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GEORGE KEGLEY
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Threading a Parkway Through the Blue Ridge

by David P. Hill

Now the most visited national park, the Blue Ridge Parkway was popular from the beginning. A primary reason for its early popularity was the parkway's location near Washington. It provided an opportunity for the president and other top officials to see quality work of the Civilian Conservation Corps and other public relief agencies on the job.

Secondly, at the time of its design a talented pool of designers who had worked in prestigious East Coast offices was in search of work wherever it could be found, and offered to the National Park Service not only a great deal of experience, but a new concept that a designed landscape could be a national park. Third, the Appalachian Region offered a palette of materials, legends and land uses that had become very popularized by the press in the 1920s, contributing to interest in the possibility of a parkway through it.

An ox pulled a family of three in this 1920s photo of mountain life. (William Barnhill, from the Blue Ridge Parkway archives)

David Hill is a landscape architect who lives in Roanoke. Now president of Hill Studio, he interned for the Blue Ridge Parkway from 1982 to 1984. Hill Studio specializes in design for the Appalachian cultural landscape.

Most Americans do not care that the most visited park in the National Park Service was designed in the former Sunnyside Awning Building on First Street in downtown Roanoke. The above circumstances certainly helped fuel the early interest in the parkway, but a six-decade tradition in creative planning and design excellence has furthered the success of our most popular park. This article describes some of the design decisions made in the Sunnyside building, and introduces some of the early techniques used in the design of the parkway.

To understand the early design of the parkway, first imagine the image of our region in the 1920s. The 1920s marked a decade significant for the closing of the American western frontier and the turn of popular interest to the Southern Highlands as the last remnant of American pioneer iconography. For photographers and writers, the Southern Highlands became a source for the juxtaposition of pioneer lifestyles against spectacular natural scenery. This sudden interest in Appalachian culture had a gradual beginning.

The popularity of novelists Thomas Wolfe and John Fox, Jr., owed a debt to the preceding half-century of descriptive documentary by itinerant ministers and reformist journalists, such as James Watt Raine, Horace Kephart and Frederick Law Olmsted. Railroads and good highways brought the Southern Highlands to within one day's journey of the fast-developing northeast corridor. The Appalachian Trail Club, and the ever-popular springs such as the Homestead, Greenbrier and hundreds of others, brought a well-educated clientele to the region, and they documented it to its fullest potential.

William Barnhill worked on a short line train that linked Asheville to Mt. Mitchell, and in his spare time, produced photos of Appalachian cultural landscapes to market to tourists. His classic works present the pre-parkway Appalachian land. Prints by Barnhill and others fixed an image of Appalachia as a unique place. The images both attracted people to the region to get a glimpse of the last American frontier, and served as a tool for parkway designers to design interpretive compositions.

Route Selection

One of President Franklin D. Roosevelt's strategies to end the Great Depression was to undertake public works projects that would employ multitudes. The Park Service, one of the primary agencies responsible for public works, had several large projects under way in 1933, including Skyline Drive in Shenandoah National Park. There was great enthusiasm for this park, as it was the closest national park to Washington, D.C. and the metropolitan eastern seaboard. The Skyline Drive followed the crest of the Blue Ridge Mountains from Front Royal to Jarmon Gap. In 1933, only a portion of the drive had been completed, but it led to the natural suggestion that the road be extended to Rockfish Gap and beyond the limits of Shenandoah National Park to connect with Great Smoky Mountains National Park. President

Roosevelt authorized the Department of the Interior to investigate the possibility of such a road in late 1933.

Secretary of the Interior Harold Ickes chose to hire outside consultants rather than use his own staff for planning studies. Gilmore Clarke and Jay Downer were the designers (landscape architect and engineer, respectively) responsible in large part for the Westchester County Park and Parkway System in New York and the Mount Vernon Memorial Highway in Virginia, some of the most successful parkway systems in the country. They agreed to serve as consultants, for $75 a day plus expenses, provided they could choose their own field supervisor: Stanley W. Abbott, a Cornell landscape architect, and the public relations officer for the Westchester County Park System. Abbott began work in January of 1934; he was the first person to go into the field equipped only with a truck and sketchy maps of the Southern Appalachians. Clarke and Downer resigned after Secretary Ickes suggested that they reduce their fee by two-thirds, leaving Abbott in near-total control of the parkway route reconnaissance.

Working out of his Salem residence, Abbott realized that maps and plan drawings would mean little to his superiors who were unfamiliar with the region and chose photographs to communicate route alternatives. His reconnaissance report includes a written description of the region and a suggestion of the acreages necessary to create the parkway. The reports served as an initiation to field trips with Bureau of Public Roads engineers and Interior and Park Service officials. Abbott's notes were gathered into reconnaissance reports, illustrated with photographs on which he drew the suggested roadway alignment.

Photo of proposed parkway alignment in the 1930s (from Stanley Abbott's reconnaissance report)

Abbott's superiors in the Park Service and the Interior Department became involved in alignment judgments, as it was from the start a political issue within the region. Beginning at Shenandoah, there was no doubt that the northern part of the parkway would be in Virginia. The states of North Carolina and Tennessee were in direct competition for the southern end of the parkway and offered various reasons for the route to go through each state. Tennessee argued that North Carolina was a "dry" state, and consequently would not treat its cosmopolitan guests from the northeast in a manner to which they were accustomed. North Carolina countered that it had superior scenery than Tennessee, which is more appropriately associated with the concept of a parkway. Getty Browning, a North Carolina right-of-way engineer, produced a 12-foot-long full-color plan and section of the proposed route through his state to illustrate that the North Carolina alternative was so scenic it was irresistible, winning the final route selection in November 1934.

Abbott's training in Westchester is apparent very early in the design process; the Westchester parkways connect a series of pre-existing recreation and natural areas, to give the impression of a single large park. Abbott felt that a series of small areas of natural interest interspersed with larger recreation areas were essential: "They are like beads on a string; the rare gems in the necklace." In drawings produced between 1933 and 1936, when the name was finalized, the parkway had various names and alignments. The Appalachian National Parkway was one, in which Abbott suggested the parkway driver experience the full breadth of the Appalachian landscape. He proposed that the road come down off the crest of the Blue Ridge into the Great Valley of Virginia at Natural Bridge, in what he described as "the interesting piece of music that fortissimo mixed with a little pianissimo provides." Unable to muster support for the Natural Bridge route, he later agreed that it would not have been the best alignment. The Shenandoah-to-Great Smokies Parkway, or SGS Parkway, was a cumbersome working title used on many of the earlier drawings. Finally, the Blue Ridge Parkway emerged as the official name in 1936.

Although the Design Office of the parkway had maintained the "string of beads" concept as a goal, the authorizing legislation passed by Congress did not include provision for land purchase. The lands for the roadway were acquired by the states and given to the federal government; most of the recreation areas were acquired through private donation. For example, Moses Cone and Julian Price parks were named after their donors, while Linville Falls was purchased for the National Park Service by John D. Rockefeller. Other recreation areas were obtained through the cooperation of the National Forest

Service and the Federal Resettlement Administration. When chestnut blight swept through the region around 1930, it removed a dominant forest tree species and a major source of forage for livestock, dealing a severe blow to the already marginal agriculture of the region. Resettlement Administration funds were used to purchase land in several devastated areas and convert them into recreation sites.

Architectural, Engineering Work

The early years of the parkway were productive, with landscape architects and other designers involved in an unprecedented range of activities. The parkway office became something of a design *atelier*, with people of diverse backgrounds working in historic preservation, new design and construction, research into vernacular precedents and new engineering techniques, cultural interpretation, and even machine invention. Several personalities stand out in this assembly of talented people. Abbott was first given the title resident landscape architect. His skills in administration of people and projects made the parkway a reality. He did the great majority of the initial reconnaissance, supervised the alignment design, and still found time to draw details in the search for a vernacular building style. The first person he hired was Edward Abbuehl, an architect who had been one of his instructors at Cornell and who was by Abbott's account something of a renaissance man. When Abbott left to design the Colonial Parkway in Williamsburg, Abbuehl became the resident landscape architect of the Blue Ridge Parkway. Gil Thurlow, a Harvard Eliot Fellow, interned for the parkway in 1936 and 1937, and later went on to become chairman of Landscape Architecture at N.C. State. Gary Everhardt began as an engineer on the parkway and worked his way to director of the National Park Service. He is currently parkway superintendent. Ted Pease, George Wickstead, Bob Alt, Bob Hall, Van Van Gelder, Malcolm Bird, Al Burns, Art Beyer, Lynn Harriss and many other talented designers worked with the parkway at some point of their careers, and resided around the Roanoke Valley. Many had great individual contributions, which are now taken for granted as part of a great park. It was landscape architect Ken McCarter, for example, who suggested that Mabry Mill should not be removed, as was called for on the acquisitions plans, and successfully saw the restoration of the building and creation of the site.

The educational backgrounds of the park designers contributed greatly to the formation of a "Parkway style." The 1920s Beaux-arts tradition required that students go out in the field and measure classical architecture before attempting to design neo-classical

architecture. Presented with young designers trained in Beaux-arts methods and lacking a source of local classical architecture, Appalachian vernacular architecture filled the void. Abbott and staff architect Haussmann produced typical coffee shops and gas stations influenced by barns and cabins they saw around the Roanoke Valley. The log cabin, shake shingles, stone barn and gas pumps were designed to look like stone foundations.

A coffee shop and gas station designed for the south end of Peaks of Otter was converted to an interpretive center. Using vernacular building precedents, Abbott and his staff architects explored several variations for structures appropriate within their emerging parkway style.

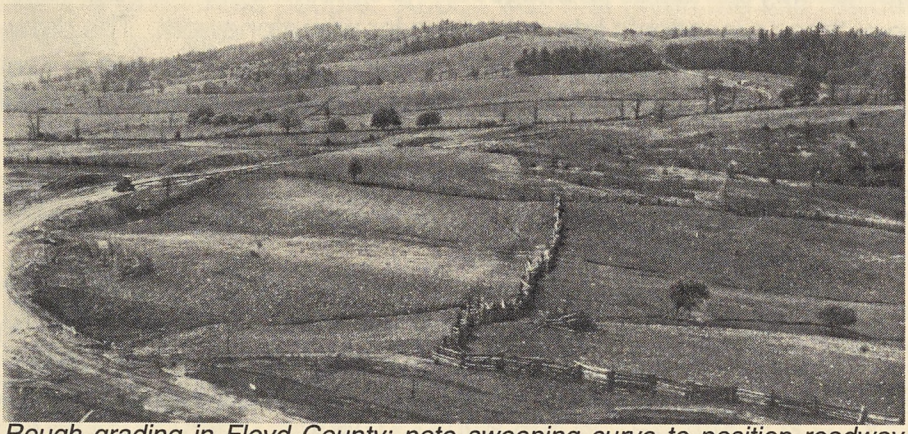
During reconnaissance and afterwards, the parkway staff was always on the watch for local precedent for new construction. The photographic archives have numerous examples by Abbuehl and others, with the landscape architect's comments recorded for future reference. Stone masonry standards for bridges and architectural work are the translation of these precedents into guidelines for new stonework. The drawings feature precision of mortar joint detailing, and a difference in joint design on the inner and outer faces of sloped retaining walls. The detail was developed after studying stone fireplaces around the Roanoke region. It was further interpreted into new details. For example, stone-lined gutters were standard early in the parkway's construction, when hand labor was abundant and cheap.

A consistently high standard of design and maintenance has been the parkway tradition, bringing elements which are often distracting on public highways into manicured foreground details within the Appalachian setting. The parkway staff's design in detail is filled with examples of the historic preservation and cultural interpretation. Signage has become one of its most widely recognized details. Staff landscape architects have devised numerous alphabets that are inscribed into work using the freehand router. White, gray and blue paint is specified within the routs of wood indigenous to the area. The white pine tree is featured on the parkway logo, and the mountaineer's musket and powder horn are specified for interpretive signs.

Many fences and gates were needed since the parkway was built in discontinuous sections through a largely agricultural landscape. Some were designed for visitor control, some for livestock control, and some for purely aesthetic effect. Bill Hooper was the staff agronomist responsible for fences. Using designs derived from Blue Ridge precedents, he pioneered a program whereby the parkway provided materials to the agricultural lessees, who in return contracted to build the specified fences. Farmers' implementation of the plans necessitated the unusual clarity of these drawings.

Ribbon Through A Borrowed Land

The architectural palette developed by the parkway staff composed a unique model for design, which was used to help blend the road and park structures with its surroundings. However, creative land planning and design was essential for the parkway to become a success. If for no other reason, the parkway is unique for its shape — 1/2 mile wide by 470 miles long. The "typical" national park shape is a large chunk of land, roughly square, in the center of which the visitor is able to achieve a level of insulation from the outside world, by virtue of park service ownership of the surrounding lands. By contrast, the parkway is part and parcel of its landscape. In very few places is the visitor removed from some outside influence and combined with the topographic situation of the roadway on the ridgetop. Happenings to the land just outside the border are frequently the focus of the view.



Rough grading in Floyd County; note sweeping curve to position roadway through mature pine forest in background.

"Paint your parkway with broad strokes," Abbott encouraged his young designers. In retrospect, a sense of urgency in the design process is manifest in a sequential driving experience along the parkway without visible boundaries. With a palette of less than a dozen landscape techniques, coupled with the region's topography, the broad strokes of the draftsmen created a 470-mile landscape orchestrated into a seemingly endless variety of spaces. Abbott was a reader and loved music. He created an uninterrupted orchestrated landscape.

Abbott achieved a "cinematic view of nature" (Wilson, 101) and of agriculture, based on the scale of private estates and expanded to a speed of 45 miles per hour. The bridges and tunnels were set as the consistent point of reference within a variety of spectacular natural scenery, agricultural fields, pastures, meadows, forests, and distant views

orchestrated to the viewpoint and speed of the automobile.

The parkway legislation required that land be acquired by the states and conveyed to the federal government. Much of the land in the Blue Ridge Mountains region had not been surveyed, so Abbott must have used diagrammatic maps with a single line showing the proposed roadway. Parkway staff aligned the roadway onto parkway development plans. The right-of-way width varied, from about 200 feet at the narrowest to many times that when conditions demanded; on the average, about 125 acres per mile was acquired for the parkway. The acquisition maps were sent to the Federal Highway Administration which, in cooperation with the park service designed the engineering and construction documents for the roadway itself. After the roadway was built, the park service prepared planting plans and land use plans which specify the landscape installation and maintenance requirements. Each of these sets of drawings was done at a 1 inch equals 100 foot scale, requiring several roomfuls of drawings for the 470-mile length of the parkway.

The parkway was built in non-contiguous sections, with the earlier construction begun in areas without paved roads and in areas where the alignment was most likely to be maneuvered politically. The sections varied in length from 5 to 15 miles, so local contractors could participate in the construction. Work began on the North Carolina border in September of 1935. Southwestern Virginia work followed, in Floyd, Patrick and Grayson counties. In 1935, the parkway was the first paved road in Floyd County.

The broad-stroke efforts of the landscape architects' drawings are reiterated in the work of the legal transfer of land. Land was acquired in two ways: fee simple and under a scenic easement. Fee simple is a legal term for outright purchase of the property and all rights to it. Although the park service had the authority to condemn, with rare exception Getty Browning and others such as Sam Weems (later superintendent of the parkway) negotiated with landowners to find an acceptable price for their land. The scenic easement was a concept borrowed from the Westchester Park system in which the landowners gave up certain rights to the use of their land in exchange for a monetary consideration, while maintaining all other rights of ownership. The conditions were usually that land would remain in agricultural use, with no changes that would affect its scenic quality, such as billboards, other commercial structures, cutting of trees or shrubs, or building of structures without prior approval.

Property acquisition for the parkway often left a farmer with too little land to farm profitably. Since rural scenery was a goal of the parkway, a policy of leasing land back to farmers was begun early in

the parkway's management. The leasing program blended well with scenic easements to sustain a rural image. Some existing conditions could not be moved, such as rural cemeteries. These were preserved and valued as visual reminders of an earlier settlement era, tended by the families and local church congregations without manipulation by the parkway.

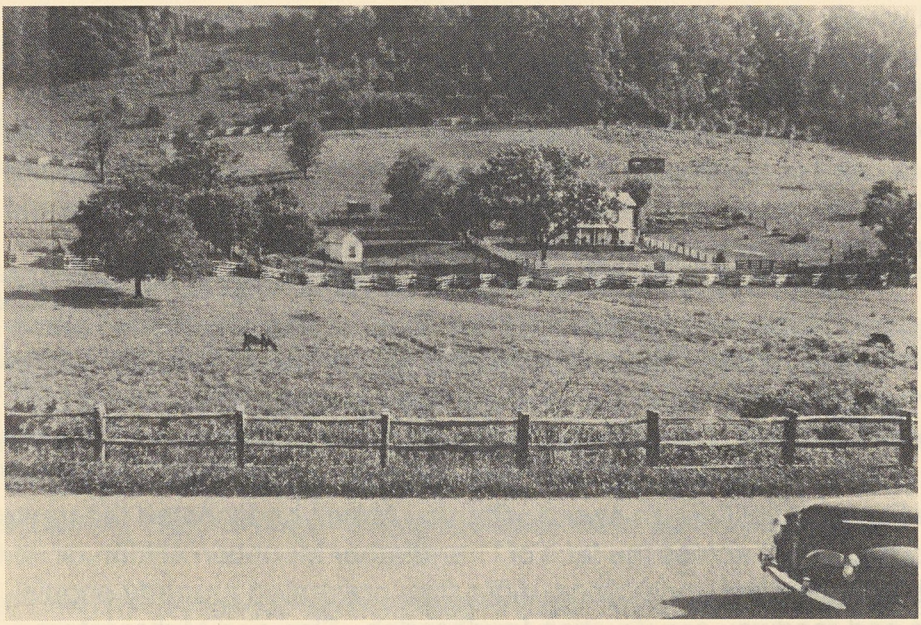
The simple structuring of the scenic easement text in the deed was meant to remove the development rights on the property, while allowing the existing agricultural land use to proceed. Although the short-term use of the easements was beneficial to both parties, all have not been well-received over the years as land values have increased significantly. In some cases the grandchildren of 1930s farmers are surprised to find they are not allowed to build a house on land that they thought was unencumbered. In some cases, the easements have also failed the parkway. When an easement was purchased to show a 200-year old tree, and someone unfamiliar with the concept of the easement cuts the tree, the resource is permanently lost although there is legal recourse. Nevertheless, the 1930s easements were an enlightened way to knit the parkway into a depressed agricultural landscape and many successful easements still exist.

Once design and construction were complete, the parkway land use maps were prepared to guide maintenance efforts on the parkway, and in some cases as substitutes for the more detailed planting plans. Individual tree specimens are located on the plans as reference points for maintenance.

