

## HOME AND COMMUNITY



*The use of the Welsh language and a love of music punctuated the everyday lives of the immigrants and succeeding generations of their descendants. There was a strong sense of community at Long Creek, not only among the Welsh, but also within the community at large.*

### *Prayer at Mealtime*

We took turns. We'd go around, and Father would say, "Thank you, there's no more children." Because we had three children, and each one had to say a blessing.

PEG BUTLER

I'll tell you about Uncle Billian. He was visiting at our place. We always had worship. My father always had prayers and something. When mother opened her eyes during the prayer, and there was Uncle Billian shining his shoes! And of course, Grandma laughed, and that ended the formal... We always had grace, but we didn't have the Bible reading and everything like that. Uncle Evan's carried it on. Mary and John, my sister and those, carry it on all the time, too. We carry it on. Uncle Evan and Auntie Mary was always in Welsh, though when we were over there. GAYLE EDWARDS ROTTER

Many of the homes carried on morning services at the breakfast table. I was the youngest, and I can't remember that we did it when I came along, but I know that many of them did have a service. Of course at that time we had phones, community phones you might call them. Sometimes, if the phone was off the hook, the morning service went over the phone. In fact, they tell about one family had two little boys that would get a little bored with the service, especially the dad's long prayer. They would just reach back, take the phone off the hook, and be listening to the phone, and grandpa's prayer went over the whole community.

GOMER OWEN

When we sat down for breakfast, we took turns reading the different verses around the table. MARIE GREENE

We had a little script [in Welsh] that we had been taught and we'd take turns.

LUTHER DAVIS

Well, it [prayer at meals] depended on who was there. If there happened to be a guest my dad knew wasn't Welsh it would be an English prayer. RUTH WILLIAMS GIPPLE

### *Ceremonies at Home*

Well, of course, any celebration we had here locally had quite a Welsh angle or accent to it, because there were so many Welsh people involved. Now she [Iva] was showing me a picture this morning of an anniversary, fiftieth anniversary of a Welsh picnic. And a lot of the older people that I remember in the community were in this picture, and I would say that picture would be 90 percent Welsh. Weddings were mostly in the home at that time, by invitation. GOMER OWEN

We weren't married in the church. There weren't too many in the church—weddings. They're mostly in the homes or parsonage. ROSINA WILLIAMS HAWKINS

Earlier years I think more were married in the home, but then they started having church weddings. DONALD DAVIS

I was married at home. I can't recall weddings too much ahead of that [1944] in the church. I don't know what instigated me to have a home wedding. I think a lot of them had been married at home. Aunt Catherine—I remember going to her wedding. And it was in their home.

My uncle Oliver's [funeral] was in his home. That's the last home funeral I can remember and that would have been about 1958. One thing in those days, when somebody had passed away in your home, there was always a black wreath on your front door.

I think most of the baptisms were at home. I don't recall baptisms in our church hardly at all, even clear down through the late thirties. My brother Farrell and Gladys were both baptized in our home. I remember that. I think Irene was too, but I wasn't too old at that time. It was a short little ceremony, I guess, in our living room. MARIE GREENE

### *Music at Home*

I've studied piano all my life. Uncle Hugh Owens, that's the professor from Chicago, I can't remember it, but he came out to this home, where we three children were born. This was the new home, of course. I was like this [mimes piano playing], playing on the tables and on the chairs and everywhere. He said to my mother and dad, "You must buy a piano for this little girl! She has musical ability and talent." So they did, right away.

DOROTHY DAVIS PLETT

We had the old pump organ. My sister, who was the oldest, was always at the pump organ playing. There was more singing on our own. Most of it was just a spin-off from my dad singing Welsh around the home here. And we had parodies that we cooked up.

My dad sang all the time. He sang when he went out in the morning to do chores. He sang all the time, some English but a lot of Welsh also. He sang a lot of Welsh folk songs too, like *Claddu'r mochyn du* ["Burying the black pig"]. That was one of his favorites, and "Counting the Goats" [*Cyfri'r Geifr*]. GOMER OWEN

My dad bought me a piano when I was young. We took some piano lessons, my brother and I. My mother sang all the time. The most memories I have of her is singing.

MARGARET WILLIAMS QUIGLEY

We had a piano, but my mother was the only one who really knew how to play.

