



ROCKBRIDGE HISTORICAL SOCIETY
VOLUME SIX OF THE PROCEEDINGS

P

roceedings

of the

ROCKBRIDGE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

VOLUME SIX, WHICH INCLUDES PAPERS READ BEFORE THE SOCIETY 1961-1965, TOGETHER WITH A TOPICAL AND BIOGRAPHICAL INDEX OF VOLUMES ONE THROUGH SIX; COMPILED AND EDITED BY ROYSTER LYLE, JR., ASSISTANT TO THE DIRECTOR OF THE GEORGE C. MARSHALL RESEARCH LIBRARY, WITH THE SPECIAL ASSISTANCE OF DAVID COFFEY.

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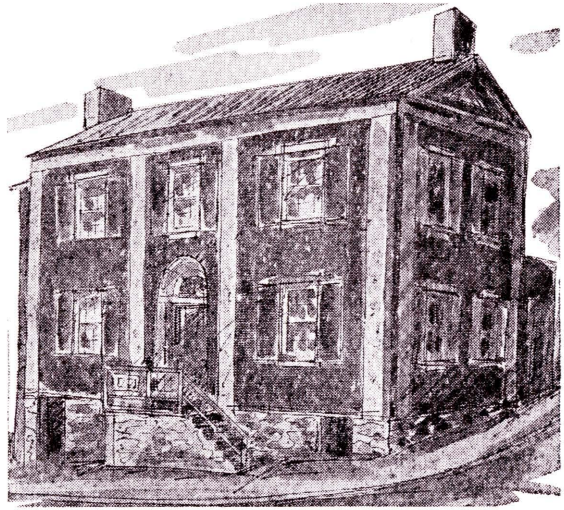
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<input type="checkbox"/>	DEDICATION TO DR. LESLIE LYLE CAMPBELL BY DR. CHARLES W. TURNER	PAGE 4
<input type="checkbox"/>	INTRODUCTION BY ROYSTER LYLE, JR.	PAGE 6
<input type="checkbox"/>	JAPAN, 1860-1960 BY COL. GEORGE M. BROOKE	PAGE 8
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	ROCKBRIDGE GOES TO WAR BY W. HOUSTON BARCLAY	PAGE 9
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	WAR COMES TO THE DAVIDSON FAMILY BY CLINTON L. ANDERSON	PAGE 15
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	DR. ALFRED LEYBURN (1803-1878) A LEXINGTON WHIG, LEGISLATOR, AND MAN OF AFFAIRS BY DR. JAMES G. LEYBURN	PAGE 22
<input type="checkbox"/>	VIRGINIA ARCHITECTURE BY THEODORE R. TURNER	PAGE 30
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS OF A NEW MARKET CADET BY COL. JOHN G. BARRETT	PAGE 30
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	WARTIME RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LEE AND JACKSON BY DR. W. GLEASON BEAN	PAGE 43
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	GOV. JOHN LETCHER AND VIRGINIA'S SECES- SION BY PAUL R. COCKSHUTT	PAGE 46
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	LETTERS (1790-1800) OF JOHN JOHNSTON, ROCK- BRIDGE MEDICAL STUDENT AND DOCTOR BY DR. CHARLES W. TURNER	PAGE 54
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	RUNAWAY SLAVES IN VIRGINIA, 1800-1830 BY MAJ. STANLEY W. CAMPBELL	PAGE 55
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	JOHN JORDAN, BAPTIST LAYMAN BY REV. MR. JOHN S. MOORE	PAGE 63
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	JUDGE JAMES K. EDMONDSON (1832-1898) BY ROBERT C. MOTLEY	PAGE 72
<input type="checkbox"/>	A YEAR IN JAPAN BY COL. GEORGE M. BROOKE	PAGE 78
<input type="checkbox"/>	AROUND THE WORLD BY MR. & MRS. W. O. HAY, JR.	PAGE 78
<input type="checkbox"/>	ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM OF THE GEORGE C. MARSHALL RESEARCH LIBRARY BY DR. FOR- REST C. POGUE	PAGE 78
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	THE LEE GIRLS BY MARY P. COULLING	PAGE 79
<input type="checkbox"/>	DR. McCHESNEY'S GHOST BY MRS. GORDON HEINER	PAGE 86
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	DAVID HUNTER: VILLAIN OF THE VALLEY BY DR. CECIL D. EBY	PAGE 87
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	ALEXANDER McNUTT: KNIGHT OF THE NEW WORLD BY MRS. CHARLES McCULLOCH	PAGE 93
<input type="checkbox"/>	THE GRIMKE SISTERS BY MRS. ROBERT S. MUN- GER	PAGE 98
<input type="checkbox"/>	SOCIETY'S MEMBERSHIP AS OF DECEMBER 31, 1965	PAGE 99
<input type="checkbox"/>	NECROLOGY (JANUARY 1, 1961, TO DECEMBER 31, 1965)	PAGE 101
<input type="checkbox"/>	IN MEMORY OF COL. WILLIAM COUPER BY COL. GEORGE M. BROOKE	PAGE 101
<input type="checkbox"/>	IN MEMORY OF W. HOUSTON BARCLAY FROM NOTES BY MRS. CHARLES McCULLOCH	PAGE 102
<input type="checkbox"/>	OFFICERS OF THE ROCKBRIDGE HISTORICAL SOCIETY	PAGE 103
<input type="checkbox"/>	INDEX OF VOLUMES ONE THROUGH SIX	PAGE 104

CONTENTS

Indicates
paper delivered
before the
Society is included
in full or only
somewhat
condensed

To Dr. Leslie Lyle Campbell, one of the founders and a leading



benefactor of the Rockbridge Historical Society, this sixth volume of the *Proceedings* is respectfully dedicated. Not only was he one of the Society's charter members and first presidents, but he also edited the first volume of the *Proceedings*, gave numerous books, artifacts and pictures to the Society's collections and at his death left his house, garden and a large sum of money to the Society. The organization is deeply indebted to this great and gentle scholar for his generosity.

The Campbell Clan of Virginia has produced many ministers and teachers. And one of the more prominent teachers was Dr. Leslie L. Campbell, who was born at Campo Bello in Powhatan County, September 17, 1863, and brought up in Richmond. He was the son of Dr. William Addison Campbell and Virginia Eppes Dance Campbell. In 1882, he was graduated from the McGuire School in Richmond and received his MA from Washington and Lee University in 1887 and his PhD in 1891. While at W & L, he was made a charter member of Phi Beta Kappa and student assistant in the mathematics department under President G. W. Custis Lee. In 1893, he married Catherine Estill Houston of Lexington.

Dr. Campbell was known as both a fine teacher and remarkable research scholar. After teaching for a short period at the Fishburne Military Academy, he was appointed physics instructor at Westminster College in Fulton, Missouri. In 1903-04, he was made a Harvard research fellow and worked there with the noted physicist,

by Dr. Charles
W. Turner

**Dedication to
Dr. Leslie Lyle
Campbell by
Dr. Charles W.
Turner**

Dr. S. H. Hall, on what was called the "Hall Effect." This important study was prepared for publication by Dr. Campbell. From there he went on to head the department of physics at Simmons College in Boston where he remained for twenty-six years until 1932. In 1913-14, while on a sabbatical at Cambridge University in England, he studied with Sir J. J. Thompson at the Cavendish Laboratory. During the World War I years, he worked both at the Jefferson Laboratory at Harvard and the Naval Training Station at Newport, Rhode Island, doing research for the United States Navy.

Upon retirement in 1932, he and Mrs. Campbell returned to Lexington to occupy the house of Mrs. Campbell's brother, Professor Hale Houston of the Washington and Lee faculty. Here Dr. Campbell continued his experiments in magnetism, photography, and sun dials. The lovely old garden behind the house was the constant interest of both Dr. Campbell and his wife.

Dr. Campbell was a member of a number of scientific societies, and author of scientific articles. Increasingly in Lexington his scholarly interests turned to geneology and, when in his eighties, he prepared volumes on the Dance, Campbell and Houston families. He continued a keen and active interest in the Historical Society until his death on June 9, 1964, at the age of 100 years. He is buried at the Stonewall Jackson Memorial Cemetery.

Perhaps to no one does the Historical Society owe a greater debt. To no one did the Historical Society give greater pleasure. □



oscar Wilde said journalism is unreadable, and literature is not read. Unfortunately, local history volumes are in many cases both. With this in mind, we have made an effort to present here, in a somewhat different form, five years' worth of Rockbridge Historical Society papers and at the same time to provide a reference aid which will be useful to those doing further research on local history.

A number of the papers include material published for the first time and several important personalities in the County's history are dealt with quite skillfully. Unfortunately, due to the space allotted, it has been necessary to condense some papers somewhat, and several have been omitted either at the request of the writers or because the papers were not available.

Included is a biographical and topical index of the entire six volumes—over twenty five years of papers presented before the Society. Taken together, these volumes, plus the new index, now make a rather complete reference source on Rockbridge County history.

Among the Society's activities during the past five years, has been an effort to bring about the preservation of the community's architectural and historic landmarks. The Society urged VMI to spare one of the original Alexander Jackson Davis buildings which was destined to be demolished to make way for a new building. Efforts here were unsuccessful, but the group was extremely encouraged to learn that the Department of Interior plans to name the VMI barracks, also designed by Davis, a "National Historic Landmark."

On the other hand, efforts to encourage the national office of the Kappa Alpha Order not to demolish its building on Lee Avenue, known as the Barclay House, proved more successful. Because of strong urging by the Society and the APVA, the Fraternity decided to sell the building to Col. and Mrs. C. C. Tutwiler after learning that they would preserve the building and restore it to its original form.

Also, as a result of quick action by the Historical Society, the valuable portraits of early Rockbridge judges and others, which had been removed from the County Courthouse, were located, restored and replaced on the walls of that building. In cooperation with the County Board of Supervisors and the County Bar Association a committee was appointed and funds allotted to assure the proper rehanging of the portraits.

During 1965 the Society paid special tribute by resolution to the Lexington-Rockbridge County Chamber of Commerce for its new guided tour program of the County's and City's points of historic interest. The free tour has been highly successful economically and has brought considerable attention to the area.

Also during the past five years great strides were made in almost all the Historical Society's fields of activity. Most notably, perhaps, was the receipt of the very valuable real estate from the late Dr. Leslie Lyle Campbell. The letters and papers he also left have added greatly to the Society's collection.

These papers, photographs and books have now been catalogued and carefully preserved by the Librarian, Dr. Charles W. Turner. With help of several students, Dr. Turner has done a superb job in making the Society's valuable collection readily available to researchers. Among the materials are diaries, county newspapers, store ledgers, photographs, letters and journals. The Society's minute book reflects many of the tributes given Dr. Turner for his devotion and diligence in caring for the Library. He has also edited the two previous volumes of the *Proceedings* and handled the difficult task of procuring programs and speakers for the Society's quarterly meetings.

It should be mentioned that a number of members of the Society have recently published books on local subjects, several of which are referred to in this volume. In addition, many inquiries were

**Introduction
by Royster
Lyle, Jr.**

answered by the Librarian and others, concerning County genealogy and other subjects, and the Society's museum in The Castle was enlarged and opened to the public from time to time. The rental property, which the Society now owns, is bringing in a modest income, and the Society, under the present leadership of Mr. Frank Gilliam, is indeed enjoying its finest hour.

**Introduction
by Royster
Lyle, Jr.,
and Japan,
1860-1960
by Col.
George M.
Brooke**

One of the projects which has been discussed by Society committees for almost 25 years is the labeling of buildings throughout the County and Lexington with proper historical information. This, together with the inventory now being done for the National Trust by the APVA, should do much to assist in the preservation of remaining historic landmarks in the area. And further, both the County and Lexington have begun to discuss the possibility of historic zoning.

This sixth volume of the *Proceedings* has come into being through the combined efforts of a number of people. Particular thanks must be given to Dean Gilliam for his kind assistance and understanding and to the two immediate past presidents, Col. George M. Brooke, Jr., and Gen. J. S. Letcher, for their help. At the same time, the book could not have been published without the help of Mrs. F. William Burke, who typed the manuscript, and David Coffey, who assisted greatly with editing and with the index. Special mention must also be made of Dr. Turner, Col. John Barrett, Lt. Col. George Davis, Mrs. Charles McCulloch, M. W. Paxton, Jr., Mrs. Boyd Stuart and Alan Wheeler, whose advice and counsel proved invaluable. And to Dr. Forrest C. Pogue and Katie Lyle go special thanks for their constant encouragement. □

The Society met February 1, 1961, at the R. E. Lee Episcopal Church. The program was a talk by Col. George M. Brooke entitled: "Japan, 1860 - 1960." Col. Brooke, head of the VMI history department and president of the Society, was invited to Japan during the last two weeks of May, 1960, as guest of The Association for Japan—US Amity and Trade Centennial. In his talk to the Society, he told of the celebration in Japan which he and Mrs. Brooke attended. Col. Brooke had been invited partly because of the work of his grandfather, Lieutenant John Mercer Brooke, who had done much 100 years ago to advance relations between the two countries. As background to telling of his trip, Col. Brooke related the achievements of his grandfather (see earlier paper in the *Society's Proceedings*, Volume 4, page 32). As a direct descendant of an American who had contributed so much towards Japanese-American understanding during the period being commemorated, Col.

Brooke was singled out for personal attention. He was interviewed by newspapers and on the radio.

Col. Brooke described Japan in the year 1960 as "once again a nation to be reckoned with. In a miracle as great as that of Western Germany, Japan has risen from the rubble of war."

He concluded his talk by saying Japan must trade to live and at the moment the U. S. is its best customer. "As Lieutenant Brooke suggested one hundred years ago, Japan and the United States in both trade and national defense have a common destiny. Friendship and understanding can go far towards achieving that goal." Col. Brooke has done extensive research on his grandfather, who from 1865 to 1899 was professor at VMI. His complete paper can be found in the Society's library. □

On April 19, 1961, the Society held ceremonies commemorating the outbreak of the Civil War. Col. George M. Brooke, Jr., presided. The Commemorative Address was given by W. Houston Barclay, the title being: "Rockbridge County Goes to War." The ceremony, which included the dedication and unveiling of a memorial marker, was held on the lawn of the County Courthouse. Mr. Barclay, who died January 2, 1966, was a charter member of the Society. □

ONE HUNDRED YEARS have passed since our country went through the period of its greatest trial. Before we start on the account of the Civil War itself and the effect on Lexington and Rockbridge County, we must go back a few years before 1861 so that we may understand why our people felt and acted as they did.

This part of my talk I have called "The Union Must Be Preserved," for this is the phrase most often heard repeated in the accounts of this period. As early as 1850, Judge John White Brokenbrough of Lexington in an address pleaded with his people to "stay the tide of fanaticism which is sweeping our land." Also in 1855, William Cabell Rives had spoken "to drive the spirit of fanaticism and sectional hostility from our land, which is leading to a struggle between blood brothers." Wise leaders here agreed that, because Virginia was a border state, it would most likely be the battlefield, and therefore they were much concerned.

About this time, Maj. T. J. Jackson of Lexington accompanied a detachment of VMI cadets to Harper's Ferry and was present at the hanging of John Brown.

The Virginia Assembly at Richmond sent out an invitation to all the Southern states for a "Peace Convention" to be held in

**Rockbridge
Goes to War
by W. Houston
Barclay**

Washington, D. C., February 4, 1861, at the Willard Hotel. Of the 34 states invited, 21 responded by sending a total 133 delegates. These men were most earnest in trying to hold the Union together and by doing this to prevent a war. This same day six Southern states that had already seceded from the Union met in Montgomery, Alabama, and formed the "Southern Confederacy." As we look back on this Peace Convention in Washington, it is very easy to criticize. In one way they missed the mark completely. The resolutions they formed after

Program for the
Commemorative
Ceremonies
April 19, 1961

ROCKBRIDGE HISTORICAL SOCIETY
Ceremonies Commemorating the Outbreak of Civil War in 1861
Courthouse Square, Lexington, Virginia
April 19, 1961

COLONEL GEORGE MERCER BROOKE, JR., *President of the Society,*
Presiding

THE INVOCATION The Rt. Rev. Lloyd R. Craighill
"Rockbridge County Goes to War"
Commemorative Address by Mr. W. Houston Barclay

CIVIL WAR SONGS Lexington High School Glee Club
Mr. William Tolen, Director

DEDICATION AND UNVEILING OF MEMORIAL MARKER IN TRIBUTE TO
MEN OF ROCKBRIDGE COUNTY
Dr. George West Diehl and Miss Betsy Letcher

THE INSCRIPTION
IN GRATEFUL MEMORY OF THE BRAVE MEN FROM
ROCKBRIDGE COUNTY, VIRGINIA
WHO SERVED SO GALLANTLY IN WAR, 1861-65
THIS MEMORIAL IS DEDICATED IN TRIBUTE TO THEIR
SACRIFICES
ONE HUNDRED YEARS LATER
Presented by the Rockbridge County Historical Society 1961

MARCHES The Virginia Military Institute Band
Captain Joseph Pearce, Director

THE BENEDICTION Bishop Craighill

HONOR GUARD BY VIRGINIA MILITARY INSTITUTE
AND
WASHINGTON AND LEE UNIVERSITY ROTC

23 days of debate were: first, "to try to hold slavery south of the 30° north latitude," and second, to enforce the fugitive slave law. Both of these resolutions were voted down by the Congress of the United States.

Meanwhile, the Secession Convention of Virginia in Richmond kept trying to get an agreement among its members, and a great uncle of mine, Samuel McDowell Moore of Rockbridge, was burned in effigy for a fiery speech he made in favor of the Union.

Many families were divided on the subject of preserving the Union.

Dr. George Junkin, President of Washington College, was a strong Union man. His family was badly divided. One daughter and a nephew sided with the Doctor, while another daughter, who had married Col. John T. L. Preston, and her two brothers sympathized with the South. In fact, these two brothers were later in the Southern army. Another daughter, who had died in 1854, was the first wife of Maj. T. J. Jackson.

Fort Sumter was fired upon on April 12, 1861. Three days later, President Lincoln called for troops from Virginia to help bring the seceded Southern states back into the Union. His call united Virginians. The preservation of the state became foremost in their minds, and on April 17 Virginia, too, seceded from the Union.

Young men in the county had been drilling and forming companies for some time before this. The Rockbridge Dragoons had been organized since November, 1859. A vote was taken in the county to determine the advisability of Virginia's seceding; the result was 1,728 for secession and only one against.

Gov. John Letcher of Lexington called for volunteers for the Southern army. The day after Virginia seceded, the Rockbridge Rifles with 103 men marched to Staunton. The same day the Rockbridge First and Second Dragoons with 60 men each left for the same destination. On Sunday, April 21, the VMI cadets under Maj. T. J. Jackson left Lexington for Richmond, where they took over the training of officers for the Confederate Army. All of these cadets became officers themselves in the years that followed. Before leaving, the various local companies gathered in the Courthouse Square for a blessing and prayer by the ministers of Lexington. Washington College professors and students were drilling on the campus under instructions by the VMI cadets before the men left for service.

After Mr. Lincoln's call and before Virginia seceded, a Confederate flag was raised on Washington College. Dr. Junkin, its president, ordered it taken down, and a wise student said that as Virginia had not seceded they had no right to put up the flag. It was agreed to take it down. A few days later the flag was raised again, and Dr. Junkin, his daughter and a nephew left Lexington for Philadelphia.

The next company of which we have a record was the Rockbridge Artillery which was formed April 21, 1861, with 70 men. General William N. Pendleton of Lexington, the Episcopal minister and a graduate of West Point Military Academy, was elected its commander. In his book,* Col. Poague states that many men from the University of Virginia came to join these Rockbridge companies because of their outstanding leadership. This was also helped by the fact that Sandie Pendleton, a son of the general who later became a member of General Jackson's staff, was a student of the University of Virginia. Also, there were many Southern states represented among the students and cadets in Lexington.

*GUNNER WITH
STONEWALL, by
W. T. Poague,
1957.

**Rockbridge
Goes to War
by W. Houston
Barclay**

**Rockbridge
Goes to War
by W. Houston
Barclay**

The cavalry and artillery companies were outstanding for the care given their horses probably because a large number of men in these outfits were Rockbridge County farmers.

The Liberty Hall Volunteers, named for a company from this area that fought in the Revolution under the president of Liberty Hall Academy, Dr. William Graham, was organized at Washington College on June 8, 1861, and my father (A. Telford Barclay, Jr., then a student, age 17) was among their number. They left Lexington after a period of prayer and worship lead by Dr. William S. White, minister of the Presbyterian Church. They were mustered in at Staunton the next day.

During the next several months, fifteen companies left Rockbridge County for the army. Two of this number formed at Brownsburg, a company of rifles and one of cavalry. In Rockbridge during the whole war, 2,343 men enlisted. This was 86% of the manpower of the county according to census, and 37½% of these men were killed or died in service.

All this time the people thought it would be a short war. Col. Poague states that his law partner, Col. J. W. Massie, wanted to go at once for fear the war would be over before he could enlist. President Lincoln's first call for men was for three months' service.

The county women were not idle during these first days. The ladies of Brownsburg made 80 coats, 80 trousers, 80 knapsacks, 80 canteen covers, and ten tents in one week for one of their companies.

The years dragged on, and during the time between 1861 and 1863, Lexington and Rockbridge County did not suffer nearly as much as they did later in the war. Rockbridge citizens were chiefly concerned with caring for the sick who came home, burying the dead, supplying the army with food and clothing and providing for their horses. Business in the towns was almost at a standstill as supplies had to come through the blockade, and money was scarce. The population of this area was composed mainly of women, old men, children, slaves and some free Negroes.

*probably
the
present
City Recreation
Field

The ladies formed aid societies and worked in the town churches making supplies which were shipped to the hospitals. One of these hospitals was at Alum Springs in the old Virginia Building and several unmarked graves tell the story of boys who died here of measles. There was also a hospital at the White Sulphur, one at Staunton, another at the Fairgrounds* in Lexington, and later in the war one was established at Washington College. The Fairgrounds hospital had 150 beds, and most of the time was filled with cases of smallpox. The ladies aid societies sent everything that could be spared, beds, carpets, food, tableware, money, blankets, and quilts. Sometimes they gave the services of their servants. Even the window curtains were used as bandages.

Lexington was divided into seven parts and each part was responsible for a hospital a week. For example, the wagons for Staunton

left every Thursday loaded with all that was made for that week in that section of town. After a time when all of the men were gone, the Masonic halls were used as work shops.

The members of the Ladies Aid Society of Natural Bridge cared for the sick and offered their houses for men on furlough. The same was done in other parts of the county, but not on as large a scale. Col. Poague tells that when he returned to his house near Falling Spring after being badly wounded, he realized that his family did not have enough food to divide with him. His mother and sister were going without in order to feed him; so he left and went back to the army in order to relieve the strain on his people at home. He also stated that when he returned to the army he took with him 60 new recruits from the county.

Jackson's body reached Lexington by packet boat from Richmond and was buried on May 15, 1863. Exactly one year later the Battle of New Market was fought by the VMI Corps. The valiant effort slowed the Union army's drive up the Valley.* The next month, news was received here that the Federal army of Gen. David Hunter was in Staunton and on its way to Lexington.

The town began to gird itself for the shock. Supplies were hidden along with the family silver and other treasures. All animals that could be moved were driven to the mountains; soldiers on furlough or wounded were moved to places of safety. On June 11 the first scouts arrived in town. Mrs. Preston tells in her diary of seeing a squad of calvary in Confederate uniforms passing her front gate. She called to them to hurry because the Yankees were coming. One of them cursed her and said they were Northern spies. Then came the infantry after the town had been shelled by cannon from across the river. Around forty houses were hit in addition to the VMI and Washington College, although Gen. Hunter in his report said he did not shell the town. The Confederates had burned the bridge over Maury (North) River to slow down the progress of the Federal troops.

The houses used by the northern generals as headquarters while in Lexington were the Jacob Fuller house, the Francis H. Smith house, and the Prof. James S. White house. At nine a.m., the VMI was set on fire and burned. This was done because it was State property and also because the VMI had trained soldiers for the Southern army. Gov. John Letcher's home was also burned.

In many cases, Hunter's men looted houses on the pretence of hunting for Confederate soldiers. This, of course, frightened the occupants. Mrs. Preston's diary gives a full description of what went on. She said she wrote it down so that she could send it to her father so he would know how they behaved. She and her daughter hid the family table silver and her brother-in-law Gen. Jackson's sword under their hoop skirts all the time the Federal troops were around. I also remember a family story of how an ex-slave slept on the door step

*****Up the Valley**
is actually south as
the Shenandoah River
flows north to
Harper's Ferry.**

**Rockbridge
Goes to War
by W. Houston
Barclay**

**Rockbridge
Goes to War
by W. Houston
Barclay**

of my grandmother Barclay's* house with an ax to protect the three lone ladies in the house.

The library at Washington College was looted. The soldier acting as guard at my grandfather Moore's** house gave the cook a Greek dictionary for making him a pot of soup. The college buildings were saved from destruction by a board member who went to Gen. Hunter and told him that Gen. George Washington had given the money to build the college.

On Thursday, June 14, the Federal troops left as quickly as they had come and carried away the Washington monument from in front of the VMI. When they left, a number of the young colored people went with them.

Prices in Lexington after Hunter's raid are recorded as \$30.00 for a gallon of sorghum, \$6.00 for a pound of candles and \$250.00 for a barrel of flour. This was for the people who had money, but most trading was done by exchange for some other product. Col. Preston sent his family for Christmas, 1863, from Richmond a pair of rubber shoes for his wife, for which he paid \$30.00, some old illustrated magazines picked up in the barracks for the smaller boys, a piece of dress goods given him by a friend for the older daughter, a bridle picked up off a battlefield for the older boy, and, as a special gift, some writing paper from a captured northern supply train and last, but not least, one orange.

*Mrs. A. T.
Barclay, Sr.

News of the surrender at Appomattox came while the people were in church. The whole town went virtually into mourning.

Gen. Grant allowed the officers at Appomattox to keep their horses. An uncle of mine, Ned Moore, a private, told his neighbor from Lexington, Gen. Pendleton, about having recently acquired a horse; whereupon, the General appointed my uncle to his staff so that he was able to keep his horse. When he returned to Lexington, he sold the horse for enough money to enter Washington College the next fall.

**David E.
Moore
lived
in
what is now
the
"Barclay
House."

Gen. Lee was allowed to retire to "Derwent" in Powhatan County on the James River, where for a few months, with his family once again around him, he was able to rest before he accepted the call of the board of Washington College to become its president.

In the years immediately following the surrender, carpetbaggers were very discreet in Lexington because of the presence of many ex-soldiers in the two colleges. Also Gen. Lee was living here—all of which was quite fortunate for Lexington at this particular time.

The people of Lexington and Rockbridge County were closely united by the suffering they had gone through together. The boys and girls were together again, and youth has a way of forgetting quickly. Small groups of young people began meeting in what they called "starvation parties," with little to eat but lots to talk about, and, the old custom of serenading the ladies was begun again. Life in Lexington and Rockbridge County slowly became more normal. ■

On July 24, 1961, the summer meeting of the Society was held at the Effinger School House. Col. George M. Brooke presided. Mr. Clinton L. Anderson spoke on "War Comes to the Davidson Family," taken from a paper written while a senior at W & L the previous year.

Mr. Anderson, who is a resident of the County, drew heavily from the materials in the Society's possession for his honors thesis entitled: *The James D. Davidson Family of Rockbridge County, Virginia*. The collection of Davidson papers contains over 600 letters of that family and their friends. Among the many correspondents were John Letcher, James B. Dorman, and William M. Paxton. A copy of the complete paper can be found in the Society's Library. □

JAMES DORMAN DAVIDSON was born November 7, 1808, the eldest son of a prominent Rockbridge County Presbyterian minister, Andrew Baker Davidson. James became an outstanding chancery lawyer who "exceeded all of his brethren at the bar in volumes of written pages on file in the court." He was educated at Washington College in 1827-28 and lived, until the war, on East Washington Street. His wife was Hannah Greenlee Davidson, a very patient and kind woman and the mother of eight children.

The first son died in infancy. The other five boys, who grew to adulthood, were Greenlee, Frederick (Seddie), Charles (Charlie), Albert (Allie), and William Weaver (Willie). The two girls were Mary and Clara, the youngest member of the family.

Mr. Davidson was very much interested in education. All of his sons attended college. Three of them left college—two from University of Virginia and one from Washington College—to enter the war in 1861. The Davidson family was typical of the majority of Rockbridge in being Unionists in sentiment.

The Davidsons had been long-standing Whigs and when the Whig Party disintegrated, they joined the opposition to the Democrats. In 1860, Davidson and most of the Whigs supported John Bell, the Constitutional Union candidate, as did the rest of Virginia. The election of Lincoln over Bell and Breckinridge came as a shock to the Valley region, but most people felt the South would stay in the Union.

Albert wrote to his father from college that "everyone" at the University of Virginia expected "to be called to defend his country or protect his fireside." He mentioned that the South Carolina boys had already gone home. Two military companies had been organized but probably would have to dissolve because of the lack of arms.

**War Comes to
the Davidson
Family by
Clinton L.
Anderson**

**War Comes to
the Davidson
Family by
Clinton L.
Anderson**

Albert, his father, and his sister attended the Virginia State Convention, which had been called to take up the question of secession. From Charlottesville, Albert reported that he was having a difficult time maintaining his conservative viewpoint because a vast majority of his schoolmates were avid secessionists. On March 11, he wrote that the students were calling Lexington "an abolition hole." Then, on April 20, H. R. McKennie wrote to J. D. Davidson:

The young men of all ages seem to be wild with the most intense excitement. At dinner on Wednesday, your son Charles had determined to go, and Albert said he would wait and write home to you to get him a place with Col. Smith, but, at 6 o'clock, which was our supper, to my surprise Albert came in all ready for the march. Tell Mrs. Davidson her sons were both well, and went off with high spirits. I feel the greatest faith that the great God of Heaven will be with us in this terrible struggle.

Mr. McKennie concluded with a note that "all parties are now united." This college group was soon to become part of the Army of Northern Virginia.

Five days before this letter was written, on April 15, 1861, the spirit of Unionism died in Rockbridge. It was on this day that President Lincoln called on Virginia to produce 75,000 volunteers for the purpose of forcing the seceded states back into the Union. Davidson made a comment to James B. Dorman that the "Union pole raised on yesterday, with the eagle upon it, has been cut down by those who raised it. Everything is quiet, and at long last it seems we all think alike."

The Davidson family became immediately involved in the Southern cause. Charles and Albert had already gone with the student companies from the University of Virginia to Harper's Ferry. News came to Lexington that they had arrived safely along with approximately three hundred other students. They were being drilled every day by their professors. Fred Davidson left his studies at Washington College and marched with the first contingent of the Rockbridge Rifles as a second corporal.

In May, 1861, Greenlee accepted Gov. Letcher's invitation to become the Governor's personal aide with the rank of lieutenant colonel of cavalry. Meanwhile, both Albert and Charles, with the student companies, had moved to the mountainous counties of Western Virginia and in the Kanawha Valley.

Tragedy first struck the Davidson family at the battle of First Manassas. Fred Davidson, a member of the 27th Virginia Infantry Company H, was killed. By his own request, he was buried on the battlefield. His father was granted permission by the Army to get inside the lines at Manassas to see that his son was properly buried. On August 3, 1861, as Fred Davidson's family was mourning his death, his grandfather, the Rev. Andrew B. Davidson, died at the age of eighty one. He had been the senior member of Lexington

Presbytery and a minister for about 55 years. He was well known for his evangelistic work, having founded congregations at Colliertown, Kerr's Creek, and Rockbridge Baths.

The Confederates fared badly in West Virginia during the winter of 1861-62; the Yankees began pushing along both the east coast and the western section of the seceded states. Defeat at Fort Henry and Roanoke Island brought deep concern to the Confederate leaders in Richmond. On February 10, Greenlee wrote from Richmond that he had "determined to take the field and give benefit of my weak arm to the cause of Southern Independence," Greenlee's father quickly replied that he had not been surprised by his son's decision to enter directly into active service but that both he and his mother regretted having "to part" with him. His final words in this letter were: "Go with the Blessing of your Parents and may Heaven prosper and defend you, is the prayer of your Parents."

Greenlee was officially commissioned captain of artillery by Gov. John Letcher on February 14, 1862. Tremendous responsibilities were immediately placed upon the young captain of what was to be called "the Letcher Battery." He had to obtain guns, company officers had to be picked, and recruits had to be found. Financing the cost of organizing the Company was also his own private responsibility. Three days before, on February 11, Greenlee had begun recruiting men by opening an office in Richmond. He sent his father a number of his recruiting advertisements so that he could circulate them in Rockbridge. In reply his father gave him a few words of advice:

In recruiting your men, some wild characters may apply. Though apparently objectionable, they afterward make the best soldiers. Treat them kindly and respectfully without exception. Be kind but decided and your men will obey you. You must expect to take many rough fellows. Don't let the idea get out that your company is to be formed of prudish young men. It won't do. In a word, use kind words always and never wound men's feelings of any applicant for your company.

Greenlee's company later took part in 13 major battles, and numerous skirmishes. His first major engagement was at the Battle of Malvern Hill. The commanding general, J. B. Magruder, ordered the battery to be placed in an "impossible position." Greenlee writes:

We only saved the battery from utter destruction by loading the guns low down on the slopes and running them up near enough to the crest of the rise to fire them, and the recoil would run back into a sheltered position.

This method of rapid firing continued for an hour and twenty minutes, during which time two infantry charges were made. After the second charge, the two sides became engaged in hand to hand combat. But at the end of the battle the battery had held fast. First Lt. Charles Ellis Munford, the son of the Secretary of the Com-

**War Comes to
the Davidson
Family by
Clinton L.
Anderson**

monwealth of Virginia, and two other men were killed. Nineteen company men were wounded.

The Letcher Battery was honored for its outstanding bravery and excellence. Newspapers, such as the South Carolina *Southern Guardian* and the *Richmond Enquirer*, carried strong editorials praising the battery. A special commendation for conspicuous gallantry was given Capt. Davidson in a report by Gen. A. P. Hill.

By this time, Albert Davidson had joined his brother's company. Their youngest brother, William, was a part of the company for a few weeks until he became ill. He and Albert went to Dublin, Virginia, where they were stationed under a cousin, James B. Dorman, in a training camp.

Charles Davidson, who was a lieutenant in the First Irish Battalion, also became a part of A. P. Hill's division and was stationed with his brother during much of the summer campaign in 1862.

The Davidson brothers were also together during the Battle of Cedar Mountain August 9, 1862. Charles was nearly wounded when a Minie ball hit only two inches in front of him.

The second engagement which Greenlee describes in detail was near Warrenton Springs:

I had the safest position on the ground. We were nearest the enemy, but we stationed on the top of a high hill, the slope of which behind us afforded almost a perfect protection to the men and horses. We would load our guns on the side of the hill, run them up near the top, just far enough to sight them and after firing a round or two we would lie down on the hillside and enjoy the music of the shells which burst over us and around us by the hundreds. Sometimes we would fire at the enemy whilst their batteries were silent and then it was like waking up a hornets nest. The enemy would concentrate all their guns upon us and the shells would burst around us so rapidly and furiously that it was impossible to carry on a conversation—the report of the shells and the whistling of the fragments was so deafening.

Yankee bullets glazed the top of the hill and whizzed down the other side. Only two men in Greenlee's company were wounded and none were killed. Greenlee's canteen which was hanging at his left side was shattered by a bullet:

How the canteen was struck without my arm being injured is incomprehensible to me. I suppose my arm must have been raised when [it] was struck. I will send it home to Ma. She will prize it as it saved my life perhaps. Had it not been for the canteen I would have been struck in the left side.

Greenlee's account of the Battle of Second Manassas is lost. However, a description of the Antietam-Harper's Ferry campaign is very complete. He describes one of the cities that his troops passed through. Greenlee noticed to his dismay:

After passing through the City we turned into the National road

and moved in the direction of Hagerstown. About 10 o'clock passed through Middletown—a village nearly as large as Lexington. It has the reputation of being the bitterest abolition hole in the state. The people are as valid (*sic*) as those of any village in Mass. or Vermont. We found the place almost deserted. The houses were locked up and all the merchants had closed their stores and fled. It looked indeed like a deserted village. After leaving Middletown we passed through a most beautiful country. The lands are in the highest state of cultivation and every farmer has a barn almost as large as Noah's Ark. But strange to say, I visited nearly a hundred farm houses during the day, and did not succeed in buying a pound of meat or a bushel of corn. It is true that a considerable number of the houses were deserted, but where I found the owners at home, they all told me they had nothing to sell. It is perfectly evident that the people of this section of the State are as hostile to us as if we were north of Mason and Dixon line.

By nightfall of September 14, the Letcher Artillery was located in a woods near Harper's Ferry. Jackson had extended his lines forming a semicircle with his left on the Potomac and his right on the Shenandoah leaving the enemy only a "little tongue of land" between the rivers. Although the battery set up opposite three of the enemy's heaviest guns, only one man was killed during the action.

Toward the last of November, Davidson's company marched to Fredericksburg. Greenlee wrote:

Fredericksburg is deserted and is threatened by our guns as well as by those of the Yankees. The country for miles around is filled with refugees. Every house is crowded and hundreds are living in Churches, in Barns and in Tents. I passed one camp, in which there must have been forty or fifty families. It made me feel sad to see delicate women, beautiful girls and tender young children thus banished from their comfortable homes, living as it were in the woods, at this trying season of the year. How thankful the people of Rockbridge should be, that the County has never been visited by the desolating tread of an army. Although the people of Fredericksburg have been driven from their homes and are in daily expectation of seeing their houses reduced to ashes, still they utter no word of complaint.

During this battle, Greenlee was in immediate command over 21 guns. He wrote that he looked around to see what damage had been inflicted on his own neighboring companies. One of Capt. Brown's men, who had been giving out ammunition "was severed in twain and burned to a crisp. His clothing was stripped from his body and blown into the top of a tall pine." Greenlee saw Lt. Grayson fall mortally wounded. An ammunition chest was ignited by a Yankee shot and ten pound shells were thrown in all directions inside the battery position. A few minutes after Grayson was hit, Lt. Thomas Brander was glazed by a ricocheting bullet. The shock was so great

**War Comes to
the Davidson
Family by
Clinton L.
Anderson**

War Comes to
the Davidson
Family by
Clinton L.
Anderson

that Brander was dazed at first, then "took off in a full run" leaving Davidson as the only commissioned officer at the battery.

On May 2, 1863, the Letcher Battery was ordered to Wilderness Church, a part of the Chancellorsville battlefield. The next morning after they had fired three hundred and nineteen pounds of ammunition, the battery was ordered to the rear behind a hill, while an infantry charge was made. Greenlee and several other men were near the top of the hill watching the charge when Davidson was hit by infantry fire. Greenlee's men carried him from the field and made him as comfortable as possible. As he was being moved he turned to his first lieutenant, Brander, who was now in command of the battery, and asked him "to thank the men for their gallant behavior, for it made him die happy." John Morris, Jr., an ordinance officer of the battalion, was beside Davidson during the last moments of his life. Morris wrote Greenlee's mother:

. . . he dreaded his approaching end principally on your account and exclaimed Oh! My mother! What a terrible blow this will be to her: he requested me to write to you to say that he fell bravely fighting for our cause and in the hour of history. In conclusion let me assure you that whilst we would not intrude our feelings on the sacredness of a mother's grief, you have the heart felt sympathy of all who knew him here and we deeply mourn the loss of one from among us who possessed so many qualities of heart and mind to render him a most valued friend in any position.

Albert and William came home from Dublin for the funeral. Charles was unable to leave his new position at Gordonsville. He did, though, write to the family:

And now that he is gone, let him be as an example to your remaining sons, as to what they ought to be, as a shining mark for them to imitate; to others, let his name be referred to with pleasure, and with the proud feeling of a father who knows that few parents had such a son to lose.

The southern position was declining in the summer of 1863. Charles had spent the previous winter at Gordonsville where he was a provost officer. Albert and William had been at Dublin. William entered the war as a commissioned officer and, as a member of Early's army, took part in the famous raid on Washington that same year. He served as special aide to Col. Patton.

Meanwhile at Lexington, Mr. Davidson had been acting as commissary officer for the home guard and at different times was highly commended for his work.

In June, 1864, Gen. Hunter, sweeping up the Valley, raided Lexington leaving the VMI buildings and Gov. Letcher's home in ruins.

On the first of October the Dublin camp and the department of Southwest Virginia were closed. Albert received an appointment as enrolling officer of Giles County, and was stationed at Pearisburg in November.

There are no Davidson letters to describe the miserable, chaotic conditions of the winter of 1864-1865. Lines of communications were destroyed. Grant's armies were overpowering Gen. Lee and the Army of Northern Virginia. On February 26, 1865, Charles wrote from Petersburg that the people had been ordered to remove all tobacco from the city or have it confiscated.

News of Lee's surrender reached Lexington on April 10. But the end of the war in eastern Virginia did not mark the end of tragedy for the family. Albert was still fighting in the mountains of Giles County when Lee surrendered at Appomattox Court House on April 9. Before the news reached that area, Albert was mortally wounded. He lingered for several weeks, and died May 6. His daughter, Alberta, had been born on April 24, less than two weeks before his death.

William and Charles Davidson returned home from Appomattox to live with their elderly parents. William enrolled at VMI and Charles was admitted to the Lexington bar. William was soon forced to withdraw from VMI before completing his studies because of ill health. His health grew steadily worse, and he died shortly afterwards of typhoid fever at the age of twenty-four.

Charles, now the only remaining son, became very active in civic affairs in Lexington, working constantly for the progress and prosperity of the community. But a disease, supposedly tuberculosis, soon caused a serious decline in his health. On the advice of friends he went to the sanitorium at Clifton Springs, New York. Around February 20, 1879, he became worse and the superintendent sent a telegram requesting that his sister, Clara, come to Clifton Springs immediately. Before she had left the county she learned of his death. He was buried February 27, in the Lexington Presbyterian Cemetery.

James D. Davidson had outlived all his six sons. Yet his civic interest did not fail. He continued to express in prose and verse much of the spirit of the times. In 1880, Davidson prepared a short poem, in which he expressed a warm feeling of hospitality and friendship toward Northern people who, in turn, had demonstrated their willingness to help the South. No sign of bitterness can be found in the poem, even though its writer had lost practically everything in the war, including five of his sons. The new attitude of Rockbridge citizens can be seen in these two stanzas of the poem addressed to northern "capitalists:"

*Come, then amongst us, with your thrift,
And with your go-a-head,
And wake our Sleeping Beauty up,
And raise her from the dead.
The past is gone—forgotten be,
Before us is a future grand,
When solid South and solid North,
Are one united land.*

**War Comes to
the Davidson
Family by
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**Dr. Alfred
Leyburn —
(1803-1878)—
A Lexington
Whig, Legisla-
tor, and Man
of Affairs by
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he October 30, 1961, meeting of the Society was held at the Castle with Col. George M. Brooke presiding. Dr. James G. Leyburn, Professor of Sociology at W & L, spoke on Dr. Alfred Leyburn, a Lexington Whig, legislator and man of affairs. In 1963, Dr. Leyburn published an important study and history of the Scotch-Irish people. He has also written a thorough history of the Leyburn family (1734 to 1960). Much of the material for his paper on Dr. Alfred Leyburn was drawn from this family history. □

IN 1803, IN WHAT is now called the Withrow House, diagonally across from the Rockbridge County Court House, was born Alfred Leyburn, the subject of this memoir. He was the fifth of the nine children of Capt. John and Mrs. Jane McDowell Leyburn, and the oldest of the sons to grow to maturity.

Since the seventy-five years of his life saw Lexington grow from a small village of nine blocks to a considerable town, and since he was intimately connected with many of the important institutions and people of Lexington, this paper will, in the general interest, be not a strict biography, but rather a comment on "how things used to be" in the nineteenth century.

At the time of Alfred's birth, both Lexington and Rockbridge County were only twenty-six years old. Since the western limits of the town were marked by Back Street (or Jefferson, as it is now called), they did not then include what was to become Washington and Lee. Indeed, the building that housed Washington Academy had been destroyed by fire a few months before Alfred's birth, and the work of the school was then being conducted in rented buildings within the village. The southern limit of the town was the present Nelson Street. Presbyterians of Lexington had, in 1802, built their church, the only one attended by Lexingtonians, a quarter of a mile to the south in an oak grove; the building was surrounded by its graveyard, the present cemetery.