The final orchestration of the land is achieved through maintenance of several generic landscape effects used on the parkway. Vistas were often of adjacent open agricultural land, but may also extend for miles at the higher elevations. The canopy vista appears through a thin screen of tree trunks; this technique is rarely used, since it requires heavy maintenance of the shrub layer and is effective only at slower travel speeds. Shrub bays are planted and maintained exclusively with shrubs, intended to provide relief from the forest canopy. The dominant roadside condition is the forest and regenerative forest, with multiple canopy layers so that one cannot see very far into it. Open woods are comparatively rare, as they require intensive maintenance to keep the shrub layer out. Open land is of several types: agricultural, ranging from field crops, pasture, hay field, to orchards; naturally maintained or mowed grasslands; and old pasture growing up with wildflowers but without significant tree and shrub plantings.

Malcolm Bird took great care to orchestrate these land uses through every section he designed. He would vary the width and

topography of the grassed shoulder so that one is almost never conscious of a cultivated right-of-way typical of other public roads. Ironically, the naturalistic appearance of the parkway corridor requires much more intensive maintenance than a typical roadway.



View from the parkway; adjacent land was leased back to farmers while more distant farmsteads were placed under scenic easement.

The landscapes composed by the parkway designers show a reverence toward scenes of the 19th-Century Hudson River painters. A tradition of vistas holds true to the same rules of classical composition. In the foreground, rustic details frame the scene from below. In the middleground, the subject of the scene, there may be a farm scene or a meadow, and in the distance, wild forested mountains. The foreground may be controlled on park property, but the rest of the view is frequently "borrowed." The farm scenes and the distant wooded mountains are not under control of the park, and if tastelessly developed, the park staff must wait years for trees to grow and screen the view.

Signs frequently cue the visitor to the distant scenes, and parkway land use maps are the medium that blurs the distinction between what is in the park and what is immediately adjacent. The successful use of vernacular planting and building materials makes it almost impossible to find the boundary in many places.

Labor for the planting, precise grading and roadside improvement was provided through the Works Progress Administration (WPA), Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), and, during World War II, conscientious objector labor camps. Abundant but unskilled labor facilitated a rustic style which was very appropriate to the parkway.

Not only was the architecture and land planning successful, but the parkway is remarkable for the degree to which road engineering technology was and is embraced. For example, in 1934 when design on the parkway began, spiral transitional curves (curves of continuously changing radii) were new in highway design and were not widely used. Abbott molded the highway to the mountains, using spiral transition curves abundantly to create a "space-time" effect of being connected with the soil and ... of hovering just above it" (Giedion, 554). Used extensively on the parkway for the first time, spiral curves were used in the design of the interstate highway system. The rural separated-grade interchange was another technique used on the parkway, later employed on large highway systems.

The innovative engineering tradition continued to the final link: Figg and Muller's S-shaped Linn Cove Viaduct was constructed above the mountainside. The viaduct was a part of the final section to be completed on the North Carolina parkway and was dedicated in September of 1987, 52 years after the start of construction. This acclaimed structure has won numerous design recognitions, including the Presidential Design Award. Stanley Abbott had located the parkway alignment across the face of Grandfather Mountain at Linn Cove, but technological and political difficulties prevented property acquisition and roadway construction for decades. Figg and Muller International was retained for the technical design of the structure, erected by cantilevering precast segments between piers 180 feet apart, so as to minimize harm to the rare plant community below.

Since its Depression-era beginning, there has not been a moment without some design or construction occurring on the Blue Ridge Parkway. Fifty-two years after construction began, the roadway has been completed. However, Abbott's concept for the parkway is far from finished. Attention is now focused on building the beads of the necklace — the recreational areas. Hemphill Knob near Asheville, Fisher's Peak near Galax, and the Roanoke River Parkway are three currently in the design or construction process.

Now headquartered in Asheville, the parkway has provided this nation with national park leadership and design excellence for almost sixty years. Many creative design solutions we see far away have some allegiance to this area. Pioneer-style architecture, routed interpretive signs, scenic easements, and spiral curves owe some footnote to the precedents set by Abbott's Roanoke design atelier. Often the greatest works of landscape architecture are those unnoticed by the casual observer. It is hard to imagine that some of the most successful pastoral scenes of the parkway are not accidental, but very carefully planned from creative scenic easements to the details of the

fences. The careful attention to detail derived from local precedent has contributed to the parkway's emergence as America's most visited national park.

Note

All photographs and drawings used in this article are courtesy of the Blue Ridge Parkway archives, National Park Service, Asheville, N.C.

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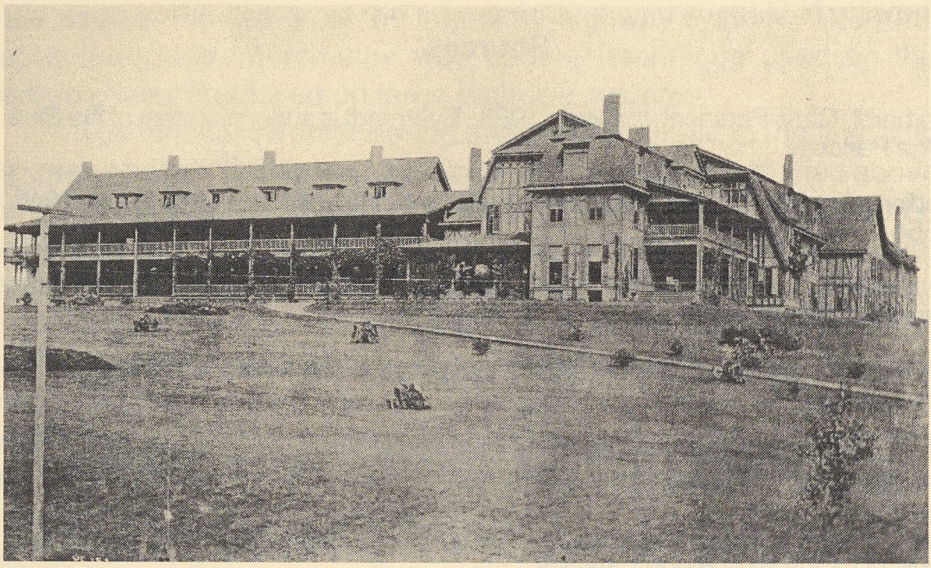
Hotel Roanoke
A Description of this Large and Well Equipped Hotel

(Editor's Note: This description of the new Hotel Roanoke is printed verbatim from *The Leader*, published in Roanoke on October 28, 1882.)



Hotel Roanoke stood alone on a hill above the railroad in this 1890 photo, eight years after it opened.

By invitation of H. Chipman, Esq., the polite and attentive superintendent of the Roanoke Land and Improvement Company of this place, we, accompanied by him, visited and inspected this splendid hotel, which is now nearly ready to be opened to the public. The main building of this hotel is 177 feet long by 73 feet in width, to which is added an annex 132 feet long by 48 feet wide, the whole containing about 100 rooms. Entering the **BASEMENT** on the left hand came the Barber shop, with bath rooms attached, all fully equipped and supplied with hot and cold water and finished up in handsome style. Adjacent to these rooms is a compartment in which is a Lebrant & McDowell hot air furnace of large capacity, with three coal rooms each 30 x 40 feet. On the right come the large finely finished bar rooms, in which we observed large fire places of pressed brick after the Queen Anne style, which is the style of architecture of the entire building. Passing through the bar rooms, we reached four large and excellently ventilated store-rooms for keeping supplies, while still further to the right comes the apartment fitted up for a **STEAM LAUNDRY** This apartment contains a boiler of great capacity for use in washing and drying rooms lined with galvanized iron,

together with many minor arrangements for complete efficiency and prompt work. Lastly under this wing comes the **BAKERY** in which is a large brick oven, 6 x 6 feet inside measurement, with several smaller compartments adjacent for use in connection with the bakery, while an elevator runs from this apartment to the 3rd floor. All the different apartments in the basement are supplied with all necessary closets etc.

Ascending to the first floor and entering the south entrance fronting the union depot, we came to the **OFFICE** of the hotel, handsomely finished in paneling and carved oak; the floor polished until it shone like a looking glass. The ceiling is also in highly polished wood, natural grain; the room is lighted by three elegant chandeliers of eight lights each. It also has electric bell attachments to every room, a handsome gong and large fireplace of pressed brick, besides registers from the hot air furnace beneath. On the right, approaching the grand stairway, is the...oiled woods, as is the office, equipped with handsome chandeliers and numerous conveniences. Passing beyond the stairway, we enter the grand **DINING SALOON** capable of seating two hundred guests, brilliantly lighted by six chandeliers of eight lights each. This room is finished up in the same style as the office and gentlemen's parlor and is extremely handsome. Adjoining the dining room is a spacious and fully equipped butler's pantry, with electric and speaking tube connections with the various departments with which he has use. On the left hand side of this pantry is a store room fitted up with shelves and boxes for groceries etc. Next to this apartment comes the **KITCHEN.** This most important quarter is most admirably and completely equipped with all appliances and aids to the culinary art. A range of the largest size, manufactured by Bramhall, Deane & Co. of Philadelphia, is located on one side of the room; it contains two fire boxes, three large ovens, an immense broiler and boiler of great size. There is also an apparatus for keeping meats, vegetables & c. warm by means of hot water circulated ingeniously through pipes, in which the heat can be diminished or increased as pleased. Here we also noticed the coffee, tea and milk urns, large and handsome, with glass gauge attachments which indicate the amount in each vessel; these were also manufactured by Bramhall, Deane & Co. Just beyond are the dish compartments, containing 12 closets closed from floor to ceiling and fitted up with apparatus for warming dishes by steam. An elevator passes through this room also. Further beyond is a refrigerating apartment of the J.H. Ridgeway patent. This contains two apartments with places for ice, each capable of holding something like a ton, and arranged with banks, shelves & c. for meats, butter, vegetables & c. Six beeves could be hung in

either one of these apartments and kept indefinitely. At the extreme end of this wing is another storage room. Ascending the grand stairway ornamented with carved and polished oak and lighted by a ....strikingly arranged with paneling over hard finished plaster. Here, also, is a spacious pressed brick fireplace, besides registers from the hot air furnace below, and glass doors opening on the verandah. This floor contains nineteen sleeping apartments, all roomy, excellently ventilated, and furnished alternately in ash and ebony, the floors all carpeted, linen rooms and all possible conveniences provided throughout. A small ebony knob in each room needs but to be touched by the guest to ring the bell in the office. A back stairway also leads downward and upward. On the third floor is fifteen sleeping apartments, besides linen rooms & c., all elegantly furnished and carpeted, with electric call bell attachments and every possible convenience for guests. At the end of this floor is an apartment containing a large iron tank capable of holding some 3,000 gallons which will be kept filled with water, pumped up by the machine works, to be used in case of fire. Passing through an open hallway, we enter the annex or wing of the main building, 132 feet long by 48 feet wide. This wing is surrounded on three sides by spacious verandahs at each floor from which the view of the surrounding country is almost enchanting. The basement of this part is at present in one large apartment the full size of the building, and which will probably be fitted up for a billiard saloon.

The first and second floors have fourteen sleeping rooms each, and on the third floor are seven, besides numberless closets, linen rooms & c. This portion is also fitted up in the same style as the main building: electric call-bell attachments, elegant chandeliers, and handsome protected lights for the verandahs.

The hotel and grounds are lighted by gas, and supplied with water from the famous McClanahan spring.

The system of drainage is extensive and most complete. Situated on a commanding eminence, there is ample fall to take off all waste matter, and keep the entire premises dry and sweet. The grounds—containing some six acres—are being enclosed and graded, and will be lighted by some twenty gas lamps. At each post in the surrounding fence will be planted a vine. Some five hundred trees have been ordered for planting on the grounds, which will be laid off and arranged by Mr. Hayes, landscape gardener, of Philadelphia, under the supervision of H. Chipman, Esq. The entrance and driveway gates will be manufactured by the Cleveland Wrought Iron Fence Co. of Ohio.

Taken in its entirety, this is one of the most commodious, well arranged and handsomely finished hotels we have ever seen outside

of a few of our largest cities. There is one feature, however, in which it cannot be equalled, and that is the **MAGNIFICENT VIEW** presented from the verandas and every window and door in the building. The view needs to be seen to be appreciated. We have neither the ability or space to depict it in words. On every hand the horizon is met by mountains of attractive outline, while the landscape intervening is beautiful and attractive. On the South, the hotel overlooks the union depot, the machine works, round houses, and a large portion of our picturesque town; on the East we have the round houses, machine and car works, also besides the iron furnaces which loom up in the distance and another section of the town; on the North and West, an extended and varied landscape, while, as before said, mountains are seen on all sides.

This cannot fail to become a most popular resort, and under the experienced management of the lessee, Mr. Mullin, will soon become famous with the traveling public and visitors to our growing city.

The hotel has been built by the Roanoke Land and Improvement Company at a cost of about sixty thousand dollars.

The Railroad Offices

by Don Piedmont

The first office building of the Norfolk and Western Railroad was built in 1883 on North Jefferson Street, beside the tracks. It burned in 1896, the same year the company emerged from receivership as the Norfolk and Western Railway.

It was a many-gabled thing, this rambling, chimney-rich Queene Anne office building that was for a dozen years home to the Norfolk and Western Railroad. It sat there just across Jefferson Street from the new Hotel Roanoke, and end-on to the main line.

A photograph from the time suggests the presence of retail shops on the ground floor and a bay window that may or may not have been a telegraph office on the sidewalk facing the track. Through the deeply shaded door passed the luminaries of the time: Frederick J. Kimball, no doubt sporting his famous checkered suit and glittering tie pin; Henry Fink, bearded and bulky, who succeeded Kimball as president, and L. E. Johnson, another future president. There were others, of course, anonymous then and forgotten now, except as fading images in old albums; derbied dandies in high collars and ladies in long dresses, their ample skirts covering high-button shoes. Grandparents, great-grandparents even, ancestors perhaps of many who work in today's offices, for in Roanoke the Norfolk and Western has always been a family business.

Don Piedmont is the retired manager of public relations for Norfolk Southern Railway in Roanoke. He wrote this article for a brochure published when railroad employees moved into the new offices in the spring of 1992. Piedmont is a member of the board of the Society and Museum.

It was built in 1883, in the heady years when Big Lick became Roanoke and coal began to move east. The railroad bought it in 1887 as headquarters. On January 4, 1896, a cold and windy day, a fire broke out in the Car Records Office. It started at about 10 in the morning; before one in the afternoon, the fire was out, not through the efforts of the fire company although they fought the blaze bravely but because there was nothing left to burn.

Employees had saved what they could, but papers and debris of all kinds littered the streets about the stark ruins and despair crowned every brow among the huddled spectators. The ashes were not even cold before city fathers were gnawing their knuckles in anxiety about the possibility of the railroad's moving away from Roanoke; and the railroad, with such a thought far from its collective mind, began planning to rebuild.

And rebuild it did, with such speed and efficiency that some employees were at work in their new offices by July. It was the first of two pieces of good news the fates had in store for the Norfolk and Western, the second being its delivery that fall from receivership, and with a new and only slightly different name: Norfolk and Western Railway. It is a matter of record and pride that from that day forward the railroad never looked back.

In the new building, comfortable charm gave way to an earnest business-like brick structure of six stories, with an imposing broken pediment above the front door. It was 186 feet long, embraced 106,200 square feet, and cost $95,852.

Before long, these spacious quarters were inadequate. A West Wing, identical in design with the original - but not as long - and costing just as much, was put up in 1903 and "improved" in 1907. And so it remained, although internal changes and remodelling of many and diverse kinds took place over the succeeding decades.

It was the place of livelihood for hundreds of Roanokers. They worked in "the offices" and when they crossed the tracks for lunch or other business, they went "over town." This phrase remained in the working language until the recent past, in fact, until just about everything moved "over town."

In the Great Depression, Norfolk and Western took a bold and brave step by deciding to add another major office building to its facilities and to the city's skyline. Said to have been modeled loosely on an office building in Winston-Salem belonging to the R. J. Reynolds Company, it turned out to be a solid piece of work. The general contractor was J. P. Pettyjohn, who also built, among other structures, the Roanoke passenger station.

On the site stood an old hotel called the Stratford; the Norfolk and Western Magazine, reporting on the new building, said it had been built 29 years before, which would date it at about 1902. However, it strongly resembles the Hotel Felix as shown in a photograph of the 1896 fire. Whatever the name, the hotel was home to a number of NW employees who, thus dispossessed by progress, had to find another.

These employees and hundreds of others moved into their new office home in May 1931. Its square tower stood 138 feet above street level and topped a structure of eight stores and a basement with a total of 247,600

square feet. It was 152 feet by 141, contained two million pounds of steel, one million mostly tawny bricks and cost $831,927, eight times the original cost of its neighbor to the south. It must have been about this time that the two general office buildings began to be called "new GOB" and "old GOB," a custom that continues in some vocabularies to the present day. Not until years later did "north" and "south" and "east" become office GOB suffixes.

A 500-plus seat auditorium was on the first floor at the rear on the south, or Center Avenue side, but whether it was long used is not now clear, 60 years later. Sharing the floor were the Industrial and Agricultural and Relief and Pension Departments, where

Below the two Norfolk and Western office buildings on North Jefferson Street, a group of employees lined up to deliver Christmas baskets in 1932.

under slightly different names, they remained until Norfolk and Western's consolidation with Southern Railway mandated their presence elsewhere.

The Freight Traffic Department got the second floor, Engineering the third. Accounting got the fourth, fifth, sixth and seventh. The Magazine and Advertising Department (the Public Relations Department's ancestor), the assistant engineer for the Radford and Shenandoah Divisions and the catenary engineer filled up the eighth. The President's office remained for many years on the first floor of the old building, in fact, until Stuart Saunders' time.

Generally the interior reflected a firmly planted no-nonsense railroad hard at work in a depression. Nevertheless, the impression was not altogether grim. In certain aspects of the exterior and in the lobby and elevator cages, fans of the architectural and decorative arts of the 1920s will find delightful counterpoint to the unadorned functionalism elsewhere in the building. There are, for example, graceful lighting fixtures, bold marble highlights and interesting use of metals, all evocative of the times.

The Virginian merger came, the Nickel Plate-Wabash et al merger came, employment grew and shrank. Architects and remodelers wrought a certain amount of magic in the one old and one aging building to accommodate these comings and goings, but finally there came the critical time for decision. And the decision came down on the side of commitment and Roanoke.

