

Figure 1. 1927 Price/Manning map of Preston Cemetery. Smithfield Files, Montgomery Branch APVA.

The Preston Cemetery of Historic Smithfield Plantation

Laura Jones Wedin

From the porch, one sees to the left, gleaming white among the trees, the monuments and tablets that mark the last resting-place of a vanished people — for here, where the Preston name once lived and flourished, it has passed away...

— Cary Baldwin Preston, 1903 *Bugle Yearbook*
Virginia Polytechnic Institute^{1,2}

The Preston family cemetery in Blacksburg, Virginia, on the campus of Virginia Tech, is located to the southeast of the Historic Smithfield manor house, built circa 1774.³ It has served as a burying ground for six generations of Prestons including Colonel William Preston, a Revolutionary War leader and patriot.⁴ Located on a high knoll near the Southgate Drive entrance to the Virginia Tech campus, the cemetery's approximately one-third acre is enclosed by a brick masonry and black metal fence. Large oak and hickory trees shade the fenced area. Land to the west and south sides of the cemetery is cropland farmed by Virginia Tech. The north side is wooded. To the east are the Virginia-Maryland College of Veterinary Medicine and a storm drainage pond that was built in 1998. The oldest assumed burial in the cemetery dates to February, 1782.⁵ The first documented and marked burial is that of Colonel William Preston, who died in June 1783. The most recent is Edwin Page Preston (1921-2001), great-great-great-grandson of Colonel William Preston, in 2001.

The Scots-Irish, Presbyterian Burials and the Preston Family

The Preston cemetery reflects the typical burial traditions of the Scots-Irish frontier immigrants in Virginia. Inhabitants of towns and cities were typically buried at the churchyard cemetery but, as the pioneer

migration pushed further west, the use of small family burying grounds placed within sight of the family house on a knoll or high ground, “closer to heaven” and shaded by oak trees, became common. In an agrarian landscape, these private graveyards included the planter family and its labor force of indentured servants, slaves, and freedman.⁶ Scots-Irish cemeteries typically have entrance gates of slender iron bars with tips made by blacksmiths and are loosely organized by family unit, with graves arranged in rows, rather than clusters.⁷ In New England tradition, the graves are aligned to a west-east, head-to-foot celestial alignment. According to Protestant beliefs, this orientation would allow the dead to rise on Judgment Day to face God in the eastern sky.⁸ For burials prior to 1800, the body may have been dressed in a hastily sewn shroud of white linen or cotton or more simply wrapped in a winding sheet, fastened with brass pins and placed in a wooden coffin, almost always of the characteristic hexagonal shape, and usually made of pine.⁹ In the nineteenth century, the dead were typically clothed in their “Sunday best” and, while pine coffins were still typically used, other woods along with metal hardware became more common. The large flat ledger marker with beveled edges was a style typical among the upper-class Scots-Irish plantation burials from 1765 to 1835, and these types of markers are found in the Preston cemetery in various forms, as box-tomb and table tomb markers.¹⁰

A few markers from the mid- to late-nineteenth century utilize engraved symbols and emblems; the remainder are text inscription only. Two inscriptions on the markers can be attributed to a Scottish poet and a Scottish minister; most other quotes are biblical in origin. The markers at Smithfield are simple and austere compared to area cemeteries such as the Westview Cemetery of Blacksburg.

In the cemetery are 28 marked graves (eleven are shared), three out-of-place markers, and two memorial markers; there are approximately 64 documented and/or assumed burials, and it is likely that there are more. From burial order and location of family members, it appears that sometime in the lifetime of James Patton Preston, son of William Preston, the cemetery space was divided up into quadrants to provide each of his sons, William Ballard, James Francis, and Robert Taylor Preston, and his daughter, Catherine Jane, an area for their family burials.

History of Previous Documentation

Interest in the Preston cemetery, along with several documentation efforts, has occurred sporadically throughout the twentieth century. The first detailed map and recording of the cemetery appeared in 1927 with a map based on the notes of Harvey Lee Price¹¹ and correspondence of the Warren Manning Offices, a landscaping design and residential planning firm that had proposed a scenic drive through the Virginia Tech campus to include the cemetery on its route.¹² The 1927 Price/Manning map was drawn by hand, using a background grid as a guide (fig. 1). The map details the octagonal-shaped “moat” or ditch that surrounds the cemetery, 18 markers and much detail of the plant life around the cemetery, including identification and diameter measurements of trees. In c1930, Rudolph D. Michael, who at the time served as agricultural editor (1928–1965) at the Agricultural Experiment Station of Virginia Polytechnic Institute, drew by hand a map of the cemetery¹³ (fig. 2). The hastily drawn map, while not to scale, had accompanying notes with corresponding

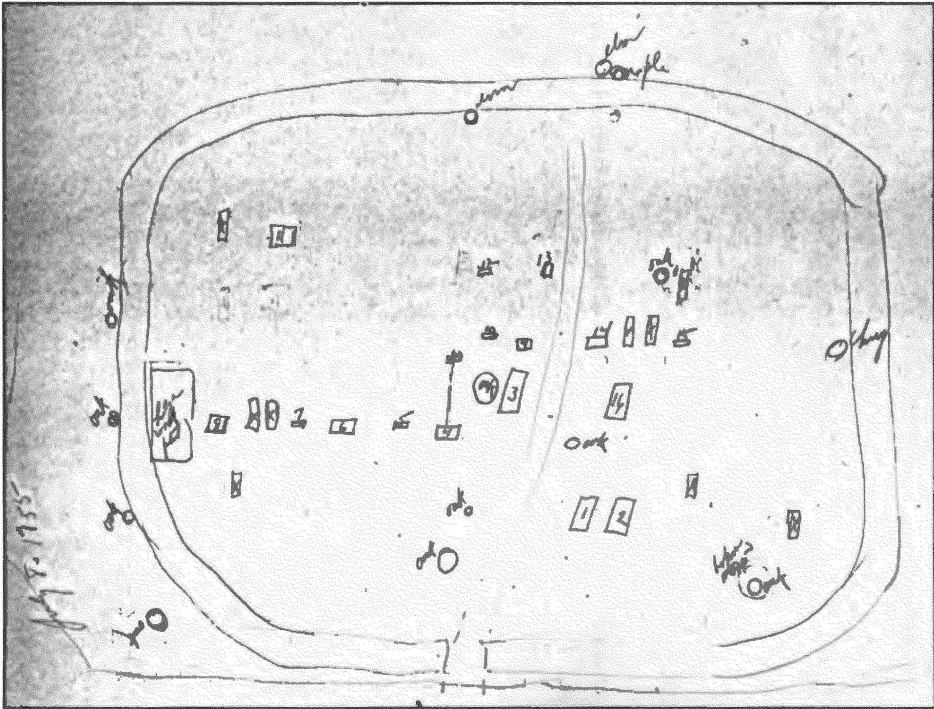


Figure 2. Circa 1930 Rudolph D. Michael drawing of the Preston Cemetery. Special Collections, Virginia Tech Library.

numbers and inscriptions of the existing markers. Michael also indicates rectangular boxes with X's — perhaps graves that no longer had markers or graves marked with wood or fieldstone.

