The Smithfield Review

Studies in the history of the region west of the Blue Ridge

Volume XI, 2007

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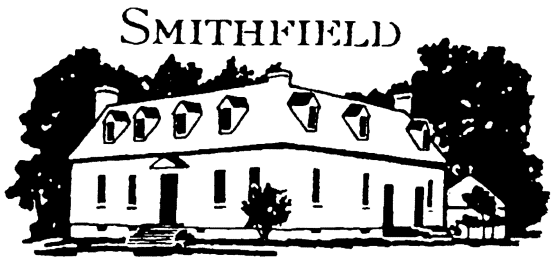

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Smithfield is an important historic property adjacent to the campus of Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University in Blacksburg, Virginia. The manor house, constructed around 1774 on the frontier, is a premier example of early American architecture 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

Many of our readers are accustomed to associating American history with leaders of a particular era or locality. An important and often neglected part of our history, however, involves people who were not well known. Studies of their lives often reveal characteristics and qualities that in their aggregate produced our society. Several articles this year examine various activities of such persons.

Our first article, "The Indian Captivity Narrative of Charles Johnston," describes the first-hand account of Johnston's harrowing experience with the Shawnee Indians in 1790 along the Ohio River. The author, John Long, also examines Johnston's narrative within the context of other stories of captivity on the American frontier in that era. Mr. Long, a senior lecturer from the history department of Roanoke College, is also the director of the Salem Museum and Historical Society.

During the Colonial period, and for many years after the birth of our country, public schools were rare, and those that did exist were considered to be for higher education. Early education was often provided by churches or by itinerate teachers. Many of these teachers were imported to provide elementary education for a family and perhaps a few neighboring families. Dr. Jim Glanville, a retired Virginia Tech chemistry professor, recently found an interesting document in the possession of Hubert Gilliam of Kingsport, Tennessee — a document that reveals an amusing story concerning such an arrangement. "To Refrain from Drinking Ardent Spirits: The Bet between Peter Byrns and Francis Preston" describes an unusual interaction between a teacher and his students.

The next article, by Jessica Wirgau, is entitled "'To Counterfeit the Soul': Portraiture at Smithfield." It investigates the artwork at Historic Smithfield within the context of American portraiture in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries and demonstrates the influence of British artists and culture. Mrs. Wirgau graduated from Duke University with a major in art history. She later received a mas-

ters degree in art history from the University of Virginia and is currently the museum coordinator for the Town of Blacksburg.

Women of nineteenth-century America are often overlooked in studies of that era. Their lives, however, provided the foundation that enabled their children to meet and overcome the challenges that were so prevalent in that troubled century. Zola Noble, the author of "An Ordinary Woman: Sarah A. McIntyre Greer of Saltville, Virginia," uses numerous old letters to demonstrate the influence that a group of women had on each other as they coped with difficult times in post-Civil War Southwest Virginia. Ms. Noble is an assistant professor of writing at Anderson University in Anderson, Indiana.

The final article, "Progress at Gunpoint," is a study of the labor wars in southern West Virginia in the early twentieth century. The author, Zack Fields, a recent graduate of the University of Virginia, describes how coal miners and their unions assertively engaged the coal mining companies in an effort to improve wages and living conditions, while the coal mining companies often retaliated with various forms of intimidation. These confrontations frequently erupted in violence with tragic consequences.

With this issue, we begin a new feature entitled "Brief Notes" immediately prior to our normal book review section.

The editors express their gratitude to Peter Wallenstein of the Virginia Tech history department, Mary Holliman of Pocahontas Press, and several anonymous reviewers for their considerable editorial assistance.

The Indian Captivity Narrative of Charles Johnston

John Long

Sir, In compliance with the wishes of my friends and my own inclination I am about publishing a narrative of my capture and detention by the Indians as a prisoner in the year 1790 in which I have had the assistance of a friend much more competent to such an undertaking than I can pretend to be. Having the pleasure of a slight acquaintance with you and knowing you to be a friend of American Literature in which I cannot but flatter myself this work will hold some thing like a respectable station, I am induced to take the liberty of inclosing you one of my subscription papers for the purpose of obtaining your signature should you think fit to honour me therewith...[1]

With these words Charles Johnston of Botetourt Springs solicited the support of former president James Madison in 1826 for an upcoming publishing venture. Thirty-six years before, Johnston had survived a harrowing encounter with Shawnee Indians along the Ohio River. Now, after years of requests to retell the story, he was planning to publish his account, probably the first book ever written in the Roanoke Valley.

Madison did endorse the book and order a copy. Johnston had his narrative printed, and it was well received by readers hungry for this type of adventurous tale. Johnston's 1827 book is a fascinating memoir. Virtually forgotten today, it is a thrilling story that, as an historical record, gives one of the clearest glimpses of the experiences of Indian captives on the frontier.

This essay will summarize Johnston's experiences and then examine where Johnston's chronicle fits into the uniquely American genre of the Indian captivity narrative. Finally, it will demonstrate why the name Charles Johnston deserves to be remembered as a hero, albeit an unwilling one, of the Virginia frontier.

Charles Johnston was born in 1769 in Prince Edward County. As a young man he was employed as a clerk by a Mr. John May[2] to help settle land claims in Kentucky. His duties necessitated traveling there to solicit depositions. On such a journey in 1790, the two men traveled by way of the Kanawha River to Point Pleasant (now in West Virginia). There they chartered a small boat to venture down the Ohio River. Joining them in the boat were a merchant named Jacob Skyles, a frontiersman named William Flinn, and two sisters by the name of Fleming.

The party had not ventured very far when they saw on the northern shore two stranded white men, imploring them for help.[3] The travelers had been warned not to heed such appeals since the Shawnee Indians would often use white captives as decoys to lure boats ashore for attack. Nevertheless, perceiving no danger, the group agreed to land and render assistance.

As soon as they reached shore, they suddenly found their little boat under attack by heretofore concealed Shawnee. John May and one of the Fleming sisters were killed and scalped; Mr. Skyles was wounded; and the rest were captured unharmed. "No human being, who has not experienced a similar misfortune, is capable of conceiving the horror ... upon finding myself a captive of these ruthless barbarians," recalled Johnston.[4]

Surprisingly, Johnston found himself relatively well treated, mainly because of the laudable character of the Indian into whose custody he was placed. Messhawa, a Shawnee warrior, became Johnston's master and proved to be a "humane, generous, and noble" one. Jacob Skyles was allotted to a much more cruel captor and suffered greatly. Messhawa, wrote Johnston, "had qualities which would have done honour to human nature in a state of the most refined civilization; whilst [Skyles'] keeper possessed such as disgraced even the savage."[5] Johnston also received protection and kindness from another Indian with the unlikely name of Tom Lewis. Thus, his captivity, harrowing though it was, was mild.

Several days into the captivity, a Mingo Indian joined the party, touching off an incident that Johnston recounts in a tongue-in-cheek style, though at the time he found it anything but funny. Previously, this Mingo had killed another Indian warrior and so was obliged by

custom to find a replacement to marry the dead man's wife and raise his children. The Mingo was able to convince Johnston's captors to release him for that purpose. "The prospect, indeed, was not very rapturous, of leading to the altar of Hymen an Indian squaw, already the mother of several children,"[6] lamented the 20-year-old Virginian, suddenly and unwittingly engaged to an Indian woman he had never seen. Fortunately for him, after a few days Messhawa regretted the trade and took him back from the Mingo. Weeks later, Johnston chanced to see the woman he was to marry, "and I could not help chuckling at my escape ... she was old, ugly and disgusting."[7]

By that time, Johnston and his captors had traversed the modern state of Ohio and arrived at the Indian towns on the Upper Sandusky near Lake Erie. There he had the good fortune of meeting a French fur trader by the name of Francois Duchouquet. Johnston, who for weeks had entertained the notion of escape but had found no opportunity, now saw a possible means of release: ransom. He implored Duchouquet to intervene on his behalf, which the trader graciously did. The Indians at first refused, but when it became known that they intended to kill Johnston (since "the scalp of their captive might be transported with greater facility and safety than his person"[8]), Duchouquet redoubled his efforts.[9] Finally, the captors agreed to terms and accepted silver broaches worth about $100 in exchange for their prisoner. "This event, to me the most important of my life, by a singular coincidence occurred on the 28th day of April, in the year 1790, the day on which I attained the age of twenty-one years. It might be truly and literally denominated my second birth,"[10] he recalled in his memoir.

Johnston remained in the employment of Monsieur Duchouquet for several weeks, until the trader made a trip to Detroit, and Johnston parted from his redeemer with tremendous gratitude. Johnston later repaid Duchouquet for the ransom and even petitioned Congress to have his friend reimbursed for the ransom of other captives he had rescued through the years. The two maintained a close friendship for years afterwards.

Others of Johnston's original party were not as lucky. Jacob Skyles, after being separated from Johnston, was horribly treated by his cruel master but was later able to escape and found his way back to civilization after many arduous adventures. Peggy Fleming, whose sister had

been killed in the initial attack, was terribly abused[11] but was eventually rescued by a former acquaintance who claimed to be her brother and negotiated her release. As for William Flinn, he was savagely tortured and eventually suffered death at the stake.

From Detroit, Johnston was able to find transportation to New York City, which was then the national capital. When his story was told in that city, it caught the attention of President George Washington, who requested a meeting with Johnston to discuss affairs on the western frontier. Their interview centered on relations with the Indians and the disposition of British forts that were still on American territory. On this point Johnston could offer little information, but his meeting with Washington would afterwards remain a high point of his life.

Eventually, Johnston returned to Virginia where he seemed to recover quickly from his ordeal. In 1808 he moved to the Lynchburg area and built a brick home, still standing, which he named Sandusky after the Indian town where he was ransomed. In 1820, he moved to Botetourt County (now Roanoke), where he lived until his death in 1833. At the Botetourt Springs, site of today's Hollins University, he opened a hotel and resort where an impressive mineral spring still flows. He also owned a hotel in nearby Salem and operated a gristmill, sawmill, and distillery on the Roanoke River near that town. At his death, he was buried on his resort land; years afterwards, his grave was moved to East Hill Cemetery in Salem as Hollins College expanded.

Three years after his experience, while aboard a ship crossing the Atlantic, Johnston met a French nobleman named Francois La Rochefoucauld, to whom he told the story of his capture. La Rochefoucauld later wrote an account that was woefully mistaken on several details. To correct the record and to satisfy the requests of family and friends, Johnston wrote his own memoir in 1827 with the tortuous title *A Narrative of the Incidents Attending the Capture, Detention, and Ransom of Charles Johnston of Botetourt County, Virginia.*[12] The book was well received and widely read, enough so that it was reprinted in 1905 by Edwin Sparks and again, in pamphlet form, by a descendant in the 1960s. An early reviewer commented that "so

graphically was the story told and so fascinating was the style, that none would ever lay it down without finishing it if once begun."[13]

Nonetheless, the tale of Charles Johnston's harrowing adventure has been largely forgotten, even in the Roanoke Valley where he spent his last years. This may be surprising, but, in fact, the obscurity of his story is not unusual. Johnston's book was a late example of one of America's earliest and most ignored literary forms: the captivity narrative. Not only have most examples of these once widely read books been forgotten, the entire genre is virtually beyond recollection. Yet almost two thousand such narratives were published from the sixteenth to the late nineteenth centuries.[14] Of the four best-selling books of the early 1700s, three were stories of Indian captivity.[15] In a day when indigenous American culture was virtually unknown, these widely read books helped to establish American literature. Yet while captivity narratives (including Johnston's, which is not unknown to the few scholars of the genre) have received a limited amount of scholarly attention, they are, by and large, forgotten by Americans today.

Johnston's *Narrative* came on the tail end of the genre. Although his captivity was in 1790, when such experiences were still relatively common, his book was not published for another thirty-seven years. By then the frontier had shifted far to the west, and the captivity experience attracted less fascination than it once had. Occasional captivity narratives would be written for decades after Johnston's, including some highly popular Wild West accounts, but the genre had passed its zenith.

The captivity narratives were a diverse lot. They ranged from the factual to the lurid and improbable, from the eloquent and polished to the rough and amateurish. Some were clearly exaggerated or entirely fictional. For instance, in one obviously fabricated tale, a pair of captives on the Ohio escape and in two weeks are able to flee to the Pacific, where they find the lost tribes of Israel. Another tells of a captive's great adventure through Texas, where he discovers a miracle drug. It finally becomes clear to the reader that the story is nothing more than an advertisement for a new patent medicine.[16] But other captivity narratives seemed to be more-or-less true accounts of actual experiences.

Where does Johnston's *Narrative* fit into this range? In some ways his tale is typical of the phenomenon, and in others it does not fit the mold. Roy Harvey Pearce, in one of the earliest academic treatments of the subject, identified three phases through which captivity narratives passed. The earliest were religious confessionals, tales of God's grace in extreme circumstances, designed to encourage the faithful and witness to the lost. Later, many narratives served as propaganda, identifying the French allies of the Indians, or later the British, as enemies, feeding the nascent American nationalism of the mid- to late eighteenth century. Finally, in the nineteenth century, captivity narratives took the form of the thriller, the "out-and-out sensational piece" in which the Indians are villainous fiends.[17]

Johnston's *Narrative* fits none of these categories well. His is, by and large, a secular story, with only a few obligatory references to God (his slaves "return thanks to Heaven for my deliverance"[18]). Nor does he address the political situation to any great extent, except for Washington's questions about British forts in Ohio. Writing long after the Puritan era and the days of the French and Indian and Revolutionary wars, Johnston had no reason to write his book along the first two of Pearce's lines.

But neither does his account fit the category of the penny dreadful. Johnston's style is too subdued and factual, and the Indians in his story are not one-dimensional villains. Sometimes grim-faced and ominous, they are also prone to "loud and repeated bursts of merriment."[19] To be sure, some Indians he encounters are cruel, and the brutal treatment of his fellow captives cannot be missed. But still other Indians are humane and accordingly respected, even admired, by the narrator. This is especially true of Messhawa, Johnston's "sentinel and protector,"[20] presented as a noble and beneficent man. Elsewhere, the Indians who kill and eat Flinn and those who abuse Peggy Fleming are described as "savages"[21] and "unfeeling Cherokees,"[22] but on the whole Johnston avoids the sensationalistic stereotypes of other captivity narratives.[23]

More surprisingly, in the description of the Indians' drinking binges, greed for trinkets, antipathy toward encroaching surveyors, and underlying fatalism, one can sense a certain pity on Johnston's part for his captors. Observing a war-dance, for instance, Johnston interprets the motions as "repeat[ing] the injuries which have been

inflicted on them by their enemies the whites; their lands taken from them — their villages burnt — their cornfields laid waste — their fathers and brothers killed — their women and children carried into captivity ... repetitions of their wrongs and sufferings."[24]

If Johnston's *Narrative* is neither religious tract, political treatise, nor sensationalized thriller, what is left? An accurate retelling of the facts seems most likely.

Another paradigm exists with which to compare Johnston's *Narrative*. Richard Vanderbeets analyzed the captivity narrative as ritual, identifying a definite pattern that the genre followed with remarkable consistency. The vast majority of these narratives were structured in three stages: separation, transformation, and return.[25] In the separation phase, the captive is removed from his or her home and society in extremely trying circumstances. He or she is often exposed to similar experiences, such as witnessing brutal scalpings or even cannibalism. In the transformation phase, the captive is exposed to the Native American culture and usually is assimilated into that society to some degree, some even joining the captors' tribe and only returning much later, often under duress.[26] Finally, the return phase completed the journey, with the captive being restored to his former society. This event is often portrayed as a resurrection from the dead — and indeed Johnston describes his ransom as "my second birth."[27]

It is the first and third phases of Vanderbeets' paradigm that Johnston's account most resembles. He is certainly separated from his culture and immersed into an alien one, and of course he returns at the conclusion. But his *Narrative* differs sharply in the second, or transformation, stage. Although Vanderbeets uses Johnston as an example of a quintessential captivity narrative in his analysis, in fact several details diverge from the typical pattern.

For instance, scalping and cannibalism are typically witnessed as part of a captive's story (obviously not performed on the authors or they could never write their accounts later). Such details serve to demarcate the differences between one culture and another. Indeed, Johnston witnesses the scalping of Mr. May and one of the Fleming sisters and experiences the horror of seeing their scalps drying by a fire later. But since Johnston himself didn't witness the cannibalistic fate of Mr. Flinn, he gives only a second-hand account.

Several other common experiences identified by Vanderbeets are, at best, peripheral to Johnston's case. Most captives in the second "transformation" phase go through a process of accommodating themselves to Indian food and clothing. Johnston tells us of developing a taste for bear meat, but on the whole never gets used to his new diet, which lacked bread and salt. In contrast, it is his culinary skill in concocting a "chocolate dumpling" from ingredients captured from another boat that impresses the Indians on his first night of captivity.

Nor is he forced to ritually change his attire to "become" an Indian, as many captivity survivors describe. When one Indian tries to force him to swap his shirt for a "greasy, filthy garment that had not been washed during the whole winter," another Indian, Tom Lewis, prevents the trade, reproaching the first Indian for his unkindness, thus allowing Johnston to remain attired according to his own culture.[28] Rather than Johnston "becoming" an Indian in terms of diet and clothing, the Indians he describes seem more interested in taking on the trappings of white society. For instance, Johnston repeatedly describes his captors' eagerness for alcohol and silver broaches and their use of English greetings and curses.

Nor is Johnston forced to run the gauntlet as part of being initiated into captivity, although he expects to do so and expresses great apprehension over the prospect. In short then, Johnston's experiences share some commonality with other captives', but his account is also markedly different from those usually recorded. There is likely a simple reason for this: Johnston was only in captivity for some five weeks and ransomed almost as soon as he arrived at the Sandusky village. In contrast to other captivity ordeals, which lasted months or years, there was not time for Johnston to experience the usual rituals of captivity. As a result of these differences in his captivity narrative, we may infer from this the accuracy of his account: if he were to embellish or fabricate details of his story, he would probably have included some of these lurid details that were so typical of the genre and expected by the readers. That he did not indicates his intention to create a purely factual history.

If Johnston's *Narrative* is a factually accurate account of his experiences, we might then consider the ethnological value of his book. Dwight L. Smith has analyzed captivity narratives as ethnological

sources, and concluded that they are useful records when used with caution. Information contained in such stories should be taken at face value only when it can be confirmed by other sources; otherwise it should be used as "supplementary rather than primary sources."[29] Smith cites Johnston's *Narrative* as one of the sources he considers accurate and useful.

Thus, students of Native American culture, especially Shawnee, may relish some of Johnston's cultural observations. Such details as the game of "Nosey,"[30] the presence among the Shawnee of escaped slaves, French traders, and whites adopted into the tribe, the practice of replacing deceased husbands with captives, the war-dance Johnston eagerly observes — all have the ring of truth to them, although Johnston admits that he doesn't always understand what he sees.

Charles Johnston and his *Narrative* have languished in the historical shadows for too long. For its seemingly accurate recounting of events, Johnston's even-handed assessment of his captors, the ethnological value of his observations, and the compelling story of his adventure, Johnston's *Narrative* deserves a prominent place in the historical record of the Virginia frontier.

Much of the information from this essay is adapted from the introduction to a forthcoming reprint of Johnston's Narrative, *edited by the author and to be published jointly by the Salem Historical Society, the History Museum and Historical Society of Western Virginia, and Historic Sandusky in Lynchburg.*

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Endnotes

1. Charles Johnston to James Madison, April 4, 1826. Letter in archives of Historic Sandusky, Lynchburg, Va.
2. An early land speculator and developer of Kentucky, the city of Maysville on the Ohio River was named for him.
3. This was approximately at the confluence of the Ohio and Scioto rivers, about where Portsmouth, Ohio, is now located.
4. Charles Johnston, *A Narrative of the Incidents Attending the Capture, Detention, and Ransom of Charles Johnston of Botetourt County, Virginia* (Cleveland: Burrows Brothers, reprinted 1905), p. 40. All references in this monograph to Johnston's Narrative are from the 1905 reprint edited by Edwin Erle Sparks.
5. Johnston, *Narrative*, p. 72.
6. Johnston, *Narrative*, p. 88.
7. Johnston, *Narrative*, p. 113.

8. Johnston, *Narrative*, p. 97.
9. Duchouquet, having already expressed interest in ransoming Johnston and the Shawnee having, up to then, shown no inclination to kill their captive, one wonders if this threat was merely a bid to raise the ransom price.
10. Johnston, *Narrative*, p. 98.
11. Johnston was too genteel to describe her suffering in detail but hints at repeated rape. Her silence about her ordeal "left my mind to its own inferences," he writes (*Narrative*, p. 104).
12. Like many nineteenth century manuscripts, which attempted to tell the entire story on the title page, Johnston adds to his title "Who was made prisoner by the Indians, on the River Ohio, in the year 1790; together with an interesting account of the fate of his companions, five in number, one of whom suffered at the stake; to which are added 'Sketches of Indian Character and Manners with Illustrative Anecdotes.'"
13. William McCauley, *History of Roanoke County, Salem, Roanoke City, and Representative Citizens* (Chicago: Biographical Publishing Company, 1902), p. 315. Quote ascribed to a "Judge Marshall."
14. Gary Ebersole, *Captured by Texts: Puritan to Post-Modern Images of Indian Captivities* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1995), p. 9.
15. Ibid., p. 9. The other bestseller was *Pilgrim's Progress*.
16. Phillips D. Carleton: "The Indian Captivity," *American Literature*, vol. 15, no. 2 (May 1943), pp. 178–9.
17. Roy Harvey Pearce, "The Significances of the Captivity Narrative," *American Literature*, vol. 19, no. 1 (March 1947), pp. 1–20.
18. Johnston, *Narrative*, p. 147.
19. Johnston, *Narrative*, p. 71.
20. Johnston, *Narrative*, p. 56.
21. Johnston, *Narrative*, p. 62.
22. Johnston, *Narrative*, p. 110.
23. Also interesting along the same lines is Johnston's surprising friendship with an escaped slave and fellow captive. "The poor Negro, whom under other circumstances I should have kept at a distance, became my companion and friend," he records, commending the bilingual man for his abilities as a translator. (Johnston, *Narrative*, p. 81).Charles Johnston was hardly an egalitarian; nor should we expect a nineteenth-century slave owner to be. But his open-minded assessment of Indians and blacks is more tolerant than we might expect.
24. Johnston, *Narrative*, pp. 84–5.
25. Richard Vanderbeets, "The Indian Captivity Narrative as Ritual," *American Literature*, vol. 43, no. 4 (Jan. 1972), pp. 548–62.
26. An untold number of such captives never returned to white society. Since they tended not to write their memoirs, they are not treated by Vanderbeets' analysis.
27. Vanderbeets, "The Indian Captivity Narrative as Ritual," pp. 561-2.
28. Johnston, *Narrative*, pp. 39–40. He does lose his coat and outer garments, but this seems more like plunder than any ritual. Later, his trousers are also confiscated when a hidden knife is discovered, but again no ritual is involved.

