

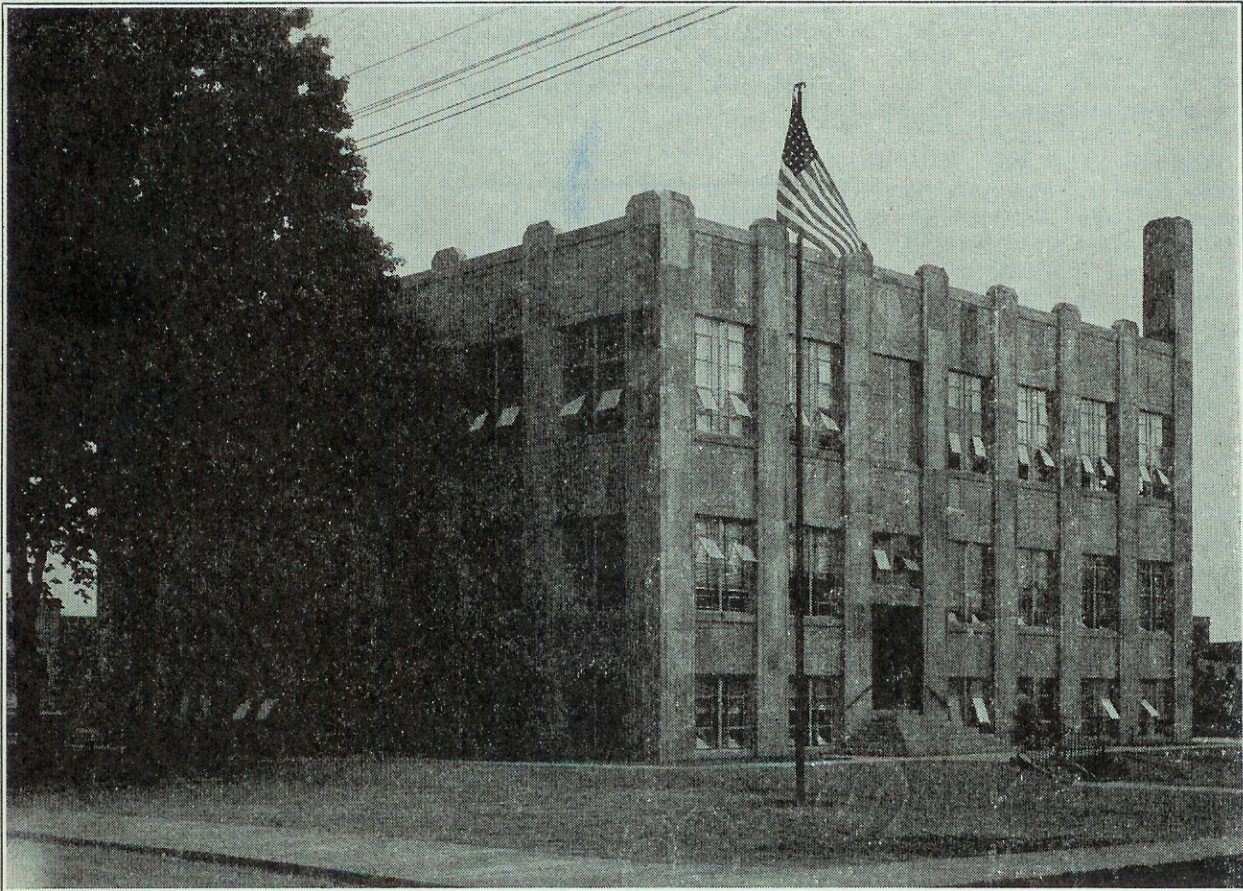
# The County **NEWSTELLER**

A Monthly Magazine Dedicated to the County and School Officials  
of West Virginia

## PRESTON COUNTY COURT HOUSE

Dedicated Aug. 25, 1934

Kingwood, W. Va.



**PRESTON COUNTY:** Formed in 1818 from Monroe county; named in honor of James Patton Preston, Revolutionary hero and one-time Governor of Virginia (1816-1819); area 654 square miles; population (1930) 29,043.

(No. 3 in a series of 55 front covers being used to present the Court Houses of West Virginia)

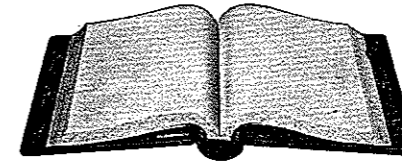
Volume I

MARCH, 1939

Number 6

The County  
NEWSTELLER

A news magazine devoted to those public officials to whom the county's vital records and business management are entrusted and securely safeguarded.



