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West Virginia Archives & History

History of Marie Community

(Summers and Monroe Counties, W.Va.)

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In writing a description of Marie Community we are at a loss to know just where the boundary lines should be located. In the early settlements of our community, the lines that bounded a given neighborhood was much farther than at a later date. People living eight or ten miles apart were considered neighbors, therefore I will, in describing a few events that took place, confine myself to this immediate neighborhood.

This community as late as 1870 was primitive, but little land was cleared and houses were few and far apart and built out of logs of the rudest kind. Every farmer raised his own grain, and bought what he was short from his more thrifty neighbor. He raised all of his own meat and sheep from the wool of which he manufactured his clothing. The wool was woven into jeans and flannel cloth for wearing apparel. Tow was also made from flax raised on the farm, skutched, and spun on the old fashioned spinning wheel and wove into cloth on the looms. The women of the household would cut, pattern, and make clothing for all members of the family. Sugar was manufactured from the sap of the sugar tree. The reap-hook and sickle were still in use for cutting wheat and grass. Kerosene oil lamps were not introduced until 1870, the pine knot and tallow candle being still in use at that time. Salt was hauled from the Kanawha River and cost \$9.00 a barrel.

The flint lock rifle was still in use and the "Deer Lick" was still watched by night; the log rollins, grubblings, skutchings, quiltings were in vogue when neighbors, both men and women would be invited. The woods were in full of deer and small game, the creeks teemed with fish. The people were not very poor nor very rich, but they were contented and happy.

The schools in those days were known as subscription schools, that is, each parent signed an article of agreement binding himself to send so many children to school for a certain period, usually three months and to pay the teacher a certain stipulated sum for each scholar per month an din turn the teacher of "schoolmaster" then called, bound himself to teach spelling, reading, writing and arithmetic as far as the single rule of three and keep good order. The school room used was usually some vacant dwelling and a few of the pioneer teachers were Messrs Eli Ballengee, Johnathan Davis, James Lively, and John Brown.

We mention with a feeling, we trust of pardonable pride, that about the first free school taught under the laws of West Virginia in Monroe County (all of this community was then Monroe County) was taught in an old log dwelling on the farm now owned by Charley Lowe of Little Stony Creek. The first teacher was Mr.J.M. Davis. This was in the year 1868. In those primeval days order was the first consideration, and filling the minds of scholars with useful knowledge was a second consideration. The following year a log school house was built near the residence of Mr. J. H. Ellison's and known as the Maddy School house. Also about the same time there was another school house erected on the land now owned by C.N. Vass. known as the Dughill School house. These buildings were the only ones used for many years. The age of the scholars were not considered, many of them were twenty-five years old. Some of the teachers of these schools were: Ward Baker, John Carden, J.H. Maddy, W.M. and Geo Ballengee, Omer Light and others. It was soon after the great Civil War that these school houses were erected and when we today look backward, take a view of the hardship caused by that cruel war and consider that many bright boys and girls were deprived of all educational advantages, we can but think if the youth of our land had been trained mentally and morally along the common school branches for those four years instead of filling their youthful minds with political hatred and malice and all kinds of immorality incident to war that our country would have gone forward with untold strides of mental, moral, and financial prosperty.

Location

The boundary line of Marie Community extends from Greenbrier River to Indian Creek, commencing with an imaginary line at A.L. Campbell's on the Greenbrier River, three miles north west of Marie running east up the river to the mouth of Big Stony Creek, then south east to I. H. Ellison's with the old Carruthers road to the Milton Hall school house, thence to High Top, then south with the Morran Hollow to W. L. Hinton's on Indian Creek, then west with said creek to M.A. Belcher's, including him in Marie Community, then to P.M. Garrison's. From there with the line established by George Cottle, in writing the history of Forest Hill Community, which runs by James Campbell's then to the beginning, containing about twenty square miles, with a population of about three hundred.

The Marie Community consist of about forty farms. Agriculture is the principal pursuit of the people. The community is locate in the foothills of the Allegheny Mountains between the ranges of Peters Mountain and Elk Knob, and in sight of each, lying in both Monroe and Summers Counties, and is on the 37th parallel North latitude. The highest land being "High Top" 2400 feet above sea level, and Greenbrier River at the mouth of Little Stony Creek 1800 feet above sea level, making an average of 2100 feet altitude for the community.

The first land was granted by the government or John Brynside, consisting of 1920 acres in the year of 1794, and from him to John Hollingsworth, and since then has been divided and sub-divided into many small farms.

The natural resources are varied, but the scenery is magnificent. High Top on the extreme east affords a great view. With the aid of magnifying glasses one is enabled to see a great distance from this point which is used for geological observations, there being but few higher points in the state. Alum Rock on the extreme north affords great scenery and is visited by many tourists each year. Big Stony Creek here breaks through what is known as Carden's Ridge and forms one mile of the most rugged depression or canyon in this part of the state; high cliffs hanging over on each side of the creek afford an example of the wonderful work of nature.

