, was one of the first three automobiles in Yancey County, owned by Higgins. It bore the license plate 123456.



Do You Remember?

The streets were unpaved and rough then (and muddy in wet weather), but this was something that could be tolerated when a fellow could find shade right in the middle of town. . .

Pictured above is Burnsville's main street as it appeared in the 1920s from the lawn of the County Courthouse.

The Burton Hotel boasted the white columns and the tremendous shade trees. It was bordered by stores in which a fellow could buy almost everything—except alcohol

(prohibition, remember?)

Before the turn of the century the site occupied by the stores and hotel was the homestead of Fulton Roland and then Dr. C. P. Edwards.

Gus Burton later acquired the property and built the brick building which housed the hotel and the stores. Some of the merchants who did business in the block were Bill Burton, Rex Wilson, Jim Hensley and Robert A. McElroy.

The peaceful scene depicted above later was the center of perhaps the county's most searing

controversy and sensational trial.

The buildings burned in 1927 and one Carl S. Maddox of Buncombe County was arrested for house burning. Maddox implicated the owners of the building, John R. Burton and Thomas R. Byrd, and they, too, were indicted.

Maddox pled guilty to the charges brought against him by Sheriff Hugh Banks and at the March term of court in 1928 Judge P. A. McElroy sentenced him to 20-30 years at hard labor.

Burton and Byrd were tried at the same time and were found not guilty.

The site of the old buildings is now occupied by Burnsville Furniture and Hardware Co., Yancey Barber Shop, Cecil Anglin Insurance Agency and Anglin-Westall Dept. Store. The building at far left is now the site of Ruby's Flower Shop.

(This picture was donated by Mrs. Ashton Ramsey. . . Don't you, too, have an old picture of Yancey you'd like to donate for this feature? Photos submitted will be returned unharmed and the donors given credit).



Do You Remember?

Tombstone? Dodge City? Wichita?

Bill Masterson? Wyatt Earp? Jesse James?

Nope, pad'nut, it's not the wild west. . . It's Burnsville!

The picture above was taken in the early 1900s before the "Carter House," which stood near the site now occupied by Hilliard's Esso and faced what is now Green Mountain Street.

Those hombres in the picture are local, too; believe it or not.

All Yancey County natives, they are, left to right, Walt Buckner,

A. K. Wilson (Gus) Wilson and Rex Wilson.

Buckner and Rex Wilson are now deceased. Gus Wilson, whose daughter, Mrs. Bob Rhinehart of Burnsville donated this picture, now resides in Asheville.

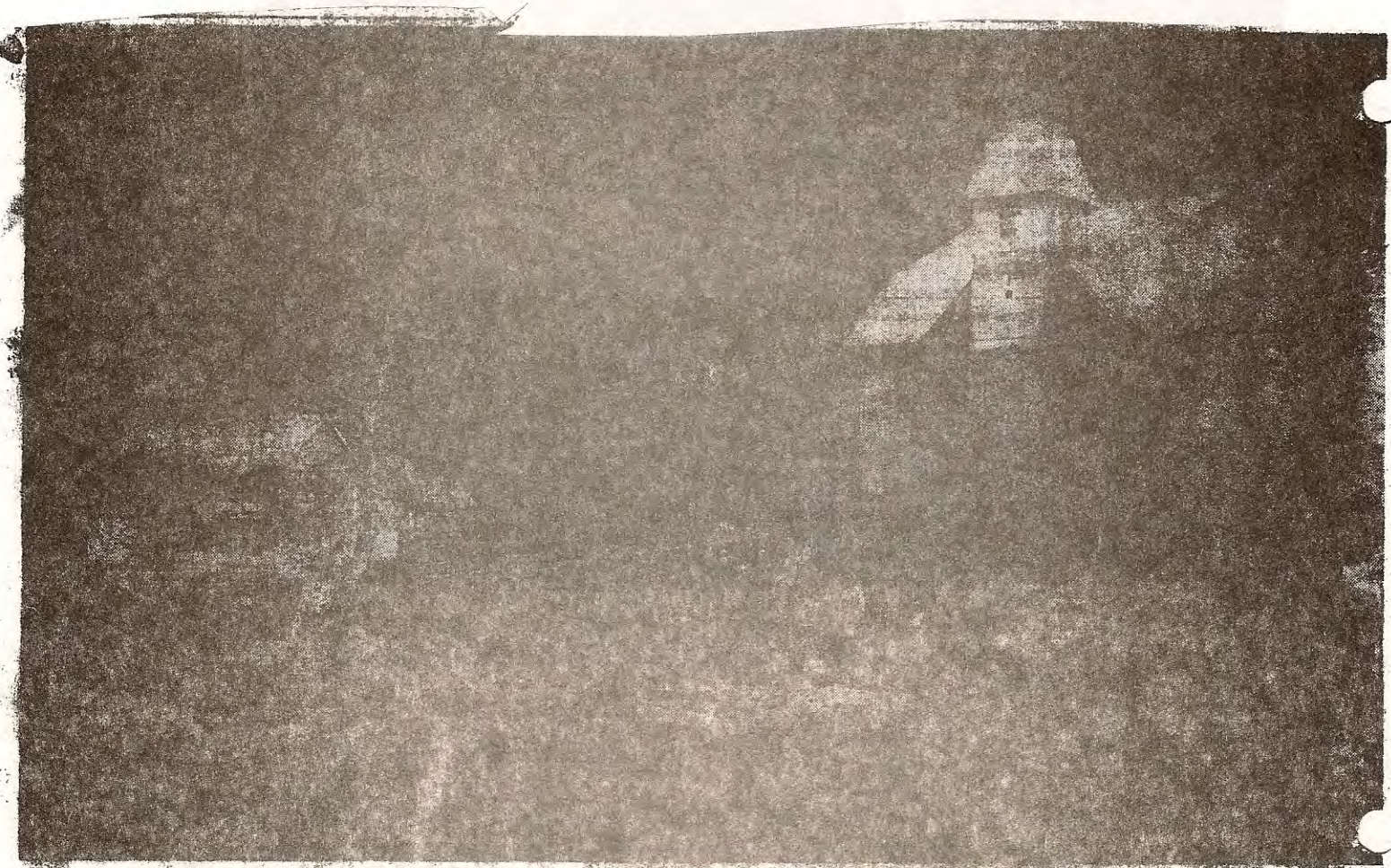
Although far removed from Westeners whose dress they adopted, the trio above were reputedly no less skilled when it came to handling horses.

