

A COAL CAMP AND ITS CLASSROOM:

A Historical Study of a Virginia Coalfield Community and Its School 1888-1987

by

Terry W. Mullins

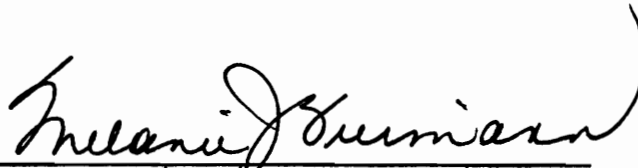
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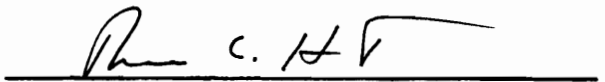
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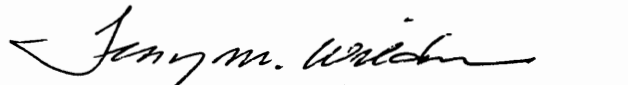
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(ABSTRACT)

The coal camp school located in the community of Bishop, Virginia was a unique institution that was molded for an equally unique time and place in the history of Tazewell County, Virginia. However, as a prelude to understanding the Bishop school and its community, one must briefly examine the history of the Pocahontas Coalfields. The school that was established in the community of Bishop was a direct result, not only of the agricultural community that preceded it, but also of the influence exacted upon the school by the coal company which created the Bishop camp in the 1930s.

The strategy used to investigate the school and

community of Bishop included principal use of the historical research methodology and a variety of primary and secondary accounts. Extensive and detailed literature review first established a foundation of existing knowledge. This assessment preceded considerable additional research into both primary and secondary historical records.

Oral history strategies became an integral part of the work in examining the history of the Bishop School. Numerous interviews with former students, teachers, principals, other employees, and parents of the Bishop and Crocketts Cove Schools were conducted.

Triangulation verification techniques permitted substantiation of much of the research gathered during this study. Oral history interviews were compared to Bishop School records and Tazewell County School Board records, to both local and regional historical sources, both scholarly and amateur, and to evidence available using photographic archives.

The primary importance of this study is the preservation and examination of a unique phenomenon in the history of schooling in the United States, the coal camp school. Within this framework, the evolution of the Bishop School and the role played in its development by the coal company, the union, the local school board, and state guidelines and regulations are scrutinized. As a result, the study has lasting value to the scholarly community which

embraces both educators and historians on the state,
regional, and national levels.

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Valley News, and the local Bluefield daily, The Bluefield Daily Telegraph, were very useful. Visual materials recording the life of the Bishop coal town were available in the photograph archives of the Eastern Regional Coal Archives, the Special Collections at the Newman Library at Virginia Tech, the Tazewell County Public Library, the Tazewell County Historical Society Albums and the personal photograph archives of Melvin Grubb, photographer in Bluefield, West Virginia.

Mrs. Iva Dean and her expert critique; Mr. and Mrs. Bill Rhodes and their work on historical sketches of numerous Tazewell County schools for the Tazewell County Heritage Book; Ms. Louise Leslie, other local historians and their publications; United States Census Bureau statistics; United States Geological Survey information; interviews with scores of local residents, former students, former teachers and other school employees; and personal observations as a life-long resident of Tazewell County, Virginia were all included in the background work assembled for this composition. Additional assistance was provided by both current and retired members of the Tazewell County School System and current and former residents of the Bishop community.

In addition, I appreciate Dr. Melanie Biermann for chairing and supervising the development of my study with

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In Memory of My Father

John Henry Mullins, Jr.

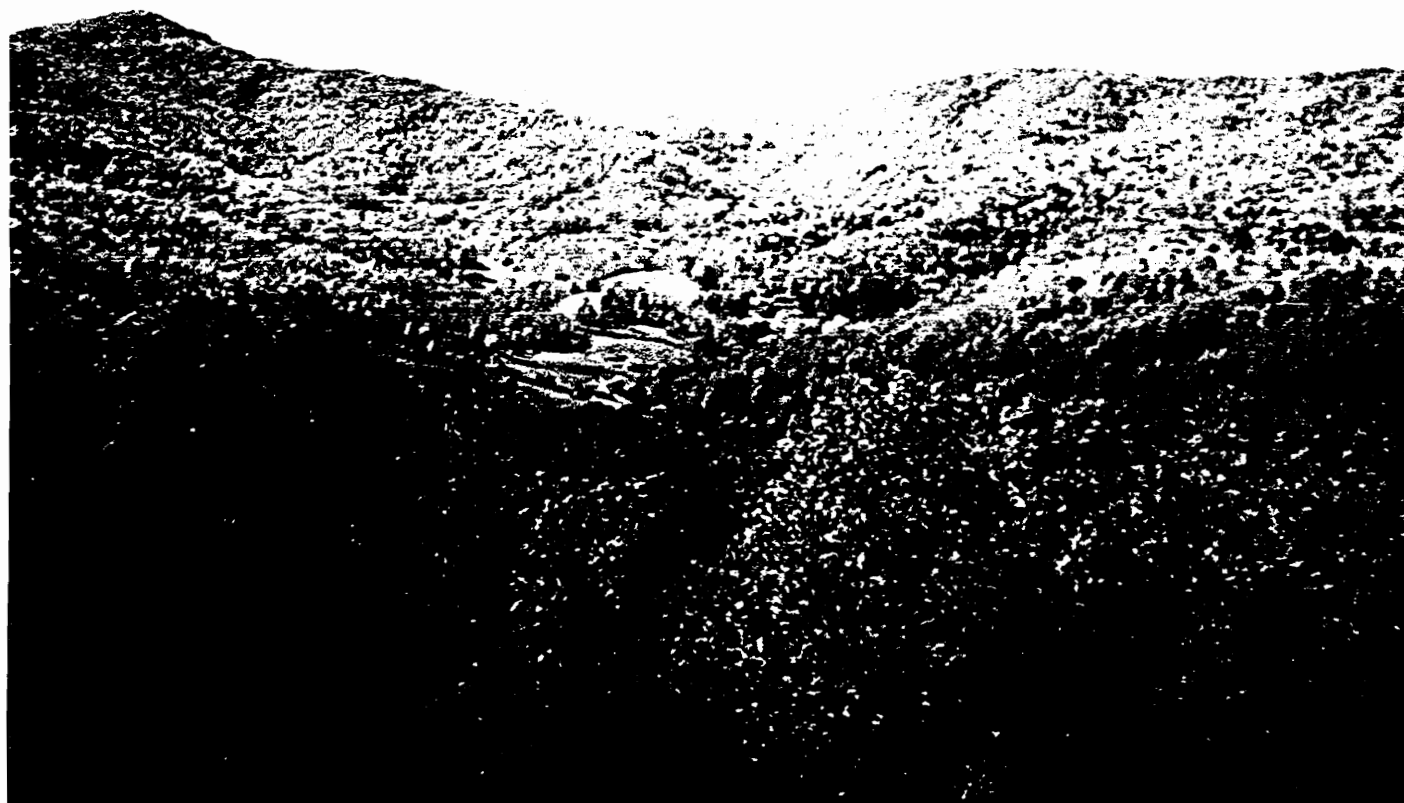
1922-1991

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

This dissertation is a historical study of the processes of transformation in a Virginia coalfield community during the late nineteenth and most of the twentieth centuries. This knowledge adds to a broader discernment of the history of the southwest Virginia coalfields, as well as the schools that grew up in this region. The inquiry examines the hegemonic practices which evolved from both the nineteenth century farming community of Crocketts Cove and the twentieth century coal town of Bishop, which was born in the 1930s. The probe examines the continuing mechanisms of control which emerged, as new ideologies were introduced into the community. These new tenets appeared as a result of the growth of an industrial-based society built up around the new coal mining community. This introduction of a mining and industrial society in the mountains of Southwest Virginia challenged the established roles of the traditional mountain society.

Between 1887 and 1987, community interests and education issues changed markedly within the confines of the small valley of Crocketts Cove in the northern portion of



View of Crocketts Cove Facing North. Mountains in the
Background Are in West Virginia.

Photograph by the Author.

Tazewell County, Virginia. As the community changed, new school structures were built to serve the changing student population and new strategies were introduced to benefit a growing student population. For example, the original one-room school structure was replaced in 1917 by a modern two-room frame school building to more adequately meet the needs of the agrarian-based communities of Crocketts Cove and Shraders, Virginia. The arrival of the Pocahontas Fuel Company and the Norfolk and Western Railroad in 1930 meant a new, eight-room, brick structure was required to meet the educational needs of the bustling, new town of Bishop.

The commonly accepted tradition of the life style of people in such mining communities was examined to determine if Bishop conformed to the conventional interpretations of such mining-industrial communities. As the study evolved, the Bishop experience emerged more and more as an exemption to many of the mining-industrial town representations found in much of the literature. As a result, an extensive examination of primary source documents was made to ascertain the unique metamorphosis through which the story of the community of Bishop and its school unfolded.

The vast majority of the literature surrounding mining-industrial towns has concluded that the coal company maintained a virtual monopoly over the community and its institutions. Authors such as Harry Caudill, W. P. Tams

and, more recently, David Corbin saw outsider-controlled mining corporations as paternalistic exploiters who controlled most every aspect of the mountaineer miner's life. As a part of this patriarchal supervision, education became a tool that industrialists or company men used to solidify and preserve their socioeconomic order. These interpretations held that, in such mining camps, schools became less agents of change and more agents of maintaining the social structure's status quo. (Corbin, 1981)

The study of the society that evolved in the Bishop coal town shows that the schools and other institutions of the town were not totally divorced from such company influences. Any claim to neutrality within the schools of Bishop would be without substantiation. As critical theorists have observed, there is an increasing accumulation of evidence that supports the interpretation that schooling, itself, is not a neutral enterprise. (Apple, 1982)

Nevertheless, the distinctive characteristic of the Bishop School lies in its autonomy from direct control by the company or the industrial interests of the community.

Although the Bishop coal operators, much like those in other coalfield communities, were undoubtedly aware of the connection between a good school and a successful community, there is very little evidence that the Pocahontas Fuel Company or the Bishop Coal Company had significant direct

control on the community's school or, for that matter, the decisions of the Tazewell County School Board which operated the Bishop School.

For example, this study concluded that, at no time, during the history of this school, was either its curriculum, its regulations, or even its teachers' salaries different from the curriculum, the regulations or the teachers' salaries of the other schools in Tazewell County, Virginia. The vast majority of these Tazewell County schools were not, however, located in mining or industrial towns similar to Bishop.

In Bishop, a town grew up with roomier houses than most towns of comparable size; lower rent than most urban apartment complexes of the same era; clean water and readily-available electricity--commodities not available in many urban sprawls of that time. In addition to these advantages, Bishop even boasted both a first-rate school edifice and a school curriculum equal to, if not superior to, the non-mining areas of the same county. The tenets upon which the Bishop community were founded were not those of despair. Instead, the process imbedded in the institutions and discourses of the community of Bishop or, in other words, the hegemonic pattern (Giroux, 1981) of the Bishop citizenry, was one of either optimism or an enduring faith in the future. Such an outlook was often

uncharacteristic of the traditional role found by the researcher in many typical coal towns.

Based on the findings of this study, the miners and community members of Bishop were a proud and hardy people. They could and would openly criticize the boss, company rules or even the company itself. Government officials, even state and federal mine inspectors, were not immune to such criticism. The scenario of the oppressed, apathetic, or passive servants of the coal company does not unfold at Bishop. Significantly, neither does the totalitarian control of a mining community by the company men materialize. Instead, the patterns of control in Bishop are quite similar to those patterns found in other small towns of twentieth century America.

The Bishop school building, to this day, remains the first community institution one observes when entering the Bishop community. Located at the foot of the Stony Ridge Mountain and at the gateway to the coal town, the Bishop School had always held a place of importance both physically and figuratively within the Bishop community. The sturdy, brick structure which housed the Bishop community's school seems to further dictate the permanence and preeminence that education was expected to play in the lives of the citizens of Bishop. The future success of the Bishop graduates gives further evidence of a community which valued both education

and independence of thought within the confines of the mining-industrial based society deep within the mountains of Southwest Virginia. The primary importance of this study, for the author, was an examination of the Bishop community, its school, its teachers, its students and its family members. The perception of the typical coal camp and of its image proves to be very different from the reality of the model coal camp that thrived on the Virginia-West Virginia state line at Bishop.

Chapter 2

LIFE IN EARLY TAZEWELL COUNTY

Early History of the Region

The century preceding the 1880s and the development of the coalfields in the mountains of Southwest Virginia saw the region change very little. Farming communities dotted the landscape from Virginia and Carolina in the east to the rugged Appalachian Plateau of West Virginia and Kentucky to the west. In fact, due to the rich soil of the Clinch Valley region and an abundant amount of rainfall, bluegrass grew profusely in the valleys of Tazewell County. As a result of the steep terrain and this bounty of bluegrass, cattle farming became the dominant enterprise of many of this county's early settlers.

Many farms were organized early in the region's history, as the first pioneers established permanent residency in the mountains. These farms spread throughout the area during the decades that followed. The bulk of these early settlers in the southwestern region of Virginia were the rugged descendants of Scotch, Irish, and Welsh

immigrants. These early mountaineers made their way to Southwest Virginia via the Wilderness Road and other early trails which brought frontiersmen and frontierswomen down the Great Valley of Virginia and into the vast wilderness now known as Southwest Virginia. Many of these early settlers had lived for a generation or more in Pennsylvania, Maryland or eastern Virginia before moving to the west. These were the people who "eked out a meager existence" by farming, hunting, establishing cottage industry by hand sewing in the home and utilizing a largely barter economy. (Hibbard, 1990)

By the later part of the 1700s, many of the mountain regions of western Virginia were beginning to be permanently inhabited by these early pioneers. Much of the land was hilly or mountainous country with no public improvements and limited means of transportation. (Maury, 1876) As a result, the valleys of the section were among the most sought-after settlement territories. The New, Holston, Clinch and Powell Valleys were among the first regions of present-day southwestern Virginia to begin to grow in numbers.

As a result, in 1799, the residents in and around the rugged Clinch Valley petitioned the Virginia General Assembly for the formation of a new county. (Bickley, 1852) When the bill proposing the creation of the new county was

introduced by Russell County senator, Simon Cotterel, on December 18, 1799, it met with fierce opposition from Senator Henry Tazewell of Norfolk County. The following day, Senator Cotterel erased the proposed name and inserted the name "Tazewell." Senator Cotterel never divulged the proposed name of the new county, if indeed there was an actual name submitted prior to "Tazewell." The senator from Norfolk was silenced and the county had its name. (Bickley, 1852) As a result, the new county was officially created by act of the Virginia General Assembly on December 19, 1799 from portions of Wythe and Russell Counties. The county government of Tazewell was organized, as a result, on May 1, 1800, when the first court was held at the home of Henry Harman. ("Origin of Tazewell," 1934) The county which took Senator Tazewell's name grew slowly as it developed into a prosperous, yet remote, agricultural mountain society. (Hudson, 1952)

COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA

DEPARTMENT OF HIGHWAYS

AND TRANSPORTATION

TRAFFIC AND SAFETY DIVISION

COUNTY SEATS AND INDEPENDENT CITIES

SCALE OF MILES
0 5 10 20 30 40



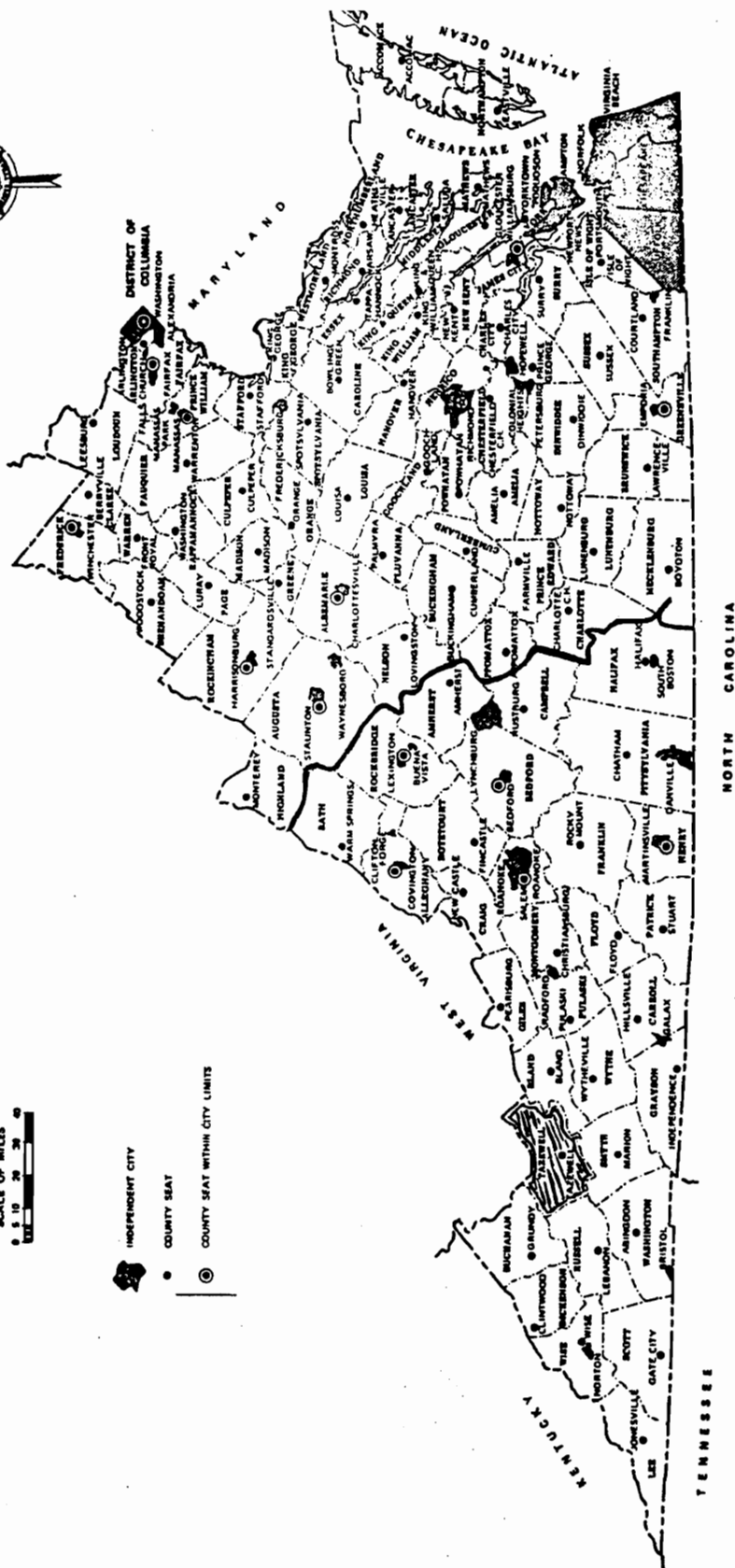
INDEPENDENT CITY



COUNTY SEAT



COUNTY SEAT WITHIN CITY LIMITS



Map of Virginia Showing Tazewell County.

The Discovery of Coal

Possibly, knowledge of coal's existence in the far western regions of present-day Virginia existed from colonial times. Thomas Jefferson wrote in 1785 in his Notes on Virginia that "coal is known to be in . . . many places between the Laurel Mountain and the Ohio." (Conley, 1960) These "coal lands" of which Jefferson wrote included the present-day counties of Tazewell, Buchanan, McDowell, Wyoming, and Mercer. ("Pocahontas: Still," 1988) The latter three counties were later included in the new state of West Virginia. Dr. Thomas Walker, who explored many of the western regions of Virginia, was present in 1750 at the current site of the town of Pocahontas and mentioned the great coal deposits in the region. (Pendleton, 1920) Another eighteenth century explorer, Andrew Lewis, of Greenbrier County, also noted the existence of coal in western Virginia. (Tams, 1963) Professor W. B. Rogers reported the existence of Virginia coal in his geological research during the 1830s and 1840s. ("Pocahontas No. 1", 1955) As early as 1852, George Bickley, when writing the first Tazewell County history, observed that "coal exists everywhere (in the county)." In fact, he observed that coal

"is found in great quantities." (Bickley, 1852)

Astonishingly, however, Tazewell had been settled for more than a hundred years before the tremendous importance of the coal reserves was even suspected. ("Tazewell County," 1950)

It was not, however, until 1866, nearly a century after the first exploration of the region, that Andy Stowers and Jordan Nelson, blacksmiths in the northernmost portion of the county, began to use pieces of coal that they found in their backyards to fire their blacksmith forges.

(Pocahontas Coalfield, 1983) According to local tradition, Jordan had set up his blacksmith forge in 1860, using charcoal as his fuel source. On one occasion, Jordan was burning some logs on top of a "big black rock" when he was amazed to see this "rock" being consumed by the fire. After that time, Jordan used coal to feed his fire. (Daughter, 1959) Jordan even built a grate so that he could heat his home with the black treasure. (McGehee, 1988) This discovery changed forever the fortunes of both Tazewell County and Southwest Virginia.

Although George Bickley, in the earliest published history of Tazewell County printed in 1852, referred to the potential importance of coal to the county (Bickley, 1852), it would not be until Jordan Nelson's use of coal in his backyard blacksmith forge during the 1870s (Leslie, 1982) that the county would be changed permanently.

Neighbors and friends of Jordan heard of the potential uses of his backyard coal. As a result, Nelson began selling the mineral to his neighbors who took lumps of coal home in their saddlebags. By 1870, Nelson was selling coal from his "coal bank" on the hill above his blacksmith shop for a penny a bushel. Eventually he built a substantial trade. ("Old Pocahontas," 1979) In fact, one day when a customer acquired an entire wagon load, Nelson's Aunt Bessie Thompson fumed. (Nelson, 1988) If this practice continued, she feared that there would not be enough coal to meet the needs of Nelson and his neighbors. Her concern was needless, however, since Nelson's outcropping was just the tip of the iceberg of one of the richest coalfields ever to be discovered. (McGehee, 1988)

Jed Hotchkiss and Captain I. A. Welch, who came to the area in 1873, discovered not only Nelson's thirteen-foot outcrop of coal in his backyard but also several other obvious strata of the black mineral in many other sections of the northern portion of the county. (Pocahontas Coalfield, 1983) These men and other entrepreneurs like them recognized the importance of the Tazewell County coalfield possibilities.

At this time, roads were virtually non-existent in the immediate area and the heavy growth of native shrubs and forests made the Nelson farm almost inaccessible.

Nevertheless, coal was carried more and more by horseback to patrons not only in other parts of Tazewell County but also to other nearby regions of Virginia and West Virginia. The black gold brought the exquisite price of one penny per bushel. (Hibbard, 1990)



Burl B. Maxie points to all that remains of Jordan Nelson's original 13 foot opening on a hillside near Pocahontas, Virginia. Date of photograph, August 16, 1955.

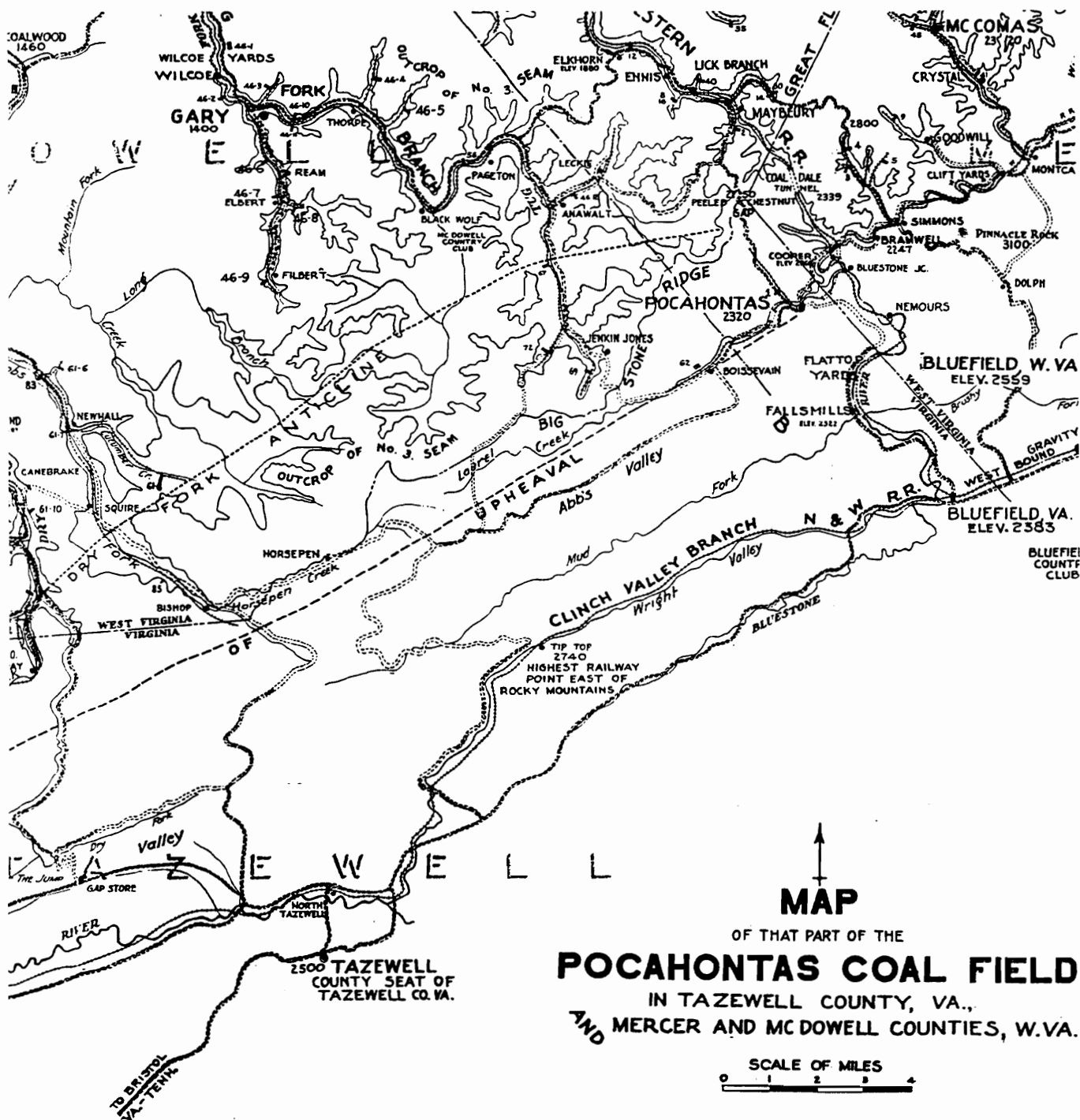
Courtesy of Grubb Photo Service.

Marketing the Pocahontas Coal

The early entrepreneurs Hotchkiss, Kimball and Welch knew it would take much capital and labor to develop a coal mine and to get the coal to market outside Southwest Virginia. Trying to interest northern investors was difficult but the Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia in 1876 gave Hotchkiss the opportunity to attract attention to the new discovery. (Jones, 1983) The investment made at the Centennial Exposition resulted in the investment of millions of dollars within the boundaries of the Southern Appalachian coalfields. (Corbin, 1990) Hotchkiss also published a magazine called The Virginias which promoted the possibilities of the southern West Virginia and southwestern Virginia coalfields. In addition, he lectured throughout the northern states including New York, Boston and Philadelphia. (Tams, 1963) Hotchkiss sent samples of the Pocahontas coal to Colonel Thomas Graham of Philadelphia who exhibited the coal at the exposition and who, as a result, sent his son, John Graham, into Tazewell County to investigate the new find. When John Graham visited Jordan Nelson and his coal outcropping, the younger Graham was chief engineer for the New River Railroad which was to

extend from Radford, Virginia to Hinton, West Virginia. Samples of the coal were sent for analysis and, as expected, were shown to be of superior quality. (Jones, 1983)

Graham was able to convince a group of Philadelphia entrepreneurs of the possible profits buried deep within the mountains of southwestern Virginia. With the support of this northern capital, the Norfolk and Western Railroad Company and its subsidiary, the Southwest Virginia Improvement Company, bought up options on 100,000 acres of choice coal land throughout the two-state region. The Southwest Virginia Improvement Company was, therefore, officially chartered on March 9, 1880 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Philadelphia attorney Joseph Doran, of the Southwest Virginia Improvement Company, bought 406 acres from Jordan Nelson for \$1,932 and mineral rights to an additional 500 acres for \$4,000. (Tazewell County Deed Book 18, Page 93) Doran's Southwest Virginia Improvement Company became the first company to mine the coal found around Pocahontas. (Brooks, 1977) Twenty miners arrived and small scale mining began commercially with the first coal shipped to areas outside of the region by the early 1880s. (Herrin, 1991)



Map of the Pocahontas Coalfields Surrounding the Bishop Community. Prepared for the Pocahontas Operators Association, Bluefield, West Virginia. Revised 1931.

Nelson's future was not as happy as that of industrialists like Kimball and Welch. These two men became wealthy coal barons as a result of their bargain with Jordan. (McGehee, 1988) Nelson finally disposed of these rather extensive land holdings for \$3.00 per acre. (Daughters, 1959) Soon, thereafter, he saw his small fortune stolen. After that event, he could do nothing but watch the rapid development of the area that he, at one time, had owned.

Within ten years, the population of the region had increased tenfold. (McGehee, 1988) With towns popping up everywhere, the region was being forever changed. Today a West Virginia historical marker stands one-third mile from the Virginia state line as a tribute to Jordan Nelson. That marker reads

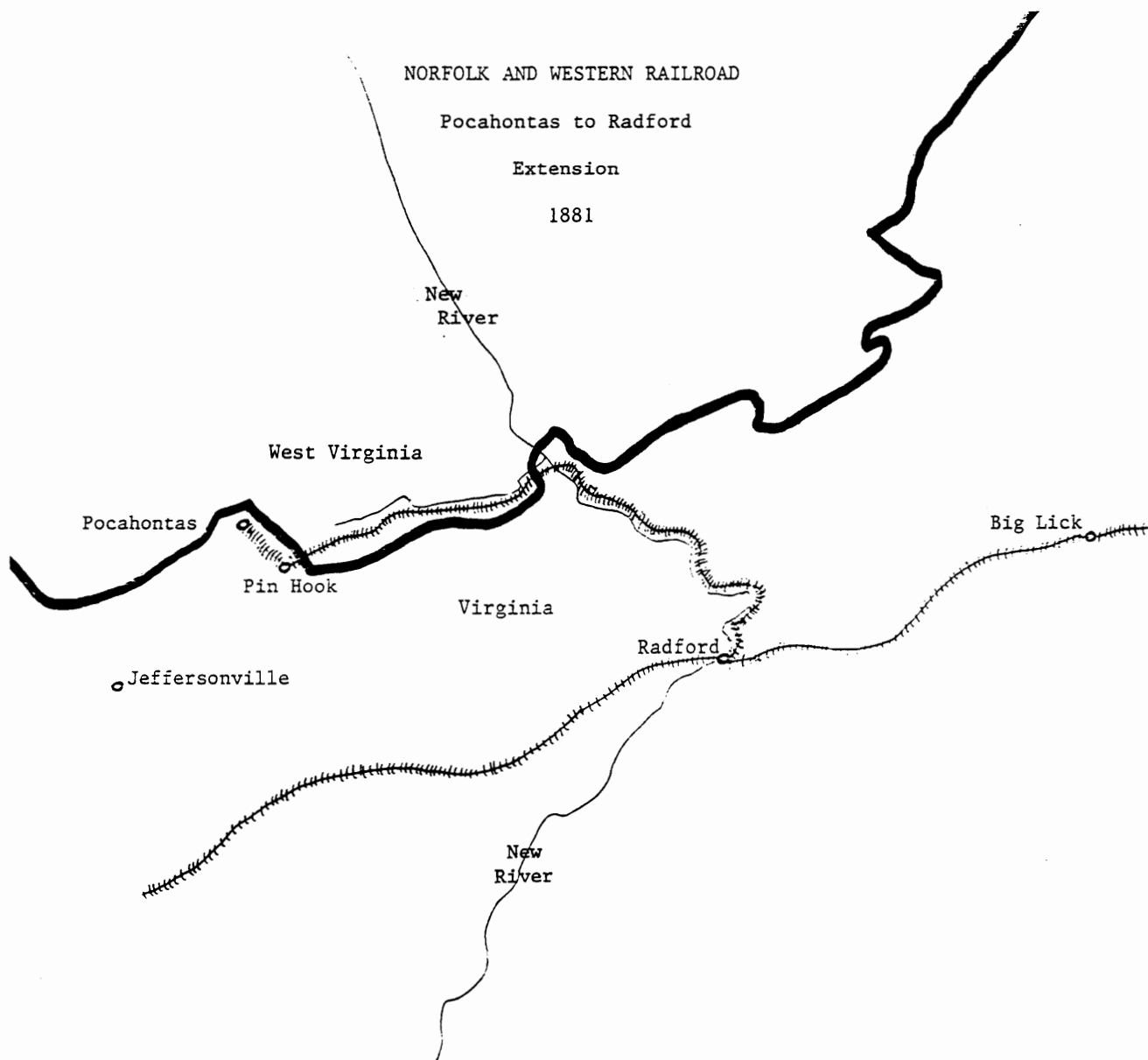
Jordan Nelson, blacksmith, dug coal from bank to fuel forge, and made first commercial use of selling for one cent a bushel in 1870s. In 1873, I. A. Welch surveyed Pocahontas Coalfield for J. Hotchkiss who induced F. J. Kimball, later President of N. & W. RR, to visit site. May 1881, South West Virginia Improvement Company bought land and opened Pocahontas mine and shipped coal over N. & W.'s New River Line Built to open coalfield.

TIME LINE

1800	---	1799	Tazewell County Established
	---	1830	Northern County Sparsely Settled
1850	---	1852	Crocketts Cove First Settled
	---	1888	One-Room Crocketts Cove School Built
1900	---	1917	Two-Room Crocketts Cove School Built
	---	1932	Eight-Room Brick Bishop School Built
	---	1934	Bishop (WV) One-Room School Opened
	---	1947	Coal Production Peaked in 1950
	---	1960	Bishop Designated Largest Employer
	---	1965	Bishop (WV) Negro School Closed
	---	1982	The Bishop Mine Closed
	---	1987	The Bishop Elementary School Closed
2000			

The Coming of The Railroad

In 1852, when Bickley first wrote of coal in Tazewell County, his ultimate question was "When shall we have an outlet for this coal?" (Bickley, 1852) With the small scale mines in operation by the 1880s, Bickley's question was begging a response. The recently organized Norfolk and Western Railroad Company answered in 1881 by proposing that a branch of the railroad be built from Radford to Pocahontas. (Leslie, 1982) After surveys were completed, the Norfolk and Western Railroad began construction of the Radford to Pocahontas line on August 3, 1881. The construction of the railroad down the New River, up the East River, and across Stony Ridge was both difficult and expensive. (Pendleton, 1920)



Map of Norfolk and Western Railroad, Radford to Pocahontas
Extension, 1881.

Nevertheless, with the arrival of the railroad in 1883, coal mining became a very profitable enterprise throughout the region. The first coal was shipped from the region in March of 1883 with the first car used as fuel for the train. The second car was conveyed to William Lamb, the mayor of Norfolk, Virginia, by F. J. Kimball, who became president of the Norfolk and Western Railroad that same month. (Leslie, 1982) The mayor disbursed the Pocahontas coal to the citizens of his city in an attempt to convince them that Pocahontas coal was far superior to the anthracite to which the citizens of Norfolk had grown accustomed. ("Tazewell County," 1950) As a result, many new towns or coal camps grew up throughout the region including the site of Nelson's forge and perhaps the most famous coal camp in Tazewell County and the ultimate destination for this rail line, Pocahontas.

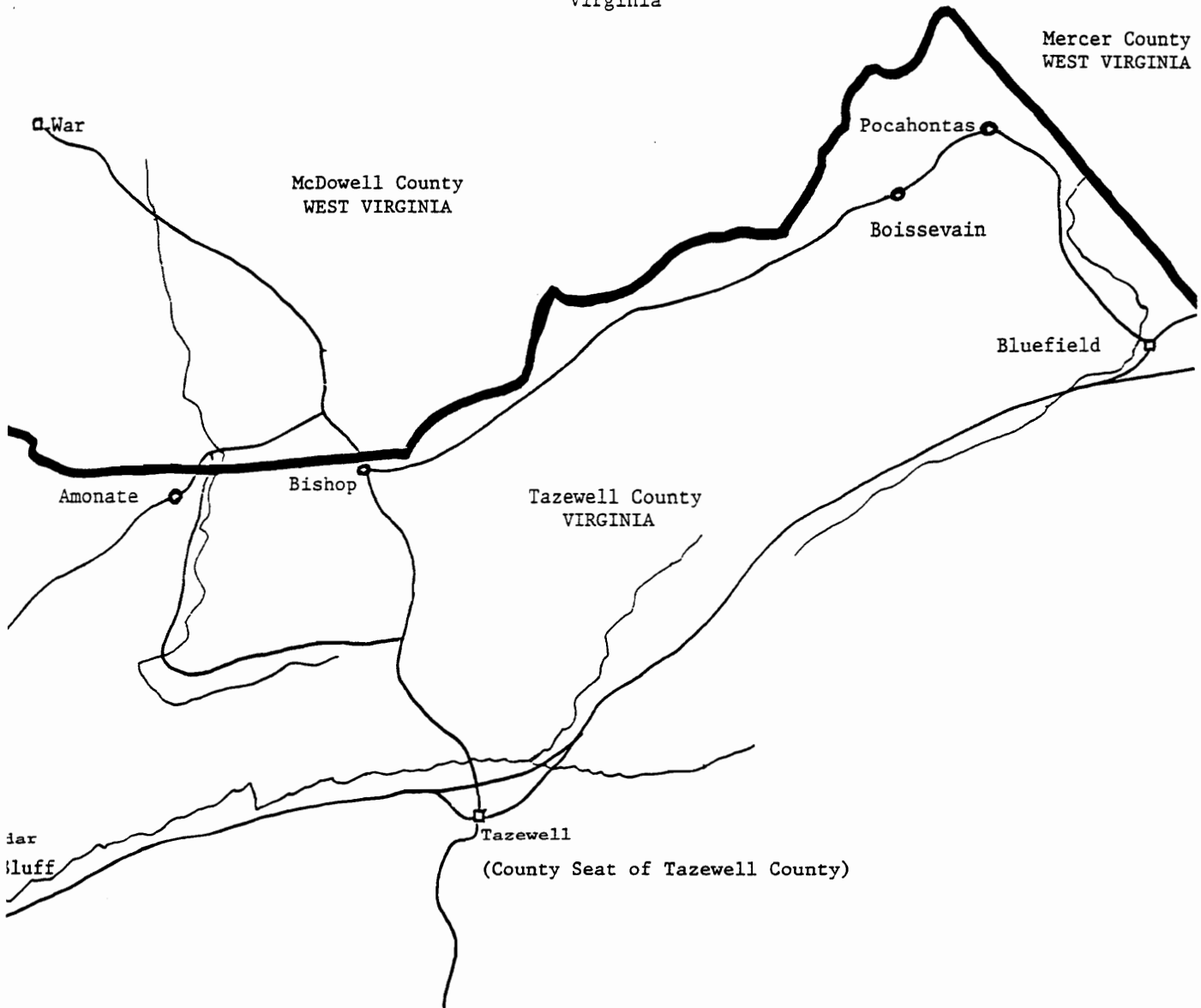


Coal Car Going to the Mayor of Norfolk, Centennial
Observance at Pocahontas, Virginia on March 12, 1983.

Courtesy of Grubb Photo Service.

Other company towns that flourished during this era in Tazewell County included Boissevain, Jewell Ridge, and Amonate. In addition, prosperity spilled over into the county seat at Jeffersonville--known as Tazewell after 1892--and to the rail hub at Graham--known as Bluefield, Virginia after 1923--which was advertised as a new city which would be unparalleled in the south for reaching the extensive markets of the coalfields. ("Graham," 1891) The real railway hub soon developed at the site of what would become Bluefield, West Virginia, located in Mercer County, West Virginia, just across the state line from Graham, Virginia. Tazewell County's already famous agricultural products found new markets in the coalfield towns. Cattle, lambs, hogs, and poultry were all products for which the county was gaining a reputation. Vegetables such as corn, beans, and tomatoes also graced the shelves of almost every coal company store.

POCAHONTAS FUEL COMPANY TOWNS
in
Virginia



Map of Pocahontas Fuel Company Towns in Virginia and
Neighboring Communities.

In addition, the towns of Bluefield and Pocahontas, serving the coalfields and boasting populations of several thousand persons each, became busy centers of commerce. (Pendleton, 1920) During the decade of the 1880s, the region saw a boom which locally equalled the California Gold Rush of several decades earlier. (Bates, 1950) The local newspaper lauded the Southwest Virginia Development Company for turning what had been uninhabited wilderness into a thriving industrial center. ("Southern Coal," 1898) Coal brought the railroad and the railroad brought economic development. ("Tazewell County," 1950)

As an illustration of the important role of the railroad in the development of the coalfields, the rapid increase in passenger rail service into McDowell County must be examined. For example, during the first year that the railroad served the McDowell County seat at Welch, only 193 passengers arrived. During the second year of the railroad's intrusion into McDowell County, 1892, a total of 15,045 paying customers arrived. Welch, the McDowell County seat, a few months before lost in the wilderness of the Southern Appalachians, now found itself only a day's journey from New York City. (Daughters, 1959) The isolated mountain people would never again be quite so isolated. (Greever, 1994)

COAL AND COKE TRADE

**Steady Activity and Briskness in the
Pocahontas Field.**

**Invention to Transfer Soft Coal to Su-
perior Quality of Hard.**

The steady activity and briskness which characterize the coal and coal trade of this section at this time are most gratifying to all classes. The long trains heavily laden with "black diamonds" which go out hourly from our region on their journey to far distant markets offer very excellent evidence of the steady work being done throughout the coal field, and the steady and steadily increasing demands for Pocahontas coal and coke prove that its high standard does not waver nor change.

The large number of coke ovens now burning in this field give evidence of a healthy state of trade and a brisk market, which ensure benefits and emoluments by no means trifling to our whole section and to all classes of our people.

Each year bringing the hidden treasures of our mountains more and more to light, advertises their excellencies to the world and wins for them broader markets. Even casual observers cannot fail to be conscious of this or to note that the past year has proved a strong confirmation of this rule. The activity and life of business interests throughout this region attest its truth.

The interests of capital and labor are indissolubly linked here, and by means of the united strength of these mighty forces a wonderful future may be molded for our rugged region.

The very great progress and the wonderful development of the Pocahontas Flat-Top coal field in the past few years are but earnest of the results of the coming years; and we trust, and believe, that the coming year may prove an era of unparalleled progress and prosperity for this entire section.

The coal trade is excellent. There is much activity in mining and shipping, and many of the operations are making improvements in preparation of a larger business.

The Bluefield Daily Telegraph, December 31, 1897.

