THE BBOXSTART
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THE 1942 CHRISTMAS CENSUS OF
THE BROOKS BIRD CLUB
by
Charles Conrad

This, the 1942 Christmas Bird Census, and the eleventh consecutive one taken
by members of the Brooks Bird Club was a much greater success than had been
anticipated. Not only were all plans carried out as pre-arranged, but the
small number who were able to participate in the census-taking established a
record for the total species listed — thirty-two. This figure raises by five
the greatest number of any previous census the bird club has taken.

The territory covered was practically the same as in past years. The 750
acres at Oglebay Park were well worked during the morning by two separate
groups. In the afternoon the groups worked together covering the Warwood Hill
section and the Ohio River between Wheeling and Warwood. A list was also kept
of the birds recorded within the bounds of the “city limits.”

The day was begun with a Screech Owl being recorded about eight a. m. (EST).
The owl was heard calling from a tree near the Conrad residence. The morning
was perfect, with a bright sun shining and the temperature at the start about
58 degrees. However, by one o’clock it began to cloud up and within half an
hour a light rain was falling. (The rain continued for the remainder of the
day and for the next three days, eventually resulting in a flood.)

As stated before, although a record for species (32) was established, only 615
individuals were counted. This, in comparison with other years, was low; for
example, only 245 crows were counted as compared with last year’s total of
1,071.

Birding during the winter months, as one can expect, is usually spotty, with
small scattered groups. This condition seemed even more dominant this year.
For instance, along the entire Brooks Trail, only three birds were observed.
And despite the brilliant morning sunlight there were very few songs or chirps except the occasional call of a chickadee, titmouse, or cardinal, and of course the never-ceasing call of the crow. Swallows were heard singing matches of their spring song. Tree Sparrows were silent and only four were observed.

At Oglebay Park, 347 individuals were recorded which represented 24 species, seven more than were listed in 1941. On the hillside at Narwood, 137 individuals and 14 species were recorded. The "city limits" list was 87 individuals and 10 species. Observations on the Ohio River netted 49 individuals and 4 species.

That the following species are worthy of individual comment is the opinion of the writer, and it is hoped they prove of value in years to come:

**Snow Goose** A large flock of these geese have been wintering for several weeks at the upper end of the island at Narwood. Recent flood waters have forced their departure.

**Black Duck** The same is true of this species as of the snows.

**American Nighthawk** A pair of American Nighthawks have been frequently observed in this same territory.

**Sharp-shinned Hawk** The only hawk recorded all day was observed by the writer flying low over the golf course at Oglebay Park. Its flight was slow and observation clear.

**Ring-necked Pheasant** Only one pheasant was heard this year as in 1941. This shows a considerable decrease as compared with several years back when from ten to twenty pheasants could be listed most any time at Oglebay Park.

**Bobwhite** One covey of seven quail was flushed at Oglebay. On another occasion a single-note call was distinctly heard. The bob-white in 1941 was not listed.

**Killdeer** Four birds were flushed from the grassy knoll at Telescope Hill at Oglebay. They were also heard calling.

**Horned Gull** The only record of this species was one lone gull seen flying south over the river at Wheeling. Very few gulls have been observed this winter.

**Kingfisher** A lone individual of this species regularly perches on a wire which crosses Wheeling Creek at Theda Plaza.

**Mallard Woodpecker** It is not every day that one has the "luck" of listing this bird. However, 4 Mallard Woodpeckers were observed by the group working the beach section at picnic site 35 at Oglebay Park.

**Horned Lark** Five were observed feeding on the grassy athletic field near the swimming pool at Oglebay Park.

**Robin** Three robins were seen perched in the top of a large elm tree at Narwood.
white-throated sparrow Six of these birds have been wintering in the woods near the Bt's residence. A feeding station is maintained by Elizabetht Bt's and the sparrows make regular visits to the feeder. The white-throats have been heard singing on several occasions.

This year all who participated in the Christmas Bird Census were the guests of Mr. and Mrs. Conrad for luncheon. A very delightful and welcome hot meal was served at their home and a big "How Now" was given by the census takers in appreciation.