Gus Hensley was especially renowned throughout the WNC area for his ability to master wild horses. Many Burnsville old-

timers recall seeing him "break" horses on a huge meadow that is now the town square.

"Believe me, this rodeo guy on TV, Stoney Burke, had nothing on Gus Hensley," said one. "He could hang on to a horse that was bucking so hard you expected Gus to end up in the top of one of the nearby trees. And if he was bucked off, he climbed right back on until he beat the horse down."

. . . The REALLY wild and wooly days—like these, anyway—are gone forever.



Do You Remember?

Yancey County's first high school was far from being a "little red school house."

It was, in fact, the ornate, three-storied structure pictured above.

The building was located at Bald Creek, a few yards east of the present Bald Creek Methodist Church.

Most of the young boys attending the school wore huge, broad-brim hats (note the hats in the picture)

and went barefoot.

Barefoot boys are prone to play in a creek when there is no ice possible, but the stream was "at limits" at Bald Creek. I meant the hickory stick for the horse who was caught in the creek, too.

The only person identifiable in the picture is a Professor McElwain, the mustaschioed fellow standing in the foreground. The group gathered at the left and the

chap on the horse at right are also thought to be teachers. Judging of their dress, it seems that the faculty had donned their best for this portrait.

Three students climbed into the second story windows for the occasion of the picture-taking. Two of the boys are the late Sam Tipton and Roy Wilson.

Professor Charles Hubbard, widely-known Yancey educator, was

teaching at this school at the time of his death.

The old building was razed several years ago and replaced by first another wooden building and then the present four building which is now occupied by Bald Creek Elementary School.

This picture, I thought to be 60 years old, was donated to The Record by Miss Laura Tipton of Bald Creek.



Do You Remember?

Forty years ago in Yancey County THE social event of the year was the church picnic or "dinner on the grounds."

This picture was made at such an occasion at the Roland Hill Baptist Church on Jack's Creek.

The hat styles, the latest "rage" then, are in fashion again today. Not so with the men's beards and derbys.

The picture above was made by Thomas F. Byrd, now residing on Route 1, Burnsville. The photograph was donated to The Record by Vernie R. Wilson, long-time Yancey County educator and athletic coach, who laboriously went about the task of identifying everyone in the picture.

Following are the identifications (left to right):

First Row—Frazier Williams, Lenoir Honeycutt, Vernie Wilson, John Howell, Harlan Horton, Herbert Franklin, Lawrence Wilson, Cecil Bailey, Enaid Bailey, Carl Evans, Bernie Arrowood and Edd Bryant;

Second Row — Minnie Burton, Glessie Bailey, Bashie Beaver, Monnie Byrd, Zula Honeycutt, Girtha Wilson and Mamie Evans.