29. Dwight L. Smith, "Shawnee Captivity Ethnography," *Ethnohistory*, vol. 2, no. 1 (Winter 1955), pp. 29–41.
30. Johnston's description of this game is probably the only record of its existence: "Only two hands were dealt out, and the object of each player was, by a mode of play which I do not now recollect, to retain a part of the cards in his own possession at the close of the hand, and to get all from his adversary. When this was done, the winner had a right to a number of fillips, at the nose of the loser, equal to the number of cards remaining in the winner's hand. When the operation of the winner was about to begin, the loser would place himself firmly in his seat, assuming a solemn gravity of countenance, and not permitting the slightest change in any muscle of his face. At every fillip the bystanders would burst into a peal of laughter, while the subject of the process was required to abstain completely even from a smile; and the penalty was doubled on him if he violated this rule. It is astonishing to what an excess they were delighted with this childish diversion. After two had played for some time, others would take their places, and the game was often continued hour after hour." Johnston, *Narrative*, pp. 57–8.

The Smithfield Review
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To Refrain from Drinking Ardent Spirits: The Bet between Peter Byrns and Francis Preston*

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Introduction

In an earlier issue of the *Smithfield Review*[1] we presented a transcription of a previously unpublished letter written to John M. Preston of Abingdon[2] by Andrew Creswell, a participant in the Battle of King's Mountain. That letter is in the collection of one of the authors.[3] Cresswell wrote an eyewitness account and answered the long-standing question as to who at the battle's conclusion received the flag of surrender. The flag was accepted by William Campbell of Aspenvale,[4] which is near Seven Mile Ford, Virginia.[5] Campbell died of natural causes at Yorktown, Virginia, in 1781. Had he lived longer, Campbell would have become the father-in-law of Francis Preston, who is discussed here.

In this article we present a transcription and describe a second document from the Gilliam collection: a contract formalizing a bet made in 1807 between Francis Preston and his employee, and the tutor of his children, the former redemptioner Peter Byrns.

Unlike the Creswell letter, the Byrns-Preston contract is a very minor matter with almost no historic import beyond being what it is. It is a written document, a formal agreement to a "bet," with two

signatories and four witnesses, that seals a deal between an employer and an employee. The deal was that the employee would be rewarded if he stopped drinking and punished if he continued.

The Document Formalizing the Bet

Here is a transcription of the contract document, which is untitled:

> Whereas on the 18th Day of April 1807 there was *[?]* had passed and moote *[?]* a certain conversation between Francis Preston of the one part & Peter Byrns of the other of respecting the said Peter's getting intoxicated, the said Preston expressing his belief that the said Byrns could not refrain from drinking ardent spirits over much, when the said Byrns declared he could resist the temptation of drinking inordinately & tendered to Bet a horse worth twenty pounds that he the said Byrns would not get drunk for five years; which tender of Bet the said Preston accepted, and the said parties do now upon honor bond themselves to each other to fully and unequivocally comply with the obligation here entered into, to wit that in case the said Byrns gets drunk within the term of five years he will pay to the said Preston or heirs a horse worth twenty pounds, and the said Preston agrees if the said Byrns does not get drunk in said period or before his death should he die within said period that he will pay the said Byrns or his heirs or assigns a horse worth twenty pounds – in both cases to be valued at Cash price in case the parties cannot agree. As Witness of our hands and seals this 16th Day of April 1807.
>
> Frans Preston
> Peter Byrns
>
> Test[e]
> Hercules Whaley
> Wm C Preston
> Eliza H. Preston
> Sarah B. Preston

Figure 1 is an image of the second or reverse page of the document, which is written on 8½ × 14" legal-sized paper. This image shows the concluding two sentences of the agreement and the signatures of the two principals and the four witnesses. It is reproduced here at about 80 percent of its original size.

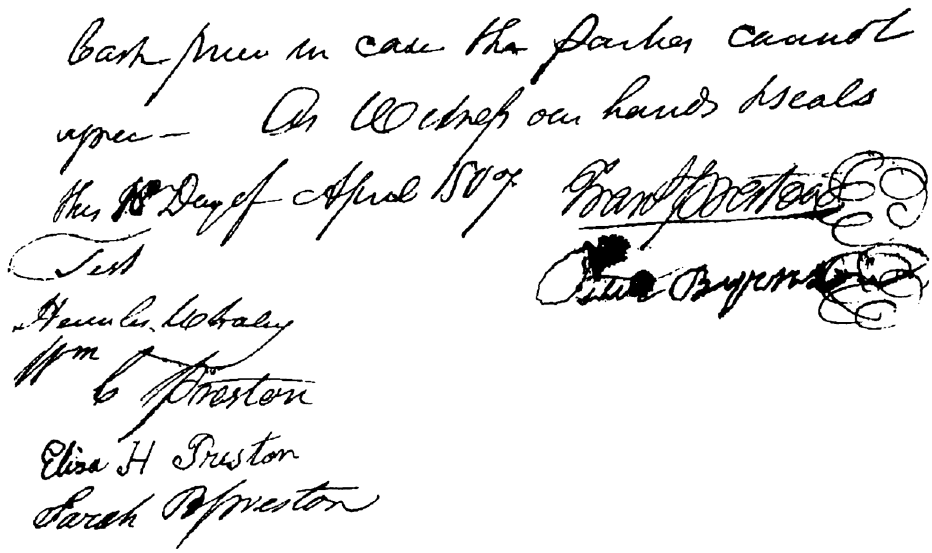

Figure 1: Above, the signatures of the two principals (on the right) and four witnesses (on the left) to the Byrns-Preston bet.

There is no indication as to where the document was drafted and signed, but because Francis Preston was living with his family in Saltville in 1807, there is a high probability that it was there that the bet was made and the document signed. A conceivable alternative site for the signing and witnessing might have been Preston's law office in Abingdon.

Gambling and Drinking on the Early Frontier

In 1807, when Byrns and Preston made their bet, Southwest Virginia was an early American western frontier. The region at this time was often referred to as the "backcountry" or the "back settlements."

Gambling and drinking are two aspects of life on the early frontier not addressed in the standard works[6] of regional history — an omission perhaps understandable in works devoted in large measure in establishing family histories. For example, on consulting a number of standard sources we found that there is a complete absence of index entries for the topics "drinking," "alcohol," "betting," and "gambling."

However, these aspects of life did not escape the attention of the historian Carl Bridenbaugh,[7] who was much interested in those soci-

eties that, in his words, "prefigured the South that was to be." Speaking of gambling among the upper classes of eighteenth century Virginia, he wrote:

> We cannot overlook the predilection of many gentlemen for gambling, which became a fashionable vice and part of the extravagance that characterized the aristocracy.[8]

So we may be confident that Francis Preston was an experienced bettor.

The role played by alcohol in the back settlements was considerable. For example, along with churches, taverns played a dominant role in the social life of backcountry settlers and travelers and served as gathering and meeting places.[9]

But although taverns played a useful institutional role in the formation of backcountry society, abuse of liquor was rampant. Carl Bridenbaugh wrote:

> In Back Country lore, the infallible panacea for hard work, bad diet, and discouragement was liquor in generous and frequent doses. Intemperance was an endemic vice in all ranks. Hard cider and peach or apple brandy were the commonest beverages, rum was consumed in large quantities, but in these pre-bourbon days, rye whiskey was the grand elixir.[10]

So the Byrns-Preston bet took place against a social background in which excessive drinking and extravagant gambling were commonplace.

The Bettor Peter Byrns[11] (1742–1824)

The only biographical sketch of Peter Byrns of which the authors are aware comes from the reminiscences of William Campbell Preston, eldest son of Francis Preston and one of the witnesses to the document transcribed in this article. William C. Preston wrote:[12]

> Our letters were taught to us by an Irishman named Peter Byrnes, a weaver by trade who had come into my grandfather's family as far back as 1780, and had continued to teach letters to successive children of the family and lived to teach her letters to my daughter Sally, in 1824. He had always been a member of the Preston family, died in it at the age of 82 and is buried in the family grave yard at Aspenvale, Washington County, amidst

> numbers of his pupils, he being the only one (except another) a stranger to the blood whose remains are buried there.

From the above quotation we deduce that if Byrns was 82 in 1824, then his dates are 1742–1824.

Preston family sources record that Peter Byrns was a former redemptioner.[13] A redemptioner was typically a person of European origin who had migrated to America with a passage paid by a landowner. In return, and under contract, the redemptioner then paid back the landowner by working for a previously agreed specified period of time — often seven years. This redemption system of voluntary servitude was widely recognized by law and by custom. When the redemptioner had fulfilled or "redeemed" the contracted apprenticeship or servitude he (or, very rarely, she) was released to join American society as a free person.

One other public reference to Peter Byrns comes from a rare volume of Delaware history,[14] which lists in an appendix the "roster of Delaware volunteers in the war of the rebellion," *i.e.*, the Revolutionary War. According to that roster, Byrns in 1778 was a corporal in Company E of the second regiment of the Delaware Infantry Volunteers. It has not been possible to obtain confirming documentary evidence of this fact, but in 1778 he would have been 36 years old — a somewhat advanced but not unreasonable age for him to be a redemptioner who had completed his seven years service.

From these relatively slender facts about Peter Byrns, we can make an approximate tabulation of some key events in his life (Table 1). This table is probably as close to a biography of Byrns as we are likely to get, and much remains unknown. For example, we do not know if he was ever married or had children.

The Bettor Francis Preston (1765–1835)

If Peter Byrns is obscure and difficult to find in the historical record, the opposite is true of his co-bettor, Francis Smith Preston.[15] Francis was the son of Colonel William Preston and Susanna Smith Preston. He was born in 1765 at Greenfield near present-day Fincastle in Botetourt County but spent his formative years at the Smithfield Plantation in Blacksburg, where his family had moved in 1773. He was a graduate of the College of William and Mary, a lawyer, and a member of the Virginia House of Delegates and the Virginia State

Table 1: Some Key Events in the Life of Peter Byrns

1742	Born in Ireland
1770 (*circa*)	Comes to U.S. as a redemptioner
1778 (*circa*)	Redeemed from his contract, he is in Delaware Infantry Volunteers
1780 (*circa*)	Reaches Smithfield and becomes associated with the Preston family as a teacher
1793 (or later)	Moves to Salt Works following the marriage of Francis Preston
1807	Makes a refrain-from-drinking contract with Francis Preston
1824	Dies and is buried in the Aspenvale cemetery

Senate. He served as a brigadier general in the War of 1812 and two terms in the U.S. House of Representatives. He married Sarah Buchanan Campbell on January 10, 1793, at the "Stone House" in Botetourt County and moved to Saltville, where he took over the operation of the Salt Works that his new wife had inherited from her father. (Sarah's stepfather, General William Russell, who had previously been operating the Salt Works, died a few months after the couple were married).

For six or seven years, Francis Preston operated the Salt Works himself. Later he leased the operating rights to William King. During this time, the business was apparently very profitable.[16]

Eventually, around 1810, Francis and Sarah Preston moved from Saltville to a large new home in Abingdon, which today is incorporated into the Martha Washington Hotel, located on Main Street across from the present Barter Theater. Francis Preston died in 1835 in South Carolina at the home of his son William Campbell Preston, who witnessed the bet.

Figure 2. Aspenvale Cemetery. Peter Byrns the redemptioner is buried here in the illustrious company of many founding members of one of the first families of Southwest Virginia. Byrns' small head-stone is in the foreground. To the right and center is the grave of Elizabeth Henry Campbell Russell ("Madam Russell," sister of Patrick Henry and wife successively of Revolutionary War Generals William Campbell and William Russell).To the left, the flat grave-stone, partly obscured, covers the remains of William Campbell, "the hero of King's Mountain." Beyond Campbell, the three large obelisks in a row in the center of the picture mark the graves of Francis Preston (discussed in this article); Francis' wife, Sarah Buchanan [Campbell] Preston, daughter of General Campbell and Madam Russell; and Charles Henry Campbell Preston, son of Francis and Sarah Preston.The box grave immediately behind Byrns' stone is that of Ellen Wilson, first wife of John M. Preston (1788–1861) of Abingdon, who built the ford at Seven Mile Ford. The stone in the far corner commemorates William Campbell's mother.

The Witnesses

Witness Hercules Whaley (1778?–1832?)

Hercules Whaley is absent from the fine-print, three-column, 40-page index of Summers' standard work on early Southwest Virginia people,[17] and the only written account of him of which the authors are aware comes from the reminiscences of William C. Preston:[18]

> The next step in my education was to be placed under the tuition of a Mr. Hercules Whaley, a private tutor brought into the family, a man of rare and curious accomplishments. My father picked him up in remote valleys of Lee County, where he accidentally met him apparently shrinking from exposure and seeking obscurity. My father struck with his conversation prevailed upon him to enter our family as a tutor. He continued with us for many years but there was always a mystery hanging about him. In the course of time we gradually learned that he was a native of New York, that he had been bred for the ministry, that he had become an actor and at length had joined Gen. Wayne's army as a dragoon. These circumstances gradually dropped or rather leaked out in the course of our intimate relations with him for several years. He never entered upon any distinct account of himself and having dropped a hint, would lead off in some other direction. He was found to be a capital Latin scholar, familiar with the Classics contained in that language, not ignorant of Greek, and speaking French pretty well. Besides he had eminent skill in music, sang and played upon the violin with wonderful execution, and read and recited poetry with exquisite power.

Internet resources[19] reveal the additional information that a Hercules Whaley was born in England within two years of 1778 and came to America accompanied by two brothers and a sister. He is listed in the 1820 Washington County census return, and his will is dated 1832, the year of his death in Abingdon. This seems to be our witness to the bet, but some of the genealogical information is inconsistent with William C. Preston's account of the man. Further evidence is needed to ensure that the information is about the same man.

Witness William Campbell Preston (1794–1860)

The witness William Campbell Preston was the previously mentioned eldest son of Francis Preston and Sarah Buchanan Preston. He

was born in Philadelphia in 1794 while his father was engaged there in service as a Congressman. Like those of his father, William's public and private lives are well documented in the historical record, and a chronology of his life was prepared by Minnie Clare Yarborough.[20]

In April 1807, when the bet was sealed, William C. Preston was thirteen years old and a resident in Saltville with his family. As he himself states, while in the family home he studied under both Peter Byrns and Hercules Whaley.

Subsequently, William C. Preston graduated from South Carolina College in 1812 and was admitted to the Virginia bar in 1820. South Carolina College had opened in 1805 and, much later, in 1906, became rechartered as the University of South Carolina. As a young man, Preston traveled widely in the western U.S. territories and later in Europe. He married Maria Coalter in 1822, settled in South Carolina, and went on to serve in that state's legislature and subsequently as a U. S. senator from 1833 to 1842. From 1846 to 1851 he was president of his alma mater, South Carolina College.

Witness Eliza H. Preston (1795–1877)

The witness Eliza Henry Preston was the third of the fifteen children born to Francis Preston and Sarah Buchanan Preston.[21] She was born at the Salt Works and was just eleven years old when she inscribed her signature as a witness to the Byrns-Preston bet.

In 1820, in Abingdon, she married Edward C. Carrington. They had seven children, two of whom died in infancy. She lived for many years with her husband in Halifax County and, as a widow, spent the last twenty years of her life in Charlottesville, where she died in 1877.

Witness Sarah B. Preston (1778–1846)

Sarah Buchanan Preston is, like her husband, an historical figure with an extensive and well-documented record. Born Sarah Buchanan Campbell, she was the daughter of General William Campbell[22] and Elizabeth Henry,[23] one of the sisters of Patrick Henry. At the time of her marriage to the twenty-eight year old Francis Preston, Sarah was only sixteen. By then, she was the stepdaughter of General William Russell.

Conclusions

Although we lack direct evidence, Byrns likely won the bet because seventeen years after making it he was buried, in a place of pride, in the Campbell/Preston family cemetery at Aspenvale. At the time of Byrns' death in 1824, Francis Preston had eleven more years to live. Byrns' prestigious place in the cemetery must surely mark Francis' high esteem and affection for his former childhood tutor and is a fair indication that Byrns won his gamble. Byrns is one of only two persons buried there without either a blood or marriage tie to the Preston family.

Francis Preston is prominent in the historical record but Peter Byrns is obscure. From the available facts, the authors have reconstructed a plausible biography of Byrns.

Of the four witnesses to the bet, three were members of Francis Preston's immediate family, while the fourth was a schoolteacher employed in Preston's household. The three family members are well known from the historical record, but the teacher, Hercules Whaley, is obscure. Internet genealogical sources provide additional tantalizing, but not necessarily convincing, information about Whaley.

Two of the witnesses (William C. and Eliza Preston) had been students of Byrns. Perhaps we may be permitted to speculate they had personally observed Byrns' liking for ardent liquor and may even have brought such inclinations to the attention of their father.

Acknowledgments

The authors thank the several anonymous reviewers, who have aided them in substantially strengthening this article and improving its logic, and the editor of the *Smithfield Review* for correcting several misconceptions in an early draft. We thank Mr. John M. Preston of Knoxville, Tennessee, for a review of the final draft of this article. We thank Deena Flinchum for helpful editorial comments on an early draft. All the mistakes, infelicities, and embarrassments that remain are the sole responsibility of the authors.

Endnotes

1. Hubert Gilliam and Jim Glanville, "An Unexpected Enemy and the Turn of the Tide: Andrew Creswell's King's Mountain Letter," *The Smithfield Review*, vol. 10 (2006), pp. 5–20.

2. John Frederick Dorman, *The Prestons of Smithfield and Greenfield in Virginia* (Louisville, Ky.: The Filson Club, 1982). Hereafter cited as *The Prestons of Smithfield*. As is well known to readers of this journal, William Preston moved from his home near present day Fincastle in 1774 to the Smithfield Plantation adjacent to the campus of present day Virginia Tech. William Preston's son, Francis, one of the signatories of the contract described here, was an eight-year-old at the time.
3. Hubert Gilliam.
4. Aspenvale is often spelled "Aspinvale" in some of the older sources.
5. The entrance to the cemetery is sign-posted off the road that runs across the railroad tracks and parallel to U.S. Route 11. To reach Aspenvale, cross the tracks in Seven Mile Ford and turn left. The gravel road that leads to the cemetery is on the right about a mile from the railroad crossing. Park on the grass. Gary and Linda Sutherland, who live in the house about a hundred yards southeast of the cemetery, are wonderful and welcoming neighbors.
6. Mary B. Kegley and F. B. Kegley, *Early Adventures on the Western Waters: The New River of Virginia in Pioneer Days, 1745–1800* (Orange, Va.: Green Publishers, 1980), vol. 1; Lewis Preston Summers, *History of Southwest Virginia, 1746–1786, Washington County, 1777–1870* (Johnson City, Tenn.: Overmountain Press, 1989), originally published 1903 (hereafter cited as *History of Southwest Virginia*); Goodridge A. Wilson Jr. *Smyth County History and Traditions* (Bowie, Md.: Heritage Books, 1998), originally published 1932; Elizabeth Lemmon Sayers, *Smyth County, Virginia, Volume 1. Pathfinders and Patriots: Prehistory to 1832*, ed. Joan Tracy Armstrong (Marion, Va.: Smyth County Museum and Historical Society, Inc., 1983).
7. Carl Bridenbaugh, *Myths and Realities: Societies of the Colonial South* (New York: Atheneum, 1970), originally published 1952. (See especially pages 119–96 "The Back Settlements.") Hereafter cited as *Myths and Realities*.
8. Bridenbaugh, *Myths and Realities*, p. 27.
9. Daniel B. Thorp, "Taverns and Tavern Culture on the Southern Colonial Frontier: Rowan County, North Carolina, 1753–1776," *Journal of Southern History*, vol. 62, no. 4 (1996), pp. 661–88.
10. Bridenbaugh, *Myths and Realities*, pp. 177–8.
11. The spelling "Byrns" used here comes from the contract and particularly from Byrns' signature which is so spelled [see Figure 1]. However, the spelling "Byrnes" is used both on his headstone in the Aspenvale cemetery and in several written sources, such as in the work of William C. Preston.
12. William Campbell Preston, *The Reminiscences of William C. Preston*, ed. Minnie Clare Yarborough (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1933), pp. 2–3. Hereafter cited as "Reminiscences of William C. Preston." These handwritten reminiscences were found among Preston's papers at the time of his death in 1860, and remained unpublished for 73 years. Yarborough speculates that the reminiscences were written circa 1858.
13. John M. Preston, Knoxville, Tennessee, personal communication, 2006, consisting of a map of the Aspenvale cemetery and a list of the persons buried there, with a brief biographical commentary.

14. Thomas J. Scharf, *History of Delaware, 1609–1888*, vol. 1 (Philadelphia: L. J. Richards & Co., 1888), Appendix: Roster of Delaware Volunteers in the War of Rebellion. Fortunately, the relevant appendix from this difficult-to-find book is online at <http://www.accessible.com/amcnty/DE/Delaware/DelawareAppendix.htm>
15. *The Prestons of Smithfield*, pp. 52–6. See also Elizabeth C. Preston Gray, "General Francis Preston," *Historical Society of Washington County, Virginia, Bulletin*, pp. 9–13, April 19, 1938.
16. Thomas L. Preston, *Historical Sketches and Reminiscences of an Octogenarian* (Richmond: R. F. Johnson, 1900); see especially pages 55–70. Written by Francis Preston's son, this account is one of the best records we have of the early years at the Salt Works. See also Mack Blackwell Jr., *The Preston Salt Works: A Vital Link to Southwest Virginia's Industrial Beginning* (Abingdon, Va.: self published), 1992.
17. Lewis Preston Summers, *History of Southwest Virginia*.
18. *Reminiscences of William C. Preston*, p. 3.
19. See, for example, the Whaley family web pages at <archiver.rootsweb.com/th/read/WHALEY> and the genealogy page of Lynn Airheart Brandvold at <worldconnect.rootsweb.com>
20. Minnie Clare Yarborough, "Chronology of William Campbell Preston," pp. 134–5, editor's appendix to the *Reminiscences of William C. Preston*.
21. *The Prestons of Smithfield*, pp. 204–6.
22. Agnes Graham Riley, "Brigadier General William Campbell 1745–1781," *Historical Society of Washington County, Bulletin*, Series II, Number 22, pp. 1–32, May 1985. William Campbell's bibliography is extensive. The article cited here includes 159 footnotes and references.
23. Elizabeth Henry, better known as Madam Russell, has an extensive bibliography. A partial list of entries includes: Thomas L. Preston, *A Sketch of Mrs. Elizabeth Russell* (Nashville, Tenn.: Publishing House of the M. E. Church, 1888), reprinted by Jerry W. Catron, Saltville, *ca* 1999); E. Runyon, *Madam Russell, Methodist Saint*, M. A. Thesis, University of Virginia, 1941; Nelly C. Preston, *Paths of Glory: A simple tale of a far-faring bride, Elizabeth, sister of Patrick Henry* (Richmond: Whittet & Shepperson, 1961); Douglas Summers Brown, "Elizabeth Henry Russell Campbell: Patroness of Early Methodism in the Highlands of Virginia," *Virginia Cavalcade*, vol. 30, no. 3 (1981), pp. 110–17; Gladys Stallard, "Madam Russell: Elizabeth Henry Campbell Russell," *Appalachian Quarterly*, June 1996, vol. 1, pp. 12–15.