As new coal camps were born, houses were constructed; schools and churches were established; and immigrants from the deep south and from far away European nations such as Hungary, Austria, Poland and neighboring countries made their way to jobs in the coalfields of Southwest Virginia and Southern West Virginia. The rise of the smokeless coal industry totally changed the face of the southern Appalachian region. (Thomas, 1972) Faced with a hopeless situation where they lived, many of these people came to a region they knew little about and assumed a trade--coal mining--about which they knew even less. (Corbin, 1981)

Life in these coalfield towns was tough. Nevertheless, the promise of a job, a better life and a brighter future for the miner and his family attracted hundreds of new residents to the coalfield communities. Many of these newcomers to Bishop were from neighboring coal camps. Often these immigrants were second or third generation Americans. Others, particularly the black immigrants, were from the deep South. Large numbers of Afro-Americans abandoned southern life and labor for work in the coalfields of Southern West Virginia. (Trotter, 1991) Thus laborers were in high demand in the coalfields. Also, disastrous consequences of the boll weevil and devastating storms on southern farms led hundreds of black sharecroppers from the south to seek new opportunities in the Pocahontas

Coalfields. (Trotter, 1990)

All of these immigrants were attracted by the promise of a steady job and a regular income. For example, Alonzo Lambright migrated from South Carolina to Bishop in search of a better life in the coalfields. Lambright stated that many of the other black residents of Bishop came from the same region at about the time he arrived and for several years thereafter. (Alonzo Lambright, personal communication, February 26, 1995)

This attraction to the coalfields is evident through an examination of the increased coal production in McDowell County, West Virginia. In 1889, that county produced 246,000 tons of coal per year. The Bluefield Daily Telegraph, in a very optimistic article published in 1897, observed that the great progress and "wonderful" development of the Pocahontas coalfield in the past few years will bring unparalleled progress and prosperity for the entire region. ("Coal and Coke," 1897) Pocahontas coal, both at home and abroad, was standing at the head of American coal even with prices higher than any of its competitors. The Pocahontas coal sold out first because of the premium quality of the product. ("Success Achieved," 1898)

The increased production is evidenced by the McDowell County output which had increased to 3,500,000 tons by 1889. By 1910, the production in the same county totaled

12,000,000 tons annually. (Corbin, 1981) In Virginia, total output of coal by 1910 was more than 6,500,000 tons, the highest output on record for the Old Dominion. Most of the Virginia production came from the Pocahontas Coalfields and, in particular, Tazewell County. ("Largest Coal," 1911) As a result, jobs were becoming plentiful throughout the Pocahontas coalfields. The boom which ensued gave Tazewell County several thriving communities where, just a few years before, only one or two houses had stood. ("Tazewell County," 1950)

Local Reaction to the Development of the Coalfields

The native farmers of such coal town regions had mixed feelings about both the mining of coal and the changes such mining brought to their region. (Lantz, 1958) The roads of such communities were unimproved. In 1911, one local newspaper editor even observed that the roads in and out of Crocketts Cove were as they were several hundred years ago. ("Good Folks," 1911) As roads connected the new coal camps, communities such as Crocketts Cove watched curiously as neighboring towns were born. As a result, mixed emotions were common in Crocketts Cove concerning the transformation that was taking shape all around the modest farming village

located near the McDowell County, West Virginia line.

GOOD FOLKS IN CROCKETT'S COVE

A Mountainous, Rough Section That Needs Improved Roads Badly

I was playing a new role on Wednesday. In company with A. J. May, Thomas Hinkins, Jr., Crockett, Jos. P. Harman and J. R. Gildersleeve, Jr., he was ordered by the authorities to view a proposed location of a road in Crockett's Cove and pass on various and sundry questions involved, such as damages, etc. The experience was new, the country was new, everything was new, except the roads we traveled over. They are the same as they were several hundred years ago perhaps, only a little more so. After making this trip over roads and hills a fellow feels like saying, "I'll go back there, no never," but after meeting so many good folks and receiving such kind treatment one feels better toward the roads. I am not at all sorry that I made the trip. I saw territory I had never seen, and which I hope to see again, when the roads are better. On the way I saw Tom May, as handsome and genial as ever, at his store at Adria, where he is doing a good business, and deservedly popular.

PRODUCTION OF COAL IN THE McDOWELL COUNTY COALFIELDS

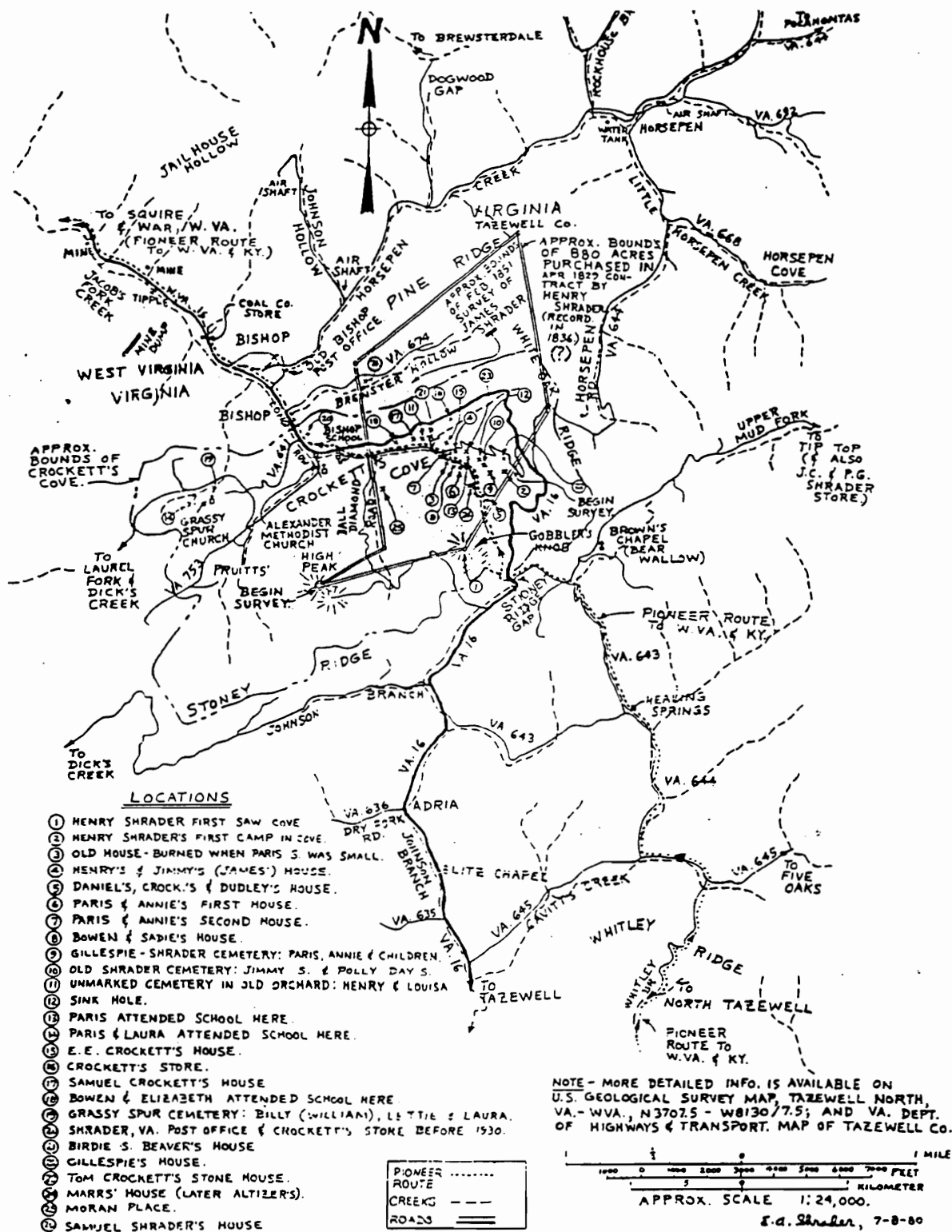
1890	564,729 Tons
1900	4,639,154 Tons
1910	13,651,904 Tons
1920	17,715,824 Tons
1930	20,788,333 Tons
1947*	26,542,937 Tons
1960	14,802,004 Tons

*1947 was the peak year of production in McDowell County including Bishop.

(Tams, 1963)

The Crocketts Cove Community

While many new coal camps were being born throughout the coalfield region, other older, more established communities continued their quiet existence as small, agrarian-based villages of only a handful of residents. Although the railroad brought industry to Tazewell County, a unique mountain civilization had already existed for decades. One such community, Shraders or Crocketts Cove, traced its history back to 1852 when Samuel P. Crockett together with his wife, children and slaves moved to Crocketts Cove, a valley situated in the north central section of Tazewell County, Virginia. The upper part of the valley was bought by Henry Shrader in 1861. ("Bishop Was Built," 1950) Shraders and Crocketts Cove grew only sporadically during the next several decades as farming communities serving nearby towns and market places. In fact, the nearest market was Jeffersonville, later Tazewell, which was only a few miles away. The trip was, nevertheless, a rugged one-to-two-day journey either by foot or on horseback, because the road needed for a wagon to make the trip did not exist. (Daughters, 1959)



Map of Crockett's Cove Area from Thomas J. Crockett Collection.

Many farmers in communities such as Crocketts Cove benefited economically from the development of neighboring coal camps throughout the region. For example, The Clinch Valley News ran an advertisement seeking butter, eggs, beans, poultry, meat and grain from already existent local farms to stock the new coal company stores owned by the Southwest Virginia Improvement Company in 1886. Nevertheless, many people in this region were left basically unaffected by the coal industry's arrival for decades following the construction of the first mine at Pocahontas. In fact, there were many parts of Southwest Virginia that were left relatively untouched for years by any major type of economic enterprise. (Herrin, 1991) Many mountain people were content to continue the lifestyle of their ancestors. As a result, small-scale farming continued to be the mainstay of many sections of Tazewell County and Southwest Virginia during the latter part of the 1800s and into the early 1900s.



S. J. Crockett Home at Shraders in October of 1918--
Representative of Homes in the Crocketts Cove Vicinity
During the Early Century.

Courtesy of Winifred Crockett and the Tazewell County
Historical Society.

Chapter 3

EDUCATION IN EARLY VIRGINIA

Rural Education in the Commonwealth

Although Thomas Jefferson, as an early governor of Virginia, had held that public education was essential to the success of democracy, his 1779 bill for a More General Diffusion of Knowledge was not uniformly adopted in the state for several decades. (Monroe, 1940) Jefferson's plan for a vertical state system of education created elementary schools, secondary schools, colleges and, at the top, a state university. All white boys and girls would attend elementary school for three years--schools supported by local taxation. The most able male students could then continue free public education at the secondary level. Looking back at his plan from the vantage point of 1816, Jefferson observed that localities controlled by property owners saw the plan to educate the masses as an attempt to educate the poor at the expense of the rich. Jefferson did not live to see his plan at work.

Other efforts were made to create a public school

system in Virginia during the nineteenth century. As public education was taking hold in other parts of the nation, a special subsidy known as the Literary Fund was created in Virginia. This fund was established to support public education in 1810. Income for this fund came from fines, forfeitures or other penalties. The funds were designated for distribution among the counties based upon the number of school age children living in the county. (Acts, 1811)

Early Tazewell County Education

Nevertheless, as late as 1829, private tutorial instruction appeared to be the only formal education available in Tazewell County. The standard "school" of western Virginia involved the frontiersman "hiring" a teacher who taught all the young people for an undetermined school term. (Callahan, History, 1913) For example, a memorandum of agreement was entered into between James L. Pendleton on the one part and several citizens of Tazewell County's seat, Jeffersonville, including John Crockett, James Witten, James Peery, Hugh Tiffany, James Cecil, William Whitman and others listed as subscribers on the other part.

According to this agreement, Pendleton was "to use his

best exertions to improve all youths placed to his care." In return, each of the subscribers agreed to pay Pendleton the sum of \$9.00 per student per month. In addition, one additional dollar would be paid for grammar, history and geography instruction with the use of maps. This practice was a continuation of practices of the earliest American settlers who envisioned that the most important agency in the transfer of culture was the family. (Cremin, 1961)

Memorandum of Agreement made and entered into this day of November 1829. Between James L. Pendleton of the one part and the undersigned subscribers of the other part: Witnesseth that the said Pendleton on his part proposes to conduct a school in the town of Jeffersonville for the term of a year in which he will teach the branches most usually to be taught in English schools, and promises to use his best exertions to improve all youths placed to his care for which the undersigned subscribers agree to pay the said Pendleton the sum of \$9 per scholar each in the minor branches, and the additional sum of one dollar for Grammar and Geography (with the use of maps) and History and also to defray a proportionable part of the contingent expenses for wood &c. Witness our hands &c.

James L. Pendleton

Thomas P.	2 28 00
John C. Williams	1 9 00
John Crockett	3 32 00
John Wynn	1 9 00
James Miller (Carp. an)	1 9 00
John Wynn	2 20
James Pary	3 27 00
Lane Shannon	2 50
James Harrison	2 28 00
David Peery -	
Hugh Tiffany	2 18 00
Saml Cecil -	3 27 00
J. R. Rogers	1 2 25
W. W. Whitman	1 10 00

Witnessed as guardian to
Henry P. George Children 1/2 1350
and one for myself - 1 10 00
W. W. Whitman

Memorandum of Agreement made and entered into this day of November 1829 Between James L. Pendleton of the one part and the undersigned subscribers of the other part Witnesseth that the said Pendleton on his part proposes to use his best exertions to improve all youths placed to his care for which the undersigned subscribers agree to pay the said Pendleton the sum of \$9 per scholar each in the minor branches, and the additional sum of one dollar for Grammar and Geography (with the use of maps) and History and also to defray a proportionable part of the contingent expenses for wood and ect. Witness our hand

James L. Pendleton

Copy of Agreement to Pay School Tuition Signed by James L. Pendleton From the Personal Collection of James Russell Barnes, III, Atlanta, Georgia and the Tazewell County Historical Society.

Few accounts of Tazewell County funds directed toward education during this pre-Civil War period are available. One such report appears in the Gazetteer of Tazewell County produced in 1830. According to that document, Tazewell County paid out a total of \$184.23 that year for the education of the "poor." ("County History," 1931) No further explanation or discussion of early Tazewell County education has been discovered. In the Virginia constitutional convention of 1829-1830, resolutions from western Virginians supporting public education in the Commonwealth were vigorously opposed by most eastern Virginians. These easterners feared that "the people of eastern Virginia would be forced to pay for the education of the children of the west." (Callahan, Semi-Centennial, 1913, p. 229)

A couple of decades later, George Bickley observed in his History of the Settlement and Indian Wars of Tazewell County, Virginia, published in 1852, that the county was deficient in the education of the children of her citizens. (Bickley, 1852) In fact, according to the Tazewell County census of 1850, 1,490 persons out of a total population of 3,317 over the age of twenty-one were unable to read and write. The illiteracy rate in this Tazewell County, which included present-day Buchanan and McDowell Counties, was

45%. Bickley, therefore, admonished all "intelligent members of the community who have tasted the blessings of an education . . . to use their influence for the improvement of our schools and the increase of the intelligence of our citizens." Only fifteen schools existed in the county in 1852. Each of these institutions was a one-room school. "Better suited for barns than for seats of learning," Bickley commented. (Bickley, 1852) Public funding for education was labeled by most Virginians including many in Tazewell County as a form of charity (Hankins, 1970) until well after the Civil War era. There was a great hesitation by most rural Virginians to admit the benefits of free public education.

The Underwood Constitution and Its Impact

A public school system similar to that proposed by Thomas Jefferson was finally included in the Virginia Constitution which was adopted in 1870. That document known as the Underwood Constitution was adopted as a part of the Reconstruction Era of Virginia history. Also, at that time, Virginia's first Superintendent of Public Instruction, William H. Ruffner, was mandated to get the state's public school system inaugurated. Despite much opposition, Ruffner

set out to do just that. Dr. Ruffner submitted to the General Assembly a detailed, written plan for the new state school system. His plan included a uniform system of free public schools, a state board of education, state and county superintendents of schools, and district school trustees. The duties and responsibilities of each official body and officer were spelled out. (Morton, 1924) Ruffner's efforts proved quite successful as evidenced by changes that began to occur even in remote sections of the Commonwealth such as Tazewell County.

In Southwestern Virginia, the recovery from Civil War and Reconstruction was actually hastened by the new free public schools. Finally, public schools were acknowledged as a valuable asset for the county rather than simply a burden for the taxpayers. (Pendleton, 1920) In fact, the Virginia Constitution of 1870 set up a universal free public school system for the state (Ward, 1950) and by November 1870, public schools were open in every county in the state. At the close of that first year, 130,000 students were attending 2,900 schools with 3,000 teachers. Virginia public schools were finally a reality. (Pearson, 1976) By the end of the first decade of Ruffner's tenure, enrollment had jumped to 220,730 students and, by 1900, the state's enrollment in public schools was 370,595. (Pearson, 1976)

The first high school in Tazewell County was established in October 1872, as a direct result of the Underwood Constitution. Tazewell High School was established that year with three graduates in the class of 1879 and five graduates in the class of 1880. (Hankins, 1970) The term for this early Tazewell High School was five months with the average teacher's salary set at about \$20.00 per month. (Ward, 1950) As a result of the same constitution, the office of superintendent of schools was established along with the free school system in Tazewell County in 1873. (Brewster, 1989) The Rev. Jonathan Lyons, the pastor of the Presbyterian Church in Jeffersonville, became the first superintendent of Tazewell County's schools. (For a complete list of the men who have served as Superintendents of Tazewell County Public Schools, see Appendix I.) The tie between church and education in many communities of this era was also present in Tazewell County. It was not unusual for the community's clergy to be among the best educated of its citizens. Thus it was logical that these clergy became the first school board members. The original school board consisted of seven members, W. W. Peery, A. J. May, Isaac E. Chapman, George W. Gillespie, Zachariah S. Witten, A. J. Tynes and Jonathan Lyons.

Following the turn of the century, newly appointed State Superintendent of Schools James W. Southall seized the

opportunity both to improve rural schools and to increase both local and state financial support for education through a new constitution written in 1902. The disillusionment that had followed the Civil War in Virginia had, by now, been replaced with a genuine interest in education. As a result, the new state constitution gave a mandate for public schooling in Virginia by providing that "the General Assembly of Virginia shall establish and maintain an efficient system of public free schools throughout the state." During Southall's term as state superintendent, great strides were made toward improvement in public education in Virginia as a whole.

The Hart Administration's Influence on the Local Level

Local school boards were empowered to carry out the mandate for improved public education. Goals were set for the state which included the provision of nine months of schooling, the acquisition of well-trained teachers and even the location of high schools within a reasonable automobile commute of every student. State teachers colleges were established at Radford and Harrisonburg and a State Board of Examiners was established to certificate teachers. In 1918, Harris H. Hart was elected State

Superintendent of Schools. Dr. Hart identified and tackled many problems which public schools have faced in the twentieth century. Among his objectives were the abolition of the district system of schools, the enactment of statewide compulsory attendance laws, and the provision for free textbooks. The county unit provision of Hart's proposal eradicated wide discrepancies in some counties, in favor of a more uniform plan. In 1919, the State Board of Education made a major revision in teachers' certification practice in Virginia by replacing twenty-eight types of certificates with seven new classifications intended to both raise and revise teacher certification standards. Those seven classifications were collegiate professional, collegiate, special (for high school subjects), normal professional (for junior high school and elementary subjects), elementary, first grade and second grade. By 1931, these seven categories had been further reduced to just three--collegiate professional, collegiate, and normal, with all holders required to earn a collegiate professional certificate within four years.

Many of Hart's initiatives were apparently accomplished during his tenure. For example, The Clinch Valley News announced in its August 18, 1925 edition, that schooling would be compulsory that year for all students between the ages of 8 and 14. The new law applied to all students who

lived either within a two-mile walk from the school or within a one mile walk of bus transportation. ("Three New," 1925) Less than a month later, Superintendent Harris addressed the teachers of Tazewell County meeting at Graham. There he warned that, if the work teachers were doing in the schools did not make better citizens, the government's money was not well spent and was actually a poor investment on the part of the nation. ("God Needed," 1925)

Later in the 1920s, Superintendent Hart again addressed another group of interested citizens in Tazewell County. At this August 24, 1928 meeting, Superintendent Hart spoke at the weekly gathering of the Tazewell Rotary Club. During that address, Hart spoke to the needs of education, not only on the state-level but also in Tazewell County, in particular. He spoke of the need for new facilities in the county seat and also in the outlying areas of the county such as Crocketts Cove.

The First Crocketts Cove School

Coinciding with these efforts to improve the state of education in Virginia, the Tazewell County School Board attempted to expand its efforts to serve all areas of the county. As a result, many one-room schools were built in

communities throughout the mountainous region. (For a view of the floor plan of such one-room schools, see Appendix H.) By the 1880s, most mountain schools such as Crocketts Cove were in session for five months from August until December. (Smith, 1988)

As a result, in 1888, Tazewell County established a small school in the Shraders community. (Tazewell County Deed Book 23, Page 536) This one-room school was located just south of Shraders in the valley known as Crocketts Cove. The small frame school facility was built not too far from the location of the first post office which also served the community. The name of this post office community was Shraders, Virginia. (For a list of the teachers at this school, see Appendix B.)



Post Office at Shraders, Virginia.

Courtesy of T. J. Crockett and the Tazewell County
Historical Society.

The door for the first school building in this community was in the center of the front of the structure. Large windows graced each side of the classroom. The back of the room was windowless and a large coal stove filled the center of the room. The schoolyard consisted of a small stream which ran through a playground which featured patches of clay and trampled grass when school was in session. The school sat beside the winding country road which made its way up Stony Ridge Mountain from Crocketts Cove. Not only did this small edifice serve as the educational center of the community, it also served as the social and cultural center as well. It was one of the few institutions that rural people came in contact with every day. (Tyack, 1974)



Photograph of Crocketts Cove One-Room School Built in 1888.
Photograph by the Author.

The school at Crocketts Cove, one result of the support for education locally, was typical of the one-room school houses scattered across much of the country in the early part of the twentieth century. The deed for this property, which was conveyed from T. G. Crockett and W. S. Crockett, his wife, to the Jeffersonville School District, was recorded in the Tazewell County Clerk's Office on March 31, 1888. (Tazewell County Deed Book 23, Page 536)

Another testimony to new interest in the success of education locally was the reduction in the illiteracy rates in the county. From a 45% illiteracy rate in 1850, the illiteracy rate in Tazewell County had dropped to only one per cent by the time the one-room school had been located in Crocketts Cove for thirty years in 1917. (Pendleton, 1920) A listing of the textbooks used at this school was published in the local newspaper prior to the beginning of the 1912-1913 school year. The school books listed were to be used in all Tazewell County Grade Schools including Crocketts Cove. ("Public Schools," 1912)

PUBLIC SCHOOLS OPEN MONDAY

"Tariff on Hides" Will Then be
Effective—List of Books to
Be Used:

The public schools of the county will open Monday. The indications are that the attendance this year will be much larger than last. The following is the list of the school books and prices that are to be used in the county this year:

Books For Elementary Grades

Chandler & C. Amer. Hist.	40
Colaw & E. Primary Arith.	24
Colaw & E. Inter. Arith.	24
Colaw & E. Advanced Arith.	44
Conn's Intro. Phy. & Hyg.	40
Duggar's Agriculture	60
Fry's 1st Course In Geog.	40
Frye's Higher Geography.	88
Graded Classics Book I Clo.	20
Graded Classics Book II Clo.	27
Graded Classics Book III Clo.	32
Graded Classics Book IV Clo.	36
Graded Classics Book V Clo.	35
Haaren's New Writ. Book I.	5
Haaren's New Writ. Book II.	5
Haaren's New Writ. Book III.	5
Haaren's New Writ. Book IV.	5
Haaren's New Writ. Book V.	5
Haaren's New Writ. Book VI.	5
Haliburton's Plinymates Clo.	18
Hodge's Two Book Cr. Eng. I Clo.	26
Hodge's Two Book Cr. Eng. II Clo.	46
Lee's New Sch. Hist. U. S.	65
Magill's 1st Virginia History.	45
Magill's History of Virginia, clo.	65
McBane's How We Are Governed.	55
Richie's Human Physiology.	60
Sheppe Word Studies Primary.	18
Sheppe Word Studies Advanced.	13
Sheppe Word Studies Complete.	20
Simmon's Guide Right.	25
Stepping-Stones 1st Reader.	20
Stepping-Stones 2nd Reader.	25
Stepping-Stones 3rd Reader.	30
Thomas Spelling Blanks.	05
Webster's Primary Dictionary.	44
Wide Awake Primer.	88
Webb & W. Prac. Dr. I.	14
" " II.	14
" " III.	14
" " IV.	14
" " V.	18
" " VI.	18
" " VII.	18
" " VIII.	18

The Clinch Valley News, August 30, 1912.

The Clinch Valley News announced in a article in the January 1, 1916 edition of the local Tazewell County newspaper that the school at Shraders (Crocketts Cove) gave an interesting Christmas entertainment to the community just before the holiday. The school's success was attributed to the excellent work of one of the early teachers at Crocketts Cove, a Miss Hayden. ("Christmas Tree," 1916) Another of the early teachers at this school, Nina Waltman Crockett, taught in the Crocketts Cove/Shraders school facility during the 1916-1917 school year. She gave up teaching, as was the custom for female teachers of that era, when she married. (Crockett, personal communication, January 25, 1995)

Another teacher who taught in a similar one-room school in Bear Wallow in the western end of Tazewell County noted in her own farewell address in January 1911 that the enrollment at her school had reached 52. Luckily, she noted, they all never managed to find the school the same day. Nevertheless, she observed, there was a certain "reluctance in leaving the pleasant haunts of this mountain resort." (Leslie, 1982)

This one-room school was located about one-half mile east of the present community of Bishop in the valley of Crocketts Cove. The building remains standing today and is owned by Delphia Rasnake. Her father, William Rasnake,

purchased the building from the county in 1935 and converted it into a private residence for many years. (Della Saunders, personal communication, March 28, 1995)

This school consisted of one large room with a large pot-bellied stove for heat. For many years, the building served the needs of the small community well. In one room, as many as 40 students in Grades 1-7 were taught by one teacher. Bowen Shrader lived on a farm owned by his family, descendants of the original Shraders in the community, in the early part of the twentieth century. He recalls starting school at the age of six in 1914. "You can imagine," Shrader noted, "how difficult it was for one teacher to teach seven grades in one-room." (Bowen Shrader, personal communication, November 11, 1995) The school term for Crocketts Cove and most schools in the mountains during this time was five months, from August through December. (Precourt, 1982) Nevertheless, interest in education was apparently on the rise in the Tazewell County area as evidenced by the thrust not only for new buildings but also for better equipment and for an expanded eight-month school term by the 1920s. ("May Campaign," 1924)

In addition, when students finished the seven grades at Crocketts Cove, they had limited options to continue their education in high school. Although Tazewell High School admitted students from Crocketts Cove, the roads to Tazewell

made it virtually impossible to get to the high school daily. As a result, many students like Bowen Shrader and his sister, Hallie Shrader, chose to go to a boarding school to finish high school. Shrader noted that he and his sister, who finished Crocketts Cove in 1926, had to go to Tazewell to catch the train on the Clinch Valley line at the North Tazewell depot. They left Tazewell on the train to Norton at 2:00 PM. Once in Norton, they awaited another train to cross over the mountains to Corbin, Kentucky. After another layover in Corbin, they transferred to a third train to complete their commute to Berea, Kentucky and the Berea Boarding School. Arrival in Berea occurred around 2:00 AM or 12 hours after the departure from Tazewell. Shrader noted that he and his sister finished high school at Berea in 1930. At that point, his family was unable to send him on to college since he was the oldest of 12 brothers and sisters. (Bowen Shrader, personal communication, November 11, 1995)

Although the one-room Crocketts Cove building remains standing today, its use as a school was discontinued in 1918 when a new two-room structure was built. The new building was located one mile down the road from the original school and, therefore, closer to the village of Shraders.

Replacement of the One Room School

By this time, one-room schools existed throughout the Appalachian region. (Campbell, 1921) However, members of the Crocketts Cove community began to question if the one-room, one-teacher school would meet the needs of the community's young people in the new century. Major concerns included a poor heating system and the combination of seven grades in one-room. In addition, in even these remote communities of Tazewell County, citizens were urged by a local newspaper editor to strive for the best schools for their individual communities. ("Why Not," 1911) As a result, a delegation of Shraders/Crocketts Cove residents implored A. S. Greever, Superintendent of Tazewell County Schools, to cross Stony Ridge Mountain to see the dilapidated condition of the old one-room school. The delegation also implored the school board to divide the school into two groupings, Grades 1-3 and Grades 4-7. (Bowen Shrader, personal communication, November 11, 1995) As a result of that meeting, the school board began plans to build a new structure. (Winifred Crockett, personal communication, January 25, 1995)

As a result, the one-room structure was replaced with a two-room school in 1918. The original post office for this community was named Shraders. (Dickenson, 1950) The new

two-room school was also located near the white frame structure of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. The property for the church was deeded on January 20, 1876. (Tazewell County Deed Book 23, Page 536) Both the school and the church took the name Crocketts Cove.

W. F. Harman, a gentleman who lived in the community and owned a farm where a large spring was found near the mouth of Crocketts Cove, conveyed two acres of his property which adjoined the lot owned by the Methodist Church to the School Board of the Jeffersonville Magisterial District Number One of Tazewell County, Virginia for \$1.00. This property, which was intended for the purpose of building a new school, was deeded on October 20, 1917. (Tazewell County Deed Book 84, Pages 85-86) This weather-boarded structure, which contained no running water and, therefore, no indoor facilities, was, nevertheless, quite modern for its time. This building did consist of two separate classrooms requiring the teaching staff to increase twofold. Students were assigned two to a desk. Water was carried to the school in zinc buckets with no covers from the big spring located on the property. (Alice Wells, personal communication, March 28, 1995) The donation of this land stipulated that, if the school should close, the property would return to the Harman estate. Bowen Shrader, who recalled starting school in the one-room facility at

Crocketts Cove in 1914, also remembered the excitement of moving to the two-room building as he entered the fourth grade in the fall of 1917. (Bowen Shrader, personal communication, November 11, 1995) "We went to school seven months out of the year beginning in September and finishing up in March of each year." Shrader added.

The Two-Room Crocketts Cove School

As previously stated, this building was a two-room structure. Plastered inside and weather boarded on the outside, "it was a first class edifice for its time." (Bowen Shrader, personal communication, May 4, 1995) The floor, made of wide pine boards, was oiled to keep the dust down. A large walk-in cloak room was provided for jackets and coats. Two Burnside pot-bellied stoves heated the facility--one in each room. Two coal buckets with shovels stood in front of each stove. (For a view the floor plan of this two-room school, see Appendix H.)

The carpenters who built this school also erected several other schools in the county at about the same time. They were skilled Tazewell County craftsmen who crossed Stony Ridge to work each day. Many of these men returned to their homes in Tazewell each weekend. (Bowen Shrader,

personal communication, May 4, 1995)

School at Crocketts Cove was never cancelled due to weather problems. (Phillips, 1989) After all, students provided their own transportation to this school by foot. There was an outside water pump where boys took turns carrying water into the classroom. Bathroom facilities were "outhouses." The outside of the school also included a large playground area of clay and grass most often trampled down during the school months. Coal, of course, was used to heat the building. (Bowen Shrader, personal communication, May 4, 1995)

The pupils' desks and chairs were constructed in one piece. Shelf storage for the books and supplies was provided under the seats. The teacher's desk, piled high with books, was located at the front and center of the classroom. School materials were scarce. Most of the teacher's materials were purchased by the teacher, herself. (For a list of principals at this school, see Appendix A; for a roll of teachers at this school, see Appendix B.) Large windows provided much natural daylight for the classroom. An American flag, hanging behind the teacher, was about the only decoration found in the classroom. (Bowen Shrader, personal communication, November 11, 1995)

The school year in this agrarian-based community was determined by the need for the young hands in farm work

during the summer months. In addition, harsh winters, combined with primitive roads, made getting to school difficult much of the year. As a result, the school term, by the late 1920s, continued to encompass only eight months. The summer months were reserved for work on the family farms. "The call of the farmer [was] louder and stronger than the call of the school room." (Link, 1986, p. 50)

The question of required attendance was never a major problem for this school. Compulsory attendance became the law in Virginia during 1922. (Link, 1986) According to teachers and students who taught at or attended the Crocketts Cove/Bishop School, absenteeism was never a significant problem. (Thelma Buffalow, personal communication, March 7, 1995) Students attended school regularly. (Crickett Nash, personal communication, August 26, 1995) They were expected to be present by both parents and teachers. As a result, more often than not, they were present.

In fact, just a decade earlier, the school year at Crocketts Cove School had consisted of only a six-month term. ("Two-room," 1968) However, at that time or during the mid-1910s when local patrons were willing to furnish the fuel, the teacher was empowered to extend the school term to six and one-half months. (Regulations, 1916) The teacher at Crocketts Cove was paid a monthly salary of \$30.00 for

Second Grade Certificate, \$40.00 for a First Grade Certificate and \$45.00 a month for the Normal, Professional or Equal Grade Certificate. For a teacher who secured a return appointment to the same school, \$5.00 per month additional salary was paid. (Schedule, 1916) The Tazewell County School Board increased the monthly salary and extended the school term as a part of its desire to improve the one-room and two-room schools by providing the best teachers possible for those classrooms. ("More Salary," 1914)

The certification of teachers in Virginia was carried out by local county and city superintendents of school using regulations prescribed by the Virginia State Board of Education. The certificates mentioned in the Tazewell County Schedule of Teachers' Salaries were described by the board of education as follows.

Second Grade Certificate

The applicant must not be less than 18 years old and must make an average of 75 percent on tests in the following subjects: spelling, reading, writing, arithmetic, grammar, geography, history of the United States, history of Virginia, civil government (including the government of Virginia), drawing, theory and practice of teaching, physiology and hygiene. In addition, the applicant must not

score below 60 percent on any subject area test.

First Grade Certificate

The applicant must be at least 19 years old, must have had a nine-month successful experience in teaching, must have scored an average of 85 percent on tests in the following subjects: spelling, reading, writing, arithmetic, elementary algebra to quadratics, grammar, geography, history of the United States, history of Virginia, civil government (including the government of Virginia), drawing, theory and practice of teaching, physiology and hygiene, one branch of science (either physical geography or elementary agriculture), and one division of history (either general or English). He, also, could not score below 70 percent on any subject area test.

Normal or Professional Certificate

The applicant must hold a baccalaureate degree from a registered college based upon a curriculum which included at least ten per cent professional work. (Circular, 1912)

As a result, a returning professionally certificated teacher at Crocketts Cove was paid \$325.00 for the six-and-one-half month term. The same teacher in the eight-month high school at that time received a \$400.00 salary. The

salary goal set by State Superintendent Hart's plan was an average annual salary of \$1,000. The Tazewell County teacher at Crocketts Cove only received 40% of this state goal by 1920. The following salary schedule, school contract and school regulations were applicable to the Crocketts Cove School during the 1910s. Winifred Crockett supplied this information from materials that belonged to her mother, Nina Waltman Crockett, who taught at Crocketts Cove in 1917. An interesting aside here notes that Winifred Crockett's mother came to Crocketts Cove to teach from Chesterfield County, Virginia because she would be paid better at Crocketts Cove. (Winifred Crockett, personal communication, November 11, 1995) Evidently, Tazewell was not the only county lagging far behind Superintendent Hart's salary goals.

Schedule of Teachers' Salaries

For Tazewell County, Virginia, for the Term of 1916-1917

As Fixed by the County School Board

¶ For Second Grade Certificate, \$30.00; For First Grade Certificate, \$40.00; and for Normal, or Professional, or Equal Grade Certificate, \$45.00 per month.

EXTRAS.—For Teaching a One Room School, \$5.00 per month extra.

For Return Appointment to same school, \$5.00 per month extra.

¶ This Tabulated would appear as under:

GRADE OF CERTIFICATE	For Two Room Schools or over Two Rooms		For One Room Schools Only	
	REGULAR	RETURN	REGULAR	RETURN
<i>Second Grade</i>	\$30.00	\$35.00	\$35.00	\$40.00
<i>First Grade</i>	40.00	45.00	45.00	50.00
<i>Normal, etc.</i>	45.00	50.00	50.00	55.00

¶ The Return appointment to same school, with its \$5.00 per month extra salary, will only be granted by the Board to Teachers, who, by reason of their success in teaching, and in Community service, and satisfaction given to Patrons, shall, in the opinion of the Board, merit such appointment.

¶ The above salaries for Teachers are applicable to all Teachers in Tazewell County; and are not subject to change.

¶ Teachers applying for positions can at once see what their salary will be, by consulting their certificate and the above table.

DURATION OF TERM OF TEACHING	WHERE FUEL IS FURNISHED	
	BY BOARD	BY PATRONS
Schools with one and two rooms	6 Months	6½ Months
Schools with three rooms and up	6½ Months	7 Months
Accredited High Schools		9 Months

If you wish to apply for a position under the above terms, please state what kind of a certificate you hold, and class of school you would prefer, and what grades you are most competent to teach.

Kindly send copies of testimonials from Superintendents under whom you have taught, and any others you may wish to submit; also state your age, experience, and number of years you have taught.

On receipt of your application and information above asked for, I will then be able intelligently to offer you a position, or choice of positions, such as would appear to me to most nearly meet your wishes.

For positions in Tazewell County, Virginia, Schools, write to the following:

For Schools in Maiden Spring District to

J. B. CRABTREE, ESQ., Richlands, Va.

For Schools in Jeffersonville District to

W. L. MOORE, ESQ., Tazewell, Va.

For Schools in Clear Fork District to

J. F. DUDLEY, ESQ., Graham, Va.

Schedule of Teachers' Salaries, for Tazewell County,
Virginia, for the Term of 1916-1917.

This Article of Agreement, Between THE SCHOOL BOARD OF Jeffersonville
School District No. one of the County of Tazewell Virginia,
 of the first part, and Nina M. Hallman of the second part:

WITNESSETH, That the said party of the second part, under the supervision and direction of the said Board, but subject, nevertheless, to the visitation and lawful authority of the Division Superintendent, agrees to teach in Crocketts Cove schoolhouse for the term of 6 school months or 120 days, commencing on 4th of Sept 1916, at a compensation of fifty dollars per school month, for a lawful school, with a lawful average daily attendance of pupils: provided, that any failure on the part of the said teacher to report correctly the daily average, as required, to the Superintendent, shall vitiate this contract—the said amount to be paid on the last day of each calendar month, for the total value of the services rendered during the said calendar month, or as soon thereafter as a proper voucher can be forwarded to the Clerk of the Board by the Division Superintendent, the Board reserving the right to dismiss the said party of the second part at any time, for cause, paying for services rendered in accordance with this agreement to the date of dismissal. In the event the Board finds it necessary to shorten the school term it may terminate this contract.

It is also agreed that the said party of the second part shall open school at 9 in the morning, give 10 minutes at 10 1/2 o'clock 60 minutes at 12 o'clock, and 10 minutes at 2 1/2 o'clock, and close the school at _____ o'clock in the afternoon (a school day shall consist of 6 hours and 50 minutes, and a school month of four weeks of five school days each); obey all school laws and regulations, and make monthly and term reports to the Division Superintendent according to forms furnished.

It is further agreed that the fire shall be made, or caused to be made, and the floor shall be regularly swept or caused to be swept by the said* Teacher the Board providing the fuel, brooms and brushes therefor; and that the actual possession of the schoolhouse shall be considered by both parties as remaining and being at all times in the said Board or their successors.

It is further agreed that the chairman and clerk of said School Board shall deduct monthly from the salary of said party of the second part a sum equal to one per centum of said salary, to be placed to the credit of the Retired Teachers' Fund, to be applied and expended as provided by law.

SPECIAL COVENANTS

If Patrons furnish fuel school
will continue 6 1/2 months

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties hereunto have set their hands and seals, this 4 day
 of Sept, 1916

W. L. Moore [L. S.]
 Chairman of the Board

W. L. Moore [L. S.]
 Clerk of Board

Nina M. Hallman [L. S.]
 Teacher

*Insert "Board" or the name of the teacher according to the terms of the contract.

School Contract for Tazewell County, Virginia, Crocketts
 Cove School for 1916-1917.

REGULATIONS OF

Tazewell County School Board

1. All schools must open promptly at 9 a. m., giving 10 minutes recess before noon; one hour at noon—from 12 to 1 o'clock; and 10 minutes recess in the afternoon, and continue in session until 3:30 o'clock. Teachers may hold pupils in school where lessons are not finished until 4 p. m.

2. Any teacher failing to make the legal average attendance must report the same to Clerk of District Board, giving reasons for same at once or shall forfeit all right to collect their next month's salary.

3. Reports must be made off at the close of each calendar month. All questions on blank form of teachers' monthly report must be fully and correctly filled and answered each month, and MUST reach the Superintendent's office not later than THREE DAYS after close of each month. Teachers making false report will be dismissed from service and contract forfeited.

4. No teacher will be allowed pay for teaching on SATURDAY. All teachers will be allowed Thanksgiving day as a holiday and report the same as taught.

5. All teachers must attend the meetings of all Teachers' Associations when so notified by the Superintendent or President of the Association, and shall be allowed \$2.00 per day for attendance upon such meetings.

6. No expense bills made by any teacher will be allowed by District Board unless teacher first gets permission from District Board.

7. Any teacher failing to take necessary precaution for protection of school house and furniture while under her charge, shall be deemed sufficient cause for forfeiture of contract.

8. All teachers employed in one and two-room schools must be present with pupils during the hours contracted for, and not leave the school house during the daily recitations. In schools where three or more teachers are employed, not less than two teachers shall be present with the pupils during all recess periods, and at the discretion of the District Boards, more than two teachers may be required to remain on the school grounds during recess periods.

9. All schools shall continue for a term of 6 months, and where fuel is furnished by the patrons, or individuals, the school shall continue for term of 6½ months, excepting all schools receiving State aid, which shall continue for term conforming to State requirements for schools of such grade.

10. All schools will be required to conform to the above regulations, and failure to do so on the part of any teacher shall be investigated by the District Board and if reason for failure on part of teacher to comply with these regulations be not satisfactory to the Board, said teacher shall be dismissed.

11. Teacher will not receive salary for last month taught until they have returned to the Superintendent the copy of the Course of Study given them, and returned to the Clerk of the District their daily register.

12. Teachers are required to read to their pupils as often as may be necessary for them to become familiar with the rules and regulations pertaining to pupils and patrons and conditions upon which promotions are made, as laid down in the Course of Study.

By order of the County Board these regulations must be pasted to contract made with teachers and is considered part of the contract.

W. ARCHIE THOMPSON, Chairman.

J. B. CRABTREE, Secretary.

Regulations of Tazewell County School Board for 1916-1917.

Such disparities as this contrast led State Superintendent Hart to initiate the first attempt to equalize opportunity throughout the state beginning in 1928-1929. These targets might have been met had it not been for the strains placed on the state budget by the sharp depression cuts of the 1930s.

