Historical Society of Western Virginia

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Historical Society of Western Virginia

Amor montium nos movet

(For the love of mountains inspires us)

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Editor of the Journal

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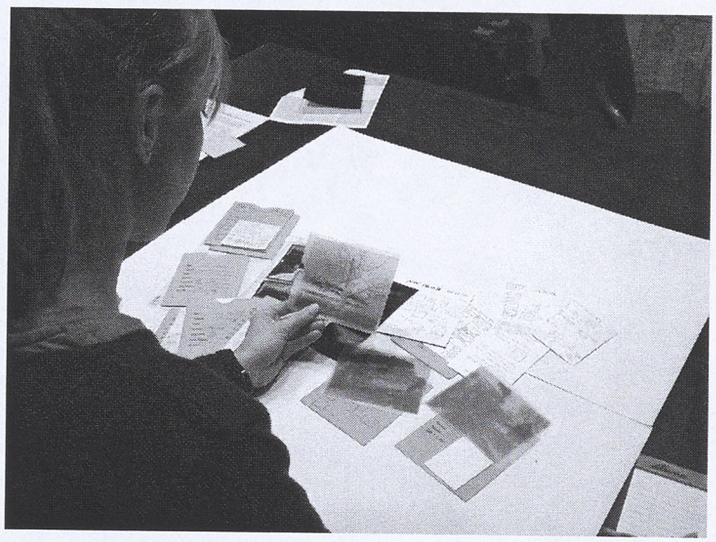
Table of Contents

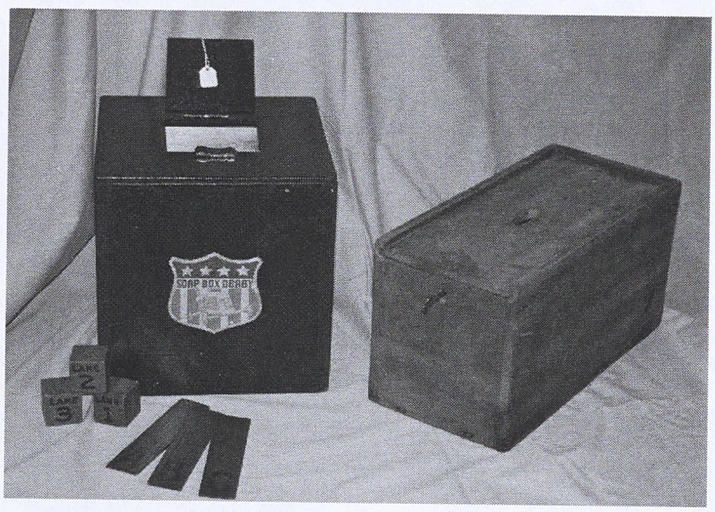
Note From the Executive Director

A 33rd issue of the Journal! The highlight of many of our supporters' membership, this Journal also celebrates the Society's 50th year of collecting, interpreting, displaying and publishing the heritage of our region. We enter our 50th year, yet again, fortunate to build on many years of past successes.

Agendas were full for our two largest operating divisions, the O. Winston Link Museum and the History Museum of Western Virginia. Both facilities developed and/or hosted a number of exhibits in 2006.



O. Winston Link negatives of the N&W Series, sought for seven years, are being scanned and conserved at the Link Museum.



Two recent acquisitions at the Society museum are a Rockbridge County 19th century ballot box, donated by Wilson Watts, whose father supervised its usage before mechanical voting started; and a Roanoke Soapbox Derby "draw" box, given by the Kulp/Thacker family who were active in the Derby.

The History Museum held five: Garden Party, Women's Summer Fashions 1860-1960, Car Crazy at the Roanoke Drag Strip (developed by the Blue Ridge Institute), Carter Burgess, A Life of True Contentment (developed by the George C. Marshall Museum) and the paired exhibits, Wish You Were Here: Post Cards from the Blue Ridge/Riding the Lee Highway, also developed by the Blue Ridge Institute. Additionally, the Museum and Society hosted two outbound tours, visiting historic sites in Rocky Mount and Giles County and held 10 lectures. One of the History Museum's lectures also served to debut the Society's latest book, Jim Dalmas' *The Street Railways of Roanoke*, which sold through its initial 500-copy printing and is poised to sell through a second. Not to forget the "little people," Fantasyland celebrated a 12th year at the History Museum and the Step into the Past hands-on education program was well on its way to another sell-out booking with local schools.

At the O. Winston Link Museum, numerous physical improvements, along with continued programmatic growth, resulted in a second Gold Award as "Best Museum" by readers of the Roanoker. Several notable achievements included the completion of the Raymond Loewy Gallery and the acquisition of Winston Link's N&W caboose. The Link Museum also hosted changing exhibits on Women Working on the Railroad, Passenger Service, the Norfolk Southern Calendar Show and an exhibit of the photographic work of Tommy Firebaugh. The Link Lecture Series expanded to a series of nine talks with ties to the Museum's interpretation but ranging from best-selling author Sharon McCrumb to Disney Corporation Senior Vice President Bob Lambert. Link special events included the 3rd annual "Santa by Rail," "Celebration at the Station" and the new "Haunted Museum," each event serving a crucial

role in audience expansion. Speaking of audience, potential visitors are now greeted by interstate signage and in 2006 they could read of the Link Museum in Southern Living magazine.

Many museums and societies are completely run by staff. That is not the case with the Society or its museums. The array of activities cited above is available because staff can rely on a dedicated corps of volunteers, increasing offerings and quality.

Lastly, the Virtual Museum Project, the much anticipated long-dreamt of Society-wide digitalization of our collections began in 2006 with the purchase of appropriate hardware, software and the hiring of our first full-time Registrar, Carol Tuckwiller, to direct the project. Because of you, our members and supporters, our 50th year holds the promise of being our best. Thank you!

D. Kent Chrisman
Executive Director

Historical Society Journal is 43

For 43 years, the Journal of this organization – Roanoke Historical Society, later Roanoke Valley Historical Society and now the Historical Society of Western Virginia – has done its best work "to chronicle the past and present of that part of the state west of the Blue Ridge." Ben Dulaney, public relations director of the Norfolk & Wesstern Railway, edited the Journal from summer 1964 until his untimely death in 1968. I followed him as editor.

In that first issue 43 years ago, we began seeking and publishing manuscripts, documents, letters, diaries, biographies, histories of homes, churches, schools and companies, descriptions of taverns, mills, roads, farms and stores. About the same time, we began to preserve and exhibit a wide variety of historical items – pictures, maps, records, deeds, books, newspapers, tools, clothing, flags and objects used in everyday life. These also provided sources for Journal articles.

In this issue, marking the 50th anniversary of the Society, we have attempted to reprint a sampling of the diverse historical material we have published during the past 43 years. If not the best, they are indeed diverse. Selecting them was like choosing a favorite among your children. We did not have space for many excellent works.

Among the many fine writers of Journal articles who are not represented here are Clare White, Frances Lewis, W.L. "Tony" Whitwell, Lee Winbourne, Norwood Middleton, Louis Newton, Don Piedmont, Mike Pulice, Judge Jack Coulter, Warren Moorman, Mary Kegley, J.R. Hildebrand, Frances Niederer, Patricia Johnson and Goodridge Wilson. Their good historical research may be found in back issues of Journals at the Historical Society offices.

Some of the most interesting articles not appearing here told of a 1753 pilgrimage, Fort Vause at Shawsville, Bent Mountain recollections, saddlebags and bank ledgers, the ancient Teays River, "Walled in by the Appalachians," cigar manufacturing in Roanoke, Montgomery White Sulphur Springs, folk artist Lewis Miller, "vivid" Appalachian dialect, Cherry Tree Bottom, early lighting devices, log buildings, cures of mountain herbs, Roanoke hay rides and a hoax at Natural Bridge.

Much appreciation is extended to Roger Pommerenke, who scanned the articles from old issues of the Journal, and to Christina Koomen Smith, who did her usual professional job of layout and design on this issue.

George Kegley
Editor

Roanoke County & Valley: The Lessons of History

by Dr. Marshall W. Fishwick ❖ first printed in Vol. 13 No. 1 (1989)

Try to imagine how silent it was — this magnificent motley valley — not hundreds or thousands but millions of years ago. We still shoot the deer and recall the now-extinct buffalo, but how many know that dinosaurs once roamed these hills and perhaps enjoyed a tasty meal at the very spot at which you now sit — say, half a million years ago?

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

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

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

What are the "lessons of history"? History does not teach "lessons"; that is the task of historians. History doesn't "demonstrate," "prove," "justify"; like Old Man River, it just keeps rolling along. Or coming closer to home — like the James, New, or Roanoke rivers, which we all know and love.

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

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

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

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

Dr. Marshall W. Fishwick was a professor of humanities and communication studies at Virginia Tech from 1976 until he retired in 2003. A Roanoke native, Fishwick earned degrees at the University of Virginia and the University of Wisconsin before he received a doctorate at Yale University. A prolific writer of many articles and more than 25 books on a variety of themes in history and American studies, Fishwick also taught at Washington and Lee, Yale, Temple and Lincoln universitites. Fishwick died in 2006. He gave this talk during Roanoke County's sesquicentennial (150th anniversary) in 1988.

Aerial photo of the Andrews orchards at the foot of the north side of Read Mountain in Roanoke County.
(Underwood & Underwood photo, 1924)

of a soaring bird or the sound water makes when it gushes over a ledge of limestone.

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

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

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

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

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

The women wore petticoats, "shortgowns," and tight calico caps, except in summer when their feet, hands and arms were bare. They usually helped the men labor in the fields of rye, flax, oats, potatoes, grain and hay. Fine

mowers and reapers, they also hoed, plowed, and did much heavy labor. These women not only kept house; they also helped make it.

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

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

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

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

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

> If a white pigeon settles on your chimney, or an owl screeches with a hoarse voice, calamity is near.
> You can never catch a weasel asleep.
> In dog days toads never open up their mouths.
> A spider is an old quilt, hung around your neck, cures ague.
> The white stripe on a donkey is the cross of Christ, impressed when He rode into Jerusalem.
> If you see a wolf before he sees you, you'll drop dead on the spot.
> Where the devil came out of the swine's forefeet, there's a small hole.
> King Arthur was turned into a raven, and in the springtime he circles over Virginny.
> Raven once snow-white, a tattle-tale, now he is black.
> Robin plucked a thorn from Christ's temple, now his breast is red.
> And on the dogwood you can see the imprint made by the nails of the cross.

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

You will not find him in the Roanoke Public Library, or the archives of Roanoke College. The Clarks had no chroniclers. No Ph.D. has studied their close-knit world; they left no documents to lure the literate. But old Joe, whose progeny stretched clear from Wigwam Ridge to somewhere over Bent Mountain, was a king-sized cockalorum saver of souls:

> Old Joe Clark set out to preach
> He preached all over the plain.
> The highest text he ever took
> Was high low Jack and game.
>
> Old Joe Clark had a yaller cat
> She'd neither sing nor pray
> She stuck her head in the buttermilk jar
> And washed her sins away.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Each of these three quotations is close to the earth; they deal with firkins, mice, and barns. Much twentieth century scholarship, produced in urban areas and library stacks, is far removed from the earth which is the womb and hub of man's existence. It is the earth alone, as A.C. Spectorsky reminds us in *The Book of the Earth*, that man may touch, probe, pat, smell, work with-and upon which he lives, toils, and dreams. Culture and land surface are interwoven, and interact in countless directions. Basically, the United States is a two-billion-acre-farm on which all of us work and live. Roanoke County is one small segment of that vast farm. The story of land use, pieced together and understood, furnishes a commentary on our nation more accurate than all the histories ever written. But only fragments of that commentary exist; and many of us do not know even them.

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

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

Who are you indeed who would talk or sing to America?
Have you studied out the land, its idiom and men?
Have you learn'd the physiology, phrenology, politics, geography, pride, freedom, friendship of the land?

its substratums and objects?
Are you faithful to things?
Do you teach what the land and sea, the bodies of men, womanhood, amativeness, heroic angers teach?
Are you really of the whole People?
Have you vivified yourself from the maternity of these States?

America and the world have changed beyond belief since Walt Whitman died almost a century ago. We have entered the Electronic Age, and become the leading world power. Now we have the pill, the tube, the bomb. America looks less like a Currier and Ives landscape than a Jackson Pollock abstraction. The prophetic words of William Butler Yeats echo in our ears: "And what rough beast, its hour come round at last / Slouches to Bethlehem to be born?"

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

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

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

How shall we use this land? How shall we honor our heritage, and those who first explored our valley? The answers are not easy and will change with time and circumstances. Even the meaning of "explore" changes. Some would attach it to a giant theme park to attract waves of tourists. When does "explore" slip into "exploitation?" Our heritage isn't for sale.

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

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

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

Let me close with a local version of this same sentiment. Before preparing this talk, I had a visit with Julia Wilkins, who at 98 is the oldest resident of a nearby nursing home, Heritage Hall. Think of what her keen eyes have seen since her 19th century childhood. "Are you ready for the 21st century, Miss Julie?"

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

And so we can.

The Past is Right Here for the Archaeologist

by Ivor Noel Hume ❖ first printed in Vol. 8 No. 1 (1972)

Archaeology: a word to conjure with, a word to carry us on the wings of imagination to far away places, into distant times, and into the presence, perhaps, of untold wealth. For most of us this is a vicarious, armchair experience — a trip to be taken without any unpleasant after-effects.

Unhappily there are few real adventurers left among us. Thanks to the soporific saccharine of television we have become a generation of watchers — watching other people play games, other people playing music, other people talking and other people fighting our wars.

Of course you can argue that we are all adventurers at heart — if only there was somewhere left for us to prove it. It's true. There are very few acres of this earth left unexplored by Western man. Even the Loch Ness monster can't hold out much longer, Only a very few of us will ever go forward into space, but a great many more can go back into the past — through archaeology. And you don't have to go to Egypt or to Greece to do it. The past is right here — your own American past.

The distinguished archaeologist, Jaquetta Hawkes, has written that archaeology gives a people a "sense of having roots," and this is indisputably true. It is why in Europe thousands of people from every walk of life give their vacations to working on their countries' archaeological sites. They do it here in the United States too, from the Johnson White House downwards, and the shades of countless Indians must scratch their heads in wonder as they watch their trash and bones being treated with the respect that their living descendants are denied.

Expeditions are sponsored by universities, sites are protected by government and state agencies, and from East to West across the land societies of amateur archaeologists devote themselves to the study of the American Indian. But do these undeniably worthy efforts contribute to our sense of having roots? I think not.

On the contrary, these are the roots of a quite different tree, one which was cut down to make way for the planting of European seeds. The past which belongs to the vast majority of the American people began in the Spanish, French, and English settlements in the New World. This is where the history books commence, for these were the seeds out of which the existing culture of the United States has slowly grown. And it is the study and the presentation of these beginnings which provide that "sense of having roots."

Slowly, much too slowly, there is a growing awareness that the remains of this past have some meaning, some value. But the sound of the mechanical excavator is loud in the land, and from Florida to Hawaii hardly a day passes without some portion of your heritage being ground into dust beneath the wheels of progress. The carpet of the past is being rolled behind us as we advance into the future, and before long, when we look back over our shoulders, we shall see nothing but the mirror image of ourselves.

It has been estimated that within the next century the American population will have increased by eight hundred million and that the east coast will have become a vast concrete jungle stretching from Maine to Virginia. We are told that if we are to preserve our place in the world's sun, we must devote all our efforts to pressing forward.

The buildings that were put up in the 1880s or 1920s are torn down, regardless of their architectural merit, to make way for those of the 1970s — which in turn will be scrapped — regardless of merit — to make way for those

Pertinent thoughts on the present state of historical archaeology appearing here are excerpts from a talk given by Ivor Noel Hume, director of the Department of Archaeology at Colonial Williamsburg, at a joint meeting of the Roanoke Historical Society and the Roanoke chapter of the Archeological Society of Virginia on April 28, 1971. Born in London, Hume has been an active archaeologist and prolific writer since 1949. He came to Williamsburg in 1957.

of the 1990s. We are living in the age of the garbage grinder and the disposable everything. Nothing is allowed to survive long enough to become venerable with age because it first becomes obsolete — and that's the dirtiest word you can utter in the 20th century.

Obsolescence cannot be tolerated, not in buildings, not in art, not in thinking, and not in people. Throw them all on the scrap heap. They have to be young to be good, and if they are young they are good — which is why there's no juvenile delinquency these days, only delinquent parents, delinquent homes, delinquent schools. Those homes and schools will be torn down and replaced by fine new antiseptic boxes, and because those boxes must be stacked higher and higher on top of one another, their foundations must go even deeper into the ground, destroying all traces of what was there before. Thus we are ensuring that there will be little or nothing of our generation left for the archaeologists of A.D. 3000 to dig up.

How short-sighted we are!

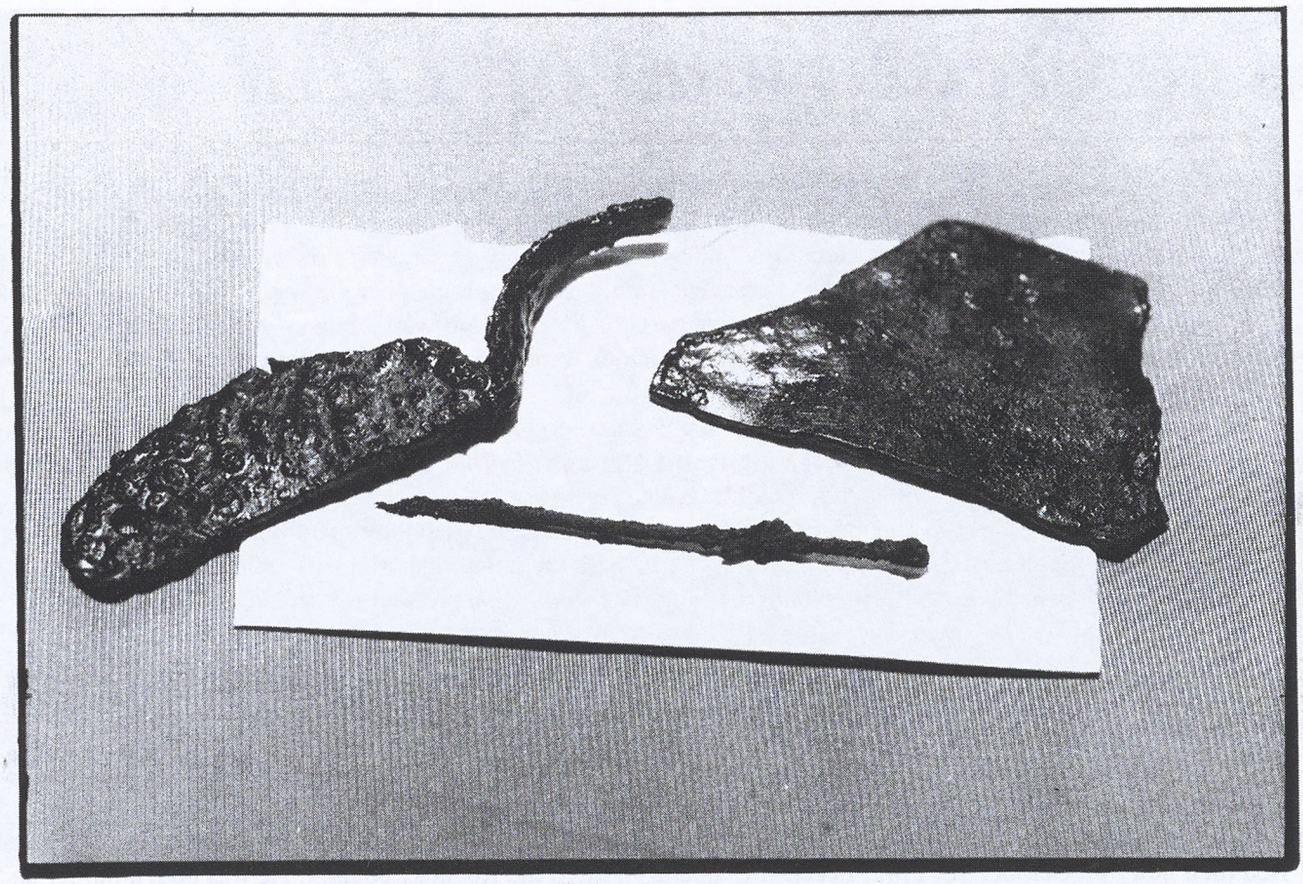
There comes a time in the life of every nation when it can no longer put all its pride and enthusiasm into being young. It must then switch its approach to its own people, and to the world at large, saying that it still merits its place at the head of the table because of its wisdom born of long experience. It is not too long a step from there to a reliance on the deference due to advanced age. Much is then made of tradition, pageantry, times remembered — in a word, history. This may not cut much ice among the world's new giants, the young, virile nations intent on taking our place, but it may be all that we have left. Consequently, the amount of enthusiasm and support that we stimulate today among the American people for the preservation of their historical past, may have a very real influence on how this nation thinks of itself in the centuries ahead.

We are living in the age of the garbage grinder and the disposable everything. Nothing is allowed to survive long enough to become venerable with age because it first becomes obsolete – and that's the dirtiest word you can utter in the 20th century.

On the national scene there is now a Society for Historical Archaeology which was founded in 1967. In England there is a comparable organization known as the Society for Post Medieval Archaeology whose members, both professional and amateur, are working in fields that are of immediate interest here in the eastern United States. In Canada much of its archaeological effort is devoted to work on historic sites such as the great reconstruction projects at Louisbourg which rivals Williamsburg in its scope and purpose. All over the world colonial sites of the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries are being excavated and developed into cultural attractions for the education of the nations' people and to attract the tourist dollar. The projects range from the exploration of the sunken city of Port Royal in Jamaica to a sixteenth-century Portuguese fort at Mombassa, Kenya.

Here at home the catalog is equally broad and dramatic involving sites as varied as a Spanish mission in Arizona, the French and Indian War Fort Ligonier in Pennsylvania, 19th century privy sites in Alexandria, historical Fort Snelling in Minnesota, and the first settlement of 1670 at Charleston, South Carolina, not to mention innumerable amateur projects of which little is heard.

Here in Virginia our score is less satisfactory than it should be. As you may know, in 1966, the General Assembly unanimously recognized the need to protect or salvage the information from our many threatened historical sites, and it authorized the construction and operation of the Virginia Research Center for Historical Archaeology which was to be built adjacent to the campus of the College of William and Mary in Williamsburg. Unfortunately funds were not forthcoming, and in spite of keen efforts on the part of the Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission under whose wing the Center would operate, nothing was achieved. Last year, however, Governor Holton appointed a new committee to turn the corpse over from time to time in the hope that some miracle might bring it to life, and I am happy to be able to tell you that temporary quarters have been made available within an existing facility — providing that the state will employ the skeleton staff needed to get the project going. In the years that we have been wrestling with this splendid but proverty stricken project my own views on archaeological preservation have matured in a manner that will doubtless cause many of my professional colleagues to turn to pot.



Seventeenth century European trade goods found in an archaeological dig along the Roanoke River in South Salem were (from left) a trigger assembly, a rusty iron needle, and a piece of brass.

I am convinced, as I said earlier, that the future of our historical archaeological sites lies not so much in the hands of professionals but in those of dedicated amateurs. There will not and cannot be a sufficient number of permanent jobs in historical archaeology to provide enough trained professionals with a livelihood. Besides, the need for archaeological help is often immediate, and there may be no time to defer the saving of a site until funds can be found and a contract archaeologist hired. The battles must be fought at the local level and funded with amateur enthusiasm, volunteer labor, and a sense of civic pride and patriotism, all in the service of American history.

And because we are talking of history, it is only proper that we should call on our Virginia historical societies and preservationist organizations to shoulder part of the responsibility for developing an awareness of the importance of archaeology's potential contribution to historical, genealogical, and sociological studies. As for the handful of professional archaeological historians, it is up to us to cease denigrating the amateur and indeed to help him, and her, and to foster the establishing of historical archaeological clubs under the aegis of high school history departments, seeking cooperation from skin-diving clubs, from Boy Scouts, garden clubs, anyone with a will to learn and a desire to contribute.

For much too long we have tried to treat every archaeological site like a piece of the Holy Grail to be protected until such time as competent professionals are available to fondle them. Meanwhile the sites are being destroyed by horny-handed land developers without yielding so much as a sentence or even a phrase to the history books. We have to recognize that this country's archaeological heritage is a resource, money in the bank, and while we must conserve the gold, the nickels and dimes are there to be spent. We must therefore make the lesser sites available to the public, putting them to work as training grounds for students of all ages. I can think of no better means of getting high school students interested in local history than by enabling them to dig it up and thus make history as well as read about it.

The Great Flood of 1749

by Klaus Wust ❖ first printed in Vol. 7 No. 1 (1970)

While the flood of 1969 will certainly remain one of the most trying events of recent history, the early pioneers on the Roanoke and its tributaries had ample reason to remember the flood of 1749 for a long time. Inundations were frequent in the western parts of Virginia but two German reports made independently from each other seem to indicate that an unusually ferocious flood occured shortly after midnight on August 25th, 1749.

Two German itinerant preachers of the Moravian Brotherhood in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, Leonhard Schnell and John Brandmuller, who passed through the area in November, 1749, recorde several details about the experiences of people during that fateful summer night. Of one family, Schnell wrote: "The man and his wife with their six children had climbed into a tree, which had fallen down halfway. There they spent the whole night." The travelers had great difficulties to obtain food because everywhere there was a shortage of grain and bread. About two miles from James River a woman with whom they lodged related "that she and two of her children were lifted up by the water in the bed in which they slept and were carried about on the bed while asleep until they woke up."

The best report, however, is contained in a letter which Samuel Eckerlin, head of the Sabbatarian Dunker colony on New River, wrote to Alexander Mack, junior, in Germantown, Pennsylvania on September 23rd, 1749. Mack, who had lived on New River from 1745 until 1747, considered the letter newsworthy enough to pass it on to Christopher Sauer, publisher of the German newspaper in Germantown. It appeared in the *Pennsylvanische Berichte* on January 16, 1750. Sauer's newspaper reported on the Dunker colony on New River from time to time. Only a few weeks after Eckerlin and some followers had set out for western Virginia, the Germantown paper carried their story on October 16, 1745. Eckerlin frequently visited the Roanoke country. He was both a hunter and a doctor, apart from his religious activities as the spiritual leader of a band of monks and married "householders" who pioneered the Dunkards Bottom and Sinking Creek areas.

The place name "Mahanaim" was chosen by Eckerlin in 1745. It is of biblical origin (Genesis 32:1-2) and means "Two Camps," evidently indicating the separation of the monastic colony from the individual homesteads of the householders. Here is the full text of Eckerlin's letter in English translation:

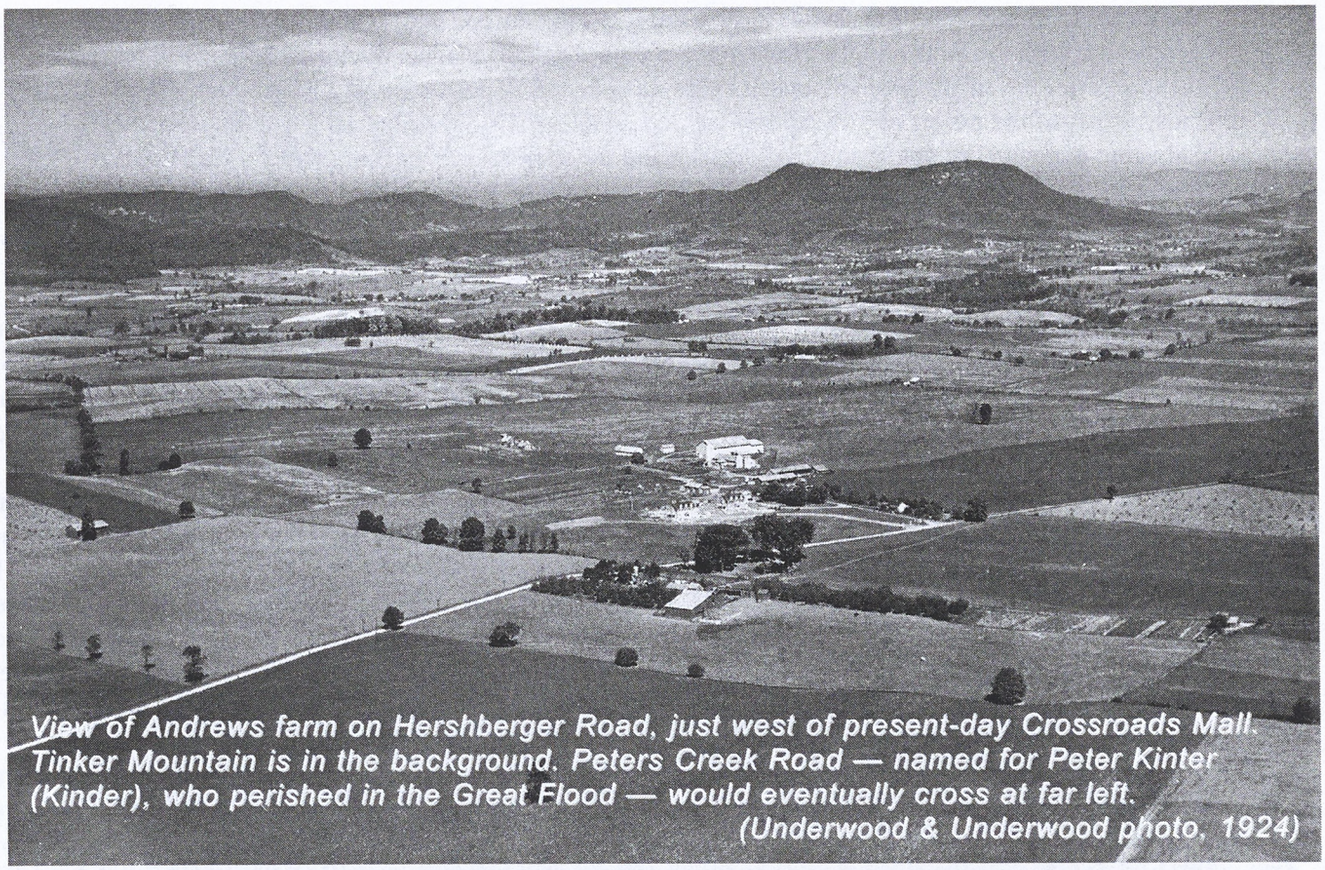
Mahanaim on the New River in Virginia
the 23rd of September (1749)

Beloved Brother,

Upon this occasion I want to report to you about the great inundations which occurred on the 25th of August, a little past midnight, on the Roanoke and the area northeast of it. Our river as well as the Little River were also very high but nobody here suffered mentionable damage. On the Roanoke, however, and other nearby places there was much damage. At several spots entire hills were swept down and leveled and several tracts of bottom land, all inhabited, were filled with so much gravel and sand that they can no longer be lived on. This I have seen myself. Also houses and barns were carried away and with them a great deal of the crop.

