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## **Daniel Reid Ross, Soldier, Teacher and Berkeley County Doctor, Part 2,**

**By  
D. Reid Ross**

Prior to the Civil War, there were no free schools in the six counties of Virginia that were to become the Eastern Panhandle of West Virginia. Private academies, also known as “select schools,” gradually evolved into common schools, but they were not tax-supported and therefore could not be attended free of charge. Instead, they enrolled only those students whose families could afford and were willing to pay tuition.

Agitation for public schools in western Virginia began as early as 1838. That year, Governor David Campbell, himself a western Virginian, placed high priority on state-supported education “for small landholders and others on inconsiderable incomes.” At an 1841 education convention held in Clarksburg in western Virginia, Reverend Alexander Campbell, the keynote speaker, observed that, unlike aristocratic eastern Virginians, westerns “would be glad to send our children to the same good common school. . . . We do not want poor schools for poor scholars . . . but we want schools for all at the expense of all.”

As early as 1819, a Board of School Commissioners had been organized in Berkeley County to educate poor children. At that time, tuition in private academies, such as the Stonewall Academy founded by Presbyterians as early as 1820 in Gerrardstown, was \$2.50 to \$3.50 per quarter.

That year, the commissioners selected 62 children out of the 360 eligible to receive an education financed by the Literary Fund. By 1829, ten years later, 211 poor children were educated out of the 450 who were entitled. In 1846, only \$827 was available for educating 411 poor children out of 650 eligible in the county. This expenditure amounted to about 3.5 cents a day per child for the 64 days of schooling they received. Agitation for popular education continued, and it was clear that the time for free schools for all children was approaching. Many who were too poor to attend were instead sent out to work by their parents for 25 cents per week, plus board.

Few schools were established, even though state legislation enacted in 1846 and amended in 1848 permitted the founding of public school districts on a voluntary basis, provided that a two-thirds majority voted for the necessary school tax. Those districts that were created operated the first permanent free schools in western Virginia for white children. None, however, was established in Berkeley County. Instead, its voters relied on existing private schools.<sup>1</sup>

Prior to this legislation, the only private academy in Berkeley County was in Martinsburg, known as the “Martinsburg Academy.” It was a ladies’ seminary and was in operation from 1811 until about 1837. It was supported by subscription and was attended by only daughters of the well-to-do. For a time before the Civil War, there were other select, small, private elementary schools with only a few pupils. The schools were supported by

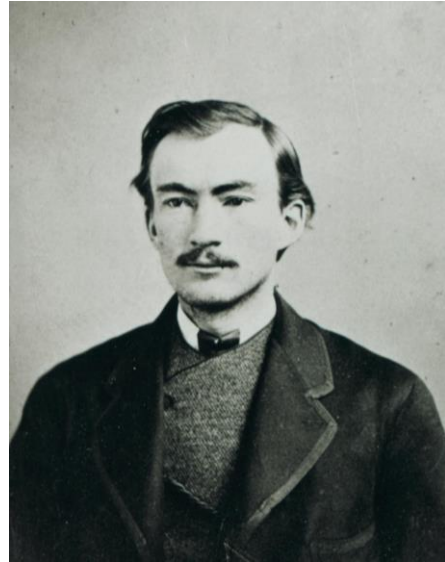
tuition in Harlan Springs, Three Runs, Cumbo, Apple Pie Ridge (near Gerrardstown), North Mountain, and Little Georgetown. A boarding school also existed in Hedgesville from about 1854 and several other private schools by 1858. Students were children of the well-to-do.<sup>2</sup>

After West Virginia was formed and admitted to the Union, one of the first acts of the new state's legislature, approved December 10, 1863, provided for tax-supported educational instruction for a term of six months "for all [white] youth of the state." In 1865, this law was amended by the legislature to establish separate schools for black children between six and twenty-one years of age. The township was to be the unit of organization for both black and white schools, with elections of educational commissioners to be held in April. Teachers were to be certified on the basis of good moral character and loyalty to the State and Union.<sup>3</sup>

After the Civil War ended, Jacob Ropp and a handful of other like-minded men took the initiative to establish free public schools in Berkeley County. In 1866 seven school districts whose boundaries coincided with townships were organized, including Hedgesville, which was established in May. The state school fund provided \$3,310 to Berkeley County to fund schools to serve a school population of 3,898 in the entire county for that year, less than one dollar per child. By February 1866, the Freedmen's Bureau was also sponsoring a school for black children in Martinsburg. Since November 1865, the Free Will Baptists had operated the school for black children under the auspices of the American Missionary Association.

