When Al Stevenson reached working age in the 1880s, a dollar a day was the prevailing wage and had been for more than a half century. Workdays often lasted twelve hours or more. At the end of a six-day week, a man brought home six dollars. Not counting Sundays, when most workers rested, this sum amounted to an annual income of about $313 without deductions or fringe benefits. Yet many families lived well, for in the final years of the past century a dollar bought much more in goods and services than its inflated descendant does today.

The dollar-a-day rate had become widespread in the United States even before the end of the first quarter of the nineteenth century. Frances Trollope, an English writer, reported this in an account of her American travels published in 1832. Henry David Thoreau, who set himself up in a hut by Walden Pond in the spring of 1845, estimated “the pecuniary value of every man’s labor at one dollar a day” at that time. In the years just before the Civil War, even skilled workers in the Monongahela River valley seldom made

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Mr. Stevenson was born in 1907 on a farm near New Geneva. He graduated from Penn State in 1930, worked as a newspaperman for a period of time, and then joined the staff of Popular Science magazine. During his twenty-seven years with Popular Science, he authored or coauthored four books. Now living in Mountainville, New Jersey, Mr. Stevenson is researching the historical aspects of life in southwestern Pennsylvania.—Editor

1 Frances Trollope, Domestic Manners of the Americans, 2 vols. (London, 1832). Mrs. Trollope noted (1: 163-64) that “the average wages of a labourer throughout the Union is ten dollars a month, with lodging, boarding, washing, and mending; if he lives at his own expense he has a dollar a day.”

2 Thoreau, in Walden (Mod. Lib. ed., N.Y., 1950), 28, writes: “An average house in this neighborhood costs perhaps eight hundred dollars, and to lay up this sum will take from ten to fifteen years of the laborer’s life, even if he is not encumbered with a family — estimating the pecuniary value of every man’s labor at one dollar a day, for if some receive more, others receive less.”
In the early 1870s, hard-working cowboys driving herds from Texas to railroads in Kansas were paid off at the rate of $30 a month, plus the food they ate from the chuck wagon. And despite a major strike in which guards killed seven and wounded twenty near Scottdale, miners in southwestern Pennsylvania in the early 1890s were making just about a dollar a day — from which deductions were made for house rent and heating coal.

In the 1890s young Al Stevenson worked many days for a dollar. This is revealed in the ledger where he recorded details of his many jobs from 1890 until almost 1900, a book that survives in my possession. But he soon found that with his farm wagon and team of horses he could command much more by doing hauling jobs for his neighbors and the business establishments located in his hometown of Greensboro, Pennsylvania.

Stevenson's major employers in the early 1890s were two pottery companies then operating in Greensboro — Hamilton and Jones and Williams and Reppert. Both paid him $3.50 a day for hauling clay from nearby clay banks. One bank was located across the Monongahela River in Fayette County south of New Geneva, the other northwest of Greensboro in Greene County. In winter when the clay banks were idle, Stevenson worked for a dollar a day in the Williams and Reppert pot shop. In other slack times, he loaded his wagon with earthenware from one of the two potteries and set off for several days through Greene County, selling jugs, pitchers, crocks, canning jars, and other stoneware from door to door.

Alfred Adolph Stevenson, my father, was born on September 16, 1862. His birthplace was a farmhouse near the top of the ridge just west of the Old Glass Works. This was the name commonly given to a cluster of homes built around the site of a glass factory that operated for a half century in the early 1800s a mile north of Greensboro. As

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3 Geo. H. Thurston, *Directory of the Monongahela and Youghiogheny Valleys* (Pittsburgh, 1859; reprint ed., Greensboro, Pa., 1982). Total annual wages are cited in the directory for several factories in the 1850s. When divided by the number of "hands" (employees), these totals average out somewhere near a dollar a day.


6 Residents of Greensboro and New Geneva usually referred to the local potteries as "pot shops."

7 During the author's boyhood in the years of World War I, this ridge was known as "Gabler's Knob." At that time, the house where Al Stevenson was born still stood, plainly visible from the farm across the river in Fayette County that Stevenson bought in about 1905.

8 This glass factory was an offshoot of the one established on Georges
Alfred A. Stevenson at the time of his marriage in 1895
a boy, Al attended the one-room Glass Works School just long enough to learn to read, write, and do simple sums. There was no time for more learning; young Al and his elder brother were needed at home to help with the farmwork. This family burden became even heavier after June 28, 1884, when Ellis Bailey Stevenson, Jr., my grandfather, died at the age of fifty-two of a heart attack, leaving ten children, the youngest less than a year old. Al then was nearing twenty-two. By 1890, when he began keeping his ledger, the fatherless family had moved down the hill to a new home on the outskirts of the Old Glass Works. The eldest son, Martin, was then homesteading in Kansas and the eldest daughter, Eva, had married and gone to Iowa. Four boys and four girls remained at home. Two brothers, Will and Presley, were old enough to help Al with the family support.

