

Gassaway and Community

1796-1942

West Virginia Writers' Project
Gassaway and Community

Folk Studies

Compiled and Written

by

Workers of the Writers' Program
in
West Virginia

Sponsored by

Braxton County Board of Education
The Town of Gassaway

O.O. Sutton, Area Supervisor
C.M. Byrne, Research Editor

Consultant and Adviser

C.R. Ramage, Principal
Gassaway High School

Mimeotyped
May, 1942

Contents

Introduction.....	3
Gassaway.....	4
Timbering in the Gassaway-Rosedale Section	
7	
Gassaway National Guard	
7	
Gassaway Official Roster 1905-1943	9
The Pioneer Arrives	12
The School House of Yesterday	
15	
Education.....	15
Early Schools.....	16
Buffalo and Coon Creek Schools.....	16
Davis Graded School.....	17
Gassaway High School.....	18
Religion.....	20
First Churches.....	20
Gassaway Churches.....	21
Presbyterian Church	22
St. Thomas Catholic Church	22
Methodist Episcopal Church, South	23
Methodist Episcopal Church	23
Engel Chapel	24
Appendix (Roster of Town Officials and Business Firms).....	25
Chapel Community	29

Introduction

Most all cities and towns in West Virginia had pioneer surroundings, embracing pioneer communities in which the dominating force, or power for good, was the school-though primitive in character, and the Christian trail-blazer who proclaimed the gospel tidings and established the first church. To these pioneers-strangers to the present generation-we owe much. Our greatness is built upon the foundation laid by them.

Each community in Braxton County had its pioneer settlers, and its first village which often grew into a town. The oldest town in the county had its first settlement in 1792; another village settlement in 1793, and another in 1798.

The beautiful little city of Gassaway with its schools and churches and varied business enterprises, had its early community settler in 1796, but the town being born of our progressive and industrial era did not have its birth until 108 years later, and is the youngest in years and the largest in population in the county today. And while the town's rapid growth and expansion due in the main to the opportunities offered by this twentieth century tempo, which was responsible for its initial influx of population, it must not be forgotten that the descendants of the Gassaway community pioneers-a sturdy, intelligent, independent and God-fearing folk-have been a balancing factor in the life and spirit of this "little city built upon a West Virginia hill."

O.O. Sutton

Gassaway

Nestled among a group of hills thrown off from the great Appalachian system, at the junction of Little Otter Creek and the Elk River, lies Braxton County's largest town-Gassaway. The town was named in honor of Henry Gassaway Davis, a former United States Senator and once a candidate for Vice-President of the United States, and known to all as West Virginia's "Grand Old Man." It was incorporated as the Town of Gassaway in 1905, at the time of the construction of the Coal & Coke Railroad, to the location of whose shops at this point the town owes its rapid growth. It was also the terminus of the Elk and Little Kanawha Railroad, and is connected with Sutton by a spur off the Coal & Coke.

Prior to the year 1903, what is now the site of Gassaway was an old farm, part of a large boundary of land owned by J.M. Boggs and the Israel J. Friend heirs. The first development of this section of the county other than that of agriculture was attempted on a section known as the Salt Works on Little Otter Creek nearly a century ago by the New York Development Company. This company purchased a large tract of land and began prospecting for oil. Oil and gas were both found, but in this particular section oil was not found to exist in sufficiently paying quantities but salt was found in abundance.

The New York Development Company being unsuccessful in its search for a profitable oil territory, and not desiring to manufacture salt, abandoned the territory and sold its holdings to J.M. Boggs, who built a salt furnace and manufactured salt for some time. As there was no railroad through the county at that time, and no other transportation facilities except by wagons over the muddy, dirt roads or in light canoes on the Elk River, his sphere of operations was very limited. Boggs supplied the territory from Clay Courthouse to Addison in Webster County, and Summersville in Nicholas county. Kanawha salt was then selling at \$5.00 per barrel, but Boggs placed his on the market at \$2.00 per barrel or 50¢ per bushel, and might have made a great deal of money from the enterprise if he had had transportation facilities to enable him to dispose of the entire output of his salt furnace, but he could manufacture in six weeks enough salt to last all the trade he could reach for two years. At this rate the business was unprofitable; the salt furnace was closed, and the place lapsed into its former state of an old country farm and so remained until August, 1903.

At this time Henry Gassaway Davis having purchased the Charleston, Clendenin and Sutton Railroad, and desiring to complete the line from Otter, in Clay county to Elkins, formed the Gassaway Development Company, and Arthur Lee, Jr., trustee for the new company, purchased eleven hundred acres of land at this point, including parts of two tracts belonging to J.M. Boggs and a part of the old Friend farm.

And near this time the name of the Charleston, Clendenin and Sutton Railroad was changed to the Coal and Coke Railroad, and Gassaway was located on the route midway between the two terminal points-Charleston and Elkins. The railroad was divided into two divisions, and since the division running towards Elkins required much heavier engines to haul the trains through the tunnels and over the hills than did the slightly graded river-route into Charleston, the ends of the two divisions and the shops were located at Gassaway. (The road is now owned and operated by the Baltimore and Ohio system.)

Having secured the ground and right-of-way for the railroad, the Gassaway Development Company in 1904 began to lay out the city, and although Gassaway is a little city set on a hill, it is one of the very few cities that was laid out from the beginning to fit the hill. This work was

done by James A. Paterson, one of the prominent early residents. Paterson surveyed the grounds and made a topographical map of the townsite, and then secured the services of an eminent engineer and the two laid off the town into blocks, streets, and alleys which fit the hills on which the town is located. All the preliminary work finished, the summer of 1905 witnessed the beginning of a new West Virginia town.

The first mayor was William Chenoweth; P.M. Dumond, recorder, and W.M. Funk, Dr. A.S. Boggs, and Henry Tuidon, members of the council.

The first buildings erected were the Bank of Gassaway, a beautiful native cut-stone structure whose present officers are Doctor Norman Goad, president, Carl Walker, vice-president, J.B. Fisher, cashier, and Nolan B. Hamric, assistant cashier; the Arthur Lee business and office building, at present housing the Gassaway Midland Store company; the Juergens & Walker building; the Davis Grade School, and the railroad shops which occupy several acres of bottom land lying between the town and the Elk River. The school building was used as a place of public worship until 1907, when two churches were built. The new town however inherited one church building, a Baptist church which stood on the north side of the Elk just below the mouth of Little Otter Creek, but this denomination has since built a modern church in the town, as have other church denominations.

The Armory building was built by James A. Paterson for the accommodation of the company of the West Virginia National Guard, located here.

The Gassaway Hotel now the Valley Hotel, was built and opened to the public in 1905, and for many years was under the management of A.J. Williams until his death in 1931. The hotel is known to the traveling public throughout Central West Virginia as a popular "stopping place."

The latest addition to Gassaway hotels-The Lincoln Hotel-under the management of Mrs. Lillie Brewster is a modern hostelry well-known for its hospitality and home-like accommodations.

The Boggs Hospital and Sanitarium at Gassaway was completed in May, 1906. The promoter and builder of the institution was Dr. A.S. Boggs son of J.M. Boggs. The building is a large three-story frame structure with basement, and wide veranda encircling the entire first floor. The cost of the building was approximately \$25,000.

In the year 1906, the Gassaway Era was established by John A. Grose of Sutton, and was continued for a number of years when it was sold to private individuals of the town who successfully conducted the newspaper for many years. The name of the paper was changed to the Gassaway Times, which at different periods was edited by William Swann, Perry Layman, Harry Woodley, and A.H. Erhart. The plant was sold and removed to Dunbar a few years ago, thus ending the history of Gassaway's only newspaper.

