

Diamond Methodist Church 1921-1976

During the early formative years of this community there was not a single church, but this did not hinder the Christian people as much as you may think. Meetings were conducted in the only available structure (public), the school house. Many years passed before the first church was built. Led by the Reverend Luther Mayse, an organizational meeting was held and plans were formulated to buy land and build a church. The land was purchased from the K & M Land Company for \$400.00. Personal solicitations began. Pledges were received from interested persons, creating a great deal of enthusiasm among the people of the community, the building fund rapidly grew. With no capitol but the promise of many laymen to help with the building, the visions and prayers of a large number of people soon was realized. A church building of their own.

Elected to serve on the Trustee Committee were: chairman, Charles S. White; vice chairman, Thomas Grafton; secretary, Clyde V. Johnson; treasurer, John A. Fout. Member at large: Conrad Brown Stuarts, Jack Lawson, Joe Hicks and J. A. McAllister.

Reverend Luther B. Mayse was asked to serve as the pastor and on July 2, 1922 the cornerstone was laid by the Grand Lodge, A.F.A.M. of West Virginia, under the auspices of Salina Lodge 27-A.F.A.M. by Captain John M. Collins, Past Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of West Virginia.

Charter members were Mr. and Mrs. Charles S. White, Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Grafton, Mr. and Mrs. Jack Lawson, Mr. and Mrs. Harley Gwinn, Mr. and Mrs. Conrad Brown, Mr. and Mrs. S.J. Johnson, Mr. and Mrs. Albert Anderson, Mr. and Mrs. George Henry, Mr. and Mrs. Emmett Blossfield, Mr. and Mrs. Harold Walker and Mr. and Mrs. J.A. McAllister.

Myrtle McAllister, Steve Brown, William Brown, Thomas White, Joe Hicks, Vincent Smith, C. V. Johnson, William Tate, Lucy Turner, Mary Hannigan, Nora Moore, Rebecca Turner, John A. Fout and Christine Spradling.

This church is in good repair and in use today.



Diamond Baptist Church

The dreams and prayers of many years duration were finally fulfilled for a small group of people of Baptist belief in this community when their plans were completed to start building their own church.

In 1947 the Diamond Baptist Church was completed and the first services were held. It was built on land acquired many years before from a Mr. Ramus Hancock, and paid for by a group of ladies who raised most of the money by making and selling quilts. The organization of the church was led by eighteen charter members as listed below:

Mr. and Mrs. N. A. Edwards Mrs. Ruth Bonham
Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Gray Mrs. Effie Cash
Rev. and Mrs. Mark Farren Mrs. J. A. Fout
Rev. and Mrs. J. W. Romine, Sr.
Mrs. Irma Hemmings Mr. and Mrs. Herbert Walker
Mrs. Ilene Shaffer

The first acting pastor was Reverend J. W. Romine, Sr. in 1947.

Kenneth Ledsome	.....	1948-50
J. E. Hartman	.....	1950-52
Eugene Wolfe	.....	1952-53
Walter Scherbaum	.....	1953-56
Patrick Ballardham (interim)	.....	1956
Mark Farren	.....	1956-58
Thomas Norman	.....	1958-66
Dorsey McCormick	.....	1966-68
Rock Harrison	.....	1968-69
Arvil Smith	.....	1968 to present

History of Dickinson Family

Joseph Dickinson (1742-1818) a prominent and wealthy plantation owner of Bedford County, Virginia, married Elizabeth Woolbridge, (1744-1818). This family included five children: Sally, Edna, Nancy, Pleasant and William I.

According to the will of Joseph Dickinson, written the year of his death, he, his son, Pleasant, and son-in-law Joel Shrewsbury, were engaged in tobacco merchandising and milling in Bedford and Franklin counties, under the firm name of Joel Shrewsbury and Company. The death of Mr. Dickinson, followed two months later by that of his son Pleasant, brought an end to the partnership. This began an intimate associate between the remaining son, William I and Joel Shrewsbury which continued for many years.

The war of 1812 was followed by a business recession and a slump in the tobacco market. With Joel's two brothers already established in Kanawha, where salt production was growing beyond the experimental stage into a stable industry, William I joined his brother-in-law in a move to the Kanawha Valley.

With their families, they reached the valley where they settled in a spot fifteen miles east of Charleston, now known as Quincy. Many dates have been given but actually the most logical time for the pilgrimage must have taken place late autumn of 1818 or the spring of 1819, since the deaths of three members of the Dickinson family occurred in 1818.

It is assumed that the small one-story cottage, still standing, must have been built and occupied before the large house was constructed. Back of it is another small building whose fine old brick chimney, wide at the bottom, and narrowing toward the top, has a very definite similarity to the out buildings that cluster around the restored dwellings of Williamsburg, Virginia. It is called the wash house, but may have originally been used as a kitchen. An unexpected feature is its interesting windows, which are very long and contain three separate sashes. Another building on the opposite of the house, and in the rear of the shaded lawn, is the

sturdy log meat house. The Dickinson family a few years ago moved this structure to another location in Charleston.

The white frame farm house, enclosed by a picket fence and surrounded by beautiful meadows still stands today. The homestead is a simple farm house type of dwelling. It is two stories in height, with outside chimneys of red brick, on each side of which pairs of twelve inch long windows under the eaves serve to light the attic. The windows, flanking the central doorway are somewhat unusual. Especially large, each has a long upper sash containing twelve panes of glass, while the shorter sash below has but eight. The large rooms opening into a wide hall measure approximately eighteen by twenty four feet. Two of them contain ornate plaster moldings, which are obviously much latter embellishments. Ornate bannister and stair well, leading to the second floor, is indicative of the quality of the original woodwork. It is indeed of special interest to all who have ever had the pleasure to see.

During the Civil War, with both armies of the North and South passing through the valley, directly on the turnpike, narrowly escaped as the charred rafters in the attic testify. William II was living on the farm at this time. When the northern troops saw his son John's cattle branded "JD", the cattle were destroyed, with the explanation that the initials stood for Jefferson Davis.

In 1832, under the partnership of Dickinson and Shrewsbury, the men erected a well on the site, along with two other wells, engaged in the production of salt on a large and profitable scale for many years. Located close to the Kanawha River, one of these wells was destroyed by the devastating flood that swept the valley the spring of 1861, shortly before the Civil War. During this time they also conducted a mercantile business at Kanawha Salines.

