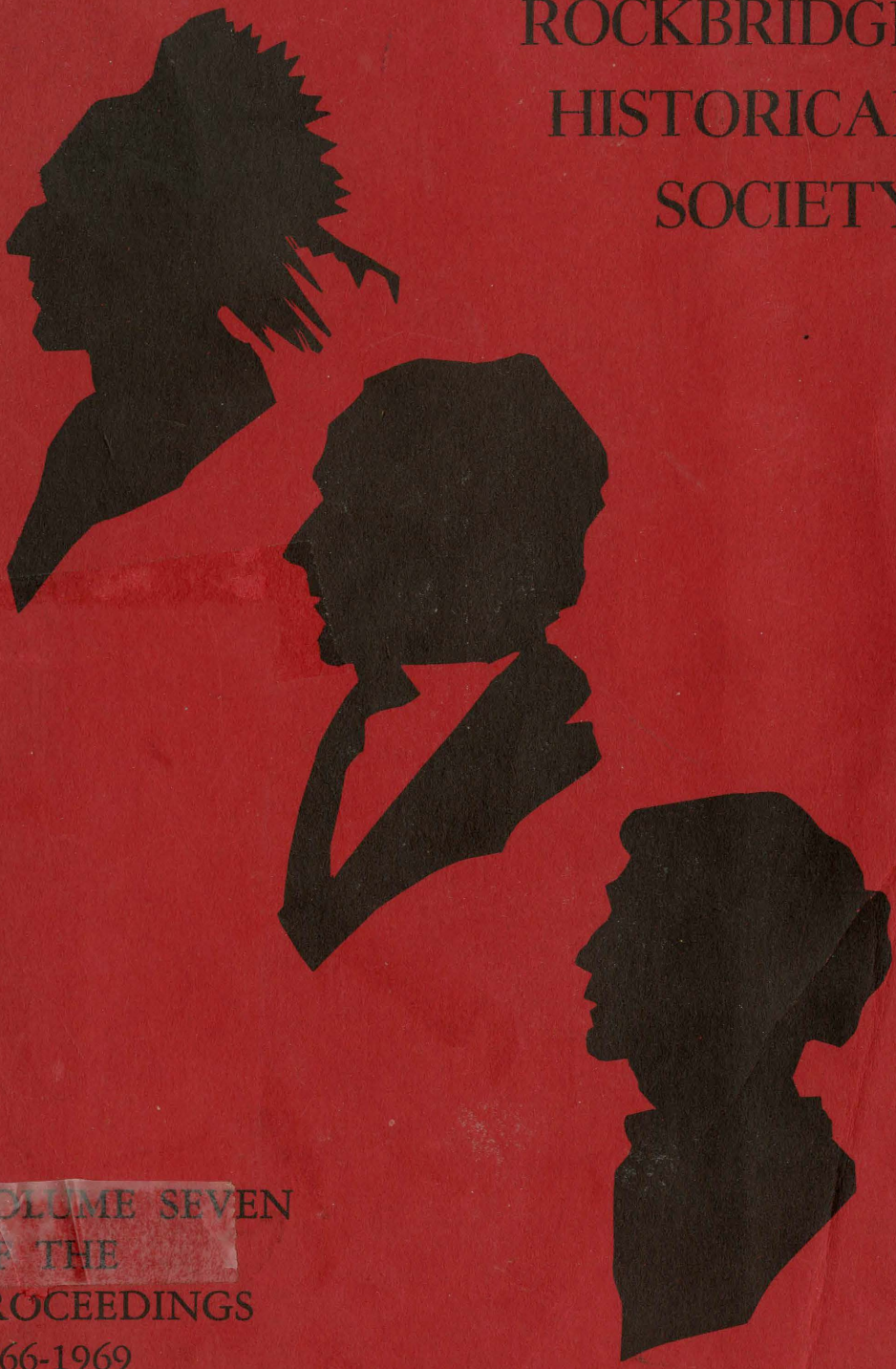
ROCKBRIDGE HISTORICAL SOCIETY



VOLUME SEVEN
OF THE
PROCEEDINGS
1966-1969

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Volume Seven of the Proceedings of the ROCKBRIDGE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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Cover Silhouettes by Anne Brandon Heiner.

At the top is an Indian of the Chippewa tribe, one of many northern groups that came to the valley by the "Great Path" for hunting, and to battle with the southern Indians.

The silhouette of Andrew Alexander, 1768-1843 represents the settlers who brought strength and prosperity to this region. He was the eldest son of William Alexander, 1738-1797, who gave Dr. William Graham the land for Liberty Hall Academy. After Andrew's father died, he lived in the "Farmhouse," later sold to Washington Academy, which is now the site of the home of the President of Washington and Lee University.

The third silhouette is of Mrs. Charles McCulloch, one of the principal founders of the Rockbridge Historical Society.

On the back cover is the Natural Bridge for which Rockbridge County was named, and which was worshipped by the Indians long before the arrival of the white settlers. Considered one of the seven natural wonders of the world, it was purchased with 157 acres around it by Thomas Jefferson from King George III of England on July 5th, 1774, for "Twenty Shillings" of good and lawful money.

TO RUTH ANDERSON McCULLOCH
WITH LOVE AND ADMIRATION

ABH

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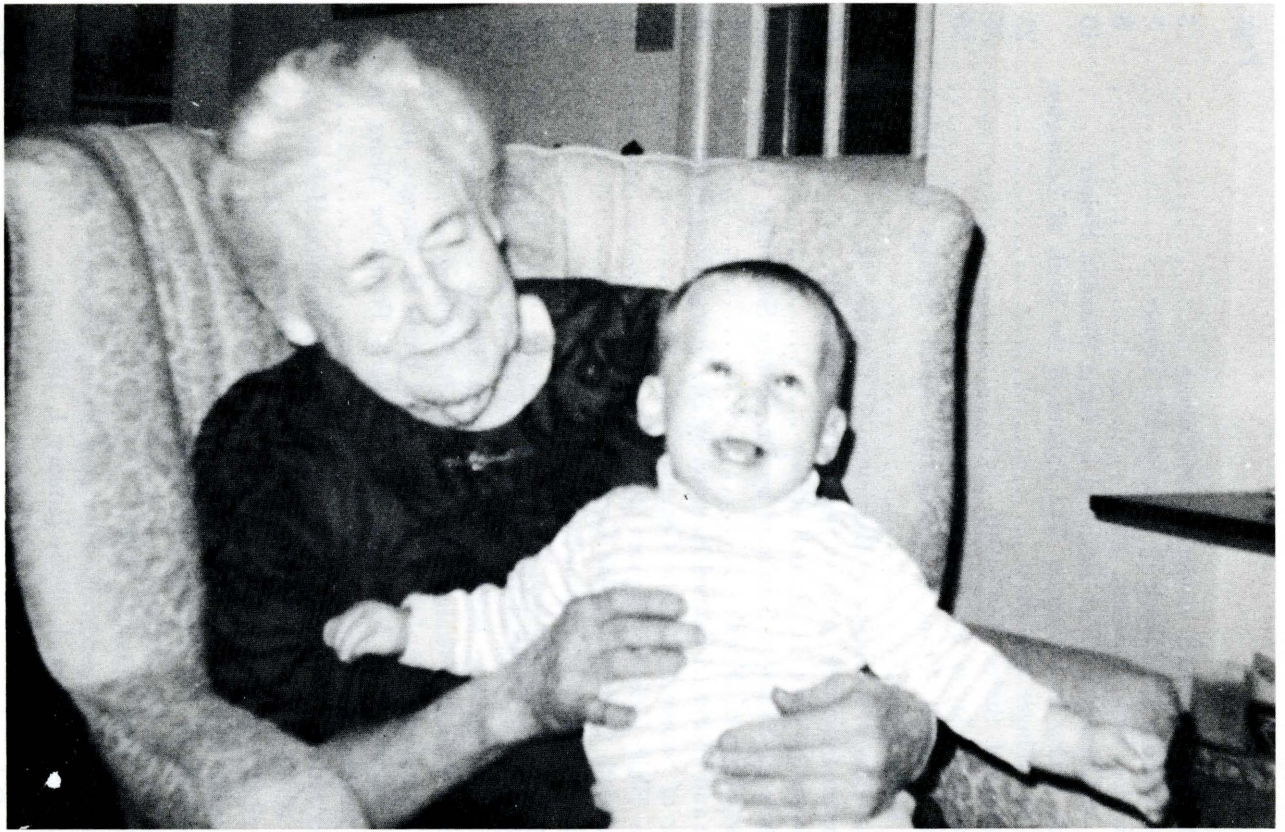

Mrs. Charles McCulloch, holding her great-great-niece, Lynn Dandridge Stone.

MRS. CHARLES McCULLOCH

By Charles W. Turner

Mrs. Charles McCulloch, one of the founders of the Rockbridge Historical Society, is the one person whose influence and inspiration has kept the organization alive and growing through the years. "Miss Ruth" as she is known has served as president and program chairman, and has presented numbers of significant papers before the society. Having been a life long resident of this area, and possessing a keen historical sense, she has acquired a knowledge which has proved invaluable to those searching for historical materials on the region.

Ruth Floyd Anderson was born July 20, 1876, (the year of the centennial of American independence) in the home of her Blair grandparents on (present) Letcher Avenue. Her parents were William A. Anderson, who was prominent in state politics, and a Trustee of Washington and Lee University, and Maza Blair. Both of her father's parents were descended from the pioneer Scotch-Irish who had settled Augusta County. Through her mother she was also descended from the John Blair who had been sent in 1745-46 from the Newcastle Presbytery, in Delaware, to organize the congregations of Timber Ridge and four other meeting houses of this area.

Most of her life has been spent in Lexington and Rockbridge County, although a dozen years or more in Baltimore, Washington, New York and Richmond gave her an experience of city life.

After marriage to Dr. Charles McCulloch, she lived as the wife of a country doctor and farmer in Buckingham County until they moved to an old farm four miles from Lexington in 1922.

While they lived there, in the summer of 1939, an old frame house on Main Street, which was considered by authorities an architectural gem, was to be demolished. It was the only house still in the town which had been built on the Great Road, before the town existed. On July 4, 1939 she called about twenty people who would be anxious to preserve this relic. Mr. Houston Barclay was visiting his home that summer, and his description of the eagerness of the present residents of Wichita, Kansas to preserve every trace of their early days there inspired the group to form a historical society here.

Through the practical business experience of Mr. C. Cabell Tutwiler and others, by August, the Rockbridge Historical Society was securely formed with its original Constitution and By-Laws drawn up by lawyer members, Stuart Moore and Matthew Paxton.

Since moving into the town, in 1940, Mrs. McCulloch has been active in every effort to emphasize and preserve local history, although the at-

tempt to preserve "Miss Jennie Bacon's," the "Blue Hotel," and other houses proved unsuccessful.

She has contributed various stories of local history to the *Lexington Gazette,* to the *Rockbridge County News,* and to meetings of the Historical Society. Among these are a "History of the Blue Hotel," the story of Phoebe Alexander Paxton's journey to Valley Forge in the terrible winter of 1778, life in Rockbridge County, and incidental accounts of people and places.

ACTIVITIES 1966 THROUGH 1969

On August 9, 1939, 29 citizens of Rockbridge County and Lexington met in the hope of saving from destruction a building that was considered an architectural gem, and formed the Rockbridge Historical Society. They were unsuccessful in their first effort, but the public spirited activities of the Society and of its individual members have made an enduring impact upon the life of the community.

Addresses given at the four general meetings held during the years 1966 through 1969 are printed later in this volume. Each general meeting was preceded by a meeting of the Executive Board. A brief resume of the activities of the Society during these years, under the presidencies of Mr. Frank J. Gilliam, the Right Reverend Lloyd R. Craighill, and Colonel B. McCluer Gilliam follow.

During 1966, the Chairman of the Library Committee, Dr. Charles W. Turner, with the help of some of his Washington and Lee University students, recatalogued and indexed all papers, pictures and memorabilia belonging to the society. A committee under him including Mrs. James P. Alexander and Mrs. Felix Staedeli rearranged and decorated the living room and other rooms of "The Castle."

Revisions were made to the Constitution and By-Laws in accordance with recommendations of a committee headed by Colonel George Mercer Brooke Jr.

The Sixth Volume of Proceedings, including the years 1962 through 1965 were placed on sale at the fall meeting of 1966. Its editor was Mr. Royster Lyle Jr., and it incorporates a valuable index of that volume and the five volumes which preceded it. It was dedicated to Dr. Leslie Lyle Campbell, whose generous gift of two buildings to the Society provides regular income from rents for the future. The loss of Colonel William

Couper, a former president, and Mr. Houston Barclay, a charter member, who had much to do with the group's beginning, was particularly noted.

Improvements on the three houses owned by the Society have continued throughout the three years under the supervision of Brig. General John S. Letcher as money from rents became available. Due to the terms of Dr. Campbell's will, the two buildings left to the Society by him may not be sold, and it is the intention of the Society to put them in excellent rental condition.

Since limitations of space in the museum make it necessary to be selective in accepting donations, a committee on acquisitions headed by Mr. Matthew W. Paxton, Jr., was appointed.

"The Castle" was lighted for Christmas in 1967 with electrical candles, and the door was decorated with a wreath in keeping with the city-wide "Old fashioned Christmas." Each spring the old building has been open to the public during Virginia Garden Week, and scholars interested in research have been permitted to use its archives during the years.

Dr. Charles W. Turner was recommended by the Board and elected by the Society as trustee to fill the vacancy left by the death of the late Earl S. Mattingly. It was decided that at the end of each year, the trustees, assisted by the Treasurer, would review the properties and assets of the Society. Mr. Robert B. Weaver, Treasurer during 1968, suggested that an annual newsletter giving a resume of the year's activities of the Society be sent out each January, and this has been done.

The sum of $300 was appropriated to assist the Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities in the historical research and photographing of a number of buildings in the area which were selected by the National Park Service, and the Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission. Several of the Society's members helped in this important project. Copies of the material collected were to be filed in "The Castle."

Three bound volumes of Colonel William Couper's valuable notes, diagrams and index of the gravestones in Stonewall Jackson Cemetery were made by students of Washington and Lee University under the supervision of Dr. Turner, with one volume being placed at W. and L., one at VMI, and one in "The Castle." A 55-page index is included. The original notes, which were left to VMI, were loaned for this purpose.

During the severe floods resulting from the hurricane "Camille," the Archibald Alexander monument erected by the Society at the Irish Creek entrance into South River was washed downstream. The legend was removed for safe-keeping until the monument can be replaced.

The opening of "The Castle" once a week under the supervision of Dr. Turner, with Mrs. Frederic M. P. Pearse, Jr. as curator, was started in October of 1969. Dr. Turner is also in charge of the Society's newest

project, oral history, the taping of interviews of historical interest. Dr. Turner has again provided the help of one of his students for this interesting work.

Many members of the Society assisted the Historic Lexington Foundation in its "Heritage House Tour," which took place in October 1968 and 1969 to raise money for the purchase of the Alexander-Leyburn-Withrow house. The interesting old building, which stands at the corner of Main and Washington Streets, has now been bought by the Foundation. Its history includes the legend of an Indian who tried to court the piano-playing daughter of one of its owners, and a possible occupancy for an office by Thomas Jonathan Jackson.

For a century and a half, stories of the poltergeist which harassed the family of Dr. John McChesney have been told by ghost story lovers in Rockbridge and Augusta counties. They were again explored by Anne Brandon Heiner at a dinner meeting of the Society at the Robert E. Lee Hotel on Monday, January 25, 1965. Mrs. Heiner was unable to release her paper in time for the Sixth Edition of the Proceedings, so it is included here by special request of members of the Board of the Rockbridge Historical Society.

DR. McCHESNEY'S GHOST REVISITED

By Anne Brandon Heiner

Tonight I want you to go back with me to Lexington Virginia in 1825.

The Marquis de La Fayette was on a triumphal tour, and there was hope expressed in the *ROCKBRIDGE INTELLIGENCER*[1] that he might visit here.

Citizens were complaining that the militiamen at the state arsenal were a bad influence on the youth of the community.[2]

Washington College in Lexington had a fine new "Center Building," but its dedication[3] had been marred by the unfortunate generosity of the college's good friend, John Robinson of Hart's Bottom, now Buena Vista, who had sent 40 gallons of his finest rye whiskey for the ceremony. The rowdy element of town had tried to drink it up on the spot.

But neither La Fayette, the Arsenal, nor liquor was the topic of conversation around the firesides. A strange rumor had come over the hills

from the vicinity of Brownsburgh. Men whispered that a ghost walked there at the home place of Dr. John McChesney, a respected physician and farmer, and this was no quiet ghost that floated and moaned in the twilight, but a poltergeist,[4] a rough elemental being that threw hot rocks in broad daylight, made bottles and chairs dance to its devilish tune, and cruelly pinched and beat a small child.

John McChesney had been a student of Washington Academy, and a legend persists[5] that a deputation from the Christian college, or from the Presbyterian Church, set out to investigate.

One member of the group is said to have been Colonel J. T. L. Preston, who later became one of the founders of the Virginia Military Institute, and Mrs. Charles McCulloch[6] says she remembers seeing a letter from him describing what he saw.

If John Thomas Lewis Preston was with them, he was only 14 years old, a dark-haired boy with thoughtful blue eyes.[7]

If we could look back to 1825, this is the way it might have been.

Scraggly dominecker roosters were still crowing when several men and a boy on horseback met in front of the courthouse which had been built after the "Great Fire" of 1796.[8]

"Old Andrew" Reid, the clerk of court, would not be at work for another hour, and the pillory and stocks that had embraced so many unhappy sinners[9] yawned empty in the dim light, but the village residents were stirring.

Pale orange rays filtered over the Blue Ridge, lightened the dark outlines of Hogback and Deadman Mountains, and tinted the thin curls of smoke rising from the chimneys as the women thrust fat pine-heart kindling into the banked coals of kitchen fireplaces, and began to stir up corn bread and hoe cake.

A hungry prisoner in the jail "dungeon" beat on the new-fangled stove[10] with an iron spoon for his breakfast, and the five sets of different-keyed bells[11] on five stout horses hitched to a Conestoga wagon jingled as a hostler in front of one of the four taverns[12] fastened the traces.

Already, a small knot of whispering onlookers clustered to see the delegation leave, and a bearded hunter with an eight-point buck slung across his restless horse, who had partaken too freely of "Black Betsy," the local whiskey,[13] called after them, half jeering, half in earnest, "Don't let that-air thing hit you in the haid!" But their rigid backs reproved him.

The riders plunged down the steep hill to the north, which was cursed thrice weekly by the south-bound stage coach drivers,[14] passing to the right of Leyburn's store, with its decorative pattern of brick work.[15]

They sat their sturdy horses easily, as men long accustomed to riding, but there was a strained unease in their eyes, and a solemnity in their

bearing, because they soon might be facing a manifestation of that sinister figure which even God-fearing men of the time respectfully called "His Satanic Majesty."[16]

The road along the base of College Hill from Lexington to North River was piked with stone in 1825,[17] so they were free of the choking dust until they reached the river, but as they turned toward the Allegheny mountains a thick haze slowly rose around them from the coach-churned highway, obscuring the horses' legs, drifting up to the men's sumac-dyed black coats, dusting the ruffled shirts that were woven from their own flax patches,[18] and almost hiding the boy who rode politely in the rear.

Occasionally they went by a log cabin, where small patches of hemp and tobacco and Indian corn[18] pushed feeble hands against the mighty forest.

Once they passed a huge Tennessee road wagon,[19] swaying like a ship, covered with bear skin instead of canvas, and waved to its whooping driver.

And once they saw a successful hunter taking three wolves' heads to Lexington, where the magistrate would clip their ears and pay a bounty,[20] (which in a few more years would rise to twelve dollars a head,) and one of the men remarked in annoyance, "That bounty's too big when a whole deer brings only a dollar and a half. Who knows if they're sparing the wolf bitches, or maybe bringing heads in from another county?"

So they jogged along on their sweating horses in the pleasant jingling of bits and creaking of leather, and when they walked to breathe the animals they spoke again of ghosts and goblins, and of this new poltergeist, and whether they really existed, or were the results of hysterical imagination. They talked again of Mary Greenlee who was born Mary McDowell, and had died 16 years before at the age of 101, and whether she was a witch[21] as some of her neighbors had believed, one of those malignant creatures who had signed a bloody contract with the devil, who could inflict painful and incurable diseases upon victims, or whether, (as all the group agreed,) she was simply a witty and eccentric old woman who found amusement in teasing and scandalizing her neighbors,[22] and had richly endowed county history[23] by her deposition in the Borden law suit.[24]

And the blue-eyed boy called John, riding quietly to the rear because he was still of the age when children "should be seen but not heard," remembered, but did not think of mentioning in this august Presbyterian group, an invocation from the Scottish prayerbook of the early sixteen hundreds:

> From ghoulies and ghosties
> Long Leggitie Beasties
> And things that go bump in the night
> Good Lord deliver us.[25]

And soon the drowsy day, too warm, too odorous, the droning hum of the locusts and the bees, the scent of the honeysuckle and the strangling wistaria, and the dark, jeering flight of the crows mingled in his mind with the witch tales and the grinning wolves' heads, and he seemed to be floating on a heavy, irresistible current toward this new dark mystery.

Suddenly he was jolted awake as the horses in front stopped, and one of the men pointed to the left with his crop, and said, "There's the hill where they say the ghost stood hollerin', and threw down hot rocks," and ahead and to the left he could see the comfortable McChesney farm house built of logs covered with frame, with its outhouses clustering around it.[26]

Small Negro children rushed to the gate to care for their horses, and the doctor met them hospitably in the front yard. He was usually to be found at home, because his office was in an upstairs room lined with shelves for medicines, and with a grinning skeleton[27] hidden in a closet for reference when he wanted to do bone work.

Mrs. McChesney, followed by her daughters, moved gracefully from the house to the stoop in her morning dress, with leg-of-mutton sleeves, and a fairly slender, bell-shaped skirt. Rockbridge and Augusta County ladies did not follow closely the affectations of city style, where ladies of society in 1825 wore "a bunch of curls on each ear, and a top-knot which looked like three feathers in imitation of the Prince of Wales' feathers."[28] Mrs. McChesney's hair was almost hidden by the cap that the local ladies put on their heads almost as soon as they were married. Except for the cap, her four daughters' dress was a smaller imitation of their mother, with the skirts short enough to show their pantaloons.[29]

There was no sign in any of the family of anxiety or distress, and when one of the visitors hesitantly mentioned the cause of their coming, a shadow crossed the doctor's face, and he changed the subject.

They were invited to stay for dinner, and accepted without hesitation, and first there were toddies for the gentlemen made from whiskey of Dr. McChesney's own still.

Although temperance societies were beginning to function at this time, most people felt that there was nothing evil about the use of liquor unless it were abused, and Morton says:

"When James Morrison came to preach at New Providence in 1819, all but one of the eight elders of the church had their stills."[30]

And Augusta County records in Staunton show ten dollars paid to William McChesney by his brother, John McChesney, in May, 1816, to permit him to have "equal benefit with himself in the use of the watter for the purpose of a distillery now standing on the land of the said John McChesney, running from a spring. . . ."[31]

They drank their toddies in the parlor, standing around the iron fireplace with its carved mantel, and talked about the news of Lexington and nearby villages.

After what seemed an almost unbearably long time to the hungry boy, whose only refreshment had been spring water, John was bowing his head at the table above which floated the tantalizing fragrance of broiled chicken, spoon bread, and homecured ham swimming in red-eye gravy while one of the visiting clergymen droned his long prayer, paying particular attention to blessing the house, and preserving its members from all evil and disaster.

Released at last, the assembly began to load their plates and pick up their forks. As Johnny reached for a beaten biscuit, a sharp black stone, flying from the ceiling in a swerve that was apparently sourceless, cut it in two.

We must suppose that after dinner Dr. McChesney had an open discussion of his troubles with his guests, and we go to written records for what he must have told them.

Margaret F. Wade, whose prize story of the ghost written over 40 years ago brought her a scholarship to Converse College,[32] said that the manifestations started at the time of the birth of a daughter, Ellen, in the "big house" at the same time that a slave named Aunt Liza was giving birth to a daughter named Maria in the Negroes' quarters.

A gust of wind shattered a window and swept out the lights in the farmhouse near Brownsburgh, and large rocks fell at Dr. John McChesney's feet, her story said, while in the slaves' quarters the wind was so strong that it turned Aunt Liza's bed completely around.

Miss Wade, now Mrs. Hugh McCulloch of Alexandria, says that she wrote her account as fiction,[33] but it was based on stories of persons living forty years ago who had known those connected with the ghost story.

The historian, Joseph A. Waddell, in his "Annals of Augusta County," places the first occurrences in 1825,[34] when Maria was "probably eight years of age," and he treats the whole subject with caution, first quoting Southey's records of what happened to the Church of England minister, the Reverend Samuel Wesley, whose family was similarly plagued by a poltergeist in 1715.

Waddell's care in leading up to his subject is understandable, as descendants of the McChesneys and Steeles, (which include Miller, Sale, Grey, Wade, Davidson, Hutcheson, Howard Smith and many other well-known families,) still smile ruefully as they remark in connection with

the ghost, "It's something the family never liked to talk about." Mrs. E. A. Sale of Lexington said flatly, "Our family was always ashamed of the whole thing."

Waddell describes Dr. John McChesney as "an intelligent physician" living on a farm a mile north of the village of Newport, (near Brownsburg.) His wife was a sister of Thomas Steele, who lived a mile from the McChesney's, and his mother-in-law, the widow of Captain William Steele, and the mother of Thomas and Mrs. McChesney, lived several miles away.

"William Steele, a son of Thomas, is now (1889) one of the few surviving witnesses of the occurrences to be related, and to him we are indebted for all of our detailed statements," says Waddell. "He was a child, . . . six years of age, but distinctly remembers what he saw and heard, and we may add, his veracity is unquestionable."

In 1825, according to Waddell, Dr. McChesney's family included his wife, four young children, and a number of Negro servants, one of whom was a child about eight years of age named Maria.

In January or February, while the white family was having supper, Maria rushed in from the stone kitchen, (which is still standing, but was originally separated about 20 or 30 feet from the dwelling,) to the dining room in apparent fright, and said that an "old woman with her head tied up" had chased her.

The family paid little attention, but during the following days Maria continued to complain of being frightened when she had been alone.

Soon Waddell says, by day and night, vollies of stones began to descend upon the roof of the dwelling house. Most of them were the size of a man's fist, but some were "too large to be thrown by a person of ordinary strength." Occasionally they were hot, and would leave scorched marks if they fell on the dry grass.

Rumors of the strange occurrences were carried from one village to another, and the McChesneys were barraged with curious people from miles around who would watch the house to discover the source of the stones, but no one could solve the mystery.

They did not fall every day, and visitors who did not see them generally went away refusing to believe that such things were really happening. In the meantime, Maria constantly complained of being chased and frightened.

Since Maria seemed to be the focus of the trouble, Dr. McChesney decided to send her to the home of his brother-in-law, Thomas Steele.

As Maria made her journey over the hills, Mrs. Steele, with her son William and another white woman, were in the yard under a tree. Nearby, a Negro woman was doing some washing, surrounded by her children.

One can see the drowsy scene—Mrs. Steele knitting, the washwoman stirring the boiling clothes in the big iron wash pot over a fire, the odor of breakfast sausage and home-made soap, the laughter and the peace—suddenly shattered by a loud noise that came from the house, described as the sounds that might be made by frightened and stamping horses.

Mrs. Steele's woman friend was the first to run to the house, then she called to the others to come. In the center of the "large room" all the furniture was piled in a wild heap,—bureau, bed, chairs, andirons, everything that was easily moveable. As the alarmed group looked and wondered, stones began to fall on the house, and they saw a small Negro girl running across the field. It was Maria.

"She stated as usual that she had been chased by an old woman," says Waddell, "and her evident terror was distressing to behold."

The Steeles sent Maria back to Dr. McChesney's, but the stones continued to fall on the Steele house, and no one could discover their source. Some of the missiles entered the house, broke the glass doors of the cupboard, plates and dishes, and pelted the furniture, leaving marks on some of the articles which were still preserved by the family when Waddell wrote his account.

In the meantime, the trouble at the McChesney house continued. On one spring day, when the weather was still cool, a gathering of the family sat around a comfortable fire. Dr. and Mrs. McChesney, their son William, and others were present. All the doors and windows were closed when a stone, which is described as coming from a corner of the room near the ceiling, hit Mrs. Thomas Steele on the head.

"She was the only person struck at any time," declares Waddell.[35] "A lock of her hair was severed as if by scissors, and her scalp was cut to the bone, causing profuse bleeding. Mr. Steele became enraged, and denounced the invisible agent for 'taking its spite on a woman,' and not on him. He then took his seat in the front door, and was immediately pelted with clods of sod and earth, coming from the inside of the house. He sat there until the missiles were piled around him, and then, at the earnest solicitation of his mother, who declared that 'the thing' would kill him, left the spot, and was not pursued."

The harassed McChesneys and Steeles decided to send their children away to their Grandmother Steele near Midway to be out of harm, but they made the mistake of sending Maria, also.

Very soon the same disturbances started at Mrs. Steele's, with stones flying around, and furniture moving of its own accord. Once, when a large kitchen bench moved without anyone touching it, prancing over the floor like a circus horse, the children laughed at it, as the Wesley children had been amused by their ghost,[36] and young John M. Steele, (afterward

a doctor, dead at the time of Waddell's account,) suggested that they bridle the steed and ride him. They did so, but then became so frightened at the antics of the bench that Johnny fainted.

During the same period, the farm servants complained that they would take food and tools to the field, that they would disappear, and turn up at the house.

While at Mrs. Steele's, Maria frequently said she was being beaten, according to Waddell. Once Mrs. Steele took her between her knees, drew her skirt about her, and with a stick struck around as if to beat off an invisible foe. Maria continued to cry out that she was being beaten and pricked with pins, and William Steele said that the slaps could be distinctly heard, although no one could see the vindictive demon. At last the victim fell on the floor, exhausted and apparently dead, but soon revived. This continued for many weeks.

Worn out with these troubles, Dr. McChesney, as a last resort, sold Maria, and she was taken south. As soon as she left, the disturbances ceased, and they never followed her in her new home.

Does Waddell have a theory as to the cause?

This was his conclusion:

An old Negro woman lived in Dr. McChesney's neighborhood who was reputed to be a witch. William Steele said "She walked with a stick, and chewed tobacco," and that in his boyhood, he was careful to get out of her way when they met on the road. It was said that this old woman had received some impudence from Maria, who had an evil tongue, and had threatened her with punishment.

"Of course readers who believe in witches understand now why and from whom the troubles came!" said Waddell. "We cannot, however, refuse to believe that many strange things happened as related, without repudiating all human testimony. Similar occurrences have taken place in Rockingham, Albemarle, and Culpeper counties, the last in September, 1889."

More than one hundred and forty years have passed since Dr. McChesney's ghost danced on the hill, threw hot rocks at its victims, and cruelly punished a hysterical Negro child.

Was it all a hoax?

For centuries, in every part of the world, civilized and savage, poltergeists, or "racketing spirits" have caused attention. Considered a lower form than ghosts or phantoms, they customarily are said to cause mysterious noises, move furniture, set objects into motion which usually move in soft curves or swerves or "wobble," and break glass and crockery.

Often there is obvious trickery, and sometimes the hoax is so clever that it takes a skilled investigator to uncover it. Occasionally there seems to be no reasonable explanation.

"Bouncing Bertha," a nine year old child of Powell's Mountain, in southwest Virginia, who was bounced all over her bed as if by an unseen person, caused a furore in her area that involved a commonwealth attorney, a sheriff, and a board of supervisors in 1938.[37]

A Baptist minister in Petersburg was plagued by moving bottles and crockery in his century-old home in 1949, but was more distressed by curious throngs.

In Portsmouth in 1965, Mr. and Mrs. Charles Daughtery were annoyed by thousands of visitors after word was out that furniture and crockery were being smashed, and that a mattress slid off a bed and a carpet rose in the air while a group of the family looked on.

The McChesney affair has been particularly interesting because of the respectability and prominence of the families concerned, and because so many of the incidents were observed by apparently stable, reliable witnesses, and it seems obvious that if there was any malicious mischief involved, it did not come from the family.

There have been no more strange incidents in the McChesney and Steele homes or those of their descendants since the Negro child, Maria, was sent "across water," (to Alabama, according to Mrs. Robert Hutcheson, a McChesney descendant.[40] The sure way to keep an evil spirit from pursuing is to cross water, according to the old theories concerning witchcraft, although according to another informant, Mr. Douglas Whipple of Middlebrook, Maria jumped off a train during her journey, and was killed.[41])

Still the visitors go up the winding dirt road near Brownsburgh to see for themselves the house where the manifestations started.

Some years ago, I followed the road past the hill where the "thing" was said to have danced and thrown down hot rocks to the house nestled in peaceful green fields owned then for many years by Mrs. Una Beard.[42]

"My father planted the hemlock and pine trees in front as tiny little things when we bought the house," she said. "There was a stoop in front instead of the porch, but the iron fireplace in the parlor, and all the mantels are the same. The dining room, the big bedroom above it, the attic and the cellar are all part of the original log houses, covered now by frame, and the upstairs bedrooms were without fireplaces. One was used for Dr. McChesney's office, and it had shelves for medicines, and a skeleton in the closet when they sold the house."

The parlor's distinctive wall paper, with its grasshopper and flower design in gold against a dark blue background, was not put on until one of

the McChesney girls married David Miller, about a hundred years ago, she said. At the time of the ghost, the food was all cooked over the coals in the great kitchen fireplace in the stone house at the back that now has a passageway leading to the main house. There were a great many more outhouses which were later torn down, (because they made everything, even shoes on the place,) and they included a weaving house, a hen house, a log spring house and so on.

"The servants, all 70 of them were stored in that two story brick house to the left of the main house,[43]" said Mrs. Beard. "I wasn't born here, and I heard most about the ghost from Aunt Lucy Anderson, who used to live in a log house just below the cattle guard.

"Aunt Lucy was a tall, real dark, spindling Negro woman who had been a maid to old Mrs. McChesney. She was real nice, and always seemed to tell the truth. She used to tell me about the stage coach coming by the old coach road in front of the house. And she saw a lot of what happened.

"Under this stairway in the hall, this little closet was the wine closet, and the bottles would turn upside down and start dancing with nobody near them, and benches walked all over the porch. Tools taken to the field would disappear and turn up back at the house.

"Aunt Lucy saw this and a whole lot more.

"She said one day the little colored girl, about eleven or twelve, was in the field behind the house hoeing corn, and she said 'I'm so hongry!' And all of a sudden the air was full of pancakes—hot pancakes falling down.

"Aunt Lucy's buried in a cemetery on the hill above the place where the Steele house was."

Mrs. Howard Smith of Lexington, who was a McChesney, says[44] that her father, who is 87, was told that at family prayers, hot embers would jump out of the fireplace on the family, that the Negro child would go to the spring to get water, and the pitcher would jump out of her hand, and the water pour all around, and that the story was that the child had done something to an old Negro woman, who had then threatened her that she would be haunted for the rest of her life.

Mrs. Gilmer Weston, of Staunton, Virginia, says:[45]

"My grandfather saw things dancing on the sideboard, and hanging off the edge, and hot rocks falling on the farm. He was one of the unbelieving at first. He said, 'I hate to admit it, but it's true!" And Mrs. Robert Jeffries[46] of Lexington says that her husband's Grandmother McChesney said the baby would cry as if it were being spanked, they would see nothing, but that there would be prints on the baby, bruises from unseen hands.

Some of us journeyed on another sunny afternoon to Harmony Farm in Newport, near Brownsburg, to the handsome brick home of

Mrs. Georgette Moran, which is built below the site of the burned-out ghost house that had belonged to Thomas Steele.

In her dining room is one of the mantels that was saved from the fire, intricately carved with columns, spools, and a sunburst.

A friend and I climbed a huge cattle gate, and went up a high hill past numbers of enormous brown and white Hereford beef cattle, and a blooded brood sow that looked over five feet long, to the little grave-yard where Aunt Lucy Anderson sleeps under a rich blanket of black-eyed susans, iron weed, and Indian paint brush. Aunt Lucy had been 109 years old when she died according to Mrs. Beard. We could not find her head-stone.

Then we sat around in a circle in the yard of the white-pillared country home of William East, and his wife, who had been Russell George, told us[47] of her mother speaking of the scar on the Negro child's head where a brick had hit her, and of professors from Washington College going to investigate the matter, how they had sat around the fireplace talking with nothing happening, and suddenly the tongs started dancing, and how later on, at dinner, rocks had fallen in the sugar bowl.

There was a story that an old white woman of Newport named Mrs. Polly Craig was angry with the McChesneys because Maria had put a curse on her, Mr. East said,[48] and that started all the witchcraft. And some of the others remembered a big hollowed rock on the side of the Newport road that the children had called "Polly's Chair," and had been afraid to pass.

Another theory, advanced by Mr. East, was that there a great deal of the deviltry may have been the result of jealousy of the McChesneys. They were the most prosperous people in the county with their coach with red velvet steps that lowered, and a driver and prancing horses that threw dust in the faces of the common people, and he thought some of the neighbors may have helped the ghost story along.

So the tales go on, and it is years since Maria was sent on her long journey across water to break the spell. But next year, someone may win another scholarship with the strange tale of Dr. McChesney's ghost.

FOOTNOTES

1. *Rockbridge Intelligencer,* 1825, (Col. William Couper's clippings of files of *Rockbridge County News* and *Lexington Gazette,* VMI Archives.)
2. William Couper, *One Hundred Years at V.M.I.,* Garrett and Massie Inc., Richmond, Vol. 1.
3. Oren F. Morton, *A History of Rockbridge County, Virginia,* McClure Co., Inc., Staunton, Va., 1920, pp. 194-195.
4. *The Encyclopaedia Brittanica,* Eleventh Edition, Vol. 22, pp. 14-17.
5. Interviews with Mrs. Charles McCulloch and others, 1963.

6. Interview, Mrs. McCulloch, 1963.

7. Portrait at VMI, Lexington, Va.

8. Morton, p. 148.

9. Morton, p. 564, Andrew Reid was Rockbridge County Clerk of Court 1778 to 1831.

10. Morton, p. 148, In 1815 " a stove was ordered for the 'dungeon' of the jail."

11. Couper, *History of Shenandoah Valley,* Vol. 1, p. 734.

12. *Martin's Virginia Gazeteer* of 1835.

13. Morton, pp. 180-182.

14. Couper, *History of Shenandoah Valley,* Lewis Historical Publishing Co., New York, 1952, Vol. 1, p. 736.

15. Alexander-Leyburn-Withrow House, located at Main and Washington Streets, Lexington, recently bought by the Historic Lexington Foundation.

16. Interview, Mrs. Charles McCulloch.

17. Morton, p. 38.

18. Morton, p. 38.

19. Couper, *Shenandoah Valley,* Vol. II, p. 744.

20. Morton, p. 39.

21. Morton, p. 255, says "It was perhaps a victim of her caustic tongue who perpetrated the following lines of doggerel . . .

Mary Greenlee died of late;
Straight she went to Heaven's gate;
But Abram met her with a club
And knocked her back to Beelzebub.

22. Morton, p. 255.

23. J. Lewis Peyton, *History of Augusta County, Virginia,* Samuel M. Yost & Son, Staunton, Va., 1882.

24. Couper, *Shenandoah Valley,* Vol. 1, p. 279.

25. As republished by the Washington Cathedral, Wash. D. C., 1963.

26. Pictures of the house, the stone kitchen etc. in *Roanoke Times,* Oct. 20, 1963, "Legend of McChesney Ghost," by Anne Brandon Heiner.

27. Interview, Mrs. Una Beard, owner of house in 1963.

28. Information on styles from Valentine Museum, Richmond, 1963.

29. Valentine Museum.

30. Morton, pp. 180-183.

31. *Deed Books* for 1816, Augusta County Court-House, Staunton.

32. *Lexington Gazette,* Sept. 17, 1929, p. 2.

33. Interview, Mrs. McCulloch, 1963.

34. Joseph A. Waddell, *Annals of Augusta County,* (From 1726 to 1871) Second Edition 1901, C. Russell Caldwell, Staunton, Va.

35. In 1969, articles in a Staunton newspaper claimed that a McChesney baby had died from injuries caused by the "ghost." Since the writer did not give the name of his informant, or any other proof such as cemetery records, his story is not believed by me. ABH

36. The Wesley story is told at some length in the *Encyclopaedia Brittanica* reference cited above.

37. *Roanoke Times* 1965 quoting their story of 1938.

38. *Roanoke Times* 1965 quoting their story of 1949.

39. *Roanoke Times,* 1965.

40. Interview, Mrs. Robert Hutcheson, 1965.

41. Interview, Mr. Douglas Whipple, 1965.
42. Interview, Mrs. Una Beard, 1963.
43. This number is doubted. ABH
44. Interview, Mrs. Howard Smith, 1963.
45. Interview, Mrs. Gilmer Weston, 1963.
46. Interview, Mrs. Robert Jeffries, 1964.
47. Interview, Mrs. William East, 1963.
48. Interview, Mr. William East, 1963.

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Interviews with Mrs. Una Beard, Mrs. Russell George East, Mr. William East, Mrs. Robert Hutcheson, Mrs. Robert Jeffries, Mrs. Charles McCulloch, Mrs. Hugh McCulloch, Mrs. Howard Smith, Mrs. E. A. Sales, Mrs. Gilmer Weston, Mr. Douglas Whipple.

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Peyton, J. Lewis, *History of Augusta County, Virginia,* Samuel M. Yost & Son, Staunton, Virginia, 1882.

Portrait, VMI, of John Thomas Lewis Preston.

Roanoke Times.

Rockbridge Intelligencer.

Valentine Museum, Richmond, Va.

Waddell, Joseph A., *Annals of Rockbridge County, Virginia,* 1726 to 1871, Second Edition, 1901, C. Russell Caldwell, Staunton 1901.

Washington Cathedral, (Episcopal) Washington D. C.