In 1890, Greensboro's fortunes were still on a rising scale. Paddlewheel steamboats provided the borough's main link with the outer world. One or more boats put in each day at the cobblestoned wharf at the foot of steep County Street to pick up and deliver freight Creek in New Geneva by Albert Gallatin. The same expert workmen who made New Geneva glass moved across the river and set up a new shop.

9 This youngest child was named John Jones Stevenson for my grandmother's first cousin, John Jones, who in 1866 had set up the pottery firm of Hamilton and Jones in partnership with Frank Hamilton, son of William Leet Hamilton.
and passengers. At the south edge of the wharf a hand-pulled ferry crossed the Monongahela to New Geneva. Several general stores were in operation. The imposing Monongahela House, a three-story red brick hotel, overlooked the wharf and river, its high-ceilinged rooms ready to greet the traveler with big-city elegance, its many features including a ballroom and theater on the third floor. Traveling theatrical groups brought melodrama to appreciative audiences there, as duly noted in the pages of the weekly Greensboro Graphic. During the summer a showboat docked occasionally at the wharf, its shrill calliope calling to customers for miles back into the hills on both sides of the river. Drummers intent on replenishing the stock of local stores put up at the Monongahela House or at the Greensboro House, a second hotel another block up the street. These traveling salesmen hired hacks from local livery stables to carry their trade to other merchants back in the Greene County hinterlands.

In 1890, Greensboro had been Greensboro for only eleven years. In 1879 it had become a borough and at the same time changed its name from the Greensburgh its founder, Elias Stone, had designated his new town in 1787. At the beginning of the final decade of the past century, stock raisers on the hilly farms to the westward drove their cattle, hogs, and sheep to Greensboro for shipment to market. The two potteries in the borough provided jobs, and there was much talk of a coming boom in coal mining with the expected approach of a railroad on the opposite side of the river. In Greensboro in 1890, there were many opportunities for a young man who wanted to work.

Al Stevenson did want to work, and his ledger shows there were few days when he was idle. By 1890, he and his horses and wagon were a familiar sight as they came up the dirt road from the Old Glass Works, passed the Methodist Church on the right, and turned left into Greensboro's Diamond Street where the Hamilton and Jones pottery and tile works were located. Farther on near the center of town he might have stopped at the store and post office operated by A. V. Boughner to check Box No. 87 for Stevenson mail. From

10 Glenwood Davis, Jr., in an article in the Morning Herald (Union-town), Dec. 9, 1974.
11 Samuel P. Bates, History of Greene County, Pennsylvania (Chicago, 1888), 765. For about twenty-five years, A. V. Boughner and his brother William had conducted the pottery business that their father in 1811 took over from the Vances. From 1868 on, A. V. Boughner devoted his time to a store. In 1885 he was appointed postmaster.
12 Within the pages of Stevenson's ledger is a loose receipt for payment of rent on this box in 1894.
there one could see the Williams and Reppert kilns and buildings rising on lots toward the Monongahela. If he headed toward the dock to pick up freight, he might pass the Greensboro House, an inn that Stevenson knew well in his youthful days, for his uncle, David R. Jones, had once owned and operated it.

By the time he was twenty-eight years old in 1890, Stevenson knew almost everyone in the borough and for miles around. When there was hauling to be done, he often got the job. He worked as a moving man to move furniture from house to house. He hauled coal and brick. He was seen passing through the streets with hay, straw, corn, fodder, and other farm products. In May and June 1890, he did hauling jobs for the borough government on four different occasions at the rate of $2.00 for a half day. On two days he hauled lumber and sand to the Methodist Church. In August 1893, he charged William Davis $7.00 for two days of “hauling stone for school,” and on October 31 of that year, he billed South and Keener $15.00 for “hauling lumber for school.”

Stevenson's ledger pages were headed by the names of his employers. No less than one hundred thirty names are listed in the ledger, and Stevenson did work for most of them at some time during the last decade of the century. At the end of each day, he jotted down under the proper heading what he had done that day and the pay he expected when the account was settled some days (or weeks) later.

This delayed method of payment was a part of the credit system on which a rural and small-town economy then operated. Carpenters, masons, and other odd-jobs workers kept records of their work. From time to time the account was “settled” and was so marked in the ledger or account book. Storekeepers seldom collected cash. Instead, they recorded purchases in a daybook and later transferred the items to a second ledger where accounts were arranged by customer names in alphabetical order. Customers were charged nothing extra for this service. They were simply expected to pay within a reasonable time. Customers usually chose one particular store at which to trade, a term derived from the practice of barter which in 1890 was still common, particularly in the case of farmers who had butter and eggs to exchange for groceries. Barter deals were recorded along with cash accounts by the storekeeper.

