Hacker's Creek Lewis County history and ties to
Barbour County Hacker's Creek

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Introduction

To the

Hacker’s Creek Pioneer Descendants, Inc.
Birth of the Hacker’s Creek Library

In 1982 the idea for the Hacker’s Creek Pioneer Descendants was born when two women with Lewis County roots met for a cup of coffee in Canton, Ohio, to discuss their ancestors. Joy Gregoire Gilchrist Stalnaker DeFazio and Betty Wimer Graybill, met because the former had sent a letter-to-the editor to the Weston Democrat seeking information about her early Lewis County ancestors. The women had no idea that their meeting would produce the largest genealogical and historical society in West Virginia.

Today the library is open 5 days a week and on Saturday by appointment. We have over 300 members from all over the United States. Our growth and work is done mostly by volunteers. We are a 501© g non-profit organization depending on membership, fundraisers, donations and sometimes grants. Our location is in the old Horner grade school located in Horner, WV.

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The beginning of the saga
Of the settlers and pioneers
Of Hacker’s Creek and other areas.
The Pringle Brothers & The Sycamore Tree

by Joy Gilchrist

John and Samuel Pringle lived on the South Branch of the Potomac River in what is now the Eastern Panhandle of West Virginia when they enlisted in the army and served in the British Garrison at Fort Pitt during the French and Indian War. In 1761, unhappy with life at the fort, they left the fort without permission. William Childers and Joe Linsey went with them. The four deserters wandered in the wilderness around the Monongahela and Youghiogheny Rivers. In 1762 they went to Looney's Creek where Childers and Linsey were captured.

The brothers escaped and eventually were employed by John Simpson, trapper and trader. They were with him until 1764 when an argument at the Horse Shoe Bend on Cheat River caused them to part company. Simpson continued to the headwaters of the Elk River, at the site of present-day Clarksburg, West Virginia, and remained until permanent settlements began to disturb his hunting and trapping; he then may have gone to Kentucky. John and Samuel Pringle followed the Tygart Valley and reached the Buckhannon River country and Turkey Run.

They took up residence in a sycamore tree and lived there until Fall 1767 when John went back to the South Branch and learned that the war was over and that they were no longer wanted as deserters. After some delay, he returned to the sycamore tree (now known as "Pringle Tree") with the good news. The brothers returned to the South Branch River valley and told their story.

Among those hearing the story were William and John hacker, Alexander and Thomas Sleeth whose sister, Margaret, had become John Hacker's wife, John Jackson and his sons, George and Edward. Thomas Hughes (pictured at left) and his son Jesse, John and William Radcliff and John Brown. They decided to go across the Alleghenies and see this fertile valley first hand.

In the fall of 1768 some of the above-mentioned men were led by Samuel Pringle on the arduous journey across the mountains. They decided to settle there along the waters of the Buckhannon and began to claim their lands. Winter was closing in. After a short stay, they party decided to return to the South Branch and made plans to come back in the spring to clear land, plant corn, and prepare to bring their families. They returned in the spring of 1769 by following the trail previously cut by John Pringle. The group divided themselves according to interests - homeseekers and hunters.

John Hacker, the Sleeths and Jacksons were in the first group, the rest in the second. While the homeseekers began improving land, the others kept them supplied in meat and explored the countryside. During their explorations, they discovered the West Fork River and Hacker's Creek.

Shortly after the land clearing started, Samuel Pringle arrived with another band of pioneers including John and Benjamin Cutright. Upon their arrival, John Hacker learned that the land he had chosen (some of the land is included in present-day Heaven Cemetery at Buckhannon) and started to clear was already that of Samuel Pringle, to save problems, John agreed that Pringle could have the land if he (Pringle) would clear an equal amount on a creek which had recently been discovered by the hunters. Thus, John Hacker came to be the first settler in present-day Lewis County and the creek became known as Hacker's Creek.

Crops planted, land cleared, and shelter erected, the men went back to the South Branch to their families. They returned in the fall to harvest their crops and found them eaten to the ground by the buffalo. This destruction delayed the migration of the families until 1770.

With the coming of these early pioneers, the settlement of the valleys of the West Fork River and its tributaries was begun. Although their settlements would be broken up by Indian incursions from time to time and land claims would not be recognized by the Virginia government until 1781, migration to what would be the central West Virginia area had begun in earnest; and, they started it all.

Update:

Information about this tree is included on the history website: CLIO.com. Besides history about the tree, you will find directions to visit and photographs.
Timeline of Events Shaping Lewis County, WV (1763-1840)
by Joy Stalnaker

1763 – John & Samuel PRINGLE live in tree at Turkey Run, Upshur Co, for 3 years

1769 – John HACKER settles on Hacker’s Creek & first white child, William HACKER, born

1773/1774 – First fort at today’s Jane Lew built

ca 1775 – John HACKER establishes one of first grist mills in area on Hacker’s Creek

1776-1783 – American Revolution

1776 – Monongalia County formed

1777 – Year of the Bloody Sevens – massacres along the western frontier. John HACKER and others served with Capt. James BOOTH defending the frontier.

1778 – Indian attacks. Elizabeth HACKERFREEMAN, Thomas HUGHES, Issac WASHBURN, and numerous others were killed during this year in separate attacks.

1779-1780 – Fort abandoned with settlers going to Nutter’s Fort & Bushes Fort. Fort burned in one of these years.

1790 – Beech Fort, later called West’s Fort, built where is now Jane Lew Fire Department

1790 - George Adam BUSH first settler at present day Freemansburg

1780-1790 – John SLEETH Trading Post

1784 – Harrison County formed. First county court held at Pringle Tree community.

1784 – Methodism came to America from England.

1787 – Shawnee-SCHOOLCRAFT raid on Hacker’s Creek Settlement

1788 - New York City is chosen as temporary seat of US Government

US Constitution ratified.

1789 - George WASHINGTON is first president; John ADAMS is first vice president.

Thanksgiving established.
1790 – Circuit riders from Methodist Church began visiting the county.

1790 - First Census of US

1791 - Bill of Rights added to Constitution

1792 – WAGGONER Family tragedy; Henry McWHORTER built mill at today’s Jane Lew

1793 - Eli WHITNEY patented cotton gin.


1795 – Greenville Treaty brought peace with Indians in the West

1795 – Families began to leave Lewis County and head west

1797 - John HARDMAN was first settler on Little Skin Creek (mouth of Curtis Run)

and operated a mill that served the area.

Richard JOHNSON followed shortly and was first settler on Big Skin Creek.

1800 - George COLLINS & Daniel TURVEY were first settlers in Collins Settlement

on lands patented to Col. George JACKSON.

1800 - School being taught by Henry McWHORTER and others at old West's Fort.

1801 – Edward JACKSON’s grist Mill built on West Fork - sawmill added soon after

1803 - Louisiana Purchase

1804-1806 - Lewis and Clark Expedition to Pacific Ocean

1804 – Broad Run Baptist Church established

1808 - Widespread economic decline throughout U.S.

1808 - Thomas McCARTNEY built home near mouth of Bennett Run for William & Rebecca McCALLYBENNETT

1809? - Jackson’s Mill Post Office

1810 - George BUSH, then Henry CURTIS, operated mill near Gaston

1810 – Clarksburg had 31 families living there

1812 - Star Spangled Banner written; War of 1812
1813 - Andrew "Old Ireland" WILSON believed to have settled near Ireland

1816 – Dec 18 - measure forming Lewis County passed

1817 – Preston and then Fleshersville established

1818 – Dams on Little Kanawha and the West Fork proposed.

1818 - Henry HARDMAN teaching in "Old Field" School near Vandalia.

1819 – Fleshersville became Weston

1819 - Earliest major economic depression in the U.S.

1819 – Harmony Methodist Church built.

1819 - Alabama is 22nd state admitted to Union

1820 – First bridge in county at Maxwell’s Run

1820 – Road to saltworks in today’s Braxton County surveyed

1821 - Post office established in Collins Settlement, the third p.o. in the county.

1822 – Bailey House opened in Weston

1823 – Staunton and Parkersburg Turnpike proposed. First funds the next year.

1824 - Thomas Jonathan JACKSON born in nearby Clarksburg

1825 - Bush’s grist and saw mill established; eventually became town of Roanoke

1827 – Methodist Church split.

1828 – Survey for S&P Turnpike completed.

1828 - Post office established at Freemansburg. Alexander K. SLEETH first postmaster.

1830 – Peter SWISHER killed by falling tree. Berlin Methodist church established

1831-1838 - Hackersville post office.

1832 – Minter BAILEY granted license to keep an ordinary at Bailey House

1833 - 33 common schools in county supported by Virginia Literary Fund

1834 - Mt. Gilead/Georgetown Methodist Church established on land donated by

John HELMICK
1835 - William BENNETT started mill at Walkersville

1836 – Dams on Little Kanawha and West Fork proposed again.

1836 – Construction begun on Weston & Gauley Bridge Turnpike; Weston and Charleston Turnpike layed out.

1836 - New school built on Skin Creek. Teachers included PETERSON, HARDMAN and WILSON.

1837 - Second major economic depression in America

1837 - Samuel F.B. MORSE invents telegraph

1839 - Jane Lew Post Office

1840 - Only two settlements were made in the Courthouse District before this date.

1841 – Portions of Staunton & Parkersburg Turnpike opened.
John Hacker’s
Settlement
JOHN HACKER'S
SETTLEMENT

John Hacker (1743-1824) erected his pioneer cabin about one mile west of here in 1769. He was the first white settler in Lewis County, and in the watershed of the creek which bears his name. He served under General George Rogers Clark in the Illinois campaign of 1778. Hacker and his wife Mary are buried in a small private cemetery near here.

WEST VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF CULTURE AND HISTORY, 1971
Beginning in the 1760s when the earliest settlers crossed the divides of the Allegheny Mountains and made their tomahawk claims along the waters of the upper Monongahela River in what became the Hacker's Creek settlements of western Virginia, the names and exploits of the frontiersmen of the region were indelibly inscribed in the pages of American history. These settlements were the western frontier of the fledgling nation far longer than any place in its western expansion; and, there were more conflicts between its people and the red man during the last half of the eighteenth century than anywhere else on the long frontier.

Hacker's Creek was named for John Hacker, a Stafford County, Virginia, native who came with the first party of men to settle at present-day Buckhannon, Upshur County, West Virginia. Upon learning that the land he desired at Buckhannon had already been claimed by Samuel Pringle, an earlier sojourner in the region, he crossed the Buckhannon Mountain and selected four hundred acres on a tributary of the Muddy River, as the West Fork of the Monongahela River was then called. John Hacker thus became the first permanent European settler in what is today's Lewis County, West Virginia.

John Hacker was born January 1st, 1743 (Old Style Calendar) somewhere near Marlborough Point, Stafford County, Virginia, to William and Ann (Dillon) Hacker. His birth was recorded in Overwharton Parish, Stafford County, Virginia. His whereabouts for the ensuing twenty-six years are not know; any records that might have pertained to this period in his life were probably destroyed during the Yankee occupation of Stafford County during the American Civil War.

John's wife was Margaret Sleeth, daughter of John and Mary Ann (Wallace) Sleeth.

Of course, the foregoing would indicate sociability with good conversational powers, which it is said he possessed in a eminent degree. Though he was never known to be loud or objectionable, but rather to the contrary, ... Yet when he did speak, his language was plain and direct to the point of issue. He stood square with his head straight over his spinal column and then to see the flash of that little eye, the earnestness of the face, the easy wave of the hand, the emphatic nod of the head, all indicating the natural orator, and then when done with what he had to say, the calm folding of the arms, with the letting down of the countenance to the natural repose, awaiting a reply of some question of further inquiry upon the matter under discussion or consideration, and then to see the face light up again when about to reply and the gestures so natural to him to move off as above described was said to be so interesting and entertaining as to always command the closest attention and respect.

It is further said of him that he was never known to utter a foolish remark and although when a little warmed up in his subject, he was sometimes thought to be a little extravagant. Yet never so at the expense of truth. In his person, he was neat and cleanly, and so had everything about him. So far as possible he was never foppish or over exacting but rather on the "Friend Quaker" style of things. In these matters many of his children followed closely in his footsteps. But he raised no child that excelled him in having a place for everything, and everything in its place. Such then was the makeup of my grandfather, John Hacker, a perfect man and far above the normal physically, mentally, and morally, and as we have seen, such was the care he took of himself as well as everything around him that his days were long in the land and his death triumphant and happy."