The town in 1909 was enlarged by the Stewart Addition. A plot of land was purchased and streets and alleys surveyed and lots for home building sites staked out. Dr. G.F. Perry of Flatwoods installed a planing mill and was active in building up this new addition on the north side of the Elk. A wire suspension foot bridge connected the addition with the main town until the present highway bridge was built by the State Road Commission in 1927.

The first bridge built across the Elk River leading into the town was constructed in the years 1912-13, the whole cost of building being borne by the town of Gassaway. This was an iron bridge of two or more spans resting on stone pillars and abutments. This bridge was replaced in the year 1935 by a modern steel structure of three spans built by the State Road Commission.

The railroad company in the years 1914-15 built a handsome and commodious two-story depot of stone and brick at a cost of \$25,000. The town owns a beautiful park of about three acres which lies adjacent to the Baltimore and Ohio depot. The park is used chiefly as a playground; also, the new municipal building stands in the east corner of the park.

The Gassaway Livestock Market, Inc. was established at Gassaway in recent years. Many of the largest livestock producers and shippers in the county pooled their money and efforts in this important undertaking.

The need for a municipal building being apparent, the citizens of the town, on July 12, 1938, voted a bond issue of \$20,000 (a portion of which was used for street paving purposes), supplemented by \$42,000 contributed by the Work Projects Administration. The building—two stories built of native stone, located on Elk Street, houses the following departments: mayor's office, council chamber, motorized fire department, public library, and auditorium for combined use as a recreation center.

The location of Gassaway is a beautiful one, surrounded as it is by entrancing mountain scenery. It may be properly termed an agricultural center, serving a large area of fertile and well-kept farms. Also, a splendid citizenship resides near the town in the Otter Creek and Elk River valleys. The surrounding communities have good schools and churches, and many other organizations that wield an important cultural influence. The rich farming region that surrounds the town contributes to its economic welfare. Gassaway is supplied with water by the West Virginia Water Service Company, whose plant is equipped with modern purification devices. The Monongahela West Penn Public Service Company supplies the town with electric power, and the Hope Natural Gas Company supplies gas. City services include sewerage, six miles of paved streets, fire department, police and other features of present-day towns, and a public library. An active chamber of commerce organized in 1920 is made up of local business men whose object is to promote the best interests of the town and surrounding community; the officers are Dr. E.L. Fisher, president, G.C. Byrne, vice-president, Vaughan H. Duffield, secretary, F.H. Grose, treasurer, and Roy B. Cartright, chairman of the program committee.

Amusement is provided by the Alpine Theatre. There are two beauty and three barber shops, five garages, six filling stations, five restaurants, two drug stores, hospital service, jeweler, one bank, funeral home, and two hotels. Other needs are supplied by merchants of various kinds. The town is well provided with tourist accommodations and offers attractive possibilities in this respect; quiet and unhurried, Gassaway is ideal for those who seek complete relaxation, and fishing in the Elk provides a sport for more active vacationers.

Three physicians and two dentists practice in Gassaway. Two lawyers serve the legal needs. A Woman's Club, a public library, an American Legion Post, a chamber of commerce, the Gassaway Elk Chapter-Future Farmers of America, and various church and school organizations provide nuclei for social activities.

In the history of Gassaway many names stand out as representative of the civic pride that built up the town on the Elk to its present importance and beauty. Among these but by no means a complete list are Henry Gassaway Davis, Arthur Lee, Chas. S. Robb, C.M. Handley, James A. Paterson, Dr. Andrew Boggs, Dr. James A. Rusmisell, Dr. Charles Rusmisell, John L. McCoy, J.P. Keeley, W.P. Bartlett, B.S. Hulm, Alex Groves, Henry S. League, Wm. M. Chenoweth, S.C. Rosenberger, A.L. Williams, I.N. Kalbaugh, J.S. Sergent, Dr. John W. Hyer, Mrs. Ida B. Johnston, P.M. Dumond, C.L. Perkins, J.C. Kinton, P.G. Cutlip, David Frame, N. Van Wilson, C. W. Flesher, J.A. Huff, Perry Layman, Harry Woodley, Albert Hostetler, Lloyd Shomo, W.G. Carper, Joseph Daugherty, John Poling, William Paxton, W.M. Funk, H.H. Mollohan, Dr. J.W.

Smith, Scott Duffield, J.H. Beall, J.A. Bridge, Carl Walker, H.L. Gum, C.R. Remage, J.B. Fisher, E.H. Bills, H.C. Isenhardt, H.A. Hays, I.F. Harold, John Timms, Thomas Morgan, L.D. Rose, John Cain, John Paisley, Clinton Shaffer, Jacob Scheerer, Henry Cunningham, O.J. Pittman, Henry Bender, J. Lee Simmons, H.C. Duckworth, Dr. C.C. Carson, and Dr. H.L. Welch. Many of these are still serving the community.

The 1940 census gives the population as 1,429.

Timbering in the Gassaway-Rosedale Section

The vast quantities of timber in the section between Gassaway and Rosedale caused the building of the Elk and Little Kanawha Railroad from Gassaway to Stumptown which was completed in 1913. This was a narrow gauge road and was operated as a private lumber road, but also carried passengers and freight. Timbering in this section was conducted by the Interstate Cooperaage Company, a subsidiary of the Standard Oil Company, which purchased and manufactured chiefly into oil barrel staves a 28,000-acre tract known as the Bennett Heirs' land. This company began the stave industry and had mills on this tract long before the railroad was completed. The timber operation was completed in 1920, and the railroad removed. A hard-surfaced highway now runs over a large part of the old railroad bed.

Gassaway National Guard

Gassaway National Guard, Company "G", 150th Infantry: West Virginia National Guard was organized at Gassaway, May 11, 1928. The officers and personnel consisted of : Captain Daniel G. Simmons, formally commanding Company A of the 137th machine battalion 38th Division A.E.F.

First Lieutenant, Harry H. Duckworth, formally Air Service A.E.F.

Second Lieutenant, George Coble Byrne, formally Machine Gun Service A.E.F.

The non-commissioned officers consist of the following:

First Sergeant, Harry E. Havermill.

Supply Sergeant, Austin D. Duckworth

Mess Sergeant, Oscar E. Fansler

Sergeants, Clyde G. Sands, Olen Weaver, Everett O. McMorrow, Earl McCune, Henry A. Nussear.

Corporals, Wayland F. Keener, Walter L. James, Joseph E. James, Ray W. Northcraft, Luther L. Hayhurst, Joseph T. Conley, Albert Carr.

Company Clerk, Robert M. Heflin.

Privates First Class, James A. Boggs, Oscar C. Drake, Edwin E. Duckworth, James D. Duffield, Robert H. Hays, Roy Hamric, Jas. M. Hefner, Ralph K. Keener, Spurgie A. Mace, Elmer L. Mullens, Amos H. Riffle, Charles J. Riffle, Paul A. Russell, Rowland G. Samples, James R. Sergeant, Jr., John W. Smith.