Published monthly by Casto & Harris, Inc., Spencer, W. Va., specialists in county and school record books, election supplies, printing, office supplies and equipment.

Record Books of Everlasting Service

Volume I

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### From Roane



**Roy Lester**

Roy Lester, clerk of the Roane County Court, didn't bother to take the cigar out of his mouth when The NewsTeller photographer caught him in this informal pose.

Roy will be at the Clerk's convention in Morgantown June 8-9 with bells on!

•  
"Best wishes and success for The NewsTeller."—L. O. Bobbitt, Nicholas county superintendent of schools.

### CLERK'S MOTHER DIES

Mrs. Ida L. Phillips, 62, mother of Circuit Clerk O. B. Phillips of Upshur county, was found dead in bed March 18. Physicians said she died from a heart ailment.

### \$1-PER-WORD PRIZE WINNER

Highest-paid contributor ever breaking into The NewsTeller is Bertha I. Falland, deputy County Clerk of Ohio county, whose "shortest will" item wins her the \$3 prize-of-the-month.

The will contained only three words, "All to Alpha," which means that the winner has been paid at the rate of \$1 per word, which would be top wages for an Irvin S. Cobb or a Pearl Buck.

So many interesting items were submitted this month that it was quite difficult to name the winner. C. E. King, for example, deputy circuit clerk of Cabell county, sent in three dandy articles, and L. O. Bobbitt's account of the Nicholas county spelling bee is championship material.

Again for April we offer \$3 for the best and most interesting item submitted before April 15. Everyone, including office deputies and assistants, has a chance to win.

### NICHOLAS ENJOYS SPELLING "BEE"

Only Two Contestants Survive  
McGuffey Test Repeated at  
Summersville

By L. O. Bobbitt

Nicholas Co. Supt. Schools  
Sometime ago the parents of Summersville were discussing the advisability of having "McGuffey's Night" in the town. The program committee of the Parent-Teachers Association finally decided to have such a meeting. The committee designated a night and termed it an "Old Time Spelling Bee." The committee appointed six group leaders in the community and requested each leader to select five additional spellers. The leaders were Mrs. Dessa Wiseman, Mrs. Thelma Pugh, Mrs. Mary Smith, Mr. A. E. Dorsey, Mr. Ernest Mearns and Mr. L. O. Bobbitt. In the line up for the "Old Time Spelling Bee" were the county superintendent, assistant superintendent, grade principals, high school teachers and some classroom teachers; also some of the older teachers from various sections of the county.

The generalissimo selected to lead the soldiers in this battle was Prof. W. G. Brown, an experienced educational leader.

The citizens of the town and community began to talk and in a short time the interest ran high. Many old timers boasted of what they used to be able to do in McGuffey's Speller. Some of

(Continued on Page Four)

## UPSHUR COUNTY SENDS 2 PICTURES

Old and New Court House at Buckhannon to be Pictured in September Issue

Only one Court House picture was received by NewsTeller publishers during the past month. It was from Allen B. Cutright, clerk of the Upshur county court.

Most interesting was the fact that Mr. Cutright sent two pictures, one of the old Court House built in 1851 at a cost of \$8,479 and one of the present Court House built in 1900 on the same ground at a cost of \$45,000. The picture of the present structure will be used on the front cover of the September issue of The NewsTeller, and the picture of the old Court House will be reproduced inside, so that the interesting comparison can be noted.

If other county officials have pictures of old Court Houses which have been replaced, they will be printed in The NewsTeller the same month that a picture of the present structure is used on the front cover.

The following counties HAVE NOT sent in pictures of their Court Houses: Barbour, Berkeley, Boone, Braxton, Brooke\*, Cabell, Calhoun, Clay, Doddridge, Gilmer, Grant, Greenbrier, Hancock, Hardy, Jackson, Jefferson, Kanawha, Lincoln, McDowell, Marion, Marshall, Mason, Mercer, Mineral, Mingo, Monongalia, Monroe, Morgan, Nicholas, Ohio, Pendleton, Pleasants, Pocahontas, Raleigh, Randolph, Summers, Taylor, Tyler, Wayne, Webster, Wetzell, Wirt, Wood, Wyoming.

\*(A colored postcard picture has been received, but this type picture does not make up into a good engraving.)

## Another First



Miss Vicki Lee Vickers

Miss Vickers enjoys the distinction of being the first child to have a photograph in The County NewsTeller. She is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. C. B. Vickers of Fayetteville. Her father is prosecuting attorney. Nearly two years old, Miss Vickers has a baby brother a month old.

The photo was sent in by Miss Mary K. Houchins, deputy clerk of Fayette county. Other pictures of children of county and school officials are requested.