Cemeteries

The first person buried in the New Hope Cemetery was a Mrs. Thompson, who was buried in the year of 1870, and now the bodies of 135 people lay at rest in this cemetery. There are other places where the older settlers were buried, called family grave yards. There is one on the E.C. Maddy farm, known as Lively grave yard, one on Elbert McNeer farm, known as the Baker grave yard, one on Robert Pitzer's Farm, known as the Pitzer's grave yard, but the people of recent years prefer a church cemetery and have abandoned the practice of burying in family plots. We pause for a brief time in remembrance of our departed brothers, those who have passed to the great beyond, from whose borne no traveler returns. Today we solemnly tread the walks of the city of the dead, bowing to the inevitable, yet holding in ever tender remembrance, the qualities, the fatherly and brotherly love of our departed children and neighbors. This day we remember their gift of friendship, fellowship and devotion. This is the day of memories. It is a day of sorrow. It is a day of revelation. But to us it is not a day of despair. We are facing the light, we are looking forward toward eternal sunrise. We cherish the hope of the great resurrection. The grave we believe is not lonely and deserted but garrisoned about with angels of God. We look forward to reunion with these deaparted children and neighbors of ours. We look for the city of God, upon whose hillsides there are no graves, but homes of joy and increasing life.

Wars

The parties from this and immediate neighborhoods who served in the great Civil War between the North and South are as follows: William and Geo. Young. Stewart Mann, Richard McNeer, H.H. Ballengee, F. Hoback, A.F. Brown, Allen Ellison, Harvey Gwinn and Joseph and Eber Maddy, the last two parties named were killed in battle. The others lived to be old but are dead now, except Mr. Brown. Most of these men served in Edgar's Battalion.

Those who served in the Great World War from this and immediate neighborhoods are as follows: Talmadge Light, Cicer Light, Earl Cody, Glen Claude and Jennings Maddy, Dr. F. K. Vass, Lloyd Lively, Eura Light and Homer Roach. The three last named, either died or were killed while in service.

The C. and O. Railroad

The Chesapeake and Ohio Railroad was completed in the year of 1876 which gave the land owners market for their lumber as there was abundance of fine timber, consequently the farms were neglected and a period of twelve or fifteen years farming was but little considered, but the emigration of people from Floyd County Virginia about that time helped the situation and is worthy of consideration. Mr. John S. Light who first came with his family to this community in the year of 1878 purchased a 200 acre tract of land from the Minner heirs, all of which was in woods and it is worthy to relate that he received sufficient money to pay for his farm wiht one crop of tobacco. During the next the years the following parties came to this or immediate neighborhoods withe their families: James, John and Booker Light, F. Hoback, John Shumate, Jonas and Taylor Wilson, Bird Iddings, James and William Shanks, and many others. They were industrious people an did much in making and preparing the community better for man's future abode. Their descendants constitute a large per cent of the populace here.

Early Public Buildings

The first church at New Hope was a log building. It was built in the year of 1850. The promoters of this church were: H.H. Ballengee, Stewart Mann, Joseph Huffman, John Baker, Charles Ellison, Jordan Lively, and several others, all of whom are dead. This church was used as the place of worship for all denominations of the community, but was built by and deeded to the Methodist people, and strange as it may seem there has been no strife of denominational trouble in the community. This log church was considered an up to date country church building at the time, and it really was, up until the year of 1893, a new building was put up in its place. The promoters of the erection of the new church were: Robert and Shannon Baker, H.J. and Walter Light, D.A. Welder, C. N. Vass, E.C. Maddy, Lewis and James Garten, W.B. Ellison, Geo. Akers and many others, most of whom are still living.

The New Hope school house which is located one-half mile east of New Hope church was built in the year 1885, or forty years ago, and it is conjectured that this school has sent forth more teachers than any other free school in the county.

The first store at Marie was owned by Robert Miller. A room in W.A. Goode's home was used, and in 1898 Mr. Miller sold to Young and Company and they erected the store building that is being used now. Later the style of the firm was changed to W.A. Barger and Company, then to C.N. Vass and Son then to McNeer Brothers and then to E.J. Vass, the present owner who has been clerk or owner for twenty-five years.

The Marie post office was established in the year of 1900, and before that time mail facilities were a great handicap to the community. The principal promoters in establishing this office were C.N. Vass, Walter Light, F.K. Vass, W.A. Goode, and others.

Noted Sons and Daughters

As to our prominent citizens, while we have never had the honor of furnishing statesman or governors, yet we believe that the natural intelligence of our community will compare with that of other rural communities.

We beg to submit some of the names of those who were native born and away and made a success in the different business vocations in life. Dr. F.K. Vass, born near Marie, the son of C.N. Vass graduated with honors at the Maryland Medical College, Baltimore, and served his profession with marked ability, practicing at Marie and also at Gassaway, West Virginia. In 1917 he offered his services in the World War and was accepted as an officer with the rank of Lieutenant. He was discharged in the fall of 1919 after which he practiced his profession at Red Sulphur Springs and later at Greenville, where he died June 7, 1923. His death was great shock to his many friends, who realized the loss of a useful and upright citizen.

