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ROANOKE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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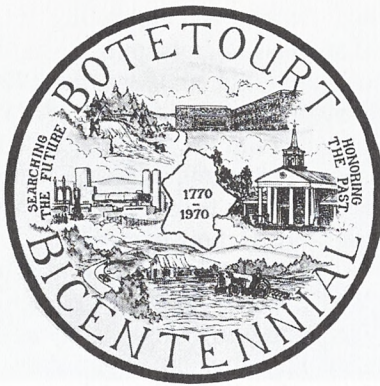
Editor of the JOURNAL

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Here's To Botetourt



Bicentennial Emblem

With this all-Botetourt issue of *The Journal*, the Roanoke Historical Society tips its hat to its mother county on her 200th birthday. A mecca for many who appreciate her beauty, charm and historical associations, Botetourt was recognized by the Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission in 1969 when its county seat, Fincastle, was added to the Virginia Landmarks Register, a distinguished list of historic places.

Credit for this issue goes to many people: R. D. Stoner, retired clerk of court and county historian extraordinary, for his sketch of the county's beginning; Frances McNulty Lewis, Roanoke writer, for her story of Fincastle prepared for the Virginia Cultural Development Study Commission hearing in Roanoke in 1967; Clare White, Roanoke Times women's editor, for the account of the bell-ringing; Anne McClenny, associate professor of music at Hollins College, for a report on the old spinet in Fincastle; Harry Fulwiler, Alexandria electrical engineer, for recollections of his native Cherry Tree Bottom at Buchanan; Roddy Moore, Yorktown school teacher, for research on the early craftsmen of his home county; Edmund P. Goodwin, for assembling information on the South West Turnpike in Botetourt; Raymond P. Barnes, for his look at old Daleville and Miss Emma Martin of Buchanan, who supplied most of the information on her cousin, Mary Johnston. She remembers the writer as "a warm, affectionate, lovely person."

Photographers Bob Phillips, Wayne Deel, Jack Gaking and Oakie Asbury gave valuable assistance. J. R. Hildebrand prepared two interesting maps and the cover sketch of the county's 1847 courthouse.

How The Mother County Began

By R. D. STONER

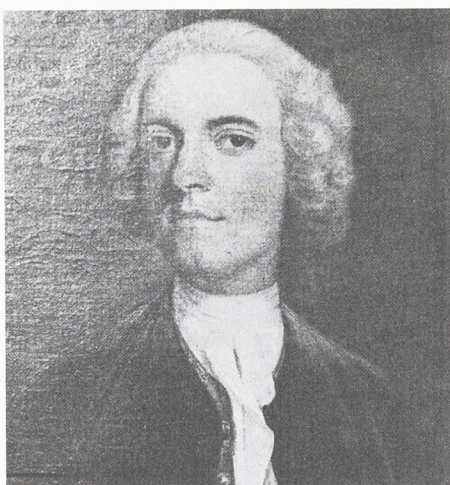
Now that Botetourt County is celebrating its bicentennial, members of the Roanoke Historical Society may be interested in reviewing the image of their mother county as it was in 1770.

From Botetourt's mother, Augusta County, it inherited a claim to all lands beginning at a point in the watershed of the Blue Ridge Mountains, east of present Lexington, and lying south and west of a line running approximately through the center of present Rockbridge County, crossing a road between Warm and Hot Springs and continuing through the present state of West Virginia on the established course of N. 55° West, to the Ohio River some 30 miles north of Point Pleasant, W. Va. Projecting this north-west division line, the boundary would roughly run through Columbus, Ohio, Fort Wayne, Ind., and cross Illinois north of Chicago into a small section of Wisconsin to the Mississippi River. The eastern boundary was the watershed of the Blue Ridge Mountain from a point east of present Lexington to the Virginia-North Carolina line. Its southern border was an extension of the Virginia-North Carolina boundary including the present state of Kentucky.

This immense territory became a part of the Royal Province of Virginia by the British victory won at Quebec in 1759 and ceded to England by France under the terms of the Treaty of Paris executed in 1763. Augusta County then being the westernmost county in Virginia, this land became its territory before it belonged to Botetourt. Later, with the exception of the present states of Kentucky and West Virginia, most of this was known as the Northwest Territory, and under the provisions of the Northwest Ordinances of 1787 its inhabitants could organize into states in the then new Republic when population justified such a move.

From a few dozen families in the late 1730's, Southwest Augusta County had grown in population to the extent that their numbers were sufficient for its citizens to petition the House of Burgesses in 1767, and again in 1769, for a division of the county. On January 31, 1770, an Act of Division was authorized, which divided Augusta into two counties and parishes. The infant was named Botetourt in honor of Norborne Berkeley, then governor and perhaps the most popular of all the colonial governors of Virginia, Lord Botetourt was succeeded as governor by John Murray, Lord Dunmore, in 1771 and Botetourt's county seat was named after the title of his eldest son, Viscount Fincastle.

At this time the majority of Botetourt's citizens were Scotch-Irish Presbyterians, who so many decades before left Ireland, and

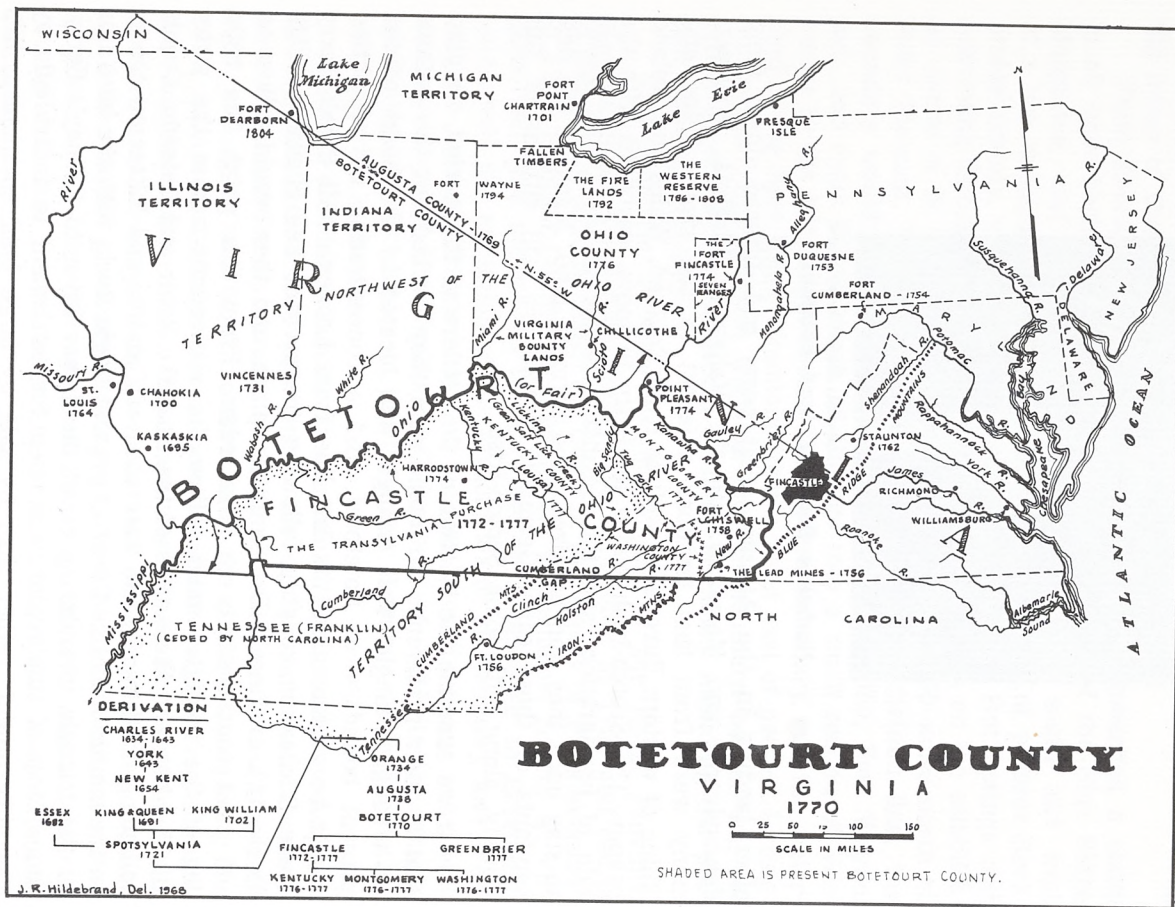


Virginia State Library photo

Norborne Berkeley, Lord Botetourt

after landing in the Atlantic coast ports had filtered down from Pennsylvania and Maryland into the Valley of Virginia. However, many were from that territory adjacent to the rivers Seine and Rhine of western Europe, as well as from England, Wales and Ireland proper. The Scotch-Irish had a tendency to move westward with the tide of immigration, and the Germanic people of the Rhine Valley to stay once they had acquired good farming land. Many of the descendants of those early Germanic people are still citizens of this County, along with some Scotch-Irish.

If we examine the location of the settlers of this period, we find that in their preference for home sites they worked out the pattern of a rough triangle. This triangle was located in the heart of the present boundary of Botetourt, and a concentration of population would be evident along its left line from Looney's Mill Creek Ferry (now Buchanan) roughly following the present Lee Highway (U.S. Route 11) to the old Dr. Simmons' place, and then would follow an old road southwesterly to Amsterdam. From this point, the right leg of the triangle would follow the settlements across the water divided between the waters of the Roanoke River and Catawba Creek, following northwardly the watershed of Catawba and Patterson creeks to the mouth of Craigs Creek at present Eagle Rock, with the base line of the triangle meandering down the James River to Looney's Ferry. Since most of this region was open for settlement to individuals by the government, rather than by sale by large land companies, this enabled the individual to take land in single small surveys, and made the homesteads more scattered than had been the case in Augusta



and present Rockbridge counties where the Beverley and Borden grants covered so much of the counties and limited the homesteader to a definite area.

The Botetourt pioneers of the 1770's were primarily involved in three undertakings.

First: The protection of their lives and property.

A company of Rangers could be called upon, but the primary defense against sudden Indian raids was that of the individual family with their long rifles, either in the defense of their log cabin or, when time allowed for the gathering of these settlers, in local forts. Three such forts available to them were Fort William a few miles west of Fincastle; Fort Fauquier at present Buchanan, and Paul's Fort near the present Botetourt-Rockbridge county line.

Second: The sustaining of life by food and raiment.

These frontier settlers were as independent in search of the necessities of life as they were in defending their lives and were as nearly economically independent as a people can be. They supplied their food either from the forest or the field, by their hands. Clothing they produced either from the furs of the wild animals in the forest or from the hides of animals raised; or wove their cloth from fibers raised by themselves, and built their houses with the trees of the forest.

At this time, hemp was of great importance to England because of its use in shipping, providing ropes, cloth, use as bedding and as sails, and the short fibers (oakum) were used to caulk vessels. It was the cash crop 200 years ago for our people. Many years before the 1770's, the British Parliament had placed a bounty on hemp, and later the General Assembly of Virginia added its efforts to stimulate hemp planting by providing warehouses for its reception. Some of these warehouses were located here in present Botetourt County. Wheat closely followed hemp in production, along with flax, corn, hay, oats, barley and beans, as well as all kinds of root crops. Horses, cattle and hogs were extensively raised and marketed in Philadelphia or other eastern cities, as well as Fort Pitt.

The labor available to the settlers of Botetourt County in this period falls into one of five categories: First, and most important, the family unit, which usually consisted of many sons and daughters; next were slaves, indentured servants, apprentices and free labor.

However, we must not overlook the most lucrative of all business in this period and the principal motive for the colonization of America: The acquisition of property and freedom from oppression. Certainly the hope to better themselves financially was the compelling motive that brought our pioneers across a perilous ocean to face a land inhabited by savages and which makes us, his descendants, also

endure the fast pace of modern living in an over-crowded and physically sick terrain. The early deed books of this county show much activity in acquiring lands through importation rights, that is, the immigrant claim to 50 acres of free land if he could show he came of his own free will and paid his transportation costs to America. The records show these transactions all the way from the 50-acre tracts to the original papers just located in the basement of the Clerk's Office for a grant of land containing 4,395 acres, lying in Botetourt County on the Ohio River, about three miles above the rapids at the Great Bend.

Third: The construction of government and of shelter.

The implementation of county government was mainly the product of the Royal Governor, the Council and the House of Burgesses through their appointees, the twelve justices of the peace. These justices were the outstanding men of the territory and a certain number of them had to be trained in law matters. They exercised the duties now held by the courts and the board of supervisors, and usually were the leaders in the local churches. However, the construction of dwellings, inns, roads and churches—other than that of the established Church of England—was the responsibility of the average pioneer of this date. At this period the tax lists describe his homes generally as "log house with clay chimney", "frame dwelling house, brick chimney, four fire places", "log dwelling house, shingled roof and clay chimney" and "frame dwelling house, one stone and one brick chimney."

The inns or ordinaries, in addition to caring for the travelers, drivers, merchants and others, were required to provide for the food and comfort of the horses and upon occasions for droves of cattle and hogs being driven to markets. From the early records, one would be justified in believing that any resident having a house large enough to provide one extra room for the care of transients, procured a license to keep an "ordinary" in his home. A uniform schedule of compensation for lodging and services was promulgated by the justices of the peace in 1770.

These tavern keepers were allowed to charge:

For West India Rum, they may demand ten shillings per gallon.

For rum made on this continent, two shillings and six pence per gallon

For Apple Brandy, four shillings per gallon

For Virginia strong malt beer bottled three months, seven pence half penny per bottle

For Bumbo with two gills o Rum to the quart made with white sugar, one shilling and three pence

For a warm diet with small beer, nine pence

For lodging in clean sheets, one in a bed, six pence; two in a bed, three pence, three farthings. If more than two, nothing

For stablage with plenty of hay or fodder, one night, seven pence, half penny.

Usually, when a county was formed, a parish was created having the same geographical boundary. This procedure was followed when Augusta County was divided, and the Botetourt Parish erected its established church building at Fincastle which is now used by the Presbyterians. The Botetourt territory contained such a high percentage of dissenting population that discord readily developed and church services for these dissenters were usually held in their own home.

Botetourt County's main road ran from Gilbert Campbell's Ford at Lexington to Cherry Tree Bottom on James River above Buchanan, then to Amsterdam where one division turned left, or south, following somewhat the present Route 220, and the other division continued up the Catawba Creek to Adam Harmon's on New River, where it became known as the Wilderness Road to Kentucky.

The feeder or local roads were of more daily concern to the early settlers than were the arterial roads, and our early records teem with petitions and orders concerning roads to the mill and the market. The establishment of these roads was only the first step and a constant vigil by the county fathers was necessary to keep them in condition.

Almost every grand jury indicted more than one overseer of a road for neglect of his duty in connection with it, and sometimes these roads were obstructed by the building of fences across them by irate landowners.

Celebration in Print

Botetourt and its county seat, Fincastle, have been celebrated by three national publications in articles written by Frances McNulty Lewis in recent weeks.

The New York Travel section printed an article, "Living With History In Spacious Fincastle," Sunday, April 12. Antiques magazine used the heading, "Botetourt County, Virginia Begins Its Third Century," and Southern Living entitled its article, "The First 200 Years of Fincastle." Both magazine articles were in the April issue and all three used pictures.

