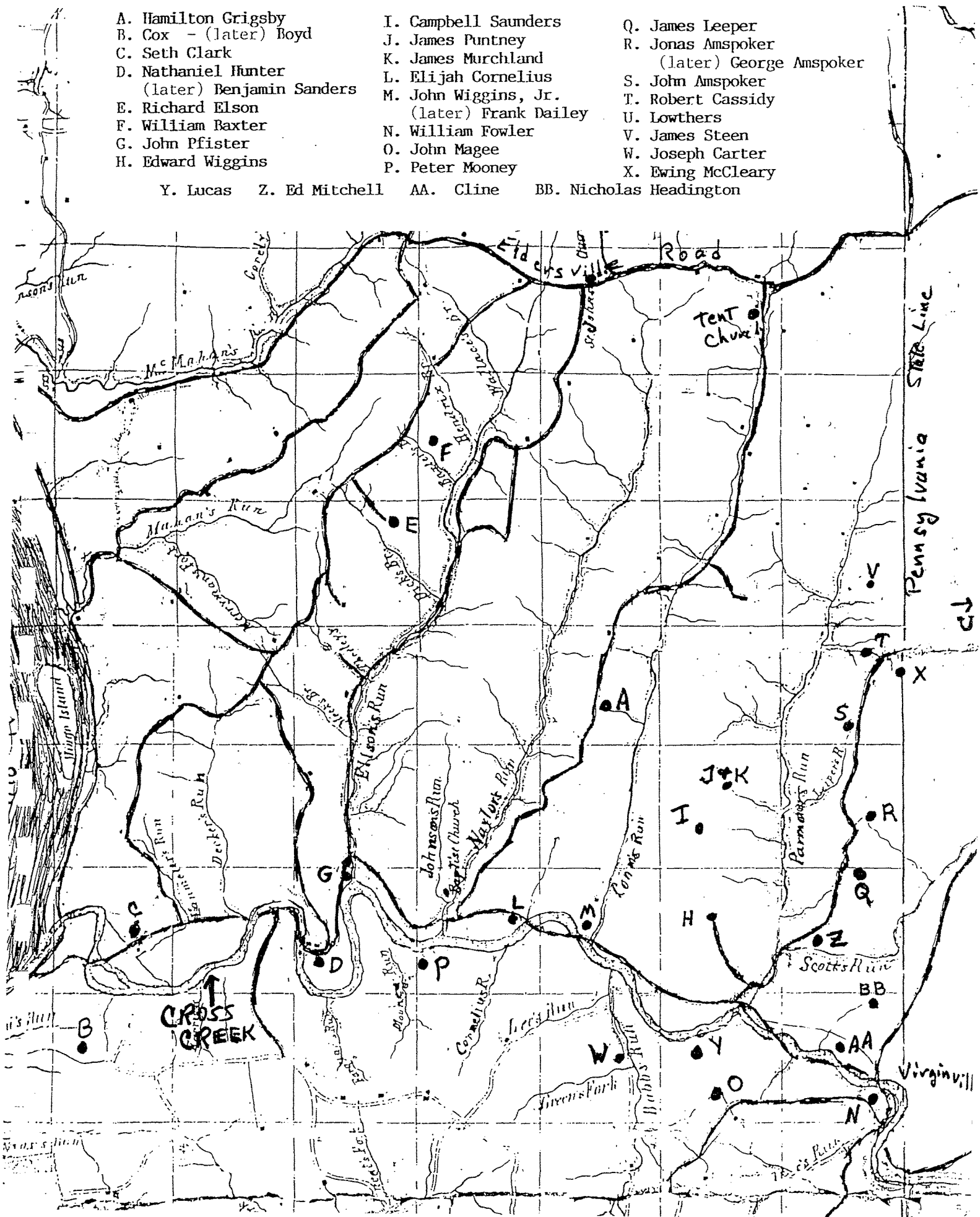


Pfister Family

**Leaves of History-Cross Creek, Brooke County-Part II
Online use, Refer to Obituaries**

THE EARLY FAMILIES

- | | | |
|--------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------|
| A. Hamilton Grigsby | I. Campbell Saunders | Q. James Leeper |
| B. Cox - (later) Boyd | J. James Puntney | R. Jonas Amspoker |
| C. Seth Clark | K. James Murchland | (later) George Amspoker |
| D. Nathaniel Hunter | L. Elijah Cornelius | S. John Amspoker |
| (later) Benjamin Sanders | M. John Wiggins, Jr. | T. Robert Cassidy |
| E. Richard Elson | (later) Frank Dailey | U. Lowthers |
| F. William Baxter | N. William Fowler | V. James Steen |
| G. John Pfister | O. John Magee | W. Joseph Carter |
| H. Edward Wiggins | P. Peter Mooney | X. Ewing McCleary |
| Y. Lucas | Z. Ed Mitchell | AA. Cline |
| | | BB. Nicholas Headington |