Of Margaret, William wrote: "Our grandmother was as tall as Grandfather. She stood straight and was well proportioned, good head, dark wavy hair, dark hazel eyes. Well formed nose, rather aquiline and straight on the face. Two moles, one on the temple and the other on the upper lip near the corner of her mouth. A very pleasant countenance with usually a smile playing over it, acute in hearing, slow in utterance. While the sound of her voice was said to be music itself. Hence she was a beautiful singer and when in company was usually seen with a cluster of friends around her. She spoke in a slow and deliberate man-
While John Hacker was definitely a family man, he took his responsibilities to God, his community and his country seriously. He believed in justice for all and was friend to both white man and red.

The first church services in present day Lewis County were held in his home. He served 91 days in 1777 "under the command of Captain James Booth who commanded a Company of Militia in defense of that part of the (then Western frontier of West Augusta which now comprises the Counties of Harrison and Lewis). He served two long years (1782-1784) with George Rogers Clark on his campaign against the British at Kaskaskia and Vincennes. He was a magistrate and sheriff and served on various road surveying crews. He was appointed by the Harrison County court, together with John Waggoner and Jacob Cozad, to represent the county at the Greenville Treaty in 1795.

It is not known if John could read and write, but extant court records bear his signature. An inventory of his estate records four books in his home: "2 Books the Saints Rest Walsh & Nelson" and "2 Books old bible and dying thoughts." The sale bill for his estate shows six books, two Bibles, one song book and one hymn book.

He had the first mill in what is now Lewis County. He hauled the buhrstones for his mill over the mountains from Winchester; it was hand powered at this time, but was later converted.

John Hacker built his cabin not far from the junction of Bloody Run and Hacker's Creek. An historic marker marks his farm site along the Hacker's Creek Road between Jane Lew and Berlin.

The present monument marking John's and Margaret's grave was erected in 1993 by modern-day descendants of the couple. It is the third stone to mark the graves.

John's first stone was apparently erected about the time of his death in 1824. It is unknown if Margaret had one. The inscription that was on the gravestone was recorded as part of the Draper Manuscripts, a collection at the University of Wisconsin, and eventually found its way as a part of the footnotes in Lucullus McWhorter's Border Settlers of Northwestern Virginia. In the early 1900s, Roy Hacker, a grandson, placed new monuments and footmarkers on both graves; and, as far as local descendants knew, the original stone disappeared.

In the mid-1980s, during an HCPD Gathering, it was learned that the original stone had been taken to Oklahoma by Roy Hacker and placed "face-down" in his garden path. Upon his death, Roy's nephew John Hacker rescued the stone and took it to his home in Tyler, Texas. In the spring of 1986, the Gilchrists drove to Tyler and returned to stone to Lewis County. Today, it is part of the collection at the CWG&H Library.

By 1992 the stones placed by Roy Hacker were barely readable; in fact, the entire face with all writing was gone from Margaret's. Fortunately, numerous photos existed that detailed its inscription. Hacker descendants raised enough money to replace the two stones with the present stone pictured on this page. The stone was erected in 1993. The side that is visible is a replica of the original stone; on the reverse are the inscriptions for those placed by cousin Roy.
The Hacker’s Creek Journal is published twice a year (March & Oct) and a newsletter is published twice a year (June & December). This is free to all paying members. The old Journals are available to read on our website www.hackerscreek.org. The last 5 years are only available to members. These journals are full of history and genealogy of the Central WV area. Membership is $40.00 a year and can be paid online or calling the library 304-269-7091.
HACKER'S CREEK JOURNAL

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JOHN HACKER, THE PIONEER, AND HIS FAMILY

John Hacker was born 2 Jan 1743 by the Old Style Calendar according to records of Over-Wharton Parish, Stafford County, Virginia. He is believed to be the second of five children born to his parents, William and Ann (Dillon) Hacker. Other children were: William (b 1739), the Indian scout; Elizabeth (ca 1741 - June 1778), wife of John Freeman; Nancy Ann (ca 1745 - after 1827), 1/m James Keith and 2/m Col. Claypool; and Mary "Polly" (1747 - 1805), wife of Capt. John Bush.

According to William Hacker, John's grandson of Shelbyville, Indiana, who wrote a history of the family, the family did not use the name Hacker while living east of the Alleghenies. Whatever the reason, records for the Hacker family are very scarce in "old" Virginia.

On 30 August 1757 a William Hatcher (Hacker?) was grantor for a tract of land to Isaac Nichols in Loudoun County, Virginia; and, in 1781, William Hatcher and John Hatcher appear on the rent rolls of Lord Fairfax in Loudoun County. Finally, in 1763, there is one deed in West Augusta which says that William Hacker (father or son?) is deeding to John Hacker for the sum of $50 pounds current money of Virginia household goods, interest, etc., which is listed on the deed. It is signed by William Hacker.

Around 1765, somewhere near Winchester, Virginia, perhaps on the South Branch of the Potomac, John married Margaret Sleeth. Margaret was born in Ireland 24 Jun 1747 and came to America with her parents, John and Mary Ann Wallace Sleeth, the following year.

It appears that John did not own property on the South Branch but it is believed that he lived near the Indian Old Fields near what is now Moorefield, West Virginia. The first of John's and Margaret's eleven children, Mary Ann (I), was born here in 1768.

The same year, according to Chronicles of Border Warfare, John, together with his brother, William Hacker, his brothers-in-law, Alexander and Thomas Sleeth and others (Thomas and Jesse Hughes, John and William Radcliff, John Brown, John Jackson and his sons, George and Edward) followed Samuel Pringle across the Alleghenies to examine firsthand the verdant valley of the Buckhannon River. They were pleased with what they saw and returned the following spring to plant a crop of corn and prepare for the emigration of their families. They selected lands and marked their tomahawk claims.

Of these first-comers, John Hacker, the Sleeths and the Jacksons were the homeseekers; while William Hacker, the Hughes, the Radcliffs and John Brown appear to have been content to spend their time exclusively in hunting
and exploring the surrounding countryside.

John Jackson staked his claim at the mouth of Turkey Run, John Hacker higher up the Buckhannon and the Sleeths were near to Jackson. They began to clear their lands and plant their crops.

Meanwhile, on one of the hunting party's expeditions, they discovered and named Stone Coal Creek. Upon descending it, they found the river since known as the West Fork. They returned to Turkey Run (now known as Pringle Tree, near Buckhannon) by a different route, better pleased with the new lands than with the Buckhannon country.

Shortly after the party's return, Samuel Pringle arrived with new settlers, including John and Benjamin Cutright and Henry Rule; and, John Hacker discovered that his claim on the Buckhannon had already been spoken for by Pringle. To avoid trouble, John agreed that if Pringle "would clear as much land, on a creek which had been recently discovered by the hunters, as he had on Buchannon, they could then exchange places." Thus, did John Hacker settle on what is known as Hacker's Creek and become the first permanent white settler in what is now Lewis County, West Virginia.

John Hacker planted his crop, cultivated it, and probably erected some form of shelter before he returned to the South Branch for his wife, Margaret, and their daughter, Mary Ann. A study of Chronicles of Border Warfare and Border Settlers of Northwestern Virginia indicates that the young family probably made their trek from the South Branch in late summer or early fall with plans to harvest the corn crop before winter.

Upon their arrival at their new homestead on Hacker's Creek, they discovered that buffalo had destroyed the crop. John's reaction is an indication of his temperament. He left his wife and daughter and went after the buffalo; he caught up with them at what is now Holly River State Park and destroyed them. McWhorter relates the story of his pursuit:

"At the close of the working season of 1769 some of these adventurers, went to their families on the South Branch; and when they returned to gather their crops in the fall, found them entirely destroyed. In their absence the buffaloes, no longer swayed by the presence of man, had trespassed on their enclosures, and eaten their corn to the ground—this delayed the removal of their families 'till the winter of 1770.'"

It has been noted in the preceding chapter that John Hacker, the first settler on the creek bearing his name, was one whose crop was destroyed. This occurred during his absence on the Wappatoomaka for his family, and is history; but the sequel is tradition. There are few now living who have ever heard of Hacker's long pursuit of the destroyers of his sole means of bread; but the landmarks of that chase will remain indefinitely. I am indebted
to Mr. John Strange Hall, of Walkersville, West Va., for the following account of the hunt, as given him in manuscript by Mr. Jackson Arnold, who got it direct from Hacker's children.

"As soon as Hacker had installed his family in their new home, with the usual equipment of a hunter he took up the trail of the buffaloes. It was a small herd, two full grown and a young calf. Buffalo and elk were not numerous on the upper waters of the Monongahela, and were never found in large droves. They, however, gave names to numerous licks and streams. (8)

"The band which Hacker followed, was moving leisurely south for the winter, and ranging up and down the streams. It consumed time to find the various crossings; hence the short marches and many camps made by the huntsman. All the waters crossed, or followed by trail, with the licks and camps were so accurately described that subsequent hunters easily recognized them. Hacker's first camp was at the mouth of (now) Curtis Run, a branch of Little Skin Creek, where he dined on a turkey. The second was 'Crane Camp,' on a Tributary of the West Fork. Here in addition to the deer killed at a lick where the buffalo had halted, Hacker shot a crane; hence the name of camp and stream.

"The trail followed the right-hand branch of the river to its source, and Hacker was, so far as known, the first white man to look upon the upper waters of the Little Kanawha, known at its mouth as the first great tributary of the Ohio below Fort Pitt. In the glades above the falls of the creek, he met with more abundant and fresher signs of buffalo. In addition to the grass, the crab apples and thorn berries attracted the game.

"The third camp was noted for its durability. A rain storm coming up, the hunter sought shelter in a dry and comfortable cave in a cliff, where he again regaled himself on a fine turkey killed on the river bottom. This cave, or rock-shelter, has since been known as Hacker's Camp, and was subsequently occupied by hunters and ginseng diggers. The stream is known as Hacker's Branch.

"The fourth camp was at Buffalo Lick, where Hacker shot and crippled a buffalo cow. She had just come up from the lick where the others were, and all fled over a well-beaten path toward a gap in the mountain. The trail was followed but a short distance, when evening coming on, the hunter returned to the lick. It was at the source of a ravine, circular in form, rock bottom and about two rods in diameter. Several small springs issued from the bluffs, differing in taste, but none of them palatable. Here the sign of buffalo, elk and deer surpassed all that Hacker had ever seen. The brackish, or saline properties of the water allured the animals from a great distance.

"Buffalo Fork, an affluent of the Back Fork, or Right Fork of Little Kanawha, and Buffalo Lick are names given by Hacker. Following the trail through the gap, a scene of rugged grandeur opened to the hunter's view. A boisterous stream rushed through
the deeply wooded canyon. From the trend of the mountains, he rightly conjectured that it did not belong to the system on which he had been traveling, which proved to be the Little Kanawha. He had dropped onto the waters of Elk, a tributary of the Great Kanawha.

"A few miles up the stream, the mountains receded, enclosing a beautiful valley. Here Hacker secured the cow previously wounded. She was standing in a clump of bushes near a lick. The sound of the rifle startled the others, now joined by another herd, and all fled towards the great Buffalo Lick at the forks of Elk River, which is now a noted health resort, the Webster Salt Sulphur Springs. The arduous chase was ended. The grim hunter's wrath was appeased and he prepared to return with the spoils. The robe was removed and a small amount of choice parts selected and cured by the fire to carry home as jerk.

"Hacker made a 'tomahawk-entry' at the lick where the cow was killed, embracing the bottom land. For years it was known as Hacker's Lick, but in time the lick lost its value and now the locality with its village bears the name of Hacker's Valley. This is a branch of the Holly River, so named by Hacker from the groves of this evergreen which adorned its banks.

"The return trip was by short stages, the camps being at the mouth of Buffalo Fork, Crane Camp, and Little Skin Creek, at each of which Hacker made a 'tomahawk-entry.' The latter was the only one to which he secured a title. Here, early in the last century his son Jonathan became the first settler of Skin Creek. After several years he sold the place to Rev. John Hardman, and moved to Crane Camp. He soon learned that he had no title to the land, it being covered by a large patent. The abandoned cabin in the wilderness became the abode of spooks."