Privates, Clarence O. Boggs, Ralph W. Bills, Clarence Bennett, Leonard A. Burns, Francis O. Burkhammer, Robert L. Corkett, Gus H. Caldwell, Chelsea A. Couger, Waine H. Chamberlain, Glenn H. Fowler, Carl O. Hughes, John W. Hannah, Chelser A. James, Roy L. James, Farrell D. James, Bertie G. Keener, James H. Lough, Leslie E. Lancaster, Ernest T. Lytle, Ivan F. McElwaine, French C. McTheney, Murville L. Moore, Frank M. Otto, Herman B. Stewart, Amos E. Starcher, Paul Smith, Brown E. Singleton, Lloyd I. Twyman, Clarence Trowbridge, Cleo O. Teets, Rupert E. Vanhorn, Thomas J. Williams.

Gassaway Official Roster 1905-1943

1905-1906

W.M. Chenoweth, Mayor; P.M. Dumond, Recorder, and W. P. Bartlett, Dr. A.S. Boggs, Wade Osborne, Charles Lewis, R.A. Hall, Councilmen.

1906-1907

W.M. Funk, Mayor; John A. Huff, Recorder, and W.F. Osborne, W.P. Bartlett, Harry Snyder, Albert Funk, John M. McCoy, Councilmen.

1907-1908

P.H. Murphy, Mayor; C.L. Perkins, Recorder, and Dr. A.S. Boggs, J.J. Shannon, W.F. Osborne, Alex Groves, J.F. Moore, Councilmen.

1908-1909

P.H. Murphy, Mayor; C.L. Perkins, Recorder, and O.J. Pittman, D.W. Howell, C.J. Scheerer, H.S. League, R.E. Floyd, Councilmen.

1909-1910

C.L. Perkins, Mayor; G.A. Moon, Recorder, and J.P. Keeley, C.J. Scheerer, J.N. Poland, W.F. Osborne, H.C. Isenhardt, Councilmen.

1910-1911

H.C. Isenhardt, Mayor; H.A. Hays, Recorder, and C.B. Shreve, H.E. Woodley, J.P. Frame, J.P. Keeley, C.N. Kalbaugh, Councilmen.

1911-1912

W.M. Funk, Mayor; C.L. Heater, Recorder, and W.P. Bartlett, M.C. Watkins, J.M. Cain, W. H. Hiser, W.F. Osborne, Councilmen.

1912-1913

O.J. Pittman, Mayor; O.P. Frame, Recorder, and C.S. Haymond, H.C. Isenhardt, H.H. Mollohan, B. H. Griffin, W.F. Henretta, Councilmen.

1913-1914

H.A. Hays, Mayor; J.W. Zarling, Recorder, and C.O. Byrd, J.H. Friend, E.C. Jones, J.S. Nicola, G.C. Belknap, Councilmen.

1914-1915

E.C. Jones, Mayor; C.R. Applegate, Recorder, and J.L. Barker, R.L. Sponaugle, J.M. Blackwood, S.C. Johnson, J.A. Huff, Councilmen.

1915-1916

S.C. Johnson, Mayor; O.V. Wilson, Recorder, and J.N. Blackwood, H.B. Mollohan, J.H. Beall, Thomas Browning, R.L. Sponaugle, Councilmen.

1916-1917

H.H. Wilson, Mayor; O.V. Wilson, Recorder, and J.H. Beall, R.L. Sponaugle, R.M. Houston, M.J. White, Chas. R. Summers, Councilmen.

1917-1918

O.P. Frame, Mayor; C.L. Heater, Recorder, and W.P. Bartlett, A. Hostetler, James J. Frame, A. Kibbie, C.C. Rusmisell, Councilmen.

1918-1919

C. L. Heater, Mayor; R. Lee Boone, Recorder, and H.H. Huff, J.P. Frame, L.A. Jarrette, L.R. Shomo, John H. Beall, Councilmen.

1919-1920

R.L. Boone, Mayor; H.L. Gum, Recorder, and J.B. Fisher, John H. Beall, O.J. Meadows, C. C. Rusmisell, H.C. Isenhardt, Councilmen.

1920-1921

S.C. Johnson, Mayor; H.L. Gum, Recorder, and H.B. Mollohan, Frank Sutton, C.E. Walker, C.L. Heater, James R. Riffle, Councilmen.

1921-1922

G.C. Belknap, Mayor; Mrs. E.L. McCrey, Recorder, and O.P. Frame, H.A. Fast, B.M. Shears, J.J. Timms, B.W. Piercey, Councilmen.

1922-1923

G.C. Belknap, Mayor; Luther Wood, Recorder, and J.J. Timms, J.D. Calfee, R.L. Sponaugle, O.P. Frame, J.W. Colliver, Councilmen.

1923-1924

Luther Wood, Mayor; J. Lee Simmons, Recorder, and U.F. Duffield, O.P. Frame, J.D. Calfee, A.H. Young, E.M. Layman, Councilmen.

1924-1925

C.L. Perkins, Mayor; J.L. Simmons, Recorder, and H.L. Gum, H.T. West, O.P. Frame, J.J. Timms, C.H. Bills, Councilmen.

1925-1926

C.L. Perkins, Mayor; Sam Fox, Recorder, and Oscar Duncan, Lawrence Bowen, J.J. Timms, B.W. Piercey, H.L. Gum, Councilmen.

1926-1927

C.L. Perkins, Mayor; H.L. Gum, Recorder, and H.F. Remaley, J.C. Kinton, H.C. Isenhart, S.W. Rosenberger, L.E. Bowen, Councilmen.

1927-1928

C.L. Perkins, Mayor; C.L. Heater, Recorder, and H.C. Isenhart, S.O. Buzzerd, R.L. Sponaugle, A.C. Calfee, U.F. Duffield, Councilmen.

1928-1929

C.L. Heater, Mayor; J.L. Simmons, Recorder, and U.F. Duffield, L.E. Bowen, C.H. Bills, D.H. Baker, H.B. Mollohan, Councilmen.

1929-1930

C.L. Heater, Mayor; C.L. Perkins, Recorder, and H.B. Mollohan, C.H. Bills, U.F. Duffield, D.H. Baker, L.E. Bowen, Councilmen.

1930-1933

C.L. Heater, Mayor; C.R. Walker, Recorder, and J.W. Colliver, Gay Rusmisell, C.S. Haymond, H.S. Sergent, E.F. West, Councilmen.

1933-1935

J.J. Timms, Mayor; W.W. Hymes, Recorder, and C.S. Haymond, H.E. Bragg, S.L. Cole, P.H. Friend, O.E. Powelson, Councilmen.

1935-1937

J.A. Bridge, Mayor; C.C. Ballengee, Recorder, and D.G. Simmons, Guy L. Warner, J.E. Conley, Carl McCune, N.B. Hamric, Councilmen.

1937-1939

J.A. Bridge, Mayor; Lloyd M. Bartlett, Recorder, and D.G. Simmons, Guy L. Warner, J.E. Conley, H.B. Mullens, Carl McCune, Councilmen.

1939-1941

J.A. Bridge, Mayor; Lloyd M. Bartlett, Recorder, and D.G. Simmons, Guy L. Warner, J.E. Conley, Carl McCune, H.B. Mullens, Councilmen.

1941-1943

J.A. Bridge, Mayor; Karl Skidmore, Recorder, and Carl Duckworth, Ira Gum, Carl McCune, S.L. Cole, A.T. Helmick, Councilmen.

The Pioneer Arrives

*"Undaunted by danger, unconquered, true-hearted,
With ax-beaten march the brave pioneers came,
And the wild tangled vine of the wilderness parted
As progress swept onward with banners of flame."*

The story of the exploration, settlement and development of the trans-Appalachian region constitutes one of the most fascinating chapters of American history. The territory included West Virginia, which received a few white settlers in its eastern panhandle as early as 1726-27.

