

Cressy Road Neighbors and Friends

by Tracy Randall Patrick

I've been fortunate to live in Estill County, Kentucky, all of my life. I've worked in Winchester, Stanton, and Booneville, but always lived in Estill County. I've seen a lot of pretty places in a lot of other states and in our own state of Kentucky as well, but my favorite place in this whole world is the area surrounding what my late friend and neighbor W.G. Patrick referred to as 'The Hub.' That's what most know as the '3-Way,' which is the intersection of KY-82 and KY-89 which some people call 'Harg,' but I like to refer to it as its proper name of Hargett, which is where I attended school for eight years. My favorite area surrounding 'The Hub' includes Estill, Lee and Powell counties and parts of Clark and surrounding counties which are very nice as well.

I was born at the end of what is now called Whitepine Lane, Ravenna, but in 1952 was simply referred to as "The Ancil Pitts Place." The bluff where the house stood led to what some people refer to as 'Buffalo,' which is a huge limestone rock overlooking the Fitchburg Furnace. My birth certificate says I was born at Ravenna but that fine city was about ten miles away. My sister was born in the same bed in the same house and delivered by the same Dr. Glenn Marcum but her birth certificate from the year before says she was born at Union Hall. We always thought another sister was born there too but found out recently she was born across the 'holler' on Tipton Ridge.

Years later, I was at my Uncle Carl McIntosh's hide-away called Shelter Valley when a friend of mine asked me, 'What are you doing here?' I looked across the holler toward Buffalo and the head of Crowe Hollow and said, 'I was born here.' He looked puzzled a minute; then replied, 'Well, I guess you were.' I don't know what he meant, but he probably didn't know what I meant either.

We didn't live very long at Union Hall-Gum Springs-Tipton Ridge-White Pine Lane, Ravenna, before we moved north to the Hargett area to be closer to my dad's job at Avon. We lived for a short while on the upper part of Woodward's Creek on Winchester Road in a rental house from which I would live across the road from about 30 years later. We moved from the rental first to another rental on Cressy Road, then to a place we bought within sight of it which we called Hickory Hollow Farm because of the huge number of hickory nut and walnut trees. Both homes were on Caney Branch which is a tributary of the Red River. Later we moved again and ended up north of "The Hub" on a tributary of the Kentucky River which is called Polecat Creek.

Many times I drove through Pine Ridge Road in Clark County and from a high hill I could see one of the most beautiful valleys in the distance with a line of pretty blue mountains behind it. I thought, that's a place where I would really like to live. Years later, after computers gave us the technology to see our entire earth from above, I decided to see where that beautiful valley was at. I started at the bluff on Pine Ridge and followed the screen toward those mountains and suddenly realized that beautiful valley was where I had lived the past 50 or so years. I could see all of Cressy where we made our home for about 20 years and as far as the mountains of Iron Mountain and Sugar Loaf which were our guiding points coming from Winchester or Richmond.

We moved to Cressy around 1957 in time for me to start school from there in the fall of 1958. We quickly found out we had some of the most marvelous neighbors in the world although we thought most were really old. Cressy was a thriving community in the '40's with plentiful jobs in the oil and coal business, accessible by means of passenger trains that stopped there. By the time we moved there, those type jobs were gone and most people worked in Winchester while farming part-time.

Most houses were 30's style farm houses like our own and each was on a small to large farm with the houses built on bluffs where most neighbors were separated by hollows. Our nearest neighbor was about a 1,000 feet out a ridge but we were separated from the next neighbors by either a hollow or a hill. One neighbor was within sight of us but it was nearly a mile by road to get to their house. Another was about a half mile away by road but we could easily look inside their front door.

One of my favorite neighbors was the Berrymans, Tom and Nancy. Although they were close we could not see their house for

the hill and trees. It was easily a mile away but half of that mile was traveling up their driveway through a cattle pasture and over some boulders that could easily wreck a transmission or oil pan. Tom Berryman drove a Jeep, but most any other vehicles had a rough time getting to their house.

They were really nice people. He was about 80 years old when we first moved there and she was about 75. Nancy was one of my mom's cousins out of the Moreland family and my mom knew them from the Tipton Ridge-Cow Creek area.