Third Row — Lloyd Fracklin, Clyde Evans, Mrs. Hiram Wilson, Mrs. Bascom Williams, Mrs. Sam Bailey (holding baby Madge), Eula Wilson, Mephra Renfro, Pansy Honeycutt, Lora Williams, Luna Evans, Sula Wilson, Lily Bailey, Lois Franklin and Mrs. Thomas

F. Byrd.

Fourth Row—Mrs. Wade Honeycutt, Mrs. W. E. Wilson, (immediately behind Mrs. Honeycutt and Mrs. Wilson are Charles Byrd and Jim Arrowood), Myrtle Hensley, G. B. Honeycutt, Henry Arrowood, Mrs. Will Horton, Sallie Mae Williams, Sam Evans (holding baby Bessie), Will Byrd and Harvey Franklin.

Fifth Row—Carl Honeycutt, W. E. Wilson, M. A. Honeycutt, Jim Renfro, Taylor Williams, Laskie Shepherd, Taylor Byrd, Mose Byrd, Mose Arrowood, Cling Byrd, Mose Evans, Will Horton, Eva Higgins, Bob Byrd, Gibb Byrd and Carl Renfro.



Do You Remember?

Basketball was a comparative new-comer to Yancey County in the early 1920s.

However, the sport's popularity spread quickly and soon even the girls in the county's schools were ardent participants.

Pictured is the 1924-25 Stanley McCormick Institute team, which was coached part-time by Vernie E. Wilson, a Stanley McCormick student, and by Perry A. Ball, a Stanley McCormick professor who now resides in Chicago. Wilson, who continued to coach in the

Yancey County school system until the late 1950s, resides on Jacks Creek. He will teach this year at East Yancey High School.

Team members were (left to right): Ruby Ray, Bess Wheeler, Grace Cassida, Lucille Smith, Lucile Carmichael, Ore Lee Bailey and Zula Cox. The girl at extreme right could not be identified by Wilson, who loaned this picture.

"I am certain that this is one style the ladies will never revive," quipped Wilson, referring to the uniforms.

The Stanley McCormick team played against teams from the Yancey Collegiate Institute, which was also located in Burnsville, and from the public schools at Bald Creek and Micaville.

Games were played in a small gym in the administration building at Stanley McCormick (it stood on the site now occupied by Paul Laughrun's home), in the auditorium of what is now Burnsville Elementary School or on an outside clay court on the Stanley McCormick grounds.



Do You Remember?

Remember when Charles L. McPeeters built his home,

The house took three years to build, and understandably,

When it was finished, Yancey Countians said that there was nothing like it anywhere in this section. There still isn't.

McPeeters, a Marshall merchant, moved to Yancey County in 1895 and constructed the mansion, with which he is pictured above, in the years between then and 1900.

The unusual home was located on Possum Trot on a huge tract of land McPeeters purchased from the Proffit clan of Yancey County. The structure still stands, and is in an amazingly good state of preservation.

The home has a full basement—an unusual feature for that era in Yancey—into which sev-

eral teams of horses could be taken to unload cargo. There are 16 rooms on the second and third levels. On the fourth level McPeeters had his canning quarters, where he personally prepared the foods raised on his land and placed them in tin cans.

McPeeters was known far and wide for his unusual dwelling, and that probably was a big factor in his being easily elected to represent Yancey in the 1895 legislature.

A Raleigh Observer of that year described McPeeters as "... the efficient and popular Democratic member from Yancey." It said that he was "one of the most attentive listeners in the legislature and carefully inspected each measure before casting his vote."

It was McPeeters who led a fight that prevented passage of a

bill that would have lopped off one of Yancey's townships and placed it in Mitchell County.

McPeeters was one of the first from Yancey to ship crops to faraway markets.

He was most famous for his apples. In the 1900 Universal Exposition in Paris McPeeters' Possum Trot apples won a first prize.

McPeeters died in 1930 at the age of 69.

A daughter, Mrs. Helen Dillingham of Oklahoma City, donated this picture to The Record. A son, Francis, resides in Detroit.

Two of McPeeters' grandchildren, Mrs. L. V. (Bob) Pollard and Byrd Gillespie, still reside in Yancey. A third grandchild, Mrs. Lucille Brown, is a former Burnsville resident. They are the children of McPeeters' third child, the late Mrs. Mary Gillespie.



Do You Remember?

