

## **KDS COMMENTARY - THE SHOWALTERS & DODDS:**

### **Background**

Lillian Skinner, my grandmother, is the daughter of **Joseph B. Showalter** of Huntingdon County, PA and **Bertha Jane Dodd** of Fairmont, Marion County, WV. Huntingdon and Fairmont, though separated by 180 miles, are in the same coal-rich mountains of the Appalachians.

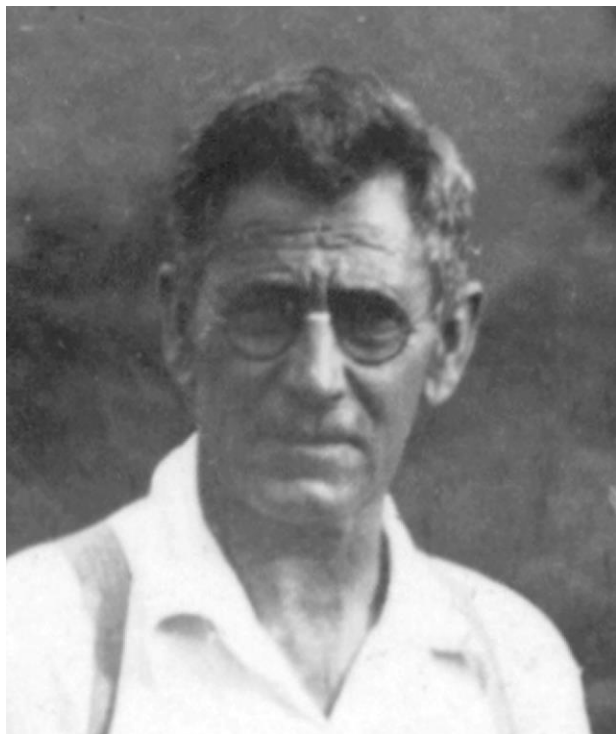
Lillian wrote the Showalter and Dodd family histories in 1981 with input from her sister Ethel. Their written history is included in the [Showalter Family Appendix](#). Lillian's writing reveals her strong personality, identifying whom she liked and disliked.

This is the story of a family "on the move", always searching for work and frequently living apart from one another. Talk about a tough life – Joseph Showalter was nearly killed by lightning while working when young, was severely injured while working for a railroad, suffered typhoid fever while with the Army, was released by the Army after a horse kick broke his nose. Joseph was routinely injured by falling rock while later working in quarries. Joseph and wife Bertha had five children - only two, including my grandmother Lillian, survived childhood.



The Dodds – Clarksburg (Coal Twp.) and later Fairmont, WV  
The Showalters – Huntingdon County, PA

Joseph Showalter was a stone setter at **Canton** in the late 1800's.



Joseph Showalter (1870 - 1939)  
circa 1933  
Huntingdon County, PA

Joseph had black hair and blue eyes.



Bertha Showalter (1879 -1961)  
age 41, circa 1921  
Highland Ave., Downingtown, PA

Bertha inherited the large nose of her father  
William – 'dog' noses per Bertha's daughter  
Lillian.

*Bertha Dodd Showalter*

*age 41*

Lillian's writing



Bertha Showalter (1879 -1961)  
age 41, circa 1921  
Highland Ave., Downingtown, PA

Lillian's parents, like Lillian, always had dogs and cats

## Joseph Showalter - Father of Lillian

Joseph Showalter was born Joseph Beightal Showalter on July 15, 1870 in Grafton (today called Hesston), Penn Township, Huntingdon County, PA. Penn Township is located just outside the city of Huntingdon, Pennsylvania. Joseph was the 9th of 14 children. He was part of a large German-protestant Showalter clan that had been living in Huntingdon County going back to the early 1800's.

Information provided by daughter Lillian Skinner shows that Joseph was born Joseph Blair Showalter on July 12, 1872. This information appears to be incorrect. In addition, records created near the end of his life, probably with the help of his daughter Ethel, show a birth year of 1871 – probably also incorrect.

Joseph's father was a resident of Penn Township, a couple of miles south of the city of Huntingdon, per the 1860 and 1870 census. At the time, a German family named Brumbaugh owned much of the land surrounding the Showalter home. Brumbaugh was also the name given to the local stop of the Huntingdon and Broad Top Railroad. Per the 1870 census, Joseph's oldest brother Madison was living with one neighbor of the Brumbaugh family and second oldest brother Samuel was living with another. Joseph's middle name of Beightal seems to have been taken from the family of Joseph Beightal, another neighbor of the Showalters in Penn Township.

Ten years later, per the 1880 census, Joseph's family had moved about 12 miles east of Penn Twp. to the town of Shirley. Shirley is located four miles south of the city of Mt. Union and was situated along the tracks of the narrow-gauge East Broad Top Railroad. The 1880 census is the first census that includes Joseph, who was now nearly ten years of age. Note that the 1880 census for the Showalter family is incorrectly indexed as 'Thonalter' at Ancestry.Com, and is missing from FamilySearch.Com.

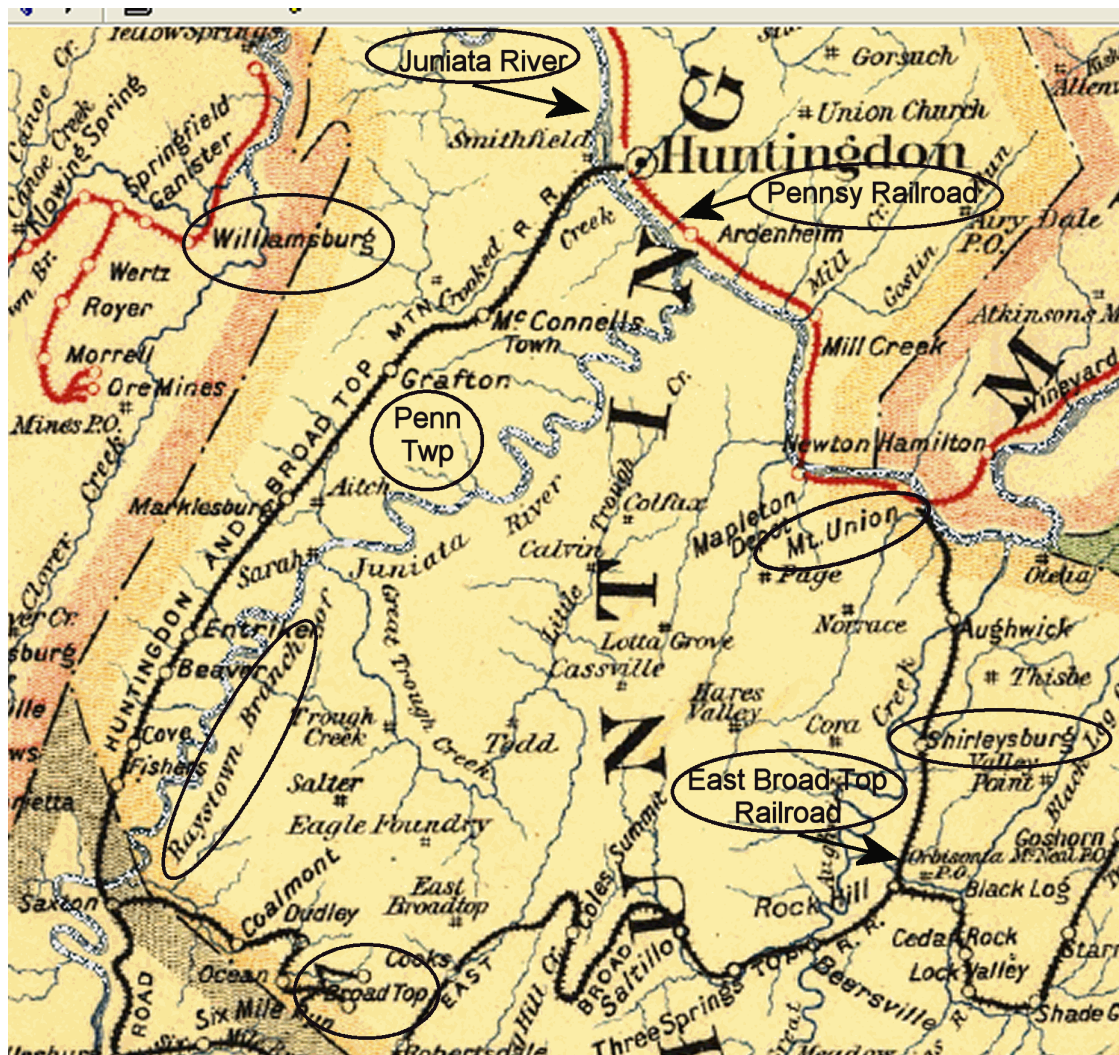
Joseph's brothers and sisters would live their lives in Huntingdon County, as well as Blair County to the west. Joseph ended up living with many of his siblings during his life, often times without his wife. Joseph lived with his brother George (married Sallie McConaughy) who lived at Mt. Union, his sister Hetty (married John Kyle), who lived in Juniata Township outside the town of Huntingdon, his sister Hannah (married David Lower) who lived at Williamsburg (Blair County) and his sister Mary (married Mr. Kipe) who lived in Catherine Township, part of the town of Williamsburg (Blair County).



## Geography

Huntingdon County sits in central PA, south of Penn State University. The Juniata River flows eastward across Huntingdon County, passing through the towns of Huntingdon and Mt. Union. To the east of Huntingdon County, the Juniata River becomes a major tributary of the Susquehanna River, joining that river at Pennsylvania's capital city of Harrisburg. Highways and railroads follow the Juniata as it slices through one mountain range after another of the Appalachians in its eastward journey towards Harrisburg.

A major tributary of the Juniata River is called the 'Raystown branch of the Juniata River'. This winding river runs northward through Huntingdon County and flows into the Juniata near the city of Huntingdon.



1895 Rail Map [www.reisenett.no]

Joseph Showalter's parents lived in Huntingdon County in western Pa. The Showalters lived at **Penn Twp.** per the 1860 & 1870 census, where Joseph was born in 1870, and at **Shirley**, south of **Mt. Union**, per the 1880 census.

## **Railroads Of Huntingdon County**

The mainline tracks of the Pennsylvania Railroad (PRR) run through Huntingdon County, passing through the towns of Mt. Union and Huntingdon, on the railroad's path between Philadelphia and Pittsburgh. The tracks are situated along the banks of the Juniata River, following the path of the canals that had preceded the railroad in the early 1800's.

There is a large coal area called the Broad Top Mountain that sits in southern Huntingdon County. Two local railroads were built to haul coal and iron ore out of that region.

The Huntingdon and Broad Top Mountain Railroad serviced the west side of the Broad Top Mountain and carried the ore north to the town of Huntingdon, where the railroad joined the Pennsylvania Railroad.

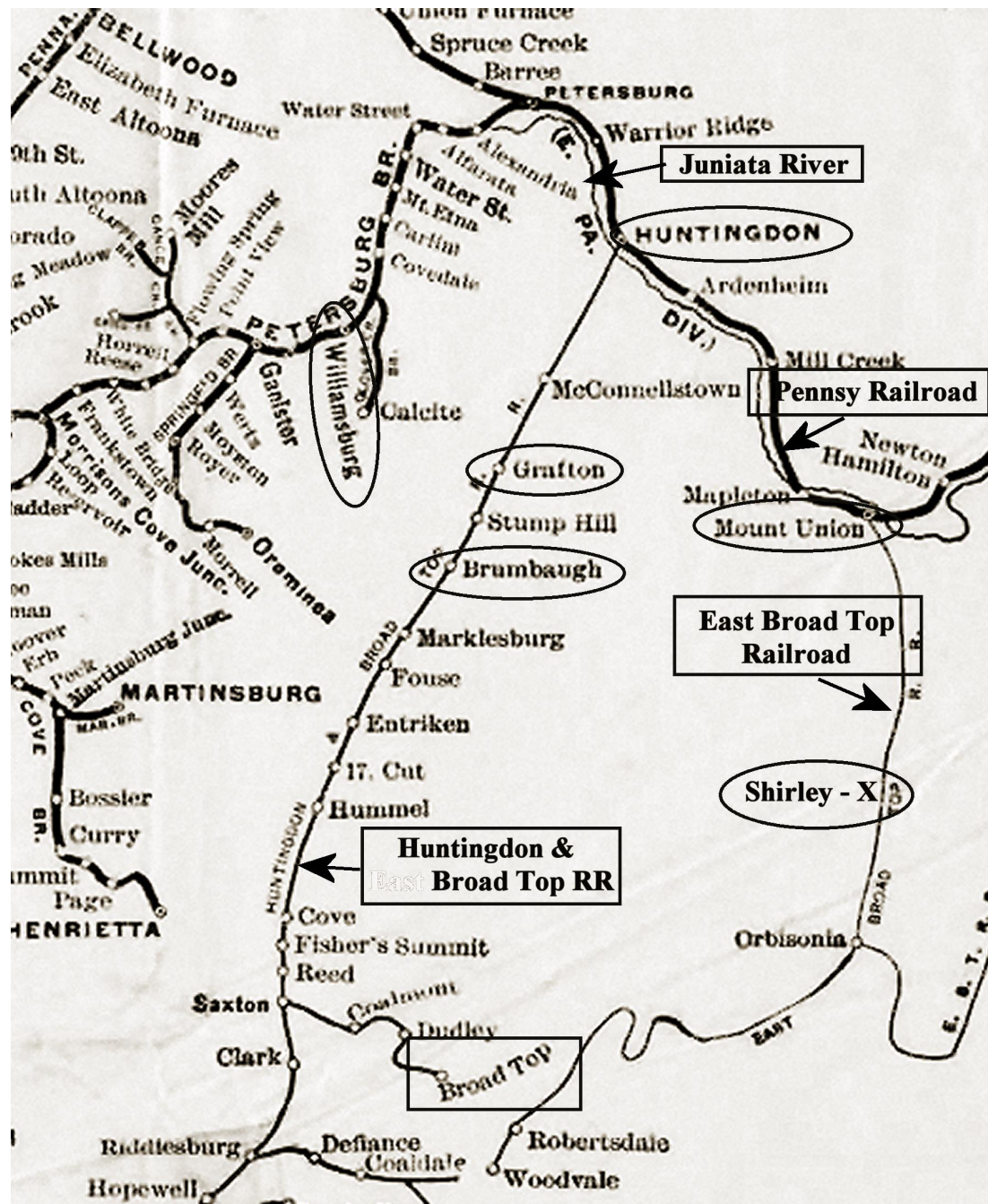
Another local railroad, called the East Broad Top, hauled coal from the east side of the Broad Top Mountain. The East Broad Top was a narrow-gauge (3-foot wide track) railroad that connected with the Pennsylvania Railroad at Mt. Union, 12 miles east of Huntingdon. The Broad Top railroad is well known to train enthusiasts today - it is the last of the narrow gauge railroads in existence east of the Rockies and is a popular tourist destination.

The East Broad Top included an 'interchange yard' at Mt. Union, where goods could be transferred between the narrow-gauge cars of the Broad Top and the standard gauge cars of the Pennsylvania Railroad for shipment around the country. The yard featured dual-gauge tracks that could handle both the narrow- and standard-gauge cars.

## **Shirley, PA**

The Showalters were living at the town of Shirley by the time Joseph was age 10 in 1880. Shirley was situated along the tracks of the East Broad Top railroad and was four miles south of the railroad yards of Mt. Union, where coal from the East Broad Top was transferred to the Pennsy Railroad.





1911 Rail Map, [Mapmaker.Rutgers.Edu]

The Huntingdon and Broad Top Railroad joins the Pennsylvania Railroad at **Huntingdon**. The East Broad Top Railroad joins the Pennsy at **Mt. Union**. The railroads carry coal from the Broad Top Mountain to the south (bottom).

In the late 1800's, the Showalters lived near **Brumbaugh** and later **Shirley**.

## **Railroad Accident**

As a young man, Joseph worked for a time as a fireman shoveling coal on a shifting engine in some unknown railroad yards. In a story that has often been retold by Lillian, there was an accident in which the engine ran into a bumper at the end of the tracks and overturned. The engineer was killed and Joseph suffered a crushed foot and other broken bones. His foot remained short and crooked for the remainder of his life. Per daughter Lillian and my father, Joseph walked OK, though with a limp.

It is not clear whether this accident occurred in Joseph's youth in Pennsylvania, or later when he spent a year or two in Ohio or even later during in his earliest married years in Watson, West Virginia. Since Joseph was able to serve in the US Army Cavalry in the years 1898-1899, it is likely this accident occurred at a later time when he was living in West Virginia.

## **Ball of Lightning**

Another story that was often been told to me by Lillian involved Joseph and a ball of lightning. Per the recollections of the story by my father, Joseph and others were either working in a mine or sought shelter in a mine during a storm. A lightning bolt hit a nearby tree and a charge of ball lightning entered the mine. One or more persons died, some had to be revived. I do not believe Joseph was injured in the event.

Like many of the family stories recounted here, the stories were told often enough to confuse the facts, but not enough times that any of us can really be sure of the details. The story of the ball lightning was not included in the Showalter history written by Lillian and Ethel in 1981. Like the story of the railroad accident that permanently injured Joseph's foot, the timing of the ball lightning story is not known. This event could have when occurred when Joseph was a teenager growing up in Pennsylvania, or a few years later when he was in his twenties and married in West Virginia, just prior to him working in the West Virginia coal mines. At any rate, this would have been prior to Lillian (born 1903) having any direct memories of the event.

## **Stone Cutter at Canton, Ohio**

The Huntingdon area of Pennsylvania where Joseph grew up offered little in the way of work. Joseph Showalter left home and family and relocated to Canton, Stark County, Ohio, northwest of Pittsburgh, Pa, some time prior to 1898. He apparently had been offered a job there as a stone setter. I recall his daughter Lillian telling me that Joseph had done stone walls for a time.

## Spanish-American War, 1898 - 1899

On June 1, 1898, while living at Canton, Ohio where he had been a stone setter, Joseph enlisted in the Army. This was during the Spanish American War and he was probably recruited as a result of the war effort.. Joseph's enlistment record (per [www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com)) shows:

Showalter, Joseph B.; enlisted Canton, Ohio [June 1, 1898];  
 Born Huntingdon, Pa; Age 27 yrs., 10 months [born July 15, 1870];  
 occupation – stone cutter.  
 Eye color (unreadable); black hair; dark complexion; 5'7";  
 Discharged Feb 22, 1899 Camp MacKenzie, Ga;  
 Remarks (unreadable)

His record of military service, per daughter Lillian, shows:

Age 27, height 5'7", black hair, blue eyes. Enlisted for 3 years June 1st, 1898, 3rd Regiment of Cavalry Troop D. Contracted typhoid fever - sent to Montauk Point, Long Island and furloughed home September 8, 1898. Camp MacKenzie, Augusta, Ga., January, 1899 with the 3rd Cavalry, Troop D - George Chase, Captain. Was kicked in the face by a horse that broke his nose, was honorably discharged from Camp MacKenzie February 22, 1899.

Joseph served in the cavalry, so his deformed foot resulting from an earlier? train accident may not have been a problem. Lillian believes Joseph had been sent to Cuba but that his ship never landed. At any rate, his war service provided him with a much-needed pension later in life.

## Return To Canton, Ohio

The federal census of 1900 shows that Joseph returned to Canton, Ohio following his military service. He was boarding there with a German family. His occupation was again that of 'stone-setter', same as indicated in his previous 1898 military enlistment.

Joseph was nearly 30 years of age and single, but must have been married soon thereafter – his first child was born in 1901. His future wife was Bertha Jane Dodd of Fairmont, West Virginia.



Showalter, Joseph B. Canton, Ohio

Huntington, Pa 27<sup>th</sup> Stone Cutter

2. Black Hair 5'7"

3 Cuts A

Disch. Feb. 22/99. Camp MacKenzie, Ga.

Good age. Very good. P-2.

Joseph Showalter Enlistment Record, 1898 [ancestry.com]

Showalter, Joseph B. enlisted Canton, Ohio  
born Huntington, Pa, age 27 years 10 months, occupation Stone Cutter  
blue eyes, black hair, dark complexion, 5'7"  
discharged Feb 22, 1899, Camp MacKenzie Georgia

Mr. Joseph Blair Showalter  
 age 27 Height 5-7  
 Blue eyes Black Hair  
 Enlisted June 1st 1898  
 for 3 years  
 Typhoid Fever sent to  
 Montauk Point  
 furled home Sept 8, 1898  
 Jan 1899 Augusta Ga  
 with 3rd Cavalry Troop D.  
 Geo Chase Captain  
 J.B. was kicked in  
 face by horse breaking  
 his nose  
 Honorably  
 Discharged Feb 22 1899  
 from Camp MacKenzie  
 (Law - Par. 2 H.S.  
 #40 enacted May  
 10th 1898)  
 Father of  
 Lillian Showalter Skinner

Lillian's Notes - Joseph's Military Service Record

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## Spanish–American War

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The **3rd Cavalry Regiment**, formerly **3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment** ("Brave Rifles"<sup>[2]</sup>) is a regiment of the [United States Army](#) currently stationed at [Fort Hood, Texas](#). ....

In April 1898, the regiment was assembled at [Camp George H. Thomas](#) in Chickamauga National Park and assigned to a brigade in a provisional cavalry division when the [Spanish–American War](#) erupted.<sup>[12]</sup>

On 13 May 1898, the Regiment arrived in [Tampa, Florida](#). On 8 June, the regiment, minus four troops, embarked, dismounted, on the transport *Rio Grande* for [Cuba](#). Three provisional squadrons were formed; 2nd Squadron was commanded by MAJ [Henry W. Wessels Jr.](#) and consisted of Troops C, E, F, and G. 3rd Squadron, under CPT Charles Morton, consisted of Troops B, H, I, and K. [The four troops that were left in camp \(Troops A, D, L, and M\) in Tampa took care of the animals and regimental property and instructed recruits.](#) The Regiment landed at [Daiquirí](#), Cuba but were forced to leave behind most of their horses.<sup>[12]</sup>

One of the Army's objectives was to seize the [Spanish](#) positions on the high ground around the landward side of the city of [Santiago de Cuba](#), a Cuban seaport. This would force the [Spanish warships](#) in the harbor to sail out to face the [U.S. Navy](#). The cavalry division, of which the Regiment was a part, was one of three divisions assigned the mission of assaulting these hills, known as the [San Juan Heights](#). The 3rd Cavalry was one of five regular U.S. cavalry regiments engaged there.<sup>[12]</sup>

Three troops of 3rd Squadron crossed over [Kettle Hill](#) and on to the Spanish positions around what was known as the [San Juan Hill](#). Despite a lack of water, the men charged the fortified Spanish positions on foot. Despite being forced to advance uphill and across a river, the troopers' movements were partially screened by the dense foliage. SGT Andrews, carrying the regimental standard, fell from a bullet wound, but it was quickly recovered and the advance resumed.<sup>[13]</sup> Troop B advanced to the enemy's line at the [San Juan Blockhouse](#) (different from the San Juan House) where the Regiment's U.S. Flag, carried by Sergeant Bartholomew Mulhern of Troop E, was the first to be raised at the point of victory. 2nd Squadron, held in reserve on Kettle Hill, joined the 3rd Squadron on [San Juan Hill](#) that evening. On 23 July, 1LT [John W. Heard](#), the regimental quartermaster, was directing several troopers unloading supplies from the *Wanderer* near Bahia Honda when they were set upon by a force of 1,000 Spanish cavalrymen. After two men were shot and the ship was disabled, Heard led the defense and repelled the enemy attack. For this action, he would receive the Medal of Honor. The regiment stayed in Cuba until 6 and 7 August 1898 when they sailed for [Montauk Point, New York](#).<sup>[12]</sup>

The 3rd Cavalry's casualties were three Troopers killed, six officers and forty-six Troopers wounded. 1LT [John W. Heard](#), Regimental Quartermaster, was awarded a Medal of Honor for most distinguished gallantry in action and Certificates of Merit were awarded to five Troopers. These certificates were the forerunner of the [Silver Star Medal](#).<sup>[12]</sup> The 3rd Cavalry did not remain together for very long. In February and March 1899, two troops were assigned to [Fort Sheridan, Illinois](#), two troops to Jefferson Barracks, four troops and the band to [Fort Myer, Virginia](#), while the remainder of the regiment stayed at Fort Ethan Allen.<sup>[14]</sup>



Lillian Skinner's Condo, 1992  
Wiley Retirement Community, Marlton, NJ

Three circular picture frames:

Lillian and brother Llewelyn (at top)

Lillian with sister Ethel, hand-colored (at left)

Lillian's grandparents' William and Alice Dodd (at right)

Two Rectangular Frames

Lillian's husband Earl and son David

Lillian and Earl, 50<sup>th</sup> Wedding Anniversary

Painting - by Lillian



### **Bertha Jane Dodd - Lillian's Mother**

Bertha Jane Dodd was born Sep, 1879 at Simpson Creek, Harrison County, West Virginia. Simpson Creek was a township in Harrison County, largely rural, that included the city of Bridgeport, West Virginia.

Six months later, the 1880 census recorded the family as living in Coal Township, Harrison County. Coal Township, a rural area outside Clarksburg, was adjacent to the township of Simpson Creek and is likely the same place where Bertha had been born the previous year.

Bertha was the first child of William Dodd and (Mary) Alice Harlow. Lillian Skinner described her grandmother, Alice Harlow, as being a small girl with sandy (light, brown) hair and gray eyes from a well-to-do plantation family in Kentucky.

**Alice Harlow** (1863-1929) was the only child of John A. Harlow (1819, Ireland - 1893) and Mary Alice \_\_\_\_ (1834-1894). Alice was not from Kentucky as Lillian had said – she was born in West Virginia (part of Virginia at the time of her birth), but per [Google Groups – Harlow/Dodd] “her grandfather owned a cotton plantation in the south.”, and so Lillian’s recollections of a plantation background are correct.

And continuing on [per Google Groups] – “Mary Alice was said to have been part Black Dutch and part Native American.” Black Dutch is slang for a dark-complexioned German.

**William Elzie Dodd** (1847-1938) was the 2<sup>nd</sup> son of Alpheus ‘Alva’ Dodd and Mary ‘Dolly’ Griffith (died 1861). Per Lillian, William was 6' or taller, slender, with dark brown eyes and a long nose. He was a quiet man. Lillian believes he or his family had come from Wales and were coal miners. Like his wife, William Dodd was actually born in West Virginia (then part of Virginia) as were his parents.

William Dodd and Alice Harlow were married circa 1878. William was 16 years older than Alice – he was age 31 and she was 15. Eldest child, Bertha Jane Dodd, was born in 1879, a year after their marriage. A year later, the census of 1880 shows the family living outside Clarksburg where William was a farmer. William and Alice must have worked hard to grow, process and store food off of a small plot of land. The family would later relocate to the town of Fairmont where William worked the coal mines until he was quite old.

Alice would eventually have twelve children in all – she raised nine of them (3 died) and also raised two grandchildren from infancy. Most of the children had the gray eyes of their mother. Daughters Bertha and Elma had dark eyes and inherited the large nose of their father – ‘dog’ noses as Lillian called them.



William Dodd (1847 – 1938)



Alice (Harlow) Dodd (1863 – 1929)

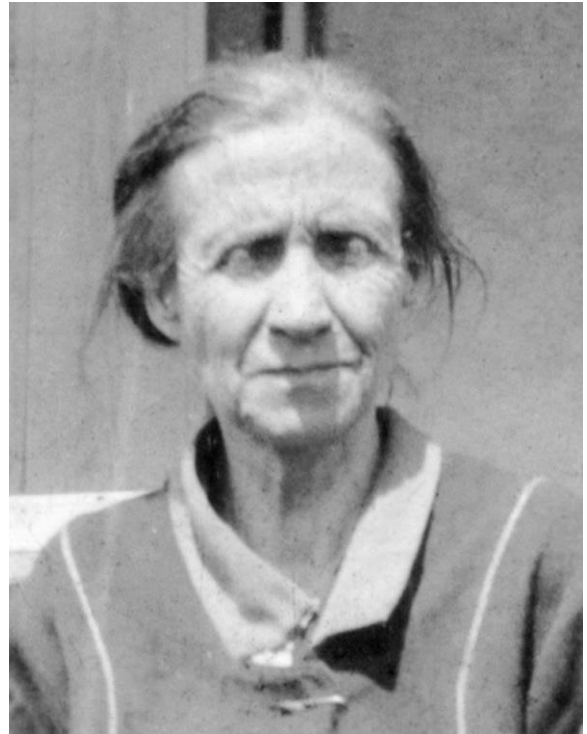
Hand-painted photo.

Above photo is the only known image of William Dodd, grandfather to Lillian Skinner.