The next known mapping was done in 1961 by Hartwell H. Gary, Sr., husband of Cary Baldwin Preston (1883-1960). Gary¹⁴, a 1904 alumnus of Virginia Polytechnic Institute and a civil engineer by profession, produced a drafted map in a 1"=10' scale.¹⁵ This map shows measurements and specific graves indicated with their celestial alignment and provides a generation numeral and identifying number for each Preston grave (fig. 3). An accompanying legend, using the identification number of each grave, marked and unmarked, gives the name, birth and death

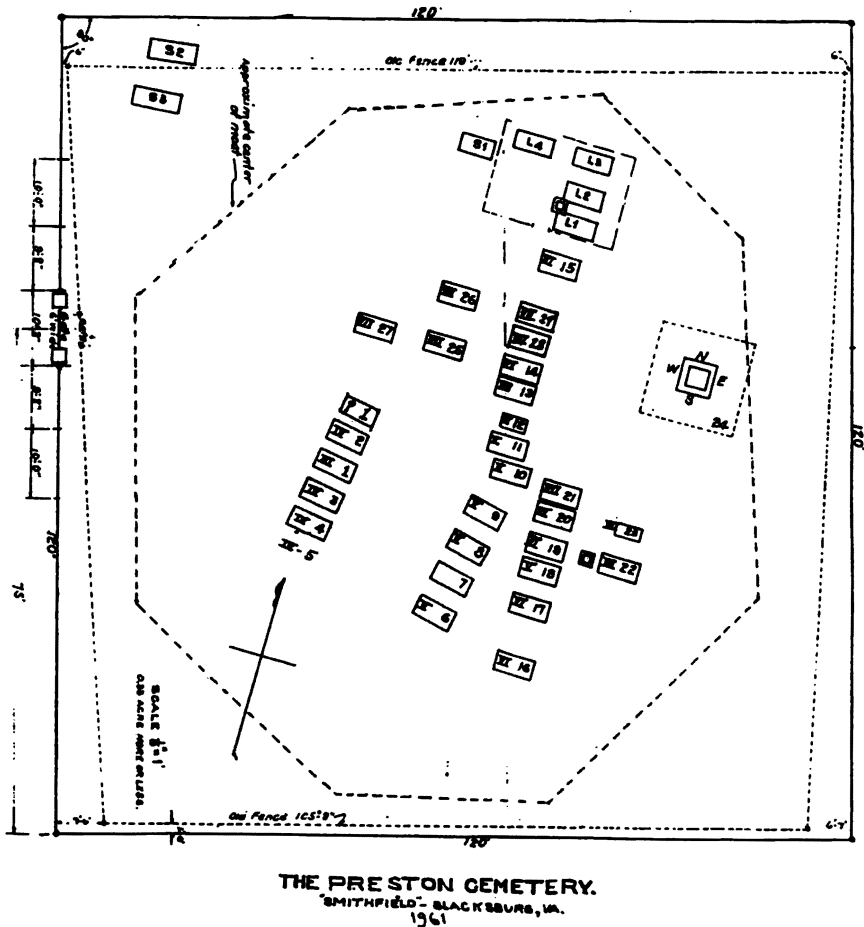


Figure 3. 1961 Hartwell Gary map of the Preston Cemetery. Smithfield Files, Montgomery Branch APVA.

dates, and sometimes additional information about the individual. This map was later amended and revised with additional graves and information in 1981 by retired Virginia Tech faculty member and Smithfield volunteer, C. H. “Hank” Powers.

In 1980, Smithfield’s first resident curator, Anna Whitehead Kenney, documented the cemetery markers in a small booklet, “The Preston Cemetery at Smithfield Plantation 1782–1980”, which is still sold in the museum shop of Historic Smithfield. In it, she documents each of the existing markers with their inscriptions and often includes additional information about the individual. She also has a page of “Graves no longer marked in the Smithfield Cemetery”, which includes the grave of Governor James Patton Preston and his wife, Ann (Nancy or Nannie) Taylor Preston. The booklet was revised in 1984, adding new information, burials, and an index. The booklet has minor errors and inaccuracies in inscription transcription, but has served as a valuable resource for tracing and re-documenting those buried in the cemetery.

Several photographs of the cemetery have been located in Special Collections of the Virginia Tech library as well as the files of Smithfield, Montgomery Branch APVA. Despite the absence of documented dating on these photographs, approximate dating has been determined through the presence and changes of features such as fencing, trees, and the known dates of particular benchmark grave markers.

Who is Buried in the Preston Cemetery

Colonel William Preston

Identity of the deceased was temporarily maintained in family memory or recorded in a family Bible. The earliest markers at the Preston cemetery were of wood, fieldstone, or simply a planting of periwinkle or boxwood over the grave. There was not an established stonecutter in the southwest area of Virginia until the second quarter of the nineteenth century¹⁶, although it seems clear that the Prestons did not access the talents of local German stonecutters, such as B. F. Spyker, who operated regionally beginning in the 1820s.¹⁷ Professionally-cut and engraved marble markers had to be ordered from the northern commercial markets. The practice of “backdating” or marking a grave many years after the burial was prevalent in rural western Virginia in the nineteenth century.¹⁸ The oldest inscribed marker of the Preston cemetery covers the grave of William and Susanna Preston (fig. 4). From a letter dated Janu-



Figure 4. View looking west toward gate and chain link fence. From left, the markers of Colonel William Preston and his son, William Preston of Kentucky. Photo c. 1965. Smithfield Files, Montgomery Branch APVA.

ary 1832 from Colonel Preston's son James Patton Preston to James' brother, Francis Preston, it is known that Francis purchased a marble slab while he was in Philadelphia and had it shipped to a Mr. Meem¹⁹ in Lynchburg. James Patton Preston then had it hauled to Smithfield by John Fraction²⁰, one of the Smithfield slaves.²¹ The large flat ledger marker with a refined molded border bears the maker mark of Elias Brown of Philadelphia in the lower right hand corner. This grave was formally marked nine years after Susanna's death and almost 50 years after the death of Colonel Preston. In 1973, the Alleghany and William Preston Chapters of the NSDAR placed a bronze commemorative marker at the foot of Colonel Preston's grave.²²

William Preston of Kentucky

Next to Colonel William Preston's grave, a flat marble ledger marker also marks the grave of his son William Preston of Kentucky (b. 1770 at

Greenfield). After a two-and-a-half month period of illness that included a stroke, influenza, jaundice, and finally dropsy²³ he died at the home of his sister, Letitia Preston, and her husband, Dr. John Floyd at Thorn Spring, Montgomery County [west of Dublin, Pulaski County], Virginia, on January 24, 1821. Letitia writes to William's wife, Caroline Hancock Preston, "His beloved remains are still in our house. Tomorrow they will be taken to Smithfield accompanied by many friends and on Sunday be committed to their parent earth." He was "interred by the side of our Father at his special request."²⁴ This marker has lengthy and descriptive inscription. The inscription content,^{25, 26} style and straight edges of this ledger marker suggest that his grave was not formally marked until the early 1850s. A photograph, c1891 (fig. 5), shows that the ledger marker for William Preston of Kentucky originally had a box base with square fluted columns at each corner and framing slabs of marble on the sides and ends.²⁷ This base may have fallen apart, as it was later replaced with one of rough-hewn limestone.²⁸ One section of the marble siding is now on the ground between the two markers, and the four square, fluted columns now mark the four corners of the Ledgerwood plot.²⁹ A commemorative bronze marker bearing the marker's inscription³⁰ was placed at the foot of his grave by descendants Caroline Joyes Cory and S. Gordan Dabney of Louisville, Kentucky, in 2001.

Early historic photographs show Colonel Preston's ledger top lying on the ground and then later supported by rough-hewn blocks of sandstone that are now found piled at the base of the nearby white oak tree (fig. 5, fig. 6). Rudolph Michael notes in 1929 that the ledger markers of both William and William of Kentucky were "weather-beaten slabs raised from the ground about two feet by supporting squares of stone." It is unlikely that the sandstone blocks were original to the marble ledger top but possibly were parts of another broken marker. Colonel William Preston's marker, along with two other flat ledger markers, appears to have had its base replaced with a brick masonry box, sometime in the mid-twentieth century, to possibly coincide with the installation of the masonry fence pillars that support the entrance gate.

