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Studies in the history of the region west of the Blue Ridge
Volume 20, 2016
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The Smithfield Review

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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.

The Smithfield Review Volume 20, 2016

A Note from the Editors

The first three articles of this volume provide insight into some of the early history of Virginia Tech. That history reveals the unusual vision of early leaders and the external forces that altered the course of that vision. As is often the case, the impact of these individuals and events often go unnoticed at the time, but in retrospect they become quite obvious. The fourth article presents the early history of the region now called Whitethorn where Virginia Tech's College of Agriculture does much of its research. The final two articles extend the discussion of the life and letters of Letitia Preston Floyd who was born at Smithfield and later became the wife of Dr. John Floyd, who served as the Governor of Virginia in the 1830s.

The first article is Part II of "Olin and Preston Institute and Preston and Olin Institute: The Early Years of Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University" by Clara Cox. It traces the difficult transitions of the young Methodist school as it overcame disruptions from legal battles, financial problems, and the Civil War. It tells the story of leaders who were dedicated to education in an era when public schools as we know them today did not exist.

In "Change Amidst Tradition: The First Two Years of the Burruss Administration," author Faith Skiles presents the early plans of Virginia Tech's longest serving president, Julian Burruss, who served in that office from 1919 until 1945. Those plans included policy changes that required less time spent in military training and more time spent in academic studies. Burruss also arranged for the enrollment of the first female students---a movement that evolved and expanded until its completion in the 1960s.

The third article, "Thomas Nelson Conrad: Educator, Editor, Preacher, Spy" by Clara Cox is a brief biographical sketch of the man who served as president of both Preston and Olin Institute and Virginia Agricultural and Mechanical College. As a young man, Conrad lived an exciting life as a spy for the Confederacy during the Civil War.

Documents that provide information about the earliest settlers in Southwest Virginia in the 1740s are often difficult to find and interpret. Author Ryan Mays has done considerable research in presenting "Adam Harman, the New River and Tom's Creek: An Analysis of the Earliest Documentary Records." In the previous volume of the *Smithfield Review*, Jim Glanville and Ryan Mays provided three articles about Letitia Preston Floyd, wife of Governor John Floyd and daughter of Colonel William Preston and his wife Susanna. New information has been found about Letitia and her final home in Burke's Garden, and it is reported in the fifth article "Letitia Preston Floyd: Supplemental Notes."

In 1843, Letitia Preston Floyd---at age 63--- was encouraged to record significant historical information in her papers and memory. She had been a witness to numerous historical events and also had read many letters and documents in her deceased father's large collection. A long 31-page letter was written to her son Rush Floyd. Several transcriptions of the letter---not all alike---were circulated over the years. Recently, the original was found in a storage box at Smithfield Plantation. Jim Glanville and Ryan Mays collaborated to produce a new transcription found in our final article, "Letitia Preston Floyd's 'My Dear Rush' Letter." A digitized copy of the original handwritten letter is referenced.

It is with sadness that we inform our readers of the death of Susanna Kibler, a member of the Smithfield Review Management Board since its beginning in 2008. That group of dedicated volunteers handles all business and distribution duties of our operation. Susanna's cheerful, helpful participation will be missed.

As usual, we acknowledge with gratitude the help we receive from Peter Wallenstein of the Virginia Tech history department; Barbara Corbett, who does all of the final production work; Rachael Garrity, who does our indexing; our financial donors; and all of our numerous volunteers who perform considerable editorial and business management duties. Of course, our authors deserve special thanks for all the time and effort that they donate to our production. They are the heart of our operation.

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Olin and Preston Institute and Preston and Olin Institute: The Early Years of Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University

Part II

Clara B. Cox

Introduction

Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, popularly known as Virginia Tech, promotes 1872 as the year it was founded, acknowledging a historical link with two Blacksburg, Virginia, schools that preceded it but not counting them as part of its official existence.¹ This two-part article looks at those two schools—the Olin and Preston Institute and the Preston and Olin Institute—and proposes that the university is actually a continuation of these earlier schools. Part I of the article, which appeared in the 2015 issue of the *Smithfield Review*,² covered the university's earliest years as the Olin and Preston Institute.* Part II of the article, which follows, relates the history of the Preston and Olin Institute and examines its conversion into Virginia Agricultural and Mechanical College, the school known today as Virginia Tech.

Review of Olin and Preston Institute

Olin and Preston Institute, the school for boys started in Blacksburg, Virginia, in the early 1850s by Methodist leaders and supported by the Baltimore Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, was forced to close its doors at the beginning of the Civil War.³ The school certainly was not the only one meeting that fate, particularly in the South, as teachers and students enlisted or were drafted to fight and resources were directed to the

^{*} **Correction**: On page 52 of Part I, the author states that G. F. Poteet ("Secondary Education in Montgomery County 1776–1936" [M.A. thesis, University of Virginia, 1937]) "reported that these education-oriented Methodist leaders bought land from Jacob and Mary Keister on 5 March 1850." Since writing Part I, the author has accessed a better copy of Poteet's thesis and determined that Poteet did, in fact, list 1860, not 1850, as the year that the trustees of the Olin and Preston Institute purchased land from Jacob and Mary Keister. She apologizes for this error and any problems it may have caused.

war effort.⁴ Members of governing bodies of educational institutions joined the conflict as well. For example, of the nine Montgomery County members of the Olin and Preston Institute Board of Trustees in 1860, the last year for which names of the members of that board could be found, at least four of them fought for the Confederacy, and one represented Virginia as a senator in the Confederate States Congress before dying in 1862.⁵

As discussed in more detail in Part I, another factor may also have contributed to the school's closing. The carpenters, house joiners, and brick masons who constructed the building that served Olin and Preston Institute filed suit in 1858 to recover money promised them to construct the facility. Although a settlement was reached, Olin and Preston never paid the builders what was agreed to in that settlement, and John N. Lyle, acting on behalf of the builders, filed another suit in 1859. The suit continued for years, with its resolution not reached until after the Civil War ended.⁶

Reviving the Blacksburg School

In 1845, the Methodist Episcopal Church split over the issue of slavery, resulting in the formation of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. Although the Baltimore Conference, which served the Blacksburg area, had churches in both the North and the South, it remained a member of the original Methodist Episcopal Church. After the Civil War ended, "many Baltimore Conference preachers with Southern sympathies believed that they would feel more at home in the Methodist Episcopal Church, South." Influenced by Samuel Regester, a conference leader who had been a trustee of Olin and Preston Institute, a new Baltimore Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, was formed in February 1866 at a meeting in Alexandria, Virginia, splitting the conference.⁷ This split would lead to questions of ownership of the school for boys in Blacksburg.

On 14 February 1866, at the same meeting in which the Baltimore Conference, South, was established, discussions about education and schools, including the Olin and Preston Institute, resurfaced. Those discussions were spurred by a report from the Committee on Seminaries, which was headed by Rev. Peter Harrison Whisner, a young Methodist minister who would play vital roles in the history of Preston and Olin Institute and Virginia Tech. Whisner presented the committee report:⁸

[T]here never was a more favorable time than the present, for exerting ourselves in the great cause of education, with such immense advantage to our people, and such lasting good to the Church at large. The long period of civil strife and unrest from which we have just emerged, prevented us, in a great measure, from giving that attention demanded by a subject so important to human welfare, and indeed our people from securing for their children the training necessary for the due performance of the active duties of life. We are fully convinced, that now is the moment, when if the work is to be accomplished, it must be earnestly and energetically commenced; and if properly carried forward, we cannot doubt that our share in the training of youth within the limits of our territory, will be secured. . . . Of the Colleges and Schools under Conference Control five years ago, we have to-day, but one remaining, the Wesleyan Female Institute, at Staunton; and of all the Seminaries looking to us for encouragement and support, and to which annually we sent our ministers as examiners, not one remains. There is then a pressing demand upon us, as a Conference, to meet the exigencies of the occasion, and by every proper means to secure for ourselves the educational training of our youth, unless we would see their education committed to others, and the positive loss in our membership [that] must result from such neglect on our part.9

The report then discussed specific schools supported by the conference before the war. Of Olin and Preston, the Committee on Seminaries reported:

The College building at Blacksburg, known as the "Olin and Preston Institute," is unoccupied, and falling into decay. Immediate attention is asked to the matter, that all the money and labor expended on this enterprise of our Church may not be entirely swept away. As there is now no College in our territory, it becomes us immediately to provide for the wants of the sons of our people, either by reviving the Institute at Blacksburg, or founding one elsewhere.¹⁰

At the 1867 Annual Conference of the Baltimore Conference, South, held in Baltimore, the Committee on Seminaries, still chaired by Whisner, reported no progress with regard to Olin and Preston Institute. The committee declared that the building, "erected some years since at considerable expense to the community and Conference," was "decaying for want of occupancy and is serving no purpose whatever." The report added: "The citizens of Blacksburg and the community are most anxious that the Conference should purchase the property at once, and make it our Conference college." It also urged delegates to the Annual Meeting to consider carefully whether the Baltimore Conference, South, should have a college in Blacksburg and, if so, how the conference should "possess ourselves of this college and put it in successful operation."¹¹

The report continued:

The facts therefore are laid before the Conference together with the address sent by the trustees at Blacksburg, in the hope that the Conference can do something which shall contribute to the advancement of education among the young men of that locality if not of the whole Conference. The questions as they appear to the committee are, first—shall we have a college in our territory? Secondly—shall it be at Blacksburg, whose advantages are that there is a building there already, erected, which will require only about a thousand dollars to repair.

The delegates took no action.¹²

About the same time, concern arose over whether northern Methodists or southern Methodists actually owned the institute in Blacksburg, a result of the 1866 split of the Baltimore Conference.¹³ According to Virginia Tech historian Duncan Lyle Kinnear, trustees of the school wanted ownership unquestionably in the hands of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, which was the parent organization of the Baltimore Conference, South, and they engaged in "an unusual series of actions" to accomplish their goal. The first of those actions was to get John N. Lyle Jr. to proceed with his father's case against them.¹⁴ John N. Lyle Sr. had died, and the court consented on 10 September 1867 to let his son, who was the administrator of the estate, continue the case.¹⁵

The court heard the suit on 18 April 1868, a decade after Lyle Sr. had initiated the first legal action. According to court records, the trustees of Olin and Preston waived the provisions of an act passed by the Virginia General Assembly to stay the collection of debts for a limited period, and they consented to a sale of the school, which consisted of a two-story building and about five acres of land. The court appointed Charles A. Ronald, a Confederate hero and brother to pre-war Olin and Preston trustee Nicholas M. Ronald, as a special commissioner to "sell at public auction . . . to the highest bidder for cash the said Olin & Preston Institute" The commissioner was instructed to advertise the sale 40 days in advance and "to convey to the purchaser, upon payment of the purchase money, the said property by deed with special warranty, and report his proceedings to this court."¹⁶ Lyle Jr. purchased the property, as stated at the next hearing on his suit.¹⁷ That purchase was part of the plan devised by the Olin and Preston trustees to get the property into the hands of the southern branch of Methodists.¹⁸

That same year, the Baltimore Conference appointed a special committee "to take into consideration the interest of the Olin and Preston Institute" The committee, which consisted of "Preachers and Laymen of the Roanoke District," submitted its report to the Committee on Literary Institutions, which expressed its hope that "if it is possible to perpetuate this Institution as a source of Methodist influence, it may be done." The special committee proposed two recommendations:

Resolved, That the Baltimore Conference do appoint seven Commissioners to negotiate a loan for the purchase and repair of the building known as Olin and Preston Institute, with authority to mortgage said property for that purpose, and to secure a suitable principal to put the School in successful operation as soon as possible.

Resolved, 2d, That this Commission be constituted of the Presiding Elder of the Roanoke District and the Preacher in charge of Blacksburg Station, and five Laymen, and that they have power to fill vacancies.¹⁹

The commissioners were appointed,²⁰ and Whisner was tapped by the conference as the preacher-in-charge of Blacksburg.²¹

Lyle Jr. then petitioned the court to have "the property conveyed to Dr. Harvey Black [president of the board of trustees] and other trustees of the Preston & Olin Institute instead of to himself with a vendor lien retained on the property to secure the said Lyle the balance of purchase money due to him from said Trustees for said property." The court ordered Commissioner Ronald to convey the property to the trustees, reserving the lien—nearly \$3,000, according to Kinnear²²—for Lyle Jr. as he had requested.²³ The deed, finally recorded on 1 July 1872, defined the actions taken by Commissioner Ronald, Lyle Jr., and the trustees of the institute in the property sale.²⁴ The Baltimore Conference, South, purchased the property "on most favorable terms" in 1868²⁵ and reported that purchase in the minutes of its 1869 Annual Meeting:

The property has been secured to the Church at a cost <u>far</u> <u>below</u> expectation; and the school is in successful operation. The unexampled low rates of board and tuition, and its other solid merits, are bringing to this school a very encouraging patronage. It is a great necessity to our Church for all that portion of our Conference, and <u>fully deserves</u> its confidence and support [underlining included in the original].²⁶

The School Opens, Acquires a "New" Name

Although no mention of an opening date could be found in the records of the Baltimore Conference, South, Florence (Black) Weiland and Ellen Tyler McDonald, who wrote a history of the Black family, a prominent Blacksburg clan, reported that Whisner opened the school in September 1868.²⁷ G. F. Poteet, who traced secondary education in Montgomery County, Virginia, and Mrs. S. A. Wingard, who wrote a history of Blacksburg, also listed that date as the school's opening, although both writers may have used the Black family genealogists as their unnamed source.²⁸ The fact that a local newspaper reported on the *second* commencement in 1870 for the 1869–1870 session²⁹ lends credence to an initial opening in 1868 if the first session, like the second one, spanned parts of two years. Additional evidence can be found in an August 1869 Staunton newspaper, which announced:

Preston and Olin Institute . . . commences its *next* session on the first Wednesday in September. This Institution is now under the Presidency of Rev. P. H. Whisner, and is a most excellent school preparatory to the University of Virginia [emphasis added].³⁰

The year 1868 as the opening is also supported by an 1871 report from the Committee on Education for the Baltimore Conference, South, which stated that Preston and Olin had "passed thus far through its third annual session"³¹ If the 1868 date is accurate, as it appears to be, the school opened before its new charter was issued, a path followed by the pre-Civil War Olin and Preston Institute, and before it was officially renamed in that charter. Also like Olin and Preston, the school reportedly opened before a president or principal—the two titles were sometimes used interchangeably—was appointed. The Baltimore Conference, South, did, however, send Whisner to Blacksburg in 1868 to lead the local Methodist church.³²

On 2 January 1869, Olin and Preston Institute officially became Preston and Olin Institute when Judge Robert M. Hudson of the 14th Circuit Court issued a charter for the school, designating the new name and giving it "collegiate powers." The objective of the school was to be "a seminary of learning for the instruction of Youth in the Various Branches of Science and Literature, the useful arts and the learned and foreign Languages." The charter named Dabney Ball, Harvey Black, Peter H. Whisner, James H. H. Figgat, Andrew L. Pitzer, Thomas J. Magruder, and Charles Shipley as trustees of the school. It delineated the powers of the trustees and president; directed the trustees to hire a treasurer and "such other Officers, Agents, Committees and Servants as they may see proper"; gave the trustees

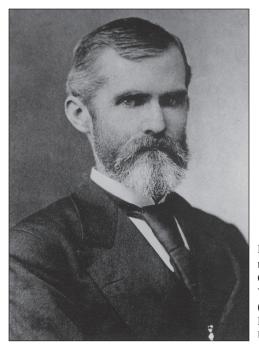


Figure 1. Dr. Harvey Black played a pivotal role in getting land-grant money for Preston and Olin Institute, which then changed its name to Virginia Agricultural and Mechanical College (Papers of the Black, Kent, and Apperson Families, Ms1974-003, Special Collections, University Libraries, Virginia Tech).

power to remove or suspend the president, professors, instructors, tutors, or trustees; and directed that the trustees hold an annual meeting.³³ Of the trustees named by the court, only Dr. Black, had served as a trustee of Olin and Preston Institute.³⁴ According to historian Paul L. Nichols, the Baltimore Conference, South, appointed additional trustees.³⁵

At some point before 1870, the membership of the Preston and Olin Board of Trustees changed. The new board consisted of Rev. Dabney Ball of Rockville, Maryland, who was president of the board; Col. Robert T. Preston of Blacksburg, who, like Dr. Black, had served on the board of Olin and Preston; Dr. Oscar Wiley of Craig County, Virginia; Giles D. Thomas of Blacksburg; Charles Payne of Giles County, Virginia; James Lawson of Blacksburg; James D. Johnson of Giles County; Hamilton D. Wade of Christiansburg, Virginia; W. W. Ballard of Blacksburg, secretary of the board; and Col. A. J. Hamilton of Rockbridge County, Virginia. The board also included the following men who had been named in the 1869 charter: the Rev. Whisner of Blacksburg; Shipley of Baltimore; Maj. Pitzer of Salem, Virginia; Magruder of Baltimore; Dr. Black of Blacksburg; and Capt. Figgat of Fincastle, Virginia.³⁶ It is likely that those trustees who lived some distance from Blacksburg were among those appointed by the Baltimore Conference, South.

Methodist Minister Named School President

In another significant action in 1869, the Baltimore Conference, South, appointed Rev. Peter Harrison Whisner as president of Preston and Olin Institute.³⁷ A biography of Whisner, written by Nichols, appeared in the 2015 issue of the *Smithfield Review*; therefore, the life of the man who played such a crucial role in the school will only be summarized here.