Mrs. Charles McCulloch was 18 years old when Mr. Figgatt absconded with all the money in Lexington, left the bank empty, the stores strapped, and gloom in almost every house.

"Mr. Charles Figgatt was rather pudgy in appearance, and had a sandy, sparse goatee," she said. "Everything was round about him, round eyes, round cheeks, a round stomach. All the Figgatts were shining lights of the Episcopal Church. Caldwell McBride said he would always remember the prayers of Mr. Figgatt, and his resonant pious tones, 'Oh Lo-o-o-od, we air thine and all that we have is thine.' Mr. Figgatt was the cashier, (he kept a double set of books,) at the one and only Lexington bank, maybe the only one in the county then. Nobody knew why he did it. Two trains left here daily, and the evening train went west. It was in the spring when Mr. Figgatt carried his two heavy valises to the train. 'Let me help you," said a solicitous friend. 'They're so heavy they might have gold in them. They did, and the town was left in mourning."

Dr. Ollinger Crenshaw, head of the Department of History at Washington and Lee University, delivered the following address at the winter dinner meeting of the Society on January 24, 1966, at the Robert E. Lee Hotel. Dr. Crenshaw, who was born at College Park, Georgia, took his M.A. at Washington and Lee, and his Ph.D. at Johns Hopkins University. He is author of *The Slave States in the Presidential Election of 1860,* and his most important writing has been *General Lee's College: The Rise and Growth of Washington and Lee University,* published in New York by Random House in 1969, which gives the history of the University up to 1930.

BLACK FRIDAY IN LEXINGTON

The Failure of the Bank of Lexington

By Ollinger Crenshaw

On Thursday, February 21, 1895, the *Rockbridge County News* of Lexington carried a headline, "Our Bank Wrecked!" This startling intelligence had been previously widely known to town and county residents, for on the preceding Friday morning, February 15, 1895, John L. Campbell, one of Lexington's most respected citizens then and afterwards, President of the Bank of Lexington only since the beginning of the year, had signed and posted a public notice stating that the bank was closed. The exciting but lugubrious story was quickly told, becoming more tragic as it unfolded in the ensuing days and weeks. Charles M. Figgat, Cashier of

the bank, had "skipped", as the laconic account had it in the *Richmond Dispatch,* a defaulter in the amount of at least $145,000 (considerably more, as was later established), departing for parts unknown. In his wake he had left heavy losses to stockholders, depositors, and bondsmen—indeed, distress to everyone.[1]

* * * * * *

Citizens of the community had experienced the vicissitudes common to their fellow Virginians during the latter half of the Nineteenth Century: Civil War, Reconstruction, the Panic of 1873 and depression of the Seventies, economic fluctuations of the Eighties, the Buena Vista boom together with neighboring boomlets at Glasgow, Goshen, Irish Creek, and finally a boom of sorts had developed even in classic Lexington. The Buena Vista Company, organized in 1889, attracted much attention and enthusiasm early in that year. "Rockbridge Awake!" exclaimed the *County News.* Everybody was investing in Green Forest or Buena Vista, as that place was soon christened, the "mineral centre of the world—to be."[2]

Capitalists converged upon Buena Vista, and on February 8, 1889, it was anounced that all the $600,000 capital stock of the Buena Vista Company had been subscribed. The local newspapers devoted much space to the boom, so much so that the *County News* issue of February 22, 1889, could be characterized as "the boom issue," though that journal expressed some uneasiness lest Lexington become overshadowed. Capitalists also invested in an opera house for Buena Vista, that "infant Pittsburgh," and by year's end of 1889, optimism rode high, tempered by an occasional note of skepticism. Thus the Rockbridge humorist, "G. Whillikens" [J. D. Morrison] could write his friend Josiah Simpkins of Rich Patch as early as August 1, 1889: "Our booms ain't as inflate as they was. The inexorable laws of events always squeezes a heap of the wind outer sich things." And the one-time editor of the *Lexington Gazette,* J. J. Lafferty, an associate of General Lee's in Washington College's program for the training of journalists, upon visiting the region, remarked that Buena Vista lots were selling for prices of New York City land, for "$3,000 a piece, where cray fish were still building mud towers." The Reverend Dr. Lafferty observed that he had not invested a dime in Buena Vista, and had no intention of doing so, but he added that his friends had "coined money, however."[3]

In the summer of 1890, a series of enthusiastic boom articles appeared in the Baltimore *Sun,* "Boom in the Valley." After noting that Lexington was located in the center of a country rich in minerals, the *Sun* writer

sagely commented: "Every town in this section of Virginia just now seems to have a separate and distinct boom of its own, each like Barnum's circus—the very greatest boom on earth." He also pointed out that A. T. Barclay had recently been in Philadelphia, to close a contract for the construction of a "basic steel plant . . . backed by a separate company with capital of $225,000." Money invested at Buena Vista, this writer estimated, amounted to $1,500,000.[4]

Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper discovered "Picturesque Virginia," including in an article pictures of Buena Vista and "Glasgow on the James." But Lexington was ignored, to the pain of the *County News.* Lexington suffered from lethargy ("apathy" had not yet gained popular usage), and its public relations did not exist. In fact all the advertising which the town received was gratuitous: "Were it not for the two schools and the . . . bodies of Gens. Lee and Jackson here, the town would never be heard of."[5]

In mid-August 1890, "Boom! Boom!" could be heard in every part of Virginia. One local commentator, who preferred to use a pseudonym, and who possibly wrote with tongue in cheek, declared that he desired no boom in Lexington, but wished the "quiet, classic air undisturbed." Alluding to George W. Cable's *Autrefois,* this self-confessed old fogy would let those boom who desired to do so, "but do not lay the ruthless hand of change on Lexington." This opponent of New Southism concluded, "I never wish to see the spires and battlements of her college buildings wreathed in the smoke of her furnaces and factories, or the stranger give but a careless glance to the marble effigy of the Immortal Chieftain in his eagerness to visit Lexington's *great Rolling Mills.*"[6]

Fogyism, however, seemed definitely overwhelmed. The local *Gazette* jubilantly reported in September, 1890, that an English syndicate had signed a contract with stockholders of the Rockbridge Company ranging from a half million to $5,000,000. The British gentlemen had secured $1,500,000 in cash for the project, for which Lexington's own William A. Anderson earned praise. Some time before, Ralph Moore, an expert Scottish geologist had examined the property of the Rockbridge Company, of which Governor Fitz Lee served as president, and had turned in a highly favorable report. Among the purchasers of lots at Glasgow were the Duke and Duchess of Marlborough, who were reported late in 1890 to have decided to build handsome warehouses upon their property, to cost not less than $15,000 apiece.[7]

To the lament that Lexington alone had shown no interest in sharing in industrial development, and to a publicly stated call for a land development company in town, something indeed was done in a big way in the fall of 1890. Lexington's "Great Enterprise" was launched in the forma-

tion of "The Lexington Development Company," to the accompaniment of optimistic local editorials. $100,000 in stock was subscribed in two hours, the like of which had never been seen even in the surrounding valley booms. Heretofore somnolent Lexington had entered the race last, but was "getting there all the same." The October 31, 1890, issue of the *Gazette* jubilantly asserted that $350,000 had been subscribed in capital stock of the Lexington Development Company. "Just think of it!" exclaimed the editor in a now-amusing editorial, entitled, "Our Boom." He waxed bitter against "croakers." Such bullishness about all the local booms continued into 1891, with descriptions of the work of the Buena Vista Company, its reports, the Rockbridge Company, and the Lexington Development Company. Virginia was about to join the company of Pennsylvania as one of America's greatest industrial states.

Yet before 1891 was out, disquieting reports were heard and financial tremors felt. Almost simultaneously the Rockbridge Company, the Buena Vista Company, and the Lexington Development Company appeared to be "in trouble." The *County News* hoisted some storm signals as early as June 11, 1891, when it could say that holders of boom stocks were uneasy. Later in the summer, the same observer wrote: "Twelve months ago those only in popular opinion were regarded as fortunate who had invested in booms; now in popular opinion those are regarded as the fortunate few, who never touched them in any way." This set out two extreme views, but neither was correct, the editor believed. On August 13, 1891, General Fitz Lee's resignation as President of the Rockbridge Company was announced.[8]

As the weeks passed, it became evident that the Rockbridge Company should have been in receivers, and in mid-October, 1891, the *County News* disclosed that the Lexington Development Company had evidently "busted," cautioning, "Let Moderation Prevail." Next month, the Company was "on its feet," but on November 19, 1891, William McKeever assailed the management, especially several prominent Lexingtonians who, he charged, had sold lots to themselves. Early in 1892 A. T. Barclay's speech dealing with the Buena Vista Company was copiously excerpted in the Richmond *Dispatch*. Although the situation hardly lent itself to humor, "G. Whillikens" bluntly informed Josiah Simpkins, "It's bust! The boom's busted!"[9]

The misfortunes of the several boom companies were recited during 1892 and 1893. At the beginning of the latter year A. R. Long attended a meeting of the Lexington Development Company stockholders, where he offered a resolution to the effect that the promoters of the Lexington Development Company had "acted both as buyers and sellers," and had "illegally provided for large profits for themselves." Efforts were made

to appease and to explain, but irate Long remained adamant. His resolution, nevertheless, went down to overwhelming defeat. Almost simultaneously the Buena Vista Company became rent by two factions of stockholders, the "ins" versus the "outs," with insistent demands for investigation being heard. In 1893-1894, the boom companies went into receiverships. For example, on March 1, 1894, the Rockbridge Company was in receivers, owing $150,000. The dolorous fate of the Buena Vista Company can be followed in its annual reports, the sixth of which in 1894, still carried the name of A. T. Barclay as President. Various Iron companies were liquidated, and the City of Buena Vista (for such it had been chartered as being, and would remain in legal theory until today) settled back into a state of relative calm, if not desuetude. A sensible article in September, 1893, in the *County News,* depicted Buena Vista "after the boom."[10]

The truth is that the economic condition of the United States in the early Nineties fluctuated. Even as the Virginia booms were being set under way, an occasional item referred to the shaky financial situation in "the City" (London) and Wall Street. A serious condition had befallen the United States Treasury in 1892, which developed into the full-fledged Panic of 1893, soon after the hapless President Grover Cleveland had assumed office in March, 1893. Money conditions in the South had been tight intermittently since the Civil War, and the Panic, followed by severe depression hit the South and West hardest of all. For the remaining years of the century, hard times prevailed.

* * * * * *

Such was something of the setting, national and local, for the greatest tragedy ever to befall Lexington and environs, the collapse through the "gutting" of the Bank of Lexington, announced to the public on "Black Friday" of February 15, 1895. That day the news was sent out to the daily papers, so that both the Richmond *Dispatch* and the Richmond *Times* printed details next morning. The brief *Dispatch* story hopefully noted that Cashier Figgat had been bonded for $30,000 deemed sufficient to cover all losses. Also at first it was said that Figgat had lost funds in speculation, and that he had not taken cash with him. How much cash he did take along cannot be determined, but later the figure was put at $8,000 or more.[11]

Such initial sanguine reassurances immediately faded. According to a story from Lexington in the Richmond *Times,* the closing created much surprise, "as not the first suspicion of its unsoundness had ever been rumored or thought of." In later post mortems, however, it be-

came known that, while the public may have been in ignorance of the bank's condition, certain individuals knew that all was not well, and some recriminations resulted from this. When Figgatt's defalcation was known to have swamped the Bank of Lexington, the principal financial agent of the people of Rockbridge County, great excitement prevailed in town. As the bad news reached County residents, they swarmed into town on Saturday morning, February 16, to ascertain the worst. All day Saturday knots of people could be seen on the streets—depositors and Figgat's sureties among them—discussing the affair.[12]

On that very morning of "Black Friday," February 15, 1895, Robert K. Godwin, Assistant Cashier of the bank and brother-in-law of Figgat, had sent for Mr. Campbell to inform him that Figgat had departed on the 2:20 P.M., C. & O. train, Thursday, February 14. The absconding official had left, it was afterwards determined, on what had appeared to be a routine business trip, accompanied to the railroad station by his two children. It is true that he had been seen in the bank some days earlier carefully studying a map of the United States, but his open departure for his announced destination, Rush Run, West Virginia, where he held large interests in soft coal mines, seemed in order, as had his purchase of a ticket to Hinton, West Virginia.[13]

This "honest," impeccably respectable Lexington business man, who had been a bank official for more than a quarter century, had possessed impressive credentials. A Confederate veteran, he had served as General Stonewall Jackson's clerk, and after the Civil War, had begun his business career, as he once had put it, with 75¢ in his pocket, as an employee of Mr. J. H. Myers in a dry goods store. When the Bank of Lexington had opened in 1874, he became its first Cashier (as it fell out, the only Cashier). As a public spirited citizen, Figgat served as treasurer of the fund that had built the R. E. Lee Mausoleum and the recumbent statue of General Lee, and also had aided in fund-raising for the Stonewall Jackson monument fund. He was widely trusted, and the story is told of old ladies (tennis shoes?) approaching him on the streets of Lexington, pressing into Figgat's hands, cash which they wished him to deposit for them in the Bank of Lexington. The image of Mr. Figgat was rounded out when this devout churchman served as chairman of the building committee which erected the R. E. Lee Episcopal Church of Lexington. Moreover, this exemplary Christian worked as Superintendent of the Sunday School for more than twenty years, and occupied the post of Senior Warden of his church. Could respectability be more developed than in this best-known figure of his community?[14]

Older residents of Lexington are familiar with a story, perhaps apocryphal, of Mr. Figgat, burdened by two large, heavy valises, walking

across the tracks to change from his East bound train at Balcony Falls to a west bound C. & O. train. One version has it that a kindly citizen volunteered to assist the traveler with his luggage, unaware of the destination of Lexington's soon-to-be notorious banker. Wild tales began to circulate concerning that destination: some believed that New York and Europe would see the fugitive; others had it that he was headed west, and that Mexico would be his haven. In any case, it was comforting (slightly) to hear that Sheriff Witt was leaving no clue uninvestigated, and that he was hot on the trail. Rewards were offered for Figgat's apprehension by Governor O'Ferral, but the embarrassed Supervisors of Rockbridge County could put up nothing for the purpose: they had been depositors in the Bank of Lexington.[15]

Detailed stories from Lexington indicated that the shortage of the bank continued to grow, as investigation progressed. Judge James K. Edmondson had called for depositors' bank books, soon stacked head high in the bank, for comparison with the regular set of bank books. A private ledger of Figgat's was located, containing $5,000 of entries of individual depositors, but not in the regular records. Two bank books of C. W. Irvine & Co. turned up in the pile, evenly balanced, a fact which caused wonder as to why they had appeared. They covered a period of four years, balanced, and containing all checks. Careful scrutiny of them revealed, however, that the Irvine firm owed the bank more than $51,000, $44,000 of this consisting of overdrafts by that company. Curiosity aroused as to the methods of the bank looters was partially explained by the Irvine transactions.[16]

Amounts deposited by Irvine & Co., for example, according to "the scratcher" (the book at the teller's window on which deposits were recorded) differed from the books of the bank. For instance, on a specific date and according to the scratcher, Irvine & Co. deposited $500, yet $4,500 appeared upon the books of the Bank of Lexington, and on C. W. Irvine Company's pass book. By such devices, Irvine & Co. amassed $51,500, which had not been deposited. Perhaps these books had been accidentally placed in Judge Edmondson's possession. In any event, C. W. Irvine requested their return to him, a demand refused. On March 6 Irvine and Edmondson conferred, the former denying that he had made these overdrafts.[17]

Another example of the Figgat "system" in operation may be cited: a depositor put in $400, checking out $14, leaving a balance of $386. When directors examined the books of the bank they found $400 credit, but the $14 had been raised to $314, leaving a balance of $86. In such manner, it was reported that Figgat had pocketed $300. Accounts thus were reworked and manipulated, balanced at regular intervals, with all checks promptly returned each month.[18]

Meanwhile, the Supervisors of Rockbridge County found themselves embarrassed, noted above, because the County's funds had been deposited in the Bank of Lexington. V.M.I.'s fund had amounted to $20,000, a loss which would momentarily cripple that institution, and the Richmond *Times* reported that the fund of Washington and Lee University had lost nothing, quickly adding: "All the professors and employees of the latter institution were paid a few days ago, and their money was deposited in this bank." The collapse, therefore, said this account truly, left them in a bad fix. Professors were, not unprecedentedly, said to have been "without a dollar." Students, Cadets, Negroes and other small depositors found themselves penniless.[19]

Not surprisingly, the people of the town and county, as well as persons in Staunton, who had lost heavily, were in an ugly frame of mind, One Staunton man had lost $1,500, a bank there $2,000, while others who held the Bank of Lexington stock (it had paid 12 to 18% annually) were wiped out. Wild rumors circulated, fed by stories that the money had found its way into the hands of outsiders, some of whom were local residents. A suicide on South River was attributed to this disaster. One report had it that a recently resigned bank official had withdrawn his money some time previously, and was said to hold but little stock at the time of the holocaust. Proofs were lacking about much of this although a thorough investigation of the bank's affairs was immediately undertaken. A large mass meeting assembled at the Court House, presided over by the Honorable John Randolph Tucker, adopted resolutions one of which demanded a grand jury investigation. Indictments soon were returned of Figgat, Godwin, and Irvine, and during February and March the shocked people of Lexington slowly began to return to their wonted ways.[20]

The respected William H. Ruffner thus wrote on February 27, 1895, "the Recuperative Energy of Rockbridge County," in which he reviewed the hard times of the past, while others moralized that the community must learn lessons of greater care and watchfulness of those with whom people dealt as well as themselves. All this, however, furnished little solace as depositors read the contrasting statements of the Bank of Lexington: Figgat's last, dated February 9, 1895, and that of February 16. The latter revealed a "rotten condition" of things, with only a trifling figure of about $6,500 cash on hand to pay about $72,000.[21]

Small wonder, then, that crowds on the streets of Lexington wore sober expressions, and that the local churches of Presbyterian Lexington were filled on the Sunday following "Black Friday" with somber worshipers. From the days of the early settlers in the Augusta-Rockbridge area, financial probity and belief in the sanctity of contracts and private

property were basic tenets of the hard-working, God-fearing people of the community. News of the sensational fate of the Bank of Lexington spread over state and nation. A Chicago newspaper pithily put the matter: "Mr. Figgat, by a system of book-keeping of his own, managed to hoodwink the bank directors, who, with the depositors, are now in deep mourning. He got away with the entire capital stock of the institution, and seventy thousand besides. In fact, about the only thing of value that he didn't carry away was the building." Newspapers as far away as Jacksonville commented on the disaster, while the Baltimore *Sun* kept its readers well informed concerning "Figgat's victims."

A summary review story, originating from Lexington, remarked that it all read like fiction, but that the stark reality had made it the "grandest piece of rascality that is known in the history of our state." Moreover, Lexington had "won an unenviable reputation before the world, as having produced one of the shrewdest of bank robbers, a prince of the profession, whose successful methods in robbing the only bank here pass upon the record as a piece of the most brilliant thievery that can be found upon the pages of the financial history of this great country." Figgat's feat had established him as a "Napoleon of Finance" without equal among eminent bank robbers.[22]

According to this account of March 17, 1895, the effect of the fall of the Bank of Lexington had been widespread upon the United States, alarming financiers, bankers, and business men of the possibilities for plunder which might exist. Banks were investigated in various places, causing the Comptroller of the U. S. Currency to request statements of condition from National banks. The Lexington bank wreck was believed to have awakened some Americans to the possibility that even the supposedly strongest banks might be vulnerable. This review concluded with the suggestion of what Figgat might not have accomplished had he been in a larger bank, in the twilight years of America's "robber Barons."[23]

Events leading up to the debacle provided various explanations of Figgat's flight and the disclosure of his defalcation. The *County News* reported that for some time there had been dissatisfaction with the management of the bank. On January 1, 1895, it had declared no dividend. Moreover, the bank had been known to be involved in "the [Lexington] boom": at the beginning of the year, $44,000 of the $123,000 of the bank's paper was said to have been past due, and that it was actually no longer bankable paper—this a result of the "boom". A large amount of the paper either was involved in litigation or soon would be, and much of it was "worthless." It became evident that careless management had prevailed at the Bank of Lexington. Another factor openly asserted was the dissipation of Figgat, said to have been "notorious," "a heavy drinker."

When John L. Campbell became president, the bank's directors' committees were reorganized, and as the *County News* sagely put it, "New brooms sweep clean and the bank officers knew it."[24]

According to the same source, Robert K. Godwin had known of Figgat's defalcations, but was said to have regarded the latter as his superior, who could act as he pleased. In a letter to Professor Nelson, Figgat traced the beginnings of his pilferings to about 1875, at about the time he had undertaken the management of the Goshen Stage. In this connection he sought to involve Col. A. W. Harman, who publicly denied the allegation. The departed cashier had also become a big operator in real estate, coal, transportation, farming, cattle, and had invested $50,000 in the Buena Vista boom. People in town and County had had "wonderful confidence" in Figgat, as mentioned above. By February, 1895, it had become plain that the Bank of Lexington had long been a mere shell which had miraculously weathered a storm "twenty months ago, when it must have been bankrupt." But this small town financial wizard fooled them all with his "Alice-in-Wonderland" banking techniques.[25]

Because of the fact that Figgat had become a fugitive from justice, only Godwin and Irvine were tried, each being convicted and sentenced to four years in prison, though Irvine was subsequently retried and acquitted. In passing, it may be noted that one of the witnesses for the prosecution himself years later fell into difficulties as Treasurer of V.M.I. Much light was thrown on the case of the Bank of Lexington during these trials, fully reported in the newspapers. Later it was brought out that Figgat apparently had overloked negotiable bonds in the amount of $219,000.[26]

Probably a feeling of sympathy developed in Lexington in later years for the convicted Godwin, who in the view of many had "taken the rap" for the absconded cashier. Early in November, 1895, the *County News* editorially opposed a pardon for Godwin, but by March, 1898, the Lexington *Gazette* recorded that he had been pardoned by Governor J. Hoge Tyler, after having served thirty-two months. Among the petitioners in Godwin's behalf were William A. Anderson and several members of the Glasgow family. Since Charles W. Irvine had been acquitted, only Figgat remained unaccounted for. But on March 1, 1899, the *Gazette* carried an unobtrusive item to the effect that C. M. Figgat had died in Lockett, Colorado, where he had been known as "Charles Miles," and where his true identity had been established by his name in his prayerbook.[27]

While the stockholders in the Bank of Lexington had lost everything, the slow work of litigation gradually brought the depositors' dividend up to 75-80%. A widely-asked question, and one which recurs, was: "What became of the money?', an amount estimated finally to have been around

$180,000, lost by the Bank of Lexington through Figgat's defalcations? Though contemporaries posed the question, they did not answer it, leaving the historian to surmise that the fever of speculation, which afflicted so many Americans (Virginia included) in the 1890's, as well as before and afterwards, played a part in Figgat's troubles. We know that he had sunk $50,000 in the Buena Vista boom, and it appears likely that he had engaged in other speculations, some of them perhaps in the Lexington "Boom" of the 90's. One may doubt that those bags so kindly carried across the railroad tracks at Balcony Falls by that Good Samaritan of legend had contained more cash than perhaps $8,000.[28]

Other thoughts may occur to the modern investigator of the Lexington debacle of 1895, a year, incidentally which saw the coldest winter since 1857. First of all, the funds lost consisted of the hard money of the times, when a dollar was worth a gold dollar, as President Cleveland strove to stem the demands of western and Southern inflationists. Thus the sums lost constituted enormous purchasing power in terms of the modern United States dollar. Another aspect of this doleful story was the operation of "free enterprise," unhampered by effective state banking laws or by federal banking supervision or guarantees of deposits such as have been in existence since 1933. No doubt the stockholders, and certainly the depositors of 1895 would have welcomed some government inspection and supervision, if that could have staved off the disaster which beset them. One may hazard the guess that few Americans today would desire to go back to that good old period of the American brand of laissez-faire, when businessmen of the type of Figgat could loot a bank with impunity, and destroy an institution essential to the very life of the community. Finally, one may doubt that anyone today would go so far as to withdraw needed protection by state and federal governments to modern banks.

NOTES

1. *Richmond Dispatch,* Feb. 16, 1895. For economic and political background in Virginia, readers should consult Allen W. Moger, *Virginia: Bourbonism to Byrd, 1870-1925* (Charlottesville, Virginia, 1968).
2. *Rockbridge County News,* Jan. 25, 1889.
3. Lexington *Gazette,* Aug. 1, 1889, July 3, 1890.
4. *Ibid.,* July 3, 1890.
5. *Rockbridge County News,* July 10, 1890.
6. *Ibid.,* Aug. 14, 1890.
7. *Ibid.,* June 26, Dec. 4, 1890; Lexington *Gazette,* Sept. 18, 1890.
8. *Rockbridge County News,* Aug. 13, 1891.
9. *Ibid.,* Sept. 3, Oct. 15, Nov. 12, 1891; Feb. 4, 1892.
10. *Ibid.,* Jan. 12, Feb. 16, March 2, Sept. 28, 1893; *ibid.,* Feb. 15, March 1, 1894.
11. *Richmond Times,* Feb. 16, 1895.

12. *Ibid.*, Feb. 17, 1895.
13. *Rockbridge County News,* Feb. 21, 1895.
14. *Richmond Times,* March 17, 1895, "The Financier Figgat", Article, "Special from Lexington."
15. *Ibid.*, Feb. 21, 1895.
16. *Ibid.*, for illustrations of the looters' methods, March 8 ,1895.
17. *Ibid.*
18. *Ibid.*, Feb. 20, 1895.
19. *Ibid.*, Feb. 19, 24, 1895.
20. *Ibid.*, Feb. 19, 20, 1895; *Rockbridge County News,* Feb. 21, 1895.
21. *Rockbridge County News,* Feb. 28, 1895.
22. *Richmond Times,* March 17, 1895; *Lexington Gazette,* Feb. 28, 1895.
23. *Richmond Times,* March 17, 1895.
24. *Rockbridge County News,* Feb. 21, 1895.
25. *Ibid.*, Lexington *Gazette,* Feb. 28, 1895.
26. For trials of Godwin and Irvine, see *ibid.,* May 2, 9, 16, 1895, and *Rockbridge County News,* May 9, 16, July 11, 1895. *Lexington Gazette,* July 1, 1896.
27. *Rockbridge County News,* Nov. 7, 1895; Lexington *Gazette,* March 9, 1898.
28. *Rockbridge County News,* July 8, 1897.

SPOTTSWOOD STYLES, 1869-1946

One hundred years ago, on January 24, 1869, Spottswood Styles, Lexington's Negro poet was born.[1] His life and writings are the subject of a paper written by the late Houston Barclay, and read by Anne Brandon Heiner at the spring meeting of the Society held on April 25, 1966, in Murray Hall of Lexington Presbyterian Church. His poem called "Eve"[2] was read by a grand-daughter, Mrs. Ella-Jean Styles Johnson, and various samples of his poetry were read by Mrs. Heiner.

Styles was born less than four years after Appomattox near the Lucy Selina Furnaces owned by Colonel John Jordan, where his father, John Robert Styles had worked for many years. He was one of fourteen children.

During 52 of the 77 years of his life, Styles was a capable and trusted employee at a Lexington wood, coal and machinery yard operated in turn by E. A. Moore, Robinson and Hutton, and Harper and Agnor.[3] He was especially skillful at repairing large machinery, and was a good provider for his large family, owning the red brick home on the creek west of Lexington on Route 60.[4]

His daughter, Mrs. A. C. Jordan remembers vividly his thoughtful kindness to his family. "In the spring," she reminisced, "The bed ticks would be emptied of straw and washed, and filled with fresh, sweet smelling hay. Sometimes they would be three feet high. The stone fireplace downstairs was so large that we could burn whole railroad ties without having them cut, and on cold nights my father would heat pressing-irons in the fire, and go upstairs and iron our ticks, and then three or four of us would jump into one big warm bed—"[5]

After he finished his day's work, Styles wrote poetry which was sometimes deeply religious, sometimes witty or sad, and sometimes a caustic satire on the irreligious life that he saw around him.[6] Most of his work is in simple, pure English, but several of his most charming poems are in negro dialect. He speaks in only one poem of the dreadful days of slavery, when he repeats his grandmother's story of the selling of her son, his Uncle Henry.[7]

When Robert Frost lectured in Lexington in 1914, he read some of Styles' poems, and commented, "His work, judging from the few samples I have seen, shows, a very poetic mind."[8]

The thick collection of Styles' poems, written in his own meticulously beautiful hand in an old leather-bound ledger, was studied, and a few that I consider among the best have been selected, and are printed following the Barclay paper.

A.B.H.

FOOTNOTES TO INTRODUCTION

1. Tombstone, Evergreen Cemetery, Lexington.
2. In ledger owned by Mrs. A. C. Jordan.
3. Interviews with Mrs. Jordan, Mrs. Charles McCulloch, others.
4. Mrs. Jordan.
5. Mrs. Jordan.
6. In ledger.
7. In ledger.
8. Rockbridge County News, April 10, 1946.

SPOTTSWOOD STYLES

By Houston Barclay

History is a tapestry that is being woven day by day. It develops very slowly, and the weavers do not know that a picture is in the making, because they are so close to the loom. When they stand back to see what has been done, the true story is revealed. It takes a lot of colors to make an interesting tapestry, some vivid and bright, and it takes a lot of background tones consisting of the less conspicuous hues. Many tapestries are being woven each day, but the one in which we are most interested is the history of Lexington and Rockbridge County.

Our Historical Society is apt to lay great stress on the bright, colorful characters in our past, and forget that without the sometimes less conspicuous inhabitants, history is not truly revealed. It is the old story of the argument the fingers of the hand had as to which one was most important. The thumb said, "I am the strongest," and the first finger said, "I am the one on which the rings are placed." When it came to the little finger, he said, "I am the smallest, not the strongest nor any of these things, but when a man prays and folds his hands, I am the first and closest to his God." Thus each finger has his task, and the hand would be less if any one of them were taken away. So each citizen has his designated contribution in society, and the whole is made weaker by the loss of anyone.

I take great pleasure in weaving a few threads that will bring in at least one of the many fine people who have lived in Lexington, who have too often been overlooked. What would our history be without the Negroes who added so much to our way of life! Each of us has special friends that we knew and loved, and from whom we learned much. How well I remember our nurse when we were children. She gave us values from which we have greatly profited. How we cried at her wedding when we sat with her family and realized we were losing her, a member of our household. Our tapestry would be colorless indeed without our Negro friends.

Spottswood Styles, the subject of this paper, was another Negro gentleman we all loved and admired. "Spot," as he was affectionately nicknamed by his friends, was born in Lexington on January 24, 1869. He was the son of John and Mariah Styles. John was owned by the Jordan family, and was a powerful man. He worked in one of the Jordan iron furnaces, the one known as "Lucy Selina."

The "Lucy Selina Furnace" was between Lexington and Clifton Forge. When the Civil War was over and John received his freedom, he moved to Lexington, and lived in a house across from the Virginia Military Institute which has since been torn down, and here his fourteen children were born. One of his daughters was named "Lucy Selina" for the iron furnace, so John must have had some happy associations with the place of his labor. Sister Lucy Selina Styles became a teaching nun in the Catholic Church.

One daughter, Sarah, married a man of whom I have heard much. His name was Edmond White, and he was the first superintendent of the Negro school in Lexington. He and his wife were the parents of Mrs. Hugh Williams who died here this year. She was known and admired by many of you. The reason I mention the Whites especially is because I think they had a great influence on the future of our subject. If I were to tell you of other members of Spotwood's family it would prove how many bright and worthwhile colors they have given to our Lexington tapestry.

Spottswood was a fine mechanic, and supported his large family in his early days mending reapers and binders and wagons for the farmers. There were two boys and eight girls, all of whom grew up in our town, and a number of them gave much to the building of Lexington. In addition to his trade, Spotswood was a poet, and his work has lived for those who would look for it. Many of his poems were published in the town papers, and in the "Ladies' Almanac."

A daughter, Mrs. A. C. Jordan, who was named for her aunt, Sister Lucy Selina Styles, was one of the ten children. Mrs. Jordan has a book of her father's poems written in his unbelievably beautiful hand writing, full of his original thoughts expressed in a fine choice of words.

I asked his daughter where she thought her father obtained his copy-book handwriting, his command of English, his love of poetry, and above all, his original ideas. She does not know how far he went in school, but it is evident that he drew much from his background, and his brother-in-law, Edmond White must have taught him a good deal. Definitely, he was given a talent by his creator, and he certainly accomplished much with his gift. I am sure that when he met his Lord, he received the greeting, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant."

Some of his poems are humorous, and some sad, but as you read them, you get a picture of his unforgetable character. His daughter says that often her father would sit on the front porch on Sunday afternoon and write poetry, and that when she was a small child, she would be asked to recite one of her father's poems at either the Methodist or the Baptist Church. (They attended both.) At such times he would write her a special piece to use. One that I especially like was written for the celebration of Children's Day at the Methodist Church.

Mrs. Jordan gave me a picture that I would like to include in this tapestry of her family. On Sunday morning, before breakfast, they always had family prayers. The whole family gathered around the table, for it was the only time in the week that they would be sure to be together, since Spottswood's work caused him to travel in the county a great deal. He would read the *Bible, Pilgrim's Progress,* and a book I would love to see called *Aunt Charlotte's Bible Stories.* They would sing several hymns, and both mother and father would pray.

Spottswood led early Christmas morning prayer service at the Baptist Church for fifty years, and at his death the family was asked to carry on this tradition, which they have done. No wonder the children in this home turned out so well. Just think what the Lexington tapestry would have lost if it had not been for them.

The Styles red brick home is still standing on the right-hand side of Route 60, just below the bridge over Woods Creek. One of my happy memories is when we were cold after skating on Reed's Pond. On our way home we would stop at the Styles home to get warm by a huge fireplace, and his wife would give us cookies. In the summer, on returning from a day at Cave Spring, either in the cave or the river, we were sure to stop again, and once I remember being served lemonade. It was true Virginia hospitality we received there.

No wonder the children of this home turned out so well. Two of Spottswood's grandchildren have Master's degrees, and one is working on his Doctorate. Four others are teachers. One of the daughters, Mrs. Daisy Evans, has a wonderful voice, and used to sing over the radio. It is impossible to tell all the accomplishments of the ten children.

Often the Lexington children would climb on his wagon, as he drove by, and hear some of his wonderful poems and original thoughts.

EVE NEVER WAS A GIRL

By Spottswood Styles

Of all the people the world has seen since time its rounds began
There's one I pity every day, earth's first and only woman.

Just think of all the fun she missed since coming to this world,
The dear delights of youthtide, for she never was a girl.
She never nursed a bottle of first class jersey milk,
She never wore upon her head a hood of lace or silk,
She was never in a baby carriage, to take a pleasant whirl,
And she had no nurse to wheel her, for she never was a girl.
She never went to the public school that sits upon the hill,
She never enjoyed the fishing in the pond behind the mill,
She never hung her stocking for ole Santa Claus to come,
She never heard firecrackers, the tinhorn nor the drum.
She never wrote love letters to the best boy in the world,
And she had no ma to scold her, for she never was a girl.
She never had a present of a diamond, gold or pearl,
In fact she had no fun at all, for she never was a girl.
And when I think of those sad days, my memory takes a whirl,
I pity her earth's first woman, for she never was a girl.
I pity her, why should I not? I'll even shed a tear,
For she never knew how much she missed, and never will, I fear.

DE SIGN OF SPRING

By Spottswood Styles

When de Turtle Dove am mourning
An' de Rainbow's in de sky
An' you hear de Bees ahumming
Den you say dat spring am nigh.

When you start to set out onions
And Taters in de Patch
When you start to set out cabbage
An' de Hens begin to scratch

When de apple trees am blooming
And de Birds Begin to sing
And de whipperwills awhipping
Den dat's de sign of spring.

When trees begin to pull out leaves
And grass done made a start

And de turkey gobbles strutting
Trying to give de Turkey trot

Dars a mighty heap of drawbacks
Which de springtime am to blame,
When de milk tastes jest like onions,
And de butter taste de same.

When de woman Folks get Busy
Aputting up fly screens
And den dey drap an old Ham Hock
Into de pot ob greens,

When de Toad Frog starts a Hopping
And de Hens begin to sing
And de Bed Bugs starts a Biting
Dat's de time you know its spring.

JUST WHISTLE

By Spottswood Styles

When times are bad, and folks are sad
And gloomy day by day
Just try your best alooking glad,
And whistle them away.

Don't mind how Trouble bristles,
Just take a Rose or Thistle,
Hold your own, and change your tone,
And whistle, whistle, whistle.

Each day comes with Life that's new,
A strange continued story,
But still beneath a bend of blue
The world rolls on to glory.

Don't mind how trouble bristles!
Just take a Rose or Thistle,
Hold your own, and change your tone,
And whistle, whistle, whistle!

DAT GROUND-HOG DAY

By Spottswood Styles

Some say I'm Juverstetious,
I don't care what dey say,
Kase I'se been Teached from Childhood
To watch dat Ground-Hog Day.

Well, yes, I'm superspecious,
And got dat curous way
Ob watching Ebry Little Sign,
Especially Ground-Hog Day.

Yes, some folks say I'm Foolish,
In de sylum I should stay,
But dat don't change my Notion
'Bout dis hear Ground-Hog Day.

It's February de second
which am dat Ventfull Day,
If he don't see his shadow
He Just comes out and stay.

Den look for pleasant weather,
Jes Fling wide open de Door,
Don't worry bout de wood Pile
Or de coal bin running Low.

Don't shed your under garments
Like lots of People do,
Kase de Ground Hog makes no Promise
Dat you won't Ketch de Flue.

Law, if de sun am shining
When he pokes out his head
Jes order up more wood and coal,
Put more Kivers on de Bed.

You can mark it on de stove Pipe,
Dar's gwinder be sleet and snow,
Dar ain't no doubt about it,
Kase de Ground-Hog done say so.

THE COST OF LIVING AND DYING

By Spottswood Styles

The cost of our Living is entirely too high,
And it seems to increase as you lie down to Die.
It's seventy-five dollars for Powders and Pills,
The doctor wants his if he cures or he kills.
The good undertaker is there, it's his Biz,
And of course therefore, he is looking for His.
The graveyard sexton before the body is cold
Will charge two prices for digging the Hole.
The nice Jitneyman will Furnish his car,
And charge just so much for just so far.
You don't have to look for the tombstone man,
He's right on the job, He's always on Hand.
He always Displays a feeling of sadness,
When we know in his heart there is nothing but gladness.
He will show you Designs of monuments Tall,
It's something that's worthy, the Price is so small.
He will tell the bereaved 'Tis best not to weep,
"I'll carve on this tomb 'Not dead, but asleep.' "
Then he gets busy with chisel and hammer
At the same time he whistles the Star Spangled Banner.
Now everything is moving quietly and still
Until you receive that stone-cutter's bill.
One hundred and fifty for the stone, as you know,
And for setting it up, just twenty-five more.
We advise Every woman, Boy, Girl and Man
In all good Religion, Live Long as you can.
So often the Friends and Relations are crying,
Not for the dead, but the high cost of Dying.

KEEP FIGHTING

By Spottswood Styles

When you've come to the end of a nerve-wracking day
And your soul is loaded with sorrow
Don't creep off alone, or to crying give way—
Remember, My Friend, there's tomorrow.

When your back's to the wall, and your money's all gone
And there isn't a cent you can borrow
Don't think it is shameful you ever were born—
Remember, my Friend, there's tomorrow.

When your enemies bury you deep in abuse
And your friends pass you by in sorrow
If you buck up and fight, they will cry for a truce,
Remember my Friend, there's tomorrow!

THE PLOWMAN

By Spottswood Styles

A plowman entered a field one day,
With his horses and his plow,
He knew exactly where to start,
He'd been taught just when and how.

The field extended far over a hill,
The end was not in sight,
But the plowman continued to wend his way
From early morn until night.

A stranger asked the plowman,
How far do you have to go?
The plowman answered the stranger,
I must plow to the end of the row.

Come sit in the shade, said the stranger,
Have a drink, and rest with ease,
The plowman shook his head, and said
My Master would be displeased.

You can see the plowman in the field
Every morn at break of day,
He said when the plowing was over
He'd be sure to receive his pay.

So the plowman continued his plowing,
Tho' his progress seemed very slow.

But his heart was right, and his burden light,
Thus he plowed to the end of the row.

Now every Christian is a plowman,
Over the hilly fields they must go,
For their hands are on the gospel plow,
And must plow to the end of the row.

Satan often acts as a stranger,
And will ask you why, thus, and so,
But the Christian must continue plowing,
To plow to the end of the row.

Some started plowing at childhood,
Now their hair is white as snow,
They seem more and more determined
To plow to the end of the row.

Now when the great plowing is completed
And our Lord and Master shall come
And look over the field at his plowman
He will say, "Christian plowman, well done!"

When our plowing days are over
And the promise of a great reward
Will be, Behold, the gates ajar,
Enter thou into the joys of your Lord.

Then when we shall reach that great city
The face of our Saviour we'll know,
And we'll live with him forever,
Because we plowed to the end of the row.

UNCLE HENRY

By Spottswood Styles

It was in the year of '47 as I heard Grandmother say,
Old Master was heard to tell old Mistress that we had a debt to pay.
Then he called up all the Negroes, and he placed them in a row,
Then he points to Uncle Henry, and said that he would have to go.

'Twas early on one Tuesday morning a Negro Trader came around,
And he asked, how much will buy him? Old Master said five hundred down.
All the while my dear grandmother stood eavesdropping closely by,
And when she heard, I'll take him, she laid down and tried to die.

Then he handcuffed Uncle Henry, and the last that he was seen
Was with a drove of other Negroes on his way to New Orleans.
The sight near killed Grandmother as she seen her boy depart,
Then she bowed her head in sorrow, and she prayed with all her heart.

She sighed and mourned for her darling, she prayed both night and day
That God would free the Negroes was the prayer she was heard to pray.
Oh God, my Heavenly Father, my cry is now unto Thee,
Be merciful to my darling boy, have mercy, oh Lord, upon me.

