

Historical Society of Western Virginia

2014

Journal



Vol. 21

No. 2

Historical Society of Western Virginia

Amor montium nos movet

(For the love of mountains inspires us)

Officers

Natalie Norris Acting President, Vice President

Tommy Moore Secretary

Jerry Bradley, CPA Treasurer

Director of Administration Kim Clymer

Board of Directors

Alison Stone Blanton

John P. Bradshaw

Ben Chapman

Wilburn "Will" Dibling Jr.

Helen S. Franks

Gordon Hamilton

Rev. Nelson Harris

Scott Hengerer

William E. "Bill" Honeycutt

Jim Humphrey

Dr. Norma Jean Peters

Charles Price

F. Anderson Stone

Katherine Watts

Directors Emeriti

Sara S. Airheart

George A. Kegley

Edgar V. Wheeler

In Memoriam

Barbara Lemon

David Helmer

George Kegley

Editor of the Journal

Christina Koomen

Production, Editorial Assistant

The Journal, Vol. XXI, No. 2, chronicles the history of the Commonwealth west of the Blue Ridge. It is published by the Historical Society of Western Virginia (formerly the Roanoke Historical Society), P. O. Box 1904, Roanoke, Va. 24008. The price for additional copies is \$5 for members and \$10 for others. The Society welcomes unsolicited material but submissions cannot be returned and the Society cannot be responsible for damage or loss.



These four coin silver spoons made by John Welch (ca. 1790-1827) of Fincastle, a Great Road artisan of the early 19th century, were acquired with funds provided by the Roanoke Committee of the National Society of the Colonial Dames of America in the Commonwealth of Virginia. They are in the Fiddle pattern, with shoulders. The monogram appears to be WSC. Coin silver means the alloy is set at the same standard as that used for minting dollar coins in the United States at the time, 900 parts silver per 1,000, or 90 percent pure silver. The History Museum is delighted to have such a fine example of locally made silver, and expresses its gratitude to the Colonial Dames for their donation.

Table of Contents

p. 4 Growing Up in Roanoke in the 1920s to 1930s • by Helen Fitzpatrick

p. 9 O. Winston Link's 100th Birthday Party

p. 10 Bedford Barns • by Dan Pezzoni

p. 22 Frances Benjamin Johnston, Renowned Photographer, and the George Trout Farm in NW Roanoke • by Mike Pulice

p. 28 Runaway Slaves: Mindset of Negroes, 1861-1865 • by Matthew Woods

p. 36 Many Presidents have visited Roanoke Valley • by Sandra Brown Kelly

p. 42 Michelle Obama has Henry County Slavery Roots

p. 44 The Jacob Persinger Family in "Backcountry Virginia" • by Walter Dixon

p. 54 Living on the Edge of the Blue Ridge Parkway • by Peter Givens

p. 58 Rebuilding Mabry Mill, a Southern Appalachian Icon • by Jack Betts

p. 64 The American Chestnut Trade in the Blue Ridge of Southwestern Virginia • by Ralph H. Lutts

p. 69 Charles Schaeffer: Freedmen's Rights, Education, Worship in Christiansburg and Southwest Virginia, 1866-1899 • by Dr. John Kern

p. 77 Help Us Preserve Our History

On the cover: Carter family cabin ca. 1908, built by Christopher Persinger ca. 1773. See Walter Dixon's "The Jacob Persinger Family in 'Backcountry Virginia.'"

Growing up in Roanoke in the 1920s to 1930s

by Helen Fitzpatrick

A little Boy Scout was reporting on his good deed for the day. He said, "I helped an old lady across the street but it was very hard." The scoutmaster queried, "Why was it so hard?" The little Scout answered, "She didn't want to go." I really didn't want to come down here to the History Museum today but when George Kegley called, I knew I had to, because he has done so much for this museum and for our community, so here I am and there you are. I hope you don't stop listening before I stop talking.



Helen Fitzpatrick

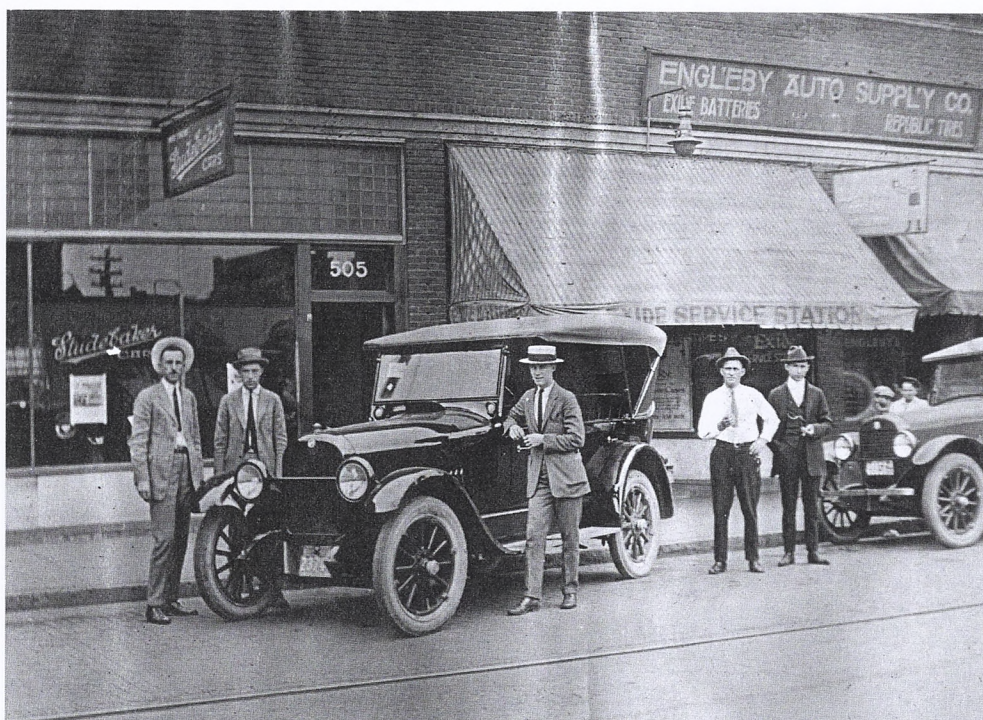
I was born in 1923 in the old Lewis-Gale hospital, now a parking lot next to the studio of WSLs-TV. My home was in Northwest in a suburb called Grove Park. This area was developed by Elmore D. Heins, a German who with another German, Heini Scholz, owned all the theaters in town, a very lucrative business. His home is now The Hermitage, a Methodist retirement home. It was really in the country then and we were surrounded by alfalfa fields.

A man we called Bubba came from Fincastle to mow the fields now and then. The following day he would return to rake them and next he would arrive with pitchforks and a friend to make the hay into haystacks. We were crazy about Bubba because he would let us ride on his horse for a few minutes each day. The haystacks delighted us too, because they smelled so good and we almost ruined them, playing hide and seek and "old dead mule."

One special memory I have is of afternoon naps. On certain days, I would be on my bed and I would hear a horse clippity-clopping up the street (our streets were asphalted by then). I knew who it was and rushed downstairs and out the door to greet Liz Parrott, who was a good friend of Mother's and who came to visit her often. She would swing me up onto the saddle and ride me around the block. Then she returned, dismounted and came in to have tea and a visit with Mama. Liz had ridden from her father's farm, which is now the Veterans Administration Hospital. Mr. Parrott's home is the present administrator's home.

We walked to school each day, came home for lunch and went back the five blocks to Forest Park School. Bev [her late husband, Judge Beverly Fitzpatrick Sr.] carried my books to school most mornings. We didn't have book bags then but what made Buddy [brother Broaddus Jr.] and me feel special was that Daddy made us a new pencil box each Christmas and that was so much more than many of our friends received. There was only cursive writing in school. We were rehearsed in the Locker Writing System and we had no idea how to print.

Helen Fitzpatrick, matriarch of an active Roanoke family, gave this reminiscence in the First Thursday series of the Historical Society of Western Virginia on May 1, 2014.



Jarrett-Chewning Company was a dealer of Studebaker automobiles and White motor trucks. Broadus Chewning (the author's father) is in the center, leaning against the automobile and wearing a straw hat.

The favorite games in Grove Park were played on the street, because there was little traffic. Almost everyone had skates or scooters and we played tag and a hockey of sorts. The boys used broomsticks and the hockey puck was a tin can. Those cans were the size of golf balls and solid as a rock when the games ended.

Another form of entertainment was for us to attend Sunday school and church, twice on Sunday and again on Wednesday nights. Only six denominations were prevalent in Roanoke then: Baptist, Catholic, Presbyterian, Episcopal, Methodist and Lutheran. If there were fundamental groups, we were not aware of them. We attended strange things like Walkathons and the Billy Sunday meetings at the American Legion Hall.

I can remember gathering around our first radio as a family to listen to Amos and Andy, with lots of static in the background. We went to Saturday movies (the Rialto, the Roanoke, the Jefferson and the American theaters) and there was a Safety Club meeting each Saturday at the newly opened Grandin Theatre, attended by a huge crowd of children from all over town. To get into a movie, you had to have 10 cents, a nickel for a candy bar and you had it made. The Judge [the late Beverly Fitzpatrick Sr.] remembered belonging to a Scout troop at Greene Memorial Methodist Church. When he left home, his mama gave him 15 cents: 5 for the bus and 10 for a hot dog and Coke at the Texas Tavern after the troop meeting. I don't know how he got home!

Air conditioning was unknown in those days and so was automatic heating. Daddy used to get up in the morning before the rest of us to stoke the furnace and build a fire in the little water heater that gave us warm water for our baths. There were no washing machines, no dryers or dishwashers. We had no refrigerators but we did have an ice box. The ice man came once or twice a week to put a big hunk of ice into the left side of it and the food went on the right. My brother and I used to chip pieces off of the hunk to hold in our mouths and it was a treat.

There were no grocery stores near us, no national food chains as there are now. The nearest store was about 3 miles away, down Melrose Avenue, called Carter's Grocery Store. Mother would call in

her order (no dial phones yet) and a grand old black man named Louis would bring the food to the back door, place it on the kitchen table and leave. There were no locked doors at that time and we never took a key out of a car when we parked it.

To augment that, a produce truck would drive by often and wives would come out of the houses to select vegetables and fruits, which were weighed on a swinging scale at the back of the truck. A milkman came twice a week, bringing milk, cream, cottage cheese and butter. Our dairy was Garst Brothers. Our favorite trucks, however, were the ice cream ones. The driver would ring bells and I seem to recall



Helen Sheahan Chewning (the author's mother), in period costume, riding on a float in a parade in Roanoke, circa 1925.

that he had a little song he played on an amplifier so we would be sure not to miss him. All the kids would rush out of their homes with small change to purchase a popsicle. That was special!

Street cars were the main mode of transportation. One ran at the foot of our hill and proceeded to Salem, I think. They ran all over Roanoke, and when we moved to South Roanoke in 1950 I remember one coming up Jefferson Street to 26th, then over to Rosalind Avenue, right on 27th, crossed Wycliffe, left on 26th and back to Jefferson to return downtown. Conductors had to reverse the seats at the end of each run. The seats were wicker, with brass handles on top. If you were headed for Salem, you'd be facing that way. When you went back to Roanoke, you would face in that direction. I always sympathized with those conductors. The boys used to delight in putting pennies on the trolley rails. A flat penny was like a trophy. They also bedeviled the conductor by disengaging the electric pole. The poor man would have to leave the car to put the pole back on the wire again. By this time, the boys had disappeared, of course.

During the Depression, many hobos used to come to the house, asking for food. Shaffer's Crossing was fairly close to us and we figured they had come to Roanoke on trains, looking for a job.

Mother never turned one away. I also recall Daddy checking on us, as we did our homework. "Keep your lights on when you need them," he would say, "but cut them off as soon as you are finished studying. People don't buy cars during Depressions," he would explain.

Downtown was so different then. You could walk down Campbell Avenue and Jefferson Street and speak to everyone you met by name. There were several "10-cent stores": Woolworth's, Kress, Grant's and McClellan's. They were full of cosmetics, jewelry and ceramics, plus about anything else that anyone might want. Most of the articles were made in Japan, not China.

We had some fine department stores. McBain's, Heironimus, Pugh's and Thurman & Boone were the largest. They carried quality merchandise. When you made a purchase they wrote it on a pad, folded the paper and put it in a canister. This, they inserted in a pneumatic tube which whisked it through many pipes to the upstairs offices. You could hear those tubes rattling back down to the clerk's desk. It was fascinating.

No ladies went to town (or to church) without wearing dresses, hats, gloves, hose and heels.



Victory Stadium on Thanksgiving Day, circa 1950. The stadium is packed with spectators attending the annual VPI-VMI football game, dubbed "The Military Classic of the South." Virginia Military Institute cadets are in formation on the football field to honor the Virginia Polytechnic Institute's Corps of Cadets, seated in the stands at right. The VPI band is in formation on the north end of the field (left), while players warm up on the sidelines. The silos of Roanoke City Mills can be seen in the background.

And no ladies ever wore slacks! Fashion shows were quite popular and they raised money for charitable causes. Another thing — when a new neighbor moved close to you, it was customary to go and call on him or her. You left your engraved card on their hall table, which held a plate for that purpose. Then, the new person was expected to "return the call." That was a great way to get to know people who lived nearby.

When I was a teenager, World War II began and America began to change. Every citizen was given a dated stamp book which allowed you to purchase things. Almost everything was rationed! Sugar, butter, meat, gasoline, cigarettes, whiskey, et cetera. Bev was a student at Washington and Lee and he traded his whiskey stamps to his friends for gas stamps, enabling him to come see me at Hollins.

Mother was chairman of the Red Cross Motor Corps and, of course, I belonged too. We wore nifty uniforms and would be alerted when trains or planes of wounded soldiers were due here. We would meet them, go on the cars and planes with those dear boys, trying to cheer them and give them some comfort. We took sandwiches, cookies and cold drinks to them, which were deeply appreciated. Our USO parlor was located in the train station so that servicemen would come up there to relax and have some refreshment. Some of us met at the Red Cross headquarters during the week to knit socks and hats



Beverly Fitzpatrick with Helen Chewning



Inspired by local aviatrix Martha Anne Woodrum, Helen took up flying.

for the men and to roll bandages.

Daddy and I were "block wardens." Due to the proximity of the rail yards, Roanoke had been told we were a bombing target. So after dark each night, Papa and I would roam the neighborhood, searching for any pinpoint of light that might be shining out of a house.

You must know by now that I married that little boy who used to carry my books to school. He was home on leave from the Navy when the announcement came that the European war had ended. That VE Day was one I will ever remember. We rushed down to Jefferson Street to celebrate with throngs of people, who made a solid wall across the avenue. People were laughing, crying, dancing, hugging and most were arm in arm. It was such a joyful occasion.

Another great celebration Roanoke enjoyed occurred each Thanksgiving. Crowds would line Jefferson Street to watch the VMI and VPI cadets leave the train at the station and march smartly out to Victory Stadium, bands and all. The bleachers there were crammed with fans who came to see the two military schools play football. Many notables attended the game: Council members, governors, and I even remember sitting behind General and Mrs. George Marshall one year. The nice thing was that these celebrities would switch sides at halftime so they wouldn't show favoritism.

One more story you may enjoy: While I was working in the newsroom at the paper I decided to learn to fly. Friends thought I was crazy, but I admired Martha Anne Woodrum a lot; she encouraged me. The night after I soloed, some neighbors entertained me at dinner. Everyone was asking why I would attempt such a thing. I replied that I thought air travel was a thing of the future. I'll never forget what one man said. "You don't really believe that ordinary people will be flying in airplanes, do you?" "I do," I said. And look at what has happened.

I have been privileged to see a great deal of the world and I have always returned, being grateful to live in Roanoke. I am blessed to live here and so are you!



O. Winston Link, recognized as a leading railroad photographer, also took industrial and commercial photos, like this one of Interstate 81 construction at Newbern, Pulaski County, in 1959.

O. Winston Link's 100th Birthday Party

A new exhibit, "The First Century of O. Winston Link," opened last fall at the Link Museum and it was the highlight of a 100th birthday party for the noted railway photographer at the Roanoke museum on Dec. 14. From more than 2,000 images, Ellen Arnold, a longtime volunteer at the museum, selected commercial and industrial photographs that have never been exhibited, as well as photos from his personal life, including one of his granddaughter, Annie.

A photo shows Link's self-portrait while working on his first commercial project in Louisiana in 1937. Because his initials were OWL, a portrait has him posing with an owl. For a panoramic image of a switcher locomotive at Shaffers Crossing in Roanoke, he shot the train by sections and pasted them together. He placed cables across the Maury River near Buena Vista to hang lights and take a photo of a locomotive passing a dam.

Link was celebrated for his creative work from 1937 until retirement in 1983. He died in 2001 at the age of 86. Peppermint stick ice cream, Link's favorite, was served at the birthday party.

Bedford Barns

by J. Daniel Pezzoni

Say “farm” to someone and they are likely to picture a barn. The barn is the iconic building type of the American farm landscape, yet changes in agricultural practices and land use have placed many older barns at risk, in western Virginia as much as other areas of the country. Recognition of this fact inspired the Bedford Historical Society to launch the Bedford County Farm Survey in 2013, a documentation of over 700 farms and thousands of farm buildings.

Known as the “Bedford Barn Survey” for short, and undertaken by the author, an architectural historian with Landmark Preservation Associates in Lexington, the project was funded in part by the Virginia Department of Historic Resources during a second phase in 2013-14. The survey generated a wealth of information on the county’s historic farm buildings, ranging from crude log corncribs to architecturally sophisticated dairy barns to specialized facilities for canning tomatoes and packing apples, as well as many other common (and uncommon) farm building types.

What were Bedford County’s first farm buildings like? The simple answer is: we don’t know. Settlement of the area that would become Bedford County in 1753 began in earnest in the first half of the 18th century as agriculturalists of largely English and African derivation moved into the area from more established areas in Piedmont and Tidewater Virginia (with a few settlers from other regions), but no farm buildings from this early period are known to survive. In fact, no farm building from the 1700s was positively identified by the survey, although it is possible a few are tucked away in remote corners of the county (the survey concentrated on properties visible from public roads; many less accessible farms were not included).

But we can deduce something about Bedford’s early farm building stock. In its society, economy and culture the county was like others further east, and in those areas farm buildings were typically frame structures of simple gable-roofed form, with weatherboard siding and wood shingle roofs. Frame construction was the normative building technology of colonial Virginia, and wood was an abundant building material.

In fact, standing timber was over-abundant, a hindrance to pioneer agricultural. The first step in the establishment of a Bedford farm would have been land clearance, a back-breaking chore typically carried out by a slave workforce under the supervision of the farm owner or his overseer. But there was a shortcut. Farmers often planted their crops in “deadenings,” groves of dead trees killed by “girdling,” the removal of a strip of the life-giving outer woody layers. The leafless branches allowed sufficient light to reach the ground for the plants to grow. Fire was also employed in a version of slash-and-burn agriculture which enhanced, at least in the short term, soil nutrients. With its charred, dead forests early Bedford would have been no beauty spot, but the point was to maximize agricultural profits with a minimum of effort, not aesthetics.

A glimpse of the county’s early farm building stock is provided by the records of the Mutual As-

Dan Pezzoni is an architectural historian who formerly worked in the Roanoke Regional Preservation Office of the State Department of Historic Resources. He has written or edited eight county architectural histories and he has prepared National Register of Historic Places nominations for over 100 historic districts and individual properties in seven states.



The iconic American barn: the County Farm Barn (1936), located on the former county poor farm near Bedford, has the gambrel roof and red-painted siding typical of the the larger early-20th-century barns.

insurance Society of Virginia, an insurance company active in the rural parts of the county during the first two decades of the 19th century. Of the 10 or so barns described in the company's "declarations" (applications for coverage) for the period 1802 through 1818, all were wooden buildings with wood-covered roofs. The wooden construction of the barns was either log or frame and the wood roof coverings meant the buildings were wood shingled or may have had clapboard or board-and-weight pole roofs.

Most of the barns described in the Mutual Assurance Society records for Bedford County were one story high. Two were described as two stories, possibly an indication they were of the type known as the bank barn form. As the name suggests, a bank barn was built into a bank so that both its upper and lower levels were directly accessible from the ground. The upper level contained a haymow (hay loft) and, typically, a central drive-in bay and threshing floor. The lower level contained animal stalls. Bank barns are traced to German-speaking lands in Europe and were introduced to Virginia by Germans who primarily settled west of the Blue Ridge.

Surviving bank barns in the county are of three basic types, all relatively rare. The true bank barns, those having full lower levels, appear to date mostly to the 20th century and may owe more to promotion of the form in the agricultural press than to vernacular transmission. Examples include bank barns on the Carner-Croft Farm at Kelso Mill and the Nance Farm in the Moneta vicinity.

The second type might be called false bank barns. These have lower levels but they are not a full

story in height and did not function for housing livestock. Instead the purpose appears to have been to raise the haymow floor off the ground to protect the hay from damp. The premier example of the form is the 19th century barn at Parkdale Farm near Sedalia. This large barn, constructed of pegged mortise-and-tenon heavy timbers and possibly antebellum in date, is also notable for the wrought-nailed construction of its double-leaf drive-through doors, representing either a late use of the nail type, manufacture of the nails on the farm, or recycling of doors from an earlier barn. The ca. 1900 barn on the Jennings Farm near Kelso Mill also has haymow floors lifted off grade.

The third bank barn type might be called a half bank barn. An example of the form is the frame barn on the Blair Farm near Chamblissburg which was probably built in the early decades of the 20th century although it reuses hewn timbers from an earlier building (possibly a barn). Not only does the Blair barn have a half bank form, its design is split-level; the south end, to the left of the center drive-through, has lower-level animal stalls the upper portions of which rise several feet above the drive-through floor, whereas the north end is level with the drive-through. The Blair barn is also notable for various provisions for the care of the animals housed in the lower level such as an engaged porch-like drive-through in front of the stalls; latticed openings on the front of the stalls to facilitate ventilation; and openings at the back of the stalls above the center drive-through floor through which hay from the mow was easily forked to the animals below.

The haymow may be considered the functional nucleus of the county's barns, and because of its utility apart from the sheltering and feeding of livestock it often exists in isolation as a hay barn. Many hay barns are constructed of log, a material and construction technique ideally suited to hay storage. The slender young-growth trees that could be used to build hay barns were less valuable and presumably more plentiful than larger, older trees during the early 20th century, the period from which most of the county's log hay barns appear to survive. The gaps between logs provided ample air flow to the loosely piled hay.

One of the oldest barns identified in the survey, that on the Elliott Farm at Reba, which appears to date to the 1880s although it may have older fabric, has as its core a stoutly constructed v-notched log haymow that perches high on a boulder and rubble foundation. The frame stock shed that attaches to its side is constructed with cut nails and, although it may have been built at the same time as the log portion, reads as secondary. Over time the Elliott barn was enlarged by two additional frame sections to create a linear four-part composition. The barn's location on the heavily wooded flanks of the Blue Ridge, relatively far from the railroads that served Bedford County in the late 19th century and in an area where tanbark production and the creation of new arable ground through the practice of "deadening" were still occurring, probably accounts for the relatively large logs used in the barn's construction.

The log "crib" of the standard log hay barn could be doubled to form the "double-crib barn" of Appalachian fame. Presumably many double-crib log barns were built in Bedford County in historic times; however, the windshield documentation and prior and recent survey efforts have identified only two. One was surveyed by architectural historian Anne Carter Lee in the Rocky Branch/Joppa Mill vicinity in 1975. Lee noted that the two-level barn's lower level was very low, more like a raised basement, the configuration noted in the partial bank barns described above. The second documented double-crib log barn is located on the Key-Shackford Farm north of Bedford. Ownership history, nail chronology, and other features suggest the Key-Shackford barn may date to the 1910s, possibly the 1920s. Sheds on two sides protected many of the saddle-notched logs, which are in almost pristine condition, but exposed sides have experienced deterioration which current owners Joy and Andrew Watkins are repairing.

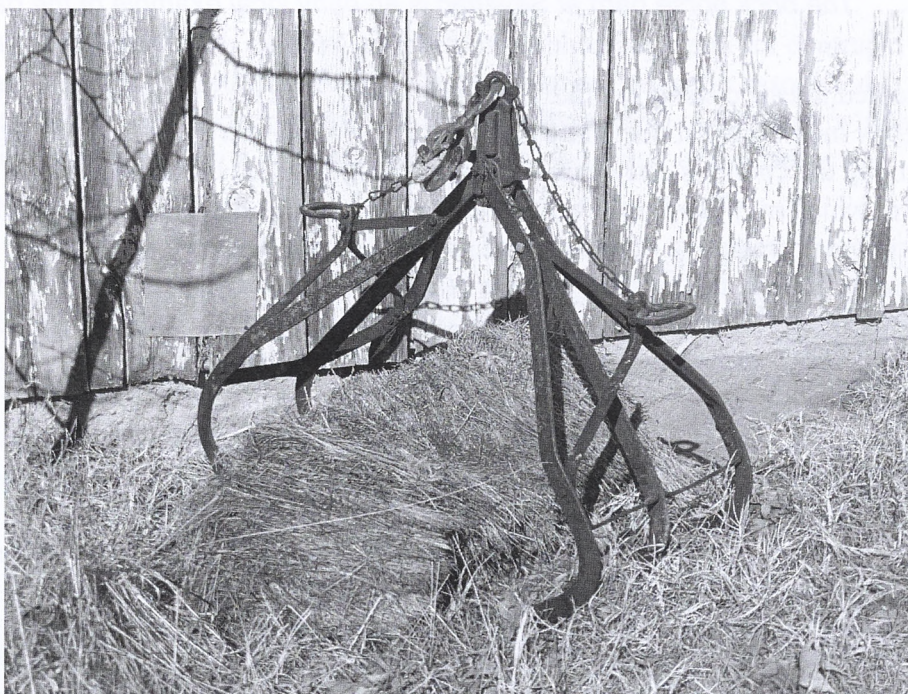
The basic functional division of the bank barn with animals below and hay above characterized the large non-bank barns constructed throughout the county in the first half of the 20th century. These multipurpose barns were promoted during the period by the agricultural press, plan services, state

agricultural authorities and the Virginia Agricultural and Mechanical College (Virginia Tech) in Blacksburg. The form reflected the interest in scientific farming methods, efficiency and labor-saving technology that characterized the Victorian and Progressive periods.