Locally, many groups and individuals also lobbied for increased support for schools in Tazewell County. Women's organizations led the fight for what they described in the local Clinch Valley News as "putting schools where they should be." ("Women Beg," 1928) The one-room school was quite common in Tazewell County as late as 1926. Rather primitive, one-room facilities were found in 37 communities across the county in places with names such as Benbow, Coal Branch, Cove Creek, Coaldan, Red Oak Ridge, Steelesburg, Clifffield, Busthead, and Sinking Waters. (Leslie, 1982)

Several delegations from different sections of the county appeared before the school board to press the Board of Supervisors for more support for schools. One group spokesperson remarked that, "if the school board could provide as good shelter for the county children as some of the farmers do for their cattle, the question could be solved." ("Women Beg," 1928) Another observer of the same time period found that children in little red one-room

schoolhouses had to crowd around old wood stoves to keep from freezing while warm, dry barns for horses and cattle were almost within sight. ("Women Beg," 1928) One educator later observed, "Supplies in the one-room school (in Tazewell County) were scarce . . . but we did have the two necessary ingredients, children and books." (Harman, 1970) Education in this two-room school would soon become only history in Crocketts Cove.

The need for more attention to both education and living conditions in the more rural communities was made most evident at the beginning of the 1929 school year. Several cases of typhoid fever were reported in the county during the summer of 1929. In fact, several cases were centered in the Crocketts Cove community where well-known county citizen and local Crocketts Cove farmer, R. G. Gillespie, died as a result of typhoid fever in August. The cause of the outbreak was traced to the polluted water supply in the Crocketts Cove community. No sooner had the county recuperated from the outbreak of typhoid at Crocketts Cove than an outbreak of infantile paralysis or polio was revealed in the eastern end of the county around Bluefield and Pocahontas. As a result of that outbreak, the opening of the new school year for 1929-1930 was delayed one week. More startling news was just around the corner for Tazewell County, however, as the Roaring Twenties came to a close.

Chapter 4

THE ARRIVAL OF THE COAL INDUSTRY IN CROCKETTS COVE

Pocahontas Fuel Company's Announcement

The history of Shraders, Crocketts Cove and the entire region was forever altered with an announcement made by the Pocahontas Fuel Company during the fall of 1929. That same year, West Virginia led the nation in coal production, developing reserves that were said to be so vast as to be virtually inexhaustible. (State, 1929) The coal company disclosed its plans at that time to open a new, large-scale mining operation at Shraders near the West Virginia state line. For several months prior to 1929, engineers employed by the Pocahontas Fuel Company had been surveying plans for the proposed operation and had located a site for the town which would become home to many of the new families who would find gainful employment in the proposed operation. ("Many Rumors," 1929)

Many Rumors of New Coal Mines

Rumors have been flying thick and fast in Tazewell the past week of the opening of the new mines of the Pocahontas Fuel Company in Crockett's Cove. No confirmation of the rumors can be found, but it is said by those who claim to know that immediate steps are being taken to mine coal in the area near the store of E. E. Crockett. It is stated that for several months engineers of the Pocahontas Fuel Company have been working on the project, and that all the plans for the operation have been perfected, and work will begin in a short time to carry the plans into effect. Those who claim to know the present plans of the company state that the matter has gone as far as having located a site for the town, etc. Much gossip has been indulged in over the project, and many Tazewell people feel jubilant over the prospect of the development. One man states that it means more to Tazewell and community than anything that has occurred here in fifty years, bringing right to our doors a branch of one of the greatest coal companies in the United States.

Those familiar with such affairs are more cautious in their statements. They state that much right of way will have to be secured, as the coal mined at this operation will be taken to Faraday to connect with the Dry Fork branch of the N. & W., and that securing rights of way and building railroads cannot take place over night.

The Pocahontas Fuel Company's property at the point where the new operation is said to be planned, contains the finest coal in the country. One statement is that a sixteen foot vein is on this site.

The possibilities of such development may be remote, but will eventually materialize is the opinion expressed by many men who are familiar with the coal business. The improvement in the coal trade, and the fact that there is always a demand for coal of the quality that lies in this area, is the argument used by many to support their contention that the development may not occur forthwith, but will in the very near future. "The new state highway from North Taze-

well to the West Virginia line is being built at an opportune time," said a well known coal operator in Tazewell this week. "This road will open up to this community and to the adjacent territory the greatest coal field in the country, with a pay-roll of millions a year. This proposed new operation, about seven miles from the town of Tazewell, will be of untold benefit to the town." "The people of Tazewell, the merchants and business men, will have an opportunity for business that has not been offered them before," said the operator, "and they should arouse themselves and see that the road to West Virginia is finished at the earliest possible moment."

Another report stated that, if the proposed development materialized, Crocketts Cove, a rural community, was destined to become one of the leading mining communities in the country. The "throbbings of the industrial revolution would shatter the stillness of the forest-clad hills" (Grimsley, 1962) of Crocketts Cove forever. Reports indicated that there were several acres of level land in the area, a commodity that most mining communities had in short supply. The coal town would be a model mining community with the residential dwellings in Tazewell County, Virginia and the mining portals in McDowell County on the West Virginia side. ("N. & W. ," 1929) At the time Bishop was founded, the early 1930s, all coal mines were worked in essentially the same manner with one or more entries depending on the size of the mine. (Densmore, 1977) With multiple portals for Bishop, the size of the operation was destined from the beginning to be rather massive. As a result, the mountains of Southwest Virginia saw a new order arrive with rather startling speed. In just a few years, farming communities became outposts of heavy industry. (Ayers, 1991)

Building the new town at Crocketts Cove was really not an option for the coal company. The mining of coal required

miners and miners required housing. (Tams, 1963) Housing was sparse in these rural areas and existing towns could not absorb these large numbers of new families. (Lewis, 1989) Since very little housing was available in the farming communities of Shraders and Crocketts Cove, the building of new houses was a necessity. Also, since the roads to the community were not adequate, the miner was forced to live near the mine in which he worked. (Tams, 1963) As a result, the building of the town at Bishop was essentially required.

Interest High In New Town

A great deal of interest is being manifested in the proposed new town to be made by the Pocahontas Fuel Company on Jacob's Fork, seven miles north of Tazewell. The belief that the Company will soon begin operations in that community is borne out by the announcement that the N. & W. has filed application with the Interstate Commerce Commission for the right to build additional mileage to its Dry Fork Branch, appearing elsewhere in this paper. Further confirmation of the development comes from people living in the community. Several corps of engineers are now at work on Jacob's Fork, both for the railroad's right of way and for the fuel Company.

The Pocahontas Fuel Company's holdings on Jacob's Fork is said to contain coal that is second to none in this country, and to include veins that can be mined very profitably. It is stated that preliminary work of locating sites for tipples, etc., and a site for the company's offices will begin at once.

As stated recently in this paper plans are being made for the completion of the State highway from North Tazewell which will connect with the West Virginia highway at the State line, and that every effort will be made, is being made, in fact, to push this work to completion by the time the company begins its active coal operations.

There are many angles to this development that mean much to this community. It appears reasonable that Tazewell's coal supply, in a very short time, can be brought here by truck directly from the mine at a much cheaper rate than now prevails. A truck could make several trips a day over the good road that will soon be completed.

It is reasonable to believe that residential property in Tazewell and North Tazewell will enhance in value, and that business for the stores will come from the new town.

The new road will not only open up this wonderful section of the county, but will offer a market for produce from this section second to none in this country. In the course of a few hours ride by automobile a market with a pay-roll of two million dollars a month can be reached by produce trucks or business cars.

"Black Tuesday" and the Coal Company's Disclosure

Ironically, the initial announcement of the birth of the Bishop coal town came just four days before the "Black Tuesday" that would send the American economy on a long term downward spiral. Nevertheless, the people of Tazewell County were rejoicing in the prospects for a bright future with the reports of the new mine, a major employer designated to open soon just north of the county seat. One man stated that the project meant more to the Tazewell community than anything that had occurred in Tazewell in fifty years. ("Interest High," 1929) In addition, one of the greatest coal companies in business in America at the time, the Pocahontas Fuel Company, was right on the doorsteps of the people of Tazewell. The potential of the coal located here, veins of sixteen feet according to some projections, made the location potentially one of the finest operations in the country. ("Interest High," 1929) In addition, projected payrolls for the operation would total several million dollars annually.

By November 1929, the suppositions were beginning to become reality. The Norfolk and Western Railway had filed application with the Interstate Commerce Commission to

extend its line from Newhall in McDowell County, West Virginia up Jacob's Fork and Horsepen Creek to Crocketts Cove in Tazewell County. ("N. & W. Proposes," 1929) The Norfolk and Western extended its Jacobs Fork Branch across the Virginia state line at Bishop in 1931. (Daughters, 1959) The addition was constructed to provide an outlet for a large deposit of coal that was found along the Jacobs Fork Creek. Work began in March of 1930 in Newhall and ran for a length of 11 1/2 miles through the new town recently named Bishop across the state line in Tazewell County, Virginia. ("Real Job," 1931)

People living in the area around Shraders and Crocketts Cove also reported a flurry of activity in the vicinity. In addition, several corps of engineers were reported in the area representing not only Norfolk and Western but also Pocahontas Fuel Company. With perfect timing, the Virginia Highway Department announced plans to complete a new paved highway. Beginning at North Tazewell, the road would go west to the mouth of Cavitt's Creek to Adria through Shrader's Gap to the West Virginia line, a distance of about nine miles. ("New Route," 1927) The highway would connect the county seat at Tazewell with the West Virginia line near the site of the projected Pocahontas Fuel Company mining enterprise. ("Many Rumors," 1929) The route furnished an outlet for the coalfields and an inlet for Tazewell County

truckers and produce farmers. ("New Route," 1927) West Virginia soon followed suit by announcing that the state road in the Jacobs Fork Valley would be relocated to connect with the new road built on the Tazewell County side of the line by the State of Virginia. ("Real Job," 1931)

The construction of the highway from the county seat at Tazewell to the Jacobs Fork Valley, although only eleven miles in length, was an engineering marvel. The town of Tazewell, at an elevation of 2519', is located in the Clinch Valley which is a part of the Tennessee River Valley watershed. The Jacobs Fork Valley, on the other hand, at an elevation of 1669', is located in the Tug Fork Valley which is a part of the Ohio River Valley watershed. As a result, although the distance between Bishop and the county seat at Tazewell was only eleven miles, the new road would cross the Stony Ridge Mountain ending nearly 1,000' lower on the Jacobs Fork side than it began on the side of the mountain facing the town of Tazewell. (Geographic Name, 1992)

New Route to Coalfields Will Bring Prosperity to Tazewell County

The State Highway Commission has positively decided on the route to be taken for the new State Highway from North Tazewell to the West Virginia line.

Beginning at North Tazewell the road will go west passing through M. L. Peery's land to the mouth of Cavitt's Creek, thence up the right bank of Cavitt's Creek to Adria, through Shrader's Gap to the West Virginia line, a distance of about nine miles.

Sometime ago an allocation of \$70,000 was made on this route, and there seems to be nothing in the way of the connection with West Virginia.

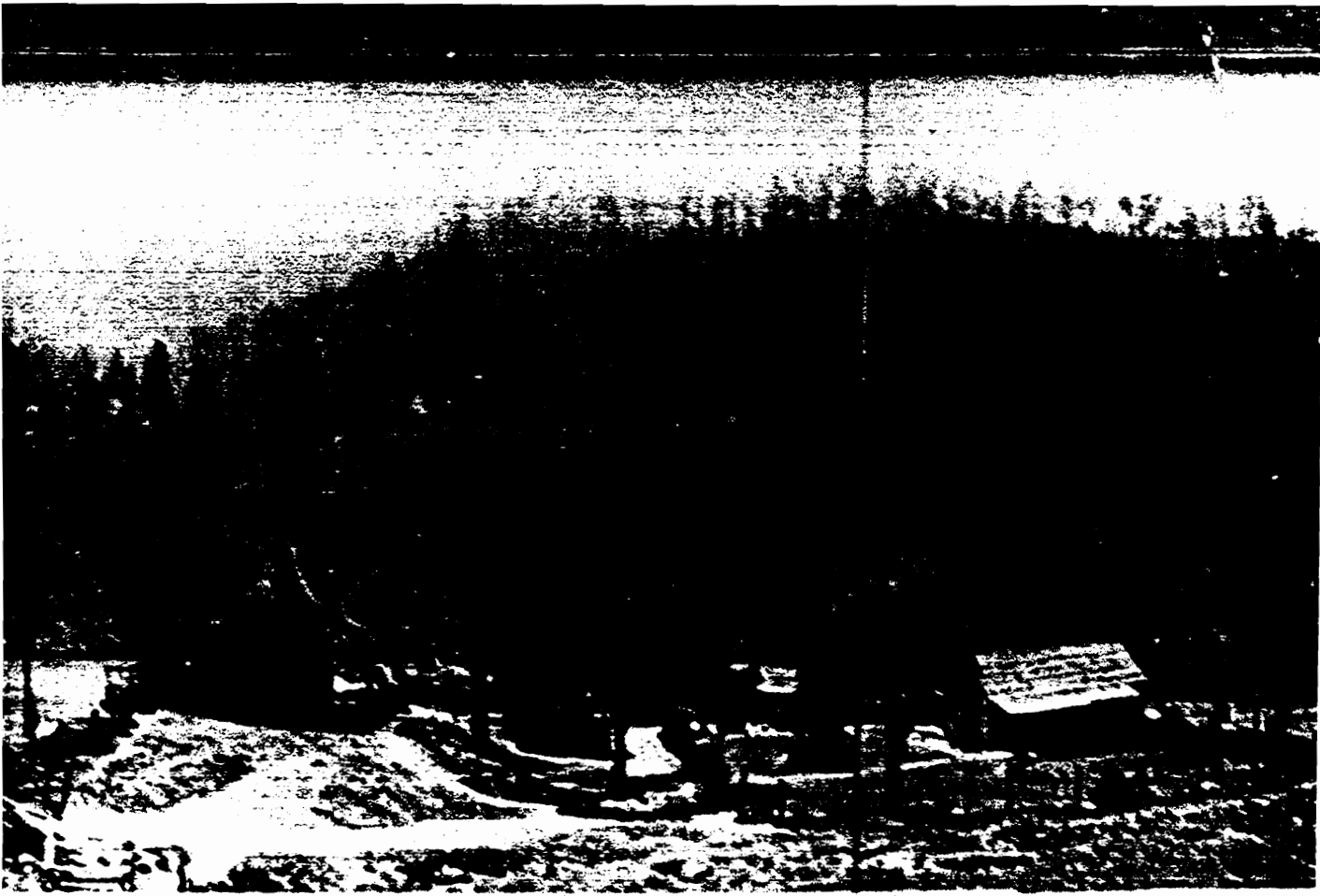
This road will be one of the most important in the county, furnishing an outlet from the coal fields, and an inlet for the trucksters and produce dealers of the Southwest.

The Birth of a Coal Camp

The coalfields now open, the secret of the mountains was revealed. (Herrin, 1991) From the rich mountains surrounding Crocketts Cove would come the fuel for America's industry in the twentieth century. (Appalachian, 1993) Several decades would pass, however, before the valley, which had long been the home of the Shraders, Crocketts and other mountain families, would be bustling with activity. That transformation came as the officials of the Pocahontas Fuel Company began construction of the last coal camp that would ever be built in the rich Pocahontas Coalfields of the two Virginias. This model coal camp was built near the point where the Horsepen Creek enters into the Jacob's Fork of the Dry Fork River. (McGehee, 1980) The site also straddled the line separating McDowell County, West Virginia and Tazewell County, Virginia. Bishop is, as a result, a two-state town. In fact, the state line crisscrosses the residential sections several times. (Leslie, 1977)

The building of coal towns, which had begun in the 1880s, had continued now for more than four decades. The peak in housing construction in the coalfields had come during the Roaring Twenties. However, the coming of the

Depression and the declining market conditions spelled an end to the construction of coal towns. (Shifflett, 1991) Bishop, therefore, would be the last.



Home of C. H. Presley and Lula Henegar Thompson Prior to the
Building of Bishop Company Store and Payroll Offices at the
Same Location After 1930.

Courtesy of Gladys Thompson Horton and the Tazewell County
Historical Society.

The Pocahontas Fuel Company's holdings in the Jacob's Fork Valley reportedly contained one of the highest grades of coal available anywhere, including many veins with the potential to be mined very profitably. ("Interest High," 1929) The deep valleys of Southwest Virginia, like Jacob's Fork, permitted the opening of mines in most beds by simply following the vein into the hillside. (Hanson, 1955) Coal, by this time period, accounted for nearly seventy-eight percent of the total energy supply of the United States. (Herrin, 1991) Therefore, the demand for the rich bituminous coal which prospective Bishop veins contained was at an all-time high. The time had come for the birth of a new coal camp, Bishop.

The post office in the community was long known as Shraders, Virginia. (Dickenson, 1950) Meantime, the community was served by Crocketts Cove School, and, next door to the school, the Crocketts Cove Methodist Episcopal Church, South. Two small stores were found in the valley, one operated by the Brewster family and another by the Crocketts. (Mary Whitt, personal communication, March 25, 1995) The new community that was now being born would, however, require a new identity. About 50% of all the new coal towns in the smokeless fields were named after a coal

company pioneer, founder, owner, operator or engineer.
(Shifflett, 1991)



Sign Posted at the Gateway to Bishop, Virginia.

Photograph by the Author.

A New Identity for a New Community

The name for the promising new coal camp at Crocketts Cove was selected to honor such a company man. The name, Bishop, was chosen to honor Walter A. Bishop, who was the chief engineer of the Pocahontas Fuel Company when the camp was created. Bishop served the company a total of 26 years from 1923 until his death in 1949. (Leslie, 1982) Under his direction, the Pocahontas Fuel Company became a leader in the coal mining industry in the Appalachian region. During the 1930s, the post office, the school and even the church took the name, Bishop. (Holston Annual, 1936 & 1939) The official change of the post office name from Shraders to Bishop occurred on August 1, 1930. (Dickenson, 1950) The Crockett family store was purchased by the coal company and became the Pocahontas Fuel Company Store at Bishop.



Walter A. Bishop, Namesake of Bishop Community.

Courtesy of the Eastern Regional Coal Archives, Craft
Memorial Library.



Crocketts Store at Shraders Which Became First Bishop
Company Store.

Courtesy of Winifred Crockett and Tazewell County Historical
Society.

The camp which bore Bishop's name also had the advantage of learning from the errors of the coal camps that preceded it. Earlier coal boom towns such as Pocahontas to the east and Richlands to the west were filled with saloons and resultant wild spending brawls and crime. (Hibbard, 1991) Pocahontas was said to have had more saloons than the company had mules. (Jones, 1983) In reality, Pocahontas was home to twenty-seven such saloons at one time. Meanwhile, the rest of Tazewell County, including Bishop, was "dry."

As a result, the Bishop camp was able to avoid many mistakes made in the creation of the first one hundred coal towns. (McGehee, 1990) This truth was evidenced by the men and women who took much pride in building Bishop, their "model camp." Since the coal operator was interested in inexpensive yet durable construction materials, wood from local lumber proved the best choice. ("Mining Life," 1980) Men such as William Baugh and Isaac White Clark, both skilled Tazewell County craftsmen, put their substantial carpentry abilities to work in constructing fine housing for the residents of the new town. (Hager, 1983) These men coordinated the work of more than thirty-eight carpenters and skilled workers who came to Bishop from the Bluefield, Virginia community to build the new town. (Francis Huffman,

personal communication, March 18, 1995) In reality, the work force at the new mines was growing so rapidly that many miners and their families had to wait for months to obtain housing. Meanwhile, many miners and their families lived in make-shift 14' x 14' tents which lined the valley where Bishop was coming into existence. (Marilla Johnson, personal communication, March 7, 1995) Not everyone lived in tents but many families did as they awaited the construction of the first company houses. (Stevens, 1976) Such temporary housing--tents or boardinghouses until more permanent dwellings could be built--was common as a beginning for many coal camps. (Shifflett, 1991)

The earlier coal camps of Appalachia often had contained housing that was very simple. One-room deep dwellings with an additional shed at the back and porch on the front were common. In these duplex houses, two families shared the simple structure separated only by a wall. These early camps included houses which were constructed of just one layer of so-called weatherboards over the frame and sometimes a plastered wall inside. This type of construction did not always, however, keep out the elements. In these early camps, there were no lawns, no cement walks and no paved roads. (Densmore, 1977) In fact, as late as 1925, the Report of the United States Coal Commission found that living conditions in the mining camps of the southern

mountains were among the worst in the nation. (United States Coal, 1925) At this time, only about 14% of the company houses in Virginia, West Virginia and Kentucky had indoor running water. (Peshkin, 1982)



Company House Under Construction in Shraders (Bishop) in
1929.

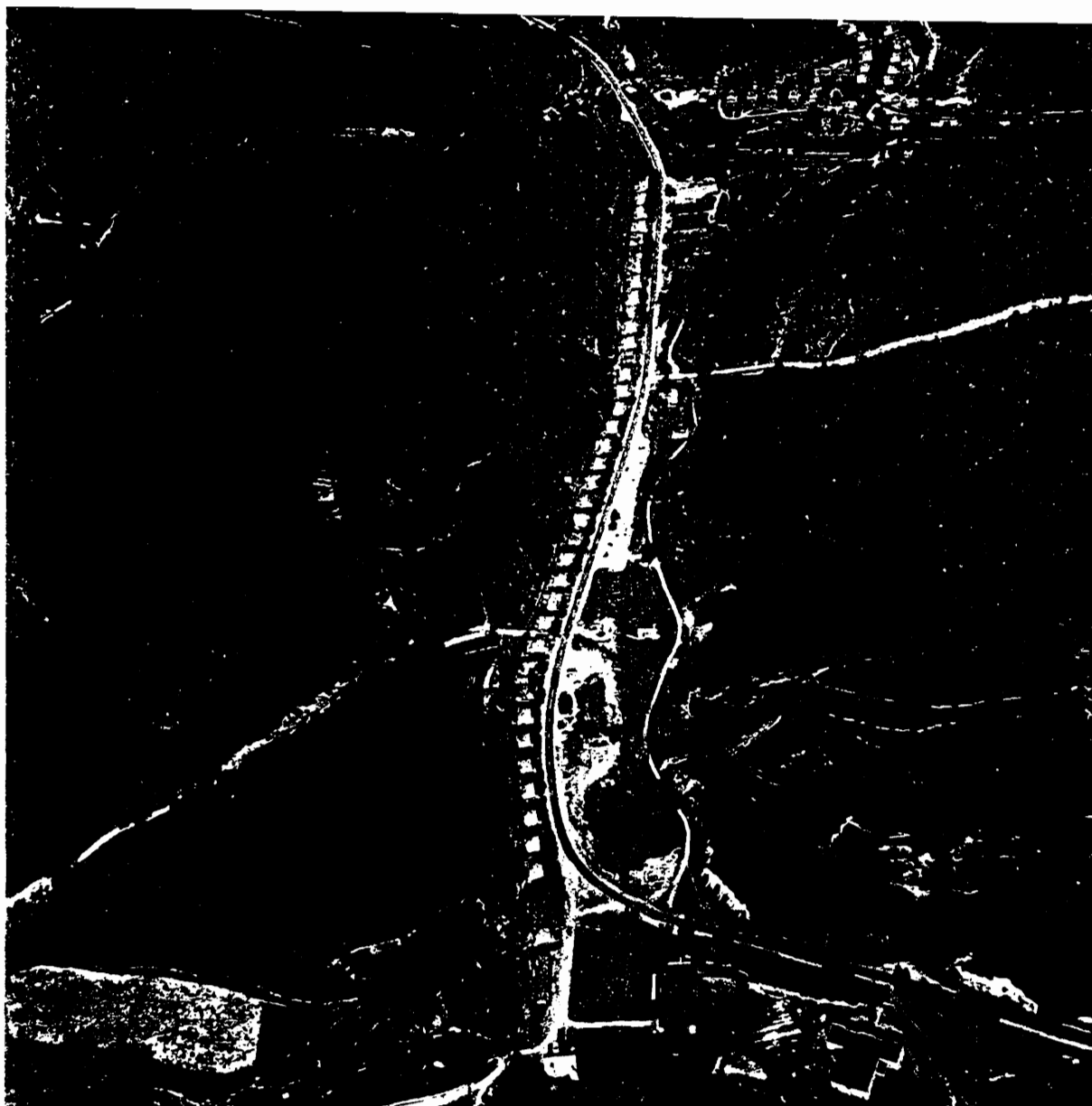
Courtesy of Tazewell County Historical Society.

Housing in the coalfields eventually improved, however, and as a result, housing in Bishop was comparable to that in any progressive community of that era. In fact, adequate housing was essential for the success of the new town. Due to the isolation of the Crocketts Cove community, little, if any, available housing existed. As a result, company-built homes became the standard for the coal mining community. The day finally came when the eager, new residents moved into their new homes. (Stevens, 1976)

Bishop, like many coal camps, grew in a linear pattern stretching along railroad tracks, a main road, or the Jacobs Fork Creek nestled between steep mountain slopes. The houses in Bishop were designed and constructed similar to one another. All houses contained two four-room residences. As a result, two families lived in each of the company houses. The dwellings had two stories, four rooms for each family, with a porch, running water, and electric lights. Electricity was almost always available in the coal-mining areas because mine operations depended on the availability of such power. (Rockefeller, 1980) In Bishop, stone foundations and first quality woodwork were found in each of the company houses. (McGehee, 1990)

The new town of Bishop had grown up almost overnight. By 1931, the population of the community had already reached 1,000. A number of brightly colored, large, eight-room

duplex houses were constructed in the new town. Streets were laid off and plans were made to pave the streets and create one of the cleanest and most modern coal mining towns anywhere. ("Real Job," 1931)



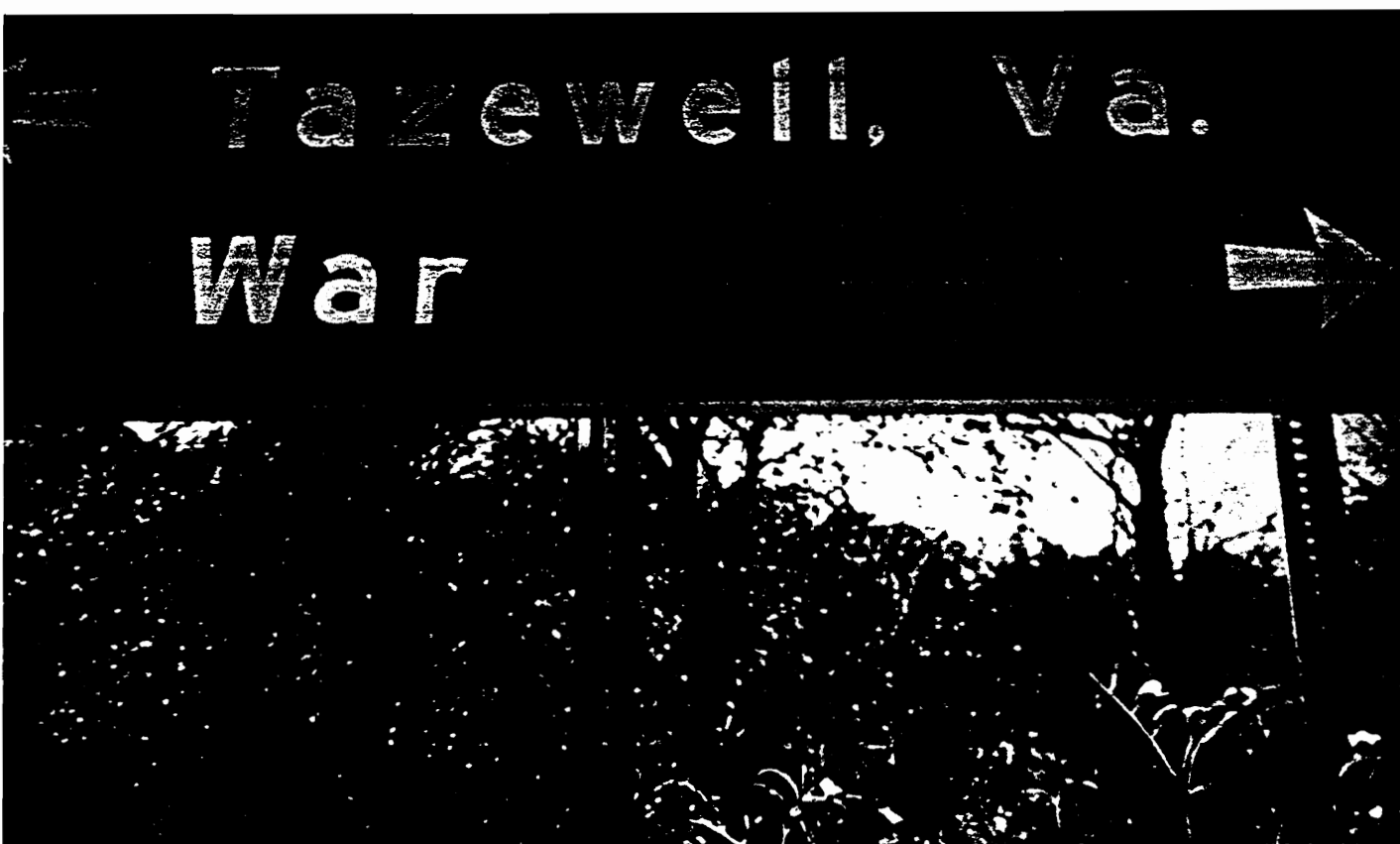
Aerial View of Bishop Coal Town After Completion of Construction.

Bishop School is T-Shaped Building in Lower Right Hand Corner of Photograph.

Courtesy of Grubb Photo Service.

Single miners usually boarded with other families or lived in one of several boarding houses in the community. Eighty cents a day was routine fare for room and board. Wash houses were also constructed where miners could clean up and bathe before going to their homes. An example of the boarding houses found in Bishop was the one owned by Jim Hunt and his wife on the corner of Radio Street. They kept fifteen boarders. In addition, they paid their cooks, Sylvia Harrison and Alma Hunt, four dollars a week plus board.

Conditions at this time were tough but the town soon began to take shape. In fact, within just a few years the community was completely constructed and the families moved in. The company cleared the land and erected an entire new town where the village of Crocketts Cove/Shraders had previously existed. Offices, supply houses, and a company store were built as well as dozens of the residential dwellings for the miners and their families.

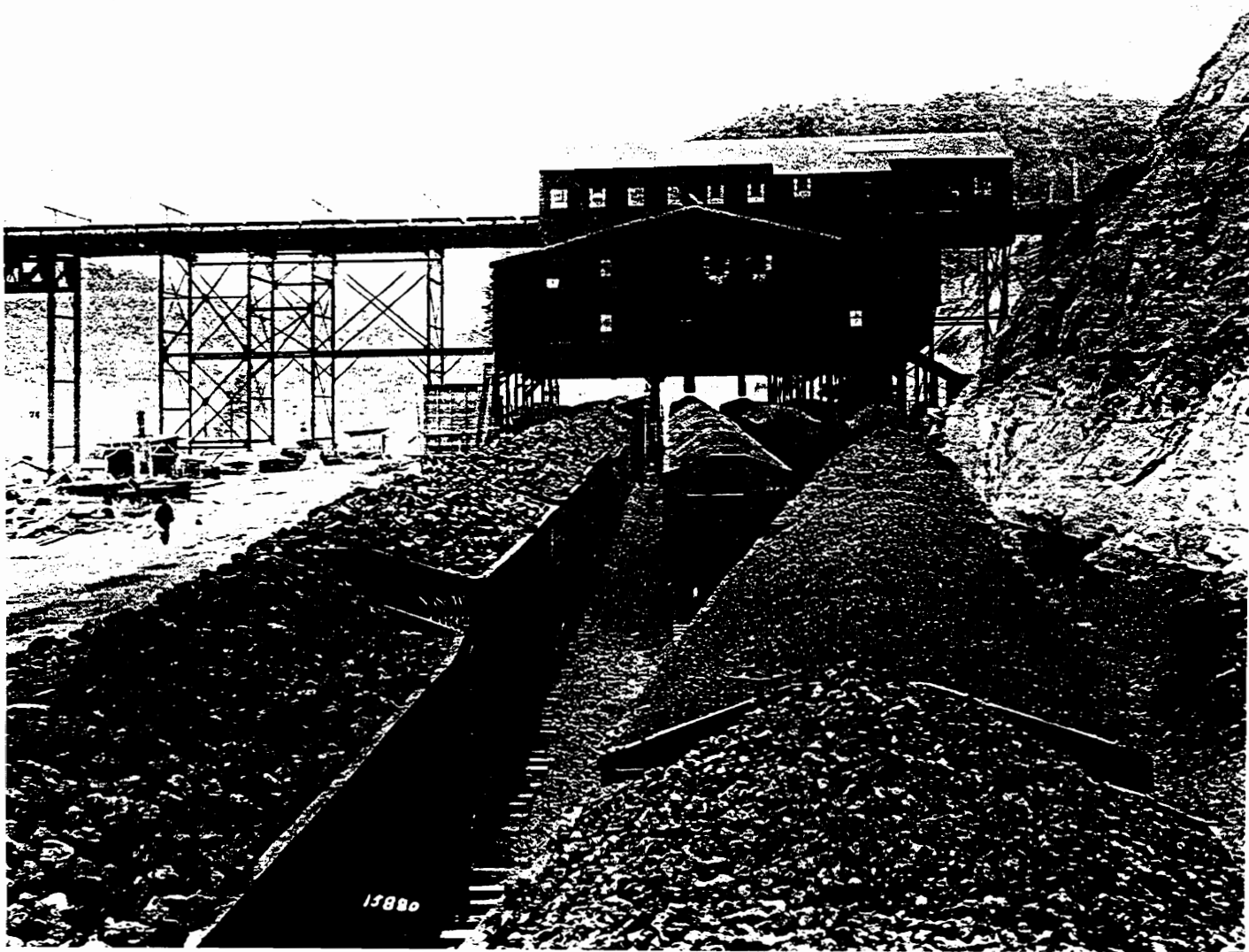


Highway Sign Symbolizing Bishop's Two-State Location.

Photograph by the Author.

Bishop's Two-State Location

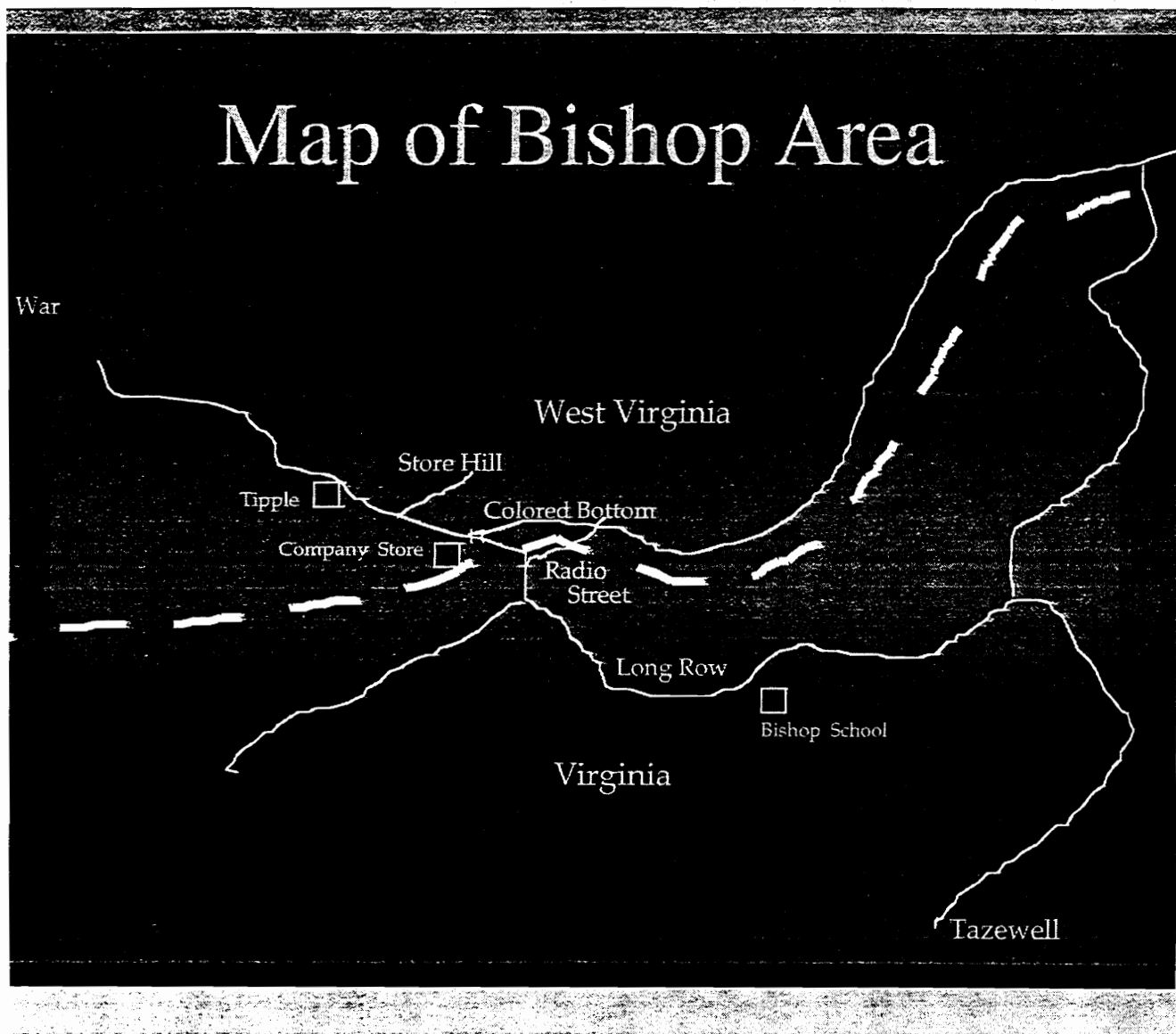
The town of Bishop grew up on the main road leading to War, West Virginia in the north, Horsepen to the east and Tazewell, Virginia towards the south. Much of the residential section was built on the Virginia side but the principal tipple in the community of Bishop was located on the West Virginia side. The tipple dominated the landscape in most coal communities. Located near the mine entrances, the tipple was a huge structure connected to the mine entry. In this tipple, coal was weighed, sorted, prepared for shipment and finally loaded into the railroad cars on the track below. "Mining Life," 1980)



Coal Cars Loaded at Bishop Tipple in August of 1931.

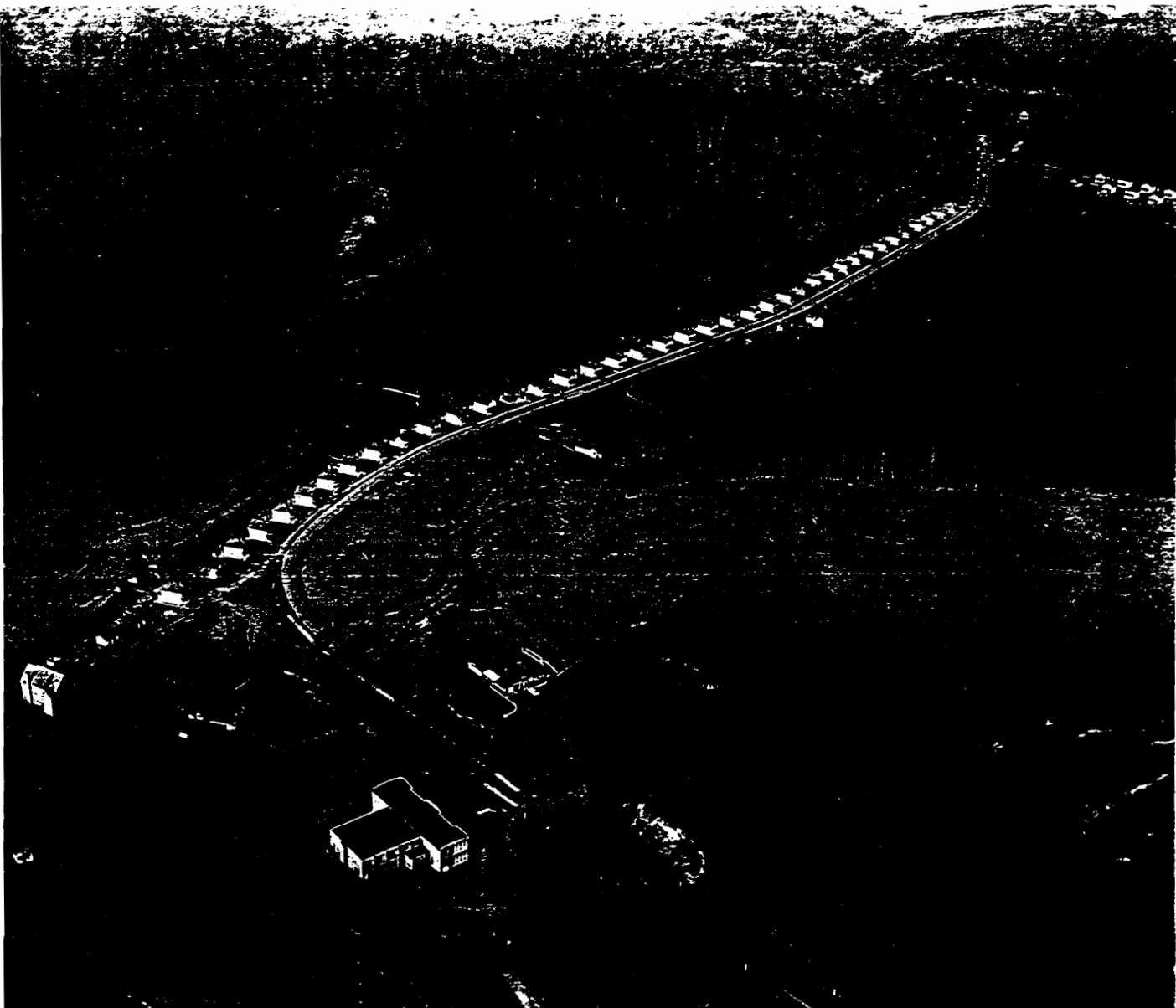
Courtesy of Norfolk and Western Railway Photographic
Collection,
Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University
Libraries.

The community was divided by settlement patterns into four distinct neighborhoods on both sides of the state line. The most common pattern for the layout of mining communities in the Southern Appalachians was the "linear pattern" in which rows of houses ran parallel to the mountain, the river, or the railroad tracks. Each of the four neighborhoods in Bishop followed this pattern. ("Mining Life," 1980)



Map of Bishop, Virginia-West Virginia Area.

