

Solvay Folks

Westerley

History of Progress and Development of
Westerly

(By *W. M. Alexander*)

In the spring of 1913 the Solvay Collieries Company purchased the Westerly mining operation from the Milburn Coal and Coke Company, since which time it has been in steady operation and it is one of the best mining camps in the State.

Development the greatest key to success in the mining business, has not in the least been sighted by the Solvay Collieries Company at Westerly and we are glad to say that under the progressive ideas and efforts of those higher up in the company and with proper supervision Westerly has become one of the most ideal and homelike mining towns in this section. The people of Westerly are very proud of this. Since the present company purchased Westerly they have made special efforts to standardize living conditions and a result we have built fifty new houses for Westerly tenants together with two churches, one for the white people and one for the colored people. Furthermore, we have under construction at this time, two eight room officials' houses which will each cost about seven thousand dollars. They are being built for the store manager and mine foreman respectively. We also have under construction an Amusement Hall which is for the benefit of employees of Westerly and community. It will afford a picture show, pool room, reading room, soda fountain, barber shop, indoor games and possible a fraternal lodge hall. It is indeed an appreciated improvement. It will be a place of recreation and will be instrumental in bringing the people in closer touch with each other socially, which consequently will have its bearing toward adding to the harmony and peacefulness of the community, thus stimulating the welfare of all which in turn will tend to make Westerly a still more ideal mining camp to live in. Such features in other mining camps have proven a great success and we are looking forward with much interest to the time when our hall is formally opened for use. The carpenters are working on it

every day and it will soon be finished.

We also have under construction, and at this time is nearing completion a bath house for Westerly employees and it affords us pleasure to say that it is going to be among the best in this section of the State. It is located at the foot of the incline where the men board the car to go the mines, which will make it convenient for them upon coming from their daily employment. Up-to-dated equipment is being installed with all the necessary conveniences for a real comfortable honest-to-goodness bath. Such a convenience will certainly be appreciated. The men will leave their homes in the morning dressed in their regular street clothes and after changing to their mine clothes at the bath house, will go to the mine. In the afternoon they will take a good refreshing bath, change to their street clothes and leaving their mine clothes in the lockers in the bath house. Thus when they return home to the supper the good housewife has prepared, they will be ready to enjoy it and the home will not be encumbered with the soiled mine clothes and bathing facilities as at present.

WATER

Westerly water supply is unusually good, being pumped from a very deep well. Much comment is often heard on the good quality of its water. It has the name of being a pure and delightful drink to all whose thirst is quenched by it. We have at this time a filtration plant under construction which will, when put into operation, serve to free it of excess iron and sulphur or any foreign mineral element it might contain. Our water system is conveniently arranged to tenants of Westerly, being piped to locations that are handy to dwellings.

SCHOOLS

At the present time Westerly does not have school buildings other than dwelling houses comfortably arranged for such, but much good has been accomplished in the schools of Westerly, and that we are promised school buildings between now and the next school term in another feature of our little town to be appreciated. It is the earnest desire of the Solvay Collieries Company to have and help maintain good schools for their employee's children, for they all realize that good schools are necessary to the best citizenship.

ROADS

Prospects for good roads for Westerly, both up and down the Creek are of the best. At the present time we have with us a contractor who is constructing concrete bridges for our good roads and one of the two necessary bridges in Westerly has been completed, while the other is well under way of construction. We are all interested in the good roads and those who possess cars are greatly enthused over the promising outlook for better roads in this section,

and are trusting that the summer months will have passed that they are able to enjoy a trip to any point on Paint Creek to which they may care to go.