Alfred's father, Capt. John Leyburn, a merchant, had bought his house and lot in 1800 from the estate of William Alexander for the sum of \$2000. The lot extended from Main Street all the way to Back Street, and near the rear corner was one of the ample springs from which Lexingtonians derived their water. The house itself had been built by Mr. Alexander in 1780. Main Street in those days was considerably higher than it is at present, so that what is now the second story of the house was then the ground floor, and the part now used as a store was then the basement of the house.

Capt. Leyburn used the corner room of the main floor for his store, since it fronted on both Main and Washington Streets. Behind

the store was a counting room, with glass panels in its door so that the Captain or his clerk might look through it into the store. Across the hall was the parlor, in which the Leyburns had the first piano ever to appear in town. The instrument had been purchased by the Captain for his daughter on one of his semi-annual trips to Philadelphia to buy goods for his store, and it had been hauled to Lexington by wagon.

Across the street from the Leyburns, where now is the Adair-Hutton store, lived the Caruthers family, one of whose members later played a large part in Alfred's life. Children of the two large families played together, and there was agreement among the parents that a child of either family might be disciplined in the other household.

When, in 1810, a double covered bridge was constructed across the North River, it then became feasible for Capt. Leyburn to purchase a country estate along the north bank of the river. The farm ran from the present Humphris store in East Lexington all the way to the Lime-kiln Bridge, and included at various times from 450 to 1000 acres. (I shall mention later the construction of the house now owned by Mrs. Beatrice Price and the mill now operated by Mr. Furr.) The Leyburn family continued to live in town, the farm being run by an overseer with the help of Negro workers.

When Alfred was seventeen, he entered Washington College. Here, like his two younger brothers after him, he remained for two sessions and then went on to Princeton to graduate. Having decided to become a physician, he attended the Jefferson Medical College in Philadelphia, and upon receiving his degree, returned to practice medicine in Lexington.

It was upon his return in 1825 that he began to show his interest in his neighbor and former playmate, Ann Eliza Caruthers, three years his junior. Ann's father had died in 1817, leaving nine children. Thereupon, Mrs. Caruthers gratefully accepted the invitation of her distinguished brother, Dr. Archibald Alexander, to have the eleven-year-old Ann come to live in Princeton with the Alexanders. This was a brilliant opportunity for the child. Dr. Alexander, having already served as president of Hampden-Sydney, had been called to Princeton to become the first professor in the new Princeton Theological Seminary. While Ann was living with her uncle's family, she developed into a considerable beauty, with dark red hair, brown eyes, and a fair complexion. It was the unanimous testimony of those who knew her that she had "a very lively character." Her first cousin, one of the young Alexander boys, fell in love with her. This alarmed Mrs. Alexander, who said she "would have none of first cousins marrying each other." She forthwith dispatched Ann Eliza back to her family in Lexington. Here in 1826, at the age of nineteen, she married the twenty-three-year-old Dr. Alfred Leyburn.

Leaving the family home on Main Street, Dr. Leyburn bought for himself and his bride the handsome new house just built by

**Dr. Alfred
Leyburn —
(1803-1878)—
A Lexington
Whig, Legisla-
tor, and Man
of Affairs by
Dr. James
G. Leyburn**

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Samuel Darst (or possibly John Jordan) that is now the Episcopal rectory. In this house three sons were born to the couple, William, Edward, and John, and here the family lived for the next decade.

Dr. Leyburn soon began to take an active part in community affairs. At 32, he was made an elder in the Presbyterian Church, and at the same age he was elected as a Whig to represent Rockbridge County in the State Legislature.

In 1835, the year of his election, two political parties dominated the national scene—the Jacksonian Democrats and the Whigs. The backbone of the support of Andrew Jackson came from the ordinary people who, during the years of government by Virginia and Massachusetts aristocrats, had had small voice in national affairs.

The substantial citizens of Rockbridge were, of course, Whigs; it was these men of property who in 1835 elected Dr. Leyburn to the legislature. My father, who knew him well, said of the doctor: "He was an aristocrat and a Whig, who despised democracy, and thought the ignorant rabble utterly incapable of managing the affairs of state. He felt that the franchise should be based on education and property." In one of his own letters, Dr. Leyburn referred contemptuously to the Democrat, Martin Van Buren, who was shortly thereafter to be elected President.

In late November, 1835, Leyburn left his wife, Ann Eliza, and his three sons, then aged eight, six, and eighteen months, and, taking his younger sister with him, set out upon the three-day journey by stage-coach to Richmond for the meeting of the legislature. In his first letter after reaching Richmond, he wrote his wife: "Nothing short of the committal of the remains of my dear wife and children to the grave, could have given me more pain, I believe, than Monday morning's separation, and scarcely ever could any one have struggled harder to suppress his feelings than did I."

Ann, in her letters to the new assemblyman, always included news of the three little boys, their health, their bright remarks, the first efforts of the baby to talk. In her second letter she says that Edward and William had asked that their love be "put in that letter," and reminds him always to mention them when he writes, "for they beg me to read the letters to them, and look disappointed when nothing is said about them." Alfred is thereafter faithful about including messages for each of the children, and sends news of candy and oranges he has bought for them, and finally of the purchase of "a little bit of a puppy, as white as snow and wooly as a sheep."

Ann tells of family prayers morning and night, conducted by her younger brother Edward; of the sermons by the young minister, Mr. Cunningham; of his efforts to convert Alfred's good friend Dr. Jordan (finally successful). She wryly notes that Mrs. Cunningham is about to have another baby, though her language is oblique: "She looks very much as if she was sold to the Dutch, poor woman. I pity her, she has begun already, and preachers' fortunes consist in their

The family has in its possession a series of twenty-two letters between husband and wife during the four months of the legislature session.

children." She commissions Alfred to purchase in Richmond some new Venetian blinds for the dining room—and fails to give him any measurements. Business problems and farm affairs appear in almost every letter; for example, she writes: "The pork came in on Saturday too late for me to do anything with it as I expected. The hogs weighed 3618 pounds."

She is jealous of the Legislature that keeps Alfred from "his widowed Ann Eliza," and begins a quiet but ultimately effective campaign to keep him from standing for re-election. At first Alfred is quite disturbed by her manoeuvres, but finally accedes graciously to her wishes for retirement after one term. She twits him on his silence in the legislative debates, saying, "I do not hear of your *figuring* in the Legislature much!" Eventually he writes her that he has made his maiden speech, which—"this is for your own ear only"—his friends tell him is a good one. Repeatedly she makes plans to come to Richmond to spend a month with him, but something always interferes—bad weather, illness of the children, unavailability of a suitable companion for the three-day trip by stage-coach, or her own bad cold.

Alfred in turn keeps Ann posted about his sister Alice's beaux, about visits from his younger brother George (who, as a student in the theological seminary nearby at Hampden-Sydney, seems to Ann lamentably uninterested in getting married), his own health (Ann recommends celery for his dyspepsia—this to a doctor!). He tries manfully to keep her posted about what ladies in Richmond are wearing. He buys some silk for her and tells her he intends to have it made up into a dress for her "by the measure of a little black-eyed girl who sits at our table, who is not quite so tall, but whose bust is a very facsimile of Ann Eliza's." (She hastily sends him her own measurements.) Once he describes "a shew of the burning of Moscow & the French soldiers, horse & footmen & all, many hundreds entering the city with Drums & Trumpets & Muskets & Cannon. Oh how I did wish for you all. The most splendid exhibition of the kind I ever saw." He gives Ann instructions about business details at home, counsel about the servants, advice about taking along a heated brick for her feet and an extra coat for her knees if she should make the stage-coach trip to Richmond.

Health figures frequently in letters from both of them, and there is an ominous note in one of Ann Eliza's letters about a deep cold she has. She writes in February, 1836: "I think I never knew what a cold was before, compared with the one I have now. My friends have been, as usual, uneasy about my lungs as I can see from their countenances, and I have not been without apprehension myself, as I never have a cold on the chest that I do not think my lungs are in danger. It is necessary for me to be kept down by sickness, and danger, to be kept in the line of duty, so prone am I to go after the things of this world."

**Dr. Alfred
Leyburn —
(1803-1878)—
A Lexington
Whig, Legisla-
tor, and Man
of Affairs by
Dr. James
G. Leyburn**

Alfred finally got home at the end of the session in March. His last letters show increasing impatience at the delay in ending debate: "You don't know how bad I want to see you all, and if these Shoats here had not fooled away so much time on the abolition & expunging resolutions, we would all have been at home probably, snug enough."

**Dr. Alfred
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The reader of the correspondence imagines the job of the home-coming and reunion, and almost finds himself hoping that the young family will all "live happily ever after." The sequel, however, is painful. Ann Eliza's health grew steadily worse; we have a letter from her brother-in-law, Dr. H. W. Moseley, of Lynchburg, concerning medicine to be given her; the letter concludes: "I would hope the disease of the lung would yield under the present course."

It did not yield. Ann Eliza died on November 3, 1836, when she was only thirty.

With the death of his wife, Dr. Leyburn returned to the Legislature, and now devoted considerable attention to a bill of much interest to the Lexington community. Even during his first term he had made references to the "Arsenal Bill." This was the beginning of what was to become the Virginia Military Institute.

In 1816 Virginia had established at various points throughout the state Arsenals, in which State Guards were maintained. Early in the 1830's Claudius Crozet, a native of France, who had taught mathematics at West Point before coming to Virginia to undertake various large engineering enterprises, seems to have made the suggestion that the State should replace its Arsenals by a military school on the order of West Point. Alfred Leyburn and particularly his closest friend and brother-in-law, J. T. L. Preston, a lawyer, thought this idea an excellent one. (Col. Preston was married to a younger sister of Ann Eliza's.) The bill was introduced into the Legislature, and Leyburn worked steadily for it. At its passage, the Institute was established in 1839. Gen. Francis H. Smith was named as its first Superintendent; Crozet was made first president of the Board of Visitors, Dr. Leyburn was made a member of the Board, and Col. Preston was appointed as professor of Rhetoric and Literature.

In the next year, 1840, Dr. Leyburn was chosen a member of the Board of Trustees of Washington College, at the age of 37. It was at this point that he gave up his practice of medicine, simply because of his involvement with other affairs. As legislator, spending three or four months each year in Richmond; as owner of a flourishing plantation; as member of the Board at V.M.I.; as member, secretary, and finally rector of the Board of Trustees at Washington College; and as elder of the Presbyterian church—he simply had no time for his medical practice. Indeed, the pressure of affairs made him also give up his membership of the Board at V.M.I.

As secretary of the Board of Trustees at Washington College, he was one of those who wrote and signed the letter inviting General

Robert E. Lee to become president of the institution in 1865. Thirty years before, Dr. Leyburn had built a handsome home for himself and Ann Eliza on his plantation; her death prevented her living in it. But thereafter the town house was sold to the Episcopalians for their rectory, and the Leyburns moved to Elmwood. When Gen. Lee became president of the College, he frequently rode Old Traveller out to Dr. Leyburn's place to consult with him about affairs of the institution. My father, who was born in 1865, vividly remembered the general, and I shall tell one story in his own words:

On one of his visits, probably in the spring of 1870, Gen. Lee hitched Old Traveller near the stile under a large cucumber tree which shaded the lower part of our lawn. While he was in the house visiting the older members of the family, we small children gathered dandelions in the yard and climbing up on the fence, decorated Old Traveller's mane and forelock and bridle with the flowers. When we saw General Lee coming out of the house and down the walk with our parents, we hid behind the shrubbery, since we did not feel sure that the General would approve our work of decoration. When we saw that he and our parents seemed greatly amused at what we had done, we came out of hiding and General Lee, who was very fond of children, took the smaller ones of us up into his arms and held us up to pet Old Traveller.

In the year following the death of Gen. Lee, Washington College became Washington and Lee University, and in 1872 Dr. Leyburn was named Rector of the Board of Trustees, a position made all the more important because of the retiring nature of General Custis Lee, successor of his father in the presidency of the institution.

During all these years of concern with the college, important issues were being decided by the Session of the Presbyterian Church, of which Dr. Leyburn was a member. In 1840, for example, it was agreed that a new church (the present one) should be erected nearer the center of town; the elders very thriftily saw to it that the materials of the old church were used in the construction of a new manse for the minister on White Street. In the same decade of the 1840's the Session was unhappily involved in the famous Skinner affair.

Dr. Skinner, a Scot in the prime of life, was an excellent preacher and was at first greatly admired by his congregation; but he was something of a martinet, and he believed in running the church in his own way. He had a system of visiting the congregation which he called Parochial Statistical Visitation. He would announce from the pulpit on Sunday that he would be in a certain house at a specified hour on Monday, that he would see all the family who wished to be seen, and that he would then refresh the minds of the children in the Shorter Catechism and hunt up all the ages in the family Bible. Before leaving he made a complete record of all he did and learned during the visit. After seven years of being treated

**Dr. Alfred
Leyburn —
(1803-1878)—
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tor, and Man
of Affairs by
Dr. James
G. Leyburn**

**Dr. Alfred
Leyburn —
(1803-1878)—
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as statistics, many of the congregation were ready for Dr. Skinner to move. Several members addressed to him a private letter, suggesting that his usefulness in Lexington had ceased. Receipt of this letter aroused the fighting Scot in Dr. Skinner. After a variety of scenes embarrassing to the congregation, the Presbytery dissolved the relationship between pastor and church; but Dr. Skinner appealed this decision to the Synod, and when that body upheld the Presbytery, to the General Assembly of the Church. At the same time, he published a pamphlet assailing most of the people of the congregation. To this pamphlet the Session replied, through the columns of the local newspaper. The war of words continued, and it was only after a futile appeal of Dr. Skinner's to a grand jury to indict the members of the Session that the minister shook the dust of Lexington off his feet.

After the death of Ann Eliza Caruthers, Dr. Leyburn married two years later Miss Anne Pope Price, of Richmond, by whom he had four children. The second Mrs. Leyburn was an excellent mother to the three sons by the first marriage. She herself died in 1855, after fifteen years of married life. Five years later, in 1860, the doctor married for the third time, a distant cousin of his second wife, Miss Susan Wrenn, beloved by all who knew her. The third Mrs. Leyburn was a staunch Episcopalian; she used the conservatory at Elmwood as her place of daily prayer. In the back of her prayer-book she pinned a list of names of people for whom special prayer should be offered, and her step-children were among them. During Lent Mrs. Leyburn often fasted so strenuously that her health was threatened, and Dr. Leyburn had to take a firm stand on this matter.

The Civil War brought its difficulties and tragedies to Dr. Leyburn and his family, as it did to most other members of the community. The time of Hunter's Raid was particularly tense. The mill, which Dr. Leyburn and his son Edward had built in 1850, was several times set on fire by Union soldiers; but since the fires were easily extinguished each time, the consensus was that the soldiers were acting on orders, and had no heart for destroying an institution so necessary to the people of the county. Nevertheless, since the mill supplied Confederate troops, the order to destroy it was understandable. In the family archives are several notes from Stonewall Jackson and later from Gen. Lee giving their personal orders for flour from the mill.

The bombardment of VMI took place partly from the Leyburn estate. All families were ordered out of their homes, and the Leyburns took shelter in the woods. As they were wandering there, a contingent of soldiers, seeing them, trained its guns upon them and were about to open fire. Fortunately, neighbors standing nearby recognized them and saved them from destruction. Elmwood, the house, was despoiled, and all the cattle were driven off; the gardens, of course, were ravaged; the family silver and jewelry were fortunately

saved, having been buried by faithful slaves.

Dr. Leyburn's third son, John, became a surgeon in the Confederate Navy. He was one of those on the *Alabama* under Admiral Semmes when that ship was struck and sunk, but he was saved.

Until the end of the War, Dr. Leyburn ran his plantation with slaves. It was his custom, when trouble arose among them, to hold court on the back porch of Elmwood. The cook, Ginnie, who possessed a violent temper, was most often the trouble-maker. Many stories are told of the difficulties which the Doctor had to adjudicate; they all indicate his even-handedness and fairness, but one story also shows his ingenuity. On a certain morning Ginnie and Smithy, a house maid, had a violent argument that led to hair-pulling and face-scratching. They were called before the Doctor, and as they mounted the four steps to the porch each of them held her head high and showed a face furious with anger. Dr. Leyburn asked no questions, but had two large palm-leaf fans brought and given to each irritated woman; then he ordered them to fan each other. The quarrel ended as a grin began to appear on each face, then a titter, and finally complete laughter on both sides.

With the freeing of the slaves, there was the problem of making an adjustment to the new order of things. Irish tenants now appeared. Soon also, as very often happened, most of the slaves, after a brief experience of freedom and responsibility, returned to the farm, to work during their active life and then to be taken care of in their old age. When the doctor reached the age of seventy, in 1873, he turned over the management of the farm to his twenty-year-old son by his second wife, Howard Leyburn.

Dr. Leyburn shared with his family a deeply religious nature. Both of his younger brothers were ministers: one of them, George, was a missionary to Greece, and the other, an editor of a church paper in Philadelphia, and then pastor of the largest church in Baltimore for many years. In 1878 Dr. Alfred went, as representative of the Lexington church, to the meeting of the Synod of Virginia in Abingdon. While staying at the home of the Prestons there, he became ill of pneumonia, grew rapidly worse, and died on October 30. Howard went to Abingdon to help nurse his father, and then to bring his body back to Lexington for burial.

My father, who knew his grandfather, Dr. Alfred Leyburn, in his latter years, says of him: "He was a very dignified man, rather reserved, always carefully dressed. I do not remember ever having seen him go out without wearing his long Prince Albert frock coat and high stove-pipe hat, even when he was only going to ride over the farm on horseback to see what was going on and to give directions to the hands. Yet with all of his dignity and apparent reserve, he was very friendly and cordial, with a fine sense of humor. He was quite a mimic, and could tell a good story as well as anyone I have ever heard. When I was a small boy he often took me with

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him as he rode about the farm, I riding behind him on old Sam, his favorite riding horse.”

Physician, legislator, active trustee of two educational institutions, elder in his church for forty-five years, gentleman-farmer, and father of seven children, Dr. Alfred Leyburn led a versatile life. ■

Virginia
Architecture
by Dr.
Theodore
R. Turner

The Society held its winter dinner meeting on January 22, 1962, at the Trinity Methodist Church. Gen. Letcher presided. The speaker for the evening was Theodore R. Turner, chairman of the Fine Arts Department of the University of Virginia, who presented an illustrated talk on Virginia architecture. Dr. Turner, who is the brother of Dr. Charles W. Turner, began his talk with the State Capitol in Richmond, built in 1792 from designs by Thomas Jefferson. Among other buildings in Richmond which were discussed were the Main Street and the Broad Street railroad terminals. He mentioned the Rotunda and the lawn at the University of Virginia in Charlottesville, Bremo and Berry Hill. He then discussed in detail the contrasting forms of architecture found at Washington and Lee and VMI and their influence on other buildings in Lexington. □

On April 30, 1962, the Society met at the Castle, and Gen. Letcher presided. The speaker of the evening was Col. John G. Barrett, professor of history at VMI, who read a paper on the letters of a cadet who was killed in the Battle of New Market. Col. Barrett has published a number of Civil War books and articles. *The London Times* called his *Civil War in North Carolina* (University of North Carolina Press, 1963) “one of the better books published in the United States since 1959.” Earlier this year he contributed a chapter in *Writing Southern History* entitled “Confederate States at War on Land and Sea,” and in 1956, UNC Press did *Sherman’s March Through the Carolinas*. A number of the letters in the paper which follows were carried in his *Letters of a New Market Cadet* (UNC Press, 1961). □

A MEMBER OF a large and well established family, Beverly Stanard was born on April 27, 1845. By the early 1860’s his father, Robert Stanard, was dead, but his mother, the former Ellen B. Taliaferro, continued to live at the family home, Berry Hill, near

Orange. Also living at or near Berry Hill at this time were three of Beverly's sisters: Mary, the wife of W. H. Chapman; Frances Pendleton ("Fanny"), the wife of T. J. Shaw; and Champe, who later married William Rawlins. In addition, Beverly had two older brothers, F. Haywood, who was married to the former Sallie Chandler and who lived in Mobile, and Robert, who was married to the former Mary Battle ("Mollie") and who by April, 1864, was in the army attached to Headquarters, Artillery Corps, Valley District. There is no information concerning Beverly's childhood, but on November 11, 1861, Haywood, writing from Augusta, Georgia, opened negotiations with Colonel (later Major General) Francis H. Smith, Superintendent of VMI, to have Beverly admitted as a cadet. Allusions in Haywood's letter indicate that he was acquainted with General Smith, and he wrote, "I have a high opinion of the Institute & wish to give my Brother a good education." Beverly's mother, however, was less enthusiastic about her youngest son's leaving home. On December 5, 1861, she wrote to General Smith, "I have declined sending him for the present, the times are too unsettled," but a year later she apparently became reconciled to the idea. On December 15, 1862, she wrote again to General Smith:

I learn through my son in Mobile that you have promised to take my son into yr institute. I should have sent him immediately but found great difficulty in getting him comfortable clothing &ct. I will endeavor to send him the 1st Jan. . . . It is a great trial to me giving up my youngest boy & the only one near me, and I must beg you to show him as much Fatherly care as you can? It will be his first absence from me! And I shall be truly thankful & well satisfied if he returns the same good & obedient child when his education is complete.

On January, 20, 1863, Beverly arrived at VMI and was admitted as a cadet. His letters to his mother and sisters begin a month later. Lexington was away from the scenes of the great military operations of 1863 and 1864, and the cadets themselves, then as now, were somewhat isolated from the world outside and even from the activities of the town itself by the restrictions of barracks life. But Beverly's letters do give some indication of what life at VMI was like in these years; they reveal and comment on the hardships and rigors of the cadets' day-to-day existence, the few amusements open to them, the rumors and the fruitless marches into the mountains to repel Federal attacks which never got to them, and above all the longing of all the boys to take some active part in the war which was going on around them but which seemed certain to pass them by. Against this background Beverly himself appears as an interesting and sympathetic character. Like most cadets, he had his prejudices, his resentment of authority, and his complaints about his treatment at the Institute, but with them all a good humor and a sense of proportion which usually kept him from petulance. This is really to say

**Extracts from
Letters of a
New Market
Cadet by Col.
John G. Barrett**

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New Market
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that he was in many respects a typical cadet, and his attitudes are as common to cadets of today as they apparently were to those of a hundred years ago.

The strong affection which many alumni feel for VMI is a rather curious phenomenon which usually first manifests itself openly on graduation day. Cadets have always professed a hearty aversion to the chop-logic of the regulations and the punctilios of the discipline to which they subject themselves, while, paradoxically, they generally resist any move to change the system substantially. Their complaints are often indirect boasts of their ability to endure the very things that they complain about. Beverly was in this respect little different from the general run, but his frequently expressed dislike of VMI received some additional stimulus from his genuine feeling that it was shameful for a young man of his age not to be in the army. His academic failure, which goes unmentioned in his letters, may also have affected his attitude.

Beverly's letters written in the winter and early spring of 1864 constantly stress one theme, his desire to leave VMI and to join Lee's army while there was still a war to be fought. The latter part of April Beverly was granted a leave but he was back at his studies by May 10. On this date about nine o'clock in the evening a messenger from Major General John C. Breckinridge (Commander of Confederate forces in the Valley) arrived at General Smith's quarters bearing the following dispatch:

Siegel is moving up the Valley—was at Strasburg last night. I cannot tell yet whether this is his destination. I would be glad to have your assistance at once with the cadets and the section of artillery. Bring all the forage and rations you can . . .

The next morning the Corps of Cadets started north on the Staunton pike. Three days later, May 15, they were to play a prominent part in the Battle of New Market. In this engagement two officers and forty-five cadets were wounded, and ten cadets were either killed on the field or so badly hurt that they later died. One of those mortally wounded was Jacquelin Beverly Stanard.

Tonight I plan to read only portions of various letters written by Beverly Stanard, and I have selected excerpts that I hope will be of particular interest to residents of Lexington and Rockbridge County.

*Virginia Military Institute
February the 20th 1863*

My dear Sister,

And just to think I have only been here one month today, and have five more long weary ones to spend here. It is awful to think about. . . . You would laugh to see me going through the double quick step. I look like a frog in the act of jumping. . . . While I am writing they are drawing a cannon out on the parade ground to test it. I am going out there to see it fired. . . . Tomorrow is the

22nd and Gen. S[mith] told Capt Bull¹ if he could get the turkeys, he might give us a big dinner, but as he cannot get them, we will have the same old fare, Beef & Bread. I am in hopes there will be a suspension of Studdies until Tuesday. (Private) Sister asked if I ever saw the little Madisons.² Am sorry to say I have not. And moreover I dont expect to, from what I can hear. Dont say anything about this? I heard from good authority that the children were not allowed to wear socks, until that one (the youngest) had its feet fross-bitten. I feel sorry for the the little darlings. Mrs. M[adison] is master. And every one easily percieves it. Let no one see this but the family? . . . There is no episcopal preacher here, but they expect to call Henry A. Wise, Jr.³ hope they may. Have very good music at the presbyterian church. . . . Sunday the 22nd. Ground covered with snow nearly a foot deep and still falling fast. What awful weather we have had in the last month for our army. They must suffer. I never saw such a country as this in my life. And every boy agrees with me. It is either raining or snowing all the time. . . .

Spelling has not been corrected in Stanard's letters.

Camp Jackson Aug. 28th 1863

My darling Mother

I left Staunton about 4½ Wednesday morning, and after a very pleasant trip (Having met with 3 or 4 Cadets returning) reached my old prison house at 1 P.M. and to my surprise found that the Corps had left the evening before to reinforce Jackson.⁴ I then began to regret and censure myself very much for stopping over in Staunton, but it all proved to have been the best thing for me, which you will presently see. Us furlough Cadets immediately began to prepare to set out on our march to overtake them, Determined they should not be in a fight with out us, but about the time we were ready, one of the officers came in and said the Yankees had fallen back and that the Corps was then on the way back to the Institute, after having marched to Goshen. We then thought after that information that it would be a piece of folly in us to start to meet them coming back.⁵ I felt quite lonesome, there being only a few Rats⁶ left as a guard. I staid down with Capt. B[ull] and made myself at home. He seemed very glad at having me back. And yesterday evening they all returned, broken down sorefooted, and quite mad that they were not permitted to go on and engage the enemy. Jackson was very anxious, especially for the company of artillery to come on and join him, but old Spex⁷ had not the authority to take the Corps out of the County, but had, to fight them in Rockbridge in defence of the Institute. I am now delighted that I did not get there in time, since it has proved such a useless & fatiguing march.

Extracts from
Letters of a
New Market
Cadet by Col.
John G. Barrett

Virginia Military Institute
November the 15th 1863

My dear Sister

Willie T. old sweetheart Lu Brokenbrough will be married in the

morning to Capt Semmes, a professor here.⁸ He would have been married last Tuesday but for being out on the march. Dont you reckon he blessed the Yankees. . . .⁹

Virginia Military Institute
December the 1st 1863

Extracts from
Letters of a
New Market
Cadet by Col.
John G. Barrett

My dear Sister

I ought to be there in the army now fighting for my home. Changing the subject, I attended the tableaux given last friday night by the ladies for the benefit of the poor soldiers, although I was dead broke at the time, thought as I had never been to anything of the sort here, and then it was my duty, borrowed the money to go. Some of the scenes were very pretty, but the smallness of the room and the immense crowd destroyed all the pleasure of being present. Capt. B[ull] the only person you know, acted the part of the "Irish volunteer"—It would be useless in me to attempt to describe the scenes dress &c. Will send you a programme, and you can form an idea for yourself of what they ought to have been, at least how they looked. I dont think it could have been as grand as those given by the ladies of Old Orange as the material was wanting. They realized I understant \$600. Lula P[endleton]¹⁰ did not act. I dont think she can be very popular. By the by, I forgot to tell Champe, that she told a friend of mine that she was one of the wildest girls she ever saw, and was wearing Gen. I[mboden]'s¹¹ ring. Tell C[hampe] she had better beware her reputation will be quite broad. . . .

V.M.I. Dec. 19th 1863

My darling Mother

I guess you have been wondering what in the world had become of me that I did not write. Well we were ordered out on last Tuesday very unexpectedly to march directly to Goshen and then wait orders from Gen. Imboden. I have not time to give you an account of our march now, as we have to leave here in the morning at 5 to go in the direction of Buchanan or Salem after "Averil,"¹² and having marched 13 miles today <over [?]> a miserable frozen road, feel as if I could <use [?]> a little sleep on my old mattras after taking it out so long. Oh! I tell you I can stand army service. We were exposed one day and night to the most disagreeable weather I ever saw. Rain fell in perfect torrents, freezing as it would fall. We intended to have gone on from here after a rest of 2 hours but as there were a good many boys shoeless and others with sore feet, we concluded to lay over. We take 3 days rations (which is very little) . . . I am perfectly well & hardy, ready to give that s<camp[?]> "Avril" a laming. I hope to gracious we may catch the scoundrel and his men.

My dear Mother

I wrote you a few days ago, on my return from our Goshen tramp, and I promised I would write again as soon as I reached here once more. Well dear Mother we reached our journeys end Monday evening and nar'e Yankee did we kill or see after marching us all over this plagued mountainous country, and ruining our feet, we being badly shod at the time.¹³ But thank gracious, there were none seriously hurt by the trip, and now since they have had a little rest would be willing to start out on another, provided they were carried in some other direction than that of Goshen & Covington, for both of these routs every boy seems disgusted with. And it is enough to dispirit any one for you look upon nothing but high rocks of mountains the whole way. Once in every ten miles by accident we would pass an old delapidated looking building. I believe I mentioned in my other letter what a wet time we had of it while at Camp Starvation near Goshen. Although we were so near drowned, yet there was no grumbling, quite to the contrary the boys were hollowing & singing the whole time. I wish you could have heard us when a train¹⁴ came up to Goshen whistling & the bell ringing. I believe every boy joined in a thundering shout which reecho through out the surrounding mountains. It reminded us all so much of home & especially those who had been here so long without having had furloughs that I do believe if the Yankees had been near and we been ordered to keep quiet we could not have resisted the temptation to give vent to our joy at such a pleasant sound. When we left here we thought we were going to Staunton. I took some collars along in case we should, and when I heard this train I could not but help thinking it was coming to take us there and I had made up my mind if we got that near home, I would work my <coins[?]> so as to go the whole hog. But alas! there was no such good luck for poor me. I was doomed to disappointment. The train only came to bring a bearer of dispatches. We laid in our mud puddles until evening when the tap of the drum bade us prepare for marching. There were all sorts of rumors afloat before we left camp. Some said the Yankees were near Lex[ington] and we had to march there that night a distance of 22 miles. Others said we were going to Covin[gton] but we were all surprised when Col. Ship¹⁵ marched us up to Cool Sulpher Springs¹⁶ to quarter us in the cabins there for the night. Before we reached there we had to wade through mud & water a foot deep for near ten miles. We managed to build us up a a little fire and dry our blankets. There was a still house at this place and every boy got enough to drink to make him sleep and to keep him from taking cold. In fact the majority of the boys were quite merry. I took a little swig though not enough to make me feel the effects of it.

Extracts from
Letters of a
New Market
Cadet by Col.
John G. Barrett

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Letters of a
New Market
Cadet by Col.
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Stanard Buffington¹⁷ had his canteen full and was looking all about for me. Expect if he had found me I should have been tipsy also for I did not think it any harm that night. Buffington is a splendid boy. On the next morning we set out for Lex[ington]. It had then ceased raining and we had a beautiful day before us for marching but the roads were so bad and the streams we had to pass over so swollen that we did not go more than 12 miles to Wilson Store before we stopped over again for the night, and slept in some old darkey cabins. Although it was very cold I had a very good nights rest. While [we] were here Col. Ship receiv[ed] a dispatch from Old Spex (who said in his order before we left that he would shun our hard ships) who was then at Lex[ington] enjoying the pleasures of home comforts ordering us hurry back as quick as possible, we had to go in the direction of Buchanan. So we left next morning early & reach[ed] here at 11½ although the roads were so bad we marched 4½ miles in one hour

Virginia Military Institute
January the 3rd 1864

My dear Mother

. . . The dinner you spoke of was really a "beautiful" one, but I am confident when I give you a bill of fare of the one which I had the pleasure of masticating, you will not for one moment hesitate in saying mine, was still more beautiful. First, We had cold loaf bread, (not enough by 16 loaves) also warm cornbread. Second, Cold beef. For desert, molasses, water, &ct, &ct. Oh! Indeed if I were to go on and enumerate the rest, I would not finish this letter soon-So leave it for you to form an idea. . . . Christmas week was the dullest to me, I ever spent, only one day suspension. Few boys tight, owing to the scarcity & high price of Liquor. I slept most all the time to rid myself of the monotony. Occasionally I would walk up in Lex[ington] and get some thing to eat. I had looked forward before Xmas with much pleasure to the arrivel of two boxes belonging to my roommates which were to have come by the packet boat but it has not as yet made its appearance. And judging from the looks of the river which I can plainly see from my window, and which is entirely frozen over, that it will not do for some time to come. We have almost despaired . . . So Gen. I[mboden] is still flying around old C[hampe]. Wonder if she can't prevail on him to give me a place on his staff . . . I attended Church this morning [the Methodist] had to go there with my Company but deserted & went to the Episcopal. Saw Sandy P[endleton] & bride,¹⁸ but did not speak to him. Lula had a beau so looked pleased. . . .

Virginia Military Institute
January the 17th 186[4]

My dear Mother

I have anxiously been looking for a letter from you for some time,

in reply to my last, which I mailed about the 5th or 6th. I hope it has not been lost, for it was a long one, and I wanted you to see how I spent my Christmas. Mother it has been so long since I wrote that I guess you have been uneasy about me again, thinking I might be sick—Quite to the contrary, for the last week I have been having a good time skating. The river was frozen over beautifully for miles, as we were not doing any studying, the Examination being just over, we were all allowed to go. I wish you could have seen the river, it looked like a flock of black birds was on it. I never saw boys seem to enjoy themselves more, could play bandy, fox & goose and many other games, to afford us amusement. Sandy P[endleton] & Sisters¹⁹ & some other ladies were down to see us. Sandy seemed to be a very awkward skater, and would get some pretty falls, sometimes, which added to my fun. I think he is Stuck up quite much. I hav'nt spoken to him yet. I attended Church this morning, saw his wife then, do not think she is pretty. The Gen.²⁰ has only preached for us once since he came here, but gave us an excellent sermon then. . . . Doubtless ere this you have received my report and have been worried about the way I have wasted my time & gotten demerits & ct—in the last six months, myself as well as many others have done but little studying. We have lossed about one and a half months going out on these plagued marches and still Old Specs hasn't made a single allowance in the examination, and I would not be surprised if there are not 150 cadets shipped soon for being unjustly found deficient, some over 18, and others for demerits. 15 were shipped yesterday for demerits. One of my roommates goes tomorrow. Spec a grand old scoundrel coins money by this as most of them have made their deposits, which is \$600. I think you must not be surprised to see me at any time, as my number of dems, is past one hundred, though most of them I got for overstaying furlough, and may yet be removed. I shall write to brother in a day or two for money to pay what I owe to old Spec. Mother to give you an idea what sort of a man Gen. S[mith] is—after our return from our last march, the government sent up 300 pairs of shoes for the Cadets as presents, or to pay for our own that we wore out and now Gen. Smith will not let a cadet hav a pair if he has gotten shoes from the Institute within the last 6 months, and if a cadet is shipped before he can get them, They fall in Specs hands who furnishes all his darkeys with a good pair. I shall try hard to get mine, tho' dont expect to wear them, they are course army shoes worth at the present prices 30 or 40 dollars. I have a pair I bought before I went on the march that will do me, so shall keep mine (if I get them) for Henry, unless he is well supplied.

Virginia Military Institute
Feb. the 21st 1864

My dear Mother

Since my last letter nothing much of interest has transpired to

Extracts from
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New Market
Cadet by Col.
John G. Barrett

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New Market
Cadet by Col.
John G. Barrett**

disturb the monotony of the V.M.I. soldier boy's life—or daily routine of exercises, save the freezing up of the river, which has afforded us a little fun skating. Yesterday being Saturday, it did not interfere with our duties or studies, so all could go that wished. I went down to the river in the morning myself, 'though not with the intention of skating, as I had a sore back and then I was minus a pair of skates, mine being broken, but the ice was so beautiful that I could not resist the temptation, so borrowed a pair from one of the boys—and spent the rest of the morning on the ice. It was really elegant fun, could go down the river as far as you wished. There were a great many ladies on the ice, who seemed evidently to think there was more fun in falling down than standing up, but unfortunately in the hight of their enjoyment, one of them (friskly) fell rather too hard and almost broke her nose. Poor girl, I guess it will spoil her beauty spot and I know will teach her a lesson how to run on ice again. The fall of this unfortunate lady, of course, intimidated and some what marred the pleasure of the remainder of the party. My friend Miss L[ella] P[endleton] was among the no. and was looking as rosy as usual. Tomorrow being the anniversary of the birthday of the father of our Country, and in order to show our due respect to his memory, there will be a suspension of academic duties, but owing to the scarcity of powder, will not be able, as is customary, to fire a salute. I went up in Lexington yesterday and looked around for the combs you wrote for. Got you three which I hope may suit, the best I could find, and rather high, but you know everything is now, 'though I could have gotten the two large ones for two dollars less if I had only known it in time. The following is what I gave for the three: black, \$3.75, one of the horn \$5.00 the other \$6.00, making in all \$14.75.

Virginia Military Institute
March the 13th 1864

My darling Sister

. . . I honor you home folks so often with my letters that there must be a good deal of sameness in them which renders them uninteresting. But I hope you will overlook this, remembering that this is one of the dullest & meanest places in Christendom, that is in my estimation, and also of a great many of my fellow Cadets. But I shall not waist my time by heaping abuse upon Lexington and the V.M.I. You are well aware of my hatred for them both. . . . Fan, how do you suppose I spent yesterday evening? Why I saw a poor mink²¹ court marshaled by the boys (only greening him) for deserting his post where they had stationed him the night before. After speaking on both sides the jury retired, and soon reentered the hall. The sentence was read by the judge. The prisoner found guilty, and had to be shot in one hour. The whole court was so much affected at this sentence that the judge had to tell them they must not give way in

that manner to their grief. The prisoner was then told that he would only have one hour to live, and asked if he had any thing to say or if he did not want to write a letter home. He rose and endeavored to make an appeal to the court under the plea of ignorance and a promise to do better in future, but the poor fellow was so frightened that his speech made but little impression upon the court. He was then told to retire into the antechamber where he could write his last letter, which he did and such a one you never saw. He told his Sister when he dilled her and told her good bye he never thought he would disgrace the family in that way. After finishing his letter he returned in the court room, and was so much distressed & frightened that his lawyer again made an earnest appeal in his behalf, and begged that they would grant him a reprieve for ten days, so that he might be better prepared to meet his fate. This was granted by the jury, but subject to the approval of old Spex. The Sergt. of the guard was then ordered to post 2 Sharpshooters at each corner of barracks, so as to prevent the prisoner from talking to any one, or attempting to make his escape. He took the proceedings of the court over to the Gen. who told him we were only greenning him. When he returned and told us what old Spex said, every boy roared out laughing. Our fun was then ended, & the poor boy relieved from his misery. He actually thought he was going to be shot sure 'nough. These are the kind of Cadets which are being admitted in the V.M.I. now. Do you blame us for having a little fun, sometimes? Old Spex says we can substitute greenning in the place of bucking for the new Cadets. . . .

Virginia Military Institute
March the 22nd 1864

My dear Mother.

. . . Well Mother I guess you will wonder why it is, that I am writing with a lead pencil. The reason is just this, we are upon the eve of freezing up. It has been one week since we had a particle of heat. (There not being a stick of wood at the V.M.I.) You know what a change has taken place in the weather—today it is snowing hard, and a cold wind blowing, and still we are having the same duties to attend to, both academic & military. It is outrageous, for the boys can't study a bit. I wish you could step in and take a peep at us, it got so cold we could not stand it any longer, soe we (all the roommates) went out and made a raid on Old Spex laths, and have built up some sort of a fire and are all gathered around it like, a gang of chickens under its mothers wing. If the officer of the day should by chance visit our room and catch us we would get a hard report and a few demerits. . . . Last Saturday Ex. Gov. Letcher²² made a very fine speech, also Judge Brokenbrough.²³ So we went up and heard them. Both were very encouraging, and thought the war would not last a year longer. . . .

Extracts from
Letters of a
New Market
Cadet by Col.
John G. Barrett

Virginia Military Institute
April the 8th 1864

My dear Sister

Just think I am a plagued conscript. If I cant get some place I am stout and hardy enough to rough it as a private. Do you not candidly think I ought to be in the Army? I am over 18. I think I have been very obedient in remaining here as long as I have, and only done so because I hated to go contrary to the wish of a fond and devoted Mother. I think Mother might very willingly give her consent now, that the prospect of the war ending soon is very great. . . . I believe I have fattened, weight 137 lbs. Tried on some of my summer clothes a few nights ago out of curiosity. You know they were full large for me then. Now my jacket won't meet around me, and my pants require a little sugar or molasses on my shoes to induce them to come down a little. . . . I wrote before how we suffered during the cold weather for the want of fire. It was the same this last spell, had to have suspension and let us lay in our beds to keep from freezing. Old Spex was well prepared to meet his own individual comfort. Plenty of the best coal that could be started in peace times. We were not at all indignant at his having suspension. I believe the majority of the boys preferred it and the cold weather to fire. Very natural feelings for school boys. . . . I did intend giving you and account of a review of the Corps by Gen. Rossur.²⁴

V.M.I. April the 24th 1864

My darling Mother

They are starving us out now. Dont give us half enough bread, miserable rye coffee without sugar or milk (and it has caused an eruption to break out on a good many of the Cadets, I believe it is poison) and for the last two weeks they have been giving us nothing but rotten beef. I declare it is perfectly awful. Old Spex has some 50 or 60 barrels of it put away and will keep feeding us on it. An old scamp, he has about ten or eleven barrels of molasses, and won't give us any. All the cadets are grumbling and abusing him for it. . . . Well Mother every body (or Cadet at least) has been eight much excited today, been thinking of leaving for the Army to join the coming battle. You need not be surprised if I am one, if they raise a company I shall join. Remember I will be 19 on the 27th of this month and ought to be ashamed of myself to be here.

Virginia Military Institute
May the 9th 1864

My darling Mother

Here I am, no longer a freeman, but a prisoner within the lofty walls of the V.M.I. I reached here safely on friday evening. and it has been a source of regret to me ever since, that I should have been

Extracts from
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goose enough to leave [Beverly was returning from a furlough] when I did. . . . Tomorrow there will be a suspension of academic duties in order to raise the flag sent from Europe, over the grave of our lamented leader Jackson.²⁵ Well Mother it has been very warm all day, and this evening I had to attend drill for two hours. Wound up with 2 charges 100 yards across the parade on pretended breastworks. It was very exciting, in the first charge I was the first to mount the dreaded works, in the second the 3rd man, but as I was so fat and excited, I had to leave ranks at Dress Parade from a violent headache and a fainty feeling. But I have rested and feel all right and ready for another now.

Staunton May the 12th 1864

My darling Mother

No doubt a letter written from this place will take you greatly by surprise. Well to relieve your anxiety I will tell you before going further and keep you from uneasiness. On Tuesday night an order came from Gen. Breckinridge calling us immediately to Staunton. In obedience to his orders we fixed up and left on Wednesday morning at half past 8, marched 18 miles by half past two, when we camped. The roads were very good but were quite dusty and then it was very warm. This morning we left camp under quite different circumstances, it having rained during the night and has continued to do so all day, the roads were awful perfect loblolly all the way and we had to wade through like hogs. We came 18 miles from 5 to 12 however and are tonight encamped one mile out of town. I have run the blockade and come in to take tea with Cary Taylor, and that I might write this letter. Am I not good? I have a strong notion of staying in until 2 tonight with him so as to dry off, for I have been like a wet mouse all day—so disagreeable in camp. We will leave in the morning early and expect to have to march to Harrisonburg (down the Valley) a distance of 26 miles. The Yankees are reported coming up the Valley with a force of 9000 strong. Our Corps will run Gen. B[reckinridge] up to 5000 may be more. I hope we may be able to lick them out. I have suffered more with my feet this march (so far) than I ever did on all the others together. I hope to get me a more comfortable pair of shoes when this will be remedied. I got my trunk the evening before I left all safe. It was in the nick of time and my biscuit and ham for my rations. If you want to write to me direct your letter to me at this place Care of Edmond M. Taylor,²⁶ Staunton, he will send them to me. I expect we will be down out this time for some weeks. I told you that you had better let me join Lee at once, that this could be the way, but you must not make yourself uneasy about me. I will take care of myself. One of my messmates from this place is going to fill my haversack with something better than what we draw so I wont suffer for some days at any rate, though I hope not at all.