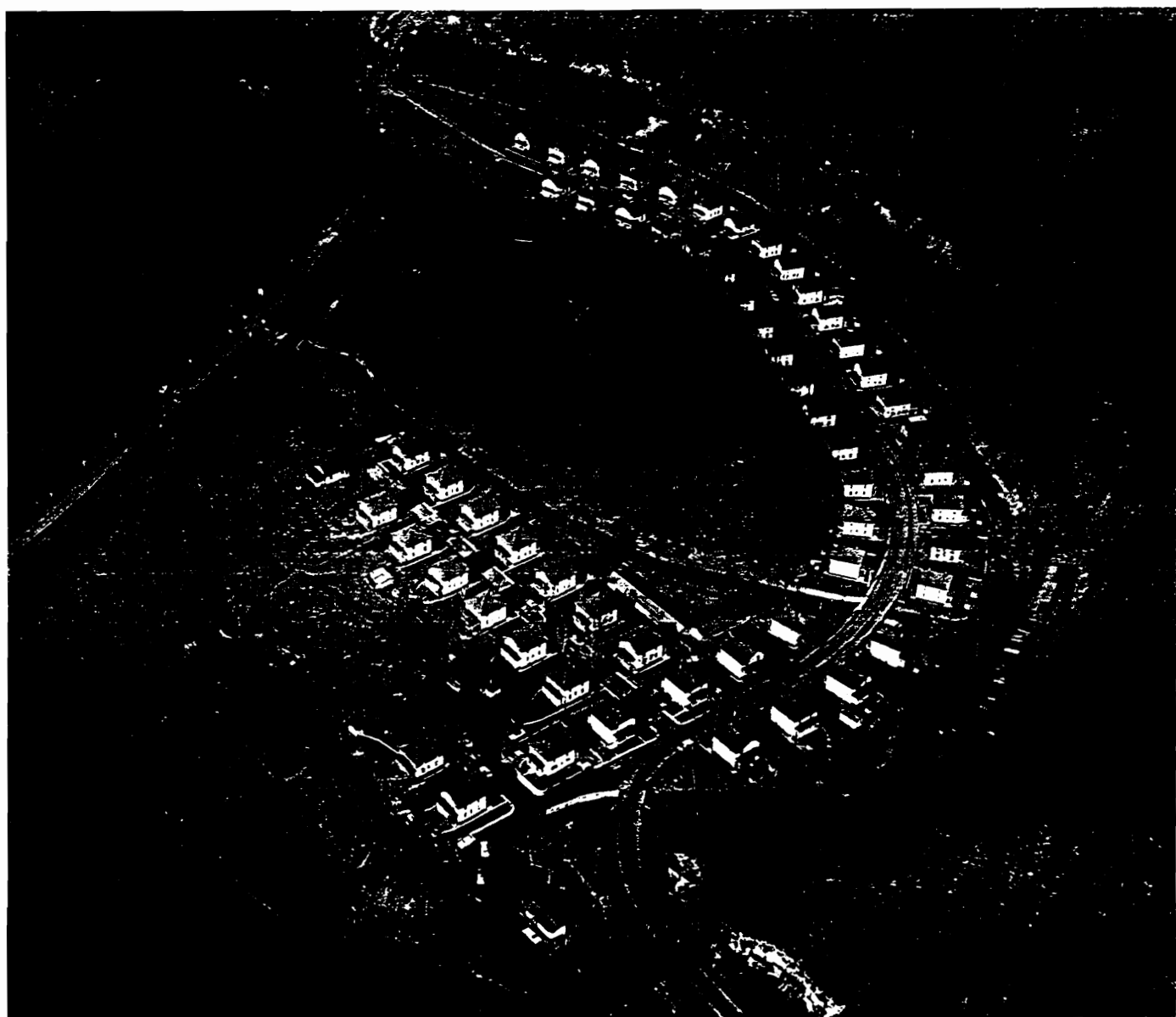
Long Row was built on the Virginia side of the camp on the state road leading to the county seat at Tazewell. More than 30 families lived in the duplex company houses that lined the west side of the state route running south through Bishop.



Aerial View of Thirty-Nine Houses That Line Long Row From
Church and School at Bottom-Left of Photograph to State Line
Near Top-Right.

Courtesy of Grubb Photo Service.

Radio Street was so named because all the residents owned radios and played their new wireless entertainment devices regularly and loudly. During most evenings, residents would routinely stroll Radio Street as the Amos and Andy Show, the Grand Old Opry, or Lum and Abner bellowed from every home on the street. (H. L. Honaker, personal communication, March 1, 1995) Radio Street straddled the state line diagonally with most of its residents on the Virginia side. Some families on this street cared for their yards which were located in a different state from their houses. One family's home was also divided by the state line.



Aerial Photograph of Radio Street and Colored Bottom.

Courtesy of Grubb Photo Service.



Radio Street Residence that Straddles the State Line from
the Rear Left to the Front Right of the House.

Photograph by the Author.

Colored Bottom became home to a rather large community of African-American residents. Settlement patterns here, based on race, created another example of a the coal camp community pattern. The same arrangement used in other areas of the community was maintained in Colored Bottom with two families living in each house. Residents took pride in their modern and orderly community.



Photograph of Colored Bottom, August 1931.

Courtesy of Norfolk and Western Railway Photographic
Collection,
Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University
Libraries.



Photograph of Colored Bottom, November 12, 1940.

Courtesy of Virginia State Library and Archives.

Finally, Store Hill, a small neighborhood of about six or seven houses, was located near the site of the company store. These houses were the largest in town. They were also single family dwellings which set them apart from the rest of the camp. Here on Store Hill lived the coal operators or the "company men" and their families. Both Colored Bottom and Store Hill were on the West Virginia side of the Bishop camp.



Photograph of Company Store Hill, August 1931.

Courtesy of Norfolk and Western Railway Photograph
Collection, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State
University Libraries

One possible interpretation of the aim of such settlement patterns was to prevent any one group from gaining too much power within the camp. In other words, one group's prejudices were played against those of the other groups. Another explanation was that companies reasoned that miners were more comfortable when living next to those most like themselves. (Herrin, 1991) The four neighborhoods did firmly establish in Bishop segregation of the working class from the management class as well as segregation of white families from black families.



Substantial Housing Lines Street in Colored Bottom
Neighborhood, August 1931.

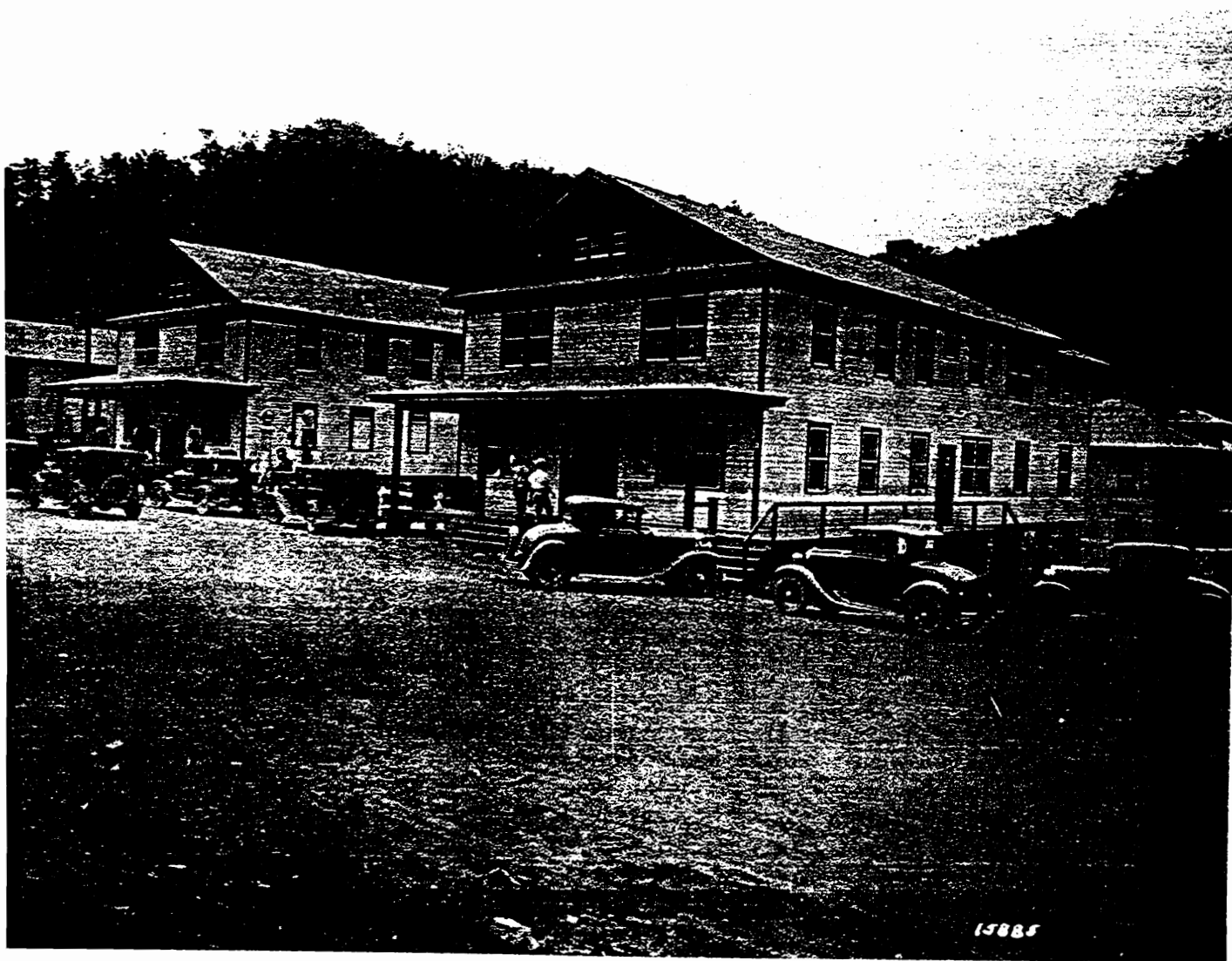
Courtesy of Norfolk and Western Railway Photographic
Collection,
Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University
Libraries.

The Company Store and Its Role in the Community

The Company Store, originally the Crockett Store on the Virginia side, was relocated to a new structure on the West Virginia side of Bishop. The new store was known as Pocahontas #33 Colliery. (Brown, 1978) This store became a meeting place for the entire community. In fact, the company store in many ways dominated the coal camp. (Lewis, 1989) In some coal camps, the company store was actually more profitable than the mine itself. (Densmore, 1977) Besides containing the grocery store or the "commissary" as miners often called it, the company store merged numerous enterprises under one roof. (Shifflett, 1991) Here miners and their families bought their clothes, shoes, groceries, tools, seeds, plants, furniture and most other necessities of life. (Leslie, 1980) In reality, the company store provided practically everything that the miner and his family needed for their daily existence. (Cohen, 1984) It indeed became the "hub of community life" in many mining communities. (Eller, 1982) The company store, however, proved to be the greatest drain on the miners' wages. (Corbin, 1981) The scrip system, physical distance to other communities and subtle, or not so subtle, coercion often

forced miners to deal with the company store.

A. O. Bishop was a long-time manager of the Bishop Company Store. Hallie Shrader and Gene Crockett served as dry goods clerks. Clerks for the grocery department included John Henry Mullins, Jr., Bowen Barrett and Bertha Benson. (Phillips, 1989) Such company store employees often became the best known members of the community since they had contact with the miners and their families on a daily basis.



Company Store at Bishop, West Virginia, August 1931.

Courtesy of Norfolk and Western Railway Photograph
Collection,
Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University
Libraries.

In addition to being the center for shopping in the community, the building which housed the company store was located adjacent to the building which served as the payroll office for the Bishop mines. Often scrip or company-produced currency was the medium of exchange at the company store. Originally in the form of a paper currency or coupon paper, scrip had been discontinued by the time that Bishop was established. The only scrip used here was metal scrip which was used until a credit card system was installed in 1953. (Brown, 1978) No one was required to ask for scrip, however, and all purchases could be made in cash if the miner so desired. All the necessities of life were provided in this one location for the residents of the coal camp community. (Cohen, 1984)



Pocahontas Fuel Company Scrip.
Five Cent Piece and One Dollar Coin.

Some of these stores took advantage of their near monopoly by charging prices as high as the traffic would bear. Others, however, kept their prices in line with other private establishments in nearby towns. Company store prices were usually high but company store goods were also of unusually high quality. (Alonzo Lambright, personal communication, February 26, 1995) Since company store prices were usually high, many Bishop residents routinely shopped in Tazewell. (Juanita Pruitt Yost, personal communication, September 16, 1995)

Bishop residents even enjoyed a luxury many other small town residents did not. Grocery delivery to one's own back door was available from the company store upon request. Many families in Bishop depended totally on the company store for the necessities of life. The perception of many local residences was that the accumulation of a considerable financial obligation at the company store was, therefore, frequently too easy to do. Many believed that Tennessee Ernie Ford's lament, "I owe my soul to the company store," was often more than just catchy lyrics in a country song. It would seem that many residents of the community of Bishop did accumulate substantial debts at the company store. ("Three Pink," 1984)

Other Community Institutions

Two churches were located in the community, a Baptist Church for black residents on the West Virginia side and a Methodist Church for white parishioners on the Virginia side. The company provided much of the financial support needed to get these churches built. Providing an attractive church building also made the community, as a whole, more appealing and, subtly, gave the company another type of jurisdiction within the coal camp. Eller noted that nationally organized churches were reluctant to enter the company town. (Eller, 1982) Bishop stands out here as another exception to the rule. Both the Methodist and Baptist churches were well established national churches and both were represented in the Bishop community.



Alexander United Methodist Church, Bishop, Virginia.

Photograph by the Author.



Little Zion Baptist Church, Bishop, West Virginia.

Photograph by the Author.

Two schools were also built in the camp. A one-room school for blacks was built in West Virginia and a modern brick school was constructed in Virginia. Both buildings were erected in the early 1930s. The story of the Virginia side school which is one focus of this study continues the story of the earlier Crocketts Cove School.

New Families in a New Community

The majority of the immigrants to Bishop's Colored Bottom came from the deep South attracted by the lure of a better wage and living standard in the booming coalfields of central Appalachia. The bulk of the remaining immigrants to the Bishop camp came from a variety of ethnic backgrounds. Nevertheless, almost all of these "white" migrants were second or even third generation Americans having grown up in families that lived and worked in other coal camps in Southwestern Virginia and, in particular, Southern West Virginia. Spanish surnames such as Rodriguez, Hungarian families such as Kulchar, Italian names such as Scillia (Shelley) and German families such as the Karnes and Kitts were commonly found in the Bishop camp. Nevertheless, most of these families had already been "Americanized" long

before their arrival in Bishop. (Francis Huffman, personal communication, March 18, 1995) Overall, the flow of foreign born whites into coal mining in Virginia was small compared with what occurred in many other states. (Division of Planning, 1956)

There was much geographical mobility among the coal camps of Appalachia during this era. Miners and their families frequently moved from mine to mine and camp to camp in search of better pay and a better job. (Sandra Peery, personal communication, March 22, 1995) Bishop was not only the newest coal camp; it was also in many ways the most attractive and promising coal camp in America. The company men here did not have to advertise very far to attract dedicated workers to their community.

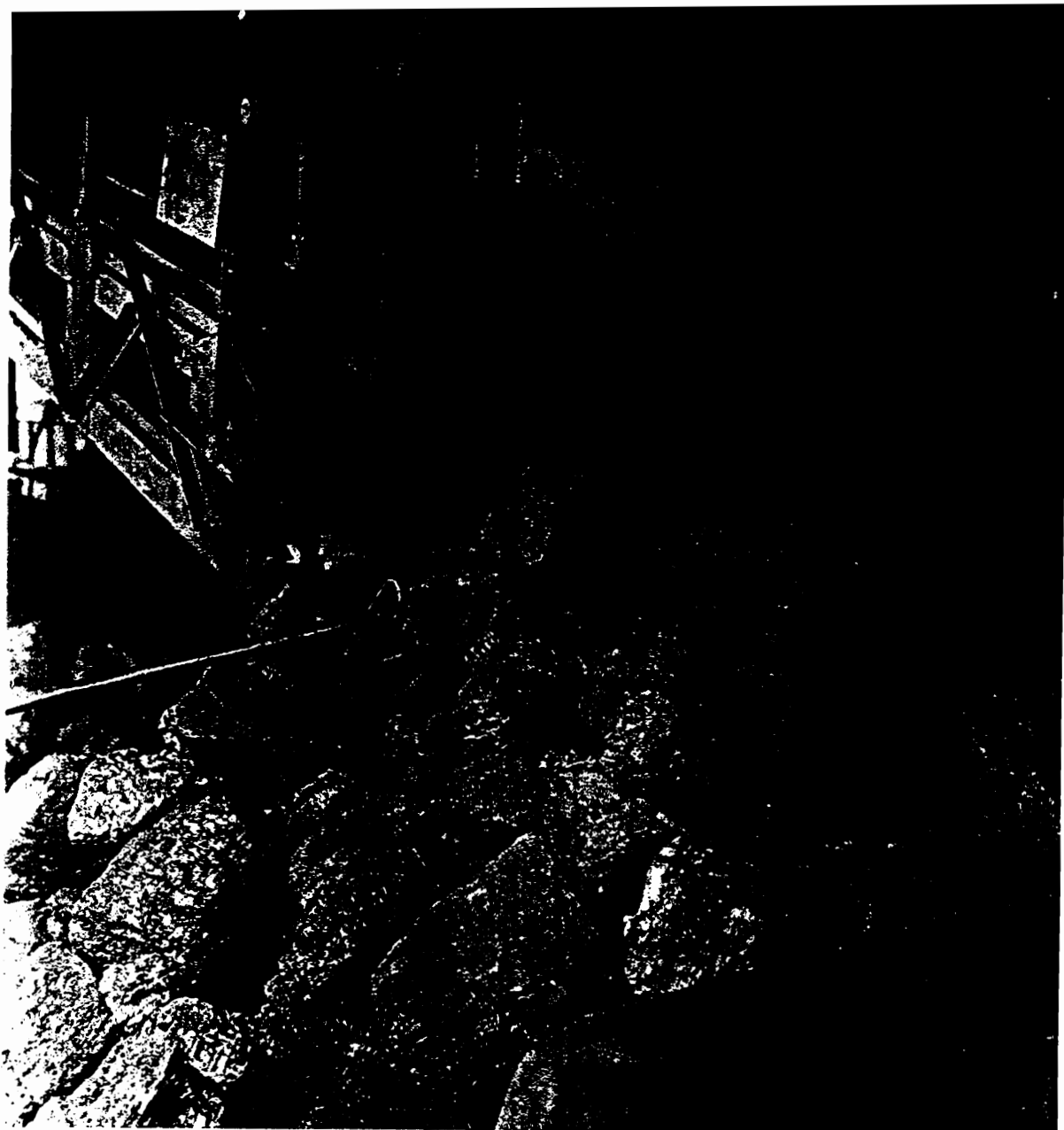
This coal boom that had come to this region is evidenced through an examination of the tonnage of coal being produced in the Pocahontas Coalfield during the era. For example, in just a short three year period from 1887 to 1890 the tonnage of coal shipped from the Pocahontas fields by the Norfolk and Western Railway nearly doubled. In 1887, the total tonnage was 602,400 and, by 1890, that tonnage had increased to 1,015,202. In fact, the total coal transported by the Norfolk and Western increased from 4,735 tons in 1882 to 2,869,215 tons, just eleven years later in 1893. (Striplin, 1981)



Tipple Crew Pose in Front of Loaded Coal Car at Bishop
Tipple, December 11, 1935.

Courtesy of Norfolk and Western Railway Photographic
Collection,
Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University
Libraries.

By the time that Bishop was established, the coal boom was in full swing. The company had a large workforce on the payroll and between twenty-five and thirty carloads of coal were shipped from Bishop each day. ("Bishop Originally," 1976) According to one company spokesperson, the coal mined at Bishop was "superior to any Pocahontas coal yet discovered and was finding a ready market wherever its qualities [became] known." (Leslie, 1982, p.96)



Oil Spraying Equipment at Pocahontas Fuel Company, Bishop,
Virginia, August 9, 1937.

Courtesy of Norfolk and Western Railway Photograph
Collection,
Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University
Libraries.

Erection of Coal Company Housing

Throughout the Bishop camp, attractive pastel-colored company houses trimmed in a variety of complementary colors lined the streets. Most of these dwelling places contained two separate residences for two coal town families. These houses were among the best to be found in any coal camp in Appalachia. The yards were green with trees, flowers all neatly trimmed. (Alonzo Lambright, personal communication, February 26, 1995) The rent charged for these homes averaged as little as \$8.00 per month in the early years of the camp (Tams, 1963), increasing only to around \$13.00 per month by the time the company decided to sell the houses to the miners by the late 1940s. (Bill Shutt, personal communication, October 22, 1995) In fact, the paved streets and sidewalks constructed later in the 1930s made this community a showcase compared to other communities of its size anywhere in the country. Bishop was becoming known as a pleasant community with some of the best housing and most congenial people in the coalfields. (Virginia Neel Harry, personal communication, March 10, 1995) "Even though [the people of Bishop] worked hard and had very little money, they could always find time to visit each others homes and

sit and talk a while." (Phillips, 1989, p. 5)



Various Pastel-Colored Houses Line Long Row, Bishop,
Virginia, August 1931.

Courtesy of Norfolk and Western Railway Photograph
Collection,
Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University
Libraries.

Under this arrangement, the coal company was responsible for upkeep of the camp houses. Garbage pickup was routine and houses were repainted every three years. (Alonzo Lambright, personal communication, February 26, 1995) In addition to these private residences, several larger boarding houses were also constructed by private investors to house single miners who came to work in the rich coal veins and school teachers who came to teach at the little two-room Crocketts Cove School where enrollment was surging monthly. In fact, the school was growing at a rate that closely paralleled the increasing number of miners who were employed at the Pocahontas Fuel Company's new mine. Most of these miners brought with them a family that already consisted of several children.

Temporary School Located on the West Virginia Side

As a result, a company house located at the end of Store Hill was used temporarily to school some of the white children in the community. (Gladys Thompson Horton, personal communication, March 28, 1995) This school, for which no records exist, was apparently a McDowell County, West Virginia facility. The school only operated a few years. This arrangement is further substantiated by West

Virginia Department of Education records which listed the George Camp school a decade earlier in 1921-1922 taught by Blanche Shrader. (West Virginia, 1922) The George Camp was the name often given to the community just north of Bishop. The George Camp school is listed in the West Virginia records once again in 1927-1928 with Ada Harrison listed as the teacher of a one-room school with an enrollment of 24 students. (West Virginia, 1928)

This school was also listed in the West Virginia school records which actually specify that Shrader, Virginia was the site of a one-room McDowell County, West Virginia school in 1925-1926. The teacher for that school was listed as Viola Shrader and 30 students were enrolled in the school. (West Virginia, 1926) This was probably the same school listed by the nearest post office, Shraders. The same school is listed simply as Bishop in the 1930-1931 records with Claudine Perry listed as one of two teachers and sixty-three students enrolled. Apparently the West Virginia-side school was closed when a new brick building was constructed on the Virginia side in 1932-1933.

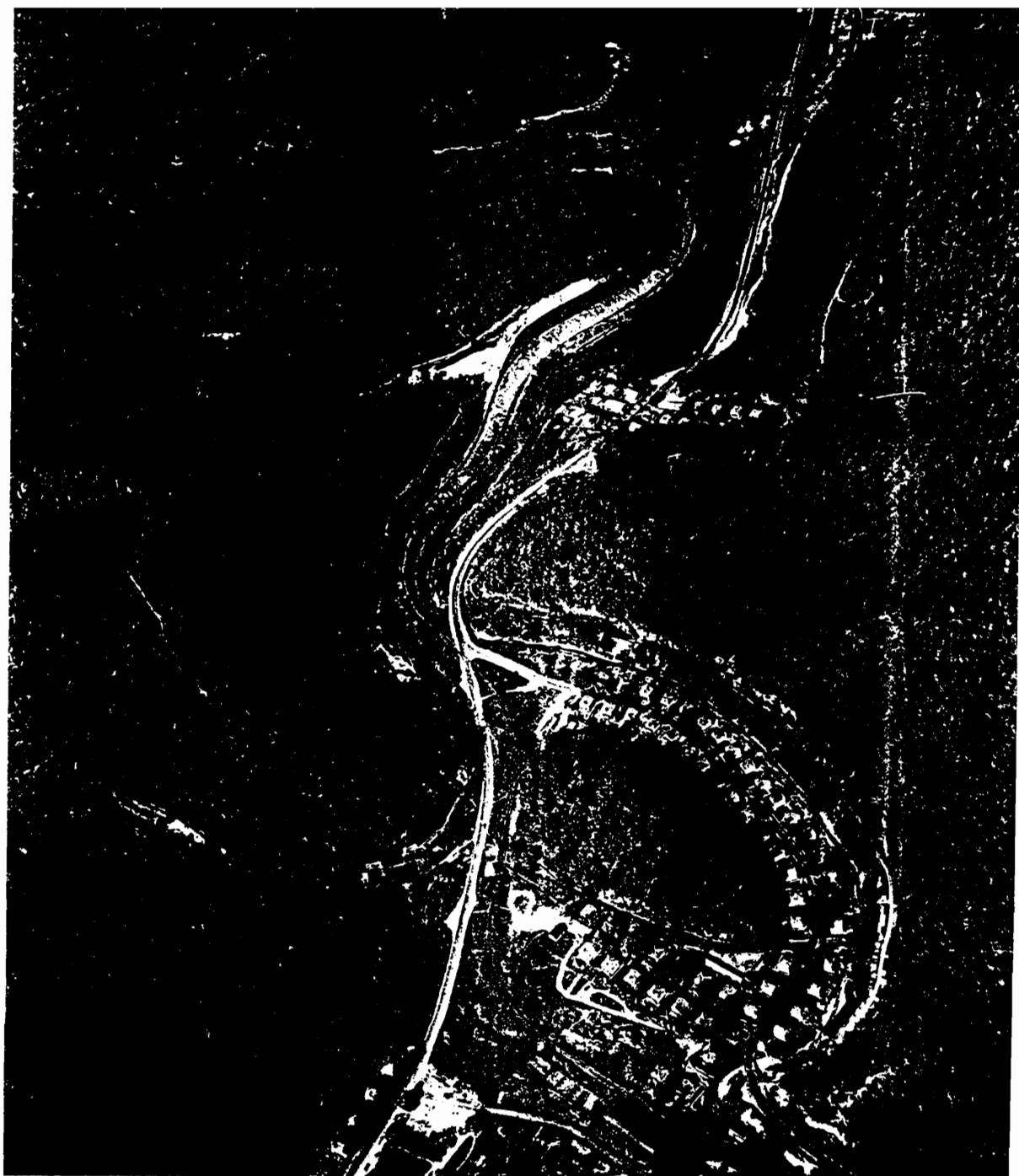
This scenario seems quite logical since, at about this same time, the Baldwin School at Amonate was taken over by the McDowell County system. Prior to 1931, two teachers at the Amonate school were employed by Virginia and two by West Virginia. Beginning with the 1931-1932 school year, all

teachers at the Baldwin School were to be employed by West Virginia. ("Amonate School," 1931) Prior to this time, the Bowman School at nearby Horsepen was also listed in both McDowell County, West Virginia and Tazewell County, Virginia records. It no longer appears as a West Virginia school after 1931-1932. These actions would coincide roughly with the time that the Store Hill school in Bishop, West Virginia was closed and all teachers in Bishop were employed by Virginia in the new school on the Virginia side of the camp.

The people who lived in Bishop became very proud of their community. The families were all very close to each other. (Phillips, 1989) When one family suffered, the entire community suffered. Outsiders often noted that Bishop was a special place to live to those individuals who were fortunate enough to call it home. A classmate of Bishop students at Tazewell High School in the 1940s commented that she often watched students from Bishop "with a feeling of wanting to join their special circle of closeness." (Leslie, 1977) Even the company operators did not want the term "coal camp" used to describe their town. Coal camp, to many, meant shoddy and temporary. Bishop would be neither. Instead, Bishop became a truly unique place to live and to work. (Leslie, 1977)

The coal company town that grew up at Bishop had many advantages not found in other similar towns during that

time. There were conveniences such as electricity, well-built homes, sidewalks, gardens and orderliness. The community included schools, churches, and the company store. Many such institutions were superior in coal camps in comparison to similar towns of equal population. (Corbin, 1981) Athletic playgrounds and ball fields were provided for the residents of the coal community, as well. The average small town of the same time period did not have facilities to compare with those found in the coal mining town of Bishop. (Conley, 1960)



Aerial View of West Virginia Side of Bishop Community.
Tipple at Top, Company Store and Store Hill at Center,
Colored Bottom and Radio Street at Bottom.

Courtesy of Grubb Photo Service.

Chapter 5

THE COAL COMPANY'S ROLE

Explosion of the School's Population

As a consequence of the remarkable influx of people into the community, the school known as Crocketts Cove was in no way capable of handling the resultant increase in the number of school-age children arriving almost daily. The enrollment at the school in the era before the coal mine had averaged around 60 students in two classrooms. (Bowen Shrader, personal communication, November 11, 1995) The school in 1930-1931 was yet listed by the school board as Crocketts Cove and employed two teachers, Rosa Mae Harman and Elsie Hilt.

In 1931, however, the school board recorded the same school as "Bishop" and disclosed, in June of 1931, that the announcement of teachers for the school would have to be withheld until arrangements for cooperating with West Virginia school authorities had been completed. ("Bishop," 1931) Apparently, during that school year, the Tazewell and McDowell County school boards collaborated in continuing instruction at the old two-room school at Crocketts Cove.

They dealt with the overflow of students in a company house on the West Virginia side of the community. (Gladys Thompson Horton, personal communication, March 28, 1995) This arrangement was temporary, however.

The school age population in Bishop was growing rapidly. This growth was evidenced by the fact that the Crocketts Cove Church hosted the Tazewell League Union meeting of Epworth Leagues in 1931. The Epworth League was the young peoples' organization in the Methodist Church during the 1930s. At this session, area churches represented included the Layman's Chapel, the Richlands Church, the Tazewell Church and the North Tazewell Church, as well as Bishop. Obviously, the young people's group at Bishop had to be rather sizable to host the area-wide meeting at the Crocketts Cove Church in which more than 90 young persons participated. ("Epworth League," 1931)

With projections for the next school year growing to more than 250 students in the same community, a more permanent arrangement was mandated. Classes being taught in a building constructed as a home and a school building which had only one or two-rooms but as many as eight different grades was simply not acceptable. (Virginia Neel Harry, personal communication, March 10, 1995) Clearly, the building would no longer suffice. In addition to being overcrowded, the school was showing many signs of aging.

(David Pruett, personal communication, March 26, 1995)

Bishop, as the community was now known, needed a school that could meet the needs of its residents.

One of the earliest residents of Bishop, Gertrude Crockett Wynn, moved to the new coal camp along with her parents in June of 1932. The new school was under construction when the family moved to town. By the fall of 1932, the building opened for grades one through seven.

(Gertrude Crockett Wynn, personal communication, March 28, 1995)



Residents Stroll through Busy Bishop Coal Community.

Courtesy of the Eastern Regional Coal Archives, Craft
Memorial Library.

Education During the Great Depression

Had the Bishop School been located in almost any other community in Virginia at this time, improvements would simply have had to wait. In fact, during the 1932-1933 school year, the superintendent's annual report noted that a full-time program was realized in the state, not because funding was sufficient but because many teachers volunteered their services after the money ran out. This sacrifice was coupled with the fact that teachers in Virginia had already suffered a 21% reduction in salary at the beginning of the same school year. The state superintendent observed in his annual report that it is not too much to say that a comparable situation in any other vocation or profession could not be found. (Superintendent of Public Instruction, 1932-1933) The state drastically cut school appropriations to balance the state's budget at the end of calendar year 1932. ("School Term," 1932) As a result, the school term in Tazewell County was pared back to seven months to conform to the state's appropriation reductions. Teachers in the county agreed to donate one week of their time and the towns in the county agreed to make up one additional week. These actions allowed the school term to total at least eight of

the original nine-month term. A writer in The Bluefield Daily Telegraph that year noted that school teachers should not be expected to teach school for nothing. He wondered aloud what other official in Tazewell County had agreed to be as generous as some were asking school teachers to be. ("School Term," 1932)

In 1933-1934, the Governor and the General Assembly authorized a further reduction of state support for education by 30%. As a result, the average teacher salary which had climbed to \$909.00 at the beginning of the decade had fallen to \$692.00 by 1933-1934. (Superintendent of Public Instruction, 1933-1934) Locally, all school personnel received two 10% annual cuts in salary during the depression years. Teacher applications during the 1930s for master's degree and even PhD holders were not uncommon for teaching positions that paid the phenomenal salary of \$70.00 per month. (Walthall, 1970)

The Coal Company's Support

Fortunately for Bishop, coal companies throughout the region had gained a reputation of supporting education in the coalfields. For example, in most coal communities, the company gave a plot of land on which to build the school.

In some camps, the coal company even did the grading work for the new school, donated building materials for the facility, or even built a school for the local school board. Teachers in many of the region's schools, as previously noted, often held no more than a public school education. The coal companies, however, wanted the most competent teachers to teach in their coal camp schools. As a result, the coal company often supplemented the school board's salaries in the coal camps. Coal companies in McDowell County subsidized teachers' salaries by almost \$20.00 per month by 1900. (Corbin, 1981) Sometimes these supplements were in the form of bonuses. Some coal companies actually paid the teachers' salaries. (Shifflett, 1991) These salaries and bonuses made coal camp schools among the best paid teaching positions of that time. (Charles Grindstaff, personal communication, January 2, 1996) Throughout the coalfields, as in Bishop, modern, brick buildings replaced older, weather-boarded structures. Education, as well as coal mining, introduced the native mountaineers to new ways of thinking and to the values of an industrial rather than agricultural society. (Corbin, 1981)

Another factor explaining the support for teachers' salaries in the coal camps is the reality that many of these same male teachers could leave the classroom for the mines and make a very good wage. The coal company officials

wanted the best teachers to stay in the classroom and, therefore, used these bonuses and supplements to encourage them to stay. "The Pocahontas Fuel Company put a lot into their schools," observed Dr. Charles Grindstaff, principal of Graham High School in Bluefield, Virginia, and 1959 graduate of Bishop School. (Charles Grindstaff, personal communication, January 2, 1996)

As a result, these same schools many times attracted the most qualified and the best-educated teachers available. Coal camp children were very likely to have college graduates teaching them. Well-qualified teachers throughout the eastern part of the United States went to the coalfields to teach. (Corbin, 1981) These college graduates taught in the communities which rewarded them for their educational advancements. The coal camp schools were among the first in the region to increase pay for the college degree. This practice was again in sharp contrast to earlier coal camps where coal operators were not interested in the educational system since many of their initial employees were single men. (Eller, 1982)

Coal companies were now providing space for school buildings, building schools, equipping them and even subsidizing school budgets. (Corbin, 1981) In fact, by the time Bishop was established, the coal industry had matured and a more family-oriented labor force had been established.

As a result, the coal company at Bishop supported the school from its inception.

Before high schools were established, some coal operators such as James Ellwood Jones, Edward O'Toole, and Joe Hutchinson even helped the poorest miners by sending their children to college at no cost to the miners' family. When these young men and women completed their two or four year college course, the company men would guarantee the miners' children a job teaching in the schools of the district. (Hight, 1946)

Fortuitously, the Pocahontas Fuel Company had a reputation for supporting education throughout its coal camps, as well. Bishop was no exception. In fact, J. A. Leslie, local Tazewell County newspaper editor, had observed, just a few years earlier, that the Pocahontas Fuel Company stood for liberal support of public schools. "Being the largest taxpayer in the county, it ought to be known that the Pocahontas Fuel Company favors adequate financial support of the public schools whether through tax levies or bonded indebtedness." ("Pocahontas Votes," 1925) In fact, paying taxes was one of the most important ways that Pocahontas Fuel Company supported education in Tazewell County. The Clinch Valley News editor further observed that, because of the strong personal support of education by James Ellwood Jones, the Vice President of the Pocahontas

Fuel Company at that time, "Tazewell County in the near future would take her place at the top of the list of Virginia counties in the development of her public school system." ("Pocahontas Votes," 1925) It is easy to see why the coal company officials received cooperation from the Tazewell County School officials. By supporting schools and education in this manner, the coal company also created a "more stable working environment and a closer bond with their workers." (Herrin, 1991)

As a result, county residents were not surprised when the Pocahontas Fuel Company presented a plan to the Tazewell County School Board in 1931 to furnish land for a new building to the community of Bishop to educate the mushrooming school-age population of the coal camp.

Perhaps this willingness by the coal company to invest in the future of Bishop resulted from the realization that Bishop was a new kind of mining town. "Practically free from the rough element which usually follows such developments, Bishop is one of the most orderly mining towns in the entire coalfield section," observed T. S. J. Williams, the deputy sheriff who was assigned to the Bishop community to preserve law and order during its early years. ("Bishop Is Most," 1931) As an illustration of his assertion, the town of Pocahontas at the same time contained at least twenty saloons where alcohol was sold. Meanwhile,

Bishop had only one such establishment.

Bishop Is Most Orderly Town

**Practically Free From Rough
Element Which Usually Fol-
lows New Developments.**

Bishop, the new mining town of the Pocahontas Fuel Company, is one of the most orderly mining towns in the entire coal field section, according to T. S. J. Williams, deputy sheriff, located in that new city to preserve law and order. Mr. Williams states that the mining area was formerly a clearing house for bootleggers and moonshiners for a wide territory, but they have been driven away and the town is quiet and peaceful now.

The company has a large force of miners at work and is shipping twenty-five to thirty cars of coal a day from the new plant, and expects to increase the output. The coal being mined at Bishop, according to Mr. Williams, is superior to any other Pocahontas coal yet discovered and is finding a ready market wherever its qualities become known.

The Clinch Valley News, August 21, 1931.

Leisure Time and Coal Company Baseball

Simple pastimes such as loafing, visiting, gossiping, or playing pool, checkers or horseshoes took much of the miners' free time. Fishing was limited since fish were rarely plentiful in the small streams near the camp.

(Turner, 1985) Churches provided an important social gathering place as did the school in the community. But when it came to leisure time, by far the most popular activity for the Bishop camp was its baseball teams. From sandlot to school lot, baseball became the game of choice.

In fact, nearly every coal town in the region had a baseball team. (Nyden, 1980) Competition was fierce among these amateur community-based teams. The coal company often furnished uniforms and equipment. ("Mining Life," 1980) Most of the players were recruited from the actual coal miners who worked at Bishop but, because of the heated inter-camp competition, semi-professional ball players were often "hired" at the mines because of their athletic prowess. Bishop Mine Superintendent H. A. Cassell often hired good ball players, both black and white, to work at the Bishop mines. (Freda Cassell Sadler, personal communication, December 27, 1995) On those occasions, coal

company officials became so involved in building good baseball teams that they recruited star players from other coal camp teams by offering them better positions at the Bishop mine. (Reginald Shutt, personal communication, October 22, 1995) As discussed previously, coal companies, in general, liked to hire good ballplayers; to give them lighter jobs on the surface and to dismiss them early to practice. (Nyden, 1980)



H. A. Cassell, First Bishop Mine Superintendent and Namesake of Bishop Baseball Diamond, Cassell Field.

Courtesy of the Eastern Regional Coal Archives, Craft Memorial Library.

Two semi-professional teams called Bishop home. Their home was a fine baseball field located just up the Crocketts Cove valley from the neighborhood known as Long Row. The local baseball turf was known as the Bishop Ball Diamond or Cassell Field. (Reginald Shutt, personal communication, October 22, 1995) Cassell Field was a fine facility with a grandstand and additional bleachers which were filled on Sunday afternoons by almost everyone who lived in the Bishop camp. (Raymond Phillips, personal communication, December 27, 1995) The diamond, surrounded by advertising billboards, rivaled ball fields in much larger communities. (Dennis Grindstaff, personal communication, January 2, 1996) Whenever the coal miner/ball player worked, he worked hard. Whenever the coal miner/ball player played, he played equally hard. (Nyden, 1980)

The black team, the Bishop State Liners, and the white team, the Bishop Miners, made their respective marks in the coalfields and provided the residents of Bishop with a favorite pastime during the zenith of the history of the coalfields. (James Altizer, personal communication, June 6, 1995) Since the league to which the Miners belonged was all-white, a separate network of black teams also grew up. (Nyden, 1980)

In black baseball, the Bishop State Liners was one of

the most outstanding teams in the entire region. The State Liners won an overwhelming majority of the games that they played during their existence. Riding from town to town in the back of coal trucks, these players did not enjoy the indulgences that professional ball players relished during this time but they, nevertheless, provided some of the most exciting baseball to be seen in any ballpark, backyard or professional. In fact, a substantial rivalry among the teams of the Coalfield League developed in the early years of the league's history. At Bishop, Cassell Field hosted several professional teams passing through this area who stopped to play the State Liners. Such teams included the Homestead Grays of Pennsylvania, the Miami Giants of Florida, the Winston Pond Joints of North Carolina and the Philadelphia All Stars of Pennsylvania. In addition, local teams provided top rate competition. Jenkinjones, Welch, Amonate, Pocahontas, and Crumpler fielded notable teams during the era. (Hypes, 1981)

Nick Cullop, a former New York Yankee pitcher, was the early manager of the Bishop team. He was followed by Dick Asbury, who had experience playing the game all over the world while in service. (Talbert, 1988) John Baker served as next manager during this time for the Bishop State Liners. (Phillips, 1989) The recreation provided for the residents of Bishop through the Coalfield League was "one of

kind." The competition found in coalfield baseball is something for which no comparable pastime exists today.

The all-white team which played for Bishop in the 1930s was known as the Bishop Miners. Hundreds of people regularly turned out at Cassell Field each week to cheer the Miners on to victory. Any member of the Miners team who knocked a ball out of the Cassell Field was given a free suit of clothes from the Bishop Company Store. In addition, coal companies routinely bought new uniforms and other equipment for the ball clubs. (Nyden, 1980) Coal miners greatly enjoyed these diversions which the coal company made possible. (Herrin, 1991) It is apparent, however, that these activities did give the coal operators one more mechanism to pacify everyday life within the coal camp.

Bishop Miners' competition pitted teams from other area coal camps such as Caretta, Gary, Boissevain, Berwind, Bradshaw, Filbert, Elbert, Amonate and Coalwood. Some of these games were big rivalries. In particular, games with Amonate, Gary and Elbert created much excitement in Bishop. In addition, the Bishop team played teams from Saltville, Lebanon and Covington. (Talbert, 1988) The Bishop team sometimes played other squads from as far away as West Virginia, Kentucky, North Carolina, Pennsylvania and Tennessee in hotly contested athletic competitions.

The Sunday afternoon baseball game became an

institution in the coalfields. All week long, residents anticipated the baseball game to be played on Sunday afternoon. (Daughters, 1959) After Sunday dinner, the entire family walked to the community ballfield, "the ball diamond," for an afternoon of baseball. Often the small "stadiums" would be packed. ("Mining Life," 1980) Baseball thrived in the coalfields until the 1940s. Stakes and interest ran high in the coal communities since players were often offered bonuses for outstanding feats. (Daughters, 1959)

When the United Mine Workers Union arrived, coal companies refrained from supporting the teams as they had previously. The semiprofessional Coalfield League was terminated in 1937 and supplanted by the professional Mountain State League. (Daughters, 1959) Finally, the advent of World War II spelled the end of the coalfield teams in most of the communities where they yet survived. (Nyden, 1980) The war also brought an end to the new Mountain State League. (Daughters, 1959)



Site of Bishop Ball Diamond or Cassell Field, Home of the
Bishop Miners and Bishop State Liners Baseball Teams.