## CLERK 44 YEARS

California Man Was First Elected To Office in 1894—Still There

(From L. L. Brown's "Permanence")

An extraordinary record of lengthy service as a county official is held by Mr. Grant G. Halliday of Vallejo, California, who is at the end of a period of forty-four years service as County Clerk of Solano County.

Mr. Halliday was elected as county clerk in 1894 and took office in January, 1895. Every four years thereafter he has been re-elected as clerk.

In August of 1938 Mr. Halliday was again elected for a four year term as clerk and began his new term on January 1st of this year.

In addition to being Clerk of Solano County, Mr. Halliday is President of the State County Clerk's Association, which office he has held for many years.

## BULLETIN!

Just as The NewsTeller was going to press it learned that the State Department of Health will furnish the health (blood-test) certificate blanks which must be filed with the County Clerk's before marriage licenses can be issued.

These blanks and a complete list of all registered doctors in each county, will be mailed to the clerks within a short time. This complies with House Bill No. 117 enacted at the 1939 legislature. The law does not go into effect until May 25, 1939.

## POETRY DEPT.

"How about some poetry for your magazine?" inquires Sue S. Boram, deputy county clerk of Lewis county. "I am enclosing one of my own composition. If you wish to use it in The NewsTeller, OKAY! If not suitable for this purpose, just file the same in W. B. file (Wastebasket file)."

Not into the wastebasket but into The NewsTeller goes Miss Boram's poem, the first original one published by this magazine. It follows:

### ALONG LIFE'S WAY

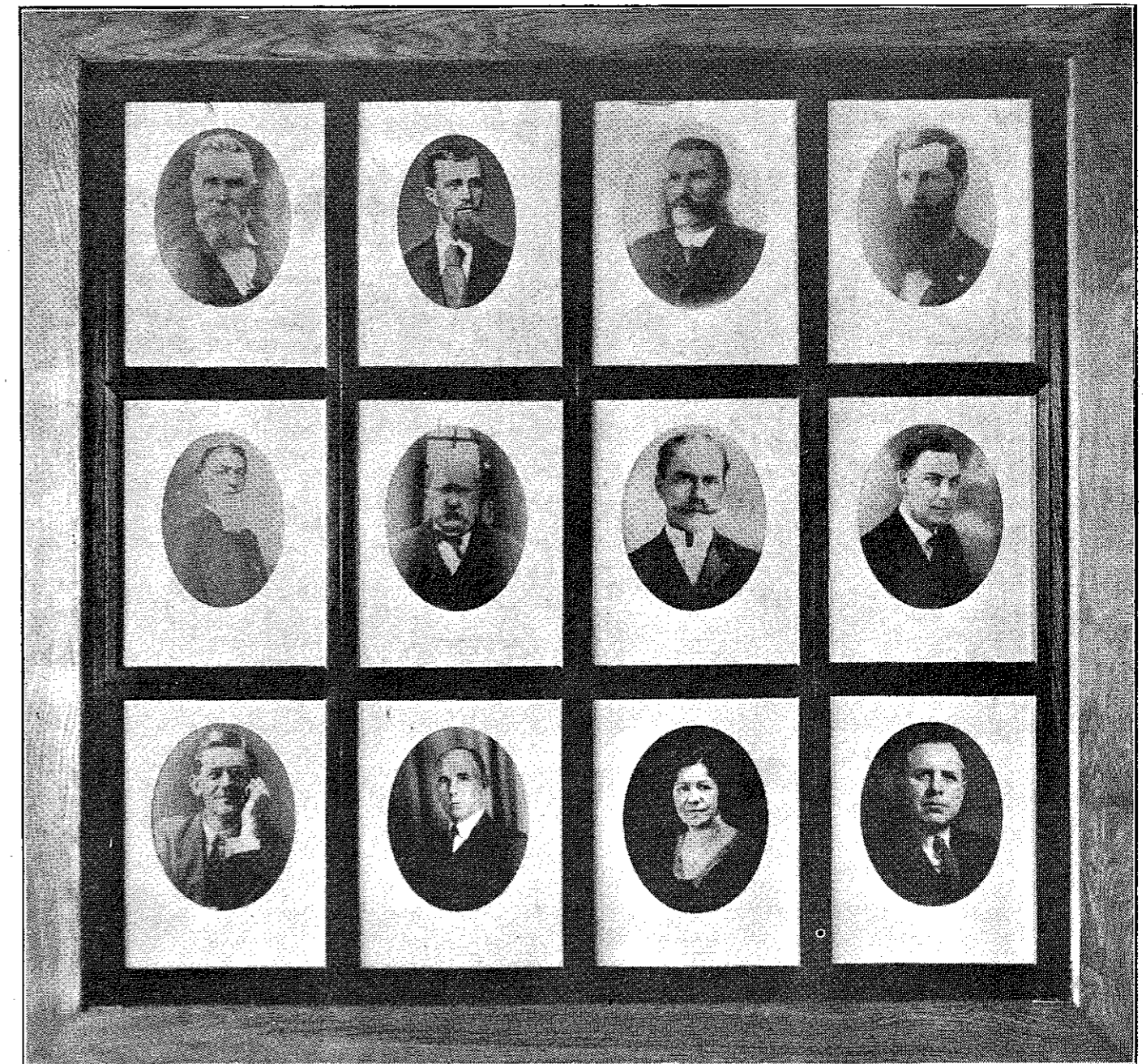
It costs nothing to be polite,  
It is entirely free from pay;  
Wishing one a cheery good-morning,  
Ere assuming the duties of the day.

