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GEORGE KEGLEY

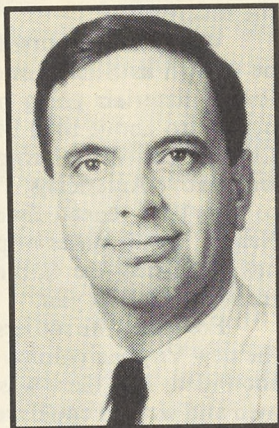
Editor of The Journal

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Roanoke County's First Years

This special issue of the Journal of the Roanoke Valley Historical Society marks the observance of Roanoke County's Sesquicentennial in 1988. This Journal contains the texts of many of the talks given at a series of historical forums held from Sept. 12 through Sept. 17, 1988. Some speakers did not have a text and their tapes were transcribed. The speakers described business, industry, education, architecture, music, religion, agriculture and other facets of life in the county during the past century and a half.

The elequent keynote speaker at the main forum on Sept. 17 at Roanoke College was Dr. Marshall W. Fishwick, professor of humanities and communication studies at Virginia Tech since 1976. A Roanoke native, Fishwick earned degrees at the University of Virginia and the University of Wisconsin before he received a doctorate at Yale University. A prolific writer of many articles and more than 25 books on a variety of themes in history and American studies, Fishwick also has taught at Washington and Lee, Yale, Temple and Lincoln universitites.



Fishwick (Roanoke Times & World-News)

Roanoke County and Valley: The Lessons of History

by Marshall W. Fishwick

Try to imagine how silent it was--this magnificent motley valley--not hundreds or thousands but millions of years ago.

We still shoot the deer and recall the now-extinct buffalo, but how many know that dinosaurs once roamed these hills and perhaps enjoyed a tasty meal at the very spot at which you now sit--say, half a million years ago?

You ask for proof? It was found by that greatest of Virginians in whose shadow we all stand: Thomas Jefferson. In compiling his **Notes on Virginia**, Jefferson discovered that arthritic dinosaurs bathed in Virginia's mineral springs aeons before Homo sapiens did so. He actually discovered the bones of a giant prehistoric sloth near what is now White Sulphur Springs, and promptly named the creature **Megalonus Jeffersonii**. Water, history, and life are all of a piece.

How little we know of those endless days and nights . . . not only before our time, but before the concept of time. The first lesson of history is humility.

For those of us who spend our lives studying and writing history, one truth tops all others: how little we know about the past; and how hard it is to explain what we DO know.

What are the "lessons of history?" History does not teach "lessons"; that is the task of historians. History doesn't "demonstrate," "prove," "justify"; like Old Man River, it just keeps rolling along . . . Or coming closer to home--like the James,

New, or Roanoke rivers, which we all know and love.

We would like to know the facts-yet we know there are no "facts" in history. Rocks, stones, animals, books—but not FACTS. Facts are made-or drawn-by humans. What we call "facts" are conclusions drawn by the human mind . . . , and often they turn out not to be true. "History," said Voltaire, "is a pack of lies agreed upon." Or is it "propaganda of the victorious?"

In any case, we are not here to repeat the facts (real or assumed) of our Sesquicentennial. We must, in these few minutes, try to catch the mood and meaning of those recent years . . . to show how the meaning of life dwells in this valley, in this soil . . . then ask how, contemplating this microcosm, we can glimpse the macrocosm.

We are not the first humans who have loved this valley, and what has come to be known as Southwestern Virginia. The Archeological Society of Virginia has found materials going back 8,000 years, to the Paleo period, then the Archaic period (to about 1000 B.C.), the Woodland period (to about 1500 A.D.) and the Contact period, covering the brief span when Europeans first came into contact with native Americans. The Shannon site, near my home in Blacksburg, is believed to have been repeatedly occupied more than 3,000 years ago, and later until 1670. Nearly 12,000 pieces of pottery fragments have been gathered. The State Library has published the findings of Joseph L. Benthall, project archeologist, and I recommend it to you.

For the white settlers this must have fulfilled Drayton's famous description of the new Virginia colony—"earth's only paradise." Plants, game, trees of all kinds abounded; and there was more space than Europeans could even conceive. Here men and women could work all day with their hands their only company, listening for the screech of a soaring bird or the sound water makes when it gushes over a ledge of limestone.

Try to visualize the strong morning sunlight turning the Blue Ridge bluer than tropical waters. And the long lonely nights, broken only by the wail of wolves and the plaints of whippoorwills; the stealthy and eyeless fear, creeping through the floorboards, lapping at the cabin door; the silent prayer of sunlight to fill up the chinks in the wall and to warm cold aching bones.

Perhaps they agreed with the Indians who said the Great Spirit brought the stars together here to sing for joy. Even the angels joined in, according to an old Indian saga:

"While the stars and angels were singing, there came a crashing sound, as of mountains falling, or of thunder in the sky. As the stars and the angels stopped singing to look and to listen, a great rock in the mountain wall split and fell asunder; through the deep opening the waters of the lake began to pour out and to rush towards the sea.

The first white settlers came in the 17th century. John Lederer reached the Shenandoah Valley in 1669, killing a six-foot rattlesnake and watching a wildcat kill a deer. He returned in 1670, was bitten by a spider, and passed off the stage of history. Then came German Protestants, driven from Europe by Louis XIV, and a host of sturdy settlers who left their indelible stamp on the interlocking mountains and valleys in which ours rests. One splendid book summarizes what we know of that heroic period: Frederick B. Kegley's **Virginia Frontier; the Beginning of the Southwest; the Roanoke of Colonial Days, 1740-1783**. In 1988 we celebrate not only the 150th anniversary of our valley, but the 50th anniversary of Kegley's book. What a fine moment in time!

Drawing from Kegley, and others, we can imagine what our county was like when it was the frontier. Men wore coats with broad backs, straight short skirts, and short breeches reaching to the knee. Stockings were drawn up under the kneeband and tied with a garter just below the knee. Shoes were of coarse leather; hats of wool or fur had crowns about four inches high and broad brims.

The women wore petticoats, "shortgowns," and tight calico caps, except in summer when their feet, hands and arms were bare. They usually helped the men labor in the fields of rye, flax, oats, potatoes, grain and hay. Fine mowers and reapers, they also hoed, plowed, and did much heavy labor. These women not only kept house; they also helped make it.

The barn, the finest building on the farm, was usually built before all else. The typical one-and-a-half story house had a large cellar, a chimney in the middle, a fireplace in one end, and a stove-room in the other. Invariably there was a long pine table with permanent benches attached to one side. On the upper floor were garnerers for holding grain. The beds were filled with straw or chaff. Living wasn't easy.

From all indications most newcomers were sober, stern, and unadorned. As soon as their families were properly housed, they built churches to worship their God. The walls were thick enough to withstand attacks. Every spring saw some red blood on the white dogwood.

With few large plantations and infrequent European contacts, life was hard and lonely. Mountain barriers blocked the way to the sea, and settlements were few and far between. Rye, oats, barley, corn, and wheat were the chief crops. Only a few who raised cattle drove their herds north to Winchester or Philadelphia.

On the horizon just beyond are the inexorable mountains, with a magic kind of majesty, a brooding sullen stillness. This has been hard country to conquer. West of the six valleys of Virginia is an ocean of leaves. There are elms with slim weeping tops; sturdier, plumper maples; gnarled, many-fingered oaks. Here and there a great pine pierces the horizon. From the first there has been a raw, Darwinian quality about the people who live here. Call up the hogs, pack the pony, line up the old lady and kids, spit on the fire, and start west! Only the hardiest survived.

What has survived are folk tales and songs of those bygone days—for me, the most precious part of my Virginia heritage. Do you remember things like this, from your childhood—or did you hear words like this from grandparents' lips?

"If a white pigeon settles on your chimney, or an owl screeches with a hoarse voice, calamity is near.

You can never catch a weasel asleep.

In dog days toads never open up their mouths.

A spider is an old quilt, hung around your neck, cures ague.

The white stripe on a donkey is the cross of Christ, impressed when He rode into Jerusalem.

If you see a wolf before he sees you, you'll drop dead on the spot.

Where the devil came out of the swine's forefeet, there's a small hole.

King Arthur was turned into a raven, and in the springtime he circles over Virginny.

Raven once snow-white, a tattle-tale, now he is black.

Robin plucked a thorn from Christ's temple, now his breast is red.

And on the dogwood you can see the imprint made by the nails of the cross."

We have these tales and songs because of men like A. K. Davis, my beloved English professor at the University of Virginia. His **Traditional Ballads of Virginia** is (like Kegley's) another indispensable book, listing 650 versions of 51 songs, still echoed on home-made dulcimers (John Jacob Niles, Susan Reed) and store-bought guitars (Burl Ives, Willie Nelson). How many of you know **Ol' Joe Clark**?

You will not find him in the Roanoke Public Library, or the archives of Roanoke College. The Clarks had no chroniclers. No Ph. D. has studied their close-

knit world; they left no documents to lure the literate. But old Joe, whose progeny stretched clear from Wigwam Ridge to somewhere over Bent Mountain, was a king-sized cockalorum saver of souls:

Old Joe Clark set out to preach
He preached all over the plain.
The highest text he ever took
Was high low Jack and game.

Old Joe Clark had a yaller cat
She'd neither sing nor pray
She stuck her head in the buttermilk jar
And washed her sins away.

With Joe the law of love did not prevail. Nor were all those who followed him distressed by it:

Old Joe Clark killed a man
Killed him with a knife.
I'm damned glad he killed that man
Now I'll have his wife.

The song took hold and grew because it was a good song. In his **Treasury of American Folklore**, B. A. Botkin lists verses heard in Cleveland County, Oklahoma. Back in Virginia new verses were contrived to meet new situations and times.

Eventually book-learning came, and a school teacher appeared on the local scene. If this verse of "Old Joe Clark" is any indication, she was not treated in a way befitting Virginia Cavaliers:

I wouldn't marry a school teacher
I'll tell you the reason why;
She blows her nose in yaller corn bread
And calls it pumpkin pie.

Joe Clark is a single tree in the vast forest of American history. No one has ever bothered to examine and record full the story of his life and influence. Musing on his obscurity, as well as that of thousands like him, one wonders if there is not a lesson here for us. Instead of not seeing the forest for the trees, we have frequently missed the trees while admiring the forest. We have been too far removed from the landscape and the people to know the specific, unique, and local. Our concern has been with size, spectacle, and generality; the glory and the truth contained in the ordinary and immediate has eluded us.

Ralph Waldo Emerson understood this danger when he advised us to discover the real meaning of America by examining "the meal in the firkin; the milk in the pan; the ballad in the street; the new of the boat; the glance of the eye; the form and gait of the body." Walt Whitman insisted that a mouse is miracle enough to stagger sextillions of infidels. His brilliant nineteenth century contemporary, Soren Kierkegaard, couched the same thoughts in more philosophic language. "Most systematizers stand in the same relation to their systems as the man who builds a great castle and lives in the adjoining barn."

Each of these three quotations is close to the earth; they deal with firkins, mice, and barns. Much twentieth century scholarship, produced in urban areas and library stacks, is far removed from the earth which is the womb and hub of man's existence. It is the earth alone, as A. C. Spectorosky reminds us in **The Book of the Earth**, that man may touch, probe, pat, smell, work with-and upon which he lives,

toils, and dreams. Culture and land surface are interwoven, and interact in countless directions. Basically, the United States is a two-billion-acre-farm on which all of us work and live. Roanoke County is one small segment of that vast farm. The story of land use, pieced together and understood, furnishes a commentary on our nation more accurate than all the histories ever written. But only fragments of that commentary exist; and many of us do not know even them.

We have favored the abstract over the earthy. Worse yet, we have insisted on explaining our culture from the top down, rather than from the bottom up. Very few of us have been willing or able to discover just how Americans have lived and thought, as individuals and members of communities, in specific eras and places. Let us, here in the Roanoke Valley, continue to record (even as did the Old Testament writers) details of our families, our land, our churches and colleges. And let us train others who can make of these items a grand mosaic which will add meaning to minutiae.

Then, and only then, can we give positive answers to the questions asked by America's greatest poet, Walt Whitman:

Who are you indeed who would talk or sing to America?
Have you studied out the land, its idiom and men?
Have you learn'd the physiology, phrenology, politics,
geography, pride, freedom, friendship of the land?
its substratums and objects?
Are you faithful to things? Do you teach what the
land and sea, the bodies of men, womanhood,
amativeness, heroic angers teach?
Are you really of the whole People?
Have you vivified yourself from the maternity of these
States?

America and the world have changed beyond belief since Walt Whitman died almost a century ago. We have entered the Electronic Age, and become the leading world power. Now we have the pill, the tube, the bomb. America looks less like a Currier and Ives landscape than a Jackson Pollock abstraction. The prophetic words of William Butler Yeats echo in our ears:

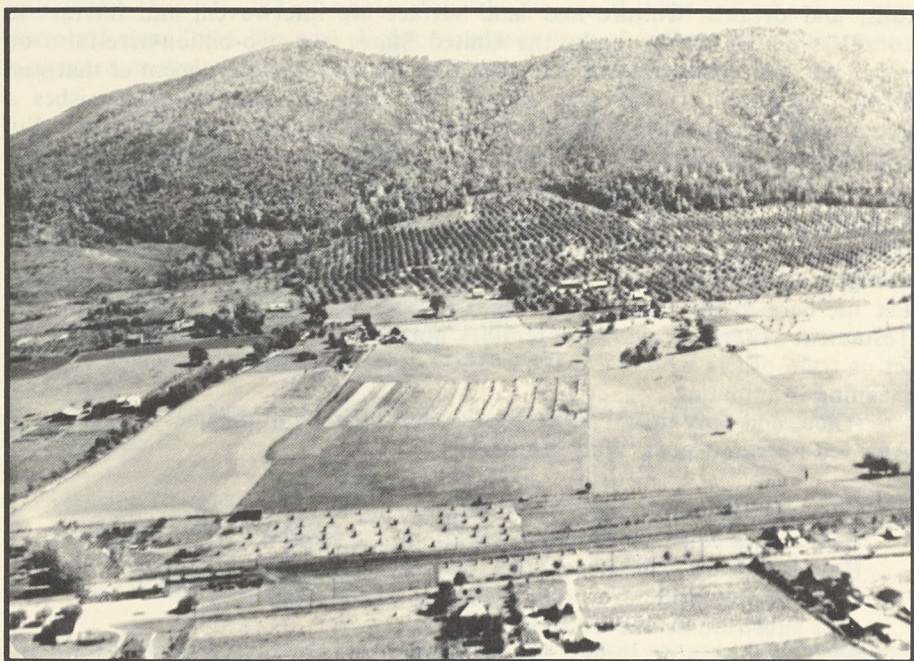
And what rough beast, its hour come round at last,
Slouches to Bethlehem to be born?

Is there a lesson here? One thing history DOES teach is "This too shall pass." Visionaries (like Yeats, Edgar Cayce, Arthur Clark, Herman Kahn) see Western civilization, which unified us with machines, giving way to a new one, in which we shall be unified in consciousness.

Birth is a cry of joy and a scream of pain; the environment that sustained us for a time is now crushing down and pushing us out. But death, too, is a scream of pain and a cry of joy, and so we cannot be certain that we are headed for one and not the other. Birth and death are ultimately confusing; to make sense of them we will have to make our peace with myth.

We are on the threshold not only of a new myth, a new century, but a new millennium. Historians try to decipher the past, but only a fool thinks he or she can read the future. We cannot tell what is out there beyond the year 2000. But we do know, as William I. Thompson says, that we are on the edge of history. The future is blowing wildly in our faces, sometimes delighting, sometimes blinding us. Here, in this good college, this good town, this good valley, let us remind ourselves where we have been—so that we need not fear where we are going.

How shall we use this land? How shall we honor our heritage, and those who first explored our valley? The answers are not easy and will change with time and



In Roanoke County's changing scene, this once pastoral area of orchards and wheatfields on the north side of Read Mountain now is the site of the Ingersoll-Rand plant and many houses. (Underwood & Underwood)

circumstances. Even the meaning of "explore" changes. Some would attach it to a giant theme park to attract waves of tourists. When does "explore" slip into "exploitation?" Our heritage isn't for sale.

Once we were an uncertain chain of small settlements perched on the frontier, looking west to what was rightly called "dark and bloody ground." We are still sparsely settled, close to nature. Seventeenth century Virginia centered around Jamestown, eighteenth century around Williamsburg, nineteenth century around Richmond. When Richmond became the capital of the Confederacy, no great battles occurred in our County--Roanoke had not even been incorporated. That gave us little space in the drum-and-bugle history books, which in the long run may have been a blessing. The War Between the States so transfixed and absorbed Virginia that for some it froze time, leading to that dread disease which historian Arnold Toynbee had labled "The Idolization of an Ephemeral Past." How else to explain how Virginia, the cradle of democracy, came near to being its graveyard in the decades after Appomattox?

The thunder of galloping horses has given way to the roar of mighty missiles—from horse wars to star wars. We move from Washington to Richmond in a few minutes by jet plane, a trip that consumed four bloody years of American warfare. We are a tiny corner of the global village: computerized, televised, terrorized by the fear of sudden death. This is still "dark and bloody ground."

A century ago the great historian, Thomas Carlyle, pondered all this and saw that the myths of the Old World had found new meaning in the new. "How beautiful," he wrote, "to think of lean Virginians, tough as guttapercha, with most occult unsubduable fire in the belly, steering over the Blue Mountains, to annihilate the Jungle, and bring bacon for the posterity of Adam. There is no **myth** of Athene or Heracles equal to this **fact**."

Let me close with a local version of this same sentiment. Before preparing this talk, I had a visit with Julia Wilkins, who at 98 is the oldest resident of a nearby

nursing home, Heritage Hall. Think of what her keen eyes have seen since her 19th century childhood. "Are you ready for the 21st century, Miss Julie?"

"The 21st century?" she said in a firm voice. "Bring it on. We can handle it!" And so we can.

Roanoke County Communities Started Between The Mountains

by Deedie Kagey

CATAWBA, CAVE SPRING, BENT MOUNTAIN, BONSAK, HOLLNS, GISH'S MILLS, POAGES MILL. The establishment of Roanoke County communities such as these began in the 1740's and 1750's as Scotch-Irish and German immigrants took up land in a wilderness situated in a lush valley between two mountain ranges--the Blue Ridge and the Alleghenies.

The Roanoke Valley became the home of those who ventured into an area known for its fertility and resources, but feared because of the presence of Indians and danger of attack. Enticed by the offer of inexpensive land, these hardy, transplanted Europeans protected the frontier and made an English stronghold possible.

The story of Roanoke County's beginnings lies rooted in those pioneers who led the way and left behind remnants of their past--mirrored in the culture, traditions, religions, architecture, and work ethic of their descendants.

Being largely a group of religious dissenters, the Scotch-Irish and Germans began pouring into the religious haven of Pennsylvania in the early 18th century. It would only be a matter of time before they traveled the Great Wagon Road (U. S. Rt. 11 and Int. 81) in a southerly direction throughout the Valley of Virginia and into the Roanoke Valley.

The Scotch-Irish, who arrived first, were largely Calvinists or Presbyterians in faith, while the Germans were Lutheran, Dunkard, or Reformed. Many had been persecuted or prosecuted for their beliefs and worship activities in their mother countries. Hope for religious freedom was placed in the new lands these people were settling.

While religious persecution was not only motive for the throng of people who left Europe and populated colonies such as Virginia, it was a strong factor in the settlement of what was to become Roanoke County. Other reasons centered around free or inexpensive land (if one would but settle and cultivate it), adventure, the hope of financial gain and the availability of abundant natural resources.

Almost always the choicest pieces of land were "taken up" first and nearly always included good water sources and fertile soil. The natural resources of the Valley provided an ideal location for the agricultural lot who farmed and tilled the land as soon as they acquired it, and left it to their children, grandchildren and great-children to continue the tradition. The farming tradition earmarked Roanoke Valley for the past 200 years, only straying from this pursuit in the

*Deedie Kagey, author of the new book **A History of Roanoke County**, is assistant principal of Penn Forest Elementary School in Roanoke County. Formerly an elementary teacher at Hardy Road School in Jacksonville, Fla. for 19 years, she also is the author of **Community at the Crossroads: A Study of the Village of Bonsack of the Roanoke Valley**. She is president of the Southwest Virginia Genealogical Society. A graduate of the University of Florida, she holds a Master's degree from Hollins College and she is a doctoral candidate at Virginia Tech.*

mid-20th century because of urbanization. Consequently, the result has been fewer operating farms and increased suburban or residential development.

Early communities developed in direct proportion to the acquisition of land by early settlers along streams rich and abundant in springs and high-quality soil and timber. Surveys generally went to the tops of surrounding ridges, and roads paralleled the ridges or fences along the fields. Early settlements generally occurred at a crossroads, or point at which two main roads intersected. The roads, traveled by men and horses in the early years, originated with animals that fashioned the dirt paths as they sought to lick the large pockets of salt, feed on other game, and drink from the plentiful water supply.

What kind of lives were the pioneers leading in the first decades of settlement? Nearly all of the families (and they were usually large) were functioning as relatively isolated, independent units. Using the natural resources of the area, they produced their own food and clothing and built their own houses. As more people arrived, settlements developed and people became more dependent. When several families acquired land in a particular section, a community began and was usually centered around a mill or mills from which grain could be ground, timber sawed and planed, or cloth made. As roads improved, other visible signs of these hamlets, in addition to farms, surfaced in the form of stores, inns, taverns (or ordinaries as they were often referred to in early court records), distilleries, blacksmith, cabinetmaker and cooper shops, and wagon or carriage shops. In essence, specialized services increased and growing communities reflected a burgeoning era of diversification that would only intensify as the years moved forward.

Certain areas developed more quickly than others--usually in direct response to improved roads and transportation. When the Virginia and Tennessee Railroad laid tracks in 1852, many communities grew because of their proximity to the railroad, which not only provided the ready availability of transporting farmers' goods to market but also facilitated the receipt of goods from eastern markets.

What were some of the early communities and rural neighborhoods that had their beginnings deeply embedded in agriculture? And what of a town that sprang from the boundaries of the County? A brief treatment of some of these neighborhoods and the Town of Vinton might be of interest and broaden one's understanding with regard to their place within the Roanoke Valley. Beginning geographically with the southwest corner of Roanoke County and moving in a counterclockwise fashion, these treatments follow:

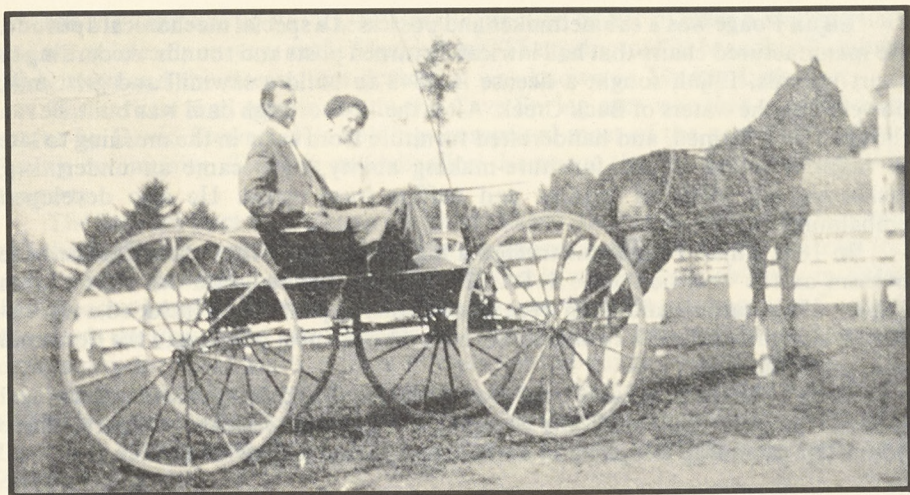
BENT MOUNTAIN/BACK CREEK

The Bent Mountain/Back Creek section in the southwest area of Roanoke County was a 1740's settlement that is believed to have received its name either from its horseshoe shape or from two brothers, James and William Bent, who came from Pennsylvania to survey the Bent Mountain area. The Back Creek section, at the foot of the mountain, is named for the creek that winds through the southwest, south, and southeast sections of the County.

For many years Bent Mountain was sparsely populated because large amounts of property were in the hands of a few families. An early legend reveals that the first settlers were Pennsylvanians who bore the names of Willet, Martin, and Webster, and that a man by the name of Heckman, who accompanied them, moved on to Franklin County near Cahas Knob. Descendants of the Willet, Martin, and Webster families still populate the mountain.

General Andrew Lewis had been rewarded for his service during the Indian and Revolutionary wars with a 20,000-acre grant which he, in turn left his son, Colonel Andrew Lewis. This land included about 8,000 acres of mountaintop land and the remainder was situated in the Back Creek section.

Eventually, the Lewis land fell into other hands. Among them were the families of Dabney, Coles, Terry, Price, Powell, Baldwin, Huff, Kefauver, Thrasher, Lancaster, Teal, Tyree, Henry, Ferguson, Fralin, Wimmer, and Hawse.



Marie Moir and Cab Tench were “sparking” when they took a Sunday afternoon carriage ride on Bent Mountain. (Sue Tinsley Angle)

In the early 1870's Jordan Woodrum bought a large tract of forested Bent Mountain land and planted an apple, known as the pippin, with great success. This beginning spurred the growth of many orchards bearing apples and peaches which have brought millions of dollars to Roanoke County. After Woodrum, other successful orchardists have included the families of Terry, Shockey, Bowman, and Huff; and in the Back Creek section, Bell, Grisso, Wertz, Smallwood, Aliff, Willett, and Turner.

While many orchards have given way to residential growth, orchards in this section still provide large quantities of fruit to the City Market and more distant markets.

Many other crops, such as cabbage and livestock, have also been successfully raised in this section. More recently, poultry has become a major industry. Begun in the 1960's, the former Coles Egg Farm, the state's largest egg producer, is owned by a Japanese firm and known as Seaboard Farms.

Bent Mountain/Back Creek is primarily an agrarian community, as it was in the early days, but suburban sprawl is taking effect. Residential growth in the Back Creek section is occurring faster than county officials had projected and old-timers have remarked about the change also.

Today, Bent Mountain remains primarily agricultural, but at the foot of the mountain, changes are being felt—not only in Back Creek, but in another southwest community, Poages Mill.

POAGES MILL

The Poages Mill community is part of the Back Creek valley, located in southern Roanoke County about eight miles south of Salem. It is surrounded by Masons Knob, Twelve O'Clock Knob, Sugar Loaf, and Bent mountains. Poor Mountain lies to the west. The chief stream is Back Creek, a name also applied to the community.

One of the earliest settlers in the Roanoke Valley was Robert Poage, who first took up land in Catawba by grant, and soon thereafter moved to Back Creek. The grandson of Robert, Elijah, was born in 1823 in Rockbridge County and moved to Back Creek as a young man, residing there until his death in 1900. It was because of Elijah, also known as “Squire” for a justice of the peace appointment, that Poages Mill became a community center.

Elijah Poage was a cabinetmaker and possessed a special mechanical aptitude. He manufactured chairs that had intricately turned posts and rounds. According to court records, Elijah sought a license in 1848 to build a sawmill and grist mill, powered by the waters of Back Creek. After the 12-foot-high dam was built, he ran the grist mill, farmed, and handcrafted furniture from early in the morning to late at night. Because of his furniture-making ability, he became an undertaker, fashioning all kinds of caskets and coffins from wood. He also developed embalming fluid.