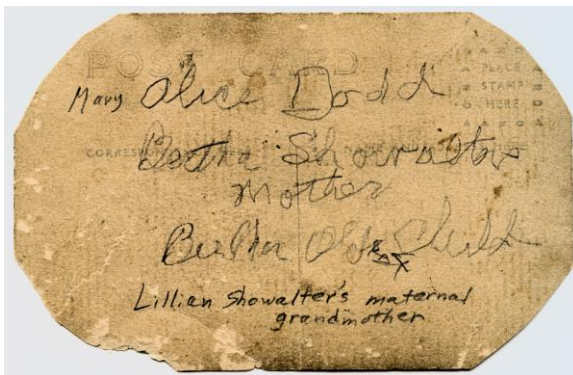
Lillian was fond of her Dodd grandparents and kept these images on her wall for her entire life. They were enclosed together in a round picture frame. The frame was on her bedroom wall in Deptford, NJ in the 1960's, in the bedrooms of her two Florida homes in the years 1966-1987, and in the condo of Earl and Lillian at the Wiley Retirement Community in the 1980's and 1990's. The realtor's video of the sale of their Florida home in 1987 shows these images. And these are the images in the third round picture frame as shown here a few pages back.



Alice (Harlow) Dodd

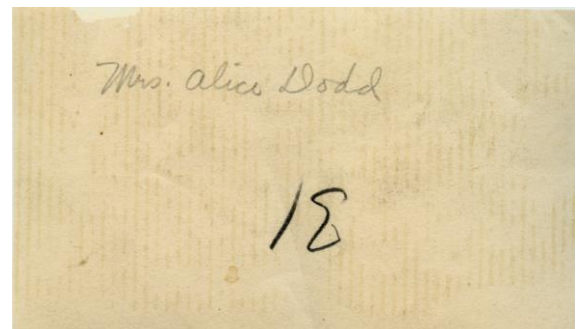


Alice (Harlow) Dodd



"Mary Alice Dodd  
Bertha Showalter's mother.  
Bertha [is her] eldest child".

Probably written by Bertha;  
Annette's printing



Lillian's writing

This could be 1927, two years before her death,  
when she attended the wedding of her  
granddaughter Lillian in Pennsylvania.

## **Move To Fairmont**

The Dodd family moved fifteen miles north of Coal Township, Harrison County to Fairmont, Marion County between the 1880 and 1900 census years. William Dodd moved to Fairmont for work, and the census records of 1900 and 1910 show that William, at age 52 and 62, was a coal miner. By 1900, the Dodds had built a two-story home on the Fairmont Bridgeport Pike, several miles south of Fairmont, on high ground out in the country.

## **Geography**

Fairmont is a large town in West Virginia located where the West Fork River and Tygert Valley River join to form the Monongahela River. The Monongahela then flows northward several hundred miles to Pittsburgh, Pa, where the Monongahela joins with the Allegheny River to form the Ohio River.

The Fairmont area is in the heart of the Appalachian Mountains and coal country. The area has seen extensive coal mining since the latter half of the 1800's and extending thru most of the 20th century.

## **New England**

The Dodd homestead was located a few miles south of Fairmont on the Fairmont Bridgeport Pike and just down the road from a small community called 'New England', a suburb of Fairmont. New England was named for the 'New England' shaft, the largest mine in the Fairmont area. This mine sat along the banks of the West Fork River looking across to the south side of Fairmont. A smaller mine, called 'Gaston', was located on the Fairmont side of the river

The Gaston mine was serviced by the B&O railroad that ran along the banks of the West Fork River. A railroad spur was built across the West Fork River to service the New England mine on the opposite side.

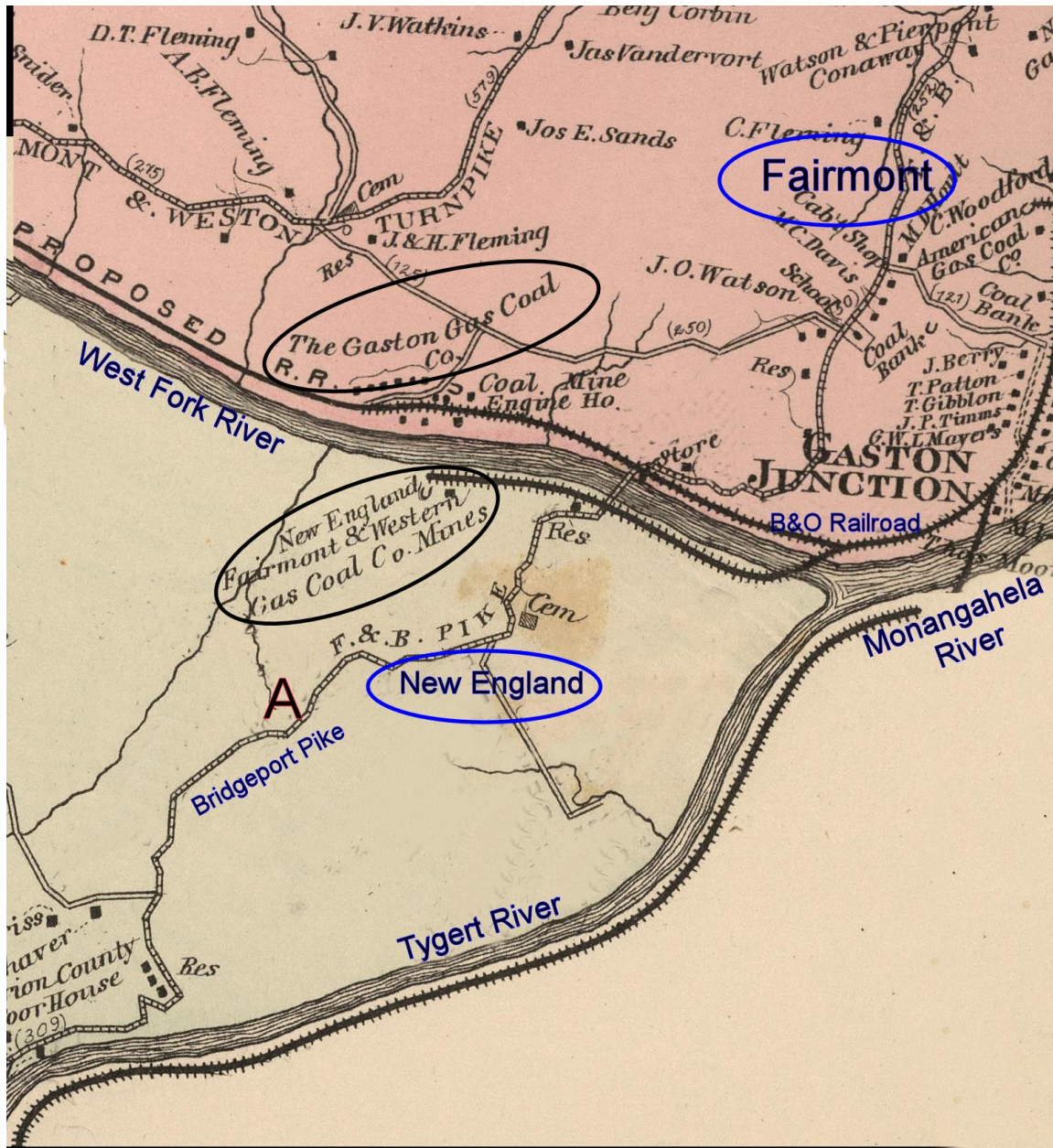
William Dodd, like nearly every male resident of the area, worked at either the New England or Gaston mines.

## **New England becomes Watson**

The small community that grew up around the New England mine in the late 1800's was called New England. The earliest homes built adjacent to the mine had been built by the mining company to provide rental housing for the miners.

After 1900, the growing community began to be called Watson, named for James Watson, a coal baron and the 'father' of the West Virginia coal business. My grandmother, Lillian, born 1903, referred to her 'home town' as being Watson.





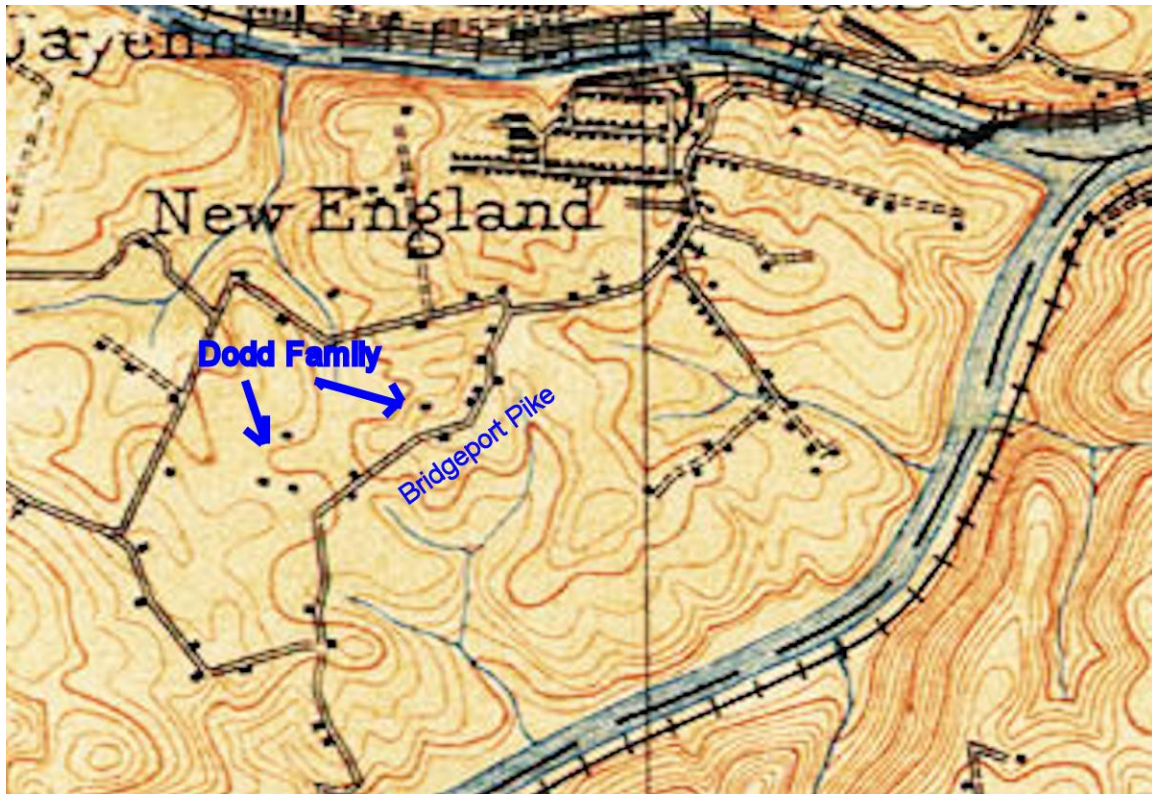
Fairmont and Vicinity, 1886  
[davidrumsey.com]

The Dodds moved to the Fairmont area by the time of the 1900 census. They built a home on high ground off the **Fairmont Bridgeport Pike**, at about point 'A', just south of the mining town of 'New England'.

Previous to their move, they lived in a rural area outside Clarksburg (well to the south off bottom of map).

William Dodd was a miner and likely worked the 'New England' shaft.





Fairmont Topographic Map, 1901  
[lib.utexas.edu]

The Dodd family lived on high ground off the northeast side of the Fairmont Bridgeport Pike, probably one of the farmhouses shown here.



Watson, WV and Vicinity 2009  
[google.com]

The Dodd family lived off of the Fairmont Bridgeport Pike at roughly point 'A'.

### William Dodd, Coal Miner

No doubt, William Dodd moved to the Fairmont area for work. Previous to moving to the Fairmont area, he had farmed crops on a small plot of land. The 1900 census shows that he was now a coal miner, as was nearly every male person who lived on the Fairmont Bridgeport Pike. The next census of 1910 shows the same. Like most people who lived outside of town, the Dodds grew crops on their land, and probably had some animals as well.



[Einhornpress.com]



### **1907 Mine Blast**

The largest mine disaster in US history occurred in 1907 just eight miles southwest of Fairmont, at the town of Monongah, where an underground blast killed nearly 400 miners. At the time, William Dodd was still working in the mines at Fairmont. Living just three miles from the mine, the Dodd family certainly felt the blast and would have known many of the victims.

In the 1960's, another well publicized mine disaster occurred at Monongah. Once again, miners were left underground who could not be recovered.

### **Final Chapter of the Dodds**

The Dodds remained in the home William had built for most of the rest of their lives, surrounded by a growing family of children and grandchildren in the immediate area. They attended the wedding of their grandchild Lillian Showalter and her husband Earl Skinner in Pennsylvania in 1927.

Alice Dodd died in 1929. By the time of the 1930 census, William Dodd had moved in with the family of his daughter Vicie Donlin, who also lived on the Fairmont Bridgeport Pike. William died in 1938 at age 90 or 91.

And now we move on to the story of the eldest Dodd child – Bertha Jane Dodd.

## The Deed

In 1899, 'Miss Bertha Dodd' of Fairmont, WV, eldest child of William and Alice Dodd, was involved in an unusual land transaction. At the age of twenty and still living with her parents, she purchased a plot of land in South Jersey, hundreds of miles from her parent's home in West Virginia. The land was located in a subdivision called Lawndale, Cape May County. The land was just ten miles from the Jersey beaches of Ocean City and near a train station. Bertha paid just one dollar for the land in a transaction that was probably questionable.

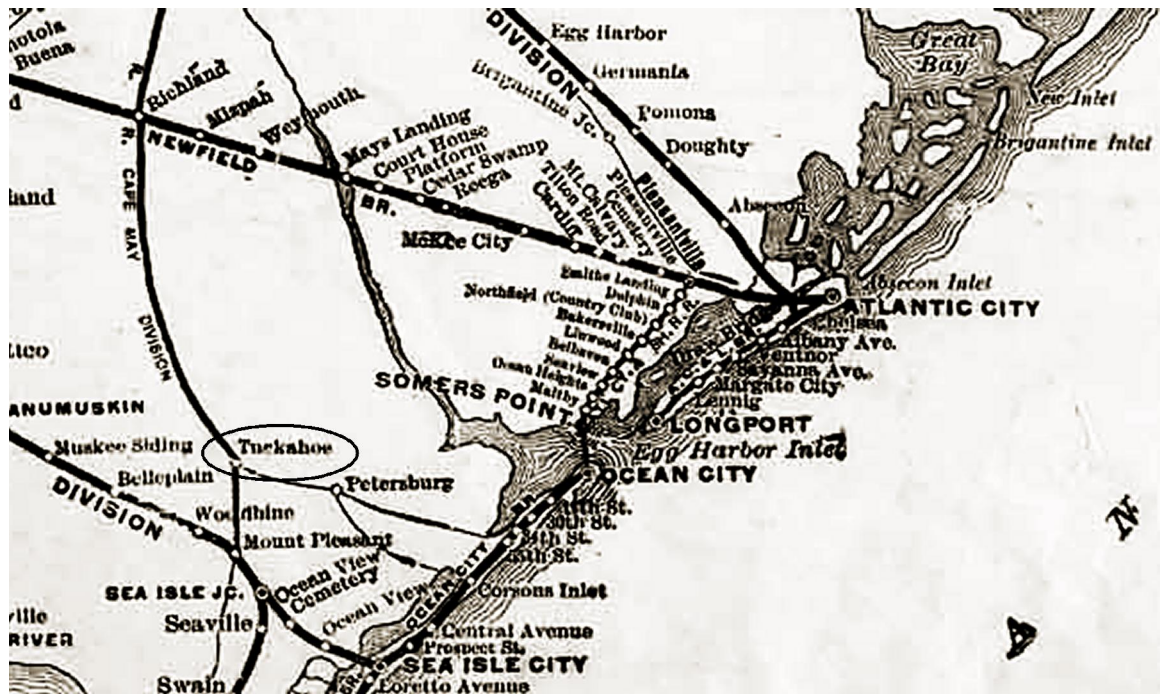
The land purchase was made from a real estate developer named William Mattix. Young Bertha may have purchased the land as a result of a trip made to the Jersey shore with family or friends - the B&O Railroad advertised numerous train excursions to Atlantic City and Ocean City, NJ in the Fairmont, WV newspaper at the time. Nothing seems to have come of the land - perhaps taxes were never paid.

The deed was signed by Mattix and by Daniel Frazier, the NJ Commissioner of Deeds. Bertha's signature was not required and is not on the document. Mattix and Frazier later worked together on major real estate projects, including the development of the town of Sewell in Gloucester County, NJ.

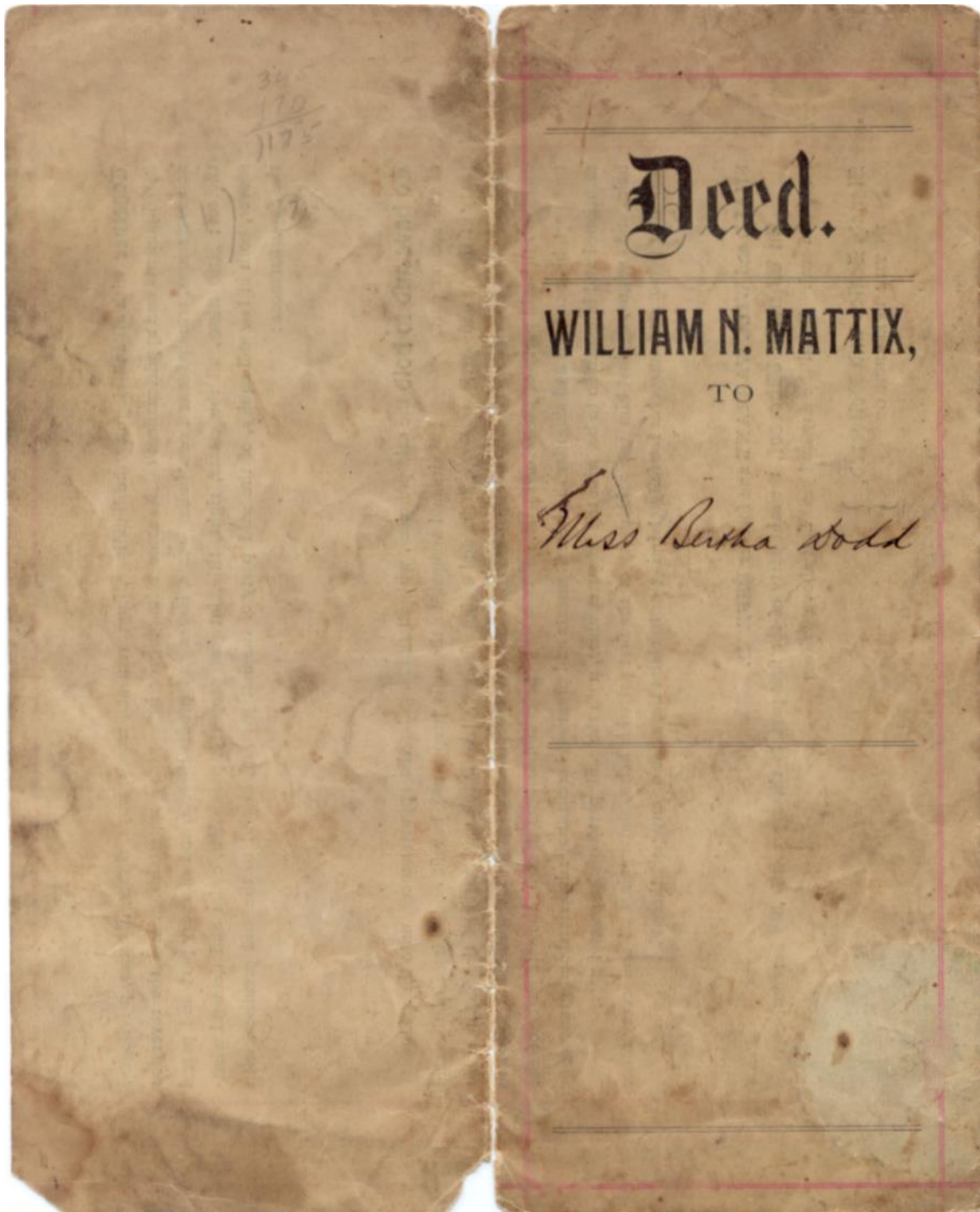
In 1962, Earl Skinner wrote to the Clerk of Cape May County concerning the land of his mother-in-law. The clerk replied that they had no deed record of the land transfer from Mattix to Bertha. The clerk indicated that the tract of land known as Lawndale was located in Upper Township, and that one might find tax information from the Collector of the town of Tuckahoe.

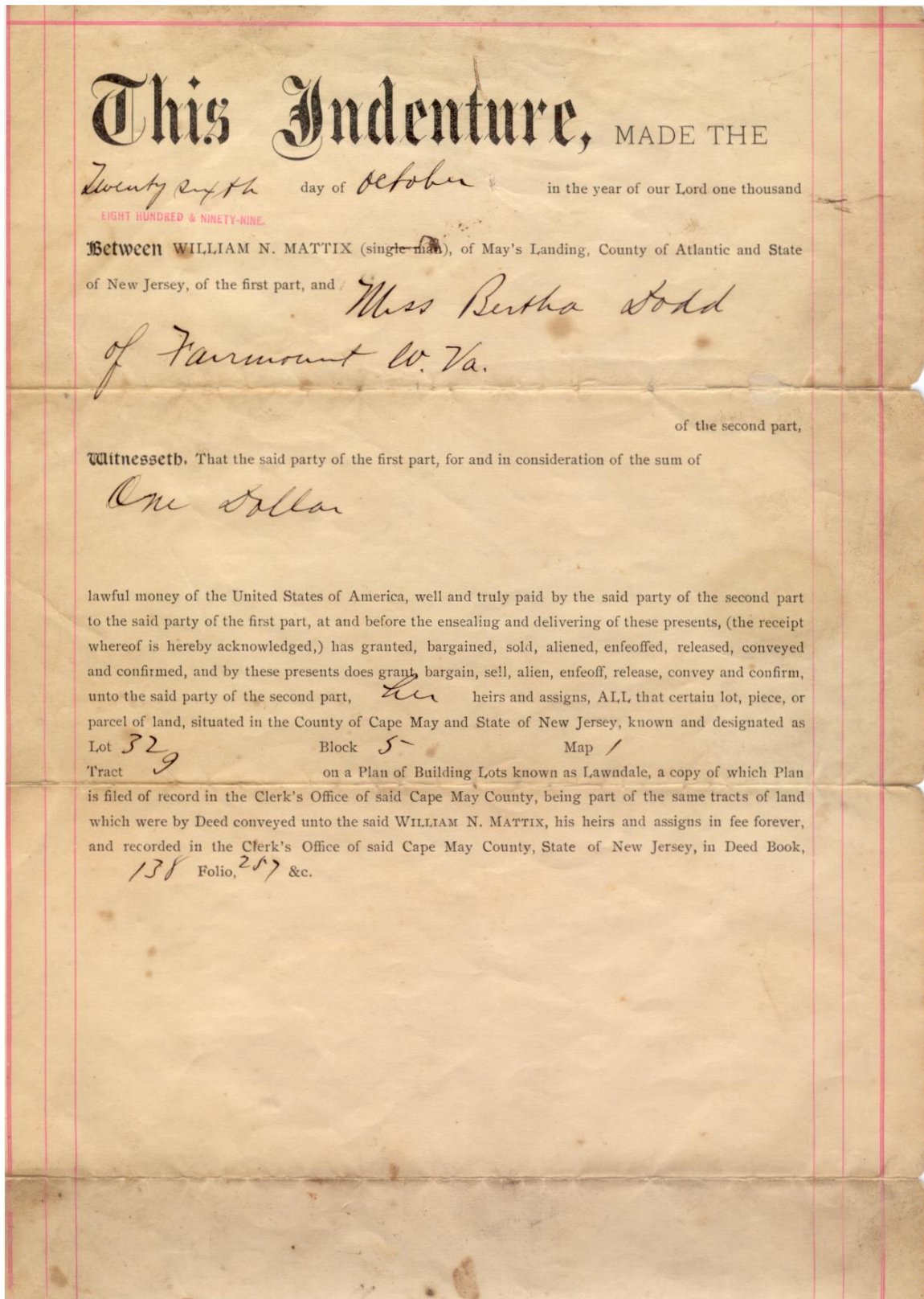
Despite being near the Jersey shore, this area is sparsely developed, even today.





1911 Railroad Map [Mapmaker.Rutgers.Edu]





Land Purchase Agreement, 1899, Cape May Co., NJ - Miss Bertha Dodd



To have and to hold the said premises, with all and singular the appurtenances, unto the said party of the second part, *he* heirs and assigns, to the only proper use, benefit and behoof of the said party of the second part, *he* heirs and assigns forever. AND the said party of the first part for himself, his heirs, executors and administrators, *do* by these presents covenant, grant and agree to and with the said party of the second part, *he* heirs and assigns, that he the said party of the first part, his heirs, all and singular the hereditaments and premises herein above described and granted, or mentioned and intended so to be, with the appurtenances, unto the said party of the second part, *he* heirs and assigns, against him the said party of the first part, his heirs, and against all and every other person or persons whomsoever lawfully claiming or to claim the same or any part thereof.

SHALL and WILL WARRANT and forever DEFEND.

In Witness Whereof, the said party of the first part to these presents has hereunto set his hand and seal. Dated the day and year first above written.

Signed, Sealed and Delivered,  
IN THE PRESENCE OF

*D B Frazier* *William N Mattix*

STATE OF NEW JERSEY, }  
ATLANTIC COUNTY, } ss.

BE IT REMEMBERED, that on this *Twenty 24th* day of *October* in the year of our Lord one thousand *EIGHT HUNDRED & NINETY-NINE.* before me, Daniel B. Frazier, a Commissioner of Deeds for the State of New Jersey, residing in Atlantic County aforesaid, personally appeared William N. Mattix, who, I am satisfied, is the grantor mentioned in the above deed or conveyance, and I having first made known to him the contents thereof, he acknowledged that he signed, sealed and delivered the same as his voluntary act and deed, all of which is hereby certified.

*Daniel B Frazier*

Commissioner of Deeds for the State of New Jersey.

## 1900 Census

The 1900 census shows that Bertha Dodd was still single and living with her parents on the Fairmont Pike south of Fairmont. Her future husband, Joseph Showalter, had been discharged from the Army in 1899 following a horse kick to his nose. Joseph returned to Canton, Ohio where he had enlisted two years earlier. He appears in the 1900 census as a 'stone-setter' at Canton, same occupation as when he had entered the military in 1897. Joseph was single and approaching his 30<sup>th</sup> birthday. The clock is ticking.

## Joseph Showalter Meets Bertha Dodd

Little is known as to how Joseph Showalter, living in Ohio, came to meet Bertha Jane Dodd of the Fairmont area of West Virginia. Daughter Lillian believes Joseph may have met Bertha while traveling home by train to Huntingdon, Pa from his Georgia army base. Lillian also said that Joseph may have run a newspaper ad to attract a partner 'as many people did in the day'. Bertha's sister, Cora, had answered an ad from a man whom she later married.

Joseph Showalter got all dressed up for his first meeting with Bertha at the home of her parents William and Alice Dodd. He had purchased a new Homburg hat for the occasion. The Homburg is the traditional creased hat with turned-up brim.



The carpeted front room of the Dodd house was special – off-limits to the kids. Upon entering the front room, Joseph was surprised that the Dodds did not offer to take his hat, so he set it in on the floor. One of the numerous Dodd cats (the Dodds did not like dogs) climbed into the hat and as Lillian said – “did his business”. Per Lillian, this is a story that her father often retold.



## **Marriage of Joseph B. Showalter and Bertha Jane Dodd**

A marriage license was issued on 24 November 1900 and the couple were married the next day. Joseph's age is listed as 29 (I believe he was age 30, born July, 1870) and Bertha was 21. They were married in Marion County, West Virginia by Methodist minister Benjamin Stout, who had emigrated to West Virginia years earlier as a Pennsylvania German, the same heritage as Joseph. Rev. Stout was a prominent minister of the West Virginia conference of the Protestant Methodist church.

Daughter Lillian later remarked that Joseph had a straight nose in wedding pictures despite his broken nose in previous Army service. Lillian's sister, Ethel, must have possession of the wedding photo as I have never seen it.

The weekly Fairmont Times, published every Thursday evening, included a listing of the latest marriage licenses that had been issued. The newspaper edition of 29 Nov 1900, front page, lists a marriage license for Joseph B. Showalter, age 29 and Bertha J. Dodd, age 21. There was no follow-up mention of the wedding nor have I ever located any pictures of the event.

## **Briefly Home to Pennsylvania**

After their marriage in December 1900, Joseph took Bertha back to Huntingdon County, Pennsylvania where he had been born and raised. They moved in with the family of Joseph's sister, Hetty Kyle, and her husband John Kyle.

When Hetty would speak, she prefaced everything with "as far as I concerned" and the family had fun at her expense.! Bertha did not like the Kyles so the family returned to West Virginia to be with Bertha's extensive family.

## **Fresh Start in Watson, 1901**

Joseph and Bertha returned to Fairmont, West Virginia, following their brief stay with his sister Hetty Kyle in Pennsylvania. They settled in at the mining town of 'New England', later called Watson, just south of Fairmont. Bertha's parents, William and Alice Dodd, lived just south of Watson in the country. Bertha was the eldest child and most of her siblings were still living with the parents at the time. Joseph and Bertha would live at Watson for the next 10 years, until 1911 or so.