Closely associated with the newly introduced multipurpose barn form, also known as the loft barn type, was the popularity of the gambrel roof form. The double-sloped gable roof came to be replaced by the four-sloped gambrel form in new loft barn construction during the period 1900 to 1950. The gambrel barn roof form in its modern incarnation was spread by the adoption of the mechanized hay carrier after the Civil War. The carrier used a hay fork, typically in the form of a pincer-like grappling mechanism, to lift loose hay from a wagon parked in the barn's drive-through or outside one end and drop it into the hay-mow, thereby bypassing the hard work of pitching by pitch fork. In 1867 Iowa inventor William Loudon patented what became the preferred system. Loudon's carrier "elevates the hay perpendicularly any height," the inventor wrote in period advertising copy, "then conveys it horizontally to the back of the longest mow and returns the Fork back to the load without a single effort of the Pitcher." Hay fork systems like Loudon's worked best in haymows that were free of obstruction from the crossbeams of old-fashioned heavy timber construction. The old construction methods were becoming less tenable as mechanized lumbering gradually reduced the availability of large timbers. The solution, perfected in the Midwest and gradually



The double-crib log barn on the Key-Shackford Farm probably dates to the 1910s or 1920s but is representative of earlier log barns.



A hayfork outside a Bedford County barn.



The brick horse barn at Savenac is an early local example of the gambrel-roofed form.

adopted in east coast areas like Bedford County, was the development of roof forms constructed from lighter members that dispensed with crossbeams and were in their later iterations self-supporting. Among the county's early gambrel-roofed multipurpose barns is the horse barn at Savenac south of Bedford, which may have been built in the 1910s when horse raiser Dean Starks acquired the property. The barn is representative of transitional gambrel forms. The roof is supported by a row of heavy posts at the breakpoints and the posts in turn are reinforced by cross-braces that tie in to the floor structure and wall plates. Starks' English nationality may in part explain the roof form as well as other features such as the barn's handsome brick construction and a basement level that may have served to enhance ventilation of the space above.

The 1936 County Farm Barn, or "Red Barn" as it is generally known, located at Falling Creek Park, has a self-supporting gambrel roof modeled on the light-framing advances of the early 20th century. It has been suggested the barn was built from a Sears, Roebuck kit and it does share general features with published examples of Sears barns, as well as specific features such as the shed ventilation dormers that project from the roof; however, an exact exterior match has not been established. Other barn kit suppliers such as the Gordon-Van Tine Company, the Aladdin Company and the Loudon Machinery Company were active during the era and may be the source. For example, the Aladdin Company is believed to have supplied components for the Woolfolk Barn, built in 1940-41 and visible from U.S. 460 on the south side of Bedford.

A barn with a gambrel roof similar to that which covers the County Farm Barn was built at Triple Hills Farm near Stewartsville in 1944-45. According to family tradition, farm owner C.W. Spradlin had trouble finding a barn builder who could build the kind of barn he wanted until he found a 23-year-old carpenter named Marvin Saunders who was up to the task. The barn's virtually self-supporting gambrel roof is even more economical of lumber than the County Farm Barn roof, although the area

spanned appears to be narrower. The tradition about the barn's construction suggests the advanced roof forms were still relatively unknown to county barn builders as late as the 1940s.

The epitome of the self-supporting form was the so-called Gothic Arch roof popular from the 1910s through the 1950s. The Gothic Arch roof, which has the curved and pointed profile of the Gothic lancet arch, is represented in the survey by the roof on the 1947 cinder block dairy barn at the aforementioned Parkdale Farm. Gothic barn roofs and roofs with continuous curves typically utilized thin wood sections that were bent, layered in multiple plies, and glued and/or nailed together to create curved rafters. The technique was first publicized in 1916 and by the 1930s was widely adopted by progressive farmers. The barrel-vaulted bentwood-rafter haymow of the ca. 1950 barn at Groveland near Perrowville is a representative example of the form.

The county's multipurpose barns tend to be the farm buildings where various technological advances are most often found. Principal among these, at least in number, are hay carriers, and most surviving examples utilize grappling-type hay forks. A clue to the presence or former presence of a hay fork system is provided by the hay bonnets or hoods that project from the roof peaks of many frame and masonry barns. Generally hay bonnets have a small triangular or wedge form sufficient only to shelter the boom that supports the short extension of the hay fork track outside the barn; however, the 1920s Spradlin Barn near Stewartsville, a small frame hay and stock barn, features a full strut-supported extension of the gable roof which in addition to protecting the hay fork rail may have served to shelter a hay wagon parked below during off-loading. A multipurpose barn that utilized the old-fashioned hand-pitched hay loading method is the small, early 20th-century stock and hay barn on the Jeter Farm near Chamblissburg where the hay was loaded into the mow from a wagon or truck parked in the drive-in bay beside the mow.

Similar in operation to hay carriers are litter carriers, a somewhat euphemistic term for contraptions used to transport soiled straw litter from barns. In Bedford County these are typically associated with the milking parlor sections of dairy barns. Examples include the Hurt Barn north of Bedford, which preserves a trolley-mounted carrier that runs along a suspended track down the center of the parlor and

The Hurt Barn, one of the county's more sophisticated early dairy barns, features a metal silo, a rear entry alcove for emptying a litter carrier, and a privy for farm workers.



dumps out the back of the barn through double-leaf doors, and the 1927 barn on the Wright Farm, also north of Bedford, which no longer has its carrier but retains the mounts for the track and double-leaf back doors with a notch through which the track projected.

A device of somewhat mysterious function survives in the early 20th century barn on the Arington Farm near Peaksville. A pulley system mounted over the west entry to the center drive-through has a long framed board with, at each end, drum-like pulleys or shafts with toothed iron gears. According to local tradition the apparatus was associated with a hay carrier system but how the system operated is not recalled. Also possibly associated with a non-standard hay carrier system is the large wooden drum pulley that projects from the front of the ca. 1900 horse barn at Rothsay Farm in Forest. Architectural historian Travis McDonald notes the existence of a similar wheel mechanism in the 1856 granary at nearby Poplar Forest. The Rothsay horse barn also features a cantilevered shed-roofed projection that may have housed an engine: an exhaust pipe that projects through the roof may have vented former machinery and a pair of cast iron mounts just inside the wing's entry may have provided stabilization.

The rise of commercial dairying in the county in the early twentieth century and the implementation of stringent health and hygiene requirements concerning the handling and purity of dairy products fostered the construction of sophisticated dairy buildings. Representative of the county's better-equipped early dairy barns is the aforementioned 1927 barn on the Wright Farm. The barn has an unusual form with a gambrel-roofed haymow wing and gabled milk room wing that branch off a main gambrel-roofed axis containing the milking parlor. (A milking parlor is a stanchion-lined space used for milking the cow herd; a milk room is a wing or separate or semi-detached building for processing the milk.)

The barn is reminiscent in several respects to the model dairy barn constructed at Virginia Tech in 1899 according to plans by Roanoke architect Henry H. Huggins, notably the presence of multiple wings at different levels, although Elmo Wright, the barn's original owner, might have been inspired by any one of the many barn plans available from published sources and plan services. By housing the milk room in a separate wing a degree of separation from the unhygienic milking parlor was achieved and the milk room wing's concrete floors and wainscots further enhanced hygiene. The milk room was equipped with brine coolers, a vat for cooling the milk cans with an overhead hoist beam for lifting them out, a boiler that supplied hot water for washing implements, and a metal-lined vault for implement storage visible on the exterior as a small shed-roofed extension on the end of the wing. In the early 1950s a separate cinder block milking parlor and milk room were built to the side of the 1927 barn. Concrete construction, painted on the interior, was favored as a method for controlling bacteria. The new milking arrangement on the Wright Farm reflected an important postwar shift in the industry: the adoption of refrigerated bulk tanks for the keeping of milk in place of individual cans and the piping of milk from mechanized milkers attached to the cows' udders directly to the tank to minimize handling.

At its peak in the mid-1940s the Wright Farm's milking parlor accommodated a herd of 86 cows at a single milking. Larger still was the herd at nearby Redlands farm which numbered as many as 300 to 400 head. The milking parlor at Redlands, which may be contemporaneous with the one on the Wright Farm, shares with it specialized features such as a milk house wing replete with boiler and cooler and an additional engine room wing with two motors intact. The milking parlor proper is spanned by a roof with a complicated structure of scissor trusses and tension rods.

Frame dairy barns and milking parlors were built as late as the mid-1940s, for example the broad gable-roofed milking parlor built on the Markham Farm about 1946, which at the time was one of the first specialized dairy buildings in its Kelso Mill Road area. But for the most part post-war dairy buildings were constructed of cinder block. Milk house arrangements were varied both before the war and after. Semi-detached milk houses connected to their milking parlors or dairy barns by covered breezeways are represented by the 1936 County Farm Barn and the ca. 1950 dairy barn (later converted to a horse barn) on the Blair Farm. Milk houses constructed as separate single-purpose buildings appear on

a number of farms. The construction of separate or semi-detached milk houses responded to the desire of regulators for milk houses that were “free from contaminating surroundings,” meaning the filth of the milking parlor.

The iconic image of the American barn often includes a silo but in Virginia as well as nationwide silos are relative latecomers to the farm landscape. Silage — corn or other feed that is partially fermented to produce acids that inhibit bacterial growth — enabled farmers to store quantities of feed for periods of poor or unavailable pasturage, as during droughts and snowy weather, which in turn enabled farmers to expand the size of their dairy herds. European agriculturalists experimented with the making of silage in the 1870s and the first American silos were apparently built in the mid-1870s.

The practice quickly caught on, prompting the U.S. Department of Agriculture to publish a report on ensilage in 1882. Silos from the years around 1880 were in the form of trenches or covered pits but by the end of the 1880s above-ground tower-type silos were being built in increasing numbers. Many of the early upright silos were square/rectangular or octagonal in floor plan but when it was realized that rot

The iconic image of the American barn often includes a silo.... Many of the early upright silos were square/rectangular or octagonal in floor plan but when it was realized that rot was more likely to occur in the corners of polygonal silos builders switched to the now-standard circular form.

was more likely to occur in the corners of polygonal silos builders switched to the now-standard circular form. The first Bedford County silos, which date to the early 20th century, were apparently constructed of wooden staves. Only one surviving example of a wooden stave silo was documented by the survey, the silo attached to the 1939 dairy barn on the Tanner Farm near Big Island. The Tanner silo was disassembled at another farm and reassembled on the Tanner property with a rectangular metal-sided enclosure to protect the staves from the elements.

Wood construction gradually gave way to more durable materials. The attractive stone and poured concrete silo on the Arrington Farm was built by brothers Harry, Onyx, Morris and Joseph Arrington in the mid-1930s when the four were boys or young men. The barn attached to the Arrington silo is now gone. Charles Ervin Woolfolk also built a stone silo in the 1930s at his farm just outside Bedford. Concrete was the most popular silo material in the county. Early examples, such as the silo attached to the ca. 1935 barn on the Simmons Farm near Chamblissburg, were poured in forms; however, most surviving historic-period concrete silos were built from prefabricated concrete staves that slotted together and were held in place by steel tension rings. The example on the Cridlin Farm near Goode was



The McDaniel Tobacco Barn, believed to date to 1851-52, is one of the county's oldest surviving farm buildings.

built with components (the concrete staves or perhaps only the domical metal roof) manufactured by the Marietta Silos company of Marietta, Ohio, as indicated by the metal logo on its weathervane.

Brick was also occasionally used in silo construction as demonstrated by the ca. 1946 silo on the Markham Farm and the ca. 1945 silo at Triple Hills Farm. A material especially well suited to silage-making owing to its impervious vitrified surface was terra-cotta tile block. The ca. 1920s Chappelle Barn northwest of Bedford has a silo constructed of "vitrified hollow clay tile" manufactured by the National Fire Proofing Company (NATCO) of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, as a plaque inside the silo attests. NATCO also produced tile block for the construction of the ca. 1920s silos, recently torn down, on the farm at the nearby Elks National Home in Bedford. The company advertised its silo as "the silo that lasts for generations." A tile block silo also serves the horse barn at Savenac and like the barn it may date to the 1910s. The Hurt Barn north of Bedford, which appears to date to the 1920s or 1930s, has a silo constructed of riveted steel plates, some of which bear traces of the stenciled name of the manufacturer, the E. W. Ross Company of Springfield, Ohio.

Bedford County's dominant agricultural specialization for the first century and a half of settlement was tobacco cultivation, and tobacco barns for the curing of tobacco, generally referred to as "tobacco houses" in Virginia's early history, were probably essential features of Bedford County's earliest farms, though the popular colonial-era sun-curing method of drying the harvested leaf did not require curing barns. The county's earliest tobacco barns may have been frame, gradually giving way to log construction by the end of the 18th century, a trend noted by historian Ronald L. Giese in research on the county's historic tobacco barns conducted for Poplar Forest.

Most of the county's surviving tobacco barns, which appear to date predominately to the first half of the 20th century, are log, a material that when chinked and daubed made an air-tight enclosure ideal for the two forms of curing prevalent in the county, fire curing and flue curing. Fire curing, the more

common of the two techniques locally, involved the lighting of small fires on the floor of the barn which both heated and smoked the leaves suspended overhead from poles known as tier poles. Fire curing had come into use in tobacco-growing regions of the East by 1786 and was common by 1800.

Flue curing, introduced by agricultural innovators in the early 19th century and in Bedford County dominant in the county's southern tip, was a modification of fire curing that removed the fire to stone fireboxes at the front corners of the barn and conducted the heat through flues that snaked across the barn floor to exhaust their heat and smoke beside the front entry. Flue curing heated the leaves without smoking them and it greatly reduced the threat of catching the barn and its contents on fire from stray sparks. Both fire-cure and flue-cure barns have tall forms to maximize exposure of the leaves to rising heat. The basic concept may have been borrowed from smokehouses which worked on the same principle.

The county's oldest known tobacco barn, the McDaniel Tobacco Barn near Perrowville, is believed to date to 1851-52 and stands on what was at the time the farm of Albert McDaniel. The 1850s date seems probable given the specificity of the oral tradition and also the cut nails visible in the door jamb. The relatively large v-notched log barn, which measures approximately 21.5 feet to a side, has the tall profile of the tobacco barn form and its stone foundation lacks fireboxes, confirming it as a fire-cure barn. Smoke residues on some of the lower tier poles and walls of the barn provide evidence of the fires used to cure the leaf.

Although flue curing was not as common in the county at large, flue-cure barns appear to survive in disproportionately greater numbers compared to fire-cure barns, although some fire-cure barns may be masquerading as hay barns. Flue-cure barns, when they occur, are often found in groupings of two or more. The Martin Farm on Falling Creek Road has three surviving flue-cure barns of an original five tobacco barns (the other two were fire-cure barns). Most or all of the log barns were built in the 1920s. Current co-owner of the farm, Alvin M. Martin, notes that flue-cure barns could be easily converted to fire curing by the simple expedient of opening the flues on the interior. Depressions in the ground near two of the barns mark spots where mud was dug for use in daubing the gaps between the logs, routine maintenance necessary to keep the barns air-tight.

The Martin Farm lacked a common feature of Piedmont Virginia tobacco farms: an ordering pit, a semi-subterranean space where the cured leaves were hung to be "placed in order," that is, exposed to ambient moisture from the earth that made them supple enough to handle without crumbling. Instead, the Martin family flooded the floors of their tobacco barns with water or sprinkled the leaves with a watering can while the leaves hung from the tier poles. An ordering pit survives on another southern Bedford County farm, the Jones Farm near Smith Mountain Lake State Park. A partially excavated cellar under a pack house or "stripping house" where the cured tobacco was prepared for shipment is outfitted with crude dimensional-lumber racks on which the cured leaf was placed in order. The log tobacco barn on the Turner Farm near Graves Store, originally a flue-cure barn, has a shed-roofed log wing where the cured leaf was apparently prepared after curing. The wing has tier poles as in the barn and a low door-like opening through which the cured leaves were passed through to its interior.

The county preserves a diversity of other specialized farm building types. The survey documented numerous examples of corn cribs, granaries and chicken houses. Buildings with a hybrid agricultural-processing function include tomato canneries and apple packing houses. The introduction of large-scale commercial tomato cultivation to the county in the early 20th century necessitated facilities for processing the crop and preparing it for shipment to market. Any barn or other building large enough to house the workers and machinery during the brief summer canning season would do but many producers constructed purpose-built canneries. Typically these were long one-story buildings that reflected the assembly-line nature of the production process which began with receiving and continued on to scalding, peeling, canning, boiling the cans, labeling, boxing and shipping.

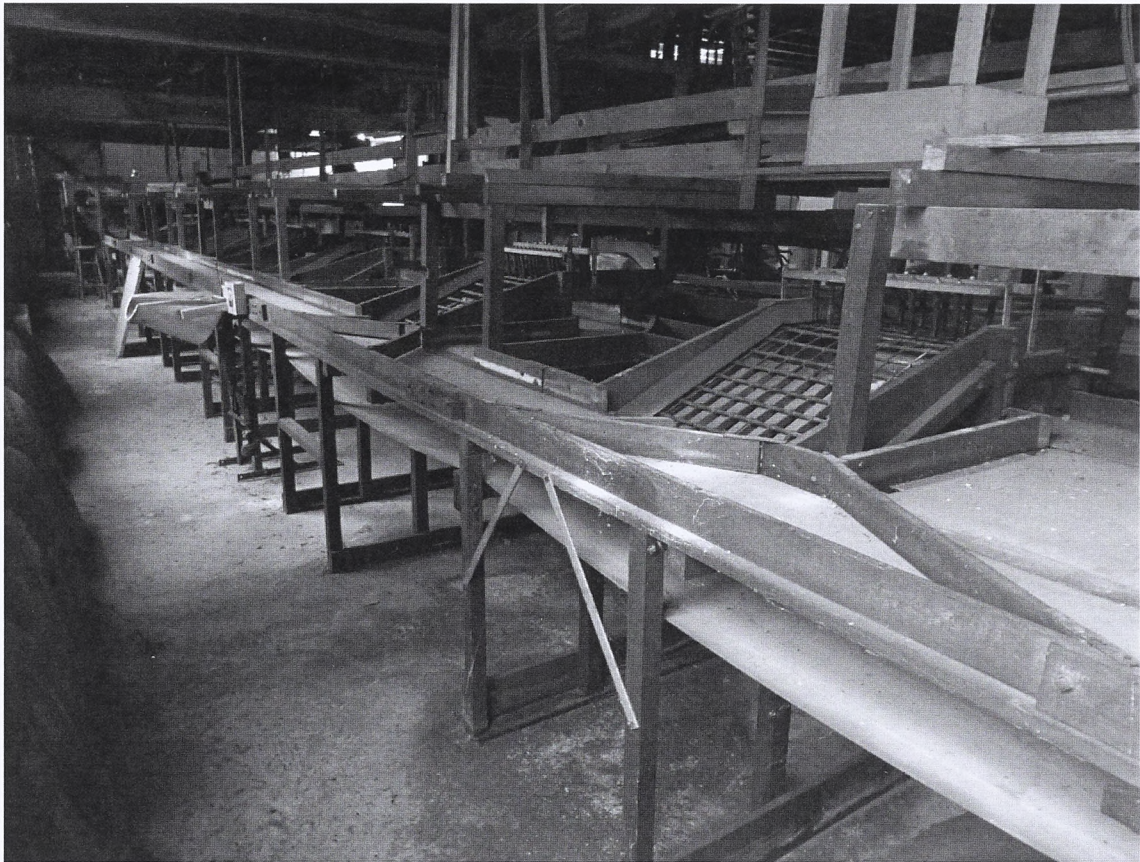


The Peters Tomato Cannery in Moneta has the barn-like form and construction of the county's formerly numerous early 20th century tomato canneries.

Representative of the early canneries is the one on the Arrington-Gross Farm near Peaksville which was apparently built before 1918. The cannery was built not only to facilitate the canning process but for the comfort of the workers who during the Gross family's ownership were adults and older children in the Gross family. The end of the building that sheltered the hot work of scalding and boiling is slatted to encourage air flow (the slats are now covered with metal sheathing). The more enclosed vertical-board-sided end was used to store the boxes of cans until they were picked up by trucks for shipment. An essential feature of the cannery, one shared by many others, was its location beside a creek, in this instance Stony Creek. The creek supplied water to the operation and was used to wash away the peelings. The Arrington-Gross cannery also had an office in a shed wing (now removed) that projected from a corner.

Apple growing was not as extensive an agricultural specialization as tomato growing and canning but it nevertheless made a mark on the county's architectural landscape. An early example of apple-related buildings was the log apple barn W.C. Hatcher built ca. 1916 on his Twin Oaks Farm. A surviving log apple barn on the Johnson-Dooley Farm, high on the slopes of Campbell Mountain near Peaks of Otter, was fashioned out of logs from a tobacco barn at some date prior to 1966. Another building associated with apple growing is the apple picker's cabin on the Watson Farm near the Bedford Reservoir, a small one-room board-and-batten bunk house, perhaps dating to the 1920s-1950s period, which retains crude built-in bunk beds.

More imposing than the apple barns and picker cabins were the packing houses associated with the larger orchards. Among the oldest of these is the packing house at Hunting Creek Farm near Sedalia



Apple grading machinery in the Logwood Apple Packing House (1955), located on Wheats Valley Road in the heart of Bedford orchard country.

which was probably built in the 1920s. The large two-story building, sided with weatherboards and set on poured concrete and stone foundations, has something of the appearance of a large barn of the era though inside the difference is immediately apparent. The complicated conveyor-belt apparatus used for grading the apples extends the length of the main space. Slatted slides, apparently for feeding boxes to the packers who worked by the belts, connect to the second floor where the boxes were stored. The Hunting Creek operation ranked among the county's top four apple growers in 1949.

At the smaller end of the size spectrum is the Yoder Apple Packing House, also near Sedalia, which has interesting origins. Its builder in the late 1940s was Jacob Johnson Yoder who fought in the Battle of the Bulge during World War II. Upon his return to the states he decided apple growing on a Bedford County mountainside was the quiet life he needed after the horrors of combat. His pole-built packing house, though crudely constructed compared to the other examples, nevertheless shares the same functional division of a lower level for grading operations and an upper level for box storage.

Many people helped make the Bedford Barn Survey possible, but the driving force was Bedford preservationist Betty Gereau. Gereau was not content to let the work sit on a shelf and made public outreach an important aspect of the project. One initiative involved working with county middle school students to produce pastel drawings of local barns for the 2014 "Barns of Bedford" calendar. The project was featured at the Bedford County Agricultural Economic Development Advisory Board Expo held in March 2014 and has also been covered in the Bedford Bulletin and the Lynchburg Business Magazine. These efforts raised public awareness of the county's historic barns and will hopefully encourage preservation of these important buildings types.

Frances Benjamin Johnston, renowned photographer, and the George Trout Farm in Northwest Roanoke

by Michael Pulice

Frances Benjamin Johnston was a groundbreaking photographer about whom much has been written. Thousands of her images of historical sites, primarily in the Southern and Mid-Atlantic states, are among her important legacy. Born in Grafton, West Virginia, in 1864, her professional career in photography endured more than a half-century, almost until her death in 1952.

She became known nationally during the 1890s as one of the first “photojournalists” and the first female press photographer, and later for her photographic portraits of dignitaries, including Presidents Cleveland, Harrison, McKinley, Roosevelt and Taft, taken at her studio in Washington, D.C. Her images frequently appeared in newspapers and magazines, but others, mostly those from her later career, were taken for archival rather than commercial purposes, and today are held by such repositories as the Library of Congress and the University of North Carolina Libraries.

One of her earliest and best-known documentary works is an extensive collection of photographs taken 1899-1900 at the Hampton Institute for African Americans in Hampton, Virginia. After moving to New York around 1910, Johnston partnered for several years with Mattie Edwards Hewitt to specialize in architectural photography, and began to concentrate on photographing gardens and estates throughout the U.S. and Europe. [Fig. 1]

Beginning about 1925, amid growing interest in historic preservation and documenting historic structures inspired by the ongoing restoration of Colonial Williamsburg, Johnston resumed her photography of historic Virginia landmarks. Beginning in 1933, she was funded by a series of seven grants from the Carnegie Corporation to document colonial buildings in nine southern states. Although she clearly sought out colonial-era buildings, many of her subjects were built much later, into the mid-19th century.

Johnston’s architectural photography was compiled in a number of books including Henry I. Brock’s “Colonial Churches in Virginia, ...Photographic Studies by Frances Benjamin Johnston” (Richmond: Dale Press, 1930); and “Early Architecture of North Carolina: A Pictorial Survey by Frances



Fig. 1. Renowned photographer Frances Benjamin Johnston, circa 1950. [Library of Congress]

Mike Pulice is the Western Region architectural historian for the Virginia Department of Historic Resources. For further reading about historic brick architecture in the Roanoke Valley, see the author’s book “Nineteenth-Century Brick Architecture in the Roanoke Valley and Beyond: Discovering the True Legacies of the Deyerle Builders” (History Museum of Western Virginia, 2011).



Fig. 2. The George Trout House — original c. 1830 main block (right) and added c. 1840 front wing (left). [Frances Benjamin Johnston Collection. Library of Congress.]

Benjamin Johnston, with an Architectural History” by Thomas T. Waterman (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1941, 1947). In 1945, she received an honorary membership into the American Institute of Architects for her “notable achievement in recording photographically the early architecture of the United States,” and she later donated most of her materials to the Library of Congress, creating the Carnegie Survey of the Architecture of the South, covering more than 1,700 sites in over 7,000 photographs; 2,910 of her images taken in Virginia are available online at the Library of Congress website. (1)

In her photographic surveys Johnston gave wide coverage to eastern Virginia, where most of the state’s colonial-era buildings are located. However, her work concentrated on only a few of the most esteemed landmarks of the Blue Ridge and Piedmont, and apparently she made no forays to the far southwestern reaches of the Virginia.

In 1930, within the City of Roanoke, Johnston took two photos of the Horton House, aka. Nestle Brook (demolished in 2014), seven images of George Tayloe’s Buena Vista, and seven of “Trouts Farm,” discussed below. [Fig. 2] In Roanoke County the same year, she took three portraits of the Bushong House (previously the David Deyerle House) and one of an unknown brick house near Salem. [Note: A log house mistakenly labeled “log farm house, Hollins vic.” was actually in present-day Botetourt County — the Bryan McDonald Sr. House, demolished ca. 2008.] In 1934, in Botetourt County, Johnston captured a few photos of the 18th-century Bryan McDonald Sr. and Bryan McDonald Jr. houses, and the farm called Greenfield, which had been associated with Colonel William Preston in the 1760s. In Bedford County in 1935, she took a few shots each of Thomas Jefferson’s Poplar Forest, the Federal-

style house and Civil War landmark known as Sandusky, and a plantation house called Welbourne.

Johnston's westernmost site in Virginia is the splendid early 19th-century house known as Fotheringay, near Elliston in eastern Montgomery County, of which eight excellent photos taken in 1935 have been preserved. In the Chatham vicinity of Pittsylvania County in 1930, she captured a few of the most noteworthy houses including the Moses House, better known as Little Cherrystone, as well as the prestigious Dan's Hill, Oak Hill and Berry Hill plantation houses near Danville.

Although cursory in detail and geographical coverage, Johnston's work represents the seminal documentary survey of historic architecture in Southwest Virginia. No such efforts had been undertaken previously, though the more extensive Works Progress Administration (WPA) Virginia Historical Inventory would soon follow, in 1936–1938. Though Johnston's photographs of each site were few in number, most of her architectural photographs were of exceptional quality for their time, particularly those taken after 1933 with Carnegie funding.