It is noteworthy that Mr. Hall places the removal of Hacker's family to their new home in the autumn of 1769. From all evidence this is correct, but it is very probable that they subsequently returned to the Wappatomaka, and that their permanent removal to Hacker's Creek was not until the following fall, or even later.

Hacker reported the existence of the artificial earth mounds at the mouth of Buffalo, where the village of Cleveland now stands in Webster County. There were ten or twelve of these, the largest in quite recent years measured about five feet in height and some twenty feet in diameter. He attributed them to Indian origin, which is doubtless correct. This pursuit of the buffalo stands unique, and has no rival in geographical discovery made in a single chase for game on the western waters. The incentive was revenge.
We are told that some of the families returned to
the South Branch because of the buffalos' raid; we are
uncertain whether the Hacker's were among those who
returned. Although some sources say that William
Hacker, the first son of John and Margaret, was born in
1769, another source says that his birthdate 1770. A
third source, an old birth and death record unearthed in
the Jackson family of Jane Lew in the 1930's and
published in the Clarksburg "Exponent-Telegram" gives
the date as 3 May 1770. Whichever date is correct,
William Hacker was the first white child born within the
confines of present Lewis County.

The next years were busy ones for the pioneer family
- clearing land, greeting new immigrants, Indian
troubles, and helping to establish some form of
government all were on their minds.

Very early John brought buhrstones by horseback over
the mountains and set up a hand-operated mill that the
settlement might have ground corn and flour. He
eventually converted the mill to water-power.

In the "bloody year of the three sevens," 1777, he
"served ninety-one days under the command of Captain
James Booth who commanded a Company of Militia in
defense of that part of the then Western frontier of
West Augusta which now comprises the Counties of
Harrison and Lewis." He was not paid for his services.
In 1819, he appeared before John McWhorter, justice of
the peace in Lewis County, and petitioned the State of
Virginia for that service. The outcome of the petition
is unrecorded.

In 1778 he enlisted as a matross (private) in
Captain Robert George's Company of George Rogers Clarks'
"Illinois Regiment", Virginia State Troops and was a
part of Clark's expedition against the English and
Indians at Kaskaskia and Vincennes. Volumes have been
written about the campaign and this writer has neither
time nor space to pursue the story here except to say
that the hardy Hacker served well in the arduous
campaign and was rewarded for his service with two
tracts of land, one of eight acres and one of 100 acres,
in the Clark Grant in Indiana (see map next page).
These lands were sold for non-payment of taxes in 1807.

The years were not without tragedy for the Hacker
family. Despite John Hacker's friendship with the
Indians, in 1787, Mary Ann Hacker, their eldest daughter
who was the bride of Edmund West, was slain by the
Indian renegade Leonard Schoolcraft. Another daughter,
ten-year-old Margaret, was scalped and left for dead in
the same raid. Two neighbors, Edmond West Sr. and his
son, William West, were also killed and Martha Hughes
was captured.

In 1796, John, with others, attended the Greenville Treaty Commission to obtain the release of the Cozad and Waggoner children who had been captured in earlier raids by the Indians. They were partly successful in their mission obtaining the release of two Cozad boys.

John Hacker signed the petition for Harrison to become a county separate from Monongalia in 1789 and, ten years later, in 1799, and served as the tenth sheriff of the county (his father-in-law, John Sleeth, has served in 1792). In 1800 he was a Justice of the Peace.

Despite the hardships of the time or perhaps because of them the early pioneers were deeply religious. They lived far from organized religion and the infrequent visitation of ministers of any faith were occasions of joy. Families traveled for miles to attend a preaching service.

One itinerant preacher, the Reverend Henry Smith, visited the Hacker's Creek community in 1790. He remembered John Hacker as "a man of good common sense, and I think an honest man, and a good Christian, and among the first that took in the Methodist preachers. His house had long been a preaching place and the preachers' home home, and also a place of refuge in time of danger."

The Hackers were among those who established the first Methodist Church on Hacker's Creek, Harmony, and also were leaders in the move to form the Methodist Protestant churches at a later day. Through their efforts, and those of David Smith and the Rev. John Mitchell and others, Harmony became known as the "Mother Church" of Methodist Protestantism west of the Alleghenies.

One of the oldest cemeteries in the Hacker's Creek community, Morrison, is located on John Hacker's homestead. In it repose the remains of John and his wife, Margaret, and, perhaps three of their children - William, Jonathan, and Sarah, the wife of David Smith. Today it is maintained by the Hacker's Creek Pioneer Descendants.

John Hacker died 20 Apr 1824 in the family home. He left a considerable estate. His will and inventory are transcribed on pages . At least two relics of his estate passed down to the modern day - his rifle and a lantern. The rifle was in the hands of a descendant and its location is now unknown to this writer. The lantern was, for years, on display in the West Virginia Building at Jackson's Mill; it has since been misplaced. Margaret died 8 May 1832.
The Hacker Children and Grandchildren

John and Margaret (Sleeth) Hacker were the parents of eleven children: Mary Ann (I), William, John, Sarah "Sally", Margaret Sleeth, Jonathan, Alexander, Elizabeth, Absalom, Thomas Sleeth, and Mary Ann (II).

1. Mary Ann Hacker, b ca 1768, probably near Winchester, Virginia, before the family left the South Branch. A bond dated 9 February 1787 for her marriage to Edmund West Jr. was returned by Isaac Edwards who performed the marriage; the marriage was dated 15 February 1787. There was no issue from the marriage.

Mary Ann was killed by Leonard Schoolcraft, an Indian renegade, and two Indian friends on 5 December 1787. In the same raid, Mary Ann's sister, Margaret, was scalped and left for dead; Martha Hughes was captured; and Edmund West Sr., Mary Ann's father-in-law, and one of his younger sons who may have been named William were killed.

Mary Ann and the Wests were interred in the old Pioneer Cemetery. Tombstones for Mary Ann and Edmond Sr. are extant.

Edmond West Jr. remarried 11 April 1791 to Catherine Ellsworth, daughter of Moses Ellsworth. Four children - John, Moses, Mary, and Edmund - were born of the second marriage. Edmond Jr.'s will was written 24 February 1814.

2. William Hacker, b 3 May 1769/70/71, on Hacker's Creek was the first white child born within the confines of present-day Lewis County, West Virginia. On 12 February 1791 he posted a marriage bond to wed Mary (Adah/Eder) West, b 20 December 1770, daughter of the deceased Edmond West Sr. and his wife Mary. Joseph Cheuvront, a Methodist Episcopalian minister who lived in what is now the Good Hope area, married them on 25 February 1791. (MB 1/95, Harrison County)

Despite the hardships and deprivations of growing up on the frontier, William was sufficiently educated to serve as a school teacher, minister, Justice of the Peace and historian. With William Powers, he interviewed old pioneers and wrote their memories of life during the days of border warfare.

West's and Powers's chronicles are said to have been published in 1820's by a newspaper in Morgantown. In 1831, after the deaths of the original authors, Joseph Israel, Clarksburg publisher, engaged Alexander Scott Withers to rewrite these chronicles with additions and published them as Chronicles of Border Warfare or, A
History of the Settlement by the Whites, of North-Western Virginia, and of the Indian Wars and Massacres in that section of the State with Reflections, Anecdotes, etc. by Alexander Scott Withers.

Glen Lough, Marion County historian and author of Now and Long Ago, claimed in his publication, "Awhile Ago Times," that some 25 copies of the 1829 chronicles were, about 1920, in the family of Flowers Anglin (?) who was said to have been a member of the Judge Noah Life family. Sporadic research and inquiries of rare book dealers by this writer has failed to locate either descendants of Anglin or the early publication. However, many copies of the 1831 version are extant.


William and Mary Adah (West) Hacker were the parents of ten children: John Wesley, Mary Ann, Margaret, William, Alexander West, Edmund, Thomas, Jonathan W., Absolem (K.?), and Sarah A.

The names of the children, together with their birthdates, were found in the effects of the Jackson family of Jane Lew in the 1930's and published in the Clarksburg paper in an article by Wilbur C. Morrison.

1A. John Wesley Hacker, b 5 Jan 1792, probably on Hacker's Creek; d 13 Mar 1869, Westfield, Hamilton Co, IN. On 18 Apr 1814 in Lewis County he married Mary Ann Raines, b ca 1794/95, d/o John Raines. His father performed the nuptials.

By 1830 when the census was taken, John Wesley and Mary Ann removed to Hamilton County, Indiana. Others of the family later followed, including Alexander Hacker, John Wesley's uncle.

On the 1850 census of Hamilton County, John Wesley is listed as a basket maker and his real estate
value was $50. He appeared on the 1860 census in the same county.

At least three children were born to John Wesley and Mary Ann (Raines) Hacker: David F., James R., and William Robert. Given the number of years between the first born and the last two, it would appear that there may have been other children who died in the interim.

(1) William Robert Hacker, unproven as a child of this marriage, b ca 1817, m 20 Mar 1860 Mary E. Bond.

(2) David F. Hacker, b ca 1832, was living with his parents in Westfield in 1850; death date unknown; m Malinda Catharine Dunn (ca 1838 - 6 Aug 1906) who is buried in Crownland Cemetery, Wayne Twp, Hamilton Co, IN. Four children: John H. (18 Aug 1854/Westfield, Hamilton Co, IN - 25 Jun 1897/Tipton, IN) m Rebecca Jane Fitzsimmons 15 Nov 1887 and had three children; Amelia/Permila, b ca 1863, m 13 Mar 1883 Ambrose Cook in Hamilton Co, IN; Edmond H., b ca 1865, m 24 Dec 1896/Hamilton Co Lottie P. Holloway/Rosa B., b 6 Sep 1870, d 10 Mar 1901 in Hamilton Co and bur Prairie Baptist Cemetery, m 30 Jan 1897/Hamilton Co Grafton McDonald.

Note: HCPD's Joyce Chambers of South Bend, IN, is descended from John H. and Rebecca (Fitzsimmons) Hacker.

(3) James R. Hacker, b ca 1834/IN; d 29 Nov 1871/Hamilton Co and bur. Riverside Cemetery, Noblesville, IN; m 13 Feb 1862/Hamilton Co, Lucy Ann Geiger. At least two children: Mary Ellen, b ca 1862, m 20 Nov 1882/Hamilton Co, IN Manford E. Hunt; and, Emma M., b ca 1870, d 5 Apr 1912/Noblesville Twp and bur Crownland Cemetery, m 24 Feb 1889/Hamilton Co, Samuel Darrah.

1B. Mary Ann Hacker, no information except that she was born 27 March 1793, probably in present-day Lewis County.

1C. Margaret Hacker, b 18 Feb 1796, probably on Hacker's Creek; m 19 Oct 1815 in Harrison (Lewis) Co, (WV), Solomon B. Townsend, b ca 1795 Bath Co, VA according to Thomas A. Townsend, a family researcher. They were the parents of eight children. Solomon later married Nancy Conrad and had three more children: Elizabeth, Jonathan, and Margaret. Solomon and Margaret lived in Gilmer County; the 1860 census shows them there, but not in the same household. Were they divorced? One source indicates that Margaret may also
have married a second time to Aquilla Osborn. Did she?

(1) Levi Townsend, b ca 1822
(2) Solomon Townsend, b ca 1833
(3) Commodore Townsend, b ca 1837, m Rebecca Williams.
(4) Albert Townsend, b ca 1840
(5) George Townsend, b ca 1842
(6) Mary Townsend m Samuel Ellis Stout
(7) John Townsend
(8) Mariilda Townsend

10. William Hacker, b 16 Dec 1797; d 3 May 1799

1E. Alexander West Hacker, b 7 Dec 1799, probably on Hacker's Creek, and named for his mother's brother. He was twice married: (1) to Elizabeth Haverty, d/o William Haverty, on 16 Sep 1821/Lewis County; and, (2) to Rachel Cunningham who was born 26 Feb 1809. He had three children by his first marriage, six by the second.

At an early day, he moved to what is now the Sand Fork region of Gilmer County. Further research is required to determine all the activities of the family there.

(1) Jemima Hacker, m 7 Mar 1833 Peter Wiant.