"To Counterfeit the Soul": Portraiture at Historic Smithfield

Jessica Wirgau

In 1803, James Patton Preston, then just twenty-nine years old, was painted by Gilbert Stuart, perhaps the most sought-after portrait artist of early nineteenth-century America. The bust-length oil painting follows closely the tradition of state portraiture that Stuart perfected in his depictions of George Washington. Likely commissioned after Preston's election in 1800 to the Virginia General Assembly, the dignified image foreshadows Preston's illustrious political career. The original painting is now in the collection of the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts in Richmond (*fig. 1*). A twentieth-century copy hangs in the drawing room at Historic Smithfield Plantation (*fig. 2*).

The Stuart copy serves as an anchor for Smithfield's portrait collection, which epitomizes the creation of a distinctly American portrait style that evolved from British prototypes. This paper will explore the function of portraiture and discuss a selection of Smithfield's portraits in the larger context of American and British art. It will conclude with a closer look at Gilbert Stuart, the formation of a distinctly American, democratic portrait type, and its expression in the James Patton Preston image.

The Function of Portraiture

Some of the most recognizable images in the history of art are portraits, and many transcend their roles as representing the physical likeness of an individual. They provide clues to the sitter's profession and social status, convey information about the style or tradition in which an artist was working, and communicate the values of the society in which the image was created. The ability to serve so many functions is due, in part, to the portrait's role as an inherently public image meant to be seen, interpreted, and appreciated by multiple viewers. Even within a domestic setting, the portrait remains public, often dis-

Figure 1. *James Patton Preston*, Gilbert Stuart, 1803, oil on panel, 25x20 in. Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond. Gift of Mrs. Preston Davie (59.19)

Figure 2. *James Patton Preston,* Copy after Gilbert Stuart original, 1980, oil on canvas. Historic Smithfield Plantation.

played in a room, such as the drawing room or dining room, used for entertaining guests or conducting business. Because portraits exist in the public domain, they may be employed to deliver a specific message or imply a particular meaning and have been used to such ends throughout the history of art.[1] In medieval Europe, for example, portraits became an important component of tomb sculpture, commemorating the dead while reminding the living of an exemplary life and, in Italian Renaissance portraiture, the dead were painted alongside the living, and patrons depicted themselves in Biblical scenes, implying both power and piety.

Such examples underscore that portraiture has, by and large, been the privilege of the elite, serving to demonstrate and reinforce social hierarchy while celebrating an individual or an occasion. Among the

European aristocracy, the portrait was often used as an instrument of political influence, representing not just the individual depicted but the abstract principles which he/she embodied, a tradition that was adopted and reinterpreted in America.[2]

American Portraiture and British Influence: The Smithfield Portraits in Context

Portraiture in America in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries embodied many of our fledgling nation's values and ambitions as well as our society's close association with British culture. From the furnishings in American homes to proper manners and social customs, America looked to England as its prime model, even as it sought independence from British control.

In the arts, such prominent British painters as Sir Joshua Reynolds and Thomas Gainsborough were the standards against which American artists were measured. While artists trained in America enjoyed moderate success, those who traveled to England to study European masterworks were most successful both in Europe and America.

The Georgian era of painting in England, from approximately 1714 to 1830, was centered in London where men such as Reynolds and Gainsborough had a steady stream of patrons from the aristocracy and the royal family. The Royal Academy, founded in London in 1768, further promoted the visual arts by offering classes for instruction and exhibition opportunities for both established and emerging painters. More important, it established public art tastes and promoted classical forms based on ancient Greek and Roman art. Some of the most prominent artists of Colonial and Early America studied in London and were deeply influenced by the doctrines and artist members of the Royal Academy, including John Singleton Copley and Benjamin West, two American artists who enjoyed their greatest success while working in England.

John Singleton Copley painted many of America's elite, becoming the supreme artist of the American colonies by 1760. Copley's works both in America and later in England are notable for his ability to craft the image of his sitters the way they wanted to be seen by the public. Using gestures, props, and costumes familiar to the American viewer, Copley's paintings became visual indications of one's social

Figure 3. *Susannah Smith Preston,* Charles Xavier Harris copy after Jeremiah Theus original , 1876–1936, oil on canvas, 30x25 in. On loan to Historic Smithfield Plantation. Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond. Gift of Mrs. Preston Davie (60.52.2)

position. He faithfully depicted the sitter's appearance, while at the same time constructing meaning through the depiction of expensive fabrics and elaborate interiors. Copley, like many American artists, relied heavily on prints of works by Reynolds and others for the latest European fashions.

While Copley enjoyed success in the Northeast, his contemporary Jeremiah Theus was the premier portrait painter in Charleston, South Carolina, for three decades, beginning in 1740. Theus painted nearly 150 portraits, most featuring prominent citizens of Charleston, along with landscapes, crests, and coats of arms.[3] Like Copley, Theus attained success by drawing attention to the social position of his subjects, often focusing on costume, delighting in the representation of expensive fabrics, bows, and lace and providing more generalized, flat depictions of the face and body. For example, hanging in the drawing room at Smithfield Plantation is a bust-length portrait of Susannah Smith Preston, wife of Colonel William Preston, wearing an elegant gold dress ornamented with pearls and lace (*fig. 3*). On loan from the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, this is a copy by William Xavier Harris after the original painted by Jeremiah Theus. Theus emphasized Susannah's costume rather than her physical likeness, and, as a result, her face appears similar to many of his portraits of female sitters.

Theus also relied heavily on imported English mezzotint prints for his poses and costumes. London printmakers would publish prints based on painted images of prominent British aristocrats.[4] American artists closely studied these prints so as to place their own sitters in similar poses, settings, and dress. Given this tradition, one may presume that Susannah did not own the dress she wears in the Smithfield portrait, but that it was adopted for the work from an English prototype.

American artist Benjamin West's influence can also be seen in the works at Smithfield Plantation. Born in Pennsylvania, West settled in London in 1763 and became a charter member of the Royal Academy and later King George III's official historical painter. Working at King George's court, West appropriated the styles of his English colleagues in his dramatic landscape backgrounds and his treatment of classical subjects. West's greatest legacies, however, were the students who passed through his London studio, including such prominent portrait artists as Charles Willson Peale, Gilbert Stuart, John Trumbull, and Samuel F.B. Morse, many of whom are represented at Smithfield.

Hanging in Smithfield's schoolroom above the fireplace is a copy of a portrait of George Washington by one of West's most celebrated students, Charles Willson Peale (*fig. 4*). The original, entitled *George Washington in the Uniform of a British Colonial Colonel,* was painted at

Figure 4. George Washington in the Uniform of a British Colonial Colonel, Unidentified Artist, twentieth century copy after Charles Willson Peale original, oil on canvas.
Historic Smithfield Plantation.

Mount Vernon in 1772 and is now in the Washington-Lee-Custis Collection of Washington and Lee University in Lexington, Virginia. Charles Willson Peale began his career as a painter in the 1760s by studying the works of Copley and similar artists. He moved to London where he studied in West's studio for two years but did not choose to pursue his teacher's interest in painting historical events and, instead, returned to America to paint portraits of the Revolutionary War's greatest heroes. The Washington portrait depicts the first president as he would have appeared in the 1750s as a British colonial colonel in the Virginia Regiment. He carries an American hunting gun along with an English-made sword. Like many depictions of aristocratic

Figure 5. Major William Preston, Charles Xavier Harris after original by Matthew Harris Jouett, 1876–1936, oil on canvas, 30x25 in. On loan to Historic Smithfield Plantation. Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond. Gift of Mrs. Preston Davie (60.52.5)

gentlemen, Washington is robust, with his right hand tucked into his vest and his protruding stomach subtly alluding to the fine foods that likely graced his table.

A portrait of similar style of Major William Preston, third son of William and Susannah, hangs in the dining room at Smithfield (*fig. 5*). It is a copy by Charles Xavier Harris of a painting by Matthew

Figure 6. George Washington, Charles Willson Peale, 1777, watercolor on ivory, 1 1/2 x 1 3/8 in. Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of William H. Huntington, 1883 (83.2.122), Image © The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

Harris Jouett. William Preston is dressed in the uniform of a cornet of the U.S. Army. He was recommended as the first cornet of a company of cavalry in the Montgomery County militia in 1788, and served in various military capacities throughout his career. He moved his family to Kentucky in 1814, settling on land inherited from his father near present-day Louisville.[5]

According to records at Smithfield Plantation, Major Preston's image was reportedly copied from a portrait miniature, a tradition in America that, like full-size portraits, was adapted from British models but ultimately evolved from medieval illuminated manuscripts and portrait medallions of classical antiquity (*fig.* 6). Miniatures were often painted in watercolor on small pieces of ivory and then mounted in lockets, brooches, and bracelets, becoming both jewelry and intimate mementos of loved ones. Many of the artists already discussed, including Jeremiah Theus and John Singleton Copley, painted miniatures in addition to full-size images. Miniatures are particularly renowned for their delicate and luminous renderings. Unfortunately, the radiance of the subject's flesh and dress painted in watercolor on ivory cannot translate easily to a full-size canvas. If this piece was copied from a miniature, it likely contrasts significantly with the original in its texture, color, and feel. In the schoolroom at Smithfield, flanking the fireplace, are some small prints of other Preston family members also derived from portrait miniatures.

A second generation of American students, who studied under West at the Royal Academy in London, reached prominence in the nineteenth century. One of them, Samuel F. B. Morse, is perhaps better known for his invention of the telegraph than for his painting career. His portrait of Senator William Campbell Preston currently hangs in Smithfield's entrance hall (*fig.* 7). Morse was born near Boston in 1791 and studied painting at the Royal Academy before settling in New York City in 1825. He attempted to secure commissions painting historical scenes but, instead, had a relatively limited career as a portrait painter. He made his largest contribution to the arts through his founding of the National Academy of Design in 1826, an honorary association of artists with a museum and school of fine arts based in Manhattan.[7]

William Campbell Preston was the eldest son of General Francis Preston and Sarah Buchanan Campbell and the grandson of Colonel William Preston. He was also great nephew of Patrick Henry. He studied natural philosophy and law both in the United States and abroad at the University of Edinburgh before representing South Carolina as a United States senator from 1833 to 1842. He was a staunch advocate of slavery and vehemently opposed some of the policies of President Andrew Jackson. In 1842, the South Carolina legislature at-

Figure 7. William Campbell Preston, Samuel F. B. Morse, ca. 1842–1860, oil on canvas, 36x29 in. On loan to Historic Smithfield Plantation. Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond. Gift of Mrs. Preston Davie (60.52.6)

tempted to guide his actions in the Senate, and he resigned rather than follow their instructions. He subsequently became president of South Carolina College and later a trustee of the school before retiring in 1857.[8] He is celebrated in particular as a great orator with strong opinions. The Morse portrait captures his confident personality in his expression and stature.

Copley and West, along with such artists as Theus, Peale, and Morse, drew heavily on European aristocratic painting to depict American subjects both before and after America's war for independence. With the formation of America's democratic government, a distinctly different form of American portraiture emerged, exemplified by the works of Gilbert Stuart. While still drawing on British examples, Stuart adapted them to depict prominent revolutionaries, including Thomas Jefferson, John Adams, and George Washington. Moving away from the depiction of wealth and social differences, Stuart's portrayals of prominent statesmen reinforced America's new identity with an emphasis on wisdom, dignity, and the principles of democracy.

Gilbert Stuart and American Portraiture

Gilbert Stuart was an extremely prolific artist; he painted roughly one thousand portraits from the late 1760s to his death in 1828. While he produced some of the most celebrated portraits of the period, his career is often considered uneven, or even tumultuous. Some scholars have even suggested that he suffered from manic depression, going in and out of periods of deep depression and procrastination to periods of intense and rapid production.[9]

For Stuart, portraiture and storytelling went hand in hand. Rather than asking his sitters to remain still so he could faithfully record their likeness, he carried on lively conversations, seeking to capture a distinctive expression or mannerism in his subject. Many prominent Americans who loathed sitting for a portrait quite enjoyed sitting for Stuart, who was extraordinarily entertaining. John Adams said of sitting for the artist, "Speaking generally...no penance is like having one's picture done. You must sit in a constrained and unnatural position, which is a trial to the temper. But, I should like to sit to Stuart from the first of January to the last of December, for he lets me do as I please and keeps me constantly amused by his conversation."[10]

Despite his sociable character, Stuart was a great frustration to many of his patrons, family, and friends, always suffering from deep debt and running from creditors. He was a terrible procrastinator and kept many of his sitters waiting years for their portraits, even going so far as to accept a deposit for a painting with absolutely no intention of ever finishing it and collecting the remaining payment. He kept cer-

tain portraits for years, either for his own personal enjoyment or for use in the production of replicas. For example, he kept Thomas Jefferson waiting more than fifteen years for one of his portraits. When the assumed original portrait of 1805 arrived at Jefferson's home in August of 1821, his daughter Martha noticed that the paint was still fresh and suspected it was a recent replica.[11]

Stuart showed an early interest in both painting and music, but little ambition toward any particular profession until he arrived in Benjamin West's studio in London in 1776. There he both emulated and criticized the work of his teacher and studied closely the paintings of British masters.

By the late eighteenth century, art critics were commenting increasingly on an artist's ability to represent character, in addition to physical likeness, in order to portray qualities such as benevolence, dignity, and intelligence. They strongly promoted the notion that one's soul was reflected in his/her physical appearance and could, in turn, be represented on the artist's canvas.[12] As Stuart began exhibiting his works in London, he became a celebrated example of capturing both body and soul in his work. A 1787 article in the London newspaper *World,* fittingly described his talent: "Stuart dives deep into mind, and brings up with him a conspicuous draught of character and characteristic thought."[13] Upon his death in 1828, artists of Philadelphia echoed this sentiment with a testimonial memorializing the artist: "His business was to counterfeit the soul...a glance at his copy was sufficient to afford an understanding of the original."[14]

In London and later Dublin, Stuart experienced considerable success, yet he thought constantly of returning to America to paint the new American president, George Washington. He wrote to his friend while in Dublin, "When I can net a sum sufficient to take me to America, I shall be off to my native soil. There I expect to make a fortune by Washington alone."[15] Political and social upheaval in Great Britain, combined with mounting debts to English and Irish creditors alike, further expedited Stuart's trip to America. In March 1793, he sailed for New York, where First Chief Justice John Jay was the only person Stuart claimed to know in America who could help him get established.

Stuart had met and painted Jay while in London and came to New York to paint him once again in the spring of 1794. Jay intro-

duced Stuart to many of his New York patrons and wrote a letter of introduction for Stuart to President Washington in Philadelphia. With this letter in hand and a list of thirty-two patrons who had commissioned a total of thirty-nine portraits of the president, the artist moved

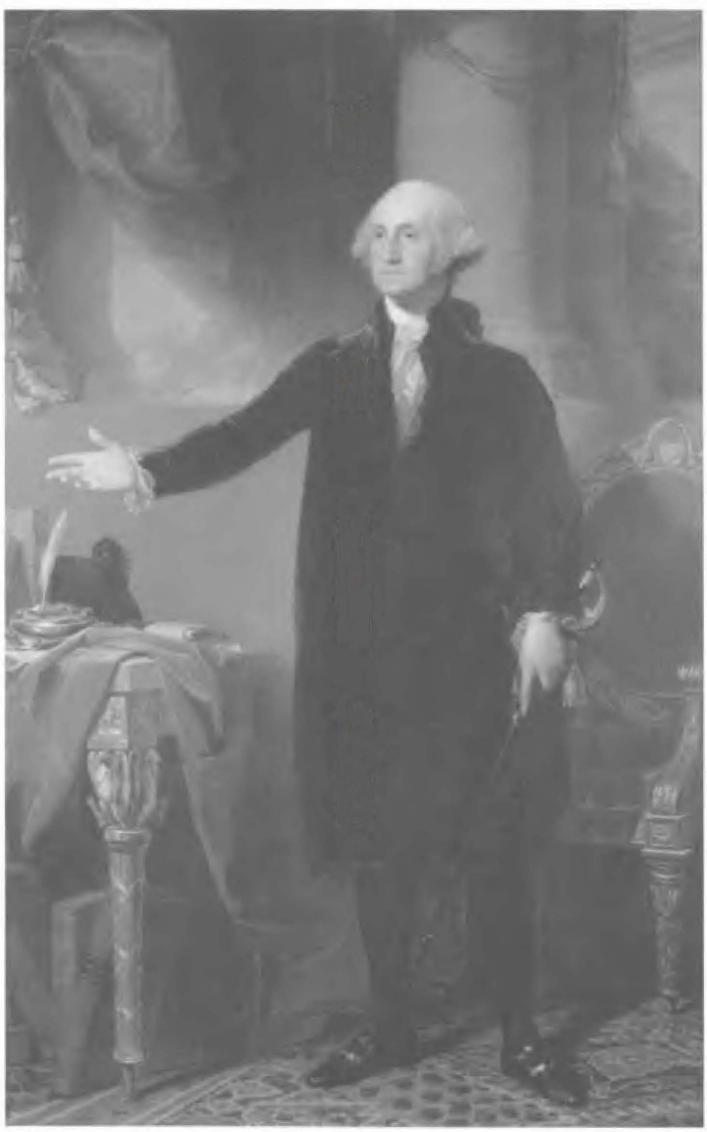

Figure 8. George Washington (The Lansdowne Portrait), Gilbert Stuart, 1796, oil on canvas, 97 1/2 x 67 1/2 in. National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C. (NPG.2001.13)

to Philadelphia in November 1794 with the goal of securing a sitting with Washington straight away.[16]

Washington sat for Stuart three distinct times in 1795 and 1796. From these three original images, Stuart produced at least one hundred copies that may now be seen in museums throughout the United States and abroad.[17] While details of dress or background were often

Figure 9. George Washington, James Heath after Gilbert Stuart, 1800, engraving, 19 7/8 x 13 1/8 in. National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C. (NPG.81.55)

changed from one copy to another, each work successfully captured the first president's reserved demeanor, the embodiment of democracy, and thus secured Stuart's reputation as America's premier painter.

Stuart painted two full-length portraits of Washington, the most famous of which is the so-called Lansdowne portrait commissioned by Philadelphia merchant William Bingham as a gift to William Petty, first Marquis of Lansdowne (*fig.* 8). It is widely considered Stuart's greatest accomplishment in America. Washington is standing as if addressing an audience. He is wearing a black velvet suit, the type he wore during public occasions, and his left hand rests on the hilt of the sword he carried with him for ceremonial purposes. The neoclassical decoration on the furniture is derived from the Great Seal of the United States, and thirteen alternating red and white stripes represent the thirteen original states. At the top of the table leg sit two eagles grasping a bundle of arrows — a symbol of war — while laurel surrounds the medallion on the back of the chair, representing victory. Under the table are books entitled *General Orders, American Revolution,* and *Constitution and Laws of the United States,* referring to Washington's career during and after the Revolution.[18]

In addition to the two painted copies of this work, it was engraved in 1800 by English printmaker James Heath (*fig.* 9), and one such engraving hangs in the drawing room at Smithfield Plantation. As with English sitters, portraits of prominent American citizens were readily reproduced in the form of prints, and painters often worked collaboratively with printmakers to profit from the widespread sale of their work, a practice in which Stuart actively engaged. To say that Stuart was frustrated by the Heath print would be a substantial understatement, for he had not granted permission to Heath to publish it and was furious upon seeing it. After the Marquis de Lansdowne received the original painting, Stuart contacted Benjamin West in London, asking him to identify a printmaker who could publish the work. Unfortunately, the Marquis de Lansdowne had already granted James Heath permission to produce the engraving without Stuart's knowledge or consent. Stuart first came across the Heath print quite by accident on display in a bookstore in Philadelphia and immediately went to his friend William Bingham, who had commissioned the piece for Lansdowne. Stuart complained that he was receiving no compen-

sation for this "exceedingly bad" engraving. When Bingham offered no immediate resolution, Stuart drafted a letter to Lansdowne which he never sent. In it he writes passionately of the injury he had sustained from the print's publication: "Thus, without my privilege and participation, despoiled of the fair fruits of an important work, and defeated in the great object of my professional pursuit, your Lordship will readily allow me the privilege to complain."[19] Stuart's daughter Jane noted that the incident with the Heath engraving severely troubled him to his death.

Despite this unfortunate situation, Stuart received a significant number of commissions for portraits of Washington and would often work on several copies at a time, a virtual assembly line of portraits. He spent much of his time in Philadelphia working on these copies. Later, in Washington, D.C., and Boston, he continued to produce copies, and he employed similar techniques and symbols in painting other statesmen, including John Adams, James Monroe, and Thomas Jefferson.

An Emerging Statesman: James Patton Preston

With the Washington portraits, Stuart solidified his reputation as the premier painter of prominent citizens and political figures in America in the early nineteenth century. In a new democratic America, the ideal portrayal of one's character conveyed dignity and inner nobility thought to be achieved, not through inherited social status, but through word and deed.[20] Stuart's Washington portraits demonstrate and enhance the long tradition of portraying leaders as the embodiment of a nation's driving principles. Washington seems to engage the viewer, inspiring both confidence in his leadership and a sense of approachability. In him nineteenth-century viewers saw the personification of America's victory over the British and the promises of democracy. Americans and Europeans alike hungered for portraits of the great American revolutionary and statesman, and Stuart's images delivered. They came to define what is known as state portraiture, and they must inform one's interpretation of the James Patton Preston portrait at Historic Smithfield.

James Patton Preston, the fourth son of William and Susannah Preston, was born June 21, 1774, at Smithfield Plantation. His three

older brothers, John (1764–1827), Francis (1765–1835), and William (1770–1821), each went on to attain prominent positions in government and the military, and James pursued a similar path. He attended the College of William and Mary from 1794 to 1796 before spending a year in Philadelphia with his brother Francis. He returned to Smithfield by 1798 and became one of the original trustees of the town of Blacksburg. By 1799, he was a justice of the Montgomery County Court and served in the Virginia General Assembly from 1801 to 1804. He later served in the War of 1812 and was wounded in the thigh at the Battle of Chrysler's Field in Canada, an injury that crippled him for life. From 1816 to 1819 he served as governor of Virginia, and he spent much of his time from 1816 to 1837 in Richmond while still overseeing his affairs at Smithfield, particularly after his mother, Susannah, died in 1823. From 1824 to 1837 he served as postmaster of Richmond.[21] He died at Smithfield in 1843. Among his possessions were multiple slaves, furniture, livestock, and one painting valued at $1.[22] It is impossible to know for certain whether this painting is the Stuart portrait, but it is reasonable to assume that Preston would have kept it in his home until his death, when his possessions were divided among his four children.

Newly established in his political career at the time the portrait was completed in 1803, it is not surprising that Preston would want to commemorate this period in his life.[23] He is depicted in a neoclassical setting, seated in front of a column, with undulating drapery behind him. This style, with its allusions to ancient Greece and Rome, was prominent in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries as America identified with and emulated these ancient democratic societies. A glance at Stuart's Washington portrait (*fig.* 8) and those of other prominent American politicians illustrates the pervasiveness of this tradition.

In some cases, the background imagery described above is obvious, and in others Stuart spends little time on the background, merely suggesting a setting with loose brushstrokes, as he does in the Preston image. In many cases, Stuart would focus entirely on the face and leave the background, even the hands and costume of his sitter, roughly sketched. Preston's coat and cravat are relatively well delineated, but the emphasis is on the face and its suggestion of character.