In 1882 Elijah Poage constructed a big frame house that stands in the wide bottom on the west side of U. S. Rt. 221. Near the frame house was once a loom house, where carpets and cloth were made. Other dependencies included a smoke-house, slaughter house, a spring house, a storehouse-post office, and the flour mill and coffin factory.

Today cousins of Elijah Poage provide milk and Old Poages Mill eggs to local stores. The community is quickly changing from a rural retreat to a suburb, where homes are assuming the place of apple trees that once provided much fruit.

CAVE SPRING

The community of Cave Spring, now part of the larger residential area called "Southwest," is located southwest of Roanoke and south of Salem, off of Va. Rt. 419 and U. S. Rt. 221. The name of the community stems from the large spring located at this spot in Roanoke County. In early days, the area was often referred to as Cave Springs because of the presence of several springs in the vicinity of the main spring. Old timers often referred to the section as the "Cave" and the community was well-established long before Roanoke City. The community provided a market for turkeys, chestnuts, wheat, and other grains grown in that section, along with goods from Bent Mountain, Floyd, and Franklin counties. Before good highways were built, it was a favorite camping site for farmers hauling goods from these



This cluster of frame houses stood in the heart of the early Cave Spring community. (Roanoke Times & World-News)

locations. Hauling wagonloads of produce was a difficult job which required strength and perseverance. It usually took one day from Bent Mountain, for instance, to deliver a load of turkeys to the "Cave" and return. From Floyd and Franklin counties a round trip might take three or four days. The spring at the "Cave" was a favorite meeting spot.

On the west side of Va. Rt. 419 (at the junction of Rt. 702) lies a lowland that was noted in early surveys as the Muddy Lick. The spring and its branches flow into the bottom and the stream that drained it was known as Muddy Lick Run.

The earliest land acquisition in the Cave Spring area was that of a 400-acre patent by David Stewart. His holdings comprised most of the present-day Cave Spring community. There is no indication, however, that he ever lived on this property.

The Stewart tract was left to a daughter, Elizabeth Woods, and Esom Hannan bought the Stewart tract from her and her husband in 1790. Keeping his tract for many years, Hannan moved to Missouri with his wife and six children in 1834. Joel Cooper bought the tract. Abram Greenwood, through marriage to a Cooper, acquired the tract and descendants of this family lived and farmed in the community for many years, adding to their land holdings over the years.

Among the other important families to live in the Cave Spring community in the 19th century were the Bells, Chapmans, McCampbells, Hartmans, Harrises, Lavinders, Turners, Beckners, Harveys, Boons, Trouts, Starkeys, Shartzers, and Zirkles.

John Steele and Richard Fowler, merchant and blacksmith, built a storehouse along the western side of what is now the intersection of Va. Rt. 419 and U. S. Rt. 221, serving the needs of the early community. (Later their store became known as the Berry store, which was demolished in 1959 in order to widen the road.) The store passed through the hands of Nathan Chapman and Thomas Sublette, James Watts, and Robert Thaxton. In 1868 Thaxton turned over the store to Joseph Berry, who ran it until 1911. Robert Wyatt then became the proprietor until 1917, and was followed by W. A. Rasnake. A. J. Phelps also ran a blacksmith shop near the store in 1880.

After the Civil War, Joseph A. Gale, a Confederate veteran and also a doctor, opened up an office in a small cabin in the yard of S. H. Greenwood. Other doctors already present included Hardin and White. In 1881 Dr. Gale left Cave Spring and moved to Big Lick to become Norfolk and Western's chief surgeon. The home he built in the 1870's still remains. Dr. Gale was associated with the founding of Lewis-Gale Hospital.

The Frank Richardson family was also important to Cave Spring. He ran a flour mill, but also invented and assembled Richardson cradles, which were similar to scythes, with wooden fingers running parallel to the cutting blade. Wheat was cut with a sweeping motion and dumped on the ground. The implement caught the grains on the same end, which made binding easier and faster.

Cave Spring has quickly transformed into a suburb of residential subdivisions. Business and industry have located on Va. Rt. 419 and other thoroughfares and disguised the agricultural nature of the past.

STARKEY

Starkey, located southwest of Roanoke, is an old village off U. S. Rt. 220 and Buck Mountain Road. It is located on lands originally in the Robert Harvey grant. Harvey became a prominent "iron man" in Botetourt County in the late 18th and early 19th centuries and owned 7,000 acres in Roanoke County, stretching to Franklin County and including part of the Starkey community and Penn Forest subdivision. In 1819 Harvey gave 7,000 acres to his two sons, Lewis and Harry, but only Lewis retained the acreage.

It was Lewis Harvey who built an iron furnace on the far bank of Back Creek, where brown hematite ore was mined. The Harvey furnace became well-known for its high-quality iron ore. He also built the house called "Speedwell," a name taken from the ship that brought his mother's ancestors to the New World. Built in the 1830's, the house is one of the oldest remaining homes in Roanoke County. The presence of a serpentine wall is typically Jeffersonian.

The village was not named until the Roanoke and Southern Railroad

connected with the Norfolk and Western in the early 1890's. Tazewell Starkey, owner of land in the vicinity, gave land to the railroad for a right-of-way and his name was assigned to the community. Eventually, a store, residences, station-master's house, post office, and the Shenandoah Packing Company were established. The packing company was a thriving industry until 1928 when sugar prices fluctuated, causing the demise of the company. Large amounts of sugar were used in the manufacture of apple butter.

The village of Starkey has practically faded as residential development has nearly obliterated the traces of this once busy railroad stop. Va. Rt. 419, which has become heavily traveled and an industrial and commercial strip, is nearby.

CLEARBROOK/RED HILL

The Clearbrook/Red Hill community is located in the extreme southeastern corner of Roanoke County, off of U. S. Rt. 220 South, and extends to the Franklin County line. Located a mile north of the Roanoke-Franklin county line, the community extends westward two miles to an area known as Wright's Siding. In an area near the present Clearbrook School, the community extends eastward and southward off U. S. Rt. 220 South.

The names of many early families are retained in the community. Near the Wright's Siding section is a hill named McElhaney (McIlhaney) Hill, for an early family. Boones Chapel, a union church nearby, was named for the Boon (Bohne--German derivation) family, who settled in large numbers in both southern Roanoke County and in the Boones Mill area of Franklin County.

The Clearbrook community was first known as "Dry Hollow." An explanation of this name reveals that, in all probability, early settlers found an abundance of springs all along the land near the Blue Ridge Mountains until they reached this section, where they only found two. Hence, it was called "Dry Hollow." This name was perpetuated until 1925. In that year three schools, Red Hill, Piney Dale, and Dry Hollow consolidated at a more central location. Since three different schools merged, a single name was sought. A contest within the school was held and a girl suggested "Clearbrook" for a clear flowing stream near the school. That school building is now Clearbrook Grace Brethren Church, located about a mile south of the current Clearbrook School.

William Mason secured one of the earliest, large grants in the Clearbrook section in 1797. Conveyed to Abram Gish in 1803, the land was divided into tracts. In 1843 William Williamson bought one of these tracts and in 1850 Jonathan Martin bought another. By 1889, William F. Neighbors bought Williamson's tract and in turn sold it to P. H. Rorer. P. H. Rorer's purchase was significant because he began an iron mine operation known as Rorer's Mine. The mine was situated north of Clearbrook school, northwest of a section called Welcome Valley. Eventually, P. H. Rorer sold his property to William and Thomas Campbell. The Campbell family retained this land, but sold a portion of it to the Roanoke County School Board in 1939. The present Clearbrook School was built on this site.

Other early land acquisitions were made by Lewis Hartman, Jacob Kingery, and Thomas and Jacob Fowler. Thomas Fowler was an early sheriff of Roanoke County. His daughter married John Boone and they resided on the Fowler property in the Wright's Siding section. It is believed that the original part of a brick mansion that stands on Va. Rt. 615 was built in 1797 by Christian Holderman and another portion was added in the 1830's or a little later, perhaps by the Fowlers or Boones. The Boones kept this property for many years, but today Blanche Pedneau and Lida Robertson, sisters, own the home known as "Afton Plantation." The home is a Virginia I-Form, having a central hall with two rooms up and two rooms down. With additions, there are a total of 12 rooms, including two in the basement. If the 1797 date is accurate, only the Harshbarger home in North County is a little older.

The Hartman family, present in large numbers, possessed mechanical abilities. They operated a grist mill and sawmill and some were skilled in making cabinets and coffins or general carpentry work.

In addition to the Hartmans, prominent settlers of the Clearbrook community in the past century included the surnames of Graham, Jordan, Kingery, Minnix, Simmons, Mays, Haislip, Donahue, Carter, Ridgeway, Campbell, Hofawger, Argabright, Patsel, Dangerfield, McGuire, Wingo, Petit, and Snyder.

Wright's Siding, named for a Wright family, was primarily a lumber and logging center, but became a flag stop for the "Punkin Vine" railroad that ran between Winston-Salem and Roanoke.

In the early 20th century iron mines were worked two miles west of Clearbrook School in a valley known as "Potter's Hollow." A small railroad was built from the mines to Starkey. The ore was hauled to a location between Starkey and Roanoke for smelting into pig iron.

Most of the families of Clearbrook cultivated smaller plots of land because of the hilly terrain. In the 1950's the Bova and Beasley families grew apples and peaches commercially in the Wright's Siding section. Home farming often became a sideline to work in Roanoke, Salem or Vinton, as those areas became more industrial and jobs became available. Most everything was grown--even tobacco, which was not a major crop in Roanoke County but was more prevalent in this location. In the early 20th century, timber and chestnuts were sold by families to be used in furniture making and dyeing.

Many early families of the Clearbrook area were of German descent, whose names have undergone transformation but who often populated the rural areas of the County located on the fringes. Their religion has always been an integral part of their lives, as noted by many current descendants who shared stories and activities centering around church, both in the old days and today. The Brethren Church, a church with Germanic origins and branches, is prevalent in this community. There are seven churches of various denominations, however, in the vicinity.

The Clearbrook community today is a mixture of rural and suburban, with an emphasis on the rural. Most families work in Roanoke, Salem, the Town of Vinton, or along busy Va. Rt. 419. Some people are also employed at Rockydale Quarry, near Clearbrook School.

BALLYHACK--MT. PLEASANT

Ballyhack is an old name used to refer to an area known today as Mt. Pleasant. Though there are not official boundaries, it could be roughly outlined by the Roanoke River on the north, Back Creek on the south and east, and Roanoke Mountain on the west.

According to tradition, the name Ballyhack was more encompassing than Mt. Pleasant. It included the suburb known as Garden City on the western end near Roanoke Mountain; the center was known as Mt. Pleasant because of its location on high ground; and the lower southeastern suburb, extending to the hills along the Roanoke River, was Riverdale.

The origin of the name Ballyhack is uncertain but two traditions remain. The most accepted tradition is that the name grew out of a terrible fight. The fight may have occurred at an election precinct between rival political factions whose views clashed. Tempers flared and weapons were used and some of the participants were "hacked" up. A second version of the fight places the free-for-all at a distillery which stood across the Roanoke River from the present Roanoke Industrial Center. The corruption of "Battlehack" or "Battly-whack" has become Ballyhack. A local historian, Raymond Barnes, once proposed that "Bally Hack" is an Irish place name. "Bally" in Ere means "home site" or "place of." A pioneer named Simon Akers took up some of the land that became part of the Tayloe estate known as Buena Vista, along with some acreage south of the river. Therefore, the early

Scotch-Irish settlers could have labeled his land as "Akers Place" or "Bally Akers," which became "Ballyhack."

The earliest settlers of the Mt. Pleasant community arrived in the latter part of the 18th century and included Charles Hungate, William Seagraves, Tolliver Craig, Samuel Seagraves, and James Mason. In the 19th century the families of Kefauver, Richardson, Lloyd, Lunsford, Eddington, Bandy, Oliver, Persinger, Garnand, Filson, Leslie, and Huff owned much land and were active in community affairs. Farming was the main occupation, in addition to flour and sawmill operations, blacksmithing, and wheelwrighting.

Isaac Huff ran a large dairy farm which later was sold to P. L. Terry, a Roanoke banker. Terry engaged the services of Frank Rutrough to manage the farm and dairy. Since Rutrough had married Huff's daughter, the farm became theirs after Terry fell into financial distress and returned the farm to Huff. The Riverdale Corporation ultimately bought his farm and divided it into small tracts so that employees at the silk mill would be provided with available homesites. Today the Roanoke Industrial Center is located where the viscose plant used to be.

Some of the old Ballyhack area has been annexed by Roanoke City, while much of the farmland in the northern part has been used for building individual residences and subdivisions. Mt. Pleasant is located in close proximity to the City, where most people are employed. City expansion has usurped the farmland in much of this area except for the land around Windy Gap Mountain and off of Yellow Mountain Road.

BONSACK

Bonsack, a community on the eastern border of Roanoke County and southern Botetourt County, has an early history primarily rooted in a German migration. While there are no official boundaries, as is the case with other communities in Roanoke County, it encompasses a roughly square area with its center located just south of the intersection of U. S. Rt. 220 Alternate and U. S. Rt. 460. It is generally thought by residents of Roanoke County that its limits (except for the eastern one) extend approximately two miles in all directions from this intersection. The peripheries are bounded by Read Mountain to the north, Coyner Springs to the east, the Blue Ridge Parkway to the southeast, and the present Roanoke City limits to the west.

The earliest land acquisition in Bonsack was made by a Scotch-Irishman of Lunenburg County in 1749 for 160 acres on Glade Creek, referred to as Big Spring. Robert Ewing listed his home as Lunenburg County, so he probably never lived on his Big Spring property. Big Spring is synonymous with Coyner Springs today.

Shortly after Ewing's patent, others began settling in the Glade Creek community. Among them were John Bowen, John McFall, John Mills, Hugh Mills, Richard Kerr, John Askins, Nathan Nichols, Robert Orr, William Graham, and John McAdoo.

In 1755 Ewing conveyed his tract to Benjamin Starrett, who in turn left it to his son, James. In 1785, James sold it to James Stewart, who had acquired other property in the community in 1771.

Significant purchases were made in Bonsack by John Howard in 1770. Others to arrive in these years included Thomas Blanton, David May, Benjamin West, Joseph Hawkins, and Anthony Gholson. In 1787 John Depew was granted a 900-acre Glade Creek tract and by 1798 had a total of 1,180 acres.

Anthony Gholson had acquired four adjoining tracts in the late 18th century and combined them into a package, selling it in 1801 to Daniel Stoner of Maryland. In doing so, Daniel Stoner became the largest landholder in Bonsack history. The Stoner tract was the real beginning of what became a thriving German settlement along the banks of Glade Creek with easy access to the main east-west route of travel--today U. S. Rt. 460. In the same year as the Stoners arrived, Frederick Thrasher (Drescher) purchased 130 acres in the same area.

Following the Stoners and Thrashers in 1801, were the St. Clairs in 1815 (or perhaps before) and the Bonsacks in 1816. The Stoner family farmed successfully, established a flour mill, distillery, and a store/post office known as "Stoner's Store." The community was also known by the same name. The inheritor of the Stoner estate died in 1845, leaving his wife, Catherine Ammen Stoner, to return to Fincastle. At this point, the Bonsacks picked up where the Stoners left off, assuming the proprietorship of the store. The Bonsacks had already begun a wollen mill in 1822 that made woolen articles and dyed cloth. This industry was perhaps one of the earliest in the Roanoke Valley.

After the Stoners left the community, the community was called Good Intent for an interim period. Good Intent was also the name of the ship that carried German immigrants to America. In 1852, when the Virginia and Tennessee Railroad laid tracks through Bonsack, the Bonsack family gave the land for the right-of-way and a depot was built and named Bonsack's Station. The name has remained virtually intact with only slight modifications. It was shortened to Bonsack's and then Bonsack in the 20th century.

Another contribution of the Bonsack family centers around a unique invention--a cigarette-rolling machine. Grandson of pioneer John Bonsack, James Albert Bonsack invented the device after seeing an advertisement at an outing at nearby Coyner Springs, a popular resort and spa.

After many trials and obstacles, a patent for this machine was registered in the United States Patent Office September 4, 1800.

The invention allowed the rolling of 120,000 cigarettes a day and did the work of 48 men. The popularity of smoking was growing and the machine was in demand. James Bonsack became a wealthy man within a short time, but unfortunately never used his talents and abilities to create other useful devices.

In the 19th century, Bonsack bustled with mills, stores, the railroad, mail and stage runs, the close proximity of Coyner Springs, and the attention the cigarette-rolling machine was bringing. In addition, agricultural products, especially fruit, were being shipped in large quantities from the Bonsack depot. The Crumpacker and Murray families were especially involved in growing apples and peaches. Today, Murray descendants still operate a cider mill on U. S. 220 Alternate.

Other 19th century families of importance to the agricultural tradition of Bonsack included Charles Carney, Samuel G. Wood, Benjamin F. Moomaw, Fleming James, George Cook and Greene Foutz.

Today what was once Crumpacker Orchards has been changed by Roanoke developers, Fralin and Waldron, into the Botetourt East and Orchards subdivisions. Productive, agricultural land is fast diminishing into residential and urban growth. There are some large farms remaining, however. The main farms still functioning are operated by the Jeter, Murray, Dowdy, Seibel, and Hale families. The first three are geared primarily to livestock and vegetables, the Seibel farm is exclusively a dairy operation, and the Hale farm is used for the artificial insemination of cows.

Other traces of the past remain in a home built by Samuel and Catherine Ammen Stoner in 1836. A Virginia I-Form, it was built for \$3,600 and is situated across from the Methodist Church on Bonsack Road. The farms that identified Bonsack for so many years are fading and the community is becoming an amalgamation of urban, suburban, and rural wrapped up in one package.

NORTH COUNTY/HOLLINS

The North County area is generally located between Roanoke City on the south, Green Ridge on the north, Read Mountain on the east, and Salem on the west. Within the North County community is a smaller section known as Hollins. The Hollins community is near Hollins College and U.S. Rts. 11/220, extending to the Botetourt County line on the northeast and Plantation Road on the south. It

also includes part of Carvins Cove, a major water source that supplies Roanoke with a half-million gallons per day.

The North County area used to be abundant in wheat fields, livestock, and dairy farms. Most of the land is level, with just enough slope for good drainage. Since Roanoke City immediately adjoined this land, it was inevitable that a growing city would need expansion room. Consequently, this area developed rapidly. Farm after farm was bought and divided into lots, leaving nearly no farms but rather business, industry, and residential developments.

The land in the North County area was settled early because of its location close to the major north-south route of travel, now known as U.S. Rt. 11. Peters Creek, Tinker Creek, and Carvn Creek, all tributaries of the Roanoke River, keep the land well-drained.

Mark Evans was probably the earliest settler in what is now north Roanoke County. He received his patent in 1748 for 1,910 acres of land, north and south of the Great Lick. This acreage was divided into three farms--Cedar Springs, the Barrens, and the Naked Farm. Part of this land is now inclusive in the Roanoke Regional Airport property. Evans' son, Peter, inherited the North County tract and he in turn left to his children. Two of the three children sold their farms to James Breckenridge and Charles Johnston, developer of Botetourt Springs (Hollins College). The third child, Thomas, continued to live at Evans' Spring.

William Carvin appeared earliest in the Hollins area, leaving a creek and cove in his name. His name appeared first in Captain George Robinson's Militia in 1746. The Carvins Cove community was once a thriving village that was doomed to extinction because of the desirability of the cove as a major water supply for Roanoke City. The dissolution of this community began when Francis Collins, manager of the Roanoke Water Works, announced that a dam was going to be built to impound water.



Long stockings and knickers were standard dress at Carvins Cove School in 1917. (Helen R. Prillaman)

In 1942 Roanoke City acquired the Roanoke Water Company and began purchasing land in the Cove for a reservoir. As a result of this action, people were displaced and nearly 60 homes were razed. The community that had developed such close ties was disbanded. Families such as the Rileys, Leonards, Guslers, Kerns, Tinnels, and Laymans lost their homes.

Early settlers of the Hollins/Summerdean area, south of U.S. Rt. 11/220, included William McClanahan in 1748, Israel Christian in 1764, and Leonard Fleming in 1782. Neal McNeal settled in the Burlington area in 1770. John Mills was located south of the Summerdean section of Hollins in 1752. By 1767

Robert Breckenridge owned four tracts totaling 1,508 acres, nearly surrounding the present airport site. John and Joseph Robinson acquired land in the same period, along with Francis Graham, west and southwest of Read Mountain. Tolliver Craig (1787), James Neeley (1762), and Methusaleh Griffith (1748) acquired property in North County, mostly south and west of the airport.

The largest landholder in what later became North County in the 18th century was Robert Breckenridge. He was active in civic and military duties until his death in 1772.

Colonel William Fleming, a surgeon in the British Navy, came to America in 1755 and served in the Indian wars. He also owned much land, most of which is now in Roanoke City, along the Monterey Golf Course and Tinker Creek. An old house on the Fleming plantation remains on Tinker Creek Lane, N. E. Some historians, however, think it was not the main dwelling.

In the 19th century, some newcomers, mostly Germans, arrived. The Garst family took up land at the foot of Green Ridge, on the west branch of Carvin Creek, later in Hanging Rock and Kesler's Mill in Salem.

General Edward Watts, from all records the most wealthy Roanoke Countian in the 19th century, operated a 1,200-acre plantation called Oaklands, now in North Roanoke City. This property descended to family members and eventually George and Peter C. Huff bought some of the property and ran a large farm. The Huff farm, as it became known, is now Valley View Mall, a reality in the mid-1980's.

Other settlers of the 19th century important to the North County development included the Reads, Olivers, Farleys, Campbells, Niningers, Richardsons, Pettys, Days, Myers, Barnes, Rivercombs, Walronds, Frances, Deyerles, Peffleys, Persingers, Obenchains, Brubakers, Bushongs, Houtzes, Graybills, Showalters and Laymans.

The Hollins community developed rapidly because of the early establishment of Hollins College, first known as the Roanoke Female Seminary and established by Edward William Johnston. Later, when John and Anna Hollins of Lynchburg made large contributions, the college became known as Hollins Institute and eventually Hollins College. Across from the college is Enon Baptist Church, a mid-19th century church established through the efforts of Charles L. Cocke, long-standing president of Hollins College.

It has been speculated, though not fully documented, that the Black Horse Tavern, an early hostelry established in 1782, was located on Old Mountain Road. Old Mountain Road is perhaps the Old Carolina Road that ran from Cloverdale to the Big Lick in earlier days. The only definitive placement of the tavern is one and a half miles from Botetourt Springs in 1851 when John B. Luck purchased part of the land on which the Black Horse Tavern was located. The land was purchased from Thomas Madison and one and a half acres came from Christian Frantz. There is a state road marker in Cloverdale, on U.S. Rt. 11/220, which places the location of the Black Horse Tavern on this road.

The original owner of what has been described as the Black Horse Tavern was John Madison, a cousin of President James Madison. Through the years the property passed through many hands, but many have heard the story that Andrew Jackson, both before and during his term as President, stopped at the Black Horse Tavern on his way to Washington, D. C.

The largest contribution of residents that settled North County has been to agriculture. A part of the past now, the Andrews Farm is now the airport and Crossroads Consumer Mall area; the Huff farm, now Valley View Mall; the Ramsey farm, now the Sheraton and Marriott hotel location; the Kinsey farm, now the site of the Countryside Country Club and Golf Course; the Showalter dairy farm, in the same location; and the Garst dairy and poultry farm is now a myriad of businesses. All farms were located near Interstate 581.

Beyond the limits of these Roanoke City farms, were the Petty, Boxley, and Sunnysbrook farms, all located in the Plantation Road area; Spring Hill farm, where

Walrond Park is today; the Hinman farm and greenhouses, off of Plantation Road just past the city limits; the Bushong farm, off Peters Creek Road; and Wipledale Farm, the land that is the North Lakes subdivision.

A mid-19th century home with Greek Revival details stands off of Plantation Road. Built by Peter Nininger, it is now owned by the Vinyard family. A late 18th century home, built by Samuel Harshbarger at Hershberger and Plantation roads, is also still standing but in a dilapidated condition.

The North County area has assumed an urban atmosphere in the past 25 years. Business and industry, such as Double Envelope, ITT, and Dominion Bank Operations Center, are located off Exit 43 of Interstate 81. Another large employer, Ingersoll-Rand, is located off of U.S. Rt. 11 on Shadwell Drive and produces drilling equipment. These four companies employ over 2,000 people.

North Roanoke County has turned the corner in the latter half of the 20th century--from rural to suburban and urban. The diversified industries now provide employment for many Roanoke Valley residents. The productive farms of the 19th and 20th centuries have succumbed to the continuing development of the Roanoke Valley.

MASONS COVE

The Masons Cove community is located between Fort Lewis Mountain and Catawba Mountain, east and west of Va. Rt. 311. The original land grant to John Mason Sr. gave the name to the community and the creek. Mason left this tract to his son, John, who in turn left it to his son, James. At this point, the Mason ties were broken when James sold it to Jeremiah Pate of Bedford. In 1795 Absalom Smith owned most of the land in the Masons Cove area. Daniel Goodwin had a 600-acre grant above the head of Mason Creek in 1799. Others with 18th century holdings were John Robinson in 1751, Samuel Crawford in 1787, and George Chambers' large 1794 survey composed of 12,700 acres. Near to Bradshaw were Patrick Sharkey in 1760, Cain Scantland in 1783, and Wiley Murdock in 1798.

The mountainous terrain of the Masons Cove/Bradshaw area has caused this section to be sparsely populated through the years. By the mid-19th century some new names appeared in the community. Among them were the Leonards, Hansons, McDaniels, Humphreys, and Runnels. In the Bradshaw area appeared the families of Martin, Hines, Moore, Stump, Murdock, Dallas, Garman; and later the families of Bain, Hix, Barton, Bradford, Jones, Long, and Trent.

Early families in the Masons Cove community, before growth really occurred in the mid-20th century, were few. Most residents worked at the Catawba Sanatorium or a large peach orchard nearby that was run by a New York millionaire named Dr. Lease. The surnames of Crawford, Haines, Sumner, Thomas, Francisco, Moses, and Lark were some of the families between Masons Cove and Bradshaw.

It was not until the depression years that the characteristics of this very rural community began to slowly change. In this period, timber and tan bark were the source of jobs. Other jobs were found in a canning factory, in sawmills, and at the Sanatorium.

G. K. Custer, originally from Catawba, has been a store owner in Masons Cove since 1933. His store carries everything from weed eaters to key chains, along with being a big game checking station. Hunting and fishing licenses are also sold there. Since it is the only store in Masons Cove, there are few people Custer does not know.

In 1933 the CCC (Civilian Conservation Corps) pitched tents in the Cove and built cabins. The cabins became a camp where they were based while building fire trails through the mountains. In 1941 the CCC camp became an Army camp/mechanical school. Soldiers were trained to work with Jeeps, trucks, tractors, and other equipment. From 1943 - 1946 German prisoners were housed in this camp. They picked apples in the orchards and worked on nearby farms.

The Havens Game Refuge is located in the Masons Cove area. The game sanctuary, a part of the State of Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries, comprises about 6,000 acres of Fort Lewis Mountain, running from Hanging Rock to a point just short of the Montgomery County line. Timber companies own much of the land abutting the Havens Game Refuge and running to the Carvins Cove Watershed.