Extracts from
Letters of a
New Market
Cadet by Col.
John G. Barrett

Well darling Mother I have written enough I suppose to relieve your mind as to our destination so I must stop and go in the parlor. Some young ladies there. You will have a hard time trying to make this out I shan't undertake it. Saw <Fedic[?]> T. this evening. Give my love to all acqu [aintan] ce & friends. Hope Bob²⁷ come out all right and all the Berry Hill friends & visitors. I shall write when ever I have an opportunity. And now dear Mother that I may be spared to see you all again, and that you may continue in good health will be the nightly prayer of

Your darling boy

Bev

FOOTNOTES

¹Capt. William R. Bull, steward at VMI

²The Children of Dr. Robert L. Madison, Post Surgeon and Professor of Natural Philosophy and Animal and Vegetable Physiology, Applied to Agriculture.

³Henry A. Wise, Jr., attended VMI for a short while (class of 1855) and then entered the Episcopal Theological Seminary of Virginia where he received his B.D. degree.

⁴Col. William L. Jackson, a cousin of Stonewall Jackson and a former lieutenant governor of Virginia.

⁵Beverly's absence from camp on August 25 caused him to miss the long and exhausting march made by the cadets to support Col. W. L. ("Mudwall") Jackson's defense of the Valley against the first incursion of Gen. William W. Averell and the Fourth Separate Cavalry Brigade of the Federal 8th Army Corps.

⁶New cadets.

⁷Cadet nickname, usually "Specs," for Gen. Smith.

⁸Louise Brockenbrough was the daughter of Judge John W. Brockenbrough; Thomas M. Semmes was at this time an instructor in French at VMI and later Professor of Modern Languages and Rhetoric.

⁹Beverly is referring to Averell's second raid into western Virginia. The Corps marched almost to Covington and back without firing a shot. Beverly said he stood the campaign "bully."

¹⁰Probably Hughella ("Lella") Pendleton, daughter of Gen. William N. Pendleton.

¹¹Brig. Gen. J. D. Imboden.

¹²In December, 1863, Gen. Averell conducted his third and most successful raid into western Virginia.

¹³Beverly is referring to Averell's third raid.

¹⁴The Virginia Central Railroad

¹⁵Lt. Col. Scott Ship was commandant at VMI. Later he changed the spelling of his name to Shipp.

¹⁶Cool (Cold) Sulphur Springs was near Goshen.

¹⁷Cadet Edward Stanard Buffington, class of 1867, was a private in C Company in the Battle of New Market.

¹⁸Col. Sandie Pendleton, Stonewall Jackson's chief of staff, was the son of Gen. W. N. Pendleton. (The father spelled his son's name "Sandy" but the remainder of the Pendletons spelled it "Sandie.") On December 29, 1863, Sandie married Kate Corbin of Moss Neck, near Fredericksburg. The young couple spent their honeymoon in Lexington.

¹⁹Sandie had five sisters, Susan, Mary Nelson, Rose Page, Nancy Nelson, and Hughella (Lella).

²⁰Gen. W. N. Pendleton was an ordained Episcopal minister. He was

a graduate of West Point and served as Chief of Artillery in the Army of Northern Virginia.

²¹As early as 1846, when it appeared in a manuscript newspaper called "The Royal Caroline," the term "mink" was in use by cadets to mean "Washington (and Lee) student." It is still current in that meaning and has never, as far as is known, been applied to new cadets. Beverly may, however, be using it as a synonym for "rat", the usual appellation of new cadets, or he may mean that the cadets had, as a joke, somehow induced a mink to stand guard at VMI. His later remark—"These are the kind of cadets which are being admitted in the VMI now"—does nothing to clarify the matter since he may be referring to those who were heartless enough to "green" the poor boy.

²²John Letcher, native of Lexington, was governor of Virginia, 1860-63.

²³John W. Brockenbrough, Federal Judge, ran a private law school in Lexington; it was at Washington College after 1866 and became part of it in 1870.

²⁴Brig. Gen. Thomas L. Rosser, commander of the "Laurel Brigade," which at this time was encamped in Rockbridge County.

²⁵Stonewall Jackson.

²⁶Edmond M. Taylor and Cary Taylor, mentioned above, were probably related to Beverly by marriage. Two of his uncles, Lawrence and William B., married women of this surname.

²⁷Robert Stanard survived the war. His son, born in 1865, was named for Beverly. □

Gen. Letcher presided at the Society's summer dinner meeting at the Robert E. Lee Hotel July 30, 1962. The speaker was Professor W. Gleason Bean, former head of the Washington and Lee history department. Dr. Bean, who has published extensively in historical journals, is the author of the *Liberty Hall Volunteers* and *Stonewall's Man: Sandie Pendleton*.

There follows a short resume of Dr. Bean's talk on the relationship of Generals Lee and Jackson during the Civil War. □

IT WAS NOT until the spring of 1862, when Lee became Jefferson Davis' military advisor and Commander of the Army of Northern Virginia that Jackson's independent command in the Shenandoah Valley came under Lee's control. It was at this time that the partnership between Lee and Jackson first took form.

At once Lee sensed Jackson's integrity. Here was the beginning of an understanding that would make for effective cooperation.

Lenoir Chambers, in his recent brilliant biography of Jackson, wrote that while Jackson and Lee were far apart, as far as communications went, they were always able, through their letters and orders, to project themselves into the future. Each had the sagacity to discern what the other was thinking or desired. Lee never had a subordinate so quick to grasp his thoughts or so reliable in carrying them out or, when on his own, in taking care of himself while he fitted all his movements to the grand purpose as did Jackson in the Valley Campaign of 1862.

**Wartime
Relationship
between Lee
and Jackson
by Dr. W.
Gleason Bean**

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After the decisive victory of the Seven Days fighting Lee found himself faced with a new threat, another Federal army under Gen. John Pope who was advancing from Washington toward the Virginia Central Railroad, Lee's vital communication with the Valley of Virginia, his bread basket.

To operate against Pope, Jackson was sent with a semi-independent command, while Lee kept his eye on McClellan at Harrison Landing on the James, where he was licking his wounds after his defeat around Richmond.

To Jackson, Lee gave the following instructions: "I must now leave the matter of Pope to your reflection and judgment. Make up your mind what is best to be done under all circumstances, and let me hear the results at which you arrive."

Tuned to each other with rare sympathy, they acted not as superior and subordinate, but as equals with a single purpose.

In Lee's subsequent offensive operations, he always selected Jackson for detached, hazardous assignments such as the daring flanking movements at both Second Manassas, August, 1862, and Chancellorsville, May, 1863, and at the capture of Harper's Ferry in the Maryland Campaign, September, 1862. In all these campaigns he relied upon Stonewall Jackson to work out any problems of strategy or tactics which might present themselves. To Jackson, Lee gave broad, discretionary orders, leaving it to his lieutenant to decide on how to do the job.

On several occasions, Jackson demonstrated his zealous devotion to his chieftain. During the winter of 1862-63, when the Army of Northern Virginia was encamped in the vicinity of Fredericksburg, Lee once sent word that he wanted to talk with Jackson at his convenience on a matter of no great urgency. Thereupon Jackson arising at daybreak and without breakfast rode through a blinding snow storm to Lee's headquarters, 15 miles away.

Lee expressed amazement, saying, "You know, General, I did not wish you to come in such a storm. It was a matter of no importance and I am sorry you had such a ride." Jackson blushed and simply said: "I received your note, General."

On another occasion when it was suggested that he might return to an independent command in the Valley, Jackson answered that instead he preferred a subordinate position near Gen. Lee—a manifestation of the highest proof of his loyalty to Lee.

Jackson's personal loyalty to Lee was intimately bound up with his confidence in Lee's military ability. Once when another officer had criticized Lee, Jackson instantly replied: "Lee is a phenomenon. He is the only man I would follow blindfold."

And what did Gen. Lee think of Jackson? In the Valley campaign of 1862, Lee showed complete confidence in Jackson's discretion. At a critical moment in this campaign Jackson submitted three operational plans to Lee for consideration. Lee replied: "I must leave

the one to be adopted to your judgment." At the end of this victorious campaign in which Jackson had tied down in the Valley Federal troops ear-marked for McClellan's Army which was threatening Richmond, Lee wrote to his trusted lieutenant: "Your recent successes have been the liveliest joy in this army as well as in the country. The admiration excited by your skill and boldness has been constantly mingled with solicitude for your situation."

Lee's deep affection for Jackson and his confidence in him cannot be questioned. Before and after the Army of Northern Virginia was organized into two corps under Gen. James Longstreet and Gen. Jackson, Lee always remained with Longstreet on the march, and left Jackson to operate independently, as if Longstreet were more in need of personal supervision than Jackson.

In recommending Jackson for the rank of lieutenant general in the fall of 1862, Lee wrote President Jefferson Davis: "He is true, honest and brave, has a single eye to the good of the service, and spares no exertion to accomplish his object."

Yet Lee did not hesitate to advise Jackson as freely as he would any other subordinate.

The wounding of Jackson, his subsequent death and the realization of his loss elicited from Gen. Lee's expressions of warmth so unusual as to be almost startling. Upon being informed by Capt. R. E. Wilbourn of Jackson's staff of the wounding of Gen. Jackson, Lee moaned and almost wept, saying, "Ah, captain, any victory is dearly bought which deprives us of the services of Gen. Jackson even for a short time."

On that beautiful Sunday morning of May 10, 1865, when he was informed that Jackson could probably not live through the day, Lee at first refused to believe it, saying: "Surely God will not take him from us now that we need him so much."

To the bearer of the news, Lee said with tears in his eyes and his voice shaking, "When you return, I trust you will find him better. When a suitable occasion offers, give him my love, and tell him that I wrestled in prayer for him last night, as I never prayed for myself."

Notifying Gen. Jeb Stuart of Jackson's death, Lee said, "The great and good Jackson is no more . . . He died calm, happy and serene. May his spirit pervade our whole army; our country will then be secure."

In his official report of the battle of Chancellorsville, Jackson's last battle, Lee spoke in a similar strain, paying tribute to "the matchless energy and skill that marked this last act of his life, forming as it did, a worthy conclusion of that long series of splendid achievements which won for him the lasting love and gratitude of his country."

It was only after the war that General Lee gave a glimpse of what he may have thought in 1863 of the ultimate consequence of

**Wartime
Relationship
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and Jackson
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Gleason Bean**

the removal of Jackson from the scene. In a conversation with one of his friends at Washington College, of which he was then president, he remarked, "If I had had Stonewall Jackson, as far as man can see, I should have won the battle of Gettysburg." ■

**Gov. John
Letcher and
Virginia's
Secession by
Paul R.
Cockshutt**

On October 29, 1962, the Society met at the Castle; Gen. Letcher presided. The evening's paper was read by Paul R. Cockshutt, a history major at W & L, on the subject of Gov. John Letcher's efforts to preserve the Union shortly before the Civil War. The paper received W & L's 1962 Society of the Cincinnati award. □

FROM TIME TO time throughout history there have been men in positions of grave responsibility who have been able to stand firm in the face of blind passion and steep emotion of crisis and provide leadership characterized by calm deliberation and clairvoyance. Such a man was John Letcher, forty-first Governor of Virginia and Chief Executive of the Old Dominion during the most difficult period of her history.

Letcher was elected Governor in 1859 after an unusually strenuous campaign in which he was continually maligned as a traitor to the Southern cause, mainly because of his alleged previous association with the so-called Ruffner pamphlet, which was an anti-slavery tract published in 1847, and because of his abhorrence for radical sectionalism.

A long-time Jacksonian Democrat from Rockbridge County, Letcher defeated his Whig opponent, secessionist W. L. Goggin of Bedford County by a majority of 5,579 votes. The victor's strongest support came mainly from the counties which today make up the state of West Virginia and from the valley counties north of Roanoke County. His showing was poorest in the Piedmont and Tidewater areas of the state. The balloting was characterized by the defection of free-soil Whigs to Letcher in the Northwest and of pro-slavery Democrats to Goggin in the East.

In an editorial on June 9, 1859, the Washington *National Era* hailed Letcher's election as a hopeful sign for a relaxation of "slavery fanaticism" and looked forward to an administration dedicated to "Reason, Justice, and Freedom." And indeed, throughout the entire nation pro-Unionists looked with hopeful eyes upon John Letcher as he assumed the duties of Governor of the most influential of the border states.

Letcher took office on January 1, 1860, and shortly thereafter delivered his first address to the Virginia General Assembly. The

situation in Virginia at that time was marked by severe tension and agitation. The troops called out to put down John Brown's raid at Harper's Ferry were still on active duty. Virginians were reacting strongly against abolitionist praise of Brown's actions. As a result, radicals in Virginia such as Letcher's predecessor, Henry Wise, and other secessionists were gaining ground on Virginia moderates.

But as Letcher addressed the Assembly for the first time as Governor, it became clear that he would not be swayed by radicals of either side. He began his speech with a synopsis of sectional harmony in "those earlier and better days of the Republic." He went on to place the blame for the current sectional crisis squarely upon the North, citing particularly Northern attacks on the institution of slavery, efforts to restrain it in the territories, and attempts at nullifying the Fugitive Slave Act.

Then, characteristically, he asked for an easing of tensions on all sides. "It becomes conservative patriots of the nation to unite and determine upon a line of policy that shall govern their future action." While he was a strong supporter of moderation, Letcher also believed in the necessity for concrete ideas to strengthen his moderation. And so he called for a convention of all the states, under the provisions of Article V of the United States Constitution, "to ascertain whether the question in controversy cannot be settled upon some basis mutually satisfactory to both sections." He called upon the Virginia legislature to initiate this action by passing a resolution supporting a National Convention and sending invitations to all the states.

He also asked that prominent Virginians should be sent to all states having Personal Liberty Laws "to insist, in the name of Virginia, upon their unconditional repeal" for the sake of the Union.

Letcher predicted the worst circumstances if Northern aggression continued and if a Republican were elected President of the United States in November. "The election of such a man, entertaining such sentiments and advocating such doctrines ought to be resisted by slaveholding states."

The Governor, however, concluded his address upon a note which left no doubt concerning the way he felt about the Union: *I am now and have ever been a friend of the Union of the States. I appreciate its value, ardently desire its preservation and would not rashly hazard its existence.*

After the raid on Harper's Ferry a large number of South Carolinians became convinced that Northern abolitionists had begun open warfare on slavery. Hence, resolutions were passed in the South Carolina legislature calling for the initiation of an entirely Southern convention for the purpose of strengthening the unity of the South for the defense of Southern rights.

Charles A. Memminger, a distinguished Charlestonian, was appointed to the important post of Commissioner to Virginia by

**Gov. John
Letcher and
Virginia's
Secession by
Paul R.
Cockshutt**

**Gov. John
Letcher and
Virginia's
Secession by
Paul R.
Cockshutt**

South Carolina's Governor William Gist.

The purpose of Memminger's mission was not to attempt to preserve the Union but to attempt to induce Virginia into a new Southern Confederacy. He sought at all costs to see to it that, in case of war, Virginia would not side with the Union.

But Governor Letcher had called for a convention of *all* the states in his address to the Virginia Assembly. Letcher had in mind the strengthening of the *Union* as the object of the convention he had proposed. Memminger therefore had his doubts that Virginia would be willing to take any radical steps at that time.

The South Carolinian was received courteously by Virginia officials and was invited to address the Legislature on January 19. Yet, beneath the public expressions of good will there was a feeling, which Memminger expressed in private correspondence, that he would not get far with the Virginia Assembly.

His fears were validated when Memminger's address to the Assembly, which called for a Southern conference to precede Letcher's National Convention, met with apathetic response from the Virginia legislators and the Virginia press. This apathy seemed to reflect an early vote of confidence for Letcher's conciliatory approach to the situation. On February 6, therefore, a discouraged, unsuccessful Charles Memminger returned to South Carolina saying, "My visit here has shown me that no cooperation in advance of secession can be had from Virginia."

Continuing his calculated efforts to preserve the peace, Letcher, on March 28, ordered all the Virginia troops, who had been involved in the Brown raid and were still stationed at Charlestown, to return to their homes. He spent the rest of the year trying to round up the participants of the Harper's Ferry raid who had escaped to Northern states. He met with little cooperation from the governors of those states, and this action made Letcher increasingly apprehensive about the good faith of the North. He also rejected all Northern pleas for clemency for those Brownites who had not already been hanged, because he felt, and correctly, that most Virginians believed that the conspirators ought to be hanged.

Virginia Democrats were at each other's throats during the Presidential election year of 1860, as they sought a candidate from the Old Dominion who could capture the Presidential nomination. Two opposing factions developed within the Democracy. One wing, conservative, was led by U. S. Senator R. M. T. Hunter. The other, radical and supporting secession, was headed by former Governor Henry Wise. Letcher had supported the Hunterite wing of the Party, partly because he felt an intense dislike for Wise's radicalism and partly because Hunter's conservative beliefs seemed in line with his own.

The Democratic National Convention met in Charleston, South Carolina, on April 23, but was disrupted shortly thereafter by a

walk-out of delegates from the deep South. The Northern and Border State delegates then reconvened in Baltimore, while the deep South group met in Richmond.

The Hunterites went to Baltimore hoping to be able to heal the rift in the Party, but planned to go with the South if concessions were not made on slave issues. The concessions were not made and most of the remaining Southerners, including four-fifths of the Virginia delegation with Hunter at their head, walked out and held their own "Seceders convention" in Baltimore. They followed the lead of the Richmond convention and nominated John Breckinridge. The Northern Democrats proceeded to nominate Stephen Douglas.

It was at this point that Letcher left the Hunterite wing of the Democracy and joined the sparse ranks of Douglas Democrats in Virginia. His move was prompted by two considerations. First, he felt that Douglas was the legal Democratic candidate. Secondly, he was disgusted by the extremism of men like Rhett, Yancey and Wise, as well as Hunter who had become more radical since Baltimore. He felt these men had permanently split the Party and were now seeking to employ the same tactics on the Union.

When the ballots were counted on election day, however, it was a third-party candidate who emerged victorious in Virginia. John Bell, candidate of the Constitutional Union Party, carried the state by a small plurality of 358 votes. Breckinridge placed second, and Douglas, despite Letcher's vocal support, finished a weak third. Abraham Lincoln polled only 1,929 votes in the whole state, most of these coming from the panhandle area around Wheeling.

These returns did not indicate a strong desire in Virginia for secession. Bell and Douglas, the first and third place contenders in the state were both strong Union men, and Breckinridge stood more for extreme Southern rights than for immediate secession. Letcher could interpret these returns as another indication of general support throughout the state for a policy of watchful waiting.

A short while before Lincoln was elected, Governor Letcher had promised the James River and Kanawha Canal Company that he would call the General Assembly into extra session on January 14, 1861, to consider an offer by a French company to purchase the canal. Then on November 7, directly following Lincoln's election, ninety-four members of the legislature petitioned the Governor to call the extra session for the first Monday in December, in light of the crisis caused by the election of Lincoln. Letcher compromised by setting January 7, 1861, as the date for the legislature to convene.

Letcher addressed the Assembly on its first day in session. His message was not unlike the one he had delivered the year before when he had become governor. However, by now the ranks of the secessionists had greatly increased, due mainly to the election of Lincoln, the secession of South Carolina, and the failure of the Congress in Washington to come to any agreement which might

**Gov. John
Letcher and
Virginia's
Secession by
Paul R.
Cockshutt**

**Gov. John
Letcher and
Virginia's
Secession by
Paul R.
Cockshutt**

settle the sectional crisis.

Letcher's address outlined the problems and dangers which challenged the nation as well as Virginia:

The condition of our country at this time excites the most serious fears for the perpetuation of the Union. . . . Surely no people have been blessed as we have been, and it is melancholy to think that all is now sacrificed [on] the Altar of Passion. If the judgment of men were consulted, if the admonitions of their consciences were respected, the Union would yet be saved from overthrow.

He went on to condemn South Carolina for her secession, saying that a situation "involving consequences so serious to all the slaveholding states, no one state should have ventured to move without first having given timely notice to the others of her purpose." Letcher also attacked the governors of South Carolina and Mississippi for proposing a tax on slaves brought to those two states from the border states as a means of "blackmailing" them into secession. To Letcher, this was as much "coercion" on their parts, as was the Federal Government's action toward South Carolina and Mississippi.

Letcher also expressed his opposition to a plan to call a State Convention for the purpose of weighing the issues of the crisis at hand. He felt that the General Assembly was capable of handling the situation as it had before. But he did favor the adoption of a resolution by the General Assembly, which again called for the sending of commissioners appointed by the Assembly to the Northern states which still had Personal Liberty Laws, and respectfully urge that they be repealed.

And, as in his first address to the legislature, he called for a convention of all the states under Article V of the U. S. Constitution. He requested that Virginia begin this action by passing a resolution advocating this National Convention and then sending the resolution on to the other states for their consideration.

He concluded the address by laying down a six-point plan which he believed would remedy the tense situation:

1. Abolishment of all Personal Liberty Laws
2. The protection of slavery in the District of Columbia
3. Free entry of slavery into the territories
4. No interference with inter-state transportation of slaves
5. Punishment for those who incite slave uprisings
6. No appointment of local officers in slave states by the Federal Government.

He restated his belief in a state's right to secede, and warned that in the event of armed conflict, he would not permit Federal troops to pass through Virginia to get to the seceded states. There was nothing basically new about the address. Similar proposals had been made a year ago. But the speech did illustrate how strongly Letcher was attached to the Union and how great his interest was in preserving it.

Most Virginians felt that Letcher had spoken too moderately. A member of the Assembly expressed his disapproval, declaring that the "time and people are ripe for secession." So displeased was the Assembly that they hesitated in printing up 1,500 copies of the speech, arguing that the Governor had not expressed their views.

In both houses of the legislature resolutions were introduced condemning "coercion" of any kind and suggesting the immediate reform of the militia. Shortly afterward the legislature expressed its loyalty to the South and its cognizance of its essentially Southern status by passing a resolution which agreed that if efforts to resolve the "unhappy differences existing between the two sections of the country shall prove to be abortive," then Virginia should cast her lot with the slave states of the South.

And yet, there was still strong Union sentiment in the Assembly. Thus the Governor's proposal for a National Convention was carefully considered. A resolution was finally passed inviting every state in the Union "willing to unite with Virginia in an earnest effort to adjust the unhappy controversies . . . to meet on the fourth day of February next, in the City of Washington." At the same time another resolution was passed which provided for the immediate appointment of former President John Tyler, Judge John W. Brockenbrough, George W. Summers, William C. Rives, and James Seddon as delegates from Virginia to the Conference, which came to be known as the Washington Peace Conference of 1861.

Twenty-one states responded to Virginia's call and the delegates gathered in Washington's Willard's Hall on February 4. More than likely, this "Old Gentleman's Convention" was the last hope of saving the Union. But, the conference failed, mainly because of a lack of distinguished personnel and because the time for compromise seemed to have passed. States from the lower South did not even attend. Hence this attempt to preserve the Union and the peace, which Letcher had inspired, could do little if anything to halt the steady drift toward open conflict.

In his speech to the extra session of the Assembly on January 17 Letcher had expressed his opposition to a special State Convention on the grounds that the calling of such a convention, at that time, would be an unnecessary, inflammatory action. The Assembly ignored the Governor's opposition and went on to pass a resolution asking that Letcher call a State Convention. On January 15 he regretfully issued a proclamation calling for the Convention.

Letcher wished Virginia to be ready for any occurrence and so, although he would not drift toward secession with the radicals in his state, he did take steps to strengthen the Virginia military by purchasing more and trying to secure for the Virginia forces the services of prominent officers then in the United States Army; but most were reluctant. From New York, Major George Thomas replied to a letter sent to him at Letcher's request by Major Gilham of VMI,

**Gov. John
Letcher and
Virginia's
Secession by
Paul R.
Cockshutt**

**Gov. John
Letcher and
Virginia's
Secession by
Paul R.
Cockshutt**

declining to resign his commission in the U. S. Army to become Chief of Ordinance of the State:

It is not my wish to leave the service of the United States as long as it is honorable for me to remain in it, and therefore as long as my native state Virginia remains in the Union it is my purpose to remain in the army unless required to perform duties repulsive to honor and humanity.

Meanwhile an election for delegates to the State Convention had been held on February 4 and the returns showed that the majority of delegates elected were opposed to Virginia's secession at that time. The voters also decided that the proposals of the Convention should be submitted to them for final ratification.

The Convention assembled on February 13 with Unionists and moderates in control. But it was not long before that control was lost. The failure of the Washington Peace Conference, Lincoln's strong inaugural address, and the realization that Lincoln was not going to give up Fort Sumter, all severely damaged the moderates' cause. Throughout the state popular sentiment was also beginning to turn to secession. For about a month and a half the proponents of secession and union struggled, debating Virginia's future at the Convention. On April 4, a secession resolution was defeated by a vote of 88-45. But this was only a temporary set-back for the secessionists.

Then on April 12, Fort Sumter was attacked. On April 15 President Lincoln called upon Virginia to supply 75,000 troops to help crush the rebellion. Letcher replied to Lincoln on the 16th:

In reply to this communication I have only to say that the militia of Virginia will not be furnished to the powers at Washington for any such use or purpose as they have in view. Your object is to subjugate the Southern States, and a requisition made upon me for such an object—an object, in my judgment, not within the purview of the Constitution or the Act of 1795—will not be complied with. You have chosen to inaugurate civil war, and having done so, we will meet it in a spirit as determined as the Administration has exhibited toward the South.

Then on April 17, the Virginia Convention, feeling that Lincoln's action was coercive and that it was opposed by the vast majority of Virginians, passed a secession resolution 88 to 55. The opposition to the resolution came mainly from the delegates from the pro-Union Northwest.

Letcher responded quickly to the Convention's action with a proclamation in which he declared that Lincoln's call for troops was unconstitutional and presented a threat to Virginia's safety. He then summoned all volunteer regiments or companies in Virginia to stand ready for a call to active duty.

The spirit in which the actions of Letcher and the Convention were received is reflected in the Richmond Examiner of April 17:

The great event of all our lives has come to pass. A war of gigantic proportions, infinite consequences and indefinite duration is on us and will affect the interests and happiness of every man, woman or child, lofty or humble, in this country called Virginia. We cannot shun it, we cannot alleviate it, we cannot stop it.

In another contemporary account of what happened in Richmond on April 17, the proceedings of a celebration at Metropolitan Hall are described:

(Former) Governor Wise . . . Hon. J. M. Mason, and many other of Virginia's distinguished sons were called upon and delivered patriotic speeches, and finally Gov. Letcher appeared on the stage. He was loudly cheered by the very men who, two days before, would gladly have witnessed his execution. The Governor spoke briefly, merely declaring his concurrence in the important step that had been taken, and his honest purpose, under the circumstances, to discharge his whole duty as Executive of the State, in conformity to the will of the people and the provisions of the Constitution.

During his first year and a half as Governor, John Letcher had been strenuous in his efforts on behalf of peace and Union. He had shared fully in the agony of his country and of his State. Radicals of the North and South as well succeeded only in earning his contempt as they sought to discourage him from the courageous course he sought to follow. Consequently he was violently attacked by both sides as a traitor to both causes. But when Virginia officially seceded on April 17, Letcher followed his State as he had always said that he would.

And so April 17 was for John Letcher an end and a beginning: The end of a long and lonely struggle for peace and moderation; the beginning of long months of forthright leadership as Civil War Governor of the State of Virginia. ■

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**Letters
(1790-1800)
of John
Johnston,
Rockbridge
Medical
Student and
Doctor by
Dr. Charles
W. Turner**

The Society met January 28, 1963, at the Trinity Methodist Church with Gen. Letcher presiding. The evening's paper was read by Dr. Charles W. Turner, Professor of History at W & L and Librarian and past President of the Society. Dr. Turner is the author of *Chessie's Road*, a comprehensive study of the Chesapeake and Ohio Railway, published in 1956, and *Mississippi West*, a topical treatment of the American West, published in 1965. He has also written a number of articles in historical journals.

Dr. Turner published a paper entitled "Letters (1790-1800) of John Johnston, Rockbridge Medical Student and Doctor" in the April, 1959, *Journal of the History of Medicine*. In his talk to the Society on the same subject, he quoted part or all of ten letters from the collection of letters found in the "Stone House," the Johnston family home just outside of Lexington. A portion of his talk is included here. □

DR. JOHN JOHNSTON WAS born November 15, 1764, in Fishersville, Augusta County, Virginia, of Scotch-Irish parentage. His father, Zachariah, a leading citizen of his section, had attended Liberty Hall Academy and served in the House of Delegates in Richmond where he had supported the Jeffersonian principles, sponsored the Bill for Religious Freedom, and favored ratification of the Constitution of the United States. The elder Johnston acquired a large amount of land in a number of western Virginia counties and in Kentucky, and about 1793 the family moved to Lexington where he built "Stone House." This house stands today, with descendants of the Johnston family still residing there¹ In this place were found about twenty letters of John, written to his father, describing his student days in the Medical Department of the College of Philadelphia, founded in 1765, and letters describing his first practice and life in Staunton, Virginia.²

John attended the "old field schools" of that day and joined the Presbyterian church. Early in 1790, he decided to prepare himself for a medical career in the Medical School in Philadelphia or some place in Europe. Funds were insufficient for the latter, so he bade his family farewell and set out on a horse given him by his father, arriving in Philadelphia early in the Spring of that year.

The first letter speaks of his settling in Philadelphia. He tells about his having been confined for a while to his "gloomy room" with smallpox and then celebrating the 4th of July in Philadelphia in 1790. "The bells over the whole city rang." He mentions having had "an opportunity of seeing every kind of operation that can be

performed on the human body, also the treatment of every kind of disease that is incident to the human system." He was elected "a member of the Philosophical & Literature Societies", a student organization.

In 1791, John wrote he was having financial difficulties but appeared to be progressing well in his studies. His letter on July 7 stated: "I am very closely confined to the business. I have never been out of this city since I arrived here, and [I am] seldom ever in bed to eleven or twelve o'clock at night, beside attending to Doctor Say's extensive private practice I attend all the public receptacles for the poor viz. the Hospital, Bettering House & Dispensary* . . . I live in a Quaker family at present. The[y] treat me with every mark of friendship. I have the happiness to be high in the estimation of the professors of the University."

Spelling not changed
in letters quoted.

In another letter to his father dated September 14, 1791, he spoke of his progress: "Since I wrote you last, I have been appointed as an Assistant in the General Dispensary of Philadelphia, where I receive a compensation of £25 or 30 per annum, and if I continue any longer than I graduate I am intitled to one hundred & sixty pounds per annum which I believe will not be an object sufficient to detain me longer than I graduate which I expect will be in Feby."

John became an established and prominent doctor in Staunton about 1796. He lived 17 years longer, practiced medicine, and accumulated cattle and property which later letters of his brother's record. He died on April 4, 1815, and was buried in the Johnston Cemetery at Salem where his tombstone may be seen. ■

¹At the time this paper was originally published (1959) the Misses Susan and Anne Johnstone lived at "Stone House." At the time of this publication the owner is another direct descendent of Zachariah Johnston's, Mr. M. W. Paxton, Jr.

FOOTNOTES

²Material taken from *Rockbridge County News*, August 16, 1934; John G. Paxton "Zachariah Johnston," *Tyler's Genealogical Quarterly*, V. 185, Joseph A. Waddell, *Annals of Augusta County*, Staunton, Virginia, 1902, P. 340.

³Bettering House was the public almshouse. The Dispensary, established 1786, provided medical care to the city's poor. □

On April 26, 1963, the Society met at the Castle; Gen. Letcher presided. The evening's paper was given by Maj. Stanley W. Campbell, assistant professor of history at VMI.

Maj. Campbell has done extensive research in the problems of fugitive slaves and his paper represents a considerable amount of original work in this field of study. □

**Runaway
Slaves in
Virginia,
1800-1830 by
Maj. Stanley
W. Campbell**

THE PROBLEM OF the fugitive slave was an important factor in the evolution of the institution of slavery in the United States,

**Runaway
Slaves in
Virginia,
1800-1830 by
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W. Campbell**

and it affected the slaveholder in several ways. First, the owner lost property when a slave ran away, for a slave was worth between \$250 and \$500 in the first three decades of the nineteenth century. Second, the operation of the plantation was affected because successful management demanded a fixed and stable labor force. Care of the slaves was of first importance for profitable operation in the plantation system. Runaways had an adverse affect on the other slaves, and it was costly to have the slave returned. Finally, if the runaway managed to get to a free state, the slave owner stood a good chance of failing to recover his property because of opposition to the institution of slavery in many northern states. Opposition was manifested by the passage of personal liberty laws, and other ordinances, which made it difficult to apprehend and return fugitive slaves from those states where such laws had been enacted. Therefore, slave owners were vitally interested in reducing the number of runaway slaves to an absolute minimum.

This papers deals with the fugitive slave problem in Virginia during the thirty years preceding the Nat Turner revolt. The principal source for this study was the fugitive slave advertisements in the Richmond *Enquirer*.¹ These advertisements contain a great deal of information and have the strong asset of being reasonably objective. The slave owner was usually dispassionate in describing his runaway property.

The advertisements for runaway slaves have certain weaknesses, however, which must be kept in mind. First, they reveal the point of view of the master rather than the slave. This is unfortunate, but little can be done to give balance to the picture. Few Negroes have written about their lives as runaways, and still fewer of these accounts are extant. Second, the total number of runaways cannot be determined from this source because an unknown number of slaves who absented themselves from their owners were never advertised in the newspapers.

From a statistical point of view, the problem of runaway slaves in Virginia before 1830 has no great significance. The total slave population in Virginia in 1800 was 345,796; by 1830 it had increased to 469,757. During the period 1804 to 1828, only 1,253 slaves were advertised by the Richmond *Enquirer* as runaways. Of this number, by far the greater majority were men. In fact, 84.1 per cent of the total runaways reported were males. Seventy-two out of ninety-seven counties were represented in the advertisements of fugitive slaves. As might be expected, the greater Richmond area reported the highest number of runaways. Perhaps the explanation for this is that the *Enquirer* was in Richmond. The average number of runaways per year was about sixty. This does not have much meaning, however, because the number of fugitives from labor per year reached a peak following the War of 1817, and then declined steadily until 1830. There is little to account for this phenomenon

in the sources that were consulted.

One of the more interesting aspects of the runaway slave problem was the lackadaisical attitude of the slaveholders toward their fugitive slaves. Usually there was a considerable time lapse between the time the slaves ran away and the date they were advertised as fugitives. In January, 1811, for example, Archer Hankins reported that his slave George had run away the previous July. And in April, 1811, John S. Payne of Campbell County reported that three of his slaves had absconded in January. This seems to have been a general practice, and indicates that the slaveholders were in no particular hurry to retrieve their lost property.

The owners of fugitive slaves usually described their runaways with great care. If the fugitive had any distinguishing marks, they were noted in the advertisements. Robert Lewis of Albermarle County described his runaway in the following manner:

EIGHTY DOLLARS REWARD—Ran away from the Subscriber on the 4th of April, in the city of Richmond, a mulatto fellow, about 30 years of age, 5 feet 6 or 8 inches high; is remarkable on account of having red curly hair & grey eyes which generally appear to be sore; one of his legs somewhat shorter than the other, though scarcely to be perceived without nice observation; when standing, is very apt to stand fast on his right leg, and rather extend the left. In pronouncing the word whiskey, which he is very fond of, and apt to call for at a public house, he pronounces it whisty. . . . He is a very humble, obedient fellow, and when spoken to, has a down look. It is not improbable that he may obtain free papers, to endeavor to pass as a free man, having absconded from his boat in the basin at Richmond, with about \$120 in cash.²

Scars of various sorts were more important identifying marks and slave owners were usually careful to note all the scars on the bodies of their slaves. Many of the scars were the result of a whip. Samuel McCrary of Rockbridge County, when describing his runaway slave stated that “. . . on examining his back, it will be found very much scarred on account of whipping.”³ Betsey was described as “a Negro . . . woman . . . [with] no scars recollected except one on the back of her neck, which appears to have been made by the lash of a whip. . . .”⁴ Sometimes the scars were caused by branding irons. Perhaps the most branded Negro in Virginia was the slave of Thomas Coleman of Lunenburg County. He was branded on each cheek with the letter “C”, and with the same letter in the middle of his forehead. He had also been branded in three places on his chest.⁵

Despite the anti-Negro sentiment so prevalent in Virginia, the white people who had to deal with runaways were not completely without feeling, particularly in caring for the younger Negroes who had managed to escape. A thirteen-year-old Negro boy was arrested in Buckingham County. When questioned, the boy said that he

**Runaway
Slaves in
Virginia,
1800-1830 by
Maj. Stanley
W. Campbell**

**Runaway
Slaves in
Virginia,
1800-1830 by
Maj. Stanley
W. Campbell**

had been kidnapped when "very young," and thought he had been sold about ten times. Tanner's materials had been used in an attempt to make him yellow, presumably because lighter colored Negroes were preferred for house servants and would therefore bring a higher price. The notice appeared in the newspaper in an attempt to acquaint the boy's parents or friends with the case which was pending before the court of Buckingham County. Another example was the concern shown by Samuel Carter of Halifax County who had picked up a young Negro boy who had been lost from a slave-trading expedition. He would have been placed in jail, said Carter, but the boy was ill when caught and too young to put in jail.

Although the runaway slave problem was always a thorn in the planter's side, little concern was generally exhibited for the return of fugitive slaves. There were several instances in which the owner knew where his slave was hiding, but rather than go after the slave himself he would offer a reward for the return of his slave, or for having him placed in jail. The amount of rewards offered seems rather small when compared to the value of the slaves. The rewards offered during this period ranged between \$3.00 and \$300.00. The latter figure was exceedingly rare. The law required that a specified amount be paid depending upon where the runaway was apprehended. If a fugitive slave were caught in Maryland or Kentucky, the reward was to be \$25.00 plus \$.25 per mile for traveling expenses. In Delaware, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, or Ohio, the reward was \$50.00 plus traveling expenses. The average reward offered was about \$25.00, although a higher reward was offered for the more valuable slaves.⁶

Since relatively few slaves ran away, one might ask if there were anything that distinguished the runaway from his more docile brother who stayed at home. Little is known about the characteristics of slaves generally, and it is difficult to make a meaningful comparison. But certain characteristics of fugitive slaves might be pointed out.

The average age of the runaway slave was about twenty-seven years, but their ages ranged from ten to sixty. To run away and remain at large for an extended period of time required considerable agility, ingenuity, and bravery. The fugitive slave had to be extremely careful in moving about because any white citizen had the right to stop any Negro and demand to see his free pass.⁷ Many times the runaway was forced to "lay up" during the day and move about at night. Unless aid was forthcoming from friends, the fugitive had to rely entirely on his own wits to obtain food and shelter. This helps explain why few slave women attempted to escape. Because of the danger and the rigor of such an existence, slave women were reluctant to run away.

Fugitive slave advertisements seem to indicate that mistreatment was not the most important reason for running away. There was a great surplus of slaves in Virginia. Many slave owners were

forced either to sell their excess slaves or hire them out to whomever they could. One of the results of this practice was that the slave was removed from the isolation of the plantation, and was thus provided with a greater opportunity to meet more people and make more friends. Some slaves were hired as boatmen, others as laborers in the coal pits, brick yards, and rope walks. The slaves with special skills worked as hostlers, carriage drivers, and house servants. Many slaves were highly skilled craftsmen: blacksmiths, coopers, shoemakers, barbers, brick masons, and carpenters. These slaves seemed to have more than average intelligence, or at least more general knowledge and experience, and their employment offered greater opportunity for escape.

A significantly high percentage of runaway slaves had a wide association with white men. Evidence for this is that (1) several runaways had been hired out to various commercial and industrial enterprises; (2) many were house servants, seamstresses, carriage drivers, body servants, waiters, etc., which provided greater contact with white society; and (3) a majority of the fugitives reported lived in counties having large towns and cities. Cities and towns offered ample opportunity for the slave to observe and compare his own way of life with that of his master, and find his own wanting.

Perhaps the most difficult question to answer is: what motivated the slaves to run away? There seems to have been no single cause; indeed, there may have been as many causes as there were fugitives. Any explanation that might be proposed must be arrived at by inference. But some generalizations can be made.

The assumption that runaway slaves were motivated by some abstract sense of freedom is not born out by the evidence. It would be difficult to prove that slaves in this period even conceived of freedom in the abstract sense. If they had, it seems logical that large numbers of fugitives from service or labor would have attempted to get across the free states and into Canada, where they would have been free; but such was not the case. Only 9 per cent of the runaways reported were thought to have been headed north toward freedom. The remainder stayed within the slave states where they could be picked up at any time without due process of law. The point is not that the Negro slave was incapable of conceptualizing the Bill of Rights. The point is that slavery did not, as certain apologists have maintained, prepare the slave for freedom. Quite the contrary, the institution of slavery was designed to perpetuate itself.

The most prevalent motives for running away were the breaking up of families, and the fear of being sold down the river. Alexander A. Campbell, for example, reported that his slave Stephen would flee to Madison County, Mississippi, because his wife had been sold the previous fall to a gentleman residing there. Gabriel fled from his owner in Buckingham County because his wife lived in Louisa County. And William Cook of Richmond reported that his slave

**Runaway
Slaves in
Virginia,
1800-1830 by
Maj. Stanley
W. Campbell**

James had "absconded under the impression that he had been sold."

The destination of fugitive slaves was closely related to their motive for escaping. It has been suggested that many slaves escaped in order to re-establish broken homes and family ties. Virginia was one of the principal sources for the domestic slave trade. This trade by its very nature caused many families to be broken up. Planters were continually buying, trading and selling their slaves. A few slaves were sold or traded as many as four or five times, and at least one slave was sold seven times.⁸

Some of the slaves attempted to secure free papers and just drift, or find employment and try to escape detection. Evidently free papers were fairly easily procured even though they had to be forged. Few slaves could write, but a free Negro could usually be found who would forge a free pass. Free papers could be checked against the court records in the slave's home county, but if he were caught and returned to his master, another opportunity to escape usually presented itself.⁹ Generally, if the runaway could reach the larger towns, his chances of being detected were considerably reduced. Jobs were more readily available in the towns, and the townspeople were less suspicious of a strange black face. It was also easier to hide in a town, and less dangerous for the slave. But anyone who harbored a runaway was taking quite a risk. The penalty for free persons was a fine of \$10, and a free Negro who was unable to pay the fine was subject to corporal punishment not to exceed thirty-nine lashes.¹⁰

The misery of many slaves did not begin until after they had escaped. They had continually to be on the lookout for slave patrols or someone who might recognize them. No Negro, bond or free, was safe from arrest and being returned to his master, if he had one, or sold to pay the jail fees. Jailers were required by law to provide adequate clothing and other basic necessities when needed, but some of the jailers were negligent and their prisoners suffered terribly, particularly in winter.¹¹ One such instance of neglect occurred in King William County. The slave brought charges against the sheriff and the latter was fined \$400.¹²

Fugitive slaves who had been committed to jail were not permitted to lie around and run up the bill for their board and room. The law permitted the sheriff to hire them for a period of three months and, if they were not claimed, for another three months, until a year had elapsed. The prisoner must then be sold to pay the jail fees.¹³ In the meantime, the jailer was required to locate the runaway's owner, if he had one, and this was facilitated if the fugitive would reveal the name of his master. Many Negroes chose not to cooperate and claimed that they had either been born free or had been emancipated by a benevolent master. For example, Lucinda Patterson told a rather complicated story which was related by her jailer in Henrico County. She said she had been born free and was

reared in Middlesex County by John Symes who had moved to Mississippi and had taken her with him. In 1819, she had escaped with the aid of a white man who had taken her to New Orleans and then to Richmond. This was all very interesting, but her husband was made of less sterner stuff than she, and told a different story. As it turned out, they had escaped from a plantation near Raleigh, North Carolina, the previous Christmas.

The fate of at least twelve runaways, who managed to escape to Wilmington, Delaware, is worth noting. Two Negro couples operated what proved in the end to be a very unprofitable business there. While their husbands were in Maryland and Virginia decoying runaway slaves into the state of Delaware, the wives were enticing into their web certain runaways who were promptly sold. The two women were finally arrested, and at their trial it was revealed that they had sold more than a dozen fugitive slaves back into slavery. These two benevolent ladies were imprisoned and later sold into slavery as punishment.

