



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 1,860-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.

A Note from the Editors

In this issue of the *Smithfield Review*, we present articles that will enhance our understanding of the considerable transition that took place in the thirteen colonies before and after the Revolutionary War.

The first article, by Tom Costa, a history professor at the University of Virginia at Wise, reveals the observations of an Englishman named James Buckingham as he toured and analyzed our young nation just fifty years after its birth. The well-travelled Buckingham was a capable reporter of southern life and customs and provided ample first-hand evidence of his observations.

Recent research of old naval records shows that William Radford, grandfather of the man for whom the City of Radford was named, was among the first of our country's marines. New information about William Radford and the Radford family is presented by David L. Mordy and James C. Mordy in the article "William Radford, Revolutionary Patriot of the Continental Marines." Both David and James, who are brothers, attended the University of Kansas and served as officers in the U.S. Navy. David is retired after working for several large corporations, and James is a retired lawyer.

Colonel James Patton was a dominant force in populating the fertile lands west of the Blue Ridge Mountains from 1737 until his death in the 1755 Draper's Meadows Massacre. Very little reliable information is known, however, about Patton's earlier life in the United Kingdom. Jim Glanville, a retired Virginia Tech chemistry professor and a frequent author in this journal, and Ryan Mays, a staff biologist at Virginia Tech, have undertaken an extensive search of UK records for more information about the activities of this interesting and important person. To date, this research has produced significant information about shipping practices between the UK and its American colonies. Early results of this research are reported in "The Mysterious Origins of James Patton, Part 1." Later results will be reported in the next volume of *The Smithfield Review*.

When the Constitution of the United States was implemented in 1789, there was little precedent in the manner in which elections were to be accomplished. Consequently, it was not unusual for various forms of influence and intimidation to exist in order to achieve a desired political

outcome. Documented evidence of such behavior is provided in “Whiskey, Soldiers, and Voting: Western Virginia Elections in the 1790s.” The author, Wesley Judkins Campbell, has academic degrees from the University of North Carolina and the London School of Economics and currently is a third-year student at the Stanford Law School.

Our “Brief Notes” section this year includes a supplementary discussion of Chicago’s Newberry Library publication entitled *Digital Atlas of Historical County Boundaries*. In the section, Jim Glanville describes a mapping error in the 1772 boundary between Botetourt County and the newly formed Fincastle County. An additional brief note provides a request for financial support of a proposed Preston monument at Greenfield in Botetourt County.

With sadness, we inform our readers of the death of our publisher, Mary Holliman of Pocahontas Press. Mary was an important link in the production of our annual publication, and we will miss her cheerful, competent assistance. We are extremely grateful to Barbara Corbett and Carolyn Harris for performing the functions once handled by Mary. On very short notice, they responded admirably.

We also acknowledge the contributions of Virginia Tech historian Peter Wallenstein, our financial donors, our many anonymous reviewers, and the *Smithfield Review* Management Board members for their ongoing encouragement and assistance in making this publication possible.

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