Note: Alexander is named on the marriage bond as her father; however, there is some discrepancy here as she could not have been more than twelve years old.

(2) David S. Hacker, m 30 Sep 1841/Lewis County Elizabeth Sims, b ca 1820. Three children born of the marriage: Margaret Louise, b ca 1848, was the first wife of John William Bland Kee, and d 19 Jan 1883 with burial in Buckhannon Run Cemetery; Silas A. Hacker, b 8 Oct 1854/Buckhannon Run, Lewis County, d 2 Jan 1894 at Jane Lew of pneumonia and bur Buckhannon Run Cemetery, m 12 Oct 1878/Lewis Co, Mary L. Straley (20 Aug 1854 - 26 Aug 1932), d/o Asa Kemper and Louisa (Horner) Straley, and had three children; Mary Adeline Hacker (23 Jul 1863 - 23 Apr 1926/Parsons, Taylor Co, WV) m her sister's widower, John William Bland Kee.

1F. Edmund Hacker, b 1 Jan 1802, d 1876 in Shelby Co, IN. The location of his marriage to Catherine Keith, b 31 Oct 1801, d/o James and Mary Ann (Alkire) Keith, is unknown to this writer since the Keiths also left Lewis County and went to Indiana; however, they were married on 26 Jan 1826. Edmund and Catherine were the parents of six children.
(1) Mary Louise Hacker, b 30 Jul 1830/Shelby Co., IN and d 1869, prob in DeWitt Co., IL. She m Eleasa Austin Byerly 26 Dec 1850 in Shelby Co. They had three children. The eldest, Catherine Gilly "Duck", was b 20 Apr 1856; she lived to be 103 and died in 1959. Her spouse was Boanarges Thompson. The other two were Jonathan Samuel "Daunt" (14 Apr 1861 - ca 1935) who m Melissa Pearl Wall and Anna Retta, b 12 Dec 1869 and m 16 Aug 1882 in DeWitt Co., IL, David Thompson.

(2) Jonathan Perry Newton Hacker, b 15 Oct 1832, served in the Civil War. He never married.

(3) Nancy Ann Hacker, b 8 Nov 1837, m Wilson Cottrell 2 Dec 1858 in Shelby Co., IN.

(4) Sarah C. Hacker, b ca 1839 m Daniel Meloy.

(5) James K. Polk Hacker, b ca 1845, m (1) 27 Feb 1868/Shelby Co., IN, Nancy Barnes, and (2) 24 Dec 1874/Shelby Co., IN Martha Wertz. He was a Civil War veteran and had one known son, William, b ca 1868, by Nancy and three children, Elmera, b Nov 1881, James D., b Dec 1883, and Nellie, b Aug 1891, by his second wife, Martha.

1G. Thomas Hacker, b 9 Apr 1804 and d 6 Nov 1804.

1H. Jonathan W. Hacker, b 15 Oct 1805, m Jane Seney 13 Jun 1839 in Shelby Co., IN. No further information.

1I. Absalom Hacker, b 18 Dec 1807. No further information.

1J. Sarah A. Hacker, b 10 Jul 1810. No further information.

To be continued in the next issue.
COPY OF JOHN HACKER'S WILL
Prepared from court record copy provided
by Robert B. Smith.
Translated by Joy Gilchrist - 22 January 1983

"John Hackers will

In the name of God Amen I John Hacker of the County of Lewis and state of Virginia being of a great age and weak in body, but of sound mind and disposing memory (for which I thank God) and calling to mind the uncertainty of human life and being desirous to dispose of all such worldly estate as it hath pleased God to bless me with, I give and bequeath the same in manner following that is to say in the first place I desire that all the perishable part of my estate be immediately sold after my death and that out of the monies arising therefrom, all my just debts and funeral expenses be paid. Secondly after the payment of my debts and funeral expenses, I give to my wife Margaret Hacker one third part of my estate both real and personal, for and during her natural life, and after her decease, I give the personal part thereof to whatever child of mine shall take care of their mother during her life, and the real part thereof is to be included in the bequeath that I herein after shall bequeath to two of my sons viz Thomas S. Hacker and Absalom Hacker. Thirdly I give two thirds of the monies arising from the Sale of the perishable part of my estate to be equally divided between my two loving daughters Sarah Smith and Mary Ann Helmick and the heirs of my two daughters that are now deceased to wit the children of Margaret Hardman and Elizabeth Hardman. Fourthly I give to my son Absalom Hacker all that part of my Landed property contained within the following bounds that is to say beginning at a poplar near the great road corner to Land I formerly conveyed to my son William Hacker thence with the course of said William's line to the middle of the road and with the road crossing the run that runs through my farm to the upper end of the fence thence with a dreen to the original line and with the lines of my survey crossing said run again to the place of Beginning at the same time it is to be understood that the said Absalom Hacker is to pay to my son Alexander Hacker twenty dollars which twenty dollars together with twenty dollars that my son Thomas S. Hacker is likewise to pay to my said son Alexander is designed to make him an equal part with them and my other sons that I formerly portioned off.

Fifthly I give to my son Thomas S. Hacker all that part of my Landed property contained within the following bounds viz Beginning in the middle of the road where Absaloms part first comes to the road and running the road as Absaloms run crossing the aforesaid run to the upper corner of the fence, thence up the aforesaid dreen to the original line thence with the said original lines crossing Hackers Creek to
Jonathan Hackers corner and with said Jonathans lines and
William Hackers lines to the place of Beginning.

Sixthly I give to my three sons to wit William, John and
Jonathan one dollar each to be paid out of my daughters
legacy.

And lastly I do hereby constitute and appoint my son William
Hacker and my son in law David Smith Executors of this my
last will and Testament, hereby revoking all other and
former wills or Testaments by me heretofore made.

In witness whereof I have herewith set my hand and
affixed my Seal this eighteenth day of March in the Year of
our Lord one thousand eight hundred and twenty two.

Signed, Sealed published and declared
as and for the last will and Testament John Hacker (seal)
of the above named John Hacker
in presence of us
Edmund Hacker.
John W. Hacker

Superior Court of Law of Lewis County spring Term 1824.
This last will and Testament of John Hacker deed was
presented in open court proven by the oath of John W. Hacker
a subscribing witness thereto. And at the Spring Term of
1825 of the said Court the said will was further proved by
the oath of Edmund Hacker another subscribing witness
thereto and ordered to be recorded.

Teste
G.D. Camden
Clk

Note: John Hacker signed his name.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item Description</th>
<th>Bidder</th>
<th>Bid Amount</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Horse and 2 yokes</td>
<td>John Tracy</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Pair of Candle Snuffers</td>
<td>William Hardman</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Pair of Buckets</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1 Sitting Stool</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 New Camera</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Tea cups and saucers</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Deep dish and plates</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Water Pitcher</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Cane</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Fan mill</td>
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<tr>
<td>1 Ton Cape</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Cream Pitcher</td>
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<td>1 Biscuit Ladder</td>
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<td>1 Bay Plow</td>
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<td>1 Rake</td>
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<td>1 Meal or less</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Young Set</td>
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<td>1 Hay or more days</td>
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<td>1 Team for Targe</td>
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<td>1 Pair of Shovel</td>
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<tr>
<td>1 Long Chain</td>
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<tr>
<td>1 Pair of Hinges</td>
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<td>1 Pair of Irons</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 pair</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Long Hoe</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1 Plat of 120 Tum</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Corn Cutter</td>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Corn Cutter</td>
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<tr>
<td>1 Hand Law</td>
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<tr>
<td>1 Pitch and Stand</td>
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<tr>
<td>1 Corn boiler</td>
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<tr>
<td>1 Lot of old Iron</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Wheel</td>
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</tr>
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<td>1 Top</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Chest</td>
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<tr>
<td>1 Chest</td>
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The details include various agricultural tools and equipment, along with their respective bidders and bid amounts.
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<td>6' pole</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
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<td>William Hocker</td>
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<td>5' pole</td>
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<td>William Hocker</td>
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<td>John Hesterman</td>
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JOHN HACKER, THE PIONEER, AND HIS FAMILY

Continued from HCJ Vol. X, Iss. 2
by Joy Gregoire Gilchrist

John and Margaret (Sleeth) Hacker were the parents of eleven children: Mary Ann (1), William, John, Sarah "Sally", Margaret Sleeth, Jonathan, Alexander, Elizabeth, Absalum, Thomas Sleeth, and Mary Ann (II). The families of Mary Ann (I) and William were reviewed in issue 2 of this volume. This issue begins with John.

3. John Hacker, the third child and second eldest son of John and Margaret (Sleeth) Hacker, was born 17 Jan 1773 at the beginning of what was known as "the starving year" along the frontier.

In the two years since the Hackers had come to what we know as Lewis County, West Virginia, numerous families had joined them along the banks of Hacker's Creek and the West Fork River. Among them were Robert Lowther who settled near the mouth of Hacker's Creek. His son William chose land that now includes the Industrial Park at Jane Lew; Jesse Hughes and his wife, Grace Tanner, built their cabin within a 700 feet of the present-day Wilderness Inn; John Sleeth was on one side of John Hacker, the pioneer; William Hacker, John's brother, was on the other; and, many other claims were established throughout the area. (1)

Beginning in 1773 families started coming to the West Fork River valleys without first establishing a claim and planting a crop. They loaded their possessions on a pack horse and walked from the South Branch. The influx of new people placed a strain on the food supplies of those who had come before and were it not for the efforts of William Lowther who "roamed amidst danger and alarm, killing venison, elks, Buffalo and Bear" many would have died of hunger. (2)

John Hacker, the child, was born either at Bush's Fort or at the family homestead along the banks of Hacker's Creek. Some stories say that once John Hacker settled on his homestead, the family never left even in times of Indian activity except for one time when the entire settlement was deserted (1778) (3); yet others, including "The Hacker Records" written by William Hacker, the grandson of the pioneer and the son of this John, claim that at least portions of the family would leave and "fort up."

During the year preceeding John's birth, 1772, there was some Indian trouble - the murder of the Stroud family on the Elk River in what is now Braxton County, West Virginia, and the supposed rebuttal by a few scouts against the Indians at Bulltown. (4)

John, regardless of the exact place of his birth, grew
up along the banks of Hacker's Creek. Like other boys of
the community, he probably helped his father about the farm,
learned his lessons at his mother's knee and attended the
Methodist class meetings held from time to time in the
community. And, as he grew to adulthood, he courted "Mary"
Susanna Smith, born 18 Sep 1778, probably on the South
Branch of the Potomac (5), daughter of David and Lydia
(Ball) Smith, who had moved to the Hacker's Creek settlement
from Hardy County in late 1786 or early 1787 (6) (7) and
purchased seventy acres of land from George Arnold in
February 1787. (8) Susanna's brother, Caleb, became a close
friend.

On 29 March 1796 John and Susanna were married. The
marriage, recorded in Randolph County Marriage Book 1, Page
5, was performed by Joseph Cheaveront.

According to "The Hacker Records," the Hacker's Creek
community had broken up due to Indian troubles and some of
the family had moved east of the mountains for safety. Thus,
John and Susanna were married, or at least had the licensed
issued, in Randolph County rather than Harrison County.

After things were more settled and the treaty of
Greenville, Ohio, was signed, they moved back to Hacker's
Creek. It should also be remembered that the head of the
Hacker household, John Hacker, the pioneer, was absent
during this time because he was attending the Greenville
Treaty negotiations with John Waggoner and Jacob Cozad in an
attempt to secure release of three children of Waggoner and
Cozad who had been captured in separate raids in 1792 and
1794 respectively. (9)

In a deed recorded in Deed Book 3, page 102, Harrison
County, on 20 March 1797, not quite a year after he was
married, "John Hacker Jr." purchased from his parents 150
acres "of John Hackers Settlement Survey" for the small sum
of five shillings. William, his elder brother, had
purchased another portion of the family homestead on 23
April 1794 for the same sum and had the deed recorded in
Harrison County Deed Book 1, page 501. The small amount
paid made the transaction a sale, rather than a gift.

Of the nine children born to John and Susanna, four
were born on Hacker's Creek on their farm. They were
David, Ann (Nancy), Jonathan, and John.