MINES

Supervision and general development of Westerly mines have been unusually good. Working conditions are of the best, while extensive preparations are made to better them and to increase the output of coal. Our mines afford exceptionally good inducements to the coal loader. Our No. 1 mine having a seam of absolutely clean coal varying in thickness from five to seven feet, while our No. 2 mine has a seam that varies in thickness from six to eight feet. Tops in both mines are above the average and it is a rare thing for the careful miner to be injured in our mines. For several weeks we had work at No. 2 mine temporarily suspended in order to make additional improvements that will, it is expected, be completed in the near future. These improvements will increase our production materially. For some time, we, like the other operating companies have undergone an unusual severity due to the very inadequate car supply, however, our organization has been well maintained, due to the exceptional good living conditions and the fair inducements we have to offer employees. During the past week our car supply has been better than usual and it is hoped that before long it will again be normal. If this is realized the little town of Westerly located in a secluded cove between two great high and beautiful mountains, with the rippling waters of Paint Creek forever seeking its way through the vale between them, as heretofore, will continue to reign in peace, happiness and prosperity. Our motto is: A word of good cheer, blended with a smile for every one, with that uplifting spirit of always being ready to lend a helping hand. **JOIN US.**

CHURCH WORK

(By Mrs. M. B. Dillon)

A revival has been in progress at Westerly church for several weeks which has been very successful, though not so well attended. *Reverend Christie* of Milburn, *Rev Crumb* of Mount Hope, *Rev. Legg* of Fayetteville, *Rev. Garrison* of Huntington and *Rev. Rice* of Standard, W. Va., have been holding these meetings and have worked hard to make them of benefit to the camp. Westerly Sunday school has been in progressing slowly of late, but it is hoped that soon a good, live school will be in progress. Westerly needs a good Sunday school and if the people will come out and work, there is no reason why our hopes will not be realized.

Pioneer Residents

(By *W. M. Alexander*)

Since the spring of 1910 our noteworthy superintendent **Mr. C. H. Sigmon** has been with Solvay Collieries Company, first as outside foreman at Kingston for seven successful years, since which time he has been plant superintendent at Westerly Colliery. His experience in construction and mine work together with his fairness to all and his congenial personality have won for him the esteem of the company and hosts of friends. He has recently purchased a farm in Mason County and it is rumored that he may take up farm life after a time. If at some future time he should do so this we can but wish him every success and happiness.

Mr. W. B. Judson our very efficient mine foreman has been with us since the year 1913 and during his abode in Westerly has served in various capacities, both inside and outside of the mines with much success.

Mr. S. H. Pack who has been holding down who has been holding down weigh master's job with great success at Westerly for a long time is one of our oldest residence's, having been here since the purchase of the Westerly operation by the present Company. Mr. Pack has enjoyed good health, happiness and prosperity since coming to Westerly and we hope that he long continue to make Westerly his home.

Our town constable **Mr. C. E. Patton** who is noted and to whom credit is attributed for commendable law and order that ever reigns in Westerly has been with us for a number of years.

The store manager **Mr. L. B. Fulp** is one of our oldest employees having reared a family during his career with the Solvay Collieries Company to say nothing of the success he has realized in serving as store manager and various other positions he has held during his time with us. May he be with us long with continued success? Amen

Mr. Edward Bradshaw our trustworthy drum runner has been with us for several years. His work having considerable responsibility attached to it, new must commend him for the small number of accidents that have occurred since he has been holding down this important job. It is incumbent upon officials of the company to recognize and make mention of men who can be trusted with responsible work and it affords them pleasure to say that there are many such men in the employ of the Solvay Collieries Company. We hope that Mr. Bradshaw's future will be as successful as in the past. He being also a good citizen and kind neighbor, we hope he remains with us long.

Mr. Clyde Boccock is another old residence of Westerly. He is the man that operates the hoist which also has considerable responsibility to it. His fulfillment of this work and other work that he does has been exceedingly good and is due commendation. We trust that he sees further success in continuing to make Westerly his home.

The boarding boss, **Mr. Merrit Mosley**, is also a carpenter and general utility man of no mean ability. He is also a pioneer of Westerly and during his long stay here has been a good citizen and has also been successful. May he continue as heretofore?

Mr. **T. L. Ingram**, another pioneer of Westerly as seemed a very contented to make Westerly his home. He is the father of several children, most of them having also made Westerly their home. He, as well as they, have been good citizens and neighbors, and also successful. We want them to continue to make Westerly their home and wish them still greater success and happiness.