The following includes the data necessary for an official census report:

Wheeling, West Virginia (Ohio County, both woodlands and open grassy fields; nature trails and roadsides; city streets and back yards; and the Ohio River); December 27, 1942; 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.; weather at start fair and clear; with bright morning sun until noon; light rain began to fall about 1:30 p.m. and continued the remainder of the day; a constant wind blew from the south and southwest; temperature - 2:00 a.m. - 30 degrees F.; 4:00 noon - 45 degrees F.; 4:00 p.m. - 42 degrees F.; observers worked in two groups; total hours afield 26; miles traveled by foot - 12, by car - 24 miles.

Observed were 615 individuals which represents 32 species with totals as follows: Black Duck, 14; Scamp Duck, 4; American Bittern, 2; Sharp-shinned Hawk, 2; Bob-white, 8; Ring-necked Pheasant, 1; Killdeer, 4; Hermit Thrush, 1; Scrub Owl, 1; Kingfisher, 1; Kiskoker, 1; Raucous Woodpecker, 4; Downy Woodpecker, 15; Prairie Horned Lark, 5; Grosbeak, 245; Chickadee, 58; Tufted Titmouse, 21; White-breasted Nuthatch, 3; Green Creeper, 2; Carolina Wren, 8; Robin, 2; Bluebird, 3; Golden-crowned Kinglet, 14; Starling, 38; English Sparrow, 52; Crackle, 2; Cardinal, 17; Goldfinch, 2; Junco, 3; Tree Sparrow, 4; White-throated Sparrow, 6; Song Sparrow, 4.

The following people either participated in, or contributed to the 1942 Brooks Bird Club Christmas Census: Misses Fae Hayes, Dorothy Conrad, Carolyn Conrad, and Elizabeth Bt; Messrs. Russell Bt and Charles Conrad.

Charles Conrad
412 Farnwood Avenue
Wheeling, West Virginia

THE 1942 CHRISTMAS BIRD CENSUS
CADI, OHIO

Since Cadiz, Ohio, is only 26 miles west of Wheeling, West Virginia on Route 230, it was considered that at least the birds be counted with those observed in the Wheeling area. This may prove of some value, but is at least of interest to the bird student in these areas.

This is the 42nd consecutive year for W. E. McComnall to make a Christmas bird census of the same territory near Cadiz; for the past 31 years
without interruption, John G. Weirley has accompanied him, making perhaps the longest period of collaboration of any of the bird census contributors.

The area covered included fields and woods in the vicinity of Cadiz and a wooded area five miles west of the city. The day of December 26 was cloudy, with a dense fog in the morning, growing lighter in the afternoon; the ground was partly snow covered and a light wind was blowing from the west. The temperature in the morning was 33 degrees and at the return in the afternoon, 32 degrees. The hours spent were from 9:15 a.m. to 12:20 p.m. and 2:15 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. Three observers were out all day, and six in the afternoon. Total hours afield were 30 by foot and 10 by automobile. Total party miles were 27 (4 by foot, 23 by car).

The following is a list of the species identified: Red-tailed Hawk, 1; Bob-white, 14; Mourning Dove, 1; Red-bellied Woodpecker, 1; Hairy Woodpecker, 1; Downy Woodpecker, 8; Blue Jay, 1; Crow, 2; Chickadee, 2; Tufted Titmouse, 3; White-breasted Nuthatch, 3; Carolina Wren, 7 (since); English Sparrow, 82; Storling, 230; Cardinal, 10 (sings); Goldfinch, 1; Tree Sparrow, 29; Song Sparrow, 11. The list has a total of 18 species observed and 435 individuals.

Those participating in the census were: H. B. McConnell, John Weirley, David Weirley, Milton Kernsheim, Milton McC. Kernsheim, John G. Weirley.

John G. Weirley
Cadiz, Ohio

THE 1942 CHRISTMAS BIRD CENSUS
YOUNGSTOWN, OHIO

The following article was sent to the Brooks Bird Club by corresponding member H. J. Heinricher of Girard, Ohio, who was one of the participants on the census Party of Sunday, December 19, 1942.