Rev. W. H. Ballengee, son of the H.H. Ballengee, who was reared near New Hope Church and entered the ministry in 1886, has been active as one of the most able preachers in the M.E. Church, Baltimore Conference.

We are proud of the fact that this community furnished the first county superintendent of schools of Summers County elected by the people after the formation of the county. Mr. Charles L. Ellison was elected in the year of 1875 and served two years thereafter, as two years was the term of that office at that time. Mr. Ellison lived on and owned the farm now owned by C.L. Lowe, one mile from Marie on Little Stony Creek. He was an old soldier and died in the year of 1886 and was buried in the family burying place on the farm.

Mr. Walter W. Baker, son of Havey Baker, deceased, was born one mile east of New Hope Church and followed the profession of teaching and farming and has been elected twice as county Superintendent of schools of Monroe County, and is now serving his second term. His last election to this office was 1922.

Dr. F.M. McNeer, son of Richard McNeer, deceased, who lived in the village of Marie graduated at Maryland Medical College and practiced his profession at Hinton and Green Sulphur, West Virginia, and is now located at Roanoke, Virginia. Dr. McNeer recently specialized in ear, eye, and throat disease.

Rev. P.H. Gwinn, son of Robert Gwinn, was born and reared on his father's farm on Indian Creek now owned by Mr. M.A. Belcher. He taught school when quite young and later entered college and studied for the ministry and graduated with honors and was ordained by the Presbyterian church. His work has been mostly in the state of North Carolina. Of late years Mr. Gwinn has spent a part of his time in the National Banking business.

Dr. C. N. Vass, born and reared near Marie, has been very active in local affairs. He served one term as Justice of Peace of Forest Hill district, and was elected and served one term as assessor of Summers County. At present he is President of the County Court of Summers County. He is noted for his hospitality and is ever ready to assist in any local enterprise.

I would like to write a biography of more of our citizens, but time forbids me to do so. I might mention H.J. Light by trade a mason, farmer, and architect; D.A. Welder, undertaker; E.J. Vass, postmaster, merchant and financier; C.W. Garten and T.E. Light, auctioneers; J. F. Belcher, miller and carpenter; O. M. Foster auto repairer; A.E. Welder, Justice of Peace; M.B. Bowyer, blacksmith; L.A. Coulter and many others.

We feel that we should submit the names of some of those who were native born and some who have adopted our section and taught in the free schools of Marie section, or who have gone to other communities: L. C. Akers. D.C. Light, L.K. Maddy, Charles Sumner, M.E. Carden, Glen and Fred Maddy, Clyde Akers, Miram, Addie and Katie Light, Jessie Maddy, Clara and Esta Woodrum, Roxie, Jennie, and Berta Brown, Ada and Lillie Gwinn, Leta Ellison and Mammie and Arlene Miller.

Anna Maddy Episode

Anna Maddy, after losing her husband who was a soldier in the Revolutionary War from Virginia, by accidental drowning in the Shenandoah River, emigrated with her children to Monroe County, and settled on what is still known as the "Charley Maddy Place", near the Saltpeter Cave near Greenville. Here she reared her family. She had a considerable estate in Virginia, which it became necessary for her to return to settle up, and she rode horse back through the mountains and the wilderness, crossing the Alleghenies. After transacting her affairs and recovering her money, a considerable sum, she proceeded on her return, and in doing so she stopped over night with a settler in the wilderness. During her stay she incidently disclosed the fact of her carrying on her person considerable funds. On the next morning, the gentleman of the house told her he knew a direct route through hills that would save her a great part of the distance, and volunteered to show her the near cut. They proceeded for some time until they came to a wild place and a great cliff, where the man stopped, told her to give him the money, and declared his object to be to secure the money which she carried on her person in her clothing, and to murder her. She declined to give up the money, when he demanded her to take off her dress, it being his purpose to secure it and the money therein, and then throw her over the cliff. She requested him to turn his back, as she did not desire to undress in his presence. This he did, turning his back to her and facing the precipice whereupon she gave him a sudden push with all her strength, sending him over the cliff and into the ravine below, where he was instantly killed, thus saving her own life as well as the money. She then proceeded on her journey at her home in safety. The above experience does not deal directly but indirectly with this community and is a fine illustration of pioneer life. We have wondered if there are any women of this day who would make this trip, under the circumstances as described, crossing the Allegheny Mountains alone on horse back with hardly a path through the unbroken forest, subject to the danger of wild animals and hardships.

Mr. Maddy was of English descent, married the Dutch lady Miss Anna Morris, as figures in the above episode, just after the Revolutionary War which formed the tree which sent forth its branches over the country. To this union there were ten boys born, which is now scattered over the country generally but there is more of their descendants found in Ohio than elsewhere, although many to be found in Monroe County and also some in Summers County.

Homes of Marie Community

"Homecraft" meant all things which help to make the ideal home. Home is mighty definite because it has to do with nothing but home interests but could be stretched to convey every thing from religion to Arctic explorations. The farm homes in the community are on an average with these in most rural communities. There are no mansions but the homes are comfortable ones and the people generally have what is especially required to make an ideal home for boys and girls and without these qualities the home is lacking of the most requisite. There are games, music and reading for recreation. No one is wealthy but every one is happy.