To operate these schools, dedicated schoolteachers were needed. Ropp found his first in Dan Ross, who had spent over a week recuperating in the Ropp household from the injury he suffered when the horse kicked him. By then, Dan was a Civil War veteran of the age of 23 with almost four years' experience in the cavalry, artillery, and infantry. The school in which he was to teach was nearby, probably on the Ropp farm or the adjacent Newkirk farm. At that time, in the summer of 1865, it apparently was still a private school.

Civil War experiences changed men who were front line soldiers for any length of time. Northern soldiers who supported the Republican Party's ideological commitment to free men and free labor,



Daniel Reid Ross. All photos courtesy of the author unless otherwise credited.

as did Dan, also supported free education as a means to achieving those ends. In the spirit of Lincoln's phrase, "With malice toward none and charity for all," Dan wanted to forget the war and rebuild the portion of the nation he had helped to destroy. It is clear he harbored no bitterness. In the only memoir he wrote about the Civil War, including his prison experience at Andersonville, he said:

I never, except at Andersonville, during the time I was a prisoner in their hands nor during the many years since I have lived among them, have heard an unkind word or seen an unkind act done by those that formed the "rank and file" of the Rebel army to their Yankee neighbors.

Dan also became the first depositor in the Old National Bank of Martinsburg when it opened its doors for business on August 12, 1865, probably at the suggestion of Jacob Ropp, a founder of the bank.<sup>4</sup> Dan, Samuel Dodd, and one other teacher, the first three teachers in Berkeley County, then started teaching a total of 94 students a few days later at Little Georgetown, months before the Hedgesville School District was organized. Their salary was \$40 monthly. In April 1866, Ropp was named as one of the first three commissioners of the Hedgesville School District, serving until 1875.

Little Georgetown was one of the nine sub-

districts of the Hedgesville Township School District. An existing log schoolhouse, probably the small private elementary school that had existed as early as 1844 near the Methodist Church (both on the Johnson Ferry Road), was deemed suitable for use as the public school. Over the years, eight public school teachers, three county school superintendents, and a novelist were to graduate from this one-room wooden schoolhouse and its successor, the Little Georgetown Free School, a brick building that, in 1908, replaced the frame structure that was still standing. By March 1866, Hedgesville was operating four schoolhouses and had opened its first high school.<sup>5</sup>

The Berkeley County School Superintendent's annual report to the state superintendent of free schools dated September 1866 states, "our country

. . . was occupied by one or the other of the contending armies during the whole period of the war, and at its close found all of the farms almost destitute of fencing. But what has been most in our way and contributed more than all other causes to paralyze our efforts and retard our progress, was the strong and determined opposition made by a large portion of our citizens to the free school system. The disloyal [Confederates]

almost universally belong to this class. . . ." Opposition to paying taxes to finance the school system also contributed to the problem. Township levies could not exceed ten cents per \$100 valuation. The Hedgesville Township School District was apparently an exception, because the tax levy was enacted. Led by Jacob Ropp and the other commissioners, the district built four new schoolhouses, bringing the total to nine, one for each sub-district. As noted, the Freedman's Bureau also sponsored a school, operated by the Free Will Baptists for children of ex-slaves, in a rented building in Martinsburg. The school opened in



Charles Wesley Ross

Daniel Reid Ross's mother Margaret came to Berkeley County when her son returned in 1874. Although his father Charles never lived in West Virginia, his remains were moved there in the 1880s.

November 1865 when the state board of education failed to execute state law that authorized funding.<sup>6</sup>

There were 1,650 slaves in Berkeley County in 1860, including many children. In 1866, the bureau's school had as many as 70 students in the day school and 50 at night, presumably adults. The Freedmen's Bureau also appointed a superintendent for Berkeley County with headquarters in Martinsburg. By 1868, control of the school was turned over to the Martinsburg school board, and a new brick building—24 by 40 feet—was built with the bureau's financial aid. It was the first school built for black children in the entire county. On the whole, officials of the Freedmen's Bureau encountered little public resistance to its efforts to establish the Martinsburg school. Berkeley County leaders and officials also cooperated, including the



Margaret Ross

mayor of Martinsburg. This was in sharp contrast to the opposition encountered in neighboring Jefferson County.