Masons Cove has never been suited to farming on a large scale. Today it is perhaps only five percent agricultural. Most people work in the cities of Salem or Roanoke and grow small gardens for their families. New residents find its rural atmosphere and proximity to jobs in Roanoke and Salem desirable.

CATAWBA *Richardson*

Just across Catawba Mountain from Masons Cove is the community of Catawba. It is actually a valley nestled between Catawba Mountain on the south, and the North, Cove, and Brush mountains to the north. It is also east and west of Va. Rt. 311, the route that carries the traveler through the gap at Hanging Rock and Masons Cove and over Catawba Mountain into the valley.

The name of the community comes from a once powerful Indian tribe of Siouan stock whose territory lay mainly in North and South Carolina, including several towns on the Catawba River. These Indians may have been on warring raids of the Shawnee tribes of Pennsylvania. At any rate, the name appears at the time of the first white settlement in the Roanoke Valley.

Along the northern shoulder of the Catawba Mountain is Sandstone Ridge. The community is located at the base of the ridge; on its eastern side is Catawba Hospital, at the site of the once popular spa known as Red Sulphur Springs.

Settlement in the Catawba Valley occurred early, the result of a development by Benjamin Borden Sr. A large, 90,000-acre tract was issued to Borden and was called the Borden Grant. The land encompassed the heart of what is now the northern part of Rockbridge County. In addition, Borden developed smaller tracts on much of the choice land along the lower Catawba. Borden passed on much of this land to his heirs and some to other settlers. The first settlements of his land in the Catawba Valley were by John McFerran, James Montgomery, James Davis, and Bryan McDonald. Soon after appeared David Mitchell, William Snodgrass, James McAfee, Samuel McRoberts, Robert Poage, Henry Switchard, John McClenachan, Joshua Hadley, and John Hadley.

The upper McAfee place was purchased by Archibald Woods of Albemarle County in 1771. In 1783 this tract was inherited by his grandson, John, and was known as Indian Camp. Several other farms surrounded Indian Camp. George Painter, G. Washington Lewis, Charles Peck, Nelson Barnett, John Lester, George W. Wallace, David Barnett, Captain W. W. Brand, and John Hackley lived nearby. Nearly everyone farmed, but others were carpenters, blacksmiths, wagonmakers, mill owners, merchants, and wheelwrights.

Other families present since the early days, included the McConkeys, Spessards, Brillharts, Doosings, Sessler, McHenry, Gordons, Moomaws, Damewoods, Garmans, Alls, Brunks, Burks, Custers, Halls, Johns, Surfaces, Huffmans, Thomases, Laymans, Shelors, Starkeys, Wrights, and Jeters.

The settlers of this community and their descendants continued farming in a tradition that has remained relatively constant through the years. In addition to farming, and running flour mills and sawmills, a stave mill was in operation in the early 20th century that drew many people to work in Catawba from nearby Craig County and the Masons Cove area. After the staves were cut, they were loaded on wagons and hauled across the mountain to the Catawba depot in Masons Cove in order to be shipped. The staves were made into whiskey barrels before Prohibition. Tomato canning factories also provided additional employment about the same time as the stave mill.

Employment was also augmented when the Catawba Sanatorium opened in 1909 for tubercular patients. Today, Catawba Hospital is serving primarily as a geriatric facility with psychiatric services and continues to employ many residents.

Today, the job orientation of the Catawba Valley is still primarily agricultural, just as in the past. There are several big farms, specializing in dairying and Black Angus beef cattle. The largest dairy operations are those of Claude Sirrey, Earl Sirrey, Bobby Custer, and Vernon Lee. Those raising mostly Black Angus cattle include the Phelps, Morehead, Steele, McNeil, Custer, and Garman farms.

A trip over the mountain to Catawba is a retreat from the asphalt and concrete in the Roanoke Valley. Some of the oldest homes (mostly log) still remain visible as one travels the roads of this community. An escape to this pastoral scene makes one appreciate the land and its unspoiled, idyllic nature.

WEST COUNTY--FORT LEWIS AND GLENVAR

The Fort Lewis community derived its name from the fort and estate of the same name in the earliest days of settlement. It was once the inclusive name of the area west of Salem. Today there are two communities. The communities are bounded by Fort Lewis Mountain on the north and west sides, and Poor Mountain on the south side. Though the communities of Fort Lewis and Glenvar once comprised an entity, they are more separate today.

The origin of the name, Fort Lewis, springs from Andrew Lewis, early settler of the Roanoke Valley and Indian fighter who, along with other settlers, experienced danger from the threat of Indian attack. As a matter of protection, stockaded forts were built along the frontier. Fort Lewis was one of those built.

The area around the fort was sparsely settled in 1750. However, prior to the Civil War until about 1890, there were three large farms in the community north of Roanoke River. The Joseph Deyerle farm was located in the community now known as Glenvar; the White farm, south of U.S. Rt. 11 and west of Fort Lewis School, where the fort once stood; and the Zirkle farm, east of the White farm. These farms were especially large compared to others in Roanoke County during the 19th century. The White farm encompassed 4,500 acres, the Zirkle farm 1,200 acres, and the Deyerle farm, approximately 1,500 acres. The Deyerle farm was the oldest, lying in both Roanoke and Montgomery counties. These three large farms, because of their size, utilized slave labor prior to the war. Principal crops were corn, wheat, hay, and some tobacco. Before the restraints of prohibition, stills and the manufacture of intoxicating liquors were common.

In 1822 Samuel White built a residence named Fort Lewis east of the old fort. prior to the White purchase, beginning in 1748, the land had been in the possession of James Campbell, Alexander Boyd, Alexander Baine, and Thomas Norvell.

In 1910 the Fort Lewis estate was sold to Frank Burwell Gordon, who had amassed a fortune in South America with Standard Oil Company. The White home was extensively remodeled. In 1948 the mansion was destroyed by fire. Only a highway marker locates the historic spot that housed the fort and the mansion.

Farming continued to dominate the Fort Lewis community until about 1890, when the effects of the Roanoke City boom were spreading and the first industry was established. The diversification of Roanoke County as a railway manufacturing and commercial center provided job opportunities for many people in the Glenvar area. People no longer depended on farms for a livelihood but instead were employed by firms in Roanoke City. Some worked in Salem, some at Pierpont Brick Works, and some at the Glenvar and Hurt canneries.

Between 1917 and 1927 Fort Lewis experienced a 67 percent increase in population, double the growth of the rest of Roanoke County in this period. This increase was brought about largely because of a movement of people from the adjacent territories of Floyd, Franklin, and other counties, along with some from Roanoke City, the Town of Salem, and a few out of state. Between 1920 and 1930, these new residents comprised 40 percent of the population.

In essence, the years between 1890 and 1930 showed a trend away from agriculture with only 28 percent involved in farming and 72 percent engaged in other occupations. The other jobs were a direct result of the industrial growth of Roanoke City and Salem. By the mid-20th century the Fort Lewis community made the transition from rural to suburb or residential district of Roanoke City and Salem. Subdivisions now comprise what were once the three large farms.

The Glenvar community is located to the west of Fort Lewis and Va. Rt. 642. Though the area both south and north of U.S. Rts. 11/460 is considered the Glenvar district because of school attendance, the section south of the highway is commonly referred to as Wabun or the "Bend" neighborhood. Further west is the Big Hill neighborhood and Dixie Caverns, near the Montgomery County line.

The name Glenvar originated in 1891 from Mary Glenvar Harmon, daughter of Frank P. Harmon, a large landowner who was originally from Floyd County. Mary Harmon was often seen near the railroad stop commonly referred to as Deyerle's Switch, a mile or two east of Glenvar. When the Norfolk and Western railroad station was established, the Harmons built a store and cannery there. The store later became Logan's Barn. The Virginian Railway also had a flag stop in Wabun, just across the Roanoke River, a little farther upstream.

The earliest acquisitions of land in the Glenvar area were those of James Campbell in 1742; Thomas Arthur in 1774; Peter Deyerle in 1779; and Thomas Taylor in 1796 (near Dixie Caverns). Prior to the Civil War, the names of Duckwiler, Goodwin, Hatcher, Harvey, Beamer, Gaines, Owens, Goff, and Buckner, appeared in the "Bend" area near Deyerle's Mill. North of U.S. Rt. 11 and west of the White estate lived the family of Joseph Deyerle (grandson of Peter), as well as the families named Yates, Wythe, Will, Bean, Moses, Kent, and Thomas.

Prominent families of the Glenvar area in the early mid-20th century included the Callahans, Rettingers, Hatchers, Chapmans, Nichols, Boards, Duckwilers, Goodwins, Hinderlights, Taliaferros, Bandys, Thomases, and George and Bill Johnston.

Green Hill, a home belonging to Congressman Robert Craig, was later converted to a country club after the inside was gutted. Today the grounds are Green Hill Park Equestrian Center, a county horse farm site.

The Glenvar area, like Fort Lewis, has completed the change from rural to suburban. The influx of Medeco Security Locks, Kroger warehouse, Richfield nursing home, and several light industries has helped bridge the gap. A subdivision explosion is apparent in the development of Broadview, Cherokee Hills, Glenvar East, Glenvar Heights, Andrew Lewis Place, North Beverly Heights, and Westwood Lake Estates. There are still some "hollows," however, that capture the rural flavor of the past. They survive in the names of the roads--Cove Hollow, Dry Hollow, Fort Lewis Hollow, and Hemlock Dale.

GISH'S MILL BECOMES THE TOWN OF VINTON

The boom associated with the arrival of the Norfolk and Western Railroad and the subsequent chartering of Roanoke City in 1884 was felt in a small eastern hamlet--Gish's. Perhaps best described as a domino effect, the population catapulted from 96 in 1880 to 584 in 1884. The sudden swelling of numbers who established their homes in Vinton caused the residents of what was known as Gish's Mills, Gish's Mill, or Gish's to incorporate. Many of the new residents of Gish's were workers employed by the Norfolk and Western Railway Shops and the Crozier Furnace.

The 1880 census for the community, Gish's, listed only a few families, one physician, two merchants, two ministers, a shoemaker, a harness maker, a cooper, a house contractor, a miller, and a depot agent. By 1883 Vinton was experiencing growing pains.

In the winter of 1884 the people of Gish's convened at the schoolhouse to consider incorporation. A change of name was proposed, with several names

thrown into the hat. B. A. Jones suggested "Vinton," perhaps because he liked the sound (some Western states have towns with the same name), or perhaps because it contained syllables from the name of the two large land-holding families--the VINyards and the PresTONs. The Vinyards had been present since 1759 and the Prestons arrived in Gish's from Bedford in 1848, when the first purchase of property was noted. The name of Vinton was adopted on March 17, 1884.

Although the growth of Vinton seemed to mushroom in the 1880's, the history of the village began several decades earlier. When several Gish brothers and one sister arrived in the U. S. Rt. 460 East and Vinton areas in the late 18th century, along with other German families after the Revolutionary War, they found fertile and productive soil along the bank of Glade Creek, a tributary of the Roanoke River. On this land David Gish settled, closer to the East-West route (now U.S. Rt. 460) than present-day Vinton. One brother, George, lived nearby. Another brother, Christian, had acquired land mostly north of U.S. Rt. 460, and at least one brother set up a grist mill with David on Glade Creek sometime in the early 19th century. A Gish family history states that David and his brother, John, owned the mills. When Christian married Susan Houtz in 1816, he left the Bonsack area and moved to what later became known as the Walrond farm in North Roanoke, not far from Burlington. In 1851 Christian and his family moved west to Roanoke, Illinois, just as other Brethren families had done in order to take up new grants of land and escape the slave issue in a "free" state. By 1840, the land books indicated another mill was built, this time on some property purchased by David Gish on Wolf Creek. At some point only the mill on Glade Creek was operating and the plural form of Gish's Mills was dropped.

Early families of Vinton included the Vinyards, Joneses, Harrisons, Walkers, Hunters, Franklins, Obenchains, Longs, Foxes, Matsons, Boyers, James, and Craigs.

The growth of the town has moved steadily forward, in direct relationship to the growth of Roanoke City. In the 1960's, when Vinton nearly doubled its territory, the population also nearly doubled.

Today Vinton is a progressive town that is part of Roanoke County, but functions governmentally as a town. Population has increased from 14 families in 1880 to approximately 8,500 people in 1988. A small, hometown spirit prevails where businesses, churches, and residences comprise the majority of land. Vinton and eastern Roanoke County border the Blue Ridge Parkway, providing the natural scenery and recreation areas for those who want an escape from a city atmosphere. Vinton is on the threshold of a new era that may have an effect on the small town atmosphere. The Explore project may come close to its boundaries. how the zoological park and greenway are handled could be a boon or perhaps a detriment to the town.

Conclusion

While the urban growth and development of the City of Roanoke and the City of Salem have had a profound effect on many of these communities, there are some neighborhoods remaining with the rural, agrarian atmosphere that has earmarked the Valley since the early days. The communities most directly affected by this growth and suburban, residential development are those in close proximity to the cities. In some cases, signs of agriculture have been obliterated (such as in the Williamson Rd./North County and Southwest County areas). In other cases, such as Bonsack, Mt. Pleasant, and Ft. Lewis/Glenvar, the neighborhood is in a transition--a mixture of suburban, urban, and rural. In the Back Creek/Poages Mill area, the rural atmosphere is fast becoming suburban. The peripheral areas, such as Clearbrook/Red Hill, Bent Mountain, and Catawba, are still virtually agricultural, with ties to the earlier days. Descendants of settlers are often farming the same soil and providing the basic need of food for their families. Since farms are

much smaller, as well as families, farming on a large scale is more rare. Catawba is one of the few communities that remains more stable with regard to agriculture.

What is going to happen to the remainder of Roanoke County as it continues to grow and head for the 21st century? Will the rural remnants of the past disappear altogether? Only time will render this answer.

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The Early Economy of Roanoke County

by Norwood Middleton

Roanoke County's early economy was keyed to the land, the river, the rail and the human spirit. In a sense, it still is.

Sturdy settlers, faced with necessity, strengthened and inspired by determination and vision, moved into the Valley of Roanoke in the late 18th and early 19th centuries. Daily, they faced the hard realities of subsistence. But there was also time for dreams, for a glowing optimism, and for many, a spark of entrepreneurship.

The Indians, by felling trees and burning brush from bottomland along the river to improve their hunting grounds, became unwitting developers. The lure of fertile soil on a fairly narrow but flat floor of this spectacular valley proved irresistible to the pioneers migrating from the north and east. Many stopped and set up a lifetime of housekeeping and cleared more and more land for farming; others paused and moved on.

Those who stayed were joined by other wanderers and soon became the vanguard of countless thousands who have lived and thrived, suffered and died here since then.

In the beginning there were only a few families. They staked out claims for homesteads, for expansive fields and flowing streams, for strategic sites along the primitive paths that served as roadways for those moving on horseback and wagons. They hardly recognized what they did as the basis for an economy, but that in fact is what it was.

This was a time when the pioneers scraped together food, fuel and shelter from the land, hunting wild game, planting and cultivating a few crops, chopping and sawing wood from plentiful forests. Some brought with them a few chickens, a milk cow and other livestock, and seed for grain, tobacco and vegetables. Basic furniture was mostly hand-hewn from felled trees, as were primitive utensils for eating.

As the attraction of their surroundings and the climate grew, the settlers began to diversify their crops and to clear more land. Holdings varied in size from small plots for a cabin and vegetable garden to tracts of about 5,000 acres, some acquired by purchase, some by grants, others by squatter choice.

By the late 1700's, planters were growing modest crops of corn, hay, hemp, flax, beans, potatoes, wheat, oats and barley. Hemp and what little tobacco could be produced were being shipped elsewhere for cash or barter.

Wheat became by far the predominant field crop, followed closely by corn, inasmuch as flour and meal were vital to sustenance.

By the mid-1800's there were additional and larger farms, fruit orchards, improved dwellings, more comfortable furnishings, and more people. Livestock,

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including cattle, horses and hogs, grew in importance not only for home-farm use but for trade. It soon became apparent that the blue grass sections, such as Catawba Valley, offered the best opportunity for the more profitable cattle operations.

In the Roanoke Valley, the plantations, with their expansive fields and slave labor, brought their owners economic and political influence that pervaded the whole area.

Their names are legend. The Andrew Lewis lands of more than a thousand acres near Salem were bought in 1811 by Nathaniel Burwell. The Peter Evans estate embraced nearly 2,000 acres, as did those of William Carvin and Edward Watts. The largest holdings were those of the McClanahans. Planting and harvesting these lands had enormous economic impact on the entire valley, given the idiosyncrasies of the weather, transportation, crop experimentation and other factors.

Something of the concerns of the planters is illustrated in a mid-summer harvest accounting which Burwell, one of the larger slaveholders, gave his son, Nat, who was on an extended visit at Shirley Plantation near Hopewell:

"We have gotten out 2700 bushels of wheat and have all the balance of the crop in the barn. We have gotten all the oats in the barn and the hay in the house and the mill field into a rick. The oats crop is a very fine one. We made between 8 and 900 bushels of wheat on the Town field and about 1400 bushels off the Bottom . . . The corn had suffered for rain. We had a good rain the day before yesterday but want more for the corn. The Tobacco looks very well NOW; I have not sold my old Tobacco . . . We shall begin in a few days to break up the oats stubble, get out the balance of the wheat and attend entirely to the Tobacco. The health of the plantation has been good."

Burwell's reference to tobacco is typical of its special fascination for valley farmers, presumably because of its export value as well as for its growing popularity and the large markets in Lynchburg and Richmond.

Despite small yields and inferior quality of tobacco, they kept trying to find the right growing and curing combination that would bring them the success of Virginia's Piedmont and Tidewater and North Carolina. Some of their crop went to local tobacco factories where it was packed for shipping and some twisted for local personal consumption.

In the end, tobacco failed to make the grade as a major crop, due to unsuitable soil and climate.

Agriculture was a basic pursuit of the early 19th century, but there were ancillary enterprises as well, all contributing to the frontier economy. A few general stores appeared. Services, such as those of blacksmiths and wheelwrights, became essential, as well as a source of livelihood for the practitioners. There were even efforts at heavy industry. Two of the most important were roadside taverns and merchant mills. Let us look at some of these endeavors.

Taverns

Travelers along the county's crossroads increased in number, prompting wayside residents to open taverns or inns for overnight lodging, meals and refreshments and to provide stabling and forage for horses. In turn, these taverns became the community centers, where neighbors often congregated when the day's work was done. Several were strategically situated in the new Town of Salem and at the intersection of the Great Wagon Road and the Carolina Road, near Big Lick; others dotted the countryside at intervals, most of them in the larger houses.

Tavern operators were required to obtain licenses from the county courts. Already, there were governmental regulations to contend with! For a while the courts regulated prices not only of liquor and food but of the number of people in each bed.

For example, while today's Roanoke County was still a part of Botetourt, the bars could charge 10 shillings per gallon for West India rum and only two shillings,

six pence for domestic rum. One favorite drink known as Bumbo went for only one shilling, three pence per gallon since it contained only two gills of rum per quart. They could charge nine pence for one warm dish of food and a small beer, but only six pence if the food was cold.

When it came to lodging, one person had to pay six pence to have a bed with clean sheets, but if there were two in a bed, the price for each was three pence and three farthings. Stabling with plenty of hay for a horse was set at seven and a half pence, but pasturage, when available, only six pence.

Competition was intense for the customers' money, manifest primarily in the colorful signs seeking to lure them inside such taverns as: The Leather Bottle. The Mermaid. The Star and Garter. The Indian Queen. And the Bull's Eye. As you see, signage has long been an important economic factor.

Merchant Mills

Within the scope of the merchant mills which sprang up along practically every stream with enough water to power their operations were three main activities--grain grinding, timber sawing and brick making. A few of these mills combined all three; some diversified by distilling whiskey and carding wool.

Grist mills were the more numerous and more widespread. The larger ones became social meccas. Here farmers and their families brought their grain to be ground into flour or meal; while waiting, they exchanged pleasantries, discussed the weather, politics or other issues of the day. And here primitive economics was often at work; the grower bringing in raw grain for processing and the operator exacting a portion of the final product as compensation, using it himself or selling it. More often it was a matter of cash instead of trade. The millponds were popular for ice skating in winter and sometimes for swimming in summer; there were even paddle boats for recreation at some.

Salem and what became Gainsboro and Big Lick were sites of the principal mills, but the Evans Mill at what is now Crystal Spring was one of the earliest. The economic importance of these mills during their heyday can hardly be over-emphasized.

From a newspaper advertisement, we know that in Salem in 1821, one mill offered a variety of services and products. It was the Salem Mill, built by Samuel Lewis, the son of General Andrew Lewis, sometime before 1821. Here along the Roanoke River at the foot of today's Union Street, one could buy a variety of flours, sawn lumber, carded wool, and distilled spirits; it was to figure later in Civil War fighting.

Upstream just outside of Salem was the William L. Walton Mill, which, in addition to grinding grain and sawing timber, manufactured bricks that went into a few houses and even mansions being built in the county.

On Glade Creek, a woolen mill was established early by two Bonsack brothers, who gave their name to today's developing section in northeast county.

General Store and Services

As James Simpson found buyers for the lots that he laid out in his Town of Salem in 1802 and houses were built on them, two or three of them were adapted as general stores to provide some of the needs of the few residents and transients. Elsewhere in the sparsely populated part of the county, there were also a few country stores.

By 1820, Salem was the valley's population center. There is documentation that 290 individuals were living there, compared to 610 in Fincastle.

We learn this from a newspaper that was being published in 1821, the *Salem Register*. The newspaper itself represented an economic step of note.

Along with news reports within its pages, there were advertisements--economic indicators then as today. From them, we know that one Ezekiel Tenison operated a hat manufactory; that he also sold shoes and tobacco products. For these he would accept cash or barter, but he insisted that either medium of exchange had to be delivered "at the time the hats are taken away." The barter he desired most was "country produce, such as furs of all kinds, lambs' wool, bees-wax, tallow, feathers, whiskey or grain of any kind."

The ads also pointed to trading in real estate and livestock and to continued strength in tavern operations. Innkeeper Joel Bott was promoting his wine list heavily; in 1823, he wanted all to know that he had added Mataga and Currant wine, and substituted grape for raspberry Bounce.

There was no reluctance for doctors to advertise in those days. Four of them published so-called "cards" in the newspaper. One by Dr. Lewis Shanks wanted it known in 1821 that he had "permanently settled himself in Sale . . . and tenders his service to the public in the various branches of his profession (and) has a general supply of medicines for the accommodation of the public."

Another record dated 1827 summarizes the status of service enterprises in Salem, in addition to the mills heretofore mentioned. There was a tanning yard processing hides; a cabinetmaker; two saddlers; five blacksmith shops; a boot and shoe factory; two tailors; a manufacturer of fans used to separate the chaff from wheat; several carpenters; a house painter; and a hat manufactory. The economy of the county clearly was budding and diversifying.

Heavy Industry

Stabs were made at heavy industry, most of it related to mineral resources, during the pre-natal days of Roanoke County. These efforts met with some success. In fact, minerals were to prove an ever-beckoning lure throughout the 19th century.

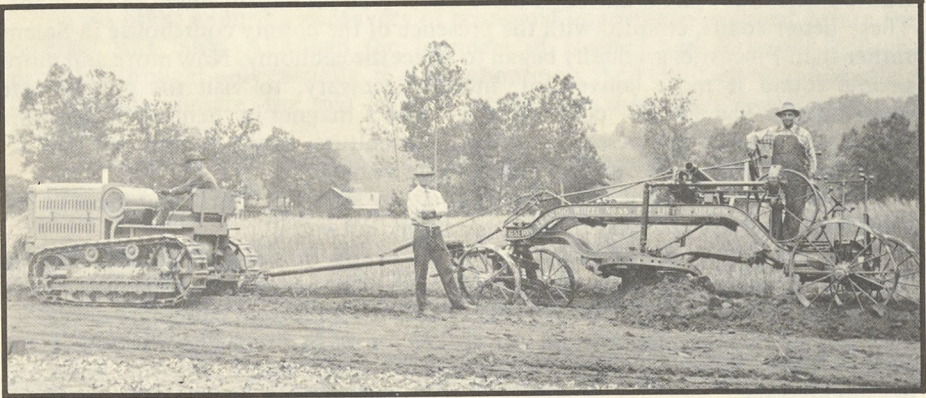
One of the first who capitalized on iron ore in the area was Robert Harvey, who operated processing furnaces on Catawba and Back creeks before 1800. Another was Samuel G. Adams of Richmond, who built what became the Cloverdale Furnace, which sputtered along until its demise about 1836. While high mining costs and inferior ore quality limited the economic viability of iron production, it was flooding of streams and the river that in 1825 had shut down the Speedwell Furnace in today's Starkey section. And flooding has continued to be a major factor in the economy.

Transportation

Transportation was a negative economic factor. Early on, the farmers and townspeople grappled with the vicissitudes of not only moving about in their chosen neighborhoods but of bringing in and shipping out needed and desirable supplies.

Travel on horseback and assorted horse-drawn rigs was about all that was available, other than by foot. And bad weather often made extensive movements almost impossible. Rain and mud posed great difficulty in just getting to and from the garden, cowshed and fields on one's own property; to and from stores, and neighbors' homes.

For horse and wagon, there were little more than narrow roadways that history calls the Great Road north and southwest, the Wilderness Road west and the Carolina Road south. Lynchburg was the direction toward which travelers pointed as they considered their ties with Richmond and Eastern Virginia, and the Blue Ridge was the big obstacle. The trail across Buford Gap was often impassable and always rough--a fact that led to a state-sanctioned project in 1818 to build the Salem-Lynchburg Turnpike. After about ten years of problem-plagued work, the road was completed from Lynchburg to Liberty (now Bedford). Many years passed, however, before a reasonably satisfactory road linked Salem with Lynchburg.



Road scraping was an important part of highway transportation for years.
(G. H. Moulse)

Somehow, these woes, these major obstructions to trade had to be overcome. Waterways were commonly used arteries elsewhere, and eyes and thoughts soon began turning to the Roanoke River, which flowed eventually to the Atlantic through Albemarle Sound in North Carolina. The James was in the dream stage of development for river traffic—why not the Roanoke?

Thus it was that in 1816, the Virginia legislature chartered The Upper Roanoke Navigation Company with the purpose of linking Salem with Weldon, North Carolina, to provide a new channel for moving tobacco and other crops, raw material, and occasional passengers. The project required venture capital in the form of \$50 shares from residents along the way, and any others interested.

In Roanoke, the stock sale management was undertaken by five leading citizens, Elijah McClanahan, James McClanahan, William Lewis, Griffin Lamkin and William C. Bowyer. The McClanahans, as we have seen, were large landholders; William Lewis, a son of General Andrew Lewis; lamkin, the son-in-law of Salem's founder, James Simpson; and Bowyer, an entrepreneur who wanted a hands-on part in the navigation project.

The risk was great, the construction challenging, the progress slow.

By 1812, however, a convoy of three flat-bottomed boats had traversed 244 miles of the river through locks and sluices and were tied up at Salem. Now all that was believed needed was cargo for shipment. Overlooked, or at least discounted, were the relatively shallow waters of summer and the floods of spring and fall. Nevertheless, by 1834, locks had been completed in Salem. For nearly 40 years thereafter, transshipments on the Roanoke became a reality east of the Blue Ridge. But after only a few years, floods ravaged the locks and sluices west of the Blue Ridge, and traffic ceased above Brookneal (in today's Charlotte County) after 1837.

