

JUST "CORMA"
by Dorothy Davis

The energy coupled with determination and dedication that made Corma Mowrey one of the most effective presidents in the history of the National Education Association¹, one of the instigators of federal aid to education, and a molder of President Eisenhower's People-to-People Program sprang from a secure childhood. The feeling for humankind that tempered the drive with simplicity and made her loved by those she met could have come from two traumas Corma Mowrey knew in early years.

Born the fourth child after Cassel, Clarice, and Cecil² to Lloyd and Ida Adams Mowrey October 10, 1907, Corma grew up on the family farm near Big Isaac in Doddridge County, W. Va. The family raised their vegetables, kept a cow and hogs to supply food, but the major income came from the country store owned and operated by Lloyd Mowrey in connection with his barbershop where, as Corma put it, "the exclusive 'Mowrey styling' prevailed for us children as well as for all children and adults who patronized the only barbershop available to them in Big Isaac."³

Big Isaac thrived the first decade of the twentieth century because of the oil and gas boom. B. I. Hudkins, M.D., had a small hospital in the village; Lloyd and Ida Adams Mowrey took their children to the Methodist Episcopal Church where three generations of Mowreys before them had attended church; the Mowrey children walked a short distance to the village school.

Lloyd Mowrey was a happy extrovert with a love of nature and the outdoors and a love of sports, especially football and baseball. The Mowrey children recalled with pleasure feasting on meals of venison and wild turkey after Lloyd Mowrey had returned from the annual trip to Pocahontas County, West Virginia, with three lifelong friends.⁴ Somehow Lloyd and Ida Mowrey began calling up names beginning with the letter "C" for their children's given names. In addition, Lloyd Mowrey wanted names which could not be confused with those starting with "K". So when the seventh child was born and the mother suggested "Catherine" for a name, Lloyd Mowrey said, "Oh, no, that can be spelled with a "K" or a "C". Thus the seventh child was named "Cleta".⁵

Six months after the birth of Cleta, Ida Adams Mowrey died on January 6, 1916. Suddenly fourteen-year-old Clarice and eight-year-old Corma were mothers for two boys of ten and five years and two girls, one three years and the other six months old. Lloyd Mowrey's happy nature helped the family to operate with verve unaware that a motherless home was unusual. He had ingenious ways for Santa's annual visit. "One year Santa Claus climbed a ladder to the second floor porch of our two-story house, in costume with pack on back, to awaken us at 4:00 o'clock Christmas morning, telling us to proceed to the downstairs parlor next to the sitting room, where we were to receive our gifts from under a huge, beautifully decorated tree! Only special events permitted full access to and use of the parlor."⁶

Each summer Lloyd Mowrey packed up the children and took them for a weekend camping trip near Good Hope, W. Va., where all fished in the West Fork River. Once he announced that everybody would go the next week to Clarksburg to the circus, "14 miles distant, which had to be traveled over dirt roads in our Model-T Ford. How anxiously we surveyed the heavens the night before, praying it would not rain lest the road become muddy, slippery, dangerous, if not totally impassable."⁷

The Mowrey brood attended the rural school at Big Isaac, where they learned to read, to write, and "to figure", a skill soon used for they clerked in their father's store as soon as they were tall enough to look over the top of a counter. Attending school after eighth grade posed a problem since Big Isaac lay seven miles from the nearest train stop reached only by walking when roads were knee-deep mud.

Cassel showed promise. After sending an essay to a contest sponsored by the National Education Association in 1916, he won first place among the ten winners chosen from across the nation in the grade-school division of the event.⁸ He should go to high school. "With great courage and little else"⁹ Lloyd Mowrey arranged for board and room for the boy in Clarksburg so that Cassel could attend Washington Irving High School which at the time was considered a fine academic school. Cassel won the title of "Big Ike" during his years as a star in basketball, football, and baseball. After graduating from W.I., Cassel entered West Virginia University to study law.