About the year 1805, John and his older brother,
William, had an argument over politics that resulted in a
break in family ties. John was on the Federalist's side, for
John Adams; William on the Republican side, for Thomas
Jefferson. The argument was heated and the brothers
resorted to fisticuffs.

Their father stepped in and separated them and
suggested they calm themselves.

Young John replied that he wasn't about to forget their
disagreement, that William was overbearing and lorded it over his younger brothers and sisters, and that, as school teacher, William talked to everyone as if they were his school pupils.

John continued that he was going to take his family and leave Hacker's Creek and go to Ohio and get his own farm where he wouldn't have to breath the same air as his brother William.

His father, who wanted to keep his children around him, said that if John left he would be disinherited. "So be it," said John. (10)

John did pack and departed Hacker's Creek with his family and several others from the community, including David and Lydia (Ball) Smith (Susanna's parents) and all their children except for David, Jr., who was married to Sarah Hacker. In time, five more Hacker children would follow John west. His sisters, Margaret and Elizabeth, and their husbands, Peter and Henry Hardman, left for Ohio a couple of years later (11); and, his brothers, Absalom, Alexander, and Thomas Sleeth, followed much later. (One wonders if this argument was just the easiest way for John to break the ties that held him to his parents?)

The migrating families traveled overland; their route took them to the Ohio River above present-day Parkersburg, West Virginia, where they crossed to Marietta, then to Chillicothe, and finally to Greene County, Ohio.

Broke and unlanded, because he had not yet sold his property in (West) Virginia, John agreed to share on land owned by Andrew Reed two or three miles east of Fairfield (now Fairborn). (12) Two more children, Jonas and Elizabeth, were born here. (13)

In 1808, John and Susannah sold their farm back in (West) Virginia to Samuel Bonnett. Perhaps it was the sale of this property that, in 1809, for John, along with David Sleeth and Caleb Smith to move north to Campbell County and settle on the Big Darby Plains (now Montgomery County, Ohio). Here William Hacker, the chronicler of "The Hacker Records" was born in 1810. Shortly thereafter, Indians began to raise trouble again, so all the settlers in the area returned to Greene County.

In October 1812 the United States declared war against Britain. When Hull surrendered at Detroit, John promptly enlisted to fight against the Indians and the British. He fought all over Ohio; however, he must have been home on furlough in February of 1813 for his wife, Susannah, gave birth to a son Thomas on 21 October 1813. (14) Just two weeks before, on 5 October 1813, John fought in the Battle of the Thames, the battle which claimed the life of the Shawnee chief, Tecumseh.

During John's absence, his eldest son David took over
as head of the household. (15)

John returned home after the Battle of the Thames. In 1815 he went to the Land Office in Cincinnati and purchased a one-fourth section of land ten miles west of the Mad River (about ten miles north of Dayton) near the north line of Montgomery County. In the same year, Susannah was with child. On 10 February 1816, Susannah delivered the child, Sarah, and five days later died, probably as a result of childbirth. She was buried on the family farm in Montgomery County. (16)

The oldest daughter, sixteen-year-old Anna (Nancy) took over as mother to her younger brothers and sisters, including the new baby. She had the responsibility of this Ohio frontier household for two years, until John remarried in 1818 to Susan, Cragell or Craygell, a sister-in-law of Andrew Reed, John's mentor when he came to Ohio in 1805.

When John brought his new wife home, the older boys began to drift away. Susan did as well as could be expected, but she did not have the strength of mind and force of character to qualify her for the position of mother to the family of children into which she had now entered. Unfortunately, she suffered from hereditary insanity (she claimed to be related to all the famous people in the world) which began to manifest itself five or six years after she and John were married.

By 1833 when John sold his farm on Big Darby Plains and moved his wife and three younger children to Shelby County, Indiana, where others from the family had located, the older children were all married. John purchased a farm two miles north of Marion on the Big Blue River. He died 15 October 1834 of Asiatic cholera at the age of sixty-two years. He was buried in the Marion Cemetery in Shelby County, Ohio. When Susan died three years later, after being cared for by her step-children, she was probably interred beside him. (17) However, John's tombstone incorrectly indicates that Susannah is also buried here.
Others buried in the same cemetery near to John include David Smith, his first father-in-law, Anna "Nancy" (Smith) Slee, wife of Alexander Slee, Evaline (Slee) Hacker, wife of John's younger brother Thomas. Children of John Hacker (1773-1834) and Mary Susannah Smith (1778-1816) were (18):

1A. David Hacker, b 24 July 1797 on Hacker's Creek, Harrison County (Lewis County, West Virginia) was named for his maternal grandfather, David Smith. On 20 May 1824 in Ohio, he married Catherine Gile. They were the parents of at least four children: James, b ca 1826; Elizabeth, b ca 1829; John W., b ca 1833; and, Francis A., b ca 1843. The family moved to Iowa at a date unknown.

David's death on 20 Jun 1863 in the Soldiers Hospital at St. Louis, Missouri, was the result of typhoid fever contracted while serving the 37th Iowa Volunteer Infantry, the famous "Graybeard Regiment."

This regiment, composed of 915 men all safely past the upper military age limit of forty-five years, was recruited in Iowa during the Civil War by special arrangement to show that there were plenty of draft-proof citizens perfectly willing to go to war. The 37th was enlisted for the full three years and eventually it campaigned in Missouri, Tennessee, and Mississippi. Only a few of its detachments saw actual fighting - the total casualty list was only seven - but 145 men died of disease, and 364 had to be mustered out of service for physical disability; but when the unit was mustered out in May 1865, more than thirteen hundred sons and grandsons of members of the regiment were in the Federal military service. (19)

2A. Ann(a)/Nancy Hacker, born 2 November 1799 on Hacker's Creek, was six years old when the family moved to Ohio. On 27 Dec 1831 she married Stephen Gile. The family later moved to Iowa where she died 30 Jan 1845.

3A. Jonathan Hacker, born 6 Mar 1802, married Catherine Herring (1 Nov 1806/Maryland - 13 Apr 1879/Huntington, Indiana) on Christmas Day 1823. They settled at Huntington, Indiana, where Jonathan died 30 Jan 1845. They were the parents of seven children:

(1) Eliza Jane Hacker, born 20 March 1826, never married. She died 23 January 1837.

(2) Nathaniel Wilson Hacker, born 18 Sep 1827 at Dayton, Montgomery County, Ohio, married Sarah Ann Smith (14 Sep 1832/Metamora, Franklin Co, IN - 31 Jan 1921/Livingston, IL), daughter of William Smith. They had ten children: Margaret Ann Hacker (10 Feb 1870/Franklin Co, IN - 10 Mar 1933) m Spencer Evans and had children Leta, Verma, Zelda,
Delosse I., and Ivan Kenneth, all born in Champaign County, Illinois, and Dale Edsel and Glen Baley, born in Dougins County, Illinois; John Hacker (24 Dec 1851 - Feb 1932) m Libby Babb; Sylvester, born 4 Dec 1853, died before his sixth birthday on 29 Aug 1859; Orris, b 16 Jun 1855; William (14 Nov 1857 - 14 Dec 1921) m Rose Russell; Martha Jane, b 24 Jun 1859 m James E. Morris on 7 Feb 1878; Laura (4 Mar 1862 - Sep 1912) was the wife of Frank Wagner; Mary, b 24 Aug 1864, married George Pitsenbarger on 18 Sep 1892; Benjamin Franklin, born 7 Sep 1872, married Mary Jane Shutt on 15 December 1872, he married Melvina J. Updyke.  

Nathaniel died 23 June 1917 in Rantoul, Champaign County, Illinois. (20)  

(3) Silas Colvin Hacker was born 4 January 1830. His first wife whom he married 29 November 1852 was Rebecca Slagal. He married Levina Welshous on 29 May 1862. He died in 1863.  

(4) Thomas Fletcher Hacker, born 11 July 1832, was married twice. On 27 December 1858, he married Mary Jane Shutt; on 15 December 1872, he married Melvina J. Updyke.  

(5) Mary Elizabeth Hacker, born 14 August 1835 and died 22 October 1854 at the age of nineteen, was the wife of Samuel F. Karns.  

(6) Catharine Louisa Hacker was born 23 August 1839. Her husband was George F. Smith.  


4A. John Hacker, born 12 January 1804 on Hacker's Creek, was named for his father and grandfather. On 26 Apr 1827 in Preble County, Ohio, he married Mary Gile. They were the parents of three daughters: Sarah married Robert J. Lawrence; Katherine; and, the third daughter's name is unknown to this writer. John died 25 November 1850/54? in Boone County, Indiana.  

5A. Jonas Hacker was the first of this immediate family to be born in Ohio. The event occurred on 20 April 1806 at Fairfield, now Fairborn, Ohio. On 12 Jun 1827 at Troy, Ohio, he married Mary Cunningham, by whom two children were born: Theodore C. and Francis A. Hacker. Jonas died on 3 January 1871 in Brownsville, Nebraska.
End Notes:

1. Smith, Robert B. Map of Early Hacker's Creek Surveys, (unpublished), Lost Creek, WV.
3. Ibid. p. 39.
4. For story on Bulltown Massacre, see HCJ Vol. VI, Iss. 3, p. 145.
11. Peter and Margaret (Hacker) Hardman had seven children born in Harrison (Lewis) County, (West) Virginia, the last being Elizabeth, born in 1806. Their eighth child, Eliza, was born in February 1808 in Greene County, Ohio. Two more, Margaret and Nelson, were born in the same county in 1810 and 1813 respectively. Thus, Peter and Margaret migrated between 1806 and 1808. Elizabeth and Henry accompanied them.
15. Ibid.
16. Ibid.
17. Ibid.
18. Sources for information on the children include: Mary (Warner) West, now deceased, of Weston; Betty Shell of Michigan; Richard Hacker, Illinois; Franklin Walters, Fort Charlotte, Florida; and independent research of this writer.
19. Civil War Times Illustrated, volume and date unavailable from Franklin Walters who sent in the article.
20. P. J. Shiver
THE NEBRASKA BRANCH OF HACKERS

By Eleanor Hacker
And Ruth Hacker

I grew up always knowing that we were of the Nebraska Hackers, but knowing nothing of family background except that there were records. My grandmother, Mary Ellen Hacker Taylor, spoke lovingly of Uncle David Hacker. I would hope to pass on something of the strong pioneer spirit of his time and his part in the westward movement which had an important part in the settlement of our American "West." Uncle David was not a part of my direct genealogical line, but was a half-brother and acted as a foster parent to my grandfather, Samuel Hacker.

Genealogically, I am beginning with John Hacker I, the first frontier settler in the Hacker's Creek area of west(ern) Virginia. He was born in Frederick County, Virginia on January 1, 1743. When he was 22 years old, he married Margaret Sleeth. Soon after he went and homesteaded in Lewis County (now the Hacker's Creek area), becoming the first white settler there. He was connected with the Revolutionary War as an Indian scout. They had 11 children. Two of them were scalped by Indians; although one, Margaret, recovered, grew up and raised 10 children. John died on April 20, 1824 and is buried in the Morrison Cemetery at Jane Lew.

Our ancestor was John II, the 3rd child of John and Margaret. He was born on the 17th of January, 1773 at Bush's Fort, West(ern) Virginia. He married Susanna Smith on March 29, 1796. They had 11 children, 3 born at Hacker's Creek and 8 in Ohio. The 8th child, Thomas, was our g.g. grandfather.

Thomas Hacker was born at Fairfield, Green County, Ohio on October 21, 1813. He married Evalin Sleeth on February 21, 1837. They moved on westward to Shelbyville, Indiana. There Evalin gave birth to twins on February 6, 1838. The son John lived for 13 hours; and daughter Susanna lived 10 days. The next year Evalin again gave birth to a son whom they named David Sleeth Hacker, but as with so many pioneer families, the mother died at the birth of the child.