## CLERK'S CERTIFICATE.

**Preliminary Inquiries and Answers Thereto,** Made and ascertained by CHAS. E. MANLEY, Clerk  
of the County Court of Marion County, State of West Virginia, relative to Mr. Joseph B. Showalter  
of Marion County and State of West Virginia  
and M Bertha J. Dodd of Marion County and State of West Virginia, to whom the accompanying Marriage License is issued.

## The Full Names of the Parties are as Follows:

His full name is Joseph B. Showalter Her full name is Bertha J. Dodd  
His age is 29 Her age is 21  
He was born in Huntington County, State of Pennsylvania  
She was born in Harrison County, State of West Virginia  
His place of residence is Marion " " " " "  
Her place of residence is Marion County, " " " " "  
The name of the party giving the foregoing information is Joseph B. Showalter  
of Marion County, State of West Virginia  
Given under my hand this 24<sup>th</sup> day of November, 1900

Chas. E. Manley

Clerk County Court.

## MARRIAGE LICENSE.

West Virginia, County of Marion, to-wit.:

To any person licensed to celebrate Marriage:

You are hereby authorized to join together, in the Holy State of Matrimony, according to the Rites and Ceremonies of your church, or religious denomination, and laws of the State of West Virginia,

Joseph B. Showalter and Bertha J. Dodd

Given under my hand, as Clerk of the County Court of the County of Marion, this 24<sup>th</sup> day of November, 1900.

Chas. E. Manley

Clerk.

## MINISTER'S RETURN OR INDORSEMENT.

I certify that on the 25<sup>th</sup> day of November 1900 at  
in Marion County W.V.

I united in marriage the above-named and described parties, under authority of the foregoing license.

Benjamin Stout

Marriage License, Joseph Showalter and Bertha Dodd

### Joseph Showalter, Reluctant Coal Miner

Joseph did not want to work the coal mines, but living in the Fairmont area, had little choice. Like his father-in-law William Dodd, Joseph became a coal miner.

Joseph Showalter is listed as a resident of New England in the records of the birth of his children in the years 1901, 1902 and 1903. His occupation is that of coal miner in 1902 and 1903 (no occupation given in 1901). Like his father-in-law, Joseph would have worked at either the New England or Gaston mine shafts, just a short walk from his house in New England.

Joseph never liked the mines and probably only worked there from 1901 until 1904 or so. By the time of the earliest recollections of his daughter Lillian, born 1903, Joseph had left the mines for good and was doing odd jobs to make ends meet.



Watson Mine, 1920's (New England Mine)  
[wveha.com]





View looking south across the West Fork River  
to the site of the New England Mine at Watson, WV  
[2013]

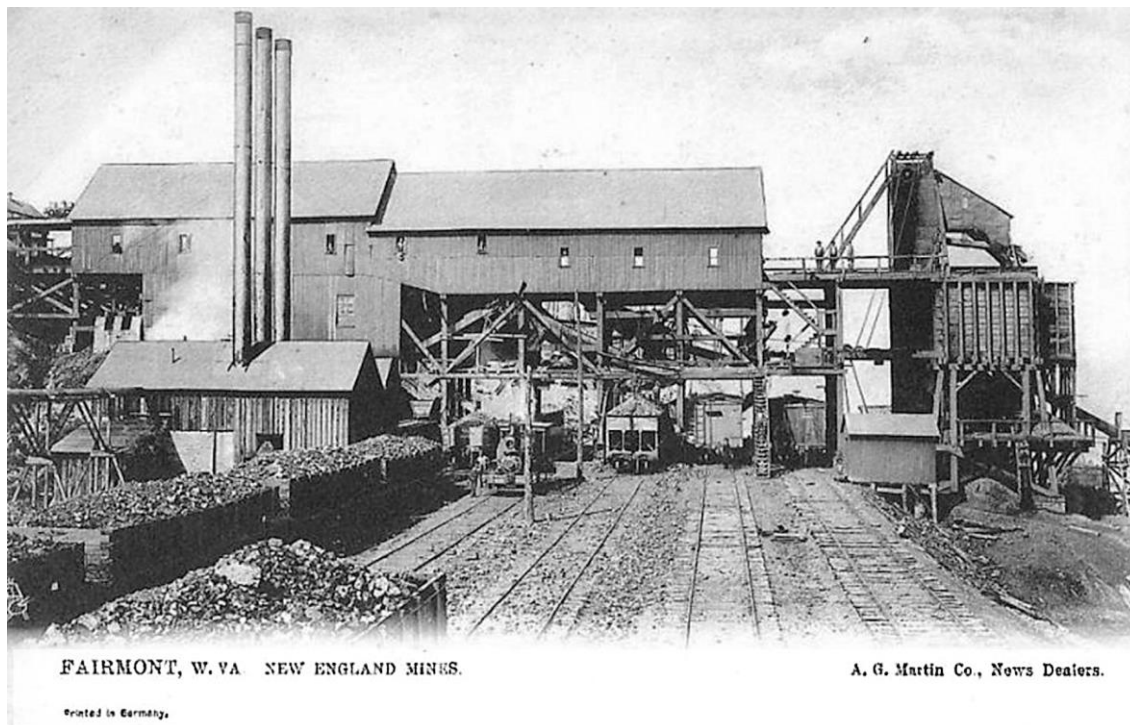
This photo was taken from the Fairmont side of the West Fork River, about where another mine, called Gaston, was located.

This photo shows a large grassy hill of dirt, created within the past several years, that seals the entrance to the New England mine. The mine entrance would have been located behind this dirt pile, directly below the tree line in the rear of this photo. The homes shown in the previous photo above the mine entrance are still there today -- one or two homes are located in the upper left of this photo (not really visible). The house in the upper right of this image is about a half a block to the right of the house in the upper right of the previous image.

This environmental cleanup has removed all traces of the mine operation that sat along the banks of the West Fork River, including the mine openings, the railroad tracks, the mine car tracks, the power house and the large mine tipple, shown on the next page, where the coal was transferred to rail cars.



The distant stack at far right are likely part of the Gaston mine across the West Fork River.  
[Einhornpress.com]



[minedat.com]

Two views of the power house and tipple (coal car loading area)  
at the New England mine sitting along the banks of the West Fork River.





[[historyinsidepictures.com](http://historyinsidepictures.com)]

## **First Child Pauline**

Per Lillian - Bertha and Joseph saw the birth of their first child in 1901. The baby was a girl and named Pauline, but died five days after birth of 'colic'.

The story may not be that simple. On June 17, 1901, just seven months after the Showalters were married, death records show that two infants of Joseph Showalter – one male and one female, died four days after birth of “complications”. The place of birth and death for the infants was the town of New England (today, Watson). And so the Showalters had premature twins that did not survive.

## **The New England Cemetery**

The infants were buried a day after their deaths by undertaker R. L. Cunningham at an unknown cemetery at New England.

There was a cemetery at New England located just off the Fairmont/Bridgeport Pike, behind the homes on the east side of the road. The cemetery must have been small and appears on just one map published in the late 1800's.

It happens that the Showalters later lived in a home on the Fairmont/Bridgeport Pike in the vicinity of the cemetery. They were recorded there by the census of 1910, nine years after the death of the infants. Lillian specifically recalled that there was a cemetery behind their house, off to one side, separated by a fence. She said that she and her sister Ethel could see the gravestones at night from their rear bedroom. At age 6 in 1910, Lillian was completely unaware that she may have been living within sight of the graves of her siblings lost in 1901.

The New England cemetery, likely the cemetery along the Bridgeport Pike, is long gone today though there is still open space where it once was. The cemetery seems to have been lost to history and completely forgotten about – contemporary records make no mention of this burial plot.

165		REGISTER							
1902									
No.	Date of Report	1. Name. 2. Sex and Color.	1. Age. 2. Occupation.	DATE OF DEATH.				Single, Married, Widower or Widow.	1. Nationality. 2. Where Born.
				Month.	Day.	Year.	A.M. or P.M.		
340	June 25	Will Perkins 2 Sex, male Color, Black	1 Year Month Days 2 infant	May	21	1902		Single	1 African 2 Monongah Wva
341	June 25	Silvester Hern 2 Sex, male Color, white	1 Year Month Days 2 miner	May	25	1902		Married	1 American 2 Hrafton Wva
349	June 27	Mrs Harry Debolt 2 Sex, female Color, white	1 Year Month Days 2 Housewife	June	14	1901		Married	1 American 2 Fairmont Wva
351	June 27	Infant Joseph Showalter 2 Sex, female Color, white	1 Year Month Days 2 -	June	17	1901		Single	1 American 2 New Eng land

165

OF DEATHS.

How Long Resident in this State. YEARS.	1. Place of Death. 2. Cause of Death.	1. Complication. 2. Duration of Complication. 3. Duration of Disease.	1. Place of Burial. 2. Date of Burial.	1. Name of Undertaker. 2. Place of Business.	Name and Residence of Physician Returning Certificate.
	1 Monongah Wva	1	Monon- gah Wva	1 R.C. Jones	
	2 Complication	2	May 22 1902	2 Fairmont Wva	
	1 Watson Wva	1	1 Work Cemetery	1 R.C. Jones	
	2 Consumption	2	May 26 1902	2 Fairmont Wva	
	1 Fairmont Wva	1	May 26 1902	1 R.C. Jones	
	2 Consumption	2	June 16 1901	2 Fairmont Wva	
	1 New England	1	June 18 1901	1 R.C. Jones	
	2 Complication of diseases	2	June 18 1901	2 Fairmont Wva	

Death of unnamed Showalter female ('Pauline' per Lillian),  
Born, died and buried at the town of New England, WV  
Died June 17, 1901



137									
1901									
REGISTER									
No.	Date of Report	1. Name. 2. Sex and Color.	1. Age. 2. Occupation.	DATE OF DEATH.				Single, Married, Widower or Widow	1. Nationality. 2. Where Born.
				Month.	Day.	Year.	A.M. or P.M.		
615	June 29	1 Jesse Snyder 2 Sex, Male Color, White	1 Year Month Days 25- 2 Farmer	Aug	29	1900		Married	1 American 2 New England
616	June 29	1 Clarence Brouser 2 Sex, Male Color, White	1 Year Month Days 17 2	May	17	1901		-	1 American 2 Massachusetts
617	June 29	1 Child of Joseph Showalter 2 Sex, male Color, white	1 Year Month Days -4 2 infant	June	17	1901			1 American 2 New England

137					
OF DEATHS.					
How Long Resident in the State, YEARS.	1. Place of Death. 2. Cause of Death.	1. Complication. 2. Duration of Complication. 3. Duration of Disease.	1. Place of Burial. 2. Date of Burial.	1. Name of Undertaker. 2. Place of Business.	Name and Residence of Physician Returning Certificate.
1	Carverham Ma	1	Carverham Cemetery	W.R. Sellers	
2	Typhoid fever	2	Aug 24	2	
1	-	1	1 Silver Pines	W.R. Sellers	
2	Lawrence of Bowles	2	2 May 18	2	
1	New England	1	June 17 1901	2	
2	Complication	2	1 New England June 18 1901	2 R.D. Gunn Wingham	

Death of unnamed male Showalter child  
 Born, dead and buried at New England  
 Died June 17, 1901

**Llewelyn, Lillian and Ethel**

Third child Llewelyn 'Lou' was born April 12, 1902, ten months after the birth and death of the Showalter twins. Llewelyn was a Welsh name, a testament to the Welsh heritage of Bertha Dodd's family (many generations back), the same heritage as many of the other immigrants in the coal areas of West Virginia. Llewelyn would die in 1907 at age 5 of diphtheria.

Fourth child, Lillian Charlotte Showalter (my grandmother), was born December 7, 1903.

Fifth child, Ethel May Showalter, was born April 25, 1908. Lillian and Ethel would be the only two of the Showalter's five children to live past childhood.





Lillian w/brother Llewelyn, circa 1905

One of several photos that Lillian kept on her walls her entire life.

## Llewelyn Birth Record

Llewelyn was born at Grafton, PA in 1902. Grafton, PA is in Huntingdon County, where father Joseph had been born and raised and where some of his siblings resided. The birth record shows that father Joseph and mother Bertha were residents of the town of New England, West Virginia at the time and that Joseph was a coal 'miner'. Apparently, Llewelyn was born on one of the numerous trips that Joseph and family had made back to his relatives in Pennsylvania.

126  
1902 East District.

### REGISTER OF BIRTHS.

LINES NUMBERED	DATE OF BIRTH	NAME OF CHILD, IF NAMED	PLACE OF BIRTH	FATHER'S NAME IN FULL
288	May 12	Shawalter Louis	Grafton, Pa.	Joseph
289	April 12	Smith, Sarah E.	Boothsville	Ed. E.
290	May 1	Smith, Eugene	Watson	Chas.
291	Sept. 12	Smith, E. C.		

NUMBERED	FATHER'S OCCUPATION	FATHER'S RESIDENCE	MOTHER'S NAME IN FULL	HOW MANY AT A BIRTH	Deformity, or any Circumstance of Interest	SOURCES Relation of informant to person born; whether of kindred and its degree, head of a family, friend, neighbor, or midwife, &c.
	Farmer	—	Amanda	1	none	Mother
	Shoe Maker	—	Esther	2	"	Father
	Blacksmith	—	Etta	1	"	"
	Miner	Montana	Betty Anna	1	"	Mother
	Farmer	"	Rachel E.	1	"	"
	"	"	Emma E.	1	"	Father
	Miner	Catawba	Iva Etta	1	"	"
	Farmer	"	Clara	1	"	"
	Miner	New England	Della	1	"	Mother
	"	"	Betta	1	"	"
	"	Ray Chapel	Eliza	1	"	"
	"	Emerson	Ruth	1	"	"
	"	New England	Bertha	1	"	"
	Sawyer	Boothsville	Raney	1	"	"
	Carpenter	Watson	Inez	13	"	"

By official of West Virginia  
File # 3067

Llewelyn, "Lou" Showalter, born 1902 in Grafton, Huntingdon Co., PA  
His birth record, above, was recorded in West Virginia



## Lillian Birth Record

Lillian was born December 7, 1903 at New England, West Virginia. Her father's residence is also New England and his occupation is that of 'miner'.

1903 East Dist.										REGISTER OF BIRTHS.	
LINES NUMBERED	DATE OF BIRTH	NAME OF CHILD, IF NAMED	WHITE	COLORED	SEX		BORN		PLACE OF BIRTH	FATHER'S NAME IN FULL	
					Male	Female	Alive	Dead			
299	5/25	" Sawyer Bessie O.	✓		✓		✓		Enterprise	W. T. Sawyer	
300	9/18	" Scriotchfield Evelyn	✓			✓	✓		New England	Aaron Scriotchfield	
301	3/12	" Shaver Mary	✓			✓	✓		Pennsylvania	Arthur Shaver	
302	12/7	" Showalter Lillian	✓			✓	✓		New England	J. B. Showalter	
303	3/8	" Smith Clara	✓			✓	✓		" "	M. W. Smith	
304	11/18	" Stollard Pearl	✓			✓	✓		Chickston	W. S. Stollard	

REGISTER OF BIRTHS.						
FATHER'S OCCUPATION	FATHER'S RESIDENCE	MOTHER'S NAME IN FULL	HOW MANY AT A BIRTH	Deformity, or any Circumstance of Interest	SOURCES OF INFORMATION	
					NAME OF PERSON GIVING INFORMATION OF BIRTH	Relation of informant to per- son of kindred and its degree, friend, neighbor, or midwife
"	"	Anna Stuckey	1	"	Anna Stuckey	"
Laborer	Catawba	Pearl Stervink	1	"	Pearl Stervink	"
miner	"	Jettie Summers	1	corrected by official	Jettie Summers	Father
Laborer	gives name	Emma B. Swisher	1	of 12	Emma B. Swisher	3-19-43 file 7
"	"	Malissa A. "	1	"	James	"
Miner	Montana	Emma L. "	1	"	Henry	"
"	Idaho	Jennie Sawyer	1	"	Jennie Sawyer	Mother
"	New England	Emma Scriotchfield	1	"	Emma Scriotchfield	"
Miner	"	Clara Shaver	1	"	Clara Shaver	"
"	"	Bertha Showalter	1	"	Bertha Showalter	"
"	"	Olivia Smith	1	"	Olivia Smith	"

Birth Record  
Lillian Showalter, 1903

## **Odd Jobs, 1905-1912**

Joseph worked the coal mines in the early 1900's but did not like it. Lillian recalls that her father had joked that he did not like working the mines, as he would end up spending enough time underground after he was dead. After working the mines in the 1902-1904 timeframe, he quit.

Per Lillian, West Virginia offered little besides coal mines and glass factories.

To earn money, Joseph made frequent trips by railroad back to his hometown of Huntingdon, Pa for work. Typically, he would stay with one of his siblings and work with them at odd jobs to earn money. Per Lillian, he took little money for food and would bum a sandwich here and there along the way. His wife Bertha and young children, Llewellyn and Lillian (daughter Ethel not yet born), would stay behind at Watson.

The mining town of New England gradually took the name Watson as it grew in the first couple of years of the 1900's. Watson is the only name that Lillian ever called her birthplace. Though she always used the name Watson in referring to her mother's family, it is likely that the adjoining major city of Fairmont would be a broader and more accurate description of where her mother's siblings resided.

**Logan Co., WV, 1907-1908**

Joseph took a job from friend Noab Hoffman in a slaughterhouse in Logan County, in the western part of West Virginia, close to the Kentucky border. His family eventually joined him there for a year or so.

**Death of Llewelyn and Birth of Ethel**

In 1907, son Llewellyn (born 1902) died of diphtheria while the family was together in Logan County. Llewellyn had contracted the disease during a visit of Bertha and children home to Watson where other children had had the disease. Lillian, born 1903, recalls her brother's death and occasionally mentioned it to me. Lillian kept a picture of Llewelyn on her wall her entire life.

Per Lillian, Bertha got pregnant 'right away' to have another boy. A girl - Ethel May, was born 1908, ten months after Llewellyn's death.

Ethel's birth was recorded at the town of Holden, Logan County, the same town where Llewelyn had died. Ethel was a sickly baby, so Bertha bundled up the family and returned home to her family at Watson.



## REGISTER OF DEATHS

Name or No. of Assessment District	NAME IN FULL	SEX				DATE OF DEATH	PLACE OF BIRTH	NAME OF DISEASE OR CAUSE OF DEATH
		White	Colored	Male	Female			
	Betsy Stollings	1		1		Apr 9/06	Logan Co W Va	Ender Carditis
	- Shumate	1	1			Nov 4/05	" " "	Kathomitis
	Will Seaggs	1	1			Dec 22/05	Lake	Bronchitis
	Estel Stone	1	1			July 25/05	Stone Branch	Pneumonia
	Jacob Shadrack	1	1			Aug 17/06	Virginia	Peritonitis
	Anna Siders					" 14/05	Ohio	-
	Marga. Sexton	1	1			8/6 1906	Chapmanville	Pain in head
	Cor. Adley Stowers	1	1			1/28 1906	Curry	Consumption
	Jacob Shadrack	1	1			8/6 1906	Gautier	Kidney Trouble
	Eli. Simpkins	1	1			12/15 1906	"	Croup
1907 41908	John. Sanson	1	1			Nov 12/07	Stone Br. W. Va	membranous croup
	<u>Mrs. Showalter</u>	1	1			June 15/07	Holden, W. Va	Diphtheria
	James Stollings	1	1			May 23/08	Bancroft "	Tuberculosis of Lungs
	Lena. Sheppard	1	1			Jan 3/08	Holden, W. Va	Vencella

## REGISTER OF DEATHS

Name Numbered	AGE			OCCUPATION	CONSORT OF, OR UNMARRIED	SOURCE OF INFORMATION	
	Years	Months	Days			Name of Person Giving Information of Death	Designation of Informant, whether Physician, Surgeon, Coroner, Head of Family, Friend, etc.
1	70			House Keeper	Widow	J. D. Turner M.D.	
2	3	3		-	Single	J. E. McDonald	M.D.
3	4			-	-	Geo Seaggs Jr	Farmer
4	2	4		-	-	Okey Stone	"
5	72			Farmer	married	W. H. Price	M.D.
6				-	-	-	-
7	44	-	-	none	married	C. C. Sexton	Husband
8	27	-	-	"	unmarried	E. J. Hayner	-
9	62	-	-	Farmer	married	Loran Shadrack	Son
10	-	3	-	none	un "	Brook. Simpkins	Mother
11	3	10		-	Single	W. H. Price	
12	4			-	"	W. F. Farley	
13	62			Farmer	married	J. D. Turner	
14	4			none	Single	W. F. Farley	

Death Record, Lou Showalter (misabeled Geo.)

Died June 15, 1907 of diphtheria, age 5 (misabeled 4)

Doctor Farley, Town of Holden, Logan County, WV



## Ethel Birth Record

Ethel's birth record was filed by physician W. F. Farley, the same doctor who had recorded the death of Lewellyn ten months earlier. The Showalter baby is unnamed, but matches the birth date of Ethel. The birth took place at the mining town of Holden, Logan Co. in the western part of West Virginia, near the Kentucky border. Lillian had told me that her father Joseph had been working in Logan County at a slaughterhouse when Llewelyn had died in 1907. Evidently, he was still there when Ethel was born in 1908.

# REGISTER OF BIRTHS.

1940.  
1963  
35

W. J. ANSCHUTZ  
District

DATE OF BIRTH	FULL NAME OF CHILD, IF NAMED	White	Colored	SEX		BORN		PLACE OF BIRTH	FATHER'S
				Male	Female	Alive	Dead		
April 16/08	Slone	1						Holden, W. Va	Tom S
" 25/08	Smith		1	1				Holden, West Va	Robert F. S
" 16/08	Showalter	1			1	1		" " "	Geo. A. Sho
" 7/15/08	Smith	1	1	1	1	1		Logan " "	" "
8/10 "	Jeff. Smith	1	1	1	1	1		Yantis	John. S
3/25 "	not named Smith	1		1	1	1		Dingers	Harve. S
4-30-09	John Shadrack	1	1	1	1	1		Shinley	Logan. S
	Ethel Sumpter	1	1					MAN Wt	M & S

corrected by father 2-22-52-T.C.  
not named Smith  
John Shadrack  
Ethel Sumpter

FATHER'S NAME IN FULL	How many at a Birth	SOURCE OF INFORMATION	
		Name of Person Giving Information of Birth	Relation of Informant to Person Born; whether of Kindred and of what degree. Head of Family, Friend, Neighbor, Midwife, etc.
Tom Slone	1	W. F. Farley, M. D.	
W. Smith	1	W. F. Farley M. D.	
Geo. A. Showalter	1	W. F. Farley M. D.	
Smith	1	W. F. Farley M. D.	
Smith	1	S. A. Draper	
Jeff Smith	1	Riley Sinkins	Grand Father
Harve. Smith	1	Harve. Smith	
John Shadrack	1	Logan. Shadrack	
Ethel Sumpter	1	M & Sumpter	

Birth Record, Unnamed Girl [Ethel Showalter], April 25, 1908

## **Grandma Alice (Harlow) Dodd**

After the birth of Ethel, the family returned to Watson from Logan County with Joseph eventually following along. Back in Watson, Joseph once again started making extended trips to Pennsylvania to earn money doing odd jobs with his siblings. Bertha would often live a week at a time with her sisters in the Fairmont area to assist with the many family pregnancies and children. She would take baby Ethel with her, but leave Lillian with grandma Alice Dodd. Lillian was about 5-6 years old (1909/1910 school year) when she went to school from Grandma Dodd's home with other children.

Lillian has many fond memories of her grandmother, Alice Dodd. The Dodds lived on a farm south of Watson. The Dodd's 2-story home, built by William Dodd, was out in the country, down the main road (Bridgeport Pike) to the left as you walked out the door of the Showalter's Watson bungalow, followed by a right turn down a small dirt road on a rise on the right side. Lillian recalls stirring the pot of apples in the Dodd's back yard to make butter.

## **Life in Watson**

Per Lillian concerning life in Watson – “School books had to be bought by parents. Education was hard to come by in WV for small children in the Mt. region. There was lots of deep snow and schools far apart and no buses. No goulashes, but high-top leather shoes, greased well.”

For a time Lillian recalls living on a farm where her mother Bertha displayed her cooking talents. Not sure of the time frame. Not sure if this was the farm of her Dodd grandparents..

Per Lillian - “The family lived well on a small farm for a while - large peach orchard, wild strawberries, and buck wheat, flour, sugar bought in barrel. Bertha learned from her mother how to make fine white bread and was a wonderful cook so always had a bountiful table with the root cellar, home-canned vegetables, jams, jellies, peach and apple butter. So many families had to make do with pancakes instead of bread, even in school lunches.”

## **Reunited At Watson, circa 1910**

When Lillian was about age 6 or so (circa 1910), her father bought into a store in Watson with brother-in-law John Schaffer. John was husband to Inez, one of Bertha's sisters. With Joseph back from Pennsylvania, the family was together again and living in a small rental bungalow in Watson. Lillian described this home to me in the 1990's. This was the only home in Watson she ever mentioned, and probably the only one she was old enough to recall (Lillian was only 6 years of age in 1910).

Per Lillian in 1995 - they lived in a small bungalow in Watson, one story, on the main road from Fairmont. Watson was a small collection of homes with no town center as a reference. The bridge to Fairmont was within walking distance if you walked out of the house and to the right. The Dodd grandparents lived down the road to the left out in the country

Cooking was done over a coal stove - Lillian recalls picking up pieces of coal from the roadside with her mother. Lillian would spend nights by the fireplace with her father, whom she felt close to and who would teach her. Her teachers thought she had much schooling as a result.

The bungalow described by Lillian "on the road from Fairmont" corresponds to the Showalter residence that was recorded in the census of 1910.

## **1910 Census**

The 1910 census shows the family living on the Fairmont Bridgeport Pike at Watson. Joseph Showalter is shown as being age 36, although he was actually age 40. I don't think Joseph ever wanted his wife to know how old he really was. The census shows that the household included wife Bertha - age 29 (she was actually age 30 or 31); Lillian - age 6; and Ethel - age 2.

The census shows that Joseph's occupation is now that of 'House Carpenter', another in a long line of jobs that Joseph did during his life to earn a living. His carpentry experience would pay off. Twelve years later, in 1922, Joseph would return to the carpentry business, and would eventually be able to purchase one of the homes that he had helped to build.

In 2013, my father and I visited Watson on our 3-day father/son trip of a lifetime around the family history sites of Pennsylvania and West Virginia.



## Ghosts of the Past

Bertha Showalter had lost twins in 1901 and Llewelyn in 1907. The twins were buried in a cemetery at New England (Watson). Llewelyn's place of burial is unknown, but was likely the same cemetery.

The only known cemetery at New England (Watson) at the time was located behind homes on the east side of the Fairmont & Bridgeport Pike. It is interesting, that the Showalter home of 1910 was located directly at that cemetery. **Per Lillian, who was age 6 at the time – a cemetery was behind the house to one side, separated by a fence. Ethel and Lillian could see the gravestones from their bedroom at the rear of the house at night.**

Lillian does not seem to have known that her siblings were likely buried there.

The cemetery located behind the Showalter home appears on only one map in the year 1886. It does not appear on any map in the 20<sup>th</sup> century and has been lost to history. There is no evidence of it today except for an area of undeveloped land behind some of the homes. Contemporary records of historical cemeteries make no mention of the site.

## Cora

Bertha Showalter had eight brothers and sisters living in the Fairmont area.

Per daughter Lillian in 1981-

“Bertha was closer to her sister Cora than to the other sisters. Bertha bought a Singer sewing machine and she and Cora sewed and made most clothing. Cora was tall and thin, with light brown hair and gray-eyes. Cora as a young woman worked in Fairmont. She met a man who was constructing a road thro. They had two daughters. Man was killed in construction. Cora answered an ad from a man in (Minnesota?) as the young women were doing in those days. 'I think my Mother (Bertha) did too'. Cora left one little girl with her mother [Alice Dodd] and took Thelma with her [to live with her second husband]. Had 3 sons after that.”

**Map Key (map on following page):**

**Feature ‘A’** – William and Alice Dodd (grandparents of Lillian, Ethel and others) and their numerous children were living on the Fairmont & Bridgeport Pike by 1899, roughly where denoted. They appear at this location in both the 1900 and 1910 census. Per granddaughter Lillian, William Dodd had built the home by hand. The census confirms that he was a landowner, not a renter. William Dodd’s occupation in both the 1900 and 1910 census years was that of coal miner, same as most of the males living on that highway.

**‘B’** – By 1910, the Dodd children were married and had left home. Daughter Bertha and husband Joseph Showalter and their daughters Lillian and Ethel were living in a rental home on the Fairmont Bridgeport Pike. The Showalter home was located 19 homes south of the bridge to Fairmont. Per daughter Lillian, the bridge to Fairmont was located within walking distance and to the right as you walked out of the house. Per the census, Joseph Showalter was a house carpenter. Bertha’s parents lived on the same highway, but 42 homes to the south. This matches the recollection of Lillian – she had told me that her Dodd grandparents had lived well down the road, out in the country, on a rise on the right.

