

## History of the Houses:

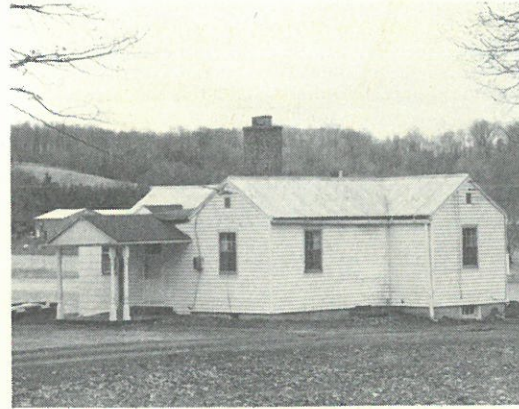
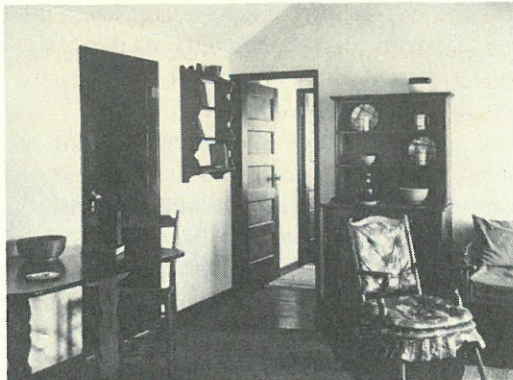
Between 1933 and 1937, three different types of houses were built for the original 165 families. The first 50 were built in 1933-34; the next 75 in 1935, and the last group of 40 was constructed in 1936-37.

Residents of the first houses were given furniture free of charge, but according to their need. The government attempted to maintain an inventory of the furnishings and equipment it had provided, expecting that the homesteaders would eventually pay for them.

Later arrivals were not as fortunate. Not only did they receive less, but the quality of construction materials used was not as good, nor was all of the carpentry completed.

The Civil Works Administration paid local women to make the curtains and bed linens for the houses, and the Mountaineer Craftsmen's Cooperative Association was given the task of making colonial-style furniture (*see picture below*) and kitchen cabinets to complement the wood-panel walls and brick fireplaces.

Each homestead included farm plots of about four acres. Homesteaders were selected for their background in farming or their ability to learn the necessary skills. An average plot might include an acre of wheat, several types of fruit trees (apples, pears, peaches, cherries, etc.), and a grape arbor. Any remaining acreage would have been planted in forage crops for the livestock being raised.



## The Hodgson Houses

The first 50 houses were begun in 1933 and completed in 1934. Called the Hodgson Houses, they were prefabricated by a manufacturer who had originally designed them to be vacation summer cottages in New England. They were made of Oregon cedar over pine frames. The siding was of cedar and the roofs were metal with standing seams. As such, they were poorly insulated and of light construction, ill-suited for the harsh winters to be found in West Virginia's Preston County.

All Hodgson houses were one story high, had complete basements and were painted white. But they did vary in style. In all, there were four types, designated by the letters I, T, L and H, to indicate their general floor plans.

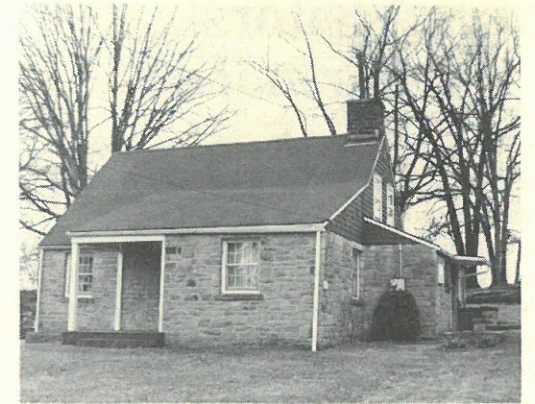
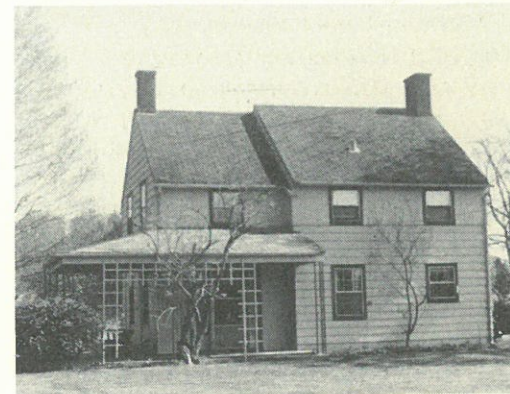
From the very beginning, each of these houses was provided with electricity, indoor plumbing and coal-fired furnaces. Later, a controversy was created when they were also furnished with refrigerators and washing machines, principally because most people in rural West Virginia at that time did not have such conveniences.

## The Wagner Houses

The next 75 houses, designated Wagner Houses, were all erected in 1935. Standing one and a half or two stories high, they were substantially larger than the Hodgson houses. Built on raised cinder block foundations, the upper stories had wood frames and siding. Only six of the houses had basements. These latter houses had hipped roofs of cedar shingles, while all of the others had gabled roofs.

Because Eleanor Roosevelt was an advocate of rural electrification, she asked that these houses be fully electrified. However, the heating systems remained either coal-fired or forced hot air. All of the houses also used coal stoves in the kitchen for cooking, as a supplementary heating source, and to supply heat to generate hot water. As did the earlier houses, they also had indoor bathrooms and running water.

In keeping with the intention that Arthur-dale was to be a self-sufficient farming community, each Wagner House came with outbuildings: a barn, hen and hog houses, and root cellars to help preserve farm produce.



## The Stone Houses

The last group of 165 houses derived their name from the stone quarried from a nearby hillside, which became their principal building material. Begun in 1936, they were all completed the following year.

These multi-storied houses were designed in two styles: colonial and English tudor. Essentially, their floor plans were the same as the Wagner Houses. The major difference was in the extensive use of stone to replace cinder blocks and some of the framing. Each of these houses had six rooms and had the added attraction of stone fireplaces. They also were provided with all of the conveniences and appliances installed in the other two groups of houses.

These houses also had the outbuildings so important to the homestead economy: barns, hog houses and poultry houses. None of these houses had basements, but they were provided with root cellars for storing the vegetables they had harvested and the foods they had canned.