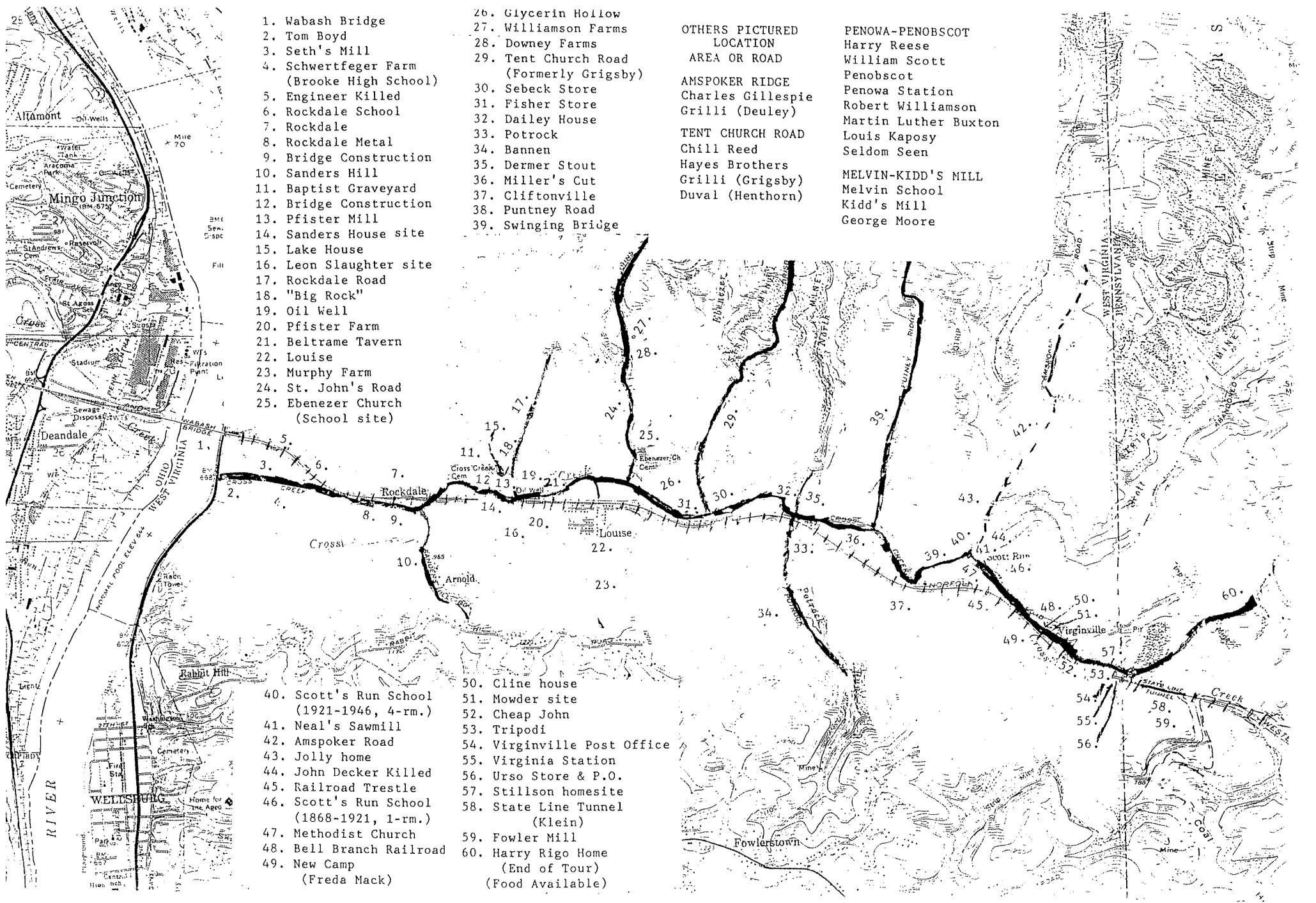


1. Wabash Bridge
2. Tom Boyd
3. Seth's Mill
4. Schwertfeger Farm (Brooke High School)
5. Engineer Killed
6. Rockdale School
7. Rockdale
8. Rockdale Metal
9. Bridge Construction
10. Sanders Hill
11. Baptist Graveyard
12. Bridge Construction
13. Pfister Mill
14. Sanders House site
15. Lake House
16. Leon Slaughter site
17. Rockdale Road
18. "Big Rock"
19. Oil Well
20. Pfister Farm
21. Beltrame Tavern
22. Louise
23. Murphy Farm
24. St. John's Road
25. Ebenezer Church (School site)

26. Glycerin Hollow
27. Williamson Farms
28. Downey Farms
29. Tent Church Road (Formerly Grigsby)
30. Sebeck Store
31. Fisher Store
32. Dailey House
33. Potrock
34. Bannen
35. Dermer Stout
36. Miller's Cut
37. Cliftonville
38. Puntney Road
39. Swinging Bridge

- OTHERS PICTURED
LOCATION
AREA OR ROAD
- AMSPOKER RIDGE
Charles Gillespie
Grilli (Deuley)
- TENT CHURCH ROAD
Chill Reed
Hayes Brothers
Grilli (Grigsby)
Duval (Henthorn)

- PENOWA-PENOBSCOT
Harry Reese
William Scott
Penobscot
Penowa Station
Robert Williamson
Martin Luther Buxton
Louis Kaposy
Seldom Seen
- MELVIN-KIDD'S MILL
Melvin School
Kidd's Mill
George Moore



40. Scott's Run School (1921-1946, 4-rm.)
41. Neal's Sawmill
42. Amspoker Road
43. Jolly home
44. John Decker Killed
45. Railroad Trestle
46. Scott's Run School (1868-1921, 1-rm.)
47. Methodist Church
48. Bell Branch Railroad
49. New Camp (Freda Mack)

50. Cline house
51. Mowder site
52. Cheap John
53. Tripodi
54. Virginville Post Office
55. Virginia Station
56. Urso Store & P.O.
57. Stillson homesite
58. State Line Tunnel (Klein)
59. Fowler Mill
60. Harry Rigo Home (End of Tour) (Food Available)

P F I S T E R

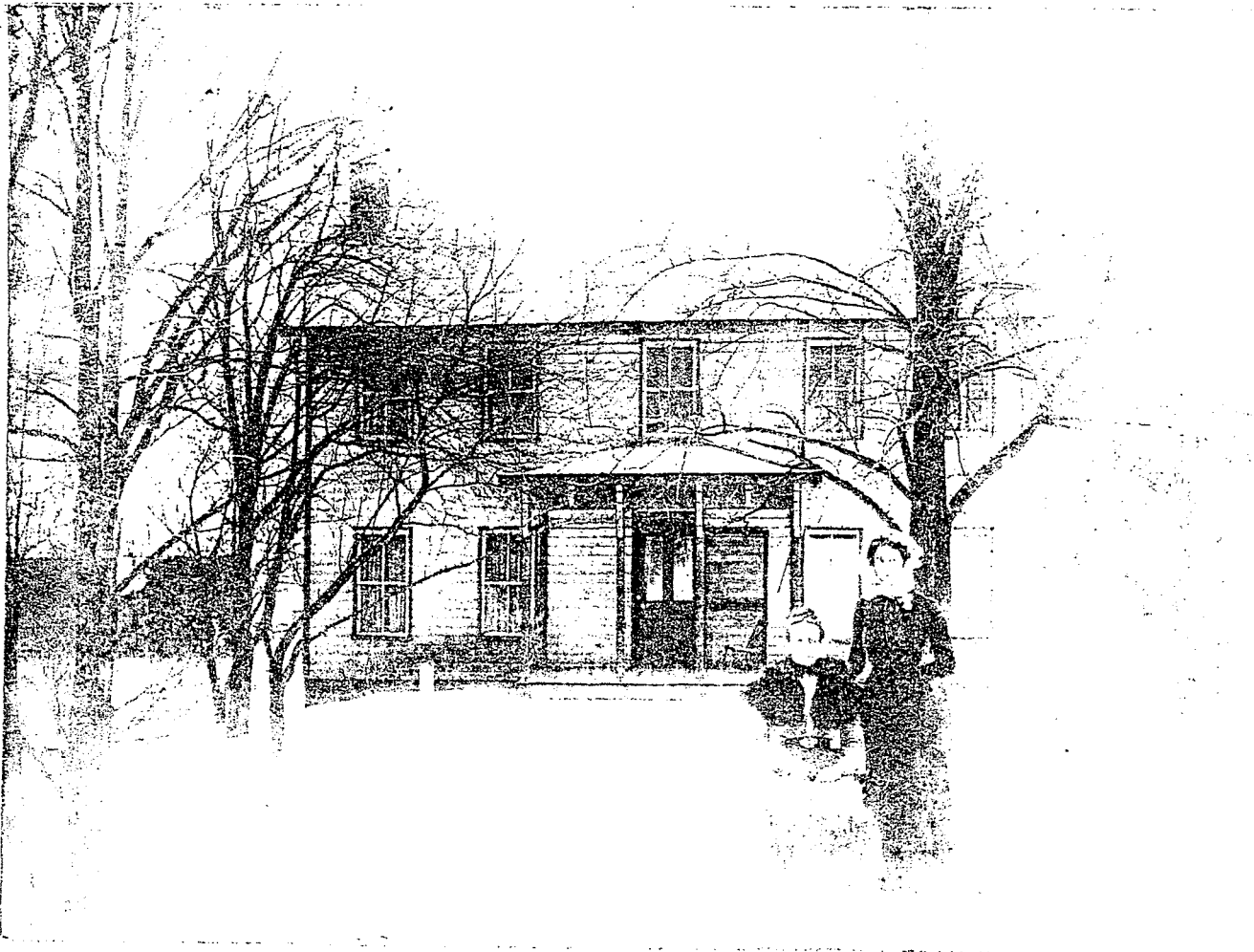
Deed Book 20, page 142, of Brooke County records shows that on 1 January 1863, a John Pfister purchased on the waters of Cross Creek, 133 acres from Rachel McCombs, and exactly seven days later, another 49 acres from Nathaniel Hunter. The 1860 Brooke County census records, however, show that a John Pfister, Sr. and wife (Agnes Segler) were living on Cross Creek between Benjamin Davis Sanders and the Wiggins families at least three years prior to this purchase. Next door to them is their son, John, Jr., his wife and their three eldest children: Agnes, aged 4; Fannie, aged two; and William Thomas, aged 1. John Sr. and his wife are shown as having been born in 1790 in Prussia. John, Jr. was also born there.