Mrs. Lewis, the wife of J. M. B. Lewis Jr., is a member of the Society board and an accomplished writer.

Fincastle--

"More Than A County Seat"

By FRANCES MCN. LEWIS

For miles around the town of Fincastle there are pastures, grain fields and orchards, watered by creeks which flow either to the Roanoke River or to the James. On nearby hills overlooking the town are handsome homes, many of them built by early residents around the turn of the nineteenth century. Fincastle itself, built mostly of mellow red brick and white clapboard, its churches and court house crowned with pointed steeples, seems the very picture of a peaceful country village.

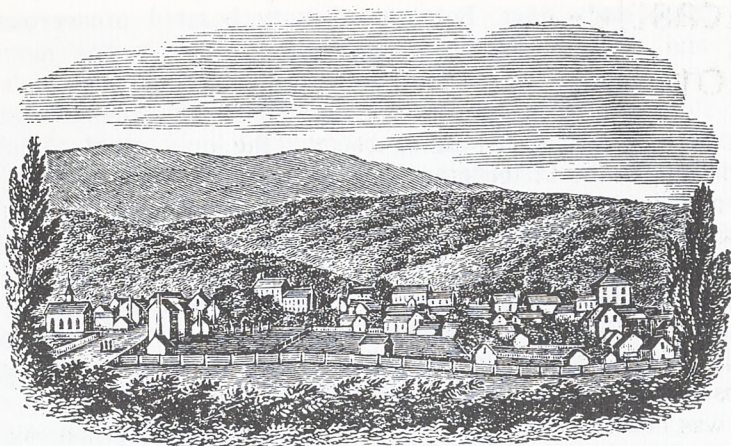
It was not always so. When the Scotch-Irish and German pioneers, during the early seventeen hundreds, began to push their way down from Pennsylvania to accomplish their immense work of settling the Great Valley, the land was a favorite Indian hunting ground. Every inch of soil claimed by the newcomers had to be fought for and defended, over and over, against the raids of Iroquois, Cherokees, and especially the dread Shawnees, the mere mention of whose name "sent chills up the backbone of every early settler" (Robert D. Stoner, *A Seed-Bed of the Republic*, p. 9)

In spite of the dangers, pioneers continued to come in ever growing numbers. Scotch-Irish and German settlers were joined by Huguenots from France, Swiss dissenters, eastern Virginians of English descent, and others, to make their homes in the fertile hills of present-day Botetourt County. As new settlers poured in, the Indians were pushed back into Tennessee, "the Kentuck", and beyond. The Virginia lands lying just west of the Blue Ridge gradually ceased to be raw frontier and became settled, prosperous territory.

Fincastle was one of the first communities—a sprawling area that included all of Kentucky, part of Ohio, most of Indiana and Illinois, and stretched to the Mississippi River. The settlement at Miller's Mill, soon to be re-christened Fincastle, was chosen as the county seat. Plans for a court house and jail were made, and taxes levied to pay for them, although by order of the General Assembly Act creating the County, "the people situated on the waters of the Mississippi" were spared the tax because they were "very remote from their court-house." (F. B. Kegley, *Kegley's Virginia Frontier*, p. 379)

A village plan (still in existence) was drawn up, with the streets laid out just about as they go today. In an article prepared for the Roanoke Historical Society, R. D. Stoner tells us about these streets:

"... over them have paraded the militia companies on their way to Point Pleasant, and to the Indian expeditions in the south and



Fincastle in the 1840s from Howe's "Historical Collections of Virginia"

west, and to the Revolutionary army battlefields. Over them Bishop Asbury passed to exhort the villagers in the religion of the day, and designed a plan for the first Methodist Church here. Over, them, Capt. Patrick Lockhart departed to escort the British prisoners captured at King's Mountain for imprisonment at Fincastle—this at the request of Governor Thomas Jefferson. In Fincastle are lodged the records by which George Washington's representatives perfected before the County Justices his ownership of holdings now in West Virginia and Kentucky; and Thomas Jefferson his ownership of Natural Bridge.

Lieutenants Meriwether Lewis and William Clark strolled along the streets of Fincastle—during visits here on furloughs from the French and Indian wars; and William Clark, after his return from the Lewis and Clarke Expedition, deposited his books and records of the expedition at Santillane, the home of his fiancée, Judith Hancock, whom he married there shortly afterward. In this home, too, Patrick Henry visited his niece, Mrs. Henry Bowyer.

. . . And along these same streets of Fincastle, General James Breckinridge carried from the post office to his own office the plans drawn by Thomas Jefferson for The County Court House." Fincastle was far more than just a county seat in those days; it was virtually a sub-capital of Virginia. Through it went the new settlers moving west, for it was the last place where adequate supplies could be purchased before the plunge into the wilderness. Though the territory it administered was steadily diminished in the next half-century as new counties and whole new states were carved out of it, Joseph Martin's *Gazeteer of Virginia* in 1835 could still describe Fincastle as a "flourishing and wealthy village" with four churches, several schools, and numerous shops and industries.

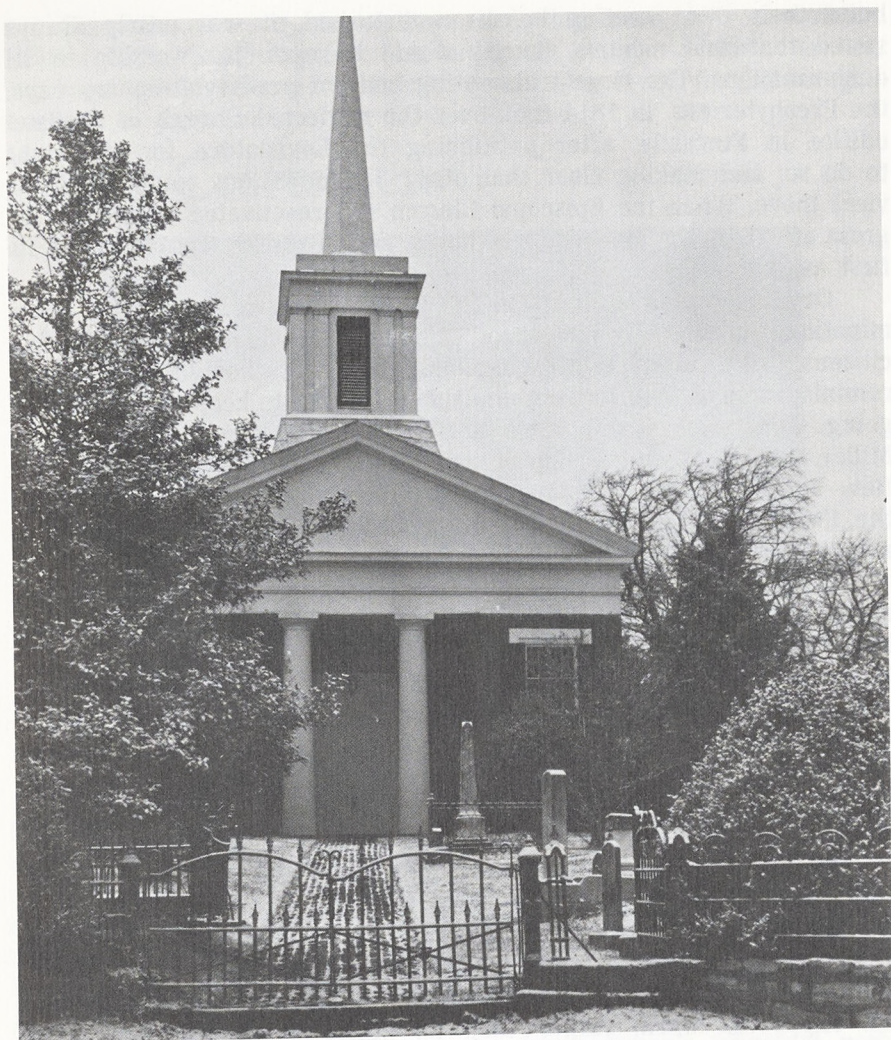
In these early days, Botetourt County boasted prosperous iron mining and smelting activities; the many forges in the mountains are said to have brightened the sky at night. One of Fincastle's sons, Joseph Reid Anderson, went to Richmond in the 1840's where he developed and ran what was to become the only great foundry of the last days of the Confederacy, the Tredegar Iron Works. Iron from the Appalachians, mostly supplied by his family and the Tayloes, went down the James River canal on bateaux, after being hauled from the furnaces by ox-cart.

Another product which, like the iron, was known far and wide, was the beautiful "Fincastle pattern" of the Ammen family's woolen mill, now museum material. During the Civil War, this mill manufactured yardage in quantity for the Confederate armies. An extensive operation, the milling enterprise embraced houses for employees, a saw mill, a grain mill, a hatter's shop, and a carding mill for the wool of the local families, who still wove a great deal at home.

Copies of the Fincastle Weekly Advertiser, founded about 1800, one of the first newspapers to be published west of the Blue Ridge, are still preserved. Besides everyday happenings, from straying hogs to travelling circuses, the columns of the town's early journals reflect the growth of political parties, the universal urge for freedom of religion, the determination to found schools, and a lively concern with national or international events, such as warnings of pirates off Tripoli, or the local mustering for the War of 1812.

These were also the years when most of the buildings in and around Fincastle were erected. A few small houses have been standing since before 1800, and many homes built during the early nineteenth century still survive. Names of the present owners read almost like a record of taxpayers in the early days of the County—for many of the former are descendants of the latter, "still doing business" in Botetourt. People with the same names, in various spellings, have populated western North Carolina, Tennessee, Kentucky, Ohio, Indiana, Missouri, and of course much of the rest of the country. They are finding that Fincastle, with its old court house records and its venerable gravestones, is a goldmine for genealogical research.

The third and present court house, remodelled in Greek Revival style in 1847 over an earlier Palladian adaptation designed by Thomas Jefferson, raises its pointed steeple above Main Street. It stands on a little fenced green, surrounded by law offices, the old hotel and the three-story jail. The jail is a later structure, built in 1897; its handsome wrought iron ornamentation is said to have been inspired by the visitors from the deep south who summered here in the great days of the Virginia Springs. Incidentally, the "ferro-magnesian" water from the Fincastle spring used to be bottled and sold to those health-seekers who could not arrange to go and drink it at the source. It was



Presbyterian church, built in 1818, is probably the oldest brick building in Fincastle.

advertised as chemically unique on the North American continent. Many were those who did come to drink from the healthful springs, however, Fincastle flourished briefly in the eighteen-eighties and nineties as a gay summer resort.

Of great importance as a picture of community life is the record, found in many places, of the churches in Fincastle. Except for a few groups, the original members of each congregation—or their fathers—had come to this country with a memory of some sort of ostracism, even persecution. Yet as soon as religious freedom became law in the new Commonwealth of Virginia, and the various little flocks could

build their own meeting houses undisturbed, it was nearly always stated that said meeting houses would be open for worship to all denominations. The largest dissenting body of pre-Revolutionary days, the Presbyterians, in 1814 took over the neglected Church of England edifice in Fincastle, after petitioning the Legislature for the right to do so, and making clear that other denominations could hold services there. When the Episcopal Church was reactivated in 1839, after great effort by the few who had clung to it, Presbyterians were on its first vestry.

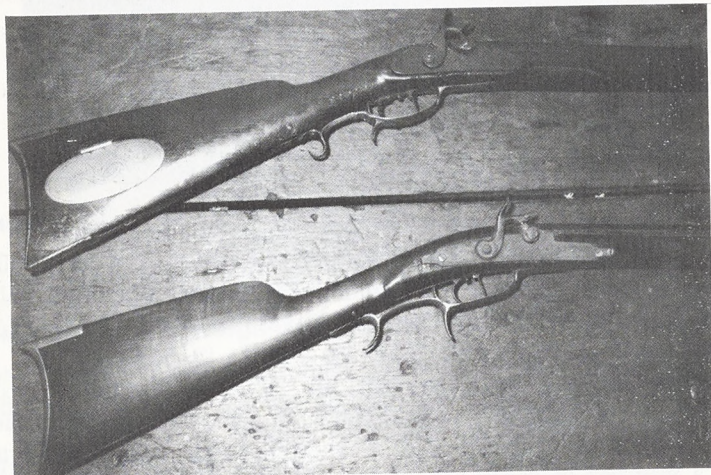
One is tempted to dwell on the absorbing histories of these denominational groups. They included biographical eulogies of outstanding citizens, full of inspiration for us today, and many homely little family reminiscences of the brothers' and sisters' efforts to keep their churches going. For twenty-seven years a Methodist minister, the Rev. R. J. Miller, looked after the Lutherans because they had no pastor. The Rev. Robert Logan, founder of several congregations and pastor of the Fincastle Presbyterians for thirty years, had to teach school to augment his pittance.

One would also like to reproduce here some of the descriptions of the regulations and curricula of early Botetourt schools, the first being Botetourt Seminary, established by act of the Virginia Legislature in 1785, with a list of well-known citizens as trustees. Prospectuses of two of the classical academies, and a long list of students whose descendants we are likely to know—or to be—may be found in Stoner's *A Seed-Bed of the Republic*, pages 473-483. We can be proud that in 1778, long before free public schools were a reality in Virginia, an act provided that now "whereas, for want of a vestry . . . the poor . . . are likely to suffer" the county should tax itself for their upkeep; and it had already provided for educating the "poor and indigent" in the act authorizing that first seminary in 1785. Dr. D. L. Kinnear of VPI, in an article in the *Roanoke Times*, February 4, 1962, speaks of this as the beginning of the idea that public schooling could be a tax supported work, rather than an ecclesiastical duty—the birth of state education in Virginia.

Perhaps nowhere in the country, certainly nowhere in Virginia, can a still-living microcosm such as Fincastle and its environs be found. In one hour of strolling its narrow streets a visitor can experience in imagination the life of pioneer days in the earliest West, of the Revolutionary War years, of the generation which struggled to produce a strong Republic, of industrial expansion when canals and then railroads were being built not far away—but not too close to change the character of this old Virginia town. Then he can see, and hear described, reminders of the War Between the States, and of the lean Reconstruction years, and of the all-too-brief period, when Fincastle was renowned as one of Virginia's most popular "Springs."

Fincastle, you see, does not need to be "restored", as Colonial Williamsburg did. But before the bulldozers move any closer, as they are moving everywhere, its integrity must be saved for future generations of Americans.

Early Craftsmen



Rifles made by John Sites (top) and by John Painter (bottom)

BY RODDY MOORE

Early settlers of Botetourt County were almost entirely self-sufficient in such domestic arts as those of the blacksmith, cooper, cobbler, weaver, tailor and distiller.

However, several of the ancient crafts—the gunsmith, potter, silversmith and cabinet maker—required apprenticeship. These specialists produced an assortment of utilitarian objects much needed by the hard-working farmers who were ill-equipped to create them at home.

The long Kentucky rifle was the frontiersman's principal possession. With it, he protected himself and his family from the Indians who did not care to give up their land to white settlers. With his Kentucky rifle, the frontiersman killed the game which provided three-fourths or even all of the meat for his table as well as skins to sell or to trade for commodities he could not produce himself.