After his father's death in 1861, William II (1798-1881) came back from Nashville, Tennessee, to take charge of the estate and established residence at the old homestead at Quincy. He had married Margaret C. Gray, who died in the spring of 1859, leaving four children: Mary (Mrs. John A. E. Winkler), Jane (Mrs. John A. Cobb), Henry Clay, 1830-1871-married Sally Jane Lewis, daughter of John D. and Ann Dickinson Lewis, John Quincy 1831-1925, married Margaret D. Lewis, sister to the wife of his brother.

Henry Clay Dickinson enlisted in the United States Army, becoming a Captain of Co. A, 2nd Virginia Cavalry. John Quincy, enlisted in 1862 under his brother, later becoming a colonel. After participating in several serious battles, each of them were captured and held as war prisoners until the termination of hostilities.

After his release John Quincy came back to the Kanawha Valley determined to attempt the rehabilitation of the long abandoned Dickinson salt wells. By 1870 the well was rebuilt and still stands today at Malden, as a conspicuous example of the tenacity of a man as Mr. Dickinson. Charles C., his youngest son, in 1898 undertook the management of the salt company and operated it until his death. The production continues today under the management of his heirs.

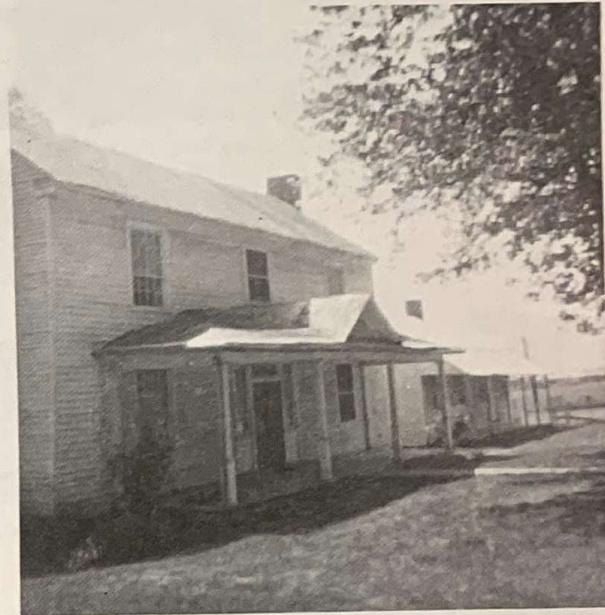
The family burial ground was located where the New York Central Railroad (Conrail) has its right of way, but before the construction of the railroad began, all the bodies were removed to the Spring Hill Cemetery.

John Quincy and Henry C. Dickinson were men of prominence in West Virginia. Each of them, as well as their fathers were organizers, original stock holders, and presidents of the Kanawha Valley Bank.

John L. Dickinson, the oldest son of John Quincy, having completed his education, spent a few months as a book-keeper for the company but left soon to begin his career in the banking business.

Beyond the homestead, in a beautiful meadowland, are

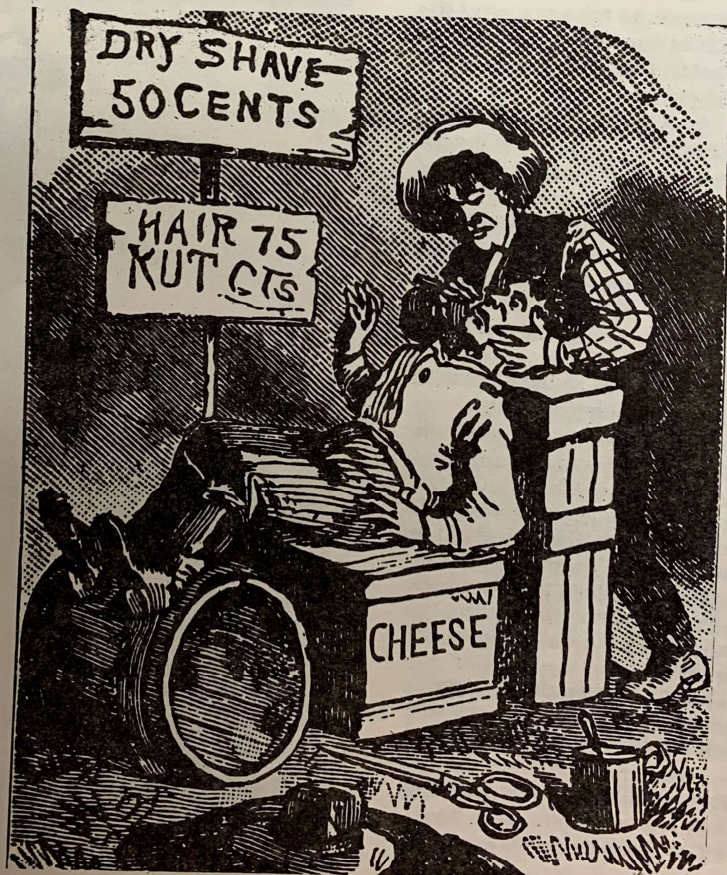
the large barns and other farm buildings which once housed the Quincy Dairy Company. Early in the 1920's, John L. established this dairy, starting with a herd of Holstein cattle. Later he purchased a herd of Guernsey cattle, and as most of us well recall, this was the beginning of that very popular "Golden Guernsey" milk. This milk was delivered by trucks to stores and residents from Gauley Bridge to Saint Albans. This dairy is no longer operating. John L. later became the president of the Kanawha Valley Bank and served in that position until his death in 1940.



THE MINER . . . This is probably the most accurate representation of the lot, both as to tools and dress.



Quincy Coal Company houses shortly after their completion up Quincy Hollow about 1890.



Life in the Mines

Town of Dickinson

A small community located fifteen miles east of Charleston, West Virginia, on Route 60, with its north boundary marked from Q rock at the head of the hollow, Carrolls Branch, to the south bank of the Kanawha River. All the Branch, to the south bank of the Kanawha River. All the houses are of the Jenny Linn style, most of which are very old, and are rented through the Quincy Coal Company, a Dickinson enterprise.

During the 1880's it began as an industrious coal mining and railroad community. The Kanawha and Michigan Railroad started operation in 1885 and was a terminal for the area from Swiss, West Virginia to Hobson, Ohio. Passenger service was also available daily.