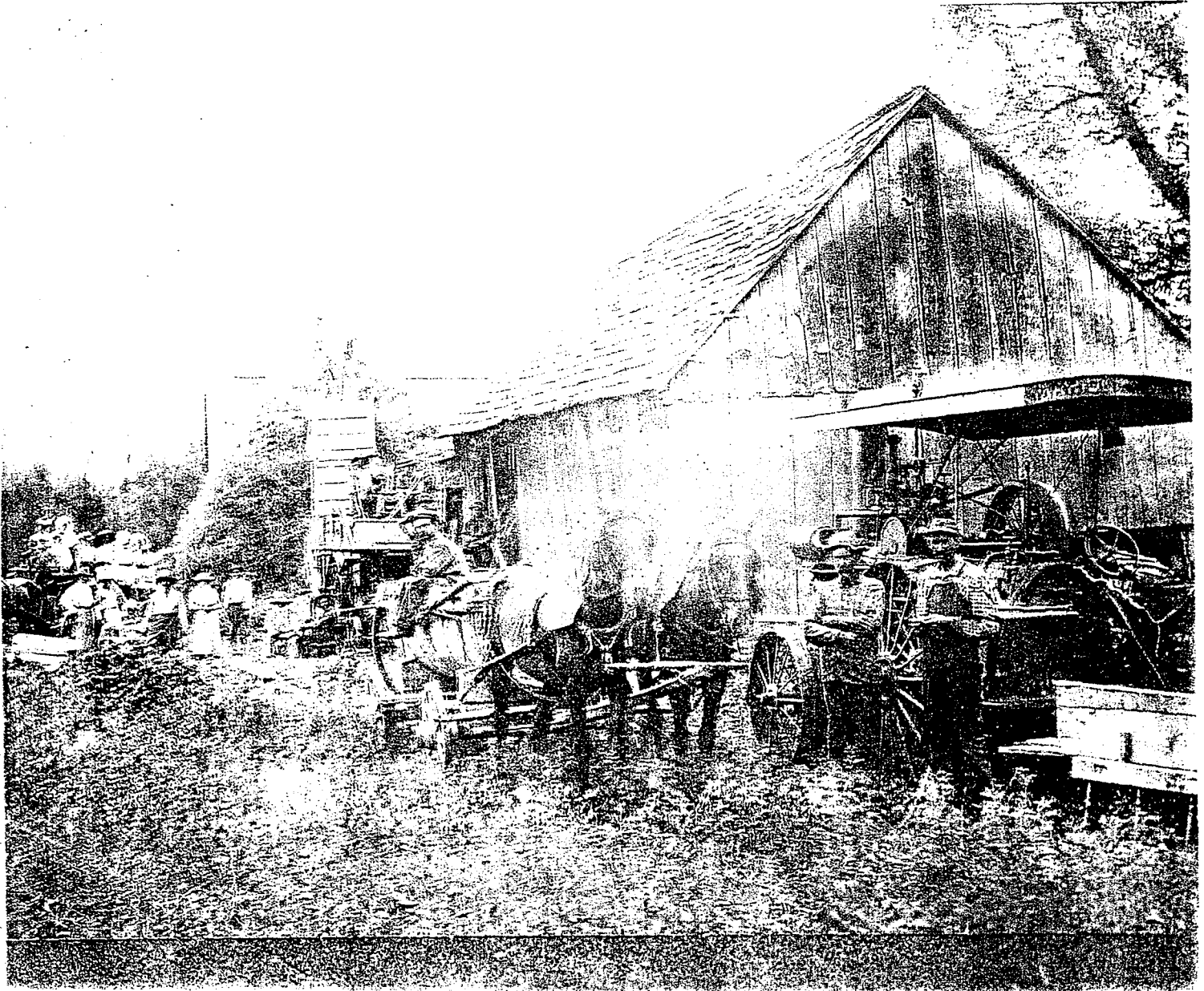
Pfister family records indicate that the elder Pfisters and children, including John, Jr. emigrated to this country in 1852 and settled for a time in Wheeling, where John, Jr. practiced his trade of stone cutting. He was known as an expert in the art and helped with the stone work on both the Custom House in Wheeling and the Catholic Cathedral there. In 1854, he married Catherine Barbara Letzkus, whose parents, George and Magdelene Peffer Letzkus, had been natives also of Germany and very early settlers in the Wellsburg-Wheeling area.

