

# Rumors of Pretty Boy Floyd in Wildcat valley recalled

By Charlotte Beard

**WILDCAT CREEK--**Thanks for the nice rain we received Thursday evening. We got two inches. We surely needed it. Now I feel in hopes we will soon have some sweet corn. We planted some early sweet corn and some mid-summer sweet corn, Stowell's Ever Green. It's just now starting to make ears of corn, and in spite of the dry weather, we had enough early corn.

I hope you all sowed some turnips the 25th. I did. Now I am going to plant some bunch beans and plant some more corn. I have some seed corn that's supposed to make in 63 days, Early Golden Giant Hybrid.

Some times you can have a pretty garden in the fall. I just like to try, and see it grow.

Now for my story. I'd much

rather have wildcats and bears than to think a fellow by the name of Pretty Boy Floyd once hid in this valley. Lots of people believed he was kept here by some people that knew him well for some time.

If you remember, they couldn't find out where he was and at that time the people he knew didn't have to work any more. It seemed they had plenty of money.

At that time there was just one room and an attic. I have been in the building and it was a perfect place to hide in. The building burned down after we moved here 37 years ago. There was no road, except if you had an old-fashioned Ford car with high wheels, you might drive it over rocks, brush and through Wildcat Creek with some deep places. You would get close enough you could walk up to the log cabin. No one visited there very often, so you see it could be

possible.

Anyway, many believed it to be. They even took pictures from airplanes of this valley.

So you see the Wildcats had pretty good company, I would say. At that time we lived the second house down from this valley. So we could hear lots of rumors.

I think we should be thankful, looking at Logan Stones big cabbage he raised even if it has been dry. I measured a banana muskmelon in my garden that was just a little over two feet and I also weighed a tomato that weighed 2 pounds. I don't have but four vines of that sort and I have kept them watered.

Maybe things could be worse with us. My grandfather always told me to look on the bright side until it got dark, before giving up. And Grandad lived to be almost 100 years old.

# Little bad weather will be seen after cooing of doves is heard

By Charlotte Beard

**WILDCAT CREEK** -- Hi to everyone, and thanks for the pretty birthday cards. It's nice to be remembered.

It has been a cold spring day, cloudy and windy. I think it will frost if the clouds clear away, but I don't have anything in my garden that the frost can get. I planted some beans but they haven't come up yet.

My grandmother always told me it was time to plant beans when you hear the whippoorwills, so I hear them every night. And you won't see much bad weather after you hear the doves cooing.

My onions will be big enough to eat next week. My lettuce has three leaves on. It won't be long until I can pick lettuce.

I can't keep from thinking people have missed a lot of enjoyment when they quit raising

a garden. I know it takes work, but it's well worth it. We used to pick blackberries. At one time they were called "poor man's fruit," but I think the rich man might like a good blackberry cobbler with some sugar and cream on it.

We picked huckleberries and wild gooseberries. Both make good pies. Wild grapes make real good jelly. We like to pick greens, too, and wild onions. All this the city people miss. So many buy everything in cans.

You can make mulberry pie by mixing gooseberries with the mulberries. The mulberries will taste flat if you don't mix the berries with something sour. Lemon juice will do.

We older folks never had a freezer or refrigerator. We butchered our hogs and cured the meat with hickory smoke, hung it in the smokehouse, and cut a piece of meat for breakfast, and made some

gravy. We could have jelly or sorghum with hot biscuits and butter. Sure beats corn flakes...

When we wanted a big fat hen to make dumplings with, we just went out and got the best looking one. I sure didn't want one with a pale comb. People don't milk a cow. They have to buy their milk. They won't keep some nice hens to lay what eggs they need.

I know in the city they can't do all that, but I see it right around me here in the country. Some with 50 head of cows, and they buy this high priced milk, lots of room for laying hens and not one on the place. Maybe they don't like chickens and good milk cows like I do. Maybe that's it.

Something to think on: The tragedy of today is not so much the noisiness of the bad people, but the silence of the good people.

# Wildcat writer and her two beagles have middle of night polecat fight

By Charlotte Beard

WILDCAT CREEK--Hi to everyone. Hope everyone has their gardens made by now. I worked my onions, lettuce and peas over, and if the weather stays pretty, my onions will be ready to eat in another week.

I planted some beans, enough that if it frosts, I can cover them up. I have sweet corn planted and potatoes.

I picked my first mess of greens this morning. My grandmother would like them. She would cook some hogs jowl with the greens, and a pan of corn bread.

I went to church this morning, and when I got back, my daughter-in-law, Bryon's wife, Anna Bell, had cooked dinner for me. I even had cake and ice cream as Sunday the 9th, was my birthday.

I will have to tell what an experience I had Friday night. My dogs woke me up barking like they

had a bear treed. I got up and tried to see through the window with my flashlight. I couldn't see very good, so I turned on my floodlight. They were barkin at something in a small building. After turning on the floodlight, I didn't feel so afraid. I could see everywhere. I got my slippers on, and a coat over my night gown.

