JOURNAL

of the

ROANOKE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Summer 1965

Volume Two Number One

CONTENTS

The Journal of the Roanoke Historical Society, Volume II, Number 1. Published twice yearly by the Society at Box 1904, Roanoke, Virginia, to chronicle the past and present of that part of the state west of the Blue Ridge. Single copy price: 50 cents; Subscription $1 a year. The Society will be careful in handling unsolicited material but cannot be responsible for its loss.

The South Western Turnpike Road

EDMUND P. GOODWIN

The virtual completion of an interstate speedway which closely follows the path of the South Western Turnpike Road chartered almost 120 years ago heightens interest in this pioneer state highway.

Two books in the possession of this Society prompted me to learn more about its location and operation. One is the tollbook of Gate #5 carefully kept from October, 1856 to September, 1876 by Gatekeeper John Woltz—and including official use by the Confederate government. The other is the account book of John McCauley, turnpike superintendent, covering parts of 1855 and 1856.

There were a number of private companies operating local roads to the west of the Lynchburg-Salem Turnpike. However it was not until January 28, 1846 that the South Western Turnpike was chartered. It was to be built with state funds, from Salem, passing through Christiansburg, Newbern, Wytheville, Marion, Abingdon, and on to Tennessee.

The turnpike was to be graded a minimum of twenty-four feet, the macadam not less than twenty-two feet and the grade at no place could exceed 3%. The initial appropriation by the general assembly was $75,000.

Initial progress of the turnpike was fast, as it reached Wytheville by the end of 1847. The completion of this portion of the road was speeded through the purchase of two existing turnpikes, one from Salem to Peppers Ferry; the other from Lafayette to Ingles Ferry, as well as acquiring Ingles Ferry itself. To give an idea of the cost of construction the first three contracts are listed: Section 1, for two miles, was let to Thomas Rosser at a cost of $5,800.; Elisha Melton was the low bidder on Sections 2 and 3, two miles each, at $13,800., and Section 4, for two miles, went to Robert Harvey at a price of $10,590.

In April of that year apparently great pressure was put on the members of the Assembly to extend the road from Salem to Buchanan. Surveys of this portion were made, but quite an argument arose as to the route from Salem. Some of the substantial citizens of the Big Lick area thought it should come closer to their community, but so far as can be found the question was never resolved although great effort was made to start construction at Buchanan so the people of Big Lick would have more time to upset or change the original surveys.

In January, 1848, the legislature appropriated $300,000 for the completion of the road, but not more than $75,000 could be used in any one year. An attempt was made in the General Assembly, the fol-

lowing fall, to stop construction but just at the time it appeared the work would be terminated it was discovered a valid contract had been signed by the board of public works.

Construction beyond Wytheville slowed. The pike did not reach Seven Mile Ford until the spring of 1851. It appears the contractor had become involved and rather than calling on his bond for completion the General Assembly, by a vote of 52-44, instructed the board of public works to suspend construction except for completing small portions that had actually been started.

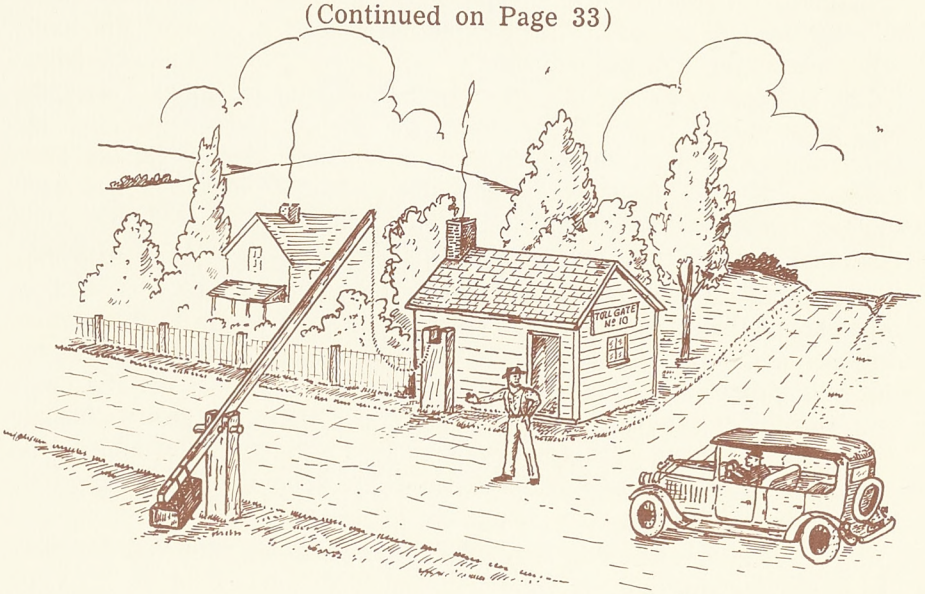
Some far Southwest Virginians thought they had been badly mistreated by those from Eastern Virginia when it was voted to discontinue the construction of the road to the Tennessee border. The real reason, most probably, was the construction of the Virginia and Tennessee Railroad, the parent of the Norfolk and Western Railway Company. V. & T. started from Lynchburg in 1849, reached Salem in 1852 and was opened to Bristol in 1856.

In March, 1848, it was determined the road was to be divided into sections of ten miles each and a toll gate would be placed as close as possible to the middle of each section. At first it was thought the toll gate keeper, besides the use of a house, could be employed at $300 per year, but by 1855 some had been increased to $450.

Tolls in the early days of the turnpike were established as follows:

cart or wagon 2" wheels for each horse drawing same	12c
cart or wagon 4" wheels for each horse drawing same	08c
cart or wagon 6" wheels for each horse drawing same	04c
4 wheeled one horse riding carriage	25c
4 wheeled two horse riding carriage	35c

(Continued on Page 33)



Toll Gates In This Century

George Kegley

Toll gates may have been operated on roads through Roanoke County in earlier days but they were not used in this century until the summer of 1914 when the county board of supervisors decided to levy tolls to pay for maintenance of the new macadamized roads. Construction was financed by a bond issue.

Many a toll was collected in the county for almost 14 years.

G. W. Gish was elected superintendent of toll gates and four gates were opened July 1, 1914 at these locations:

No. 1, near Road Bridge across Tinker Creek on Hollins Road.

No. 2, 100 feet or more beyond an oak tree near Mundy's corner on Williamson Road (near present Liberty Road intersection).

No. 3, near the Fallon-Persinger line on the Roanoke-Salem road (west of Washington Heights School).

No. 4, on Hanging Rock Road near a cherry tree between the homes of J. C. and D. C. Moomaw.

Gish was authorized to supply each keeper's house with a telephone to be used "in aiding in catching violators of the road law."

These tolls were charged: Automobile, two seats, 25 cents; automobile runabout, one seat, 20; motor cycles, 8; every 20 head of sheep or hogs, 5; horse or mule, 3; one-horse wagon, 5; one-horse carriage, 6; and two-horse carriage, 10.

The speed limit was recommended at 20 miles per hour on straight road and 8 miles around curves, according to the supervisors' minutes of October, 1917.

Toll gates produced revenues. Gish reported receipt of $314 in May, $377 in June and $452 in July, 1919 at a gate at the intersection of the Starkey Road and the Franklin Turnpike (U. S. 220) south of Roanoke.

Other gates were on the land of Hezekiah Lavinder on the Back Creek Road (present Fralin Park near city limits on Colonial Avenue); near Garst Mill (off Grandin Road Extension); on what is now U. S. 460 east of Vinton Road; and at Lockett's Store, near the intersection of Riverland Road and Mt. Pleasant Boulevard, SE.

The state took over the road from Williamson Road to Botetourt County line, from Bonsack to Roanoke and 1.4 miles west of Salem in March, 1919.

But the gates at Fairview (Washington Heights) and Hollins remained in business through the end of 1927. The Hollins gate was last operated in January, 1928 and the Fairview gatehouse and lot were sold for $2,700 in March, 1928.

O. T. Burch, superintendent of toll roads, was appointed county road superintendent in March, 1928, and an era ended.

Boyhood Collection Is Remembrance of Past

—Photograph by JACK GAKING

Mighty few youngsters who grew up in small towns in the early years of this century escaped the fascination of collecting the multishaped and brightly colored tags from chewing tobacco. Sidney P. Taliaferro of Washington saved his and recently presented this mounted collection of tokens and samples of plugs to the Society. It will interest and perhaps puzzle future generations. Taliaferro, who grew up in Salem and Roanoke, has served as a commissioner of the District of Columbia and as a Washington bank vice president.

Thomas and Tasker Tosh:

The Brothers Who Owned Roanoke

MARGARET SCOTT

The most conspicuous feature of the 18th century English colonies on the North American continent was growth. Population both native born and immigrant was multiplying rapidly. Moreover, the elements in this population, black and white, strains from the British Isles, and from the European continent—were becoming more varied. Economic enterprise also was expanding in kind and in volume. The cultural life of the Atlantic Seaboard was likewise enlarged through the building of churches, libraries, schools, and colleges, and the contribution of clergymen, artists, and scientists.

No aspect of this revolutionary expansion was more striking or more closely tied to all phases of society than the spacial. In English America pioneers were on the march into unsettled or sparsely occupied regions, pushing outward in all directions. In the Old Dominion, the frontier movement carried groups of earlier settlers and of newcomers fresh from the Old World eastward across the Chesapeake and southward to found counties along North Carolina's northern rim. But of most importance was the white man's penetration of Virginia's West. The rise of this "Old West," to borrow Frederick Jackson Turner's classic phrase, involved the Piedmont, the interior mountain valleys and, in time, the trans-Allegheny country.