The next problem for Berkeley County schools was to obtain other suitable teachers. "It is certain they are not in the county now," and they were required to take loyalty oaths to the state and to the Union. This requirement debarred thousands of residents, including all of the ex-Confederate soldiers. Less than

\$4,000 in state and county funds was available for the year ending October 1, 1866, to operate the four new schools that had three teachers and 92 students. The population of school-age children (6-21) of the county was 4,071, including that of Little Georgetown, which had 55 white and three black children.<sup>7</sup>

For the school year ending June 30, 1867, the county superintendent reported, "A few of our teachers were without experience, but they generally displayed commendable energy and tact in the discharge of their duties." Lack of uniformity of textbooks and parental prejudice against the free

school system were still major problems. Nevertheless, 23 new brick schoolhouses were built, including a model schoolhouse at Little Georgetown that replaced the existing log structure. The number of students attending school in the county had increased by 2,294 and the number of teachers to 43. Funds available totaled just under \$15,000. State funds allocated to Little Georgetown amounted to \$123.46, the largest amount assigned to any of the nine schools in the Hedgesville District.

For the year ending August 31, 1868, Berkeley County had \$17,500 available for its forty schools, 2,240 pupils, and 48 teachers. The school-age population was 4,749. In Hedgesville Township, all nine sub-districts had erected schoolhouses that were in use. The report noted, "At Little Georgetown where a model schoolhouse was erected the past year, greatly to the honor of the Board of Education, the school was kept open the whole year, with only a brief vacation." This was in contrast to the average 2.7-month school term for the state as a whole in 1865-66. Hedgesville had two free schools, one of which was a high school. "We have, with perhaps a few exceptions, very good teachers, men and women, who feel the responsibility of their position. . . Though this is not what it ought to be, yet it is far in advance of the former history of schools in this county . . . [As] the opposition dies out, as it surely will, we shall be able to report still better things."<sup>8</sup>

While teaching school in Little Georgetown, Daniel Ross decided to become a physician, partly because of his experience attending to wounded and sick prisoners in a Selma, Alabama, prison hospital during the war, the last of five prisons in which he was held captive. Formal medical education at that time was completed in one year, after which an apprenticeship was served with a practicing doctor. For the first six months of 1867, he had medical library privileges at the University of Pennsylvania Hospital in Philadelphia and attended lectures there, but he continued to teach in Little Georgetown until the fall of 1868.

In September 1868, Dan enrolled in Starling Medical College (now a part of Ohio State University School of Medicine) in Columbus, Ohio. He finished his training in 1869, and then moved to Eden (now Kilbourne), Ohio, to begin his medical

apprenticeship with Dr. Carothers, who was a faculty member of the medical college as well as a practicing physician in Eden. For a short time before or after he began his medical training, he apparently had lived in Eden at the stagecoach inn known as the Ohio House, which also had been a station on the Underground Railroad. There, he met the innkeeper's daughter, Samantha (Mantie) Jane Mathews, and they were married on February 8, 1868. They visited Berkeley County, including Little Georgetown, on their honeymoon. During this visit, the young couple spent time with Jacob Ropp and his wife, Martha, discussing the imperative need for additional medical service in the community. He also renewed his acquaintance with Samuel Dodd. Like the Ropps, the Dodds became lifelong friends of the Ross family.

While on their honeymoon, Dan and his bride must have decided to establish a medical practice in the area as soon as he was ready to "hang out a shingle." They returned to Ohio, where they stayed until 1874 in a home they bought while he completed his medical apprenticeship in Eden. While there, they brought Dan's family from New York to live with them. The family included his blind and pensioned brother, Lank, who reported his occupation as insurance salesman in the 1870 census; his father, who had rheumatism of the hip; his mother, who was nearly blind and partially



The house in North Mountain in which Daniel Ross lived before building a home at Hedgesville. This house was owned by Jacob Ropp.

paralyzed; and, later, Anna Marie, his schoolteacher sister. During the five years they lived in Eden, his father died (in 1872), having been incapacitated for

the last two years of his life, and was buried in Eden. His wife gave birth to their first daughter, Margaret, who died at birth. His blind brother, Lank, became a tailor, and in 1875 married Dan's sister-in-law, Ada, another daughter of the innkeeper, John Wesley Mathews. Ada was a music teacher, as was her mother, and earned a substantial portion of the family income by giving private piano lessons.