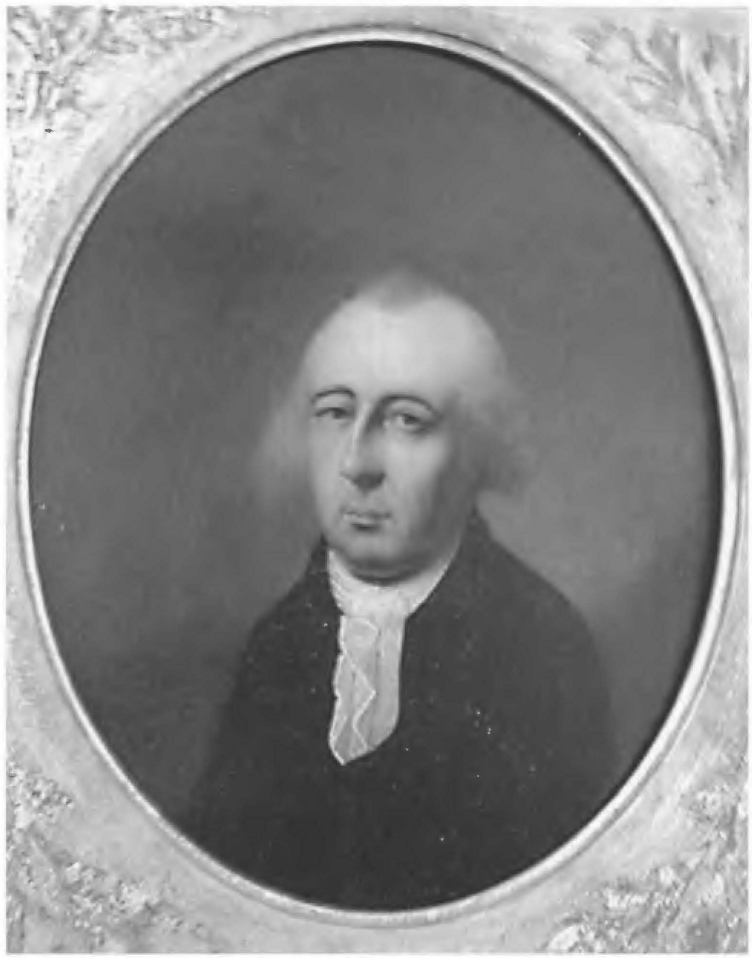

Figure 10. *James Patton Preston,* Unidentified Artist, ca. 1840, oil on canvas. Historic Smithfield Plantation

As in the Washington portraits, Preston gazes directly outward, establishing a trusting relationship with the viewer. He appears young, almost boyish, but his erect stature and serious expression suggest confidence and dignity. Adopting the imagery of state portraits before him, Stuart depicts James Patton Preston as the personification of leadership and dignity.

Adding to the portrait's significance is its status as a public image, even within the Smithfield home. Like the twentieth-century copy, it would likely have been hung in the drawing room, where

Preston and his family entertained guests. His quiet and proud demeanor would introduce him to his visitors as he likely wanted to be seen, a strong and fair leader dedicated to his profession and akin to some of America's most celebrated patriots.

A later small oval painting of James Patton Preston by an unidentified artist also hangs in the drawing room at Smithfield (*fig. 10*). Unlike the image of the young statesmen, here he has aged and appears melancholy, fatigued. It provides a striking contrast to the Stuart rendering and emphasizes the ability of a portrait to influence the viewer's impression of the subject depicted.

In looking at each of the Smithfield portraits discussed here, we strive, as viewers and visitors, to know the Preston family, its history, values, and surroundings. From Theus's early portrait of Susannah to the James Patton Preston images, we respect and admire individuals we have never met but endeavor to know. Through such portraits, we broaden our knowledge of Smithfield and the Preston family and of their relation to American history and to the community of Blacksburg.

Endnotes

1. Shearer West, "Portraiture," *Oxford History of Art* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), pp. 43–5.
2. West, "Portraiture," pp. 61–72.
3. "Jeremiah Theus," *The Collection, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.*, 2006. <http://www.nga.gov/cgi-bin/pbio?30250> (March 15, 2006).
4. "Early American Painting in the Worcester Art Museum: Jeremy Theus," *Worcester Art Museum* <ttp://www.worcesterart.org/Collection/Early_American/Artists/theus/biography/index.html> (March 15, 2006).
5. John Frederick Dorman, *The Prestons of Smithfield and Greenfield in Virginia* (Louisville, Ky.: The Filson Club, Inc., 1982), pp. 57–61.
6. Carrie Rebora Barratt, "American Portrait Miniatures of the Eighteenth Century," *Metropolitan Museum of Art Timeline of Art History*, 2000 <http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/mini/hd_mini.htm> (June 30, 2006).
7. "Samuel Finley Breese Morse." The Collection, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., 2006 <http://www.nga.gov/cgi-bin/pbio?22650> (March 15, 2006).
8. Dorman, *The Prestons of Smithfield and Greenfield in Virginia*, pp. 202–3.
9. Dorinda Evans, "Gilbert Stuart and Manic Depression: Redefining His Artistic Range," *American Art Journal*, 16 (2004), pp. 10–31.
10. Carrie Rebora Barratt and Ellen Miles, *Gilbert Stuart* (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2004), p. 324.

11. Barratt and Miles, *Gilbert Stuart*, p. 283.
12. Dorinda Evans, *The Genius of Gilbert Stuart* (Princeton, N. J.: Princeton University Press, 1999), p. 44.
13. Barratt and Miles, *Gilbert Stuart*, p. 30.
14. Barratt and Miles, *Gilbert Stuart*, p. 292.
15. Barratt and Miles, *Gilbert Stuart*, p. 79.
16. Barratt and Miles, *Gilbert Stuart*, p. 133.
17. Barratt and Miles, *Gilbert Stuart*, pp. 133–6.
18. Barratt and Miles, *Gilbert Stuart*, pp. 166–9.
19. Barratt and Miles, *Gilbert Stuart*, p. 175.
20. Evans, *The Genius of Gilbert Stuart*, p. 27.
21. Dorman, *The Prestons of Smithfield and Greenfield in Virginia*, pp. 63–5.
22. James Patton Preston, Probate Inventory, 1843, Will Book 7, pp. 130–7, Montgomery County Courthouse, Christiansburg, Virginia.
23. The details of the commission, including how Preston came into contact with Stuart and where the sitting took place, require additional research. Collection records at the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts (Accession # 59.19) suggest the portrait was executed in Washington, D.C., in 1803, but further evidence must be uncovered to confirm this date. The portrait was donated to the VMFA in 1959 by Mrs. Preston Davie, a Preston family descendant. Research on the provenance of the painting is currently being undertaken by the author.

An Ordinary Woman: Sarah A. Geer McIntyre of Saltville, Virginia

Zola Troutman Noble

The history of southwest Virginia was determined not only by prominent families with such names as Preston, Floyd, Patton, Stuart, and Henry, but also by countless families known only to their neighbors in the small communities in which they resided, communities tucked into valleys or gaps between mountains or alongside tumbling creeks or river banks. Telling their stories enriches the landscape just as details enrich paintings by the great masters.

Particularly the stories of women are often overshadowed by those of men who made names for themselves. Yet the quiet or not-so-quiet lives of women provided the foundation upon which the men built their reputations. Single women often left their mark as well. The life of a woman in one family can offer insight into the fabric of life in Southwest Virginia. From the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, letters and family stories regarding the life of Sarah A. Geer McIntyre (1860–1928) reveal intriguing facts about her, about those who influenced her life, and about those who felt her influence. These letters and stories give her life a place of interest in the history of southwest Virginia.

Sarah A. Geer[1] was born on January 4, 1860,[2] in Smyth County, Virginia, to Margaret Moore Geer (1838–1860), daughter of Samuel and Elizabeth Moore, and William E. Geer (1830–1913).[3] Though the couple had been married five years, Sarah was their first child.[4] The couple's joy at Sarah's birth turned much too soon to sorrow, for Margaret died just eight days later of "child bed fever."[5] The early loss of her mother was the first in a number of unfortunate events Sarah would face throughout her life.

Four months after her birth, the 1860 census of Smyth County, Virginia, taken in April, reveals that Sarah Ann Geer lived at Seven

Mile Ford with her father, William E. Geer, a wagoner, and with her grandmother, Celia Geer, age 57. They lived in the home of William's sister, Leah Geer McLure, and her family. The census shows that William owned no real estate, so it seems that Sarah was born into a family of meager means.

Sarah's grandmother Celia was herself a single mother. Whether she was widowed or not is a mystery, as is the identity of her children's father. Celia is listed in the 1850 census of Washington County, Virginia, as head of household, a farmer, living with two sons named William and Thomas. Perhaps some of Celia's resourcefulness in the face of difficult circumstances was passed on to her granddaughter, Sarah.

On June 20, 1861,[6] when Sarah was eighteen months old, her father traveled to Abingdon, Virginia, with his brother-in-law, Theophilus Moore,[7] and signed with the 48th Virginia Infantry, Confederate States of America. In 1863 he was captured on the retreat from Gettysburg and imprisoned at Fort Delaware Prison on Pea Patch Island, Delaware. After ten weeks, William signed the "yellow dog contract," as the Rebels called the oath of allegiance, and he was assigned to the United States Army's 1st Regiment Connecticut Cavalry,[8] Company G.[9] When the war ended, William's mother wrote to him that it was unsafe for him to return home.[10] Consequently, when he was mustered out of the service in Minnesota where he was stationed in October 1865, William stayed in the North, eventually making his home in Maiden Rock, Wisconsin.[11]

Back home in Smyth County during the war, Celia took care of little Sarah. Family tradition suggests that Margaret Moore Geer's sister, Hannah Moore Allison, wife of John P. Allison, Confederate veteran and farmer, also contributed to Sarah's upbringing. During the war, Smyth County endured two battles, one at Saltville (1864), resulting in the destruction of the salt works, and another at Marion. How these events affected Sarah and her family can only be imagined. Although specific events of Sarah's childhood are unknown, it is easy to surmise that there were difficulties for a little girl whose father was considered by many to be a traitor.[12]

Little is known of Sarah's life between the end of the Civil War and her marriage to Martin McIntyre in 1897. Family tradition says that her dark complexion earned her the nickname "little black Sally,"

and she was said to be "black Dutch," a term commonly applied to Melungeons, a group of people of mixed ethnic ancestry first noted living in northeastern Tennessee and southwestern Virginia.[13] At this writing, however, there is no proof of Melungeon ancestry.

There is no uncertainty, however, that Sarah's lifelong best friend was Sarah Alice ("Allie") Rumbley. Allie's pale blue eyes, blonde hair, fair skin, and round face contrasted sharply with Sarah's brown eyes, black hair, dark skin, and bird-like features. Sarah and Allie reportedly met while they worked at the Palmer Inn in Saltville, where Sarah was the cook and Allie was the housekeeper.[14] Earliest written evidence suggests that their friendship began possibly before 1888. A note in a small account book written by Allie in her even and carefully slanted script describes important events in their lives:

> Sarah Alice Rumbley was borned June 6, 1858 was convicted of sin Feb 14 1877. Sunday the 18, candidate for membership. May Thursday 2nd 1878 professed faith in Christ. First prayer in public July Thursday 25 1878 amersed september Thirsay 6 1883.
>
> Sarah A. Geer convicted November 21 1888 converted the 22nd and received in the church.[15]

Another page identifies the church as Methodist.

After Allie "professed faith in Christ," and before her first public prayer, she wrote the following letter to an "Absent Friend" entreating that person's prayers for her:

> By the request of a friend
> Woodland, Virginia
> July 7th, 1877
>
> My Absent Friend
> I hardly know how to address you, as I have never bin blessed with an oppertunity of forming your acquaintance, but by the halls of God's Spirit, and the influence of your earnest prayer I will endever to address you in the best way and manner that I know how. In the first place I must confess how greatly your request surprised me; and at the same time I thank God for ever giving me such a friend here in this selfish world to take such a deep interest in my soul's eternal welfare. O, that true Christians would a wake to the deathless interest of poor perishing sinners; ever remembering that he that converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a

multitude of sins. My friend don't think me presumptuous or unkind when I endever to impress upon your mind the request of an increased interest in your prayers, for freely you have received and freely give.

Oh, pray earnestly till I have received that good potion which can never be taken from me. I do thank God for the impression that secret prayer has made on my heart, for often I feel happiness unspeakable.

Excuse me if I have bin two plain, for thoughts welcome to my bosome, may make yours bleed. My friend you will do me a great favor by keeping those few illcomposed lines in secret — let them be as though they had never bin written, and as if the occasion for them had never arisen.

To the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen.

I remain most affectionately and respectfully yours,

Sarah A.

Remember that there is Joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth; more then over ninety and nine Just persons which need no repentance. Oh, Lord, help us to stay our trust on thee, the neglected source of all goodness, and enable us to endure temptations, for when we are tried we shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.

Perhaps he will admit your prayer
And lend a listening ear to your entreaties.[16]

Both Allie and Sarah could have signed a letter Sarah A., but the handwriting is Allie's uniformly slanted script. By contrast, Sarah's handwriting looks haphazard, angling this way and that, like a river meandering through the countryside.

Allie's letter reveals the religious language commonly used by Protestants during that day, phrases such as "my soul's eternal welfare" and "wake to the deathless interest of poor perishing sinners." Her words are elegant and passionate: "I do thank God for the impression that secret prayer has made on my heart, for often I feel happiness unspeakable." Also her elaborate ending of quoted scripture makes one wonder who has requested prayer from whom, yet she closes with an entreaty for God to answer her absent friend's prayers for her

soul's salvation. This letter reveals a passion for God that continued with Allie and Sarah throughout their lives, a passion they passed on to Sarah's child, stepchildren, nieces, and grandchildren.

Other than her conversion at age 28, no record exists of Sarah's activities for another nine years. In 1897, at age 37, Sarah would have been labeled a spinster when she was married on June 16, 1897[17] to Martin McIntyre, a laborer and widower with four children. Allie Rumbley and Sarah's cousin Rachel Allison, daughter of Hannah and John Allison, witnessed the marriage.[18] Martin's first wife, Susan (Chapman) McIntyre, had died the previous summer (July 13, 1896).[19] Whether Sarah was acquainted with the McIntyre family before Susan's death is unknown. The marriage may have been one of convenience for Martin, who surely needed a cook and housekeeper and someone to look after his children: Katie (16), Stephen (14), Gould (12), and Elizabeth, or Lizzie (7).[20] On the other hand, Martin's daughter Katie was old enough to step in as cook and housekeeper, so his marriage to Sarah may have been a love match. Existing evidence does not answer this question.

Whatever the case, tragedy struck after less than eight weeks when Martin suffered a sudden heart attack and died on August 7, 1897, as he was splitting wood.[21] Suddenly, Sarah was left a widow with four stepchildren in her care, and she was pregnant. At Martin's death, Sarah's friend Allie immediately came to her aid. Eight and a half months after Martin died, Sarah gave birth to a son on April 30, 1898. She named the child John Martin and called him Martie. By the time the 1900 census was taken, Allie Rumbley was living with Sarah,[22] and the children were scattered, as often happened with the death of parents. Gould lived in Kentucky,[23] Lizzie lived with Sarah and Allie,[24] and the whereabouts of Kate and Stephen are unknown.[25] Allie and Sarah supported their family by their work as cook and housekeeper at the Palmer Inn.

About 1905, M. P. Rimmer, a Church of God preacher from Norton, Virginia, went to Allison Gap and held a revival. Influenced by Rimmer's sermons and those of other evangelists, such as A. G. Riddle of Atkins, Virginia, and W. P. Long and W. A. Sutherland, both of Greenville, Tennessee,[26] Sarah and Allie left the Methodist Church and became followers of the Church of God movement.[27]

Through this association, Sarah and Allie would later play a part in establishing a church in Allison Gap. A photograph taken about 1910 shows Sarah being baptized by W. P. Long.[28]

Meanwhile, from 1865 until his death in 1913, Sarah's father, William E. Geer, made a life for himself in Wisconsin. On April 26, 1868, he married Julia Trumbull, the foster daughter of Maiden Rock's founder and leading citizen, John D. Trumbull, and his wife, Betsy Lyon Trumbull. Julia was 18 years old at the time of her marriage to William, who was 38. They had no children.

If William ever considered returning to Virginia, he must have pushed the idea further and further back in his mind as the years passed. Did he receive an occasional letter from his mother with word about Sarah? Was he plagued by feelings of guilt for not returning to see them? Did Sarah feel abandoned by him? Did the pain of his mother's letter telling him not to come home continue to trouble him? He left no record to answer these questions.

Evidence from the *Maiden Rock Press* indicates that William's life in this tiny village on a bluff above Lake Pepin was busy and full. For a time, he apparently operated a restaurant and saloon. When he sold his business, the *Pierce County* (Wisconsin) *Herald* ran this notice on March 29, 1877:

> Religion, since the decision of the Commission, seems to occupy a permanent place in the thoughts of the sedate people of the "Rock." Mr. Wm. Geer, who has been keeping a restaurant and saloon in the village, experienced a change of heart and immediately sold out. Ed Eldridge will fill the vacancy.[29]

Some time later, William began delivering mail. His mail runs took him from Maiden Rock to six other towns in the area around Lake Pepin. After William had carried the mail for ten years, he calculated his total miles traveled. He gave these figures to the *Maiden Rock Press*:

> The following is the distance traveled by our mail carrier, Mr. W. E. Geer, in a period of ten years: From Maiden Rock to River Falls, in three years, 9,984 miles; from Red Wing to Reed's Landing, in three years, 12,480 miles; from Maiden rock to Rock Elm in one year, 1,664 miles; from Maiden Rock to Lake City in three years, 7,488 miles; from Maiden Rock to Frontenac, 730 miles; from Maiden Rock to Ellsworth in three years and three months,

The baptism of Sarah McIntyre. On the back of the photo, Sarah's son J. M. "Martie" McIntyre wrote the following: "Baptism service in creek at the Mitchell home across from Chas. Barbrow's home, about 1910. W. P. Long coming out of the water with Mrs. Sarah McIntyre."

> 7,006 miles; from Maiden Rock to Hersey in three years and four months, 18,712 miles; making a total of 65,542 miles travel in ten years. [30]

The *Press* also reported that William was instrumental in chartering a post of the Grand Army of the Republic. He had found camaraderie with a group of war veterans in Maiden Rock, and together they organized GAR Post 158. William enjoyed planning Memorial Day programs at the Maiden Rock Cemetery. Eventually, because of his active participation, his loyalty, and his story of sacrifice for the Union, the post was named for him. To this day, it retains the name, "W. E. Geer American Legion Post 158."

Highlights in the lives of the village's citizens inevitably ended up in the *Maiden Rock Press*. In December of 1905, a momentous occasion for William received the headline "An Old Soldier's Romance":

W. E. Geer received what was probably as greatly appreciated a Christmas remembrance as was received by any one in town. It was a box from his daughter, who lives near Saltville, Va., and contained numerous pictures of his daughter and her son, their home and a bird's-eye of the salt works; also of the village in the "Gap." In the last picture he can easily locate the homes of his daughter and of his sister; also the old stone spring-house where he drank many a refreshing draught of cool water in his early days.

Among other presents was a cake, a portion of which Mr. Geer divided among his friends. Ye editor received a liberal portion, and we can testify that it was fine. The reception of the box brought up a flood of remembrances of former days.

Mr. Geer has not seen his daughter since he left her, a motherless child, 1½ years old, in the care of his mother, when he was compelled to leave home in 1862, because of his strong northern ideas. He was first taken as a conscript, in the year above mentioned, and was compelled to join Co. G, 48th Virginia regiment. But, on July 3, 1863, at the battle of Gettysburg, he and his brother Tom, escaped and made their way to the Union lines. The brothers became separated that day and have never met since.

Mr. Geer fell in with a company of Union soldiers, and later enlisted in Co. G, 1st Connecticut cavalry, as a teamster. Later he was promoted to wagon master—a position he held till the close of the war.

When Grant took command, Co. G (made up largely of southern men) was ordered to Ft. Snelling to fill a vacancy. After being mustered out of the service, Mr. Geer received word from his mother that it would be unsafe for him to return to the home of his boyhood; so he remained in the north. After spending a few years around St. Paul, Prescott, and other places, he came to Maiden Rock, where he has since made his home. He has often thought of visiting the old home, but his health will not permit the journey.

Thus, at this season of good cheer, was he remembered by the daughter he has not seen for 43 years[31]; and to say that he was pleased is but a mild expression of what he felt when he opened his Christmas box.[32]

This "Christmas box" initiated a correspondence between Sarah and her stepmother, Julia Geer, a correspondence that lasted until Sarah's death in 1928. In her letters, Julia addressed Sarah as "Dear Daughter" embracing her as the daughter she never had, and Julia even specified in her will that Sarah should receive all her earthly belongings.[33] Unfortunately, Julia never revised her will after Sarah's death. Therefore, none of Julia's estate, worth about $400, could be passed on to Sarah's son Martie because he was not related to Julia by blood. Instead, Julia's estate reverted to the state of Wisconsin.[34]

At the time Sarah sent the Christmas box, she had developed a reputation as an excellent cook at the Palmer Inn. She had also opened her home and her table to many traveling Church of God evangelists preaching in the area, including Long and Rimmer. Like nameless widows in the Old Testament who fed the prophets, Sarah fed these preachers from Allie's vegetable garden and from hogs they raised, which she mentions in one of her letters. In this humble way, she was instrumental in helping to establish the Church of God in the area.[35] By 1909, construction of a church building had begun. By the same year, she and Allie had purchased a house[36] in an area of Allison Gap called The Pines.

A letter from Sarah to Allie illuminates their affection for each other and Allie's importance to the entire family. Written in pencil, the letter contains random capitalization, inconsistent spelling, and no punctuation. The letter is not dated, but one might infer that the year falls between 1911 and 1916 because Sarah states that Martie and Gould, her son and stepson, "are working." During those years, Martie would have been between 13 and 18, old enough to hold a job. Having served four years in the United States Navy, Gould had returned some time after 1910.[37] He left the area around 1916 and moved to Hopewell, Virginia. The visitor "fannie" is most likely Fannie (Rumbley) Allison, Allie's sister. Lily Conkan, Mrs. Keith, Doke, and Frank are neighbors. Nicknamed Hize (or Hizzie)[38], Allie was staying at an unknown location at this time.