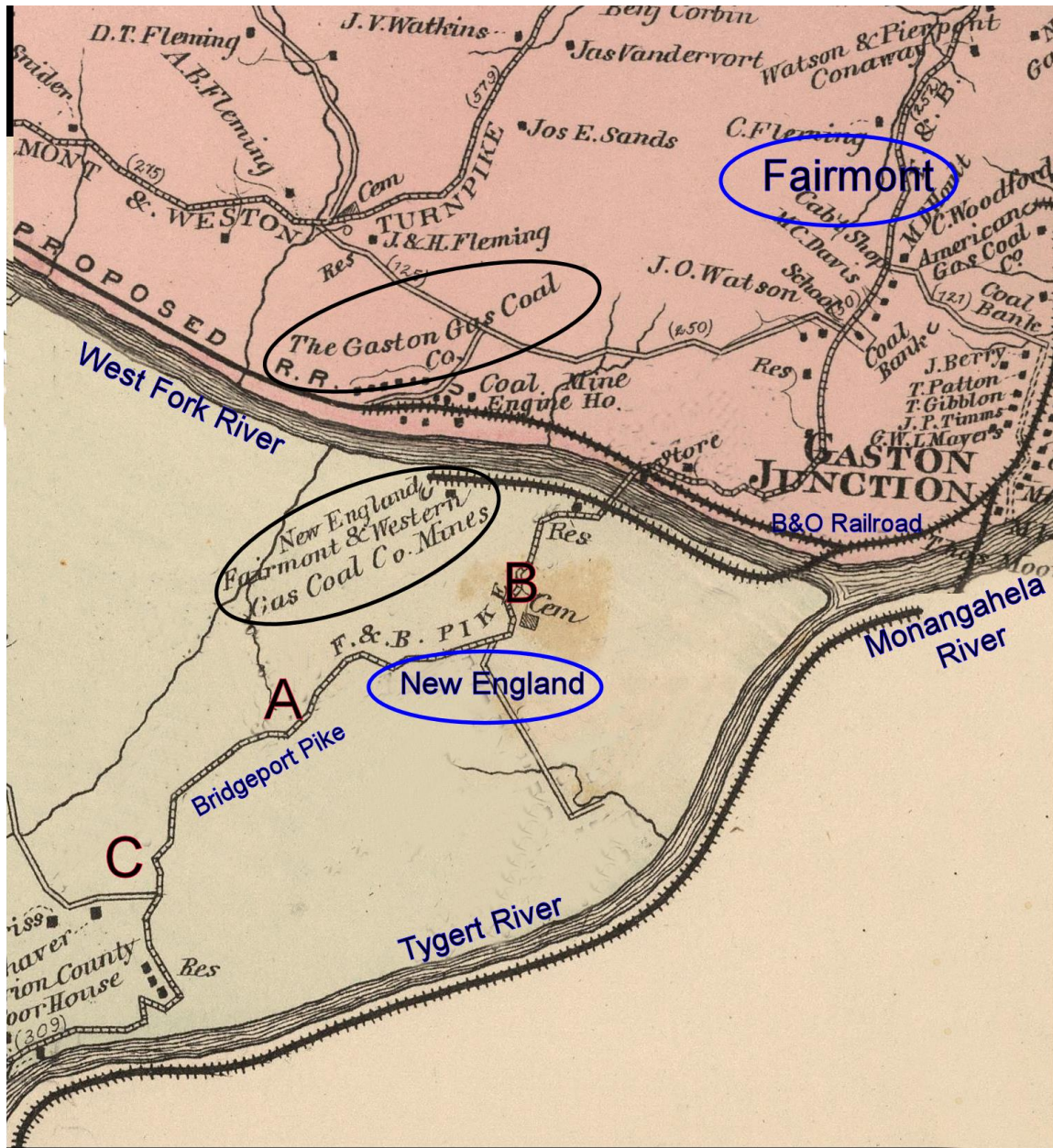
Today, the winding Fairmont & Bridgeport Pike operates under various names, including Beverly Road and Mary Lou Retton Drive. The old bridge across the West Fork River from Watson to Fairmont is gone, replaced by a new span on Interstate 250, one block to the east of the old bridge.

**‘C’** – The 1910 census shows that Vicie Donlan, another daughter of Alice and William Dodd, and Vicie’s husband Robert Donlan and were living on the same road as both her sister Bertha and her parents. Vicie and Robert Donlan lived in the last home on the Fairmont & Bridgeport Pike before the intersection with Monongah Road (today called Old Monongah Road). Their home was 17 homes south of her Dodd parents. Robert Donlan was a foreman at a coal mine.

Per 1910 census: Joseph Showalter, family #272 (first family on the Pike is family #253); William Dodd, family #314; Robert Donlan, family #332.



Watson, WV [google.com]



Fairmont and Vicinity, 1886  
[davidrumsey.com]

This is the only map that shows the cemetery that Lillian recalls as being behind her parent's Watson bungalow on the Bridgeport Pike. The cemetery helps to pinpoint the location of their home [point 'B' on map]. This is the home they were living in at the time of the 1910 census. Today, the cemetery is long gone but would be located a few home lots north of the intersection of the Fairmont Bridgeport Pike (Mary Lou Retton Drive) and Tiano Street.



### **Williamsburg, Blair Co., PA, circa 1911/1912**

Joseph was offered a job with his brother George Showalter to cut wood in the mountains of PA at the town of Williamsburg in Blair County, a few miles west of Huntingdon County where Joseph had grown up.

Joseph was to take eldest daughter Lillian with him to stay with George's wife, Sally. George and Sallie lived at Mt. Union, 12 miles east of the city of Huntingdon. Joseph's wife Bertha and youngest daughter Ethel were to stay behind with Bertha's sister, Inez, and her husband John Schaffer in Fairmont, WV.

Before leaving, Joseph took Lillian to Fairmont and outfitted her out with new clothes. Next an early she would not leave Mother!!! and so Joseph went to PA without any of the family.

### **Family Reunited at Williamsburg, circa 1911/1912**

Bertha, Lillian and Ethel eventually moved from West Virginia to Williamsburg, PA, to rejoin Joseph. At about 7 to age 8? Lillian, with younger sister Ethel and mother Bertha, took a train from Fairmont to Williamsburg. Joseph had rented a house at the end-of-a-row for the family that he called the 'Miele Stahles' (?) - but were quite nice as they were new.

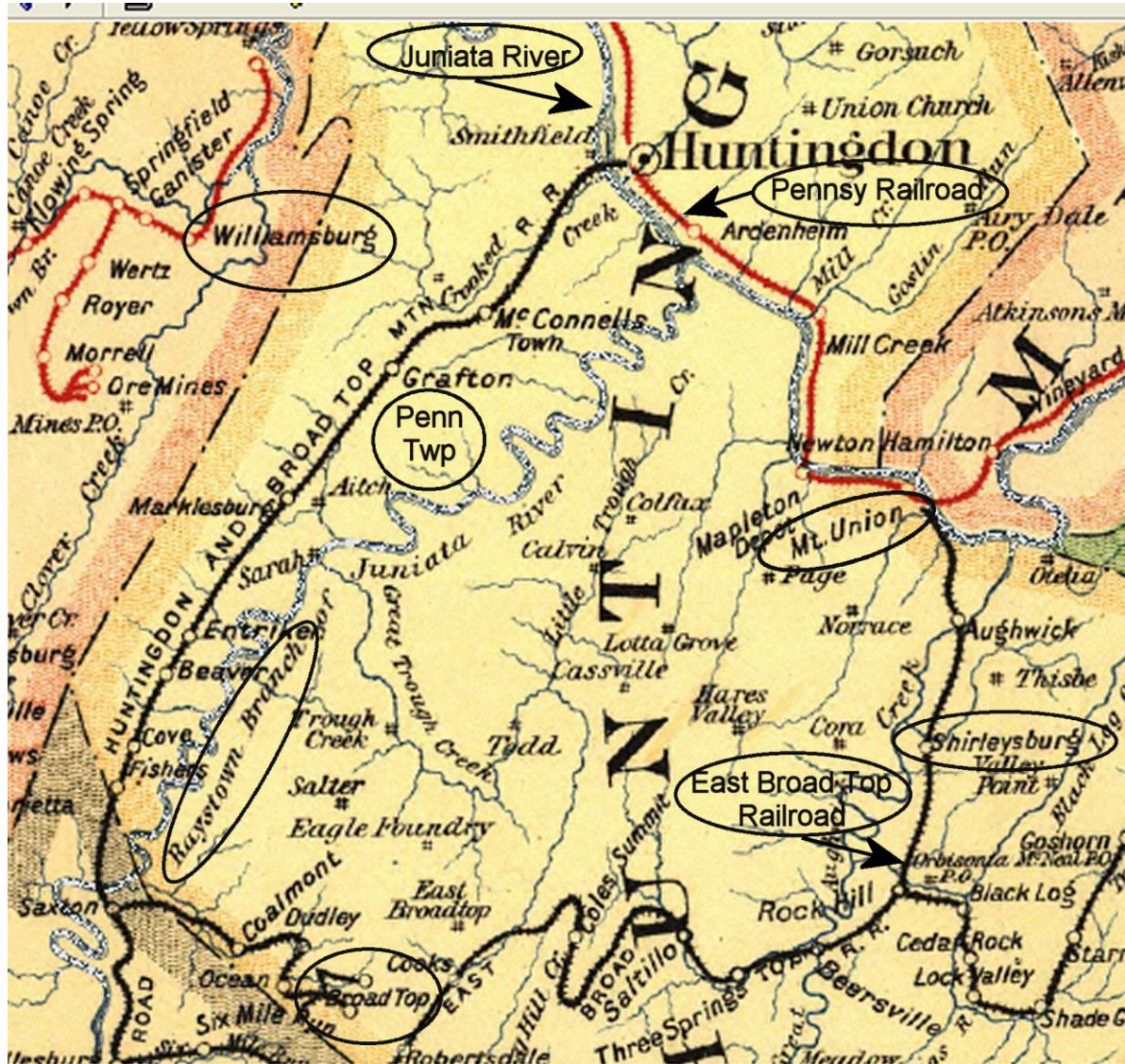
### **Miscarriage, circa 1912**

While living at Williamsburg, Bertha suffered a miscarriage. She ended up being hospitalized for 28 days. During her life, Bertha was pregnant six times and bore five children, of which Lillian and Ethel were the lone survivors into adulthood.

Ethel and Lillian were sent to stay with Sally, wife of Joseph's brother George, at Mt. Union, while Bertha recuperated. Lillian disliked Sally. Lillian and Ethel were then moved to the care of their Aunt Hannah Lower, a sister of Joseph, who lived close by in Williamsburg. Hannah had a boy and girl near the age of Lillian. Aunt Hannah insisted that Lillian take 3 1/2 or 4 year old Ethel to school with her and tend her. Ethel would not walk so Lillian would carry her on her back.

### **Mt. Union, circa 1912**

After Bertha recuperated from her miscarriage, Joseph Showalter and family left Williamsburg and settled in at Mt. Union where his brother George lived. At Mt. Union, Joseph began a long career with the Harbison Walker Refractories Company.



1895 Rail Map [www.reisenett.no/]

The Showalters relocated from Fairmont, West Virginia to **Williamsburg**, Blair County, Pa, and later, **Mt. Union**, Huntington County.





Lillian with sister Ethel, circa 1912

Lillian kept this image on her walls for her entire life.



Lillian Showalter 7-1912-<sup>mid</sup> Skinner  
 Ethel Showalter 5- married  
 R 2-2-3  
 Ethel 2 Children Dodd & Joan Algin  
 Lillian 1 Child David Skinner -  
 1912?

Lillian's writing, best guess seems to be 1912.



## **George Showalter**

George Showalter and his wife Sally lived at Mt. Union. George was 13 years older than his brother Joseph. The 1910 census shows that George, at age 53, was a laborer working for Harbison Walker. A few years later, his brother Joseph would begin a career with Harbison Walker.

Per the 1910 census, George and Sally, and the youngest of their children, were living in a neighborhood of Mt. Union called Ganister Hill. This was a group of homes built by Harbison-Walker and rented out to employees. The homes were built around the Harbison-Walker plant and extended up the side of Jacks Mountain behind the plant.

Ganister is the name of the rock that was mined from quarries by Harbison-Walker to make refractory brick. The kilns of the Harbison Walker plant lighted the sky 24 hours a day and small locomotives passed thru the neighborhood on their way up Jacks Mountain.

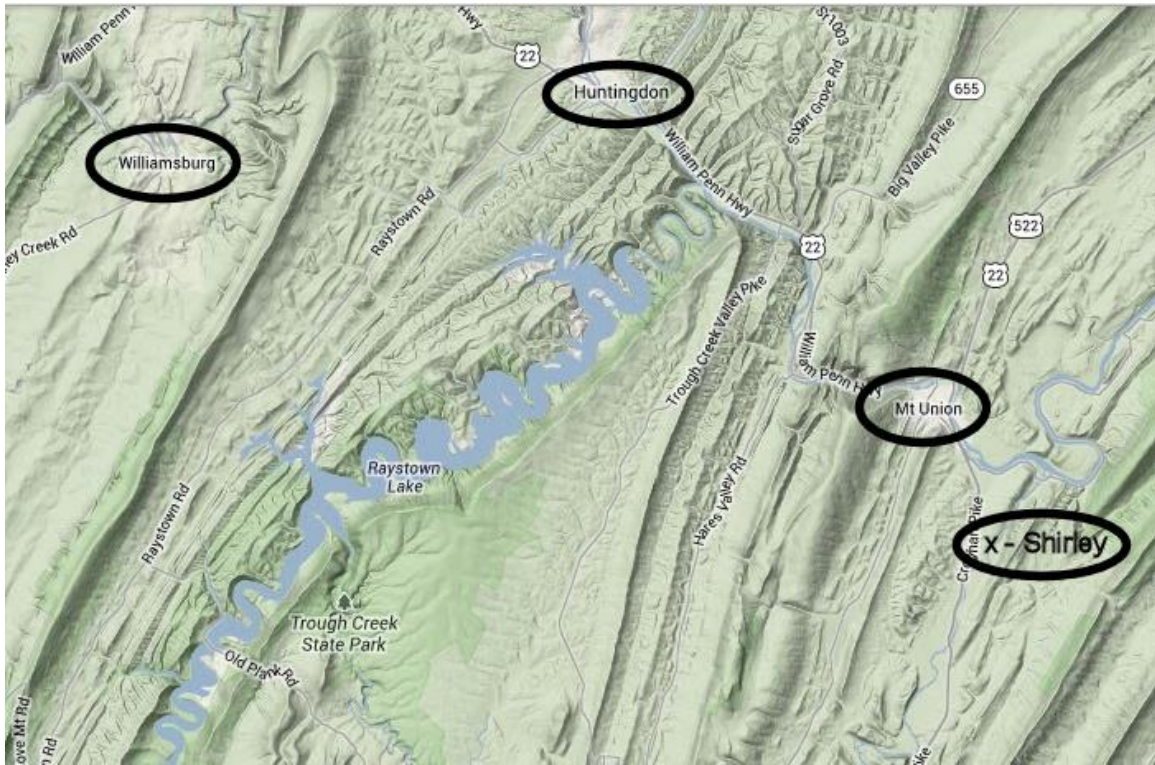
George must have left Harbison Walker shortly after the 1910 census. He and Joseph relocated to Williamsburg for their wood cutting opportunity about 1911 /1912. When they returned to Mt. Union after Bertha Showalter's recovered from her miscarriage, Joseph took a job with Harbison Walker, like his brother George had done in the past. Don't know if George returned to Harbison Walker as well.

Ten years later, the census of 1920 shows George Showalter living at 34 Water Street in the center of Mt. Union. His home sat between the tracks of the mainline Pennsylvania Railroad and the East Broad Top Railroad. Many of the homes on Water Street were built and owned by one of the brick works companies for rental to employees.

Per the 1920 census, George was now retired. One son living with him was employed at one of Mt. Union's three brick works.



George Showalter (2<sup>nd</sup> from right) and Family  
[ancestry.com; submitter – mtnrivers1]



Mt. Union and Vicinity  
[Google 2013]

George Showalter and wife Sallie lived **at Mt. Union**. Mt. Union is in Huntingdon County where George and Joseph Showalter had grown up. Joseph had been born near the city of **Huntingdon**, and spent his teen years at **Shirley** (Shirleyburg).

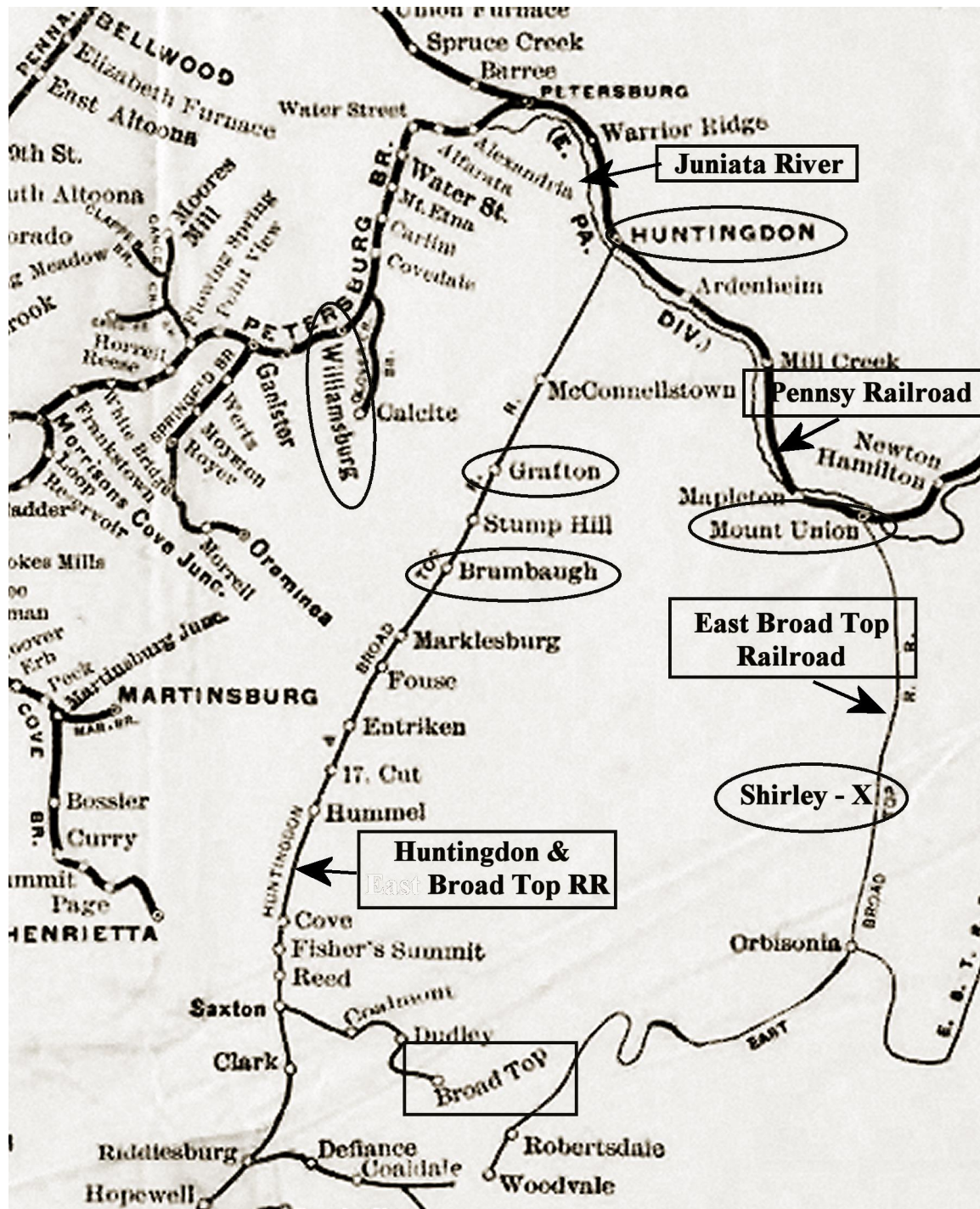
The census of 1910 shows that George was a laborer at Harbison Walker at Mt. Union. Younger brother Joseph and family were living in Watson, West Virginia at the time. George would have been age 53 at the time, and younger brother Joseph would have been age 40.

In the 1911/1912 time frame, Joseph and George worked together on a tree cutting opportunity at **Williamsburg**, Blair County, west of Huntingdon County. Joseph eventually rented a home at Williamsburg so his family could join him there from West Virginia.

In the 1911/1912 time frame (guesstimate), Bertha Showalter suffered a miscarriage and the Showalter children were shuffled around to different Showalter relatives while George and Joseph continued working.

In the 1912 time frame, the tree cutting came to an end. George Showalter returned home to Mt. Union. Joseph and family joined him there. Joseph got a job with Harbison Walker, where George had once worked. Joseph went on to work for Harbison Walker from 1912 to 1921 in various towns across Pennsylvania.

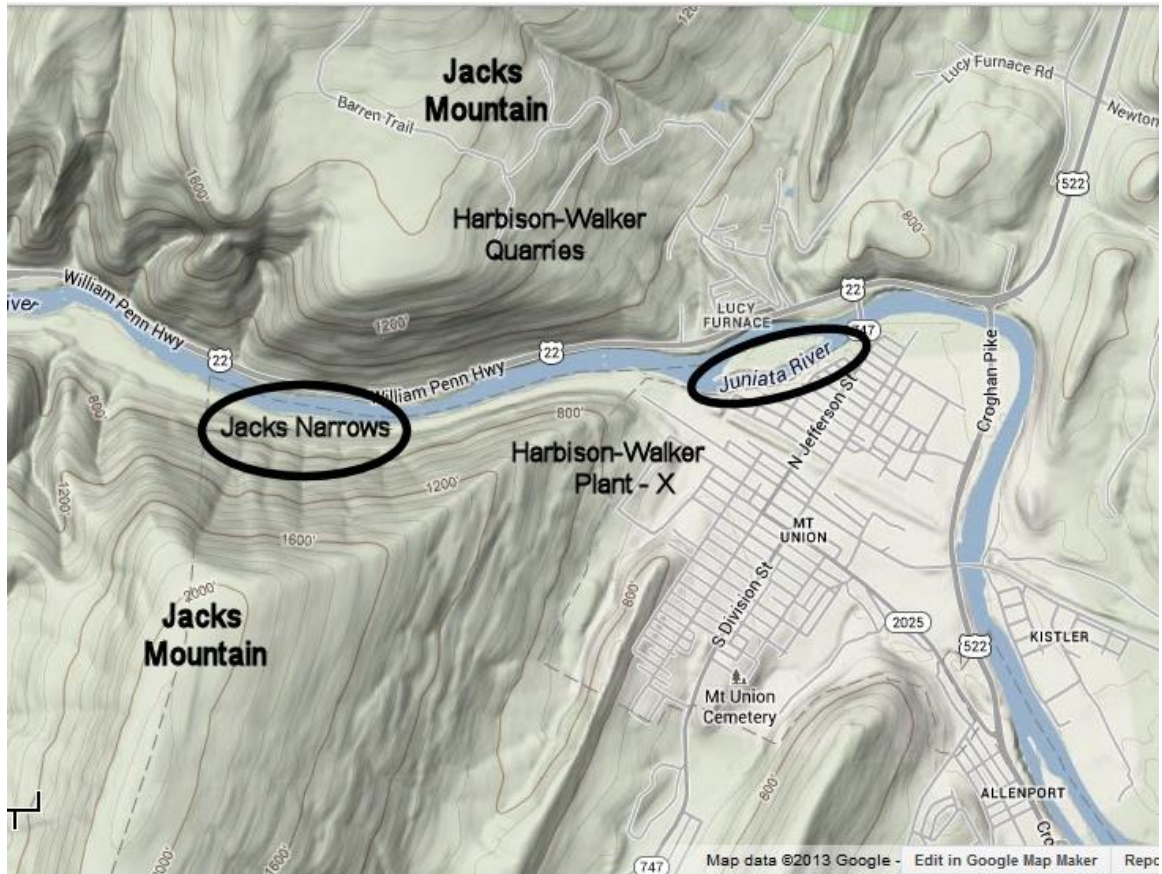




Huntingdon and Vicinity, 1911 Rail Map  
[Mapmaker.Rutgers.Edu]

The brick works at **Mt. Union** utilized a large number of coal-fired kilns. The coal for the kilns was mined at the **Broad Top** Mountain to the south and transported to Mt. Union via the narrow-gauge East Broad Top Railroad. Finished brick product from the kiln plants was shipped out to the rest of the world via the Pennsylvania Railroad.





Mt. Union, PA and Harbison-Walker  
[Google 2013]

The Juniata River cuts thru Jacks Mountain at **Jacks Narrows**.

The river flows to the east (left to right) thru the towns of Huntingdon (off map to the left) and then thru Jacks Narrows and the town of **Mt. Union**. The river continues to flow east to Pennsylvania's capital city of Harrisburg (off the map many miles to the right) where it joins the Susquehanna River as a major tributary.

Harbison Walker employed Joseph Showalter, his brother George Showalter, and a son of George. The Harbison Walker plant and kilns were located at the outskirts of Mt. Union on the south side of the river. Their quarries were located on the north side of the river. A small railroad connected the quarries with the plant via a bridge at Jacks Narrows.



Mt. Union, PA [google, 2013]

The **Juniata River** runs east through the town of **Mt. Union**.

The mainline tracks of the Pennsylvania Railroad (today Conrail ) run along the Juniata River at Mt. Union ultimately connecting Pittsburgh to the west with Philadelphia to the east.

The narrow-guage East Broad Top Railroad (3' wide tracks) brought coal north from the Broad Top Mountain (off bottom of map to the south) to the Pennsylvania Railroads' yards at Mt. Union.

## **Harbison-Walker Refractories Company**

Harbison-Walker specialized in the manufacture of refractory materials. These are brick-type materials, rich in silica, that can withstand high temperatures for use in lining the piping and walls of coke ovens, steel furnaces, etc. Much of their products were sold to the coke and steel mills in Pittsburgh. Harbison Walker was actually a large company with quarries and kilns across Pennsylvania.

The main ingredient for refractory material is ganister rock – sandstone rich in silicon dioxide (quartz). The rock is crushed into a powder, combined with clay to bond it into bricks of the desired shape, and then baked in kilns.

Most of the ganister rock came from quarries operated by Harbison-Walker on Jacks Mountain bordering Mt. Union. At 2300 ft. of height, Jacks Mountain is tall by Pennsylvania standards and helped to give Mt. Union its name - “Union of the Mountains”.

Harbison-Walker was one of three brick companies located at Mt. Union. The brick companies were experiencing a period of huge growth, as was the city of Mt. Union, as labor shortages drew workers to the town. The Harbison-Walker Refractories Company was the largest of Mt. Union’s three brick works and was world-renowned in the international refractory brick business for most of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

## **Quarry Operations**

Mt. Union sits along the banks of the Juniata River and at the base of a long mountain range called Jacks Mountain. The Juniata River cuts thru Jacks Mountain in impressive fashion at a gorge called ‘Jacks Narrows’ located at the edge of Mt. Union. The quarries of Harbison Walker were located in the steep cliffs at Jacks Narrows on the opposite side of the Juniata River from Mt. Union.

A railroad bridge was built across the Juniata River at Jacks Narrows to connect the quarries in the mountains to the Harbison Walker plant at Mt. Union. Small locomotives, called ‘dinkeys’, carried men up the side of Jacks Mountain from Mt. Union, passing through the neighborhood of company housing where many of the workers lived, crossing the high bridge across the Juniata River, and then traveling further up Jacks Mountain to the location of the quarries. During this process, the trains repeatedly moved forward and in reverse through a series of switch-backs to gain altitude. The trains then carried the ore from the quarries back down to the plant and kilns of Harbison Walker at Mt. Union.

At Harbison-Walker's plant, ganister rock containing silicon dioxide was mixed with clay from surface clay mines. The resulting clay mixture was molded into a variety of shapes and fired in coal-fired kilns.

The coal needed to fire the kilns came from local coals mines located to the south of Mt. Union at the Broad Top Mountain. The coal was transported to Mt. Union by the narrow-gauge East Broad Top Railroad. Finished silica brick produced at Harbison Walker and the two other brick companies at Mt. Union were shipped around the world via the Pennsylvania Railroad, which ran along the banks of the Juniata River. The railroad was situated on top of the old canal along the Juniata River that had been built in the early 1800's, before the age of the railroads.

Silica brick was a growth industry at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and three large companies were headquartered at Mt. Union. The population of Mt. Union increased by a factor of three between 1900 and 1920 to feed the industry. In the process, Mt. Union became the 'silica brick capital of the world'. World War I soldiers were surprised to find themselves walking on brick stamped 'Mt. Union, Pa' when they served in Europe.