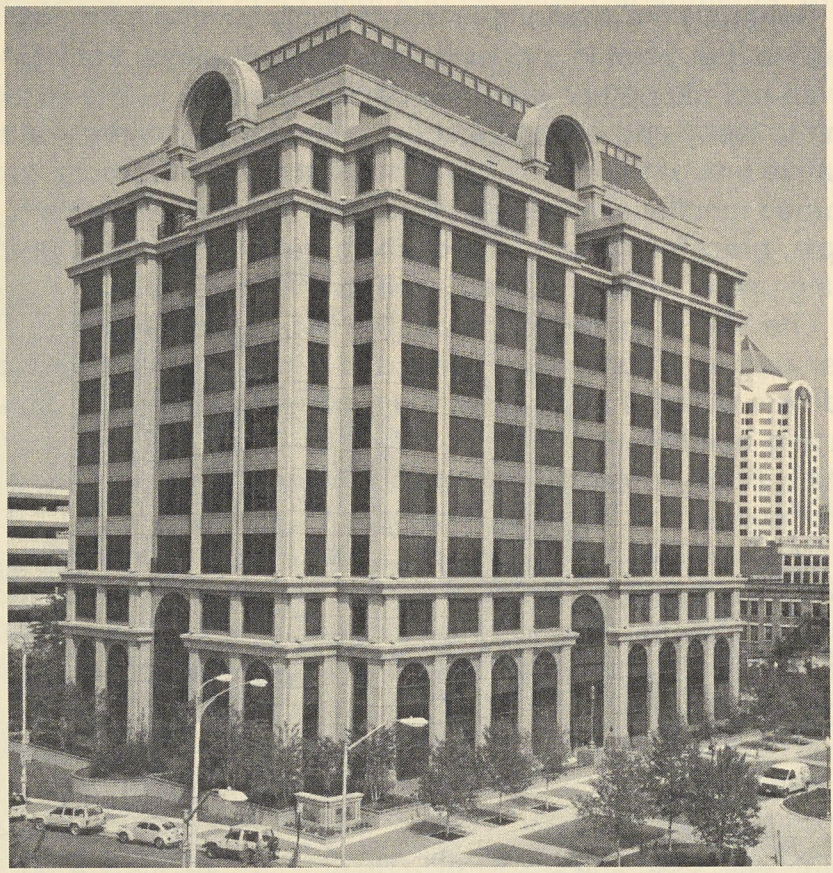
The result of that decision is clear to all. It is a steel and concrete manifestation of the railroad's faith in itself as well as in Roanoke, a design of impressive architectural distinction, as fitted for the computer age as its 1887 predecessor was fitted for the age of Grover Cleveland.

It cost $25 million. It has 10 working floors and an 11th loaded with computer and communications equipment, sophisticated beyond the minds of most people. It is home to a dozen departments: Coal and Ore Traffic, Marketing, Industrial Development, Engineering, Accounting, Tax, Police, Employee Benefits, Internal Audit, Management Information Services, Finance and Public Relations, plus Building Management. Its population on any given day is around 900.

It has 204,000 square feet and contains 500 tons of reinforcing steel, 150 tons of structural steel, 80,000 square feet of pre-cast concrete, 40,000 square feet of glass and 7,000 yard of concrete. Ground was broken on October 15, 1990, with "topping out" at the end of May 1991. The first move took place on February 21, 1992, the last at the end of April.

This cool, contemporary building, so far removed in form and style from its predecessors, is a continuation of our railroad's century-old presence in Roanoke and of our confidence in the city, in ourselves, in our people.

Queene Anne gables or tinted glass, some things just don't change.



Home for many of the railroad's Roanoke offices in the 1990s is a new $25-million, 10-story, steel and concrete building, striking in contemporary business design. The two former general office buildings on North Jefferson Street remained vacant in 1996.

Totera Town Reconsidered

by Thomas Klatka

In September of 1671, Thomas Batts and Robert Fallam led an exploration westward from Fort Henry (at what is now Petersburg) "for the finding out the ebbing and flowing of the Waters on the other side of the Mountains, in order to [attain] the discovery of the South Sea." This exploration was privately documented in a short journal kept by Robert Fallam. Fallam's journal is an intensively studied, yet problematic, document relating to western Virginia's early history. Although various interpretations of the route taken by the Batts and Fallam expedition have been advanced, no consensus has emerged. This lack of consensus stems from the recognition that Fallam's brief journal of the expedition contains little detail in its descriptions of distance traveled, direction taken, or terrain traversed.

For more than three centuries, Fallam's journal has been received as a politically sensitive and historically controversial document. Nonetheless, this important document provides undisputed testimony to the first recorded exploration of western Virginia. It also carries critical implications for the study of the early history of Roanoke Valley. This article will discuss Fallam's journal in light of recent archaeological research in western Virginia. This research may be used to inform discussions of the journal, and purported locations of Totera Town.

In the late 19th century, renewed interest in the journal of Fallam stemmed from scholarly discussions of Virginia's Native Americans, and the process of European-American settlement in western Virginia. Of particular interest to these discussions was the following journal entry by Fallam on September 9, 1671:

> We were stirring with the Sun and travelled west and after a little riding came again to the Supany River where it was very narrow, and ascended the second mountain which wound up west and by south with several springs and fallings, after which we came to a steep descent at the foot whereof was a lovely descending Valley about six miles over with curious small risings... Our course over it was southwest. After we were over that, we came to a very steep descent, at the foot whereof stood the Tetera Town in a very rich swamp between a branch and the main River of Roanoke circled about with mountains. We got thither about three of the clock after we had travelled twenty-five miles. Here we were exceedingly civilly entertain'd.

Thomas Klatka, archaeologist in the Roanoke Regional Preservation Office since it opened in 1989, came here after earning a master's degree and doing other graduate work at the University of Virginia. A native of New Castle, Pa., he is a graduate of Indiana University of Pennsylvania.

This journal entry includes the first written mention of a Native American settlement in western Virginia, and provides a description of the terrain around the settlement. This information has become one of the central clues in developing an understanding of the history of western Virginia's inhabitants before settlement by the European-Americans.

Modern interest in Fallam's journal was initiated in 1894 by the Smithsonian Institution anthropologist, James Mooney. His study of the journal concluded that Totera Town was located in present day Patrick County, Virginia. Since Mooney's publication, numerous scholars have interpreted the journal and conjectured on the location of Totera Town. Some of these scholars have concluded that Totera Town was located in the Radford Valley. However, the majority have concluded that Totera Town was probably located in the Roanoke Valley.

Numerous areas in the Roanoke Valley have been offered for the location of Totera Town. Some have cited Salem as the likely location of Totera Town. Many others believe that Totera Town was probably located in southeast Roanoke on the broad floodplain of the Roanoke River between the 9th Street bridge and the 13th Street bridge. In all likelihood, all of these scholars would probably agree that the brevity of Fallam's journal precludes a conclusive interpretation of Totera Town's location.

As modern scholars continued the study of Totera Town, they have turned to archaeology for the "hard evidence." The sought-after evidence consists of "trade artifacts." Trade artifacts are items that were traded to the Native Americans by the European American explorers. Many different articles were used for trade, but the trade items which most often remain preserved in archaeological sites include fragments of metal items, glass beads, and perhaps shell beads. Trade artifacts have been recovered from a few archaeological sites in the Radford and Roanoke valleys, and these sites provide the best available information for the study of Totera Town's location.

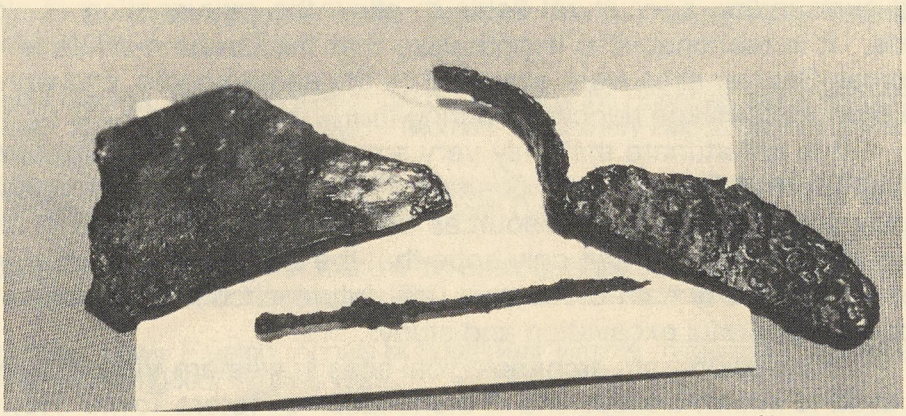
In 1974 and 1975, archaeologists excavated an entire Native American village prior to the construction of the B. David Bissett Recreation Park in Radford. The site, referred to as the Trigg Site, was located along the New River. Excavations at the Trigg site yielded the largest collection of trade artifacts in western Virginia. A study of the trade artifacts recovered from the site has led some archaeologists to conclude that the Trigg Site was occupied circa 1600-1635. Radiocarbon dates suggest that site occupation occurred in the period between the mid-16th century to the mid-18th century. Some scholars, who believe the Batts and Fallam expedition traveled as far

west as present-day West Virginia, use evidence from the Trigg site to suggest that Totera Town was located in the Radford Valley.

In 1975, archaeologists excavated a portion of the Buzzard Rock site in southeast Roanoke. Excavations at the site were conducted prior to the building of the 13th Street extension and bridge. Additional excavations at this site were undertaken in 1984. While these two excavations did reveal evidence of a Native American settlement, trade artifacts were not recovered. Furthermore, radiocarbon dates for the excavation areas suggest that the site was occupied by the Native Americans at least 250 years before the 1671 expedition of Batts and Fallam.

Recent archaeological excavations at two sites in Salem are also noteworthy. The Thomas-Sawyer site is located within the Southside Industrial Park on the south side of the Roanoke River. Various portions of this large site have been excavated since 1980. In 1988, excavations on a small part of the site yielded several trade artifacts. Radiocarbon dates associated with the trade artifacts suggest that the excavated materials date from the late 16th century to the mid-17th century.

More recently, archaeological excavations were conducted at the Graham-White site in Salem. This site is located between Williams Branch and the Roanoke River, about one mile downstream from the Thomas-Sawyer site. While the area surrounding the Graham-White site is very similar to Fallam's description of the terrain surrounding Totera Town, it should be noted that many areas in western Virginia fit the description.



A trigger from a British firearm (left), an iron needle and a piece of brass were among the trade artifacts found at the Graham-White archaeological site along the Roanoke River in Salem in 1990. (Roanoke Times photo)

Excavations at the Graham-White site were undertaken during the construction of the James Moyer Sports Complex. The Graham-White site has yielded a large number of trade artifacts. Although radiocarbon dating has not been completed, a study of the recovered trade artifacts suggests a mid to late 17th century date for the site. These artifacts include metal scraps of iron, copper and brass, glass beads, and the triggers from a snaphaunce firearm.

Snaphaunce firearms were among the first guns brought to Jamestown by the English colonists. They were manufactured and used in Europe as early as 1580. Although the snaphaunce was superseded by the English lock around 1650, it was issued by the British military until the end of the 17th century. The recovered snaphaunce trigger supports a 17th century date from the Graham-White site. Also, archaeological research in the North Carolina piedmont provides additional evidence that certain types of glass trade beads and Native American ceramics found at the Graham-White site are not common on contemporaneous sites until the period from 1670 to 1700.

Using historical and archaeological information to determine conclusively the location of Totera Town is a difficult, if not impossible task. With our current level of knowledge, the majority of contemporary scholars believe that the Batts and Fallam expedition of 1671 passed through the Roanoke Valley, and that Totera Town was located along the Roanoke River. Albeit inconclusive, the best evidence for Totera Town's location in the Roanoke Valley is at the Graham-White and Thomas-Sawyer sites in Salem.

The Native Americans living in western Virginia prior to European-American settlement were likely practicing swidden agriculture. This agricultural technique requires the periodic relocation of villages and surrounding agricultural fields to allow the rejuvenation of old fields. It is reasonable to hypothesize that the Graham-White and Thomas-Sawyer sites were occupied by the same people, and were the product of village relocation during the 17th century.

It is unfortunate that only very small portions of the Buzzard Rock, Thomas-Sawyer, and Graham-White sites were excavated. Rarely are the necessary resources and time available for a complete excavation. We can only hope that the evidence still buried in those sites will remain unharmed until future circumstances allow proper and careful excavation and study.

Information from archaeological sites in western Virginia may be used to inform discussions of the location of Totera Town. However, conclusive evidence for the village location has yet to be uncovered. Only by the continued study of early colonial documents and archaeological sites can we develop a better understanding of the route taken by the Batts and Fallam expedition, the location of Totera Town, and the early history of the Roanoke Valley.

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Col. William Fleming's Origins

by Clare White

"The Revolution that took place in North America in the Year 1775 separating the Thirteen United States from Great Britain for ever, and the remote part of Virginia where I now reside, and the Prospect I have of removing to a great distance westwardly, where the communication will be small, and the opportunities to Europe but seldom, it may not be amiss to inform my Family that I am the third son of Leonard Fleming, a Gentleman whose Ancestors have long been settled in Westmoreland in the North of England not far from Winandermeer (sic)...My Father being straitened in his circumstances sold his Paternal Estate...and moved to Scotland..."[1]

Thus Col. William Fleming began an abbreviated, and incomplete, account of his life. He probably wrote it in July of 1782 when he had been named a judge for the District of Kentucky and was contemplating a move to that remote part of Virginia where he owned thousands of acres of land. For Fleming, as for others who lived west of Virginia's Blue Ridge Mountains in the 18th century, Kentucky's meadows and forests had become the new horizon,a lodestone for the men and women whose lives were shaped by a dream. Land! While land and the freedom to possess it may not have brought the earliest settlers to Virginia in the 17th century, it soon became a central theme in their struggle to survive and succeed. A hundred years after the first settlers arrived on the eastern shores of Virginia, Scotch-Irish and German pioneers followed the same beckoning star as they crossed the Atlantic to Pennsylvania, pioneered up the Shenandoah Valley and on to the valley of the Roanoke River, cupped in mountains at the southern end of the great Valley of Virginia. Fleming's house was there, under the shadow of one of those great ridges.

William Fleming was never to settle in Kentucky. His judgeship never materialized. When the powerful Council of Virginia thought over the governor's appointment, they decided it would be unwise to name as judge a man who had already tried to arbitrate the kinds of land claims that were sure to come before him as a judge. Only two years before, he had headed a governor's commission sent to unravel the tangled legal complexities of possession that clouded most titles to land in the Kentucky of the 1780s.[2]

Clare White is a longtime writer of Roanoke area history. A graduate of Hollins College, she is a former women's editor of the Roanoke Times & World-News, a board member, librarian and newsletter editor of the Society. She is the author of "Roanoke 1740-1982." This article is the first chapter of a projected biography of William Fleming, a surgeon, legislator, Indian fighter and prominent settler of the Roanoke Valley. The photographs were made by the author.

Fleming's autobiography never got beyond his entering the University of Edinburgh to study anatomy under the famous Alexander Munro, primus. The account stops almost in mid-sentence, leading one to think he put it aside abruptly when the news reached him, less than two weeks after his appointment, that the Council conceived it "improper that he should sit in a Court before whom cases may come on which he had before given his opinion."[3] That the Council's belated decision was a bitter disappointment may be measured by his immediate resolve to resign his most recent commission to travel once more to Kentucky, this time to settle monetary claims resulting from military expeditions on the Ohio River. It was with difficulty that he was persuaded to undertake that assignment, although, as the reasoning man he was, he must have appreciated the wisdom of the judgeship revocation.[4]

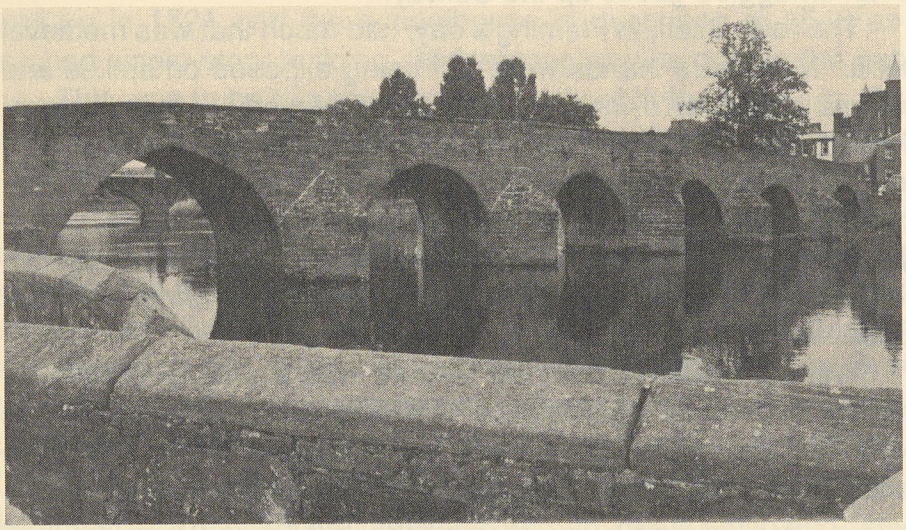
The short autobiographical account, written in the latter years of Fleming's life, serves as a kind of introduction to the man's life before he came to Virginia in the 1750s. A visit to Dumfries in the lowlands of West Scotland, where he spent his youth, fills in some of the background so a sketch can be attempted of the influences that were to mold the man he would become.

As Fleming put it, he was the third son of Leonard Fleming, "a Gentleman." That designation following his father's name immediately puts the senior Fleming in a special class,that of a man of good birth who did not work with his hands. The descent of the Fleming line that conferred that title on him is cloudy. Col. Fleming stated his family had long lived in Westmoreland and, indeed, Flemings had lived there for generations, connected with Rydal Castle. These Flemings were descended from Michael Le Fleming (translation: Michael, the Fleming), whose father, William Le Fleming, came to England with William the Conqueror. William Le Fleming had lands in both England and Scotland; his eldest son, William, inherited his Scotland lands where his descendants became identified as the Earls of Wigton.[5] When the male line of the Earls of Wigton became extinct in the late 18th century, Col. William Fleming of Virginia was reputed to be the nearest male heir to the title. He refused to enter a claim to the title, saying he was then in the decline of life and did not wish to expend the large amount of money necessary to go to England to prove his right, only to aggrandize his eldest son at the expense of his younger children. Furthermore, he said, he was now committed to his adopted country and had no desire to return to England.[6] It is significant, however, that he, like his father, was referred to as William Fleming, Gent., when not designated as Colonel or Doctor. Also, according to a peruser of his papers in the 19th century, he used the Fleming seal on his correspondence.[7]

The Leonard Flemings, Col. Fleming's parents, were living at a house called Reston in England's Lake Country, on the road from Kendal to Ambleside and only a few miles from Rydal Castle[8] when, as his son later wrote, Fleming "became straitened in his circumstances (and) sold his Paternal Estate." The elder Fleming secured a job with the Excise, the English tax collecting agency, and moved his family, first in 1725 to Rutherglen near present Glasgow, and then, a year later, to Jedborough in the Scottish Lowlands.[9] His son notes that, with his salary and an annuity coming to his wife, the former Dorothea Satterthwaite of Westmoreland County, he was able to "live with Credit and Reputation."[10] The annuity must have been truly substantial for William Fleming's unmarried sisters, Margaret and Sarah, after their parents' death, lent the town of Dumfries £1,000, an enormous sum for the 18th century.[11]

At Jedborough on the 18th of February, 1728,[12] a third son was born to Leonard and Dorothea Fleming, a son they named William. They already had two sons, Leonard and John, both of whom died in their youth, and a daughter, Catherine. When the new baby was almost three years old, the family moved again, this time to Dumfries as Fleming senior worked his way up in the Excise service. With the exception of five years in Kilmarnock and a year each in Old Melorum, Wigton and Bridgend, the Flemings would live in Dumfries for the next 45 years. Leonard Fleming became Supervisor of the Excise in 1730 and filled that position for the rest of his life.[13]

William Fleming's parents and sisters were members of St. Michael's Church at Dumfries, Scotland, and they were buried in its graveyard.