The Roanoke was a mile wide at several places and the water rose to 15 feet above otherwise dry land. Since you are familiar with this area, I want to give you details about several places as follows: One mile below Tobias Breit a man and a child were drowned; a woman managed to save

Klaus Wust, a German scholar, historian, traveler and interpreter, described his findings on the Roanoke River flood of August, 1749 in a talk to the Society in Autumn, 1969. His text appears here. Wust, author of The Virginia Germans *and* Folk Art in Stone — Southwest Virginia, *lived at Edinburg in Shenandoah County until his death in 2000.*



View of Andrews farm on Hershberger Road, just west of present-day Crossroads Mall. Tinker Mountain is in the background. Peters Creek Road — named for Peter Kinter (Kinder), who perished in the Great Flood — would eventually cross at far left.
(Underwood & Underwood photo, 1924)

herself on a tree; livestock was practically all drowned because the water rose so suddenly and right at midnight that none could have been driven away. The house of Henrich Braun with whom we stayed has been torn up. Clad in nothing but their shirts they got away with their children, the water reaching up to their arms. His three cows in the field were carried 3 miles downstream by the waters where they gained firm land alive.

Peter Kinter and his wife found a horrible end. They were not yet asleep but had been drinking together, were in good cheer and thought of no danger till the water suddenly rose up to the house and no more escape was possible. So they retreated to the attic. No sooner had they reached it than the water rose up to them. They placed boards on the collar beam and sat on them. When the water reached up to their arms and no more flight seemed possible, he lost heart and told his people: He believed that this was another deluge and the Last Judgment had come. He asked his wife to give him a kiss. As he grabbed her, both slid from the board and away with the waters. Those who were with them on the boards saw no more of them.

Kassel's wife and children and their old mother were in the house at the same time. They all survived up on the collar beam save for a small child whom Peter Kinter's wife had on her lap. It drowned with them. After daybreak, the others found out that they had been carried with the upper part of the house for a mile into some woods. They found a rope and tied it to a tree so that they would not be carried any further until the waters subsided or someone would come to their rescue. After a few days, Peter Kinter's wife was found dead and naked, hanging on a tree with one arm. And several days later he was also found. But he had no more head and only one arm. Maybe some wild animal had already feasted on him. Thus the children of man pass away in their security. He who fears the Lord, is watchful. We live in a wicked and evil world the fruits and berries of which are speedily ripening.

But how hard it is not to be corrupted by it. And not to be frightened by the judgments which hurt and will hurt. The Lord may save our and all pious men's Ark of Faith which, departing from

the shores of vanity, plies the savage seas without casting anchor until it reaches the blessed land of eternity. With the Faith and the Hope in the compass and the magnet of eternal love it will reach the longed for haven of peace where all storms subside and all peril ends. My heartful longing may thus be part of the prayer of all Children of God awaiting His Salvation, all those who await His Salvation and who tire not, then it will happen and we shall rejoice and sing many a Halleluiah to the Lamb Who paid the price.

Farewell,
Samuel Eckerlin

The letter is of particular local interest because its writer mentions four German families with whom the Sabbatarians were acquainted. Tobias Breit (Bright) and his brother, Erich Breit had settled on the North Fork of the Roanoke soon after 1740. Henrich Braun (Henry Brown) was one of the occupants of Browns Bottom between Cravens Creek and the Roanoke in east Salem and Roanoke County. His three brothers, Samuel, Daniel and David were also among the earliest settlers of this neighborhood.

Peter Kinter (Kinder) lived on the other side of the Roanoke along Peters Creek. Kinder had arrived in Philadelphia from Germany in 1738 and located on Peters Creek well before 1744. After his tragic death, neighbors appraised his personal belongings which were considerable for a man who had migrated to America only 11 years before. Besides his land, Kinder left 10 horses, 10 cows, sundry tools and a beaver hat — all amounting to 100 pounds and 10 shillings — to his surviving children, Christian, Sarah, Peter and Catherine. They were bound out by the church wardens. The "Kassel's wife" mentioned by Eckerlin might have been the spouse of Jacob Cassel (Castle) who appears often as a hunter in Augusta County records and he might have been on one of his long hunting expeditions while his wife, children and mother stayed with the Kinder family.

Samuel Eckerlin's letter thus provides us with the clue to the ethnic origin of four families whose names were thoroughly anglicized in local records: Bright, Brown, Kinder and Castle. The last portion of his epistle gives some insight into the religious thinking of the Sabbatarians. For them, the outsiders were corrupted by the temptations of this world. A flood like that of August 25th, 1749 was taken as a sign from heaven. Little did Samuel Eckerlin dream that but a few years later several of the virtuous Sabbatarians would be killed by Indians and that two of his brothers would perish in French captivity.

Another report on the Roanoke River flood of 1749 was handed down in the Journal of Dr. Thomas Walker of Albemarle County, who wrote of "a Fresh" which carried off houses, grain and fences. Dr. Walker, the explorer who is credited with naming Cumberland Gap, wrote on March 15, 1750 that the fresh occurred "last Summer" which would confirm the date. The account in his journal for March 15-16:

> We went to the Great Lick on a Branch of the Staunton & bought corn of Michael Campbell for our Horses. This Lick has been one of the best places for Game in these parts and would have been if the Hunters had not killed the Buffaloes for diversion, and the Elks and Deer for their skins.
>
> This afternoon we got to the Staunton where the Houses of the inhabitants had been carried off with their grain and Fences by the Fresh last Summer, and lodged at James Robinson's, the only place I could hear of where they had Corn to spare, notwithstanding the land is such that an industrious man might make 100 barrels a share in a seasonable year.
>
> We kept up the Staunton to William Englishe's (Ingles). He lives on a small branch and was not much hurt by the Fresh. He has a Mill, which is the furthest back except one lately built by the Sect of people, who call themselves of the Brotherhood of the Euphrates, and are commonly called the Duncards, who are the upper inhabitants of the New River, which is about 400 yards wide at this place. They live on the west side and we were obliged to swim our Horses over.

There is no known reference to a Michael Campbell but Malcolm Campbell lived at the Great Lick and later owned a 400-acre tract containing much of downtown Roanoke. A James Robinson lived north of Cloverdale in Botetourt County. William English or Ingles lived in the area between the present towns of Blacksburg and Christiansburg.

Seeing Virginia in 1797

by Louis Philippe

The 15th. We took our noon meal at a little town called Kized's town twelve miles from Frey's.

There is another road, to the right, from New Market to Staunton and a city called Harrison'sburg, capital of Rockingham county, about the same distance from Kized's town. We dined at Hudson's tavern and slept in Staunton at the General Washington Inn, proprietor Peter Heiskell, a Pennsylvania German. Excellent inn. Staunton's environs are quite hilly. The town consists of about 300 houses or families, for each family has its own. Bad weather during the day.

The 16th. The country still hilly. We begin to glimpse the northern mountains to our right.

To our left rise others. Between the two ranges the land is varied, sometimes copses and groves, then smaller ranges cutting through the valleys, etc. We dined at David Steel's house halfway to Lexington. This poor unfortunate was captured by Parleton's* corps, and after he had surrendered they fetched him two blows of the saber to the head, so he says, bashing out a piece of bone that his wife showed us. M. de Chastellux stayed with them on his way to and from the Natural Bridge. Steel told us funny stories. We reached Lexington late. It was full night and we had great trouble locating the ford across the north branch of the James river; we even missed it; we even missed the road; and we were a long time finding it and then crossing another stream that lay beyond. The town is only half a mile from it. Weather less bad than the day before. Put up at the Red Lion, proprietor Hanna; nice people, but a beggarly inn.

The 17th. Stopover in Lexington, [Virginia].

The 18th. One of our horses being lame, we did almost the whole day's journey on foot.

Country still mountainous, indifferently farmed and uninteresting. We made a halt at Captain Bartley's inn, a real hovel. The master of the house is a decent sort and a jokester. He guided us to the Natural Bridge, about a mile and a half from his inn. This is a very unusual bridge. It spans Cedar creek, a very small stream. It is a tall mass of rock which seems to have been hollowed out by the water's steady action, perhaps like the rifts of the Rhone; and as the mass of rock is quite narrow, it would seem that the earth above and below the bridge either collapsed or was swept away by the stream and left the bridge suspended between two masses of rock. Its height in the middle is 71 yards above the water. In that same spot the rocky arch is 50 feet thick. The gap at water level is 40 feet; above, the span is 30 yards. There is a path below the bridge by which one can stroll under the arch along the stream. This is truly an exceptional sight, and though the region is scrubby, the bridge is surely picturesque.

* *Probably a slip of the pen for Tarleton.*

These selections describe Southwest Virginia as seen in April 1797 by a future French king who traveled in America 33 years before he ascended to the throne. They are excerpted from the book Diary of My Travels in America, *Louis Philippe, King of France, 1830-1848, translated from the French by Stephen Becker.* *These selections were first printed in Vol. 10 No. 2 (1978).*

Otherwise it seems to me that a good sketch and a precise description should do the trick, and that it is not really worth a second trip. Captain Bartley gave me all those measurements. Today was very cold; it froze last night and snowed this morning, but the snow did not stick.

The 19th. Almost all the oaks leafing, and consequently the forests turning green. Yet in this respect there is considerable variation among the oaks. Some are altogether given, others are only budding, and for still others it might be January. This does not seem to depend on the exposure, for we find many examples proving the contrary; more probably it is due to the greater or lesser warmth of the ground. The soil here is full of clay, mixed with more or less sand and good humus, and is consequently yellowish or reddish, never black like the rich soil of France. All the forests I have so far seen consist wholly of oaks and pines (in the mountains). Of course I except a scattering of other sorts.

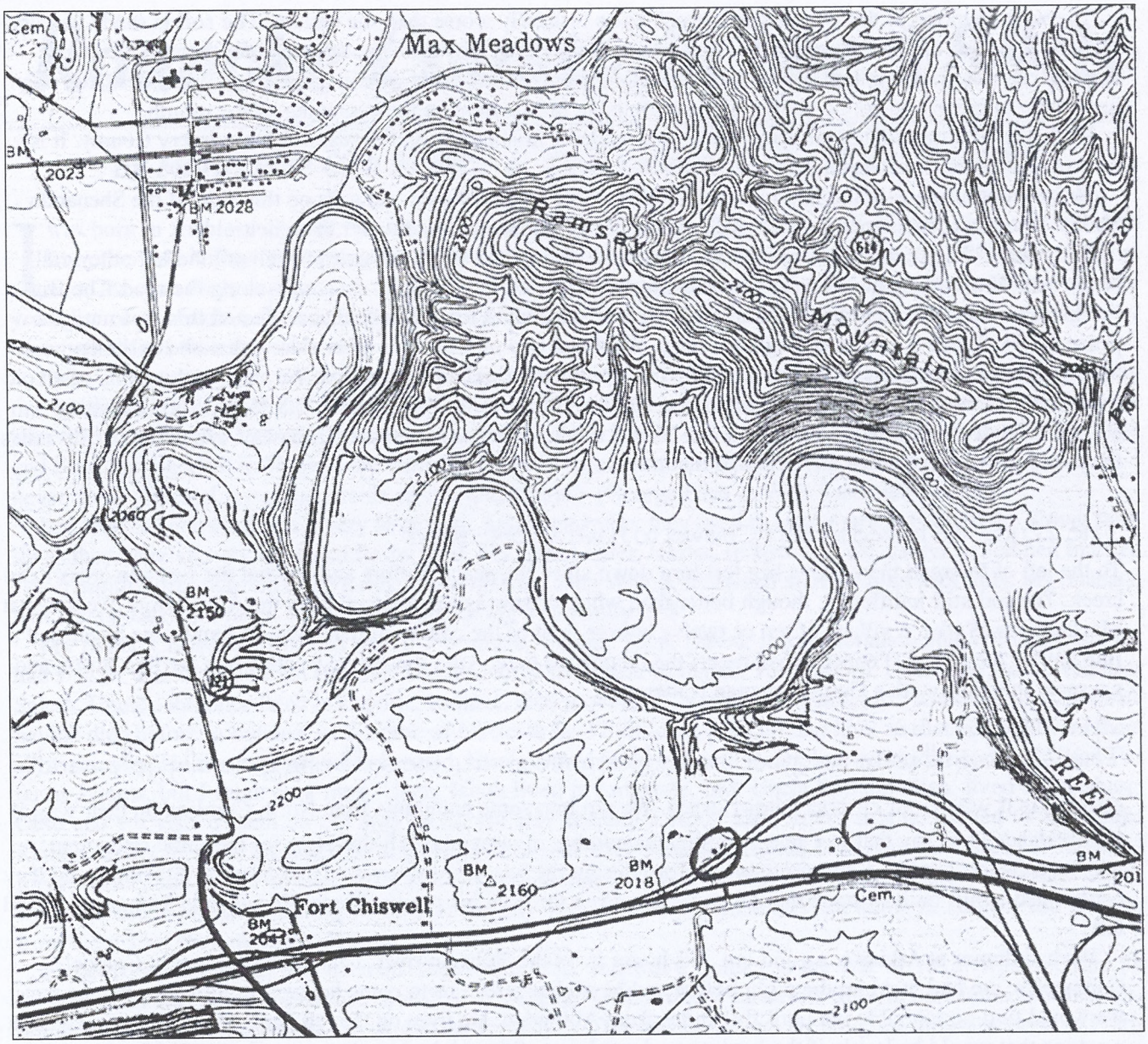
In leaving Captain Bartley's we crossed Cedar creek, which drives a mill wheel. The closer we approached the James river, the sandier, and therefore less cultivated, the soil. We dined on the left bank of that river, at Padensburg, a town of twenty souls, as they themselves boast. Their inn is fairly good. We crossed the river by ferry. The district is rather picturesque. It stretches along the James river's course through the Blue Ridge Mountains.

The landscape improves beyond the river and there are more people. About four miles along, the road forks. One fork leads to Fincastle, also called Botitourt, also called Munroe, and crosses the Kanhaway, which along this stretch is called New river, at Pepper's ferry. That is the righthand fork. The other passes through a new town called Amsterdam and crosses the Kanhaway at English's ferry. That is the better road. The two ferries have given their names to the two roads. Pepper's road and English's road. The latter is a bit longer, but better in all respects. We slept in Amsterdam at a good inn, proprietor Mr. Botts, 15 miles from Padensburg and five from Fincastle, which is twelve miles from the river. There is a road from Fincastle to English's road.

In Botts tavern we found ourselves among a large group of travelers much like those Fielding describes. They were headed for Kentucky and uneasy about the latest massacre by the Indians. In their anxiety they wanted us to swell their number, but we ignored the plea, knowing only too well the miseries such a crowd could cause in the region's tiny inns. Also, every man has his own way of traveling and travelers are mutually annoying; and aside from that, nothing is more boring than bored people who want to talk and have nothing to talk about. During thg three hours they made us wait, as usual, for a few slices of fried ham and coffee with brown sugar, there were some who never shut up for a moment and others who never said a word but could not stop yawning, scratching, belching, etc.

The 20th. Instead of sallying forth at dawn, as they had boasted they would, our wayfarers only started out at 7 o'clock, leaving the staff at the inn less than overwhelmed by their generosity, and having managed several disagreements with their host. We dined at the home of Mr. Coles, a Pennsylvania German. The countryside unimpressive except here and there. Greenery thick, and in the oak forests whole groves are all green. We crossed the river Raunoake six times and went to sleep at Colonel Lewis's, two miles above Colonel Hancock. A pleasant and comfortable place. His house is charmingly set on a foothill of the Alleghanys and surrounded by lush meadows. In the old days there was a fort here (Voss's fort) that was captured by the Indians.

The 21st. Our road went on rising gently until we had reached the summit of the hills called the Alleghanys. I do not know their height above sea level; not great, I suspect, because they rise above the valley floors no higher than the hills around Paris, and the Blue Ridge Mountains are real mountains by comparison. To look at the Alleghanys one would never think they are one of the watersheds of this immense continent. Our own continent, though much smaller, has mountains so much more majestic; which brings us to the notion that perhaps the effect attributed to the trade winds is real, that the cumulative level of the sea along these coasts is higher than ours, that these waters, ebbing more reluctantly, are deeper and more widespread than on our con-



Map shows some of the territory in present Wythe County that Louis Philippe might have explored in 1797.

tinent, and that this laggard drainage prevents them from leaching off the soil and vegetable matter that still carpet the Alleghanys as most likely they used to carpet the Alps.

The Alleghanys (in the region where I crossed them) are covered with oaks; one sees hardly any pines. The soil is dry and arid. It is no more than a stony sand, not cultivable. There are no great masses of rock to be seen, and if not for the river currents and even more the map, the traveler would never believe himself in one of the principal ranges of North America. They say that around Pittsburg the mountains are craggier and higher than around here; we shall see about that on the way back. Crossing the Alleghanys I saw evidence of the Americans' ignorance, or laziness, about mapping their roads. The one we followed crossed over the tallest of the rounded hills, leaving vales left and right where it would have been far easier to cut a road because with the land overgrown and no streams in the area, there would be no cliffs or swamps to hinder the work, just trees to fell, the same as on the crests. The only way I could make sense of this road was by assuming that the first travelers who blazed a trail across the Alleghanys were attracted to the highest ground by their impatience to see the land to the west, and that sheer laziness led the road builders to follow that trail and spare themselves the trouble of cutting a new one.

The western slope of these mountains struck us as infinitely worse than the eastern. The soil is sandy and dry, the land is flatter, and the springs rarer. The vegetation is much less varied and flourishing than on the other slope. Here, not an oak in bud, where we had before seen whole forests greening; the haws and sloes have only just begun to green and are no further along than those in Maryland at the beginning of the month.

We halted at a tiny village of about ten houses called Christians-burg, the seat of Montgomery County. It is nine miles from Colonel Lewis's.

Before continuing I should like to mention the notable height of men and girls on this side of the Shenando Valley. It seems to be increasing still, for most of the young people seem taller than their elders.

The countryside was about the same as far as the valley of the Big Kanhaway, which around here they call New river. The settlements here are few and squalid. From all I heard, they exist only along the road. The Big Kanhaway valley is better, though sparsely settled. It seems that fear of the Indians infected this area until the peace of '94. There is no inn at English's ferry. We dined two miles on the other side with some Irishmen who have given the name New Dublin to a shanty they've been living in for six years. We slept in the home of an old man named Carter who has just sold his house and his 700 acres for 400 pounds. U.S.* and who is shutting down his inn tomorrow. He is moving some twenty miles farther along on the Kanhaway. For some twenty miles the road runs within four or five miles of that river.

The 22nd. We halted at Fort Chiswel to have a horse shod.

To the left of the road there was a big fort torn down since the peace. Before and beyond the fort you cross Read creek. The soil still indifferent, though better than what we saw as we emerged from the Alleghanys. We dined at Marshall's in Wythe, a village of ten or twelve houses, seat of the county of that name. A handsome house and a fine inn for the region. Pepper's road meets the other road here. After dinner we weathered a terrible storm, and we spent the night with a German named Katternring.

The 22nd. Still rotten weather and indifferent country, the soil being generally yellow and sandy as it was east of the Alleghanys. We ran into some emigrants from North Carolina on their way to Cumberland. They say that last year a prodigious number of emigrants left that state for the same settlement, which is already sizable. Katternring was a Tory during the war. He was arrested and taken to Staunton, and they confiscated a mill built of stone that he had worked not far from his present home. He has only 200 acres of land left.

We had dinner at Atkins's, a good inn. His house is on the Holstein river. That night we slept at Colonel Campbell's; we had met him the night before and he all but forced us to come home with him, assuring us that we would find no tolerable inn until five miles from Abingdon. He lives on the left bank of the Holstein river, in a setting that would be lovely if the land were cleared; but, although he has six sons and several Negroes, he settles for what he cleared when he first arrived. And yet he has 3,000 acres here. I do not know what he and his sons do all day, and because he seems a fine fellow I asked him point blank. He answered that because he owns property in other parts he is always on the go and never at home.

I saw sugar maples on his property and again enjoyed the sight of their huge branches bowing earthward. I have often used their sugar in my coffee, which sweetening seems to me every bit as good as the other. It is impossible to estimate the yield of this product because it varies with the weather and with the trees themselves. It seems that America's changeable climate is the most favorable for these trees, as the sap only flows at the end of December, when a warm day with a thaw follows a cold night. In this area are trees that yield up to 15 pounds of brown sugar. There are many such hereabouts. Wild grapevines are another American plant that must subtly alter our impression of the landscape and differentiate it from our own. They always grow about another tree, twining to its upper limbs, whence tendrils droop to the ground. They produce very tart grapes, edible only after a frost. Apparently their leaves unfold very late, for we saw only buds on the other slope of the Alleghanys, and on this side they are much as they were in January.

* *Sterling was still in use, along with dollars, as legal tender at the time.*

Roanoke County in the 1840s

by Maria Jane Gish Frantz ❖ first printed in Vol. 7 No. 1 (1970)

I was born in Roanoke County, Va. on October 28th, 1838, 8 miles from Salem, the County seat, one half mile from the little Village of Burlington, and 2 miles from Hollins, formerly Botetourt Springs. My father's name was Christian Gish, my mother's name was Elizabeth Houtz, daughter of John and Susan Klein Houtz. I am the youngest of 8 children, Hester, John Henry, Eliza Ann, James Rufus, Susan Frances, Sarah Catherin, Mary Elizabeth, Maria Jane (myself).

I was in my 14th year when father sold his farm and moved to Woodford County, Ill., where we lived on a farm one mile north of Roanoke, Ill. Father lived to be in his 90th year, mother having died some years before. Both are buried in the Roanoke Cemetery together with brother, John Rufus, sister Susan and Elizabeth. Sister Hester, Eliza and Sarah having died in Virginia are buried on the old home place on a little hill in the west part of the orchard. I never knew either of my grandparents on my father's side. (George Gish & Wife Susannah Stover).

My brother John Gish was a very large man, and I remember they used to say he struck back to the Stover family as they were all very large and fleshy men. My oldest sister, Hester, or Hettie as we always called her, married Jacob Smith. Eliza married Isaac Renn, Susan married John Woosa, Elizabeth married John McCauly. My husband was Henry Jackson Frantz. I am the last one living of a family of 8.

My father, Christian Gish, was one of 7 brothers, George, John, David, Jacob, Abraham and William Gish. He had 1 sister who married John Beckner. Uncle George lived near Roanoke, Va. (Vinton). Uncle Abraham lived near Salem, Uncle John once lived in Laporte, Indiana, then moved to Livingston County, Mo., where he died, his wife having died before in Indiana. At the time of his death his 12 children lived around him, so that he could visit them all in one day. He was near 90 when he died. Uncle David lived in South Bend, Ind. where his son, Pike, lives, as far as I know, but I think on a farm. Uncle Jacob lived in Lafayette, Ind. Uncle William Gish, lived in Leesburg, Ohio and we visited them on our way to Ill. He was keeping a Hotel then, afterwards he moved to Atchinson, Kansas, where he died. He had 6 girls, no boys. His girls were Lucinda, Emma, Eliza, Susan, Phoebe or Rachel, I forget which, and Hattie. If those girls all married and changed their names we will never know who they are, as we never saw them after moving to Ill. and we may be living among them and not know it. Neither did we hear from them after they moved to Kansas.

Father (Christian Gish) was born on August 12, 1792, and was a Soldier in the War of 1812. Was in Camp for 16 weeks but was never called out. Grandfather, (George Gish) hired a substitute for him and came and took him home. He received a Land Grant on land of 40 acres in Ill. This was Gov. land. He bought a thousand acres of Prarie land in Ill.

Father always lived at the same place while he lived in Va. that he bought and moved to when he and Mother were married. (1816). He cleared the most of it himself, having hired hands to help. Mother always had a loom and spinning wheel, and made cloth to sell and help to pay off the hired hands. We raised Flax and had sheep to shear,

This account of girlhood on a Roanoke County farm before the Civil War was written by Maria Jane Gish Frantz in 1914. She died at the age of 91 in 1929 at Enid, Okla. Her recollections were preserved by her grandson, F.M. Heironimus of Tulsa, Okla., and passed along to another relative, Mrs. Ola Gish Durr of Roanoke, a member of the Society. Born in the year Roanoke County was formed from Botetourt, the writer was the daughter of Christian Gish, who moved from near Bonsack to what has been known as the R.L. Walrond home, near Burlington, north of Roanoke. It now is owned by A.T. Loyd. About 1851, the Gishes moved to Roanoke, Ill., a community named by families who moved from this area. In 1857, Maria married Henry Jackson Frantz, son of Jacob and Eliza Petty Frantz, who had moved west from Roanoke County. They lived in Oklahoma and had 10 children, including a son, Frank Christian Frantz, who was a captain in the Rough Riders and the last territorial governor of Oklahoma in 1906.

Wool to wash, pick and Spin. We children took delight in helping to wash the wool. We would all go out in a wagon to the creek, with the baskets, tubs and buckets, and as the water was warm we would each take a basket, put it half full of Wool, and wade into the creek where it was gravel bottom, and get into the baskets with our feet and tramp the wool until the water ran clean from the basket, then the wool was clean. We would walk out, drain the wool, and put it back into the sheets on the grass, fill the baskets and into the water again!

This was great fun to us. Now, as I was the youngest, you may wonder who were the children that I speak of; my oldest sister (Hester) died and left three little girls, Lizzie, Sarah and Susan Smith. These, Mother took to raise, and they were always like sisters to me. Lizzie was older than me, Sarah about my age, and Susie younger. We little girls had to pick wool in the hot summer days and how tired we would get sitting and picking wool. Some times we would slip out to play and Mother would have to call us in to finish our tasks, then we could play. The wool picking had to be done after school closed and before harvest came on. We little girls had to gather sheaves, and carry water to the harvest hands. The wheat was cut with Cradles, perhaps eight or ten Cradles going at the same time. As many rakers and as many men to bind up the sheaves. We had no reapers in those days. It kept my mother and two older sisters busy cooking for so many hands. Then we milked from 6 to 8 cows and made butter for the market. We little girls did the churning down at the spring-house in summer in the early morning while it was cool. We had the old fashioned dash churn and two of us would get hold of the dasher and sing:

Come butter come, Come Butter Come,
Peter's standing at the gate,
Waiting for the butter cake,
Come Butter come.

We thought sure the butter would come quicker if we sang that song.

I used to milk an old Cow named Cherry when I was too little to know the right side from the wrong. It was fun then, but when I got older it was not so funny; I remember how I used to chase the cows up, when I was older, and stand with my bare feet, in the warm place, of a dewey morning. Then away to the pasture with the cows. We little girls had to take the cows to the pasture in the morning, then go for them in the evening. Sometimes we would have to go a long way to the farthest corner of the farm. Often we would find the cows at the bars, waiting to come home. We always had a Bell cow. If the cows would happen to be in the new pasture or over a hill (for it was hilly in Va.) we would have to listen for the bell. The cows would hurry home to get a cool drink of water from the big spring that ran through the springhouse, where we kept the milk and butter, and any thing else that needed to be kept cool in summer, the water being almost ice-cold in the summer, but seemed warm to the touch in winter.

There were big shade trees all around the spring, where father and the hired men would always go for an hour's rest after dinner in the summer time, either sitting or lying down on the grass, for we had a beautiful bluegrass yard. Many a time we took knives and dug up the plantain and danderlions or any other weed that would happen to come up, so that it looked like a green velvet yard. There was a sweet Briar Rose growing and vining over the west window of the sitting room in the dear old home. It seems to me I can smell its sweet fragrance yet, after 77 years!

How well I remember every nook and cranny of the old house! The Loom house, the smoke house, the hen house, and the spring house, and the bubbling spring, whose waters never, never failed, and was a delight to those who came thirsty for a drink of its cooling waters. The horses too, how they would hurry to the trough on a hot summer day, to quench their thirst, then turn away and march back to the barn to be fed.

We had a large barn where the front projected over like a wide porch, where the cattle would gather under to keep out of rain or snow. Besides there was always a large stack of straw in the barnyard after thrashing time, so that the cattle would have shelter from the cold on any side of it, as it was in the middle of the barn yard.

What fun we children used to have gathering eggs by the dozens in the old barn or on the straw stack, in the hen house too; and what fun we had sliding down the straw stack, for it was nearly tall as the barn, but sloping down so that it was easy to climb up again, and in winter when snow covered the ground we would carry boards to the top of the hill in the orchard, and then get on the slide and down the hill we would go, then roll off in the snow, and the boards would go through under the fence into the barnyard. Then back again we would go. The children in town miss all the fun we children in the country had.