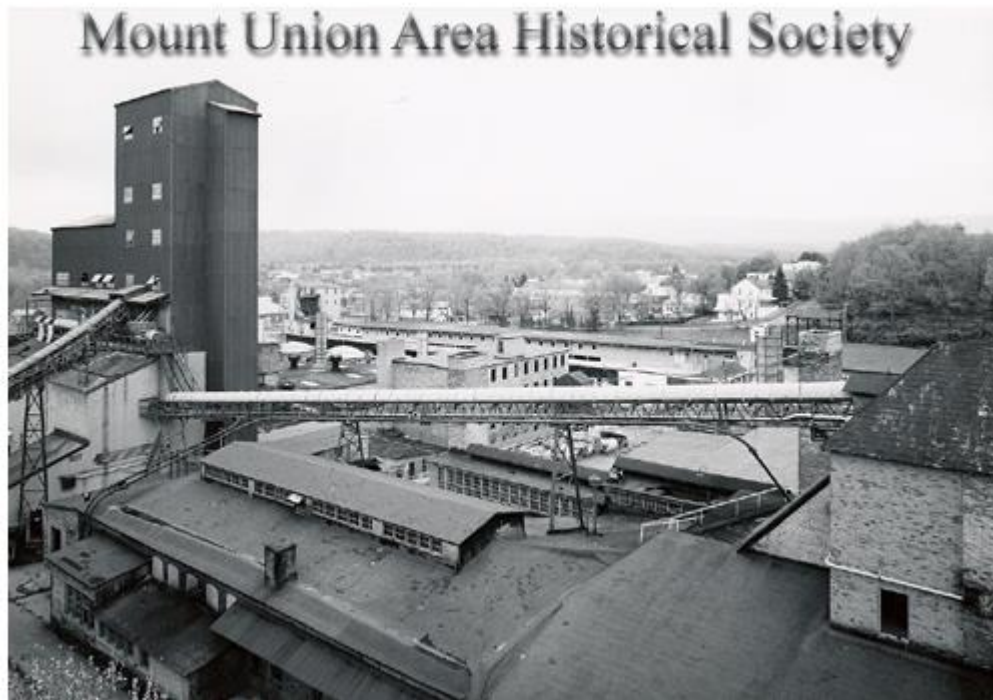
Joseph Showalter, hired at Harbison-Walker in the 1912 time frame, was a part of the expanding brick industry. He was hired to do blasting at the quarries. It was dangerous work – Lillian recalls he was laid up for quite a while after a rock hit him in the leg.

The main plant of Harbison-Walker opened in 1899 on W. Shirley Street in Mt. Union and operated until 1985. Most of the buildings have now been removed. However, the site is on a list of US Historic Places.

At Jacks Narrows, hiking trails have replaced the quarries. A favorite hiking challenge is the thousand stone steps originally placed on the mountain by Harbison-Walker for workers to use when the train was not operational. The scars on the mountain still remain.

Mt. Union is scarred as well. Its industry is long-gone.





Harbison-Walker Refractories, Mt. Union, 1988 (gone today)  
[[huntingdonheritage.org](http://huntingdonheritage.org)]

Mt. Union went through three growth phases in its history. The first was the canal era (1831-1850) that resulted from the building of the Pennsylvania Canal. In Huntingdon County, the canal was situated along the banks of the Juniata River. The second phase was the railroad era (1850-1900) that resulted from the construction of the mainline tracks of the Pennsylvania Railroad across Pennsylvania. In Huntingdon County, much of the Pennsy tracks were situated on the site of the old canal along the banks of the Juniata River. Mt. Union's third growth phase was the refractory era of 1900-1944 that made Mt. Union the 'silica brick capital' of the world'.



Looking west from Mt. Union to Jacks Mountain, circa 1907  
{home.Comcast.net/~vagelkeller}

The Juniata River (not visible at right) cuts thru Jacks Narrows at the mountain pass, upper right.

Harbison-Walker mined ganister rock at Jacks Narrows and processed it into silica brick at facilities located at the base of the mountain. The smoke in the rear right of the photo is the location of the Harbison-Walker plant and kilns.

Another of Mt. Union's numerous brick kilns is somewhat visible at the left margin.

Foreground – Interchange Yard operated by the local East Broad Top Railroad at the junction with the Pennsylvania Railroad.

The East Broad Top was narrow-gauge (3 ft. wide tracks); The Pennsy was standard-gauge. The tracks at the Interchange Yard handled both gauges – note the large and small boxcars on the same tracks. Much of the coal brought to Mt. Union by the East Broad Top was utilized to feed the kilns of Harbison-Walker and the other two refractory companies. The finished refractory silica brick was shipped out on the Pennsy Railroad.

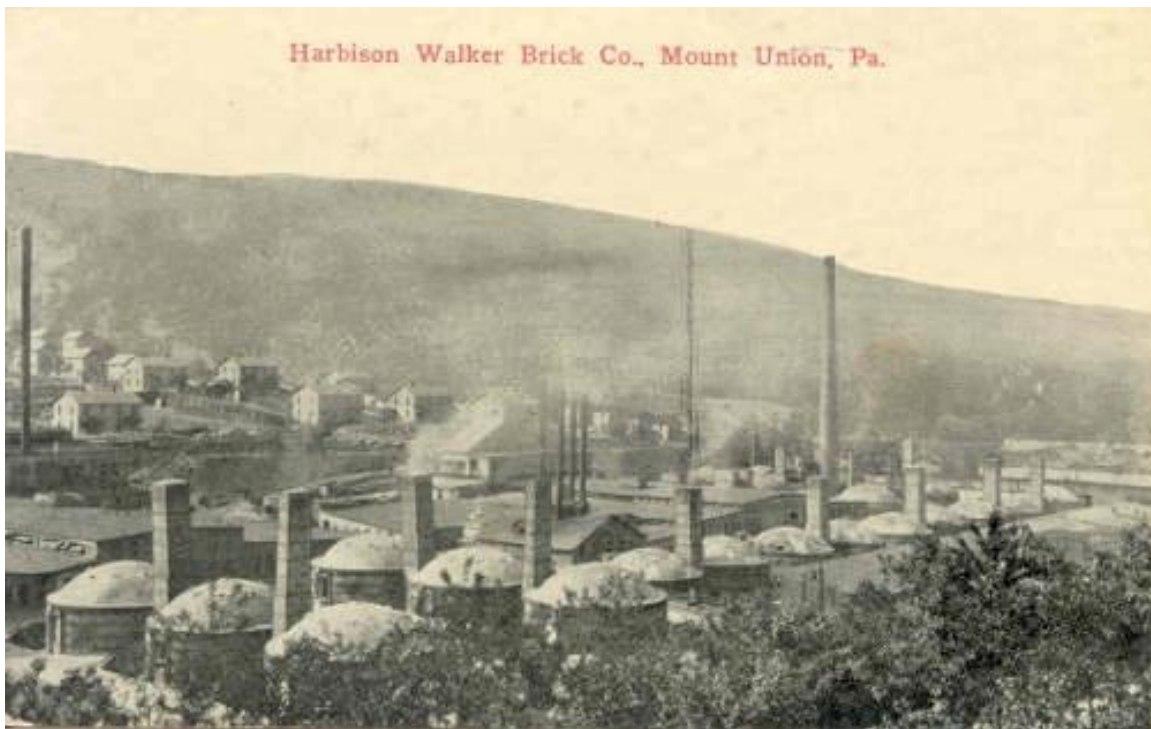


Harbison-Walker Refractories, Mt. Union  
[[www.libraries.psu.edu/](http://www.libraries.psu.edu/)]

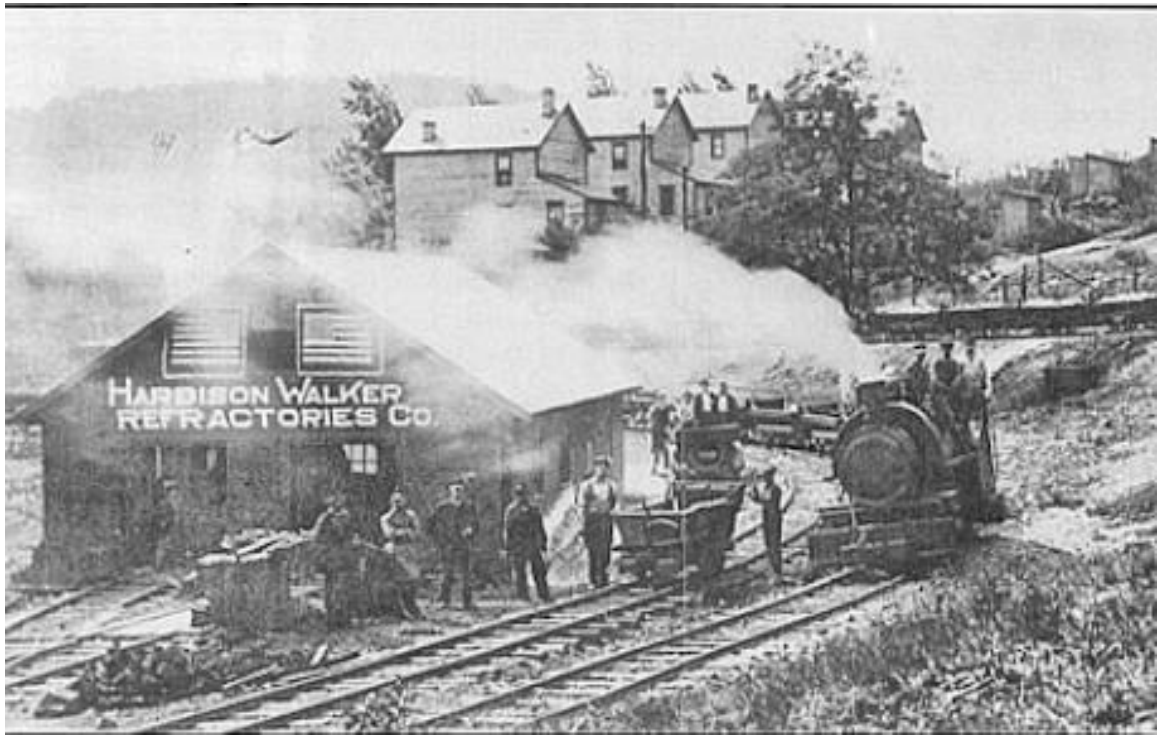




[JSTARS – ebay.sellers]



[californiabrick society.com]

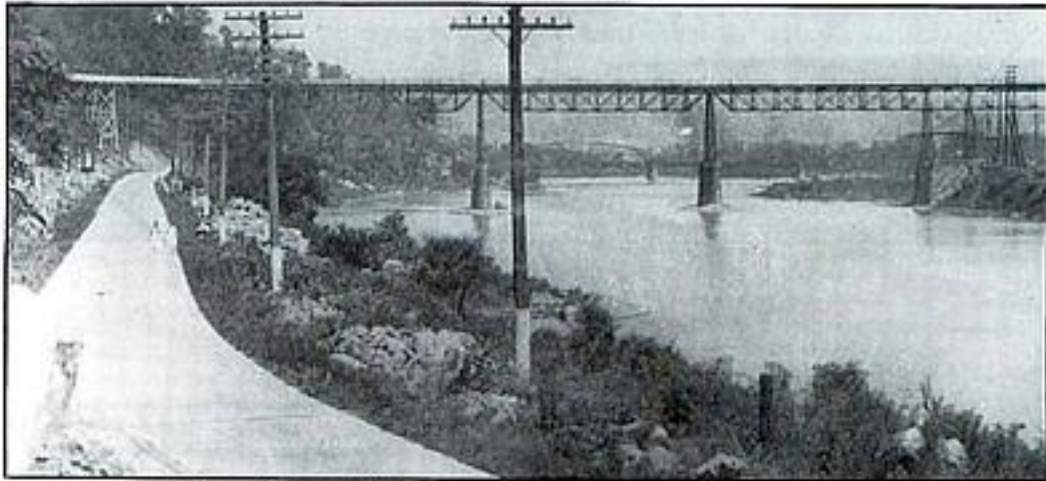


Harbison Walker circa World War I

[Rail Model Journal, October, 1990]



*At one time, the Harbison-Walker Refractories Company fielded quite a roster of these 3-foot gauge O-4-OT dinkeys to trundle ganister rock from its extensive quarry on Jack's Mountain, across the Juniata River, to its silica brick plant at Mount Union. Obtaining any definitive data on these diminutive locomotives at this late date would be a formidable task. — Mount Union Area Historical Society*



*This is the first dinkey bridge across the Juniata River at Mount Union. After the span toppled into the river during the St. Patrick's Day Flood of March 1936, Harbison-Walker replaced it with a much more substantial structure. U.S. Route 22, in the left foreground, while paved in this view, has undergone dramatic improvements since this photo was taken. — Mount Union Area Historical Society*





East Broad Top Railroad [railfan.com]



Dual-Gauge Tracks, Railroad Yards, Mt. Union [ebtrr.com/pics/RShoup]



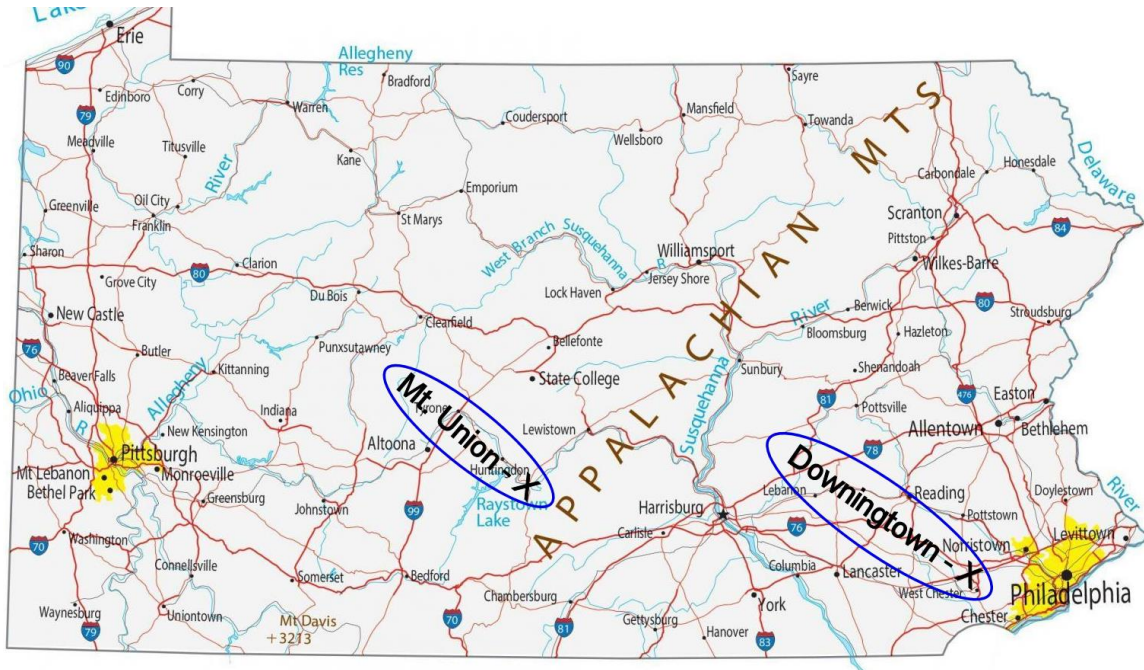


Dual Gage Tracks, East Broad Top Railroad, just outside Mt. Union

[KDS, 2013]

## Downingtown, Chester County, circa 1917

In 1917, Harbison Walker opened a quarry in eastern Pennsylvania near the town of Downingtown, a suburb of Philadelphia. Joseph Showalter was asked to help to open and run the quarry, so the Showalters relocated 160 miles east from Mt. Union to Downingtown.



Map of Pennsylvania  
Mt. Union and Downingtown

Joseph Showalter and family relocated from **Mt. Union** to **Downingtown**, circa 1917, where Joseph helped to open and run a new quarry for Harbison Walker.

## Confirmation of Lillian's Information

Per a 1936 book by John George Staack entitled Spirit Leveling in Vermont, 1896 – 1935:

*“In the quartzite of the North Valley Hills, about 1 ¼ miles north of Downingtown, quarries were opened by the Harbison Walker Refractories Company in 1917. Later a firebrick plant with six 40 foot kilns was built on the Brandywine Creek 1 mile north of town.”*

Per The Pennsylvania Geological Survey, 4<sup>th</sup> Series, Bulletin M3, “The Silica Refractories of Pennsylvania [google books]

*Harbison - Walker Refractories Company.*

*Downingtown*

*The brick plant and the quarry adjacent to it were opened in 1917. ....*

*There are six 40- foot kilns with a capacity of about 175,000 brick each . A new drier was recently installed which is expected to dry brick in from 12 to 16 hours. ....*

*The quarry in the hillside just east of the brick plant is connected by tram road and the rock is hauled by dinky engines.*

## Need For Labor

the data is to be given  
An urgent request for labor was received from the Harbison-Walker Refractories company. The plants of the company at Downingtown and Mt. Union are particularly in need of men and unless men can be obtained soon the plants will be forced to shut down. So urgent is the need that foreigners, even Austrians and Germans, will be accepted. Plants of the company at Mill Hall, Lock Haven, Philipsburg, Clearfield, Monument, Templeton, Blandsburg and Chester can also use men. Foreigners can secure work at all plants except the one at Chester.

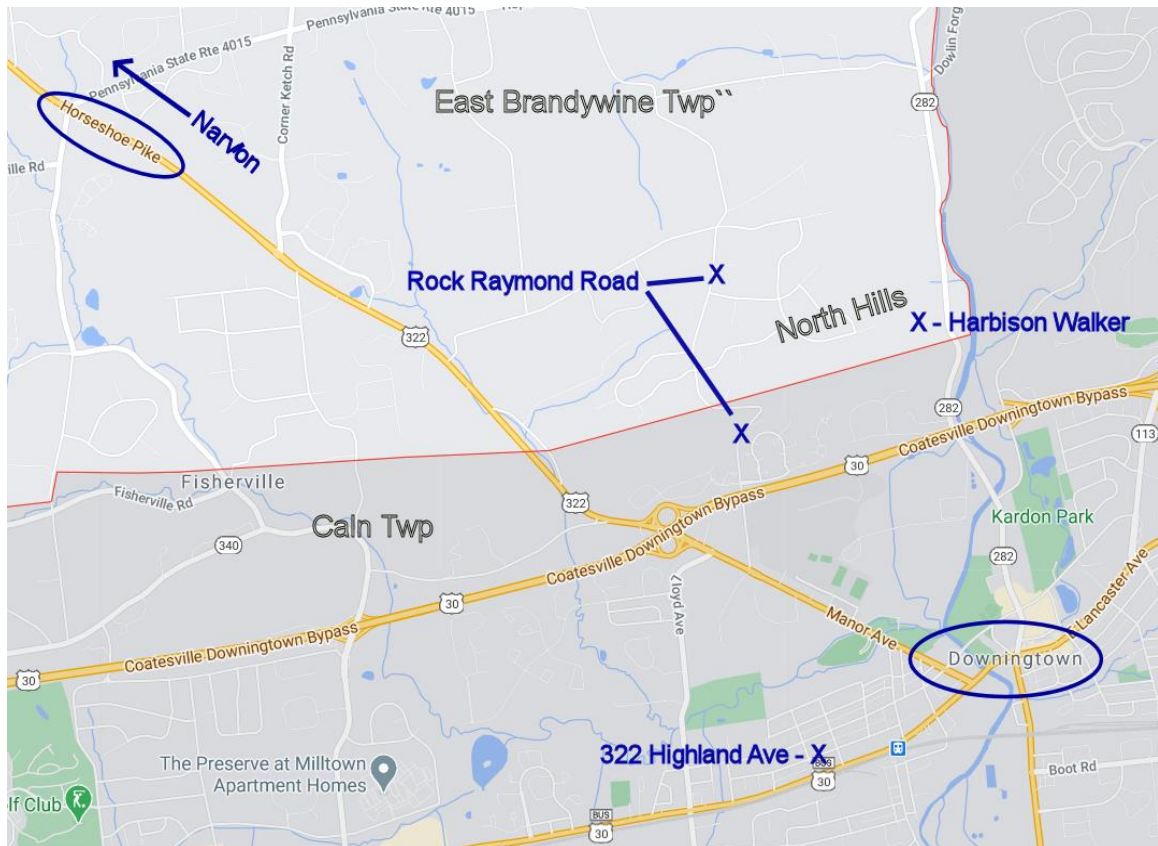
Chester Times, 27 Apr 1918 [newspapers.com]



## Rock Raymond

The Harbison Walker quarry was located about a mile north of Downingtown in East Brandywine Township. A brick plant, with six kilns, was later built along the banks of the East Brandywine River, connected to the quarry with a short tramway railroad.

Per Lillian, the family settled in at a neighborhood called Rock Raymond. They rented a home on Rock Raymond Road just a short distance from the Harbison Walker operations.



Downingtown, PA and Vicinity

The Showalters lived on Rock Raymond Road, 1917-1920. The school at Downingtown was a 3 mile walk. The family relocated to Narvon in 1921, where Joseph opened another new quarry.

Lillian was left behind to finish her schooling at Downingtown, staying with the family of George Good, who had a farm in Caln Twp. Lillian's parents and sister Ethel returned to Downingtown in 1922, with Joseph eventually purchasing a home he helped to build at 322 Highland Ave.



## Schooling

Ethel and Lillian attended the school in Downingtown. Per Lillian, the school was a 3 mile walk from their home.

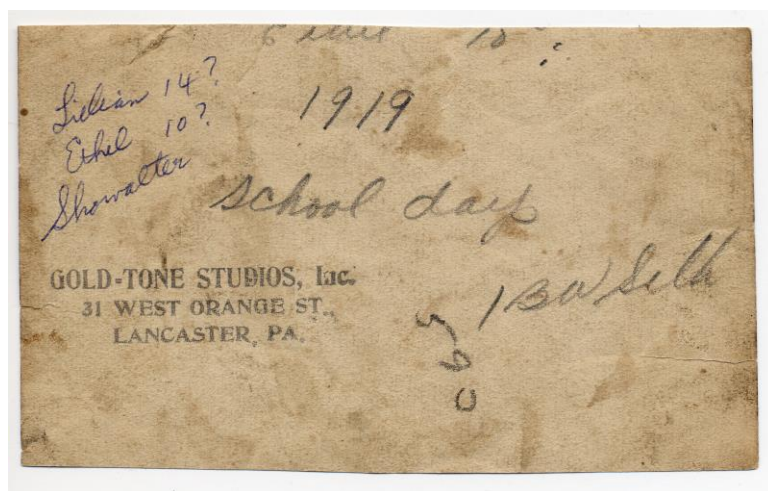
At age 14, Lillian entered the seventh grade at Downingtown in the fall of 1918. This was probably Lillian's second year in the Downingtown school system, following the move of the family from Mt. Union in central PA.

Decades later, in 1991, Lillian recalled that the Downingtown school provided her with her only good education in life. Lillian specifically recalled for me the name of her favorite teacher, Helen Fernald, from memory – the same person as shown on her report card reproduced below.

S. Helen Fernald, born 1897, was just six years older than Lillian, but left quite an impression.



School Days, Downingtown, circa 1919  
Lillian (third from right, upper row) and sister Ethel (far right)



Lillian's writing with Annette guessing ages; top line unreadable

## 1918 Influenza Epidemic

1918 was a year of the flu epidemic. Lillian wrote that Bertha, Lillian, and Ethel were sick - 14-year-old Lillian was “very” sick. The family flu recalled by Lillian went down in history as the 1918 Influenza Pandemic:

Lillian’s report card for the 7<sup>th</sup> grade (1918/1919 school year) shows many days of absences each month. She ended up missing two weeks of schooling, but was told the lost days did not have to be made up.

.” [Per [virus.Stanford.edu/uda](http://virus.Stanford.edu/uda).]

“The influenza pandemic of 1918-1919 killed more people than the Great War, known today as World War I (WWI), at somewhere between 20 and 40 million people. It has been cited as the most devastating epidemic in recorded world history. More people died of influenza in a single year than in four-years of the Black Death Bubonic Plague from 1347 to 1351. Known as "Spanish Flu" or "La Grippe" the influenza of 1918-1919 was a global disaster

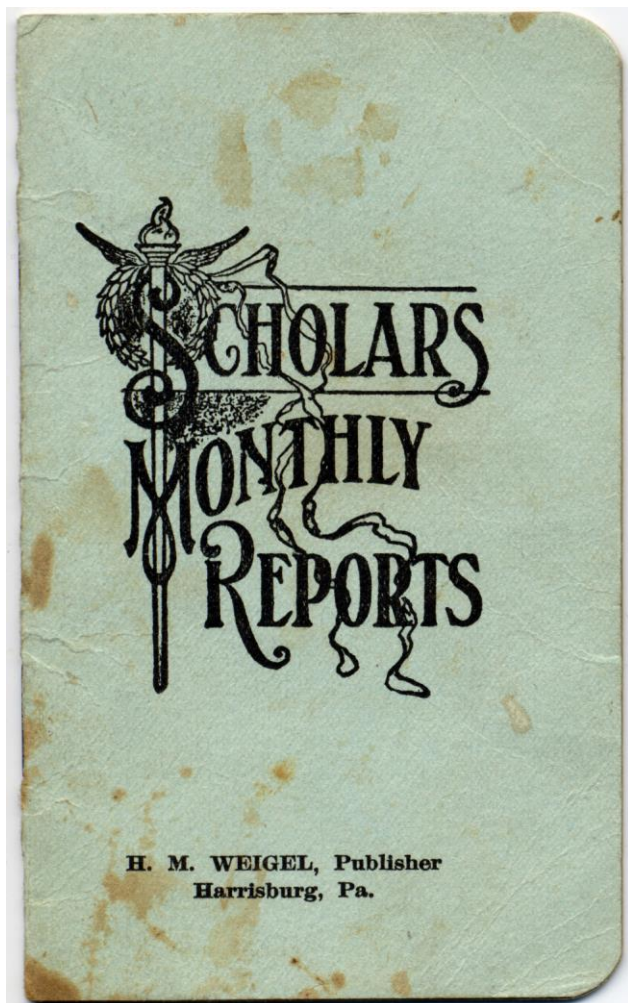
[per [www.downingtowntownareahistoricalociety.org](http://www.downingtowntownareahistoricalociety.org)]:

“More than 40 people died here during 1918 flu epidemic The worldwide influenza epidemic-- described as the “greatest medical holocaust in history”-- reached the Downingtown area in early October 1918, .

The borough’s schools were closed for several weeks, after over 300 students and six teachers came down with the disease. Churches, fire stations, and lodge rooms also were closed by the Downingtown Board of Health. By mid-October 1918, the epidemic had subsided, according to the Board of Health, which reported that more than 1,500 area residents had caught the disease and over 40 of them had died from it. One reason for the rapid decline of the lethality of the disease was because doctors got better at preventing pneumonia that developed after victims had contracted the flu virus. ...

About 28 percent of the U.S. population contracted the disease, and more than 500,000 Americans died from it.”





Only a few pages of Lillian's 7<sup>th</sup> grade report card reproduced here

## TO PARENTS OR GUARDIANS.

This report is sent to parents or guardians after the close of each school month. After inspecting the items reported please write your name in the proper place and return to the teacher.

As this is intended to be a complete summary of all that pertains to your child's school-life we hope that you will regard it with more than a mere passing interest and that you will co-operate with the teacher in securing the best possible results so far as relates to progress.

Your frequent presence in the school room would be very encouraging to both teacher and pupil while it would also give you a clearer understanding of our aims and purposes.

Recognizing the importance of the school and home to stand united your earnest co-operation in our efforts to raise the standard of our schools, and to extend their usefulness, is most respectfully solicited.

RULES AND REGULATIONS  
RELATING TO PUPILS.

Pupils are required to be regular and punctual in attendance.

No pupil shall leave the school room during school hours, nor the school grounds, without permission from his or her teacher.

Any pupil who shall in any wise cut, deface or destroy school property, shall be liable to such punishment as the misdemeanor merits.

Pupils are requested to be respectful and obedient to those in authority. Rudeness in speech or action to schoolmates and pedestrians is forbidden.

Pupils who purposely absent themselves from reviews shall not be promoted without a rigid examination by the teacher or Principal.

100 signifies perfect; 90, very good; 80, good; 70, medium; 60, poor; 50, unsatisfactory; A, signifies 95 to 100; B, 90 to 95; C, 80 to 90; D, 70 to 80; E, 60 to 70; F, unsatisfactory.