In the fall of 1922 Lloyd Mowrey paid for board and room for Corma to stay with a family on Sixth Street in Clarksburg, where she could easily walk to Washington Irving High School. Orie McConkey, the principal of the school, had a deep voice, dignity, and a bearing so commanding that students approached him with awe. Soon after the Big Isaac country girl had entered his school, she heard Mr. McConkey roar as she walked through the hall: "Corma Mowrey!" Terrified, Corma froze and trembled. The principal walked to her and said, "How's your big brother?"¹⁰

University sophomore Cassel was fine in the fall of 1922, but the next spring as he stood at bat during the 1923 Memorial Day West Virginia University - University of Pittsburg baseball game, he was hit in the head by a pitched ball. Without regaining consciousness following the injury, he died on June 1, 1923. The death sent a shock through the state so intense that the event is still remembered by the sports world in the 1980's.¹¹

By 1923 the exodus from rural areas to towns had begun. Lloyd Mowrey's friend Dr. Hudkins had built a house and an office and had moved to Wolf Summit, a village eight miles from Big Isaac through which ran the mainline of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad and to which in 1915 trolley tracks had been laid from Clarksburg. Lloyd Mowrey sold store and farm in Big Isaac to his daughter Clarice and her husband and moved to Wolf Summit shortly after the death of Cassel. Mowrey set up business in a store building in Wolf Summit and built a house for his family on the lot beside the store and just behind the rear entrance to his business.¹² Now Corma could ride the trolley to attend high school classes at W. I.

With sister Clarice married, Corma was sole "mother" for three children during the years she traveled each day from Wolf Summit to attend Washington Irving High School. The responsibility made her accountable at home and in all things elsewhere. And the death of Cassel intensified her love of sports to which her graceful, big-boned muscular frame naturally inclined. A deep, strong voice helped Corma rally fans in the cheers she led at sports events all four years she attended W. I. She had heard so many statistics of professional football and baseball players from father and brother that she early formed the habit of storing records of players in her head, numbers with which throughout her life she has surprised listeners when she rattled them off casually in conversation. ¹³

In the fall of 1926 Corma enrolled in Salem College seven miles west of Wolf Summit from which she could travel to Salem by train or by riding with someone driving an automobile to school. Fellow students elected her cheerleader, a position she held for five years even though by the time she graduated with the class of 1931 she had taught school full time for four years. ¹⁴

At the end of one year of college in the 1920's a student could apply for a "short normal" certificate which licensed him to teach. The Tenmile District Board of Education in Harrison County hired Corma in the spring of 1927 to teach the next year in the grade school at Wolf Summit, a school that stood a stone's throw from Lloyd Mowrey's store. "But", said Corma in 1983, "I was determined not to teach on the lowest level of certification." She rode the train or picked up rides in automobiles of neighbors and friends to travel to Salem to night school classes and to lead cheers at all scheduled basketball and football games while she qualified for an A.B. degree with majors in English and Latin. ¹⁵

Perhaps subconsciously Corma had the urge to run steadily and fast enough to make up for Cassel's not running. She became a volunteer leader in 4-H, an organization that has a West Virginia State Camp at Jackson's Mill, eighteen miles from Wolf Summit. During the first fifteen years of 4-H summer camps (circa 1924-1939) Corma taught tennis, planned vesper services, and served as assistant director of county camps at the Mill. She conducted charting classes for those qualifying for 4-H pins. 4-H gave Corma Mowrey the West Virginia All-Star Award for volunteer leadership. ¹⁶