In 1874, Dan returned to Berkeley County from Ohio with his wife and mother, a stern and strict disciplinarian who would not allow any work to be performed on Sunday. They moved first to Martinsburg and then two years later—in 1876—to a log house in North Mountain and finally, in 1887, to Hedgesville, in the only house he ever owned. He undoubtedly rented one of the log houses Jacob Ropp owned in North Mountain. He lived in Hedgesville until his death in 1924. In 1884, he bought a 6.5-acre lot for \$220 and borrowed \$500 in 1886 from his sister, Anna Marie—interest



The Ross home in Hedgesville is today part of a National Register historic district.

free—to build their house. The house was assessed for \$750 in 1887. Eight children, two of whom died in infancy, were born in West Virginia, six of them in the North Mountain log house. Three of the surviving children were boys and three were girls.

Dan and his wife were remembered as having a very close, loving relationship with never a harsh word between them. While he was bedridden the last year of his life, she was his constant nurse. Her children remembered her as a gentle, humane, forgiving, cheerful parent and a devout Episcopalian who ran a very orderly, well-disciplined household. She also made most of the children's clothing. Both

husband and wife were interested in literature and would often read to each other from novels by such authors as Charles Dickens and Sir Walter Scott. Their oldest grandchild, Charles Ross, also would read to them. Dan almost never talked about the war; the experience had been too traumatic. The six children rotated the chores to which they were assigned, including chopping wood, feeding and grooming horses, tending to gardens, orchards, chickens, pigs, milking the cow, shoveling snow, and filling the oil lamps.

All three of Dan's daughters became schoolteachers, starting their careers at the Little Georgetown School. Nell taught there first, 1900 to 1905, Mabel from 1905 to 1910, and Ethel in 1912 and 1913. Mabel later taught third grade for five years in the Hedgesville Elementary School and Ethel in the Hedgesville High School. Later, Nell also taught black children in Norfolk, Virginia. Dan's son, William, substituted for part of a semester in 1897 while a student at Johns Hopkins University, where he earned a Phi Beta Kappa key. Nine of Dan's grandchildren and great-grandchildren became teachers or college professors.

In 1887, when he moved to Hedgesville, Dan Ross also became a trustee of the Hedgesville sub-district's board of education. He was to serve for eighteen years, from 1893 to 1911, as secretary of the Hedgesville Township Board of Education. The latter capacity included responsibility for the black children's school. He voted to build a new school for black children in 1890 and to enlarge it in 1893. He also sponsored a drive to raise voluntary contributions for building its first brick high school, completed in 1888, when tax money was unavailable. He served as one of the three trustees of this school. This building replaced a one-room log structure erected in 1866.<sup>9</sup> On occasion, he also served as substitute teacher of chemistry, physics, and biology. His heart was in education, his main concern being the quality of the teachers. He concluded that the B&O Railroad was not paying sufficient school district taxes. As the B&O surgeon for the North Mountain District since 1880, he was able to prevail upon the railroad's president to raise its tax payments sufficiently to increase the number of and quality of the Hedgesville High School teachers. Until then, railroad tax payments to the Hedgesville district had been about \$250 annually.



A school for African American children at Locust Knob in Hedgesville. William McIntyre Collection, West Virginia State Archives.

In 1890, Dan filed for an invalid pension based on his claim that he had contracted rheumatism and heart disease while in Rebel prisons. He was awarded \$8 monthly for partial disability. This constituted a major portion of his cash income. In 1893, it was raised to \$12. Likewise, his mother, Margaret, applied for and received a \$12 monthly Dependent Mother's Pension beginning in December 1889, when she was almost eighty-four years old, blind, and partially paralyzed. He also assisted many other veterans in applying for pensions. In 1912, Dan's pension was increased to \$30 monthly and by 1924, the year he died, to \$72.

About 1883, while living in West Virginia, Daniel arranged to exhume the bodies of his father and infant daughter, Margaret, and have them shipped from Ohio to the cemetery at the Falling Waters Church near Hedgesville. In this cemetery, he also erected a four-sided obelisk in memory of his father, firstborn child, and brother, William Henry, whose body was never recovered from the Battle of the Wilderness. The fourth side was reserved for his sister, Anna Marie, who died in 1904. The Falling Waters Church was a Scots Reformed Presbyterian Church like the one in upstate New York that had helped to shape his character.