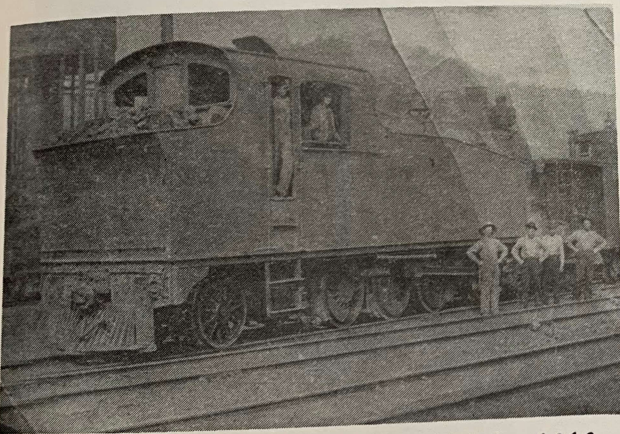
Coal mines began to open around 1880 on Carrolls Branch, known to all area people as "Happy Hollow." There were four coal mine entries providing tons of coal which was hauled from the mines to the K&M switching yards each day. The mines provided many jobs for the men in and around the area. Many homes were built by the Quincy Coal Company for the employees, some renting as low as three dollars a month. A company store was added and stocked with grocery items, clothing, furniture, and even black blasting powder. Scrip money could also be used. Close to the front entrance was a small room which housed the post office and the bookkeeper's office. In the late 1960's the store was completely destroyed by fire.

The first school in the area was built up the hollow about 1880, consisting of only one room, grades one through eight. The first teacher was Carol Smithers. This building was also used for church services.

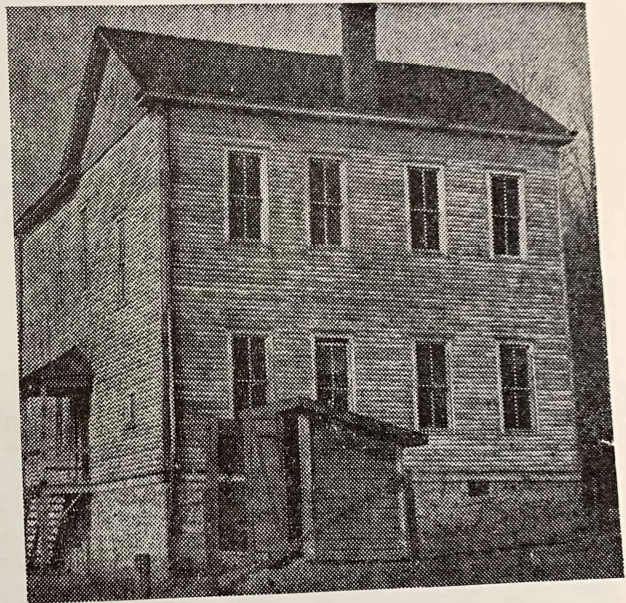


K & M R'Y Year 1906 Engine Number 500—Crew: (left to right) F. G. Joachim; T. G. Malone; C. K. Bott; J. J. Craig; J. R. Walton; J. R. Riddle.

School Relics Of 1800's



Shuttle Engine of K & M R.R. in 1912 at Dickinson Yards



Passenger Train No. 33 at Dickinson in 1911 filling up with water at the depot.



The K & M Railroad Roundhouse at the Dickinson Yards about 1910-11. Workers can't be identified. How many can you name?

Rotary
NEW YORK CENTRAL LINES
THE NEW YORK CENTRAL RAILROAD COMPANY
 Form T-69
 Slip No. 1

Division Southern Day of Week Saturday Date June 23 1923

Time Return and Delay Report of Engine and Train Employees

Occupation	NAME	Length of Time off Duty Prior to This Trip	FIRST WENT ON DUTY			FINALLY WENT OFF DUTY			Total Time on Duty		TIME CLAIMED			
			Place	Date	Time	Place	Date	Time	Hrs.	Min.	Straight Hrs.	Overtime Min.	Other Time Hrs. | Min.	Reason
Conductor	<u>C. W. Johnson</u>	<u>1 1/2</u>	<u>Dickinson</u>	<u>7 23</u>	<u>12 30 pm</u>	<u>Dickinson</u>	<u>7 23</u>	<u>6 00 am</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>48</u>	<u>8</u>			
Brakeman	<u>Wm. Berry</u>	<u>1 1/2</u>	<u>"</u>	<u>"</u>	<u>10 30 am</u>	<u>"</u>	<u>"</u>	<u>10 30 am</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>40</u>	<u>"</u>			
Brakeman	<u>L. M. Grady</u>	<u>"</u>	<u>"</u>	<u>"</u>	<u>"</u>	<u>"</u>	<u>"</u>	<u>"</u>	<u>"</u>	<u>"</u>	<u>"</u>			
Brakeman	<u>C. J. Kelly</u>	<u>"</u>	<u>"</u>	<u>"</u>	<u>"</u>	<u>"</u>	<u>"</u>	<u>"</u>	<u>"</u>	<u>"</u>	<u>"</u>			
Brakeman	<u>L. J. Walton</u>	<u>"</u>	<u>"</u>	<u>"</u>	<u>"</u>	<u>"</u>	<u>"</u>	<u>"</u>	<u>"</u>	<u>"</u>	<u>"</u>			

DETAILS OF SERVICE

Engine	Train	DEPARTURE			ARRIVAL			Actual Miles	Kind of Service (Pass., Frt., Work, Deadhead, Etc.)	REMARKS
		Station	Time Went on Duty	Time Train Departed	Station	Time Train Arrived	Time Went off Duty			
<u>568</u>	<u>Yards</u>	<u>Dickinson</u>	<u>10 30 am</u>	<u>"</u>	<u>Dickinson</u>	<u>6 00 am</u>	<u>1 1/2</u>	<u>Yards</u>	<u>Time taken for meal 4:35 a. m. to 4:55 a. m. Went on duty 17:30 on next week.</u>	

I Certify this Report to be correct:

Starting Time Approved _____ Completion Time Approved _____
 Dispatcher, Agent, Foreman or Yard Master
C. W. Johnson
 Signature
Condr.
 Occupation

FORM 19

KANAWHA & MICHIGAN R. R.