Botetourt County had a large number of skilled gunsmiths who produced quality rifles in both the 18th and 19th century. In the 18th century, Andrew Telford, Francis Graham, Robert Rowland, Alexander Simpson, George Wilson, William McFerran and George Peterman were making and repairing rifles in this area. The best known gunsmiths were John Sites and John Painter. Sites operated a shop in Fincastle from 1808 until he left for Missouri in 1834. Painter had a



"Potter Pete" Obenchain and wife, Matilda Shank Obenchain

shop at Haymakertown from the 1830s until his death in 1900.

Among the letters in the Roanoke Historical Society's collection of Preston papers is one written by David Rowland of the Botetourt gunsmith family on March 2, 1810. He wrote: "I perceive by a Notice of the Executive of Virginia—that the time for receiving proposals for making Gun carriages will expire on the 10th of this month—my father is very anxious that I should enter into a contract—to furnish a number of carriages—I am willing to undertake to make the whole number that will be wanted or any other not less than twenty and obligate myself to furnish three every month."

The best known potter of this region undoubtedly was "Potter Pete" Obenchain, who was born in Botetourt County in 1822. His occupation was listed as potter in the U. S. Census of 1850 and 1860.



Obenchain pottery, signed "Matthew Obenchain" on bottom



Desk signed by George Sawyers and Thomas Murphey in 1747

His shop on Mill Creek was wiped out by the flood of 1877, according to tradition. The only known signed piece of Obenchain pottery existing today is a red glazed, redware jardiniere, signed Matthew Obenchain, 1867 on the bottom.

Other potters known to have worked in Botetourt were Jesse Hinkle, Joel Noftsinger and Robert Fulwiler, who are believed to have apprenticed under and later worked with Peter Obenchain, the Trout pottery in Troutville and the Sprinkle pottery. Unfortunately, many local potters left their products unmarked so identifiable specimens of their craftsmanship are difficult to obtain.

As frontier settlements developed into towns and cities, the people replaced the primitive creations of the earlier period with far more elaborate household objects. By the middle of the 18th century, silversmiths, clockmakers, jewelers, cabinet makers and other highly skilled craftsmen had started to move into the county.

One of the earliest silversmiths here was John Welch, who moved into Fincastle during the latter part of the 18th century. He started his apprenticeship to the trades of silversmith and clockmaker in 1806 and by 1817 had become a journeyman and had taken Charles Aunspaugh as apprentice. In 1821, Welch advertised for another apprentice and in August, 1822, Aunspaugh informed the public he was setting up a clock and watch shop across the mountain at Liberty in Bedford County.

One of the few pieces of signed and dated 18th century Virginia furniture is a desk bearing the names of the makers, George Sawyers and Thomas Murphey, and the date, 1797. They lived and worked in the Sweet Springs area of what was then Botetourt County. The

style and lines of this Chippendale desk show that it was made by a highly skilled craftsman, rather than a country carpenter.

The handmade objects remaining today prove that there were skilled craftsmen living and working in Botetourt in the last two centuries. These products and the work of many of her craftsmen, unknown or long forgotten, make up a rich store of Botetourt County cultural history.

Garden Week in Botetourt

An added attraction during the Botetourt Bicentennial is the anticipated visit of scores of appreciative people to four notable Botetourt homes, with side trips to Fincastle landmarks, during Virginia's Historic Garden Week, April 24-25.

Doors will be opened to the public at Mrs. Garland Hopkins' Garland Orchards; Mr. and Mrs. Gregory Tyack's home; Oakland, the home of Mr. and Mrs. Leonard Muse, and Santillane, home of Mr. and Mrs. Robert D. Stoner. Buses will bring visitors from Roanoke and other points to see Botetourt in the spring.

The Hopkins country home near old Daleville, dates to 1790, although it was expanded in 1938. Its English boxwood is about 150 years old. The home is furnished with portraits, prints, rugs and antique furniture, some pieces from the county and others from Eastern Virginia. The Tyack home is built around a log cabin, about 150 years old.

Nearby they will see the Muse home, an early 19th century farmhouse remodeled in 1947. It has a number of antiques and reproductions. Santillane, just west of Fincastle, is a spacious mansion seated in a grove of old oaks where it was constructed by Col. George Hancock, a soldier of the Revolution and the first Congressman representing Botetourt.

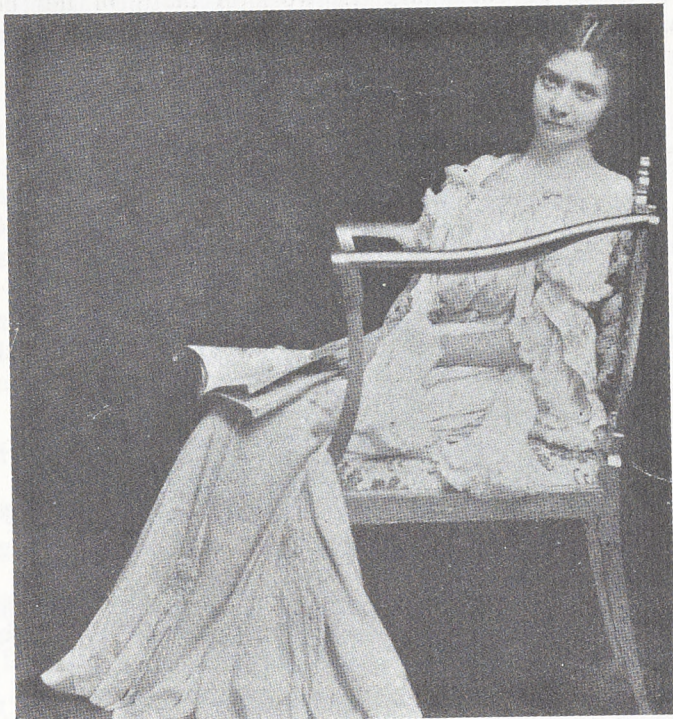
Also open for the Garden Club tour are the Presbyterian, Methodist and Episcopal churches, the Courthouse and Historical Museum, all in the county seat, and Tinker Mill, a restaurant in the Daleville mill built in 1847.

"Town of Fincastle" To Be Reprinted

Arrangements have been made to reprint Miss Frances Niederer's book, "The Town of Fincastle, Virginia." The architectural history has been out of print for some time after two printings.

Steps also are being planned for a reprinting of R. D. Stoner's "A Seed-Bed of the Republic," a valuable, comprehensive history of Botetourt County.

Mary Johnston, Writer of the Past



Mary Johnston, 1911

In 1900, the New York Times called her "one of the women of the hour." The Baltimore American wrote of "the Virginia authoress who has leapt into eminence at a single bound." The New Orleans Daily States said her first book made her "a recognized fellow in the world of fiction." And the Richmond Dispatch described her as "the quiet, retiring little genius whose talent has spread over two continents and made her rich and famous."

This was Mary Johnston, born at Buchanan in Botetourt County on Nov. 21, 1870 and deceased at Warm Springs, Bath County, May 9, 1936. She was the author of more than 25 novels, a play, short stories and poetry.

Now seldom heard of, she wrote of the past at a time when romantic historical novels were in strong demand. Her first book, *Prisoners of Hope*, a novel on Colonial Virginia, was written in 1898, after she had started with poetry. This was followed by *To Have and To Hold*, a 17th century Virginia romance, which sold 60,000

copies before it was published. Two months later, a Birmingham, Ala. writer said of Miss Johnston, "There has not been so great a demand for the works of any author since the days of Harriet Beecher Stowe.

Mary Johnston "inherits talent," the New Orleans newspaper said. She came from a prominent Virginia family who descended from Peter Johnston, a Scotchman who came to this country in 1727 and became a wealthy and influential planter. He was her paternal great-great-grandfather. His son, Charles, wrote an interesting account of his capture by the Indians in 1790 and later established Botetourt Springs, the resort at what is now Hollins College, about 1820. (See the article, Edward William Johnston and Roanoke Female Seminary, Winter, 1969 Journal of the Roanoke Historical Society.) Confederate Gen. Joseph E. Johnston was a grandson of Peter Johnston.

John William Johnston, father of the novelist and a prominent lawyer, was born at Pattonsburg, the old village across the river from Buchanan, in 1839. An artillery officer, rising to major in the Civil War, he returned to Botetourt and the practice of law. He married Elizabeth Alexander of Moorefield, W. Va., and they had four daughters—the writer was the oldest—and two sons.

Maj. Johnston was president of the James River and Kanawha Canal Co. and president of the Buchanan and Clifton Forge, later the Richmond and Alleghany Railroad, vice president and general manager of the Richmond and Danville Extension Co. and president of the Georgia Pacific Railway, which became part of the Southern Railway. While Johnston was head of the canal company, Gov. F. W. M. Holliday and a party of Richmond men came up the river on an inspection trip and the governor stayed at the Johnston home. Railroad and other business interests caused Maj. Johnston to move to Birmingham and later to New York. But he returned to Virginia and lived in Richmond from 1902 until his death in 1905. He is buried in Hollywood Cemetery there.

Until she was 15, Miss Johnston lived at Buchanan in the family home on Low Street, across from the Community House and the Botetourt Hotel. The 12-room white brick and frame house built around 1860, was purchased in 1969 by Webster E. Booze, Jr., an automobile dealer, and he plans to replace the building with a showroom for new cars.

The Johnston house stands on land patented by George III to Col. John Buchanan in 1769 and later acquired by Andrew Boyd, a Botetourt pioneer. Maj. Johnston acquired the property from the Abraham J. Fort estate.

Frail as a child, Miss Johnston was educated by her grandmother, an aunt and governesses in a small white building on the west side



Maj. John William Johnston, lawyer, railroad president

of her father's home. Her only formal education was a brief stay at an Atlanta school. Although she was in Birmingham and New York from 1885 to 1902 when she returned with her family to Richmond, she spent most of her life in Virginia.

In 1912, she and two sisters, Eloise and Elizabeth, built a home, Three Hills, at Warm Springs where she lived and wrote until her death 24 years later. During the depression, she said people stopped reading and buying books and her sister, Eloise, took in guests at the big house in the mountains.

In addition to her literary career, Miss Johnston was a leader in the women's suffrage movement and she was a pacifist during World War I. She was a member of the Author's League, the International Woman Suffrage Association, Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, Fellowship for Reconciliation, American Association for Labor Legislation, Woman's Trades Union and the Consumer League.

Following her "instantaneous success as an author," a New York Times writer interviewed Miss Johnston at her Birmingham home in 1900. She found the novelist to be "extremely reticent" about herself and her work. Photographs "that have been widely copied reveal a wonderfully sweet-faced young woman, the graceful contour of her features recalling some famous miniatures on ivory by the old masters."



Johnston home at Buchanan, about 1890; Miss Johnston attended school in the small building at right.

At the age of 30, the Times said Miss Johnston is "not very tall and her figure is slender and fraigle. She carries herself well and has that high-bred air that gives her a distinctive charm in any assembly. Her eyes are large and brown, with little flecks of gold. Her light-brown hair is soft and wavy, and she wears it simply. She dresses quietly and fashionably. Her tastes are those of a charming woman, who although unconventional, respects every propriety. She has traveled extensively in this country and abroad."

Her interest in the past obviously stemmed from her girlhood reading of "old-fashioned books in old-fashioned libraries." The Times said that she came to be regarded as "an authority on colonial history. She seems to have literally absorbed that period of Virginia's history that she uses as a background for her stories." And critics were "unable to detect any fault in her minute descriptions of the early Colonial customs and laws."

From her work on the Civil War period, she said, "I know war. I have lived with it, thinking of *The Long Roll* and *Cease Firing* (her two war time novels) for four long years. I have fought it with the generals and the colonels and the majors and the captains but mostly with the rank and file. I know the feel of it and the smell of it and the taste of it—and I hate it."

A friend, Arthur Goodrich, who visited at Three Hills, wrote of her work, "The tireless weeks she spent on the pike from Winchester to Staunton, absorbing merely locality material for *The Long Roll*, were just one indication of many, of her artistic honesty. She made Virginia, from Colonial days to the Civil War, live with the accuracy of a historian added to the vivid humanity of a novelist."

The late Gen. Dwight Eisenhower said he studied military features of *The Long Roll* and *Cease Firing* in preparing for World War II campaigns.

Metropolitan newspapers, exploring the background of this new, successful writer, also wrote of Buchanan. "Like others of its ilk, it was a leisurely, dignified, pleasant little town," said the New Orleans Daily States. Until she was 10, the Daily States said, "there was no railroad within nine miles of the place (Buchanan), only a canal boat and an old red stagecoach connecting it with the outer world."

Miss Johnston always was close to nature. Goodrich said she "loved garden and hillside flowers, just as she loved plain, everyday people. She saw aristocracy in both." And the newspapers said "it was her delight to roam over the lovely country about her home (at Buchanan). The town was so small, we are told, that a mile in any direction brought one into thick woods, to mountain streams or up upon the mountainside itself."

The Baltimore American of April 22, 1900, said of Buchanan during Mary Johnston's girlhood from 1870 to 1885: "The struggling village—a portion of which, fired during the Civil War, lay still in ruins—was walled in on either side by mountain ranges, whose aspect, changing with the alternations of the seasons' varying atmospheric conditions, presented ever and anon fresh beauties for the eye to feast upon, and amply compensated for the horizon which they excluded. At their feet, the James River, which further on must bear its part in the world's traffic, flowed lingeringly, as if loath to leave this quiet spot. The heterogenous population thus isolated, composed in part of those to the manor born, and others who had drifted in on the tide of circumstances, had abundant room for the development of idiosyncrasies, and furnished interesting studies for the analytical mind . . ."

Her other works were *Audrey*, a 17th century Virginia romance; *Sir Mortimer*, an Elizabethan romance; *Lewis Rand*, a novel of Virginia in Jefferson's day; *Croatan*, a story of the lost colony of Roanoke Island; 1942, a novel of Columbus' voyages; *The Great Valley*, a Shenandoah Valley novel; *Hagar*, a study of the feminist movement. Later books included *The Witch*, *The Fortunes of Garin*, *The Wanderers*, *Pioneers of the Old South*, *Foes*, *Michael Forth*, *The Slave Ship*, *Silver Cross*, *Sweet Rocket*, *The Exile*, *Hunting Shirt*, *Drury Randall* and *Miss Delicia Allen*, her last, published in 1932. She was interested in the mystical and occult in her later works.

Her one play, a five-act drama, *The Goddess of Reason*, featuring the performance of the distinguished actress, Julia Marlow, was considered a success. She wrote two long narrative poems, *Virginiana*, and *The James*, and a number of short stories for such magazines as *Harpers* and *Ladies Home Journal*.