Corma kept in constant motion during the eleven years from 1930-1941 that she taught English and Latin in Bristol High School which the Tenmile Board of Education had built in Bristol, W.Va., in 1929. A former student at Bristol High School remembers being imbued with Latin during the two years she studied the language with Miss Mowrey. "She was a strict teacher, a disciplinarian whose class one never entered unprepared. But out of class she was as much a sister to all of us as she was to Cleta. She never missed a ball game; she never missed a tournament; she coached the senior play. We were seniors during the lowest point of the Depression and had no money, not even enough to have a class picture. At the senior class picnic the fellow student who would later be my husband was embarrassed because he had no money to buy something at the store to bring and instead had just a loaf of homemade bread that his mother had handed him. Miss Mowrey made such a fuss over the bread that the boy was no longer embarrassed: "Forget me with food other than that homemade bread. That is all I want", she said." ¹⁷ When asked how Corma traveled to the Bristol School, the former student said: "She rode on the school bus." ¹⁸

Corma's hiatus from college courses during the depth of The Great Depression probably was caused partly by sheer exhaustion; partly by the need to help younger members of the family through adolescence; and partly by shortage of funds. But in the late 1930's when Duke University made a special offer of summer school courses at low cost, Corma enrolled. She was awarded a Masters of Education degree by Duke University in 1942. During the summers spent in Durham she served as president of the West Virginia Club and sang in the Duke Chapel Summer Choir. She took additional courses beyond those required for a masters degree to qualify for a Secondary School Principal's Certificate. ¹⁹

By the 1940's Corma's younger brother and sisters were married and gone from home; her father had remarried. She moved to Clarksburg, where she began to teach English in 1941 at Victory High School. One of the finest contributions Corma made to Victory was the organization of a Spirit Committee. Twenty-one years old in 1941, Victory from its start had oriented around athletics; and on the defensive toward the much larger and much older Washington Irving High School, Victory students exhibited often a malicious and even dangerous rivalry with W. I. Corma started the Spirit Committee which developed into an organization to aid cheerleaders, to schedule those meetings, and to keep constant watch to prevent student attitude and conduct which might give the public a negative impression of the school. ²⁰

In the 1930's the teachers of English in Harrison County had elected Corma to be chairman of their group. Then the Harrison County Classroom Teachers Association elected Corma president of its unit of CTA, an organization which in the late 1930's was new to the state and the nation; the Harrison County Education Association elected her president as soon as she finished her term as head of the CTA.

Before long Corma's "exuberance, intensity of feeling found only in born leaders, and enthusiasm for the education system" ²¹ spilled over the borders of her native county and made her vice-president and president of the West Virginia Classroom Teachers Association.

At this point she caught the eyes of national leaders in education when they saw her "vigor and persistence to stay with a job until a goal is accomplished". ²² She was appointed in 1945 on the advisory council of the Department of Classroom Teachers of the National Education Association and during the two years on the council, Corma appeared before the Congressional Committee on Education and Labor in Washington to testify in behalf of federal aid to education.

In her home state the delegate members elected Corma Mowrey vice president in 1947 and president in 1948 of the West Virginia Education Association. Her dynamic personality was noticed by newsmen, one of whom reported: "She gets around. At any given time you may find her in the state house in West Virginia or on the [Capitol] Hill in Washington, and when she speaks, they pause to listen. ²³ Corma was too valuable to the cause of education to be allowed to slip back into the classroom at the end of her presidency of the state organization. Phares Reeder, executive secretary of the West Virginia Education Association, impressed with "her drive, her ability to express herself on the platform, and to impress people on the one to one basis" ²⁴ asked her during a luncheon at the

National Education Association 1948 convention if she would accept a position in field services with teachers in West Virginia, a job to be labeled "director of Professional Services". Harrison County Schools gave Corma a leave of absence so that she could assume the post.