FORM 19

TRAIN ORDER No. 21
SUPERINTENDENT'S OFFICE

7-17 1918

To Cy 557

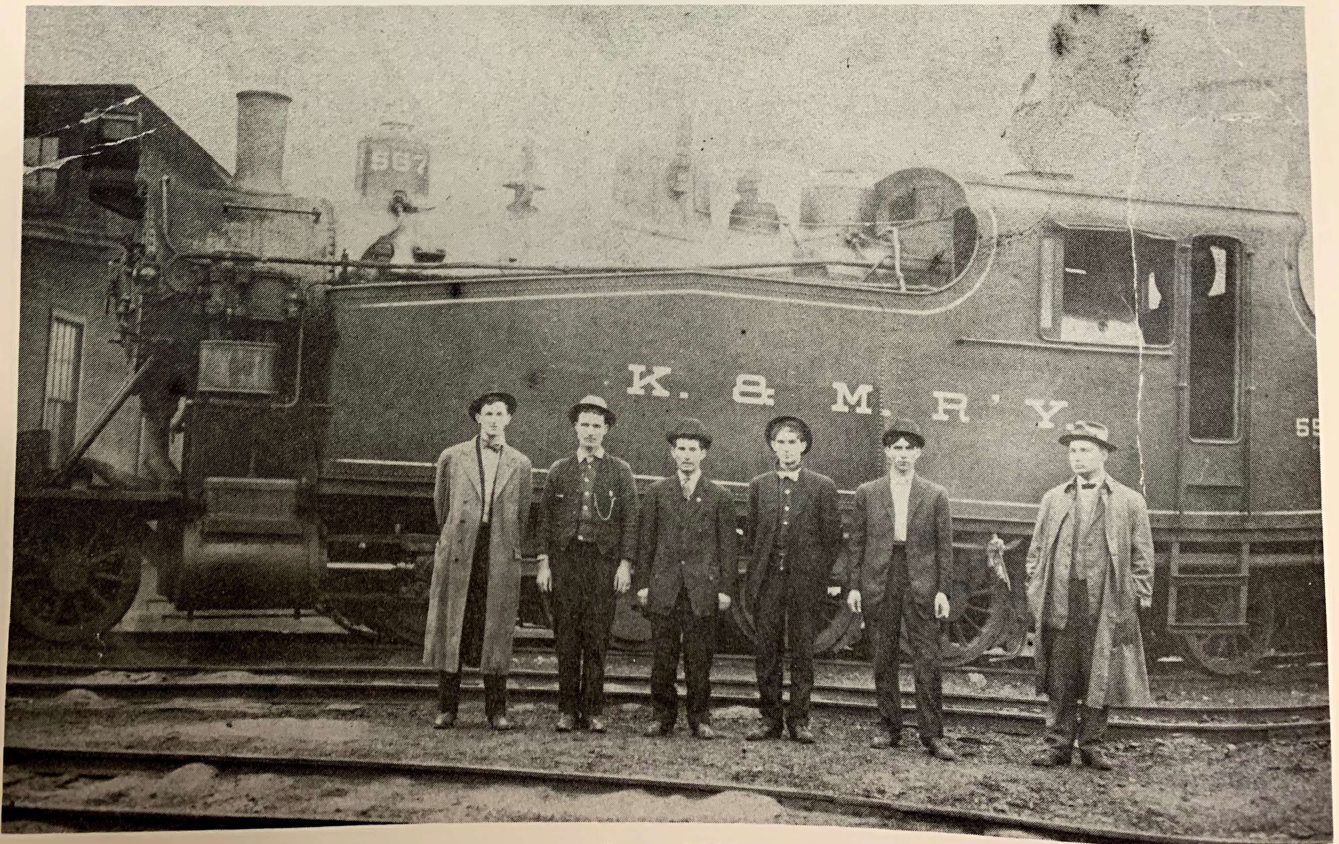
At Smethers

Cy 557 run from Smethers to Dickinson

J. H. M.

EACH PERSON ADDRESSED MUST HAVE A COPY OF THIS ORDER

Made Comp Time 12:30 a. M. Stewart Operator

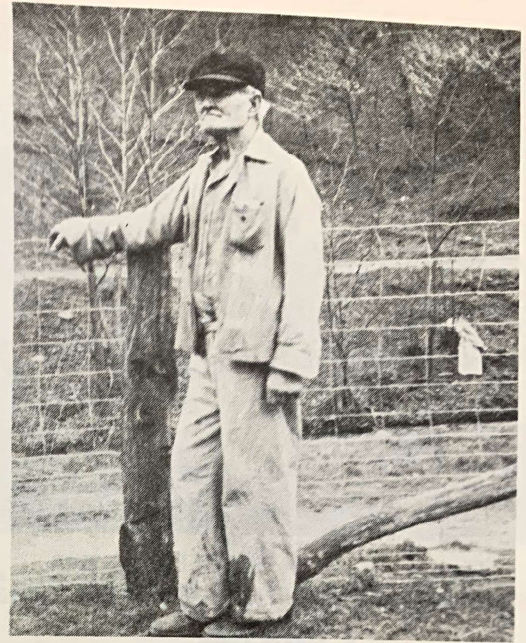


About 1910

J. Smithers. N.A. Edwards, Cecil Edwards, C. Smithers, S. Vanetta and J. Fauber

With the rapid increase in the number of school age children in the community, early in 1909 a larger school house was built. A four room, two story frame, on land given by the side of the Midland Trail Highway, on land given by the Dickinson Family. The first teachers to be employed here were Daniel W. Hunt, Ben Coleman, Lillian Porter, Mr. Gwinn, H. Blizzard and Alma Martin. Starting her teaching career here was Miss Georgia Lloyd of Ravenswood, West Virginia, who spent most of her teaching days at this school. She is well remembered by so many people in the area as they had her as their first grade teacher. Several others, such as the Misses Mary and Kathryn McGinley and Mrs. Anna L. Reed, spent many years as instructors at this school. The school was used for at least thirty-five years, at which time it was ruled unsafe and torn down. A four room brick school was built at the entrance of the hollow. Today it is no longer used for classrooms due to the decrease of enrollment in the community and surrounding areas, the children are bussed to the new elementary school at Diamond. This structure is now used for an office and bus garage by the Board of Education to dispatch the school buses to the Upper Kanawha Valley.

With the opening of the new company store in 1912, Mr. H. R. Young, known by most as Holly, was hired as the manager. Mr. H. H. Fletcher was the coal company superintendent, with offices in the front of the store. This was also the location of the post office. In 1924, Mr. Young was appointed the superintendent of Quincy Coal Company by Mr. Dickinson. Shortly afterwards he moved his family into the Dickinson Homestead where he lived until his death in 1966. Today his widow Clara still resides in the old home.