In view of the fact that Youngstown is only about 75 miles due north of Cleveland, a comparison of species from this territory is of great interest to all. The article as published in THE RESTART contains the same information as that furnished a local Youngstown paper.

"The Christmas bird census Sunday, December 19, showed 46 species in and about Youngstown, although census takers had to plow through four inches of snow in near-zero weather, and with some of their best clothes missing because of the war.

"Last year's list showed 39 species. The decline this year was caused by the early freezing of lakes and ponds, driving water and shore birds south. The 1941 census listed 15 kinds of duck, a grebe, a killdeer, and two species of gull. This year's search disclosed only five species of duck — and to get four of these a pair of searching had to walk over the ice to the middle of Maeder Lake, where about 500 ducks were gathered on the last small patch of open water."
"Floyd Merts, game protector, guided the Nasdor searchers, and contributed to their 'bag' by turning up a short-eared owl they had missed.

"Among the notable finds were a goshawk, which is a rare bird in this area, two owls left behind by their sheet-waving brethren, and a flock of 60 snow buntings in a field along Route 18. Eight other 'snowflakes' were seen in the flat land south of Youngstown.

"Grant H. Cook veteran ornithologist, organized the census. Others taking part were Miss Core Turner, Miss Helen Culbertson, Raymond S. Marshall, Paul Stewart, R. O. Mellinger, Evan Dressel, R. O. Reimerding, Edward C. Wimmers, George B. Bickes and Dr. G. D. Tomp. Among the missing were Vincent McLaughlin Jr., Adrian J. Biggus, and Williams J. Baker, now in the armed forces. Mellinger goes into the army December 26.

"The birds seen, with the number of individuals of each species, were:
Ballard Hawk, 1; Black Duck, 13; Bald-pate Duck, 1; Heated merganser, 1; American merganser, 1; Boshawk, 1; Sharp-shinned Hawk, 2; Cooper's Hawk, 1; Red-tailed Hawk, 1; Rough-legged Hawk, 1; Bald Eagle, 1; Marsh Hawk, 1; Sparrow Hawk, 5; Bob-white, 15; Ring-necked Pheasant, 4; Mourning Dove, 6; Great Horned Owl, 1; Barred Owl, 2; Short-eared Owl, 1; Pipking, 1; Pileated Woodpecker, 1; Red-bellied Woodpecker, 2; Hairy Woodpecker, 1; Downy Woodpecker, 49; Northern Mockingbird, 1; Prairie Horned Lark, 4; Blue Jay, 30; Crow, 10; Fish-tailed 49; Tufted Titmouse, 49; White-breasted Nuthatch, 49; Red-breasted Nuthatch, 1; Brown Creeper, 5; Winter Wren, 1; Golden-crowned Kinglet, 1; Starling, 7; English Sparrow, 219; Meadow Lark, 1; Redbird, 2; Cardinal, 47; Goldfinch, 11; Slate-colored Junco, 19; Tree Sparrow, 291; Song Sparrow, 15; Snow Bunting, 68." Total individuals = 1,154.

-Editor.

FIELD NOTES

A migratory Shrike Makes a Kill:

Rule Year's morning a migratory Shrike was seen sitting in a small thorny apple tree within sixty feet of the house. He was the only one observed in the Youngstown area during the sixteen years that the writer has been here. Shortly after the Shrike was seen, a flock of English Sparrows flew into the same tree. One of them perched close to this stranger, a fatal mistake on his part. The Shrike struck. The sparrow was stunned. The two of them landed on the ground where the Shrike continued to rain blows until the sparrow was lifeless.

The Shrike kept up the assault until the sparrow's head was severed from the body. With the head he flew to a nearby bush and there consumed this Shrike's meal. Within five minutes he was back at the body of his victim. Picking it up, he hopped to a low limb on the apple tree and gradually worked his way to a distance of about a yard above ground. There he found lodgment for his kill. The body was made fast among the small twigs.
For the next seven hours the shrike did not desert his quarry for a distance of more than three feet. This was to be a day of feasting for him. From the sparrow’s breast he first plucked the dark-red flight muscles, aURLA, at a URLA. When his appetite was temporarily satisfied, he would hop to a slightly higher perch only to return a few minutes later for more of the delectable sparrow. Thus he continued throughout the day — from breast to entrails, entrails to other parts of the victim.