BELOW: The Pfister homestead on Cross Creek

Seated: Agnes Pfister

Standing: Sarah Ellen (Ellie) Pfister
Butcher





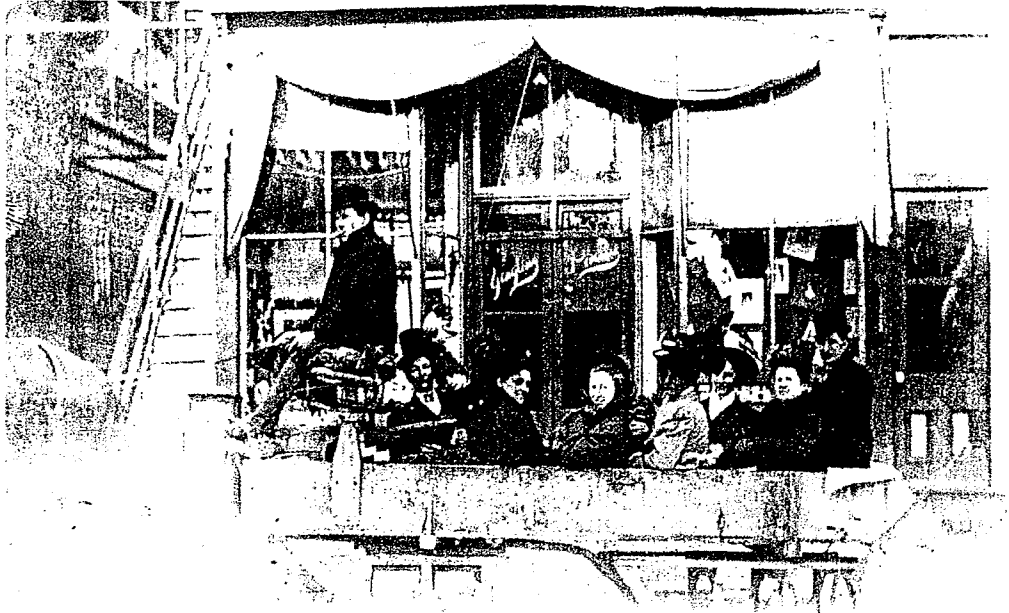
Threshing time at Pfisters

After the birth of their first son, William, who had been preceded to earth by two older sisters, "Aggie" and "Fannie", a second son, Joseph, was born in 1862. He was followed by four more sisters: Mary, Magdelene (Laney), Virginia, and Sarah Ellen (Ellie), all in the decade of the sisties. These four, and the three who were to follow, were probably born in the elegant big frame house pictured on the preceding page. Those living today who remember it, have described it as "outstandingly lovely".

In 1870, John Benjamin was born, and three years later another son, George arrived on the scene. All ten of these children reached adulthood. But 1875 was a sad year for the Pfisters. Little Anna Caroline was born, but did not survive, and in 1883, Mary died in the prime of her youth at age nineteen. No one recalls the cause of her untimely death, but it created a great void in that close-knit family circle.

The remaining nine children lived well past the allotted three score years and ten. In fact, the three women and their brother, George, lived well into their eighties. Of the three other brothers, Benjamin died at 72, while William and Joseph each at age 76. George, the grandfather of today's George Pfister, III, was the last of the children of John and Catherine. He died in 1960 at the age of 87.

The two girls who married were Magdelene (Laney) and Sarah Ellen (Ellie). Laney married John Sanders, son of Benjamin Davis Sanders who owned the PFister mill before Laney's brothers bought it. Laney and John thus united two of the most prominent families of the Cross Creek area. They perpetuated that union through the birth of three children: Lyndon, Dulcie, and John (Simmie).

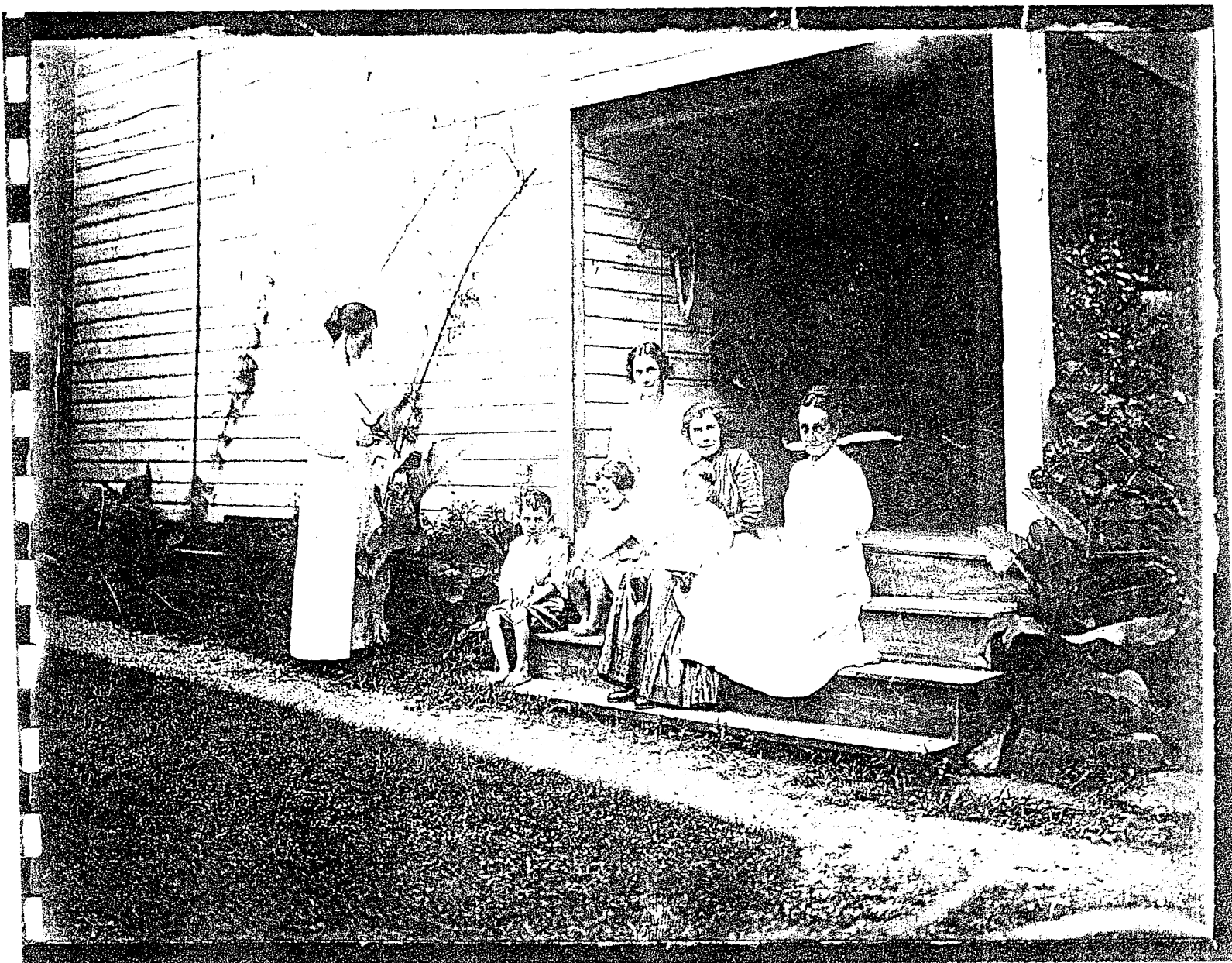


Pictured above is a typical Pfister winter activity. The site is Wellsburg. The driver is William Pfister. The lady in the center, facing the camera, is Dulcie Sanders Poteet, daughter of Laney Pfister Sanders and John Davis Sanders.

The other Pfister girl who married was Ellie. She married Henry Burton Butcher and moved with him to the Jackson Mills area. Their son, Benjamin Butcher, was a brilliant man and an excellent family historian. Benjamin and his wife were the parents of Thomas and Barbara. Barbara died as a young woman, but this line of the Pfister blood continues in Benjamin's son, Tom Butcher.