In the back, Thomas Jefferson Tipton, on the left, lived with the Nelson Tipton family, and Nancy Jane Moreland (about 13), on the right, lived with the William Alfred Alexander family.

Nancy Moreland was born in the early 1880's and by 1900 she was living with the William A. and Kitty Clay Tipton Alexander family in the Cow Creek area where she was referred to as a 'servant.' Kitty was a school teacher and William Alfred was later named postmaster at Pitts.

Next door, at the home of Nelson and Emeline Tipton, Clay Alexander's parents, lived their daughter, Mary L. who was also a teacher, and a Thomas J. who is also listed as a Tipton and referred to as a 'servant.'

So, Nancy Moreland and Thomas Jefferson Tipton were acquainted for some time and married on March 27, 1902. By 1910, they are living at the north end of Estill County in what is known as 'The Forks.' Tom lists his occupation as 'farmer' and they have four children, Effie, Haden, Amandy and Lilly.



Thomas Jefferson and Nancy Jane Moreland Tipton and their children

However, some time in the 19-teens, Nancy Jane finds out that she is not Mrs. Tipton as when she married, but Mrs. Berryman. It seems that Tom went by the Tipton name of the family he lived with, but who his parents were, was just a rumor.

Some rumored that his mother was a Molly Jeanette who was married to another man but had given birth to Thomas Jefferson (Tipton) by Dr. Thomas Jefferson Berryman who was a prominent doctor in Clark, Estill and Madison counties.

The first of Tom and Nancy's children went by the last name of Tipton, but they say Tom encountered his father on the streets of Irvine and told him who he was. Apparently Dr. Berryman acknowledged this and took measures to change Tom's legal name to Thomas Jefferson Berryman and gave him the Berryman family's original farm at Cressy. They say Dr. Berryman visited Tom regularly after that and they developed a good relationship.

Family members say 'Pappy,' as they called him, worked on the L&N Railroad as a pump station attendant at Frankfort and Sloane (near Cressy). The family reportedly stayed at the farm until after her death in 1987 when it was sold at an auction to Bro. Linville Berryman, a distant relative, and is now owned by his family.

By 1920, Tom is listed as Thomas Berryman Jr. and children are listed as Effie, Haden, Amanda, Lillie C., Sarah D., Cecil B., Mary L. and Earl S., all are now Berrymans.

In 1940, Thomas is listed as a "stationary engineer, railroad, Frankfort.)



Thomas Jefferson & Nancy Jane Berryman

I first met the Berrymans when she was 75 and he was about 80. As a relative of Nancy Moreland Berryman, my mother, Irene McIntosh Patrick, often sent me to their house to deliver garden seed, plants, catalogues, whatever neighborhood mail consisted of. We rarely traveled there by car, so I walked the road and then up their driveway or I took a shortcut, both of which went across their pasture that was filled by cattle and always one unpredictable bull.

They were always nice to me and usually gave me some change for making the trip. I also helped put in hay for them or other odd jobs and I remember at least one time when I ate with them. They served rhubarb to begin the meal which Mr. Berryman told me was an appetizer to build up my appetite. On one occasion he showed me a couple of 'long rifles' he had which were made famous by Daniel Boone shows on TV.

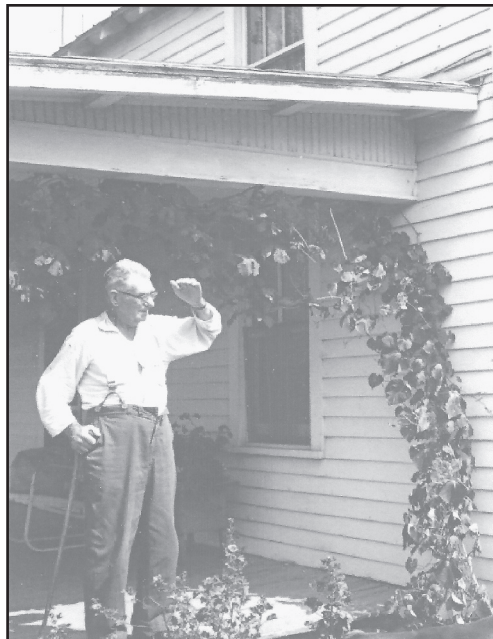
Once when our family was visiting, my brothers and I had a lot of fun playing with a couple of dogs they had; one a short haired dog and the other was a shepherd mix. Mr. Berryman told me their names were Pat and Mike and they were Irish dogs, which I believed. I really wanted the long-haired dog, Mike, but he gave me Pat.