This "Old West" was, of course, a very New West in the middle years of the 18th century. Among its lovely southwestward valleys was that drained by Goose Creek—the Roanoke River. Into it were moving in the 1740's immigrants from the north to join a smaller influx from the east and southwest.

Among these frontiersmen were the brothers Thomas and Tasker Tosh. They arrived on Goose Creek early in the decade. They were not to become distinguished persons in the wilderness they helped to civilize but their lives were typical and symbolic of the development of a Western community in the era of expansion.[1] It is believed that Thomas was born about 1715, his brother a few years later, that they

---

Miss Scott, a member of this Society, retired in 1958 as professor of history and head of that department at Hollins College. A graduate of Hollins she earned her master's degree in history at Radcliffe and her Ph. D. at the University of Virginia. It was while studying under Dr. Frederick Jackson Turner at Radcliffe that her abiding interest in the American frontier was kindled.

were of Welch extraction and originally settlers in Pennsylvania who drifted to Lunenburg County in southern Virginia—that section which became Pittsylvania. From this area they pushed northwest through the mountains to a branch of Pigg River. There Toshes Village probably perpetuates the family name. More than likely these immigrants to Goose Creek Valley were Presbyterians. It is a matter of record that in March, 1749 the distinguished divine, the Reverend John Craig, baptized Tasker's daughter Mary.[2]

But uncertain as is their place of origin, their blood or their religion, Thomas and Tasker had arrived in their new home by the early Forties. In 1742 Captain George Robinson's list of the Augusta County Muster mentioned the latter.[3] Their residence is also attested to by the fact that, under Mark Evans and James Campbell as overseers, in the early winter of 1746 the newcomers were engaged in road building. The road under construction was to run from the Blue Ridge to the watershed dividing the New River basin from that of the South branch of the Roanoke.[4]

Within five or six years of his settlement in this community, Thomas Tosh began his accumulation of landed property. But first, a resume of what is known of his other activities: In 1750 he was witnessing wills and appraising the estate of William Alexander. Later in the decade he appraised the possessions of Joseph Cummings and John Robinson and went on Erwin Patterson's bond as administrator of the McGee estate. In 1753, along with Tasker, Thomas was ordered by the court to assist in the construction of a road from William Carvin's "plantation" to William Bryan's on the Roanoke near Fort Lewis.[5] Just at this time the prelude to the struggle between England and France for the mastery of North America began in the backwoods of the Middle Colonies. Virginia's frontier was in dire need of protection from the French and their Indian allies, and Thomas enrolled in Captain James Campbell's company. He also served as a provisioner of grain for the local militia. To add to his duties, in the fall of 1753 he was appointed processioner by the parish vestry.[6]

By 1756 the clash of empires along the borders of Virginia and her neighbors widened into a global war—the first, but by no means

1 F. B. Kegley, VIRGINIA FRONTIER; THE BEGINNINGS OF THE SOUTHWEST; THE ROANOKE OF COLONIAL DAYS, 1740 - 1783 Roanoke, Va. Stone Printing Co. 1938 pp. 93, 97, 181, 184, 332.

2 Maude Carter Clement, HISTORY OF PITTSYLVANIA COUNTY, VIRGINIA Lynchburg, Va. J. P. Bell Co. 1929 p. 45.
L. P. Summers, ANNALS OF SOUTHWEST VIRGINIA, 1748 - 1770 Abingdon, Va. 1929 p.572.
Anne L. Worrell, HISTORY OF ROANOKE COUNTY, 1748 - 1770 Roanoke, Va. 1942 pp.6 - 7.

3 Lyman Chalkley comp.—CHRONICLES OF SCOTCH-IRISH SETTLEMENT IN VIRGINIA EXTRACTED FROM ORIGINAL COURT RECORDS OF AUGUSTA COUNTY, 1745 - 1800 Published by Mary S. Lockwood, Roslyn, Va. Printers Commonwealth Printing Co., 1912 - 1913 II, 507, 509. Hereinafter cited as ABSTRACTS.

4 Abstracts I, 24
Lyman Chalkley "Before the Gates of the Wilderness Road" VIRGINIA MAGAZINE OF HISTORY AND BIOGRAPHY Richmond, Va. 1922 XXX, 195 - 196.

5 ABSTRACTS I, 61; III, 4, 19, 44 — 45, 55.

6 ABSTRACTS II, 442.
Worrell OP.CIT. p. 2

the last, into which the Valley of Roanoke has been drawn. Thomas Tosh's home "on Roanoke" was the scene of negotiations with friendly Indians who were given flour in accordance with Colonel Clement Read's orders. In the Fall of 1757, Colonel John Buchanan filed an account for these provisions against "the country." In April of that year flour "for the use of the Associators" had been delivered to Tosh. During the next two years he continued to receive provisions—including those delivered at Evans' Mill—for the use of Colonel William Preston's Company.[7]

The final period of the French and Indian War and the years immediately following the Peace of Paris (1763) saw Thomas Tosh, although still concerned with defense of the frontier, once more busy with peaceful matters like the appraisal of John Mason's property. In May, 1762 he was appointed constable. He served again as processioner and in the Fall of 1767 was one of three persons commissioned to "view" a road to be built from the Stone House (near Cloverdale in the present Botetourt County) to Evans' Mill.[8] We have a few references to him in the early Seventies as he directed, from his homestead upon the high bluff above the river, the production of winter rolled wheat and beef cattle. Thomas was busy also with Tosh's ford over the river below his residence. In 1772 the court of the new County of Botetourt ordered the viewing of a road from "Thomas Tosh's ford to the top of Bent Mountain."[9]

Before rounding out this fragmentary recital of facts with a short account of Thomas Tosh's acquisition of land, the few "shreds and patches" of information we have about Tasker Tosh may be pieced together. Emerging with Thomas from the mists of the vaguely known, he settled "on Roanoke" in the early 1740's. We know likewise that the two worked as road builders for a decade "before the Gates of the Wilderness Road." Tasker also witnessed wills and served as an appraiser of estates. Like his brother, he played his part in the protection of the frontier. In September of 1748 he acquired by letters patent 220 acres in the bend of Goose Creek near Evans' Big Spring and bestriding the river where Franklin Road now crosses it. Tasker soon sold the larger portion of this land to Thomas. He secured property now occupied by Roanoke City Mills and perhaps established a home upon it. Moreover, he seems to have got hold of what came to be known as the Elmwood tract. No further record of Tasker's dealings in real estate have come to light. He died in 1762, a decade and a half before his brother.[10]

7 Papers of William Preston in PRESTON AND VIRGINIA PAPERS OF DRAPER COLLECTION. Madison, Wisconsin Historical Society Publications, 1915 Calendar Ser. I, 13, 22, 45, 49
8 ABSTRACTS I, 98, 141; II, 450; III, 70, 79.
9 Kegley OP.CIT p. 560 Summers OP.CIT pp. 83, 166, 186.
10 ABSTRACTS II, 507, 509; III, 45, 55.
Clement OP.CIT. p. 45.

The story of Thomas Tosh as engrosser of lands began more than a year before that of Tasker. In March, 1747, the former patented 269 acres on the south side of Goose Creek where Salem now stands. There is no evidence that he ever lived on that property, although he kept it until in the early summer of 1766 he sold the land to Colonel Andrew Lewis.[11] Likewise in the late Forties or early Fifties, Thomas got 120 acres of those 220 which Tasker had patented near Evans' Big Spring in the autumn of 1748. This plot included land on both sides of the Roanoke. Moreover, about this time Thomas "entered" 65 acres of the high ground on the north bank of the river. Upon it he established his home, and below this bluff where Franklin Road spans the river, the ford already mentioned.[12] We recall that in the late Fifties and early Sixties, the Toshes were active in the defense of the southwest frontier against the attacks of the French and their Indian supporters. It was not until the coming of peace that Thomas resumed his land speculations.

There is a record of his purchasing in 1764 and 1765 two parcels of 264 and 260 acres, the latter on Mason's Creek.[13] The next year, he sold his Salem tract to Andrew Lewis for one hundred pounds.[14] In October of that year Thomas got a deed to 100 acres "from James Patton deceased" on the south fork of the Roanoke.[15] But 1767 was the banner year in his land business, and September 10 the red letter day of the year. On that date he received a grant from George III to those 65 acres above the river which he had occupied about 15 years earlier. Simultaneously, he secured by patent the Belmont tract of 264 acres, 165 acres on Cedar Spring Creek, the Indian Grave 150-acre plot, 165 acres "adjacent William Campbell," 150 acres on Mason's Creek, 165 acres on the north side of Roanoke River adjacent to the Tasker Tosh property, and 254 acres adjoining M. Campbell.[16] In November, 1769, Tosh bought from his son-in-law James Crawford 266 acres on Mason's Creek.[17]

In view of the fact that Thomas was dead by early 1778, references

J. R. Hildebrand—RECORDS OF ACQUISITION OF REAL ESTATE Roanoke, Va. T.: V.L.O. Patent Bk. 28, p. 386
Kegley OP.CIT. pp. 97, 181, 526.
W.P.A.—: ROANOKE, STORY OF CITY AND COUNTY Roanoke, Va. 1942 appendix—map of early land grants and surveys.
Thos. W. Miller HISTORY OF CITY OF ROANOKE, Roanoke, Va. 1891 p. 47 Manuscript in possession of Messrs. J. P. and J. L. Hart.