With my flashlight, I looked in the building, and there was a polecat in my duck's nest. It had two duck eggs and one chicken hen egg. The polecat had broken the chicken egg, but duck egg shells are hard to break. He was eating the hen egg. I saw he had his tail up, but that end was pointed toward the wall. I hit him once, and his perfume went toward the wall. He ran out and I thought I would set a trap for him, but my dogs, a small beagle hound and a middle-sized beagle, took his track and caught him and I got to see the little beagles kill him. He bit them a time or too, but they stayed with it and won the battle.

I have a large coon dog, but he just helped to track the polecat. He had been in a polecat fight before, and didn't want any part of what the old polecat had to hand out. The little beagles were sick, but they stayed with it.

Really the old polecat was almost as big as the smallest little dog.

I thought of a song I have heard Porter Wagoner sing about the polecat fight, except I was after the polecat instead of it getting after me. I wonder if any other lady my age, 76 years, have ever got in to a polecat fight in the middle of the night.

# Wildcat writer gives directions for making head cheese or souse

by Charlotte Beard

WILDCAT CREEK--Hi, to everyone. Hope everyone is OK and enjoying life. I think we might get some snow. This Sunday has been a dark gloomy day. I didn't get to go to Sunday School today.

I haven't found my dog or heard of him. Just one thing I ask: If anyone has him, will you please be good to him. I know now how my grandfather felt when one of his hounds disappeared. Once I remember when one of his hounds got drowned by a coon. The coon got into the creek and the hound was fighting with it. It got the dog by the neck and pulled him under the water until he drowned.

I remember what grandpa said to my grandmother. He told her he would have rather lost a cow for that was one of his fox hounds.

As it gets closer to Christmas, I think of how the older ones would talk to one another over the phones, and tell what they would

have for Christmas dinner. Some would have turkey and dressing while others would have a big fat goose or maybe a big fat hen with noodles or dressing.

We didn't have the knickknacks they have now. We had Irish potatoes buried and sweet potatoes wrapped in paper. We had cabbage buried. All we had to do was pull the cabbage up, and bury the head under some straw and dirt. Yes, the cabbage would freeze, but when you cooked them they were good. We also raised parsnips. You let them stay in the ground. The more they freeze the better they are. So you see we could fix a pretty good Christmas dinner.

We made homemade light bread, so with some good butter and sorghum we did all right. With a big gooseberry pie or apple pie and some cake. And the neighbors would take time about having two or three families all together at their home. The children played and popped corn. The older ones

talked and joked. All seemed to enjoy life. Not one word was said about "Did you lock your door?" or "Did you leave your smokehouse door open?" No one was afraid of his neighbor. It's quite different now.

I'd say to them who are butchering hogs, don't throw the head or feet away. Put the head and feet in a pot or pressure cooker, only don't turn the pressure on, just turn the lid. Cook the head and feet until well done. After the meat cools so you can handle it, take the meat off the bones and run it through your food chopper or sausage grinder. Then add salt, pepper and sage to your taste. Put the ground meat into a container, press it down.

It's called head cheese, or my grandmother called it souse. You can slice it off and eat it that way with some mustard or wallow it in flour and fry it. You might like it.

Watch for my dog. I'll pay for all your trouble.

# Writer says garden season not far away

112184

By Charlotte Beard

**WILDCAT CREEK** -- Good morning to everyone. Hope you all the very best wishes. I am able to write to you. I am thankful I feel as well as I do. It's a little cold this Sunday morning, but our snow is about all gone.

Since Christmas and New Years is all over I begin to think of spring an a garden. I guess I will have to make a small one like I use to when my grandmother would give me a few seeds and a little corner of her garden: some lettuce, radishes and a few onion sets. Maybe I would bury a small potato and a tomato plant or two.

I can remember how grandpa and my grandmother would get their milking done. She would do the milking and grandpa would keep the calf back from nursing with a keen hickory until my grandmother got what milk she needed. One morning they were milking and grandpa just kinda forgot and the calf was coming to the cow and it run between grandpa's legs. He couldn't get off. It was going too fast. He could just touch the ground with his toes, so he rode it until it got to its mother and stopped. They all laughed at him. Grandpa

said his favorite word which was "dadburn" the thing."

They were always getting in to trouble. Once Grandma was eating something and she thought she felt a hair in what she was eating. She threw the bite out with her dentures and she hit a tree with them and broke them into. Then she had to get them fixed by a dentist.

Maybe we won't have such cold weather as we had two weeks ago. You know it's not to long until we can put a little garden in.

I have set onion sets out in February and did a good job of growing. You need to put them in not later than March anyway. And we plant potatoes in March. So you see it won't be long.