Although the slave population in Virginia in 1830 exceeded 469,000, relatively few slaves ran away, and fewer still managed to escape. The most probable explanation for this was the effectiveness of the laws regulating the colored population. The laws relating to the fugitive slave problem are interesting because they were operative upon those who might give aid to the runaway rather than on the runaway himself. This practice took advantage of an existing situation and exploited it. The large Negro population, which in some counties outnumbered the white, created a desire on the part of the whites actively to control the servile Negroes with an extremely rigid slave code. The slave code of Virginia fails to reveal any benevolence toward the colored population. Many white men were indeed benevolent and paternalistic toward the Negro, but it was a benevolence and paternalism predicated upon a fixed caste system which seemed to disappear when the Negro aspired toward higher things. A climate of opinion existed, therefore, which made for good law enforcement with regard to the slaves.

An analysis of the slave code reveals the futility of harsh legislation against the slave to prevent his running away. Severe punishment of the slaves, it was found, tended to cost more than the planter wanted to pay. Thus, the laws which were passed made it extremely difficult for the runaway to secure aid. And without help it was next to impossible to escape, and remain at large for any extended period of time.

The fugitive slave problem was a constant irritant to the planter and other slaveholders. Captured fugitive slaves had a decreased value and often made the other slaves difficult to manage. But irritating as the problem was, slave owners were at a loss for a satisfactory remedy. It was not considered good business practice to unload an habitual runaway on a fellow planter. An exception, however, was

**Runaway
Slaves in
Virginia,
1800-1830 by
Maj. Stanley
W. Campbell**

that in almost every instance of record those slaves returned from the free states were sold into the Deep South. The cost of returning a fugitive slave was so great that the slaveholder was forced to sell in order to get his money back. Actually, no satisfactory solution was ever found and, after 1830, there was a marked increase in the number of fugitive slaves.

In conclusion, it appears that fugitive slaves generally had higher than average intelligence and usually had a closer association with white society than the field hand. This association was usually acquired by vocation or employment. Many runaways had learned a trade and were more independent. Because of their greater ability, closer association with white men, and their employment, they had greater opportunity to run away made greater by a desire to emulate the white man. There is little evidence to support the view that the average runaway was motivated by a desire for freedom in an abstract sense. Frequently he wanted merely to get back to his family, friends, or the place where he was reared. Often times the runaway was able to secure free papers and pass as a free Negro, but his chances of being caught were high, and if it could be determined who furnished aid to the fugitive, the punishment was severe. That so few slaves actually ran away is probably a tribute to the effectiveness of the laws designed to curtail the fugitive slave problem. This, coupled with the abysmal ignorance of the slave population generally, probably accounts for the fact that there were so few fugitive slaves. ■

FOOTNOTES

¹The *Richmond Enquirer* was examined for the period September, 1804, through June, 1828.

²*Richmond Enquirer*, June 24, 1817.

³*Ibid.*, September 5, 1817.

⁴*Ibid.*, October 7, 1817.

⁵*Ibid.*, July 1, 1823.

⁶Benjamin W. Leigh, *The Revised Code of the Laws of Virginia, etc.*, 2 volumes (Richmond: Thomas Ritchie, 1819), II, 284-288; see also Samuel Shepherd, *The Statutes at Large of Virginia from October Session, 1792 to December Session, 1806, etc.*, 3 volumes (Richmond, 1835-1836), III, 373.

⁷William W. Hening, *The Statutes at Large; Being a Collection of All the Laws of Virginia from the First Session of the Legislature in the Year 1619, etc.*, 13 volumes (Richmond, 1819-1823), XII, 192; see also Shepherd, *Statutes at Large*, III, 372; *Revised Code* (1819), II, 284.

⁸*Richmond Enquirer*, November 8, 1815.

⁹Shepherd, *Statutes at Large*, I, 238; II, 417; see also *Revised Code* (1819), I, 421-444.

¹⁰Shepherd, *Statutes at Large*, II, 77.

¹¹*Ibid.*, III, 372; see also *Session Laws* (1823), p. 34.

¹²Helen Turncliff Catterall, ed., *Judicial Cases Concerning American Slavery and the Negro*, 5 volumes (Washington: Carnegie Institution of Washington, 1926-1927), I, 145.

¹³Shepherd, *Statutes at Large*, III, 372-373; *Session Laws* (1823), p. 34. □

The Society met for its summer dinner meeting on July 22, 1963, at Mountain View School in the South River district of the County. The speaker, the Rev. Mr. John S. Moore, minister of Lexington's Manly Memorial Baptist Church, delivered a paper on the life of Col. John Jordan. After the program, the group visited nearby Neriah Church, the first Baptist church in the area and one of the many County buildings constructed by John Jordan. Mr. Moore first read a paper on Jordan before the Virginia Baptist Historical Society, April 23, 1963, which was later printed in the Virginia Baptist Register, No. 2 (1963). Mr. Moore has also written a short history of the Baptist Church in Rockbridge County in No. 4 (1965) of the Register. His talk before the Society has been slightly condensed. □

COL. JOHN JORDAN should be remembered for his contribution as a church leader and for his unusual qualities as a builder and civic leader in Rockbridge County for over fifty years. Jordan was no ordinary man; he tried many things and did them all well. He became somewhat of a legend in the Valley and left many things by which he will be remembered.

When young Jordan and his new wife came to Rockbridge County in 1802, there was scarcely a Baptist in the entire region. Baptists even to this day are a minority group in the Valley. This fact has led to the observation that sweet potatoes and Baptists don't thrive in the Valley of Virginia. There is a definite reason for this in the history of the area.

The Blue Ridge Mountains formed an early barrier to the settlement of the Valley from the east. Indians, provoked by the invasion of their best hunting ground, fought the white man with a strange ferocity. When the authorities of Colonial Virginia sent word into Pennsylvania that claims were open to those who would settle the Shenandoah Valley, the Scotch-Irish and Germans came in large numbers. The Germans located mainly around Harrisonburg, while the Scotch-Irish settled principally about Staunton and Lexington. The Scotch-Irish were self-reliant and fearless, carving out a place for themselves in defiance of the Indians. Being staunch Presbyterians almost to a man, they founded their churches all down the Valley in the eighteenth century. Soon the Presbyterians were thicker per square mile than in any other part of the colony. A center of their strength was in Rockbridge County. The John Jordans found that the people around Lexington had little contact with Tidewater Virginia. For all practical purposes this was a different world from the one they had left.

**John Jordan,
Baptist
Layman by
Rev. Mr. John
S. Moore**

**John Jordan,
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S. Moore**

The Baptists did not find it easy to establish a beachhead among these hardy Scotch Presbyterians who had Rockbridge County almost to themselves. The first Baptist work in the county was done by Elder Nathaniel Shrewsbury of Bedford County who established Buffalo Baptist Church on South Buffalo Creek near Rapp's Mill among a few Baptist families who had migrated from Botetourt County. The first mention of the Buffalo Church is in the minutes of the Strawberry Baptist Association for its meeting on the first Saturday in October, 1798. This church continued for a number of years with a checkered and obscure existence. The congregation was unable to win men with sufficient leadership and stability to form a lasting church. Their meeting house seems to have been of a very primitive type. They apparently dissolved at times and then re-emerged for brief periods only to sink into oblivion before 1840.

In 1816 Neriah Baptist Church was constituted near McClure's Iron Works about five miles northeast of Lexington. It was established through the efforts of Elder William Duncan of Amherst County and a handful of Baptists who had moved from the east of the Blue Ridge. In fact, William Duncan had served as pastor of a number of these people in Amherst County before they moved into Rockbridge. This body was wiser than the Buffalo Church membership, and realized that as a minority group, they must construct a church building that would be a credit to the denomination. They also knew that they needed at least one family with commanding influence and prestige. They found their champions in Colonel John Jordan and his wife, Lucy.

John Jordan was born in Goochland County, Virginia, on July 2, 1777. His father, Samuel Jordan, is said to have been an ironmaker who helped make cannon balls for the Continental Army in the Revolutionary War. The Jordans were direct descendants of an earlier Samuel Jordan of "Jordan's Journey," who was a member of the Colonial Assembly in 1619. John Jordan's father seems to have been a member of the Established Church. His grandfather, Charles Jordan, was a vestryman of St. James, Northam Parish, Goochland County, and a close neighbor of the rector, William Douglas, who wrote the *Douglas Register*. The mother of John Jordan was Frances Puryear or Perriere, daughter of Hezekiah Puryear of Goochland County, of French Huguenot descent. There must have been some Baptist influence among the Puryears since two of Hezekiah Puryear's children, Milly Winn Puryear and Hezekiah Puryear, Jr., were married by William Webber, an early Baptist minister. When John Jordan was a small boy, his father died, leaving a widow and four children. His mother then married Benjamin Woodson, and they lived in Fluvanna County. It is said that there were strained relations between John Jordan and his step-father. So Jordan left home as soon as he could and developed the self-reliance and industry which characterized his mature life.

On March 4, 1802, John Jordan married Lucy Winn who was born June 2, 1782, the daughter of John Winn, Jr. and Mary Bowles Winn, of Hanover County, Virginia, and probably his cousin. John Jordan presented an imposing appearance, standing six feet, three inches tall, with black eyes, black curly hair, and the broad shoulders of a fine athletic figure. Lucy Winn Jordan attained unusual height for a woman, being six feet tall, and had a reputation as a beautiful blonde. It has been stated that the Jordans were one of the handsomest couples ever seen on the streets of Lexington. They are said to have had twelve sons and two daughters, nearly all of whom grew to maturity.

When John Jordan came to Lexington, it was an undeveloped country village with practically no industry. Apparently he had already served his apprenticeship as a bricklayer and plasterer. On his arrival he began work on some of the fine Lexington homes. His two brothers, Samuel and Hezekiah, came to Lexington in 1803 and assisted him in his work for a time. Apparently Jordan had connections with people of means and influence for he soon became an important contractor and built some of the large buildings of that period in and around Lexington. His projects included Washington Hall, the first building at Washington College; the Lexington Arsenal; the first Barracks at Virginia Military Institute and the Ann Smith Academy. Some of the homes which he built are Little Stono, the Reid White House, the Episcopal Rectory and the old VMI Hospital which was first used as a residence by his son, Samuel Francis Jordan. His own home at Jordan's Point, which he completed in 1819, embodies the Greek Revival influence in architecture which he introduced to Rockbridge County. So far as it is known, Jordan had no training in architecture, but he mastered the subject in an impressive manner. His buildings bear the distinctive stamp of a man of great originality. Samuel Darst helped with the brickwork and masonry on many of Jordan's buildings, but his contribution is almost forgotten in the light of John Jordan's greater fame. Henry Boley said of Jordan, "As a contractor he built everything of importance that was built in Lexington for more than fifty years."

Jordan also had a part in the construction of the University of Virginia. Just what part he took in this enterprise is not known, but in a letter from Archibald Stuart to Thomas Jefferson dated March 9, 1819, Jordan is accused of conspiring to monopolize the brickwork contracts for the University.² Jordan may also have had dealings with Thomas Jefferson in his perennial improvements at Monticello. This is indicated in a letter which President Jefferson wrote to his overseer from the White House on February 7, 1806. It reads in part: "I conclude to let Brown go to Mr. Jordan as agreed between him and myself. I enclose you a letter which you may send to Lexington by Brown himself, for I suppose he may be relied on to go to him, and that is the place to which he desired me to address

**John Jordan,
Baptist
Layman by
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him." And to the letter Jefferson attached a P.S. which reads: "Stick a wafer into the letter to Mr. Jordan after you shall have read it."⁸

Not being fully challenged by the work of a building contractor, Jordan went into a number of business enterprises with various partners, operating cotton and woolen mills, grist and flour mills, lumber and metal shops. He had partnerships with John Moorehead, John Ruff, John Irvine and others. His fame as a builder and businessman of varied interests spread throughout the area.

To his prestige as a builder and businessman was added his military service during the War of 1812. He served in Capt. Archibald Lyle's Cavalry, Fifth Virginia Regiment, McDowell's Brigade, Virginia Militia, rising to the rank of lieutenant.⁴ It is said that he carried an unusually large sword mounted with the meltings of twenty silver dollars, a weapon which could not be wielded by a man of ordinary strength. His later title, "Colonel," was honorary.

John Jordan was one of the leading iron masters who operated charcoal furnaces in Western Virginia. He formed an early partnership with John Irvine in this business, and later made another connection with William W. Davis. When his sons reached maturity, they also joined him in the iron industry. At one time the Jordans operated iron works in Rockbridge, Bath, Botetourt, Alleghany, Amherst and Louisa Counties. The family bought considerable tracts of land to furnish iron ore and charcoal for the furnaces. One of the greatest problems in marketing this pig iron was the poor means of transportation, so Jordan became an ardent supporter of roads and canals.

Since Lexington is cradled by the Alleghany Mountains to the west and the Blue Ridge Mountains to the east, roadbuilding in these directions has always presented a problem. In Jordan's day no one had been successful in completing adequate roads through these mountains. Having business interests to the west, John Jordan backed a movement to build a road from Colliertstown to Longdale across North Mountain. The road was completed in 1826 and used for nearly a century. Then he turned in the other direction to construct a road through the Blue Ridge Mountains between Lexington and Amherst County, an enterprise which others had attempted and failed to complete. When the county court hesitated to support the project because of the difficulties involved, the Colonel made this characteristic remark: "Give me men, and I will build the road." He fulfilled his promise. This road, known as The Jordan Trail, opened up trade and travel, inviting those from the Piedmont and Tidewater areas into Rockbridge County.

Although he had no formal training in engineering, Jordan, in conjunction with John Moorehead, built a toll bridge across the North River at Lexington in 1835. This structure stood until June, 1864, when Gen. McCausland burned it to delay the approach of Union troops under Gen. Hunter

During the early eighteenth-hundreds a gigantic undertaking was envisioned to build a canal from Richmond up the James River and on to the Kanawha River which empties into the Ohio, thus connecting the West with the Atlantic. John Jordan was asked to build a section of the canal in the James River seven miles long through the gap in the Blue Ridge Mountains at Balcony Falls. In cooperation with his partner in this enterprise, John Irvine, he signed a contract with the James River Company on June 9, 1824, to carry out the construction as passed on the eighth of March of that year by the State legislature.⁵ This was a great project which involved large capital and equipment. In January, 1825, there were 114 hands listed on the company's payroll. Most of the work seems to have been completed in record time by early 1826. Though the main canal never went beyond Buchanan on the James River, it served as a channel of commerce for many years until it was supplanted by the railroads.

Colonel John Jordan was not a Baptist when he married Lucy Winn. Some think he was a Presbyterian, however he did not join with the Presbyterians at Lexington. Not a single member of John Jordan's family joined the Lexington Presbyterian Church; however, his brother, Hezekiah Jordan, and his brother's wife did join in 1813 and 1814 respectively.⁶ It is quite possible that John Jordan was not a member of any church when he moved to Lexington. His wife, Lucy, however, was a staunch Baptist, coming from a strong Baptist background in Hanover County. For nearly fifteen years after coming to Rockbridge she was not able to attend a nearby church of her own persuasion. It is very likely that she might have journeyed to special meetings of the Buffalo Baptist Church at Rapp's Mill, but it was too far for regular attendance. When the small group met with Elder William Duncan to establish Neriah Baptist Church in 1816, Lucy Jordan was one of the first six who signed the confession of faith.⁷ She was not able to get her husband to sign the statement with her and to become a member at that time, but she was determined to bring him around to her position, and she succeeded. The date of his conversion cannot be established since the earliest records of Neriah Church have been lost, but it must have occurred soon after the church was founded. It wasn't easy for John Jordan to identify himself with the Baptists, because they were virtually unknown in the area and commanded little prestige.

Although he did not join Neriah at its inception, he did build a house of worship for the congregation. In fact, just a few months after the organization of Neriah, John Jordan made bricks on the lot and began construction of the church building. The woodwork was done by one of the early members, John Moody, a local carpenter. It was a plain but sturdy brick building, equipped with a slave gallery, which made a fine appearance at the time, and is still in use today. The immediate completion of this attractive church building by such a small group forced the local citizenry to take notice

**John Jordan,
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of the Baptists. At last the Baptists had established themselves in the county, and they were destined to remain and grow.

John Jordan and Lucy, his wife, must have given encouragement to Valentine M. Mason, the local editor of *The Intelligencer*, who was another of the first six who constituted Neriah. Mason had come to Rockbridge from Stafford County, Virginia. He was baptized by Elder William Duncan in 1817, and in 1818 became a licentiate for the ministry. He was ordained the second Sunday in July, 1819, and immediately took up his duties as pastor of Neriah Baptist Church, serving until 1832.⁸

John Jordan drove his wife and children to attend the services regularly. Just as he was an energetic and resourceful leader in every other line of work, Jordan developed into a devoted supporter of the Baptist denomination. He became a Baptist by conviction, and was able to present his views forcefully and persuasively. His was a free and nimble mind, never cramped by the dimensions of the smug community in which he lived. Finding a deep interest in theology, he read much in the field, and frequently discussed matters of faith with ministers and laymen alike. Though he had deep convictions, he respected the views of those who did not accept his position.

Through the years Neriah Church grew and prospered. Several of Jordan's sons and daughters, joined Neriah. The Jordan slaves became members. Some of John Jordan's Lexington business associates became members, too: Colonel Joseph Winn, John Woodson and John Moody. The first two were probably related to Jordan through marriage. Jesse Witt, the corresponding secretary of the Baptist General Association of Virginia, made this statement about a trip through Rockbridge in early 1833: "At Neriah in Rockbridge, the prospects are still quite encouraging. There have been added to this church since our first protracted meeting in September last, upwards of 40 persons." John Jordan's prestige and zeal for his church greatly enhanced the standing of this small band of Baptists.

As the Jordan sons grew up, they became associated with their father in his business enterprises, particularly in the iron furnaces. John Jordan's son, Edwin Jordan, moved to Alleghany County and became a faithful member of the Cow Pasture Baptist Church, now named Sharon, representing his church regularly at the meetings of the Valley Baptist Association. Jordan's daughter, Ann, and her husband, William W. Davis, lived for some time near Goshen, and took an active part in the work of the Panther Gap Baptist Church, now called Goshen, frequently attending the meetings of the Association. Another son, Samuel Francis, became active in the work at Neriah. John Jordan's daughter, Lucy, and her husband, Evans Christian, also joined Neriah. Most of the Jordan sons left the Lexington area, but they must have carried the Baptist witness with them.

As time passed, the Jordans and their friends in Lexington

became interested in having a Baptist Church in their town. It was difficult to attend their church in the country when the weather was unfavorable. Along with this, more and more people with Baptist connections were moving into town. Then in 1839, a young Baptist minister, Elder Cornelius Tyree, came to Rockbridge as a missionary of the Baptist General Association. He was elected pastor of Neriah Church immediately upon his arrival. There he met the Jordans, and they readily agreed on the need of a Baptist church in Lexington. It was apparent that with two institutions of higher learning located there, the Baptists should be represented. So at a meeting of the Albemarle Association in August, 1840, the following resolution was passed: "Resolved that we approve of the effort of our brethern in Lexington, to erect a brick place of worship—and as the church there is in its infancy, we invite Brother Tyree to visit our churches, to solicit and receive our aid, towards the completion of their house." At the same time, with few funds if any in hand, John Jordan begun construction of the Baptist church in Lexington on Nelson Street between Main and Randolph Streets on the lot at the rear of the Lexington Presbyterian Church now occupied by two stores. There was no assurance that the funds would be collected, or that the Baptists would rally and support the new endeavor. Nevertheless, Jordan was fully convinced of the need of a Baptist church in his town. He constructed an attractive and adequate church building, which with a few later modifications, served the congregation for over seventy-five years.

When the Lexington church structure was completed, a revival was held in May, 1841. During the revival on May 9, the Lexington Baptist Church was constituted with sixteen members by Elders James Remley, Cornelius Tyree and William Margrave as the constituting council. At least nine of the sixteen charter members were from the Jordan family: Col. John Jordan and his wife, Lucy; their son, Samuel F., and his wife, Hannah W. Jordan; their daughter, Ann Doris, and her husband, William W. Davis; their daughter, Lucy, and her husband, Evans Christian; and Elizabeth Paxton Jordan, the wife of their son, Benjamin J. Jordan. At the church conference held on Monday, May 10, Cornelius Tyree was elected pastor. John Jordan and his son-in-law, William W. Davis, were elected deacons. Jordan's son, Samuel F., was elected church clerk.⁹ When the Sunday School was organized, John Jordan became the first superintendent.

It seems evident from the minutes of the Lexington Baptist Church, that although a committee was appointed to help raise funds to pay for the church building, a large part of the cost was borne by John Jordan. He continued his generous contributions by supplying a good part of the pastor's salary. The church minutes reveal that John Jordan rarely missed a business meeting or any service of the church. He did this in spite of his far-flung business enterprises. In

**John Jordan,
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the absence of the pastor, he always served as moderator. When expensive items were needed for the church, he bought them, and the church reimbursed him in part as funds were slowly received. As his sons took over an increasing share of his business responsibilities, he assumed a more active part in the work of Baptists in the Association. He often served as a messenger to the meetings of the Valley Baptist Association which were held twice a year.

John Jordan and his son, Edwin, gave to the support of an Associational missionary for the area. A number of times the Valley Association appointed John Jordan a Corresponding Messenger to the Baptist General Association of Virginia. In 1845, Jordan was elected treasurer of the Valley Baptist Association, a position which he held for several years. Many of the meetings were held over a very wide area, and with travelling conditions as they were, it required no small effort to attend meetings, but the Jordans were usually present.

The Jordans continued their support of the Baptist cause in Rockbridge, and the Baptists began to increase slowly in number. Eli Ball, a general agent for the Baptist General Association of Virginia, wrote in June, 1841, of a tour through Rockbridge and the surrounding area: "In Rockbridge the number of our denomination does not, I think, exceed 300, but it is increasing. In Lexington, which is a flourishing village, the Baptist Church has recently built a handsome brick meeting house. Baptist preaching is much needed and desired in those counties." John Jordan and his family were quietly and unassumingly dedicated to the growth of Baptists in an overwhelmingly Presbyterian county.

Jordan was quite civic-minded and took his part in any worthwhile community endeavor. He served as a member of the Board of Visitors at the Virginia Military Institute, 1846-1847. The poor and needy turned to him in their distress. It was said of him—"His purse was ever open to supply the wants of the community . . . none ever appealed in vain to his generosity. He lived and died without an enemy, and had a name untarnished by any stain of dishonesty, malevolence or injustice."¹⁰ William T. Shields, a contemporary of Jordan, said of him many years after his death, "He was a man of fine integrity, noted for his charity and a life that was wonderfully useful. Rockbridge never knew a better man."¹¹ He was never ostentatious in the expression of his religious belief, and the people of the community knew that he was a truly honorable man. Without his influence and that of his family, it seems certain that the Baptist witness in Rockbridge could not have thrived as it did. In fact, the work at Neriah might have gone the way of the Buffalo Church without the strong support of the Jordans. The church at Lexington would have found the going most difficult without the backing of this family. John Jordan continued to be an active member of the Lexington church till his death on July 25, 1854.

The Valley Star of Lexington for August 3, 1854, contained a long obituary on Jordan. He was buried in the Lexington Cemetery.

In the absence of the pastor, Colonel Jordan's funeral was conducted by his old friend, William S. White, pastor of the Lexington Presbyterian Church. In the funeral address Mr. White said, "He was not only honest and public spirited—he was also truly pious. For many years he had professed faith in Christ as his only Savior, and always showed the reality of his faith by the excellence of his works. The Baptist Church has cause to mourn the loss of the wisdom of his councils and the munificence of his contributions—for his piety was enlightened, liberal and useful. Firm in his advocacy of the tenets peculiar to the Church to which he belonged, he nevertheless respected and loved all who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity and truth."¹²

FOOTNOTES

¹Several Rockbridge historians have stated that John Jordan was born on June 2, 1777, but his obituary in *The Valley Star* of Lexington for August 3, 1854 states, "Died . . . on the 25th. ult., Col. John Jordan, aged 77 years and 23 days." This, if correct, would place his birthday on July 2, 1777.

²Marshall Fishwick, Article on John Jordan in *The Commonwealth*, reprinted in the *Rockbridge County News*, January 4, 1951.

³*Ibid.*, January 4, 1951.

⁴Harrington Waddell, "Colonel John Jordan," a paper, printed in the *Rockbridge County News*, April 14, 1938.

⁵From the *Jordan and Irvine Papers*, Contract Papers for the Blue Ridge Canal, The McCormick Collection, Wisconsin Historical Society, Madison, Wisconsin.

⁶Minute Book of the Lexington Presbyterian Church.

⁷This information is contained in the Neriah Baptist Church clerk's book which begins in 1845. The first book for 1816-1844 has been lost, however several items were copied from the first book into the second book including the names of the first six who constituted the church.

⁸Taylor, *Virginia Baptist Ministers*, Second Series, Yale and Wyatt, Richmond, Virginia, 1838, pages 490 ff.

⁹From the minutes of the first clerk's book of Lexington Baptist Church. The church name was changed to "Manly Memorial" on March 11, 1925, in memory of Dr. Charles Manly, a beloved former pastor.

¹⁰Obituary of John Jordan, *The Valley Star*, Lexington, Virginia, August 3, 1854.

¹¹Marshall Fishwick, "John Jordan, Man of Iron," *The Iron Worker*, Lynchburg, Virginia, Autumn 1957, Volume 21, No. 4, Page 8.

¹²Funeral Remarks by W. S. White, *The Valley Star*, August 3, 1854. □

NOTE: While this publication was in the process of being printed, Mr. Moore and Col. John G. Barrett published a history of Lexington's Manly Memorial Baptist Church. The volume, brought out as part of the church's one hundred and twenty-fifth anniversary, is available from the church office.

**John Jordan,
Baptist
Layman by
Rev. Mr. John
S. Moore**

**Judge
James K.
Edmondson
(1832-1898)
by Robert
C. Motley**

At a meeting of the Society on October 28, 1963, Mr. Robert C. Motley, a W & L history major, presented a paper on the life of a prominent Lexingtonian, Judge James K. Edmondson. Col. Brooke presided at the meeting held at the Castle. The paper received W & L's Society of the Cincinnati Award in 1963.

Mr. Motley's very valuable footnotes are omitted here. The complete paper can be found in the Society's library. His chief source of information was a collection of some 204 personal letters of James K. Edmondson and his family, given to the Society by Edmondson's great niece, Miss Mary Monroe Penick. Mr. Motley states in his notes that over 130 letters were directly consulted in research for the paper. □

JAMES K. EDMONDSON was born February 11, 1832, on his father's farm two miles southwest of Buena Vista. His father died when he was 18 and the next year, 1851, he entered Washington College. He left the college without graduating in 1853 to take an apprentice's seat in the office of the clerk of Rockbridge County, Charles Chapin. From the letters of this period it is clear that Edmondson began to take a serious attitude toward his work, his emerging social position, and the problems facing Virginia in the 1850's.

In 1856, he became engaged to Miss Emily ("Emma") Taylor of Staunton. During his engagement his letters tell that he was teased by his colleagues in the clerk's office and by certain merchants in town, notably J. T. McCrum. His apprenticeship with Chapin ended in 1856, and early in 1857 he was appointed circuit court judge. In the spring of 1857, he and Emma were married.

Emma's sister, Laura, married Albert Marshall Monroe and lived for a time in Clark County, Virginia. Mrs. Monroe died quite young and left two little girls, Mary, age 5, and Frances, age 3. Albert never fully recovered from his wife's death, and his daughters were raised by James and Emma, who had no children of their own. The younger of the girls, Frances, later married Paul M. Penick; Mary married Edward Robinson.

Edmondson's career advanced rapidly; he was appointed sergeant and clerk of the town of Lexington, a position he held until April 12, 1861, the day the Confederate batteries fired upon Fort Sumter.

Edmondson joined the "Rockbridge Rifles" which was attached to the Fourth Regiment and afterwards to the Twenty-seventh Regiment of Virginia Infantry of the "Stonewall Brigade." Under the strain of the early days, Edmondson's weight fell to 117½ pounds, although he wrote that the long marches did not seem to bother him particularly. During his wartime separation from Emma,

he wrote her every other day.

Edmondson first encountered enemy action at Winchester, where, in his words, "they fled like sheep." His arbor for fighting cooled, however, when his regiment was bogged down, when nausea and diarrhea swept the ranks, and when his "friends began to die of enemy bullets." His letters point out that he took with him to the front a young Negro named Jeff, who seemed to enjoy his master's tenure with the Army of Northern Virginia, although he was seldom to be found in the vicinity of rifle fire. Edmondson used him as a personal courier and always referred to him with kindness in his letters home. The young man is mentioned in a letter in 1866 as one of the Negroes who "did not abuse his new freedom."

Edmondson was responsible for picket duty in his regiment. In September, 1861, he wrote Emma that he had been shot at while bringing in his line of pickets. She advised him to be more careful.

A copy of his "Rules For Pickets" has been preserved:

"Not to shoot for the sake of shooting, but only when they advance or fire in good range upon you. Any one Yankee approaching singly, tolerably near, and laying down his arms, will be permitted to advance and be taken into our lines as a prisoner. Keep concealed and quiet, and not be seen or heard. Maintain your ground if attacked. No friendly intercourse or conversation with the enemy, but no objection to a tacit agreement not to fire if each shall keep his proper distance. Beware constantly of any Yankee tricks and villainy, none are to be trusted far. Always on the approach of Artillery fire first at the horses then charge and take the pieces before the enemy can get into position. No fires at night. Use no tauntings, by word or gesture, but rather induce the belief that by your actions any prospective defectors would fare well and be kindly received."

Edmondson appears to have been a very even-tempered officer, though once he jokingly wrote Emma of having to handle lightly "little disciplinary problems." The prayers he wrote for his regiment have been preserved; they are the simple, yet eloquent, thoughts of a soldier scared in battle.

Edmondson's regiment was involved in the Valley Campaign under Stonewall Jackson. Between April 30 and June 9, 1862, Jackson frustrated 70,000 Union troops with less than 18,000 men. His men marched 400 miles, fought five separate battles on his own terms, and routed four different Union commanders, in addition to capturing a precious baggage train of war supplies which he sent to Richmond. Edmondson's part in the campaign was to dislodge some "Union mountain men" in the hills around Conrad's Store, near Harrisonburg. Acting under Jackson's personal orders, Edmondson's regiment succeeded in rounding up fifty of the guerrillas. It was not unpleasant work; he writes, "the mountain lassies were most cordial" and the regiment was housed in a "cozy building, the Elk Run Presbyterian Church, which protected us from the rigors of a

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spring snow." The 27th Virginia could use the rest, for on May 11, 1862, they would set a record march for one day—33 miles.

Edmondson seldom wrote of Stonewall Jackson, but he obviously held the General in absolute confidence and respect. In his letters home, the words "Stone Wall" were carefully underscored.

Edmondson had the misfortune one afternoon while on picket duty to fall into a cold mountain stream when a plank gave way under him. When he mentioned this by letter to Emma, she promptly sent him a towel to use in case it happened again.

Disillusionment followed humor, however, for after a year in uniform he wrote this bitter observation of the war: "Everything appears very gloomy now, if those who are at home were to come out promptly and in force, there would be no difficulty in driving back the enemy. But sometimes I think we do not want to be free, when I see those who have the most interest at stake and who were first and foremost for secession, staying at home, apparently unconcerned and uncaring of the invasion and overrunning of our State by hordes of Northern Hessians."

Edmondson's regiment was transferred to the malaria-infested banks of the James and Chickahominy rivers in Tidewater. He wrote Emma that his spirits were at their lowest depths; he feared for his own life and even mentioned his will, which would provide for her comfort should the worst happen. He wrote of the "dead, lying in great piles on the battlefield. I am fed up with the war, with mud, blood, and primitive bivouacs—yet we must fight on for our homes and honor."

Emma tried to cheer him up by sending through Jeff the spiciest of Lexington gossip. When she wrote him that one "Calvin's wife" was the talk of the town for her exploits while her husband was at the front, Edmondson laconically replied, "I presume that she had fallen as other women."

When Edmondson was elected a lieutenant colonel by his regiment (over a senior captain and a major), he wrote Emma: "I presume you will now assume the title of Lt. Col. Mrs. J. K. Edmondson, Ha, Ha."

On April 18, 1863, he took the loyalty oath required of all supporters of the Confederacy: "I, Col. J. K. Edmondson, do solemnly swear and affirm that I will bear true faith and yield obedience to the Confederate States of America and that I will serve them honestly and faithfully against their enemies." (Note use of *them* and *their*.)

As a full colonel, Edmondson was transferred to an infantry brigade stationed in The Wilderness. He sold his bay horse for \$350, but retained the "services" of his slave, Jeff. At the same time, he joined a Free Mason outfit called "Stone Wall Jackson's Lodge."

The Battle of Chancellorsville, fought in the first days of May, 1863, was a victory for the Confederacy, though General Lee lost

more than his "right arm" when Stonewall Jackson was accidentally shot by a confused North Carolina regiment. Captain Greenlee Davidson of the Letcher Artillery was also killed in combat along with 12,750 other Confederates. The Union lost 16,800 men, 14 artillery pieces, and twenty thousand rifles. Colonel Edmondson was cut down by a sniper's bullet while leading his regiment along a turnpike. Contrary to his premonitions, he did not die then, but had to have his left arm amputated at the shoulder in an ill-equipped emergency infirmary. The amputation ended his military career. When he recovered sufficiently, he travelled to Lynchburg where Emma met him, and together they took a canal boat back to Lexington.

Back in Lexington Edmondson was given a token command as "commandant of the military post there established." Many of the VMI cadets were at the front as were most of the town's able-bodied men.

Hard times were coming to the southern end of the Valley. Foraging parties of Yankees and deserters caused much discomfort. One of Emma's cousins wrote to them from "Poplar Hill" near Staunton: "You have no idea how we have suffered at the hands of the rabble from the North—they stripped us last winter of nearly everything we had—I didn't think that a person could do with as little as we did. . . ."

Lexington was occupied by Northern troops in June, 1864, under Gen. Hunter. The Institute barracks and professors' houses were burned, the buildings of Washington College were vandalized, and Gov. Letcher's house destroyed.

In 1865, Edmondson was elected mayor of Lexington. Three years later, in 1868, Edmondson was removed from office by "carpetbaggers" during Reconstruction. He was, though, reappointed to the circuit court as commissioner-in-chancery, a post he held for thirty years. In 1870, he was elected first judge of the court of Rockbridge County, a position he held for eight years. Also in 1870, he was called upon to serve as a pallbearer for Robert E. Lee. He was a member of the committee the next year which changed the name of Washington College to Washington and Lee University.

Edmondson served W & L as secretary-treasurer of its Board of Trustees. He managed most of the Board's financial affairs without compensation and in October, 1870, secured an endowment of \$100,000. He pledged his personal credit to assist the University several times during the critical 1872-1884 period, when, according to the records of the Board, "the financial condition of the University aroused the deepest interest and apprehension."

Edmondson was instrumental in establishing the Rockbridge Savings Bank and was its first president. He was treasurer of the Rockbridge Company at Glasgow, and was on the board of visitors of the Western State Hospital for the Insane in Staunton. Later, he held a similar position at the Virginia Institute for the Deaf,

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C. Motley**

Dumb, and Blind in the same city.

During this period, Emma was spending more time at "Retirement", near Staunton with her aging father than Edmondson would have liked, and he once fretted, "When you go home, you do not know when to come home!" He became rather conscious of his many positions, and tried to give the proper image of a judge at all times. Once Emma insisted on returning from "Retirement" in a wagon. Edmondson reproved her in a rare burst of authority: "The idea is perfect folly; you would look ridiculous up there on a wagon; you are a judge's wife. Take the stage instead!"

In 1867, Edmondson built the large brick house at 104 White Street, which has two peculiar features—cut-glass doors and a commodious greenhouse. In 1895, he also acquired "Silverwood," a handsome brick house on South Main.

Edmondson, as chairman of the executive committee of the Jackson Memorial Association, was primarily responsible for one of the greatest pageants ever staged in Lexington—the unveiling of the statue of Stonewall Jackson on July 21, 1891.* The *Rockbridge County News* of July 23 gives a colorful account of the festivities:

The Heroic Bronze Statue of Stonewall Jackson was unveiled over Jackson's grave in Lexington amid the rejoicings and proud acclaim of thousands for a man of rare genius and of a sturdy virtue hardly less astounding. Gay, colored banners waved from every housetop; music from many bands awakened the usually quiet streets at 6:00 am. The tread of a vast multitude was heard on its streets and the cheers of strong men were mingled amid the plaudits and rippling laughter of women. Nature seemed to smile upon the day—the sky was an azure blue broken in many places with floating, fleecy clouds and gentle breezes. Old veteran soldiers gathered in groups and discussed incidents of life around the campfire and on the battlefield; when the jest and laugh went 'round younger men wondered whether war was, after all, so terrible as it seemed.

The *News* reported the size of the crowd to be about 15,000. The account of the ceremonies published by the Jackson Memorial Association estimated that twenty to thirty thousand people were present. The "interesting excitement" of the day began with the arrival of the "Stonewall Brigade Band" which marched to its quarters in Franklin Hall by way of the cemetery, awakening the town with loud music. VMI set off a 15-gun salute at 6:00 a.m., but the grand procession did not begin until 10:30 a.m. Gen. James. A. Walker was marshal for the day, and Lt. Gen. Wade Hampton was widely applauded. The Rev. A. C. Hopkins, the "Fighting Chaplain" of the Stonewall Brigade, gave a ten minute invocation. Then, Col. T. M. Semmes, professor of Modern Language and Rhetoric at VMI, read three war poems. The first was "Stonewall Jackson's Way," followed by "Slain in Battle", a selection from Beechenbrook by Margaret Junkin Preston, sister-in-law of Jackson. The last poem

*G. W. Custis Lee,
president of
W & L U.,
was the Association's
president.

was J. Duffore's "Over the River."

Jackson was further eulogized in a speech by Gen. Jubal Early. After a lengthy summation of "Stonewall's" life and military career, he concluded, "I trust that every faithful soldier of the Army of Northern Virginia is ready to exclaim with me, 'If ever I disown, repudiate, or apologize for the cause for which Lee fought and Jackson died, let the lightnings of heaven blast me, and the scorn of all good men and true women be my portion!'"

This remark was received with wild yells and cheers, and then a gala procession proceeded from the Washington and Lee campus, where the preliminary ceremonies had taken place, to the statue itself in the Lexington cemetery. The parade included officials, townspeople, the VMI cadet corps, and W & L students "with fraternity and school banners." Around the base of the statue were three flags: the Stars and Stripes, the flag of Virginia, and the battleflag of the Confederacy. In the presence of Jackson's widow, her two grandchildren, Julia Jackson and Thomas Jackson Christian, tugged together at the unveiling cord and the wraps fell away from the statue. At its base was the inscription, "Jackson: 1824-1863."

The *News* records, "The cannoneers of the old Rockbridge Artillery . . . announced the event with fifteen guns, from the cannon they had used at First Manassas, and a shout such as these quiet precincts never before heard, rent the air. It was answered by the veterans . . . with an old-fashioned 'rebel yell.' . . . The armed infantry fired volleys till it sounded like a real battle was in progress."

Many people then returned to the W & L campus where they filed silently through Gen. Lee's mausoleum, which the *News* mentioned was "tastefully" decorated for the occasion. James K. Edmondson had been on the reviewing stand as chairman of the Jackson Memorial Association.

There was one final phase to Edmondson's remarkable life. In 1893, he was chosen to represent Rockbridge County in the Virginia House of Delegates. He was appointed a member of the finance committee of the General Assembly during the 1893-94 session. He wrote Emma that he was immensely enjoying himself, especially appreciating the fact that he, at 61, was invited to join a party group of the younger set called "the Commonwealth Club" which he referred to in a letter of December 11, 1894, as the "Greatest Social Institution in Richmond!"

He wrote his wife of some of the difficulties he was encountering at Richmond. One letter, written on December 15, 1893, spelled out a situation concerning a fellow Rockbridge legislator, R. G. Paxton:

A break occured between Paxton and myself this morning in the House of Delegates which will cause estrangement between us from this time forth. I had a bill before the House providing for a small increase in Judge Houston's salary, which would have passed but

**Judge
James K.
Edmondson
(1832-1898)
by Robert
C. Motley**

for an objection from Paxton and this without prior conference with me, making it a matter of extreme discomfort and unkindness. The center of his action is a dislike for Judge Houston, but I'll get even with him yet!

Edmondson's letters do not indicate whether or not he did settle the score with Paxton. We do know that he died of a brief bout with an infected kidney on March 31, 1898, in what was referred to by the W & L board minutes as the "twilight of a truly inspiring and remarkable life." ■

Papers
Presented
to the
Society by
Col. George
M. Brooke,
Mr. & Mrs. W.
O. Hay, Jr., and
Dr. Forrest
C. Pogue

On February 3, 1964, the Society met for its dinner meeting at the Robert E. Lee Hotel; Gen. Letcher presided. The program consisted of a slide presentation by Col. George M. Brooke, covering his recent year's stay in Japan. Col. Brooke, who was on a Fulbright teaching grant, spoke on present day Japan and showed a series of slides depicting the modern and traditional customs of the people. An authority on Japan and the grandson of Lt. John M. Brooke, Col. Brooke has given two previous talks to the Society on Japan and Lt. Brooke's efforts in the nineteenth century to open trade routes to the Orient. (See Vol. 4, page 32, and Vol. 6, page 8.) □

The Society met April 27, 1964, for its spring meeting at the Castle; Gen. Letcher presided. The program was given by Mr. & Mrs. W. O. Hay, Jr., who showed slides of a recent trip around the world Mrs. J. P. Alexander, who accompanied the Hays, also commented during the program. Included in the presentation were slides from Egypt, Iran, Pakistan and Indonesia. □

July 24, 1964, the Society met in the Conference Room of the George C. Marshall Research Library. Gen. Letcher presided at the first public meeting to be held in the Library. Dr. Forrest C. Pogue, well-known historian and Director of the Library, spoke on the Marshall Library's extensive oral history project. He told of his experiences in interviewing famous persons, particularly Gen.

Marshall, with a tape recorder. The tapes, including some 40 hours with Gen. Marshall and interviews with 175 of his associates and contemporaries, comprise one of the most valuable portions of the Library's collection. Dr. Pogue, who has published a number of books on military history, among them *The Supreme Command*—the history of Eisenhower's headquarters in Northern Europe—is the author of the four volume biography of Gen. Marshall, sponsored by the Library. The first volume, published in 1963, was entitled, *Education of a General: 1880-1939*. The March, 1966, issue of the *Wilson Library Bulletin* carried an article on the Library's oral history project. Dr. Pogue suggested the Society undertake its own oral history program as one of the best means of preserving local history. A copy of Dr. Pogue's talk can be found in the Society's collection. □

The Society met October 26, 1964, at the Castle; Gen. Letcher presided. The evening's program was given by Mary P. Coulling, wife of Dr. Sydney Coulling, a member of the W & L English department. Mrs. Coulling's paper was first given to the Ignorance Club, May 11, 1964. This account of the paper has been necessarily condensed and the extensive footnotes have been omitted. Included is the portion of the paper involving Gen. Lee's daughters' experiences in Lexington following the Civil War. A copy of the complete paper is in the Society's library. □

THE WEATHER HAD been unusually "bright and beautiful," so the early hours of December 2, 1865, were probably clear and frosty as Robert E. Lee on Traveller rode down to the packet landing, a mile and a quarter below Lexington. It was still early when the special packet boat tied up to the dock, bringing to their new home the first members of the Lee family, Mrs. Lee, 20-year-old Mildred Childe Lee, and young Robert E. Lee, Jr., and Eleanor Agnes, 24. Mary Custis, 30, would be joining them soon. Mrs. Lee, badly crippled, was helped into a waiting carriage. Young Rob and Mildred climbed in beside her, and escorted by the General, the carriage went up the winding road to the house on the campus to a breakfast thoughtfully provided by the wife of a faculty member.

The principal figures in this scene are so familiar to Lexingtonians that you are perhaps wondering what I could possibly say tonight that is new. But it is not about the old warrior or his invalid wife, or even about the son, that I wish to speak, but about the girls—Mary, Agnes, and Mildred Lee, and Annie, their sister, who had died during the war.

**The Lee Girls
by Mary P.
Coulling**

The Lee Girls
by **Mary P.**
Coulling

After the surrender of Lee's army and the defeated General had refused to return to a conquered Richmond, Mildred's cheerfulness and companionship continued to buoy the family. When they moved to Powhatan County in August of 1865, Mildred's spirits remained high, despite the ill health of her mother and Agnes and their cramped quarters (a cottage of four rooms for Gen. Lee, Mrs. Lee, Agnes and Mildred).

