



# The Mountain Eagle.

*Clips from available Mountain Eagle pages since 1907.*

**THURSDAY  
APRIL 16, 1925**

Miss Amanda Gibson, a stenographer for Whitesburg Attorney Stephen Combs Jr., is a candidate for the Republican nomination for Letcher County Clerk. "Is it not right and proper that the women of this county should be represented among our county officers?" she asks. "There are eight elective county offices to fill, and the superintendent is appointed by the Board of Education. The county clerk office is an office particularly suitable and adaptable to the modest, graceful, attentive instinct of a woman. I believe the men and women of this county will say that at least we should let the women have one out of nine offices.

A day of field and track events will be held next Saturday at Seco. All high schools in the county and immediate area are eligible and invited to participate. There will be running, jumping, vaulting and other events.

Fleming, Jackhorn, Seco, and the coalfields on Boone Fork are aflame with hopes now on account of the improved coal situation.

Deputy Sheriff Boaz Adkins and assistants have cleaned up Neon, where the bootlegging is almost a thing of the past.

Engineers are surveying the state road from Eolia to the Harlan County line, a part of the Mayo Trail. Six miles of the route, from Poor Fork [now Cumberland] to the Letcher County line has already been surveyed.

**THURSDAY  
APRIL 19, 1945**

Harry S. Truman has been sworn in as the 31st President of the United States. Truman took the oath of office just hours after President Franklin Delano Roosevelt died of a cerebral hemorrhage at 4:35 p.m. last Thursday, April 12 in Warm Springs, Georgia, while resting in preparation for the Peace Session set for April 25. Mr. Roosevelt had gone to Warm Springs for one of his periodic visits to seek rest and bask in the sun. He had planned to stay there through this week, then return to Washington before leaving for a cross-country trip to San Francisco to open the World Security Conference on April 25. President Roosevelt was buried Sunday in Hyde Park, New York. Truman is from Missouri.

Two Letcher County men were killed by a passenger train Sunday evening. Bill Polly and his father-in-law, Johnnie Halcomb, both of Pert Creek, died about 8:30 p.m. when they were hit by the L&N train while the two men were resting on the railroad track near Ermine. Bill Polly was employed by C.D. Lynch Coal Company of Mayking. He is survived by his wife and four children. Halcomb is survived by his wife and 10 children.

Pulitzer Prize-winning war correspondent Ernie Pyle was killed Wednesday by Japanese machine gun fire in the South Pacific.

Ira C. Craft of Millstone, a member of the Medical Detachment, 134th Infantry, is the recipient of the Bronze Star medal for heroic service in connection with military operations in the vicinity of Pain-de-Sucre Mountain in the Caribbean last September 19 and 20. "During the period, Company 'K' launched an attack against Pain-de-Sucre, resulting in its members being subjected to heavy concentrations of artillery, mortar and small arms fire in an effort to retake the high ground" the citation says. Private Craft, an aid man, with utter disregard for his personal safety, knowing that he was the only medical aid man remaining in the organization, continuously moved from platoon to platoon in adherence to duty, personally supervising the evacuation of all the wounded.

Sergeant Carl R. Vertuca of Fleming was awarded the Purple Heart medal by Brigadier General Gordon Saville during a recent ceremony. Vertuca received the award for wounds sustained in action at Casablanca, Morocco on December 30, 1942. He is a member of the X11 Tactical Air Command, compose of P-47 Thunderbolt groups, dive-bombing and strafing enemy targets in advance of the Sixth Army Group on the Western front.

Mrs. Coleman Winsted received a telegram this week stating that her son, Private Paul Winsted, had been slightly wounded somewhere in Germany.

The wonderful news in Upper Cowan this week is that Roy Fields, son of Mr. and Mrs. Steve Fields, is alive and well in a German prison camp after being listed as missing

# Earthquakes changed Kentucky in 1811

By JADON GIBSON

A joint effort by Robert Fulton, Robert R. Livingston and Nicholas Roosevelt led to the first steamboat to navigate up and down the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers, from Pittsburgh to New Orleans in 1811. Fulton is noted for inventing the Clermont, the first commercially successful steamboat.