A classic 15th century bridge at Dumfries, Scotland, where William Fleming's family lived.

In the 18th century, Dumfries, a town of about 5,000, was known as the "Scottish Liverpool." Situated at the first ford of the Nith River, about five miles from Solway Firth on the west coast of Scotland, the town built ships and carried on a lively trade with Virginia, New England, Gothenburg, the French ports, Spain, Italy, Dantzig, Norway, Holland and all around the British coasts. Many of the trading firms in the town had one son at the Dumfries end and one in the Virginia, New England or Belfast office. All through the century there are records of repeated attempts to keep the river channel open and marked, along with construction of new outports. Tobacco from Virginia was an important import, as was wine from Oporto and timber from the Baltic.[14]

It was on imports such as these, along with exports, that the British Parliament imposed an Excise tax from time to time, a tax similar to the 20th century VAT (Value Added Tax), but collected at the point of manufacture or import rather than at the point of sale. The Supervisor of the Excise had the responsibility of calculating and collecting this tax. In addition, it was his duty to apprehend smugglers. For every smuggler arrested, the Excise officer received an award and half of the goods recovered.[15] During Leonard Fleming's terms of office, Dumfries and the waters of the Nith were besieged by smugglers, so much so that, by the end of the century when the town's foreign trade had been decimated, the blame was laid on the activities of smugglers. The situation was exacerbated by the connivance of the country people. Mobs of women are said to have repeatedly assaulted the luckless excisemen with pitchforks and stones.[16] In the records in Edinburgh is a note about Fleming: "To an old CO (Customs Officer) who must have had many a tussle with the bold adventurers

who ran smuggled goods up the Solway..."[17]

The town itself, in Fleming's day, had much that was medieval about it. Murderers' hands were still being exposed on spikes and conditions in the town's prisons were said to be frightful. Most prisoners had been incarcerated for debt, small debts of a few shillings. One account details that a crofter complained he had been held for six months on a five shilling debt and his creditor had taken over, not only his croft, but also his wife and family. Near the end of the century, the officers of the town were dismissed for refusing to bring down two corpses from the gallows.

Withal, however, the 18th century was a time of growth for Dumfries, if not for its life as a port. The Flesh Market (butchers) was moved and properly laid out in mid-century, despite the wishes of the butchers who insisted on their right to slay cattle anywhere in the streets; one of the steep, narrow lanes that ran down to the river from the High Street had been known as Stinking Fennel for its association with offal (Fennel means "narrow street"). That change would have taken place during William Fleming's boyhood.

The Midsteeple, or Town Hall, with its slender spire, was built in the middle of the High Street in the early years of the century; it still stands in the 20th century as a reminder of the past. The New Kirk, the first new religious building in the town for centuries, was built in 1727 as a result of overcrowding in St. Michael's, a church first mentioned about 1200. In 1742, while young Fleming was still attending St. Michael's, its medieval tower was replaced by a steeple; the body of the church was rebuilt in 1745-1746.[18] Leonard and Dorothea Fleming and their daughter Margaret are buried in the churchyard at St. Michael's, a Presbyterian stronghold.[19]

Other 18th century improvements included a new hospital and the sale of disreputable tenements to new proprietors who promised to repair or rebuild. Thatch roofs were replaced with slate to remove fire hazards and new streets were laid out, altogether an unprecedented effort in civic pride.

On the reverse side of the coin, the town of Dumfries financed all these improvements with loans, and loans coming due were simply repaid with fresh loans. In the 1790s, Dumfries was several times cited in the Houses of Parliament as a shining example of a thoroughly corrupt burgh.[20] Margaret and Sarah Fleming, having loaned the town £1,000, were two who were caught in that loan cycle. Years after Margaret's death, her executor was still trying to collect from the town.[21]

In one respect, Dumfries could, and did, enjoy pride of achievement. The Grammar School of Dumfries dates from the 16th century with an unblemished record of scholarship. A "sculemaister"

turns up in 1521 and the schoolhouse is described in 1548 as a thatched single-story building, 36 feet long with its door in the gable end. This was to be the only grammar school in the town. In 1741, writing of the moving of the schoolhouse, a historian said it had stood in the same place for "nigh 200 years."

In the 18th century, the school was run by a succession of generally brilliant rectors, one of the finest being Dr. Trotter who took it over in 1724 and who was headmaster when young William Fleming received his "classical education" there. An education such as the young Fleming was given included a thorough grounding in Greek and Latin, as well as such subjects as arithmetic, mathematics, writing and English. Among more esoteric subjects taught at the school in Fleming's time were navigation and astronomy.[22] Evidence of Fleming's solid educational background turns up later in the titles of the books in his library. They cover a wide range, from the expected medical books a doctor would have (43 of them) to the 281 other titles he listed in 1787, which may not have been all the ones on his shelves. Of these, however, there are histories, essays, classics such as Plato, Plutarch and Voltaire, books on law, agriculture and military fortifications, poetry, philosophy and religious dissertations, including the sermons of some divines who reflected the new ideas of the Scottish Enlightenment. "Paradise Lost" rubbed shoulders with Kimber's "Peerage," Shakespeare with Dryden, Horace (in Latin) with Webster's "Mathematics."[23] In addition, Fleming wrote a graceful, flowing script of great style and clarity.

After the young scholar had completed his studies at Dr. Trotter's establishment, he decided to study medicine, "rather," he wrote later, "to enable me to Satisfy my curiosity in traveling than as a business on which I was to depend at a future day for my support." To that end, following the practice of the day, he was apprenticed to a surgeon at Dumfries, one Dr. McKie. He was then about 16 years old and he gives a distinct impression he made this decision, and later ones, entirely on his own, an unusual circumstance in a time when, in Europe, maturity was reached at the age of 28 rather than the American 21. He spent three years with Dr. McKie, following him to Kirkcudbright on the Solway Firth when the doctor moved there toward the latter part of his apprenticeship. At this point, let him take up the tale from his short autobiography:

"At the expiration of this time, instead of going immediately to College to study the Theory under the different Professors for a little time, the usual course of the greatest part of the Youth brought up to the Profession of Physick & Surgery in Scotland, I thought the Foundation ought to be well laid and that it was necessary to have a

thorough knowledge in the Materica Medica & Pharmacy, to obtain which I went to Kendal in Westmoreland (near his father's former home) and lived with Mr. Christopher Brown, an eminent Apothecary in that Place till I was master of this."[24]

The year was then 1745 and Charles Edward Louis Philip Casimir Stuart, otherwise known as the "Young Pretender," the "Young Chevalier," or "Bonnie Prince Charlie," had been in Scotland since August, intent upon raising support amongst the Highlanders and anyone else he could rouse, in quest of his claim to the English throne. Having occupied Edinburgh in September, where he proclaimed himself James VIII of Scotland, he left that city in the beginning of November to invade England. He was at the head of at least 5,000 men when he started, but the ranks were gradually thinned by the desertion of the Highlanders, who did not relish a long campaign; their tradition led them to consider war as a raid, here today and home tomorrow. Charles, however, hoped to counteract the desertions by recruiting followers as he went along. On November 9, he laid siege to Carlisle which fell in a week's time. He then started south for London and his way led through Kendal where 19- year-old William Fleming was learning pharmacy. Charles got as far as Derby before accepting his failure to rebuild an army and the attendant necessity for retreat.[25]

"During the time I lived at Mr. Brown's the Rebellion broke out in Scotland. The Rebels having taken possession of Carlisle in Cumberland, marched through Westmoreland by Kendal in their rout(e) to Derby in 1745 and left the Measles which I caught but with care I recovered in the usual time and felt no bad effect from them. The Chevalier or Pretender as he is called, not finding himself supported as he expected on his advancing into England, and that William Duke of Cumberland was advancing with troops against him, retreated from Derby the same way he advanced...

"The Van of his Army consisting of some light horse under the Duke of Perth, passed through Kendal on Saturday in the forenoon, which being Market Day and great numbers of Country People in town, when they spied a led horse which one of the Duke of Perth's servants had, and knew him to belong to Colo. Wilson of Dalentower who had marched the Militia of Westmoreland to reinforce the Garrison at Carlisle before it fell into the Rebels possession, where the horse was captured on the surrender of that city. The People were furious (and) attacked the Party with Stones, Clubs and such Arms as came to hand, knocked the Groom down, seized the horse and drove the party out of town.

"All was immediately confusion; the shops and houses were instantly shut up and several shot were exchanged by which some of

the Townsmen were kil(l)ed and some wounded. The Party galloped through the Town and made the best of their way towards Penrith. The main body of the Rebel Army came in on Saturday evening and next day and continued till Monday, plundering whoever they met of their shoes, stockings and what clothes suited them. The Duke of Cumberland being close in their Rear with the Royal Army, his Van entered Kendal on Tuesday and, after taking a small refreshment, continued the pursuit, the Inhabitants happily relieved from their fears of an engagement being brought on between the two Armies in or near Kendal, which might have been of great detriment to a trading town. (Fleming does not mention his part in any of this but, as an experienced physician and a pharmacist's mate, he surely took a hand with the wounded townspeople, if not an active part in the assault to repossess the horse.)

"To retard the Royal Army in the pursuit, the Rebels sacrificed a few men at Clifton Moor by lining the hedges and dikes (ditches) near the road and firing on the Duke of Cumberland's advanced party, by which means their main body had time to make their retreat good from Penrith to Carlisle."[26]

Charles and his by now ragtag army had started their retreat from Derby on December 6th. By mid-January he managed to defeat Gen. Hawley who had marched from Edinburgh to intercept him, but he continued to be plagued by desertions. At last, on April 16, 1746, he faced the Duke of Cumberland at Culloden and was completely worsted. All that remained was to escape; he finally sailed for France in the late summer.[27]

In the meantime, one supposes Fleming had come down with the measles in due course, a result of the Kendal experience that argues a close connection of some sort with one of the armies as they came through the town.

The young doctor's adventures were not yet over. He wrote that, in the fall of 1746 he left Kendal and went to the University of Edinburgh to study, for which he borrowed money from his sister Catherine.[28] It must have been when he left Kendal that the other adventure of which he wrote in his autobiography took place. After giving a history of Kendal and its geographical and commercial features, he continues:

"In my journey from Kendal to Dumfries in company with my sister Catherine and a young gentleman, when within two miles of Carlisle, the evening gun was fired and a young man who had joined us on the road, observing that the Gates would be shut before we could reach the City, advised us to put up at his Fathers where we could be well entertained as he kept a public house of good repute.

Being strangers and necessarily forcing, we complied with the proposal and were shown into a room. I observed as we went through a public room, a rab(b)le of People drinking, some of them being intoxicated. Some of them viewed our horses in the stables and were in hopes to plunder us of some of them. Before we went to bed I went to the stable and, being obliged to return through the room where they were, I was stopped by them when a fellow in a soldiers dress stepped up to me, looked in my face, swore he saw me amongst the Rebels at Carlisle, on which two or three fellows attempted to seize me. Breaking from them, I got into our room and bolted the door. They broke open the Stable door, took out the horses and rode them off.

"I went after them to the suburbs and found them in a little tip(p)ling house which was the only house that had a light in it. Not being able to enter the City that night, I was obliged to leave the horses (which he seems to have recovered) in charge of the People of the house and returned to our Public house. Next morning we got horses and took the Landlord, his son and the hostler to Carlisle as evidence against the person who was foremost in the outrage, who I found was a person of bad character, but having a vote for a representative of Parliament for Carlisle. (Having a vote meant he owned property.)

"It cost me some trouble and loss of time before I could get satisfaction. However, the fellow was taken up. Other felonious acts coming to light, I withdrew my prosecution and left him to take his fate in a tryal for breaking open a trunk in a stage wagon."[29]

When William and Catherine got back to Dumfries and he related his experiences with the Rebel army, he heard what had happened at home during the Rebellion. The records show that "In the year 1745 the Inhabitants of Dumfries were by the Rebels in three days subjected to plunder by vile, ruffian, barbarous highlanders, and were forced to give hostages for two thousand pounds and upwards, and these lay heavy on the poor inhabitants." The account goes on to say the ransom lay even heavier because the townspeople were already paying two Excise taxes imposed by the British Parliament "with tonnage on merchandise imported by sea."[30]

Another account says that, whereas the town had vigorously opposed the 1715 Jacobite threat, the first of the Stuart uprisings, with massive ditching, re-fortifications and the like, in 1745, 30 years later, no attempt was made at resistance beyond shifting the town's stock of arms to a good hiding place.[31] Perhaps, after five centuries of incessant raids and invasions by both the English and the Highlanders, the border town of Dumfries had decided to accept whatever came and just go on as best it might. Such was the fate of border towns. In the case of Dumfries, the physical destruction was

accompanied by taxes to pay the damages.[32]

No one could claim that life was serene in Scotland during the years of William Fleming's minority, a climate which may have led naturally to his actions when he left the University of Edinburgh. After completing his course in anatomy, he set off for an adventurous life of his own, to realize the desire for travel that had led him into medicine in the first place. The hints to be found of his experiences in the next few years prove that, whether intentional or not, he certainly achieved adventure.

Sometime after leaving the university,[33] he sailed as a surgeon's mate aboard a vessel that eventually landed him off the coast of West Africa. As research into Admiralty records fails to yield a trace of a Dr. William Fleming, the assumption gains credence that he sailed in either a merchant ship, a supply vessel for the slave trade, or a slaver, all of which sailed from Dumfries and neighboring Kirkcudbright. Port records of such 18th century manifests are yet to be found.

In later life, Fleming was to offer only hints of what happened to him during the years he was at sea. He told his children he was captured by the Spanish and put in a Spanish prison; he did not say where, although his children assumed it was in Spain. That he was in some kind of fight was evidenced by a saber scar across his nose which he bore all his life. It seems the reason he even brought up the matter was to explain his not turning away from his door in Virginia anyone who sought food or assistance. He said his life was saved when he was in the Spanish prison by the kindness of a woman, always unknown to him, whose window overlooked the small yard where, after his health began to fail, he was allowed to walk. She dropped food to him and the other prisoners which, he said, kept him from dying of starvation.[34]

The only other reference to that period of his life is in a letter to his friend, Col. William Preston, accompanying the return of some borrowed books in December, 1756. Concerning a book by Blake Morris, he wrote, "What induced me to the reading of his Adventures was his laying one of his Scenes in the Island of Fernando Po where I myself was in more real than he in imaginary distress, but I sufficiently paid for my curiosity by reading such a heap of indigested stuff."[35]

The Island of Fernando Po was at that time a Portuguese possession off the west coast of Africa, later traded to Spain, which was a place for vessels to stock up on water and provisions.[36] The island and the African mainland countries of the Cameroons and Nigeria to the east and north of it were all discovered by the Portuguese navigator Fernando Po toward the end of the 15th century. Since early in the 17th century, British ships had visited the estuaries of the

Cameroons, and English companies had set up trading stations or factories for the slave trade. In 1713, Britain had won the right to furnish slaves to the Spanish colonies in the New World by the Treaty of Utrecht, a monopoly that was supposed to last for 30 years. The contract, or asiento, came to an end in 1739 when complaints on both sides rose to such a height that war with Spain ensued. Peace was not obtained until 1750; it could be Fleming got in the way of these hostilities, hostilities which involved smugglers and the attendant excesses. Even after the British outlawed the slave trade in 1807, ships of other nations continued the slave trade in those waters and merchant ships from Great Britain found profitable markets.[37] In Fleming's time the area was clearly an attractive spot for ships of all nations, for whatever reasons, although perhaps not the safest. The saber cut on Fleming's nose may well have been delivered on these coasts. All that remains are tantalizing conjectures, overlaid by his expressed dislike of the naval service.

The next known record concerning Fleming fits well with a peace between England and Spain in 1750. A series of notices in the annals of the Upper Parish of Nansemond County in Virginia, taken with other evidence, establish his residence there in late 1750 or early 1751, and refute the long-standing claim that he came to the colony in July of 1755. In 1751, 1752, 1753 and 1754, the parish paid a Dr. Fleming for medicines and the care of its, presumably, indigent parishioners. One of the duties of the Vestry of the Parishes of the English Episcopalian (later called Anglican) Church in Virginia was the care of the poor and parish accounts are full of that service. The annual reports of the Upper Parish concerning Fleming read as follows:

"At a Vestry held in Suffolk Town October the 21st 1751 for the Upper Parish in Nansemond County

"To Doctr Wm. Fleming for Medicines and Attendance to Robt. Taylor, £14.0.0.

"To Doctr Wm. Fleming for Medicines etc., £4.7.11" on November 30, 1752.

Again, on November 19, 1753, "To Docktor Flemings for Henry Gwin, £3.12.0."

And, lastly, on November 14, 1754, "To Doctr Flemin for Medicines for the Widow Harmon,£0.15.0."[38]

The Upper Parish of Nansemond County included the Town of Suffolk. Unfortunately, the court records of the county were burned when the courthouse in Suffolk was torched by the British in 1779. Therefore, what may have been corroborating records of Fleming's residence in that county are irretrievably lost.[39]

There were other Flemings in the Upper Parish, as indeed there

were others in other parishes and counties of Tidewater Virginia, some of whom had been resident since the mid-1600s. An Upper Parish processioners' return of March, 1752, takes note of a William and Isaac Fleming being "present on (their) land." Other Flemings named during those years, and after, were John Fleming, Nathaniel Fleming and Mary Fleming.[40] Whether they were related to Dr. William Fleming is nowhere substantiated.