Photograph by the Author.

The Coal Company's Subtle and Not-So-Subtle Influence

The coal companies exercised much control over the miners and their families in Bishop and other coalfield communities through their support of schools, churches, housing and even the athletic teams. Loyalty to the company was expected, if not demanded. One early resident of Bishop recounted a man who worked at the Bishop mine while applying for a job at Jewell Ridge, another Tazewell County mine owned by a different company. When the Pocahontas Coal Company officials found out, they moved the man's furniture out of his house and evicted him from the company house on the site. (Ollie Burnett, personal communication, March 13, 1995) If a person defaced his home, he was simply given moving orders. (Alonzo Lambright, personal communication, February 26, 1995)

The Virginia coal miner was praised by a mine official from another state who, shaking his head in disbelief, stated, "They are just different; friendlier, harder working, and honest. You can depend on them." (Wamsley, 1969, p. 5) The Bishop coal miner, however, would not simply serve as a pawn of the company. He made this independent character trait very conspicuous with the

introduction of another extremely influential institution in the coalfields during this era. That organization would, once and for all, establish the rugged individualism of the Appalachian coal miner and his family.



THE POCAHONTAS CORPORATION

Company-Owned Gasoline Station Across the Street from the
Company Store.

Courtesy of the Eastern Regional Coal Archives, Craft
Memorial Library.

The Arrival of the United Mine Workers

The institution was the United Mine Workers of America. The UMWA organized central Appalachian coal miners during the years between 1933 and 1935. (Nyden, 1980) The mines in McDowell County were unionized in 1933. In fact, the first coal miners' union in Virginia was organized at Bishop in 1933.

This date coincided with President Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal legislation that forced the coal operators to allow the unions into the mines. In early 1933, President Roosevelt signed the Industrial Recovery Act into law. That statute gave American workers the right to join the labor union of their choice. (Corbin, 1990) Another piece of legislation, the National Labor Relations Act, saw the end of much of the violence that had characterized the coalfields for several years. (Daughters, 1959) In fact, for more than three decades prior to the birth of Bishop, the conflict between labor and management was waged with hundreds of men losing their lives and thousands of miners evicted from their homes. In fact, during the decade from 1912 to 1921, labor violence had erupted on several different occasions throughout the

region. (Cohen, 1984) The violence which characterized many of these earlier coal camps resulted in America's largest armed insurrection since the Civil War. (Savage, 1984) During that time, numerous attempts to establish the union were made throughout the coalfields. These problems did not exist in Bishop due to the union's late arrival in the new coal mining community.

During the spring of 1933, the members of the United Mine Workers marched down Long Row carrying both the UMWA flag and the American flag. The people of Bishop lined the streets during pouring rain to cheer on the union parade. The union's slogan was "Never forsake thy brother nor thy widow." The UMWA Local Union 6025 at Bishop was officially chartered in September 1933 with D. P. Earnest as its first president. The first international contract between the United Mine Workers and the Southern Coal Operators was signed on October 2, 1933. As a result, the operators officially recognized the UMWA as the legal bargaining agent for the coal miners.

The union's presence improved working and living conditions throughout the coalfields. As a result, the standard of living that the Bishop miner enjoyed was comparatively high from the beginning. By this time, the average miner's pay was about \$5.00 per day or a little more than \$100.00 per month. John L. Lewis, the legendary leader

of the United Mine Workers during the years that Bishop ascended to the position of a leading coal community, led the United Mine Workers to achieve a guaranteed eight-hour work day, national wage agreements, and numerous safety rules in the form of law. (Fisher, 1993)

The most common form of pay was in scrip, the only currency accepted by many coal company stores. (Hibbard, 1990) The United Mine Workers was instrumental in improving safety, increasing wages, and providing a better guaranteed living for the retired coal miner. The efforts of the UMWA were unique in that they were able, through these programs, to return to the region a substantial part of the wealth that the coal mines produced. (Caudill, 1962) The UMWA also brought together the white miner and his black counterpart in the formation of an interracial labor union at Bishop. (Brier, 1992)

The union held its first meetings in the Grassy Spur Church off the main road in Bishop. As the union grew, the first Union Hall was built on Stony Ridge. Much later, a new, modern structure was located on Long Row near the post office. This hall, built at a cost of approximately \$88,000, is also now used as the polling place for the Bishop precinct. ("Bishop Hall," 1976) Even the post office was replaced, at the same location, with a modern, brick facility at about the same time.



New Post Office on Long Row.

Photograph by the Author.

In fact, the Bishop camp was an escape for many miners and their families who were not happy in other Appalachian coal communities. Bishop was, in truth, settled by miners who came primarily from other, older coal camps. This opportunity for relocating gave the coal miner the ultimate source of independence.

Construction of a New Building

Therefore, as a consequence of the Pocahontas Fuel Company's initiative, the old, frame, two-room Crocketts Cove School was replaced. As late as the 1920s, rural schools in Virginia had undergone only "hesitant transformation." (Link, 1986) Many such schools still operated under the constraints of the previous century. These changes that took place at Bishop during the latter part of the 1920s and the early 1930s were a part of a revolution that was sweeping across the commonwealth at the time. Teacher training and building construction standards were all in place by the time the new building at Bishop was required. As a result, once again, Bishop benefited from its later arrival on the scene, as a community and as a school.

For example, in 1929-1930, the school was last referred to as Crocketts Cove in official school board records. In 1930-1931, the two-teacher and, evidently, two-room arrangement continued, but the name of the school was listed as Bishop. The following year, the school was expanded and set up on a graded basis with a faculty of five and with the name changed to Bishop Graded School. Graded schools in the county were those institutions with three and four rooms

each. Other common schools were those with only one or two rooms each.

The Pocahontas Corporation transferred to the School Board in Tazewell County a parcel of land in Crocketts Cove in consideration of \$1.00 and in further consideration of "the welfare of the employees of the Pocahontas Corporation and the advantages to be derived by establishing and maintaining a school." (Tazewell County Deed Book 117, Page 485) The deed for the Bishop School further stated that, should the property cease to be used as a school at any time in the future, the real estate would revert to and become property of the Pocahontas Corporation. (Tazewell County Deed Book 117, Page 485) The property included a 2.4 acre site located directly across State Route 112 (now Route 16) from the earlier two-room school. (Ellis, 1970)

The building at Bishop was needed, of course, to serve the rapidly growing population caused by the coalfield developments of the Pocahontas Corporation. The editor of The Bluefield Daily Telegraph noted that some citizens had taken the "narrow view" that the company, therefore, should erect the building from its own funds. The editor observed that the coal company had property in Jeffersonville District of Tazewell County at this time assessed at \$285,000 upon which the company paid the same levies assessed on other property owners. He further noted that

the residents of the Bishop camp were tax-paying county citizens themselves and entitled to the privileges, including schooling, that other citizens in the county enjoyed. ("School Board to," 1931) Apparently county officials concurred.

Therefore, the only obstacle remaining to the construction of a new building in Bishop was the passage of a school bond by the Jeffersonville District voters in Tazewell County. A heated debate ensued in which a \$135,000 bond issue was proposed that would not only build a new structure at Bishop but also construct a new school at North Tazewell, and a new addition to Tazewell High School.

On Tuesday, March 3, 1931, the Tazewell County School Board announced a bond issue to erect a new school both at Bishop and at the other locations. The total amount of the bond was set at \$135,000. The school board received plans for new school buildings at both North Tazewell and Bishop by the late summer of 1931. ("Plans for Schools," 1931) This deed was recorded at the Tazewell County Clerk's Office on September 30, 1931. The contract to build the school was awarded to a local Tazewell County contractor, J. Clarence Heldreth, on October 11, 1931. ("Heldreth," 1931) The plumbing and heating contract was awarded to Altavista Heating and Electric Company. Construction on the building began on Monday, November 2, 1931 and was to coincide with

Heldreth's building a new school at North Tazewell near the county seat. The following year this same Heldreth contracted for and built the new \$80,000 Tazewell High School building in the county seat. (Leslie, 1982)

TAZEWELL SCHOOL BUILDINGS RUSHED

Improvement Program Is Ex-
pected To Be Completed By
Fall; Civic League Is Or-
ganized At North Tazewell

Tazewell, Va., -March 19. (Correspondence). — The program of school improvement in the Jeffersonville district of Tazewell county, made possible by the ratification of a bond issue of \$135,000 last May augmented by a loan from the state literary fund of \$50,000, is moving along nicely and is expected to be completed by the opening of the school term in September. The \$40,000 building at Bishop is in the final stage of completion and the North Tazewell project, costing \$28,000, is but a few weeks behind. Ground was broken on Tuesday for the erection of the Tazewell high school plant, the major project of the enterprise, which is to cost \$70,000 and be a complete modern high school unit.

The site for the building is adjacent to the present school property, which will continue to serve as a grade school, thus bringing both schools under the direct supervision of one principal.

The Bluefield Daily Telegraph, March 20, 1932.

Grading for the new Bishop School began immediately after the bond was set in 1931. This grading and ground work was completed for the school board at no cost by the Pocahontas Fuel Company. ("Heldreth," 1931) After several months of work by the coal company, the school board and the Heldreth Contractors, the Bishop School planned to open at the beginning of the school term in September. The total cost of the new building at Bishop was set at \$40,000. ("Tazewell School," 1932). Construction on the new building proceeded on schedule, with both the Bishop and North Tazewell facilities under roof by the end of February 1932. ("Rush Work," 1932) Luckily, the winter of 1931-1932 was noted as one of the mildest winters in more than four decades. ("Winter Very," 1932) No doubt, the mild winter hastened the completion of the new school. As a result, at the beginning of the 1932-1933 school term, Bishop Graded School opened in a modern, brick facility located on State Route 112 (now Route 16) at the foot of Stony Ridge. (For a view of the floor plan of the new Bishop School, see Appendix H.)



Bishop School Pictured in the 1930s.

Courtesy of Crickett Nash.

Control and Purpose of the Bishop School

In contrast to schools in many earlier coal camps Bishop was deeded to and controlled by the county school board from the school's inception. The control of the school and its curriculum written about in other Appalachia scenarios was not present in Bishop. The low level of education often described as common in coal camp schools (Caudill, 1963) and the bleak picture of a school lost in the hollows of dirty Appalachian coalfields, as described in the Lost Appalachians (Earnest, 1972) seem far removed from the situation at Bishop.

At Bishop, most students did not attend school to prepare to go into the mines. Instead, most students went to school to prepare for high school, and in many instances, college. Bishop miners and residents saw education as a new door of opportunity for their young citizens. This view appears to sharply contrast with the view of the typical Appalachian family that Jack E. Weller described in his 1965 volume entitled Yesterday's People: Life in Contemporary Appalachia. He observed that schools in Appalachia had a high percentage of children from families that do not value education. These children, he believed, put a drag on the

educational system in mountain communities. (Weller, 1965)

To the contrary, students appear to have worked hard at Bishop. If one did not do his work, he did not pass; instead, he repeated the same grade. (Gertrude Crockett Wynn, personal communication, March 28, 1995) The operation of the Bishop school was, for the most part, parallel with the operation of other similar schools in the county at that time. If the coal company was involved at all, its involvement was very low key. (Sandra Peery, personal communication, March 22, 1995)

Meanwhile, the old two-room Crocketts Cove School was used for the next decade as Sunday School classrooms for the Crocketts Cove Church which stood next door. (Winifred Crockett, personal communication, January 25, 1995) Youth organizations met in the old school, also. These groups included the Epworth League and a very active Boy Scout Troop. (Francis Huffman, personal communication, March 18, 1995)

Jack Creeseaman and Sidney McDonald served as adult leaders for the scout troop which met in the old Crocketts Cove building. (Phillips, 1989) The troop often camped out in and around the Crocketts Cove valley. This group was one of the most active youth clubs in Bishop. Adult organizations such as the Odd Fellows and the Rebeccas used the school as a meeting hall. (Phillips, 1989) The old

Burnside stove overheated on one occasion and the old two-room frame structure burned to the ground in 1938. (Don McKinny, personal communication, March 31, 1995)

The new school term for Bishop in 1932-1933, therefore, opened in a modern building which featured eight classrooms, an office, a gym/auditorium and multi-purpose room, teacher lounges, two supply rooms and inside bathroom facilities. Five teachers were hired to teach in the new structure. This arrangement required some members of the staff to instruct in a combination-grade classroom. A principal was also employed to lead the school which was continuing to grow in enrollment almost daily.

The new building served the community not only as a school during the daily school hours but also as a community center for after school, evening and even week-end activities. For example, when the school was not in session, the playground was often busy with youngsters from the community. The PTA and other community organizations often utilized the school for night meetings as well.

At about the time that this new school building was constructed, a young man by the name of Aubrey Sadler arrived in Bishop, having recently graduated from the College of Engineering at Virginia Tech. Soon Sadler married a daughter of the superintendent of the Pocahontas Coal Company's Bishop Operations, H. A. Cassell. (Francis

Huffman, personal communication, March 18, 1995) He had come to Bishop to design the tracks for the coal to be removed from Bishop and held the responsible position of civil engineer for the Norfolk and Western Railroad. (Witten, 1931)

As a result of his work, the first coal was moved through the tippie at Bishop in November of 1931. After completing his work, Sadler and the remainder of the Norfolk and Western crew that had been assigned to complete the Bishop project were removed to Norfolk where the railroad had another project underway. Therefore, Sadler and his young bride moved to Suffolk, Virginia, Sadler's hometown, so he could work on the Norfolk project. Unfortunately for Sadler and the other members of the old Bishop crew, the Great Depression was worsening and soon all members of the group were laid off. (Freda Cassell Sadler, personal communication, December 17, 1995)

Luckily for Sadler, his father-in-law, H. A. Cassell, as Superintendent of the Bishop Mines, was able to offer the railroad engineer a job at the Bishop mine site. In Bishop, Sadler worked outside the mine during the week and at the company store on Saturdays. A. S. Greever, Tazewell County School Superintendent, heard of the well-educated mine laborer living in Bishop and persuaded Sadler to accept the post of principal at the new Bishop School which was to open

that year. For the next several years, Sadler supplemented this principal's income by continuing to work on Saturdays at the Bishop Company Store to support his wife and their three children. (Francis Huffman, personal communication, March 18, 1995) As the depression waned, new job opportunities arose for Sadler.

As a result of his education and unique skill as a writer and printer, he worked full-time as a coal company executive during the late 1930s. During World War II, Sadler joined the navy and faced action in the Pacific Theater. At that time, Sadler and his family left Bishop for good. (Freda Cassell Sadler, personal communication, December 27, 1995)

The teachers during that inaugural year included Rosa Mae Harman, Ruth Belcher, Vivian Ellington and Rose Pierce. These first-year faculty members at the new Bishop School were paid \$70.00 per month--the same salary they would have received at any other Tazewell County School that year. (Principal's Annual, 1928-1938) The school term ran from after Labor Day in September through June each year. (Nell Bailey Hairfield, personal communication, September 27, 1995) In addition, the school day began at 8:00 and ended at 3:00. (Francis Huffman, personal communication, March 18, 1995) Each day began with opening exercises including scripture reading, a song and the Lord's Prayer. (Nell

Bailey Hairfield, personal communication, September 27, 1995) One of the young men who attended the school the year that it opened was Raymond Phillips. Phillips recounted how the boys would smoke every chance that they had while outside for recess or lunch. Teacher Rosa Mae Harman would wait at the door, and when she detected the smell of smoke, she would swat the young offender as he reentered the building. Her two and one-half foot stick would provide swift punishment for the offense. (Raymond Phillips, personal communication, December 27, 1995) Harman would use the same stick to provide swift reprimand for students in study hall who lifted their heads or otherwise appeared disinterested in reading or studying during that time period. Although Harman lived on the other side of Stony Ridge Mountain, she was never absent from school. When the snow got too deep for her to drive her car across the mountain road in the winter, Harman would walk the six or seven miles across Stony Ridge from her home in the Healing Springs community near North Tazewell. (Raymond Phillips, personal communication, December 27, 1995)

However, one feature for the Bishop teacher was very different from the county-wide standards discussed above. The Bishop teachers were provided with one benefit that no regular Tazewell County teacher received. These coal camp educators were provided free lodging in a company house in

the Bishop camp. With four rooms upstairs and four rooms downstairs, the living arrangements for these teachers were better than many educators of that time enjoyed. In addition, their only expense related to the provision of food. The Pocahontas Fuel Company provided the company house at no cost to four teachers who made the company house at Bishop their home. (Virginia Neel Harry, personal communication, March 10, 1995) In some camps, such houses were called "teacherages" and were equipped with bedroom suites, kitchen-dinettes, and living rooms--all provided rent free to the community's educators. (Corbin, 1981)

In the years that followed, many teachers continued to room in the Bishop community even after the coal company discontinued its practice of providing free housing. As a result, several boarding houses provided rooms, not only for single miners, but also for single teachers. Other teachers daily drove across Stony Ridge from Tazewell to teach at Bishop. (Nell Bailey Hairfield, personal communication, September 27, 1995)

An additional benefit provided to the school throughout this era was coal for the building's furnace. The company provided the coal to the school at no cost. (Bill Shutt, personal communication, August 28, 1995) Heat for the building was furnished by one huge furnace. Hot water radiators which maintained a fairly even temperature were

placed in each room. A janitor employed by the school board maintained the heating equipment.

In many coal camp schools, the coal company mandated curriculum standards which included not only reading, writing, and arithmetic but even classes on coal mining. (Corbin, 1981) Curriculum at the Bishop school was, however, strictly in line with the state curriculum standards of Tazewell County at the time.

Despite Bishop's relative isolation, the latest techniques and strategies were routinely employed. For example, the concept of "total personality" education as proposed by the president of the University of Chicago at the time, Robert M. Hutchins, had evidently filtered down to the Bishop School. (Clausen, 1979) At Bishop, such courses as physical education, art and music were added to the curriculum. (Thelma Spence, personal communication, June 9, 1995) Specially trained educators were added to the staff as these classes became a part of the standard curriculum. This addition occurred to a great extent because more federal monies came to the school system as a result of the New Deal initiatives of the 1930s.

In addition, Tazewell County school superintendent, A. S. Greever, warned local citizens, as the depression worsened, that economizing county government to deal with the deficits caused by the depression should better occur

somewhere besides in the schools. He warned, "Let's not let the schools suffer." ("County Schools, 1931, p. 1)

Nevertheless, the school term was reduced from 9 to 7 1/2 months in January of 1932 to address the budget crisis. Only the high school terms were able to run the full nine months during the remainder of the 1931-1932 school year. ("Schools to Run," 1932)

The standard elementary social studies curriculum across the state included a detailed study of Virginia. The textbook used in the school at Bishop, as well as other elementary classrooms across Virginia, was A History of Virginia for Boys and Girls by John W. Wayland and Rose MacDonald. In one of the final chapters of the 400 page textbook entitled Some Virginia Gifts, a discussion of the "many wonderful gifts that God had bestowed on Virginia" (Wayland, 1920, p. 42) was included. These gifts included several natural resources including the ports at Hampton Roads, Virginia's forest, her agricultural wealth and her coal. The discovery of the Pocahontas seam and Jordan Nelson's coal bank were briefly discussed as was the Exhibition Coal Mine which had recently opened in Pocahontas. A photograph showing "miners at work near Tazewell" was also included. (Wayland, 1920) This text was used in the Bishop School during the 1920s, 1930s and 1940s.

Activities and Groups at the New Bishop School

The children of the Bishop school had few store-bought toys. They made most of those toys. Vigorous playtime activities were common as diversions from the classroom routine in such two-room schools. (Montell, 1993) Games that they played included marbles, jacks, crack the whip, hide and seek, pole vaulting, hopscotch, jump rope, and, during hog killing time, football--when hog bladders were secured from the local butchers, dried out over the old cook stove and blown up to give the young coal camp athletes a rare opportunity to play a game of old-fashioned football. (Phillips, 1989) Sometimes the younger children played tag or wrestled on the ground outside the school. They also played tricks on the new kids in the camp as something of an initiation into the Bishop community. The young people of the community were very inventive and industrious in providing new forms of recreation for the new town.

One of the early students at the Bishop School was L. H. Honaker who now lives in Tazewell, Virginia. Honaker was a student at the Bishop School during the mid-1930s. Some of his favorite memories included games that the students played such as dare base, baseball, basketball, and marbles. His favorite period of the school day was, of course, recess. He recounts that, when Charles Snively came to the

school as its new principal in 1935, he organized the school's first and perhaps only band. The "Gully Jumping Jaugernaught Jug Band" was established to rally school spirit. (H. L. Honaker, personal communication, March 1, 1995)

During the period from 1935-1944, Bishop Graded School also added grades 8-9 which were often taught by the principal. Mr. Snively apparently believed that the school which now included a junior high needed to better establish its identity. As a result, Snively chose the colors black and orange (H. L. Honaker, personal communication, March 1, 1995) which remained the school's colors until the its closing in the 1980s. (For a list of the teachers employed and the subjects taught at Bishop School, see Appendix C; For a list of the grades taught by year at Bishop School, see Appendix D.)

During part of this era, both of the junior high grades were taught in one room. The eighth grade would have study hall during ninth grade classes and vice versa. If class changes were required, the teachers exchanged classrooms instead of the students. (Juanita Pruitt Yost, personal communication, September 16, 1995) Snively also coached one of the school's first interscholastic basketball teams, a boys' team and a girls' team. These teams became an important part of the school's life, particularly in the

1940s. (Marie Asbury, personal communication, December 31, 1995)

The school at Bishop had great community support. "I remember the entire community getting together for events like the Halloween carnival." (H. L. Honaker, personal communication, March 1, 1995) Kissing booths, fish booths, cake walks and other games were abundant at such school activities. Parents were always there to lend their support when needed. (Thelma Spence, personal communication, June 9, 1995) In February, the Valentine King and Queen were crowned. Homemade candy was available and a carnival atmosphere prevailed again while the school raised needed funds to purchase supplies for both the office and the classrooms. (Marilla Johnson, personal communication, March 7, 1995)

The PTA became a very active group in the school and community. Teachers were required to be present and to assume an active part in the PTA. Carnivals were often sponsored to raise money for the school. In addition, hot dog sales were held at ball games. Cake walks and other fund raisers were employed by these parent groups to fund special needs at the school. (Francis Huffman, personal communication, March 18, 1995) Plays and other student-prepared exhibitions were routinely provided by the Bishop teachers for presentation at PTA meetings. (Virginia Neel

Harry, personal communication, March 10, 1995) For example, as early as 1932, it was noted that the play, "Treasure Farm," would be presented in the near future at Bishop with the proceeds being used to support the new school. (Ferguson, 1932)

During these early years of the new school at Bishop, the coal company did much to support the educational program. Another Bishop student of the 1930s, Russell Fletcher, recalls that the company supplied the school with equipment for an elementary science laboratory. The lab included microscopes, slides, and specimens. In addition, the company assisted with the upkeep of the floor in the school's new gymnasium. (Russell Fletcher, personal communication, March 28, 1995)

One of the most exciting memories many early students have of the Bishop School in the 1930s was their two outstanding basketball teams. Both the boys' team and the girls' team gained respect throughout Tazewell County and the area for their winning traditions. One of the members of those teams was Crickett Nash who attended Bishop School during the 1940s. According to Nash, the girls' basketball team was made up of 10 to 12 girls and was coached throughout much of that decade by Mr. Grover Strong who was also principal of the Bishop School at that time. One of the biggest games of the year was scheduled with Burkes

Garden. "We used to love to play one another to see who was superior," Nash recalled. (Crickett Nash, personal communication, August 26, 1995) "Bishop had a very good basketball team but Burkes Garden kept beating us," Pruitt added. (Juanita Pruitt Yost, personal communication, July 27, 1995) In fact, Bishop and Burkes Garden often played each other several times during the season. Principal Strong was from Burkes Garden; therefore, it was easy to schedule games between the two rivals and to see the quick development of a heated rivalry.

As prosperity began to unfold in the 1930s, some miners were able to save enough money to buy a good secondhand car. Then a ride over the mountain to the county seat and a good movie at the Clinch Theater in Tazewell provided a new and exciting form of recreation for the people of Bishop. A quarter would buy a ticket and leave enough change to get a bottle of pop and a box of popcorn. (Phillips, 1989)

Notwithstanding the obvious difficulties experienced during the depression years, progress was made. For example, the building of the new Bishop school consumed only a small portion of approximately \$17.5 million that was spent on new school buildings during the 1930s across the state of Virginia. The change from a one-room school at Crocketts Cove to the multi-room, modern Bishop facility was also a part of a state-wide trend which saw the total number

of school buildings in the state decrease from 5,618 to 4,892 and the number of one-room schools decrease from 2,764 to 1,923 during the same decade. (Superintendent of Public Instruction, 1935-1936)

Bishop Junior High School

This Bishop Graded School consisted of grades one through seven until after the Second World War. The principal taught the seventh grade throughout the period. He assumed the added responsibility of teaching the upper grades or the equivalent of grades eight and nine by 1935-1936. Therefore, from 1935-1936 until 1943-1944, students at Bishop could complete the first two years of high school at Bishop.

With the addition of the first two years of high school, Bishop became known as a junior high school. Bishop Junior High held regular graduations during its existence as a junior high school from 1935 until 1944. One such closing exercise was held on Friday, May 21, 1943. The following program was included in that day's edition of The Clinch Valley News.

Bishop Junior High Closing Exercises

Processional

Invocation, Rev. G. T. Jordan

America the Beautiful, Seventh and Ninth Grades

I Am an American, Lois Wallace

Victory, Rosina Mastro

America, Seventh and Ninth Grades

Americanism, Almeda Crockett

Let's Get Together, Betty Martin

Army Air Corps Song

Anchors Away, Marine Hymn, Seventh and Ninth Grades

The Flag, Denver Pennington

My Friends, Alice Justice

The Footpaths to Peace, Johnny Mastro

The Home Front, Rosa Lamantia

The Star Spangled Banner by Betty Lee Herndon

The Star Spangled Banner by Audience

Presentation of Diplomas, Mr. Maxey

Recessional

("Closing Exercises," 1943)

In addition, interscholastic sports came to Bishop with the introduction of the school's basketball team in the 1930s. The Bishop five competed successfully with such formidable opponents as Tazewell, Berwind, War and Pocahontas. The Bishop team often competed with cross-county rival, Burkes Garden. As a result, a heated rivalry developed between the two rural schools.

The High School Years After Bishop

To complete their high school careers, Bishop students needed transportation to Tazewell High School to complete grades 10-11 and graduation requirements in Virginia. Otherwise, they crossed over the state line and rode a bus to Big Creek High School to complete grades 10-12 and graduation requirements in West Virginia. Black students on the West Virginia side of the state line had only one high school option. The black school was Excelsior High School located near War in McDowell County. (Frank Bennett, personal communication, March 7, 1995)

During the first year of the Bishop coal camp, a few high school age children arrived in the community with their families. The McDowell County Board of Education completed

a new consolidated high school in 1931 bringing students from Coalwood, Berwind and War together at a new facility called Big Creek High School. The majority of Bishop students attended this school in fall of 1931. Of seven seniors in Bishop, six attended the Big Creek school which actually met on the top floor of the school building in Carretta. The new Big Creek High School which was projected to open by October 1, 1931 ("New Big Creek," 1931) was not completed for occupancy until January of 1932. (Thomas Hatcher, personal communication, October 15, 1995) Nora Lee Kiser, Belle Webb, Lola Ferguson, Louise Lester, Mary McCutcheon, and Bill Hall were all enrolled at Big Creek. Mellie Cassell was the sole Tazewell High School senior living in Bishop. ("News of Week," 1931) A long lived, healthy interstate and intracommunity rivalry began that fall when these students and many other residents of Bishop supported their respective teams at the first annual Big Creek-Tazewell football contest at War in November of the same year. ("Big Creek-Tazewell," 1931)

One of the earliest graduates of Tazewell High School who lived in Bishop was Gertrude Crockett Wynn. Wynn observed that her father had to buy a car and hire someone to drive his daughter and a few other students across the mountain to high school each day. No other transportation was available to high school in Tazewell at that time. The

only other option for Virginia side Bishop students would have been to walk to the state line, a two or three-mile jaunt for students living up the Crocketts Cove valley, to catch the McDowell County bus which took high school students to Berwind.

Not only did the high school students from Bishop have to provide their own transportation, but they also had to pay tuition to attend Tazewell High School. The incorporated towns worked with the school board in the county to provide high schools. The town of Tazewell, for example, supplemented the monthly pay of teachers at Tazewell High School. ("Towns Against," 1932) The high school tuition of \$28.00 per term was viewed as an absolute necessity by Tazewell County Superintendent A. S. Greever as a stop gap against shortening the school term during the depths of the depression in 1931. ("County Schools," 1931) As a result, high school students who lived outside the town of Tazewell were required to pay the \$28.00 tuition to attend Tazewell High School. Tuition could be paid on the quarterly plan of \$7.00 per quarter, if patrons so desired. In the 1932 school year, a total of 180 students were enrolled at Tazewell High School. Only 50 of the students lived in the town. Another 20 students lived in the neighboring town of North Tazewell and the remaining 110 pupils lived beyond the boundaries of both towns. This

who resided in Bishop. ("County Unable," 1932)

Tazewell High School
Tazewell, Virginia.
Nov, 19, 1931.

Dear Patron:

The tuition for the session 1931-32 is \$28.00 per pupil. Your tuition may be paid in four equal payments of \$7.00 as follows: Tuition for the first quarter, due Nov. 10, tuition for second quarter due January 18, tuition for third quarter, due March 21, and tuition for fourth quarter due May 20.

Please see that your tuition for the first and second quarters is paid by January 18th so your son or daughter will be permitted to take his or her examinations. Tuition for the third and fourth quarters must be paid by May 20th. If it is not convenient for you to pay your tuition on or before the dates mentioned above please see Mayer R.C. Peery and make arrangements concerning same. Please make checks payable to Tazewell High School. Checks made payable to C.J.M. Kyle will not accepted.

If there are any questions concerning the progress of your son or daughter in school I will be very glad to discuss them with you at any time.

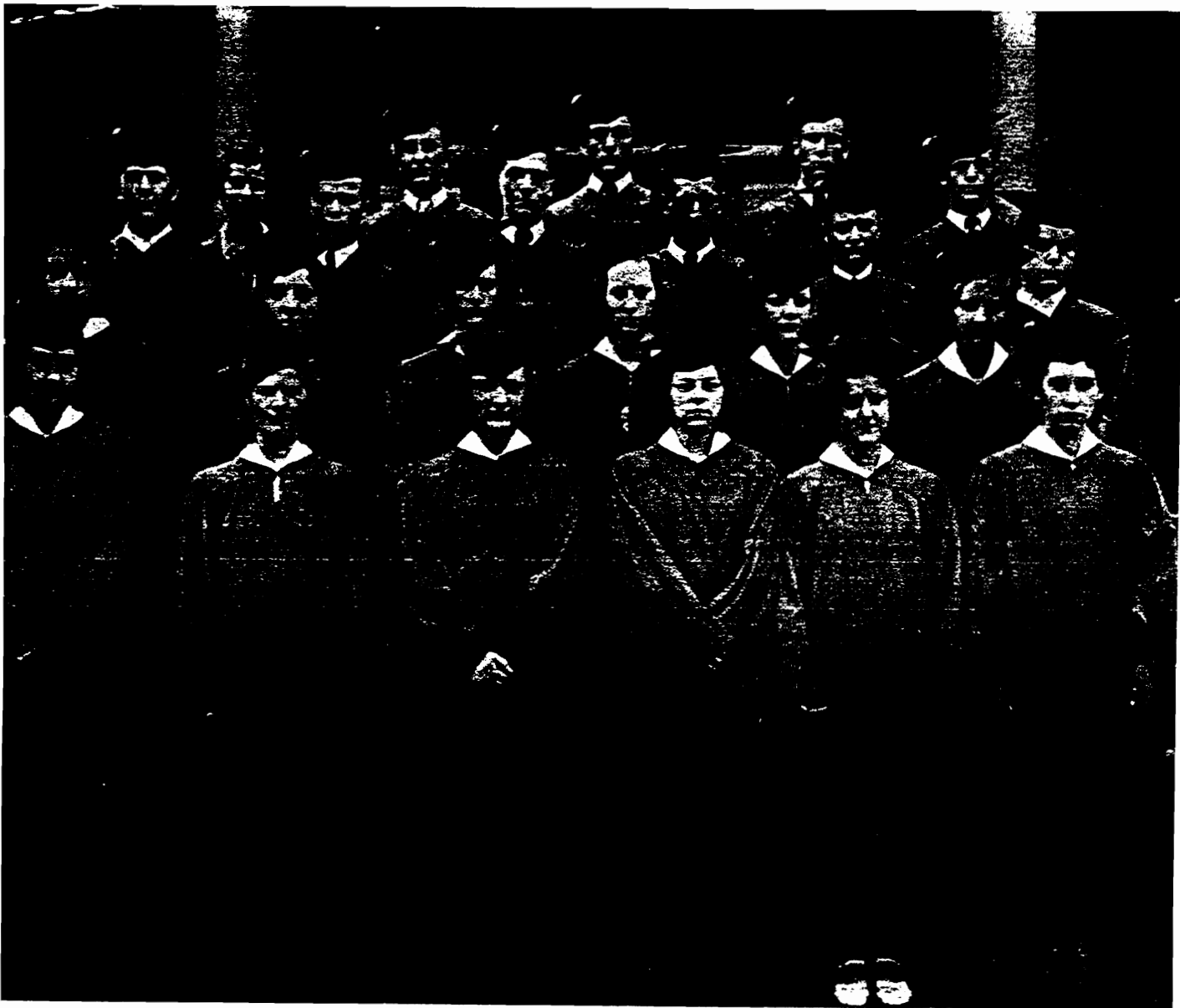
With best wishes, I am,

Very truly yours,
C.J.M. Kyle..

Letter to Patrons of Tazewell High School Who Lived Outside
of Town and Were Required to Pay \$28.00 Tuition for the
1931-1932 School Year.

She completed the eleventh grade and graduated from Tazewell High School in 1937. (Gertrude Crockett Wynn, personal communication, March 28, 1995) Another 1937 Tazewell High graduate, Winifred Crockett, confirmed that Bishop students had to provide their own transportation. She also noted that she had to pay tuition to attend Tazewell High School. She recalled that high school students on either side of the state line in Bishop could ride a bus which ran on the West Virginia side if they chose to attend high school at Big Creek. The only requirement was that the student either lived in West Virginia or his father worked in West Virginia. (Winifred Crockett, personal communication, November 11, 1995) The tippie for the Bishop mine was located on the West Virginia side.

The first free buses ("Announcement, 1938") for high school students on the Virginia side of Bishop were instituted by Tazewell County during the 1938-1939 school year. ("Buses Will Bring," 1938) In addition, the twelfth grade requirement for graduation was gradually phased in across the Old Dominion as it had been in West Virginia several years earlier. Tazewell County made the addition of a new eighth grade in 1959. The transition was made statewide when Nelson County added the new grade in 1960.



Tazewell High School Class of 1932 Embracing Graduates From
Outlying Areas Including Bishop.

Courtesy of H. S. Surface, Jr. and the Tazewell County
Historical Society.

Chapter 6

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BISHOP

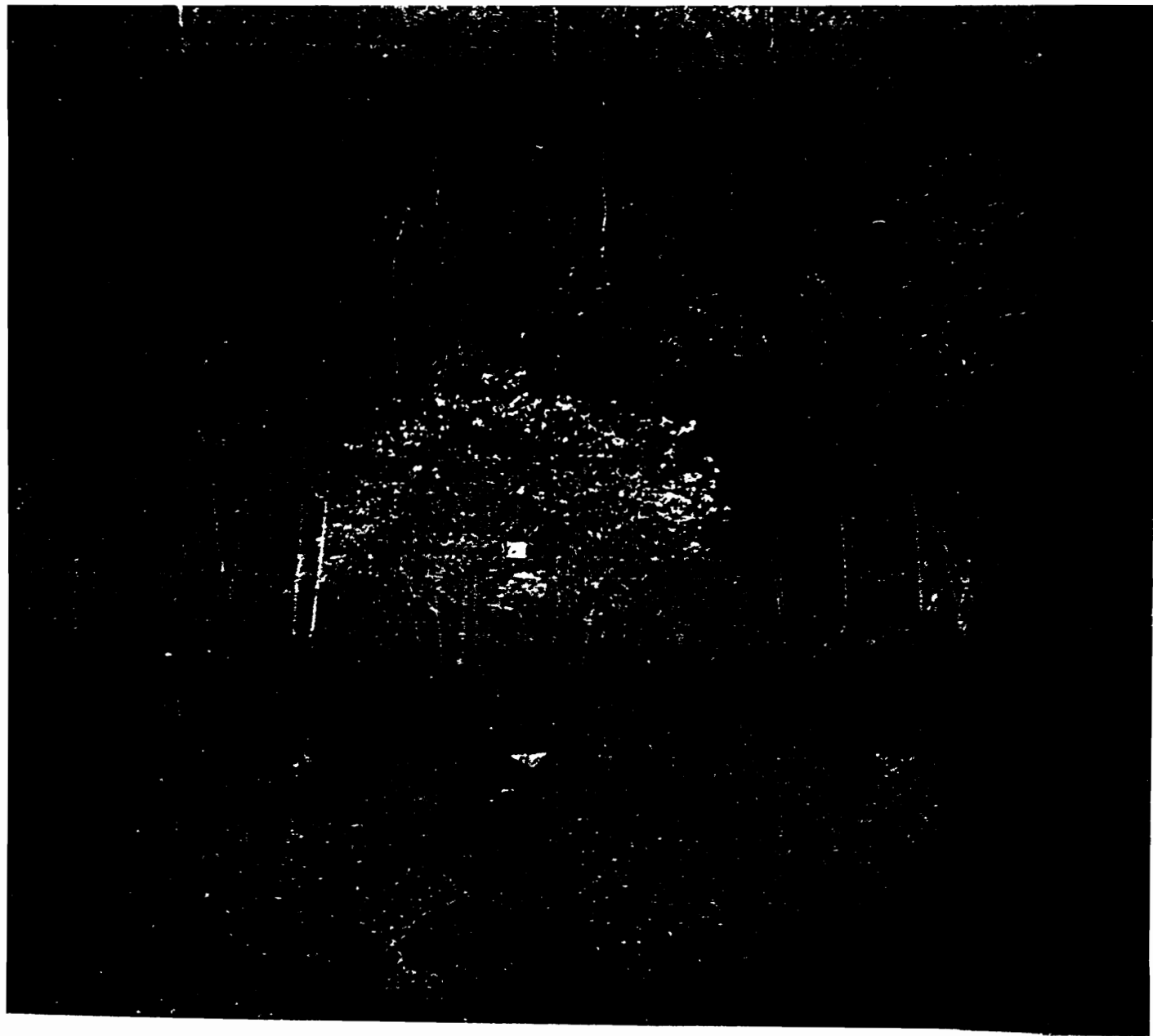
Segregation in the Bishop School

Segregation in public schools was, of course, the law in the South during this time and, as a result, the black students across the state line in the West Virginia section of the camp were schooled separately in a facility provided by the school board in neighboring McDowell County, West Virginia. This school was a one-room building with no indoor plumbing. Such a one-room school for black students with one teacher for more than forty pupils was not uncommon in the rural parts of Appalachia. (Shifflett, 1991)

Although this building was lacking in modern conveniences, apparently some very dedicated teachers graced its halls. The first teacher at this school was Pagie Black who taught the children of Colored Bottom for several years. (Eleanor Lambright, personal communication, March 11, 1995) Other teachers there included Maggie Bailey Pugh, Leona Pittard, and Gertrude Wright who taught in the one-room facility throughout its 30-year history. (West Virginia,

1936-1944) Parents supported teachers. In fact, parents expected the teachers to discipline their children when needed. In return, teachers were provided with a room in the camp and, as a result, became a part of the community. (Alonzo Lambright, personal communication, February 26, 1995)

As many as 40-50 students attended this one-room school known as "Patsy Camp" on the West Virginia side of Bishop. (Willie Hampton, personal communication, March 13, 1995) One of the first teachers at this school was a Maggie Bailey. (Nell Bailey Hairfield, personal communication, September 27, 1995) The teachers at this school were employed by the McDowell County, West Virginia School Board. (For a complete list of the teachers at the Bishop Negro School, see Appendix F.) The "Patsy Camp" school was named after Patsy Small who was a contractor for the railroad when it was extended into Bishop. The building had been used to house the men who built the railroad. Upon completion of the work, most of the men moved on to other projects. The deserted building was then converted by the McDowell County School Board for use as a school by young black students of the Bishop coal community. (Raymond Phillips, personal communication, December 27, 1995)



Small White Flag Marks Site of "Patsy Camp" School, One-Room School for Bishop's Black Students Located Just Across the State Line on the McDowell County, West Virginia Side of the Community.

Photograph by the Author.

Black and white students were segregated in Bishop, then, not only by race but also by the side of the state line on which they lived. The difference in facilities and instruction resulted from differences in both race and the specific counties and states in which the schools were located.

The white students who lived on the West Virginia side of the camp were bused to the nearest white McDowell County school at Endwell. A family could actually move from one side of the Bishop community to another side of town and, therefore, be required to change schools. Charles Grindstaff, who attended Bishop in the 1950s, remembers moving from Long Row to Radio Street and thus transferring from Bishop when he was in the second grade to Endwell when he was in the third grade due to the family's move across the camp. (Charles Grindstaff, personal communication, January 2, 1996) The black students in Bishop, West Virginia were also bused to Endwell with the coming of integration in 1965. Although West Virginia schools were officially integrated by federal court order in 1957, some counties were slower to implement that integration than others. (Daughters, 1959) In fact, McDowell County, in 1965-1966, was one of the last counties in West Virginia to allow integration.

The final year of the one-room "black" school in Bishop was the 1964-1965 school year. That year the Bishop School enrolled 32 students in Grades 1-5 with one teacher, Alvin H. Wood. That same year, the all-white Endwell School, three miles north of Bishop, included Grades 1-6 with three teachers and an enrollment of 74 students. The next year, the same Endwell School listed four teachers, including the addition to the faculty of Alvin H. Wood; 113 students were enrolled. In 1965-1966, Bishop School was no longer listed as a McDowell County school. (West Virginia, 1965-1966)

Meanwhile, white students and later black pupils who lived on the West Virginia side paid tuition and attended the school at Bishop, Virginia. This practice was the exception, however, not the rule. Therefore, although there was only one coal camp, Bishop, there were two states, two counties, two school boards, two schools, all less than two miles apart.