RIGHT: Standing on the extreme left is Burt Butcher, Ellie's husband. Kneeling on the right is Benjamin Pfister. The Pfister homestead is in the background.





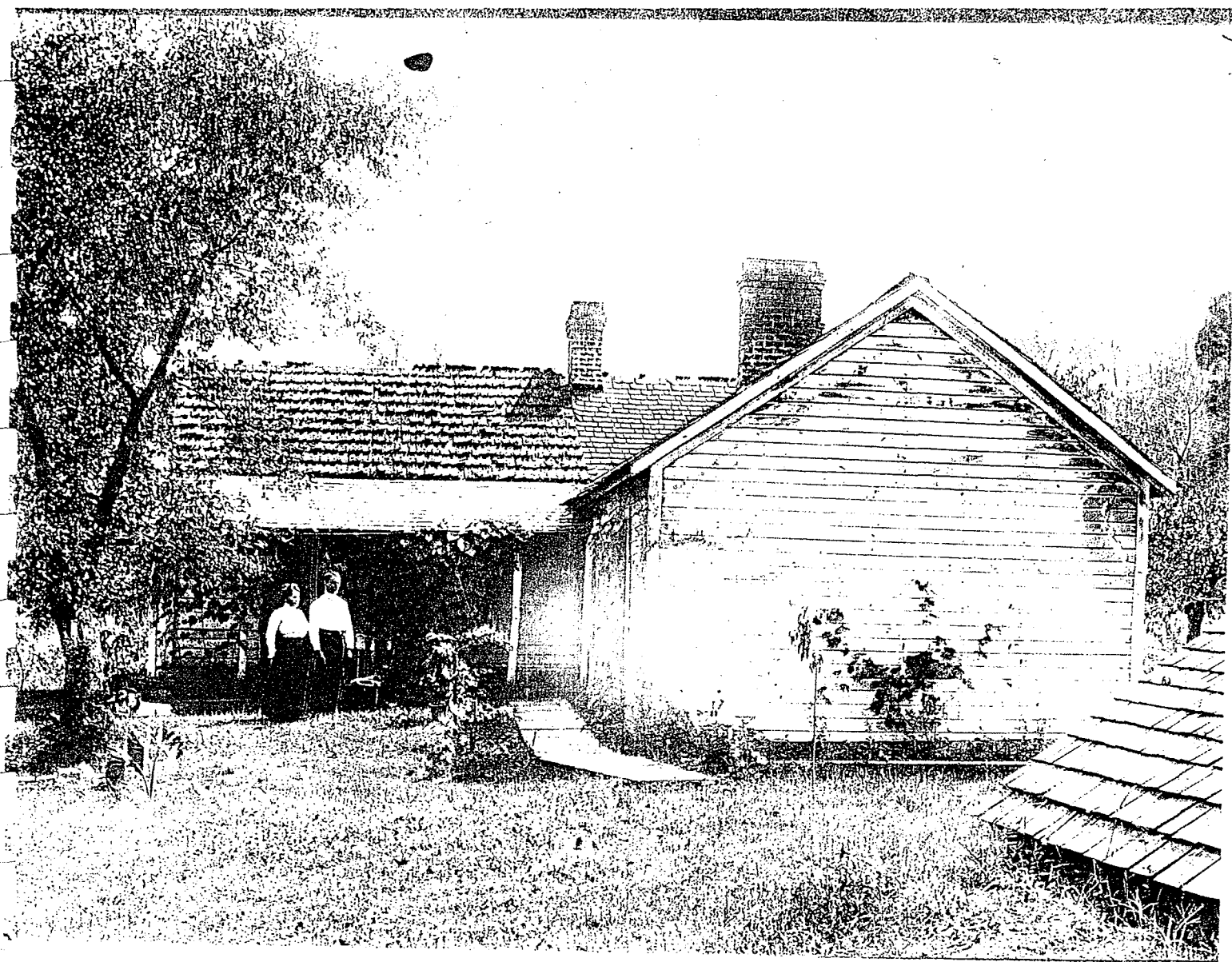
Pictured above at the Pfister homestead are: Standing- Fannie Pfister.
Seated : (adults) Left - Virginia Pfister ; Center - Kate Pfister Contriner;
Right - Agnes Pfister.
Children: Joseph Pfister, Jr. , Catherine Pfister Watkins , Mary Francis Pfister
Hervey.

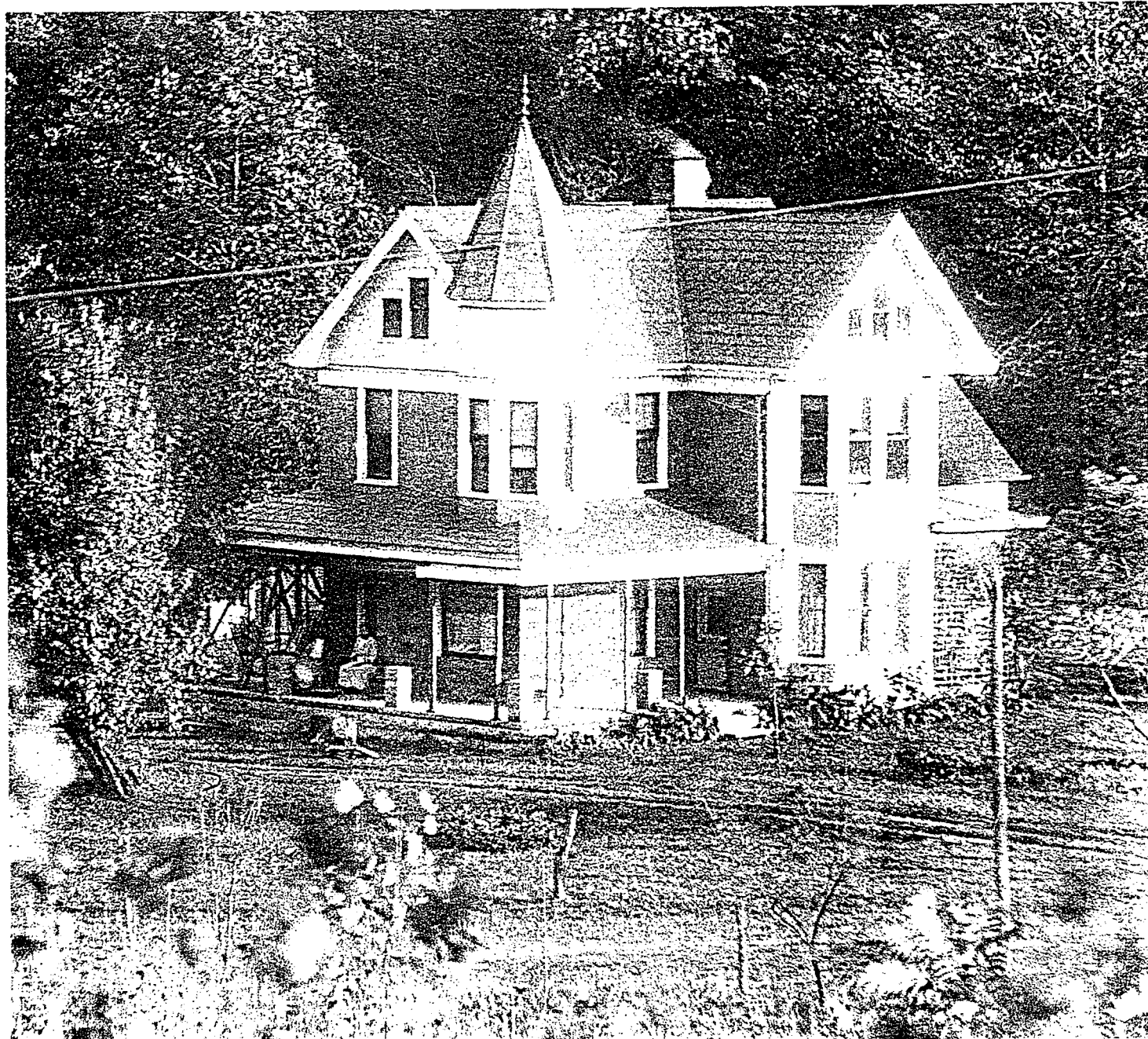
Joseph Pfister, Sr., born in 1862, married Catherine Hinkley. Their three children are in the picture above. Joseph, Jr. died unmarried. Catherine married William Watson. Her son, Richard, is living at this writing (1998) in California. Mary Frances married Judd Hervey. He died when they had been married but four years. She had no children. Thus it was that from the Joseph Pfister line, the surname, Pfister, died with the death of Joseph, Jr.