Lord break the Chains of Bondage, and set the Captives free,
Bring back my boy, dear Jesus, be merciful Lord unto me.
She mourned and mourned for her loved one, she prayed, yes day and night,
'Tis true her prayers were answered, though she died without the sight.

'Twas at Appomattox Virginia when God through Grant had spoken,
And General Lee gave up his sword, the slavery Chain was broken.

The summer meeting of the Society was a picnic at Rockbridge Alum Springs on Monday, July 25, 1966. Its owner, Mrs. Harold Bailey conducted the members and guests on a tour of the grounds before the dinner and lecture.

Robert Louis Semes, who was then an instructor at the Virginia Military Institute, spoke on the historic springs following the picnic.

Mr. Semes was born at Miami, Florida, on January 20, 1941, and received a Bachelor of Arts degree from Belhaven College, Jackson, Mississippi, in 1962. He took his Masters degree at the University of Virginia in 1968, and is currently working on his Ph.D. in history at Rutgers University, New Brunswick, New Jersey. He has been an instructor at several institutions including VMI.

TWO HUNDRED YEARS AT ROCKBRIDGE ALUM SPRINGS

By Robert Louis Semes

Shortly before the American Revolution, when few frontiersmen were living in the mountain wilds of what is now Rockbridge County, Virginia, occasional hunters would wander through the woods to a popular deer-lick. This spot would bring certain satisfaction since many deer would visit there to enjoy the salty taste of spring water. The lick, which was later to become the center of the Rockbridge Alum Springs, was located in a small valley at the base of North Mountain on the south and Mill Mountain on the north.

Alexander Campbell, surveyor of Rockbridge County, took up some 2,000 acres of land around the lick in 1790. Being an official surveyor he could not acquire the land in his own name so he procured it under a joint ownership with a friend, John Dunlap. The tract apparently continued in an undeveloped state until Campbell's son, James, started erecting buildings in the early 1830's to exploit a growing interest in the alum water of the spring. Legend says Thomas Jefferson drank the waters while visiting at the Alum in the early thirties; a possibility, since the Sage of Monticello once owned the Natural Bridge some thirty miles to the south. Campbell moved his residence to the springs in 1836, buying out the Dunlap heirs who had moved west. From the scant records of this early era it is apparent that James Campbell and his son Alexander established the basic pattern for the development of the resort.[1]

Legal entanglements over ownership of the Alum Springs were to begin in 1846 and continue for much of the resort's long history. For in that year a bill in chancery for partition and sale was filed by one of the Dunlap heirs against the Campbell heirs. As a result, the comissioners appointed by the court sold half of the land to James Campbell for $12,000. The remaining 1,000 acres were sold the next year to John Doyle, an eccentric former Pennsylvania iron-master. Doyle's acreage attracted some attention by reason of the iron ore found on it, and it was here that Doyle erected his furnace. However, the adventuresome enterprise failed and the defeated iron-master had the land sold for $10,000 to the original owner, James Campbell.

In 1851 Campbell sold the improved Rockbridge Alum property to a small corporation for $100,000. The next year the latter group sold it to John Frazier and his brother, William. After John's death in 1853, William Frazier continued to operate and develop the Alum while advancing its fame. In 1859 the Alum was sold under a court decree to John Frazier's son, James, for over $200,000—a price which clearly indicates the increased value of the property. William continued for a number of years to be associated with the resort, but in lesser capacities such as manager or acting partner. When James A. Frazier gained control of Rockbridge Alum Springs, its "golden age" was reckoned.

James A. Frazier was a colorful figure. One of the brochures issued by the Alum lists him as manager of the resort, president and superintendent of the Rockbridge Alum and Goshen Railroad, a connecting road with the Chesapeake and Ohio, and vice president and superintendent of the Rockbridge Alum, Lexington and Longdale Telephone Company. Frazier, also a political power in the turbulent days of Virginia's Readjuster politics, furthered his political ambitions by publishing, for a short time in Lexington, a weekly newspaper, *The Rockbridge Enterprise.*

The post Civil War era brought Rockbridge Alum Springs its great fame and fortune as a leading watering place in Virginia. As a semblance of prosperity returned to Virginia, the Alum became quite a gathering place for former Confederate officers and their families, and other socially elite persons. Among this group such notables as General Robert E. Lee, General James Gavin Field, later vice presidential nominee of the Populist Party, and General Francis H. Smith, first president of the Virginia Military Institute, came from various parts of Virginia with their families. From South Carolina came the robust Bourbon, General Wade Hampton and his family. Among the most glamourous visitors to the Alum in the post Civil War era, however, were the Cyrus McCormicks of Chicago. For a number of summers they came down from the north with their daughters, bringing their own riding horses and staying in the spacious

McCormick cottage. Other guests included the socially prominent Barbour family of Alexandria, the Wise family of Richmond, the Montgomery Blair family of Baltimore, the Benjamin Hill, Jr. family of Atlanta, and General John McCausland and his family from West Virginia.

With the advent of so many guests it was necessary to begin a large improvement program at the Alum. Around 1850, the improvements made by James Campbell back in the thirties were destroyed by fire, except for a few insignificant cabins and the stables. In 1853, following an intensive building campaign, the Alum was now a real phoenix rising from its own ashes. The largest building for the accommodation of guests was the Main House, later named the Central Hotel, fronting north, 60 by 30 feet, and three stories tall. At each end of the Main House, but retreating from the front, was a house similar in style to the Main, 40 by 30 feet, two stories tall, and divided into four rooms on each floor. One of these structures remains to this day. At about 50 feet from the ends of the Main House, and forming a semi-circle with it, ran two ranges of cottages, six on each side, each divided into four rooms. A majority of these cottages remain today.

One of the strangest chapters in the history of the resort was the development of the Jordan Alum Springs next door to the Rockbridge Alum. This fling at capitalizing on the spa traffic was, according to one account, started by John W. Jordan who owned a tract of some five hundred acres adjoining the Rockbridge Alum tract. This property passed through the courts and was purchased by the Jordan Alum Company in 1872. From a study of old brochures it would seem that this company erected the flamboyant Grand Hotel. This Victorian four-story structure with 150 guest rooms was opened in June, 1873. As the Jordan property grew in importance and in clientele the old Rockbridge Alum spa rapidly declined.

Late in the seventies, the seeds of the Eli Banana Society which subsequently flourished at the University of Virginia were sprouted at the Jordan. One of the founders, Charles A. Brady, VMI graduate of the class of 1872, and Rockbridge County surveyor, left a complete account of the beginning of the mystical organization. Brady declared that the Mikado of Japan authorized a young American naval officer to bring the secrets of the society to this country. The young officer, Thomas G. Terrell, and several friends, including Brady, had the good fortune to secure quarters at the Alum in what was known as the Lake Cottage, and it was here that the idea of establishing the Eli Banana Society in America was formed.

Unmistakably, into the mid-eighties the center of activity was at the Jordan Alum Springs. *The Rockbridge County News* reported in May, 1885 that the Rockbridge Alum was as quiet as a cemetery, but the

Jordan Alum was teeming with life. The Grand Hotel and several cottages in addition to a large building called the Brook House were the focal points. From the time of the formation of the Jordan Alum Company until the eighties a bitter litigation between the Jordan and Rockbridge Alum was waged. A high board fence was erected between the properties barring guests of the Jordan from visiting the Rockbridge Alum Springs and those of the Rockbridge Alum from attending the dances at the Jordan. It was not at all unusual, also, to have servants at each resort battering each other in brawls and fights late at night. In 1880 the properties were legally merged and Frazier was temporarily shoved aside as Fred Effinger gained control of the consolidated resort.

The Rockbridge Alum experienced a revival in 1886 when R. G. Campbell purchased the property for a scant $50,000 and formed a joint company. James A. Frazier was beneficiently reinstated as manager, and from this time until the close of the Alum to the public the spa enjoyed another "golden era."

The *raison d'etre* of the resort from its earliest times, of course, was the "health-giving" mineral springs, both iron and alum, of which the alum springs were the more famous and popular. The alum springs are located at the northwest portion of the valley at the base of a towering hill. Probably perpendicular at an earlier time, the hill obviously has been eroded by the mountain stream that passes at its base, leaving a denuded stratum of clay-slate rock some 80 feet in height. At the bottom of the hill five little wells were cut out of the rock, into which oozed the water through the interstices of the cliff. A concrete wall supports the base of the hill, and in this are five doors opening on the wells. After the Civil War a pavilion was erected on the spot, replacing a shed which had rested on the wall from behind and in front upon rude posts.

The waters granted great economic advantage to the owners of the spa. According to Perceval Reniers, author of *The Springs of Virginia,* before the Civil War masters farmed out their scrofulous slaves to work during the summer at the Springs.[2] The supreme economic advantage of the Rockbridge Alum Springs, however, was the profit from the sale of the mineral water for its "marvelous cures." A brochure of the 1880's notes that the waters had enjoyed great popularity with physicians for many years. At this time the water was put on the market in half-gallon bottles, one dozen to a case, and sold for $5.50. Shipments of the water were made all over the South and into the North and West. By 1910 the waters were shipped to 21 states and Canada. Multitudes came to be relieved of such diseases as "chronic diarrhoea, dysentery, bronchitis, incipient consumption and scrofula." A resident physician at the Alum,

John Staige Davis, M.D., occasional professor of anatomy at the University of Virginia, said in the eighties that

> most of the effects which I daily observe from the use of the waters, are such as the presence of their chief ingredients might suggest. These are ammonia, free sulphuric acid and iron—and according to their most conspicuous properties are astringent and tonic, adapting them to the cure of chronic diarrhoea, chronic dysentery, catarrh of the throat and nasal passages.

J. J. Clark, M.D. of St. Louis, Missouri, noted that "I am happy to add my testimony to that of the many invalids who have received benefits from the waters of the Rockbridge Alum Springs, after a sojourn there of some six weeks."

Testimonials of the water's great medicinal character were also read before several medical association meetings. One such testimonial was read before the Medical Association of Virginia in September, 1883 on "Medical Properties and Therapeutic Uses of the Waters of the Rockbridge Alum Springs." Dr. A. M. Fauntleroy's high sounding testimony to the spring's virtue reads like a prize Alum Springs sales pitch.

> Waters of acknowledged curative powers, holding in solution various ingredients so proportioned and adjusted under the silent operation of Nature's forces as to successfully defy duplication by the most expert chemical manipulator. The Alum Spring water is clear and without odor, though markedly astringent and acidulous to taste. Throughout the year these waters preserve quite an uniform temperature ranging from 50° to 56° Fahrenheit.
>
> Though these waters are far from being a cure for all the ills of which flesh is heir, yet from their extended influence over the physiological movements of the organism, it may be safely affirmed that they are applicable in, and curative of, a number of maladies, chronic in character; and my advice to you is, to give them a trial, should the ailment fall within the range of their physiological influence. Chronic cases over which you may have labored, until you are ready to cry out in your extremity and humility, "Good Lord deliver me!" And should your petition be fully answered, I am assured that you will send them to the springs, rather than employ the waters at home.

All the fancy talk and promotional recruiting of customers and clientele paid off. It was a charming spot indeed, not only a place for the mending of one's broken health and spirit, but a place for activity and the enjoyment of a rich, exuberant life. By the nineties, Rockbridge Alum Springs was classified as "second to White Sulphur" in size and popularity as accommodations for 700 guests were reached.

Most of the springs in Virginia in the eighties and nineties were setting belle traps. Each boasted that it was more accessible, select, comfortable, friendly, socially more prominent and less expensive than the great White Sulphur Springs in West Virginia. The Rockbridge Alum, which was second, got almost as much space in the newspapers as White Sulphur itself. Reniers notes that Rockbridge Alum was particularly favored by the professional classes: doctors, judges, and professors, and that it was socially always on its toes. The author of *The Springs of Virginia* adds that no sooner did the White Sulphur have Pink Teas and Pink Dinners and Pink Germans than the Rockbridge Alum had them also. In fact, the Alum had everything pink: dresses, window drapes, bandstand, candles, badges, pink icing on the cakes, and pink ribbons on the boxes of Huyler's candy. The Alum also had military encampments to furnish beaux for the girls as did White Sulphur, actually even more of them. Could a belle find a good match at the Alum? In answer, the Alum cried out, "The place offers as good an opening as can be found anywhere in the mountains of Virginia for such of our young ladies as desire clever husbands." As the century rolled to a close, the Alum acquired something of a left-handed reputation as to its belles' behavior. James Branch Cabell, a beau of the day, later a prominent novelist, recalled that slippered feet often tread cautiously through the long dim halls, appointed doors were often ajar, kerosene lamps burned at their dimmest, while the joys of love played their fanciful game.[3]

Just after the turn of the century, a family seeking the waters of Rockbridge Alum Springs would take the Chesapeake and Ohio Railroad to Goshen, about ten miles away. There they would be met by "comfortable conveyances" which would bring them over a rocky mountain road to the resort. This livery service was reputed to be very reliable, and the ladies were informed that they should not hesitate to drive to the Springs unaccompanied.

In 1909 the Rockbridge Alum property was sold by the joint stock company to a local corporation for the meager sum of $18,000. Principal members of the new corporation were the Patton and Letcher families of Rockbridge County. Around 1911 more improvements were made on the grounds, including a gas plant for lighting and a large concrete swimming pool. The VMI summer school held at the Alum from 1909 to 1919 was also a large drawing point for the young ladies of society.

The cuisine was said to be of the highest calibre. The Alum also had its own orchestra which remained throughout the season for the entertainment of the guests. Daily concerts were given during the dinner and supper hours and each evening in the ballroom, and, occasionally, concerts were given in an ornate Victorian bandstand near the Grand

Hotel which had been closed in 1902. For the guests' amusements there were tennis, croquet, billiards, roller skating, golf, and, of course, swimming. Special attention can be given the rates to families in 1911, when a room with private bath, hot and cold water, went for the sum of $15 to $20 a week! Children under ten years of age and servants were only charged half-price.

Cabell, noted Southern author of *Jurgen* and other romances, who for many years appeared at the Alum, and whose autograph can still be seen on one of the cottage doors, noted that he found his lovely wife at the spa in 1912. In his memoirs, *As I Remember It,* Cabell noted that the future Mrs. Cabell was sitting alone upon the porch of one of the cottages flanking the huge lawn when he first noticed her.[4] However, he spoke spicily of his former ventures at the spa.

> Well and during the preceding twelve summers I had been enamoured of a number of young women at the Rockbridge Alum (where virtually every patron, excepting only the age-stricken, indulged in, at least, one love affair every "season"), so that the place was, of necessity, memory-haunted. Under this or the other tree, or upon yonder venerable and secluded bench, or in some special part of the rambling lawns, or in any one of the four spring houses, by moonlight, usually, there had been amourous dealings which I remembered with clearness; and I recalled also in which of the Central Hotel's or of the Brook's or of the cottages' bedrooms, and during which particular summer, toward impassioned midnights, I had figured as an unlegalized guest.[5]

The last year in which the Alum was open to the public was 1919. Gracie Hegger Lewis, wife of the famous novelist, Sinclair Lewis, writes in her remembrances, *With Love From Gracie,* of a visit to Rockbridge Alum Springs in 1919. The Alum then, with its nineteenth century red-brick hotel and cottages was "set about a parade ground with circular beds of tired cannas and hazardous croquet ground, and the Blue Ridge Mountains rose on all sides."[6] Gracie Lewis noted that ten years before, in 1909, approximately 1,300 people had strolled about the Alum. Now, in 1919, there were scarcely eighty paying guests, including thirty boys from VMI. Gracie remembers that she and her husband were given one of the small brick cottages with a fireplace in every room, and "when I asked for some firewood against the chilly evening I could have sworn I saw a colored man removing pieces of the porch to make kindling for the fire."[7] She also recalls that there was a unusually fantastic air about mealtimes in the now decrepit dining room. She and her husband would sit at the table with Cabell and surrounded by VMI cadets and pretty Richmond debutantes, "whose mothers wore the smartest of sports

clothes and with bediamonded fingers drank from handless cups and never resented the lack of cream in their coffee because the manager preferred to give the whole milk to his calves and chickens."[8]

An evening in August, 1919 is foremost in Gracie's memory. She recalls that Cabell sat under the maple trees reading the first section of the first draft of her husband's novel *Main Street,* while Sinclair wrote the following poem, which to Cabell was "perhaps not one of the world's greater poems, but I value it more than I do most of them."

Just beneath the misty range,
Always smiling off to sleep,
Musing of the far-off strange
Era of dead psaltery,
Slumbering the Alum lies,
Bowered by the dappled skies.
Round it corn-fields billow deep,
And the fine-drawn, quivering
Nocturns of the crickets rise,
Calming my "efficiency."
Here, with winsome Nicolette,
Cabell mocks my northern fret.
Alum-filled, with folded wing.
Beautifully indolent
Even my Ego's rage is spent,
Lulled to something smiling sweet
Lo! the acrostic is complete![9]

After the early twenties, water was occasionally shipped but the Alum never reopened to the public. However, one last flicker of possible glory did occur. In April, 1928, Greenlee D. Letcher of Lexington, president of the decaying resort, wrote a friend, Bascom Slemp, of Big Stone Gap, southwestern Virginia, former secretary to President Coolidge, offering the Alum tract as a summer retreat for the President. Letcher also wrote similar letters to the Governor of Virginia asking his aid in the invitation. Although the resort had been closed to the public for almost ten years, Letcher felt that should the President like the location he could have absolute privacy and enjoy the mineral waters at the same time. Slemp turned over the letter from Letcher to Everett Saners, the new secretary to the President. Sanders replied for Coolidge with grateful thanks, but as of that time it was not clear where the President was going to spend his summer vacation. As it turned out, Coolidge did not go to Virginia, but chose instead to spend a few weeks on the Brule River in Wisconsin. Thus, the ray of hope for a revitalization of the Alum flickered out.

The spa decayed rapidly in its last years and the question remains, why? Actually, improved sanitation in the southern cities was eliminating

the dread of typhoid and other water-associated diseases. The prevalence of these dread ills in the summer months had sent many wealthy city folk to the mountain watering places. Improved transportation with the car, now mass produced by Ford and others, did not benefit the out of the way resorts, previously accessible only by railroad, and the Alum was probably the most out of the way of all. Now, once prominent resort clientele could jump into the family roadster and drive to better climes out West or perhaps to the North without the encumbrances of the trains or rugged, dusty mountain roads. And, possibly, the day for social gatherings at the mountain springs just ran its course. In the thirties the Alum went into considerable decay and was thoroughly looted. The post office there was discontinued in 1939.

A noted naturalist and his wife, Harold and Laura Bailey, of Coral Gables, Florida, purchased the 1,500 acre tract in 1942. Bailey dreamed of repairing the old resort and making it a wild life refuge and a haven for biological researchers. His outstanding collections of bird skins and eggs are housed today in an attractive two-story museum building which stands on the site of the old Central Hotel. With the help of a few workmen, Bailey repaired other buildings in the lawn area, restoring the tract to a semblance of what it was years before. Harold Bailey's collections were still being assembled at the Alum when he died in July, 1962, at the age of 83. The estate, now valued at about $400,000, went to endow the Bailey Research Trust for operation of the Rockbridge Alum Springs Biological Laboratory.

Since the naturalist's death, his wife, Laura, an experienced naturalist herself, has continued working with the large collections. Thus, the story of the Rockbridge Alum Springs continues. The orchestras have stopped playing, the halls are mostly silent, the hotels are no more, but the Alum Springs still bears a silent witness to a bygone era.

NOTES

1. Much of the information for this paper came from promotional brochures published by the various owners of the Rockbridge Alum Springs and from an unpublished short history of the springs by Greenlee D. Letcher which he prepared in the 1930's, in addition to the author's own research into extant records and papers in the possession of Mrs. Laura Bailey.

2. Reniers, Perceval, *The Springs of Virginia: Life, Love, and Death at the Waters, 1775-1900.* Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1941, p. 184.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 261-263.

4. Cabell, James Branch, *As I Remember It.* New York: The McBride Company, 1955, p. 3.

5. *Ibid.*, p. 6-7.

6. Lewis, Grace H., *With Love From Gracie.* New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1951, p. 128.

7. *Ibid.*

8. *Ibid.*, p. 128-129.

9. *Ibid.*, p. 129.

"Ellen Glasgow—the Writer as Reader" was the subject of a lecture by her nephew, Colonel Carrington C. Tutwiler at the fall meeting of the Society held at the Parish House of the Robert E. Lee Memorial Episcopal Church in Lexington on October 19, 1966.

Although Miss Glasgow, who is considered by many Virginia's most distinguished novelist, was not born in Rockbridge County, her family shares in its history. Miss Glasgow was born in Richmond, in April, 1874. She was the daughter of Francis T. Glasgow, who was born in the area that is now Buena Vista in a brick mansion called "Green Forest," which has now been demolished. Miss Glasgow made long summer visits with relatives in this area during her life, and is thought to have used in her novels characters adapted after real persons in this area.

Colonel Tutwiler, who is head of the English Department at the Virginia Military Institute, is a graduate of Princeton, where he took his M.A. and Ph.D. degrees. He is a nephew of Miss Glasgow, and owns her library and many of the beautiful furnishings which she used in her Richmond home.

ELLEN GLASGOW'S LIBRARY

By Carrington C. Tutwiler, Jr.

On Ellen Glasgow's death in 1945 her library of approximately 3000 volumes passed in substantially intact form to her sister, Mrs. Cabell Tutwiler. Missing were a few books unaccountably lost (e.g., her prized copy of *Mme. Bovary*) or removed in an over zealous attempt to protect the writer's reputation (e.g., Ellis' *Studies in the Psychology of Sex* and Celine's *Journey to the End of the Night*). But basically the library represented the accumulation of a lifetime, and illustrated quite literally the growth of the author's mind. Under any circumstances an extensive library is an important index to the interests of its owner, but Ellen Glasgow's library was accumulated in such a manner as to give it exceptional biographical importance in illuminating certain key periods in the author's life.[1]

The eclectic nature of the collection is shown by the following summary:

Fiction: English fully represented in all periods; all major and many minor authors in standard sets. European realists in sets, including Proust and Mann. American fiction well represented through 1940.

Drama: Ibsen and Shaw complete. Jacobean and miscellaneous twentieth-century authors represented.

Poetry: English and American heavily represented through 1940. Arnold, Clough, Wordsworth in sets; almost no significant omissions.

Philosophy: very heavy representation. Stoics; Jowett's six-volume Plato; neo-Platonists; Bacon; Kant, Hegel, Spinoza; Berkeley, Locke, Hume complete; Santayana complete in the Triton edition. Buddhism, Hinduism collections.

History: European and American covered in standard works: including Buckle, Lecky, Gibbon. Toynbee's *Study* complete. Special concentrations in French and Scottish history.

Anthropology, sociology, psychology: selective representation. Frazer's *Golden Bough* in eight-volume edition; Freud, Jung; Sumner; George; special items on the history of ethics and religion, including White's *Warfare of Science and Religion.*

Science: Darwin, Huxley.

Fine Arts: items representing special interests, including Vasari complete; studies of Leonardo, Botticelli, Whistler, Conder; English Cathedral architecture; ceramics.

Travel: extensive collection, especially Italy, Florence, England, London through 1940, including Lucas, Hare, Symonds.

Virginiana: very strong representation, including such items as Freeman (complete, autographed) and Meade's *Churches.*

Special interests: criminology. Small but good collection, especially true crime, including Roughead, and extensive collection of key mystery and detective novels, from Wilkie Collins to Freeman Croft, Joseph Shearing. Certain minor novelists, such as Rider Haggard and Maurice Hewlett fully represented.

Association and presentation copies: items from many contemporaries, including Mary Johnston, Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings, Carl van Vechten, James Branch Cabell.

Reference: very full collection of writers on writing; all available standard reference works, including the large Oxford English Dictionary.

Significant omissions: theology; science, other than Darwin; music.

Apart from the exceptional range of interests reflected in the collection, there are certain other circumstances that give it unusual importance to the biographer and literary critic. Of primary importance is the fact that it is largely intact. With the exception of a few years in New York, Ellen Glasgow's entire literary life was spent at One West Main Street,

Richmond, Virginia. There were no collections in other residences, and apart from inevitable losses, the Library exists as it was accumulated in the formal drawing room to the left of the front door, and in the study, bedrooms, and hall upstairs.

Far more significant is the fact that the books Ellen Glasgow collected constituted, almost literally, her education. Barred from intellectual contacts in her youth by the provincialism of the society in which she lived, and in later life by deafness, she found in books the critical and philosophic ideas that inform her novels. Intellectual companionship she found only in her sister Cary and Cary's husband Walter McCormack, who made available to her, through a subscription to the New York Mercantile Library, books on science and political economy unavailable in Richmond.

The contents of the Library, therefore, were self-chosen, and except for the temporary encouragement of Walter McCormack represent and reflect no interests other than her own. As she points out in *The Woman Within*, her formal education was minimal. "When or where or how I learned to read, I could never remember . . . so far as I am aware, nobody ever taught me to read."[2] And in *A Certain Measure* she wrote, "Since I have never approached literature by way of college courses in English . . . books have been, for me, one of the vital elements of experience, not a thing apart, not a collection of classified facts."[3] In a significant passage in *The Woman Within* she makes plain the feverish intensity with which she turned to books to find a world more real than that of the society in which she lived.

> I was seized, I was overwhelmed by a consuming desire to find out things for myself, to know the true from the false, the real from the make-believe. The longing was so intense that I flung myself on knowledge as a thirsty man might fling himself into a desert spring. I read everything in our library. History, poetry, fiction, archaic or merely picturesque, works on science, and even the Westminster Confession of Faith.[4]

Ellen Glasgow's relationship to her library was, then, far closer and more intimate than that of the author whose stimulation is the product of a cultural milieu. With the exception of the books borrowed from the Mercantile Library following her mother's death in 1893, her mental life was almost entirely the product of her Library. Unfortunately no record of her borrowings exists, but we can measure the extent by references to titles, and by her remark: "I am touched by the recollection of what the library and those weekly or fortnightly parcels of books meant in my life. I had no money to buy books; but I had all the time in the world to read them, and I begrudged the hours I spent asleep or talking to my

acquaintances who regarded books as not only unnecessary to well bred circles, but as an unwarranted extravagance."[5]

The collection as it exists, however, constitutes a clear-cut record of the author's mental development, and this record is doubly valuable in that it provides the only insight into those periods to 1905 of which written records in the form of letters have been destroyed, and of the periods in later life in which they provide a documentary support to the nebulous narrative of *The Woman Within* and *A Certain Measure.*

Fortunately, the problem of establishing the chronology of Ellen Glasgow's reading life is simplified by certain traits that are apparent from the beginning. She tended to become absorbed in certain subject matters at certain times, and when so absorbed would purchase almost everything available in that field. Often she would write the year of purchase with her autograph on the fly-leaf, and such dates may be used to pin-point her reading in certain years. Where no purchase date is given I have sometimes used the publication date as a *terminus a quo,* and when this device has failed the only remaining possibility has been to bracket an important book with others in its field. For example, there is evidence that some time after her mother's death in 1893 her interest shifted from Spencer and Darwin to Far Eastern philosophy. There is a heavily marked copy of the Upanishads dated 1895; her last purchase in that field seems to have been a volume on Buddha (one of many) in 1904, at which time, following the death of "Gerald B", her interest turned to neo-Platonism and the German idealists. I have therefore not hesitated to assign an undated set of *The Sacred Books of the East,* heavily marked, to the period between these dates, or approximately 1900.

Fortunately, it was always Miss Glasgow's custom to read with a pencil in her hand, and an indication of the importance which she attached to a book is usually shown by the degree of marking. It was her practice from about 1890 to draw a vertical line backed by two dots opposite important sentences or paragraphs, and in some instances underline key sentences. On the other hand written comments are unfortunately rare, though a significant exception is her copy of Epictetus, dated 1896, in which there are not only heavy markings on almost every page, but pencilled phrases accompanied by the actual date of the note. In this instance the words "Thou Shalt Renounce!" are written on the margin of page 44, followed by "August 23, 1900—By the Gulf of Saint Lawrence."

In addition to Epictetus, the two most heavily marked and annotated books in the collection are *The Bhagavad Gita* and *The Thoughts of the Emperor Marcus Aurelius.* The latter is heavily marked and annotated on almost every page. It was evidently carried on two trips to Europe, as dated annotations, with place references, cover the period 1899-1903. As late as 1934 she wrote,

> And now Marcus Aurelius! It has been twenty years or more since I looked at him; but he carried me over one of the worst times in my life. I have a little volume, heavily underscored, which I used as a girl, and bore with me over Europe, as Byron bore "the pageant of his bleeding heart." I had marked it in Egypt, in Greece, in Constantinople, in Italy and in the hands of God generally. As "an every present help in times of trouble," I have found stoicism a greater comfort than any religion that one cannot believe in.[6]

Though the front and back flyleaves of her older books, particularly works of philosophy, are frequently filled, these notes are usually quotations of key passages that she wished to remember. The significance of these facts may be suggested by reference to seven of the books bearing the author's autograph signature, markings, and date 1894, her twenty-first year: Darwin, *The Descent of Man* and *Origin of Species;* Marshall, *The Economics of Industry;* Lecky, *History of European Morals;* Huxley, *Man's Place in Nature;* Mill, *Principles of Political Economy.* Mill's *On Liberty* is dated 1892. The earliest autograph date found so far, 1890, appears in the author's copies of Coleridge and Sidney Lanier.

In the following paragraphs I will refer only to books that bear Ellen Glasgow's autograph signature and date, or that were demonstrably used by her.

The record of Miss Glasgow's childhood and adolescent reading may be found in *The Woman Within* and *A Certain Measure.* In the latter book she notes that at the age of sixteen

> I was an eager student of John Stuart Mill . . . After Mill I discovered other and more less radical social philosophers, Adam Smith, Malthus, and Sir Henry Maine, and with enthusiasm for his brilliant style, Walter Bagehot. Finally, by accident, I stumbled upon *Progress and Poverty* in a second hand book shop, and was deeply stirred by the analysis of poverty in the opening pages. But the book that influenced my mind most profoundly in youth was *The Origin of Species;* and it was in response to this benign and powerful inspiration that I conceived my first novels.[7]

If the statement in the preceding paragraph is correct, it would seem that she read *The Origin of Species* before acquiring the copy dated 1894. The exact nature of Darwin's influence is not within the province of this paper, but there is no question that Darwin was an outstanding influence on the author's life. At first glance the lack of markings in *The Descent of Man* might seem significant, but a pencilled cross reference in another book to an obscure paragraph on the comparative development of human and animal brains proves the closeness of the reading.

The influence of Darwin continued, in a less obvious form, throughout her later life. It is reflected in her interest in environment as the shaping influence upon human life, and in her recognition of the cruelty with which life, operating through the principle of natural selection, discriminates against those lacking "survival value." Even towards the end of her life the influence of Darwinism is apparent in her philosophy, a philosophy which finds its expression in the stoicism first indicated by the exceptionally heavy markings of her copies of Epictetus and Marcus Aurelius. As late as 1939 she wrote in *I Believe,*

> I believe in evolution, though I do not believe that evolution must, of necessity, mean progress. All change is not growth; all movement is not forward. Yet I believe that life on this planet has groped its way up from primeval darkness; and I believe likewise that, in this bloodstained pilgrimage from a lower to a higher form, humanity has collected a few sublime virtues, or ideas of sublime virtue, which are called truth, justice, courage, loyalty, and compassion. I believe in a moral order; and I believe that this order was not imposed by a supernatural decree, but throughout the ages has been slowly evolving from the mind of man.[8]

From Darwin her immediate attention shifted to philosophy, and we discover references to both Schopenhauer and Haeckel in *The Descendant.* So far she had read almost no literary criticism, but at eighteen "I knew a little of Aristotle; and from him I had imperfectly derived a few working principles of self-criticism."[9] The nature of the reference suggests that she had read the "Poetics," but no volume of Aristotle has survived in the Library.

Saturated though she was with English fiction, Miss Glasgow had not yet explored the world of the nineteenth-century giants who were dominating the European scene. But the publication of *The Descendant* in 1897 brought her into sharp contact with the ferment of ideas which at this time was emerging from Germany, France, and Russia. She had read Dumas as a child, but now she suddenly discovered the French realists. By eighteen she had purchased a complete set of Balzac's works, and she was quickly led to Flaubert and de Maupassant through Henry James. She admired James "with fervor," and almost all his novels are present. Unfortunately her *Mme. Bovary,* which she "tried to take to pieces and to put together again," has not yet been located, but the fact that she read French is proved by a marked copy of de Maupassant's *Une Vie.* Presently the influence of the French realists paled before the discovery of Tolstoi and Chekov, especially Tolstoi, whom she considered the author of the twc greatest novels. "At the moment, in the long and now slowly fading dawn of realism as a literary idea, I felt myself to be a realist at last."[10]

Though she accepted the principle of exact documentation, as shown in her meticulous research for *The Battleground,* she discovered that true realism should result from the penetration of the author into his subject rather than verbal photography. Later she wrote, "The true realists, I felt, must illuminate experience, not merely transcribe it; and so, for my own purpose, I defined the art of fiction as experience illuminated."[11]

If the faithful depiction of the scene was suggested by Flaubert and de Maupassant, the scheme of the social history of Virginia apparently derived from Balzac's *Comedie Humaine.* Ellen Glasgow, in *A Certain Measure,* included Balzac among those authors whom she had read before 1900, and Frederick McDowell refers to an uncollected essay in 1928 in which she called Balzac "the most opulently endowed of all novelists."[12] But her set of Balzac is, unfortunately, unmarked. The influence of the realists, and her concern with factual accuracy, persisted at least until 1922, when the influence of Proust became apparent.

A summary, then, of the first twenty years of Miss Glasgow's life shows us an exceptionally precocious girl, self-educated, who achieved this education by the unusual method of squeezing the life blood from the world of books. If the record were not present to support it, a summary of her reading by the age of twenty would seem incredible. She had read every important English and American novel; she was thoroughly familiar with nineteenth-century French literature; she was thoroughly familiar with the English philosophers from Bacon to Herbert Spencer; she had read widely in English and French political economy; she had absorbed much of the writing of the great naturalists, especially Darwin and Huxley. She had entered the world of European philosophy through Schopenhauer and Haeckel, and perhaps had already dipped into Nietzsche.

From this point it becomes increasingly difficult to present any adequate indication of the scope of Miss Glasgow's reading, but we may touch briefly on those fields in which her major interests lay. For the period following 1905 the Library becomes a main source of information concerning her intellectual life, and an important adjunct to the surviving, and disappointing, letters.

If Ellen Glasgow's vocation was writing, her avocation was reading that proceeded through certain clearly marked stages. Prior to *The Descendant* her interest was largely in political science, economics, and evolution. Her loss of interest in materialism and her turn to mysticism and idealism is perhaps explained by the death of "Gerald B" in 1905, and the deaths of her brother Frank and sister Cary in 1909 and 1911. The following heavily underscored passage from Josiah Royce's *The World and The Individual* suggests her state of mind about 1907:

> The technical philosophical mystics are the men who, in general, begin by being realists. They learned to doubt. They doubted through and through . . . What they discover is that realism is infected, so to speak, by profound contradictions . . . As the mystic continues . . . experience shows that explicit ideas, of human, perhaps of any type, are always profoundly false, just insofar as they are always partial, fleeting, contradictory, dialectical, disunited . . . Secondly, the mystics admit that true Being is something deeper than what usually is seen or felt or thought by men. They add that this is just because ordinary thinking, like Realism, like money getting, like pleasure seeking, like mortal love making, always looks beyond the truly complete immediate, looks to false ideas, to fleeting states that die as they pass, and so indeed looks to what the mystic regards as the contradictory and consequently superficial aspect of experience. "Look deeper," he says, "but not deeper in illusory ideas. Look deeper into the interior of experience itself. There, if you only look deeper than all ordinary and partial immediacy, deeper than colors and sounds, and deeper than mortal lover, then when once rightly prepared, you shall find a fact, an immediate and ineffable fact, such that it wholly satisfies every longing, answers every inquiry, and fulfills the aim of every thought.[13]

The search for this fact led Miss Glasgow first to the neo-Platonists; her Plotinus in Taylor's translation is heavily marked, and as late as 1943 she wrote to Signe Toksvig: "I have, or had, Mackenna's translation of Plotinus. That had a beauty of its own, but my worn out copy, heavily marked, after a bad habit of mine, is one of old Thomas Taylor's translations. His were the earliest translations, were they not?"[14] The two translations of Plotinus are both in the Library, that by Mackenna unmarked. A volume of Proculus, translated by Taylor, is heavily marked. Possibly her first copy of Mackenna's Plotinus is lost. Her volumes on the Upanishads, her set of the Sacred Books of the East, her volumes on Buddhism, and especially the *Bhagavad-Gita* are very heavily marked, and she referred to the latter frequently in her letters almost to the year of her death. The path from the Far East led directly to German idealism through Spinoza, whom she read in 1903, Nietzsche, 1903-7; Royce 1906 to a temporary resting place in Kant, whom she reached about 1907. Her copy of the *Critique of Pure Reason* has several pages of pencilled notes clipped to the fly-leaf. Kant exercised a continuing influence; there is no volume in the Library more heavily marked, with the exceptions of Epictetus and Marcus Aurelius. Though her interest turned from German philosophy about 1910, a copy of Will Durant's *Story of Philosophy,* though unmarked elsewhere, contains a chapter on Kant underscored and

marked with the keenness of her earlier period. With Kant she read Fichte, and tried to read Hegel, though unsuccessfully. During this period, and apparently leading to her interest in neo-Platonism, she read Plato; in her six-volume edition of the Jowett translation every volume is marked —the markings suggesting that she was least interested in The Republic as a political construction, most interested in the doctrine of ideas. The Symposium, Phaedo, Phaedrus, and Crito are all heavily marked.

Some time before 1916 Miss Glasgow had turned from neo-Platonism and Spinoza to Locke, Hume, and Berkeley. The precise date is uncertain, as her copies, though signed, are undated. Their importance is suggested by her comment, ". . . when I discovered Locke and Berkeley and Hume, I felt that I had merely lost my way among other philosophers."[15]

The last new philosophic interest in Miss Glasgow's life was Santayana. Though the volume through which she first came to him cannot be identified, his impeccable style and urbane scepticism were precisely the qualities towards which she was reaching in the post-war period. The Triton edition of Santayana, presented to Miss Glasgow by the publisher in 1937, is perhaps the most handsome set in the Library.

Miss Glasgow's reading in fiction was comprehensive; almost every novelist in English and every significant European writer is at least represented in the Library, many in sets. At twenty she knew thoroughly the major English novelists; she then engaged a tutor in French and in a short time was reading de Maupassant, Flaubert, and Balzac, at least the first in French, as proved by her marked copy of *Une Vie*. A quick glance at European fiction adds Tolstoi's *Resurrection,* autograph date 1900; *War and Peace,* signed Ellen Anderson Gholson Glasgow 1895; D'Annunzio, *The Intruder,* 1898; *Faust,* in the Bayard Taylor translation, bears the autograph signature and date 1894. A partial list of European authors represented would include in addition Kuprin, Dostoievsky, Artzybasheff, Chekov, Merejkowski, Andreyev, Unamuno, Barbusse, France, Karshin, Undset, Gogol, Schnitzler, Sudermann, Feuchtwanger, Rolland, Dumas, Hugo, Proust, Flaubert, Stendhal, Mann, Zweig. Proust she came to late, but her copy of *Swann's Way* is marked, and its influence felt in *A Sheltered Life*. "When I discovered Proust for myself, I remember thinking, 'Here is a way out of the woods.' "[16] Her interest in the modern movement in European fiction continued until late in life; in the last year of her life she heavily marked a copy of Mary Colum's *From These Roots.*

Her reading in fiction was so voluminous that a comprehensive list would itself constitute a minor catalog. The fact that she considered *War and Peace* the greatest novel, and *Tom Jones* the greatest English novel, is supported by her copies. Her ardent admiration of Richardson

is shown by the complete, well read set; after Richardson come the heavily used volumes of Hardy and Virginia Woolf.

The same paragraph, in *A Certain Measure,* in which we find references to Woolf refers also to Joyce and Proust, though there is no copy of *Dubliners, The Portrait of the Artist,* or *Ulysses* in the Library. But as the central reverie, in *The Sheltered Life,* suggests Proust's experiments in the evocation of time past, so does the multiple viewpoint of an early chapter in *Vein of Iron* recall certain devices of Virginia Woolf.

Miss Glasgow's taste in poetry was perhaps more conventional and conservative than her taste in fiction. Although Eliot, for example, is well represented in the Library, she was apparently uninterested in what James Southall Wilson called "the cult of unintelligibility." As a child she loved Poe and Lanier; one of the earliest volumes in the Library is a copy of Sidney Lanier's poems with the autograph date 1890. Nineteenth- and twentieth-century English and American poetry is very fully represented, frequently in full sets. Byron, Keats, Shelley, Coleridge, Browning, and Arnold she knew thoroughly; Wordsworth she owned in the eight volume set edited by William Knight, as well as in separate volumes, her interest in Wordsworth leading to Dorothy's *Journals.* Her copy of what she refers to as "Wordsworth's great preface" is heavily marked in those paragraphs containing the description of the creative process. She, like Wordsworth, found that recollections of early childhood formed a stable basis for later creative work.

Her interest in drama was, to a degree, predictable. Sets of Shaw and Ibsen are as heavily worn with us as any volumes in the Library. Greek drama she knew fairly well; copies of Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides are all marked, and there are volumes of critical material on them. She knew and used the minor Jacobean dramatists, especially Beaumont and Fletcher. On the other hand, she apparently never came under the spell of Shakespeare; her handsome set of Shakespeare shows no sign of use, and there are no significant references in Miss Glasgow's writings. Ibsen, of course, was a primary influence; a quotation from "Ghosts" is used to preface a section of *The Descendant;* and she had read Strindberg when the name of that dramatist was almost unknown in this country. Gorki and Chekov she knew well, and a program clipped to a flyleaf shows that she attended a performance of the Moscow Art Theatre in 1923. Shaw is fully represented, but there is no evidence of special interest in him. Owing to her deafness she had no direct experience of the theatre after her adolescent period, and it is perhaps for this reason that she showed little interest in the later developments in British and American drama. There is a mute significance in the fact that the only major art form not represented in her Library is music.