Sports

The sports of the earlier days were quite different from what they are today. The earlier sports consisted of jumping, foot racing, wrestling and hunting. At school the games were "shooting the buck", "town ball" and other games of the like. Now the more exciting games are baseball, football and basketball. Automobiling and other sports are also a part of the community recreation. Hunting the small game is in vogue as much as it was in bygone days, when we had plenty of deer and wild turkeys, as will as the small game found now. The last deer killed in this section was killed by James Garten. The circumstances surrounding this marvelous achievement never to be accomplished again by any one here is as follows: The report went forth that there was a deer on "High Top". This was many years after the deer were killed or run out of this section but nobody especially cared if did not go in pursuit of a same until James Garten borrowed a double barrel shot gun from P.M. Garrison and on December 10, 1893, with his brother, Lewis, started in pursuit of the only deer that decked Neels Mountain, the deer that is noted for its beauty, fleetness and docility. The hunters soon observed that the deer fed on high land at night and lay on low land by day, in a lonely hollow known as the Morran Hollow, James Garten went down the right side and Lewis Garten the left side of the hollow. James Garten found the deer lying in a small hollow about two hundred yards below the "Laurel Hole" and fired the other barrel but missed. The deer couldn't go far but dropped dead. The commotion and shooting scared up a red fox that ran to Lewis Garten and he killed it. When they called to each other one said, "I got him", the other said, "No you didn't, I got him", to their surprise one had a red fox the other a deer but each one thought the other was shooting at the same animal. Uncle Jimmie takes pride in telling this hunting experience. Ask him to tell you all about it.

Fox Chasing

Fox chasing is a sport that is much enjoyed by many people not especially for the profit as the hunters that keep fox hounds seldom kill a fox but prefer keeping the hounds for mere sport. People often come from Ballengee, Talcott and Hinton and spend a night on High Top in this way. Where there is often as many as ten or fifteen dogs in the chase and it is claimed that the grey fox runs as long now as the red in years gone by often running eight or ten hours before swift fox hounds. The following occurrences is worthy of note which explains one of those hunting experiences:

Mr. O. R. Parker, E.F. Pitzer and others while out fox chasing on :High Top had a very interesting experience. After a lengthy chase the dogs succeeded in running the fox into a den on G. M. Decks farm. The hunters planned and finally decided that the smoking process would be the surest and best plan to get the fox. After the pine and other dry timber were secured and the fire built, the hunters with guns ready sat down to wait for "Mr. Fox" to come out of the "fiery furnace". They waited anxiously, especially when the groans and commotion were heard within; when they missed one of their best hound dogs, and to their disappointment, found the leader of the pack belonging to C. T. Houchins, (Old Jack), was in the den and receiving the combustion, the best that could be procured by modern hunters. After the mutual agreement characteristic of all hunters, the trio, near day break, retired to their homes and secured all of the rock masons tools such as sledge hammers, crow bars, etc., available and by working hard when the sun was going down the western slope the next day many tons of rock had been torn out of the cliff and scattered over some farming land, and the long lost dog as well as the fox were secured. The hound appeared not much damaged by the unfortunate affair, except his eye sight was temporarily impaired. The hunters secured the fox first and tied it to a tree and while they were working with the dog to get it out of the den, the fox broke the string and bid farewell to that place and made its safe escape.

Base Ball Sport

Baseball sport has been in vogue since 1900, when the first team was organized at Marie, and since that time the game has been played each year during the ball season and the Marie team has been able to always hold their reputation as a good country team. O.R. McNeer is the "Babe Ruth" of this community and when in practice we doubt if he could be excelled in Monroe or Summers counties.

The First Automobile in Marie Community

The first automobile that passed through our community belonged to a Mr. Yink from Virginia, father of Harry Yink, who then lived on a farm near Milton Hall school house. The auto was one of the first models and did not have a muffler as was used later on all cars. The horses on the road and in nearby fields became much excited and the people were not much better. The noise made by this car was similar to the noise made by a car with a cut-out which many people insist on using, disturbing schools, church services, and pedestrian on the public highway in spite of the fact that it is unlawful to use such. The first automobile in this community was owned by E.J. Vass. There are now fifty cars and trucks or an average of one car for each family. There are a few families that have no car but a few families have two cars or one car and a truck. The automobile prosperity began here about 1912 and has kept growing till the present time.