I wish I could plant a garden but time will tell whether I can or not. I may try but that might be all I can do — just try.

I was visiting a lady that lived at Richland. We were going over her peoples graves telling who they were. I saw a pretty tombstone with a nice poem on it. It went like this. Remember friends as you pass by, as you are now so once was I, as I am now, so you will be. Prepare for death and follow me.

How true are those words. I can remember paying my doctor bills with pretty white leghorn hens and eggs. Doctor Dickson and Doctor Coons from Tuscumbia and Doctor Dickson from Brumley. That was during the depression.

## Wildcat writer recalls getting ready for several bad winters

By Charlotte Beard

WILDCAT CREEK -- Hi. to everyone. I hope you are all well, and getting ready for winter. I have been trying to get ready, but slowly.

The frost kinda froze my house plants, and I have been breaking the frozen parts off, and getting them in on the porch.

We are still needing rain, didn't get any rain all through September.

I hear people saying it's going to be a bad winter. Well, I have seen several. I heard them say one time long ago, it would never snow again on earth, and I think it snowed all winter, a little everyday that winter.

But people don't have to make big heavy quilts to sleep under like we used to. We would have to put so many quilts on at night you could hardly turn over, and some times we would heat an iron, and wrap a heavy cloth around the iron to warm our feet on. Just lay the iron under your cover at the foot of your bed. It would sure help.

You could hear things crack and pop as it got colder through the night.

We didn't have many music boxes. We never heard of a radio or a T.V. The first music box I remember seeing was an old Edison phonograph. It used round records. People came at night to hear maybe 10 or 12 records.

I can remember people used to sing over the telephone. If you heard a bunch of shorts on the phone, everyone ran to listen. Sometimes it was a love song two young people were going to sing or sometimes it would be a religious song. Sometimes they would sing half a dozen songs. I never hear that any more.

And can you remember when we wore button shoes? We had a shoe buttoner. They buttoned up on the side.

And can you remember when we used to have pie suppers, or a box supper at our school house? Someone would sell our pies to the highest bidder. And can you remember someone would get your pie, and you didn't want to eat with them. And do you remember when we use to write maybe letters on the first day of May to girl friends or boy friends? They would start them something like this: "Maybe I like you, and maybe I don't. Maybe you care, and maybe you don't. Maybe I care, and maybe I don't," and on the letter would go with lots of maybe's in it, and we didn't sign our name.

I can remember when we wore dresses that buttoned up on the sleeves and I can remember when we wore hats with pretty flowers on them.

Then, too, I can remember when we wore little white bonnets to church.

When I was about 5 or 6 years old, I thought a little baby was something great. And they are. I had an aunt that came to visit us a lot, and she would always bring her baby which I liked a lot. I would watch her dress her baby and put nice diapers on it. She would use 3 safety pins. They don't use that kind any more, well, anyway, I wanted to fix something that would look like a baby. I had as a pet a big pretty tomcat, and I got it in my head, I would pin a diaper on him. I found me a big safety pin and a large cloth. I folded it as near like my aunt did hers, and then I picked up tom. I went out on the porch. I sure didn't want anyone to see me. I laid old Tom on my lap, and put the diaper on him, then I straighten him up. He looked kinda like a baby to me until I saw his big tail sticking down on one side, and that didn't look much like a baby. I have never lived that down, for they were watching me through the window.

Thank you, Mrs. Caldwell, for the nice letter you sent me, also for the good reading you sent. Some were real funny, such as the mixed up world.

Just a thought: Is your passport for eternity in order. Do not neglect. You may need it sooner than you think.

# Wildcat writer recalls hearing people sing over phone party line

By Charlotte Beard

**WILDCAT CREEK**--I will try writing again for all my friends. I hope all are not in trouble or sick. I want to thank all the nice people that have written to me in the past. I can't answer all, but I thank you.

I was just wondering why people don't sing any more. I use to hear people sing while working, or riding. I used to hear them when they were riding in a wagon or riding horseback.

And can you remember hearing them sing over the old-fashioned phone we used to have? They had a habit of ringing a lot of shorts. When you heard the shorts start, you would know someone was going to sing, and you couldn't get there fast enough to hear

who it might be.

I always loved babies, and I was raised by myself, so I watched every move the mothers would make in caring for their babies, even putting diapers on them. That was interesting to me, so one day I thought I would like to pin a diaper on something. I owned a large tomcat, and I thought it would be fun to put a diaper on him.

I didn't want anybody to see me, my grandmother for sure. I had an uncle that stayed with us. I was getting everything ready; I had found a large piece of goods, and a big safety pin. All I needed was the cat. I didn't know my uncle was watching, but he was.

I caught my cat and went out on the porch, not knowing my uncle was watching through a window. It was kinda hard to

get my cat to be still, and his tail was in my way. But I got the diaper pinned on all right, but he soon got it off. I never did live that one down. They tell me yet: "Do you remember pinning a diaper on your tomcat?"