At the turn of the century, *The Richmond Times* told her story

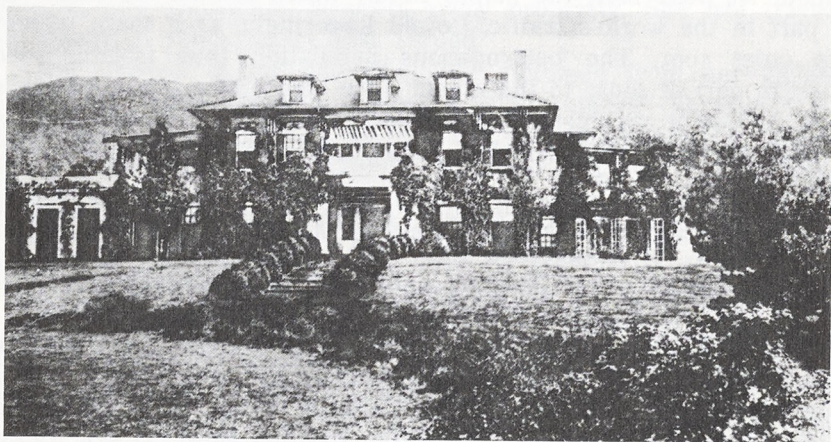
under the headline: A Virginia Girl Whose Books Have Reached a Fabulous Sale. A story from Birmingham, where she was living, called her "an international figure" who "receives letters from many parts of the world. Her personality, her past, her present and future are subjects of which the newspapers of the country are as eager as the publishers and public are for her books." Sales of *To Have and To Hold* were approaching 200,000 "which will bring Miss Johnston \$40,000." The *Richmond Dispatch* called that novel "a distinct triumph in American literature."

A magazine of the time said Mary Johnston "wrote five years before anyone noticed her, but her second novel, *To Have and To Hold*, landed her plump in the lap of success."

When she died in 1936, a *New York Times* editorial said, "Mary Johnston's own Virginia mountains and waters, her earlier Virginians created after deep historical studies, her sense of character and drama, gave quality and charm to her books."

The *Times* said, "the number of her works, not one of them scamped, testifies to her long, patient labor in spite of physical weakness. She has given pleasure to more than a generation."

She was buried beside her father at Hollywood Cemetery in Richmond.



Three Hills, the home at Warm Springs

Botetourt Men Fought "All Over"

They were born, these men, in the State of Virginia, in the County of Botetourt, in a region of wheatfields and orchards, of smiling farms and friendly villages, of high blue mountains and clear flowing rivers.

In the War between the States, this County of Botetourt sent out from farms and villages, from forge and mill, from lonely cabins in mountain clearings, and goodly houses set in rose-gardens, from Craig Creek and Back Creek, and Mill Creek and Jennings Creek, from Roaring Run and North Mountain, from Fincastle, Amsterdam and Buchanan, from every nook and corner, twelve full companies to the service of Virginia and the South. The greater number of these, during the four years of the war, fought within the bounds of their mother State. They fought at Manassas and at Seven Pines, at Chancellorsville and on many another stricken field. They charged with Pickett at Gettysburg. They surrendered with Lee at Appomattox. Others of these Botetourt men fought, as the saying is, "all over." Like the Elizabethan soldier, when they heard of a good war, they went to it. They fought in Virginia, in Kentucky, Tennessee, the Carolinas, Georgia and Mississippi. The command first known as the Mountain Rifles, then as Anderson's Battery, and then as the Botetourt Artillery, fought "all over."

On the banks of the James, a few miles from Fincastle, lies the village of Buchanan. Across the river rises abruptly a great and high mountain named Purgatory. Below the town the river forces its way through the Blue Ridge; above, the valley widens into smiling farm lands. To the west the sun sets behind the Alleghanies. From this village and its neighborhood came the majority of the men whose deeds in Mississippi are commemorated by this stone.

—From an address by Mary Johnston, read at Vicksburg in 1907 upon the occasion of the unveiling of a tablet commemorating the services to the South of the Botetourt Artillery

Cherry Tree Bottom



Cherry Tree Bottom

BY HARRY FULWILER JR.

About the year 1740, the sun rose over the Blue Ridge mountains at Buchanan as it had for many years. The James, murmuring gently as it glided toward the sea, was calm, tranquil, pure and peaceful. The mountains were bathed in the mists of early morn, prelude to a new day in the James River Valley. The white man had come, English, Scotch, Irish and later the German and Swiss Palatines were to follow.

Near the present town of Buchanan, south and westward, men had surveyed, and colonial governors had made grants of great blocks of land for personal gain or to encourage settlement. Along about 1745 one grant of 50,000 acres was made on the Roanoke and the James. Later many additional grants were made.

All of the land in the bend of the James River between the mouths of Looney's and Purgatory creek in North Buchanan was known as Cherry Tree Bottom, apparently named for a fruit tree or two. The original Cherry Tree Bottom of approximately 400 acres was selected by James Patton, an Irishman, for his home. Along with other holdings, Patton had acquired the bottom through several transactions from 1746 through 1753.

Unfortunately Patton never realized his wish to live at Cherry Tree, for two years later while visiting the Ingles and Drapers at Drapers Meadows (Blacksburg) he was killed by the Shawnee Indians.

Following James Patton's death by the Indians, Cherry Tree Bottom by his will became the property of his son-in-law, Col. John Buchanan, for whom the town of Buchanan was named. Col. Buchanan lived at Cherry Tree Bottom with his wife, Margaret Patton Buchanan, from the spring of 1756 until his death in 1769.

In October of 1756, George Washington visited Col. Buchanan at Cherry Tree Bottom in an effort to raise men to fight the Indians.

In his letter to Governor Dinwiddie, dated at Halifax on October 10, 1756, Washington related that Col. Buchanan was unable to help him and that it was impossible to get a party together in this section to scour the frontiers.

This was the land through which ran the old Indian Trail, also known as the Great Road and the Philadelphia Road, crossing the James near the mouth of Looney's Creek. This was the spot known as the gateway to the West where crossing was made by Patton's Ferry, successively known as Looney's Ferry and Crows Ferry. Near here on the south bank of the James and north of Looney's Creek was established the village of Crowsville in 1788. Pattonsburg was established north of the river the same year, the village being laid out from a part of the Cherry Tree Bottom.

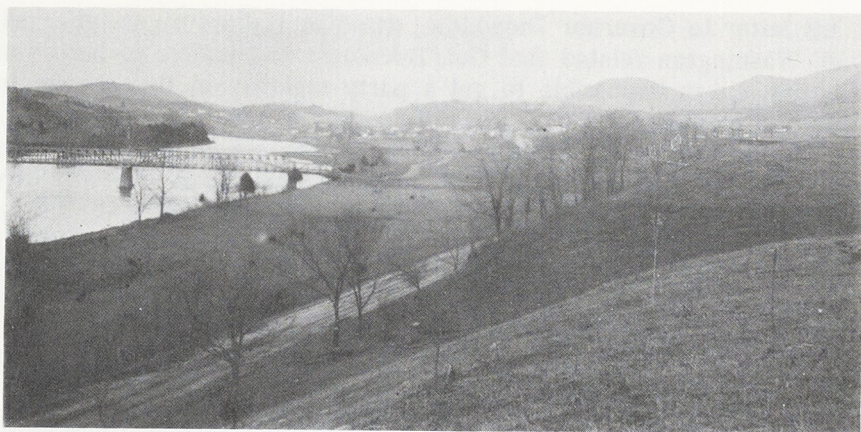
John Buchanan willed his holdings to his daughters, Margaret, Ann, Jane and Mary, the latter then at Drapers Meadows. Jane married John Floyd Sr., one of Virginia's early governors. Part of Cherry Tree Bottom was left to Mary Buchanan Boyd, the wife of Andrew Boyd. Margaret sold her interest to Andrew Boyd in 1796, married William Anderson and moved to Kentucky. Andrew Boyd operated a ferry across the James River and in 1773 was licensed to operate an ordinary.

An act of the General Assembly was passed on February 6, 1812 establishing the town of Buchanan and the town was first incorporated in 1839.

From the Boyds until the Central Land Co. of 1890, continuity of ownership and subdivisions of Cherry Tree Bottom have not been fully explored

While working as a contractor on the James River & Kanawaha Canal from Lynchburg to Buchanan about 1848, Joseph Schultz purchased a portion of Cherry Tree Bottom and built a beautiful home at the foot of Purgatory Mountain. William and Emma P. Jolliffe purchased the land and home from Schultz and named it Branham Hall in memory of Major Jolliffe's mother, Mary Ann Branham. The Jolliffes sold the home and their 395 acres in 1890 to the Central Land Co.

Jolliffe, a well known civil and mining engineer, had been chief of a locating party and later division engineer for the valley branch planned by the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad and later chief engineer for construction of the railroad from Clifton Forge to Buchanan. When work was about three-fourths completed, a tremendous freshet on Nov. 22, 1877 washed out over half of the road bed and damaged the canal to the extent of \$500,000. Jolliffe led a crew in repairing these damages between Richmond and Lynchburg. He also helped build the Shenandoah Valley Railroad below Buchanan, the New River branch of the Norfolk and Western and tunnels and yards for the N&W at Pocahontas in 1881-82. He later made a horseback survey for the Virginia Western Railroad in Southwest Virginia in 1887.



Riverside Bridge, west of Buchanan, about 1900



Smith & Briggs Brass Works, Buchanan, about 1891



Fulwiler family at home in Cherry Tree Bottom, 1905

During the 1890 "boom" at Buchanan, the Central Land Co., bought and sold much property. It was an era of speculation. The town was to grow, the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad was coming through and factories were to be built. At this time Cherry Tree Bottom passed into the hands of Robert A. Fulwiler, descendant of early "Pennsylvania Dutch" who settled on the headwaters of Purgatory Creek. In 1901, Cherry Tree Bottom became the property of his brother, who was my father, Harry Fulwiler.

The description of the property as recorded reads: "Beginning at a point on the centerline of Riverside Bridge"; "borders on the property of Smith and Briggs Brass Works"; "adjoins the lands of E.P. Jolliffe."

The Riverside Bridge across the James a half-mile south of Buchanan was torn down about 1900 and the timbers used by my father to build the barn which is still standing at Cherry Tree.

During the panic of 1893 the boom failed, the bubble burst and many people lost their savings. The Smith & Briggs Brass Works also known as the Buchanan Brass Hardware Co., was also a casualty and only a few faded photographs give evidence of its existence.

Around 1880, the Richmond and Alleghany Railroad built its line through Cherry Tree Bottom and in 1889 this became the Chesapeake and Ohio Railway. Earlier the B&O had surveyed through with a proposed crossing of the James at Looney's Creek. However, the B&O stopped at Lexington and beyond that point only a few old culverts and graded slopes remain as signs of a dream never accomplished.

On my father's farm was a private cemetery, grown up in trees and vines. The map on page 427 of Kegley's "Virginia Frontier" shows Mount Joy and Cherry Tree Bottom Estates, 1742-1804. On the Cherry Tree Bottom portion is the one word, "Graves". My father protected these graves with a fence, the surrounding fields being in cultivation. He made no record of the gravestones and as a child I did not know who was interred there.

Several years ago, the owner said that there were some headstones in the weeds on the river bank opposite the mouth of Looney's Creek. But Troy Harris, a member of the family which now farms the bottom land, said all of the stones are gone today. This last evidence of past generations at Cherry Tree Bottom just across the river from an old fort site apparently has faded away.

Author's Note: The photos of Riverside Bridge and the Smith & Briggs Brass Works, used with this article were taken about 1890 by the late J. C. Dill of Buchanan and are used through the courtesy of his wife, Mrs. J. C. Dill and in coordination with his daughter-in-law, Mrs. J. E. Dill of Roanoke and Miss Emma Martin of Buchanan.

Fire Destroys Landmarks

In Botetourt's two centuries, fire has destroyed some of its most interesting landmarks—notably Mt. Joy, Grove Hill, Montrose, the Berkeley Arms hotel at Buchanan and in modern times, Greenfield and the Cloverdale mill. Open fireplaces made the danger of fire ever-present and other losses were suffered but these are best remembered today.

In June, 1864, the old covered bridge at Buchanan was set afire by Confederate troops to halt the enemy which burned perhaps as many as 30 buildings when it did enter the town.

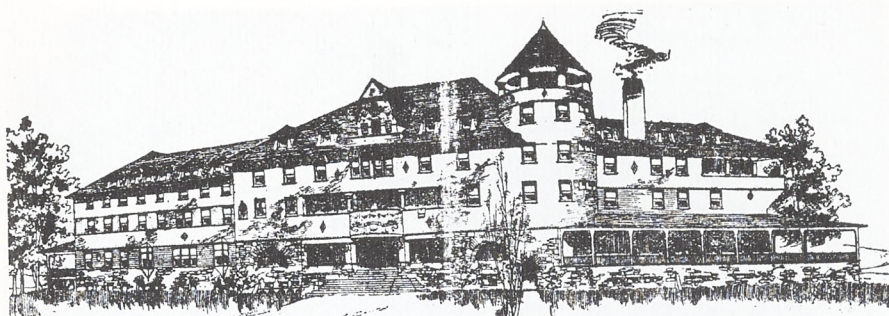
During that same raid, Gen. David Hunter's cavalry unit burned Mt. Joy, the home of Col. and Mrs. John T. Anderson, on a knoll just south of Buchanan. The big house with large white columns was burned because Col. Anderson was supplying iron ore for the Tredegar Iron Works of his brother, Gen Joseph Reid Anderson, in Richmond.

A few decades later, the Berkeley Arms Hotel, a product of the 1890 boom, caught fire and burned on Oct. 26, 1891, shortly before it was to open. The 140-room building on a hill west of Buchanan and south of the James was described as "The Pride of the Town" in a newspaper report.

"The flames lighted up the countryside for miles around. Purgatory Mountain loomed up grim and silent and the foothills of the



Grove Hill, elegant seat of the Breckinridge family



Berkeley Arms Hotel — pride of Buchanan

Blue Ridge were dark in their cloud of smoke in which the wind that was blowing from the west enveloped them," said the newspaper. Although the fire was not discovered until 11:45 at night, the flames were so bright in nearby Buchanan that "a letter could be read anywhere in the streets."

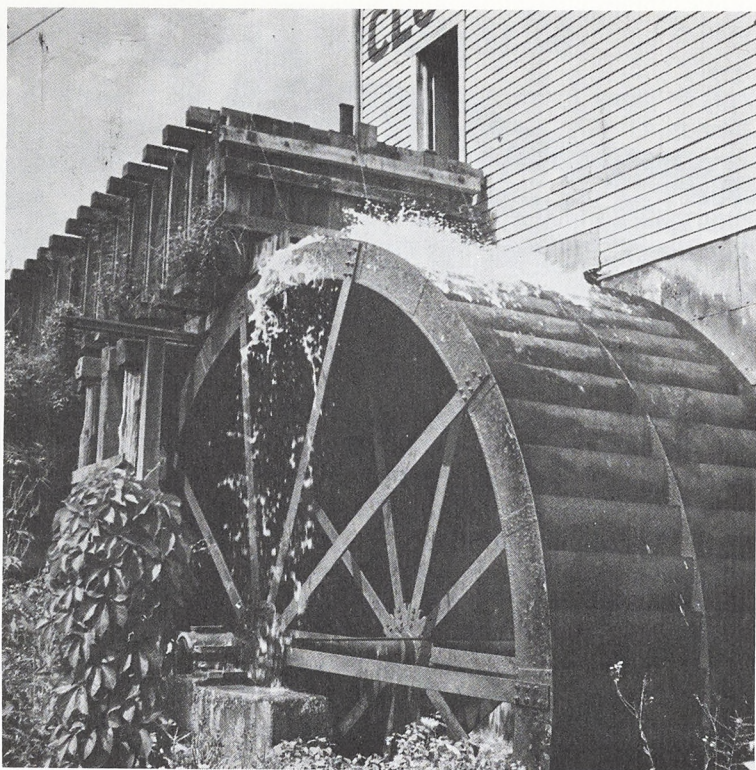
What had been a "magnificent monument to the skill and enterprise of man is now a mass of ruins." The hotel would have been completed in a few weeks, at most. It was expected that "a large number of guests would make it their summer abiding place." It was being constructed by Hoover, Hughes & Co. of Pittsburgh for the Central Land Co. of Buchanan at a cost of \$100,000 and it was reportedly insured for \$57,000.