More convincing in the matter of Fleming having been in Suffolk for the years 1751-1754 are references he made in later life to his connection with that town, references which further deny the theory that he came to Virginia right after Braddock's defeat in 1755. The 1775 date was given by his son Leonard Israel Fleming and has been accepted by almost every chronicler since, particularly by those writing about Fleming in the 19th century.

In 1763, in a letter to Gov. Fauquier recommending Andrew Lewis as the County Lieutenant for Augusta County, Fleming wrote that his letter was dictated by a sincere desire to serve his country. "This was my motive when I first entered the service of the Colony," he wrote, "and made me decline a lucrative Business..."[41] Fleming's commission as Ensign from Gov. Dinwiddie is dated August 25, 1755.[42] While the shock waves following Braddock's defeat may have precipitated his resolve to join the Virginia forces, he could hardly have worked up a lucrative practice in the space of the few weeks since the July rout of Gen. Braddock's army on its way to Fort Duquesne. More feasible is the opinion that Fleming's son was mistaken; he was the only son to have reached maturity when his father died and he had then been in Kentucky for six years. The family early on, with no concrete evidence, assumed their father had served in the Royal Navy, a service which entailed seven years of duty. By their reasoning, if he had to serve that long, he must have arrived in America at a later date.

In further support of his earlier years in Virginia, Fleming wrote his father from Suffolk in 1760 saying, "You may perceive I date this from the place I formerly lived at." As he had been in the service on the western frontier continuously since being commissioned in 1755, the only time he could have lived in Suffolk would have been before that year. He also added, in a postscript, "Please direct yours to the Care of Colonel Lemuel Riddick in Suffolk, Nansemond County, Virginia."[43] Col. Riddick had lived in Suffolk since at least the 1730s and had served on the Vestry of the Upper Parish for 40 years when he resigned in 1773. A member of the General Assembly from 1738 to 1775, excepting 1769, he was a very prominent man in the county[44] and was also, evidently, a close friend to William Fleming, a relationship

hardly to have been established between the two with one of them in Tidewater and the other on the Virginia frontier.

There is evidence to suggest Fleming came to America because of the Riddicks. Riddick is a name that turns up in the first written histories of Fleming's native Dumfries. Furthermore, a merchant Riddick of Dumfries, Robert Riddick, had a merchant son in Virginia, Alexander Riddick, in the late 18th century, undoubtedly carrying on the Scottish tradition of one merchant family foot in Virginia and one in Scotland. What more natural than a fellow townsman seeking a berth in the new colony with family friends?[45]

In May, 1779, when Fleming was in Williamsburg as a member of the General Assembly, he wrote his wife about the burning of Suffolk by the British. "A party of them marched to Suffolk and burned the Town. On hearing Gen. Scott was advancing against them they hastily retreated doing all the damage they could. Many of my old Acquaintances & Friends have suffered greatly by burning their houses, having their Negroes & Stock taken off & the women made Captives and exposed to the greatest insults they can be subjected to." The Riddicks were in the thick of that affair.[46]

The evidence would seem conclusive that William Fleming arrived in Virginia some time well before October of 1751 and practiced medicine in the town of Suffolk until, moved by patriotic feeling for his adopted country, he offered himself in its defense, a move that would involve him, in one way or another, until the day of his death.

Notes

[1]Grigsby papers, Mssl 987925 5807, Virginia Historical Society.

[2] Fleming papers, Virginia State Library.

[3] Journal of the Council of the State of Virginia, Vol. III, p. 126.

[4] Calendar of State Papers, Vol. 2, p. 205.

[5]Charles A. Hanna, The Scotch-Irish or the Scot in North Britain, North Ireland and North America, Vol. 2, p.409; Burke's Peerage, p.218.

[6] Fleming papers, Washington & Lee University Library.

[7] Hugh Blair Grigsby, The History of the Virginia Federal Convention of 1788, Vol. 2, p.53.

[8] E. P. Goodwin, Colonel William Fleming of Botetourt, 1728- 1795, p.2.

[9]RH 4/6/1-2 4953D, West Register House, Edinburgh.

[10] Grigsby papers.

[11] West Register House.

[12] Edinburgh records give date of William Fleming's birth as Feb. 7, 1727; in 1752, when England adopted the Gregorian calendar, that date became Feb. 18, 1728.

[13] West Register House records.

[14] History of Dumfries, Dumfries Museum, Scotland; Selections from the Customs Records 1710-1747, Dumfries.

[15] Burns Center records, Dumfries.

[16] History of Dumfries.

[17] West Register House records.

[18] History of Dumfries.

[19] Dumfries Archives Center records, Dumfries.

[20] History of Dumfries.

[21] CC/5/18, Scottish Record Office, Edinburgh.

[22] History of Dumfries.

[23] Fleming papers, W&L.

[24] Grigsby papers.

[25] Encyclopedia Britannica, 1958, Vol. 5, p. 291ff.

[26] Grigsby papers.

[27] Enc. Brit., ibid.

[28] According to Fleming papers, his sister Catherine loaned him the money to attend the university, a debt he was still paying off years later from Virginia. The only record at the University appears in a list of the students of Alexander Munro, primus, noting William Fleming paid the class fee of 3.3.0 for the year 1746.

[29] Grigsby papers.

[30] Robert Edgar, An Introduction to the History of Dumfries, Vol. 1, p.40.

[31] History of Dumfries.

[32] Robert Burns came to Dumfries in 1701 as, like Leonard Fleming, an Excise officer. His salary was 70 pounds a year which was considered a living wage. Already dissipated, he died in Dumfries in 1796 and is buried there.

[33] There is no record of Fleming having gotten a degree from the University of Edinburgh (see Note 28); the university records, however, are reputedly defective.

[34] Grigsby papers; Spanish scholars attest that Spanish prisoners in the 18th century were expected to provide their own food.

[35] 1QQ140, Draper Collection.

[36] Encyclopedia universal ilustrada europeo-americana, Vol. 23, p.832ff.

[37] Enc. Brit. (1958), Vol. 16, p.442; idem, Vol. 4, p.663; idem, Vol. 2, p.543-544; idem, Vol. 20, p.779.

[38] The Vestry Books of the Upper Parish, Nansemond County, Va., 1743-1793, pp 57, 86, 91, 97.

[39] James B. Dunn, The History of Nansemond County, p. 45

[40] I bid., pp. 29, 32, 69, 72, 111, 112, 126, 169, 181, 197.

[41] 3ZZ50, Draper Collection.

[42] Grigsby, Virginia Convention, Vol. 2, p.47.

[43] Mssl 987862 5781, Virginia Historical Society.

[44] Dunn, pp. 68-70; Upper Parish Vestry records.

[45] Register of Confirmed Testaments for the Commissariot of Dumfries, Scottish Record Office, General Register House, Edinburgh, No. 12, 13 Mar., 1795, p. 177.

[46] Mssl 987826 5759, Virginia Historical Society;Dunn, pp.43-44.

Old Speech Patterns Studied

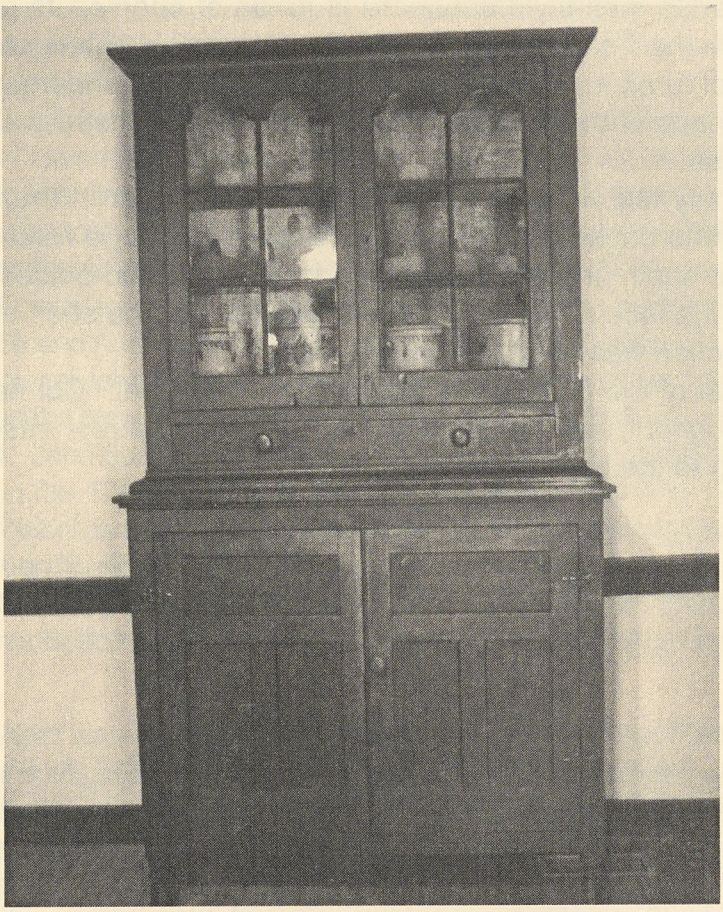
A South Carolina English professor is seeking documents, especially family letters, from before 1830 that were written in informal English (with irregular spellings and grammar). Michael Montgomery is working on a project to determine from such documents the speech patterns of people in earlier days of this country. Anonymity of all material will be scrupulously respected, he said. Interested persons may write Montgomery at the Department of English, University of South Carolina, Columbia, S.C. 29208.

Cupboard Comes Home

A handsome 8-foot cherry cupboard has returned to the Samuel Harsbarger House on Carvin Creek in Roanoke County after a 150-year stay in Indiana. Ed and Delores Truett, the restorers and owners of the 1797 brick and stone Harshbarger home, display the cupboard and the house with pride.

A matching piece of green and gray floral wallpaper and a longstanding family record confirmed that the cupboard was taken westward by Samuel Harshbarger when he left the Roanoke Valley in the 1830s. The German-Swiss family moved to Indiana because Harshbarger disapproved of slavery, according to tradition.

The connecting links of more than a century and a half occurred this way: Polly Parker of Virginia Beach toured the Truetts'



The landmark Harshbarger house in Roanoke County welcomed this old cupboard, returned after a stay of more than 150 years in Indiana.

newly restored home while on a Roanoke visit in August 1990. She told her friends, the Kessler family of Ladoga, Ind., about what she had seen. Several months later, Truett received a telephone call from Samuel Harshbarger-Kessler, a fourth-generation descendant of the original Harshbarger. Kessler told Truett he had a large cupboard from his Roanoke ancestor's home and it was too tall for his or his children's homes. Kessler decided to give the cupboard to Truett.

Truett drove to Indiana the next day where he met Kessler, who is 74, and heard the story of the wagon trip west by the Harshbarger family and the two-piece "setback" cupboard. Truett loaded the valuable piece of furniture and returned home that night.

On his Indiana trip, Truett saw the graves of Harshbarger and his son, as well as the site of the family's 1830s house which was demolished about 12 years ago.

The German-style cupboard is made of cherry. Its paneled doors follow the T-shape design of the doors in the Harshbarger house. Students of furniture believe it was built by or for Harshbarger about 1825, perhaps at the time the brick addition was constructed to the stone house.

Family legend said Harshbarger stored liquor in the bottom section of the cupboard. This would explain the large notch in the front of the shelf, providing clearance for long-necked bottles. Burn marks on the face of the upper doors indicate the the shelf atop the bottom section was used to hold a candle.

Most of the glass panes appear to be original. Cut nails are used throughout the cupboard and a handmade screw attaches a wood latch to the back of the door.

Kentland Farm, A New River Plantation

by John Kern

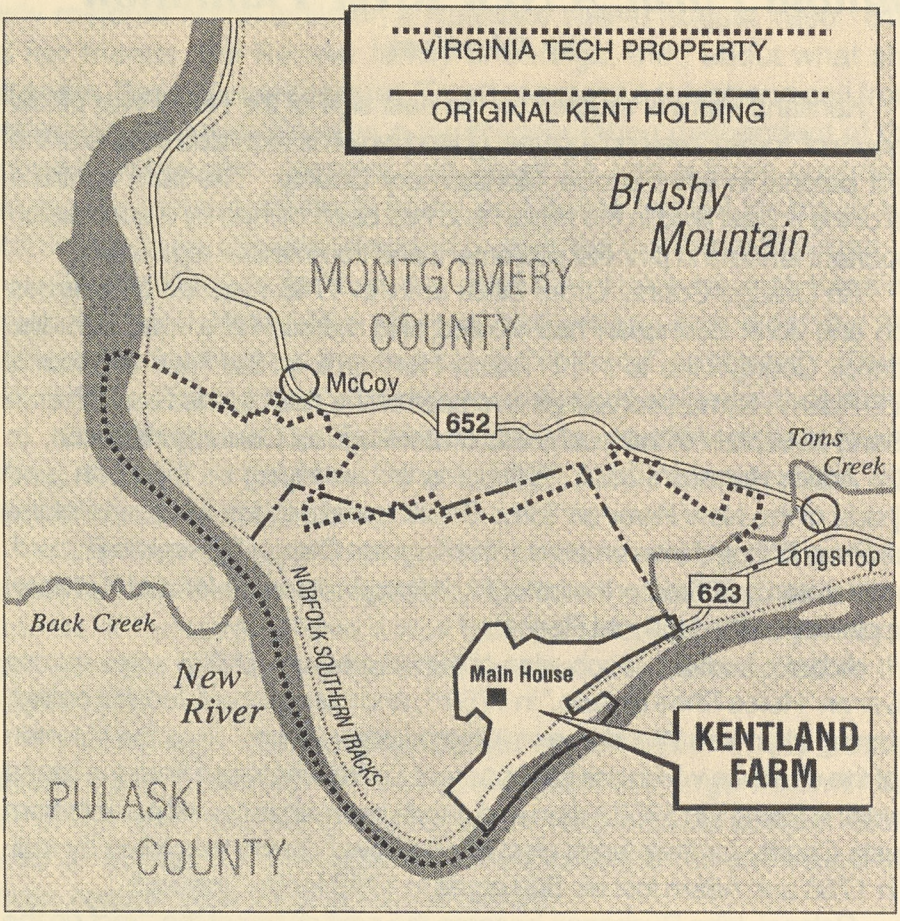
Kentland Farm is situated on the east side of the New River below the mouth of Toms Creek on a parcel of land which is recorded as one of the earliest patents in what is now Montgomery County. The farm contains some of the richest land in the region and has been owned by a succession of important leaders in pioneer settlement and commercial agriculture.

An Orange County Order Book entry in 1745 reported that James Patton and John Buchanan had viewed and marked off a road from the "Frederick County Line to . . . . Adam Harman's on the New or Wood's River." Adam Harman served as overseer of the road to the New River in 1746 and as captain of the local militia under Augusta County jurisdiction. In 1750/1 Adam Harman's tract, "500 acres of Land lying on the north [and east] side of the New River on Toms Creek oposite to the lower end of the Horse Shoe Bottom," was entered in the Augusta County Surveyors Record. Adam Harman's 500-acre tract roughly approximates the land of Kentland Farm placed on the National Register.

Adam's brother, Jacob, also obtained a survey of 985 acres across the river on "Horse Shoe Bottom," in 1750/1, and the survey of Jacob's patent, "Beginning at an Iron Wood tree at Adam Harman's ford," fixes the Harman ford at the shallows which are still apparent just downstream from the island at Kentland Farm.[1] In 1752 Adam and Jacob Harman received patents from Augusta County for their lands discussed above. Jacob was killed by Indians in 1756 and Adam lost his 500 acres in 1763 for tax arrears.[2]

Colonel John Buchanan became the next owner of the "tract on the east side of the New River where Adam Harman formerly dwelt, containing 500 acres." John Buchanan had begun service in Augusta County as deputy surveyor in the 1740s. He later became deputy sheriff and in 1755 succeeded Colonel James Patton as commander-in-chief of the Augusta County militia. When he died in 1769, Buchanan's will named his son, John, as heir to "the 500 acres formerly Harman's." The tract, known thereafter as Buchanan's Bottom, remained in possession of the Buchanan family until 1792.

John Kern was the first director of the Roanoke Regional Preservation Office of the Virginia Department of Historic Resources when it opened in 1989. A native of Iowa City, Iowa, he is a history graduate of Swarthmore College and he earned a masters and a doctorate in American history from the University of Wisconsin. Kern served in the Peace Corps in Tunisia, North Africa, and taught American history at California State College, Stanislaus. He was historic preservation coordinator for the Michigan Historic Preservation Office and head of the Delaware State historic preservation program earlier.



The location of Kentland in western Montgomery County is shown on this map.

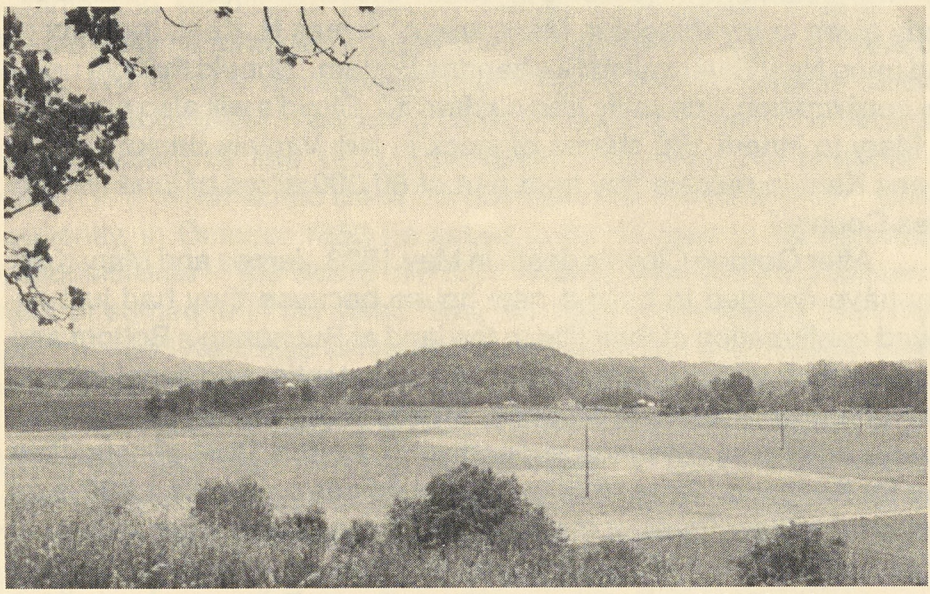
Abram Trigg purchased Buchanan's Bottom in 1793. Trigg had commanded Montgomery County troops during the American Revolution. He had represented Montgomery County at the Virginia convention of 1788 which ratified the federal constitution, and he represented western Virginia in Congress from 1797 to 1809. During the years of his congressional service, Abram Trigg and his wife, Susannah, acquired additional lands adjoining Buchanan's Bottom where they may have resided. The 1810 census for Montgomery County recorded Trigg as the head of a household of seven whites and no slaves. The 1813 Land Book for Montgomery County shows him in possession of the 500-acre Buchanan's Bottom tract and three other parcels with all four parcels totaling 1,781 acres.[3]

In 1813 three brothers, Gordon, Thomas, and David Cloyd, paid Abram and Susannah Trigg $10,000 for a 1,630-acre tract which comprised all of the land "owned or held by . . . Trigg on the east side of New River, adjoining and below Toms Creek." Joseph Cloyd, father of Gordon, Thomas, and David,

had commanded militia forces during the Revolution, after which time he built his home at Back Creek Farm around 1790 on land, now in Pulaski County, about seven miles from Buchanan's Bottom. Joseph's oldest son, Gordon, built his home at Springfield, adjacent to Back Creek Farm, around 1800. The 1820 Montgomery County Land Book, the earliest to record building evaluation, showed Joseph Cloyd paying taxes at Back Creek Farm with buildings valued at $3,500; Gordon Cloyd paid taxes at Springfield with buildings valued at $l,500; and Gordon, Thomas, and David Cloyd paid taxes at Buchanan's Bottom where buildings were valued at $200. Sometime around 1820, Gordon Cloyd bought out his brothers' interest in the 1,630 acre "tract of land upon New River called Buchanan's Bottom" and gave the land to his daughter, Mary, who had married James Randal Kent in 1818.