Stevenson's original hauling equipment probably came from his

13 David Rhodes Jones married Priscilla Stevenson, the sister of Ellis Bailey Stevenson, Jr. The latter married Mary Frances Jones, David’s sister. Thus, the five Jones children were Stevenson’s double first cousins.
Drawing of farm wagon from 1897 Sears catalogue. Al Stevenson owned and drove a wagon like it.

father's estate. Certain ledger entries suggest he had a second wagon and two teams of horses, one of the teams being driven by a younger brother. In addition to the farm wagons, he had a buggy or buckboard for hack hire; it was occasionally listed in the ledger at the rate of a dollar a day.

The farm wagons may have been built in a wagon shop in Masontown, across the river in Fayette County. A wagon builder named Howard was in business there for many years. In its 1897 catalogue, Sears, Roebuck and Company gave specifications for such wagons. They came in either wide track (five feet from center to center of the wheel tires) or narrow track (four feet six inches). Bottom beds were in two widths (either three feet six inches or three feet two inches) and in two lengths (ten feet six inches or ten feet even). Bed depth was always fourteen inches. Top boxes (usually called sideboards) were twelve inches deep and were held in place by projecting double guides that slipped down inside and outside the surfaces of the bottom box. The bottom tailgate usually hinged downward; the top one slipped down between retaining guides.

A driver sat on the right side of the two-leaf spring seat atop the wagon, operating with his right hand an iron lever that set wooden brake shoes against the rear wheels while descending hills. Surprisingly enough, the brakes were also useful in hauling a heavy load uphill. Thank-you-mams\textsuperscript{14} occurred at intervals on most hill

\textsuperscript{14} Webster's lists this term as given but some historians insist on the less polite "thank-you-marm."
roads. These shallow ditches ran across the road often at an angle, with drainage as one of their functions. Ascending the hill, the wagoner stopped with the rear wheels in the thank-you-mam, set the brakes, and gave the team a breather. When automobiles became common, thank-you-mams were graded out of rural roads.

A large farm wagon had a carrying capacity of as much as 4,500 pounds, a fact worth noting since Al Stevenson at times was paid by the pound for hauling potter's clay to Hamilton and Jones. He sometimes hauled more than 15,000 pounds in a day. If only one team was employed, this meant four trips to the clay bank. The ledger does not list a poundage rate of pay, but Stevenson normally charged both Greensboro potteries $3.50 a day for clay hauling. Under some dates, he listed $7.00 for "two days hauling," entries that indicated a younger brother was driving a second team.

This high rate for clay hauling was not all profit, however. At regular intervals Stevenson had to have a blacksmith reshoe the horses. To feed them, he raised corn, oats, and hay on land adjoining the Stevenson home at the Old Glass Works. On his hauling jobs he carried a sack of oats for filling the nose bags at noon time while he ate from the dinner pail packed at home in the morning.

Stevenson's days were often longer than twelve hours. Through most of the year he set out at dawn. Before starting he did such chores as feeding the pigs he raised for the family meat. In later years he sometimes remarked that only on Sundays was there enough daylight to gauge the growth of the young porkers. Feeding the pigs was a chore that came second, however, to feeding the horses. They needed time to eat before he quickly curried them and put on the horsecollars, pulled down the harnesses from the pegs in the stable where they were stored, threw a set over the back of each horse, hooked the hames around the collar, cinched the belly straps, removed the halter, and fumbled the bridle bit into each horse's mouth, and then, with a pat on the rump, sent them out to the watering trough before hitching up.

With reins attached to the bridle bits and the horses lined up on each side of the wagon tongue, a collar strap from each horse was strapped to an iron ring on the end of the neck yoke that slipped over the front end of the wagon tongue. After hooking up the traces

15 In its 1897 catalogue, Sears, Roebuck and Company gave 4,500 pounds as the capacity of its largest farm wagon.
16 The author's elder brother, Edwin Ellis Stevenson, recalled Al Stevenson speaking of his early rising on several occasions.
to the whiffletree assembly, Stevenson was ready to climb into the seat and set off for work.

In my own boyhood, we knew the whiffletree assembly as a doubletree. This consisted of three pieces — an iron-fitted wood evener in the middle, with a singletree attached to each end. The evener pivoted on an iron rod thrust through it and the wagon tongue. The pivot sometimes had a U-shaped right-angle projection on the upper end. When withdrawn from the doubletree, this iron pivot did double duty as a wrench for removing the nuts so the wagon wheels could be pulled out far enough for application of axle grease, a black salvelike substance that came in a can. At times of heavy wagon usage, greasing the wheels was a daily chore. In doing this, a man must remember that the two wheel nuts on the left side of the wagon had reverse, or counterclockwise, threads. This was done to keep forward-turning wheels from turning their retaining nuts off the axle.17 Wagoners sometimes kept on hand a stepped wooden jack to support the axle while greasing was being done. An awl, a spring-hole punch, a box or two of rivets, a supply of leather, and assorted rings and snaps were kept at hand for harness repairs as they became necessary.