For more than fifty years, Dan conducted his medical practice from an office in his home, which included a pharmacy, but in emergencies he even performed minor surgery as well as amputations outdoors on a makeshift table in the front yard.

Sometimes he made his house calls on horseback, surgical kit and medicine case in his saddlebags, and sometimes by horse and buggy. Over the course of his career, he delivered from five to 600 children. He owned two horses and would not consider owning an automobile. His practice covered Berkeley and two adjacent counties. His daughter, Mabel, remembered traveling with him as a little girl while making house calls and listening to him sing Civil War songs. In visiting widely scattered farm homes, he would often be gone for days, having to trade horses with farmers before he got back. On his return journey, if he was using his own horse, he would slacken the reins, tell his horse to go home, and fall asleep. More often than not, his compensation was a bushel of corn, a load of firewood, a dress for one of his daughters, or a sack of potatoes, rather than cash. He was the only one of the five doctors in the area who would treat black patients. He also met and administered to countless residents who had been sympathetic to the Confederate cause.

For 44 years, from 1880 to 1924, he served as surgeon for the North Mountain district of the B&O Railroad. He would take one of his sons with him to occasional railroad accidents to help hold the amputee whose mangled arm or leg had to be severed to extricate the victim from the wreckage. The only pay he ever received for this service was free lifetime railroad passes for his wife and children, so they could travel wherever they pleased. At one passenger train wreck, he worked twenty hours attending to injured passengers.

While there is no written record as to why Dan returned to Berkeley County to spend the last fifty years of his life, the fact is that he also moved his mother, a blind brother, a sister, sister-in-law, and the bodies of his father and firstborn daughter with him to his new home. His passion for holding his family together no doubt stemmed from his strong clan loyalties and the comfort and security he must have drawn from joining a loyal, close-knit Scots Presbyterian church community similar to that in which he had been born and raised in upstate New York. His daughter, Ethel, remembered him as a "strong clansman" who was devoutly religious. He also was known as "Mr. Republican" in his part of the county.

Falling Waters is the location of the second

oldest Presbyterian church in the Valley of Virginia. It was established about 1745 by Ulster Scots Presbyterians, many of whom came from the same upstate New York area in which Dan had been raised. The Rev. James B. Scouler, an abolitionist pastor for ten years in the Argyle Presbytery in New York, to which Daniel's family belonged, also served the Big Spring Presbytery to which the Falling Waters Church was affiliated in Berkeley County. The Ropp and Dodd families had belonged to that church since at least 1837. They, as well as most of the landowners in the area, were Presbyterian.<sup>10</sup>

Both during the war and for the rest of his life, Dan assumed his full measure of civic responsibility. He devoted fifty years to helping Berkeley County citizens re-establish their lives and build a public school system, and they knew it. In the process, few people were ever billed for his medical services, including the B&O Railroad. He was a lifelong Lincoln Republican, a Royal Arch Mason, and a member of the Grand Army of the Republic.

Dan lived out the last year of his life in Hedgesville, bedridden and nursed by his wife. His primary source of income at that time was a \$72 monthly invalid pension check from the army. His estate, including his house, was valued at \$3,000. His death in 1924 was attributed in part to the rheumatism he contracted while in Civil War prison camps and partly to pneumonia. He also had suffered from rheumatism of the hip for the last ten years of his life. His obituary appeared on the front part of the *Martinsburg Herald*. Dan's wife, Samantha, who died in 1935 at St. Vincent's Hospital in Norfolk, Virginia (the home of her daughter, Nell), is buried at his side in Hedgesville.<sup>11</sup>

Daniel Reid Ross's outstanding quality was his sense of commitment to serve others, a sense bred into him by family, church, and community. This commitment to serve was first evident during the Civil War when he enlisted twice for three-year terms.

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D. Reid Ross is the grandson of Daniel Reid Ross. He is a retired urban planner and the author of a number of Civil War and family history articles. He also wrote *Lincoln's Veteran Volunteers Win the War: The Hudson Valley Ross*

*Brothers and the Union's Fight for Emancipation* (New York: 2008).