I must not forget to tell of the Flax raising. When in bloom it waved like a blue sea and was very beautiful. When

the bloom dropped it would soon begin to turn brown. And when the seed was ripe it was ready for the harvest. We would pull it up, tie it in bundles as large as your arm, and stick it with roots down and seeds up, in small stacks to dry. When dry it was hauled to the barn and the seed beat off and the stacks spread in smooth wind rows in the newly mown meadow where the grass was short, where the rain and the dew would fall on it until the stalks were rotted or brittle so they could be broken, then it was raked up and taken back to the barn, where Father would break it. I cannot describe a Flax break to you so you would understand it. Then we women folks would scrutch it, and mother would hackle it and it was ready for the spinning wheel. It looked like soft and beautiful gray hair as it was made into twists and hung up on the walls of the loom house. Then came the spinning of the Flax by mother and the older girls. We children that were younger had to spin tow. Tow is the tangled part that is hackled out of the Flax on sharp pointed steel pins. This is made into coarse cloth, the flax into figured table linen, or plain cloth for sheets, pillow cases, towels, etc.

We little girls had to pick wool in the hot summer days and how tired we would get sitting and picking wool. Some times we would slip out to play and Mother would have to call us in to finish our tasks...

I used to fill quills for the weaver, and got very tired sometimes, but everybody had to work. My older sisters had to spin the wool in summer on a big wheel and they would sing and spin. I seem to hear them yet, and see them draw out the long woolen thread from the woolroll. That was after the wool had been picked to remove all the trash out of it and it had been sent to the Carding machine to be made into rolls. Then after the spinning came the washing again, then the coloring of it into different colors, to be woven into woolen goods for our winter dresses, or plain blue brown or black for the men's wear, or left white for the blankets, or the colors were woven into beautiful designs for bed spreads. There were many uses for it. The older sisters used to weave beautiful white figured counterpanes for the beds, or carpets for the floors, some which were made from the coarse part of Tow, and colored different colors. Some were made from rags.

I tell you all of this that the grandchildren may know how easy they have it now!

All of our sewing was done by hand. We had no sewing machines then, nor cooking stoves. All the cooking was done over a fire place.

Our kitchen fire place was half as wide as the kitchen. But we had a big clay oven in the yard where we did most of the bread or pie baking. Occasionally Mother would bake biscuits or custard pies in a dutch oven on the hearth, if needed between baking days, and our corn pone (we never had any other sort in those days) was baked in the same Dutch oven on the hearth, putting coals of fire under and on top of the oven. And how delicious it was — not hard crusted or dried out like a cook stove makes it.

I used to go to school at the old Green Ridge school house near a mile away and sit all day from sun up till sun down, on seats without any backs, but we never thought of getting tired. How we made the air ring with happy voices, and how we tried to get the last tag away as we ran to our homes in the evening. We never had kerosene lamps in those days, but had tallow candles, and we would burn pine knots in the fireplace to see to get our lessons with — it was much brighter. The girls used to spin too by the light of the pine knots, I mean on the little Flax wheels. They never spun wool at night. Sometimes they would want to go and spend the evening with a neighbor girl, or girls. Then they would gather up their wheels and go and laugh and talk and spin and visit till bed time, then pick up their wheels and go home again, to be ready for the business next morning.

Those were happy days.

HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF WESTERN VIRGINIA

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www.history-museum.org www.linkmuseum.org e-mail: info.hswv@cox.net

Dear Friend:

Greetings from the Historical Society of Western Virginia.

Enclosed with this letter is one of the highlights of our year, the 2006, Volume 17 Number 1 ***Journal***. As described in the "Note from the Executive Director," 2006-2007 was one of the busiest and most successful periods in our 50 year history. We are pleased to relay that there is an equal amount in which to look forward to in 2007-2008.

The Society will begin a significant renovation of the History Museum this fall. The project, undertaken in four phases, will create 30% more usable public space for our visitors. The work will create an enhanced research library, expanded revolving galleries, an educational resource gallery for our younger visitors and a significant update of the permanent gallery. The project is slated to conclude in spring of 2009.

The O. Winston Link Museum will present two exciting additions to its galleries over the next year. Using the actual equipment used by Winston Link to develop his N&W series images, the museum will unveil the new "darkroom exhibit," where visitors can learn more about the processes and techniques Link used to develop his stunning photographs. Secondly, in order to better care for and organize the collection, the museum will be outfitted with an open storage system, making available the nearly 300 image collection on every museum visit.

Operating with an eye towards efficiency, and with tremendous volunteer efforts, the Society's facilities attract more than 50,000 visitors annually, and put on numerous specials events, lectures and programs in addition to the special projects mentioned above – all on a shoe-string budget.

Your annual support of the Society is essential to our provision these educational programs and services to the community. In light of all that the Society has undertaken, we are asking for your financial assistance directed to either the **annual campaign** or the Society's **operating endowment** to help us ensure the continuation of these and other activities, enjoyed by students, weekend guests, and foreign travelers alike for the next year, and many to come.

Please contribute today. Enclosed for your convenience are a donation form and a return envelope. Working together, we can achieve all of the above and maybe more.

Sincerely,

David G. Helmer
President, Board of Directors

How the Mother County Began

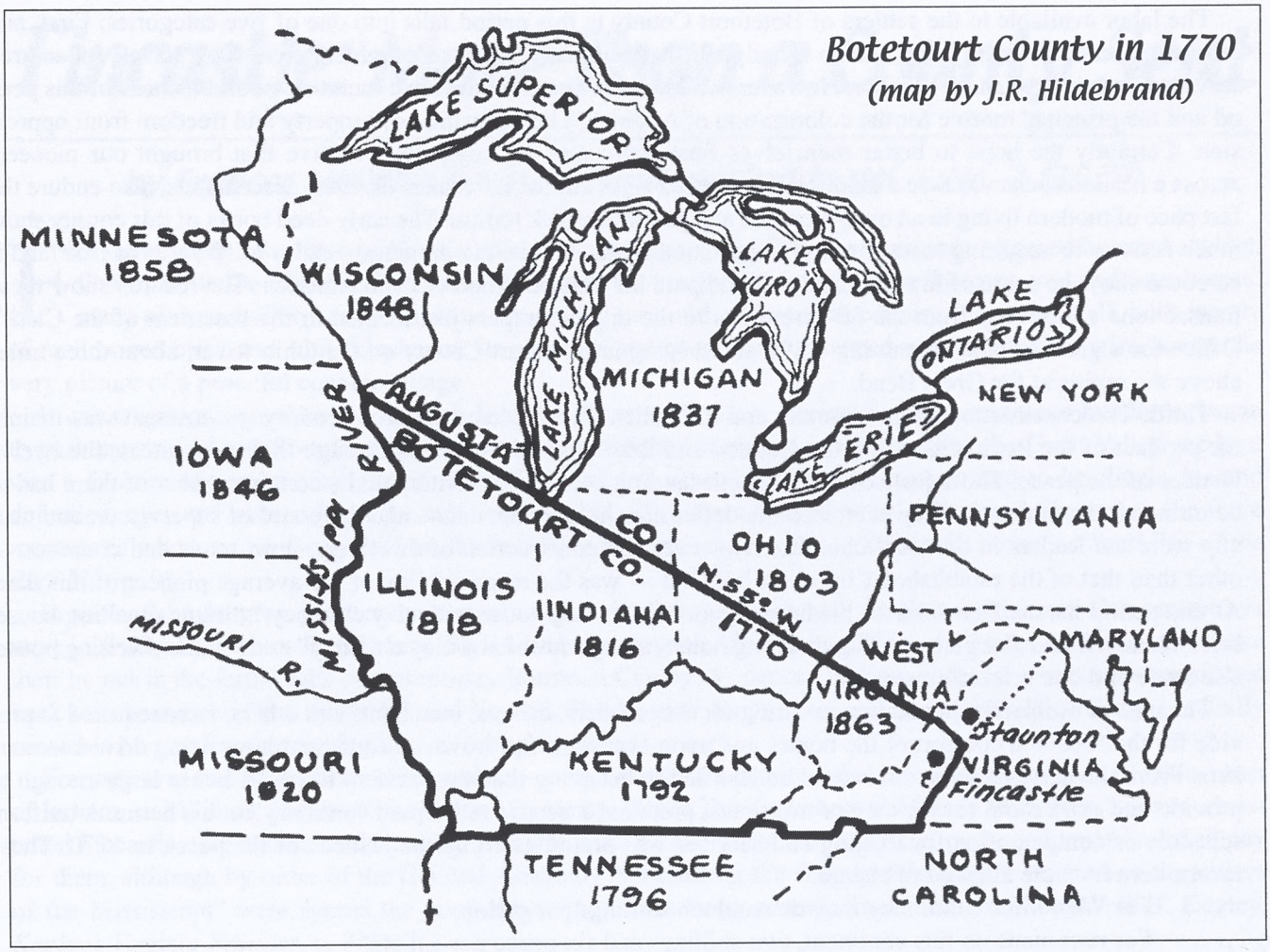
by R.D. Stoner ❖ first printed in Vol. 6 No. 2 (1970)

Now that Botetourt County is celebrating its bicentennial, members of the Roanoke Historical Society may be interested in reviewing the image of their mother county as it was in 1770. From Botetourt's mother, Augusta County, it inherited a claim to all lands beginning at a point in the watershed of the Blue Ridge Mountains, east of present Lexington, and lying south and west of a line running approximately through the center of present Rockbridge County, crossing a road between Warm and Hot Springs and continuing through the present state of West Virginia on the established course of N. 55° West, to the Ohio River some 30 miles north of Point Pleasant, W.Va. Projecting this northwest division line, the boundary would roughly run through Columbus, Ohio, Fort Wayne, Ind., and cross Illinois north of Chicago into a small section of Wisconsin to the Mississippi River. The eastern boundary was the watershed of the Blue Ridge Mountain from a point east of present Lexington to the Virginia-North Carolina line. Its southern border was an extension of the Virginia-North Carolina boundary including the present state of Kentucky.

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

From a few dozen families in the late 1730s, Southwest Augusta County had grown in population to the extent that their numbers were sufficient for its citizens to petition the House of Burgesses in 1767, and again in 1769, for a division of the county. On January 31, 1770, an Act of Division was authorized, which divided Augusta into two counties and parishes. The infant was named Botetourt in honor of Norborne Berkeley, then governor and perhaps the most popular of all the colonial governors of Virginia. Lord Botetourt was succeeded as governor by John Murray, Lord Dunmore, in 1771 and Botetourt's county seat was named after the title of his eldest son, Viscount Fincastle. At this time the majority of Botetourt's citizens were Scotch-Irish Presbyterians, who so many decades before left Ireland, and after landing in the Atlantic coast ports had filtered down from Pennsylvania and Maryland into the Valley of Virginia. However, many were from that territory adjacent to the rivers Seine and Rhine of western Europe, as well as from England, Wales and Ireland proper. The Scotch-Irish had a tendency to move westward with the tide of immigration, and the Germanic people of the Rhine Valley to stay once they had acquired good farming land. Many of the descendants of those early Germanic people are still citizens of this County, along with some Scotch-Irish. If we examine the location of the settlers of this period, we find that in their preference for home sites they worked out the pattern of a rough triangle. This triangle was located in the heart of the present boundary of Botetourt, and a concentration of population would be evident along its left line from Looney's Mill Creek Ferry (now Buchanan) roughly following the present Lee Highway (U.S. Route 11) to the old Dr. Simmons' place, and then would follow an old road southwesterly to Amsterdam. From this point, the right leg of the triangle would follow the settlements across the water divided between the waters of the Roanoke River and Catawba Creek, following northwardly the watershed of Catawba and Patterson creeks to the mouth of Craigs Creek at present Eagle Rock, with the base line of the triangle meandering down the James River to Looney's Ferry. Since most of this

Robert D. Stoner of Fincastle, author of the important Botetourt County history A Seedbed of the Republic, *spent much of his adult life collecting and writing history of his native county. He had daily access to valuable records in his work as deputy clerk and later clerk of Botetourt County Circuit Court from 1938 to 1960. He lived at Santillane, an early 19th century home on the outskirts of Fincastle, until his death in 1980.*



region was open for settlement to individuals by the government, rather than by sale by large land companies, this enabled the individual to take land in single small surveys, and made the homesteads more scattered than had been the case in Augusta and present Rockbridge counties where the Beverley and Borden grants covered so much of the counties and limited the homesteader to a definite area.

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

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

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

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

The labor available to the settlers of Botetourt County in this period falls into one of five categories: First, and most important, the family unit, which usually consisted of many sons and daughters; next were slaves, indentured servants, apprentices and free labor. However, we must not overlook the most lucrative of all business in this period and the principal motive for the colonization of America: The acqusition of property and freedom from oppression. Certainly the hope to better themselves financially was the compelling motive that brought our pioneers across a perilous ocean to face a land inhabited by savages and which makes us, their descendants, also endure the fast pace of modern living in an over-crowded and physically sick terrain. The early deed books of this county show much activity in acquiring lands through importation rights, that is, the immigrant claim to 50 acres of free land if he could show he came of his own free will and paid his transportation costs to America. The records show these transactions all the way from the 50-acre tracts to the original papers just located in the basement of the Clerk's Office for a grant of land containing 4,395 acres, lying in Botetourt County on the Ohio River, about three miles above the rapids at the Great Bend.

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

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

For West India Rum, they may demand ten shillings per gallon.
For rum made on this continent, two shillings and six pence per gallon.
For Apple Brandy, four shillings per gallon.
For Virginia strong malt beer bottled three months, seven pence half penny per bottle.
For Bumbo with two gills Rum to the quart made with white sugar, one shilling and three pence.
For a warm diet with small beer, nine pence
For lodging in clean sheets, one in a bed, six pence; two in a bed, three pence, three farthings. If more than two, nothing.
For stablage with plenty of hay or fodder, one night, seven pence, half penny.

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

Botetourt County's main road ran from Gilbert Campbell's Ford at Lexington to Cherry Tree Bottom on James River above Buchanan, then to Amsterdam where one division turned left, or south, following somewhat the present Route 220, and the other division continued up the Catawba Creek to Adam Harmon's on New River, where it became known as the Wilderness Road to Kentucky. The feeder or local roads were of more daily concern to the early settlers than were the arterial roads, and our early records teem with petitions and orders concerning roads to the mill and the market. The establishment of these roads was only the first step and a constant vigil by the county fathers was necessary to keep them in condition. Almost every grand jury indicted more than one overseer of a road for neglect of his duty in connection with it, and sometimes these roads were obstructed by the building of fences across them by irate landowners.

Fincastle: More Than a County Seat

by Frances McNulty Lewis ❖ first printed in Vol. 6 No. 2 (1970)

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

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

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

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

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

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

"Lieutenants Meriwether Lewis and William Clark strolled along the streets of Fincastle — during visits here on furloughs from the French and Indian wars; and William Clark, after his return from the Lewis and Clark Expedition, deposited his books and records of the expedition at Santillane, the home of his fiancee, Judith

In 1970, Botetourt and its county seat, Fincastle, were celebrated by three national publications in articles written by Frances McNulty Lewis. On Sunday, April 12, The New York Times Travel section ran an article titled, "Living With History In Spacious Fincastle." Antiques magazine used the heading, "Botetourt County, Virginia Begins Its Third Century," and Southern Living titled its article, "The First 200 Years of Fincastle." Both magazine articles were in the April issue and all three used pictures. Mrs. Lewis, the wife of J.M.B. Lewis Jr., was a member of the Society board and an accomplished writer of regional history.

Hancock, whom he married there shortly afterward. In this home, too, Patrick Henry visited his niece, Mrs. Henry Bowyer.

"... And along these same streets of Fincastle, General James Breckinridge carried from the post office to his own office the plans drawn by Thomas Jefferson for The County Court House."

Fincastle was far more than just a county seat in those days; it was virtually a sub-capital of Virginia. Through it went the new settlers moving west, for it was the last place where adequate supplies could be purchased before the plunge into the wilderness. Though the territory it administered was steadily diminished in the next half-century as new counties and whole new states were carved out of it, Joseph Martin's Gazeteer of Virginia in 1835 could still describe Fincastle as a "flourishing and wealthy village" with four churches, several schools, and numerous shops and industries.

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

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

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

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

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

Of great importance as a picture of community life is the record, found in many places, of the churches in Fincastle. Except for a few groups, the original members of each congregation — or their fathers — had come to this country with a memory of some sort of ostracism, even persecution. Yet as soon as religious freedom became law in the new Commonwealth of Virginia, and the various little flocks could build their own meeting houses undisturbed, it was nearly always stated that said meeting houses would be open for worship to all denominations. The largest dissenting body of pre-Revolutionary days, the Presbyterians, in 1814 took over the neglected Church of England edifice in Fincastle, after petitioning the Legislature for the right to do so, and making clear that other denominations could hold services there. When the Episcopal Church was reactivated in 1839, after great effort by the few who had clung to it, Presbyterians were on its first vestry.

Church steeples dot the terrain of Fincastle, as they have for more than two centuries.

One is tempted to dwell on the absorbing histories of these denominational groups. They included biographical eulogies of outstanding citizens, full of inspiration for us today, and many homely little family reminiscences of the brothers' and sisters' efforts to keep their churches going.

For twenty-seven years a Methodist minister, the Rev. R.J. Miller, looked after the Lutherans because they had no pastor. The Rev. Robert Logan, founder of several congregations and pastor of the Fincastle Presbyterians for thirty years, had to teach school to augment his pittance.

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

Perhaps nowhere in the country, certainly nowhere in Virginia, can a still-living microcosm such as Fincastle and its environs be found. In one hour of strolling its narrow streets a visitor can experience in imagination the life of pioneer days in the earliest West, of the Revolutionary War years, of the generation which struggled to produce a strong Republic, of industrial expansion when canals and then railroads were being built not far away — but not too close to change the character of this old Virginia town. Then he can see, and hear described, reminders of the War Between the States, and of the lean Reconstruction years, and of the all-too-brief period, when Fincastle was renowned as one of Virginia's most popular "Springs." 12

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

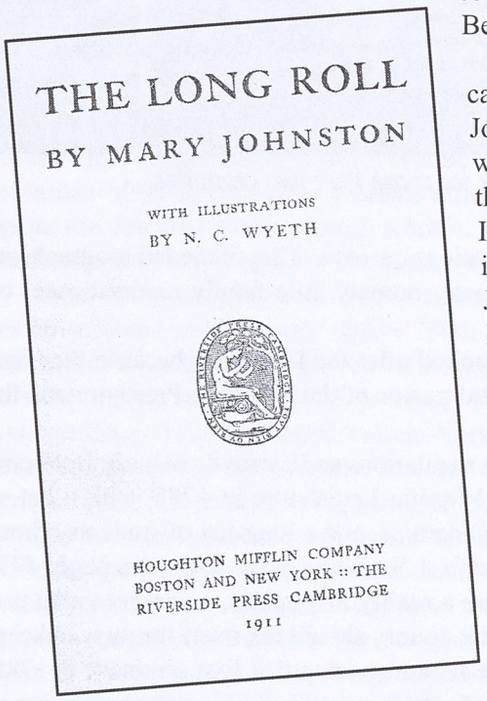
Mary Johnston, Writer of the Past

by George Kegley ❖ first printed in Vol. 6 No. 2 (1970)

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

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

Now seldom heard of, she wrote of the past at a time when romantic historical novels were in strong demand. Her first book, *Prisoners of Hope*, a novel on Colonial Virginia, was written in 1898, after she had started with poetry. This was followed by *To Have and To Hold*, a 17th century Virginia romance, which sold 60,000 copies before it was published. Two months later, a Birmingham, Ala., writer said of Miss Johnston, "There has not been so great a demand for the works of any author since the days of Harriet Beecher Stowe."


THE LONG ROLL

BY MARY JOHNSTON

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS
BY N. C. WYETH

HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY
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RIVERSIDE PRESS CAMBRIDGE
1911

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

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

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

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

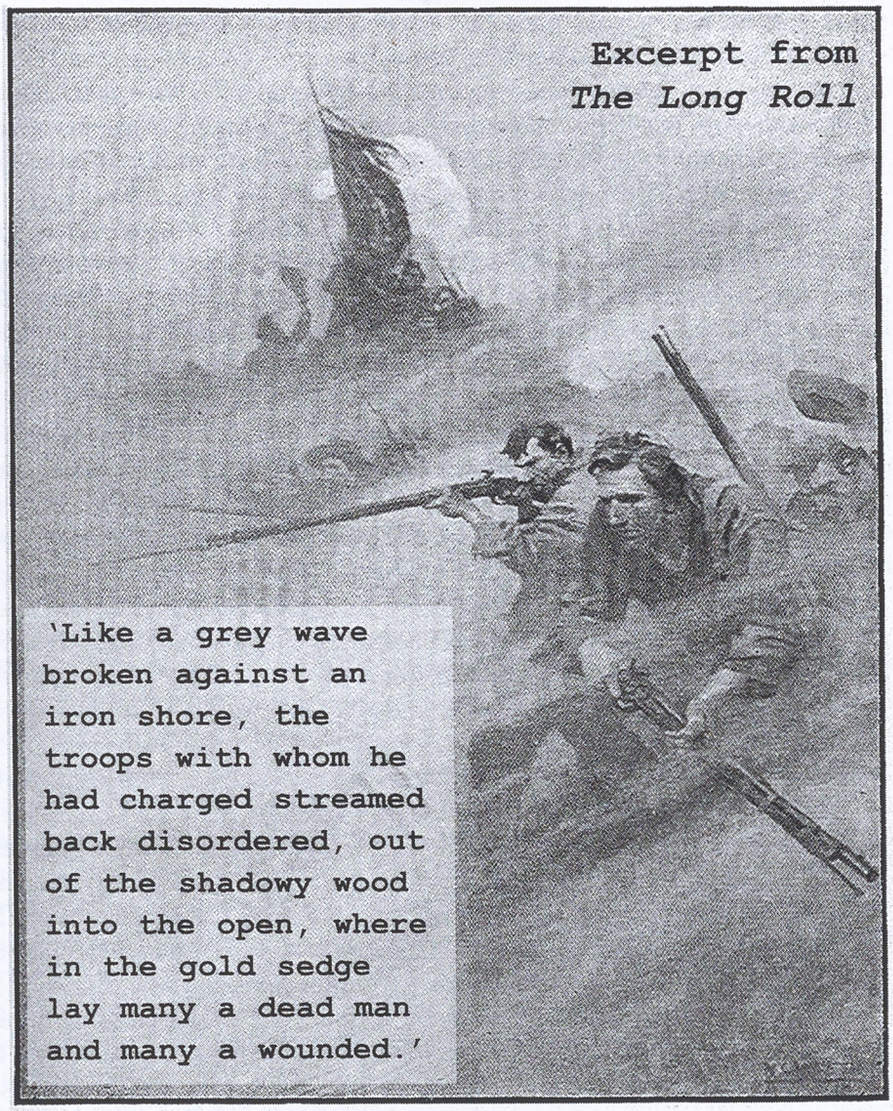
George Kegley, a longtime resident of Roanoke, is a director emeritus of the History Museum, and editor of the Journal since 1968.

room for new cars.

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

Frail as a child, Miss Johnston was educated by her grandmother, an aunt and governesses in a small white building on the west side of her father's home. Her only formal education was a brief stay at an Atlanta school. Although she was in Birmingham and New York from 1885 to 1902 when she returned with her family to Richmond, she spent most of her life in Virginia.

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



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

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

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

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

From her work on the Civil War period, she said, "I know war. I have lived with it, thinking of *The Long Roll*

and *Cease Firing* (her two war-time novels) for four long years. I have fought it with the generals and the colonels and the majors and the captains but mostly with the rank and file. I know the feel of it and the smell of it and the taste of it — and I hate it."

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

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

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

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

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

Her other works were *Audrey*, a 17th century Virginia romance; *Sir Mortimer*, an Elizabethan romance; *Lewis Rand*, a novel of Virginia in Jefferson's day; *Croatan*, a story of the lost colony of Roanoke Island; *1492*, a novel of Columbus' voyages; *The Great Valley*, a Shenandoah Valley novel; *Hagar*, a study of the feminist movement. Later books included *The Witch, The Fortunes of Garin, The Wanderers, Pioneers of the Old South, Foes, Michael Forth, The Slave Ship, Silver Cross, Sweet Rocket, The Exile, Hunting Shirt, Drury Randall* and *Miss Delicia Allen*, her last, published in 1932. She was interested in the mystical and occult in her later works.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Virginia's Neglected Soldiers

by Dr. James I. "Bud" Robertson Jr. ❖ first printed in Vol. 5 No. 1 (1968)

When war clouds obscured the sky in April, 1861, tens of thousands of Virginia's sons flocked to the defense of their state. Few of these men and boys were motivated by any desire to perpetuate either the institution of slavery or the doctrine of states' rights. They were going to war because "noble state pride and love of home" seemed to leave them no choice. Fauquier County's George Baylor echoed the sentiments of many future compatriots when he dramatically stated: "Now that the Old Dominion had taken her stand with her Southern sisters ... I felt it my duty to lay down the plow and the pruning hook and take up the sword and the battle-axe."

From every section of the state they came: hardy mountaineers from Virginia's western region, small-scale farmers from the rolling country of the Piedmont, fishermen and planters from the Tidewater's sandy flatlands. In all, perhaps as many as 100,000 Virginians served in the Confederate armies; and when the smoke drifted from the last battlefield of the Civil War, 14,974 of the Old Dominion's sons lay dead.

Wars change, but soldiers rarely do. While the Civil War was unquestionably history's most transitional conflict — in terms of both strategy and tactics — the men in the ranks of North and South remained for the most part semi-educated, simple, highly impressionable soldiers. No better proof of this exists than in the writings of the fighting men themselves, and no war ever produced a greater outpouring of letterwriting and diary-keeping than the conflict of the 1860s. "Johnny Rebs" and "Billy Yanks" were lonely men, with no diversions available to them in camp but to think of home and family, and to put such thoughts on paper. Moreover, in letters and diaries — and later in memoirs — the men could share with a loved one the experiences of army life.

Confederate soldiers from Virginia were certainly no exception in this penchant for writing. Nor was semi-literacy any deterrent to their correspondence. In June, 1862, a Pvt. W.W. Brown protested in a letter home: "Mother when you wright to me get somebody to wright that can wright a plain hand to read I Cold not read your letter to make sence of it it wrote so bad I have lurned to do my own wrading and writing and it is a grate help to me."

Virginians went to war with unbounded enthusiasm and optimism. Montgomery County's James H. Langhorne, a lieutenant in the 4th Virginia Infantry, wrote exuberantly during his first days as a soldier, "there is not a man in the Southern Army who does not in his heart believe that he can whip three Yankees, he would consider it beneath his manhood to count upon whipping a less number, in any sort of fight." A few months later, Capt. Charles M. Blackford of the 2nd Virginia Cavalry informed his wife: "I am well, and I think this kind of life agrees with me, though I have not taken on any flesh. I weigh the same as I did when I left home — one hundred and twenty-five pounds — but all there is of me is bone and muscle, very tough and very active."

In the first days of the war, recruits were often anxious to have friends back home join them in the ranks. A young soldier in what became the 27th Virginia Infantry sent a message to his sister in May, 1861: "Tell Sally I want her to talk to John F. Hall and tell him to be a man & come down here & help us fight the Yankeys & If he returns home that she will marry him without fail I think that will entice him to come."

All too quickly, however, the excitement of army life vanished. Loneliness and homesickness took its place. Shortly after the battle of First Manassas, a Rockbridge County soldier wrote home: "I am affraid My letter this time will Be devoid of Interest or News it will Be in a great Measure like the life we are leading dull & Monotonous in the Extreme if Robinson Crusoe Suffered for want of Society we are Suffering for want of News or communi-

Former executive director of the U.S. Civil War Centennial Commission, Dr. James Robertson is the executive director of the Virginia Center for Civil war studies at Virginia Tech in Blacksburg. He has written numerous books and articles on the Civil War period, and in 1962 he received the Harry S. Truman Award as the nation's outstanding Civil War historian This article is an expansion of an address delivered June 26, 1968, to the Roanoke Historical Society.

cation with the outer world..." In the following year, a Giles County artilleryman moaned in a letter to his aunt: "I would be (glad) to see my bitterest enemy if he was from Giles. In fact, I would be glad to see a dog from home."

Romantic communiques kept many soldiers occupied in writing for hours on end. A Virginia infantryman from the Lexington area once evaluated the letters he had been receiving from a number of feminine acquaintances. "Most of my lady correspondents deal too Much in the little trivial affairs of their own circle this may please the Small fish But wont do for Sharks or Soldiers, and vanity if Soldiers Life dont ease a Man of this Burden there is No hopes for him in this world."

On a more serious note, Lt. D.B. Baldwin, a Tazewell County member of the 23rd Virginia Battalion, wrote his wife Sallie: "I know I have read each of your letters half (a) dozen times. This might sound foolish to others, but to those who are linked together by ties so dear, and whose hearts beat for each other, only it is reality. ... I think of you a great deal. Not an hour nor scarcely a moment passes that you are not remembered. There is a place in my memory ever fresh with the recollections of the many pleasant hours enjoyed with each other. I hope God will spare us to meet again and live as happy as we once did."

Oliver Perry Rader, a Botetourt County foot soldier, died at the Battle of Five Forks, April 1, 1865.

Accentuating the homesickness, and ever-present to most Confederate soldiers, were the horrors of the civil war of which they were a part. Only those who have never participated in battle become excited by it. The average Virginia Confederate soldier looked on mortal combat with uncertainty, dread and revulsion. An Amherst County private observed after his first engagement: "the balls whistled round and about us as thick as hail. It made one feel quite strange to heare them whistle so close to my head not noing but one might strike me at any moment." Another member of the same regiment wrote a succinct summary of the three-day holocaust at Gettysburg: "It was the most awful Battle that I have ever Bin (in) yet." Lietuenant J.L. Doyle of the celebrated Stonewall Brigade vividly described the thick of the fighting in the bloody 1864 battle at Spotsylvania: "The figures of men seen dimly through the smoke and fog seemed almost gigantic, while the woods were lighted by the flashing of the guns and the sparkling of the musketry. The din was tremendous and increasing every instant, men in crowds with bleeding limbs and pale, pain-stricken faces were hurrying to the rear and, mingled with those, could be seen many unwounded who had escaped from the wreck of their commands."