11 Hildebrand OP.CIT. T.: V.L.O. Patent Bk. 26, p. 218
Kegley OP.CIT. p. 96

12 ABSTRACTS III, 295
Hildebrand OP.CIT. T.: Augusta Deed Bk. 3, p. 355
Kegley OP.CIT. pp. 99 - 100, 526
Miller OP.CIT. p. 135

13 Hildebrand OP.CIT. T.: Augusta Deed Bk. 11, p. 840
Kegley OP.CIT. p. 304

14 ABSTRACTS III, 441
Hildebrand OP.CIT. L.: Augusta Deed Book 12, p. 519

15 ABSTRACTS III, 467

16 ABSTRACTS III, 295
Hildebrand OP.CIT. T.: V.L.O. Patent Bk. 37, pp. 220 - 221

17 Botetourt County Deed Book I, p. 70
Summers OP.CIT. p. 533

in the Botetourt County Patent Bk. 3 (p. 577) to acquisitions by him in 1780 - 1781 are mystifying. But in any event, enough has been itemized to show him a landholder of stature in the early period of white settlement in this community.

The will of Thomas Tosh was dated September 7, 1777. Its author died the following winter and the document was probated at Fincastle on February 11. The widow, Mary Tosh, was to possess, "while she remains a widow," the "plantation whereon I now live"—i.e. the homestead above the river and its ford, with all its servants, furniture, utensils, farming implements, horses, cattle, hogs, sheep, etc.—"In case of her marying" (sic) or in the event of her death, the estate was to go to Thomas' son, Jonathan, whose education now became his mother's responsibility.—Thomas left property also to his daughter, Mary, and to his sons-in-law, Crawford and Evans.[18]

Perhaps this is the place to set down the few data discovered about the immediate families of the brothers Tosh. The maiden name of Thomas' wife, Mary, is unknown, as is the date of her death. Unknown also is the name of the daughter who married James Crawford. Her sister, Mary, became the wife of Peter, son of Mark Evans. Son Jonathan, who figured importantly in the will just referred to, married a widow, Mrs. Elizabeth Townsley.[19] Tasker's wife was Agnes Alexander. Their children were William, James, Jonathan, Jeanne and that Mary who was baptized by the Reverend John Craig.[20] When Tasker died in the summer of 1762, the Augusta County Court appointed Agnes administratrix of his estate. She posted bond with Armstrong McKeachy.[21]

According to a letter of Colonel Preston at "Greenfield," in 1764 Agnes was trying to collect pay due her husband in connection with the late war.[22] Seven years later she patented 138 acres on the Blackwater branch of Roanoke River. Agnes survived her husband by two decades, living until 1783, the year Britain acknowledged America's independence.[23]

Several additional statements may be made about the Toshes of the second generation. With regard to Tasker's children: William died late in 1772, a decade before his mother. His will was probated in the court of the new County of Botetourt on the following February 8, his brother Jonathan acting as executor. As heirs to the proceeds of the

18 Botetourt County Will Bk. A., pp. 81 - 82, 93
Anne L. Worrell—EARLY MARRIAGES, WILLS AND SOME REVOLUTIONARY WAR RECORDS, BOTETOURT COUNTY, VIRGINIA Hillsville Va. 1958 p. 64
19 Hildebrand OP.CIT. T.
20 Hildebrand OP.CIT. T.
Summers OP.CIT. p. 577
21 ABSTRACTS I, 99; III, 70
Summers OP.CIT. p. 572
22 Preston Papers OP.CIT. p. 57
23 Hildebrand OP.CIT. T.: V.L.O. Patent Bk. 40, p. 570
Kegley OP.CIT. p. 542
Summers OP.CIT. p. 57

sale of his "farm on Cannaugh" (Kanawha) he named his sister, Jeanne, and his brothers, James and Jonathan.[24] Botetourt court and parish records give us a little bit more information about James. In 1774 he did jury duty. In the late Seventies the church wardens were binding out to him several boys and girls. In the spring of 1781, he was enrolled as ensign in the county militia. In July came a promotion to a second lieutenantcy in Captain Neeley's company. Several years after the War James was appointed constable.[25]

One cannot be sure whether some references to Jonathan Tosh are to the son of Tasker or to his first cousin of the same name. Court records show, however, that in 1780 the former was serving as constable, and in 1783 as grand juror. He was selected also to "view the way" of a road proposed from Indian Hill. In 1796 came further service as constable as well as processioner. Late in 1797 he was made guardian to the four sons of Peter Evans and Mary Tosh (Mark, Thomas, Jonathan and William). In their name he was expected to bring suit against William Watts and others.[26] Nothing is known of Tasker's daughters but the reference to Mary's baptism.

The member of the second generation of whom most has been recorded is the only son of Thomas Tosh, Jonathan. Upon his mother's death, perhaps in the early Eighties, he inherited the estate developed from the nucleus of those 65 acres above the north bank of the Roanoke "entered" by his father soon after he came to the Valley of "Goose Creek" and granted to him by the Crown in 1767. The romantic story of the courtship and marriage on August 6, 1805 of Jonathan to the widow Elizabeth Townsley of Alabama is told by Colonel Lucian D. Booth, who was the past owner of the old Tosh "plantation," known for over half a century now as "Lone Oak."

Moreover, using as his sources primary documentary materials and the recollections and traditions of Tosh's descendants, Colonel Booth has traced the development of the old dwelling and its grounds from the construction of the original log home in the middle years of the 18th century to the present time—a tale of more than two centuries. In addition to its detailed account of the oldest home within the limits of the present City of Roanoke, it furnishes a record of the descendants of Thomas Tosh through the third and fourth generations. Especially important is the analysis of the disposition of Jonathan's property upon the death of the master of "Lone Oak" some time before August 19, 1812 when the estate was settled. Here Colonel Booth makes use both of court records and a contemporary map in his possession.[27]

24 Summers OP.CIT. pp. 172, 587
Worrell EARLY MARRIAGES, WILLS, ETC. p. 64
25 Summers OP.CIT. pp. 217, 254, 274, 283, 340, 345, 409, 527
26 Summers OP.CIT. pp. 307, 372, 393, 463, 466, 474
27 L. D. Booth, Col U. S. Army, Ret. LONE OAK Roanoke, Va. 1958, typecript, esp. pp. 1 - 5
1942 W.P.A. ROANOKE: STORY OF CITY AND COUNTY OP.CIT. p. 185
Worrell—EARLY MARRIAGES, WILLS, etc. OP.CIT. p. 64

It is not known where the persons treated herein are buried. But one may surmise that the graves of some of those who dwelt upon that high ground above the river are at "Lone Oak" or upon land nearby that was a part of the Thomas Tosh estate. The discovery in 1910 of four skeletons on the site of the present Griggs house points to that conclusion. As for Tasker, we have done no more than guess where his homestead may have been. We have no clues whatever as to his burial place.[28]

* * *

This paper, therefore, ends as it began upon a note of conjecture. However, in between the obscurity of the story's beginning and end one may follow two frontiersmen of the middle sort or class as they go about their concerns, both public and private. Such observation will throw considerable light upon the days and ways of the white man as he colonized the "New West" of the Roanoke Valley.

28 J. R. Hildebrand: Letter of November 19, 1959, based on information furnished by Mr. Stuart Barbour

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Bruce, Thomas—SOUTHWEST VIRGINIA AND THE SHENANDOAH VALLEY, Richmond, Va. J. L. Hill Publishing Co. c. 1891

Chalkley, Lyman comp.—CHRONICLES OF SCOTCH-IRISH SETTLEMENT IN VIRGINIA EXTRACTED FROM ORIGINAL COURT RECORDS OF AUGUSTA COUNTY 1745 - 1860. Published by Mary S. Lockwood, Rosslyn, Va. Printers Commonwealth Printing Co. 1912 - 13

Chalkley, Lyman—"Before The Gates Of The Wilderness Road" VIRGINIA MAGAZINE OF HISTORY AND BIOGRAPHY Richmond, Va. 1922 Vol. XXX.

Clement, Maud Carter—HISTORY OF PITTSYLVANIA COUNTY, VIRGINIA Lynchburg, Va. J. P. Bell Co. 1929

Early, R. H.—CAMPBELL CHRONICLES AND FAMILY SKETCHES, 1782 - 1926 Lynchburg, Va. J. P. Bell Co. 1927

Hildebrand, J. R.—RECORDS OF THE ACQUISITION OF PROPERTIES Manuscript Roanoke, Va. n.d.