With Corma Mowrey's drive and personality the agency she headed would never be operated in a humdrum fashion. Everyone knew she would whiz around the state giving excellent speeches that invigorated teacher groups, but no one expected the creativity, the innovation of new ideas she exhibited. Straight off in August 1948 she staged the first annual West Virginia School for Leaders on the campus of West Virginia Wesleyan College in Buckhannon with the aim to provide training for county association officers and state committee members. She thus had leaders to mingle as she did with state legislators and encourage them to vote for a basic single salary schedule, salary increases, high certification requirements, a liberal sick-leave plan, and adequate retirement benefits for teachers, all of which won approval during or shortly after World War II. To combat the looming teacher shortage, she organized future teacher clubs in the colleges of the state. She directed an annual conference for Future Teacher Club leaders at Jackson's Mill, where she pushed plans that would attract "A" students to enter a career in teaching.

The job she had in state education required a constant flow of copy for professional magazines. To brush up writing techniques, Corma enrolled in a course in journalism at the University of Chicago in the spring of 1949 a few months before she journeyed on to Boston, where she was elected vice president of the National Education Association at its annual meeting. ²⁵

She knew that teachers must work together to improve the profession. So when Phares Reeder instigated unified dues, whereby payment of one fee made teachers members of county, state, and national professional organizations, she helped move the drive to the success she described in an article published in NEA News in 1949:

....American teachers will not fail their professional obligations when they know the facts. We have followed this philosophy in West Virginia and we are pleased with the result. In 1943, when the War and Peace Fund Campaign was made, West Virginia had only 3075 NEA members. The splendid record which our state made in that campaign helped us to go forward and since its adoption in 1946 we have built steadily thru our county associations around the Victory Action Program. We have adopted unified dues to take effect in each county association.

We have worked at the tasks of training leaders and of explaining the program to the teachers in the counties. In 1947 we had 10,620 NEA members and in 1949, 13,814 members as compared with 14,425 in the WVSEA. Fifty-three of our 55 counties now have unified dues: 33 of these have more than 90% membership; 13 of them, 100%. We have felt the results of this building in every phase of our professional life. Thru understanding, we have achieved an important end democratically. We believe that working thru local groups other states which have not already done so, can achieve unified dues and thus simplify present membership problems. Corma Mowrey, acting director of Professional Services, West Virginia Education Association and vice president and member Executive Committee, NEA. ²⁶

Corma paused long enough during the preparation to push off to St. Louis for the convention of the National Education Association in July 1950 to travel to Salem College, where during commencement her Alma Mater awarded her an honorary Doctor of Pedagogy degree. Two hundred West Virginia educators, who would nominate Corma Mowrey to be the 89th president of the NEA, went to St. Louis to be in their seats when the convention opened on July 3, 1950: "By bus, by plane, by train and in cars they went, with a purpose and together with the loyal support of 3,500 delegates from the other 47 states and the territories, they achieved their goal. Corma Mowrey was elected president of the National Education Association without opposition." ²⁷

A reporter for a St. Louis paper telling of the migration of West Virginians to the convention had written: "If Miss Mowrey wins the election, as expected, a large Harrison County delegation will give her a thunderous ovation and has promised a celebration when she returns home." ²⁸ The party occurred, after Corma had cleared her desk in Charleston to move to Washington, when 400 friends and associates honored her with a dinner at Jackson's Mill. Among the guests were Orie McConkey, principal of Washington Irving High School; Lawrence R. Lynch, president of the W.Va. Board of Education; Arthur V. Upton, superintendent of Harrison County Schools; Clyde McCarty and Wade Coffindaffer, assistant superintendents of Harrison County Schools.

Within a month the new NEA president was sent as a delegate to the World Confederation of Organizations of the Teaching Profession in Ottawa, an organization whose international meeting she would also attend in 1951 in Malta, and in 1959 in the United States. During the year as president of the NEA, Corma made dozens of speeches all over the nation among which were "Today's Challenge to Education" delivered in Providence, R.I.; and "Education and our Freedoms", given before the convention of the National Congress of Parents and Teachers in Miami, Fla., in which after stating that someone had called our age one of "turbulent tragedy", she said: "To make the community a fit place in which to rear children, to give every child a fair start in life, to eliminate the prejudices which divide us as a nation, to lay the basis for understanding and appreciation of the democratic way, to provide funds necessary for the building of a profession and for school plants in which to house our children, to give education recognized status as a profession are among the objectives of school and home in this period of 'turbulent tragedy'." ²⁹