Marked and Unmarked Graves

Several graves from the period prior to 1852 remain unmarked. Susanna Smith Floyd, the first child of Letitia Preston (daughter of Colonel William Preston) and Dr. John Floyd, died in 1806 at Smithfield and



Figure 5. Preston Cemetery, looking east, showing post and rail fence. Photograph c. 1891, attributed to the Rev. Ellison A. Smyth, Sr. Special Collections, Virginia Tech Library.

is probably buried in the Preston Cemetery.³¹ In particular, the graves of children from this period were not marked, including four children of James Patton and Ann Taylor Preston.³² In 1835, their daughter Susan died in Lexington, where she attended school. James Preston writes to his nephew James McDowell that her remains were returned to Smithfield in “a mournful procession” and that a “deeply afflicted circle of friends gave our dear Susan to the consecrated spot which she while living asked her mother to select for her remains.”³³ The grave of Keziah (b. 1854–d. c.1861), the daughter of William Ballard and Lucy Redd Preston, is marked with a small fieldstone, next to her parents’ grave.³⁴

Owing to improved transportation and the establishment of commercial stonecutters, most graves after 1852 were marked. Three markers are attributed to the work of John B. Gaddess, a stonecutter who had established himself in Lynchburg in April of 1852.³⁵ The first is a ledger marker for Catherine Jane Preston Gilmer, who died in January 1852.^{36,37} Two vertical marble headstones by Gaddess are for Ann Taylor Preston Coles (1843–1868)³⁸ and daughter Ann Preston Coles (1868–1869).³⁹



Figure 6. Looking northeast, from left, the markers of William Preston of Kentucky and Colonel William and Susanna Preston. Note post and wire fencing, Preston/Mean's obelisk in upper left corner. Photo c. 1935 to mid-20th c., Smithfield files, Montgomery Branch APVA.

The first two years of the Civil War saw fourteen burials in the Preston Cemetery. In 1861, Ann Barraud Taylor Preston (1778–1861), William Ballard's young daughter Keziah, and Sallie and Mary Means, daughters of Virginia Preston Means⁴⁰ died, as did an unnamed slave of James Francis Preston. In 1862, 214 deaths were recorded at the Montgomery County Courthouse compared with 63 the year before.⁴¹ That year, the brothers James Francis and William Ballard Preston died along with James "Little Jimmy" Francis I and James Francis II (infant sons of James Francis and Sarah Ann Preston)⁴² and four slaves belonging to Robert Taylor Preston. Isabell Ledgerwood, buried in the Ledgerwood section, died of typhoid fever that year. Seven C.S.A. veterans of the Civil War are buried in the cemetery; James Francis Preston died of disease contracted in service.

On the 1927 Price/Manning map, the grave of Hugh Caperton Preston (1856–1905) is noted as a “wood marker no dates”. Rudolph Michael notes “wood — Black painted letters Hugh Caperton Preston.”⁴³ When his wife Cary Baldwin Preston died in 1935 and was buried in the same grave, this wooden marker was replaced by one of marble with a quote from Scottish poet Thomas Campbell: “To live in the hearts of those we leave behind is not to die.”

In the northeastern portion of the cemetery, a large and imposing 12-foot tall grey granite obelisk serves to memorialize ten unmarked graves, which include Robert Taylor Preston and his descendants, with burial dates ranging from 1851 to 1901 (fig. 6).

Where is Governor James Patton Preston?

Most of those buried in the cemetery are descended from James Patton Preston, the fourth son of William and Susanna Preston and the first of their children to be born at Smithfield in 1774. James Patton Preston was only nine when he inherited Smithfield after his father’s death in 1783. His mother Susanna, as directed by Col. Preston’s will, chose to live at Smithfield and remained there for forty more years, until her death in 1823. Susanna managed the plantation until James came of age. James served in the War of 1812, receiving a serious injury to his leg that crippled him for the remainder of his life. He later became governor of Virginia (1816–1819) and lived off and on in Richmond where he was postmaster from 1824–1837.⁴⁴

Governor James Patton Preston died 4 May 1843 at the age of 69. His wife Ann (Nannie or Nancy) Barraud Taylor died in 1861. A description of her funeral is found in a letter written at White Thorn by M.E. Caperton, sister-in-law of James Francis Preston’s wife Sarah Ann Caperton, dated June 10, 1861:

She was buried yesterday [Sunday, June 9th] and I never witnessed such an imposing funeral. It was estimated that between 3 & 400 persons assembled at Smithfield. Sr. Carson the Methodist minister preached a short but eloquent sermon in the parlor. Mr. Preston [William Ballard Preston] requested that we all follow the herse on foot to the grave. Gov. Preston’s grave was opened and Mr. Preston went him-self the day before and had the evergreen [probably periwinkle] which covered his father’s grave cut just the shape of the grave and foldered over on the ground by the side of the grave. After the

Episcopal burial service was read and the coffin lowered, the servants assembled around the grave and sang a beautiful hymn. And as they sang four of the oldest servants stepped forward and pulled this mantle of evergreen over the grave which had been previously filled. I thought it the most beautiful idea I have ever seen. Eighteen years ago [1843] the old lady had her husband buried so that her remains might be placed on top of his. The evergreen she planted herself and her son considered it so sacred that he attended to the cutting himself and had the same covering drawn over her body that had rested over his father's ashes for 18 years. Was it not a beautiful idea?⁴⁵

There is little doubt that Governor Preston's remains reside in the cemetery but the actual location for his and his wife's shared grave has not been confirmed. Anna Kenney, Smithfield's first curator, notes that through a conversation in 1970 with an old black gentleman, John Valentine⁴⁶ of Riner, Virginia, who had worked for the Preston family for many years⁴⁷, told her that "one time a long time ago a limb from a big tree fell across one of the 'chist like' tombs. One of them high flat stones and broke it so that you could see the coffin." He had been told to level it and fill it in. The pieces of the stone were too badly broken to be mended. He was almost sure it was the grave of "de one dey called de Governor."⁴⁸ The 1927 Price/Manning map does not show or mention this grave. The material in the Warren Manning letter of 19 March 1927 does not include information about a James Patton Preston marker. Rudolph Michael does not include this grave in his notes; however, on his hand-drawn map c1930 are several graves marked with X's, presumably those with just worn wood or fieldstone markers or no markers. The note "broken stone?" is scrawled next to the circle indicating the large oak tree near the two Williams' graves. From the 1927 map and letter, it would appear that the tree event had occurred prior to 1927.

Contemporary and Historical Accounts of Preston Funerals and Burials

Other accounts of Preston burials appear in the diaries of long-time Blacksburg resident Rosanna Croy Dawson (1822–1906), who detailed everyday life in the town. At the death of Charles Trigg Beale, son of William Radford and Lucy Preston Beale, Dawson's entry for April 24, 1890, reads, "Charley Beal died last night he was here in the College

School [V.P.I.] had the tyfoid [sic] fever"⁴⁹ A year later, Charles Beale's fellow cadets at V.P.I. gave him a military memorial service at the cemetery.⁵⁰ His grave is marked with a distinctive marble obelisk that has been valuable in dating old photographs of the cemetery (fig. 5).

Just three years after Charles Beale's death, his sister Anne died. Rosanna Dawson's entry for June 8, 1893 reads, "Anna Beal was Buired at the Preston Graveyard by her brother."^{51,52}

The 1898 diary of Rosanna Croy Dawson in her "A Sheat for Deathes" reads:

may 30 Mrs. Virginia Means⁵³ the daughter of Cor [Colonel] Bob Preston died at her home in Birmingham Alabama, took newmonia May 28th they brought her two Prestons old home to bury her by her Husband [Robert Stark Means, d. 1874] She was taken two the Me[thodist] church they sang a few verses of the hymn howfirm a foundation, the last hymn a Sleep in Jesus, big crowd of old friends

June 2th She was buried at the Semetery Where all the Prestons are buried, the old Grandfather and Grandmother was layed years ago"⁵⁴

Her regular diary entry for June 2 was "...at 3 oclock I went too the funeral...Mrs. Sarah Preston was at the funeral and lots of old friends"⁵⁵.