Whisner was born 1 February 1837 in Berkeley Springs, Virginia (now West Virginia). In 1856, when he was 19 years old, he enrolled in Dickinson College, a Methodist school in Carlisle, Pennsylvania, and graduated in 1860. When he was about 20 years old, he committed himself to the ministry, and in February 1860, he received his official license to preach.³⁸

In 1861, he received an appointment as a junior preacher. Three years later, the Methodist Episcopal Church ordained him as a deacon, and he received his first appointment as preacher-in-charge, serving the church in Lewisburg, West Virginia, for two years.³⁹

In 1866, the 29-year-old Whisner married Louisa Ann Arey of Bridgewater, Virginia, and two weeks later "transferred his allegiance to the newly formed Baltimore Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South." During the meeting in Alexandria, where the new conference was formed, he received his first appointment from the new conference as the preacher-in-charge of the church in Lexington, Virginia, an appointment renewed at the 1867 Annual Conference.⁴⁰

According to Kinnear, Whisner was determined to reopen the Olin and Preston Institute.⁴¹ Perhaps that determination played a role in his 1868 appointment as preacher-in-charge of Blacksburg's Methodist church, whose leaders had led the efforts to found Olin and Preston Institute. Whisner was reappointed the church's pastor in both 1869 and 1870.⁴² In addition to that position, the conference named him president of the Preston and Olin Institute in 1869 and 1870, years in which he also served on the school's board of trustees.⁴³ During the 1869–1870 school session, he taught moral philosophy and English,⁴⁴ and he may well have taught classes in other sessions during his tenure as president. In 1871, his last year in Blacksburg, the only position he held that could be ascertained was that of president of the school.⁴⁵ According to Nichols, the conference appointed him to the position that last year "with the understanding that he could be needed before the end of the year to take over the Rockville (Maryland) Circuit."⁴⁶

In August 1871, Whisner made the anticipated move to Rockville. Only a few months after arriving at his new station, his wife, Louisa, died at the age of 27. Two years later, he married Virginia Louisa Childs of Montgomery County, Maryland. Neither of the Whisner couples had any children.⁴⁷ Whisner left Rockville in 1875 to become presiding elder of the Morefield District, followed three years later by an appointment as preacherin-charge of Central Church in Baltimore. He was also one of six clergy representatives elected that year to the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. In 1879, he was elected to the board of trustees of Randolph-Macon College, a Methodist school in Ashland, Virginia, a role he retained until 1898.⁴⁸ From 1882 to 1886, he was presiding elder of the Winchester District, during which time Randolph-Macon conferred upon him the Doctor of Divinity and he was elected a delegate to the 1886 General Conference. His next positions were presiding elder of the Baltimore District, 1886–1890, and then of the Roanoke District, 1890–1894. After leaving Roanoke, he spent a year as a pastor in Buena Vista, Virginia, and then three years—1895–1898—as presiding elder of the Rockingham District.⁴⁹

In May 1894, shortly after Whisner left the Roanoke District, the *Roanoke Times* printed the following description of him, which it took verbatim from the *Memphis Commercial*:

He is a close, thorough student. He is great in character, wise and conservative in counsel, stately in deportment. He is a pure man, gentle yet firm, a fine blending of the lamb and the lion, according to the demands of the situation. Bishop [Robert] McTyre once said of him, "He is the Paul of the Baltimore Conference." Another fine judge of men writes, "Peter H. Whisner is the peer of any man from this end of the kingdom."⁵⁰

In 1898, delegates to the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, elected him corresponding secretary of the Board of Church Extension, a job that took him and his wife to Louisville, Kentucky, where Virginia Whisner died in 1901. During Rev. Whisner's tenure as secretary, he represented the Methodists at an Ecumenical Conference in London and, in 1902, was elected a delegate to the General Conference, where he chaired the Committee on Federation.⁵¹ When he addressed the 1904 General Conference, he remembered the church and school in Blacksburg—by then Virginia's white land-grant college—urging "that assistance be provided for churches at various points, notably at Blacksburg, where many of the students of the rapidly growing Virginia Polytechnic Institute are Methodist young men."⁵²

Death ended Whisner's tenure as secretary and his long service to the Baltimore Conference, South. He was 69 years old when he died on 22 April 1906 in Baltimore, where he had traveled for treatment of health problems. He was buried alongside his second wife, Virginia, in Gaithersburg, Maryland.⁵³

Although death claimed Whisner more than a century ago, he left a lasting mark in Blacksburg—and beyond—both in religion and in education. In 1906, the Blacksburg United Methodist Church named its new church building for its former pastor, remodeling the Whisner Building in 1955 to convert it into a fellowship hall when a new church building was constructed.⁵⁴ In the realm of education, Virginia Tech remains a testament to his foresight in spurring the drive to secure land-grant money for Preston and Olin Institute.⁵⁵

Preston and Olin Institute Flourishes

The Baltimore Conference, South, operated Preston and Olin and Institute "with very flattering success." The school, according to its 1869–1870 catalog, "will be seen to compare favorably with any similar institution in the state,"⁵⁶ an assertion echoed by the conference: "The course of instruction corresponds in all essential features, with that of other colleges"⁵⁷ With the institute's operation flowing smoothly, delegates to the 1870 Annual Meeting heard a glowing report:

To this Institution we refer with special satisfaction. This school, established by authority of the Conference and conducted in conformity with its views, possesses superior advantages for the thorough literary training of our young men. The course of instruction is comprehensive, the teachers are capable and laborious, the accommodations excellent and ample, the place is easy of access and the location most healthful. Efficient discipline combines with the high moral character of the community to inspire confidence in all who may seek in it the education of their sons.⁵⁸

In 1870, the cost to the ninety-nine students who enrolled in Preston and Olin Institute varied from \$150 to \$175 per ten-month session.⁵⁹ That cost could rise, depending on lodging; room rent at the school plus fuel to heat the room was \$15 per session, while boarding with private families or in boarding houses was \$10 per month—or \$100 per session.⁶⁰ The rates to attend Preston and Olin rose for the 1871–1872 session to \$200,⁶¹ and an advertisement for the school that year noted that tuition and other expenses were "unparalleled for cheapness, together with ample accommodations and facilities for instruction."⁶²

In 1870, the school was meeting its "current demands by current receipts"; consequently, it required no "call for help from the Conference." The conference lauded the school that year for the "sound judgment exercised in its financial affairs," noting that "the buildings have been

secured without a call for help from the Conference⁶³ Praise within the conference continued in 1871, when it was reported: "Though not quite as largely attended as last year, the school has improved in every other element of prosperity."⁶⁴

Little definitive information could be found about the faculty of the institute during its first year of operation, although Weiland and McDonald list the professors working under Whisner, without designating the specific year or years, as "Maj. Ballard"-he was also a member of the board of trustees (see above)-and "Messrs. Neorman [Moorman], Norris, and Kern."⁶⁵ For the 1869–1870 session, which commenced on 1 September, faculty members in addition to Whisner were Edwin C. Moorman, professor of mathematics and natural science; W. W. Ballard, professor of ancient languages and literature; Derrel [Darrell?] H. Jones, tutor; and Wilbur F. Kern, assistant in the preparatory department. Joseph P. Linkous, though not named in the school catalog that year as one of the trustees, was listed as treasurer under "Officers of the Board."66 By 1871, the faculty was comprised of Thomas N. Conrad, professor of English literature and moral philosophy; A. Grabowskii,⁶⁷ professor of mathematics and modern languages; and C. C. Rhodes, professor of ancient languages. A professor of natural sciences had not yet been appointed when the list was published.⁶⁸

Instruction for the boys' school was divided into five departments: Latin, Greek, mathematics, natural science, and moral philosophy and English. When required, the school could organize courses in German, French, bookkeeping, commercial law, civil engineering, and "other studies necessary to aid young men in obtaining a thorough practical business education." A primary and preparatory department, which was considered "a separate and distinct school of the Institute,"⁶⁹ met "the wants of those not yet prepared for the more advanced classes of the Institute."⁷⁰ Examinations were held twice each session: in January and June. In addition to classes, students were required to attend opening and closing exercises, which consisted of scripture reading and prayer, each day in the chapel, and church services every Sunday.⁷¹

Faculty members kept daily records that included each student's grades, absences from class, "and such other facts as are worthy of notice with respect to [the student's] general deportment." The institute used this information to provide parents or guardians with a monthly report. Students were "treated as gentlemen, and by constant advice and by appeals to the higher and nobler qualities of their nature to have them form habits of self-control and government," and obedience to the school's discipline was required. Neglecting studies and/or persistently violating regulations

could result in suspension or expulsion. Extracurricular activities included a weekly prayer meeting organized by the students and the opportunities afforded by the Preston Literary Society, which had also been organized by the students "for the purpose of improving themselves in debate, oratory, and composition,"⁷² and the Alpha Literary Society.⁷³

Whisner continued as president of Preston and Olin into 1871, most likely until the close of the 1870–1871 session, as indicated by the 1871 minutes of the Annual Meeting of the conference: "A report from the Committee on Education was presented in relation to Preston and Olin Institute. P. H. Whisner, President of the Institute, addressed the Conference."⁷⁴ The success of the school continued under his leadership, as reported in those same minutes: "The Committee on Education beg leave to report, that Preston and Olin Institute has entered upon and passed thus far through its third annual session with most flattering success." Although enrollment was down from the previous year, the report continued,

Its faculty, course of study, facilities for the instruction and accommodation of students, together with its low rates of tuition and other expenses, and its intimate relation to this Conference, point to this school as necessary to the true prosperity of the Church in the bounds of our Conference.

Your committee are impressed with the fact that the Conference has not realized fully the importance of this school, and would take this opportunity to urge all the preachers to active efforts for extending patronage, enlarging its library and philosophical apparatus, and procuring of maps, etc., so that in the fullest possible measure it may advance the course of liberal education.⁷⁵

A New President Is Appointed

When Whisner left Blacksburg, Thomas Nelson Conrad, president of the Rockville (Maryland) Academy, succeeded him as president. Whisner himself may have supported Conrad as his successor since the two had probably become acquainted at Dickinson College, which had a mere 135 students during the 1856–1857 school year when both men were enrolled at the Methodist school.⁷⁶ Whisner had been a student there from 1856 to 1860,⁷⁷ while Conrad enrolled in 1853 and earned a bachelor's degree in 1857.⁷⁸ Although Conrad received a master's degree from the institution in 1860, it is unlikely that he remained at or returned to the school—or took any additional courses—for any period during the years between the



Figure 2. Thomas N. Conrad headed five educational institutions, including Preston and Olin Institute and Virginia Agricultural and Mechanical College in Blacksburg, Virginia (Historical Photograph Collection, Special Collections, University Libraries, Virginia Tech).

two degrees since a master of arts could be secured by "graduates of three years' standing, or more, who have in the meantime sustained a good moral character" and made application to the president, "accompanied by the usual fee (\$5) at least three days before the Commencement."⁷⁹ Besides, he was employed in the District of Columbia during that time. Nonetheless, the men shared other similarities in addition to their undergraduate education. Both became Methodist preachers,⁸⁰ and both became educators,⁸¹ which could have made Conrad an appealing presidential candidate to Whisner.

The possibility also exists that Rev. Dabney Ball, head of the Preston and Olin Institute Board of Trustees, probably until 1870 or 1871,⁸² was responsible—or shared responsibility with Whisner—for the appointment. Ball and Conrad had been friends before the Civil War, a friendship that continued into the years of the Civil War and, perhaps, beyond. Ball, a major, had been the chief of commissary and a chaplain on the staff of Confederate Gen. J. E. B. Stuart and had endorsed his friend to Stuart at Conrad's request.⁸³

Biographical information on Conrad is available in the article "Thomas Nelson Conrad: Educator, Editor, Preacher, Spy," in this issue of the *Smithfield Review*; thus, his life will only be summarized here. The second president of Preston and Olin Institute was born on 1 August 1837 in Fairfax Court House, Virginia. He pursued religious studies at Dickenson

College, earning a degree when he was 20 years old.⁸⁴ He then served as principal of Georgetown Institute, a Washington, D.C., school for boys, from 1857 to 1861.⁸⁵ A Southern sympathizer, Conrad advised his students how to join the Confederate army after the Civil War started in April 1861. Events he organized for his final commencement at Georgetown Institute led to his imprisonment.⁸⁶

That experience, he later wrote, "hastened the abandonment of educational pursuits for the sterner ones of war."⁸⁷ Following his release, Confederate Gen. J. E. B. Stuart appointed him for scouting duty and approved Maj. Ball's suggestion that Conrad "become a chaplain, with the rank of captain," for the 3rd Virginia Cavalry.⁸⁸ Conrad spent most of his time as a scout⁸⁹ until late 1861, when he offered his services as a spy, an offer accepted by Confederate President Jefferson Davis.⁹⁰ During his espionage activities, Conrad proposed a plot to kidnap President Abraham Lincoln in September 1864, but the plot, which he had begun to enact, fell through at the last minute.⁹¹

After the war ended, Conrad was arrested and returned to prison two different times. The second time, he escaped and hid in the Blue Ridge Mountains for several months.⁹²

In 1866, he purchased the Upperville Academy, teaching there until 1868. On 4 October 1866, the 28-year-old educator wed Emma S. Ball. The couple had seven children.⁹³

From Upperville, Conrad moved to Rockville, where he was principal of Rockville Academy from 1869 to 1871.⁹⁴ He then relocated to Blacksburg, where he headed the Preston and Olin Institute for approximately one year, beginning in 1871. In the position, according to Kinnear, he "brought a new dimension of excitement to the school and to the town of Blacksburg."⁹⁵

In 1872, Conrad unsuccessfully pursued the presidency of Virginia Agricultural and Mechanical College (VAMC).⁹⁶ In 1873, he purchased an interest in the *Montgomery Messenger*⁹⁷ and became its editor.⁹⁸ He accepted a position at VAMC in 1877 as an adjunct professor heading a new Preparatory Department⁹⁹ and in 1880 as chair of English.¹⁰⁰ Two years later, he became president of VAMC, serving in that capacity until 1886.¹⁰¹

In August 1887, Conrad became a professor of agriculture and chair of the faculty at Maryland Agricultural College.¹⁰² During his tenure there, in 1889, he received another degree from Dickinson College: a master of science.¹⁰³ He returned to Washington in 1890 as a special agent of the census office and later became a general statistician for the office, where he remained until his death at age 67 on 5 January 1905. He was interred in Westview Cemetery in Blacksburg.¹⁰⁴

Conrad is the only person to have served as president of Preston and Olin Institute and Virginia Agricultural and Mechanical College.

Preston and Olin Pursues Virginia's Land-Grant Funds

On 2 July 1862, more than a year after the first shots were fired in the Civil War, President Abraham Lincoln signed into law the Morrill Act (also known as the Morrill Land Grant Act and officially entitled "An Act Donating Public Lands to the Several States and Territories [W]hich [M]ay [P]rovide Colleges for the Benefit of Agriculture and the Mechanic Arts"). This act provided each state with 30,000 acres of federal land per member of the state's Congressional delegation. The states were authorized to sell the land and use the proceeds "to fund public colleges that focused on agriculture and mechanical arts."¹⁰⁵

At the time, Virginia could not take advantage of the Morrill Act since eligible Virginians had voted on 23 May 1861 to accept the 17 April 1861 vote of the Virginia Convention to secede from the Union.¹⁰⁶ On 26 January 1870, nearly nine years after seceding, more than seven years after passage of the Morrill Act, and almost five years after the Civil War ended, Virginia was readmitted to the Union.¹⁰⁷ Several weeks later, on 5 March 1870, the General Assembly voted to accept the provisions of the Morrill Act.¹⁰⁸ Although discussions had been held about how to use the land-grant monies before the commonwealth's readmission and subsequent vote by the legislature—such discussions were fruitless in practicality—they intensified after Governor Gilbert C. Walker called attention to the Morrill Act, also in March 1870.¹⁰⁹

Schools across the state scrambled to petition the legislature for funds that the act would make available.¹¹⁰ On 17 December 1870, one newspaper reported "that there will be a good deal of difficulty in determining the disposition of the land scrip, donated by Congress for educational purposes" since "nearly all the large Seminaries of learning in the State" were eager "to procure a portion." The newspaper continued, "The Joint Committee of the two Houses of the Legislature have the subject under consideration, and the representatives of the various colleges are here urging the respective claims of their institutions."¹¹¹ Less than a week later, the newspaper reported that nine colleges had applied for the funds.¹¹² Preston and Olin Institute would soon enter what one newspaper dubbed the "War of the Colleges" as some 24 schools across the state eventually sought the funds.¹¹³

Although some historians have reported that Preston and Olin Institute entered the land-grant fray because it was facing financial difficulties,¹¹⁴ this author was unable to locate any records to verify that statement. To the

contrary, as noted earlier, the school had required no help from the conference in 1870 because it was meeting its "current demands by current receipts,"¹¹⁵ and the following year, a report to the Baltimore Conference, South, refers to the school's "flattering success."¹¹⁶ Even the local newspaper reported in July 1870 that the school was "flourishing."¹¹⁷ Regardless, at some point in 1870, Whisner and Black decided to pursue the land-grant monies for Preston and Olin Institute.

According to a history of the Blacksburg United Methodist Church, Whisner had read about a deadlock in the Virginia legislature over what to do with its land-grant funds "and proposed to Dr. Black that their school be offered to the State as an inducement to get the college located here." Dr. Black, the history continued, liked the idea and promoted it with the Preston and Olin Institute Board of Trustees and members of the state legislature.¹¹⁸

It is also possible that the initial idea to pursue the land-grant funds came from Black, whose father was a farmer and who grew up working on the family farm in Montgomery County. This possibility is implied by one of his colleagues, Dr. John S. Apperson, who married Black's daughter following Black's death. Referring to the land-grant act, Apperson wrote, "Always on the alert for the good of his people, with others, he [indecipherable word: commenced?] at once with the work of getting that valuable improvement for his native county....¹¹⁹

Sometime before Christmas 1870, Whisner and Black wrote letters to John E. Penn, the senator representing Montgomery, Floyd, and Patrick counties in the Virginia General Assembly. The precise dates of their letters are unknown but can be approximated from Penn's response to Black's letter. In Penn's letter, dated 6 January 1871, the senator apologized for his delay in responding, citing the Christmas recess as the reason, and stated:

Rev. Mr. Whisner[']s letter has been received and I will with pleasure do all in my power on behalf of your very worthy institution. It is impossible at this time to tell what will be the place which will be adopted by the Legislature. I am myself in favor of a distribution of the fund in such a manner as to make it available to the largest number of our people.¹²⁰

The next month, on 14 February 1871, Penn expanded on his views in another letter to Black:

Some weeks since I received a communication from you and also from the President of the Preston & Olin Institute in regard to the

querol features. of course I can not ofure you that it can be carried in the Segistation but This are many reasons why your County woold be a desirable location and The fund is worth an effort-Very hugh prime

Figure 3. In a February 1871 letter to Dr. Harvey Black, State Senator John E. Penn described his views on establishing a land-grant college in Virginia. The last page of the four-page letter appears at left (Papers of the Black, Kent, and Apperson Families, Ms1974-003, Special Collections, University Libraries, Virginia Tech).

land scrip—I enclose a Bill which embodies my views on the subject. From its provisions you will observe that it aims at establishing an<u>independent</u> "Agricultural College" rather than to grant the fund to some college, the University [of Virginia] for instance, and make the agricultural and mechanical features <u>subordinate</u>. . . . One of the conditions of the congressional grant was that no part of the fund could be appropriated to building purposes, hence the necessity of finding a college that will <u>abandon</u> its present organization and substitute the features of this Bill. In reference to your college I fear the buildings would not be large enough but would it not be a good investment for your <u>County</u> to erect additional buildings. The school would be on a permanent footing and from its very character every County in the State would be interested—it would have a state reputation at the very outset and large numbers of [indecipherable word] men who do not desire a strictly <u>classical</u> education would attend it and in a few years you might anticipate having regularly three or four hundred students and the money they would bring to your county would soon repay you for the taxation expended in buildings—Show this to the president of your college and others interested and let me hear from you.