LEILA WILLIAMS CARLO

We had a piano and my two sisters played lots of duets. I took lessons for a few weeks one summer. It got to be a problem because my mother didn't drive. Once or twice I even drove the horse and buggy clear to Crawfordsville. So I didn't take lessons very long.

RUTH WILLIAMS GIPPLE

We had a piano at home. ROSINA WILLIAMS HAWKINS

We had the first piano there was in the country anywhere. My dad decided that his girls were going to have things that he had never gotten to have when he was at home. We had a [piano] teacher, Tom Davis from Washington. Every Sunday evening after we ate supper, we always sang for a while, Sunday evening, hymns most generally. My folks would sing Welsh sometimes, and my sister and I'd sing it in English. So if someone was there, they'd probably wonder what was going on, I suppose. ROSELLA WILLIAMS CRAWFORD

I still have that organ. [My mother] didn't read music, but she just played. And we would stand around and sing. If she wanted us to quit singing, why she'd play "Shall we gather at the river" and we'd all cry! And then that was the last. GAYLE EDWARDS ROTTER

Now, my mother's side, they had the piano. They had an old Victrola that had the Welsh records. I've got it and some of the records that they made back in the old days. My grandmother used to sing. She used to sing hymns all the time, or hum.

MARION CZERNIAKOWSKI

Oh, I remember the songs my mom would sing. Of course you know the Welsh are noted for their singing and their music. On Sundays we didn't have things to do, and that's what we would do. My sister would play the piano, and she'd play those old hymns. We just went through the hymn books. Oh, those old hymn books, old and old, and a lot of them now I kind of sing to myself, but I don't remember all of the words.

EVELYN ARTHUR QUIGLEY

We always had music in our home. We had a pump organ. Mother played it, and I learned to play. Then we got a piano. Effie Kelly is the one I took lessons from here in Columbus Junction. When we'd come home from church, dad would always want someone to play the piano and sing while mom was getting the meal together. We'd play some Welsh hymns, and he would chime in. MARIE GREENE

[Played the accordion] ever since I was five or six years old. We had one in our home. One of my aunts owned one and she played a little bit. She played it by note, but I started playing it by ear when I was real small and I've played it ever since. I used to have friends that played a guitar and a banjo. We used to have a bunch that played. But not anymore. We played anywhere. We didn't play for dances. Everywhere else. EVERETTE DAVIS

### *Conversation between Harriet Jones and Luther Davis*

HJ: So who played the piano, then? Or did they just sing over at the Owens'? Viola?

LD: Viola played. She was real good, too.

HJ: I bet! Good singer, too?

LD: Yes, she was—alto.

HJ: Oh yeah, and Hazel?

LD: Hazel was a good singer.

HJ: I always heard they were all good singers.

LD: They were! Margaret was a good singer.

HJ: You ever sing a duet with her?

LD: No, just sang along.

### *Saturday Activities*

We got the work done early Saturday. We got the chores done early, and the children took early baths. The thing was to get the cream and the eggs to town as early as we could. Had to get a good parking place. There was usually a band concert. And I remember going with my mother to the grocery store to trade out the cream check, egg and cream check.

LEILA WILLIAMS CARLO

Well, Cotter was open every night. We'd always go down to the store every night in Cotter. We'd just visit. We boys'd go out and play hide and seek in the lumber yard or something like that. We finally bought a set of boxing gloves so we'd get out under the streetlight then and had boxing matches. We'd draw a crowd. Then also later by the garage in Cotter they'd fix a horseshoe court and we'd go down there. And upstairs in the general store where the Odd Fellows Hall was, they had a pool table. We couldn't go up there unless dad took us. Years ago, like I told you, the Ladies Aid had their soup suppers up there. Then

after they got the church basement that went there. They also had dances up in the Odd Fellows Hall. My dad never let me go to dances. And I didn't believe in them either. I haven't gone to one yet. I watch them but I don't know how to dance. ELMER THOMAS

We were tickled to go to town. Went into town Wednesday and Saturday nights just to take the produce mostly. We were just glad to go to see people. Otherwise we never went to town for every little loaf of bread like we do today. BILL EDWARDS

We didn't get to go very often. In fact Saturday night was about the only time you got to go to town. Everybody got together on Saturday night, that was the thing.