I will tell you this, then close. Once I was very sick. Dr. Duncan from Iberia was my doctor. I had to be operated on, one of my lungs. I didn't go to a hospital. I couldn't. It was too far away. No way to go. He did the job alone. I wore a tube in my right lung. The tube was placed in between my ribs. No pain killer was there. And he took the whites of eggs in a glass of water. I drank the water off the egg whites for oxygen. Well I am still here with God's help. Thank you, my Lord.

# Wildcat writer tells her way to dry peaches -- on a tin roof

By Charlotte Beard

WILDCAT CREEK--Hi to all you nice people out there. Hope everyone is doing okay.

Did you go to church today? I did. Our pastor brought a message on "Rewards." If we have been born again, and do God's commandments, go to church to worship with our Christian friends, love our neighbors, and, above all, love our Lord, then I believe we have a good chance to win a reward from our Lord. So it is my prayer that everyone will start going to church somewhere.

It is getting cold at night on Wildcat Creek. It won't be long until I'll put my stove up. I have a gas heater, but it never gets as good and warm as a wood stove.

Do you have your gardens plowed? I have mine plowed. My son plowed it for me last week. It will sure help next spring if you have your garden plowed. When it sometimes stays wet in the spring and you need to set your onions in the ground, just watch and you will catch a day when it's dry enough to

work the top of the ground with your tiller, and set out your onions. Maybe sow a lettuce bed, and plant potatoes in March.

Onions and potatoes need to be in the ground pretty early.

I was asked how I dry peaches. This is my way. Freestone peaches can be broken open. If you have a tin roof, put a cloth on the tin and lay the peaches on it. Keep covered at night as the dew will keep them damp, then it takes longer to get them dried. Make a frame with screen wire and set it over your peaches to keep the flies and bugs from getting on them.

I think it takes about 10 days for them to be ready to store away in paper bags. I never use any thing to preserve them. Don't pile them too thick. Keep them stirred now and then. Don't let it rain on them.

I have watched my grandmother dry pumpkin. She would cut the pumpkin open, take out the insides, then cut strips round so she could hang them on a pole. She would leave them in the sun and when it rained, she would bring them in

and hang them behind her cookstove, wood stove that is.

She liked dried pumpkin.

We used to live on sweet potatoes and dry beans cooked with some good pork. We always tried to keep cows to milk. That way we had butter to eat on the sweet potatoes.

We made jellies without Penjel

or Sure-jel. We never knew any other way. We canned apples. You know applesauce is not bad for breakfast, with butter and hot biscuits. We didn't have all the cereals they have now, like corn flakes, bran flakes, and so on. We could buy oats and rice. They were good for breakfast. I still like oats.



# Wild Cat column returns

By Charlotte Beard

WILDCAT CREEK--I am thankful I am able to write to you good people again. No so long back I couldn't write my name. I don't know how my editor read my writing at all, but thank you for trying.

I am not getting well very fast. Don't expect too much. We have a snow on the ground. Not very cold. It's a good time to make some good hominy with white corn, also a good time to butcher hogs.

I was just talking to one of my good neighbors over the phone whom I have known a long time. She once lived close to me when she was a small lit-

tle girl, Agnes Patterson. I knew her mother, her dad and her brother Robert Colvin. I haven't seen her for a long while, and didn't know she was sick. Sorry for anyone that's sick. We are getting our new seed books, and it makes you think of making gardens, sowing lettuce. I will soon be able to write a little better I hope, then I'll write more. I will have to hurry the mail will soon be here.

The world is in distress, and the men are scared to death. There is no hope outside of God, and they know it. What a chance we have. Let's get on the job for God, please.

19/82

# Wildcat writer recalls prayer for rattlesnakes

By Charlotte Beard

**WILDCAT CREEK** -- Once upon a time there was a family of wayward church members who had once been active, but had lost all interest and had fallen away. There were the father and three sons, Jim, John and Sam.

The elders had talked to them about their lost condition. The preacher had visited them, and many of the brethern had tried to get them to come back to church. But all this had not seem to do the least bit of good.

One day when the boys were out in the pasture, a large rattlesnake bit John and he became very ill. The physician was called and after an examination he pronounced John to be in a very critical condition.

Said he, "About all you can do now is pray." The father called the preacher, and told him of John's condition. He asked the preacher to pray for John's recovery and this was his prayer.

"O wise and righteous Father, we thank thee, for thou hast in thy wisdom sent the rattlesnake to bite John in order to

bring him to his senses. He has not been inside the church house for years and it is doubtful in all that time felt the need to pray. Now we trust that this will prove a valuable lesson to him, and that it will lead to genuine repentance.

"And now, O Father, wilt thou send another snake to bite Sam, and another to bite Jim and another Big One to bite the old man.