The building pictured above, the old Burnsville Mill, still stands and is a sight familiar to Yancey Courians of today. However, few of the present generation know its "illuminating" history.

The mill, which gave the street its name — "Mill Street"—is located near the intersection of Summit and Main Streets.

It was built in 1912 by Cornelius Robertson, E. F. Watson and W. M. (Will) English. The latter obtained sole ownership in 1920. (Robertson and English are the men pictured).

Craig English, Yancey County's veteran forest ranger, virtually grew up at his father's mill. "I looked like a ghost most of my

younger years, I was so white from the dust that got on me at the mill," he said.

Craig added that he remembered times when 20 to 25 wagons were tied up near the mill; their owners waiting their turn to have corn, wheat or rye ground. "Why, some people even brought food and camped nearby when they brought their grain at harvest time. They knew there would be a crowd and a wait."

The mill served a dual purpose in 1923, much to the relief of Burnsville residents.

A log dam on Cane River owned by the Burnsville Electric Company washed away that year throwing the town into darkness and forcing Burnsvillians to break

out oil lamps and candles.

However, the electric company, which was headed by Bob Wingo and Green Woody, and mill-owner English hit upon a solution.

The power company's generator was brought from the dam site to English's mill and placed in the engine room. At night a belt from English's one-cylinder, gasoline powered engine was put on the generator, thus furnishing the town with light. "It was dim, but it was light," said Craig English.

Will English continued to operate the mill until advancing age forced his retirement in the late 1940s. It then had several operators before finally going out of business within the last decade.



Do You Remember?

In many of today's school books you'll find inscribed in bold letters near the front: "In Case Of Fire, Throw This In First."

The kids do it as a joke (well, most of them anyway).

Fortunately, there has been no occasion for tossing books into fires in Yancey County over the past few years. The old wooden gymnasium burned at Clearmont in the 1950s, but there were no classrooms in the building.

The last serious school fire was the burning of the Yancey Collegiate Institute classroom building in February, 1922. Blazes gutted the brick veneer structure leaving only the walls and columns standing. The building was only a little over three years old when it was destroyed. It had replaced a classroom building that burned on Nov. 11, 1918.

Ralph M. Lee was principal at YCI at the time of the fire. He is now Dean at Mars Hill College. Horace Higgins of Burnsville remembers that students pitched in and helped fight the fire. "I went into the library with some others and began throwing out books," said Higgins. "I still have a scar on my hand where I was cut by a piece of broken window glass."

Later-day students may sense something vaguely familiar in the photo above, which was donated by Mrs. Troy Ray. They should.

The present brick building at Burnsville Elementary school was rebuilt on the same site and with the same plans as the structure that burned.

YCI turned the new building over to the public school system in 1926.



Do You Remember?

Graduation time, which passed only a couple of weeks ago, brings back memories to everyone who has experienced this occasion with the mixture of emotions it annually brings.

Above is the oldest Yancey County graduation picture The Record has been able to locate.

It's the Yancey Collegiate Institute High School seniors of 1922, resplendent in the dress of the day.

Class members in the

front row are (left to right): Miss Eva Wilson, Tyler Roberts, Clara Lee Hyatt, Hazel McCourry and Annie Horton. In the second row (left to right): Miss Grace Bailey; the late Erskine Bailey, for many years a principal in Yancey County schools; the late Miss Sarah Baxter, a member of the YCI faculty and sponsor of the senior class; and the late John Bennett.

The picture was shot on the front steps of the brick

building which is now part of Burnsville Elementary School. The building was built in 1919 on the site of an earlier classroom structure, which burned on Nov. 11, 1918.

(This photograph was donated by Mrs. J. E. Johnson. Don't you have an old picture of a landmark, person, group of persons or event that you would donate for use in this feature? Pictures submitted will be returned unharmed and the donors given credit)



Do You Remember?

Remember Yancey County's first bank?

It was called The Bank of Yancey and it was located on the site now occupied by Town and Country Shoe Store.

The bank was built in 1905 with bricks made on the site.

E. F. Watson, John B. Lyon, Charlie McPeeters, Sam Byrd and Nealie Byrd, all deceased,

were instrumental in the organization of the bank. J. Wes Higgins was its first president and Lyon was the cashier.

Judging from the picture above, donated to The Record by Mrs. Georgia Byrd, the bank would have been a pushover for burglars. Its windows had no alarms and the door was a

flimsy affair with a lock on the outside.

However, bandits never victimized the bank.

