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# Archives of Appalachia NEWSLETTER



VOL. IX, No. 2

WINTER 1988

## WOMEN IN THE COAL MINES: THE MARAT MOORE COLLECTION

Marat Moore, a writer and photographer for the United Mine Workers in Washington, D.C., has donated to the archives 57 audio tapes and transcripts, together with photographs she accumulated while researching her book on women coal miners. These interview materials fall into three categories: 1) pioneer women miners, 1910-1950; 2) "New Wave" of women miners, 1970-present; and 3) other, including



Photo by Marat Moore



interviews with female union organizers, and with a survivor of the April 3, 1914 "Ludlow Massacre" of the miners and their families, Trinidad, Colorado, by militia and agents of the Colorado Fuel and Iron Company. It should be noted, however, that there are some restrictions on publishing and duplicating materials from this collection.

A native of Johnson City, Moore graduated from Science Hill High School in 1972 and from Duke University, Durham, N.C. in 1977. It was while working for the Johnson City Press-Chronicle in 1975-76 that she first went to the mines to cover the 1976 Scotia mine disaster in Letcher County, Ky. Shortly thereafter Moore worked as a VISTA volunteer in Minga County, W. Va., and then as a miner in Thacker, W. Va. Her work as a miner inspired her to learn more about women in coal mining. After she left the mines she pursued this interest as a free lance writer and photographer for the United Mine Workers.

The Marat Moore Collection is an excellent source of information about women miners, their lives in the mines and the community at large. The collection provides historical and sociological insights on women in an untraditional occupation. The archives is very pleased to acquire this collection.

### **ARCHIVES ACQUIRES GENERAL SHALE RECORDS**

In November 1987 the archives acquired the records of General Shale Products Corporation, Johnson City, Tenn. James C. Widener of General Shale donated the records on behalf of the company. The records consist of 3.5 linear feet of materials which include minutes of stockholders meetings and board of directors meetings as well as by-laws, deeds and stock certificates. The records date from 1909-86, and include materials from Johnson City Shale Brick Corporation, Richlands Brick Corporation and General Shale Concrete Products Corporation.

General Shale has long been part of the Johnson City economy. Incorporated in Delaware in August 1928, the company began operations on September 1, 1928. The company was formed by the merger of Kingsport Brick Corporation, founded in 1910, and Johnson City Shale Brick Corporation, organized in 1920. At the time of the merger, each company was valued at \$500,000. When the merger was completed, there were 8000 shares of capital stock at \$25 par value.

Initially, the new corporation prospered, acquiring a number of other brick companies by 1930. But the company then was hard hit by the Great Depression and barely managed to stay afloat during the mid-thirties. To remain in business General Shale secured a \$95,000 Reconstruction Finance Corporation loan from the federal government in 1936. During World War II and the immediate post-war period, the company again prospered. A privately owned company, General Shale went public with its stock in 1960. Until 1986 the stock was traded over the counter and listed on the NASDAQ exchange.

General Shale weathered a difficult economic period in the early 1980s, but rebounded in 1983 and 1984. Still, when Marley Acquisitions Corporation (MAC), a subsidiary of Marley plc, Kent, England, offered to buy General Shale's outstanding stock for \$30 per share, the offer was too good to refuse. In June 1986 General Shale's board of directors unanimously approved MAC's offer, and on July 11, 1986 MAC announced it had purchased 2,844,062 shares of General Shale stock for \$30 per share, or \$85,321,860 total, and 91% control of the company. MAC stock is traded on the London Stock Exchange.

The records of General Shale are a most welcome addition to the archives. These records should prove invaluable to those interested in the economic history of Johnson City and East Tennessee.

### **BLUE COLLAR APPALACHIA: SOURCES ON WORK AND UNIONS IN THE ARCHIVES**

The transformation of the Appalachian economy from agricultural to industrial which began in the late nineteenth century to a great extent depended upon such extractive industries as coal mining and logging. Later, in the early twentieth century low-wage textile manufacture came to Appalachia as well as to the rest of the upper South. In the struggle to achieve higher wages and better working conditions, Appalachians often turned to the labor union for support. Unionization, however, frequently brought the workers into conflict with their employers. This was especially true in coal mining and textiles where employers vehemently resisted the efforts of their workers to organize. It is no wonder, then, that the history of industrial Appalachia is marked by violence and strikes.

The Archives of Appalachia holds a number of collections which document working and unionizing in Appalachia. One of these collections, the records of Magnet Mills, a hosiery mill established in Clinton, Tenn. in 1906, contains materials on the unionizing and strike activities of the Textile Workers Union of America, Local 2125, as well as personnel files of the workers (indeed, approximately two-thirds of the collection consists of personnel files). Following strike activity there, the mill closed down in 1967.