August the 26
Saltville Va

Dear Allie,

i have just received your letter was glad to hear from you glad to hear all is well We are all well and getting a long all rite Martie and Gould is working they are getting in good time they both wonder when hize will com home Martie said last night Mama I have almost forgot how hize looks he said i want to see her so bad i had to cry Allie he is the best thing to me on earth Gould has got all that pine wood cut up and in the wood house and has engaged 6 moose wagon loads Gould is so good to he don't want me to work he wants me to hire someone to stay until you come back well Allie the cow is all rite She give about 2 gallons at a milking We give the calf half of the milk The hogs is growing rite a long fannie was down here yesterday eaving and stayed all eaving with me for i was so lonesome for God sakes hurry and come home well me and lily Conkan is coming over this next Thursday if nothing happens Cant you meet us at the train now i will tell you how i got disapointed yesterday i thought by me not getting word a Saturday you and some of them over there would be here yesterday so fint and looked but and no one came so i thought i heard a hack coming at 10 oclock I run to see and when i found that I was mistaken i just took me a good old fashion cry fannie laugh at me harty but i could tell she was hurt to Well Allie are you coming before I come over there or not

i got Mrs. Keith to do the work for me to come Tell doke i want her to be there at franks to s———— ———— togeather for it will be the last time we will all be there i know i will come on the first train if nothing happens Martie wants you to have him some ripe pears Well I will close for this time into soon it is raining hard love to all

Sarah McIntyre

Sarah's letter brims over with affection, not just for Martie and Allie but also for Gould. It is obvious that Allie is an important and loved member of the family, important to Martie, important to Gould, important to Fannie and "Lily Conkin" (Lillian Cochran), and important to Sarah. It also gives a glimpse into the life of the family with references to the wood-cutting, the cow, the milking, and the hogs.

Home of Sarah McIntyre and Allie Rumbley in Allison Gap, Virginia, about 1911. From left: Sarah McIntyre, Allie Rumbley, Lizzie McIntyre Chapman, and Gladys Chapman.

In February 1913, Sarah's father died in Wisconsin. Her stepmother, Julia Geer, wrote these letters in pencil shortly after his death:

Maiden Rock Wis April 22 [1913]

Dear daughter it is Such a lonesome day thought I would write you a few lines I was So Sorry to hear you were Sick hope you are better now I have not been very well I have been So lame I feel some better to day I guess I worked to hard I cleaned house and I have had a such big washings Sickness makes lots of work my but I do miss him So it is So lonesome but I Stay alone I don't feel contented any where else I am So glad I have my home I have been to the grave yard twice I was up last Sunday and put flowers on the grave I feel So much better when I can go and look at his grave I don't feel quite So lonesome it does Seem Sometimes as if he will come back but he never will. I See So many things to remind me of him but it has to be and I must make the best of it God knows what is best for us I think of it every day he don't have to live and Suffer I think he is at rest.

I have not got any pension yet I think So Strange I don't get it I wish I could for I need it So bad I have not got my debts paid yet wish you would write and tell me when your Birthday is and how old you are I don't want you to try to do any thing if you are not able I do hope you are better wish I lived where I could help you

when you are sick I will pay you for all you do I don't want you to work for me for nothing

Well I am not going to write much this time will write more next time Tell uncle Tom[39] I have not forgotten him and Aunt Hannah[40] and Martie how I do wish I could See you all write Soon

Love to all from your

Mother Julia Geer.

Maiden Rock Wis April 26 [1913]

Dear daughter

Received your letter . . . this morning I apreicated your kindness when I get my pension I will try to remember you Tell Martie I wont forget him he is a good boy, I am afraid you rob yourself you have to work hard one of those papers you will have to send back I want you to let me know what it costs and I will pay it I think what you send me will help me more than anything I was married to your father in April 25th 1868 and your father died Feb 11 1913. I wrote you a letter a few days ago hope you will all keep well I am feeling better I was all tired out have worked hard wish you were here to go to your fathers grave in the morning it is not so far Sarah don't try to send a box You have to work so hard and you don't feel well I want to send a box after a little I have some things I want to send uncle Tom & want to send the watch to Martie I want him to have it Your father said he wanted him to have it and he shall I am going to close

write soon
love to all
your Mother
Julia Geer

Julia shows affection and tenderness toward a "daughter" she had never met. It seems that Sarah endeared herself to her stepmother through acts of kindness, to which Julia alludes in her letter.

The same month, Sarah's stepson Gould wrote her the following letter, revealing some difficulties the family was facing:

Bluefield W. Va.
204 Reese St.
April 11th 1913

Dear Mama:—

just a few lines to let you know that I am well. hoping that this will find you all the Same. well Mama work is very dull out here at the present time. but I think that it will get better in a few days. if not I am going to leave this place about pay day which is on the 24th. I marked up for duty last Monday and have just made one run which didn't make me but three dollars. but I am expecting to get out tonight. if I should take a notion to leave this place I have been thinking of sending my trunk home so don't be a bit surprised if you see it coming in by the way Mama I wish that you would look in the vase on the dresser and get the letter that Rush[41] gave me to bring to Bluefield and send it to me. if you can't find it have Rush to write another one. that is if he want to do so. if not alright. tell Me how is Lizzie and the children getting along. if they get in need of anything let me know at once. I am going to send you a little Money Pay day and I want you to pay five dollars to uncle Jim[42] for rent for if I send it to Lizzie she might keep it and then aunt Emma would think that I was trying to beat them out of the rent tell me if they have repaired the house yet? now I am going to do all that I can to help Lizzie. but if that dirty tramp comes back and she lives with him I will never help her again. and futhermore they will have to get out from there. for I think that you have been imposed on a little to much. and I also think that there has been enough scandal brought on the family so I don't intend to have anymore. I am going to send you some money for your troubles for you have been awfull good to Me and I am not the kind of a man to forget. tell Hise to give the little cow[43] some sugar. ha. give Mart a wallop for me. with love to all

Your loveing Son
Gould McIntyre

Gould's letter reveals the affection and the protective feelings he held for Sarah and for his sister Lizzie. The "dirty tramp" mentioned in the letter was Lizzie's husband, John Chapman, who apparently had left Lizzie at this time.

Some time after Gould's letter, Lizzie and John Chapman did get back together and moved to Dante, Virginia. Whether their move

had anything to do with Gould's threat is unknown. A note on a postcard addressed to "Mrs. John Chapman, Dante, Va." reveals the tension Sarah felt over Lizzie's situation:

> March 4, 1914 Dear lizzie What is wrong with you that you don't write Mama is awful worried about you all please write and let us know if Gladas is with you all don't foget to write at once.

Fifteen months later, another blow to Sarah's life came when Lizzie died in childbirth on June 13, 1915 at age 25. The child died also. The care of two small daughters, Gladys, age six, and Lorene, age three, was too much for John Chapman. He soon left the girls in the care of Sarah McIntyre and Allie Rumbley. Once again, Sarah became the caretaker of motherless children.

During these years, World War I raged in Europe. When the United States entered the war in 1917, Sarah McIntyre's family felt the effects. Against his mother's wishes and with a strong desire to follow in Gould's footsteps, Martie enlisted in the Navy on August 2, 1918. His military records describe him as 5'9" tall, 153 pounds, with brown eyes, black hair, and ruddy complexion.[44] Prior to this time when men enlisted in the Navy, they served four years, but as an incentive to get recruits for the war effort, they were allowed to enlist for the duration of the war. This was Martie's choice. When Germany signed an armistice with the Allies on November 11, 1918, the war officially ended, but Martie served several more months. By special order of the Secretary of the Navy, he was honorably discharged on April 17, 1919.[45]

Seven months after Martie returned from the Navy, Sarah made room for a daughter-in-law in the home. On November 15, 1919, Martie married Fannie Mae Myers (1902–1925), daughter of Jacob A. Myers, a magistrate and teacher in Smyth County, and his wife Oma Allen Deal Myers, a teacher and drama coach. Fannie's dimpled smile and gentle ways added cheer to the McIntyre home. Within a year (August 10, 1920), Fannie gave birth to Sarah's first grandson, Woodrow Wilson McIntyre, and twenty-three months later (July 16, 1922) to a granddaughter, Norma Lois McIntyre. By this time in her life, Sarah must have learned not to take good times for granted. A year or so after the birth of her second child, Fannie was diagnosed

with "consumption," a term used at that time for tuberculosis, and sent to Catawba, a tuberculosis sanitarium near Roanoke, Virginia.

Fannie's treatments failed to cure her of the disease. Some time after she returned home, she began to keep a diary. Her first entry was dated Dec. 27, 1924, and the last entry was penned in May 1925. Within the pages of this slim volume, she recorded her hopes and dreams and the events of her life. She often mentioned her mother-in-law, mostly in terms of illness or work: "Mrs. McIntyre is sick today," or "Mrs. McIntyre is ironing." Fannie also noted friends and family members who visited her, among them two women evangelists, Mayo Moses and Mabrey Evans. Fannie wrote glowingly of her affection for them.

> February [1925], Sunday—1
> Mayo has been here I love Mayo. I know she is a good girl. This old world we're living in is very hard to beat. We get a rose with every thorn, But aren't the roses sweet. . . .
>
> Monday—16
> Mayo has been here. She brought Miss Evans. They are such nice girlies and are doing a good work. . . .
>
> Tuesday—24
>
> It is cloudy to day. I don't feel good at all. The meeting is still in progress, and will be this week. Mayo has not been here since Sat. I wish she'd come.[46]

Mayo was a Tennessee girl, the daughter of a poor tenant farmer, William Moses, and his wife, Martha Oody Moses. At age sixteen, she had been converted during a revival meeting near Loudon, Tennessee, by a Church of God evangelist, the Reverend A. G. Riddle. So impressed were the Riddles by Mayo's zeal for the Lord that they took her into their home at Atkins, Virginia, to tutor her in Bible study and Church of God doctrine.[47] After her education with the Riddles and a year at Berea College in Kentucky, Mayo began a preaching ministry with another woman evangelist, Mabrey Evans. Mayo and Mabrey held revivals in communities throughout Southwest Virginia, including Atkins, Marion, Christiansburg, and Saltville. Mayo also took interim pastorates at Elliston and Chatham Hill, and she pastored for a few years the new congregation at Allison Gap. Mayo's strong voice carried across the congregation and out through the windows to the

surrounding hillside homes in powerful prayers and sermons, and she ministered in many homes, praying for the sick.

When Fannie died on September 12, 1925, her twenty-third birthday, Martie and Mayo stood at her bedside holding her hands.

Once again, motherless children were left in Sarah's care, but this time at age sixty-five she was suffering from poor health. Unlike John Chapman, who seldom visited Gladys and Lorene, Martie took responsibility for John's children. Life went on in the McIntyre household. Martie bought property farther up the hillside in Allison Gap and began construction of a new house. Allie later built a barn on the property and continued to keep a large garden for the family. Some said Allie could do the work of any man.

Though she was just a young teenager, Lorene carried much of the responsibility for the care of Lois and Woodrow. Gladys had moved to Hopewell, where her Uncle Gould lived, and found a job. Though Sarah's health began to fail, she kept in touch with her "adopted" children, Gould and Gladys. A few letters to Gladys remain.[48] These letters illustrate Sarah's devotion to these young people whose lives were entrusted to her care as children. That she often signs her letters "Mother" illustrates the way she regarded her relationship to them. Though she did not record the year, indications are that these letters were written in 1927, the year before Sarah died.

Saltville Va
January 23

dear daughter

it is with great Pleasure to night that i will try and drop you a few lines to let you Know that i have not forgotten you gladis they all well here but me and i dont get no better nor never will some days i can do verry will and some I can't hardly go hope those few lines will find you all right

Lorene is at home she is lots of help to us thire is a 20 days singing school agoing on here now Lorene is going all the time we don't want her to miss none of it for it is good well gladis thire is lots of Sickness and deaths here thire was Some one buried nearly every day last week Mr Charley Surber and his

Sarah Geer McIntyre, about 1905.

brother died at McCrady Gap Mrs lineberry Anie Haynes[49] mother and anie die is dead

well gladis i got a letter from Virginia a few days ago i must rite to her i would be glad if you and her could [come] back we all thought lots of her

well i dont know of nothing els to rite we are a going to try and send you a little birth day Bon in next month if nothing hapens

if I could just git around i could do lots of work but i cant i just have to Sit here all the time well I will have to close for to night hoping to hear from you Soon

So be good and take good care of your Self for thire is so many girls kidnapped i am uneasy about you so be carful this from your Mother to her daughther

So good night Sarah McIntyre

April the 5 [1927][50]

dear gladis

i thought i would try and drop you a few lines i would have rote sooner but have not been able i have been awful Poorly all winter not able to do no work my cough sure is bad the children got thir baskets was well Please gladis if i could get out of the house i would have sent you a Ester Preasant but just as soon as i can get out i will send you something nice

Well gladis we had a surprise Party Come in on us last Friday night at Eleven oclock i know you cant guess so i will tell you your aunt dealy[51] and and uncle billy[52] and Ribern Arnell[53] and Earnest[54] and his wife they Stayed all night and went on the first train they come to See your aunt Em[55] and then come to See me i Sure was glad to see them all when you come home Marti Said that he would take us all down there

Well Lorene has not missed a day in school the school aint out until the first of May your aunt Dealy is coming back to go with us down to billys well gladis I don't know of nothing to rite only Gould has got a big boy[56] they call him junior i forgot to tell you that Dell and Hugh and francis was here last Saturday they come and we was not looking for them well the old Gap is just the same only worse there is moore meanness than ever was Known before i Sure was glad that you got out i am a going to try and get Loren out just as soon as we can This is no fitten place for a deacent girl to Stay i am so sorry that Marti come back if i could get out to night i sure would go[57] i am well Pleased with you that you are holding yourself up Conny Phipps has just throwed herself away they made Bunk Whitley marry her the other night he won't live with her no one cares for her Mrs. Phipps is dead buried two weeks ago so Nanny is Staying with Lue Mullens well I will close now will rite more next time don't fail to rite to me i will rite just as often as i can

this from Mother
so good by my little girl be a good girl

August the 5
dear daughter

After a long delay I thought i would drop you just a few lines to let you Know how we all are all well as comen but me i have not been able to do nothing sience you was here well i Seen fransias batten[58] She Said to tell you to come back just as soon as you can for She Shur did enjoy you company while you was up at her home you Said that you was coming home in September hop you will come well Mrs. Myers and Charles and fred[59] is all down with tyfoied fevor all are bad Gladis did you See that man about that other half curtoin if you half to pay for it don't pay for it you just See if the man made a mistake

Allie said for you to go and send her them samples of t woolen dress goods and she will Pick her out one and Send the mony to you to Pay for it so dont fail to do that the children[60] has gon to bed Marti is down at times has just come in from the store so I so I don't know of any thing more to rite at Preasant will give you all the news next time

Hope to hear from you soon gladis don't fail to rite to me often for Part of the time I can rite to you and you must not fail to rit often so I will close for to night so be good and take good care of your Self

So good night my little daughter
this from Mother
rite soon

Oct 25 [1927]
Dear daughter

i thought i would drop you a few lines this morning as aunt Marry Collins is waiting on me to take it to the Post office i would have rote sooner but have not been able to go half my time gladis what has become of Lorene don't hear from her Gladis Hizzie was awful Proud of her dress it Sure is nice goods well Virgie Tallor[61] run of the other day and got married India Haynes[62] is Married they both married men from Marion I don't know know their names well I have not time to rite mutch will give you all the news next time when do you think you are coming Soon I hope I sure do want to see you

So I will close for this time this leaves all well as comen hope this will find you the Same

So good by for this time
be a good little girl
this from Mama
to her daughter
rite soon

Saltville, Va.
Nov. 17
dear daughter

i will try and rite you a few lines tonight to let you know that I have not forgot you Gladis i have been so Poorly that i could not rite but i am trying to rite you tonight just a few lines to let you know how we all are all well but Martie and myself Martie has something like high Blood Pressure he said last night he was going to be enarned [?] I am awful uneasy about him gladis Dell Balten has moved to Blufield and rented out her home Barnie Henderson got his house burnt down the other day that is two in about two years he had one burnt here wher we live and then bought him a nice place in abbingdon and now it burnt he is having bad luck they have moved in the old school house Monday your aunt Mary Collins said that she was a going to rite you a long letter and give you all the news gladis i want you to send me two more of those pictures like you sent here i never got one Martie give Mr. Moore one and your aunt Mary one so i want to send granma Geer[63] one and keep one myself when you and Lorene comes in Christmas i want you both to have some so I can send granma one she rites a bout you all in every letter i get gladis woody said for you to bring him a nigra doll when you come Louis wants one to well i will close for this time hoping to hear from you (over) soon and see you so don't fail to come home Christmas so good night hope you will have a good night rest so be good

this from
Mother to her daughter
rite soon
and often
don't fail to come

Sarah strangely omits an important event from these letters, although there may have been another letter, now missing, that carried

the news. Sarah learned, inadvertently, that on August 24, 1927, Martie had secretly married Mayo Moses (1898–1988), the lady preacher and Fannie's friend. They slipped off from a Church of God camp meeting at Christiansburg and were married at Appomattox. As a featured evangelist at the camp meeting, Mayo was afraid her marriage would divert attention from the purpose of the camp meeting — to win souls for Christ — hence the secret ceremony. The couple planned to hand out marriage announcements after the last service, but Martie's mother discovered one of the announcements as she was searching Martie's pockets preparing to launder his clothes. The secret was out.

When Mayo joined the McIntyre family, she not only gained a husband, but also two small children (Lois and Woodrow), a teenager (Lorene), a mother-in-law (Sarah), and "Aunt Allie." She ran an organized and efficient household and continued Sarah's tradition of housing and feeding guest preachers.

In contrast to Mayo's strong voice, Martie was soft spoken and modest. He had learned compassion and generosity from his mother. By this time, he was working in the Matheson company store as a grocery clerk. The Matheson Alkali Works had come to Saltville in 1893, and the company owned much of the town. Martie often helped the poor by giving them goods they needed and charging his own bill.

Within a year of Martie's marriage to Mayo, Sarah died. And so the earthly life of an ordinary woman of Southwest Virginia came to an end. Her life exhibits traits upon which communities thrive. She overcame many tragedies: early loss of both her parents, the stigma of her father's defection from the Confederate army, early loss of her husband, loss of two stepchildren and a daughter-in-law as young adults, and more. With dignity and with her friend Allie by her side, she used what little resources she had to make a living for herself and for the children entrusted to her care. With her modest resources, she helped establish the Church of God in the area by housing and feeding visiting evangelists. Beyond her own family and community, Sarah McIntyre was unknown. However, in her determined and humble way, she represents many women who faced the hardships of life with determination and courage. They taught their children to honor God and country, to continue the work ethic modeled for them, and to be compassionate, contributing citizens. Thus Sarah Geer McIntyre and

countless women like her helped to weave the social and economic fabric of their communities for the good.

Acknowledgments

Thanks to my mother, Lois McIntyre Troutman, for telling me stories and for saving all the letters and photos. Thanks to Harry Haynes at the Museum of the Middle Appalachians for introducing me to *The Smithfield Review* and for answering my many questions about Saltville, Allison Gap, and the people who lived there long ago. Thanks to Hugh Campbell and others at *The Smithfield Review* for their comments and suggestions to improve the clarity of this manuscript. From readers, I welcome any additional information that might shed light on the life of Sarah McIntyre and her family.

Endnotes

1. Sarah's birth certificate states her name as Sarah A. Gear. In the 1860 census, her name is listed as Sarah Ann, and it is recorded as Sarah Ann in the McIntyre Family Bible, but the name on her tombstone, chiseled by her son, John Martin McIntyre, is Sarah Alice. As for the spelling of her last name, in documents prior to and during the Civil War, the name is spelled G-e-a-r. After the war, it is spelled G-e-e-r. For this paper, I will remain consistent with the latter spelling. So too, the spelling of McIntyre varies in records: McIntire, McEntire, MacEntire, and McIntyre.
2. Smyth County (Virginia) Register of Births Book 1, p. 15. The spelling of the name in the record is Gear.
3. The year of William's birth is unconfirmed. The 1850 census records his age as 19, and the 1860 census records his age as 29, which would indicate that he was born between mid-1830 and mid-1831. His enlistment in the U. S. Army on October 1, 1863, records his age as 33. The newspaper in Maiden Rock, Wisconsin, reports, however, that his wife, Julia, threw him a 75th birthday party on January 31, 1905, which would indicate that he was born in early 1830.
4. The marriage date of Margaret Moore and William E. Geer is unconfirmed. The only record of their marriage I have found to date is actually a record of their application for a marriage license dated January 4, 1855, located at the Washington County Historical Society, Abingdon, Virginia, STA VA WA 3.1, p. 22.
5. Smyth County Register of Deaths, Book 1, 1857-1896.
6. John D. Chapla, *48th Virginia Infantry* (Lynchburg, Va.: H. E. Howard, Inc., 1989), p. 124.
7. Chapla, *48th Virginia Infantry*, p. 142.
8. Chapla, *48th Virginia Infantry*, p. 142.
9. Veterans Records, Union, Ist Connecticut Cavalry, Company G, Muster Roll, 1 Oct. 1863.

10. "An Old Soldier's Romance," *Maiden Rock Press*, Dec. 1905, n. pag.
11. "An Old Soldier's Romance."
12. Several years ago, I met a descendant of Thomas Geer, William's brother. When I told her I was descended from William, she said, "Oh! He was the traitor." That remark made 120 years after the fact made me realize how difficult it must have been for Sarah to grow up in a community where some people considered her father to be a traitor.
13. For more on the Melungeons, see The Melungeon Heritage Association web site at http://www.melungeon.org/.
14. This version is according to Lois McIntyre Troutman. Other family members assert that Sarah and Allie started working at the hotel after Sarah's husband, Martin McIntyre, died.
15. Booklet is in the author's possession in Anderson, Indiana.
16. Letter is in the author's possession.
17. McIntyre Bible. This Bible is in the possession of Zenobia McIntyre Hammond, Saltville, Virginia.
18. McIntyre Bible.
19. Arnold Family Bible. Cordelia McIntyre Arnold was a sister to Martin McIntyre. This Bible is in the possession of Zenobia McIntyre Hammond of Saltville.
20. Arnold Family Bible.
21. This story has been passed down through the family. The piece of wood Martin was said to be splitting is in the possession of Woodrow McIntyre of Saltville.
22. 1900 Census; Rich Valley, Smyth, Virginia; Roll T623 1728; Page 13A; Enumeration District 83.
23. 1900 Census; Black Oak, Whitley, Kentucky; Roll T623 555; Page 10B; Enumeration District 142.
24. 1900 Census; Rich Valley, Smyth, Virginia; Roll T623 1728; Page 13A; Enumeration District 83.
25. According to Arnold Bible records, Stephen died Feb. 18, 1901.
26. *The Tie That Binds*, compiled by the Women's Missionary Society, Allison Gap Church of God, December 1970, p. 4. Republished and updated in July 2005 as *A History of the First Church of God, Allison Gap, Saltville, Va.*, by Jack Barbrow, Geneva Louthen, Thelma Swartz, and Saundra Wassum.
27. According to *The Tie that Binds*, the Church of God movement dates to 1825–1830 when the Rev. John Winebrenner of Harrisonburg, Pennsylvania, began preaching the following points as the basis of the organization: (1) Under the Divine order, believers in any given place are to constitute one body. (2) Division into sects and parties under human names and creeds is contrary to the spirit of the New Testament. (3) Believers in any community organized into one body constitute God's household, and should be known as the Church of God. (4) The scriptures, without rote or comment, constitute a sufficient rule of faith and practice, while creeds and confessions tend to division and sects. (5) Binding upon all believers are the ordinances of baptism by immersion in water, in the name of the Trinity — Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; the washing of the

saints' feet; partaking of breads and wine in commemoration of the suffering and death of Christ.