In 1921 the Bank of Yancey merged with the Citizens Bank of Burnsville and became the Citizens Bank of Yancey. Later, the bank became affiliated with the Northwestern Bank and the name was changed.



Do You Remember?

The big, greyish building with the shiny silver-painted dome was the pride of Yancey County in 1912, when the photo above was taken.

Few of the other mountain counties had a courthouse like it.

Only four years old at the time, the building sat alone in a treeless, grassless plot that became a quagmire in wet weather. Nevertheless, it was then as now, a popular gathering spot where men with a few idle hours to pass traded news and talked politics.

However, it was a place to be

dodged by the younger set, especially after dark.

"There were no street lights then, of course," explains Mrs. P. C. Coletta, whose daughter, Irene, donated this picture, "And the courthouse with its cold, dark windows and that building behind it were frightening to children.

"The wooden building adjacent to the courthouse was supposed to be haunted. It was called the Masonic Temple since the Masons held their meetings in an upstairs room. Caskets were stored and sold in the downstairs section.

"A great deal of secrecy surrounded the Masons then and that plus those caskets gave the children of those days in lurid fascination. None of us would go near the area after dark."

The shiny dome, muddy streets and Masonic Temple are all gone now. The latter's spot is occupied by a building which houses the U. S. Post Office and other government agencies.

The old courthouse may disappear soon also if Yancey leaders are successful in obtaining funds to build a new one.



Do You Remember?

The old Yancey Collegiate Institute in Burnsville was noted for its high academic standards.

And, according to its graduate, perhaps the toughest course to pull a good grade in was The Literary Digest class, which was taught by the school's principal, Professor E. E. Hawkins.

D. R. Fouts, a Burnsville attorney, recalls that Hawkins assigned each student a story in the now defunct magazine. "The class only met once a week so Professor Hawkins felt that with a week to prepare a report on a story, that report should be extremely thorough," said Fouts. "If it wasn't, it meant that a struggle was ahead if the student were to pull his

grade up to a respectable mark."

Pictured above is the class of 1915-16 school year.

Front row (left to right): The late E. F. Watson, chairman of the YCI board of trustees; a Miss Hunt; Miss Rena Alexander; Rose Hawkins, daughter of Prof. Hawkins; the late Laura Jo Roland; Elisha Honeycutt, who was a state senator in Minnesota at the time of his death; Vaughn Angel; and D.R. Fouts.

Second row (left to right): Clifford Hunter, Bill Hutchins, a Professor Moyer; James Badger; the late Ed Hunter Sr.; Latt (Boss) Ray; Hercules Jordan; the late Lafayette Queen; and the late Ray McCall.

Third row (left to right): The late Professor

Hawkins; the late Tom Wadkins; the late Richmond Phillips; Lester Renfro; Monroe McIntosh, now principal at Yancey's South Toe Elementary School; Ed Warrick; Carl Honeycutt; and Herman Roland.

Mrs. Ed Hunter Sr. donated this picture to The Record. She and Fouts made the identifications.

The picture was made in front of the old stucco classroom building, which burned on Nov. 11, 1918. It stood on the site now occupied by the brick building at Burnsville Elementary School.

By the way, the Literary Digest is gone now, too. It folded in 1936 after predicting the defeat of Franklin D. Roosevelt in his second try for the presidency.



Do You Remember?

When the picture above was made, it marked the beginning of the end for the "Little Red Schoolhouse" in Yancey County.

Prior to the fall of 1901, when the photo was made, Yancey's educational system consisted mainly of small one-teacher institutions scattered about the county.

Pictured above is the first group to enroll at the new Yancey Collegiate Institute (or Yancey County Institute). It was practically the first time in Yancey that students of one class had a room all to themselves.

The stucco building, with its church-like stained windows, was located on the site where the Bur-

nsville Elementary School's brick building now sits. It burned on the night of The Armistice, Nov. 11, 1918.

There was speculation then—and even now—that someone celebrating the end of the war accidentally ignited the blaze.

The building was rebuilt and the school continued operation for several years. But to many who had studied in the old stucco structure it was never the real "YCI" again.

In the group above are members of the clans whose names have become synonymous with Yancey County—the Briggs, Baileys, Hays, Wilsons, Honeycuts and Petersons.

Among the few identifiable in the picture are Prof. Flax, first principal of the school (at extreme left) and one of the teachers; a Miss Passmore (at right).

YCI alumni and former teachers will hold their annual reunion on the grounds of Burnsville Elementary School Saturday (Aug. 3).

Registration begins at 10:30 a. m., the program at 11 and lunch at 1 p. m.