Of course I can not assure you that it can be carried in the Legislature but their [sic] are many reasons why your County would be a desirable location and the fund is worth an effort. [Underlining included in the original.]¹²¹

In addition to Whisner and Black, Conrad probably aided the effort to get the land-grant money for Preston and Olin following his arrival in Blacksburg in 1871. According to holdings in Special Collections at Virginia Tech, the former Confederate spy took an "active part" in getting an agricultural and mechanical arts college located in Blacksburg.¹²² But it was Whisner and Black who apparently initiated the movement to get the money for the Blacksburg school. In late 1871, most likely at their suggestion, the trustees of Preston and Olin petitioned Senator Penn and Delegate Robert A. Miller, who represented Montgomery County in the House of Delegates, to support the Methodist school as the recipient of at least a portion of the land-grant monies. Miller was succeeded in the 1871–1872 session by Gen. Gabriel C. Wharton, who "immediately joined forces with Penn in the Senate on behalf of the Preston and Olin Institute."¹²³

The battle over the land scrip seemingly overwhelmed the General Assembly. According to Kinnear, "In spite of, or perhaps because of, the conflicting claims for the money faced by the legislature, the session of 1870–1871 came to a close without arriving at a disposition of the fund."¹²⁴ It took the General Assembly two years—from March 1870 to March 1872—to resolve the issue. Chaos ruled even in the final stages of the deliberations, according to an Alexandria newspaper:

Senate bill to give two-thirds of the income from the land scrip to Preston-Olin Institute and one-third to Hampton Normal Institute was taken up out of its order. A multitude of motions and inquiries here arose, causing considerable confusion.¹²⁵

Various legislators moved to amend the bill in favor of other institutions or to change the distribution equation, but ultimately a number of them withdrew their challenges and lent support to the Blacksburg school. The act appropriating the income from the land scrip to Preston and Olin was passed in the Senate on 13 March, then in the House of Delegates,¹²⁶ and Governor Walker signed it on 19 March 1872.¹²⁷

The act required Preston and Olin to meet the following conditions, among others:

First. The name of the said institute *shall be changed* to the Virginia Agricultural and Mechanical College [emphasis added].

Second. The trustees of the said institute shall transfer, by deed or other proper conveyance, the land, buildings, and other property of said institute, to the Virginia Agricultural and Mechanical College.

Third. The county of Montgomery shall appropriate twenty thousand dollars, to be expended in the erection of additional buildings, or in the purchase of a farm for the use of the said college.¹²⁸

In a referendum held on 23 May 1972, the citizens of Montgomery County approved a \$20,000 bond issue for the college by an overwhelming majority.¹²⁹ On 19 June 1872, the Preston and Olin Institute Board of Trustees formally accepted the conditions of the legislative act, directing "the property of the Preston & Olin Institute to be conveyed to the Virginia Agricultural and Mechanical College." The deed was recorded on 12 July 1872,¹³⁰ Thus, Preston and Olin Institute became Virginia Agricultural and Mechanical College.

Several leaders of Olin and Preston and/or Preston and Olin played critical roles in the early life of the land-grant college. Dr. Harvey Black, a member of the Olin and Preston Institute Board of Trustees and president of the Preston and Olin Institute Board of Trustees, continued his role in school governance—he was named the first rector of the VAMC Board of Visitors.¹³¹ Robert T. Preston, also a member of the Olin and Preston and the Preston and Olin boards, sold his house, "Solitude," which is the oldest structure on the Virginia Tech campus, and his farm to the VAMC Board of Visitors, providing the land-grant college with facilities needed by a school with a heavy agricultural focus.¹³² Additionally, Thomas Nelson Conrad, president of Preston and Olin, 1871–1872, became president of VAMC ten years later, serving from 1882 to 1886.¹³³

Conclusion

Without Olin and Preston Institute and its continuation as Preston and Olin Institute, Virginia Tech as we know it today would not exist. Fortunately, the leaders of the Methodist-supported school were men of action. Most prominently, the Prestons, of Smithfield Plantation, helped keep Olin and Preston afloat for a number of years with strong financial support and leadership, which led to the institute's acquisition of land and construction of a substantial building. That facility and acreage, which helped spur the Methodists to create a college at the site in 1868, also helped in 1872 to attract the support of legislators trying to decide which school in Virginia should benefit from the Morrill Act.

Later, the determined efforts of the leaders of Preston and Olin Institute, particularly Rev. Peter H. Whisner and Dr. Harvey Black, convinced the commonwealth to assign to their school the two-thirds of the land-grant monies that had been designated for a white college. The leaders of Preston and Olin agreed to *change its name* to Virginia Agricultural and Mechanical College, the institution that morphed into Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University.

Certainly the shift from a classical education, as offered by Preston and Olin, to a "practical" kind of education and training, as was required to teach agriculture and mechanical arts, was dramatic, but Virginia Tech is no stranger to dramatic changes in its curriculum, e.g., the focus-shifting changes in educational offerings arising from the leadership of John M. McBryde and T. Marshall Hahn Jr. Today's students can find an amalgamation of the offerings of the two schools that existed in 1872, although today's curriculum is, of course, far more extensive.

Interestingly, both name changes were effectuated by legal actions, and both resulted in specific types of colleges. The first name change, to Preston and Olin Institute, evolved from a plan to end litigation against the school and to clear ownership. The second change, to VAMC, was required under the statute that brought land-grant money to Montgomery County. When Olin and Preston became Preston and Olin in 1868, the old academy officially acquired collegiate powers. By then, the Baltimore Conference, South, had already spent two years discussing reopening Olin and Preston as a college. The Methodists had recognized that the real estate was in place to permit the inauguration of a college curriculum in Blacksburg. The state generally came to the same conclusion in 1872 when it awarded the land-grant money to Preston and Olin to change its educational focus. Much changed with the two name changes, but much remained the same as VAMC built upon the history of Preston and Olin Institute, which had built upon the history of Olin and Preston Institute. In 2022, Virginia Tech will celebrate 150 years of existence as a landgrant institution. Perhaps during this time of reflection, the university will recognize its real founding in the early 1850s as a Methodist school for boys and will officially change its date of establishment to reflect that fact.

Acknowledgments

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Endnotes

- 1 According to "The University Shield" in Virginia Tech's online *Factbook:About the University* (www.vt.edu/about/factbook/about-university.html), the numerals "1872" in the shield "recognize the year the university was founded."
- Clara B. Cox, "Olin and Preston Institute and Preston and Olin Institute: The Early Years of Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Part I," *Smithfield Review* 19 (2015), 51–76.
- "General Information: Historic Statement," *Catalogue, Preston and Olin Institute, Session* 1869 and 70 (Blacksburg, Va.: Preston and Olin Institute, n.d.), 11, Special Collections, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (Virginia Tech), Blacksburg, Va.
- "Education during the 1860s," Civil War Trust, www.civilwar.org/education/history/on-thehomefront/culture/education.html, adapted from Juanita Leisch, An Introduction to Civil War Civilians (Gettysburg, Pa.: Thomas Publications, 1994), and Clara B. Cox, "Blacksburg Educates Its Children, 1740s–1990s," A Special Place for 200 Years: A History of Blacksburg, Virginia, ed. Clara B. Cox (Roanoke, Va.: Town of Blacksburg, Va., 1998), 85.
- 5. Of the Olin and Preston trustees, Robert T. Preston organized the Preston Battalion of Virginia Reserves, charged with defending the home front (Dorothy H. Bodell and Mary Elizabeth Lindon, "Blacksburg during the Civil War," *A Special Place for 200 Years*, ed. Cox, 34. James F. Preston was the first colonel of the 4th Virginia Infantry (Bodell and Lindon, "Blacksburg during the Civil War," 24). James R. Kent fought with the 11th Regiment, Virginia Infantry (National Park Service, The Civil War, Search for Soldiers, www.nps.gov/civilwar/search-soldiers.htm?submit ted=1&firstName=William&lastName=Peck&stateCode=VA&multiselect=VA&warSideCode=C&battleUnitName=). Harvey Black served with the 4th Regiment, Virginia Infantry (National Park Service, The Civil War). Additionally, a William H. Peck served with the 26th Battalion, Virginia Infantry (National Park Service, The Civil War), but it could not be ascertained if he was the same Peck who was a trustee of Olin and Preston. William Ballard Preston, who apparently chaired the board and may have been the largest financial supporter of Olin and Preston, served in the Confederate States Congress before his death on 16 November 1862 ("Preston, William Ballard (1805–1862)," *Biographical Directory of the United States Congress, 1774–Present, bioguide.congress.gov/scripts/biodisplay.pl?index=P000518*).

- 6. Cox, "Olin and Preston Institute and Preston and Olin Institute, Part I" Smithfield Review, 67-68.
- Paul L. Nichols, "Peter Harrison Whisner, D.D.," *Smithfield Review* 19 (2015), 34–35. The appointment of Samuel Regester as a trustee of Olin and Preston was reported in "Closing Session. Winchester, Va., March 8, 1860," *Daily Exchange* (Baltimore) 5, no. 633 (9 March 1860), 1, Library of Congress, Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers, *chroniclingamerica.loc.gov.* Unless noted otherwise, newspapers cited in this article can be found in this online collection.
- 8. "Baltimore Annual Conference—M. E. Church," *Staunton Spectator and General Advertiser* (Staunton, Va.), (20 February 1866), 3, and Nichols, "Peter Harrison Whisner," 36.
- 9. "Section IV. Seminaries: Report of the Committee on Seminaries," Annual Register of the Baltimore Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, [H]eld in Alexandria, Va., February 7, 1866 (Baltimore: James Lucas & Son, 1866), 27.
- 10. "Report of the Committee on Seminaries," 27.
- 11. "VIII Seminaries," (n.p., 1867). The photocopied page (Preston and Olin Institute, Ms1964-001 in Special Collections, Virginia Tech) appears to be taken from the minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Baltimore Conference.
- 12. "VIII Seminaries," 1867.
- The Baltimore Conference had supported Olin and Preston Institute from its founding in the early 1850s to its closing at the beginning of the Civil War. See Cox, "Olin and Preston Institute and Preston and Olin Institute, Part I," 51–76.
- 14. Duncan Lyle Kinnear, *The First 100 Years: A History of Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University* (Blacksburg: Virginia Polytechnic Institute Educational Foundation, 1972), 13.
- 15. John N. Lyle vs. Olin & Preston Institute (1867), Chancery Order Book 2, 20, Montgomery County Court Records, Christiansburg, Va.
- 16. John N. Lyle Jr. vs. Trustees Olin & Preston Institute (1868), Chancery Order Book 2, 31. Information on the property is available in William H. Ruffner, J. R. Anderson, and W. T. Sutherlin, "Virginia Agricultural and Mechanical College," report from the committee planning organization and instruction, presented to the Virginia Agricultural and Mechanical College Board of Visitors, 14 August 1872, Yellow Sulphur Springs, Va., published in pamphlet form and adopted by the board as its annual report to the Virginia General Assembly (n.p.), 3. Information on Ronald can be found at "Nicholas M. Ronald," zoominfo, www.zoominfo.com/p/Nicholas-Ronald/1634815502.
- 17. John N. Lyle [Jr.] vs. Trustees Olin & Preston Institute (1869), Chancery Order Book 2, 66-67.
- 18. Kinnear, The First 100 Years, 13-14.
- 19. Baltimore Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, *Annual Minutes of the Baltimore Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South* (Baltimore: King Brothers, 1868), 22.
- 20. Baltimore Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, Annual Minutes of the Baltimore Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South (Baltimore: J. Wesley Smith and Brothers, 1869), 31. The minutes refer to "[t]he commissioners appointed by Conference, at its last session"
- 21. "Baltimore Conference Appointments," Staunton Spectator (17 March 1868), 2.
- 22. Kinnear, The First 100 Years, 14.
- 23. John N. Lyle [Jr.] vs. Trustees Olin & Preston Institute (1869), Chancery Order Book 2, 66–67.
- 24. Deed Book S, Montgomery County Court Records, 652.
- "General Information: Historic Statement," *Catalogue, Preston and Olin Institute, Session 1869 and 70* (Baltimore: J. Wesley Smith & Brothers, n.d), VPI Miscellaneous Pamphlets LD 5655 A4 1870, 11, Special Collections, Virginia Tech.
- 26. Baltimore Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, Annual Minutes, 1869, 31.
- 27. Florence (Black) Weiland and Ellen Tyler McDonald, "Notes on Draper's Meadows and Blacksburg and Vicinity, Part 3," in "Sketches of the History of the Black Family from England to the United States" (1926), 5, Special Collections, Virginia Tech.
- 28. G. F. Poteet, "Secondary Education in Montgomery County 1776-1936" (M.A. thesis, University

of Virginia, 1937), 142, and Mrs. S. A. Wingard, "History of Blacksburg, Virginia" (1939), *spec. lib.vt.edu/bicent/recoll/wingard.htm*.

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- 30. "Local News," Staunton Spectator and General Advertiser (Staunton, Va.) (3 August 1869), 3.
- Baltimore Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, Annual Minutes of the Baltimore Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South (Baltimore: King Brothers, 1871), 28.
- 32. "Baltimore Conference Appointments," 2.
- 33. Charter Book 1, 1869–1881, 1–4, Montgomery County Court Records.
- 34. See "Schools and Academies," Virginia Acts of Assembly, 1853–54, 67–68.
- 35. Nichols, "Peter Harrison Whisner," 37.
- Catalogue, Preston and Olin Institute, Session 1869 and 70, 3–4. Identifications of board members of Olin and Preston Institute came from Cox, "Olin and Preston Institute and Preston and Olin Institute, Part I," 64.
- 37. Nichols, "Peter Harrison Whisner," 37.
- 38. Nichols, "Peter Harrison Whisner," 33–34; "Whisner, Peter Harrison," Anniversary Edition: House Divided, the Civil War Research Engine at Dickinson College, hd.housedivided. dickinson.edu/node/6841; and "Whisner, Peter Harrison," Dickinson College Archives & Special Collections, archives.dickinson.edu/image-archive-people/whisner-peter-harrison.
- Nichols, "Peter Harrison Whisner," 34–35, and Methodist Episcopal Church, *Minutes of the* Annual Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church for the Year 1861 (New York: Carlton & Porter, 1861), 11.
- Nichols, "Peter Harrison Whisner," 36; "Baltimore Annual Conference—M. E. Church," *Staunton Spectator* (20 February 1866), 3; and "The Methodist Conference at Alexandria," *Evening Star* (Washington, D.C.), 2nd edition (16 February 1866), 2.
- 41. Kinnear, The First 100 Years, 13.
- "Appointments for 1869" and "Appointments for 1870," Hand-Book of the Baltimore Conference, Methodist Episcopal Church, South, Rev. E. R. Smith, comp. (Baltimore: King Brothers, 1871), 50, 52, Emory University Archives, archive.org/stream/30711779.1871.emory. edu/30711779_1871#page/n0/mode/2up.
- 43. Nichols, "Peter Harrison Whisner," 37; "Local News," *Staunton Spectator* (3 August 1869), 3; *Charter Book 1*, 1, Montgomery County Court Records; and *Catalogue, Preston and Olin Institute, Session 1869 and 70*, 3.
- 44. Catalogue, Preston and Olin Institute, Session 1869 and 70, 4.
- 45. "Appointments for 1871," Hand-Book of the Baltimore Conference, 57.
- 46. Nichols, "Peter Harrison Whisner," 38.
- 47. Nichols, "Peter Harrison Whisner," 39-40.
- Nichols, "Peter Harrison Whisner," 40–41, and "Board of Trustees," *Catalogue, 1897–1898*, Randolph-Macon College, Ashland, Va., *archive.org/stream/catalogueofrando1897rand/ catalogueofrando1897rand_djvu.txt*.
- 49. Nichols, "Peter Harrison Whisner," 40-41.
- 50. "Dr. Peter H. Whisner," Roanoke Times (Roanoke, Va.) (18 May 1894), 2.
- Nichols, "Peter Harrison Whisner," 41; Leonard Bacon *et al.*, eds., *The Independent* 50 (New York: Independent Publications, 1898), 688; and "Methodist Conference," *Alexandria Gazette* (Alexandria, Va.) 99, no. 75 (29 March 1898), 1.
- 52. "Southern Methodist Conference Appointments," *The Evening Star* (Washington, D.C.) (5 April 1904), 12.
- 53. Horace M. Du Bose, A History of Methodism: Being a Volume Supplemental to "A History of Methodism" by Holland N. McTyeire, D.D. (Nashville: Smith & Lamar, Publishing House of the M. E. Church, South, 1916), 231; Christian Advocate 81 (New York, n.p., 1906), 645; Daily Public Ledger (Maysville, Ky.) (24 April 1906), 4; and Nichols, "Peter Harrison Whisner," 42–43.

- 54. "Blacksburg United Methodist Church," *www.blacksburghistory.org/?page_id=2301*, accessed 17 November 2015.
- 55. Harry Downing Temple, *The Bugle's Echo* 1 (Blacksburg: Virginia Tech Corps of Cadets Alumni Inc., 1966), 9, and Clara B. Cox and Jenkins M. Robertson, *History and Historical Data of Virginia Tech* (Blacksburg: University Relations, Virginia Tech, 2010), www.unirel.vt.edu/ *history/historical_digest/prefounding_activities.html*.
- 56. "General Information," Catalogue, Preston and Olin Institute, Session 1869 and 70, 11.
- 57. Methodist Episcopal Church, South, *Annual Minutes of the Baltimore Conference* (Baltimore: King Brothers, 1870), 41.
- 58. Methodist Episcopal Church, South, Annual Minutes, 1870, 41.
- 59. Methodist Episcopal Church, South, *Annual Minutes*, 1870, 41, and *Catalogue*, *Preston and Olin Institute*, *Session 1869 and 70*, 14.
- 60. "Local News," *Staunton Spectator* (3 August 1869), 3, and *Catalogue, Preston and Olin Institute, Session 1869 and 70*, 14.
- 61. "Preston & Olin Institute," advertisement in Hand-Book of the Baltimore Conference, 115.
- 62. "Nichols, "Peter Harrison Whisner," 39. The advertisement, which was reproduced in the Nichols article, appeared in the 1871 journal of the Baltimore Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.
- 63. Methodist Episcopal Church, South, *Annual Minutes*, 1870, 41, and *Catalogue*, *Preston and Olin Institute*, *Session 1869 and 70*, 14.
- 64. T. E. Bond and I. R. Finley, "Report of the Committee on Education," Baltimore Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, *Minutes of the Eighty-Seventh Session of the Baltimore Annual Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South* (Baltimore: King Brothers, 1871), 28.
- 65. Weiland and McDonald, "Notes on Draper's Meadows and Blacksburg and Vicinity," 6.
- 66. Catalogue, Preston and Olin Institute, Session 1869 and 70, 3–4.
- 67. Correct spelling per the advertisement cited in footnote 68, from which it was taken.
- 68. "Preston & Olin Institute," advertisement in Hand-Book of the Baltimore Conference, 115.
- 69. Catalogue, Preston and Olin Institute, Session 1869 and 70, 8–10.
- 70. Methodist Episcopal Church, South, Annual Minutes, 1870, 41.
- 71. Catalogue, Preston and Olin Institute, Session 1869 and 70, 12.
- 72. Catalogue, Preston and Olin Institute, Session 1869 and 70, 12–13.
- "Programme: Anniversary Celebration of the Alpha Literary Society of the Preston and Olin Institute," 29 June 1869, Preston and Olin Institute Records, Ms1964-001, Special Collections, Virginia Tech.
- 74. Methodist Episcopal Church, South, Annual Minutes of the Baltimore Conference, 1871, 9.
- 75. Methodist Episcopal Church, South, Annual Minutes, 1871, 28.
- E-mail correspondence from James Gerencser, Archives and Special Collections, Dickinson College, Carlisle, Pa., 27 October 2015, reporting the number of students listed in the *College Catalog*, Dickinson College, 1856–1857.
- 77. Nichols, "Peter Harrison Whisner," 33-34.
- "Thomas Nelson Conrad (1837–1903)," Dickinson College Archives & Special Collections, at archives.dickinson.edu/people/thomas-nelson-conrad-1837-1905, and Ernest B. Furgurson, "Thomas Nelson Conrad (1837–1905)," Dictionary of Virginia Biography, reprinted in Encyclopedia Virginia, at www.encyclopediavirginia.org/conrad_thomas_nelson_1837-1905.
- 79. College Catalog, Dickinson College, 1860, 27.
- 80. Furgurson, "Thomas Nelson Conrad," called Conrad a "lay Methodist preacher," but he was called "a local preacher" in "Baltimore Conference, Central Church, Baltimore," *Hand-Book of the Baltimore Conference*, 48.
- Ernest B. Furgurson, "Teacher, Preacher, Soldier, Spy" *HistoryNet*, at www.historynet.com/ teacher-preacher-soldier-spy.htm, posted 7 August 2012; "Thomas Nelson Conrad," Dickinson College Archives & Special Collections; and Nichols, "Peter Harrison Whisner," 37.