## REPORT for the School Year

Beginning Sept 2, 1918

-of-

Lillian Showalter

A PUPIL

of

Seventh Grade

Class

Harmony SchoolWalen Darnald  
Teacher.(COPYRIGHTED)  
PUBLISHED AND SOLD BY

H. M. Weigel, Harrisburg, Pa.

## Percentage and Recapitulation

For School Month Ending Sept. 27, 1918

Let us cherish our Public Schools as the looms, and our Teachers as the weavers, who weave the wondrous destiny for the Nation.  
—John Fiske

## PERCENTAGE IN VARIOUS BRANCHES

Reading, - - -	91	Book-Keeping, - - -	
Spelling, - - -	96	Algebra, - - -	
Writing, - - -	87	Geometry, - - -	
Drawing, - - -	88	Physics, - - -	
Language or Gram., - - -	92	Physical Geography, - - -	
Phys. and Hygiene, - - -	92	Chemistry, - - -	
Arithmetic, - - -	88	Botany, - - -	
Geography, - - -	92	Geology, - - -	
Mental Arithmetic, - - -		Zoology, - - -	
Composition, - - -	91	Rhetoric, - - -	
History, - - -	85	Lit'ure and Classics, - - -	92
Music, - - -	95	.....History, - - -	
Civics, - - -		Latin, - - -	
Agriculture, - - -	92	German, - - -	

## RECAPITULATION

Monthly Average, - - -	91	General Behavior, - - -	99
Application, - - -	96	Care of Books, - - -	92
Behavior, - - -	94	Days Absent, - - -	1
Punctuality, - - -		Times Tardy, - - -	0

J. B. Showalter

Name of Parent

## Percentage and Recapitulation

For School Month Ending December 3, 1918

"Never put off till to-morrow what you can do to-day."  
—Jefferson

## PERCENTAGE IN VARIOUS BRANCHES

Reading, - - -	91	Book-Keeping, - - -	
Spelling, - - -	97	Algebra, - - -	
Writing, - - -	88	Geometry, - - -	
Drawing, - - -	93	Physics, - - -	
Language or Gram., - - -	80	Physical Geography, - - -	
Phys. and Hygiene, - - -	96	Chemistry, - - -	
Arithmetic, - - -	95	Botany, - - -	
Geography, - - -	93	Geology, - - -	
Mental Arithmetic, - - -		Zoology, - - -	
Composition, - - -	93	Rhetoric, - - -	
History, - - -	86	Lit'ure and Classics, - - -	92
Music, - - -	95	.....History, - - -	
Civics, - - -		Latin, - - -	
Agriculture, - - -	93	German, - - -	

## RECAPITULATION

Monthly Average, - - -	92	Term Average, - - -	99
Application, - - -	98	Care of Books, - - -	94
Behavior, - - -	96	Days Absent, - - -	3
Punctuality, - - -		Times Tardy, - - -	0

J. B. Showalter

Name of Parent



## New School Code of Pennsylvania

Attendance of Pupils.

Section 1414. Every child having a legal residence in this Commonwealth, as therein provided, between the ages of eight and sixteen years is required to attend a day school in which the common English branches provided for in this Act are taught and every parent guardian or other person in this Commonwealth having control or charge of any child or children between the ages of eight and sixteen years is required to send such child or children to a day school in which the common English branches are taught, and such child or children shall attend such school continuously through the entire term during which the public elementary schools in their respective districts shall be in session. Provided further, that the board of schools directors in any district of the fourth class may at a meeting held at any time before the opening of the school term reduce the period of compulsory attendance to not less than 70 per centum of the school term as fixed in such district, in which case, however, the board of school directors must at the same time fix the period for the compulsory attendance to begin.

Section 1415. The board of school directors of any school district in this Commonwealth may, upon satisfactory evidence being furnished to it, showing that any child or children are prevented from attending school, or from application to study on account of any mental, physical or other urgent reasons, excuse such child or children from attending school as required by the provisions of this Act; but the term of "urgent reasons" shall be strictly construed and shall not permit of irregular attendance. Every principal or teacher in any public, private or other school, may, for reasons enumerated above, excuse any child for non-attendance during temporary periods.

Section 1416. The provisions of this Act requiring regular attendance shall not apply to any child between the ages of fourteen and sixteen years who can read and write intelligently and is regularly engaged in any useful and lawful employment or service during the time the public schools are in session, and who holds an employment certificate issued according to law.—Approved May 18, 1911.

Certificate of Promotion

This Certifies, That Lillian Showalter  
has attained the required standard for promotion and is hereby  
by transferred to the Eighth grade.  
class, room.....

Given this 27 day of May 1919

Walter Darnald

Principal, or Supt.

Teacher

Average of Examinations 91 1/3

## The 1920 Census

The census shows the Showalter family living in a rental home in Upper Brandywine Township, just north of Downingtown. They were living on Rock Raymond Road, close to the intersection with Donlins Forge Road.

The Harbison Walker brick works was located a short distance from their home. The census recorded that Joseph was a foreman at the 'Brick Works'. Their neighbor Howard Good was a foreman there as well.

## Fatal Quarry Accident

Lillian often told the story of the accident that brought an end to her father's work in the quarry. A metal cable snapped while pulling a heavy ore car. The ricocheting cable killed a young man standing near Joseph Showalter and splattered blood on Joseph's clothes.

Joseph went home, burned his clothes, and never returned to the quarry. Per Lillian "The quarry was closed as Joseph had run the operation."

There is historical information to corroborate this family tale.

## Howard H. Good

The man killed by the cable at the quarry was apparently Howard H. Good.

Howard Good was a neighbor of the Showalters on Rock Raymond Road. Like Joseph Showalter, Howard Good had been a foreman at Harbison-Walker.

On April 20, a few months after Howard was recorded in the 1920 census, he was killed at the quarry. His Death Certificate says:

*"Quarry Accident"*  
*"accidentally killed by being struck by steel cable"*

This death record is identical to the quarry incident recalled to me by Lillian. Howard died in East Brandywine Township where he lived and worked.

Howard Good was a laborer who had done many odd jobs in his life. He left behind a wife and six children



---

## ONE KILLED; ONE HURT AT DOWNINGTOWN QUARRY

---

**Broken Wire Cable struck H. H.  
Good on Head**

---

Downingtown, April 22.—Howard H. Good, was instantly killed and Acre Jacobs, seriously injured yesterday while at work in the Harbison and Walker quarries north of this town. A broken wire cable which struck Good on the head caused his death and inflicted severe injuries on Jacobs.

Several men in the quarry were moving small cars on a track by means of a long wire cable. One of the hooks, attaching the cable to the car, broke and the heavy strand struck Good on the head, fracturing his skull and causing almost instant death. Deputy Coroner Johnson, who conducted an inquest yesterday afternoon, found a verdict of accidental death.

Mr. Good, who was a son of Samuel Good, this town, is survived by his wife and six small children. A sister and several brothers also survive.

---

Form V. S. No. 5-100M-10-14-18.

1. PLACE OF DEATH.  
County of Chester  
Township of East Downingtown  
or  
Borough of  
or  
City of

CERTIFICATE OF DEATH  
Registration District No. 350  
Primary Registration District No. 2380

COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH  
BUREAU OF VITAL STATISTICS  
File No. 48122  
Registered No. 77

2. FULL NAME Howard H Good

3. SEX Male  
4. COLOR OR RACE White  
5. SINGLE, MARRIED, WIDOWED OR DIVORCED married  
(Write the word.)

6. DATE OF BIRTH May 16 1882  
(Month) (Day) (Year)

7. AGE 37 yrs. 11 mos. 26 ds. If LESS than 1 day how many.....hrs. or .....min?

8. OCCUPATION  
(a) Trade, profession, or, particular kind of work Farmer  
(b) General nature of industry, business, or establishment in which employed (or employer)

9. BIRTHPLACE (State or Country) Downingtown

10. NAME OF FATHER Samuel Good

11. BIRTHPLACE OF FATHER (State or Country) Chester Co

12. MAIDEN NAME OF MOTHER Alice Walton

13. BIRTHPLACE OF MOTHER (State or Country)

14. THE ABOVE IS TRUE TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE.  
(Informant) Samuel Good  
(Address) East Downingtown

15. Filed 4.21.20 A. J. Penney Local Registrar

16. DATE OF DEATH April 20 1920  
(Month) (Day) (Year)

17. I HEREBY CERTIFY, That I attended deceased from held an investigation 4/20 1920, that I last saw him alive on 1919 and that death occurred, on the date stated above, at 2 45 P. M.  
The CAUSE OF DEATH\* was as follows:  
accidentally killed by being struck by steel cable  
(Duration) yrs. mos. ds.  
Contributory Quarry accident  
(Duration) yrs. mos. ds.  
(Signed) W. G. Johnson, Deputy M. D.  
4/20 1920 (Address) Downingtown Pa.

\*State the DISEASE CAUSING DEATH; or in deaths from violent causes, state (1) MEANS OF INJURY; and (2) whether ACCIDENTAL, SUICIDAL, or HOMICIDAL.

18. LENGTH OF RESIDENCE (For Hospitals, Institutions, Transients or Recent Residents).  
At place of death.....yrs.....mos.....ds. In the State.....yrs.....mos.....ds.  
Where was disease contracted, If not at place of death?  
Former or usual residence

19. PLACE OF BURIAL OR REMOVAL North Wood DATE OF BURIAL 4-22-1920

20. UNDERTAKER J. L. Waldin Downingtown ADDRESS

Howard Good Death Certificate

## **Narvon Quarry, Lancaster County, circa 1920 - 1922**

Lillian had said that the Harbison-Walker quarry at Downingtown had closed after the 1920 accident, and after Joseph had quit. However, the records show that the quarry ultimately continued in operation for years, though at diminished capacity as the quality of the rock declined. Joseph Showalter, however, moved on.

In the winter of 1921, Harbison opened a new quarry 15 miles up the road at a place called Narvon, to provide higher quality materials to the Downingtown kilns. Joseph Showalter assisted in opening and running the Narvon quarry, as he had done at Downingtown.

Per a 1936 book by John George Staack entitled Spirit Leveling in Vermont, 1896 – 1935, “*The Harbison Walker Refractories Co. opened a quarry for garnister in Welsh Mountain at Narvon in the winter of 1921, but this operation was short-lived.*” Note that Garnister is the rock used to make fire brick at the Downingtown kilns.

Lillian recalls her father working at Narvon, but also spoke of him working at a place called Beartown. It turns out that Narvon and Beartown are one and the same. Narvon is located at the foot of Welsh Mountain and is where the quarries were located. Beartown is the nearby town, half a mile away, sitting along the railroad and highway. Today, Narvon and Beartown are a short car ride up the Horseshoe Pike (Rt. 322) from Downingtown.

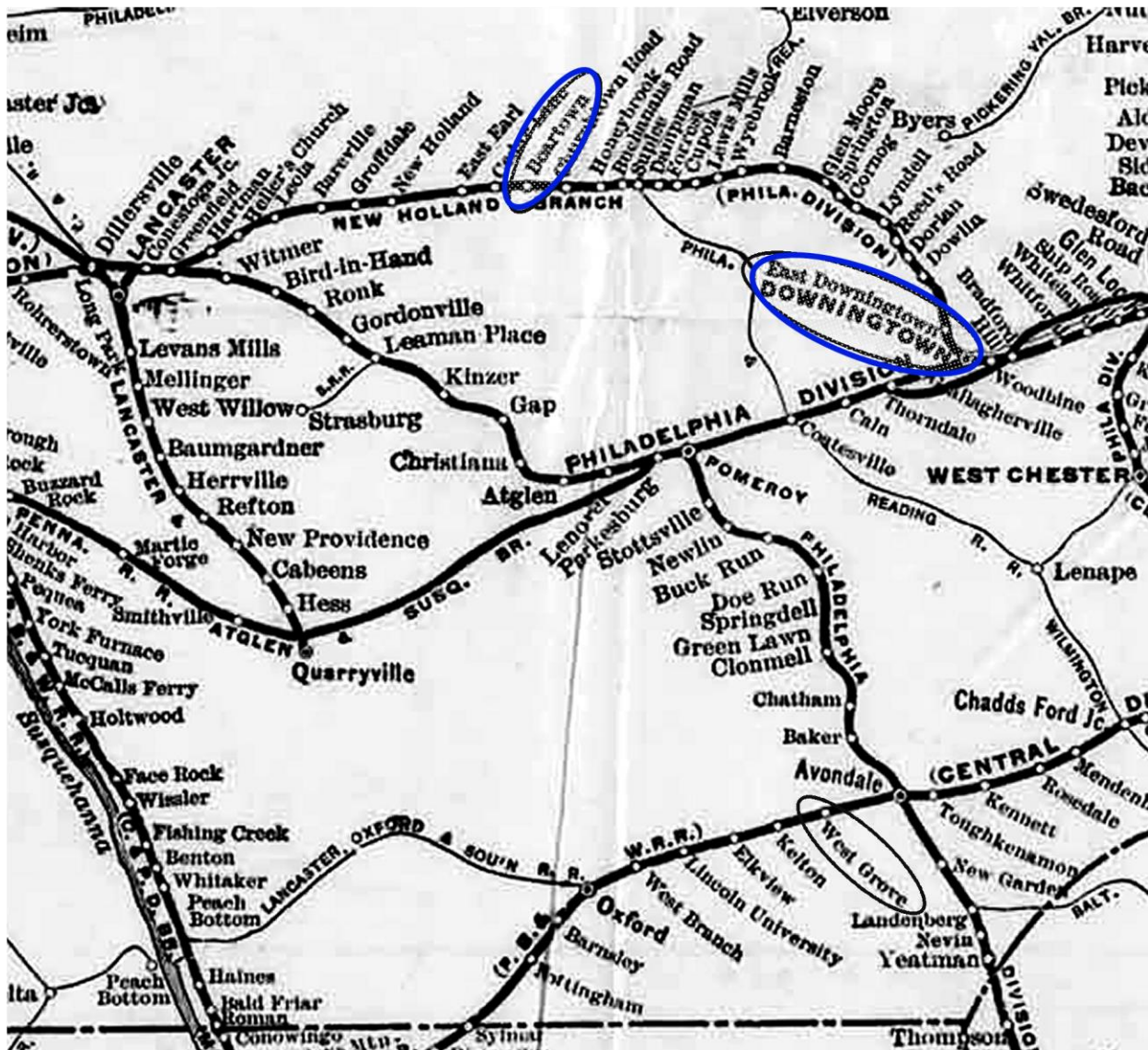
## **Lillian Left Behind**

Joseph relocated to Narvon (Beartown) from Downingtown and took his wife and youngest daughter Ethel with him. Lillian was left behind so she could complete her schooling in the Downingtown school system. Per Lillian, she “was left on a farm outside of Downingtown, the Geo. Goods, to go to high school. Went 2 yrs....”.

For Lillian, her two years of high school were the 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> grades. She was age 17 when she finished the 9<sup>th</sup> grade in May of 1921, her last year of school. So she spent some portion of her final years of schooling living with the family of George Good, who had a farm in Caln Township, Downingtown.

George Good [George<sup>3</sup>, Henry<sup>2</sup>, Samuel<sup>1</sup>] was a second cousin of the Showalter’s neighbor Howard Good [Howard<sup>3</sup>, Samuel<sup>2</sup>, Samuel<sup>1</sup>], who had been killed in the quarries. Back in 1917, Howard had been employed on the farm of his cousin George Good, prior to beginning work as a foreman for Harbison Walker.





Beartown (Narvon) and Downingtown  
1911 Rail Map [Mapmaker.Rutgers.Edu]

The Showalters lived on Rock Raymond Road north of **Downingtown**. They lived close to the first railroad stop north of Downingtown called 'Dowlin' on the above map.

They later relocated to a quarry at **Beartown**, leaving Lillian with the family of George Good at Downingtown to complete her schooling.

The railroad between Downingtown and Beartown parallels today's Rt. 322.



**Downingtown, circa 1922 - 1929**

Joseph Showalter's work at the new quarry at Narvon was short-lived. The quarry closed in the 1922 timeframe and Joseph, Bertha and daughter Ethel moved back to Downingtown after a year or so at Narvon.

Joseph's days of doing quarry work were over. He had worked for Harbison Walker for ten years or so. He had done a lot of dangerous work, including blasting. Per Lillian, he had suffered serious injuries from falling rock over the years.

After returning to Downingtown from Narvon, Joseph got a job doing carpentry work on new homes that were being built. This was the same type of work Joseph had been doing 12 years earlier (1910 census) while living in West Virginia.

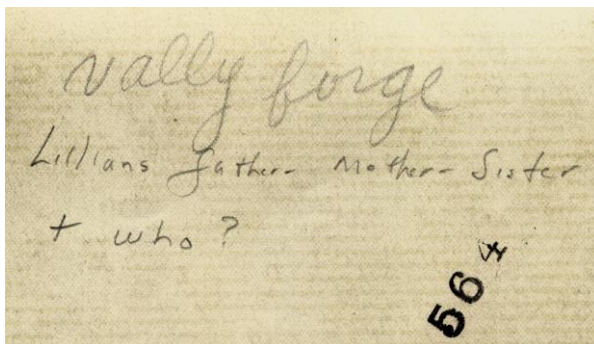
On April 17, 1924, Joseph was able to purchase one of the new Downingtown homes he had been working on. The address was 317 Highland Avenue. This was the only home Joseph would ever own. His home ownership would last just four years.





Joseph and Bertha Showalter with daughters Lillian and Ethel  
Valley Forge, PA , circa early 1920's

Valley Forge is not far from Downingtown where they had lived on Rock Raymond Pike, and later, Highland Ave. Lillian is unrecognizable – hair pulled up and thinner face than later photos, but she has the ‘family nose’.



Annette's printing –She doesn't recognize  
Lillian, neither did I. Who?



Lillian and Ethel

## Lillian & Ethel as Adults

While the Showalter family had been living at Narvon for a year or so, daughter Lillian had stayed behind in nearby Downingtown. She completed her public schooling in the Downingtown school in May of 1921.

In the fall of 1921, at age 17, Lillian entered into a nursing program at Taylor Hospital at Ridley Park, south of Philadelphia. She lived in student housing at the hospital. Lillian never mentioned where the idea of working in nursing had come from, but she was perfectly suited to it.

As a nurse-in-training, Lillian met her future husband, Earl Skinner, at Taylor hospital where Earl had undergone an emergency appendectomy in 1924.

Lillian graduated from nursing school in 1925 at age 21 as a registered nurse, and took a job at a hospital near Coatesville, living with her family at Downingtown. Two years later, she married Earl Skinner and settled into his house at Norwood, two towns over from where she had earned her nursing license at Taylor Hospital.

One year after Lillian's marriage, her younger sister Ethel married a man by the name of LeRoy Algier. LeRoy moved in with Ethel and her parents at the Highland Avenue home in Downingtown. Mother Bertha Showalter kept house.



Downingtown, Narvon (Bear Mountain), Ridley Park, Coatesville and vicinity





Lillian on vacation from nursing school, visiting her parents' new home at 317 Highland Ave., Downingtown. Construction materials on the ground. Probably the summer of 1924.

Lillian - 18 yrs.  
Downingtown  
home on vacation  
from nursing school  
parents' new home  
1921

[Printing by HES & Annette; Age and dates by Annette not necessarily correct]



### **Family Separation, circa 1929/1930**

Joseph's carpentry work in Downingtown eventually ran out. On August 18, 1928, Joseph and Bertha signed their home and mortgage over to son-in-law LeRoy Algier to continue paying it off.

Joseph was out of work, and may have been at odds with son-in-law LeRoy. For whatever reasons, Joseph left his family and went 'home' to south-central PA where he had grown up. The 1930 census shows Joseph Showalter living with his widowed sister Mary Kipe, age 70, in Catherine Township (town of Williamsburg), Blair County, Pa, just west of Huntingdon County. Joseph was age 60 and retired.

Wife Bertha stayed at Downingtown to assist with daughter Ethel's growing family. Ethel and LeRoy had a boy Donald who was born in 1929. They later had a daughter Joan. The 1930 census shows the family continuing to live at 317 Highland Avenue, Downingtown. LeRoy is now shown as being the owner of the home, Joseph Showalter having turned over the home and mortgage to him. Bertha is missing from the 1930 census, but was no doubt living with them as well.

Ethel's sister, Lillian, was married and living at the town of Norwood outside Philadelphia, 32 miles away. Like her sister Ethel, Lillian also had a son in 1929 – my father David Skinner.

### **Joseph Showalter – the 1930's**

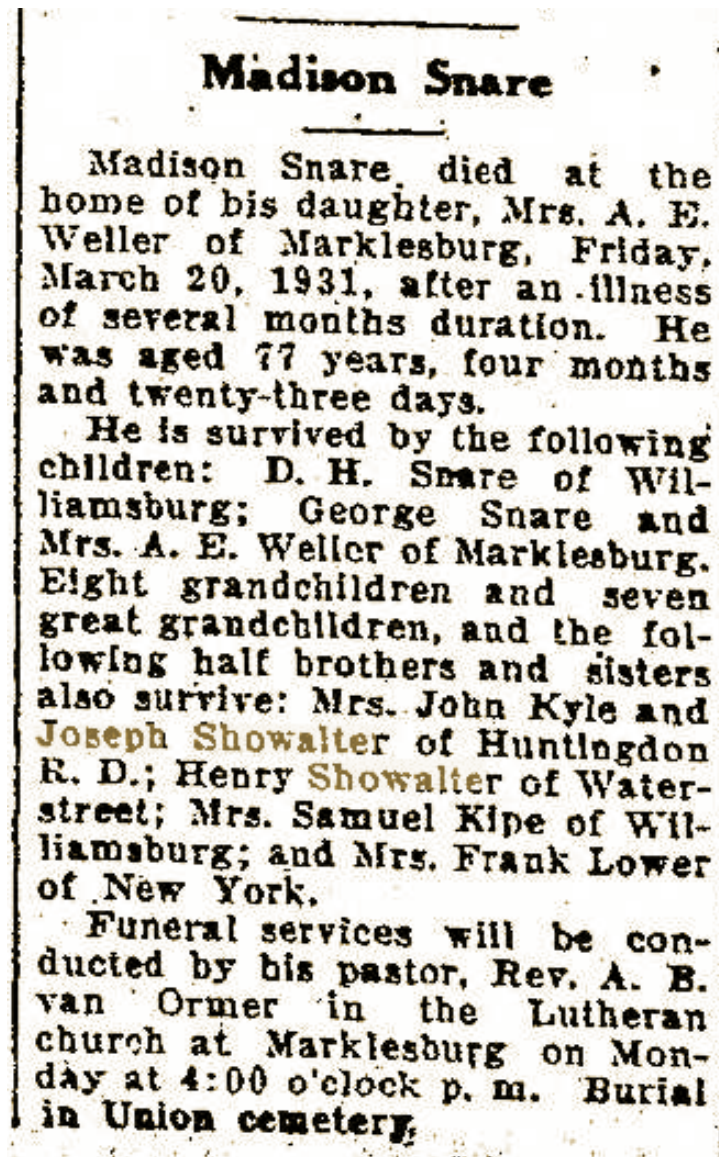
Some time after the census of 1930, Joseph Showalter left his sister Mary Kipe at Williamsburg, Blair County and relocated a few blocks away from another sister, Hetty Kyle, just outside the town of Huntingdon in Huntingdon County. He lived along a dirt road called Second Hollow Road that ran up a valley from the banks of the Juniata River. His sister, Hetty Kyle and her family, lived on a small farm on a connecting road just over the top of the mountain.

Per my father, Joseph lived in a small, one room cottage that was covered only in tar paper – a 'tar shack' as my father calls it. Joseph spent the rest of his life in the 1930's living at that location. He lived alone and did not own an automobile, but probably spent many a meal with his sister up the road, who was a good cook.

Per his daughter Lillian, Joseph collected a \$30/month Spanish-American War pension and ran a second-hand furniture store. Per Joseph's obituary, he was the manager of a second-hand store called the People's Furniture Store in the city of Huntingdon.

### Joseph Showalter – the 1930's (continued)

Joseph would have disappeared from the history books were it not for the fact that his daughter Lillian and her son David, spent many weeks each summer visiting him. Joseph's younger daughter Ethel and family did the same.



Joseph Showalter relocated from sister Mary Kipe at Williamsburg to the vicinity of his sister Hetty Kyle outside Huntingdon by 1931  
[Huntingdon Daily News, March 21, 1931]

## **Dave Skinner's Recollections – Summers With Joseph Showalter**

My father (born 1929) has many fond memories of visiting his grandfather Joseph Showalter, when Joseph was living by himself outside the city of Huntingdon in the 1930's. My father and his mother, Lillian, would visit Joseph three or four weeks each summer, retrieved at the end of their visit by my Dad's father. David's cousin Joan Algier was often there as well.

My father describes Joseph's house as being a 'tar shack' – just a small, 3-room cottage sitting along a dirt road that ran up a valley from the Juniata River. Lillian and son David slept on cots during their summer visits. There was no running water, electricity or indoor toilets. Joseph's cottage was located on the west side of today's route T330 (Henderson Hollow Road).

My father recalls Joseph was a pot-bellied man who spoke few words. But he made a big impact with this twin-barrel shotgun that he used to protect his grandson and chickens from snakes and birds. Young David delighted in playing in the stream that ran behind and around one side of the house. Dave recalls the shock of hearing Joseph fire his shotgun at close range and without warning to kill a snake sunning on the rocks by the water.

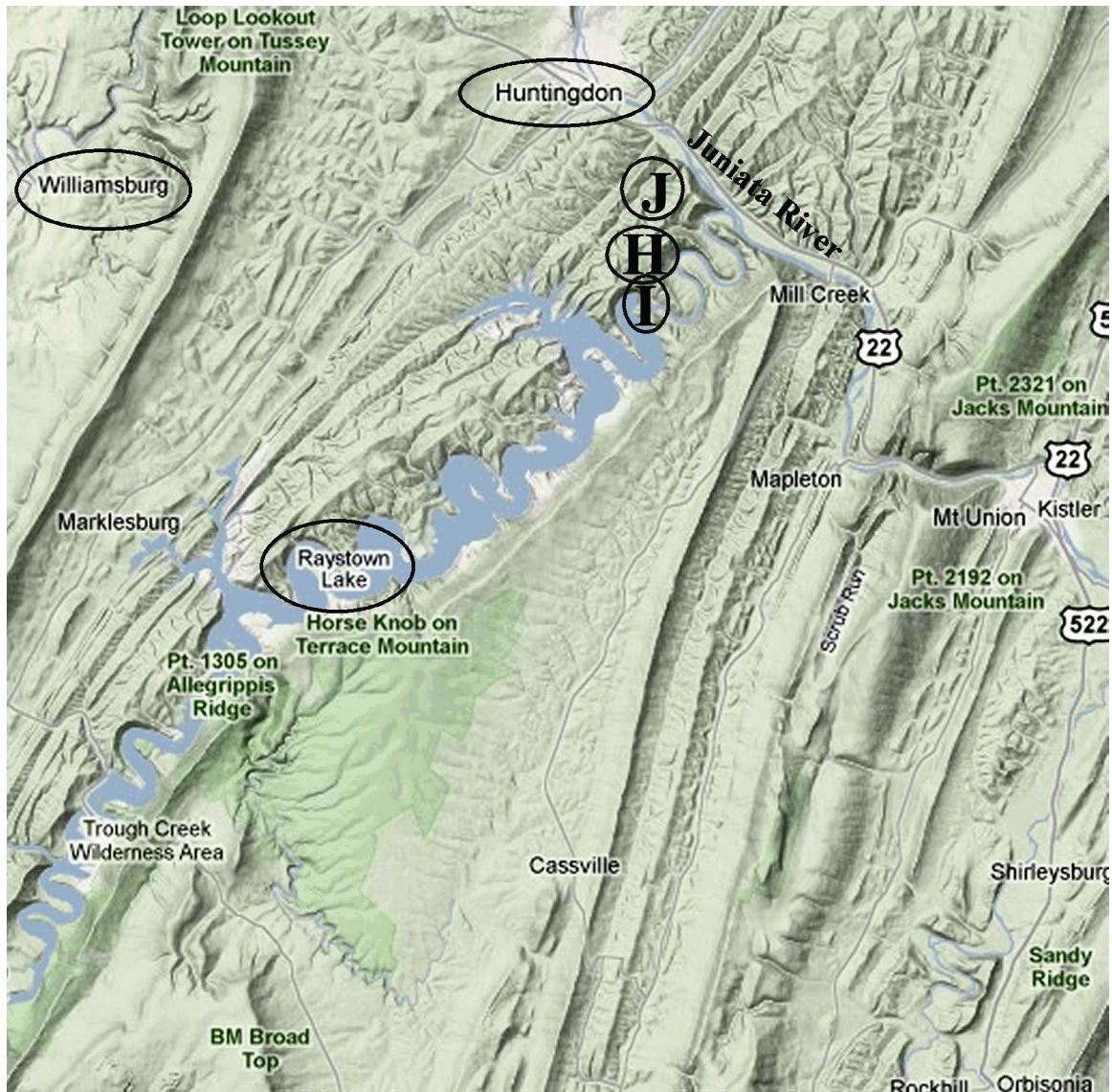
Lillian and her husband Earl would climb the steep hills behind the house to pick blueberries on their visits there. They would nap together on the sloping land in the late afternoon.

Our family visited the site in the late 1960's. Joseph's wood frame home was still there and occupied, though I do not recall it. My Dad tried to talk to a neighbor, whose daughter he had once admired, but the woman was unfriendly.

My aging Dad and I returned to Joseph's street in April, 2013. The Showalter cottage was gone, though a few other small cottages were still on the street. The typical cottages consist of a small living room in the front with a kitchen and bedroom to the rear.

The plot of land that Joseph's cottage sat on was distinctive in that the house sat far back from the road with a large front yard. A stream ran down the valley behind the house, and then curved around the house toward the street, cutting the property off somewhat from the next house down the valley. In the 1930's, the photos show that there were no trees in the neighborhood, probably as a result of the need for firewood. In 2013, trees were everywhere, limiting the view.