Her skill as a photographer is evident, but it was an obvious, deep appreciation for her subjects that guided her practice. Clearly she selected her camera placements and angles carefully, deftly handling the challenges of natural lighting, capturing large and small details others would have considered unimportant. Furthermore, secondary buildings such as kitchens and smokehouses, virtually ignored by the Virginia Historical Inventory, were often included in Johnston's photographic surveys. Early images of outbuildings are quite rare and therefore of great value to historians. Fortunately Johnston's photos are beautifully preserved and have been scanned at high resolution, allowing the small details to be brought into focus.

GEORGE TROUT FARM

Of considerable interest are Johnston's aforementioned photos of "Trouts Farm," once owned by George Trout. The brick house and outbuildings located on the waters of Peters Creek and the Roanoke River, now in the City of Roanoke, were destroyed by around 1970. Fortunately they were documented in Frances Johnston's 1930 photos and by a few sentences in the Historic American Building Survey Inventory of 1958, which noted the slave quarters and meathouse were located east of the main house, and provided the following ownership history: "John Neely was a large land holder in the county, later sold to George Trout of the well-known Trout family. Neelys and Trouts were among the first families in the Roanoke area. Currently owned by E.E. Engleman." The Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission survey of 1968 offered a few photos and the following background: "The George Trout House was built circa 1830 by George Trout after the land was purchased from Dr. John Neely in the 1820's. The property is now owned (since 1962) by Concrete Ready Mixed Corporation." (2) [Fig. 3]

While the census never recorded a middle name or initial for George Trout, family genealogies found online record his middle name as Nathan and his birthplace as Timberville, Rockingham County, Virginia. He was born in January, 1782, and died in Roanoke County in June, 1850. He is said to have

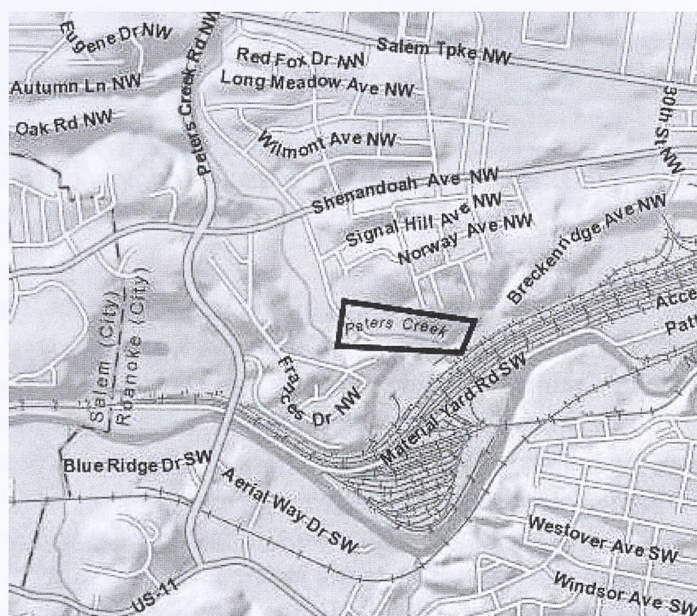


Fig. 3. Current map of former George Trout Farm location near the City of Roanoke western limits.

served in the War of 1812 and moved to Botetourt about 1816, where he purchased the 250-acre farm at the mouth of Peters Creek. George Trout does indeed appear in the 1820 and 1830 federal census as a resident of Botetourt County (Roanoke County was carved out of Botetourt in 1838). Within his household were five daughters, three sons, and one slave—a male less than 24 years old. The 1840 census identifies Trout as a farmer by profession, between 50 and 59 years of age. His eight children remained at home with their mother, Mary, who was between 40 and 49 years old. The three boys were engaged in farming. By 1850, Trout's real estate was assessed at \$19,000. Though now 68 years old, he and sons Jacob, 22, and David, 20, continued farming. Mary was 59 years old and only daughter Hannah, 17, remained at home.

BUILDING DESCRIPTIONS

Johnston's 1930 photos of the Trout Farm show a dilapidated, likely vacant house and three roughly contemporaneous brick outbuildings—a two-story secondary dwelling, a meathouse, and a one-story, probable kitchen/quarters.

Main House

The two-story brick main house had an unusual plan owing to the circa 1840 addition of a two-story brick wing extending forward from the original Flemish bond façade, and a one-story rear wing or ell, likely part of the original c.1830 construction. Gauged brick jack arches spanning the first-story windows and Flemish bond brickwork appear on the front of the main block and the west (side) elevation of the main block and rear wing, while the rear and east (side) elevations have no jack arches and are laid in common bond with three- and five-course intervals. The added two-story front wing is laid in four-course common bond at consistent intervals. All three parts of the house had matching molded brick cornices (later painted white) and slate-shingled roofs. Porches wrapping around from the central main block to the front and rear wings appear to have been early twentieth-century design and construction. The front porch was two stories in height with a second-floor walkout, the rear porch only one story, with a shed roof. Sheltered by the porches were four entrances, including the second-floor front walkout. Each of the entrances had a lighted transom and a handsome faux-grained six-panel door. Barred window/vent openings indicate the presence of a full basement beneath the central main block and the rear wing. [Figs. 4, 5]



Fig. 4. (top) The George Trout House— rear view of original c. 1830 two-story main block and one-story rear wing.

Fig. 5. (above) The George Trout House— alternate rear view of original c. 1830 two-story main block and one-story rear wing. Part of the meathouse is visible to the right. [Both images: Frances Benjamin Johnston Collection. Library of Congress.]



Fig. 6. The George Trout Farm — c. 1840 two-story secondary dwelling was situated southeast of the main house. The top of the meathouse is visible to the left. [Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission survey, 1968.]

Outbuildings

All three domestic outbuildings seen in the photographs also had brick walls and molded brick cornices matching those of the main house. The two-story secondary dwelling may have held domestic work spaces downstairs and slave quarters upstairs. It appears to have had a two-over-two-room plan and had chimneys on both ends so that all rooms were heated. Unlike the other buildings on the property, the brick walls were laid in an uncommon Flemish variant bond. [Fig. 6] The meathouse and kitchen/quarters had wooden shake roofs. The meathouse stood directly behind the secondary dwelling, and had a steeply pitched front-gable roof. Like the added front wing of the main house, the meathouse walls were neatly laid in common bond with consistent four-course intervals, which suggests the two buildings might have been constructed about the same time, by the same brickmasons (quite possibly Deyerle family members or their slaves). [Fig. 7] The kitchen/quarters had a side-gable roof, walls laid in common bond (two- and four-course intervals), an exterior chimney on one end and a window in the opposite end, and two front doors (likely indicating a two-room interior plan). [Fig. 8] Unfortunately, the Trout Farm is one instance in which Johnston may not have been granted full access, for she did not photograph any significant interior spaces. Two 1968 photos of the interior are the only ones known to exist. [Fig. 9]

The Trout House was architecturally significant as a well-appointed Federal-style residence built circa 1830. The interior featured finely crafted woodwork, much of it skillfully painted with decorative faux wood graining. The house and contemporary attendant buildings comprised four excellent examples of domestic building types and period brick masonry with fashionable molded brick cornices, all highly characteristic of the Valley of Virginia.



Fig. 7. The George Trout Farm — c. 1840 meathouse was situated east of the main house. [Frances Benjamin Johnston Collection. Library of Congress.]



Fig. 9. The George Trout House — one of the two existing interior photos of the main house. [Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission survey, 1968.]

END NOTES

1. <http://www.loc.gov/collections/carnegie-survey-architecture-of-the-south/about-this-collection/>

See also Frances Benjamin Johnston Biographical Overview and Chronology, Prints and Photographs Reading Room, Library of Congress online: <http://www.loc.gov/rr/print/coll/fbjchron.html>
See also the Frances Benjamin Johnston Collection, 1935-1938. University of North Carolina Library: <http://www2.lib.unc.edu/ncc/pcoll/inv/P0006/P0006.html>

2. The 1958 HABS and 1968 Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission surveys are held at the Virginia Department of Historic Resources archives, Richmond.



Fig. 8. The George Trout Farm — c. 1830 probable kitchen/quart-ers were situated south of the main house. [Frances Benjamin Johnston Collection. Library of Congress.]

Runaway Slaves: Mindset of Negroes, 1861-1865

by Matthew Woods

“**E**ither they deny the Negro’s humanity and feel no cause to measure his actions against civilized norms; or they protect themselves from their guilt in the Negro’s condition and from their fear that their cooks might poison them, or that their nursemaids might strangle their infant charges, or that their field hands might do them violence, by attributing to them a superhuman capacity for love, kindness and forgiveness. Nor does this in any way contradict their stereotyped conviction that all Negroes (meaning those with whom they have no contact) are given to the most animal behavior.” — *Ralph Ellison (1)*

From the start of the 17th century, Negroes were transported to America and sold into slavery. (2) Because of their resentment to these oppressive conditions, some tried to escape captivity by running away when they thought they could. Even though most slaves found running away very daunting because of the fear of repercussions if they were caught, the desire for freedom drove them to look for the perfect opportunity to escape. The Civil War provided the key distraction they needed. Slaves saw the advancing Union soldiers as their saviors. Benjamin Quarles quotes John H. Ransdell, a Louisiana planter, witnessing the coming of Union troops on the plantation he was overseeing and the slave’s reaction to them: (3)

“The arrival of the advance of the Yankees alone turned the Negro crazy. For the space of a week they had a perfect jubilee. Every morning I could see beeves being driven up from the woods to the quarters — and the number they killed of them, to say nothing of sheep and hogs, it is impossible to tell. The hogs are mostly yours....”

Many slaves knew the war was not being fought with the intention of freeing them, but they did see the opportunity they were looking for to escape. Though the Federals did not realize it at first, the slaves and the Union had more in common than one could imagine: both desired the destruction of the Confederacy.

Matthew Woods wrote this article as a senior thesis at Ferrum College in 2011. He taught world history at Bassett High School for three years and earned a master’s degree at Virginia Tech. He is assistant principal at Woodrow Wilson Middle School and a member of Ferrum’s alumni board.

The Civil War, 1861-1865, between the slave-holding Confederate states of the South and the industrializing Union states of the North, affected the lives of the slaves in two significant ways. First, many slaves in Confederate territory viewed the war as an opportunity to run away toward Union lines. Second, the slaves who did not run away found their relationships with their owners changed due to the war. Historians tend to focus on the fact that slavery was simply abolished as a result of the Civil War but seem to have forgotten about the effects the war had on the mindset of Negroes who ran away and the ones that stayed behind. If we can learn about their struggle through those long four years, then we can hope to understand their mindset in regard to freedom.

The Underground Railroad, for example, was one of the earliest forms of running away (and one of the most successful). It consisted of numerous stations along its path where the runaway slaves could stay and gain information on where to proceed to next. (4) The "conductors" on the path served as guides to insure safe passage as well. (5) Though the journey was long, many slaves sang spiritual hymns to encourage each other along the way:

Bending knees a-aching,
Body racked with pain,
I wished I was a child of God,
I'd get home by and by (6)

If slaves had contact with people in the North, however, and did not want to take such a risky passage on the Underground Railroad, they could pass as free by the acquisition of "free papers." Free papers were used by Negroes to show they had gained legal freedom. These papers usually detailed "the name, age, color, height and form of the free man" that they were describing. (7) Since more than one man or woman could fit the same general description, many would use the free papers to impersonate one another and escape to the North.

Though these examples refer to slaves getting many miles away from their oppressors, some on bigger plantations found easier ways to deal with their conditions. Unbeknownst to many people, slaves would take turns hiding out in the woods during the day and return to the plantation home right before nightfall. (8) The beauty of this was that many owners of large plantations did not know every single one of their slaves well enough to tell if one was missing or not. Though some slaves would participate in hiding out for a few hours, few dared to run away completely because of the fear and uncertainty they faced in life on their own. Slave owners by this time period encouraged their slaves to breed to make more children so that they would not have to purchase slaves and assume the risk of importing them from Africa. As one former slave stated, true "African" Negroes were a hassle for overseers:

"Marse Dave wasn't mean like some. Sometimes de slaves run away to de woods and iffen they don't cotch 'em fust they finally gits hengry and comes home, and then they gits a hidin'. Some niggers jus' come from Africa and old Marse has to watch 'em close, 'cause they is de ones that mostly runs away to de woods." (9)

By the time of the Civil War however, most slaves had been born in captivity in the United States. Albert Jones, for example, was seemingly on his deathbed when interviewed by Thelma Dunston of the Federal Writer's Project, and at age 96, he recalled being "born in Souf Hampton county." (10) Ties to home and family seem to be the biggest reasons why so few slaves decided to run away. People always seem to ponder why so many slaves chose not to run away, but fail to consider the disadvantages and challenges that awaited them in an unfamiliar place.

The concept of a "runaway slave" in the United States can be traced back to slavery's beginning in this country. Some of the earliest signs of slave resentment towards their masters can be seen in their behavioral patterns. Slaves were often described as "unfaithful, unreliable, lazy and vicious." Many

whites recognized such behavior as an indication that slaves were becoming fed up with their lives of degrading servitude. (11) The open "day-to-day resistance" of slaves was also alarming to slave owners, who knew that the slaves understood that they would face punishment if caught for their transgressions. These acts of resistance were never fully documented; however, some of the results of such actions were known to have been broken farm equipment, damaged boats, ruined clothing and anything else the slave could do to show growing dissatisfaction with captivity. (12) Many white northerners, like Reverend Samuel J. May, tried warning their southern counterparts that such seemingly minor resistance was only the beginning and that a "large opportunity" was on the horizon for slaves to make their escape:

"The slaves are men. They have within them that inextinguishable thirst for freedom, which is born in man. They are already writhing in their shackles. They will, one day, throw them off with vindictive violence, if we do not unloose them." (13)

This warning, however, seems to have fallen on deaf ears since slavery still remained a staple of the southern economy. The speech, nevertheless, is significant because it introduced the commonly used phrase "runaway slave" in reference to Negroes who attempted to escape.

Runaway slaves ranged from "young and old, black and mulatto, healthy and infirm...male and female." (14) Although the number of slaves who ran away rose as the Civil War approached, the profile of runaway slaves stayed consistent for more than 60 years. To make the assumption that slaves only began to run away during the Civil War would be false, but it is certain that a larger number of slaves risked their lives to escape servitude during this time period. (15) In the brief clipping below, a South Carolina planter named E.M. Royall posted a \$25 reward in the Charleston Mercury for a slave who ran away from him. Reading the description enables one to see the trouble that historians have had in finding characteristics that make runaway slaves stand out from other slaves:

TWENTY-FIVE DOLLARS REWARD — Ran away from the subscriber's plantation, in Christ Church Parish, his Negro Man TONEY. Said fellow is about 5 feet 6 inches in height; stoutly built, is very black, has a broad, full face, black eyes, and when he laughs, shows a very white set of teeth. The above reward will be paid for his apprehension and delivery to the Work House in Charleston, or to the subscriber on his place. (16)

From vague descriptions like this, runaway slaves seemed indistinguishable from the slaves who choose to remain in servitude. This is not the case, however, because most runaway slaves displayed distinctive behavioral problems before they fled.

One would tend to think that a vast amount of slaves ran away, but in actuality it was only a minority. (17) For example, imagine yourself on a plane with a bomb that will explode in about 10 seconds and there is only one parachute left. The dilemma you face is that your family is also on the plane, but you are the only one who can successfully wear the parachute. Now here is the real question: Do you save yourself, leaving your family to face the unknown, or do you stay and stick it out with them? This question was one slaves dealt with on a routine basis; should they leave or should they stay. The need to stay by their loved ones was the main reason why many slaves did not run away. (18) Slaves who ran away successfully usually faced the fear that their family members might be punished for their transgression. Successful escapee Nathan McKinney found out upon his escape that his wife had been jailed and his child had been reclaimed by his owner. In a desperate attempt to free his family, McKinney wrote a letter to the federal commander in Louisiana asking for his help:

Neworleans [La.] Feb th 2 1863

kin Sire I wash to state to you this morning the hole mattor I am in truble and like
Jacob of old and Can not let the go untill you Comford me My wife and felloservant



This scene from a 19th century slave hunt in Dismal Swamp was painted by Thomas Moran. (Courtesy of the Virginia Historical Society)

was orded to go yeenkis and they left and went sence that they hav taken them and put them in prison taken the mother from hire Suckling Child put the mother in and taken the Child home I and my wife and fello servant am not willing to go Back we had Rented a house and living in it 20 Days then taken if you please Sire gave me a premiat to gat my wife out of Prison and my things out off his house the no 262 Cannal St mrs George Ruleff Reseadents your most obodent Servent

Problems such as this made slaves think twice about running away, but with Union forces realizing the help Negroes could provide in repairing the Union, northerners gradually changed their attitudes towards helping them.

The attack on Fort Sumter on April 12, 1861, can be seen not only as the beginning of the Civil War, but also as the "opportunity" that slaves were looking for. (19) With constant fighting raging between Union and Confederate forces, the number of white men on plantations dwindled as the need for more troops increased. Slaves soon realized they vastly outnumbered the whites who remained at home and took advantage of the opportunity to plan escapes. They went about escaping in different ways than their predecessors did. Numerous cases involving assassination attempts on slave owners and desertion of plantations upon the Yankees' arrival were all common during this era. (20) Many slaves felt that if they offered some sort of "sacrifice" to the Union, they would be allowed to enter Union territory and freedom. A young South Carolina slave named Robert Smalls was notorious for his daring escape, during which he stole a gunboat and gave it to the Union navy as a gift:

One spring night in 1862, when the white officers were sleeping ashore at their homes in Charleston, Smalls smuggled his wife, his children, his sister-in-law, and his brother's wife and child aboard at midnight. He fired the boiler, hoisted the Confederate flag and

just before dawn steamed out to the open sea. There he hauled down the Confederate colors and hoisted a white flag of truce as he came within sight of the blockade vessels of the United States Navy... Congress voted Smalls a sizable sum of money for his contraband and Lincoln signed the appropriation. (21)

Instead of slaves following the irrational impulse of "running away towards freedom," they used well-thought out strategies like this one not only to escape but also to further cripple the Confederacy.

With the issuance of the Emancipation Proclamation on "midnight of the last day of 1862," the Union formally recognized Negro people as being equals. (22) This was done, however, as a military ploy to further weaken the Confederacy. Union forces used slaves' willingness to join their ranks to replenish their manpower. (23) Negroes however, saw this as their opportunity to prove themselves to the Union. Famous black abolitionist Frederick Douglass argued that the Negro as a soldier would help lay the foundation for Negroes to become equal citizens as well:

"Once let the black man get upon his person the brass letters, U.S.; let him get an eagle on his button, and a musket on his shoulder and bullets in his pocket, and there is no power on earth which can deny that he has earned the right to citizenship in the United States." (24)

It is estimated that at least 38,000 Negro soldiers died trying to repair the Republic and to end the tyranny of slavery. (25) Though the Union forces and the Negroes were fighting for different purposes, they found common ground in their fight against the Confederacy.

Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters.

— *Ephesians 6:5*

Though some Negroes wanted nothing more than to escape as soon as possible, some were more than willing to wait until the war was over to gain their freedom. (26) Nannie Bradfield of Uniontown, Alabama, laughed at the question of being happy at the possibility of gaining her freedom:

"What I keer 'bout bein' free? Didn't old Marster give us plenty good sompin to eat and clo's to wear? I stayed on de plantation 'till I mah'ied. My old Miss give me a brown dress and hat. Well dat dress put me in de country, if you mahie in brown you'll live in de country." (27)

Another unnamed slave in South Carolina also stressed the distaste fellow slaves he knew had in being "free":

"De slaves, where I lived, knowed after de war dat they had abundance of dat somethin' called freedom, what they could not, wear, and sleep in. Yes, sir, they soon found out dat freedom ain't nothin', 'less you is got somethin' to live on and a place to call home. Dis livin' on liberty is lak young folks livin' on love after they gits married. It just don't work. No, sir, it las' so long and not a bit longer. Don't tell me! It sho' don't hold good when you has to work, or when you gits hongry." (28)

The refusal of some slaves to express joy at gaining freedom is difficult to comprehend for those of us who enjoy our daily freedoms to say and do whatever we would like as long as it does not harm or offend anyone else. Depending on where the slave was located, he or she may have been living very comfortably compared to others and did not want to join in the fighting. When slaves heard of their upcoming liberation from slavery, many wondered what it would be like. Charlie Davenport, like many other slaves, responded with enthusiasm at the news of his possible freedom:

"I was right smart bit by de freedom bug for awhile. It sounded pow'ful nice to be tol': 'You can th'ow dat hoe down an' go fishin' whensoever de notion strikes you. An' you can roam 'roun' at night an' court gals jus' as you please. Aint no marster gwine a-say to you, 'Charlie, you's got to be back when de clock strikes nine.' I was fool 'nough to b'lieve all dat kin' o' stuff." (29)

After much thought however, Charlie, like other slaves, became scared of the uncertainty they would face when freed. (30)

Slaves who wanted to remain in their "familiar surroundings" found it extremely difficult to maintain the trust of their masters due to the strong suspicions of rebellion to which they had been subject during the war. Nervous slave masters began moving their slaves from plantation to plantation in an attempt to avoid the Yankees, even if the slaves proclaimed their loyalty to their masters. (31) No matter what the slaves would say, the slave owners, at the end of the day, viewed them as "property" and wanted to keep them at all costs.



Although slavery was considered a "southern thing," it is an unfair assumption to label every southerner as a slave owner, or state that every northerner wanted Negroes to be free. Slavery, at its core, was an economic institution set up to make money, and anything else attributed to the institution was added on to it and nonessential. (32) Slave owners during the war started to realize that slavery was coming to an end, and that the days of "whips and shackles" had long passed. New alternatives sprang up to keep slaves obedient. Masters turned to offering wages to "secure the services of the Slaves" and to keep them from running away. (33) Though these arrangements worked for awhile, all they did was buy time before the Union crushed the life out of the institution of slavery in the United States

In comparing the mindsets of Negroes who ran away and Negroes who stayed in captivity, it is presumptuous to think that they were different just because of their circumstances. The two groups had different ideologies and perspectives of freedom. But to say that one group was

right and the other wrong is absurd. The totality of a Negro's life determined his mindset. Being a slave can be viewed as the most dehumanizing affliction in the world. An ex-slave named Georgina Giwbs recalled a story that her father told her which sums up the evil destructiveness slavery can cause upon a human being and how it can dramatically shatter someone's psyche:

"My father told me ders wuz once a mastah who sold a slave woman and her son. Many years after dis, de woman married. One day when she wuz washing her husband's back she seen a scar on his back. De woman 'membered de scar. It wuz de scar her mastah had put on her son. 'Course dey didn't stay married, but de woman wouldn't ever let her son leave her." (34)

Though this example is extremely graphic (and rare in its nature), it underlines the evil that slavery infuses and how it can ruin relationships and lives.

Having to serve someone all day and do what they say while ignoring your own needs must have been difficult. Try to imagine how the slaves during this time felt. One cannot find it hard to imagine why numerous slaves ran away during the Civil War or to recognize the issues they faced while trying to escape their captivity. The fears that crowded the slaves' minds and the uncertainty always present in their daily lives must have been a scary realization to them.

Will it be possible for anyone to ever be able to really understand the sincere desire for freedom that the slaves really sought after? Will we ever be able to capture in words the pain that their bodies felt from the extreme heat and the sharp thorns that ripped their flesh while at the same time they were being mistaken for the common stereotype "they all look alike?" The slaves ran as fast as they could or stayed behind and waited for the golden opportunity to get relief from the oppressor and to seek out any means of escape into a free world.