Telephone Companies

The first telephone line built through our community was one from Lowell Post Office along what was known as the Red Sulphur turnpike by the present site of Marie to Red Sulphur Springs. This line was the first telephone line used in Monroe or Summers counties. It was built while Mr. Glavis was proprietor of the Red Sulphur Springs line in the year 1879. The writer as well as other people near by who visited the offices of A. C. Lowe to hear him talk to another party thirteen miles away, this being the length of the telephone lines, could hardly comprehend or think it possible. This line was not used but about five years. The next telephone was the Greenville line. The citizens of Greenville, Monroe County, obtained a charter from the state about the year 1890 and organized the Greenville Telephone Company, which is well known and whose lines are much used today. It was extended through the Marie Community, first entering the community at Mr. George Young's and by way of Forest Hill on to Hinton, Summers County. This line is used by a few people in Marie Community. The next line built was by the Monroe Mutual Telephone Company. This corporation was organized in the year of 1894 and built its first line on our section in 1905. The majority of the farmers had stock and got the service rendered by said company. The next company was the Marie Telephone Company, the present and only local telephone company that is used in our section. This company was organized in 1918, and most of the stockholders transferred from the Monroe Mutual. The Southern Bell or long distance line is built through by way of Marie, and there is a phone on said line which enables each farmer on the local line get not only service on the local line but on the long distance line. Telephone facilities are all we could ask for. The charter members of the Marie Telephone Company which was organized at Marie on September 4, 1918 are as follows: D.A. Hedrick, C.N. Vass, C.W. Michael, E.J.Vass, A.H. Michael, S.C. Ballengee, L.A. Ellison, O.B. Pauley, Henry Shumate, R.L.C. Foster, G.F. Kesler (deceased), W.T. Maddy, Jr., O.C. Kesler, L.B. Garten, E.C. Maddy, (deceased), L.J. Davis, J. O. Perdue, H.D. Lively, Hugh Lowery, L.K. Maddy, C.A. Richardson, J. Henry Smith, J.P. Garten, H.T. Crawford, W.J. Garten, W. B. Flint, W.T. Maddy, Sr., S.J. Michael, W.G. Iddings, Lee Tabor and J.F. Leftwich.

Flour Mills

The only flour mill in the Marie Community was built at Marie by O.B. Pauley in year 1910 and was operated by a kerosene engine. This mill is equipped with the latest machinery for making flour and also a corn mill and buckwheat mill combined. Mr. Pauley sold this mill to Fleshman Brothers who sold to Michael and Son. It was then sold to D.A.Welder and Son then to Sumner and Light and from them to J.F. Belcher the present owner.

There was a corn mill established and run by W. L. Maddy as early as 1885 who sold to W.A. Goode. Mr. Goode ground and crushed corn for several years. D.A. Welder and Son established and had a corn mill and crusher at their home about one-half mile north of Marie. They ground for the public until the present mill used now was built.

Biography of Some of the Old Soldiers While in the Civil War

The name of the old soldiers that served in the great Civil War are found elsewhere in this narrative. I would like to write a biography of their life or at least during their service while in the war, but failed to procure but little data in regard to them, hence the importance of a community history. The Civil War might be considered the worst war fought by man considering the number engaged in it as a rebellion is the worst form of war. Neighbors, relatives and even brothers often allied against each other. This community being sparsely settled did not furnish soldiers but furnished its quota of brave men, characteristic of this state. The following letter written to and printed by the Monroe Watchman in 1915 by Captain T.C. Morton of Staunton, Virginia, we herewith copy in full.

"I think it will interest the surviving members of my old company F 26th Virginia Battalion and their friends to know that the name of their comrades who fell at New Market, Virginia are engraved upon the battle monument there. A year or two ago I received a letter from the Ladies Monument Association telling me that they were erecting a monument upon which are to be inscribed the names of the New Market dead. I sent with the subscription asked for, the names of Joseph A. Maddy and John Midkiff, who their comrades will remember fell on that victorious May 15, 1864. The other day I was driving along the well remembered pike, north of town, when casting my eye across the battlefield I was attracted by a tall white marble shaft I had never seen in that cemetery before. I hitched my horse to the fence, climbed over the locked gate and was soon standing before the monument eagerly scanning the names upon it and there were the names of the poor fellows, John Midkiff and J.A. Maddy deeply cut in the white stone; and a few yards away their graves, neatly sodded and with white marble stones at their heads. How well do I remember the day they fell. Joe Maddy, first. He was in the front firing line and men were falling like broken reeds in a gale, while the rain poured down, wetting the guns and disabling many of them. Joe was standing near me and called out, "Captain my gun is choked, I can't get the cartridge down." I took it from him and tried to ram it down but it stuck fast, then a man fell beside us. I picked up his empty gun found the lock worked right and handed it to him, telling him to drop his. He hastily loaded the dead man's gun, cocked it, raised it to fire, when at that instant he was struck in the middle of the body by the fatal ball and fell at my feet. John Midkiff did not fall until the battle was nearly over. It was when we made a last charge up a slope, capturing the Yankee battery. Midkiff was on the color guard close to Allen Woodrum, who carried the flag, and fell seventeen days after with two bullets through him at Cold Harbor. He shouted aloud as he charged with the leading group and was hit by a shot in the mouth. He never knew what hit him as he fell backward stone dead. A few hours after, about midnight as I found poor Midkiff lying on his back, his glassy eyes staring at the moon, but his countenance placid and his face showing no cuts of his head. Maddy mortally wounded had been carried back in by the ambulance corpse and soon died. Peace to their ashes, they sleep in honored graves in the shadow of a marble shaft in the green valley of the Shenandoah River at Staunton, Virginia. Signed T. C. Morton."

