Roane, Wirt Had Border Dispute

History

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History records that Roane County was formed from areas of land "out of parts of Kanawha, Jackson, and Gilmer Counties," with the boundaries of the new county seat set out in the Act of the General Assembly of the State of Virginia, which authorized the formation . No mention is made of taking any area from the then young County of Wirt, but the area comprising the Northern two-thirds of Spencer Magisterial District was cut off from Wirt County. At least our neighboring county to the North so claimed and the issue was not settled until 1915, when a joint commission from both Roane and Wirt Counties, plus a disinterested "umpire", agreed on the boundary line between the two counties.

Wirt County's claim that some of its area had been taken in formation of Roane County was pressed from the earliest days of the county and a petition filed by the former finally resulted in the Roane County Circuit Court. In an order dated May 29, 1915, ordered J. J. Taylor, county surveyor, A. S. Heck and A. B. Thron as members of commission from Roane county, to meet with a commission from Wirt County to settle the issue. On the commission from the latter county were H. F. Pell, J. W. Martin and S. L. Showalter., and Albert G. Matthews of Calhoun County was named as "umpire."

The report of this committee does not show a date, but it is recorded in the office of the County Clerk of Roane County, in Deed Book No. 87, page 1, as being recorded June 30, 1920. This report gives the boundary line the same as given by the Stumps in the first survey of the county boundaries. Since no further action was instituted it is inferred that Wirt County does not believe that the Act of Virginia making and establishing Roane County should be construed as taking any part of Wirt County to make a part of Roane County.

Source: Times Record/Reporter; CENTENNIAL; Section 5 1856-1956; Roane Beginning; Spencer, W. Va.- October 11, 1956