

HELVETIA

by Virginia Rugeley

The Program

In 1869 a group of Swiss immigrants left Brooklyn, N.Y., to establish a community in Randolph County, West Virginia. They named their settlement "Helvetia" (the original name for Switzerland, dating back to the days of the Roman Empire). The residents of Helvetia spoke their native Swiss dialect (Schwyzerdutsch) and preserved Swiss traditions and customs - even to the making of home-made cheese. Attempts to establish a commercial cheese industry and to make Helvetia a tourist attraction failed because of the community's isolated location and (until very recently) the lack of paved roads into Helvetia. Population has dwindled in recent years, but the residents still preserve the language and customs of their Swiss forbears.

Voices heard in the script

Isler - the Swiss surveyor who first interested his fellow immigrants in moving to West Virginia.

Jacob Holder }
Joseph Zielman } Three of the six man committee who traveled from
Ulrich Mueller } Brooklyn, N.Y. to W.Va. in October of 1869 to
investigate the possibility of purchasing land for
the establishment of a Swiss community.

Man }
First Woman } Residents of Helvetia whose voices are heard in the
Second Woman } discussion of what to name the new community.
Old Man }

Preparation

1. Locate Switzerland on a globe or map of Europe, and discuss briefly the features of the country the children would be familiar with.

2. Locate Helvetia on a map of W.Va.

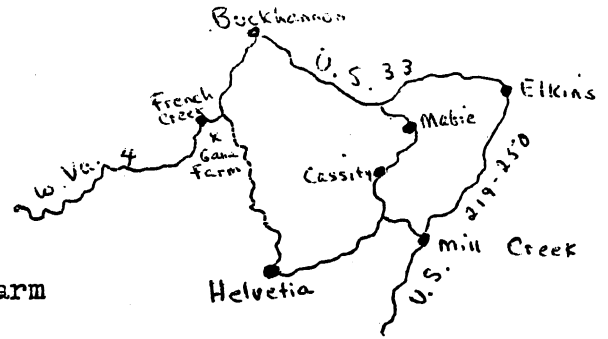
(See inset).

The town can be reached in three ways:

From U.S. 219-250 at Mill Creek

From W.Va. 4 at French Creek Game Farm

From Mable-Cassity Road off U.S. 33
between Buckhannon and Elkins.



Vocabulary

Alps - a mountain range of Southern Europe, located in parts of Austria, France, Germany, Italy, and most of Switzerland.

Community - a group of people residing in the same locality and subject to the same laws; a village or town.

Dialect - a language developed from a root language and retaining recognizable elements of the parent language, but having distinctive vocabulary, pronunciation, idioms, etc.

Immigrant - a foreigner who enters a country with the intent of settling there.

Swiss - the people of or from Switzerland.

Switzerland - a federal republic in central Europe, a mountainous country of 15,940 square miles. Capital, Bern.

Surveyor - one who surveys land for the purpose of determining its area, contour, or boundaries.

WHITE SULPHUR SPRINGS

By M. K. Thompson

Dolly

*Rec'd
Mon. April 18*

THE PROGRAM:

White Sulphur Springs is surely one of the best known places in West Virginia. Each year people from all over the United States -- and from many other countries as well -- come to visit its famous Greenbrier Hotel. This program presents the history of White Sulphur Springs -- from the days when the Indians worshipped the sulphur springs to the present day.

PREPARATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS:

1. You might begin by asking students to pretend they lived somewhere else in the United States and were asked: "When you think of West Virginia, what picture comes to your mind?" Answers will probably include "coal mines" . . . "beautiful hills and trees" etc. You could say that these are all good pictures; but if no one mentions The Greenbrier, point out that there is a famous place which many people from all over the world think of when West Virginia is mentioned -- The Greenbrier Hotel in White Sulphur Springs. It would be helpful to make it clear that White Sulphur Springs is the name of the town and The Greenbrier is the name of the hotel.

2. Locate on a map the town of White Sulphur Springs in Greenbrier County. Some of your students will probably have driven through it on Route 60; they may have noticed the buildings and golf courses of The Greenbrier. Perhaps some can describe The Greenbrier from driving past it or visiting it.

3. The history of White Sulphur Springs is revealed in this program through families visiting it at four times -- 1958, 1922, 1948, and 1965. Before hearing the program, students should relate