Grove Hill, seat of the Breckinridge family for more than a century, burned Sunday morning, Oct. 24, 1909, while Judge George W. Breckinridge and his family were away at church. This had been the home of Gen. James Breckinridge, 1763-1833, member of the House of Delegates, a member of Congress for four terms, friend of Thomas Jefferson, a lawyer and statesman. He served in the Revolution in his teens and became a general in the War of 1812.

A Mutual Assurance Society policy in Richmond, dated 1804, said the "elegantly finished" mansion located a short distance west of Fincastle was valued at \$12,000. The home had 25 rooms and two hallways crossing in the center. Its brick walls were 2½ feet thick and a two-story kitchen wing was attached.

Montrose, the Fincastle home of Frances Thomas Anderson and later his cousin, William Anderson Glasgow, burned in the 1920's and Breckinridge Elementary School stands on the site today. It was a two-story brick building with wide front doors, massive white columns and a front balcony the size of the lower porch, according to R. D. Stoner's Seed-Bed of the Republic.

The fire at Greenfield, the Preston home for almost 200 years, was described as a "grievous loss," in a Roanoke World-News editorial. Located five miles south of Fincastle, off U.S. 220, the white



Cloverdale Mill wheel turns no more

frame home stood on land purchased by Col. William Preston in the 1750's. Col George Washington stayed here on his tour of frontier forts in October, 1756 and the home was headquarters for the Preston family for eight generations until it burned May 25, 1959.

Col. Preston's commission in the militia, signed by Lord Botetourt, a letter from Washington and other valuable documents and antiques were lost in the fire. This also was the home of James Patton Preston, Virginia governor in 1816.

On June 7, 1968, Cloverdale Mill, said to be the last of more than 30 water-powered mills in operation in Botetourt County, burned to the ground. Although temporarily closed because of difficulties over the water supply following construction of Interstate 81, it had been operated by the Chambers family for 37 years. The last steel overshot wheel was the third to serve the old mill.

The mill apparently was built around 1800 on a tract of land in the Breckinridge family.

None of these buildings of another century have been replaced although a home was constructed at the Mt. Joy site.



Greenfield, Preston home for almost two centuries

The Turnpike Through Botetourt

BY EDMUND P. GOODWIN

History records events of the past but the discovery of new material sheds an ever changing light on them. A good example of this stems from an article "The South Western Turnpike Road", in Vol. 2, Number 1, Journal of the Roanoke Historical Society. According to the article, "great pressure was put on the General Assembly to extend the road from Salem to Buchanan . . . but so far as can be found the question was never resolved . . ." It has now been resolved as a result of papers given to the Society recently by the heirs of Dr. J. William McCauley of Salem, whose grandfather John McCauley, was a superintendent of the Turnpike.

Col. Claudius Crozet, the famous French engineer, who contributed so much to the development of transportation in Virginia, recognized the importance of opening a line of communication between the James River and Tennessee. In 1842, he stated the route "must be through Botetourt, Roanoke and Montgomery counties to New River". A reference in this article shows that in December, 1847 the General Assembly directed a survey be made to determine the best route from Salem, then the eastern terminus of the Turnpike, to Buchanan.

The McCauley papers show that two routes were surveyed from Salem to Cloverdale, one by way of Big Lick, the other just south of Botetourt Springs (now Hollins College). They mention the names of plantations or the owners of farms, which the Turnpike would cross. The availability of limestone is shown. Although it was a mile and a half longer, the engineer preferred the route by Big Lick be-

cause the maximum grade was $1\frac{1}{2}\%$, just half of the Botetourt Springs route. In support of his recommendation, he stated two wagons going four miles an hour on the easier grade could carry as much as three wagons with a grade of 3% . Alternate routes were surveyed from Cloverdale to Buchanan, one by way of Fincastle, but his preference was to follow, generally, what is known today as Route 11.

Notwithstanding the efforts of the good citizens of the Big Lick area, on January 24, 1848 the Assembly approved the shorter route by way of Botetourt Springs and eliminated the plan of going by Fincastle. The Assembly appropriated \$90,000 with the proviso that not more than \$30,000 could be spent in any one year. The right of way would be 40 feet wide, the road bed to be graded not less than 24 feet and the minimum width of the macadam to be 22 feet.

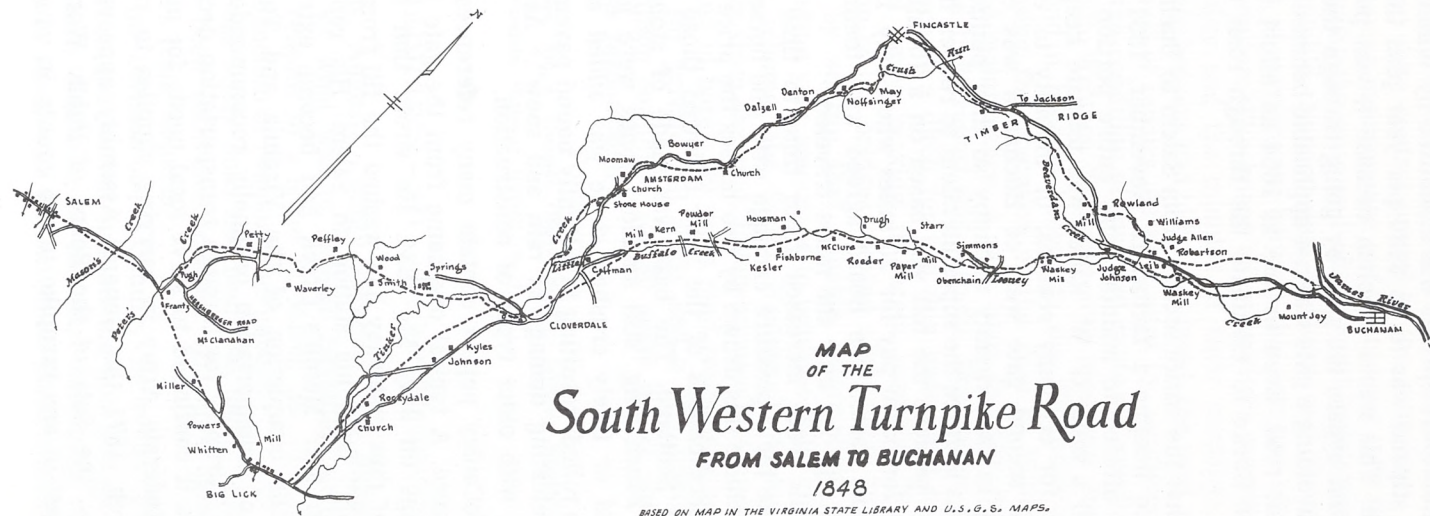
The papers show on July 25, 1848, an advertisement was sent to the National Intelligencer, to be inserted tri-weekly, stating bids would be received on August 26 at the office of the Turnpike in Salem, for grading and macadamizing the seven-mile section from Salem to Cloverdale. The six bridges that must be built on this portion of the road would be bid on separately. The longest of them was 80 feet over Mason's Creek and the contract price was \$2,500.

Some of the residents of Botetourt were unhappy about the proposed location of the road from one mile west of Buchanan to Waskey's Mill. In October, 1848 they petitioned the Board of Public Works for a change, giving as their reason its closeness to the river and the possibility of high water causing damage. They admitted the new route would be longer but said that when the General Assembly directed the Turnpike should follow the most direct course, that condition had been inserted for the sole purpose of settling the argument about the road going by Big Lick.

Apparently they failed to make their point and even today Route 11 follows the river. The portion of the road from Cloverdale was progressing and in the summer of 1849, Thomas Rosser and John West were awarded a contract to build a 65-foot bridge over Looney's Creek with a completion clause of January, 1850.

Notwithstanding Crozet's recommendation that turnpikes built by the state should be toll free, his advice was not followed and this was to become a toll road. The toll houses would be $1\frac{1}{2}$ story, $32\frac{1}{2}$ by 26 feet "out to out" and each would have a log smoke house 12 by 12 feet with a height of 10 feet as well as the gate itself. Bids were received for them on September 15, 1849. The discrepancies were substantial, but Jordan and Hubbard were awarded the contract to build all of them on this section of the road at a price of \$550 each, exactly one half of the high bid submitted by James Deyerle.

The next job to be completed before the road could be opened for business was to secure toll gate keepers. A typical bid to man the



gate near Botetourt Springs was submitted by William Allen in August, 1850. The stipend was to be \$130 per year plus the use of the house and garden. This was a problem because it was possible to leave the Turnpike and bypass the gate by going through the Springs. The fine of \$10 for avoiding a gate was not applicable because the alternate route was a public road. Even as late as 1854 an effort was being made to get Charles Cocke to eliminate the through road by the way of his school.

Now that the entire section from Salem to Buchanan was passable, maintenance became a factor. In November, 1851 S. A. Coffman of Mill Creek offered to maintain this entire portion of the road for a year at \$50 a mile. G. W. Rader was tollgate keeper at Mill Creek. Apparently for economy reasons, or inability to employ a toll gate keeper, the second gate west of Buchanan was closed. This action made many in that vicinity unhappy so they petitioned the Board of Public Works to force the superintendent to reopen it. Their reason was quite sound because the toll was based on a 10-mile section so many were being forced to pay for 20 miles when only 10 miles was being used in many cases. The Board agreed with them and orders were issued to charge for only the miles traveled.

The tolls were increased from time to time. For example, in 1854 the rate for a pleasure carriage with one horse became 10 cents, but if the vehicle was drawn by two horses the price was 15 cents.

The specifications of the road followed those outlined by John McAdam of Scotland. The base was made of stone that could pass through a 2-inch ring, still smaller stones were placed on top and finally, sand or finely crushed stone was added as top cover. This surface was rolled, resulting in a tightly bound pavement "which resisted the penetrating damage of rain and snow".² At best, this was in comparison with older types of construction.

The McCauley papers contain many references to the problems of maintenance. A typical one came from the gate keeper near Botetourt Springs on July 11, 1834. He wrote that the "uncommonly heavy fall of rain yesterday had washed the fill from the road making it impassable" from his station to Salem. His report said that the 80-foot span over Mason's Creek had become extremely dangerous.

After the completion of the Virginia and Tennessee Railroad, the means of transportation originally recommended by Crozet, the need of the Turnpike for through transportation decreased materially. Nevertheless it continued to serve local needs for many years as well as the Confederate Army in carrying supplies to rail heads.

In March, 1871 the General Assembly approved an act stating it would be "the duty of the Board of Public Works to convey the States interest in any turnpike to the county in which said road may

lie" subject to the approval of the supervisors. In due course such action was taken and state control passed to the counties.

Based on increasing maintenance and decreasing tolls this was not an altruistic decision by the state and why a rural legislature approved it is not understandable. Nevertheless Roanoke and Botetourt were now in the position of carrying on because this was one of their main arteries of transportation. The board of supervisors, created in 1870, had this responsibility and the minutes of their meetings showed it was a heavy one. Gate keepers had to be appointed, the road and bridges were in constant need of repairs. As time went by, petitions were filed by citizens stating the condition of the road made it "untollable".

The name South Western Turnpike was used less frequently as the years passed and it became known as the "Macadamized Road". Botetourt tried leasing the operation of the road to William Thomas for \$400 a year and maintenance. A year later, in 1879, the court appointed viewers and their report was pathetic. The center of the road, the lowest part, became a ditch for the rain water and at places the sides were washed away, making it barely passable. This and the deplorable condition of the bridges created a hazard to travelers. The viewers conclude by stating that reliable information showed the tolls for the preceeding year amounted to between \$700 and \$800.

This majestic scheme, the South Western Turnpike, conceived to raise the counties from the mud, failed because of the short sightedness of the state and in barely 30 years mud roads once again became prevalent. Except for private toll roads and a few provided by the counties, this condition continued for 60 years before the state once again recognized its responsibility.

FOOTNOTES

- ¹ Southern Sketches, No. 8. Claudius Crozet, Soldier, Scholar, Educator, Engineer, by Col. William Couper, 1936
² The Story of Virginia Highway Growth. p. 9

Western Inhabitants—an "Incumbrance"?

Thomas Lewis, Augusta County surveyor and justice, was opposed to creation of what was to become Botetourt County and he gave some of his reasons in a letter of March 20, 1767, received by the Society in its collection of Breckinridge papers.

The 203-year-old letter does not bear the name of its recipient but it could have been addressed to John Wilson, a member of the House of Burgesses from Augusta.

"In opposing the Division of the County," he wrote, "I would make up of such reasons as follows but first let me give you an idea of the Extent of this County Exclusive of any part belonging to (western) waters of Virginia as those who inhabit these parts contribute nothing

to the Charge of either county or parish but must be deemed an Incumbrance."

Lewis commented, "The poverty of the Generality of the people, the Extreme scarcity of money amongst all orders of people is such that I cannot conceive how it can be got over in these circumstances by a Division or increase of county and parish. Levies will take place, a circumstance that will bear hard on those that are least protected against such contingencies but must be Extremely oppressive & terminate in the ruin of those already in Indigent circumstances.

In addition to poverty and difficulty in paying higher levies, Lewis said another reason against division was "the want of men even modestly qualified to act as Magistrates—a difficulty not easily got over."

The "inconveniences" resulting from a lack of qualified men would be "more severely felt than any that can arise from the distance those have to travel to court who live in the Extreme parts of the County."

He pointed to other potential dangers of the times. "It must be remembered that we have but very lately (if in truth we have at all) got clear of a long, dangerous and oppressive war. New troubles or the remains of the old seem to be collecting themselves & too soon I fear will discharge themselves on us, heaven prevent it. I wish there were less grounds for fear should the Indians break on us again as they did . . ." Lewis, older brother of Gen. Andrew Lewis, added, "in what situation must those infatuated People be in who are now Petitioning for two new Counties."

"But if you are not able to postpone the Division until another session of the Assembly, he continued, "the next object of your case is that it be properly done. If the division is lower down than the North River your Court House will (not be) very central as will that of your church, it might occasion a removal of both. This would be an inconvenience that the people of Augusta County in their Present State of poverty could not surmount."

Lewis' outline of "equitable" boundaries proposed "the North River as far up as Carr Creek and along it "to above the upper Inhabitant thereof & from there a course N 55 degrees W to the utmost extent of the County." When the House of Burgesses enacted the Act of Division establishing Botetourt County on Nov. 27, 1769, over 2½ years later, it accepted the boundary lines listed by Lewis. And the Assembly recognized that "many inconveniences attend the inhabitants of the county and parish of Augusta by reason of the great extent thereof . . ."