In the fall of 1950 the a capella choir of Victory High School under the direction of Winifred Bell received an invitation to perform at the NEA Convention over which Corma Mowrey would preside July 1-6, 1951, in San Francisco. During the school year the high school raised \$9595 to send thirty-five members of the choir to the West Coast, where they arrived by Pullman on July 4, 1951, seventeen hours late because floods and dust storms had delayed the streamliner. ³⁰

Meanwhile Corma had opened the NEA Convention over which she presided after a presidential address "United in Purpose: United in Action" in which she had said: "I put salaries first without apology. Good schools are essential to the defense and security of this nation. Good teachers are essential to good schools. Our teachers must be provided with the necessary economic support." ³¹ She was honored at a reception at the Palace Hotel. Dr. Carr, former executive secretary of NEA said that one of the most moving experiences of his professional life occurred on the last night of the convention when members of the Victory High School choir filed past Miss Mowrey, then stood as a unit and sang Corma's favorite song: "You'll Never Walk Alone." ³²

Corma returned in August 1951 to Charleston to her old job with the West Virginia Education Association which

had outgrown the rented quarters it occupied and had launched a plan to build on a lot on Quarrier Street near the state capitol. Funds for the structure would come from bonds to be purchased by teachers in the state. Corma directed the fund drive which "went over the top" at the same time she fell into a similar drive by the NEA.³³

Appointed to the NEA Board of Trustees in 1952, Corma would have part of the responsibility of raising \$5,000,000 for the Centennial Action Program started when Corma was president of the NEA and planned to end in 1957, when the national organization would be 100 years old. The money would build a headquarters building for the association in Washington, D.C. The trustees decided to raise a percentage of the \$5,000,000 by selling life memberships in the NEA. Within three years the funds for the building were in sight and by 1957 the total sum in the fund reached \$7,000,000.

Corma Mowrey sold 703 new life memberships in West Virginia. Her nearest competitor in other states sold 300 memberships. She sold the memberships by calling on or by telephoning fellow teachers. West Virginia raised \$165,000 for the new building, \$15,000 above its quota. Then Corma started selling life NEA memberships to educators and friends of education from various states when she met them at national meetings and conferences. This effort brought in 400 for a total of 1103 life memberships sold by Corma whom the NEA gave the title of "Miss National Education Association" for being grand sales champion of the United States.³⁴

Honors came now in a steady procession. West Virginia State College awarded Corma Mowrey a Doctor of Humanities Degree in 1951, the same year she joined the Board of Trustees of Salem College on which she would serve continuously until 1968. In 1956 she was named West Virginia Daughter of the Year by the West Virginia Society of the District of Columbia and Salem College Alumna of the Year.

And in 1956 President Eisenhower chose Corma Mowrey co-chairman of the education committee of the "People-to-People Program for World Understanding". The base for the education program was built so well that it is still in 1983 used for exchange of secondary school pupils between the United States and foreign countries. In 1957 Corma went to Rome as a U.S. representative of the People-to-People Program. The same year she was U.S. representative for four weeks' study in Germany as a guest of the Government of West Germany.³⁵

In April 1958, as part of the campaign she had waged for years for federal aid to education, she spoke before the Subcommittee on General Education and Labor on "How Much Should Teachers Be Paid?" and the next February in a speech in the NEA auditorium said in a speech: "If it is the purpose of our schools to develop competent thinkers whose daily lives are to reflect application of the truths learned, these same young people must see round them adults whose conduct reflects the same great basic truths and values. This requires the best qualified and the best trained teachers that can be found in our society."³⁶ Since its beginning in 1857 presidents of the NEA have returned to their home states at the end of their one-year term. "Few have ever served on the NEA staff. They just couldn't. But it was no problem for Corma."³⁷ She was appointed associate director of the Division of Organization Relations³⁸ of the NEA September 18, 1959.³⁹ Now she would resign her position in Charleston and move out of the state. Just before she accepted the new work on November 1, 1959, the West Virginia Classroom Teachers Association honored her at Jackson's Mill on October 18 with an "I Remember Corma" dinner at which, in a "This Is Your Life" program, people closely associated with Corma in various phases of her life described their relationship.⁴⁰