We have all been doing everything we know for years to restore them, but to no avail, it seems, therefore that all our combined efforts could not do what this snake has done, we thus conclude that the only thing left that will do this family any good is rattlesnakes; So Lord send us bigger and better rattlesnakes. In the name of Jesus we pray, Amen."

I am thankful I can write again. I feel a lot better. I have the best doctor I know and nice nurses, the best.

But I'll always thank you nice friends for the pretty flowers, for myself and my son's funeral.

I'll always remember the pretty cards and will pray that my Lord will bless everyone.

# Walnuts falling during windy days

By Charlotte Beard

WILDCAT CREEK -- Hi, to every one and I hope all is well with each and everyone.

I have been watching the walnuts fall. As the wind blows the walnuts just falls in big piles. We have a tree in our yard, and the ground is covered. I don't know if they will buy walnuts this year or not.

I can remember picking up walnuts for my grandmother. She put them in cookies and cakes. They are good in candy too.

We sure are dry. There's danger of fire. Twenty-eight days since we had any rain.

We will have five young people at our church Friday night. They are young Christians, they will sing and maybe will bring us some good messages. We will have them Friday night, Saturday, night and Sunday. Everyone is welcome. Our

pastor brought us a message on what must I do to be saved. It was a good message. Turn to St. John in your Bible, third Chapter of St. John and read it. If you don't quite understand the meaning, go ask a preacher or some older person that should know.

I still have some pretty flowers. But I am getting tired of watering them. I was visiting my nephew last week and I want you to know, he is some gardner. He has for his late garden radishes, lettuce and tomatoes. And he had an early garden of everything, his tomatoes are kinda giving up. Too much dry for them. He waters them, but the sun is so hot. He even raised some big watermelons. If you doubt my story just go visit Mr. and Mrs. Verner Beard or Bun as I always called him. Nice place to go.

This dry hot weather is kinda bad. But we have had it lots worse. Back in the '30's and even up in the '40's we didn't raise enough corn to

feed a goose. We tried to fatten our hogs on acorns and fed them sharts in their slop, they didn't get very fat. And for dry beans we sometimes ordered split beans out of the Kansas City Star. The reason they called them split beans, I guess they split them in thrashing. When you cooked them they were just like soup. I remember planting beans five times an never raised one mess. Our Irish potatoes just cooked in the ground an rotted. Sometimes you would find a few good ones, that happened to be planted deep an the sun didn't cook them.

So you see we should be thankful to our Lord we can still eat. And we should go to church. He does so much for us and we do so little for him.

While closing, just a thought:  
It matters not, what you lose,  
If you save your soul.  
It matters not what you save,  
If you lose it.

# Wildcat Creek writer likes cooking old-fashioned way

By Charlotte Beard

WILDCAT CREEK -- Hi to everyone. Seems like I can't give up writing to my friends.

It's kinda cool on Wildcat Creek. I guess we can't complain. We have had nice, pretty weather for quite a while.

I was just thinking. It seems like time to make hominy, and get some white corn to make some fresh, good cornbread.

We would gather around the old wood heating stove and shell corn to take to mill, and have it ground into some good meal.

The kids would help. They would parch corn on top of the heating stove. They liked to eat the parched corn. Then, too, they liked to make corncob pens, laying the cobs across one another.

We had a kind of a mess next morning, but I didn't mind sweeping a little corn off the floor and burning the cobs. It just made a good fire. Then we took the corn and had it ground at the mill. Then we had some good cornbread.

Some times we made mush. We ate peaches with the mush, or sometimes we would have milk and mush - either is good. Cornbread and butter are very good. I really think if people would eat like we use to they would feel better.

Any way, I do like to cook my old-fashioned way--make a pan of biscuits and make some good gravy to eat with them. Sorghum and butter are good with the biscuits, or jelly.

Pumpkin butter is good with biscuits and you can grow your own pumpkins. . . Try frying some pumpkin, real brown looking when it's done. That good, too.

We didn't have any way to freeze everything like we have now. But you can freeze the taste out of lots of food if you freeze it too long.

Then comes butchering time.

My granddad would pick the coldest day to butcher his hogs. He said he like to have a big snow on the ground. He could lay the meat out on the clean snow. We never put our meat in the freezer. We waited until about March, and then smoked the meat with hickory wood smoke. The ribs and back bones we canned.

We did our washing on a washboard. We ironed with old-fashioned irons with iron handles, using a double cloth to hold on the handles. Some

times I would get burned. I didn't get my cloth doubled . Pretty good.

My, how things have changed in the last 80 years. But I still like old-fashioned people, and going to church, and I am quite old-fashioned myself. I like a pretty dress. Any more I see some pretty dresses.

I can't finish my items without saying a word for my Lord: Don't be afraid to go out on a limb for God, that's where the fruit is.