The Bells of Fincastle



William P. Simmons, left, fourth generation bell ringer at the Courthouse, learned the trade in 1966 from his father, William M. "Bill" Simmons who had been instructed by his father, the late A. G. Simmons, right, in 1950.

BY CLARE WHITE

On New Year's Eve men and boys crouch in the cold, dark belfrys of Fincastle as they have for, some say, the last 150 years. They are waiting for the moment to start the tolling of the bells of the county courthouse and churches that will mark the end of one year and the beginning of another.

The ceremony, starting at 11:45 p.m. on the last day of the year, is part of a tradition that clings to the little village which has been the county seat of Botetourt County since its founding in 1770.

One strong bong is struck on the courthouse bell, the bellwether for the ceremony, at exactly 15 minutes before midnight. Ten seconds later the bell of the Presbyterian Church to the east rings out one note. Then, at ten-second intervals, the bells of the Baptist, Methodist and Episcopal churches take up the tolling, completing a circle to the courthouse.

The slow progression continues around and around until just before the hour of twelve when a bugler blows "taps" from the courthouse steeple. At the moment of midnight the bellwether bell strikes the hour. Following the twelve bongs for midnight, comes one bong for the number "one", followed by nine bongs for the number "nine." The century being taken care of, bongs for the last two numerals of the year are struck. Then, all the bells of the town peal together in celebration.

No one knows exactly when Fincastle's custom of ringing the bells on New Year's Eve originated. Fulton Waid, who was long the mayor of the town's 400 residents, says it started at least 150 years ago.

Robert Stoner, Fincastle historian, traces the New Year celebration to before the Civil War. His grandfather remembered the bellringing as something that "always was."

Over the years the same families have jealously guarded the right to furnish the bellringers. Men of the Simmons family have rung the courthouse bell. McDowells, Stoners and Waids ring the Presbyterian bell, Boltons the Baptist bell, Breckinridges and Waids the Episcopal and Housmans the Methodist. These names go deep into the history of Fincastle.

Every year on Dec. 31, the head of the Simmons family, William now, climbs the ladder-like steps to the belfry of the courthouse at Fincastle's town center. Tradition says the building was designed by Thomas Jefferson. With him is likely to be George Holt and the young sons of each. They will strike the big bell by hand with its hammer. The bell rope is used only for the final pealing.

Because the responsibility of timing rests with the bell at the courthouse, Simmons stays outside on the roof so he can hear the other bells plainly. He remembers being at his post when the snow was coming down so fast he could only place the other churches by the pitch of their bells.

Roy Bolton Jr. and his son, another Roy, ring the bell at the Baptist church, the 30th year for the older man. His father, Roy Sr., put in 25 years at the job before that.

A McDowell son comes from Staunton, about 70 miles away, to carry on his father's responsibility for the Presbyterian bell. There are no men of the family living in Fincastle now, but the tradition set by his father and grandfather draws him back.

One of the Breckinridge men rings the Episcopal bell with one of the Waids. Fulton Waid has turned over his post to his son. He remembers when his father let him help for the first time. When he was 12 years old, he was allowed to pull the rope for the final peals.

The historic line of bellringers has been broken at the Methodist church so relative newcomers, only something like 10 years at the job, see to it that the cycle is not broken.

In times past another bell joined in, although somewhat erratically, according to Stoner. Hayth's Hotel, long discontinued, had a bell which was rung, or was supposed to be rung, right after the courthouse bell. The proprietor, however, is remembered as having some difficulty in counting, the New Year's Eve causes for which are discreetly overlooked by history. The other bellringers would never

know whether to wait for him or not. If the Presbyterian ringer, after a decent interval, decided Hayth was not going to take his turn, he would go on without him. Then, half the time, the proprietor would either wake up or catch up and would come in with a bong out of the proper order, a confusing state of affairs at best and one that has been remembered.

The residents of Fincastle look forward to the yearly ceremony and rarely miss it. They hold "waiting up" parties from which the guests are likely to depart in time to get to their own homes for the ringing. Almost without exception, the townspeople think the sound is best from their own homes where they have heard it since childhood.

One year a homesick son of the town called from New Mexico, where he was living, to ask his father to open the window and put the telephone outside so he could hear the bells.

As they listen, the initiated can differentiate the bells by their sound. The courthouse bell has what is called a "strong" voice. To some the Presbyterian bell, the oldest now hanging (it is dated 1829), has the sweetest ring. The Baptist bell, a very large one, has a sound to match.

The only flaw that the years have brought is an occasional invasion by visiting automobiles with squealing tires and blaring horns. It is enough to make the old residents wish for a crippling snow every year so the winter midnight will be shared only by bells struck in an ancient sequence.

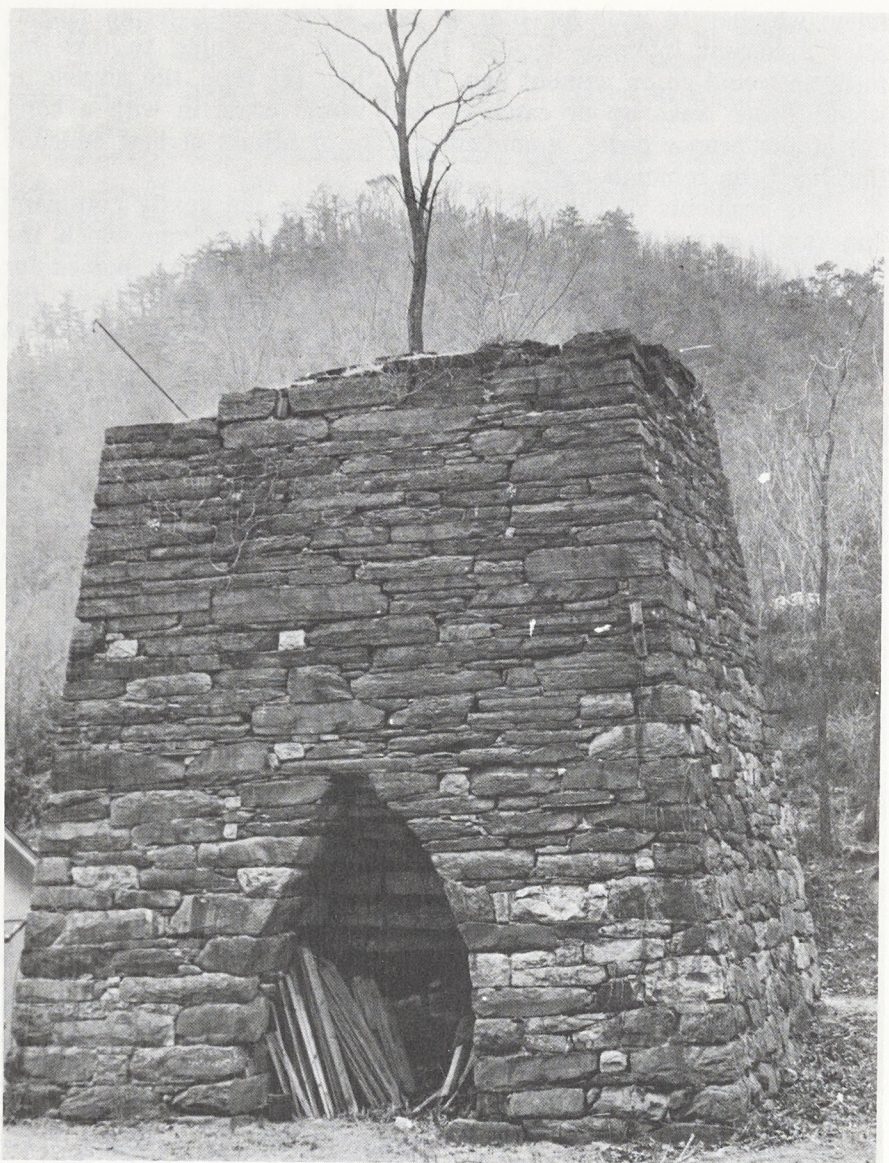
14 Iron Furnaces of Botetourt

The manufacture of pig iron was a significant industry in early America and particularly in Botetourt County where 14 furnaces operated during most of the 19th century.

Robert Harvey apparently "instigated the furnace development" at Cloverdale No. 1 about 1787, according to Kegley's Virginia Frontier. And the last to be abandoned in the county was Aracdia Furnace on Jennings Creek in 1885, says John D. Capron, Lynchburg iron authority.

Capron, who's working on a book on 155 Virginia furnaces, lists these 14 for Botetourt: Aetna 1 and 2, Arcada, Callie, Catawba, Cloverdale 1 and 2, Grace, Jane, Princess, Rebecca, Retreat, Roaring Run and Salisbury.

Catawba and Roaring Run furnaces are in the Jefferson National



Arcadia Furnace was built to supply iron for the Confederacy.

Forest and this government agency has placed fences around them as protection from vandals. An extensive picnic area is planned for the Roaring Run site, near Craig Creek in northern Botetourt.

The late P. H. Trout of Roanoke, a student of the iron industry, said the mill race at the Cloverdale Furnace later drove the nearby flour mill which burned in 1968. The stream was used to drive the bellows to furnish air blast and power requirements of the furnace.

Capron said the Cloverdale Furnace was burned by Gen. David Hunter June 14, 1864 but it was rebuilt six months later.

In a book, "Virginia Iron Manufacture in the Slave Era," Kathleen Bruce wrote, "Iron, known as Catawba iron, smelted at the furnace of that name in Botetourt County, Virginia, had for nearly 40 years been familiar to every American ironmaster of importance east of the Appalachian mountains. So prized was Catawba pig iron, that in past years it had sold for as much as sixty dollars the ton. The Catawba Furnace at this period (1850) had fallen out of blast."

The Catawba Furnace was in excellent condition, Trout reported, until about 1930 when "vandals robbed the arches of their cast iron lintels, and thus caused the stone work to collapse," a fate probably suffered by many of these monuments to 19th century industry.

John Wood's celebrated 1821 map of Botetourt listed these seven furnaces: Tayloe's Furnace at Cloverdale, Harvey's on the west fork of Lee's Branch of Catawba Creek, Mayberry A and B on Purgatory Creek, Taylor's Iron Works on Catawba Creek at the mouth of Lee's Branch, Iron Works on Jackson River north of Peters Mountain (in present Craig County) and Harvey's Iron Works on Back Creek near Buchanan.

Arcadia Furnace, built in 1862, was one of four constructed during the war, according to Capron. Iron was shipped down the nearby James River to Richmond for use by the Tredegar Iron Works, headed by Gen. Joseph Reid Anderson, a Botetourt native. More than 50 tons a week was shipped downstream.

Virginia's iron industry dates back to 1619 when the London Company brought workmen to put up a furnace on Falling Creek near present Richmond, Capron said. Gov. Alexander Spotswood's furnace at Germanna, near Fredericksburg, was active soon after 1700. Col. William Byrd reported on three blast furnaces and an air furnace in 1732.

Howe's 1845 History of Virginia listed 42 blast furnaces producing 18,810 tons of cast iron, 52 forges, producing 5,886 tons of bar iron, 1,742 persons employed and \$1,246,650 in capital invested.

Iron has its greatest need, in wartime, Capron wrote, and during wars, "we find the greatest demand—So it is to war that we attribute the rise and fall of Virginia iron furnaces."

He quoted an iron authority of the last century who said that so far as the basic need of Confederate ironmasters for war pig iron was concerned, "their fate, be it success or failure, lay buried in Virginia valleys and mountains."

An 18th Century Spinet

BY ANNE MCCLENNY

If you are a person interested in Southwest Virginia's cultural history, a trip to the Museum of the Botetourt Historical Society in Fincastle will prove most rewarding. There, in a room that long ago was a parlor, stands a Hitchcock spinet, said to have been brought to the area now Botetourt County about 1740 by the Crawford family.

Looking at the spinet, the inquisitive visitor will surely wonder about its history, what kind of sounds came from it and what music was popular when it was in use.

The little spinet bearing the nameboard inscription, "Thomas Hitchcock Londoni fecit" looks exactly like one in the Smithsonian Institution's collection of keyboard instruments. Its maker was well known in London for his fine instruments. The date in the Smithsonian catalog for its Hitchcock spinet is 1710.

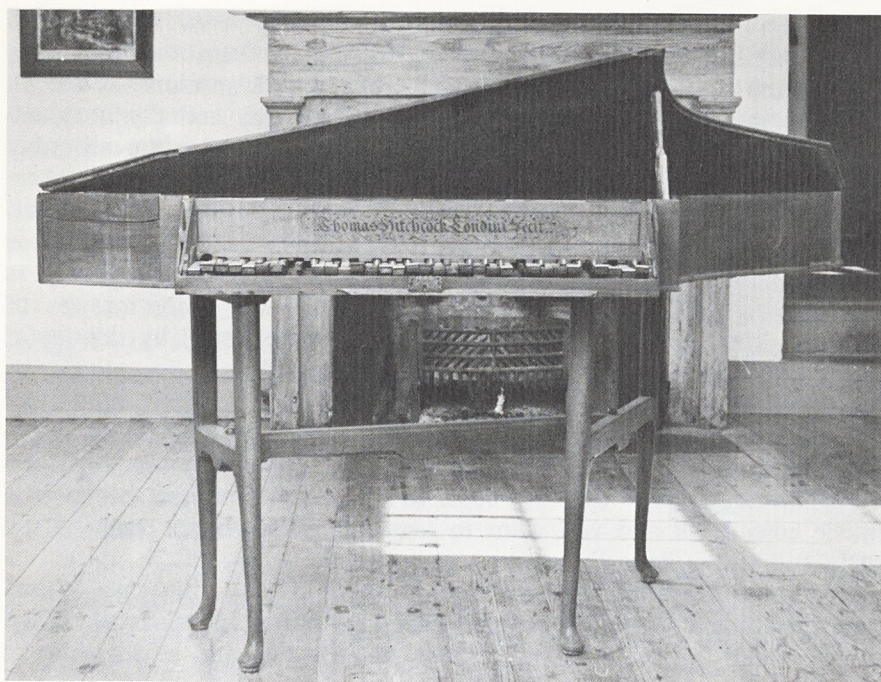
Although there is no date on the one in Fincastle, we can assume that it too, was built in the early eighteenth century. To find any keyboard instrument from this period in a small museum is unusual but to come upon one made by so famous a person as Thomas Hitchcock is very rare.

The name, spinet, comes from the Latin word, spina, meaning thorn. This word refers to the quill which plucks the string as the key is struck, producing a clear, delicate tone. Commonly called a bent-side, the Crawford spinet was typical of its day. Its keyboard compass or range, was five octaves running from GG to g3. (The capital letters and small letters are indications used by musicians to describe keyboard range.) Black keys like those on the instrument were nicknamed "Skunk keys" because they had white stripes of ivory running down the middle. The key beds were shallow and the action light, making the profuse ornaments (trills, turns, mordents, and the like), which cluttered pages of music at the time, easy to realize.