In 1883, Dam No. 7 was opened downstream from Greensboro just above Gray's Landing. Before that, much of the clay for Greensboro's potteries came from the New Geneva banks. Wagons forded the Monongahela at the foot of New Geneva's Ford Street. At that point, just below the mouth of Georges Creek, a sandbar extended almost across the stream. On the west side, a steep road ran up from the water at a sharp angle and joined the river road to Front Street in Greensboro.

When the dam backed up navigable water over the New Geneva ford, ferry tolls could be avoided by hauling from a clay deposit near Mapletown18 northwest of Greensboro. But an entry for June 9, 1890, in Stevenson's work ledger indicates that clay was being brought from New Geneva despite the ferry tolls. On that date he made this entry under the Williams and Reppert heading: "To one day's hauling on the other side — $3.50 [italics mine]." Eight similar charges were made on as many days during June and July 1890.

No further mention is made in the ledger of hauling from "the

17 Henry Ford carried over these same reverse threads to the left-side wheels of the famous Model T.
18 Ralph W. Stone, Geology and Mineral Resources of Greene County, Pa. (Harrisburg, Pa., 1932). Stone was assistant state geologist at the time this book was published.
Site where the Monongahela River could be forded in the early days at New Geneva is seen at the right of this photo. Note the covered bridge spanning Georges Creek beside approach to the ford. The road in foreground on the Greene County side of the river led to Front Street in Greensboro. Completion of Lock No. 7 three miles downstream in 1883 backed up deep water over the ford. This photo was taken in about 1900 before the railroad was built along the New Geneva waterfront. The New Geneva ferry landing can be seen toward the left end of the photo in opening between trees.

other side” but Stevenson family legends indicate it continued for the next three or four years. The major New Geneva clay bank was located just to the right of the road leading eastward to Fallen Timbers and Morris Cross Roads, about one hundred yards beyond what was then the northeast corner of the Friendship Hill estate. By 1890, Al Stevenson had become acquainted with James Palmer Baker, the farm manager at Friendship Hill, 19 and sometimes worked for him and at the same time courted Baker’s second daughter, Ella Catherine.

In crossing the Monongahela at New Geneva by ferry, Stevenson helped the ferryman propel the flatboat. In the 1890s, the ferry still traveled back and forth on a wire-rope cable anchored to posts

19 Friendship Hill was the name given the estate Albert Gallatin developed on the plateau south of New Geneva. The National Park Service now operates the estate as a national historic site.
at either side of the stream. The cable ran through pulleys on one side of the craft but was slack enough to rest on the river bottom and not endanger passing steamboats. After the ramps had been raised and safety chains stretched across each end, the ferryman pole the boat free from the landing. He then picked up one of several heavy wooden rods about a yard long with a slot across the flat surface near one end. Walking forward to the bow of the boat, the ferryman fitted the slotted rod over the cable, leaned against the rod, and walked behind it to the rear of the boat. As he walked, pressure exerted through his feet propelled the boat slowly toward the opposite shore. Though a paying passenger, Stevenson always picked up another slotted rod and joined the ferryman. Arriving at the rear, each pulled the rod free and returned to the bow, alternating in this way until the craft scudded into the landing gravel and it was time to drop the ramp and unhook the safety chain. The New Geneva ferry operated by this method until a gasoline propulsion system was installed after World War I. In the early days, the ferryman saved himself effort by carrying foot passengers across in a skiff and leaving the cumbersome flatboat behind.

The New Geneva clay bank was located on land known in 1890 as the Bierer farm. This originally was part of "Phillips Choice," a 453-acre estate patented in 1788 by Theophilus Phillips, a lieutenant colonel in the Revolutionary War. In the 1950s oldsters in the area could remember two clay banks on the estate. The major one can still be seen, a water-filled hole to the right of the road about a hundred yards east of the Albert Gallatin High School. The Theophilus Phillips pioneer home was located about another hundred yards eastward along the road and then a short distance to the left toward Georges Creek. Until 1780, when Pennsylvania and Virginia settled their border dispute, the Phillips home was the site of county court sessions for Monongalia County, Virginia. In the late summer of 1784, Lieutenant Colonel Phillips entertained there overnight his commander in chief, George Washington,20 who was then returning to Virginia after visiting his properties in Washington and Fayette counties.

Late in the last century, mining clay at the New Geneva bank was an important industry for the entire region. During the spring, summer, and autumn months, at least fifteen men kept busy digging
the clay and loading it on wagons for delivery to New Geneva and Greensboro potteries or to a barge at New Geneva for transport downriver to a Rices Landing pottery. Another ten men worked as teamsters hauling the clay. Al Stevenson was one of them.

In the years after World War II, Doc Atchinson, a former New Geneva potter, liked to tell of the different results obtained with different clays. He spoke of the attractive Bierer clay as making ware of a creamy gray color while ware made of Dunlap clay was an unattractive stony gray. The latter clay was mined east of Mapletown on a Greene County farm then owned by a man named Dunlap. A water-filled pond now occupies the site. The pond is surrounded by woodland east of the Gabler ballfield on the flat land north of the crossroads at the northeast corner of the Monongahela Hill Cemetery.