Hon. John C. Ballard of Boogo, Monroe County was with the above named parties, Maddy and Midkiff, and was lined up between them until they were killed.

Ebrew Maddy was killed in the battle of Cedar Creek. As to the particulars there is little known only that he received two wounds from which he died and was buried in the usual way characteristic of that cruel war.

F. Holback, whose name appeared elsewhere received a wound in the hip at the battle of Gettysburg, and carried the minnie ball as long as he lived, as the ball was never extracted.

Law and Order

The citizens of Marie community have been generally law-abiding people. No one ever served a term in the penitentiary but still the community has had some law breakers and there is always room for improvement along that line. We have had one homicide and one suicide: Cha Crawford, son of E.W. Crawford age twelve years shot and killed his brother Frank, age seventeen on Little Stony Creek on Monday morning February 11, 1901. Charlie wanted to go hunting to which his older brother objected, whereupon Frank interfered and he received the fatal shot from a breech loading shot gun. Justice W.G. Halstead conducted an inquest and the accused was sent to the reform school and he remained there for two years. The defense of the youthful homicide was that the shooting was accidental and he did not intend to kill his brother.

Jake Hall, son of D. Hall who lived on the Baker farm one mile east of Marie, age twenty- one years, killed himself on July 4, 1898 by shooting himself through the heart with a pistol. Justice W.G. Halstead conducted the inquest and the

Jury returned the verdict that the deceased Jake Hall came to his death by a gun shot wound inflicted by his own hands. This was a great shock to his people and friends and they said if they said he had any intentions of suicide before that time that no one knew about it.

The First and Only Still Used for Making Liquor

There was but one still used for the making of whiskey legally in this community. It was owned by Jordan Lively and operated on the farm now owned by E.C. Maddy heirs on Little Stony Creek. This still was mostly used before the great Civil War when it was allowed by law to make grain and fruits into liquor and sell same. Mr. Lively acquired a large estate and did his part as one pioneer clearing away the forest aiding in making future homes. He owned and cleared the most of what is known as "War Ridge" which has always been noted for good crops of wheat. Mr. Lively when old became involved in debt and after his death the land then owned by him was sold for same by a decree of court.

The First Road Built Through Marie Community

The first county road through this section was one built from the old Corruther's road at a point near I.H. Ellison's home running South, crossing Little Stony Creek near the farm of Charlie Lowe and up the Huffman hill by New Hope Church and down the Baker Hill connecting the Indian Creek road near the residence of Elbert McNeer. This road was used in the stage coach days in spite of the fact that some of the road was steep grade possibly 25 degrees but used daily by the traffic when the Red Sulphur Springs was used and considered one of the greatest mineral resorts in the East.

Later, possibly in the years of 1875 to 1885, the road known as the Red Sulphur Springs turnpike was completed. This road had at different points been regraded and now is considered a good mountain dirt road. This road connects Talcott on the C. and O. Railroad and Rich Creek on the Virginian Railroad which is the nearest route east of New River which connects the two railroads.

Balloon Incident

On the morning of June 4, 1924, Mr. Fleet Pitzer, who lives two miles east of Marie, observed on the hillside near his home some mysterious obstacle which had appeared there during the night.

As the first scouting party advanced near the object to find out what it was, the sun was shining on it and the warm rays of sunshine were causing it to move and expand according to the laws of nature. Whence it came and whither it was bound, no one knew, but soon it was to rise again and go on its course to come to earth again when the air became damp and still.

When the first party approached and saw it moving, one leg seemed to be saying to the other "Let me pass this time and I will let you pass the next time". The news went far and near and soon became the central factor of the community everyone trying to find a solution of the miraculous event. Some thought it might be a sign of an invisible Empire, while others thought it to be something that had sprung up during the night like mushroom from a hotbed, but the monster constantly shaking and going up a few inches and then coming down in the grass, blubbed and held back all but one, Robert Pitzer, who had by old age and hard work had the misfortune of losing his vision to some extent and due to this fact having not had such a clear realization of the monster, proved a real hero. Mr. Pitzer, in rather a cautious manner went forward and touched the thing in spite of the protests of the onlookers. His sense of touch related to him the fact that it was pliable and resembled the inner tube of an automobile, being spherical in form. As nothing miraculous happened to him his first investigation, his courage increased to the extent that he carried the object back to the crowd. The crowd decided the thing to be a balloon and after thorough examination it was turned loose to ascend the air on its lonesome journey, while Mr. Pitzer was hailed as the hero of the day.