It was a quarter of six in the evening before a let-up in the feasting was evidenced. At that time the shrike made his way to the top of the small tree. For a moment he sat there as if meditating the joy of his feast-hours. Presently he lifted his head, gave his tail a flirt or two, then flew to a larger tree a hundred yards distant. But briefly he stayed there. Spreading his wings, he took a course south across Suncrest and doubtless was soon resting his sparrow-fed body in the denseness of some tree or shrub, for night was fast approaching.

Close examination of the crime-scene revealed the thoroughness with which the killer had done his work. Only the extreme tip of one wing was left dangling from a twig. Having made a complete clean-up, the shrike would not need to return on the morrow. Neither did he then or since insofar as we know.

I. B. Boggs
Morgantown, West Virginia.

During the Brooks Bird Club field trip at Lake Terra Alta over Labor Day last September 1943, a dead bird was picked up on the road going to Crumelville.

The bird in all probability was hit by a car and was badly mangled, so at the time identification was doubtful. However, in a recent note from Mr. Leonard Llewelyn from Cambridge, Maryland, who in company with his wife and daughter were at the camp, he said he was sure it was a Philadelphia Vireo, Vireo philadelphicus. This is the first record of this species for the Terra Alta list.

Charles Conrad

The Brooks Bird Club has always aimed to help beginning bird students whenever possible, so it seems not amiss to publish any notes they might have, even if the observations are not particularly unusual for the area. The following note was sent in by a student of Triadelphia High School, by a boy very much interested in birds — as evidenced by his attendance on bird walks and his interest in reporting his observations. — Editor

On Saturday afternoon, January 9, 1943, about 4:30, Phyllis Ritter and I were walking in the vicinity along Big Wheeling Creek directly behind Triadelphia High School when a Great Blue Heron was seen just taking off from the creek. Later the same day the bird was seen again further down the creek, and was observed again the following Thursday in the same locality.

Bill Willis
1301 National Road
Wheeling, W. Va.
Duck Migration Dates:

By reason of the likelihood of waterfowl to linger in open waters in this latitude through the winter season, or so long as the surface is not entirely frozen over, it is difficult to speak of early arrivals amongst the ducks.

Observations on the small Chautauqua pond, near Cadiz, include the recollection of a single Lesser Scaup staying until the December freeze had put an inch of ice on the pond, and then on a sudden flight dropping down and sliding over the very clear ice, which it evidently mistook for water. Several years ago a Whistling Swan stayed on this same pond until late in December, keeping a small patch of open water by swimsing about.

At the 1960 Christmas Census (December 23) the following water birds were listed at the Tappan Lake, then not largely filled: Mallard, 10; Black Duck, 32; Pintail, 2; American Golden-eye, 1; Florida Gallinule, 1; Herring Gull, 1.

While exact dates of arrivals at Tappan Lake are not available, approximate dates can be given for average appearances of several of the ducks.

Blacks and Mallards put in an appearance in numbers by mid-March, with a few the first week in March. By the last of March or the first of April, Pintail are present, and early in April nearly all have some representatives, particularly, Blue Winged Teal, Ring-necked and Red Heads. A little later, say from the first week to the middle of April may be seen Shovellers, Ruffle Heads, Green Winged Teal, etc. In early April should be listed Baldpates, which also come in late in March. A few years ago there was ice until late March, and the flights were delayed, leaving the impression that there can be a variance of about two weeks, dependent upon how soon the water is clear.

The late flights are comprised largely of Scaups, which linger into early May. Wood Ducks have been seen in March at Pleasant Lake, and probably nest there. Eggs have been found floating on the surface at Tappan in early May. The Margarets are seen at Tappan from the middle of April to the first week in May.

In all, sixteen species of ducks have been accurately identified at Tappan, and most of these have been seen only on hunting. The season properly extends from the first week in March to the first in May, but the larger flights may be expected to disappear by the middle of April, the second week to the last of March being the heaviest flights at Tappan.