The 1820 census recorded James R. Kent as the head of a Montgomery County household comprised of himself, his wife, and two young daughters. In addition he owned 15 slaves. In 1821 James Kent paid taxes for the first time on the 1,630-acre tract where he and Mary would live for the remainder of their lives.

James and Mary Kent were the intermarried descendants of families who had gained wealth and influence in southwestern Virginia during the period of the American Revolution. Their common grandparent, James McGavock, was a staunch Scotch-Irish Presbyterian and a member of the committee of 15 which drafted the Fincastle Resolutions in 1775. James McGavock married Mary Cloyd in 1760, and their daughter Margaret, married militia colonel, Joseph Kent, in 1787. Colonel Joseph Kent and Mary Cloyd Kent raised 14 children on their estate at Kenton in Wythe County;



Panoramic view of bottom land from the front lawn of Kentland

James R. Kent was their fourth child. Elizabeth, another daughter of James McGavock, married her first cousin, Gordon Cloyd, of Back Creek in 1797; Mary Cloyd, their eldest daughter, completed the family ties at Kentland when she married her first cousin, James Kent, in 1818.[4]

Well married and established on rich New River bottom lands by 1821, James R. Kent proceeded to make Kentland the most prosperous plantation in Montgomery County. He served as deputy sheriff of Montgomery County in 1822 at about which time he began to accumulate land holdings in addition to the homeplace at Buchanan's Bottom. By 1830 he paid taxes on the 1,630- acre parcel at the mouth of Toms Creek where buildings were then valued at $250, and he owned two more parcels of undeveloped land which totaled 2,605 acres and contained no evaluated buildings. The 1830 census recorded James Kent as the head of a household which included himself, his wife, and four daughters. In that year he owned 39 slaves. The following year Kent acquired an additional parcel of 169 acres on both sides of Toms Creek near its mouth, and the 1832 Land Book showed buildings valued at $100 on that tract. The buildings on the 169 acre parcel may have been associated with the mill just east of Toms Creek which is shown as belonging to James Kent on James Herron's map of 1833-34.

Sometime around 1834, James Randal Kent probably built the formal brick residence which survives today and is known as Kentland. When James Kent's father-in-law, Gordon Cloyd, prepared his last will and testament in November 1832, Cloyd specified, "I have already given to my daughter, Mary, wife of James R. Kent, the tract of land upon New River called Buchanans Bottom. Should that gift need any confirmation, I do ratify and confirm it." Cloyd's will also provided for Mary to inherit 100 shares of stock in two Virginia banks and for James Kent to receive "my third part of 80,000 acres of land lying in Giles County."

After Gordon Cloyd's death in May 1833, James and Mary Kent may have decided to build a new house because they had just received confirmation of their title to the land at Buchanan's Bottom and because they were now in receipt of a substantial additional inheritance of real and personal property. Montgomery County Land Books provide additional evidence supportive of a circa 1834 construction date for Kentland: from 1828 to 1834 buildings on Kent's 1,630-acre tract on the New River at the mouth of Toms Creek were valued at $250; from 1835 to 1850 buildings on that tract were valued at $2,500. Since Joseph Cloyd's buildings at Back Creek Farm were valued at $3,500 and Gordon Cloyd's buildings at Springfield were valued at $2,500 during the 1820s, and since Kentland closely resembled the

dwellings at Back Creek Farm and Springfield, it seems likely that Kentland was not constructed in its present form until just before 1835 when the value of buildings at Kentland Farm first rose to a comparable evaluation of $2,500.[5]

James Kent substantially increased his wealth and influence in Montgomery County between 1835 and the Civil War. By 1840 he owned about 6,000 acres of land and 90 slaves.[6] Two decades later his 6,000 acres of farm land valued at $126,000 and his 123 slaves made him by far the county's most prosperous planter; no one else in Montgomery County in 1860 owned farm land valued at more than $63,000 or more than 71 slaves. The 123 slaves of James Kent were quartered in 13 slave houses in 1860 when the Kent farms kept 40 horses and 1,100 other head of livestock and raised 15,000 bushels of corn and 3,600 bushels of grain. In addition to his agricultural estate and slaves, Kent owned personal property valued at $196,000 in 1860. This included substantial holdings in the Montgomery White Sulphur Springs Company, a resort near the present community of Ellett, whose buildings were valued at $89,000 in 1859, as well as shares in three Virginia banks and in the Virginia and Tennessee Railroad Company.

Apparently James Kent's extensive financial interests occupied most of his time and energy for he never held elective office, though he did serve as a Montgomery County justice in 1842 and 1845 and as the Montgomery County surveyor in 1847. From 1849 to 1853 Kent played a leading role in promoting construction of the Virginia and Tennessee Railroad through Montgomery County. In this capacity he attended at least one meeting of the Virginia Board of Public Works as a representative of Virginia and Tennessee stockholders. Successful in securing construction of the main line through Christiansburg by late 1853, Kent failed in his efforts to promote a branch line which would cross his plantation on the New River. Consequently, in October 1853 he asked to be relieved of his reporting responsibilities to the Board of Public Works, requesting the appointment of someone in his stead "who will have more leisure than myself." In 1855 Kent also served as a trustee of Olin and Preston Institute, a precursor of Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University.

Montgomery County and James Kent experienced hard times during the Civil War. Military records have not been found to substantiate family tradition which tells of a devastating Yankee raid on Kentland following the Battle of Cloyd's Mountain in May 1864, but a Montgomery County Order Book specified in November 1864 "that James R. Kent be exempted from paying the County levy for the year 1864 on 44 negroes and 38 horses which were taken by the public

enemy previous to the laying of the said levy."[7] Another entry from the Montgomery County Order Book in January 1865 recorded the appointment of a special committee with instructions to present a memorial to the governor of Virginia which stated that "within the past twelve months a large number of the able bodied negroes . . . have been carried off by or made their escape to the Yankees." Because "almost all the ablebodied and efficient white laborers have been withdrawn from the cultivation of the soil and placed in the army," and because slaves had been captured or escaped, the memorial explained that "the surplus of crops made by the labor of the county during the past year has not been sufficient to feed the families of the soldiers . . . . and a great portion of our population will be reduced to destitution and great suffering." James Kent was not destitute at the close of the Civil War, but his estate certainly suffered substantial losses in consequence of the conflict. When he died in 1867, his land holdings were evaluated at $74,000, 41% less than in 1860, and his personal estate probably suffered at least a comparable reduction in value.

James Kent's wife, Mary, had predeceased him in 1858; and when he prepared to divide his property among his five surviving daughters in May 1867 the week before his death, his last will and testament specified that "Margaret G. who is my youngest child shall have the home place known as Buchanan Bottoms, together with any and all lands adjoining belonging to me."[8] Margaret Kent married Major John T. Cowan of Clarksburg, now West Virginia, in 1868 and they lived at Kentland Farm and Toms Creek for the remainder of their lives.

John Cowan, who had served as an officer in the 25th Virginia Infantry during the Civil War, managed Kentland Farm as a profitable agricultural and milling enterprise until around World War I. In 1880 Cowan's farm, valued at $58,000, produced 8,000 bushels of corn, 2,700 bushels of grain, and 4,500 pounds of tobacco on 1,650 acres of tilled land at the cost of $1,000 paid in wage labor. Cowan also raised and traded Shorthorn cattle throughout his tenure at Kentland Farm.

Cowans Mill on Toms Creek was listed as a post office during the 1880s and 1890s, years in which the mills there produced corn meal, flour, and sawn lumber. Cowan's flour sold for $4 a barrel in 1899, a commodity which he exchanged with a merchant in Blacksburg for shoes and dry goods. Cowan doubtless used those store goods as partial payment for the laborers who worked his land, a few of whom were descendants of slaves owned by James Kent.[9]

John Cowan had attained sufficient status through his successful administration of his mills and farm lands so that he was chosen as a member of the original board of trustees of Virginia Agricultural and Mechanical College, eventually to become Virginia Tech. He also served on the Virginia State Board of Agriculture and Immigration from the Sixth District, and he represented Montgomery County for one term as a Delegate to the Virginia General Assembly in 1899-1900.

Margaret and John Cowan's son, James Randal Kent Cowan, married Maude Battle and moved from Radford to the mill house at Cowans Mills sometime after 1900. James and Maude Cowan's daughter, Margaret, remembers that the Cowans hired someone to operate their ferry across the New River at the mouth of Toms Creek; the ferry at Harman's Ford was operated from the other side of the river.[10] In 1907 the Virginian Railroad completed a line along the north and east bank of the New River, and Whitethorne, the rail stop at Toms Creek, replaced Cowans Mills as the place name associated with Kentland. Shortly before World War I, James Cowan and his immediate family traded dwellings with his parents, and James and Maude Cowan lived at Kentland Farm until 1936 when the Cowans lost the estate to their cousin Francis Bell of Dublin.[11] The Bells sold Kentland Farm in 1966.

Virginia Tech acquired the acreage and important cultural resources of Kentland Farm in 1988. The rich bottom lands formerly owned by the families of Harman, Buchanan, Trigg, Cloyd, Kent, and Cowan are now used for research by the Virginia Agricultural Experiment Station.

FOOTNOTES

1. Local historian Jimmie L. Price is probably correct when he reasons that Adam Harman lived near his ford rather than a mile away at the mouth of Toms Creek.

2. Adam Harman is reported to be the person who found Mary Draper Ingles after her escape from Indian captivity in 1755.

3. Montgomery County Land Books prior to 1816 neither list buildings nor provide land descriptions, so they do not provide evidence which can be used to locate the place of the Trigg dwelling.

4. Joseph Cloyd, father of Gordon Cloyd, was Mary Cloyd McGavock's brother. The Cloyds, Kents and McGavocks were also related by marriage to James McDowell, the husband of Sarah Preston. Sarah's father, William Preston, had headed Revolutionary War efforts in the New River Valley where he also established large land holdings and built Smithfield. These intermarriages of influential and landed families in southwestern Virginia between 1760 and 1818 are similar to the ties of kinship and status established in Tidewater Virginia a century earlier.

5. The value of Gordon Cloyd's buildings at Springfield was listed at $2,500 from 1823 through 1827. Of course, earlier buildings at Kentland may have been retained after the new residence was constructed circa 1834. Perhaps one of these structures was the two-story brick kitchen which survived as one of the domestic outbuildings at Kentland until about 1970.

6. Mary Kent had inherited 20 of her father's slaves when Gordon Cloyd died in 1833.

7. Jimmie Price located this information and reported it on a video tape of Kentland which he generously provided to the author.

8. Buchanan's Bottom was the most valuable portion of James Kent's estate and two of Margaret Kent's brothers-in-law, Francis Bell and James Otey, and one of her widowed sisters, Mrs. Henry Bentley, unsuccessfully contested the Kent inheritance in the Montgomery County courts for 15 years. The James R. Kent Papers in the Special Collections at VPI&SU contain some of the depositions pertaining to this complex litigation. For a cogent summary of the dispute, see John Nicolay, "Foundation Notes," Montgomery News Messenger, Feb. 6, 1983; May 15, 1983 and May 22, 1983.

9. John Nicolay's papers in the Special Collections at VPI&SU contain fascinating interviews with residents of Wake Forest, a black community located off Route 652 to the north of Kentland Farm. Margaret Gordon Cowan had provided land for the church at Wake Forest in the 1920s, but Nicolay and Clyde Kessler, who conducted the oral history interviews in the early 1980s, found no informants who discussed ante or post bellum life at Kentland.

10.Interview with Margaret Cowan and Josephine Scrivenor, Roanoke, Virginia, Aug. 9, 1990.

11.Josephine Scrivenor, also a daughter of James and Maude Cowan, explained that her father had mortgaged Kentland to cover cattle trading losses in the 1920s and could not meet payments during the Depression. Mrs. Scrivenor said that she learned from this loss by noting that her parents never expressed any bitterness about their misfortune. James Cowan went on to serve many years as Montgomery County treasurer, an office which his daughter, Margaret Cowan, later held for 19 years. Ibid.

(This text and the following article on the architecture of Kentland came from the nomination of the property for the National Register of Historic Places. The Virginia Department of Historic Resources reference number is VDHR Site 60-202.)

The Architecture of Kentland

by J. Daniel Pezzoni

In 1834, when James Randal Kent began the construction of his plantation seat overlooking the New River, he built on a scale commensurate with his status as one of Montgomery County's largest antebellum landowners.[1] Kent's house, known as Kentland to his descendants, combines features at once traditional and novel in the context of Virginia's New River Valley.

Kent chose a dwelling type with a long pedigree in Virginia: the symmetrical I-house form. Architecturally, Kent followed in the footsteps of his influential in-laws, the Cloyds, who built impressive I-houses in the Back Creek Valley of Pulaski County, across the New River from Kentland. Kentland and the Back Creek houses share a remarkable range of similarities, pointing to the contribution of a common builder skilled in the popular Federal style of the early 19th century and the Greek Revival style that followed.

Kentland is a two-story brick house with a symmetrical five-bay front facade. In plan the house is one-room deep, a characteristic that combines with its two-story height to define the house as an I-house. The walls of the house are laid in a stylish Flemish bond and rise to a hound's tooth cornice, a construction detail that also characterizes several of the houses on Back Creek.

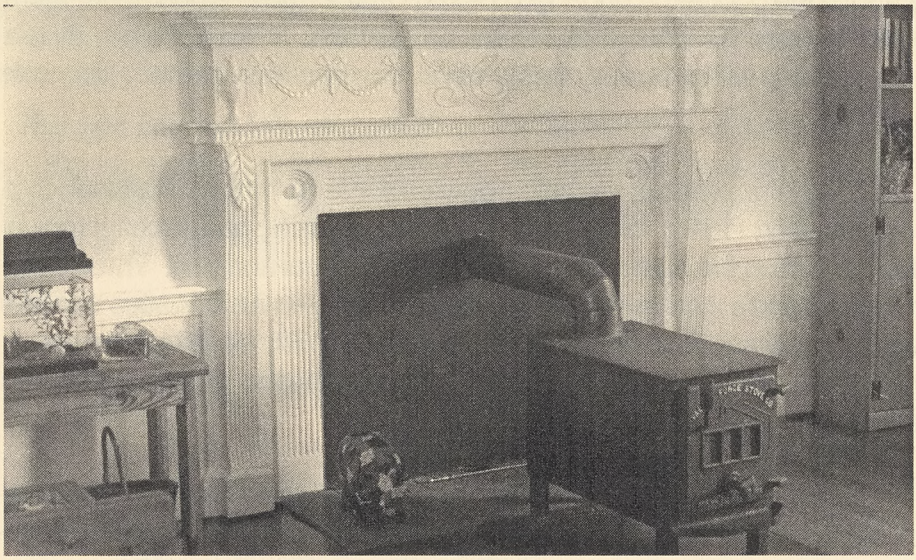
Stylistically, Kentland's restrained front facade is transitional between the Federal and Greek Revival styles. Over the front entry is an entablature supported by capitals with delicate frond-like ornament. These capitals now float above the door—the engaged columns that formerly stood under them have been placed in storage elsewhere on the farm. In front of the entry is a limestone stoop with gracefully flaring steps. Iron handrails formerly rose with the steps.

[1]The information in this article derives primarily from the National Register nomination (1990) for the Kentland Farm Historic and Archaeological District, for which the author prepared an architectural analysis. The discussion of Kentland's local architectural context draws on historic sites surveys of Montgomery and Pulaski counties conducted by Gibson Worsham and J. Daniel Pezzoni. Information on John Swope's activities at Belle-Hampton was provided by Barbara Church.

Pezzoni, formerly an architectural historian in the Roanoke Preservation Office of the State Department of Historic Resources, has been a preservation consultant with Preservation Technologies, Inc., since 1991.

Front view of Kentland

The neglect of recent decades has taken its toll on Kentland's exterior, but fortunately the interior is in a good state of repair. Many original features remain such as the elaborate Federal-Style mantels in the front rooms on the main floor. The mantel in the east rooom (at one time the main parlor) is decorated with a stylized representation of an eagle executed in flowing bas relief lines. Inspiration for the eagle probably came from the imaginative calligraphy of the period. In the frieze to either side of the central eagle motif are swags suggesting ribbons tied in bows. Flanking the mantel are consoles with



Mantel in the east room of Kentland

water leaf carvings. Swags and water leaves were common decorative motifs illustrated in the pattern books of the period.

The covered urn featured on the mantel in the west first-story room at Kentland was probably copied directly from *Pain's British Palladio*, an expensive London pattern book of the late 18th century. The other, less public rooms in the house contain plainer detailing mostly in the Federal style. In the end rooms of the wing extending to the rear of the house are mantels more akin to the Greek Revival style, evidence that the rooms were an early addition to the house.

Today the basement at Kentland is cavernous and dank, but in the 19th century it would have been lighted and warmed by two fireplaces, and the basement rooms filled with activity centered on the preparation and preservation of food. In a brick partition wall between two of the basement rooms is an enigmatic feature: a barred vent with pliable oak splints woven between the bars forming a screen. A clue to the function of this screen comes not from Kentland but from its near twin, Springfield, in Pulaski County. Springfield also has a barred vent (lacking a screen) in one of its basement partition walls. The Springfield vent formerly permitted a flow of air to a room-sized root storage area partitioned off from the rest of the basement. The Kentland vent may also have ventilated a root storage room, and the screen may have served to keep rodents from apples, potatoes, or other contents.