Too often overlooked — by all but the soldiers themselves — was the carnage left on a battlefield. Private Robert Stiles of the Richmond Howitzers was among those assigned to help bury the dead at Gettysburg. Moving out onto the field with picks and shovels, Stiles wrote, "the sights and smells that assailed us were simply indescribable — corpses swollen to twice their original size, some of them actually burst asunder with the pressure of foul gases and vapors... The odors were nauseating and so deadly that in a short time we all sickened and were lying with our mouths close to the ground, most of us vomiting profusely."

Modern generations can hardly conceive the hardships that were the daily lot of Virginia's Confederate fighting men. After the first weeks of the long four-year struggle, the absence of the basic necessities of life was constant and paramount. Yet "Johnny Rebs" bore the adversities with incredible fortitude.

Following the strenuous campaign around Yorktown in the spring of 1862, Confederate Gen. John B. Magruder reported: "It rained almost incessantly; the trenches were filled with water; the weather was exceedingly cold; no fires could be allowed; the artillery of the enemy played upon our men almost continuously day and night; the army subsisted on flour and salt meat, and that in reduced quantities, and yet no murmurs were heard patriotism made them indifferent to suffering, disease, and death."

Five months later, after Robert E. Lee's army had returned to Virginia from the setback at Antietam Creek, Md., a Richmond newspaper editorialized: "Posterity will scarcely believe that the wonderful campaign which has just ended with its terrible marches and desperate battles, was made by men, one-fourth of whom were entirely barefooted, and one-half of whom were as ragged as scarecrows. We cease to wonder at the number of stragglers, when we hear how many among them were shoeless, with stone bruises on their feet."

Late in 1863, Gen. Lee concluded his official report of the Mine Run Campaign by stating: "Nothing prevented my continuing in (the enemy's) front but the destitute condition of the men, thousands of whom were barefooted, a great number partially shod, and nearly all without overcoats, blankets, or warm clothing. I think the sublimest sight of the war was the cheerfulness and alacrity exhibited in this army in the pursuit of the enemy under all the trials and privations to which it was exposed."

The loneliness and despair of army life naturally led to much complaining among Virginia soldiers. All of it was justified, and all of it was an age-old, natural expression by men in the ranks. While the soldiers continually found fault with officers, surgeons, chaplains, clothing, arms, equipment, few furloughs, filth, low pay, hard duty and alleged discrimination among units, their greatest condemnation was reserved for army rations.

Confederate soldiers, wrote Pvt. William Jones of the 19th Virginia Infantry, were "all ways grumling a bout somthing to eat." That the quantity of the rations was poor is evident in a March, 1864, letter from Jones to his wife. "I have bin living of nothing but Corn bread for 7 days," he stated, "and will not draw (more) for four days (to) Come and will not draw anny meet (during) the time ... I have felt quite week in the stomake."

That the quality of the rations issued was even poorer was substantiated by Jones, who wrote that a "pare Boile" cat "eat prisisily like a rabbit," and Pvt. John R. Stafford, who commented on the meat the men received: "i will tell you what the Boyes Say A Bout the Beef Hear they Say when they go to Kill them it takes 2 to Hold them by the Harno's to Steadey them till they Shoot them & then they Say they Eat the Meet & Make Ring's out of the Bones & combs out of the Homes & whip crackers out of the tales..."

Small wonder that Southern soldiers often resorted to theft to obtain digestible food. As a Virginia soldier parodied after the war: "Man that is born of a woman, and enlisteth in (Stonewall) Jackson's army, is of few days and short rations. He cometh forth at reveille, is present also at retreat, and retireth apparently at taps. When, lo! he striketh a beeline for the nearest hen-roost, from which he taketh sundry chickens, and stealthily returneth to his camp. He then maketh a savory dish therewith he feasteth himself and a chosen friend. But the Captain sleepeth, and knoweth not that his men are feasting."

The above quotations are but a sampling of how Virginians viewed life in the Confederate army. Yet a sampling is all that has so far come to light. The paucity of data available to scholars on the Old Dominion's soldiers and units is as lamentable as it is incredible. This woeful neglect can be illustrated in the writings done to date on the 65 regiments and 10 battalions of infantry that Virginia contributed to the Southern cause. For 26 of those units, nothing whatsoever exists in print; for 32 others, no more than two small items have been published. In short, 58 of 76 Virginia infantry units have, in the past century, received little or no attention on the part of historians and writers. The scarcity of source material on Virginia's artillery and cavalry components is even more glaring.

As a native of Danville and member of the VPI faculty since September, 1967, this writer is earnestly attempting to call overdue attention to the heroism and sacrifices of Virginia's soldiers of the 1860s. Our long-range project at VPI is to prepare histories (in the form of master's theses, graduate seminar papers, and scholarly articles) of every regiment, battalion and battery that represented the Old Dominion in the Civil War. Thirteen such studies are already underway, and all of the histories prepared may well serve as bases for a comprehensive study of Virginia's pivotal role in the sectional struggle.

Soldiers' letters, diaries and reminiscences are the most necessary sources for such histories. Only through them can the historian discern the movements of units, the intricacies of marches and battles, and — more especially — the feelings of men caught in war. For that reason, we are appealing to everyone with such letters, journals and similar works to loan them to us long enough to copy and digest. (Naturally, the Newman Library on the Blacksburg campus would be honored to become custodian for any Civil War manuscripts that persons might wish to deposit

permanently.)

To date, scores of persons in southwest Virginia have responded to our plea and loaned letters and diaries in their possession. Such materials are treated with utmost care and returned promptly. Yet there can be no doubt but that hundreds, possible thousands, of other Virginians now possess such documents. These citizens can perform no greater service for American history in general, and Virginia history in particular, than in searching for such writings of yesteryear and in making them available to us who need them so desperately. Without these personal accounts, our efforts to perpetuate the deeds of our forefathers will fail.

Speaking at Washington and Lee University in 1910, Capt. G.B. Strickler of the Stonewall Brigade expressed a dream. "Time will not suffice to tell in detail the story of the services bravely rendered, and sufferings cheerfully borne in battle, in bivouac, and upon the toilsome march — in summer's heat and dust, in winter's cold, mud and snow. That story must some day be written by some pen inspired by truth and love. When it shall be truly written it will be a story of which any ... land must be proud, for it will be a story of dauntless courage, of unselfish devotion to duty, of suffering endured without a murmur, and death encountered without a qualm." 18

Today, in the History Department at VPI, we are echoing Capt. Strickler's dream with words that grace a number of Civil War monuments in Virginia:

Lord God of Hosts be with us yet,
Lest we forget — lest we forget!

NOTES

1. James I. Robertson Jr., THE STONEWALL BRIGADE (Baton Rouge, 1963), 10.
2. Of that number of fatalities, 6,947 Virginians succumbed to sickness and disease. William F. Fox, REGIMENTAL LOSSES IN THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR, 1861-1865 (Albany, N.Y.), 554.
3. Bell I. Wiley, THE LIFE OF JOHNNY REB (Indianapolis, 1943), 207.
4. James H. Langhorne to mother, June 26, 1861, letter in the possession of David G. Langhorne Jr., Blacksburg, Va.
5. Charles M. Blackford, LETTERS FROM LEE'S ARMY (New York, 1947), 4849.
6. D.H. Fora to mother, May 25, 1861, letter in the writer's possession.
7. Unknown soldier to "Cousin," Aug. 9, 1861, letter in the writer's possession; John D. McClaugherty (comp.), THE HISTORY OF THE FAMILY McCLAUGHERTY (Dayton, O., n. d.), unpaged.
8. Unknown soldier to "Cousin," Aug. 9, 1861, letter in the writer's possession.
9. O.B. Baldwin to wife, June 13, 1862, letter in the possession of Mrs. D.W. Mason, Pearisburg, Va.
10. Joseph A. Higginbotham diary, entry of July 21, 1861, University of Virginia; William H. Jones to wife, July 13, 1863, W.H. Jones Papers, Duke University (cited hereafter as Jones Papers); J.L. Doyle diary, entry for May, 1864, Jed Hotchkiss Papers, Library of Congress.
11. Robert Stiles, FOUR YEARS UNDER MARSE ROBERT (New York, 1903), 219-20.
12. U. S. War Dept. (comp.), WAR OF THE REBELLION: A COMPILATION OF THE OFFICIAL RECORDS OF THE UNION AND CONFEDERATE ARMIES (Washington, 1880-1901), Ser. I, XI, pt. I, 408-9. Cited hereafter as OR.
13. Richmond DAILY DISPATCH, Oct. 9, 1862.
(?) M OR, Ser. I, XXIX, pt. 1, 408.
15. William H. Jones to wife. Mar. 29, 1864, Jones Pacers. is IBID.; John R. Stafford to George T. Stafford, Feb. 28, 1863, letter in the possession of A. Clifton Stafford, Roanoke, Va.
(?)
17. Royall W. Figg, WHERE MEN ONLY DARE TO GO (Richmond, 1885), 64. Lt. John N. Lyle of the 4th Virginia Infantry asserted that the experienced soldier could beg water, food and shelter in one sentence; "Madam, can I get a drink of water, I'm so hunqry 1 don't know where I'll sleep tonight." William G. Bean, THE LIBERTY HALL VOLUNTEERS (Charlottesville, 1964), 74.
18. IBID, vii.

Big Lick Home Front: 1861-65

by Mary S. Terry ❖ first printed in Vol. 3 No. 1 (1966)

My father and husband were Union men until after Lincoln's call for troops, then there was only one thing to do, and that was to go with the State. We were raised with slavery, and thought it right, but we were not fighting for our slaves, but for our rights as we thought, and every true hearted woman wanted her husband, her brothers, her lover, her friends to do their duty bravely. Filled with hope and courage, feeling our cause to be just and right, we never thought defeat possible, that a few months would decide the trouble in our favor. And after the great victory gained by the Confederates at the Battle of Manassas, we thought there was little more to do — but experience soon proved the reverse.

Our men were brave, there were none braver, but as time passed, the ranks of the volunteers were thinned by battle, sickness, and death. Their places must be filled by conscripts, the first call was from twenty to thirty years old, then to thirty-five, to forty, to forty-five and then to fifty. The older men were organized into Home Guards. I remember well when my father, Mr. Word, Mr. Ben Tinsly, Mr. Ferguson, Col. Tayloe and others from fifty upwards were hurried to Saltville to defend the Saltworks.

We were dependent upon our home productions for the necessities as well as the luxuries of life — I ought not to say luxuries, for those who did not pass through the war can have no idea how plainly we lived. Each person in a family was allowed 2 lbs. of salt a month, it required careful management to make it last at that rate the year round. If we carelessly or extravagantly used it, we had to do without, for our neighbors were as badly off as ourselves. The difficulty was, that salt had been so plentiful and cheap before the war that we could not make the servants realize the strict economy that was required. Our coffee soon gave out, or was hoarded for the very old, and the sick, and for special occasions. It seems almost impossible to realize now the different drinks we used; rye, wheat, chestnuts, sweet potatoes were all used in making coffee. Chestnuts and sweet potatoes, parboiled and baked, made a preparation somewhat like chocolate, but as these were obtainable only a certain portion of the year, we were compelled to use rye and wheat chiefly. The wheat and rye were prepared by first washing carefully, then scalding in boiling water, after which it was thoroughly dried and then parched like coffee. It was a healthful drink, very much like the Postum Cereal of later years. We used herb and root teas, camomile, boneset, balm, sage, raspberry leaf, sassafras, etc., but all these being known for their medicinal qualities savored too much of medicine to be popular as a drink for the table; they were invaluable in their proper place.

We had difficulty in obtaining wheat and rye at all times, so we cultivated temperance principles, and appreciated pure, fresh water as a healthful and convenient table beverage. As time passed we could get only heavy, brown sugar used before the war for plantation and factory hands, and in curing hams and corning beef. At one time I was entirely without sugar, and company in the house, I couldn't buy any, I was afraid to borrow, and consequently was doing without. One of my neighbors learning of my destitution said she would ask her husband to let me have fifty pounds if I would not tell. Her husband was a tobacco manufacturer and had some barrels of sugar stored for that purpose, and she knew of it; were it known that I had bought sugar from him it would be almost impossible to keep any on hand for manufacturing purposes. I paid fifty cents a pound and was so thankful to get it. We used it only for tea and coffee, but while we could not afford sugar for cooking purposes, we were not without sweet desserts. Sorghum was raised in great quantities and used in a variety of ways, in cakes, custards, pies, puddings, sauces, sweet pickles, and as a syrup for the table. In fact there was a kind of rivalry among housekeepers as to who could

Born Mary Susan Trout in December 1839, the author had been married for less than four years to Peyton Leftwich Terry when war broke out in 1861. They lived at "Elmwood," then a country estate a mile from the village of Big Lick, now Elmwood Park in downtown Roanoke. She wrote this narrative in 1894 and lived through many more "wonderful changes" until her death in May 1910. It has never been printed before in its entirety. Two of Mrs. Terry's grandchildren were members of the Society: Mrs. Dirk A. Kuyk and Edmund P. Goodwin.

make the best and greatest variety of good things from sorghum.

What we had, we had to do with, for while the supplies were limited, the money with soldiers' families was still more limited. My oldest daughter says she remembers Mama always had a nice print of butter on the table, but the rule was "you must not eat butter" unless we had an extra print. We had to keep prepared for company, and anyone dropping in unexpectedly at lunch time would not have known the circumstances, besides we had a greater feeling of comfort and respectability when we could see a sufficiency.

The most discouraging time I experienced was the Christmas before the surrender, we felt our cause was well nigh hopeless, we were discouraged, despondent, heartsick, almost destitute of clothing and provisions. For our Christmas dinner we had sorghum cakes, pumpkin custards made with sorghum, without eggs and a small piece of spare rib. I had filled my two little children's stockings and small chairs with apples, walnuts, hickory nuts, sweet potatoes and sorghum candy. I did what I could to make them happy, for I dreaded what another Christmas might bring forth. Let no one think we complained of our deprivations, it was the growing conviction of the helplessness of our cause that was destroying our courage. Until the last months we gladly and hopefully endured hardships, we were cheerful and hospitable, always welcoming our guests to our table with its scanty fare, feeling that they knew we were giving our best. The social gatherings were called "starvation parties" and were apparently much enjoyed, taffy pullings were quite common. The refreshments would be walnuts, hickory nuts, apples, cider, sorghum cakes, taffy and often sweet potatoes and Irish potatoes roasted. To have had all these at one time would have been inexcusable extravagance, what I have named would have been sufficient variety for at least three times. At one of the largest parties around here the refreshments were sweet and Irish potatoes roasted, served with butter and with cider and milk for a beverage. When my brother was home on furlough, I had some friends in one evening to be with him, and for refreshments we had brown sugar and sorghum cakes, blackberry wine and apples, another evening he and a cousin made cream out of snow, sorghum, and rich cream and all thought it delicious.

The women of the South were heroic, self-denying, never a murmur from those whose hearts were in the cause. We had only the usual amount of clothing at the beginning of the war, we never thought of purchasing for the future, for we expected the war to last only a short while. Our bedding we divided with the hospitals in the beginning of the war, sheets were needed, not only for the beds of the sick and wounded, but for bandages for the wounded; so not only our clothes, but our bedding, our table linen, our china and kitchen utensils all became very scarce. For table linen we sewed two widths of Osnaburg cotton together, fringed the ends (to take away the sheet-like look). But for ourselves and families the question was no longer "what to wear and how to make it," but "what can we get and how shall we pay for it."

But necessity has always been the mother of invention, and in this case the results were wonderful. The sheep were sheared, the wool washed, carded, spun, and dyed, and raw cotton bought by the bale, carded, spun and woven into beautiful cotton and linsy. This was all done in the homes — the factories were engaged in making clothes and blankets for the soldiers. They could not furnish a sufficient quantity, for we had few factories in the South, and as the machinery wore out we could not replace it. My stepmother excelled in making cloth, and kindly supplied my small family. We used red oak bark, cedar tops, sumac, walnut hulls and everything we could gather for coloring matter. I regret so much I did not save samples of our home productions to show my children and grandchildren. We had to exercise a good deal of ingenuity to keep supplied with buttons, it was impossible to buy them, so we used hard scraps of leather, pasteboard, and gourds cut into the right sizes and covered with the material of the dresses. Needles and pins were very precious and we could not get hooks and eyes. We knit woolen stockings in solid colors, stripes and checks, and stockings of fine spun cotton in railroad, shell and fence rail patterns. The railroad stockings were knit with a long, narrow leg, and when sufficiently long, every other stitch was dropped and raveled out. The stocking was perfectly straight and easily adjusted to the foot. I suppose they were named because of the speed with which they were made. We had great difficulty in keeping supplied with shoes. My children and all of my friends' children went barefooted in the summer, their winter shoes were made of natural colored leather by the colored shoemakers on the farms, we used leather strings and were very thankful to be able to protect the feet. We had so few tanneries south, and the government took charge of what we had; the soldiers must have shoes if possible to obtain them.

I was almost barefooted one summer, Mr. Dillon (a white shoemaker) had made me promise after promise to make my shoes "next week," and after patiently and persistently going each week, would be told that he had no leather, but would be sure to get some the "next week." I had to walk a mile each time I went, and went each time

with a hopeless feeling, but I could not afford to let him alone. I was in despair, for winter was coming on and I must have shoes. At last he made a pair for a lady who wore number sixes, and made them too small. He told me if I could wear them to take them, at that time I wore fours, but I took them thankfully and used them until they wore out. They were a comfort in one sense, and a terrible mortification in another, for our homewoven dresses would shrink when laundered and the shoes could not be concealed.

I have told you about the difficulty of covering our feet, now I will tell you how we managed to cover our heads. We plaited wheat and rye straw, and sewed the braids into hats of different styles and shapes according to the taste and skill of the maker. They were dyed brown, drab or black, pressed into shape and varnished. We always managed to get some kind of material for trimming, when ribbons failed we used old silk skirts for bands, bindings and rosettes, and friends would always divide their little store with each other. The prettiest hats were made of white shucks, cut into narrow strips and braided, then sewed into shape. My little girls had beautiful hats made by Miss Sowers. A cousin of mine married during the war had her bridal hat made of white shucks and trimmed with horsehair flowers. Mrs. London made the hat and trimmed it. For the wreath of flowers she obtained long hairs from the tails of different colored horses, and for white used the long fluffy hair of her little dog's tail.

Mary Trout Terry

The war was a necessity, for legislation could never have settled the sectional differences so effectually as has been done.

Oh! how glad we were to get "store clothes" once more, and especially "store shoes." They were so comfortable, and looked so pretty and neat that I no longer had a desire to hide my feet. With our rough shoes we did not even have blacking, except a poor substitute made of elderberries, lampblack and brown sugar which we used sparingly for fear of injuring the leather. We had to use tallow with lard to soften the leather as well as to keep down the rusty look. Long cloaks called Beauregardes were another fashion improvised by necessity. We wore them in summer made of light material, I had one made of black silk from one of my wedding silks for summer wear.

I remember well a bride who wanted to make a Beauregarde of black silk, she asked the dressmaker to lend her pattern, which she very kindly did, but newspapers being scarce, the pattern was fully three feet shorter than it should have been. She neglected to tell her to lengthen it, thinking as a matter of course she would do so. She said to me, "Just imagine my surprise and dismay when I saw the bride at church with a short black silk sack instead of a long Beauregarde."

The Yankees made a raid through here about the middle of the war, burned the depot and carried off all the silver, firearms, horses and cattle they could find, killing some of the hogs that were too fat to drive. I remained at home that night with only my two small children and two young servants, I was afraid to undress, but we passed safely through the night, no one came to the house. The next morning my little daughter saw them at a neighbor's on the opposite hill. I told her to look at the Yankees, she said, "Are they Yankees, why they look like men." This reminds me of a colored boy of my father's, the servants found four Yankees hiding in an outhouse in extremely cold weather. My father made them come in the house and sit by the fire until they were comfortable, then gave them a good meal. While they were in the room the boy came in to bring wood, my father told the boy, "These are Yankees"; he stared at them in open-mouthed astonishment, then said, "I didn't know Yankees looked like folks, I alius thought they looked more like cows." Another time a detachment of Yankees came galloping by my house to stop a train of provisions, without halting they broke down two plank fences with their guns, and reached the depot just as the train was passing from sight. We felt so thankful they failed to reach the train, for our soldiers were fed

with great difficulty, and those full cars would have furnished many nations, we knew too that the flour and meat had been taken from homes that could ill spare them.

Mr. Ferguson, who owned a large tobacco factory on the way, made the servants roll out two barrels of brandy, knock the heads out and let the brandy waste. He was afraid that after their failure at the depot, on their return they might search the factory, find the brandy and get drunk and do a great deal of damage. It hurt the factory hands so much to see the good brandy wasting on the ground. I remember seeing old Uncle Jordon (one of Mr. Ferguson's slaves) trying to get some, but it poured too fast. They went to Mr. Ferguson's smokehouse and carried off nearly all of his meat. His wife sent the old colored woman to beg for some, she said to them, "What you reckon me and my chilluns going to eat if you take all dat meat, whar we going to git more from, no more meat around." They laughed at her, but left part of it. Another neighbor packed hers in ash barrels leaving one piece in the house. When they searched her house they asked if that piece was all she had, she said, "Yes, except what is packed in ashes." Her husband used to laugh at her about losing it "because she could not tell a lie."

We laughed so much at Mrs. Mitchell, who was very brave until the trial came. She boasted that she was not afraid of the Yankees, that she would tell them plainly what she thought of them, but when they came and one of the officers galloped up to the house where she was boarding, she went out to meet him, answered his questions very politely, ending by asking him, "Won't you have something more, Won't you have some water?" He replied "No, I thank you, the branch is out here." My stepmother said she would not be afraid of them (we had heard such dreadful reports of the way the soldiers treated the women), but when they galloped into the barn lot and with their guns broke the slats of the corn crib to let the corn run out on the ground for their horses, she went to bed sick with the silver concealed in the bed under her. There was no pretense about her sickness, excitement and anxiety had really made her sick.

I had some pieces of old silver from my husband's grandfather, and a dozen table spoons that had been made out of a silver sword presented to Capt. Granville Leftwich, U.S.A. (my husband's uncle) for an act of special bravery in the Seminole War, I was very anxious to save them and put them and a revolver up the chimney. My little daughter saw me, and kept me very anxious by continually asserting, "I won't tell the Yankees where Mama hid her silver spoons." I put what little bacon I had under the mattress of my bed and slept on it several nights.

But all our hardships were as nothing compared to the terrible suspense and anxiety we endured when we know that battles were raging, the feeling that our dear ones might then be lying dead or seriously wounded on the battlefield; the two most trying times of suspense were the battle of Gettysburg and the seven days fighting around Richmond. I hope the severe experience of our late war will protect us from another Civil War. I am thankful that we are an almost isolated people, we have but two close neighbors, Canada and Mexico, and I feel sure that Great Britain after her experience of 1776 and 1812 will be content with our present friendly relations.

Another trial that I omitted mentioning was the difficulty of getting medical attention, our physicians were needed in the army, and in the hospitals, so that the number at home was very limited and they had great difficulty in obtaining medicine. There was a good deal of fever one summer, I was aching terribly and felt very much depressed. I was young and inexperienced, with two small children and two young servants, I know I could not get the proper attention necessary for recovering from fever. A kind neighbor with a good deal of experience in sickness came to see me, she inquired into the matter. I told her I felt sure I was taking typhoid fever, she said she thought I was very bilious and needed blue-mass, that she would send me some and if I would take two pills I would be relieved. She sent me a piece about the size of a partridge egg, I made it into two pills and took them. I was so sick I thought the fever was developing rapidly and sent for Mrs. Ferguson (who had given me the blue-mass); she asked me how much I had taken, I told her all of it, she said, "No wonder you are sick, but I think you will be better soon." She was right and I have had a great respect for heroic treatment ever since, as well as a great respect for blue-mass.

We used boneset, sage camomile, saffron, and sassafras as medical teas, and tansy, sassaparilla and May apple roots, wild cucumber and wild cherry bark were made into bitters, elecampane and mullein were made into syrups for coughs, also rich pine knots soaked in whiskey for the same. Bruised comfrey was used to dress wounds, sprains, dog bites, etc. Teas made from watermelon and pumpkin seed, from parsley roots had their special values. We could always get turpentine for plasters, and spirits of turpentine were used for different purposes. We raised our own mustard seed for plasters, and hops for poultices.

Another trouble we had was the want of light to work by at night, for we southern women were certainly not

idlers during the war. We could get no sperm or wax candles, electric lights were unheard of, our village was too small for gas works. Tallow was difficult to get for making candles, so we had to depend chiefly upon pine knots and wax tapers. We would economize time and light by knitting by firelight in the winter evenings, often several friends would meet together and pass the evening together knitting as rapidly as possible.

We not only had our own families and servants to knit for, but our soldiers had to be provided also. We knit not only socks, but gloves and wristlets in numbers. We made a wax taper that was really a work of ingenuity, we first melted equal quantities of rosin and beeswax in a skillet, then taking a piece of candlewick several yards long would pass it slowly through the melted wax, one person with a short forked stick would hold it down in the melted wax, while two others would slowly draw it back and forth until it was the right thickness. It was pliable enough to wrap around a high candlestick, yet stiff enough to stand upright as it was burned.

My husband and only brother went as volunteers in the first company that left our county. My father was a man of means, had only two children, and he not only willingly consented but wanted both son and son-in-law to do their duty (as he expressed it). It was Henry's second session at Roanoke College, he left college in April and the first of May left home as a soldier, he was only nineteen. They belonged to Co. 1, 28th Virginia Regiment, Philip St. George Cocke's Brigade, Pickett's Division. Their first officers were Capt. Mat. Deyerle, Maj. William Watts, Lieut. Col. Robert Allen, Col. Robert Preston, Brig. Gen. Philip St. George Cocke, Maj. Gen. Pickett. Dr. Edward Rives was surgeon, and Rev. Peter Tinsly, Chaplain. Rev. Peter Tinsly was known as the fighting parson, was always in the midst of the battles to care for the wounded. My father said he didn't believe in substitutes, that soldiers who fought for money would not fight as those who fought from principle. But many of our substitutes were brave men and true patriots, men who wanted to help their country, but being poor needed the substitute money for their families.

Mr. Terry and Henry served the four years, Henry never missed a battle in which Pickett's Division was engaged, was slightly wounded at the battles of Gettysburg and Malvern Hill, had one spell of typhoid fever while his command was in winter quarters. After he was taken ill, he was brought home. Both were taken prisoners April 6, at Sailor's Creek, three days before the surrender. Henry was confined at Fort Johnson, Lake Erie, my husband at Point Lookout, Md. As the prisoners were released alphabetically, they were detained some time. Mr. Terry came home the 20th of June, but had stopped ten days with a friend in Baltimore to gain strength for the trip home. He had been very ill in prison, and as the soldiers were brought home, packed and jammed together in box cars, on open flats, etc. he knew he would not be able to bear the trip home.

I must speak words of praise for the slaves of the South during the war. They have a noble record for faithful service, while the husbands and fathers were in the army their families were entrusted to the care of the servants, often on country farms there would be no white person, except the mother and small children. It is no wonder that Southerners have a tender regard for the colored people that our Northern neighbors cannot understand. When the surrender had taken place and their emancipation proclaimed they hardly knew what to do, they could not well realize their freedom without changing homes.

Two colored blacksmiths had been hired by their master to Mr. Raines who had a blacksmith shop, they quit work and as it was impossible for the farmers to make good crops without them, their former master wrote to the Yankees who were in authority in Lynchburg for power to enable him to fill his contract with Mr. Raines. They sent thirty men here to spend the summer, and their first act was to tie these men up by their thumbs, this struck the others with terror, so that there was little difficulty about making the crops. The Yankees decided the ex-slaves must fill the contracts made by their masters at the beginning of the year, and that they should have the wages for which they had been hired. In looking back I feel a great sympathy for them, and can well understand their restlessness, for we had no money to pay wages, or buy clothes until after the wheat crop was made. It was difficult for them to realize they were free, living in the same homes, without wages, scarce of clothing, often their families scattered, some living one place, some in other places. When the time for payment came it was difficult to settle the wages, they had been hired for Confederate money, and although this was well nigh valueless the last year of the Confederacy, yet it had a big sound and the greenbacks, gold or silver in which their wages must be paid seemed so little in proportion to the number of dollars for which they had been hired.

Money was so difficult to obtain, there was nothing to sell, and everything to buy, the cattle and hogs had been killed to feed the soldiers, the horses had been taken for the army, wearing apparel, bed and table linen almost worn out, table-ware broken, kitchen utensils worn and broken, all farming implements in the last stages of usefulness;

it was more trying financially the year of the surrender than during the war.

One of the Yankees came to my house to trade coffee, candles and laundry soap for milk and vegetables. At that time I didn't feel that it was right to have any dealings with them, but I was desperately in need of U.S. postage stamps, I could not write to my husband or brother in prison without them. I told him I would give him anything to eat I had if he would get me some stamps, he said he had stamps, but no paper, so we exchanged. He seemed a nice, kind man, but I couldn't bear to have him in my house, I felt like a traitor making friends with the enemy while my dear ones were still in prison. I have often felt when thinking over the terrible ordeal through which we passed, that I could not bear a like experience, but I know when our greatest trials come we are mercifully strengthened to bear them, but war is dreadful, especially Civil War, where all the suffering falls on one people.