In the 1890s several men were available at the clay banks to help load Stevenson's farm wagon. But unloading at the pottery was usually a backbreaking one-man shoveling job. In the final years the New Geneva pottery was in operation, unloading had become a far simpler task. About 1912, clay was hauled to the pottery in two-wheel carts that could be emptied by simply upending the beds. Al Stevenson hauled clay to both Greensboro potteries during 1890, 1891, 1892, and 1893, sometimes hauling to Hamilton and Jones one day and to Williams and Reppert the next. The work ledger shows that he had his last dealings with Hamilton and Jones in 1893, but he continued for three years longer with Williams and Reppert, returning to Greensboro in 1896 even after he had married in 1895 and moved across the river to Fayette County.

In the first years, his charge for one day's hauling was always $3.50. On July 5, 1892, he began listing clay hauled to Hamilton and Jones by the pound, the total figure that day being 15,280 pounds. On all later occasions, he charged this firm the same way. He ended up with a flurry of activity from June 12 to August 24, 1893, when he hauled to them almost every day and was paid off with a total of $77.82, a figure that averaged out at somewhat less than $3.50 daily.

21 From Priscilla Stevenson Lockard. In a thesis written in the 1950s for credit at Waynesburg College, the author's sister reported on an interview with Atchinson.
22 Ernest Gabler, of Greensboro, and Herbert Stevenson, of Mapletown, the author's first cousin, informed the author of this location in separate interviews in April 1983.
23 James Fast, of New Geneva, gave information about these carts to the author in April 1983. Jim grew up in New Geneva in a house near the covered bridge, a site the carts would have passed going to and from the pottery.
In September 1893, Williams and Reppert dropped him to $3.00 a day and continued that rate thereafter. Stevenson hauled his last clay to this firm in May 1894. These reductions portended the end of stoneware manufacture in Greensboro. Beginning on April 1, 1895, Stevenson took almost daily consignments from Williams and Reppert at a wholesale rate and then peddled the items retail. This continued until early in March 1896, when the supply on hand apparently was depleted. Stevenson did his last work for Hamilton and Jones in 1893. In 1897, when the Hamilton and Jones buildings were almost destroyed by fire, the company moved across town to the vacant buildings of Williams and Reppert, but work continued there for only a short time.

It is interesting to note that the decline of the pottery industry in Greensboro came simultaneously with a major disruption in worldwide business — the Panic of 1893 and the depression that followed for four years or more. At that time, new types of products also were appearing on the market to fill the functions of the oldtime stoneware.

The ledger shows that Al Stevenson and his brother Presley worked extensively for Williams and Reppert at the rate of a dollar a day, but I do not know what work was performed. My mother gave me a one-gallon jug in 1935 with the remark that my father had "made it." This suggests he may have operated a pottery wheel, but I have not been able to confirm this. It seems more likely that he was hired for one of the routine but essential other jobs performed in a pottery. In keeping records of the money he earned, Stevenson sometimes charged for overtime. The one-dollar rate was for a workday of eight hours. For one and a quarter and one and a half days, he billed the company for $1.25 and $1.50.

Over the years, Stevenson bought stoneware from both Greensboro potteries and then peddled it from his wagon to villagers and farm people along the roads of Greene County. Accompanied by one of his younger brothers, either Will or Presley, he might be gone for three or four days on one of these trips. Rather than stay overnight at a village inn, he usually chose a farm that could accommodate him and his horses. As time passed, he became selective in his choice of these stops. He refused to return to any home where the housewife had served him either salt-rising bread or red raspberries, both of which he disliked.  

24 Evelyn Stevenson, daughter of Will Stevenson and the author’s first cousin, told of hearing the elder Stevensons discuss these dislikes. She wrote to the author: “Uncle Al claimed that red raspberries tasted like bumblebees.”
In his ledger, Stevenson usually kept accounts of these transactions on pages separate from his work records. One page under a Hamilton and Jones heading is typical. From May 27 to July 22, his purchases almost fill the page. On this page he neglected to record the year, but it apparently was 1890. On May 27 he bought 227 gallons of first-grade ware at five cents a gallon for a total of $11.35. He also piled into his wagon 266 gallons of second-grade ware at two and a half cents a gallon for a total of $6.65. He apparently knew that thrifty Greene County housewives would take half-priced "seconds" with manufacturing defects that did not detract from the utility of the ware. At what prices did he sell the ware? The ledger gives no hint. I suspect that he may have doubled his money, for the going rate for Greensboro and New Geneva pottery had been ten cents a gallon just a few years before.\(^{25}\)