The quiet of the country was just what Robert E. Lee wanted and needed, but he soon began to get restless. It was Mary Lee who made the chance remark which led the Washington College board of trustees to call him as their president. "The people of the South are offering my father everything," she remarked in Staunton in the presence of a board member, "everything but work; and work is the only thing he will accept at their hands." Lexingtonians need not be reminded of Judge Brokenbrough's trip to Derwent, nor of Lee's famous letter of acceptance. Lee left for his new duties in late August, riding along on Traveller. Mrs. Lee and the girls were to join him later, when the house designated for their occupancy was ready. The repairs and arrangements for furnishings took several months, so that it was not until December that Mrs. Lee, Mildred, and Rob arrived to begin a new life in Lexington. "We were all very grateful and happy," Rob wrote many years later, "glad to get home—the only one we had had for four long years."

I don't know whether the girls had ever been to Lexington; I doubt it, for the town was then quite inaccessible and not on any major route. But they must have known a good bit about Washington College. Their grandfather Custis had no doubt reared them on the story of George Washington's gift of canal stock to struggling Liberty Hall, in gratitude for which the trustees renamed the school Washington College. Their grandfather "Lighthouse Harry" Lee had been influential in persuading Washington to make that gift. Their aunt Anne Marshall's father-in-law had been president of the college, and Robert E. Lee's half brother Harry had attended the school in 1806-7.

But even though they knew something of the school, the girls did not find the adjustment to the community easy. "The Miss Lees . . . don't seem to like Lexington much," wrote a bachelor professor. "[They] think the people stiff and formal, which is very much the case."

Soon after arriving, Mildred confided to Lucy Blain: "I believe it was you who told me Lexington was such a delightful place. I disagree with you in toto. I am often dreadfully lonely, know no one well in the whole town . . . The number of old maids here quite appalls me. My fate was decided from the first moment I put my foot on shore. Lucy, do you know what starvation of the *heart and mind* is? I suffer, & am dumb." But her spirits rallied at the end of the letter: "You ought to see the beautiful new black

silk dress I have got all trimmed with steely beads.”

If Lexington seemed staid and a bit dull to the Lee girls, there is evidence that not all the townspeople welcomed the newcomers. Some people were offended by Agnes’ reserve and her “seeming haughtiness,” and they were shocked by “the innocent pastimes of the young people.” But Lexington then, as now, was surprisingly adjustable, and the “Saints,” as Mildred called them, soon got used to the social pace set by the Lee sisters.

One might surmise that the girls were too old to be courted by undergraduates. But this was a post-war student body, with bearded veterans as well as “yearlings,” as the teen-age students were called. In the evenings the young men of the community, students, cadets, and faculty, came to call, and the girls appear to have been popular.

“I met Miss Mildred Lee,” wrote one student, “and was charmed by her manner and conversation.

“Miss Mary is bright and willful, intelligent and cultivated,” wrote another young man. “Miss Agnes . . . is charming.”

On calling nights, Lee and his wife sat in the dining room while the girls entertained in the parlor. Ten o’clock was the deadline, and the general had several ways to maneuver the young men home. Rob wrote once that when the clock struck ten, Lee would get up and slowly close all the shutters. If this hint was not taken, he would say in a firm tone, “Goodnight, young gentlemen.”

A student of that period recalls a more delicate approach. At ten, he says, the general would slip into the parlor and replace one of his daughters beside a student caller. The embarrassed young man “who had not come for the purpose of monopolizing the General . . . found it convenient to depart.”

In 1866, the young people organized a reading club, which met every Wednesday evening. “The reading is usually a small matter,” Agnes said, “and [the meetings] are becoming right pleasant.” Lee described the club as “a great institution for the discussion of apples and chestnuts, but it is quite innocent of the pleasure of literature.”

Once at least, the club met at the Bachelor Officers’ Quarters at VMI. I don’t know what reading they did, but the record states that the members danced till three, the Virginia reel, the lancers, and the quadrille, for “Presbyterian Lexington” would not have countenanced a “waltz or polka.”

Always outdoors women, the Lee girls soon made walking, skating, and sleighriding popular pastimes. Mary and Agnes set the town agog by going on “a genuine old-fashioned sleighing party” with two VMI professors, until eight o’clock in the evening. “We all enjoyed it very much.”

Of the three sisters, Mary seems to have been the least happy in Lexington, and she spent much of her time away visiting. When she was home, she did not help at all with the housekeeping, but seemed to have been out of the house as much as possible, riding

**The Lee Girls
by Mary P.
Coulling**

**The Lee Girls
by Mary P.
Coulling**

horseback, skating, and taking long walks. On one such occasion, walking out alone toward House Mountain, she came upon a mountaineer, whose wagon load of apples had become stuck in a mudhole. The man, whose name was John Moodispaugh, was beating his horse unmercifully. Mary "walked up to him," we are told, "ordered him peremptorily to stop beating the horse, and showed him how to get out of the mudhole, which he did under her direction. She then made him give her his name, and describe where he lived, and how to find his cabin." When she got home, she asked a student to go see the farmer, to urge him to attend the mountain chapel run by the student YMCA. Evidently the experience with Miss Mary reformed Moodispaugh, for "the man came to Sunday School regularly," the student wrote, "learned to read and write and to wear decent clothes, gave up his whiskey habit and got to be a decent citizen."

During these years Mary gradually grew apart from the rest of the family. She did not go with her mother and the other girls to the spas in the summers. She is mentioned less frequently in family letters. And she wrote home very little. "We rarely hear from Mary," Mrs. Lee commented. "She is a bad correspondent." When she and Mary were left at home alone together in the spring of 1870, Mary complained in an unkindly manner of her younger sister's housekeeping. She was out of town all through Lee's last illness and was not present when he died. I am not even sure she got home for her father's burial. John Esten Cooke in his account of the funeral states that "the sons . . . their sisters, Misses Agnes and Mildred Lee . . . and the nephews entered the church with bowed heads and silently took seats in front of the rostrum."

Agnes seems to have been more content to stay in Lexington than the others. She never regained her health after her illness at Derwent in the summer of 1865. "She has not great velocity," wrote Lee to Mildred, "but is systematic and quiet." When she did travel, it was usually for her health. At home she kept house, taught her niece Mildred Marshall (who was living with the family) and took dictation from her father. In her quiet way she participated in the activities of the community and endeared herself to students and townspeople by thoughtful little notes and gifts.

When Robert E. Lee took his Southern trip in the spring of 1870, Agnes was appointed to accompany him.

During his last illness, Agnes was her father's nurse, and she alone could persuade him to eat and take medicine. She was at his bedside when he died.

Robert E. Lee, Jr., asserts that Mildred was her father's favorite child. Certainly during the Lexington years she was his frequent companion as they rode horseback together all over Rockbridge County. We have her own account of a three-day trip they took to the Peaks of Otter and Liberty (now Bedford). They rode up the

mountain as far as they could, hiked to the top, got caught in a rainstorm, and took shelter in a mountain cabin, muddying the floor of the irate housewife. The poor woman was overcome with mortification and embarrassment to learn the identity of her bedraggled visitors. When they reached Liberty and the home of friends, Mildred was equal to the occasion. Opening her saddlebag, she shook out her hoops and appeared for dinner, dry, and "glorified in crinoline . . . The General was greatly amused."

Lee loved to tease all his daughters, but particularly Mildred. He joked with her about her housekeeping, her handwriting, her weight, and her assortment of cats. But he never joked about her looks, for she was not pretty, "Plain, but respectable," she called herself.

"Miss Mildred . . . was not beautiful," wrote a student friend many years later, "but had a bright, interesting face . . . a pleasing personality and fine literary taste . . ." Lee called her his "light-bearer. The house is never dark," he said, "if she is in it." When she was desperately ill in the summer of 1868, he nursed her himself, never leaving her bedside night and day. That Christmas he gave her every present she asked for. Freeman comments that "as the father of numerous daughters, he should have known better."

After Robert E. Lee's death in the fall of 1870, Mrs. Lee decided to remain in Lexington, where, Mildred wrote, "We found kindness in every heart and home." For a time the girls seem to have been content, keeping house for Custis and their mother, or visiting Rooney and Rob. But in a couple of years, Mary was away again, this time to Europe. She was still abroad in October of 1873 when Agnes was suddenly taken ill, exactly three years to the day after Lee's death. Always delicate, Agnes could not survive the serious bout of typhoid fever. She died on October 15, 1873, at the age of 32. "Retired as was her life," wrote the *Lexington Gazette*, "there are few persons in Lexington who will not feel a sense of bereavement . . . Miss Agnes Lee was . . . a very gentle and gracious lady." Rob and Rooney came up from their farms to be with their mother and Mildred as Agnes was buried in the chapel beside her father.

Mrs. Lee survived her favorite daughter by less than a month, dying on November 5. It must have been a terrible autumn for Mildred. She wrote to a cousin in December, 1873, "I am just beginning to grasp the true measure of my loss, and to taste its full bitterness! Mary you know is still abroad, and Custis and I have to bear our sorrow alone—and together—in a home once so happy—but now so desolate."

Mildred was very lonely after her mother's death. Custis was a shy, retiring individual. She and Mary were not close, and the other boys were far away. She felt keenly that life was passing her by. "Time flies, & life is soon over, & in the quiet grave we are soon

**The Lee Girls
by Mary P.
Coulling**

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Coulling

forgotten." Most of her time she spent keeping house for Custis, who never married, and for Rob, whose first wife died less than a year after his marriage. We do know, however, that she took several trips abroad. On one such trip, in 1879, she traveled to Egypt, where she climbed "to the top of the great Pyramid, with the assistance of 4 Arabs, who clutched & pinched me in every part of my body! Today I am black and blue. I feel the need of someone to take care of me sadly. Oh, celibacy, where are the charms!" After Cairo came Damascus, Constantinople, Athens, Italy, and Paris. She became ill in Paris and longed to be home—"in our quiet home in Lexington—with Custis, and all the kind good friends." Mary came to be with her, but that was little consolation, for, wrote Mildred, "[Mary] is not sympathetic with weakness or nervousness, & is always absorbed in self first and foremost . . . I try to steel myself against her sharp words, by thinking she has always been the same with everybody."

Toward the end of her life Mildred seems to have been happiest with Rob, who remarried and had two daughters. "My two precious nieces occupied my entire time and heart," she wrote. "One must have *something* to love in this world . . . It is always a comfort to be with Rob, who is so good to me." But even here she betrayed her loneliness. "Be thankful you have your own little home," she wrote to a Lexington friend. "Anything else can be endured if you have that." She died suddenly in New Orleans near the end of March, 1905. On March 31, "the most beautiful of spring days," a select group of students carried her coffin across the Washington and Lee campus for burial in the chapel. Mildred Lee was 59, and she had spent many of her latter years away from Lexington, so only her contemporaries remembered her well. "The older ones among us," they wrote, "cherish a precious memory of her radiant girlhood in her father's home here in Lexington, and we have loved her well, through all these years of absence and separation."

Mary, the eldest daughter, lived longest. She spent most of her time abroad, where, through the magic of the Lee name and her own audacity, she met the best people of England and Europe. There is a story, perhaps apocryphal, which tells of her attempt to get an invitation to a court party. "Is not the daughter of America's greatest general to be invited?" she asked. An invitation was hurriedly dispatched, addressed to Miss Grant.

While traveling in Mexico in 1885, she met David Strother, a man not kindly regarded in Lexington, for he was a Virginian who had been in the Union Army and had been on Hunter's staff at the time of the Raid on Lexington. But Strother was quite taken with Mary. "She is dark, about 50 years of age," he wrote in his diary in April, 1885. "[She] has traveled extensively in Europe, Africa, and Asia, and talks of her adventures with great vivacity and good sense . . . But [she] says she is a poor traveller, not knowing how

to take care of herself and is always dependent on the assistance and gallantry of her countrymen."

She was in Germany when the First World War broke out, and from there she went to England.

She spent the winter of 1917 in Lexington, boarding with old friends on Letcher Avenue. She was an unmistakable figure as she walked slowly across the campus, a portly old woman, with long skirts and a lace-edged parasol. Whenever she spied a piece of trash or rubbish, she would wait till a student appeared, stop him, and ask, "Are you going to pick that up, or do you expect General Lee's daughter to lean over to get it?"

Mary Lee died at the Homestead in November of 1918, just after the Armistice. She was 84. Following specific instructions in her will, her nephews and nieces held a private service for her in Washington. Then her body was cremated, for she had a horror of being boxed in a coffin, and the ashes were brought back for private interment in the chapel.

As one stands in the chapel crypt, looking at the inscriptions, one is impressed by their simplicity and reticence—merely the name of each daughter and date of death. Annie's inscription, however, is more revealing: "Annie C. Lee, daughter of General R. E. Lee and Mary C. Lee, born at Arlington, June 18, 1839, and died at White Sulphur Springs, Warren County, North Carolina, October 20, 1862." Born at Arlington, died and buried far from home—these two details epitomize the story of the Lee girls. Born to a life of luxury, with a rich heritage and strong family ties, they were forced to adjust to privation, to the dissolution of family and social unity, and to a sense of rootlessness which all four felt when Arlington was gone. Although they differed in the ease and grace with which they adjusted to their greatly altered circumstances, the Lee girls shared a common faith and a readiness to accept whatever came as the will of God. This unquestioning faith is embodied in the last two lines of Annie's favorite hymn, a hymn she requested just before her death. These lines were inscribed on her North Carolina tombstone:

*"Perfect and true are all His ways
Whom heaven adores and earth obeys."* ■

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On January 25, 1965, the Society met for a dinner meeting at the Hotel Robert E. Lee; Gen. Letcher presided. Mrs. Gordon Heiner read a paper on the legend of the *poltergeist* which inhabited Dr. McChesney's house located near Brownsburg. Her paper took the form of a possible expedition from Lexington out to the McChesney farm on a morning in 1845, to check up on rumors that had the area in an uproar. Quoting from letters, church records, and basic source material such as *Waddell's Annals of Augusta County*, Mrs. Heiner was able to reconstruct and present one of the county's most interesting legends. □

On April 26, 1965, the Society met at the Castle; Gen. Letcher presided. The evening's paper, entitled "David Hunter: Villain of the Valley," was delivered by Dr. Cecil D. Eby, Associate Professor of English at W & L. Professor Eby was on the W & L faculty from 1960 to 1965, and since September, 1965,

has been Associate Professor of English at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

A more complete paper on this subject by Dr. Eby along with accompanying pictures was carried earlier in the Spring, 1964, issue of the *Iron Worker Magazine*, published by the Lynchburg Foundry Company. The portion of his paper concerning Gen. Hunter's activities in Lexington is included here. □

ON JUNE 10, 1864, THE Army of West Virginia under Major General David Hunter moved south toward Lexington by four parallel roads. Against it were poised only 1500 cavalry under Brigadier General John McCausland, himself a graduate and former professor of the Virginia Military Institute, who was prepared to dispute every foot of the way.

For Hunter, the departure from Staunton began badly. Most of the night before, he lay awake listening for signs of the dreaded guerrillas which he expected at every moment. But by the time they reached their camping ground near Midway (the present Steeles Tavern) his spirits were rising.

The Union columns resumed their march at four in the morning of June 11, and by midday their advance had reached North River, where McCausland had crossed over and burned the bridge leading into Lexington. High on the opposite bluffs were the stone barracks of the Virginia Military Institute, machicolated like a medieval fortress.

At the appearance of the Federals, figures moved about on the roof, and sharpshooters opened fire from behind rocks, trees, and Institute buildings. A McCausland battery fired rapidly from the parade ground until forced from its exposed position by the heavier and more numerous Union batteries across the river.

Clearly Hunter could have crushed resistance by subjecting the town to a prolonged bombardment, but instead he ordered Averell to cross the river to the west and to flank McCausland, who, apprehending the maneuver, withdrew from the town on the Buchanan road at a gallop.

McCausland's attempt to delay the Union advance at North River has been criticized, by both Northerners and Southerners. Hunter, in his report, was enraged by the "unsoldierly and inhuman attempt of General McCausland to defend an indefensible position . . . by screening himself behind the private dwellings of women and children." His flanking movement was made in order "to spare private property and an unarmed population" from intensive shelling, but it is also clear that he wished to save ammunition, particularly since he was so far into enemy territory.

On the other hand, Superintendent Francis H. Smith of the Institute believed that McCausland had no right to defend the town at all, since such defense was hopeless and might subject both

**David Hunter:
Villain of the
Valley by Dr.
Cecil D. Eby**

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Cecil D. Eby**

Lexington and the Institute to reprisals. McCausland, however, was a tough cavalry commander, not a maker of subtle policy; he had stopped the Federal advance for four hours, since the first Union soldiers did not reach the streets of Lexington until four in the afternoon.

In all, less than two hundred shells fell upon Lexington, most of which landed in the vicinity of the Institute and did no significant damage. Some of the Federal artillerists aimed deliberately at the stone barracks in order to avoid damaging the town. Twenty houses were struck but no one was injured.

In the events which followed, it was natural for Hunter to assume that the Corps of Cadets had been engaged in the defense of the Institute, but they had not. All morning they were drawn up along the "parapet," a ravine to the east of their barracks, awaiting orders and watching the shells explode over them. At two in the afternoon they were ordered to retire toward Lynchburg along the Balcony Falls road so that they could resist Hunter's advance should it move toward the Blue Ridge.

The first Union officer to arrive at the Institute was Colonel J. M. Schoonmaker, commanding the First Brigade of Averell's division, who entered town by the west. In the classrooms he found school books still open on desks and mathematical diagrams partly finished on the blackboards, yet there were no traces of occupation by the military forces other than those of the Corps itself.

When Hunter arrived, Schoonmaker was temporarily relieved of his command for having placed a guard detail at the Institute. Further, Hunter said that in the future he would select as his officers leading the advance men those "who would know what to do in like circumstances." Plundering the Institute followed, as if by the General's order.

Hunter then rode to the professors' homes beside the parade ground and ordered the families out, since he intended to burn these buildings, all of them state property. Mrs. William Gilham, wife of the commandant, was troubled yet firm. A soldier's wife and a soldier's daughter, she gamely sent a servant for a pitcher of apple jack, apologized for having nothing more refreshing to offer the Federal officers, and then began to move her furniture out upon the lawn.

Some officers, without asking their General's permission, assisted her. Among these was William McKinley, twenty-fifth president of the United States, at that time a lieutenant of Ohio volunteers.

Throughout the day Mrs. Gilham remained at guard over her possessions—driving away would-be plunderers with irony and disdain. No townspeople dared help her, fearing their turn would be next. However, on the following day Major Richard G. Prendergast of the 1st New York Cavalry obtained two army wagons, commandeered orderlies, and moved her belongings to a neighbor's house, where he posted a guard to save her from further molestation.

At the quarters of the Superintendent, Hunter was met by Mrs. Francis H. Smith, who asked that he not burn the house since her daughter was in bed with a two-day-old child. "Very well, Madam," he replied, "we will make your house my headquarters." This he did, and the building was spared. Here Hunter and his staff lived until June 14 with the Smiths.

Within the town Mrs. Margaret Junkin Preston, sister-in-law of Stonewall Jackson and wife of the professor of languages at the Institute, stood at her window and watched the Yankees enter Lexington. First six Confederate pickets, abandoned during the retreat, raced past, and ten minutes later the first of Averell's cavalry, who galloped through town without stopping, in pursuit of McCausland. Then came the infantry, which crossed North River by either the charred timbers of the burnt bridge or the ford a mile west of town.

Mrs. Preston and her husband expected that the Institute would be destroyed. Four days before, at the first news of the Federal advance up the Valley, she had written in her diary, "As the Institute is Government property, they will most likely burn it; that, at all events, is what we apprehend."

Her husband, Colonel J. T. L. Preston, had at once begun to transfer laboratory equipment, books, and natural history collections from VMI to Washington College, where they might be overlooked by the enemy. Trunks containing the personal belongings of the cadets were packed and prepared for shipment to Richmond by the canal, but it was impossible to get all of them away in time. Bolts of cadet uniform material were secreted among townspeople.

The town was quickly overrun with Union soldiers, most of them half-starved as a result of their General's theory that they should "live off the country." In fairness to them it should be said that their looting began as a search for food, although it later became something else. Swarming into gardens, they rooted up onions, turnips, and other vegetables, devouring them on the spot.

Mrs. Preston met their begging for food with two strips of bacon per man, but this was unwise. In a short time there was a horde of soldiers in her yard clamoring for food, until she was eventually forced to open her smokehouse for them.

By the next morning they were in her house, had snatched her breakfast off the table, and had left her children crying for food, with only a few crackers left in the house for them. In particular they had a craving for pickles and preserves. They seized anything of this kind they could find, carrying off the dishes in which it was found, though not for the china itself. Many brought back the dishes after they had emptied them.

Before the Yankees arrived, Mrs. Cornelia McDonald had her children put the chickens in the garret of her house on Henry Street. This trick, which she had learned in Winchester earlier in the war,

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worked well until the following morning, when rooster crowing informed the Yankees of her attic roost.

Even so, Mrs. McDonald preserved her sense of humor during the occupation. She, like other townspeople, was amused when she heard that Yankees had entered the home of Colonel Robert L. Madison and had carried off supplies of flour in the purple velvet cloak of his wife, well known for her fastidiousness.

Hunter obliged some townspeople who requested guards, but ignored others. He met one lady's request with sarcasm, "I know your father and brothers; look to them to protect you."

On Sunday, much against the wishes of most of his staff, Hunter resolved to burn the Virginia Military Institute. He argued that states rights doctrines were taught here, that the Corps of Cadets had served with the Confederate armies, and that, on the day previous, shots from the Institute had been fired upon his army.

Lieutenant John R. Meigs, a recent graduate of West Point, was probably in charge of the detail which started the flames. There was last-minute looting of the buildings. A soldier carried out a stuffed gannet from the museum; the staff surgeon appeared with a perfect human skeleton as his prize.

Hay and wood shaving saturated with turpentine were ignited and while the barracks flamed Lieutenant Meigs wrote in the record book of the Dialectic Literary Society, ". . . At this moment the Virginia Military Institute is a mass of flames." Soon a black cloud enveloped Lexington. The time was between nine and ten o'clock on Sunday morning, June 12.

In addition to William McKinley, another future president of the United States stood among the officers who watched fire consume the Institute. Lieutenant Colonel Rutherford B. Hayes, commander of the First Brigade of Crooks' army, wrote to his wife on this day:

"General Hunter burns the Virginia Military Institute. This does not suit many of us . . . General Hunter will be as odious as Butler or Pope to the Rebels and not gain our good opinion either."

Even so, Colonel Hayes mentioned in the same letter that he was sending along, as a gift to his sons, "a pretty little cadet musket."

While the Institute burned, one of Hunter's provost marshals named Captain Matt Berry brought to the attention of his General a proclamation issued by ex-Governor John Letcher shortly before the Federals had entered the town. Letcher, a resident of Lexington, urged the citizenry to rise up and wage guerrilla warfare upon the Yankee invader.

General Hunter was enraged, both at the proclamation and at the "ignominious flight" of the ex-Governor. This was the last straw—a Southern statesman inciting the populace to wage "unlawful and uncivilized warfare." In retaliation he ordered Captain Berry to burn the Letcher house.

Berry rode at once to the Letcher home, located at the bottom of the hill between the grounds of Washington College and the Institute, where he gave Mrs. Letcher ten minutes to vacate the house. She asked to see his order; he replied it was verbal. She asked if she could remove clothing belonging to her and her family, but as this was refused, she left the house.

Her daughter, Miss Lizzie Letcher, collected what clothes she could, but encountering her in the hallway, Berry took them from her arms and used them as fuel for the fire he had lit on the parlor floor with camphine. Without tears the family sat quietly in the front yard while the house burned.

Looting the house had been strictly forbidden, but some of it evaded the attention of the guards. One Federal soldier, ignoring the blaze, sat on the backstairs eating a jar of brandied peaches until the heat drove him away. Another recalled many years later, "the most expensive cooking I ever saw was when we burned Gov. Letcher's house . . . My breakfast was a piece of salt pork cooked in the silver plate over a fire made of a rosewood piano."

The house of Letcher's mother, an aged widow of seventy-eight, caught fire twice, since it was located only forty feet from her son's house; but each time the blaze was extinguished by Captain Towns, who had spent the night with the Letchers. He was assisted by volunteers among the soldiers and officers, but he was unable to prevent the widow's house from being pillaged afterward.

Meanwhile, the Gilham and Williamson cottages up at the Institute were on fire. In their panic, the townspeople erroneously believed that Hunter intended to burn the whole town, and there can be no doubt that many Union soldiers preyed upon those fears to exact tribute from the residents.

Perhaps the quietest man in Lexington during these days was Anderson, the Negro baker at the Institute. Asked afterward if he had thought of turning himself over to the Federal authorities and asking for freedom, he replied, "No, indeed—if I had told the Yankees that, they would have burnt me up with the other state property."

The fear that Washington College would be destroyed was heightened when soldiers pelted the statue of George Washington on the cupola under the mistaken notion that it was a statue of Jefferson Davis. An elderly trustee went to Hunter's headquarters to request a guard for the college.

As Colonel D. H. Strother, Union chief of staff, rode back with him to attend to the matter, he tried to explain why they were disposed to treat the College in a manner different from the Institute. "I do not wish to discuss the matter, Sir," broke in the trustee. Strother, pointing to the smouldering Institute, replied, "You perceive that we do not intend to discuss it either."

One place in Lexington was respected by all Union soldiers—

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Stonewall Jackson's grave. All day Sunday the enclosure with the tall pine flag staff was crowded with men who came to see the resting place of the Confederacy's most legendary soldier. Further, when the Union army marched out of town on June 14, many columns halted, removed their hats, and then moved on solemnly.

On Sunday night it was rumored that on the following day all private dwellings in the town would be searched for firearms and Institute property. By now it was clear that the possession of any weapon might be interpreted by Hunter as evidence of guerilla intentions.

Mrs. Preston, recalling that Stonewall Jackson's sword was concealed in the garret above her portico, arose at one in the morning and crept up there "as stealthily as a burglar" to retrieve it. At first she hid it in the piano, but this seemed too obvious. Eventually the sword of Stonewall was concealed in the outhouse until the Federals left.

After the burnings on Sunday the occupation of Lexington settled quietly into a routine. Hunter was forced to delay his march to Lynchburg because one of his brigadiers of cavalry, Duffie, had completely disappeared on a scouting expedition east of the Blue Ridge, and did not return until the evening of June 13.

The statue of Washington at the Institute, a copy of Houdon's original at Richmond, was removed from its pedestal along with the ornamental French cannon to rescue them from "the degenerate sons of worthy sires." Mills in the vicinity as well as iron furnaces continued to be destroyed.

Early in the morning of June 14, Hunter's Army of West Virginia departed on its ill-fated expedition against Lynchburg. Behind him lay charred embers of the Virginia Military Institute; before him lay the avenger, in the person of General Jubal Early, who would drive Hunter's broken forces across the Alleghenies to the Ohio River.

When compared with the monumental march of Sherman across Georgia a few months later, the sack of Lexington seems but a petty affair. But it shocked the Confederacy like no other single act before it during the war.

Hunter's destructive force was the spectre of eventual Union victory that hovered everywhere in the South during the spring of 1864. That such a man could have led such an army so deeply into a territory where no Union army had ever penetrated before testified to the inexorable strength of the Northern and the debility of the Southern armies.

Stonewall Jackson, for whom Lexington was home, might have saved them, but he, like so many, was dead. And even the counter-march of Jubal Early, who seemed for a time to inherit the Jackson boldness, was only the last surge of a dying cause which expired at the point where Hunter had begun—Cedar Creek. ■

The Society met for its summer dinner meeting, July 26, 1965, at Mountain View School. Gen. Letcher presided. The program consisted of a paper on Alexander McNutt prepared by Mrs. Charles McCulloch, a charter member of the Society. A considerably condensed version of the paper appears here. □

ABOUT THE YEAR 1745, young John McNutt and his wife, Catherine Anderson, came to the Valley of Virginia near Lexington. They had come from Londonderry and landed in Newcastle, Delaware, which was the main port of the Ulster emigrants to America. Unlike the earlier immigrants, they did not make a home there but came at once to Benjamin Borden's tract in Virginia.

Borden had advertised well and secured a good class of homesteaders for his 92,000 acre grant in the "back country of Virginia." Most of these came, and continued to come, from the Pennsylvania settlements.

By the time the McNutts reached their destination, the countryside was showing signs of the white man's presence. For some seven years the Thomas Paxtons had been living on their plantation near the McNutt's land. Some four miles north, the McDowell families were well settled having been there since 1737. Gristmills were operating, stores and trading had been established, and meeting houses were built.

The Archibald Alexanders came that same year—maybe in the same caravan—the Widow Paxton and her three grown sons had come before. Possibly the McNutts had introductions to kith and kin, for most of these settlers had been originally from Donegal and around Londonderry.

John's parents had come to America some years earlier and at this date (1745) were living in Orange County, Virginia, more than a hundred miles north of Borden's Grant. The young couple could have stopped by en route to the Valley. We have nothing further on the parents, but Augusta County court records (in Staunton) show that three other sons eventually bought land and settled near John in what is now Rockbridge County. Two of these had wives and children. The eldest brother, Alexander, who was unmarried, stayed with John and Catherine, having come around 1747 or 1748. His deed of 1753 reads: "From Benj. Borden, Exec of Benj. Borden, deceased, to Alex'r McNutt eldest son and heir of Alex'r McNutt, deceased, late of Orange Co., Va., for a tract of land, part of the Big Survey, etc., etc."

These McNutts, or McNaughts as it was originally spelled, like the other Valley residents, had left Ireland in the exodus of the

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1730's, but like these others they were not Irish. They were Scotch; Scotch in tradition and custom; Scotch in their religious tenets of John Knox; Scotch in their clannishness, their hardiness, their frugality, their fearless adventurous spirit, and their firmness (or stubbornness).

John's brother, Alexander McNutt, who came to live with them before 1750, was evidently the embodiment of the Scotch characteristics. Daring and resolute, he must have had, too, a rare winsomeness that attracted later the thousands who put their trust in him.

In Virginia, Alexander became an active part of the community life, bought land and joined the local militia. In 1756, he was in the company from Augusta that joined Col. Andrew Lewis in the Sandy Creek expedition against the French and Indians. Withers, in *Border Warfare* says, "A journal of this campaign was kept by Lieutenant McNutt, a gentleman of liberal education and fine mind. On his return to Williamsburg he presented it to Gov. Fauquier [of Virginia] by whom it was placed in the executive archives."*

Only three years after this date McNutt was in England, having travelled extensively first in Ohio and to Williamsburg, Philadelphia, and Boston.

It would seem that he was sent by some authority on this English trip, for he bore with him letters from Gov. Dinwiddie of Virginia to King George II recommending him for recognition of his exceptional services in the Sandy Creek expedition and other campaigns including Braddock's.

This introduction secured him formal audience with the King, and he was rewarded by being made a knight. He was also presented the handsome sword used in the ceremony which had an inset of silver in the hilt engraved with his name and probably the date. This ceremony occurred in October, 1759, in the latter months of George II's reign. The next January, 1760, George III came to throne.

I cannot discover what order of knighthood was conferred, but ensuing gifts indicate that it could have been "Baronet of Nova Scotia." New baronettes have always been profitable to the Crown. The baronet had to pay money, furnish men and return other benefits to the British government. The Nova Scotia Baronetcy had been created in 1611 and 1624 in the reign of James I. At this time, tremendous efforts were being made to develop a profitable colony there.

In the seventeenth century, Sir William Alexander (later to become the Earl of Stirling), who gave the name Nova Scotia, had been given land and was made its first baronet. He was also given complete authority and public funds to secure desirable settlers for new territory. It was relative to this colonization that he had so highly recommended his countrymen as settlers.

This earlier movement did succeed in making Nova Scotia an English province. But it never prospered, and in the next hundred

*WITHERS'
CRONICLE OF
BORDER WARFARE
by A. S. Withers
1895. p. 86.

years the French gained possession of it along with the rest of Canada. The English and Scots willingly gave up their farms to the Acadians.

In the year 1759, Canada again changed ownership following the conquest of Quebec by the English under Gen. James Wolfe. Parliament by fall of that year was anxious to fill this rich farming country with occupants loyal to Britain. England feared the French sympathizers who were left and ousted them. The Acadians especially—as we know in Longfellow's *Evangeline*—were cruelly evicted.

At this time the newly knighted Alexander McNutt was given miles (not acres) of the land on which he was required to settle loyal Englishmen. He was authorized to develop all natural resources, to promote industry, to make the colony an asset to Britain. In this he was exceedingly successful.

"In 1759," according to Mrs. McCormick,* "Alexander McNutt and his brother William first came to the Province (Nova Scotia). There were thirty men and no women in their party. It was chiefly reconnoitering."

*GENEALOGIES AND
REMINISCENCES
by H. H. McCormick
Chicago, 1897

There are few records about Alexander's brother, William. Possibly William did not come to Virginia with his brother but stayed in Ireland, and Alexander joined up with him during a trip to Londonderry, or perhaps he could have immigrated later.

Whenever this first reconnoitering trip occurred, he did take William, who two years later, in 1761, took his young wife there to live. He received a large grant in Anslow Township, designed and built its first church, was a noted sportsman, and had a fine house, became wealthy and left a family which is still represented there.

One can hardly believe the extent of the land grants made to the McNutts—200,000 acres in Pictou and no less than 1,600,000 acres in other parts of the Province. Some of this land is now New Brunswick.

Pictou was known as the "Irish Grant" because its settlers were the Ulster families. Another was called the "Philadelphia Grant" because its occupants had come from there, sponsored partly by Benjamin Franklin who had collaborated with McNutt.

In addition to these large tracts, the greater part of Prince Edward's Isle was given to Alexander in addition to one little island still called "McNutt's" at the entrance of Shelbourne Harbor. On this latter island, he built his own home where he lived off and on for about forty years.

Col. McNutt collected immigrants from his old home in North Ireland as well as from Connecticut and Massachusetts. The first shipment from Ireland arrived at Halifax, October 19, 1761. The next March he brought 170 more, also from Ulster. McNutt made at least three round trips to England before 1776.

In all, he brought, as several official letters state, more than 2000

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people to the Province and thousands of pounds of shipping. When he was finally forced to leave Halifax in 1776, he was preparing to bring in several thousand more families.

Says an extant letter: "The character of these colonists is lauded and it is declared that for sobriety, industry, exemplary conduct and standing they are superior to the recent immigrants who have come into the New England Territory." This excellence is attributed to Col. McNutt's zeal and resolution. In fact, with the exception of Gov. Lawrence, no individual played so active a part in the resettlement of Nova Scotia as Alexander McNutt. Gov. Lawrence's death in October, 1760, and the outbreak of the American Revolution together gave the death blow to many other plans McNutt had for this area.

At the beginning of the Revolutionary War, McNutt left Nova Scotia to join the forces of the Colonies. He served in various capacities and places during the war. After Yorktown, he returned to his brother's Virginia home and his own farm. His land then lay in Rockbridge County which had been established on January 1, 1778, from parts of the existing counties of Botetourt and Augusta.

But after a sojourn with John's family, he made the long trip back to McNutt's Island, where he lived several years undisturbed, though his royal estates had been legally confiscated by England, because of his participation in the Revolutionary War.

McCormick writes further: "It would appear that Alexander McNutt was the principal grantee in the Province (i. e. Nova Scotia). . . . Circumstances were against him; the outbreak of the American Revolution blasted his prospects . . . but the Nova Scotia of today is none-the-less his debtor for many of the pillars of her foundation."

In the late 1780's, he was again in Virginia with the John McNutts, where he lived until his death in August, 1811. On August 23, 1796, he conveyed, by a most definitely worded deed, 100,000 acres of his Nova Scotia land to "The Trustees of Liberty Hall Academy: to assist said Academy that it may always be able to give youths a complete liberal education and especially in all branches of human literature necessary to qualify for the ministry of the gospel . . . and to obtain necessary additions to its library and apparatus . . . Lastly . . . to support annually lectures on human depravity by the fall of Adam and by man's actual sins, also on their recovery by unmerited grace in Jesus Christ."

He carefully detailed the exact location of this bequest "as surveyed by Anthony Wayne in 1763," and made specific provision that if the trustees preferred selling rather than keeping the land, they should get all the money due. No money was, of course, ever collected. The complete deed is still owned by Washington and Lee.

Col. McNutt took an active part in civic life as well as the church. He is said to have served in the Virginia legislature (but I have not been able to establish this). His eager energy did lead

him to Richmond and other places when political action was discussed. He visited his friends, too. One of these was Thomas Jefferson, whose home at Shadwell was not too far for a day's ride from Rockbridge County.

Mrs. McCormick says: "As long as he lived he wore the court costume of George II, with buckles and ornamental buttons of silver and trimmings of gold lace, a cocked hat, powdered hair and top boots. His sword never left his side and it is related that when he was an old man one of his nephews climbing on his knee asked why he always wore a sword. He replied, 'It wouldn't do to hunt the weapon when the enemy is at hand.' "

This sword was treasured by John's descendants and kept at Tuscan Villa, built about 1822, on the north east side of South River by John McNutt's grandson, John Glasgow.

Tuscan Villa estate is near the Jordan Buena Vista furnace, which furnished iron to Richmond during the Confederacy. A detail of men in Gen. Hunter's army, which raided Lexington June 12, 1864, was sent to destroy the furnace. This they did so thoroughly that it never functioned again.

The soldiers went on to the Glasgow home about a mile down South River. There they cut down cherry trees in fruit, took the bacon and other food, stole the silver and movable valuables, and looted and damaged whatever they could. This sword was included in the stolen items.

Its recovery is another interesting story. A letter from Miss Mary T. Glasgow, who gave the sword to the Rockbridge Historical Society, tells about it:

My father, Alexander McNutt Glasgow, was in New York on his wedding trip in May 1874. While walking up Fifth Avenue a man spoke to him for Gen. Grant. (He was said to look like Gen. Grant). Father said, "I would like to meet Gen. Grant." This man said, "I served under him during the war and will tell him."

Gen. Grant called on Father at the Waldorf. Father told him about the sword. (It had been stolen during Hunter's raid), and he said, "I will get the roll of Gen. Hunter's Company that was assigned to that section." He sent it to father, who then wrote to each one until he got an answer saying this man had it. He wrote that he took it because he wanted the silver scabbard and the name plate. This plate had been broken off the hilt of the sword when the blade was returned. The scabbard with its silver chains was not returned.

Gen. Grant gave father a cigar that we cherished until last year, when it disappeared.

I believe I have told you all I remember.

Mary T. Glasgow

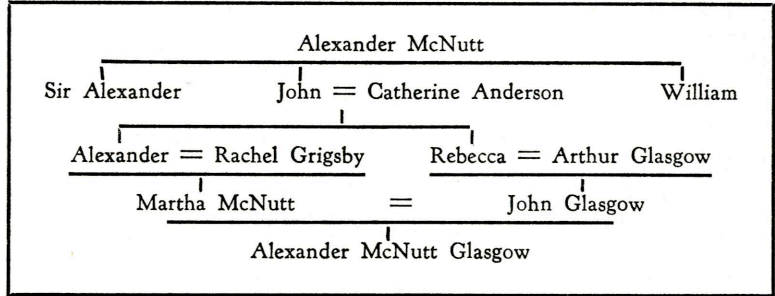
May 14, 1965

Miss Mary T. Glasgow was the last member of her family to live at Tuscan Villa. In 1964, the house, which had been in the Glasgow family since its construction, was purchased by Dr. & Mrs. David Sprunt. Miss Glasgow died December 13, 1965, in Buena Vista.

**The Grimke
Sisters by
Mrs. Robert
S. Munger**

Miss Glasgow said that her father, when writing, had also inquired about the family silver which had been stolen during the raid: spoons, forks, coffee pot, etc. One man answered that inquiry. Yes, he had a lot of the silver which he had taken because he wanted it, and he intended to keep it!

“Squire” Alexander Glasgow of Tuscan Villa was grandson of the pioneer John McNutt. His mother was Martha McNutt, John’s grand-



daughter who married John Glasgow. He was namesake and grand nephew of Col. Alexander McNutt. It was his family who kept the royal sword, which, after the sale of Tuscan Villa in 1964, was given to the Historical Society. ■

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he Society met at the Castle, October 25, 1965, Dr. Turner presiding. The program was presented by Mrs. Robert S. Munger, who read a paper on the Grimké sisters, Sarah (1791-1873) and Angelina (1805-1879). These women, daughters of a Supreme Court Justice of South Carolina, were raised in the affluent, aristocratic society of Charleston in the first quarter of the 19th century. However, their religious and moral convictions led them into the maelstrom of the early abolition movement.

The Grimkés spoke in pulpits and at public meetings in New York and Massachusetts, pleading the cause of “their brothers in bondage”. They were the first women to address mixed (“promiscuous”) audiences, and Angelina was the first woman in history to speak before a legislative body when she addressed the Massachusetts legislature in 1838. By being the first to exercise woman’s right to speak in public, the Grimkés became the historical forebears of the long and lively Women’s Suffrage Movement.

Throughout her paper Mrs. Munger often referred to letters and manuscripts of the Grimkés and their anti-slavery circle, thereby emphasising the pleasure and excitement of original research. Mrs. Munger has done extensive research on the Grimké sisters at the Clements Library, Ann Arbor Michigan, the Boston (Mass.) Public Library and the Charleston (S. C.) Library Society. □

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Mrs. C. E. N. Hall, *Verona*; Mrs. R. L. Hardin, *Buena Vista*; Mrs. Jesse Harper; Mrs. William O. Hay, Jr.; Col. & Mrs. S. M. Heflin; Mrs. Gordon G. Heiner; Mrs. D. Edward Henson, Sr., *Buena Vista*; Dr. S. Palmer Hileman, *Millboro*; Mrs. L. Douglas Hill, *Buena Vista*; Mr. Dorsey C. Hopkins; Miss Jennie M. Hopkins; Mr. Kent C. Horner, *New York City*; Miss Guendolen Howe; Dr. William D. Hoyt, Jr., *Rockport, Mass.*; Mr. T. E. Huffman; Mr.

**Society's
Membership
as of
December
31, 1965**

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December
31, 1965**

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Necrology (January 1, 1961, to December 31, 1965): Brig. Gen. James A. Anderson, Dr. Leslie Lyle Campbell, Mr. Walter Campbell, Col. William Couper, Mrs. Charles H. Davidson, Sr., Mrs. George W. Diehl, Mrs. Augusta B. Fothergill, Dr. Francis P. Gaines, Col. Gordon G. Heiner, Miss Anne R. Johnstone, Miss Susan M. Johnstone, Miss Mary McNeil, Mrs. L. W. McNulty, Mr. Stuart Moore, Miss Evelyn Nelson, Mr. Earl Paxton, Mr. S. G. Rockwell, Mrs. John Ross, Mr. T. B. Shackford, Miss Edmonia L. Smith, Col. A. S. J. Tucker, Dr. Harrington Waddell, Mr. O. S. Wallace, Mrs. George D. Wiltshire, Mrs. J. B. Wood. □

Probably no one in this generation has possessed a more intimate knowledge of the history of VMI, Lexington, and Rockbridge County than Col. Couper. Graduating from VMI in civil engineering in 1904, he spent a number of years in New York City on engineering and construction projects. But his wide range of interests, tremendous energy, and outstanding ability in many fields needed a broader outlet. In 1925 Col. Couper returned to Lexington to take up the ramifying duties of business executive officer at his alma mater. The title is completely inadequate to describe the variety of responsibilities that he willingly assumed in the construction of buildings, the keeping of records, the organization of the Alumni Association, and the development of the athletic program within the Southern Conference. He left an indelible stamp upon the Institute he served so well.

But official duties were not enough for Col. Couper's cascading energies. He found an outlet in the writing of history where his propensity for gathering facts and remembering details was exceedingly valuable. Designated VMI historiographer in 1934, Col. Couper prepared for the Centennial in 1939, *One Hundred Years at V.M.I.*, a four-volume history which demonstrated his scholarly abilities. This source is the work to which VMI men refer when they want to get the facts. Later, Col. Couper published a multi-volumed history of the Shenandoah Valley.

**In Memory
of Col.
William Couper
by Col.
George M.
Brooke**

In Memory
of W. Houston
Barclay from
notes by Mrs.
Charles
McCulloch

Upon his retirement from VMI in 1954, Col. Couper devoted much time to local history. He became an authority on the history of Rockbridge County, and by preparing scholarly papers, he shared his knowledge with the community. Also, he gave generously of his time, holding various offices in the Rockbridge Historical Society, including that of President. To Col. Couper, indefatigable worker and true scholar, all who have an interest in this county's heritage pay tribute. □

William Houston Barclay was born in Lexington, December 27, 1889. He was a true son of Rockbridge County; his ancestors, since the first settling of this area, had been prominent in the church, education, and politics in the county. He himself was an active and dedicated member of the Lexington Presbyterian Church and participated in many areas of the town's civic life.