Its plain but self-reliant pioneers were the fore-runners of a mighty tide of immigration, far greater in energy than in numbers, which burst the barriers of the Alleghenies. They participated in the Anglo-French struggle for a continent-a struggle which began by strifes between frontiersmen of rival nations along the upper Ohio. At the close of that struggle, from which they emerged with a new stimulus born of victory, they advanced from ease and security of older settlements into the trans-Allegheny wilds, steadily pushed back the frontier and the Indians, and in the heart of the wilderness established their homes on many streams whose fate had recently hung in the balance. Here, they turned to the conquest and subjugation of the primeval forest which the Indians had sought to retain unconquered.

The story of the settlement of every early community is full of the heroic deeds of these plain, modest, uncelebrated men of the struggling common people-men who sought no praise and achieved no great fame, who were not conscious of their own greatness, but who were always ready for any service which was needed to maintain an advancing frontier. Out of many springs among the hills emerged at last the irresistible current of their strength. They toiled not in vain. While building homes in the wilderness they were raising the framework of a self-governing state destined to play an important part in the history of the nation.

Into the forest-clothed land came settlers seeking new homes; here each pioneer clearing broadened into a field in which all that was worthy of human endeavor found a fertile soil to grow, and on the spot erected a log cabin. Pioneers were beginning to find their way into the beautiful Elk River valley.

Among the first to come was a man by the name of Cottrill from Virginia, who settled in the year 1796 on the Elk River at the mouth of Little Otter Creek opposite Gassaway, and the Friend Family, consisting of three brothers Andrew P., Israel J., and Thomas came to Braxton County from Pendleton County in 1807, and also settled on the Elk at the mouth of Little Otter. They were of German descent. Early in the nineteenth century Andrew P. Friend built the first gristmill at a point on the Elk River, since locally known as Beall's Mill. The site of the town of Gassaway was owned at one time by Israel J. Friend and James A. Boggs. This site seemed to have been a favorite resort for the Indians as many Indian relics have been found. There was at one time a celebrated salt spring at the mouth of Little Otter Creek and the Indians doubtless resorted here for the purpose of making salt.

The Frame family-James, Thomas, and David-settled on the Elk in 1808; this family came from Pocahontas County in the year 1801 and first settled on the Big Birch River at the

mouth of Powell's Creek. David Frame built his cabin home three miles above Gassaway. An early school was taught by him at Sugar Bottom on the Elk River, a short distance below the residence of Archibald Taylor. Today the Frame family is a numerous one; many descendants of this well known family reside near the present site of the town of Gassaway; and in the year 1810 Jacob Long and Charles Rogers came from Pocahontas County. Long settled on the north side of the Elk opposite Little Buffalo Creek, and Rogers settled on Little Otter Creek (a son Ballard S. Rogers was a Confederate soldier in the War Between the States).

Among the earliest pioneers coming from the Virginia settlements were the Skidmores, one of whom, Andrew was born in 1780, settled in the year 1814, on the Elk River three miles above Gassaway on a tract of 140 acres of land purchased from John D. Sutton and paid for principally by labor in building a post and rail fence on the bottom where the town of Sutton stands.

Francis B. Stewart, an early community settler, was born near Skidmore's mill on the Elk River in 1818, was a carpenter and boat builder. He built over 300 rafts and boats, and floated much timber to Charleston at an early period. The grandfather of Francis B. Stewart was a Revolutionary soldier and served as a bodyguard of General Washington at the time of the surrender of Lord Cornwallis at Yorktown, October, 1781, and also served as a soldier in the War of 1812 (one son James M. Stewart was a Union soldier, member of Company F, 10th West Virginia Infantry); Jonathan C. Friend came to Braxton from the state of Maryland in 1822, and settled near the site of Gassaway (one son Jonathan Caldwell Friend was a minister of the gospel).

Archibald Taylor came to the Elk around 1822 from Champaign County, Ohio, where he was born October 27, 1795. Two years later he married Elizabeth Friend, daughter of Thomas, and established his home in 1834 on a 1,000-acre tract of land 3 miles from Gassaway (one son Gustavus Taylor was a member of the Constitutional Convention held at Wheeling in 1861-62, was prosecuting attorney of Braxton County in 1870, and was one of the first editors of The Mountaineer, Sutton's first newspaper).

One name which seems prominently linked with that of the early settlement of the community is that of James Anderson Boggs, born in 1815, in Lewis County and came to Braxton County in 1834. He married Susanna Cutlip of Braxton County and to this union were born eleven children. He represented Braxton County in the state legislature in 1882-83; his real estate holdings extended from Braxton County into the counties of Clay, Roane, and Webster (one son Peyton J. Boggs was a Confederate soldier, serving in Company I, 3rd Virginia Cavalry. He engaged in farming and sawmilling on Sugar Creek); Francis C. Boggs who resided near Gassaway, was elected sheriff of Braxton County in 1860 for a period of two years; he was the last sheriff of the county under Virginia jurisdiction; Isaac Rose born near Chambersburg, Pennsylvania in 1769 where he grew to manhood, move to Botetourt County, Virginia in 1794, thence to Nicholas County in 1805 and to Braxton County, 1836 (one son Ezekiel Rose settled on the Elk waters below Gassaway, and two of his sons Marshall and Fielding were ministers of the gospel, also Fielding was a Confederate soldier, and two other sons James and Mortimer were Union soldiers, members of Company F, 10th West Virginia Infantry).

In the year 1854 Henderson H. Beall came from Lewis County and settled at Beall's Mill; he owned and operated a grist and sawmill for many years. His first mill was washed away in the Elk River flood of 1861, but was rebuilt on the same foundation and a dam was built across the river to secure water power for the plant's operation. This latter mill was three stories high,

the first floor was used for a sawmill, the second floor for a gristmill in which corn and wheat were ground, and the third floor was used for a carding machine in which wool was carded into rolls and made ready to be spun by hand and woven into cloth. With three sons-John H. Beall, James Beall and Abel Beall, he built boats and barges 150 to 160 feet long and 24 feet wide and boarded them up from four to six feet high. He ran these boats to Charleston loaded with barrel staves and hoopoles, and sold the boats to Charleston coal merchants who in turn shipped coal in them down the Kanawha River. It may be interesting also to note that Henderson H. Beall married Mary Jane Farnsworth in 1848 near Troy in Gilmer County; she was a sister of Daniel T. Farnsworth who was governor of West Virginia for a short term-February 27 to March 3, 1869.

Abel M. Lough came from Pendleton County in the year 1855, and settled on the Lough bottom adjoining Gassaway; he was a blacksmith and carpenter, also served as sheriff of the county 1872-76. His brother Anderson N. Lough came to the county from Pendleton in 1866, and settled on lands adjoining his brother Abel; they owned 460 acres and 103 acres, respectively. He was a cabinet maker and boat builder; was also sergeant of Company A, 47th Virginia Battalion, Confederate army.

Later other settlers came including Ephriam B. Duckworth from Maryland in 1880, who settled in the local community; he was a Union soldier and served in Company F, 3rd West Virginia Infantry; and in the year 1882 Samuel W. Cunningham came from Upshur County and settled on the waters of Coon Creek; his father John A. Cunningham was a Union soldier and died in prison in the time of the war.

During this period other settlers of course came. The pioneers along the Elk and neighboring country often belonged to the best families of the older East and some of them brought slaves with them as well as the household goods which they carried on the backs of horses.