- 82. In poor health, Dabney was moved to the Pacific coast in 1871 (John Collinsworth Simmons, *History of Southern Methodism on the Pacific Coast* (Nashville: Southern Methodist Publishing House, 1886), 442).
- James Edward Armstrong, *History of the Old Baltimore Conference from the Planting of Methodism in 1773 to the Division of the Conference in 1857* (Baltimore: King Bros., 1907), 330, and Furgurson, "Teacher, Preacher, Soldier, Spy."
- Captain Thomas N. Conrad, A Confederate Spy: A Story of the Civil War (New York: J. S. Ogilvie, 1892), 6; Furgurson, "Thomas Nelson Conrad"; and Furgurson, "Teacher, Preacher, Soldier, Spy."
- "Thomas Nelson Conrad," Dickinson College Archives & Special Collections, and Conrad, A Confederate Spy, 7.
- Conrad, A Confederate Spy, 6; Furgurson, "Teacher, Preacher, Soldier, Spy"; and Edward Steers Jr., Blood on the Moon: The Assassination of Abraham Lincoln (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2001), 55.
- 87. Conrad, A Confederate Spy, 6.
- 88. Conrad, A Confederate Spy, 10.
- 89. Steers Jr., Blood on the Moon, 54.
- 90. Conrad, A Confederate Spy, 34.
- 91. Conrad, A Confederate Spy, 68-75.
- 92. Conrad, A Confederate Spy, 79-86, 105, 120-121.
- 93. "Thomas Nelson Conrad," Dickinson College Archives; Conrad, A Confederate Spy, 122; Conrad, The Rebel Scout: A Thrilling History of Scouting Life in the Southern Army (Washington, D.C.: National Publishing Company, 1904), 218–219; Furgurson, "Thomas Nelson Conrad"; and Phi Kappa Sigma, "Thomas Nelson Conrad," Semi-centennial Register of the Members of the Phi Kappa Sigma Fraternity (Philadelphia: Avil Printing Company, 1900), 113. The author was unable to find evidence that Conrad's wife, Emma Ball Conrad, and his friend, Dabney Ball, were related.
- 94. Furgurson, "Thomas Nelson Conrad," correctly gives 1871 as the closing date. Supplying an incorrect date, 1872, are Phi Sigma Kappa, "Thomas Nelson Conrad," and Tiphen Walsingham Allen, "Student Life at Dickinson College from 1853 to 1854: Class of 1857," at chronicles. dickinson.edu/studentwork/tiphenallen/studentbody/classof1857.htm.
- 95. Kinnear, The First 100 Years, 14.
- 96. Kinnear, The First 100 Years, 60.
- 97. Bristol News (Bristol, Va. and Tenn.) 8, no. 23 (4 February 1873), 1.
- 98. Kinnear, The First 100 Years, 72.
- 99. Temple, The Bugle's Echo 1, 129.
- 100. "Virginia Agricultural and Mechanical College," Daily Dispatch (Richmond) (7 January 1880), 2.
- 101. Kinnear, The First 100 Years, 111, 119.
- 102. Furgurson, "Thomas Nelson Conrad," and Kinnear, The First 100 Years, 120.
- 103.107th Annual Catalogue of Dickinson College for the Academical Year, 1889–90 (Carlisle, Pa.: Dickinson College, 1890), 10.
- 104."Virginia News," *Alexandria Gazette* (Alexandria, Va.) (24 July 1890), 3, and "Thomas Nelson Conrad Dies in Washington," *Times-Dispatch* (Richmond, Va.) (6 January 1905), 5.
- 105."Primary Documents in American History: Morrill Act," The Library of Congress Web Guides, www.loc.gov/rr/program/bib/ourdocs/Morrill.html, and Daniel W. Hamilton, "Morrill Land Grant Act of 1862," Major Acts of Congress, 2004, ENCYCLOpedia.com, www.encyclopedia.com/ doc/1G2-3407400192.html, accessed 8 January 2016.
- 106. Virginia had been influenced in part by William Ballard Preston, a member—and most likely the head—of the Olin and Preston Institute Board of Trustees, a well-known political figure, and a Unionist-turned secessionist who had submitted the Ordinance of Secession at the Virginia Convention of 1861. See biographical information on Preston in Laura Jones Wedin, "A Summary of 19th Century Smithfield," *Smithfield Review* 18 (2014), 79–95, and Cox, "Olin and Preston Institute and Preston and Olin Institute, Part I," 56–57. For information on the Virginia

Convention, see Nelson D. Lankford, "Virginia Convention of 1861," *Encyclopedia Virginia*, a publication of the Virginia Foundation for the Humanities and the Library of Virginia, *www. encyclopedia.com/doc/1G2-3407400192.ht.*

- 107. PBS, "Reconstruction Timeline: 1867–1877," *Reconstruction: The Second Civil War*, at www. *pbs.org/wgbh/amex/reconstruction/states/sf_timeline2.html*.
- 108. "General Assembly of Virginia," Staunton Spectator (15 March 1870), 2.
- 109. Kinnear, The First 100 Years, 29.
- 110. Kinnear, The First 100 Years, 19-29.
- 111. "Letter from Richmond," Alexandria Gazette and Virginia Advertiser (Alexandria, Va.) (17 December 1870), 2.
- 112. "Letter from Richmond," Alexandria Gazette (23 December 1870), 2.
- 113. Kinnear, The First 100 Years, 30.
- 114. Kinnear, for example, wrote: "Prospects for the school seemed to be excellent in all respects except one-finances" (*The First 100 Years*, 14).
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- 117. Montgomery Messenger (6 July 1870).
- 118. Anonymous, "Early History of the Blacksburg United Methodist Church," adapted from "Church and Community: A History of the Blacksburg United Methodist Church," (n.p.). Photocopy given to the author by the church in 2015.
- 119. John S. Apperson, "Sketch of the Life of Dr. Harvey Black," handwritten manuscript, folder 8, Black-Kent-Apperson Papers, Ms1974-003, 6, 14–15, Special Collections, Virginia Tech.
- 120. Letter from John E. Penn to Harvey Black, 6 January 1871, folder 2, Ms1974-003. Penn's constituency can be found in Cynthia Miller Leonard, comp., *The General Assembly of Virginia, July 30, 1619–January 11, 1978: A Bicentennial Register of Members* (Richmond: Virginia State Library, 1978), 512.
- 121. Letter from Penn to Black, 14 February 1871, folder 2, Ms1974-003.
- 122. "Presidents of Virginia Tech: President Thomas Nelson Conrad," University Archives, University Libraries, *spec.lib.vt.edu/archives/125th/pres/conrad.htm*.
- 123. Kinnear, *The First 100 Years*, 36–37. Miller's constituency can be found in Leonard, comp., The *General Assembly of Virginia*, 509, 514.
- 124. Kinnear, The First 100 Years, 32.
- 125. "Virginia Legislation: The Educational Land Scrip," Daily State Journal (Alexandria, Va.) (14 March 1872), 4.
- 126. "Virginia Legislation," Daily State Journal (14 March 1872), 4, and Kinnear, The First 100 Years, 39-41.
- 127. Ruffner, Anderson, and Sutherlin, "Virginia Agricultural and Mechanical College," 1.
- 128."An ACT to Appropriate the Income Arising from the Proceeds of the Land Scrip [A]ccruing to Virginia under Act of Congress of July 2, 1862, and the Acts Amendatory Thereof," Acts and Joint Resolutions Passed by the General Assembly of the State of Virginia at [I]ts Session of 1871–'72 (Richmond: R. F. Walker, Supt of Public Printing, 1872), 312.
- 129. Kinnear, *The First 100 Years*, 46, and Dorothy McCombs, "Blacksburg, Virginia," *spec.lib. vt.edu/bicent/recoll/history.htm.*
- 130. Deed Book S, 653, Montgomery County Court Records.
- 131. "First Report of the Board of Visitors of [t]he Agricultural and Mechanical College," Virginia School Report 1872 (Richmond: R. F. Walker, Superintendent [of] Public Printing, 1872), 1, online at books.google.com/books?id=C_IsAQAAMAAJ&pg=RA1-PA2&lpg=RA1-PA2&dq= president+of+preston+and+olin&source=bl&ots=rdYunz5mt3&sig=WJNsS8piocO snUvjIryul1-bgis&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0CEIQ6AEwBmoVChMI14aLyPKxyAIVgho-Ch1SEg0V#v=onepage&q=president%20of%20preston%20and%20olin&f=false.
- 132. "First Report of the Board of Visitors," 3.
- 133. "Kinnear, The First 100 Years, 110.

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Change Amidst Tradition: The First Two Years of the Burruss Administration at VPI

Faith Skiles

On May 25, 1921, Julian Ashby Burruss, president of Virginia Polytechnic Institute,¹ sat down to write Lawrence Price, president of the alumni association. The letter to Dr. Price was just one communication in a flurry of correspondence Burruss, the institution's first alumnus to hold the position, initiated during his first two years in office. In this letter, though, the usually ultra-professional and guarded Burruss wrote on a more personal level. In answering Dr. Price's assertion that some among the alumni thought that "a few things ... might be different," Burruss responded, "I have long ago learned that one cannot please everybody, so my policy is to go ahead and try to do what I believe and what my counselors and friends think is best and let it go at that."² This philosophy can be seen in his actions. Throughout the first two years of his administration, Burruss bucked tradition and worked tirelessly to implement his vision for the school, a vision that would bring radical change to the all-male agricultural and mechanical college known popularly as VPI. The changes he instituted reshaped the school's administration, expanded its curriculum offerings, changed its military requirements, and ultimately altered its relationship with women.

In pursuing his vision for the school, Burruss was an advocate, and first and foremost, he advocated for Virginia Polytechnic Institute. A perusal of his professional correspondence from 1919 to 1921 reveals a man deeply committed not only to the institution of VPI but also to its growth. It shows a man who, on the one hand, acted as fund-raiser and visionary but, on the other, as the settler-of-all-questions—from the types of table covers that should be used to which faculty members would live in which house and to who might be stealing the laundry.³ He seemed equally dedicated to communications with the Virginia governor's office as with interested parents and students.⁴

Histories recounting the years of the Burruss administration already exist, written by esteemed authors such as Duncan Lyle Kinnear, Peter Wallenstein, Harry Downing Temple, and Clara B. Cox; however, this article strives to provide a more nuanced look at the first two years of this dynamic educator's tenure at VPI.⁵ The picture that unfolds illuminates



Figure 1. Julian Burruss, photograph (1933-1934). Historical Photograph Collection, Special Collections, University Libraries, Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, VA. https://imagebase.lib.vt.edu/view_record.php? URN=01TE0812030910&mode=popup

an administrator dedicated to a specific vision for the school. This vision centered on expanding and growing the school and in the process changing its designation from a military/technical school similar to VMI to a designation as a standard university. In the process of enacting his vision for VPI, Burruss called for reorganizing the school's structure, expanding its curriculum, and changing its military requirements. In his quest to execute his vision, he also facilitated the admission of women and the hiring of the first female instructor. Burruss worked to put his vision for the school in place amidst great change within America. So, this article also illustrates ways in which Burruss maneuvered in an early 1920s America to bring change to VPI against a backdrop of tradition as well as within a changing post-war America.

Beginning

On June 12, 1919, the VPI Board of Visitors unanimously elected Julian A. Burruss to succeed Joseph D. Eggleston as president of the Blacksburg, Virginia, institution.⁶ As Burruss began his tenure, veterans were returning from World War I, and America had begun to move toward a post-war world. Federal programs for veterans gained wide support. The Nineteenth Amendment, giving women suffrage, gained ratification, and progressive ideas concerning social hygiene and health continued to remain popular. And while more liberal ideas concerning education began to flourish in the North and Midwest, conservatism still reigned in the South.⁷ Within this

flux of change and tradition, Burruss entered a VPI world that was more in debt and more disorganized than he had initially thought.⁸

Although elected to the presidency on June 12, Burruss did not actually arrive in Blacksburg until the following September 1. Not knowing which way the board of visitors would vote concerning his candidacy, he had decided to accept a summer instructorship at the University of Chicago, an appointment that both he and the board agreed should be kept.⁹ Regardless, throughout the summer of 1919, Burruss maintained a steady correspondence with Theodoric P. Campbell, dean of the general faculty, who assumed the duties of "acting executive of the institution" for the summer.¹⁰ For the most part, Dean Campbell tried to defer decisions to Burruss. Campbell did, however, approve a \$.60 raise for three employees, who had stated, "[W]e can not live on what we are getting"; authorized a return to the "old uniform: the blue and gray"; told the Daughters of the Confederacy that he would like to grant their request to sell lunches on campus, but that he could not; and asked the mayor of Blacksburg to please control the town boys who were swimming in the quarry.¹¹

At the beginning of July, Campbell's communications to Burruss seemed to center on such mundane questions as whether the mess hall should install "vitrolite" on the tops of the tables. Burruss's responses, however, asked for things such as copies of allotments; enrollment numbers; and information on funding, faculty, and expenditures.¹² As July moved into August, Campbell's letters grew longer and longer as he attempted to give the new president all the information he asked for. As September 1, 1919, approached, Campbell seemed more than willing to hand over the administration to Burruss. At one point during the summer, Campbell tried to warn the president-elect about his upcoming job, writing, "I'm sorry to have to tell you, since you necessarily inherit it, but scarcely a day passes that does not bring forth some new vexations and annoying problems."¹³ If Burruss was moved in any respect by this declaration, he did not indicate it in his letters to Campbell.¹⁴

After arriving in Blacksburg, Burruss continued his fact-finding efforts. He examined the administrative structure, the curriculum, the physical plant, and faculty responsibilities. When he could not access information, he asked for it, officially, in writing.¹⁵ What the VPI Board of Visitors and others did not know was that Burruss was amassing information that would help him enact his vision for the school. He was gathering information to assess the present condition of the school and to determine the best course for initiating changes—changes he hoped would allow for growth and expansion and a different school-type designation for the small, rural military college.

Reorganization and Curriculum Expansion

When Burruss finished gathering information, he converted his findings into a multi-page document that turned the college structure on its head. This report called for a fundamental reorganization of the school's leadership, for military changes, and for a curriculum expansion. It proved to be thorough and extensive. Burruss's attention to detail and the professionalism and the speed with which he amassed such a report allowed him to persuade the board to pass his extensive reorganization plan without much opposition or change.

In the report, Burruss proposed changes to the administrative structure of the college. He called for eliminating three of six deanships and setting the rest of the college under the leadership of the commandant, a health officer, and a business manager. According to Burruss's reasoning, this plan streamlined the number of people who reported directly to the president and more evenly distributed responsibilities.¹⁶

By declaring that "progress almost invariably means change," Burruss also called for revisions to the curriculum. He believed that since VPI now existed in a post–World War I world, the college needed to adapt to the changing times.¹⁷ In his curriculum plan, Burruss proposed eliminating courses that underperformed (persistent low enrollment) as well as restructuring and revising courses not well adapted to new technologies developed during the war. He called for the elimination of political science and economic courses, which would be replaced with courses in social science to address the "social unrest" of post-war American society.¹⁸

Significantly, in order to push forward the growth of the college, which was one of Burruss's primary objectives in his vision to produce change, he called for the addition of courses to train teachers for vocational education. Specifically, he called for "a course (or courses) in: Education in Trades and Industries."¹⁹ In adding this curriculum line, Burruss could take advantage of federal funding for colleges via the Smith-Hughes Act.²⁰ Burruss also proposed new curricula in agronomy and in animal and dairy husbandry.²¹ Also, in order to increase VPI's standing amongst colleges and increase its academic status, Burruss extensively researched and asked for an increase in the admission requirements to the college: no less than 15 units of high school work in particular courses.²² These additions to the curriculum and structural changes laid the foundation Burruss felt was needed to grow VPI and make it relevant in a post-war America. The growth he called for, however, came with a price.

Perhaps the bane of every college or university president's existence is the need for money. Colleges cannot grow and cannot conduct classes without money. Julian Burruss's records show that he spent much time constructing letters to various people about funding. Money was important and Burruss knew it. He also knew that one of his first tasks in implementing his vision for the school would be to increase the amount of money the school was awarded from the state legislature, its main source for monies.