When passing through trying experiences of the war we never thought it possible if defeat should come, that we would live to thank God for it; yet it is so. The South rejoices today over the downfall of the Confederacy, and realizes that our defeat was not only a national blessing, but a special blessing to the South. The war was a necessity, for legislation could never have settled the sectional differences so effectually as has been done, and I do feel that the lives of our soldiers were sacrificed in vain. Each true hearted soldier slain in our war fills a patriot's grave, and his memory deserves a grateful and loyal tribute from all Southerners. The greatest blessing to us was the abolishment of slavery, we were raised believing the institution right, we thought it sanctioned by Divine law, as well as by the laws of our State, and that the sad things resulting from it were great misfortunes, and not the necesssary results of the institution.

Time was required for our old prejudices to pass away, but sectional differences are now unknown. Northern capital has developed our resources, and many northern people (among them real Yankees) are among our most intimate friends, and marriages frequently taking place between the extremes of the Union. One thing we are proud of is that we were overpowered by our own people, no foreign enemy has ever been able to gain a victory over us. Our war was a family affair and settled among ourselves, we required no foreign arbitration to bring us to terms.

I was born December 1839, and feel that I have lived through an eventful age. Among my first recollections of national events was the Mexican War, the first hairless dog and horned frog I ever saw were brought by the returning soldiers. I delighted in listening to their descriptions of the country and battles, and was familiar as a child with the details of the battles. I remember the excitement caused by the discovery of gold in California, and have heard many wonderful experiences from the Forty-Niners. I read and heard discussed the political arguments on the slavery question, becoming more bitter as each new state or territory was admitted into the Union, and saw the bitterness and strife increase between the contending until the Civil War was the result, the war ending with our defeat, our surrender and the emancipation of the slaves.

I have seen suffrage given to the freedmen, and public schools established for white and colored children alike in the South, and I have seen former slaves elected to the state legislature and to Congress, my father and brother serving in the state legislature with them. I have seen railroads made through our state and cities and towns spring up as if by magic. I remember when there were only three houses where the city of Roanoke now is. My own country home with its yard and garden is now a city residence, and forms a square of eight acres in the central part of the city. I had always felt I would not willingly live in the city, but the city came to us and enclosed us in its circumference and now I would not willingly go to the country again.

I was in New York very soon after the Elevated Railroad began running, and I saw there the first public exhibition of electric lights; two immense globes were in front of St. Patrick's Cathedral in which a large festival was being carried on every evening. In our state I have seen cellars of the earth opened and rich stores of coal brought forth by the quantity, and kerosene brought from the storehouses of the earth to make our light. I have seen the sewing machine, the telephone, the typewriter, the phonograph, the cigarette, all made and patented. I have seen the mowers, cradles, binders and rakers all turned into machinery; my father purchased the first mower and reaper that were brought to Roanoke County. I have seen the six horsepower threshing machine turned into steam threshers that measure and bag wheat and stack the straw. I have seen ice cream frozen by steam and butter churned by steam, and artificial ice made. I have seen chickens hatched by artificial heat, and hovered by artificial mothers.

Truly, the fifty-four years of my life have been the time of wonderful changes in my country and if six more years be added to my life, I shall see the close of the nineteenth century, and the beginning of the twentieth.

Peyton Terry: Roanoke's First Millionaire

by Betty Low ❖ first printed in Vol. 14 No. 2 (2001)

When Roanoke was chartered in 1882, Peyton Leftwich Terry was recognized as the wealthiest man in town. Terry was born in Campbell County on February 2, 1835, the son of Stephen and Lucinda Leftwich Terry. From a family of successful merchants, he was educated in Appomattox County. He came to Big Lick Depot at the age of 16 in 1851 and worked in a mercantile business.

Big Lick Depot was little more than a cluster of 10 to 12 buildings around the Trout House, an old stagecoach stop owned by George Trout, located at the present site of the Crystal Tower Building (formerly Ponce de Leon Hotel). Trout willed the business to his son, John Trout, who enlarged the house and ran it for the convenience of passengers of the Virginia-Tennessee Railroad, who stopped at the depot across the tracks. A spring and a creek were in the yard of the house.

John Trout owned all of the land from present Shaffers Crossing to the East End Shops, north to Orange Avenue and south to Franklin Road and Tazewell Avenue. Benjamin Tinsley owned the land south of the Trout property to the top of Mill Mountain, joining the McClanahans, who owned the mill, Crystal Spring and the land south of Roanoke River. George Tayloe was Tinsley's neighbor to the east.

Terry worked in Big Lick four years before moving to Texas briefly. His short time there would prove beneficial in the future. When he returned to Big Lick, he married Mary Shaver Trout, daughter of John and Eliza Shaver Trout, owners of the Trout House. He resumed his career as a merchant at a store on the northeast corner of Commerce (now Second Street S.W.), and the railroad.

Peyton and Mary Trout Terry would become the parents of five daughters: Lila; Alice P., who married Samuel W. Jamison; Martha L. who married Thompson W. Goodwin; Annie B., who died June 14, 1883, and Lucinda.

When the Civil War began, Peyton Terry was one of the first from Big Lick to enlist. He joined the Roanoke Greys, the company of Capt. Madison Deyerle, Jackson's Division, Second Corps. They fought at Cold Harbor, Antietam, Gettysburg and Five Forks. Terry was never wounded in his four years of service but Capt. Deyerle was killed in 1862. However, the whole company was captured three days before Gen. Robert E. Lee surrendered at Appomattox. They were sent to Point Lookout, Md., for six weeks.

Returning home, Terry resumed his career as a respected businessman. He adhered to Gen. Lee's philosophy and quickly became a community leader in reconstruction. In an account of the Big Lick home front during the war, Mrs. Terry related that Union Gen. David Hunter burned the Big Lick Depot and searched some homes, missing theirs, although it was near the depot. Mrs. Terry reported that she slept, fully clothed, with only her two babies and two young servants in the house. She had hidden the last of their bacon under her mattress and the family silver and Leftwich sword were hidden in the chimney.

In 1868, Benjamin Tinsley sold his house and land to Peyton Terry and the Terry family moved to the house, known as Elmwood, located at a site on the hill in the park east of the present Main Library. His land extended from Franklin Road east to the Tayloe property in present Southeast Roanoke and to the top of Mill Mountain. A lane passed through the property, leading to Crystal Spring and the mill. Terry paid less than $20,000 for this land.

By 1874, the small community of Big Lick had a new, brick depot and a jail. Application for incorporation as a town of one square mile was sought and approved by the state. A survey included all land one-half mile from the depot in all directions, except for Jane Lewis's land. The new town was named Big Lick and the street in front of Terry's store became Commerce Street, running from the railroad south to Franklin Road. The town included

Betty Low, a long time volunteer in the History Museum library, prepared this paper for a meeting of the Wednesday History Club on Jan. 15, 1997.

Gainsboro on the north, where most of the houses were sold or rented to freed blacks.

John Trout was elected mayor of Big Lick and Terry was a town councilman. Terry and his wife's brother, Henry Trout, bought 96 acres of land from John Trout, northwest of Big Lick, and they opened a stockyard there. They raised and shipped cattle. Terry was considered an expert cattleman.

Seven years after the town of Big Lick was incorporated, the community learned that the Shenandoah Valley Railroad was looking for a terminal location in the Big Lick area. John Moomaw, a Cloverdale orchardist, recognized the advantage of a north-south rail line for shipping apples to northern markets. Terry, Henry Trout and others became interested and called a meeting to plan strategy to get the terminal in Big Lick at a point connected to the east-west Norfolk and Western Railroad.

The coming of the Shenandoah Valley Railroad led to the growth of the town to a "Magic City" and helped establishTerry's status as the wealthiest man in Roanoke. The Roanoke Land & Improvement Co., organized by the railroad, began buying land and building houses. The company paid Terry $125,000 for his 650-acre farm, leaving him 6.5 acres around his home, Elmwood. Terry was the only Roanoker asked to serve on the board of the development firm. Woodland Park, the eastern portion of the Terry farm, was developed for about 100 houses for railroad employees and the Terry Orchard, later known as Orchard Hill or Officials Hill, was made available for railroad officials. The company decided on the hilltop location for Hotel Roanoke and a site below for the passenger station. Roanoke Land & Improvement bought the McClanahan land, near the foot of Mill Mountain, including Crystal Spring and mill. Water was pumped to a tank in Woodland Park.

Peyton Leftwich Terry

Terry, with the wealth from the sale of his land, became the principal officer in the new Roanoke Gas Company and later he had the same role in the electric company, water company, the Winston-Salem rail line and a Salem- Vinton rail line. When Roanoke's population reached 5,000, the town asked for and received a state charter to gain city status in 1884.

Terry and Henry Trout, his brother-in-law, were members of St. Mark's Lutheran Church. When a new church was proposed at a cost of $9,000 in 1882, they saw that the money was in place quickly. Terry gave a stained glass window in memory of his daughter, Ann, who had died recently, and Trout gave a window in memory of his father, John. The church was replaced in the 1890s at the same location, Church Avenue and Commerce (present Second) Street. The Lutherans, facing financial problems, traded church buildings with Greene Memorial Methodist, then located in a red, brick church at Campbell Avenue and Roanoke (now Third) Street. Mrs. Terry and Mrs. Trout gave land for the City Cemetery on Tazewell Avenue.

Terry sold his store on Commerce Street to C.R. Wertz and went into the wholesale business. On Jan. 5, 1885, Walter Huff who occupied a room over the Terry store, was undressed, preparing for a bath, when his oil lamp exploded, starting a fire which spread so rapidly he was fortunate to escape with an unscorched hide. Most of the store's merchandise was cigars and manufactured tobacco which bystanders moved and then helped themselves to so liberally that sermons on the incident were preached the following Sunday. The city, seeing the necessity for fire protection, soon acquired a steam pump.

Terry and his son-in-law, S.W. Jamison, husband of Alice Terry, founded Roanoke Trust, Loan and Safe Deposit

Company with powers of unusual latitude in the 1880s. The company enjoyed such prosperity (at least on paper) that it soon sought proper quarters befitting its dignity. On Sept. 26, 1890, announcement was made that a veritable skycraper, seven stories in height, would be erected on the southeast comer of Campbell Avenue and Jefferson Street, housing three banks, each with a separate entrance. Two hydraulic elevators and offices were located above. (The new Ponce de Leon Hotel, near completion, had only six stories). First National Bank had an entrance on Campbell Avenue, Roanoke Trust on the curved comer of Campbell and Jefferson and the entrance from Jefferson led to a lobby and elevators. Some tenants eagerly moved in before the brown brick and stone building was completed.

For years, the Terry Building (no other name was ever suggested) was the point of reference when giving directions to other parts of the city. Activity in Roanoke was beyond description in 1890. The Academy of Music on Salem Avenue and Rockledge Inn on top of Mill Mountain were started. In April, a tornado went through the town, causing $20,000 damage and killing two people. In the summer, the water line from Crystal Spring broke and many Roanokers had to carry water from cisterns.

On Dec. 16, a light snow began to fall. First Baptist Church members were meeting to decide whether certain members should form a new church. Having decided, they created Calvary Baptist. But members had difficulty getting home from the meeting. At Elmwood that evening, the Terrys held a grand reception attended by most of Roanoke's society. When the party ended, the snow was so deep that many guests spent the night at a nearby hotel.

At 2 o'clock in the morning, the whistle from the Machine Works began to blow a distress signal. Under the weight of two feet of snow, the roof of the blacksmith shop collapsed and started a brief fire. By morning, three feet of snow had fallen and flimsy buildings collapsed all over Roanoke. Efforts to dig out were hampered by an additional eight inches on Christmas Eve. This memorable snow seemed to end the boom that had sustained Roanoke for a decade. That same year, the Shenandoah Valley Railroad, in receivership, was auctioned to the Norfolk and Western.

Peyton Terry with three daughters: (from left) Martha, Lila and Lucinda, around 1887. (Photo courtesy of Martha Hull)

The boom only slowed because building continued in 1891 on the Terry Building, the Academy of Music and Rockledge Inn on Mill Mountain. The Terry family and young John Trout went to Europe. While they were away, a stone and chain wall was built around Elmwood, with an iron carriage gate bearing the name ELMWOOD above. A spring behind the home was enclosed to form a small lake.

The year 1892 saw excitement in the city. Terry's Winston-Salem rail line was completed and opened for traffic. With the Academy of Music, Rockledge Inn and the now famous Terry Building completed, the city had cause to celebrate its 10th anniversary, the Decennial. On June 16, the day selected, several thousand people came to hear a 200-voice chorus, the Machine Shop orchestra and speeches. The next day, a parade featured the Machine Shop marching band, VMI cadets, Civil War veterans and many floats. The units gathered at Elmwood and serenaded

The Terry Building, corner of Jefferson Street and Campbell Avenue, site of the 1926 Colonial Arms Building which would become the present-day 204 Jefferson.

Mr. and Mrs.Terry before the parade began. One report said there were 40,000 people along the parade route.

In 1893, the whole country was hit by a terrible recession. People began to default on loans and the banks' only recourse was to take near-worthless property. On June 15, 1896, the Roanoke Trust, Loan and Safe Deposit Company, Terry's bank, did not open its doors for business. Terry met with S.W. Jamison, his son-in-law, and other officers of the bank behind closed doors in his office. When they emerged, Lucian Cocke, trustee, announced that the bank was bankrupt. Creditors hoped to collect 5 cents on the dollar but there were no assets. At a hearing, it was decided that the bank officials were guilty of nothing more than bad judgment.

Jamison, worth $100,000, and Terry, worth $645,000, made an effort to repay every creditor. The editor of the newspaper wrote a letter of encouragement and the community stood together. After that, most of the old crowd was no longer prominent in community affairs and new names began to appear.

Terry died on Sunday evening, Dec. 17, 1898, at the age of 63. A newspaper obituary stated: "He was a steadfast friend, a devoted and affectionate father and in his death the city loses one of her most public-spirited men. The reverses and losses that overtook him in the evening's sunset of life may have hastened his death." Terry was buried in the City Cemetery on Tazewell Avenue, as was his wife, who died May 7,1910. She had indicated that she planned to sell Elmwood to the city but the decision was left to her heirs. The property was sold to the city for $150,000 and the house, Elmwood, was used for Roanoke's first Public Library from 1921 to 1952.

In the mid-1880s, the Terry family joined St. John's Episcopal Church. The altar rail there is dedicated to "the glory of God and the memory of P.L. Terry." The National Exchange Bank purchased the Terry Building which was demolished and replaced with the Colonial-American Bank Building in 1927. It later was known as the Colonial Arms Building.

Terry was so much a part of Roanoke and Roanoke was a part of him. In 1893, he and three other industrialists erected a monument in Woodland Park in Southeast Roanoke, bearing this inscription, "Erected 1893 by P.L. Terry, F.J. Kimball, S.W. Jamison and Joseph H. Sands as an Industrial Monument to Mark the Progress of the City of Roanoke, Chartered 1882." Today, the monument stands on the southeast comer of Elmwood Park, where it was moved for Roanoke's Centennial in 1982.

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Early Craftsmen

by Roddy Moore ❖ first printed in Vol. 6 No. 2 (1970)

Early settlers of Botetourt County were almost entirely self-sufficient in such domestic arts as those of the blacksmith, cooper, cobbler, weaver, tailor and distiller. However, several of the ancient crafts — the gunsmith, potter, silversmith and cabinet maker — required apprenticeship. These specialists produced an assortment of utilitarian objects much needed by the hardworking farmers who were ill-equipped to create them at home.

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

Botetourt County had a large number of skilled gunsmiths who produced quality rifles in both the 18th and 19th century. In the 18th century, Andrew Telford, Francis Graham, Robert Rowland, Alexander Simpson, George Wilson, William McFerran and George Peter-man were making and repairing rifles in this area. The best known gunsmiths were John Sites and John Painter. Sites operated a shop in Fincastle from 1808 until he left for Missouri in 1834. Painter had a shop at Haymakertown from the 1830s until his death in 1900.

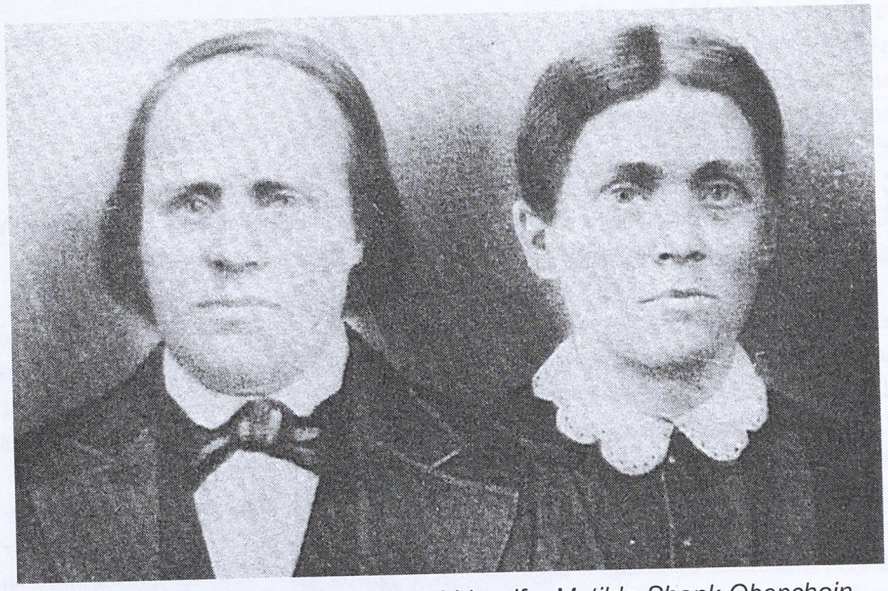
Among the letters in the Roanoke Historical Society's collection of Preston papers is one written by David Rowland of the Botetourt gunsmith family on March 2, 1810. He wrote: "I perceive by a Notice of the Executive of Virginia — that the time for receiving proposals for making Gun carriages will expire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

The best known potter of this region undoubtedly was "Potter Pete" Obenchain, who was born in Botetourt County in 1822. His occupation was listed as potter in the U.S. Census of 1850 and 1860. His shop on Mill Creek was wiped out by the flood of 1877, according to tradition. The only known signed piece of Obenchain pottery existing today is a red glazed, redware jardiniere, signed Matthew Obenchain, 1867 on the bottom.

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

As frontier settlements developed into towns and cities, the people replaced the primitive creations of the earli-

Roddy Moore, a graduate of Virginia Tech and the Cooperstown, N.Y., Graduate Program in American Folk Culture, has been the director of the Blue Ridge Institute at Ferrum College for more than 30 years.



Above: "Potter Pete" Obenchain and his wife, Matilda Shank Obenchain. Below: A piece of Obenchain pottery, signed 'Matthew Obenchain' on the bottom.

er period with far more elaborate household objects. By the middle of the 18th century, silversmiths, clockmakers, jewelers, cabinet makers and other highly skilled craftsmen had started to move into the county.

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

One of the few pieces of signed and dated 18th century Virginia furniture is a desk bearing the names of the makers, George Sawyers and Thomas Murphey, and the date, 1797. They lived and worked in the Sweet Springs area of what was then Botetourt County. The style and lines of this Chippendale desk show that it was made by a highly skilled craftsman, rather than a country carpenter.

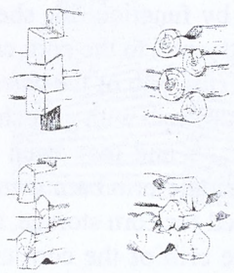
The handmade objects remaining today prove that there were skilled craftsmen living and working in Botetourt in the last two centuries. These products and the work of many of her craftsmen, unknown or long forgotten, make up a rich store of Botetourt County cultural history.

Old Barns of Appalachia

text and sketches by Henry Glassie III ❖ first printed in Vol. 9 No. 1 (1974)

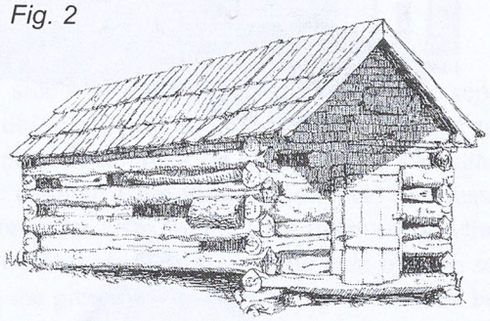
By the Bronze Age, horizontal log construction, which had its origin in the northern European Mesolithic, was employed commonly throughout northern and central Europe; it was most usually found on a rectangular building — house, stable, or granary — with the door in one gable end. During the late Bronze Age the log houses of central Europe and particularly Germany began developing away from the simple rectangular gable-door form, which was introduced from the Near East in the Neolithic, but it was preserved on various out-buildings which were brought to America centuries later by the Pennsylvania Germans. From this ancient rectangular construction unit — usually in the mountains called a "crib" or a "pen" and here consistently referred to as a crib — developed, partially in Europe and partially in America, most, if not all, of the traditional barn types found today in the Southern Mountains. The fact that the barns of the Southern Mountains are traceable to the Bronze Age and beyond implies that the Southern Mountain culture, which could become a casualty of the war on poverty, is continuous not only with medieval but also with prehistoric Europe.

Fig. 1



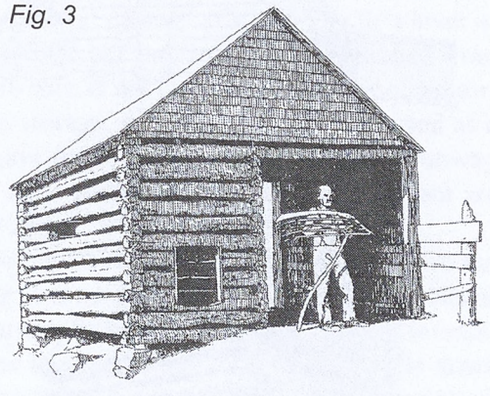
The first barns of the Appalachian area were constructed of log after the Pennsylvania German fashion: the logs were frequently hewn and dovetailed at the corners; however, barns were often less carefully constructed than houses and the logs left in the round, un-chinked and saddle notched. (fig. 1) Although today in the mountains there are abundant examples of old log barns and corn cribs are still occasionally constructed of log, during the past thirty years the older log barns have, in many cases, been replaced by frame ones of the same types.

Fig. 2



The rectangular log construction unit, still used in Europe as a granary, was easily adapted to the storage of maize and became the corn crib found throughout the Southern Mountains. (fig. 2) The corn crib is the same form as the Pennsylvania one-level out-building; that is, rectangular with a gable or lean-to roof and the door in one gable end, except that the corn crib rarely has the forward projecting room so commonly found on mountain smoke and spring houses. Recently corn cribs have been built in the traditional form of horizontal slats; a halftimbering practice which logically succeeded horizontal unchinked logs.

Fig. 3



Frequently the corn crib has a shed for the storage of farm equipment — "gear" or "plunder" — on one side if it has a lean-to roof (fig. 3) or, less commonly, on one or both sides if it has a gable roof. In the German areas of Pennsylvania the corn crib had anoth-

This study of Appalachian barns first appeared in the Summer 1965 issue of Mountain Life and Work magazine and is used here with the author's permission. He was the first Pennsylvania state folklorist and he served on the faculty of Pennsylvania State University. The author of Patterns in the Material Folk Culture of the Eastern United States, *University of Pennsylvania Press, 1969, Dr. Glassie also worked at the Indiana University Folklore Institute.*

Fig. 4

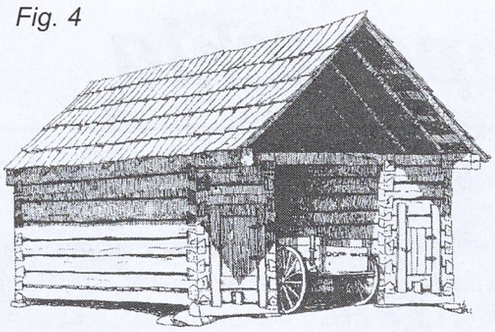


Fig. 12

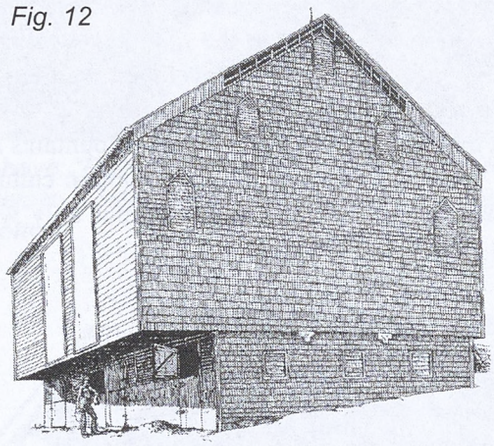


Fig. 5

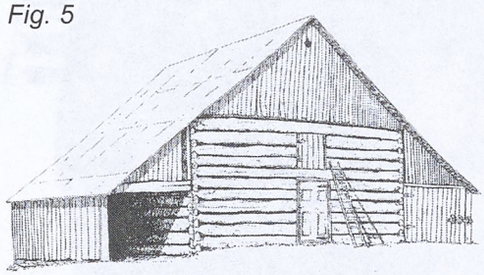
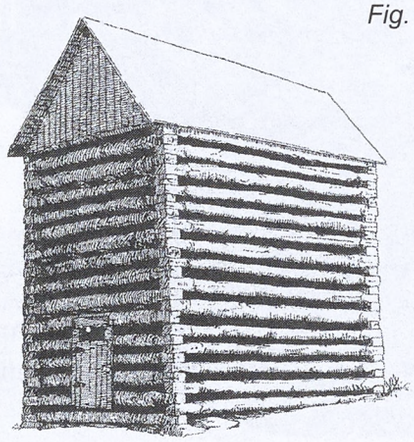


Fig. 6



er built by its side with a runway between the two producing the drive-in corn crib. (fig. 4) The corn crib with gear shed of log or frame is found throughout the Southern Appalachian region; whereas, the drive-in corn crib is found usually of frame in southeastern Pennsylvania, central Maryland, and down the Valley of Virginia, and of log or frame in the mountains which surround the Valley. Neither the corn crib with gear shed nor the drive-in corn crib were originally designed for stabling and neither ever constitutes the sole barn of a farm.

As the settlers moved out of eastern Pennsylvania the great Pennsylvania barn (fig. 12) was found to be uneconomical for the frontier farm so sheds for stabling were added to the sides of the rectangular log construction unit producing the single-crib barn. (fig. 5) The single-crib barn is closely related to the corn crib with gear shed but may be distinguished from it by function (the sheds of the barn are used for stabling, the shed attached to the corn crib for the storage of farm equipment), by form (the crib of the barn is a more moderate rectangle than that of the corn crib with gear shed — ca. 16' x 12' as opposed to ca. 14' x 5' — and may even be square), and by the fact that the crib of the single-crib barn is usually divided into two levels: the lower utilized for corn storage, the upper as a hay loft or "mow," whereas, the crib of the corn crib with gear loft has only one level. The single-crib barn could be easily varied for the needs of individual farms and as a result of this flexibility and the fact that it is simple to construct and houses the stock, hay, and corn necessary for the operation of a small farm, it became common in the northern Alleghenies and along the Blue Ridge from Virginia to Alabama.

Tobacco, the one cash crop for many mountain farmers, is most usually cured in a section of a crib barn or in an abandoned log house. Occasionally special barns are constructed for tobacco curing which have the same floor plan as the corn crib, although they are usually considerably larger and taller. (fig. 6) In the Blue Ridge and Great Smoky Mountain areas of North Carolina and Tennessee, tobacco is air cured so the logs are left unchinked. From the southern Virginia and North Carolina Piedmont eastward, where tobacco is flue cured, the logs are "daubed with mud" and the barn, although similar in appearance to the rectangular mountain one, may be built on a square floor plan with the door in the side as is consistent with English tradition.

The simple Neolithic rectangular gable-door construction unit, was, in medieval Europe, varied into a form of stable found occasionally of stone in German Pennsylvania and Maryland and frequently of log or frame in the Southern Mountains. (fig. 7) The first level of the rectangular mountain stable is usually divided into three sections: two areas for stabling separated by a walkway which has access to the hay loft above. Each of these three sections has a door of equal size leading to the outside, but it did not achieve its standard form, three doors into the first level and one into the second level all on the same side, until it became commonly built of frame. Sheds may be added to the sides of the stable, making it

Fig. 7

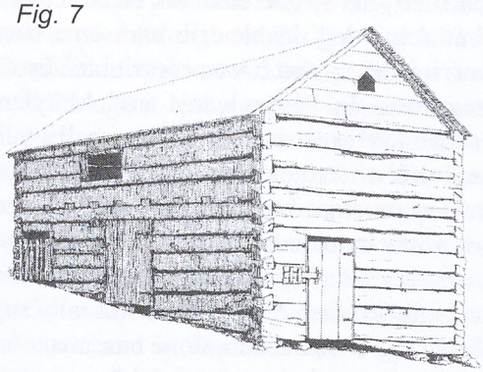


Fig. 8

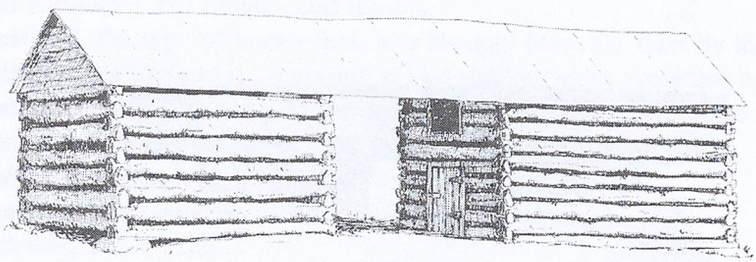


Fig. 9

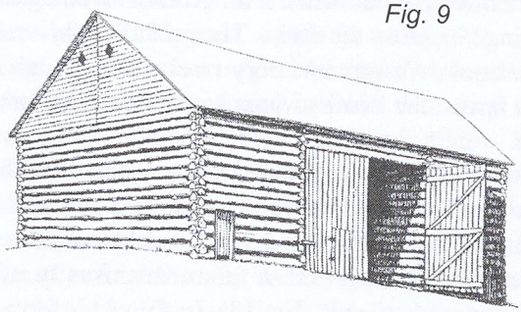
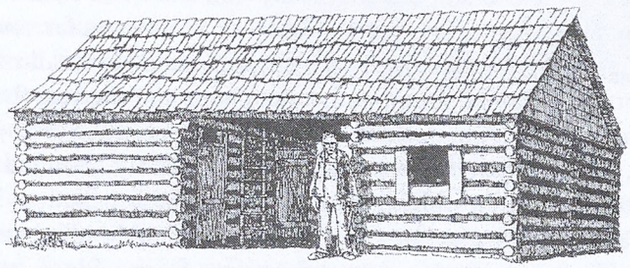


Fig. 10



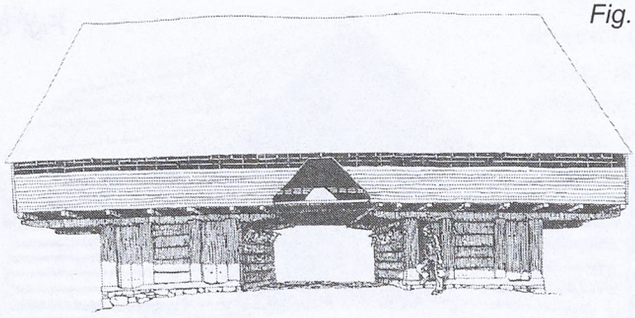
superficially similar to the single-crib barn.