John G. Verley
Cadiz, Ohio

Just traveling: - Frank Conner (At) left DuPont Plant in Morgantown and is now at Aberdeen Proving Grounds, Md. looking for Pat (John Pattison) -- perhaps they have found each other by this time -- we surely hope so . . . . . Bob Reeserberger left Aberdeen and on his journey west stopped off at Denver and hunted for two and one half hours with Broding . . . . Reeserberger ended up at the Army Air Base at Salt Lake City, Utah -- which place had just been vacated by Paul West.

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CORRESPONDENCE FOR JANUARY

The correspondence for January included the much looked for rise out of Olsen (expected ever since he received the Christmas gift from the club). He says: "Of all the low, sneaking, killer-in-the-dark, snake-in-the-grassier tricks, the trick you did to me is the worst, most dastardly, lowest, and meanest of all the awful things that could be done. You must be too old, one club could not think up such a thing! I received a copy of The Reserve this evening and all the pictures, or rather all the ones worth looking at, were cut out and I know who did it!" He does, however, send one picture back which the "censor" had somehow missed.

Another nice letter from Byrne Waterman in Kansas — "The other day we had a little trip across country for four and one-half miles. We split up in groups, were given a compass with a reading and told to walk straight across everything until we came to our objective. Our group was one of the few groups to hit the objective right on the nose. Must have been some of my bird clubbing and hill-billy ways as I walked the other fellows to near exhaustion." Byrne mentions the Reunion, and says, "I hope some day we will have one Real Reunion with everybody there singing all the old songs, then we have our convoy practices a group of us always sing. I have taught them 'Let's go down to Little Mary Ann's', 'Puffer Billy', and, of course, 'I want to wake up in the morning.'"

From Helen Howell came a very interesting account of their Christmas Census in Nashville, Tennessee, which was held the same day the Brooks Bird Club held theirs. "We had a gloomy sort of day with high winds in the morning... it rained when we got deep in the woods... it was between 40 and 50 degrees... the total for the census was 65 species and one more group yet to be accounted for." Their census included a little lake where 6 ducks, a coot and a hill-deer were found.

A letter from Bob Rosenberger who says, "Glad you're taking your daily walks once again and I wish that some day I'll again pick up my glasses and wander off into Miller's Hollow or up Edington Lane. It's fun, isn't it?"

Peter Chandler writes, "A friend of mine and former pupil was sent to Lowry Field in Colorado and who should look him up but old Sarge Braiding which brought forth a letter to me from both of them. Braiding is still enthusiastic about everything."

Wayne Wilson in Doorsfield says, "Sarge and I certainly miss the campfires, singing and all the good fellowship. You see, we have nothing like that here. We can't get people out from under their bridge tables long one ugh."

Corporal Sam Shaw was riding along with 56 other soldiers in a bus going back to camp when this incident occurred during the singing of one song after another. They got into 'Somebody's in the Kitchen with Dinah', and other old standbys. Then several superb voices came out with 'Be Kind to Your Web-Footed Friends. "Hey", called Sam, "Anyone here belong to the Brooks Bird Club? - There was no answer!" Sam sends this nature report — "Flora — a forest of tall pines and other trees; fauna — cows are on next farm; mineral kingdom — red sand."
Remember Herman Poestlthwaite? He was a corresponding member before he entered the service - he's in Mississippi now and he says, "Today for the first time since coming in the army, I went for a walk in the woods. Birds - there were dozens of them. Species I had never seen before and plenty of songs I had never heard. Then the trees are so different. Now I wish I had attended your club and taken more interest in Gray's."

Don Kayser, my dear in Louisiana, sent this very much appreciated letter, "As I write this letter, I am dreaming. I dream of the day after this is over, and we can be gathered together again. I dream of a campfire at Terra Alta where I can sit with my back against a log - and cheer in my heart. Sit among the best of friends and gaze into the glowing depths of the fire, while listening to the stories that never grow old, and the singing and with the glow of the fire ember - the aroma of wood smoke in the air and perfect contentment in my heart, drift off to sleep after all is still."