On July 15 the same year, Stevenson itemized his purchases in greater detail as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quantity</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>369 gal</td>
<td>firsts</td>
<td>$18.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 doz</td>
<td>(\frac{1}{2}) gal fruits(^{26})</td>
<td>60(\frac{1}{2})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 doz</td>
<td>(\frac{1}{2}) gal fruits</td>
<td>50(\frac{1}{2})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 doz</td>
<td>(\frac{1}{2}) gal jars</td>
<td>50(\frac{1}{2})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(\frac{1}{2}) doz</td>
<td>(\frac{1}{2}) gal pots</td>
<td>50(\frac{1}{2})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(\frac{1}{2}) doz</td>
<td>(\frac{1}{2}) gal jugs</td>
<td>60(\frac{1}{2})</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Stevenson also had assorted other dealings with the two pottery companies. On July 23, 1890, he charged Hamilton and Jones twenty-five cents for hauling freight, probably from the wharf. In August 1890 one of his horses worked for nine days for Williams and Reppert for a dollar a day. Was this horse perhaps used for the merry-go-round operation that ground the clay fine, a preliminary step in preparing it for the potter?\(^{27}\) On other days in the same period, Stevenson also hired from the company a horse and a wagon.

On several days in late October 1890 Stevenson hauled sand to Williams and Reppert, usually charging seventy-five cents a load. He picked up these loads at one of the two sand pits that nearly a hundred years before had begun supplying the glass factories that operated at New Geneva and north of Greensboro. One sand deposit was located near Mapletown, the other\(^{28}\) south of New Geneva just

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\(^{26}\) These were pottery jars in which housewives canned various fruits.


\(^{28}\) The author recalls that sand was still being hauled from the pits on the plateau south of New Geneva up to the years of World War I.
A sample page from Al Stevenson's work ledger in his own handwriting
west of a road leading into Cedar Grove Cemetery, a site not far from the New Geneva clay bank.

Stevenson’s entry for January 11, 1893, suggests that a heavy snow must have covered the Greensboro area at that period. He charged Williams and Reppert $5.00 for the use of a sled. Farmers then commonly had a bobsled to which they could transfer the bed of a farm wagon for hauling on snow-covered roads. By filling the bed with straw and issuing a few invitations, a group of young people also were all set for an old-time social event — a frolicsome sleigh ride through the snow.

In the spring months, Stevenson kept busy plowing gardens, the charge varying from a dollar to two dollars depending on lot sizes. A plowing customer on February 25, 1892, was James Hamilton, the local potter. He paid Stevenson $2.00 for the job. On the same day Stevenson did a one-dollar plowing job for Arthur Robbins. Stevenson returned on April 11 to harrow the Hamilton garden plot and charge another seventy-five cents. Before plowing he often hauled manure from his own stable and spread it on the ground, the charge being a dollar a load. Frequent entries in the ledger indicate that Stevenson had a market for all the manure his horses could produce.

In the mid-1890s he also did a good business in and around Greensboro by making and selling lime to condition fields and garden plots. A ledger entry listing his expenses in “building a lime kiln” reminded me of a similar venture on our own farm thirty years later. Limestone was quarried from a hillside outcropping, dumped into a pile on an open field, surrounded with firewood and covered with coal. After the coal had burned for a week or so, the ashes were removed and a pile of loose lime remained where the rocks had been. According to the ledger, Stevenson expended $24.57 for labor and materials in building the kiln on his Old Glass Works site. He sold the lime for seven or eight cents a bushel, one wagonload amounting to about thirty bushels. One of his many customers for lime was A. V. Boughner, the former potter. Stevenson delivered a wagonload to him on March 30, 1894, and collected $2.10 for it.

During the autumn and winter months, Stevenson filled in otherwise idle time by hauling coal and slack, both by the bushel. Slack was quality sand from the same pits was used to make the first New Geneva glass.

29 Arthur Robbins later took over the pottery in New Geneva and operated it until his death in 1914. See Schaltenbrand, Old Pots, 22.
extra-fine coal that might even contain a little slate. It could be had for about half the price of good-burning coal. The ledger shows that Stevenson had many dealings with John S. Black, a local coal merchant, and with Benjamin G. Williams who, as the administrator of the estate of his father, Charles Williams, had recently run a track from his hillside mine to the river in order to ship coal by water. Stevenson also hauled coal from workings on the lands of his Old Glass Works neighbors, Benjamin F. and George Gabler. The Gablers were descendants of one of the original New Geneva and Greensboro glassblowers.

On a page devoted to Stevenson's dealings with Ben Gabler, one transaction stands out. It records the sale to Gabler of twelve buckets of blackberries at forty-five cents a bucket for a total of $5.40. Dated September 4, 1892, the entry is inscribed in ornate penmanship, contrasting with Stevenson's scribbles. This perhaps was the writing of one of Stevenson's sisters, Permelia, whose fine penmanship helped win her a teaching certificate when she graduated from Old Glass Works School. Blackberry picking in those days was a useful activity in which young women could engage to stock the home larder and even, as possibly in this case, make a little pin money. The berries grew wild in many fields, free for the taking by anyone willing to fight the thorny brambles — with the farmer's permission, of course.