# Wildcat creek writer recalls lots of changes in 80 years

By Charlotte Beard

WILDCAT CREEK--Hi to all my friends. Every one is my friend.

I am still able to be up and work a little, but not like I would like to. I have lost quite a lot of weight; I don't know why. But I am thankful to my Lord for everything.

I used to wonder why older people complained so much, but now I know. I miss going to church; but I listen to the TV.

I like Jerry Fallwell, also Billy Graham, but sometimes I would like to go to church where they say "amen" once in a while or "praise the Lord." Don't get me wrong. I like all good Christians. But I am a Baptist. But I can remember how good old Christians would shout, and they didn't care who heard them say "amen," or "praise the Lord."

Once I overheard two Christians talking about being at a meeting. One said you would freeze to death in that meeting; they acted like they were scared to speak out, and say one word or even shaking their head.

But really I can't understand what has happened to people that they don't go to church. We have nice seats. nice

houses, even restrooms right handy. You should see what we had for seats when I was growing up. No backs to the seats, just old hard boards, an old stove with wood to keep warm by. We went horseback or in a wagon or afoot, walk for miles; cold or hot, we went.

I always kind of dreaded to see my grandmother shout, but it wouldn't bother me now. I would know she was happy and she wasn't the only one. Sometimes three would be talking to their Lord at one time.

I hope everyone raised a good garden. I didn't. I was sick most all summer, and I have to wear a pacemaker to live, so I didn't get to make a garden.

I sure miss a lot of things I could do, but there comes a time in your life you have to quit, and I have been here 80 years.

Lots of changes in 80 years. We never saw a woman wearing shorts or britches, or men either. They wore clothes. We never heard women swear or drink any thing stronger than coffee or tea.

We never saw but very few

babies raised on a bottle. It just had to be something wrong with the mother if she had to raise her baby on a bottle.

It sure takes a lot of money to raise one baby these days. I never thought of buying all kinds of drinks for my babies, and I never saw the fancy diapers they have now. Mine were white all right, but I made them out of goods that was nice and soft, and I got by washing them on a washboard with good homemade soap, rinsed real good.

Sometimes I wish I could go back. I loved my babies, and I never heard of a babysitter. My babies learned to eat when they were 6 months old. We never had to buy so many different kinds of food. We raised most of the food we ate. I canned my fruit. It was whatever kind I could get and we always had milk. Now it's just buy everything we get to eat. But I still go back to bake cornbread, homemade biscuits, and some times I make homemade lightbread.

Don't forget to pray. I have had enough prayers answered that I'll just keep on praying.

Best wishes to all.

# Whatever happened to peddlars and beggars and quack doctors?

by Charlotte Beard

WILDCAT CREEK -- Good morning to everyone. I hope everyone is feeling good and better. I have not been so well the last few days, but I am used to not feeling well. I just wanted to ask a few questions of you older people.

Can you remember when we had peddlers selling dry goods mostly, like bed spreads, and pillow covers, real good and pretty? These old gentlemen could carry heavy loads and they came in any kind of weather. I have not seen any for years.

And do you remember we used to see Gypsies coming by? They always wanted to trade horses, and we use to get gipped so to say. They liked to trade a worn-out horse for a

good one.

And I don't see anymore poor people or beggars, whatever they were called. They would come to your door and ask for something to eat. I would always feed them. One came to our house one late evening and wanted something to eat, so my husband gave him what was left from supper and told him if he would watch early the next morning when he would see the smoke coming out of my kitchen stove he could have breakfast. He went up the road a little ways and lay down by an old log in the weeds and grass.

My, I don't know how many ticks and chiggers he got on him. But anyway, he came and ate breakfast. My husband asked him to cut a few sticks of wood. He said he wasn't use to cutting wood and it hurt his

hands, but Ira handed him the ax and told him to get at it. He kinda fussed about it, but cut up a few pieces.

Then we use to have quack doctors. They would get herbs, just weeds seemed like, and make a tea out of it and give to people. They told them they could cure cancers or even Tuberculosis. But I think they found out that they couldn't cure anything.

One old doctor was treating an old lady that had heart trouble real bad. He told her she needed to drink more water and told her to eat salty cucumbers right out of the brine. He said she should eat a lot of them. They made her worse.

I used to put cucumbers in brine before I learned to put them up different. You lay a

layer of cucumbers in a large jar. Then a layer of salt, no water. They make their own brine. Fill the jar with as many as your jar will hold. Put a weight on them heavy and they will keep. You soak the salt out when you want to use them to eat. But remember to leave a short stem on the end of the cumpers when gathering them to put in the brine. We like them.

Did you know you can make kraut out of turnips. You make it just like cabbage kraut. Cut the turnips fine and lay a layer of cut turnips in a jar. Then put the salt on until you make as much as you would want. Put a weight on top of the turnips and cover them up. In nine days, the kraut is done. Be sure you don't use too much salt, just a sprinkle sparingly.