It costs nothing, absolutely nothing,  
In dollars and cents, you see  
To say to a fellow being,  
Happy birthday, to you from me.

It costs nothing, there is no tax,  
On words that are kindly spoken;  
And worth the effort one puts forth,  
To express a friendly token.

It costs nothing, in fact,  
Kindness does its own reward bestow;  
For by bringing happiness to others,  
Happiness within one's heart doth glow.

## MINERAL COUNTY'S SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS



—Photo and Article Courtesy Luke McDowell, former County Superintendent of Schools.

Above are pictured the 12 county superintendents of schools who have served Mineral county since its formation in 1866. Their names and terms of office are given by Mr. McDowell, as follows:

Top row, left to right—Thomas P. Adams, 1866-1873; John W. Vandiver, 1873-1875; James A. Sharpless, 1875-1881; David C. Arno'd, 1881-1883;

Second Row—George S. Arnold, 1883-1893—1899-1911; Wilson M. Foulk, 1893-1895; Charles F. Hahn, 1895-1899; Richard W. Thrush, 1911-1918;

Third row—Arthur E. Sites, 1918; Luke Mc-

Dowell, 1918-1923—1926-1935; Myra M. Nefflen, 1923-1926; Paul C. Rouzer, 1935-.

The annual reports of these superintendents on file in the county schools office provide interesting material in the study of progress made in providing educational advantages for all the children of all the people of the county. At first a few sparsely scattered one and two-room schools developed to the present system of graded and high schools in reach of every section of the county except one small village, and that village has a standard one-room school, modern in all its appointments.

## SOME COON DOG!

"Mr. Okey Harris,  
"%Casto & Harris,  
"Spencer, West Va.  
"Dear Mr. Harris:

"I noticed a few days ago in your news columns an article in regard to a coon dog owned by Lee Taylor who works in this office.

"You failed to state in this article, just what a good coon dog he owned; however, you may not have heard about his fine qualities before writing this article, so am giving you just one incident, showing what a valuable dog he is.

"Lee at the time lived with his father on 6th Avenue between 17th and 18th streets, and the ice wagon went by their home one morning about 7 a. m. and this coon dog took after the wagon. The driver tried several times during the day to make him go back, but could not do so and the dog followed the wagon until about 2 p. m., when the ice man unloaded the last 300-lb. cake of ice and he discovered a coon track frozen in the ice. So, you see, the dog followed this track all day, and you can realize in a small way from this, just what a good dog he is.

"With kindest regards,  
"C. H. Withers,  
"Deputy Circuit Clerk,  
"Cabell County."

## GETS DOG TAXES

Nicholas Assessor Says Collections Will Double Those of 1938

Assessor Dock L. O'Dell of Nicholas county and his staff of deputies have their field work well in hand and will soon have it completed.

Mr. O'Dell has adopted a method of collecting the dog tax, which is working well and which may be of interest to other assessors.

Notice is served on the owner at the time the assessment is made that unless payment is received by the first of the following month same will be certified to the sheriff, which plan is being carried out and is very effective.

Mr. O'Dell thinks that from

## Nicholas Enjoys

(Continued from Page One)

them could have the first word in the book pronounced and then they could spell by memory every word in the book. Interest and bombast mounted as the night drew near. The topic of conversation in the barber shops, restaurants, hotel lobbies, beer parlors, stores and chimney corners was spelling.