A glance at the history section in Miss Glasgow's library would suggest that she had not only gone to college, but had majored in the subject. The general field of history is well covered from Thucydides and Plutarch—she owned Finley's commentary on Thucydides—to the complete set of Toynbee, and she had read Toynbee *in toto* before his popularization in the shorter edition. Greene's *History of the English People* is worn from much use, as are Buckle and Lecky, and one is not surprised to find the word "superficial" written on the flyleaf of Will Durant's *The Life of Greece.* Particular interests are shown by concentrations of titles on Scottish history, seventeenth-century France, and the French Revolution. Her collection of Virginiana was, of course, of great importance to her, and consists of perhaps two hundred titles, including presentation copies.

Anthropology and sociology are represented to a lesser extent, principally in the late nineteenth-century pioneers. The complete *Golden Bough* stood near Toynbee, and it is evident that her early interest in Henry George led her to Sumner, Veblen, and Parrington. Of interest are the Godey's Ladies Books, obviously used to supply evidence on period styles. Her interest in psychology which had started with Locke continued to Jung and Freud; her Library was perhaps one of the few in Richmond to contain *The Parapsychology of Everyday Life.* It also contained Ellis's *Studies in the Psychology of Sex,* but that has disappeared.

Her interest in and knowledge of art and architecture is witnessed at every period of her life. One of her earliest purchases was Vasari's *Lives of the Painters;* one of her latest was *The Notebooks of Leonardo da Vinci.* In this area, as in others, the presence of specialized studies of engravings, mezzotints, prints, furniture, and costume suggest a penetration beyond that of the average amateur. A miniature collection of books on the English Abbeys and Cathedrals perhaps reflects interests aroused during European trips.

Miss Glasgow's reference collection, especially in the fields pertaining to the craft of fiction, would be adequate for the average small public library. We find every dictionary, from the *Concise Oxford* to the complete *New English Dictionary.* Her favorite reference work was Fowler's *Modern English Usage,* of which she owned several copies. An interesting item is Saintsbury's *History of English Prose Rhythm.* Her reference collection on the technique of writing was comprehensive. In her own words,

> I have read, I believe, with as much interest as if it were a novel itself, every treatise on the art of fiction that appeared to me promising . . . That variable branch of letters shares with philosophy the favorite shelf in my library. I know all that such sources of learning

> as Sir Leslie Stephen, Sir Walter Raleigh, Mr. Percy Lubbock, Sir Arthur Quiller Couch, Mr. E. M. Forster, and other less eminent, but often more earnest, were able to teach me, or I was able to acquire.[17]

Elsewhere she refers to Lubbock's *The Craft of Fiction* as "the best work in its limited field," and her copy is heavily marked.

Lack of space prohibits more than a passing reference to other represented areas. The major critics are of course present, especially those who referred to the author's novels. Miss Glasgow's collection of true and fictional crime reveals her as a connoisseur—two hundred or more volumes range from Wilkie Collins to Joseph Shearing and Simenon.

A final reference may be made to a locked bookcase in which were kept presentation and association copies. Included are autographed volumes, usually with inscriptions, or letters, from many contemporaries. There are some significant exceptions, but a partial list in alphabetical order includes J. D. Adams, Stephen Vincent Benet, Arnold Bennett, Van Wyck Brooks, James Cabell, Douglas Freeman, John Galsworthy, Hamlin Garland, Radclyffe Hall, Richard Hughes, Mary Johnston, Margaret Mitchell, David Morton, Harold Nicolson, Marjorie Rawlings, Agnes Repplier, Frank Swinnerton, Gertrude Stein, H. J. Taylor, V. Sackville West, Hugh Walpole, and, unexpectedly, Wendell Willkie.

In the foregoing paper an attempt has been made to suggest the nature and extent of Miss Glasgow's library, rather than to assess the influence that certain books exerted. It has been pointed out that Miss Glasgow was one of the foremost book collectors in Virginia, and this in a sense is true. She was never, however, concerned with collecting for its own sake; she had no interest in first editions, fine bindings, or the products of private presses. Though her library contained these, they were incidental. Miss Glasgow's library was for use, not display. It is this fact that gives it its exceptional value.

NOTES

1. An annotated catalogue is planned for publication in 1967.
2. Ellen Glasgow, *The Woman Within* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1954), p. 24.
3. Ellen Glasgow, *A Certain Measure* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1943), p. 15.
4. *The Woman Within,* p. 72.
5. *Ibid.,* p. 90.
6. Letter to Bessie Zaban Jones, February 7th, 1934, *Letters of Ellen Glasgow,* ed. Blair H. Rouse (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1958).
7. *A Certain Measure,* p. 57.
8. "Ellen Glasgow," *I Believe: The Personal Philosophies of Certain Eminent Men and Women of Our Time,* ed. Clifton Fadiman (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1939), p. 107.

9. *A Certain Measure,* p. 7.
10. *Ibid.,* p. 15.
11. *Ibid.,* p. 14.
12. F. P. W. McDowell, *Ellen Glasgow and the Ironic Art of Fiction* (Wisconsin, 1960), p. 242.
13. Josiah Royce, *The World and The Individual* (New York, 1904), p. 81.
14. *Letters,* p. 322.
15. *The Woman Within,* p. 173.
16. *A Certain Measure,* p. 116.
17. *Ibid.,* p. 191.

COMMEMORATION OF SOUTHERN SEMINARY'S CENTENNIAL

One of the most brilliant meetings ever held by the Rockbridge Historical Society was on April 24, 1967, when the members were invited to participate in commemoration of the centennial year of Southern Seminary Junior College, at Buena Vista.

Six hundred guests were invited to the quarterly meeting of the Society which was held in the college's Chandler Hall, and to the reception which followed.

Mr. Frank J. Gilliam, president of the Society, opened the meeting, the Right Reverend Lloyd R. Craighill gave the invocation, and Mrs. H. Russell Robey, president of Southern Seminary, welcomed members and guests.

Miss Martha Laverty, soprano, Mrs. Tyson Wilson, piano, and Mr. David Mongan, clarinet entertained with a selection from Schubert, the business session of the Society followed, and then Mrs. Robey introduced the speaker, Dr. Sidney E. Sandridge in a witty and reminiscent talk that gave many delightful pictures of the beginning of the school, and of those who founded it.

The college glee club sang five numbers, after which the group adjourned to the ball room where an orchestra played during the reception.

WELCOME BY MRS. H. RUSSELL ROBEY

Dean Gilliam, Members of the Historical Society, Guests:

We at Southern Seminary are honored that the Rockbridge Historical Society has chosen to devote one of its quarterly meetings to the history

of our institution. We have looked forward to this occasion as one of the most interesting and meaningful in the celebration of our Centennial year.

We are delighted that so many of our friends from Buena Vista, Lexington, and Rockbridge County are present tonight. On behalf of the Trustees, administration, faculty and students of Southern Seminary, I bid you welcome. We hope that all of you will remain for the social hour in the Ball Room which will follow this program.

Southern Seminary for the last seventy of its hundred years has been a part of Rockbridge County, a little known part at first. Because of its lack of roads, Buena Vista was more isolated from Lexington and the County and the State than from New York and other distant points which could be reached by our overnight train. Though small, Southern Seminary attracted students from many states and some foreign countries. When my parents and I came to Buena Vista forty-seven years ago, Lexington was a half-a-day away and only when we had a whole day to spare could we visit it. So it was quite slowly that we came to know Lexington and be known by its people. Today this meeting is a testimony to the changes that the years have brought. Southern Seminary and Lexington now have much in common. You share our pride in the growth and development of Southern Seminary and we consider Lexington one of our greatest assets, and not solely because it is a happy hunting ground for our girls!

Tonight it is my privilege to introduce to you Dr. Sidney E. Sandridge, our Academic Dean, who will tell you about Southern Seminary's history. As a Ph.D. in Sociology from Northwestern University, he is well qualified for this assignment. His enthusiasm for Southern Seminary has made this a happy assignment for him. It is with pride and pleasure that I present to you Dr. Sandridge.

HISTORY OF SOUTHERN SEMINARY

By Dr. Sidney Sandridge

The history of Southern Seminary has been greatly influenced by two significant marriages, each bringing together two prominent southern families to provide leadership for the institution. The first brought together the Scott-Chandler family with the Rowe family and gave the school its first president. The second united the Durham and Robey names and provided a treasurer and business manager.

In the year 1867 the Civil War had depleted the South of its wealth and its finest young manhood. In the desperate years of reconstruction was born the realization that southern womanhood had for too long been reserved for ornamental and creative purposes only. Throughout the

South, schools for girls were established to provide educational opportunities for the fairer sex.

In 1867, Alice Scott Chandler, the wife of a young lawyer and Civil War Veteran, William T. Chandler, opened her home "Sherwood" in Bowling Green, Virginia, to the young ladies of the community. Her school, which she called the "Home School for Girls," began with about 10 pupils taught by Mrs. Chandler and her two sisters.

Because Mrs. Chandler was a well educated woman, having attended the Buckingham Female Institute; and because there were no free public schools, the Home School for Girls grew rapidly and soon had to move into larger quarters. In 1870 it moved to the "Lawn Hotel" and in 1872 into a still larger dwelling on Milford Street, where its name was changed to Bowling Green Female Seminary. Ten years after its beginning, the school had 40 students (elementary and high school, both boys and girls from local families primarily) and seven teachers. The property consisted of a four room school building and a dwelling house. In 1889 the school house burned. It was replaced by a schoolhouse with eight classrooms. Tuition, board, lodging, and laundry was $125 per semester.

In 1881, Mr. Edgar H. Rowe married Emma Scott, the sister of Alice Scott Chandler. Mr. Rowe was an alumnus of the Bowling Green School and a Methodist minister. He had continued his studies at Randolph Macon College, University of Virginia, and Princeton University. In 1883, Mr. Rowe bought the school from Mrs. Chandler and operated it with her as principal. Gradually, Mrs. Chandler retired into the background until 1897 when she bought the Washington Female Seminary in Atlanta, Georgia, and moved there.

In 1899, Dr. and Mrs. Rowe offered the Seminary to the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. The property had become run down and was encumbered by $5,000 in mortgages. Blackstone College, a four-year institution, had opened in the vicinity and was offering competition. There was some question as to whether the church would accept the offer, but finally the grant was consummated. For the next 22 years the school was theoretically under the direction of a board of trustees appointed by the Methodist Conference. However, the church gave no support and little guidance to the work of the institution. In 1921, after one of the trustees had made an unfavorable report concerning the Seminary, Dr. Rowe did away with the board of trustees and since then the school has had no official connection with the church. "The Lord giveth, and the Lord taketh away!"

Southern Seminary became the incorporated name of the school in 1900 and in 1901 it was moved to Buena Vista. An old hotel at Fry's Spring in Charlottesville was considered as a possible site, but the Buena

Vista Hotel, designed by Stanford White, was selected as the better location.

With this move, Dr. Rowe formed the Southern Seminary System of schools. It consisted of schools at Buena Vista, Bowling Green, and Alderson, West Virginia. At the Buena Vista school, Mr. J. S. Engle, who was a partner in the school from 1910 until his death in 1915, directed the curricula while Dr. Rowe directed the life of the students. Six years after Southern Seminary moved to Buena Vista the Bowling Green Female Seminary failed and was closed.

The Buena Vista Hotel had been built as part of the Buena Vista Boom about 1890. Four years later the bottom dropped out of the boom and the hotel property was sold to Dr. Rowe for $10,000. At Buena Vista, Southern Seminary flourished. By 1910 there were more than one hundred students, one-half of them from outside Virginia.

While the school continued to grow under Dr. Rowe's administration, the property (as had been true of the Bowling Green property) depreciated steadily. The building was in bad state of repair, the grounds were barren of trees and shrubs, and cows roamed at large over the campus. A watering trough near the back door of the building assured a constant procession of live stock around the building.

Such was the scene when Dr. Robert Lee Durham, his wife, and daughter arrived in Buena Vista. Dr. Durham, who was already highly respected as an educator, bought half interest in Southern Seminary in 1919, and with his family became the resident head of the school. By this time, Dr. Rowe was already spending most of his time on his farm "Holly Hill" in Caroline County and was eager to turn the running of the school over to someone else. Dr. Durham became Southern Seminary's second president in 1919.

Dr. Rowe had done an excellent job of establishing Southern Seminary as an educational institution of distinctive service. He allowed no social interaction between the sexes and forbade dancing or card playing of any kind.

Mr. H. Russell Robey married Margaret Durham and purchased Dr. Rowe's half interest in the school.

With this marriage a new day dawned for Southern Seminary. Dr. Durham had been Dean at Martha Washington College for fourteen years. He understood the workings of a girls' school and was recognized in educational circles. As the president, Dr. Durham provided the academic foundation for Southern Seminary's program, his wife, Mary Craton Durham, gave it its spiritual dimension; and his daughter, Margaret Durham, provided the athletic and social stimulation so necessary for a school for young women. By the hand for providence and the wiles of

young love, Mr. H. Russell Robey came into the picture with his genius and business affairs which complemented this family team to make it an unbeatable combination.

Dr. Durham, the second president of Southern Seminary, was a man of many interests and abilities. He was an educator, a lawyer, an engineer, an author, an inventor, and a song writer. He was a man of strong religious convictions and was a leader in the Methodist Church. It was his wording that was finally adopted as the Plan of Union when the Methodist Episcopal Church, the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and the Methodist Protestant Church united to form The Methodist Church in 1939.

An honor graduate of Trinity College, Dr. Durham with his two brothers, played on the first football team Trinity (later to become Duke University) ever fielded. Evidence of his varied genius are still to be seen around the campus in everything from his *Call of the South* on the library shelves, to his design of the gate posts and the motto over the mantel, to the formulation of the philosophy of education which the college follows.

Mrs. Mary Craton Durham was a spiritual giant in the community as on the campus. She sponsored the Young Woman's Christian Association, taught a Sunday School Class all of her life, and felt a personal responsibility for the Spiritual welfare of the Southern Seminary students as she did for the physical welfare of the less fortunate in the community. Her spirit is still apparent in the work and rituals of the "Y" and the Sunday School Class, which is named in her memory, at St. John's Methodist Church.

Margaret Durham Robey, who was later to succeed her father as President of Southern Seminary, inherited his genius for administration and his curiosity about and ability in a great variety of fields of interest. She was a teacher, a musician, and an enthusiast of many sports when she came to Southern Seminary. In the years since then she contributed significantly to the life of the school and the community as an administrator, a civic leader, a lecturer, a hostess, and has represented her government at home and abroad on several occasions. The spiritual quality which characterized her mother was not lacking in Margaret Durham Robey. Her understanding of and appreciation for persons has endeared her to students, faculty members, and friends of Southern Seminary through the years.

When the Durhams and the Robeys assumed the control of Southern Seminary, both their desire for solvency and their sensitivity to beauty were challenged. The property was heavily mortgaged and the furnishings consisted of only the barest necessities. The hill was totally unimproved

and paved walkways and drives were non existent. The front lobby of the single building was without furniture except for a flower stand strategically placed in the center of the room to hide a hole in the worn carpet. The administration began immediately to re-invest some of the school's earnings in much needed repairs and improvements. It was at this point that Mr. Robey's ability and experience became valuable. Under his careful budgeting and the eye for beauty of Mrs. Durham and Mrs. Robey, landscaping, planting, and paving were begun which were to make of the campus a thing of beauty far surpassing the dreams of the builders of the old Buena Vista Hotel. Even Chestnut Street and the sidewalk from the town up Seminary Hill had to be paved by the school.

Dr. Durham invented a self-closing gate to facilitate the removal of cattle from the campus. However, he had to go to court in order to get permission to close the gates against the cows that roamed at will. For a while, following this act, the new administration was very unpopular with the town people. The austerity of the physical facilities was symbolic of the social atmosphere at Southern Seminary. A first task of the Durham-Robey administration was to provide a regimen of social activities that took into consideration the development of the whole person. Life at Southern Seminary began to take on a different aspect.

Not all the people who were important to the Seminary were on its staff. One man who rendered numerous services in transportation, hauling, and providing riding horses for the girls was Mr. W. T. Robey. Mr. Robey was a pioneer businessman in the city of Buena Vista and his influence in the community made its impact upon the Seminary as well. Many of the early graduates still allude to the important role played by Mr. W. T. Robey.

After the initial loans were made to buy the school it was the policy of the owners never to spend money until they had it in hand. When Mr. Robey became business manager, one of his first acts was to sell the family car and the truck as luxuries which they could not afford. This pay-as-you-go policy, which resulted in a great many sacrifices in the early years, has continued to this day. However, through such thriftiness and by the ingenuity and actual labors of the members of the administration working together, the mortgage was paid and additions and improvements were made to the property.

The first addition to the campus was a temporary gymnasium which now serves as the stables. This temporary gym, built in 1923, was followed by an indoor swimming pool in 1925. Eight years later another story was added over the swimming pool to be used as a gymnasium. About the same time the dining room was enlarged to its present seating capacity. The enrollment at that time was approximately one hundred, at which

figure it stayed for many years. In rapid succession the lower level of the Main Building was remodeled, the dormers were added to the fourth floor, and the sprinkler system was installed. Writing in 1937, Mr. F. W. Kling, Jr., said of Southern Seminary: "The school has housed for the last few years all the girls it could possibly accommodate by building new rooms, boarding some of the teachers in private houses, and crowding as much as was comfortable. There is no room left for expansion. It is not likely that the enrollment will ever exceed 150."

Since that time, however, 17 buildings have been added to the campus (classroom buildings, auditorium and library, home economics practice house, infirmary, art building, President's Home, kindergarten, a dormitory, two student residences, a riding arena, two faculty apartment buildings, and four faculty homes), and the enrollment has increased to 325, 302 of which are boarding students. Several of these buildings deserve special mention here. In 1939 Durham Hall, academic classroom building, was built. This building made possible the removal of classrooms, laboratories, and faculty offices from the main building. The next year Chandler Hall, auditorium and library was erected with a colonnade attaching it to the Main Building. At present Durham Hall is being enlarged and plans are nearly complete for the enlargement of Chandler Hall.

Southern Seminary's educational history has been one of early achievement and consistent growth. The High School department was accredited by the Virginia State Department of Education in 1918 and the Junior College in 1934. Accreditation by the Southern Association of Schools and Colleges came as soon as the institution changed from a proprietary school to one owned and operated by a non-profit board of trustees. Many years before its accreditation, Southern Seminary had established a reputation which enabled its students to transfer to colleges and universities all over the United States.

From its beginning, Southern Seminary was a preparatory school, but always offered courses beyond the high school level. In 1926 its Junior College department was recognized and the Junior College Diploma was offered. At that time the name of the school was changed to Southern Seminary and Junior College. High School courses were continued until 1961.

Hundreds of names could be mentioned as names of persons who have made significant contributions to the development of Southern Seminary. It is dangerous to call attention to any lest others be offended by their omission. However, in discussing the academic development of the school, it is appropriate to give credit to Miss Mary Louise Israel. Miss Israel came to Southern Seminary as a teacher of English. When the position of academic dean became vacant in 1940, she assumed the

deanship and served in that capacity until 1965. It was during these 25 years that the Junior College curriculum was established at Southern Seminary and its accreditation by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools was accomplished. Miss Israel's leadership in the administration of the academic affairs of the college and in the sponsorship of the student government has contributed significantly to the development of the school. Since 1965 she has served as a teacher of English and the head of that department.

Southern Seminary was begun as a "Home School for Girls" and the concept of a large Southern family has always characterized its atmosphere. When the Durhams arrived on campus, the one thing that impressed them favorably was the fireplace in the front lobby. They were immediately informed that the fireplace was a sham and was unsafe for use. With his customary determination and forthrightness, Dr. Durham lay down upon his back and peered up through the fireplace and chimney. When he saw the sky he said, "Light the fire, we'll take a chance." Since that day there have been few times in appropriate seasons when the warmth of the fireplace has not welcomed students, faculty and guests. The enlargement of the fireplace and the carving of the inscription on the mantel were Dr. Durham's personal projects. The inscription says: "God rest ye all that linger here"; but, as a writer in *The Southern Collegian* once quipped, "You'd better get the hell out at 11:00 just the same".

The physical setting and the traditional graciousness of the administration and staff have through the years combined to provide a type of southern hospitality at Southern Seminary that never fails to enlist comment from guests and create fond memories among students and alumnae. The formal events and social occasions surrounding the traditional celebration of Christmas, the May Day festivities, the Athenian-Cornelian athletic events, and the three day graduation program have all become a part of the Southern Seminary way of life. Many alumnae write telling of their efforts to give the Southern Seminary flavor to social events in their homes or in other situations. In speaking of alumnae affairs, the name of Miss Regina Chastain must be mentioned. Miss Chastain has taught music and Spanish at Southern Seminary and the hundreds of girls all over the world who have attended Sem. To a great many alumnae, Miss Chastain personifies the combination of academic excellence, personal concern, and social graciousness that IS Southern Seminary. It is an appreciation among Southern Seminary's students for such personal traits that gives meaning to the phrase: "there is something about a Seminary Girl!"

The organizations which are a part of Southern Seminary's program are also a part of her history. Two organizations, which include all stu-

dents in their memberships, were established in 1906; the Young Women's Christian Association and the Athenian-Cornelian Societies. The "Y" has always been the interdenominational expression of organized religion on campus. The Athenians and Cornelians, organized as literary societies, have in recent years been primarily concerned with athletic competitions. The Student Government Association leads the student body in self government with the Judicial Council administering the honor code. During the academic year 1965-66 a chapter of Phi Theta Kappa, National Junior College honorary society, was chartered at Southern Seminary.

During the first one hundred years of Southern Seminary's history, two families have been at its helm. The school has had only three presidents during the century of its operation. The period of greatest growth and development has been during the presidency of Mrs. H. Russell (Margaret Durham) Robey, the current president. Mrs. Robey succeeded her father in 1942. With her husband as Treasurer and Business Manager, Mrs. Robey has seen the school doubled in size, and the faculty has been increased proportionately during her administration. She has brought to pass several significant changes in the operation of the school. During those years, the Seminary ceased offering high school work, greatly improved its physical facilities, and gained regional accreditation.

During much of its history Southern Seminary has filled its complement of students by persistent advertising and careful canvassing for prospective students. In the twenties and thirties, Mrs. Robey spent a good part of the summer each year in New York and other northern cities interviewing girls. It was because of her effectiveness as a recruiter that Southern Seminary was always filled when the school session opened. When this program became too demanding to be combined with her presidential duties, Mrs. Robey turned this recruitment responsibility over to Miss Charlotte Hageman who was later succeeded by Miss Catherine Townsend as Southern Seminary's representative in the field and appointments secretary.

Since its regional accreditation, Southern Seminary has not needed to recruit students. Each year there are more than 800 applications for the one hundred fifty vacancies and the school's enrollment for the next year is consistently filled well before the end of the current academic year. A great many of Southern Seminary's students come to the school because of its recommendation by friends or relatives. In recent years the student body each year has included girls from at least 30 states and the membership in the kin club usually numbers in the 40's. Southern Seminary's alumnae have long been the best possible advertisement for the school and its most effective recruiters.

In 1958, through the generosity of Mr. and Mrs. Robey, the school was changed from a privately owned proprietary operation to one of

ownership and control by a non-profit board of trustees. The Robeys made the transfer without gain to themselves and have both worked for no salary since that time. During these years, with very little outside help, Mr. and Mrs. Robey have accumulated for the school an endowment fund of approximately one-half million dollars while, at the same time, improving the property by a half million dollars. All of this has been accomplished in spite of the fact that Southern Seminary has never received aid from Federal, State or local government—nor from any sponsoring agency. The school has been cited as an example of private enterprise at its best. As a tenet of its philosophy it continues to be an independent operation free of entangling financial alliances with any agency. The administration of the school believes that American education needs to have some schools that maintain such freedom in this day of complex and restrictive envolvements.

The intensity of the Administration's desire to "run its own show" is illustrated by an incident that occurred during World War II. In 1943 the U. S. government sent a corp of inspectors to the Seminary to examine the facilities. After several weeks of inspection an offer of $950,000 was made for the property. It was to be used as a training center for the Women's Army Corp. The proposition was more than an offer. It was only through the intervention of Senator Willis Robertson that the government allowed the owners to retain the property.

During its first century, Southern Seminary has grown from an elementary and high school of ten students to a fully accredited junior college of 325; from a faculty of three to a teaching faculty of 29; from a meagre facility bought for $10,000 to a twenty-four acre campus valued at well over a million and a half dollars with $500,000 in endowment; from a privately owned "Home School for Girls" to an accredited junior college operated as a non-profit corporation by a board of trustees of ten members.

All of this has been accomplished under the administration of two families; three presidents. It is fair to say, however, that Southern Seminary owes its present-day success to the careful planning, creative ability, unceasing labors, indominable faith, and unselfish devotion to the ideals of higher education of its president and treasurer. Although it is older than either of them, in a very real sense the Southern Seminary of 1967 is the child of the marriage between Margaret Durham and H. Russell Robey. Many people have contributed to her nurture and God has guided her growth. In the years ahead may she fulfill the promise of the heritage that is hers.

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Maid of the Mountains, Southern Seminary's year books from 1904 to 1966.
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PRESENTATION OF MEDALS

The medals and citations of Second Lieutenant Francis Thomas Glasgow II, who was killed in Korea in battle, were presented to the Society at the meeting on January 23, 1967, and the following remarks were made by Mr. Frank J. Gilliam, its president:

Those here tonight share in an occasion of great pride and of high memory. A little over fourteen years ago a Lexington boy in his early twenties died an heroic death on a battlefield in Korea. Francis Thomas Glasgow represented a Rockbridge line and name that reached back with distinction for generations, and he was deeply worthy of that rich heritage. In Lexington, at his prep school, in his church, in his college here, there was no better loved boy than "Wink" Glasgow.

We who knew him so well were sure that

"Even as he trod that day to God
"So walked he from his birth,
"In simpleness and gentleness,
"And honor and clean mirth."

A short time ago the Executive Committee of the Society accepted with sincere appreciation the offer of his mother, Mrs. Charles S. Glasgow, to present his framed medals and citations as permanent, prized possessions of the Society.

I today received these testaments from Mrs. Glasgow with a letter, and I dare violate the intimacy of a treasured friendship to read this that she wrote: "It seems an appropriate place for them to be as he now belongs to a long line of patriots who have dared to die that Freedom might live and grow and increase its blessing."

The awards are of the Purple Heart and the Bronze Star Medal for heroism in battle, with accompanying citations, and an official acknowledgment signed by the President of the United States.

The family is represented here tonight by Mrs. Walker MacMillan, the sister of Mrs. Glasgow, and we ask you, Mrs. MacMillan, to convey to "Wink's" mother the assurance of our deep appreciation for a gift of so great significance, and to assure her that "not with tears, but in the translation of love into life shall his name be remembered."

LIFE AND WORKS OF SAMUEL HOUSTON

By Dr. George West Diehl

Dr. George West Diehl spoke on the "Life and Works of Samuel Houston" at the annual winter dinner meeting of the Society on Monday, January 23, 1967. Since Dr. Diehl plans to incorporate his lecture in a book, the paper will not be printed in this volume. A brief summary is as follows:

The Rev. Mr. Houston was born on Hays Creek before the Revolution, not far from New Providence Presbyterian Church. He was educated at Liberty Hall, and was one of the twelve members of the first graduating class to receive an AB degree.

After having been ordained a minister of the Presbyterian Church, he was pastor of a church in Tennessee, and later returned to this area to become pastor of High Bridge and Falling Spring churches. He operated one of the finest boys' schools of the day on his extensive acres called "Rural Valley," was one of the first scientific farmers of the county, invented a thrashing machine, was a magazine writer, a member of the Board of Trustees of Washington College, and was Clerk of the Board, as well as serving in the Rockbridge Militia and fighting in the Battle of Guilford Courthouse. He and his wife are buried at High Bridge Church.

TOUR OF STONEWALL JACKSON CEMETERY

Members of the Society went back into history for a fascinating look at famous citizens of this area in a tour of Stonewall Jackson Cemetery led by Dr. Frank J. Gilliam, president of the Society, on July 25, 1967 at 5:30 P.M.

Dr. Gilliam was introduced by Dr. James J. Murray, who explained that the cemetery had started as the burying ground of the Presbyterian Church which was built in 1789, used until 1848, and which had once stood within the cemetery, which was also used by the community. The Town of Lexington took over the cemetery's administration during Dr. Murray's pastorate.

Lexington and Rockbridge County have produced so many notables that it was impossible to mention them all in one tour, Dr. Gilliam said. He conducted a large group through sections of the older part of the cemetery, giving a running commentary on the tombstones of the interesting, the important, and the odd citizens. He visited the graves of generals, governors, judges, college presidents, professors and family doctors, great ladies of an earlier day, a tavern keeper, a monument to Yankee soldiers, and a stone put up by a slave for his well-loved master.

JOHN BLAIR LYLE

By Royster Lyle, Jr.

A paper on John Blair Lyle, who was a distant relative, was read by Royster Lyle, Jr., at the fall meeting of the Society at the Timber Ridge Presbyterian Church on Monday, November 6, 1967.

Customers who came to Lyle's "automatic" book store on Main Street in Lexington had to wait on themselves, the speaker said, as Mr. Lyle was too busy discussing politics and the affairs of Lexington with his friends to be bothered.

Frequent visitors to the book store were "Stonewall" Jackson, J. T. L. Preston, General T. H. Hill, General Francis H. Smith, and Governor John Letcher. Thomas Jonathan Jackson, who was a major at the Virginia Military Institute at the time, and had not yet received his famous nickname, was a close friend, and Dr. William H. White, Jackson's minister, felt that Mr. Lyle had great influence on Jackson joining the Presbyterian Church.

It is regretted that this fine paper was not received for publication in time for this issue.

EIGHTEENTH CENTURY ENGLISH COUNTRY HOUSES

Dr. Sterling M. Boyd, assistant professor of fine arts at Washington and Lee University gave an illustrated lecture on "Eighteenth Century English Country Houses" at the winter dinner meeting of the Society held at the Robert E. Lee Hotel in Lexington on January 22, 1968.

A number of very fine slides which Dr. Boyd had obtained during a three weeks seminar trip taken the previous summer were shown. The trip was sponsored by the National Trust of England, a private organization which purchases English houses of historic and architectural interest.

Dr. Boyd's group included about 40 Americans, curators of museums, teachers, and representatives of such places as Colonial Williamsburg, he said. They were quartered at Attingham Park, an eighteenth century country house near Shrewsbury, in Shropshire. Part of the staff of the Victoria and Albert Museum acted as hosts, gave lectures, and conducted the group to other houses on busses. The houses that they saw differed from the old houses of Rockbridge County in that they were enormous establishments.

Dr. Boyd was born in Little Rock, Arkansas, and has M.A. degrees in art history at both Oberlin College and Princeton University, and a Ph.D. from Princeton. He has taught at Washington and Lee University since 1964.

Matthew W. Paxton, editor of *The News-Gazette* of Lexington chose four great events which brought large crowds to the town as his subject at the spring meeting of the Society which was held in Dunlap Auditorium of the Lexington Presbyterian Church on Monday, April 22, 1968. Mr. Paxton's well researched paper was taken entirely from information in the files of *The Rockbridge County News* and *The News Gazette,* and was first read at the Fortnightly Club. Mr. Paxton graduated from Washington and Lee University in 1949, and took an M.S. degree in the School of Journalism at Columbia University before becoming editor of *The Rockbridge County News,* which later combined with *The Lexington Gazette* to form *The News-Gazette.*

GREAT EVENTS IN LEXINGTON

By M. W. Paxton, Jr.

It took the Town of Lexington some 185 years to come up with an occasion big enough to bring here a President of the United States in his official capacity as the nation's chief executive.

That occasion, still fresh in memory, was the dedication of the George C. Marshall Research Library on Saturday, May 23, 1964.

But the intervening years, from the time of the town's founding in 1778 had been by no means devoid of spectacular events.

A number of occasions, beginning with General Lee's funeral in 1870 have brought throngs of people to this little college town.

The affairs have strained the resources of the community and they have called forth the utmost in resourcefulness merely to get the participants transported in and out of town.

Meticulous arrangements have been required for all these occasions and it is interesting to see how changing times are reflected in the way these have been carried out.

The more recent events have placed less of a burden on the populace in general, but probably more on those in official capacities.

For the Marshall Library dedication, personal invitations were extended to some 4,000 individuals.

The event was expected to be unique in that two former presidents, Eisenhower and Truman were to participate, along with President Johnson. Mr. Truman, you will remember, was unable to be present. He was suffering from an upset stomach following his 80th birthday celebration.

Advance estimates of the crowd ranged from 20,000 to 50,000 and, as one account put it, "the nine-acre VMI Parade Ground is expected to be jammed to overflowing."

The tempo of planning quickened when it was announced in March that President Johnson would attend the May dedication. The attendance of the President had been in doubt after the assassination of President Kennedy, who had accepted an invitation to attend.

The management of traffic was paramount in planning for the dedication.

An elaborate plan, to go into effect at 7 a.m. the day of the ceremony was announced several weeks in advance by the Lexington chief of police.

All cars entering town were to be stopped and the driver's destination asked. Those passing through town were to be directed along special routes. Those attending the dedication were to be routed to designated parking areas.

Buses were to be provided by the National Guard to bring people in from these parking areas.

Local residents were asked to walk to the ceremonies.

The dignitaries were to arrive by various means. Former President Eisenhower and General Maxwell Taylor were scheduled to fly into the Lexington Airport at about 8:30 a.m.

President Johnson's party was to land on the Parade Ground in four huge helicoptors, flown from Roanoke. Foam trucks from Roanoke's Woodrum Airport were engaged to be on hand at the Lexington Airport and on the Parade Ground. The coptors carrying the presidential party were to make a practice landing on the Parade Grounds two days before the dedication.

Communications and security measures are always major factors when the President attends an occasion outside Washington.

To handle the press coverage, additional long-distance telephone lines had to be installed by the local phone company. Special arrangements also had to be made to keep the President in touch with Washington, and these were a closely guarded secret.

The public was advised that "Buildings in the immediate parade ground area will be secured Friday night and will be placed under guard until after the ceremonies."

In this day of generally speeded up activities, the dedication was strictly a one-day affair. The problem of overnight accommodations was therefore largely eliminated, though one local resident, feeling that the community should not stint on its hospitality, invited Mr. Truman to visit him at Rockbridge Baths.

D-Day itself dawned hot. Some spectators had already arrived at the VMI parade ground before 7 a.m.

"It might have been a holiday Saturday morning on Lexington's Main Street," wrote one commentator. Families carrying thermos bottles

and camp stools strolled toward the VMI post. Most stores closed at 10 a.m.

As the mercury climbed toward 90 degrees the guests began filling the seats on the parade ground. Spectators gathered outside the roped off area. Ike arrived at the local airport and was whisked by car to the VMI superintendent's quarters.

The first of the presidential coptors touched down 10 minutes behind the scheduled 10:30 arrival time. Following the President down the landing ramp was Senator Harry F. Byrd.

The presidential group first took a quick tour of the Marshall Library, coming out onto the platform in front of the building 20 minutes after the scheduled 11 a.m. starting hour for the dedication.

Security officers looked on the scene from the roofs of Smith Hall and the Marshall Library.

A crowd of about 15,000 had assembled, far below expectations. Many persons had apparently been scared away by the predictions of a crush of humanity in Lexington; others being unwilling to brave the heat and still others surmising that they could see more of what went on by sitting at home in front of the TV set.

After long debate it had been decided that no cover would be provided to shade the platform guests.

The widow of General George C. Marshall, who sat on the front row of the guest seating area with a bevy of national figures, was shaded by an umbrella.

The one hour ceremony over, the platform guests returned to the Superintendent's quarters where President Johnson delayed his departure just long enough to receive from General Omar Bradley a silver dedicatory chalice. The four helicoptors were soon airborn.

General Eisenhower briefly joined about another 1,000 out of town guests at a dinner in the VMI mess hall, leaving town about 1:45.

The local newspaper account of the event concluded, "By late afternoon an atmosphere of quiet rest had descended upon the Institute environs."

Possibly the main regret expressed afterwards was that the event was on such a rushed schedule that many notables were virtually lost in the shuffle.

Men like Secretary of State Rusk, former Secretary of State Acheson, Under Secretary of State Harriman, Ambassador Lewis Douglas and former US high commissioner in Germany John J. McCloy, made the long trip to Lexington, sat an hour in the broiling sun and departed.

A visit of any one of these alone would have been a big occasion.

A much less complicated event, but one described in The Rockbridge County News as Lexington's "biggest day" was the dedication of the Marshall Arch at VMI May 15, 1951.

The occasion, billed as "Marshall Day," probably brought more notables to the town than had ever previously assembled here.

General George C. Marshall, VMI's most distinguished graduate, was honored in day-long activities. They culminated in the afternoon ceremonies in which the archway in the new section of cadet barracks was officially named for Marshall. The name of George Marshall was thus placed beside those of George Washington and Stonewall Jackson, for whom the other barracks archways had been named.

Elder statesman Bernard Baruch gave the address for the dedication which was held in front of the barracks.

National interest in the occasion was heightened by the fact that Marshall was spokesman for the administration in the controversy which then raged over the firing of General MacArthur in Korea. The Senate hearings on the MacArthur firing had been recessed so that Marshall could attend the event here.

Marshall Day marked the 50th anniversary of the graduation of the then Secretary of Defense from VMI. The day officially began when General Marshall emerged from the Superintendent's quarters into the sunlight of a perfect spring day as a 19-gun salute boomed.

In a ceremony preceding the afternoon dedication, Governor John S. Battle decorated General Marshall with Virginia's highest award, the Distinguished Service Medal. The citation was read by Cadet Guy B. Agnor Jr., corps adjutant.

Baruch called Marshall "History's first global strategist" and pointed out that the difference between Marshall and MacArthur was essentially that between the men called on to administer this global strategy and a theatre commander with his eye on victory in the field.

A crowd of some 8,000 attended the parade ground ceremonies.

Among the figures of national prominence present were Gen. J. Lawton Collins, Army Chief of Staff; Deputy Secretary of Defense Robert M. Lovett; Stuart Symington, then chief of the Reconstruction Finance Corporation; William E. Pawley, former ambassador to Peru and Brazil; and Thomas J. Watson, head of IBM.

Joseph H. Short, President Truman's press secretary and a 1925 graduate of VMI, brought a letter from Truman which referred to Marshall as "an inspirational leader who deserves the appreciation of America and the whole free world."

Logistics were again a major concern of the day. Flying the dignitaries into Lexington's grass airstrip were five planes, including two Air

Force C-47's, the largest planes which had ever landed on the 2,500 foot strip. Several of the planes had been flown in a few days previously to test the landing conditions.

George C. Marshal was associated with yet another of Lexington's great occasions.

That was the visit of General John J. Pershing on June 18 and 19, 1920.

General Pershing came here at the invitation of General Nichols, superintendent of VMI, to present the diplomas to the Institute graduates. And, to quote an account of the day, "through the patriotic suggestion and efforts of one of General Pershing's officers in France, Captain Greenlee D. Letcher, he was entertained as a guest of the town and county on a visit to the tombs of the South's two great chieftains."

Among those who accompanied the commander-in-chief of the nation's armed forces to Lexington "in two high powered machines" was Col. George C. Marshall of his staff.

Pershing's reception here was described as a "great spontaneous, hearty ovation."

Reported the County News: "All who remember the tremendous gathering here on the greatest day in Lexington's history, when in 1891 the statue of Stonewall Jackson was unveiled at his tomb, agree that there has been no such gathering since in Lexington."

Arriving in town by car at 3 p.m. Thursday, Pershing was welcomed with a 17-gun salute from the VMI cadet battery. He attended parade and the Superintendent's reception that evening.

The next day at noon he presented diplomas to 62 graduates of VMI and made a "seven minutes' speech of wise counsel."

At 2 p.m. he alighted from an automobile near the Lee Chapel, accompanied by Captain Letcher, representing the hosts for the day.

Drawn up below the roadway as he alighted was a squadron of more than 100 horsemen in khaki, above was a company in khaki and nearer yet a platoon in khaki. The platoon, made up of men wounded and decorated in France, served as an escort of honor to accompany General Pershing to the Chapel.

Along the pathway to the chapel was gathered a great throng of school children and as the General strode smartly up the hill, three small children stepped into the walkway with a huge bouquet of roses.

Under the guidance of Mrs. W. W. Wright, "Tammy" Corse bore the bouquet, assisted by little Misses Mary McPheeters Landis and Mary Mulligan."

It was reported that "This array halted the general with a suddenness that no German could have, but 'his dilemma was easily solved as, taking the bouquet, he bent low and kissed the cheeks of each of the little girls.' "

"As he entered the Chapel, the large assembly arose. Upon the platform sat a contingent of grey-headed Confederates and the faculty of the university in cap and gown; to each of whom General Pershing gave a smile and a handshake.

University President Henry Louis Smith stepped forward and said: 'Speaking for the people of this Valley and this county of Rockbridge, I welcome the Hero of 1918 to the last resting place of the Hero of 1861.'

The honored visitor responded, 'Nothing could come to one that would arouse a deeper sentiment than to be classed as I have been with the name of Lee.' "

The General then placed an ivy wreath upon the recumbent statue and saluted. After speaking to some of the parents of boys killed in the war he returned to his car and moved at the head of "a triumphal procession" to the cemetery.

A platoon of horsemen commanded by Lt. Charles S. Glasgow rode at the head of his automobile. Cars containing army officers and Confederate veterans immediately followed. All were decorated in red, white and blue.

Then followed a squadron of cavalry and after that group came a company of infantry commanded by Major A. W. Robertson. Then came a stream of decorated automobiles filled with patriotic citizens which in number seemed to have no end.

Pershing's passage up Main Street was marked by cheers from a throng which "filled every outlook. National colors waved from many homes and places of business."

General Pershing placed a wreath on the Jackson statue and after giving a brief tribute in which he called Jackson "a great strategist and a Christian hero" he passed along the line of veterans personally greeting those wearing wound stripes and decorations.