Kegley, F. B.—THE VIRGINIA FRONTIER; THE BEGINNINGS OF THE SOUTHWEST; THE ROANOKE OF COLONIAL DAYS, 1740 - 1783 Roanoke, Va. Stone Printing Co. c. 1938

McCauley, William—ed. and comp. HISTORY OF ROANOKE COUNTY, SALEM AND ROANOKE CITY, VIRGINIA Chicago, Ill. Bibliographical Publishing Co. 1902

Miller, Thomas W.—HISTORY OF ROANOKE CITY; SURVEYS OF ORIGINAL TRACTS, SURVEYS, CONVEYANCES, ETC. Roanoke, Va. 1891 Manuscript in the possession of the Messrs. J. P. and J. L. Hart

Pendleton, WM. Cecil—HISTORY OF TAZEWELL COUNTY AND SOUTHWEST VIRGINIA, 1747 - 1920 Richmond, Va. J. L. Hill Publishing Co. 1920

Peyton, John Lewis—HISTORY OF AUGUSTA COUNTY, VIRGINIA Staunton, Va. Saml. M. Yost. Co. c. 1882 2nd ed. Bridgewater, Va. c. 1953

Summers, Lewis Preston—HISTORY OF SOUTHWEST VIRGINIA, 1746 - 1786 Richmond, Va. J. L. Hill Publishing Co. 1903

Summers, Lewis Preston—ANNALS OF SOUTHWEST VIRGINIA 1769 - 1800 Abingdon, Va. Pub. by author 1929

Waddell, Joseph Addison—ANNALS OF AUGUSTA COUNTY, VIRGINIA FROM 1726 TO 1871 2nd ed. Staunton, Va. C. R. Caldwell 1902

Worrell, Anne Lowry—EARLY MARRIAGES, WILLS AND SOME REVOLUTIONARY WAR RECORDS OF BOTETOURT COUNTY, VIRGINIA Hillsville, Va. Carroll Publishing Corp. 1958

Worrell, Anne Lowry—HISTORY OF ROANOKE COUNTY, 1748 - 1770 typescript in Roanoke Public Library Roanoke, Va. c. 1942

W. P. A.—OLD HOMES OF ROANOKE COUNTY Pamphlets in the Salem Court House, W. C. Sponaugle researcher "Lone Oak" 1936

W. P. A.—ROANOKE, STORY OF CITY AND COUNTY Writers' Program: American Guide Series Roanoke, Va. Stone Printing Co. 1942

MAPS

J. R. Hildebrand—Court House, Salem 1943: 1825 - 1875: farm lands now in city Carlton Terrace, Roanoke 1955: Official Map: Roanoke and Environs

Fincastle Court House: Deed Bk. 11, p. 370 Col. L. D. Booth and Mr. E. P. Goodwin: Maps in private possession

W. P. A.—ROANOKE, STORY OF CITY AND COUNTY: end piece

COURT RECORDS

Botetourt County: Fincastle
Roanoke County: Salem

Notable Southwest Virginia Homes--II

Lone Oak, 1767?-1964

Lone Oak, mentioned in the immediately preceding story of the Brothers Tosh, was most probably the oldest dwelling in the City of Roanoke when it was demolished in 1964, replaced by a nursing home.

The late Col. Lucian D. Booth, its last resident owner, declared the center portion of the brick house was built by Thomas Tosh in 1767. Others, including Raymond P. Barnes, a regional historian of standing, say that Tosh dwelt in a log house on the site until his death in 1778, that the home later known as "Lone Oak" rose on the hill above Tosh's Ford under the supervision of his widow.

Whatever the date, the house was a fine example of the early plantation manors of this area. It was occupied by direct descendents of the pioneering Tosh brothers until 1901.

In these latter days of streets and numbers "Lone Oak" stood at 324 King George Avenue, SW in Roanoke on the remnant of its original 65-acre grant above Roanoke River (and the come-lately Virginian Railway) northwest of Franklin Road. Col. and Mrs. Booth did much to restore some of the original appeal to the old home and in 1958 he wrote a paper, never published, outlining the history of the dwelling.

"In 1767 Thomas built alongside the log residence a house with 18-inch brick walls," Booth wrote. "It consisted of a living room and a bedroom on the first floor and two bedrooms above. A circular staircase in the southeast corner of the bedroom connected with the bedroom above. The dining room was in the old log house. The front of the house was on the southside with a single door opening onto a wooden porch which extended around the west side of the house. It included a balustrade around the porch. . . .

"The timber used in the construction of the house was all hewn by hand, seasoned on the place and put together with morticed joints, handmade nails and wooden pegs. It is probable that the floors were made of split puncheons, smoothed with a broad-axe. The large bricks in the walls were laid with unusually hard mortar. When it became necessary to cut a window during remodeling the brick had to be chiseled out as if it were solid stone. . . .

"The place was at one time called 'Rock of Ages,' because of the rocky ledge on which it stood, and later, 'Big Oaks,' from two magnificent trees which stood on the lower part of the lawn near present Franklin Road. In 1901 when the Lawrence Davises became owners there was only one tree left standing so they changed the name to "Lone Oak." This tree measured more than 25 feet around the trunk and its branches were enormous. It was blown down in 1917 and 32

LONE OAK IN ITS LAST DAYS.

cords of wood were cut from the branches alone—as the trunk was shattered.

" 'Rock of Ages' was frequently used as headquarters by Gen. Andrew Lewis during various campaigns and many conferences were held there before Lewis died in 1781.

"After the death of Thomas Tosh, his widow Mary and the children including the only son Jonathan, continued to live in the brick home near the ford. Once during high water a Negro brought news to Jonathan that his mistress, Mrs. Elizabeth Townsley, and her maid sat in a carriage in midstream, unable to cross or turn back. Jonathan rescued them and persuaded them to spend the night. Elizabeth, a widow and reportedly beautiful, was on the way to Richmond but there must have been a mutual appeal as the trip was forgotten and she and Jonathan were married in the house on August 6, 1805."

Col. Booth then details the succession of "Lone Oak's" owners. Jonathan inherited it from his mother and willed it to his wife who outlived him. At her death in 1850 title was taken by their daughter Jean who married William Lewis, a great-grandson of Gen. Andrew. Jean's eldest son, Andrew Lewis, inherited the property at her death in 1889.

"In his old age Andrew married a widow named Mrs. King who had

the old house painted red, thus infuriating some nearby residents," Booth wrote. "They later moved to Florida and rented 'Lone Oak.' It was during this period that the place had little care."

In 1901 Patterson Rorer bought "Lone Oak," then a five-acre estate, and gave it to his daughter Blanche upon her wedding to Lawrence S. Davis. The old log kitchen—farm bell attached, servants' cabins, smokehouse and icehouse were still standing. There were 3 1/4 acres remaining when Col. and Mrs. Booth bought the house in 1944.

First major remodeling was done by Jean Tosh, probably in the 1860s. She removed the old log "dining house" and built the brick addition containing a dining room and the master's bedroom above, constructed larger porches. The Davises made many changes, including the shifting of the main entrance from south to east, the construction of a sunroom and bathrooms and the cutting of more windows. The old log kitchen was replaced by an addition containing a pantry, kitchen, laundry room and vegetable room on the first floor and a bedroom and two baths above. The original log servant house was torn down for a double garage and servants' rooms.

"Under the ownership of Jean Tosh Lewis, 'Big Oaks' was noted for its beautiful shrubbery, boxwood trees and lovely bluegrass sod," Col. Booth wrote. "It was also noted for its mint juleps. One part of the lawn was so covered with mint that in later years during cutting the odor of mint was so strong it could be detected half a mile away.

"At that time a boxwood-lined path led from the rear door of the house to the garden. Two tall cedar trees stood at the garden entrance and there were hedges of English lavender and old red damask roses on each side. Down the east side of the garden stretched a grape arbor. On the west side was a lilac hedge separating the flowers from a lawn on the west. . . . In the center was a small summer-house covered with wisteria and seven sisters roses. Many tall boxwoods were scattered about.

"During Andrew Lewis' ownership a tenant kept cows which roamed at will upon lawn and gardens, destroying everything they liked. About all that remained was one enormous boxwood tree, a century-old wisteria vine clambering over the remnant of the summer house and part of the lilac hedge."

Col. Booth related how Mrs. Davis rehabilitated the lawns and gardens to the point where they were again a showplace of the area and have been a feature of Virginia Garden Week.

"Lone Oak" had been vacant for three years when the Booths moved in and the gardens were neglected and overgrown. They painstakingly restored them. So in the 1950s, two centuries after its beginnings, "Lone Oak" was opened to Garden Week visitors—an example of a way of living which can never return.

Founding of Patrick County

By James H. Martin

The beginning of the French and Indian War in 1753 brought construction of numerous frontier forts, both east and west of the Blue Ridge Mountains. Among them was Fort Mayo which stood on the North Mayo River in Halifax County—on soil that was later to become Patrick County. The fort was commanded by Captain Samuel Harris, and was visited in 1756 by George Washington while on an inspection tour of all the forts. It was the southernmost of the line of stockades extending from the Potomac River to North Carolina, and stood close to the Indian path leading from the Cherokee country in North Carolina to the white settlements east of the Blue Ridge.

The main path led from the west to the east, but a branch of it left the South Mayo River near the present court house of Patrick County, about ten miles due west of Fort Mayo, and went northeastward up Bull Mountain Fork, crossing the head branches of Smith River, toward Woods Gap in the crest of the Blue Ridge on the Patrick and Floyd county line. Near this mountain pass the branch trail up Bull Mountain Fork converged with another Indian path which came from New River valley and western country, crossing the moun-

---

Mr. Martin, a native of Princeton, W. Va., and a graduate of the University of Virginia law school, is an attorney in Bluefield, W. Va., where for 18 years he was a city court justice. Through his late mother whose maiden name was Rebecca Elizabeth Shelton he is descended from the Patrick County Sheltons about whom he writes.