Since most of the residents of Bishop had moved to the community from other parts of the country, most miners had with them only their immediate families. As a result, the coal camp residents became an extended family. Even the segregation which marked the schools, churches and housing patterns ended at the worksite, the mines. Men of many backgrounds worked side by side, receiving the same wages. (Shifflett, 1991) Black miners at Bishop were even promoted

to the position of foreman by the 1950s. Such a promotion was rare in many industries during that era, particularly in the south. (Alonzo Lambright, personal communication, February 26, 1995)

All residents of Bishop shopped side by side in the company store which was a natural meeting spot for persons of all races in the Bishop community. The company store was one place where the two races appear to have been treated equally. (French, 1953) The union's struggle toward solidarity among the miners also worked to bring about a feeling of equality on the job within the coal camp community. (French, 1953) As a result, inter-racial ties of work and play developed within the community. (McGehee, 1990) Racial troubles were surprisingly few and from this "melting pot" grew a stable community. (Daughters, 1959) In the coal mines, there were no color barriers--all were one. (Alonzo Lambright, personal communication, February 26, 1995)

In fact, during an era of racial troubles in many northern cities, racial troubles remained "conspicuously absent" in southern West Virginia. With increased migration of blacks out of the deep south, many northern cities such as East St. Louis, Illinois; Newark, New Jersey; Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; and Chicago, Illinois saw race riots flare between black and white workers in the years

following the turn of the century. (Corbin, 1981)
Meanwhile, racial harmony seemed to reign supreme in southern West Virginia and Southwestern Virginia coalfields, particularly in Bishop.

A Model Camp and School

Nevertheless, Bishop, whether Virginia or West Virginia, was enjoying a prosperity rare in the United States in the 1930s. In fact, as the nation sank further into the depths of the depression during the 1930s, Bishop stood out as a decided exception to the rule. Although there had been a steady development in the coalfields, the pace rapidly accelerated during the 1930s. (Grimsley, 1962)
The development of Bishop was an important part of this acceleration.

As a result, Bishop was recognized as a model coal mining camp since its inception. ("Model Coal Camp," 1994)
In fact, Bishop was noted as one of the most beautiful towns in all of Appalachia. ("Bishop, Virginia, Community," 1988)
After all, Bishop had everything. Although the miners at Bishop worked long hours, they did have jobs. In addition, the town included a restaurant, a clothing store, the company store, a theatre and even a jukebox joint. People

walked up and down the streets just as those did in any small city or town. To enable residents to go to Tazewell or Bluefield, a bus ran through the Bishop community.

(Juanita Pruitt Yost, personal communication, July 27, 1995)

Bishop residents remembered the community as a busy, booming town in good times, with many friendly, helpful people.

(Lewis, 1989)

Bishop was in many ways a showcase coal camp. Coal was loaded with the latest technology of the time. Mechanical loading replaced hand loading. Meanwhile, hand loading was still the norm in many coal camps of the region in the 1930s. (Don Gillies, personal communication, March 10, 1995) There were tennis courts, basketball courts, barber shops, grocery delivery, a restaurant, a pool hall, garbage pick-up, and even sewage removal by men referred to as "honey dippers." (Phillips, 1989) The coal company even brought a doctor, a dentist and other medical personnel to Bishop to serve its citizens. In fact, the Pocahontas Fuel Company hired a team of nurses to care for the employees and families at Bishop. House calls were common for these nurses who worked with doctors such as Dr. Carol Bennett, Dr. Charles Goodykoontz, and Dr. Sam Milchin during the town's boom era.

Most professional medical care in the coalfields was provided by these doctors and nurses hired by the company.

Usually small amounts were deducted from the miner's salary to pay for this medical care. ("Mining Life," 1980)

Therefore, rather extensive welfare programs were common in coal camps of the era as coal companies such as the Pocahontas Fuel Company and similar corporations strived to drive home the idea that employers and employees were really "one big, happy family." (Eller, 1977) Although the miners paid the doctors directly for at least a part of the cost of their individual medical care, the doctors were usually considered employees of the company. (Turner, 1985)

Nevertheless, a licensed medical doctor was always available to the miner and his family at minimal cost. (Corbin, 1981)

Nevertheless, a 1947 study of the health-care system of the coalfields in general conducted by Navy personnel under the guidance of Admiral Joel T. Boone found that many of the coal communities had inadequate health and sanitation facilities. Medical care in many camps was inadequate. Infant mortality rates were much higher than in the general population. In addition, almost half of all mining communities had contaminated water supplies. (Boone, 1947)

Bishop was again an exception. The town was clean and neat. Miners who lived in the company houses were expected to comply with these regulations. If not, a miner and his family could expect quick eviction, no questions asked. (Sandra Peery, personal communication, March 22, 1995) Such

behavior that could not be molded along the lines desired by the company was simply banned from such company towns.

(Corbin, 1981) As a result, Bishop became one of the cleanest company towns in the coalfields. (Talbert, 1988)

One woman who grew up in such a coal camp recalled that people were close and friendly. Women talked over the fences and met each morning at the company store to draw scrip and buy groceries. The men talked after work on the steps of the store. (Lewis, 1989) Such ideal "model towns" as Bishop combined the best in housing construction, the most recent modern conveniences and planned streets to produce an environment very different from that of other older coal camps. According to Eller, however, such towns as Bishop made up a small minority of only 2% of all coal camps in the Southern Appalachians. (Eller, 1982)

One result of the industrial society that evolved in the coal camp was that women did become economically dependent upon men. Only men worked in the mines. Therefore, most women were forced to depend on the men for support. (Graves, 1993) In fact, since many of the mine owners were non-resident, the major benefit that the immediate area received was the wages that the miners earned.

Here miners worked even when coal did not sell immediately. They were able to continue because Bishop had

a large area in the Jacob's Fork Valley on the West Virginia side in which to stockpile coal. (H. L. Honaker, personal communication, March 1, 1995) When coal did sell, Bishop coal sold first and last because of the superior quality of the Pocahontas seam at Bishop. As a result, the residents of the Bishop camp, both black and white, prospered during a decade when much of the country suffered bitterly from the effects of the depression.



Jacobs Fork Valley North of Bishop Company Store on March
18, 1935.

Courtesy of Norfolk and Western Railway Photograph
Collection, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State
University Libraries.



Stockpiled Coal in the Jacobs Fork Valley South of Coal
Company Tipple on April 15, 1940.

Courtesy of Norfolk and Western Railway Photograph
Collection, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State
University Libraries.

The Typical Bishop School Day

Discipline was rarely a problem in the Bishop Coal Camp School. Respect for teachers and principals was the rule. "Trouble at school meant trouble at home," teacher Edith Altizer remembered. (Edith Altizer, personal communication, February 28, 1995) Bishop school children knew that the discipline they would receive at home after getting in trouble at school would generally be far worse than the reprimand that they might receive at school. For the most serious problems, Bishop students could expect a paddling at school and another one after they arrived at home.

Fees paid by the Bishop students were standardized county-wide. In addition, curriculum guidelines for Bishop were those followed at the county and state levels. In fact, when Bishop students moved on to upper grade schools in the county seat, the Bishop youngsters had no trouble competing. (Thelma Spence, personal communication, June 9, 1995)

Lunch time at Bishop, in the era prior to the Second World War, meant a walk home for most students and a "hot" meal with their own family. Such a lunch most often consisted of a biscuit left over from breakfast with butter

and jelly. If no biscuits were left from breakfast, mashed beans were a common fare for lunch. (Raymond Phillips, personal communication, December 27, 1995) For those students who were too far from home to go and return during the one-hour lunch period, a brown bag lunch was the norm.

World War II and the Coalfields

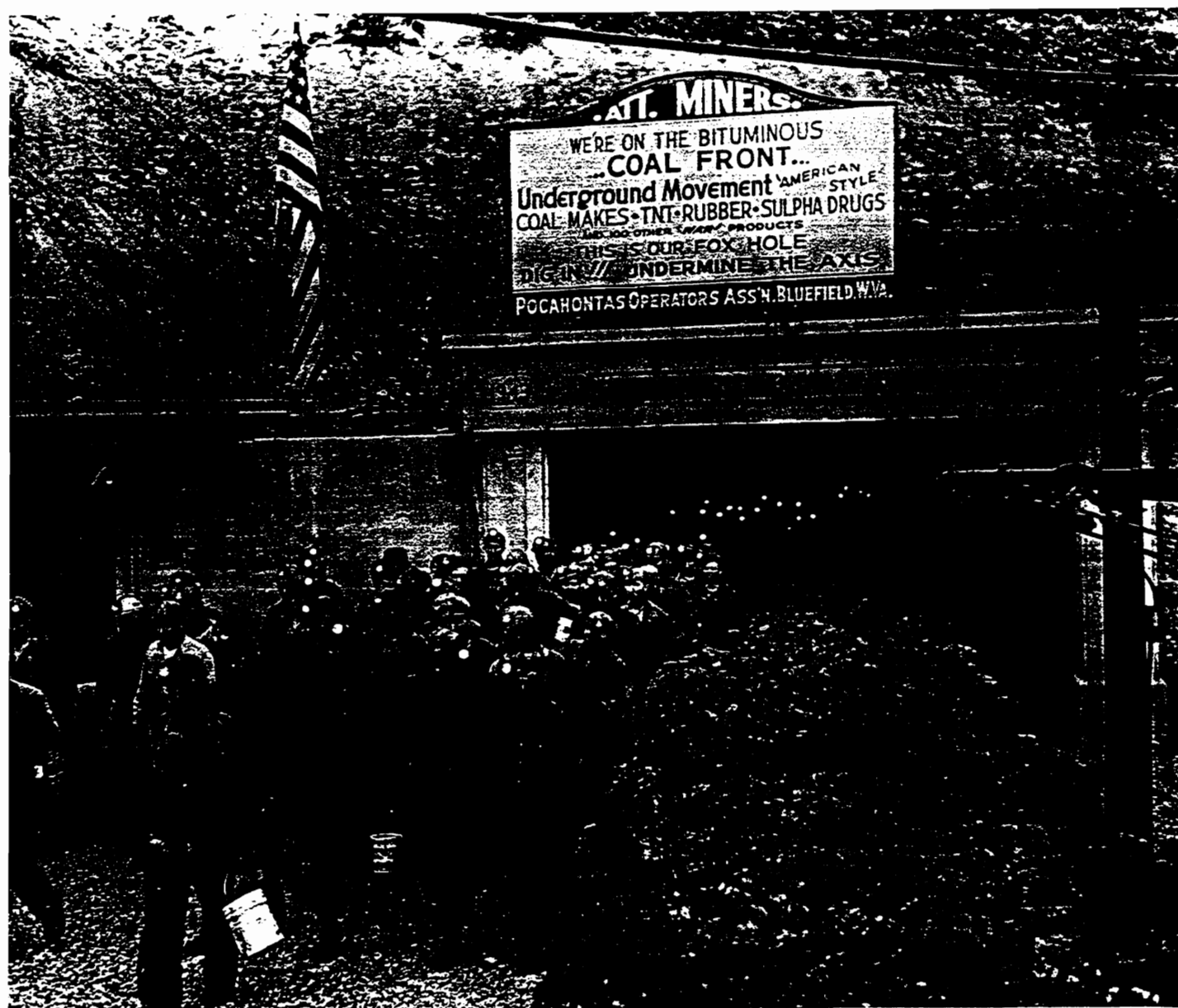
The years of World War II brought an increased need for the high grade bituminous coal mined in the Pocahontas Coalfields, Bishop, in particular. "King Coal" would come into its own to help the United States win the biggest war in history. (Daughters, 1959) In fact, the exceptional "smokeless" purity of the Pocahontas low-volatile bituminous coal enabled it to become the chosen fuel of the United States Navy. ("Pocahontas Exhibition," 1990) As a result, Tazewell County coal production peaked at 4.8 mt with 4,552 miners employed in the county in 1943. (Hibbard, 1990) Activity was now booming in the coalfields and in Bishop, the Pocahontas Fuel Company had one of the finest coal towns around. (Williamson, 1988) The Pocahontas coal mined at Bishop had high heat value and was standard in marine use. (Hanson, 1955) In addition, the high-grade Bishop coal was used extensively by the steel industry, by-product plants

and other large fuel consumers. (Hanson, 1955)

Other residents of Bishop joined in the war effort in many ways. In addition to efforts of the Bishop miners to supply the much needed high grade coal for the Allied cause, Bishop women and children joined with their own campaigns to energize the war effort. The ladies of Bishop took formerly male clerical positions to free the men both for military service and for other civilian jobs within the mines and coal camps. In addition, women and children made bandages for wounded soldiers and worked to control consumption at home to further augment the Allied struggle. The residents of Bishop even dimmed the lights of the community at night to protect the camp and the mines from possible enemy attack. Since coal was such a vital element of the Allied victory strategy, Bishop's location deep within the Southern Appalachians was not viewed as an absolute protection against enemy attack.

The Bishop mine operators were so encouraged by the victories of their sons and brothers in the European and Pacific theaters of World War II that they even placed a sign over the entrance to the Bishop mine. The billboard urged the Bishop miners to step up the production of coal as part of the nation's overall effort to defeat the Axis powers. The bituminous coalfield production for 1943 had set an all-time record high of 589,000,000 tons. During the

same time period, the enrollment at Bishop School reached its all-time high of 365 students. Meantime, the sign hanging over the miners' "foxhole" at the Bishop portal urged them to beat the 1943 record-breaking output during 1944.



Bishop Miners Exit Their "Foxhole" During World War II
Beneath Sign Erected in an Effort to Beat the 1943 Output.

Courtesy of Grubb Photo Service.

Also during the war years, the coal operators saw the need for a new building to meet the needs of the worshipers at the old Crocketts Cove Methodist Church. The massive edifice constructed in the community that year is uninsurable today because it would be irreplaceable at any cost. Local folklore states that the granite stone for the new church building was imported into the community by rail from Mexico. (Marilla Johnson, personal communication, March 7, 1995) More likely, however, the stone was excavated a few miles from Bishop in a Jacobs Fork Valley limestone quarry. The laying of the stone was coordinated by John Camello, an Italian immigrant who had recently been hired by the Bishop mines. The new structure, built in 1943, became known as the Bishop Methodist Church. Bishop coal miners, members and non-members alike, contributed to financing the building of the new church through mandatory payroll deduction. When a debt remained a few years after the construction was complete, coal company officials made up the difference and left the congregation debt-free. (Hager, 1983)

The federal school lunch program was instituted in 1943 and the Bishop School saw a cafeteria added to the facility soon thereafter. (Crickett Nash, personal communication, August 26, 1995) The attraction of a decent meal at noon

increased an already commendable average daily attendance. According to Thelma Spence who taught at Bishop during much of this time, the favorite meal of the students included brown beans, cornbread, onions, and canned tomatoes. The price of the hot meal was \$0.25 per day. Following a flood which destroyed the school in the neighboring Tazewell County coal camp at Amonate, buses also brought seventh grade students from Amonate to the Bishop facility.

Post World War II Bishop

Subsequent to the Allied victory in World War II, the United States entered an era of increased coal production which benefited the Pocahontas Coalfields including Bishop, in particular. It should be noted that the mining operations at Bishop, employing about 1400 men, were among the largest employers of the Pocahontas Fuel Company by 1950. ("Bishop Was Built," 1950) Some even suggest that as many as 1,600 men were employed in the Bishop mines at its zenith. (Stevens, 1976) This figure is reasonable, considering the fact that more than 17,000 men were employed by Virginia coal mines in both 1950 and 1951. (Hanson, 1955) It was also at this time that the populations of both Tazewell County, Virginia and McDowell County, West Virginia

peaked at approximately 47,000 and 98,000, respectively.
(Mathews, 1986)

During this era, the Bishop Graded School was administered by Grover L. Strong, who not only served as principal of the school but also, along with his wife, lived on the top floor of the building for eight years from 1944-1945 to 1952-1953. During that era, the school included grades 1-7 with the principal teaching the seventh grade class. In 1948, the Grades 5-7 from neighboring Horsepen School were moved to Bishop. As a result, the enrollment at Bishop topped 300 for the next several years. One of the Bishop teachers during this era, Charlotte Harman Puckett, recalled that she taught a couple of years at Bishop in the early 1950s but then married. As a result of her marriage, she decided not to return to the classroom. (Charlotte Harman Puckett, personal communication, December 3, 1995) In fact, as a result of this practice, the turnover among young teachers at Bishop was rather high. In addition, Elizabeth Strong, the wife of the principal, became the first head cook at the school's new cafeteria when it was added in the 1940s.

In the latter part of the 1940s, many of the southern Appalachian coal mines became mechanized. Through the introduction of the continuous miner, many miners lost their jobs. As a result, even Bishop began to see some workers

laid off in the late 1940s. Bishop's mechanization program got underway in 1949 and, by June, 1954, the underground portion of the program was completed. ("Bishop Boosts," 1967) Nevertheless, more than 40% of those men employed by industry in Tazewell County were coal miners, according to the 1950 Virginia Department of Conservation and Development statistics. ("Division of Planning," 1956)

The school again suffered, along with the entire coalfield region, during the post-war recession which caused widespread unemployment throughout the coalfields by 1954. The coal market lost much of its business to oil and natural gas during the early 1950s. (Hibbard, 1990) In fact, the Virginia Unemployment Compensation Commission reported that an estimated 3,000-4,000 miners of a total of 10,000 were unemployed by mid-1954 in the four-county region which included Tazewell County. The reductions were attributed to a general slump in the coal business. ("Southwest Coal," 1954)

Fortunately, Bishop did not suffer as much as other camps because of the superior quality of its coal and its ability to stockpile large quantities of the black gold. Nevertheless, coal operators turned more and more to mechanization to try to hold on to profitable mines. This increased mechanization, which meant fewer miners mining the same amount of coal, also spilled over to the Bishop

portals. Although Bishop did not suffer as much as other camps, workers were laid off and families began to move away.

It was also during this post World War II period that the coal company in Bishop began to sell off its property. The houses were sold to individual miners because the company found it too expensive to maintain the houses. Selling the property to miners shifted responsibility for taxes, repairs, installing and maintaining roads, water, supplies, sewage and garbage disposal facilities, as well as other public services and facilities. (Lewis, 1989)

Nevertheless, throughout most of this period from 1945-1965, the Bishop Graded School continued as a high enrollment elementary school in which grades 1-7 were taught. During the Virginia General Assembly's 1950 Session, legislators charged that greater emphasis be placed on the instruction of Virginia history, government and geography in the Commonwealth's schools. As a result, a commission was created to prepare textbooks for that purpose. Therefore, The History of Virginia for Boys and Girls, which had been in use in the Bishop School from its beginning, would soon be replaced. The new texts included Virginia's History and Geography by Dingledine, Barksdale and Nesbitt at the fourth grade level and Virginia: History, Government and Geography by Simkins, Jones and

Poole at the seventh grade level. Although the fourth grade text made no reference to coal mining or the coalfields, the new seventh grade text included several references to the region.

In this textbook, Chapter 38, entitled "Virginia Recovers Her Prosperity," the discussion related to the importance of the building of railroads to the recovery that Virginia experienced following the Civil War. The largest of these railroads, the Norfolk and Western, extended, it was explained, far into Southwest Virginia to open up the coalfield region. The following section of the textbook outlined the discovery and development of the rich coal deposits in the Pocahontas Coalfields. The economic impact of the coalfields on Virginia's domestic and foreign trading patterns and the varied uses of coal as a consumer product were discussed in this chapter in some detail.

The coal industry was again discussed in Chapter 42, "The Progressive Present." Here the growth of the coalfield counties in the Southwest during the previous decades was examined. In addition, the influence of coal, not only on the economy of the Southwest but also on the economy of the Hampton Roads region from which much of Southwest Virginia's coal is shipped to distant ports, was examined. Bishop students found, through their study of Virginia history, that their region was one of the most progressive,

flourishing sections of the commonwealth in the 1950s. The growth that they read about in their social studies textbook was evident in and around the community in which they lived and in the school that they attended each day. In fact, it was during this period that the Bishop School's enrollment peaked, once again, at more than 300 students. (For a complete listing of the enrollment figures at Crocketts Cove/Bishop School, see Appendix E.) Multiple sections were required for some grade levels and 35-38 students were found in each classroom grades 1-7. (Thelma Buffalow, personal communication, March 7, 1995)

In addition to the social studies curriculum, the typical day at Bishop included English, math, reading, spelling, health, science, music, physical education, and lunch. Teachers routinely read to students for 15-20 minutes each day from books such as Little House on the Prairie, Tom Sawyer, Huckleberry Finn, and Ann of Green Gable. Grades were assigned using the letters A, B, C, D, and E in grades 4-7. S and U were the grades awarded in the primary grades. Equipment was in short supply. A science project consisted of a teacher's imagination and ability to secure items for illustrations. The school owned a few filmstrip projectors and one 16mm projector at this time.

Beginning with the 1951-1952 school year, the name of the school was changed from Bishop Graded School to Bishop

Elementary School. In 1953-1954, Jack Harman became the principal. Beginning with Jack Harman's appointment, principals who were assigned full-time did not teach. (Principal's Annual Report, Tazewell County School Board)

The remaining primary grades 1-4 from Horsepen School were consolidated with Bishop in 1955, increasing the enrollment at Bishop to more than 260 again by the late 1950s. Harman was succeeded by Steward M. Lilly in 1957-1958. During this decade, the only library available to students at Bishop was the library that each teacher maintained in her classroom.

During Harman's tenure, Consolidation Coal Company purchased the Pocahontas Fuel Company, including Bishop. That transaction was finalized in 1956. In Virginia, that property transfer included not only Bishop but also Amonate, Boissevain, and Pocahontas. One major change which the transfer of mine ownership brought was the decision by Consolidation to sell the company houses. Duplexes which had rented for \$13.00/month in the 1940s were sold to interested families. Most bought the homes, removed the walls separating the two sections and made one home.

(Stevens, 1976) Thelma Spence, who taught at Bishop during the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s, was employed, according to her teaching contract, for 9 1/4 months or 180 teaching days and five in-service training days for the school term of 1957-1958. For that contract year, she received a salary of

\$3,200.00.

CONTRACT WITH PRINCIPALS AND TEACHERS

This Article of Agreement, between the SCHOOL BOARD OF TAZEWELL COUNTY

State of Virginia, of the first part, and Mrs. Thelma L. Spence
of the second part:

WITNESSETH, That the said teacher, or party of the second part, subject to the authority of the said school board under the supervision and direction of the division superintendent, agrees to teach in the BISHOP ELEMENTARY school administered by said school board under the following conditions, to wit:

1. The said teacher or party of the second part shall be in attendance at school on regular school days at such hours as the school board may designate, open and close school, observe such recess schedule as provided, and shall perform such other duties during the period of this contract as are deemed necessary by the school board, superintendent or principal for the efficient and successful operation of the school.

2. The said teacher shall comply with all school laws and State Board of Education regulations, and all rules and regulations made by the said school board in accordance with law and State Board of Education regulations, and shall make promptly and accurately all reports required by the superintendent of schools.

3. Said teacher shall exercise care in the protection and upkeep of the school property, furniture and fixtures and shall report to the superintendent needed repairs or necessary additional facilities or supplies.

4. The said teacher hereby swears or affirms allegiance and loyalty to the Constitution of Virginia and the Constitution of the United States.

5. The said teacher may be changed from one teaching position to a different teaching position by the division superintendent when the efficiency of the school system requires such change. Proper explanation shall be made by the superintendent upon request of the school board.

6. The said board, or party of the first part, upon recommendation of the division superintendent, reserves the right to dismiss the teacher, or party of the second part, for just cause, paying for services rendered in accordance with this agreement to date of dismissal. In case schools are closed temporarily on account of an epidemic or for other necessary cause, the board may require such loss of time to be made up within the school term or may extend the school term.

7. The school board, or party of the first part, reserves the right, after giving at least thirty days notice in writing to the teacher, or party of the second part, to cancel this contract whenever in the judgment of the school board the services of such teacher are no longer needed due to a lack of funds, a decrease in enrollment or attendance of pupils in the school to which said teacher has been assigned, paying for services rendered in accordance with this agreement to date of contract cancellation.

8. The said school board, or party of the first part, agrees to pay said teacher, or party of the second part, \$ 3200.00 per school session of 9 1/2 calendar months, beginning on or near September 1, 1957, for services rendered, payable on the last day of each calendar month or as soon thereafter as possible. Regular teacher's contracts are made on the basis of 9 1/2 calendar months within which there shall be a minimum of 180 actual teaching days plus 5 additional working days for in-service training, conferences, planning, evaluation, and related services.

9. The said school board, or party of the first part, shall deduct monthly from the salary due the said teacher the computed amount due under the Virginia Supplemental Retirement Act, the Federal Social Security and Withholding Tax Acts.

SPECIAL COVENANTS.

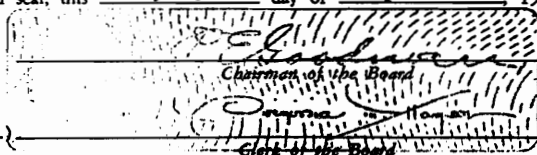
1. With reference to care and cleanliness of school plant in which no janitor is employed

2. With reference to time lost by teacher on account of sickness or for other cause

3. With reference to vacation with pay

4. Other special covenants

In witness whereof, the parties hereunto have set their hands and seal, this 5th. day of April, 1957


Chairman of the Board (L. S.)
Teacher (L. S.)
Clerk of the Board (L. S.)

1957-1958 Tazewell County School Contract for Bishop School.

Courtesy of Thelma Spence.

Chapter 7

THE CRUCIAL LATER YEARS

Bishop Mine Disasters

Although the Bishop mines had not been accident free, the community had been very lucky to have had no major disaster for more than twenty-five years of operation. That would all change, however, with the pivotal event of February 4, 1957. Men working both inside and outside the mine at 2:00 AM that Monday morning noted dust bellowing its way through the main shaft. They knew that some type of an explosion had occurred. They did not realize, until hours later, the magnitude of the destruction which took the lives of 37 Bishop coal miners.

Lawrence Brewer remembers hearing something like "far away thunder" as he prepared his lunch during the early hours of Monday morning at his home in the Bishop camp. ("Bishop Blast," 1957) Couriers were sent through the camp to notify families of trapped miners. Those living in Tazewell and Bluefield were contacted by telephone. (Dillon, 1976) Quickly the vigil set up outside the mine's

entrance.

The Bishop School that day was a fearful place to be. As school began that morning, teachers and students were just beginning to understand the magnitude of the disaster. As the day progressed, more and more bodies were discovered. Family members arrived at the school throughout the day to get the children who had to be given the dreadful news that they were now fatherless. One teacher recounted that several children fainted at school that day as relatives arrived to bear witness to the escalating catastrophe. (Thelma Spence, personal communication, June 9, 1995) A student at the school on that day, Curtis Shrader, recalled that the prevailing attitude was one of disbelief. "When we learned that a classmate had lost a parent, it was as if we all had lost a parent. That's how close we were at Bishop," Shrader recounted. (Curtis Shrader, personal communication, December 31, 1995) That tragedy left a total of 147 fatherless children, 34 widows and three dependent mothers in the Bishop community. (Cecil, 1989)

Astonishingly, not all the miners in the Bishop mine that day met the same fate. One of those miners was Clifford (Blue) Glover, the father of Arlene Glover Booth, who would later serve as secretary at the school. She recounts that her father was a brakeman in the mine that day. The boss sent Glover to the outside for a load of

needed supplies. While exiting the mine shaft, the explosion struck. The force of the blast sent the elevator up the shaft, lodging it at the top. As a result, the men in the elevator, including Glover, were knocked unconscious. Regaining consciousness sometime later, they climbed more than 700 steps to the Horsepen portal of the mine. "My dad, Clifford Glover, was interviewed that day by TV crews from Bristol, Virginia and Bluefield, West Virginia." (Arlene Glover Boothe, personal communication, December 31, 1995)

The explosion was investigated by the West Virginia Bureau of Mines which had jurisdiction over the Bishop mines despite one entrance being located in Virginia. ("Bishop Miners," 1957) A week later, Life Magazine carried a dismal photograph which carried the following caption, "Out of Mine 34 of the Pocahontas Fuel Company came coal cars bearing a sad burden--the bodies of 37 victims of the worst United States mine disaster in five years." ("Tragic," 1957, p. 14)

Scarcely had the townspeople been able to begin the recovery from that tragedy when a second explosion took another 22 lives on October 27, 1958. This time the brisk fall air gave no warning of what would befall the community early on another Monday morning. The high school football games of Friday night were the topic of conversation. Big

Creek High School fans on the West Virginia side often debated the season with Tazewell High School fans on the Virginia side. A Bishop School product, Tazewell High School graduate and former all-state and all-area player, Bill Johnson, was in the Bishop mine that morning. Other fathers of football stars at both Big Creek and Tazewell were also in Bishop mine that morning. ("Mining is Their," 1958) Many had just begun their day's work.

At 8:20 AM, gas ignited and ripped through the Bishop mine, killing Johnson and 21 other men. (Dillon, 1976) This blast occurred shortly after the men of the day shift had started work. ("Crews Bring," 1958) Ironically, this explosion occurred in the same section of the mine where 37 other miners met a similar fate less than two years earlier. ("22 Miners," 1958) News of the disaster spread fast but, as of school time that morning at Bishop, no one really had any idea how many, if any, men would be dead or alive. It was estimated that, by mid-day, more than 5,000 people had gathered near the Bishop mine entrance. Rescue teams worked feverishly to remove the bodies. Again, the Bishop School was a frightening place to be as family members brought the bad news or, in some instances, good news to the children about their fathers, grandfathers, brothers or uncles.

These "tragic explosions brought the town together in sorrow as it had been brought together before in civic

pride." (McGehee, 1990) School days following the explosions were ones which students and teachers at Bishop will long remember. Although no schools were closed in the area, many students, particularly at Bishop, were called from classes and sent home. They were the ones with family members in the mine. Many of these children showed up at the mine with other family to await word of their loved ones. ("Mining is Their," 1958) The streets of the town were deserted. Absent shoppers at the company store bore "mute evidence" that something was wrong. "It was like a ghost town." ("Tragedy Empties," 1958, p. 98)

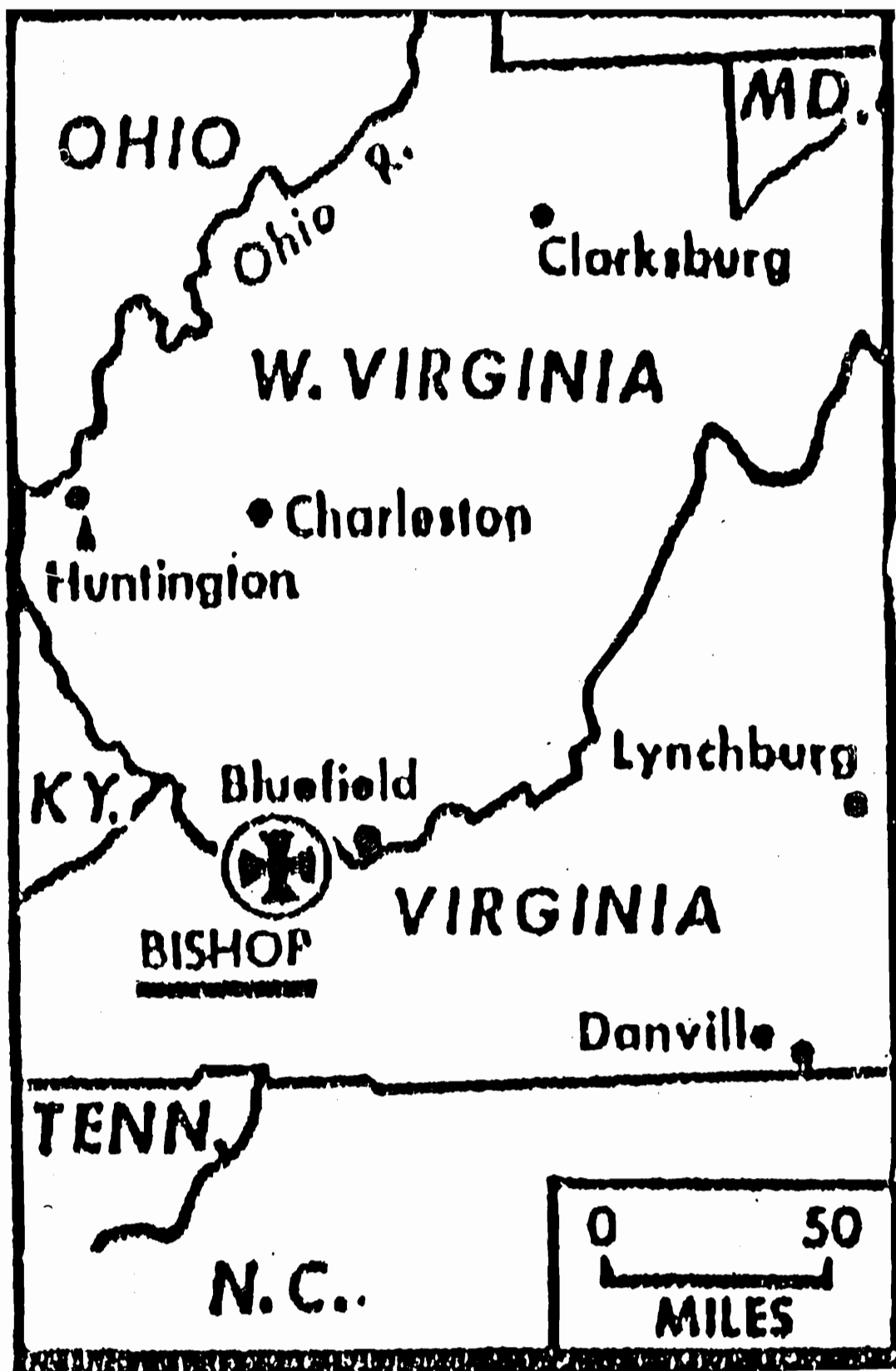
Periodically, throughout the day, family members arrived at the school. Some brought good news. More common, however, family members would arrive with tragic news of the death of those individuals closest to the students at Bishop Elementary. Many of the children of the miners came to school not really knowing what to expect. "It was a day I'll never forget," remembers Edith Altizer who taught at Bishop in the 1950s. (Edith Altizer, personal communication, February 28, 1995)

Shortly after school dismissed on this Monday, the company announced, nearly eight hours after the explosion, that all the men were dead. ("Probe of Bishop," 1958) "A loud gasp from the throats of hundreds of relative and miners echoed about the entrance when word was received that

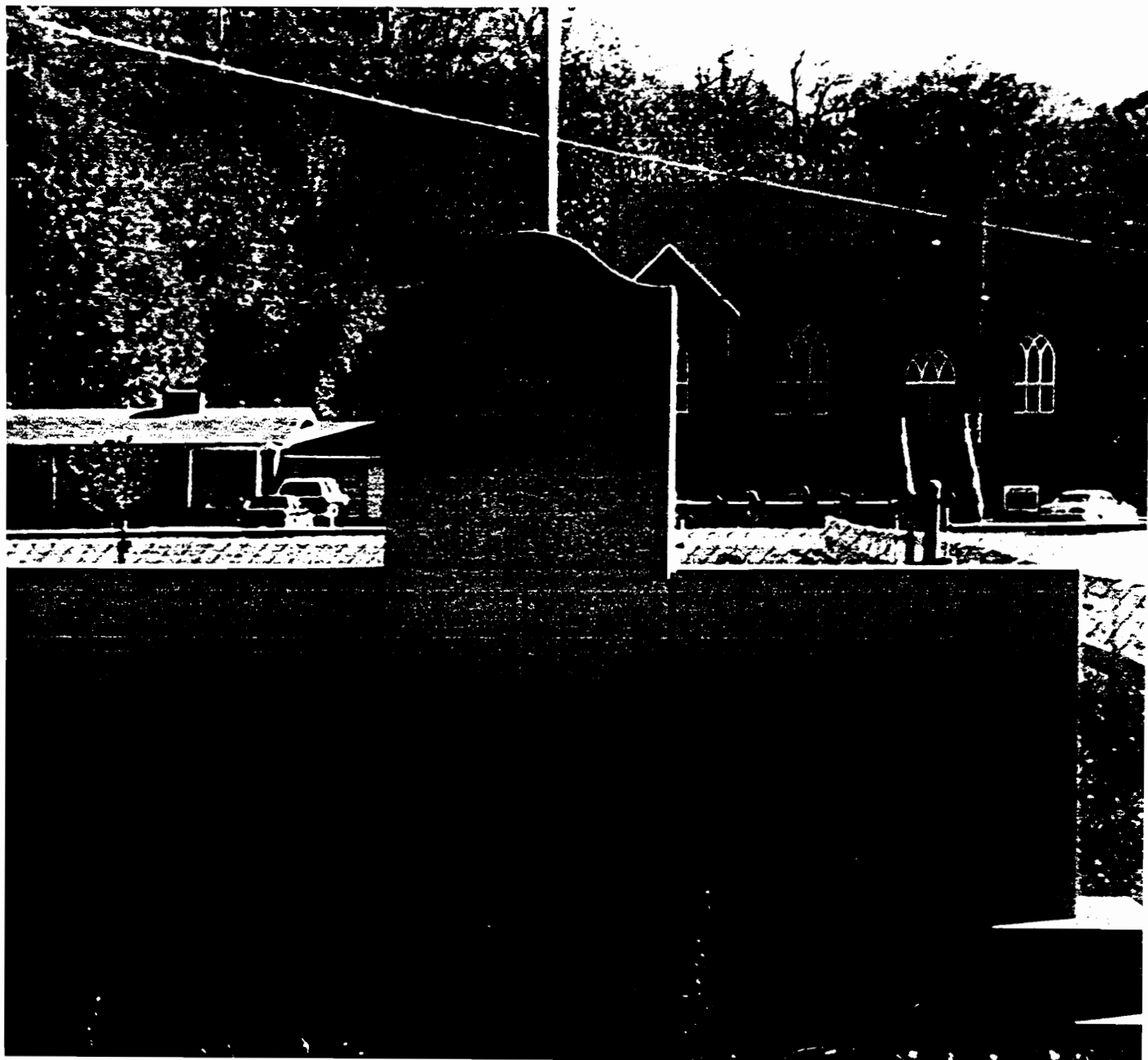
all the trapped men were dead." ("Tragedy Empties," 1957)
The bodies were brought up the mine on the same elevator
that had taken them below. It was not, however, until 6:15
PM that evening that all the victims had been brought out.
They were wrapped in white bed sheets with small white tags
attached for identification purposes. ("22 Die," 1958)
Late that evening, Bishop began to stir, again. The bodies
having been removed, the crowd disbursed. Windows in the
two-story company houses lining Long Row, Radio Street,
Colored Bottom and Store Hill "were lighted and the shades
were drawn." ("Tragedy Empties," 1958, p, 92) Again
investigated by the West Virginia Bureau of Mines, the cause
of the tragedy was shown to be a gas explosion--the same
explanation that had earlier been listed as the reason for
the 1957 explosion. ("Coal Mine," 1958)

The school and other groups like the United Mine
Workers joined together following the disasters to set up
programs designed to help the children of injured or dead
coal miners. (Thelma Buffalow, personal communication,
March 7, 1995) The disasters at Bishop in 1957 and 1958
have never been repeated in a Virginia coal mine. In fact,
when seven miners lost their lives at the McClure mine
explosion a quarter century later in 1983, the McClure
tragedy was noted as Virginia's first mine disaster since
the Bishop catastrophes. ("McClure," 1983)

As the community recovered from the tragedies of the late 1950s the Bishop school entered a new era of growth during the early years of the 1960s. R. D. McGee became principal in 1959-1960 and Howard Crouch served as principal beginning in 1963-1964. Crouch not only functioned as principal but also routinely pulled two or three students who were in danger of falling behind in their studies from each classroom and worked with them individually. He provided this assistance at a time when remedial programs were not readily available in the school system. It was also under Crouch's tenure that the Bishop School's library was established. (Nancy Hall, personal communication, March 17, 1995) By the 1960s, the Bishop mines and camp were in full recovery. The Bishop Coal Company was incorporated as a distinct entity on November 24, 1961. ("Bishop Boosts," 1967) In reality the Bishop Mines of the Pocahontas Fuel Company Division of the Consolidation Coal Corporation was the largest employer in Tazewell County by the 1960s with more than 1,400 full-time employees.



Map Indicating Location of Bishop Mine Explosions.



Memorial to Bishop Miners Lost in 1957 and 1958 Disasters.

Photograph by the Author.

The Aftermath of Disaster

As Bishop seemed to recover to some extent from the devastating explosions of the 1950s, the future of the camp and the school was becoming clearer. During the 1960s, oil companies began to buy central Appalachian Coal Companies. Occidental bought Island Creek and Continental Oil assumed control of Consolidation Coal Company, Bishop's parent corporation. Coal made a spectacular comeback from the depression of the 1950s. The industry recovered as did the demand for coal by both domestic and foreign producers. (Caudill, 1980)

Meantime, as a result of new federal government initiatives stemming from the "Great Society" programs of the 1960s, Bishop Elementary made curricular additions and improvements. For example, the school hired its first physical education teacher during the 1963 school year. A remedial reading program was also launched during the 1963-1964 school year. The first audio-visual equipment and more books and other supplies were also available to the Bishop teachers as a result of these government-sponsored programs. Two teacher's aides were employed for the first time. In addition, a part-time music teacher, a school nurse and a

band instructor visited the school on a regular basis.
(Humphrey, 1972)

Nevertheless, school supplies were never overly abundant. Teachers routinely purchased, with their own money, many of the necessities of a successful classroom. With the possible exception of construction paper, if the teacher needed additional materials, she bought them herself. (Thelma Spence, personal communication, June 9, 1995) One of Spence's students in the 1950s, Curtis Shrader, remembers well the love of reading and literature that Spence instilled in her students. He recounted several books that he remembers her reading to the class. Such works as Tom Sawyer, Huckleberry Finn, and Treasure Island quickly came to mind. "She was a fine teacher," he recalled. (Curtis Shrader, personal communication, December 31, 1995)

Regression of Boom to Bust

The Title II Program, which included a library funding emphasis, was passed by Congress in 1964. Nevertheless, the library at Bishop School was never more than an individual teacher's collection of books on a wall of the classroom. (Thelma Spence, personal communication, June 9, 1995) In

reality, libraries were almost non-existent in most rural areas of Appalachia as late as the 1970s. (Peterson, 1972)

As late as 1964, the enrollment of the school was 210 students. Five years later, however, the enrollment had fallen to fewer than 200 students. This decrease in enrollment existed regardless of the fact that the Virginia State Board of Education and the Virginia General Assembly had, in 1966, funded the addition of state-supported kindergarten classes as part of the public school program in the state, including Bishop. The funding was included in the 1968-1970 state biennium to aid localities in establishing their kindergarten programs. The new kindergarten at Bishop was added to the school with the 1969-1970 school year. Nevertheless, during that same year, the enrollment at the school dropped to 188. Two families had lived in every company house in the town. By the late 1960s, only three or four families remained in coal company houses. (Nancy Hall, personal communication, March 17, 1995)

Economically, the Bishop Coal Company of Consolidation Coal was the most important employer in Tazewell County by the late 1960s. By 1967, Bishop employed 465 coal miners. A survey that year indicated that about 82% of those miners lived in or near Tazewell. Facilities at Bishop, at this time, included not only the mine itself, including two drift

mouths, but also the preparation plant. Coal reserves at Bishop included 54,000,000 tons with a life expectancy of 30 years. ("Bishop Boosts," 1967) With about 40% of the reserves in Virginia and the remaining 60% of the reserves in West Virginia, the Bishop mines produced an average of 9,000 tons of coal a day with its 465 men working three shifts. ("Bishop Boosts," 1967) The Bishop of the 1960s was a booming coal mining community.