# Memories of a trip west

by Charlotte Beard

**WILDCAT CREEK** -- Hi to everyone this rainy day. We got about one inch of rain, but I think we shouldn't complain since we might get more rain than we want. I think it would be real bad if it never rained. We wouldn't last long.

I have been quite busy getting straightened up as I moved to my home. I am very glad to be at home, although Byron and Anna Beard were real nice to me. I thank them both.

I have got a new quilt almost made. I don't know about my garden. I haven't given it much thought. My legs don't work as good as I'd like for them to. They don't hold out, and they hurt when I walk too much, but I will try to make a little garden. I have some onion sets and lettuce I'd like to put in the ground.

I don't think I ever told you

good people about our trip out west. It was the year of 1937 in March. We sold out and went to Idaho. It was one of the bad droughts. We had nine children, and my baby was

just five weeks old. We rode in a covered truck, kind of a house. We were looking for work. But it wasn't like we thought it would be.

You shouldn't get hungry, as potatoes almost grow wild, and at the end of the rows, the potato digger has to raise his digger to turn and that leaves a lot of potatoes at the end of the rows. The same way with raising red beans, two were allowed to pick the beans and potatoes free, same with the onions. As for honey, you can almost put the bees in a box and they will start making honey, and it is real good. It's real honey, no sugar put in it.

In the country there's bluffs that bees like to find a place to

build in. You find them, and you can rob them when it gets cold. But the hold back was the water. We had to use ditch water and that was awful. And the wind, when we got there it almost would blow you down, and we didn't have any wood. You had to go to the mountains to haul wood. I tried using sage

brush, but it burned up too fast. I tried to cook on an open fire. It didn't work.

The neighbors were real nice to us. We were there on my birthday, and one lady gave me a reall good cake. I was proud.

We ran onto an old guy who panned gold on the Snake River. I don't know how much

gold he got, but he had rode all over Idaho in a covered wagon. He had had the wagon since 1902 and had put one set of tires on it. He stayed by himself and cooked his own meals. He was a queer old gentleman. He

wanted to help someone, so he told me to watch for the pheasants when they flew up off their nest.

"Come and look, you will find their nest. I did, the first

one I found had nine eggs in it," he said.

They were good to eat. They are almost as big as guinea eggs, and I stepped on a horned frog. My it was an ugly thing, but harmless. They stay in the sage brush. You can hardly pull them out. They have horns all over, and they are hard to pull out.

Well, back to the old guy. He told my husband that everyone has bed bugs, and they did have. He said I got them from an old lady that moved in my wagon while I was looking for gold. I put her out, so he said he came to the tent where we were living to talk to Ira about Missouri.

My husband told him he doubted if there was any gold in Missouri. While they were talking, I stepped behind him to see what all he had fixed on his hat. He had a small

horseshoe and a lot of rattle snake rattlers. The sun was kind of warm, and as I was looking on his hat I saw a big bed bug crawl out from his hat band.

He had four horses so if one team got tired he could change. Well maybe I will finish my trip out west. I got homesick as usual. Maybe it's a change for my editor if I can write so he could read it.

A Christian man was once urged by his employer to work on Sunday. Does not your Bible say if your mule falls in a ditch on the sabbath you may pull him out? Yes replied the Christian but if the mule had the habit of falling in the ditch every Sunday, I would either fill up the ditch or sell the mule.

Feb 13 1975

# Wildcat creek writer gives gardening tips

By Charlotte Beard

**WILDCAT CREEK** --It's very cold on Wildcat Creek and we have about one-half inch of snow on the ground. We saw a groundhog cross the road yesterday. I wonder where he is today. He sure didn't see his shadow Feb. 2.

My grandparents always kept Feb. 14 for groundhog Day. If he can't see his shadow, he will stay out, but if he can see it, he will go back in his den and stay for 40 more days. We will see if he gets by Feb. 14.

You know, the 14th is a good time to sow lettuce. Find you a warm spot behind a building and sow some. It will be early and good eating.

If you have some large onions that have long sprouts on them, set them out in your cellar. Just put enough dirt on the roots and in two weeks or three they will be knee high. They are good to eat.

I have an old cellar that's dug back in the hill and covered with dirt on the roof. I never have anything to freeze in it. And I always have some onions I raise the last year with long sprouts on them. I set them along the wall and it just suits them. I don't have to water them. Just cover the roots with a little dirt and watch them grow.

Now is a good time to scatter your wood ashes on your potato ground. Sure helps them to grow. Then when you plow your ground, it mixes them just right. We always use ashes on the potato ground--not too thick.

I always set my onion sets out in March. We mix chicken manure in the ground to grow onions, you can't beat it. We sow radishes, lettuce, carrots and parsnips, also, plant peas. Some people think peas will get frost bit, but we never did have any trouble getting them frost bit. I sow beets, too, all in March. You will be sure to catch your ground dry enough sometime in March if you watch.