By 1894, after the death of his brother Presley on October 23, 1893, Al Stevenson found it necessary at times to become an employer. He hired others to help both with his hauling jobs and his farmwork. He paid at the same rate he received — a dollar a day. But there were two exceptions — two boys. One was James Phillips who worked along with his father, Madison Phillips, for fifty cents a day. Young Jim first appeared in the accounts under his father's heading as one day's work for "self and boy." He later had his own billing. At the end of his first day, he took half his pay in cash. But that twenty-five cents was all the actual money he saw for his work. After he had worked for another day and a half, his account was settled for a one-dollar order on a Greensboro store. Joshua Dugan was the other boy employed by Stevenson. Joshua must have been puny and obviously not worth much. Stevenson paid him at the rate of only forty cents a

30 Bates, History of Greene County, 764-65.
31 Ibid., 778.
32 Ibid.
33 The author once saw surviving examples of Permelia's fine penmanship, treasured heirlooms in the family of one of her sons, Wilbur Barclay.
day for the twenty or so days he worked during November and December 1894 and January of the following year. James Downey, who worked for two days at a dollar a day, took twenty-five cents of his pay in a store order for “tobacco.”

Stevenson’s account book reflects the farming operations he carried on at his Old Glass Works home at the same time he worked as a teamster and laborer. This probably was a whole-family operation with his sisters pitching in to take care of the chickens and turkeys, handle the dairy activities, and help with gardening.

Hamilton and Jones, which owned and stabled several horses, was a good customer for Stevenson farm products. On June 5, 1891, Stevenson delivered thirty-five bushels of corn at ninety cents a bushel for a total of $31.50. On October 3, he made another corn delivery, but this time charged by the pound — 1,997 pounds for $19.97. In early 1892 he again sold the firm corn — six bushels at ninety cents a bushel — as well as turkeys weighing thirty-two pounds for ten cents a pound, and thirteen and a half bushels of potatoes for $6.75. By December 2, corn had risen to a dollar a bushel — twenty-five bushels for $25.00. On February 15, 1893, Stevenson delivered 2,200 pounds of straw as bedding for the pottery’s animals, the charge being $9.90. The following April 17, 26, and 28, he delivered 8,630 pounds of hay (four and a half tons) for receipts of $64.73.

But it was Elias A. Flenniken who proved to be Stevenson’s best customer for farm products. In the 1890s, Flenniken was the proprietor of the Greensboro House and a livery stable located just to the rear of the hotel. On May 12 and 14, 1892, Stevenson sold seven tons of hay to the stable for a total of $91.00 and on May 26 a load of straw for $5.00 and twenty-two barrels of corn for $22.00. These were just a few of the deals with Flenniken that Stevenson recorded on four ledger pages, marking a business relationship that continued until a final settlement on January 1, 1896. At times, Stevenson hauled hay, straw, oats, and corn that Flenniken had bought from others, and occasionally hired horses either to or from the livery stable at the rate of a dollar a day.

In the late summer of 1895, Stevenson also delivered garden produce for the hotel dinner table — potatoes at sixty-five cents a bushel, apples at twenty-five cents a bushel, and, on three separate September days, late sweet corn at twenty-five cents for three dozen ears.

34 Al Stevenson never used tobacco himself.
35 Bates, History of Greene County, 767-68.
Stevenson found a ready market for his home-cured bacon at seven cents a pound. On May 30, 1891, he delivered seventy-nine pounds to Hamilton and Jones and two hundred and five pounds a year later — on May 26, 1892. At about the same time Williams and Reppert took four hundred and fifteen pounds. What the two pottery firms did with so much bacon is unclear. But one possibility is that it was parceled out to employees in place of cash wage payments.

In the summer of 1893, Stevenson must have raised a bumper crop of wheat — or perhaps he made a deal with someone who did. During that fall and the following spring, he disposed of thirty-five barrels of flour to Williams and Reppert at $3.40 a barrel, a return to him of $119.00. Over the years, Stevenson also made frequent sales of flour by the sack.

Stevenson may have obtained the flour from one of two mills in the vicinity. During the nineties, Tom Eberhart was operating the former Mellier mill at New Geneva, a towering wooden structure located south of the mouth of Georges Creek. At the same time, John E. ("Jenks") Minor owned a mill on a loop of Whiteley Creek beyond a covered bridge at the western edge of Mapletown, Greene County. Their location indicates that both mills originally were water-powered but in the final years of the century steam engines did the job.