Primary funding for VPI, a land-grant school, came from the Virginia General Assembly. In order to get this funding, Burruss needed to prepare and submit a budget to the governor's office. In 1919, the governor's office in Richmond announced a new set of guidelines for budget requests that every public college in Virginia had to follow. Therefore, Julian Burruss's very first budget request needed to follow a different structure than any previous VPI budget. In the 1920 request, Burruss asked for large increases in the school's funding and explained in detail his reasoning for these increases. He prepared the documents meticulously, rolled them, placed them in tubes (he was not supposed to fold them), and then sent them to Richmond.²³ He instructed VPI alumni in the legislature to quietly look out for the budget but not to lobby strongly for the school.²⁴ His strategy worked and the legislature approved large increases for VPI.²⁵

Julian Burruss, however, did not depend solely on the legislature for more money in growing the institution. He realized that he would need to look at many different ways in which he could finance the curricula at VPI and thus expand the school's offerings. One such way was to look at federal programs for which VPI might qualify. The Smith-Hughes funds mentioned above proved to be one such program.²⁶ In the early years of Burruss's administration, he wrote often to the state superintendent of education in Richmond, Harris Hart, concerning VPI's use of Smith-Hughes funds.²⁷ Burruss also became aware of other funding available on the national level, funding arising from national concerns surrounding the end of World War I. This search for funding brought another, different, radical change to the institution by altering its relationship with women.

Curriculum Expansion Leads to First Woman Instructor

Culture, trends, and movements in America of the late 1919s and early 1920s dictated much of the national policy created for federal funding opportunities for colleges. World War I veterans returned home from the front in France ready to restart or rebuild their lives. And Progressive Era America was ready to help. In 1918, Congress passed the Vocational Rehabilitation Act, which established the Federal Board for Vocational Education. Under this act, returning honorably discharged soldiers qualified for vocational rehabilitation training. Also under this act, President Burruss



Figure 2. Anna Campbell photograph (undated). Historical Photograph Collection, Special Collections, University Libraries, Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, VA. https:// imagebase.lib.vt.edu/view_record.php?UR N=VT0604041102&mode=popup.

secured funding to expand VPI's offerings to include a course that prepared returning disabled servicemen for college vocational training, an action that brought the first female instructor to the VPI campus.

Anna Campbell, Dean Theodoric Campbell's daughter, agreed in the spring of 1920 to undertake the education of disabled returning servicemen in "elementary subjects."²⁸ The classes were to be taught on the campus of VPI and would work in tandem with VPI courses such as "Drafting, Blue Print Reading and shop knowledge."²⁹ In a letter to the federal vocational director, Burruss stated, "I think we were quite fortunate in being able to get Miss Campbell to undertake the work"; however, he also lamented, "I have felt at times that it might have been better to have a man as a teacher rather than a young woman." He ends the letter by describing the agreement to have Anna Campbell teach returning veterans elementary subjects on the campus "as quite agreeable to us."³⁰

It was, no doubt, "quite agreeable" because the Federal Board for Vocational Education would pay \$150 per month to the college for conducting the program. They also agreed to pay other expenses incurred by the veterans, such as books and supplies, as well as Anna Campbell's salary.³¹ This cooperation between the Federal Board for Vocational Education and VPI allowed Burruss to expand the work of the college while covering the expense. With this program, he brought change to the curriculum, but he also initiated radical change in the college's relationship with women by adding its first female instructor. Anna Campbell was listed as "Instructor in Education" along with other faculty members for the 1920–1921 school year in the "President's Report to the Board."³²

Correspondence found in the Burruss records indicates that Ms. Campbell took her work very seriously. In a letter to Burruss in 1921, she tells the president, "Mother says I stay from breakfast till supper everyday, but that is an exaggeration." She wrote Burruss at the time to express her need for more light in her classroom "as a good many of the soldiers, especially those who were gassed, complain constantly of their eyes."³³ She was not, however, sure who should pay for the bulbs, VPI or the Federal Board; she suggested the government pay for them. Alas, after this letter, the light bulb trail goes cold, but the records of Anna Campbell as an instructor at VPI do not.³⁴

The college reorganization and curriculum changes introduced by Burruss changed the way VPI operated; however, little evidence exists within Burruss's correspondence that the faculty objected much to the changes. Theodoric Campbell's son, the college registrar, did resign and leave before the board meeting that eliminated his job. When asked to help with registration, his father readily agreed to pitch in until the new organization was in place, especially since it was his son who was leaving before the end of the term.³⁵ Campbell also resigned as dean, only to be reinstated by the board.³⁶ In *The First 100 Years: A History of Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University*, Kinnear claimed that Burruss's reorganization of the college "was so successful in effecting financial savings that he soon paid off all old debts and embarked on an extensive program of repairs and improvements to the entire physical plant."³⁷

Military Changes

Hand-in-hand with structural changes, curriculum expansion, and securing federal funds for specific lines of instruction was Julian Burruss's vision to change the college designation of VPI. Correspondence found in his records points to his desire to move VPI away from a more restricted designation as a military/technical school, similar to VMI, and move it into a designation as a standard college.³⁸ So in Burruss's 1920 "Report to the Board of Visitors," the VPI president did not just call for modifications to academic courses, he also called for a change in military requirements. He wanted to alter the structure of and reduce the time spent in military training.

According to Burruss, in 1920, no other college in America required as much military training as VPI. Burruss believed that the amount of time spent

in military/physical training and theoretical military instruction reduced the quality of students' academic work. This may have been true since reports on the graduation standards of VPI graduates did not parallel standards of similar colleges.³⁹ So, as a part of the sweeping reforms passed by the board of visitors in 1920, the time spent in military training and instruction was reduced, and ROTC became an elective that juniors and seniors could choose.

These military changes did not come without some criticism. Despite the fact that VPI required more military training than any other college in America, the presiding military officer at VPI at the time, Commandant Clifford Carson, vehemently opposed the reduction of hours. Part of this opposition may have come from the commandant's misunderstanding of "each credit-hour being equal to **three** time hours [emphasis added by Burruss]."⁴⁰ Misunderstanding or not, Carson moved quickly to alert the country's War Department of the changes at VPI that he felt were "likely to take us off the list of Distinguished Colleges, which will be a great loss to the prestige of the institution."⁴¹

Carson's criticisms made to Burruss and his communication of those criticisms to the War Department produced a three and one-half page, pointby-point response to the commandant from the VPI president. In the letter, Burruss did not mince words. To the assertion that VPI would lose its status on the Distinguished College list, Burruss asked Carson why he felt that VPI needed "50% more time than other colleges for military theory and practice" in order to qualify when other colleges were qualifying with much less time.⁴² Burruss also countered Carson's claims that he was not informed of the decisions regarding the corps. Burruss asserted that he did confer with Carson and that changes were discussed and disseminated in faculty meetings. In regard to Carson's communication with the War Department, Burruss wrote that if Carson had conferred with "the immediately accessible college chief" first and verified his assumptions, his letter to Washington could be "more clearly justified by fact."⁴³

Burruss called upon Carson to immediately write the War Department to "correct any erroneous or misleading impressions which his communication transmitted."⁴⁴ Carson did tell Burruss that he communicated to the War Department his misunderstanding as to "the time allowance for advanced ROTC."⁴⁵ And as for Burruss, a footnote to a letter addressed to his secretary, Jean Glassett, and referring to the "Commandant matter" stated that he now had things in "splendid shape" with the "Washington authorities."⁴⁶ Commandant Carson's orders for the next school year took him away from VPI, which was not unusual. Commandants often served a year at a time. In a last letter to Burruss, there was no overt mention of the difficulties between the two men. Carson did write, however, that "it was a source of great gratification to me

to see the college on the distinguished list again" and that he felt the year had been successful. Instead of mentioning the differences he had with Burruss as the most difficult part of the year, Carson posited, "The unusual supply of corn whiskey was the worst feature." He understood, however, that "VMI had the same trouble."⁴⁷ The consumption of whiskey by cadets may have truly been a very serious problem. A year later, in the yearbook, cadets bemoaned the raid on a nearby still, which had supplied them with the drink that made "the silvery moon look green, or pink, as we let the world go by."⁴⁸

Despite Commandant Carson's objections, military requirements at VPI were altered, a move that helped situate VPI closer to a designation of a standard university (a central goal in Burruss's vision) and paved the way for further changes in ensuing years. In 1924, military policy changed again, allowing cadets to opt out of the military requirement entirely during their junior and senior years.⁴⁹

Search for Further Curriculum Expansion and the Admission of Women

As 1920 rolled into 1921, Julian Burruss continued his quest to grow VPI. In the fall of 1920, his fact-finding missions extended beyond the campus at Blacksburg. Indeed, between November 8 and November 20, Burruss visited ten midwestern land-grant colleges. On this trip, he travelled to Ohio State University; Purdue University; and Michigan, Kansas, and Iowa agricultural colleges, as well as to the universities of Illinois, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Nebraska, and Missouri.⁵⁰ Before leaving Blacksburg, however, he asked his newly hired health officer, Dr. W. A. Brumfield, to look into the possibility that VPI might qualify for funds under another federal program: the United States Interdepartmental Social Hygiene Board. This particular search for funding from the Social Hygiene Board proved pivotal in another of VPI's major changes in the first two years of the Burruss administration: the admittance of women to the school.

The United States Interdepartmental Hygiene Board arose from ideas and movements of the Progressive Era, specifically the Social Hygiene Movement, which was characterized by a scientific approach to the control of venereal disease, the regulation of prostitution and vice, and sex education. Social hygienists found a reason for requesting federal money: rising rates of venereal disease among soldiers. This "danger" to America's soldiers provided the impetus for establishing federal policy regarding social hygiene.

In the fall of 1920, after hiring Dr. Brumfield, Burruss asked the doctor to examine a pamphlet from the Interdepartmental Social Hygiene Board on applying for financial assistance in the training of teachers in social hygiene. After reviewing the information, Dr. Brumfield replied to Burruss that he was "of the opinion that it is worth while for us to apply for financial assistance."⁵¹ Burruss then wrote to T. A. Storey, executive secretary of the Interdepartmental Social Hygiene Board; obtained the forms to apply for the funding; and learned from Storey that the forms would also need to be signed by the Virginia superintendent for education, Harris Hart.⁵²

Burruss initiated all of this correspondence about funding from the Social Hygiene Board in the weeks just before January 13, 1921. On this date, Burruss met with the VPI Board of Visitors and asked the board to approve the admission of women. He also asked the board to approve the application for funding through the Interdepartmental Social Hygiene Board. It becomes apparent in his correspondence after the board of visitors meeting that Burruss believed the admission of women would increase VPI's chances to receive these monies.

Before the January 13 meeting, Burruss prepared a lengthy thirteenplank document outlining the reasons VPI should admit women. According to Burruss's enumerated justifications, women, who having been granted the right to vote were now full citizens, desired to come to VPI as it was the only Virginia school for whites offering agricultural classes, and besides agricultural classes, women would also be interested in science and technical classes. Burruss pointed to the need for women in home demonstration work and noted that VPI was the only Virginia school that could provide white women with such training. He advised the board that there were no distinctions as to gender in the guidelines for land-grant colleges. He also stated that VPI could lose federal funding pending in Congress under the Smoot bill if the college did not add a home economics department.⁵³Additionally, he purported that the admission of women would be an inducement for professors to come to VPI since their daughters could attend the school. He assured the board that they indeed possessed the authority to admit women without going through the state legislature and even offered his house as a housing option.⁵⁴ (He also probably told them, off the record, that not many women would attend, something he wrote in letters to assure worried alumni.⁵⁵) The board voted unanimously to admit women.

The board also voted to apply for funds available through the Social Hygiene Board, although Burruss says nothing about this decision in his official "General Report." A few days after the board meeting, on January 17, Burruss sent the application for funding to Harris Hart, asking for his signature on the application. Two days later, Burruss wrote T. A. Storey, Social Hygiene Board executive secretary, to inform him that the application had been sent to Superintendent Hart, who, Burruss believed, would soon forward it to Storey. In this letter to Storey, Burruss explained the "slight delay in completing" the application:

I was waiting for our trustees to meet to pass on the matter and also to authorize the admission of women to this college. The trustees decided to admit women to all courses beginning in September of this year, and they authorized me to make application for help in developing the department of physical training and hygiene with the assurance that this college is prepared to fully comply with the requirements of the Interdepartmental Social Hygiene Board in this connection.⁵⁶

Meanwhile, on the same day that Burruss wrote the above letter, Superintendent Hart declined to sign VPI's application because he had already signed the application of William and Mary for the funding.

This refusal prompted a flurry of letters between Hart, Storey, and Burruss. Burruss continued to make the case for funding for VPI. In a final correspondence from Burruss to Storey, dated February 11, 1921, the president indicated that his understanding of the situation at "present" was that if more funds were to become available, VPI's application would be "duly considered." Burruss then again made the case for funding for VPI. In summing up his appeal, he wrote:

Again, I may call attention to the fact that it has been decided to admit women to this institution, and it is desirable for such instruction for them. I presume that both men and women students will go into teaching from this institution and more largely in the future than in the past, and this together with the extension feature referred to above, it seems to me, makes this a good center for your work in Virginia.⁵⁷

The last year Congress appropriated funding for colleges through the Social Hygiene Board was 1921. VPI never received any money from the program, but it did receive five full-time and seven part-time regularly enrolled women students.

More than likely, Burruss believed in his thirteen points for the admission of women, but he also had a let's-do-it-now reason for approaching the board on January 13, 1921. He wanted money that would add yet another program to VPI's curriculum and thus continue to grow the college and enact his vision. His correspondence shows that he believed that the admittance of women would help VPI qualify for that funding.

While Burruss received limited disapproval for his reorganizational and military changes, the decision to admit women exacted more widespread

criticism. This criticism manifested in an incident during the summer school session of 1921. In a letter from the summer school director, J. W. Watson, to Burruss in order to inform the president "of everything," Watson related events that "constitute[d] the shady side of the Summer School Session." According to Watson, on the night of July 25, just after the students arrived, "various things appeared written on certain of the walks and on the roof of one of the barracks, in a general way derogatory of the coming of the girls." Watson told Burruss that the students as a majority disapproved of the graffiti and that "we thought it would be more effective to get the students themselves to handle it." Apparently, after the students' denouncement of the event, the rest of the summer session went smoothly.⁵⁸

Another source critical of the admittance of women was the corps of cadets. The 1921 yearbook, *The Bugle*, gives good insight into the reaction of the cadets to the coming of the "co-eds." In a section of the yearbook entitled the "Class History," a fictionalized story appears of a future cadet asking the VPI barber about the class of '21. In the story, the barber explained the end of hazing at the school during the tenure of the '21 class and the beginning of "rules" for the "rats" instead. The "barber" though, in ending his story, lamented a change that did not affect the class of '21 but nevertheless was instituted during 1921, the admission of women. In talking to the future cadet about the "past" class of '21, the fictional barber explained that the '21 boys should "thank their lucky stars that they graduated before the Co-eds changed the school." He continued, "Jest seems like VPI hasn't been the same since. Things are jest not like they used to be, and that's why I can't help 'membering that lucky bunch." The story is "signed" by "E. L. A. *Historian*."⁵⁹

E. L. A. (most probably Ernest Lynwood Andrews Jr., associate editorin-chief of the *Bugle*) was indeed a historian.⁶⁰ His story gave insight not only into the history of hazing at VPI, but also to the reaction of the corps to the admission of women. E. L. A.'s story was not the only evidence in the 1921 *Bugle* of the cadet reaction to the admission of women.

A section of the book called "The Hornet," which appeared at the end of the yearbook, proved to be especially helpful in gauging the reaction of VPI students to the admission of women. This section detailed graphically the feelings of the corps toward "co-eds." On page 2, a cartoon depicted 1921 activities at VPI as including football, war game practice, and artillery sighting exercises, while 1925 activities changed to playing croquet, dancing around the maypole, and a woman watering corn with a watering can.⁶¹ A story entitled "The Ballad of 'Growley' Shultz" accompanied the cartoon, which, among other lines, included the following:



Cartoon. "The Hornet" in The Bugle, 1921, The Bugle Archive, 15, *spec.lib.vt.edu/archives/bugle/*.

Now listen girls, Old "Growley" said, "I'll tell you of the time When V.P.I. was a he-man's school, and coeds were a crime...

We didn't have a crowd of women forever shedding tears, Instead of female farmerettes, we turned out engineers...

Now, hear me out; I'm really sick of all this feminine rot, We used to drink "corn licker" here, but where's your feminine sot?... Near the end of the poem, the author begins his final lament and in the process takes Burruss to task: Oh! Bring me back those good old days, those grand old days of yore, When "George" and "Phil," and "Bolvimk" Kent hung round the old bookstore,

They wore the good old Blue and Gray and not those gingham dresses, And they were full-fledged engineers when they got their B.S.'s. Where once our halls resounded with old "Tech Triumph's" refrain, Or the thrilling words of old "Play Ball" rang out again and again, You holler now: "Oh rooti-ti-toot for Burruss Normal Institute! We hope we win, we surely do," and a lot of other mush to boot.⁶²

The poem was signed "E. H. H. '21," and the author was most probably Ernest Hampton Hornbarger, who was described as the "poet laureate of the Class of 1921" on his senior page in the yearbook.⁶³ Other poems and stories in "The Hornet" section showed the disdain of the students for incoming coeds. An "ad" at the end of the section declared, "LADIES, A Golden Opportunity Awaits You, The Class of '21 is about to enter the matrimonial arena, Get them before they lose the notion. *Applications Now Being Received*. NO CO-EDS NEED APPLY."⁶⁴ The yearbook contained many pictures of women as "sponsors," and the language of the copy spoke often of women as objects of affection; women could be the objects of a cadet's desire and affection; however, cadets were not yet ready for women to be their classmates.⁶⁵

While alumni criticism most likely existed in these early years, not many graduates voiced their reservations in letters to Burruss. However, one alumnus did: Walter Priddy. Walter was the brother of Lawrence Priddy, head of the VPI Alumni Association. In writing Burruss, Priddy expressed his thoughts on admitting women:

I believe it would be far better for the Institution to confine it to young men, and that the presence of young ladies as students on the campus and in the class room will in many respects be objectionable to the young men who are now attending the Institution, or who may hereafter consider attending. I hope you will not consider putting in any domestic science or any other special work for young ladies which might attract them there.⁶⁶

In addressing Priddy's concerns, Burruss wrote: "There are … absolutely no sound reasons against [admitting women]," but assured him that "there will only be a very few women in attendance, and they will not be noticed."⁶⁷ Although Walter Priddy opposed the admission of women to VPI, it should

be noted that a scholarship exists in his name today, one that can be earned by Charlotte County students, male or female and of any race.⁶⁸

In examining reactions to the admission of women to VPI, it should be noted that not all of those reactions were negative. Many voiced support. In fact, most of the letters that reached Burruss's office, at least in the months immediately following the decision, supported women students, although the letters came from off campus. For example, a letter from a local female high school principal as well as a letter from a University of Wisconsin alumnus voiced support.⁶⁹ Additionally, the Virginia League of Women Voters passed a resolution in favor of VPI's decision to admit women.⁷⁰

Ella Graham Agnew also sent Burruss a letter, stating that she was "delighted to see from the papers ... and to hear from friends ... that VPI will open its doors to women next September."⁷¹ Agnew, for whom Agnew Hall on Virginia Tech's campus is named, was the first woman appointed as a home demonstration agent in the country. During her tenure as an agent, she worked in conjunction with and later for VPI.⁷²

Of especial note in connection with the admittance of women are letters between Burruss and Mrs. M. M. Davis of the Cooperative Extension Work in Agriculture and Home Economics for the State of Virginia. In a letter dated October 22, 1920, Mrs. Davis told Burruss that she did not believe Home Demonstration Work in Virginia could progress until women could receive training in a local institution.⁷³ It seems that Burruss agreed. Writing on January 17, 1921, Burruss told Mrs. Davis that the board had voted to admit women and in the process of securing that vote that he "took occasion to call attention of the Board to your letter of October 22nd." He went on to say that Mrs. Davis therefore had "some part of the credit for securing this action."74 On January 11, 1921, Mrs. Davis had pushed her point on the admittance of women with Burruss by sending him a short, curt note asking for him to "put in writing your attitude towards having women admitted to the classes at Virginia Polytechnic Institute."⁷⁵ After hearing, just days later, of the admittance of women, another short note relayed: "I am so pleased that V.P.I. has opened her doors to women. Just as soon as it is possible ... I will go over with Mr. Hutcheson the matter of courses we should like offered."76 Mrs. Davis was not just happy to see women admitted, she was also ready to suggest curricula for them.