Braxton County as a whole has a good degree of historical perspective. There is an interesting background of legend relating to the days of pioneer privation, of a gradual subduing of the wilderness, and of peril from the Indian. The men and women who were the real pioneers are strangers in the present generation, and their ways of thinking and doing have a freshness and interest to us of this new century.

The School House of Yesterday

"The old log school house, with all its surroundings, primitive and simple though they were, yet around it clusters memories never to be forgotten. Neither wealth, fame, nor earthly gift could detract one jot or one tittle from the old moss-chinked school house. The associations of that day formed a basis and gave inspiration that lent grace to every pulpit, learning to every bar, made creditable and honorable all the professions; drove forward with energy and skill the business of the State, sent teachers out into the world, and clothed the farmer with dignity and independence."

- *John D. Sutton, History of Braxton County and Central West Virginia (1919)*

Education

That the State should concern itself with education as a function of its own is an entirely modern idea. Education was fostered in earlier times by the State, but with the idea of producing scholars, not valuable citizens. The idea of making of the youth by a system of public instruction worthy citizens, valuable to the State as well as to themselves, was one of the contributions of the Dutch to civilization.

This idea of schools supported by the State was brought over to the American colonies by the Dutch colonists, and was in the air here when the great men who were building the foundations of the republic sought for these institutions which would insure the permanency of the commonwealth. English and French statesmen also took up about this time the question of the incorporating of educational functions into the duties of the government, and we find the minds of the leaders of public opinion both here and abroad strong in the advocacy of the State's taking upon itself the office of foster parent as well as that of law-giver and judge. They advocated, therefore, a system of schools where the State might inculcate those principles of democracy, that respect upon which the very life of a republic depends.

The conditions of the early history of West Virginia were not favorable to education of the higher grades. Yet the feeling of the people with reference to education is shown in the large number of academies and schools which were later found all over the State. The pioneer character of the settlers continued longer perhaps in this State than in others of the east. This was due in large measure to the fact that the expansion of the country took the line of least resistance, and West Virginia was left to the side in the great tide of emigration that in the early decades of the nineteenth century sought homes and fortunes on the great plains of the west. The discovery of its wonderful mineral resources, and the later coming discovery of the value of its petroleum and gas, brought with it wealth and an enormous influx of population.

During this early pioneer period which lasted until the memory of men now living, the stalwart settlers kept alive the flame of learning in many a little log school house, and when these were inaccessible the children were taught at home and learned their lessons after the day's duties were done, by the light of the fire on the hearth. These mountaineers were of a sturdy and ambitious stock, and though they had sought a home in the wilderness, they brought with them the virtues and the aspirations of the best type of American immigrant.

The first Virginia school law that affected West Virginia was enacted by the General Assembly in 1796, known as the "Aldermanic School Law" sponsored by Jefferson. This law went into operation in 1797, and soon everywhere there sprang up what came to be known as the "Old Field Schools." The day of the Indian wars was past; the frontiersmen, now that the day of midnight raids and sudden war whoops was over, assembled, selected sites and erected the rough log school houses, usually on some old abandoned clearing, hence the name.

The free school system offered by the State of Virginia to West Virginia counties was by most of them rejected, and in 1860 but three counties west of the mountains had free schools. There were then fifty West Virginia counties, and in forty-seven of them, with slight modifications, the old system had continued for nearly a century, and the "old field" school house, built of logs, used alike for school purposes and Divine worship, was present in every neighborhood, and in neither case were they void of results. Rough without and within, these "old field schools" played an important part in rearing the hardy body of Americans that has formed the basis of the West Virginia commonwealth. The teachers were often highly educated men. In these rude cabins the children learned discipline, as well as to spell, and read, and write, and cipher. But the noble independent manhood they gained was due as much to contact with the fine self-sacrificing personality of the teacher as to the hardy exercise of their out-of-door lives. Many who had been educated at these schools remained in their native State and helped to replace the old ways of life by the arts of modern society. Others went away to make names of whom the State may be justly proud, the first trend of whose character was determined by the training of the rough little cabins of the "old field school."

Early Schools

The first school within the Gassaway community area was taught by David Frame at Sugar Bottom on the Elk River, a short distance below the residence of the Reverend Archibald Taylor, prior to 1830. It was a crude log cabin constructed on the architectural designs followed in the erection of school buildings at that time. The old English Reader and Dilworth's Speller-the latter finally displaced by Webster-were the text books used.

Other primitive subscriptions schools were taught in the community prior to the War Between the States, after which time the free school system was established in 1864, in accordance with the education provisions of the first constitution of the State.

Buffalo and Coon Creek Schools

The first school house on Buffalo Creek about two and one-half miles above Gassaway, was a crude affair. It was built in 1868 and was a log structure, with a six-foot fireplace. Light came in rather dimly through the window panes made of paper and greased with 'opossum grease. Later, an eight-foot by eighteen-inch single window contained panes of real glass. A "writing desk" made from a puncheon log and pinned securely to the wall by wooden pins and used to advantage by the students, each taking turns. The boys and girls sat on benches on opposite sides of the building.

Later, in 1876, a new building was constructed of hewed logs. A touch of modernism was added by the installation of a "Burnside Stove" and new double windows. This building

stood on the Lewis Harris farm near the site of the old one, and only recently has been torn down and the best logs used to build a barn.

The Coon creek school building was erected in 1879 and was removed in October, 1940, in all probability the oldest school building in Braxton County. Sixty terms of school were taught in this building; sixty years of service to the county as well as to the community-a marvelous record of achievement. The logs for this building were taken direct from the forest and hewed; a great many of them were 20 feet long, 21/2 feet wide and eight inches thick.

One could hardly have looked upon the old hewed walls without having mingled feelings of regret and sadness. The boys and girls who went to school here in 1879 and later, left their marks on the hewed walls, for instance,

*"Remember me while love is sweet,
Remember me whenever we meet,
Remember me when upon high,
I will remember you until I die."*

This verse was signed by Etta A. Dean. On another log was written "J.F.B., 1885," and immediately below was written "W.F.D., 1881." These initials probably stood for J. Francis Boggs and W. Frank Duffield. On another log was written "Jas. Dunn, August 9th, 1880." Nearly all the logs were written on but the lettering was not all clear. L.A. Friend taught the first school, and Sam R. Brady the last.

Davis Graded School

In 1905 the first school was taught in the town of Gassaway by Maude Rader and Ott Rader. It was a subscription summer school and was taught in what is now an old store building.

The Davis Graded School was built in 1905 and 1906, and donated to the people of the Town of Gassaway in the year 1906 by the Honorable Henry Gassaway Davis. Originally it contained four rooms and a library, but in later years as the need became evident, the building was increased to its present size of eleven rooms. With the inauguration of the County Unit system of financing public education, and the program of consolidation carried out by the Board of Education, a greater pupil load was placed on the school and has become much too small to meet the need. Two rooms are housed in the present High School building and the room which was formerly intended for use as an auditorium is now used as a classroom.

The Faculty for the school year 1941-1942 is as follows: Vaughn H. Duffield, Principal, Joy Bailes, Ruth Rose, Thelma Houston, Sara Rollyson, Glenna Williams, Bree Coffindaffer, Lola McCauley, Rado Shock, James Hall, Janice Hopkins, Ressie Boggs, Marjorie Marple, and Mildred Wilson.