When local farmers brought a small amount of grain, say up to four bushels, to the Minor mill for conversion into flour, a quick trade was made on a barter basis and the wheat was dumped into a large bin for later processing.\(^\text{36}\) For each bushel of wheat (weight sixty pounds) the farmer was given twenty pounds of flour, twelve pounds of bran (fed mostly to horses), and two pounds of middlings (often mixed in slops for pigs) — a total of thirty-four pounds. The miller retained the rest, twenty-six pounds of each bushel, as his fee, realizing that removal of the ever-present cockle seeds from the farmer's wheat would reduce his profit to about twenty pounds. Before grinding the wheat, the Minor mill cleaned out cockle seeds by running the grain through a special machine. The cockle seeds came out a solid black mass. If a farmer wanted to use his own wheat as seed, the mill charged him five cents a bushel for this cleaning.

Straw remaining from Stevenson's wheat went for bedding for

\(^{36}\) Information about the Minor mill was obtained on April 23, 1983, in a personal interview with Arlie Minor of Mapletown, then eighty-four years old. Arlie spoke enthusiastically of working in his father's mill during his boyhood.
both man and beast. On June 8, 1890, he charged Madison Phillips $1.30 for "straw for two ticks." A tick was a cloth mattress case filled with straw. In time, the straw became so pressed together that it provided very little sleeping comfort. So at least once a year, a housewife ripped open the casing, dumped out the old and stuffed in new straw, and sewed up the casing again.

The Stevensons sometimes found their own pasture inadequate for the cows they kept. So they paid for the use of other land. On December 11, 1892, Stevenson recorded a debt of $35.00 for keeping two cows on George Gabler's land since May 12. The same ledger page has this notation: "Cow taken to bull on the 16th day of November 1893." Elsewhere, Stevenson noted the sale of a calf. The Stevensons sometimes sold homemade butter at twenty cents a pound.

In the early 1890s Greensboro began to hear of railroads approaching the region. Signs of this appeared in Stevenson's ledger. On February 21, 1892, and again on January 24, 1893, Greensboro firms paid him for day-long trips to Fairchance, in eastern Fayette County, probably to deliver or return freight shipments. The Baltimore and Ohio was then building its line from Uniontown through the flat lands west of Chestnut Ridge toward Point Marion and eventually to Morgantown, West Virginia. Stevenson made one of these Fairchance trips for T. F. Pennington, a tinner who owned a foundry in Greensboro. Pennington operated the foundry along with a stove and tinware store. In 1890, Pennington was completing a term as burgess of Greensboro. He was a member of the Royal Arcanum, a lodge that Stevenson also had recently joined. Stevenson maintained this membership until his death in 1932.

On February 11, 1894, Stevenson charged Ben Gabler, his Old Glass Works neighbor, for "bringing cows from the Coke Works" across the Monongahela where they had been pastured. The coke ovens were then being built on the Provance Bottoms, a rich stretch of Fayette County farmland running northward from Little Jacobs Creek to a point opposite Gray's Distillery in Greene County. Eventually, a string of coal towns named Gray's Landing, Gallatin, Monvue, and Martin would throw an industrial pall over this once shining land, and the Monongahela Railroad, coming from Brownsville, would be completed in about 1901 to Martin, the coal town located on Little Jacobs Creek. To reach the new cokeworks, Stevenson used

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37 Bates, History of Greene County, 775.
the ferry that crossed the river at the Old Glass Works to a road a half mile south of Little Jacobs Creek. When the Monongahela Railroad continued its tracks southward along the river to New Geneva and beyond in 1912, the ferry was moved downstream to a point just north of the creek. The Gabler family owned and operated this ferry for many years.

During the years he kept his ledger, Stevenson's life was not all work. There was some play, too. Two younger sisters of marriageable age saw to that, and there were also prolonged visits by attractive young female first cousins, the daughters of his Uncle Will Stevenson, who owned and operated a fulling mill on Muddy Creek beyond Carmichaels. These young women naturally attracted their own girlfriends to the Stevenson home and word has come down that Stevenson was not too bashful to join in the festivities that developed.

Suitors arrived regularly by horse and buggy to call on the young women. Within less than a one-year period, marriage took away two of Stevenson's sisters. May, the most attractive, was the first to go. On September 8, 1892, she married Robert Minor. The following August 16, Permelia (known as "Mead") became the bride of Hugh K. Barclay. Both bridegrooms operated prosperous livestock farms in central Greene County near Garards Fort. With family obligations reduced, Stevenson himself could think of marriage. So on October 31, 1895, he hitched up his horse and buggy and drove across the Monongahela to Friendship Hill, where Ella Catherine Baker was waiting. Before nightfall, they had returned from Uniontown as a married couple.

Stevenson continued his ledger only sketchily after his marriage. But he still made a good part of his living as a teamster, even while actively working rented farms near Morris Cross Roads and along the river in Provance Bottoms near Gallatin before buying the 100-acre James Hess farm that encompassed Fort Hill directly across the Monongahela from Greensboro and the Old Glass Works. And there, from his hillside farm where he could survey at will the scenes of his early life beyond the river, he continued to live for more than a quarter century. And it was there that he died — on September 27, 1932, eleven days after his seventieth birthday.