Gus Peterson, president of the YCI Association, urges all former students to attend and bring their families. He asks that each family bring a picnic basket.



Do You Remember?

Life in Yancey County in the early 1900s would seem mighty monotonous to we moderns.

The roads to the world outside the towering mountains were poor, and very little came in or went out.

For that matter, the roads were so crude there was little travel from one section of the county to the other.

So folks stayed close to home in those days. But the oldtimers say they didn't mind.

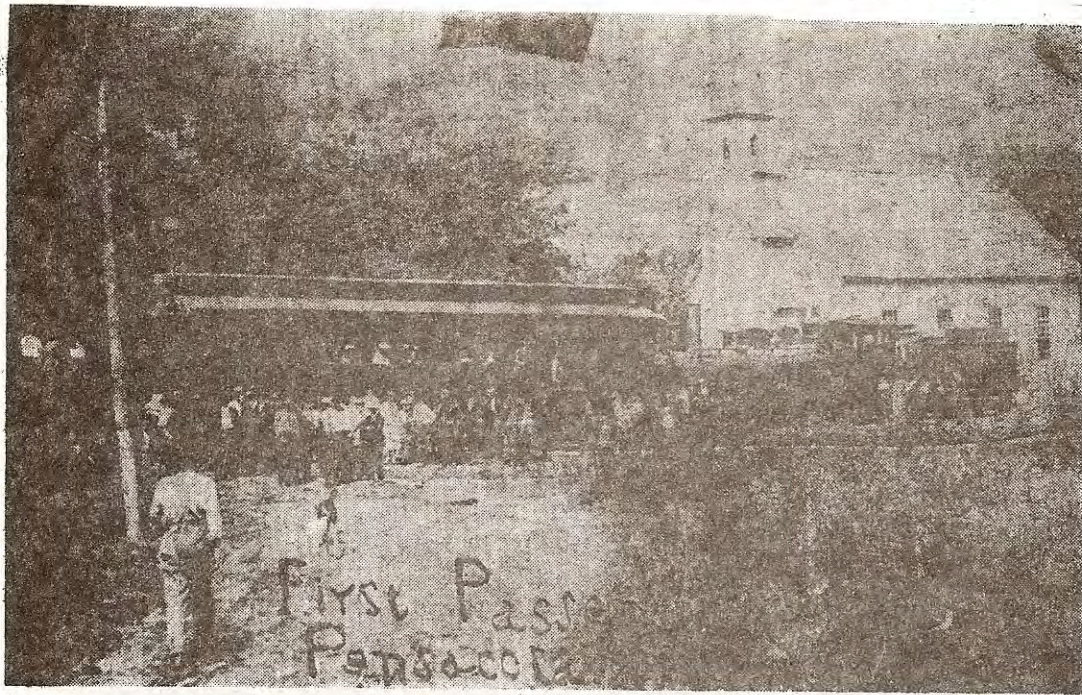
The highlight of the week was Sunday when everyone went to church and the cousins from down the "holler" came for dinner and to visit.

One of the most remote churches in the county near the turn of the century was the Big Creek Free Will Baptist Church (pictured above) in north Yancey County. The area was then known as Sioux (it's not called that too often anymore since the Sioux post office has been discontinued).

The Lower Cane River Valley was a haven for Scotch-Irish clans which settled Yancey, as this picture, taken in 1916, testifies. Everyone in the picture is either a Whitson, Atkins, Howell, Byers, Warrick, Byrd or Adkins.

Included in the group is Bill Atkins, who was destined to become a Yancey County representative to the N. C. Legislature. He is now a Burnsville attorney.

This photo was donated by Bonnie Adkins of Rt. 1, Relief.



Do You Remember?

A new luxury came to the almost inaccessible wilds of Yancey County in June, 1913.

Fifty years ago this month—no one contacted by The Record can recall the exact date—the first passenger train made its run into Yancey.

Clinchfield Railroad's No. 6 engine pushed a Black Mountain Railroad coach up the Black Mountain line from Kona in Mitchell County to Burnsville and on to the railhead at Pensacola, where the picture above was made.

The train was greeted all along the line by folks dressed in their

Sunday best—women in plumed hats and men in white shirts, ties and derbys. People came from all over Yancey County to witness the long-awaited event.

The church in the picture is the Pensacola Baptist Church, which still stands. The man in the left foreground, who is following his wound toward the train, is on what is now Cattail Creek Road.

There was no Yancey Countian in the crew that made the first passenger run, but the passenger trains were later manned by an all-Yancey crew consisting of Engineer Charlie Riddle, Fireman Charlie

Buchanan and Brakeman Fred Autrey.