The crest of Wood's Gap on the Patrick-Floyd county line. After centuries it is still a sparsely-travelled gateway.

tain and passing southeastward toward the white settlements in eastern Virginia and North Carolina.

Colonel Abraham Wood, who dwelt at the falls of the Appomattox River, on the site of Petersburg, obtained permission from the Government more than one hundred years before Patrick County was dreamed of, to open trade with the western Indians. In traveling westward from his home Colonel Wood followed the head branches of Smith River across Patrick County soil in the 1750s.

Dr. John P. Hale in his book *Trans-Allegheny Pioneers,* stated:

"In 1758 the State sent Captain Robert Wade from 'Fort Mayo', with thirty-five rangers to 'range for Indians.' They came by Goblintown, by Black Water, Pigg River, and Smith's River, branches of the Dan, and crossed over to the head of Little River to New River. Probably just the route of Colonel Abraham Wood and Captain Henry Batte many years before. Thence they passed down as far as Draper's Meadows and back up to Reed Island Creek. . . . The result of this expedition was reported by Captain John Echols and sworn to before Abraham Maury, a Justice of the Peace for Augusta County."

In 1763 Ralph Shelton Sr., of Amelia County, sold his land on the Nottoway River in that county, and with his family joined the westward movement. He settled several miles west of Fort Mayo in what was then Halifax County, where he had purchased four hundred acres of land astride the South Mayo River, in the southern foothills of the Blue Ridge. His land was successively included geographically in four different counties following his purchase: Halifax taken from Lunenburg in 1752; Pittsylvania taken from Halifax in 1767; Henry taken from Pittsylvania in 1777, and finally in Patrick taken from Henry in 1791. Later historical developments have proven that the Town of Taylorsville (now Stuart) includes part of his land. It is interesting to note that the two last mentioned counties were named after the patriot and statesman, Patrick Henry, who at one time lived near Martinsville in Henry County.

Shelton's large family included three sons: Eliphaz, who probably was the oldest, James and Jeremiah. Henry County was formed during the Revolutionary war, and its records show that Eliphaz Shelton took the oath of allegiance, and Jeremiah Shelton furnished supplies to the county militia during the war. In 1777 James Shelton was appointed Captain, and in March, 1779, Eliphaz Shelton also was appointed captain in the Henry County Militia.

On March 11, 1781, Captain Eliphaz Shelton marched with his men, under Colonel Abraham Penn, to the assistance of General Nathaniel Green who was defending Guilford Court House. The British forces in this battle on March 15 were under Lord Cornwallis and although the Americans lost the battle, the supplies of the British were so badly

depleted that they never recovered, and this battle led to Cornwallis' surrender at Yorktown on October 19, 1781. The names of the men who marched with Colonel Penn on this historic occasion are recorded in a roster in Colonel Penn's own handwriting in the possession of one of his descendants at Martinsville, and also in the roster in the Henry County courthouse.

The Revolution had ended, our independence had been won, and it was now 1784. On February 28 Captain Eliphaz Shelton received from Benjamin Harrison, Governor of Virginia, a grant of 590 acres on both sides of the South Mayo River in Henry County. His land was bounded on the south by the 400-acre tract owned by his father, Ralph Shelton, Sr., and on the east by another 400-acre tract owned by his brother, Captain James Shelton. At a point close to Captain Eliphaz Shelton's western boundary, the water from Bull Mountain Fork joined the South Mayo River as it flowed from the rugged crags of the Blue Ridge, winding its way to join the big Dan River near Mayodan, North Carolina.

With the formation of Patrick County in 1791, a site was needed for the county seat of government. Tradition has it that the first court of the county was held in a tobacco warehouse near Mayo Forge, in the eastern part of the county, and that later the place for holding court was moved to the home of Edward Tatum on Peters Creek. But the permanent site of the county seat was determined by the Patrick County justices during the early months of the new county's existence. Records in the Circuit Court Clerk's Office of Patrick County show that Captain Eliphaz Shelton donated a parcel of land containing eighteen acres for the site of the county seat. His donation was by a deed dated October 10, 1791, recorded in Deed Book 1, at page 17. On July 11, 1791, previously he had executed a title or performance bond in the penalty 200 pounds, binding himself to convey the land for the county seat, and William Banks, Sam'l Clark, Charles Foster and William Carter, or any three of them, were to lay the land off. It was almost in the heart of the 590-acre grant from Governor Harrison.

On November 17, 1792, the General Assembly passed "An Act to establish a town at the Court-house, in the county of Patrick." This law, in Chapter LXIX of *Henning Statutes at Large,* Vol. 13, (1789-92). Section 1 reads:

> *"Town of Taylorsville established at Patrick court-house. Sect. 1 BE it enacted by the General Assembly, That the lots and streets, as the same are already laid off at the court-house in the county of Patrick, shall be, and are hereby established a town by the name of Taylorsville; and Archelaus Hughes, Abraham Penn, James Lyon, Samuel Clark, Francis Turner, James Armstrong, William Banks, William Carter,*

Charles Foster, and George Penn, gentlemen, are constituted and appointed trustees thereof."

The town was named for George Taylor who came from Wales, and in 1774 obtained a grant of land on North Mayo River, situated in what is now eastern Patrick County. In 1882 the name of the town was changed to Stuart in honor of General J. E. B. Stuart, Confederate hero, who was born and reared several miles west of the town. A monument to the memory of General Stuart stands on the court house lawn. The town was incorporated as Stuart in 1884. During the same year the Danville and New River Railroad, predecessor of the Danville and Western, ran its line into the town.

Captain Eliphaz Shelton owned and operated a mill of Mill Branch (now Campbell Branch) which flows through the town. He devised his mill to his wife, Ann Shelton, for life, by his last will.

As early as 1796 Samuel Staples operated a blacksmith shop in the town, on land donated by Eliphaz Shelton to the county.

The present courthouse built in 1852 to replace an earlier structure, was remodeled in 1928. It is claimed that long before any churches or schools were constructed in the village, the basement of the courthouse was used for church services and as a schoolroom. As early as 1793 there was a meeting house near the head of Russell Creek, not far from the town. Reference to this meeting house is to be found in a deed from James Buford, Jr. to Eliphaz Shelton, recorded in Patrick County.

At the May Court of 1847, the surveyor of the county was ordered to survey and lay off the prison bounds not exceeding ten acres around and including the court-house and prison. History records, as is pointed out by R. D. Stoner in his recent book, *A Seed-Bed of the*

The present Patrick County courthouse at Main and Blue Ridge Streets in Stuart.

Republic, that in the early days debt was a cause for imprisonment, and either because there was no moral stigma attached to it, or because the county preferred not to support the debtor in prison, ten acres was laid off in a boundary around some prisons, outside which debtor prisoners were not to stray, and within which they enjoyed a degree of liberty.

On June 13, 1847, Lewis Pedigo, surveyor of the county, filed in court the report of his survey together with a map showing the prison bounds. It included the courthouse, jail and a spring. It is interesting that his report and map did not show the inclusion of a church. It was customary for the court to require that the prison bounds include the courthouse, jail, a church and a spring. The fact that the surveyor did not include a church in his report and map would seem to confirm that there was no church in the village at that time, and that the basement of the courthouse was used for church services and as a schoolroom. It is also worthy of note that the surveyor's written report stated that the prison bounds as surveyed by him, included "nearly all the dwellings, houses, shops, etc., in the *vilage* as well as the court house and prison." In 1849 the town contained about fifty dwellings.

So Ralph Shelton, Sr. and his sons, Eliphaz Shelton and James Shelton, were really early pioneer settlers in what is now Patrick County. Their adjoining tracts of land in the Taylorsville area were so situated with relation to each other that if an imaginary straight line were drawn from a point on the western boundary of Eliphaz Shelton's 590-acre tract, extending eastward through the Town of Taylorsville (now Stuart), crossing the adjoining tracts of Ralph Shelton, Sr., and James Shelton, respectively, to the latter's eastern boundary, such imaginary line would be two and one-quarter miles in length.

Ralph Shelton, Sr. lived to see his residence near the present courthouse of Patrick County successively included in Halifax, Pittsylvania and Henry counties. He died in March 1789, while his residence was still included in Henry County, where his will was probated that year.

Captain Eliphaz Shelton died in August 1826, at his residence, which was also near the Patrick courthouse, and where his will was probated.

Both of these pioneer settlers are believed to have been buried in an old cemetery on land formerly owned by Ralph Shelton, Sr., in what is now referred to as "downtown" Stuart, the land being now owned by the Carter family.

Peaks of Otter: I

A Postscript to Prehistory

Archeological research at the Peaks of Otter which indicated human habitation there during periods ranging from 8,000 to 5,000 years ago was described in an article in last winter's *Journal*—Jean M. White's "Three-Layer Cake of Prehistoric Virginia."

The story detailed findings of three distinct firepits, one atop another, and the archeological timetable constructed by the study of weapon points found at each level. It said that National Park Archeologist John W. Griffin was making a further study of the discoveries.

This June Griffin reported that carbon-14 analysis of a piece of charcoal from the firepit showed it to be 5,380 years old, "give or take 140 years."

Studies of the carefully-catalogued material taken from the site now covered by an artificial lake are continuing and are expected to shed further light on the lives of the nomadic peoples who roamed the Appalachians 300 generations and more ago.