The evening set for the contest arrived. Some of the spellers began to arrive early in the morning and continued to come to town most every hour during the day. By seven o'clock the court room was filled with spellers, sightseers and curiosity seekers. The generalissimo appeared on the

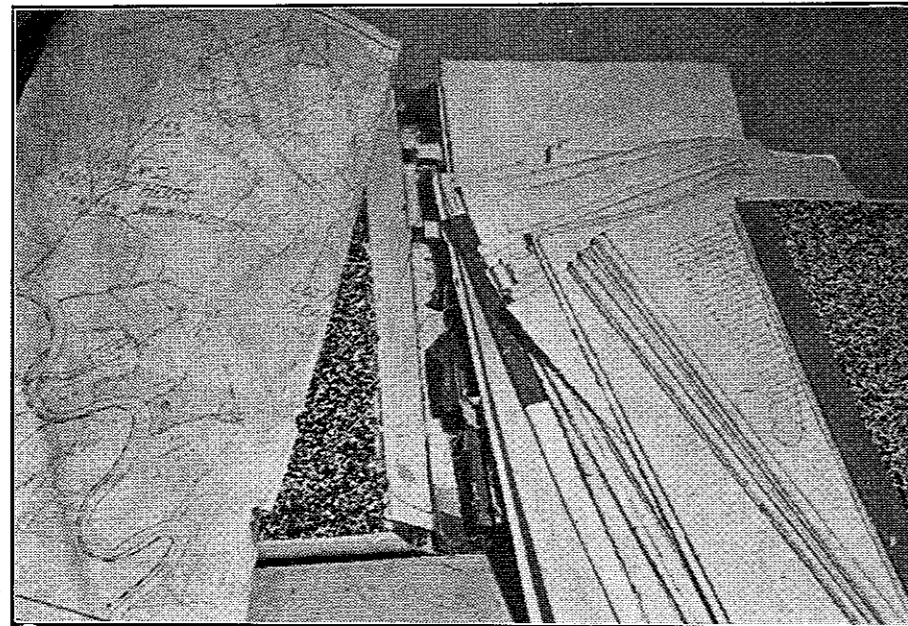
present indications his dog tax collections will be double that of last year.

battle scene at the appointed hour and gave the bugle call. The leaders at once formed their soldiers into battle line and the general gave the command, "Attention, forward march," and two angry armies stood face to face.

The generalissimo gave the command, "Ready, aim, fire," and the roar and smoke boomed forth. When the smoke from the first volley had cleared away, the assistant county superintendent and the grade principal were among the first casualties. The house went into pandemonium and it was some time before the casualties could be removed to the rear and firing resumed. The battle waged furiously several hours and at the end of the day as a few distant guns were heard firing at random only two veteran soldiers answered to the roll call, Mrs. Luverna O'Dell and Mr. P. N. Wiseman.

## BEFORE and AFTER

A Picture-Story of a Map Book That Was Ready to Fall Apart



Above is reproduced a photograph of Map Book No. 1, which reposed in the Roane county clerk's office until a short time ago. As can be seen, the book had practically fallen apart, the maps had been torn loose and many of them were badly damaged.

Because it is one of the most important record books in the county, it was decided that some means must be devised to preserve

these maps for public inspection. Because the maps were too badly worn to be put back into shape for handling, the problem was turned over to The NewsTeller publishers.

Every map was removed from the book and photographed on the Rectigraph Daylight Duplex photo-copy machine installed at the Spencer plant. When necessary, the maps were enlarged or reduced so as to make them all the same size. When this was done a typewritten notation appears on the photograph, giving the percentage of reduction or enlargement.

These photo-prints were mounted back-to-back on regular mounting cloth, a cloth hinge was added, the completed sheets were punched and fit into the special binder made in the Casto & Harris plant. The old map book was rebound, filed away for reference in case it was necessary to consult the originals. But in 99% of the cases the photo-copies will serve the purpose and the valuable maps are preserved for all time. Sheets in the new book are extra heavy and will stand constant handling.

Below is the "after" picture, showing what the new map book looks like. Compare it with the "before" picture above! Incidentally, the young lady in the picture below is Marie Smith, deputy in the office of Everett Sinnett, circuit clerk of Roane county. The Rectigraph machine, on which the photo-copies were made, is shown in the background.



## UNUSUAL PROBLEM IN CABELL COUNTY

Son Wants \$750 Settlement Made With Mother Years Ago

A gentleman from the rural section of Wayne county entered the Circuit Clerk's Office of Cabell county a few days ago and stated he wanted his wife's money. On questioning the gentleman, he gave the following facts to sustain his claim:

It seems that his wife was an illegitimate child, born May 4, 1868. The mother of the child instituted suit against one Mr. \_\_\_\_\_ and obtained a judgment for \$1,000. He stated that this was later compromised and Mr. \_\_\_\_\_ paid \$750 into the court for benefit of the child. He stated further that during the past few years they had talked about the money and considered it safe but now that the "Old Woman" is growing old, they need the money and now (after a lapse of some 70 years) had come after it.