Results of a Radical Vision for Change

Undoubtedly, the first two years of the Burruss administration brought radical change to VPI. In those two years, the organization of the college completely changed. Faculty members needed to adjust to fewer deans, more programs, and tighter budgets. Little evidence exists, however, that they objected. The military segment of the college adjusted to less time in military training and instruction and continued to earn a place on the "distinguished college" list published by the War Department.⁷⁷

Also, in these two years, VPI radically changed its relationship with women. And while Burruss undoubtedly had a "get it done now" reason for admitting women in January of 1921, the admission of women also dovetailed with his vision to move VPI towards a more inclusive standard university designation. It remains, though, that few women came to the school in those first years, and they faced considerable challenges.

Nevertheless, women did come. In fact, in the first year that women were eligible for admittance, twelve braved the overwhelmingly male atmosphere of the campus and began classes, five as full-time and seven as part-time students. Of the five full-time students, none chose the curriculum developed for home demonstration work. Mary E. Brumfield, Carrie T. Sibold, and Lucy Lee Lancaster chose applied biology; Billie Kent Kabrich selected applied chemistry; and Ruth Louise Terrett chose civil engineering.⁷⁸ In light of an earlier change VPI had made in its relationship with women, when those first co-eds arrived on campus in the fall of 1921, the first female instructor, Anna Campbell, was working steadily in her classroom.

Julian Burruss was indeed a visionary. He had a vision for change at VPI, and he worked tirelessly to realize that vision for the school. Perhaps ironically, beyond his desire to bring about structural change, curriculum change, and military change—changes that did radically alter the future course of the school—what Burruss is most remembered for are not these changes. His enduring legacy is the admission of women.

Endnotes

- The school's official name at that time was Virginia Agricultural and Mechanical College and Polytechnic Institute, but most people shortened it to Virginia Polytechnic Institute or, simply, VPI.
- Lawrence T. Price to Dr. Julian A, Burruss, May 23, 1921, and Julian A. Burruss to Dr. Lawrence Price, May 25, 1921, Records of Julian A. Burruss, President, Virginia Polytechnic Institute, 1906–1946, RG 2/8 folder 163, Special Collections, University Libraries, Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, Va. Unless cited otherwise, all records can be found in Special Collections, Virginia Tech.
- For discussion on vitrolite see Theodoric Campbell to Dr. Julian Burruss, July 22, 1919, and Julian Burruss to Dean T. P. Campbell, July 23, 1919, RG 2/8 folder 81. For discussion on housing, among others, see Julian Burruss to Mrs. F.S. Glassett, August 29, 1920, and Julian Burruss to Mrs. Glassett, August 9, 1920, RG 2/8 folder 102. For the lost laundry see "Memorandum for President Burruss" from the Commandant, May 27, 1920, folder 84.
- For correspondence with the governor and other high-ranking state officials, see "A–D Correspondence, 1919–1920", RG 2/8 folder 163. Correspondence with parents can be found in many miscellaneous folders in RG 2/8.

- 5. Duncan Lyle Kinnear, The First 100 Years: A History of Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (Blacksburg, Va.: VPI Educational Foundation, 1972); Peter Wallenstein, Virginia Tech, Land-Grant University, 1872–1997: History of a School, a State, a Nation (Blacksburg, Va.: Pocahontas Press, 1997); Harry Downing Temple, The Bugle's Echo 3, 4 (6 vols., Blacksburg, Va.: Virginia Corps of Cadets, Inc., 1998, 1999); Clara B. Cox, Generations of Women Leaders at Virginia Tech (Blacksburg, Va.: Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, 1996).
- 6. Temple, The Bugle's Echo 3, 2242.
- 7. See Wallenstein, *Virginia Tech, Land-Grant University*, chapter 8, for a discussion on land-grant colleges during these years.
- 8. Kinnear, *The First 100 Years*, 255, and letter from Julian Burruss to Dr. Dodd, March 1, 1920, RG 2/8 folder 5. Lamenting the structure and program at VPI to his mentor at the University of Chicago, Burruss states: "I cannot imagine a more unsatisfactory program than our students are required to follow here."
- 9. Kinnear, The First 100 Years, 254.
- 10. At times, when his correspondence was more executive in nature, Dean Campbell signed his title as "Acting Executive of the Institution," RG 2/8 folder 81.
- 11. On asking for a raise, see handwritten document asking for a raise. On changing the uniforms back to the blue and gray, see Dean of the General Faculty to The Zone Supply officer, Coca Cola Building Baltimore, Md., July 16, 1919. On selling lunches, see Dean of the Faculty to Mrs. Minnie E. Woolwine, July 25, 1919. On boys swimming in the quarry, see Dean of the General Faculty to Mr. David Stanger, Mayor, Town of Blacksburg, Va., July 15, 1919, RG 2/8 folder 81.
- 12. See correspondence between Burruss and Campbell, Records of Julian A. Burruss, RG 2/8 folder 81.
- 13. Theodoric P. Campbell to Julian A. Burruss, August 8, 1919, RG 2/8 folder 81.
- 14. As a matter of fact, Burruss tells Campbell that when he arrives, he will "relieve you of a part of your burdens." Julian Burruss to Theodoric Campbell, August 23, 1919, RG 2/8 folder 81.
- 15. For example, in a letter addressed to "Dear Sir," found in folder 97, Burruss asks for a "written statement setting forth what you consider to be the duties of your office," which may be a general letter to members of the faculty. Julian Burruss to "Dear Sir," RG 2/8 Box 3 folder 97.
- "Special Report on Organization: 1919–1920 Report," Virginia Agricultural and Mechanical College and Polytechnic Institute: Reports of the President (Blacksburg, Va.: Bulletin of Virginia Polytechnic Institute, 1920), 109.
- 17. "Introduction to 1919–1920 Report," *Reports of the President*, 1920, 9. He considered this so important that it was the first plank in his goal statement under a heading he entitled "proximate objectives."
- 18. Reports of the President, 1920, 28-127.
- 19. "Special Report on Instruction: 1919–1920 Report," Reports of the President, 1920, 77.
- 20. "Smith-Hughes Act (Vocational Act of 1917)" (Public Law 37, 64th Congress, 2nd session, 1917).
- 21. "Special Report on Instruction," Reports of the President, 1920, 77.
- 22. *Reports of the President*, 1920, 28–127. His correspondence also includes letters to presidents of other institutions asking for their opinion on admission requirements.
- 23. Governor Westmoreland Davis to Julian Burruss, July 15, 1919, RG 2/8 folder 81. In the letter from the governor's office, Burruss was instructed not to fold the documents but to roll them and send them back in the tubes in which the forms were sent to Burruss.
- Correspondence to state officials about the budget can be found in folder "A-D correspondence, 1919–1920," RG 2/8 folder 163; for a specific example, see Dr. Lawrence T. Price to the Chairman of the Welfare Committee, April 27, 1920, RG 2/8 folder 163.
- 25. "1919–1920 Second General Report," Reports of the President, 1920, 41–43.
- For a discussion on Smith-Hughes funds and the admission of women, see Leslie Ogg Williams, "Access and Inclusion: Women Students at VPI, 1914–1964" (master's thesis, Virginia Tech, 2006).
- 27. See Harris Hart folder, RG 2/8 folder 58.
- 28. Julian Burruss to Mr. W. H. Magee, District Vocational Officer, May 6, 1920, RG 2/8 folder 165.
- 29. W. H. Magee to Mr. Myrong C. Kibler, November 16, 1920, RG 2/8 folder 165.

- 30. Burruss to Magee, May 6, 1920.
- 31 "Contract for Special Instruction in Institutions," May 20, 1920, RG 2/8 folder 165.
- "1920–1921 General Report for the Year," Virginia Agricultural and Mechanical College and Polytechnic Institute: Reports of the President (Blacksburg, Va: Bulletin of Virginia Polytechnic Institute, 1921), 129.
- 33. Anna Campbell to Julian Burruss, November 7, 1921, RG 2/8 folder 182.
- 34. Annual Catalog of the Virginia Agricultural and Mechanical College and Polytechnic Institute, 1920–1921, 1921–1922, 1922–1923, on pages 18, 17, and 17, respectively. Anna Campbell is listed as an instructor in education at VPI through the 1922–1923 school year. Preliminary research points to her leaving the school at this time to pursue more education and planning to return and resume teaching.
- 35. Theo[doric P.] Campbell to Julian Burruss, April 6, 1920, RG 2/8 folder 82.
- 36. Theo[doric] P. Campbell to Julian Burruss, May 10, 1920, RG 2/8 folder 163.
- 37. Kinnear, The First 100 Years, 261.
- Julian Burruss to Superintendent Harris Hart, March 31, 1922, RG 2/8 folder 58; Superintendent Harris Hart to Julian Burruss, January 21, 1924, RG 2/8 folder 59.
- 39. Reports of the President, 1920, 28-127; see page 68.
- 40. Julian Burruss to The Professor of Military Science and Tactism, May 18, 1920, RG2/8, folder 84.
- 41. Burruss to The Professor of Military Science and Tactism.
- 42. Burruss to The Professor of Military Science and Tactism.
- 43. Burruss to The Professor of Military Science and Tactism.
- 44. Burruss to The Professor of Military Science and Tactism.
- 45. [Commandant C.] Carson to The President, Va. Poly. Inst., May 18, 1920, RG 2/8 folder 163.
- 46. Julian Burruss to Mrs. Glassett, July 31, 1920, RG2/8 folder 102.
- 47. Clifford Carson to Julian Burruss, June 21, 1920, RG 2/8 folder 84.
- 48. "The Hornet" in *The Bugle, 1921, The Bugle* Archive, 15, *spec.lib.vt.edu/archives/bugle/.* Whiskey very well may have been a problem. In a poem in the 1921 yearbook, the talents of a "Moonshine Bill" are extolled. In the poem, the author claims that:

Now, Moonshine Bill ran a private still,

And he catered to VPI, We had only to wink when we wanted a drink

For Bill kept a large supply.

He plied his trade, till a plot was laid,

By a traitor and a spy.

Poor Bill they slayed in the raid they made.

- 49. Temple, The Bugle's Echo 4, 2954.
- "Itinerary For Western Trip," found in the Jean Glassett folder, secretary to Julian Burruss, RG 2/8 folder 102.
- 51. W. A. Brumfield to Julian Burruss, November 10, 1920, RG 2/8 folder 78.
- 52. T. A. Story to Julian A. Burruss, November 29, 1921, RG 2/8 folder 58.
- 53. Ultimately, the Smoot bill did not pass Congress.
- 54. "General Report 1919–1920", Reports of the President, 1920, 142–145.
- 55. As an example, see letter to Mr. W.M. Priddy from Julian Burruss, August 4, 1921, RG 2/8 folder 256.
- 56. Julian Burruss to T. A. Storey, January 19, 1921, RG 2/8 folder 58.
- 57. Burruss to Storey, February 11, 1921, RG 2/8 folder 58.
- 58. J. W. Watson to President Julian Burruss, August 3, 1921, RG 2/8 folder 160.
- 59. The Bugle 1921, 49.
- 60. The only senior who was a member of the *Bugle* staff with the initials E.L.A. was Ernest Lynwood Andrews Jr.
- 61. "The Hornet," in The Bugle 1921, 2.
- 62. "The Ballad of 'Growley' Shultz," "The Hornet," in The Bugle 1921, 3.
- 63. "Senior Class: Ernest Hampton Hornbarger," The Bugle 1921, 66.

- 64. "The Hornet," in The Bugle 1921, 16.
- 65. There are numerous references to women as desired objects of affection, and every class, club, and team includes the picture of a female "sponsor."
- 66. W. M. Priddy to Mr. Julian Burruss, Pres., July 8, 1921, RG2/8, folder 256.
- 67. Julian Burruss to Mr. W. M. Priddy, August 4, 1921, RG 2/8 folder 256.
- Impact, a publication of the Virginia Tech Office of University Development (Blacksburg, Va.: Office of University Relations for University Development, 2012), 18–19.
- 69. Mrs. F. C. Berverley, Principal, to Pres. Julian Burruss, February 27, 1921, RG 2/8 folder 172; Dole P. Mason '20 to Dr. J. A. Burruss, January 24, 1921, RG 2/8 folder 165.
- 70. Edith Clark Cowles to Dr. Julian A. Burruss, February 17, 1921, RG 2/8 folder 180.
- 71. Ella Agnew to My Dear Mr. Burruss, April 6, 1921, RG 2/8 folder 169.
- 72. "Ella Graham Agnew (1871–1958)," vtpp.ext.vt.edu/about/ella-graham-agnew-1871–1958.
- 73. (Mrs.) M. M. Davis to Mr. J. A. Burruss, President, October 22, 1920, RG 2/8 folder 188.
- 74. Julian Burruss to Mrs. M. M. Davis, January 17, 1921, RG 2/8 folder 188.
- 75. Mrs. M. M. Davis to President Julian A. Burruss, January 11, 1921, RG 2/8 folder 188.
- 76. (Mrs.) M. M. Davis to Mr. Julian A. Burruss, President, January 25, 1921.
- "General Report for the Year 1921–1922," Virginia Agricultural and Mechanical College and Polytechnic Institute: Reports of the President (Blacksburg, Va.: Bulletin of Virginia Polytechnic Institute, 1922), 164.
- 78. Cox, Generations of Women Leaders at Virginia Tech, 7–9.

The Smithfield Review Volume 20, 2016 **Thomas Nelson Conrad:** Educator, Editor, Preacher, Spy

Clara B. Cox

Thomas Nelson Conrad, the second president of Preston and Olin Institute and the third, fourth, or fifth president of Virginia Agricultural and Mechanical College (VAMC, today's Virginia Tech), depending on how one counts Tech's top executives,¹ led a colorful—sometimes even life-threatening—existence. This note provides an abbreviated biography of the man.

Conrad was born on 1 August 1837 in Fairfax Court House, Virginia, to Nelson and Lavinia Thomas Conrad.² While growing up, young Conrad particularly enjoyed horseback riding, which he had accomplished by the age of 5. By the time he was 15, he had become "an expert horseman and a good pistol shot."³ Both would serve him well during the Civil War.

Conrad attended Fairfax Academy before enrolling in Dickinson College in 1853, about the time he turned 16 years old. He pursued religious studies, earning a bachelor's degree in 1857.⁴ During his college days, he was a member of the Phi Kappa Sigma fraternity and the Belles Lettres Literary Society, which he served as secretary and then president. He also forged a friendship with fellow student Daniel Mountjoy Cloud, who would play a role in Conrad's exploits during the Civil War.⁵



This lithograph of Thomas N. Conrad appeared in a Dickinson College yearbook in 1857, his senior year (courtesy of Archives and Special Collections, Dickinson College, Carlisle, Pennsylvania).

Thos Moonrad

Although Conrad received a master's degree from the institution in 1860, it is unlikely that he remained at or returned to the school—or took any additional courses—for any period during the years between the two degrees. A master of arts could be secured by "graduates of three years' standing, or more, who have in the meantime sustained a good moral character" and made application to the president, "accompanied by the usual fee (\$5) at least three days before the Commencement."⁶ Besides, he was employed in the District of Columbia during that time.

Following his undergraduate education, Conrad served as principal of Georgetown Institute, a Washington, D.C. school for boys, from 1857 to 1861.⁷ A Southern sympathizer, Conrad advised his students how to join the Confederate army after the Civil War started in April 1861.⁸ But that was not the limit of his pro-South activities. According to Civil War historian Craig Sodara, "By raising and lowering his window shades, Conrad would send messages to Confederate soldiers on the other side of the [Potomac]."⁹ It has been said that "no one in Georgetown was more defiantly pro-Confederate than Thomas Nelson Conrad,"¹⁰ who "did not hide his Confederate sympathies."¹¹ Conrad described himself as being "[h] ot-headed" and "impulsive to rashness" during that period of his life.¹²

Events organized by Conrad during his final commencement at Georgetown Institute led to his imprisonment. As he later wrote,

Some of the graduates' speeches undoubtedly smacked of the strongest Southern sentiment and when, at the close of the exercises, the band struck up "Dixie," the audience went wild. . . . Already I had been suspected of being too pronounced in my expression of disloyalty and that night I was arrested and conducted to prison, ironed and chained to prevent attempts at escape from the squad of guards, who marched me through crowded streets. . . . In a few days I was paroled under a promise not to leave the capital until regularly exchanged and for six weeks . . . the freedom of the city was mine I proceeded to get into more mischief without delay.¹³

That experience, he added, "hastened the abandonment of educational pursuits for the sterner ones of war."¹⁴ One of those war pursuits was a plan to kill Union Gen. Winfield Scott, who was considered a traitor by pro-Confederate Virginians. Conrad even obtained a musket for that purpose, but "peremptory orders from Richmond" stopped him from executing his plan.¹⁵

His temporary freedom from the prison became permanent—at least for a while—when he was taken to Union-held Fortress Monroe in

Hampton Roads, Virginia, and was exchanged along with hundreds of other prisoners.¹⁶ Conrad then proceeded to the Culpeper, Virginia, headquarters of Confederate Gen. J. E. B. Stuart, where the general appointed him for scouting duty and approved Maj. Dabney Ball's suggestion that Conrad "become a chaplain, with the rank of captain," for the 3rd Virginia Cavalry. Conrad later noted that perhaps "no officer but 'Jeb' Stuart would ever have hit upon the plan of directing me to carry out such orders as were assigned in the guise of a churchman militant."¹⁷ He spent most of his time as a scout,¹⁸ at least until late 1861.