In Europe the log rectangle frequently had another one built side by side with it or facing it; the two were separated by a runway and joined by a common roof. This barn, the double-crib, was brought by the Germans to Pennsylvania where, although once common, it is now only rarely found. The double-crib barn is found throughout the Southern Mountains in a variety of forms which seem to have resulted from three basic types. The least common of the three, doublecrib barn type I, is composed of two rectangular cribs facing each other so that the doors open into the runway. (fig. 8) The rectangular cribs of the double-crib barn type II are built side by side so the doors open to the front. (fig. 9) It is in this second type that there is the greatest variation, for the cribs may be square as well as rectangular and the doors may open into the runway. In the third type of double-crib barn, which is most common at the southern end of the mountains, the cribs are built side by side, like those of the double-crib barn type II, but each crib is divided in half and has two doors opening into the runway. (fig. 10) The first level of all the types of double-crib barn is most commonly used for stabling and the second level, usually reached from doors opening into the runway, for hay storage. Although the double-crib barn is not commonly used for corn storage, frequently one crib will be used for stabling and the other for corn storage, in which case that side used as a corn crib is usually the smaller. The mountain double-crib barn may have large doors on the ends of the runway and a heavy threshing floor, as is usually the case in Pennsylvania, but more usually doors and threshing floor are absent

In the general area of the Blue Ridge and particularly the Great Smokies of North Carolina and Tennessee the log double-crib barn type II is found with a large frame loft overhanging in front and back or on all sides by means of the cantilever principle (fig. 11). In southeastern Kentucky similar barns may be found but there the loft is occasionally translated into log. This type was probably not developed in the mountains, but rather was brought down the Alleghenies fromPennsylvania, where similar barns may be very rarely found, and is traceable to a medieval German peasant house — the *umgebindehaus* — in which the ground level was of log for warmth and the upper level, usually of frame, overhung by means of the cantilever principle.

In the great Pennsylvania barn 2 the lower level, which is used for stabling, is built into a hillside, and the upper level, which overhangs in the rear — the forebay — and is reached by a ramp, is divided into three: two hay mows separated by a threshing floor (fig. 12). It was apparently developed in eastern Pennsylvania by building a log double-crib barn type II on a hillside with a stone basement under it as barns were often built in England, Germany

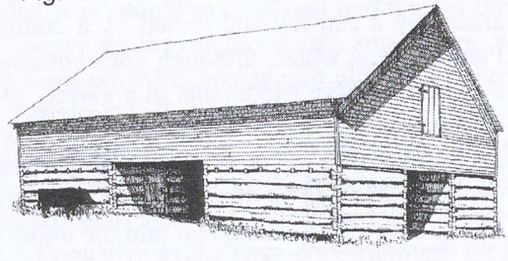
Fig. 11



and particularly in Switzerland. As the forebay is not essential to a log double-crib barn on a stone basement, it is likely that it was contributed by the *umgebindehaus*. In Pennsylvania and Maryland the great Pennsylvania barn is most usually built of stone, brick or frame on a stone basement and rarely of log on stone basement; in the Valley of Virginia, where it not only has a forebay but also a narrow overhang on the other three sides, and in the Alleghenies, where the forebay is usually supported by posts, it is most often built entirely of frame, although examples of log or frame on a stone basement may also be found. There is nothing in the Southern Appalachian region to compare with the celebrated hex signs of southeastern Pennsylvania; yet, the barns of the Valley of Virginia are often painted white with green trim and green spheres on the doors or red with white trim and white stars or galloping horses on the doors. The great Pennsylvania barn is found commonly in the Valley of Virginia as far south as Roanoke County and very rarely as far south as northeastern Tennessee. Although not well suited to small mountain farms, the Pennsylvania barn, usually of small proportions, may be found in the mountains surrounding the Valley.

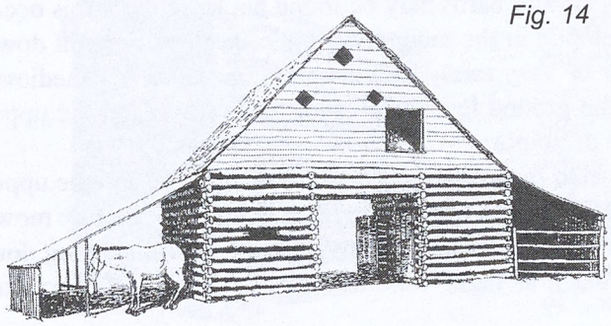
The Southern Appalachian folk culture is characterized by more than the preservation of what is archaic in other areas, for traditionally based innovation is clearly reflected in the development of instrumental music and certain architectural forms which have achieved wide distribution. The four-crib barn, which was developed in southeastern Tennessee by placing two type II or III double-crib barns end to end, is composed of four cribs, usually used for stabling, separated by runways running from gable to gable and from side to side (fig. 13). In the older form of the four-crib barn, which is limited to the general area of the Great Smokies, the cribs are rectangular, the doors may open into either runway and the runway which runs from side to side may be wider than that running from gable to gable. In the later and more symmetrical form of the four-crib barn, occasionally found in southeastern Kentucky, western North Carolina, eastern Tennessee, through the Tennessee Valley and deeply into Alabama and Mississippi, the cribs are square, all doors open into the gable-to-gable runway, and the runways are of equal width.

Fig. 13



The four-crib barn is often found with one runway boarded up leaving only the gable-to-gable runway open. The resultant form is that of the transverse-crib barn (fig. 14) which was probably developed in the eastern Tennessee Valley, as there both the oldest log examples of the transverse-crib barn and the four-crib barn, from which it developed, may be found. The transverse-crib barn could be conceivably related to the drive-in corn crib; however, unlike it each crib of the transverse crib barn is divided into two or three units, entered from the runway, which are usually used for stabling, although one might be set aside for corn storage. Like the four-crib barn, the transverse-crib barn has a hay loft and often has sheds on the sides, which are features absent in the drive-in corn crib. The transverse-crib barn, like the Pennsylvania barn, was developed in America from the ancient German double-crib barn into the perfect barn for the area of its development. The Pennsylvania barn is ideally suited to the rich rolling limestone lands of eastern Pennsylvania, central Maryland, and the Valley of Virginia in its capacity to shelter large herds and store great quantities of hay. The transverse-crib barn is equally well suited to the more prosperous farms of the mountain valleys, for under its roof can be stabled a moderate herd and stored large amounts of corn and hay. It has also been easily enlarged and adapted for use as a dairy barn as in eastern Tennessee where it often has large doors on the ends of the runway. Although not commonly found of log outside

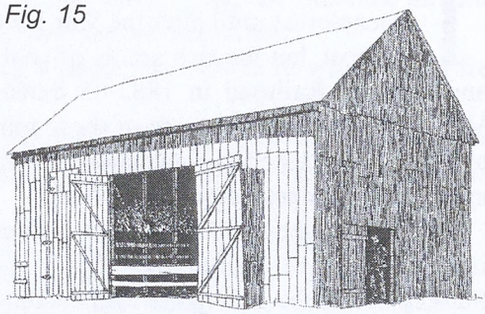
Fig. 14



of its area of probable origin, built of frame it has spread recently north up the Blue Ridge, and at an early date it was carried throughout the Tennessee Valley from where it spread south into Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, and Louisiana; west into Arkansas; and north through Kentucky into Indiana and Illinois.

Although it had parallels in Germany and Scotland, the type of barn which was brought from the East by the English never became common in the mountains. The English barn is composed of two stabling areas separated by a threshing floor on the ends of which are placed large doors (fig. 15). Its tripartite floor plan seems to indicate a relationship between it, the mountain stable and the double-crib barn; in fact, the examples found along the Virginia-West Virginia border may be type II log double-crib barns translated into frame. In Germany this barn was built of stone or half-timber, in Scotland of stone, and in England, New England, the tidewater South, and infrequently along the eastern slopes of the Virginia Blue Ridge, of board over frame. It is difficult to tell whether the English barns in the Valley of Virginia, which frequently have a slight ramp, are of English or German origin; the fact that they bear a greater outward similarity to those found in Ohio than they do to those found in eastern Virginia or New England might, however, indicate a German origin. Occasionally it may be built on a bank with a stone basement as a result of influence from the Pennsylvania barn, but it never has the distinctive forebay.

Fig. 15



Realizing that all the barns of the Southern Mountains, with the exception of the English barn, were either introduced in final form by the Pennsylvania Germans or were developed from Pennsylvania German barns, the scholar should not be surprised that for a great number of Southern Mountain tales, some tunes, and for Southern Mountain dulcimers and pottery, the closest European parallels are found in those areas from which the Pennsylvania Germans came. Further, a realization that a comparison of existing buildings with archaeological data reveals that the barns of the Southern Mountains are direct outgrowths of prehistoric antecedents may lead the scholar to imply prehistoric parallels for Southern Mountain tales or melodic scales.

NOTES

1. The information in this article was derived primarily from field research in the Southern Mountains and the areas which contributed to the mountain culture. The author is indebted to Prof. Fred Kniffen for reading an earlier form of this paper and making many useful suggestions, and for supplying the photographs from which figure 5 was drawn.

2. The Pennsylvania barn is one of the few American folk architectural elements which is beginning to receive adequate attention, see: Alfred L. Shoemaker, ed. The Pennsylvania Barn (Kutztown, Pa., 1959) and Charles H. Dornbusch, Pennsylvania German Barns (Allentown, Pa., 1958). In Dornbusch's useful classification the mountain stable is related to types A and C, the double-crib barn is type B, the English barn is type D, and the great Pennsylvania barn is types F-G. Type J, as a variation on type G, is common in the Valley of Virginia, where type E is very rarely found. Type H rarely crosses the Potomac, and types K and L were not carried south of Pennsylvania. The log double-crib with overhanging frame loft, although present in York and Adams counties, was not reported in either book. It is probably that type referred to as the log and frame barn in the Pennsylvania tax reports for 1798 (see Shoemaker et al. pp. 29, 91-96).

3. The Pennsylvania Germans came from the Rhenish Palatinate, Switzerland, Bohemia, Silesia, Moravia, Saxony, Hesse, Wurtemburg and Alsace.

Roanoke Valley's Early Iron Mines

by Raymond P. Barnes ❖ first printed in Vol. 3 No. 2 (1967)

The extensive deposits of minerals stored by nature in the mountains of Virginia were, for the greater part, unexploited until after the War Between the States. The lead mines near Fort Chiswell enjoyed early development, but the rich seams of coal in Western Virginia were not tapped until the newly organized Norfolk and Western Railroad in 1882-85 extended lines into the mountainous regions. It must be emphasized that Virginians were not unaware of these mineral resources — they simply did not have the capital to exploit them, and this factor, taken in connection with the limited demand for coal in the Southland, left development unencouraged until rail lines permitted an outlet.

In the Roanoke-Botetourt area it was common knowledge that a superabundance of low grade brown hematite iron ore could be easily mined. Locally, the "Speedwell" furnace of Robert Harvey was in operation at present Starkey before the turn of the 19th century. The slag heap of the "Cloverdale" furnace is still in evidence just south of the overhead crossing of the railroad on Rt. 11. Additional charcoal-fired furnaces operated in other sections of Botetourt.

When in 1881 it was announced that the Shenandoah Valley Railroad would connect at "a point at or near the Town of Big Lick," an issue of the Salem Times-Register carried an item that Maj. William Lewis (owner of "Lone Oak" formerly standing off Franklin Road) and several associates were camping in the highlands near Big Lick, "to find out what these mountains were made of."

That Western Virginia had large deposits of coal, iron and lead was well known long before these lodes were exploited. From early days the lead mines at Fort Chiswell were worked at a profit, for this much needed mineral, used principally for moulding bullets or securing window panes, has sold at a premium for many years. Many wagon loads of lead passed over the Blue Ridge on a now-abandoned road en route to Williamsburg or in later times to Richmond.

Western Virginia is rich in brown hematite ore deposits, but the iron content is low. Much of this ore was smelted in small charcoal-fired furnaces. The famous "Speedwell Furnace" on Back Creek at Starkey produced a particularly fine iron until it was destroyed by flood around 1825 and never rebuilt.

About halfway between Buchanan and Troutville there is a small settlement called Lithia. On the exact site of the old railroad depot, Joseph R. Anderson around 1854 operated a furnace he called "New Cloverdale." Anderson and his successors mined over 200,000 tons of ore off the adjoining property. Although the plant ceased to operate in 1874, the settlement continues in existence.

In the Roanoke direction, the next iron mine was at a station called "Houston," named for an official of the Crozier Iron Furnace which operated for years in northeastern Roanoke on 9th Street at the railroad.

Today anyone familiar with the appearance of hematite-bearing rock or soil can see abundant evidence of this mineral by a casual stroll in our surrounding mountains. The curious can watch excavations for drainage ditches or basements to see if a vein of this ore is uncovered and such lodes are often exposed. Unfortunately, the ore content is of a low grade.

Ferdinand Rorer, early promoter and local capitalist, a man of vision, prospected in a more scientific manner. He uncovered on the west ridge of Mill Mountain substantial ore deposits. Mineral rights were secured and a charter for the Rorer Iron Company was granted January 15, 1883 (Charter Book 1, p. 72, Salem).

A narrow gauge railroad was constructed, from the mine about half a mile north of present Rt. 220, just below Peakwood Drive. The roadbed ran east immediately in front of Piney Grove Church, then on a bee-line to where the Winston-Salem Division tracks were laid in the early nineties. The little road ran up to cross Colonial Avenue,

Raymond P. Barnes, a lawyer and a Roanoke native,wrote the monumental A History of the City of Roanoke, *as well as a series of columns in The Roanoke World-News on local and regional history. He died in 1983.*

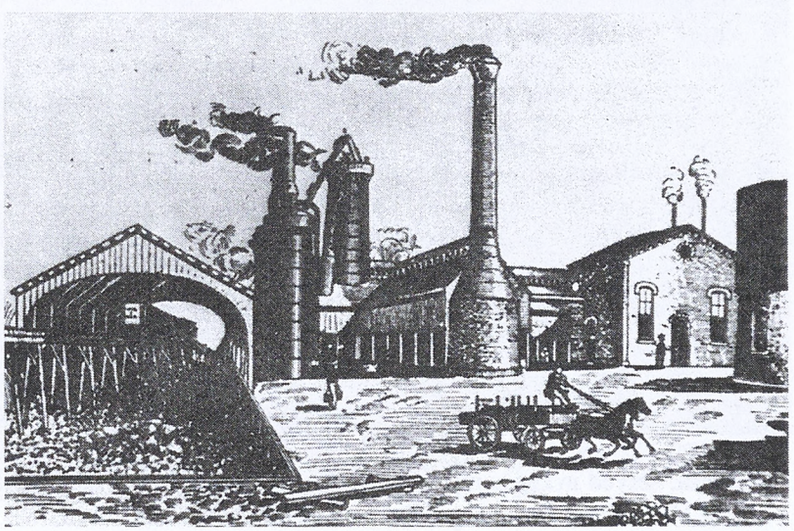
then down the brow of the hill, northwestwardly to a railroad trestle spanning Murray's Run.

From here it paralleled the Roanoke River (over the same bed now occupied by the belt line tracks) to an ore wash. Still going west over a fill of such a sandy composition, contractors over the years since its abandonment carted it away for use in mixing concrete. The little road crossed the river just below the present Wasena Bridge, then via a deep cut paralleling Ferdinand Avenue, proceeded west to emerge at a point west of 10th Street S.W. It then ran in a north-westwardly direction over the hills down to the N&W's West End Yards to a loading platform about 16th Street S.W.

Rolling equipment consisted of a "dinkey" engine and about 15 cars of the "dump" type. By this time the little road was ready for operation, a considerable tonnage of ore was mined, awaiting transportation.

In early Roanoke, Mr. Rorer occasionally entertained guests by giving a picnic, the climax of which was a free ride in empty dump cars out to the mines and return.

Crozier Furnace, an early and leading industry of the new town of Roanoke, had a huge plant at 9th Street S.E., and the railroad but it did not utilize ore from the Rorer mines, but instead that shipped here from some western counties. The Rorer ore found a market at Ironton, Ohio.



Rorer had financial reverses, and men including Samuel Coit, William Welch and a Mr. Body took over leadership of the concern, until the Virginia Iron, Coal & Coke Company (organized originally at Pulaski) came into possession of the corporate properties. (Incidentally, VICC moved its home offices to Roanoke in 1908 and has been here since.)

At the mine itself a nice little settlement grew, with small frame houses for workmen (some of which are still standing) plus the inevitable commissary. A post office was established, known as "Gale, Virginia."

Wages ran about a dollar a day for common labor but an application to secure such a humble job required references of good character.

When the Roanoke & Southern Railroad (presently the Winston-Salem district of the N&W) was constructed in the early nineties, the narrow gauge line was abandoned west of the new railroad and the ore wash located on McClanahan Run (ofttimes called Ore Branch), which parallels the Winston-Salem line. Here there were facilities to load "washed" ore directly into freight cars. For some years local ore continued to be sold to plants at Ironton, Ohio.

After the Virginia Iron, Coal & Coke Co. took over the mines, this corporation came into ownership of the old Crozier Furnace and smelted local ore there.

In addition, VICC opened a new ore deposit lying east of the present Ogden store on Rt. 119 and extended the "dinkey line" to the new mines. A crossing was made at the lane on the north side of the store, now a hard-surfaced county road. The little line ran down the bottom of the east of Rt. 119 to the ore wash.

The original Rorer mines became in the early 1900s a favorite objective of Sunday walks, adventure trips by boys, and in the fall offered a bountiful crop of chinquapins which grew on the abundant bushes located around the abandoned diggings. A small colony of colored people took over the "Gale" settlement.

When the apparent inexhaustible Mesabi deposits were opened near Lake Superior to produce high grade ore, the brown hematite of the local section could not compete, but the mines still operated on a limited scale. When World War I brought a new demand for iron from any source, our local mines enjoyed a burst of renewed popularity.

It is not recalled just when operations ceased or the narrow gauge tracks were removed, but it was probably in the early twenties.

The Watts, a Pioneer Family

by Helen R. Prillaman ❖ first printed in Vol. 11 No. 2 (1982)

The Watts family has contributed more to the Williamson Road area than any other pioneer family — if for no other reason, most of the land in the Williamson Road area was Watts' land — "The Barrens." In 1789 William Watts, from Prince Edward County, purchased 400 acres in The Barrens from General James Breckinridge, who had inherited The Barrens from his father, Robert Breckinridge, to whom the original patent had been granted.

William Watts' family was prominent in state and local affairs. His brother, Colonel John Watts, was a hero of the Revolution and a charter member of the Society of Cincinnati. William, a lawyer, was a member of the Virginia Constitutional Convention in 1788.

William Watts' son, General Edward Watts, inherited the 400 acres of land which his father had purchased. In 1811 he married Elizabeth Breckinridge, daughter of General James Breckinridge, thereby getting control of a very large plantation in The Barrens. General Edward Watts built "Oaklands" about 1820.

All historical accounts tell us that Oaklands was not a great or beautiful home in comparison to some of the elegant homes which had been built but it was a large, attractive and roomy house which was known for its charm and hospitality. Oaklands was so popular to the many friends and relatives of the Watts family that it was necessary to construct cottages on the grounds to accommodate them. It was said that Oaklands could easily have been taken for a small watering place in view of the warm atmosphere of enjoyment experienced by all of the many guests. We also find many comments about Mrs. Edward Watts' charm and gentleness and hospitable nature in addition to her business and executive abilities.

General Edward Watts was truly a fine Virginia gentleman from all accounts and was known for his graciousness and modesty. He served as Roanoke County's first commonwealth attorney from 1839 to 1845. His son, William, served in the same capacity from 1845 to 1854. General Edward Watts twice was a candidate for governor of Virginia on the Whig ticket in 1834 and 1842.

General Edward Watts died at Oaklands on August 9, 1859. His wife died in 1862. The couple had ten children.

William Watts, the oldest surviving son, came into an estate of over 1,150 acres — the Watts Mill was located on Evans Spring Branch in what is now Washington Park and the land extended beyond Hershberger Road.

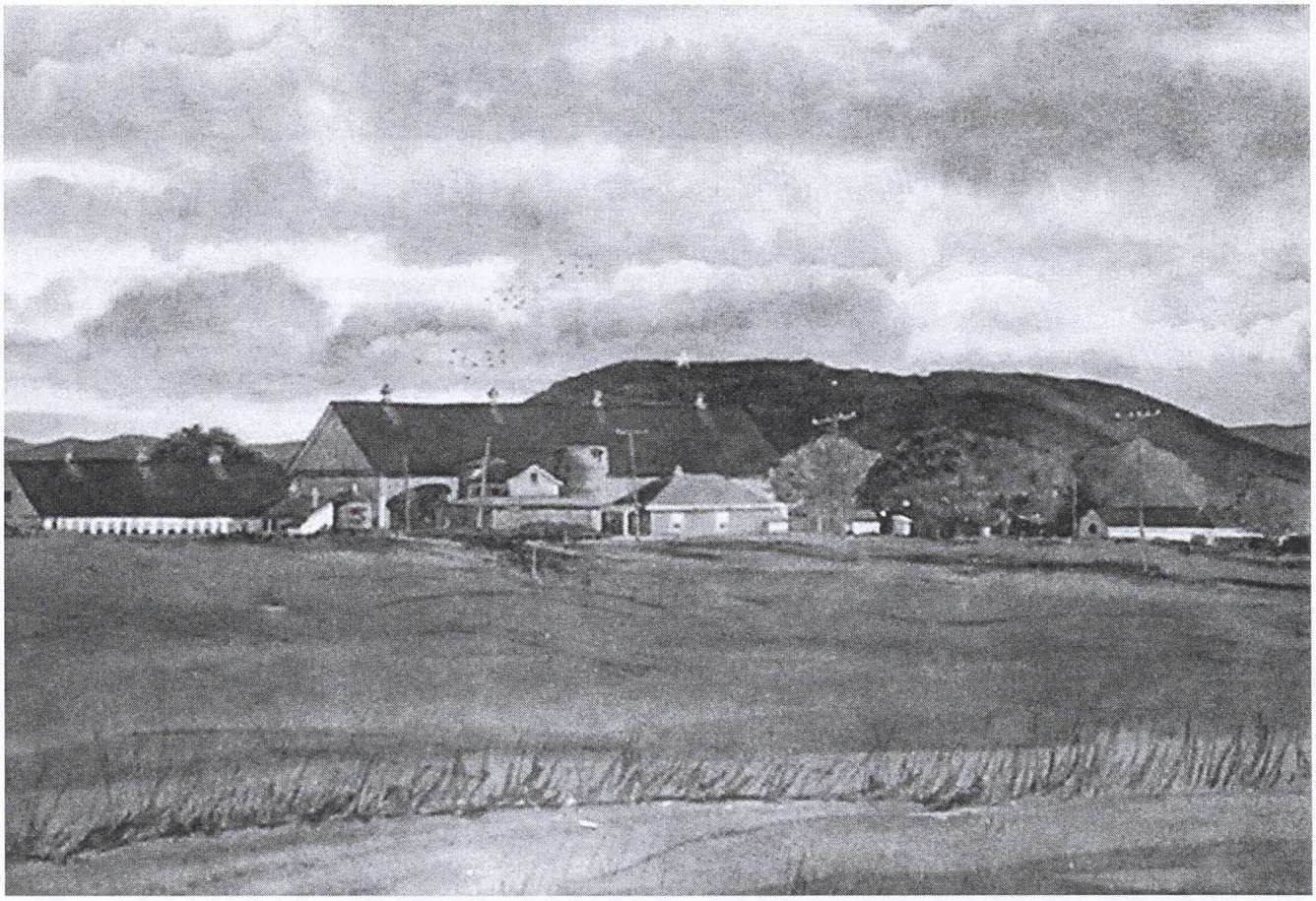
On October 8, 1850, William Watts married Mary Allen, who was the daughter of Justice John J. Allen of Beaverdam near Buchanan. Mrs. Watts lived only a few weeks following the birth of their only child, J. Allen Watts.

William Watts was 44 years old when the clouds of the War Between the States reached the Roanoke Valley. He immediately joined the Roanoke Grays and was promptly elected lieutenant. He won rapid promotions because of his gallantry and qualities of leadership, advancing to colonel. When he returned home after the war he lost no time in trying to restore the economic and physical health of Virginia. He served in the Virginia legislature in 1875 and died at Oaklands on May 1, 1877. The local United Daughters of the Confederacy — William Watts Chapter enshrines his memory and we also find a large picture of Colonel Watts hanging in the Courthouse at Salem, Virginia.

We also want to mention that history reflects another contribution for Colonel William Watts which greatly benefited the people of the Blue Ridge — before the war he served as a member of the State Constitutional Convention of 1850-1851 which finally broke the lock which had been held by Eastern Virginia over the Commonwealth.

We have learned of another contribution of this great family: that needy farmers of Roanoke, Craig and Botetourt

Accounts of the Watts family and the Barrens (page 56), the Peter Huff home which stood at the site of Valley View Mall, are used here with permission of Miss Helen Prillaman, from her Williamson Road history, A Place Apart. *A longtime resident of Williamson Road, she was a service director for an insurance agency.*



Painting by Roanoke artist John Will Creasy shows the property known as The Barrens, and later as the Huff farm. The property is now the site of Valley View Mall. (Courtesy of Christina Koomen Smith)

Counties would drive up to the huge Watts' barn at will and help themselves to seed wheat and corn. The practice was so common they didn't even bother to get permission before loading up the seed.

The famed Oaklands burned in 1897 — much to the sorrow of the many people who had shared many an enjoyable time there.

The Watts family continued their service to the area and the Commonwealth. John Allen Watts, the only son of William and Mary Allen Watts, married Gertrude Lee, whose grandfather was a Justice of the State Court of Appeals.

J. Allen Watts practiced law first in Salem, Then when the City of Roanoke was chartered in 1882, he moved his practice there. He served as counsel for the N&W Railway for 20 years and also served on the Roanoke City Council. In 1893 he was elected to the State Senate.

His daughter, Jean, married Abram P. Staples, who was a Senator, Attorney General and Justice of the Virginia Supreme Court. William, his son, married Ellen Catogni, daughter of Louis Catogni. Their son, William, the last male survivor of the direct line, lives in a house built near the famed Oaklands. It is interesting to find that the Watts home place has remained in the hands of the original pioneer family for almost 200 years.

Shortly after 1900 we find that families began moving into the Williamson Road area, buying acreage from 5 to 60, from Mrs. Gertrude Lee Watts, surviving wife of J. Allen Watts. When Interstate 581 was built into the City of Roanoke the Watts home place tract was intersected; the nature and need of the land changed. Round Hill School was built on a knoll overlooking the site of the famed Oaklands. The Watts Cemetery was moved a few years ago to Fairview. We must reflect on the many well-known and prominent people who were laid to rest there.

The Barrens: A Garden Spot

by Helen R. Prillaman ❖ first printed in Vol. 11 No. 2 (1982)

Letitia Gamble Watts, born in 1829, was a daughter of General Edward Watts and Elizabeth Breckinridge Watts of Oaklands. She married Dr. Langdon Rives, a physician from Ohio, on January 22, 1850. The couple resided at Oaklands until 1861.

When the War Between The States began, Dr. Rives offered his services to the South. He was an Army surgeon and was stationed in Richmond until his death from pneumonia on March 18, 1862. He was buried in the Watts Cemetery at Oaklands. (This cemetery was moved to Fairview a short while ago).

On March 11, 1865 Mrs. Rives married Dr. Francis Sorrel whom she had known for some years.

Dr. Sorrel was born in Savannah, Georgia in 1827, graduated from Princeton and took his medical degree from the University of Pennsylvania. He accepted a commission in the U.S. Army Medical Corps when he completed his studies in 1848. Working in the Army on the frontier was a difficult job and he resigned his commission in 1856. He toured Europe and after returning to this country he decided to go to the booming state of California. He served one term in the California legislature.

There were many Southern sympathizers in California and when the War Between The States began he had little trouble deciding where his sympathies lay. He returned to Richmond and offered his services to the Confederacy. In view of his training and experience he was charged with erecting and maintenance of the general hospital in Richmond. He remained in this position until Richmond was evacuated in 1865; he returned to Oaklands and was there when the .news of the surrender came.