Influenced by these tenets and by the holiness movement spreading across the country, Daniel S. Warner, of Ohio, began preaching the importance of the work of the Holy Spirit in people's lives. This eventually created a split between Warner and the leaders of the Winebrennarian Church of God. Warner began publishing his convictions in a periodical called *The Gospel Trumpet*. At the time that Church of God preachers from Warner's camp began spreading their teachings in Southwest Virginia, *The Gospel Trumpet* was being published in Moundsville, West Virginia. However, in 1906, the entire publishing company moved to Anderson, Indiana. In 1917, the company started a Bible school, which developed into what is now Anderson University. The headquarters of the Church of God remains in Anderson, Indiana, today.

28. Original photograph is in the possession of Zenobia McIntyre Hammond of Saltville. The author possesses a copy.
29. According to Lelynn Trumbull, a nephew of Julia Geer, "The 'decision of the Commission' . . . probably was a pre-Prohibition restriction of the sale of alcohol." Lelynn Trumbull, personal note attached to newspaper article sent to Lois Troutman, 8 Feb. 1991.
30. *Maiden Rock Press*. n. dat. n. pag.
31. From the date that Geer last saw Sarah (1862) and the number of years since he has seen her (43), one can infer that this box was received during December 1905.
32. "An Old Soldier's Romance," *Maiden Rock Press*, February 1905, n. pag. After searching Civil War records, I have found that parts of this story are not true: (1) Wm. E. Geer volunteered in 1861; he was not taken as a conscript in 1862, although he was forced to return to service after he left without leave in 1862. (2) William and his brother did not "[escape and make] their way to Union lines" during the Battle of Gettysburg. Records show that William was actually captured on July 5, 1863, during a dramatic retreat from Gettysburg and imprisoned at Fort Delaware. He signed the oath of allegiance on Oct. 1, 1863, and joined the Union army then. Thomas continued his Confederate service until the end of the war, in spite of being captured on May 12, 1864, at Spotsylvania and imprisoned at Point Lookout, Md., and Elmira, N. Y. (Chapla, p. 124).
33. A copy of the will is in the possession of the author. The original is in a Will Book at the Pierce County Court House, Ellsworth, Wisconsin.
34. A copy of the Petition for Probate of Will for Julia E. Geer and a copy of The Final Account and Petition for Assignment of Estate are in the possession of the author. The originals are in the Pierce County Court House, Ellsworth, Wisconsin.
35. *The Tie That Binds*, p. 4.
36. Smyth County Deed Book 35, p. 238.
37. 1910 United States Census, Camp Gregg, Pangasinan, Philippines, Military and Naval Forces; Roll: T624_1784; Page: 1B; Enumeration District: 40; Image: 20, Ancestry.com. In this census, Gould is listed with a group of men serving in the Philippines. A story about Gould's return from the Navy as it was

passed down through the family might be of interest here. When Gould came home, he found his young half-brother Martie being spoiled by the two women raising him and being picked on by bullies at school. He decided Martie needed to become a man and learn to defend himself, so he taught him some boxing moves and even gave him brass knuckles. Gould told Martie to take care of those bullies, which Martie promptly did.

38. Hizzie is a nickname for Allie Rumbley.
39. William Geer's brother, Thomas Geer.
40. Hannah Moore Allison, sister to Margaret Moore Geer, Sarah's mother.
41. This most likely refers to Rush Taylor, a storeowner, justice of the peace, and Smyth County Supervisor in Allison Gap, who had possibly written a letter of recommendation for Gould McIntyre, which Gould had left behind.
42. Uncle Jim and Aunt Emma were James Stanfield and his wife Emmaline McIntyre Stanfield, a sister of Martin McIntyre, Sarah's deceased husband. They lived above Plasterco, west of Saltville in Washington County.
43. According to Lois McIntyre Troutman, granddaughter of Sarah McIntyre, the "little cow" is a reference to Lizzie's baby Lorene, who was a big child.
44. Enlistment papers are in the possession of the author.
45. Discharge papers are in the possession of the author. The family story about Martie's WWI service is that he was underage when he enlisted, and Sarah was able to get him discharged for that reason. However, on finding Martie's enlistment papers, I discovered this not to be supported by the existing records. He was 20 years old when he enlisted. Perhaps Martie did try to enlist in the Navy at age 17, and Sarah was able to get him out at that time, but there is no written record of such an event.
46. Fannie Myers McIntyre, unpublished diary, 1925. This book is in the possession of the author.
47. Berny Berquist and Maxine McCall, *Posthumorously, Berk* (Drexel, N.C.: C & M Resources, 2000), p. 77. Also, this story was often told to me by my mother, Lois McIntyre Troutman.
48. In 2003, several letters from Sarah and Allie to Gould remained in the possession of his daughter, Edna Earle McIntyre Beach, in Hopewell, Virginia. Since Edna Earle died in 2005, the whereabouts of these letters is unknown to this author. Inquiries about the letters have not been answered.
49. Annie Haynes was the wife of David Haynes and the mother of India Haynes, who is mentioned in Sarah's Oct. 25th letter.
50. The year can be inferred from the reference to the birth of Gould Calvin McIntyre, called "Junior," born in March 1927.
51. Cordelia McIntyre Arnold, sister to Lizzie McIntyre (Gladys' mother) and to Martin McIntyre (Sarah's husband).
52. William Ector McIntyre, of Abingdon, brother to Lizzie McIntyre Chapman and Martin McIntyre.
53. Ryburn Arnold, son of Cordelia McIntyre Arnold.
54. Earnest Arnold, son of Cordelia McIntyre Arnold.
55. Emmaline McIntyre Stanfield, sister to Lizzie McIntyre Chapman and Martin McIntyre.

56. This would be Gould Calvin McIntyre, born in March 1927.
57. Whatever was going on in the "Gap" that caused Sarah's desire to see the family leave there is not certain. Despite this, the family stayed in their Allison Gap home until 1992, when Gerald McIntyre, son of Martie and Mayo McIntyre, died and the house was sold. Martie believed in the people of Allison Gap; he rejoiced whenever a "Gap boy" made good. He encouraged children to do well in school; he gave to the poor. At his funeral in 1966, his good deeds, stories the family didn't know, were told repeatedly by people of the Gap, people who had been recipients of Martie McIntyre's compassion and generosity.
58. Frances Bateman was a principal of the Allison Gap School at one time.
59. These people are the mother and brothers of Fannie Myers McIntyre, Martie's deceased wife.
60. The "children" are Martie's children, Lois and Woodrow.
61. Virgie Taylor, daughter of Rush Taylor, married John Mays.
62. At age 17, India Haynes married Lynn Wassum, as noted in the 1930 Census, Smyth, Virginia; Roll: 2461; Page: 8B; Enumeration District: 3; Image: 627.0. Ancestry.com. She was 20 years old at the time the census was taken on April 30, 1930. One can infer, then, that this letter was written in 1927.
63. "Granma Geer" refers to Julia Geer of Maiden Rock, Wisconsin.

Progress at Gunpoint: Struggle in the Coal Fields of Southern West Virginia, 1890–1920

Zack Fields

As the year 1920 drew to a close, striking coal miners and their families in Mingo County, West Virginia, faced the winter from a tent colony. After thirty years of rapid industrial and population growth in Mingo and surrounding counties in southern West Virginia, many families had less economic power than when the coal boom had begun three decades earlier. Miners assertively deployed their union in the fight for decent wages and improved standards of living, but coal operators sponsored violence that turned back such efforts. Coal company-led industrialization brought violence and insecurity, not progress, for the citizens of Logan, McDowell, Mercer, and Mingo counties.

The Progressive era is generally understood as the period stretching from Theodore Roosevelt's becoming president in 1901 to America's entry into World War I in 1917, or even as extending out a decade in each direction. Citizens successfully lobbied for pure food legislation, state and national prohibition, and changes in the political process. Some scholars hold, and popular understanding tends to agree, that the Progressive era involved attempts by middle class activists to wrest control of state and federal government from the hands of corporate magnates — to curtail the power of "economic royalists"— so as to limit corporate control of the economy, reduce political corruption, and protect individual citizens from the excesses of industrialization. Other themes include middle-class concerns about being ground between the great power of the corporations above and potential violence from the underclass below. Yet another interpretation, also emphasizing public policy, especially economic policy at the federal level, attributes major changes during those years to the industrial elite, who attempted to use their power in the federal govern-

ment to consolidate monopolistic control of the economy and to deflect state efforts at economic regulation.[1] None of these interpretations emphasizes worker agency — the efforts by workers to achieve progress for themselves.

This essay argues that the miners of southern West Virginia acted and spoke for themselves. They struggled for a dignified existence for their families and attempted to organize themselves into powerful collective institutions, unions, to promote their common efforts. The miners' struggles between 1890 and 1920 laid the foundation for future change in their favor, but as of 1920 they were losing, not winning — and not for lack of effort or will, but because of the violence directed against them by the coal operators and their minions.

I. Forced Industrialization

After the Civil War, tight-knit communities of subsistence farms dotted southern West Virginia, and most families owned their own land. In the years from 1890 to 1920, however, working-class families in Logan, Mercer, Mingo, and McDowell counties witnessed a transformation of their landscape.[2]

Toward the end of the nineteenth century, coal and railroad subsidiaries of corporations such as U.S. Steel followed the Norfolk and Western Railroad into the four counties and industrialized, by force, southern West Virginia. In 1894, Flat Top Coal claimed title to more than 30,000 acres of land in Mercer, Raleigh, and Wyoming counties. The *Washington Post* reported "the squatters, who possess the land now, claim it by right of possession." At the coal company's behest, the sheriff called in two squadrons of police and deputies. They prepared to displace the residents, who were armed and refused to budge. "Bloodshed," the *Post* reported, "is almost certain."[3]

Flat Top Coal had its way, part of a trend of rapid mine development in the area. Coal companies, often controlled by the Morgan or Standard Oil groups, developed the Pocahontas and Williamson coalfields. According to John Alexander Williams, "The overlapping claims and hazy surveys of earlier days," in addition to a federal judge sympathetic to out-of-state claimants to land titles, meant that many small landowners sold their land because it would have been either impossible or too expensive to defend their titles. With small landowners in a weak bargaining position, large corporations quickly

amassed vast acreage. U.S. Steel owned 53,736 acres of vein area in the Pocahontas field and 32,662 surface acres in Logan and Mingo counties. Its subsidiary, U.S. Coke and Coal, was the largest producer in the Pocahontas field.[4]

The Pocahontas Operators' Association, representing the new ownership class in southern West Virginia, produced a lavishly appointed map of their field, with rich color, gilded lettering, and lovely calligraphic pen work. The map shows the location of thirty-seven companies in the Pocahontas field, whose center was McDowell County, and notes that there were even more companies whose names were omitted for lack of space. The map speaks to the wealth of the operators and the encompassing nature of coal mining in the area.[5]

The men who brought the railroads and the coal mines to southern West Virginia had investments in coal and railroads across the United States and were part of a vast web of interlocking corporate directorships. Despite much political noise regarding trust busting and regulation of monopolies, corporations, including the coal operators in southern West Virginia, did not suffer from decentralization during the years 1890–1920. As the *New Republic* reported in 1923, "The report [of Senator Follette] finds that Standard Oil is just as much a unified monopoly as it was before its legal dissolution. Does anyone doubt it?"[6]

Even though individual coalfields were under the control of different companies, the operators collaborated to produce a hostile labor environment, precluding gains in working conditions that might have otherwise been realized from intra-field operator competition.

II. Company Housing and Stores

Part of the transformation of the West Virginia landscape was a change in home ownership patterns and the increased incidence of company housing. Coal operators sent recruiting agents to spread exaggerated tales of miner prosperity in West Virginia; in response, thousands of workers came to the Williamson and Pocahontas fields, often from low-wage areas farther south. They joined displaced West Virginia families who were residing in company housing. In just the six months preceding May 1, 1917, more than 5,000 black workers from Bessemer, Alabama, came north with tickets paid for by coal operators in West Virginia and Kentucky. Coal companies provided on-site

company housing for most of these workers. Company housing consisted of low-slung clapboard structures with diminutive porches, if any, packed one next to the other along dirt roads. Photographs of West Virginia coal-company housing from this era show structures in advanced stages of decay; they appear to be hurriedly rejoining the earth. Barely one in seven units of company housing in the area had indoor running water; far fewer had sewage systems. While miners in other states often lived in privately owned homes, four out of five West Virginia miners lived in company housing.[7]

According to the coal operators, these new mine workers labored in an industrial utopia. An ornate history of the Pocahontas field, published by the Operators' Association, states:

> As one travels through the Pocahontas Coal Fields, he is impressed by the character of the miners. No signs of poverty greet the eye — no unhappy, dissatisfied faces. Substantial buildings are scattered throughout the entire field. Schoolhouses and high schools dot the mountain sides. Clubs for miners are found everywhere. These excellently conducted clubs have billiard and pool tables, libraries, baths, etc., and are open to the humblest working man.[8]

In their benevolence, the operators also provided company stores where miners and their families could shop with convenience.

Miners told a different story, as high company-store prices encouraged them to shop elsewhere in secret. Miner W.E. Hutchinson of Mingo County testified before the U.S. Senate Committee on Education and Labor that:

> At the company store they charged 55 cents and 60 cents a pound for pork, and at the outside stores we could get it for 35 cents. For plain white meat the company stores wanted 40 and 45 cents. At the outside stores they charged 25 and 30 cents.

Miners failing to shop at the company store were punished. Frank P. Harman, secretary and treasurer of Turkey Gap Coal and Coke Company, wrote in a company-produced pamphlet, "woe unto the poor fellow who at the month's end has too much money coming to him and has not spent to the satisfaction of the company's storekeeper." Hutchinson recounted being sent to a particularly unproductive part of the mine as punishment for not patronizing the company store. He was sent "into a scrubby little place in the mine where I couldn't make

but three or four cars a day." Retribution for inadequate spending at the company store was but one of many threats to a miner's wellbeing. During the "Progressive" era, laborers in Logan, Mercer, Mingo, and McDowell counties faced increased economic insecurity and even corporate violence when they attempted to improve abysmal living standards.[9]

III. Falling Real Wages

In 1920, citizens in southern West Virginia were less secure economically and physically than they had been thirty years earlier. Real wages for non-union miners in West Virginia fell dramatically in the early twentieth century because of a combination of price inflation and wage stagnation. Non-union miners also experienced declining purchasing power in comparison to unionized miners, whose organization provided some protection against national economic turbulence.[10]

Testifying before the U.S. Senate Committee on Education and Labor in 1921, Fred Mooney addressed the 1920 strike in Mingo County and the high cost of living versus low wages. Mooney was the Secretary and Treasurer of United Mine Workers (UMW) district 17, which encompassed West Virginia. UMW called the strike on June 1, 1920, after operators in Logan, Mingo, McDowell, and Mercer counties refused to recognize the union. While real wages were falling in fields around the Tug River in southern West Virginia, other miners in the state received raises of as much as 27 percent. Data from the U. S. Coal Commission show that nominal wages in union fields rose faster than nominal wages in non-union fields. In forty-nine union mines in the Kanawha, Fairmont, Coal River, and Junior Phillips fields, nominal wages for pick mining rose between 41.6 and 61.1 percent between January 1912 and January 1923. In contrast, nominal wages at non-union mines in Logan County only rose between 34.3 and 35.9 percent during this same time. Nominal wage increases for unionized machine cutters rose between 7.7 and 11.7 percent in forty-nine union mines between 1912 and 1923, but the increases ranged only from 5.4 to 6.2 percent in non-union Logan County.[11]

If the cost of living were constant, even a relatively small wage increase of 5.4 percent would represent an improvement in the material quality of life. Unfortunately for union and non-union miners, the

cost of living increased dramatically during and after the war, eroding and in some cases reversing increases in nominal wages. Between 1913 and 1920, the cost of living in the United States more than doubled, and an acceleration occurred at the end of the war. A miner receiving a 5.4 percent nominal wage increase actually had his real purchasing power cut by about half. Neal J. Ferry, labor member of the Anthracite Coal Commission, reported:

> the present wages of anthracite workmen were not sufficient to maintain an unimpaired family life, and free the children from the necessity of seeking employment in hosiery and silk mills or the shirt factories in order to supplement the inadequate earnings of their father in the mines.

Price increases occurred for a wide variety of products. Because coal prices also increased, wages could have increased as well. Yet UMW lawyer W. Jett Lauck reported that "between 1914 and 1918 the cost of labor increased $1.38 per ton, while the corresponding increase in the wholesale price was $2.69, approximately twice the labor cost." So costs grew faster than compensation for coal miners, with increased coal revenues flowing to the companies rather than to the workers.[12]

As part of the reason for falling real wages, Mooney cited systematic underpay for carloads of coal, stating that men were receiving between sixty cents and a dollar instead of the three dollars stipulated in the contract. Senators on the committee before which Mooney testified demonstrated less interest in the economic origins of the strike than in divining a foreign influence in UMW leadership. Mooney repeatedly assured them that the majority of the men participating in the strike were locals, but this did not assuage Senators' concerns about foreign infiltration. Senators also focused on the question of paramilitary gunmen. The operators accused the UMW of hiring foreign gunmen, a charge Mooney refuted and countered by stating that the operators hired Baldwin-Felts guards who terrorized the miners with impunity. Mooney cited a list of Mingo County members of a temporary military unit authorized by local authorities to oversee the strike. According to UMW testimony, 2,700 miners were on strike in order to realize labor rights equal to those of their peers in the rest of the state, and the operators were using any means to prevent them from achieving that goal.[13]

Colonel Z.T. Vinson, representing the operators, provided a different interpretation. Eight years earlier, at the Paint and Cabin Creek strikes, the UMW had brought in outside agitators to "shoot down the people who wanted to work" after the 1912 convention when it "changed its policy and its principles from that of a labor union into an organized band [of] robbers." That militancy continued in 1920, Vinson asserted, when the UMW had "a regular organized army" of gunmen, most of whom were not from the area. Given this atmosphere of "fear" and "dread," Vinson claimed the operators had "a moral and a legal right to say that we will employ no union men." He also defended the use of Baldwin-Felts guards to evict miners and their families from their homes.[14]

Data from the Coal Commission illustrate that union militancy protected real wages where the union was strong. Because miners in the southern counties were slower to unionize and the operators there employed greater violence, real wages in the non-union fields fell both in real terms and relative to the wages in unionized fields.

IV. Declining Rates of Home Ownership

In this atmosphere of operator retribution for union activism, home ownership had the potential to insulate miners from the whims of management. Yet, when miners lived in company housing they could be thrown out legally within a week, as were Frank Ingham and his wife. Often miners received no notice of eviction, but returned home to find their belongings in a pile out in front of the house. Miner W. E. Hutchinson testified that he was thrown out of his home with three days notice when his boss found out about his union membership:

> They forced their way in at the front door, went in and piled the contents, furniture and things, outside in front of the house....Then they...piled it up against the company store, and today it is laying there as it was, only rotten.

Heavily armed Baldwin-Felts guards carried out this and other evictions.[15]

In 1900, there were 1,201 homes in Logan County, of which 645 (or 53.7%) were for rent. Massive population growth occurred over the next twenty years: in 1920 there were 8,439 homes in Logan, of which 7,127 (or 84.5 percent) were for rent. This dramatic increase

in the percentage of rental homes indicates that residents of Logan County lost economic autonomy and security during these two decades as coal production expanded in the area. Expansion of the coal industry brought rapid population growth and an increase in the housing stock to Mercer, McDowell, and Mingo counties as well. In Mingo County the proportion of rental housing increased from 62.7 to 74.9 percent. In McDowell County it grew from 81.9 percent to 91.1 percent. The percentage of rental housing declined only in Mercer County, and only slightly, from 51.2 percent in 1900 to 48.3 percent in 1920. These data provide a glimpse of a rapidly growing region in which miners only rarely owned their own homes, and were thus under tighter control of the coal companies. The falling home ownership rates also paralleled falling real wages, making it impossible for most miners to leave the company town.[16]

V. Labor Battles

The 1894 Strike. Coal operators in southern West Virginia held down wages principally through union-busting. On April 13, 1894, the *Washington Post* reported that 300,000 miners in West Virginia, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Illinois, Indiana, Missouri, and Kentucky would strike within the next couple of days. UMW president John McBride said the miners were being paid a barely subsistence wage and deserved better, considering the crucial role that coal played in the economy. The *Post* chided the miners for "following some bad advice" of the UMW and for planning to strike. By April 24, 50,000 miners in Pennsylvania and 27,000 miners in Illinois were on strike, but only 2,000 miners in West Virginia. Some operators began to call in strikebreakers. On May 21, the *Post* reported:

> William H. Gorman, president of the Consolidated Coal Company, says he will engage colored men to work in the mines of his company if the coal strike does not collapse within a day or two.

Many operators in the Pocahontas field had already hired black miners as scabs in order to maintain production despite the strike.

> When the strike first came on, the Pocahontas operators made a voluntary advance of 5 cents per ton to those negro miners, and this executed a flank movement on the agitators,

the *Post* reported. Despite this "flank movement," nationwide output

remained very low, causing the national press to panic about coal availability. The governors of West Virginia, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, and Iowa formed an arbitration committee to settle the strike and get the mines running again. They won higher wages because McBride and the operators crafted the "Ohio Compromise" in mid June, ending the two-month strike. Miners in southern West Virginia, who were not unionized, did not benefit directly from the deal.[17]

The 1897 Strike. Three years later, thousands of Pennsylvania and Ohio miners went on strike again, initially without support from their West Virginia brethren. The *Washington Post* reported that the miners remembered the last strike, when some mines in Pocahontas kept running and made a great deal of money selling coal at inflated prices. Eugene V. Debs and Samuel Gompers were traversing West Virginia making speeches, however, and the *Post* reported that strikes around Fairmount appeared imminent. Shortly thereafter, miners in southern West Virginia decided to join the strike. The *Post* reported:

> This afternoon, upward of 5,000 men employed in the lower coal fields on the Norfolk and Western Road threw down their picks and swore fealty to the cause of their Pennsylvania and Ohio brethren.

Despite this display of solidarity, thirty-five of thirty-six mines in the Pocahontas field continued to run at full output, as Debs frantically called for others to join the strike and the *Post* made dire predictions of an "industrial war." According to the *Post*, "Debs has been shadowed by two Pinkerton men and has been threatened with death if he goes to [the] Kanawha [coal field]." Pocahontas operators kept the UMW at bay when "organizers Green and Wallace were compelled to leave Pocahontas at the points of revolvers." Successful operator repression in Pocahontas was an obstacle to national UMW goals. The *Post* reported,

> The failure to secure a general suspension in West Virginia has greatly interfered with the prospects of success, as the coal supplied from that and the few isolated districts is meeting the limited demand.

The failed efforts to unionize not only held down wages in southern West Virginia, but also hurt national prospects of improved working conditions.[18]

One cause of lower wages in southern West Virginia was the relative weakness of the UMW. While most operators in Pennsylvania, Ohio, and northern West Virginia recognized the UMW, the operators in the south obdurately resisted all attempts at unionization. They evicted miners who joined the UMW and created regional blacklists to ensure that anyone who joined the union could not find work in surrounding mines, including those in adjacent states. Baldwin-Felts guards and local sheriffs terrorized miners who tried to unionize their fields.