Oldest Inhabitants of Marie Community Now Living

The oldest lady inhabitant of our community is Mrs. Huffman, who lives one mile east of Marie near New Hope Church in Monroe County. She talks of the happenings of pioneer days and often weaves cloth on the old fashion loom in spite of the fact that her age is more than four score years. Mrs. Huffman, in 1924, visited the town of Hinton, rather Avis. She had not been there for over fifty years. She visited her uncle, Mr. Joseph Hinton, and the great changes to her were noticeable, as when she made her last visit. Avis was only a farm, with only one log farm house owned by her grandfather and the land farmed by him. Now it is solid with modern homes, hence the great contrast to the old lady, who spent many of her childhood days on the farming fields there, and now automobiles are running all the time on paved streets as well as cars shifting most of the time over the tracks from the C. and O. Railroad yards, cars shifting over the place where there was once a pond where her grandfather killed wild ducks. Her mind is clear and runs back to days she spent there. Mrs. Huffman could locate the site of the old farm house which was removed long ago and more modern homes built in its place.

The oldest gentleman is Mr. A.F. Brown, who lives one mile north-west of Marie in Summers County, aged 84 years, with R.H. Pitzer, who lives tow and one-half miles north east of Marie in Monroe County, a close second. Mr. Brown gets the credit for setting up the first wheat reaper that came to Summers County.

An Unusual Car Trip

Messrs Lake Maddy, Kester Maddy, L.C. Davis and Jennings Maddy made a trip to Shamrock, Texas in 1924. They visited Carl Maddy, a brother to the first two named above and cousin to the last two. They reported good roads most to the way, hard surfaced roads from Charleston, West Virginia, to Oklahoma City. The automobile registered 3,250 miles the round trip and used only 132 gallons of gas, hence the saving of gas as well as cars on good roads. Carl Maddy did not know his brothers. He started, when a small boy on a western tour in 1907, and traveled over most of the western states. Finally he married and settled down in Colorado, later going to Shamrock Texas. We can imagine the unexpected and agreeable meeting of the boys. The first above named party arrived at Carl Maddy's Home about daybreak and asked for breakfast for four parties. The reply was that he had lost his wife recently and was keeping house and caring for his little children and was sorry that he could not accommodate them. When they told him they were from West Virginia, the reply was "come in and I will do the best I can for you".

Fraternal Orders

The Marie Camp, Modern Woodman of America was organized by O.C. Hutchison, District Deputy, Head Consul on April 6, 1906. O.C. Hutchison was a member of Indian Mills Camp, but was transferred to Marie Camp on June 2, 1906 and remained a member of this camp until his death which occurred April 3, 1924. The names of the charter members of Marie Camp appear below and their present camp rating:

Ira M. Hutchison Transferred to another camp
 S.C. Ballengee Still a member
 N. P. Stover Not a member
 J.J. Cottle Dead
 W.T. Maddy Still a member
 Clyde Garten Transferred
 J.O. Perdue Not a member
 C.F. Akers Not a member
 E.P. Davisson Dead
 O.C. Kesler Still a member
 E.J. Vass Still a member
 P. M. Garrison Still a member
 J. P. Carden Still a member
 W.F. Ellison Transferred
 M.D. Bailey Not a member
 G.C. Smith Not a member

The present number of members is forty-two.

Biography of the World War Veterans While in Service

The parties from this community who served in the great world war, whose names appear elsewhere, with a description of their rating and time of enlistment in service are as follows:

Glen W. Maddy enlisted and began service in the Navy May 6, 1918, and was discharged October 23, 1919. His time of service being one year, five months and seventeen days. After graduating in a class of one hundred at Norfolk, Virginia in the Signal Masters Department, he was assigned to the battleship, U.S. New Hampshire. This ship was used principally in convoy duty, accompanying troop ships carrying soldiers across the ocean. After the Armistice was signed he was transferred to the Dutch Troop ship, Ryndam, whose displacement was about five thousand men, where he also did signal work. He made seven trips and crossed the Atlantic Ocean fourteen times.

Claude R. Maddy enlisted and began service in the Navy, July 25, 1918 and was discharged Sept 10, 1919. He was in the service one year, one month, and fifteen days. While in camp at Norfolk, Virginia, he was put in a Gunners School which taught the machinery of the large eight and twelve inch guns which required six men to operate the machinery of one gun. After signing of the armistice, Claude Maddy was assigned to the battleship U.S. Virginia, which ship was temporarily converted into a troop ship, that is all of the guns were removed to give room for the necessary hasty delivering of the soldiers back home. Claude Maddy made three trips or crossed the Atlantic Ocean six times.

William Jennings Maddy was drafted in service August 26, 1918 and was discharged December 24, 1918. Time in camp being four months. He was taken to LsFayette, Indiana and put in the Engineering Corps, then to Valparaiso, Indiana, then to camp at Washington, D.C., with over sea equipment and while there the armistice was signed, which on the eleventh hour, eleventh day eleventh month, 1918. He was trained for guard duty.

D. Cicero Light, whose name appears elsewhere was drafted by the government for service in the world war on July 26, 1918, and discharged June 21, 1919. He was in service the months and twenty-five days. He was taken to Camp Meade, Maryland, and kept there one month, and then to Camp Lee, Virginia, where he embarked for Europe, landing at Brest, France on October 14, 1918, at which time he embarked for Europe, landing at Brest, France on October 26, 1918. He began his over-seas service in the Veterinary Corps, and served in that capacity until discharged from duty.