Three other collections contain significant amounts of strike-related materials. Records of the International Woodworkers of America, Local 5-313, document 1967 strike activity against Magnavox of Johnson City. Other documents include correspondence, grievance records, legal papers and membership records. (The Magnavox plant shut down in 1979). The Helen Raulston Collection consists of two 16 mm films, and a videocassette made from these short films, of the 1929 strike at American Bemberg and American Glanzstoff rayon plants in Elizabethton, Tenn. Two 1982 interviews with three former Bemberg and Glanzstoff employees are also part of the collection. The third collection which contains strike materials is the Kingsport Press Strike Collection. Materials related to the 1963-65 strike at Kingsport Press (now Arcata Graphics), Kingsport, Tenn., by the International Printing Pressmen and Assistants Union, among others, are included in this collection. (Permission to research these materials must be obtained by the donor).

Union activities are further documented in the Bernard H. Cantor Papers (1959-78) and the Communication Workers of America, Local 10871 (Bristol, Tenn.) Records. The Cantor papers focus on Cantor's work as a labor arbitration judge in Johnson City. Cases he worked on involved numerous unions, among them are the United Mine Workers (UMW), Teamsters, United Steel Workers, Aluminum Workers, International Association of Fire Fighters and United Auto Workers. The cases originated in towns and cities throughout the Southeast. The Communication Workers records include correspondence, leaflets and newsletters for Local 10871, 1983-85.

The archives holds a number of different types of materials related to coal mining. There are some documents within the Carolina, Clinchfield and Ohio Railway Collection, for example, which focus on coal mining. In the Broadside Television

Collection there are a number of video tapes which detail mining and union organizing in the mines. Among these tapes are the following: "A Harlan Miner Speaks" (organizing in "Bloody Harlan" during the 1920s and 1930s); "Hyden Mine Disaster" (the sole survivor talks about the Finley Coal Company Hyden mine explosion and of life in the mine after the disaster); and "Dreadful Memories" (1930s union organizing stories, Eastern Kentucky coal fields). The Appalachian vertical files contain material on both coal mining and UMW. Photographs of miners can be found in the Appalachian Photograph Collection and in the Kenneth Murray Photograph Collection.

Other materials on industrial work and unions focus on Pressman's Home, Tenn. and the International Printing Pressmen and Assistants Union, labor agreements at Holliston Mills, New Canton, Tenn., logging, and railroads. In addition, the archives has slide/tape programs on logging and on coal mining in southern Appalachia,



Loggers Ezra O'Quinn and Loundy Duddy, employees of the W.M. Ritter Co, ca 1932/33. From the C.C. Tiller Collection, Archives of Appalachia.

scattered issues of the Southern Lumberman for 1926-27, and an American Bemberg research department report on the manufacture of rayon.

Industrial work and union activities have been and continue to be an integral part of Appalachia's economic and community life. The archives desires to continue acquiring materials which relate to work and unions. If you know of any materials of this type please contact the archives at the address given on the back page of the newsletter. Your help will be greatly appreciated.

## STAFF NEWS

Norma Thomas, Technical Services Archivist, attended the December 4, 1987 Appalachian Consortium meeting held at Mars Hill College, Mars Hill, North Carolina.

Marie Tedesco, Public Services Archivist has had her paper "The Rayon Plants in Elizabethton, Tennessee: A Case Study of Appalachian Economic Development, 1926-1986," accepted for publication in the 1987 proceedings of the Appalachian Studies Conference, to be published in early 1988. An expanded version of that paper will be presented at the March 1988 Missouri Valley History Conference to be held in Omaha, Neb. Tedesco also will present a paper on the history of the Johnson City professional baseball team at the Sports Literature Association meetings to be held in Johnson City in August 1988.

## RECENTLY PROCESSED COLLECTIONS

Among the collections recently processed by the archives staff are the John Biggs Alderman Papers, the Johnson City Community Theatre Records, Soil Conservation Records, the Boy Scouts of America: Sequoyah Council, and the ETSU Rifle Team Records. The **Alderman Papers** include 7.5 linear feet of correspondence, research notes, sheet music, play programs, audiotapes and photographs relating to Alderman's career as a musician, conservationist and historian of East Tennessee, 1918-83. The **Johnson City Community Theatre Records** span the years from 1946-84. Included in the five linear feet of records are programs, photographs, correspondence, blueprints and broadsides about the theatre and its plays and operations. The **Soil Conservation Services Records**, 1933-71, consist of 35 linear feet of aerial contact prints of farmlands in selected counties of Appalachian and southeastern states.