Sometimes I feel discouraged,
And think my work's in vain.
— *African American spiritual*

END NOTES

1. Leon F. Litwack quoted Ralph Ellison in "Been in the Storm so Long" (New York: Alfred A. Knopf Inc.), p. 3, from Ellison's *Shadow and Act* (New York, 1964), p. 92
2. Langston Hughes and others explore some of the ways slaves were brought to North America, but concludes that the southerners' agricultural economy was the main reason for the Negro's subsequent enslavement. "A Pictorial History of Blackamericans" (Canada: General Publishing Company Limited, 1973), p.1-11
3. Ransdell was in charge of Governor Moore's plantation in Louisiana, and sent a letter to him detailing what was transpiring. Benjamin Quarles, "The Negro in the Civil War" (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1969), p. 55
4. See pictures and maps of various routes taken on the Underground Railroad and pictures of some famous conductors in "A Pictorial History of Blackamericans," p. 130-132; The "Railroad" started mostly in the upper Southern states (VA, MD, and KY) and helped slaves escape to New York, Pennsylvania, and even Canada. For an estimate of numbers on how many slaves possibly ran away between 1830-1860 see Gary C. Walker, "Slavery and the coming War" (Roanoke: A & W Enterprise, 1996), p. 150-151
5. "A Pictorial History of Blackamericans," p.129-130
6. As quoted from Ervin L. Jordan Jr's "Black Confederates and Afro-Yankees in Civil War Virginia" (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia), p.31: "Caroline County slaves, in one of their favorite hymns, sang of freedom."
7. Michael Meyer narrates Frederick Douglass' recollection of the exhilarating tale of how he escaped slavery by posing as a sailor using another Negro's free papers. Free papers had to be renewed frequently and Negroes were charged a fee for this. Frederick Douglass, "The Narrative and Selected Writings" (Canada: Random House, Inc., 1984), p. 176-181
8. The Federal Writers Project, "Slave Narratives: A Folk History of Slaves in the United States From Interviews with Former Slaves," Washington, D.C., <http://www.loc.gov/library/libarch-digital.html>, Slaves give random sporadic accounts of slaves' resentment towards their condition throughout the entire collection of interviews. Volume XVII, p. 8
9. Quoted from the interview of Clinte Lewis in "Slave Narratives: A Folk History," Volume XVI, p.2
10. "Slave Narratives: A Folk History," Volume XVII, p. 42
11. Leon F. Litwack, "Been in the Storm so Long" (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc.); The Federal Writers Project, "Slave Narratives: A Folk History of Slaves in the United States From Interviews with Former Slaves," Washington, D.C., <http://www.loc.gov/library/libarch-digital.html>
12. John Hope Franklin and Loren Schweninger, "Runaway Slaves: Rebels on the Plantation" (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), p. 2-4; Herbert Aptheker also discusses various methods of resistances including (but not limited to) sabotage, faking illness, strikes, and self-mutilation, "American Negro Slave Revolts" (New York: Columbia University Press), p. 140-142
13. Reverend Samuel J. May delivered this speech on July 3, 1831, quoted in Herbert Aptheker's "American Negro Slave Revolts" (New York: Columbia University Press), p. 49

14. The typical range of runaway slave descriptions are collected in Franklin, "Runaway Slaves," p. 210-211
15. Table 1.3 on p. 15 in James H. Brewer's "The Confederate Negro" (Durham: Duke University Press, 1969) shows the loss of slaves from VA in 1861-1863, and also breaks it down by the county totals and corporation totals.
16. Excerpt was published in the Charleston Mercury in November 1857, "Runaway Slaves," p. 209
17. A vast majority of slaves accepted their roles; only a fraction attempted to run away. Most ran because they had broken the master's rules or laws or simply wanted to be reunited with their families. Walker, "Slavery and the Coming War," p. 149
18. Franklin, "Runaway Slaves," p. 50-52; view Volume XVI 20-24, 48-62, 190-193, and XVII 7-11, 44-46 of "Slave Narratives: A Folk History of Slaves"
19. "A Documentary History of the Negro People in the United States," Section IV: The Civil War; many of the slave testimonials refer to the starting of the war and the ideas of freedom it sparked in their minds, "Slave Narratives: A Folk History of Slaves," Volume XVI, p. 5, XVII, p. 1, 3, 42-43
20. Individual acts of property damage and assassination attempts by fire, knife, gun, clubs, axe or poison were so common that numbering the events would be nearly impossible. "American Negro Slave Revolts," p. 143; ex-slave Charles Crawley refers to slaves killing owners when they got mistreated: "You know, some slaves who were treated bad; some of dem had started gittin' together an' killin' de white folks when dey carried dem out to de field to work." "Slave Narratives: A Folk History," Volume XVII, p. 10
21. See Slaves Deliver a Prize of War in "A Pictorial History of Blackamericans," p. 166-167
22. Page 476 of Aptheker's "A Documentary History of the Negro People in the United States" talks about the eve of the Emancipation Proclamation when Negro people and friends held parties in Boston, according to Frederick Douglass; the document was excerpted by Aptheker from "Life and Times of Frederick Douglass," written by himself (N.Y., Pathway Press), p. 387-389
23. Military manpower quotas were becoming hard to meet, so less than four weeks after the Emancipation Proclamation was issued, Secretary of War Stanton allowed Governor John A. Andrew of Massachusetts to enlist Negroes to serve. Quarles, "The Negro in the Civil War," p. 184; Charles Grandy was a Civil War veteran and ex-slave who talked about his willingness to serve without pay just to avoid being a slave again, "Slave Narratives: A Folk History," Volume XVII, p. 22; also p. 42-43 tells of ex-slave war veteran, Albert Jones, who goes into detail about his enlistment into the Union Army and some of his daily tasks.
24. George L. Stearns was supervisor of enlistments and sought the assistance of well-known Negro leaders to help him recruit troops. These leaders targeted specific homes, public meeting places, and barbershops to recruit young Negro males. Quarles, "The Negro in the Civil War," p. 184
25. "A Pictorial History of Blackamericans," p. 182
26. "Slave Narratives: A Folk History," Volume XVI, p.2, Clinte Lewis talks about the fact he had numerous chances to run away during the war, but stayed and even remained on the plantation after he was freed because the owners were kind to him during slavery. Also refer to Volumes I and XVII to see various other examples of slaves doing the same thing. It's of great importance that I stress the fact that the majority of the slaves who said they were treated fairly were in upper-southern states, and not in the lower states like Mississippi and Alabama where slaves were routinely treated worse.
27. Not only does Mrs. Bradfield talk about her attitude towards freedom, but she also talked about the kindness of her masters and how lucky she was compared to other slaves. "Slave Narratives: A Folk History," Volume I, p. 45
28. Litwack, "Been in the Storm so Long," p. 328; "Slave Narratives: A Folk History," South Carolina Narrative (Part 1) 5-6,
29. Litwack, "Been in the Storm so Long," p. 329-330
30. Charlie revised his expectations because he said he couldn't comprehend the term "freedom." Litwack, "Been in the Storm so Long," p. 329-330
31. "Running the negroes" was practiced in the South but waned during the end of 1862 because of Union campaigns in the South. The youngest and most "productive" slaves were taken with or moved by their masters deeper south so that Union forces could not free them. Usually, the old and maimed slaves were left for the Yankees. Bell Irvin Wiley, "Southern Negroes 1861-1865" (New Haven: Yale University Press), p. 4-6
32. In slave economics, slave owners would buy labor; so in essence, labor became part of the capital. Walker, "Slavery and the coming War," p. 11
33. Ira Berlin, "Freedom: A Documentary History of Emancipation 1861-1867," Series I, Volume I: "The Destruction of Slavery," p. 264-265
34. "Slave Narratives: A Folk History," Volume XVII, p. 16

Many Presidents have visited Roanoke Valley

by Sandra Brown Kelly

Sitting U.S. presidents have come to visit the Roanoke Valley by horse, train, car and plane, the mode of travel more linked to the progress of transportation than to any personal choice. Thirteen of them visited, beginning with George Washington, and if you throw in some who visited before or after being in office, and include some vice presidents, the total rises appreciably.

The Roanoke Times on July 13, 2012, reported that 11 sitting presidents had visited the Roanoke Valley. The Salem Museum in "A Guide to Historic Salem, Summer 2000," credited 10 presidents with having visited Salem, including some not on the Times' list. No doubt there are others as Woodrow Wilson should have, considering his wife Edith Bolling was from Wytheville. What information does exist offers rich details about the ways of life in various times and also brings up that ever lingering, much touted rivalry — real or imagined — between Roanoke and Salem.

Mention of the rivalry emerged during the most lavish visit of a sitting president, Franklin D. Roosevelt's trip to the Valley on Oct. 19, 1934. Roosevelt, who served from 1933-1945, came to dedicate the Veterans Administration Hospital in Salem. According to Norwood C. Middleton's "Salem: A Virginia Chronicle," Salem really fancied up along the planned route for the motorcade from the train station in Roanoke to the Salem dedication site. According to Middleton, plantings in the median along Boulevard Street "were groomed and curbing installed." Federal dollars also helped pay for a widening and paving of a portion of Eighth Street (312-313).

When the President and his dignitaries arrived around 4 p.m., some 40,000 people waited at the hospital site, but such enthusiasm did not offset a Salem newspaper's editorial that "deplored" the fact that in his dedication speech Roosevelt gave no "mention of Salem, even as a joint host with Roanoke" (312, 313). Still, it was quite a party. Various accounts, including information accompanying a photo of the event on the Historical Society of Western Virginia's Digital Museum site, put full attendance for the event at 85,000 people. The Roanoke museum account also noted that the president arrived in town on a "private seven-car



President Franklin Delano Roosevelt visited the Roanoke Valley in 1934 to dedicate the Veterans Administration Hospital.

Sandra Brown Kelly is a graduate of Virginia Western Community College and holds bachelor's and master's degrees from Hollins University. She retired in 1999 after more than 30 years as a reporter and editor for the Roanoke Times and now serves as adjunct faculty at Virginia Western and operates SBK Inc., writing and editing.

train" and then rode in a "Packard Phaeton" to Salem. Roanoke's History Museum has a photo of the train menu for the day, which included offerings of shrimp, oysters, tenderloin of trout, roast beef, chicken, cold Virginia Smithfield ham and steamed fig pudding, for \$1.25.

The earliest link to a president (or president-to-be) visiting the area is 1756, before Salem was founded in 1802 and chartered as a town in Botetourt County in 1806, and well before the existence of Roanoke, chartered as Big Lick in 1874 and as the town of Roanoke in 1882. George Washington, who became president in 1789, traveled in the area while an officer in the colonial army on an inspection tour of frontier forts when he was only 24. He stopped overnight at what became Big Lick on Oct. 13, 1756, lodging at the home of Widow Evans, according to "Kegley's Virginia Frontier." That likely was Rhoda Evans, widow of Daniel Evans, who operated a mill near present Carilion Roanoke Memorial Hospital. His bill was 3 shillings, according to his expense account. (242)

Thomas Jefferson traveled from Poplar Forest, his Bedford County home, across the mountain at the Peaks of Otter to visit the spa at Warm Springs but no documentation of a Roanoke Valley visit has been found, according to Gene Crotty, a Botetourt County historian. Crotty said Falling Spring, near Covington, was the farthest western point in the travels of Jefferson, the man responsible for the huge Louisiana Purchase of western lands.

Plenty is known of Andrew Jackson's experiences in the area, however. He visited before he became president and while he was in office, traveling between the capital and his Tennessee home, the Hermitage. None of his visits were official though. One letter that Jackson wrote to a Fincastle lawyer was penned at a Salem "tavern, the Mermaid." "Salem: A Virginia Chronicle" notes the letter was dated July 2, 1807, and wasn't mailed until July 7, "which could underscore the irregularity of stage service." Middleton's book also shares the contents of a letter Jackson wrote in 1834, five years after he became president, explaining he had been delayed in getting to Abingdon because of "rain & intolerable bad roads..." and a "severe attack of bilious colick that detained me three days at Doctor Johnstons [cq] near Salem." He was again at the doctor's house in 1936 when he wrote his son, Andrew Jackson Jr., that "in the Streets of Salum [cq]" his carriage "broke a swingle tree and the foreaxes" (Middleton, 36-42).

CAME FIRST AS SOLDIERS

Two men who became president, Rutherford B. Hayes and William McKinley, were first in the area as part of the Union Army at the Battle of Hanging Rock (Salem) in June 1864. Both later returned while president.

According to Middleton, Hayes visited four months into his presidency, in 1877, as part of a "19-day goodwill tour" of five states. According to a description credited to The Fincastle Herald newspaper, Hayes "lifted his silk hat, and got ready to make a speech," but no one in the crowd acknowledged him because they had not seen it. Finally, a student greeted him, and Hayes said "good morning," and after a silent period asked, "What county is Salem in?" When answers came back "Roanoke," Hayes asked the audience if this is the Roanoke River and eventually introduced Secretary of State William M. Evarts. The Roanoke College magazine, *The Roanoke Collegian*, quoted the president as saying: "I recollect passing through here once before, but under less favorable circumstances," a reference to having been at Hanging Rock where he was a colonel in charge of the First Brigade of the 23rd Ohio Infantry. He made no speech and the train moved on (130-131).

In between Hayes and McKinley, the area got a quick visit from President Benjamin Harrison. The Benjamin Harrison Presidential Website notes that railroads greatly expanded presidential visits and goes on to detail President Harrison's transcontinental trek through 19 states in spring 1891. The trip included a stop in Roanoke on April 14, 1891, where Harrison supposedly said a few words.

The visit by President Harrison was recorded in *The Roanoke Times* of April 15, 1891, in a lengthy story that describes many individual encounters between the chief executive and citizens of the city. As the train pulled into Union Station and came to a stop, the President received a "hearty cheer," then onlookers

began to press in to shake hands with him. Then calls came for the President to provide a speech, which he did at length. The President told the crowd he was glad to be in the state of his father and congratulated those attending on the vigorous level of economic development he had observed in Virginia. The President's party included John Wanamaker, the retail titan who was planning a store for Roanoke. According to the newspaper story, two young Norfolk and Western messenger boys had climbed to the top of the rail station, where they gained his attention after some effort when one of them tipped the brim of his hat. The President looked up, the story says, and took their hands ("The Jaunt Through Virginia"). Harrison was president from 1889-1893.

McKINLEY DREW THOUSANDS

Nine years later, according to Raymond P. Barnes' "History of the City of Roanoke," President William McKinley's train stopped briefly on April 29, 1901, at Union Station in Roanoke and drew crowds that made the streets look like "those during the carnival," a surprise for an area with Democratic leanings in politics, the account states. Barnes offers this account: "Redman and Machine Works bands were on hand to add to the clamor. Men and women fought like maniacs to shake his hand, trampling on children in their mad rush." Oddly enough, there was no official on hand to greet McKinley, the account states. McKinley was traveling in his private railcar, "Olympia," which Barnes quotes a reporter as describing as a "handsome affair." The President was barely into his second term, and that same year he was fatally wounded by an assassin, Leon Czolgosz, during a visit to Buffalo, New York (359).



Roanoke citizens offered an enthusiastic greeting to President McKinley and Party when he visited the Star City. [Copyright 1901 by Underwood and Underwood.]

LAVISH WELCOME FOR VICE PRESIDENT

On October 23, 1907, Theodore Roosevelt arrived by train in Roanoke with no plans reported for the train to make a stop. Stop it did, when the station platform and the rail yard were flooded with people wanting to see the President. Roosevelt stood on the rear platform of the train as it came to a stop. He was returning to Washington after a big hunting trip to Mississippi. The president of the Roanoke Chamber of Commerce had telegraphed Roosevelt and asked him to describe in his speech here "how he killed the bear." The Roanoke Times story of April 24 described his voice as somewhat hoarse, but that did not prevent him from applauding the material prosperity represented by Virginia's agriculture and manufacturing plants. As for the bear, he said he didn't have the time to talk about it, but he was reported as delighted at the reception given him by the citizens and dignitaries of Roanoke ("Mr. Roosevelt Visits Roanoke").

Outside of Franklin Roosevelt's visit to the area, the area's most social encounter came with Woodrow Wilson's vice president. According to the Historical Society of Western Virginia, on May 4, 1914, Vice President Thomas R. Marshall visited the Roanoke Valley along with his wife. The couple was lavishly entertained at "Cocke-Spur," the home of Lucian Hayward Cocke and Sarah (Johnson) Hagan Cocke. The event was reported in the May 5, 1914, issue of The Roanoke Times and photographs of the event are in a scrapbook in the archives of the History Museum of Western Virginia. The Marshalls stayed at Kern Cliff, the summer home of U.S. Senator and Mrs. John W. Kern of Indiana; the home was in the Carvins Cove area. (Cocke-Spur) Kern was an unsuccessful vice presidential candidate in 1908.

Chronologically, the next visit associated with a president came when then Hollywood actor Ronald Reagan came to Salem's General Electric Plant in 1957 on a public relations tour for the "GE Theatre" TV program he hosted. His visit was documented in an article compiled for The Roanoker magazine by the Historical Society of Western Virginia (Historical Society of Western Virginia. "One Year in Roanoke: 1957").

The next presidential visit came from Lyndon B. Johnson (1963-1969), who spoke upon arrival at the now Roanoke-Blacksburg Regional Airport on May 23, 1964, and introduced "the senior Senator from Virginia, my old longtime friend, Harry Byrd." Johnson then mentioned he and his group would "have a chance to come by the fence and say hello to you."

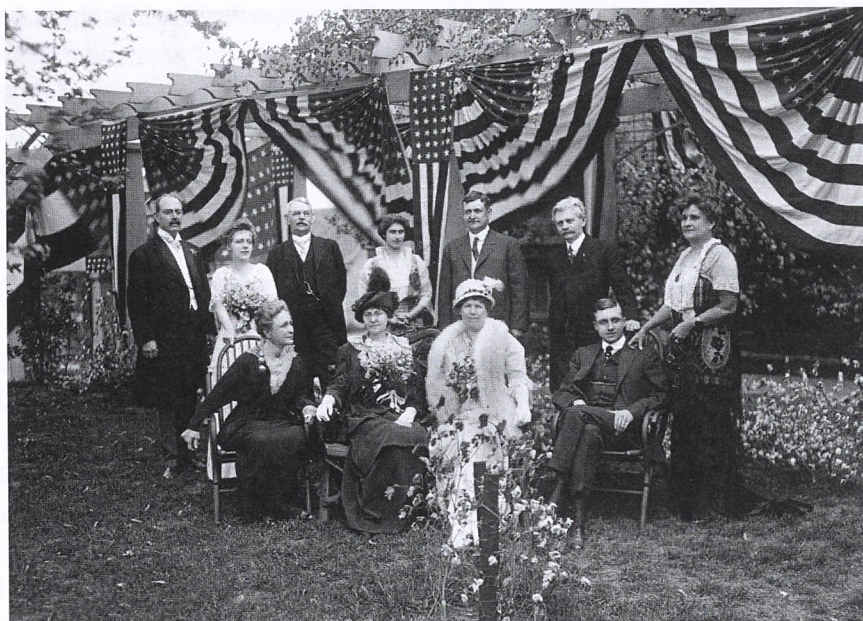
On March 31, 1976, a campaigning Jimmy Carter visited Roanoke for a short talk at what was then the Roanoke Civic Center and meetings with the editorial staff of The Roanoke Times and World-News newspapers, and leaders from the African American community. A newspaper article on the visit quotes the Rev. Charles T. Green, a former president of the Roanoke NAACP, as saying Carter made a "favorable impression" on some 15 leaders who were at that meeting. Carter returned on Sept. 23 after his election to campaign for Henry Howell.

Another Carter visit came on Sept 24, 1977, when Carter flew from Andrews Air Force Base to Roanoke, according to "The Daily Diary of President Jimmy Carter." He was met by Henry E. Howell Jr., Democratic candidate for governor of Virginia; also in the welcoming committee was Roanoke Mayor Noel C. Taylor. He then traveled to the Roanoke Civic Center (now Berglund Center) where he viewed a portrait done by Lenore Holsveig. He was gone by 3:42 p.m., heading to a similar event in Norfolk.

CAME BEFORE BEING ELECTED

On Nov. 4, 1960, John F. Kennedy campaigned in Roanoke and was interviewed by then WDBJ-radio news director Forrest ("Frosty") Landon. The interview was captured on film by WDBJ-TV, which quoted Landon as noticing: "And that was showing on the right hand of Kennedy, a band-aid [cq] that obviously was there to protect what was left of his hand after a long arduous campaign." The New York Times News Service reported that Kennedy, who arrived on his private plane, The Caroline, had to be rescued from a telephone booth where he was calling his brother, Robert. A woman gave him "a silvery set of good luck horseshoes," read the New York Times news account. The Richmond Times-Dispatch noted Kennedy drew up to 25,000 people.

An account of Kennedy's visit in "Television News of the Civil Rights Era 1950-1970" points out:



Vice presidents came to Roanoke too. Here are guests at Cocks-Spur, the Orchard Hill home of Lucian and Sarah Hagan Cocke before a May 4, 1914, reception for Vice President Thomas R. and Lois Marshall. From left, front: Mattie Cocke, Lois Marshall, Araminta Kern and C. Francis Cocke. Standing, from left: Col. Alfred B. Williams, Mary Stuart Cocke Goodwin, Harry St. George Tucker, Frances Mingea, Lucian H. Cocke, Vice President Thomas Marshall and Sarah Hagan Cocke.

"The theme of Kennedy's speech was straightforward: 'Virginia should not vote Republican.' Kennedy said Virginia is the home of Thomas Jefferson's Democratic Party, and thus, it could not afford to elect Richard Nixon as President of the United States." Two times during Kennedy's talk, aircraft noise was really loud. The first time it happened, Kennedy said, "Goodbye, Dick," referring to Nixon leaving. The second noise occasion prompted: "There are more Republicans leaving town today than ever."

NIXON VISITED SEVERAL TIMES

Richard Nixon visited the Valley multiple times, twice before becoming president and once during his term, Oct. 28, 1969. On that visit, President Nixon spoke at 7:48 p.m. at what was then Woodrum Airport in Roanoke and later at the then Salem-Roanoke Valley Civic Center, (now Salem Civic Center) on behalf of the gubernatorial campaign of Roanoke resident Linwood Holton.

Nixon noted that "coming back to this state and to this city and to this part of this state is a very heartwarming thing for me. I only wish that my wife could be here with me. She was with me on all the previous occasions, but for the last two days she has been down in bed with the flu bug. But she sends her very best and knows that the 'Ladies for Lin' are going to come through for Holton. Finally, as I will say a little later at the rally downtown, generally a President does not find it possible to go into all of the contests and all of the campaigns that he would like to. This is the first time that I have made an appearance since becoming President of the United States in behalf of a candidate. And I am proud that it is in behalf of Lin Holton... "

Later at the Salem-Roanoke Valley Civic Center, Nixon made no mistake about where he was – unlike Roosevelt when he came to the VA hospital dedication. Nixon said: "I know I am in Salem, incidentally, and not in Roanoke. I can assure you that it is a great honor to be here, to have this wonderful welcome, to remember the time that I was here in 1960 with one of the largest — according to Dick Poff, the largest — political crowd that had ever been gathered in this part of the state, either before or since." (Poff, who died in 2011, was a native of Radford and as a congressman represented a Western Virginia district that included Roanoke.)

Nixon was also in Roanoke on Sept. 15, 1960, while he was vice president. The Chicago Tribune reported a crowd of 14,000 greeted him at Victory Stadium (the city's former football stadium) where actress Helen Hayes described Nixon as a "crusader against atheistic communism ... and a band played 'Dixie' as Nixon and his wife appeared on the platform." (Edwards)

Certainly, too, Nixon was a shadow in the background in Roanoke on July 19, 1974, when then Vice President Gerald Ford campaigned here with Congressman M. Caldwell Butler. At a press conference, Ford said, "I will not predicate my appearance or attendance in a Congressional District because a person votes for or against the President. I respect the independent views of any congressman, including this one." (Nightly News 7-20-1974)

At the time, Butler was a first-term Republican representative who announced on July 25, 1974, that he would vote to impeach Nixon and "wept after he voted" on July 27, according to Butler's obituary in the New York Times. (Martin) President Nixon resigned on Aug. 9, 1974, and Ford became president.

FLIGHT STOPOVERS FOR BUSHES

Neither Bush officially visited the Roanoke Valley, but George H.W. passed through. According to The Roanoke Times' July 13, 2012, article, Bush flew into the Roanoke airport in May 1990, on his way to speak at Liberty University in Lynchburg. His son had a similar habit of just passing through, according to that article by Mason Adams. George W. Bush came to the Roanoke airport on June 6, 2001, on his way to the dedication of the National D-Day Memorial in Bedford. He was back on April 17, 2002, enroute to speak at

Virginia Military Institute, and on April 17, 2007, came into the Valley on his way to speak at Virginia Tech, which had suffered the loss of more than 30 students from a gunman's rampage on April 16. (Adams)

PRESIDENT OBAMA LATEST VISITOR

President Barack Obama filled the downtown City Market area when he spoke July 13, 2012, at Roanoke Fire Station #1. "Hello, Roanoke! It is good to be back in Roanoke! Good to be back in Virginia. Back in the Star City," he told the crowd. Obama had campaigned in Roanoke on Oct. 17, 2008. (Office of the Press Secretary)

Obama's 2008 visit drew 8,000-plus to the Roanoke Civic Center, according to The Roanoke Times. The candidate also visited the Total Elegance Salon on Jefferson Street. The newspaper reported that his visit represented the "first time a major party candidate has visited Roanoke during the general election since Sen. John F. Kennedy made a stop at the Roanoke Regional Airport on Nov. 4, 1960, during his race against then-Vice President Richard Nixon." (Adams and Johnson)

WORKS CITED

- Adams, Mason. "Roanoke Readies for Obama's visit." The Roanoke Times. July 13, 2012. A1 NewsBank.
- Adams, Mason and Johnson, Rob. "Obama Makes Pitch to S.W. Virginia." The Roanoke Times. October 18, 2008. NewsBank.
- Barnes, Raymond P. "History of the City of Roanoke." Commonwealth Press: Radford. 1968. 359.
- Benjamin Harrison Presidential Website, Indianapolis, Indiana; www.presidentbenjaminharrison.org.
- Cocke-Spur. Scrapbook. Digital Collection. History Museum of Western Virginia.
- "The Daily Diary of President Jimmy Carter." Jimmy Carter Presidential Library & Museum, Georgia State University, and the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia. <http://www.jimmycarterlibrary.gov/>.
- Edwards, Willard. "Nixon Lashes Kennedy as a Tool of Labor." Chicago Daily Tribune. Part 1, Page 3:9.16.1969. Chicago Daily Tribune Online Archives.
- A Guide to Historic Salem, Summer 2000. Vol. 6:2 — Summer 2000. Salem History Museum Online.
- Historical Society of Western Virginia. "One Year in Roanoke: 1957." 1.1.2012. The Roanoker.
- Kennedy, John F. "Remarks of Senator John F. Kennedy, Airport Rally, Roanoke, VA," November 4, 1960. Online by Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, The American Presidency Project. <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=60402>.
- Kegley, F.B.: "Kegley's Virginia Frontier," The Southwest Virginia Historical Society, Roanoke, Va. 1938.
- Kennedy, John F. "Excerpts of Remarks by Senator John F. Kennedy, Airport Rally, Roanoke, VA (Advance Release Text)," November 4, 1960. Online by Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, The American Presidency Project. <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=60401>.
- "The Jaunt Through Virginia." The Roanoke Times. April 16, 1891. Page 1.
- Johnson, Lyndon B: "Remarks Upon Arrival at the Airport, Roanoke, Virginia," May 23, 1964. Online by Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, The American Presidency Project. <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=26263>.
- Martin, Douglas. "M Caldwell Butler, a Key Vote Against Nixon, Dies at 89." July 29, 2014. The New York Times Online Archives.
- Middleton, Norwood C. "Salem: A Virginia Chronicle." Salem Historical Society Inc., Salem, Va. 1986.
- Nightly News 7-20-1974. NBC News, NBC University Archives. 7.20.74. http://www.nbcuniversalarchives.com/nbcuni/clip/5112499756_007.do.
- Office of the Press Secretary. "Remarks by the President at a Campaign Event in Roanoke, Virginia." The White House. 7.13.2012. www.WhiteHouse.gov.
- Nixon, Richard: "Remarks at Roanoke, Virginia," October 28, 1969. Online by Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, The American Presidency Project. <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=2291>.
- "Mr. Roosevelt Visits Roanoke." The Roanoke Times. October 24, 1907. Page 1.
- "Television News of the Civil Rights Era 1950-1970." William G. Thomas, III and Rector and Board of Visitors, University of Virginia. 2005. <http://www2.vcdh.virginia.edu/civilrightstv/>.

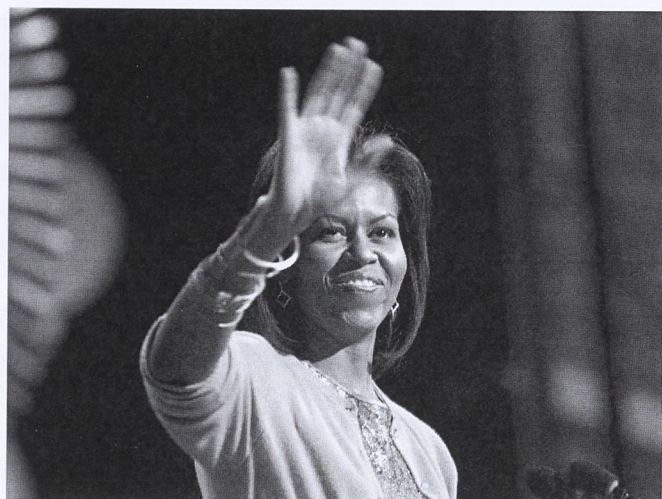
Special thanks to the Virginia Room, Roanoke City Public Library.

Michelle Obama has Henry County slavery roots

First Lady Michelle Obama's great-great-great-grandparents, Peter Jumper Sr. and Dolly Jumper, lived in Henry County where they were free before the Civil War, but their daughter-in-law, Eliza Wade, wife of Peter Jumper Jr. and great-great-grandmother of the First Lady, was a slave.