Elizabeth Hts
Lebo Terrace
Woodside, Wheeling, W. Va.

JANUARY MEETING

The regular meeting of the Brooks Bird Club was held on Friday, January 29 at the clubroom with 13 persons present. The usual business of committee reports and expenses were discussed and the membership committee was requested to meet to discuss plans for increasing and renewing memberships.

An article in the January issue of THE RESTART concerning the Christmas Boxes was read by Jean Semancik. Some very interesting letters, received recently, were read by Elizabeth Hts. A report on the Christmas boxes was given by Mabel Reynold - 21 boxes were sent with a cost, including postage of 99 cents each. Dorothy Comer read the Diary for the past month which showed that the Bird Club has been very busy.

The program was turned over to Carolyn Comer who explained that due to transportation problems, none of the invited Four-H leaders were able to be present. However, Kay Comer talked on "Along the Trail" project sheets which are to be used by this group. Miss Bryan Burton was present and expressed her appreciation for the work done.


Eva Nays, Secretary

The addresses of Karl Muller, Don Kayser, David Wadlow and Paul West are being withheld from this issue as we are not certain of their present location. They will in all probability be included in the next issue of THE RESTART. If there are any corrections or additions to be made on the following page, it would be very much appreciated if such information would be sent to Wheeling for publication in THE RESTART.

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Lt. Walter L. Aschen
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Lt. William E. Bilzer
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Sgt. Ralph Bischoff
Camp Croft, S.C.

Pvt. Robert Bonnenger
U.S. Army Air Base
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T/Sgt. George R. Broiding
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Lt. Frank F. Conner, Jr.
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A.S. George F. Flower, SV
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Army War Show, Co. B, War Section
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Lt. William Lorr
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Camp McCarr, Miss.

Cpl. Samuel Shaw
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Pvt. Lyman B. Watersman
2nd Arm. Sig. Co.
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Northampton, Mass
NOTES FROM OTHER PUBLICATIONS

THE WILSON BULLETIN (Vol. 54, No. 4, p. 232) December 1942 - A bird note by William C. Legg, Mount Lookout, W. Va. - "From June 13 to 20, 1942, the Brooks Bird Club held its annual field trip at Holly River State Park, Webster County, West Virginia. On the afternoon of the first day I identified there several singing Swainson's Warblers (Dendroica oreades) a species with which I had fortunately several months' experience in Nicholas County." Later the warblers were observed by other club members and "were found at all suitable habitats visited in the park. This extends about 60 miles northward the known breeding range of this species in West Virginia."

THE CARDINAL (Vol. VI, No. 1, pp. 16-17) January 1943 - "West Virginia Bird Notes, 1942" by Maurice Brooks. "Ornithologically speaking, the year's most interesting developments in the state were the rediscovering of Sutton's Warbler in Berkeley County" (The Cardinal, July 1942, Vol. V, p. 187 - Sutton's Warbler Again) and "the discovery of Swainson's Warbler in numbers in Webster County." Other notes in the article concerned "extensions of known ranges of bird species within West Virginia."

Editor's Note: There are over 20 active and corresponding members of the Brooks Bird Club in the armed forces of the United States - Army, Navy, Air Corps - fighting to help us keep the freedom to do the things we've always done, including our right to belong to a club of this sort. They like to keep in touch with us, and for us to keep them informed of our activities. To do so we write letters to them and ask you to do the same; and for the duration, each of them is being sent THE RESTART from each time it is printed. In addition to the letters you write, we didn't you like to help pay for the cost of sending THE RESTART to them by sending in an extra dollar (or two) to the club - and of course, keep your own membership paid up to date? Wouldn't you like to help keep THE RESTART "flying" to all corners of the globe?

THE RESTART is published monthly by and for the members of the Brooks Bird Club. A corresponding membership may be obtained upon payment of one dollar which includes a twelve-month subscription to THE RESTART. All members are permitted to contribute field notes for publication.

The Brooks Bird Club, North Fifth St., Wheeling, W. Va.