A search is being made of the records to locate this proceeding.

## Personals

Mrs. Pearl Poteet, hard-working chief deputy in Kanawha County Clerk Paul Wehrle's office, returned recently from a week's vacation with friends in Cincinnati and Indiana.

Mr. and Mrs. Earl Wolfe and daughter have returned home after a month's vacation at Daytona Beach, Fla. Mr. Wolfe is county clerk of Wood county.

Frank Thorn, clerk of the Wirt county court, was a recent visitor at The NewsTeller office.

## PLAY ON WORDS!

A few days ago one T. J. Hyer came in the Cabell circuit clerk's office looking for a notary public, stating that his wife had recently died and he needed some assistance. On filling out the papers, it was revealed that the deceased had been married twice, her first husband being J. M. High.

In her younger days she got "High" and later in life she got "Hyer."

## NO FUNERAL FOR THIS GENTLEMAN

"As Tree Fall, Let It Lye,"  
Wrote Monongalia Man In  
His Will

"As the tree falls so let it lye," wrote a Monongalia county citizen in making his last will and testament, according to records in the office of A. R. Martin, county clerk. He used this slightly mis-spelled phrase to explain why he wanted no funeral oration preached over him.

The will, in full, is reproduced as follows, same spelling but with actual names omitted:

"I bequeath my body to the dust whence it came and my soul to God who gave it hoping for a happy immortality.

"There is to be no funeral preached over my dead remains by no man. As the tree falls so let it lye.

"I bequeath to my son John and to my son Bill all of my blacksmith tools, half and half to each one of them and they are to stay where they are in the shop where I bilt and no fussing about them, for he that raiseth a fuss forfeits their part all but five dollars and the forfit shall be equally divided amongst the rest of my ares.

"Sind in the presence of Almighty God and James Doe."—signed, John Doe.

## POCAHONTAS HAD TO SAVE RECORDS

Valuable County Papers Moved  
Around to Preserve From  
Enemy

At the time of the breaking out of the war, the Hon. William Curry was serving as both Circuit and County Clerk of Pocahontas county, and when it became evident that the Federals would invade the county, the court ordered Mr. Curry to remove the records to a place of safety, according to Mrs. Pearl Yeager, Deputy County Clerk, who dug up this information.

In compliance with this order he caused them to be taken to the

private residence of Joel Hill, Esq., in the Little Levels district. Here they remained until January, 1862, when Mr. Curry became alarmed as to the safety of so valuable a charge thus placed in his custody, and he caused them to be removed to Covington, Va., where for a short time they lay in the Clerk's Office of Allegheny County. From there they were taken to the storehouse of Captain William Scott.

In September, 1863, General Averill's command reached Covington, and Mr. Curry again removed the records; first to the residence of William Clark, and then to a stack of buckwheat straw, in which they lay concealed for several weeks, and then were conveyed into the mountains and stored away at the house of a Baptist minister, and here they

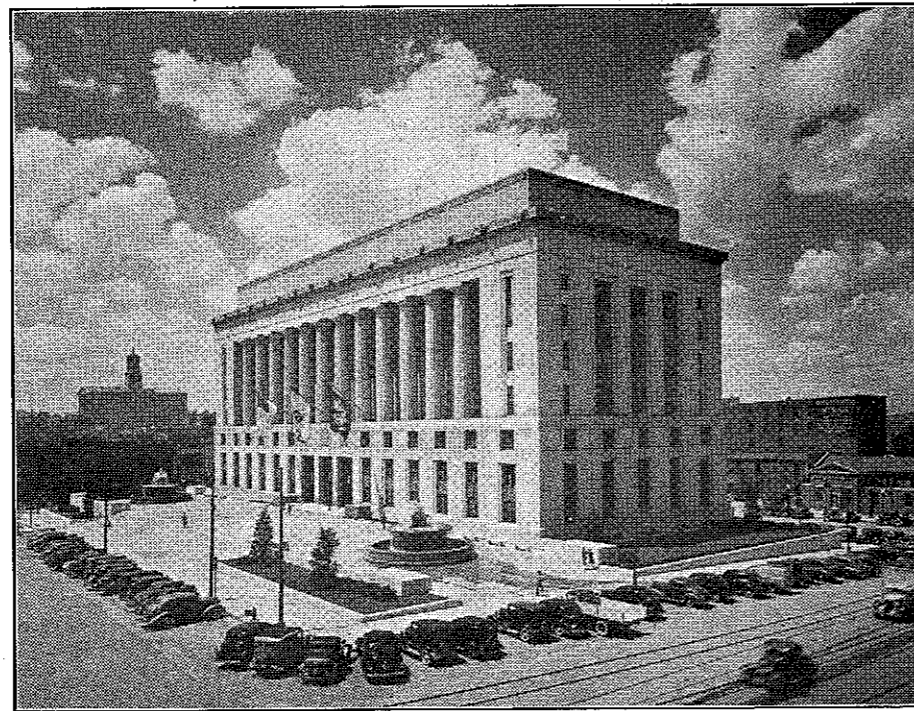
remained until after the surrender at Appomattox.