The Passenger service opened virtually a new world for the residents of Yancey. It cut the traveling time to Asheville by a day.

Yancey Countians could board the train at Pensacola or Burnsville, ride to Kona and switch to the Clinchfield for a ride to Marion, switch to the Southern at Marion and be in Asheville in 12 hours. Previously, the only way to the "big city" was by wagon, a mode of transportation that took two days.

Passenger service also was a shot in the arm for the two boarding schools in operation in Burnsville in the early 1900s. Students now had comfortable and fast (for the times) transport into Burnsville, and for a few years both Stanley McCormick and Yancey Collegiate Institute had capacity enrollment.

But as the auto came into prominence, the demand for rail passenger transport diminished and the Black Mountain eventually curtailed this service in the late 1920s.

A few years later the rails to Pensacola were ripped up. But the old line still serves the Pensacola area indirectly . . . N. C. Highway 197 follows the old railroad almost all the 10 miles from Burnsville to the southern Yancey hamlet.

(This picture was donated by Wayne Ray of Pensacola. Don't you, too, have an old picture of a Yancey landmark, event or group of persons you would submit for this feature? Photos will be returned to the donors unharmed, and the donors will be given credit.)



Do You Remember?

The setting is virtually the same, but the city has changed.

This is Burnsville as it appeared in the years just prior to World War I, nestling cozily under the peak of Green Mountain.

The profile of the peak and the long ridge have been altered only slightly (about the only difference is that a N. C. Forest Service fire tower now sits atop the mountain).

Burnsville, however is different.

Only a few of the buildings in this picture still stand.

Those still standing and in use are The Baptist Church (building

in middle foreground with sharp steeple); the Captain Bill Moore home (pine-surrounded building on knob to left of the church. . . it is now the home of Mrs. S. T. Ray); The office of the late Dr. W. B. Robertson (small building to left and below Ray home. . . it is now an apartment); The County Courthouse (building was razed dome in right foreground. It is partially obscured by the old Baptist Church); and the old Citizen's Bank Building (building at right with large window).

Gone are the Old Baptist Church, which was later used as a Ma-

sonic Temple; the Burten Hotel (low, long building with white columns at practically the center of the picture); the old Methodist Church (directly behind Burten Hotel); the home of the late Carroll Gillespie (to left of Methodist Church); the home of the late L. E. Briggs (large building with double chimneys in right foreground); the old Cornelius Robinson Drug Store (building adjacent to present Baptist Church); and the Carter House (two-story columned building opposite old Citizen's Bank).



Do You Remember?

An education was hard to come by in Yancey County around the turn of the century.

Schools were few and far between and even those that were established were usually one-teacher institutions woefully lacking in materials.

The Presbyterian Church moved to solve the problem in 1899 by establishing the Stanley McCormick Academy (pictured above) in Burnsville.

Some families living in remote sections of the county sold their land and moved to town so that the youngsters might attend school.

They came not only from rural Yancey, but from all over the Southern Appalachian region. There were several students enrolled from Tennessee and Virginia.

O. R. Hubbard, one of the academy's founders, was principal of the school.

Charles Proffitt of Burnsville, who attended Stanley McCormick for four years, recalls that although Hubbard was a strict disciplinarian, he was also very popular with the students.

Approximately 200—including the elementary students from Burnsville and the immediate area—attended the school during the peak years.

There were eight buildings that were in use most of the time, Proffitt said.

The school was located on a knoll in West Burnsville atop which the First Presbyterian Church now stands.