On December 4, 1902, the remains of Colonel William Ballard Preston (1858–1901), a great-grandson of William and Susanna and son of James Francis Preston, were taken to the cemetery at Smithfield for final interment with full military honors by the V.P.I. Corps of Cadets, almost a year after his death in the Philippines while in military service. He had served as commandant of the Virginia Tech Corps of Cadets and as a faculty member. As a mark of respect, the Cadet Battalion paraded as the procession passed through the Institute grounds, accompanied the body to the cemetery, and performed graveside honors.⁵⁶

Shared Graves — a Preston Tradition

Spouses sharing graves in the Preston cemetery became a Preston family tradition beginning with Susanna, who directed in her will "that my body shall be deposited in Grave with my deceased and ever dear husband."⁵⁷ This practice continued for at least ten other Preston burials including James Patton Preston and his wife Ann Preston; James Francis and wife, Sarah Ann Caperton Preston; William Ballard and wife Lucy

Redd Preston; Hugh Caperton and wife Cary Baldwin Preston; and Cary B. Preston Gary and her husband, Hartwell Gary. The unmarried sisters Caperton and Katherine Preston, who established and owned Camp Carysbrook, also share a grave. A family story relates that “Miss Kat” (Katherine), the younger sister, had requested that, if Caperton died first, her remains be reburied on top of Katherine’s as Caperton was the stronger and most gracious of the two and ready to meet whatever came along.⁵⁸

Other Burials — Not Prestons

Another white marble ledger marker, also made by Elias Brown and dating from the 1830s, belongs to Emily Ann Eyre Terrill (1805–1832).⁵⁹ She was married to Dr. George Terrill of the U.S. Navy in 1830. Her connection to the Preston family is unknown, but the marble marker with lengthy and elaborate inscriptions and location within the cemetery indicates that her family was of considerable means or that she or her husband’s family had a special relationship with the Preston family.

On Christmas Day 1859, a Miss Julia Binnens was laid to rest in an unmarked grave at the Preston cemetery. From a register entry of the Bannister Parish, dated 12 January 1860 in Pittsylvania County, Virginia, we know that Julia Binnens was born in the West Indies to a wealthy English planter family and was educated in Philadelphia. She enjoyed the refined society of the West Indies until the abolition of slavery ruined the family fortune. Her family relocated in New Haven, Connecticut. After the death of her parents, Miss Binnens had to make a living as a teacher. She taught at a small school for girls in Chatham, Virginia, from 1845 until March 1859, when she began living at the home of William Ballard Preston.⁶⁰ By this time she was old and ill and perhaps William offered his home to her as a last refuge before her death on December 23, 1859. Her relationship to the family is unknown but there may be a connection through Judge George Gilmer of Pittsylvania County, who married Catherine Jane Ann Gilmer and had close ties to the Preston family. Her grave is unmarked and its exact location is unknown — but it is most likely in the area near the William Ballard Preston quadrant.

Who May Not Be Buried at Smithfield

The Gary Map of 1961 indicates that the grave of James Patton Preston is beside the unmarked grave of John Preston (1764–1827), which is on the south side of Col. Preston’s. In a letter from Janie Preston

Boulware Lamb to Mr. J. Adger Stewart, dated 23 April 1941, she claims that John was buried at Smithfield.⁶¹ But the Dorman book indicates that John died at Greenfield and, according to Botetourt county history, John is buried at Greenfield.⁶² Other Preston family members affiliated with Greenfield claim that John is buried at a cemetery at Greenfield. There is no marker for John at either the Preston cemetery or the Greenfield cemeteries.

The Price/Manning map and also the Gary map indicate that Henrietta Preston (1803–1835)⁶³, who was married to Albert Sidney Johnson (later to become a well-known C.S.A. general), is buried at the Preston cemetery — this statement was based on legend, not on an existing grave marker. John Dorman's material says that Henrietta is buried at the Cave Hill Cemetery in Louisville, Kentucky.⁶⁴

Anna Kenney's booklet mentions the markers of George H. Gilmer (1810–1874), who was married to Catherine Ann Preston, and his second wife, Elizabeth Carrington Gilmer (1828–1903). Of Gilmer's marker, Kenney notes: "There is an identical tombstone for him in the Gilmer Plot in the Chatham Cemetery except that that stone gives the Biblical reference for the quotation II Timothy 1–12." A note in the revised 1984 version of her booklet says: "In recent years the markers for George H. Gilmer and Elizabeth C. Gilmer have disappeared. They are not piled with other broken stones in the cemetery." The Gilmers are probably buried in the Chatham plot, but the family may have provided memorial markers in the Preston cemetery. The markers Kenney mentions are not indicated on the Price/Manning map nor in the Michael notes.

Family history and legend has it that James Patton, uncle of William Preston, was buried 'at Smithfield' after he was killed at the Drapers Meadow Massacre on July 30, 1755⁶⁵ — reasoning that William Preston would have remembered the burial location of his uncle, years later. Letters of Letitia Preston Floyd⁶⁶ and her daughter, Letitia Floyd Lewis⁶⁷ mention that Patton was buried near or at Smithfield. A story, attributed to Cary Baldwin Preston, in the 1900 *Bugle Yearbook* about the massacre says "he was interred near the scene of the massacre, probably in the grove of Smithfield."⁶⁸ No evidence has been found to support these claims.

A persistent legend also has it that Governor John B. Floyd is buried in the Preston Cemetery. Floyd, the son of Letitia Preston and John Floyd, was born at Smithfield in 1806 but was buried at the Sinking

Spring Cemetery in Abingdon, Virginia.⁶⁹ A Virginia Tech trivia sheet used by student campus guides has John B. Floyd listed as one of the two governors buried in the cemetery, but this information is undocumented.

Other Graves

As in churchyard cemeteries, the first part of the Preston cemetery to be used was the southwest side. The north side of these cemeteries was considered less desirable and often the last part of the burying ground to be used. It was sometimes reserved for strangers, prisoners, slaves, servants, and indigents.⁷⁰ Graves in the northern section of the cemetery include the overseer's plot for the Ledgerwood family and the three documented servant/slave graves.

Overseers' Plot

The Ledgerwood family plot is shown on the 1927 Price/Manning map, the c. 1930 Michael drawing, and the 1961 Gary map, marked L1 through L4. Anderson Ledgerwood (1823–1892) was long-time overseer of White Thorn and later Smithfield. His wife Hester and son Allen are buried in the plot along with Isabell Ledgerwood, who might have been his mother or possibly an aunt. Anderson Ledgerwood's name is seen in the Montgomery County death records as the informant for several slave deaths and the death of Isabell. Three of the markers with death dates ranging from 1862–1880 in the Ledgerwood plot are of grey slate⁷¹ and more New England in style. They were possibly the work of an area German stonecarver. Anderson Ledgerwood's marker is of marble. A four-sided marble obelisk memorial marker with the names of the four burials was perhaps placed around the time that Anderson Ledgerwood's grave was marked in the early 1890s.