Onions and potatoes are a cool, weather plant. If you notice when it gets real hot and dry, the onions and potatoes will have their crop made.

One more thing I wanted to write, then I'll close. I would like to tell how I make a hot bed, I call it, to raise my plants in, such as tomatoes, cabbage, and pepper. I make it about the first of April, and we use horse manure. I am thankful we still have one horse left. We make a frame about three feet high, and as wide or long as you think you need.

Then take fresh horse manure and fill the frame one-half full or more. Stomp it down real tight. Pour warm or hot water on it, so as to wet it through, then fill the rest of the frame with rich dirt and a little sand. I don't fool with the sand, but some people do. When you get your dirt on the manure, then cover it real good with old sacks or insulation. Let it stay covered two or three days, then test it to see if the dirt is warm. If so, you can sow your seeds in rows. But, it needs to be covered at all times, when its cold or maybe danger of frost.

When the weather warms up real

good, you can stretch a woven wire over the top of your frame and keep the dirt watered until the plants come up. Then maybe the rain-will come and you won't have to water them. But this way you can raise your own plants lots; cheaper than you can buy them, and you won't have a disease in your plants.

Remember, I am not telling people how to do this for they probably already know, but I think there would be some who never heard of getting plants started in this way and at this time. All who can should raise a garden. I hope this helps someone as that's what I like to do.



# Wildcat Creek writer got homesick for Missouri while living on desert

WILD CAT CREEK—Nice warm weather we are having in Missouri. Nice showers also; some not so nice, but most gardens are real pretty.

We had a nice surprise this afternoon when Tommy Bunch and wife brought Tommy's mother to see us, Mrs. Mary Bunch. We hadn't seen her for years. She will be 87 years old in July if I remember right. She gets around real good except she doesn't see very well, but has a real good memory. She told me things I had forgotten. She was my older children's school teacher. She taught school at Barnett which they consolidated several years ago.

She now lives in Clifton, Colo. Her health is better in that state.

When she lived in Montana, she told me, a bear tried to get in at her door. She called for help and they killed the bear, and she had a pretty rug made out of its hide. I asked her if she ever ate any bear meat. She said no, although she cold-packed four quarts of its meat, but couldn't eat it. She laughed and said, if I had eaten any of its meat, I know I would hear it growl."

She likes to read my items.

I think I would like to tell everyone about our trip out west. We went to Castleford, Ida., also out into Washington. I want to say I got real homesick. I am glad I didn't hear "Missouri is calling me." That would have made it worse.

First we moved out on the Beaut or desert until we could find a house. We just had a large tent. An old gentleman had moved on the Beaut, too. He lived in a covered wagon drawn with horses. He had four horses so he could change them now and then. He said he panned gold down on Snake River. He wore a funny hat with rattlesnakes rattlers pinned on and a few gold nuggets, not finished.

He had lived in this same wagon since 1902, the year I was born. Had put one set of wheel tires on it. There's not much gravel or rock on the land in the tract we were on. He cooked in his covered wagon, slept in it also. He told us an old woman moved in his wagon one day when he was away. He says, "She gave me bedbugs," but said he got rid of her.

He was real friendly and wanted to help you out so you would have to like him. He knew we were new there and didn't know anything about how people got along or lived. So he told me to watch the pheasants when they flew up out of the sage brush. I could go look where they flew up and I could find eggs to use. So my daughter, Berneice, and I were out looking one day, and we scared a pheasant off her nest. She had nine eggs in

her nest. We got them. They are about the size of banty eggs, kind of brown. I remember I made a cake with part of them.

He also said you could go around the ends of the potato fields after they blow their potatoes out and get all the potatoes you want. Beans and onions, the same. He said at the ends of the big fields where they make the turns are places where you can find the potatoes. The farmers didn't mind. They would never go back to get them.

The big white potatoes you buy in your grocery stores are raised in Idaho, and maybe other places too. They also raise the little red beans you see in your stores.

I don't know why but you have to cook your beans lots longer than you do here.

Back to the old gentleman we met on the desert. He kept the best honey I ever saw. He had a place he called Lily Grade. It had

mountains on both sides. The bees were so thick they would swarm and go into the sides of the mountains and just make tons of honey. But he had a certain place he knew about. He could climb up and roll a big rock back and get enough honey to do him for months. It was real white. He told us he would show us how to get all we needed.

But we didn't stay that long—nine months and we came back to Missouri.

I must tell this one with no offence. One morning he came up to our tent and was sitting in a chair talking to my husband. I passed along behind him and was kinda looking at the snake rattlers he had on his hat when I saw a big bedbug crawl out from under his hatband. It was shining in the sun. They were sitting on the outside talking. I guess the old woman sure left him some bedbugs.

May 29 1975