Mrs. Obama's ancestry and information about the Jumpers is explored in "American Tapestry: The Story of the Black, White and Mixed Ancestors of Michelle Obama" by Rachel L. Swarns, a reporter for the New York Times for almost 20 years. The book was published by Amistad, an imprint of HarperCollins Publishers in 2012.

An excerpt from the book follows:



It was that hunger for freedom that drew Dolly and Peter Jumper, Mrs. Obama's great-great-great-grandparents to the courthouse in Henry County, Virginia, in 1866. Dolly and Peter had been free before the war, but the North's victory opened the doors to a kind of liberty they had never known. So on a winter day in February 1866, they joined hundreds of other African American couples in front of the two-story brick building. There were former slaves and people whose families had been free for generations, elderly couples with salt-and-pepper hair, and young lovers brimming with the giddiness of first-found romance. They were lining up because federal officials were legal-

izing the marriages of African Americans for the very first time. Dolly and Peter had lived together for thirty-five years by then. She was about fifty-three and he was about sixty-six. They may have been hobbled by arthritis, with graying hair and aching limbs, but they were determined to imbue their relationship with the formal recognition of the state. (Although as free people they had the right to marry even before the war, some free African Americans chose to cohabitate rather than to invite unwelcome attention from the white authorities responsible for handling marriage licenses.) So the Jumpers took their turn amid the crowds. And when their moment came, they stood before a federal official who took up pen and paper and wrote down their names and ages, adding those of their children as well, and the year that they had first lived together as husband and wife. By the time the registration was through, 603 couples—12 of whom were free before the war—had enshrined their relationships in that courthouse, and Dolly and Peter were able to savor freedom's fullness in a way they never could before. They had never lived as slaves .but they had been denied many of the basic rights that whites took for granted. For them, freedom meant finally receiving official acknowledgement of the precious and invisible bonds of their family, formal recognition as

This is an excerpt from pp.289-91 (910 words) from "American Tapestry: The Story of the Black, White and Mixed Ancestors of Michelle Obama" by Rachel L. Swarns. Copyright © 2012 by Rachel L. Swarns. Reprinted by permission of HarperCollins Publishers. Image: iStock Photo

a committed couple and devoted parents.

No eyewitness accounts have emerged of that day in Henry County, but similar scenes played out across the country as African Americans wept and rejoiced as they turned up by the thousands to enshrine their relationships under the cloak of law. "I praise God for this day!" one black soldier declared after learning that Virginia would recognize the relationships between slaves. "I have long been praying for it." White missionaries and army officers, who had assumed that slavery had destroyed family ties among African Americans, watched with astonishment at the outpouring of enthusiasm for the institution of marriage. In one Mississippi military camp alone, a chaplain married 119 black couples in a single ceremony. "One of the most touching features of our work was the eagerness with which colored men and women availed themselves of the opportunities offered them to legalize unions already formed, some of which had been in existence for a long time."

Former slaves, then, were not the only African Americans who benefited from Emancipation. Blacks who had been free before the war—many of whom had experience working for wages, some education and some means—were particularly well poised to seize the widening opportunities opening up for African Americans as they began taking their seats in county commissions, in state legislatures, and in Congress. This group accounted for only about 11 percent of the black population in 1860, but they would occupy a far larger share of political positions. Between 1869 and 1900, at least 10 of the 22 blacks who served in Congress had been free before the Civil War. In Virginia, where the Jumpers lived, 43 of the 102 blacks who held state office were free before Emancipation.

The Jumpers and the Motens were illiterate and never became part of the African American elite. But when slavery ended both families had some money on hand and some experience negotiating with whites for wages. Nelson Moten, who had escaped to freedom in the Civil War, had managed to acquire personal possessions worth \$200 by the time he was in his forties. Which made him one of the more prosperous black men in his rural community of Villa Ridge, Illinois. His daughter, Phoebe, would learn to read and write and would carry the family line to Chicago. In Virginia, Dolly and Peter Jumper, who were born free, could afford the help of a young woman who cooked for them as they settled into old age. Their son, Peter Jr., would exemplify the social changes rapidly transforming the postslave society. When it came time to marry, he picked a bride who had been born in servitude, bridging the long-standing divide between those who had been slaves and those who were born free.

Yet even as the Jumpers and the Motens saw the world change in ways they could never have imagined before the Civil War, they still fell short of fulfilling the dream held so dearly by most African Americans. They never earned enough money to buy any land. Nelson Moten and Peter Jumper Sr. would both die as sharecroppers. Mary Moten died in Villa Ridge, Illinois and Nelson probably died there too, though no record of his death has survived. It appears that the Jumpers spent their last days amid the green hills of southern Virginia, the state where they were born free. Their final resting place has yet to be found.

According to "American Tapestry," the genealogy of Michelle Obama is as follows: Her mother is Marian Shields, daughter of Rebecca Jumper/Coleman and Purnell Shields. Rebecca Jumper/Coleman was the daughter of Eliza Tinsley and Jim Jumper. Jumper was the son of Peter Jumper Jr. and Eliza Wade. Peter Jumper Jr. was the son of Peter Jumper Sr. and Dolly Jumper. Mrs. Obama descended from the Moten family through her father, Fraser Robinson III, according to the book.

The Jacob Persinger Family in 'Backcountry Virginia'

by Walter Dixon

In 2006, two friends and I bought a mountain farm in western Virginia, with extensive hayfields, clear streams, upland pastures and forests of century-old timber. Known locally as “The Carters,” (1) it had remained in the same Persinger family for well over 200 years. Posted at the entrance was a sign designating the property a “Bicentennial Farm.”

There was a farmhouse — in serious disrepair — perched on the edge of a cliff above a small river with the Rich Patch Mountains beyond. Clustered nearby were various outbuildings: a large dark barn, a granary and smokehouse, and several other structures of ill-defined usage. The homeplace and surrounding acreage were part of a 110-acre King’s grant to one James Williams, dated 1772, lying on Potts Creek in Augusta County (now Alleghany), Virginia. (2)

In 1777 Williams sold the property to Jacob Persinger, (3) a 61-year-old Swiss-German immigrant, who divided the land between his two sons, Christopher and Jacob Jr. (4) Over the years both sons and their descendants bought more land and continued farming operations on neighboring tracts.

“The Carters” sparked our interest in Jacob Persinger, the original purchaser, who in 1750 brought the Persinger name to Virginia. He lived during a tumultuous time in American history.

About the time Jacob arrived in Pennsylvania, German and Swiss-German immigrants from Pennsylvania, followed by the Scotch-Irish, had begun moving out of the colony into Virginia through the Shenandoah Valley in search of new lands for settlement. During the next few years the trickle of migrants became a stream, alarming the Indians of the Ohio River valley and their French allies. As the number of new settlements increased, a clash became inevitable; and from 1753 to 1764, violent conflict — beginning with the French and Indian War, followed by the Cherokee War, and ending with Pontiac’s rebellion — disrupted settlement and temporarily depopulated large portions of the Shenandoah Valley.

France’s bid for empire was halted in 1760 with its surrender at Montreal. The Revolutionary period followed, and independence was assured in 1781 with the Continental Army victorious over the British at Yorktown, ushering in the National period of the United States of America.

As a young man leaving his native land to seek his fortune in a new, untamed land, Jacob Persinger was a risk taker. Chastened by tragedy in middle age, he lived his later years generously and conservatively, as you would expect from a prudent Switzer.

Following is his biography, as best we can reconstruct it from court house records, historical reports, and personal letters and reflections.

Walter Dixon is a student of history and a retired investment banker.



Home built by Jacob Persinger Jr., ca. 1778.

JACOB PERDSHENGGER (5) **THE IMMIGRANT**

Jacob Persinger arrived at the port of Philadelphia 29 May 1735 aboard the English Ship Mercury, originating from Rotterdam. He was 19 years old, unmarried and had left his home in Zumikon, a small farming village near Zurich, eight months earlier with a large colony of Swiss emigrants. They were heading for America and the so-called "Carolina Island."

At that time emigration was considered a crime in Switzerland and was punishable as such. It was equivalent to desertion, a deliberate shirking of one's obvious duty to the Fatherland. The loss of sturdy hands meant fewer for arms and trade, fewer soldiers. Beginning in November 1734, increasingly severe edicts forbidding emigration were published; property sales by emigrants were prohibited, and agents distributing literature encouraging emigration were punishable. Zurich was especially energetic in denouncing and penalizing emigration. (6)

It was a time of severe economic distress in Switzerland, and conditions were unbearable for the underclasses, with no hope of improvement. Many had lost their fathers in the wars fought by the great powers, which often pitted Swiss mercenaries against each other. (7)

We don't know the exact circumstances resulting in Jacob's decision to emigrate, but economic hardship and lack of hope for improvement probably were most significant. His parents may have died and his prospects appeared dismal. Also, we can be reasonably assured that religious persecution was not a consideration. The German Reform church — Jacob's church — was quite strong in northern Switzerland.

The group of nearly 200 country folk departed Zurich 4 October 1734, having endured much pressure from the city fathers to abandon their plan. "Many thousands saw them depart with great pity for them, especially because they were undertaking so thoughtlessly, with wife and child, but poorly provided for, the dangerous journey of 300 hours in cold, rain and wind, now, when the days are getting shorter." (8)

The group traveled on the Rhine by river boat, through harsh weather and dangerous conditions, to Rotterdam. In Rotterdam their leader, Rev. Maurice Goetschy, for personal reasons of his own, changed their destination from Carolina to Pennsylvania. (9) From Holland they sailed to the Isle of Wight where they took on provisions for the long voyage to America. After storms and delays, and much discomfort, the group, now 143 persons, arrived in Pennsylvania four months later. (10)

Traveling as a Swiss colony, Jacob and the others likely made their way from the ship to the German-speaking settlement near Goshenhoppen Reformed Church northwest of Philadelphia. His ultimate destination was the Tulpehocken River Valley in the Blue Mountain foothills near Reading.

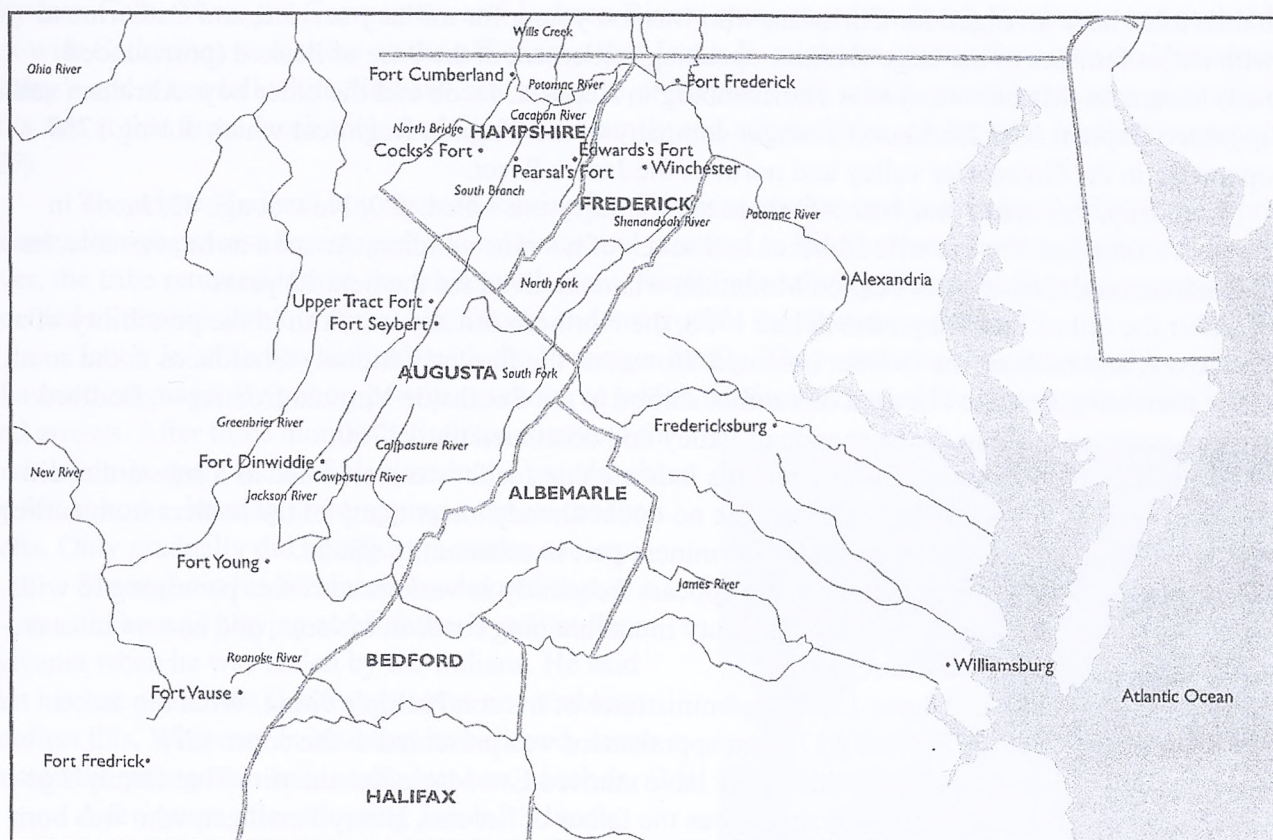
Jacob married Rebecca soon after his arrival. Their first child, Anna Maria, was born ca. 1736, and first son, Abraham, the following year. Other children came along fairly quickly: Phillip 1739, Johann Christian 1741, (11) Catherine 1745, Jacob Jr., 1749, all born in Pennsylvania; Paul 1751, and three younger unnamed children were all born in Virginia. (12)

Around 1749 Jacob Persinger packed up his young family and trekked south through the Shenandoah Valley on the Great Road to where it crossed James River at modern-day Buchanan. He then picked up a trail to the west, his destination being the Greenbrier River Valley in (West) Virginia. Jacob probably was attracted to this region by the Greenbrier Land Company which in 1749 had been granted 100,000 acres, on condition that it settle one family for each thousand acres. Andrew Lewis was the agent and surveyor. (13) Jacob bought a 185-acre tract on Spring Lick Creek, which flowed into the Greenbrier River. He likely lived there with his family and worked the land prior to acquiring it in 1751 from the original owner, an orphan named Christopher Landers. (14)

THE PERSINGER FAMILY IN AUGUSTA COUNTY

By 1753 about 50 families had settled along the creek tributaries of the Greenbrier Valley. However, sporadic incursions by Indians had begun. British General Edward Braddock arrived in 1754 with a large army, and hope was running high that the General would settle the score once and for all with the French and provide protection from the Indians. In the event, on 9 June 1755, as Braddock and his army approached Fort Duquesne (Pittsburgh), the French and their Indian allies attacked. The British soldiers were unable to defend themselves against the hit-and-run Indian tactics; Braddock suffered a disastrous defeat and was killed. The sole surviving colonel, Thomas Dunbar, led the demoralized army in retreat all the way back to Philadelphia into winter quarters, even though it was only July. Thus, the Virginia and Pennsylvania frontiers were laid open and unprotected.

Indian tribes allied with the French descended on isolated plantations with violence and bloodshed. In Augusta a full scale Indian attack on the Greenbrier rocked the area. More than two dozen settlers were killed or captured and taken to Shawnee towns across the Ohio River. Jacob and most others fled east from their Greenbrier farms to more settled and secure regions of Virginia.



Virginia Backcountry during Indian Wars 1743-1765.

Jacob thought they had found safety in the tiny community of Hooks Mill in what is now Alleghany County. (15) He found work operating a grist mill located at the head of Roaring Run, a picturesque mountain stream that tumbles eastward down the mountain to join Craig Creek. Indian troubles continued in other areas of the Virginia backcountry, but the Persingers' mountain home seemed relatively secure.

However, the Indians struck unexpectedly near Roaring Run. Beginning on 11 September 1756, and continuing for four days, more than 200 Shawnee and Delaware Indians attacked settlers' homesteads, "committing Outrages every minute, Killing Horses and Cattle, and burning the Houses of poor People... ." (16)

The Persinger farm did not escape the violence. According to one account, a war party of about 20 Delawares crossed the Jackson River near Covington and camped for the night near Low Moor. The next day they arrived at the Persinger farm. It was late summer, mid-September 1756. They attacked during the day when Jacob and his three older sons — Abraham, Phillip and Christian — were away. Jacob's wife Rebecca and two younger sons, Jacob Jr. and Paul, were taken prisoner. The three youngest Persinger children — infants or toddlers — were too young to make the arduous trip across the Ohio River to the Indian towns, and so were killed on the spot. (17) The raiders likely looted and burned the house, killed livestock, and quickly fled with their captives.

A search party picked up their trail for a while, but down in the valley around Paint Bank the trail went cold. (18) Jacob Jr. (about 6 years old) was adopted by an Indian mother and raised as her own. (19) Paul was said to have died; Rebecca was never again heard from.

One can hardly imagine Jacob's anguish when he and his sons returned to their decimated Hooks Mill home. Only his three older sons and their sister Catherine had escaped the massacre. A sorrowful

Jacob then must have arranged for Christian, who was too young for military service, and Catherine to live with Swiss families in the large German-speaking settlement at the base of Peaked (pronounced Peak-ed) Mountain (Massanutten) near Harrisonburg in Augusta. Jacob and the older boys Abraham and Phillip joined Captain John Dickinson's ranger company of the Virginia Regiment which during 1757 was operating in the Greenbrier valley and north of the James River.

Tragically, that same year both Abraham and Phillip were killed. (20) Now at age 42, Jacob in about a year's time had lost his wife Rebecca and seven of his nine children. As soon as he was able, he joined Christian and Catherine at Peaked Mountain, where he lived for the next 12 years.

After the fall of Fort Duquesne in late 1758, the Northern Indians lost faith in the possibility of a French victory, and raids on the frontier lessened. However, the formerly friendly Cherokees in the south were now fomenting trouble. The area of conflict shifted to the Southside Virginia frontier — Bedford and Halifax counties — from the Shenandoah Valley and continued until 1760.

From May 1758, Augusta County records indicate that Jacob was welcomed as a substantial citizen by the Peaked Mountain Swiss Germans. He no doubt already knew many of the settlers from earlier acquaintance in Pennsylvania, and he took a prominent part in community affairs.

During the next 10 years Jacob's name appears frequently in various activities pertaining to wills and estates and other legal matters. He did his duty in maintaining roads in his area; and he served as an elder in the German Reformed Church.

Jacob posted bond in August 1760 as administrator of his son Phillip's estate. What the assets were was not reported, but in February 1761 an appraisment was presented to the court. (21)

While not fully documented, Phillip may have married Eve Marie Kummerlin. That family's genealogy records indicate that Phillip Persinger was the father of her son, Henry Persinger, who was born ca. 1758, (22) after Phillip had been killed.

In 1760 Jacob married again. (23) Catherine Pence was the widow of Jacob Pence of the large and well-established Pence family in the Peaked Mountain area. At the time of their marriage, Catherine's two youngest children, John age 11 and Barbara age 12, were adopted by Jacob Persinger. (His two living children married their step-siblings: daughter Catherine married John Pence in 1763; son Christian — anglicized to Christopher — married Barbara Pence in 1768.) (24)

Also in 1762 Jacob bought his first property in the area, a 125-acre tract on Cub Run. The following year he was granted a patent on 130 acres located near the base of Peaked Mountain where he lived for the next several years, adding two adjacent tracts in 1764. He sold his original 125-acre tract and settled on his 600-plus-acre plantation on the Keezeltown Road, just below Peale's Cross Road, a few miles southeast of Harrisonburg.

The Augusta County Order Book 10 states that Jacob and several others became naturalized citizens in October 1765. They also were qualified as justices. (25)

THE STRANGE STORY OF JACOB PERSINGER JR.

At the conclusion of Pontiac's rebellion in November 1764, the Shawnees reluctantly agreed to give up their white prisoners, including children born of white women. Many longtime adult captives had to be forced to leave what they considered their homes and Indian families. A contemporary account stated, "...The Shawnese were obliged to bind several of their prisoners and force them along to the camp; and some women who had been delivered up, afterwards found means to escape and run back to the Indian town... Some, who could not make their escape, clung to their savage acquaintance at parting, and continued many days in bitter lamentations, even refusing sustenance." (26)

In late 1764, there was a release of Indian prisoners at the head of the James River near present-

day Iron Gate, where the Cowpasture and Jackson Rivers come together. Jacob Persinger, and probably his wife Catherine, were there on the off-chance that Jacob Jr. might be among the captives. Unclaimed at day's end was a tall white "Indian" boy about 15 or 16 years old, which would have been about Jacob Jr.'s age at that time. Jacob took the lad into his family and adopted him, giving him Jacob Jr.'s name.

(27)

The white "Indian" boy resisted leaving his Shawnee mother and Indian family. During the prisoner exchange process he escaped several times and returned to his Shawnee mother. Each time, however, the tribe returned him to the white settlement, fearful of violating the treaty. Finally, young Jacob decided to remain with his new white family and not trouble the Shawnees further.

Jacob Jr.'s life was difficult with the Persinger family. They spoke only German and he only the Shawnee language. He got on poorly at school, to which he always carried his tomahawk, knife, bow and arrows. After three months he refused to attend further. Jacob Jr. spent most of his time in the woods where he felt at home, hunting and trapping animals for their pelts. Only gradually did he adjust to settler society.

Throughout his life Jacob Jr. claimed that as a 5-year-old he was playing at his father's mill in Pennsylvania when he was stolen by the Indians. He said that his last name was Godfrey but was never able to confirm this. Whatever in his heart he believed, Jacob treated the young man as his long lost son, Jacob Jr. (28)

A few years after adopting Jacob Jr., Jacob resolved to leave his Peaked Mountain farm and relocate in the newly forming Botetourt County. By 1770, he had bought a small farm on McMurray's Creek, (29) a branch of the Cowpasture River, had relocated there, and was selling his Peaked Mountain farm. We can only speculate as to his motivation to remove from an established, comfortable community of German-speakers to what was still backcountry Virginia, until only recently fraught with Indian troubles.

The happiness of his "reincarnated" son, Jacob Jr., may have had much to do with it. Jacob Jr. was much more at home in the mountains and forests than in civilization, and he had little in common with the culture of the settled German-speakers at Peaked Mountain.

Botetourt County records show that during the next several years Jacob acquired several other tracts in the county, but he sold them all not long after their purchase, apparently each at a profit. Also, he probably had in mind providing for his two sons.

Daughter Catherine Pence and her husband John were well settled now near Harrisonburg; and Christopher in 1768 had married Barbara Pence. Several years later Christopher bought a 145-acre farm on the North River of the Shenandoah.

Jacob Jr. must have moved to Botetourt with his parents because in September 1775 he enlisted in the Army of the Revolution from Botetourt and served as a corporal under Captain Mathew Arbuckle. Jacob Jr. saw no combat; and there is no record of military service prior to the Revolutionary War. (30)

Initially, Jacob Jr. went to the Greenbrier area and from there marched to Fort Pitt (formerly Fort



This painting depicts Col. Henry Bouquet, and English army officer, receiving English captives from Native Americans at the end of the French and Indian War, 1764. [Source: Ohiohistory.org]



Carter family cabin ca. 1908. Marjorie Carter McCarthy is at far right, sitting. She died in 2005. The cabin was built by Christopher Persinger ca. 1773. Dr. and Mrs. Carter's home.

Duquesne) in Pennsylvania to obtain supplies. From Pennsylvania he marched to Fort Randolph, located at Point Pleasant on the Ohio River, and was discharged November 1776. From Point Pleasant Jacob Jr. returned to his parents' home in Botetourt. In his 1833 pension application, he declared that he had seen no combat. (31)

Other than Jacob Jr.'s service early in the War, no other Persingers were in the army. However, Jacob (probably Jr.) and Christopher provided services and supplies. Both registered locally for recruitment in the army in 1782, as required. (32)

SETTLING ON POTTS CREEK, VIRGINIA

On 8 December 1777, Jacob Persinger bought 110 acres, 8 miles southwest of the town of Covington on Potts Creek, from James Williams of Montgomery County who had patented the tract in 1772. Jacob's intention was to divide the property between his two sons, Jacob Jr. and Christopher, who was still on his own farm on North River of the Shenandoah. For convenience the entire tract initially was deeded to Jacob Jr. (In 1798 Jacob Jr. deeded his brother Christopher his portion of the Potts Creek land, where Christopher and his family had been living.) Jacob built a wigwam on his land; and in 1778 he married Mary Kimberlin and took her to her new "home."

Living in a wigwam and sleeping on bear skins was not quite to his new bride's liking, so Jacob Jr. built a proper bed and traded his bear skins for blankets. He also began construction of a proper log

home, which with additions is still standing today.

Christopher joined his brother on Potts Creek a year or so later and built a cabin where the present Carters farmhouse now stands. He sold his North River farm in Rockingham in 1781. Courthouse records beginning in the early 1780s show the brothers paying land taxes on their respective Potts Creek tracts.

THE DEATH OF JACOB PERSINGER SR.

Jacob Persinger Sr. was about 72 when he died in 1788 or 1789, just about the time George Washington took the oath of office for his first Presidential term. In April 1789 Christopher and the widow Catherine were summoned to appear at the June Court to declare whether they would administer Jacob's estate. (He had no will.) Jacob and Catherine had lived for nearly 20 years on McMurry's Creek, a branch of Cowpasture River, on the small tract Jacob bought in 1770.

The appraisal bill of the estate (33) tells much about how he lived his life. The total recorded inventory value was £200.2s.6d., but some amounts are suspect.

Notes due from neighbors totaled over £138., mostly from Gasper Faught, whose serial notes for £10. each came due 1787-1798. Indications are Faught may have either died or removed from the county; if so, the notes probably had no value.

Faught was either German or Swiss, as was Joseph Ensminger, another neighbor who was past due on two £7 notes. Jacob was no doubt the typical thrifty Switzer; but he also had profited from his real estate transactions in both Massanutten and western Augusta. He likely stuck close to his Swiss German roots: the only books in his library were in "Dutch Print."

Farm animals were few. He had one horse, a black mare about 9 years old with "one very old saddle bridle & blind halter"; one cow with calf; two steers; a yearling "heffer"; eight sheep, including three lambs; and three small hogs. Also included in the inventory was a spinning wheel, which with the sheep indicates that they made their own clothes. (He had some old "wearing cloaths" valued at 12s.)

There was only one bed and furniture and modest personal items, mostly kitchen utensils, including one skinner and one flesh fork. No other furniture is listed.

Cultivation of flax, spinning linen thread and weaving were typical Swiss farm activities to provide money for items they could not grow — sugar, salt. There were two entries in the inventory regarding flax — hackles and breaks — and it's likely that Jacob and Catherine were both proficient in linen weaving. (Sail cloth was made from flax or hemp; one of the fields at the Carters farm was known as the "hemp field.")