On 17 December 1861, two days after the Confederate victory at Fredericksburg, Virginia, Conrad traveled to Richmond and personally offered his services to President Jefferson Davis as a spy, an offer accepted by the Confederate leader.¹⁹ The value of Conrad's subsequent intelligence-gathering activities was recognized in a note from Davis, dated 27 May 1864:

Please accept my thanks for the zealous and patriotic manner in which you have lately served the Confederacy by going within the enemy's lines. If the expression of my satisfaction at the efforts made by you for the advantage of our cause will afford you gratification, it is a pleasing duty to me to thank you for them.²⁰

During his espionage activities, Conrad proposed a plot to kidnap President Abraham Lincoln in September 1864. As he wrote in his memoirs:

One shrewd move, a skillful capture of somebody high in Federal authority, and the advantage then gained might equalize the struggle. Why was it not possible to capture Lincoln himself, take him into the Confederate lines and hold the Northern president as a hostage for peace? If such a plan were successful, there could be no doubt that the war would be at an end in a few weeks and who could tell, but that the South might gain in the treaty much, if not all, that had been left to the arbitrament of arms during the past three-and-a-half years.²¹

With approval from Confederate officials, Conrad secured the assistance of two other men, including his former Dickinson College classmate, Mountjoy Cloud; reconnoitered the White House to observe Lincoln's movements; and developed the final, detailed plans. But when the targeted day arrived and the would-be abductors were in place, the president's carriage was surrounded by a squad of Union cavalry troops, thwarting the kidnapping plans and causing Conrad to abandon any further such attempts. "Had [Lincoln] fallen into the meshes of the silken net we had spread for him," Conrad later wrote, "he would never have been the victim of the assassin's heartless, bloody and atrocious assault."²²

Soon after the war ended, Conrad was arrested, this time by a military boat captain, and returned once again to the Old Capitol Prison. As he later wrote,

President Lincoln had fallen a few nights before and the captain of the gunboat and his officers were so outraged in feeling, that I was thrown into double irons in a trice, stripped to the skin, searched and threatened with the hangman's noose before morning, for the captain informed me he was positively certain I had had a hand in the conspiracy and for ought he knew was in hiding after helping [Lincoln assassin John Wilkes] Booth escape.²³

After the boat landed, troops moved Conrad to the prison. During the trek, "more than one person in the crowd" along the streets mistook him for Booth and wanted to hang him. The gathering mob "made a rush for me," Conrad remembered, but the troops protected him, and he was delivered safely to the prison.²⁴

After a couple of weeks, during which time he was imprisoned in a cell near the suspected Lincoln assassination conspirators, Conrad was temporarily released and spent some time with his parents, who were then living in Leonardtown, Maryland, before he went back to the prison for his official release and return to Virginia.

That July, however, as he was visiting a young woman in King George County, Virginia, he was arrested, taken to Fredericksburg, and imprisoned yet again. During a transfer by train to another prison, he escaped and hid in the Blue Ridge Mountains for months afterwards.²⁵

In 1866, Conrad's father, Nelson, purchased a home in Upperville, Virginia. That same year, Thomas bought the Upperville Academy and began teaching there in September, a job he continued until 1868. On 4 October 1866, the 28-year-old educator wed Emma S. Ball, the woman he had been visiting on the occasion of his last arrest. The couple had seven children over the course of their marriage.²⁶

From Upperville, Conrad moved to Rockville and served as principal of Rockville Academy from 1869 to 1871.²⁷ His next job—again as a principal—was in Blacksburg, where he headed the Preston and Olin Institute for approximately one year, beginning in 1871. According to Virginia Tech historian Duncan Lyle Kinnear, he



Thomas Nelson Conrad was the only person to serve as president of both Preston and Olin Institute and Virginia Agricultural and Mechanical College (courtesy of Archives and Special Collections, Dickinson College, Carlisle, Pennsylvania).

seemed to have entered upon his task with great enthusiasm. Possessed as he was with a flair for writing and a "tongue for speaking," this ex-Confederate secret agent brought a new dimension of excitement to the school and to the town of Blacksburg.²⁸

In addition to heading the school, he served as a local preacher, at least in $1871.^{29}$

When Preston and Olin Institute became Virginia Agricultural and Mechanical College, the commonwealth's white land-grant school, in 1872, Conrad eagerly pursued the presidency. According to Kinnear, he had the "strong support of the Methodists, especially those having been connected with Preston and Olin Institute," and such influential men as Robert T. Preston, who had served on the institute's board of trustees, spoke on his behalf. However, the position went to another former Confederate officer, Charles L. C. Minor.³⁰

In 1873, Conrad purchased an interest in the *Montgomery Messenger* from John Sower and, according to the *Bristol News*, was expected to continue the paper with the other owner, a Mr. Carper. "Mr. Conrad is a gentleman of ability and culture and we shall expect that his impress upon the *Messenger* will be felt," the *Bristol News* predicted.³¹ Almost immediately after becoming editor of the *Messenger*, Conrad launched the

first of numerous editorial attacks on the VAMC Board of Visitors but not on the college itself.³² Regardless, he accepted a position at VAMC in 1877 as an adjunct professor heading a new Preparatory Department³³ and was named chair of English in 1880.³⁴

Conrad developed ties to Virginia's Readjuster Party,³⁵ a black and white coalition created in the late 1870s to "readjust" (reduce) Virginia's public debt and thereby free up money to invest in schools.³⁶ When that party swept into power in Virginia in the early 1880s, Conrad realized his dream of becoming president of VAMC. Called by Kinnear "the most colorful and controversial person ever to hold the office of president during the first century of the existence of the College,"³⁷ he made a number of improvements to the fledgling school, and it flourished for a while. But his political enemies created problems for him and VAMC, and when the Readjusters lost the governor's race in 1885, Conrad lost his job as well; he was removed from the presidency in 1886, four years after his appointment.³⁸ While in Blacksburg, he had briefly served as mayor of the town for three months in 1882, and the year after he left VAMC, he was mayor for one month.³⁹

In August 1887, Conrad returned to Maryland to be professor of agriculture and chair of the faculty at Maryland Agricultural College.⁴⁰ In 1889, he received another degree from Dickinson College: a master of science.⁴¹ He returned to Washington in 1890 as a special agent of the census office charged with collecting statistics on tobacco.⁴² At some point, he became a general statistician for the office, remaining in the position until his death at age 67 on 5 January 1905. His wife, Emma, had died five years earlier. Conrad was interred with military honors in Blacksburg,⁴³ alongside Emma in Westview Cemetery.⁴⁴

Conrad is the only person to have served as president of both Preston and Olin Institute and Virginia Agricultural and Mechanical College.

Endnotes

- Virginia Tech counts John L. Buchanan, its second and fourth president, as its second president only, even though Buchanan served two entirely different terms, the first one from 1 March 1880 to 12 June 1880 and the second one from 14 August 1881 to 17 January 1882. The university does not count Scott Shipp, its third president, at all, reportedly because Shipp spent so little time in office—fewer than two weeks. Consequently, the university lists Conrad as its third president.
- Frederick Hatch, Protecting President Lincoln: The Security Effort, the Thwarted Plots and the Disaster at Ford's Theatre (Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland & Company, 2011), 64; Ernest B. Furgurson, "Thomas Nelson Conrad (1837–1905)," Dictionary of Virginia Biography, reprinted in Encyclopedia Virginia, at www.encyclopediavirginia.org/conrad_thomas_nelson_1837-1905; and "Thomas Nelson Conrad" (Dickinson Chronicles), at hd.housedivided.dickinson.edu/ node/5454, accessed 20 October 2015.

- 3. Capt. Thomas Nelson Conrad, *The Rebel Scout: A Thrilling History of Scouting Life in the Southern Army* (Washington, D.C.: National Publishing Company, 1904), 11.
- Captain Thomas N. Conrad, A Confederate Spy: A Story of the Civil War (New York: J. S. Ogilvie), 1892, 6; "Thomas Nelson Conrad (1837–1903)," Dickinson College Archives & Special Collections, at archives.dickinson.edu/people/thomas-nelson-conrad-1837-1905; and Furgurson, "Thomas Nelson Conrad."
- 5. "Thomas Nelson Conrad," Dickinson College Archives & Special Collections.
- 6. College Catalog, Dickinson College, n.p., 1860, 27.
- 7. "Thomas Nelson Conrad," Dickinson College Archives & Special Collections. The Dickinson archives listed the ending date for Conrad's principalship at the school as 1861, as did Conrad himself in Conrad, *A Confederate Spy*, 7. Furgurson, however, in "Thomas Nelson Conrad," incorrectly stated that he was still principal for the closing exercises in 1862.
- Ernest B. Furgurson, "Teacher, Preacher, Soldier, Spy," *HistoryNet*, at www.historynet.com/ teacher-preacher-soldier-spy.htm, posted 7 August 2012, and Edward Steers Jr., *Blood on the* Moon: The Assassination of Abraham Lincoln (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2001), 55.
- 9. Craig Sodaro, *Civil War Spies* (North Mankato, Minn.: Capstone Press, 2014), 8. Furgurson, "Teacher, Preacher, Soldier, Spy," makes the same claim.
- 10. Furgurson, "Teacher, Preacher, Soldier, Spy."
- 11. William A. Tidwell with James O. Hall and David Winfred Gaddy, *Come Retribution: The Confederate Secret Service and the Assassination of Lincoln* (Jackson: University of Mississippi Press, 1988), 281.
- 12. Conrad, A Confederate Spy, 8.
- 13. Conrad, A Confederate Spy, 7.
- 14. Conrad, A Confederate Spy, 6.
- 15. Conrad, A Confederate Spy, 7-8.
- 16. Conrad, *A Confederate Spy*, 9. Information on Fort Monroe can be accessed at Brian Matthew Jordan, "Fort Monroe during the Civil War," *Encyclopedia Virginia*, Virginia Foundation for the Humanities and the Library of Virginia, at *www.encyclopediavirginia.org/fort_monroe_during_the_civil_war*.
- 17. Conrad, A Confederate Spy, 10.
- 18. Steers, Blood on the Moon, 54.
- 19. Conrad, A Confederate Spy, 34.
- 20. The handwritten note from Jefferson Davis was reprinted in Conrad's book, A Confederate Spy, npn.
- 21. Conrad, A Confederate Spy, 68.
- 22. Conrad, A Confederate Spy, 70-76.
- 23. Conrad, A Confederate Spy, 79.
- 24. Conrad, A Confederate Spy, 81.
- 25. Conrad, A Confederate Spy, 79-86, 105, 120-21.
- 26. "Thomas Nelson Conrad," Dickinson College Archives; Conrad, A Confederate Spy, 122; Conrad, The Rebel Scout, 218–219; Furgurson, "Thomas Nelson Conrad"; and Phi Kappa Sigma, "Thomas Nelson Conrad," Semi-centennial Register of the Members of the Phi Kappa Sigma Fraternity (Philadelphia: Avil Printing Company, 1900), 113.
- 27. Furgurson, "Thomas Nelson Conrad," correctly gives 1871 as the closing date; Phi Sigma Kappa, "Thomas Nelson Conrad," and Tiphen Walsingham Allen, "Student Life at Dickinson College from 1853 to 1854: Class of 1857," at chronicles.dickinson.edu/studentwork/tiphenallen/ studentbody/classof1857.htm, incorrectly list the date as 1872.
- 28. Kinnear, The First 100 Years, 14.
- "Baltimore Conference Record, March, April, or May, 1871," Hand-Book of the Baltimore Conference, Methodist Episcopal Church, South, Rev. E. R. Smith, compiler, (Baltimore: King Brothers, 1871), 84, Emory University Archives, archive.org/stream/30711779.1871.emory. edu/30711779_1871#page/n0/mode/2up. According to the conference records, Conrad had

also been a "local preacher" in 1868, apparently in the Baltimore area ("Baltimore Conference, Central Church, Baltimore, March 4–13, 1868," *Hand-Book*, 48).

- 30. Kinnear, *The First 100 Years*, 60, and Furgurson, "Thomas Nelson Conrad." Preston is identified as a member of the Preston and Olin Board of Trustees in *Catalogue, Preston and Olin Institute, Session 1869 and 70* (Baltimore: J. Wesley Smith & Brothers, n.d), VPI Miscellaneous Pamphlets LD 5655 A4 1870, Special Collections, Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, Va., 3–4. For information on Minor's role in the Civil War, see Aaron D. Purcell, "Charles Minor's Cashbook and the Diary of E. P. Harmon, A Maine Soldier in the Overland Campaign, Spring 1864," *Maine History* 48 (January 2014), 136–58.
- 31. *Bristol News* (Bristol, Va. and Tenn.) 8, no. 23 (4 February 1873), 1, Library of Congress, Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers, *chroniclingamerica.loc.gov*. Unless noted otherwise, newspapers cited in the "Endnotes" can be found in this online collection.
- 32. Kinnear, The First 100 Years, 72-74.
- Harry Downing Temple, *The Bugle's Echo* 1 (Blacksburg, Va.: Virginia Tech Corps of Cadets Alumni Inc., 1966), 129.
- 34. "Virginia Agricultural and Mechanical College," *Daily Dispatch* (Richmond, Va.) (7 January 1880), 2.
- 35. "Conference of Mahoneites," Shenandoah Herald (Woodstock, Va.) (7 December 1881), 2.
- 36. C. C. Pearson, "The Readjuster Movement in Virginia," *American Historical Review* 21, no. 4 (July 1916), www.jstor.org/stable/1835892?seq=6#page_scan_tab_contents, 739, and Brent Tarter, *The Grandees of Government: The Origins and Persistence of Undemocratic Politics in Virginia* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2013), 238–52.
- 37. Kinnear, The First 100 Years, 111.
- Clara B. Cox, *Images & Reflections: Virginia Tech, 1872–1997*, eds. Lawrence G. Hincker and Clara B. Cox (Louisville, Ky.: Harmony House, 1997), 30–31.
- Donna Boone-Caldwell, "Blacksburg's Mayors and the Evolution of Town Government," A Special Place for 200 Years: A History of Blacksburg, Virginia, ed. Clara B. Cox (Roanoke, Va.: Town of Blacksburg, Va., 1998), 155.
- 40. Furgurson, "Thomas Nelson Conrad," and Kinnear, The First 100 Years, 120.
- 107th Annual Catalogue of Dickinson College for the Academical Year, 1889–90 (Carlisle, Pa.: Dickinson College, 1890), 10.
- 42. "Virginia News," Alexandria Gazette (Alexandria, Va.) (24 July 1890), 3.
- "Thomas Nelson Conrad Dies in Washington," *Times-Dispatch* (Richmond, Va.) (6 January 1905), 5; Furgurson, "Thomas Nelson Conrad"; and Kinnear, *The First 100 Years*, 120.
- 44. "Westview Cemetery Plot Locator WebGIS.net," at *arcgis.webgis.net/va/Blacksburg/ WestviewCemetery/.*

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Adam Harman, the New River, and Tom's Creek: An Analysis of the Earliest Documentary Records

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The earliest surviving references to the New River, Tom's Creek, and Euro-American settlement in the New River Valley of southwest Virginia appear in government treaties, court documents, and the private records of the region's first explorers and surveyors. This article presents documentary evidence dating from 1744 that shows Adam Harman settled on the New River by June of that year. Although Euro-Americans undoubtedly visited the New River Valley as early as the late 1600s, no hard evidence of their having settled in the area before 1744 has yet come to light. Using primary source documentation, this article also discusses the naming of the New River and Tom's Creek, the latter being one of the river's tributaries in what is now Montgomery County, and also one of the first creeks named by Euro-Americans in southwest Virginia.

Evidence for Adam Harman on the New River (June 1744)

Between 22 June and 4 July 1744, representatives of the Six Nations and other northern Indian tribes met at Lancaster, Pennsylvania, to conduct treaty negotiations with Lieutenant Governor George Thomas of Pennsylvania and commissioners from Virginia and Maryland, with the Pennsylvania government acting as intermediary. The commissioners from Virginia were Thomas Lee and William Beverley. Colonel James Patton (c. 1690–1755) also attended the proceedings and signed the treaty made on 2 July. The result of this meeting—to rectify disputes between the Indians and colonists over western frontier land— was the Indians' renunciation of their claim to any land in the Colony of Virginia for the sum of £400.

What has been called the official record of the Treaty of Lancaster negotiations and agreements was printed by Benjamin Franklin in Philadelphia in 1744.¹ However, William Parks printed a more complete version in Williamsburg, Virginia, the same year. Among letters sent to the Board of Trade in England from Virginia in 1744 was one "from Colo. [William] Gooch, Lieut. Govr. of Virginia, to the Board, dated the 21 of

Decbr. 1744, transmitting a great number of Publick Papers, A Treaty with the Indians for purchasing Land of them; his remarks on several Acts publick and private." The copy of the treaty that Gooch sent to the board was that printed by William Parks. Page 75 of Parks' edition includes the following entry (see also Figure 1):²

The Indian Road as agreed to at Lancaster, June the 30th, 1744. The present Waggon Road from Cohongoronto above Sherrando River, through the Counties of Frederick and Augusta by Colonel James Wood's, Jacob Tunk's, Jost Hiti's [Hite's], Benjamin Allin's, the Widow Givan's, Colonel James Paton's, Patrick Campbell's, Patrick Haye's, Gilbert Campbell's, Robert Young's Mill, Joseph Long's, Robert Loney's, George Robinson's Mill, on Roanoke [River], to Adam Herman's at Tom's Creek on New River, above the Blue-Ridge; shall be the established Road, for the Indians our Brethren of the Six Nations, to pass to the Southward, when there is War between them and the Catawbas.

The Indian Road as agreed to at LANCASTER, June the 30th, 1744.

THE prefent Waggon Road from Cohongoronto above Sherrando River, through the Counties of Frederick and Augusta by Colonel James Wood's, Jacob Tunk's, Jost Hiti's, Benjamin Allin's, the Widow Givans's, Colonel James Paton's, Patrick Campbell's, Patrick Haye's, Gilbert Campbell's, Robert Toung's Mill, Joseph Long's, Robert Loney's, George Robinson's Mill, on Roanoke, to Adam Herman's at Tom's Creek on New River, above the Blue-Ridge; shall be the established Road, for the Indians our Brethren of the Six Nations, to pass to the Southward, when there is War between them and the Catawbas.

Figure 1. This is the excerpt from William Parks' 1744 printing of the Treaty of Lancaster proceedings, describing "Adam Herman's at Tom's Creek on New River" as the southern terminus of the Indian Road. The document is located in the Colonial Office Papers 5/1325 at the Public Record Office of Great Britain (The National Archives in Kew, London).