Thomas kept his son David and remarried on June 18, 1843 to Lucretia Alexander. They had 10 more children, all born in Shelbyville, Indiana:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Birth</th>
<th>Death</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>David Sleeth</td>
<td>24 Aug. 1839</td>
<td>24 Dec. 1919</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Alexander</td>
<td>24 Apr. 1844</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary Caroline</td>
<td>7 Oct. 1845</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sarah Catherine</td>
<td>15 Sept. 1847</td>
<td>14 Sept. 1848</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James Darwin</td>
<td>12 June 1849</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hulda Jane</td>
<td>28 June 1851</td>
<td>1 yr. 9 mo.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lucretia</td>
<td>28 Feb. 1853</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Samuel Franklin</td>
<td>21 May 1855</td>
<td>8 July 1882 (27 yr)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virginia</td>
<td>7 Mar. 1857</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sophia</td>
<td>26 Mar. 1859</td>
<td>21 Nov. 1895</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evalin</td>
<td>7 Jan. 1862</td>
<td>18 Apr. 1863</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The following is the record of the Hacker Family moving to Nebraska, as recorded by Nora Hacker Hollenbeck, daughter of James C. and niece of David:

"Thomas Hacker got his land through a patent in 1865-1866 (land grant from the Navajo-Mexican War). President Andrew Johnson signed the patent. The war was in 1848. The soldiers could sell or buy as many acres as they could afford. The patent was about like a homestead only you did not have to live on it.

"Thomas Hacker got his land on November 10, 1866. He was the first person to own the land after the government. The land was in sections 20-21-22-27 and 28. Andrew Johnson was vice president for Abraham Lincoln and took office as President on April 16, 1865, the day after Lincoln was shot.

"It was quite a little work at the Court House to find all of the information. I wished I knew what he paid for it! 75 cents or a dollar twenty-five maybe?" quoted from a letter from Nora Hacker Hollenbeck, the family historian.

When the Civil War broke out Thomas and his son David both served in the Union Army.

In the fall of 1865 David and his father went and took up the government land in Nebraska. They returned to Indiana, sold their land there, preparing to move their family to Nebraska. Father died. In the spring of 1866 David brought the family, including stepmother and halfbrothers and sisters, some still small -- the youngest 7 and 9 years, and Samuel, our grandfather, was only 11 -- to Nebraska.

Quoting again from Nora Hollenbeck: "David was guardian for the family... He helped organize the first Methodist Episcopal Church in the county."

David Sleeth Hacker was born on the 24th of August, 1839 in Fairland County, Indiana. He married Nancy Permelia Geil (Millie) on March 7, 1867, and died in Auburn, Nebraska on December 24, 1918 at the age of 79 years and 4 months.

Marriage of Thomas's other children:
Mary Caroline Jacob Kitchen
James Carwin Mary Ellen Taylor
Lucretia Boyd Cole 26 Dec.1880
*Samuel Franklin Mary Ellen Whitney, Farnum, Nebraska
   b. 11 Jan. 1861 near Poughkeepsie, NY
d. 23 Oct. 1949 - Zion, IL
   Hannibal (Hamilton?) Phillips
Virginia Thomas Bennett
Sophia

(*Our grandfather)
This photo of David's own family was taken about 1887 to 1889. It shows David as a young man with his wife, Nancy Pemelia and the children:

Front Row – David Hacker, Charles Theodore, Nancy P., Spencer
Back Row – Elsie, Ami, Minnie

Spencer became a newspaper man in Peru, Nebraska. Elsie married James Malcomb Hacker, a distant cousin. We visited her in Auburn in 1941. Elsie had two sets of twins, Helma and Delmer, and Cora and Coral.

Delma Kelley and Cora Hacker live together in the old family home in Auburn. They are David's granddaughters. When we were there 3 years ago, they gave family records and these old family pictures to us, for which we are most grateful.
This picture is of David and his half brothers and half sisters whom he brought from Indiana, with their spouses. It was probably taken soon after 1895, as it does not include Samuel (my grandfather) who died in 1892 and Sophia who died in 1895.

Front Row - L to R - Jacob Kitchen, Mary Caroline Kitchen, David Sleeth Hacker, Nancy Parmelia (Millie) Hacker, Boyd Cole

We have had contact through the years with a few of our father's cousins. My grandmother kept contacts through a round robin letter which circulated from one cousin to another, each adding her own letter to the envelope. My mother continued with the cousins' letter when Grandmother was not able to keep this up. We have visited several of the chain letter cousins.

In 1941 we had the privilege of spending a few hours with Nora Hacker Hollenbeck, the Hacker family historian. If only she were alive today, she would so much enjoy HUPD! And she would have so much to contribute! She could tell all about the old Nebraska sod house - how cool it was in the summer and how warm in winter, all about how it was made, etc. There were no trees in that part of the country until the pioneers planted them. After 11 o'clock at night, when her father-in-law was asleep, she took us to see Grace Cole at Burr Oak Kansas. She was a daughter of Boyd and Lucretia Hacker Cole. She was a kind and self-sacrificing person - had taken care of her brother, Arby, for years after he had lost both arms in a farm machinery accident. Nora and Grace were best friends.
Nora, as a young woman, was a milliner, making stylish hats for the ladies. She kept all family records and passed them on for others to add to their records. A few years ago she wrote that her sister Ruth still had the 8-day family clock given to their parents on their wedding day in 1877, and that it still kept perfect time at well over a hundred years.

Nora used to write bits of pioneer family history in almost every letter. She wrote beautiful poetry too. She and her husband, Lou Hollenbeck, retired in SanDiego, California. She was living in her own home by herself - with a younger sister taking her to buy groceries, go to church, etc. - until she was almost 101 years old - in good health -- and was killed in the night by a burglar who stole her TV set.

James Carwin and Mary Ellen (Taylor) Hacker had one son, Cecil, and 6 daughters: Nora, Edith, Maude, Mamie, Roxy and Ruth.

From the family of Virginia Hacker and Ham Phillips, we knew Alice Pitch, Goldie Decker and Chester Phillips via the cousins' chain letter. We once met Goldie and Chester in Nebraska.

In 1986 we had the pleasure of visiting Della Kitchen, widow of Omar, son of Caroline and Jacob Kitchen. In spite of her 98 years, she was amazingly cheerful and mentally alert, recognizing us from a letter even though she had never met us before. She was in a beautifully kept nursing home in North Platte, Nebraska. She has since passed away in 1987.
Our grandfather was Samuel, the 8th child of Thomas and Lucretia Hacker. He was brought from Indiana to Nebraska by David with the family as an 11 year old. He married Mary Ellen Whitney of a Farnum, Nebraska pioneer family who had homesteaded from Poukeepsie, New York.

I will quote from Grandmother's life story which she wrote at age 82:

"I was united in marriage to Samuel F. Hacker on December 26, 1880. To this union James Arthur Hacker was born on November 17, 1881.

"When Arthur was 7 months old his father passed away. This was the greatest sorrow of my life. He was a Christian and went in peace.

"He had mortgaged the farm for $400 to build the house. There was very little income from the farm and some debts to pay off. My father took me to Brownsville, the county seat, and the judge appointed me administratrix to settle up the business. The first one that came to me was the M.E. minister. My husband had promised him $5 on his salary. He had no note or anything to show for it so he did not put in his claim, and all claims had to go into court. In those days there was nothing a girl could get to do but to work out by the week for about 2 dollars a week, or to teach school. I knew I was not qualified to teach. The school director came to me wanting me to teach the spring term of school. Well, I passed for a third grade certificate and taught that spring term.

"After my husband passed away my parents took me back home with my baby Arthur and my mother had most of the care of him (along with her baby Vincent the same age.) At that time we were living in Humboldt. When Arthur was about 3 years old I started into school at the Humboldt Academy. It seemed hard for me to start in again (and among strangers) after being out of school so long. I passed for a second grade certificate and taught at the Sharp School.

"There was some income from the farm. It was rented for cash. When the mortgage became due I paid off half of it, $200 and renewed the balance of $200, and when that became due I paid it all off.

After the death of my husband I was a widow for 10 years, then married James A. Taylor. (The father of Mary Ellen Taylor, wife of James Carvin Hacker) He was a good Christian man and had a good home for us." (Quote from Mary Ellen Hacker Taylor autobiography)

In 1897 they heard of the faith healing ministry of Dr. John Alexander Bowie in Chicago. She went to Chicago for him to pray for deliverance from her very serious facial birthmark. In her
words, she did not receive the healing, but felt that the Christia-
tian teaching received was a greater blessing to her than the
healing would have been without the teaching. The family learned
to take all their needs to the Lord. Although they were church
members in Nebraska, there was no one there who believed in hea-
ling who could be called on for prayer. From the time Arthur was
5 years old he had spells of sore throat every winter. With the
quinsy, the glands of his throat would swell up so he could hard-
ly turn his head or swallow. At about 14 Arthur had an extra
hard attack of the quinsy. An old Methodist Brother came when
asked, but only said it looked bad and looked like diphtheria.

After having received teaching on Divine Healing they found
no prayer support in their church, so the family kvelt together
in prayer and Arthur was healed. He could turn his head, the
sore throat was gone, and he was hungry and ate his supper.

Because of Dr. Dowie's teaching on "salvation, healing,
and clean holy living" the family moved to Chicago to become a
part of Dr. Dowie's church; and Arthur attended the church
school there. Because churches everywhere refused to accept
those who returned after receiving healings, and many were per-
secuted, Dr. Dowie began to plan for a new church home. He pur-
chased land for the new Zion City, half way between Chicago and
Milwaukee. On an excursion to see the new city land, 25 cent
round trip by train, my father and mother came separately, but
returned to Chicago together. This began a 5-year courtship,
and marriage after both families moved to the new Zion City.

Myrtle (Stanton) and James A. Hacker had 5 children: Ruth,
Eleanor, Martha, Elizabeth and Arthur. Father lived to see his
first 2 grandchildren. He died in Zion, Illinois on November 11,
1948. Mom lived to see her 7 grandchildren and 7 great grand-
children. At age 101 she enjoyed a family get-together picnic
at a nearby lake on her last afternoon, July 23, 1984. 9 more
have been added to our family by marriage or birth since then.
A Noted Mason Dead

The Demise of William Hacker at a ripe old age.

Shelbyville    July 29, 1891

William Hacker died today, aged ninety-two.
No man was better known in the masonic fraternity than William Hacker, who has been an active member for fifty-nine years.
In the year 1499 so far as is now known, his line of descent commenced at the birth of Wilhelm Heckardt, near the city of Dresden in Saxony.
The descendents of Hacker fled to Holland and thence, in 1725, to America. They settled in Virginia and in 1773 John Hacker, father of the subject of this sketch was born in a block house on the west fork of the Monongahela. In 1809 John and his family moved to what was then known as the Big Darby plains in Ohio, and on Dec. 5, 1810, William Hacker was born.
He lived with his parents until he was seventeen, during which time he went in winter to school & obtained a common education. In 1839 he and Miss May Ann Sargent of Pennsylvania were united in marriage. He came with his father to Shelby county in 1833 and has resided here ever since. In 1838 he embarked in the mercantile business and continued in it five years. In 1843 he assisted in the organization of a railroad company, became its secretary and superintended the construction of the road.
He was made a mason by St. John lodge No. 14, in Dayton, O. in July 9, 1832, and has been an officer in the various grades of the order ever since, having gone entirely through and completely mastered the craft. He became a member of the grand lodge of Indiana in 1835 and served as its grand master and grand secretary for two and three years respectfully. He became a member of the Grand Chapter of (Continued on page)
Indiana in 1848 and assisted in its labors every session since. He served four years as grand high priest and three years as grand secretary. He assisted in the organization of the Grand Council of Indiana in 1855 and served six years as its grand master and three years as its grand recorder. He also assisted in the organization of the grand commandery of knights templars of Indiana in 1854 and filled every station in that body from recorder to grand commander. For the past twenty-four years he has been annually placed at the head of the committee on jurisprudence in all those bodies.

He became a member of the general grand chapter and grand encampment of the United States at Hartford, Conn. in 1856 and held an office in those bodies twelve years.

He joined the methodist episcopal church in 1825 and has lived a consistent Christian to his death.

"Research in West Virginia", quoted from:

It is to be kept in mind that West Virginia was a part of Old Virginia until the latter state decided to join the Confederacy, and therefore its early history is tied up with the Old Dominion, although it conforms more to the Shenandoah Valley Region than to the Tidewater Region of the state. In fact no less an authority than John Fiske states in his history, "Virginia and Her Neighbors" that the much greater part of the inhabitants were Scotch-Irish, who it will be remembered, were at first in Pennsylvania and migrated down the Valley from where commencing about 1750 they spread into what is now West Virginia, Kentucky and Tennessee. Of course mixed in with them were the Germans who also had emigrated to the Valley and sons of the Tidewater settlers. The date of organization of the counties as shown in the table, will indicate approximately when the regions were opened up. It is stated that in 1754 when Hampshire County was formed the center of the region which contained the pioneer settlers can be included in an irregular line drawn from the Blue Ridge through Harper's Ferry, Charlestown, Martinsburg, Berkeley Springs, Romney, Moorefield, Petersburg, Upper Tract, Franklin, Marlinton and thence down the Greenbrier and through Monroe County to Peter's Mountain.