Christopher Persinger presented a bill for £6.1s. for wintering stock. Otherwise, there were no debts or charges against the estate.

There were no slaves.



Dr. Carter in white suit and hat. House in background was remodeled around cabin ca. 1913. Doc Carter died in 1947 at age 84. He was a country doctor for Potts Creek for more than 50 years.

JACOB AND CHRISTOPHER, BRIEFLY



*Grave of Jacob Persinger Jr.,
1749-1841, in Persinger Family
Cemetery.*

Jacob Jr., continued hunting, but he also was a successful farmer, and over the years he bought additional acreage. His will was written 3 July 1840, and probated in May 1841. Jacob Jr. was around 92 when he died, leaving a moderately large estate to his children. (34)

In 1802, Christopher drowned when his horse lay down during high water in Potts Creek. His body was not recovered for three days. (35) Christopher had 13 children. Moses bought out his siblings and maintained the farm. One of Moses' grandchildren, Clarissa (Clara), inherited the property which in the 1890s became known as "The Carters."

END NOTES

1. 09 Sep 1896 Dr. Benjamin Lewis Carter married Clarissa Susan Persinger, who had inherited at her father's death 194 acres of what came to be known as "The Carters." From time to time Dr. and Mrs. Carter bought additional adjoining acreage.
2. Virginia Land Office Records, Patent Book 40, p, 277, microfilm reel 39, Archival and Information Services Division, Library of Virginia.
3. Persinger in records is spelled variously: Bertschinger, Perdschenger; and later Passenger, Pessinger, and other close combinations.
4. Botetourt County Deed Book 2: 361, Circuit Clerk's Office Fincastle, Va.; (2) Virginia Land Office Records, Grant Book G, pg. 197, microfilm reel 48, Archival and Information Services Division, Library of Virginia.
5. The phonetic name written on the ship's passenger log.
6. Albert Bernhardt Faust, A.B. PhD, Lists of Swiss Emigrants in the Eighteenth Century to the American Colonies, Volume I, Zurich, 1734-1744, Preface iii. from the Archives of Switzerland, Published by the National Genealogical Society, Gaius M. Brumbaugh, Managing Editor, Washington D.C., 1920, printed by The New Era Printing Co., Lancaster, PA.
7. Ibid.
8. William John Hinke, Ph.D., D.D., A History of the Goshenhoppen Reformed Charge, Montgomery County, Pennsylvania (1727-1819), Part XXIX of a Narrative and Critical History prepared at the request of The Pennsylvania-German Society, Lancaster, 1920, 98. The list of emigrants in Goetschy's Colony on page 100 includes Jacob Bertschinger, from Zummikon, traveling alone.
9. Pennsylvania and the two Carolinas were the two most popular destinations for Swiss immigrants at this time.
10. John Henry Goetschy, letter to Zurich, July 23, 1735, describing the voyage, History of Goshenhoppen, Pennsylvania-German Society, 108-10.
11. John Christian (Christopher) Persinger was born 8 January 1741 in Berks County Pennsylvania, as reported by his father in the Christ (Little Tulpehocken) Church records; baptism was July 11, 1742). A woman named Anna Maria Persinger married in 1743 and did not migrate to Virginia with the family. She is assumed to have been a daughter. There also was a man named John Persinger in the Botetourt County records. His relationship, if any, to Jacob has not been documented.
12. Birth dates and order of birth are estimates, except for Christian.
13. Otis K. Rice, introduction to Memoir of Indian Wars, and other Occurrences; By the late Colonel Stuart, of Greenbrier. Presented to the Virginia Historical and Philosophical Society, By Chas. A. Stuart, of Augusta, son of the narrator. Parsons, West Virginia, reprinted by McClain Printing Company, 1971), 1.
14. Jacob's son Christopher stated in a 1797 deposition that they had "made an improvement" to the land prior to 1751, when it was surveyed. Lyman Chalkley, Chronicles of the Scotch-Irish Settlement in Virginia: Extracted from the Original Court Records of Augusta County, 1745-1800, 3 vols. (1912; reprint, Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Company, 1999), 3-513.
15. Robert Meade Snyder, A Selective History of the Persingers of Alleghany County, independent study University of Virginia,

Charlottesville, May 1993, 4.

16. Pennsylvania Gazette, Oct 7, 1756 (Box 215, Toner Collection). As cited in *The Effects of the French and Indian War on Civilian life in the Frontier Counties of Virginia 1754-1763*, Chester Raymond Young, dissertation Vanderbilt University, June 1969, as published by Virginia Genealogical Society, Richmond, 2009.
17. Chalkley, 2:511. Entries in "The Preston Register" in the Draper mss for Sep 13-14 state that "3 Parsinger children at Jackson River, killed" and "Mrs. Parsinger and 2 children, at Jackson River, prisoners" Also, *A Centennial History of Alleghany County Virginia*, Oren F. Morton, B.Lit., J. K. Ruebush Company, Dayton, Virginia, 1923, reprinted C. J. Carrier Company, Harrisonburg, Virginia, 1986.
18. Snyder, 7-8. A tradition in the family is that Rebecca for a while marked the trail with pieces of her dress.
19. Joseph Persinger, *The Life of Jacob Persinger... Who was Taken by the Shawnee Indians when an infant; with a short account of the Indian Troubles in Missouri; and a Sketch of the Adventures of the Author*, Sturgeon, Missouri: Printed for the Author by Moody & M'Michael, 1861, 1-6.
20. Lewis Preston Summers, *Annals of Southwest Virginia 1769-1800* (Reprint: Johnson City, Tennessee, The Overmountain Press, 1992), 303. Also Lloyd DeWitt Bockstruck, *Virginia's Colonial Soldiers*, 1988 (3d printing, Baltimore, Genealogical Publishing Company, Inc., 1998), pp. 246-7. The State of Virginia honored the Royal Proclamation of 1763 awarding bounty lands to those who served in the Virginia Regiment (but not militia) in the French and Indian War. In Feb 1780 Jacob had certified his and his two deceased sons' service and was awarded warrants for fifty acres for himself, for Abraham, and for Phillip. He reported that they were in Captain Dickinson's ranger unit in 1757 and that both sons were underage. The land for bounty was located in Kentucky, for which he had no use, so he sold (assigned) the warrants to Thomas Madison.
21. Augusta County Will Book 2:404, 20 Aug 1760; Will Book 3:9, 17 Feb 1761.
22. Henry Persinger appears in Botetourt County records with his wife Greselda, or Grizzly. He has some modest contact with the Persinger family. Family researchers in the early 20th century name Henry as a son of Jacob, but this lacks evidence and seems to be only an assumption. Henry's military service pension, which began in 1833, shows his age as 74, indicating that he was born around 1758-9, which of course was several years after the Shawnees captured Jacob's wife Rebecca. It therefore seems more likely that Henry was Phillip's son, as indicated in the Kummerlin genealogy. While Jacob married again in 1762, there is no indication that he had children by his second wife.
23. Augusta/Rockingham County Pence Family Group Sheets, *The Children of Jacob Pence*; compiled by Richard A. Pence; <http://www.pipeline.com/~richardpence/gensum1.htm#jacob1>
24. Chalkley, 1:87. John Pence married Catherine after Jacob threatened him with a suit for breach of promise. While their first child, born the month after their marriage, died young, the marriage apparently was a success: they went on to have eleven more.
25. Augusta County Order Book 10:8
26. Ward, *Breaking the Backcountry*, 250, n99, 305. citing William Smith, *A Brief State of the Province of Pennsylvania*. London: R. Griffiths, 1755, 29.
27. Mary Evelyn Harlow Carpenter, wife of Joseph H. Carpenter, *History of The Carpenters of 'Fort Carpenter,' 1746-1949* quoting an address of Judge Alexander Persinger, son of Jacob Persinger, Jr., to the Boone County Missouri County Court, 05 Sep 1860.
28. Joseph Persinger, *The Life of Jacob Persinger... Who was Taken by the Shawnee Indians when an infant; with a short account of the Indian Troubles in Missouri; and a Sketch of the Adventures of the Author*, Sturgeon, Missouri: Printed for the Author by Moody & M'Michael, 1861, 1-6.
29. Botetourt County Deed Book 2: 22. Indenture dated 22 Jan 1770 between William McMurry, grantor, and Jacob Persinger, grantee, both parties of Botetourt County, 20 acres (may have been 40 acres), on a branch of the Cowpasture River called McMurrays Creek... (Land tax records in Botetourt always showed 40 acres, but there is no record of how, or whether, Persinger acquired the additional acreage. May have been an error in the deed.)
30. Pension application of Jacob Persinger [Jr]: S30019, Transcribed and annotated by C. Leon Harris, Alleghany County Court November Term 1833, dated 18 Nov 1833. He stated his age as 84 and that he was born in Pennsylvania 19 Jan 1749. He related his service and added that he was in no engagement with the Enemy.
31. Ibid.
32. Robert D. Stoner, *A Seed-bed of the Republic*, Second Edition, Kingsport Press, Kingsport, TN, 1962, 126, 143.
33. Botetourt County, Virginia, Deed Book A, pp. 272-277.
34. Snyder, 17-18, 21-25.
35. Mother Nutt's History in the R. L. Persinger Collection, cited by Snyder, p 14.
36. Alleghany Circuit Court, August Term 1893, Partition of lands plat, Lee Persinger, decd. In 1896 Clara married Dr. Benjamin L. Carter. They lived in the log house built by her great-grandfather Christopher ca. 1772, which was modified to its present dimensions ca. 1912.

Living on the edge of the Blue Ridge Parkway

by Peter Givens

When I pick up my highway maps of Virginia or North Carolina, the Blue Ridge Parkway is easy to locate. It's that long, thin, blue line over on the left-hand side, beginning at Shenandoah National Park and meandering down the mountains. The line takes a sharp, westward turn just past Mt. Pisgah, and crosses the Cherokee Indian Reservation into the Smokies. It isn't hard to locate, and from this perspective, it looks relatively simple. On the ground, however, and especially as we grapple with issues of protection and conservation, the complexities become all too apparent.

The Parkway is, after all, a piece of prime mountaintop real estate that just happens to touch boundaries with two states, 29 counties, seven U. S. Congressional districts, two state parks and four national forests. To complicate matters further, 5,000 individual tracts of land border the Parkway... some of them may belong to you. Every decision concerning this property must take into consideration the impact on each neighbor — perhaps even getting their input. It isn't an easy task and increasingly we find ourselves in this national park talking about partners and coalitions and agreements and understandings with neighbors.

What do we learn about this place from looking at the map? It is long, linear, multiple communities and lots of sites to see. One thing we didn't mention, which the map just happens to demonstrate, is the knife-sharp edge on the boundary. And those of us along the boundary or close to the boundary are in this together, just by the fact that we are living "on the edge" of this national park.

Let's review a little of our history and take a look at the founders' vision and idea for this long, linear park that would become what we sometimes call today "America's favorite drive." Hugging the crest of the world's oldest mountain range and winding through the coves and forest slopes that make up much of Southern Appalachia is the Blue Ridge Parkway. A 469-mile winding, landscaped, recreational road, specifically designed for the ride-a-while and stop-a-while vacation. An opportunity to leave the hectic pace of traffic jams and freeway speeds behind. Almost 20 million visitors did just that last year, making the Parkway the most heavily traveled unit of the National Park System.

It began as an idea, a concept in the minds of Depression-era politicians. This type of project, they reasoned, could provide public service jobs for many of the nation's unemployed. At the same time, it would be a link between the two eastern national parks, Virginia's Shenandoah and the Great Smokies of North Carolina and Tennessee. The route was decided and the process began: to carve out of this rugged part of the Southern Appalachians, a road — a parkway — down the Blue Ridge.

The Southern mountains in the Depression-ridden 1930s were home to rugged German and Scotts-Irish. The survey crews blazed a trail that sometimes led to cabins in remote coves — rocky hill-sides where families eked out an existence from the land. In other areas, they found nicer homes, productive farms, even hotels and resorts. Patience, "an infinite amount of patience," was necessary in order

Peter Givens, who retired in December 2014 as an interpretive specialist on the Blue Ridge Parkway, gave this talk in the First Thursday series of the Historical Society on Nov. 6, 2014. He is teaching history at Virginia Western Community College.



The Craggy Dome overlook on the Blue Ridge Parkway, Milepost 364, elevation 5,640 feet.

to deal with many landowners who were reluctant to sell. For most, however, the source of income from their land was welcomed. Jobs were scarce and jobs were hard to come by — much of this rocky land was too poor for much good anyway. One particular man, born and bred in the mountains, commented that he had wondered all of his life what this land was good for. “And now I’ve found out,” he said, “it’s good for a road.”

September 1935 came and construction began. The first rocks were blasted from the mountain-side near the North Carolina/Virginia state line. Survey parties led the way far into the mountains and soon began to realize the size of the task at hand. For many of these areas, there were not even current maps available. Interviews with locals often were the determining factor in where the center line would be laid. These crews braved “all manner of weather, snakes, chiggers... and frostbite,” their final work being called in some circles “absolutely heroic.” Many mountain roads were little more than ruts and could not accommodate the equipment needed for construction. Foremost in the minds of construction crews was creating as little “scar” as possible. The Parkway was to “lay easy on the land” and, in order for that to be accomplished, great care was taken to blend the new roadway into its natural surroundings.

Progress was steady until the early 1940s when work was diverted by the coming of World War II. After the war, work resumed through the late '50s and early '60s. Finally, the only “missing link” was a section around Grandfather Mountain, North Carolina. In order to preserve the fragile environment on the steep slopes of Grandfather, a unique design was conceived. The Linn Cove Viaduct, award-winning

and spectacular in design, fulfilled the purpose. This 1,200-foot “suspended” section of Parkway offers spectacular views of the Johns River Gorge.

Today, then, the Parkway is complete, providing 469 miles of leisurely driving — no traffic lights, no advertisements and uninterrupted recreation. It’s hard to forget a visit to this special place. Maybe it’s because of the leisurely pace or perhaps because of the variety of resources: mountains, woodlands, flowers, wildlife, the people — all of these things tend to stamp an impression on your mind.

Like all national parks, this one is set aside to preserve a story and to leave it undisturbed — unchanged — in its unique state for generations to admire and enjoy. This was the original plan — the original dream.

America’s landscape, however, is forever changing and that’s where “the edge” comes in. A cross-country drive or a quick look around your hometown will confirm that. In “Our Vanishing Landscape,” Eric Sloane describes an America that used to be: “The pattern of our early landscape... had the mellowness and dignity of well-seasoned wood. Close at hand there were lanes with vaulting canopies of trees and among them were houses with personalities like human beings. At a distance, it was all like a patchwork quilt of farm plots sewn together with a rough back stitching of stone fences.”

Traveling down the Appalachians on the Blue Ridge Parkway — out beyond “the edge” — visitors see a landscape that has changed considerably since the first shovel of dirt was turned, creating this national park. This is, of course, especially true in highly populated areas like Roanoke and Asheville. All of these changes affect the park experience of 20 million visitors each year. “The growing changes rung on the landscape of today,” Eric Sloane continues, “are the Americana of tomorrow.”

These changes that Eric Sloane talks about, these changes in our communities and our neighborhoods, these changes taking place along the knife-edged boundary of the Blue Ridge Parkway are significant. What happens to this place makes a difference.

And going back to our original theme, those of us who live “on the edge” — in those 29 counties and hundreds of communities and thousands of neighborhoods — find that there is a pride, an enjoyment, and a responsibility that comes with that.

I make no apologies when I say “I am proud of the Blue Ridge Parkway.” I didn’t grow up in this area, but as I have told people in the past, I got here just as soon as I could. I’m proud of this place as I have been of the other National Park Service sites where I’ve been employed in my career. But the Parkway is special and I imagine that most of you whose lives have intertwined with the Parkway know what I’m talking about and feel much the same way.

Growing up in the Carolina foothills, we would often pack a picnic and head up on the Parkway. I have a photograph at home of me on the Parkway about 1960 at Pounding Mill Overlook. I could see Grandfather Mountain from my mother’s kitchen window and I walked home from school looking toward the Blue Ridge in the west. I never knew I’d be working here one day. I watch people bring their out-of-town guests to see a sunrise or hike to a special waterfall — having a shared experience and a shared memory. It is a special place — one to be proud of.

This sense of pride is important. It helps, first of all, in protecting the Parkway. It is one of those important collective feelings that we share with each other that, I believe, add to our sense of community. There are many places in western Virginia like that; the Parkway is just one of them.

There is, secondly, an enjoyment to living “on the edge” of the Parkway. And no wonder! We have 87,000 acres of protected land, 1,200 types of plants, 25 rare and endangered species, 110 miles of streams, 13 lakes, 100 historic structures. And this doesn’t even take into account the intangible things like cool air, vistas and just the serenity of the place. Everyone, it seems, loves the Parkway. Personally, I enjoy the trout streams where those little native brook trout are still alive and well. I enjoy the grassy hills down around Rocky Knob on crisp October days. It’s a wonderful place to get away from whatever

you need to get away from — for enjoyment.

But in addition to pride and enjoyment, there comes a certain degree of responsibility associated with “living on the edge” of the most-visited National Park Service area.

As I mentioned earlier, there are 5,000 adjacent landowners, 29 counties, six congressional districts. A park map reminds us how long and how narrow this place really is. To many visitors, it is little more than a platform to climb up on and look off of, into your towns, your backyards and into your region — far beyond the boundaries that we have control of. One of the themes that you will often hear from us as we speak to communities and organizations is “you’re important to the Parkway and the Parkway is important to you.” This place cannot stay the way we know it without community and regional help, and the communities and region will not continue to be what they are without a well-maintained, cared-for, protected Parkway corridor. There is a mutual responsibility involved.

A former Parkway superintendent said that this park’s “relationship to the region through which it passes is perhaps the most critical factor in guiding and directing future planning.” This suggests partnerships. The Blue Ridge Parkway Foundation, the Friends of the Blue Ridge Parkway, the Blue Ridge Land Conservancy, Explore Park — the list goes on and on.

We’re beginning to find opportunities to work with realtors to develop land adjacent to the park in a way that maintains the visual qualities that make this place so special. We’re beginning to see neighbors building split rail fences and rock-lined drainage ditches that mirror the park’s efforts. Progressive ideas like “open space” and “greenways” are being designed in such a way as to enhance the visual scene from the park, and these things help maintain this entire region that is so special to those of us who live here and to those who visit, spending almost a billion dollars each year according to University-based studies.

I heard someone say that “too many places we see in America today look like too many places we see in America today.” I didn’t understand it at first, but I began to think about inner cities, interstates, subdivisions — all of which very often look the same no matter where you are in America. But national parks aren’t like that — they are places where people can have “unique experiences, remarkable experiences, experiences unattainable elsewhere.”

Aldo Leopold in the 1940s said, “We abuse the land because we regard it as a commodity belonging to us. When we see the land as a community to which we belong we may begin to use it with love and respect.”

Keeping parks like that involves community support, especially in a place with so many communities and so many neighbors. Living on “the edge” of the Parkway does generate pride. It is an enjoyable experience, but most of all, to keep it like we want it, we must recognize the responsibility we have in our communities to do all we can to ensure that our children and our children’s children have a Blue Ridge Parkway to enjoy like we do.

Rebuilding Mabry Mill, A Southern Appalachian Icon

by Jack Betts

CHAPTER 1: THE CHALLENGE

Blue Ridge Parkway historians make a pretty good case that the old mill near Milepost 176 is one of America's cultural treasures. It has become an icon for the American country mill — weathered board-and-batten siding, stone-lined drains and flumes gathering water from seeps and trickles and creeks across the gently sloping land, converging to provide the rushing water power that turns a big wooden waterwheel and drives a grist mill, a sawmill, lathes and other tools, even a sash saw of the kind once used to build window parts.

And it's gorgeous, particularly in the fall when the maples are in full-burn color, reflected against a lovely little pond where ducks paddle back and forth as the waterwheel creaks and groans and splashes fresh, clear mountain water about the stony foundation of the mill. The image of this mill has adorned postcards sold in other states. "Greetings from Iowa," notes one of them. Another says, "Greetings from Connecticut." It looks just like what you'd find in some rural New England hamlet. But it's not. It's in Virginia, near the little crossroads of Meadows of Dan.

It's Mabry Mill, a reconstruction of a century-old mill built by Edwin Boston Mabry, known to some as E.B. and to others as Ed, whose family owned land near the border of Floyd and Patrick counties as long ago as the 1780s. More than a century later, Ed Mabry had a water-powered lathe that he used to make chairs, according to an online history by the Blue Ridge Parkway:

"Later he worked as a blacksmith in the coal fields of West Virginia. In 1903 he returned to Floyd County and soon began construction of the mill. It was first a blacksmith and wheelwright shop, then became a sawmill. By 1905 it was in operation as a gristmill. By 1910 the front part of the mill was completed and included a lathe for turning out wheel hubs, a tongue and groove lathe, a planer and a jig-saw.

"Between 1905 and 1914 he bought adjacent tracts of land, mostly for the purpose of acquiring more water power. Those who knew Ed Mabry thought well of him and have described him as peaceable, easy-going, honest, hard working, a Primitive Baptist and a Republican. Whatever he needed he tried to make himself including most of the furniture in his home. He didn't travel much, but when he did it was either on foot or in his one-horse Concord wagon. Today the Mabry Mill is one of the most popular attractions on the entire Blue Ridge Parkway."

Jack Betts, a Washington correspondent for the Roanoke Times, Norfolk and Greensboro newspapers and associate editor of the Charlotte Observer for almost 40 years, moved with his wife to Meadows of Dan. His observations about Mabry Mill are from a blog written before work on the mill began early in 2014. It was completed last July. More chapters about Mabry Mill, with photos, as well as additional entries on other subjects, can be found at his Rocky Knob Blog at <http://www.rockyknobblog.blogspot.com/>.



Mabry Mill is one of America's cultural treasures. (Photos by Jack Betts, Rocky Knob Writery LLC)

The mill has, of course, been rebuilt a number of times. Even using the most weather-resistant of natural woods, the hard winters and long summers take their toll, and every 15 or 20 years the old mill needs body work and a good worming-out of the silted-over pond. ... [T]he pond had filled up with silt and other things that have slid down the hillside and rolled in on the creek. You could, I'm told, walk across the pond without getting wet much above the knees — if you didn't first go neck-deep in the silty mud that fishermen call pluff. And that's not all: the waterwheel is in bad shape. The buckets on the wheel — the compartments that water from the flume pours into and forces the wheel to turn with an increasing amount of power as the flow of the water increases — have weathered away in some places.

So the National Park Service has to do periodic maintenance on its buildings and its landscape, at a time when Congress seems in no mood to provide adequate funds for personnel or sufficient maintenance to keep the national jewels in good shape. More than a year ago, the Blue Ridge Parkway asked the Blue Ridge Parkway Foundation — a private group that raises money and helps support the Parkway in a variety of ways — for help. The Foundation (whose board of trustees I serve on) agreed to provide funding for rebuilding the waterwheel; early this year the Foundation also agreed to provide funding for dredging the pond. (The Blue Ridge Parkway Foundation's website is at www.brpfoundation.org.)

Dredging work began in foul weather last week [mid-March 2014] and ended successfully on Friday, but that's another story. Stay tuned for more on the restoration work of the waterwheel and dredging of the millpond. And don't be confused by anything you read in the newspapers about the waterwheel being shipped off to Asheville; the work will be done on-site starting this week, Parkway officials say.

It's all taking a lot of ingenuity, scavaging for suitable materials and making the best use of resources that indicates that the kind of engineering skill that built Mabry Mill the first time a century ago has not entirely disappeared, thank goodness.

CHAPTER 2: THE DREDGING

If you passed by Mabry Mill in the past couple of weeks, you might have noticed a curious run of big black pipe around the shoreline [March 2014]. It was the first lick at solving a problem of a badly silted millpond at one of the most photographed sites along the Parkway — maybe one of the most photographed in the East.

Mabry Mill's unique site is a marvel of engineering — but it's susceptible to weather. It sits, just a few feet off the Blue Ridge Parkway, in the perfect spot to collect the accumulated weight of water seeping out of the earth, of springs that flow out of little folds in the terrain and of happily running creeks throughout the woods covering the slopes of this part of the Blue Ridge Mountains. Ed Mabry used these waters to power the big waterwheel on his mill, first built in 1910, and the National Park Service has used his mill to illustrate how there was plenty of power to manufacture things in the days long before power was defined as electrical.

But one of water power's disadvantages is that along with the water that comes flowing down watersheds and hills and stone-lined drains and wooden flumes is that there's a lot of silt, a lot of leaves, a lot of sticks and other natural things that can clog up a millpond and even, eventually, the flumes themselves.

That's just one of the problems the Blue Ridge Parkway encountered in its plans to rebuild part of this attraction on the scenic roadway. It is one of the most popular sites to visit — there's a terrific seasonal restaurant run by Parkway concessionaires, as well as fascinating glimpses of 18th and 19th century life when the mill's waterwheel is rumbling away, the blacksmith shop rings with the songs of the smith's hammers and tongs, and the paddles in the applesauce and molasses cookers are working their magic.

But the mill hasn't run much in awhile because the wheel is in bad shape and the flumes have been clogged and even the pond didn't look as good as it usually does. Thanks to weeks of effort by Parkway employees and the dredging skills of Larry Hampton, a Blue Ridge Parkway retiree who has his own excavating business (and who worked on the last waterwheel reconstruction two decades ago), the millpond is back to its 8 1/2 feet depth again, and crews are digging out nearly 2-foot depths of muddy compacted leaves from the flumes near the mill. The much bigger job was removing tons of silt from the pond — and doing so in a way that didn't cause damage to habitat or to the inhabitants of the productive creeks downstream, including trout and bog turtles. The big black pipe was put in to divert a creek that feeds the millpond, so that the creek below the pond would continue to run clean and free. The Parkway, with the financial support of the Blue Ridge Parkway Foundation, rented a big powerful Diesel pump to siphon off the millpond's water after the creek water was diverted through the pipe, under the Parkway and down into the creek flowing westward.

That pump would shoot a cannon stream of water downhill — and workers had to be careful to contain it within a haybale-lined silt fence to avoid putting clouds of silt into the water.

The pumping job was complicated by the fact that it's been wet lately, and water would trickle back into the pond overnight. And then there was the problem of how to get a huge excavator into the pond, keep it from sinking with a 21st century version of the old "corduroy roads" paved with tree trunks, and how to keep big dump trucks that would haul off the silt from sinking axle-deep into the soft banks of the millpond. ...

The muck from the pond was trucked a couple of thousand feet away to an open field above where Mabry Mill workers park. Allen Lawson, the Blue Ridge Parkway facility manager and supervisor of the project, says workers in the past have found plenty of pocket change that visitors have thrown



Jack Trivett cuts a white oak board to make a replacement part for Mabry Mill's century-old water wheel. All the restoration work was done on-site.

into the pond after making a wish. Every time it rained on a pile of the silt, it revealed a few more quarters and dimes — not enough to put a dent in the cost of the project, but interesting to see what comes up.