And the waters of the lake on the Blue Ridge Parkway 30 miles northeast of Roanoke well protect other secrets which may be revealed by scientists of a generation to come—one in which techniques have been refined to the point that much more can be learned from evidence which appears worthless today.

When Mrs. Lyndon B. Johnson visited the Peaks in May, 1965, Don Robinson, chief naturalist of the Blue Ridge Parkway, prepared a talk in which he told the party of the previous summer's research project, described how the early hunters were believed to have lived in the area and said it was believed that such groups were there more or less continuously until the coming of the white man.

"Recent Indian tribes—the Saponis, Iroquois and Cherokees—roamed these mountains from time to time, hunting and warring with each other," he said. "The mountains afforded plentiful game and a pleasant summer camping site, but they still chose to build their permanent villages and plant their corn in the Great Valley or the Piedmont at the foot of the mountains and along the larger river banks below."

Robinson then told of the first white visitors and settlers in the shadow of the Peaks. That part of his talk is printed on the opposite page.

Peaks of Otter: II

Coming of the White Man

Don Robinson

We don't know who was the first white man to see the Peaks of Otter. John Lederer may have seen them from a distance in 1670, but the first actual record of them appeared on a map of Virginia made in 1751 by Joshua Fry and Peter Jefferson. A 20,000-acre land grant to Matthew Talbot and Rev. John Brunskill, in 1749, included this area, and was probably its first private ownership.

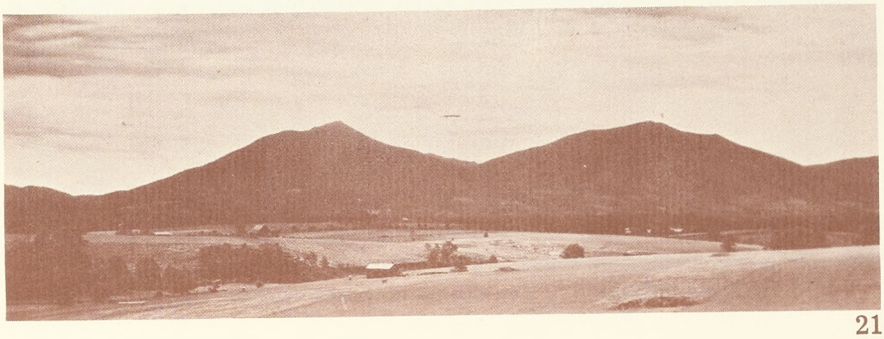
Following this the area changed hands many times, and by the middle of the 19th century included a considerable number of smaller tracts.

The late Dr. E. L. Johnson, of Bedford, was born in this area, and he stated that during the 1880's this was a well-settled community, with 20 or more families living within a radius of two miles. The same area is now rapidly reverting to wilderness, with only a few ancient apple trees, a cabin chimney here and there, and a scattering of crude gravestones to mark the relatively short span of "civilization" in the shadow of the Peaks of Otter.

During Revolutionary times a road was built through the area and used to haul lead from the mines in the New River country for Continental muskets and flint locks. This road soon became a common thoroughfare, as teamsters and others learned that between these peaks was an inviting place to pause and rest. This commercial travel soon brought about the first public overnight accommodations. About 1830 Polly Woods, widow of one of the Peaks of Otter's early settlers, opened an "ordinary" a short distance east of the site of the present motel. It was just a simple, one-room log cabin, with a sleeping loft, catering to the "ordinary" needs of the traveler—a hot meal cooked in the fireplace, a bed in the loft, and a stable for his horses.

Polly Woods' ordinary operated for about 25 years, and near the end of this time Benjamin Wilkes started a competing business. In

(Continued on Page 34)



Peaks of Otter: III

How It Was in 1907

Today it takes about twenty minutes to drive up from Bedford to the wide meadows on the Blue Ridge Parkway below the Peaks of Otter. State road 43 is no interstate expressway but it is paved and the curves are banked, providing a routine climb for travellers heading either for the Parkway or over the mountain to Buchanan and beyond.

Not so 58 years ago. For horsedrawn vehicles it was an Undertaking. The dusty-or-muddy winding trail was a three or four hour jaunt. The change might have come with the Hudson pictured on these pages.

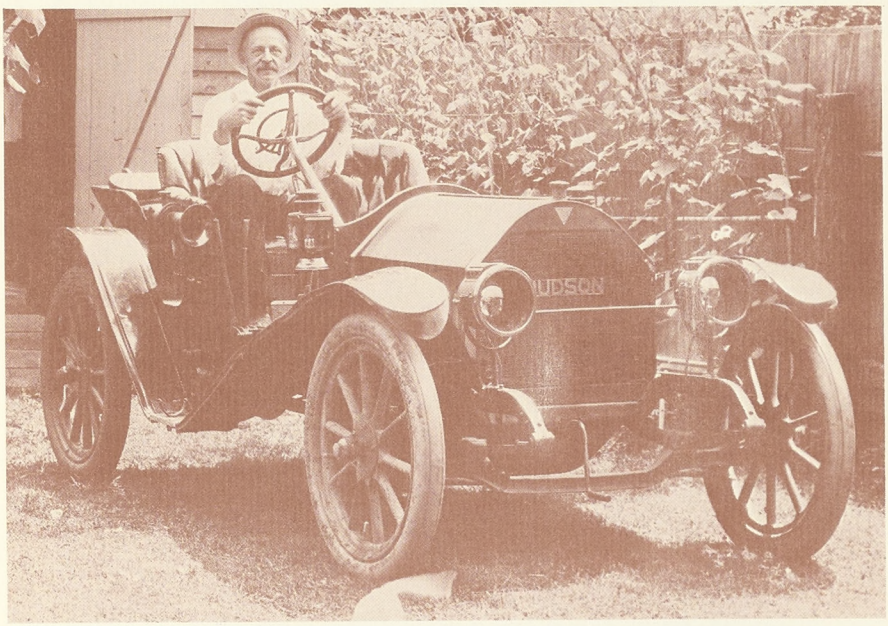
The negatives from which these photographs were made—remarkable for their time—were found in the papers of R. Cator Ragland of Bedford (who died in 1936) by his nephew R. Holman Ragland, a member of this Society. Holman Ragland says the pictures probably were made by a man named Richardson, a Bedford photographer at that time.

Owner and driver of the climbing Hudson (and that make of car maintained its reputation for power for another 35 years) was J. A. Heuser, Bedford jeweler. Identification was made by Miss Earle Dennis, former deputy court clerk, who also recalls that R. Cator Ragland himself was the first automobile owner in Bedford.

From the old pictures we have reconstructed a horseless carriage trip to the peaks in 1907.

1. This is Bedford City's Bridge Street in 1907 looking north from Main. Note there isn't an automobile in sight. Heuser's jewelry store was near this principal intersection.

2. Here are the Peaks as seen from south of the Bedford passenger station in 1907. The old Randolph-Macon Academy dominates the scene, center, with the Elks' National Home at left. That is Norfolk & Western Norfolk-Columbus Train 3 (due 3:23 PM) with four full coaches and a parlor car. Double-tracking of the railway brought material and work cars, foreground and left.



3. J. A. Heuser mounts his rugged Hudson preparatory to the trip. His four-footed friend in foreground is taking off in opposite direction.

4. On the climb with headlamps covered as protection against dust, flying rocks and chicken feathers, Heuser has picked up an unidentified — but very dignified passenger.

5. Objective achieved, the Hudson is besieged by a gang of most envious youngsters. In background is the Peaks of Otter Hotel, predecessor of Hotel Mons.

Beginnings of the Virginia Historical Society

by William M. E. Rachal

This is part of a talk given before the Roanoke Historical Society at a Hotel Roanoke dinner meeting in May, 1965. Since 1953 Mr. Rachal has been editor of the VIRGINIA MAGAZINE OF HISTORY AND BIOGRAPHY and other publications of the Virginia Historical Society. He is the author of numerous articles and has edited several important works including the 1951 edition of Caldwell's A TOUR THROUGH PART OF VIRGINIA IN THE SUMMER OF 1808. Since 1956 he has represented the University of Virginia as editor of James Madison's papers. Mr. Rachal is a graduate of Davidson College and holds a graduate degree in history from the University of Virginia.

The gentlemen who gathered at Richmond in the Hall of the House of Delegates on the evening of December 29, 1831, were at once cultured and public spirited. The concept of the philosopher, which Thomas Jefferson exemplified so well, was still current.

George Tucker, courtly and urbane, moved about the hall greeting friends warmly. A decade earlier he and John Floyd had served together in Congress. Now as professor at the new University of Virginia and as governor of the state respectively, they engaged in last-minute conversation concerning plans for organizing a historical society for Virginia. Jonathan Peter Cushing, the president of Hampden-Sydney College, joined them. Oddly enough, not one of the three was a native of Virginia. Tucker had been born in Bermuda on the eve of the American Revolution, Floyd in Kentucky just after the war, and Cushing in New Hampshire in the month President George Washington was inaugurated for his second term.

Success in Virginia politics, experience as a professor of moral philosophy, and distinction as the author of several books made Tucker, a graduate of the College of William and Mary, an ideal leader in establishing the society; but it was Cushing, not Tucker, who had fathered the project. In fact, when first approached, Tucker had demurred. "Societies for promotion of agriculture and other laudable purposes" had been formed, but they were "soon suffered to languish and decay," he reminded Cushing. A historical and philosophical society could be established, but it would not continue. Cushing won Tucker over by pointing out "that supposing it should last but some six or seven years, it will in that time have done a great deal of good."