Fleeting though it was, the navigation project had an economic impact on Salem. In anticipation of river traffic, several buildings went up in the Union Street area where the batteaus were docked, and this community of businesses never really shut down completely. Closer to Main Street, the Salem headquarters building for the river project was erected by two staunch supporters and officials, William C. Bowyer and William Ross. Bowyer lived and operated a general store and warehouse in his substantial brick building, and, incidentally, was the Salem postmaster for a decade during development of the locks and canals.

It can be assumed that few if any of the canal investors recaptured their capital.

The lack of transportation put a damper on any prospect for real development of this section of what was then Botetourt County.

Even the formation of Roanoke County in 1838 could not totally surmount the

transportation problem, although there was a gradual improvement in the roads. These better roads, coupled with the presence of the county courthouse in Salem rather than Fincastle, gradually began to affect the economy. Now more and more people found it more convenient, indeed necessary, to visit the county seat occasionally. The storied "court days" became a magnet in themselves, and this meant new service businesses in Salem. Agriculture, however, did not lose its dominance in the county and indeed became stronger.

Then, in mid-century, came the railroad! In 1852, the course and focus of the local economy was changed forever, gradually but surely.

For years, Lynchburg, in the eyes of the people of Roanoke county, was the "big city" to the east, with its markets and influential newspaper. Now the County was to see its frustrating efforts of many years for a railroad culminate in reality. Two and a half years after ground was broken for the first rails under a contract for the Lynchburg-Salem leg of the Virginia and Tennessee Railroad, a train arrived in the county seat.

The road had reached Big Lick the first day of November, 1852, but apparently occasioned little notice. Six weeks later, December 15, 1852, wood-burning locomotives pulled, not one, but, three trains into Salem. They were filled with officials of the railroad, residents of Lynchburg and guests who climbed aboard along the way--all invited for a gala, overnight celebration in the county seat.

Even then, there was not unqualified support for the railroad from Roanoke County, which had offered no governmental financial assistance. The challenge to reverse that fact was not long in coming; in one of the speeches at the depot, a railroad official called on the county to subscribe \$25,000 to help extend the rails westward. Substantial public resistance to a railroad had developed on the mistaken belief that it meant benefits would accrue only to the immediate Lynchburg area; as a result, the voters overwhelmingly rejected any public funds in a March 1853 referendum. Three and a half years later, however, in October 1856, the railroad was completed to its destination at Bristol.

Effects of this rail link to the east were soon evident to all and have been sustained for the nearly 140 years since. Trains began moving freight and passengers, and new enterprises emerged.

Other Mid-Century Developments

The decade prior to the coming of the railroad was not one of exceptionally strong economic growth but it had witnessed other developments worthy of note.

For starters, commercial banking appeared on the business scene. While there is no record of its success or fate, the Salem Savings Institution appeared in 1840. Six years later, the Roanoke Savings Bank opened for business. This one seems to have had a measure of success, inasmuch as the year after the trains started moving, it changed its name to the Bank of Roanoke and offered stock by public subscription. Nearly all the investors were from the Salem area, leading to the assumption the banks themselves were in the county seat. Still another, the Exchange Bank of Virginia, opened in Salem in 1855, perhaps based on business stirred up by the railroad.

We know, too, that what may be described as light industries were thriving in the county. Three of them were in the county seat. The Salem Carriage Factory advertised that it was manufacturing "every variety of carriage now in use, such as, rockaways, buggies, chariottes, barouches and carryalls," as well as harness. This seems to have been the first of several later wagon manufacturers.

Phillip Reed by patent was producing a bevelled wheat fan, which he said cleansed "all kinds of grain from cheat, cockle and smut." Abraham Hupp operated a sheet metal business next to the county courthouse. In another part of the county, on Back Creek, Elijah Poage set up a sawmill and cabinet works that achieved note. By no stretch of the imagination, however, could it be said that manufacturing had overtaken agriculture.

Two other enduring endeavors of economic importance emerged before the railroad was built. Although the founders of Hollins and Roanoke colleges probably thought only casually, if at all, about how their institutions would affect the business climate, the two colleges nevertheless have had a profound and continuing impact.

Launched at Botetourt Springs in 1838 as the Roanoke Female Academy and its name and ownership changed first in 1841 to Valley Union Seminary, later to Hollins Institute and finally to Hollins College, this school grew to its present prestigious stature over the years. Roanoke College was transported in a wagon from Augusta County to Salem in 1847, first as Virginia Collegiate Institute; occupied a section of its first building on its own campus in 1848; and adopted its lustrous present name in 1853.

It is clear that the ordinary residents of the county were not totally isolated from the products of distant manufacture before the railroad was built. In their advertisements, merchants were boasting of what they called splendid and tremendous stocks of goods from New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore and Richmond. It was no simple thing to make buying trips to these commercial centers, however, and the merchants made this plain. One called on customers in February to pay their bills so the merchant could make a buying trip in March. His ad said: "You know I don't often dun you, nor would I now, but I really want money and must have some before I can make my Spring purchases."

Something of the state of the economy in 1852 is evident from the plea by one leading merchant that he would bargain with his customers for wheat, flour, corn, tobacco and oats and that he would be pleased to offer sugar, salt, iron, nails and blankets in exchange for produce.

Gradual Change

Such predicaments began gradually to change in the few years between the arrival of the railroad and the Civil War.

The operation of spas at the sites of supposed healing springs began making a real impact on the economy. The earliest seems to have been Botetourt Springs in 1822 at the site of today's Hollins College. Another, Roanoke Red Sulphur Springs in the Catawba Valley, was chartered and added a somewhat different emphasis to a predominantly agrarian section of the county. At both, the waters and pleasant surroundings attracted guests from both the county and, from the standpoint of the economy more important, from far afield. Roanoke Red Sulphur eventually became the core of a state tuberculosis sanatorium, which became the present Catawba geriatric hospital. These were but two of a number of springs that became popular with the reasonably well-to-do throughout mountains, valleys and foothills of the Alleghanies.

Hotel operations were also expanded, at least two opening for guests in Salem and another in Big Lick, where the railroad had sparked interest in real estate sales. The first store in what became Roanoke was built by Samuel P. Holt, who unhappily, soon faced the stark reality of an always lurking economic bugaboo--bankruptcy. There were other stores and service shops.

A newspaper, the *Salem Register*, was founded in 1854, the second one of record by that name. Its pages contained advertisements by some of the leading businesses; on them were faithfully printed the schedules of the trains which were becoming increasingly important as a supply link to the east.

The War Period

Slavery as an economic factor was not as critical for Roanoke County as for the region between the Blue Ridge and the Atlantic. Nevertheless, as the Civil War years neared, slaves labored in the fields, barns and homes of the wealthier landholders here.

In numbers, the slave picture looked like this: There were 2,510 among the 8,477 people in 1850; ten years later, there were 133 more slaves (2,643) and 429 fewer people overall in the population of 8,048. One landowner, Edward Watts, was taxed for 89 slaves in 1854; another Nathaniel Burwell, for 69. There were 18 others with substantial land and with more than 10 slaves; three of them had more than 30; five, more than 20. Politically, slavery was a relatively remote issue for most, removed as the area was from the capitals and centers of debate.

The war itself produced immediate and depressing results locally, as elsewhere in the state. Owners of small farms were reduced to a struggle for existence, as the menfolk went off to fight and the women and children had to take over. Somehow the larger operations, with their loyal slaves, were able to fulfill an increasingly vital role as a breadbasket of sorts for Confederate forces.

A reasonably steady supply of grain and flour, some livestock products and even some seasonal vegetables were funneled to the army through a few warehouses and the three railheads in the county. The critical value of these stores became apparent when they became the object of raids into the county by Federal forces in 1863 and 1864. Destruction by the enemy of mills, warehouses and rails on two brief forays dealt a severe if temporary blow to the already strapped economy, not to mention the loss of supplies to the troops themselves.

Leather paralleled the importance of grains and foodstuffs being produced in the county. The Snyder tanning yard in Salem was a source of hides for shoes and harness for the military.

Overall, the War, emancipation, reconstruction and military rule devastated the local, money-starved economy, and it took a few years to recover. But recover it did.

Education

Not until 1870, when a statewide public school system was established, did Virginia move with zeal toward overcoming the deficiencies in its primary and secondary education. A few earlier efforts had done little to raise the literacy level.

In Roanoke County, there had been a few so-called free schools in the decade before the War, along with a number of private academies and schools that charged tuition. The County was quick aboard with a superintendent in September 1870 and public school classes began within a couple of years. This new dimension of education began strengthening the economy.

The Focus Shifts

By 1881, the town of Big Lick beside the railroad had become a center of some growth, marked by a growing number of businesses of its own and the physical shift of some businesses and churches from Gainsboro. The population of Big Lick was 669 in 1880, compared to Salem's 1,759 and the county's 12,436. The stage was set for a refocusing of economic leadership and power from Salem to the Big Lick that became Roanoke.

There was drama attached to this refocusing in the night-time ride of the courier who was the human link to the rise of Roanoke--C. W. Thomas.

The story is a familiar one and won't be repeated here. The bottom line is that a new railroad, the Shenandoah Valley, selected Big Lick as the junction with the new Norfolk and Western. Big Lick became Roanoke later in 1881 and was incorporated as such in 1882.

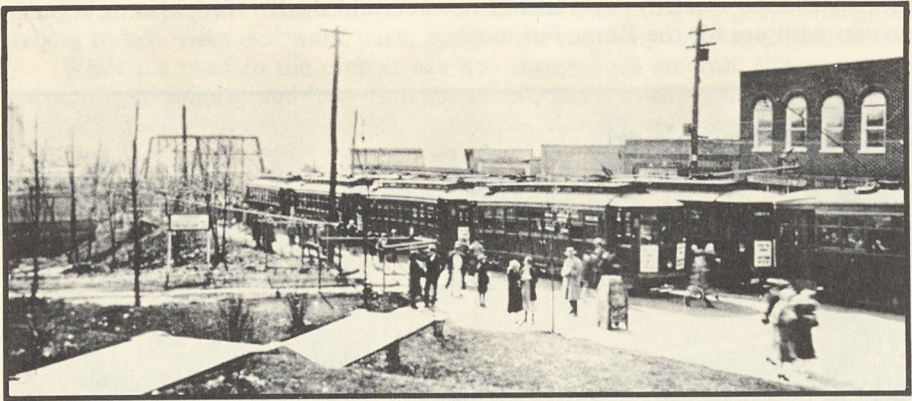
A new era was at hand. Now there was to be a railway system with ties to the markets of eastern and northern Virginia, Baltimore and the developing areas of Southwest Virginia and beyond. Business and industry began modifying, if not reversing, the dominance of agriculture in the Roanoke County economy.

The Boom Years

Concurrently with expansion of the railroad, scores of business houses and residences went up near the rail junction, and the cornerstone of the economy, a machine works, was under construction. The rosy outlook became a bit cloudy during the panic and depression of 1884, but the picture brightened shortly thereafter.

The influx of workers from other parts of the country injected a zest among developers and entrepreneurs to meet their needs and earn some money for themselves.

More hotels, including the original Hotel Roanoke, were built, along with the Crozier Steel & Iron Company. With them, there were boarding houses, restaurants, saloons, retail shops, additional medical and consumer services. And especially real estate ventures.



Workers waited for the streetcar at the old American Viscose Corp. plant, a major Roanoke County industry until the annexation by Roanoke City in 1949. (Roanoke Times & World-News)

The pace of development was almost frantic, but the optimists called it magic and Roanoke soon bore a slogan--the Magic City. Inevitable ripple effects were felt throughout the county, most noticeably at Salem and the new (1884) Town of Vinton, less so on the farms.

In a small village east of Vinton, a personal saga was unfolding that was to deliver a product that had a major impact on the world economy. Bonsack Station on the new railroad was an unlikely place, even as James A. Bonsack was an unlikely person for the role he was to play. Here was a teen-ager who saw an advertisement by a Durham tobacco manufacturer offering \$75,000 to anyone inventing a machine to roll cigarettes. A fascinating account of what happened next is included in Deedie Kagey's sesquicentennial history of Roanoke County:

Young James Bonsack became absorbed in his dream to win that \$75,000 and, in a shop in his father Jacob Bonsack's woolen mill, began tinkering to produce such a machine. After many setbacks and frustrations, he and his father obtained a patent on their invention in 1880 and organized the Bonsack Machine Company.

Their machine to roll and cut cigarettes was installed first in Richmond. By 1884, six others were in operation in other cities in this country. The Bonsacks later licensed their manufacture in Paris, Argentina and other places, and royalties soon catapulted James Bonsack into a wealthy man while still in his twenties.

This Bonsack invention also injected a residual shot of adrenalin into the local economy, through its manufacture for some years by the Comas Cigarette Machine

Company in Salem and by a Lynchburg company.

Tracking details of the economic growth of the late 1880s and early 1890s is virtually impossible, so many and varied were the enterprises.

Joint-stock land companies were chartered by the scores, some with stable leadership, others resting on paper-thin speculation. Nearly everybody with any financial spunk, however, bought into the action as tracts of land became developmental plats with lots for sale. These companies staged lusty promotions to attract buyers of their lots. They also offered appealing incentives to bring in manufacturers and heavy industry, still confident that in iron ore there was "gold." All in all, they had remarkable initial if not untroubled and lasting success.

The pioneer among these was the Roanoke Land and Improvement Company, which laid out today's main Roanoke streets in wheat fields of that day. Then it provided the land for the railroad station, the Hotel Roanoke and the Roanoke Machine Works, which in a year or so was bought by the railroad for its shops.

A daily paper, bearing the name *The Roanoke Times* that had earlier been on the masthead of a weekly paper in Salem, was established in 1886. Mining began in earnest with ore for the Rorer Furnace.



Business was bustling and three buggies were parked on Main Street in Salem in earlier days. (Salem Times-Register)

Catching the spirit from its lively neighbor, Salem jumped onto the fast-moving treadmill. The Salem Improvement Company became the major developer in the county seat, but two of its major efforts, a 100-room hotel and an iron furnace, fell victim to the deflation that befell the boom and never reached even the minimum expected potential.

Water works, electricity, telephones and telegraph were installed in Roanoke and Salem, and a street railway was built to link the two, as well as Vinton to the east.

Several industries weathered the 1893 recession that followed and provided a foundation for the future.

An industrial sampler of those boom days and the period before the turn of the century, in addition to the railroad and ore furnaces, would contain such as:

Lumber and specialty planing mills, woolen mills, commercial printers, wagon and carriage works, foundries, brick works, tanneries, chair manufacturers, machine works, ice and candy makers, beer brewers, distilleries.

Flour mills grew in size and product variety throughout the county; fruit orchards became larger and more numerous; livestock dealers branched out into

dairy farming; timber from surrounding forests fed the building spree.

Financing for these businesses and for much of the real estate trade came from an array of banks and loan companies. When hard times struck, all underwent financial strain but only one, Roanoke Trust, Loan and Safe Deposit Company, went bankrupt. Several predecessors of today's banks proved remarkably resilient in very difficult times.

Many small, boom-era investors were hurt badly, as they lost their life savings when the half-dozen, 25-foot lots or so they bought for re-sale found no market. The heavy losers were those who furnished the major capital for large-tract acquisitions, but most of them started over again and bounced back.

Not only did most bank depositors show restraint under stress, but some emerged as key leaders. The county sought to shrug off its setback and moved into a period characterized by optimism and resourcefulness, coupled with organized promotions to strengthen the economy. Chambers of commerce by other names tried all sorts of ways to keep businesses on their feet and to bring in new ones.

These organized efforts and those of the real dynamos, the people who were willing to take risks and work hard, nudged the economy into the 20th century.

While the road to the present has not always been smooth, successes have outnumbered failures and have brought us into today's strong economy.

Old City Point "Rail Road" Was N & W Forerunner In 1838

by Louis M. Newton

In this Sesquicentennial year of Roanoke County, I would like to call your attention to an important event that occurred 150 years ago in another part of the Commonwealth. Although eventually it would have a great effect on Roanoke County, it was probably not even noticed here at the time. In the early 1830's the citizens of Petersburg, proposed building a "Rail Road" from their city a distance of nine miles to a location on the James River at City Point, now part of the city of Hopewell.

Several years were required to incorporate a company, secure financing, construct the line, and acquire equipment, but the difficulties were finally overcome, and the City Point Railroad operated its first train from Petersburg to City Point on September 7, 1838, exactly 150 years and 10 days ago. The City Point was the beginning of what was eventually to become the Norfolk and Western Railway.

In the meantime, closer to Roanoke County, the citizens of Lynchburg, interested in better transportation, considered gaining access to the Ohio River by building a canal to connect the James and the New Rivers. As an alternative, they proposed building a railroad, but again securing authorizations and financing caused a long delay. Finally, in 1850, Governor John Floyd turned the first spadeful of dirt, and the construction of the Virginia & Tennessee Railroad had begun. The route progressed across Bedford County, through the community of Big Lick, and by December, 1852 reached Salem. Work continued through the difficult

Louis M. Newton retired as assistant vice president for transportation planning of the Norfolk and Western Railway in 1987 after 37 years with the railroad. A native of Chattanooga, he is a mechanical engineering graduate of the University of Tennessee.

mountainous terrain to the west to New River and on through southwestern Virginia to Bristol, 204 miles from Lynchburg, where the line connected with the East Tennessee & Virginia Railroad.

While the Virginia & Tennessee was building west from Lynchburg, there was further activity to the east as the South Side Railroad built a railroad from Petersburg to Lynchburg, a distance of 124 miles over relatively level terrain (except at High Bridge, which was an engineering marvel of its day), completing it in 1854. Meanwhile, the original City Point Railroad had been renamed the Appomattox Railroad in 1847 and was then acquired by the South Side in 1854.

Even farther to the east, the builders of the Norfolk & Petersburg Railroad, while not having to contend with mountains, may have faced even greater obstacles. The first was topographical, the Great Dismal Swamp, which was overcome through the genius and the tenacity of Chief Engineer William Mahone. The second was a pestilence, yellow fever, which struck the Norfolk area in 1855 and brought local activities to a virtual standstill. Despite the difficulties, the Norfolk & Petersburg was completed between the two cities by 1858. Two years later, William Mahone, who had been so instrumental in its construction, at the age of 33 was elected as its president.

The construction projects in Virginia, coupled with those farther to the west, resulted by the time of the Civil War in a thin chain of railroads stretching from Hampton Roads across Virginia into Tennessee and on to the Mississippi River. They represented six or seven independent companies, including three in Virginia, and as Robert H. Smith said in his **Short History Of The Norfolk & Western Railway**, "... (they) had been built on faith, hope, and probably with some charity. These lines were striving eagerly to improve their respective lots and the communities which they served."

Unfortunately, their hopes of improving their lots suffered a tragic setback as a result of the Civil War. Instead of improvements, there was catastrophic destruction and deterioration, both physically and financially, as these railroads found themselves in the middle of some of the war's most intense battles. The reconstruction era was almost as difficult as the war years, as they attempted to rebuild their properties in an area suffering from extreme economic deprivation. Meanwhile, William Mahone had served with distinction in the Confederate Army, particularly at the Battle of the Crater, emerged from the War as a major general, and returned to his former post as president of the devastated Norfolk & Petersburg Railroad. By 1870 he had succeeded in uniting the three separate Virginia railroads—the Norfolk & Petersburg, the South Side and the Virginia & Tennessee—into a single system stretching 408 miles from Norfolk to Bristol, under the corporate name of the Atlantic, Mississippi & Ohio Railroad, headquartered in Lynchburg. Under General Mahone's leadership and with the aid of English capital, the AM & O began to recover from the adversities of the war and the Reconstruction era.

Within a few years, however, adversity struck again, this time in the form of a financial panic in 1873. With a general decline in business, the AM & O was unable to make the interest payments on its debt, went into receivership in 1876, and was then sold at auction in February, 1881 to the Clark banking interests of Philadelphia. One account of the sale, perhaps overly dramatized, describes the successful bid by Clarence H. Clark, previously unknown to the crowd, of \$8,605,000, and his immediate payment of exactly \$100,000 as a cash deposit.

The Clark interests, however, were not completely unknown in Virginia at that time, because in the 1870's they had become interested in the Shenandoah Valley Railroad, which was building a line from Hagerstown, Maryland into the Shenandoah Valley. The Pennsylvania Railroad also had an interest in the line, perhaps to discourage the Baltimore & Ohio's interest in the territory. The B & O had built a line from Harper's Ferry into the Shenandoah Valley, and with encouragement from General Robert E. Lee, who at that time was president of Washington College, finally reached Lexington. There is evidence that the B & O surveyed a route from Lexington to Salem for an intended connection with the

Virginia & Tennessee (by that time probably the AM & O), and even constructed stone culverts at some proposed stream crossings in Botetourt and Roanoke Counties, but the eventual completion of the Shenandoah Valley Railroad, as we will see, probably kept the B & O from completing the line south of Lexington.

The Shenandoah Valley Railroad had progressed as far south as Waynesboro at the time the Clarks acquired the AM & O in 1881. For the next several years, events moved in quick succession. The AM & O was renamed the Norfolk & Western Railroad, George F. Tyler became president, and Frederick J. Kimball was named first vice president. In May 1881, Kimball personally confirmed the existence of extensive deposits of high quality coal in southwestern Virginia, which his wife according to tradition, named the "Pocahontas" coal seam. Kimball then pushed to complete the Shenandoah Valley to a connection with the Norfolk & Western. Surveys were made for the connection to be made at any of several locations, including Montvale, Bonsack, Big Lick and Salem. According to E. F. Pat Striplin's account in *The Norfolk & Western: A History*: "One day the leaders of Big Lick heard that the directors of the Shenandoah Valley would meet the next day in Lexington to decide on which point to intersect the N & W. They got busy and collected \$5,000, and an acre of land was donated in writing to the Shenandoah if they would agree to come to Big Lick." A messenger was then dispatched on horseback to deliver the petition to the directors in Lexington by 10:00 the next day. Whether for that reason or for others, Big Lick became the junction point, and a boom town grew up around it. The citizens voted to rename the town for Kimball, who modestly refused the honor, and the name of Roanoke was chosen instead. The headquarters of the Shenandoah Valley was moved from Hagerstown, as was that of the old AM & O from Lynchburg, to the new town. The Roanoke Machine Works was chartered in 1881 to repair equipment for both roads and then developed into the East End Shops of the Norfolk & Western. The original Hotel Roanoke was constructed in 1882. A new city in the valley blossomed almost overnight.

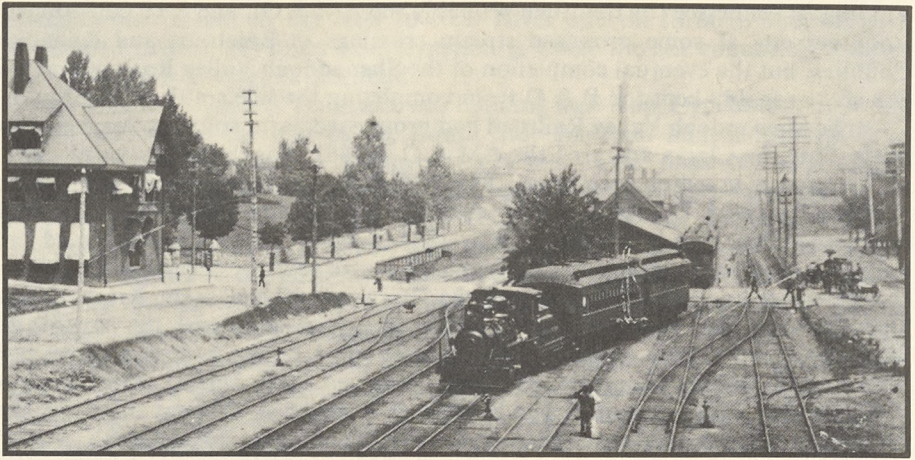
As the connection was being effected at Roanoke, Kimball was progressing the construction of a new railroad line from Radford along New River to Glen Lyn, then through the town of Pocahontas, where a new mine was producing coal. The first car of coal, on March 12, 1883, was used for railroad fuel. The second car, shipped the next day, was consigned to the mayor of Norfolk. Like millions of cars since, it moved through the Roanoke Valley on its way to Tidewater.

Not content with only an eastern outlet for coal, Kimball, by that time president of the Norfolk & Western, foresaw the potential market for coal in the industrial Midwest and pushed for the construction of the Ohio Extension of the N & W for 200 miles through the rugged terrain of southern West Virginia and across the Ohio River to a connection with the Scioto Valley Railroad at Ironton, Ohio. The Scioto Valley itself was acquired by the N & W, thus providing a route to Columbus and connections with several Midwestern railroads. The construction of the Ohio Extension strained the finances of the N & W and resulted in a brief receivership before the company was reorganized in 1896 as the Norfolk & Western Railway. The value of the Extension, however, has never been questioned, as tremendous volumes of coal have moved toward the west for many years.

The decade of the 1890's was one of great activity in the railroad industry. In the Roanoke area, the Roanoke & Southern Railway was completed between Roanoke and Winston-Salem, North Carolina in 1892 and was absorbed into the N & W in 1896. Other construction projects and acquisitions enabled the N & W, by about 1902, to attain the configuration that it would keep for most of the first half of the twentieth century.

About the same time, it lost its leader when Kimball died in 1903 at the age of 59. His integrity, vision, devotion to duty and other fine qualities had combined to make him the ideal leader at the time of the Norfolk & Western's greatest period of expansion; and the Roanoke Valley is indebted to him for establishing the headquarters of a great transportation company in the area.

After the turn of the century, the management of the N & W concerned itself



In 1895, a steam-powered passenger train stopped at the old Norfolk and Western Railway station. The old General Office Building and Hotel Roanoke grounds were at left. (Norfolk and Western Railway Archival Collection, VPI & SU Libraries)

with building on the foundation laid in previous years. The company's facilities grew to accommodate increased volumes of traffic, and new technologies were used to improve the safety and efficiency of operations. There was a general increase in the capacity of both roadway facilities and equipment. In the Roanoke area, general office buildings were constructed and expanded to accommodate the headquarters of a growing company. The Roanoke Yards were expanded several times through the years. East End Shops was not simply a repair shop; for many years the Norfolk & Western designed its own locomotives and cars and built them in its own shops. Roanoke was the headquarters of a relatively small railroad geographically, but one recognized throughout the industry as a leader, and one that rightly adopted as its slogan, "Precision Transportation."

Meanwhile, the N & W endured the usual ups and downs of the business cycle, went through World War I, struggled through the Great Depression, and met one of its greatest challenges during World War II, when it moved unprecedented volumes of both freight and passengers. Roanoke Shops not only built new locomotives and continued to maintain older ones, but it also overhauled locomotives for neighboring railroads.

Competition from other modes of transportation, particularly from those using government financed highways, began to erode railroad traffic in the 1920's and became particularly acute after World War II. The result was a reduction in passenger trains and the eventual elimination of their operation by the railroad itself (although Amtrak continues to operate in some areas). As for freight, much of the merchandise traffic shifted to highways, and the railroad industry had to adjust accordingly. Coal traffic, always the mainstay of the N & W, has had its peaks and valleys, but in recent years has been affected more by a change in the sources of supply and demand, including international competition, than by a change in the method of handling, with rail still being the dominant mode. However, with rapidly changing business climates and developing technologies, there is a constant challenge to avoid losing the business to competitors.