Another time at the Berryman's house I noticed a huge rock in the yard that was shaped just like a frog. They said it came from Woodward's Creek just over the hill. Later, I was at another neighbor's house and saw a rock the same size and shape, except it was painted in traditional frog colors. I heard later there was some controversy about it being the same rock.

Tom Berryman told me that when they first came there, the man who lived there before them told of watching a Civil War skirmish over the hill in the bottoms of Woodward's Creek. They said he told of a few shots ringing out and watching Union calvary chasing rebel soldiers up the hollow. Nearly a hundred years later, that picture seemed vivid in my mind.

The Berrymans raised cattle on their farm and every herd must have a bull. It seemed that every farm at Cressy had to have the biggest, meanest bull that could be found. Their farm came to a point at the old railroad passenger stop at Cressy and was bounded by Cressy Road and the railroad on three sides. Behind the railroad grade, a large lake was backed up and was varying degrees of sizes over the years. Berryman Lake was crystal clear, normally, in the middle but several water grasses extended about ten to 12 feet from the bank and grew from the deep mud. It was nearly impossible to wade out because of the grasses and mud but their bull once tried it and got stuck. It took nearly everyone in the neighborhood to pull him out of the ooze.

There were no phones at that time, but nearly every household had a bell in the yard that was used for various reasons. A certain number of rings was used to summon farmers in for 'dinner,' but a lot of ringing meant there was an emergency. It was open sky from our house toward Log Lick and Trapp and you could not only see for miles but hear a bell going off for many miles. A ringing of the bell would bring neighbors from 2-3 miles away.



Thomas Jefferson Berryman

As Tom Berryman progressed in age in later years, we were often summoned to look for him when he wandered off. There was a lot of concern because of the railroad and the lakes being nearby. Once, I was the one who found him. He was just out on the

farm looking around and checking on his cattle like he had always done.

'Aunt Nancy' as we were told to call her, was a very small, petite woman, like only about 4'6", but she had a shrilly voice like some small people do and was quick to let family know what she thought. I remember the scolding to this very day that she gave to a daughter-in-law whom she thought wasn't dressed modest enough.

Although Aunt Nancy and her sisters were all small in stature, one of her daughters was even smaller. Mary Lou Berryman was small enough that most would have referred to her as a 'midget,' but she lived a long, eventful life.

My brothers and I were visiting the Berrymans when we were just kids when another kid walked up to us. He was about our size but was dressed in really snappy adult clothes and had one of the biggest cigars I've ever seen sticking out of his mouth. He was really friendly to us but we were wondering who was letting this kid smoke. They finally introduced him to us as Bud Kirkendall who was married to their daughter Mary Lou. He was small in stature like Mary Lou but by no means was this couple 'small.'



Bud & Mary Lou Berryman Kirkendall

Aunt Nancy was about 75 when I first met her and most would have never dreamed she would be around 30 years. She was born in March 1882 and died in Rowan County on November 24, 1987. She lived through two world wars, The Depression, and the terms of 19 presidents.

Some time after her 100th birthday, she was given a certificate by our 40th President, Ronald Reagan (her 19th) which was presented by our present Estill County Judge Donnie Watson in one of his previous terms. As I walked down the hallway of the Irvine nursing home to take a picture of the event, I could recognize her voice long before I reached the room. No one likely knew what she was saying but I knew who she was saying it to. She was giving Tom or one of the other family members 'what for,' because of something they had done.



Estill County Judge Donnie Watson presented a flag and certificate in 1982 to Nancy Jane Berryman from President Ronald Reagan.

Many years before Aunt Nancy passed away she gave me a box which contained several pieces of an unfinished quilt. I kept it for many years as it was but finally my mother, Irene, decided she would finish out the quilt and she did. She bound it with a yellow border which made a nice treasure for which to remember Aunt Nancy and Uncle Tom who were such good folks.



Moreland sisters, Barbara Ashcraft, Ollie Muncie and Nancy Jane Berryman