After the Treaty of Fort Stanwix settlers pushed forward over the mountains to the Greenbrier and New Rivers, to the Monongohela, down the Ohio as far as Grave's Creek.

Until the conclusion of the Revolutionary War the settlers were never free from Indian incursions and the western part of the state was not settled until about the time of the settlement of Kentucky.

SOURCES.

Sources of parent states should be scanned.
West Virginia, Inventory of Public Vital Records.
" " and Its People, Miller's, 3 volumes
" " Obituaries from Newspapers, Tetrick.
" " Revolutionary Ancestors whose Services Were Non-Military, Reddy's
" " History, Quarterly Magazine, April 1940 to date.
Chalkley's Chronicles of the Scotch-Irish, 3 volumes.
DeHaas's History of Early Settlement and Indian Wars of Western Virginia.
Hale's Trans-Allegheny Pioneers.

For Revolutionary Records consult Pennsylvania and Virginia Sources.
John Hacker’s Tombstone Returns to WV
JOHN HACKER'S TOMBSTONE to be RETURNED TO W. VA.

John Hacker died at his settlement on Hacker's Creek on 20 Apr 1824 and was buried in what is now called the Morrison Cemetery. He was survived by his widow, the former Margaret Sleeth, and eight of their eleven children. Margaret died in 1832 and was buried beside him.

John's and Margaret's graves are marked with twin tombstones that are showing the ravages of time. These tombstones, from their style and similarity to other stones in the old cemetery, appear to have been placed on the graves after Margaret's death.

According to Border Settlers of Northwestern Virginia, John's grave had been marked with an earlier tombstone which was probably placed there at time of his death and which was inscribed quite differently from the present stone. In 1891, Henry M. Hacker sent the inscription from the present stone to Lyman C. Draper, according to the Draper Manuscripts; and, in 1914, Lucullus McWhorter said that both stones were at the cemetery, with what appears to be the older stone on a grave a few feet from John's. McWhorter speculated that the several unmarked graves between John and others of his family belonged to some of John's children. Present day researchers agree with his speculation.

At any rate, sometime after 1914, the original John Hacker tombstone disappeared from Morrison Cemetery.

With the forming of the Hacker's Creek Pioneer Descendants in 1902 and efforts by its members to preserve the Morrison Cemetery, as well as the resurgence of interest in the Hacker family, researchers began to question what became of the original tombstone.

One Lewis countian, a Hacker descendant and HCPD member, claimed that the tombstone that now marks the grave had been taken to Kansas but was returned at the request of the late Mary (Warner) West. This story was partially correct.

Others thought that the tombstone might be buried under the dirt and debris of one of the many groundhog holes in the cemetery, although probing had not revealed it.

At the 1984 Hacker's Creek Pioneer Descendants Gathering, it was found and it is now enroute to West Virginia.

One of the events of the 1984 gathering was a tour of the Hacker's Creek area, with a stop at Morrison Cemetery. The tour was divided in three groups with each group having a different leader.

The group led by Joy Gregoire Gilchrist, fourth g. granddaughter of John and Margaret (Sleeth) Hacker, included John Sheldon Hacker of Tyler, Texas, great-great grandson of John Hacker.

As she had at other stops on the four hour tour, Joy was telling the group about the site. While telling about the Hacker tombstones, she mentioned the inscription from the original marker and the meaning of it. (See exhibit A).

John Sheldon Hacker said, "It's O.S. and stands for Old Style calendar."

Joy then said, "I wish I could see it for myself, but we don't know where it is. I've heard that it's somewhere in Kansas."
"It's in Tyler, Texas," responded John.

Knowing that John lived in Tyler, she asked, "Do you have it?"
"Yes, I saved it," he replied. "My uncle, Roy Hacker, had it."

After he died, I was visiting my aunt and found it laying face up in the garden path. I took it home with me to save it. I intended to bring it with me (to the Gathering), but I flew and couldn't. If you'll come after it, I'll give it to you to bring back."

Without hesitation, Joy said, "I'll come after it next spring."

Following the gathering, Joy and her husband Charles began to make plans for a spring trip to Texas with Charles' cousin, Paul Barnett, and his wife, Lynn. The two couples have vacationed together for several years and find it enjoyable and a relatively inexpensive way to travel.

Paul was appointed official photographer for the tombstone trip.

No connection has been found between Paul's Barnett family and Daniel and Sarah (Hacker) Barnett but the family are searching for one. Lynn is a descendant of John Gray, last survivor of the American Revolution. John Gray lived in the Morgantown area in the 1780's and was married to Mary Meeks, perhaps at that location.


John Sheldon Hacker and his wife, Ethel, greeted the two couples most graciously. While they visited, John pointed out that all the males in his direct lines were named John Hacker. Ethel prepared a delicious luncheon with a tuna salad cold plate. After lunch, they strolled in the Hacker backyard among Ethel's wisteria and azaleas and viewed the tombstone leaning against a tree in a garden setting. After some picture taking, the tombstone was loaded in the car and goodbyes were said amidst plans for John's trip to the 1985 gathering.

The Gilchrists and Barnetts continued on to College Station, Tex., the same day where they had supper with Clerissa Tatterson, another HCPD member. Clerissa and Joy are cousins through the Polen/Poland/Poling family and Clerissa's deceased husband, Ben, was Joy's cousin through the Straley family. This visit ended with a promise by Clerissa to submit some Cozad information for inclusion in a future Journal.

By the time the two couples returned to Ohio on Sunday, 31 March, John's tombstone had acquired many more miles of travel. It went to San Antonio where the vacationers visited the Alamo and the Riverwalk, to Laredo where they crossed over to Mexico for an afternoon's shopping, to Galveston where they strolled the sandy beaches, to Lake Charles, La., where they had delicious steaks at the Black Angus, and to New Orleans where they wandered through the French Quarter eating bignettes and cafeaulait.

The tombstone now reposè in the Gilchrist living room awaiting the next leg of its journey back to West Virginia.

Plans are being made for a ceremony at the Morrison in late spring or early summer when the original tombstone, along with those currently on the graves of John and Margaret, will be given to some W. Va. library or museum for preservation, and bronze markers will be placed upon the graves.

The decision as to the repository for the markers has not been made at this date.

John's new marker is government issue. He was entitled to the marker

(Cont. on pg. 134)
for his service under George Rogers Clark at Vincennes and Kaskaskia and under Capt. James Booth.

Margaret's new marker will be paid for by donations from her descendants. Anyone wishing to donate to it should send their check, marked for the Margaret Hacker Marker Fund, to James J. Strong, HCFD Treasurer, 221 Highland Ave., SW., Massillon, Oh 44646.
Hacker's 2nd log cabin located on Hacker's Creek Road in Lewis County. It is now gone.

Stone returned and on display in library.
1940 The Exponent Newspaper (Clarksburg)
Reprint of the John Hacker Article
By Victor McIntyre

Out of the dimness of the past, breaking bold like a silver-gold Saturn placed magnificently in a deeply-purpled sky, a buck-skinned figure stands as one of the most colorful pioneers who ever hunted, fought, and reared a family here in the central state area.

That figure was John Hacker, pioneer extraordinary, who lived on Hacker's creek in Lewis County for many years after moving there from somewhere on the Buckhannon river in the latter part of the 1700's.

Hacker was a stolid individual, with a resolute bearing. Not impetuous as were many of the early settlers in this part of the state, he worked steadily toward a goal which was to assure him an honorable place in the histories of the future. Alongside the gallant and resourceful Jesse Hughes, he trailed and killed the Shawnees infesting the wide area stretching from Hampshire County in the east to the Ohio river in the west, always the colorful protector of those men, women and children who had staked down here to dwell.

You must unveil a bit more of the yesteryear to get at the real John Hacker, whose father, William Hacker, used to watch the picturesque windmills of Holland while clomping along on wooden shoes. His mother, a real Irish girl names Ann Turner, first met his father on a ship coming to America in 1724. They were married in the year of 1725.

John was born in Winchester, VA on January 1, 1743.

Rushing westward was the flow of ambitious and eager young men who wanted to build their homes even beyond the frontier—out I the wilderness where redmen ran free. Out where instantaneous death lurked behind every tree, behind every bush. Out where the twang of the redman's bowstring was a familiar sound, the sharp crack of a rifle not a strange noise. And in this flow of humanity moved John Hacker.

He pulled up and lived for a while on the Buckhannon River, but having trouble establishing himself just as he would like, moved on to a creek in what is now Lewis County. Geographers call it Hacker's Creek now, after its first settler John Hacker.

Well, the years rolled along, and John's prowess as a real pioneer began to grow upon his neighbors. They began to depend upon John Hacker a lot. He knew Indians. He knew the wilds. He was a fine hunter—almost as good as his brother William—-and he could fish. He was a great fellow to keep the peace, too; a law-abiding citizen, so the people had him as a justice of the peace.

And in the years his excellent reputation was snowballing into prominence a certain obscure Kentuckian—George Rogers Clark—was fooling with a plan whereby he might round up a mob of volunteers. He hoofed it all the way from a little Kentucky town to Williamsburg, Va., obtained the consent and help of Governor Patrick Henry, sent out a call for volunteers who could stand the rigors of such a venture, and John Hacker joined, along with many other Harrison countians.

Throughout that long and torturous campaign westward across a territory spattered with hostile Indians, wading waist-deep through miles of icy waters in the terrible “drowned lands” of southern Illinois, John Hacker proved to be the man his neighbors knew he was.

And then—-back to his home on Hacker's creek.

Measured in terms of hardness and ability to conquer great odds, Hacker was remarkably exceptional among his neighbors. You are aware of this when you learn that they chose him as their sheriff—as sheriff of Harrison County—just before the turn of the 19th Century.
Years before this John had formed a great friendship with a lesser chief among the Shawnee tribes, and together they often discussed various topics, hunted and companioned, just as any friends do. John’s neighbors knew of his attachment for the red chief and didn’t like it.

One day a pioneer reported the theft of considerable property. At once the red chief was suspected and the anger of the whites multiplied. They were determined to kill the Indian chief on sight! Hacker, convinced of his friend’s innocence, slipped away one night not long after the reported theft and warned him. Not only did the pioneer caution the Shawnee, but both went as far west as the Ohio river where friends of the latter met them and took the Indian to the safety of their camps.

Then John Hacker scurried back to the settlement.

He did not evade the issue; he told no lie. He has informed the Indian chieftain, he explained, who was his friend, that the pioneers were planning to murder him on sight. He was convinced, he said bluntly, that his friend was innocent of the theft.

The settlers didn’t like that very well, either. They grumbled and grew sullen whenever John was around. They looked upon him as a sort of traitor, but when several weeks later the real culprit was apprehended, they apologized. John Hacker was a hero! He had saved a good Indian’s life.

This dependable pioneer had married a Margaret Sleeth and it was their daughter Margaret, who, when but eleven years old, was tomahawked and scalped by the Indians in a malicious assault that terminated in the death of Mrs. Edmund West, Jr, on December 5, 1787. Margaret’s wounds healed nicely, and she lived to marry Peter Hardman and give birth to ten children.

John Hacker’s descendants are scattered all over the United States today. Scores live here in the central state area. Ned H. Hacker, a resident of Haywood and a great-great-grandson of John Hacker, as a youngster owned a gun that once belonged to the great Harrison County pioneer.

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**Added Ancestries/Ancestry.com:**

Scotland/England to West Virginia to Ritzville to lone

William Hacker was born in 1690 at Hampton Ct, London, England and died in 1772 in Buckhannon, Upshur County, WV

John Hacker was born in 1743 near Marlborough Point, VA and died 1824 in Westor, WV. He married Margaret Sleeth (1747-1832) in 1768 in Laudav, VA.

