



Smithfield is an important historic property adjacent to the campus of Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University in Blacksburg, Virginia. The manor house, constructed around 1774 on the frontier, is a premier example of early American architecture and is one of few such regional structures of that period to survive. It was the last home of Colonel William Preston, a noted surveyor and developer of western lands, who served as an important colonial and Revolutionary War leader. Preston named the 2,000-acre plantation “Smithfield” in honor of his wife, Susanna Smith. Today, the manor house is a museum that is interpreted and administered by a local group of volunteers.

In 1997 *The Smithfield Review* was founded with the purpose of helping to preserve the often neglected history of the region west of the Blue Ridge Mountains in Virginia and adjacent states. We seek articles about important personages and events; reports of archaeological discoveries; and analyses of the social, political, and architectural history of the region. Whenever possible and appropriate, the articles will incorporate letters, speeches, and other primary documents that convey to the reader a direct sense of the past.

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## A Note from the Editors

The colonists were divided in their loyalties during the American Revolution. As the British generals brought the war to the south, they were able to gain considerable assistance from the southern Tories. Col. William Preston played a crucial role in the patriots' cause in opposition to these Tories. Richard Osborn researched the fascinating life of William Preston in a 1990 Ph.D. dissertation at the University of Maryland. Chapter 7 of that dissertation presents the challenges that Colonel Preston faced as a western frontier militia leader in the midst of Indian unrest, loyalist neighbors, British threats, and military action. Dr. Osborn, currently the president of Pacific Union College in Angwin, California, presents our first article, "William Preston — Revolutionary (1779–1780)."

Following the termination of the war, a variety of industrial, agricultural, and educational ventures were unleashed by citizens eager to take advantage of their newly won freedoms — often with governmental encouragement. Our next two articles provide illustrations.

Many of our early educational institutions were initiated by religious denominations. Robert Vejnar II, archivist and historian at Emory and Henry College, outlines the Methodist roots of that institution and explores the ongoing controversy about its name. The article is entitled "From a Bishop and a Patriot to a Bishop and a Saint: Rival Understanding of the Naming of Emory and Henry College." In addition to its primary theme, Mr. Vejnar's carefully researched essay reveals the importance of primary sources and the dangers of questionable documentation.

In 1813, the Reynolds family first appeared in Patrick County, Virginia. Members of the family began growing tobacco and later started marketing various tobacco products. Their activities eventually evolved into the prosperous RJ Reynolds Tobacco Company. One branch of the family moved into a different industry and founded the Reynolds Metals Company. The author, Jim Crawford, a cultural geographer and filmmaker, examines the old family home place in "Rock

Spring Plantation: Incubator of Two American Industries." Jim's award-winning documentary, "Down in the Old Belt: Voices from the Tobacco South," was broadcast on PBS stations throughout the United States in early 2008.

Our new "Brief Notes" section contains three articles this year. First is "Indian Slavery and Freedom Suits: The Cases of Rachel Viney and Rachel Findlay" by Mary Kegley, a well-known author from Wytheville, Virginia. Next is "Architectural Fashion and the Changing Faces of Yellow Sulphur Springs" by Dustin Albright, a graduate student in the College of Architecture and Urban Studies at Virginia Tech. And, finally, Jim Glanville provides an update for one of his previous articles (in Volume 10). His Brief Note is entitled "Comments about Andrew Creswell's King's Mountain Letter."

The editors express their gratitude to the people and institutions who provide the necessary funds to make this publication possible. We also gratefully acknowledge Mary Holliman of Pocahontas Press, Peter Wallenstein of the Virginia Tech Department of History, and our many anonymous reviewers for their considerable assistance in the preparation of this issue. Over the past few years, the *Smithfield Review* Management Board has labored behind the scenes to execute various administrative components of our operation. Members of this board are listed on page 2, and we thank them for their invaluable contribution.

Hugh G. Campbell, Editor

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