In addition to the regular work of the conventional elementary school, the Davis Grades during this year has been a demonstration school, in which a definite activity program was worked out through all the grades. The teachers have organized groups in which the girls are taught to cook, sew, knit, quilt, crochet, embroider, plan balanced meals, learn simple rules for home decoration and other related subjects. The boys are taught elementary manual art, wood carving, how to make chair bottoms, airplane and other models, and many useful articles from castoff materials. Activities open to both boys and girls include glee club, band, a class in

games, which teaches pupils how to plan, play and direct games for all occasions, classes in paper cutting, soap carving, painting, stamp collecting and other hobbies.

The intermediate grade teachers in cooperation with other teachers of the county and state carried out an improvement program in reading through the fourth, fifth and sixth grades and as a result raised the reading standards for these grades.

The school hot lunch program contributes materially to the health of those pupils who find it necessary to eat lunch at school. This program was carried out through the cooperation of the Board of Education, the Work Projects Administration, the school, and the Parent-Teacher Association.

In the Gassaway school community the parents, teachers and pupils work and plan together for the continuous upward progress of all enterprises pertaining to the civic welfare.

Gassaway High School

The Gassaway High School was established by order of the Otter District Board of Education in July, 1912. The first principal and only teacher that year was C.R. Remage, and the classes were held in the grade school building. The following subjects were taught: English, algebra, ancient history, geography, and biology. The first year's enrollment was 12; the second year it increased to 22, and C.L. Heater was added to the one-member faculty; the third year the enrollment reached 34, and Miss Lulu Jordan was added to the teaching staff. The first class graduated 9 members in 1914.

Thus it was that Gassaway High School had its humble beginning, but a beginning that was destined to grow almost immeasurably with the years. As the enrollment increased from year to year the grade school building soon was too small to care adequately for both grade and high school students.

In the year 1920, the citizens of Otter District voted a bond issue of \$100,000 for the purpose of erecting the present modern high school building, in which more than 400 boys and girls are enrolled. The building-a three-story brick structure with large basement gymnasium that seats 960-has 13 class rooms which are well equipped with up-to-date facilities and teaching aids, office rooms and an auditorium with a seating capacity of 800.

The vocational agricultural department is now housed in a new building which is located on the campus northeast of the main high school building.

The program of studies during the present (1941-42) school term is well organized and provides for cultural and practical training for all the students. The schedule offers the following subjects: general science, chemistry, physics, arithmetic, algebra, geometry, English, French, civics, geography, American history, world history, physical education, general shop work, home economics, mechanical drawing, sociology, journalism, manual arts, vocational agricultural, bookkeeping, business arithmetic, typing, shorthand, music and band.

Well equipped laboratories, library, class rooms, gymnasium, and athletic field provide the students attending Gassaway High School with a balanced program of training. In addition to the regular cultural and vocational work, the school conducts a wide variety of extra-curricular activities, such as physical education, high school band, literary team, football, basketball, intra-mural sports, also many clubs and organizations. Within the past twenty-five years the library has grown from a small beginning of 50 volumes until it is today the largest school library in Braxton County-3500 volumes, including all work useful to students, and the library

books are available to all teachers in the county.

The faculty of the school is composed of fourteen college trained teachers. C.R. Remage, Principal, a graduate of Fairmont State Teachers College and West Virginia University, is an instructor in social science and manual arts; Henry Bailey, Glenville State Teachers College and West Virginia University, science, chemistry and algebra; Mrs. Mildred Burns, West Virginia University, home economics and physical education; Robert Burns, West Virginia University, vocational agriculture; Roy B. Cartright, Marshall College and West Virginia University, English and journalism; Clifford Clem, Glenville State Teachers College and West Virginia University, English and civics; Smith Cottrill, Salem College and graduate work at Ohio University, typing, shorthand and bookkeeping; Miss Florence Henretty, Marshall College and graduate work Akron University and West Virginia University, History; Clay Martin, Davis-Elkins College and graduate work West Virginia University, civics and physical education; Miss Margaret R. McMillion, Salem College, algebra, geometry and French; H.G. Robinson, West Virginia University, English; Miss Mary Engel Vankirk, Marshall College, arithmetic and library; Miss Mildred Wilson, Dennison University, English, music and band.

The permanent records of Gassaway High School reveal the names of nearly 1000 graduates. An active alumni association has an important part in the life of the school and has contributed much to the growth and progress that has been made.

Standards maintained by the school are high. With 400 students, the Gassaway High School in its 30th session is representative of the best in modern education. Adopting always the most progressive methods, the school officials strive constantly to improve all phases of the educational program.

While denominationalism is not taught in any degree, yet the moral and spiritual needs of the large body of students are carefully looked after. Proper safe guards are thrown about the students, and ministers visit the school and deliver addresses touching on clean and wholesome living. These and other contacts have a beneficial effect upon the young and impressionable minds of the students.

Gassaway High School has been accredited by the State Department of Education as a first class four-year High School, and is a member of the North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools.

The following is a list of the principals of the school from the beginning (1912) to 1942:

C.R. Remage, 1912-15; C.M. Ashburn, 1915-18; L.O. Taylor, 1918-21; Frank Cutright, 1921-22; K.A. Moyers, 1922-23; P.W. McTheny, 1923-25; C.L. Heater, Superintendent and C.R. Remage, Principal, 1925-28; J.F. Bartlett, 1928-30, and C.R. Remage, 1930-42.

Religion

Until the passage of the act of religious freedom in 1785, worship by any denomination except the Church of England, was not permitted in Virginia unless by special permission, and before the Revolution any religious denomination except the Episcopalian, that wished to establish a place of worship within Virginia, was required to apply for a license from the governor, who, if he granted the petition, designated meeting places for the congregations. The petitioners were required to declare loyalty to the King and to promise dutiful submission to the colonial government. While many different denominations established themselves under this law in eastern Virginia, none were established according to law in what is now West Virginia. The necessity of having Indian fighters to defend the western frontier against incursions of the savage, prevented the colonial officials from making too close inquiry into the religious beliefs of the backwoodsmen who dwelt in the mountains of the west. With the exception of the few churches established by the state church, the close of the Revolution found few church societies in the mountains of western Virginia, few church buildings, and a number of inhabitants who were in dire need of religious instruction.

Confronted with the tremendous task of carving for themselves a home on a new and little-known wilderness frontier, Braxton's first settlers, though God fearing people, had neither the time nor the means for building churches and extending religion to the remoter regions. They came one, two and three at a time representing not one but several denominations, not in large religious groups as did the settlers of the early American colonies. The variety of faiths added to the natural difficulties encountered in establishing religious societies, and it was not until 16 years after the Carpenter brothers made the county's first permanent settlement on the Elk River eight miles above the town of Sutton, that an ordained minister found his way into Braxton County.

The many hardships the first preacher had to endure in those early years can be inferred from the condition of the country at that time. There were no roads, merely blazed trails and paths which he followed through the unbroken forest on horseback, or, as was often the case, on foot. He forded the deep, bridgeless streams, at times amid floating ice, and when benighted far from the hospitable room of a settler's cabin, spent the night under the sheltering branches of the forest. Often he would have to turn back when snow drifted so high that it was impossible for either himself or his horse to get through to a place of meeting. At times flooded streams, another source of constant danger, barred his way.

The tide of home-seekers was ever increasing and the scattered settlements which heretofore had boasted no more than a family or two, were becoming villages, a fact especially true with regard to the Little Kanawha and the Elk River valleys-the gateway for settlers arriving both from the north and from the east.