MARIAN PUGH CECIL

We baked on Saturday for Sunday. You took care of your animals, but you didn't work on Sunday, except taking care of animals. You didn't work in the fields, didn't do any of that kind of work. Yes, cold food, usually. Or you could just reheat something. You always had the coal stove and you could just put a kettle on that and let it warm it. You could warm up something, but your other food was all cooked. We didn't have movies. There were kinds of cards that you couldn't play. Rook or you could play checkers or something like that, but not any other kind of cards. Dancing was taboo. Even when I was teaching, it was written in my contract that if I went to a dance, I would be dismissed. That was in the 'thirties.

GAYLE EDWARDS ROTTER

### *Sunday Activities*

Sunday afternoon was usually a rest time. Everybody rested. Sometimes you'd have company, but then, not every Sunday and that was the time my folks had to relax a little bit.

ROSELLA WILLIAMS CRAWFORD

But we'd go to church and we'd have our dinner cooked and then we kids, oh some kids couldn't even play ball, you know bat a ball. Now I think Mom's dad was a little more strict, and they couldn't; but we three kids could go because Irene Morrow, Dorothy Bell and myself we rode horseback on Sundays. That was not bicycles or cars, it was horses. And I remember Irene I think it was, no, Dorothy Bell had a little pony and then Irene and I just had regular riding horses. We had an old horse that it was tame and we'd ride and the kids would hitch her, the younger kids then, would tie her to a little red wagon and pull them all around like that. So that's what we had but we never did any work on Sunday. Nothing, only the chores. We got the Sunday dinner. Oh if she was maybe like wanting to bake cakes and pies or something, she'd bake them on Saturday, or we girls would have to bake cakes or something but that was just to have them ready so we could have dinner quicker that way.

EVELYN ARTHUR QUIGLEY

They [grandparents] were raised where Sunday you couldn't read a book, you couldn't do

anything. The women had to prepare meals before on Saturday to have things ready. Someone mentioned that Claudia one time went around with one of her boot buttons hanging off and hitting the boot because she could not sew it back on that day. TIFFANY HOGUE

We always had more time to go visit our neighbors than we do today for some reason. We went at night. We'd try to get the chores done. It might be seven o'clock before we'd head out to the neighbors, but we'd go. And of course, they were always getting in from choring and all that, too. Ten o'clock we'd be ready to go home and four o'clock the next morning we'd be up. Everybody did that then. We usually ate before we'd go. [Was there four-part singing?] Once in a while you'd do that. 'Specially if you had a piano back there. We'd been there at Hayden's [Davis] and Dorothy would play and we'd sing. Lots of times we'd sing and make taffy. Used to pull taffy. Oh gee, we had fun doin' that. Hayden used to cut our hair. We all had the same haircut, same price, too. We'd just take him a jug of water or something when he was working in the field.

We had a neighbor that would come over on Sunday nights. The folks wouldn't always go on Sunday nights, and the old man would come over to our place and play Chinese checkers with us, especially in the wintertime. And we'd just be playin' along and then all of a sudden we'd beat him. Of course we thought we were getting better all the time. We never thought that after awhile he'd let us beat him so he could keep coming back. We'd play championship games and it'd be nip and tuck. We never thought he just did it on purpose.

BILL EDWARDS

People would go to each others' houses on Saturday or Sunday nights, and they would perform for each other. PEG BUTLER

That was the thing to do, you know. To go and visit family, well not so much in evenings but on Sundays. That's when they did their visiting. They weren't always home. I mean they didn't forewarn them that they were coming. And that was the thing, if they weren't home one of my mother's favorite tricks was to put dummies in their bed and do mischief in the house. The other side of the family did it too. But they were good at that. They just had more fun. Go in the house, because they didn't lock houses then out in the country. Or they'd sit down maybe at the table and get the crackers out. MARIAN PUGH CECIL

They [parents] visited some with the Cotter folks. They had a lot of friends over there. Some but not like we do today. It was just too hard to get around. EVERETTE DAVIS

They used to go visit the neighbors, that was all their social life, to go visit the neighbors. RUTH WILLIAMS GIPPLE

### *Sport and Play*

We'd pitch horseshoes, and what we had for horseshoes was just the ones we'd put on horses. We didn't have these professional kind. After my sister started to keep house for us,

we'd have to go out and have a horseshoe game to see who had to help her with the dishes. When we lived at Cotter, in the little pasture just north of the house, we had a ball field. All the kids from town would come up there, and we'd play ball up there all the time.