The 1901 Strike. Southern miners, however, continued their struggle for recognition of the UMW. In the Thacker-Matewan field, near Williamson, miners went on strike in 1901 to force the operators to recognize the union. A former West Virginia attorney general represented the coal operators in court, and won an injunction from the judge that restrained the miners from blocking entrances to the mines. Coal operators hired guards who fired upon the miners with impunity. After a couple of days, the miners, fed up with dodging bullets, started firing back. The *Post* reported that a "posse of United States deputy marshals, led by A.C. Hufford, of Bluefield," faced off against the miners in an increasingly violent conflict. Overpowered, many workers fled across the Tug River into Kentucky, outside the jurisdiction of the West Virginia marshals. The *Post*, in a display of sympathy for the miners, noted, "The strikers have nothing but hatred and contempt for the marshals."[19]

Both independent local operators and corporate subsidiaries vigorously fought the union in southern West Virginia. UMW vice-president Phillip McMurray noted:

> Both the United States Steel Corporation and the Pennsylvania Railroad have long been conspicuous for their fight against trade unions and the denial to their employees of the right of collective bargaining.

Mr. Coolidge, representing the Logan Operators Association, concurred with U.S. Steel:

> I believe we would be justified [in firing any union man] because we know that he would be like a man coming into your house — if that man told you...that before he got out he intended to rob your house, I do not care how pleasant he was when he came in;

> you probably would exclude him the moment you found out that was what he intended to do.[20]

Because of their collusion with such local law enforcement agents as Marshal A.C. Hufford, operators had no difficulties removing union families from their homes and putting union men on blacklists.

The 1902 Strike. Southern West Virginia miners and UMW organizers were fighting for a union as forcefully as the operators were resisting it. The UMW held its thirteenth annual conference in January 1902. More than one thousand delegates attended, representing 232,329 miners nationwide, making this the largest convention yet. In a speech before the delegates, UMW president Mitchell said:

> West Virginia — or properly speaking, district 17 — is now more thoroughly organized than at any other time in its history; there is a total of eighty local unions in that district, with a membership of approximately 5,000.[21]

Most new members came from the northern part of West Virginia; however, some new members in southern West Virginia — around Welch, Bluefield, and the Tug River — prepared to go on strike shortly thereafter. The operators got ready too, hiring scabs in order to avoid any pause in production. On June 7, 1902, miners throughout southern West Virginia went on strike as operators threw union families out of their homes. On the same day, two men from the Pocahontas field died under unexplained circumstances. Within three days, 95 percent of Flat Top miners had walked out. The workers prepared to defend themselves against operator violence, when "a greater number of strikers can be seen parading up and down the field with Winchester rifles and belts of cartridges buckled on, so the slightest provocation might cause serious trouble." Within two weeks, however, many of these miners went back to work, although some remained on strike through August. In late August the operators, impatient with the ongoing strike, called on the constable, who tried to remove the miners by force. The workers held their ground by fighting back, but were unable to win concessions from the operators. On September 4, after three months on strike, the miners voted to return to work on the condition that the operators would not discriminate against formerly striking workers.[22]

Gains Realized from Strikes. Union organizing produced direct as well as indirect gains. In 1904 some West Virginia miners won minor concessions from the operators. The *Post* reported,

> The settlement provides that engineers and firemen now members of the union shall have the check off applied to them, but those who may join the union later shall not.

Meanwhile the UMW built up a million dollar strike fund to permit it to carry through lengthier strikes and put greater pressure on operators. Perhaps in order to preclude mass union participation, Consolidated Coal Company granted a 5 percent pay increase to non-union members in 1910. Many other operators followed, benefiting 45,000 miners in West Virginia, Maryland, and southern Pennsylvania. These meager gains were not enough to content West Virginia miners north of Mingo County, who continued to press for unionization.[23]

Nearly all the operators from the New River, Pocahontas, and Virginia fields of West Virginia, who continued to resist unionization, convened and decided to reject recognition of the UMW as a representative of the miners working in their fields. Meanwhile, miners appeared to win more allies in the national government. Six months after the death in 1913 of four men in a battle between the Wake Forest Coal Company and miners in the Cabin Creek area, Senator William S. Kenyon of Iowa joined Senator Thomas Martin of Virginia in recommending nationalization of the coal mines of Paint and Cabin Creeks.[24] Senator Wayne Borah of Idaho made a speech in which he stated his "thorough" opposition to U.S. Steel's resistance to any union representation. Simultaneously, however, Senator Charles Thomas of Colorado proposed legislation authorizing the President to use troops to mine coal, which would have precluded the effectiveness of strike efforts. Relentless organizing by UMW appeared to have made a difference in the national political climate, yet that difference was not having an effect on the daily lives of miners in southern West Virginia.[25]

West Virginia Governor John J. Cornwell lauded the benefits in the non-union, low-pay mines of the south. At a Chamber of Commerce meeting, Cornwell praised the service provided by coal production in the non-union fields. During the last strike, these mines produced 2,500 tons of coal, which Cornwell said "had saved millions of people from cold and famine."

The 1920 Strike. Miners in Mingo County were not thinking of the welfare of out-of-state consumers when they went on strike in July 1920. Mingo County workers remained on strike through November, when the Governor felt tensions had decreased enough to allow a federal battalion of soldiers to withdraw from the field. Less than a month later Cornwell desperately appealed to President Wilson to send the troops back in, as violence between operators' guards and miners escalated beyond the control of state police. By Christmas, dozens of men had died in the labor war and the operators were showing no sign of capitulating to union demands.[26]

VI. Unionization and Operator Retaliation

Daily violence by police and private guards threatened miner safety during this time, a fact recognized by statewide politicians. Governor Cornwell stated: "I am now and always have been opposed to vesting the employees of a private company, whether a detective agency or a coal company, with police power. It is almost certain to be abused." E.T. England, West Virginia Attorney General, concurred in testimony before the Senate committee in October 1921, saying, "the mine guard system...is one, if not the greatest source of trouble" in Logan County. England added: "The main thing is to prevent organization." He recalled one recent instance of deputy abuse of power, when "a colored fellow named Omar came out [of the polls] and said he voted the straight Republican ticket, and one of the deputy sheriffs shot him down." The deputy was still employed at the time of England's testimony. In another instance, Baldwin-Felts guards murdered Logan Sheriff Sid Hatfield on the steps of the county courthouse after Hatfield refused to cooperate in their campaign against the union. A UMW brief presented to the committee detailed yet another instance of state-operator violence, again carried out by Baldwin-Felts employees:

> The two cases of flagrant open-shootings and killings...were in connection with Baldwin-Felts operatives — the killing of eleven men at Matewan and the killing of Sid Hatfield and Ed Chambers on the Court House steps in Welch in McDowell County.

Violence was not limited to blacks or the poor. During England's campaign for Attorney General, a deputy in Logan threatened to kill him.[27]

Amidst this constant violence, the union made great progress, though it had much less success in southern West Virginia. In 1900 the UMW had 897 members in West Virginia, representing 3.1 percent of the mine labor force and producing 0.2 percent of coal tonnage. Miners flocked to the union during and immediately after the First World War, and UMW membership grew to 49,027 in 1920. Those members represented 42.4 percent of the coal labor force and produced 49.5 percent of coal tonnage in West Virginia. Yet, as Fred Mooney of UMW testified before the Senate in 1921, Logan, Mingo, Mercer, and McDowell were counties without union mines.[28]

Extant propaganda provides evidence of the resources operators employed to stop unionization. In response to a labor pamphlet accusing the Tug River Valley coal company of shooting miners, L.E. Armentrout, vice president of Borderland Coal Company, wrote *Borderland and Bullets: Charges Answered.* Armentrout stated that Borderland had always maintained an open-shop policy in which workers could choose whether to join the union, but that the union then came in and tried to force all the laborers to join. Non-union laborers were "threatened, intimidated, shot at in their homes and at their work," Armentrout alleged. Only when the union attacked non-union men did Borderland institute a policy of firing union men. "When their program was announced, and this intimidation started, we notified our men that if they joined the union under these circumstances we would let them go." Instead, more employees joined the union, which declared a strike on July 1. Union members and the operators' men exchanged fire, which Armentrout claimed was purely defensive: "The company's employees returned the fire, but never on any occasion, started the fire." Nor did the company fire into miners' homes, Armentrout asserted, despite testimony to the contrary:

> As to the statement of Mr. J.B. Smith in the *Roanoke Times* of the 26th and continuing in the affidavit of Mrs. Soard, that miners' homes were fired upon by mine guards or employees of the company, such is untrue.

Armentrout did not discuss Borderland's anti-union campaign, which historian Crandall Shifflett has characterized as "second to none in its militancy."[29]

In testimony before the U. S. Senate, miner Blaine Maynard challenged operator credibility by describing an operator conspiracy to

blame sabotage on the union. Maynard, a mine foreman, was planning on moving out of the Williamson area when his mine superintendent, Bob Satterfield, approached him with a plan to create conditions for the enactment of martial law to avert the potential success of a strike in which C.H. Workman was an organizer. According to Maynard, Satterfield said, "You go and burn that out [a railroad trestle] and claim C.H. Workman hired you to do that and we will get rid of him and this damned strike will be gone to hell." Satterfield offered Maynard $1000 for his cooperation.[30]

UMW President McMurray and the miners thus fought a remarkably united group of extremely powerful businessmen and law enforcement officials who demonstrated a willingness to use any means to defeat unionization campaigns. Local sheriffs, such as Don Chafin of Logan County, often orchestrated campaigns of repression, prompting condemnation by the UMW:[31]

> What, we may ask, are the fears of this rich man as compared to the fears of the humble miner of Logan County who saw his "buddies" shot down at Sharpless, who knows of the murder in Don Chafin's jail, who knows of the hateful espionage of Lively and other undercover men, and who knows that all the power of the law in Logan County is personified in Don Chafin, himself a rich man and a coal operator, with a staff of deputy sheriffs paid from funds furnished by the operators' association? What terrorism can radicalism hold that is more dreadful than terrorism of the law, administered for one class and by one class against another class of citizens?[32]

Testimony by former state officials and by former miners corroborated the UMW's assertions. In his testimony before the U.S. Senate Committee on Education and Labor in October 1921, McMurray presented a different perspective from Armentrout's on the origins of mine violence. McMurray cited the report commissioned by Governor Glasscock that identified the private mine guards as the origin of the violence in the Paint and Cabin Creeks conflicts. He also referred to a report by Lawrence R. Lynch in *Political Science Quarterly* that said the presence of deputized private guards "was the direct cause of much of the violence" in these incidents. The violence of the deputized private guards was systematic and not limited to the Kanawha district.[33]

Operators also conspired to create conditions under which anti-miner violence would appear legitimate and defensive. R.H. Kirkpatrick worked as a foreman for Burnwell Coal and Coke in Mingo County. Kirkpatrick testified before the U.S. Senate Committee on Education and Labor that the superintendent of his mine staged a fire fight that could be blamed on the union in order to create conditions under which martial law and anti-union repression could end a strike. The superintendent said, "If we can get martial law in here, the strike is broken."[34]

Frank Ingham, a miner in Mingo County, provided to the U.S. Senate first-hand evidence of operator terror. Ingham testified in July 1921 that he had been mining for fourteen years in Mingo County when he was fired for joining the union. A constable served the eviction notice and forced Ingham and his wife out of the company home with only three days' notice. Ingham went to his sister's house in McDowell County, only to be thrown in jail without any charges filed against him. Ingham asked to contact a family member or a lawyer, but the sheriff told him: "the only message you can get out will be to God, and unless you hurry you will fail in that." Two minutes before midnight the sheriff released Ingham from jail, and seven men with two cars were waiting for him. Ingham told the sheriff he preferred not to get in either car, whereupon a prohibition officer clubbed him with an iron rod. The seven men tied Ingham's hands with his suspenders, drove into the country, and hauled him into the woods. They beat him until they thought he was dead and then left, but only after a deputy sheriff gave him one last kick in the face and took his wallet. Ingham managed to drag himself through the woods to a nearby cooling station, where a couple of laborers put him on a train to Williamson.[35]

Exiled from Mingo County, Ingham went to McVeigh, Kentucky, and found work with another coal company, only to be fired two weeks later when the manager learned he was a union man. That manager told him, "Frank, I have a telephone message from the manager of the mine you left, and he says that you belong to the union, and he advised us to get rid of you." Ingham next found a job with a different company, only to be fired five days later under the same circumstances. Eventually H.D. Ingram, the manager who had fired Ingham initially, invited him back to work on the condition he renounce his union

membership. Ingham accepted, in large part because he missed his wife, a schoolteacher in Mingo County. The operators had forbidden Ingham to visit his wife in Mingo County and had also prevented her from changing school districts in order to live with her husband.[36]

Ingham worked under H.D. Ingram only briefly; he was fired for a second time when he worked to avoid a "race riot." H.D. Ingram tried to replace most of the white workers with black miners and pay the blacks lower wages, but Ingham, who was black himself, tried to convince blacks not to take the jobs. Ingham then went to work hauling heating coal for the UMW strikers' camp. While building a house for his family in Mingo County, Ingham was arrested again. His brother and sister pressed for a trial. The sheriff refused, saying he would put the next "nigger" in jail who asked anything about the case. Ingham sat in jail for twelve days before a judge in Charleston ordered his release.[37]

The testimony of Frank Ingham demonstrates that operators and local law enforcement authorities worked together, using systematic violence to intimidate union members. While articles in the *Post* portrayed the violence as the work of both sides, testimony before the Senate Committee and from government inquiries shows that the operators used violence much more frequently and in a more organized fashion. Ingham's testimony also raises the issue of race. The operators tried to drive down wages by replacing whites with blacks. In contrast, the UMW demonstrated remarkable colorblindness in its organizing efforts. This commitment to equity built alliances with the 15 to 20 percent of the population of the town of Williamson who were black. The operators used violence to repress organizing by both blacks and whites, and they exploited blacks' marginal legal standing to pad company profits.[38]

VII. Changing Political Dynamics

Diminished economic security manifested itself at the polls, and presented another threat to operator power. In 1912, three times as many residents of West Virginia voted for Socialist candidate Eugene V. Debs than in 1908. Although the new corporate elite maintained national political control, reformist local and state officials won office across the country. Established figures reacted fearfully to this political development. William Forbath writes,

> Federal judges echoed the old Federalist dismay about local politics and their faction-driven disregard for the lawful rights of property. Local officials were "lawless," "blameworthy," "irresponsible" and sometimes "subversive" in their dereliction of duty.

With the notable exception of Sid Hatfield, whom the Baldwin-Felts guards eliminated, coal mine owners and operators prevented such "undesirables" from winning office in southern West Virginia. While the propertied classes throughout the state fought viciously against unionization, nowhere was it more important to maintain non-union mines than in Logan, Mingo, Mercer, and McDowell counties. By 1920 miners had organized nearly all the other fields in the state through the UMW. If the southern fields had fallen as well, operators would have been in a much weaker position to resist multi-state strikes, in which worker success depended upon ending regional output. Thus the bloody reprisals organized by southern operators represented a desperate attempt to maintain a position of power in regional coal politics.[39]

VIII. Operators' Last Stand

Continual violence between miners and operators characterized the "Progressive" era nationally. Miners in southern West Virginia had much less success defending their interests than had their peers in the northern part of the state, and as a result were still fighting as 1920 drew to a close. As coal operators transformed the local landscape, they held down wages through repression of unionization. Their control of vast tracts of land and a high percentage of the housing stock prevented workers from accumulating capital of their own and created dependent relationships between workers and corporations. Miners stubbornly resisted operator assaults on their economic well being, using union organizing experts to counter private guards imported by the operators. The miners tried to balance the increasingly concentrated power of the coal operators with their own collective institution, the union. Their resistance and the growing clout of the United Mine Workers spurred the coal operators to intensify campaigns of organized violence against miners during and immediately after the First World War. Union organizing posed such a threat to the operators that they resorted to violence that drew the attention and condemnation of some local, state, and national political leaders. Con-

cerned politicians responded by investigating the labor conflicts. Although these investigations did not have any immediate effect on the miners' quality of life, it opened possibilities for increased government supervision of labor relations in the future.

By the time of the Great War, every successive year brought more extreme poverty to mining families, described eloquently in the folk song "Coal Creek Trouble":

> My song is founded on the truth
> In poverty we stand
> How hard the millionaire will crush
> Upon the laboring man
> The miner toiling under ground
> To earn his daily bread
> To clothe his wife and children
> And see that they are fed.

Each year also brought an intensification of paramilitary violence paid for by coal operators and organized by local law enforcement and national private guard services. [40]

The growth of the UMW during the early twentieth century, however halting, indicated the growing power of laborers, without which operator violence would have been more violent and less public. By bringing the terror to the attention of the press and politicians, the UMW checked the operators' ability to repress their employees' attempts to live in a dignified manner. Although the coal companies introduced appalling violence and economic insecurity to southern West Virginians between 1890 and 1920, the growing strength of the UMW gave hope for eventual improvements in miners' standards of living.

Endnotes

* All *Washington Post* articles cited herein were accessed via ProQuest. The papers of W. Jett Lauck, lawyer for the UMW, cited in this article are contained in the Harrison Special Collections Library at the University of Virginia.

1. For a sample of the leading interpretations of the Progressive era, see Richard Hofstadter, *The Age of Reform: From Bryan to FDR* (New York: Knopf, 1955), especially p. 236; Gabriel Kolko, *The Triumph of Conservatism: A Reinterpretation of American History, 1900–1916* (New York: Free Press, 1963), especially p. 280; and Richard McCormick, "The Discovery That Business Corrupts Poli-

tics: A Reappraisal of the Origins of Progressivism," in *Who Were the Progressives?*, ed. Glenda Gilmore (Boston: St. Martin's Press, 2002).

2. Altina Waller, *Feud: Hatfields, McCoys, and Social Change in Appalachia, 1860–1900* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1988), pp. 22, 25, 30; John Alexander Williams, *West Virginia: A History* (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1984), p. 102. Leading studies of coal miners during these years include Ronald L. Lewis, *Black Coal Miners in America: Race, Class, and Community Conflict, 1780–1980* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1987), and Crandall A. Shifflett, *Coal Towns: Life, Work, and Culture in Company Towns of Southern Appalachia, 1880–1960* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1991).
3. "Opposing the Surveys: West Virginia Squatters Defy the Government and the Coal Companies," *Washington Post*, 5 March 1894, p. 1.
4. *The Case of the West Virginia Coal Mine Workers*, before the Committee on Education and Labor of the United States Senate, October 1921 (United Mine Workers, 1921), p. 60, citing Lawrence R. Lynch, "The West Virginia Coal Strike," *Political Science Quarterly*, vol. 29 (1914), pp. 626–63, Lauck papers box 16; W. Jett Lauck, "The Control of the Anthracite Coal Mining Industry of the United States," in *Report on the Concentration in the Control of Industry in the United States* (United Mine Workers, 1915), p. 4, Lauck papers box 140. Data on the coal firms come from the coal statistics section of Lauck's "Report on the Concentration in the Control of Industry in the United States," which, unlike the section entitled "The Control of the Anthracite Coal Mining Industry in the United States," does not have page numbers. Based on directorships in a wide variety of financial and industrial corporations, Lauck concluded that the Morgan-First National Bank and Standard Oil-National City Bank groups were the most powerful business organs in the country. Their corporate networks reached into the hollows of southern West Virginia. E. J. Berwind, for example, ran Berwind-White Coal Mining Co., one of the largest mining firms in southern West Virginia. He was also a director of the National Bank of Commerce. H. A. Berwind, vice-president of Berwind-White, was also a director of New River & Pocahontas Coal Company, another large mining concern in the area. Williams, *West Virginia*, pp. 107, 129.
5. Map of the Pocahontas Coal Field, undated, compiled and published by the Pocahontas Operators' Association, in the Harrison Special Collections Library of the University of Virginia.
6. "Coming to Grips with Monopoly," *The New Republic*, 28 March 1923, pp. 123–4; Lauck papers box 153.
7. See National Park Service website <http://www.nps.gov/neri/hist-gal.htm> accessed 5 November 2005. According to Shifflett, *Coal Towns*, pp. 156–61, company towns often had adequate housing; offering miner testimony and photographs from a coal-company library as evidence, he posits that miners' housing in the company towns he investigates — in particular, Stonega, Imboden, and Exeter, all in Wise County, in far southwestern Virginia — may well have provided an improvement over miners' previous experience. According to Lewis,

in *Black Coal Miners in America*, pp. 124, 146–7, however, only 14 percent of houses in company towns in Kentucky, Virginia, and West Virginia had indoor running water (compared with 90 percent in Ohio), and 2 percent of those company towns had sewage systems or recreational opportunities, although one "model town" he identifies, Holden, is in Logan County, one of the four counties in this study.

8. Pocahontas Operators' Association, *The Story of Pocahontas, 1863–1915: A Good Coal*, pp. 26–7, in the Harrison Special Collections Library at the University of Virginia.
9. Frank P. Harman, "A Review of the Pocahontas Strike and its Causes: From the Operators' Standpoint; With Reply by 'Junius,'" in the Harrison Special Collections Library at the University of Virginia; *In the Matter of the Investigation of Violence in Coal Fields of West Virginia and Adjacent Territory, and the Causes Which Led Up to the Conditions Which Now Exist in Said Territory*, before the United States Senate Committee on Education and Labor, Transcript of Hearings, vol. 1, 14 July 1921 (Washington, D. C.: National Shorthand Company), pp. 243, 239, Lauck papers box 16. Data from the U.S. Census on Mines (1910) and the U. S. Coal Commission (1922) suggest that company store prices were inflated in many regions of the country.
10. Based on an analysis of data compiled by Gregg Lewis, University of Virginia Professor Mark Thomas concludes that both real and nominal wages of West Virginia miners fell between 1890 and 1920. Data from the United States Coal Commission indicate that nominal wages rose more slowly in the non-union southern fields than in the northern unionized fields. W. Jett Lauck, lawyer for UMW, compiled data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics that, in conjunction with nominal wage data from the U. S. Coal Commission, demonstrate that most miners in West Virginia suffered declining real wages, with non-union workers suffering particularly. In other words, Thomas's analysis of Lewis' data corroborates the conclusion I reached based on a cross analysis of the data from both Lauck and the Coal Commission. While subsistence farmers in southern West Virginia saw wage increases as the coal companies forced them off the land and into the formal economy, such increases did not represent increased economic security, as data on home ownership indicate. Unfortunately, neither Thomas's nor the Coal Commission's data chart wages before and after the influx of the coal companies, so I cannot state with certainty the degree to which wages increased as formerly subsistence farmers entered the formal economy.

    Operator-sponsored violence also contributed to economic insecurity, as the testimony of Ingham and others illustrates (Email correspondence with Mark Thomas, 2 December 2005, 5 December 2005.) Professor Thomas describes how he ran the analysis: "The Lewis data are taken from the *Historical Statistics of the United States* (1976 edition) — look at the section on wages for his series on average wages of bituminous coal operatives. To convert from nominal to real wages, I used Albert Rees's cost of living index for 1890–1914, linked to the BLS series for later years. Both are taken from *Historical Statistics of the United*

States (1976 edition), the section on prices and cost of living; *Report of the United States Coal Commission*, Part 5 Atlas of Statistical Table, Senate Document 195, Part 5, 68th Congress, 2nd Session, pp. 170–3, 187–9, in Alderman Library at the University of Virginia; W. Jett Lauck, *The Cost of Living in the United States Since 1913 As Determined by the Statistics of the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics* (United Mine Workers, 1921), Lauck papers box 148.