First Churches

The Frame Chapel Methodist Episcopal Church now located on Buffalo Creek, was founded in 1825 by David Frame and his wife, Sarah Frame. Among the more prominent early preachers serving this church were Reverend C.W. Upton, Reverend George H. Williams, and Reverend Wiley. The membership of this church at an early date was 50, but the present membership is much less. A Sunday school was organized soon after the founding of the

church, and has been a thriving organization to this day. The present Frame Chapel was built fifty years ago, and dedicated by the Reverend B.B. Evans. It is one of the oldest church organizations in Braxton County.

A Methodist Protestant organization at 'Coon Creek school house was first instituted in 1866, at which time there were 12 members. Among the names of early members are the Friends, Deans, Hannas, Roses, Duckworths, Heffners and others.

Post-war expansion was not confined to the Methodist societies alone. In 1867 the Baptists organized the Middle Run Society with the following charter members: Reverend and Mrs. Frame, A.B. Keener, Peter Reip and wife, Susan Mollohan, Phobia Wilson, Mary Duffield, and Elizabeth Ann James. In later years the Sugar Creek Baptist Church was organized, and is an active church today.

The 'Coon Creek Church was dedicated in April, 1894. The members of all church denominations living in the 'Coon Creek community worship in this church. Therefore, it is known as the All Denominations Church. The church site was deeded by S.W. Cunningham, and the trustees of the church property are: P.B. Carr, George Dean, L.H. James, and James Rose.

Jerusha United Brethren Church located on Sugar Creek was built in 1906, and had an initial membership of 12. The Reverend J.O. Potts was the pastor in charge at the time of the dedication of the church. Other preachers who have served this church include L.R. Collins, W.H. Scott, Levi Stead, B.H. Cross, O.B. Lanham, Roy Davis, E.A. Crites, L.L. Westfall, S.A. Jesse, and the present pastor M.O. Cross; and the Little Otter U.B. Church was built in 1907. Reverend J.O. Potts was the pastor in charge. The number of members at the beginning of the class was 5, but the membership has grown to 120, and the Reverend M.O. Cross is the present pastor. Each of these churches has an active Sunday school and auxiliary organizations.

Gassaway Churches

The town of Gassaway when founded in 1905 had one church within its corporate limits, the Little Otter Baptist Church, which had been built in 1895-a frame structure-at the mouth of Little Otter Creek. This church was used until 1913 when the present Baptist church was built. The Little Otter church is still standing but has been sold and converted into a residence property. A.N. Lough and Mary Jane Farnsworth Beall, widow of Henderson H. Beall, played an important part in the organization and maintenance of this church.

The new Baptist church was dedicated in October, 1913. It is located on Elk Street, and was erected at a cost of \$8,000, with additional Sunday school rooms built at a cost of \$3,000. The church was constructed of buff colored pressed brick and is elegantly furnished throughout. The corner stone of the building was laid May 22, 1913 by the Masonic Lodge, the Reverend G.E. Bartlett delivering the address.

A wide-awake and well attended Sunday School, and active B.Y.P.U. and affiliated organizations mark this church as an outstanding Christian institution in the town and community.

Reverend A.A. McQueen was the first pastor, and others who served the church were N.B. Hamric, L.T. Harvey, J.F. Frame, H.W. Martin, Harry E. Poe, and present pastor Kelly Smith.

Presbyterian Church

The first meeting of the Presbyterians of Gassaway was held at the home of Mrs. Ida B. Johnston late in 1905 for the purpose of organizing a church. The Reverend R.E. Steel, pastor of Sutton Presbyterian Church presided at the meeting, and testimonials of membership were presented from fifteen persons, most of whom were present. The letters all being in proper form, those present entered into the required covenant and proceeded to elect Charles M. Ritchie, clerk and elder, and James A. Paterson and W. Kent Harper deacons.

The next session of the church was held January 7, 1906 at the home of Mrs. Ida B. Johnston. On April 4, 1906 the members met at the office of the Bank of Gassaway, at which various reports were filled out and forwarded to the proper officers of the Presbytery. Prior to the building of a church family worship was held in the homes of the members. Assisted by the ladies of the Sutton Presbyterian Church, the members of the Gassaway organization formed a Ladies Aid Society, April 29, 1906. The meeting was at the home of Mrs. James A. Paterson, and officers elected were Mrs. James A. Paterson, president; Mrs. C.M. Ritchie, vice-president; Mrs. H.J. Snyder, secretary, and Mrs. S. Dumond, treasurer.

In 1910 and 1911, Senator Henry G. Davis built an elegant Presbyterian church at Gassaway at a cost exceeding \$20,000. The church was erected as a memorial to his wife and is called the Davis Memorial Presbyterian Church. It was built of native stone.

The first meeting held in the Davis Memorial Church was July 2, 1911, for the purpose of electing a presiding elder and deacon, also trustees for the church property. A. Hostetler was elected elder and B.L. Hulm was elected deacon. B.S. Hulm, E.S. Woodley, Robert Waddell, and Dr. F.K. Vass were elected trustees.

June 15, 1913 the Reverend J.W. Rowe was chosen pastor of the church and served for a period of three years. Other pastors serving the church have been the Reverends P. Vanderkam, George H. Rector, H.A. Poole, C.R. Garrison, and F. Carl Davis, the present pastor.

St. Thomas Catholic Church

The St. Thomas Catholic Church of Gassaway was a gift to the town by the Honorable Richard C. Kerns, a former United States Senator from the State of Missouri, who had been associated with Henry Gassaway Davis in the building of the Coal & Coke Railroad from Charleston to Elkins. The church was constructed in 1906 at a cost of \$30,000 and is one of the most beautiful buildings in the country. It has double walls, an outer wall of stone and an inner wall of brick, and is covered with tile and copper mountings. The church was presented to the town completely finished and furnished.

The only Roman Catholic organization in the county, St. Thomas has a large membership, a number of whom are Sutton residents. The pastor of the church is the Rt. Rev. F.J. Merren of Richwood.

Methodist Episcopal Church, South

Until 1907 the Davis Grade school building was used as a place of public worship by both Catholics and Protestants, but in that year and the year 1908 two Methodist churches were erected. As early as November, 1904 a lot was purchased by the M.E. Church, South from The Gassaway Development Company. Reverend G. W. McClung was the pastor of the new organization, and the charter members were E.V. Frame and wife, R.E.L. Lloyd and wife, W.M. Funk and wife, C.G. Perkins and wife, Delia E. Kalbaugh, Eulan James, Blanche James, Emma James, Emma Daugherty, Martha Ables, Rebecca F. Jones, Everett Levisay, Erchie Pierson and wife, Mamie Layman, Ada Pierson, Ruby Mae Rollyson, Mary Gerwig, Holly Leta, Floyd W. Dick, Venia Stewart, Mrs. M.L. Lloyd, Elizabeth Lloyd, Blanche Ables, Helen Kalbaugh, Mrs. H.C. Isenhart, Mrs. Nanie Funk, Mrs. C.D. Moist, M.C. Watkins, and F.A. Watkins.

The contract for the building of the church was awarded in 1907 to the Funk Brothers, and in August, 1908 the church was dedicated at an approximate cost of \$6,000. Reverend H.A. Spencer was the pastor.

This church had a very alert Woman's Missionary Society, and the Sunday School was active under the various superintendents and teachers. The church membership was 154.

The early preachers were G.W. McClung, H.A. Spencer, O.T. Headley, J.A. Siceloff, C.B. Morris, O.E. Thorne, H.H. Pownall, A.P. Keyser, R.J. Yoak, W.L. Reid, C.D. Lear, and J.N. Herold.