Within the industry, there were dramatic technological changes following World War II, especially as diesel-electric locomotives came on the scene. The N & W, under the leadership of President R. H. Smith, countered by improving its coal-fired steam locomotives, designed and built in Roanoke. The N & W carried the development of steam power to its zenith, and was the last major U. S. railroad to remain completely committed to steam. Finally, economic pressures and other

considerations forced the company to dieselize in the late 1950's. The result was a drastic but unavoidable drop in employment in the shops, which had an adverse effect for a time throughout the Roanoke area.

Shortly after the N & W had completed the task of putting its system together early in the twentieth century, a competitor entered the field in the form of the Virginian Railway. This company, financed personally by millionaire Henry Huttleston Rogers, was well-engineered, with its favorable grades enabling it to operate highly efficiently. It was opened for through operation from the West Virginia coal fields to Norfolk in 1909, passing through the Roanoke Valley generally south of and parallel to the N & W main line. The Virginian did not handle a great deal of business of moving coal to Tidewater. In the 1920's the N & W's proposal to lease the Virginian was rejected by the Interstate Commerce Commission. Years later, however, with a changed business climate, the ICC did approve a consolidation of the two companies, and on December 1, 1959 the N & W and the Virginian were merged. Most of the local facilities of both companies were retained, and a number of headquarters personnel of the Virginian were relocated from Norfolk to Roanoke. The merger of the two parallel coal-hauling railroads was generally regarded as highly successful.

At the time, merging the Virginian's 650 miles of line with the N & W's 2,100 miles seemed to be a big project—and it was—but it was small in comparison to the next proposal: Within months after the N & W - Virginian merger had been effected, a dramatic announcement was made that the Norfolk & Western, the Nickel Plate and the Wabash railroads planned to merge.

After a number of legal and financial maneuvers, the ICC approved the proposal, and the unification of the three principal railroads and two smaller lines, along with the acquisition of the Sandusky Line of the Pennsylvania Railroad, became effective on October 16, 1964. Overnight, the N & W had practically tripled in size as it became a system of about 8,000 route miles serving 13 states in the U. S. and a province in Canada, and extending from the Atlantic Ocean to the Great Lakes and west to the Missouri River. There have been few mergers of its size involving such diverse carriers as the N & W (primarily a coal line), the Nickel Plate (primarily a long haul carrier), and the Wabash (primarily a carrier of products related to the automotive industry and agriculture). Roanoke realized an obvious benefit as it became the headquarters of the unified system.

In the late 1960's, an even larger merger was proposed with the neighboring Chesapeake and Ohio Railway, but the collapse of the Penn Central and other events dampened the enthusiasm for such a consolidation, and in 1971 the plan was abandoned.

During the decade of the 1970's, the Norfolk & Western, led by John P. Fishwick, was concerned with increasing its efficiency and strengthening its financial position while coping with the usual problems of business fluctuations, competitive pressures, strikes, floods, blizzards, and similar challenges. Without going into great statistical detail, let us say that the company met the challenges with a high degree of success. As Conrail was formed when the railroads in the Northeast and Midwest were restructured following the bankruptcy of the Penn Central and other carriers, N & W's principal involvement was the acquisition in 1976 of about 100 miles of Penn Central trackage northwest of Cincinnati in order to obtain a shorter route for traffic moving between the eastern and western regions of its system.

Elsewhere, during the 1970's and 1980's there were mergers and super-mergers, as systems such as the Burlington Northern in the West and CSX in the East were formed. The managements of the Norfolk & Western and the Southern considered merger, backed away, then reconsidered and agreed to consolidate their operations under a common management. After approval by the ICC, the resulting Norfolk Southern Corporation was formed on June 1, 1982, with Robert B. Claytor as chairman and chief executive officer of a railroad with about 15,000 miles of line and assets of over \$5 billion. Although the consolidation resulted in a move of the corporate headquarters to Norfolk, Roanoke continues to be the headquarters of

an operating region as well as several important departments, and Roanoke Shops continues to maintain a substantial part of the company's equipment, as it has done for over a century.

Norfolk Southern currently employs about 3,000 people in the Roanoke Valley. Although still the Valley's largest single employer, Norfolk Southern is no longer the dominant industry in the Roanoke Valley that the Norfolk & Western was for many years. However, it is probably better for all of us for the area to have a more diversified economy rather than to be dependent on a single industry or an individual company. With diversification, changes in technologies or in business or commercial practices can be absorbed with a less severe impact than would otherwise be the case.

For me, it is interesting to look back at 150 years of Roanoke County history—and an equivalent number of year of railroad history—and see the ways in which our predecessors successfully met the challenges of their times. My hope is that future generations, looking back at our times, will be able to say the same about us.

Overlooked Buildings By The Side Of The Road

by W. L. Whitwell

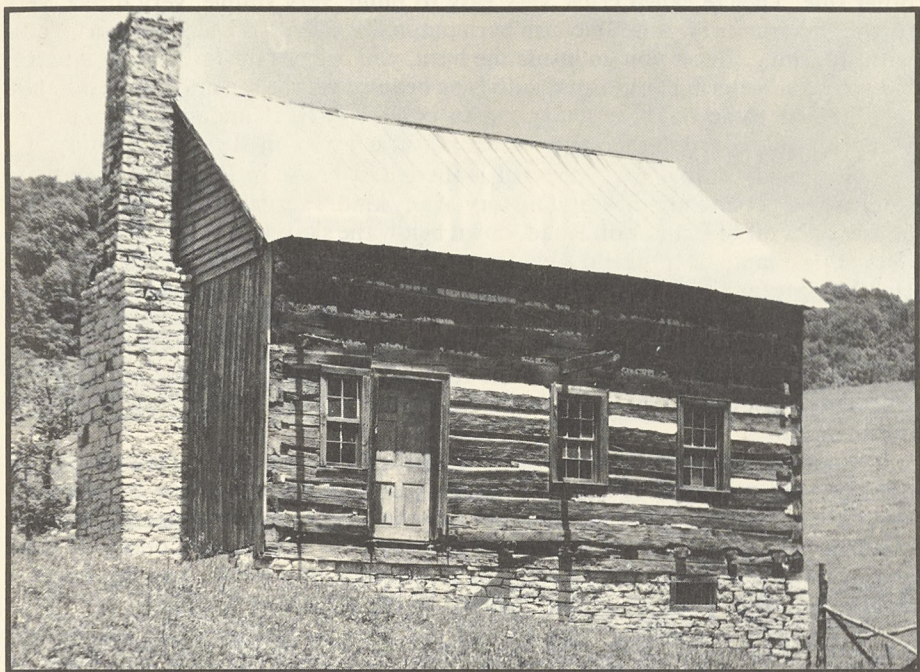
What I would like to do for this group and for the Sesquicentennial of Roanoke County is to make selections of Roanoke County architecture. Of course, I've selected from the past. I've selected here. I've selected there from major trends in architecture. These will give us some idea on what the architecture of this area is all about.

We live in a wonderful spot. I remember when I came here to Southwest Virginia from the University of New Hampshire, somebody said there's no architecture there in Southwest Virginia. It's all over in the Tidewater plantations, they said. That, of course, is not true. I think that any given area where you live or where you are you can find architecture of equal interest to the ecology, or people.

You begin looking around this area from an historical perspective. The thing that struck me in the beginning is the number of log cabins which are still in existence in Roanoke County. I am confining myself to just Roanoke County. Throughout Roanoke County are some very interesting log cabins.

There they sit on the side of the road, relatively forgotten today. You drive past them very quickly. The majority are covered up with asbestos siding but there are a few here or there which are naturally preserved, like the McNeil cabin out in Catawba Valley which dates from approximately 1840. It is an excellent example of the architectural settlement of this area. Settled in this case by the Scotch-Irish who came down the valley, down the Great Road, approximately what is now Interstate 81. The log cabin represents a natural architectural tradition coming to this area. It is a particularly interesting building, a rectangular building which has lost its front porch and the wood over its porch. Other than that it's pretty much the way it was.

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A story-and-a-half Scotch-Irish log cabin still stands in the Catawba Valley. Its stone foundation and V-notching recall buildings of the late 18th and early 19th century. (W. L. Whitwell, Lee Winborne)

Log cabins need to be seen as temporary housing. Most early settlers built a log cabin as a wedge against the wilderness, not as something to live in for the rest of their lives. The Murray log cabin down on 220 south dates from approximately 1830. This represents another interesting settler's house here in this area. The English settlers came over the Blue Ridge from the Tidewater area which is not the normal way of settling here. One real fascination of looking at log structures, if you can find good ones, is within their construction.

A spring house in the Catawba section of the county is particularly fascinating because it has two basic kinds of notching logs. On the top portion were V-notches, standard notches of structures of log cabins in this section. Very easy to do, no problem at all to construct a V-notch log cabin, all you need is an axe and an adze. Down below, on the other hand, is a half-dovetail notch which is very unusual to do. The maker of the lower half of this building had some cabinet making skills or understood how to construct a dovetail form. Log cabins sit there much in need of preservation in our time, very much overlooked. They are vernacular, by-the-side-of-the-road architecture.

A lot of fascinating barns and barn structures are still left in Roanoke County. This is the form of a barn called a single crib barn. A box made out of logs has what is called a saddle notch, just a rounded-out notch. You can see the log up on top of it. This dates to about 1900 in the southwest area of the county.

The interesting thing about log structures in many of these vernacular, everyday folk structures is they are carriers of tradition. Long, long after log building went out in Roanoke County, it was still often seen in barns and outhouses. The standard barn of this area, however, was called the double-crib barn, taken out of the Eric Sloane tradition. You may be familiar with his structure of barns when you talk architecture. It's a Virginia barn of 1840, a little earlier than what you find in this section but it has the standard double crib. It's called a three-bay barn, two long boxes, a center passage in between and another box on the

other side. They're called cribs, very easy to build, very simple, very direct, very forthright structures. A double-crib barn out in Catawba has been covered up now with sheathing. But if you go inside the barn, you can see the fascinating interior. It's your double-crib barn format with long beams over the top and saddle notches.

One of these days we are going to come to a real understanding of this vernacular barnyard architecture which is still left here in Roanoke County.

Everybody always asks me what is the oldest house in Roanoke County, as soon as you get into architectural history of any kind. I suspect it is the Harshberger house, right off of Plantation Road, down below the skating rink. If we can believe the rather scant, documentary evidence, this house was built about 1797. The Harshberger family was German, coming to this area but later leaving because they were opposed to slavery. They went out to Illinois. The stone part of the building is an interesting structure called one over one, one room over one room. The brick portion of the building was put on in 1825-ish and the porch was put on in the 1920's. The last time I was in this building, about a year ago, it was badly in need of preservation.

Another most interesting component of the architecture in Roanoke County is not only the vernacular form used here. The form of this house is related to Pennsylvania houses of the same period. Another interesting component about this building and many like it in the rural section of Roanoke County is what architectural historians call aspects, the positioning of a house, how the house is located in relationship to all the elements of the landscape around it.

Consider a house seen from Rt. 795 in Catawba, looking down on the little Catawba Creek. Its fields are above the flood plain which floods at high water. In front of the house are, and I love this term, bride and groom trees, planted when the houses were first built, nestled behind the hills. There are outcroppings of fieldstone in the hills up above. One chimney is built out of fieldstone and the other chimney is built out of the stones out of the creek. The house faces in the general southwestern direction so as to see the sun in the winter. Outbuildings are scattered on the field behind.

Two interesting points: Number one, and some of you who have looked at my book have seen this point, reading a description of a first century Roman villa outside of Dorset in England. The creek, flood plain, fields, road, trees and house are sited to the southwest. Croppings of stones are behind it. You have a sense of continuity, which is often overlooked architecturally. But the other point I would like to make is the old man who used to live here until his death in the late 1970's, when we were doing our research on the place. He bought his young son-in-law a mobile home. He and the son-in-law camped around in the area until they found, are you ready, above the flood plain, above the fields, sited to the southwest and planted two trees in front of them. There's a lot of fascination in the everyday architecture and siting of buildings.

The most common architectural form from the 19th century in Roanoke County is what's called an I-house. The I refers to the fact that the house is one room deep and it comes in all sorts and varieties. In Speedwell, at Starkey, you find it built out of logs, built out of bricks, built out of all kinds of different materials. The form is the important thing. This house has a corridor, a room on either side, a room on the other side and the same plan at the top. Speedwell dates from 1831, on very good evidence.

A later example on the Hollins College campus makes the same point. It is the same form of the I-house which is a post-Civil War example of the type that probably dates from around 1870, 1872. You've got some new decoration on the front of the gable, you've moved the chimneys inside so you'll have better insulation for chimneys at that time and you have better stoves. That's basically exactly the same form of the house.

Another most interesting phenomenon is that Roanoke County also participates in the springs culture of the early 19th century. The very grand Greenbrier and Homestead are the last vestiges of the great resort culture here in Virginia that clustered around the sulphur springs. Here on the grounds of the



The Fort Lewis Mansion, built by Samuel White about 1822, was one of the fine homes of the county until it was destroyed by fire in the late 1940s. (Salem Times-Register)

Catawba Hospital were the spring as it goes down below, the water pump and one of the old hotel buildings that was still left. Most Virginians are familiar with the spring culture. The people from the deep South coming up here to take the waters and creating a whole vacation culture here around the springs.

Historic preservation and concerns for preservation of architecture, indeed concerns about architecture generally, begin at the point where I did not begin, at the mansion phenomenon. In the period following the Civil War, large mansions were those that brought the attention of architecture to most people's attention. There are a few of these and I emphasize, a few, around in Roanoke County.

One of the grandest of the mansions in the Roanoke County area is Pleasant Grove, west of Salem, dating from 1853. This was not a large slave holding country, not great mansion building country. Pleasant Grove is a four-over-four, with four rooms down and four rooms up center hall. One of the most interesting things about Pleasant Grove is the fine architectural detail on the front which was put out on the house by Gustavus Sedon, a German carpenter/handyman contractor. The house has interesting Ionic columns which Sedon carved and a cast-iron balcony up on the top which Sedon or Joseph Deyerle, the owner of this house, ordered probably from Lynchburg or maybe from Richmond. Some day I'll pursue this iron work but it's interesting to know that the exact same iron work is on the Witherow house in Lexington, on a house in Main Street in Lynchburg, and another building in Richmond.

Those things under the carving of the columns imitate forms which he had seen in architectural handbooks. The joint has been painted. The line between the bricks has been painted. In areas today where brick work has been protected from the elements, you often see this. Nineteenth century brickmaking was, to put it bluntly, done very sloppily and 19th century bricklaying was sloppy too. They painted in the lines to make it look better than it was. There was no name for it back in the 19th century, but it was the highly admired thing to do. Pleasant Grove had a grill ventilator at the top of the house to allow air to come and go. Sedon, who carved this grill, had a very distinctive curvilinear kind of carving. These elements he brought from the local lumber mill. This is a typical Sedon adaptation of American Greco-Roman motifs. In fact, I think they'll say that Sedon was one of Roanoke County's most interesting early citizens. He was a German who came into the United States through the Port of Baltimore and walked, according to family oral tradition, to the Roanoke County area. His dates are 1820 - 1893.

He was what you would think of today as a competent carpenter, handyman, small-time contractor. He didn't build buildings, he ornamented them. He put the

woodwork on Pleasant Grove, he carved the columns, he put the woodwork on West Dormitory at Hollins and a number of other places.

I'm sure you are probably aware that the best scholarly discoveries are often the simplest discoveries. A number of years ago, students at Hollins College and myself were working on Sedon. We were trying to find out all we could about him. We'd heard his name here, we'd heard his name there. We didn't know where to go so we were tracing his genealogy down the line and we came up to fairly current ties. And one of my young lady students said, look in a phone book. We picked up the county phone book and found the name of his descendants, dialed the number and yes, we had Sedon's journal. We have his daybooks, we have his tools. And even better we had the chest which he probably brought over from Germany with him.

Progressing on Sedon, let me mention there's a lot of research yet to do in Roanoke County. Not only do you have Sedon, but a lot of other people. We have, for instance, over in the Roanoke County courthouse the entire inventory down to the last nail, screw, screwdriver, saw, it goes on three or four pages, of a cabinet maker who was working in the county in the period just before the Civil War. Wouldn't it be nice to find some furniture by him?

Wouldn't it be nice to find some ancestors of him? I ran his genealogy as far as I can afford to and then I had to stop. All sorts of wonderful research projects are still left in this area.

Johnsville Meeting House is a classic example of that, one of those wonderful little buildings in Roanoke County, indicative of the old culture which is still here, the Dunkard culture. The top floor has one of the most wonderful spare, lean interiors in this entire section. It was built between 1871 and 1872, on very good evidence. But there is still a lot of work to be done on Dunkard culture and any type of architecture they built. In our liberated society, the meeting house has separate doors for the men and the ladies. It's off Rt. 785 in Catawba. You can't see it from the road, over the hill. It's just about two miles this side of the Montgomery County line.

Hollins College is the outstanding educational complex within the county. Hollins architecture is particularly interesting because it has grown and changed as architecture changes, not in one consistent style. Looking across the quadrangle, Main Dorm had decorations put on it by Sedon.

In Sedon's daybooks, his journals, all these bits and pieces of decorations are noted. Sedon was a very interesting character with a wry sense of humor, even though he had trouble with his spelling in English. One year just before the Civil War, his journal notes that he had to build a walkway to the necessary--a walkway to the outhouse behind the building. The next year he cryptically noted a cover for the walkway to the necessary. Obviously, the young ladies didn't like getting wet as they walked downstairs.

One of the most enigmatic buildings on the Hollins campus is East Dormitory, built in 1856/1858. I wish I could find the architect of this building. Early Hollins records give me lots of names but I can't put them together with an architect. The prototypes of this building are very interesting. They are springs resort architecture that you see up in West Virginia and in Virginia in that particular area. The funny thing, it blew my mind when I found it and someday I'll go to print with this, is a military barracks near New Orleans with almost the same form. Now, something is going on there and I'm not quite sure yet. It's an excellent research project for someone.

Generations of Hollins students and maybe some of you who haven't been on the Hollins campus in some time remember East Dormitory without the straight-run staircase. In 1974, you may remember, the federal government had some very stringent codes and regulations about helping to occupy buildings. We tore our hair at Hollins on how to get this building to conform to the new codes. There were wild schemes from fire escapes out of the side, bursting through walls and doing all types of things to this building until then President Carroll Brewster and myself said let us look at the 1857-58 Hollins College catalog and there was a straight run of stairs. It had been taken off prior to the Civil War and the balustrade

run across there. The staircase now is aluminum, by the way covered with wood, which helps to make the building conform to the 1974 code.

One of the earliest architectural remnants that I know in this entire section is in the little treasure room, as it is called, at Hollins. This is the mantelpiece from Botetourt Springs hotel, which was built by Charles Johnston in 1820. It's the last remnant of this springs resort hotel which stood on the site of what is now Hollins College. Stylistically and according to the oral tradition which comes down at Hollins, I have no reason to doubt that fireplace mantel is not what it is said to be.

Prosperity came slowly in the Roanoke County area during the period of post-Civil War. But architecturally the prosperity is represented by a house which is off of Plantation Road, design circa 1882, which represents the coming of the first boom to the Roanoke Valley. Roanoke City had its boom, with the coming of the railroad. Salem had its boom with all the promoters, boosting the town and little pockets here and there throughout Roanoke County. This building represents this idea of pockets of prosperity. You have farmers, merchants and lawyers. You have doctors, who could afford up-to-date architecture, and in times embellished their houses with the wooden millwork which was being turned out commercially in this area. If you keep your eyes open you can see these same forms on some of the streets of Salem. You can see these same forms on the streets here and there in Roanoke City. They were buying them from the same place and putting them on their houses.



An old German bake oven, unique in the Roanoke Valley, stood near Hanging Rock for an estimated century and a half until it was moved to the Blue Ridge Institute at Ferrum in the summer of 1987. (Roanoke Times & World-News)

Architecturally, let me finish up with two problems: Roanoke County in the 20th century is faced with two fundamental problems. The first one is urban spoils. What are we going to do architecturally with what is happening to us as suburban

shopping malls, various buildings and factories take over our available land? Suburban malls threaten to engulf all of us. Structurally, does any of this have any merit? I think I can say quite equivocally, no, it does not.

The second architectural problem and the one which I would like to leave with you is at the same place where I started with you—the architecture by-the-side-of-the-road. We had best start taking a look at what is still on the sides of our road. We drive past it, we overlook it. It's time to take a good look at what is happening to our county. It's time to take a good look positive and if it's the best kind of thing, it supports our taxation for the county, then it's time to take a look as to whether this architecture is good looking or bad looking. Some people would say this is the vernacular folk architecture of the 20th century. These are the log cabins and outbuildings, maybe, of the 20th century, the forgotten and overlooked by the side of the road. So I'll leave you in the same place that I started with you on the side of the road.

How Did Colleges Choose Locations In The 19th Century?

by Mark Miller and Tony Thompson

MILLER:

If I were to ask you to identify a time in American higher education when schools will blossom, where higher education is transformed, perhaps the period that would come most readily to mind, something that most of us have lived through, would be the recent 1960s or the early 1970s. Small colleges around the country are transformed overnight as institutions, many times their earlier form and stature of the late 1950s or early 1960s. Many state universities, small schools in the 1960s, become major comprehensive universities by the early 1970s.

If there is a more familiar story and a closer example to home of a boom time in American higher education, I suppose a story less familiar but in many ways even more significant is an earlier boom and this comes in the mid-years in the 19th century. Between 1830 and 1860, no fewer than 516 colleges and universities were established around this country. Being someone who teaches geography and being a little bit interested in things graphic, I spent a summer a few years ago, attempting to identify just where in the 19th century would these 516 schools be located. From a little map, I wondered exactly why that distribution might look the way it did.

A rather stylized view of American demographics of 1850 shows centers of population in this country before the Civil War, roughly existing across the upper Midwest with concentrations along the East Coast megalopolis still with us today.

But the location of the schools gives no relation at all to questions of population, of accessibility, of markets or of strategy that many private schools and

*Dr. Mark Miller of Roanoke College and Tony Thompson of Hollins College described the formation and early student bodies of their schools. Miller has been assistant professor of history and geography at Roanoke since 1979. A graduate of Loyola University of Los Angeles, he holds master's and doctoral degrees from the University of North Carolina. He is working on a Roanoke College history and he was principal author and general editor of **American Military History Time Line**. Thompson was archivist and administrator of the rare book collection at Fishburn Library at Hollins for about six years until he moved to Lexington, Kentucky last fall. He is a graduate of the University of Virginia.*

public schools are certainly concerned with to an extent even in the 20th century. When you put the locations of the colleges and a map of population centers together, they're almost exclusive. The locations of the colleges and centers of population along the coast and farther to the interior are there with seemingly no relationship at all between the two. The question that I started with was how could you make sense of those two rather disparate pictures.

To me, one statement was useful early on, a statement suggesting that you and I, as members of the 20th century, expect to live. We expect to be healthy. We expect to continue. We have our hopes and aspirations and dreams to be doing something a few months from now, a couple of years from now. And I think it's fairly honest to say that members of our society in the 19th century truly expected to die. They didn't expect to be here a few years from now or five or 10 or 30 or 40 years from now.

And I suppose if you expect to die and if you're concerned about environment and questions of health and one's survival, you attempt to order things and arrange a society a little differently. I think that's what we're looking at. Another question I had to ask of the 19th century was who is doing the selecting of schools. That is probably more for the 19th century than for the students we would meet today in the 20th century.

If our students would tell you today that they chose Roanoke College or they selected Hollins or they decided to go to Virginia Tech, in many ways that is a legitimate response. They were the ones doing the choosing. Parents are going to be there at some point to help or referee or decide matters of finance when that's appropriate. But in many ways, students' selection process today is essentially their own.

In the 19th century, I suspect that was less the case. Probably a more appropriate response would be that the parents of affluent males and a few females in the 19th century are doing the selection. The parents are the ones deciding where they are going to take their young son and where would they put him for safe-keeping for a period of some time, two, three, four years, whatever the program might stipulate.

I think what we are looking at then is a 19th century picture where colleges are almost monastic in their arrangement. They're in the hills. They're in places that are perceived by 19th century Americans, they couldn't have explained why, but they were almost on the right track. They're putting the schools in places that they believed to be healthy, a little more distant and remote from population centers.

In the 19th century, cities were awful places. There was disease in the cities, there were epidemics in the cities, associated with clusters of population. There was crime and there was temptation in the cities, as well. If we're talking about young males in the 19th century, they are always going to be led astray. Perhaps parents felt at least concerned that the young males could be tempted by evils of city life in the 19th century. So where do we put our young sons? We almost put them away. You don't bury them in mountains but rather you put them in the kind of outlying regions of mountains. You want some kind of accessibility, I suppose. So when you go back to get little Langhorne for vacations or back in the fall or back in the spring, you want to be able to get to him at some point with some ease and you don't put him in the center of the mountains. You put him in the first folds of the mountains.

Obviously, Roanoke and Hollins are precise examples of that kind of national picture. They believed that what could be a better response to ensuring their son's survival, education and general enlightenment. But for safekeeping, they would identify a college network that identified with the mountains.

I'll read you a section from the Roanoke College catalog entitled "climate and health:"

"The Roanoke Valley has a climate noted for its equitability, its summers being seldom too warm and its winters free from excessive cold. In the salubrious climate few of the diseases which infest many portions of the country are known. Most

young men from lower altitudes improve greatly in physical health and consequently in mental vigor after a stay of some months in this mountainous region."



What yarns were spun when the Confederate veterans gathered on the Roanoke College campus for a reunion. Dr. Charles J. Smith, popular Roanoke president from 1920 to 1949, stood at the rear center in this photograph made at Rose Lawn, the college president's home. (Salem Times-Register)

This is the whole 19th century notion of spas and resorts. If there was a Fort Lauderdale, if there was a place that Robin Leach's television program, "Lifestyles" might have gone to a hundred years ago, it might have been Salem. It might have been right here with a concentration of hotels. The Greenbrier and the Homestead today are just vestiges of this old order and it was an impressive one, certainly, a century ago.

"Within a radius of 30 miles of Salem are seven resorts for mineral water, while in the immediate vicinity are both sulphur and chalybeate springs. Salem also attracts a number of summer visitors. Families from different sections of the country find here the comforts of a home while affording their sons the educational advantages of Roanoke College."

That says in two simple paragraphs what I've suggested in a couple of minutes. The trick about that quotation though is this doesn't come from a 19th century catalog. Roanoke College is still presenting that picture in 1939.

THOMPSON: I'm not going to be covering the entire history of Hollins College. I'm going to give a thumbnail sketch of one part of one aspect of Hollins, its students. That means I won't be saying anything about endowments or faculty committees or curriculums or building programs, things I know you're on the edge of your seat to hear about. But instead I'll be talking about students which perhaps we academics like to think less about.

Anyway, what kind of girl came to Hollins in the 19th century? I use the word "girl" advisably here because the average age of a student who came to Hollins in the 19th century was much lower than the average age that a college student is now.

And there are a couple of reasons for that which I'll mention.

What kind of girl came to Hollins in the 19th century? How did she fill her time outside of class? What did she think about? Did she ever leave the campus? Was she superstitious? What about religion? How did she meet boys? Or did she meet boys? What in short was it like to go to Hollins?