It was a simple instrument for household, not concert use. Actually a one manual harpsichord, its jack action, with tuning pins in front over the key board and strings running diagonal to the key frame, did not provide a big sound.

We do not know who played this spinet now in the Fincastle Museum but we can safely assume that the Crawford children did. In colonial times all well reared boys and girls learned to play some musical instrument and the children of Southwest Virginia were no exception. Col. William Preston, bringing up a large family in Botetourt County, saw to it that his children had a musical education.

Helen Bullock, writing on music in Virginia, says "A redemptioner by the name of Palfremen, who had been the victim of an



18th century spinet in Fincastle museum

unfortunate experience in London and had come to America was bought by Colonel Preston of Southwest Virginia as a music teacher for his daughters." (William and Mary Quarterly, Second Series, Vol. 6, p. 233)

If John Crawford was not fortunate enough to find a teacher for his children, the so-called method books, whose first pages explained how to begin, provided a good substitute. At this period in our history, they were imported primarily from England, along with instruments. Their first pages exposed the reader to rudiments. There were charts naming notes on the grand staff and diagrams showing their positions on the keyboard, tables explaining key signatures, note values and how to count.

Then followed a dozen or more little pieces to delight young performers. Gavottes, sarabandes, minuets, and marches filled the pages, not surprising since dancing was probably the most popular amusement of the day. The appealing pieces challenged the children and placed demands on them which would astound many beginners of today. In the first short pieces both hands were used and ornaments such as trills and turns, which would never appear in early teaching literature now, were sprinkled over almost every page.

Often getting printed music posed a problem. Publishing houses did not begin to flourish in America until the last decade of the

eighteenth century and importing music was expensive. Copy books offered the obvious solution. Many children made them and they were almost like diaries, with personal comments and opinions added in the margins. The necessity for copying music was actually very advantageous. There is no better teaching device and students even today are urged to learn musical notation this way.

By the time the young eighteenth century players had mastered even the simplest pieces they were encouraged to perform for family and friends. They enjoyed doing solos, accompanying singers and playing with other instrumentalists. This was truly an age of music making. Many a long evening's quiet was relieved by the joyful sounds of young people singing and dancing.

Today children, as always, like to hear tales of their ancestors' lives and nothing delights them more than exploring in an attic. Perhaps in the not too distant future some young explorer will discover an eighteenth century book of dances, a method book or a music copy book and will want to place it on the music rack of the little spinet in Fincastle.

In the meantime we can take pride in having this rare instrument in our midst. Our enjoyment of it now can only be visual. When its five-sided top is raised no strings can be seen and so its voice is silenced.

The keyboard, with many missing keys, resembles a snagged-toothed child. And yet its charm is very apparent. Resting on a lovely Queen Anne stand, it is there to remind us that people of an era far removed from ours knew the joys of making music in Southwest Virginia.

The Village of Daleville

BY RAYMOND BARNES

The village of Daleville has an interesting historical background for near here stood the home of Robert Breckenridge where the first court of Botetourt County convened in 1770. Robert Breckenridge died in the fall of 1772 and left part of his holding, including that on which Daleville stands, to his son, Preston.

After the Revolution, many of the original settlers sold their land and moved to new frontiers. The Dunkards of Pennsylvania, attracted by the calcareous soil of the Shenandoah Valley and being excellent judges of good land, came to the upper valley in large numbers and many purchased farms near Daleville. In 1792, Preston and Elizabeth Breckenridge sold 650 acres to Christian Gish, who in turn let Jacob Gish buy 500 acres in 1705.

It must have been one of the Gishes who built the first mill powered by waters of Tinker Creek in this vicinity. A mill functioned on the same site for countless years. All mills became a community center and when the first Dunkard church was erected at present Daleville, quite a little settlement grew up around it and the community soon boasted a general store. Just when or why the name, Daleville, was attached to the settlement is unknown but descendants of a Southwest Virginia family have said that Dales lived there in the early days.

Peter Nininger, born in 1804, later wed Lydia Gish, who was a daughter of Jacob Gish. Nininger was a good business man, a presiding elder in his church and very prolific, witness the seven sons and three daughters of his union. Benjamin Franklin Nininger, born 1848, was a younger son who wed Anna Marie Denton of a nearby family. George Layman, another well known farmer of the community, with John C. Moomaw started the first commercial orchards in Botetourt County around 1872.

There were about 12 children in the Nininger-Layman families and although the public school system of Virginia had been in effect since 1870, neither Nininger nor Layman approved of their children attending the schools offered. In the summer of 1890, Prof. I.N.H. Beahm, then teaching in the schools of Roanoke City, was induced to take charge of a "select school" attended by the Nininger-Layman children.

The summer session was held in a small frame building but with the coming of winter it was moved into a room over the kitchen of Mrs. George Layman. The select school found favor in the eyes of other Dunkards and applications for admittance piled up to such an extent that a building was erected in 1891 on the west side of the highway for school purposes only and to form the nucleus of the educational institution that followed.

It was not long before a sufficient number of pupils graduated and desired higher education. A curriculum was installed, offering two courses of study. One, successfully attended for two sessions of nine months each, earned a graduate degree of bachelor of pedagogy. The other more of a cultural nature, required three years before a bachelor of commercial science was conferred.

The institute now assumed the name of Botetourt Normal College and many of its graduates taught school here and elsewhere. Coeducational from its inception, time brought an attractive and separate building used as dormitories for the girls. This building has been converted into apartments. The Administration Building still stands, in need of repair. Here on the ground floor, pupils took their meals with classes held in the upper rooms.

Bridgewater College in upper Virginia eventually took over all higher subjects and the normal school became known as Daleville Academy, the equivalent of a high school. Baseball and football teams contested with other high schools, but such innovations were of comparative recent vintage.

It is probable that the school offered little to attract modern youth, for the discipline was strict and there was little diversion. In fact, old grads tell us that a trip across the road to Ikenberry's store where the post office was located was the big event of the day. One failing to meet required standards of conduct was confined to the school campus, which was not large, but from there the culprit could view fellow students gaily trotting over to the store just across the road. In the early days, each student chopped his own wood and attend to his fire. After a central heating plant was installed, this task was eliminated but replaced with chores equally as onerous.

In spite of severe injunction against anyone leaving quarters after dark, girls sneaked out to meet boy friends on an innocent date in a nearby orchard. The depression brought the end of the school and it folded up in 1933.

Behind the school, the old mill ground grain until 1949 and now it has taken on new life as the Tinker Mill Restaurant, operated by Mr. and Mrs. W. B. Hopkins. The date, 1847, is carved on the cornice of the mill, constructed here by Peter Nininger.

The Hopkins have located a crane and beams from an earlier mill believed to have been at the same site. Nininger acquired this



Nininger Hall at Old Daleville Academy

property from William R. Preston in 1834. It was part of a 730-acre tract purchased by Gen. John Preston from John C. Griffin in 1817 and it was bounded by the land of Abraham and Jacob Gish.

Today, Daleville is a delightful retreat from the noise and bustle of swiftly moving traffic, yet it is close to all modern conveniences. Cut off from the main highway when U.S. 220 was changed, the little settlement retains all of the characteristics of the old-time village which now is becoming a thing of the past. It would be a pity for Daleville to change.

“Echo From the Hills” Will Tell Bicentennial Story

“Echo From the Hills,” a two-act pageant linking old Botetourt’s frontier beginnings with the present, will climax the Bicentennial in June. Covering each of the county’s two centuries in a separate act, the pageant is the combined work of co-winners in a countywide contest.

As judged by Miss Clara Black of Roanoke, a veteran theatrical director, the pageant of Mrs. Katherine C. Harris and that of Mrs. Jacqueline H. Rader and Mr. and Mrs. Glen Main placed first among five submitted. Others entered were by Mrs. Nell Thompson, entitled “Of Thee I Sing”; Mrs. Martha Edwards, “1770-1970,” and Mrs. Faye Caldwell, “From the Beginning to Infinity of A County.”

A song, “Parade of the Pioneers,” will introduce the pageant with a description of the emigrants who came here to settle in a “wild, new land.” Instrumental music, songs and dances representative of periods of history will be performed.

Highlights of the first act, “The First Hundred Years,” will be an Indian dance, Col. George Washington on his way to Fort William, a court scene featuring Robert Breckenridge, Israel Christian, Andrew Lewis and other well-known people of the 18th century, British soldiers’ visit to the home of Hattie Brugh in search of supplies, the wedding of Judith Hancock and William Clark at Santillane after his return from the Lewis and Clark expedition and the burning of Mt. Joy during the Civil War.

In the second act, covering the second century, will be a description of early industries, packet boats on the James River at Buchanan, the Flood of 1877, Gay Nineties, 1920s and World War II. The production will close with a poem written by Mrs. Harris and a flag ritual, followed by singing of “God Bless America” and the county song, “Botetourt.” Flags from the states whose land was encompassed in early Botetourt will be displayed. Fireworks will be shown. Gar-

land Stevens, a Botetourt teacher, will direct the pageant with the help of Miss Black.

Other features of the Bicentennial, planned by a 12-member board headed by Thomas E. Reynolds of Troutville, are an Easter sunrise service at Lord Botetourt High School and a Patriotism Day program on Memorial Day. During Bicentennial Emphasis Week, June 21-27, special attention will be given to religious heritage, tours of landmarks, homes and gardens, old farm implements, arts and antiques and several performances of the pageant. An anniversary booklet has been prepared.

The observance began on New Year's Eve with the traditional ringing of the bells at the Courthouse and the churches of Fincastle, joined by other churches of the county for this special event.

Debbie Myers, a James River High School senior, has been selected as Miss Botetourt Bicentennial. Slogan for the anniversary is "Honoring the Past, Searching the Future," suggested by J. J. Madine of Fincastle. Mrs. Jacqueline Rader of Troutville and Mrs. Gaynelle Stevens of Buchanan composed the song, "Botetourt" and Mrs. Rader wrote a poem for the celebration. The emblem was drawn by Harold Little of Fincastle from themes suggested by Mrs. Alice Crowder of Troutville and Mrs. Martha Edwards of Buchanan.

Historic Fincastle, Inc.

(A report based on information supplied by Mrs. Hellen Caldwell, President)

In the upper right-hand corner of Historic Fincastle's conservative grey-green stationery, under the seal of the six steeples, is printed the organization's quiet battle-cry: TO PRESERVE AND RESTORE HISTORIC FINCASTLE. That is a big order.

Only two short years ago, the group of determined citizens was formally organized. Since then its projects have really proliferated. Here, in outline form are a representative baker's dozen of its many plans and accomplishments. The members have:

1. Helped supply part of the funds for restoring the handsome 1897 county jail, with its unusual decorative ironwork, for use as the county library;
2. Sponsored educational walking tours of Fincastle for groups, such as wives of conventioners in Roanoke, who make advance reservations;
3. Held an arts and crafts festival during the second week of each of the past two Septembers, including also country music, contests, square dancing, home-cooked food, a parade, band concerts, and a country store;
4. Opened a country store on other special occasions for antiques



and home-made articles and food;

5. Cooperated in many ways with the Botetourt Historical Society in acquiring material for the Botetourt Museum in the restored old building behind the courthouse;

6. Leased an 1810 brick building from the county, to be restored from its recent burned-out condition for use as a craft shop;

7. Received as gifts one late eighteenth century log house from Hon. Stuart Carter and another from Fincastle's Mayor Arich R. Bolton; (Note: There are, in spite of two disastrous fires in the 1970 in the yard of the old log house donated by Mr. Carter and, four others nearby; in all, in a village of 401 inhabitants, there still are at least thirty-five such buildings.)

8. Started negotiations for leasing a brick blacksmith shop—1840 or earlier—to be restored;

9. Placed attractive historical data signs at appropriate spots;

10. Planned for date-of-erection plaques to be put on all houses in town built before 1875;

11. Cooperated with the Botetourt Bicentennial Committee for the county's year-long celebration in 1970;

12. Corresponded with the history department of Roanoke College which is interested in doing archeological work during the summer of 1970 in the yard of the old log house donated by Mr. Carter: and,

13. At their board meeting in early February, decided to raise funds by selling "loan-a-shares" in Historic Fincastle, Incorporated, at ten dollars each, bearing interest at two per cent a year, payable in 15 years by funds "derived from hard work".

"They'll be mighty pretty framed," says Mrs. Caldwell. You can draw your own conclusions from that suggestion.

—F. McN. L.

Botetourt Bicentennial

Great men of faith and fortitude
Proclaimed this virgin land
A frontier county—Botetourt—
Forever may she stand!
They set aside an Eden in
An untamed wilderness,
A beacon shining brightly there,
So dear and richly blessed.
The murmurs of the woodland streams,
The grandeur of the peaks,
The comfort of the rolling hills
A soothing message speaks
Botetourt! Bright jewel of
Two hundred years ago;
Sustained by men of vision till
Thy cup doth overflow.
And what about those little men
Whose efforts go unsung,
Those unassuming heroes here
From whence traditions spring?
Men of firm integrity,
Courageous, strong, and true—
Persevering mountain men
Of strong devotion, too
We owe them great respect, you know,
Those backbones of our land,
Those hardy souls who'd rally 'round
To lend a helping hand;
No captain ever won a fight,
No king retained his crown
Without the so-called little guys
To help him hold his ground!
Two centuries of toil and sweat,
The mandate of success—
The citizens of Botetourt
Have offered her no less.
Search and you will find their names
On worn and yellowed page,
The deeds and taxes, births and deaths,
And oaths confirming age.

*A legacy they leave to us,
Their daughters and their sons,
In whom is trusted all their hopes;
Indeed! we are the ones!
To us is given stewardship,
A chance to glorify
Old Botetourt—our Botetourt.
We hold her banner high!*

Botetourt

*Where the Blue Ridge Mountains kiss the sky
And the wind speaks softly to me,
Where evening soothes the weary soul—
That's where I long to be!
High in the mountains a mockingbird sings,
Deep in the valley an ageless church bell rings.*

Chorus

*Botetourt, Botetourt, blessed by God's own hand,
My heart is yours forever—
Dear old home and hallowed land!*

*Where the mighty river, James rolls by
On its journey down to the sea.
Where orchards bloom and grain fields glow—
My heart will ever be!
Land of my fathers, and priceless to me—
Hope of my children; a precious legacy!*

Chorus

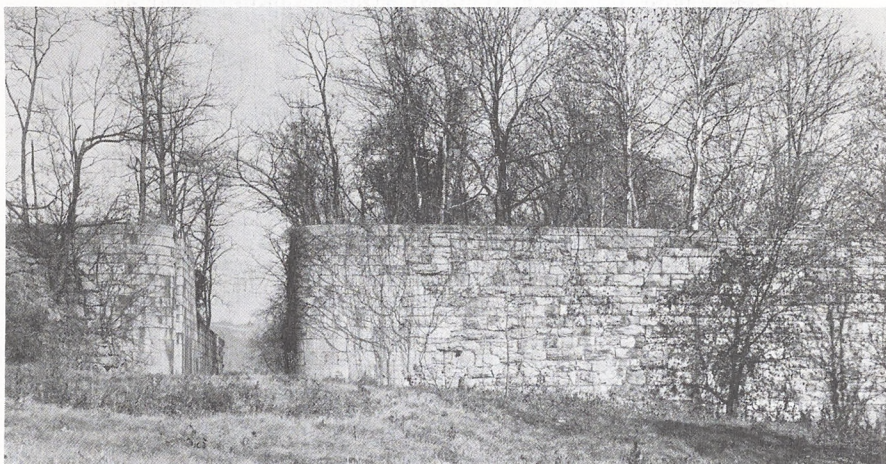
Jacqueline Hundley Rader, talented wife of Jacob K. Rader of Troutville is celebrating the Bicentennial in many ways. She is the writer of the official poem and the song and co-author of the pageant chosen for the celebration. Her poem entitled "Botetourt Bicentennial," was first read publicly Nov. 29, 1969 during the Miss Botetourt Bicentennial contest. The song, with music by Dr. John Diercks of the Hollins College music faculty, had its first public performance by the Lord Botetourt High School choral group at the courthouse on New Year's Eve.