William Jennings Bryan may not have been as universally revered in his day as General Pershing was at the close of the Great War, but when he made an appearance here in 1908 he was presented by President George H. Denny of Washington and Lee as "The foremost citizen in private life in the United States today."

Bryan's lecture here on March 23, 1908 was sponsored by the UDC and its proceeds went to benefit the Jackson Memorial Hospital. It had been opened by the UDC in the Jackson Home less than a year earlier.

Bryan arrived in town by train at 1 p.m. on the day of his lecture. He was welcomed by the official reception committee and by members of the Bryan Club of Washington and Lee. This group at the college was reportedly the first Bryan club in Virginia in that year which would see The Great Commoner nominated for the third time for the Presidency by the Democrats.

The train was crowded with residents from Buena Vista and from the Natural Bridge District and had been held for five minutes in Buena Vista so that Mr. Bryan could greet the crowd which had assembled to hear him.

His itinerary included an informal reception at the Lexington Hotel, where he dined just after his arrival;

A reception by the Daughters of the Confederacy at Jackson Memorial Hospital from 2:15 to 2:45;

His lecture at the skating rink at 3 under auspices of the Mary Custis Lee Chapter, UDC;

A battalion review at VMI at 5:40;

Tea at Greenlee D. Letcher's at 7;

An address to the VMI cadets and W&L students in Jackson Memorial Hall at 9;

He reached his room at the hotel a short time before 11 and left at 4 a.m. to fill a speaking engagement in Clifton Forge.

Bryan's easy manner and his sense of humor won him a wide following here.

A young boy was presented to him with the comment that the lad wanted to shake the hand of the next president of the United States.

Bryan quickly replied, "And I want to shake his hand, because he might be president before I am."

It was reported that at the hospital reception the Daughters of the Confederacy agreed "that they didn't care a rap for Mr. Bryan's position on the ownership of railroads, but voted him a most agreeable man to talk to and exceedingly good to look at."

The County News described him as "a portly man of medium height whose broad countenance wears an expression of benignity. . . . The set of his mouth which is ready to smile, indicates that firmness, or what some would call stubbornness, and that courage that has marked his public career."

About 900 people assembled to hear Mr. Bryan's public address. He gave them a choice of four topics "The Prince of Peace," "Observations in Foreign Lands," "The Value of an Ideal," and "The Average Man." Rising votes were called for and finally "The Average Man" was selected on the second ballot."

The local paper noted that Bryan wove considerable politics into his lecture. "As a stump speech it was ideal," the paper commented.

He spoke deliberately, without apparent effort in a voice noteworthy for its musical cadence and a power which made it as audible 100 feet away as it was immediately in front of him. He indulged in few oratorical flights, but was "a master of simple statement in simple, chaste English." His power to excite laughter was "irresistible."

The crowd heard him with apparently unabated interest from 3 until 5:20.

The event which probably involved the local populace to a greater degree than any other was the dedication of the Jackson Statue in the cemetery on July 21, 1891, the 30th anniversary of the Battle of First Manassas in which Jackson had earned the sobriquet "Stonewall."

Based on the estimates of the railroads 15,000, coming from distant points, joined some 12,000 Rockbridge residents in the throng at the cemetery exercises.

For months before the great day the County News carried articles about the preparations.

Funds for the heroic bronze statue had been raised by the Jackson Memorial Association of which Gen. G. W. C. Lee was president and Judge James K. Edmondson chairman of the executive committee.

The association had been formed in 1875 for the purpose of erecting a suitable monument over Jackson's grave. However, because of the effort then being made to raise funds for the Lee mausoleum and statue, the financial efforts of the Jackson group were not started until 1884.

At first, the object was to raise a simple monument over the grave, but the fund raising efforts were so successful that it was decided to commission the Richmond sculptor Edward V. Valentine, who had executed the Lee recumbent statue, to do a heroic bronze figure of Jackson. The sculptor was then in possession of Jackson's death mask.

The cost of the statue was $9,000 and of the pedestal and vault plus the expense of the unveiling ceremonies another $3,000.

In February of 1891 the newspaper reported that a contract had been awarded for the granite base and pedestal.

In April Judge Edmondson called the survivors of the Stonewall Brigade and the Rockbridge Artillery to meet in Staunton to make arrangements for their participation in the ceremonies.

It was reported on May 21 that work on the pedestal and base were making satisfactory progress and that there was "no doubt but that everything would be in perfect readiness for the unveiling of the statue on July 21."

At the same time it was noted that "There is every indication now that Lexington will have on that date such a crowd of strangers as has never before assembled in the town."

"Col. Edmondson was daily receiving notices of veterans and organizations of veterans and others who will be present. Among them will be survivors of the Stonewall Brigade in larger force than ever has assembled since its disbandment at the surrender."

A note of uneasiness crept into the local newspaper's columns on June 18 as it exhorted the residents of the town and country to contribute provisions for the visiting veterans.

"Remember, these old fellows lost their cause, but the survivors didn't lose their appetites."

Committees to solicit supplies were organized in every county community under the leadership of John L. Campbell and a depot for the collection of the provisions was set up in each area.

On July 7, the statue, which had lain boxed since December at General Custis Lee's residence, was placed atop the pedestal and veiled from sight.

The C&O and B&O railroads announced that they would run a number of excursion trains into the town and a special one-half fare was offered by the railroads.

The crowd began to gather the day before the event.

Various units of veterans were placed in Washington Hall, the VMI barracks, the Court House, the Opera House, the Presbyterian lecture room and the basement of Lee Chapel.

At 4:30 a.m. on the great day a train arrived bearing the Stonewall Band and the strains of music as they passed to their headquarters aroused the town.

At 6 o'clock 15 guns were fired in honor of Jackson. The guns were placed on the VMI parade ground and were manned by a detachment of the Rockbridge Artillery commanded by Col. Poague.

"After that," reads the newspaper account, "all was stir and bustle. Veterans from North Carolina and elsewhere, volunteer soldiers from the lower Valley and strangers from many sections who had arrived the day before thronged the streets and each arriving train added to their number by as many thousand men.

"Gay colored banners waved from every housetop and swung to the breeze from every window. The bright uniforms of the soldiers mingled with the sober garb of the citizen. Strains of music from many bands awakened the echoes about the usually quiet town. The tread of a vast multitude was heard upon its streets and the cheers of strong men were mingled with the loud plaudits and rippling laughter of women."

The weather was ideal for the occasion.

Barrels of ice water were placed along Main Street and at other points and 3,500 pounds of ice were used.

At 10:30 many units had already moved into position on the VMI parade ground where they were arranged by Gen. James A. Walker, chief marshal of the day, and the last surviving commander of the Stonewall Brigade.

The units were marched to the shaded platform on the W&L campus where the ceremonies began at 11.

When General Wade Hampton arose to preside a cheer went up from the 10,000 people assembled before him.

Prayer was offered by Dr. Hopkins of Charlestown, W. Va., the "Fighting Chaplain" of the Stonewall Brigade.

Another mighty cheer went up when General Hampton introduced the speaker, General Jubal Early.

"We are assembled here for the purpose of manifesting our respect and admiration for one of the most illustrious characters that has figured in the annals of history," General Early declared.

After giving a sketch of Jackson's career he concluded his oration with the declaration, "I trust that every faithful soldier of the Army of Northern Virginia is ready to exclaim with me: If I am ever known to repudiate the cause for which Lee fought and Jackson died, may the lightning of heaven blast me and the scorn of all brave men and all good women be my portion."

The line was again formed for the movement of the procession to the cemetery. The County News listed every unit in order and gave the number of men in each.

The elaborate decorations included several arches thrown across Main Street.

The platform guests, including many surviving Confederate leaders, entered the cemetery gates. The Confederate units continued their march to Houston Street, turning off into the field immediately behind the cemetery.

General Jackson's widow and her two little grandchildren, Julia Jackson Christian and Thomas Jackson Christian, mounted the unveiling platform.

The County News recalls the scene in these words:

"When the signal gun sounded the two little children with united hands pulled the cord and let the veil fall, and this grand statue of the great Jackson was unveiled to the admiring gaze of the thousands around it. The cannoneers of the old Rockbridge Artillery at the foot of the hill announced the event with fifteen guns, from the cannon which they used at

First Manassas, and a shout such as these quiet precincts never before heard, rent the air. It was answered by the veterans on the other side with an old fashioned "rebel yell." . . . The Armed infantry fired volleys til it sounded like a real battle was in progress.

"As the battery ceased firing, Gen. Walker again put his column in motion. They passed down and in at the rear of the cemetery and along the broad pathway by the statue and out the main entrance. As the old veterans approached the statue they gazed upon it as it were with reverence and as they passed saluted. Some were heard to say, "That is old Jack all right." . . . The bands that at first approached played "Dixie" and excited a little cheering, but the crowd was remarkably serious looking. The last bands which came played solemn tunes. It was three o'clock when the end of the line passed the monument. The people quietly dispersed, and the events of a day never to be forgotten by those who witnessed them were over."

How did the visitors fare in Lexington? Apparently a few were disgruntled about the hospitality, because their grumblings brought forth eloquent replies. Wrote Col. Joseph Milton, commander of the 2nd Virginia Regiment to Col. Edmondson, "We had an abundance to eat, good quarters, fine horses, the sweetest and best of ladies to welcome and cheer us, and if Lexington is half as well pleased with the 2nd as the 2nd is with Lexington, then we are satisfied."

No event in the years before the dedication of the Jackson statue had left such an indelible impression on the memories of the people of Lexington as had the funeral of General Robert E. Lee, which took place on Saturday, October 15, 1870.

General Lee's death had occurred on Wednesday.

On Friday at about 12:30 his body was carried from the president's house to the Lee Chapel where it lay in state on the rostrum.

For the removal of the body to the chapel a procession was formed in front of the house. It was led by former officers and soldiers of the Confederacy. These were followed by the clergy and after them came the pallbearers with the casket. Behind the hearse was led Lee's horse Traveller covered with sable trappings. Next followed the trustees, faculty and students of Washington College, officers and cadets of VMI and a long line of citizens.

According to the account published in the W&L Southern Collegian, the procession was too long to be accommodated in the short distance between the house and the chapel, so it made a complete circuit of the chapel before those at the head of the column entered .

After it was placed in the Chapel, the casket was opened and during the remainder of the day hundreds filed past for a final look at the Southern leader.

The Southern Collegian's account of the funeral, which took place the following day at 10 has been preserved in the scrapbooks of the late Misses Lucy and Margaret Withrow recently acquired by the Rockbridge Historical Society and W&L and deposited in McCormick Library.

Many who wished to attend Lee's funeral could not because a flood on the night of October 9 had washed away the bridge across Maury River.

This flood had also washed away Alexander's warehouse where all the coffins in town had been stored. Many will recall the story about the two youths, C. H. Chittum and Henry Wallace who floated on a raft down the swollen river and found a casket caught in the upper branches of a willow tree.

The casket was recovered from the river and used for the burial of General Lee. Because the casket was slightly too short, it was necessary to remove General Lee's boots.

Representative citizens of the town were selected to serve as Lee's pallbearers. They were Judge F. T. Anderson and David E. Moore, Sr., trustees of the college; ex-Gov. John Letcher and Commodore Matthew Fontaine Maury for VMI; Professor W. Preston Johnston and Professor J. Randolph Tucker of the College; William L. Prather and Edward P. Clark, students at the college; Capt. J. C. Boude and Capt. J. P. Moore, Confederate soldiers and Gilliam G. White and Joseph G. Steele, citizens of Lexington.

According to the arrangements of the printed program, the funeral procession formed at 10 o'clock at the Episcopal Church. It moved to the sound of solemn music furnished by the VMI band.

The escort of honor, made up of Confederate officers and soldiers was followed by the clergy; the hearse and pallbearers; General Lee's horse; the attending physicians; trustees and faculty of Washington College; dignitaries of the State of Virginia; board of visitors and faculty of the VMI; other representative bodies and distinguished visitors; alumni of the College; citizens; VMI cadets; and the Washington College students as a guard of honor.

"The procession moved down Washington Street, up Jefferson Street to the Franklin Hall, thence to Main. In front of the hotel the ranks were opened, and the committee from the Virginia legislature, the representatives of the faculty and students of the University of Virginia, and other distinguished guests took their appointed places. Moving on, in

front of the court house it was joined by the large body of citizens; and thus the long line solemnly and slowly moved down to the Military Institute. Meanwhile all the bells were tolled, and minute guns were fired from the parapet of the Institute. In front of the Institute the whole corps was drawn up, with presented arms; and as the procession slowly defiled past, it was joined by the visitors and faculty who took their place immediately behind the legislative committee and by the cadets who took place immediately behind the students of the college."

Moving up to the College Chapel, the front of the procession was then halted, and while its front was at the chapel door its rear was still in the Institute grounds.

The students and after them the cadets were marched to the front, and proceeded into and through the chapel, past the remains, and were drawn up into two bodies outside the chapel on the southern side.

The procession then moved in. On the platform were seated the officers of the college and of VMI, the legislative committee and other representatives from a distance. The body of the chapel was filled with Confederate officers and soldiers and the galleries and side block were filled with citizens.

The Episcopal service was read by the Rev. W. N. Pendleton, D. D., rector of the Episcopal church who had been Lee's chief of artillery. The casket was then carried by the pallbearers to the vault which had been opened in the basement of the chapel. When the service was concluded the whole multitude filed past the open grave.

Architecture in Lexington was reviewed by a panel at the summer dinner meeting of the Rockbridge Historical Society held at VMI's Lejeune Hall on Monday, July 22, 1968. Royster Lyle, Jr. secretary of the Marshall Foundation acted as moderator following a brief speech of welcome from General George R. E. Shell, superintendent of VMI. A display of photographs, old prints and measured drawings of Rockbridge County Architecture arranged by Mrs. B. McCluer Gilliam was set up in an adjoining room.

C. Willard Isley, a 1968 graduate of Washington and Lee University read his paper on John Jordan, which had been written as a term paper for Dr. Sterling M. Boyd's course, Fine Arts 106: A Survey of Architecture in Europe and America. Mr. Isley was employed during the summer of 1968 in Rockbridge County by the Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission as a photographic survey historian, and he also did documentary architectural history work for the Rockbridge Chapter of the A.P.V.A., and the Rockbridge Historical Society.

Matthew White Paxton, Jr., editor of *The News-Gazette* first read his paper on Alexander Jackson Davis to Lexington's "Fortnightly Club."

JOHN JORDAN, BUILDER

By Willard Isley

One of the most solid citizens in Rockbridge County in the first half of the nineteenth century was "Colonel" John Jordan, (pronounced thereabouts as Jurdan.) In fact, for fifty years he was the most outstanding man, in the general promotion of industry and building. As Marshall Fishwick has summarized, "Craftsman and financier, John Jordan was concerned with politics, iron smelting, milling, town planning, canal construction, cotton and wool processing, contracting, building, sculpture, theology, and architecture."[1]

The historian, Henry Boley has said that the Jordan family were iron makers by inheritance since John Jordan's father made cannon balls during the Revolutionary War for the American army.[2] By the late 1820s, John and his sons began smelting on a large scale.[3] They operated twelve furnaces in Rockbridge, Botetourt, Alleghany, Bath, Amherst and Louisa counties,[4] with the most famous one, the Lucy Selina, being located in Alleghany.[5] Since commerce's greatest obstacle is poor transportation, Jordan was naturally also interested in roads, bridges, and canals. In fact, he built the "impossible" Jordan Trail over the Blue Ridge, and the road

over North Mountain from Collierstown to Longdale which was long Lexington's main connection with the west.[6] In 1824, with his partner, John Irvine, Jordan contracted to build the Balcony Falls section of the James River—Kanawha River Canal, and finished it in record time by 1826. Jordan built a bridge in East Lexington in 1810,[8] and with John Moorehead a toll bridge across the North River at Lexington in 1835.[9]

But of his many interests and accomplishments, it is the area of architecture that will be the main consideration in this paper. Beside the physical fact of his doing many of the most important buildings in Lexington for half a century, John Jordan's accomplishment in architecture was in establishing the new Roman Revival style in building west of the Blue Ridge. In those days, the valley and its traditions were physically apart from the eastern areas of the state. What it took was a man in contact with the East, and Jordan was that man. In his accomplishment, he was certainly a powerful innovator, but necessarily an imitator, too, as will be shown.

Goochland County, Virginia was where John Jordan was born on July 2, 1777. When he was small his father died, and his mother remarried and moved to Fluvanna County. Supposedly because of strained relations with his step-father, John left home soon, and was out on his own in the world. On March 2, 1802, he married Lucy Winn of Hanover County. They reportedly made a handsome couple, he being six foot three, black eyes and black hair, with broad shoulders, she being a beautiful six-foot blonde; they were to have twelve sons and two daughters.[10]

Probably Jordan came to Lexington in 1802. What reasons brought him from the Tidewater, Virginia area all the way to the rural town in the valley are apparently unknown. Anyway, it seems that his two brothers, Samuel and Hezekiah, came to Lexington in 1803, and helped him for a time in his work on Lexington homes, (he must have served apprenticeship in brick-laying and plastering.) "Mulberry Hill" is thought to be the first house on which Jordan was employed, (he helped with the brickwork.)[12] It was done for Andrew Reid about 1805, in the late Georgian idiom, and has been much altered since then. In 1808, Jordan built the Ann Smith Academy building in Lexington;[13] it is no longer standing. By 1810 he had tried the East Lexington bridge, the Rockbridge Manufacturing Company with a frame building, and a brick unit for the cotton factory, and an extensive blacksmith establishment at Jordan's Point.[14]

When the War of 1812 came, Jordan volunteered and served most of his duty as a cavalry officer in the Tidewater area.[15] This was probably significant in his later architectural development, for he was possibly acquainted with the first Roman Revival public structure in

this country, Jefferson's Virginia State Capitol in Richmond, and the ideas it represents. Even before the War, Jordan probably had personal dealings with the improvements on Jefferson's Monticello, as indicated by a letter Jefferson wrote from the White House to his overseer on February 7, 1806, and which 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 him," and "P. S., Stick a wafer into the letter to Mr. Jordan after you shall have read it."[16] Association with Mr. Jefferson, the veritable founder of the Roman Revival style, and his ideas was certainly to have effect on Jordan in his buildings as an established Lexington contractor after the War.

It is probably in "Little Stono" in the country east of Lexington that the Roman Revival first appeared in the Valley. This is generally thought to be the first major house all by John Jordan. It employs a full temple front, two story portico with four piers paired on either side of the entrance way, in its present state. The pairing is not a classical idea, but rather a Federal one. These may not be original, but certainly piers would have been easier to make than columns. The proportions of this building are tall, and therefore somewhat awkward, but nevertheless, a certain rustic elegance is afforded in the provincial interpretation. A brick dated 1816 suggests that the house was finished in that year.[17] If that is the case, this house is even more advanced for its time, for thus it even preceded Jefferson's first actual construction pavilion at the University of Virginia, 1817.

In 1816, Jordan began construction of the Neriah Baptist Church out in the county. He made the bricks on the lot, and the woodwork was done by John Moody, a local carpenter and member. As Rev. Mr. Moore has described it, "It was a plain, but sturdy brick building, equipped with a slave gallery, which was a fine appearance at the time, and is still in use today."[18] The building also has the brick S-shape cornice along the sides characteristic of Jordan. This building forced the prevailingly Presbyterian citizenry of the locale to take notice of the Baptists, and Jordan's joining of the group at the insistance of his Baptist wife furthered their cause.[19]

Jordan was responsible for the brick work for the Lexington Arsenal. In a letter of January, 1818, he pointed out "That great care was devoted to moulding the bricks, and more than the usual percentage of handmade bricks was used."[20]

In 1818, Jordan also built his own home, "Jordan's Point" or "Stono." Four (Federal?) columns are crowned by a steeply-rising

pediment much as at "Little Stono." Two engaged half-columns occur at the front corners of the building. The two front doors are crowned with graceful fanlights. Inside, the none-too-graceful stairway has a balustrade railing which ends in a playful note which an academic mind would never have invented: Jordan there carved a likeness of the head of one of his favorite dogs.

At the time Jordan was probably aware of what was going on in Charlottesville with the University of Virginia. In fact, his brother-in-law John Winn III, lived at "Belmont" near Charlottesville, and it is possible that Jordan visited there while the University was being built.[21] Although it is not known whether he took any part in the construction of the University, there is a letter dated March 9, 1819, from Archibald Stuart of Staunton to Thomas Jefferson in which the former accused Jordan of conspiring to monopolize the brick contracts for the building of the University of Virginia.[22] In the building of the pavilion of the University, Jefferson took the first step of building houses like temples.[23] He had previously been the first to use the temple-structure as a place not for worship in the Virginia Capitol, and this pre-dates almost any real "temple" for churches.

Whether in the Virginia capitol, the University of Virginia, Monticello, and for the man and his ideas personally known, Thomas Jefferson was the man behind John Jordan in houses like "Stono" and "Little Stono" and others to come. If Jefferson was the "prophet" of the Roman Revival, Jordan was one of his earliest "apostles." And in giving it form according to his background and materials, Jordan formed style himself, of a freer, more rustic and colloquial version of American frontier charm and dignity, a mixtured Federal and Roman Revival.

About 1820, Jordan is supposed to have built the Reid White House, (now the Kappa Alpha House) in Lexington.[26]

In 1821, a new building was needed for Washington College. The lowest bid for the building's erection was $9000, and that was John Jordan's. It was accepted on October 16, 1822. Samuel Darst was in partnership with Jordan in its erection,[28] the crowning point in Jordan's architectural career. As Ruffner's "History of Washington College" relates, "The building was completed and occupied in the autumn of 1824. Its dimensions are 50 x 100 feet, and three stories high. The pillars in front, according to the plan, were intended to be square and very large, but they were changed to round, and very much reduced in size. There was at first a second story porch in front; but it was taken down after a few years on account of noise. The statue on top is more recent; also, the raising of the eaves to the present angle, and the metalizing of the roof. The building erected was a handsome, well-proportioned structure; a Maison Quarrée,

like the State Capitol, but without a high basement." The last remark is quite telling, for it expresses the popularity of the new Roman Revival ideas, and indicates just where Jordan had to go for his building. As for the simpler orders, they were probably out of necessity of sheer practicality in the Valley.

Sometime during the next decade, (1824-1834,) the Barclay House on Lee Avenue was built by Benjamin Darst for his son, (Darst lived in the rear portion of the present next-door house, "The Pines," at 111 Lee Avenue.) Darst was Jordan's contractor, so probably Jordan provided the plans and architectural supervision for the house.[30] An architectural study of the present structure in view of anticipated restoration was summarized:

"It would seem that the Barclay House, when it was first completed, was a full two-story brick structure above a partially exposed basement on the front. Its impressive gable end fronted the street, and the building was perfectly symmetrical. The four chimneys of the main house are rather unusually, yet symmetrically placed, and are of course strategically located to afford sufficient heat to all of the principal rooms by means of open fireplaces."[31] Beyond this simple description, however, "It is fascinating to see in a structure such as the Barclay House how this classic influence, as propounded by Jefferson and others, filtered into the valley and thus came to have an identity all its own as it was interpreted in various ways and combined with the more familiar and early motifs known to the valley builders."[32] What occurs in Jordan is "a combination of the colloquial with the classic . . . certain naivites are found in the proportions and placement of design elements, which if not 'correct' in an academic sense, give a wonderful domestic character to the house. The fan in the attic, from a straight front elevation, seems to perch awkwardly on the ridge of the roof, yet at the same time gives more light and ventilation to the attic than is often the case with more strictly academic design. Also, the tri-partite windows of the facade abut uncomfortably close on the pilasters of the portico, yet, because of these large windows, how delightful are the well-lit spaces within.

"In his front doorway treatment, Jordan the romantic far out-shines Jordan the academician. The heart motif employed here is found throughout the Lexington vicinity, and may be related to the Pennsylvania 'Dutch' tradition as much as to Jordan. However, only a professional such as Jordan could have taken this folk motif and combined it with his version of the classic revival to produce such an effective and impressive design element."[34] A carry-over from Adair style. (The above has been taken from a "Research Report Relating to the Barclay House, Lexing-

ton, Va., July 13, 1966 by J. Everette Fauber, architect for the restoration done by its present owner, Colonel Carrington C. Tutwiler, Jr.)

The Episcopal Rectory at 107 Lee Avenue was built in 1829 or 1830; there is some controversy as to who designed and built it, either Benjamin Darst or John Jordan.[35] It may have been the old partnership situation again. The original house was rectangular, about forty feet wide and thirty-six deep, with a full basement, first floor, second floor, and attic.[36] Alterations and additions have confused the original style of the house. A wing was added about mid-century, and the attic was raised after the Civil War to provide more space for boarders, (the roofline changes are readily apparent.) In the process of the latter, the original molded brick S-shape cornice, a Jordan feature, was removed but for the lowest cornice, of bricks.[37] The second story has a fan, as does "Stono," and the bannister on the present stairs is of the same design as the one at "Stono" except for the newel post.[38] The original two-story porch was probably about one-third as wide as the present one-story affair which blocks two of the four basement windows.[39]

Donovan's paper in 1950 stated that it was thought that Jordan did "the building which now houses the Lexington Meat Market on Main Street, next to the Troubadour Theater."

In 1839, Jordan got the carpentry contracts for the V.M.I. Barracks work. In 1840-41, he built the no-longer standing Baptist Church on Nelson Street between Main and Randolph on the spot now occupied by two stores behind the Lexington Presbyterian Church.[42] With the assistance of his sons, whom he trained as builders, he erected Jordan Alum Springs, and the home which is now the Virginia Military Institute Hospital.[43] He also erected a home, no longer standing, for his son Samuel west of the iron furnace on the old Buena Vista road.[44] In 1850, when the Virginia Military Institute adopted the new medieval revival plan of A. J. Davis for its new barracks, interesting but certainly not unexpectedly, it was the classical revivalist and Renaissance man John Jordan who contracted to do the stonework.[45]

"Col. John Jordan" is buried in the Stonewall Jackson Cemetery at Lexington, and his tombstone states that he "died June 25, 1854, aged 77 years." A portrait of him is in the Rockbridge Courthouse, and shows a man of force and appearance, which he was. His record is roundabout.

FOOTNOTES

1. Marshall W. Fishwick, "John Jordan, Man of Iron," *The Iron Worker,* XXI, No. 4, Autumn, 1957, p. 1.

2. Henry Boley, *Lexington in Old Virginia,* Richmond, Garrett and Massie, Inc., 1936, p. 185.

3. Jerry J. Donovan, "John Jordan, Virginia Builder," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, IX, No. 3, p. 18.

4. Harrington Waddell, "Colonel John Jordan," paper read to the Fortnightly Club, Lexington.

5. Kathleen Bruce, *Iron Manufacture in the Slave Era,* New York, the Century Co., 1931, p. 135.

6. *Lexington Gazette,* "A Family of Builders," December 29, 1931.

7. John S. Moore, "John Jordan, Rockbridge Baptist Layman," *The Virginia Baptist Register,* 1963, No. 2, p. 57.

8. *Lexington Gazette,* Bicentennial Issue, Section III, p. 14.

9. *Rockbridge County News,* May 22, 1890, p. 31.

10. Moore, p. 54.

11. *Ibid.*

12. Fishwick, p. 2.

13. Boley, p. 77.

14. *Ibid.*

15. *The News Gazette,* "For a Tribute to Noted Builder John Jordan," Lexington, Va., April 1, 1964, Section II, p. 2.

16. Fishwick, "John Jordan, Virginia Builder," *Rockbridge County News,* January 4, 1951.

17. Fishwick, *The Iron Worker,* p. 3.

18. Moore, p. 58.

19. Moore, p. 57.

20. William Couper, *One Hundred Years at V.M.I.,* Richmond, Garrett and Massie, Inc. 1939, 1-8.

21. Fishwick, *Rockbridge County News,* op. cit.

22. Jerry J. Donovan, "Colonel John Jordan, 1777-1854," term paper in Humanities 253 for Prof. M. W. Fishwick, March 1950.

23. Fiske Kimball, *Domestic Architecture of the American Colonies and of the Early Republic,* New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1922, p. 179.

24. Howard Major, *The Domestic Architecture of the Early American Republic: Greek Revival,* Philadelphia, J. B. Lippincott Co., 1926, p. 24.

25. Kimball, p. 146.

26. *Lexington Gazette,* Bicentennial Issue, p. 3.

27. Boley, p. 185.

28. William Henry Ruffner, *Continuation of the History of Washington College,* Washington and Lee University, Lexington, Va., Historical Papers, Baltimore, John Murphy & Co., 1893 No. 4, 92-3.

29. *Ibid,* 94-5.

30. J. Everette Fauber, "Research Report Relating to the Barclay House, Lexington, Va., July 13, 1966, p. 2.

31. *Ibid.,* p. 29.

32. *Ibid.,* p. 30.

33. *Ibid.*

34. *Ibid.*

35. J. Randolph Kean, "The Episcopal Rectory, Lexington, Va." Paper for Fine Arts—201 of Prof. M. W. Fishwick, January 1953, p. 5.

36. *Ibid,* p. 6.

37. *Ibid.,* pp. 15, 16.

38. *Ibid.,* p. 12.

39. *Ibid.,* p. 17.

40. Donovan, p. 5.
41. Couper, p. 59.
42. Moore, p. 59.
43. Fishwick, "John Jordan, Virginia Builder," *The Commonwealth,* XVLL, No. 10, October 1950, p. 14.
44. Couper, 1-225.

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A. J. DAVIS, CREATOR OF V.M.I. GOTHIC

By M. W. Paxton Jr.

Alexander Jackson Davis had completed his plans for the Hudson River Gothic mansion now known as Lyndhurst when the first twenty cadets marched to the snow-covered Lexington arsenal for the inauguration of the Virginia Military Institute.

The highly successful New York architect and the struggling new military college seemed worlds apart on that November 11, 1839. Yet in less than ten years' time was to begin a long association between the man who has been called "the country's leading architect of secular Gothic" and the Virginia Military Institute.

The story of this fruitful association is richly documented in letters which have fortunately been carefully preserved in the V.M.I. archives. Col. George B. Davis, V.M.I. Librarian, has been most kind and helpful in making this material available to the writer.

Describing the conditions at the founding of the Virginia Military Institute, General Francis H. Smith, its builder and rebuilder, wrote, "It was a most unpropitious day to begin the important work in hand."

"A heavy snow rested on the ground. The work on the barracks had been delayed, and the buildings were in a most unfinished condition—without roof, and no rooms in a condition to be occupied except those used by the old guard. The Superintendent had to crowd the little band of Virginia youths, who had accepted their appointments as cadets expecting comfort, at least, eight in a room in extemporized bunks, without shelter overhead. No fuel had been laid in. Their provisions had to be cooked in the sally-port, and every conceivable discomfort existed."

In addition to the twenty state cadets, there were twelve pay cadets on the rolls at the end of that first year.

In spite of the physical hardships that year and the very rigorous examinations given orally in the presence of the board of visitors, the Institute's patronage the following year succeeded "the most sanguine expectations." The number of cadets doubled and the increase was exclusively in the pay cadet category.

The progress of the new institution continued.

As Superintendent Smith, who then held the rank of Colonel, expressed it, "By a steady adherence to the fundamental principles which had been ennunciated at the beginning: viz., *thoroughness in the distinctive scientific education supplied,* and *perfect discipline,* the Virginia Military Institute, which had been started as a doubtful experiment, so advanced, year by year, in the public confidence and in the public support, that

the number of applicants for admission, as pay cadets, largely exceeded its ability to accommodate."

Discussions among Institute leaders of the needs of the school culminated in a report to the board by General Smith in June, 1848, calling for an appeal to the State Legislature for an appropriation of $50,000.00 for removal of the old barracks and construction of a new building, "upon the most approved architectural plan, so that the institution should be presented in its buildings and grounds in such proportions and beauty as would be in harmony with its established reputation."

The most ardent supporter of this project was Philip St. George Cocke. Named a member of the board in 1846, Cocke "was a man of great wealth who brought to the V.M.I. board a great enthusiasm," according to Col. William Couper, V.M.I. historian.

The aristocratic planter, whose father had been instrumental in the founding of the University of Virginia, hoped to see V.M.I. become the great polytechnic institute of the South, and he yearned to provide it with a physical plant of architectural excellence and taste.

He wrote in July of 1848, "Would it not be well to form at once, an adequate and tasteful design for the future extension of the buildings. . . . In the end an harmonious whole shall be procured—beautiful and inspiring in style as well as commodious and well adapted to the purposes in view."

General William H. Richardson, another V.M.I. board member who supported the new barracks idea, suggested that the case might be more forcibly presented to the Legislature if plans were prepared in advance. Cocke, who in the preceding ten years had spent about $60,000.00 on the buildings at his plantation, Belmead, in Powhatan County, proposed the employment of his architect, Alexander Jackson Davis.

When Major William Gilham, of the V.M.I. faculty, went to New York in the fall to purchase philosophical and chemistry apparatus, he called on Davis.

Satisfactory terms were agreed upon, and on November 6 the Superintendent wrote Davis summarizing the barracks project.

The letter, in Colonel Smith's clear handwriting, is still quite legible today. It eloquently attests to the fact that, although Mr. Davis was drawing the plans, Colonel Smith had developed the layout in great detail. Some excerpts from that letter will illustrate how strongly the first Superintendent put his stamp upon the Virginia Military Institute.

He outlined the layout as follows:

"The main front of the building to be, say 225 to 240 feet.

"The depth of the square to be 150 feet. The plan will then form a rectangle. . . .

"The Barracks to be made four stories high, with the barracks rooms opening upon piazzas in the inside of the square, the rooms to accommodate three cadets and to be about 20 x 16 feet or equivalent. The object being to accommodate 200 cadets.

"The barracks to be heated with hot air . . . it is proposed also to light with solar gas.

"The estimate for completing one main front and one lateral front . . . not to exceed $30,000.00.

"The Barracks to be entered by one arched door in front.

"The barracks rooms for the cadets to be entirely disconnected from each other.

"The main front faces south," Col. Smith explained, "the east front faces the river, the west front faces the town. It is proposed now to complete the southern and western fronts, but in the plan for the western front regard should be had to its prominence in facing the town of Lexington and also the parade ground. The stage road passes parallel with the southern front."

The building, as outlined by the Superintendent, was to include not only cadet living quarters, but also "a philosopical academy embracing arrangements for chemical laboratory, instruments, etc., . . . two lecture rooms . . . two debating society halls . . . and a library room."

And the Superintendent duly noted, "Such a plan and estimate Maj. G. informs me you will prepare for $50.00."

This notation would hardly seem to bear out an assertion made by Wayne Andrews in his book, *Architecture, Ambition and Americans,* that the work done for V.M.I. by Davis was "a spectacular commission."

By the first of December, according to Col. Couper, Davis had his sketch plans in good shape and forwarded them to Lexington with the remark: "I have now performed all that was proposed to Major Gilham and with the calculations I have made I cannot think a cheaper building could be devised for the accommodation, or that the part colored red on plans, would exceed the sum of $30,000.00. Indeed, it may cost just what you will, by adding or cutting off 17 foot sections at pleasure . . . P. S. I think the building would look well in the natural brick color, without stucco, using stone for coping and foundations."

Col. Smith replied on January 13, 1849, "Absence in Richmond has delayed my attention to the claim you have against this institution for the elegant drawing you so promptly prepared for it. Above is check for $50.00."

Further impetus was given to the proposal for a new barracks by a petition to the Legislature from the corps of cadets which stated that the existing barracks rooms, measuring 15 x 16 feet, were each occupied by

four men; that fifty wood fires had to be kept burning day and night and that some rooms were often flooded with water.

Col. Smith and Col. Cocke presented the case to the General Assembly in Richmond and the action that came out of that Assembly March 16, 1849 injected a new note into the Institute's planning for the future.

The bill called for the V.M.I. board of visitors to investigate the possibilities of finding "a more suitable location for the Institute . . . combining the advantages of health and grounds better adapted to all military exercises."

The act was prompted, at least in part, by an unfriendly atmosphere fostered by some local merchants as well as by certain elements at Washington College.

Col. Smith himself favored a move of the institution to Mount Vernon. He noted in his history of V.M.I. that "the friends of the Institute had seen, with great dissatisfaction, the unfriendly, if not hostile attitude sustained by the town of Lexington toward the Virginia Military Institute, as exhibited: first, in the presentment by the grand jury and subsequent prosecution of the Superintendent, upon the charge of selling goods without a license; second, in the effort to assail the Institute and its administration upon the charge of sectarianism; and, third, in the still more serious attempt made by the Trustees and Faculty of Washington College to circumscribe the work of the Institute. . . ."

The grand jury action against the Superintendent had been brought when he took the procurement of cadet uniforms out of town. The case was dismissed upon motion of counsel for Col. Smith, the Hon. John White Brockenbrough.

The directive of the Legislature was a bombshell in Lexington.

A public meeting of citizens held in the Court House on June 4, 1849, and presided over by former Governor James McDowell, passed a resolution urging retention of the school in Lexington, and calling on Washington College to join in a similar resolution. The document stated, in part, "we rejoice to see the harmony that prevails between the professors, students and cadets of the two institutions. . . . And we are gratified to find that the only effect of their being located in the same vicinity has been to stimulate the professors and students in both to extraordinary exertions in their respective avocations."

On the twenty-first of the same month, the trustees of Washington College resolved that they had "no desire for any change in the present location of the Virginia Military Institute. . . . and there need be no conflict between the two institutions to disturb their present harmonious relations."

In the late summer the board of visitors began an investigation of sites ranging from Winchester, Romney, Martinsburg and Alexandria to Waynesboro, Buchanan and Salem.

The board then met in Lexington on September 15 and decided that "considering the extent and cost of the buildings already erected here, and the great loss the State would sustain by removal to another place, the board therefore deem it inexpedient to remove the Institute from its present location."

A renewed request to the Legislature for $46,000.00, including $30,000.00 for the new barracks, won approval by large majorities in each house in an act passed March 8, 1850.

No one in Lexington knew of the passage of the bill when Col. Smith returned to town from Richmond, and the Superintendent's own account of his breaking the news reveals a genuine sense of humor.

"I kept it a profound secret from everyone but my wife; and requesting her to have a nice supper prepared, I wrote a note to Major Preston, (J. T. L. Preston)and invited him to come down and bring our friend John B. Lyle with him, and take supper, and I would then give them an account of the condition and prospects of our bill. They promptly came, but found me very slow to answer their many questions. I told them I had a great deal to talk about, that I had had a long ride, was very hungry, and after we had all taken a good supper and then a smoke, I would be prepared to talk about public matters. There was nothing in my manner to indicate success. . . .

"At last supper was over and we were all seated around the fire. . . . and allowing my wife to form one of the council, I commenced to unfold my budget.

" 'Well, gentlemen, what do you think here as to the prospects of our bill?' Preston said: 'Well, I am in hopes the visit of the cadets will have a good effect.' But Lyle put in: 'Too much money for the State to appropriate. I always thought Smith was too sanguine in expecting to get $50,000.00. . . .'

"In conversation of this kind some half hour or more was spent, and as the minutes glided on, and no revelation made by me of the result, the hopes of both seemed to be getting lower and lower. . . .

"When Major Preston said: 'Well, Colonel, when do you think our bill will come up, for it is getting late in the session?' I replied, 'Our bill was called up on the eighth of March,' speaking very slowly, 'on its final pass-age,' and, putting my hand to my pocket I went through the form of drawing out a bag, 'and here I have the neat little sum of forty-six thousand dollars to begin with. . . .'

" 'What's that you say?' asked Preston. 'None of your nonsense,' said Lyle, and neither would be satisfied until I showed them the documents in a certified copy of the Act of March 8, 1850."

The Superintendent wasted no time but communicated immediately with A. J. Davis, sending him back the barracks plans for the completion of details. He seemed to be somewhat worried by the hot air furnaces, as, he observed, "heating by furnaces is altogether new with us."

He explained that the new barracks would be erected ten feet in front of the then existing barracks building, a hodge podge extension of the original armory building.

He also gave his reasons for recommending a stucco finish for the new buildings, a decision that has been something of a bone of contention ever since.

He suggested stucco, he said, first because of its general effect, second because of its use on existing buildings, and third because local workmen "cannot give us the finished bricks which northern art furnishes."

A lengthy correspondence was begun between the Superintendent and the New York architect.

The cornerstone for the barracks was laid on July 4, 1850, and the front section of the main building was occupied in September 1851.

The Institute has preserved a number of the original letters written by Davis to the Superintendent in the spring of 1850. In some of them the architect sketched various details that were being discussed.

In a letter on March 15, he states that he will "proceed immediately to prepare details" for the barracks plan. He adds that he will send in the mean time a rough sketch for the professors' houses "so as to get your views by the time the details are ready for the barracks."

The houses referred to were the two located between the present superintendent's house and the barracks. They were built in 1853, were burned during the Civil War, were reconstructed and were then moved back and reconstructed again when the parade ground was enlarged in 1914.

On March 19, 1850, Davis asked the Superintendent for a rough sketch of the rooms necessary in the professors' houses, giving "size, number, uses and materials you would use (not pitch pine and plaster, I hope.)"

"I'll hint," he continued, "that one large room 16 to 18 by 20 to 24 might suffice, the rest (even the dining room) may be small, say 12 by 18 or 14 by 14, or with a bay window 10 by 14 is not a bad room for a modest professor."

"These professors' houses, standing on a slope, as I learn . . . should from economy of walking be made as narrow as possible. Besides, a dumpy mass, say 40 by 40, tho somewhat cheaper, would look petty in its narrow front. . . ."

Going on to a discussion of the barracks plans, the architect writes, "Think not of any rooms in the cellar. . . . On a slope the rooms would be damp. . . . A great objection to having habitable rooms in the basement is the necessity of riddling the wall for light where above all it should look like solid rock.

"I will propose that whatever wood you use for doors and inside work be avowed for what it is, not be painted at all—oiled perhaps and lac varnished. You have an abundance of black walnut, I believe—no matter if it be pine. You may turn it into ebony by means of nitric acid."