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### Solar Eclipse of 1869

Because a solar eclipse crossed the United States on August 21, 2017, it seems an opportune time to look back at the eclipse of August 7, 1869, the closest to West Virginia in the period of written history. On that date, the path of the eclipse across the United States had a northern limit for 100

percent solar obscuration that included southwestern West Virginia. Unfortunately in terms of the likelihood of finding firsthand accounts, that part of the state was still sparsely settled, with the rise of the coal industry that would lead to the development of towns such as Williamson, Welch, and Bluefield—all would have been within the area of totality—still in the future.<sup>1</sup>

The nearest West Virginia newspapers known to survive were from Cabell Court-House (Barboursville), Charleston, and Lewisburg. These papers gave only brief mention to the event from a local perspective, although all three noted that people viewed the eclipse through smoked glass. The Charleston paper's reporting was such that a reader who had not been born at that time might reasonably conclude that the eclipse came and went and, aside from the benefit to astronomers, was not much of anything. The Lewisburg paper did note that the black martins went home to roost but devoted half of the single paragraph allotted to discussion of a comet that had just appeared.<sup>2</sup>

In Barboursville, it became damp and chilly. An old shanghai (a type of fowl) thought it was time to roost and "sounded his customary retiring notes." Apparently unlike his fellow newspapermen in Charleston and Lewisburg, the editor recognized the significance of the occasion when he stated, "An eclipse of this magnitude has not occurred for nearly a century and in all probability will not again be witnessed by any of the present generation."<sup>3</sup>

A little farther away, in Point Pleasant it became dark enough for a couple of hours that lights were needed in stores, and birds became confused. "The black birds came in from the fields along the Kanawha and remained upon their roosts a short time when they again dispersed and commenced feeding in the fields," the *Mason County Journal* reported. "Many instances of chickens going to roost are also reported to us."<sup>4</sup>

The longer accounts appeared in the Wheeling papers, much farther from the path of the eclipse. According to the *Wheeling Intelligencer*, residents sought colored glass, with Messrs Pratt & Son being crowded with customers throughout the morning to mid afternoon. "Where-ever the eye rested, smoked glass and sooty noses were the prominent 'features' of the landscape," the paper noted. "If everybody, everywhere, from the porter to the boss and from



the cook and bottle-washer to the mistress, did not give up their whole time to the spectacle, they at least 'went one eye on it,' to the intense straining of that particular optic, and to the immense enlightenment of the possessor on the intricate and mysterious science of astronomy."<sup>5</sup>

The *Wheeling Register* reported:

All our citizens were on the lookout for the eclipse on Saturday. In the language common on such occasions, "the whole affair passed off pleasantly, nothing occurring to mar the harmony of the proceedings." The day was delightfully clear, and during the whole of the eclipse, but a single cloud, and that so light and flaky as hardly to deserve the name, drifted across the face of the sun.

From the most accurate data we could gather, the sun began to be obscured at 4:45, at which time a very faint shadow appeared upon the edge of the sun's disk. At 5 o'clock about one-sixth of the disk was shaded, and by half-past five one half of the face of the sun was hidden. Persons differ as to the time of the greatest obscuration but we think the nearest approach to totality was about 5:40. The proportion of the disk then in shadow is estimated by some at nine-tenths but we doubt if the eclipse was so near total in this locality.

About the hour mentioned the sky was tinged with black, and every object bore a gloomy, somber look. Shadows upon the ground appeared perfectly black, and the very sunlight partook of the heaviness of shade. Although the sun's rays were very much weakened, there was yet no time during the whole of the eclipse when the sun could be gazed upon by the naked eye for any length of time without pain. A few tried the experiment but speedily desisted. As the light lessened and night seemed to approach, the atmosphere grew chilly, so much so as to attract notice and remark. The phenomena frequently witnessed under a total eclipse, such as the appearance of the stars and the falling of dew, were not visible here, so far as we could learn. Neither did the night birds sing nor tame animals become terribly agitated, nor the cows turn homeward from their pastures for their nightly milking—occurrences which fanciful writers describe as always accompanying total eclipses. The waning sunlight, the blackness of the shadows, the chilliness of the atmosphere, and the heavy sombreness of the situation

generally, were the only noteworthy facts of the great eclipse here, but the animal world, man and beast, seemed to be not at all disconcerted by the great astronomical event of the century.