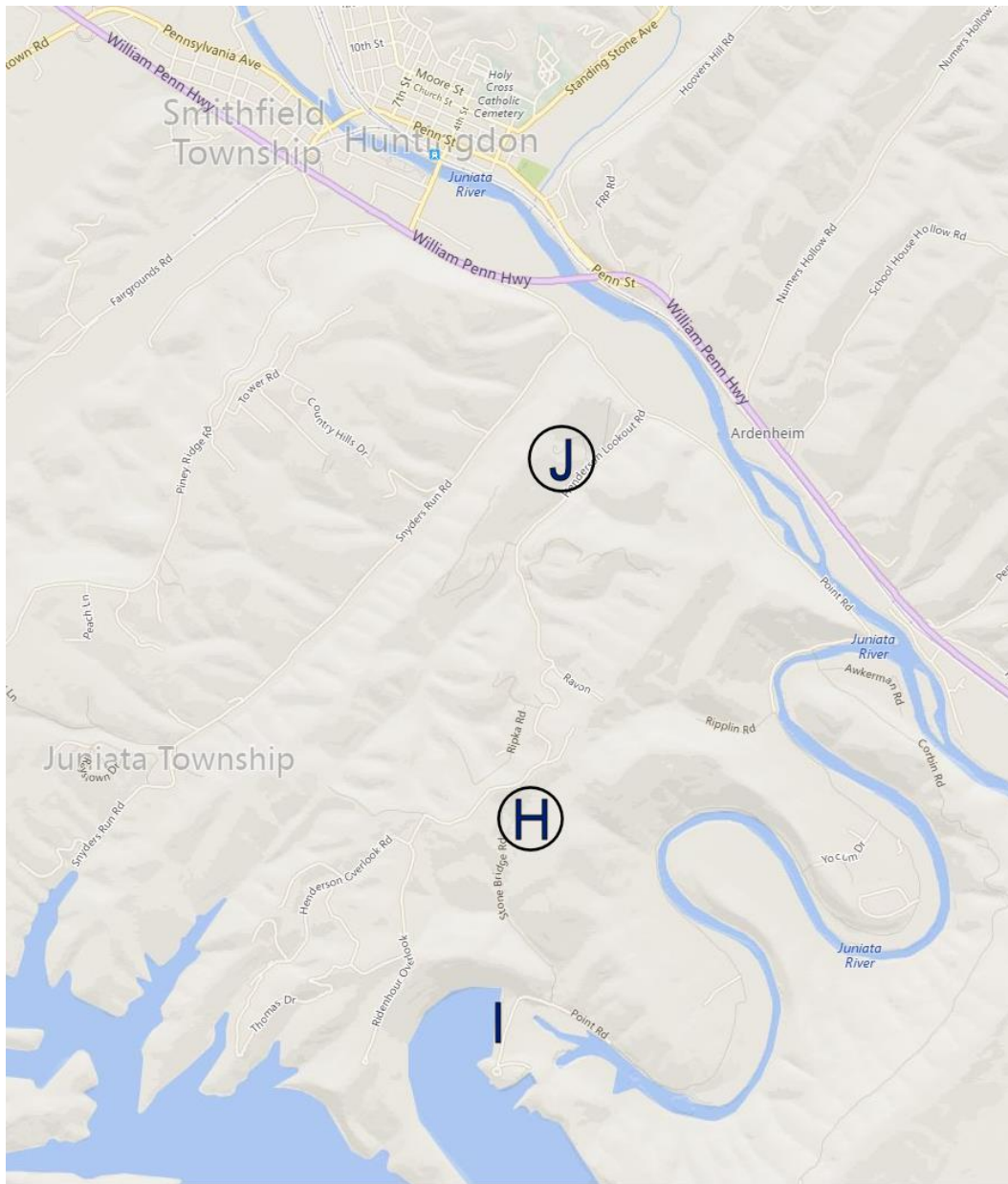


Huntingdon Area Today [google contour map]

Joseph was living with his widowed sister Mary Kipe  
at **Williamsburg** per the 1930 census.

By 1931, Joseph Showalter had moved near his sister Hetty Kyle  
on a dirt road outside of **Huntingdon** where he lived until his death in 1939.

Joseph Showalter's tar shack ( **J** )  
and the small farm of his sister Hetty Kyle ( **H** ) per my father's recollections.  
The Raystown Lake dam ( **I** ) was built on a tributary  
of the Juniata River in the 1960's.

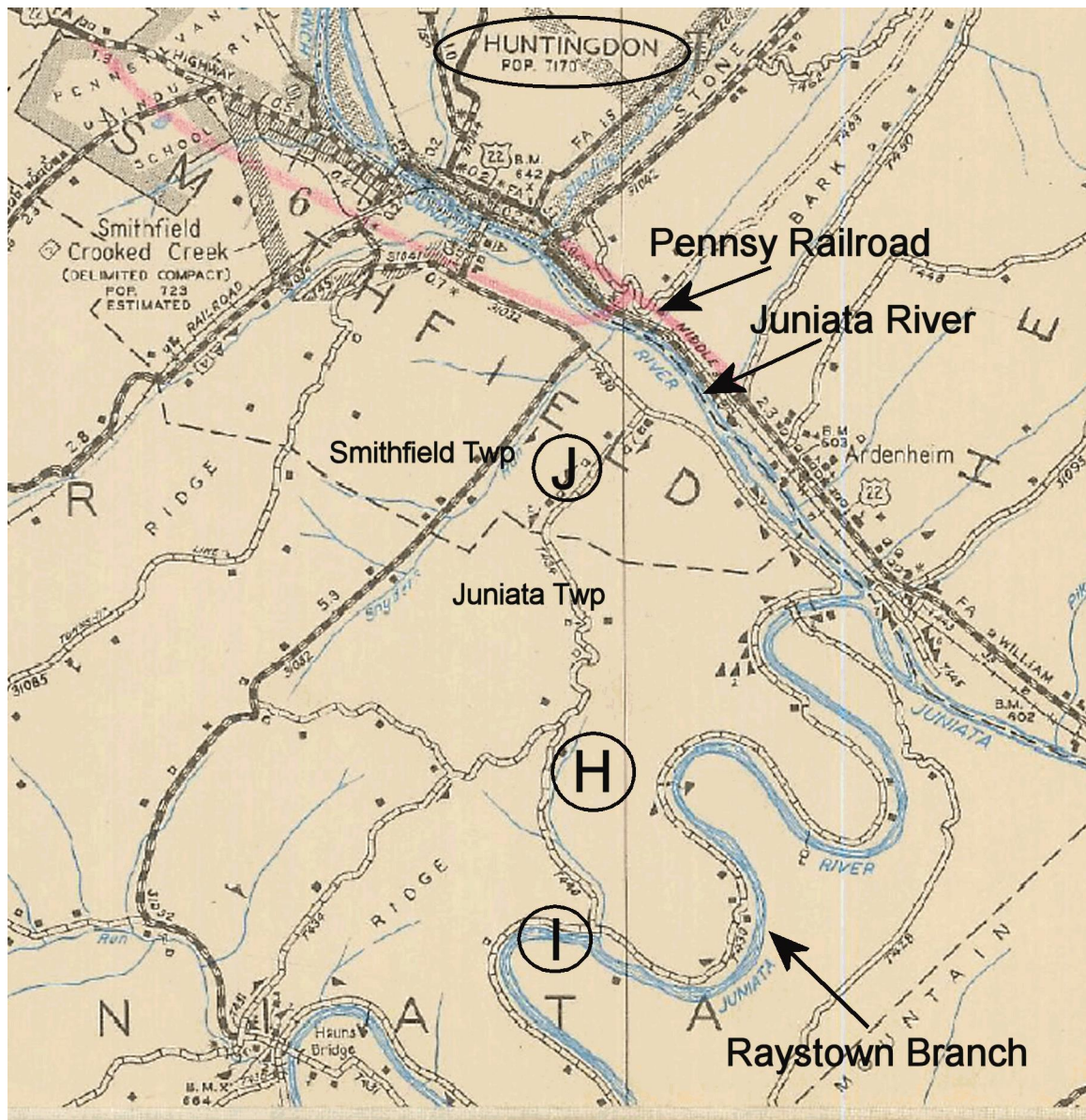


Close-Up - - Huntingdon Area [mapblast.com]

Joseph Showalter's tar shack ( **J** )  
 and the home of his sister Hetty Kyle ( **H** ) per my father's recollections.  
 The Raystown Lake dam ( **I** ) was built in the 1960's.

Joseph lived on a dirt road now called Henderson Hollow Road in Smithfield Township, Huntingdon County. His sister Hetty Kyle lived on a continuation of his road in Juniata Township called Second Hollow Road – today, called Stone Bridge Hollow Road (Rt. T440). The Kyle home was gone by the time of our first visit there in the late 1960's.





Huntingdon Area, 1941 [www.reisenett.no/]

The guesstimated location of the homes of Joseph Showalter ['J'] and his sister Hetty Kyle ['H'] in the 1930's are indicated. The map shows a dot signifying a farmhouse that matches the Kyle location. The map key identifies their road as being unpaved. The location of the future Raystown Lake dam (I) is also indicated, which was built at the end of their road in the 1960's.

The winding river that comes up from the south and joins the Juniata near Ardenheim is called the 'Raystown Branch' of the Juniata River. Poorly named, this is not a branch but a major tributary of the Juniata River. The Raystown Branch was dammed in the 1960's creating Raystown Lake to the south.





## **Dave Skinner's Recollections – Summers With Joseph Showalter (continued)**

My father was especially fond of Joseph's sister - Aunt Het (Hetty Kyle). John and Hetty Kyle, and their son Thomas, lived on road called T440 today, an extension of the road Joseph Showalter lived on. The Kyles lived up from Joseph, on pitched land over the backside of the mountain. The Kyle side of the mountain overlooked the Raystown tributary of the Juniata River.

The Kyle land happened to sit not far from where a massive earthen dam, the Raystown Dam, would be constructed in the 1960's, long after they were gone. On our visit there in the late 1960's, the Kyle homestead was gone and the nearby dam was under construction. On our visit there in 2013, the impressive dam was operational. It was difficult to tell where the Kyle farm could have sat - the land along road T440 is simply too steep. The land along the road matches my dad's recollections - a hill on the west side of the road and the land on the east side sloping down and away where the small Kyle farm property would have sat. Despite the steep terrain, the historical map of 1941 shows a farmhouse at that location that was likely where the Kyles lived.

The Kyles were largely self-sufficient. My Dad recalls that his Aunt Het was an accomplished cook. She had a large wood-fired stove, black with four burners, in the kitchen. She made her own breads and pies, cooking numerous pies at the same time. She also made her own jams. In the backyard there was a large shed in which the chickens were killed. Wood was cut on a large circular saw in the shed and stored there. The sloping yard and animals produced the necessary food for the table. A single cow provided the milk that was stored in the metal milk can in the basement.

A spring came out of the hill on the west side of the road, ran under the road in a pipe, and then ran below the Kyle house. A dam created a pool of water in the basement that was six or seven inches deep. Milk and cheeses were refrigerated in the water down there.

No doubt, the Kyles helped to provide for Hetty's brother Joseph who lived down the dirt road a bit. My Dad recalls sometimes sleeping at the Kyles. He and his mother would share the same small bed, sleeping head-to-toe.

### **1930 Census**

The 1930 census shows that the Kyle's were living on Second Hollow Road outside the city of Huntingdon. This is the road that my father picked off a map as being the road that the Kyles lived on.

#### **Census Details:**

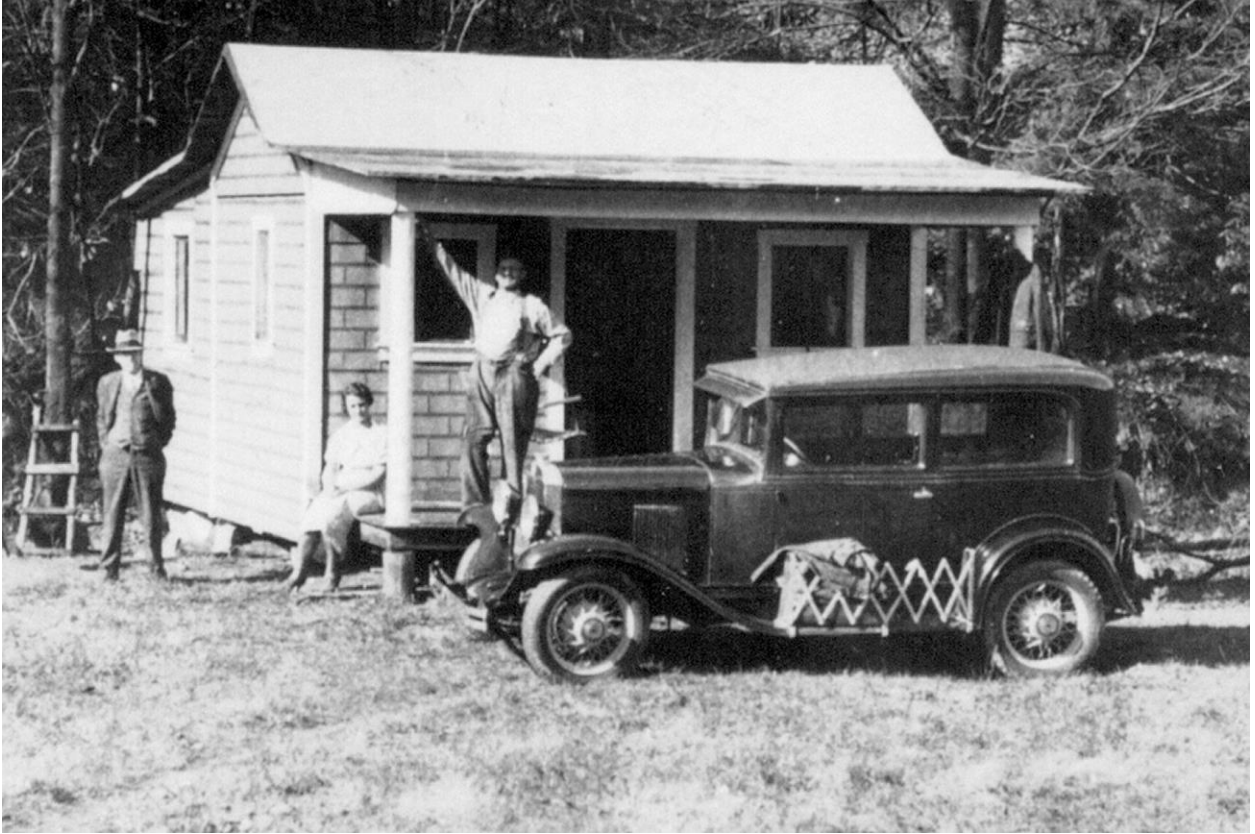
John Kyle – age 62; Farmer, General Farm; Hettie – age 65;  
son Thomas – age 19.



Uncropped Original Photograph

Unpaved Road (Henderson Hollow Road) in Foreground





Warren Skinner, Lillian Skinner, Joseph Showalter, Earl's Automobile  
Joseph's 'tar shack', Huntingdon, circa 1933  
A Classic Photograph

Ready to go Home  
(1930 Chev) wire wheels  
Huntington, Pa  
ABT. 1933  
  
Lillian - my father  
DAVID - Earl  
Hunting TRIP

Earl (taking the photo) drove across PA from Norwood, PA to retrieve his wife Lillian and son David (age 3, not shown) following Lillian and David's annual summer visit with her father, Joseph Showalter. Earl apparently brought along his own father, Warren Skinner, for company.

Earl's printing;  
Emphasized his autos, as usual



Joseph Showalter  
Huntingdon, circa 1933



Joseph Showalter with  
grandson David Skinner, circa 1933

Never saw an image of him until 2006.

### Images At Right

The same family appears in both images. The only family with that many children is the Norris family, who lived over the hill in the next valley on Snyder's Run Road. I need to cross-check this again as more info becomes available.

Earl's auto is visible in the rear of the lower image and appears to be parked on the dirt road that the Showalter lived on. The same buildings are visible in the rear of both images (you have to look closely for the sloping roof in the lower image) and did not belong to Joseph. The same mountain backdrop is visible in both images as well, much closer in the upper image.



Joseph Showalter, holding David Skinner, with neighboring family, circa 1932



Joseph Showalter, David Skinner (2<sup>nd</sup> from rt.) and same Norris? family, ca1934  
Car in rear.



### **Application For Military Pension**

In the early 1930's, Joseph was living alone at Huntingdon in south central PA while his wife Bertha was assisting the family of their daughter Ethel back east at Downingtown.

In 1934, at age 62, Joseph applied for a pension for his service during the Spanish American War of 1898-1899. His application was successful, and per Lillian, provided him with a much-needed pension of \$30/month.

Joseph's application indicated that his middle name was 'Beightal'. Lillian had thought his middle name was 'Blair'. His application also gave an address in downtown Huntingdon. Not sure if this was an address of a relative – there is no indication Joseph ever lived anywhere but his cottage outside Huntingdon from the early 1930's until his death in 1939. His application confirms that his wife Bertha was living apart from him at their home in eastern PA at Downingtown.

NO RECORD IN FILE 5-7

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

## VETERAN'S COMPENSATION APPLICATION

45906

NUMBER (1)

Read instructions and then type or print answers to the following questions striking out words that do not apply. Numerals in parenthesis refer to corresponding numerals in the instructions.

COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA

COUNTY OF

being duly sworn, deposes and says: I am the veteran named in the following descriptive information; I served in the military or naval forces of the United States from June 1 1898 to Feb 27 1899. I claim veteran's compensation as authorized by Act No. 53, approved January 5, 1934; I was a resident of Pennsylvania at time of entry into service; I make this claim with full knowledge of the penalty for making a false statement relative to a material fact concerning this claim and the answers to the following questions and descriptive information are true:

- (2) SHOWALTER JOSEPH. BEIGHTAL (Last name) (First and middle name) (Serial number) (White or colored) WHITE
- (3) Legal residence at entry into service Huntingdon Pa (Street and number, City, County and State)
- (4) Present residence: 268 Albemarle St Huntingdon Pa (Street and number, City, County and State)
- (5) Enlisted, commissioned or inducted in RA; ~~ANG; NA; NG; EBG; Navy; NRP; MC; ORC; Pa. Vols; US Vols. at~~ Canton Ohio on June 1 1898
- (6) On active duty in Navy or in Reserve from \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_
- (7) Place and date of birth Irfton Pa July 15 1871
- (8) Names and addresses of dependents: Wife (full name) Beulah Showalter Huntingdon Pa  
Minor children \_\_\_\_\_  
Mother (full name) \_\_\_\_\_  
Father \_\_\_\_\_
- (9) Service in organizations, at stations or on vessels in the order named as follows:  
Troop D 3rd US Cav from June 1 1898 to Feb 22 1899  
\_\_\_\_\_ from \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ from \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_
- (10) Grades or ratings with dates of appointments or promotions: none
- (11) Engagements: none
- (12) Wounds or other injuries received with dates: none
- (13) Served overseas from no to \_\_\_\_\_
- (14) Honorably discharged on Feb 27 1899 at Camp. near Hungie Ga.
- (15) Did you ever apply for or receive a bonus or veteran's compensation from any other State? no
- (16) Did you ever refuse on conscientious, political or other grounds to perform full military duty or to render unqualified service? no

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 7 dayof Feb 1934(17) Metta M. Drake, n.p. (Signature and seal of officer administering oath)(18) Joseph B. Showalter (Signature of Applicant)

My Commission Expires March 7th, 1937

## CERTIFICATE OF IDENTIFICATION

(19) I, Dr. E. Williams, do hereby certify that I am Adjutant Gen.  
(Name of person certifying to) (Title of officer)  
again Post 24 that Joseph B. Showalter applying for Veteran's  
(and position) (Name of applicant)

Compensation is known to me to be the applicant named in the application; that he is mentally competent; that the signature of the affidavit is the signature of the applicant.

Signature and impression  
of seal or stamp indicat-  
ing office or position held.

Read instructions (19) before signing.

(Signature of person identifying applicant)

Application for Veteran's Compensation, February, 1934

## **Loss of Downingtown Home**

LeRoy Algiers was employed as a pattern-maker at Lukens Steel in Coatesville. Despite his good-paying job, LeRoy fell behind on the house mortgage payments and their Downingtown home was lost to the bank. Per Lillian, LeRoy had a history of purchasing items on credit and failing to pay his debts.

The family, with mother Bertha, relocated to a rental at nearby Coatesville.

## **Bertha, Ethel and Joan – Together Alone, circa 1934/1935**

Ethel's husband LeRoy Alger not only had a habit of running up debts but was also a womanizer. Ethel had enough and decided to leave LeRoy.

The children of Ethel and LeRoy were quite young at the time (eldest child Donald b. 1929). Ethel took baby Joan with her but left older son Donald with LeRoy's mother.

In 1935, the three gals - Bertha, daughter Ethel and granddaughter Joan, were living near Ethel's sister Lillian in a neighborhood called Collingdale south of Philadelphia [the 1940 census asked people where they had been living in 1935].

Ethel re-entered the work force. Mother Bertha, who had been keeping house, went with Ethel and started doing menial work like house cleaning to help pay the bills.

## **Bertha and Joseph Reunited**

In the late-1930's, Ethel had enough and 'gave up'. Ethel, daughter Joan and mother Bertha relocated to the Huntingdon area of Pennsylvania to rejoin her father Joseph. The three gals may have rented in the city of Huntingdon as Joseph's one room cottage outside of town would have offered little space.

This living arrangement did not last long – my father does not recall any summer visits with his grandfather Joseph in which Joseph's wife Bertha or daughter Ethel were present.

## **Death of Joseph Showalter**

Ethel was living in Huntingdon on May 9, 1939, when her father, Joseph Showalter, fell dead of a heart attack in a doctor's waiting room.

Lillian would later say that the Showalters were famous for dying suddenly of heart disease in their mid-60's.

Joseph died at age 68, assuming a birth in July, 1870. Note that his pension application and death information, all filled out near the end of his life, show a birth of 1871, which I believe is incorrect.



THE COMPANY WILL APPRECIATE SUGGESTIONS FROM ITS PATRONS CONCERNING ITS SERVICE

1204

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>CLASS OF SERVICE</b></p> <p>This is a full-rate Telegram or Cablegram unless its deferred character is indicated by a suitable sign above or preceding the address.</p>	<h1 style="margin: 0;">WESTERN UNION</h1> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; font-size: small;"> <span>R. B. WHITE PRESIDENT</span> <span>NEWCOMB CARLTON CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD</span> <span>J. C. WILLEVER FIRST VICE-PRESIDENT</span> </div>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>SIGNS</b></p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td>DL = Day Letter</td></tr> <tr><td>NM = Night Message</td></tr> <tr><td>NL = Night Letter</td></tr> <tr><td>LC = Deferred Cable</td></tr> <tr><td>NLT = Cable Night Letter</td></tr> <tr><td>Ship Radiogram</td></tr> </table>	DL = Day Letter	NM = Night Message	NL = Night Letter	LC = Deferred Cable	NLT = Cable Night Letter	Ship Radiogram
DL = Day Letter								
NM = Night Message								
NL = Night Letter								
LC = Deferred Cable								
NLT = Cable Night Letter								
Ship Radiogram								

The filing time as shown in the date line on full-rate telegrams and day letters, and the time of receipt at destination as shown on all messages, is STANDARD TIME.

**Received at** MORTON PENN

2 P 8

HUNTINGDON PENN 1010AM MAY 9 1939 FJ

MRS H E SKINNER  
68 MITCHELL AVE  
MORTON PENN

DAD DIED SUDDENLY THIS MORNING. COME AT ONCE

ETHEL  
1027AM

Age 67

THE QUICKEST, SUREST AND SAFEST WAY TO SEND MONEY IS BY TELEGRAPH OR CABLE

Telegram from Ethel to her sister Lillian  
announcing the death of their father - Joseph Showalter.

### Burial of Joseph Showalter

Per Lillian, Joseph was buried in a cemetery on a mountain overlooking the Juniata River. My father attended the funeral of his grandfather as a 9 year old child and recalls it was well outside of Huntingdon. Per Joseph's obituary, he was buried in the Corner cemetery on Piney Ridge, usually called the Upper Corners Cemetery, where many of his relatives were buried. The cemetery was southwest of the town of Huntingdon.

Today, the location of the remains of Joseph Showalter's is unknown. Joseph does not appear in any contemporary cemetery records. In the 1960's, the graves of the Upper Corners Cemetery were relocated to the 'Old Stone Church' cemetery at Marklesburg. A complete inventory of the graves that were identified and relocated included many of Joseph's relatives, but not Joseph himself.

**THE DAILY NEWS, HUNTINGDON, PA., TUESDAY, MAY 9, 1939.**

**Joseph B. Showalter**

Joseph B. Showalter, of Second Hollow in Juniata township, died this Tuesday morning, May 9, 1939 at 8:30 o'clock. Death was due to a heart attack.

He was born in Pennsylvania on July 15, 1861 and was the son of John Showalter and Susan (Marks) Showalter, both deceased. At the time of death he was aged 67 years, 9 months and 24 days.

At the time of death Mr. Showalter was manager of a sec-

ond hand store, sponsored by People's Furniture Company.

He leaves to mourn his passing his wife, Mrs. Bertha Dodd Showalter and two daughters, Mrs. Ethel Algier, of Huntingdon, and Mrs. Lillian Skinner, of Philadelphia.

Two sisters, Mrs. Hettie Kyle, of Huntingdon, and Mrs. Frank Lower, of Rochester, N. Y., and one brother, Henry D. Showalter, of Shaffersville, also survive.

Funeral services will be held at Brown's funeral parlors on Friday afternoon, May 12, at 2:30 o'clock. The Rev. A. M. Baggett will officiate. Interment will be made in the Corner cemetery on Piney Ridge.

Friends will be received at Brown's funeral parlor's any time after eight o'clock this Tuesday evening until the hour of the services.

The birth date of 1861 is a typo that should read 1871;

This obituary confirms that Joseph was still living in the cottage on Second Hollow Road outside Huntingdon at the time of his death.

HVS-5D-100M-9-36

Primary Dist. No. 31-25-21 COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH  
BUREAU OF VITAL STATISTICS **436**

1. PLACE OF DEATH  
County Huntingdon  
Township Huntingdon  
Borough Huntingdon  
City \_\_\_\_\_  
No. \_\_\_\_\_ St. \_\_\_\_\_ Ward \_\_\_\_\_  
(If death occurred in a HOSPITAL or INSTITUTION, give its NAME instead of street and number)

File No. 46223  
Registered No. 78

**CERTIFICATE OF DEATH**

Length of residence in city or town where death occurred \_\_\_\_\_ yrs. \_\_\_\_\_ mos. \_\_\_\_\_ days. How long in U. S., if of foreign birth? \_\_\_\_\_ yrs. \_\_\_\_\_ mos. \_\_\_\_\_ days.  
(IF U. S. VETERAN, COMPLETE REVERSE SIDE OF CERTIFICATE)

2. FULL NAME (type or print) Joseph B Showalter  
Residence: No. \_\_\_\_\_ St. \_\_\_\_\_ Ward \_\_\_\_\_  
(Usual place of abode) (If nonresident, give place, county, and State)

**PERSONAL AND STATISTICAL PARTICULARS**

3. SEX Male 4. COLOR OR RACE White 5. SINGLE, MARRIED, WIDOWED, OR DIVORCED (write the word) Married  
5a. If married, widowed, or divorced HUSBAND of \_\_\_\_\_ (or) WIFE of Bertha Dodd  
6. DATE OF BIRTH (month, day, and year) July 15 1891  
7. AGE Years 67 Months 9 Days 24 If LESS than 1 day, \_\_\_\_\_ hrs. or \_\_\_\_\_ mins.  
8. Trade, profession, or particular kind of work done, as spinner, sawyer, bookkeeper, etc. Manager of  
9. Industry or business in which work was done, as silk mill, sawmill, bank, etc. Second hand store  
10. Date deceased last worked at this occupation (month and year) \_\_\_\_\_ 11. Total time (years) spent in this occupation \_\_\_\_\_  
12. BIRTHPLACE (city or town) (State or Country) Penna  
13. NAME John Showalter  
14. BIRTHPLACE (city or town) (State or Country) Penna  
15. MAIDEN NAME Lusan Parks  
16. BIRTHPLACE (city or town) (State or Country) Penna  
17. SIGNATURE (name and address) OF INFORMANT Mrs Ethel Algier  
Huntingdon, Pa.  
18. BURIAL, CREMATION, OR REMOVAL: Date May 12 1939  
Place Corner Cemetery County Hunt State Pa.  
19. UNDERTAKER (name and address) Harry Brown & Son  
Huntingdon Pa.  
20. FILED May 10 1939 Mary E Johnston  
Registrar.