As with most 19th-century Virginia farmhouses, many essential household activities at Kentland took place in separate structures

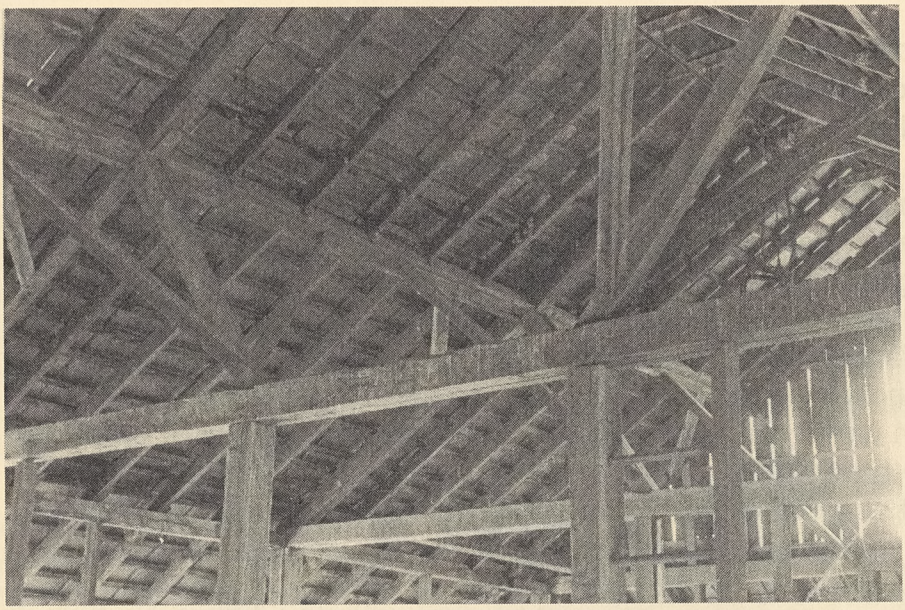
Hexagonal meat house has lattice vents creating a decorative pattern.

clustered around the main house. Only one of these early domestic outbuildings survives at Kentland: a hexagonal brick meat house with brick lattice vents creating a decorative pattern of hexagons on the outer walls. The wood-shingled pyramidal roof of the meat house is supported on the interior by a massive king post. Until recent years a two-story brick kitchen and laundry stood off the west gable end of the main house. The family cook and other domestic servants may have lodged in the upstairs rooms of the kitchen and laundry building. Looms stood in the upstairs of this building during the early 20th century, suggesting cloth was formerly manufactured there.

Not much is known about the accommodations for Kent's huge slave work force, numbered at 123 in 1860. Two one-story brick slave houses stood to the west of the main house during the early 20th century. These two dwellings may have been the last remnants of a double row of as many as 12 slave houses. A number of log tenant houses formerly stood at outlying locations on the farm; some of these may have once served as slave dwellings.

To the north of the main house is another important complex: the barn and associated farm buildings. The antebellum Kentland barn is unlike any other barn so far identified in Southwest Virginia. The barn consists of two mortise-and-tenon frame units separated by a drive-through area that may once have been fitted with a threshing floor. The lower levels of the units contain horse stalls; the upper levels are open on all sides and probably served as hay mows. Above the hay mows is a roof with unusual truss-like supports. Near the barn is another 19th-century structure: a slatted corn crib with two units separated by a drive-through. Also nearby are a 20th-century granary, a workshop, silos, and other smaller structures. Beyond the domestic and farm complexes, many topographical features are still

Barn and nearby farm buildings are in a cluster at Kentland.



Barn roof at Kentland has unusual truss-like supports.

visible such as fieldstone piles, lanes and culverts, and a mile-long drainage ditch that skirts the edges of the bottom below the main house.

Agricultural production was certainly the mainstay of the Kentland farm, but also important were milling and lumber production that took place at the Kent-Cowan mill on Toms Creek a mile east of the main house. Kent acquired the mill with his property and may have employed a man named Honaker to run it in the 1830s. The main house and barn at Kentland are built with straight-sawn lumber that was likely produced at the mill. The mill still stands on the east bank of Toms Creek, although the frame superstructure apparently dates to the late 19th century when Kent's successor, John T. Cowan, operated the facility. A post office was located at Cowan's Mill during the 1880s and 1890s, suggesting that a store or commissary may also have been associated with the complex.

One of the more interesting aspects of the main house at Kentland is its affinity to a group of stylistically related houses on Back Creek in neighboring Pulaski County. Back Creek Farm, Springfield, and Belle-Hampton in particular are similar to Kentland in their overall (original) form and detailing. Back Creek Farm and Springfield were built by Kent's in-laws, the Cloyds; the original section of Belle-Hampton was built by James Hoge in 1826. Kentland and Springfield are the most alike, although Springfield was partially destroyed by fire in 1950. Both houses have front entries framed by

delicate engaged columns, and both have elaborate Federal-style main parlor mantels with central frieze tablets bearing representations of eagles.

The eagle on the Springfield mantel is more realistically carved than the one at Kentland and bears traces of its original paint scheme: a yellow head and talons, blue feathers, and a green wreath encircling the whole. By all accounts the interior at Kentland was sumptuously appointed during the 19th century; historic photos and surviving fabric point to similar refinement at Springfield. In the stair hall at Springfield were mural paintings of fanciful mountain scenery. In the main parlor are traces of early wallpaper depicting vivid green and blue-green foliage. The wallpaper at Springfield is apparently a remnant of a French scenic wallpaper dating to the early 19th century.

Tradition ascribes Kentland and the Back Creek houses to a local carpenter named John Swope, an attribution given strong support by recent research. John Swope (ca. 1776-1856) was largely responsible for the construction of the original 1826 section of Belle-Hampton, located near Back Creek Farm and Springfield, which has mantels that are virtually identical to ones at Kentland. Back Creek Farm, the home of James Randal Kent's father-in-law, was extensively remodeled by Swope in the mid-1830s. Although the third house in the Back Creek group, Springfield, may be considerably older than Kentland, it was acquired by James Randal Kent's brother, David Fenton Kent, in 1833, and it seems likely that David embarked on a remodeling of Springfield at the very time that James was building his house from scratch. Presumably both men employed the accomplished Swope.

Additional research and analysis may reveal more about the interplay of kinship and cultural expression in the Kentland/Back Creek houses. Other aspects of the properties such as farm and domestic complex layout, workforce composition, and general farm operations may prove to be similar. Kentland and the Back Creek properties ranked among the largest antebellum farming operations in Southwest Virginia. Together they display some of the most sophisticated architecture in the region.

Making Pottery in Botetourt County

by Kurt C. Russ

In 1984, Washington and Lee's Laboratory of Anthropology initiated an investigation of the traditional pottery manufacturing industry in Virginia. A research design was formulated which outlined the need, justification, and methodology for a statewide survey of this early industry[1]. Combining both documentary and archaeological field research, the research design focused on the identification of historic pottery manufacturing sites, the individual potters associated with these sites, and the types and varieties of wares produced.

The statewide survey together with detailed investigations of particular potteries is intended to reveal information regarding the technological history of the pottery manufacturing industry in Virginia[2]. The data generated from this work will also address the economics involved in the production and distribution of historic pottery.

Since the inception of the statewide survey in 1984, the Washington and Lee Laboratory of Anthropology has concentrated its research efforts on three western counties within the ridge and valley region of the state: Alleghany, Botetourt and Rockbridge[3]. These counties were selected for several reasons. First, the historic pottery manufacturing industry was generally undocumented for these areas of Virginia. Secondly, pottery kiln sites were known to exist archaeologically as were extant locally made earthenwares and stonewares. And finally, the proximity of these counties to the laboratory provided relatively easy access to the sites and relevant historical documents.

The purpose of this paper is to document the traditional pottery manufacturing industry in Botetourt County by presenting the information gleaned to date from archaeological and documentary research.

Two mid-19th century pottery kiln sites and 11 19th century potters have been identified in the Botetourt County area of Virginia, indicating that this was, indeed, an important pottery center for the region[4].

Kurt C. Russ, a 1978 cum laude graduate of Washington and Lee University, completed graduate studies in anthropology at the University of Tennessee. An expert on Virginia ceramics, Russ formerly was research archaeologist at W & L. He and his wife Linda are avid collectors of local ceramics. This paper was presented to the Roanoke Valley Historical Society March 27, 1990.

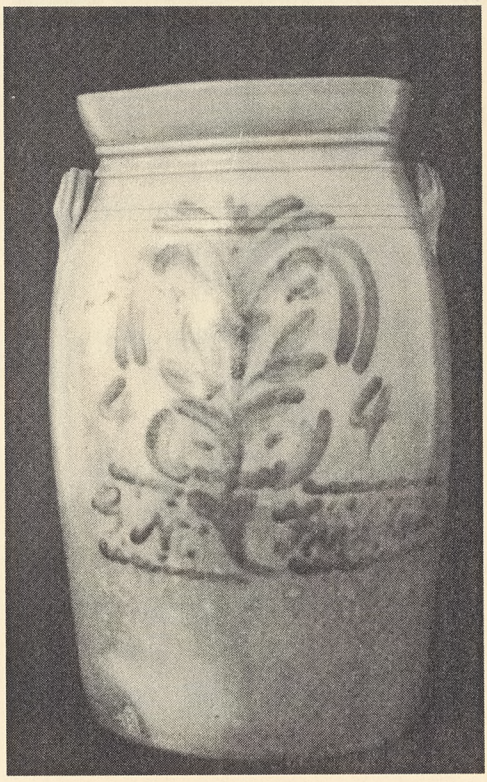
Perhaps the best known of these 19th century potters was George N. Fulton who produced in prodigious quantities a distinctive stoneware decorated with both manganese and cobalt oxides. Fulton descended from a family who was deeply immersed in the pottery business in Ohio. Fulton's father and his two brothers were both potters; one having a kiln in Marietta and the other in Zanesville, Ohio. At the age of 21, Fulton moved to Richmond, Virginia and worked with the established potter, David Parr.

George Newman Fulton, a remarkable potter, and his wife, Sarah Ellen Shaver Fulton, who were married in Parkersburg, W. Va. in 1866,

Thereafter, Fulton enlisted with the Union Army on 23 July 1862 at Meadowbluff, Virginia as a private in Company "E", 9th Regiment, Virginia-West Virginia Infantry. He was later transferred in November 1864 to Company "B", First Regiment, Virginia-West Virginia Veteran Infantry and ultimately discharged on 14 June 1865 at Parkersburg, West Virginia as a private.

After his service in the war between the states, Fulton moved to the Potts Creek area of Alleghany County. There he established a pottery and had a thriving business from circa 1867 until 1875, according to oral and family history, but according to census records he remained an active potter in Alleghany County until sometime after 1880[5]. Subsequently, Fulton moved to the Botetourt County area of Virginia where he was also said to have engaged in the manufacture of pottery[6].

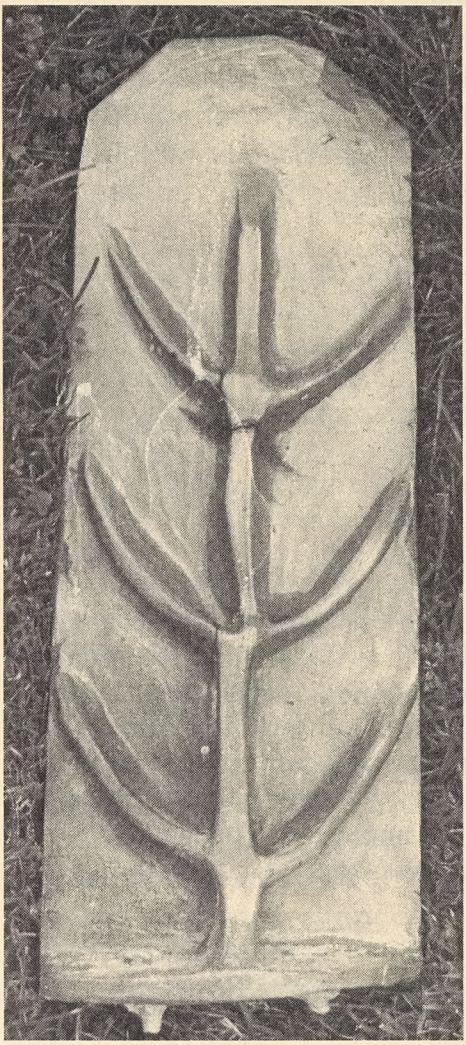
One-gallon stoneware crock with brushed manganese floral decoration and signature (Russ collection)



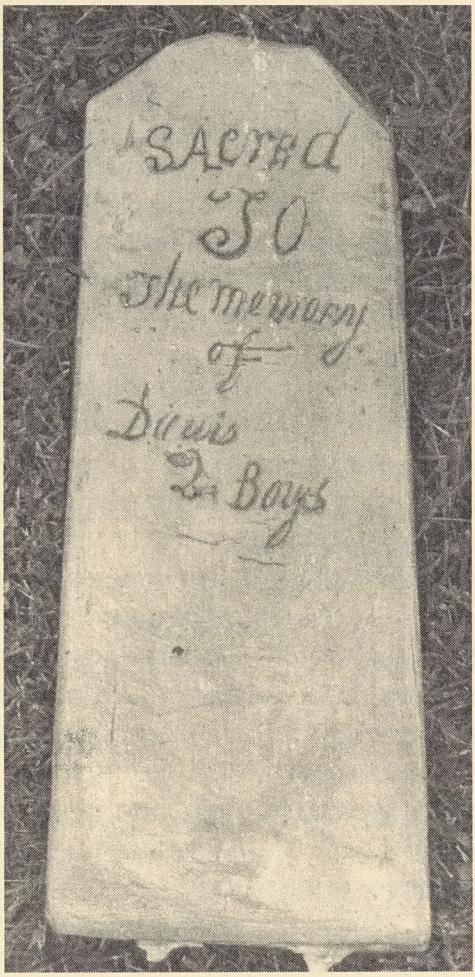
Four-gallon stoneware crock with brushed blue cobalt floral decoration and signature (Russ collection)

Potters working in Botetourt County, during the 19th century:

Potter	Approximate Dates of Operation
Edward Dunbar (b. ca. 1835)	ca. 1850
George N. Fulton (b. 1835- d. 1894)	ca. 1875-1894?
Robert Fulwiler (b. 22 July 1825 - d. 17 June 1908)	ca. 1850
Joshua Hill (b. ca. 1790)	ca. 1850
Joseph (Jesse) Hinkle (Henkle) (b. ca.1796 in Maryland)	ca. 1830-1850
Joel Noftzinger (b. 11 Feb. 1812- d. 3 Oct. 1857)	ca. 1850
Mathias Noftzinger (b. 1821)	ca. 1850
William Obenshane (Obenchain) (b. 1804)	ca. 1860-1880
Peter Obenshane (Obenchain) (b. 1828)	ca. 1860-1880
Peter M. Obenshane (Obenchain) (b. 1817)	ca. 1850-1880
Philip Spigle (b. 9 Nov. 1828- d. 16 Feb. 1880)	ca. 1850-1880



Handmade stoneware tombstone with tree of life motif in relief, attributed to Fulton Pottery, Alleghany County



Reverse of tree of life tombstone showing inscription, "Sacred to the Memory of Davis 2 boys"

Early in this century, Marion Rawson conducted oral history research which documented traditional Appalachian lifeways. In her book, *Candleday Art*, she interviewed Daniel Arritt who as a young man lived next door to Fulton and worked in his Alleghany County pottery shop. The interview reveals numerous insights into the processes involved in manufacturing stoneware during the 19th century.

> "You see yonder out that door where the grass looks brown just over the knoll? That's where I dug the mud and carted it a mile and a half down to Fulton's shop. He had what you call a mill standing up two feet or so from the ground and about as big as a hogshead, that was worked by an old horse at the end of a sweep; I'd throw the mud or clay in there and the knives revolving would cut it up. When it was cut up enough we took it out in blocks about a foot square - it would be about as stiff as wheat dough - and carried it to the lathe, and old man Fulton would work it round and round so, running the treadle with his foot to make the platform revolve. He'd draw it up so and so and make it like the shape he wanted it to be, sometimes using a little piece of wood to fix it right, and when it suited him he'd take a wire and cut under it to loosen it so he could pick it up and carry it into the dry room. It took five days to dry and when it was dry enough he'd take his brush and paint his name in blue across it, the full name on the big crocks, and then put some of them fancy patterns out of his head on it,. He got the blue indigo at the store in a chunk and softened it up with a little turpentine - yes marm. When he had enough ware - a thousand gallons - we'd set it up in the kiln."

At this point Arritt explained that the kiln was about 18 feet in diameter and about the same height. It was shaped like an egg, with the fire door close to the ground on one side and the only other opening being the central chimney. It is inferred from his description that the kiln was of the circular updraft variety, a common 19th century stoneware kiln He also indicated that there were four iron bars stretching across the kiln above the flues, upon which rested stones placed about eight inches apart and so arranged that the crocks and pots could be set up on them and stacked, being separated by hand-formed sand-coated pottery pieces called kiln furniture. This arrangement kept the vessels from sticking together during firing and allowed them to be exposed to equal heat on all sides. The kiln held 1,000 gallons of ware, with the pot quantities being computed by adding together half pints, quarts and gallons[7]. Arritt continued:

> "We burnt the ware for three days and three nights and I've set up and watched many a batch and tended fire. When the ware was burnt just enough I'd go up on top of the kiln and looking in it would seem just like a raging iron furnace, and I'd take a right smart of salt and throw it

down over the ware and you could see it melting all over the ware, inside and out. You had to leave the ware where it stood for two days to cool off before you could draw it. Then it was my job to load it onto a wagon - 350 gallons would make a good two-horse load -all sizes, and it brought fifty cents for a gallon and seventy-five for the bigger ones, wine crocks and water coolers.

"You know, marm, this was good stoneware, not that no 'count red earthen ware. You could bile in our stoneware. I've drive the wagon many a time to Blacksburg, and there old Waddel that sold the redware would see me coming and shout, "What you bringing that no 'count stuff to this town for?" And I'd shout back, "Yours is the no 'count stuff, aint burnt to a body. Mine's burnt to a stone body. Give me a piece of your old no 'count ware, I want to pitch it and one of mine down the road a little piece." So I pitched one of my crocks down the road twenty feet and it never broke none. His'n? He darent's give me any. He went out of business afore long. Fulton's ware was good stone body."

Although oral history and family tradition suggest that Fulton moved to Botetourt County in 1875, he is listed on the Alleghany County census records as a potter in both 1870 and 1880, but does not appear in census records or any deed or will books for Botetourt County. Fulton died in 1894 and both he and his wife are buried in the old Noftzinger cemetery which is located south of Fincastle along Route 220 in Botetourt County[8]. The documentary and oral history information is conflicting with regard to precisely when Fulton established residence in Botetourt County. Unfortunately, the nature of his participation in the pottery industry in Botetourt is understood with even less preciseness.