General Edward Watts died in 1859 and while by partition, his eldest son, William, received the major part of the estate, Mrs. Sorrel received over 240 acres of land as did her sister, Alice, who had married Justice William J. Robertson of Charlottesville.

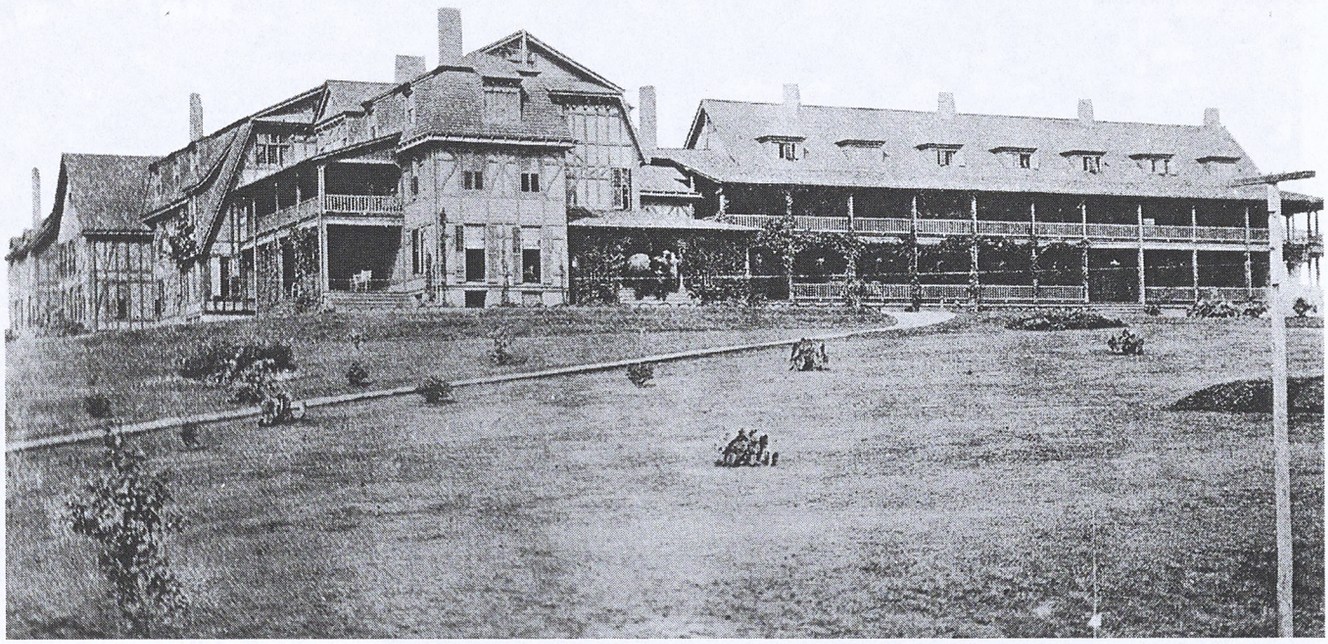
Shortly after the war ended, Dr. Sorrel and Letitia built a lovely two-story brick house on the land which she had inherited from General Watts. This house stood north of Oaklands and was called The Barrens. This land was truly the garden spot of the valley, producing lush crops, especially wheat. Dr. Sorrel and his wife lived at The Barrens until her death in 1900.

J. Allen Watts (grandson of General Edward Watts), owner of Oaklands, moved into the City of Roanoke to be near his work. He rented Oaklands plantation to George and Peter C. Huff. It was while George Huff lived at Oaklands that it burned in 1897. Peter C. Huff lived in a cottage nearby.

After Mrs. Sorrel died in 1900 The Barrens was sold to Peter C. Huff for the sum of $24,400 with a portion only being paid in cash. Actually The Barrens only brought $100 per acre — not counting the house. What an investment for Peter C. Huff! The Barrens — a beautiful house surrounded by beautiful and fertile land — was demolished in November 1981. This is the land that the Valley View Shopping Center hopes to put the big shopping center on. What a shame, and how sad it is to see such a beautiful place disappear from the Valley and our area.

We find that Dr. Sorrel moved into Roanoke after his wife's death and lived on Franklin Road. In 1901 in St. John's Episcopal Church, he dedicated the beautiful stained glass memorial window overlooking the altar, "To the Glory of God and in memory of Letitia Gamble Sorrel." Dr. Sorrel died in Washington, D.C., in 1916 and his body was returned to the Watts cemetery for burial.

The Barrens, long known as the P.C. Huff home, was razed for the Valley View Mall shopping center in 1981.



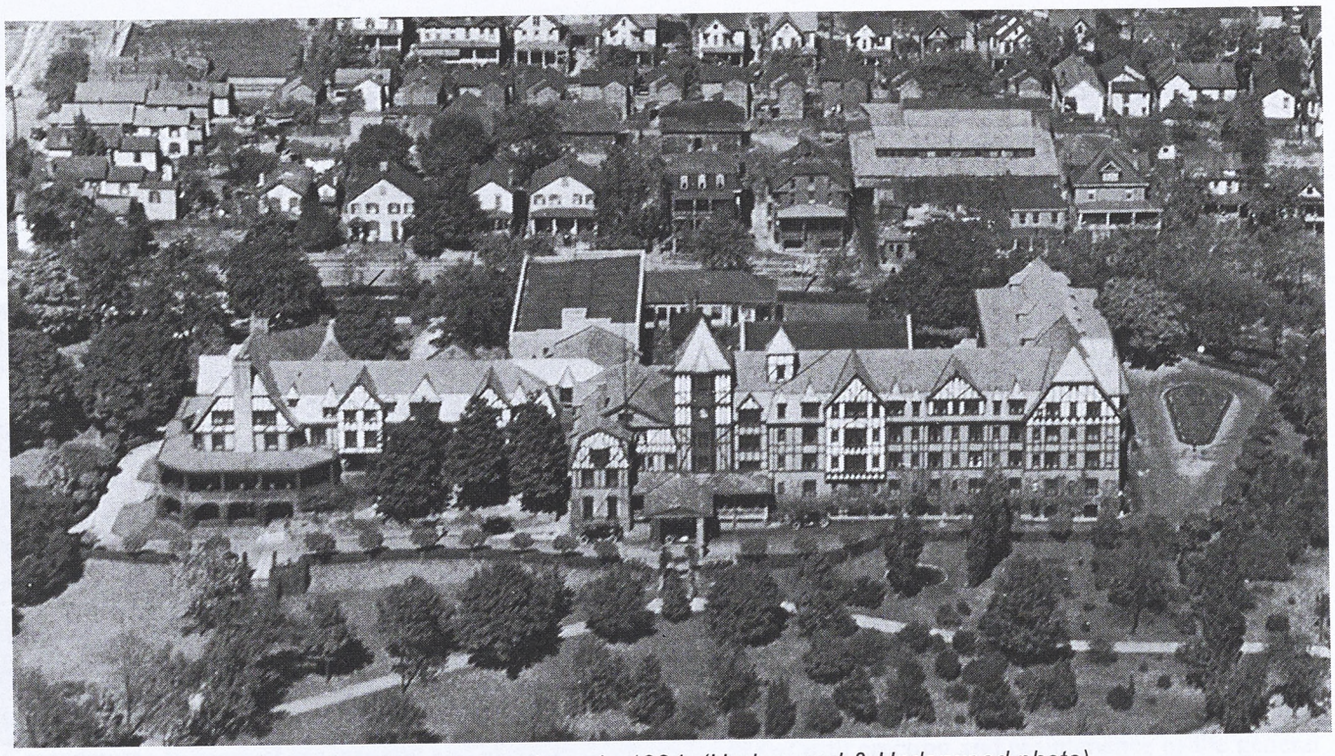
Hotel Roanoke - A large and well equipped hotel

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

Editor's Note: This description of the new Hotel Roanoke is printed verbatim from The Leader, published in Roanoke on October 28, 1882. This story was first printed in Vol. 13 No. 2 (1996).

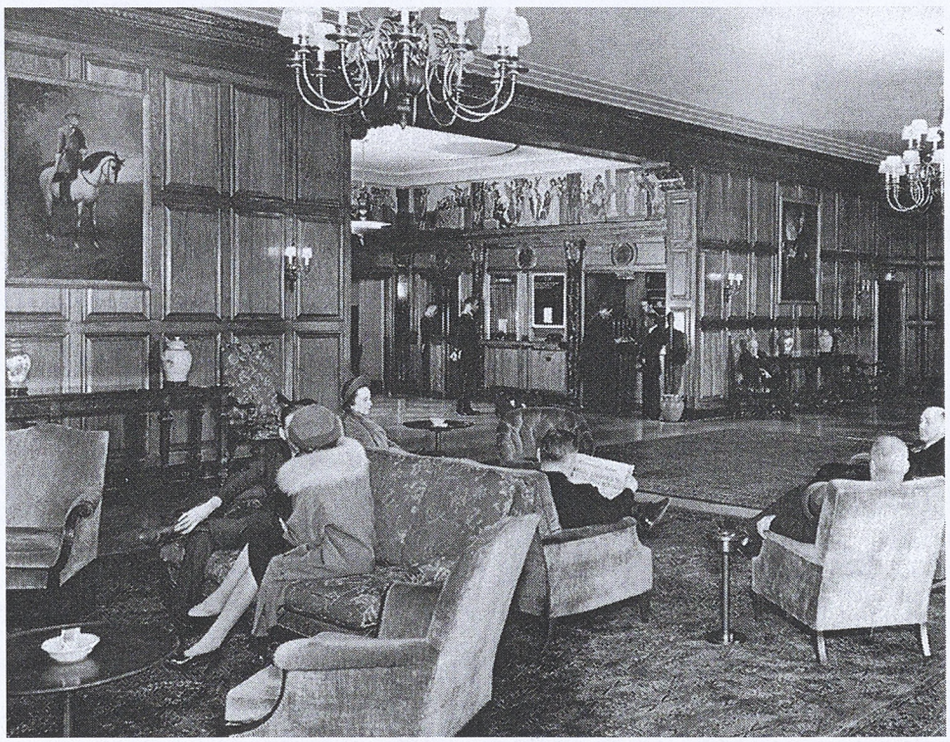


Hotel Roanoke and environs in 1924. (Underwood & Underwood photo)

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. [old style for "etc." -*ed.*] 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.



Hotel Roanoke lobby in the 1950s.

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.

Vice Presidential Candidate had Carvins Cove Summer Home

by George Kegley ❖ first printed in Vol. 14 No. 2 (2001)

"A nation has lost a leader and a statesman," said a Roanoke World-News editorial on Aug. 21, 1917, in a report on the funeral and burial of former U.S. Sen. John Worth Kern of Indiana at his summer home, Kerncliffe, in Carvins Cove. The statesman who tramped over the hills around the cove also conferred with President Woodrow Wilson about World War I and received more than 6.4 million votes in a losing race for vice president in November 1908.

Kern had been the unsuccessful candidate for vice president, the nation's second highest office, less than nine years before his death. In the 1908 election, the Democratic ticket of William Jennings Bryan and John W. Kern lost to the winning Republican slate of William Howard Taft and James S. Sherman.

Sen. John Kern on his way to the Capitol in Washington. (All photos taken from The Life of John Worth Kern, *by Claude G. Bowers)*

The popular vote was much closer than the totals from the Electoral College. Taft and Sherman won 321 to 162 on the electoral count. However, the popular vote margin was much closer — Taft and Sherman had 7,679,006 popular votes to 6,409,106 for Bryan and Kern.

After losing for vice president, Kern was elected to the Senate and served from 1911 to 1917. In a rapid rise to prominence, within two years after his election to the Senate, he was named chairman of the controlling Democratic caucus, serving from 1913 to 1917, and as chairman of the Senate Committee on Privileges and Elections. In 47 years in politics, Kern lost more elections than he won but he briefly held influence in high places in Washington.

Almost forgotten today, Sen. Kern had several strong ties to the Roanoke Valley and Virginia. Born in Alto, Ind. on Dec. 20, 1849, he died at 67 on Aug. 17, 1917. His great-great-grandfather Adam Kern came from Germany in the 1700s and settled near Winchester. The family left its name with Kernstown in Frederick County, Va.

Jacob Harrison Kern, father of Sen. Kern and a great-grandson of Adam Kern, acquired land in Botetourt County and lived there before he moved west, became a physician and practiced in Indiana and Iowa. After the death of his first wife, Dr. Jacob Kern returned to Carvins Cove about 1870 and lived there and at nearby Daleville until his death in 1901. He and his wife were buried in a family cemetery in Daleville and the remains eventually were moved to Mount Union Cemetery at Haymakertown in Botetourt County.

Sen. Kern built a large summer home, Kerncliffe, on a bluff overlooking the road into the cove soon after he was elected to the Senate. He often retreated there with his family and they entertained prominent guests from Washington. Among the guests was Kern's friend and fellow Indianan, Vice President Thomas Marshall and his wife, who were royally entertained at Kerncliffe, at Hollins College and a major reception on Orchard Hill in Roanoke in 1914. Marshall was vice president under President Woodrow Wilson from

George Kegley, a longtime resident of Roanoke, is a director emeritus of the History Museum, and editor of the Journal since 1968.

1913 to 1921.

When Senator Kern died three years later at Asheville, N.C., while resting from a strenuous Southern speaking trip, he was buried at Kerncliffe but the body was moved to Indianapolis in 1929. This was about the time when the City of Roanoke was buying property in Carvins Cove before the dam was constructed and the lake filled.

Another local tie came through his daughter, Julia, who married Dr. George B. Lawson of Roanoke on Christmas Day, 1913. She later said that was the only day the family was certain that her father would be home from the Senate. Through her father's political connections, she knew five presidents: Grover Cleveland, Benjamin Harrison, William Howard Taft, Woodrow Wilson and Theodore Roosevelt. She had four children, was a Mother of the Year, played a piano duet in the Governor's Mansion in Richmond when she was almost 90 and was president of the Thursday Morning Music Club. The Lawsons had four children but none are living today. George Jr. lived in Salem; Katherine was a writer/photographer in Paris and California; Judy lived in Norfolk and John, a pilot, died in World War II.

The World-News editorial in 1917 had high praise for the former senator:

> One for whom over six million of his fellow men had cast their vote for the second highest office in their power to bestow; whom his own state had ever delighted to honor; who had for four years been the leader of his, the dominant party in the Senate; who had been through a great world crisis (World War I); who had been the intimate friend and trusted counselor of the president; who had measured up to the full status of a man under every test which high office and trying times could apply to him, was laid to rest in the presence of a few friends and neighbors and with a burial service of a sweet and beautiful simplicity appropriate to the strength and gentleness of his exalted character.

About 200 people attended the funeral.

Dr. George Braxton Taylor, minister at Enon Baptist Church, Hollins, conducted the funeral at the summer home. Lucian H. Cocke, a Norfolk and Western Railway lawyer and a Roanoke friend, spoke of the senator's life and service, several Hollins College students sang and Joseph A. Turner, a Hollins official, closed the service with a prayer.

Kern died of uremic poisoning at Asheville, N.C. He had traveled to Asheville a week earlier to recuperate after a speaking tour in the South under the auspices of the National Lincoln Chautauqua system. He spoke in Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, Arkansas and Kentucky. His last public speech was at Carrollton, Ky. on June 23. Before starting the tour, Kern had a conference with President Woodrow Wilson and brought a message from the President to the people urging them to be steadfast in the war situation, according to The Indianapolis News.

The World-News editorial closed Kern's career: "It was at sunset, above the waters of Carvins Creek, on one of the western foothills of Tinker Mountain that he was buried. There his father and grandfather had lived; there he himself had spent many of the years of his early youth; there he had hoped to find an age of rest from his long life of generous and untiring service to his country, and there he sleeps today."

Claude Bowers, former secretary for Kern and later editor of the Ft. Wayne, Ind., Journal-Gazeteer and the author of a 475-page biography of the senator, wrote, "Senator Kern sacrificed his life in the service of his country, and when the history of President Wilson's administration is written and the inner facts are disclosed the greatness of the man will be established...No man ever served Indiana in the Senate more conscientiously, with greater constancy or with purer purposes."

In his biography, Bowers described how Araminta Kern, wife of the senator, designed Kerncliffe on a breezy, wooded knoll between two mountain ranges. He quotes an article from The Ladies Home Journal and The Indianapolis News, telling of a living room 40 feet long, a dining room with a big fireplace, a sitting room for the two Kern sons, Sunset porch, "where we eat supper and watch the sun go down behind the mountains, four sleeping porches (and) dozens of little sanctuaries where one may write or read in pleasant or in tempestuous weather." The big, rambling house had a lodge and Tree Top House in an oak tree, "a charming little house with a lookout tower in the treetop."

Juliet V. Ross, the Indiana writer who told of the summer house, said Araminta Kern "has for neighbors the cosmopolitan folks of Roanoke, the wonderful and noble people from the nearby college at Hollins and the plain, sturdy farmers of the cove." Of the people who lived in the cove, who had to move out when the present lake filled,

"their quaint homesteads cling to the feet of the mountain," Ross wrote. In her article written about 85 years ago, she said, "Roanoke is the most progressive city in Virginia — a bustling modern city, with no distinct flavor of the old regime in its business life. All sorts of progressive people are there."

When the senator escaped from his busy governmental tasks, he was revived as he rode the four miles from Hollins, crossing the foot of Tinker Mountain, to Kerncliffe, according to Bowers' biography. He came here "for rest and inspiration during the long dreary grind of his senatorial career." Kern spent his time resting on the sleeping porches, reading or tramping the hills, wearing the garb of a mountain climber and carrying a heavy cane as protection against snakes. Sometimes he carried an ax and a hatchet to help in clearing land.

Sen. John Kern holds his grandson, George B. Lawson Jr., as his daughter, Julia Kern Lawson of Roanoke, looks on.

The Bowers biography said Kern "loved this home in the Blue Ridge, where he could relax, ramble at will over the hills, and sit in the evenings holding the hands of his boys."

Just three years before his death, the Kerns and their guests, Vice President and Mrs. Thomas Marshall were central figures in a momentous social weekend at Kerncliffe and in Roanoke. The party enjoyed May Day festivities at Hollins College on Saturday and the following day, guests enjoyed "a genuine, old-fashioned Virginia dinner" at Kerncliffe, Many people called in the afternoon to meet the Marshalls, the World-News reported: "Much merriment was caused during the afternoon by the arrival of a mountain couple, asking to see these distinguished guests, who proved to be Mrs. Lucian Cocke and Mr. Joseph Turner of Hollins, whose clever disguises mystified the guests for a short time."

On Monday, the Vice President and his wife, accompanied by Araminta Kern, "motored to Roanoke" to Cockespur, the Orchard Hill home of the Lucian Cockes, for a reception for nearly 1,000 guests, on "one of the most notable days in the social history of the city." Sen. Kern was called away from the festivities to Washington by urgent business. The newspaper account of the 1914 reception said the scene was "one of marked brilliancy and animation. With the handsome gowned women and their escorts, beautiful surroundings and music, it is an event that will long be remembered." During "the serving of the delicious menu, animated conversation was enjoyed." The reception ended a series of "delightful entertainments" in honor of the Marshalls, who later left on the Memphis Special for Washington.

Another report in Helen Prillaman's *Places Near the Mountains* said Vice President Marshall spoke to the Men's Bible Class at the Cove Alum Baptist Church during a visit to Kerncliffe.

The Indianapolis News had this evaluation of Kern in an editorial on Aug. 18, 1917: "... he was widely known as a man of friendly and kindly nature. Though a strong partisan, he had many admirers among Republicans. For many years, Mr. Kern had been prominent in politics. Twice his party's candidate for Governor under conditions that made election impossible, and once its Candidate for Vice President when success was out of the question. Mr. Kern fought three losing battles in such a way as greatly to strengthen his hold on the people. As senator, he had the confidence and respect of his colleagues who gladly accepted him as majority leader of the Senate. President Wilson had no more steadfast supporter in that body."

Kern attended the normal school at Kokomo, Ind., taught school and graduated from the law department of the University of Michigan in 1869. He practiced law in Kokomo, was an unsuccessful candidate for the state House

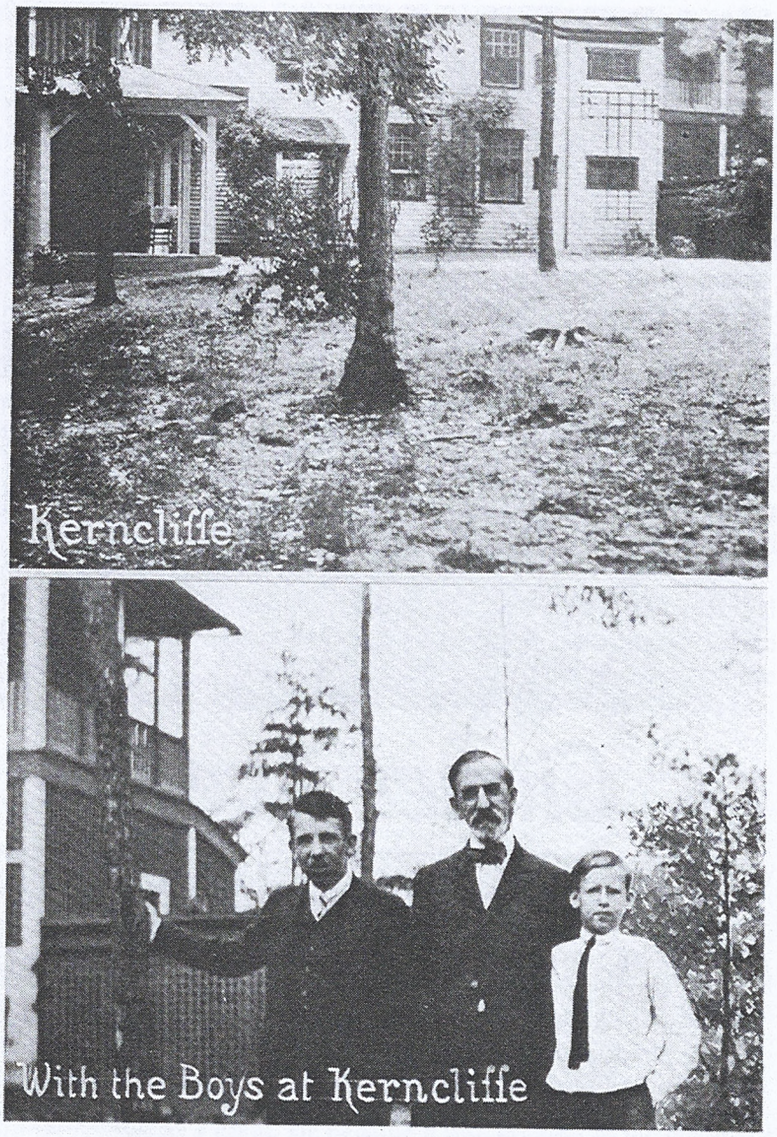
of Representatives, his first election campaign, in 1870. He served as Kokomo city attorney, reporter of the Indiana Supreme Court, as a member of the State Senate, special assistant U.S. district attorney and Indianapolis city solicitor. He lost two elections for governor before he ran on the Bryan ticket for Vice President.

The New York Times reported that in 1853 the Kern family "moved to a farm in Iowa and there for ten years he led the life of a pioneer, for during that time, he never saw a railroad train." The senator came to be known as "Uncle John Kern" and everybody who knew him had a kind word for him, according to The Indianapolis News.

When the Senate heard of his death on Saturday, Aug. 18, 1917, Sen. Harry S. New, the Republican who defeated Kern, made a motion, adopted by the Senate, calling for recess until Monday.

John W Kern Jr., one of the senator's two sons, placed a marker at his father's grave in Carvins Cove, bearing this inscription: "Here lies in Peace, the body of John Worth Kern; Resting after the Labors of a Life Lived for the Welfare of the People."

Among the tributes after Sen. Kern's death was this comment by William B. Wilson, secretary of labor under President Woodrow Wilson, in the Claude Bowers biography: "He belonged to a race of statesmen whose type and example was Abraham Lincoln. These unite simplicity and sincerity with ability and power. They are rugged and strong, like the hills, genial and fruitful like the prairies, and like all these qualities of nature, honest.



Top: Kerncliffe, Sen. John Kern's summer home at Carvins Cove. Bottom: Sen. Kern with two grandsons at Kerncliffe.

"Throughout a long and distinguished public career which attained to eminence in the history of his country, Senator Kern never wavered from his early ideals. Like all constructive men, he endeavored to adapt them to the necessities and requirements of a changing age, but he maintained them in their integrity to the last. They became part of the strong structure of better things — better because John Worth Kern lived."

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The boyhood home of famed civil rights lawyer Oliver Hill at 401 Gilmer Avenue (at right) has been purchased by the Oliver Hill Foundation and planning for its future use is under way. (Dan Smith photo)

Gilmer Avenue, Northwest

by Alice Roberts and Margaret Roberts ❖ first printed in Vol 14 No. 1 (1999)

Before Orange Avenue replaced the Lynchburg Turnpike, Gilmer Avenue served as the main eastwest route through the city, north of Shenandoah Avenue. From 1887 to 1920, black community leaders and professionals had offices and homes in the northwest corridor. Offices and businesses were on Gainsboro Road, Henry Street and the first block of Gilmer. Homes were located on Gilmer, Patton and Wells avenues and High Street (now Loudon Avenue, west of Henry Street).

Prior to 1900, the south side of Gilmer Avenue, Jefferson to Fifth Street, had been developed with homes on every lot. The north side for five blocks had only 21 houses and one church. Today, many of the houses are over 100 years old.

Black homes and businesses were in the surrounding area in the 1890s. An acceleration of construction on the north side of Gilmer took place from 1903 through 1907. The significant move of black residents to Gilmer Avenue occurred around 1910, with 1915 being the date of first purchases in the 400 block. The black-owned Gilmer Apartments at 301 Gilmer had their first tenants in 1925. Blacks moved to Gilmer Avenue east of Jefferson Street after 1927.

The intersection of Gilmer Avenue, Henry Street and Gainsboro Road was the professional and business hub. The Cosmopolitan Office Building on the northwest corner of Gilmer and Gainsboro was owned by local black stockholders. Its offices included physicians, dentists, attorneys, Richmond Beneficial Insurance, Magic City Building and Loan, Johnson and Reid Realtors and the Association of Colored Railway Trainmen. At various times, the first floor had a grocery, beauty parlor and a candy kitchen.

On Gilmer Avenue, one block east and one block west of the Gainsboro Road/Henry Street intersection, were located a service station, barber shop, photographer, made-to-order bake shop and milliner. Prior to moving to

Alice Roberts is a retired medical librarian and her sister, Margaret Roberts, retired as a clinical dietician. Their family has lived in the same house on Gilmer Avenue for 80 years. Their father, Dr. J.H. Roberts, was a co-founder of Burrell Memorial Hospital.

Henry Street, the Roanoke Tribune had its beginnings in 1939 in the first block of Gilmer. The first black undertakers were located on Gilmer Avenue and Gainsboro Road.

The Burrell Memorial Hospital opened in 1915 at 311 Henry Street. Its founders lived in the Gainsboro area, with two residing on Gilmer Avenue. The hospital moved to McDowell Avenue in 1921.

The Gilmer community represented an educational, social and economic mix, with skilled and unskilled persons living side by side. Gilmer Avenue was always integrated. Until the mid-1940s, each block had a convenience/grocery store, owned and operated by whites, with the exception of a store owned by blacks in the 300 block. The owners lived next door or above their business and were a part of community life. One family (non-grocery owner) lived in the 400 block from the turn of the century to their deaths in the 1930s.

The church was the center and life of the community, spiritually and socially. It also was a source of information and guidance regarding public, legal and social issues. Most residents were members of one of the following churches: First Baptist on Jefferson Street, High Street Baptist on High Street (now Centre Avenue, east of Henry Street), Ebenezer AME on Wells Avenue, St. Paul Methodist (which in 1915 moved from Henry Street to the corner of Gilmer and Fifth Street), Mt Zion AME on Gainsboro Road and Fifth Avenue Presbyterian on Patton Avenue.

The Phyllis Wheatley (later Lula Williams) Branch of the YWCA had its beginnings in 1924 on Wells Avenue. From 1926 to 1928, the Y occupied buildings on Gilmer Avenue at the southwest corner of Henry Street and from 1929 to 1933 buildings on the southeast corner. (The Y moved back to Wells Avenue in 1934 and in 1939 moved to Second Street N.E., and later to Orange Avenue.)

There was an emphasis on music in the homes, churches and schools. Several youths received instrumental instruction at the first Addison High School and later became members of the Aristocrats, a local orchestra. Some individuals received private lessons at home. The instructor would come by trolley from Salem and walk to the homes of pupils. One instructor had her studio in the Gilmer Apartments and one student of voice became an internationally known concert and opera tenor.

The theater on Henry Street, later High Street, provided attractions—movies and stage—for the neighborhood. The Dumas Hotel on Henry Street was the location for meetings, dinners, wedding receptions and other social gatherings.

In 1923, the movie "The House Behind the Cedars" was filmed in the 300 and 400 blocks of Gilmer Avenue by the black American filmmaker Oscar Micheaux. The house at 401 Gilmer had a significant role in the movie.

Gilmer Avenue is proud to claim as its residents an outstanding civil rights attorney, the first black U.S. ambassador, an activist for the cause of railway trainmen and many others outstanding in the fields of education, law, medicine and dentistry.

Prominent Gilmer Residents

Civil rights lawyer Oliver Hill lived at 401 Gilmer Avenue as a child. He became a lead counsel in the landmark public school desegregation case, Brown v. Board of Education, before the U. S. Supreme Court.

Edward Dudley, who grew up at 405 Gilmer and became a lawyer, was appointed minister to Liberia by President Harry Truman in 1948. When the post was upgraded the next year, Dudley became the nation's first black ambassador. He later was president of the Borough of Manhattan and a judge of New York State Supreme Court.