Robert R. Livingston, the minister to France during President Thomas Jefferson's administration, was instrumental in negotiating the Louisiana Purchase. Fulton and Livingston realized the importance of steamboat travel on the western waters and met with Nicholas Roosevelt because of his side-wheel method of propulsion. It enhanced the speed of the steamships and made them commercially viable.

The three came to an agreement on October 20, 1811, and Nicholas Roosevelt, captain of the steamship New Orleans (aptly named) set out from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Their destination was New Orleans, 2,000 miles away. The New Orleans steamboat was slightly over 148 feet in length, 33 and a half feet wide and 12 feet deep. It weighed 171 tons.

Those aboard included Captain Roosevelt's pregnant wife Lydia, their two-year-old daughter, a crew of 12, and Roosevelt's Labrador dog, Tiger. His wife, daughter and dog were along as they wished to convey that steamboat travel was available for commercial use and for passengers, including families.

Everything went well until the 10th day when they were forced to anchor at Louisville, Kentucky, where Roosevelt's wife gave birth to a son. They waited for Lydia to recover initially but then the captain determined the water level wasn't high enough to safely pass over the Falls of the Ohio, a dangerous coral reef not far from Louisville.

After a month the steamboat continued. On the night of December 16, while anchored at Owensboro, Kentucky, the sleep of those aboard was disturbed by Roosevelt's dog, barking and scratching at the door. The dog wanted inside the family cabin. Tiger was content to

in action since November 14.

Mrs. Edna Cook of Jenkins received a letter from her husband, Private Arlie Cook, last week stating that Arlie was in a German prison camp. The War Department had previously notified her that her husband had been missing in action since January 9. He was in Camp Bad Orb (Stalag IX-B, Wegscheide), which was liberated April 3.

Hudson Goins, 18, president of the Whitco 4-H Club last year in Letcher County, was named state home labor champion after working more than 1,417 hours, or more than 141 10-hour days. With her brother called to service, Miss Goins helped paint the house, hoe corn, and harvest potatoes. She also helped her mother with the housework, cooking, canning, and sewing. She earned a total of \$58 during vacation from school.

Letcher County Jailer Jim Stampfer was seriously injured in a car wreck last night (Wednesday) near Blackey. At this time he is a patient in the Jenkins Hospital, where it is believed physicians may have to amputate his crushed left leg.

Two Neon men, "Shine" Sumlar and Carl Swanger, caught a 51-pound yellow catfish near Pineville yesterday. The two brought the huge fish to *The Mountain Eagle* office and told how they caught it after placing liver on their hooks and leaving for a time. During the excitement of catching the fish, the 200-pound "Shrine" fell into the stream and had to be pulled out "by the necktie" by Swanger.

**THURSDAY  
APRIL 21, 1955**

The City of Whitesburg hopes to build a sanitary sewer system that would be paid for with user fees of about \$2.40 cents per month, or 8 cents per day. Building the system is estimated to cost \$220,000, at least \$30,000 of which has been pledged by the Memorial Hospital Association.

Several members of the Stuart Robinson School Folk Dance Club, made up of 16 couples chosen by a folk dance teacher at the beginning of the school term, have been busy touring North Carolina, South Carolina and Tennessee. On that one-week tour were students Joanne Hubbard, Evola Branson, Francis McIntyre, Ella Faye Adams, Jackie Blair, Shelby Jean Caudill, Elizabeth Combs, Dennis Hampton, Thomas Jent, David Estep, Lindsey Sexton, Elwood Cornett and Gilberto Hinojosa. Members also participated in the Berea Folk Festival April 1-3. They were Olga Adams, Sadie Nell Whitaker, Faye Dunn, Ann Dixon, Wilma Pridemore, Martha Sue Cornett, Dennis Hampton, David Es-

# The Way We Were



Seen above is a replica of the Clermont, the first commercially successful steamboat in the United States. (Courtesy Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.)

sleep on the deck on each prior night but on this occasion, he complained until the captain relented and let him inside where he could be with his owners. Actually, Tiger sensed something that no one else on the New Orleans knew about.

The steamboat was not far from New Madrid, Missouri, the epicenter of one of the greatest earthquakes of all time. Somehow Tiger sensed the earthquake was just beginning.