A statewide character was given to the gathering by the presence of members of the General Assembly, then in session. Many stood around the ornate iron stove, which had warmed the burgesses in the old capitol at Williamsburg, and discussed the issues of the day. Instead of damning George III and the tax on tea, as the burgesses had done, the delegates denounced President Andrew Jackson and the Tariff of Abominations.

Soon the gentlemen filed into the benches which, during the day many of them occupied as members of the legislature and took their seats. When conversation ceased, Cushing moved that Floyd be invited to take the chair. As soon as the Governor, gaunt and swarthy as an Indian, had mounted the platform and seated himself in the speaker's ancient chair, John Hampden Pleasants, editor of the Richmond *Whig*, was appointed secretary and took his place at the clerk's table, close to the candle.

The object of the proposed society, Professor Tucker explained, was "to collect and preserve materials for the civil and physical history of Virginia." Scattered throughout the state in private hands were valuable papers which would throw light upon its history, especially during the period of the Revolution. He urged that these records be preserved for the use of future historians, since in the forming of the nation the influence of Virginia and Massachusetts had been "greater than that of all the other states put together." Tucker added that his examination of the papers of Richard Henry Lee which had recently been deposited at the University of Virginia had confirmed him in this view.

Turning to the "physical" side of the society's proposed activities, Tucker pointed out that mountains were "the natural sites of mineral wealth," and he looked forward to the day when the hills of Virginia would yield up their treasures. He remarked that the finest porcelain could be made from clay discovered by Professor John P. Emmet on the grounds of the University, and urged each member of the General Assembly to bring geological specimens from his county to the society so that they could be analyzed.

The organization was to be called "The Virginia Historical and Philosophical Society." While the word "historical" was specific, the word "Philosophical" was broad enough in that day to include all fields of knowledge. Therefore, the "natural," as well as the "civil and literary" history of Virginia came within its purview. Indeed, the association proposed "to patronize and advance all those sciences which have a direct tendency to promote the best interests of our citizens. This breadth of interest was the rule, rather than the exception, among historical societies founded during the first half of the nineteenth century.

Throughout Virginia at this time a passion for party politics tended to crowd out "the more calm and rational pursuits of science and letters." Cushing and others foresaw that identification with a particular political faction could wreck the society. Success depended on enlisting support from all parties and choosing a president who was above faction, a man whose character—whose very name—would command support. They turned instinctively to John Marshall, Richmond's beloved senior citizen. But the Chief Justice was not present; at his modest home several blocks away, he mourned his wife, the adored Polly, who had died on Christmas day.

Nevertheless, James H. Gholson, of Brunswick County, who was soon elected to Congress as a Democrat, moved first that Marshall be elected as honorary member and then that he be elected president. The choice was unanimous. The great man subsequently accepted the office and set the seal of his approbation upon the society. Though he was re-elected president regularly until his death more than four years later, Marshall never attended a meeting. The old Federalist was not well, but a conflict between the February term of the Supreme Court and the annual meetings of the society probably occasioned his absences. He showed his sincere interest in the organization by presenting to its library a copy of his *Life of George Washington* inscribed to the society "with his profound respects."

Governor Floyd, an ardent state-rights Democrat who could command support from those who might object to Marshall's nationalism, was nominated by Tucker for first vice president; and Cushing, the chief architect of the society, was nominated by Archibald Bryce, Jr., of Goochland County, for second vice president. Both were elected without opposition.

John B. Clopton, of New Kent County, who assembled one of the most remarkable private libraries ever owned by a Virginian, became corresponding secretary, and James E. Heath, of Richmond, soon to be the first editor of the *Southern Literary Messenger,* became recording secretary. The office of treasurer went to Conway Robinson, a brilliant young Richmond attorney.

With a view to securing shelf space and professional care for both the library and the cabinet, Gustavus A. Myers nominated William H. Richardson, the state librarian, to be librarian of the society. Richardson, who was not present, was first elected an honorary member and then librarian.

With all offices filled, the meeting turned to other matters. Cushing was appointed to deliver the first anniversary address in January, 1833. The annual dues were set at one dollar, and though this was at

that time a substantial sum, it was necessary to double it two years later.

The important question of how to acquaint the people of the state with the "views of the Society" was disposed of by appointing Cushing, Tucker, Nelson, Bryce, and General William Henry Brodnax, of Dinwiddie County, to prepare an "Address to the Public." The omission from the Committee of anyone from Richmond emphasizes perhaps the statewide character of the new society. In any case Cushing and Tucker were certainly best qualified to present the aims of the organization.

The hour was late and a motion for adjournment was in order, but Tucker rose once more to propose that Virginia's only living former President of the United States be made an honorary member. Approval was unanimous, for, like Marshall, James Madison was an elder statesman and patriot whom all delighted to honor. Although he was then too infirm to attend its meetings, Madison was interested in the society. On one occasion he stated that it had a "prior claim" on the manuscripts in his possession, but its library received no papers from him. A short time before his death, Madison enclosed a copy of the proceedings of the society in a letter to a friend interested in natural history. This so encouraged the gentleman, that some months later, he submitted a paper on the gestation of the opossum to the corresponding secretary.

The first gifts to the society, of which we have a record came from Southwest. Charles Crockett, who had represented Wythe County in the House of Delegates during the previous session, gathered from Tazewell, Grayson, Smyth, and Wythe counties specimens of lead, zinc, iron, and copper ores, of quartz and gypsum, and of wild cherry wood. These he entrusted to his successor in the Assembly to be delivered to the librarian.

Cushing addressed the second meeting on January 7, 1833. He then presented on behalf of absent donors the first manuscripts received by the society: a memoir of Indian wars in Western Virginia written by Colonel John Stuart, of Greenbrier County, and a copy of the record of the trial of Grace Sherwood for witchcraft in Princess Anne County in 1705. Both are still treasured possessions of the society.

The *Collections of the Virginia Historical and Philosophical Society* . . . , a paper-backed volume of eighty-seven pages edited by Heath and Dr. Robert Briggs, of Richmond, was ready for distribution by the middle of June 1833. At that time Clopton and Heath sent a printed circular letter to the various historical societies in the United States announcing the formation of the Virginia society and "communicating a copy of the first publication." Besides Cushing's address, it contained both the "memoir of Indian Wars . . ." and the "Record of Grace Sherwood's Trial . . ."

In response to a letter from the society to "various seminaries of learning and individuals" in Virginia there were several donations of valuable manuscripts, books, minerals, and relics.

John Page, of Williamsburg, presented an exercise book containing etymological praxis in Greek and Latin of Homer's *Iliad* made by George Wythe and some notes copied from Sir John Randolph's breviate book.

Among those who made notable donations to the cabinet were several civil engineers employed by the Board of Public Works. Charles B. Shaw, who was engaged in locating the Northwestern Turnpike Road between Winchester and Parkersburg, was very active on behalf of the society. He contributed a specimen of "Fungus growing upon decayed Sugar trees, or paper spunk, from Hardy County."

Nevertheless, when Governor Floyd called the third annual meeting to order on January 6, 1834, he was displeased: "Still many of the persons made members and officers of the Society have never met it," he remarked in his diary. Cold weather with snow undoubtedly prevented some from attending, but indifference kept others at home.

A number of gifts were acknowledged, some important, others trivial. Rather musty were "several ancient volumes in the latin language, derived from the Library of an episcopal clergyman." A modern note was struck by "a sample of Uranium from Cornwall in England, a sample of Agate from Spotsylvania county and a Garnet from the Island of Owhyhee." Of greater value were *The Proceedings of the convention of Delegates, held at the Town of Richmond, in the Colony of Virginia, On Friday the 1st of December, 1775* . . . printed by Alexander Purdie, and "a manuscript account of Bacon's Rebellion in 1675 & 1676 being a copy of the manuscript purchased by Rufus King from Lord Oxford and presented to Mr. Jefferson." Irreplaceable were the "original copper plates, from which the state paper currency of the Revolution was struck."

Cushing, who had braved the bitter January weather in his journey to Richmond for the meeting, had reason to be pleased with the progress of the society. Its membership was increasing, its collections were growing, and a very creditable volume had been published. On the other hand, no place had been found in which to house the library and cabinet. As the collections increased in size and value, their care became a pressing problem. Legally, the society, an unincorporated body, could not hold property. Cushing, therefore, proposed that a charter be secured from the General Assembly, then in session. On his motion, the Standing Committee was directed to apply for incorporation of the society, and "to procure a suitable place of deposit for the various acquisitions." If the Standing Committee met to discuss

the proposed charter, they left no record of their deliberations.

On February 12 Charles J. Faulkner, of Berkeley County, a charter member of the society, was given leave by the House of Delegates "to bring in a bill to incorporate the Virginia historical and philosophical society." At the same time a special House committee was appointed to prepare the bill and "to enquire if any, and what aid it may be proper for the state at this time to extend to that institution."

Two days later Faulkner reported a bill to charter the society and "a bill for granting certain aid" to it. These bills appear to have been drafted by Conway Robinson, treasurer of the society, for they are in his clerkly hand.