"This castle-like design would look very well without stucco or paint, leaving the walls brick color, but if desirable to refine a little, a stucco finish would doubtless give more general satisfaction, and a granite imitation would be suitable."

Davis concluded by saying that business would call him to Stanton (cq) in April, and he hoped to stop in Lexington to "visit and examine your site and get just views of the fitness of things."

We are indebted to Philip St. George Cocke for verification of the fact that Davis did actually visit the Institute that spring.

Cocke wrote Col. Smith April 21, 1850, indicating that Davis was then in Lexington and expressing a desire to see him at Belmead to confer with him about the V.M.I. plans and also about improvements at his own place.

It takes quite a bit of deciphering to make out Cocke's scrawly handwriting, but the fact emerges from this letter that he is most anxious for the new V.M.I. buildings to be finished in stone.

He writes, "Stone is certainly the most appropriate material for Gothic buildings and is more durable than brick and stucco, and I suppose would be cheaper too. Houses are built of limestone everywhere in the Valley and I see it is used generally for foundations at Lexington and even at the Institute."

A letter from Cocke to Smith in May followed a visit by Davis to Belmead.

The writer admits that "Davis agrees that stone would be more expensive" for the barracks construction.

"I am quite pleased with Davis' plan for the professors' houses," Cocke continues, "He is certainly a most accomplished fellow in his line. The castellated and battlemented Gothic style which he has adopted is most suitable for military building and is the plainest and cheapest style we could have selected."

Cocke's admiration for Davis' work found expression on another occasion in a letter to the architect himself in which he exclaimed, "If I were autocrat or even emperor . . . I should delight with your aid to

build up the waste places, repair dilapidation . . . and beautify the goodly and glorious heritage of our Rip Van Winkle people."

During this period when V.M.I. was establishing its architectural identity, A. J. Davis was a busy man.

In 1850, at the age of 47, he was at the peak of his career, with clients scattered from New England to Kentucky and Virginia.

Some years earlier he had been selected to be one of a committee of three to arrange and issue the call for the first meeting of the American Institute of Architects, and thus was a founder of the A.I.A.

Born in New York City, the son of a Congregationalist theologian, he was convinced by Rembrant Peale, the well known painter, that his aptitudes lay in the field of architecture.

After studying under John Trumbull, painter of Revolutionary scenes, and perfecting his genius for rendering in Boston, he was invited in 1828 to become the partner of Ithiel Town, a successful architect who had gained wealth from his invention of the lattice truss for covered bridges.

Town had the finest architectural library in the country and Davis had ample opportunity, especially when his partner was on extended trips, to study the collection.

The partnership lasted for seven years, from 1829 to 1835 and was resumed briefly 1842-43 when Davis found that he had more commissions than he could handle alone.

Among the impressive commissions of Town and Davis were the state capitols of Indiana and North Carolina and the New York Customs House, all in the Greek Revival style.

But Davis was strongly drawn to the Gothic style and it is in this romantic genre that he made his great contribution to American architecture.

His interest in this style brought him into association with one of the most influential arbiters of taste in that day.

Andrew Jackson Downing, who, it is said, "interpreted the architecture of his generation with a grace denied to American commentators before or since," chose Davis as his collaborator in his books on landscape gardening. The first of these appeared in 1841. Davis contributed most if not all of the Gothic and Italian illustrations for Downing's books.

The interesting observation has been made by several writers that the Gothic revival, representing as it did a rebellion against the narrow rules of the classicists, was the forerunner of modern architecture. The assymetrical opportunities of the Gothic style provided new freedom in the use of space, just as did the abandonment of classical forms bring new freedom to the concurrent romantic era in music.

To Davis and his associates, Gothic was not a matter of archeology or of slavish copying, but rather "the means of suggesting the poetry inherant in the passing of time," one critic has commented.

One of Davis' greatest achievements was Lyndhurst, the Gothic mansion referred to at the beginning of this paper. Started in 1848, it was more than doubled in size in 1864-67 under Davis' design. It is considered the finest example of the American Gothic Revival mansion. Lyndhurst is situated on the Hudson River where the craggy landscape helped foster a great interest in the Gothic Revival.

Davis' plans for this house, along with his plans for V.M.I. and his other outstanding creations are now in the collection of The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York.

Lyndhurst, once owned by railroad magnate Jay Gould, was left to the National Trust for Historic Preservation by Gould's daughter, Anna, Duchess of Talleyrand-Perigord, and was opened to the public by the National Trust earlier this year.

The old New York University building, by Town and Davis (1832) was one of the earlier major achievements in secular Gothic.

A residence designed for Henry Delamater of Rhinebeck, New Hampshire, in 1844 bears a striking resemblance to the Lexington Presbyterian manse.

In addition to the Gothic mode, Davis designed buildings in the Grecian, Italian and Moorish styles then popular.

In the Italian style Davis drew the plans for "Locust Grove" the residence of Samuel F. B. Morse near Poughkeepsie. A more imposing structure by Davis in this style is the State Hospital for the Insane at Raleigh, North Carolina.

His Grecian buildings included the old library of the University of North Carolina, which later became the Playmakers' Theater, and the administration building at Davidson College, which has vanished from the scene.

His only Moorish style building was the house of Senator William S. Archer of Virginia.

The Gothic house he created for Philip St. George Cocke, Belmead, has been stripped of its umbrage, the Gothic term for porch, and now serves as the administration building for St. Emma's, a Roman Catholic School.

After drawing the plans for the V.M.I. barracks and the faculty houses, Davis designed the old mess hall on which construction was completed in 1854.

The years immediately preceding the outbreak of the Civil War brought another flurry of building activity on the V.M.I. post and there

was another lively exchange of correspondence between the V.M.I. Superintendent and the architect.

Davis wrote Col. Smith on September 15, 1859, "Am glad to hear of the flourishing condition and prospects of the V.M.I." He agreed to have plans for proposed additions ready before a board meeting in October.

"My copy of your barrack plan exhibits the sides in all respects like the front, 236.8 feet and what better arrangement could be made? If this does not furnish room enough, the square might be enclosed as per red color."

On May 18, 1860, Col. Smith wrote Davis that his plan for the superintendent's house "pleases me mightily. . . . Mrs. Smith is altogether pleased with the provision made for her."

Well might they be pleased with the plans. Though not ostentatious or elaborate in detail, the superintendent's house eloquently bespeaks Davis' originality, his eye for graceful shapes and proportions, and his feeling for space. The house was built in 1860.

One detail which was not mentioned here, but which became a family story and is recalled by Col. Smith's granddaughter, Miss Nettie Smith, is the fact that the superintendent's wife quietly insisted that the casement windows typical of the Gothic style were not for her. Her windows must go up and down. And for many years, and maybe even today, they are the only double hung windows in the parade ground buildings.

The Superintendent wrote Davis on May 21, 1860, that excavation had commenced for the foundation of the eastern wing of barracks.

He comments, "It has occurred that we might save the immense cellar the slope of the hill would give by allowing the building to follow the slope of the hill.

"From the corner of the wing as completed I can run back some 90 feet or more. Suppose we round that corner and then run to the northwest by the line of the hill. This would make our area an irregular polygon. Let me know what you think. It struck me we might have something of the effect at the corner like the round tower at Windsor Castle."

The discussion on this suggestion waxes rather heated.

We find a letter from Davis to the Superintendent in November of that year which states: "And now for the Barracks. I am as little wedded to symmetry as any person living (though my wife is quite symmetrical) and yet it has appeared to me from the first that your barracks ought to be 'orderly and well balanced.' Now are we to give up the hope of making our front face the Parade? and with this view to extend a wing on the right of a bold center and thus dominate over the southeast front? . . . And why should your barracks look askance at the town, and over its shoulder at the Parade?

"Is it not probable that enlarged accommodations will be required?" Davis asks. Then, in an imaginary dialogue, he replies, "Yes, more accommodation is wanted now."

"Then why not extend?"

"Because the ground will not admit of it."

"Ah! That should have been thought of at the outset, and a general plan secured for all time. Is there a general plan?"

"Not any very definite one, as we are adding to our grounds, and cannot see exactly how our plot may lie together next year or next century."

"Very well then, plot, front and face with reference to this state of things, providing for all contingencies."

"Ah, would we could!"

"Is it too late?"

"No, we have only to contend with a little piece of low ground on one side of our parade and the limited contents of our purse."

Sketching out a rough plan for the quadrangle in this letter, Davis then goes on to argue for the closing of the court, even if some parts of the building would have to remain unfinished on the inside.

Again the pen proved mightier than the sword. A letter from Davis in February indicated that he had won his point and plans were progressing for construction of a quadrangle whose outer dimensions would be 225 feet by 326.

As the eve of war approached, considerable attention is given in the letters to the question of the location and space in barracks to be occupied by the armory.

In 1860 the V.M.I. Superintendent and Philip St. George Cocke, then president of the Institute Board of Visitors, had been named two of the three members of the state munitions commission and the study and procurement of arms was occupying a considerable part of their time.

In 1861 Cocke, with the rank of brigadier general, was in command of all military operations along the Potomac. At First Manassas he commanded a brigade that played a strategic role in the victory.

He was reduced in rank to colonel when a reduction in the number of general officers was ordered by the Virginia Convention. He was greatly embittered by this and it evidently affected his mind.

While on leave at home he fatally shot himself on the day after Christmas, 1861.

For the last fifteen years of his life he had been a devoted leader of the Virginia Military Institute. Though references here have been confined to his role in bringing the Institute and the architect together, he expressed the hope that V.M.I. would become "the great school of the

physical sciences," and he gave the Institute $20,000.00 to establish a chair of agriculture.

The main surge of the Gothic revival had about run its course by the outbreak of the Civil War, but its outstanding exponent was called back into service for the post-war rebuilding of the Virginia Military Institute.

In October of 1869, Davis replied to a letter from General Smith that he was "much gratified at your progress with the barracks restoration."

Asking whether all of his pre-war plans were lost in the burning of the Institute, he observed that if they were "it will take time to make out the whole of so great a work and I must send such items as you first need and designate by piece-meal."

The architect outlines the work he had done from 1859 to 1861, including:

"General plan for barracks addition with an elevation for new front, October 15, 1859." The charge for this work was $50. Also, among many other items, "Maj. Gilham called and we passed the day in planning, $10."

Of the total fees of $160, $70 had been paid on account February 14, 1861 and a balance of $90 was still due.

"Few or none of these drawings were duplicated," Davis wrote, "much being in letters and others too elaborate to admit of being copied at the very small amount charged as fees, compared with ordinary demands by architects, the same being a labor of love in good part. . . ."

It can be assumed that the pre-war plans were destroyed in the sacking of the Institute, as Davis goes on to say that he would proceed with preparing the plans he had duplicates of and he asked the Superintendent to help him recall others. "I shall presume that we had all digested well and that we wish to adhere to what we made in 1861," he comments.

A week later he was writing to General Smith, "I send you a general plan of the entire block of barrack building by which alone the additions and mode of extending the pile can be judged as expedient and all wants be provided for at the smallest cost. And here it is that I may be able to save you two or three thousand dollars. At this you will cry, hear! hear!"

Two days later he writes expressing his displeasure at the news that the level of the parade is eight feet above the line of the principal floor of the barracks building. "The whole mass will appear from the parade as sunken in the earth," he laments.

He concludes with a typical Davis comment, "It is a great work and requires much discussion. God himself assisted David in a plan for the temple, but who shall assist us?"

His letters that followed in ensuing weeks were rich in literary allusions. Discussing the placement of stairs to the chapel he writes, "To place the stairs in the towers only will be "by indirection to find direction out."

He accompanies his plans for the chapel on November 10 with an eloquent plea for their acceptance in all their Gothic richness.

"In the V.M.I.," he writes, "you will agree with me that the buildings should be as correct as it is in our power to make them, with regard to the style adopted, both within and without; and that our audience hall should be shaped and seated according to the laws of phonics etc., and that cadets returning to their homes should be enabled to serve on building committees and have a competent knowledge of Castellated, Collegiate, Memorial and Domestic Gothic . . . that the stigma justly cast upon American architecture shall no longer apply.

"I do not ask that you should yield one iota in regard to convenience and appropriate use, for

'Can beauty deign to dwell
Where use and aptitude are strangers?' also
'Taste, never idly working, saves expense.'

"In all events, our towers and turrets will be of great use as abutments and I leave it to you if their size is not also productive of grandeur."

The correspondence continues apace throughout 1870. In February he encloses a large drawing for the memorial chapel, and the finance problem crops up again.

"I cannot justify myself," he notes, "in going on with other details as in looking over my diary I find items of drawing to the amount of $200, and more than this I do not wish to note without your sanction."

In April he mentions the fact that the duplicate of his design for the V.M.I. chapel was then in the National Academy spring exhibition.

Later that month we find a remarkable communique from the New York architect.

"My Dear General," he writes, "I have a project, first proposed by Capt. Bobadil, which I submit to your 'high consideration.' You are to have a topographical survey made of the region around Lexington, with a view to its being made (the whole twelve or more miles) a 'Rockbridge Park,' that a nursery or botanic garden for exotic hardy shrubs and trees be got up under the auspices of the V.M.I. or yourself, out of which and at reasonable prices young men of your Institute and others may be

induced to invest a small capital in park lots (as places for summer retreat, hunting &c after the manner of English sportsmen in Scotland) . . . That Davis be invited to deposit in the library of V.M.I. plans for simple but elegant 'hut cottages' to cost, say $500 to $5,000 each. . . . Bobadil (a landscape man) to receive one per cent on the whole outlay and the architect one per cent.

". . . That club may serve as a model in its way for the whole people in all parts of the sunny south, 'high, low, Jack and the game' (high and low lands are referred to, not people, there are no low people in Virginia) . . . Lexington with its memorial chapel and galleries of art, chemistry, natural history and agriculture and a splendid library would be the Versailles, or rather the Athens of the South and your V.M.I. the very academie of the new world."

Whether intended seriously, or a mere lighthearted whim, this letter shows a decided lack of comprehension on the part of Mr. Davis of conditions in the Valley of Virginia five years after the close of the Civil War.

The fact should not be overlooked, however, that he showed great interest in helping V.M.I. acquire books to reestablish its library.

There is a sharp change in tone in a letter of July 7, in which the architect complains about the Superintendent's failure to answer questions. He comments acidly, "I presume that you yourself are too much exercised in educational and other present affairs that you cannot give time to the future."

One gathers from the letters later that year that the Gothic details with which Davis was preoccupied were a bit precious for the down-to-earth Superintendent of the Virginia Military Institute.

Davis gives details of windows for the chapel and comments that "the designs of William of Wickham are models for all time." He is much concerned in another letter over whether "we should not make every part of our chapel iconological."

The last letters in the V.M.I. collection, dated in October, 1870, refer to the architect's financial embarrassment and report that he has drawn upon the Institute's account for plans he has submitted.

Undoubtedly there was further correspondence, as Davis lived until 1892, dying at the age of 89. And the Institute continued to build upon his plans until the present century. In the work that Bertram Goodhue, another eminent architect, completed for the Institute in 1915, the extension

of the north end of the west wing of the barracks was a continuation of Davis' design, and the Gothic motif was continued in Jackson Memorial Hall, and in additional parade ground houses.

It has been said that the style of architecture developed at V.M.I. became a model for military schools throughout the country.

This may be an overstatement.

Jane B. Davies, who has been studying the work of A. J. Davis for nearly a decade, has verified the fact that West Point had Gothic buildings (not Davis') before V.M.I. did.

But she points out that, "as V.M.I. developed, it presented a more unified Gothic appearance," and she expresses the view that "the Davis design of the V.M.I. Barracks is superior to the West Point one."

As one of the early Gothic campuses and, certainly, one of the most successful, the Virginia Military Institute buildings have undoubtedly strongly influenced other military campus planners.

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John Gilchrist Barrett, professor of history at VMI, and Colonel in the Virginia Militia, spoke on "Lexington Baptists" at the fall meeting of the Society on October 28, 1968, at the Manly Memorial Baptist Church. Colonel Barrett is the son of a Baptist minister. He received his B.A. at Wake Forest College, his M.A. and Ph.D. at the University of North Carolina. His special field is the Civil War and the reconstruction period at VMI, where he has taught since 1956. His books have included *Sherman's March Through the Carolinas,* published in 1956, which was a selection of the Civil War Book Club, *The Civil War in North Carolina,* published in 1963 by UNC Press, and *Letters of a New Market Cadet,* edited by Barrett & Robert K. Turner, Jr., 1961, UNC Press. *Yankee Rebel: Civil War Journal of Edmund DeWitt Patterson* published by the UNC Press in 1966 has an introduction by him, and he has also edited, in conjunction with Dean Frontis Johnston of Davidson College, the papers of Zebulon Baird Vance, Civil War Governor published by the Department of Archives of the State of North Carolina in Raleigh.

LEXINGTON BAPTISTS, 1839-1887

By John G. Barrett

Manly Memorial Baptist Church has had an interesting history but its story is one of struggle against great odds. For some years prior to Manly Memorial's organization, most of the Baptists of Lexington had their membership at Neriah Baptist Church, which is located about five miles northeast of town near the old Buena Vista furnace. Although the Baptists of Lexington desired a church of their own, they were too weak numerically and financially to support one. From the beginning they have been a minority group in Rockbridge County.

Baptists did not find it easy to start a church in Lexington. Rockbridge was largely settled by Scotch-Irish Presbyterians who entered the county in the eighteenth century. These fearless people entrenched themselves to drive out the Indians and to make a permanent home for themselves. They formed a closely knit society which made it difficult for other denominations to gain a footing. Many of them having come down the Valley from Pennsylvania were strangers to the customs and practices of those living to the east of the Blue Ridge Mountains. It was often said by those across the hills that the people in the Valley were different.

Although Baptists were virtually unrepresented in Rockbridge during its early history, they were strong in the neighboring counties of Amherst, Nelson and Bedford. The Baptists in these bordering areas began to work

among small groups of Baptist people who had migrated to the fringe areas of Rockbridge. The first Baptist church in the county, was founded at Papp's Mill in 1798 as a result of the labors of a Bedford County minister, Nathanial Shrewsbury. Since the church was near the county line a number of the members lived in Botetourt County. But the church failed to take root and faded out of existence before 1840.[1]

The second Baptist church in the county, Neriah, was established in 1816. The impetus for organizing this church came from a group of Baptist people who had moved from Amherst County shortly before this time. The newcomers were: John, Benjamin and Washington Camden; Nicholas Jones and Benjamin Noel, who were connected with the Camdens. Since there was no Baptist church in this section, these families called on their kinsman in the ministry, William Duncan of Amherst County, to preach for them. It is not known when Duncan first preached in the area, but he performed in Rockbridge the marriages of two of Nicholas Jones's daughters Lavinia Jones to John Buntin on October 8, 1811 and Elizabeth Jones to Moses McClure on February 18, 1812. Probably beginning his preaching about this time Duncan went on to form Neriah Church and serve as its first pastor. The church was admitted to the Albemarle Association in 1816.

William Duncan served four other churches in the Association and though these churches, along with Neriah, were well able to support him, he never accepted remuneration for his work. Valentine M. Mason, editor of *The Intelligencer,* a local newspaper, decided for the ministry and was ordained by Duncan on July 11, 1819. Immediately after his ordination he became pastor of Neriah serving until 1832, but unlike his predecessor, Mason accepted a salary for his services.

The first six members to sign the articles of faith in the constitution of the church were: Benjamin Camden; Nancy Camden, wife of Washington Camden; —Seyton; —Gray; Valentine M. Mason and Mrs. Lucy Jordan, both of Lexington. About the time of the organization of the church, Colonel John Jordan, husband of Mrs. Lucy Jordan, constructed a sturdy brick church building which is still used by the congregation today. The original deed to the church land was never recorded, but the church was built near the home of Nicholas Jones and was probably situated on land he leased from Hobert, Moses and Alexander McClure.

The influence of the Jordan family was decisive in stabilizing the church during its shaky infancy. Although Col. Jordan was not a Baptist when Neriah was founded, he was won over by his zealous wife and became a staunch supporter of the Baptist cause in Rockbridge. A number of Lexington residents joined Neriah through the influence of the Jordans.[2]

As the Lexington Baptists increased in number they began to think of a church in their town. By 1839 the flourishing community claimed two institutions of higher learning: Washington College and the newly-formed Virginia Military Institute. With Baptist students and faculty members entering from other areas it was felt that a church was needed to minister to the growing needs. Cornelius Tyree, a native of Amherst County, came to Rockbridge in the summer of 1839 as a missionary of the Baptist General Association of Virginia. This youthful minister 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 the county seat.

Tyree began to stir up interest for a new church. He wrote on August 29, 1839: "We are making an effort to build a Baptist church in this place (Lexington). We think if the brethren generally will give us some assistance, there is but little doubt of success."[3] He presented the matter to the meeting of the Albemarle Association in August, 1840, and the following resolution was passed: "Resolved that we approve of the effort of our brethren 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."[4]

A rather daring procedure was followed in the establishment of the church. The building was completed before the congregation was organized! This was due to the faith and foresight of John Jordan. With characteristic initiative and boldness he did not wait for funds to be collected for the new building. He felt that a Baptist church was needed, so he began construction of the new edifice on a Nelson Street lot between Main and Randolph Streets belonging to Thomas W. McCue of Augusta County.[5] This lot is now occupied by two stores at the rear of the Lexington Presbyterian Church. It required no small amount of risk to start building even before there was an organized church. There was no assurance that the funds would be collected. In fact, there was no positive guarantee that the Baptists would successfully support this new endeavor. Construction seems to have begun in late 1840. By May, 1841, the new brick structure was completed and ready for occupancy.

Soon after the building was finished, a revival was held under the direction of Cornelius Tyree. During this meeting, James Remley, William Margrave and Tyree, a council of three ministers, met "to inquire into the propriety of constituting a regular Baptist church. After mature deliberation it was deemed expedient to constitute the Baptists in and around Lexington into a church. . ."[6] This council of ministers then proceeded to draw up a statement of beliefs consisting of eleven

short sections dealing with Christian articles of faith in general. It was determined that the new church should be called "The Lexington Baptist Church of Jesus Christ."

On Sunday May 9th the Lexington Baptist Church was officially organized. At least nine of the sixteen charter members were from the Jordan family.[7] On the following day, Monday, May 10th, a church conference was held at which Tyree was elected pastor. John Jordan and his son-in-law, William W. Davis, were chosen as deacons. Jordan's son, Samuel Francis Jordan, was made church clerk.

The sixteen charter members were John Jordan, Samuel Francis Jordan, William W. Davis, Hannah W. Jordan, Elizabeth Barnet, Lucy W. Jordan, Ann Davis, Jane Lee, Elizabeth Jordan, Lucy A. Christian, Evans Christian, Lucy A. Winn, Cornelia M. Dabney, Mary Morman, Amanda Lewis and Isabella McCown. There were twelve women and four men in this group.

Although the church began during a revival, an additional meeting was held in July. Cornelius Tyree had written on Wednesday, May 21, 1841, only three days after the church was organized: "We have just closed our protracted meeting in this place, which I can but hope upon the whole, resulted in much good to our cause. During our meeting we constituted a church. . . In this number there are some who promise usefulness in the cause of Christ. The prospects for the enlargement of our number are by no means discouraging. We intend holding another protracted meeting in the course of a month or two."[8] In August Tyree was able to write: "The Lord is at this time blessing us with his pardoning and reviving presence. A few weeks since, assisted by brethren I. S. Tinsley, Hughart and Dempsey, we commenced a protracted meeting. . . Fifteen willing subjects have already been added to our church by baptism, and there are others who are expected to follow their example soon. (Our number) is now 46. There is, I hope, an increasing interest in favor of the distinctive features of our denomination."[9] It is interesting to note that one minister seldom did all the preaching in a revival. Several were usually present to assist with this phase of the meeting.

The Lexington Baptist Church was received into the newly created Valley Baptist Association at its first meeting on August 7-9, 1841. It was represented by Cornelius Tyree, John Jordan, Samuel F. Jordan and William W. Davis. Tyree was elected clerk of the new Association. At last the Baptists were strong enough in the Valley to have their own Association, and in Lexington and the hub of Rockbridge County life, they were sufficiently able to maintain a church.

In addition to the support of the Jordans another family was also a source of strength during these early years. Tyree spoke of this dedicated

couple as follows: "In the second year of my pastorate, Professor George E. Dabney of Washington College, professed religion and joined our little struggling band. He was a most valuable addition. His noble and accomplished wife, Mrs. Cornelia M. Dabney, had been from the start of my ministry in that town my most efficient helper. Never have I known so valuable a christian woman. Till her death she was my fastest friend."[10]

There is an interesting story in connection with Professor Dabney's reception into the Lexington Baptist Church on Jan. 29, 1843. As a result of this action he felt compelled to tender his resignation to the authorities at Washington College. This is explained by a student in the college, Richard Watkins, who wrote the following to his brother on February 11, 1843. only 13 days after Dabney joined the church: "Professor Dabney stated his reason for resigning before the board of trustees that he had joined the Baptist Church and feared they would not like to have a Baptist professor in college. They told him that this was not so strict a sectarian institute as to think less of him for that and gave him leave to withdraw his resignation. I suppose that he will withdraw it."[11]

Actually Professor Dabney kept his job and remained in Lexington. He became active in the church and was made superintendent of the Sunday School and lated served as teacher of a Bible class.

The first building of the Lexington Baptist Church was rather small by today's standards and nearly square in shape. It had no vestibule and stood some distance from the street. When the large and imposing building of the Lexington Presbyterian Church was completed at the corner of Main and Nelson Streets in 1845 it largely hid the Baptist structure from view. This caused no small comment, and the wish was often expressed that the Baptists might have a church which could be easily seen from Main Street. However, it required more than forty years for this dream to be realized.

The early baptisms were performed in the North River, frequently on week days. But on August 28, 1847, at the insistence of John Jordan, the church voted to erect a baptistry. The minutes do not reveal when this baptistry was completed. Just prior to this action Colonel Jordan was also authorized to enlarge the church building for the use of the pastor, John N. Brown. Apparently space was provided behind the auditorium for the scholarly pastor to use as a study. At the same time a small building, which must have been a privy, was also ordered to be erected on the back of the lot.

Church business sessions were required on the Saturdays before the first Sunday in each month. During the first years the business of the church was not confined to these Saturday meetings. Often a business session would follow the Sunday service or the Wednesday night meeting.

Each adult male member was expected to be present. Those who habitually absented themselves were subject to church discipline. Women had no voice in the proceedings. In the minutes of the business meetings the women, though doubtless present at times, were not listed. However, at one session the clerk made a grudging parenthetical acknowledgement of their presence: "At a regular meeting on October 7, 1848, the roll was called after singing and prayer when the following brethren (besides several sisters) were present: Brown, J. Jordan, S. F. Jordan, McManama, Bobbitt, Wilmore, Adams, Hill and Davis."

Rather strict discipline was maintained. It was felt that the members of the church should live exemplary lives and that they should settle any differences among themselves out of court. Members were expected to be regular in attendance at worship. Such offenses as profanity, drunkenness and adultery were reported at the business meetings. When charges were made a committee was usually appointed to investigate and report at the next meeting. If the charges were found to be true, the offender was requested to be present for questioning. He was often "unchurched" until he convinced the brethren of his "repentance" and desire for "reformation." Church letters were not granted to any who had differences with others in the congregation.

The Church did not receive collections at the regular services during the first years. Certain men were appointed to collect funds outside the worship hour. This system did not work satisfactorily, because the treasurer could not meet the church's obligations at times. Frequently the pastor's salary was in arrears. In some cases a settlement was made with the pastor after his resignation and removal from the field. No doubt the minister settled for a fraction of the full amount due him. On April 4, 1846, it was "voted that a public collection be taken up the first Sunday in every month to defray the current expenses of the church." But the subject of a public collection must have been a rather delicate one for some of the members. The regular passing of a collection plate while others looked on prompted their feeling for the need of privacy in giving. On June 3, 1848, it was "voted that a public collection be taken up once in three months on Sabbath afternoon to meet the expenses of the church."

The first pastors were called on an annual basis. Since the church was unable to support fully the minister, he was free to serve other churches. Tyree continued to serve Neriah, along with Lexington, until April, 1845, when he resigned to accept work in Powhatan County.

John Newton Brown a native of New London, Connecticut, succeeded Tyree as pastor coming to the field in September, 1845. Leaving a professorship of theology and church history in New Hampton, New Hampshire, he came South for reasons of health. He published several books

and edited a one-volume religious encyclopedia, *The Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge.* He also revised the New Hampshire Confession of Faith.[12] Brown served the Lexington Church until November, 1849.

Baptists throughout the state were happy with the progress of the Lexington Baptist Church. By September, 1843, the church reported 105 members. After this, however, the enthusiasm cooled off; by September 26, 1846, only 82 members were reported, and of this number, about 30 were negroes. By 1850 the roll had climbed to 118. On May 20, 1854, the church listed 144 members with a total of 33 baptisms for the past year. Without the added boost of successful revivals, the church could not gain sufficient members to offset the losses by death and exclusion.

The first convert and the first person to be baptized into the membership of the church was Milton Smith, a slave belonging to Professor George E. Dabney. He was baptized on June 18, 1841. Incidently, Milton Smith later became the first pastor of the Lexington African Baptist Church which was formed in 1867 when the negro members withdrew from the church to form their own body.

Since a number of the church members [Lexington Baptist Church] were Negroes, it was felt that they should receive a measure of supervision from those of their own race. On Feb. 20, 1842, it was agreed that two of the Negro members should be appointed as deacons to watch over "colored" members. These deacons exercised a measure of discipline over their own group. On March 4, 1843, the minutes reveal that the Negro deacons reported two women who had been disorderly in conduct and recommended that they be excluded from the church, and this was readily agreed to.

On August 1, 1846, one of the Negro deacons, Bro. Samuel Harris, a free man, stated that he had determined on going to Liberia. He said that the Negro members desired to have Brother Milton Smith to fill his place. On October 10, 1846, it is recorded that "Brother Jacob" mentioned was a slave, the property of Dr. Alfred Leyburn. The church also granted letters of dismission on November 10, 1849, to two other "colored" members, Henry Lewis and Mariah, his wife, who were about to go to Liberia.

Though the complete details are not available, there was a separate Negro Baptist Church in Lexington, 1843, but it apparently had no connection with Lexington Baptist Church. Its existence is attested by a deed from Samuel M. Dold for a plot of ground eighteen by thirty feet on which was located a meeting house near Jordan's Point by the North River. This deed was made on October 19, 1848, to two white trustees who held the property for the Negro congregation.[13] The church must have been in existence several years prior to 1848. This is indicated by an entry in the Lexington Baptist Church minutes for October 10, 1846:

"Mary Evans, a free woman of color, presented herself for membership stating that she had joined Mt. Moriah Baptist Church in Amherst County about four years ago, that she came to this place about three years ago, and not having brought her church letter she had joined the Colored Baptist Church at this place." It is not known when this body dissolved.

It seems certain that the Lexington Baptist Church did not have a musical instrument for use in the worship services during its early history. Often times churches of that period had no organ and few hymn books. It was a regular practice for a member to read or "line out" the words of a hymn and then to lead the congregation in singing it. At a business meeting of the church on October 23, 1847, this matter was discussed, and the clerk entered the following in the minutes: "The subject of lining the hymn during public worship was brought before the church, and after some discussion, the meeting adjourned without a decision on the question."

In April, 1850, Adoniram Judson Huntington, a native of Braintree, Vermont, became pastor. He later distinguished himself as professor in Columbia University, Washington, D.C., a Baptist school. He was to become the father-in-law of the distinguished William Lyne Wilson who served both in Congress and in Cleveland's Cabinet before assuming the presidency of Washington and Lee University in 1897. Dr. Huntington remained through part of 1851. He was succeeded by Francis Marion Barker, a Bedford County native, who served from 1852-1854. Barker later was pastor in Baltimore. Here he edited the "Baltimore Baptist and Evangel."

Gilbert Mason, also born in Bedford County, was minister from 1854 to 1856. Mason was an evangelist in the surrounding territory during his pastorate in Lexington. He also served the Natural Bridge Church for part of this period. The 1856 State Mission Report states that during the year he preached 250 sermons, delivered many exhortations, revived the Sunday School at Natural Bridge and baptized 84 persons. He was followed by Vincent Thomas Settle, a Warren County, Virginia native, who was pastor from 1856-1857. Florence McCarthy, Jr., was a popular preacher who came to Lexington in November, 1858 and served through 1860. The exact time of his departure is not known but it appears to have been in early 1861.

The Civil War years were troubled times for the congregation. The church minutes contain only eight entries for the entire period and there is nothing for the years 1862 and 1864. Only from September 29, 1861 to October 1, 1862, did the church have a regular pastor. Samuel Poindexter Huff served for this twelve month interval. He was from neighboring

Botetourt County. During 1863-1865 J. C. Richardson of Neriah Baptist Church served as a supply pastor.

In June, 1864, Lexington was occupied for a few days by Federal troops under General David Hunter. The Virginia Military Institute was burned, but there is no evidence to indicate that any church property in town was destroyed. In this respect the Lexington Baptist Church fared much better than a number of her sister churches in the State.[14]

When the General Association of Virginia met in June, 1865, the war was over and the State was under military rule. Nevertheless, this body resolved: "That whatever may have been our past views, aims or efforts regarding the issues which have divided the Northern and Southern States, we deem it our duty as patriots and Christians to accept the order of Providence, yield unreserved and faithful obedience to the 'powers that be' and to cultivate such spirit and to preserve such a course of conduct as shall best promote the peace and prosperity of the country; and we earnestly recommend to our brethren throughout the state to prove themselves to be loyal citizens of the United States, and to enter with zeal and activity upon the discharge of the responsibilities devolved on them by their new social and civic relations."[15]

It was doubtless in this spirit that the members of the Lexington Baptist Church met in early August " for the purpose of considering a call for a pastor. . ."[16] Their efforts were richly rewarded in November when John William Jones "entered formally upon his duties" as minister. This remarkable man was a native of Louisa County. After graduating from the Univ. of Virginia, he attended the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary and was preparing himself for missionary work in China when his State seceded from the Union. He enlisted immediately as a private in A. P. Hill's 13th Virginia Regiment. Jones was with the Confederate troops from Harper's Ferry to the end of the war and won the title "the fighting parson," serving in the ranks for a year, then as chaplain of the regiment, and after November 1863, as a missionary chaplain to Hill's Corp. He was an author of note. Among his works are: *Christ in the Camp* (1887) *Personal Reminiscences, Anecdotes, and Letters of Gen. Robert E. Lee* (1874), and *Life and Letters of Robert Edward Lee* (1906).

Jones and Lee became close personal friends during the war, the General always addressing him as John.[17] The two men arrived in Lexington in the fall of 1865 (Lee as president of Washington College) and their friendship was to continue. Jones wrote: "It was my privilege to see much of his 'domestic life' . . . to have been the frequent intimate of his model home, and to have seen him in the pleasant intercourse of his family circle.[18] Also on at least one occasion General Lee, who was a devout

Episcopalian, made a generous contribution to the Lexington Baptist Church.[19]

As one of the Washington College chaplains, Jones "attended every morning, the prayers at the college, and the frequent Y.M.C.A. meeting of the students. . ." Furthermore he "held well-attended prayer—meetings at the institute every night" and frequently visited the barracks as well as in the rooms of the college students. "The happiest results followed these labors," he later wrote. "There were a number of conversions among the students, and soon we had a general and all-pervasive revival among the cadets of the Institute, in which 110 of them professed conversion. In the college and the Institute both there were 150 professions of conversion, and of these, 35 became ministers of the gospel, and others were useful church members. . . ."[20]

One of the first things Jones did upon assuming the pastorate of the Lexington Baptist Church was to hold a protracted meeting." Others followed and the statistics of the church for the two years ending October 31, 1867, show eighty-five new members, both "colored" and white, on the rolls.[21] However, a few weeks earlier the Negro members of the congregation "except one Nancy" had asked for and obtained letters of dismission to organize a new church. . . This separation was harmonious as shown by the following resolution spread on the church records:

1st. That the letters asked for be granted and the colored members whose names are on the list . . . be considered dismissed from us as soon as they have regularly united in a church of like faith and order with our own.

2nd. That in parting with those in whose welfare this church has always taken the deepest interest, and for whose spiritual good we have ever been ready to labor, we desire to express our unabated good will towards them, our best wishes for their future prosperity as a people, and our continued readiness to aid them, as far as in our power "in every good work and word."

3rd. That we tender our colored brethren the continued use of our lecture room as their place of worship until they can secure one of their own, and that we will help them to secure a house of worship of their own to the extent of our ability. But it must be distinctly understood that they must use our lecture room only for religious meeting,—that the pulpit is not to be occupied by strangers—and that the room is to be well swept after each of their meetings."[22]

Not only did the church at this time wish its colored members success, but it also withdrew from the Valley Association to be admitted on August 14, 1867, "into the Albemarle Association at its meeting at Mt. Crawford in Augusta County."[23]

It was during Jones' pastorate that the church "conscious of its growing strength" first required the full time of its pastor. But on March 4, 1871, Jones, to the "profund sorrow" of the congregation, submitted his letter of resignation "to become the general agent for the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary located at Greenville, South Carolina."[24]

Dr. Alonzo Church Barron became the new pastor on January 14, 1872, and served the church well for three years. He was a graduate of Howard College in Alabama and the recipient of honorary degrees both from his Alma Mater and Richmond College. While in the Confederate army he contracted a disease which made him a semi-invalid the remainder of his life. It was he who instituted the practice of taking up a collection for the poor after each communion service. Barron was followed by George Broadman Eager (June 8, 1876 - January 1, 1879) who was also a Confederate veteran and the holder of various honorary degrees as well as a M.A. from Mississippi College. Lexington was his first pastorate and while here he took courses at Washington and Lee University. Eager seems to have been a good organizer. He drafted and had adopted a rather lengthy set of "rules and regulations" for the church. One of the standing committees was that of "discipline and reception of members."

Church discipline was exceedingly strict in the 1860's and 1870's as it had been before the war. All members were expected to attend church services regularly, and when one failed to do so, he was visited by a committee and asked to explain his 'neglect of church duties.' Members were expelled from the church for various offenses unless they appeared before the congregation to make "the proper confession and promise." Dancing was definitely frowned upon and even the use of an organ in the church service was questioned.

During this same period the church labored under extreme financial difficulties. Even though the pastors' salaries were small (ranging from $300.00 "and as much more as could be raised" to $500.00 from the church, plus $500.00 from the State Mission Board) they were seldom paid in full. After two years in Lexington Jones complained of "his inability to support himself and family on his present income" and asked the "church to settle definitely on what amount they . . . (were able) to pay him."[25] In efforts to raise money various plans were used. Members were asked to give quarterly, funds were solicited from outside, a committee was established for the sole purpose of raising money, envelopes were tried, six ladies were put on the Finance Committee and finally each church member was assessed a certain amount of the pastor's salary. In case an individual should refuse to pay or subscribe "when in the

opinion of the church, he or she . . . (was) able, then the church was authorized to withdraw fellowship from them."

Despite the apparent lack of funds, the church voted in the fall of 1868 to buy for $5000.00 the Paine house and lot on Main Street (where the Trinity Methodist Church is now located) "for the purpose of there erecting a new house of worship." A down payment of $150.00 was to be made, leaving four notes of $1,212.50 for the remainder. These notes dated October 15, 1868 were signed by G. W. Adams, S. F. Jordan, Wm. W. Davis, John H. Wilmore, Joseph F. Shaner and S. W. Paxton. Only two of these were duly elected trustees of the church—Jordan and Davis. The court decree plainly stated that the men who signed the notes were personally responsible. This proved most embarrassing when the church was unable to meet the payments on the notes and the property had to be sold at public auction.[26] *The Lexington Gazette* May 11, 1877, carried the following: "The Paine property which was purchased several years ago by the Baptist Church in this place, for the purpose of erecting a new church upon the lot, was sold Friday last at public auction at the low figure of $1,590.00, Wm. H. Laughlin, Esq., the purchaser. The authorities of the church agreed to pay $5,000.00 for the property, but had up to the sale extinguished only about $2,000.00 This will leave a debt of about $1,400.00 resting upon the church."[27]

It took slightly over two years to pay off the remaining indebtedness. But with the final payment of $10.84 on August 3, 1879, "a heavy and annoying burden bourne for so long a time . . . (was) finally disposed of." The Pastor, John Lemuel Carroll, wrote in the minutes: "The church is now at rest, "O Lord I beseech Thee send prosperity, Ps. 118:25."[28]

Carroll was a North Carolinian and a graduate of the State University which also conferred upon him the D.D. degree. He served in Lexington from March 1, 1879, to May 28, 1882.

A bright new chapter in the church's history began with the pastorate of James Barnett Taylor, Jr. As the son of the first corresponding secretary of the Foreign Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention Taylor received excellent training for the ministry. Prior to his arrival in Lexington he suffered a serious illness. This occurred while he was serving as pastor of the First Baptist Church of Wilmington, North Carolina. After resigning this work he spent several months recuperating on a European tour. He began his ministry in Lexington in early January, 1884, soon after his return from Europe. His vision challenged the members to deepen their sympathies and to widen the scope of the church's outreach. Many of the more parochial views on church discipline were dropped, and a broader outlook was established.