In 1919, he married Martha Jane Hyde, of Wichita, Kansas. They lived in Kansas for many years where their four children were born and where he was engaged in the florist and insurance business.

Mrs. McCulloch, in a tribute to him shortly after his death, said, "It is especially fitting that this society should keep his memory green. In the summer of 1939, Houston told us of the Wichita Historical Society—how they treasured relics of the past and what they had been able to accomplish by a united effort. We thought at the time we could find people here who would want to work with the same purposes in mind. The result was that a few weeks later a meeting was held August 9, 1939, at Ann Smith Academy, and the Rockbridge County Historical Society was formed."

Since then, Houston Barclay has been an inspirational influence to the group. Of particular importance was the part he played in the ceremonies commemorating the outbreak of the Civil War in 1861. His paper, one which encompasses many anecdotes about his family, can be found in this volume.

Shortly before his death, he completed a study of Spotswood Styles and his poems. In his boyhood he had known "Spot" Styles and often heard him recite his poems. But only in later years did he come to appreciate the unusual talent of the Negro who for many years was a warehouse foreman in Lexington.

Houston Barclay was deeply religious. But as Mrs. McCulloch said of him, "The stern Calvinism of the past generations blossomed into a happy, active Christianity manifested in everyday life." He could see humor in almost everything while at the same time had a deep and abiding concern for his church, his family and his community. Here was an uncommon man. □

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the Rockbridge
Historical
Society**

INDEX

Note: An effort has been made to identify persons by their full names and proper titles if possible, even though, in many cases, only their last names were given in the text itself. Unless otherwise noted geographic locations (houses, churches, towns, etc.) are in Rockbridge County. Names of members of the Society are not included unless mentioned in an article.

Abb's Valley, Tazewell Co.:
 captives of, i. 83-86, 93; v. 37-38
 description of, i. 80
 massacre, i. 81-83; v. 37
 naming of, i. 80; v. 36
 settlers, early, i. 78, 79; v. 32, 33,
 34, 35, 37
 Accokeek Furnace, [Va.?], iv. 21
 Adams, Mrs. Lewis Whittaker, v. 14
 William, iii. 42
 Agnew, Mrs. Henry, article by, iv.
 12-13
 Albemarle Iron Works Furnace, Al-
 bemarle Co., iv. 22
 Alexander, Andrew, v. 81
 Ann Dandridge Aylett (Mrs. An-
 drew), v. 81
 Archibald, Sr., v. 81; vi. 93
 Archibald (sheriff), i. 64; v. 25, 88
 Rev. Dr. Archibald, vi. 23
 birthplace, ii. 29; v. 44, 88
 and Great Awakening, iv. 10, 11;
 v. 29
 life of, v. 88
 memorial plaque, v. 43, 44, 45,
 61, 88
 missionary journey, iv. 8
 on Benjamin Porter Grigsby, iv.
 8
 on Rockbridge Co. morals, i. 70
 on John Blair Smith, iv. 11
 on Zachariah Johnston, v. 63, 66
 Elizabeth Campbell (Mrs. Wm. [of
 Timber Ridge]), v. 10
 Janetta Waddell (Mrs. [Rev.]
 Archibald), v. 88
 Dr. John H., i. 11
 Capt. Joseph, v. 10
 Louise Houston, article by, iv. 4
 Margaret. *See* Graham, Margaret
 Alexander
 Margaret. *See* Lyle, Margaret Ale-
 xander
 Mary Ann. *See* Anderson, Mary
 Ann Alexander
 Phoebe. *See* Caruthers, Phoebe Ale-
 xander
 Sarah Reid (Mrs. Joseph), v. 10
 William (father of Rev. Archi-
 bald), i. 73, 74; v. 88
 residence-store of, i. 73; vi. 22
 W&L, gifts to, i. 69, 74
 William (of Timber Ridge), v. 10
 Sir William (later, Earl of Stirl-
 ing), vi. 94
 William D., v. 82, 83
 Alexander family, i. 16, 20; v. 9, 11,
 16, 73

"Alexander-Withrow House," i. 73-
 74; v. 92; vi. 22-23
 Allen, Cary, iv. 10
 Alphin, L. L., iii. 5
 Anderson, Anne Thomas (Mrs.
 Wm.), v. 80
 Catherine. *See* McNutt, Catherine
 Anderson
 Clinton L., article by, vi. 15-21
 Ellen G. Anderson (Mrs. W. A.),
 v. 83
 Ellen Graham, iv. 34; v. 8, 92-93
 article by, iv. 5
 Francis Thomas, iii. 13; v. 80-81
 Gen. James, article by, v. 97-102
 Rev. James, i. 45; iii. 40
 J. D., v. 77
 John, v. 34
 Gen. Joseph, v. 83
 Joseph R., v. 59
 Joseph Reid, v. 82
 Mrs. M. A., iv. 21
 Margaret Noely (Mrs. Robt.), v.
 80
 Mary Ann Alexander (Mrs. F. T.),
 v. 79-80, 81
 Mary Louisa Blair (Mrs. W. A.),
 v. 83
 Rev. Dr. O. M., iii. 44
 Robert, v. 80
 Ruth Floyd. *See* McCulloch, Ruth
 Floyd Anderson
 Sallie Archer (Mrs. Joseph), v. 83
 Col. William, v. 80, 84
 William Alexander, iii. 21; v. 73
 ancestry of, v. 80-81
 attorney-general of Virginia, v.
 87
 business interests, v. 83-84
 childhood of, v. 79, 80, 81
 Civil War, participation in, v.
 81-82
 General Assembly, delegate to,
 v. 42, 84-86
 law studies at UVa. v. 82-83
 marriages, v. 83
 and progressive Democratic
 movement, v. 86-87
 Anderson family, ii. 10; v. 14
 Anderson-McCormick Election Law
 (Va., 1884), v. 85
 Angel, Nathan, iii. 42
 Ann Smith Academy, iii. 25, 48; iv.
 11; vi. 65
 Anslow, Nova Scotia, Canada, vi. 95
 Antietam, Battle of, vi. 18-19
 Archer family, i. 16
 architecture, Virginia, vi. 30
 "Arlington" (Custis-Lee mansion), vi.
 85
 Armstrong, Rev. Dr. George D., v.
 23, 24
 Elizabeth A. *See* Cook, Elizabeth A.
 Armstrong
 Robert, iii. 42
 Arnold, Stephen, ii. 10
 Arnold's Valley, ii. 9-10
 Arsenal, Lexington, i. 28; v. 49; vi.
 26, 65
 Associate Reformed Presbyterian

Church, v. 11
 See also the following churches:
 Ebenezer; Old Providence, Augusta Co.; Timber Ridge
 Atchison, Rosanna. See Grigsby, Rosanna Atchison
 Atlanta, Ga., v. 71-72
 Augusta Academy. See Washington & Lee University
 Augusta County:
 Committee of Safety, v. 62, 66
 divided by legislature, i. 63; v. 18 elections
 General Assembly, v. 63, 67
 presidential (1788), v. 63
 Va. convention to ratify U. S. Constitution (1788), delegates to, v. 66, 68, 69
 establishment of, v. 19, 34
 militia Court Martial, v. 62
 settlers, Scotch-Irish, v. 16; vi. 63, 94
 Augustine, Mrs. Jean, article by, v. 44-45
 Averell, Gen. William W., vi. 34, 42 n. 5 & 12, 87
 Avery & Bradley Foundry, v. 25
 Awakening, the Great. See Great Awakening, The

Baggs, Jane, i. 49; v. 18
 Sarah, i. 49; v. 18
 Bailey, Rev. William L., iii. 27
 Baker University, founding of, v. 40
 "Balcony Downs," Battle of, i. 9-10, 11, 21-22; iv. 29
 Baldwin, C. C., iii. 9
 Laomi, v. 97
 Ball, Eli, vi. 70-71
 Ballagh, Margaret Tate Kinnear (Mrs. James), v. 13
 Ballagh family, v. 13
 Baltimore, Md.:
 investors of
 jealousy, object of, iii. 33
 and Lexington "boom," v. 71, 72, 75
 and Valley Railroad, iii. 19
 as market for Rockbridge Co., v. 84
 Baltimore & Ohio Railroad, v. 74
 jealousy, object of, iii. 33
 reaches Lexington, iii. 19, 22; v. 84
 Baltimore & Virginia Investment Co., v. 75
 Bank of Lexington, v. 78
 banks, desire for in Rockbridge Co., v. 48
 Baptist Church in Rockbridge Co., vi. 63-64
 See also the following churches:
 Buffalo; Goshen; Manly Memorial; Neriah; Panther's Gap
 Barbour, John S., v. 86
 Philip, v. 57
 Barclay, Mrs. A. Telford, Sr., vi. 13-14
 A. Telford, Jr., v. 72, 76; vi. 12
 Hugh, i. 65; iii. 8, 26

Martha Jane Hyde (Mrs. W. H.), vi. 102
 William Houston, iii. intro.; vi. 102
 article by, vi. 9-14
 "Barclay House," vi. 7, 14
 Barrett, Col. John G., article by, vi. 30-43
 Barrier, Casper, v. 35
 Bartram, John, iv. 31
 batteaux, river, v. 25
 Battle, Mary. See Stanard, Mary
 Battle
 Battle Creek, Battle of, i. 9-10
 Baxter, Rev. Dr. George A., iii. 41, 42; v. 29
 Bean, Dr. William Gleason, articles by, ii. 17; iv. 36; vi. 43-46
 Beard, Rev. Christian, iii. 4
 Walter E., i. 95
 Beatty's Mill, iv. 7
 "Beaumont" ("Barclay House"), vi. 7, 14
 "Bellefont," Augusta Co., i. 21
 "Bellevue," i. 85-86, 95
 Bell family, i. 20
 Benton, Elizabeth McDowell (Mrs. T. H.), i. 10
 Sen. Thomas Hart, i. 10
 Berry, Mrs. Agnes McCown, v. 13
 Elizabeth, v. 18
 Capt. Matt, vi. 90
 "Berry Hill," iv. 28
 "Berry Hill," Orange Co., vi. 30-31
 Bethany Lutheran Church, iii. 3, 4-6
 Bethel Presbyterian Church, Augusta Co., i. 91
 Bethesda Presbyterian Church, ii. 18; iii. 26; vi. 17
 Beverly, William, i. 21, 90; v. 34
 Beverly Manor. See Beverly's Grant
 Beverly's Grant, i. 14, 19, 21, 90; v. 34
 map, i. frontispiece
 Beverly's Mill Place. See Staunton, Va.
 Birmingham, Ala., v. 71-72
 Bisset, Susanna. See Carey, Susanna
 Bisset
 Bittle, Rev. Dr. David F., iii. 4
 black oath, the, i. 90
 Black Wolf (Indian warrior), v. 37
 Blain, Rev. Daniel, iii. 27; iv. 11; v. 28, 29
 Lucy, vi. 80
 Polly Hanna (Mrs. Daniel), iv. 11
 Blair, James, iii. 42
 Jane. See Wallace, Jane Blair
 Rev. John, i. 46, 91; iii. 40
 Judith Nicoll (Mrs. W. B.), v. 83
 Mary Louisa. See Anderson, Mary
 Louisa Blair
 Col. William B., iv. 5; v. 83
 "Blandome," vi. 13
 Bloody Island, v. 95
 Blue Hotel, iv. 18-21
 Bobb, Charles, v. 28
 Mary Houston Hamilton (Mrs. Charles), v. 28
 Bobbitt, M. L., v. 31
 bond-issue, railroad, iii. 19-22

INDEX

INDEX

- Bondurant family, i. 88
- Borden, Benjamin, Sr., i. 8, 9, 16, 20, 21; vi. 93
- death of, i. 22
- George II, audience with, i. 20-21
- Grant, attempt to settle, i. 14-15
- , surveyed, i. 15-16
- , received, i. 13, 20, 90
- , renewed, i. 14
- origins of, i. 12
- Valley, first visit to, i. 13
- Benjamin, Jr., i. 21, 22; iii. 44; v. 63
- Magdalena Woods McDowell (Mrs. Benj., Jr.). *See* Bowyer, Magdalena Woods McDowell Borden
- Zeruiah (Mrs. Benj., Sr.), i. 12
- "Borden Case, the celebrated," i. 23
- Borden Manor. *See* Borden's Grant
- Borden's Grant, i. 10, 23-24
- attempts to settle, i. 14-15
- claims, contested, i. 23
- given to Borden, i. 13, 20, 90
- map, i. *frontispiece*
- offer of George II to enlarge, i. 20
- renewed, i. 14
- settlers, early, i. 8, 15, 16-17, 20; v. 18; vi. 93
- size of, i. 18
- surveys of, i. 9, 15-16, 20
- Boston, Mass.:
- investors of, v. 24
- Valley aids during blockade, v. 91
- Botetourt County:
- divided by legislature, i. 63; v. 18
- settlers, Scotch-Irish, v. 16
- Botts, John Minor, iii. 3
- Boude, Capt. John C., iv. 14; v. 72
- Bouknight, Rev. L. E., iii. 6
- article by, iii. 3-6
- bounties, wild animal, i. 18
- Bowie family, iv. 21
- Bowman, William, v. 23
- Bowyer, Allen, v. 94
- Gen. John, i. 16, 63, 64, 67; iii. 47
- fined by court, i. 17-18
- life of, i. 22-23
- Magdalena Woods McDowell Borden (Mrs. John), i. 8, 23, 63
- described by Mary Greenlee, i. 22
- Bradley & Lyle Foundry, v. 25
- Bradly, William, iii. 42
- Brady, Douglas E. Sr., article by, ii. 24
- Brander, Lt. Thomas, vi. 19-20
- Bratton, Robert, i. 17
- Bratton family, i. 88
- Braxton, Allen Caperton, v. 87
- Carter, v. 67
- Breckinridge, Maj. Gen. John C., vi. 32, 41
- bridge, covered (N. River), vi. 13, 23, 66, 87
- Bridger, Jim, iii. 17
- Briery Presbyterian Church, Prince Edward Co., iv. 10
- Brockenbrough, Catherine Nelson Page (Mrs. W.S.R.), iv. 35
- John White, iii. 8; iv. 35; vi. 39, 42n. 8
- law school of, vi. 43n. 23
- Gen. Lee, visit to at "Derwent," vi. 80
- pre-Civil War activities, iii. 9; v. 9, 51
- Judith White. *See* McGuire, Judith White Brockenbrough
- Louise. *See* Semmes, Louise Brockenbrough
- William Spencer Roane, iv. 35
- Brooke, Gen. George Mercer, iv. 32
- Col. George Mercer, Jr., articles by, iv. 32-34; v. 4; vi. 8-9, 78, 101-102
- Lt. John Mercer, iv. 5, 32-34; vi. 8-9, 78
- Katherine Corbin Pendleton (Mrs. J. M.), iv. 32; v. 70; vi. 36, 42n. 18
- Lucy Thomas (Mrs. [Gen.] G. M.), iv. 32
- Mary Elizabeth Selden Garnett (Mrs. J. M.), iv. 32, 33
- Brooke gun, iv. 5, 34
- Brown, Addie McChesney. *See* Davidson, Addie McChesney Brown
- Frances. *See* Morrison, Frances Brown
- Henry B., i. 85
- Rev. James Moore, i. 87, 95; v. 38
- Rev. John, i. 46, 92, 93, 99; iii. 40
- Mary Moore (Mrs. Samuel, Sr.), i. 78, 85-87; iii. 43; v. 38
- ancestry, i. 79-81
- cradle-bed, i. 88-89 (picture of, i. 88a)
- descendants, i. 87-89
- Indians, taken captive by, i. 83-84; v. 37
- massacre, survivor of, i. 81-83; v. 37
- Rockbridge Co., return to, i. 84-85; v. 37, 38
- Rev. Samuel, Sr., i. 85-87, 95; iii. 43; v. 38
- classical school of, i. 85, 87, 99
- described by Foote, i. 85
- by Gov. James McDowell, i. 85
- and Great Awakening, i. 94
- ministry of, i. 85, 93-94
- Rev. Samuel, Jr., iii. 43
- Sinclair, v. 98
- William, i. 74, 75; iv. 20
- "Brown-Hanna House," iv. 20
- Brownsburg, i. 100; vi. 12
- Brownsburg Academy (Presbyterian High School), i. 100; iii. 27
- Brownsburg Public High School, i. 100
- Brown's Raid (John), vi. 47, 48-49
- Brush, Blakeley, iii. 42
- Bryan, Joseph, v. 82
- Buchanan, Col. John, v. 34
- Buena Vista:
- "boom," iii. 50; iv. 36; v. 72, 76
- predecessors
- Green Forest, v. 72
- Hart's Bottom, iii. 47, 48, 50; iv. 8
- UVa, offered to, iii. 48

- Buena Vista Brickyard, v. 26
 Buena Vista Company, v. 72
 Buena Vista Furnace (McClure Bros. Furnace), ii. 24; v. 25; vi. 97
 Buena Vista Hotel, v. 26, 75
 Buena Vista Telephone Exchange, v. 45
 Buena Vista Wagon Works, v. 24
 Buffalo Baptist Church, v. 30; vi. 64, 67
 Buffalo Creek Community, iii. 24; v. 31
 Community League, v. 30, 32
 buffaloes, v. 17
 Buffalo Forge, ii. 24; v. 51
 Buffington, Edward Stanard, vi. 36, 42n. 17
 Bull, Capt. William R., vi. 33, 34, 42n. 1
 Bull Run, Second Battle of. *See* Manassas, Battle of Second
 Bumpass, James J., iv. 24
 Burden. *See* Borden
 Burdette, John, iv. 14
 "Burial of Latane, The" (painting), iv. 34, 35, 36
 Burks family, ii. 10
 Burnwell, T. S., v. 45
 Butler, Gen. Benjamin, v. 71
 Byram, Rev. Eliab, i. 45, 91, 92; iii. 40
 Byrd, Sen. Harry Flood, Sr., v. 98, 100
- Cabell, Joseph, iv. 9
 Col. William, iv. 9
 Calhoun, Rev. Philo, iii. 43
 Campbell, A. G., iv. 36
 Alexander, v. 10
 Catherine Estill Houston (Mrs. L. L.), vi. 5, 6
 Charles, i. 64
 Dougal, v. 10
 Duncan, v. 10
 Elizabeth. *See* Alexander, Elizabeth Campbell
 Gilbert, iv. 18
 Henry D., v. 24
 Isaac, i. 65, 70; iii. *intro.*
 James, ii. 10
 Rev. James, iii. 41
 Dr. Leslie Lyle, v. 94-95; vi. 4-6
 articles by, i. 88-89; iv. 6
 Rockbridge Historical Society, gifts to, iii. *intro.*, 1, 39; vi. 5, 6, 8
 Mary (Mrs. Dougal), v. 10
 Robert, v. 34
 Sarah Lapsley (Mrs. Isaac), iii. *intro.*
 Maj. Stanley W., article by, vi. 55-62
 Virginia Eppes Dance (Mrs. W. A.), vi. 5
 Dr. William Addison, vi. 5
 See also McCampbell
 Campbell family, i. 17; ii. 10; iv. 20; v. 11, 16
- "Campbell House, L. L.," iv. 6; vi. 5
 Camp Lee, naming of, i. 27
 "Campo Bello," Powhatan Co., vi. 5
 Camp Starvation, vi. 35
 canals, iv. 13; v. 47, 98; vi. 66
 See also James River and Kanawha Canal; North River Canal
 "Cannicello," iv. 25
 Capron, John D., article by, iv. 21-23
 Carey, Johnson, v. 23
 Susanna Bisset (Mrs. Johnson), v. 23
 Carpenter family, i. 53
 "carpetbaggers," vi. 14, 75
 Carraway, Rev. George, iv. 35
 Carson family, iv. 21
 Carter, John, iii. 42
 Caruthers, Ann Eliza. *See* Leyburn, Ann Eliza Caruthers
 Edward, vi. 24
 Isaac, iii. 49
 James, i. 68
 John, i. 65, 67
 Joseph, i. 50
 Phoebe Alexander (Mrs. Wm.), vi. 23
 Sally, *See* Preston, Sally Caruthers
 Samuel, i. 65
 William, i. 43; iii. 42; vi. 23
 Cash Tin Mines, v. 23, 24, 26
 Cassidy, James, iii. 42
 "The Castle:"
 drawing of, iii. *frontispiece*
 garden restored, v. 89
 given to Rockbridge Historical Society, iii. *intro.*, 1, 7; iv. 6; v. 91
 history of, i. 75; iv. 6; v. 91-95
 Castle Hill Hotel, v. 75, 76
 Catherine Furnace, Va., iv. 22
 cattle, v. 17
 Cedar Grove, ii. 18
 Chamber of Commerce tourist program, vi. 7
 Champe, John A., v. 76
 Chancellorsville, Battle of, vi. 74-75
 Chandler, Sallie. *See* Stanard, Sallie Chandler
 Chantilly, Battle of, i. 29
 Chapin, Charles, vi. 72
 Chapman, Mary Stanard (Mrs. W. H.), vi. 31
 W. H., vi. 31
 Chase, W. H., iv. 36
 Chastellux, Marquis de, i. 70; iv. 8
 "Cherry Grove," i. 10
 Chesapeake & Ohio Railroad, iii. 18; v. 74
 Chinn family, iv. 21
 Christian, Evans, vi. 68, 69
 John, v. 34
 Julia Jackson, vi. 77
 Lucy Ann Waller Jordan (Mrs. Evans), iv. 13; vi. 68, 69
 Thomas Jackson, vi. 77
 Christie, Madeleine. *See* Davis, Madeleine Christie
 Churches. *See the following denominations:* Associate Reformed Presbyterian; Baptist; Episcopal;

INDEX

INDEX

- Lutheran; Methodist; Presbyterian
 Cincinnati, Society of, i. 27
 circuit riders, v. 17, 30
 Civil War:
 battles. *See* Antietam; Chancellorsville; Fredericksburg; Harper's Ferry; Manassas (Second); Ox Hill; New Market; Valley Campaign (1862); Warrenton Springs
 centennial commemoration (1961), vi. 10
 Rockbridge County, vi. 9-14
 casualties, number of, v. 12
 companies formed, early, vi. 11-12
 economy, effect upon, vi. 12, 14, 36, 38
 enlistees, number of, vi. 12
 hospitals, Confederate, vi. 12-13
 Hunter's Raid. *See* Hunter's (Gen. David) Raid
 women's role, vi. 12-13, 34
 Clarkson, John, v. 28, 29
 Susan A. *See* Patterson, Susan A. Clarkson
 Clifton Iron Works, Alleghany Co., iv. 13
 Cline, Rev. R. H., iii. 6
 clothing, early, i. 71-72
 Cloverdale Furnace, Va., iv. 23
 "Clover Hill," ("Herring Hall"), ii. 21
 Clyde, Christopher, iv. 19
 Eliza (Mrs. J. B.), iv. 20
 Jacob B., iv. 18, 19, 20; v. 49
 James F., iv. 20
 Mrs. James F. *See* Gibbs, Mrs. John T.
 William, iv. 19
 Clyde family, i. 49
 Coalter family, v. 36
 Cockshutt, Paul R., article by, 46-53
 Coiner, Rev. J. I., iii. 6
 "Col Alto," iii. 27
 Cold Sulphur Springs, vi. 35-36, 42n. 16
 Coleman, George P., v. 98
 Rev. James M., iii. 27
 "Collegiate Connection, The" (churches), iv. 12
 Colliertown, v. 44
 Colliertown Presbyterian Church, iii. 27; vi. 17
 Colston, Maj. Raleigh E., i. 27
 "Commonwealth Club, The," Richmond, vi. 77
 Conner's Midden Indian Village, Halifax Co., v. 6-7
 Conservative Party (fl. 1870's), v. 84-85
 Constitutional Union Party, iii. 7, 8; v. 80; vi. 15, 49
 Cook, Elizabeth A. Armstrong (Mrs. J. P.), iii. 4
 John P., iii. 4
 Cooley, Joel F., v. 30
 Corbin, Katherine. *See* Brooke, Katherine Corbin Pendleton
 Cornstalk (Indian chief), v. 18, 19
 Cornwall, v. 23, 24, 25-26
 "boom," v. 26
 named for Cornwall, Eng., v. 26
 tin mines, v. 22, 23, 24, 25
 Cornwall Hotel, v. 26
 Corse, Capt. Montgomery D., v. 101
 Coulling, Mary P., article by, vi. 79-86
 Council of the German Flats, v. 38
 country stores, i. 72
 Couper, Col. William, vi. 101-102
 articles by, i. 26-42; ii. 13-14, 20, 24; iv. 34-36
 court decisions, early, i. 23; v. 18-19
 court house, Rockbridge Co. *See* Rockbridge County; court house covered bridge (North River), vi. 13, 23, 66, 87
 Craft, Solomon, iv. 20
 Craig, Rev. John, iii. 40
 Craven, George, iii. 41
 Crawford, Alexander, ii. 10-11
 (Mrs.) Jane Todd, iv. 6, 7; v. 96
 Mary, i. 49; v. 18
 Crawford family, i. 17, 21
 Crenshaw, Dr. Ollinger, articles by, iii. 7-14; v. 89-90
 Crow, Ann. *See* Evans, Ann Crow William, v. 17
 Crowder, Robert, v. 26
 Crowder Community. *See* Cornwall
 Crozet, Claudius, v. 97
 Board of Public Works, complaints to, v. 59
 tunnel, designs railroad, iii. 32
 turnpikes, makes plans for, v. 53, 58, 59
 —, against federal aid for, v. 57-58
 and VMI, vi. 26
 Cull, James, v. 35
 Cumberland Gap and Price's Turnpike Road, v. 59
 Cumberland Island, Ga., i. 32
 Cumberland (Synod) Presbyterian Church, i. 95
 Cumberland Valley Railroad, v. 74
 Cummings, Rev. Charles, iii. 40-41
 Cummings family, v. 9, 10
 Cunningham, James, iii. 42
 Rev. W. M., vi. 24
 Cunningham family, i. 49, 53
 Currie, Rev. E. S., i. 98
 Custis, George Washington Parke, vi. 80
 Mary. *See* Lee, Mary Custis
 "Custis-Lee Mansion" ("Arlington"), vi. 85
 Dabney, Dr. (geologist, N. C.), v. 24
 Charles, i. 87
 Maria, iv. 35
 May, iv. 35
 Rev. Dr. R. L., i. 87
 Mrs. R. L., i. 87
 Rev. William A., iii. 27
 Daniel, John, v. 86, 87
 Darst, Samuel, vi. 23-24, 65
 Darst family, i. 49

- Davidson, Addie McChesney Brown
(Mrs. Charles H., Sr.), i. 88
picture of, i. 88a
- Albert, vi. 15-16, 18, 20, 21
- Alberta, vi. 21
- Rev. Andrew Baker, iii. 26-27, 42;
v. 29; vi. 15, 16
- Charles, vi. 15, 16, 18, 20, 21
- Clara, vi. 15, 21
- Elizabeth. *See* Letcher, Elizabeth Davidson
- Frederick, vi. 15, 16
- Greenlee, vi. 15, 17, 18, 19
death of, vi. 20, 75
Gov. Letcher, personal aide to,
vi. 16
and "Letcher Artillery," vi. 17-
18, 18-20
- Hannah Greenlee (Mrs. J. D.), vi.
15
- James Dorman, iii. 10; vi. 15, 20,
21
Lincoln, meeting with, iii. 10
northern investors, overture to,
vi. 21
"Robert of Rockbridge" articles,
iii. 12
Secession Convention (Va.,
1861), attends, vi. 15-16
secession, agrees to, iii. 13
unionist sentiments, iii. 7, 9, 10-
11, 12-13; vi. 15
- John, ii. 11
- John Kinnear, v. 13
- Margaret. *See* Houston, Margaret Davidson
- Mary, vi. 15
- Susan Kinnear (Mrs. Wm.), v. 13
- William, v. 12, 13
- William Weaver, vi. 15, 18, 20, 21
- Davidson family, i. 49; v. 9
- Davis, Alexander Jackson, vi. 7
- Ann Doris Jordan (Mrs. W. W.),
vi. 68, 69
- Lucy Burton (Mrs. J. C.), v. 3
- Madeleine Christie (Mrs. W. C.),
v. 3
- Dr. William Cole, v. 3, 61
articles by, ii. 17, 24
- William Weaver, v. 3; vi. 66, 68,
69
- Davis family, v. 25
- Dean, Rev. John, i. 46; iii. 40
- Decker family, v. 26
- De-gan-a-widah (Indian chief), iv. 29
- DeHart, Hotel (Castle Hill Hotel),
v. 75, 76
- Democratic Party of Virginia, v. 85;
vi. 15, 47
division (1860), iii. 7; vi. 48-49
Jacksonian era, vi. 24
progressive movement (fl. 1900),
v. 86-87
and Redemptioners, v. 84-85
- Demsey. *See* Hampsey
- "Derwent," Powhatan Co., vi. 14, 80
- Dice, Walter F., article by, i. 90-101
- Diedrich, Michael, v. 12
- Diehl, Rev. Dr. George West, articles
by, iv. 10-12, 29-32; v. 27, 32
- Dillon, E., v. 76
- Dinwiddie, Rev. Dr. William, i. 99;
iii. 43
- Dixon family, i. 49, 53
"Dold Building," i. 73
- Donegal, Presbytery of, i. 45
- Donihoo, John, i. 48
Martha M. Walker (Mrs. John),
i. 48
- Donihoo family, i. 49
- Dorman, Cornelius, i. 74; v. 92
James B., iii. 8, 10, 25; vi. 15, 18
defeated in 1861 election, iii. 13
delegate to Secession Convention
(Va., 1861), iii. 11, 12, 13
unionist sentiments, iii. 9
- Douglas, Rev. William, vi. 64
- Douglas family, i. 49, 53; v. 16
- Downey, Samuel, v. 25
- Draper, Mrs. George, v. 35
John, v. 35, 36
Mrs. John, v. 35-36
- Draper's Meadows, Montgomery Co.,
massacre of, v. 35, 36
- Draper's Valley, Pulaski Co., v. 36
- Dryden, James, i. 50
- Duffie, Gen. Alfred N., vi. 92
- Duncan, Rev. William, vi. 64, 67
- "Dungeness," Cumberland I., Ga., i.
32
- Dunlap, John, iv. 15
Robert, ii. 10
- Dunn, Clifford Cabell, v. 94
- Early, Gen. Jubal, vi. 77, 92
- Ebenezer Associate Reformed Presby-
terian Church, v. 11
- Eby, Dr. Cecil D., article by, vi.
87-92
- Eckols, Edward, iii. 13
- "Edgehill," v. 10
- Edley family, i. 49, 53
- Edmondson, Maj. David, i. 49
Emily Taylor (Mrs. J. K.), vi. 72-
77*passim*
- Edmondson, James Kerr, vi. 72, 78
career, post-bellum, v. 83; vi. 75
Civil War, participation in, vi.
72-75
General Assembly, delegate to,
vi. 77-78
and Jackson Memorial Associa-
tion, vi. 76-77
Sally Paxton (Mrs. David), i. 49
- Edmondson family, i. 53; ii. 21
- "Edmondson-Penick House," vi. 76
- elections, Rockbridge Co., v. 31, 49
- Constitutional Convention (Va.,
1901-1902), delegate to, v. 87
- General Assembly, delegates to
1795, iv. 25
1797, v. 69
1835, v. 24
1837, vi. 26
1861, iii. 13; v. 80
1869; 1871, v. 84
1883, v. 84-85
1893, vi. 77
1917, v. 85

INDEX

INDEX

- judicial (1870), vi. 75
 mayoralty (Lexington, 1865), vi. 75
 presidential (1860), iii. 7-8; vi. 15
 referenda
 Ordinance of Secession (Va., 1861), iii. 13; vi. 11
 railroad bond-issue (1866), iii. 19
 street improvements (1922), Lexington, v. 101
 Secession Convention (Va., 1861), delegates to, iii. 9
 U. S. Senate (1804), iv. 25
 Virginia Convention to ratify U. S. Constitution (1788), delegates to, iv. 25; v. 68, 69
 electricity, first Lexington, v. 79
 Ellyson, J. Taylor, v. 86, 87
 "Elmwood," vi. 23, 27, 28
 Emory and Henry College, founding of, v. 39, 40
 Engleman, Elizabeth (Mrs. Philip), iii. 4
 J. W., iii. 5
 Luther, Davis, iii. 4, 5
 Philip, iii. 4
 Episcopal Church, v. 67
 See also R. E. Lee Memorial Church
 Ervine, Bess, i. 37
 Hope, i. 38
 Escue, Albert, v. 12
 Clarissa (Mrs. Albert), v. 12
 Evans, Ann Crow (Mrs. Thomas), v. 38
 Lewis, iv. 31
 Martha, i. 81, 82, 83, 84; v. 37
 Thomas, i. 84; v. 37, 38
 Evansville, Ind., naming of, v. 38
 Ewin family, i. 53
 Ewing, Rev. John D., i. 52-53, 54, 55, 56
 Exchange Hotel, The (Blue Hotel), iv. 18-21

 fairgrounds, Lexington, vi. 12
 Fairfield, i. 99
 Fairfield Presbyterian Church, iii. 27
 Falling Creek, Va., Indian raid on, iv. 21
 Falling Spring Presbyterian Church, i. 43-44; iv. 8
 academy, operation of, i. 57-58
 benevolences, i. 55-56, 57, 58
 buildings
 first (log), i. 19, 46, 51-52; iii. 4
 second (stone), i. 49-50, 51, 52, 53-54, 71
 present, i. 56-57
 and Civil War, i. 57, 58
 founding of, i. 46
 manse, i. 52, 57
 membership, i. 47-50, 53, 54-55
 ministers, i. 45-48 *passim*; iii. 26; v. 18
 pews, renting of, i. 48, 50-51, 57
 services, early form of, i. 53-54
 sexton, i. 52
 "Fancy Hill," ii. 13
 Fancy Hill Academy, i. 57, 58
 Figgat, C. M., v. 78
 Filler, Rev. S., iii. 4
 fire, the great Lexington (1796), v. 18
 area of, i. 76; iv. 20; v. 92
 court records saved, i. 77; v. 92
 surviving houses, i. 74, 76; iv. 20; v. 91-92
 fire company, Lexington, i. 76-77
 Fishwick, Dr. Marshall W., articles by, iv. 3, 13-15; v. 3, 15-21
 Fithian, Philip, i. 72; v. 17
 Five Nations, the. *See* Indian tribes; Iroquois
 Fleming, William, v. 69
 Flournoy, Dr. Fitzgerald, articles by, ii. 14; iv. 7, 8
 Flournoy family, i. 88
 Floyd, Gov. John, v. 47
 Henry, v. 26
 folk-medicine, v. 20; vi. 25
 folk-songs, v. 25, 26
 football, v. 94
 "Forest Tavern," ii. 21
 forges, iron. *See* iron industry
 Forks of the James Presbyterian Meeting House. *See* New Monmouth Presbyterian Church
 Fort McIntosh, Treaty of, v. 39
 Fort Stanwix, Treaty of, v. 35
 forts, frontier, i. 25; iii. 24; v. 8, 19
 foundries. *See* iron industry
 Fox, Rev. Dr. Luther A., iii. 6
 Franklin, Benjamin, vi. 95
 Franklin Society, iii. 50
 discussions of, iii. 9
 history of, v. 22
 Jeffersonian sentiments of, v. 22
 library of, public, iv. 28; v. 49
 meeting hall, desire for new, v. 49
 membership, duties of, v. 22
 purposes of, v. 22
 fraternities, college social, v. 95
 Kappa Alpha Order, vi. 7
 Phi Kappa Psi, v. 82
 Frazier, James A., v. 84
 Frederick County:
 establishment of, v. 34
 settlers, German, v. 16
 Fredericksburg, Va., iv. 22
 Battle of, vi. 19
 Fredericksville Furnace, Va., iv. 21
 Fremont, Gen. John C., i. 10
 Front Royal, Va., v. 72
 "Fruit Hill Farm," iv. 7-8
 fugitive slaves, vi. 55-62
 Fuller, Jacob (fl. 1809), iii. 42
 Jacob (of W&L), vi. 13
 Fulton, M. J., v. 77
 Funding Act (Va., 1871), v. 84
 furnaces, iron. *See* iron industry
 Furr's Mill, vi. 28

 "Gadsbury Plantation," v. 27
 Gaines, Dr. Francis Pendleton, articles by, iii. 16-17; iv. 36
 Galbraith, John, i. 74; iv. 18; v. 92

John, Jr., iv. 18
 Gallatin, Albert, v. 56-57, 58
 Gallaway's Iron Mine, Va., iv. 22
 Galt, Mary, article by, v. 91-95
 Garnett, Mary Elizabeth Seldon. *See*
 Brooke, Mary Elizabeth Selden
 Garnett
 Garrett, John W., v. 74
 Gaylor family, iii. 42
 General Turnpike Law (Va., 1817),
 v. 55-56
 German Flats, Council of, v. 38
 Germanna, Va., iv. 21
 German settlers. *See* "settlers" under
 various counties, e. g., Rock-
 bridge County: settlers, early
 Ghiselin family, i. 88
 Gibbs, James E. A., iii. 7
 Maj. John T., iv. 20
 Mrs. John T., iv. 20
 W. W., v. 45
 Gibraltar Forge, ii. 24
 Gibson, John, v. 10, 12
 Gibson family, v. 11
 Gilham, Col. William, i. 27; vi. 51-52,
 91
 Mrs. William, vi. 88
 Gillock, C. J., iv. 24
 Samuel, iii. 8
 Gilmore, James, i. 65
 James, iii. 42
 James, v. 25
 (Mrs.) Janetta Houston, iii. 26
 John, Sr., i. 64, 71
 Gilmore family, v. 11
 Given, Charles, v. 18
 Glasgow, v. 44
 "boom," v. 72
 Glasgow, Alexander McNutt, vi. 97,
 98
 C. S., v. 101
 Frank T., v. 72
 John, vi. 97, 98
 Martha McNutt (Mrs. John), vi.
 98
 Mary T., vi. 97, 97n.
 Glasgow family, i. 49, 53, 88; v. 81;
 vi. 98
 Glasgow Improvement Company, v. 72
 Glasgow Telephone Exchange, v. 45
 Glass, Sen. Carter, v. 87
 Glenwood Furnace, ii. 10, 24
 Glenwood Iron Mines, v. 80
 Goggin, W. L., vi. 47
 Gold family, iii. 42
 Gooch, Gov. William, i. 21; v. 34
 Indians, relations with, iv. 31
 and land grants, i. 13, 20, 90
 religious freedom, position on, i.
 44-45
 Goodbar, Joseph, iii. 42
 Goodwin family, i. 53
 Goolrick, Charles O'Connor, v. 98
 Maj. Chester B., article by, iv.
 15-16
 Goshen, ii. 18
 "boom," v. 72
 Goshen Baptist Church, vi. 68
 Goshen Furnace, ii. 18
 Goshen Pass, ii. 18

Grace Episcopal Church. *See* R. E.
 Lee Memorial (Episcopal) Church
 Grace Furnace, Va., iv. 23
 Graham, Dr. Archibald, i. 74; v. 92
 Edward, iii. 42; iv. 11
 E. L., iii. 8
 John Alexander, v. 60
 Margaret Alexander (Mrs. Ed-
 ward), iv. 11
 Michael, iv. 10
 Rev. Dr. William
 divinity school, founding of, iv.
 12
 and Great Awakening, iv. 10-12;
 v. 29
 and Liberty Hall Academy, i.
 69, 70; iii. 41
 Liberty Hall Volunteers, com-
 mander of, vi. 12
 life of, iii. 41
 pastorates of, iii. 40, 41; iv. 10
 U. S. Constitution, opposition
 to, v. 69
 Graham family, i. 53; ii. 21
 Grant, Gen. Ulysses S., vi. 97
 grants, land. *See* land grants
 Grasty, Rev. John S., i. 57
 Gray, William, v. 18
 Grayson, Lt. (of "Letcher Artillery"),
 vi. 19
 William, v. 68
 Great Awakening, The:
 Lexington, iv. 11
 Liberty Hall Academy, iv. 10, 12
 New Monmouth Church, iv. 11
 New Providence Church, i. 94-95
 Oxford Church, v. 29
 Rockbridge Co., iv. 10-12
 Southside Virginia, iv. 10-12
 Great Valley Road, i. 63; v. 16, 19,
 91, 93
 Greenbrier County, W. Va., estab-
 lishment of, i. 63
 Greene County, Ohio, settlers of, v.
 11
 "Green Forest," v. 81
 Green Forest Community. *See* Buena
 Vista
 Greenlee, David, Jr., i. 44
 Hannah. *See* Davidson, Hannah
 Greenlee
 James, i. 8, 15
 John, i. 47
 Mary McDowell (Mrs. James), i.
 8, 19, 49, 63; v. 18
 "Deposition" of, i. 15-16, 23
 estate of, i. 18
 liquor, illegal sale of, i. 69
 memorial plaque, v. 88
 on Magdalena Borden, i. 22
 Greenlee family, i. 20, 24; ii. 10, 21
 Greenlee Ferry, ii. 10
 "Greenlee Tavern" ("Herring Hall"),
 ii. 21
 Greenwood, (Mrs.) Daphne Sterrett,
 v. 45
 John R. S., v. 45
 Grigsby, Rev. Benjamin Porter, iv.
 8, 9
 Elisha, i. 44

INDEX

INDEX

- Elizabeth Blair McPherson (Mrs. B. P.), iv. 9
 Frances Porter (Mrs. James), iv. 8
 Hugh Blair
 ancestry of, iv. 7-9
 career of, iv. 7
 on Zachariah Johnston, v. 63, 66
 and *W&L Historical Papers*, v. 63, 66, 68, 69
 James, iv. 7, 8
 Jane Porter (Mrs. John), iv. 7
 John, iv. 7, 8
 Lelia Frances, iv. 9
 Mary Elizabeth, iv. 9
 Rebecca Wallace (Mrs. James), iv. 8
 Reuben, i. 44; iv. 7, 8
 Rosanna Atchison (Mrs. John), iv. 7
 Grigsby family, i. 20, 24, 49, 53; ii. 14
 Grimké, Angelina, vi. 98
 Sarah, vi. 98
 grist mills:
 early, i. 19-20; v. 10; vi. 93
 Hunter's Raid, destroyed during, vi. 92
 Col. John Jordan and, iv. 13
 Gurnee and Sheffey of New York, v. 26
- Hall, Andrew, iii. 42
 J. Coleman, v. 30
 Dr. S. H., vi. 5-6
 Hall family, i. 17
 Hall's Presbyterian Meeting House.
 See New Monmouth Presbyterian Church
 Hamilton, Cynthia Ann. *See* Marshall, Cynthia Ann Hamilton
 Isaac Montgomery, v. 28
 James, v. 27
 James, Jr., v. 27
 James Forgison, v. 28
 John, iii. 41
 John Letcher, v. 28
 Margaret Owen (Mrs. James, Sr.), v. 27, 28
 Margaret Robinson (Mrs. James, Jr.), v. 27
 Mary Ann Hancock (Mrs. J. L.), v. 28
 Mary Houston. *See* Bobb, Mary Houston Hamilton
 Narcissa Bertonia, v. 28, 30, 31
 Owen William, v. 28
 Phoebe. *See* Lackey, Phoebe Hamilton
 Robert, v. 27, 28, 29, 31, 51
 Sarah Letcher (Mrs. Robt.), v. 28
 Susan A. Clarkson (Mrs. J. F.).
 See Patterson, Susan A. Clarkson Hamilton
 Hamilton family, i. 49, 53; v. 11, 27
 Hamilton's Presbyterian Meeting House. *See* Hamilton's Schoolhouse
 Hamilton's Schoolhouse:
 closed by school board, v. 30-31
 community center, use as, v. 31
 construction of, v. 29
 description of, v. 29
 religious services, use for, iii. 26; v. 29-30
 restored, v. 32
 teachers of, 30, 31
 Hampden-Sydney College:
 and Great Awakening, iv. 10; v. 29
 presidents of
 Alexander, Archibald, v. 88; vi. 23
 Maxwell, William, iv. 9
 Smith, Rev. John Blair, iv. 10
 Hampsey, Jane, i. 36
 Sgt. John, i. 36, 37, 38, 39, 40
 Martha Larew (Mrs. John), i. 36
 Hampton, Gen. Wade, vi. 76
 Hancher, Rev. Dr. A. D. R., iii. 6
 Hancock, Mary Ann. *See* Hamilton, Mary Ann Hancock
 Hanna, Rev. C. M., i. 98
 Matthew, i. 75, 76; iii. 42
 Nancy. *See* McKee, Nancy Hanna
 Polly. *See* Blain, Polly Hanna
 "Hanna House," iv. 20
 Hanover, Presbytery of, i. 45; iii. 40
 Hardin, Prof. M. B., v. 24
 Harper family, v. 11
 Harper's Ferry, Battle of, vi. 18-19, 44
 Harris, Rev. John K., iii. 43
 Harrison, Carter Henry, v. 67
 Hart, Dr. Freeman H., article by, ii. 17
 Hart's Bottom Community. *See* Buena Vista
 Hart's Bottom Farm, iii. 47-48, 50
 Hay, W. O., Jr., program given by, vi. 78
 Hayes, Rutherford B., in Hunter's Raid, vi. 90
 Hays Creek Academy, i. 99
 Hays family, i. 17, 20
 Hebron Presbyterian Church, Augusta Co., i. 91
 Heiner, Mrs. Gordon, articles by, v. 96; vi. 87
 hemp, i. 71-72
 Hemphill, Dr. W. Edwin, article by, v. 46-52
 Henderson, William, v. 29
 Henry, Patrick, v. 68, 69
 Henry family, v. 9
 Hepburn, Rev. A. D., i. 96
 Heron, Rev. Andrew Ross, v. 11
 Herring family, ii. 21
 "Herring Hall," ii. 21
 Hickman, Jacob, i. 44, 47, 48
 Hickman family, i. 49
 "Hickory Hill," iv. 7
 Hicks, Sophia, iii. 42
 Higgenbotham, Benjamin, v. 12
 High Bridge Presbyterian Church:
 buildings
 former, iii. 44
 present, ii. 21
 founding of, ii. 21