Kate Pfister Contriner, pictured above, was a sister of John Pfister, Jr., and the aunt of Fannie, Agnes, and Virginia in the picture. She married Jacob Contriner. Their daughter, Fannie, married John T. Carter and is pictured in the Carter family history on another page.

Of the children of John and Catherine Pfister, Agnes, Fannie, Virginia, and Benjamin remained unmarried, living together for the most part, in the family homestead. Virginia taught school at Ebenezer and Rockdale, and lived part of the time at Wellsburg. Fannie was well known as a cook at the Brooke County Poorhouse, pictured below, which stood on the banks of Cross Creek behind the Pfister house. Their brother, William Pfister, and his wife, Anne Davis Pfister, are pictured standing in the yard. After the Poorhouse was closed, William and Anne lived in it as their first home, before building the beautiful "castle" pictured on the next page. When this building was torn down, the stones from it were given by Fannie Pfister to Virginia Young, her niece, whose husband used them in the chimney of their home. They remain there to this day.

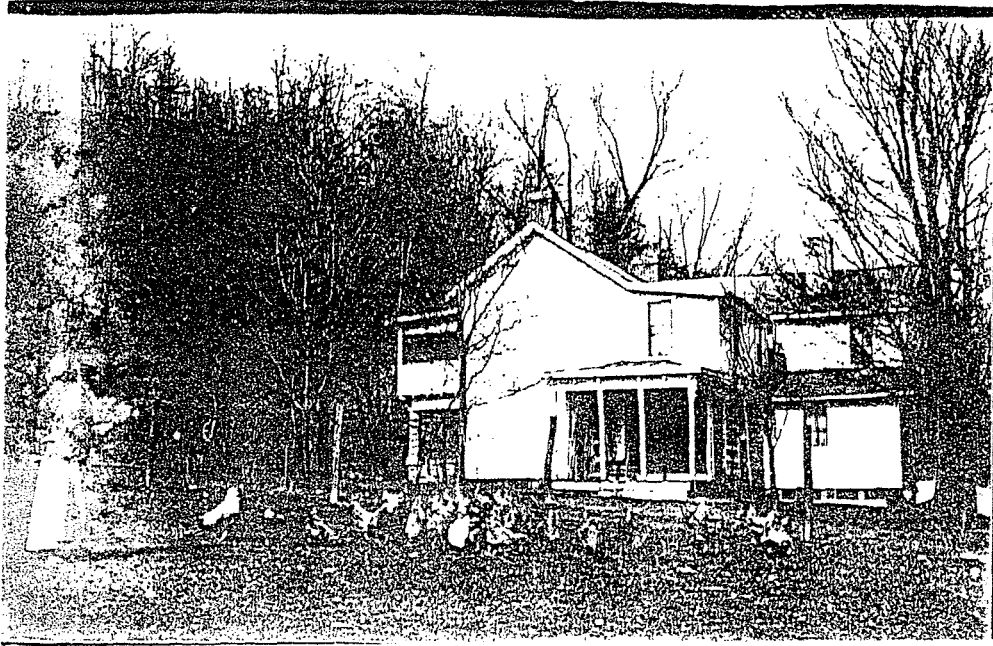
Benjamin, in company with his brother, George, bought and operated the old Sanders Mill, thereby giving it the name, Pfister Mill. Ben built for himself a small house not far from the mill, but could be found back at the homeplace much of the time with his unmarried sisters. George, who is remembered to this day as one of the finest carpenters ever to set foot in the valley, had a woodshop in the mill. Pfister children remember gathering on cold days around the fire in that wood shop and listening to the conversations of the Pfister men as George plied his trade.





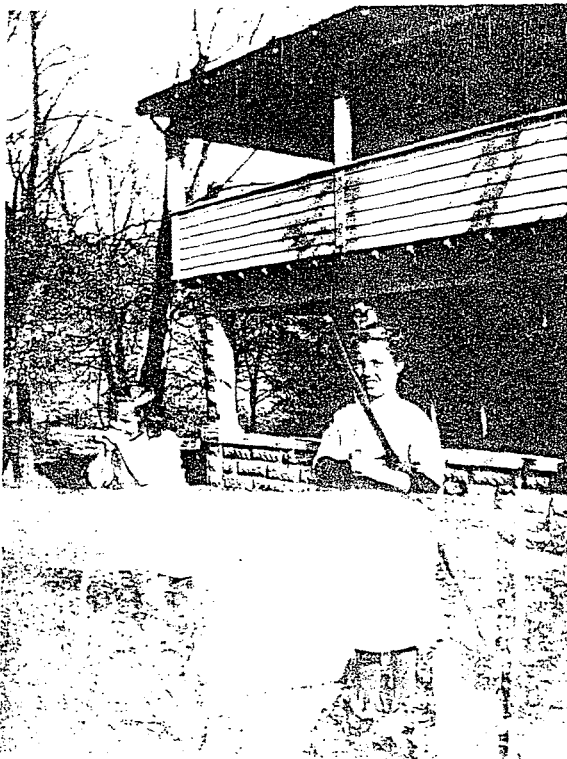
Pictured above is the William Pfister home. It sat on the site of the present "Coral Castle" in Rockdale. Those who remember it describe it as a "story-book castle". It was destroyed by fire.