Dr. Taylor found the Lexington Church building too small and in sad repair. By May 26, 1884, a building committee of five had been appointed. This group employed a competent architect who drafted a set of plans for enlarging and improving the building. On October 17, 1887 the enlarged and renovated sanctuary was dedicated at an evening service. The building had been extended to the sidewalk, and a tower and vestibule had been added. Inside a new balcony was placed over the vestibule. These improvements greatly enhanced the attractiveness of the building. At last the Baptist Church building could be seen from a distance, and the members could point with pride to the steeple which crowned the tower.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. *The Virginia Baptist Register,* Number 4, 1965 pages 165f.
2. *Ibid.,* Number 2, 1963, pages 57f.
3. *The Religious Herald,* September 6, 1839, page 142.
4. Albemarle Association Minutes, August 15-17, 1840.
5. Rockbridge County Deed Book X, page 96 lists the deed of transfer on the church lot on April 25, 1843 for $500.00. The trustees of the church on that date were: John Jordan, Samuel F. Jordan, Wm. W. Davis and Wm. L. Dunkum.
6. Lexington Baptist Church Minutes, Book 1, page 1.
7. *The Virginia Baptist Register,* Number 2, page 60.
8. The Religious Herald, June 3, 1841, page 87.
9. *Ibid.,* page 126.
10. George B. Taylor, *Virginia Baptist Ministers,* Second Series, 1913, page 119.
11. Letter from Richard Watkins to his brother, Nathaniel Venable Watkins, at Prince Edward Court House, Virginia. This letter, in the Rockbridge County Historical Society Collection, was located by Dr. Charles W. Turner.
12. W. L. Lumpkin, *Baptist Confessions of Faith,* 1959, pages 360f.
13. Rockbridge County Deed Book AA, pages 170f.
14. Ryland, *The Baptists of Virginia,* 1955, page 397.
15. *Ibid.,* page 302.
16. The church minutes for the entire Reconstruction period reflect no bitterness toward the North.
17. Riley, *General Robert E. Lee After Appomattox,* 1922, page 186.
18. Jones, *Personal Reminiscences, Anecdotes and Letters of General Robert E. Lee,* 1874, pages 402-403.
19. *Ibid.,* pages 33, 35.
20. *Virginia Baptist Ministers,* Fifth Series, 1915, page 225.
21. Lexington Baptist Church Minutes, Book 1, pages 39-40.
22. *Ibid.,* pages 33, 25.
23. *Ibid.,* page 35. In 1876 the church transferred its membership to the Augusta Association.
24. Lexington Baptist Church Minutes, Book 1, pages 39-40.
25. *Ibid.,* page 37.
26. Rockbridge County Virginia Document File 162, Packet 507.
27. *Lexington Gazette,* May 11, 1877.
28. Lexington Baptist Church Minutes, Book 1, page 52.

Dr. Sidney M. B. Coulling read a paper on the life of Colonel William Fleming, colonial surgeon, patriot, and trustee of Liberty Hall Academy at the winter dinner meeting of the Society at the Robert E. Lee Hotel in Lexington on the evening of January 20, 1969. Dr. Coulling, who took his B.A. degree at Washington and Lee University, and his M.A. and Ph.D. at the University of North Carolina, is professor of English at Washington and Lee University.

COLONEL WILLIAM FLEMING

By Sidney M. B. Coulling

Two hundred years ago this past autumn—on November 20, 1768, to be exact—Israel Christian, an early settler in Augusta County who had acquired extensive lands in the West, gave to his daughter, Anne, some 530 acres in what is now Vinton in the city of Roanoke.[1] Today the property is in the hands of a family named Read and is called Monterey.[2] But in 1768 it became known as Bellmont when the husband of Anne Christian, William Fleming, built on it a large log house which he named after his ancestral home in Scotland. Fleming was the colonial surgeon, soldier, and patriot whose life is the subject of this paper.

He was born in 1728 (new style)[3] in Jedburgh, Scotland, of English parents from Westmoreland County. His father was related to the Earl of Wigton, and when, sometime after the American Revolution, the title of the earldom fell into abeyance on the death without issue of the last earl, Fleming was urged to return to Scotland and claim succession. But he declined, giving as his reason that in America he could provide for all his children whereas the earldom would provide for only one.[4]

As a boy he attended the school of a good classical teacher in nearby Dumfries, and later, after he had decided to become a surgeon, he studied at Edinburgh. While a student there he became involved in one of the numerous Stuart uprisings or attempted uprisings of this period, and apparently only his youth and some influence brought to bear in his behalf prevented his being charged with treason.[5]

Upon the completion of his studies at Edinburgh he entered the British navy as a surgeon's mate. It was a brief career, however, for in some kind of encounter with the Spaniards his ship was boarded and he was captured. He was taken to Spain, where, like most prisoners of war in those times, he was harshly treated, being poorly fed and closely confined. But Providence, intervening as it had after the Stuart uprising and as it would do on more than one occasion in the future, spared his

life. Overlooking the prison garden where he was permitted to walk was the residence of a Spanish lady who took pity on the emaciated figure she saw below her and managed periodically to slip food to him. Fleming never forgot her kindness, and to the end of his life at Bellmont he would not allow persons in want to be turned away from his door, lest, as he would say with a smile, they might be descendants of the good Spanish lady who had saved him from starvation.[6]

Eventually released from prison, Fleming decided to resign his appointment in the navy (which, even without the Spanish affair, seems to have been uncongenial to his taste) and seek his fortune in the Colony of Virginia. He was attracted, no doubt, by the fact that its Lieutenant Governor, Robert Dinwiddie, was a fellow Scotsman. And since an intimacy between the two quickly developed, one concludes that although at the time Dr. Samuel Johnson may have been right in thinking the road to England the noblest prospect a Scotsman might see, young William Fleming was more astute in perceiving that in Virginia the road *from* Scotland was the surest prospect for advancement. He was only in his twenties when he left for America, and he was never to see his native land again.

He could scarcely have come to Virginia at a more opportune time than August 1755, when he landed in Norfolk.[7] In the previous month had occurred the disaster of Monongahela, resulting in the death of Gen. Braddock, the decimation of three Virginia companies, and the exposure of the entire frontier to attack. So serious were the consequences, in fact, that on August 5 the General Assembly met to consider ways of strengthening the Virginia forces. Under such circumstances it is not surprising that Fleming should have gone directly from Norfolk to Williamsburg and there, on August 25, been appointed ensign in the Virginia regiment commanded by Col. George Washington.[8]

For the next seven years he was actively engaged in military service. The record during this period of his life is sketchy, but a few details have survived. In 1756, when he was promoted to lieutenant, he served as surgeon in Maj. Andrew Lewis's expedition against the Shawnees. Two years later he participated in the successful campaign of Col. John Forbes against Fort DuQuesne, and between 1760 and 1762 he was with Col. William Byrd's expedition against the Cherokees.[9] In May of the latter year he was commissioned captain in a newly formed regiment for which he had helped recruit men, as a document in the Washington and Lee library indicates ("You are not to regard the size of the men," he was instructed, "provided they be young, healthy, able bodied, and have good legs").[10] But this was to be only a brief assignment, for the year 1762 marked the cessation of military operations on the ground, and the

regiment was disbanded. For his seven years of military service in the Colonial army Fleming received grants of land which were increased eleven years later with the addition of 3,000 acres for his extra duties as surgeon.[11]

Having at one time during his military service been stationed in Augusta County, Fleming now decided to settle near Staunton and practice medicine. It was there that he met Anne Christian, who, in the language of the eighteenth century, was of good character and gentle birth. She became Fleming's wife on April 9, 1763, in a marriage that linked his name still more closely to the history of this period. Her brother, William, later murdered by Indians, was married to a sister of Patrick Henry. One of her sisters married Col. William Bowyer, another married Judge Caleb Wallace of Kentucky, and a third married Col. Stephen Trigg. Three of the counties of Kentucky—Fleming, Christian, and Trigg—were thus to be named after brothers-in-law.[12]

During the next five years Fleming was "Doctor" Fleming, practicing medicine in Staunton. Then, in 1768, with the acquisition of property from his father-in-law, he retired from medicine and went to live at what was to become known as Bellmont. Except for several long absences this was to be his home for the remaining twenty-seven years of his life.

Because the new property was in territory frequently attacked by Indians, Fleming's first task was constructing a log house that served as a fort for both his own family and neighboring families, who gathered there at the slightest sign of danger. On one such occasion, we are told, one of Anne's sisters, who had been ill and was staying with the Flemings at the time, looked up from the bed on which she was resting and saw an Indian warrior peering through the window. Her scream instantly alerted others in the house, but since they could find no trace at all of an intruder, Anne's sister tried in vain to convince them that illness had not impaired her vision. Years later, however, when a deputation of Indians, returning from Richmond, called at Bellmont, one of the chiefs remarked that he had been there before, had looked through a window, and had quickly departed when he found that the whites were prepared to repel an attack.[13]

Although in settling at Bellmont Fleming had retired from medicine, he had not retired from active life. On the contrary, during the next few years he assumed an increasing number of duties. In December 1769, immediately after the formation of Botetourt County, he became a justice of the peace in the new county, along with, among others, Andrew Lewis, William Preston, John Bowyer, Israel Christian, and Benjamin Estill. They were charged with keeping his Majesty's peace, enforcing all ordinances and statutes of the Kingdom of Great Britain and laws of the

Colony and Dominion, and punishing offenders. The following year Fleming was one of a group of four who supervised the construction of a courthouse and jail, the land for which had been given by his father-in-law, and during the next few years he was assigned such duties as reporting on the condition of the clerk's office, listing tithables and collecting taxes, and serving on the road commission.[14]

His most significant appointment, however, occurred in June 1774, when he was commissioned Colonel in the County of Botetourt and at once became involved in Dunmore's War. On June 10, after a series of outrages had been committed on the frontier, Lord Dunmore issued a circular letter calling up the militia of the western counties, and on July 24 he ordered Col. Andrew Lewis, commander-in-chief of the southwestern militia, "to raise a respectable body in your quarter, and join me either at the mouth of the Great Kanawha or Wheeling, or such other point on the Ohio as may be most convenient for you to meet me." Lewis in turn sent orders to his brother Charles, the county lieutenant for Augusta, and to Col. William Preston, who had just moved to Fincastle. On August 12 Preston, Col. William Christian, and Fleming met at Col. Lewis's to make plans, and nine days later Fleming left for Camp Union (now Lewisburg, W. Va.), where some fourteen companies were arriving in preparation for the march.[15]

From there, on September 4, he wrote to his wife the first of those charming letters with their characteristic blend of tenderness, patriotic fervor, trust in Providence, and manly reticence: "My Dr. Nancy: . . . when I shall march will be uncertain. there are some Indian Spies attending us, and now and then firing on a stragling person they can have an advantage over, that is not too near the camp. as our motions will fully imploy them I think the Inhabitants will be altogether safe whilst we are out, and would not have you give way to Apprehensions of dainger. Col. Lewis informs me he has ordered three Men to Belmont, if they behave well . . . they will be sufficient if they are troublesome Capt Trigg . . . will chainge them, should you be Apprehensive of dainger, or dismiss them alltogether at your discretion. there has bein no damage done here since we came out, but one man Slightly wounded, and one Shot through the Jaw. . . . there are not above two parties of Indians of three or four in each party on these fronteers so that you must give no Attention to any Reports you hear that may Allarm You. I am thus perticular to remove any uneasiness you might be under. I have been in good health since I left home, and have met with nothing that gives me uneasiness. . . . I have nothing more perticular to write but Sentiments not proper to commit to paper, you know my warmest wishes are for your and my Lenny happiness [Leonard Israel Fleming, his eldest son, was

then ten]. I shall take Opportunities as they offer to Acquaint you with our Motions. Remember me to all My Friends."[16]

The next opportunity offered itself three days later, when Fleming wrote again: "My Dearest Nancy—I have an Opportunity which I gladly embrace to let you hear that I am well Your Brother & the Companies from Fincastle reach'd this place Yesterday Mr. Jones informd me, he cal'd, and that you were all well & that you were in good Spirits. this gave me great satisfaction. Trust in God and you need have no fear. . . . I am as easy as a person can be that has left so near & dear conections behind him. but consider my Dr. Girl the Cause engaged in is a good one, and Our Seperation only for a small time. but I must stop writing on this subject. You surely know my reasons for it. I have heard of Sympathizing thoughts posessing the breasts of two Distant Lovers if there is anything in this fond Oppinion You must know what passes in my heart at present and not accuse this letter of coldness. more I need not say, nor would it be prudent to commit more to paper. . . . tell my boy to learn his book & write every day, that I may see what a fine boy he is when I return. . . . If I have an Opportunity I will write before we march, if not I recommend You & the Family to the Protection & Guidance of Divine Providence. And I hope that All Sufficient power will grant us a happy meeting again in a little time."[17]

The opportunity to write did not present itself, for five days later Fleming marched. Under his command were seven captains leading the Botetourt troops, 350 strong, and with them were Col. Charles Lewis and his forces from the Staunton area. In the next ten days they marched the 103 miles to the mouth of Elk River, the present site of Charleston, W. Va., where they paused and where Fleming promptly wrote his wife: "Agreeable to my Promise I take every Opportunity of letting you hear from me, convinced it will afford you the same satisfaction in reading that it gives me in writing to you, even though I have nothing to add to my former but that I continue in health & that nothing extraordinary has hapned as yet. . . . My Dr. Nancy, that You & Lenny are daily in my thoughts, you need not doubt, but as much as I love & Regard you both, I can not Allow myself to wish me with you, till the expedition is finishd knowing that it would Sink me in your esteem, & that you would dispise a wretch that could desert an honourable Cause, a Cause undertaken for the good of his Country in general, and more immediately for the Protection of his Family, as included amongst the Frontier settlers let thoughts like these Animate you and support your Spirits, and remember my Dr Girl that the Divine Being is Omnipresent as well as Omnipotent, that He who rides on the Wings of the Tempest, and derects the Artillery of Heaven, beholds with serenity, the Rage of a Battle & derects each deadly

Shaft where to strike—for a Sparrow falls not to the Ground without his knowledge. His Mercy is more conspicuously displayed, in instances of Preservation & Protection in the fiersest Battles and greatest daingers, than in a calm undisturbed Rotation of time in a quiet peaceble life. thefor My Dr. think me as safe on this Expedition, tho we should have a Skirmish or two with the Indians, as if at home. And should it be the Will of God, that I should fall, I must & can not otherwise think, but that he who dies in the Service of & in the defense of his Country, dies in an Act of Religion. and circumstances considered, dies the death of the Rightious. but my Dr I hope in a few Months to have the Pleasure of personally telling You & my Little Son more perticularly of our proceedings, and till then I Recommend You, him & the Family, to the Protection of that Being who is equally present at this Moment, and at all times, both with You and me, Who knows our most secret thoughts both Now and Always, and is equally Able to preserve you & protect me."[18]

On September 30 the army broke camp, forded the Elk River, and marched down the north side of the Great Kanawha River. On October 6, after a march of nearly sixty miles in less than six days, they reached the upper triangular point of land at the confluence of the Great Kanawha and Ohio Rivers and saw before them a magnificent scene. The dense forests were tinted with the hues of autumn, and the water was so low that the Ohio resembled a lake shimmering in the sunlight. To an army of weary men the view was so appealing that they named this, their seventeenth camp since leaving Camp Union, Camp Point Pleasant.[19]

Meanwhile Lord Dunmore, commanding the so-called northern division of this two-pronged expedition against the Indians, had reached Fort Gower, across the Ohio River from present-day Parkersburg, W. Va. With Dunmore was Col. Adam Stephen, under whom Fleming had previously served. On hearing of his presence in the vicinity Fleming was inspired to write him in the martial spirit of an old comrade in arms: "I was very agreeably surprized this morning when Col. Lewis favoured me with a sight of yours from Hockhocking. to know you was so near, and that we were to make an excursion again together after so long an Interval of ease, rousd in my breast, sentiments I know not what to call them, but surely they are warmer than common lifeless Friendships contracted in indolence or over a bottle A soldiers connections in this light may be compaired to Gun Powder which keapt dry, will with a spark kindle into a blaze." After describing the force he and Lewis had with them—800 well-armed and reliable men, mostly woodsmen, and 200-odd men in support behind them—Fleming asked, "With such a force Col. Stephens would the Shawnese & Mingoes be more than a breakfast?"[20]

Yet this clearly depicted the situation in too rosy a light. There had been difficulties along the way, as Fleming's orderly book reveals. It

speaks of frequent desertions and of thefts of flour and provisions, and some of the orders Fleming was forced to issue—such as those against irresponsible shooting away of ammunition and distributing liquor in such quantities as to make the troops drunk—show that the men were not perfectly disciplined. Fleming himself, though confident, conceded that there were problems. "We have had a verry fatiguing march," he told Stephen. "Our horses are wore out."[21]

At the very moment Fleming was writing to Stephen, the southern division was preparing to resume its march in order to join forces with Lord Dunmore, who was moving from Fort Gower toward the Pickaway Plains, the Shawnee capital. But Cornstalk, the Indian chief, was well aware of the enemy's movements. His spies had been following them all the way from Camp Union, and now, seeing that the two forces would soon converge, he decided that the time had come to strike them separately.

On the evening of Sunday, October 9, the outpost stationed by Col. Lewis reported no sign of Indians in the vicinity. Early the next morning, however, there was a sudden alarm when several men ran into camp shouting that they had been attacked. Immediately some 300 troops were ordered to march out, in two columns. Leading the right one, the Augusta line, was Col. Charles Lewis. Leading the left, the Botetourt line, was Fleming. They had marched no more than three-quarters of a mile when the Augusta line fell under heavy fire, and Lewis was fatally wounded. Seconds later the Botetourt line was attacked and Fleming was seriously wounded, receiving two balls in the left arm and one in the chest.

The wounds were too serious to permit Fleming to remain long in the battle, but several days later his irrepressible spirit asserted itself again as he wrote William Bowyer of the outcome: "We had 7 or 800 Warriors to deal with. Never did Indians stick closer to it, nor behave bolder. the Engagement lasted from half an hour after [sunrise], to the same time before Sunset. And let me add I believe the Indians never had such a Scourging from the English before. . . . that they came fully convinced they would beat us I think is certain. they cros'd the River & encamped the same side with us the Evening before, brought over with them their goods Deer Skins &c: took no pains to conceal themselves, And were boldly Marching to Attack Our Camp when we met them. . . . but God disappointed their Savage presumption. And tho Many brave Men lost their lives, Yet I hope in its consequences, it will be a general Good to the Country, and this engagement will be long Remembered to the Memory & Honour of those who purchas'd the Victory by their deaths."[22]

But Fleming himself was not yet out of danger. Five days after the battle Col. William Christian wrote Col. Preston that he feared he would die. But the following day there was a turn for the better, and by November

6 William Bowyer could write to Mrs. Fleming a letter that fully reveals her temperament: "I think from what my Dear friend writes he will stil Return to continue you happy. I hope he will, therefore pray do not Anticipate your Trouble before it Realy comes. I know your Tender Heart will Suggest every misfortune that possibly might attend the accident, but pray do not so. he is stil In the hands & under the protection of the same kind preserver of us all you[1]. Observe many worthy men were Imediately Calld. off the Stage of action at or near the same time he Receivd. [h]is wounds [about seventy whites died as a result of the battle]. he is still alive therefore instead of being Sorrowfull I think you ought to Rejoice that he was not amoungst the dead."[23]

Yet he was but barely among the living. In his journal for November 10 and the following days he referred to fever, violent pains in the arm, and inflammation of the wounds. On the 15th, nevertheless, he reached what is now White Sulphur Springs; on the 18th, Covington; on the 20th, Fincastle. On the 22nd, the date of the last entry in the journal, he wrote: "Reach'd home in safety being Just 3 months gone Praise be to God."[24]

Fleming never fully recovered from his wounds—the ball in his chest was not removed and periodically caused intense suffering until the end of his life twenty-one years later—but despite them he remained amazingly active. In the spring of 1776, as a matter of fact, he was appointed county lieutenant of Botetourt and in that capacity was ordered a few months afterwards to raise 150 men in an expedition against the Cherokees. It was an order he gladly obeyed. "I am well convinced," he wrote Col. William Preston, "that carrying the War into the Nation, is the only way to secure our Frontiers and make us respected."[25]

He does not seem to have taken part in this expedition himself, but three years later he was called upon to engage in a still more arduous mission. The legislature of Virginia, having taken notice that "great numbers of people [had] settled in the country upon the western waters, upon waste and unappropriated lands, for which they [had] been hitherto prevented from suing out patents or obtaining legal titles," passed on act in May 1779 "for adjusting and settling titles of claimers to unpatented lands." The implementation of the act was entrusted to a commission consisting of Fleming, Edmund Lyne, James Barbour, and Col. Stephen Trigg. For nine months the commission labored, eventually granting over a million acres to more than a thousand claimants.[26]

During those nine months Fleming kept a journal that is one of the most interesting of his documents that have survived.[27] It reveals an observant eye sharpened by years on the frontier and a curiosity about everything: about the process of extracting salt from salt springs, for instance, or the process of making molasses; about the Kentucky

coffee tree and a species of woodpecker he had not seen before; about what forms the hump of a buffalo and how bears can sleep all winter without eating.

The bears, one supposes, were the only fortunate creatures in Kentucky that winter, for the weather was cruelly cold. Fleming's journal reports rivers frozen to a depth of nearly two feet; deer unable to get water or food and found dead in great numbers; turkeys that had dropped dead off their roosts, buffaloes starved to death, hogs frozen to death. Fleming himself had one of his toes frostbitten and some of his fingers frozen, and later he became ill from having lived, he said, "for a constancy on poor dried Buffalo bull beef cured in the smoke without salt and dressed by boiling it in water or stewing it without any addition but a piece of Indian hoe cake which made my breakfast and the same for dinner." In addition to the severe cold and the poor diet there were outbreaks of typhoid fever and frequent Indian massacres. But Fleming remained imperturbable. "My Dr.," he wrote to his wife, "you express great anxiety at the Account of the Murders committed here by the Enemy. it is to be expected they will be as diligent in mischief as possible as they must imagine such a multitude of People coming into this Country must of course make them uneasy, and murders are daily perpetrated in every quarter, but my Dr. Nancy rely on the Almighty. . . . in him is my trust, nor have I the least apprehension."[28] On his return home less than a month after these lines were written Fleming met four survivors of a party of twelve from Lexington who had encountered Indians at Cumberland Gap, and together with them he discovered the bodies of John and Robert Davis of Amherst, scalped and much mangled. On May 27, 1780, he reached home safely, and gratefully wrote in his journal on that day, "I found my Family well and in health after nine months Absence. Laus Die."[29]

But he was not to stay long at home. Two years earlier he had become a senator from the district composed of Botetourt, Montgomery, and Kentucky counties, and by 1780 he was a member of the Executive Council. Thus trips to Richmond and Williamsburg were often necessary. For a time in June 1781, when he was the only member of the Council in Richmond during the Cornwallis invasion, he acted as governor, his acts later being legalized by a resolution of the Assembly.

The following September a severe rheumatic complaint that made his right arm virtually useless caused Fleming to resign from the Council, but once again he continued to be active. Early in 1783 he went to Kentucky on a second mission, this one for the purpose of investigating charges of fraud and misconduct among persons employed by the state. Fleming accepted the appointment despite his ill health and his fear that a

military escort would be needed for protection from the Indians (a fear in which he was prophetic, for the journal he later kept[30] has almost daily references to massacres). He was away from home for some four months, getting as far as Louisville, where he reported that the garrison had almost no beef or flour but plenty of whiskey.

He was back in Kentucky the next year, though this time to attend to personal rather than state business. By now he held extensive lands in the West which required his attention if he intended to keep his claim to them. For part of the journey he was accompanied by his son Leonard, who near present-day Abingdon, Virginia, contracted what was called an ague in those days and was forced to turn back. Fleming continued on alone to Kentucky, where early in December 1784 he wrote his wife an uncharacteristically despondent letter: "I have but a gloomy prospect before me this winter, so far removed from My Dr. Nancy & my Family. but I find it necessary for their benefit that I should finish as much of my business as possible. When I came here I found nothing had been done in my affairs. Friends are rarely to be depended on. What was done, was either wrong, or incompletely done. I have been very diligent since I got in, and constantly on horseback. My claims here are small but it requires a considerable exertion to get a little business done. To me at present it is a most disagreeable Country. At such a distance from home, where my Family may suffer in my Absence, here everything is most extravagantly dear, nothing to be got without money of a higher rate than in Richmond. . . . The weather has been verry bad and the roads verry deep & dirty. frequently my Blanket on a dirty floor for my bed. these are inducements to make me finish as quick as possible which I will do tho at the expense of some land and return to my Dr. Family as soon as I can."[31]

Exactly five years later he was once more in Kentucky on business, and writing to his wife in an almost identical vein: ". . . . however disagreeable it is to me, & inconvenient it is to my Dr. Nancy & the Family it will be March before I can leave this Country unless I leave the whole of my business to do over again. My feelings are greatly hurt by the backwardness of my affairs here."[32] His feelings would have been still more greatly hurt, it might be remarked parenthetically, had he known that after his death his claims would be so neglected that his heirs eventually possessed only a small portion of what their father had once owned.

In the previous year—1788—Fleming had performed his last public service when he was called upon to be a member of the convention to consider a new federal constitution. Ratification finally came at the end of a long and arduous session, but by a narrow margin—89 to 79. Though he would have preferred an arrangement in which the federal

power rested directly upon the states rather than upon the people, Fleming also realized that only a strong union could overcome Indian hostility and thus he cast his vote with the majority.[33]

Not all of Fleming's efforts in these years, however, were concerned with military, business, or political affairs. He was also vitally interested in education. In May 1776, when the Presbytery decided to move Liberty Hall Academy to Timber Ridge, it named Fleming one of the trustees, together with Andrew Lewis, William Christian, Samuel Lyle, William Preston, John Bowyer, and Samuel McDowell. He became a trustee of Presbyterian Theological Seminary (now Hampden-Sydney) when it was incorporated in 1783, and by the same act he became a trustee, along with three other Virginians and twenty men from the Kentucky district, of Transylvania Seminary, now Transylvania College in Lexington.[34] He himself owned a library of more than 300 books that was considered the best in western Virginia during his lifetime. It included the usual military and medical treatises—*Vauban on Fortifications* and *Houston on Ruptures,* for instance—but also a wide selection of works from classical and English literature.[35]

By 1790 the years had taken their toll from Fleming. He had crowded into his life enough adventure for a dozen men and had narrowly escaped death on more than one occasion. But now the old body, racked by illness and aching wounds, refused to respond to the call of a frontier that had finally drained his energies. In the year before his death he wrote to a niece in England: "I have retired from all public business for several years; am now old, my constitution broken, maimed by several wounds, and am often attacked by violent pains in my limbs, brought on by colds and by many years' severe duty in a military line. I am just able to walk a little, after a month's confinement to my bed and room."[36]

He died on August 5, 1795, in the sixty-eighth year of his life, and was buried at Bellmont. It was there, more than a century later, that a memorial was constructed in his honor. On October 25, 1925, before a crowd of several hundred interested persons, it was unveiled by a great, great, great, great grandson, aged four, after which the dedicatory address was delivered. "One hundred and thirty years ago," it said, "there were gathered here a company of people . . . who . . . lowered to his resting place the old hero of Point Pleasant, full of wounds and bearing in his body the marks of Indian warfare and the toils and trials of the long seven years of struggle for our national independence. . . . Here he has slept through more than a century of stirring and striving and development all around him. Generations have come and gone; the name of William Fleming was almost forgotten. We were so busy building a city that we scarcely took time to think of our heroes—the men who

gave us our liberties—or even to know that one of the most notable of them lay buried in an unmarked grave almost at our city gates. But there were a few men and women in Roanoke, not altogether obsessed with the affairs of today, who opened the pages of history, put together the broken records, and located the grave of Col. William Fleming, surgeon, soldier, patriot."[37]

Footnotes

1. Fleming papers, McCormick Library, Washington and Lee University.
2. See the feature story in the Roanoke *Times,* August 7, 1955, p. 25.
3. The generally accepted date, 1729, appears erroneous in view of evidence supplied by the Misses Coulling, of Gloucester County, and by Mr. Edmund P. Goodwin, of Roanoke, who is preparing a life of Fleming for the Roanoke Historical Society.
4. Oral tradition as recorded in a MS. in the author's possession.
5. *Ibid.*
6. Hugh Blair Grigsby, *The History of the Virginia Federal Convention of 1788* (Richmond, 1891), II, 41.
7. *Ibid.* Mr. Goodwin believes that he was living in Nansemond County as early as 1751.
8. Fleming papers, W&L.
9. F. B. Kegley, *Virginia Frontier* (Roanoke, 1938), p. 518; *Colonel William Fleming: Colonial Surgeon, Soldier, Patriot* (Roanoke, 1940), p. 5.
10. Fleming papers.
11. *Colonel William Fleming,* p. 5.
12. Grigsby, II, 43.
13. *Ibid.,* II, 43-44.
14. Kegley, p. 381; *Colonel William Fleming,* pp. 6-8.
15. R. G. Thwaites and L. P. Kellogg, *Documentary History of Dunmore's War* (Madison, 1905), pp. xv, xvii-xviii, 146.
16. *Ibid.,* pp. 181-182.
17. *Ibid.,* pp. 183-184.
18. *Ibid.,* pp. 212-214.
19. Fleming's journal, in V. A. Lewis, *History of the Battle of Point Pleasant* (Charleston, W. Va., 1909), p. 37.
20. Thwaites and Kellogg, pp. 236-237.
21. *Ibid.,* pp. 313-340, 237
22. *Ibid.,* pp. 256-257.
23. *Ibid.,* pp. 265, 299-300.
24. *Ibid.,* pp. 358-360.
25. Kegley, p. 632.
26. N. D. Mereness, *Travels in the American Colonies* (New York, 1961) pp. 617-618, 646.
27. *Ibid.,* pp. 619-655.
28. Letter of April 19, 1780, Fleming papers, W&L.
29. Mereness, pp. 649, 651.
30. It is printed in Mereness, pp. 661-674.
31. Letter of Dec. 3, 1784, Fleming papers, W&L.

32. Letter of Dec. 3, 1789, Fleming papers, W&L.
33. Grigsby, II, 50.
34. Colonel William Fleming, pp. 13-14.
35. "Library of Col. William Fleming," *William and Mary Quarterly,* VI (Jan., 1898), 158-164.
36. Grigsby, II, 52.
37. The Roanoke *Times,* Oct. 26, 1925, p. 2.

Colonel James M. Morgan, Jr. showed thirty-five slides of the Virginia Military Institute from the time it took over the physical properties of the Lexington Arsenal in 1839 to the present at the spring meeting of the Society held at the new Lexington Fire House on April 21, 1969.

The Dean of the Faculty of VMI has seen his school from both sides of "Limits Gates" since he passed through them to become one of its honor winning cadets in 1941. Colonel Morgan joined the faculty in 1946 as an instructor in civil engineering, became professor and head of his department in 1955, and was appointed Dean of the Faculty in September 1965.

THE CHANGING FACE OF THE VMI

By Colonel James M. Morgan, Jr.

Last January, at the beginning of the second semester at VMI, there was presented at the general faculty meeting a brief talk by the author that was called "The Changing Face of the VMI." In short, through the use of approximately 35 slides, I showed the physical development of the Virginia Military Institute. I am pleased to be with you this evening and to present essentially the same discussion.

The talk was prepared as part of a study made by the VMI Planning Board, whose members are Colonels G. M. Brooke, Jr., J. C. Hanes, D. C. France, J. A. McDonough, G. M. Pickral, Jr. and the author. The Board was convened early in September 1968 in order to prepare for the Superintendent, who would submit to the Commonwealth's Division of the Budget that fall, three separate planning and cost estimates:

a) The 1970-72 capital outlay budget for the next biennium.

b) The 1970-76 capital outlay budget for the next three biennia, the standard Commonwealth of Virginia Planning Interim.

c) For use by the Commonwealth's "Revenue Resources and Economic Study Commission" created during the 1968 General Assembly, the capital outlay projections for the ten year period 1970-80.

The Planning Board sought recommendations from all VMI faculty and staff as to what the future Institute would and should look like in 1980. Many excellent suggestions were received and a large number of these suggestions were incorporated into the Planning Board's recommendations to the Superintendent which were ultimately forwarded to the Division of the Budget.

In making its recommendations, the Board had to consider several items. First, the makeup of the Planning Board changes with time. Second, no person now serving on the Board of Visitors will be a member of that body beyond 1977, or an eight year span now so limited by law. Therefore, the planners attempted to achieve a somewhat flexible program, one that can be realistically considered every two years through 1980. As you know, in Virginia budgets are prepared and appropriations are requested and made every two years. At the same time, the planners hoped to submit a comprehensive building program for the Institute. To decide where we were going in our future planning, we first thought it necessary to see where VMI has been, or the various stages of construction that have brought us to our present situation. This discussion summarizes those stages.

Many local persons are fully aware that the Institute opened its doors to cadets for the first time on 11 November 1839, and it is from that date many trace its history. However, I like to feel that the VMI was first conceived, although tangentially, in a letter of 1 April 1816 from Governor Wilson Cary Nichols, and addressed to the Honorable Samuel McD. Moore, a citizen of Lexington. In his letter, Governor Nichols requested Mr. Moore to be the chairman of a five-man body of local inhabitants who would recommend to him the location of an arsenal to be constructed in the western part of the state. Mr. Moore lived in a dwelling located on what is now the VMI Post. The chairman did not have far to look as he walked approximately 300 yards east of his home and there he found a commanding sight overlooking the Valley pike on the south, the Woods Creek ravine on the north, and the Maury (North) River further on the east. The position, a commanding one, rose well above the three terrain features mentioned. Here was built the arsenal. From this beginning, there was ultimately established the Virginia Military Institute. The fact is that the local citizens became disenchanted with the paid militia guard and argued for the establishment of a military school. Instead of militia, cadets were to guard the arsenal. Fees and tuition were not levied on cadets initially as their service as guards exempted them from these payments.

One of the earliest letters extant is from Cadet V. C. Saunders to his parents written twelve days after the Institute formally opened its

doors. In that letter he explained that the arsenal housed some 56,000 stand of arms consisting of old rifles, muskets, pistols and dragoon swords, all of which had an estimated value of $700,000.

The cadets were quartered in the arsenal buildings as was the Superintendent. The arsenal was located on the present barracks site. Late in the 1840's, the Superintendent made an appeal to the state legislature for an appropriation that would permit the building of several structures that the young institution needed. Funds were made available, work soon began and in 1851 the south side of the present Barracks, designed by Alexander Jackson Davis, was first occupied. The new institution was extremely fortunate in obtaining the services of Davis as he was one of the outstanding American architects of the 19th century. His original design has influenced almost all other buildings constructed at the Institute which reflect his gothic revival style. The original construction plan for the struggling institution included barracks, faculty residences and a mess hall.

In time, extensions were made from the original south side of the Barracks northward from the east and west turrets and the plan of the cadets' living quarters resembled a large "U." Completed in 1851, one of the new faculty residences was occupied by the Commandant of Cadets and another by a professor. A new Superintendent's quarters was not completed until 1862 and the chief administrative officer lived from the time he moved from quarters in the arsenal, in a dwelling located on the present parade ground probably opposite the eastern edge of today's Preston Library. The home occupied by Mr. Moore overlooked the fledging institution and stood for more than a century and a quarter after the founding of the arsenal as a symbolic sentinel at the Limits Gates. A structure not designed by Davis, but built in 1848, is still standing today and has seen many uses. It is referred to and so marked as the Old Hospital. There was very little new construction at the Institute during or after the 1860's until around the turn of the century.

As so many of you here tonight know and well appreciate, Lexington was occupied in June 1864 by a federal army and the Institute was severely damaged by the shelling of its buildings and by fire. The barracks, in particular, were left almost in ruin. When the Institute reopened in October 1865, cadets were quartered in a series of "cabins" which occupied the north side of the present roadway (Letcher Avenue extended) from the Barracks to the Old Hospital. Although the initial buildings were restored I am unable to find that there was any new construction until the original Jackson Memorial Hall was constructed in 1896; this was located north of the present day Jackson Arch and the architecture was more ecclesiastical in nature than the completed barracks south of

Jackson Arch. Mr. I. E. A. Rose, VMI Class of 1883, prepared the plans for this new addition.

The development of the Institute after the turn of the century was markedly different from the first 60 years. The second 60 years from 1900 through 1959 saw the following. In 1900 the Smith Academic Building was constructed within the "U" of the barracks and was located just about where the north side of the old barracks is now situated. In 1904, an administrative building, next to the Old Hospital, to house the quartermaster, the post exchange and the tailor shop. In 1905, the original Mess Hall was remodeled and enlarged. In 1907, a heating plant was constructed. The next year, Maury-Brooke Hall was under construction to house the Department of Chemistry. In 1907, a library was built northwest of the barracks along the enlarged Parade Ground road. In 1915 the Institute received funds from the federal government in the amount of $100,000 as retribution for the physical damage inflicted during the Civil War. These funds enabled the old Jackson Memorial Hall to be dismantled and a new memorial structure, with the same name, designed by Bertram Grosvenor Goodhue, to be erected on its present location starting in 1915. Three new single quarters, designed by Goodhue were erected about 1915 west of the Superintendent's quarters and a fourth, a duplex, was finished in the early 1920's. Scott Shipp Hall, a companion building to the new Jackson Memorial Hall south of the Barracks, was begun about 1918 as a classroom to take care of the increased enrollment caused by World War I. Stables to house the mounts for the newly created ROTC program were first constructed in 1919 and later enlarged with remount stables completed in the 1930's by the enlisted detachment.

The next two decades witnessed the following construction. The Barracks quadrangle was completed after 1920, the Alumni Memorial Field concrete stands were erected in 1922, an Alumni Hall added as an extension of the west side of Barracks in 1923 and W. H. Cocke '94 Hall, the gymnasium, was constructed about 1927. In 1934, Richardson Hall was added as an extension to the chemistry facilities in Maury-Brooke Hall; it also housed the laundry and this operation is still conducted there. 1934 and 1935 saw the construction of a new mess facility, known as Crozet Hall. A gun shed to house the artillery battery was completed in 1935. Preston Library was under way in 1939 and work was well along that year on the Field House near the stables and south of U. S. 11. Nichols Engineering Hall had been built just west of Jackson Memorial Hall in 1931, and occupies a position between it and Preston Library.

During World War II there was no major construction. Following that conflict, there was incorporated in 1948 a major expansion of cadet

quarters, known as New Barracks or North Barracks, which joined the old barracks by a sally-port. Mallory Hall, the new Physics building, was completed in the early 1950's and considerable renovation of the Maury-Brooke Hall took place about that time. An addition to Scott Shipp Hall, known as the Annex, was likewise completed early in the 1950's. 1956 saw the construction of the Sale Planetarium behind Preston Library and new tennis courts were built a year later in the Woods Creek valley. An annex was connected to Nichols Engineering Hall in 1959.

A truly phenomenal building program has been under way during the current decade. An outdoor rifle range was completed in 1961, new athletic facilities in the Woods Creek valley including baseball diamonds were completed in 1962. The George C. Marshall Research Library, erected on two acres of land donated by the Commonwealth of Virginia for that purpose, was dedicated in 1964, and also during that year permanent stands were erected on the Alumni Memorial Field. Private funds were used almost extensively in building the Marshall Library and the Alumni Association contributed certain funds for the erection of the stands. A new administrative building, Smith Hall, was dedicated in 1964 and for the first time all of the administrative offices of the institution were housed under one roof. A student union, or Lejeune Hall, was completed in 1966; one-third of its construction cost was met by the issue of bonds. Nichols-Preston Annex, which connected the Nichols Engineering Hall and Preston Library, was built to house the Computer Center and certain engineering laboratories were completed in 1968. Kilbourne Hall, the first building solely erected for the purpose of housing the military science and aerospace studies program was completed the same year. Under way now is the magnificent Moody Hall, a gift of Mrs. Mary Moody Northen, whose father, William Lewis Moody, was a distinguished member of the Class of 1886; it will be dedicated next fall. Also under way at this very moment is an annex to Cocke Hall to enlarge the athletic facilities. Architects are currently working on plans for the expansion/ renovation of Preston Library.

For the future, the Planning Board foresees the following in the 1970-80 decade. In the 1970-72 biennium, the construction of, or at least the authorization of, a Multi-Purpose Auditorium to be located on the western end of the Alumni Memorial Field at the intersection of Main and Diamond Streets. This is the only major capital outlay building planned for that biennium; there will be some improving and modernizing of academic areas, and other areas, including rehabilitation of at least one building.

No new construction is foreseen in the 1972-74 biennium.

In the 1974-76 biennium, it is proposed to add two stories to the Nichols Engineering Hall—Preston Library Annex which now connects

these two buildings. Also, there will be an annex connecting Mallory Hall with Preston Library which would be brought up from ground level in the back of the buildings to the Parade Ground level along Letcher Avenue. In this biennium it is also expected another annex to Cocke Hall, which would be an additional floor to the present annex which is already under construction.

In the 1976-78 biennium there will probably be constructed an Earth-Life Science Building west of Mallory Hall along Letcher Avenue. During that biennium the chances are the present Maury-Brooke Hall and the Science Hall would be demolished. This demolition would be in preparation for an extension of the Barracks eastward along Letcher Avenue and extending almost to the Old Hospital.

In the last biennium of a decade, 1978-80, the Board has recommended that an addition to the Barracks be constructed on the site occupied by Maury-Brooke Hall and Science Hall. Also during this biennium the second phase of the Mallory Hall-Preston Library Annex would be constructed to raise the height of this building to the present height of Mallory Hall. West of the proposed Earth-Life Science Building along Letcher Avenue there is the possibility that a Center for Research and Continuing Studies could be constructed.

Therefore, there should be from Nichols Engineering Hall stretching almost 1,000 feet along the south side of Letcher Avenue, a continuing complex of buildings that would present a solid front, i.e., there would be no breaks in the construction and all the buildings would be approximately of the same height. This complex would be as follows from east to west: (a) Nichols Engineering Hall; (b) Nichols Engineering Hall-Preston Library Annex; (c) Preston Library; (d) Preston Library-Mallory Hall Annex; (e) Mallory Hall; (f) Earth-Life Science Building; and, (g) Center for Research and Continuing Studies.

An increase in the size of the Barracks might ultimately allow the Corps of Cadets to grow from its present size of 1,200 to approximately 1,500 by 1980, but no commitment has been made on this matter either by the administration or the Board of Visitors.

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Francis Nash Boney, professor of history at the University of Georgia, who gave the following address at the summer dinner meeting of the Society on July 6, 1969, is an authority on the life of Virginia's Civil War governor. Many articles and two books concerning the war include "John Letcher's Secret Criticism of the Confederate Cabinet," in the Virginia Magazine of History, July 1964, "John Letcher and Reconstruction in Virginia," in the Mississippi Quarterly, in the spring of 1966, and the book, *John Letcher of Virginia, The Story of Virginia's Civil War Governor,* published by the University of Alabama Press in 1966. Dr. Boney was born in Richmond, and took his Ph.D. at the University of Virginia.