Methodist Episcopal Church

This church was first organized in the graded school building, Gassaway in the autumn of 1907. Having no pastor, the church requested the District Superintendent to send them one, and the Reverend George H. Williams, a retired preacher living at Sutton, was sent as supply pastor.

The lot for the church was purchased and the contract let for the building of the church in the year 1908. A. Middlemass was the architect, and W.M. Funk and John L. McCoy were the contractors. The church at a cost of \$5,000 was dedicated in the year 1909 by Bishop Moore.

O.H. Duncan and wife, C.W. Flesher and wife, J.C. Staley, and Mrs. Laura Boggs were among the charter members. This church had an active progressive Sunday School, and an efficient Ladies Aid Society and other auxiliary organizations. The church membership in 1940 was 126.

Among the early preachers who served this church were George H. Williams, James E. Scott, Richard Aspinnall, Homer J. Matheny, Percy Matheny and C.S. Thornburg.

Under the plan of unification of the Methodist churches, the Methodist Episcopal Church and the Methodist Episcopal Church, South of Gassaway were united in September, 1940, and the first pastor of the united church-The Methodist Church-was Reverend J.D. Bell.

The united church has a Sunday School enrollment of 200; H.J. Tunstall is the superintendent. The Woman's Society of Christian Service has a membership of 55; the present church membership is 294. Reverend H.L. Phillips is the pastor.

Engel Chapel

The Engel Chapel United Brethren Church (Stewart Addition church) was built in 1920. The number of members at the beginning was 5. The first class was organized in a school house in 1919, the Reverend B.H. Cross was the first pastor. The Reverend M.O. Cross is the present pastor.

Appendix

Roster of Town Officials and Business Firms

Town Officials 1941-1943

Mayor.....J.A. Bridge
Recorder.....Karl Skidmore

Members of Council

Carl McCune
A.T. Helmick
Carl Duckworth
S.L. Cole
Ira Gum

Chief of Police.....L. B. Duffield
Fire Chief.....E.C. Williams

Business Firms

A

Alpine Theatre, moving pictures
A.P. Armstrong, radio and refrigerator repairs
Atlantic & Pacific Tea Co., groceries, flour and feed

B

Cecil Baker, barber
John Baker, Texaco Oil distributor
Baltimore & Ohio Rail Road Co.,
I.F. Kinter, master mechanic; J. F. Stevens, train master, and J.A. Bridge, agent.
Bank of Gassaway, general banking
W.P. Bartlett & Son, furniture dealers and funeral directors
Mrs. Ivan Beall, permanent waving
R.C. Bickle, beautician and barber
Charlie Boggs, electrician
Forrest Boggs, life insurance
Walter Brady, filling station and garage
Olive Lynn Bragg, novelty merchandise
Tom Browning, tailoring and dry cleaning
G.C. Byrne, hardware

C

Robert Carr, pool and billiards
B.E. Chenoweth, Standard Oil distributor
City Meat Market, meats and groceries
Conley Service Station, filling station
Cross Jewelry Company, jewelers

D

Bruce Duffield, taxi service
Ophelia Duffield, restaurant
O.H. Duncan, dairy products

F

Fairmont Cream Station
W.F. & F.E. Foster, life insurance
J.T. Frazee, groceries and merchandise

P.H. Friend, filling station and restaurant

G

Gassaway Hardware & Furniture Company, hardware and furniture

Gassaway Maytag Company, washing machines and refrigerators

Gassaway Midland Company, clothing

Gassaway Service Center, auto-sales and filling station

Gulf Service Station, auto-service and filling station

H

Fred B. Heater, Gulf Oil Distributor

Edward Hoffman, groceries

Hope Natural Gas, local office

I

H.C. Isenhart, plumbing

J

Wilbert Johnson, photography

K

Kroger Grocery & Baking Company, groceries, flour and feed

L

Ted Lei, farm machinery and service station

T.P. Lewis, plumbing

Liberty Garage, auto-sales and filling station

Lincoln Hotel, general hotel service

M

Fay Mace, feeds

Main Street Service Station, auto-sales and filling station

Everett Mick, General merchandise

C.L. Moore, transfer

N

Jane Nicholas, restaurant
Ada B. Nuzum, restaurant

P

Ralph Pletcher, auto-sales and filling station
Point Service Station, auto-repair and filling station
B.W. Powers, bakery

R

Mrs. James R. Riffle, tourist home

S

Frank Sefale, shoe repairing
J.L. Simmons, general insurance & real estate
Frank Squires, barber
Charlie Swick, shoe repairing

T

H.J. Tunstall, ladies furnishings

V

Valley Hotel, general hotel service

W

Carl Walker, druggist
Guy L. Warner, drilling contractor
W.Va. Water Service Company
West's Cash Store, Groceries
Williams Bros. Garage, auto-repair and filling station
Williams Candy Company, wholesale candies
Williams Quality Store, drugs and confections

Chapel Community **by S.G. Engel**

The Chapel community lies three miles northwest of Gassaway in Otter District, and includes all the people who live on the waters of Steer Creek and on Crooked Fork from their headwaters to the Braxton-Gilmer County line.

In the year 1841 Daniel Engel, John Bender, Jacob Runach, Godfrey Moyers, George F. and Mathias Gerwig, J.H. Wyatt, Mathew Hines, M. Eckerman and son, William M. Schiefer, and Conrad Leopard and their respective families came from the city of Baltimore, settled on Steer Creek and founded the "German Settlement." They were of the United Brethren faith, and soon after their arrival built a church. Then a little later came Israel Friend and family, who took up a claim of 1000 acres of land on Steer Creek, Nicholas Run and Grasslick Run; then Wisner and family, and in 1844 a family by the name of Saddler. In 1846 a family by the name of Frame settled in the Chapel community on Crooked Fork, and in 1863 Samuel H. Rider moved from Harrison County to Blowntimber Fork of Crooked Fork.

Otterbein Church (United Brethren) was organized in 1841 by the German colony from Baltimore. For nine years after the organization, services were held at the private residences of George F. Gerwig, Daniel Engel, John Bender, Mathias Gerwig, Michael Smith, Christian Long, Jacob Cramer, John Wyatt, Jacob Rumach, John Miller, Conrad Leopard and others. But in 1850 all joined together and erected a neat hewed log church-28 x 36-with a seating capacity of 200. Reverend Daniel Engel was the pastor at the time of organization, and in that capacity continued for twelve years.

The first church was located one mile below the German post office, where Thomas Engel now lives, and was named in honor of the founder of the United Brethren church.

The next church was built in 1866 and was located near the Chapel post office. It was a Methodist church and was named "Richmond Chapel" in honor of Elder Richmond, an eminent churchman. It was the first frame building in the community, the lumber being whipsawed. This church was abandoned in 1883 and another built in the place of it on a flat just above the residence of the late W.K. Bender. It caught fire and burned down in 1912, but was rebuilt in 1913.

In the year 1893 a second United Brethren church was built in the community, located in the low gap between Nicholas Run and Grasslick Run, known as the Fairview church.

The second Methodist church was built in 1904 on Crooked Fork at the mouth of Blowntimber Fork.

The German schoolhouse was built in 1872, and the Rider schoolhouse in 1875.

The community now has four churches and five schools, a Community Hall, an outstanding 4-H Club which has donated much toward the erection of the Braxton County building at Jackson's Mill, built its own cottage at Camp Holly-Gray, established the first model room school in the county-Hope School, is an oil and gas production center, and a hard top road furnishes convenient transportation facilities.