Messrs, Jim Painter, Lucian Painter and Edward Painter, brothers and pioneers of Westerly have enjoyed making Westerly their homes. They are good workers, loyal citizen and we hardly believe they would be contented in any other place but Westerly.

Other pioneers of Westerly are Homer Meadows, outside foreman; William Bragg, electrician; P. T. Belcher, night foreman; Grover Judson, assistant mine foreman; F. P. Deming, timber man; J. L. Sprouse, Cecil Sprouse, S. W. McClary, J. M. Sewell, Peter Berry, Rios Burtick, P. L. Mosley, Robert Gregory, Charlie Knight, Edward Knight, and G. N. Bryant, all of whom have met with success in Westerly, have been upright citizens, have been neighborly working for each others good as well as their own and in behalf of Solvay Collieries Company, have performed their duties wells.

Colored Pioneers

Westerly's colored population is not so great as that of the white but is well represented in the pioneer list. Some of the oldest on the job are as follows: **Julius White, Andrew Allen, Andrew Jackson, R. L. Shelton, E. L. Parker, James Varner, James McGeorge, Tom Turner, Tom Adams, Henry Hammond and Wm. Gouvan**. As citizens they have been of the best and have taken pride in keeping their side of town in a clean and orderly condition. We want them to continue to prosper and make Westerly their home.

Work of Rev. E. W. Christie

In October of 1919 the Rev. **F. W. Christie** commenced his work in Westerly, since then he has labored with considerable success in this field. The character of his work may be described as both religious and social. He is endeavoring to teach the boys and girls of the Community how to grow up into useful Christian men and women. This he is doing through a Boys and Girls Club. His religious work consists of a week day Bible class, superintendence of the Sunday school and preaching. The results thus far have been satisfactory.

Recently with the help of *Rev. Tegg, Rev. Krum* and *Rev. Rice* followed by a ten days meeting by Reverend *C. R. Garrison*, of Second Presbyterian Church, Hunting, *Rev. Christie* conducted a three weeks revival with gratifying results. There were several conversions, but probably the greatest blessing was the unifying of the Christian workers for the great battle of righteousness.

Notes of the Colored People *(By N. F. Parker)*

The colored people of Westerly are going to have a big time on the 4th, 5th and 6th of July. We are going to hold a meeting for the dedication of the church and also have a pastor appointed. The church was organized January 5th 1915. Since that time we have had two pastors. *Rev. J. R. Brown* has been with us four years and has been very successful. We feel that he is one of the best preachers in West Virginia, and is dearly loved here. This church has also licensed one preacher, *Rev. John Anderson*. We have another young man just starting to preach, Brother *W. F. Parker*. He preached his trial sermon Wednesday evening, June 9th.

We had a ten day meeting in May, added six to the church, one by baptism, Brother *John Hale*. We had a great and grand time. The church is being dedicated by Silver Star Lodge No. 17 *A. F. & A. M.* of Kingston.

A sermon will be preached by *Rev. W. C. Adams* at 3 o'clock, one Monday night by *H. C. Gregory*, of Kingston, and on Tuesday night by *J. T. Thompson* of Pax, W. Va., Kingston, Milburn, Burnwell and Westerly choirs will sing.

To pass the time away on the days we do not work, Brother *Allen* and Brother *Parker* are swapping roosters. Brother *Hosea Thornton* said all the roosters on Baptist Street made Brother Allen's say he was a hen, which is the reason he swapped him off. Brother *Vanner's* rooster, it bring a bantam, is just waiting for the one Brother *Allen* is getting.

Mr. and Mrs. *W. M. Gouvan* were in Charleston the other day buying a great big three quart ice cream freezer. *Mr. and Mrs. N. F. parker* were in Montgomery to see that awful man, the dentist. *Mr. R. L. Shelton and E. L. Parker* spent a day in Charleston recently.

Westerly Success Lodge No. 10 will pay off the death claim of Brother *Walter Goard*, Sunday, June 20th, 1920 at Kingston W. Va. Please attend this meeting.