A Time of Transition

It was reported in a State Department of Education evaluation report in November of 1970 of the Tazewell County Public Schools that the Bishop School had seen no additions or major renovations since its construction in 1932. Further observation was made that the building was in fair condition and that consideration should be given to making several minor safety repairs. (Ellis, 1970) The downward enrollment trend continued, nevertheless, with only 146 enrolled in 1973. Although the Bishop School had now been downsized, the future existence of the school appeared to be definite with the major remodeling projects that were completed during the 1973-1974 school year.

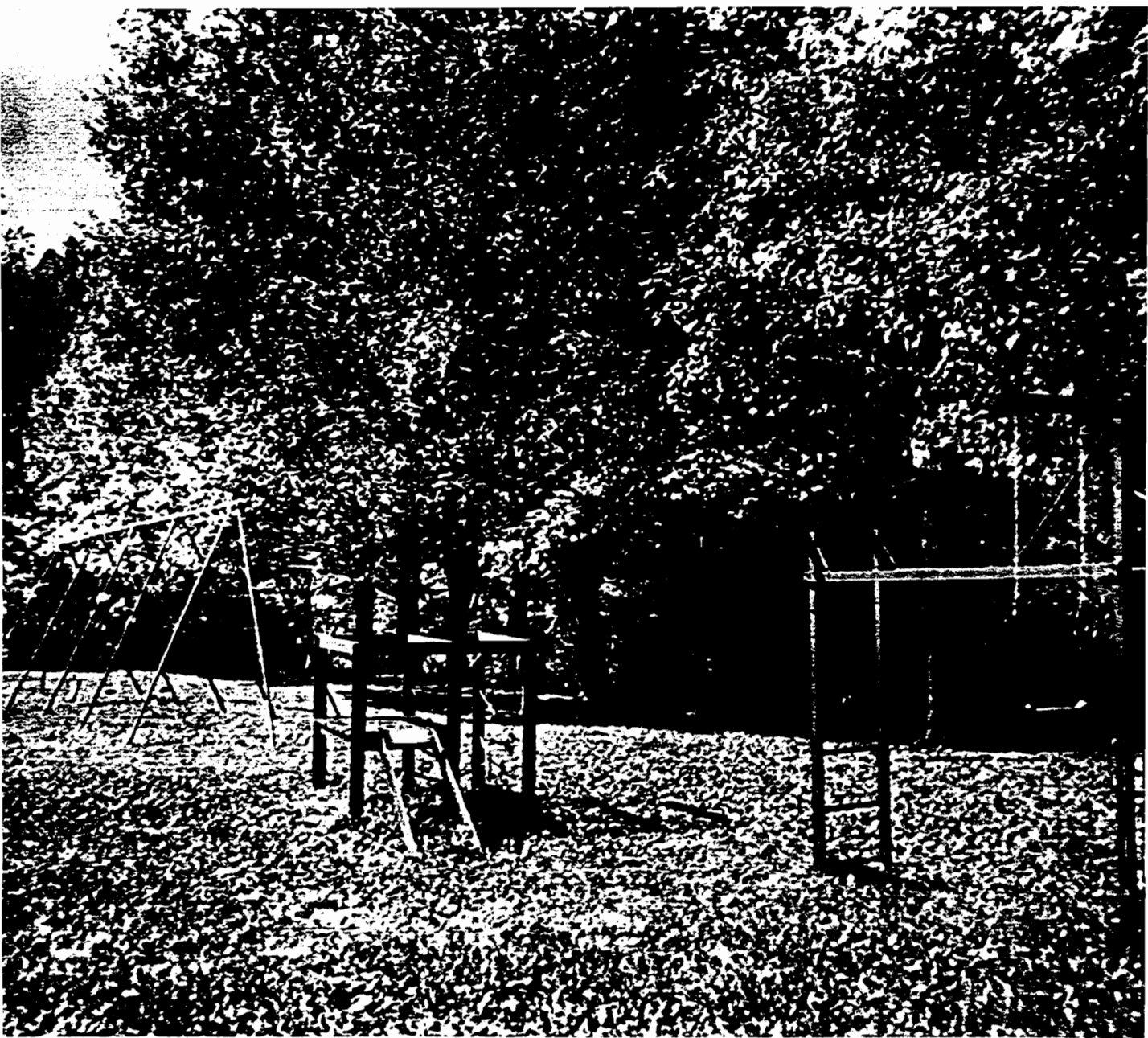
The stage area of the gym/multi-purpose room was closed

off and converted into a modern cafeteria kitchen. The gym/multi-purpose room now took on one more function as a room which could adequately seat the entire student body and faculty for assembly programs. The gym was further subdivided into two smaller rooms and one large assembly hall. One of the small rooms became a teachers' lounge. The other small room became the school's first library. This room also served as the music room where beginning band classes were taught beginning in 1973-1974. Russell Hatfield, Tazewell High School Band director at that time, remembers that his class of five or six sixth graders at Bishop each year included students "who were as good as, if not better than, most sixth graders with whom he worked in town schools at the same time." (Russell Hatfield, personal communication, January 2, 1996) He regularly had five or six students in beginning band at Bishop while at Rivermont, another coalfield school of comparable size in nearby Amonate, one or two students made up the usual band enrollment.

The smaller old kitchen at Bishop was remodeled and combined with a former third grade room to create a spacious new kindergarten complex. With the building improvements, electronic teaching aids were rare even as late as 1972 when the principal that year reported that the school owned not one overhead projector and only one opaque projector.

(Humphrey, 1972)

A variety of additional improvements were also made to the school grounds in the early 1970s. Concrete sidewalks and steps were either remodeled or constructed leading to the front of the school. A portion of the playground west of the building was paved for basketball courts. In addition, new playground equipment was placed around the perimeter of the play area. (Ellis, 1970) Although much of the economic news in the nation was negative by the mid-1970s, it appeared that, locally, the economy had not suffered. Those individuals who worked to upgrade the school facilities apparently agreed that the coal business in Southwest Virginia was, in the 1970s, basically good. (Leslie, 1976) Improvements had come in many different forms to schools throughout the Appalachians during the late 1960s and early 1970s. (Caudill, 1976)



Playground Equipment Outside of Bishop School.

Photograph by the Author.

With advances in technology, cable television arrived in the community and the school in the 1970s. A community-owned system was developed and 13 channels became available for \$5.00 per month. HBO and other premium services were also offered as an option to the residents of the camp.

It was also during the 1970s that integration, which had come to Tazewell County in 1965, finally arrived in Bishop. Even after court-ordered integration across the Commonwealth in the 1960s, no black students attended Bishop Elementary because no black families lived in the school's attendance zone. The young black students on the West Virginia side had been integrated but that integration was within the McDowell County School System. The students in Bishop, West Virginia were bused daily to the next coal camp, Endwell, and into what had formerly been an all white school.

Nevertheless, a black family, the McDonalds, moved to the Mudfork section of Tazewell County from Cleveland in the early 1970s. Included in the family were high school age youngsters who attended the now integrated Tazewell High School. The youngest member of the family, however, was only in the seventh grade. There he would attend school at Bishop. When he arrived, school was teeming with news of the new "student" in the seventh grade. Although the young

man was very nice and polite, he soon discovered he was a minority of one. Shortly thereafter, he voluntarily transferred to Tazewell to attend the integrated elementary school there.

There existed no school library at Bishop until this 1972 renovation. The Tazewell County Public Library's bookmobile did, however, bring books to the students weekly. As a part of the state's library expansion emphasis, a demonstration library was established in Tazewell in 1964. The bookmobile became an outreach program of the county library serving rural communities and their schools.

(Laurie Surface, personal communication, September 16, 1995) In addition, Bishop teachers would, voluntarily, transport boxes of books back and forth from the same public library. (Thelma Spence, personal communication, August 28, 1995) To meet the educational needs of Bishop students, the faculty and staff, through their own efforts, often made up for the deficiencies created by the rural location of Bishop.

The school community at Bishop was a close-knit group that enjoyed their school and its opportunities. As late as 1974, the Bishop School even interrupted its daily routine every Friday to assemble in the school gymnasium for a devotional program led by the Rev. Leon Yost, pastor of the Alexander United Methodist Church in Bishop. (Debbie Cecil, personal communication, December 27, 1995)

This religious instruction was predated by a local couple known as the Tacketts who, earlier in the school's history, presented monthly Bible Story programs for the student body. The Tacketts introduced the first audio-visuals used at the school in the 1950s through their monthly flannel board presentations. The school often sponsored a canned food drive to repay the Tacketts for their service at the school. The couple made their presentations regularly at schools throughout the coalfield region. (Charles Grindstaff, personal communication, January 2, 1996) These religious programs was phased out in the mid 1970s as a result of Supreme Court decisions from several years earlier. In 1973, the seventh grade was removed from Bishop and consolidated with other Tazewell area seventh grade and eighth grade classes to create the new Tazewell Junior High School. As a result, the enrollment at the Bishop School dropped by approximately 30 students for the new school term.

From 1976 until 1980, Robert Brown served as principal of the Bishop School. In 1977, the federal lunch program was expanded at Bishop to include a breakfast schedule to meet additional nutritional needs of the students. Bishop was, under Brown's leadership, one of the first schools in Tazewell County to institute the breakfast schedule. In the spring of 1979, flash floods threatened many sections of the

region. The sludge ponds near the Bishop camp filled with water to the point that coal company engineers feared that the earthen dams would collapse and the coal company houses might be flooded. As a result, the school made preparations to become a temporary shelter for some 50-75 residents of the community. Luckily, the rain stopped and the danger passed with no additional flooding. (Robert Brown, personal communication, January 1, 1996)

The faculty and staff of the Bishop School illustrated their pride in the school and its environment by painting colorful figures throughout the hallways of the facility. Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs, as well as other story-book characters, graced the hallways of the school as a result of their untiring efforts. The community of Bishop, during the 1970s, consisted of a group of people who were appreciative and supportive of the school's efforts. "Many of the people of Bishop did not have a lot when growing up and, therefore, they wanted more for their kids," commented Debbie Mink who taught at the Bishop School during the late 1970s and early 1980s. (Debbie Mink, personal communication, January 2, 1996) Brenda McGinnis, another Bishop teacher of the same time period, noted that "the smaller classes meant that we knew everyone and could help individualize our instruction better." (Brenda McGinnis, personal communication, January 2, 1996)

The 1970s also saw a boom return to the coalfields. The upswing of the 1970s made some people forget the slump in the coalfields of an earlier decade. (Mathews, 1986) This time, however, many of the relatively well-paid miners chose to live in nearby towns like Tazewell or Bluefield and commute to work in Bishop. As a result, the prosperity of the 1970s decreased the probability that miners working at Bishop would live in Bishop. The solidarity among miners and families of a few decades before would not be as evident. (Lewis, 1989) With little available housing and few alternatives to mining, Bishop attracted few newcomers. Only the school and church now remained. Most other community institutions had lost their significance if not their existence. Those who remained in the coal camps were beginning to feel the loss of community spirit. (Lewis, 1989)

During the latter part of 1977, the United Mine Workers and the Coal Operators Association found it impossible to reach a new contract agreement. As a result, the miners, nationwide, went out on strike near the end of the year. The strike cast an eerie silence over the community of Bishop. It was quiet, too quiet for those who dreaded the strike. (Leslie, 1977) The stillness was a ominous warning of the constant silence of a community which would see its mine close permanently fewer than five years later.

The Declining Years

In 1980-1981, the sixth grade was moved from Bishop and combined with other area sixth grades at the newly constructed Tazewell Middle School. With the loss of the sixth grade, the enrollment at the Bishop School no longer warranted a full-time principal. As a result, Robert Brown was replaced as principal that year by Deaton Jones who was also assigned as half-time principal at Rivermont School near Amonate. Jones served as a half-time principal for the two schools for the next seven years. Enrollment of the Bishop School at the beginning of this period was around 150. That number would drop by nearly one half during Jones' tenure. Upon his arrival at the Bishop School in 1980, Jones remembers a very "vibrant" group. "May Day celebration was a big day--community spirit was evident," Jones recalled. (Deaton Jones, personal communication, December 30, 1995) The declining enrollment over the next several years, however, reflected a decline in both the community's population and the school's physical condition. (For an examination of the population trends of Tazewell County, Virginia and McDowell County, West Virginia, see Appendix G.)



Bishop Faculty and Staff During the 1980s. Principal Deaton Jones in Inset. First Row: Brenda McGinnis, Gilla Brown, Betty Slade, Harriett Pardue, Peggy Logan, Judy Sargent. Second Row: Betty Beavers, Arlene Glover Boothe, Roberta Marrs, Connie Honaker, Peggy Bowman, Nancy Hall.

Courtesy of Arlene Glover Boothe.

The lethal blow for the struggling school at Bishop came in 1982. That was the year that the last coal was run and the Bishop mines ceased operations. (Bill Shutt, personal communication, August 28, 1995) In fact, more than 500 miners were laid off when the Bishop mines closed in 1982. (Larry Witt, personal communication, October 22, 1995) As a result, many families began to leave the Bishop community in search of employment. In reality, this picture was being repeated throughout Southwest Virginia as the entire region's population dropped by 10% between 1980 and 1990. (Virginia Coalfield, 1991) As a further consequence, the enrollment at Bishop Elementary by 1983 in what was quickly becoming a half-deserted coal camp had fallen to 140. By 1986, the student rolls had decreased to eighty-three. The coal industry paralleled this decline throughout the region in the mid-1980s. (Mathews, 1986) The Bishop mine remained closed and many buildings in the community remained vacant throughout the 1980s.

During that decade, the Bishop students who completed the fifth grade joined students from Tazewell Elementary, North Tazewell Elementary, Thompson Valley Elementary and Rivermont Elementary to form the sixth grade class at the new Tazewell Middle School. Bishop students fared very well when placed into such a consolidated setting. In fact,

many teachers noted the Bishop students were actually advanced compared to some of the sixth graders who would arrive at the middle school each year. The students who came from Bishop had just as strong a "core program" as those students who had attended Tazewell or North Tazewell Elementary Schools. They were as well-prepared as the other elementary students who arrived at the Tazewell Middle School. (Joan Neal, personal communication, December 29, 1995)

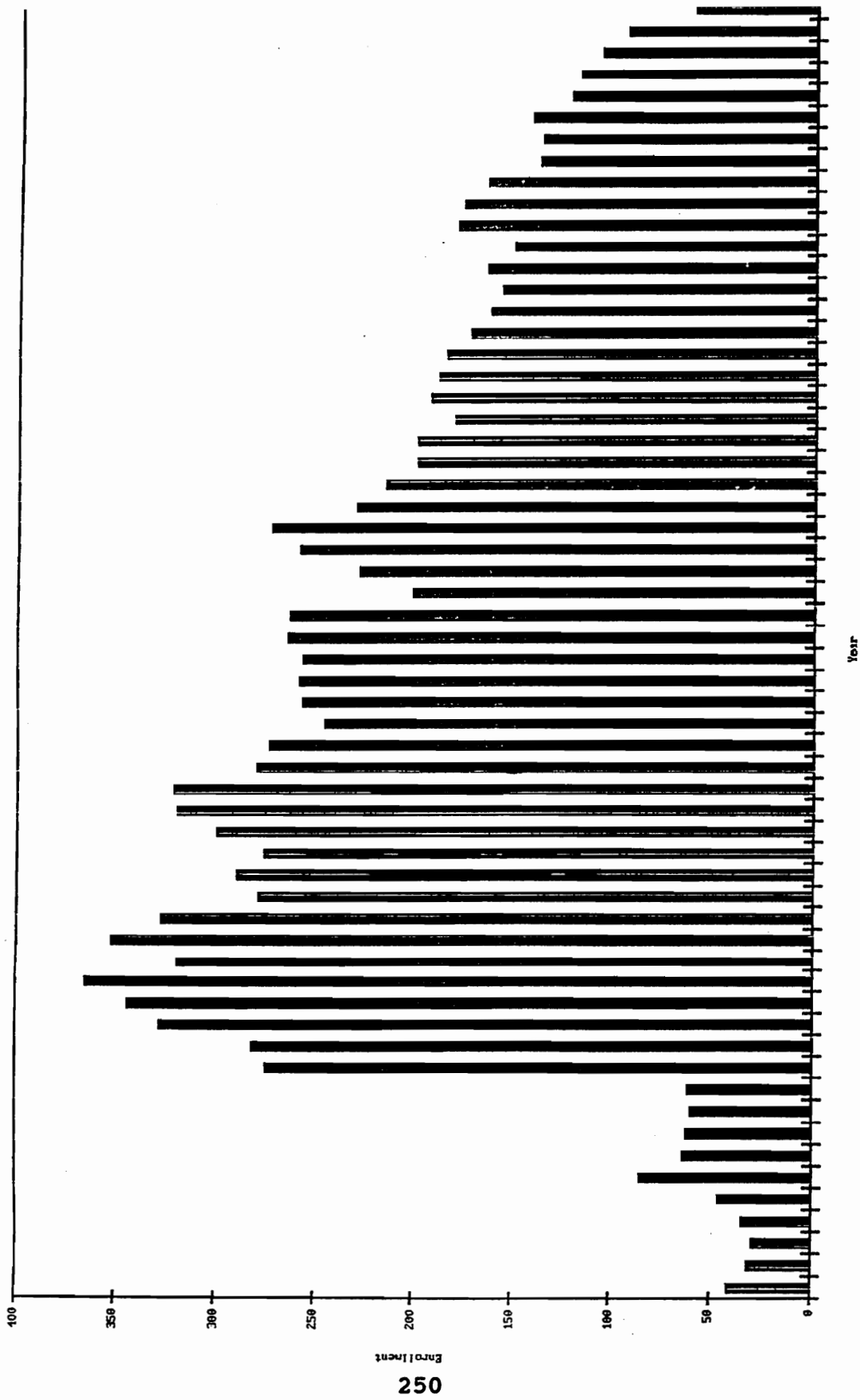
Also, as a result of the economic slow-down in Tazewell County, the Board of Supervisors directed the School Board to cut the school budget for 1987-1988 by \$700,000. Meanwhile, the Bishop School was suffering from other problems with the physical plant. The water in the coal community had been condemned and actually cut off for extended time periods. (Deaton Jones, personal communication, December 30, 1995) The custodian was assigned the added responsibility of carrying water in buckets from the nearby creek to be used to flush commodes in the bath rooms. Eventually, the fire department brought in trucks of water to fill large garbage cans for the same purpose. The county brought in bottled water for student consumption and for cooking in the cafeteria. (Betty Beavers, personal communication, December 30, 1995) Betty recalled that, throughout this time, parents were most

cooperative. "The parents often jumped in and offered to help in any way that they could." (Betty Beavers, personal communication, December 30, 1995) Germicidal soap dispensers were installed in each room but no long-term solution was yet in sight for the school's latest dilemma.

In addition, major repairs were now needed in the interior of the building as well as in the patched-up heating system. The ceiling on the upper floor was sagging toward the floor. The furnace was also in need of major restoration. Consequently, Tazewell County School Superintendent, Frank Cosby, recommended that the Bishop Elementary School close its doors with the end of the 1986-1987 school year.

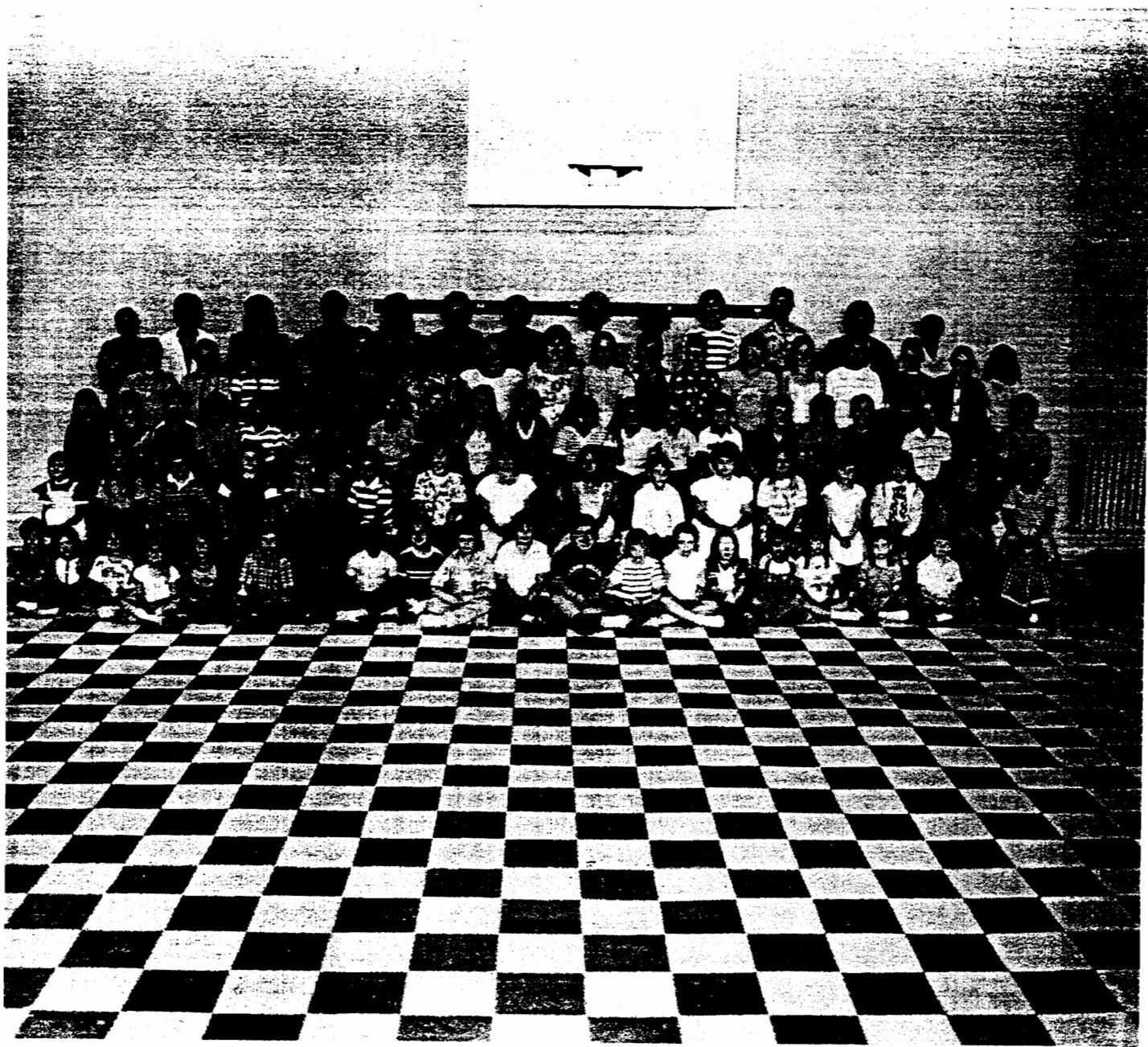
Crocketts Cove/Bishop Enrollment

1908-1987



Crocketts Cove/Bishop Enrollment: 1908-1987.

Enrollment at the Bishop School dropped from 93 to 76 during the 1986-1987 school year. It was predicted that the trend would continue with as few as 60 students enrolled for 1987-1988. According to architect W. A. Thompson, the Bishop School required numerous repairs. A new ceiling, the installation of expansion joints in the walls, cosmetic treatment of cracks, stairway enclosure, replacement of fire doors, replacement of electrical wiring, new windows and creation of better handicap accessibility were cited as needs. Superintendent Cosby indicated that the cost would be no less than \$75,000. In addition, closing the school would partially "compensate" for the \$700,000 budget cut which was being imposed by the Board of Supervisors on the School Board Budget. (Wood, "Bishop," 1987) The cost per pupil to reopen Bishop School, he estimated, would be more than \$4,000. (Wood, "Bishop," 1987) This cost would have been considerably higher than the average per pupil cost in other Tazewell County schools at the time. As a result, Cosby noted that the condition of the building, projected repair costs and declining enrollments were all factors in his recommendation to close the school. Therefore, the school board voted to officially close the Bishop Elementary School on June 8, 1987.



Bishop School Students, Faculty and Staff, 1987.

Courtesy of Arlene Glover Boothe.

Opposition to the consolidation of Bishop School did surface in the Bishop community. PTA President, Shirley Wright, questioned the school board concerning quality, individual attention that the children would receive at North Tazewell. Residents in most consolidation cases are also concerned with the survival of the community.

(Peshkin, 1982) Bishop residents saw the closure of their school as one more move toward the dissolution of their community. If Bishop lost its school, it would most certainly lose its identity. (Michael Hymes, personal communication, January 3, 1996)

Superintendent Cosby, nevertheless, contended that the average class size at North Tazewell was 20-22 students and that, even with the added students from Bishop, the classroom sizes would remain below the state standard of 27-30 students per classroom. (Wood, "Parents," 1987) Therefore, as students left the Bishop School in June of 1987, the doors of the school which had been the heart of the coal camp community closed for the final time.

Although there was no mass meeting in opposition to the school's closure and no major delegations to the school board to oppose the measure, the community did not accept the school's fate blindly. Curtis Shrader, another officer in the PTA at the time the school was closed, noted that,

although the school board indicated that it would require \$75,000 to repair the school, the facility was actually renovated for \$17,000 for use as a homeless shelter a few years later. Now Bishop students from kindergarten through high school would face the task of crossing Stony Ridge Mountain twice each day. "The decision could not have been for the good of the students," Shrader observed. (Curtis Shrader, personal communication, December 31, 1995) Shrader also noted that the closing of the school took something away from the closeness of the community. "A part of us is no longer there." (Curtis Shrader, personal communication, December 31, 1995)

Bishop and Bandy schools may close

By Leesa Wood

School board members are considering closing two rural elementary schools to compensate for a \$700,000 budget cut instituted by the board of supervisors.

Superintendent Frank Cosby presented the school board with two lists of options for reducing the budget. The board approved the first list of \$494,949 in departmental budget reductions but delayed acting on the second list, which included the proposed closing of Bishop and Bandy Elementary Schools.

Budget categories which received cuts were administration (\$3,425), instruction (\$198,874, including elimination of a proposed special education instructor's position and adjustment in the teacher pay raise scale from 10 percent plus step to a flat 10 percent increase), transportation (\$48,350), operations and maintenance (\$190,000), fringe reductions (\$31,550) and capital outlay (\$22,750). Besides closing the two elementary schools, the board is now also considering reducing the number of kindergarten aides from 28 to 18 (saving \$78,663), delaying roadway improvements at Richland Elementary School and Graham Intermediate School (cutting another \$50,000) and eliminating institution of an additional Master's degree supplement in the field (\$40,000). Cosby's figures project closing Bishop Elementary would save \$107,209. The closing would include elimination of three teaching positions (\$54,450), a secretary (\$12,759) and a custodian (\$12,500).

He estimated closing Bandy Elementary School would save an additional \$71,122, which would include eliminating the positions of administrator (\$35,000) and librarian (\$18,150). Cosby told the board he would not recommend closing Bandy Elementary unless Bishop were also closed.

More than half of the students enrolled at Bishop Elementary live in Mud Fork, Cosby said, which is as close to North Tazewell Elementary School as to Bishop. If the school is closed, the total enrollment at North Tazewell Elementary would increase to 403 next year, requiring two or three additional teachers. He added the funds needed for these personnel are reflected in his cost

reduction estimates.

Enrollment at Bishop Elementary declined from 93 to 76 during this school year and Cosby said the number of students is projected to drop into the low 60's by the next school year. Bandy's enrollment has shown no decrease and remains at 52.

Bishop Elementary has a number of structural problems, as revealed in a preliminary inspection conducted March 26 by Thompson and Litton Architect W.A. Thompson, III. In a written report citing cracked walls, a bowed, sagging ceiling, electrical wiring violations and other problems, Thompson said no eminent danger of structural failure exists but voiced concern with the upstairs plaster ceiling.

"Primarily because of the understanding that the cracks I observed today developed just recently, I believe there is a strong possibility that the condition will worsen and eventually lead to the collapse of the plaster ceiling," Thompson wrote. He recommended the ceiling structure be examined after school ends this year and the ceiling materials be tested for asbestos content to ensure proper removal.

Thompson also suggested installation of control and expansion joints into walls, cosmetic treatment of the cracks, enclosing stairwells, replacement of classroom doors with fire doors, replacement of electrical wiring and windows and making modifications to increase accessibility to the handicapped. Cosby estimated no less than \$75,000 will be needed for repairs before the building can be reopened next fall.

Cosby said Bishop Elementary has been without water for more than a week. Water has been hauled in to flush the commodes and bottled drinking water is being provided to the students.

John Sadler, ServiceMaster maintenance director, said the pipes to the school have been checked for leaks and water company representatives say the school should be receiving water. He said the school has been without water service for 10 days and the state health department is advising Bishop residents to boil water obtained through the system before consumption.

The superintendent strongly recommended the school be closed,

noting repairing the building would require "a substantial investment of more than \$1,000 per pupil." Based on September, 1986 enrollment figures, the average operation cost per pupil in the county was \$2,700. Operation costs for students at Bishop Elementary were between \$2,800-2,900.

Cosby pointed out Bishop Elementary School has lost nearly 20 students since September. He said the repairs needed to reopen the school would raise the cost per pupil to more than \$4,000.

A number of Bishop area parents asked the school board not to bus their children to North Tazewell. Susan Glover told the board the parents don't care about the facility, but don't want the children traveling across Stony Ridge in the winter months.

Glover suggested installation of a mobile classroom unit at Bishop as a possible solution to the problem. Harlan Atwell told the board to seal off the hazardous upper story of the school building and hold classes on the ground floor.

Larry "Bunk" Spencer of Abbs Valley said closing Bishop Elementary and the other rural "feeder" schools would only cause more unemployment. He said personnel and students of the outlying elementary schools are just as important and deserve the same consideration as those at the larger schools in the towns. Spencer added he fears if this trend continues, all the rural elementary schools will gradually be "wiped out."

Board members agreed to consider the closings over the next month and to meet with community residents during their next meeting. Board Chairman Jim Sam Gillespie said parents will receive copies of all available data on the situation, including a report on the structural condition of Bishop Elementary.

"It's the school board's responsibility by law to consolidate the schools or make pupil reassignments or placements when it contributes to the efficiency of the school system," Cosby said after the meeting. "Board meetings are not the place for political forums for any politician or aspiring politician. I think the school board will act on the issues and facts and will do what's in the best interests of the students and the school system."

The Clinch Valley News, May 13, 1987.

As Peshkin argues in The Imperfect Union, smaller schools such as Bishop are consolidated not to provide enrichment for students or to intentionally harm small communities but to save money. Consolidation has been and continues to be the policy of school systems determined to save money and trim budgets. (Peshkin, 1982) The future of the Bishop community had, however, been foretold years before the school board's final vote.

As early as 1925, a survey conducted by the United States Coal Commission had concluded that the life expectancy of a coal operation was 60 to 80 years. (United States Coal, 1925) Bishop appeared to be fulfilling that prophecy as operations ceased. Even the community's school was preparing to close just prior to the coal camp's sixtieth birthday.

The students who had been attending Bishop Elementary School were now to be bused to North Tazewell Elementary School in the county seat town of Tazewell. The faculty and staff at the North Tazewell School scheduled a special session before the school term began that year for the former Bishop students and parents to visit the North Tazewell School and to become familiar with their new school home. According to the principal of the North Tazewell School at that time, Fred Dean, the transition went very

well for all concerned. Although some of the Bishop parents did express displeasure with the change, most accepted the decision, realizing that the enrollment at Bishop was becoming too small to continue the school's existence. "It was not long," Dean observed, "before the former Bishop students were regarding North Tazewell as 'our' school." (Fred Dean, personal communication, December 30, 1995) "The children adjusted better than the parents," observed Judy Penley, a teacher at Bishop who transferred along with the children to North Tazewell. (Judy Penley, personal communication, January 1, 1996) Simultaneously, the other employees of the Bishop School were relocated to North Tazewell or to other schools throughout Tazewell County.

Several students who attended Bishop Elementary, in its last years of existence, are now high school and college students in Tazewell County and the state of Virginia. One such student, Eric Henegar, was in the fourth grade the year that Bishop closed. He was involved in many of the school's activities including the local baseball team during his fourth grade year. The fifth grade meant riding a bus across Stony Ridge each day, however, to attend North Tazewell Elementary School. According to Henegar, the toughest part of going to North Tazewell was meeting new people. Everyone at Bishop had grown up together. On the other hand, North Tazewell was a new community, with new

activities and new adjustments. Academically, Henegar noted that the North Tazewell students seemed to be ahead in some subjects. (Eric Henegar, personal communication, March 17, 1995) It took a while but soon the Bishop students had caught up. In fact, many of the Bishop students not only caught up but excelled in their middle and high school careers. For example, Henegar was an honor graduate in his class of 200 at Tazewell High School in 1995.

One of Eric's classmates, Jared Linkous, another Bishop product and honor graduate at Tazewell High School in 1995, is enrolled as a first-year student at the Virginia Military Institute. Both young men concurred that the preparation that they had at Bishop Elementary readied them for success at North Tazewell Elementary School, Tazewell Middle School, Tazewell High School and higher education. Linkous observed, "Everything went fine; our grades were good or at least as good as anyone else's." Linkous added, "Although it seemed weird to close our school at first, I believe it was better for me in the long run." (Jared Linkous, personal communication, December 27, 1995)

One of the teachers at North Tazewell Elementary School that year of consolidation was Patsy Grindstaff. She remembered well the extraordinary class of fifth graders that she taught that year at North Tazewell. Four of her twenty-five students were former Bishop pupils. Grindstaff

observed, "Intellectually that was the best group of students that I have had during my career at North Tazewell which spans more than two decades." (Patsy Grindstaff, personal communication, December 27, 1995) The Bishop students were academically and intellectually on par with the other bright youngsters that she taught that year. This group questioned everything. "This was the same year that Tazewell County first administered the ITBS Tests," Grindstaff noted. (Patsy Grindstaff, personal communication, December 27, 1995) This group of students challenged some of these standardized test questions and even pointed out that some of the responses were not clear, asserting that some of the standardized questions actually had more than one "correct" response. Other than getting used to the larger student body of the North Tazewell School, the Bishop students were no different from the students who had spent their first five years of school at North Tazewell. (Patsy Grindstaff, personal communication, December 27, 1995) Arlene Glover Boothe, former Bishop School secretary and now Tazewell County School Board secretary, also noted that the Bishop School routinely turned out some of the best students to attend Tazewell Middle and Tazewell High Schools. (Arlene Glover Boothe, personal communication, December 31, 1995)

Although the decline in the coal industry was not noted

as a factor in the school's closing, the correlation between the declining market for coal from the Bishop mine and the declining enrollment at the Bishop Elementary School is more than obvious. Change and decay which had ever been the fate of even the most famous of mining regions would also tell the story of the southern Appalachians. (Shinn, 1970) From the peak of the coal industry in the 1940s to the decline of the Bishop operations by the mid-1980s, the rise and fall of the Bishop Elementary School can also be traced. As one outsider observed, "The heart of the billion dollar coalfield was still beating (in the 1980s), but barely." (Greever, 1994, p.4)

In fact, during the coal boom of the 1960s, it was not unusual to find thirty-eight or more pupils in each classroom at Bishop. (Thelma Spence, personal communication, June 10, 1995) By the 1980s, the average class size had dropped to only sixteen or seventeen students per class. (Nancy Hall, personal communication, April 1, 1995) The fate of the Bishop coal camp and that of Bishop Elementary were unavoidably intertwined.

Mary Alice York Stacy, librarian at the Bishop School during its last several years, recalls the final day at the school. "Shortly after the students had boarded the buses or begun the walk to their homes, an elderly man entered the building and asked if he could walk down the hall of the

school just one more time," Stacy recalled. He indicated to Stacy that he had attended the school during the early 1930s when the building and he were both young.

Consolidation and New Purpose

When the edifice was abandoned as a school building by the Tazewell County School Board at the end of the 1986-1987 school year, the property reverted to the Pocahontas Corporation or its successor, the Consolidation Coal Company, as designated in the original deed. The reversion was made official by action of the Tazewell County School Board on October 12, 1987. The reversion clause is further recorded at the Tazewell County Clerk's Office. (Tazewell County Deed Book 570, Page 178)

The following year, Consolidation Coal Company conveyed the ownership of the building to the United Way of Southwest Virginia. (Steele, 1989) The deed provided for the property transfer with a reversionary interest and mineral rights retained by the coal company in return for \$1.00. (Tazewell County Deed Book 587, Page 470) Bishop School, rechristened Bishop's Place, would again serve the people of the greater Southwest Virginia community. Beginning in August of 1989, the school building underwent remodeling to

convert it into a shelter for the homeless. A new roof was added to the structure; a new furnace was installed; a new kitchen was built on the second floor; and the indoor rooms were painted. (Michael Hymes, personal communication, January 3, 1996) Much of the renovation was made possible with funding from the Department of Housing and Community Development. ("Bishop's Place," 1994) Additional assistance was given by many members groups of the community. Also, several civic and school-related groups adopted rooms to decorate and prepare as bedrooms, sitting rooms and play areas. An advisory group of members of the Bishop community helped the United Way to oversee the functioning of the shelter. In addition, local groups such as the Bishop Boy Scout troop, were given access to the building for meetings and other activities. (Michael Hymes, personal communication, January 3, 1996)

Consolidation prize

Coal company presents building to Bishop, Va.

By H. EDWARD STEELE
of the Daily Telegraph staff

Bishop, Va., on the West Virginia-Virginia state line, is excited over Consolidation Coal's gift of its closed grade school building for use for a variety of community and human service needs.

Consol has decided the two-story well built facility to the Southwest Virginia United Way because the land on which it stands reverted to the company after the school was closed not long ago because of lessened attendance.

"Donation of the Bishop school demonstrates Consol's continued commitment to the communities in which we operate," said Eustace Frederick, who heads the company's Important Southern Appalachia Region from its Bluefield, Va. headquarters.

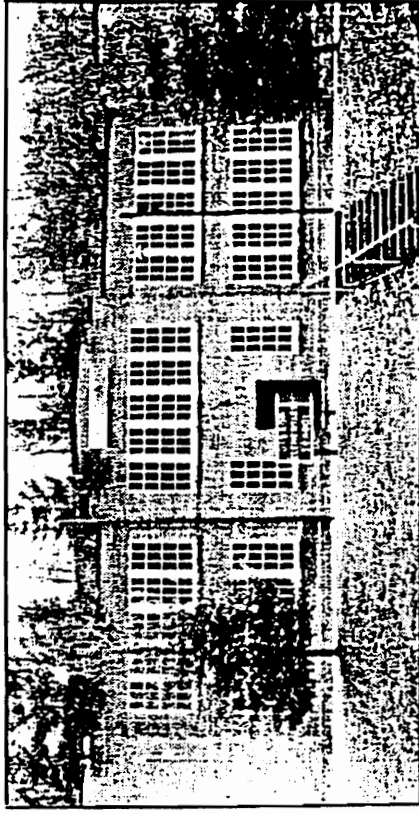
Doug Parnell, a Richlands, Va., banker and president of the Lebanon, Va.-based regional United Way, has already named an advisory board of Bishop residents to decide on how the building can best be used for the good of the community and indeed the whole area.

On the board are J.H. Johnson, Reginald Lambright, Jerry Farley, Mrs. Bill Shutt and Rev. George Mallory. According to Mike Hynes, a Bluefield, Va. Consol official and vice president of the Southwest Virginia United Way, all are active in the Bishop community and well acquainted with its needs.

Aleta Spicer, the United Way's executive director based at Lebanon, Va., said yesterday several good suggestions have already been made for the closed school's use following Frederick's announcement of its donation.

Aside from meeting strictly local needs, such as a meeting place for the Scouts and other community organizations, one suggestion is that a part of it might become a shelter for persons who are temporarily homeless. "Not derelicts and winos but those who have been burned out or rendered homeless by accidents, deaths and the like," Spicer explained.

A share of the food program also operated in that isolated region and it could very well be based in the building. Other good



Gift

This former Bishop Elementary School will become a community center following its recent donation to the Southwest Virginia United Way by Consolidation Coal Co. The school was closed not long ago and the property given back to the company.

Ideas will be considered when the advisory board meets shortly.

Incidentally, the Lebanon-based United Way is in sight of its annual financing goal of \$400,000. Mike Hynes has directed the campaign and is a vice

president of the Virginia United Way organization and slated to become its president next May, Spicer said. There are 45 separate United Ways in the state-wide set-up he will head.

The Bluefield Daily Telegraph, January 1, 1989.

A number of people were given safe haven over the next several years when emergencies arose. (Isom, 1989) The shelter served as a refuge for people who were burned out, flooded out, abused and homeless. The building that had housed school children now housed unfortunates. And although the sign in front of the school was reversed, the function of the Bishop building, that of service to people, continued. In fact, Bishop's Place served as a temporary refuge for both the homeless and the abused in a seven-county region of Southwest Virginia. ("Bishop's Place," 1994) The United Way of Southwest Virginia owned and operated Bishop's Place until funding losses forced the shelter to close in late 1995.



Bishop's Place Homeless Shelter.

Photograph by the Author.

Conclusion

This study is the story of a real community and its school as well as the individuals who made up both the community and the school for one hundred years. The account reported here must be explored and analyzed to better understand how the community and its school influenced the lives of the people of Bishop for a century. The study is not intended to be solely an abstract, theoretical review, but rather an examination of the real lives of real people in the farming village of Crocketts Cove and its successor, the coal mining community of Bishop.

From 1888-1987, the history of the Crocketts Cove and Bishop communities and their educational institutions reflected many changes in the school, the community, and the nation. Therefore, the study represents a century of change, revision and redefinition, not only in the role of the school in the community, but also in the role of this particular community within the nation.

From a one-room school serving a very rural farming locale to a modern, eight-room, brick facility serving a burgeoning mining-industrial based town, the Crocketts Cove/Bishop school was forced to redefine its role several

times during its one-hundred years of existence. As the make-up of the Bishop community changed, so did its school. The purpose of this study, therefore, has been to look at the influences that helped to shape the Crocketts Cove and, later, Bishop communities. The changing economy, the transforming society, the shifting roles of family, church, the miners' union and other community institutions each played a role in the development of the schools in the Crocketts Cove/Bishop community.