The later bill had two provisions. The first would authorize the society to "deposit for safe keeping such books, manuscripts, mineralogical specimens and Indian Antiquities as they may have acquired, with the public Librarian, who is hereby authorized to preserve and arrange the same in any of the vacant niches of the Library." The second paragraph would appropriate an undetermined sum to aid the society "in the laudable purpose of discovering procuring and preserving whatever may relate to the Natural, Civil and Literary history of the State."

Both bills passed their first two readings and were ordered engrossed on March 5. When they came up for a final reading two days later, the charter passed easily, but the bill for granting aid was "ordered to be laid upon the table" and so expired. On March 10 the Senate approved the charter and it became effective immediately.

Why the legislature refused to provide for the care of the society's collections, one can only guess. Perhaps the state librarian, William H. Richardson, who had never evinced the slightest interest in the society, refused to be burdened with the mounting pile of geological specimens and used his considerable influence to kill the bill. Certainly Richardson was not again elected librarian of the society, the office being joined at the next annual meeting to that of corresponding secretary, an arrangement which continued for a century.

The refusal of aid by the Commonwealth was a turning point in the history of the society. Instead of becoming an agency of the state, as many of the great Midwestern societies were to do, the Virginia society remained independent. This was fortunate, for it left the organization free from political control at a later time when near-sighted bureaucrats declared much in the priceless state archives wastepaper and consigned these treasures to the junkman.

Tucker delivered the annual address on February 4, 1835, "A Discourse on the Progress of Philosophy, and its Influence on the Intellectual and Moral Character of Man." Long and somewhat dry by modern standards, it was carefully reasoned and appears to have been well received. Actually, it was a valedictory, and in it Tucker set

forth a very modern concept of history:

"In history," he declared, "one most clearly perceives the spirit of the age. Formerly it consisted of a little more than a recital of the actions of princes, public or private; and no occurrence in the annals of a nation was deemed worthy of commemoration, except battles and conquests, revolutions and insurrections—with now and then the notice of a plague, famine, earthquake or other general calamity. Now, however, the historian aims to make us acquainted with the progress of society and the arts of civilization; with the advancement or decline of religion, literature, laws, manners, commerce—everything indeed, which is connected with the happiness or dignity of man; he does this, not only because he deemed these subjects more worthy the attention of an enlarged and liberal mind, but also because we can, from a faithful narrative of these events, traced out from their causes, and to their effects, learn the lessons of wisdom—and seeing the approach of evil, be better able to avert or mitigate it. It is in this spirit that all history must now be written, to be approved or even read."

—Photo by JACK GAKING

This elegant bonnet was worn 75 years ago by Mrs. Delcie Wade Gardner of Dugspur in Carroll County. It was presented to the Society's museum by her granddaughter, Mrs. J. J. Scruggs of Roanoke. Model is Sandra Sisson.

The South Western

(Continued from Page 2)

every horse or mule	06c
scores of cattle	30c
scores of sheep	15c
Stage to be charged per year for each section used	$75.00

Later the fees were reduced by 10% or 15% but in February, 1864, the tolls were generally increased by 100%—reflecting the depreciation of Confederate currency.

The earliest record which can be found of tolls collected on the entire turnpike was in the McCauley book, on loan to the Society, for the period from October, 1855 to September, 1856. Until the quarter ending June 30, 1856, there were thirteen toll gates. The fourteenth was added at that time, and was operated by Jacob Myers. The toll keepers were, in order, for that period as follows: B. Zimmerman, George W. Rader, Ranson Jeter, Josiah Johnston, John Woltz, Robert Douthat (later Henry Douthat), Franklin Akers, Ransom Dudley, William G. Hall, John Allen, Samuel R. Wheeler, and M. Kerr and Robert B. Allen.

The decision to stop construction was probably wise as Mr. McCauley's book shows the income of the road was $11,568 (including $2,784.06 from the estate of Colonel James Piper, the former Superintendent and chief engineer of the turnpike), but expenses amounted to $12,028.73.

The records of Gate #5 from October, 1856 to September, 1876 show the greatest civilian monthly use in various categories was as follows: In November, 1862, 217 animals drawing waggons (sic); in November, 1856, 11 two horse carts; in August, 1859, 59 one horse carts; in February, 1860, 352 horses and mules; in December, 1861, 1,200 cattle; and in December, 1861, 1,250 sheep and hogs. The Confederate tolls from September, 1862 to September, 1864, show the lowest for any one month was $4.00 in August of 1862 and the highest $415.75 in June of 1864.

Although research is lacking, the South West Turnpike was probably the last of the toll roads built with direct state funds. The years since World War II have produced the closest thing to it with toll roads, bridges and tunnels being built by instrumentalities of the state.

All material facts contained herein have been verified by official records or semi-official records of the times, however, this cannot be called a complete history. There are many things missing and it is hoped this short paper might stimulate someone to do the research necessary to develop its complete history. Here are subjects open for exploration:

1. The original backers of the turnpike.
2. The history of the earlier private turnpikes to and from Lafayette.
3. A more complete profile from Seven Mile Ford to Tennessee.
4. The location of toll gates.
5. The early tolls.
6. The stage coach lines using the turnpike.
7. The significance, if any, of the great fluctuation in Confederate tolls.

Peaks of Otter: II

(Continued from Page 21)

the late 1850's Wilkes, who had been operating an ordinary for seven or eight years, built the first hotel in the area, called the Otter Peaks Hotel, and soon put Polly Woods out of business. This hotel was located just across the Parkway from the present dining room, and rapidly became popular with vacationers. In 1870 the hotel burned, but was promptly rebuilt. In 1917 it was purchased by a company known as "Peaks of Otter, Inc.", which built a still larger hotel just west of it and named the new structure "Hotel Mons." The old building was then referred to as the "Annex."

In 1936 the property was purchased by the Parkway and the buildings razed, seemingly putting an end to this vacation mecca. But, soon came the Peaks campground, a picnic ground, and now the new Lodge and restaurant, bringing more vacationers into this restful mountain retreat than Polly Woods or Benjamin Wilkes had ever dared dreamed of.

And still they come, men and women, adults and children, the famous and the lowly, from all walks of life and from all over the world, still seeking, each in his own way, the same peace of mind, the same relief from cares and problems that this mountain retreat has offered since the days of stone-age man, and which we hope it will continue to offer for untold ages yet to come.

Almanacs, Ration Books and Rapiers

The pleasing variety of recent acquisitions by your society's museum accents the need for continuing efforts by members and friends in locating items related not only to the development of this area but of the nation.

In the last few months we have received relevant material ranging from almanacs in German and English from 1849 to 1934 (Dr. Charles H. Peterson), and World War II ration books (Mrs. W. W. S. Butler) to a "gentleman's rapier" (Mrs. L. P. Smithey). Other much appreciated donations include:

An old steel engraving of the Yorktown surrender (James Izard)
An 1840 dress (Mrs. Maude Hopkins)
Spoons from Roanoke Red Sulphur Springs Hotel (Mrs. Lyle Stevens)
Hand-cranked sewing machine and fluting iron (loan from Mrs. W. H. Horton)
1780 lottery ticket to build New London Academy (Anson Jamison)
World War I helmet, gas mask and other items (Mrs. Ola Gish Durr)
Candle snuffer (Mrs. S. Beverly Cary)
Bricks and beams from Jonathan Tosh home (Raymond Barnes)
Newspapers, 1800-1865 (Miss Sallie Cocke)
Corduroy suits (Mrs. George Kegley)
Brass key, Haythe's Hotel, Fincastle (Mrs. Charles Bryant)
Sitz bath tub (Walter Macdowell)
Edison mimeograph machine #1 (Robert Woody)
1885 insurance policy, Botetourt Insurance Company (Steve Neal)
Hand split lathe from Blue Ridge Baptist Church (Marvin Lemon)
Walking stick of wood from the first Protestant church west of the Mississippi (Fred Alouf)
Collection of 170 chewing tobacco tags from 1895 (Sidney Taliaferro)

We have received many pictures depicting early Roanoke life and considerable clothing worn by women and children in the nineteenth century.

The late Dr. E. G. Swem said in a talk before the society seven years ago that we in this part of the state still had the greatest opportunity to find items yet in homes which reflect the life of early settlers. So we hope that the next time you are cleaning out old trunks or files that you will be alert for such memorabilia.

The museum, a large well-lighted room in the basement of Roanoke College's new library in Salem, is open every Saturday afternoon.

—E. P. G.

Notes from the President

Start of a new year on July 1 finds the Roanoke Historical Society with almost 260 members, its officers re-elected for another year and a new executive secretary, J. R. Hildebrand.

Long one of the most active students of local history in Roanoke Valley and a charter member of the society, Hildebrand has drawn many maps and completed much research. He has made valuable contributions in his career as city planning engineer and later as engineer with Roanoke Valley Regional Planning Commission. Now working on a Botetourt County research project, he will devote his time to the Society this fall. W. B. Kerr resigned in April after almost a year of efficient work as executive secretary.

We are planning an early fall meeting, giving us four programs a year. As our Society picks up momentum, we need more help from our members. If you are interested in collecting items for our museum, local research or any form of delving into the past, please contact your officers. Too, we should have more members. And we invite attention to the Society and its museum in preparation of wills.

As an indication of the value of many of our museum pieces, William M. E. Rachal of Virginia Historical Society tells us that apparently there are only two copies extant of the Richmond Independent Chronicle of May 19, 1790. S. H. McVitty donated one copy to our museum and the other is in the Library of Congress.

GEORGE KEGLEY