Mr. Jacob Martin Kelly, born March 23, 1864 at Winifrede Jct. Started to work in the coal mines at the tender age of seven years. Thru the years he worked as a coal loader, mine blacksmith, 2nd class mine foreman and was a prospector for the Quincy Coal Company until the ripe old age of 75. Mr. Kelly and a Mr. Lewis established the Methodist Church in Nov. 1913 on property deeded to them by the Dickinson family. Being one of the earlier residents he saw many changes in the valley. He died in 1958 at the age of 96 years.



Dickinson Methodist Church Sunday School about 1926. John L. Dickinson is the first man to the left in the back row.



Dickinson Methodist Church built in 1913

Churches

Meeting for several years in the school buildings in the community, for their church worship services and Sunday School, a group of concerned people formulated plans at one of these meetings to build a community church. Led by Mr. Clarence Lewis and Jacob Martin Kelly this became a reality in 1913. Built on land deeded to them, free of charge by the John L. Dickinson family, the church was built on the west side of the school house. The church was used on Sunday morning by the Methodist faith and the afternoon was used by the people of Baptist faith, combining the night services and the revivals as arranged. This arrangement was used for a few years but due to some type of misunderstanding among some of the members, the Baptist separated from the church. Today the church is still standing, used by the people of the community and known as the Dickinson Methodist Church.

In 1891, the first Chapel Car was dedicated by the American Baptist Convention. This was a passenger railroad car that was assigned to areas that requested its use for conducting church services and evangelistic meetings. Known as the "Hope of Faith", the chapel car was used on a side track up Quincy Hollow from 1914 to 1916. Conducting the meetings was the Reverend and Mrs. Newton. During this time, encouraged by Reverend Newton, Charles S. Thompson and Walter Childers began to organize and draw up plans for a church. Again a site was deeded by the Dickinson family, free of charge, to the Baptist people to build their church. Located on the east hill at the mouth of Quincy Hollow the church was completed in 1917. It, like its sister church, is still in good repair and in use today, and known as the Naomi Baptist Church.

A life time member of the church, the area, and more than eighty-years-old, Mrs. Cleo Hastings, related this information to this writer concerning the charter members, and the pastors that have served the church. Reverend Newton served as the first pastor, with baptism in the Kanawha River of these charter members. Mr. and Mrs. Charles Thompson, Mr. and Mrs. Walter Childers, Mr. and Mrs. N. A. Hastings, Mr. and Mrs. C. S. Smithers, Mr. and Mrs. J. A. Kilcolin, Mr. and Mrs. Holly Cotton, Mrs. N. A. Edwards, Mrs. Harvey Chapman, Mrs. Belle Martin, Ruth Boyd (Mrs. O. J. Myers Sr.), Evalina Walker, George Douglas, Lynn Fauber, Van Walker, Andy Fauber, John Harmon Sr., and others whose names were unattainable.

Pastors: Reverends Newton, Morris, Kerns, Howell, Ker-

sey, Bias, John Hartmen (served twice), Walker, Billups, Ducan, Young, Phillips, Cavender and presently his second time Clarence Hutton.



Noami Baptist Church at Dickinson about 1921



Another mode of life and employment for this small community was the River Locks Number Four, located at the east end of the community. It was in operation in the early 1800's, long before the rail service was built. River packets and boats were used for shipping, traveling and hauling coal by barge to the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers, passing through these locks on their journey. The first lock master was Lynn Fauber, followed by Ben S. Smithers, Bob Childress, with Fred Clendenen being the last one prior to the building of the Marmet and London Locks in 1934.

Late in 1926 three residents were very concerned about other means of transportation for this community. Mr. Charles Bracken, Sam "TAW" Hammonds and Mr. Charles "DUTCH" Jochiam established a bus service from Cedar Grove to Charleston. Securing a franchise and purchasing a Chandler touring car the service began. It took two hours or more to make the trip, but of course road conditions were quite different then. This service was the beginning of our present day bus transportation. This franchise was purchased by the old Midland Trail Lines, followed by the Blue and Gray, the Atlantic Greyhound and now in service KRT.

The two writers of this history on Quincy, being former residents, could go on and on as there is really no place to stop, but time and space forces us to break away to the reflections of happiness, some sadness, but many pleasant and precious memories of early childhood days in this quiet and peaceful little community. With humble thanksgiving to the early settlers who chose this site to live and rear their families, who made this possible for each of us to be a part of their, and our "American Heritage."

Do You Remember at Quincy?

When the barn burned, killing several horses and mules?
When there was a musical group that played for dances at the Railroad Restaurant?
When the Railroad men were called out to report at a scheduled hour by a "Call Boy"? There were no telephones in the homes then.
When the old Locks No. 4 were lowered for the new one built at London, you could walk across the river without water going over your head? That is if you were tall enough.
When the Captain of the steam boats made big waves for the swimmers to ride?
When the old Junk Boats, Billy Bryants Show Boat came to town?
Remember the ferryman "Mart Taylor?" He could ferry twenty to thirty people across the river for a nickle, cut ten to twelve heads of hair a day for ten cents each, then reward you with a "tall tale", free of charge.
When the old power house used to furnish electric lights to the mines and the residents? The generator was started at 6:00 A.M. shut down at 10:00 P.M. It was either light a candle or a lamp, or just go to bed.
When there was nothing else to do on Sunday afternoon, you boarded the passenger train at the depot and rode by pass to the end of the line at Swiss, West Virginia? It was madness for the Conductor at times as toilet tissue was strung everywhere.
Or when you rode the train to Charleston on Saturday morning, attended a double feature at the movies for ten cents, bought a hot dog, a drink, and a bag of popcorn all for twenty five cents?
When the Chelyan Bridge was opened in 1932, connecting Route 60 to Route 61 on the south side of the Kanawha?
When you paid the School Bus Driver one penny over and one penny back as toll charge for the school children attending the junior and high schools across the bridge.