Graves of Slaves and Former Slaves — “Aunt Ginny”

The enslaved population of Smithfield was probably buried nearby, possibly on the north side of the cemetery, on the down slope. In 1774, at Smithfield, William Preston wrote of the death of the slave Peter and later the almost imminent death of Sam.⁷² There are other suspected slave burial sites, marked with periwinkle growth, just north of the current northern fence line. The “S” graves, those of slaves or servants, are indicated only on the 1961 Gary map. S1 is indicated as the unmarked

grave of Virginia “Aunt Ginny” Capers, a former slave and “colored mammy for the older children of Hugh and Cary Preston”⁷³, and is located to the west, just outside the Ledgerwood plot. At the time, in post-Civil War Virginia, her burial within the Preston Cemetery was a strong statement of family sentiment of her value and inclusion in the family sphere.⁷⁴ Graves S2 and S3, noted as “from markers and location in graveyard, these were probably colored servants”, are located outside the moat area and the old fence line in the northwest corner.⁷⁵

Markers No Longer *in situ*

Three markers at the cemetery are no longer in their original locations, nor are those identified on the markers known to be Prestons. One “G.S. Died Aug. 21, 1841 Aged 6-Y” is beautifully engraved on a small sandstone marker that leans against the marker of Isabell Ledgerwood. The other, the “Benjamin” marker, hewn from native limestone into a shield shape and inscribed by shallow scratching, lies on a pile of stones near the oldest oak tree. “BENJAMI[N] HE WAS BORN/ AND WAS TAKE[N]/7 OF JUNE/HE LIEVE IN SEP[TEM]/BER THE 8 AN H[E]/DIED 1840”.⁷⁶ Two crudely etched crosses are at the top. It could be the marker of a child, but does not match the other Benjamin (d. 1851) of the Preston family. Both markers are likely to be the markers of servants or slaves or even an overseer’s child. They are significant, being two of the earliest engraved markers, reflecting the local vernacular of the area. Another undated marble marker is for Lavinia Hart Berkeley (b. c1830 – d. before June 1880). This marker was noted in Rudolph Michael’s notes of 1929 as well as in Anna Kenney’s booklet.⁷⁷ The head and footstone, now in four pieces, rest or lean on the Preston/Means monument. She was the wife of Colonel Norborne Berkeley, C.S.A., who became the college farm manager (of V.P.I.) in 1876.⁷⁸ There is a possible connection to the Hart family who married into several lines of Prestons, or through Col. Berkeley’s service during the Civil War.

Layout of the Preston Cemetery

The Entrance

The entrance to the cemetery is through a welded three-rail picket iron gate supported by two tall masonry brick pillars, features not noted in the 1927 Price/Manning map but that do appear on the 1961 Gary map (fig. 3, 4). Rudolph Michael mentions “the iron gate” in his notes

but does not specifically indicate it on his hand-drawn map of c. 1930. Mary Hart Means Lloyd (b. 1916), daughter of Virginia Preston Means, recalls the gate as a child.⁷⁹ Anna Kenney's revised 1984 booklet notes that the brother of Smithfield overseer Anderson Ledgerwood was an engineer with the Norfolk and Western Railroad, and had sent the money to Smithfield to have the "anchor fence and iron gate" placed at the cemetery.⁸⁰ The iron gate and attached name plaque were noted by the James Madison University historic resource survey crew in their 1978 recording⁸¹ although they refer to it as the "Patton" cemetery. Archaeologist Tom Klatka of the Virginia Department of Historic Resources, in his August 2002 visit to the cemetery, noted that the gate appears altered — that the finial points were perhaps original but that the gate had been adjusted or remade.⁸² An early fencing, which appears in an old photograph, was post and rail (fig. 5). Later photographs show a post and wire fence (fig. 6), which is also noted on the 1927 Price/Manning map. The post and wire fence, remains of which are in the wooded area north of the cemetery, was encircled with a metal chain-link fence at an unknown date. The 1961 Gary map indicates both the new chain-link fence line as well as the old fence line.⁸³ The chain link fence also appears in a photograph c1965 (fig. 4). This fencing remained until the newer black aluminum metal fencing with additional masonry supports was installed in 1999 by Virginia Tech.

The Moat — a Possible "ha ha"

The moat or ditching that surrounds the graves in the cemetery is a most interesting and historic feature of the cemetery. In an approximate octagonal shape, it was suggested on the 1927 Price/Manning map that the "moat or trench appears to have been for a hill top defensive breastworks" but also notes "or it may have been a boundary moat or ditch for the cemetery as all the burials seem to be inside of it."⁸⁵ Rudolph Michael writes in a draft article c1929: "Completely around the cemetery, except for a small section at the iron gate, runs a trench about three feet deep and four to six feet wide. Since the cemetery is on high ground, it does not seem reasonable that the trench was made for drainage purposes." Michael is also thinking of the moat in terms of a defensive earthworks when he notes "the position of the hill along the road made it an admirable place to establish an outpost and first defense..." On the 1961 Gary map, a dashed line locates the approximate center of the moat.⁸⁶

Archaeologist Tom Klatka suggests that the moat could be a “ha ha” or an underground fence that was sometimes used by elite families in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries to restrict the movement of large animals and livestock, although he says that he had never heard of one being west of the Piedmont. The moat at the Preston cemetery is shallow and has sloped sides, different from a typical “ha ha”, which was usually three feet deep with straight sides, but Mr. Klatka pointed out that weathering, erosion, and perhaps added fill in later years could have altered a “ha ha”. A future archeological investigation can help ascertain the original form and construction of this moat.

Flora of the Preston Cemetery

Periwinkle (*Vinca minor*, also called myrtle), an evergreen perennial, was commonly used as a ground cover for cemeteries in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. It provided a quick-growing ground cover that prevented erosion, hid the grave subsidence, and provided flowers around the time of Easter. Periwinkle is found throughout the Preston cemetery, primarily on grave sites. Several graves to the northeast of the cemetery are only marked with periwinkle — these graves belong to those listed on the large Preston/Means obelisk monument. Many oak trees, of black and white variety, provide much shade. Grass is thin and sparse. Shade trees, particularly oaks, had symbolic meaning going back to Roman times. The large “first tree,” a large white oak in the southwest corner near Colonel Preston’s grave, was possibly shading the first graves. It may be the tree whose branch was responsible for crushing the marker of James Patton Preston. Ghost ground impressions remain from two large oak trees that were noted in the 1927 Price/Manning map and the 1930 Michael drawing. The Michael drawing indicates one maple, two elms, ten oaks, and one cherry tree. The Price map, done just a few years before Michael’s jottings, identifies the elms as black cherries. Other trees, mostly hickories, have been established since these maps were done.

A large American boxwood (*Buxus sempervirens*)⁸⁷ more than eight feet tall, which flourishes in the east central end of the cemetery, now obscures the footstone of Hugh Caperton and Cary Baldwin Preston’s grave. This boxwood appears in a photograph c. mid-twentieth century at a height of approximately three feet. Boxwoods were a common planting to mark either a row of graves or an individual grave. Other scrubby

boxwoods, stunted and low to the ground from repeated mowings, appear in other areas of the oldest section.

Today, running cedar, as well as poison ivy, is found in a shady area just west of Colonel Preston's grave. Poison ivy was noted in this location on the 1927 Price/Manning map along with Virginia creeper. The Price/Manning map also mentioned the presence of old cottage rose, cinnamon rose, and snowberry along with many other kinds of wildflowers and plants.

Survey and Documentation in the Computer Age

The most recent documentation was done in the summer and fall of 2002. All previous documentation of the cemetery available, along with genealogical records and family papers, has been closely examined to provide correct historical perspective. This information will be transferred to electronic media along with digital photographs of each marker. Inscriptions have been re-recorded and previous transcription errors have been noted. The cemetery is scheduled to be re-surveyed in order to get a revised recording and global positioning system (GPS) of its location. A new map will be made using this revised information. To facilitate any future interments, an attempt to locate undocumented, unmarked graves will be made. An archeological investigation of the moat or "ha ha" is being coordinated under the guidance of Tom Klatka of the Virginia Department of Historic Resources. A field survey and location of unmarked grave shafts is being considered by area archaeologist Dr. Clifford Boyd of Radford University. Plans to list the cemetery on the National Register of Historic Places are underway. A revised map, new booklet, and possibly an internet/CD format will be created to serve as a resource guide to the cemetery and to be sold in the museum shop of Smithfield.