At about 6:41 the eclipse ended. The sun and sky resumed their wonted brightness, the earth put off its funeral attire, and the world wagged on again as steadily and carelessly as if great eclipses were every-day occurrences, and the ugly interposition of the moon betwixt mankind and the source of daylight quite a common and trivial incident. The observations made hereabouts partook very little of the scientific character. The traditional smoked glass, ungainly in shape, and exceedingly dirty in appearance and effect, was the medium through which our people generally made their observations. True, no very interesting statistics concerning the transactions skyward could thus be obtained, but our citizens merely wanted personal views and satisfaction as to the event itself, leaving to *savans* and philosophers the task of collecting the minutiae and gathering therefore such inferences and lessons as may furnish matter for reflection and study to the world of science.<sup>6</sup>

According to one account, an overly enthusiastic cat became cross-eyed, while an elderly woman put her glasses on upside down in her excitement over the eclipse. One person who had a glass eye got the glass smoked and "gave himself up to the felicitations of the occasion, completely and blissfully happy."<sup>7</sup>

While people in Wheeling may have enjoyed the eclipse, such was not the case for everyone. Fifty-six years later, when an eclipse passed much farther away, across New England, the *Bluefield Daily Telegraph* heard from a few people who recalled the earlier event. Some had not lived in the region, but one man who was a small boy at the time recalled that his three sisters were picking blackberries in an area that would have been on the Virginia side when the sky darkened much earlier than normal. Frightened, the girls started running for home.

In more populated cities and towns, people in 1869 were anticipating the eclipse and knew what it was, but in places that lacked a ready source of news or information on astronomy, the occurrence no doubt came as a complete and scary surprise. "It

will be seen the eclipse of August 7, 1869, lasted exactly one hour and fifty minutes,” the *Telegraph* reported, “and it is no wonder that many people became frightened, thinking the end of time had come sure enough when the sun went out for almost hour [sic] and it became dark almost as midnight.”<sup>8</sup> Ohio County cows may not have turned homeward for their nightly milking on that day in August 1869, but one wonders how the cows in Mercer, McDowell, and present-day Mingo (still part of Logan at the time) responded.

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1. Map showing the path of the 1869 solar eclipse and northern and southern limits, <https://eclipse.gsfc.nasa.gov/SEsearch/SEsearchingmap.php?Ecl=18690807>, accessed September 1, 2017.
  2. *The West Virginia Journal*, August 11 and 18, 1869; *The Greenbrier Independent*, August 14, 1869.
  3. *The Cabell County Press*, August 9, 1869.
  4. *Mason County Journal*, August 11, 1869.
  5. *The Wheeling Intelligencer*, August 9 and 11, 1869.
  6. *The Wheeling Register*, August 9, 1869.
  7. *The Wheeling Intelligencer*, August 11, 1869.
  8. *Bluefield Daily Telegraph*, February 8, 1925.

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### Upcoming Events

Do you play an active role in an organization that has collections but lack knowledge about how to care for them properly or to assess the risks that may threaten them? Or, perhaps there is someone else in your organization in that situation.

If so, one or both of you may benefit from the following program. On Friday, October 13, and Saturday, October 14, all-day workshops in the **Regional Heritage Stewardship Program** will be held at the Culture Center in Charleston. With funding from the National Endowment for the Humanities, the program was launched in the Spring by the Conservation Center for Art and Historic Artifacts (CCAHA). The workshops will be led by Dyani Feige, the director of Preservation Services at CCAHA.

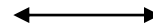
The October 13 workshop will address essential policies and procedures for cultural collections. An institutions’ collections care and business practices are defined by its written policies and procedures. This workshop will provide an overview of policy

and planning documents that are essential for collections care.

The workshop on October 14 will focus on risk assessment, which institutions need to understand in order to develop an emergency preparedness and response plan. The workshop will offer tips for conducting an assessment on a site-wide level and for specific collections, will look at case studies of institutions that have dealt with disasters, and provide advice on forming relationships with first responders and others who can help conduct risk assessments.