Johnathan David Hacker was born in 1779 at Harrison, WV and died in 1867 in Lewis, WV. He married Hannah Bennett (1788-1867) in 1806.

John Turner Hacker was born in 1812 at Harrison, WV and died in 1896 at Green, KS. He married Sarah Batten Hawkins (1810-1868) in West Virginia in 1842. His second marriage to Mariah Daniels (1838-1913) in 1873 produced son [Jonathan] Lewis Cass Hacker.

[Jonathan] Lewis Cass Hacker was born in 1876 in Lewis, WV and died in 1942 at Orient, WA. He married Hattie Lucelia Pettijohn (1880-1916) in 1900. *(Hattie was the granddaughter of missionaries Jonas and Fanny Huggins Pettijohn of LaQui Pare and Traverse de Sioux of what would become Minnesota.)*

Wenona Pearl Hacker was born in 1902 at Green, KS and died in 1994 in Spokane, WA. She married Ernest Noble Mathews in Lone, WA in 1918. Ernest was born in 1898 in Butler, IN; died 1983 in Spokane, WA. Their children include:

- Charles Ernest Mathews (1920-1986)
- Lewis Mathews (1922-1951)
- Florence Mathews (1918-2004)

Charles married Minnie Margaret Mathews (born in Flora, OR) in Spokane, WA in 1946. Their children include:

- William Earnest Mathews (born 1946)
- Margaret Eileen Mathews (born 1949)
- Keith Lewis Mathews (born 1951)

Keith married Linda Kay Doty in Yakima, WA in 1973. Their children include:

- Ryan Keith Mathews (born 1978)
- Amy Eileen Mathews (born 1979)

William married Joan M. Long in Spokane, WA in 1968. Their children are:

- Keirsten Marie Mathews (born 1970)
- Kimberley Mathews (born 1972)
The connection between
Hacker’s Creek in Lewis County and Barbour County
Hacker’s Creek

Article and research by
Elaine Allman Coulter, HCPD Board Member and
Barbour Co. resident
HACKER’S CREEK IN BARBOUR COUNTY AND HOW IT CONNECTS WITH LEWIS COUNTY HACKERS’ CREEK

Compiled by Elaine Allman Coulter  
September 8, 2021

Bertha L Allman (my mother) asked me to help Hackers Creek Pioneer Descendants Genealogy Library in their efforts to obtain grant monies, to provide evidence of the historical connection between Barbour County Hackers Creek and Lewis County Hackers Creek. I will admit that trying to find the perfect piece of historic evidence linking John Hacker, Pioneer, to Barbour County may not exist or was beyond my abilities. However, I can site references and publications that suggest that it is true.

1. The historic maps of the Counties of Virginia and West Virginia show how the county boundaries changed over time.

In 1734 Orange County Virginia, included all of West Virginia and Kentucky. Colonial exploration into far western Virginia was triggered by land speculators. They obtained large land grants from the king, then sought to survey and sell parcels to the growing population in the colonies. The gentry of Virginia and Pennsylvania coerced their colonial governments and Native Americans into making land speculation "legal," then
sponsored expeditions to explore, hype, and sell western lands. Settlers migrated first from Pennsylvania into the Shenandoah River Valley, then others kept walking south to occupy the Holston River valley and other tributaries of the Tennessee River. In 1734, the General Assembly of Virginia created Orange County, the first local government with boundaries that extended west of the Blue Ridge. That county was subdivided in 1738, and its land west of the Blue Ridge was incorporated into Augusta and Frederick counties. Enough settlers arrived finally to start actual county court operations in Frederick County in 1743, and in Augusta County in 1745. The undefined western border of Augusta County was not a problem. **There were few long hunters and fur traders west of the Allegheny Front, and they required minimal support for documenting land claims or resolving disputes in court.**

1776, Monongalia County was created by Virginia from Hampshire and West Augusta District. 1784, Harrison was created from Monongalia.
1787, Randolph created from Harrison. 1816 Lewis created from Harrison. 1843 Barbour created from Harrison, Lewis, and Randolph, 1844 Taylor created from Barbour, Harrison, and Marion, 1851 Upshur created from Barbour, Lewis, and Randolph

Therefore, Barbour County was indeed part of Harrison, Lewis, and Randolph before 1843.

Maps from WVGenweb.org

2. Information from History Books

John and Samuel Pringle lived on the South Branch of the Potomac River in what is now the eastern Panhandle of West Virginia when they enlisted in the army and served in the British Garrison at Ft. Pitt during the French and Indian War. In 1761, they deserted along with William Childers and Joe Linsey and wandered in the wilderness around the Monongahela and Youghiogheny Rivers. Childers and Linsey were captured at Looney’s Creek. John and Samuel escaped and eventually followed the Tygart Valley and reached the Buckhannon River and Turkey Run. They took up residence in a sycamore tree and lived there until 1767 when John went back to the South Branch and learned that the war was over. He returned to the sycamore tree to give Samuel the news. They then returned to the Wappomaka (South Branch) and told their story. Among those hearing the story were William and John Hacker, Alexander Sleeth whose sister Margaret was John Hacker’s wife (1765) John Jackson and his sons, George and Edward and Jesse Hughes, John and William Radcliff and John Brown. Led by Samuel Pringle, fall of 1768, some of the above-mentioned men made the journey and chose to settle there. John Hacker, the Sleeths and Jacksons were home seekers. The others were hunters and explorers. During their explorations they discovered the West Fork River and Hacker’s Creek. With the coming of these early pioneers, the settlement of the valleys of the West Fork River and its tributaries was begun. Land claims would not be recognized by the Virginia government until 1781, The Hackers Creek area remained a part of Harrison until 1818 when the new county of Lewis was formed.

Duplication of Place Names -from Violet Gadd Coonts “The Western Waters; Early Settlers of Eastern Barbour County, West Virginia – Current maps of present Barbour County depict two
Hacker's Creeks on the west side of the Tygart Valley River— a Hacker's Creek and a Little Hacker's Creek both tributaries of the Tygart Valley River. Another Hacker's Creek, a tributary of the West Fork River, runs through present Lewis and Upshur Counties. The Hacker's Creek that flows into the West Fork River became widely known due to the writings of William Hacker, a son of John Hacker, an early settler on the creek. Some events William Hacker described may have happened on Hacker's Creek, Barbour County, on which John Hacker, Jr., William's brother owned land.

3. Interesting things from Hardesty, Maxwell, McWhorter, and others about Pleasant Creek district of Barbour County which contains Hackers Creek

Pleasant district lies in the northern part of the county and is bounded north by Taylor County, east by Cove and Philippi districts, and west by Elk district and Harrison County. The surface is diversified; the soil is fertile and much of it is under a high state of cultivation. But it is not in arable lands or grazing farms that the chief source of wealth is found, but rather in the immense deposits of iron and coal which abound in every portion of the district, and which ages of the most active industry cannot exhaust. Much of this vast source of wealth still lies in an undeveloped state, but the day is not far distant when this must become a great mining center. The high percentage of its ores and the especial adaptability of its coals to smelting purposes, and its communication with the outside world by the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, must render it a region which ere long will attract the attention of capitalists, when its development will be but a question of time.

Geography

There are several small streams; Pleasant creek rises on the farm of Hamilton G. Bartlett, flows in an easterly direction, and empties into the Valley River; its length is seven miles, the entire course being through cultivated farms. Bartletts run has its source on the farm of J. Peppers; it has an easterly course and falls into Simpson's creek at Fairview; length one and one-half miles. Bakers run also flows into Simpson's creek at Point Pleasant church. Hackers run rises on the farm of J. Corders near King Knob, flows east and discharges its waters into the Valley River. Its length is four and one-half miles. Mitchells run, three and one-half miles in length, empties into the Valley River five miles below Philippi. They derive their name from the earliest settlers upon its banks.

Hacker Creek, Hacker Valley, Hacker Camp, Hacker Lick and Hacker Branch are examples of sites named by John Hacker after events that occurred there. For example, On Buffalo Lick at the forks of Elk River, which is now Webster Sulphur Springs, Hacker shot and crippled a buffalo cow. Several springs issued from the bluffs, differing in taste, nonpalatable, but drew buffalo, elk, and deer in large numbers. Hacker Valley, found in Webster County and Holly River State Park. Hackers Camp gave shelter from rainstorms in a dry and comfortable cave in a cliff.
"Hacker made a ‘tomahawk-entry’ at the lick where the buffalo cow was killed. Hacker was reported to make a ‘tomahawk-entry’ at each of the camps."

Post Office
The first post office of Pleasant Creek, established in 1840, at Harvey Woodford’s store, on the pike leading from Philippi to Pruntytown in Taylor County. Josiah M. Davidson was the first postmaster. It remained here until 1864, when it was removed to the residence of Abraham McDaniel, who is the present postmaster. Hackersville post office situated on the Fairmont and Beverly turnpike, nine miles south of Webster station, on the Baltimore & Ohio railroad, and three miles west of Philippi, was established on the fifth day of May 1853. John W. Corder was the first and is the present postmaster. (Remember J Corder mentioned earlier under Geography, Hackers Run rises on his property)

4. People of interest
*Found one William Hacker aged twenty-five, wife Polly age 24 and child Arnetha age 2 listed in 1860 US Federal Census Barbour County, Virginia. He was a farmer. The value of real estate was 1400. The value of Personal estate was 246. There are no other records of William and Polly Hacker. A search of William Hacker of Barbour County using Ancestry.com did not yield further results. I suspect he may have enlisted to serve in the Civil War. (I also suspect that he is a relative of the Lewis Hacker families)

*Found one George Hacker aged thirty-six born in Germany, living in Webster, WV in 1870. George was a blacksmith. He was married to Mary, age 31, with sons John and James ages 2yr and 9 months. George is the son of Thomas Sleeth Hacker and Charlotte Hess. (George is the great grandson of John Hacker)

*Record of Thomas Alonzo Law born on Hacker’s Creek, Lewis County in 1858 married to Rozaltha Cleavenger, resided on Simpson’s Creek. He imported Aberdeen-Angus cattle into northern Barbour County where he moved in 1893. (Thomas Law is my great grand Uncle.)

*According to Hu Maxwell’s history of Barbour County, the name Talbott was well known and respected as landowners, businessmen, and early settlers of Barbour County. It appears that Mr. Maxwell was paying tribute to prominent names in the Family History section of his book. It is also evident that the Lewis County Hackers Creek prominent families were worthy of note. In the following excerpt, The Talbott family marries a daughter Bersheba (This spelling is on her tombstone in Point Pleasant Baptist Church Cemetery) to the descendant of David Smith and Sarah Hacker.

*Bessheba M. Smith, born 1847 on Hacker’s Creek, daughter of Silas and Sarah (McKinney) Talbott, (Mr. Talbott died Feb 7, 1877, and buried in the Mount Olive Old School Baptist Church Cemetery) was married August 27, 1872, to Levi J.B. Smith, son of John and Mary (Swisher) Smith. (This Smith and Swisher family descend from early settlers of Lewis County Hacker’s Creek) Their son, Esker T. was born Aug 9, 1873. Eighteen months later her husband died, and she moved with her son to Barbour County, and now resides on Baker’s Run. She has been a member of the Baptist Church since 1863. Levi Smith served six months in the Union Army, being discharged at Wheeling in 1864. His father was John Smith who was born in 1796; his grandfather was also John Smith and was of Irish parentage. Mrs. Smith has been an invalid
since 1888. She owns forty-five acres of highly improved land underlaid with coal. David Smith was born October 29, 1773, died November 7, 1864, was of English descent, born in New Jersey. He was Justice of the Peace, captain of Malitia (Militia) and Sheriff of Lewis County. He married Sarah Hacker, who was born June 24, 1775, and died 1855. She was of Irish descent. Their son, John Smith, was born October 24, 1796, and died October 12, 1880. He was a local preacher over fifty years. On January 28, 1819, he married Mary Swisher who was born November 4, 1801, and died May 29, 1878. Her father was Peter Swisher, native of Maryland, born March 11, 1777, died September 27, 1830, (killed by falling tree). On January 27, 1801, he married Susanna Rinehart, who was a native of Maryland, was born December 1, 1779, and died at the age of seventy-five.9 *(John Hacker is my fifth great grandfather and I am related to all the people named above except the Talbott’s)*

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