The NEA Division of Organization Relations works to develop the best possible relationship with other organizations interested in education such as the American Legion, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, National School Boards Association, The National Congress of Parents and Teachers, and the American Textbook Publishers Institute. The division is a clearing house for needed information on education and a speakers' bureau which meant Corma was often on the way to a city somewhere in the country because so many of the requests for a speaker included the words, "Send Corma!"⁴¹ She was promoted to the director of the division August 1, 1965, the same year she began a seven-year stint as secretary-treasurer of the Conference of National Organizations.

Chartered in 1857 to improve public education and to assist the welfare of teachers, the NEA had been a conservative organization. Like most other leaders of the NEA through the years, Corma had favored policies that would cause the general public to respect the association. She was a moderating influence as shown in the early 1950's when as last speaker at a national meeting, she came to the microphone during a contentious debate and said, "Let us be reasonable." Then the issue she favored passed in a vote of the delegates.⁴²

In the 1960's the large urban affiliates of the association demanded that collective bargaining, immediate desegregation of schools and immediate merging of black and white education associations, political action to secure more federal aid for education, and a cabinet level position for education be pushed by NEA. When the affiliates demanded structural changes in the charter of the NEA to make it more radical, Corma asked to appear before the executive committee of the association, where she spoke against changes that would lead the organization away from voluntary membership in a voluntary organization. When delegates to the national convention of the NEA wanted to affiliate with a national labor union, Corma spoke up in 1964: "A trade union would take from public education its most precious and unique ingredient--independence of any segment of society and allegiance to education of all the people."

It was no surprise to anyone reading the signs when announcements came that Corma Mowrey would resign from the National Education Association staff on November 1, 1972. The NEA Board of Directors had honored her at a breakfast in Atlantic City on July 1, 1972⁴⁴; West Virginia Governor Arch Moore had made her a Distinguished West Virginia Citizen⁴⁵; a Washington newspaper had carried a photograph of the Met's star Willie Mays signing his autograph for Corma Mowrey prior to an exhibition ball game with the Boston Red Sox at the R.F.K. Stadium in Washington in September⁴⁶; The West Virginia Classroom Teachers Association had presented her the Mary Titus Professional Courage Award in October.⁴⁷ On October 10, 1972, Corma's sixty-fifth birthday, her fellow workers at NEA Headquarters gave her a birthday and retirement party.⁴⁸

Corma "resigned" from the NEA staff. She did not retire. She accepted Area III Vice President of the National Retired Teachers Association and for five years worked as a volunteer in programs designed to eliminate discrimination against women, ethnic minorities, and older Americans; and in programs to strengthen human rights.⁴⁹

In November 1975 Corma sat beside President Ford at a pre-Thanksgiving Day dinner at the White House for fourteen Washington, D.C., senior citizens. The newspaper reported the conversation between the President and

Corma: 'I understand you're a Redskins fan of some dedication,' Mr. Ford told Miss Mowrey, a Redskins' season ticket holder. 'I've watched them a few times,' she replied, grinning."⁵⁰ In 1976 during the West Virginia Governor's Conference on International Women's Year, Corma Mowrey was named one of West Virginia's 10 Women of Accomplishments and was honored with the other nine honorees at a reception at the Governor's Mansion in Charleston.⁵¹