ELMER THOMAS

Yeah, of course those days we were lucky if we had a ball and a bat, and maybe the catcher might have a mitt, maybe the first baseman, if he was real fortunate. And we'd just get the neighborhood kids to have a game, and when the game was over, we went home and forgot about it. LEROY OWENS

We didn't have any Welsh games as such. But we used it [Welsh] to our advantage now, like in baseball when a team came in to play why the pitcher and catcher would talk back and forth in Welsh so we didn't need any signals. We had our own signals. GOMER OWEN

We were born to play baseball. It was just in our blood. The Welsh kids were all ballplayers. They loved to play just for the love of the game. On the ball field, they all talked Welsh, so the other side wouldn't know what they had in mind. EVERETTE DAVIS

[My doll was called] Blodwen. We didn't have a lot of money, so most of them were rag dolls. GAYLE EDWARDS ROTTER

We didn't play cards. We used to play caroms, dominos, and checkers. RUTH GIPPLE

Cats were our pets. I'd dress them up in doll clothes and take them for a ride in a doll buggy and the old cat would stay there and sleep all afternoon in that doll buggy. So when she had her nap over, she jumped out, she was gone. So we always knew to leave the buggy out so she would have it to crawl into, because we knew that's where she'd sleep all afternoon.

ROSELLA WILLIAMS CRAWFORD

### *Importance of Learning*

We were all readers, all my growing up years. Everybody read every night.

IRENE THOMAS MORROW

It was interesting, when we would sit around the table and do our homework, my folks really stressed education, and they'd say "Well now, when (we were going to be teachers) you're a teacher and have money, what do you think you'll bring?" Well, we'd bring home hot dogs and bananas and things like this that we didn't have at home. But that was at the end of our homework. GAYLE EDWARDS ROTTER

She [grandmother] copied poetry lots of times, because, maybe, they couldn't afford a lot of books. If there was something she really liked, she would copy [it]. PEG Butler

*Community Service*

When the day of voting came, they had to drive to Cotter to vote. If the road was muddy, the men would go with a team of horses. They would never miss the voting; they believed in voting. They'd get there some way. The ladies would go in the afternoon. After the men were through working for the day, then they'd go. It would be way late when they got back.

EVERETTE DAVIS

A big threshing machine would come in and go all through the neighborhood, start on one end and go all the way through. ROSINA WILLIAMS HAWKINS

Each farmer helped one another, you know, in the neighborhood. It was exciting. We always looked forward to that day [threshing]. MARIAN PUGH CECIL

My mother was very sick and I was little, and Aunt Jennie (father's oldest sister) practically raised me. She would come and stay whenever she was needed, she'd just come to our place and stay. ROSELLA WILLIAMS CRAWFORD

We had a country school right by our house, and the teacher always boarded at our house.

She [Grandma] did a lot of free nursing around here, as did my mother. Once in a while, my mother would be gone six weeks at a time taking care of relatives or friends. My dad would do all the cooking. He'd bake all the bread and he'd do everything. He was always helping someone.

They [Rees Davis family] all had typhoid and Grandma was taking care of them. She would walk about the three miles. And they said, "Oh, here comes the blackberry lady." She always brought a quart of blackberry juice for them every day.

Nobody ever moved into the community that she [mother] didn't bake a pie and go up there and greet them. But she wasn't the only one. There was this feeling of friendliness and checking on you. GAYLE EDWARDS ROTTER

My grandfather [Alfred Davis] never knew a stranger. TIFFANY HOGUE

This would be in the spring, I think. They called it a Donation Day for the minister. The older folks would go in the daytime and take their dinner. And they would take feed and would take oats and stuff for the minister's horse. They had their dinner and in the evening we young folks would go up and we'd take our refreshments and visit with the minister and his wife. They'd enjoy it and we did too. ROSINA WILLIAMS HAWKINS

My folks were janitors for a long time that took care of the church. If they wanted prayer meeting or a big song sing or something, they had to go up and build a fire in the stoves. Everybody that was in the church had to take turns of making fire on Sundays.

I think we were close-knit and everybody helped one another.

EVELYN ARTHUR QUIGLEY