The workshops will run from 9:00 a.m. to about 4:30 p.m., with a one-hour lunch break. Lunch will not be provided, but a list of nearby restaurants will be available. The cost is \$30 for each workshop. If registering for both workshops, the total cost will be only \$50. The registration deadline is two weeks before the date of the workshop. A link to the CCAHA registration page for the October 13 workshop is available under “Latest News” on West Virginia Archives and History’s Web site, <http://www.wvculture.org/history>. You can register for the October 14 workshop by clicking on CCAHA’s Program Calendar and scrolling down to the correct workshop.

If you have questions about the workshops, call CCAHA’s Preservation Services at (215) 545-0613 or e-mail [ps@ccaha.org](mailto:ps@ccaha.org). A limited number of scholarships may be available. For more information, contact Archives and History Director Joe Geiger at (304) 558-0230.



The **Mining Your History Foundation** will hold its annual conference at the Archives and History Library on Saturday, October 21, from 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. The conference is free, but registration is requested. The registration form is available on West Virginia Archives and History’s Web site, <http://www.wvculture.org/history>.



**History Day** at the Legislature will be Thursday, February 22, 2018, from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at the Capitol Complex. Forms for display space and History Hero nominations will be posted on the West Virginia Archives and History Web site, <http://www.wvculture.org/history>, in October. Only

West Virginia historical, museum, preservation, and similar organizations may nominate individuals for the History Hero award. Other rules are available with the forms. The West Virginia Historical Society is one of the supporters of this event.

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### Recent Books Related to West Virginia

Dickinson, Jack L. and Kay Stamper. *Lumbermen, Log Rafts, and Sawmills: The Lumber and Timber Industry in Southern West Virginia*. Huntington, WV: 2016.

*Lumbermen, Log Rafts, and Sawmills* looks at the lumber and timber industry in seven western and southern West Virginia counties from the 1880s to the 1920s. Among the sources the authors used were newspapers, interviews, and deed books, which contain not only deeds but sales contracts for timber and other documents.

Fisher, W. Douglas, and Joann H. Buckley. *African American Doctors of World War I: The Lives of 104 Volunteers*. Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, Inc., 2016.

With the centennial of World War I underway, it is an appropriate to look back on those who served during a conflict that generally receives less attention in the United States than it deserves, in part because it has been overshadowed by World War II and Vietnam War. Fisher and Buckley chose to look at an even more overlooked group, African Americans, in *African American Doctors of World War I*. These doctors provided care for the 92nd and 93rd divisions, the army's African American combat units. Of the 104 doctors they cover, five lived in West Virginia, either before or after the war: Vanderbilt Brown, Louis A. Hilton, Orlando W. Hodge, Charles H. Laws, and James M. Whittico.

Rice, Donald Tunnicliff. *Cast in Deathless Bronze: Andrew Rowan, the Spanish-American War, and the Origins of American Empire*. Morgantown, WV: West Virginia University Press, 2016.

Monroe County native Andrew Summers Rowan became famous when Elbert Hubbard wrote "A Message to Garcia," an account of Rowan's mission at the start of the Spanish-American War in 1898. In *Cast in Deathless Bronze*, Rice looks at Rowan, Hubbard's story, and that war, as well as the Philippine War and the Moro Rebellion, providing new information.

Seaton, Carter Taylor. *The Rebel in the Red Jeep: Ken Hechler's Life in West Virginia Politics*. Morgantown, WV: West Virginia University Press, 2017.

*The Rebel in the Red Jeep* looks at the life of a man who did things his own way—Ken Hechler—from the bright red jeep that he drove to the issues that he fought for, such as the environment, black lung benefits, and miners' rights. The author utilized Hechler's political papers at Marshall University, but she also had access to the man himself and his personal papers.

For those who live within a short driving distance of Charleston, Carter Seaton will be discussing her book at the West Virginia Archives and History Library in the Culture Center on September 21.

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### Submissions

The West Virginia Historical Society magazine welcomes manuscript submissions for publication consideration that deal with state or local history-related topics. Submissions, which should be of a length suitable for publication in the magazine and include footnote/ endnote citations of referenced materials, should be sent to the editor, West Virginia Historical Society, P.O. Box 5220, Charleston, WV 25361.

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Membership is available at the cost of \$10 per year for individuals and \$15 for institutions. Members receive the society magazine, which is published two times a year. Dues should be sent to West Virginia Historical Society, P.O. Box 5220, Charleston, WV 25361.

*If you are moving, please send us your new address so that we can update our records.*

**West Virginia Historical Society**

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