Corma moved to Leesburg, Florida in 1978 to live with her sister Cleta. She was active in educational circles and wrote in 1981: "I continue to believe in our professional associations and maintain that the teaching profession should remain voluntary, independent, and professional. It should not be affiliated with labor, business, industry or any other groups of society, but free to work with all in the interest of providing excellent free public schools. Because of my philosophy, I must emphasize that teachers should assume the responsibility for finding better ways than strikes and the disruption of educational services for the settling of impasses which result from teacher - school board negotiations and bargaining."⁵² "No official merger talks of NEA with a union has yet taken place and for this I am extremely pleased," wrote Corma in 1983.⁵³

A caption with her photograph in a 1929 college yearbook described Corma thus: "Who is everyone's friend and no one's enemy? She never gives up. You'll never confuse Corma with anyone else for there isn't another Corma."⁵⁴ During the days she worked in the archives at NEA headquarters and interviewed associates of Corma Mowrey, the author of this sketch caught a quick index to the personal opinion people hold of Corma Mowrey: Not once did anyone refer to her as "Miss Mowrey." She was "Corma Mowrey" or, most often, just "Corma". A male associate at NEA said that before the Touchdown Club in Washington accepted women as members, he took Corma with him to the club for she loved sports as much as he or anyone else there and it was natural to include Corma.⁵⁵ When asked the one characteristic that makes Corma stand out, another said, "Integrity" and then added an explanatory cliché: "She has never believed her own publicity."⁵⁶

Corma Mowrey was in West Virginia to attend education professional organizations such as the Human Relations and Delegate Assembly Meeting of the West Virginia Education Association held in Parkersburg May 12 and 13, 1983, where she presented the Corma A. Mowrey Award for leadership abilities in the area of women's rights to a lady who had won a lawsuit involving women's rights in the work place.⁵⁷ She returned to attend alumni meetings of Salem College whose call she still heeded just as she did in 1964, when she and Senator Jennings Randolph, as co-chairmen of a development drive of the college, canvassed alumni for funds.

Corma could literally "go home" for Chloe's oldest son, Jack Roach who was reared and educated by Clarice Mowrey Day and her husband, inherited the Mowrey home place and comes each summer to the Big Isaac "home" after, as principal, he closes school in Maryland.⁵⁸ Corma educated Chloe's two younger sons, Eugene and Richard. Eugene teaches in a college in Florida. Corma often visited Richard, a mortician, in Gassaway, W.Va., where the author of this biography caught up with her in May 1983.

Knowing that Corma had lived with carcinoma since 1968 and had been in chemotherapy for a number of years, the interviewer was surprised at the conversation even though it was typical Corma style: Two days before she had left Florida Corma had helped stage a baseball party at which \$1400 was raised to send a representative of the Leesburg Chamber of Commerce to Hawaii to a baseball owners' meeting. "If we get a major team for spring training, it will mean an estimated five million dollars to the economy of Leesburg. The prospects are good! We are now raising \$30,000 to secure a legal advisor for two years." As active in the Methodist Church in Leesburg as she had been when she was Sunday School teacher and member of the board of trustees of the First Methodist Church in Clarksburg when she taught there, Corma said that in 1982 she was a "major" in a drive to raise funds for a new sanctuary in the church she attended: "The first-year drive was for \$500,000. Members pledged over \$600,000", she said.⁵⁹

Corma Mowrey died Thursday, March 1, 1984, in Leesburg, Florida. Interment was in the Big Isaac Cemetery, Big Isaac, West Virginia.⁶⁰