William Dupree, who became internationally recognized as a concert and opera tenor, took voice lessons on Gilmer Avenue.

Among other residents of Gilmer were Samuel Medley, one of the earliest black physicians; Daisy Schley, a pioneer black city nurse; Sara Buckholtz, a nurse with the City Instructive Nurses Association, and Dr. J.H. Roberts, a founder of Burrell Memorial Hospital, Roanoke's first black hospital.

R.L. Edwards, an official of the National Association of Colored Railway Trainmen and a partner in Citizens Undertaking Establishment, lived on Gilmer. Also living there were Richard Williams, a chef for the Norfolk and Western Railway, and Alvin Coleman, superintendent of service at Hotel Roanoke.

Lawyers and law officers also lived on Gilmer. Gustavus W. Crumpecker, a downtown lawyer, lived at 110 Gilmer. John W. Mills, a deputy U.S. marshal, resided at 210 Gilmer and Police Officer John Conrad lived at 326 Gilmer.

Sources: Publications from the Roanoke Public Library, Virginia Room; Roanoke city directories, 1888-1940, and Sanborn Insurance Co., New York maps of Roanoke, 1889-1907.

A Jefferson Street Stroll at the Turn of the Century

by Paul Stonesifer ❖ first printed in Vol. 11 No. 2 (1982)

A citizen of Roanoke today may be interested in a glimpse of the business section of Jefferson Street about 75 years ago as I ask him or her to join me in a stroll. My starting point is a house at the northwest corner of Elm Avenue and Jefferson, built by my father in 1890, the year I was born. I walk down to Jefferson Street and turn left to begin this adventure. First, I glance across the street to the P.L. Terry property, now Elmwood Park, surrounded by a very attractive stone wall extending along the east side of Jefferson from Bullitt Avenue to Elm Avenue.

The first house next to my home was built by H.C. Macklin and after a brief occupancy by him was sold and rented to several families over the years. The new brick sidewalk was laid about this time, replacing a board walk used for years. The next house is difficult to describe architecturally. It was a double house, the first part was one and a half stories and it was attached to a two-story structure.

Across the alley is the Green home, built some distance from the street by K.W. Green, a pioneer jeweler of Roanoke. The next house of stone and brick was built and occupied by Dr. F.C. Tice, a pioneer doctor of the city. The next lot at the corner of Day Avenue was vacant. At the northwest corner of Day Avenue and Jefferson is a large frame house occupied by the Camp family for many years. The rest of the property down to Buillitt Avenue was vacant. A house was built at the corner of Bullitt by Levi Witt.

The next 150 or 200 feet, now the site of the Patrick Henry Hotel, was vacant. Being level, it made an excellent playground. A baseball field was laid out and I remember seeing games there. On the southwest corner of Franklin Road and Jefferson was a large brick house which went by the name of the Rosenbaum home. I think it was built by Ed Rosenbaum.

Across Franklin Road on the northwest corner was a vacant lot. However, a frame store building was built here in the early part of this period. A marble cutting firm occupied a lot in this block but it was not in business very long. The next lots were vacant down to Luck Avenue. From Luck Avenue to Church Avenue was vacant; however, the Jefferson Theatre was built at the northwest corner around 1903. This block, now the site of Heironimus, was undeveloped for years and a deep hole was the remains of the foundation of a skating rink, demolished by the big snow of 1890.

We now cross Church Avenue where Knepps Livery Stable occupied the corner property. This was the premier livery business of the city, where citizens rented space for their horses and where livery equipment was for hire. Knepps' closed vehicles were largely used for weddings and dances.

Next to Knepps was a small frame house occupied by a photographer. At the corner of Kirk Avenue, the Southern Express Co. built a substantial brick building which it occupied for years and it still stands. Across Kirk Avenue on the northwest corner the property was owned by the YMCA. This lot with a high fence was used for basketball, just coming into use then.

The YMCA headquarters was in a frame building just west of the lot on Kirk Avenue. Next to the YMCA lot were three business buildings. The first was Vaughan Grocery Co., next was the Western Union Telegraph Co. and the Masonic Building was on the corner of Campbell Avenue. The ground floor of this building was occu-

Paul Stonesifer, who had one of the keener minds of Roanoke's older residents, died at 92 on Sept. 30, 1982. A former vice president and trust officer of First National Exchange Bank, he wrote this account of a walk down Jefferson Street from his home at the corner of Elm Avenue in the early years of this century. He joined the bank as a messenger in 1914 and he retired in 1956.

pied first by Thomas and Burns and next by Meals and Burke, a men's clothing store.

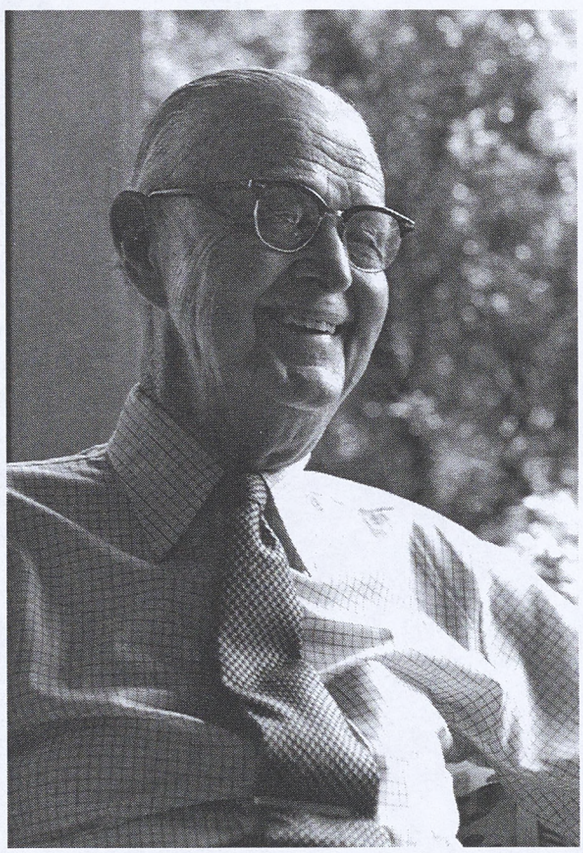
At the northwest corner of Campbell and Jefferson was the Southwest Virginia Trust Building. Adjacent to it was a small one-story structure about six feet from the sidewalk, partly occupied by Hiler's confectionery business. The next building at the southwest corner of Jefferson and Salem Avenue was occupied first by Christian & Budwell, druggists and later by another drug store, Van Lear Bros. Across Salem Avenue on the northwest corner was another drug store, operated by T.W. Johnson and his uncle, J.C. Johnson. This was one of the oldest drug businesses in the city.

Next to it was a shoe store and then a one-story building occupied in the early years of the century by the Busy Bee Restaurant, established by a Greek family. The next building, according to my memory was occupied by a retail hardware store.

We now cross Jefferson Street and start southward on the east side. At the southeast corner of Jefferson and

Norfolk Avenue is the building occupied by Barnes Drug Co. for many years. Next was a one-story building with several small shops, including a tailor. Another Greek family operated a restaurant in this block later. At the northeast corner of Jefferson and Salem there was a three-story building and I believe the Didier Grocery was on the ground floor. Across Salem Avenue at the southeast corner was the City Hotel. In this building Milan began his tobacco business. When the building was demolished, the location was occupied by a pawn shop and next to it Mr. Milan created a modern building in which his sons continued their profitable tobacco business.

The next property was occupied by Ryland and Rankin's Jewelry store. In front was a large street clock which can now be seen in downtown Vinton. The next building was occupied by a shoe store owned by Mary Gray. Tailor & Payne's's haberdashery store was next and at the northeast corner of Campbell and Jefferson E. Wile operated a men's clothing business.



Paul Stonesifer

Across Campbell Avenue at the corner we arrive at the Terry Building, Roanoke's first skyscraper and largest office building. The First National Bank and the National Exchange Bank were on the ground floor. Next was the Vaughan Building. The Post Office occupied part of this building for a while. Then on the corner of Kirk and Jefferson was an old landmark, the Fire House, of stone construction with a bell tower. I remember the date, 1888, in large letters on the front. The Fire Department occupied these quarters until it was moved to its present location on East Church Avenue. The vacant lot between Kirk and Church was used for many events such as small traveling circuses, temporary structures for religious services and a very elaborate carnival one year.

I believe the first building in this block was erected at the northeast corner of Church and Jefferson by Edgar Nininger. Now we cross Church and see a one-story building on the southeast corner occupied by C.L. Saul Grocery. It had a canopy over the sidewalk. Saul later moved to a new building at the northwest corner of Jefferson and Franklin Road. Noble's Livery Stable was next to Saul's and I remember so well the night the stable was destroyed by fire, with the loss of many horses.

The next lot was vacant until the Boxley Building was erected some years later. A.B. Hammond built a one-story structure on the southeast corner of Luck Avenue and Jefferson where he operated the Hammond Printing Co. for many years until his new five-story building was erected. The remainder of this block was vacant until a man known as "Cucumber" Lemon constructed a very bizarre home often referred to as Lemon's Folly on the northeast corner of Tazewell Avenue and Jefferson.

On the southeast corner of Tazewell and Jefferson, the lot remained vacant for years until the Elks Club was built about 1903, I believe. It remained until the club moved to a location off Brambleton Avenue. Next to the Elks Club was the Gale property, a large parcel fronting about 200 feet on Jefferson with a depth of approximately 250 feet. Dr. S.S. Gale, pioneer physician in Roanoke, built his home here. I remember the hitching post in front of the property and often saw his horse there awaiting a call from a patient. This brings us back to the Terry property, the present location of the Public Library.

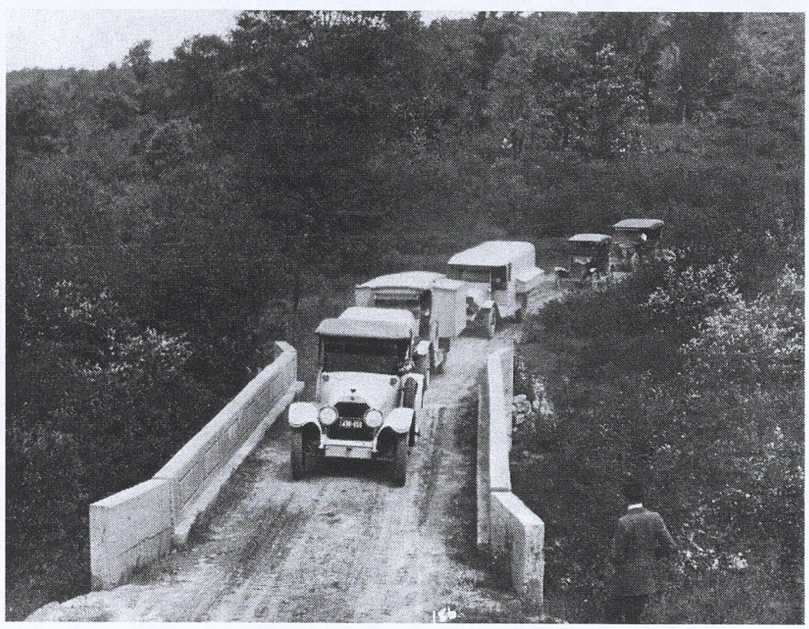
Jefferson Street was not paved until later. The surface was rolled stone, full of potholes. A single streetcar track traversed the center of the street.

Henry Ford & Friends on Tour

by George Kegley ❖ first printed in Vol. 3 No. 2 (1967)

"Traveling in a big Packard, with two Fords along behind as baggage wagons, for all the world like two colts following a mare, the daddy of all the Fords slipped into town yesterday chaperoning such celebrities as Thomas Edison and Henry (sic) Firestone," according to a front-page story in the Aug. 31, 1918 Roanoke Times.

The celebrities — Ford, Edison, Harvey Firestone and John Burroughs, writer-naturalist — "had dinner at Hotel Roanoke and would have slipped out just as quietly had they not run short of gasoline," the newspaper said. The procession was stalled in front of the Red Cross canteen on Jefferson Street at Shenandoah Avenue while a supply of gas was obtained.



A caravan of Model Ts (what else?), led by Henry Ford and friends, traveled through Martinsville, Roanoke and on to Natural Bridge in August 1918.

This was one episode in a two-week camping trip by the "Four Vagabonds," as they called themselves, through West Virginia, Virginia and North Carolina.

The itinerary of the circle tour from Pittsburgh south to Asheville and back and a number of pictures of the travelers are preserved in the Ford archives at Henry Ford Museum, Dearborn, Mich.

Ford had been chosen as the Democratic nominee for the U.S. Senate from Michigan shortly before the trip but when questioned by a reporter in Roanoke he "did not appear to be concerned so much about his political chances good or bad." The pioneer automobile manufacturer took no part in the campaign that fall but he lost by only a small margin.

As *Outdoors Calling!,* a recreation magazine, recently observed, family camping with its modern refinements, may have had its beginnings with the travels of the Vagabonds from 1914 until the 1920s.

Burroughs, who had passed 80 when he made the Southern trip, died in 1921. And that summer, the remaining three took their wives and newly elected President Warren Harding and Mrs. Harding on a camping excursion in Pennsylvania and Maryland.

In 1918, the party drove south by Elkins and on through brief stops at Hot Springs and White Sulphur Springs to "Camp Tuckahoe." Breaking camp early on the morning of Aug. 24, they passed through Sweet Springs, lunched at Gap Mills and drove on through Narrows to "Camp Wolf Creek."

Perhaps impeded by bad roads, they drove only a short distance the next day, passing through Princeton, Bluefield and Oakvale to "Camp Tazewell." From here, they went through Lebanon, Hansonville, Abingdon, Bristol and on into Tennessee. From the Grove Park Inn at Asheville, they returned by way of Winston-Salem.

George Kegley, a longtime resident of Roanoke, is a director emeritus of the History Museum, and editor of the Journal since 1968.

"Four Vagabonds" Henry Ford (from left), Thomas Edison, naturalist John Burroughs and Harvey Firestone stopped by an old mill in Franklin County on a1918 camping trip across the Southeast. This may have been Hambrick's Mill near Gogginsville, according to the late B.M. Phelps.

Somewhere between Martinsville and Roanoke, they posed for a picture beside an abandoned mill. From the picture, B.M. Phelps of Roanoke, a Franklin County native who has passed his 90th birthday, says they probably stopped at what once was Hambrick's Mill, located on property now owned by Phelps on Blackwater River, near Gogginsville in Franklin County. Phelps said the picture was not made at the mill at Boones Mill, which once was operated by his father.

Ford reported that the road from Martinsville was "not as bad" as some he had encountered. Three miles per hour is the limit in some places "not so far away that boast of good roads," he said.

Driving up the Shenandoah Valley, the Vagabonds rested at Natural Bridge and spent the night at Castle Inn, between Lexington and Staunton. "Nineteen tolls were paid before we reached Winchester," they wrote in their log.

Even while driving through the mountains, Ford dressed in his business suit but at the camp site he would take off his coat, roll up his sleeves and pitch in with the work.

The inventive genius of Edison, Ford and Firestone undoubtedly made this much more than an ordinary trip. They had separate tents for sleeping, ten feet square with mosquito flaps. Their 20-foot square dining tent contained a large circular table, nine feet across, which had a "lazy Susan" inset to pass food around. The table could be folded into a small portable package.

One of their trucks was refrigerated to keep camping provisions. They carried new gasoline stoves but they preferred wood fires. And Ford built a portable electric plant to light Edison's lamps which were strung through every tent.

Their outdoor living may have contributed to the longevity of the Vagabonds. Ford, Edison and Burroughs all lived to the age of 84 and Firestone to 70.

Dan Smith photo

Threading a Parkway Through the Blue Ridge

by David P. Hill ❖ first printed in Vol. 13 No. 2 (1996)

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.

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.

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.

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 tum 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 Southem 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 underway 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 Southem 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.

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.

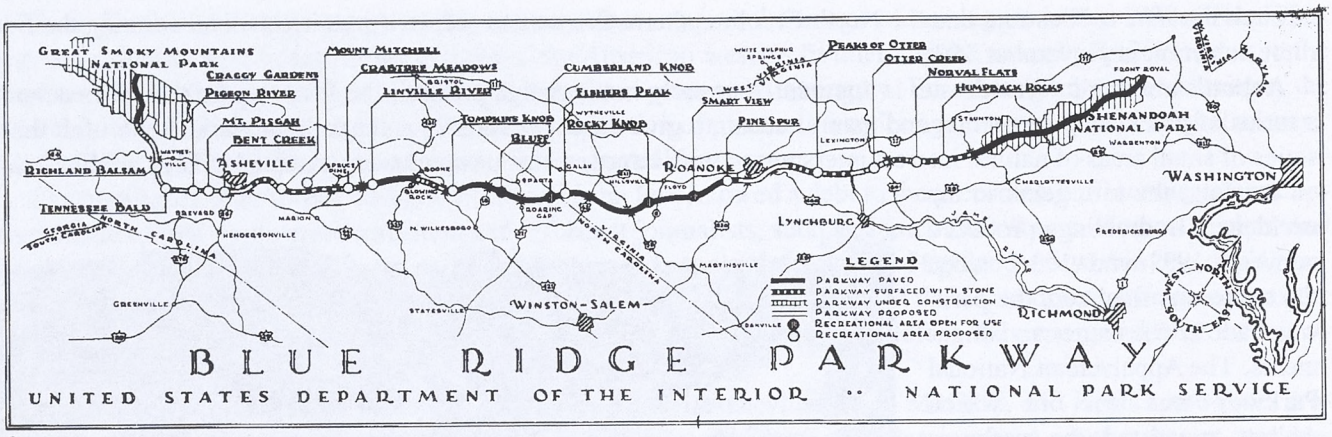
Abbott's training in Westchester is apparent very early in the design process; the Westchester parkways connect a series of preexisting recreation and natural areas, to give the impression of a single large park. Abbott felt that a series of small areas of natural interest interspersed with larger recreation 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.

About 90 percent of the workforce for the Blue Ridge Parkway came from the immediate area.

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 bam 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, stonelined 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.

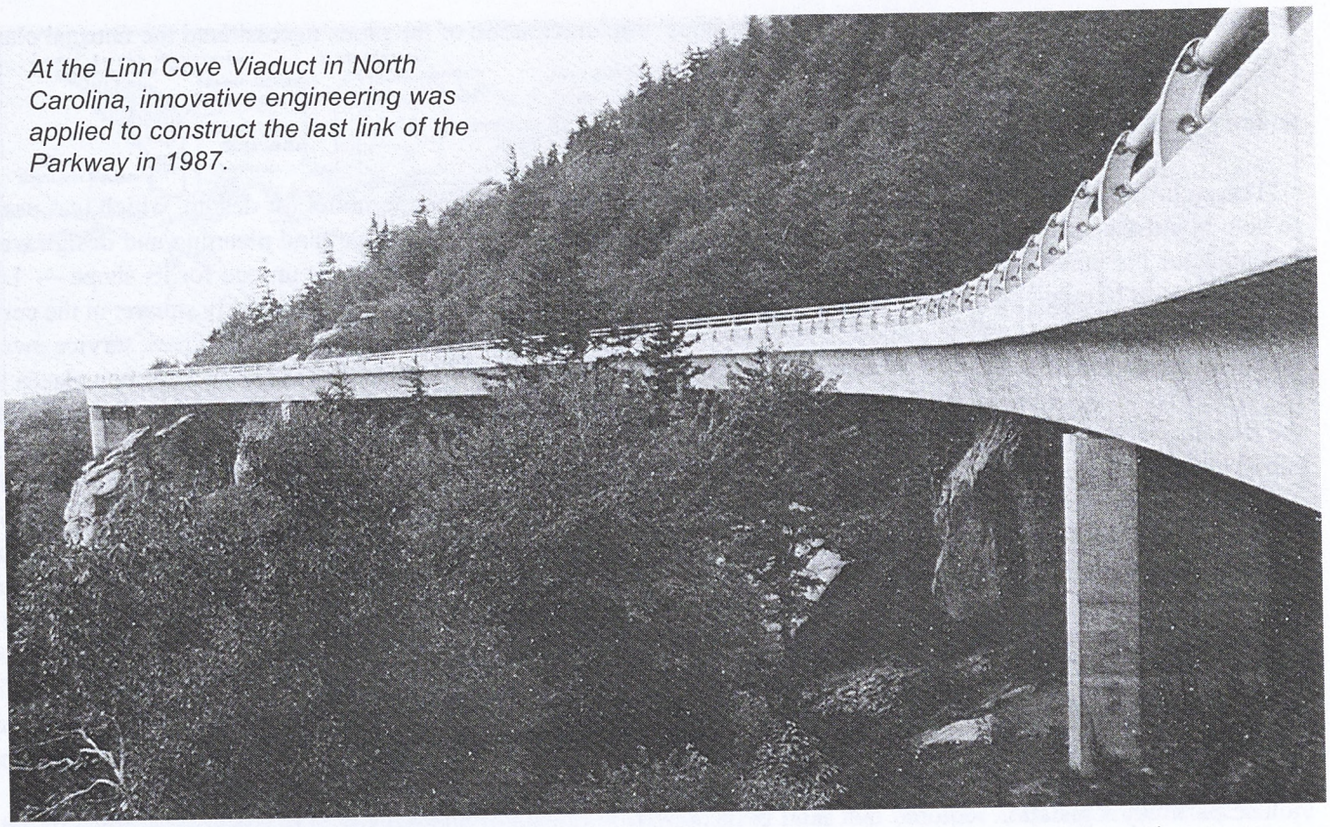
Abbott achieved a "cinematic view of nature" (Wilson, 101) and of agriculture, based on the scale of private estates and expanded to a speed of 45 miles per hour. The bridges and tunnels were set as the consistent point of reference within a variety of spectacular natural scenery, agricultural fields,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



At the Linn Cove Viaduct in North Carolina, innovative engineering was applied to construct the last link of the Parkway in 1987.

ment 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

Some images used in this article are courtesy of the Blue Ridge Parkway archives, National Park Service, Asheville, N.C.

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Roanoke's Future: More People on Less Land

by Dr. F. Meade Bailey ❖ first printed in Vol. 10 No. 1 (1977)

When they put me in the position of being a pundit, I wondered how I would guess what would happen 100 years from now! We are barely 100 years old. To determine this, I decided that I would ask the questions: What are the political pressures, and what are the laws that are being made, and what are the economic consequences, and then decide what is going to happen.

First, I want to say that we are going to have a unified government. I don't know how we are going to combine Roanoke, Salem and Vinton, but economically, it has to be done.

One of the things that you are always going to be asked is how big is Roanoke going to be. I plotted population history from Raymond Barnes' book and made a chart. Roanoke's population today is 106,000. The very rapid growth which has been talked about was phenomenal in the late 1800s. I suspect that what happened then is the same that is happening now. We put restrictions on the central part of the city and people don't like them so they move out and build things to their own liking out in the suburbs. Then the city engulfs them and they are all back in the same boat again. Here we are in 1976 up to 106,000 people. I think that is a phenomenal curve because all of the population predictors are always talking about population growing exceptionally and things running away with themselves.

Except for the first three years, this has been a straight-line course and I suspect the conservatism of Virginia and the conservatism that is inherited in Roanoke will probably continue this process so that I have to say that it will be a straight line in the future. When we get up to 2076 I say we are going to have 215,000 people. The question is how will we be able to take care of that many people?

I think there will be many changes that will take place which will allow us to do this. I drew a sketchy map show-

For an April 21, 1976, meeting of the 1900 Club, as part of Roanoke's 1976 Bicentennial celebration, Dr. F. Meade Bailey, an engineer at the Salem General Electric plant, looked into his crystal ball to see what the Roanoke Valley would look like in 2076. Here is an edited excerpt of some of his predictions.

ing the present airport. We have expanded this airport, but I'm sure that in 100 years we will have the regional airport with commuter buses going down I-581 to downtown Roanoke where $45 million worth of buildings have been built.

I think there won't be any automobiles allowed here. The congestion will be impossible, but there are ways of handling this. Manhattan Island does with a fewer number of automobiles in the the first mile radius and this is what will happen here. You'll probably commute in from Grandin Road or Vinton or from Tanglewood on a commuter bus. I keep saying commuter bus because there aren't going to be any railroads, in the passenger sense. There will be railroads, of course, for freight. If we once get around to that kind of thinking, we don't need all of those freight yards in the middle of Roanoke. I'm going to say that the freight yards are going to disappear and we can use that valuable land for other things.

Spur lines will bring produce, passenger service will be a commuter bus, probably to the airport and we should be able, by that time, to solidify our transportation system so that it will be effective and efficient.

There is not going to be any newspaper. I'm sure that's a terrible thing to say, but we're all going to walk around with some electronic thing and listen to the news. If we can't listen to the news all the time, it's going to type it out on a little piece of paper and we can read it from time to time.

Now, what are you going to do down in downtown? You are going to have small personal transporters. I would say now the nearest thing to them is the fork-lift truck, but that's a pretty heavy kind of thing, so let's say a lightweight golf cart. You will rent them there in order to get around. That is, if you are rich enough to do this. Remember that there is no evidence that inflation is going to stop so things are going to get expensive when you've got to see what you can do in terms of levels of cost of things. There will be transporters that you can rent, drive up to one store and leave it there, then rent another and drive to another place.

These will be the vehicles for those who want to have transportation. For the rest of us, we'll walk and we'll get back to walking a quarter of a mile or half a mile or so to get around, but we won't have the congestion of traffic that is certainly a part of the real problem.

There is not going to be any newspaper. I'm sure that's a terrible thing to say, but we're all going to walk around with some electronic thing and listen to the news. If we can't listen to the news all the time, it's going to type it out on a little piece of paper and we can read it from time to time. That is, the news — the daily things that are happening, things which are going to keep us up-to-date. There's still a need for the want ads, big sales announcements and advertisements. These will come out as an advertisement sheet. Deadlines won't be so serious, you can have it Tuesdays and if it doesn't come out until Wednesday morning, why that's all right. You'll still know what the Thursday sales are going to be. But I think that our system of communication is going to evolve to the point where we have lots of personal communication in the sense of the news and in the sense of getting it immediately, not via the newspaper.

Land values are going to go up, and most importantly, young families won't be able to buy the lots. This is true in California today. You can just see it coming. I think we are going to stop having 100-foot lots. We are going to take the 100-foot lots in the Grandin Road area and the area just west of the downtown section. We'll probably break them up into small groups and have small lots and put small houses on them. We'll have to change the zoning to do this. We'll have to change the building codes so that we can use modern techniques of doing this. Perhaps there will be trailer courts of houses, built like houses, not like trailers.

Anyhow, I think we will concentrate on small parcels of land with housing facilities on them, no large yards which we won't be able to keep up. There will be communal services such as washing machines, small gardens and the like. This seems to be the trend which we will have here. If this takes place, then we are going to build up small

communities which are self-sufficient. Tanglewood is already there.

There will be a large number of condominiums and apartments and those types of things and we will be forced economically to have a large number of our population forced to live in rental facilities of that kind, probably of a smaller size than currently deemed necessary. We are going to see the evolvement of trailer courts into the small lot, smaller housing area and gradually have it grow back into the city so that we can utilize land facilities more effectively.

Now, there are going to be some changes in rules and regulations. The banks and the political pressures tell young people that they can only afford to be outside the city. They will not give them loans for homes for properties inside the city to put their own effort in to build up, hence it runs down. There are other reasons for run-down areas, but that is one of the reasons there is no incentive to make young people turn to the city. Note that London, for example, is the other way. Some people are building up, buying older properties cheap and improving them. I think that is going to take place, and Roanoke is an ideal place for this kind of thing to happen, to reconcentrate the city.

Automobiles will be expensive, there will be only the small cars, probably with half the horsepower and we will not need any speed policemen because the cars won't go fast enough. They can do other things, but we will of necessity have to make the whole environment more efficient and concentrate on our resources and our living accommodations.

The river will be fixed up by then. There will be boating on it. A law will be passed so that you can have a canoe with a 100-watt motor, without a license. A license now costs more than the motor. We'll get to the point where it will be a very useful recreation area and we'll have overcome some of the ecology preservers.

We absolutely have to have lower-cost housing to serve the young people. Inflation is going to get them so we are going to have to do it. In that connection, when we look at the crime problem, our productive capacity is going to be so great that tape recorders, dishes and chairs, cupboards and all the kind of things that you use to live with are going to be relatively so cheap that everybody will have them and there's going to be no point in stealing them. Stealing will be a problem for the well-to-do. There will be richer and richer people. Hunting Hills will become an armed camp. It will have a fence around it with guards. It will have private policemen simply because the city cannot afford to have a large enough police force to take care of the situations which will take place.

Probably we are going to have more school systems which teach people salable skills. We accept the business college where we teach people, mostly women, to type and do secretarial work and we look upon that as a very significant kind of contribution. We will have the same contributions for the other kind of things which will become absolutely essential: brick-laying, carpentry, machine shops, automobile mechanics and the like. We will raise the skills of our people simply because economically we are going to do so. Colleges will shrink. We will certainly have a few big universities for specialized studies and broad educational background but we will have to face it, not everybody is going to be cut out for that.

I think the community coliseum kind of thing may become so expensive that people in the smaller communities such as Tanglewood and Vinton will develop their own amateur theater and they will have their own show house. There will be more group participation in this kind of thing. The big extravaganzas will then be exclusively a civic center feature.

Question about agriculture, very important to this community now. There will probably be greenhouses and orchards. I understand you can write off a greenhouse in 2 1/2 years. This is phenomenal and economically that will make them grow.

I look forward to it being a very wholesome community in which people are actually doing things and able to do things and economically possible for them to have a lot more personal living even though they are confined together and all 215,000 are channeled together in roughly the same amount of area. Some people will look at this as being undesirable. We don't have the large spacious areas, we don't have the farms and the like to live on, but we can make communities which are fantastically pleasant to live in.

We just won't be here to do it.

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