Westerly Scribes
(By C. H. Sigmon)

W. M. Alexander came from North Carolina to Uncle Sol in 1914 at the Big Sand operation in the capacity of clerk in the store thence to Marytown as a pay roll clerk, thence to Kingston in 1915 as shipping clerk then to Westerly as chief clerk. After a year and a half at Westerly he answered the call to the colors, remaining in the service fifteen and one-half months, after which he returned to North Carolina. In April of this year he returned to Kingston and is again at Westerly acting as Chief Clerk in Mr. Medaugh's absence.

Mrs. D. B. Dillon one of our leading boosters of good times has lived at Westerly since September, 1919. She and Mr. Dillon are leading exponents of the Good Fellowship Club.

Rev. F. W. Christie is an ordained minister of the Presbyterian Church, having studied at the Moody Bible Institute Chicago, and has done several years of colportage work in the West Virginia hills. He preaches at Westerly, Milburn and occasionally at Kingston.

Social and Personal

On Saturday night May 1st, Mrs. C. H. Sigmon gave a farewell party in honor of Westerly school teachers, Mrs. Ada Bowles and Miss Vera Chapman, who left last month for their homes. Several tables of cards made an interesting evening. During the games Mrs. Sigmon served delicious fudge, and later sandwiches and coca, followed by ice cream and cake. Those enjoying Mrs. Sigmon's well-known and delightful hospitality were; Mrs. Ada Bowles, Misses Vera Chapman, Thelma Bowles Hinkle and Lydia Reed, Mr. and Mrs. Bridges, Mr. and Mrs. L. B. Fulp and Mr. and Mrs. Dillon was the favored ones on this occasion. Cards and fudge were enjoyed by those present.

On Thursday night June 10th, Mr. and Mrs. Patton, Mr. and Mrs. Fulp and Mr. and Mrs. Akers gave a surprise party to Mr. and Mrs. Dillon. After several hours of dancing, a delicious sandwich course was served and later ice cream and cake. Mr. W. M. Alexander of Kingston, who is acting chief clerk at Westerly during Medaugh's vacation, was welcome addition to the party.

Mr. and Mrs. C. H. Sigmon greatly appreciated the gracious hospitality of Mr. and Mrs. A. B. Rawn, extended to their little daughter Elsa, during her visit of several weeks at their home in Huntington.

On June 2nd, Mrs. T. L. Ingram had the misfortune to break her arm just below the left shoulder. We are indeed sorry to learn of this and her many friends wish her a speedy recovery.

Mr. C. H. Sigmon has just returned from a short visit to his farm near Point Pleasant. We have recently received an announcement from Mr. E. H. Medaugh and Miss Katherine White of Nashville, Tenn., were married on June 15th. We extend to our chief clerk and the bride all good wishes for a long and happy life over the sea of matrimony. May all their

troubles be little ones.

A supper given by the I. O. O. F., for the benefit of widows and orphans was held Saturday night June 5th, on the lawn of the Baker's home in Kingston. Chicken sandwiches, pie and ice cream and cake composed the menu. Those attending from Westerly were Mr. and Mrs. William Bragg, Little May Hunley, and Mr. and Mrs. P. T. Belcher and others.

Kingston Colored Church Organization

The structure of the church began in the fall of 1915. In January, 1916, the people began their services in the church with a membership of nine. The membership has grown to seventy. There have been nine converts and four baptisms during the year. The Officers are as follows; Rev. H. C. Gregory, pastor; Samuel Marshal, secretary; William Duckworth, financial secretary; A. Washington, janitor; and W. E. Jackson treasure.

Report for the year. At the beginning of the year the Membership was sixty-two. Those received by baptism, six, received by letter, two; received by experience, three. Total membership increase, fifteen; lost by death, one; lost by letter, six; total decrease, seven. Net gain for the year, eight. Present membership, seventy. Value of church edifice \$1,000.00. Value of chapel \$2,500.00; value of organ \$150.00; value of other furniture \$300.00. Total value \$3500.00.

The church has a choir with a membership of twelve, directed by H. Laurence Prillerman and Ednora Prillerman, organist