The earthquakes wreaked unbelievable havoc over a wide area and resulted in the Mississippi River actually turning and running backwards for several hours. Keep in mind the Mississippi is one of the largest waterways in the world and for it to run backwards would be of

Biblical proportion.

The riverbanks collapsed in many places, river islands disappeared, and other islands were formed. It would become a series of over 2,000 quakes of different degrees that continued from December 16, 1811, through March 6, 1812.

Thousands of trees and debris floated along their course. Roosevelt took a flatboat trip to New Orleans the previous year, taking measurements and making notations of various hazards but the changes brought on by the earthquakes made his travel plans largely useless.

Heretofore their journey brought citizens along the river towns, out to the water's edge, cheering them on. Captain Roosevelt met

tepp, Lawrence Back, Bill Croucher, Elwood Cornett and Don Back.

Army Pvt. Billy G. McCloud, son of Mr. and Mrs. L.C. McCloud of Jenkins, recently arrived in Hawaii and is now a member of the 25th Infantry Division.

Judge Bert T. Combs, Democratic candidate for Governor, was a visit or in Whitesburg and Letcher County on Tuesday. We are informed Judge Combs will return here for speaking engagements at a later date.

The Fugazzi School of Business Extension Division will open in Whitesburg next Tuesday night, April 26. Classes will be held over Quillen Rexall Drugs on Main Street.

**THURSDAY  
APRIL 15, 1965**

Isaac B. "Ike" Caudill, a former typing teacher at Kingdom Come School, has been hired to direct the proposed multi-million dollar War on Poverty and Appalachian Area development programs in Letcher County. Caudill will be paid \$7,500 a year.

Discussing incidents in which poor people have been excluded from planning the War on Poverty, a *Mountain Eagle* editorial says, "We are convinced that the War on Poverty will be lost unless it can involve the poor so deeply that just by that involvement they become convinced that there is some point in taking vocational training or going to school or cleaning up the yard or doing all the other things the poverty experts say must be done. There are only two choices. One course of action would be to force the poor to reform and become like the rest of us think we are. The other is to draw the poor into the programs in such a way that they will take an active, even a voluntary interest in them. The first choice is a War on the Poor. The second is a War on Poverty."

Fields Hardware and Furniture Center, formerly Whitesburg Farm Services, is holding a grand opening sale.

Steve Frazier was named athlete of the year in both football and basketball at the annual athletics banquet at Whitesburg High School.

**THURSDAY  
APRIL 17, 1975**

County Judge Estill Blair has ordered Sheriff Ruben Watts not to publish the sheriff's annual notice of sale of delinquent tax bills in *The Mountain Eagle*. Blair had voiced objections to *The Mountain Eagle's* coverage of fiscal court meetings and to a letter to the editor criticizing him.

The Whitesburg City Council raised garbage collection fees from

with news reporters in the larger towns and their quest to reach New Orleans was widely known. The quakes changed that with citizens coming forward to be rescued and taken along on the steamer. The captain wouldn't consider it as their supplies were limited and he knew overcrowding brought many potential dangers. They discontinued stopping at towns, instead mooring to an island but that night the island disappeared into a giant fissure, taken by a quake. They had seen numerous boats of different types since leaving Pittsburgh but now it had been three days without seeing even one, except for those that were wrecked, destroyed and abandoned. Roosevelt knew he had to keep a stern hand.

The travels of the New Orleans were widely publicized and with the advent of the horrific earthquakes, many individuals began to think the steamboat may be the cause. After entering Indian territory, they were caught by surprise in a canoe attack by a band of Chickasaws. Luckily the captain had kept the steamboat positioned a good distance from shore because of falling and floating trees and collapsing riverbanks. Luckily, they were able to outrun the Indians. Those aboard were safe.

They arrived in New Orleans on January 10, 1812, having traveled nearly 2,000 miles from Pittsburgh. It was the first steamboat to travel the waters of the west.

They took passengers back and forth between Natchez and New Orleans for several days to show that passenger and commercial travel on steamships was feasible. Prior to this, settlers and goods traveled westward on the waterways but could not return upstream.

"The Mississippi is conquered," Robert Fulton the father of steamboat travel, wrote to a friend.