In addition to manufacturing crocks, jugs, jars and other utilitarian storage vessels, Fulton also made tombstones, a few of which still survive. Perhaps the most impressive extant vessel made by Fulton is the 20-gallon stoneware water cooler on display in the President's Cottage at the Greenbrier Hotel in White Sulphur Springs, West Virginia. The vessel is elaborately decorated and was made by Fulton in 1856 during his tenure as a potter in Richmond, Virginia.

The Fincastle Kiln

As a part of the documentary and archaeological research dealing with historic pottery making in Botetourt County, a pottery kiln site, the Fincastle Kiln, was identified and tested archaeologically[9]. Subsequently, in the summer of 1988 the site was intensively investigated by W & L University under the auspices of the Threatened Archaeological Site Program of the Department of Historic Resources[10].

The site is located in the ridge and valley physiographic province situated just south of Fincastle, near the junction of Routes 640 and 602. Identified as a mounded area adjacent to and just south of Route 640 at the edge of rolling pasture land, the site is at an elevation of approximately 1,280 feet above sea level.

The goals of the archaeological excavations were to verify the existence of the pottery kiln as well as to document the various structural features of the kiln with emphasis on the technological level at which it operated. The excavations were undertaken because of the immediate threat of destruction the site faced. The nature of the threat was two-fold. First, the northern section of the pottery kiln was eroding into a highway drainage ditch cut along the edge of Route 640; secondly, the land on which the site is located was for sale and the owner of the land had plans to bulldoze the site in order to achieve a more level acreage.

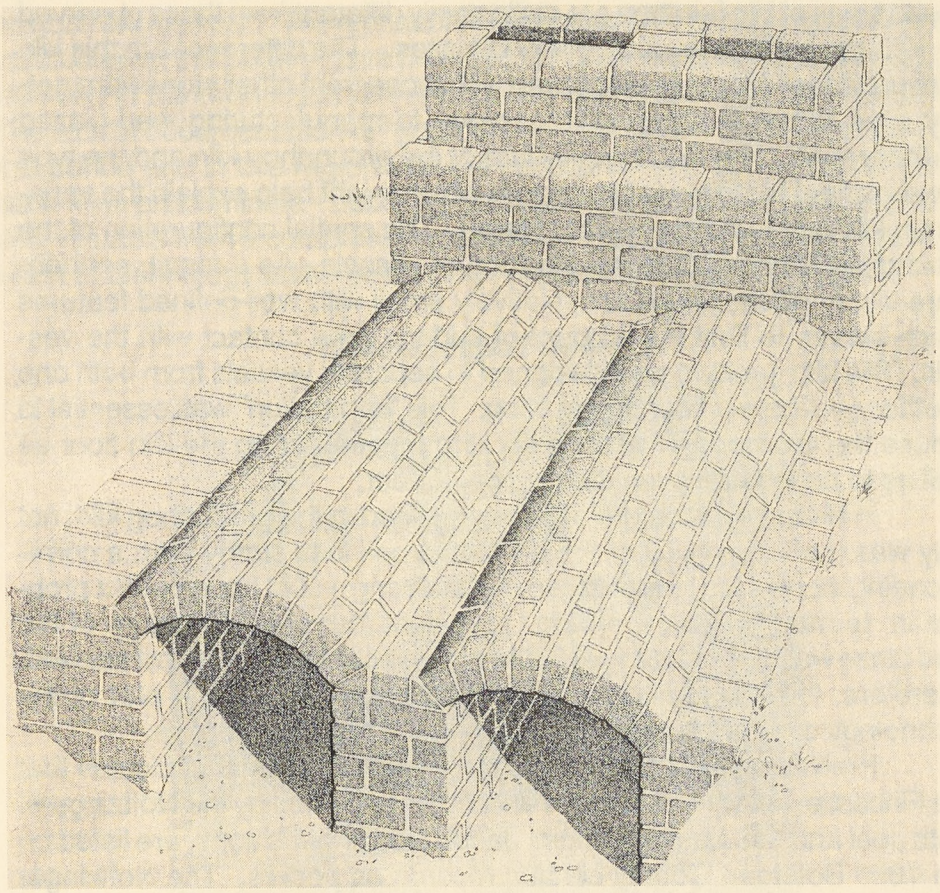
The testing and subsequent salvage excavations revealed structural foundations and features interpreted as a single-chambered, two-flued, arched, rectangular, groundhog or clamp style pottery kiln. The portions of the kiln which had not been destroyed included evidence of one central and two exterior kiln walls separated by flues with mortared floors leading into small channels which provided a flue venting function representing the kiln's chimney base[11].

The American groundhog kiln is simply a cross-draft rectangular kiln usually built into a hillside or slope with the firebox situated on the lower ground level at the front of the kiln[12]. The low linear nature of the kiln, earthen banking of its sidewalls, and front opening result in it resembling an animal burrow and undoubtedly relates to the development of the name.

According to Greer, constant features of this kiln type include: a firebox at the front end; a single flat shelf for loading the wares and forming the floor of the firing chamber, this being raised at least 18-24 inches above the floor of the firebox; and a true chimney structure terminating the kiln at the rear.[13]

The expression of these constant features is highly variable between individual kilns as noted by Greer and illustrated by the Fincastle example. As detailed previously, the Fincastle pottery kiln has three brick walls separating two parallel flues with mortared floors. The outside of the two exterior walls is banked with both earth and limestone rock, providing support and insulation. The central kiln wall separates the two flues, each of which were arched over with brick. It is within the flues that vessels were placed for firing. Leading from the flues into the chimney base are two channels which would have functioned in controlling the exiting kiln draft.

The structure of the kiln's firebox is unknown because the front portion of the kiln was destroyed prior to the salvage excavation. Firebox dimensions were commonly eight feet wide and four feet deep. The Fincastle kiln was probably between 16 and 20 feet long, which is the general length range for documented groundhog kilns. Its width is approximately nine feet which is just beyond the six to eight-foot width range observed by Greer.[14] In terms of the kiln operation, when fired the heat or flames travel up from the firebox and a bag or baffle wall directs them over into the firing chamber where they travel across the kiln firing the vessels, eventually escaping through the chimney.



Drawing of the hypothetical reconstruction of the mid-19th century Fincastle earthenware pottery kiln

Artifacts recovered from the site include glazed and unglazed earthenware waster shards, fragments of earthenware tile, kiln Artifacts recovered from the site include glazed and unglazed earthenware waster shards, fragments of earthenware tile, kiln furniture fragments, and miscellaneous artifacts. Artifact analysis indicates that a relatively restricted variety of lead-glazed earthenware utilitarian vessel forms was manufactured at the pottery. The nature of the artifact assemblage with well-potted, glazed and fired earthenwares suggests a technologically efficient operation. Reconstruction efforts show that the most common vessel form represented in the assemblage is the wide or open mouth storage crock.

The kiln furniture types encountered include hand-formed circular pins, placing bars, points, stilts, triangular pins, spurs and saggers. These types of kiln furniture are distinctively different from those observed on 19th century stoneware pottery kiln sites. The differences in this kiln furniture assemblage as compared with those from other stoneware pottery sites reflect the technology unique to manufacturing lead-glazed earthenwares. The low linear nature of the groundhog kiln and the type of wares fired therein are two factors which might help explain the variation in kiln furniture types encountered. The spatial configuration of the groundhog kiln restricted the stacking of vessels. As a result, earthenware kiln furniture pieces are relatively small with well-defined features which served to limit the amount of surface area contact with the vessels. The kiln furniture was designed to separate vessels from both one another and the kiln floor during firing. This "separation" was essential to reduce the likelihood of vessels sticking together on to the kiln floor as well as to provide an even distribution of heat.

In terms of the nature of the wares fired in the groundhog kiln, not only was the vessel wall of the earthen crock less sturdy than a corresponding stoneware example. so that stacking would have been a problem in terms of wares surviving the weight, but also the nature of the lead glaze was such that it would drip and run between vessels if stacked. Therefore, the kiln furniture utilized was adapted to and a part of the technology of earthenware production in the valley of Virginia.

Preliminary oral history and documentary reserch indicates that the Fincastle pottery was located on land once owned by the Noftzingers. Both Joel and Mathias Noftzinger, Jacob Noftzinger's sons, are listed on the 1850 Botetourt County census records as potters. The Noftzinger family cemetery is located on a hilltop to the northwest of the Fincastle pottery site and includes the graves of George N. Fulton and his wife, Sarah Ellen Shaver (Schaffer), indicating that Fulton was in some way affiliated with the Noftzinger family. According to family tradition and secondary historical sources,[15] Fulton, the well-known Alleghany county potter, arrived in Botetourt County in 1875, lived with the Noftzingers, and established a a pottery which he operated until his death in 1894. Despite this information, Fulton is not listed in any 19th century census

records, land records, or will books for Botetourt County. Fulton's inclusion in the Noftzinger cemetery and the oral tradition which indicates that Fulton lived on Noftzinger land, after moving to Botetourt County, together with the lack of documentary evidence for Fulton's residence in Botetourt County, provides contradictory evidence regarding Fulton's residence and involvement with the Noftzingers in pottery manufacture in Botetourt County.

On the other hand, the absence of salt-glazed stoneware shards seems to suggest that Fulton, who was involved with the stoneware industry in Alleghany County for several years, may not have been associated with the pottery. In either case, the evidence indicates this was the kiln operated by the Noftzingers. If, in fact, Fulton was involved in pottery making in Botetourt County, then either he was working at a different site or he was involved with the Noftzingers in the manufacture of earthenware exclusively. The archaeological testing and salvage excavations conducted at the pottery have provided for documenting the technology involved in the production of earthenware during the mid-19th century. The lack of documentation of "groundhog" type earthenware kilns during this period and in this region - where circular up and down draft stoneware kilns predominate - make the data generated by this work particularly valuable from a comparative perspective for understanding the evolution of technology in the pottery manufacturing industry in Virginia.

Hinkle/Spigle Pottery

Phillip Spigle, Botetourt painter who worked with Jesse Hinkle, and his wife, Frances Susan Fluke Spigle. (Anna Gray and Patsy Cronise, Spigle descendants, Fincastle)

Working in the county as early as 1830 was a potter named Jesse Hinkle. He was born in Maryland in 1796 and probably learned the pottery trade there by apprenticing to an established potter. Having acquired the requisite skills, Hinkle moved to Botetourt County during the early 19th century and established his own pottery business. Philip

Spigle, who worked with Hinkle, is listed on the 1850 county census. Spigle was "a potter of considerable talent and had a pottery shop at Amsterdam"[16] which is located to the south of Fincastle along Route 220. No evidence of the actual Hinkle/Spigle pottery shop remains today. It is thought that construction associated with Route 220 destroyed the remains of the pottery. Preliminary research indicates that Edward Dunbar, who is listed on the 1850 census as a potter, worked with Hinkle and Spigle. It is also interesting to note that by the mid-19th century Spigle owned a tract of land contiguous with land owned by Joel Noftzinger, indicating a possible historical association between the two individuals.

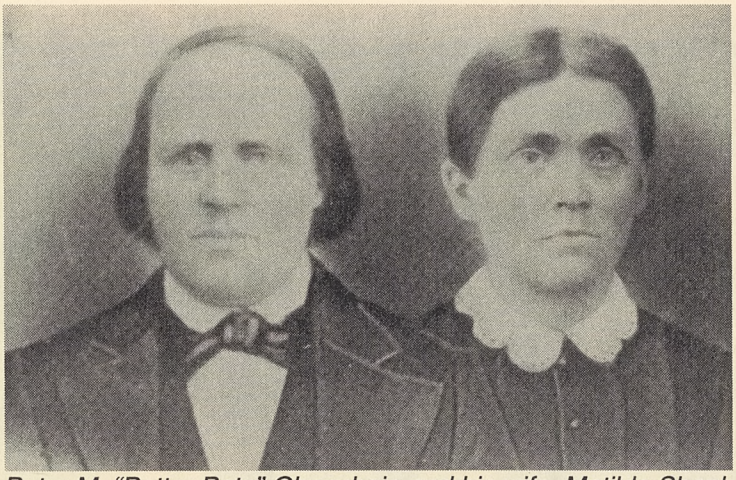
Hinkle and Spigle produced lead-glazed earthenwares utilizing both combing and freehand incising as decorative treatments. One extant semi-ovoid lead-glazed storage vessel with lid is signed Jesse Hinkle, Botetourt County, Virginia and dated 1839. This presentation piece exhibits a variety of incised decoration and was made by Hinkle for Mrs. Spigle. The vessel was acquired from Spigle's granddaughter, Meta Bertha Coffman Cronise and her daughters, who still reside in Botetourt County.

Although this is the only signed Hinkle piece known, several pieces with similar form, glaze, and decoration survive in local collections. At least one piece with the typical lead glaze and incised decoration on both the body of the vessel and matching lid has been identified with an "S" stamped in the bottom, undoubtedly indicating Spigle was the maker. A lead-glazed earthenware pitcher with an incised floral motif was handed down in the Spigle family as was a large impressive lead-glazed bowl with prominent rim and bold applied handles.

The Obenchain Pottery

The 1850 Botetourt County census lists William Obenshane (Obenchain), whose occupation was farmer, as having one Robert Fulwiler, a potter, in his household. This suggests that Fulwiler was involved with the Obenshane (Obenchain) pottery operation which is known to have included Peter Obenshane. William's son, who is listed in the 1880 census as a potter 52 years of age, and Peter M. (Potter Pete) Obenshane, a cousin listed on the 1850 census as a potter 33 years of age. The census records indicate that Peter M. Obenshane listed his occupation as a potter in 1880, as well.

The Obenshane pottery was probably started by Peter M. (Potter Pete) Obenshane circa 1850 and during this period employed Robert Fulwiler (who was later engaged in the pottery manufacturing



Peter M. "Potter Pete" Obenchain and his wife, Matilda Shank Obenchain (Mrs. Edmonia Boblett)

in Rockbridge County - 1860 through 1880). Potter Pete's cousins, Williams and Peter, undoubtedly became involved in the business at a later date, probably circa 1860.

Oral history information had sugggested that Obenshane's pottery kiln was located along Mill Creek in Botetourt County until it was destroyed by a flood in 1877. Recent archaeological and documentary research resulted in locating the Obenshane pottery kiln. According to the current land owner, the previous owner of the land, a Mr. Crist, had his two sons haul away four wagon loads of waster shards and bricks over 50 years ago. Only two brick fragments and one lead-glazed earthenware pottery shard were recovered from a walk-over of the area. Plans are to conduct a systematic shovel testing effort to see if any features of the pottery remain archaeologically.

Two signed pieces of Obenshane pottery have been identified. Both are tall, semi-ovoid, lead-glazed storage jars with distinctive applied handles and a flat, broad, extruding rim. Incised on the bottom of one jar is "Matthew Obenshane 1868." Several other pieces have been found locally and attributed to the Obenshane pottery based on either provenance or identification of distinctive vessel attributes such as glaze (an often heavy reddish-brown metallic glaze), form (semi-ovoid and well potted), rim treatment and handle style. Other forms identified include bowls and cups.

Continued documentary and archaeological research should provide for clarifying and refining the information presented here about the historic pottery manufacturing industry in Botetourt County. New kiln sites may be identified or we may, in fact, find that several of the potters worked together at the Fincastle kiln site in the Amsterdam district as well as at Obenshane's kiln site located along Mill Creek.

Obenshane (Obenchain) Pottery—lead-glazed, earthenware pieces: three-gallon storage jar, signed Obenshane (left); cup or mug (center), and a bowl, found in Buchanan and attributed to Obenshane

Also to be clarified is the relationship of several of the individuals identified on the U. S. Census records as potters living in Botetourt County, to the existing pottery kiln sites in operation at the time.

Summary

The history of the traditional pottery manufacturing industry in Botetourt County begins with that establishment of the Hinkle pottery in the 1830s. This earthenware pottery employed Philip Spigle and continued to operate until 1880. Although there is no historical or archaeological evidence for the pottery industry in Botetourt before this time, it is likely that others were engaged in the manufacture of pottery in small shops or perhaps on a part-time basis since the last quarter of the 18th century. By the 1850s, the Noftzingers had established the Fincastle kiln and the Obenshanes were operating a pottery along Mill Creek, both producing lead-glazed earthenware. Even though the industry in Botetourt was dominated by the production of earthenware, it is possible that Fulton was manufacturing decorated stoneware during the last quarter of the 19th century at a site which is as yet unidentified. The Fincastle/Amsterdam area of the county was a center for pottery manufacture, with a number of potters living and working in the area for most of the 19th century.

By the 1880s the manufacture of domestic ceramic wares was no longer economically feasible and with the closing of the Obenshane Pottery, the traditional pottery manufacturing industry ceased to exist in the Botetourt County area of Virginia.

Footnotes

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Cultural Shock in Botetourt County

by Edward L "Buck" Henson

Culturally, the longest 13 miles in the state of Virginia in the 1930s were those, measured in a straightline distance, betwen downtown Roanoke and my great-grandparents' farm which lay in the general vicinity of Haymakertown in Botetourt County.

I suppose the main thing was that, in those days before the REA (Rural Electric Administration), you left electricity behind. The responsibility of carrying a lighted glass-based coal oil lamp up a steep and narrow flight of steps was a sobering experience for children.

It took a while to get accustomed to the quiet. A small creek, always called The Branch, ran in front of the house and sounded like Niagara for the first few nights you were there. You learned that sheep did not wear bells just so you could find them when they were lost. They provided an instant means of telegraphy by which the sheep communicated with their owner throughout the night.

You learned that dogs in this environment were basically nocturnal animals. They lay around sleeping and scratching all day and chased other animals all night. A source of particular pride for my great-grandfather were the "mouths" his dogs had on them. "Isn't that pretty music?" he is supposed to have asked a city visitor as Old Bell brought a raccoon around the mountain one night. "I can't hear any music for the dogs barking," was the city fellow's reply.

One of the few concessions to modernity was a party line crank-type telephone. My great-grandfather permitted this only after a large knife-switch was installed on a pole 50 yards from the house so that he could disconnect it with the appearance of the first dark cloud.

One of Henry Ford's black T-Models was kept under a wagon shed because it had no top. It was used exclusively to haul produce in to the Roanoke City Market on Saturday mornings. It also brought necessities back to the farm: salt, coffee, sugar, pickling spices, shotgun shells and a pint of Old Rocking Chair whiskey which was always stored in one of the beehives. My great-grandmother was afraid of bees and little else.

Dr. Edward L. "Buck" Henson, is a Lexington native who has retired as a history professor at Clinch Valley College of the University of Virginia at Wise. He wrote this column about his great-grandfather, L. R. Ferrell, for the Coalfield Progress and Big Stone Gap Post.