- ministers of, i. 46, 49, 51; ii. 21; iii. 26, 27
- Highland Belle School, iii. 44
- Highland County, investors of, v. 75
- Highland Investment Company, v. 75
- highways. *See* roads; streets
- Hileman family, v. 9
- Hill, Gen. David H., i. 27-28
William, iv. 10
- Hillman, Dr. J. N., v. 41
- Himes, George W., v. 49-50
- Hoge, Rev. Edward T., iii. 27
- Hogshead, Rev. Alexander L., iii. 28
Mary Elizabeth Moore (Mrs. A. L.), iii. 28
- Holston Methodist Conference, v. 39
- Holt, Mary. *See* Letcher, Mary Holt
- Hope, James Barron, i. 41
Janey. *See* Marr, Janey Hope
- Hopkins, Rev. A. C., vi. 76
James, i. 74-75
W. S., v. 72
- horses, Arabian, first in Valley, v. 37
- hospitals, Confederate, Rockbridge Co., vi. 12-13
- Hotchkiss, Maj. Jed, v. 24
- hotels, v. 72, 84
See also taverns
- Hotinger, Rice, v. 101
- Houseman, Mary E. (Mrs. J. G.), iii. 4
John G., iii. 4
- Houston, Catherine Estill. *See* Campbell, Catherine Estill Houston
- Dr. Hale, iv. 6; vi. 6
picture of, iii. *intro.*
Rockbridge Historical Society, gifts to, iii. *intro.*, 1, 7; iv. 6; v. 91
- Janetta. *See* Gilmore, Janetta Houston
- John, v. 16, 19
- Livingston, v. 94
- Margaret Davidson (Mrs. Robt.), v. 16, 28
- Margaret Walker (Mrs. [Rev.] Samuel), i. 48
- Mary. *See* Letcher, Mary Houston
- Maude, article by, ii. 21
- Robert, v. 16, 28
- Gen. Sam. iii. 17; v. 21
ancestry of, v. 16, 28
birthplace, v. 8, 10, 16, 16n.
childhood, v. 17, 19-20
Liberty Hall Academy, student of, v. 20
- Rev. Samuel, i. 48, 51; ii. 21; v. 28
- Falling Spring, pastor of, i. 46-47, 49; iii. 26; v. 18
- Hamilton's pastor of, v. 30
- High Bridge, pastor of, i. 49; iii. 26
- Oxford, supply for, iii. 26
- William P., vi. 78
- Houston family, i. 53; v. 9, 16
- Howell, Ann (Mrs. Thomas), v. 27
Thomas, v. 27
- Hoyt, Dr. William D., article by, ii. 14-15
- Hubard, William J., iv. 5
- Hughes, Hannah. *See* Letcher, Hannah Hughes
- Hulls, Samuel, i. 17
- Humphries, Dr. Milton Wiley, v. 90
William S., v. 25
- Hunter, Sen. R. M. T., vi. 48
Dr. Robert F., article by, v. 52-60
- Hunter's (Gen. David) Raid, i. 35; iv. 24
Jackson, reverence for "Stonewall," vi. 91-92
- Letcher house, burning of, vi. 13, 20, 75, 90-91
- Lexington
advance to, vi. 13, 87
Confederate defense of, vi. 13, 66, 87-88
headquarters, vi. 13, 90
looting of, vi. 13, 89-90, 91, 92
occupation of, vi. 92
shelling of, vi. 88,
- Lynchburg, Va., advance to, iv. 23; v. 82; vi. 92
iron industry, destruction of, iv. 23
- Rockbridge Co.
homes looted, vi. 28, 97
iron furnaces, destruction of, vi. 92, 97
mills, destruction of, vi. 28, 92
slaves freed by, vi. 14, 20
troops, number of, i. 34
- VMI
destruction of, iv. 24; vi. 13, 20, 75, 90, 91
plundering of, 13, 88, 90, 92
shelling of, vi. 13, 28, 88
- Washington College
looting of, vi. 14, 75
saved from destruction, vi. 14, 91
shelling of, vi. 13
- Hurlbert, Arthur Carey, v. 23
Clarence Avery, v. 23
Mary Ann Carey (Mrs. W. H.), v. 23
Mary Frances, v. 23
Naphthali, v. 23
Olive Smith (Mrs. Naphthali), v. 23
William Hooker, v. 22-23
William Johnson, v. 23
- Hutcheson, (Mrs.) Mary Moore, i. 88
- Hutton, William, iii. 42
- Hyde, Martha Jane. *See* Barclay, Martha Jane Hyde
- Imboden, Gen. I. D., vi. 34, 36
- "Indian Block House," ii. 21
- Indian forts. *See* forts, frontier
- Indians, v. 18
artifacts of, v. 6-7
Falling Creek, raid on, iv. 21
fear of, i. 18, 24; v. 68
Mary Johnston, discussed by, v. 78-79
marriage with whites, v. 39
Negroes, relations with, v. 39

INDEX

INDEX

- Valley, use as hunting ground, iv, 29; v. 17, 19
whites, relations with, v. 19
See also Indian tribes
- Indian tribes:
Catawbas
 Iroquois, relations with, iv. 29-31
 Valley, use as hunting ground, v. 19
Cayugas, iv. 29
Cherokees
 Arkansas, removed to, v. 39
 British, allies of, v. 38-39
 Iroquois, relations with, i. 9; iv. 29; v. 35
 and Sam Houston, v. 17, 19
 Shawnees, relations with, i. 86; v. 33, 34
 Valley, use as hunting ground, v. 19
Chickasaws, v. 19, 39
Choctaws, i. 9; v. 39
Creeks, v. 39
Delawares, v. 19
Iroquois confederacy, iv. 29
 Balcony Downs, battle of, i. 11, 21-22
 Catawbas, relations with, iv. 29-31
 Cherokees, relations with, i. 9; iv. 29; v. 35
 Valley, use as hunting ground, v. 19
 whites, relations with, iv. 30-32; v. 35
Massawomee confederacy, iv. 29
Mohawks, iv. 29
Onedias, iv. 29
Onondagas, iv. 29, 30
Saponis, v. 6-7
Seminoles, v. 39
Senecas, iv. 29
Shawnees
 Abb's Valley, massacre of, i. 81-84; v. 37-38
 Cherokees, relations with, i. 86; v. 33, 34
 Draper's Meadows, massacre of, v. 35-36
 Kerr's Creek, raid on, iii. 24
 Valley, use as hunting ground, v. 19
 Tuscaroras, iv. 29
industries:
 Lexington (1890), v. 74, 76
 proposed for Lexington, v. 76
infantile paralysis epidemic (1917), i. 95-96
Ingles, Mrs. William, v. 35
inns. See hotels; taverns
Intelligencer, The, vi. 68
Irby, Mrs. Richard, v. 13
Ireland, James, v. 17
Irish Creek Community, v. 24
"Irish Grant," vi. 95
Irish tenant farmers, vi. 29
iron industry:
 Col. John Jordan and, iv. 13; vi. 66
 Rockbridge Co., v. 50, 51, 74; vi. 92
See also Avery & Bradley Foundry; Bradley & Lyle Foundry; Buena Vista Furnace; Glenwood Furnace; Glenwood Iron Mines; Goshen Furnace; Lydia Furnace; Moore's Furnace; McClure Bros. Furnace; McCormick Forge; Parks Furnace
Virginia, iv. 21-23
Irvine, John, vi. 66, 67
Irwin, Rev. William, iii. 41
"Ivy Cliff," Bedford Co., i. 85
Jack, Sam, v. 19
Jackson, Elinor Junkin (Mrs. T. J.), i. 28; vi. 11
Mary Anna Morrison (Mrs. T. J.), i. 28; vi. 77
Gen. T. J. "Stonewall," i. 29; iii. 8; iv. 24; vi. 11, 43n. 4, 92
 burial of, vi. 13
 farm of, ii. 14
 grave of, vi. 41
 —, Hunter's forces honor, vi. 91-92
 —, statue unveiled, vi. 76-77
Harper's Ferry, accompanies VMI cadets to (1861), vi. 10
Gen. Lee, relations with, vi. 43-46
 professorship, assumes VMI, i. 27-28
 sword of, vi. 13, 92
 VMI cadet-soldiers, first commander of, i. 26, 27, 32; vi. 11
Col. William L. ("Mudwall"), vi. 33, 42n. 4-5
"Jackson House:"
 history of, i. 74; v. 92
 memorial, operation as, v. 5
Jackson Memorial Association (fl. 1891), vi. 76-77
James River, v. 25
James River and Kanawha Canal, iii. 18; iv. 5; v. 50, 80
 Balcony Falls section, construction of, vi. 67
 extension to Buchanan, objections to, v. 51-52
 purchase offer of French Company, vi. 49
 Washington invests in, iv. 28
See also canals; North River Canal
Jamestown, Va., v. 97
Jefferson, Thomas, iii. 48
 letter to Zachariah Johnston, v. 65
 transportation program, support for, v. 97
Jeffries, John L., v. 87
Johnhaty (Indian chief), iv. 30, 31
Johns, Jay W., article by, v. 5
Johnson, William F., iii. 25
Johnston, Anne (Mrs. Wm.), v. 62
 Ann Robertson (Mrs. Zachariah, Sr.), i. 71; v. 63, 64
 Elizabeth, v. 64
 James, v. 30
 Jane E., v. 30

- Mrs. J. Granville, v. 31
 J. Montgomery, v. 30
 Dr. John, v. 64-65; vi. 54-55
 William, v. 62
 Zachariah, Sr., v. 62, 64-65
 death of, v. 69-70
 descriptions of, v. 63, 66
 religious freedom, support of, v. 67; vi. 54
 Revolutionary War, role in, v. 62-63
 Rockbridge Co., removal to, v. 69; vi. 54
 slavery, views on, v. 69
 U. S. Constitution, support of, v. 68-69; vi. 54
 will of, v. 63, 65-66
 Zachariah, Jr., v. 64
 See also Johnstone. *Note: About 1900, the family adopted the earlier spelling "Johnstone."*
 "Johnstone House," i. 71; v. 63, 92; vi. 54, 55n.
 Johnstone, Anne, v. 63; vi. 55n.
 Susan, v. 63; vi. 55n.
 See also Johnston
 Jones, Capt. H. B., i. 95
 Col. T. A., v. 98
 William A., v. 86, 87
 Jordan, Ann Doris. See Davis, Ann Doris Jordan
 Benjamin J., iv. 13; vi. 69
 Charles (grandfather of John), vi. 64
 Charles (son of John), iv. 13
 Edwin, iv. 13; vi. 68, 70
 Elizabeth Paxton (Mrs. B. J.), vi. 69
 Frances Puryear (Mrs. Samuel [father of John]). See Woodson, Frances Puryear Jordan
 George Washington, iv. 13
 Hannah W. (Mrs. S. F.), vi. 69
 Hezekiah, iv. 13, 18; vi. 65, 67
 Hezekiah Thomas, iv. 13
 Ina Franklin, iv. 13
 James Lawrence, iv. 13
 Dr. [James Reid?], vi. 24
 Jesse, iv. 13
 Col. John, iv. 12, 18, 19; vi. 63-64
 and Baptist Church, vi. 67-71
 buildings of, iii. 49; iv. 13; vi. 23-24, 65-66, 67, 69
 business enterprises of, iv. 13; vi. 66-67
 death of, vi. 70-71
 description of, iv. 13; vi. 65
 generosity of, vi. 70, 71
 and iron industry, iv. 13; vi. 66
 transportation, interest in improved, iv. 13; vi. 67
 and UVa, vi. 65-66
 youth, vi. 65
 John Winn, iv. 13
 J. R., iii. 8
 Lucy Ann Waller. See Christian, Lucy Ann Waller Jordan
 Lucy Winn (Mrs. John) and Baptist Church, vi. 64, 67, 68, 70
 description of, vi. 65
 marriage of, iv. 12; vi. 65
 Mary Winn, iv. 13
 Nannie, iii. intro.
 Robert, iv. 13
 Samuel (fl. 1620), iv. 12; vi. 64
 Samuel (father of John), iv. 12; vi. 64
 Samuel, Jr. (brother of John), iv. 12; vi. 65
 Samuel Francis, ii. 17; iv. 13, 15; vi. 65, 68, 69
 William, ii. 17; iv. 13, 15
 "Jordan House," i. 75; iii. intro.
 "Jordan Road," iv. 13; vi. 66
 "Jordan's Point" ("Stono"), iv. 13; vi. 65
 Jordan's Springs. See Rockbridge Baths
 Jump Mountain, naming of, i. 85
 Junkin, Rev. Dr. E. D., i. 96
 Eleanor. See Latane, Eleanor Junkin
 Elinor. See Jackson, Elinor Junkin
 Rev. Dr. George, i. 28
 Ft. Delaware prison, visit to, iv. 24
 unionist sentiments, iii. 13; iv. 24; vi. 11
 Margaret. See Preston, Margaret Junkin
 Rev. Dr. W. F., i. 56, 57, 58
 Kanawha Canal. See James River and Kanawha Canal
 Kanawha Turnpike, v. 53
 Kappa Alpha Order, v. 7
 Kearny, Gen. Philip, i. 29
 Keller, Helen, i. 74
 Kerr family, i. 17, 21
 Kerr's Creek, Indian raid on, iii. 24
 Kerr's Creek Presbyterian Church, iii. 42; vi. 17
 Kimberlin, Annie. See Taylor, Annie Kimberlin
 Kincaid, Isaiah, iii. 42
 Robert, iii. 42
 Kinnear, Dr. Duncan Lyle, article by, v. 8-14
 Elizabeth Campbell Lyle (Mrs. J. A.), v. 10, 13
 Elizabeth McCune (Mrs. John), v. 13
 John Alexander, v. 10, 12, 13
 Joseph, v. 12, 13
 Julia Anne Orbison (Mrs. Andrew Heron), v. 13
 Margaret Tate (Mrs. Andrew, Jr.), v. 13
 Rachel Lackey (Mrs. John Joseph Lyle), v. 14
 Retta Wilson (Mrs. William A., Sr.), v. 14
 Kinnear family, v. 9, 10, 11, 13-14
 Kinnier, Margaret. See Stuart, Margaret Kinnier
 Kirkpatrick, Charles, iii. 42
 John, iii. 41
 Rev. John I., iii. 27

INDEX

INDEX

- Joseph, v. 12
 Michael, v. 13
 Susan Kinnear (Mrs. Michael), v. 13
 Kirksville College of Osteopathy and Surgery, Mo., v. 40
- Lackey, Jemima Taylor (Mrs. Thomas), v. 14
 Phoebe Hamilton (Mrs. Wm.), v. 14
 Rachel. *See* Kinnear, Rachel Lackey Thomas, v. 14
 W. Horace, v. 14
 Maj. William, v. 14
 Lackey family, v. 9, 11
 Lacy, Rev. Beverley Tucker, iii. 25, 28
 Laird, David, i. 49
 David E., i. 58
 James, i. 47, 49
 John, i. 47, 49, 54
 John C., iii. 44
 Laird family, i. 53
 land grants, v. 47
 See also Beverly's Grant; Borden's Grant; "Irish Grant;" Moore Grant; McNutt Grant; "Philadelphia Grant;" Woods River Grant
- Lapsley, Joseph, i. 16, 24; iii. 44; v. 63
 Sarah. *See* Campbell, Sarah Lapsley
 Larew, Martha E. *See* Hampsey, Martha Larew
- Larkin, Jane, i. 69
 Larkins, James, iii. 42
 Larrick's Clothing Store, v. 94
 Latane, Eleanor Junkin (Mrs. J. H.), i. 3, 117
 Dr. John Halladay, i. 117
 Capt. William, iv. 34, 35
 "Latane, The Burial of" (painting), iv. 34, 35
- Lauck, C. Harold, editor's foreward to vol. ii, ii. 3-4
- Lawrence, Samuel, iii. 25
- Lawson, Robert, iii. 42
- Layman family, i. 11
- Layne, J. E., v. 26
- Leake, Rev. Samuel, iii. 41
- Lederer, John, v. 15-16
- Lee, Anne. *See* Marshall, (Mrs.) Anne Lee
 Annie Carter, i. 34; vi. 79, 85
 Eleanor Agnes, i. 34; vi. 79, 81, 82, 83
 Gen. Fitzhugh, v. 72, 84
 Gen. G. W. Custis, i. 34, 38; vi. 76n., 83
 VMI, professor of, i. 31
 W&L, president of, vi. 27
 Gen. Henry ("Light Horse Harry"), i. 27, 32-33; vi. 80
 Maj. Henry, Jr., vi. 80
 Mary Custis (Mrs. R. E.), ii. 17; vi. 80, 81
 death of, vi. 83
 Lexington, arrival in, vi. 79
- silver, burial of family, i. 35, 38, 39
 Mary Custis, vi. 79, 81-82, 83, 85
 death of, vi. 85
 David Strother, meeting with, vi. 84-85
 W&L, suggests Lee for presidency of, i. 30
 Mildred Childe, vi. 79, 80-81, 82-83, 83-84
 Gen. Robert E., i. 27, 28, 29; ii. 17; iv. 6; v. 20, 42; vi. 14, 27, 79
 admiration of soldiers for, iv. 24
 Army of Northern Virginia, unwritten history of, v. 89
 death of, vi. 83
 family, relations with, vi. 81, 82-83
 home built in Lexington, i. 74
 Stonewall Jackson, respect for, vi. 43-46
 memorial in Richmond, i. 41
 Rockbridge Co., desire for economic expansion of, iii. 23
 Sewanee, offered position with, i. 30
 UVa, offered position with, i. 30 and Valley Railroad, iii. 23
 W&L, assumes presidency of, i. 30-41; vi. 80-81
 Capt. Robert E., Jr., i. 30, 34; vi. 79, 80, 83, 84
 Thomas, i. 14
 William Henry Fitzhugh ("Rooney"), vi. 83
- Lee family silver, buried of, i. 34-40
 "Lee-Jackson House," i. 28
- Leech, John, Sr., iii. 26
 John Steele, v. 30, 31
 W. B. F., v. 30, 72
- Legrand, Rev. Nash, iv. 10, 11
- Lenard, Henry, v. 35
- Letcher, Elizabeth Davidson (Mrs. W. H.), v. 91
 Elizabeth S. ("Lizzie"), vi. 91
 Giles, v. 28
 Capt. Greenlee D., v. 72, 86, 101
 article by, ii. 17
- Hannah Hughes (Mrs. Giles), v. 28
 John, v. 28
 Gov. John, v. 49; vi. 15, 16, 39, 43n. 22
 convention, plans for national, iii. 8; vi. 47, 48, 50, 51
 elerted governor (1859), vi. 46
 and election of 1860, vi. 48-49
 and Harper's Ferry, vi. 46-47, 48
 and Hunter's Raid, house burnt, vi. 13, 20, 75, 90-91
 —, urges guerilla defense, vi. 90
 and James River and Kanawha Canal Co., vi. 49
 militia, attempts to strengthen, vi. 51-52
 and "Ruffner Pamphlet," ii. 17; vi. 46
 and Secession Convention (Va., 1861), vi. 51-52
 secession, final acceptance of Vir-

- ginia's, vi. 52-53
 Union, six-point plan for a stronger, vi. 50
 unionist sentiments, iii. 7-12*passim*; vi. 46-53*passim*
 Mary Holt (Mrs. [Gov.] John), vi. 91
 Mary Houston (Mrs. John), v. 28
 Sarah. *See* Hamilton, Sarah Letcher
 William H., v. 29
 "Letcher Artillery, The," iv. 5
 formation of, vi. 17
 military engagements, vi. 17, 18-20
 newspapers' praise for, vi. 18
 "Letcher Battery, The." *See* "Letcher Artillery, The"
 Letcher's Springs. *See* Rockbridge Baths
 Lewis, Gen. Andrew, v. 19, 33, 62; vi. 95
 George, i. 17
 John, i. 16, 45; v. 33, 34
 and Benjamin Borden, i. 12-13
 Staunton, founder of, i. 8
 Thomas, v. 34, 69
 Lexington:
 banks, desire for, v. 48
 "boom," v. 72-78
 results of, v. 78-79
 See also Lexington Development Company
 buildings of, first, v. 91-92
 electricity, first, v. 79
 establishment of, i. 64-66; iv. 6
 fairgrounds, vi. 12
 fire company, i. 76-77
 Hunter's Raid. *See* Hunter's (Gen. David) Raid
 industries (1890), v. 74, 76
 proposed, v. 76
 law and order, desire for, v. 49
 opera house, v. 77
 Providence Hill subdivision, naming of, v. 63
 Reconstruction period, vi. 14, 75
 telephone companies, v. 44-45, 79
 water supply
 cisterns, i. 67
 public, v. 25, 79
 springs, i. 65, 66-67; iv. 18; vi. 22
 See also Civil War, Rockbridge Co.; elections, Rockbridge Co.; fire, the great Lexington (1796); Rockbridge County; streets, Lexington
 Lexington, Bank of, v. 78
 Lexington Building Company, v. 75
 Lexington & Covington Turnpike Company, v. 49
 Lexington Development Company:
 collapse of, v. 76-78
 holdings of, v. 73
 newspapers, discussed by, v. 73
 opposition to, v. 77-78
 proposals of, v. 75, 76
 prospectus of, v. 73-75
 sponsors of, v. 72
 Lexington Gazette, iii. 7, 11
 Lexington Manufacturing Company, v. 76
 Lexington Presbyterian Church, vi. 33
 attacked by opponents of Lexington Development Co., v. 78
 buildings
 first (c. 1796), i. 76; vi. 22
 present, vi. 27
 founding of, i. 75-76; iii. 41
 separation from New Monmouth completed, iii. 44
 manse, vi. 27
 ministers, iii. 42; iv. 12; v. 81; vi. 12, 24, 27-28, 71
 pew-holders (1809), list of, iii. 42
 "Skinner War," vi. 27-28
 Lexington, Presbytery of, i. 100; iv. 10; v. 8
 Lexington Quarry Company, v. 76
 Leyburn, Dr. Alfred, vi. 22-30
 description of, vi. 29-30
 education of, vi. 23
 General Assembly, delegate to, vi. 24-26
 and Gen. Lee, vi. 27
 political beliefs, vi. 24
 and VMI, vi. 26-27
 Alice, vi. 25
 Ann Eliza Caruthers (Mrs. Alfred), vi. 23-24, 24-26
 Anne Pope Price (Mrs. Alfred), vi. 28
 Edward, vi. 24, 28
 Rev. George, vi. 25, 29
 Howard, vi. 29
 Dr. James G., article by, vi. 22-30
 Jane McDowell (Mrs. Capt. John), vi. 22
 Capt. John, iii. 42; vi. 22, 23
 Rev. Dr. John, Jr., vi. 29
 Dr. John (son of Alfred), vi. 24, 29
 Susan Wrenn (Mrs. Alfred), vi. 28
 William, vi. 24
 "Leyburn's Mill," vi. 28
 Liberty Hall Academy. *See* Washington & Lee University
 Liberty Hall Volunteers:
 Civil War, v. 81; vi. 12
 Revolutionary War, vi. 12
 library, public, iv. 28; v. 49
 lime quarries, v. 50, 76
 Lincoln, Abraham, conversation with James D. Davidson, iii. 10
 literary societies. *See* Franklin Society; Washington Literary Society
 Little, Joseph, v. 11
 Little Abraham (Indian chief), v. 38-39
 "Little Stono," vi. 65
 Locher, Charles, iii. 17
 locks, boat. *See* canals; James River and Kanawha Canal; North River Canal
 Logan, James, iii. 42
 Long family, i. 17
 Longstreet, Gen. James, vi. 45
 Looney, Absalom, v. 36
 Looney's Ferry, Va., naming of, v. 36
 Louisville, Ky., investors of, v. 71

INDEX

INDEX

- Loving, Abraham, i. 80
 Loyal Company, v. 35
 Lucy Selina Furnace, Alleghany Co.,
 iv. 13
 Lutheran Church in Rockbridge Co.,
 iii. 3-6
 Lydia, Anne Wilkerson (Mrs. Jacob),
 v. 38
 Jacob, v. 38
 Mary. *See* Still, Mary Lydia
 Lydia Furnace, ii. 18, 24
 Lyle, Annabel. *See* Williams, Anna-
 bel Lyle
 Capt. Archibald, vi. 66
 Daniel, iii. 42
 Elizabeth Campbell. *See* Kinnear,
 Elizabeth Campbell Lyle
 James (fl. 1778), i. 65, 69
 James (fl. 1850), v. 12
 John, i. 68
 Capt. John, ii. 10; v. 10
 Katie Letcher, vi. 2
 Margaret Alexander (Mrs. S. W.),
 v. 10
 Matthew, i. 19, 46
 Oscar, v. 13
 Royster, Jr., editor's foreword to
 vol. vi., vi. 6-8
 Samuel, i. 64, 67, 68
 Samuel Woods, v. 10, 13
 Sarah, *See* Ruffner, Sarah
 Lyle family, v. 9
 Lynchburg, Va., Hunter's Raid on,
 iv. 23; v. 82; vi. 92
- Mackey, Inez. *See* Williams, Inez
 Mackey
 John, v. 9, 33
 Sue. *See* Williams, Sue Mackey
 Mackey family, i. 8; v. 10
 Madison, Helen Bannister (Mrs. R.
 L.), vi. 33, 90
 James, iv. 25; v. 67
 federal aid, opposition to, v. 57
 Jefferson, relations with, v. 66
 Col. Robert L., vi. 33, 42n. 2, 90
 Magruder, Gen. J. B., vi. 17
 Mahone, Gen. William, v. 85
 Malvern Hill, Battle of, vi. 17-18
 Manassas, Battle of Second, vi. 44
 Man Killer (Indian chief), v. 39
 Manly, Dr. Charles, vi. 71n. 9
 Manly Memorial Baptist Church, vi.
 68-70, 71n. 9
 Mann, Gov. William Hodges, i. 100
 "Manor House, The," iv. 20
 Manspile, Richard G., v. 31
 "Maple Hall," v. 10
 marble quarries, v. 50
 Margrave, Rev. William, vi. 69
 Marr, (Mrs.) Janey Hope, i. 41
 Col. R. A., v. 98
 Marshall, (Mrs.) Anne Lee, vi. 80
 John (Chief Justice), v. 97
 Gen. George C., vi. 79
 Louis, vi. 80
 Mildred, vi. 83
 Dr. Robert, v. 28
 Marshall Research Library, George C.,
 vi. 78-79
 Martin, Tom, v. 86
 Mason, Rev. Emmett T., v. 30
 J. M., vi. 53
 Rev. Valentine M., vi. 68
 Massaponax Furnace, Va., iv. 21
 Massie, Prof. (geologist), v. 24
 Col. James W., iii. 8; vi. 12
 Matthews family, i. 16, 49
 Maury, Matthew Fontaine, iv. 33
 Maury River, v. 25, 74, 94; vi. 37
 covered bridge, vi. 12, 23, 66, 87
 Maxwell, William, iv. 9
 Mcky. *See* Mackey
 Meigs, Lt. John R., vi. 90
 Memminger, Charles A., vi. 47-48
 Merrill, Horace S., article by, i. 60
 Merrimac, iv. 34
 Methodist Church in Rockbridge Co.,
 iv. 16
 See also the following churches:
 Mt. Zion; Trinity
 Mexican War, iv. 22
 Middletown, Md., abolitionists of, vi.
 18-19
 Miley, Henry (father of Michael),
 iv. 13
 Henry (son of Michael), iv. 14
 Michael, iv. 13-15, 24
 Mill Creek, v. 74
 Miller, James, v. 94
 James T., v. 30
 Rev. Dr. John, iii. 27, 43
 L. Rice, v. 45
 Sally Campbell Preston McDowell
 (Mrs. John), iii. 27
 Miller's Furnace, Augusta Co., iv. 22
 mills, grist. *See* grist mills
 Minor, Dr. John B., v. 82-83
 Mitchell, Rev. James, iv. 11
 Samuel, iii. 42
 Moffett, George, i. 10
 Martha McDowell (Mrs. George),
 i. 10
 Moger, Dr. Allen, article by, v. 89
 Mohler, Friedrich, iii. 3
 Monroe, Albert Marshall, vi. 72
 Frances. *See* Penick, Frances Mon-
 roe
 (Pres.) James, v. 57
 Laura Taylor (Mrs. A. M.), vi. 72
 Mary. *See* Robinson, Mary Monroe
 Monroe family, ii. 21
 Montague, Gov. Andrew, v. 11, 49
 Montgomery, Capt. James, v. 11, 49
 "Montrose," Botetourt Co., v. 81
 Moodispaugh, John, vi. 82
 Moody, John, vi. 67
 Moon family, v. 26
 Moore, Alexander, i. 82
 Alexander Spotswood, i. 74
 Gen. Andrew, iv. 25
 Andrew Reid, letter to, iv. 25-28
 General Assembly, delegate to,
 iv. 25
 Jeffersonian sympathies, iv. 25-
 28 *passim*
 Louisiana Purchase, approval of,
 iv. 25-26, 27

- military endeavors, i. 67; ii. 11; iv. 25
 U. S. Constitution, favors ratification of, iv. 25; v. 68, 69
 U. S. Senate, member of, iv. 25-28
 Barbara Taylor (Mrs. James, IV), v. 33, 38
 David E., Sr., iii. 8, 21; vi. 14
 Edgar, iv. 21
 Edward A. ("Ned"), v. 77; vi. 14
 Elizabeth Aylett (Mrs. A. S.), i. 74
 Frank, v. 101
 Jane, i. 83
 Jane. *See* Walker, Jane Moore
 Jane Walker (Mrs. James, Jr.), i. 79; v. 33, 36
 James, Sr., v. 33
 James, Jr., i. 79; v. 32, 33, 36, 37
 Capt. James, III, i. 18, 81, 83; v. 36
 Abb's Valley, moves to, i. 79-80
 killed by Indians, i. 82; v. 37
 in Rockbridge Co., i. 79; v. 33
 James, IV, v. 33
 Abb's Valley, return to, v. 37-38
 Indians, taken captive by, i. 83; v. 37
 Mary Moore (Brown), reunion with, i. 84; v. 37
 Rockbridge Co., return to, i. 84-85; v. 37
 John (son of James, III), i. 83
 John (of New Monmouth), iii. 42
 John (fl. 1780?), v. 18
 Rev. John S., article by, vi. 63-71
 Joseph, v. 36
 Lois, article by, v. 79-87
 Margaret, i. 82, 83
 Martha Poague (Mrs. James, III), i. 81
 Abb's Valley, moves to, i. 79-80; v. 37
 death of, i. 83; v. 37
 Indians, taken captive by, i. 83; v. 37
 massacre, survivor of, i. 81-82; v. 37
 in Rockbridge Co., i. 79; v. 33
 Martha Poague. *See* Still, Martha Poague
 Mary. *See* Brown, Mary Moore
 Mary. *See* Hutcheson, Mary Moore
 Mary. *See* Stuart, Mary Moore
 Paxton
 Mary Elizabeth. *See* Hogshead, Mary Elizabeth Moore
 Rachel. *See* McPheeters, Rachel Moore
 Rebecca, i. 81, 82
 Samuel McDowell
 education of, i. 85, 87
 General Assembly, delegate to, iii. 13
 secession, agrees to, iii. 13
 Secession Convention (Va., 1861), delegate to, iii. 9, 10-13 *passim*
 unionist sentiments, iii. 7, 10, 11, 12; vi. 10
 Sarah Reid (Mrs. Andrew), iv. 25
 Stuart, v. 97, 101
 article by, v. 70-79
 Thomas, v. 37
 William (son of James, III), i. 81, 82
 William (of Cornwall), v. 25
 Capt. William, i. 67, 72; ii. 11
 W. T., v. 26
 Moore and Crowder Store, v. 26
 Moore Grant, v. 36
 Moorehead, John, vi. 66
 Moore's Furnace, v. 25
 Moorman, Dr. J. J., ii. 13
 Robert, ii. 13
 Moravian missionaries, v. 34, 37
 Morris, John, Jr., vi. 20
 Robert, v. 49-50
 Morrison, Bettie Walker. *See* Sale, Bettie Walker Morrison
 Frances Brown (Mrs. [Rev. Dr.] James), i. 86, 87, 95
 Dr. James, i. 89
 Mrs. (Dr.) James, i. 88
 Rev. Dr. James, iii. 26
 academy, operation of, i. 99
 marriage of, i. 86, 87, 95
 New Providence, pastor of, i. 95, 96
 Dr. Samuel Brown, i. 88; ii. 17
 Dr. William, iii. 17
 Moseley, Dr. H. W., vi. 26
 Moses, R. B., v. 45
 Motley, Robert C., article by, vi. 72-78
 Mount Carmel Presbyterian Church, Augusta Co., iii. 27
 Mount Olive Lutheran Church. *See* New Mount Olive Lutheran Church
 Mount Torry Furnace, Va., iv. 23
 Mount Zion Methodist Church, i. 49
 Mowbray, Rev. Thomas, iii. 27
 "Mulberry Hill," v. 73, 75
 Munford, Lt. Charles Ellis, vi. 17-18
 Munger, Mrs. Robert, article by, vi. 98
 Murphy, William, v. 29
 Dr. William Alexander, article by, ii. 11
 Muterspaw (Mutispaugh). *See* Moodispaugh
 Myers, Henry H., v. 72, 73, 77, 79
 James J., iii. 42
 Sue. *See* Williams, Sue Myers
 Myers Hardware Company, v. 79
 McAden, Rev. Hugh, i. 24; iii. 40
 McCabe, Capt. William Gordon, i. 41
 McCampbell, John, iii. 42
 Robert, iii. 41
 Robert, iii. 42
 William, iii. 41
See also Campbell
 McCausland, Gen. John, vi. 66, 87-88
 McChesney, Dr. John, vi. 87
 Lt. Robert, i. 100
 McClanahan, Rev. William, iii. 4, 6

INDEX

INDEX

- McClelland, Samuel, iii. 42
 McClintic, Shanklin, iii. 26
 McClung, Mrs. Elizabeth Bell, v. 14
 Frank L., v. 14
 H., iii. 42
 Hanna Kinnear (Mrs. J. S.), v. 13
 Henry, i. 65
 John S., v. 13
 Kendall, v. 14
 Susan Kinnear (Mrs. F. L.), v. 14
 William (fl. 1778), v. 11
 William (fl. 1850), v. 12
 McClung family, i. 8, 49
 McClure, Alexander, i. 65
 Jane, i. 49; v. 18
 John S., i. 48
 R. C., i. 58
 Samuel, Sr., i. 47
 Samuel, Jr., i. 47
 McClure Brothers Furnace (Buena Vista Furnace), ii. 24; v. 25; vi. 97
 McClure family, i. 53; v. 9
 McConnell, Rev. James, i. 46, 47
 McCoppin family, i. 53
 McCorkle, J. Baxter, v. 30
 Rev. Samuel Eusebius, i. 46
 McCorkle family, i. 49, 53; v. 16
 McCormick, Cyrus Hall, i. 97; iii. 17; v. 14, 38
 Robert, v. 14
 McCormick family, i. 97
 McCormick Forge, ii. 24
 McCown, Agnes. *See* Berry, Agnes McCown
 Dr. Albert, article by, iv. 24
 James L., iv. 24
 John (of Irish Creek), v. 25
 John (of Timber Ridge), v. 13
 Malcolm, v. 18
 Nancy Kinnear (Mrs. John), v. 13
 Walter, v. 13
 McCown family, v. 11
 McCoy, Dr. B. H., article by, iv. 16-18
 McCrary, Samuel, vi. 57
 McCray family, i. 49
 McCrum, J. T., v. 77; vi. 72
 McCue, J., v. 64
 McCue family, i. 21
 McCulloch, Ruth Floyd Anderson (Mrs. Charles), articles by, i. 62-77; iii. *intro.*; iv. 18-21; vi. 93-98, 102
 McCune, Elizabeth. *See* Kinnear, Elizabeth McCune
 John, v. 13
 McCune family, v. 11
 McDonald, Rev. C. A., iii. 44
 article by, iii. 40-45
 (Mrs.) Cornelia, iv. 20; vi. 89-90
 Francis, v. 18
 McDowell, Elizabeth. *See* Benton, Elizabeth McDowell
 Ephriam, i. 8, 15; iv. 6; v. 9
 Dr. Ephriam, v. 96
 birthplace, i. 10
 centennial observance, iv. 6
 education of, iv. 6
 monument to, iv. 6-7
 surgeon, first abdominal, i. 10-11; iii. 17; iv. 6-7
 James (county-surveyor), i. 64
 James (son of Ephriam), i. 8, 19
 James (of Woods Creek), v. 63
 Dr. James, iii. 9
 Gov. James, iii. 50; iv. 36
 birthplace, i. 10
 education of, i. 85, 87, 99
 emancipation plan, persuades Gov. Floyd to abandon, v. 47
 grave of, i. 11
 on Rev. Samuel Brown, i. 85
 Jane. *See* Leyburn, Jane McDowell
 Capt. John
 Borden's Grant, surveyor of, i. 8, 15-16
 home of, i. 8-9
 killed at Balcony Downs, i. 9, 11, 21-22; iv. 29
 Magdalena Woods (Mrs. John). *See* Bowyer, Magdalena Woods McDowell Borden
 Martha. *See* Moffett, Martha McDowell
 Mary. *See* Greenlee, Mary McDowell
 Robert, iii. 42
 Sally Campbell Preston. *See* Miller, Sally Campbell Preston McDowell
 Col. Samuel, i. 9, 11, 64, 67; iv. 28
 McDowell family, v. 16; vi. 93
 McElhany, John, iii. 41
 McElwee, Rev. William M., iii. 28
 McFarland, James, iii. 42
 McGarry, Edward, i. 17
 McGreath, Prof. (geologist), v. 24
 McGuffin, Thomas H., iii. 5
 McGuire, (Mrs.) Judith White Brockenbrough, iv. 35
 McKee, James, iii. 41
 John, i. 76; iii. 41
 Nancy Hanna (Mrs. John), i. 76
 Capt. Thomas, iv. 31
 William, i. 71; ii. 10; iv. 25; v. 68, 69
 McKeever, William, v. 77, 78
 McKelway family, i. 88
 McKennie, H. R., vi. 16
 McKinley, William (during Hunter's Raid), vi. 88, 90
 McLaughlin, Rev. Dr. H. W., i. 97, 98
 McLaughlin family, i. 88
 McMath, Susanna, iii. 41
 McNaught. *See* McNutt
 McNeil, Daniel, v. 13
 Mary, v. 13
 McNulty, Charles, address by, ii. 9
 McNutt, Alexander (of Orange Co.), vi. 93
 Sir Alexander, i. 18, 49; v. 39; vi. 93, 98
 description of, vi. 97
 knighted, vi. 94
 military career, vi. 94, 96
 and Nova Scotia, vi. 95-96
 political interests, vi. 96-97
 sword of, vi. 97, 98

- W&L, bequests to, vi. 96
 Gov. Alexander Gallatin (Miss.),
 i. 85, 87, 99
 Catherine Anderson (Mrs. John),
 vi. 93
 John, vi. 93, 97, 98
 Josiah S., iii. 11
 Martha. *See* Glasgow, Martha Mc-
 Nutt
 William, i. 47, 49; vi. 95
 McNutt family, i. 88
 McPheeters, Rachel Moore (Mrs.
 Wm.), i. 84
 McPheeters family, i. 88; v. 36
 McPherson, Elizabeth Blair. *See*
 Grigsby, Elizabeth Blair McPher-
 son
 (Mrs.) Lilia Blair, iv. 9
- Natural Bridge, The, iv. 8
 Natural Bridge Community, i. 56; v.
 45, 48; vi. 13
 Negroes, v. 31, 84, 85, 94-95; vi.
 13-14
 Indians, relations with, v. 39
See also slaves
 Neil, Patrick, iii. 42
 Nelson, Alexander L., iii. 8; v. 8,
 72, 79, 94
 Catherine. *See* Brockenbrough,
 Catherine Nelson Page
 Elizabeth Moore (Mrs. A. L.), v.
 94
 Thomas Cary, iv. 35
 Neriah Baptist Church, vi. 63, 64,
 67-68, 71n. 6
 New Castle, Del., vi. 93
 New Castle, Presbytery of, i. 45
 Newell's Tavern, i. 79; v. 36
 New England:
 confederacy considered by South
 with, iii. 9
 turnpikes of, v. 56
 New Market, Battle of, i. 32; vi. 13,
 32, 41-42
 graves of cadets, i. 31-32
 New Monmouth Presbyterian Church,
 iv. 10
 buildings
 first (log), iii. 44
 second (frame), iii. 44
 third (stone), i. 71; iii. 41, 44
 fourth (brick), iii. 44-45
 present, iii. 45
 establishment of, i. 19, 91; iii. 40
 and Great Awakening, iv. 11-12
 manses, iii. 45
 membership
 roster (1798), iii. 41-42
 size of, iii. 43
 ministers, i. 46; iii. 26, 40-44*pas-*
sim; iv. 10, 12
 mother church of
 Kerr's Creek congregation, iii. 42
 Lexington congregation, i. 75-76;
 iii. 41, 44
 name changed to Monmouth, i. 65;
 iii. 44
 pews, renting of, iii. 42
 predecessors
 Forks of the James, iii. 44
 Hall's, iii. 44
 New Mount Olive Lutheran Church,
 iii. 3-4
 New Providence Academy, i. 100
 New Providence Presbyterian Church,
 i. 90
 academies, operation of, i. 99-100
 buildings
 first (log), i. 91
 second (log), i. 91-92
 third (stone), i. 92-93, 100-101
 fourth (brick), i. 94
 present, i. 96
 chrysanthemum show, first, i. 97
 establishment of, i. 19, 46, 91
 and Great Awakening, i. 94-95
 members, number of, i. 94, 96, 98
 ministers, i. 45-46, 85, 86-87, 91-
 98*passim*; v. 38
 organ, purchase of first, i. 98-99
 Sunday School buildings construct-
 ed, i. 97-98
 Synod of Virginia organized, i. 99
 newspapers, Rockbridge Co., iii. 8
See also Lexington Gazette; *Intelli-*
gencer, The; Rockbridge County
News; Rockbridge Democrat
 Newton, Mary Mann Page (Mrs.
 Wm. Brockenbrough), iv. 35
 Newton family, iv. 35
 New York, N. Y., investors of, v. 71
 New York, Synod of, i. 45
 Nightingale, P. M., i. 32
 Nitre and Mining Bureau (CSA),
 iv. 23
 Noely, Margaret. *See* Anderson, Mar-
 garet Noely
 Norfolk & Western Railroad (Shen-
 andoah Valley RR), iii. 22-23;
 v. 23, 26, 74
 North Mountain Presbyterian Church,
 Augusta Co., i. 46, 91
 North River. *See* Maury River
 North River Canal, iii. 18; v. 74; vi.
 13, 36, 75, 79, 89
 construction of, v. 50-52
 financing of, v. 50-51, 52
 local objections to, v. 51-52
 pre-canal navigation by batteaux,
 v. 25
See also canals; James River and
 Kanawha Canal
 North River Navigation Company,
 v. 50-52
 Northwestern Turnpike, v. 53
 Nova Scotia, Canada, vi. 94-95
- Obenchain, Rev. J. P., iii. 6
 Occaneechee Trace, v. 19
 Odineal, D. T., v. 45
 "Old Joe Clark" (song), v. 25
 "Old Jordan Road," iv. 13; vi. 66
 Old Monmouth Presbyterian Church.
See New Monmouth Presbyterian
 Church