The **Boy Scouts of America: Sequoyah Council, Troop 36 Records** include 2.5 linear feet of correspondence, membership and leader lists, applications and certificates relating to the membership and activities of this Johnson City troop, 1958-67. The **Rifle Team Records**, 1977-86, consist of 3.5 linear feet of photographs, team history, scrapbooks and general office files on the ETSU team and the NCAA and Southern Conference.

## RECENT ACQUISITIONS ARCHIVES OF APPALACHIA

### **ALLEN, BERTRAM S. JR. COLLECTION, 1969-1970, 0.5 linear foot.**

Consists of a scrapbook containing photographs relating to Allen's tour of duty in Vietnam and a collection of newspaper and magazine publications. A history of the Twenty-fifth Infantry Division is also included. Donated by Bertram Allen, Jr., Jonesborough, Tenn.

### **BROYLESVILLE FLOUR MILL RECORDS, 1912-1945, 1.0 linear foot.**

Consists of account books, day books and working papers of the Broylesville Flour Mill located near Limestone, Tenn. in Washington County. Financial books contain

information on the amounts of corn or wheat ground, costs of service and customers' names. Donated by Erlene Ledford, Limestone, Tenn.

**GENERAL SHALE PRODUCTS CORPORATION RECORDS, 1909-1986, 3.5 linear feet.**

Consists of minutes of stockholders meetings and board of directors meetings, certificates of confederation, by-laws, deeds, and stock certificates concerning the General Shale Products Corporation and related companies. Includes records of the Johnson City Shale Brick Corporation, Richlands Brick Corporation and General Concrete Products Corporation. Donated by James C. Widener on behalf of the company.

**PRESSMAN'S HOME PHOTOGRAPH COLLECTION, 1906-1987, 38 items.**

30 black & white and 7 color prints of Pressman's Home in Hawkins County, Tenn. The home was operated by the International Printing Pressman and Assistants Union. A 20x30 color poster is also included in the collection. Donated by Jack Mooney, Communications Department, ETSU.

**ADAM WATERFORD VS. ISAAC BAKER CASE TRANSCRIPT, 1830-41, 142 pages.**

Consists of a transcript of Waterford vs. Baker case heard by the Chancery Court in Rogersville, Tenn. The case involves efforts by Adam Waterford, a free black man to recover possession of his slave, Jefferson, from Isaac Baker. Jefferson had been given to Baker as a pledge in exchange for a loan of \$450. Transferred to the archives by Dr. Fred Borchuck, Director of University Libraries, ETSU.

**WILLIAMS, A. J. Papers, c. 1865, 1 volume. PHOTOCOPY.**

Consists of a journal compiled by Williams from notes taken during the Civil War. Williams served in the 2nd (Ashby's) Tennessee Cavalry Regiment for the Confederacy. The unit was actively involved in the defense of Atlanta. Donated by Judy Salo, ETSU.

## UNIVERSITY ARCHIVES

**COMMITTEE ON FACULTY PUBLICATION AND PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITY RECORDS. 1980-1986, 0.5 linear foot.**

Consists of voluntary reports by individual faculty members which record their publications and paper presentations for the years 1983 through 1986. The reports were sent to the committee for compilation. Transferred by Dr. Fred Borchuck, Director of University Libraries, ETSU.

**OFFICE OF THE VICE-PRESIDENT FOR STUDENT AFFAIRS, 1948-1976, 2.0 linear feet. ADDITION.**

Includes correspondence, financial papers, meeting minutes and procedures manuals concerning the office's interaction with the sororities on campus. The records reflect the sororities membership, scholastic achievements and special activities. Transferred from the Office of the Vice-President for Student Affairs, ETSU.



## SPECIAL COLLECTIONS

Below is a list of persons who donated books to the Special Collections. The title of the volume is given after the donor's name. The archives thanks these individuals for their donation.

Margaret Ripley Wolfe: A copy of her book, Kingsport, Tennessee: A Planned American City.

Judith Salo: The Noah Columbus Higdon Family.

Centennial Committee of the Glenwood Baptist Church, Kingsport, Tenn.: History of the Glenwood Baptist Church, 1887-1987.

Judy Minor: Scattered issues of Southern Lumberman, 1926-27; Southern Ruralist, 1917-1919; Southern Planter, 1923-27; and Progressive Farmer, 1919-21.

John L. Kiener: American Gold by Ernest Seeman.

## MISCELLANEOUS

The archives thanks the following donors for a variety of items relating to Appalachian culture, local and university history.

Thomas Burton

Robert Patton

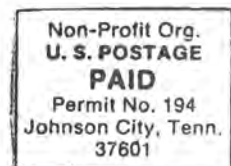
Doc McConnell

McBerney Burlison

Anne Newton



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