Lloyd Lively, son of D.W. Lively, was drafted by the government for service in the World War on July 26, 1918, and was first taken to Camp Meade, Maryland, and then to Camp Lee, Virginia, where he died October 10, 1918, with the "flu", which was in camp at that time. He only served two months and fourteen days. His body was brought back home and laid to rest in the Wayside Cemetery, October 14, 1918.

Earl Cody, son of D.W. Lively, was drafted by the government for service in the World War on July 26, 1918 and taken to Camp Lee, Virginia, where he remained until the armistice was signed and was then honorably discharged.

Eura Light, son of H.J. Light, was drafted by the government for service in the World War on May 15, 1918, was taken to Camp Meade, Maryland, and kept there a short time, from thence he was taken over seas. He was a machinist and consequently was installed in the Machine Gun Battalion Company A. He became ill with that much dreaded disease "flu" and died in a French hospital on September 12, 1918. His time of service was only three months and seventeen days. Eura Light married the only daughter of R. L.C. Foster and she died in 1917 leaving a daughter, Due May Light. Eura Light's body was brought back home and was laid to rest in the Forest Hill Cemetery August 15, 1920, having been buried in France one year, ten months and twenty-three days.

Homer Roach, son of Isaac Roach, whose name appears elsewhere was drafted by the government for service in the World War on July 26, 1918, and was taken to Camp Meade, Maryland. He was there but a short time when he contracted the "flu" from which he died. His body was brought back home and laid to rest in the Forest Hill Cemetery.

Talmadge E. Light, whose name appears elsewhere in this narrative was drafted by the government for service in the World War on July 26, 1918, and discharged August 1919, his time in service being one year and one month. He was taken to Camp Meade, Maryland and kept there one month and then to Camp Lee, Virginia, where he remained till October 1918, at which time he embarked for Europe and began his over-seas service in the Medical Corps. He served in that capacity until discharged from duty.

The boys whose names appear in this narrative and who served in the Great World War the never-to-be-forgotten strife between the leading nations of the world, endured hardships and suffering only known to themselves, but did their part as heroically as did any soldier of this much regretted affair. Not only did they suffer hardships but their parents and friends who were back home spent many restless hours while their boys were subjected to the horrors and hardships of the greatest war the world has experienced.

Sketch of Indians and Their Habits

The history of any community of country is not complete unless there is some data of the original inhabitants or Indians who inhabited America before it was discovered by the white people of the Europeans, otherwise this Indian description would have left out. As this is told in my own way and put off till the last part I shall make a comparison of Indian days with the present time.

When working in the fields we often find arrow heads or flint used by the Indians which is the only visible sign that the Indians once inhabited our country and when I find a flint my mind runs back over the cycle of time when this country was wild and grand. Every schoolboy and girl knows that less than two centuries back this country was a howling wilderness. There was almost an unbroken forest from the Mississippi River to the Atlantic Ocean which included this community. This forest was roamed through by a people known as the "Red Man". He was in many ways less intelligent than the present inhabitants. His physical make-up was different from any other race. He had long, coarse black hair, small black eyes, high cheek bones, swarthy complexion, straight posture and was noted for activity and alertness as well as strength. The Indian's most desirable pursuit was war. Tribe warred against tribe, clan against clan, and often family against family. In fact about all his time was spent in preparing for war and hunting. His living was simple and he relied on the skins of wild animals for his clothing and their flesh for food. The Indian was revengeful, never forgetting a wrong or vice-versa a favor. He knew no mercy or pity but probably angered by the mistreatment practiced by some of the Europeans especially the Spaniards there was no cruelty too bad for the white captive.

We feel sure that this was intensified by such acts as rushing many natives on board ships by the early discoverers and working them in European copper mines and also other mines. We are told in history that a religious sect bought the land from the Indians in New England and signed a treaty which the Indian was to respect as long as the sun would shine and this treaty has never been broken. The Indians that inhabited this section were some of the eastern tribes, probably the Algonquin or Iroquois

There have been many Indian relics found which the present race of people value as rare souvenirs. A spear head was found by Fred L. Maddy who lives in Marie section and it is said to be the most beautiful relic in the state or probably anywhere. The dimensions of this spear head are 31/2 by 81/2 inches. It is of white flint and the architectural work is complete. The making of these flints which is a lost art by a people who did not know of steel or electricity is puzzling to the present inhabitants. The finding of the above described flint and other relics in this mound strengthens the belief that the pre-historic mound builders once inhabited this country before the red man.

But the Indians are gone,
Gone with their old forest wide and deep
And we have built our homes
Upon fields where that generation sleep.

We probably have omitted many things that might have been said concerning those who have taken prominent action toward the upbuilding and maintaining the high efficiency of our schools, church services, Sunday schools and community in general but in the limited time we had to prepare this sketch as well as the limited space to which we must confine our remarks we hope to be pardoned for any oversight.

Community Histories Index

West Virginia Archives and History

West Virginia Department of Arts, Culture and History
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