INDEX

INDEX

- Old Providence Associate Reformed
 Presbyterian Church, Augusta
 Co., i. 91, 99
 Old's Furnace, Albemarle Co., iv. 22
 Oney, Rev. W. B., iii. 6
 opera house, Lexington, v. 77
 Orange County:
 division of, i. 24; v. 34
 establishment of, v. 33
 Orbison, John, iii. 42
 Julia Anne. *See* Kinnear, Julia
 Anne Orbison
 Orbison family, v. 11
 Oregon Trail, iii. 17
 osteopathy, v. 32-33, 40-41
 Otter, Peaks of, Bedford Co., vi.
 82-83
 Owen, Margaret. *See* Hamilton, Mar-
 garet Owen
 oxen, iv. 5; v. 24, 25
 Oxford Presbyterian Church:
 buildings
 first (log), iii. 24, 25
 second (stone), i. 71; iii. 24-25
 present, iii. 25
 establishment of, iii. 26
 and Great Awakening, v. 29
 ministers of, i. 46; iii. 25, 26-28;
 iv. 11, 12; v. 28, 29
 re-organization of, iii. 26
 Ox Hill, Battle of, i. 29

 Page, Anne Rose, i. 35
 Catherine Nelson (Mrs. C. L. C.).
 See Brockenbrough, Catherine
 Nelson Page
 Charles L. C., iv. 35
 Mary Mann. *See* Newton, Mary
 Mann Page
 Maj. John, i. 35
 Paine, J. W., iii. 8
 Paine, Rev. James, iii. 42
 Palmer, Clay, iv. 24
 Panther Gap Baptist Church, vi. 68
 panthers, danger of, i. 18
 Parker, Rev. Newton A., iii. 27
 Parks, John, v. 25
 Parks furnace, v. 25
 Paterson, John M. P., v. 28
 Susan A. Clarkson Hamilton (Mrs.
 J. M. P.), v. 28
 Patterson, Bruce E., article by, v.
 22-26
 John K., v. 13-14
 Lauretta Kinnear (Mrs. R. L.), v.
 13
 Rufus L., v. 13
 Patton, A., v. 12
 Col. James, i. 9; v. 34, 35, 36
 Mrs. W. Y., v. 14
 Patton family, v. 9, 11
 Paul, John, i. 69
 Paxton, Earle K., v. 12
 Gen. Elisha Franklin, ii. 17; iii. 8
 Elizabeth. *See* Jordan, Elizabeth
 Paxton
 Elizabeth Alexander (widow of
 John, Sr., of Pa.), i. 63; vi. 93
 John, Jr., i. 63, 69, 73
 Capt. John, III, i. 67; ii. 11
 John (son of Thomas [son of
 Elizabeth A.]), i. 47, 48, 49
 Joseph, i. 54
 Mary, i. 49; v. 18
 Mary Moore (Mrs. Samuel). *See*
 Stuart, Mary Moore Paxton
 Matthew W., i. 69
 articles by, ii. 20; v. 61-70
 Matthew W., Jr., vi. 55n.
 Phoebe, i. 49; v. 18
 Robert Glasgow, vi. 77-78
 Sally. *See* Edmondson, Sally Paxton
 Samuel, v. 36
 Samuel D., v. 25
 Sarah Walker (Mrs. John [son of
 Thomas]), i. 48
 Thomas (son of Elizabeth A.), i.
 47, 48, 49
 Thomas (of nr. Fairfield), vi. 93
 Rev. Thomas N., iii. 42-43
 Maj. William (son of Elizabeth
 A.), i. 47, 65, 69
 William (son of Thomas [son of
 Elizabeth A.]), i. 43, 44
 Capt. William (son of John, Jr.),
 ii. 11
 William M., vi. 15
 Paxton family, i. 20; ii. 10, 21; v.
 9, 16, 36
 Payne, Rev. Henry, iii. 26
 Peace Conference of 1861, vi. 9-10,
 51
 Peak, (Mrs.) Linette, article by, ii. 10
 Peaks of Otter, Bedford Co., vi. 82-83
 Peaks Presbyterian Church, Bedford
 Co., iv. 11
 peddlers, i. 72
 Pendleton, Col. Alexander S. ("Sand-
 die"), iv. 32; v. 70; vi. 36,
 42n. 18
 description of, vi. 37
 nickname, spelling of, vi. 42n. 18
 UVa, student of, vi. 11
 Hughella, vi. 34, 36, 37, 38, 42n.
 19
 Katherine Corbin (Mrs. A. S.). *See*
 Brooke, Katherine Corbin Pen-
 dleton
 Mary Nelson, vi. 37
 Nancy Nelson, vi. 37
 P. P., iii. 20, 21, 22
 Rose Page, vi. 37
 Susan, vi. 37
 Gen. (Rev.) William Nelson, vi.
 14, 42n. 10^c18
 Chief of Artillery, Army of N.
 Va., i. 35n.; vi. 43n. 20
 ministry of, i. 35n.; vi. 37;
 42n. 20
 Rockbridge Artillery, elected
 commander of, vi. 11
 West Point, graduate of, vi. 42-
 43n. 20
 Mrs. William Nelson, i. 35n.
 Penick, Rev. D. A., iii. 43
 Frances Monroe (Mrs. P. M.), vi.
 72
 Mary Monroe, vi. 72

Paul M., vi. 72
 "Penick-Edmondson House," vi. 76
 Petersburg, Va., vi. 21
 petitions to General Assembly, Rock-
 bridge Co., v. 48-52
 Philadelphia, Pa., vi. 56n.
 Centennial Exposition (1876), v.
 44
 Independence Day celebration
 (1790), v. 65; vi. 54
 investors of, v. 71
 "Philadelphia Grant," vi. 95
 Philadelphia, Synod of, i. 44
 piano, first in Lexington, vi. 23
 Pickens family, i. 21
 Pierson, Capt. W. F., v. 75
 Pinkerton, Rev. William, iii. 27
 Pittsburgh and Glasgow Railroad, v.
 74
 Pittsburgh and Virginia Railroad, v. 83
 Poague, Eli, i. 58
 John (of Falling Spring, fl. 1810),
 i. 44
 John, Sr., v. 36
 John, Jr., i. 80, 81
 Mrs. John Sr., i. 85
 John B., i. 52
 J. Wilson, i. 58
 Martha. *See* Moore, Martha Poague
 William F., i. 52
 Col. William T., i. 58; vi. 13
 Poague family, i. 49, 53
 Pogue, Dr. Forrest C., article by, vi.
 78-79
See also Poague
 Poindexter, Erk, i. 68
 Miles, articles by, 9, 24
 Point Pleasant, Battle of, v. 19, 33
 Polio epidemic (1917), i. 95-96
 Pope, Gen. John, vi. 44
 "Poplar Hill," Augusta Co., vi. 76
 Porter, Frances. *See* Grigsby, Frances
 Porter
 Jane. *See* Grigsby, Jane Porter
 Rufus Choate ("Babe"), v. 94
 Posey, Maj. Thomas, i. 50, 52; v. 88
 Powers, Rev. James, iii. 27
 Prendergast, Maj. Richard G., vi. 89
 Presbyterian Church in Rockbridge
 Co., vi. 64
 "Collegiate Connection, The," iv.
 12
 early services of
 communion, i. 54; v. 18
 worship, v. 18
 singing clerk of, i. 54
See also the following churches:
 Bethel, Augusta Co.; Bethesda;
 Briery, Prince Edward Co.; Col-
 lierstown; Fairfield; Falling
 Spring; Hamilton's; Hebron, Aug-
 usta Co.; High Bridge; Kerr's
 Creek; Lexington; Mount Car-
 mel, Augusta Co.; New Mon-
 mouth; New Providence; North
 Mountain, Augusta Co.; Oxford;
 Peaks, Bedford Co.; Providence,
 Pa.; Timber Ridge; Tinkling
 Spring, Augusta Co.

Presbyterian High School, i. 100;
 iii. 27
 Presley, William, iii. 41
 Preston, Col. John T. L., iii. 8; vi.
 10, 14
 birthplace of, i. 28
 residence, destruction of, v. 79
 and VMI, founding of, vi. 26
 —, hides property of from
 Union forces, vi. 89
 Margaret Junkin (Mrs. J. T. L.),
 vi. 11
 during Hunter's Raid, vi. 13,
 89, 92
 and Gen. Jackson's sword, vi.
 13, 92
 memorial plaque, v. 88
 poetry read at unveiling of Jack-
 son statue, vi. 76
 residence, destruction of, v. 79
 Sally Caruthers (Mrs. J. T. L.), vi.
 26
 Col. Thomas L., v. 34
 Preston family, i. 88
 "Preston House," v. 79
 Price, Anne Pope. *See* Leyburn, Anne
 Pope Price
 William, i. 74
 Priestly, James, v. 88
 Princeton Theological Seminary,
 founding of, v. 45, 88; vi. 23
 prison, first Rockbridge Co., i. 68-69
 Providence Hill subdivision, naming
 of, v. 63
 Providence Presbyterian Church, Pa.,
 i. 87, 91
 Pulse, Mrs. E., iii. 4
 Puryear, Frances. *See* Woodson,
 Frances Puryear Jordan
 Hezekiah, Sr., vi. 64
 Hezekiah, Jr., vi. 64
 Milly Winn, vi. 64
 quarries:
 lime, v. 50, 76
 marble, v. 50

railroad bond-issue, Rockbridge Co.,
 iii. 19-23
 railroads in Virginia, 19th century,
 iii. 30-34; v. 98
 canals, successors to, vi. 67
 difficulties of, iii. 33-34
 equipment, description of, iii. 32-33
 financing of, iii. 30, 31-32
 lines in operation, iii. 31
 and public highway system, v. 99
 turnpikes, competition with, v. 54
 Ramsay, William, i. 65
 Ramsey, Rev. Dr. James B., iii. 43, 45
 Randolph, Edmund, v. 68, 69
 Rapp's Mill School, iv. 16; v. 31
 Rawlins, Champe Stanard (Mrs.
 Wm.), vi. 31, 34, 36
 William, vi. 31
 Read, Clement, iv. 10

INDEX

INDEX

- See also Reed; Reid
 Readjusters, v. 84-85, 86
 Reconstruction in Rockbridge Co.,
 vi. 14, 29, 75
 Rector, Rev. George H., iii. 27
 Redeemer government, Va., v. 84-85
 "Red House," i. 8-9, 10, 11, 16
 "Red Mill," ii. 21
 redemptioners (indentured servants),
 i. 71
 Redwell's Furnace, Va., iv. 22
 Reed, Downy, iii. 42
 See also Read; Reid
 Reeves, John H., Jr., article by, v.
 6-7
 referenda. See elections, Rockbridge
 Co., referenda
 Rehoboth Schoolhouse, iii. 4
 Reid, Andrew (of "Mulberry Hill"),
 iv. 25; v. 75, 91
 county clerk, first, i. 64, 77; v. 92
 Andrew (fl. 1870), iv. 5
 Samuel McDowell, i. 74-75, 77;
 iii. 7, 13
 Sarah. See Alexander, Sarah Reid
 Sarah. See Moore, Sarah Reid
 See also Read; Reed
 Reid family, v. 11
 "Reid-White House," vi. 13, 65
 R. E. Lee Memorial (Episcopal)
 Church:
 buildings
 former (Grace Episcopal
 Church), v. 8
 present, consecration of (1886),
 i. 35
 rectors, i. 35n.; vi. 33, 37
 rectory, vi. 23-24, 27, 65
 Religious Freedom, Act of (Va.,
 1785), v. 67; vi. 54
 Remley, Rev. James, vi. 69
 Republican Party, v. 85; vi. 49
 "Retirement," Augusta Co., vi. 76
 Revolutionary War, Rockbridge Co.,
 ii. 10-11, 17
 economy, effect on, i. 70
 morality, effect on, i. 70; iv. 10
 pensions and benefits, i. 69
 taxation, rate of, i. 69
 Rhodes family, i. 49
 Richardson, Rev. X. J., iii. 4
 Richmond, Va.:
 investors of, v. 71
 market for Rockbridge Co., v. 84
 Richmond *Times-Dispatch*, v. 82
 Richmond *Whig*, iii. 12
 Riley. See Ryley; Rylly
 Rives, William Cabell, vi. 9, 51
 Rixey, Rep. John F., v. 87
 Road, Great Valley. See Great Valley
 Road
 Road, Old Jordan, iv. 13; vi. 66
 roads:
 Rockbridge Co., secondary, v. 102
 Virginia, v. 98-102
 free, v. 54
 original highway system, v. 98
 "summer," v. 56
 toll. See turnpikes
 Roanoke, Va., iii. 23; v. 72
 Robert E. Lee Memorial Episcopal
 Church. See R. E. Lee Memorial
 (Episcopal) Church
 "Robert of Rockbridge." See David-
 son, James Dorman
 Robertson, Ann. See Johnston, Ann
 Robertson
 Sen. A. Willis, v. 97, 98, 99, 101
 David, v. 68
 William, i. 13, 14, 15
 William G., v. 87
 Robinson, Britain, iii. 42
 Edward Trent, vi. 72
 articles by, ii. 21, 24
 John ("Jockey")
 birthplace, iii. 46
 business operations, iii. 47-48
 death of, iii. 49-50
 education, interest in, iii. 48-50
 monument to, iii. 50
 nick-name, iii. 47
 trade of, iii. 46-47
 UVa, offer of land to, iii. 48
 W&L, gifts to, iii. 49-50
 Mary Monroe (Mrs. E. T.), vi. 72
 Rockbridge Alum Springs, iv. 15-16;
 vi. 12
 Rockbridge Artillery (CSA), vi. 11,
 17
 Rockbridge Baths, ii. 17-18; iv. 15
 former names
 Jordan's Springs, ii. 17; iii. 36
 Letcher's Springs, iii. 36
 hotel, burning of, iv. 16
 VMI, use as summer school by,
 ii. 17-18; iv. 16
 Rockbridge Baths Company, ii. 17
 Rockbridge Company, v. 72, 84; vi.
 75
 Rockbridge County:
 bond-issue, railroad, iii. 19-22
 court, first, v. 25
 court decisions, early, i. 23; v. 18-19
 court house
 first, i. 68; v. 93
 portraits, display of, vi. 7
 establishment of, i. 62-64; v. 93
 officers of, first, i. 64
 petitions to General Assembly, v.
 48-52
 prison, first, i. 68-69
 Reconstruction period, vi. 14, 29,
 75
 secessionist movement, iii. 7-14; vi.
 16
 settlers, early, i. 16-17, 20; v. 8,
 33-34
 Germans, v. 15-16, 17
 Scotch-Irish, i. 8, 90-91; iii. 40;
 iv. 6; v. 9, 14, 16-17, 62, 80;
 vi. 63, 94
 tax reports, annual, v. 47
 telephones, first, v. 44, 79
 unionist sentiment, iii. 7-14; vi.
 9-11, 15, 16
 wills of, iv. 36
 See also elections, Rockbridge Co.;
 Civil War, Rockbridge Co.; Lex-
 ington; Revolutionary War,
 Rockbridge Co.

- Rockbridge County Agricultural Society, ii. 13
- Rockbridge County News, v. 73, 75
- Rockbridge Democrat, iii. 7-8
- Rockbridge Dragoons (CSA), First and Second, vi. 11
- Rockbridge Historical Society, v. 4
board of trustees, creation of, iii. 29
- Constitution and By-laws, i. 105-111; ii. 31-35; iii. 54-60; iv. 49-52; v. 110-113
- markers erected by, v. 88; vi. 10
- membership roster
original, iii. *intro.*
Oct., 1941, i. 112-116
Jan., 1946, ii. 37-41
Jan., 1949, iii. 61-66
Jan., 1954, iv. 37-40
Jan., 1961, v. 102-105, 106
Dec., 1965, vi. 99-101
- officers and committees
1940, i. 6-7
1941, i. 60-61
1942, ii. 8-9
1943, ii. 11-13
1944, ii. 15-16
1945, ii. 18-20
1946, ii. 22-23; iii. 1-2
1947, iii. 15-16
1948, iii. 29-30
1949, iii. 46; iv. 40
1951-54, iv. 41
1956, v. 15, 21
1958, v. 45
1960, v. 89
1962-64; 1964-66; 1966-68, vi. 103
- organization of, i. 4, 117; ii. 9; iii. *intro.*; vi. 4-5, 102
- Rockbridge Lime and Stone Company, v. 76
- Rockbridge Rifles (CSA), ii. 72-74
- Rockbridge Savings Bank, vi. 75
- Rockfish Gap, v. 82
- Rockingham County:
establishment of, i. 63
settlers of, German, v. 16; vi. 63
- Rogers, Mrs. J. D., iv. 21
- Rosebro family, i. 88
"Roseley," v. 10
- Ross, Col. John DeHart, v. 72, 73, 77, 78
- Ross' Furnace, Va., iv. 22
- Rosser, Gen. Thomas L., vi. 40, 43n. 24
- Rowsey, Seaton R., v. 30
- Royal, Maj. W. B., iv. 35
- Ruff, John, vi. 66
- Ruffner, Rev. Dr. Henry, iii. 42; v. 42
Sarah Lyle (Mrs. Henry), v. 42
Dr. William H., v. 42
"Ruffner Pamphlet," ii. 17; vi. 46
"Rural Valley," ii. 21; iii. 26
- Rutherford, Katherine. *See* Walker, Katherine Rutherford
Samuel, i. 79
- Ryley, Judith, v. 18
- Ryly, William, iii. 42
- Sagh-si-dowa (Indian chief), iv. 31
- Sale, Bettie Walker Morrison (Mrs. E. A.):
article by, i. 78-86
photograph of, i. 88a
- Salem, Va., v. 72
- Salling, John, i. 21; v. 33
- Samuel's Lutheran Church, iii. 3
- Sandys, Sir Edwin, iv. 21
- Saville, Charles S., v. 30
Jacob O., v. 30
- Scales, Peter, v. 58, 59
- Scholl, Peter, v. 34
- schools, Rockbridge Co.:
boy's preparatory proposed for Lexington, v. 79
field, v. 30
See also the following schools: Ann Smith Academy; Brownsburg Academy; Brownsburg Public High; Fancy Hill Academy; Hamilton's; Hays Creek Academy; Highland Belle; New Providence Academy; Presbyterian High; Rapp's Mill; Rehoboth
- Schoonmaker, Col. J. M., vi. 88
- Scotch-Irish settlers. *See* "settlers" under various counties, e.g., Rockbridge County: settlers, early
- Scott, Rev. John A., iii. 25
- Secession Convention (Va., 1861), iii. 9-13; vi. 16, 52
calling of, vi. 51
Rockbridge Co., delegates to, iii. 9; vi. 10
secession approved by, iii. 12-13; vi. 52
- secessionist movement, Rockbridge Co., iii. 7-14; vi. 16
- Seddon, James, vi. 51
- Semmes, Louise Brockenbrough (Mrs. T. M.), vi. 33-34, 42n. 8
Col. Thomas M., vi. 33-34, 42n. 8, 76-77
- Semones, Dr. Harry, article by, v. 32-41
- settlers, first. *See* "settlers" under various counties, e. g., Rockbridge County: settlers, early
- Sewannee (Univ. of the South), i. 30
- Shaner, Cornelia, iii. 4
George B., iii. 4
- Shanks, Rev. Dr. D. W., i. 58
- Shaw, Frances Pendleton Stanard (Mrs. T. J.), v. 31
T. J., vi. 31
- Sheltman family, v. 25
- Shenandoah County, German settlers of, v. 16
- Shenandoah Valley Railroad (N&W RR), iii. 22-23; v. 23, 26, 74
- Shewey, E. T., and Decker Brothers Store, v. 26
- Shields, A. Terry, i. 77
- Shipp, Col. (later Gen.) Scott, vi. 35, 36, 42n. 15
- Shirley, Henry G., v. 100
- Shreckhise, Rev. J. M., iii. 4, 6
- Shrewsbury, (Mrs.) Anassa Sterrett, v. 45

INDEX

INDEX

- Rev. Nathaniel, vi. 64
 Shuey, Rev. Dr. John W., iii. 5, 6
 shunpikes, v. 53
 Sigel, Gen. Franz, vi. 32
 silver prospecting, v. 23, 24
 "Silverwood," ii. 21; vi. 76
 Simpson, John, i. 80, 81, 82
 Six Nations. *See* Indian tribes: Iroquois
 skating, ice, v. 94; vi. 37, 38, 81
 Skeen, William, iii. 42
 Skinner, Rev. Dr. John W., vi. 27-28
 slavery, opposition to:
 Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church, v. 11
 Zachariah Johnston, v. 69
 Scotch-Irish, i. 71
 slaves, vi. 29, 67
 in Civil War, vi. 73-75 *passim*, 91
 credit granted to by store-owners, v. 12
 emancipation of, Gov. Floyd's plan for, v. 47
 freed by Hunter's Raid, vi. 14, 20, 91
 legal codes, vi. 61
 number of per owner in Rockbridge Co., i. 71; iii. 48; iv. 8, 19, 28; v. 11, 27, 63; vi. 20
 runaway, vi. 55-62
 in Shenandoah Valley
 growth in number per farm (1800-1860), v. 12
 number of (1765, 1793), v. 17
 treatment of, vi. 56, 57
 value, monetary (1800-1830), vi. 56
 Sloan, Rev. John, iii. 26
 Smiley, Capt. T. M., i. 95
 Smith, Rev. Dr. B. M., i. 87
 Mrs. B. M., i. 87
 Elizabeth, i. 17
 Gen. Francis H.
 and Lee silver, i. 35, 39-40
 nickname given by cadets, vi. 42n. 7
 Gen. McCausland, criticism of, vi. 87-88
 Beverly Stanard's dislike of, vi. 36, 37, 39, 40
 superintendent, named VMI, vi. 26
 Mrs. Francis H., vi. 89
 Rev. H. P., iii. 27
 Rev. James Power, Jr., iii. 27
 Rev. John Blair, iv. 10, 11
 Olive. *See* Hurlbert, Olive Smith
 Snodgrass, Joseph, i. 47
 societies, literary. *See* Franklin Society; Washington Literary Society
 Society of the Cincinnati, i. 27
 Southern Seminary, v. 75
 South River Lumber Company, v. 26
 South, University of, i. 30
 Southwestern Turnpike, v. 53
 Spotswood, Sir Alexander, iv. 21
 Spring Valley Lutheran Church, iii. 3
 springs:
 Lexington, i. 65, 66-67; iv. 18; vi. 22
 Rockbridge Co., sulphur, iii. 36
 See also Cold Sulphur Springs; Rockbridge Alum Springs; Rockbridge Baths; Wilson's Springs
 Sprunt, Dr. David, vi. 97n.
 Stanard, Champe. *See* Rawlins, Champe Stanard
 Ellen B. Taliaferro (Mrs. Robt., Sr.), vi. 30, 31
 F. Haywood, vi. 31
 Francis Pendleton. *See* Shaw, Frances Pendleton Stanard
 Jacquelin Beverly, vi. 30-32
 letters of, vi. 32-42
 Mary. *See* Chapman, Mary Stanard
 Mary Battle (Mrs. Robt., Jr.), vi. 31
 Robert, Sr., vi. 30
 Robert, Jr., vi. 31, 42, 43n. 27
 Sallie Chandler (Mrs. F. Haywood), vi. 31
 "starvation parties," vi. 14
 Staunton, Va., vi. 12
 court at, first, i. 21
 predecessor, Beverly's Mill Place, i. 21
 and UVa, iii. 48
 Staunton and James River Turnpike, v. 59
 Staunton and Parkersburg Turnpike, v. 53
 Steele, David, i. 47
 John, ii. 11
 Rev. R. E., iii. 43
 Sterrett, Anassa. *See* Shrewsbury, (Mrs.) Anassa Sterrett
 Daphne. *See* Greenwood, (Mrs.) Daphne Sterrett
 Dr. John R. Sitlington, ii. 21; iii. 17; v. 45
 Margaret Kinnear (Mrs. T. A.), v. 10, 13
 Marika, v. 45
 Phoebe. *See* Weeks, Phoebe Sterrett
 Samuel W., v. 75
 Thomas A., v. 10, 13
 Still, Rev. Dr. Abraham, v. 32, 38, 39, 40
 Dr. Andrew Taylor
 ancestry of, v. 32-38
 birth of, v. 38
 centennial observance, v. 41
 death of, v. 40
 Kirksville College of Osteopathy and Surgery, founding of, v. 40
 osteopath, first, v. 32, 40
 Boaz, v. 38
 Martha Poague Moore (Mrs. Abraham), v. 32, 33, 38
 Mary Lydia (Mrs. Boaz), v. 38
 stills. *See* whiskey manufacture
 "Stone Castle" (Rockbridge Historical Society). *See* "Castle, The"
 "Stone Castle" (W. W. Whitmore House), ii. 21

- "Stone House" ("Johnston House"),
i. 71; v. 63, 92; vi. 54, 55n.
- Stonewall Brigade, v. 81
- "Stonewall Brigade Band," vi. 76
- "Stono" ("Jordan's Point"), iv. 13;
vi. 65
- stores, country, i. 72
- streets, Lexington, v. 92
beltway proposed (1890), v. 75
by-pass, Rt. 11, proposed (1925),
v. 101
condition of, i. 65-66; v. 79, 93
improvement of (1922), v. 101
original, i. 65; vi. 22
regrading of, i. 73-74; vi. 22
- Strickler, Daniel, iii. 36
- Strickler's Springs. *See* Wilson's
Springs
- Strother, Col. David H., vi. 84-85, 91
- Stuart, Alexander, Sr., i. 64, 67, 68
Maj. Alexander, Jr., v. 36
Alexander (of Timber Ridge), v.
10
Andrew, v. 13
Archibald, v. 68, 69
Elizabeth Hope, i. 117
Hannah Kinnear (Mrs. Andrew),
v. 13
Gen. J. E. B., v. 36
Margaret Kinnier (Mrs. W. C.),
i. 117
Mary Moore Paxton (Mrs. Alex-
ander, Jr.), v. 36
W. C., i. 117; v. 77
- Stuart family, i. 16
- Styles, Spotswood, vi. 102
- "Summer Hill," Hanover Co., iv. 35
- Summers, George W., vi. 51
- "Sunny Knoll," ii. 21
- "Sunnyside Farm," v. 63, 73, 78
- Sutton family, v. 26
- Taliaferro, Ellen B. *See* Stanard, Ellen
B. Taliaferro
- Tardy, Jennings, v. 28
- Tate, Joseph, v. 13
Margaret. *See* Kinnear, Margaret
Tate
- Tate family, v. 11
- taverns:
of 18th century, i. 69-70
licensing of, i. 69; iv. 19-20
rates charged, i. 70; iv. 19
See also hotels
- Tayloe, John, i. 14
- Taylor, Allen, v. 80
Annie Kimberlin (Mrs. [Bishop]
Wm.), iv. 16
Cary, vi. 41, 43n. 26
Edmond M., vi. 41, 43n. 26
Emily. *See* Edmondson, Emily Tay-
lor
Jemima. *See* Lackey, Jemima Taylor
J. McD., iii. 8
Laura. *See* Monroe, Laura Taylor
Martha (Mrs. Stuart), iv. 16
Rev. R. J., iii. 43
Stuart, iv. 16
- William, iii. 42
Bishop William, iii. 17; iv. 16-18;
v. 30
- Taylor family, v. 11; vi. 43n. 26
- Teaford family, iii. 4, 5
- telephones, first Rockbridge Co., v.
44, 79
- Telford family, i. 16, 88
- temperance movement, i. 95; v. 42
- Templeton, Elizabeth Edmondson
(Mrs. James), i. 49
James, i. 47, 49
Robert, v. 12
- tenant farmers, Irish, vi. 29
- Tennessee Midland Railroad, v. 74
- Thomas, Anne. *See* Anderson, Anne
Thomas
Col. Frank, v. 80
Maj. George, vi. 51-52
Lucy. *See* Brooke, Lucy Thomas
- Thompson, Eliza Kinnear (Mrs.
[Rev.] Horatio E.), v. 13
Faith, i. 38
Rev. Dr. Horatio E., v. 10, 11,
12, 13
Capt. Horatio E., v. 10, 13
John, i. 65
John R., iv. 35
Thomas, iii. 42
- "Thorn Hill," i. 23, 63; iii. 47
- Thornton, William M., v. 98
- Thurman, Dr. Frances L., i. 117
article by, i. 8-11
- Timber Ridge Associate Reformed
Presbyterian Church, v. 8, 11, 12
- Timber Ridge Community, v. 7-14
- Timber Ridge Presbyterian Church,
iv. 10
ARP Church, relations with, v. 11,
12
building, present, v. 16
fort, use as, v. 16
establishment of, i. 19, 46, 91; v.
9, 11
periodic commemorations of, v. 9
ministers, i. 46, 92, 93; iii. 40, 41;
iv. 10, 11, 12; v. 28
services, early, v. 18
- Tinkling Spring Presbyterian Church,
Augusta Co., i. 73
- tin ore, v. 22, 23, 24
- tobacco, raising of, v. 27
- Todd, Charles, v. 30
Jane. *See* Crawford, Jane Todd
- toll roads. *See* turnpikes
- Tompkins, Dr. E. Pendleton, iv. 3
articles by, i. 3, 12-25; ii. 21, 24;
iii. 18-23, 35-38; iv. 6-7
editor's foreword to vol. iii. by, iii.
intro.
- Towns, Capt., vi. 91
- transportation, development of Vir-
ginia, v. 97-102
- Traphagen, Dr. Frank W., v. 24
- "Traveller," vi. 27
- Treavy family, i. 11
- Tredegar Iron Works, Richmond, iv.
5, 23, 34; v. 82
- "Tribrook," v. 42
- Trimble, John, i. 64

INDEX

INDEX

- Rev. W. W., iii. 26, 27
 Trinity Lutheran Church, iii. 3
 Trinity Methodist Church, v. 77
 Trotter, Preston, i. 95
 Troutman, Rev. R. H., iii. 6
 Trussler, Richard, v. 12
 Tucker, Henry St. George, v. 57
 Henry St. George (of Lexington),
 v. 44
 John Randolph, v. 94; vi. 13n.
 Turner, Dr. Charles W., vi. 7
 articles by, iii. 30-34; iv. 25-28;
 vi. 54-56
 Rev. James, iv. 10
 Theodore R., article by, vi. 30
 turnpikes, v. 47, 98
 history of ante-bellum, v. 52-60
 "Tuscan Villa," vi. 97, 97n.
 Tutwiler, Col. Cabell Carrington, Jr.,
 vi. 7
 Tye River and Blue Ridge Turnpike
 Company, v. 48-49
 Tyler, John, v. 67, 68; vi. 51
 Tyree, Rev. Cornelius, vi. 69
- unionist sentiment, Rockbridge Co.,
 iii. 7-14; vi. 9-11, 15, 16
 Underwood Constitution (Va.), v.
 81, 84
 United States Constitution (1787),
 local reactions to draft of:
 Rev. William Graham, v. 69
 Zachariah Johnston, v. 68-69; vi. 54
 Gen. Andrew Moore, iv. 25; v.
 68, 69
 University of the South, i. 30
 University of Virginia. *See* Virginia,
 University of
- Valley Campaign (1862), vi. 44-45,
 73-74
 Valley Railroad Company, iii. 18-23
 Valley Star, iii. 7, 12
 Valley Pike, v. 59, 98
 Varner, John, iv. 24
 Vaughan, Rev. Dr. C. R., i. 96-97, 99
 Victoria Furnace, ii. 24
 "Vine Forest" ("Forest Tavern"),
 ii. 21
 Virginia, (*Merrimac*) iv. 34
 Virginia, Commonwealth of:
 Board of Public Works, iii. 33; v.
 47, 53
 complaints to, v. 59
 creation of, v. 54, 97
 Crozet suggests creation of, v. 57
 members of, v. 54
 powers of, iii. 30
 purposes of, v. 54-55
 Constitution (Underwood), v. 81,
 84
 Constitutional Convention (1861).
 See Secession Convention (Va.,
 1861)
 Constitutional Convention (1901-
 02), v. 86-87, 98
 Fund for Internal Improvement,
 v. 53
 Highway Commission, creation of,
 v. 98
 Literary Fund, v. 30, 47, 49, 50
 Railroad Commission, v. 47
 Supreme Court of Appeals, creation
 of, v. 81
 U. S. Constitution, convention to
 ratify, v. 67-69
 Virginia Central Railroad (C&O
 RR), iii. 18, 32; vi. 35, 44
 Virginia Military Institute, iv. 5
 Alms House, housed in, i. 40
 barracks, construction of first, vi. 65
 and Blue Hotel, iv. 20
 cadets
 John Brown, present at execu-
 tion of, vi. 10
 cemetery for New Market, i.
 31-32
 Civil War, life during, vi. 31-41
 Lynchburg, defense of, vi. 88
 Richmond, march to (1861), i.
 26-27; vi. 11
 commandant's house, demolition of,
 vi. 7
 Alexander Jackson Davis, architect
 for, vi. 7
 establishment of, ii. 13-14; iv. 20;
 vi. 26
 French guns, iv. 5; vi. 92
 hospital (old), vi. 65
 Hunter's Raid. *See* Hunter's (Gen.
 David) Raid, VMI
 Lexington Arsenal, successor to, i.
 28; v. 49; vi. 26
 New Market, Battle of, vi. 13, 32,
 41-42
 summer school, ii. 17-18
 telephones, installation of, v. 44
 and Washington College
 early co-operative agreement
 with, i. 27
 helps prepare for Civil War,
 vi. 11
 Virginia Polytechnic Institute, v. 42
 Virginia State Library, collection of,
 v. 46-52
 Virginia, Synod of (Presbyterian),
 founding of, i. 99
 Virginia Tin and Manufacturing
 Company, v. 24
 Virginia, University of, v. 82
 Alderman Library, Anderson col-
 lection of, v. 82, 84
 Confederate army, students enlist
 in, vi. 11, 16
 founding of, iii. 48
 Col. John Jordan and, vi. 65-66
 Gen. Lee, offer of position to, i. 30
 secessionist sentiments of students
 of, vi. 15, 16
 Virginia Western Railroad, v. 74
- Waddell, Edmonia, v. 94
 Harrington, articles by, ii. 10; iii.
 46-50; v. 42
 Dr. Livingston, iv. 6; v. 94
 Rev. James, i. 72-73; v. 88

Janetta. *See* Alexander, Janetta Waddell
 Martha, v. 94
 "Waddell-Campbell House," iv. 6; vi. 5
 Wade, Thomas M., v. 77
 Walker, Gen. James A., vi. 76
 Jane. *See* Moore, Jane Walker
 Jane Moore (Mrs. Joseph [of Falling Spring]), i. 48
 John, i. 79; v. 32, 36
 Joseph, i. 65
 Joseph (of Falling Spring), i. 47, 48, 50, 85
 Joseph (of Kerr's Creek and Ky.), i. 48
 Katherine Rutherford (Mrs. John), i. 79
 Margaret, i. 88
 Margaret. *See* Houston, Margaret Walker
 Martha M. *See* Donihoo, Martha M. Walker
 Samuel, i. 79
 Sarah. *See* Paxton, Sarah Walker
 Dr. Thomas, v. 34, 35
 Thomas H., i. 95
 Walker family, i. 17, 53
 Walker's Creek, naming of, i. 79
 Wallace, Andrew, ii. 10
 Blair, i. 65-66
 Jane Blair (Mrs. Andrew), ii. 10
 Gen. Lew, i. 64
 Peter, i. 16
 Rebecca (Mrs. [Col.] Samuel). *See* Grigsby, Rebecca Wallace
 Samuel, i. 63, 64; v. 25
 Col. Samuel, iv. 8
 Sue Myers (Mrs. W. G. F.), iii. 27
 Rev. W. G. F., iii. 27
 William Alexander Anderson ("Bigfoot"), i. 64; ii. 10; iii. 17; v. 22
 Wallace family, i. 24; v. 16
 "Walnut Hill," Botetourt Co., v. 80
 Walthall, Rev. Dr. D. B., i. 98
 War Between the States. *See* Civil War
 Wardlaw, James, i. 93
 Martha (Mrs. James), i. 93
 Warrenton Springs, Battle of, vi. 18
 Washington, George, i. 40
 transportation, urges development of Va., v. 97
 W&L, gift to, iii. 50; iv. 28; v. 20n.; vi. 14, 80
 William Dickinson
 "Burial of Latane, The" (Painting by), v. 35-36
 memorial to, v. 34, 88
 Washington Academy. *See* Washington & Lee University
 Washington College. *See* Washington & Lee University
 Washington & Lee University:
 Ambulance Unit, World War I, ii. 20
 Blue Hotel, purchase and use of, iv. 20-21
 Board of Trustees, i. 29, 33; v. 49
 duties of, iv. 28
 confederate hospital, use as, vi. 12
 divinity school, founding of, iv. 12
 financial condition
 1865, i. 30, 33
 1870-84, vi. 75
 gifts to, by:
 William Alexander, i. 69, 74
 Sir Alexander McNutt, vi. 96
 "Jockey" Robinson, iii. 48, 49, 50
 Society of the Cincinnati, i. 27
 George Washington, iii. 30; iv. 28; v. 20n.; vi. 14, 80
 Hunter's Raid. *See* Hunter's (Gen. David) Raid: W&L
 law school, origins of, vi. 43n. 23
 Gen. Lee
 acceptance of presidency, i. 30-41; vi. 80
 growth of college during presidency of, iv. 6
 Lexington, removal to, iii. 48
 Liberty Hall Volunteers
 Civil War, v. 81; vi. 12
 Revolutionary War, vi. 12
 military-science course, i. 27
 predecessors
 Augusta Academy and other log academies, i. 65, 99; iii. 41
 Liberty Hall Academy, i. 65, 71; iii. 41, 48; iv. 8; v. 20, 20n., 75; vi. 22
 Washington Academy, v. 20n.; vi. 22
 Washington College, v. 20n.; vi. 75
 societies
 Phi Beta Kappa, organization of, vi. 5
 Washington Literary Society, iii. 10
 YMCA, vi. 82
 students
 Civil War veterans among, vi. 81
 nickname ("minks"), first use of, vi. 43n. 21
 tennis courts, construction of, v. 76
 Washington Hall
 construction of, iii. 48-49; vi. 65
 dedication of, iii. 49
 and VMI
 early co-operative agreement with, i. 27
 military instruction given by (1861), vi. 11
 Washington Literary Society (W&L), iii. 10
 Washington and Jefferson College, divinity school of, iv. 12
 Washington Peace Conference (1861), vi. 9-10, 51
 Wasson, Robert, iii. 41
 Robert, Jr., iii. 41
 water system, first Lexington, v. 25, 79
 Wayland, Rev. Francis, iv. 33
 Waynesboro, Va., v. 72
 Weathers, Rev. J. W., iii. 44
 Weaver, William, v. 51

INDEX

INDEX

- Webber, Rev. William, vi. 64
 Weeks, (Mrs.) Phoebe Sterrett, v. 45
 Weir, Hugh, iii. 42
 Weiser, Conrad, iv. 31-32
 Welch, Benjamin, i. 54
 See also Welsh
 Welch family, i. 49, 53
 Weld, Isaac, i. 76
 Welsh, John, iii. 42
 "Welsh letters," iv. 36
 West End Glasgow Land Company, v. 72
 Western Inn, The (Blue Hotel), iv. 18-21
 West Lexington Land Company, v. 76
 "Westwood," Hanover Co., iv. 35
 Wharton, Rev. William P., iii. 43
 Whig Party, vi. 47
 campaign rally, Hamilton's School-house, v. 31
 Conservative Party, join forces with, v. 84
 composition of, vi. 24
 Constitutional Union Party, join forces with, v. 80; vi. 15
 Democratic Party, opposition to, vi. 15
 Whipple, Mrs. D. J., i. 37
 whiskey manufacture, iii. 48; v. 27, 28, 63, 78; vi. 36
 White, Rev. Dr. Henry A., iii. 27
 Capt. James J., v. 73, 75
 James S., vi. 13
 Dr. Reid, v. 97, 101
 Robert, iii. 42
 Thomas S., v. 72, 73, 78
 William, iii. 8
 Rev. Dr. William Spotswood, iii. 44; v. 46; vi. 12, 71
 Whitehead, Cabell, v. 24
 Whites Ordinary, v. 25
 Whiteside, Moses, i. 65
 White Sulphur Springs, N. C., vi. 85
 White Sulphur Springs, W. Va., vi. 12
 Whitmore, John, v. 26
 Wilbourn, Capt. R. E., vi. 45
 Wiley, Alexander, iii. 41
 Wilkerson, Ann. *See* Lydia, Ann Wilkerson
 Wilkinson, W. A., iii. 26
 William and Mary, College of, and UVA, iii. 48
 Williams, Annabel Lyle (Mrs. W. T., II), v. 10
 Hugh, v. 22
 (Mrs.) Inez Mackey, v. 10
 Rev. John, iv. 10
 John Lyle, v. 10
 Samuel W., v. 87
 Sue Mackey (Mrs. W. T., III), v. 10
 Rev. Dr. William Twyman, II, v. 10
 articles by, i. 43-59; v. 8
 William Twyman, III, v. 10
 Williamson, Olympia, iv. 21
 Gen. Thomas Hoomes, iv. 32; vi. 91
 Rev. Dr. Samuel B., i. 99
 Sidney, iii. 17
 wills, Rockbridge Co., iv. 36
 Wilmer, Josiah, v. 26
 Wilmer and Sutton Store, v. 26
 Wilson, Rev. Dr. Samuel B., i. 85, 87
 Rev. Dr. G. A., i. 96-97
 Dr. Goodridge, address by, v. 88
 James (of New Monmouth), iii. 41
 James (of New Providence), i. 100
 John, iii. 41
 Capt. John F., iii. 41
 Retta. *See* Kinnear, Retta Wilson
 Capt. P. St. Julian, v. 98, 99
 Samuel, iii. 42
 Samuel B., iv. 10, 11
 William, iii. 41
 William A., iii. 36
 Wilson family, ii. 21; v. 9, 11
 Wilson's Springs, iii. 35-38; iv. 15
 Winegar, Moses, iii. 25
 Winn, John, Jr., vi. 65
 Col. Joseph, vi. 68-69
 Lucy. *See* Jordan, Lucy Winn
 Mary Bowles (Mrs. John, Jr.), vi. 65
 Winslow, Prof. (geologist), v. 24
 Wise, Gov. Henry A., iii. 10; iv. 48, 49, 53
 Rev. Henry A., Jr., vi. 33, 42n. 3
 Wise's Legion (CSA), v. 31
 Withrow, (Mrs.) Sallie, i. 97
 Susan Kinnear (Mrs. Wm.), v. 13
 William, v. 13
 "Withrow House," i. 73-74; v. 92; vi. 22-23
 Witley family, i. 16
 Witt, Jesse, vi. 69
 wolves, danger of, i. 18
 women, duties of, i. 71
 Wood, Rev. Albert W., iii. 27
 article by, iii. 24-28
 Rev. Branson L., article by, ii. 21
 James, v. 34
 Woods, Magdalena. *See* Bowyer, Magdalena Woods McDowell Borden
 Richard, i. 16, 19, 71
 Wood's Creek, v. 74
 naming of, v. 63
 Woods family, i. 24; v. 63
 Woodson, Benjamin, vi. 64
 Frances Puryear Jordan (Mrs. Benj.), vi. 64
 John, vi. 68-69
 Woods River Grant, v. 34
 Wrenn, Susan. *See* Leyburn, Susan Wrenn
 Wythe, George, iv. 68
 Yarbro, Rev. D. N., iii. 43
 Yorktown Centennial (1881), i. 41
 Young, James, i. 20
 Young family, i. 17
 Young's Mill, i. 20
 Yount, Elizabeth, iii. 4
 Zane's Furnace, Va., iv. 22
 Zilla Woolie (Indian chief), iv. 32