Ownership, Care, and Future of the Preston Cemetery

The cemetery became part of Virginia Tech property when the land on which it exists [Plat I] was sold by the Preston family to Tech in 1967 with an agreement that family ingress/egress and burial rights, along with perpetual care, would be observed.⁸⁸ The grounds are maintained by Virginia Tech. After the chain link fence had broken, Tech replaced it with aluminum fencing and additional masonry supports. The area just north of the cemetery, probably a slave burying ground, has been allowed to

“naturalize.” Some recent tree pruning has been done. The Montgomery Branch APVA is now working in close partnership with the Virginia Tech Grounds Department to ensure that the existing markers are not damaged any further by nylon filament cutters, etc. Children and parents associated with the SmithfieldKids program at Historic Smithfield assisted with cleaning of the markers. Repairs and stabilization are needed for several markers, but this will be an area that will require further study and private funding. A newly formed committee of Montgomery Branch APVA will oversee future affairs of the Preston Cemetery. A tour of the cemetery is in development; the first groups visited in September 2002 during Smithfield’s Heritage Days.

The author welcomes contacts and any rediscovered information and resources regarding the Preston cemetery or those buried there.

Buried in the Preston Cemetery**

* denotes a shared grave [] unmarked graves

III-1 William Preston (1730–1783) m. Susanna Smith Preston (1739–1823)*⁸⁹

[IV] Ann Nancy Preston (1769–1782) no marker, actual location of grave unknown

IV-2 William Preston of Kentucky (1768–1821)

[IV] James Patton Preston (1774–1843) m. Ann Barraud Taylor (1778–1861)* no marker, actual location unknown

[V] Sarah Barraud Preston d. 1804 as infant, grave is not marked or located

[V-8] Susanna Edmonia Preston (1818–1823) died young, no marker

[V-10] Virginia Ann Preston (1816–1833) died young, no marker

[V] Susan Preston (c1825–1835) died young, grave is not marked or located

V-18 William Ballard Preston (1805–1862) m. Lucy Redd (1819–1891)*

VI-20 1. Ann Taylor Preston (1843–1868) m. (Walter Coles 1839–1892), died from childbirth

VII 21 Ann Preston Coles (1868–1869) as infant

VI-17 2. James Patton Preston (1846–1920), pointed native stone marker

VI-16 3. Waller Redd Preston (1847–1872) m. Harriet Means (1846–1869)*

**Roman numerals stand for generations beginning with Archibald Preston; numbering corresponds to Hartwell Gary’s 1961 map of the cemetery.



The present-day Preston Cemetery, looking east. Photo, July 2002, L. Wedin.

- VI-19 4. Keziah Preston (1854–c1861), native stone marker near her parents
- VII-23 Ann Radford Beale (1868–1893), child of Lucy Redd Preston and William Beale
- VII-22 Charles Trigg Beale (1872–1890), child of Lucy Redd Preston and William Beale
- [V]-24 Robert Taylor Preston (1809–1880) m. Mary Hart (1810–1881)*?
- [VI] 1. Virginia Ann Emily (1834–1898) m. Robert Stark Means (1833–1874)*?
 - [VII]- i. Sallie Stark Means (1860–1861) as infant
 - [VII]- ii. Mary Hart Means (1861–1861) as infant
 - [VII]- iii. Ballard Preston Means (1867–1867) as infant
 - [VII]- iv. Courtney Hanson Means (1868–1877) as young child
- [VI] 2. Benjamin Hart Preston (1836–1851) as young child
- [VI] 3. James Patton Preston (1838–1901)
- V-11 James Francis Preston (1813–1862) m. Sarah Ann Caperton (1826–1908)*
 - VI-14 1. Hugh Caperton Preston (1856–1905) m. Cary Baldwin (1858-1935)*
 - VII-13 i. James Francis Preston (1878–1879) as infant

- VII-25 ii. Robert Baldwin Preston Sr. (1881–1944)
m. Merle Page (1892-1973)*
- VIII-30 Robert Baldwin Preston Jr. (1916–1982)
m. Elnora Coffman (1920-2001)*
- VIII-31 Edwin Page Preston (1921–2001)
- VII-27 iii. Cary Baldwin Preston (1883–1960)
m. Hartwell Gary (1881–1966)*
- VII-28 iv. Sarah Caperton Preston (1885–1965)
unmarried*
- VII-28 vii. Katherine Stuart Preston (1894–1967)
unmarried*
- VII-26 v. William Ballard Preston (1888–1959)
m. Lelia Dew (1893–1984)*?
- VII-29 vi. Hugh Caperton Preston, Jr. (1893–1966)
- VI-15 2. William Ballard Preston (1858–1901) m. Elizabeth
Blackford Scott (1864–1920)*
- VI-12 3. James Francis Preston “Little Jimmy” (1860–1862)
as infant
- [VI-?] 4. James Francis Preston II (1861–1862) as infant, grave
unmarked
- V-9 Catherine Jane Preston (1821–1852) m. (Judge George H.
Gilmer 1810–1874)*?
- [VI]- i. James Preston Gilmer d. 1852 as infant, probably
buried with his mother, Catherine Jane Preston.

Burials in cemetery not related to Preston Family

- 7 Emily Ann Eyre (1805–1832), family from Eyre Hall, Northampton,
Virginia, m. (Dr. George Terrill)
- [?] Miss Julia Binners of Pittsylvania Co., Virginia, d. Dec. 23, 1859,
exact burial location unknown

Ledgerwood Plot

- (overseers of White Thorn and Smithfield in mid-to-late 1800s)
- L1 Allen Ledgerwood (1857–1880)
- L2 Anderson Ledgerwood (1823–1892) m.
- L3 Hester Ledgerwood (1820–1870)
- L4 Isabell Ledgerwood (1782–1862)

Slave/Servant graves (as marked on 1961 Gary map)

- [S1] “Aunt Ginny” (or “Jenny”) Virginia Capers (also known as Caperton,
Fraction). Virginia Capers was a former slave and African-American
child minder for older children of Hugh Caperton and Cary Baldwin
Preston (b. c.1830–? d. after 1880).
- [S2] Unknown and [S3] Unknown

Markers out of situ — original location in cemetery unknown

“Benjamin” d. 1840 – probably an infant (marker near large oak tree)

“G.S.” d. Aug. 21, 1841 aged 6 years (behind L4, near Ledgerwood plot)

Lavinia Hart Berkeley – no date (leaning on Preston/Mean's Monument) (b. c1830–d. before June 1880)

There are several unmarked graves scattered throughout the cemetery and the other side of the north fence.

Acknowledgments

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About the Author

Laura Jones Wedin has her Master of Fine Arts from Virginia Tech and is employed by the Virginia Tech Alumni Association. An active volunteer with Historic Smithfield, she currently serves on the Montgomery Branch APVA Board, and is enrolled in the archaeological technician certification program of the Archeological Society of Virginia.

Endnotes

1. C. B. Preston, "The Revolt of the Slaves," 1903 *Bugle Yearbook* (Virginia Polytechnic Institute), p. 100.
2. Cary Marx Baldwin Preston (1858–1935), who married Hugh Caperton Preston, son of James Francis Preston.
3. Historic Smithfield was acquired by the Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities (APVA) in 1959. It was restored and opened to the public in 1965.

4. Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission. *Special Report: Preservation of Revolutionary War Veteran Gravesites in Virginia to the Governor and the General Assembly of Virginia* (House Document No. 42, Commonwealth of Virginia, 2001), p. 49.
5. Colonel Preston's daughter Ann Nancy died of smallpox at the age of 13. Letter from WP to Colonel Daniel Smith, March 7, 1782 (State Historical Society of Wisconsin, The Draper Manuscripts 4XX), p. 49.
6. Thomas S. Klatka, *Cultural Expressions of Nature in Sacred Contexts: Documentation of Family & Community Cemeteries in Roanoke County, Virginia* (Virginia Department of Historic Resources, 2000), p. 17.
7. Ruth M. Little, *Sticks and Stones — Three Centuries of North Carolina Gravemarkers* (Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 1998), p. 78.
8. Klatka, p. 10.
9. Jack Larkin, *The Reshaping of Everyday Life, 1790–1840* (New York: Harper & Row, 1989), p. 99.
10. Little, p. 14. If the ledger rests on a high, solid base of brick or stone, it is a *box tomb*. If it rests on stone corner posts, it is a *table-tomb*.
11. Price was Dean of Agriculture from 1908 to 1948 at Virginia Tech.
12. Virginia Tech Special Collection manuscript MS62-007, Manning Papers. Copy of map from Montgomery Branch APVA files appears to have been done by the Manning offices from notes provided by Dean Price, but provenance is uncertain. Its plat reference number 1442-56-4 appears to correspond to Manning's plat of the proposed scenic byway, labeled 1442-25.
13. Rudolph Dixon Michael Papers, 1921–1960, n.d. 0.2 cu. ft. Agricultural editor (1928–1965 at the Agricultural Experiment Station of Virginia Polytechnic Institute. Head of the Agricultural Information Department (1964–1965). Ms60-005. Virginia Tech Special Collections Library.
14. Hartwell Gary (1881–1966) was married to Cary Baldwin Preston, daughter of Hugh Caperton Preston.
15. Hartwell Gary Map of the Preston Cemetery, 1961. Smithfield files, Montgomery Branch APVA.
16. Klatka, pp. 194, 601; author's communication with Tom Klatka 12/02/2002. In Southwest Virginia, the earliest inscriptions on fieldstone markers date to the first decade of the nineteenth century. These early inscribed markers merely document a death date or the initials of the deceased. More complete biographical information does not become prevalent until the second decade of the nineteenth century.
17. Clara Cox, ed. *A Special Place for 200 Years: A History of Blacksburg, Virginia* (Town of Blacksburg, 1998), p. 67.
18. Little, p. 18.
19. Possibly a Mr. John Gaw Meem, b. c1795, married to Eliza Campbell Russell. He was reportedly a banker who also was the president of Lynchburg Manufacturing Company, c1846. <<http://worldconnect.rootsweb.com/cgi-bin/igm.cgi?op=GET&db=:2173577&id=I111857055>>
<<http://theoldentimes.com/johngmeem46va.html>>
<<http://worldconnect.rootsweb.com/cgi-bin/igm.cgi?op=GET&db=n4554r&id=I68724>>

20. John Fraction, b. c.1800, is listed in Montgomery County Will Book 4, p. 339 with the 1826 estate appraisal of William Preston and in the 1843 slave inventory of James Patton Preston, Montgomery County Will Book 7, p. 130. He is found later in the Freedmen's Bureau List of 1867, age 67, with his former owner as Robert T. Preston, grandson of William Preston.
21. Anna W. Kenney, *The Preston Cemetery of Smithfield Plantation 1782–1980*. (Blacksburg: Montgomery Branch APVA, Rev. 1984), Notes p. 1 (p. ii).
22. Alleghany Chapter, National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution. Records, Ms95-019. Virginia Tech Special Collections Library.
23. *Dropsy* is an old term for edema or swelling. William's dropsy was probably indicative of congestive heart failure.
24. Preston Papers — Joyes Collection, Folder 3399. Filson Club Historical Society, Mss\A\P937\Box6\fl.66.
25. Inscription on marker reads in part: "His widow Caroline Hancock Preston died in 1849 and is interred at Cave Hill Cemetery near Louisville".
26. John Frederick Dorman, *The Prestons of Smithfield and Greenfield in Virginia: Descendants of John and Elizabeth (Patton) Preston through Five Generations* (Louisville, Kentucky: Filson Club, 1982), p. 58, records that Caroline died 20 December 1847.
27. Anna Kenney attributes this columned ledger marker to that of James Patton Preston. Undated document, Kenney File, Smithfield, Montgomery Branch APVA.
28. The marble sections for this type of marker are held together with iron cleats which rust, similar to a collapsed box tomb marker c1850s in the McGavock cemetery near Wytheville. Photographs and notes provided by Smithfield volunteer Sandy Wilson.
29. Anderson Ledgerwood was overseer of Smithfield during the mid-to-late 1800s.
30. Rudolph Michael includes the line "and great strength and possessing a noble presence" in his record, which is missing from the Kenney record as well as from the commemorative marker, probably because of the enlargement of a crack that goes through this line.
31. Dorman, p. 70. Their son, the first George Rogers Clark Floyd (b. 20 Nov. 1807, Montgomery County; died 14 August 1808, Christiansburg) may also be buried at Smithfield.
32. Dorman, p. 65. Daughters are Sarah Barraud (1804), Susanna Edmonia Preston (1818–1823), Virginia Ann Preston (1816–1833) and Susan Preston (c1825–1835).
33. Smithfield-Preston Foundation Papers, Ms97-002, Flatbox, Folder 2, Special Collections, Virginia Tech library.
34. Kenney, p. 26.
35. J. Daniel Pezzoni, "Virginian to the Grave," *Virginia Cavalcade*, 51 (Spring 2002), pp. 66-67.
36. Daughter of James Patton Preston. She most likely died from complications of childbirth and was probably buried with her infant son James Preston Gilmer, b. 31 Dec. 1851 – d. 1 Jan. 1852. Dorman, pp. 268-9.
37. John Gilmer Speed, *The Gilmers in America* (New York, 1897), p. 153.
38. Daughter of William Ballard and Lucy Redd Preston. Married Dr. Walter Coles in 1864. She died four days after giving birth to Ann Taylor Preston Coles.