11. *Report of the United States Coal Commission*, Part 5 Atlas of Statistical Table, Senate Document 195, Part 5, 68th Congress, 2nd Session, pp. 170–3, 187–9, in theUniversity of Virginia Alderman Library; Email correspondence with University of Virginia Professor Mark Thomas, 2 December 2005.
12. Lauck, *The Cost of Living in the United States Since 1913*; *United States Anthracite Coal Commission Report, Findings, and Awards*, Minority report of Neal J. Ferry, Labor member of the Commission, 1920, p. 51, Lauck papers box 148; *The Relation Between Wages and the Increased Cost of Living*, presented by W. Jett Lauck to the United States Railroad Board, Washington D. C., 1920, Lauck papers box 149; *Wage Reductions Not Necessary to Decrease Prices: An Analysis of the Present Industrial Situation*, presented by W. Jett Lauck to the United States Railroad Board, Washington, D. C., 1920, Lauck papers box 147.
13. *UMW Brief*, presented to the U.S. Senate Committee on Education and Labor, pp. 50, 55, Lauck papers box 16; *In the Matter of the Investigation of Violence in Coal Fields in West Virginia and Adjacent Territory*, pp. 8, 9, 72.
14. *UMW Brief*, pp. 14, 30, 36.
15. *In the Matter of the Investigation of Violence in Coal Fields of West Virginia and Adjacent Territory*, pp. 267–8.
16. *1900 U.S. Census*, Volume 2, Population Part II, p. 699; *1920 U.S. Census*, Volume 2, Population, p. 1321. Note: The Census used different terms and different columns to depict the housing situation in 1900 and 1920, so the numbers above involve some calculation on my part in order to compare equivalent groups. In 1900, the Census disaggregated housing into farm and non-farm categories, whereas the 1920 Census did not differentiate between these categories. I added farm and non-farm rental housing and non-rental housing together from 1900 in order to make comparisons with the data from 1920. I calculated rental home data by combining multiple columns from the 1900 Census, since the data were formatted differently from 1900 to 1920. Home ownership data by county are not available from 1890.
17. "Following Some Bad Advice," *Washington Post*, 13 April 1894, p. 4; "Signs of Weakness," *Washington Post*, 24 April 1894, p. 1; "Negroes Make Good Miners," *Washington Post*, 21 May 1894, p. 7; "Coal Must Be Mined," *Washington Post*, 30 May 1894, p. 1; "The Ohio Compromise," *Washington Post*, 18 June 1894, p. 1; "The Soft Coal Strike," *Wall Street Journal*, 31 May 1894, p. 4.
18. "Strike's Second Week," *Washington Post*, 12 July 1897, p. 1; "Miners Are Satisfied," *Washington Post*, 17 July 1897, p. 1; "Must Close All Mines," *Washington Post*, 18 July 1897, p. 1; "Calling on M'Kinley," *Washington Post*, 20 June 1897, p. 1; "Debs Is Discouraged," *Washington Post*, 21 July 1897, p. 1; "An Appeal to Labor," *Washington Post*, 21 August 1897, p. 1.

19. "Miners' Strike Critical," *Washington Post*, 23 June 1901, p. 3; "Marshals Fired Upon," *Washington Post*, 25 June 1901, p. 3.
20. *UMW Brief*, p. 33.
21. "Voice an Army of Miners," *Washington Post*, 21 January 1902, p. 10.
22. "Strike in Virginia Fields," *Washington Post*, 6 June 1902, p. 1; "Obeyed Strike Order," *Washington Post*, 8 June 1902, p. 8; "Heavy Loss to Roads," *Washington Post*, 11 June 1902, p. 10; "Pocahontas Field is Busy," *Washington Post*, 24 June 1902, p. 10; "Conditions Improved," *Washington Post*, 29 June 1902, p. 5; "Rioting in West Virginia," *Washington Post*, 5 September 1902, p. 4.
23. "Miners will Resume," *Washington Post*, 4 June 1904, p. 4; "Miners Plan Strike Fund," *Washington Post*, 15 January 1905, p. 1; "Idle Mines Orderly," *Washington Post*, 2 April 1910, p. 5.
24. "4 Die in Mine War," *Washington Post*, 25 July 1913, p. 1; "Uncle Sam as Miner: Kenyon Backs Martin's Plan for Federal Ownership," *Washington Post*, 22 January 1914, p. 3.
25. "Defy the Miners' Union," *Washington Post*, 20 June 1913, p. 3; "4 Die in Mine War," *Washington Post*, 25 July 1913, p. 1; "Uncle Sam as Miner," *Washington Post*, 22 January 1914, p. 3; "Troops to Mine Coal," *Washington Post*, 28 October 1919, p. 1.
26. "Mines at Work Despite Strike," *Washington Post*, 2 July 1920, p. 4; "U.S. Troops Quit Mingo Coal Field," *Washington Post*, 6 November 1920, p. 3; "Eventful Regime Ends in West V.A.," *Washington Post*, 14 November 1920, p. 19; "Wants U.S. Troops to Return to Mingo," *Washington Post*, 27 November 1920, p. 1.
27. *Before the U.S. Senate Committee on Education and Labor* (transcript), 24 October 1921, pp. 2, 501–10; *UMW Brief*, pp. 50, 60.
28. William Boal, "Estimates of Unionism in West Virginia Coal, 1900–1935," *Labor History*, vol. 35 (Summer 1994), pp. 429–42; William Boal and John Pencavel, "Estimates of Labor Unions on Employment," *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, vol. 109 (February 1994), p. 269. Boal and Pencavel cite slightly higher rates of unionization, particularly near the turn of the century.
29. L. E. Armentrout, *Borderland and Bullets: Charges Answered*, Borderland Coal Company, 1920, in the Harrison Special Collections Library; Shifflett, *Coal Towns*, pp. 119, 122.
30. *In the Matter of the Investigation of Violence in Coal Fields of West Virginia and Adjacent Territory*,, pp. 203–4.
31. *The Case of the West Virginia Coal Mine Workers*, before the Committee on Education and Labor of the United States Senate (United Mine Workers, 1921), pp. 66–8, Lauck papers box 10.
32. *UMW Brief*, p. 10.
33. *The Case of the West Virginia Coal Mine Workers*, p. 60, citing Lawrence R. Lynch, "The West Virginia Coal Strike," *Political Science Quarterly*, vol. 29 (1914), pp. 626–63.
34. *In the Matter of the Investigation of Violence in Coal Fields of West Virginia and Adjacent Territory*, pp. 317–18.
35. *In the Matter of the Investigation of Violence...*, pp. 82–4.

36. *In the Matter of the Investigation of Violence...*, pp. 78, 79.
37. *In the Matter of the Investigation of Violence...*, p. 101.
38. UMW's commitment to Ingham's welfare was not an aberration in the campaign for labor rights. In a letter from 17 May 1920, T. L. Felts, of the Baldwin-Felts guard service, describes a mass meeting in Matewan wherein a preacher named Combs "said the negroes were once in bondage and Abraham Lincoln gave them their freedom, and we the miners, both black and white, were in bondage and that the United Mine Workers were going to give them their liberty." Lauck papers box 15.
39. William Forbath, "The Shaping the American Labor Movement," *Harvard Law Review*, vol. 102 (April 1989), p. 1182.
40. From the WPA Federal Music Project, in the University of Virginia Special Collections Library.

Brief Note

How the Mastodon Got Its Name: The Southwest Virginia Connection*

Jim Glanville

The mastodon is so-named because the protuberances on its teeth look like the nipples of a human breast.[1] In the *Oxford English Dictionary* we find the following entry:

> Mastodon. *Palaeont.* [mod. L., f. Gr. mast-os breast · + odont-, odons tooth. The word was used in Fr. form (*mastodonte*) by [Georges] Cuvier in 1806 in *Ann. Mus. Hist. Nat. de Paris*, VIII, 270] A large extinct mammal resembling the elephant, characterized by having nipple-shaped tubercles in pairs on the crowns of the molar teeth.[2]

Below is a picture of a mastodon tooth on display at the Museum of the Middle Appalachians in Saltville. This specimen was recovered from the spoil piles created by a construction project in the Saltville

valley. The tooth was reassembled from about ten pieces by the manager of the museum, Harry Haynes. It is easy to see from this specimen why Cuvier was inspired to christen the mastodon the nipple-tooth creature.

The paleontologist Georges Cuvier (1769–1832) named the mastodon. Cuvier was born in Würtemberg, educated in Stuttgart, and spent most of his life in Paris as a professor of natural history and anatomy. He rose to great prominence and, near the end of his life, was raised to the French peerage.[3]

In 1812 Cuvier published a collection of his articles dealing with fossil vertebrate animals that had appeared over the preceding ten years in the *Annals of the Paris Museum of Natural History*. The collection, which included added commentary, was titled *Recherches sur les ossemens fossiles de quadrupèdes ou* ....[4] This work established beyond doubt that the remains of extinct species of animals exist in the fossil record, and introduced into history the notion that there were "...a succession of creations before the appearance of human life, culminating in a relatively recent catastrophe that gave birth to human history."[5] It is a magnificent work. Here are three assessments of it:

> Cuvier's style is clear and concise, and he has the gift of vivid description ... In the whole literature of comparative anatomy and paleontology there is scarcely any work that can rank with this great masterpiece of Cuvier.[6]

> [The] Inauguration of vertebrate paleontology ... .[7]

> [This] great work ... has never been surpassed as a masterpiece of the comparative method of anatomical investigation, and has furnished to the palaeontologist the indispensable implements of research.[8]

In an essay titled "Sur Grande Mastodonte,"[9] which appears in *Recherches sur les ossemens fossiles de quadrupèdes ou...*, Cuvier coins and uses and the word "mastodonte,"[10] subsequently shortened by English speakers to mastodon.

If the foregoing represented the entire story, there would be no place for this article in a journal devoted to studies of history west of the Blue Ridge. But of course there is a geographic connection which comes in the following excerpt from "Sur Grande Mastodonte"[11] quoted first in the original French and then in a loose English translation:

> M. Jefferson, dans ses *Observations [sic] sur la Virginie* (trad. fr. p. 101), rapporte qu'un M. Stanley, emmené par les sauvages à l'ouest du *Missouri*, en vit de grands dépôts sur les bords d'un rivière qui coulait elle-même vers l'ouest. Suivant le même auteur, on en a trouvé sur la branche de la *Tennésie*, nommee *Nord-Holston*, derrière les *Allegannys* de la *Caroline*, par 36° degrés de latitude Nord, aussi dans des marais salés. C'etoit, a cette epoque, le lieu le plus méridional où l'on en ait eu connoissance... .
>
> Mr. Jefferson, in his *Notes on Virginia* (French translation, p. 101), reports that Mr. Stanley, taken by natives west beyond the Missouri [river], saw large deposits of them [fossil teeth and bones] on the edges of a river that flows towards the west. According to the same author [Jefferson], one can find them on the branch of Tennessee river, called the North-Holston, beyond the Alleghenies of the Carolinas at 36° degrees north latitude, also in salt marshes. This place [Saltville] being at this time, the southernmost place where there is knowledge of them... .

Thomas Jefferson was keenly interested in fossil bones, particularly large ones, as well as in many other aspects of archeology. In his classic work of Virginia history, *Notes on the State of Virginia*, Jefferson described the large fossil teeth found at the salt springs on the North Fork of the Holston River.[12] So when Cuvier, in his historic essay, cited Jefferson as an authority, Cuvier himself was, in part, relying on evidence from the North Holston salines — located at the site of today's Saltville.

Jefferson had first learned about the presence of large fossil teeth at the North Holston salines in 1782, when he received an actual tooth, which was accompanied by a letter of transmittal[13] from Arthur Campbell, who was in charge of the recently opened salt works.

Thus it was via the writings of Thomas Jefferson that specimens of mastodon teeth from Southwest Virginia were known to Cuvier when he was writing his book, and they were specifically acknowledged by him. In this way, a small place in southwestern Virginia plays a tiny, but distinctive part, in a large and important scientific story.

Acknowledgments

Thanks to Helen Barbrow of the Museum of the Middle Appalachians in Saltville, whose curiosity prompted the inquiry that led to

the story told here. Thanks to Gary Richardson and Jackie Moore of Newman Library, Virginia Tech, who kindly provided a computer readable copy of Cuvier's book. Thanks to an anonymous referee for helpful comments.

Endnotes

1. Mastectomy is a familiar modern use of the combining Greek form masto-, pertaining to the female breast.
2. Anonymous, Oxford: *The Compact Edition of the Oxford English Dictionary*, 1971 (reprint of 1933 edition).
3. Karl von Zittel, *History of Geology and Palaeontology*, trans. Maria M. Ogilvie-Gordon (London: Walter Scott, 1908), p. 136; hereafter cited as *History of Geology*.
4. Georges Cuvier, *Recherches sur les ossemens fossiles de quadrupèdes ou, l'on rétablit les caractères de plusieurs espèces d'animaux que les révolutions du globe paroissent avoir détruites....* (Paris: Deterville, 1812); hereafter cited as *Recherches sur les ossemens fossiles*. The title loosely translates as *Research on the fossil remains of quadrupeds or, reestablishing the characteristics of several species of animals that global revolutions have made extinct.*
5. Paul Semonin, *American Monster: How the Nation's First Prehistoric Creature Became a Symbol of National Identity* (New York: New York University Press, 2000), p. 368.
6. *History of Geology*, pp. 136–7.
7. Harrison D. Horblit, *One Hundred Books Famous in Science* (New York: Grolier Club, 1964). (The catalog of an exhibition held that year at the Grolier Club.) The quote is the sobriquet applied to Cuvier's book when it was exhibited. The frontispiece of *Recherches sur les ossemens fossiles* is plate 20a (no page number) in the Horblit catalog.
8. W. B. Scott, "The Palaeontological Record," chapter XI, pp. 184–99 in *Darwin and Modern Science — Essays in commemoration of the centenary of the birth of Charles Darwin and of the fiftieth anniversary of the publication of* The Origin of Species, ed. A. C. Seward (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1909). The cited quotation comes from p. 186.
9. Georges Cuvier, "Sur le Grande Mastodonte" ("On the Large Mastodon"), pp. 1–43 in *Recherches sur les ossemens fossiles*.
10. Cuvier writes (in loose translation) on page 3 of "Sur le Grande Mastodonte": "We have coined the word *mastodonte* from two Greek words that signify teeth-mammary, and express their principal character."
11. Georges Cuvier. "Sur le Grande Mastodonte," p. 13.
12. Thomas Jefferson, *Notes on the State of Virginia* (New York: W. W. Norton Company, 1972). (Original edition London: John Stockdale, 1787.) The Holston salines, mentioned by Cuvier as a source of mastodon teeth, are discussed on pp. 43-4 of the reprint edition.
13. Julian P. Boyd, ed., *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, volume 6, 21 May 1781 to 1 March 1784 (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1952), p. 201. Letter to Thomas Jefferson from Arthur Campbell.

Book Review

Edited by Tom Costa

***The Planting of New Virginia: Settlement and Landscape in the Shenandoah Valley* by Warren Hofstra. Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004. Pp. x, 432. $25.00 paper. ISBN 0-8018-8271-0**

By the early to mid decades of the eighteenth century, colonists in Britain's North American colonies had begun to penetrate the North American interior. No longer tied to the Atlantic seaboard, England, through its colonists, began to exert its imperial influence along a vast frontier. To the colonists, this frontier region was the backcountry, a term reflecting a general mentality among the colonists that political and economic centers were situated in Europe. However, as Warren Hofstra convincingly argues in his work *The Planting of New Virginia,* the development of the backcountry in the Shenandoah Valley foreshadowed the development of future frontiers in America. That is, the Shenandoah backcountry, connected both physically and metaphysically to the Atlantic seaboard and to England, became somewhat progressive as it developed economically and socially. It did so in a manner that became a model for later western expansion areas of the United States. While colonists looked east, the future of what America would become was unfolding to the west.

Warren Hofstra's examination of the Shenandoah Valley makes two important contributions to the historiography surrounding the American frontier. First, Hofstra successfully sets the Virginia backcountry within an imperial context. Hofstra convincingly demonstrates how three primary concerns affected British imperial policy and helped the Virginia government encourage settlement throughout the Shenandoah Valley. Fears concerning French expansion in lands west of the Appalachians, fears about Amerindian raids against Eastern Virginia, and fears about slave rebellion in Eastern Virginia and the possibility of escaped slaves creating maroon settlements in territory closer to Amerindians all came together to produce a desire

to establish a buffer between western lands and the more established east. Such fears allowed larger issues related to the political, economic, and social climate of the Atlantic World to shape the settlement of the Shenandoah Valley during the 1730s.

The second way in which Hofstra contributes to the historiography surrounding the American frontier serves as the heart of the work and builds on the imperial context surrounding the settlement of the Shenandoah Valley. Hofstra outlines an interpretive model for the study of the American frontier that suggests the settlement of the Shenandoah Valley "in many ways epitomizes" middle America. Central to this argument is the transformation the region underwent in which dispersed, "open-country neighborhoods" morphed into a town and country landscape. Hofstra demonstrates that eastern Virginia and European economic and political forces shaped the development of towns throughout the region, as opposed to local economic forces or central-place theory.

The evolution toward a town and country landscape occurred in three phases and was intricately woven with imperial issues tied to Amerindian raids against the region and French expansionist visions. The first phase of settlement of the Shenandoah Valley found families dispersing themselves along tracts of land that had access to water and that contained land of both good and poor quality. The second phase in the development of the Shenandoah Valley witnessed the emergence of the county system of government throughout the region, as well as the creation of county towns. Winchester came to figure prominently in the region as events surrounding the Seven Years' War turned the town into a "strategic place" and allowed it to become an important feature of the military and then, only later, the economic landscape. Hofstra explores how an exchange economy developed during this phase, thus creating a backcountry intricately linked to a vast economic network driven not so much by a motive for profit, but for basic necessities. During the third and final phase of the development of the Shenandoah Valley, the region's economy moved away from an exchange economy and toward a commercial economy. It was during this phase that an interdependent relationship grew between the towns in the region and the surrounding countryside. Cash increasingly became integral to the economy as opposed to neatly balanced ledgers that reflected an exchange economy. More than the

need for or the export of consumer goods, Winchester developed as a commercial center only after its development as a strategic place during a war that spanned the Atlantic World. Farmers in the region began to improve their property only after a larger commercial revolution gripped the Atlantic World economy and as the market for grain across the Atlantic grew. External, more than internal, forces sparked the development and growth of towns in the region.

Hofstra's argument against central-place theory, his tracing the development of the Shenandoah Valley through an Atlantic World context, and his tying the backcountry to an imperialist agenda, make *The Planting of New Virginia* an important contribution to backcountry studies. Rather than isolated and self-sufficient, as the Frederick Jackson Turner Frontier Thesis suggests, Hofstra's study of the Virginia backcountry clearly supports the image of the frontier family as coexisting within a larger economic and political system. The representation of the backcountry as interdependent economically is truly indicative of the economic culture of the frontier in American history. For example, as the frontier expanded beyond the Shenandoah Valley in Virginia, justices throughout the Upper Valley went to great lengths to develop an infrastructure that would support similar interdependent relationships. With networks linking the area to the coastal Tidewater, the region maintained an import/export relationship that solidified its interdependency within the Atlantic World. Clearly, as Hofstra suggests and as findings related to the settlement and development of the Upper Valley indicate, the concept of Turnerian self-sufficient homesteads dotting the frontier landscape does not apply to the eighteenth century Virginia frontier regions.

Some historians may quarrel with Hofstra's conclusions that capitalist, or commercial, economic features began only in the third phase of the region's development, when cash became an important element in the economy. Farmers began to grow a surplus of wheat, for example, for sale in the towns that were developing across the region. These towns became the economic centers that allowed for the commercial economic characteristics in the region to advance. Thus, a proto-capitalist spirit only began to emerge at the end of the eighteenth century.

Central to this commercial economy was the use of cash. Hofstra views the injection of cash into the economy as the driving force be-

hind the movement away from an exchange economy. Absent from Hofstra's examination is the role ordinaries, or taverns, played in the economic development of the region. Outside of a brief discussion about how ordinaries served as a potentially corrupting force to Washington's troops stationed in Winchester during the Seven Years' War and how tavern keepers were selling alcohol to soldiers in exchange for regimental supplies, Hofstra fails to explore the ways in which taverns provided credit to farmers to allow for economic expansion, allowed farmers to tie themselves to larger markets, and acted as distribution centers for locally produced products. Tavern keepers possibly took into account labor, delivery, spoilage, and profit, even if the product was being exchanged for other goods as opposed to cash, as well as compensating for bad debts, when they set the prices of their products. If such a dynamic was taking place within the taverns of the Shenandoah Valley, then a somewhat capitalistic mentalité was in existence along the backcountry at least within this segment of the population. As farmers took advantage of credit and purchased goods that were priced according to the hidden costs associated with those goods and the desire for profit, then through extension those farmers too were involved in a somewhat commercial and capitalistic economy. The use of cash is not the sole indicator of a commercial economy, and, as evinced by the Upper Valley where a similar hierarchy of towns failed to materialize, the development of market centers was not a necessary component for a frontier region to become locked into an interdependent economic relationship with larger economic webs. Without any discernable towns, the settlements along Virginia's western waters were able to export a variety of goods as early as the first settlers entered the region.

Hofstra's work adds much to the historiography of the backcountry and the development of commercial forces in America. His use of metaphors and engaging stories about events along the backcountry make this work not only informative, but entertaining. Readers interested in the development of the backcountry and in early Virginia history will be hard-pressed to find a better history of the Shenandoah Valley than Hofstra's *The Planting of New Virginia.*

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In this issue —

Johnston's book was a late example of one of America's earliest and most ignored literary forms: the captivity narrative....Of the four best-selling books of the early 1700s, three were stories of Indian captivity....The captivity narratives...ranged from the factual to the lurid and improbable, from the eloquent and polished to the rough and amateurish. ..... page 9

... the said parties do now upon honor bond themselves to each other to fully and unequivocally comply with the obligation here entered into, to wit that in case the said Byrns gets drunk within the term of five years he will pay to the said Preston or heirs a horse worth twenty pounds... ..... page 18

...hanging in the drawing room at Smithfield Plantation is a bust-length portrait of Susannah Smith Preston, wife of Colonel William Preston, wearing an elegant gold dress ornamented with pearls and lace... a copy by William Xavier Harris after the original painted by Jeremiah Theus. ..... page 34

... tragedy struck after less than eight weeks when Martin suffered a sudden heart attack and died on August 7, 1897, as he was splitting wood. Suddenly, Sarah was left a widow with four stepchildren in her care, and she was pregnant....At Martin's death, Sarah's friend Allie immediately came to her aid. ..... page 55

Even though individual coalfields were under the control of different companies, the operators collaborated to produce a hostile labor environment, precluding gains in working conditions that might have otherwise been realized from intra-field operator competition. ..... page 79

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