The storm of war had now passed away, and Mr. Curry, in June, 1865, returned with the records, and once more deposited them at the home of Joel Hill. Here they remained one month, and were then taken to a vacant house belonging to the Rev. Mitchell Dunlap, where they remained until September, 1865, when the first court after the close of the war convened (November, 1865), in the Methodist church at Hillsboro.

From that time they were kept in the old academy building until June, 1866, when they were taken back to the county seat and deposited at the house of John B. Garey. More than five years had passed away since the first removal, and strange to say that,

(Continued on Page Eight)

## NASHVILLE (TENN.) COURT HOUSE



—Photo Courtesy L. L. Brown Paper Co.

One of the nation's most impressive public buildings is the Davidson County Court House, Nashville, Tenn. The new combined home of the city and county governments, it was completed in 1937 at a cost of more than \$2,000,000.

This building, combining the best in classical and modern lines, is eight stories high, and houses the county administrative offices and county courts, as well as the city administrative offices. The fountains in front of the building make an impressive spectacle at night when lighted by indirect lighting.

## Assessor's Office of Mercer County



Reading from left to right: R. C. McClaugherty, Assessor and two of three office assistants, T. Courtney Tanner and A. C. Johnson. Miss Mamie Houseman, the third assistant, was absent when this picture was made.

Mr. McClaugherty is now serving the county as Assessor for the 14th consecutive year, having been elected to four terms, beginning Jan. 1, 1925.

The gentleman standing in the right rear against the map is Mr. Albert S. Kemper, Jr., of Bluefield, a member of the law firm of Richardson and Kemper. Mr. Kemper is now chairman of the Democratic committee of Mercer county.

## National Recognition

Your County NewsTeller received national recognition this month when the March issue of Printing, a nationally circulated magazine, carried the following item:

"A house organ directed at a special group is The County NewsTeller, published monthly by Casto & Harris, specialists in county and school record books, election supplies, printing, office supplies and equipment, Spencer, W. Va. It is, in fact, a news magazine, devoting its editorial content to news about the county and school officials of the state, their organizations, their personal doings, their pictures.

"Reader interest must be strong, because personal news dominates. Circulation hovers around 800, and in the first four issues pictures of 50 persons appeared. Advertising is confined to

the back cover, is restrained but convincing.

"Other printers, who, like Casto & Harris, cater to a limited group in a limited area, might well adopt this advertising policy, publish a readable little news sheet with names and pictures of their customers."

## You're Welcome!

"I am indeed happy to be named the prize winner in your February contest and wish to thank you for the check.

"If you have extra copies of The NewsTeller, I would appreciate it if you would mail me a copy of same.

"Again thanking you, I am

"Yours very truly,

"Sue S. Boram,

"Dep. County Clerk,

"Lewis county."

## SHORTEST WILL

(March Prize Winner)

From Bertha I. Falland, deputy county clerk of Ohio county, comes an account of the shortest will that has been called to The NewsTeller's attention.

On Nov. 3, 1928, the Ohio county court probated the last will and testament of one J. R. Bishop, who left all of his property to his widow, Alpha Bishop.

The will, dated Jan. 5, 1926, contained only three words and his signature. It read:

"ALL TO ALPHA"—

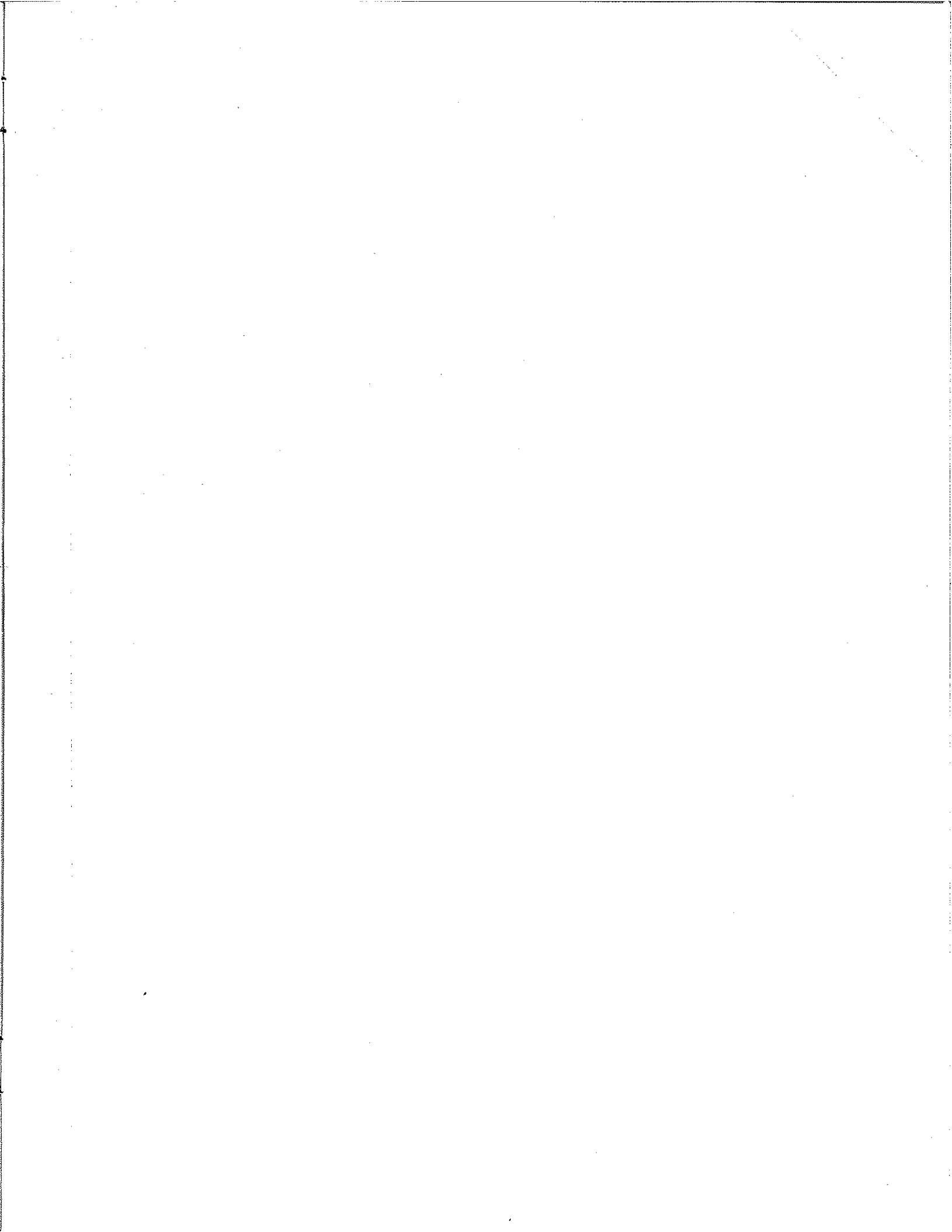
"We receive the NewsTeller each month with a lot of pleasure. It is very interesting and deserves the full support of all the counties. We congratulate you and add our wishes for much success in the publication of the NewsTeller."—T. Courtney Tanner, deputy assessor Mercer county.

## Jackson Sup't



R. P. Kiser

Mr. Kiser, county superintendent of schools of Jackson county, is a loyal NewsTeller fan, and has helped us to make the publication more interesting.



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# “A Stitch In Time . . . ”

Rare indeed is the public office in which some of its record books are not in need of repair. Backs are coming loose . . . stitches are rotting away . . . canvas jackets are wearing out . . . pages are tattered and torn.

Immediate attention to needed repairs insures longer life for valuable records and is much less expensive than to wait until the books have literally fallen apart.

Tight-bound books—if not too far gone—can be re-sewed, re-bound if necessary and new canvas jackets furnished, all for a most reasonable fee. Loose-leaf books can be repaired or the fillers placed in new binders at comparatively low cost. If contents are too badly worn or faded, they can be photo-copied, restoring their original legibility for all time (See pictures, page 5).

Without obligation, let us go over your books and give you an estimate for putting them in first-class condition. Our skilled book-binders, backed by our unconditional guarantee, can do the job right in your office, without taking the books from the building.

Your county's future depends on its written records of the past, and these public records must be preserved.

▼

## **CASTO & HARRIS, INC.**

(A West Virginia Corporation)

*Telephone 110*

**SPENCER, W. VA.**