Well, I shall begin by saying something about the founding of Hollins. In direct corroboration of what Mark Miller is saying, Hollins was a hotel watering place with sulphur and chalybeate springs in the 19th century. The hotel went bankrupt in 1842 and an itinerant Baptist minister named Joshua Bradley came and founded a little coeducational school. Hollins was coeducational for the first 10 years of its existence.

However, the school struggled quite a bit and in 1846 the trustees of Hollins called Charles Lewis Cocke, who was from the Richmond area, a very young man, to take over the school. It had no name up to that point, so he called it the Valley Union Seminary. Cocke was 26 years old at the time, very serious and intensely Protestant. He had a capacity to take almost infinite pains with what he perceived to be his life's work. And furthermore he had this ability to inspire his teachers and his family with the same sort of intensity about education.

Cocke soon found what had been Bradley's problem. Bradley was only associated with the school a couple of years. Bradley's problem was he didn't have any money and the discipline problem with the young men was almost overwhelming. I'm going to read you a little bit from the demerit book that Cocke kept in 1847. The names are of students, all male.

"Lewis, guilty of making an unusual noise at night. Williams, heard swearing. McClanahan, charged with communicating with a female department on several occasions. Jordan, accused of using drink on the premises. Sergeant, shot a pistol on way to the Dunkard meeting."

The sort of lore of Hollins College is that Cocke very early on in his life had decided that he would devote himself to the higher education of women. Now, I don't dispute that but I think it is fairly evident that he had, as many teachers do, very little interest in discipline. He wanted to teach so in 1851 he persuaded the trustees to let him abolish the male department. In 1852 Hollins became all female, as it has been ever since.

Before the Civil War, they were largely from surrounding counties, Roanoke, Montgomery, Franklin, Bedford and Botetourt. When war broke out, there were 113 students, almost all from Virginia. Of course, Virginia included West Virginia then so it was somewhat a larger geographical area they were from.

Now, by the end of the century that had changed completely. In 1894 there were 184 students, not that many more but they were from 21 different states and occasionally they began to come from foreign countries.

We don't have any direct evidence of the social status of our students. The only thing we have to go on pretty much is the father's name and whether there was a title involved. Before the war, military titles might be helpful. Of course, after the war almost everyone had a military title so that doesn't give us any very good clue about what their social status was. But titles such as doctor and judge sometimes give us an indication about what kinds of families these students came from. They largely came from good families, especially before the war.

It changed after the war quite a lot. It was after the war that Hollins established its normal school, a school for teachers, because there were so many indigent students coming to go to school here. Students were also from the country. Again corroborating what Mark has said, when Cocke wrote in 1857 about "a country school for country girls" he was emphasizing his institution's location and appealing to those who he expected to patronize it. Students were not only going to a country school, they were from the country to begin with. This is true of Hollins but I don't know how true that is nationally.

The students were young. The collegiate structure in the 19th century, especially outside the male universities, was not at all standardized as it is today.

Students, especially female students, and this goes for the Northeast as well as for down here in the South for the "seven sister schools", were often young because the standard of education wasn't as high as in the male universities. Also, the later teen years for a young lady were the years she got married and especially in the rural south, parents were unwilling to commit their children to school at a later age, at least their female children.

Now to our modern eyes, the amount of regulation is just incredible with these young ladies that came away to school. They largely were leaving home to go to school. There were very few day students, for example, Nannie Armistead kept a diary at Hollins in the late 1860s. She writes:

"The rules are tolerably strict. The rising bell is rung at 5:30 a. m. Miss Sally Ryland, the governess, takes the girls to walk; 6:30 praying; breakfast 7 a. m.; 8 a. m. school commences. Then school all day. At 6 in the evening, walk again; 7, supper; 10, the retiring bell is rung."

This pretty much covers the entire day. Every waking minute almost seems to be covered by these regulations. Again in corroboration of what Mark was saying, these schools at the foothills of the mountains were perceived for women especially, even more than for men, as places of protection. In fact during the Civil War, we actually had more students at Hollins rather than less students because families in the east were sending their girls to Hollins for protection.

Cocke's idea in establishing a school for young women was a very progressive idea in the 1840s but the context of that education for young women must have been very conservative. He would not have gotten students if he hadn't been willing to have a very protective environment for them. This, of course, reflected 19th century ideas about femininity anyway. Women would be unsexed if they would become mannish or if they were exposed to the sort of world as we think about it, like cities. Of course, the greatest danger was men.

A rule that sort of crosses the entire second half of the 19th century during Cocke's tenure is:

Young ladies will not be allowed the attention of gentlemen while connected with this institute.

Well, does that mean there were no men? No, it doesn't mean that at all. Men came quite often as a matter of fact. There were lots of ministers and fathers and brothers were always seeming to swing by. Students often were here during holidays and then there was a virtual cataract of visitors and many of these were young men, plus there were professors. The structure of women's education in the South, at least, didn't allow for very many women teachers. They were almost all men. They brought their families. They had sons. As we progressed towards the end of the century, the rules relaxed somewhat. Nannie Armistead records in the 1860s that she and a bunch of her friends wanted to get together and invite a local, very handsome, young Methodist minister to come every month and preach at Hollins. Ada Bryant, in another diary in the '90s, gives this little description of an evening of entertainment at Hollins.

"After the concert we all went to the parlors. Anna Taylor called me and I went over to her and I met lots of Salem boys. I thought they were all rather tacky. I talked to Mr. Whitman and Mr. Walden the most. I think Mr. Walden is the cutest. He is going to be an Episcopal minister and he said he is coming to Kansas sometime. Of course, that is just because I'm from Kansas. Mrs. Childs rang her bell at 11, I think it was, and we were walking out, that is, I was walking out with some of the boys and Mrs. Childs said, walk right on up the stairs, young ladies, and I had to skip to my room."

Well, so, the regulations were one thing and the prohibitions about young men were one thing but the life as it was lived was quite different. This was sort of a continual battle that administrations have to fight all the time. Nannie Armistead regularly reports that even though the going-to-bed bell is rung at 10, she was staying up past midnight studying for her exams. She also reports how three girls tried to hire a wagon to take them to Salem. They were caught though. Another

thing that students liked to do in the dorms, as recorded in the literary magazine for November 1878:

"Some of the amusements most enjoyed by the girls were screaming, hallowing, vamping and running through the halls."

This hasn't changed. eating was a constant delight. I think between 1900 and 1910 at least seven different chafing dish clubs were formed. One of them was called "Etta Hunk of Pi." Probably during the 19th century the most common clubs were the literary societies and almost all colleges during this period had them. Roanoke College did. In this case they were called the Euzelian and the Euepian societies. These were basically debate or literary societies. Readings were given but they also performed a socializing function. They let students get away from their professors for a little while and also talk about serious subjects.

Students weren't always running through the hall. They did have very serious lives, academic lives outside their rooms and they published a literary magazine.

Cocke was an ardent Baptist and he made sure he helped found the Enon church which is right across the road from Hollins. He was also very much nonsectarian and he encouraged students to practice their religion any way they wanted to as long as they practiced it. They were willing. When the missionary society was formed in 1860, one-half of the school showed up. Chapel met twice a day and still students looked forward to revivals and going to church in Salem. At that time, Salem was two hours away from Hollins because you had to go by wagon.

The students were also superstitious and I want to read you an exchange of letters that I find very amusing. I don't know how instructive it is but a woman is writing to Cocke about her daughter in 1896:

"Dear Sir: I have received a letter from my daughter stating that she has a room on the third floor which is called the devil's room. Now I do not know what the meaning of devil's room is but I would like for you to please give her a room on the second floor. I am paying you what you asked and I expect my daughter to be comfortable."

A few days later:

"My dear Madam: Your letter of the 19th instant has been received in which you state that your daughter wrote you a letter saying she was on the third floor which is called the devil's room. Such a term or phrase, we have never heard before and certainly should not be in vogue around refined young ladies. I immediately sent for your daughter and asked her about this matter. She at once declared that she never wrote any such thing."

Then he goes on and talks about some of the accommodations in the various building and concludes, saying:

"Your daughter has a very comfortable and pleasant room. As comfortable and pleasant a room as any on the place and her surroundings are respectable as any. I hope this will prove satisfactory to you. Yours truly, Charles Lewis Cocke."

Well, there was, there still exists quite a lot of speculation about the devil's room, I haven't been able to trace that about a ghost at Hollins. This is something I get questions about almost annually.

I've left out sports, health, clothing--they were obsessed with clothing, their friendships--they had passionate friendships. I've left out money, politics--there was a lot of talk about politics, especially with the suffrage movement in the early part of the century. Also there was a great deal of talk about the very usefulness of educating women. I left out slavery and race. There's a good deal of talk about that. I've left out things like dancing and concerts.

But I hope I've conveyed a little bit of the vibrancy and the seriousness and the humor that was going on at this women's college in the 19th century. We tend to have a very patronizing idea about the past and I think we tend especially to have a patronizing idea about single-sexed institutions. A lot was going on at Hollins in the 19th century. Despite the sort of circumscribed nature of life for these young women students, they lived rich lives.

Roanoke County Schools' Legacy

by Bayes E. Wilson and Norma J. Peters

In Virginia the concept of public education was slow to be accepted. Prior to the Civil War, various attempts to develop public schools slowly evolved into the foundation for a free school system. When Virginia adopted a plan in 1870 to inaugurate public education statewide, some other states had systems which had been in operation for almost 100 years.

Education Prior to 1870

Educational opportunities on the frontier in western Virginia were similar to those in the older settlements in eastern Virginia. Wealthier settlers often employed tutors to provide education for their children. Some of them, including William Preston, allowed their neighbors--rich and poor--to send their children to classes provided by these tutors. Prior to the Separation Act of 1802, churches were involved in providing basic education for children on the frontier. For example the Reverend John Craig, noted Presbyterian minister, wrote of his visitations to frontier communities in the Roanoke Valley to preach the gospel and teach the children the rudiments of reading, writing, and counting.

As early as 1779, Thomas Jefferson proposed a plan for public education. His bill finally passed in 1796, but it was amended and changed to the point of making it weak and ineffective. Although Jefferson's bill failed to establish a system of public education, it stimulated and kept alive the idea of free schools supported by the state.

The Literary Fund was established in 1810 by the Virginia General Assembly for the purpose of setting aside money to be used for a school or schools in each county. Many of the attempts to provide public education during the early years of the nineteenth century were met with little enthusiasm. Education at public expense was looked down upon and thought to be for paupers. Even some of the poorer people were suspicious that publicly funded education was "aid" and an attempt to pauperize them.

Although public schools in Virginia prior to the Civic War were mainly for paupers, several significant legislative acts provided the basis for the public school system that would begin in 1870. These acts included establishment of the Literary Fund in 1810, the Act of 1818 augmenting the Literary Fund and assuring a type of public education from state funds, and the District Free School Act of 1829

This paper on the beginnings of public education in Virginia and Roanoke County was presented by Dr. Bayes E. Wilson, Roanoke County superintendent of schools. The paper was written by Wilson and Dr. Norma Jean Peters, county supervisor of social studies and foreign languages. Wilson earned a bachelor's degree and a doctorate from Virginia Tech and a master's degree from the University of Virginia. Earlier, he was business manager and assistant superintendent of county schools and principal of Salem High School. Dr. Peters is a graduate of Trevecca College and she holds a master's degree from George Peabody College and a doctorate from Virginia Tech. She has been chairperson of the Social Studies Department at Northside High School, an adjunct professor at the University of Virginia Roanoke Center, co-author of a manual and workbook for Virginia History and Geography, winner of the Outstanding Alumni Award for the Virginia Tech College of Education and president of Southwestern Virginia Genealogical Society.

providing the first authorization of state funds for school buildings and furniture. The District Free School Act of 1846 provided public educational opportunity for any white child between the ages of six and 21 with any cost beyond the Literary Fund allocation to be levied on the county as determined by the school commissioners. The 1851 Constitution provided for a portion of a capitation tax to be allocated to primary and free schools, and a special authorization was given in 1806 for the Town of Charlottesville to establish a public school from local taxation (to the extent of \$200).

History of the County School System

As a result of the passage of the District Free School Act in 1846, Roanoke County made a meager attempt to establish a public school system. A superintendent, who served without remuneration, was appointed and the county was divided into districts. Efforts were made to seek out indigent children and to find teachers who would teach them the rudiments of education. Little progress was made to provide free schools for all children until after the Civil War.

Some private schools were established in the 1830s and 1840s in Roanoke County. One of the first to be built was Salem Academy which was incorporated in 1837. Numerous other private schools came into existence in the antebellum period, but few students were able to attend these schools because of the tuition cost.

Establishment of The System in 1870

Virginia's new constitution, adopted July 6, 1869, contained the first provision for a complete system of public education in the state. In compliance with the new constitution, Virginia's public school system was inaugurated by legislation on July 11, 1870. Professor Luther R. Holland, who had been principal of a boys' preparatory school at Roanoke College, was appointed the first superintendent of Roanoke County Schools on September 22, 1870. Roanoke County was organized into four school districts--Catawba, Salem, Big Lick, and Cave Spring. Each district had a Board of Trustees with one member chosen annually for a three-year term. The members of the first boards were influential members of the community and were often shopkeepers, merchants and persons holding positions of political leadership. Their responsibilities were to enforce the school laws; hire and fire teachers; suspend or dismiss pupils; supply textbooks, buildings and equipment; call meetings of parents; and arrange votes on school taxes. They were allowed a clerk who was to take the school census and keep a record of the trustees' meetings. The clerk received a per diem pay of two dollars.

The first recorded meeting of the district trustees was held on December 10, 1870. This meeting outlined how the districts should proceed with the organization of schools. The following plan was adopted and published in the county newspaper:

Persons living in the vicinity of any school house in the county may have a free school established among them by complying with the following conditions:

- 1st Provide a comfortable school house with all the necessary furniture.
- 2nd Admit to the school all the children of the proper age within a district of such a size as will secure an average daily attendance of twenty scholars for five months.
- 3rd Employ a teacher who has a certificate of qualifications from the County Superintendent and who shall be appointed by the Trustees.
- 4th Raise by subscriptions or donations, an amount equal at least to one third of the teacher's salary.

5th Begin the school before March 1st and continue it five months previous to September 1st.

6th Place the school in all things under the regulations of the public free school law.

To any school complying with these conditions, the district trustees will appropriate an amount sufficient to make up the teacher's salary, they reserving the right of saying what the salary shall be; and will establish schools in the order of time in which they apply until the funds are exhausted.

The trustees will appoint a public meeting at any school house when requested to do so by two or three citizens interested in having a free school at that point.

At this meeting the trustees will ascertain whether the conditions above named will be complied with in that neighborhood.

Beginnings, 1870-92

In 1870-71, the superintendent's report listed 23 school buildings, 1,113 students enrolled, 571 average daily attendance, and 23 teachers. Tuition was \$1.13 for each pupil each month. Teachers had a student-teacher ratio of 48:1 in enrollment and 25:1 in attendance. The entire cost of education in 1870-71 was \$3,560.56 and the state paid \$2,695.35 of that amount.

Most of the early schools were one-room buildings with one teacher. There was little in the way of teaching materials. Few of the schools had blackboards and the textbooks provided the basis of the instruction. In 1871, trustees adopted four textbooks: **Holmes Readers and Spellers, Maury's Geography, Davies Arithmetic and Harvey's Grammar.**

School trustees leased some school buildings, and others were constructed according to the needs of the communities. The Academy Street School building in Salem, which had been operating as the Salem Male and Female Academy, was leased in 1871 and subsequently purchased by the Salem District School Board. The first Roanoke County public school for black children opened in 1872 in a frame building on Chapman Street in Salem. A new six-room frame building was built in 1890 on Union Street extending to Chapman Street. This school was later called the Roanoke County Training School and served black students until the new Carver School was built in 1939-40. The Hartman School, named for the family who owned the land on which the school was built in 1875, was typical of the early buildings. Located near the present site of the Roanoke County Public Safety Building (formerly Southview School), the building was 25 feet x 35 feet with four windows and a door. The seats were benches with attached desks with seating for six children on each. There were 30 or 40 children enrolled and one teacher was employed. The children were expected to carry water and chop wood for the stove.

Minutes of May 1872 recorded the school board called for a countywide tax levy of 7.5 cents per \$100 for county school purposes and a levy of equal amount for district purposes. At the same time another tax for education, a dog tax of 75 cents, was imposed. In two of the districts, Cave Spring and Catawba, the amount raised for education from the dog tax was almost as much as the general levy. The amount levied indicated a dog population of 1,932. At the same time the census of school age children listed 3,140.

The superintendency in the early days was considered almost an honorary position. Superintendents were appointed by the State Board of Education and received very little salary. Short terms of service may have been indicative of the economic sacrifice required of those who served. The salary was to be \$15 per 1,000 of population in the county plus \$5 for each one-teacher school and \$10 for each graded school, but the total was not to exceed \$350 per year.

After serving as superintendent for two years, Luther Holland left Roanoke

County in 1872 to take a position in Richmond as secretary of the State Board of Education. Although acceptance of public education was slow, Holland noted in the *Virginia School Report for 1872* that "public sentiment concerning public schools has improved . . . the supervisors promptly and unanimously levied the maximum rate of taxation and expressed a regret that they were not permitted to do more." He indicated that some very influential citizens were sending their children to public schools and that some thought these schools to be superior to those in existence before. Some of the schools ran for only three months; others for five months.

Major William W. Ballard served as superintendent from 1872-1883. He was an attorney and had served as a school trustee for the Salem District. His experience was no doubt valuable in the formative years of school administration. In his report in 1880, he indicated that much progress was being made in education in the county. He predicted that the "children of the more ignorant classes will surpass their parents in intelligence."

Marshall P. Frantz, who had previously served as a teacher and a school trustee, served as superintendent from 1883-1885. He stated in his 1885 annual report that "the system has been steadily growing in public favor, until now there is no open opposition--all classes accepting it as an institution that is here to stay, and determine to make the most of it."

Professor William M. Graybill served a short two-year term from 1885-1887. He had been a principal of the Academy Street School in Salem and was known as a very successful conductor of teacher training institutes in various counties of the state.

In the late 1870s and the 1880s, public education showed increases in attendance, numbers of schools, numbers of teachers, and costs. Gradually the stigma of pauper schools began to decline. The increase of population in the 1880s and the development of the City of Roanoke resulted in growth in public education. Roanoke was made a separate school district with a city superintendent in 1885-86.

In 1887 Luther R. Holland, who had served as Roanoke County's first superintendent, returned to the superintendency. In a controversial move, Superintendent Holland condemned the old Academy Street building, and this action led to the construction of a new eight-room building which opened in 1890. Superintendent Holland served until 1892 when he resigned because of ill health.

Early Days, 1892-1906

Reaumur Coleman Stearnes of Dublin served as superintendent from 1892 to 1906. This was a time when calls were coming from all quarters for improvement of public education. The 1902 Constitution of Virginia extended the powers of the State Board of Education. The "May Campaign" of 1905 featured Governor A. J. Montague and other distinguished Virginians making speeches across the state supporting improvements in public education. It was during Stearnes' tenure that the beginning of consolidation and standardization of schools took place in Roanoke County. The Stearnes administration established a graded course of study throughout the county in 1893-94. Two advanced grades were added in 1894 creating a three-year high school. A second building was built on the Academy Street site in 1895 to accommodate the high school which became a four-year program in 1900. Named Salem High School, this facility served as the first high school in Roanoke County. The first class of six students from the three-year program graduated in 1896; the first class of nine students from the four-year high school graduated in 1902. Roanoke County was one of a few places in Virginia which had a high school at that time and quickly became known throughout the state for its excellent public schools. In 1906 Stearnes resigned to become secretary of Public Instruction for the state of Virginia. Subsequent to his state positions, he taught mathematics at New York University until his death.



Education wasn't half as important as having a picture taken outside the Narrows School in the Catawba Valley early in the 20th century. (Lucille Brillhart Garman)

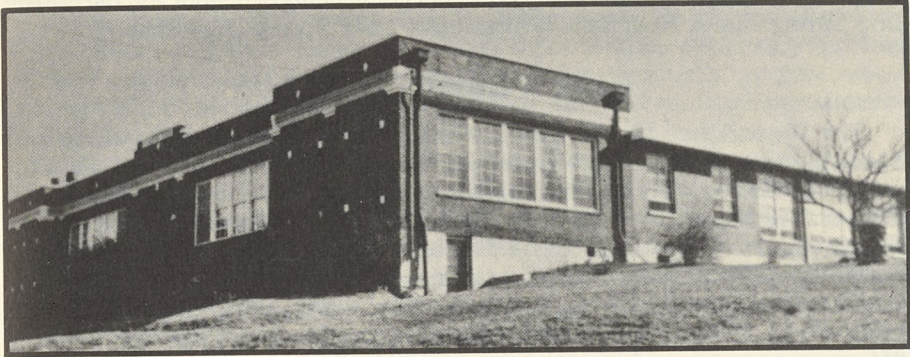
Organization, Consolidation, and Change, 1906-45

Roland E. Cook became superintendent of Roanoke County Schools in 1906. Cook began his career as an educator in 1896 as a teacher in a one-room school in Norwich in Roanoke. He then became principal of the Vinton School and organized and taught the first high school courses in that school. After several years at the Vinton School, he served as principal of Blacksburg High School for one year before being appointed superintendent of Roanoke County Schools in 1906. He served as superintendent for 39 years, a period of sweeping changes in public education in the county. Cook's administration was characterized by increased enrollment, increased staff, consolidation of schools and thorough organization of the Roanoke County Schools as a modern education entity. State legislation in the 1920s changed the local school organization from the district system to a county unit plan with the county school board assuming all responsibility for public schools and eliminating the district boards. The county school board was also given the responsibility of appointing the local school superintendent.

As the enrollment and staff increased, there was a need for more professional activities for teachers. In service activities were developed that dealt with topics that are still major concerns. Topics for discussion at a teacher's meeting in 1913, for example, included "The Physical Welfare and Moral Training of Children in School," "How to Interest Children in History," "Educative Seat Work," "Teaching Poetry to Children," "How to Secure Good Composition Work," "Manual Training," "Teaching Arithmetic," "Means of Interesting Patrons in the School," and "School Fairs." It was also interesting to note that teachers were asked to attend three days of meetings and be paid for two of them. In his annual report of July 31, 1917, Superintendent Cook noted "he was glad to be able to report that every district in the county has increased the salary of teachers by

amounts varying from \$2.50 to \$7.50 per month for the coming session."

In the 1930s more consolidation of schools took place. Transportation by buses began and a variety of new courses was offered. Agricultural, shop, and other vocational training classes were offered in the high schools. Parent-teacher organizations participated in a number of activities to benefit the schools with such projects as beautification, building of playgrounds, equipping auditoriums and, as one account mentioned, buying talking machines, filing cabinets, pianos and books. The parent-teacher organization also assisted in providing free lunches for undernourished children.



The old Mount Vernon Elementary School, now the Roanoke County Administration Building, was constructed in 1926. (Roanoke County Schools)

In May 1932 an election was held to vote on a bond issue for constructing school buildings. It was defeated by 32 votes. The board of supervisors, however, authorized borrowing three-fourths of the money needed for new buildings from the Literary Fund. In 1934 the federal government began making Public Works Administration grants available for buildings and paid up to 45 percent of the cost. During the five-year period following, Roanoke County received federal grants of over \$382,000 and borrowed over \$691,000 from the Literary Fund. This, along with local funds, brought about the construction of or additions to Back Creek, Burlington, Clearbrook, Mount Pleasant, and Southview elementary schools; Andrew Lewis High (now Andrew Lewis Middle School in Salem), William Byrd High (until recently William Byrd Junior High School), William Fleming High (now Breckenridge Junior High in Roanoke City), and Carver High (now G. W. Carver Elementary in Salem) schools. Andrew Lewis, William Byrd, and William Fleming high schools opened in 1933. New construction during this period left Roanoke County with only five one-room schools in 1940. Consolidation of public schools did not come easily. A report attributed to Superintendent Cook suggested that "any person who suggested closing a small county school was branded Public Enemy Number One."

By the end of Cook's administration, the Roanoke County School System had become recognized throughout Virginia for progressive educational practices.

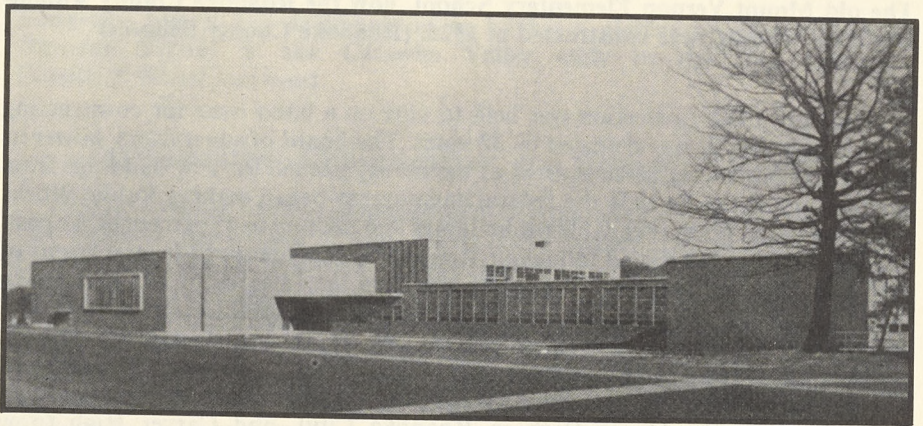
Post-World War II Year, 1945-55

When Cook died in 1945, R. Douglas Nininger was appointed to fill the remaining two years of his term. Nininger, who had served as principal of William Fleming High School and director of instruction under Cook, was reappointed for two more four-year terms. Nininger left the superintendency in 1955 for private business.

The post-war years were times of financial dilemma for Roanoke County. Annexation by the City of Roanoke reduced taxable value in the county by 34 percent. Many school needs such as improvements to buildings had been put off during the war, and it was very discouraging when voters in every precinct rejected a \$3.5 million bond issue for schools in December 1950. In 1950-52 the state provided \$75 million statewide for school buildings. These funds were known as "Battle Funds" in honor of Governor John Battle who was instrumental in gaining approval of the Virginia General Assembly for appropriation of funds for this purpose--the only time before and since that the state has allocated funds for school buildings. Beginning in 1954, additions and improvements were made to certain Roanoke County schools including West Salem Elementary School and the present Cave Spring Junior High School (previously Cave Spring High School).

Years of Growth, 1955-65

The 10-year period while Herman L. Horn was superintendent was one of growth in the Roanoke County Schools. From Mt. Solon, Horn served as a teacher in Augusta County, principal of Troutville High School in Botetourt County, and William Byrd High School in Vinton. He was director of instruction from 1940-42 but left education to serve as a field director for the American Red Cross during World War II. He returned to public education as principal of Marion High School for one year in 1946 and then taught at Hollins College and Virginia Polytechnic Institute prior to being appointed superintendent of Roanoke County Schools in 1955.



Cave Spring Junior High, originally a high school, was built in 1955-56. (Roanoke County Schools)

The late fifties and early sixties was a period of construction in Roanoke County. In 1957 a school bond issue was passed which led to construction of five new schools and additions to eight existing ones. The new schools were Northside High School; and Glenvar, Oak Grove, Mountain View, and Craig Avenue elementary schools. In 1962 another bond issue resulted in five more new elementary schools--Cave Spring, Mason's Cove, Pinkard Court, East Vinton (now Herman L. Horn Elementary), and East Salem.