**MEDICAL CERTIFICATE OF DEATH**

21. DATE OF DEATH (month, day, and year) May 9 1939  
22. I HEREBY CERTIFY, That an Inquest was held upon the body of the above named deceased on the 9 day of May, 1939; that the jury rendered a verdict giving the cause of death as follows: Coroner  
The principal cause of death and related causes of importance were as follows: Acute myocardial failure  
Other contributory causes of importance: Chronic coronary sclerosis  
Name of operation \_\_\_\_\_ Date of \_\_\_\_\_  
What test confirmed diagnosis? History Was there an autopsy? No  
23. If death was due to external causes (violence), fill in also the following:  
Accident, suicide, or homicide? \_\_\_\_\_ Date of injury \_\_\_\_\_, 193  
Where did injury occur? \_\_\_\_\_  
(Specify city or town, county, and State)  
Specify whether injury occurred in industry, in home, or in public place:  
Manner of injury \_\_\_\_\_  
Nature of injury \_\_\_\_\_  
24. Was disease or injury in any way related to occupation of deceased? No  
If so, specify \_\_\_\_\_  
(Signed) William B. West M.D. Coroner  
(Address) Huntingdon Pa.

946  
934



## **Return East To Coatesville**

After Joseph's death, his wife Bertha, daughter Ethel and granddaughter Joan (grandson Donald was with his father LeRoy Algier) left the Huntingdon area and moved back east to Coatesville near Ethel's ex-husband Leroy. Ethel was working. Mother Bertha was also working as a housekeeper.

The 1940 census shows mother Bertha, age 60, daughter Ethel, age 31, and granddaughter Joan, age 7, in a rental home in Coatesville. Bertha, shown as the head of household, was employed doing housework in a private home. Ethel was employed as a seamstress in a garment factory.

After Ethel finalized her divorce from LeRoy Algier, the family moved to the west side of Lancaster, where mother Bertha worked for a time in a hotel kitchen at Elizabethtown.

Ethel's sister Lillian would often come to visit her sister Ethel and mother Bertha, though Lillian was not particularly close to Ethel. The strong-willed and opinionated Lillian felt that Ethel was a complaining and needy person who spent her life under the care of their mother Bertha. Lillian's husband Earl was not fond of Ethel either. Per Lillian – 'the two were never really friends'.

As a kid in the 1940's, my father recalls visiting his aunt Ethel and cousin Joan at Coatesville. My dad also recalls three occasions in which his mother Lillian, after heated arguments with her husband Earl, temporarily moved in with her sister Ethel and mother Bertha taking my father with them. That does not surprise me – I recall that Lillian and Earl had loud shouting matches in the 1960's. Lillian was not the kind of woman to be put on the defensive or to go 'cry' in the corner.

## **LeRoy and Family**

LeRoy Algier, Ethel's former husband and the father of children Donald and Joan, ended up marrying an 18-year-old girl he had been living with. They had two children. LeRoy later divorced the young gal declaring in court that she was an unfit mother. He then married an older woman – his third wife.

Joan [daughter of Ethel and LeRoy Algier] married George Anis and had two girls and one boy - Michael, Wendy and Laurie. They would be of my generation.

Joan's brother Donald was a Dr. of Education and lived in Cockeysville, Maryland with wife Jean. They have no children.

Ten years after leaving first husband LeRoy Algier, Ethel married L. Donald Hart, ten years her junior. They lived at 210 S. Manor Street in Mountville, Pa. Mother Bertha lived with them as well. Ethel worked; Bertha kept house.

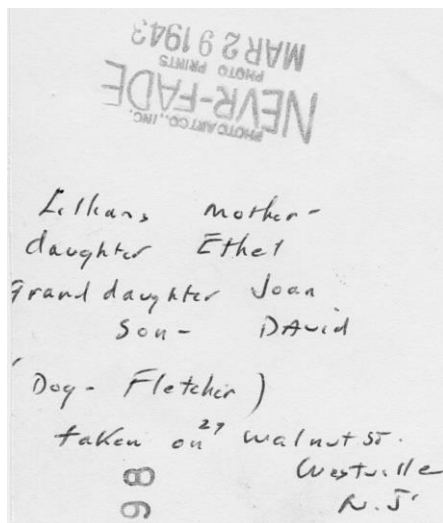




Bertha with daughter Ethel Algier (rear),  
granddaughter Joan Algier, grandson  
David Skinner and Fletcher;  
at the home of Bertha's daughter Lillian,  
Walnut Ave., Westville, NJ, 1943



Joan Algier and cousin David Skinner  
Walnut Ave., 1943





'2 Cousins', 1949

Lillian with son David (b. 1929) and nephew Don Algier (also b. 1929)

Don was the son of Lillian's sister, Ethel Algier.

Note the similarity between Lillian and Don.

Aunt Lill  
Dove, and Don  
Sept - 49 <sup>Algier</sup>  
Taken by Joan.  
"2 Cousins"  
Born Nov. 8 - Nov. 22  
1929.



Bertha Showalter, daughter Lillian Skinner  
and May and Warren Skinner (the parents of Lillian's husband).  
Circa mid 1950's.

*Grandmom, Lillian,  
mom mom, Pop Pop*

Annette's writing



Bertha Showalter with daughters Ethel and Lillian  
Circa late 1950's.  
Lillian's yard, 62 Walker Ave., Deptford, NJ

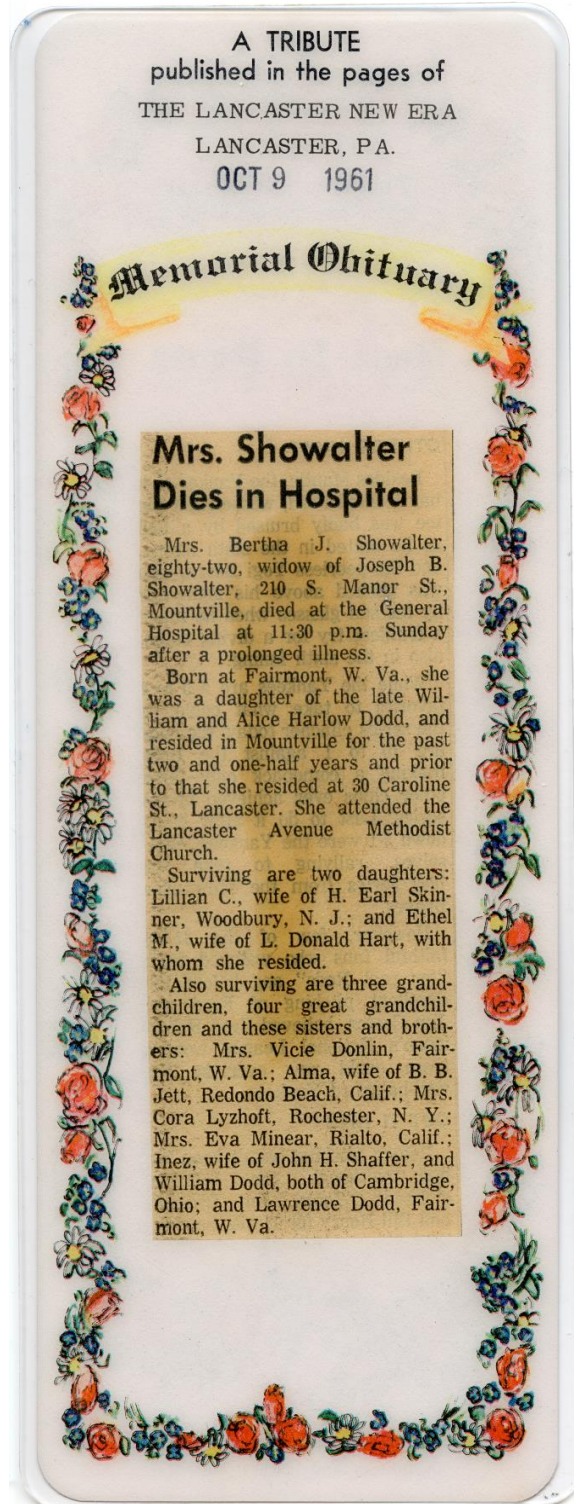
*Grandmom, Ethel, Lillian*

Annette's writing



## Bertha Jane (Dodd) Showalter (1879 – 1961)

Mother Bertha Showalter died Oct 9, 1961, aged 82. She had lived with her daughter Ethel most of her life. Bertha was alive until I was age 7, though I do not recall meeting her.



Mr Joseph B. Showalter  
died of heart attack in Drs  
waiting room May 9th 1939  
age 67  
Mrs Bertha J. Showalter  
died Oct 9th 1961 age 82.  
Cancer and failing heart.  
had one Breast removed 1958

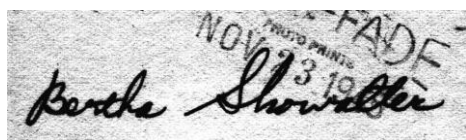
Lillian's Notes



Bertha Showalter  
Thanksgiving, 1945



Betha Showalter (colorized)  
Home of daughter Lillian, Walker Avenue, Deptford



Annette's writing





Bertha Showalter  
Dave Skinner Home, Deptford, 1959  
Another Great Photo by Dave Skinner [DES slides]



**Ethel Hart (1908 – 1991)**

Ethel and second-husband Donald Hart were in wheel chairs in 1990. Ethel died 12 noon, October 22, 1991; funeral October 25. I only met Ethel a couple of times in the 1960's, when she would visit her sister, Lillian, my grandmother. Have only a faint recollection of Donald Hart.



Lillian, sister Ethel and Ethel's daughter Joan  
Wedding Reception, 1952, for Annette & Dave Skinner (Lillian's son)



Ethel, Lillian, mother Bertha and Joan (dau. of Ethel)



Ethel and daughter Joan



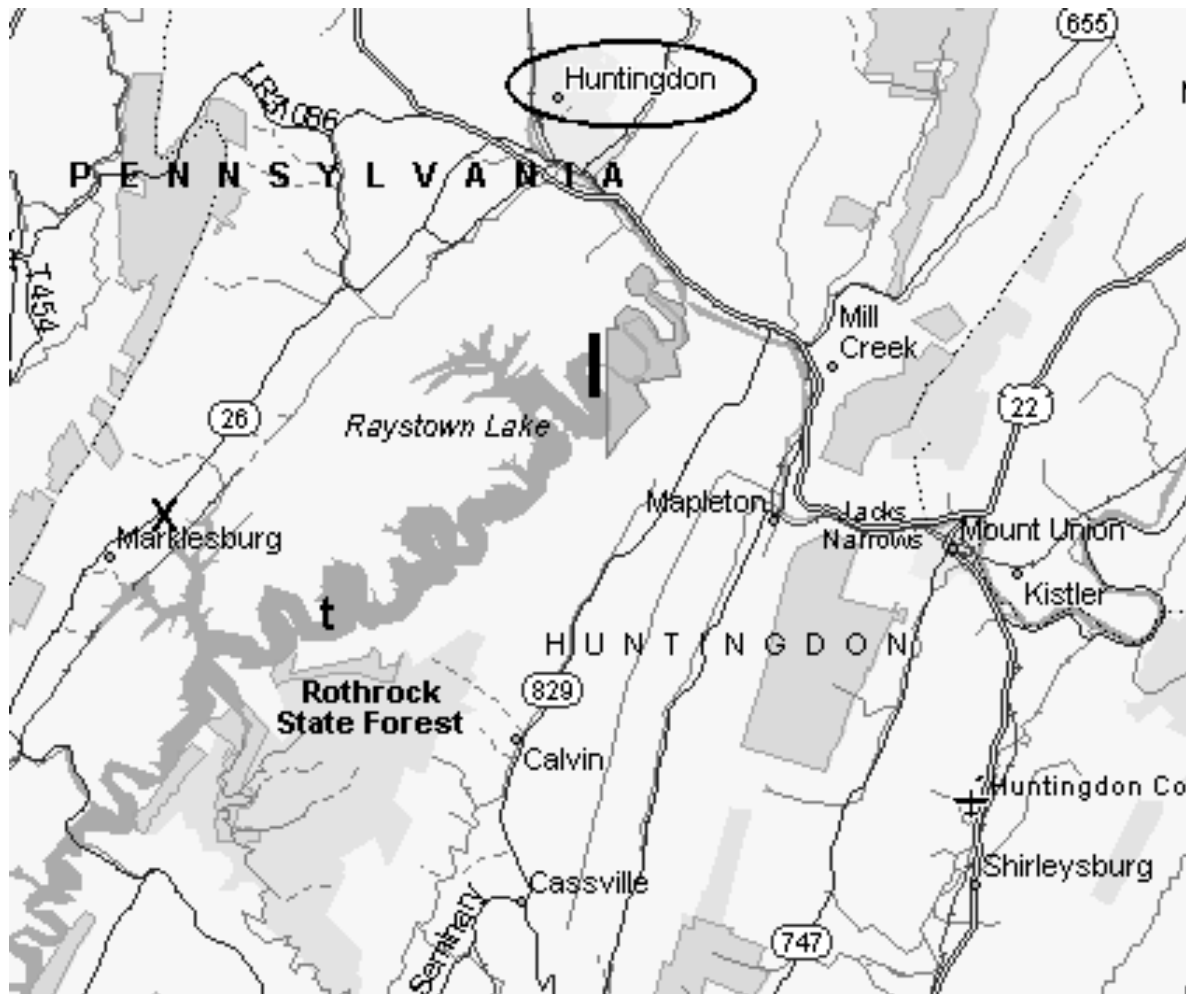
Joan & her mother Ethel (top); Ethel w/sister Lillian (bottom)  
At the home of Lillian and Earl Skinner, Lindgren Blvd., Sanibel, FL, 1975

## Raystown Lake and Cemetery Burials

In the 1960's, preparations were made to dam the Raystown branch of the Juniata River to create the massive Raystown Lake. The dam would be located near the end of the road on which Joseph and his sister Hetty had lived decades earlier.

The creation of the lake necessitated that the burial remains in thirteen area cemeteries be relocated. The cemeteries included the 'Upper Corners' cemetery, where many of the ancestors of Joseph Showalter were buried, including his parents. This is likely the 'Corner' cemetery where Joseph was buried.

The remains at the thirteen cemeteries were moved to the '**Old Stone Church**', located on Rt. 26, one mile north of Marklesburg. Joseph's daughter Lillian was informed of the move of her ancestors.

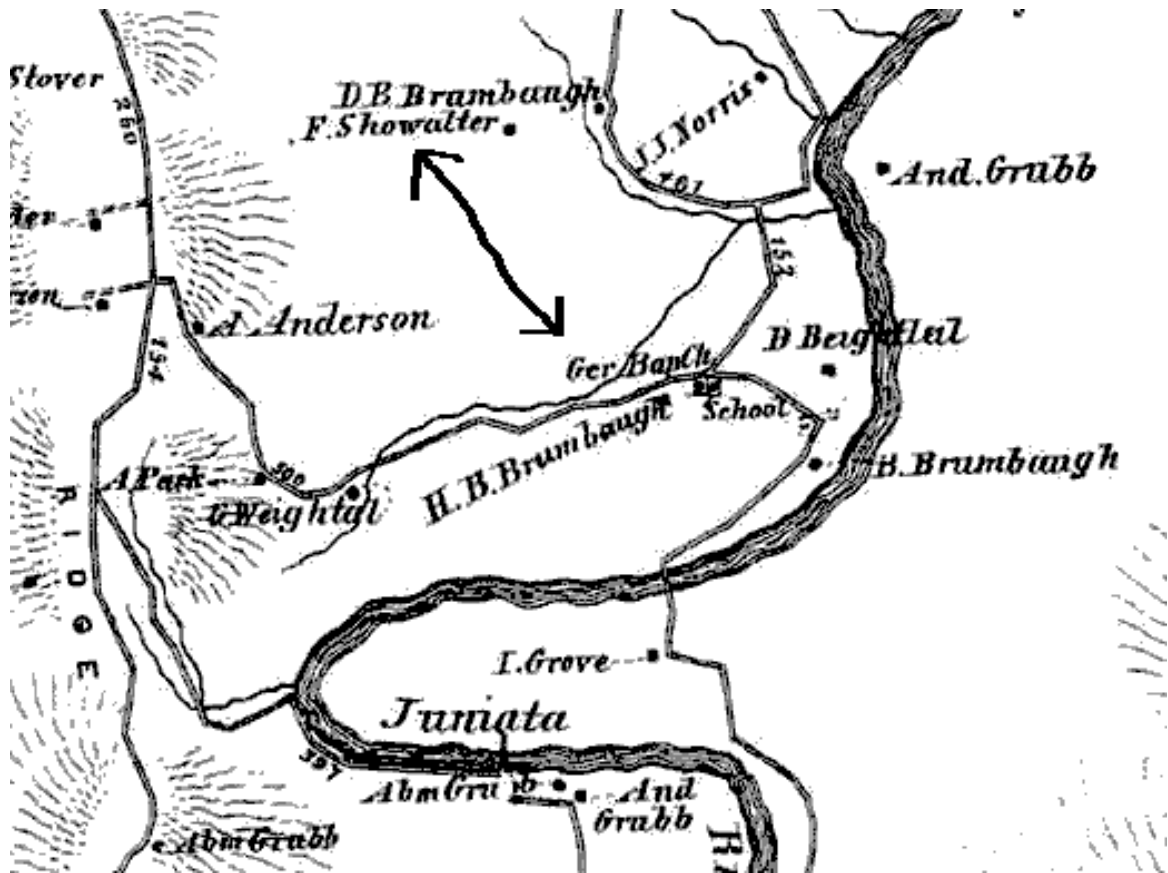


Raystown Dam ( I ), Old Stone Church ( X ), & Upper Corners Cemetery ( t )



## Upper Corners Cemetery

The Upper Corners Cemetery has an interesting history. The Dunkards (German Protestant sect) had established the German Baptist Brethren Church at the town of James Creek, near Marklesburg. Later, in 1873, Dunkards to the north built a church at the Upper Corners location. The Church, known as the "Bethel House" or "Comer", was on a high terrace overlooking the Raystown branch of the Juniata River. The Church property was used as a burial site with graves dating from 1878 to 1914. The Church did not survive long. By the 1930's, church membership had dwindled and in 1948, the church structure was removed.



Portion of Penn Township, Huntingdon Co., PA, 1873 {historicismapworks.com}

Arrow points to the German Baptist Church (Upper Corners cemetery) overlooking the winding Raystown Branch of the Juniata River, and land of Fredrick Showalter, brother of Joseph's father.

## **Damn It**

In 1968, the Upper Corners site was surveyed in preparation for the damning! of the Raystown branch of the Juniata River and the creation of Raystown Lake. The site was one of thirteen cemeteries expected to end up under water. Between 1965 and 1971, burial remains at the Upper Corners and the other cemeteries were relocated to the 'Old Stone Church' located on nearby Rt. 26, one mile north of Marklesburg.

The thirty-five or so graves relocated from the Upper Corners cemetery included:

John and Susan Showalter – parents to Joseph Showalter

Isaac and Sophia Showalter - Isaac is brother to John, above.

John J. and Abraham Showalter – brothers of Joseph Showalter who died young

Ellen Showalter and Ethel G. Showalter - unknown cousins to Joseph Showalter

In 1965, Lillian Skinner received communication involving the reburials. Lillian was identified as being the daughter and nearest living kin to two of the persons who were reburied – John and Susan Showalter. Lillian was actually their granddaughter.

By 1973, the creation of Raystown Lake was complete, but court-ordered water levels fell short of levels that would have flooded the Upper Corners cemetery. The cemetery, emptied of remains, remained high and dry. The site, situated on a peninsula, is now surrounded by the winding Raystown Lake.

## **Grave Concerns**

In the 1990's, the site was reviewed again for the development of a recreational area bordering the lake. Guided by modern law, the archeological review of the site was much more thorough than what had been done in the 1960's when the graves were removed.

The review of the Upper Corners site, published in 2000, found that some of the burials located in the 1960's had not been completely removed. Human and casket remains had been left behind. In addition, unmarked burials were found that had not been previously identified. The remaining artifacts were catalogued and removed to the Old Stone Church. My father was now identified as being the closest surviving relative of the Showalters that had been buried at the cemetery, and was informed by phone and letter of the burials that still needed to be moved.

73 N Childs St  
Woodbury, NJ 08096

August 31, 1999

Dear Joan:

I am forwarding a letter I recently received from the Corp of Engineers. This was preceded by a telephone call to confirm my connection with Lillian Skinner who was listed as the nearest relative to her father who was buried at Upper Corners. It seems some skullduggery has been afoot! A concern was hired to move the bodies from this cemetery since the new dam was going to flood same. My mother was advised of the move and the new location at that time. The water did not rise that high and they decided on a recreational use instead. The new research showed that many were not moved. It was indicated some legal action would follow. With that call, I was linked only with my mother's father. The letter now links me with all the Showalters ever deceased! I don't know any of the names, even her father's first name. I could pull out old address books and check some. I thought this all might be of interest to you. I have no idea how big brother traced me for the call.

I hope you and your family are well. We are doing great as I enter the 70's this year. Much travel around the world keeps us busy.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "David". The letters are fluid and connected, with a large, stylized 'D' at the beginning.

E-mail: dskinner1@home.com

Letter from David, son of Lillian Skinner, to his cousin Joan (Algier) Anis, the daughter of Lillian's sister, Ethel.

## Remaining Remains

During this more detailed review of the site in the 1990's, the complete remains of John Showalter, Joseph's father (Lillian's grandfather), were found intact and photographed. A glass-viewing window that was originally a part of his coffin was found resting on his skeleton. Other remains, including those of John Jr., and the porcelain dentures of Sophia Showalter (wife of Isaac Showalter, brother to Joseph's father), were also recovered.



Plate 3: Intact Burial in Grave 17

Remains of John Showalter, father of Joseph,  
beneath the glass-viewing window of the decayed casket

Upper Corners Cemetery Report, Year 2000



## **Web Link**

The final 2000 report by the consultants to the US Army Corps of Engineers is available at:

<http://raystown.nab.usace.army.mil/Partners/Uppercorners/Archaeological/TestingofGraveSites.pdf>

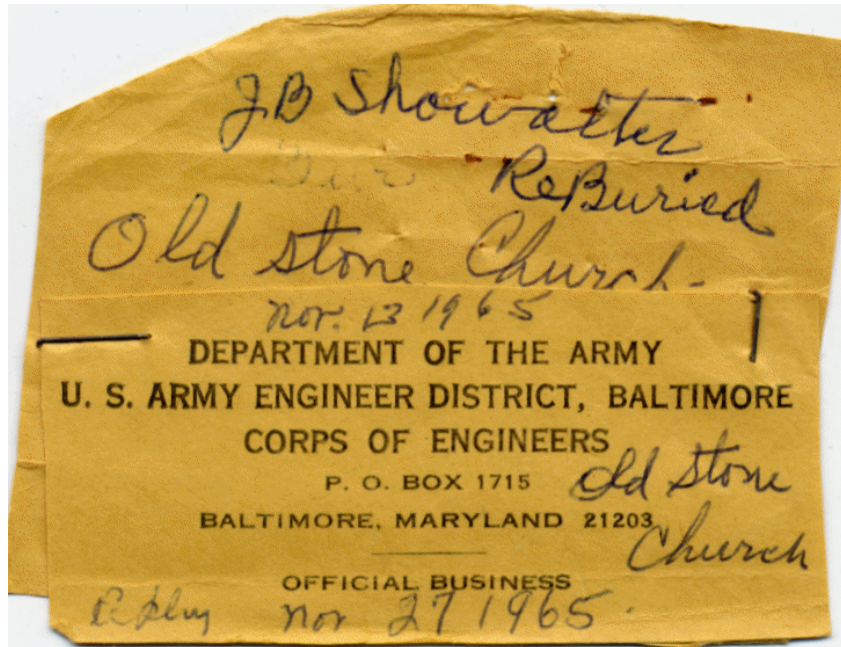
Today, the site of the former Upper Corners Cemetery is situated on the southwest corner of the intersection of roads T404 and T416. The site is officially part of Penn Township, Hesston, Huntingdon Co., PA. Some Internet sources refer to the site as being in Grafton - Grafton being the former name of Hesston.

## **Final Notes**

The remains of eight of Joseph Showalter's relatives were moved to the Old Stone Church in preparation for the rising waters of Raystown Lake. All came from the Upper Corners cemetery – there were no Showalters recorded at any of the other twelve cemeteries that were emptied out.

Government records show that Lillian was the contact person for communications involving the movement of the remains of two of the Showalters in the 1960's who were her grandparents. Thomas Kyle, the son of Joseph's sister, Hetty Kyle, was the contact person for the other six Showalters whose remains were moved. In the 1990's, my father became the contact person for all eight of the Showalters when the Upper Corners site was later reassessed for conversion to a recreation area.

Lillian's notes, indicate that she thought that the remains of her father, Joseph Showalter, were involved in the movement of burials from the Upper Corners Cemetery to the Old Stone Church:



My father thought the same – reference his letter to cousin Joan on page 73. However, it was actually Lillian's grandparents and other relatives whose graves were moved, not her father Joseph. This confusion resulted from the initial government letter to Lillian that identified her as being a daughter of the person whose grave was being moved, when in fact, she was a granddaughter.

## Finale

The location of the grave of Joseph Showalter is unknown. No one in the family can recall where he was buried back in 1939

The records of Huntingdon County cemeteries make no mention of Joseph [<http://files.usgwarchives.org/pa/huntingdon/cemeteries/raystown.txt>]. And Joseph is not mentioned in any documents relating to the creation of Raystown Lake, the relocation of the thirteen cemeteries or the subsequent reburials at the Old Stone Church.

His obituary says he was buried at something called the Corner Cemetery on Piney Ridge. Most likely, this is a reference to the Upper Corners Cemetery that was relocated to the Old Stone Church. Joseph Showalter was likely one of the many unknown remains originally buried at the Upper Corners Cemetery that now reside at the Old Stone Church.

In life, Joseph was always on the move, spending much time apart from his wife and children, and often living with his relatives in the Huntingdon area. In death, Joseph was buried with his relatives at Huntingdon, Pa, far removed from his wife Bertha and daughter Ethel who were buried at Lancaster County, Pa, and from his daughter Lillian whose ashes are at Glassboro, NJ.

end

## Service Record

Joseph Blair Showalter served in the Spanish American War - the medals from his military service remain.

## Showalter Genealogy

Jacob Showalter is the progenitor of the Showalter family in this country. He came here in 1755 via boat from Rotterdam to Philadelphia. No doubt, he was part of the massive migration of people that came to America in the 1700's from the Palatine region of Germany. There was a town of Palatine in Huntingdon Co., Pa as well as a Palatine section of Fairmont, WV.

The Showalter family soon had a strong presence in Huntingdon Co. (western PA) as well as Lancaster Co. (central PA) and Northampton Co. (eastern PA). The early family was either Dunkards or Mennonites - two similar German Protestant sects. Later Showalter generations in Huntingdon Co. were Dunkards.

The lineage is as follows [per RootsWebGedcom6910DaveHollabaughB.htm]:

- 1st. JACOB MATTHIAS SHOWALTER (b. Palatine or Palatinate, Germany) - MARY SAUNDERS
- 2nd. PETER SHOWALTER (B. 1722 Palatinate, Germany - d. 1756 Northampton Co., PA)
- 3rd. JACOB SHOWALTER (ca1756 - ca1825) - MARY \_\_\_\_\_
- 4th. ABRAHAM SHOWALTER (1800 Chester Co., PA - 1859 Cass Twp., Huntingdon Co., PA) - NANCY \_\_\_\_\_ (1801-1876)
- 5th. JOHN A. SHOWALTER (1833-1892) - SUSANNAH PARKS (1836-1914)
- 6th. JOSEPH SHOWALTER - BERTHA JANE DODD**



Joseph Showalter's Siblings (the children of John A. Showalter and Susannah Parks):

1. Madison SHOWALTER b: 1854
2. Samuel F. SHOWALTER b: 8 Feb 1856 d: 25 Mar 1903  
md. w(1) Mary E. BOWMAN and w(2) Kathurah Laurie DYSAND
3. George W. SHOWALTER b: 7 Nov 1857 d: 1 Apr 1925  
md. Sarah (Sallie) MCCONAUGHY b: May 1862 d: 1927
4. Mary SHOWALTER b: 22 Oct 1859 d: 1 Sep 1931 – md. \_\_\_ Kipe
5. Nancy Jane SHOWALTER b: 11 Jan 1862
6. Isaac A. SHOWALTER b: 26 Jan 1864 d: 1 Feb 1928
7. Hetty SHOWALTER b: 17 Aug 1866 md. John KYLE
8. Julia SHOWALTER b: 21 Dec 1868 md. Alfred N. BANKS
- 9. Joseph SHOWALTER b: 15 Jul 1870 md. Bertha Jane DODD**
10. John J. SHOWALTER b: 29 Dec 1873 d: 19 Feb 1878
11. Abraham SHOWALTER b: 28 Dec 1874 d: 8 Feb 1878
12. Hannah SHOWALTER b: 16 Jun 1877 md. David Franklin LOWER
13. Henry B. SHOWALTER b: 16 Jun 1879 d: 1942 md. Ellen DETWEILER
14. Jacob SHOWALTER b: 2 Oct 1883

end