The owner of this home, William Pfister, was the eldest son of John and Catherine. He married Anna Sarah Davis. To this union were born two daughters: Margaret Frances, who married Thomas Ulrich; and Virginia Agnes, who married Lewis Young. There was no issue from either of these unions. The Youngs, however, adopted, reared, and educated three sons who are a credit to their parents and to the Pfister and Young families of which they are a vital part.



ABOVE: The Pfister house with Fannie's chickens in the foreground.

On a cold day in February, 1942, tragedy struck the Pfister home. The old frame house that had held so much of love and laughter, caught fire. Angelo Beltram saw the smoke as he passed by on the Cross Creek Road. Frantically he pounded on the front door and then hastily climbed to the porch roof to alert the inhabitants who might be on the second floor. Virginia, Benjamin, and Agnes were able to escape, as Angelo made his way through the heavy smoke in search of Fannie. He succeeded in getting her out, but when one has lived all of 84 years in one house, it is not easy to leave behind all that is dear. Thus it was that Fannie, thinking perhaps of hard earned savings, or of some priceless treasure that could not be replaced - a picture perhaps of her parents or her dead sister, turned and rushed back into the flaming inferno. It was in the back stairway to the kitchen that her body was later found. No one who ever knew Fannie Pfister ever forgot her tragic ending.

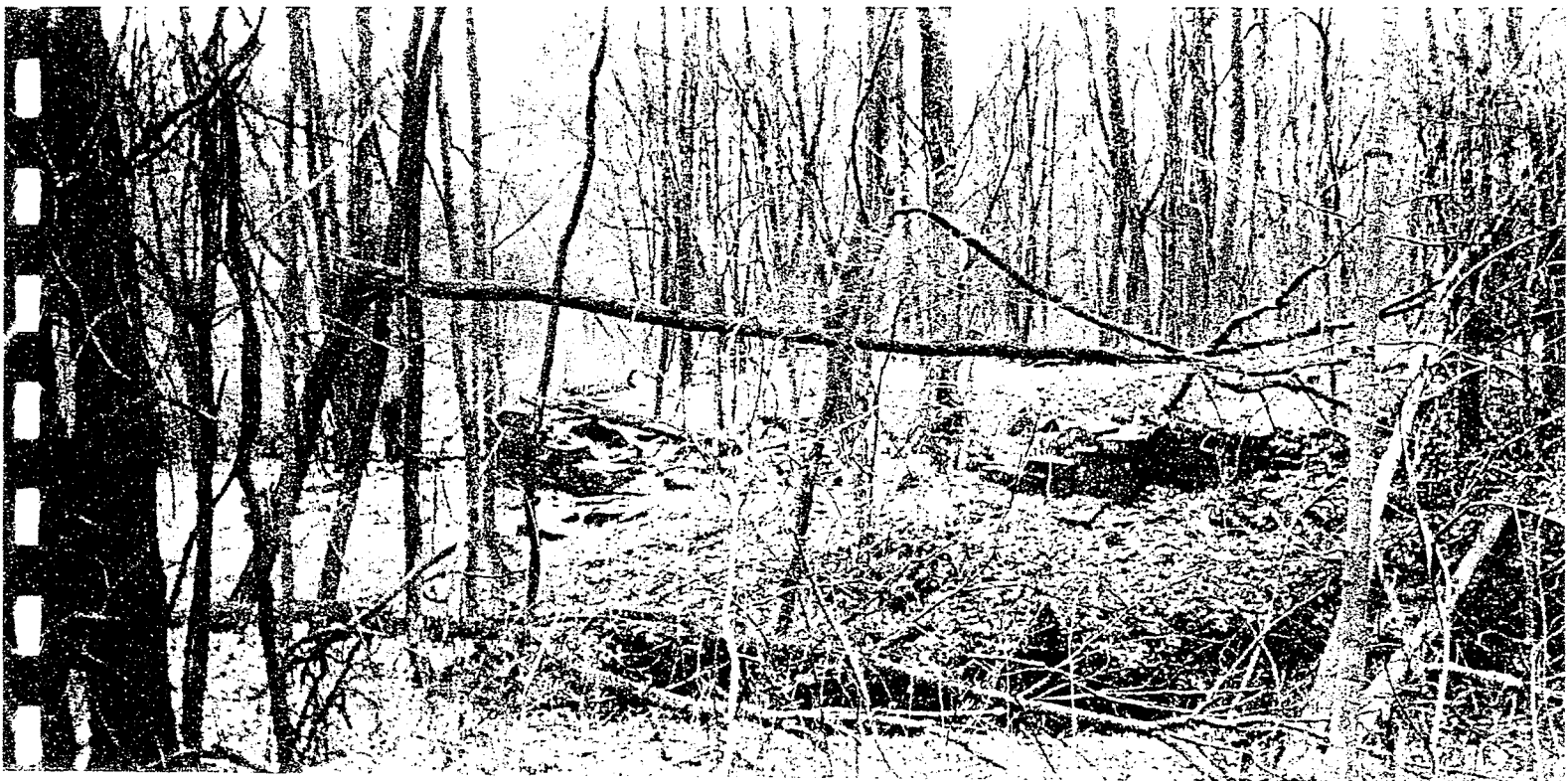


Left: William's daughters at the Pfister homestead. On the left is Virginia, with Margaret smiling into the camera on the right.



ABOVE: Stone columns which once marked the entrance to the Pfister homestead still stand today. (1998)

BELOW: All that remains after the fire of 1942 - foundation stones.



Of the grandchildren of John and Catherine Pfister, only three are living today. They are: Mary Frances Hervey who is the daughter of Joseph Pfister; Virginia Agnes Young who is the daughter of William Pfister; and John Sanders who is the son of Magdeline Pfister Sanders.

NOTE: It is to Virginia, that the writer is deeply indebted for use of a plethora of pictures of both the family and the area, as well as facts and stories of human interest which abound in her memory. These, she shared with us so freely. Her sparkling eyes and loving personality are the mark of the grand lady which she is. Her friendship is treasured as one of the greatest blessings which has come from this historic endeavor.