You Can Tell 'Em Every Time

If you've fished in clear waters and waded in mud,
Watched the calm rivers, seen many a flood
Traveled the highways, on good roads and bad,
Cussed like a trooper, yet seldom are mad—
I'll bet you're from West Virginia.
If you've sweat in the valley, cooled off on a hill,
Tramped through the mountains, drunk corn from a still,
If you like a good fight, can lose and yet grin;
Get upon your feet and again try to win—
I'll bet you're from West Virginia.
If you ain't afraid of the devil, got fire in your eyes,
God-fearing, and loving the Father on High,
Go to the limit for friends, but slow to forgive,
Nursing that hurt as long as you live,
I'll bet you're from West Virginia.
If you've drunk sassafras and old Mountain Tea,
Used "Penneyrile" for the bite of a flea,
You say what you think whether sober or drunk;
Can tell by the wind the trail of a skunk—
I'll bet you're from West Virginia.
If you've cleaned your teeth with a birch tree twig,
To "Old Dan Tucker" danced many a jig,
Stole behind the barn away from your folks
For Indian Stogie and corn silk smokes—
I'll bet you're from West Virginia.
If you've talked "Pig Latin," sung "The Old Gray Mare,"
Felt the bite of the chigger, love a good country fair;

A bit clannish of kin, though "ornery" they be,
You admit it yourself, but dare us to agree—
I'll bet you're from West Virginia.
If you've eat syrup and sausage on your buckwheat cakes,
Snore while you sleep in a bed full of snakes;
Hit what you shoot at, with a short gun or long,
And fight the devil while singing a song—
I'll bet you're from West Virginia.
You hate the damned Nazis and Almond-Eye Lice
Itching to fight 'em and not counting the price,
You're proud of your state and thrill when you hear
"The Star Spangled Banner" and stand up and cheer
Boys, I know you're from West Virginia.
Submitted by Ralph Hudnall, Homer F. Daddysman, Urea Plant.

Belle Historical Restoration Society, Inc.

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Vice President Bill Harper
Secretary Mrs. W. C. (Leoma) Ballard
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Bicentennial Celebration in Town of Belle

The Bicentennial celebration for the town of Belle began with observance of American Women's Rural Sunday, May 23, 1976, 2-4 p.m. at the Judson Baptist Church, sponsored by the Women's Missionary Society. The program theme was "Early American Women and Their Hardships During the Settlement of America." All of the churches in the area were invited to participate, reporting on the founding of their churches and the women's work in the mission field.

The Lord's Prayer was sung by Phyllis Atkins. The color guard was presented by the Belle Woman's Club. Special singing by a trio from the Judson Baptist Choir. The oldest charter member from the host church, Mrs. Nora Kersey Ashley, and the oldest charter member from the Methodist Church, Mrs. Rella Chestnut were presented an award.

With the dawning of a beautiful sunny day on July 17, 1976, in the town of Belle, West Virginia, the spirit of two hundred years when the first settlers came to the area, was celebrated by the town's people in commemoration and thanksgiving for our heritage. The American flag, the Bicentennial flag, the flag of West Virginia and the town's banners were waving in the cool breeze to welcome all who came to participate and observe the planned festivities.

To the sound of the music by the Dupont High School Band and its majorettes, the police siren, the fire trucks, the clown, and a long parade of many participants marched down the main street to open the day's celebration. Many hundreds of persons lined the street to review the parade and receive awards of small American flags handed out by the Belle Lions Club, and to express their appreciation of everyone's performance. All the plans for the celebration

were under the direction of the Senior Citizens, with their coordinators, Hildred Hurst and Ronald Surbaugh, supported by most of the civic organizations in the town.

After the parade there was food to be obtained at the Methodist Church, a quilt display to observe, a Heritage Room and a Creative Craft show at City Hall.

In the afternoon, a ceremony honoring the retired railroaders at the old depot, with its newly painted exterior of red, white and blue, was presented by the Belle Woman's Club. The club's president, Mrs. Marjorie Palmer, extended the welcome to all. Mayor Rudy Seacrist was the guest speaker, and Pastor William Millar of the Judson Baptist Church offered the prayer. Group singing was led by Mr. Robert Campbell and Mr. Connelly Hoffman. Refreshments were served. A certificate of service and a picture of the depot in color, was presented by the club, honoring all the retired railroaders in attendance.

The American Legion Post 95 played old tapes, the Harmony Four Quartet presented a program of old fashioned hymns. To conclude the day's celebration, a square dance was held on the city's parking lot by the Boomer Star Promenaders with the caller, Hobert Rodgers, directing the dancers.

Additional Bicentennial advents in the town of Belle: August: Gospel Sing, Senior Citizens Open House, singing of old songs, box supper at Belle Woman's Club House. September: Square dance, Spirit of '76 Flower Garden

Award by the Belle Garden Club.

October: Soap and apple butter making at Belle Woman's Club House, children's Halloween party at Town Hall.

November: Old fashion bean dinner at Methodist Church, children's bingo party at Belle Elementary School.

December: Adult bingo party at Belle Elementary School, Santa Claus.

In conjunction with the Bicentennial celebration, a new organization has been added to the town's other ones. For several years and with a great deal of interest in the preservation and restoration of landmarks in the area, the Belle Woman's Club has sponsored the organization of the Belle Historical Restoration Society, Inc. Elected to serve are: president, Louise J. Edwards; vice president, Bill (Clayton) Harper; secretary, Leoma W. Ballard; treasurer, Mary Lou Hindle. Board of Directors: Richard Fidler, Roy Price, Harry F. White, Clifford R. Kees, David Harless Jr., Charlotte R. Gardner, Kathleen Burgess and Mrs. James Chaplin. This Society has applied and received a state charter for the sole purpose of restoration of chosen landmarks.

WE, the editor and the staff members of this book, are especially happy to include and to share with others, this article on our town's celebration and to announce to the public the formation of the Historical Society, in the edition of this book. History continues to be made and hopefully in a few years hence, we can compile another edition on the history of our people and our adjoining communities.



Railroaders—Four steam-train pioneers of the Kanawha Valley reminisce about their Bicentennial of railroad service—200 years among them. From left, they are J. A. Fout, retired yardmaster, J. B. Smithers, C. V. Johnson, retired conductors and C. D. Smithers. They live in Belle. "When C. V. retired he broke up the crew," the other three said. All were honored recently in the Belle Bicentennial celebration parade, by the Belle Woman's Club.

Their total service as operating trainmen comes to exactly 200 years. They still get together to re-live the days when they were the coal-haulingest train crew on the Kanawha and Michigan. They are retired and live within a few blocks of each other in Belle. And they were honored recently at Belle's Woman's Club Bicentennial celebration.

Johnny Fout, who started railroading July 5, 1909, can tell you about the wreck at Cedar Grove in 1913. He was conductor on a coal train that was heading up the Kanawha from Dickinson. "The local had run by the switch and was backed up onto the main

line. The back-end brakeman hadn't even got off the caboose when we saw we was goin' to hit 'im.