For example, the Bishop community of today has changed as drastically from the pinnacle of the coal town's boom earlier in this century as the Crocketts Cove farming setting changed to give way to the creation of the coal boom town of several decades ago. An examination of local census demographics shows that the Bishop area's population of the 1990s has become very static. As of 1990, 99.6% of the residents of the Bandy, Virginia Zip Code 24602, which includes the Bishop Post Office and the rural communities surrounding Bishop, were native-born Americans. In addition, only 12.5% of the residents of the area had moved either into or out of the community from 1980-1990.

As a reflection of the closure of the Bishop mines less than a decade before, the 1990 census shows that 10% of the community's residents remained unemployed. Meantime, however, the state-wide unemployment rate was only 4.5%. In

addition, 21.8% of the residents of the community fell below the poverty level with a median income for the community of \$17,401 per year. (Sourcebook, 1992) The closing of the Bishop mine, its school and the overall reduction of the size of the community and each of its institutions has left a much different town today than one would have envisioned at the zenith of the coal camp's history earlier in the twentieth century.

The Uniqueness of the Bishop Experience

Although statistics speak poorly of Appalachian education in general, the Bishop School appears to present an exception to many of those generalizations. For example, nearly 65% of the students who enter first grade in the Appalachian region drop out before graduation. In addition, those who do finish high school routinely score poorly on standardized nationwide tests. (Peterson, 1972) Above all, Appalachian schooling is a story, according to one Kentucky coalfield county superintendent, of the most underprivileged and underfinanced schools anywhere imaginable. (Peterson, 1972) The picture of schooling in Appalachia and within the coalfields, in particular, is bleak if not hopeless.

Despite this general picture of the poor state of

schooling in Appalachia in general and the coalfields in particular, Bishop School presents a very different story. The inclusion of the voices of the people who made up the Bishop community and its school along with their conversations and experiences, as well as other local and regional primary sources revealed an uncommon scenario for the Bishop School.

For example, an examination of the last fifty Bishop graduates who were later seniors at Tazewell High School sheds much light on the success of the students who came from the Bishop School. A review of the attendance rate at Tazewell High School from 1991-1995 discloses a composite attendance rate of 93.35% during the first half of the decade of the 1990s. The attendance rate for the Tazewell High School students who came from the Bishop School during the same time was a comparable 92.5%. In fact, when considering the greater commute of most of these students, the rugged Southwest Virginia terrain and the many snowy winter days in Tazewell County, the per cent attendance for these students is actually quite exceptional.

During this same five year period from 1991-1995, 72% of the students who graduated from Tazewell High School went on to continue their education through either the military, a two-year college or a four-year institution of learning. Meantime an examination of the Tazewell High School

graduates from 1991-1995 who began their educational careers at Bishop discloses that 75% of those students ended up continuing their formal education beyond high school. Although the rate of Tazewell High School graduates who continued their education beyond high school was a rather commendable 72%, Bishop students were even more likely to continue their education beyond high school than the "average" Tazewell graduate.

In addition, the use of photographs and other written documentation provided new interpretive material by which scholarly standards were not abandoned but instead made more understandable and accessible. These photographs of the Bishop community during much of its existence shows a town with a modern school (p. 173), up-to-date housing (p. 136), and other amenities such as paved roads, sidewalks, and tree-lined streets (p. 116). Such scenarios were rare when compared to many other coal towns in much of Appalachia.

This study has found that the Bishop school provided quality instruction for its students for more than five decades of its existence. Time and again stories were recounted of the successes of Bishop students later in life. During the school's history, scores of its graduates went on, not only to complete high school but also to obtain college degrees.

For example, doctors, lawyers, druggists, dentists,

engineers, school principals, and government officials such as judges, city managers and politicians, completed their elementary education in the classrooms of the Bishop School. In addition, a plethora of teachers, nurses and other community leaders throughout the country began their formal schooling at the Bishop. (Francis Huffman, personal communication, March 18, 1995) For example, Bishop students were as well, if not better, prepared than other sixth graders who entered Tazewell Middle School during the final decade of Bishop School's existence, the 1980s. (Robert Brown, personal communication, January 1, 1996)

The dedicated educators of Bishop School may have had few fancy tools or little in the way of financial resources to work with, as was true of much of Appalachia schooling of the time. Nevertheless, the Bishop community, an enlightened coal camp, (Peterson, 1972) turned out remarkably outstanding results. In reality, the small size of the Bishop School apparently gave its teachers an advantage in scheduling the use of the limited technology and new materials that were available in Tazewell County schools at that time. (Robert Brown, personal communication, January 1, 1996) The child at Bishop who had a problem had teachers who were willing to work individually with him to solve that problem. Children were individuals not just numbers. (Curtis Shrader, personal communication,

December 31, 1995) The coal camp teachers were a closely-knit faculty who were concerned not only with the child's intellectual needs but also with his physical and emotional needs. (Susanne Grindstaff, personal communication, January 2, 1996)

In reality, in this close-knit mining community, a school emerged that distinguished itself by providing excellent educational opportunities to a variety of young people for more than 50 years. The stereotypical view of the backward, company-controlled community and community institutions did not evolve in this two-state coal town. The community of Bishop and its school embraced a much more optimistic view of the future.

The modern brick school facility at Bishop was also a much more attractive school setting for students and teachers, alike, than many of the ancient, weather beaten, wooden school houses which dotted the landscape across much of the coalfield and mountain regions. Unlike many coal camp schools, the Bishop facility was, from its inception, controlled by the local school board, in this case the Tazewell County School system of which it was a part. Community members insisted that the young people of Bishop have the same opportunities as other students within the county. The residents of Bishop again illustrated the value that the community placed on education and, in particular,

schooling within their community. As a result when the town of North Tazewell saw its long-needed new grade school completed, the Bishop School project became a part of a two-school bond issue which readily passed in both communities. In addition, control of the school by the coal company, a pattern which developed in many mining towns throughout the Appalachian region, did not materialize in Bishop.

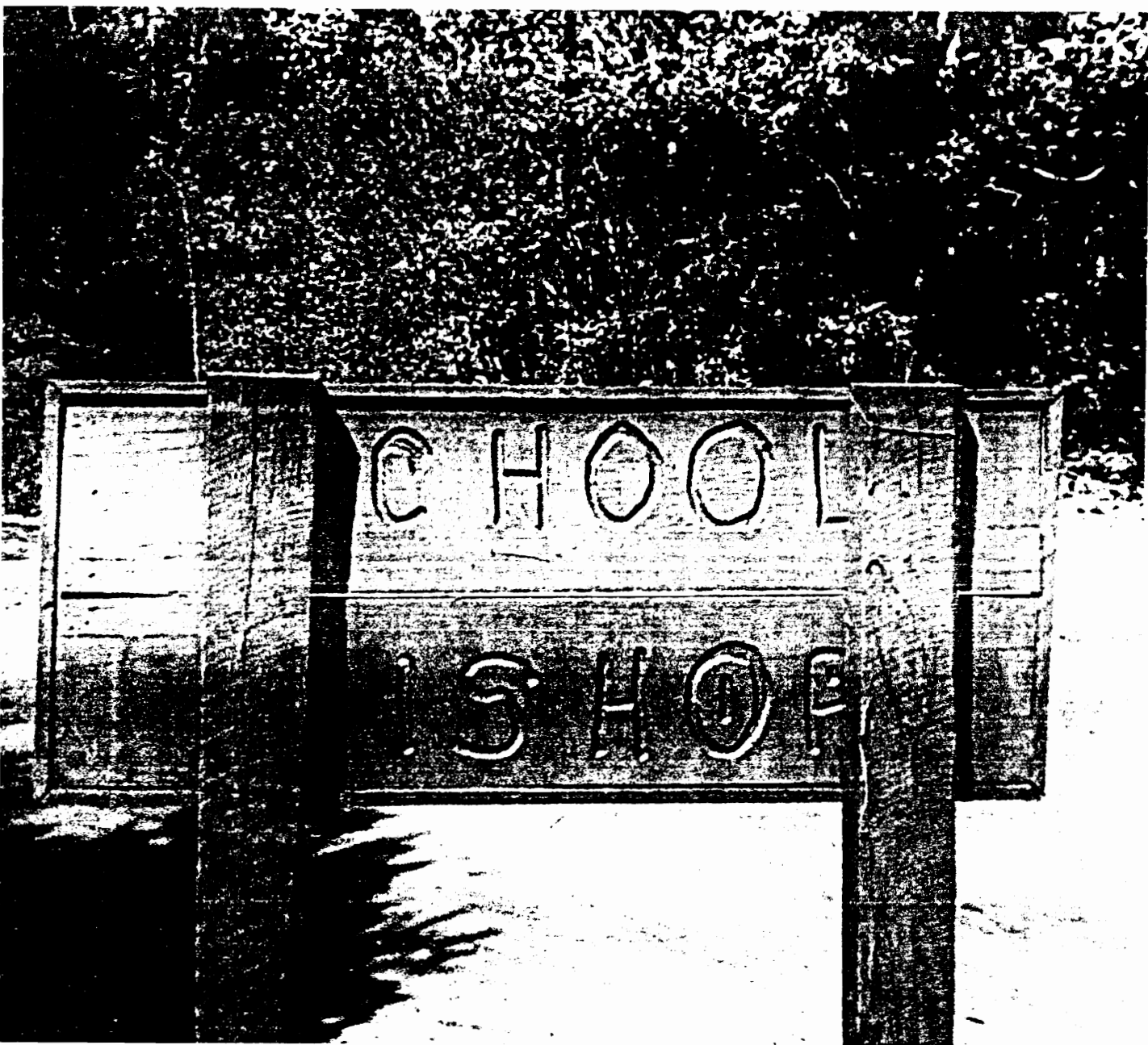
The coal company's role in supporting education in Bishop was also important to the success of the town and its school. From the very beginning of the school with the coal company's provision of the land on which to construct the building the Pocahontas Fuel Company supported the Bishop School. Well qualified teachers were routinely hired with bonuses even offered to supplement the teachers' incomes and to make many coal camp school teaching positions more attractive to the most qualified personnel. The first Bishop School educators were even provided with free housing as an added incentive to choose to teach in the Bishop School.

Bishop was a town that lacked very little. Unlike many Depression era communities, the men all had jobs. The town was home to a restaurant, a clothing store, the company store, a theater, and even a jukebox joint. If these diversions were not enough, a bus line ran through Bishop on a regular basis to take passengers to the county seat at

Tazewell or the railroad boom town at Bluefield.

This community with such modern conveniences as electricity, well-built houses, sidewalks, gardens, and overall orderliness made up the setting for a school that was quite uncommon for most similarly-sized communities of the time. Recreational facilities of the coal community were also far superior to most small towns in the United States. The resultant optimism which permeated this community furthered the cause of education within this coal community located deep in the heart of the Appalachian region.

In fact, the old Bishop School sign, now reversed to serve as a placard for Bishop's Place, beckons to all who will witness, "SCHOOL IS HOPE." This confident mind set which characterized the Bishop community and its school for decades lives on today through the young people whose lives were forever altered by the people who made up the Bishop community and its school. After all, for several decades, in the Bishop community, its school was the hope that many of the young people of the coal community used as a foundation on which to build prosperous futures as contributing members of their community in Tazewell County, across the Commonwealth of Virginia and in other communities throughout the United States.



Reversed Sign at the Bishop's Place.

Photography by the Author.

APPENDIX A

Principals of Crocketts Cove/Bishop School Tazewell County, Virginia

Years	School Name	Principal
1924-1926	Crocketts Cove	Louise Settle
1926-1927	Crocketts Cove	Grace Phillips
1927-1928	Crocketts Cove	Narcie Wingo
1928-1930	Crocketts Cove	Ruth Hilt
1930-1931	Bishop	Rosa Mae Harman
1931-1932	Bishop Graded	Elizabeth McCall
1932-1934	Bishop Graded	Aubrey Sadler
1934-1937	Bishop Graded	James Hughes
1937-1940	Bishop Graded	Charles T. Snavelly
1940-1943	Bishop Graded	Samuel Maxey
1943-1944	Bishop Graded	Lois Maxey
1944-1951	Bishop Graded	Grover L. Strong
1951-1953	Bishop Elementary	Grover L. Strong
1953-1957	Bishop Elementary*	Jack Harman
1957-1960	Bishop Elementary	Steward M. Lilly
1960-1963	Bishop Elementary	R. D. McGee
1963-1966	Bishop Elementary	Howard Crouch

1966-1976	Bishop Elementary	Bernard D. Humphrey
1976-1980	Bishop Elementary	Robert Brown
1980-1987	Bishop Elementary**	Deaton V. Jones

*Beginning with the 1953-1954 school term, principals were assigned full-time administrative duties. Prior to that year principals also taught a class--usually the seventh grade.

**Beginning with the 1980-81 school term, the Bishop principal was also assigned half-time principal duties at the Rivermont School near Amonate.

APPENDIX B

Classroom Teachers of the Crocketts Cove/Bishop School Tazewell County, Virginia

Years	Teachers
1908-1909	Birdie Shrader
1909-1910	Birdie Shrader
1910-1911	Mallie Davidson
1911-1912	Mabel Childress
1912-1913	Mabel Childress Crockett
1913-1914	A. P. DeLong
1914-1915	A. P. DeLong
1915-1916	Miss Hayden
1916-1917	Nina Waltman Crockett
1917-1918	Birdie Beavers Mary Slusher
1918-1919	Birdie Beavers Mary Slusher
1919-1920	Mattie B. Haden Margaret Porter
1920-1921	Marie Heldreth

	Birdie Beavers
1921-1922	Ada Vaught Crockett
	India Howell
1922-1923	Mary Bell
	Celeste Bell
1923-1924	Mary Bell
	Celeste Bell
1924-1925	Lena Bernard
	Louise Settle
1925-1926	J. E. Crockett
	Laura Bernard
1926-1927	Grace Phillips
	Reba Buchanan
1927-1928	Narcie Wingo
	Margaret Gillespie
1928-1929	Ruth Hilt
	Ethel Wimmer
1929-1930	Ruth Hilt
	Sallie Hilt
1930-1931	Rosa Mae Harman
	Elsie Hilt
1931-1932	Elizabeth McCall
	Rosa Mae Harman
	Ruth Belcher
	Alice Grey Lowe

	Vivian Ellington
1932-1933	Aubrey Sadler
	Rosa Mae Harman
	Ruth Belcher
	Vivian Ellington
	Rose Pierce
1933-1934	Aubrey Sadler
	Greta Warden
	Kate Peery
	Rose Pierce
	Virginia Neel
1934-1935	Aubrey Sadler
	Lois Peery
	Nannie Rose Buchanan
	Virginia Neel
	Rose Pierce
1935-1936	James Hughes
	Lois Peery
	Rosa Mae Harman
	Nell Bailey
	Lucille Peters
	Eloise Peery
1936-1937	James Hughes
	Lois Peery
	Carlyl Burdette

	Rosa Mae Harman
	Nell Bailey
	Eloise Peery
1937-1938	Charles T. Snavely
	Nell Bailey
	Lois Greever
	Rosa Mae Harman
	Clara Haley
1938-1939	Charles T. Snavely
	Curtis Tyler
	Louise Thompson
	Nell Bailey
	Charleen Beller
	Clara Hailey
1939-1940	Charles Snavely
	Curtis C. Tyler
	Louise Thompson
	Nell Bailey
	Charleen Beller
	Clara Hailey
1940-1941	Samuel L. Maxey
	Curtis C. Tyler
	Josie Cook
	Arnice Hilt
	Kate DeWitt

	Fanny Vincent
	W. P. Combs
	Lola M. Ferguson
	Lois Sparks Maxey
	Jimmy Wiley
	Charleen Beller
1941-1942	Samuel L. Maxey
	W. P. Combs
	Josie Cooke
	Annice Hilt
	Fanny Vincent
	Kate DeWitt
	Lola Mae Ferguson
1942-1943	Samuel L. Maxey
	Lois Maxey
	Katherine Maude Music
	Sallie Divers
	Lola Mae Ferguson
	Kate DeWitt
1943-1944	Lois Maxey
	Kate DeWitt
	Lola Mae Ferguson
	Katherine Maude Music
	Eva Williams Brown
1944-1945	Lois Maxey

	Kate DeWitt
	Virginia Dare DeWitt
	Lola Mae Ferguson
	Nellie P. White
	Eva Williams Brown
1945-1946	Grover L. Strong
	Lola Mae Ferguson
	Virginia Dare DeWitt
	Kate DeWitt
	Nellie P. White
	Eva Williams Brown
	Mary Alice Cassell
1946-1947	Grover L. Strong
	Evelyn Sue Cunningham
	Virginia Dare DeWitt
	Kate DeWitt
	Nellie P. White
	Mary Alice Cassell Kitts
	Eva Williams Brown
1947-1948	Grover L. Strong
	Evelyn Sue Cunningham
	Virginia Dare DeWitt
	Kate DeWitt
	Mary Alice Cassell Kitts
	Rosemary Muncy

	Betty Bailey
1948-1949	Grover L. Strong
	Evelyn Sue Cunningham
	Virginia Dare DeWitt
	Kate DeWitt
	Mary Alice Cassell Kitts
	Rosemary Muncy
	Betty Bailey
1949-1950	Grover L. Strong
	Evelyn Sue Cunningham
	Thelma L. Buffalow
	Rosemary Muncy
	Betty Bailey
	Freda Daniel York
	Paul Fleming
1950-1951	Grover L. Strong
	Evelyn Sue Cunningham
	Charlotte Harman
	Rosemary Muncy
	Betty Bailey
	Freda Daniel York
	Paul Fleming
	Thelma L. Buffalo
1951-1952	Grover Strong
	Evelyn Sue Cunningham

	Charlotte Harman
	Rosemary Muncy
	Betty Bailey
	Freda Daniel York
	Paul Fleming
	Thelma L. Buffalo
1952-1953	Grover Strong
	Evelyn Sue Cunningham
	Charlotte Harman
	Rosemary Muncy
	Betty Bailey
	Freda Daniel York
	Paul Fleming
	Thelma L. Buffalo
1953-1954	Rosemary Muncy
	Edith Altizer
	Roxie Ann Stout
	Anna Belle L. Stone
	Edith V. Neece
	Freda Daniel York
	Thelma L. Buffalow
1954-1955	Edith Altizer
	Mary O. Daniel
	Edith V. Neece
	Zelma J. Ledford

	Thelma L. Spence
	Anna Belle L. Stone
	Roxie Ann Stout
1955-1956	Edith Altizer
	Mary O. Daniel
	Edith V. Neece
	Zelma J. Ledford
	Thelma L. Spence
	Anna Belle L. Stone
	Roxie Ann Stout
1956-1957	Edith Altizer
	Mary O. Daniel
	Edith V. Neece
	Zelma J. Ledford
	Thelma L. Spence
	Anna Belle L. Stone
	Roxie Ann Stout
1957-1958	Edith Altizer
	Mary O. Daniel
	Edith V. Neece
	Zelma J. Ledford
	Thelma L. Spence
	Anna Belle L. Stone
	Mary Louise Nelson
1958-1959	Edith Altizer

	Mary O. Daniel
	Edith V. Neece
	Zelma J. Ledford
	Thelma L. Spence
	Anna Belle L. Stone
	Mary Louise Nelson
1959-1960	Zelma J. Ledford
	Bonnie H. Lilly
	Ethel Purser
	Anna Belle L. Stone
	Mary D. Daniel
	Thelma L. Buffalow
	Edith V. Neece
	Thelma L. Spence
1960-1961	Zelma J. Ledford
	Bonnie H. Lilly
	Thelma L. Buffalow
	Anna Belle L. Stone
	Mary D. Daniel
	Thelma L. Spence
	Edith V. Neece
1961-1962	Zelma J. Ledford
	Nancy H. Hall
	Thelma L. Spence
	Anna Belle L. Stone

	Thelma L. Buffalow
	Mary D. Daniel
	Edith V. Neece
1962-1963	Grace A. Sluss
	Nancy H. Hall
	Thelma L. Spence
	Anna Belle L. Stone
	Thelma L. Buffalow
	Edith V. Neece
1963-1964	Nancy H. Hall
	Flora Lee Eagle
	Thelma L. Buffalow
	Thelma L. Spence
	Anna Belle L. Stone
	Mary Daniel
	Billie W. Grant
1964-1965	Nancy H. Hall
	Billie W. Grant
	Flora Lee Eagle
	Anna Belle L. Stone
	Mary D. Daniel
	Thelma L. Spence
	Thelma L. Buffalow
1965-1966	Nancy H. Hall
	Billie W. Grant

Flora Lee Eagle
Anna Belle L. Stone
Mary D. Daniel
Thelma L. Spence
Thelma L. Buffalow

1966-1967

Nancy H. Hall
Barbara Sergeant
Rosa Mae Harman
Anna Belle L. Stone
Mary D. Daniel
Thelma L. Spence
Thelma L. Buffalo

1967-1968

Nancy H. Hall
Barbara Sergeant
Rosa Mae Harman
Anna Belle L. Stone
Mary D. Daniel
Thelma L. Spence
Thelma L. Buffalow

1968-1969

Nancy H. Hall
Barbara Sergeant
Rosa Mae Harman
Anna Belle L. Stone
Mary D. Daniel
Thelma L. Spence

	Thelma L. Buffalow
1969-1970	Nancy H. Hall
	Shirley W. Coe
	Linda Brooks
	Rosa Mae Harman
	Anna Belle L. Stone
	Mary D. Daniel
	Thelma L. Spence
	Thelma L. Buffalow
1970-1971	Nancy H. Hall
	Shirley W. Coe
	Belva K. Tiller
	Rosa Mae Harman
	Anna B. Stone
	Thelma L. Spence
	Sandra L. Warden
	Robert D. Beavers
1971-1972	Nancy H. Hall
	Shirley W. Coe
	Margaret G. Jackson
	Sandra Joan Claytor
	Anna Belle L. Stone
	Thelma L. Spence
	Patricia Martin
	Robert D. Beavers

1972-1973

Nancy H. Hall
Judy Sargent
Shirley W. Coe
Deborah Cecil
Thelma L. Spence
Patricia Martin
Robert D. Beavers
Herman Coe

1973-1974

Nancy H. Hall
Regina F. Bain
Judy Sargent
Deborah Cecil
Brenda J. Bostic
Robert D. Beavers
Patricia Martin
Herman Coe

1974-1975

Nancy H. Hall
Judy Sargent
Debbie Cecil
Brenda McGinnis
Pat Martin
Bob Beavers
Herman Coe

1975-1976

Nancy H. Hall
Judy Sargent

	Sheranne E. Bowling
	Deborah B. Cecil
	Brenda McGinnnis
	Charlie Monk
	Katherine Neal
1976-1977	Nancy H. Hall
	Sheranne E. Bowling
	Judy Sargent
	Janie A. Blankenship
	Linda Harrison
	Charlie Monk
	Katherine Neal
1977-1978	Nancy H. Hall
	Sheranne E. Bowling
	Judy Sargent
	Janie A. Blankenship
	Debra Mink
	Charlie Monk
	W. R. Moss
1978-1979	Nancy H. Hall
	Sheranne E. Bowling
	Judy Sargent
	Janie A. Blankenship
	Debra M. Mink
	Patricia B. McCoy

	W. R. Moss
1979-1980	Nancy H. Hall
	Myra Justus
	Judy Sergeant
	Janie A. Blankenship
	Debra M. Mink
	Patricia B. McCoy
	W. R. Moss
1980-1981	Nancy H. Hall
	Myra Justus
	Judy Sergeant
	Debra M. Mink
	Brenda B. McGinnis
	Betty L. Slade
1981-1982	Myra Justus
	Nancy H. Hall
	Judy Sergeant
	Debra M. Mink
	Betty L. Slade
	Brenda McGinnis
1982-1983	Nancy H. Hall
	Brenda McGinnis
	Myra Justus
	Judy Sergeant
	Harriet G. Pardue

	Betty L. Slade
1983-1984	Nancy H. Hall
	Peggy Logan
	Judy Sargent
	Harriet G. Pardue
	Betty L. Slade
	Brenda McGinnis
1984-1985	Nancy H. Hall
	Peggy Harrison
	Judy Sargent
	Harriett G. Pardue
	Betty L. Slade
	Brenda McGinnis
1985-1986	Nancy H. Hall
	Peggy Harrison
	Judy Sargent
	Harriett G. Pardue
	Betty L. Slade
	Brenda McGinnis
	Gilla Brown
1986-1987	Nancy H. Hall
	Peggy Logan
	Judy Sargent
	Harriett G. Pardue
	Betty L. Slade

Brenda McGinnis

Gilla Brown

APPENDIX C

Teachers Employed and Subjects Taught at Bishop School Tazewell County, Virginia

Years	Classroom Teachers	Librarian	Kin.	Title I Reading	Title I Math	P. E.	Music	Teachers' Aides
1889-1917	1							
1917-1931	2							
1931-1935	4							
1935-1944	5							
1944-1951	6							
1951-1952	7							
1952-1960	8							
1960-1963	7							
1963-1968	7			1			1	2
1968-1973	7		1	1			1/2	2
1973-1980	6	1/2	1	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1 2
1980-1987	5	1/2	1	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1 2

APPENDIX D

Grades Taught by Year at the Crocketts Cove and Later Bishop School Tazewell County, Virginia

Years	Grades	Name
1889-1917	One-room/1-7	Crocketts Cove School
1917-1931	Two-rooms/1-7	Crocketts Cove School
1931-1935	1-7	Bishop Graded School
1935-1944	1-9	Bishop Junior High School
1944-1968	1-7	Bishop Graded School
1968-1973	K-7	Bishop Elementary School
1973-1980	K-6	Bishop Elementary School
1980-1987	K-5	Bishop Elementary School

APPENDIX E

Enrollment at the Bishop School Tazewell County, Virginia

Year	Enrollment
1908	41
1910	31
1911	29
1912	34
1913	45
1919	85
1920	64
1921	62
1923	60
1924	61
1938	275
1939	282
1940	328
1941	344
1942	365
1943	319
	298

1944	352
1945	327
1946	279
1947	290
1948	276
1949	300
1950	319
1951	321
1952	280
1953	274
1954	246
1955	257
1956	259
1957	257
1958	265
1959	264
1960	201
1961	228
1962	259
1963	273
1964	230
1965	215
1966	199
1967	199
1968	180
	299

1969		192
1970		188
1971		184
1972		173
1973		162
1974		156
1975		164
1976		150
1977		179
1978		176
1979		164
1980		137
1981		136
1982		141
1983		121
1984		117
1985		106
1986		93
1987	(Projection)	60

APPENDIX F

Teachers, Grades and Enrollment at Bishop One-Room Negro School McDowell County, West Virginia

Year	Teacher	Grades	Enrollment
1934-1935	Pagie Black	1-6	41
1935-1936	Maggie Bailey Pugh	1-6	31
1936-1937	Maggie Bailey Pugh	1-6	22
1937-1938	Maggie Bailey Pugh	1-6	23
1938-1939	Leona Pittard	1-6	25
1939-1940	Gertrude Wright	1-6	29
1940-1941	Gertrude Wright	1-6	30
1941-1942	Gertrude Wright	1-6	35
1942-1943	Gertrude Wright	1-6	30
1943-1944	Gertrude Wright	1-6	35
1944-1945	Mary N. Hiett	1-6	37
1945-1946	Bernice E. Harding	1-6	34
1946-1947	Bernice E. Harding	1-6	32
1947-1948	Bernice E. Harding	1-6	34
1948-1949	Bernice E. Harding	1-5	36

1949-1950	Bernice E. Harding	1-5	34
1950-1951	Bernice E. Harding	1-5	35
1951-1952	Bernice E. Harding	1-5	33
1952-1953	Bernice E. Harding	1-5	31
1953-1954	Bernice E. Harding	1-5	32
1954-1955	Bernice E. Harding	1-5	36
1955-1956	Bernice E. Harding	1-5	35
1956-1957	Bernice E. Harding	1-5	36
1957-1958	Bernice E. Harding	1-5	36
1958-1959	Bernice E. Harding	1-5	36
1959-1960	Clara Thomas	1-5	34
1960-1961	Clara Thomas Harris	1-5	29
1961-1962	Hazel Russell Eldridge	1-5	26
1962-1963	Alvin H. Woody	1-5	30
1963-1964	Alvin H. Woody	1-5	34
1964-1965	Alvin H. Woody	1-5	32

*Bishop Negro School was integrated with Endwell School, a formerly all-white school three miles north of Bishop, at the beginning of the 1965-1966 school term.

APPENDIX G

Population Changes in Tazewell and McDowell Counties

Year	Tazewell County	McDowell County
1800	2,127	
1810	3,007	
1820	3,916	
1830	5,749	
1840	6,290	
1850	9,942	
1860	9,920	1,535
1870	10,791	1,952
1880	12,861	3,074
1890	19,899	7,300
1900	23,384	18,747
1910	24,946	47,856
1920	27,840	68,571
1930	32,477	90,479
1940	41,607	90,354
1950	47,512	98,887

1960	44,791	71,359
1970	39,816	50,666
1980	50,511	49,899
1990	45,960	35,233

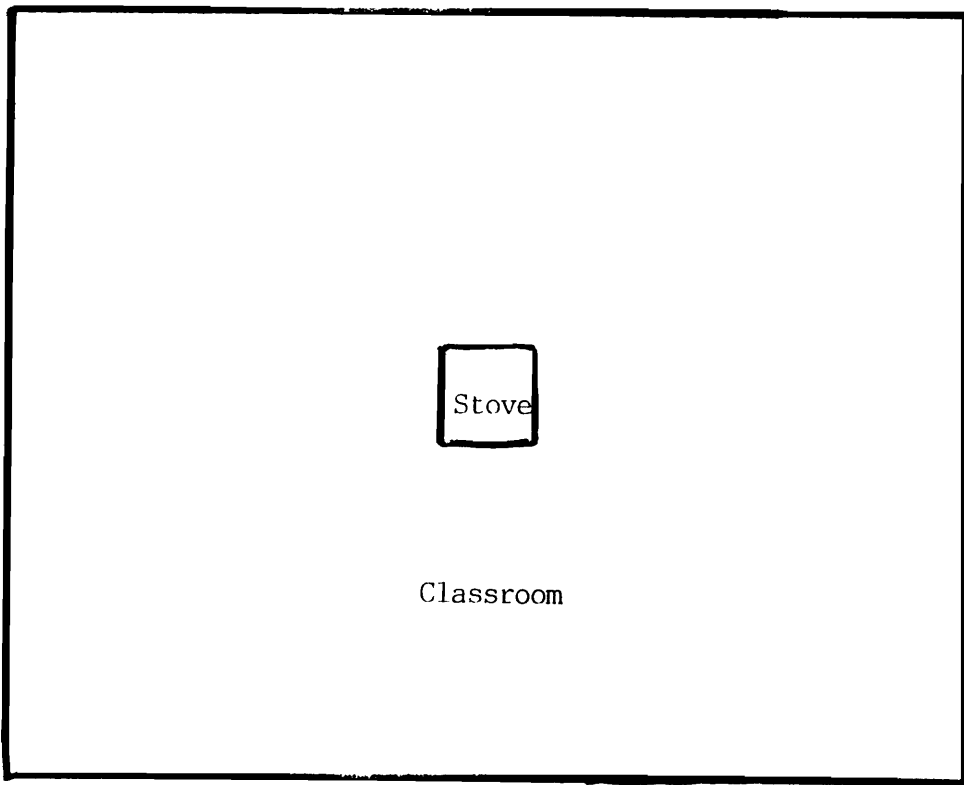
(United States Census Office, 1800-1990)

APPENDIX H

Crocketts Cove One-Room School

1888-1916

Floor Plan

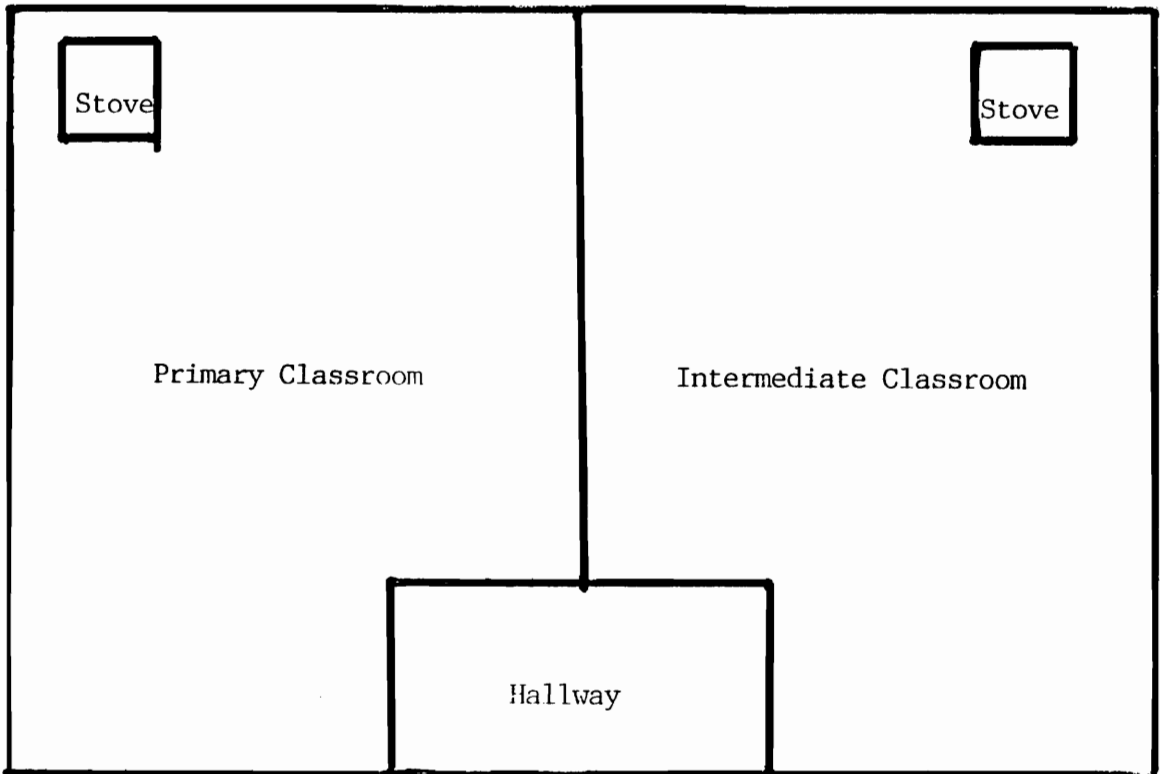


APPENDIX I

Crocketts Cove Two-Room School

1917-1931

Floor Plan

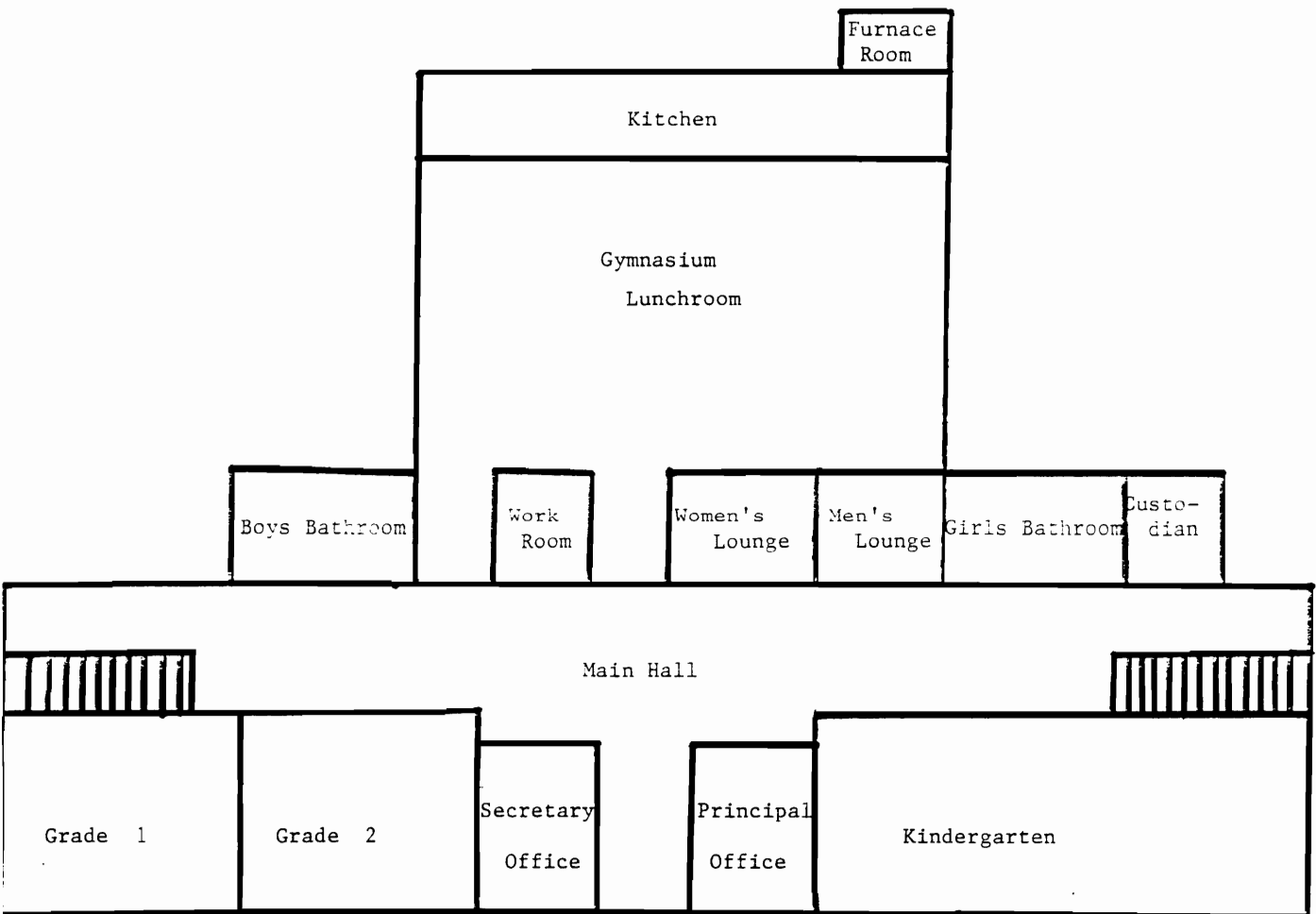


APPENDIX J

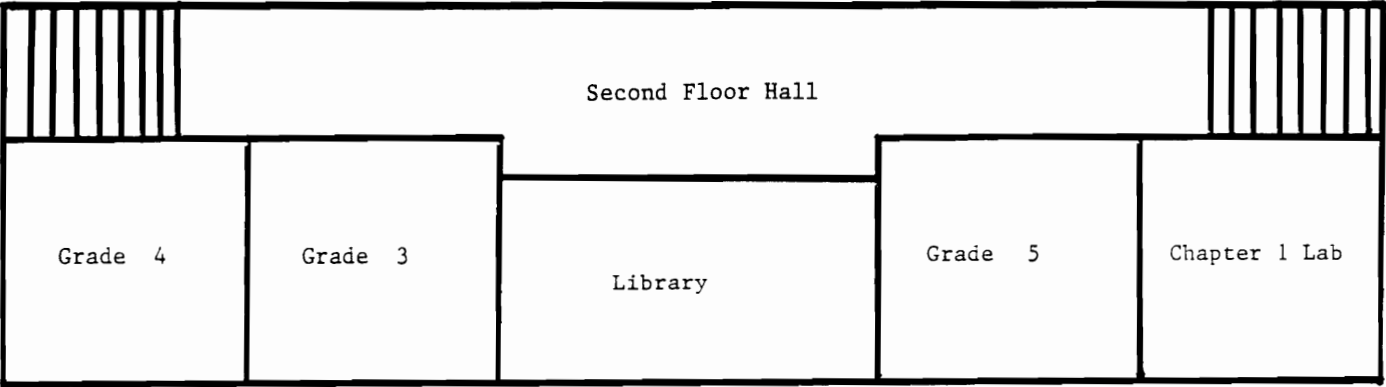
Bishop School Floor Plan

1932-1987

First Floor



Bishop School Floor Plan
1932-1987
Second Floor



APPENDIX K

Superintendents of Tazewell County Schools

1870	Rev. Jonathan Lyons
1875	James C. Spotts
1882	Rev. James H. Gillespie
1886	Harry M. Smythe
1896	P. H. Williams
1906	W. Archie Thompson
1917	Albert S. Greever
1945	Hugh K. Cassell
1947	James L. Walthall
1965	Lester L. Jones
1984	Frank A. Cosby
1991	Woodrow W. Mullins, Jr.

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VITA

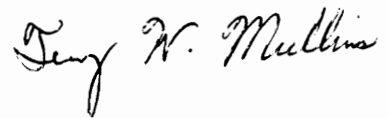
Terry Wayne Mullins was born in Bluefield, West Virginia on January 15, 1955. He grew up in Tazewell, Virginia where he attended public elementary and secondary schools. After graduating from Tazewell High School in 1973, he attended Southwest Virginia Community College in Richlands, Virginia and James Madison University in Harrisonburg, Virginia where he graduated in 1976 with a Bachelor of Arts Degree in General Social Science. In 1978, he completed his graduate work at Radford University in Radford, Virginia and was awarded a Masters of Science degree in history. He was admitted to the advanced graduate program at Virginia Tech in 1991 where he received his Certificate of Advanced Graduate Studies in Curriculum and Instruction in Social Studies Education in 1995.

His professional experience has included full time employment as a secondary social studies teacher and social studies department chairman from 1977-1982 at Rocky Gap High School in Bland County, Virginia. From 1982-1996 he has taught social studies at Tazewell High School in Tazewell County, Virginia where he has also served as social studies department chairman since 1991. He helped develop the

Social Studies Curriculum Guide for Tazewell County high schools in 1988. He introduced, implemented and coordinated the introduction of Advanced Placement Government at Tazewell High School in 1990. He also served as a member of the Tazewell High School Improvement Steering Committee from 1994-1996. In addition, he has taught classes as a member of the adjunct faculty of Wytheville Community College in Wytheville, Virginia, Southwest Virginia Community College in Richlands, Virginia and Clinch Valley College in Wise, Virginia.

His professional organization memberships include the National Education Association, the Virginia Education Association, the Bland County Teachers' Association, the Tazewell Education Association, the National Council for the Social Studies, the National Council for History Education, Inc., the Virginia Council for the Social Studies, the Virginia Society of History Teachers, the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, the Association of Teacher Educators, the Association of Teacher Educators in Virginia, the Appalachian Teachers' Network, and the Southwest Virginia Chapter of the Phi Delta Kappa. He is also a founding member and current president of the Tazewell County Historical Society in Tazewell, Virginia. He is chairman of the board of trustees of the Pisgah United Methodist Church about which he authored a bicentennial

history published in 1993. He currently serves as Vice Chairperson of the Commission on Archives and History of the Holston Conference of the United Methodist Church. In addition, he is an active member of the Holston Conference Historical Society and the Historical Society of the United Methodist Church. He has also written several articles which have been published in the Tazewell County Historical Society's newsletter, the Appalachian Teachers' Network newsletter, Stitches, and the Tazewell County Heritage Book.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Terry W. Mullins". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Terry W. Mullins