FOOTNOTES

1. "Corma Mowrey I would name among the first three best liked and most effective presidents of the National Education Association." Samuel M. Lambert in an interview June 2, 1983.
2. The seven children of Lloyd and Ida Adams Mowrey are Cassel, 1901-1923; Clarice (Mrs. Clyde Day), 1903-1948; Cecil 1905-1980; Corma, 1907-1984; Corwin, 1910- ; Chloe (Mrs. Richard Roach, Mrs. Andy), 1912-1976; Cleta (Mrs. Ray Heck), 1915 - . Doddridge County, West Virginia, Register of Births , Book 1, p. 116C; 3, p. 139; 4, pp. 107, 109, 110, 111.
3. Corma Mowrey, "A Memorial to the Lloyd and Ida Adams Mowrey Family", The History of Doddridge County, West Virginia, p. 363.
4. Dr. Hudkins, Simeon Stutler, "Uncle" David Chandler, Ibid.
5. The History of Doddridge County, p. 363.
6. Ibid.
7. Ibid.
8. National Education Association. NEA Bulletin, January 1917, p. 8; September 1917, p. 16.
9. Words spoken by Corma Mowrey at the time of the death of her father in 1960. Grace Van Horn, "Corma A. Mowrey", p. 4
10. Corma Mowrey in a conversation with Pearl Custer, October, 1981.
11. Clarksburg Exponent-Telegram, May 29, 1983.
12. The History of Doddridge County, p. 363.
13. Gerald Gereau in an interview June 2, 1983.
14. Grace Van Horn, p. 6
15. Corma Mowrey in a conversation with Dorothy Davis May 19, 1983. Corma did not own an automobile until 1935. Ibid.
16. Corma Mowrey in a letter to Dorothy Davis June 10, 1983.
17. Fannie Matthey Stutler (Mrs. Isaac W.) in an interview June 9, 1983.
18. Ibid.
19. Van Horn, p. 7.
20. Ibid.

21. Samuel M. Lambert.
22. Dr. William G. Carr in an interview June 2, 1983.
23. Van Horn, p. 11.
24. Phares E. Reeder in an interview June 11, 1983.
25. Van Horn, pp. 9, 10.
26. National Education Association, NEA News, November 18, 1949.
27. Van Horn, p. 15. The Clarksburg Exponent, Clarksburg, W.Va., July 8, 1950.
28. Van Horn, p. 15.
29. Corma A. Mowrey, "Speeches", Archives, National Education Association, Washington, D.C.
30. The Clarksburg Exponent, Clarksburg, W.Va., July 6, 1951.
31. National Education Association, Proceedings of the 89th Annual Meeting Held at San Francisco, p. 10.
32. Dr. William G. Carr interview.
33. Van Horn, p. 12.
34. "Corma Mowrey", Archives, National Education Association. The NEA Building, 1201 16th Street, NW, Washington, D.C., was dedicated in February 1959. Ibid.
35. "NEA Biographical Fact Sheet, Corma A. Mowrey, December, 1972", "Corma Mowrey", Archives, National Education Association, Washington, D.C.
36. Corma A. Mowrey, "Effective Modern Education: As the Layman Sees It." Corma A. Mowrey, "Speeches", Archives, National Education Association.
37. Mary C. Gereau in an interview, June 2, 1983.
38. Formerly called "The Division of Lay Relations".
39. NEA News Release September 18, 1959. Archives, National Education Association.
40. Van Horn, p. 25.
41. Dr. Carr interview.
42. West Virginia Association of Classroom Teachers, "Corma Mowrey, the 1972 Mary Titus Award for Professional Courage", October 14, 1972.
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INTERVIEWS

- Dr. William G. Carr, former executive secretary of the National Education Association, Washington, D.C.
- Pearl Custer, former secretary Washington Irving High School, Clarksburg, WV.
- Gerald Gereau, Washington, D.C.
- Mary C. Gereau, (Mrs. Gerald Gereau), former state superintendent of schools State of Montana, Washington, D.C.
- Alice Morton, archivist, National Education Association, Washington, D.C.
- Phares E. Reeder, former executive secretary of the West Virginia Education Association, Dunbar, W.Va.
- Fannie Matthey Stutler (Mrs. Isaac William Stutler), former secretary Steptoe & Johnson law firm, Clarksburg, W.Va.