THE MAKING OF A POLITICIAN

John Letcher's Formative Years in Rockbridge County

By F. N. Boney

A native of Rockbridge County, John Letcher was governor of Virginia from January 1, 1860, through December 31, 1863, one of the most crucial periods in the history of the state and the nation. His struggle to the pinnacle of power in Virginia was relatively routine within the context of traditional state politics. A typical lawyer-editor-politician of his age, he just happened to be in office in a pivotal period, a time of terrible crisis.[1]

The real political breakthrough for this idealistic young Jacksonian came in 1850 when he was elected a delegate to the state constitutional convention which introduced sweeping democratic reforms into Virginia's rather stagnant system of government. Delegate Letcher was one of the most effective reform leaders at the convention, and he quickly exploited his new prestige by gaining the Democratic Party's nomination for Congress. He won easily and served four consecutive terms without serious opposition in his district in the Valley of Virginia.[2]

The 1850's were a time of rising sectional conflict, and the liberal reformer from Virginia soon became a moderate Southern conservative in the halls of Congress. A tireless advocate of honesty and economy in the Federal government, he won the nickname "Honest John Letcher, Watchdog of the Treasury." A moderate states' righter who loved the Union almost as much as his native Virginia, he tried hard to avoid sectional squabbles, but occasionally he spoke out passionately in defense of the Southland. The middle ground was eroding rapidly in Washing-

ton; moderates like Letcher, North and South, were fighting a losing battle.

Then in 1858, exploiting a golden opportunity, Congressman Letcher gained the Virginia Democratic Party's nomination for the governorship. In the spring of 1859, after a bruising campaign, he edged his Whig opponent by a count of 77,112 to 71,543. Though divided and quarrelsome, the Virginia Democrats were still invincible, and 46-year-old John Letcher of Rockbridge County prepared to become the Old Dominion's 42nd governor on January 1, 1860.[3]

Letcher's peacetime administration lasted slightly over 15 months. During this period he continued to oppose the drift toward disunion, advocating a convention of all the states to work out a sectional compromise and even supporting Stephen A. Douglas, the candidate of the Northern Democrats, in the presidential election in November 1860. A Southern Unionist, he was caught in a cruel dilemma. He strongly opposed civil war, but he realized that war might well come, so he backed Virginia's military preparations, a policy which accelerated the drift toward war. Ensnarled in the peace and preparedness predicament so familiar in our own time, Governor Letcher continued to work for sectional compromise until the Civil War began. Then he led his state into the nascent Confederacy.[4]

Suddenly John Letcher was one of the top leaders within a new rebel nation fighting to survive in the chaos of modern war. His wartime record was more than just adequate; he was an outstanding Confederate governor, a pillar of strength in a nation doomed by inept political leadership at every level. The key to his success was flexibility, pragmatism, a refusal to be bound by the dead past in a revolutionary era. Realizing that Southern unity was essential, Letcher abandoned his states' rights heritage for the duration and cooperated with the Confederate central government in Richmond. Aware that the resources of his state had to be fully mobilized, he exercised an energetic, forceful leadership which, though sometimes weakened by inefficient administration, still encroached greatly on the traditional, almost sacrosanct personal and property rights of his people. Virginians, indeed Southerners in general, were psychologically and philosophically unprepared for the demands of modern, total war, for the sweeping adjustments necessary to put the South on an efficient wartime footing. They were simply not prepared to pay the price of victory on the home front, and as the conflict dragged on and on, they increasingly resented the massive, revolutionary expansion of governmental power. A seasoned politician, Letcher was well aware of this rising popular hostility, but he was also a selfless patriot, and, although he occasionally bent with the political winds and eased up a little in some of

his programs, basically he did not abandon his pragmatic policies. Putting Confederate victory above everything else, he risked the wrath of his conservative people, and soon he paid the price.

In the spring of 1863 Governor Letcher ran for the Confederate Congress, planning to represent his old congressional district in the Valley as soon as his term as governor was completed at the end of the year. But the same voters who had sent him to the Federal Congress over and over in the 1850's now rejected him emphatically. His leadership had been too forceful, he had cooperated too much with the central government, and Virginians could not accept these radical departures from the past even in wartime. John Letcher lost his political life, and the voters of the Valley soon lost their war.[5]

As a private citizen Letcher continued to support the rebel war effort, but the cause was doomed, and the Confederacy, rotted from within, finally crumbled in the spring of 1865. Financially ruined by wartime inflation and the destruction of his Lexington home by an invading Union army, briefly imprisoned during the confusion following the assassination of President Lincoln, Letcher nevertheless reverted to his habitual peacetime moderation in the postwar era. He advised Southern whites to forget the bitter past, and, although he had no sympathy for the Federal government's efforts to raise up the Southern blacks, he championed sectional reconciliation enthusiastically. He spent the declining years of his life practicing law and occasionally dabbling in local and state politics. He died on January 26, 1884, remembered and respected but still not generally recognized as one of the Confederacy's most valuable leaders.[6]

Thus Letcher's career can be briefly summarized. Unquestionably he was a major political figure in Virginia for more than a decade, a key man in a crucial period. But what of his early environment, his formative years in Lexington? There he was born and bred, shaped and molded; there emerged some of the basic patterns and principles of his long, productive life.

John Letcher was born into the comfortable Southern middle class. His father, William Houston Letcher, had moved into Lexington from the adjoining countryside, worked hard in a variety of business enterprises, and prospered. Starting as a young manual laborer with no privileges and little education, he had become a classic American self-made man. He married Elizabeth Davidson, a daughter of the Scotch-Irish yeomanry, and their first child, John, was born in March 1813. John and his brother Sam and his sister Mary grew up in a large, pleasant home, cushioned by affection and relative affluence. The children were healthy and happy in a plain, unpretentious bourgeois environment, but

the Letcher family had its share of friction; that is, a "generation gap" did develop. This was (and certainly remains) a customary development in American family life, an old and inevitable tendency in a fluid society.[7]

The parents were pious, puritanical Methodists, but John and Sam, each in his own way, rejected the austere Protestantism (Methodist, Baptist, and Presbyterian) which dominated—almost stiffled—the whole area. John rejected Methodism in particular and orthodox Christianity in general and apparently remained a quiet skeptic for the rest of his life. This skepticism extended beyond religion and permeated his whole viewpoint of life, encouraging a live-and-let-live, to-each-his-own kind of philosophy. As a man and as a politician he was not doctrinaire or inflexible or fanatic but, to the contrary, reasonable and moderate. Never what philosopher Eric Hofer describes as a "true believer", he preferred to think that most issues, personal or political, could somehow be compromised.[8]

Although Letcher abandoned his parents' puritanism, he was never profligate, but he did develop a gregarious, optimistic, enthusiastic lifestyle which included smoking a pipe, drinking bourbon and brandy, partying, and generally having a good time. Lexington, the commercial, cultural, political, and social center of the surrounding countryside, offered some challenge and charm for such an extroverted young fellow. Washington College was there, and the Virginia Military Institute would soon evolve from a small state arsenal. The Franklin Society and Library Company sponsored many debates and discussions, and travelers and visitors passed through frequently. Still the little town of less than a thousand people was much like the surrounding Valley, provincial, tradition-bound, and conservative. Young Letcher was restless there, uncertain of the future, dissatisfied.[9]

Old field schools, make-shift community institutions, gave him a reasonably good basic education, far better than anything his parents had ever received, but young Letcher simply could not settle down, and he lasted less than a year at Washington College. To put it in more modern terminology, he "goofed off" and "flunked out", becoming at age 20 a college "drop out". His father, who had worked hard all his life, was disgusted to see his son squander such opportunities. Like so many parents before and since, he did not know what to do with his erring son, but finally he decided on the shock treatment. Young John was put to work as a carpenter's apprentice. He was allowed to live at home, but otherwise he was on his own. This episode helped create a series of misconceptions about Letcher's youth culminating in printed stories of his humble origins, his noble rise from poverty to prominence, his heroic

struggle up from the lowest levels of white society. Americans have always loved the poor-boy-makes-good theme, the image of Abraham Lincoln or Andrew Carnegie or Booker T. Washington or some other humble boy climbing to the heights in the land of opportunity, so contemporaries, especially Jacksonian politicos, squeezed Letcher into the classic stereotype, ignoring a host of inconvenient facts. Later historians accepted the stereotype and passed it on to posterity. In reality John Letcher was never a poor boy at all. His apprenticeship as a manual worker was artificial, rather brief, and quite effective.[10]

Spurred by hard physical labor, young Letcher soon evolved from an aimless adolescent into a typical young American on the make. Finally he settled down, never again to have the slightest doubt who he was or where he was going. Following the lead of his father whom he had always respected even during their hottest disputes, he plunged into the political whirl and joined the ranks of the Jacksonian Democrats. Also, he began to read law in the office of William Taylor, another Lexington Democrat. Soon he had received his license to practice law, was editing a new Democratic newspaper, the *Valley Star,* and had become the protégé of James McDowell, Rockbridge County's leading Democrat and a future governor of the state.

Letcher was enthusiastic and energetic—an ambitious Democrat in Whiggish Rockbridge County had to be—but he still found time to enjoy himself. Among his many friends were Francis H. Smith, first superintendent of V.M.I., John T. L. Preston, a professor there for many years, William Taylor's two sons, Dr. James McDowell Taylor and Robert J. Taylor, and John B. Lyle, the owner of a small bookstore, but his best friend was probably John Warren Grigsby, a cynical, restless young man who was American consul at Bordeaux in the 1840's, then married into the prominent Shelby family of Kentucky, and finally found glory as a fighting Confederate colonel. Letcher's social life was considerably altered in 1843 when, following a rather erratic courtship, he married Susan Holt of neighboring Augusta County. This long, happy, fruitful marriage was a firm foundation for his professional advancement.[11]

Letcher was a successful lawyer, gradually building up a lucrative practice, but his main occupation was politics. His Whig opponents in Rockbridge usually referred to him as a loco foco, and Letcher accepted this nickname for left-wing Democrats willingly. Within the conservative context of Virginia politics, he was a moderate but vigorous liberal, championing a system of public schools and needed internal improvement projects and condemning Virginia's obsolescent, and undemocratic constitution. He was not a radical; he accepted his society's fundamental

institutions. Like many intelligent, progressive Virginians, he may have had some quiet reservations about slavery. His mentor, James McDowell, had favored emancipation after Nat Turner's bloody uprising, and other Rockbridgers had voiced concern about slavery even as the county's slave population grew slowly but steadily, but John Letcher, a slaveholder himself, did not openly challenge the peculiar institution—but once.[12]

Early in 1847 the Franklin Society sponsored a debate on east-west dissension within the state, the domination by the minority of white people living east of the Blue Ridge and the growing dissatisfaction of the majority west. The debate quickly centered on slavery which was largely concentrated in the east. Letcher attacked the conservative east by attacking slavery. More specifically he endorsed Washington College President Henry Ruffner's controversial plan for gradual emancipation. In order to gain a tactical debating advantage, Letcher committed the glaring strategic error of condemning slavery long after the South had closed ranks behind its peculiar institution. This was a dangerous mistake for an ambitious politican to make. The South was hypersensitive to criticism of slavery from without and especially from within. Even the upper South had closed its mind on this subject. The most complex, crucial problem facing the Old South was no longer even debatable. On this issue the South had become rigid and intractable—and the Civil War was increasingly inevitable.

Fortunately for Letcher the voters of his section of the Valley were aware of his past support of slavery in the columns of the *Valley Star,* of his general orthodoxy on this sensitive issue, and a short time later they accepted his public recantation of his single stand against slavery, convinced that he had only been "hard" on eastern Virginia rather than really "soft" on abolitionism. Cleared of his brief heresy, Letcher won election to the state constitutional convention of 1850 and began his rise to power. The formative years were past, but Lexington and Rockbridge County were still home, and they had marked him indelibly. Molded as all men are by their early environment, Letcher remained through all of his future trials what he had always been, a sturdy son of the Southern middle class, a proud citizen of the little town of Lexington, a loyal Virginian, and, perhaps most of all, an American.[13]

FOOTNOTES

1. This paper is based primarily on material taken from *John Letcher of Virginia: The Story of Virginia's Civil War Governor* (University of Alabama Press, 1966) by F. N. Boney. I wish to thank the editor of the University of Alabama Press for permission to use material from this book which will hereafter be cited simply as Boney, *Letcher.*

2. Boney, *Letcher,* pp. 41-52; Francis Pendleton Gaines, Jr. ,"The Virginia Constitutional Convention of 1850-1851: A Study in Sectionalism" (unpublished dissertation, 1950, University of Virginia), *passim.*

3. Boney, *Letcher,* pp. 53-90.

4. Boney, *Letcher,* pp. 91-113; Paul R. Cockshutt, "Gov. John Letcher and Virginia's Secession," *Proceedings of the Rockbridge Historical Society,* VI (1966), 46-53.

5. Boney, *Letcher,* pp. 114-220; Clement Eaton, *A History of the Southern Confederacy* (New York, 1965), pp. 52-53. The electorate in Virginia had been slightly reduced by constitutional amendment in 1862, but this had very small effect on the congressional election in 1863. Under normal circumstances Letcher would have easily beaten his opponent, John B. Baldwin, a wheeler-dealer ex-Whig from Augusta County.

6. F. N. Boney, "John Letcher and Reconstruction in Virginia," *Mississippi Quarterly,* XIX (Spring 1966), 53-65.

7. Frances Trollope, *Domestic Manners of the Americans* (New York, 1960), pp. 67, 121; Boney, *Letcher,* pp. 13-14. William Houston Letcher bought his permanent house and lot in 1817 for 1,000 pounds.

8. Eric Hoffer, *The True Believer: Thoughts on the Nature of Mass Movements* (New York, 1951), passim: Boney, *Letcher, passim;* Albert M. Cupp, *A History of Methodism in Rockbridge County* (no date), p. 111. For example, he rejected duelling.

9. Rockbridge County Census Reports, 1820-1840, U.S. Census; Boney, *Letcher,* p. 14.

10. Clement Eaton, *The Freedom-of-Thought Struggle in the Old South* (New York, 1964), pp. 283-4; Boney, *Letcher,* pp. 14-15; Richmond *Daily Dispatch,* January 27, 1884, p. 3.

11. F. N. Boney, "An American in Bordeaux: 1841-1849," *The Filson Club History Quarterly,* vol. 40 (April, 1966), 159-166; Boney, *Letcher,* pp. 15-18, 27, 32. Seven of the Letcher's eleven children reached maturity. Fellow lawyers James D. Davidson and David Curry also became good friends.

12. Rockbridge County Census Reports, 1820-1840, U.S. Census; Boney, *Letcher,* pp. 21-33; Glyndon G. Van Deusen, *The Jacksonian Era: 1828-1848* (New York, 1963), p. 95. In the 1830's about one third of the white families in Rockbridge County owned slaves, but very few owned many slaves. Approximately 75% of the county's population was white.

13. William Gleason Bean, "The Ruffner Pamphlet of 1847: An Antislavery Aspect of Virginia Sectionalism," *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography,* LXI (1953), 263-68; Boney, *Letcher,* pp. 37-44; F. N. Boney, "Virginian, Southerner, American," *Virginia Cavalcade,* XVII (Summer 1967), 11-19. This last article contains several pictures of the Lexington area and prominent Lexingtonians.

INTRODUCTION TO "GHOST OF THE CASTLE"

By Anne Brandon Heiner

More than a decade ago, someone suggested that the Rockbridge Historical Society should have a ghost story meeting, but the members who believed in spirits, or who had special knowledge of mysterious happenings in this area, were reluctant to tell their stories before an audience. So I began to investigate them by personal interviews, studies of old histories, will books, headstones in cemeteries, and by other means.

When I was a child in Newton, North Carolina, my nurse was a lovely warm-hearted woman named Alda Higgely. Her husband did not care about work, and he often drank too freely, but we were friends, and he would tell me dark tales of the Things that chased him down the road when the moon was blind, and how one who was willing to make a pact with the devil could become invisible, and go through keyholes. (This involved a cabalistic ceremony performed in the dark of the moon with the bones of a black cat, which had to be boiled at midnight in an iron pot by the creek in a wooded place our family owned called Poplar Hollow.) Instead of being frightened, I was fascinated, and I have been hunting stories of ghosts ever since.

If I believed ghosts existed, I would be afraid to look for them. But I do know that many old legends have been believed completely by honest and reasonable people, and there are some strange happenings of our time which are also believed. These are part of our local history, and should be preserved as carefully as the old ballads of the Tennessee, Virginia and North Carolina mountains were preserved by musicians.

Tonight is Monday, October 8, 1969, almost time for Hallow'een. But this is not as much a ghost story, as it is a story of one of Lexington's fascinating eccentrics.

THE GHOST OF PHIL NUNN

By Anne Brandon Heiner

When the haunted October moon grows dim over Lexington, and its curve no longer holds water, "The Castle," old stone museum of the Rockbridge Historical Society, locks its doors against the chilly mist, and broods over its treasures and its memories.

Many spirits might long to come back to their possessions there—Dr. Ephraim McDowell, "Father of Abdominal Surgery,"[1] to weigh

his "powders" on the tiny "gold scales"[2] that lie on a shelf, or Mary Moore of Abbs Valley to rock in her seven foot cradle bed, with her hands over her eyes to shut out the hideous memory of her mother and sister being tortured by the Indians.

But ghosts linger longest in places where they have lived, and so the thing that is seen by late passersby in the dark, powerful figure of Phil Nunn, looking from the shadows of his upstairs window to see if the moon is changing.[3]

"When I first knew Phil, in the 1890s, he was a huge, dark, nice-looking well-built Negro with gracious manners," said Mrs. Charles McCulloch,[4] who was then Ruth Anderson. "I was a little girl, staying at the Letcher Avenue home of my grandmother, the widow of Colonel William Blair, who had been a professor at VMI. Phil used to come by with his wagon from Adair's for the grocery order every morning, and he would deliver the groceries in the afternoon. We had a tall, mulatto girl named Maria working for us who was engaged to Phil, and she was always in evidence when he came by."

Stories of Phil Nunn's amazing strength may be read in old newspapers. Once, when he was working for Graham and Moore, wholesale grocers, he was driving a mule and cart up the steep slope of Main Street, delivering a barrel of sugar. The mule got almost as far up as the Leyburn house, and refused to go farther. Phil could never stand a lazy man or a balky mule. He tried several methods to make it move, then he stalked up to the mule muttering, "If you won't carry it, I'll carry it." He struck the mule with his fist with such force that it fell to the ground, shouldered the barrel of sugar, and walked up the hill to deliver it.[5]

"The Castle," which was in poor repair at the time, was rented for years by Phil and a number of other negroes. Phil was meticulous about paying the small rent required for his part of the upstairs,[6] and he insisted on returning any favors. When the clerk in Mr. Paul Penick's office typed a letter for him, he came back later with a store-wrapped box. "Miss, would you accept of a box of candy?" he asked gravely.[7]

Completely honest himself, Phil had his own quiet way of dealing with injustice. A store owner asked him one day to carry a large wardrobe from the basement up to the attic. At the end of the day, Phil came for his money, and the man said, "I can't pay you, Phil, you came on the wrong day." Phil tipped his hat and quietly went up to the attic, picked up the wardrobe, and carried it down to the basement.[8]

He and Maria were saving toward their marriage, and he was always glad to take extra jobs. "I am a Polisher of Metals," he would say, and no one could make silver or brass shine like Phil. At spring

cleaning time he was especially in demand, and he would lift the grandfather clocks to dust under them so carefully that they would seldom stop.[9]

All the people he worked for respected him and were fond of him, but Houston Barclay's bride, Patti, was terrified when she came to visit the home place, and walked into a room where the brawny six foot four giant was dusting. She was unsoothed by his gentle roar, "Res' yo'self, Miss."

Phil and Maria had accumulated a comfortable little nest egg, and then something went wrong between them. Maria went to Pittsburgh, and got tuberculosis, and died,[10] and Phil was never the same. He had been friendly and happy with everyone, but now he seemed to feel that his old red rooster, who slept each night on the foot of his bed, was his only true friend.

Now he began to hoard his money for the joy of hoarding, saving every penny and nickel and dime. He got a dollar a day for his work at cleaning, and since he could not count well, he would put two quarters in each cheek, and then he would know he had his money. Some of the people began to think he was not quite right in his mind, but occasionally, housewives complained that Phil was not as simple as people thought.[11]

"How much do I owe you, Phil?" they would ask.

"Well, I came at one. One, two, three, four, five. That makes five hours."

"You don't mean five, you mean four, don't you?"

"No'm. One, two, three, four, five."

And the helpless housewife would give him the money for five hours.

He had almost no living expense, because he got a good dinner wherever he worked, and people would give him clothes, but he had great trouble finding shoes for his enormous feet, although the students and cadets would bring him presents of big shoes when they returned to Lexington in the fall. Then his feet were frozen in an accident, so that shoes of any kind became intolerable.

So he cut some long boards, and nailed strips of carpet to them to put his feet through, and wrapped rags around the carpet strips and tied them to his ankles to hold them on.

And the clop-shuffle clop-shuffle of his plank shoes passing down the dirt streets,[12] always walking in the middle, and tipping his hat as he passed each of the houses where he worked, became a nostalgic part of Lexington to generation after generation, as familiar as the maples which glow with a special light on the Washington and Lee University campus in the fall, and the brave music that leads the Virginia Military Institute cadets marching on the Hill, and leaps after itself and hangs suspended in its own echoes over the town.

Some of the cadets and students began to call him "Old Dixie,"[13] but his other white friends disliked this effort to change his name, because in Lexington, things must stay as they are and never change, whether they are good things or bad, or queer things or only funny. And Phil had taken his place among the eccentrics of a town that had many beloved eccentrics.

Mr. Hale Houston had bought "The Castle", and he found that the dollar a month which Phil paid was not enough to pay its part of the taxes, so he tried to raise the rent to two dollars.

"Mr. Waddell said I just have to pay one dollar a month," Phil answered.

"But Mr. Waddell has been dead for years," Mr. Houston protested. Phil's only answer was "Mr. Waddell said I just have to pay a dollar a month."[14]

And little by little, the money came in.

Phil would hide it in his room at "The Castle," but the other tenants would find it and steal it from him. He selected new places, his mattress, an old trunk, looking over his shoulder to be sure that no one was watching. But somehow some of it always disappeared.[15]

Finally, he got a lock for his door, and changed his money into dollar bills, and pried out a board in the wall, and hid it there.

But the money was greasy and dirty from his loving handling. The rats ate it.

In desperation, poor Phil got a big burlap bag, which he hid somewhere, and he would insist on being paid in silver dollars, or quarters which he changed into silver dollars.

Then love came to Phil for the second time. It must have been on his mind when he was polishing brass at the Barclays, where one of the daughters, had become engaged.[16]

"Miss, I hear you're going to be married," Phil said. And wistfully, "I don't know nothin' about it, but I hear it's very pleasant."

And soon he was making new plans to get married. But this girl was not like Maria, and she knew about the hoard of silver coins. But even she could not persuade him to tell her where he hid the burlap bag.

Now his high-flying girl was not satisfied to get married to a wealthy man in her old clothes. She gave him an ultimatum—no trousseau, no wedding.

The coins had all been going one way, into the bag, where they joined the shining, swelling pool of lovely silver, that gleamed like the tea services he polished in the old brick homes. Now he had to drain the pool, bring them out to harsh daylight, put them from his careful hands into hers. He tried to make her see how much better the money would

be put away for their future. But he could not persuade her, and Phil was in love. So he reluctantly gave her the money, and she left town to buy clothes.

She never came back.

"I looked out of the window," he told little Edmonia Leech, "and the moon was changing. And right then, I knowed she was never coming back."[17]

He was still a hard worker, but he never got over his greedy, faithless sweetheart.

In those days, everybody took up carpets in the spring, and put down mattings, and in the fall tacked down the carpets again. This involved moving pianos and wardrobes, and Phil, who was as strong as an ox, could lift a walnut wardrobe as if it were nothing.

But one day, in the midst of polishing the brass for Mrs. Houston Leech, Phil stopped short, looked around wildly, and said, "I've got to go."

"Go where, Phil? You haven't finished."

"I've got to go. The moon's changed."[18]

Now the money bag swelled and became heavy, and Phil could dig his great hands again into the coolness of the silver quarters, slipping through his fingers like round, silver butter-fish, gleaming in the night. And only the sly moon, grinning in at his upstairs window, was allowed to watch Phil playing with his secret hoard.

But Phil became restless, and even the delight and wonder of the contents of the burlap bag could not satisfy him.

He knew he was getting old, and he had never been anywhere farther than Buena Vista. He decided he would like to take a trip.

So he stacked his lovely coins neatly in cardboard rolls that spools of thread had come in, and one fine sunny day he hobbled up the steps of the train in his plank shoes, and went to Baltimore, to visit his sister, Emma-Margaret, and he walked up and down the streets holding tightly to the burlap bag on his shoulder, for he had been afraid to leave it in "The Castle."[19]

Some children and older people followed him and pointed their fingers at his plank shoes, and laughed, but Phil took off his hat and bowed with grave dignity to each of them like a true Virginian, as his mother had taught him to do long ago, because he knew they were poor white trash, or Negroes who hadn't been taught any better by their mothers.

Then a policeman in a fine blue coat with brass buttons, who had been walking along twirling his billy and humming an Irish tune, saw the crowd and got curious, and looked up at Phil, (being a smallish man himself, hardly over six feet,) and asked him what he was carrying in the burlap bag.

And when Phil proudly showed him his silver money, (because policemen had always been his friends,) he got excited, and called the patrol wagon with its clopping horses that sounded almost like Phil's shoes.

And Phil was bundled in, bewildered but unprotesting, and the door was locked tight, and Phil sat with his great body curled and hunched in the dark inside.

The sergeant at the police station wouldn't believe it when Phil said he had not stolen the $1500 in silver dollars. "I wuks for my money! Ask anybody in Lexington!" And they locked away his burlap bag, and pushed him into a little cell in the first jail he had ever known, and he stayed there all night, miserable and uncomprehending, with his huge, ham-like hands clamped around the bars.

The next day they brought him out, but then there was a mix-up about Lexington, too, because it appeared there were several cities called by that name, (although the people at home in Virginia, who always say all they want in Heaven is a little piece of Lexington, would find it hard to believe.)[21]

But they finally wired home to the Lexington police, who sent word back that Phil Nunn was one of their most respected citizens, and had earned all the silver dollars, and Mr. Stuart Moore said "See that he gets home safely."

So the newspapers wrote a witty piece about him, and the police saw that he had a good breakfast, and drove him to the station in style, and he clatter-clattered to the train in his plank shoes, raising his rusty old hat politely to the amazed people who watched him. And he clump-clumped up the steps of the train, and thudded and shuffled down the carpeted aisle to a seat, and thankfully, at last, reached home again, where he belonged.

Now Mr. Paul Penick and the Barclays and the other "Big People" who were his devoted friends were worried about him, because too many knew about the burlap bag, and they were afraid someone might do him harm. So they tried to get him to put his money in the bank.[22]

But there had been a highly respected teller of one of the Lexington banks, a Sunday school teacher and a solid citizen, who had absconded, taking with him a heavy black suitcase full of the townspeople's money.

Perhaps Phil had heard about the suitcase, or perhaps he only felt more comfortable and happy with his precious hoard close to him when he went to sleep in the night.

For a long time, he refused. Then he let the bank count the silver coins and keep them for him, but he made them let him look at them every day. Then he would come about once a week, and finally, when

they saw him coming, they would just open the vault and let him look at some money, and he would go away satisfied.[24]

His hair became gray, but the burlap bag still collected his dollars, and he was a good workman in spite of arthritis until he died,[25] although it took him longer to get to the fine old Lexington homes, for in addition to taking off his hat and bowing graciously to all those he passed, he had to bow to every telephone pole. And his black hat wore into a greasy hole in front, where his great fingers took it off and put it on.

Now "The Castle," which was Phil's home for so many years, is perhaps the oldest dwelling in town, and it may be only the timbers cracking against the stucco-covered stones, and not Phil's plank shoes that cause the strange sounds when one passes there late at night. The dark shadow peering out at the moon from an upstairs window may be only an illusion from the dim light. And the rustling and scurrying in the walls? Probably only hungry rats, looking for Phil Nunn's dollar bills.

FOOTNOTES

1. *Congressional Record,* 1960, A6033, Dr. Ephraim McDowell, Pioneer Surgeon, by Anne Brandon Heiner.
2. McDowell Apothecary Scales given to Society 27 October 1947 by David M. Barclay.
3. *The Captives of Abb's Valley, A Legend of Frontier Life By A Son of Mary Moore,* p. 80, Reprint 1921, Philadelphia, Presbyterian Board of Publication and Sabbath-School Work.
4. Interview with Mrs. Charles McCulloch, June 1960.
5. *Lexington Gazette.*
6. Interview with Miss Nettie Smith, June 1960.
7. Interview with Houston Barclay, June 1960.
8. Interview with Mrs. Malcolm Campbell, Sr., May 1960.
9. Mr. Barclay, June 1960.
10. Mrs. McCulloch, June 1960.
11. Mr. Barclay, August 1960.
12. Miss Smith, August 1960.
13. Colonel and Mrs. B. D. Heflin, August 1960.
14. B. Lee Kagey, October 1969.
15. Mrs. Campbell, May 1960.
16. Mr. Barclay, June 1960.
17. Mrs. Campbell, May 1960.
18. *Ibid.*
19. *Ibid.*
20. *Rockbridge County News,* Dec. 29, 1938, p. 8.
21. Mrs. Matthew W. Paxton, 1939.
22. Mrs. Campbell, May 1960.
23. Mrs. McCulloch, June 1960.
24. Mrs. Campbell, May 1960.
25. *Rockbridge County News,* Dec. 29, 1938, p. 8, death of Phil Nunn on Dec. 26, 1938.

REFERENCES

Heiner, Anne Brandon, *Congressional Record 1960, A6033, Dr. Ephraim McDowell, Pioneer Surgeon.*

A Son of Mary Moore, *The Captives of Abb's Valley, A Legend of Frontier Life,* Philadelphia, Presbyterian Board of Publication and Sabbath-School Work, (Reprint.)

Lexington Gazette.

Rockbridge County News.

Interviews with:

Mrs. Malcolm D. Campbell Sr.
Mrs. Charles McCulloch.
Houston Barclay
Miss Nettie Smith.
B. Lee Kagey.
Colonel and Mrs. S. M. Heflin.
Mrs. Matthew W. Paxton.

PRINCIPAL ACQUISITIONS 1966-1969

AS LISTED BY DR. CHARLES W. TURNER

1. Miss Jennie Wheat's Family Papers
2. Francis C. Glasgow's medals and official papers presented by his mother, Mrs. Charles Glasgow
3. White Family Papers
4. Antique shaving stand and mirror, once owned by the Alexander family, bequeathed by Earl S. Mattingly
5. Morrison family photograph presented by Dr. Morrison Hutcheson
6. Sunny Brook Farm papers presented by Mrs. Felix Staedeli
7. Beaded belt of the Congo given to M. W. Paxton by Dr. W. M. Morrison, presented by the owner
8. Twenty volumes of the library of the Francis Smith family, donated by Miss Jeanetta Smith
9. A copy of Col. William Couper's study of the Jackson Memorial Cemetery
10. A rug for the Castle's main room donated by Lee's carpets
11. A sofa loaned by Mrs. Cole Davis
12. A chair loaned by Mrs. Louise Alexander
13. Some twenty volumes by a number of members
14. A number of small rugs for the upstairs rooms of the Castle given by Mrs. Dora Mitchell.
15. *The purchase of 17 volumes of the Withrow scrapbooks

* These scrapbooks were kept by the Withrow sisters for 40 years and are a valuable source of information for our county history. They are deposited in McCormick Library.

FINANCIAL REPORT

ASSETS:

Cash in bank	
Checking account	$681.48
Savings Account	1043.86
5% Demand Note of His. Lex. Fdn.	2100.00
Publications for sale	1397.88
Real Estate	
8 South Randolph Street	15,000.00
107 East Washington Street	20,000.00
101 East Washington Street	35,000.00
Accounts Receivable	636.59
	$75,859.81

LIABILITIES:

Net Worth	$75,859.81

* * *

RECEIPTS:

January 1, 1969 Balance forward	$1147.58
Membership dues	617.25
Reservations for dinners	502.25
Books sold	116.12
Rents received	1500.00
	$3,883.20

DISBURSEMENTS:

Books	14.00
Dinner meetings	520.88
Postage and printing	270.68
Utilities	63.66

Janitor	90.00
Purchased 5% Demand Note of Hist. Lex. Fdn.	2100.00
Miscellaneous	142.50
December 31, 1969 Balance	681.48
	$3,883.20

WILLIAM O. HAY, JR.

PRESIDENTS OF THE SOCIETY, 1939-1968

Dr. Francis P. Gaines, Ph.D., Litt. D., L.L.D., August 9, 1939-1940
Mrs. Charles McCulloch, 1941
Miss Elizabeth Barclay, 1942
Mr. Earl Kerr Paxton, A. M., 1943
Dr. Leslie Lyle Campbell, M.A., Ph.D., 1944-1945.
Dr. William Cole Davis, Colonel, U.S.A. Ret., 1946-1947
Mrs. H. Russell Robey
Dr. George West Diehl, B.D., M.A., L.L.D. (Hon.)
Mrs. James Patton Alexander, 1952-1953-1954-1955.
Colonel William Couper, Virginia Militia, 1956-1957.
Dr. Charles W. Turner, Ph.D., 1958-1959.
Colonel George Mercer Brooke, Jr., Virginia Militia, Ph.D., 1960-1961.
Brig. General John S. Letcher, B.S., U.S.M.C. Ret., 1962-1963-1964-1965.
Mr. Frank J. Gilliam, A.M., L. H.D. and L.L.D. (Hon.) 1966-1967
Right Rev. Lloyd R. Craighill, B.A., B.D., D.D., 1968 through April.
Lt. Colonel B. McCluer Gilliam, Virginia Militia, M.A., Ph.D., 1968 May through December.

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Mr. Matthew W. Paxton, B.A., L.L.B.
Mr. Earl S. Mattingly, B.A., 1942-1966
Mr. T. B. Shackford, 1947-1963.
Mr. Alvin Oakes, B.A., 1966-1969
Brig. General John S. Letcher, B.S., 1966-
Dr. Charles W. Turner, Ph.D., 1966-

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Taking Office January 1966
President—Mr. Frank J. Gilliam
Vice-Presidents
Brig. General J. S. Letcher
Mrs. H. Russell Robey
Mrs. J. P. Alexander
Mrs. Price Daniel
Mrs. John Merritt
Senator A. Willis Robertson
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Taking Office January 1967
President—Right Reverend Lloyd R. Craighill
Vice-President—Lt. Colonel B. McCluer Gilliam
Recording Secretary—Mrs. Felix Staedeli
Corresponding Secretary—Mrs. S. M. Heflin
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April 1967 (Special election due to Bishop Craighill's resignation because of ill-health)
President—Colonel B. McCluer Gilliam
Vice-President—Mrs. Gordon G. Heiner, Jr.

Taking Office January 1968 to serve through 1969
President—Colonel B. McCluer Gilliam
Vice-Presidents
Brig. General J. S. Letcher
Mrs. Gordon G. Heiner, Jr.
Mrs. H. Russell Robey
Mrs. J. P. Alexander
Mrs. Price Daniel
Mrs. John Merritt
Senator A. Willis Robertson

Recording Secretary—Mrs. Gordon G. Heiner, Jr.
Corresponding Secretary—Mrs. S. M. Heflin
Treasurer—Mr. William O. Hay
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December 31, 1969

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Mrs. L. W. Adams
Mrs. J. P. Alexander
Mr. Robert Alexander
Miss Mildred Alphin
Dr. B. N. Anderson, Jr.
Mrs. B. N. Anderson, Jr.
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Governor Price Daniel
Mrs. Price Daniel
Mrs. Arden Locher Davidson
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Miss Katherine Davidson
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Mrs. L. J. Desha
Dr. George W. Diehl
Mrs. Robert R. Dixon
R. A. Marr School of Surveying
(Col. S. W. Dobyns)
Mr. E. L. Dooley
Miss Elizabeth Dunlap
Miss Henrietta Dunlap
Mrs. S. P. C. Duvall
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Mrs. Lloyd Glenn
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Mrs. A. Chapman Goodwin
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Mrs. D. G. Grimley
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Dr. J. Morrison Hutcheson
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Mrs. Thomas Janney
Mr. Leon Johenning
Mrs. Leon Johenning
Mr. William E. Johnston
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Mrs. Roland A. Jones
Mrs. Thelma L. Jones
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Miss Carol U. Kaplan
Mr. Norman Kelsey
Mrs. Henrietta S. Kern
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Mrs. B. P. Knight
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Mrs. R. H. Knox
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Mrs. Samuel Lapsley
Prof. R. N. Latture
Mr. C. Harold Lauck
Mr. Maurice D. Leach, Jr.
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Miss Laura T. Lejeune
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Gen. J. Seymour Letcher
Dr. James G. Leyburn
Dr. Charles P. Light, Jr.
Mrs. Charles P. Light, Jr.
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Mrs. A. M. Lipscomb, Jr.
Mr. Baldwin G. Locher
Mrs. Baldwin G. Locher
Mrs. John G. Locher
Mrs. George King Logan
Mr. Walter E. Long
Mrs. Walter E. Long
Mr. Royster Lyle, Jr.
Mrs. Royster Lyle, Jr.
Mrs. Cary Mackey
Mrs. B. D. Mayo
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Miss Louise P. Moore
Mr. Morrison Travis Moose
Dr. James M. Moser
Mr. N. O. Moses
Mrs. N. O. Moses
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Mrs. O. H. McClung
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Mr. Wm. F. McCorkle
Mrs. Wm. F. McCorkle

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Dr. Hunter McGuire
Mrs. Hunter McGuire
Mrs. Lee M. McLaughlin
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Mrs. J. B. Newman
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Mrs. Daniel Osburg
Mrs. L. B. Owen
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Mr. M. W. Paxton, Jr.
Mrs. M. W. Paxton, Jr.
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Mr. Walter A. Paxton
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Miss M. L. Racey
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Mrs. Henry L. Ravenhorst
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Mrs. W. T. Robey, Jr.
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Mrs. Milton Rogers
Mr. R. W. Royston
Mrs. R. W. Royston
Mrs. Marion Sanders
Dr. Sidney Sandridge
Mrs. Sidney Sandridge
Mrs. Lester L. Schnare
Dr. J. J. B. Sebastian
Mrs. J. J. B. Sebastian
Mrs. Virginia C. Shattuck
Gen. Geo. R. E. Shell
Mrs. Geo. R. E. Shell
Mr. Eric Lee Sisler
Mrs. Eric Lee Sisler
Mr. Howard Smith
Mrs. Howard Smith
Mrs. Ruceille Smith
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Mrs. H. R. Topping
Miss Catherine B. Townsend
Mrs. R. J. Trinkle
Dr. Charles W. Turner
Col. Carrington C. Tutwiler, Jr.
Col. Lyon G. Tyler, Jr.
Mrs. Lyon G. Tyler, Jr.
Mrs. Lewis Tyree
Mrs. Finley Waddell
Mrs. Curtis Walton
Miss Hilda S. Warren
Mr. William C. Washburn
Mrs. William C. Washburn
Mrs. D. C. Watkins
Mr. R. B. Weaver
Mrs. Paul Welles
Mr. Charles M. Wescott
Mrs. Charles M. Wescott
Mr. L. E. White
Mrs. L. E. White
Mrs. Elizabeth L. Whitehurst
Rev. W. T. Williams
Mr. Henry A. Wise

NECROLOGY, January 1,1966 - January 1, 1970

Mr. John H. Barcena
Mr. W. Houston Barclay
Col. Thomas M. Barton
Miss Lula Dunlap
Col. J. P. D. Fuller
Mrs. B. B. Glover
Dr. S. Palmer Hileman
Mr. T. B. Huffman
Mrs. R. N. Latture
Mr. Littleton Leach
Mr. John G. Locher
Mr. Earl S. Mattingly
Dr. Hunter McGuire
Mr. Lee McLaughlin
Mr. Alvin Oakes
Mrs. Garland Peed
Col. H. M. Read
Mrs. E. A. Sale
Miss Nettie Smith

MR. EARL S. MATTINGLY

Mr. Earl S. Mattingly was a Charter Member of the Rockbridge Historical Society, and one of its first Trustees, serving from 1942 until his death in 1966. He brought to the financial life of the Society the efficiency and wisdom he had shown in his long experience as Treasurer of Washington and Lee University, and of the R. E. Lee Memorial Church. His interest in the Society's aims and purposes was always stimulating and inspiring.

RUTH ANDERSON MCCULLOCH

ALVIN OAKES

The Rockbridge Historical Society suffered a great loss when Alvin Oakes, of Buena Vista, died on April 8, 1969. Mr. Oakes was a loyal and productive member of the Society, and had served on the Executive Board from 1966 to the time of his death.

Mr. Oakes was born in Gladys, Virginia, on July 1, 1899. He was educated at Hargrave Military Academy and at the University of Virginia, from which he graduated with a Bachelor of Science Degree in 1922. He was Cashier of the First National Bank of Lexington before he settled in Roanoke, where he was engaged in the investment security business. In 1941, Mr. Oakes came to Buena Vista as Cashier of the Peoples Bank. In 1949 he was made Executive Vice-President. After his retirement from this office he was a member of the Board of Directors until his death.

Mr. Oakes was well known as an astute and knowledgeable banker and as a successful business man and civic leader, but there are countless people who will think of him as a friend, remembering the many "little unremembered acts of kindness and of love" that were the result of his concern for people and their problems.

Mr. Oakes was married to Dorothy S. Schubert, who survives him. There were no children.

MARGARET DURHAM ROBEY

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Unless otherwise noted, geographic locations, (houses, churches, towns etc.,) are in Rockbridge County.

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