Miraculously, at least to me, was the fact that the pond not only was excavated to its new depth within a week, but the landscape was also cleaned up — the pipes removed, the logs used to keep the excavator from sinking were extracted, the rockway that gave dump trucks access removed — and the banks reseeded and covered with straw while new grass starts to grow back sometime this spring. It was an amazing thing to see.

CHAPTER 3: THE WOOD

When you're rebuilding what may be the most famous mill in the National Park Service system, you don't just run down to Lowe's or Home Depot to get some 1x12s and 6x6s and a box of galvanized nails. For one thing, the kinds of wood you need and the dimensions you need them in won't be found even in most specialty lumberyards, where custom cuts can be arranged at a price that would raise the remaining hair on the frazzled heads of accountants at government agencies such as the U.S. Department of the Interior or development officers at private, nonprofit groups dedicated to taking up the slack in parks across the country. Fortunately for this project, the Blue Ridge Parkway Foundation, which pro-

vides a broad array of services, programs, funding and other support for the Parkway, committed to raising \$65,000 to pay for the restoration project. The job includes dredging the millpond, reconstructing the waterwheel and repairing the damaged and clogged log flumes that collect the water to turn the wheel.

And one of the things that is particularly hard to find is the expertise to do this sort of historic preservation work. True, there are amazing craftsmen and women across the country with phenomenal skills in the workshop and in the field. But how often do you need to restore a waterwheel with complicated cast iron parts attached to custom-cut wooden pieces, first designed more than a century ago, remade during World War II, and occasionally redone in the decades since then? The last time the waterwheel at Mabry Mill was rebuilt was nearly two decades ago: 1995. Back then, the Historic Preservation Shop at Sandy Flats near the Cone Manor in Blowing Rock, N.C., had six people working there, including Larry Hampton, now retired from the Park Service, who did the dredging work a couple weeks ago at Mabry Mill pond.

These days, due to budget cuts imposed by Washington, the staff of the Historic Preservation Shop is down to two: Steve Marmie and Jack Trivett. When they began planning how they would restore the waterwheel, they knew finding the right woods in the sizes they needed would be a big problem. At Mabry Mill, they knew they would need hemlock in certain dimensions to repair the log flumes that bring water to the wheel. But only one thing would do for the buckets and backing boards and face boards and other components of the wheel: "White oak — that's all we use," Marmie said one cold winter morning ... as he showed me around the shop. Other kinds of oak are tough, but none is as weather resistant and none is as close-grained, and as watertight, as white oak.

Nor as hard to find. Trivett called all the lumberyards he knew about in search of white oak 15 inches wide. None had exactly what he needed, but he found a supplier in Spartanburg, South Carolina, that could supply some of the oak for the buckets on the waterwheel — basically two pieces in different dimensions, with differing angles of joints, that would be set into grooves on the basic structure of the existing waterwheel.

Over the winter they fabricated the new bucket parts at the Sandy Flats shop, and sawed out new curved facing pieces. To get the width of those curves just right, they fashioned two different woodworking jigs to cut the inner and outer curves on bandsaws.

They caught one break: the main axle, the spokes and the outer band of the wheel were in good shape. All were of white oak, and the Parkway workers would not have to replace those. But some of the heavy blocks holding up the wheel on the pond side of the mill were clearly deteriorating and would have to be replaced. Somehow Marmie and Trivett would have to find huge blocks of white oak, but that was another problem.

Where in the world do you find huge dimensions of white oak to hold the massive weight of a waterwheel that will be under stress, pressure and weight from hundreds of pounds of water cascading over the wheel while driving wide belts and iron gears and huge grinding stones and circular saw blades and lumber carriages? And how do you move it, shape it and deliver it?

CHAPTER 4: THE TREE

The National Park Service and its Blue Ridge Parkway staff faced a big problem when it came time to rebuild the waterwheel at Mabry Mill, one of the most popular stops on the Parkway and, some believe, one of the most photographed spots in America's park system: finding a big source of big timber. Not only did the Parkway need a certain kind of rot-resistant, tough wood, but it needed it in big dimensions — 15-inch wide planks and big square barks of lumber strong enough to hold up the heavy wheel during its endless poundings and stress when the mill is in operation.

White oak was the answer, but where would they find it? As it turned out, by the side of the road.

"I called four or five sawmills that I knew personally, and none of them could do it. They couldn't stop their production runs to do it," recalls Jack Trivett, a specialist at the Historic Preservation Shop near the Cone Manor outside Blowing Rock, North Carolina.

But Trivett remembered a huge 75-foot white oak that had fallen just off the Parkway in the E.B. Jeffress Park, about 100 miles down the Parkway from Mabry Mill. It was an enormous tree, a blown-over giant still anchored to its root system but pitched down a steep 50-degree slope. It would be dangerous to get out, and Park Service officials were reluctant to try it out of safety concerns. But the tree held the kind of timber the Parkway needed to restore the waterwheel and other elements at Mabry Mill — and it wouldn't put additional strain on the Parkway budget to harvest some of it. The tree, after all, was still in good shape, but if the Parkway didn't take any of it for the restoration, the tree eventually would deteriorate.

"I knew about this tree," Trivett said. "It was down a couple of years but still in good shape. The wood was still wet, and that was what we were after."

Getting sections of the trunk out would require a lot of power. The crew chained a big backhoe to a big BRP truck to provide the traction, and Parkway employees sawed out sections to drag back up to the road and load on a truck. The Parkway brought in its arborist, Plant Ecologist Chris Ulrey, for advice on dealing with how to retrieve the tree. Ulrey said he took a look at a cross-section to determine its age, and a surprise emerged. "This was a very slow-growing tree with tight growth rings," he said. He gauged a section of those rings and made a calculation: The tree was roughly 400 to 500 years old — "Not less than 400, and possibly older than 500," he said. If the tree was more than 500 years old, it meant that this white oak could have been a seedling when Christopher Columbus first came to the New World. The tree had been growing all that time, and now was about to provide the big timber for Mabry Mill's waterwheel.



Jack Trivett (left) and Steve Marmie fit one of the newly fabricated parts onto the waterwheel. The replacement wood came from a fallen tree estimated to be 400 to 500 years old.

The American Chestnut Trade in the Blue Ridge of Southwestern Va

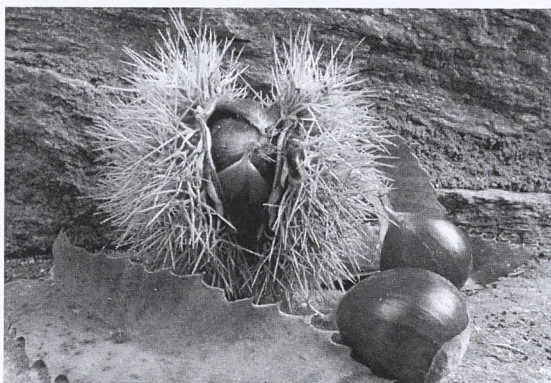
by Ralph H. Lutts

This article focuses on the trade in American chestnuts during the period of 1900-1930 in the five Virginia Blue Ridge counties located southwest of Roanoke: Franklin, Floyd, Patrick, Carroll and Grayson. Floyd, Carroll and Grayson counties are part of the core region of Appalachia as defined by John Alexander Williams. (1) The Blue Ridge portions of Franklin and Patrick counties are topographically and culturally similar to the other three. During that time, the economy of this region was based largely on agriculture, although Grayson County also was involved in a timber boom in the first decades of the century.

For mountain folk, chestnuts were more than a source of food for themselves. The nuts also fattened their hogs, which foraged freely throughout the local forest. In addition, the chestnuts were a source of income. They were sold at the local general store, or exchanged for merchandise or store credit. Each autumn, many children exchanged nuts for shoes, clothes and schoolbooks.

What did the storekeeper do with all these nuts? Trying to sell them to local customers was like bringing coals to Newcastle. Chestnuts were abundant and free for the taking, so why would anyone pay money for them? Herein lies a tale.

In the southern Appalachian mountains, chestnuts had little or no cash value until it was possible to ship them to areas outside the chestnut's range. The nuts acquired cash value as the transportation system improved. Southwestern Virginia's Blue Ridge counties depended largely on the railroad to ship theirs, although some surely were shipped by wagons before the railroad arrived. With improvements in transportation, the trade in chestnuts grew.



The price that people received for nuts was high when the season began and declined later in the autumn as nuts flooded the market. One Patrick County resident recalled that the stores initially paid 10 cents a pound and the price decreased to 2 cents as the market filled with nuts. Another recalled the price began as 5 or 6 cents, declining to 2 or 3 cents. Still another recalled that chestnuts

Ralph H. Lutts is a retired member of the faculty at Goddard College, Plainfield, Vermont, where he coordinates an M.A. concentration in interdisciplinary environmental studies. He is author of "The Nature Fakers: Wildlife, Science & Sentiment" (University Press of Virginia, 2001) and editor of "The Wild Animal Story" (Temple University Press, 1998). He lives in Meadows of Dan, Virginia.

This article is reprinted with permission from the Journal of the American Chestnut Foundation. It is adapted from Ralph H. Lutts, 2004, "Manna from God: The American Chestnut Trade in Southwestern Virginia." Environmental History 9(3):497-525.



Two workers rest on huge chestnut logs.

were worth as much by the bushel as corn. A 1909 store accounts book shows that customers received 2 or 3 cents per pound at the beginning of October. (2)

Not all people traded their nuts at the local store. Some acted as dealers, hauling their nuts to a railroad station and shipping them to a wholesale house on their own. Others dealt with hucksters, peddlers who accepted chestnuts and other goods in exchange for merchandise.

In southwestern Virginia and elsewhere, when people brought nuts to a store, they had three options for compensation. They could receive cash, exchange them for merchandise, or have the value of the nuts credited to their store account to pay off past or future debts. If they received cash, they were usually paid in cardboard or metal tokens called "due bills," or the amount received was written on a slip of paper called "scrip." These were good only for exchange at the issuing store, so customers actually received store credit, rather than cash. If a store owner had a good reputation for trustworthiness, the store's due bills and scrip might be exchanged in transactions among local people before they were eventually cashed in at the store. In effect, each country store minted its own money. (3)

Once merchants received chestnuts, they had to ship them to a market outside their region. They bagged the nuts in cloth sacks and hauled them to the railroad station. This was not an easy trip. Although roads in the region had improved by the early 20th century, they were still dirt roads and travel often was difficult. Most Blue Ridge communities did not see a paved road until the arrival of the Blue

TABLE 1
CHESTNUTS SHIPPED, MAYBERRY GENERAL STORE, PATRICK COUNTY, VIRGINIA

Year	Bags	Pounds	Estimated Value	Destination (Number of Shipments)
1914	229	9,156	\$451.00	New York City (7) Baltimore (2) Richmond (2) Norfolk, VA (1)
1915	138	6,560	\$421.00	New York City (4) Baltimore (3) Philadelphia (1)
TOTAL	367	15,716	\$872.00	

Ridge Parkway in the 1930s, after the chestnut trade had died. James D. Hopkins, a Patrick County storeowner, would haul 2,000 pounds of nuts at a time to the railroad station in his horse-drawn wagon. Alternatively, if a supplier brought goods to a store, the merchant might ship the nuts back to town in the supplier's otherwise empty wagon.

The scale of the chestnut trade is difficult to determine. Published accounts differ. The 1914 Virginia Department of Agriculture publication placed the statewide annual value of the nut crop at \$200,000. At a return of 10 cents a pound, this amounted to 2,000,000 pounds of nuts. (4) On the other hand, a Virginia Writers Project history of Floyd County placed the value of that county's annual nut harvest alone at \$100,000 (1,000,000 pounds). A 1937 University of Virginia economic study of Patrick County stated that "Patrick's chestnut crop, at one time, was a greater source of revenue than cattle." The author did not mention a dollar value, but he did note that after a 20-year decline in the size of the herd, the "7,143 cattle reported in 1930 were valued at \$336,260. Dairy products sold totaled \$52,164." That was the equivalent of over 520,000 pounds of nuts. (5) The 1914 figure of \$200,000 for the annual statewide value of the chestnut harvest may be an underestimate, or more likely the trade grew significantly in the years following 1914.

Country store record books provide much more accurate information, but they are difficult to find, especially day books. Records of hucksters' business and personal shipments are virtually nonexistent. There are, though, other clues. A set of Mayberry General Store shipping receipts from the Southern Express Company provide revealing details of the trade of one business. The store, which is located in the Patrick County Blue Ridge community of Mayberry, near the border of Floyd and Carroll counties, shipped its nuts through Stuart. As Table 1 shows, the store shipped at least 9,156 pounds of nuts in 1914, and another 6,560 pounds in 1915, with a total estimated wholesale value of \$872, or about 6 cents per pound. This store sometimes actually realized 9 to 11 cents per pound. (6) Although some nuts went to wholesalers in Richmond and Norfolk, Virginia, most went to Baltimore, Philadelphia and New York City. The local trade in chestnuts linked even the poorest folks, who seldom if ever used cash, to the national economy despite the often-encountered myth that these mountain people lived in isolation. The roasted chestnuts sold by vendors on the streets of New York, or stuffed into turkeys in urban and

TABLE 2
NUT PRODUCTION

	Grayson Co.	Carroll Co.	Patrick Co.	Floyd Co.	Franklin Co.
1900 Misc. Nuts					
Trees	64	310	164	21	333
Bushels	224	305	153	16	216
1910 All Nuts					
Trees	128	5,578	15,423	2,061	13,032
Pounds	5,550	64,931	159,852	48,791	81,260
1930 Nuts					
Bearing Age Trees	Pecans 6	Pecans 3 Walnuts 1	Pecans 8	Chestnuts 35 Other Nuts 15	Pecans 11
		314	30	260*	
Pounds					

*Includes 170 pounds of chestnuts

suburban areas throughout the northeast, may have been gathered by poor children and adults in the Blue Ridge of southwest Virginia.

Shipments from Stuart moved on the Danville & Western (D&W) railroad, which reached Patrick County, Virginia, in 1884. The narrow-gauge track began in Danville and extended westward to its terminus in Stuart, the county seat. Affectionately called the "Dick & Willie" by county residents, the D&W was upgraded to standard gauge by 1903. The arrival of the D&W expanded economic opportunities for the county and especially for the chestnut trade. The son of a stationmaster recalled that the best money his father made was from shipping chestnuts. He also was an express agent and earned commissions on the shipments. The nuts were shipped at the higher rate for perishables. "His express commissions," his son recalled, "were just fantastic." His father told him that, "during the harvest time of chestnuts you could hardly find a place to put the bags of chestnuts down, because everyone was a chestnut dealer, just about. They harvested the chestnuts and brought them and shipped them to the big cities." (7)

The chestnut trade was not necessarily small; in some areas it was a large industry. The U.S. Agriculture Census figures for 1910 show that Grayson, Carroll, Patrick, Floyd and Franklin counties produced 360,384 pounds of nuts (Table 2). This amounted to 43 percent of the entire production of all nuts in Virginia that year. It is quite likely that the trade grew rapidly between 1910 and 1920 to something approaching 500,000 to 1,000,000 pounds a year in Patrick, the most productive of these five counties. It was a boom and bust trade that accelerated sharply with the arrival of the railroad and ended just as suddenly with the death of the trees.

REFERENCES

1. Williams, J.A. 2002. *Appalachia: A History*. University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill.
2. Josie G. Thomas interview, Patrick County Project, Special Collection, Newman Library, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Blacksburg, VA (hereafter cited as "PCP"), Tape 1, Side 2, 154/91; Helms interview, PCP, -/175; Robert Samuel and Sally Slate interview, PCP, Tape 3, Side 1, 200/166. (Tape locator numbers on the left indicate location noted in PCP index. The numbers on the right indicate where I found it on my recorder.) Cockram Store Accounts Book: 30 lbs accepted for \$0.90 credit, Sept. 30, 1909; 64 lbs accepted for \$1.28 credit, 2 October 1909, Patrick County Historical Society, Stuart, VA.
3. See Joseph E. Morse, *Virginia's Country Stores: A Quiet Passing* (Manassas, VA: E.M. Press, 1996), 13-25, photo of due bills on 14. See Eliot Wigginton and Margie Bennett, eds., "The General Store," *Foxfire 9* (New York: Doubleday/Anchor, 1986), 83-206.
4. Ten cents per pound is a rough estimate of the resale value of the nuts to the general store owner before the costs of shipping and the wholesaler's commission are deducted. (See note 6 for the source of this figure.) My intention is to use a somewhat high resale value to generate a conservative estimate of the quantity of nuts traded.
5. Gravatt, "The Chestnut Blight in Virginia" (Virginia Department of Agriculture and Immigration; January 1, 1914), 13; Gertrude Blair, "Brief History of Floyd County," Virginia Writer's Project, typescript, Montgomery-Floyd Regional Library, Floyd, VA, 5; Maynard Calvin Conner and William K. Bing, *An Economic and Social Survey of Patrick County*, University of Virginia Record Extension Series, 11 (January 1937): 69, 66. Butter accounted for most of the dairy products sold.
6. Southern Express Company shipping receipts (bills of lading) for chestnuts from Mayberry General Store, courtesy of Coy Lee Yeatts and Dale Yeatts, Meadows of Dan, VA. These records recently were transferred to the Albert and Shirley Small Special Collections Library, University of Virginia, Charlottesville, VA. The Yeatts operate the Mayberry Trading Post, Patrick County, VA, successor of Mayberry General Store. Note that these are loose receipts found in a drawer and the gaps in shipping dates suggest that this may be an incomplete record of shipments. The value shown on the receipts represent the estimated resale income to the store. Statements from a New York wholesaler, Parker & Allison, indicate that eight bags sold for a total of \$36.16 and nine bags for \$34.50. With an average weight per bag in 1914 and 1915 (see Table 1) of 42.8 lbs, the merchant received about \$0.11 and \$0.09 per pound, respectively. (After the expense of shipping and commissions were deducted, Mayberry General Store received \$27.92 and \$21.83, or \$0.08 and \$0.06 per lb for these shipments.) Statements from Parker & Allison Wholesale Commission Merchants dated 9 October and 28 October, Mayberry General Store, courtesy of Coy Lee and Dale Yeatts, Meadows of Dan, VA. No year was noted, but these lots correspond with the store's shipments of 20 September and 21 October 1915. A 1907 letter from a Philadelphia wholesaler to a resident of Pennick, VA, complained of the failing crop in the northeast and promises \$11.00-\$15.00 per bushel of chestnuts. E.R. Redfield & Co. to J.S. Elliott, 30 September 1907, Bedford County Historical Society Museum, Bedford, VA.
7. History of Patrick County, Virginia (Stuart, VA: Patrick County Historical Society, 1999), 359 (note photo of the wagons at the railroad station on the same page); "Railroads in Patrick County," in *Patrick County, Virginia, Heritage Book*, Vol. I: 1791-1999 (Patrick County Heritage Book Committee, n.d.), 4-6. Store customer accounts books from the late nineteenth century, including one from Mayberry General Store, do not indicate the presence of a trade in chestnuts. W. Curtis Carter interview, PCP, Tape 1, Side 1, 436/329; Carter, statement made at Reynolds Homestead Continuing Education Center, Patrick Co., 13 May 2003.

Charles Schaeffer: Freedmen's Rights, Education & Worship in Christiansburg and Southwest Virginia

by Dr. John Kern

On March 15, 1867, local Freedmen's Bureau agent Charles Schaeffer, headquartered in Christiansburg, Montgomery County, provided the Freedmen's Bureau with a detailed canvass of potential Montgomery County voters for Virginia's Constitutional Convention election, scheduled for October 22, 1867. He identified the political allegiances of enfranchised whites: former Confederates, Conservatives sympathetic with the rebellion; and Union men, Republicans who favored freedmen's suffrage.

Schaeffer also canvassed freedmen, who invariably sought their rights of suffrage. Schaeffer's working alliances with the whites he canvassed helped him protect civil justice for freedmen while he served as Bureau agent. His work with freedmen also provided them with opportunity for education and worship in Montgomery County and southwest Virginia, until his death in 1899.

Born in 1830 into a prosperous family in Germantown/Philadelphia, Schaeffer became a devout Baptist in 1850, and fought for the Union in the Civil War. Wounded at Antietam and Gettysburg, he joined the Veteran Reserve Corps in 1864. [Fig. 1] In 1866 Schaeffer accepted appointment with the Freedmen's Bureau in Christiansburg, about six miles east of the New River. Schaeffer protected freedmen's rights in southwest Virginia until his employment with the Freedmen's Bureau ended in 1869. After 1869 Schaeffer remained in the field, and until 1895 directed freedmen's education in Christiansburg, where he sponsored and then pastored freedmen's worship until his death in 1899. (1)

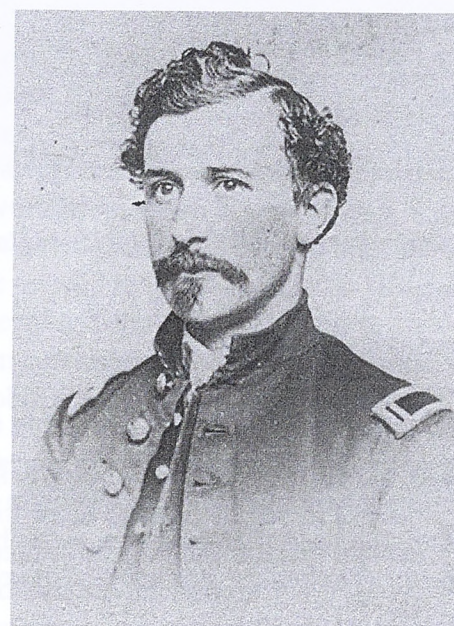


Fig. 1. 1st Lt. Charles S. Schaeffer, ca. 1863

When Schaeffer arrived at Christiansburg Depot on the Virginia and Tennessee Railroad in May 1866, he found himself south of the mid-point of the Valley of Virginia, drained primarily by the New River. There fertile bottom and tributary lands supported cash crops of corn and grain, grown by slaves who counted for 20 percent of Montgomery County's population in 1860, half the statewide percentage of slaves in Virginia on the eve of the Civil War. (2)

Dr. John Kern gave this paper for the Virginia Forum in March 2014. He retired as historian in the Roanoke Regional Preservation Office of the State Department of Historic Resources. He holds degrees from Swarthmore College and the University of Wisconsin.



Fig. 2. Freedmen's Bureau agent prevents a Constitutional Convention election riot. [Eric Foner, "Reconstruction: America's Unfinished Revolution, 1863-1877," 1988, p. 195]

FREEDMEN'S RIGHTS

The first year of Schaeffer's monthly reports to the Freedmen's Bureau recorded his success in securing poorhouse shelter for Montgomery County's most indigent and homeless former slaves. When white planters worked their freedmen without written contracts and refused to pay fair wages, Schaeffer required both parties to appear at his headquarters, and reported that he could usually arrange for satisfactory settlement. Schaeffer also protected some freedmen from violence and prosecution by former owners. (3)

Schaeffer helped protect freedmen's rights of suffrage and political representation after Congress passed the Military Reconstruction Act, over President Andrew Johnson's veto, at the beginning of March 1867. By the provisions of Radical Reconstruction, each Confederate state was to hold a constitutional convention, to write a new constitution that provided freedmen with equal rights of suffrage. If a majority of registered voters approved the constitution, and ratified the Fourteenth Amendment that guaranteed such rights, the state would be readmitted to the Union.

Virginia became Military District No. 1, headed by General John Schofield, who quickly established voting districts, largely defined by county boundaries, and chose October 22, 1867, as the day for the Constitutional Convention elections. At Schofield's request on March 4, 1867, Virginia Freedmen's Bureau commander General O. Brown directed local Bureau agents to canvass and register voters. (4)

Within a week of instruction from Gen. Brown, Schaeffer provided the Bureau with detailed information on 32 potential voters for the Constitutional Convention election to be held in Montgom-

ery County. With the precision of Obama's inner sanctum of election strategists, Schaeffer organized his information by profession, support for issues, and national political allegiance. The first category he presented was for whites, in sympathy with the rebellion, known as Conservatives, but men of "the first respectability." John Francis, Montgomery County sheriff, was a Douglas Democrat, and a captain in the Confederate service; William Ragan, Montgomery County deputy sheriff, was also a Douglas Democrat, and a captain in the Confederacy.

Schaeffer's next category was for the "most popular Union men in the county, those loyal to the Union in the war, and now connected with the Loyal League." These men were national Republicans who supported freedmen's suffrage. Among the Union men, Adam Flanagan was a Breckenridge Democrat and current Christiansburg justice of the peace, who served as a private in the Confederacy, and then "deserted into the Union lines." Schaeffer's final category was for "intelligent...freedmen...in whom both races have confidence." Minnis Headen was a blacksmith in Christiansburg who could "read, write, and cipher...one of the best colored men in the state." Richard Taylor was a preacher and farmer in Blacksburg, who "cannot read or write, but is quite intelligent." Schaeffer's concise and positive characterization of the men in the Conservative and Republican factions suggests that he could work amicably with most of the Montgomery county leaders he discussed. (5)

Schaeffer's canvassing comments on Montgomery County Union Men and the Loyal League, referred to political rallies organized by white Republicans to gain freedmen's votes for the Constitutional Convention. Freedmen would presumably gain the right to vote by alliance with white Republicans against former Confederates. Pro-Confederacy whites reacted with violence against freedmen who attended the Union League rallies.