Years of Rapid Expansion, 1965-80

The growth in Roanoke County continued through the late sixties and into the seventies. Arnold R. Burton was superintendent during the period of rapid growth

which was characterized by increases of 800 students a year and additional expenditures of \$1 million a year. Burton, a native of Rogersville, Tennessee, came to Roanoke County as principal of William Byrd High School. Prior to being appointed superintendent in 1965, he served as assistant superintendent.

In 1969 needs of the rapidly increasing school population were presented to the voters in the form of a \$15.8-million bond referendum for school construction. A massive campaign to promote the bond issue was waged through the media, parent-teacher groups and civic organizations. When the issue was presented to the voters, however, the date was omitted from the official statement making it necessary to vote a second time. The bond issue passed both times. The new schools financed by this issue were William Byrd High; Cave Spring High; Hidden Valley Junior High; Northside Junior High; Roanoke County Occupational School; and Glen Cove, Hardy Road, and Penn Forest elementary schools. Nine elementary buildings received additions including gymnasiums, cafeterias and multi-purpose rooms. During this time period the cost of a junior high/middle school was approximately \$2.5 million and the cost of an elementary school was \$1.5 million.

The 1962-63 school year marked the beginning of racial integration in the Roanoke County School System. The school division, under a court order, was completely desegregated in 1966. Good planning and a cooperative spirit on the part of black and white educators led to a smooth transition. The plan, which included integration of two grades a year, was placed into effect without large scale busing. The final desegregation effort resulted in the closing of Carver as a black school and assigning black teachers to other schools.

Sweeping changes in curriculum and the structure of schooling occurred in the late sixties and seventies. These included kindergarten, special education, elementary guidance, teacher aides, open-space plan, intermediate school concept, and modular scheduling. Vocational education expanded and became more diversified during this time period. The increasing student population and teaching staff including curriculum supervisors, resource coordinators, and directors of major areas. Three assistant superintendents were appointed--Bayes Wilson, Theodore Viars, and Con Davis.

Throughout Burton's tenure an overriding school issue was whether Salem would create a separate school division or remain part of the Roanoke County system. From the time Salem became an independent city in 1968, discussions ensued about creating a separate city school division. Roanoke County continued to operate the Salem schools by a contractual arrangement, and Burton served as superintendent of both divisions. Salem built a new high school in 1977 and funded additions to East Salem and South Salem elementary schools. The complete separation of the two systems came at the conclusion of the 1982-83 school year.

The Eighties and Beyond

The eighties in Roanoke County brought increased challenges to education. Roanoke County lost 3800 students to the new Salem School Division in 1983 and faced declining enrollments in subsequent years. These enrollment decreases coupled with increasing costs for education demanded that educators seek ways to adjust to new situations while maintaining programs which ensured quality education for all students.

Bayes Wilson, a native of Russell County, became superintendent in 1980--only the 10th superintendent of Roanoke County Schools in the history of the public school system since it began in 1870. Prior to his selection as superintendent, Wilson served the county schools as a teacher, business manager, director of finance, high school principal, and assistant superintendent.

In 1988 the Roanoke County School Division served a student population of 13,200 with a staff of 980 teachers and 907 other personnel. Despite declining enrollments, the Roanoke County School System made substantial progress during the 1980s and continued to be considered a flagship school system in

Virginia. Approximately \$15 million was spent from 1980 to 1988 to build a new middle school in Vinton and to provide additions to Cave Spring (two additions), Northside, William Byrd, and Glenvar high schools; and the elementary schools of Mason's Cove, Herman L. Horn, Mt. Pleasant, Glenvar, Cave Spring, Back Creek, and Bent Mountain. Additionally, Northside and Glenvar High schools were air conditioned, and improvements were made at all high school stadiums.

Academic excellence was a major national focus in the 1980s. In keeping with this emphasis, Roanoke County reaffirmed its commitment to excellence and a curriculum which met individual student needs. This commitment brought about increased graduation requirements, the accreditation of all schools, greater emphasis on technological education and more programs designed to meet special needs of students. This focus has resulted in high standardized test scores, academic awards and honors, and the fact that over 80 percent of the graduates pursue post-secondary education. Beginning in 1983, the United States Department of Education sponsored a national program of recognition of exemplary schools for excellence in education. Four Roanoke County schools, Cave Spring High, Hidden Valley Junior High, Mountain View Elementary, and Oak Grove Elementary, received this recognition during four of the first five years of the program—a record unequaled in Virginia and, perhaps, by any other school system in the United States.

As the school system moves toward the twenty-first century, excellence in education for the children and youth of the county continues to be the goal of educators and citizens alike. The challenges are great but the lessons of the past teach us that schools, community, and government working together can meet these challenges. We must plan and prepare for the future.

Appreciation is extended to Deedie Kagey, assistant principal of Penn Forest Elementary School in Roanoke County, for sharing information about the history of the Roanoke County School System from the research for her book, *When Past is Prologue: A History of Roanoke County*; and to Deanna Gordon, director of elementary education, Roanoke County Schools, who provided certain other resource materials.

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Farming Was The Backbone Of Roanoke Area Growth

by Lowell Gobble, P.B. Douglas and Glenn Ramsey

GOBBLE: It's good to see smiling faces and interested people and folks who can contribute, folks who have been around a long time. I'm here simply because I'm the new one on the block, even though I've been here a few years in extension, I'm the new one.

You know agriculture has come a long way in the last 150 years and even the 28 years that I've been here in Roanoke County, I guess I have seen perhaps more development than we have seen before in terms of losing agriculture and the big farms. You know the North Lake Farm, I mean the Wipledale Farm which became North Lakes. Now we're dealing with 200 to 300 citizens over there when it used to be that Harold Craun was the only one asking for information.

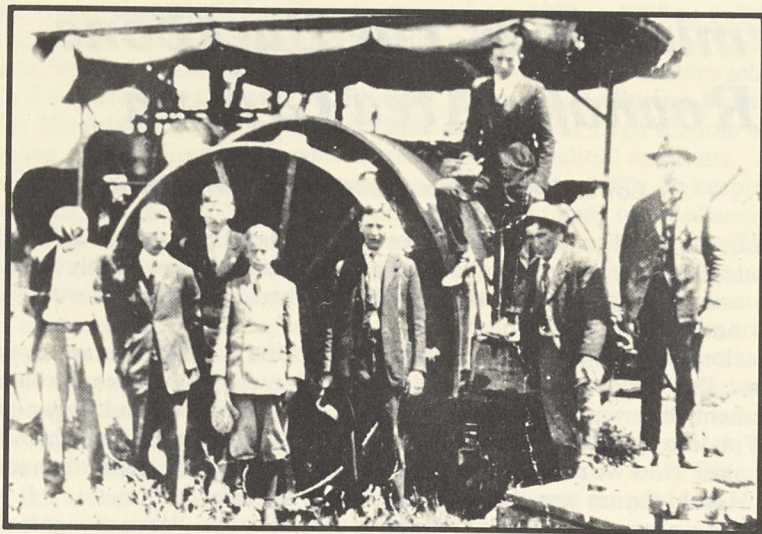
We have changed quite a bit. We have a rich history. We're recognized as the hub of agriculture for Western Virginia. We have been for years and we still are. We go back to the farmer's market down in Roanoke, over 100 years old and it continues in operation. We're going to lose a lot of agricultural history if it's not recorded very soon. As we began to think about folks who could come here tonight and share with us agricultural history, we had real difficulty because those folks that told us about the history have died mostly in the past 10 to 15 years or so. We've lost this generation and if we do not record it very soon, we're going to lose a lot more. But Roanoke is important and agriculture has been a backbone to Roanoke. It has a rich history when we look at the apple orchards, we look at the vegetables, we look at the history of tomatoes, tobacco and we go on back to flax. Is there anyone here that is familiar with tobacco being grown in Roanoke County? Were you a part of it? It was a medium of exchange, not that many years ago and that was one of the primary reasons that it was grown here. You probably have not been associated with flax but it was an important product.

To go back a little bit, take P. B. Douglas, who became my county agent in Washington County when I was in diapers. That's what he tells people so I might as well tell it before he does. So he's known me a long time, really longer than I've known him. He came here and was Roanoke County agent.

DOUGLAS: I was agent here at Salem for three or four years and after that my office was here for nearly a 20-year period in the Southwest District.

We want to take a look at what has happened in this 150-year period from the standpoint of Roanoke County agriculture. The only qualification I really have is that I'm 73 years old, will be 74 in March, and I thinned corn with the son of a slave when I was a 10-year-old boy, for 10 cents an hour. My grandparents on both sides, especially my grandfather on my mother's side were not owners of slaves but his

Joining in a discussion of a century and a half of farming were Lowell Gobble, P. B. Douglas and Glenn Ramsey. Gobble, Roanoke County extension agent since 1960 and unit director since 1967, is a Virginia Tech graduate. He won the National County Agents Distinguished Service Award in 1970. Douglas, president-elect of Salem Historical Society, retired in 1977 after 26 years as district county agent in Southwest Virginia. Earlier, Douglas, also a Virginia Tech graduate, was county agent in Roanoke, Washington and Spottsylvania counties for 14 years. Ramsey has farmed in the Hershberger Road section of Roanoke all of his adult life, except for three years of military service during World War II. Most of his family farm has been taken over by hotels and other commercial developments.



Imagine a threshing crew dressed up in coats and ties! It must have been Sunday afternoon on the Huff Farm.

daddy was. So thinning corn with the son of a slave gave me almost an accurate record of what agriculture was like down in middle Virginia--in Albemarle and Orange counties. As I migrated west, I got my agricultural license from VPI in 1933.

We agreed that we would begin here with the land and the people. The land hasn't changed a great deal. It's still here like we found it. We are preserving it and taking care of it. The land began with the limestone, sandstone and shale soil which is so basic to this valley. It's important to know that one-third of this great state is west of the Blue Ridge Mountains, then the Piedmont, the upper Piedmont with Bent Mountain as the start and the coastal plain area. So the soil is one of the basic things. Now, let's break this 150-year period down into time segments.

The first was one in which we ought to say something about the people. The last Indian raid recorded in history was in 1764 in Catawba Valley. And then Gen. Andrew Lewis, a major at the time, went from Salem to the battle of Point Pleasant, W. Va. when the Indians just wouldn't let us go any farther west than the Alleghany Mountains and the Appalachian Range.

We thought that the following categories of things that have affected the agricultural history could be handled best if done by an outline. We broke this 150-year period into the following categories:

Transportation, energy, education and research, communication, mechanization of agriculture, conservation and environmental concern.

What was transportation all about in the beginning, in 1838? At the start, we had the James and the Roanoke rivers and the canals that brought the people. They also came by foot, by riding horses, or by wagon, all kinds of wagons. Every town or part of a county or city that had any size had a wagon factory, certainly Lynchburg was famous for that. And then the Conestoga wagons, the six shooters and deep wells conquered the West.

Roanoke is the only county in Southwestern Virginia that doesn't have a tobacco allotment at the present time. When the canal was on the James River and during the Revolutionary times tobacco was money and every planter planted it and used it for money. It's still one of the top 10 dollar producers for income for farmers, when we look at it and the value nationwide.

Something happened in 1852 that's recorded in this new county history, when the Virginia-Tennessee Railroad came to town. This is an important date when we

look at what happened to this valley. We've got all the people who came this far and they didn't move very fast until there were ways to travel more efficiently. So one of the first things that helped them was the rivers and canals, then came the railroads. What were the energy resources at that time? Many of the historical societies that exist in this part of Virginia go back to the importance of the grist mill, the flour mill. And every stream that was large enough and had enough volume of water in it, somebody impounded it into a mill dam and they ran the grist mills the old way to make flour. Wheat was one of the important crops in this area.

Then of course, came sources of energy--fuel power, horse power, water power, and then steam power. I remember bagging wheat, some of you men in this room do too, when the little boys held the sacks for the wheat that came out of the threshing machine. The energy was a steam tractor engine that was being fed slab planks by us. That was all the energy it needed.

Something happened in 1862 in the Civil War. How many know that Abraham Lincoln signed the Morrill Act that created the land grant college system? That act probably had more to do with the education of the common man than any other one act that was ever passed by the United States Congress. It provided some type of education and experience to the people who lived all over the land because we had a surplus of acres and that was one way to provide a start. VPI celebrated its 100th year in 1973. It was one of the first land grant colleges to get under way. The Morrill Act had more influence probably than any other one thing in bringing about changes in agriculture. What they were doing was trying to solve problems as they existed on the land.

When the land grant colleges act was passed, there was a great fight here in Virginia about how many places in this state, how many colleges, how many politicians tried to get it located in their area of the state when it got started.

Probably the greatest single thing that has happened that affected agriculture in modern time is the increase in communication and mode of travel. Look what's happened from the telephone, the telegraph, the radio, the TV. WSLs in 1952 opened here in our immediate community. Turn on the TV and 24 hours a day you can see where the hurricane is moving in the next 25 miles and which way it's going. So the farmer knows when to make hay and when not to make hay. The next biggest thing in communication that I see on the horizon is the satellite and worldwide stock market which never closes. Each morning you wake up to see what it did in Tokyo, already a day ahead of time, and what's going on in London and when it opens up in New York. We keep in touch all the time.

Now, the mechanization of farming is one of the other categories when you look back. Joe Gish, the first county agent, starting in 1911, had the second longest service--21 years. He probably had to change more in his time than in any other, being the salesman to bring the information from the college and research stations to us.

There are other dates that are important: 1932, when the Agriculture Adjustment Act, the old AAA, was passed. I see the chairman of the county ASCS, that stands for Agriculture Stabilization and Conservation Services. You see that word conservation has gotten in there now. You stabilize agriculture so that we'll never go hungry. You haven't heard anybody with a good mouthful of food complaining about some of these programs real loud, have you? They don't always agree with some of the things we're doing but that's a fact of life. 1936: Leo Painter, who is here, served as one of the professional technicians in this county for soil conservation.

In 1940-45: "Food will win the war." They turned the farmers loose and oh boy, did they turn them loose! They put it on the line too. It soon became obvious that between 1945-50, mercy, we had to do something about how we were going to manage our production/control program. So in 1950 we had the first soil bank program. Here we are in 1988 and still dealing with the most severe, the most important soil conservation program probably that's ever been enacted by the Congress.

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GOBBLE: Let's remember a couple of dates. The Virginia Agricultural and Mechanical School, now Virginia Tech, was started in 1872 and then the agricultural research station began in 1897. That has brought about the education and the changes that have taken place in the state.

The reaper was invented just up the valley and that has come here locally. Think of Roanoke County, think of Catawba Valley, and Bent Mountain as the only two rural areas that we have left.

Anytime that we talk about agriculture in Roanoke we have to think of the airport and that general Williamson Road area, the Pete Huff and Tom Andrews farms. Then we go to the Kinseys and the Ramseys and several more, and that was sort of a bread basket because that supplied the Roanoke farmers market. That's where the mules were raised that pulled the fire trucks in the City of Roanoke and so many things happened in that general area. That's where the airport was built. That was the bread basket. That's where the largest shopping mall, next to Richmond, has been built.

And so many things that we can get back after the turn of the century when Gordon Ramsey's father came to Roanoke. I would like him to tell us just how high-priced land was in Roanoke County in 1916 and tell us about what we'll call the bread basket of Roanoke County, what is now the shopping center and the metropolis.

RAMSEY: You know it's always a pleasure to talk after Doug (P.B. Douglas) because he takes more than his time and I don't have to say too much. We've been to a lot of conventions together and I'm always glad to get behind him because he takes up plenty of the time.

Lowell asked me to speak a little bit on the Hershberger section. My father bought that tract of land out there in 1909, Gordon (Ramsey, a brother) can remember, he's older than I am. But anyway, Daddy shopped around different areas and counties, but he didn't like the soil there. He wanted to raise vegetables and he wanted to find something that was suitable for that and he found it in that section. He bought it for over \$200 an acre, which was a premium at that time. He could have bought land in other places for \$30-\$40 maybe but he didn't. Everybody said, "You're crazy, Joe, you'll never pay for it." But anyway, he tried. He worked just like Gordon and I do, we don't know when to quit, we just work all the time anyway. He did.

The first year they were obligated to pay this note off. It was early spring and a big frost killed everything. He was about as sad as anybody could be, I reckon. But anyway, my grandmother said, "Now Joe, go back in there and start planting again. You'll make it." And that's what he did. When he finally paid the thing off, they had bought the land from Dr. Allen Kirk. And he said, "Joe if I had thought you were going to pay for this thing, you never would have gotten it in the first place." That was the story of Hershberger.

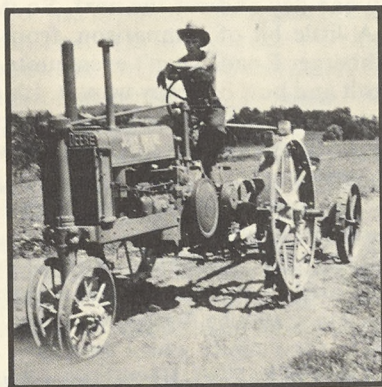
Anyway, we were real fortunate to have the type soil that we had there 'cause if you took care of it, it almost took care of you. I mean you had to treat it like it was supposed to be treated. You had to fertilize it. You had to put green manure back here. Anyway, we learned through daddy and ourselves what to do and how to do it.

In that section, land belonged to Huffs, Andrews, Kinseys and Garsts all around us; the Lackeys, Showalters, Harold Craun, just to name a few. Now all of these didn't raise vegetables but a good many of us did. Back in the '30s and '40s, Roanoke City was an excellent market. It was equal to anything in Greensboro, Winston-Salem, or any of the rest of them. Now when I got up old enough, Daddy put my job as going to the market and that meant getting up 2 or 3 o'clock or 4 o'clock every morning. At the time, we didn't have many super stores like Kroger, Mick-or-Mack, chain stores. For miles around, 100-150 miles of Roanoke, they came in every morning to pick up a load and be out of there by 5 o'clock. They wanted to get back to the store in time to open up. You can sell a pile of stuff to these out-of-town shoppers like that. They had to get back to their stores. And it was a good market, it was an excellent market. Some of you remember it. But times have

changed on that. You go to super markets now and they would just as soon buy from California or anywhere else as they would local. Although we still sell a lot of stuff, people's eating habits are different now than what they used to be. They used to buy the biggest head of cabbage they could get. Now they want the smallest one they can get. I don't know. The younger generation, if it wasn't for the fast food places, I don't know what they would do, to tell you the truth. They could starve plum to death, I reckon.



Three men were riding high on a truck-load of hay on the Joe Ramsey farm off Hershberger Road. (Glenn Ramsey)



A young farmer was proud of his steel-cleated tractor, used until after World War II on the Ramsey Farm. (Glenn Ramsey)

Gordon and I farmed with my father on up 'till Daddy retired and he lived to be 94. So we took the business over and operated under the name of Ramsey Brothers.

We specialized in greens, sweet corn, beets, radishes, no green beans 'cause it took too long to pick them. We had to get something that's in a hurry. We didn't have time to pick beans. We had turnips, lots of them, squash, cucumbers, melons. We just had a variety of everything when it was in. You know, you have to keep something coming in all the time, anyway. Onions, we had that whole valley in onions a number of years, up and down that creek on both sides. It was a good crop. It was a working crop. Back then, you could get help with no problem but as years went on, the labor situation was really against us. We just had to more or less give everything up.

Talking about different areas, toward where the airport is now, that was the Cannaday farm. I was just a kid, a little bitty kid, when I reckon they had the first steam engine and probably the first tractor in Roanoke County. I asked Gordon the other night, I remembered our John Deere was on steel wheels with cleats on it. I think it was a '35 model, wasn't it? So man, we were really getting on with it, when we got rid of the horses. Well, we never got rid of all the horses. But when we got that tractor, we were doing something. We paid \$600 and kept it for about 15 years and still got about \$600 for it. So man, you can't beat that, can you?

You know ever since then, things just keep going up, up, up. You take what a tractor costs today. You know, a small tractor costs about \$20,000. Everything is advanced pricewise, labor, parts, fertilizer, seeds. Name it, it's sky-high. It's amazing, the difference. Well, you take my father. He lived to be 94 years old. From the time he came to Roanoke, look at the difference he saw in his life span.

Hershberger was just a dirt road, nothing but dirt and everybody helped keep it up. Everybody hauled rocks to put on it. I think the first macadam road was Melrose Avenue. I was born in 1919, look at the changes I have seen in that length of time. Not only in history and work. In the service, I saw half the world. It's just a

dramatic change from 10-15-20 years ago for today. I mean pricewise and the way people live, the way they travel, the way they eat. There's nothing you see, look at or taste that ain't going to hurt you anymore. It's going to kill you before it's over with. So you have to be careful in what you do. We do. When we were in vegetables, we had to do a lot of spraying. But we had to be careful. They said wait three days, we always waited seven days before we would sell anything out of that field. We had different fields we could work out of. We didn't have to depend on that one. I don't know how strict they are on it now but I tell you one thing, I've seen some of them spray one day and cut the next. So it didn't kill everybody anyway.

A little bit of comparison, from the \$200 my father paid for that land on Hershberger Road, I can't even quote a price on that anymore. It depends on who wants it and how bad they want it. It's either a shopping center, a motel, restaurant or fast food. We used to not have any trouble flooding with that old creek out there but everytime it come a big hard rain we catch it cause all of the water runs off the hard surface.

Any chance that there will come a time when there are no more working farms in Roanoke County?

RAMSEY: I definitely see that coming, don't you, Lowell?

GOBBLE: At least we will not see them as working farms as we know them today. On Catawba Valley and Bent Mountain they have them but I'm talking about in the vicinity where we are.

RAMSEY: Well, Hershberger Road was still farm land. A lot of it was 10 or 12 years ago but it's not anymore. Crossroads Mall was the first big piece of property sold out there and after that everybody was talking about what a price they got for that. That was just \$15,000 (an acre) and it went down in history as the biggest sale that ever happened in Roanoke County, which probably was at that time.

What about the changes from horse to truck to go to the market?

RAMSEY: The first truck we had was an older truck, solid wheel, solid rubber. I know one thing, I had to stand up to touch the clutch to drive that thing. I was too short to stay on the seat. I'll tell you another little story about that truck. Herbert Thomas used to work for us. Daddy left the hillside down there to get plowed. We were about to work the old horses to death. So Herbert sent me up to get the truck and told me to bring log chains with them. I didn't know what he was going to do. Daddy went away and when he came back we had that hill plowed. He didn't believe it. He said, "What in the World, how did you do it?" We wrapped the log chains around the wheels so the thing wouldn't spin so bad. He held the plow and I drove the truck for him. That's how we got it done.

GOBBLE: There's a publication, "Roanoke Past and Present," and on page 91 it has a picture of Joe M. Gish, the first county agent, who had a demonstration set up on the Roanoke farmer's market in 1906. I understand Gish's farm and across from the farm was immediately adjacent to the Huff farm and across from the Andrews farm. It backed up to the Round Hill School. I understand that he was one of the finest farmers in the county and he was selected as a demonstrator farmer. This was prior to his becoming county agent in 1911. He was down on the farmer's market, just asking questions and as a demonstrator. The great Roanoke Fair of 1908 was pictured. What does the ticket have on it? Horse racing. Parimutuel betting. So I guess horse racing is not new in the Roanoke Valley. They raced around what is now Victory Stadium. That was the race track.

If I could, let me go through some names, like Howard Bush and T. Martin Bush and several of those over in Vinton. W. P. Saul over in Mount Pleasant. Frank McDonald, Fred Gross, John Seibel down Bonsack way, and then the Gish farm and Elmer Layman down in Bonsack. And we go down to Vinton for Darnall, Walter and Sam Vinyard; then over on Peters Creek Road, the Garst family and Harold Craun; the Plunketts and then the Huffman farms. Levi and several of the Huffmans happened to be at Exit 41 on Interstate 81. The Jamisons and then the Bowmans had the finest Jersey farm in the United States up at Salem. Then we would go to Poages Mill.

Jerry Morgan over in Catawba raised draft horses for fire stations and many others in Catawba. The Dr. Hugh Trout farm down Hollins way; the Albert farm is now Greenhill Park up in Salem; another fine farm, the Chapman farm, became Catawba Hospital and now the VPI research station over in Catawba. And then purebred breeders like Russell Johnson, Earl Simms, T. D. Steele, who came along. And we have to mention our fruit growers that this county is probably the most famous for. We would love to tell the story about the pippin apples and how they went to England and the queen exempted them from export. Paul Grisso can tell you all about it. The Back Creek Orchard Co. was probably the largest orchard in the county and it's now almost forgotten. That was a big one. We think of Crumpackers, Murrays, the Beasley orchards, the Andrews orchards off of Old Hollins Road; the Mount Regis and Diamond Hill orchards up in Salem. They're almost forgotten now. Over at Back Creek, we go around the side of the mountain and look at Paul Grisso and Joe Wertz and their ancestors who scratched out a very good living on the side of the hill. Paul finally got his tractor, his first rubber-tire tractor just a few years ago. Another kind of history that we have right here in the county is the institutional farm. The county poor farm, later the McVitty House farm, and the city poor farm that T. D. Steele bought; the Catawba Sanatorium and how they bottled milk; Hollins College and its bottled milk; the Lutheran Children's Home and the Baptist home; a number of institutional farms. We have a rich history.

The only thing I know is we are going to have to adjourn the agriculture section just now until a later date.

Nationality and Religion

by the Rev. Guy A. Ritter

When Roanoke County was formed in 1838 the religion of the people was not different from their Botetourt neighbors and relatives. At that time Botetourt represented a good cross-section of the religious beliefs and activities of the United States generally.

Denominational membership, as we think of it today, was relatively unimportant and one associated with people with similar notions of the powers that be and the morality that dictated right from wrong behavior. A similar concern for the welfare of the state and nation was well entrenched in the people and a common understanding of acceptable behavior was generally recognized. Varied strains of European religious ideas had come into the area with the migrations of the people. Even at this late date two very divisive characteristics existed, language and ethnic background. The migrants tended to settle near people of their own language and ethnic origin. Despite a common loyalty to the results of the Revolution and establishment of a "new nation under God," they remained German, English, Scottish, Swiss by virtue of language and dissenters or loyalists to the Church of England. Though eastern Virginia was settled primarily by English Episcopalians this area was settled primarily by dissenters from the State Church, German Lutherans and Reformed and Brethren and especially by Scotch-Irish Presbyterians.

The Rev. Guy A. Ritter, retired from the religion faculty at Roanoke College, is a past president of Salem Historical Society. He is a graduate of Roanoke College and the Lutheran Seminary at Philadelphia. A retired Army chaplain, he also served churches at Manassas and Blue Ridge.

These Germans, Swiss and others recognized the quality of the limestone land of the area and looked for limestone and walnut trees, having found these characteristics indicative of "good" land down the Shenandoah Valley and in Maryland and Pennsylvania. These people came to stay and they chose their land carefully. Most of these German-speaking people had left Europe to escape the restrictions of the state churches and the disastrous results of the 30 Years War. They were for the most part grateful for a place to live in peace.