Mary Frances Pfister Hervey in the Flood of 1936



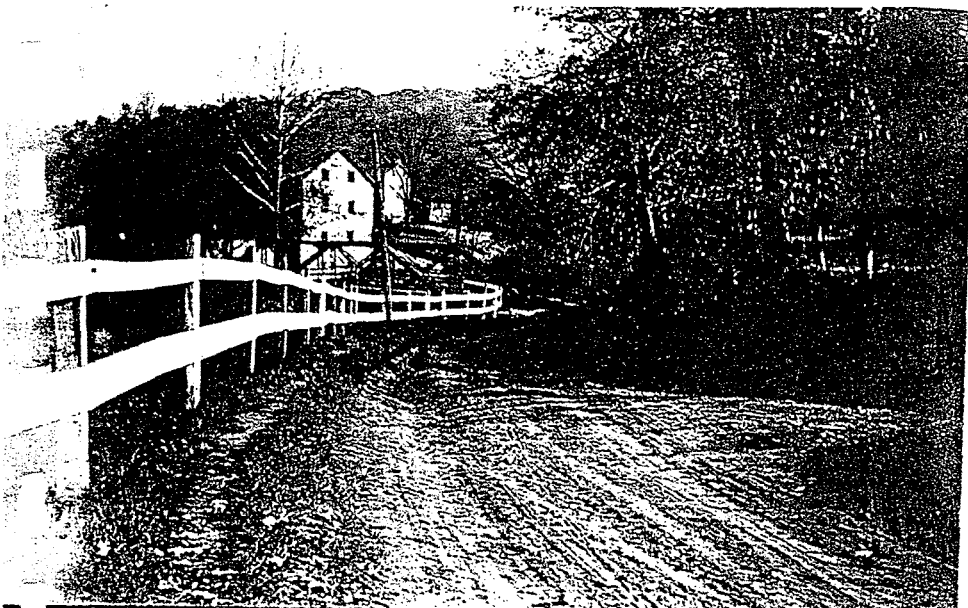
Virginia Agnes Pfister Young
at the Chicago Worlds Fair
1930



John Pfister Sanders

The reader may note that of the large family of four sons and five daughters who lived long lives, no mention of any male heirs bearing the Pfister name has been made. Benjamin remained unmarried. William produced two daughters. Joseph, who had two daughters and a son, lost his son unmarried. But with the advent of the youngest son, George Pfister, Sr., things began to look up. George married Ethyl Blanche Stewart, a union which produced two sons bearing the Pfister surname - George Paul, Jr. and John Anthony. John Anthony married Lucille Swift and to them was born a daughter, Virginia. But the year after her birth, John Anthony died at the age of 24. This resulted in no males from this line to carry on the Pfister name. George Paul, Jr., however, married Winifred Alice Forrester and had three daughters: Mary Ann who married Carl Cox; Alice Blanch who married Charles Ulrich; and Doris June who married John Care. They also had a son whom they named George Paul Pfister, III. But as fate would have it, George Paul Pfister, III, apparently did not meet his soul mate down on the waters of Cross Creek where his prolific ancestors settled over 75 years before his birth. For at this writing, he remains unmarried. This George Pfister is the only heir today of John and Catherine, who came to Cross Creek in the heart of the Civil War, to bear the Pfister name.

Although the Pfister name is all but gone, Pfister blood flows through the veins of many descendants of the first settlers, some of whom still live on the beautiful banks of Cross Creek. There, on a moonlit night, they can, perhaps, still see the shadow forms of their ancestors in summer, gaily splashing through the quiet waters of the creek behind the old mill for a midnight swim - or skating on the frozen bottomland in the heart of winter when all of the cousins came home for the holidays. Sons and daughters of the German immigrants who left their native land a century and a half ago, you may still hold high the proud name of Pfister!

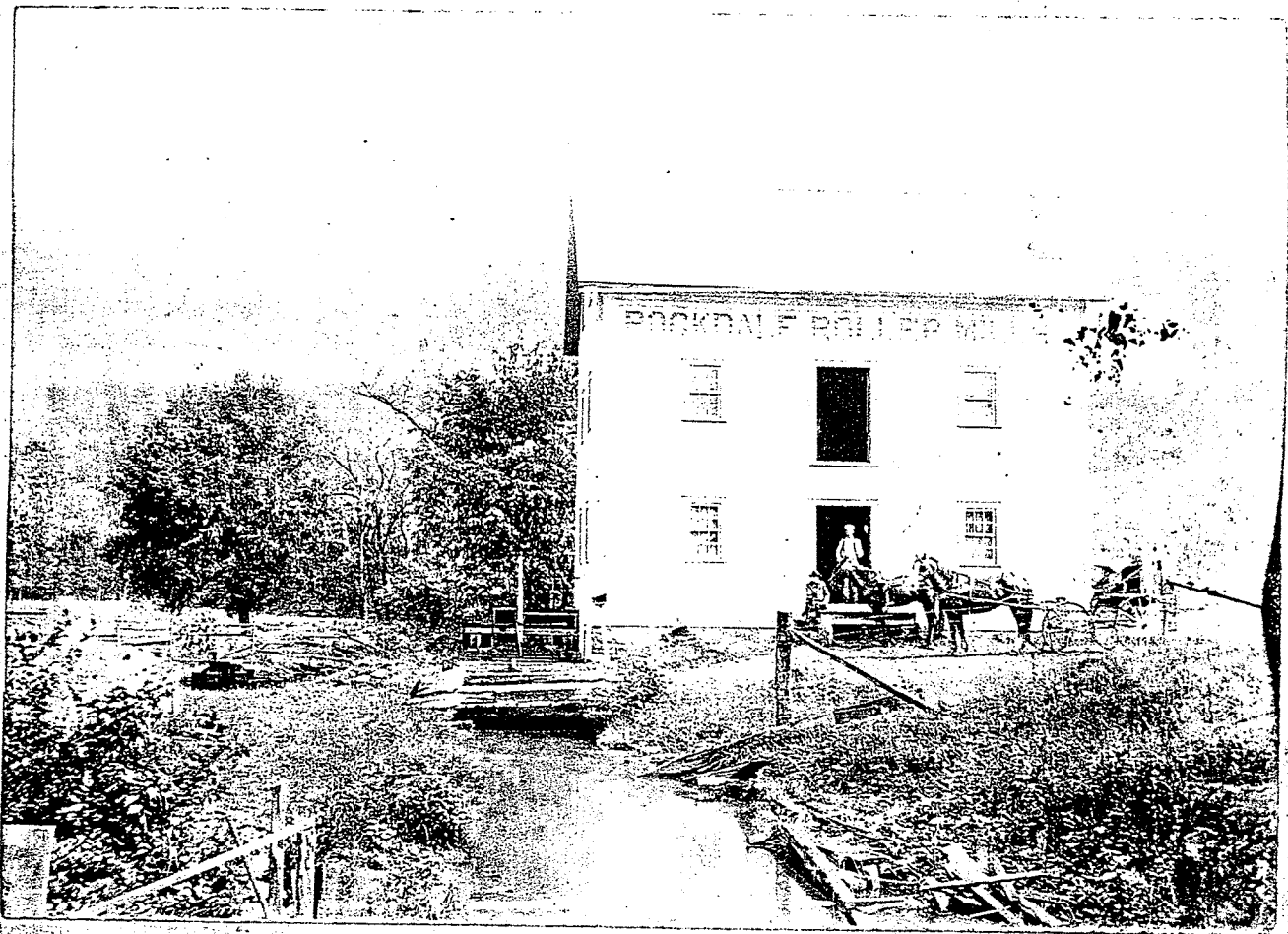


Pfister Bridge & Mill

Above: SUMMER

Right: WINTER





ABOVE: Rockdale Roller Mills

BELOW: Family reunion at the home of John Davis and Laney Pfister Sanders.





Pfisters Dam on Gross Creek, Brooke Co., W. Va.
Oct 1898