From May through September 1867, Schaeffer's monthly Bureau reports told of threats by "Anti-Union Elements" against freedmen who attended Republican Union League meetings. One planter drove "Freedmen off his land" for joining the Union League, and "severely whipped" two children whose father had joined the League. Schaeffer, as military commissioner, awarded damages to the threatened freedmen, and released the planter on \$500 bond, but still the planter refused to allow any Union League man on his land. The month before the Constitutional Convention election, Schaeffer reported that despite such threats, "Politically the Colored Men are almost a unit in sustaining the National Republican nominee for the State Convention." Hence the Union League mobilized a freedmen's community of political and civil rights awareness in Montgomery County. (6)

On the day of the Constitutional Convention election, Schaeffer reported that "a disturbance occurred between white and colored at Christiansburg that for a short time had the appearance of a general riot, but was promptly suppressed by the power invested in me as Military Commissioner, and the energetic action of Sheriff Francis and Deputy Ragan who discharged their duties faithfully." [Fig. 2] Thanks to Schaeffer's work canvassing pro-Union whites, thanks to support he received from local law enforcement officers, and thanks to votes from freedmen strengthened by his protection of their rights, Montgomery was the only county west of the Blue Ridge in the Valley of Virginia that elected a Republican delegate, Christiansburg Justice of the Peace Adam Flanagan, to the Constitutional Convention. (7)

Schaeffer acted bravely to challenge planters who threatened freedmen, and whites who rioted against black suffrage. He never reported any personal threats or misgivings to the Bureau. In January 1868 Schaeffer acknowledged the "malice and hatred of many whites toward the Freed-people, and those engaged in laboring for their welfare, yet there are some who would cooperate with us, if they could." Then he reflected with pride on the accomplishments of the former slaves under his jurisdiction. "The freedmen themselves are steadily advancing in intelligence, sobriety and good deportment — desiring to live in peace with all men, if suffered to do so, and endeavoring to secure by their labor an honest livelihood." (8)

Schaeffer probably received more support from local authorities, and encountered less hostil-

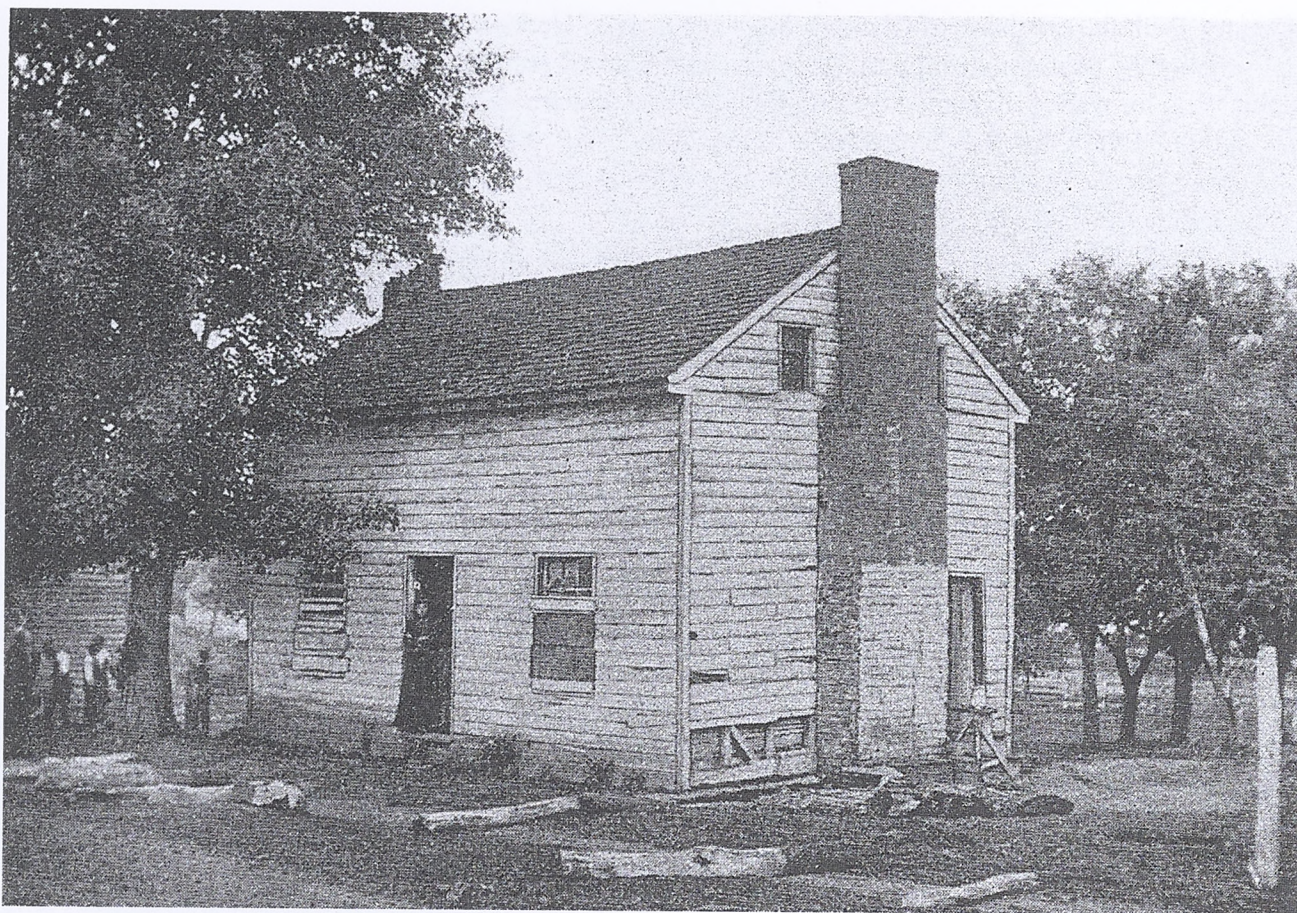


Fig. 3. Christiansburg Church and School, 1868 [Charles Harrison, "Charles S. Schaeffer," 1900, p. 118]

ity from unreconstructed whites in southwest Virginia, because freedmen comprised 20 percent of the population around Christiansburg, while blacks counted for between 46 to 59 percent of the population in the Deep South, where Freedmen's Bureau agents encountered the most violent racial antagonism and the least support from local authorities. Eric Foner's "Reconstruction" remarks that perhaps the greatest failing of the Freedmen's Bureau was that it never comprehended the depths of racial antagonism in the postwar South. Schaeffer encountered less of this antagonism west of the Blue Ridge in Virginia, where planters represented a smaller portion of the population, and exercised less influence over local authorities. (9)

FREEDMEN'S EDUCATION AND WORSHIP

On October 8, 1867, two weeks before the Christiansburg election riot, Schaeffer purchased four acres of land near Christiansburg depot for about \$200. A year later he deeded half an acre of that land, which included, a "House built for freedmen's School and Church purposes," to trustees of Christiansburg African Baptist Church, headed by Minnis Headen, and pastored by Richard Taylor, from 1869 until he died in 1879. Schaeffer's deed of that land to Christiansburg African Baptist Church trustees for school and church purposes sustained his commitment to freedmen's education and worship until his death 30 years later. Schaeffer's first Freedmen's Bureau report stated that freedmen's schools were badly needed in his sub-district, and that he had only discovered one Sabbath school. (10)

Two Philadelphia-based benevolent organizations supported Schaeffer's four decades of work for

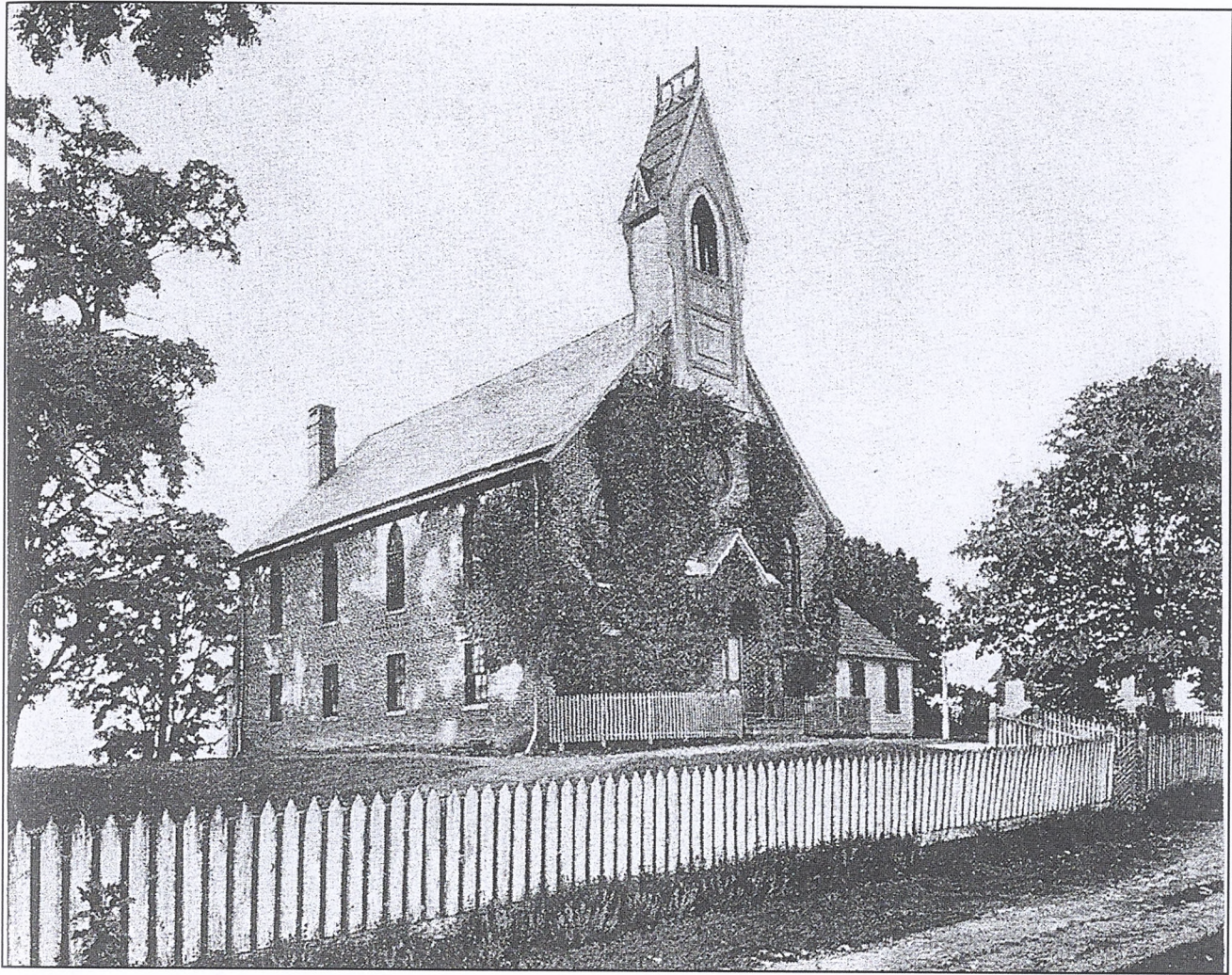


Fig. 4. First Baptist Church of Christiansburg, 1885 [Harrison, "Schaeffer," p. 266]

freedmen's education and worship in southwest Virginia. The Friends Freedmen's Association, originally known as the Friends Association of Philadelphia for the Relief of Colored Freedmen, shared Schaeffer's conviction that ex-slaves demonstrated deep capacity and commitment for learning. The Friends Freedmen's Association gave Schaeffer school supplies for Christiansburg School, [Fig. 3] begun by 1868, and financed construction of Christiansburg Institute, completed in 1888. Philadelphia Tenth Baptist Church, Schaeffer's mother church, licensed him to preach in 1869, and praised his Sabbath school ministry. Tenth Baptist Pastors Spencer Kennard and A.J. Rowland gave Schaeffer spiritual counsel throughout his service in Southwest Virginia, and funded construction of First Baptist Church of Christiansburg, completed in 1885. [Fig. 4] Both First Baptist Church of Christiansburg and Christiansburg Institute were constructed on land purchased by Schaeffer in 1873, and donated to church and school trustees in 1885. (11) [Fig. 5]

Sabbath schools provided a bridge between the two benevolent organizations and Schaeffer's dedication to freedmen's worship and education. Friends Freedmen's Association board member James Rhoads asked Schaeffer how he combined education for freedmen with teaching knowledge of the Scriptures. Because Quakers declined to proselytize in their work with freedmen, and never declared any denominational criteria for supporting their teachers, Freedmen's Association Quakers, and Schaeffer as a devout Baptist, shared a common cause in the education of freedmen, without concern for their doctri-

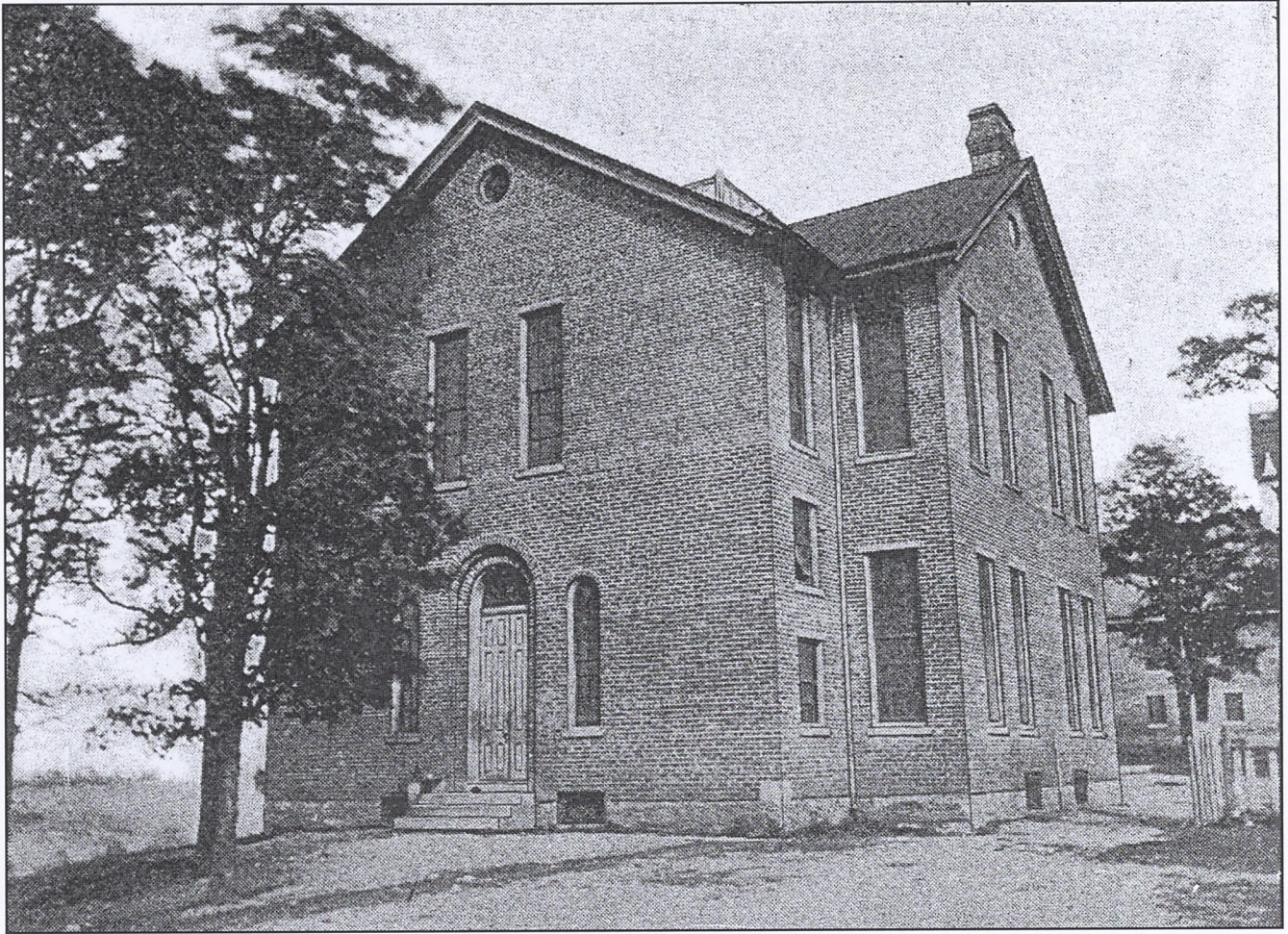


Fig. 5. Christiansburg Institute, 1888 [Harrison, "Schaeffer," p. 146]

nal differences in faith. Tenth Baptist and Schaeffer shared a common denominational faith and Schaeffer's marriage in 1872 to Ada Smart, who prior to their marriage served as principal of the Tenth Baptist primary department Sunday school, certainly sustained his interest in Sabbath schools and Baptist scriptural instruction for freedmen. (12)

Albert Raboteau's "Slave Religion" discusses slave preachers such as Richard Taylor, who began an itinerant ministry in Montgomery County well before the Civil War, and became the pastor of Christiansburg African Baptist Church in 1869. Raboteau writes that slave preachers had a remarkable ability to cite Scripture, narratives and doctrine with correctness and power. Freedmen who could not read held scripture in reverence, and flocked to schools established after Emancipation. Schaeffer's 1867 canvass for the Constitutional Convention election reported that Richard Taylor could not read or write. By 1870 when Richard Taylor, 65, his wife Nancy, 55, and daughter, Mary, 18, lived with Schaeffer, the manuscript census recorded that Robert and Nancy could read, and Mary could read and write. In 1868 only one trustee of Christiansburg African Baptist Church, Minnis Headen, could read and write, and only two of the other nine trustees could read. By 1885 all nine First Baptist Church trustees could read, and four could read and write. These comments on the increasing literacy of the Christiansburg Church trustees and pastor document the positive interaction between education and worship in the freedmen's community of Christiansburg, located south of the mid-region of the Valley of Virginia. (13)

In a unique way Charles Schaeffer served as a cultural member of the Christiansburg commu-



Fig. 6. Charles Schaeffer (with white beard, middle of front row) met with First Baptist Church officers, ca. 1895. [Photo courtesy of Tammi Franklin, associate minister, Schaeffer Memorial Baptist Church]

nity of freedmen. He protected freedmen's rights while serving as a local Freeman's Bureau agent from 1866 to 1869. He donated the land and led the campaign to build the freedmen's schools and churches in Christiansburg, and he preached to freedmen at First Baptist Church for the last two decades of his life. [Fig. 6] His political courage and concise communication with the Freedmen's Bureau, and with local authorities, enabled freedmen to vote for the Constitutional Convention. That community of enfranchised freedmen sustained their rights of suffrage until they were restricted by provisions of the Virginia Constitution of 1902.

Schaeffer's biographer in the first chapter of "The Story of a Consecrated Life, Commemorative of Rev. Charles S. Schaeffer" wrote: "Freed people required special treatment, educational and otherwise. Poor, dependent, improvident, ignorant, the degraded victims of a gigantic national crime, they could not be reached and helped by ordinary methods. To lift them up, one must stoop to their level." Schaeffer never believed this Jim Crow message of racial subordination. Schaeffer always believed in freedmen's capacities for education and self advancement, and dedicated his life in Christiansburg and Southwest Virginia to the right of the freedmen to secure by their labor an honest livelihood. (14)

CITATIONS

1. Charles H. Harrison, *The Story of a Consecrated Life: Commemorative of Rev. Charles S. Schaeffer, Brevet-Captain US V*, J. B. Lippincott Company, Philadelphia, 1900; hereafter cited as C. H., Schaeffer, 89-104. The diary no longer survives
2. John Kern, "African-American History in Southwest Virginia, 1790 to 1900," *Florida Memorial College Academic Review*, Vol. 3, 1994, 37-42.
3. Linda Killen, editor, *Freedmen's Bureau, The Reports of Charles S. Schaeffer from the Virginia Counties of Montgomery, Giles, Pulaski, and Roanoke, 1867-1868*, Belspring, Virginia, no date, typed transcriptions of Schaeffer's monthly reports to the Freedmen's Bureau Assistant Commissioners for Virginia, hereafter cited as Schaeffer Freedmen's Bureau Reports: July 25, 1866; Aug. 25, 1866; Sept. 25, 1866; Dec. 25, 1866; Feb. 25, 1867; May 25, 1867.
4. Richard Lowe, *Republicans and Reconstruction in Virginia, 1856-1870*. University of Virginia Press, Charlottesville, Virginia, 1991, 97-101, 122-125.
5. Schaeffer Freedmen's Bureau Reports: March 15, 1867; Sept. 25, 1866. In September 1866, Schaeffer compiled a complete "Marriage Register" for Montgomery County freedmen that recorded 324 married couples, and 751 children. The marriage register included information on place of birth, occupation, location of last owner, and commencement of cohabitation. Therefore, Schaeffer had data that enabled him to compile in a week's time his political canvass of 32 key registrants for the Constitutional Convention. Schaeffer's canvass for Virginia's Constitutional Convention election also shows that he well comprehended the complexity of national parties and presidential candidates for the elections of 1860 and 1864, as discussed by Eric Foner, *The Fiery Trial: Abraham Lincoln and American Slavery*, W. W. Norton & Company, New York, 2010, 132-144, 296-311.
6. Schaeffer Freedmen's Bureau Reports: May 31, 1867; Aug. 25, 1867; Sept. 25, 1867. Eric Foner, *Reconstruction: America's Unfinished Revolution, 1863-1877*, 283-288, discusses freedmen communities of political awareness mobilized by the Union League.
7. Schaeffer Freedmen's Bureau Reports: Oct. 27, 1867; Lowe, *Republicans and Reconstruction in Virginia*, 126-128.
8. Schaeffer Freedmen's Bureau Reports: Jan. 31, 1868.
9. Eric Foner, *Reconstruction*, 170. James D. Anderson, *The Education of Blacks in the South, 1860-1935*, University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill, 1988, 41, Table 2.1, shows the number and percent of blacks in Total Population of Southern States, from 1870 to 1930.
10. Montgomery County Circuit Court, Christiansburg, Virginia, Deed Book R, 444; Deed Book S, 12-13. Schaeffer Freedmen's Bureau Reports, June 25, 1866. Schaeffer's land purchase staked his claim to permanent residence in Christiansburg. The 1870 manuscript census for Christiansburg Township, Montgomery County, Virginia, lists him as head of household, and owner of real estate valued at \$1,500.
11. Report of the Executive Board of the Friends Association of Philadelphia, April 18, 1864. *Friends Freedmen's Records*. Friends Historical Library of Swarthmore College; hereafter cited as *Friends Freedmen's Records*. C. H., Schaeffer, 157-161, 210, 254, 257.
12. *Friends Freedmen's Records*, April 13, 1869. Robert Butchart, *Schooling the Freed People: Teaching, Learning, and the Struggle for Black Freedom*, University of North Carolina Press, 2010, 87. C. H., Schaeffer, 226-227.
13. Albert J. Raboteau, *Slave Religion, The "Invisible Institution" in the Antebellum South*, Oxford University Press, 2004, 231-239.
14. C.H., Schaeffer, 11; Harrison was married to a sister of Ada Smart Schaeffer; Montgomery County Circuit Court, Christiansburg, Virginia, Will Book 13, 363. James D. Anderson, *The Education of Blacks in the South, 1860-1935*, University of North Carolina Press, 1988, 37, 40-44, 52, 58, 73-77, 80-95, discusses the racial prejudice and consequent subordination supported by southern planters and politicians and some northern industrialists and philanthropists, and doubtless others, which gained its widest acceptance after Booker T. Washington's Atlanta Compromise Speech in 1895. The rationale for the subordination was that slaves were so mistreated that they and their descendents were not ready for or entitled to receive equal treatment: civil rights, employment opportunities, education, and so on.

Help us preserve our history

Please consider contributing to the Historical Society's Kegley Publication Fund to help us continue publishing articles about the history of the Roanoke Valley and Western Virginia.

YES, I want to support the Society's Kegley Publication Fund with the following gift:

☐ \$50 ☐ \$100 ☐ \$250 ☐ \$500 Other: \$ _____

Name _____
(as to be listed in print)

Address _____

Phone/Email _____

I will fulfill my/our gift with:

☐ An enclosed check (make payable to Historical Society of Western Virginia)

☐ A credit card payment

Card Number _____

Exp. Date _____

Signature _____

Additional Items:

☐ My/our employer will match my gift (please provide paperwork to process)

☐ I would like my/our gift to be recognized as a memorial or tribute to a loved one as noted here:

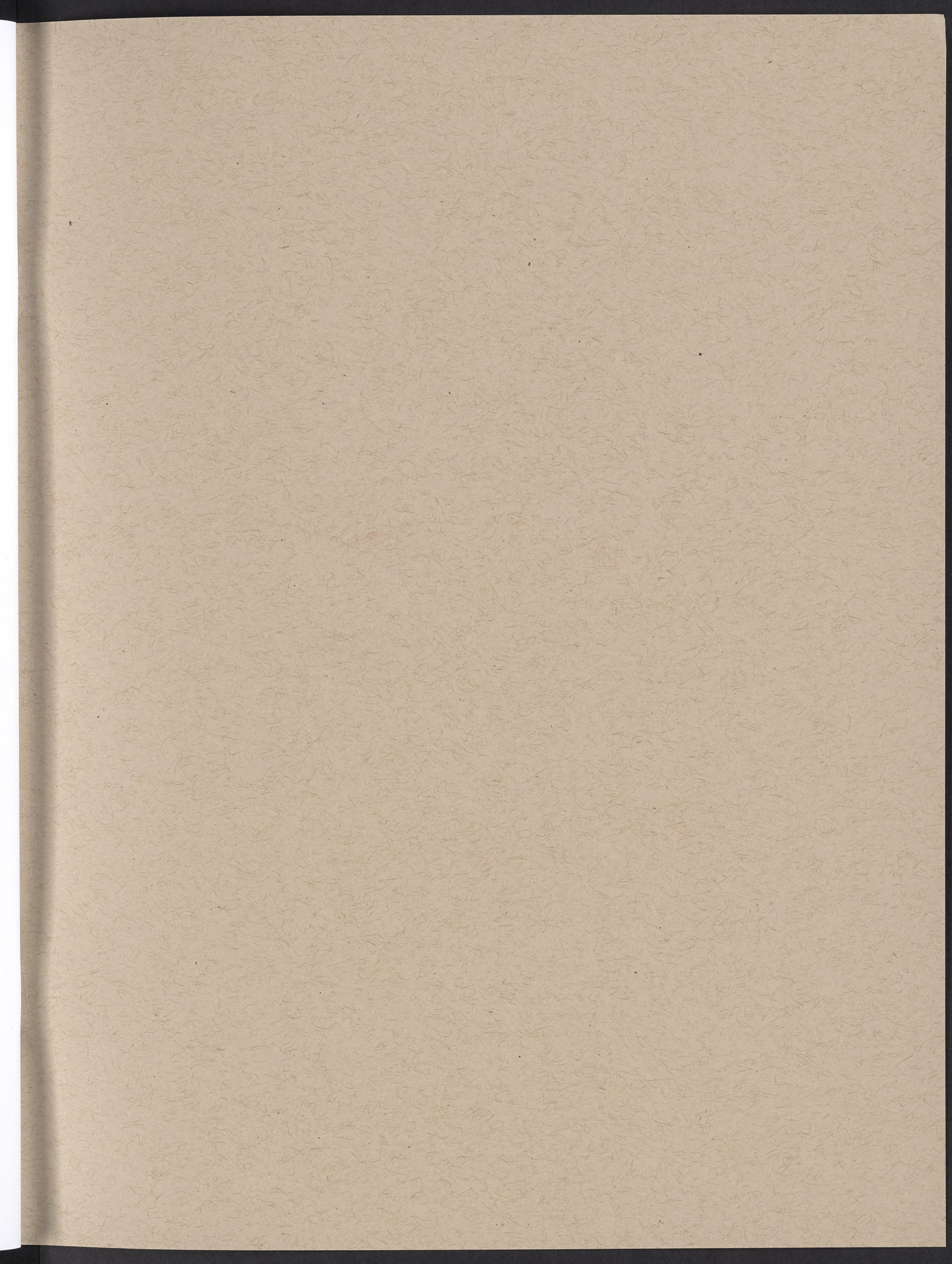
(as to be listed in print)

Please remove this page and send, along with donation, to:


Historical Society of Western Virginia

P.O. Box 1904 Roanoke, VA 24008

Thank you for your support!





Kegley 
PUBLICATIONS

ISBN 978-0-9816251-2-6 \$10.00
5 1000 >



9 780981 625126