The Scotch-Irish were not quite so pacific. Despite the relief from poverty in Scotland by removal to Northern Ireland by the Crown, the diligence and thrift of the Scots provoked legislation to curtail the threat to English industry. Then later the restriction of the practice of Presbyterianism, to which most Ulsterites subscribed, provoked these people to migrate in great numbers to the New World. They were an embittered people and particularly to the king and Established Church of England. These groups were encouraged to settle the frontier by Governor William Gooch, who promised that they could practice their religion freely if they would take the oath of allegiance as prescribed by Parliament's Act of Toleration. This they apparently did and came in great numbers to our area. Raymond Barnes writes that "By the 1730s the wave of migration reached present Staunton, Virginia. The hordes of the Scotch-Irish now overleaped the advancing Germans to push ever westwardly and southwesterly. There were few save the Scotch-Irish settler in the Roanoke Valley." Though the area of Roanoke County was only sparsely settled at the end of the colonial period nearly all of the inhabitants were dissenters from the State Church and were of non-English backgrounds.

These settlers, Lutheran, Presbyterian, Methodist, and Baptist as well as the Brethren, met in their homes for worship and learning. Most were served by itinerant missionaries who came occasionally. In the meantime these people provided their own teachers and preachers. The Rev. John Craig, a Presbyterian minister, came to the Roanoke Valley in 1749 and in 1762 he was appointed for one Sunday at Roanoke and one at Catawba. By 1767 New Antrim congregation had 49 families as members on Peters Creek. By 1785 Paul Henkel, a Lutheran minister, visited the Lutheran people in the area and by 1796 a thriving congregation with John George Butler as pastor, was established on Mill Creek near Troutville. Jacob Scherer and Robert J. Miller visited Botetourt in 1811, 1813 and 1815. They found John William Meyer serving six congregations and Copp's Church was founded by Miller and Scherer on the James at present Springwood in 1815. Butler reported that there was a group of 20 families between Salem and Big Lick with names of Muller, Braun, Traut, Gerst, Stattler, Hartman and others. There were no church buildings and they met in the homes or barns of the people. Zion Lutheran Church was a congregation in 1809 but it did not build a church building until 1826. This log church stood on the main road (Lee Highway) between Salem and Roanoke near what is now the Virginia Lutheran Home on Lee Highway.

Baptists had a similar experience with visiting ministers and a dearth of church buildings. There was a Baptist congregation on Catawba Creek in 1780 and a congregation in Salem in 1784. These may have had buildings then but the group in Salem was able to build a church in 1823. This church was used until 1845 and stood in what is East Hill Cemetery but the congregation moved to "the Bend of Roanoke River" and again in 1854 to what is now known as Fort Lewis Baptist Church.

One interesting thing about this period of limited church buildings and numerous congregations was the universal sharing of property. It seems general all over the country that Protestant denominations in the early 19th century reached a working agreement to share the property in a joint effort to church the unchurched and to offer some general social improvement in the population. Denominational rivalry was not very evident though distinctive doctrines were exercised. One of these union churches was situated on the land of David Read on present Monterey Golf Course. This was variously called the "Brick Church," "The Free Church" or

more often, "Tinker Creek Church." Apparently the building was used by every denomination at one time or another with little difficulty.

The Botetourt Parish of the Episcopal Church was formed in 1770 but fell on hard times during the Revolution and the famous Act of December 1784 disestablished the Church of Virginia. The Presbyterians had taken over the Episcopal church in Fincastle by 1801 and in 1813 wanted to build a new church on the site. In 1814 the Virginia Assembly responded to a petition to give the property to the Town of Fincastle and the town gave it to the Presbyterians. For many years no Episcopal church building existed in Fincastle but by 1837 a new Episcopal Church was built in the town in the newly popular "Gothic" style. The Rev. Dabney M. Wharton became the leading Episcopal clergyman from his arrival at Fincastle in 1836. He met the congregation at the Tinker Creek Church until 1840 for he had already moved the rectory to the Lick. In 1849 the congregation at the Brick Church moved to Gainsborough and built the first St. John's Church, a small classical revival building.

In the year that the Methodist Episcopal Church was formed in Baltimore, 1784, Francis Asbury, co-superintendent of the Methodists in America, began his journeys in Virginia. Frequently coming down the Great Road, preaching at one settlement and another he came to Fincastle and is reported to have preached to more than 1,000 people. Another time he was in Big Lick and probably visited Vinton at this time. Tradition has it that he preached at Aunt Sallie Thrasher's. In 1815 Thrasher's Chapel was completed. In 1869 the Methodists' congregation in Big Lick met in the First Presbyterian Church and afterwards in a school building and later in the Lutheran church on Loudon Avenue. The first building owned by the Methodists was a frame church seating about 300 people erected in 1875 on the corner of Henry and Loudon Avenue. This building was sold to the Black Methodists when the congregation moved south of the railroad to a larger building on Church Avenue.

During these years as The Lick became Roanoke the Presbyterians in the area were better established. When the Lexington Presbytery was formed in 1786 there were regular requests for supply ministers at "Roan Oak," Craig's Creek and Sinking Springs (Fincastle). A congregation organized out of the congregations of Ebenezer and Catawba Union was called the Church of Salem. The organizational meeting was in June 1831. In 1802 the Rev. Robert Logan was pastor of congregations at Roan Oak and Fincastle though there is some doubt about the buildings. Presbyterians worshipped at the Tinker Creek Brick Church, the Piney Grove Church south of Roanoke was shared by Presbyterians, Lutherans and Baptists. The first building of Salem Presbyterian Church was on Academy Street on the site that later became Academy Street School. This was a two-story building with a school on the ground floor and a sanctuary on the upper floor, a not uncommon arrangement for Protestant churches.

It was this building in which the second session of Roanoke College in Salem was held in 1847-48. The Salem Female Academy also occupied this building. The present Salem Presbyterian Church was built on Main Street at Market and dedicated in August 1852.

The cooperative use of our buildings was not the only common denominator in Protestant churches during the nineteenth Century. They all exhibited an enthusiastic presentation of their message in a manner called "evangelical" which emphasized above all else the preaching office. This is the result of the general acceptance of this principle which motivated the two Great Awakenings of the Protestant church in America, the first in the 1740's and the second from about 1800 on even to our own day in some denominations. This revivalism was the norm for Protestant churches. The focal point of every service was the sermon. The buildings were so arranged as to emphasize this fact--the pulpit was placed prominently in the middle of the auditorium. There was no liturgical arrangement even in Episcopal and Lutheran churches. Only a few had altars and the Sacraments played a secondary role in the sermon. Much emphasis was laid on the

necessity of conviction of sinfulness, repentance, and acceptance of Christ as personal savior. It is reported that the Rev. David Caldwell, minister of St. John's Episcopal Church in Liberty (Bedford) in the 1840's preached a sermon on family prayer in which he said that "the souls who neglected this important duty were so much combustible material cast upon the shores of time, to be ultimately borne on its current to the ocean of eternity, there to feed the flames of that fire which would never be quenched."

This period showed a general consensus of concern for the soul of the believer. What happened to the soul now in this lifetime of sin and the prospects of the soul in eternity were of prime concern. There was a general notion that the soul was immortal and that temporal death only opened the door to two prospects: Eternal bliss in Heaven or eternal damnation in perpetual hell-fire. Not a pretty prospect! Another cooperative development in Protestant churches was a great concern for the condition of the halt, the lame, the blind and the widow and the orphan. During the colonial period this was the concern of the Established church and this became the interest of benevolent societies with general cooperation.

Some historians have called the theology of most American Protestant denominations in the second quarter of the nineteenth century, "theology of disinterested benevolence". By this they mean replacing the harsh doctrine of predestination with an offer of salvation available to all persons, while at the time teaching that depravity is found in self-love and holiness is found in a disinterested benevolent concern with rescuing others from evil. The practical expression of this powerful idea was the formation of dozens of state and national societies, some denominational, but many inter-denominational, for purposes ranging from the distribution of free Bibles, to the rescue of fallen women, to the conversion of the heathen at home and abroad through the missionary movement.

"The early nineteenth century has been characterized as a time of the feminization of American Religion." A compilation of communicant statistics in the parish registers of Southwestern Virginia indicates that in the period from 1830 to 1860, the single and married female communicant together outnumbered male communicants by at least two to one, and in some parishes by as much as three to one. This was of the Episcopal Church but there is some evidence that this was true of Protestant churches generally. This ratio seems to have continued even to our own time.

One very important contribution of the religious groups in the area from colonial times until today is the concern with education and the efforts to which they have all contributed. In the earliest congregations the preacher was often also the community teacher. The church buildings when they appeared were also used as school buildings. We have already cited the Presbyterian Academy in Salem. Hollins College was founded by enthusiastic Baptists and Dr. Charles Lewis Cocke was instrumental in establishing that institution as a solid educational unit. Incidentally, he spent many years in ministering to the Black community of the county: originally in the Brick Church on Tinker Creek and later in their own church buildings. Hollins was founded in 1842 and Roanoke College, founded in the same year near Staunton, moved to Salem in 1847 and brought a strong Lutheran influence to the community. The first town church of the Lutherans was College Church, founded in 1852. Their building was located across College Avenue from the Court House where the First Virginia Bank stands. Church colleges were established all over Virginia in this period and Roanoke County was actively involved in the education of the young.

After the War of 1861 the churches of the county continued to grow as the population grew. The fastest growing part of the county was the railroad town of Roanoke. Between 1882 and 1884 the population grew from 500 to 5,000. By 1872 St. John's Episcopal Church had outgrown its little church in the Old Lick and sold its little church to the First Baptist Church (Black) and the new church was built of brick on what is now the plaza in front of the old Post Office. St. John's moved to its present building at the corner of Elm and Jefferson in 1892. In 1886 the

Presbyterians moved across the railroad and built an imposing building at Church Avenue and Roanoke Street (3rd street today). This building was razed in 1929 and a new stone church was built in South Roanoke where it remains today. The Baptists grew in this time too. The Rev. J. A. Mundy of Enon Baptist Church at Hollins visited the Lick and established a congregation in 1870, the First Baptist Church. In 1878 a small frame church was erected and later another building was erected across the street but in 1929 they built their present church, which has been added to occasionally. Other large Baptist congregations arose in the 20th century.

Until the railroads came there were virtually no Catholics in the area of Roanoke County. But with the growth of the early Roanoke came many Catholic people to the town. In 1879, Rev. John William Lynch was sent to establish a mission in the area. He is reported to have found only one Catholic family on his first visit to the Lick. The Shenandoah Valley Railroad offered Father Lynch a passenger coach in which to hold services. The first Mass was celebrated November 19, 1882. As the congregation grew Mass was held in Rorer Hall. The congregation of St. Andrew's was organized in 1883. The rectory was built first to keep Father Lynch close and the first church was small, having only eight pews. The congregation had increased to 1,600 by 1900. The cornerstone for the new church of buff-colored brick was laid on December 2, 1900. This excellent church building was constructed by J. J. Gary, a member of the congregation. St. Andrew's Church was completed and dedicated November 2, 1902. It remains one of the most imposing churches in the community. Since then other Catholic congregations have organized: Our Lady of Nazareth, Our Lady of Perpetual Help, and St. Elias.

The history of Jews in the Roanoke area begins in 1889, when 18 families formed a congregation they called Temple Emanuel. For five years they worshipped in a hall on Henry Street and then in a hall on Campbell Avenue. In 1904 the congregation purchased a frame building from the Church of the Brethren on Franklin Road. In 1937, a new synagogue was erected and dedicated in South Roanoke. This too has been replaced by an imposing synagogue near Virginia Western Community College. A second Jewish congregation, Beth Israel, was formed from Temple Emanuel and built another synagogue on Franklin Road.

The Black community of the area has built its congregations from migrants to the area from many places. In the last century the Black churches, especially Methodist and Baptist, have thrived in the area. As with white congregations missionaries from Salem came to Big Lick to organize congregations. Mt. Zion Methodist Church was organized in 1883 from inspiration from Salem. The congregation met in a school house on Shenandoah Avenue and in 1888 they built "Cuffey's Hall," and later moved to the brick Church on Gainsboro Avenue. The Baptists early had the help of Dr. Charles Lewis Cocke of Hollins College. His Baptist mission to slaves continued and in 1867 the First Baptist Church was formed. At first they met in a home on Hart Avenue and later on Diamond Hill. In 1874, the congregation purchased the brick building of St. John's Episcopal congregation when they moved to their new church. Later the church on Jefferson and Patton Avenue was built for the growing congregation. The Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church was organized in 1890 by Dr. L. L. Downing, who was a missionary to the Black populace. Needless to say, there are over 30 Black churches in Roanoke today.

Since World War II the Roanoke area has experienced the arrival of almost every major religious conviction in the world. Today, in the cities we have Moslems, Buddhists, Hindus, Sikhs, Baha'i, Greek and Eastern Orthodox, Mormons and many others. All seem to live amicably in the midst of serious and concerted efforts by Protestant groups to proselytize.

I have just looked at the listing of "Churches" in the April 1988 Telephone Book. I find 281 churches or other religious organizations listed with a telephone. There may be others but this gives as close an idea of our present religious varieties as I can.

The Roanoke Valley Ministers Conference, made up of professional religious

people, includes the following denominations in its 1988 Yearbook: African Methodist Episcopal; Anglican Catholic; Assembly of God; Baptists: Southern, Independent, and National; Christian (Disciples of Christ); Churches of Christ and Christian; Church of God; Church of God Prophecy; Church of the Nazarene; Eastern Orthodox; Episcopal; Foursquare Gospel; Brethren; Jewish; Lutheran; Pentecostal Holiness; Presbyterian in several varieties; Roman Catholic; Unitarian Universalist; United Methodist; Unity Church; Wesleyan; Christian and Missionary Alliance; Seventh Day Adventist; Southeast Community Church; Salvation Army; Household of Faith; African Methodist Episcopal; Temple Beth-El (Black Hebrew) United Christian Fellowship; Baha'i; Divine Science and probably others. From this list the tolerance of other religious convictions is healthy in the area and though many of these groups hold all others in contempt, we are able to be ourselves in a great variety of profound religious convictions and find company with others of similar persuasion.

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How "A Religious Lot" Began

by The Rev. Alpheus W. Potts

Roanoke County was created in 1838. Later some territory was added to it from Montgomery and some was cut off into Craig county. In **Roanoke: Story of County and City** the authors/state: "In 1851 the people of Roanoke County remained a religious lot, with Presbyterians, Methodists, Dunkards and Baptists vying with each other for supremacy." We are interested in the phrase "remained a religious lot." It arouses our interest in the origin and roots which made them a religious lot.



Dr. A. W. Potts, retired district superintendent and pastor of the United Methodist Church, is the author of papers on church history in Bedford, Franklin, Botetourt and Roanoke counties. He studied at Hampden-Sydney College and Union Theological Seminary and served churches in a half-dozen Virginia cities before retiring in Roanoke. He is a past president of the Virginia Conference United Methodist Historical Society.

The Presbyterians, we are told, came into the Roanoke Valley as an extension of the migrations of Scotch-Irish settlers who came up the valleys of the Shenandoah River into Augusta County. We find the Rev. John Craig (for whom Craig Creek was named), pastor of Old Stone and Tinkling Springs Churches, visiting his parishioners in 1749. These migrants were the Prestons, Pattons, McDonalds, Breckinridges and Flemings--to name a few. The Rev. Craig came to baptize infants and to marry couples. These people had been lured to the area by the attraction of "unclaimed land that lay to the west of the Blue Ridge." Later, about 1790, Presbyterian evangelists passed through the area "looking for members and seeking to find enough in any one area so that a church could be organized."

Episcopalians, who were an extension of the pre-revolutionary Anglican Church (the Church of England), were the inheritors of the Botetourt Parish which had been created by government (English) order in 1769. However, this never developed into an effective parish as a state church. In the forming of the Protestant Episcopal Church over the years from 1783 (after the final Treaty of Peace) to 1789, the local parish lay dormant until the Rev. Nicholas Cobb of Bedford, between 1825 and 1836, came through the passes of the Blue Ridge. It is said of his visits that "hopes were raised" of a "church of their fathers in their midst." The church at Fincastle, under the ministry of Dabney Wharton, was established between 1836-1840.

The Baptists, under the leadership of the Rev. John Alderson, came to Botetourt (the larger area including Roanoke County area) in 1775. He was a part of the immigration into the Roanoke valley of the Baptists who were "lured by fertile soil." The Baptists in eastern Virginia had led the fight for religious liberty (aided and abetted by Samuel Davies, a Presbyterian, and Patrick Henry, lawyer) in the earlier days of the Colony of Virginia. After 1785, when religious liberty articles were approved by the General Assembly of Virginia, the Baptists moved throughout the state and through the Blue Ridge more freely.

The Dunkards, we are told, were first called "Brethren" in 1708 in Germany. They were among the first or second settlers in the Valley. One has said that they came through Pennsylvania behind the Presbyterians and took up land as the Presbyterians migrated to Kentucky and Tennessee. These Dunkards separated in our valley into several bodies ranging from the Old Order Dunkards (old German Brethren) on through the more numerous (today) Church of the Brethren. Their roots are in German pietism and out of this tradition they contributed greatly to making the Roanoke County area community "a religious lot." Stoner says that the Church of the Brethren began at Amsterdam (near Daleville) in 1780.

Lutherans were of this German tradition also. In **Roanoke: Story of County and City**, we read: "By 1787 Lutheran missionaries were reaching Botetourt. Until then no regular Lutheran pastors served the county. It is also said that Lutheran emigrants moved down the valley from Pennsylvania beginning in 1775 "taking up land already cleared by the Scotch Irish, on patented land that was free. "The Rev. Paul Henkel arrived in Botetourt c. 1787. For 27 years beginning c. 1805 when Lutherans were without a pastor the Rev. Robert J. Miller, former licensed Methodist local preacher of North Carolina, served the Lutherans. As a Methodist (I am glad to note with an ecumenical thrust) that even in that day, far from "vying for supremacy" of denomination we reflect with pride that it was a Methodist who helped keep alive this German pietist tradition in the Valley. It was in this tradition that John Wesley found roots for his "heart-warming" experience.

Miller's experience of 27 years with Lutherans brings us down to 1832. It was very close to the creation of Roanoke County that the Lutherans were on their way to an organized church.

Now we turn to the Methodists in the area. They were after a manner of speaking the "Johnny-Come-Latelys" to the valley. George Whitefield of John Wesley's "Holy Club" whose members were later dubbed "Methodists" shared preaching in *The Great Awakening* of the 1740's in Hanover County with Samuel Davies. Not until 1772 did the Methodist lay preacher, Robert Williams,

come to Norfolk. His evangelistic ministry attracted crowds. He was the forerunner of other lay preachers whose mission was to work within the Anglican churches to revive "vital religion." No services were held in competition with Anglican stated services of the parish priests. These preachers found a hearty welcome from the Rev. Devereux Jarrett of the Bath Parish, Dinwiddie County. They worked together for the upbuilding of the Church of England. The Methodists, not then a denomination, existed in societies within the church. In 1776, as the colonists thought in terms of independence, the Methodist English lay preachers began to go back to England. Native preachers began to be recruited. They were American and developed a spirit of independence. This affected the relationship of Methodists to parish priests who were Tories. The parting of the ways came.

It is too much to detail here, but suffice it to say that in December, 1784 the Methodist Episcopal Church in America was organized. In organizing the church the small group of preachers faced and answered the question: "What may we reasonably believe to be God's design in raising up preachers called Methodists?" The answer explains not only the "design" but illuminates for us the motivating drive behind Methodist ministry. The answer was, "To reform the Continent and to spread Scriptural Holiness over the lands." In the light of this we dare to say the Methodists broke through the Blue Ridge mountains and into the area of Roanoke County in 1789. Their motive was higher than that of "vying for supremacy" with other denominations with a larger concept "to reform the Continent" and "spread Scriptural Holiness." The salvation of souls was important and basic but it was also important to so influence the total community that people could live together as Christians and raise their children in Christian traditions. This was a part of creating "a religious lot" who formed Roanoke County.

When and how did Methodism come to our Roanoke County part of the larger Botetourt Circuit? W. W. Bennett states in **Memorials of Methodism In Virginia** that Henry Ogburn was appointed to Botetourt "after the war" (not in 1779 as some date it.) 1789 was the year of a great revival extending largely through the Mitchell families from revivals near Lynchburg where Samuel Mitchell then lived.

The Bedford Circuit was created in April 1784 and grew to extend from east of Appomattox to the west into Greenbrier County. Circuit riders traveled far to find hospitable homes open to Methodist preachers. In 1787 a new Greenbrier Circuit was cut off which included areas in present Giles, Montgomery, Craig and Allegheny counties. There were then 100 members in that area. From the diaries of John Smith (1787-8) and John Kobler (1791-2) we find that the area in present Roanoke County was seemingly bypassed from which we deduce the religious life of the people was satisfied by other denominations. We are told that through the efforts of Edward Mitchell who served as preacher in Botetourt in 1795 that the circuit grew by extension into Rockbridge and Bath Counties.

Background history of the coming of Methodism is tied in with what has been called "The Second Great Awakening." This revival began in 1786 in Charlotte County, near Rough Creek Baptist Church among Baptists, Methodists and Presbyterians. This revival spread in 1787 to a wide area around Brunswick County and to Cumberland County (on the Methodist Amelia Circuit). The development among Presbyterians is especially important in this paper. Under the Methodist preaching of Hope Hull and continued under the preaching of John Blair Smith, president of Hampden-Sydney College, students of the college were converted. Preachers from Rockbridge County and Bedford County were drawn to it. It is an interesting story of how what we would call today a "student deputation" carried the revival to Rockbridge and Liberty Hall (the Washington and Lee University of today.) The revival went north into Augusta County.

The Reverends James D. Mitchell and James Turner of Bedford returned from the meetings in Cumberland and the revival came to their church at Peaks of Otter (near Bedford or Liberty, as the town was called then.) The revival continued under their ministry into the 1800's and spread over a wide area.

It is stated by Foote in his Sketches that James D. Mitchell of Bedford "was

fond of missionary excursions of weeks and months at a time in the southwestern counties."

Two other statements are pertinent here:

"In the latter part of the year 1801 the churches under the care of Messers Mitchell and Turner were greatly revived. A meeting held at the close of the year was noted for the number of people impressed with a deep sense of the value as well as the truth of the gospel." The intensity of the revival should be mentioned here: "bodily agitations of numbers were uncontrollable."

"There were many hopeful converts where there were no stated ministries or regular church organizations. Many of these looked in vain to the Presbyterian Church for a living ministry and not receiving it they turned their attention to other denominations prepared to supply their wants and they are now lost to the Presbyterian Church."

There are local traditions in oral history of a great revival in 1801 on the edge of today's Roanoke County at Coyner Springs. I believe such a meeting eventuated in the deeding of property on August 11, 1802 by Daniel James and Thomas Bandy to Trustees Matthew Pate, Charles Horn, Abner Howell, Stephen Ferrel, Samuel James and James Howell.

Stoner identifies this as a mostly Baptist group. Stephen Ferrel seems to have been a Methodist. The Ferrel family was for years active in Methodist societies along Goose Creek up from Montvale in Bedford County. In addition to being named a trustee here he was named a trustee along with Samuel and Edward Mitchell of the Methodist church at Salem in 1804. (Stephen Ferrel later migrated with others to Illinois.) Matthew Pate may also have been a Methodist. A Pate family was connected for years with Union Church (Methodist) in Bedford County. This is sufficient to justify the conclusion this was a union congregation though we may make the deduction that Presbyterians have through the years insisted upon an educated ministry and a reading of Henry Foote's Sketches shows us they were not able to follow through with results of their leadership in this Second Great Awakening.

We learn from other sources that revivals reoccurred at this Coyner Springs-Glade Creek area for several years. There are records of meetings in August 1804 and 1805 at Depew's. John Depew and Elijah Depew both owned property near Coyner Springs and on Glade Creek. "Camp Meeting at Depews commenced August 10th where the power of the Lord was displayed in the awakening of many and about 40 professed to find God."

To tie this in with the extension of Methodism in Roanoke County area Elijah Depew, on whose property the meetings were held, was an original trustee of our Salem church. (Trustees in these early days were not necessarily local but were Methodists from the general area.) Local oral history refers to a "camp" meeting in 1801. Methodist meetings at that time in this area were extended quarterly conferences or "general meetings" and were ecumenical in nature. It is stated in Price's **Holston Methodism** that camp meetings, (which originated in North Carolina in 1799 and Tennessee and moved to Kentucky in late 1801) and they first came to that part of Virginia - Bedford, Campbell and Franklin Counties in the spring of 1804.

Camp meetings of which we have record were held at Depew's in 1804 and 1805 in August of each year.

The diary of the pastor of Botetourt in 1805 (which he began in April) is available. He preached on May 16th and June 12th at Elijah Depew's and at Thomas Bandy's on May 17th. It is of interest to note his trouble at Bandy's, the Blue Ridge Meeting House. While Stoner observed that at Blue Ridge they were mostly Baptist, Fidler says "they were harping on baptism" so "I thought it proper to retaliate" since "the Society was almost broke up by them." He had the same trouble at Kesler's (seemingly near Salem) and at Guthries and at Rock Spring in Rockbridge.

We see here the beginning of the end of union services and the formation of a strictly Methodist Church. At Salem, the deed of December 10, 1804 was made to the Methodist Episcopal Church. Fidler's circuit was large—he ranged from up in Rockbridge south to and including Christiansburg and Blacksburg.

Local oral history states that services were held in the home of Paul Thrasher. In view of disputes at Bandy it is believable that a sympathetic reception on the part of a Methodist was appreciated. (We do not know what happened to the Depews unless they migrated from the area.) We do know that by 1815 a deed was made and Thrasher's Church became an appointment on the circuit.

As for the separation from Blue Ridge, we do not know about the Presbyterians' participation or lack of it. We have observed that they were not able to provide educated ministers to further their work. We do know that at a very large camp meeting at Amsterdam to which Francis Asbury came and preached to about 3,000 souls, who had come from miles around, Asbury observed, "Friendship and good fellowship seem to be done away between the Methodists and Presbyterians." He also added "few of the latter will attend our meetings now: well, let them feed their flocks apart, - and let not Judah vex Ephraim or Ephraim Judah; and may it thus remain, until the two sticks become one in the Lord's hands." Asbury believed the Lord would use both churches. When Asbury was in August County and the revival fires were burning brightly and the Methodists were few he expressed his faith thus: "I believe the Lord will work through the Presbyterians in Augusta County."

Louis Fechtig was the Methodist presiding elder supervising the Methodists in 1819. When he came to Salem he found the Methodist societies depleted in strength from "outward migrations and backslidings." He bemoaned the fact that religion had once flourished here. He reported on one of his quarterly meetings that "not one soul (was) converted."

In 1829 N. B. H. Morgan served Botetourt Circuit which extended from along the James River west to New Castle and Craig Healing Springs (Atkins) to Blacksburg and Bent Mountain to Thrashers. He had 20 preaching places. Those in the Roanoke County area were Bent Mountain, Salem, Thrashers, Keslers, Greenridge. Others close by were Fincastle, Mill Creek and Timber Ridge. He had another 20 scattering (unnamed) preaching places.

Dunkards, Presbyterians, Baptists, Lutherans and Methodists were "a religious lot" and in their ministry made their contributions to the Christianizing of the culture of Roanoke County. The comment of William Warren Sweet is applicable here: "... There was fortunately in every considerable community a little company of people, the majority of them constituting the membership... of frontier churches who believed that conditions could be changed; and that life on every frontier could be raised to a higher level... in refining manners and taste, in creating new and higher interests, in inspiring men with loftier ambition and sacrificial purpose, religion played a major role."

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