*Jadon Gibson writes from his home in Harrogate, Tennessee. His writings are both historic and nostalgic in nature. He wishes to thank Lincoln Memorial University, his alma mater, Alice Lloyd College and the Museum of Appalachia for their assistance.*

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can't be duplicated."

**WEDNESDAY  
APRIL 20, 2005**

The Letcher Fiscal Court voted unanimously to support a local group's efforts to bring a federal prison to Letcher County.

Appliances were delivered to the domestic abuse shelter in Whitesburg in preparation for an open house this week. Gov. Ernie Fletcher will be at the Esta Craft Conway Center on Friday along with State Rep. Howard Cornett, State Rep. Johnny Ray Turner and former first lady of Kentucky, Judy Patton.

Bob Shepherd, marketing manager of the Burdine Quarry of Pine Mountain Stone, is the first recipient of the Patron of the Arts Award from Cumberland Mountain Arts and Crafts Council. Also receiving a Patron of the Arts Award for his work at the Little Shepherd of Kingdom Come amphitheater site in Jenkins was Freddie Oaks of Dorton.

**WEDNESDAY  
APRIL 22, 2015**

James R. Huffman IV, one of two Pike County men accused of stabbing Michael Shane Hogg to death on New Year's Eve, 2014 in Whitesburg, has been cleared of separate charges filed against him in December 2013. Huffman had been charged in the earlier case with first-degree criminal trespassing, second-degree disorderly conduct, menacing and harassment after he was engaged in an hour-long standoff with Pike Count sheriff's deputies on December 4, 2013.

District Two Magistrate Terry Adams urged the Letcher Fiscal Court to make economic development a regular topic, and District Five Magistrate Wayne Fleming suggested holding an extra meeting each month dedicated to economic development. The fiscal court agreed to hold the additional meeting. Fleming also said the court needs to meet with people who work in economic development as well as looking for sources to invest in economic development for the county.

Tampa, Fla.-based TECO Energy Inc. has entered into a fourth amendment of its agreement to sell subsidiary TECO Coal to Cambrian Coal Corp., a member of the Booth Energy group. TECO Coal operates mines in Letcher, Pike and Perry counties.

The City of Whitesburg has received funding through the Appalachian Regional Commission to create a design for a permanent structure for the Letcher County Farmers Market.

\$2 to \$3. The council also ordered Police Chief Nathan Baker to begin towing cars parked on yellow curbs. The council said the illegally parked cars and contributing to congestion in Whitesburg.

The home of Mr. and Mrs. George Nelson on Cowan Street in Whitesburg was destroyed by fire. Volunteer firemen could not get enough water pressure in their hoses to pump water to the top of the house where the fire began.

The Letcher County Grand Jury noted "a serious drug problem" in the county in its report. The grand jury recommended that the fiscal court appropriate funds to hire personnel especially trained in the area of drug abuse.

**WEDNESDAY  
APRIL 24, 1985**

The Letcher County Board of Education has voted to stick with its plan to ask the state to approve building the new Whitesburg High School on School Hill.

Construction has begun on the Blackey Library. The library building will be connected to the Blackey Senior Citizens Center building by a ramp.

A special district tax like that supporting the county's library and health department will be necessary to keep the county's extension service operating, said County Judge/Executive Ruben Watts. The county owes the University of Kentucky \$55,000 for the county's share of operating the service, a debt that has been growing for three years.

Kingdom Come Settlement School led all county elementary schools in attendance for the sixth month of school with a percentage of 95.2. Letcher High School led the county's three high schools with a 92 percent mark.

**WEDNESDAY  
APRIL 19, 1995**

State tax receipts accounted for at least 65 percent of the total Letcher County school system budget for the Fiscal Year 1994-1995. Letcher County tax receipts accounted for only 16 percent of the budget.

Arson is suspected as the cause of two separate fires at Lowe's lumber and hardware store in Whitesburg.

"Did you ever see colors as beautiful before in the Kentucky mountains?" asks Jeremiah correspondent Hassie Breeding Helton. "And if your eyes ache from the beauty, roll your windows down a bit. The potpourri fragrance is fantastic. Combine redbud, dogwood, pear, crab apple, phlox, tulips and wild sweet william all. Nature's best; it