"I was conductor and was riding in the cupalo on our caboose when we saw him. Tom White was in the cupalo on the other side and he hollered, 'We're gonna hit!' and we both went down out of there and out the back door. George Douglas was on the bunk and he just sort of braced.

"The engine went through the caboose like it was cardboard, knocked it clear over to one side, and we went through five or six shanty cars that were on the siding. Just tore 'em up like tooth-

picks. Lucky the men wasn't in 'em. The train we were supposed to meet was bringing in the men who would have been in those shanty cars.

"The fireman on our engine jumped just before they hit and he just bounced when he hit the ground, and rolled clear down the right-of-way.

"He had a great big cut on his head, and after things had quieted down a little the doctor from Cedar Grove sat out there on the cinders and sewed up his head with a big old needle. The fireman, Olo Middleton was his name, sat there and every time the doctor would hit him with that needle he'd flinch and holler, but he got his head sewed up and went to helping with the rest of us."

Fout retired as yardmaster in the Dickinson yards of the old New York Central. But when he started as a brakeman it was the K&M. And when Clyde Vernon Johnson started railroading in 1914 he was on the old Kanawha and West Virginia railroad that hauled coal from Blakeley and Pond Gap to Spring Street in Charleston.

"I was called as flagman on a run on the coldest day the Kanawha Valley had seen up to then," Johnson said, wagging his old K&M conductor's lantern.

"We were picking up coal cars at the mine track at Cedar Grove, and I was back end flagman. When we coupled up the thermometer on the depot showed 17 below zero! It was Feb. 1, 1917.

"But the coldest time I worked was at Oak Hill in 1935. We'd picked up 23 loads at the mine and I rode the rear end of the cut of cars back down and coupled up to the train, and there on the yardmaster's door the thermometer showed 23 below zero—and there was 26 inches of snow down that night. But we kept the coal moving!"

Johnson was the first of the four to retire. He had 46 years of service when he quit work in 1959. J. B. Smithers retired as a conductor with 51 years as brakeman, flagman and conductor when he retired, and Fout had completed 53 years as trainman and yardmaster before retirement.

C. D. Smithers will be 87 next month; J. B. will be 85 next month; Fout will be 86 in October, and Johnson will be 83 in December.

They get together about once a week and compare time on their pocket watches, Hamiltons and Bun Specials, and reminisce about railroading when the steam engines were the double-articulated "malleys" of the mountains, when railroad wages came to \$2.40 for a 10-hour day.

Together the men have 258 years membership in the Brotherhood of Railway Trainmen.

Johnson recalls that the Kanawha and West Virginia Railroad and the K&M were absorbed by the New York Central in 1922.

They all remember the first diesel engine they worked out of Dickinson, noting that they carried 158 loads from Swiss to Dickinson in 1953.

John Smithers 'liked the steam engines best for switching. You could judge the speed by the exhaust, by the sound of the engine.'

And Johnny Fout remembered that any trainman could "take a switch list and tell you what kind of car it was from the serial number; whether it was a gondola or boxcar or hopper or refrigerator."

Today they're all active and alert, with hobbies, and grandchildren and great-grandchildren, and a lot of memories about their steam-engine days as trainmen.

Childhood Memories

By Miriam Slack

John Anderson Slack born 1859 at Hunter's Stretch, Virginia, which now is Spring Hill, W. Va. His father was John Young Slack born at Bedford, Virginia, in 1814. He came westward in 1844, married Miriam Rader Koontz of Nicholas County. He bought the Hunter property at Spring Hill and raised a family there. He sold that property to C & O R.R. for a railbed. He then purchased property at the mouth of Simmons Creek, which was owned by Samuel Shrewsbury. He reared six children; four daughters, two sons on the family

farm.

The oldest son went to Columbus, Ohio, lived and died there. The other son, Johnnie, who was twelve years old when they moved to Belle, lived and died at Belle. He is the one who sold DuPont Plant the property to build on. He was a Methodist, a school trustee, and contributed much to the early settling of this area. Miriam Slack, daughter of John A., says that she remembers her parents speaking of the Averill Farm, which was located near the locks. Mr. Averill had been a general in the Civil War. This property was later owned by a Mrs. Bowyer from Charleston. East of this property was the McConihay property. Next came the property of Rose Smithers. Her first husband was Boney Wyatt, who died of TB. It seemed that TB was prevalent in those days. Rose married Ed McGraw, from the North. They had a lovely brick home and a good farm. Later sold it to a Mr. Ed. Myers, who came from Blue Creek. While they lived there, the house burned, losing everything. This would be the property West of the Appalachian station, adjoining DuPont. The property the station is on was owned by John Young Slack. He sold it to Charles E. Gardner, who in turn sold it to Appalachian.

Mary Ella (Grandma) McConihay had a loom shop, where the Belle Amusement Co. building is now located. She made rugs and carpets. It was an interesting day to go through the shop and see the things that she made. Lawson W. Hamilton purchased the McConihay farm and developed it into a residential section.

East of the Slack property, which DuPont purchased, was the Smithers property which extended perhaps to the "Old Stone House". The Smithers house was later rented to the Kersey family. First Judson Church was built on one of the lots in the Smithers field. God used it in a great way for a goodly number of years. Many souls were saved there. Several families lived up Simmons Creek, several rented the Smithers property. Some of the names I recall are: Hemmings, Clarks, Walkers, Keeneys, Hancocks, Quinns and Woolwines.

About this time, the "Old Stone House" was owned by Frank Donnally of Gallipolis, Ohio. Adjoining was the Reynolds property. This included Reynolds Hollow, now Belle Hollow, or Maple Road. There was a brick building along the hill which was the Bob Reynolds Store. This is where you made your purchases, boarded the stage coach, received mail, etc. Most of all I remember this is where we purchased long sticks of white chewing gum. There was a little depot across the road, beyond the locust trees in front of the store. I was told that the old brick house, one of the Shrewsbury houses, which was damaged and had the windows blown out during the Civil War, was bought by Bob Reynolds. During those days, a Mr. Compton had the butcher shop. He was the one who supplied the area with fresh meats. Adjoining the Reynolds property was Will & Clark Jarrett farms. Clark Jarrett came to Belle in 1899 from Paint Creek, he purchased property from Bill Palmer. John S. and Rev. T. Y. Keeney owned property in Witcher. Others there were Bowles, Bonhams, Currey, Williams, Browns, Winfree, later on: Meadows, Douglas, Millers, Hill, Goshorn and Palmer.