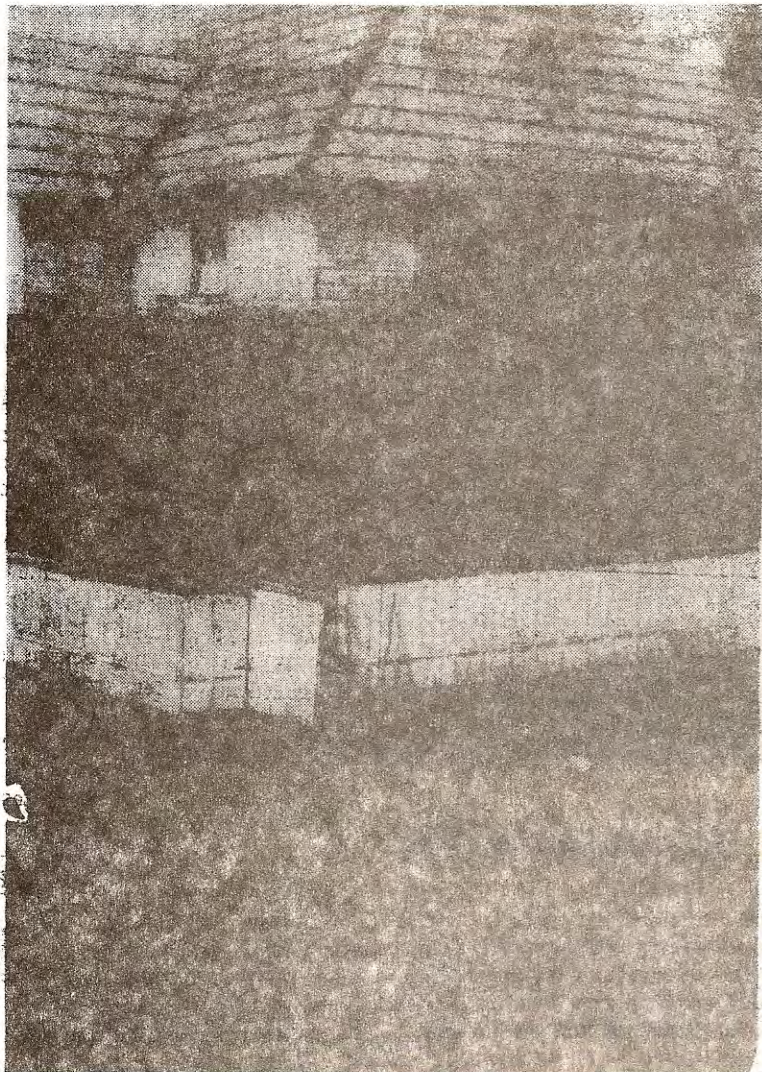
The brick building with the balcony was the main building which contained the classrooms. The structure just to the left of the main building in the picture was a girls' dormitory, which later burned. At top right is the boys' dormitory.

The building in front of the pine thicket near the center of the picture belonged to the school, also. It was the paragonage. The infirmary (not visible in picture) sat nearby.

Two other buildings owned by the college are still in use. What is now the Burnsville Community Center was then a shop. The present Masonic Temple was the Stanley McCormick dining hall.

Stanley McCormick ceased to operate as an Academy in 1922. It was converted into a trade school called Carolina New College, but after a few years, as more and more public schools were opened, this school, too, was abandoned.

This picture was donated to the Record by Mrs. S. A. McEwen of Erwin, Tenn., who, incidentally, was the first nurse to register in Yancey County.



Do You Remember?

The developers who are pushing ahead with plans for the "Winter Star Resort" atop Yancey County's Black Mountain Range are not blazing a trail.

There was a mountain-top spa in the county over half century ago.

This was a hotel (pictured above) near the Yancey-Buncombe line at the fabulously picturesque Ogle Meadows.

Built in 1912 by the late Joe Robinson of Yancey County, the hotel for a dozen years was a favorite relaxing and sightseeing spot for Western North Carolinians and

out-of-staters alike.

The inn was operated during its heyday by the late Carter Higgins of Burnsville. It was owned at the time by Walter Hanes, an Asheville attorney.

Horace Higgins of Burnsville, a nephew of Carter, helped his uncle run the hotel. He recalls that square dances were held almost nightly during the summer when the inn was open.

"Folks who came there were in love with the place," says Higgins. "They had to be. They had to either walk in or come in by horseback or in wagons. It was quite a trek."

First person to take a car to the hotel was the late Carrol Gillespie of Burnsville. When the car failed to pull the steep grade, a team of mules was hooked to the front bumper and they took the auto over the top. This was in 1914.

Remains of the inn can still be seen.

The land where it once stood are now owned by W. A. Banks of Burnsville.



Do You Remember?

Can you recall when downtown Burnsville looked like this?

There were no paved streets, and very few buildings of brick. And, if you'll notice, not a car is in sight.

The monument, which stands today in the same place (the site's now the middle of the town square), was then surrounded by

a rail. And Captain Burns still had his sword in those days, too.

That's the old Jules Abernethy story in the background (according to the best information The Record can gather). The spot is now occupied by Dancey's Service Station and Hensley's Restaurant.

The date this photo was taken

cannot be pinpointed, but it's certain that it was shot prior to 1922. This reproduction was made from a postcard dated that year.

The postcard was sent to Athelone, N. C. (Where's that?) Today it's called Bolen's Creek.

This photo was submitted by Mr. and Mrs. Charles Harris of the Bolen's Creek Community.