39. Born in 1868, died at 8 months in 1869. From William B. Coles, *The Coles Family of Virginia* (New York, 1931), p. 312.
40. She and her husband Robert Stark Means lived at Solitude with her parents Robert T. and Mary Hart Preston — 1860 census of Montgomery County, Virginia.
41. Devota Parrish Pack and Emily Allen, *Death Records in Court Records of Montgomery Co., Va. 1853–1871* (Colonel William Christian Chapter: DAR, 1977).
42. Were there two infant James? The Montgomery County Death Records only reports the death of James F. Preston on 8 November 1862 of scarlet fever at the age of 1 year and 10 months (b. October 29, 1861). The marker in the cemetery has “Little Jimmy”: James F. Preston, b. 9 April 1860 and d. 9 February 1862, at the age of 1 year and 10 days. Was this the same child?
43. Michael papers, MS60-005, Virginia Tech Special Collections Library.
44. Dorman, p. 64.
45. Caperton Papers, MS91-034, Virginia Tech Special Collections Library. Original letters at Virginia State Library.
46. John Valentine of Riner, Virginia, 1901–1970, Social Security Death Index, at <<http://ssdi.genealogy.rootsweb.com/cgi-bin/ssdi.cgi/>>
47. He was caretaker of Camp Carysbrook in Riner, Virginia, for forty years for sisters Caperton and Katherine Preston, founders of the girl’s camp. The sisters are buried in Preston cemetery.
48. Kenney, p. 20.
49. Devota Parrish Pack, compiler, *1890 Diary of Rosanna Croy Dawson* (Blacksburg, Virginia: Devota Parrish Pack, 1979), p. 8. Lucy Preston Beale was a daughter of William Ballard Preston (1805–1862).
50. Harry Downey Temple, *The Bugle’s Echo*, vol. 1 (1872–1900), (Blacksburg, Virginia: Virginia Tech Corps of Cadets Alumni, Inc.), p. 267.
51. She was daughter of William Radford and Lucy Preston Beale, who are buried in Fincastle, Va. The brother was most likely Preston Beale.
52. D. P. Pack, compiler, *The year of 1893 in the life of Rosanna Croy Dawson of Blacksburg, Virginia* (Blacksburg, Virginia: D. P. Pack, 1980), p. 48.
53. Virginia Preston Means (1834–1898) was the daughter of Robert T. Preston.
54. D. Pack, compiler, *Blacksburg in 1898 by Roseanna Croy Dawson* (Blacksburg, Virginia: D. Pack, 1978), p. 99.
55. Pack, *1898 Diary*, p. 34.
56. Temple, pp. 789-90, 863.
57. Will of Susanna S. Preston, Dec. 10, 1817, Preston Papers, folder 3437, Montgomery County Will book 4, p. 197.
58. From the author’s conversation on 7/29/2002 with Kathy Baker who worked at Camp Carysbrook in the 1980s.
59. She was daughter of William B. Eyre and Grace Duncombe Taylor of Eyre Hall in Northampton, Virginia, and was orphaned at age 3. Her parents and other siblings are all buried at Eyre Hall.
60. Maud Carter Clement, *An Abbreviated History of Pittsylvania County, Virginia* “Chapter Eight: Education” (Virginia, c1952)
<<http://www.victorianvilla.com/sims-mitchell/local/clement/mc/abb/08.htm>>

61. Preston Papers, Joyes Collection, Mss.\A\P937; box 6\fl. 66, Filson Club Historical Society.
62. Helen C. Caldwell, chairman, *Botetourt County history before 1900 through county cemetery records* (Botetourt County, Virginia: Bicentennial Publication Committee, 1978), p. 77.
63. She was a daughter of William Preston of Kentucky.
64. Dorman, p. 233.
65. Interestingly, Rudolph Michael has the date, July 8, 1755, written in the margin of his drawing of the cemetery (fig. 2). This is the earlier of two dates claimed for the Draper's Meadow Massacre. The date of 30 July 1755 is now the more accepted of the two as the true date, per Lee Pendleton, *Indian Massacres in Montgomery County, 1755–1756; Drapers Meadow massacre retold* (Christiansburg, Va., 1973), pp. 16-18.
66. Letter of Letitia Preston Floyd (1779–1852) to her son Benjamin Rush Floyd, dated 22 February 1843. She writes that William Preston “arrived at Smithfield (then called Draper’s meadows) where they found Patton, Mrs. Draper, the mother of Mrs. Ingles, and the children buried.” Southern Historical Collection, #1312-2-Letitia Preston Floyd Papers.
67. Letter of Letitia Floyd Lewis (1814–1887) to Mr. Robert W. Hughes, dated 13 June 1879. It says “in my childhood I knew the location of the grave.” Filson Club Collection.
68. Attributed to C. B. Preston, “Draper’s Meadow One Hundred and Forty-Five Years Ago. 1900 *Bugle Yearbook* (Virginia Polytechnic Institute), p. 79.
69. Dorman, p. 290.
70. Jessie Lie Farber, “Symbolism on Gravestones” *Frequently Asked Questions* (The Association for Gravestone Studies, 2001) <<http://www.gravestonestudies.org>>
71. Archaeologist Tom Klatka says that the slate markers could have been quarried from Arvonnia, Buckingham County, Virginia.
72. Patricia Givens Johnson, *William Preston and the Allegheny Patriots*. (Pulaski, Va.: B. D. Smith and Bros., Printers, Inc., 1976), pp. 118, 130.
73. Noted on 1961 Gary map. Virginia Caperton, age 36, a widow and former black slave with four children, is found in the Freedmen’s Bureau Montgomery County list of 1867, working for wages for S. A. Preston. Virginia Capers is found in the 1870 census, Montgomery County, age 40, listed as a cook with the same four children in a dwelling near the White Thorn home. It is believed that she may have been the daughter of slave John Fraction. There is a Virginia, age 14, listed in James Patton Preston’s slave inventory of 1843, near John Fraction. In the 1880 census, listed with the household of Sarah Ann Caperton Preston, is a Virginia Fraction listed, age 51, widowed, a servant with seven children although the three youngest are more probably her grandchildren.
74. Cary Baldwin Preston Gary (1883–1960), daughter of Hugh Caperton Preston, refers to “Aunt’ Jenny’s (our old cook) house” on the White Thorn property in a letter dated June 24, 1947, Smithfield Collection, Montgomery Branch APVA.
75. Noted on 1961 Gary map. Fieldstone markers for the S2 and S3 graves are visible in a color photograph c1980. Anna Kenney Papers, Smithfield, Montgomery Branch APVA.

76. Anna Kenney mentions the “Benjamin” stone in her booklet, p. 26. Brackets indicate missing or reconstructed text on the broken right side of the stone.
77. Michael’s notes have her name listed near the names of William Ballard Preston and Waller Preston. There is an “unknown grave” marked on his drawn map with a check mark that may correspond with a check mark next to her name on his notes.
78. Temple, p. 100.
79. From an October 2002 author’s phone conversation with Mary Hart Means Lloyd.
80. Kenney cites her information as given to her in 1968 by the widow of H.E. Ledgerwood, [b. 1862–19—?] son of overseer Anderson Ledgerwood — that Anderson’s brother paid for the anchor fence and iron gate. “Anchor” is the trade-marked brand name of the chain link fence.
81. Preston Cemetery is listed with Department of Historic Resources as site 44MY43.
82. The 1927 Price/Manning map notes a “fragment of iron fence” at the northwest corner of the fence line. There is a metal farm fence near the northwest corner – 10/2002.
83. Virginia Tech farm manager Chuck Shorter recalls a second fence inside the chain link fencing. Old fence posts inside the chain-link fence line are visible in a c1980 color photograph. Anna Kenney Papers at Smithfield, Montgomery Branch APVA.
84. Carl R. Lounsbury, *An Illustrated Glossary of Early Southern Architecture and Landscape* (University Press of Virginia, 1994), p. 172. Lounsbury defines a ha-ha (ha ha or ha haw) as “a barrier between the pleasure grounds and the nearby pasture or wilderness to keep out large wildlife and livestock, and to extend the prospect [view] into the adjacent countryside, so that the plantation appeared to be an unbroken continuation of the pleasure grounds.” He mentions three early variations: a wall and ditch; a ditch; and a sunken fence (literally, a fence below ground with its top just below ground surface and out of view). He illustrates the restored/reconstructed “wall and ditch” ha-ha at Stratford Hall, Robert E. Lee’s ancestral home in Westmoreland County, and quotes two late eighteenth century accounts that mention the use of a ha-ha. George Washington had one at Mount Vernon and Thomas Jefferson had a version (ditch crossed with horizontal fence rails) at Monticello.
85. Price/Manning map, 1927.
86. Gary map, 1961.
87. Identified by Dianna Pickering, Master Gardener and Smithfield volunteer.
88. Montgomery County Clerk Documents, Deed Book 274, pages 183 & 184, dated 1 February 1967. Map Plat Book 4, p. 45.
89. Dorman, p. 12-13. The Bible of their daughter Letitia Preston Floyd gives William’s birth date of 25 December 1729. His gravestone has the date of 25 December 1730. Letitia’s Bible lists Susanna’s birth as 23 January 1740. The Bible of William Preston places Susanna’s birth at 1 February 1739. Journal of son Francis Preston gives her birth as 4 February 1739. The gravestone gives the date January 1739.