A County Album

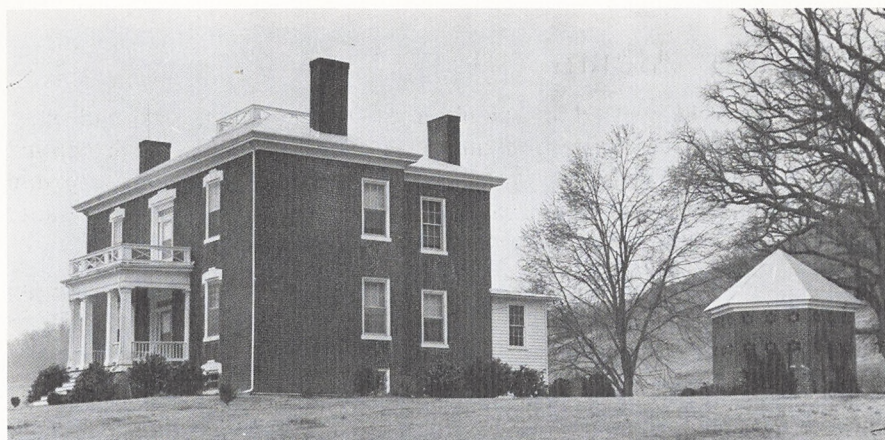
Herewith is printed a sampling of photographs, old and new, of some of the interesting structures, mainly homes, of Botetourt County. They were chosen for architectural variety, age, beauty and historical interest. The editor will welcome pictures for future issues of the Journal.



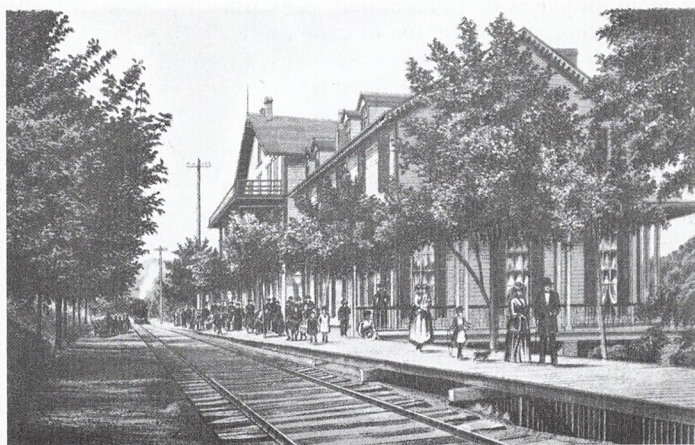
The Community House at Buchanan was built by John S. Wilson as a combination dwelling, store and warehouse in 1839. It served as storehouse and landing place for the James River and Kanawha Canal and now is owned by the Town Improvement Society.



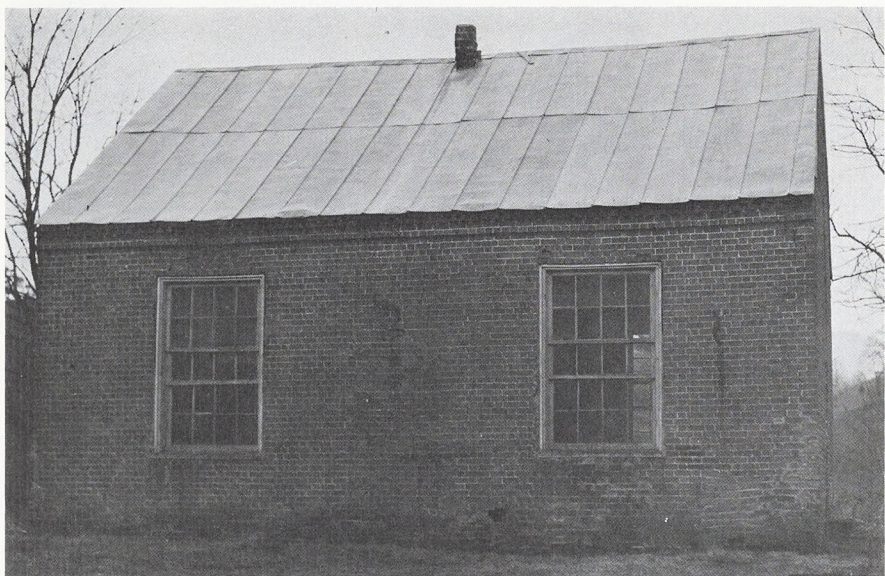
Lock on the old James River and Kanawha Canal was photographed a few miles below Buchanan.



Annandale, a square brick house, overlooks the James River in the eastern corner of Botetourt. A Georgian house with four chimneys, a modified widow's walk and a double stairway, it has a hexagonal smokehouse at right.



The hotel at Blue Ridge Springs, just east of Roanoke, was a popular watering place in the late 1800s.



The Brick Union Church stood for 125 years or more on the old Trinity-Troutville road until it was torn down in 1958 and its brick was used for an addition at Fincastle Presbyterian Church. Interstate 81 now passes over the site where Botetourt Brethren, Lutherans and Methodists worshiped for years. It had a gallery in the rear and long wood-burning stoves on each side of the aisle. 1938 photo.



James Harrison Vest and his family posed for a picture at their white frame house just east of Troutville about 1900. Logs were covered with weatherboarding on the house, probably built before 1805. Christian Houseman sold the property to John Vest of Bedford County in 1838. The home, with combination stone and brick chimneys, is one of the oldest wood structures in this area.

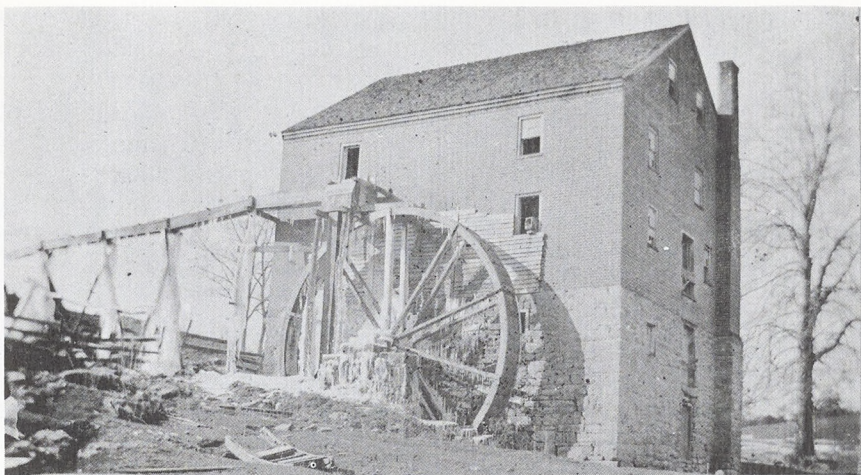


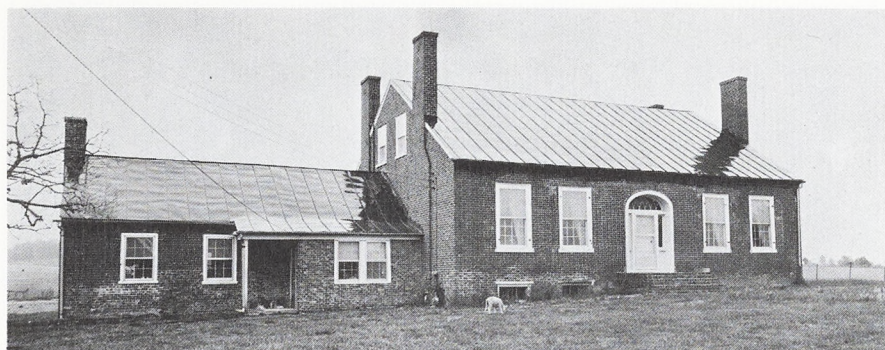
Photo by the late J. C. Dill.

Flour mill once operated at Springwood.



Photo by the late J. C. Dill.

Saw mill at Springwood on a winter day long ago.



Hawthorne Hall, the Slusser home northwest of Fincastle, was built about 1800 by Robert Harvey and his son-in-law, Stephen Trigg. An arched overhead light at the main entrance, fluted molding, slender interior columns, wall paneling and an Adam mantel are its main features.



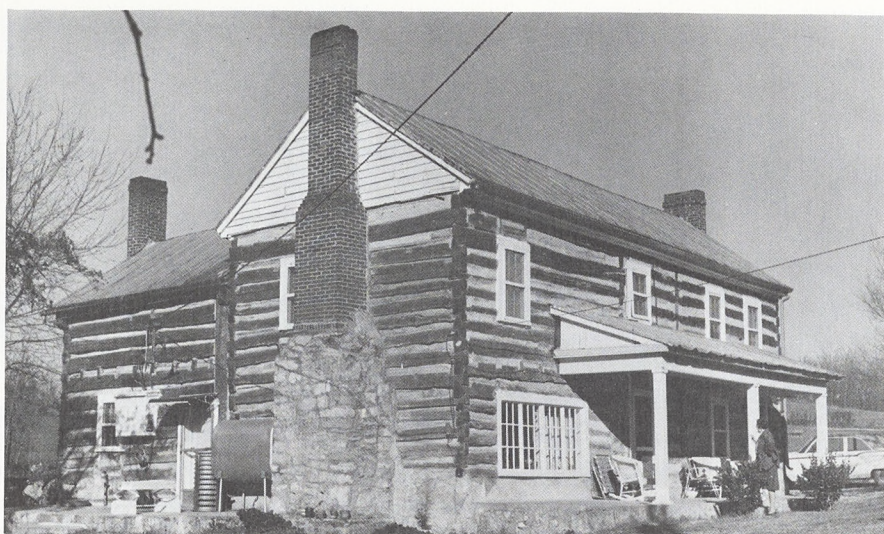
Stonelea, a stone house with a stone barn nearby, was built by Edward Mitchell in 1799. The property had been owned by David Cloyd and later was held by Philip Firebaugh for years.



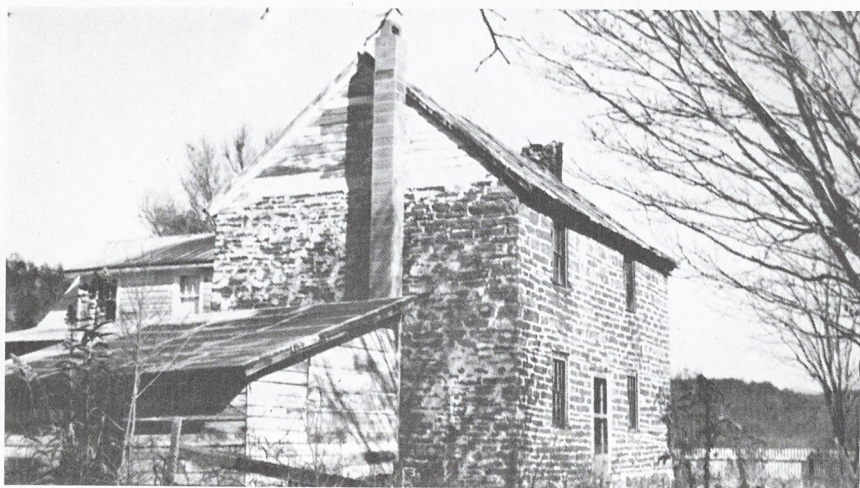
Santillane is an impressive Greek Revival mansion built by Col. George Hancock in the early 1800s. Later the home of Col. Henry Bowyer and his son, Henry W. Bowyer, longtime clerk, it is owned by R. D. Stoner, historian and retired clerk and his wife. William Clark of the Lewis and Clark expedition married Col. Hancock's daughter, Judith, and the wedding was probably at Santillane.



The Benjamin Ammen House on U. S. 220 was built about 1826, near Ammen's woolen mill. A Federal style home, it is known for the classic detail of its woodwork on the Adam entrance with fan and side lights, moldings on mantels, door frames and chair rail.



The Selander log house, southwest of Fincastle, was originally built in two sections, connected by a breezeway or dogtrot. Axe and adz marks are visible on the beams, as are shreds of horsehair used to bind the clay. Numerals marking placement of ceiling beams and wooden peg can be seen. The house, probably built by the Firestone family, dates from about 1800.



Mulberry Bottom, an Early Republic stone house, is said to have been built in the 1780s. It is near Craig Creek, west of Eagle Rock.



Glebe Mill, the Thomas T. Lawson home near Tinker Creek northwest of Daleville, is built around a log house dating from about 1770. The Rev. Adam Smyth, first rector of the Botetourt Parish, lived on this property, known as the Glebe Tract. Remarkable hand carved pine mantels and paneling probably are the work of a journeyman carver on his way west.



Rustic Lodge, originally the Lewis Burwell home, dates from approximately 1802. Known for its designed paneling and mantels, it long was the home of Martha Burwell. It is located southwest of Fincastle.

Retrospect and Prophecy -- 1885

*All golden is her past;
Rich relics rare of dear and distant days
Their shadows cast
Upon her now, and fill our lips with praise.*

*In ante-bellum years she reached her prime—
Her brilliant fame spread far—
You should have known her in the good old time,
"Before the War."*

*Sweet fragrance of the old regime fills
Our town with Southern grace;
And makes our home, among Virginia's hills,
A charming place.*

*And yet, we must confess
The railroad came just near enough to slay
Our trade with Troutville six miles away,
We face distress.*

*The County Court
Meets here, and here forever let it meet;
Fincastle shall remain the County-seat
of dear old Botetourt.*

*Our name is widely known;
Far, far away, and from a warmer zone
Fair tourists come with spirits high and gay-
And come to stay!*

*This is our lasting wealth;
The mineral water, and the bracing air,
The long romantic drives, with tonic rare,
Imparting health.*

*Fincastle sleeps upon her seven hills,
With fast closed eyes!
But she shall feel again life's magic thrills-
She shall awake and rise!*

*Yes, yes, 'twill not be long
The iron horse shall neigh upon her streets;
While golden past with golden future meets
In one grand song.*

*No, reader, 'tis no joke!
The trolly cars shall run along these roads—
Full cars, and all alive with living loads
From Roanoke.*

*The treasured past is gone;
With memories priceless, sacred, and sublime!
But we proclaim another glorious time;
Soon, soon to dawn!*

—Fanny Johnston
The Fincastle Herald
1885