In the vicinity where the DuPont Junior High School is now located the Blues owned a farm and raised sugar cane. The making of molasses was a great social event. The young people gathered and roasted potatoes and corn and had a great deal of fun. The Dickinson's and Cabells' owned farms, that still belong to heirs. This area can be very proud of the early settlers, it is a rich heritage that has been passed on.

Tribute to Deceased Citizens

Glenn Lee Allen	1950-1972
Ira W. & Elizabeth Katherine Brown	1888-1948 1894-1954
Paradine Hunt Brown	1897-1972
James A. & Martha Campbell	1893-1953 1886-1957
W. J. Bryan & Lill Casebolt (McGhee)	1898-1940 1899-1972
Arch John Chestnut	1892-1952
James S. & Parthena Coon	1879-1964 1886-1967
James J. & Leon B. Douglass	1891-1976 1921-1968
Norman A. & Grace Edwards	1884-1961 1889-1971
H. L. & Minnie Fletcher	1888-1973 1887-1961
Lyle H. Fletcher	1902-1973
Charles E. & Mary C. Reynolds Gardner	1851-1925 1858-1949
Ethel Lee (Sis) Harmon	1901-1973
Gilbert C. & Grace Harmon	1889-1971 1896-1972
J. S. "Pete" & Belle Douglas Harmon	1891-1961 1886-1975
Ira & Hettie Hemmings	1878-1950 1877-1961
David & Cora Lee Hindle	1883-1966 1887-1970
Wilson Hunt	1915-1973
Owen I. & Hester Jenkins	1880-1939 1892-1938
Prudence H. Johnson	1886-1971
Jacob (Jake) & Julia Howery Kelley	1864-1959 1865-1946
Glenna Jenkins Keeney	1912-1966
Rev. T. Y. & Traber G. Keeney	1848-1922 1874-1946
Walter H. Keeney	1888-1957
Mr. & Mrs. E. H. Kincaid	1893-1972 1893-1972
W. L., Sr. & Jenny B. Lane	1889-1963 1896-1944
Homer W. Lawson	1906-1972
David I. Martin	1907-1969
Harry Fleming & Nancy Bethel Penix Martin	1890-1943 1896-1972
William (Billy) & Annabelle Smith Martin	1877-1963 1880-1951
John McMillian	1919-1955
Jake & Mary K. Nelson	1874-1930 1877-1969
Robert M. Palmer	1908-1966
Eligah & Ella Shifflett Peck	1885-1961 1884-1945
H. Russell Phillips	1913-1974
Fred L. Reber	1917-1972
J. "Monty" Sampson	1918-1968
C. W. (Pat) Sigman	1904-1974
John Roger Sims	1896-1969
John Anderson & Addabelle Daft Slack	1859-1945 1865-1958
John M. & Sallie Slack	1855-1939 1856-1937
James C. & Ada Kilcollin Smithers	1860-1934 1894-1965
John & Nancy Steele	1878-1954 1878-1972
Charles S. & Katherine Thompson	1885-1953 1883-1964
Van William & Mattie Harmon Turner, Sr.	1898-1953 1898-1972
Joseph E. Ward, Jr.	1936-1958
Benjamin Franklin White	1910-1974
Harry F. White, Jr.	1939-1972
Juanita White	1914-1970
Mr. & Mrs. Wiley C. White	1890-1957 1887-1975
Sylvester & Virgie White	1875-1943 1881-1974
Ward Wiseman	1893-1968

Patrons

Belle Amusement	1701 W. DuPont Avenue
Belle Florist	114 East DuPont Avenue
Belle Hardware	808 DuPont Avenue
Belle Lions Club	
Ed Bridgette Service Center	1633 W. DuPont Avenue
Mr. & Mrs. M. F. Burgess	1601 W. Central Avenue
Cecil I. Walker Machinery Co.	East DuPont Avenue
Mr. & Mrs. Walter B. Davis	104 W. Riverview Drive
Diamond Shamrock Chemical Co.	W. DuPont Avenue
Mr. & Mrs. Charles W. Gardner, Jr.	170 W. DuPont Avenue
James H. Gray, M. D.	187 W. DuPont Avenue
Mr. & Mrs. Edward Goldsmith (Rebecca Dickinson)	1272 Louden Heights Road
Mr. & Mrs. Clayton "Bill" Harper, Jr.	311 E. 10th Street
Mr. & Mrs. James R. Herald	309 E. 6th Street
Hill Monument Company	418 Midland Avenue
T. G. Keeney's Sons	Witcher Boat Dock
Matthew & Agnes Kinsolving	304 John Street
Charles W. Lambert (Nationwide Ins.)	2501 W. DuPont Avenue
W. Mickie Martin	117 East 13th Street
Mr. & Mrs. A. M. McCarus (Aretta Wiseman)	912 Louden Heights Road
Mr. & Mrs. William H. Moore	145 W. Riverview Drive
Mr. & Mrs. Roy E. Price	330 E. 9th Street
Mayor Rudy & Mrs. Seacrist	306 E. 5th Street
Dr. James H. & Ruth S. Thornbury	304 E. 4th Street
Leva C. Wiseman	1715 W. DuPont Avenue

RICHARD D. FIDLER

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BELLE, WEST VIRGINIA 25015

Phone 949-4211

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE BELLE WOMAN'S CLUB FOR THE
WORK THEY DO AND FOR THIS PUBLICATION OF "THE HISTORY OF
BELLE AND THE AREA."

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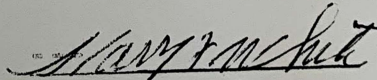
We are happy to support your endeavor in the publishing of "The History of Belle and the Area."

The White's have been River Contractors, beginning in the 1800's with Captain Woodford White. Serving on the White's Boats since that time have been, Captain Thomas, Captain Wiley C., Captain Harry F., Captain Clifford B., Captain William C., Captain Thomas Wiley, Captain Harry F., Jr., Captain Samuel Richard.

We believe that the preservation of the heritage in this community is a fine effort from the Belle Woman's Club, and will be appreciated for many years.

We are pleased for our part in the past history and are looking forward to the future with confidence.

Respectfully,



Harry F. White

THE COVER

*An Original Drawing
By Richard Fidler*

*Depicting the
Liberty Bell,
The Town of Belle
and The Woman's Club
of Belle.*