This passage is not printed in Benjamin Franklin's edition, and because the Franklin version rather than the Parks version of the treaty proceedings is most often cited by historians, this entry has apparently never been recognized in the literature as containing the earliest mention of Euro-American settlement on the Western Waters (tributaries of the Mississippi River) in Virginia. "Adam Herman's [Harman's] at Tom's Creek on New River" is now indisputably the earliest known, unambiguous documentary record of a colonist settled in the New River Valley. It clearly refers to

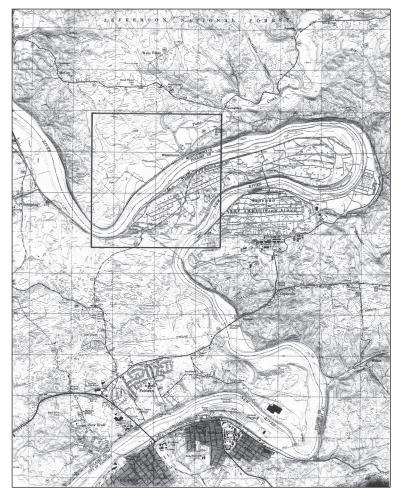


Figure 2. Map showing the area along the New River in present-day Montgomery County, Virginia, that was settled by Adam Harman and his family. The square in the upper left outlines the inset map shown in Figure 3 (page 58). Visible on this map about three miles south of the Harman settlement is the present-day City of Radford. The great "Horseshoe Bottom," known by that name and occupied by Adam Harman's close relative, Jacob Harman Sr., in the 1740s, is today the site of the Radford Army Ammunition Plant. Base map, U.S. Geological Survey, 7.5 minute series: Radford North, Virginia, 1998.

the Adam Harman (c.1700–1767)³ who seems to have overseen the use of a natural ford over the New River about 1.5 miles west (down the river) from the mouth of Tom's Creek (Figures 2, 3).⁴ The creek was simply a prominent landmark used to identify the locale in the Treaty proceedings. It is the author's opinion that Harman and his family had built a cabin by June 1744, probably at the present site of the James R. Kent plantation house, on a hill overlooking the vast New River bottomland at what is now called "Whitethorne" and "Kentland Farm" in present-day Montgomery County. The Kent brick mansion (built in the 1820s–1830s) replaced an earlier log house built in the 1790s by Abram Trigg,⁵ with that house possibly replacing or incorporating an earlier existing structure or the remnants thereof.

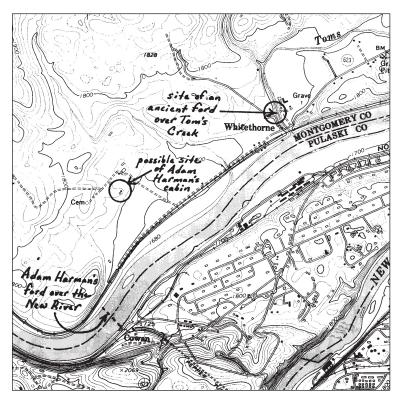


Figure 3. Inset map showing the location of Adam Harman Sr.'s settlement. There is only one convenient place to ford Tom's Creek at this locale, as indicated on the map. This was undoubtedly where the Indian Road crossed Tom's Creek. The author has also marked the location of the ford across the New River and the possible location of Adam Harman's house. Base map, U.S. Geological Survey, 7.5 minute series: Radford North, Virginia, 1998.

New/Wood's River

The few extant records dating from the 1740s and 1750s indicate that the New River was called New River and Wood's River interchangeably and with about equal frequency. The earliest known record of the river's being called the "New River" appears in the Treaty of Lancaster proceeding of 30 June 1744 (Figure 1). The name "New River" most likely derives from this river's being a prominent newfound or "new" river, as it was west of the James and Roanoke Rivers upon which waters colonists settled when westward expansion began in earnest during the late 1730s and early 1740s.⁶

Colonels John Buchanan (d. 1769) and James Patton called the New River both "New" and "Wood's River" starting in the 1740s. For example, in his land entry book, John Buchanan noted in 1745 that he was agent for the "new River Company."⁷ John Buchanan referred to the company as "Col. James Patton and Company" at least as early as November 1747,⁸ but he called the river "Wood's River" on the title page of his 1745 journal of his tour of the settlement.⁹ Similarly, on a paper included with Buchanan's copy of the 1746 terms of the company's 100,000-acre grant of April 1745, Patton wrote: "A booke of Entreys & other Papers Belonging to the new River Grante on the waters of the Misisipioa on the fronteire of Virginia in North America 1749."¹⁰ When Dr. Thomas Walker (1715–1794) reached the river on 16 March 1750 during his exploratory expedition for his own Loyal Land Company, he called it the "New River."¹¹

The earliest reference to the New River by the name "Wood's River," and possibly the oldest surviving record of the river itself, is found in the Virginia Council's decision of 25 October 1743 on James Patton and Company's petition for 200,000 acres.¹² The explorer John Peter Salling (Sally) had reached the New River in March 1741/42 [1742]¹³ as a member of the John Howard expedition. In his account of the expedition, apparently written after his return in the spring of 1745, Sally noted that his party killed five buffalos at "Mondongachate now called Woods River."¹⁴

Following the Treaty of Lancaster, Governor Gooch held a council meeting on 6 August 1744 in Williamsburg. The report of the meeting states:

This day was read the Treaty concluded at Lancaster by the Honble Thomas Lee Esqr. & Colonel William Beverley on the behalf of this Colony with the six united Nations of Indians & their Release of all their Right to all the Lands within this Colony And it was Order'd that that part of it relating to the Roads agreed to be printed in the Publick Gazette and all Persons required to take due Notice thereof and pay a strict Obedience thereto.¹⁵ At a court held in Frederick County on 5 March 1744/45 [1745], it was "[o]rdered that Robert Green Gent. & John Newport petition the Court of Orange County for a Road from the County line of Frederick to the upper Inhabitants of Augusta on Woods River."¹⁶ A directive written by Colonel John Buchanan, probably also in March 1744/45, reads as follows:

Memorandam That you motion to ye court of orange To appoaint Proper Men To nominate and appoaint certian persons To Lea [lay] off and survey a Road from fredrick county Through Augusta crossing James River at ye Chrerey [Cherry] tree Bottom thence [illegible] [Egle Bottom—marked out in the document] to woods River at the most convanint [convenient] place of passing. N.B. That Colo. Patton survey & Lay off from fredrick to Burdens [Benjamin Borden's?] Line and Colo. Buchanan Lea off from thence to woods River &c.¹⁷

Wood's River was also mentioned in the proceedings of an Orange County Court held on 24 May 1745:

James Patton and John Buchanan Gent. having viewed the way from Frederick County Line Through the Part of this County called Augusta according to the order made at the Last March Court made their Report in these words 'Pursuant to an Order of Orange Court dated the Thirteenth Day of March 1745 [1744/45] We the Subscribers have viewed laid of [f] and Marked the said road mentioned in the said Order as followeth Viz. To begin at Thom's Brook at Frederick County line and to go from thence...to a ford at the Cherry tree Bottom on James River...and that the said Road continue from the said Cherry tree Bottom to Adam Harmon's on the New or Woods River and that Capt. George Robinson and James Campbell and Mark Evins and James Davison be Overseers of the same and that all the Inhabitants between James River and Woods River clear the same and that a Distinct Order be Given to Every Gang to Clear the same and that it be Cleared as it is already Blazed and laid of f with Two Notches and a Cross Given under our hands this 8th Day of April 1745 James Patton - John Buchannon' whereupon it is Ordered that the said way be from henceforth established a Publick Road.¹⁸

The previously mentioned Frederick and Orange (later Augusta) County road orders of March 1744/45 all use the name "Wood's River." A few years later, the Ohio Company explorer Christopher Gist (c. 1705– 1759) referred to the river as the "Kanhawa or new river (by some called Woods river)" when he passed through the New River Valley in May 1751.¹⁹

There seems to be no extant historical record providing an explanation for the origin of the name "Wood's River." One possibility is that it was named for Major General Abraham Wood (c.1615-c.1681).²⁰ In September 1671, Wood sent Thomas Batte, Robert Hallam, and Thomas Wood west from Fort Henry in the Tidewater of Virginia to explore the western mountains and search for a passage to the "South Sea." Thomas Wood died early in the expedition, but Batte and Hallam apparently reached the New River in what is now southwest Virginia.²¹ It is thus not unreasonable to assume that at least by the early 1700s the river that Batte and Hallam had found and reported was becoming better known to Indian traders and other intrepid explorers. Perhaps a tradition had developed of calling it "Wood's River" for the sponsor of the Batte and Hallam expedition, even though no evidence has been found that Abraham Wood himself ever saw it. It may even be that Thomas Batte and Robert Hallam named the river to honor either Abraham Wood or their exploration party member, Thomas Wood, who had died early in the expedition.

Another possible explanation is that the river was named for Colonel James Wood (c.1707-1759), clerk and surveyor of Orange and later Frederick County, and the founder of Winchester, Virginia.²² Wood was a friend of James Patton and John Buchanan and also a prominent member of the 21-member New/Wood's River Company, as evidenced, for example, by Buchanan's notation on his bill against the company "[t]o view the Land pr order of Colo. Patton & Colo. [James] Wood Before ye order of Council was obtained" in 1743.23 Moreover, in the 1746 terms of the New River Company, James Wood's name appears alongside those of James Patton, John Buchanan, and George Robinson, suggesting that he was a leading member, since these were the only members specifically listed by name.²⁴ The river had undoubtedly been known to at least some eastern and central Virginians for some time, but it may not have been until the early 1740s that the westernmost inhabitants of Orange and Augusta counties named it in honor of James Wood, a county magistrate held in high esteem. Although this suggestion is entirely speculation, it is worth considering.

Tom's Creek

The person for whom Tom's Creek was named is even more difficult to identify. That the creek was already called "Tom's Creek" in June 1744 might indicate that an explorer or settler named Tom had preceded or was a contemporary of Adam Harman. John Buchanan's 1745 entry of land for Adam Harman at "Toms pleace" [Tom's Place], presumably along Tom's Creek, hints that someone named Tom had some affiliation with the locale.²⁵ This is not necessarily the case, however. Places at the time probably were not always named for people who had actually discovered or settled them; the names of friends and acquaintances were no doubt often used.

Patricia Givens Johnson's speculation that Tom's Creek was named for Thomas Jones, the grandson of Abraham Wood,²⁶ is unsubstantiated. This speculation apparently hinged on Lyman Chalkley's abstract of the circa 1750 lawsuit *Michael and Augustine Price vs. Israel Lorton and James Patton*.²⁷ In fact, Chalkley misread attorney John Harvie's handwriting and deciphered as a "J" what Harvie had clearly written as a "T" in Tom's Creek throughout the case documents. Chalkley therefore mistakenly wrote in 1912 that Israel Lorton had bought a tract of 400 acres "at [the] mouth of Jones (Toms) Creek."²⁸ Furthermore, none of the surviving early records from this period ever referred to Tom's Creek as Jones Creek. If Tom's Creek had been named for anyone associated with Abraham Wood, it would most likely have been either Thomas Batte or Thomas Wood, two of the three men who led the 1671 exploratory expedition that may or may not have encountered the creek.

The only other reasonable possibilities with regard to Tom's Creek seem to be the names Thomas Looney, Thomas Deleney, Thomas Walker, and Thomas Lewis. Possibly one of these men was the enigmatic Tom. Thomas Looney (c. 1718–1755?) may have lived somewhere in the New River Valley at least as early as 1746.²⁹ He appears to have been the son-in-law of Adam Harman Sr., having married one of Harman's daughters about 1735–1739.³⁰ A man named "Thomas Deleney" served as a chain carrier for John Buchanan on his 1743 exploratory and surveying expedition into southwest Virginia. ³¹ Dr. Thomas Walker was an early explorer and surveyor of western Virginia and was well known to James Patton and John Buchanan, although he was not a member of the New River Company.³² Finally, Thomas Lewis (1718–1790), Surveyor of Augusta County, while also not a company member, could conceivably have visited or even surveyed land on the western waters in the early 1740s. More importantly, however, Lewis' close affiliation with Patton, Buchanan, other company members, and

probably some of the first New River settlers, is significant. James Patton once referred to him as "[T]om Lewis."³³ But like so many mysteries of the early frontier period, the truth of this matter may never be known.

Summary

This article has presented documentary evidence that Adam Harman Sr. was settled along the New River in what is now Montgomery County, Virginia, by June 1744, the earliest known record of any settler living in the New River Valley. However, because records from the early 1740s with references to the Virginia backcountry are scarce, it remains possible that other settlers preceded Harman by several years. Furthermore, it seems possible that Harman and his family travelled to the New River Valley with other settlers whose names are unknown. The author has also examined documentation from the 1740s and early 1750s to help speculate on the origins of the names New River, Wood's River, and Tom's Creek, which are among the earliest names Euro-Americans gave to watercourses in southwest Virginia. The names New River and Tom's Creek have survived to the present day.

Acknowledgements

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Endnotes

Abbreviations and symbols:

ACCH = Augusta County Courthouse, Staunton, Virginia

CO = Colonial Office

- DM = Lyman C. Draper Manuscript Collection (Draper Manuscripts), State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Madison, Wisconsin. Microfilmed by the Department of Photographic Reproduction, University of Chicago Library
- FCCH = Frederick County Courthouse, Winchester, Virginia
- FHS = Filson Historical Society, Louisville, Kentucky
- LC = Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.
- LVA = Library of Virginia, Richmond, Virginia
- MCCH = Montgomery County Court House, Christiansburg, Virginia
- OCCH = Orange County Courthouse, Orange, Virginia
- QQ = Series QQ, Draper Manuscripts, Preston Papers. Citations include the series between volume and page number (i.e. 1QQ38).
- PP-DM = Preston Papers, Draper Manuscripts, State Historical Society of Wisconsin
- PP-VHS = Papers of the Preston Family of Virginia (Preston Family Papers), 1727-1896, Mss1
- P9267f, Virginia Historical Society, Richmond, Virginia. Microfilmed by the Library of Congress PRO = Public Record Office, Great Britain.
- VHS = Virginia Historical Society, Richmond, Virginia
- David E. Washburn, ed., *The Peoples of Pennsylvania: An Annotated Bibliography of Resource Materials* (Pittsburgh, Pa.: University Center for International Studies, University of Pittsburgh, 1981), 131. The full text of the Franklin version is included in James H. Merrell, ed., *The Lancaster Treaty of 1744 with Related Documents* (Boston, Mass.: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2008), 41-126.
- [Cadwallader Colden], [ed.,] The Treaty Held with the Indians of the Six Nations, at Lancaster in Pennsylvania, in June, 1744, to Which is Prefixed, An Account of the First Confederacy of the Six Nations, Their Present Tributaries, Dependents, and Allies, and of Their Religion, and Form of Government (Williamsburg, Va.: William Parks, 1744), Enclosure in William Gooch's letter to the Board of Trade, 21 December 1744, CO 5/1325, PRO, National Archives, United Kingdom.
- 3. Information on the early life and genealogy of Adam Harman is found in John N. Harman Sr., Harman Genealogy (Southern Branch) with Biographical Sketches and Historical Notes, 1700-1924 (Radford, Va.: Commonwealth Press, Inc., 1925, reprinted 1983), 47-51. Although Adam's full name was apparently Heinrich Adam Herrmann, in the early Virginia records his given name Heinrich was never used. The author of this article has chosen to refer to him as Adam Harman. However, there were various other spellings of his surname (e.g. Herman, Hermon, Harmon). To further confuse matters, Harman had a son named Adam: Harman, Harman Genealogy, 58, 60. In some cases the two men were designated Adam Harman Sr. and Adam Harman Jr. in the early records, but when only "Adam Harman" is mentioned it is usually impossible to determine with absolute certainty that it was Adam Harman Sr. It should also be noted that John M. Harman Sr.'s Harman Genealogy is an old publication that is very poorly referenced, with much of the material coming only from secondary sources. One important primary source document that was used, however, is "Adam's 'German Lutheran Bible,' which was handed down from him to his son, Henry Sr....This Bible was sent to the writer in October, 1923....While some of these records are dim and others somewhat mutilated, we here insert a very satisfactory translation of them." Harman, Harman Genealogy, 49-50. Information relating to Harman's marriage and the death of his wife and at least two of his children in Harman Genealogy thus appears to have come directly from Adam Harman's Bible. This document is preserved in the Virginia Historical Society: Harman Family Bible records, 1723-1767, Mss 6:4

H2278:2. The author has obtained photocopies of it, but has not yet had the text translated from the German. The best biographical sketches of Adam Harman and the Harman family published since *Harman Genealogy* can be found in Frederick B. Kegley and Mary B. Kegley, *Early Adventurers on the Western Waters: The New River of Virginia in Pioneer Days 1745–1800*, vol. 1 (Orange, Va.: Green Publishers, Inc., 1980), 217–227, and in Zola Troutman Noble, "Adam Harman, German Pioneer on the New River," *Smithfield Review* 13 (2009), 5–28.

- 4. Adam Harman's ford on the New River, located approximately 1.5 miles southwest down the river from the mouth of Tom's Creek, is clearly marked on John Poage's survey plat (as copied by Augusta County surveyor Thomas Lewis into his court record book of county surveys) depicting the Horseshoe Bottom tract of 985 acres across the river from Adam Harman's 500acre survey: John Poage's surveys of 985 acres "at a place called the Horseshoe Bottom [now the site of Radford Army Ammunition Plant] in a Bent [bend] of the New River," for Jacob Harman, 21 March 1750/51 and 500 acres "on the north side of the new River & on Toms Creek opposite to ye lower End of the Horseshoe Bottom," 22 March 1750/51, Augusta County Surveyor's Record 1:52a, ACCH, LVA microfilm reel 107. Poage noted (according to Thomas Lewis' transcription) that the Horseshoe Bottom survey began "at an Iron Wood [probably American hornbeam, Carpinus caroliniana] at Adam Harmons ford." See also William Preston's copy of this survey: William Preston, Survey Book, 1750s-1760s, PP-VHS, Folder 67, LC microfilm reel 2. The ford is a naturally shallow place in the New River where a ledge or series of rocks spans the river's bottom from its north to south bank, forming a convenient crossing, especially Harman's ford was obviously a well-known road crossing and an important at low water. landmark at least as late as March 1750/51. It had probably been used by the Indians who occupied the New River bottomlands in centuries past, and became well-known to hunters and other early adventurers by the 1740s: See Patricia G. Johnson, Kentland at Whitethorne: Virginia Tech's Agricultural Farm and Families That Owned It Harmans, Buchanans, Triggs, Cloyds, Kents, Cowans, Bells, Adams (Blacksburg, Va.: Walpa Publishing, 1995), 109-113, for a helpful discussion.
- 5. Johnson, Kentland at Whitethorne, 22, 29-30; John Kern, "Kentland Farm, A New River Plantation," Journal of the Roanoke Valley Historical Society 13 (1996), 45-52; Henry E. Albert, Log Cabin Heritage: A Historical and Genealogical Insight into the Middle New River Settlement (Dayton, Ohio: Henry E. Albert, privately printed), 139-42. The last author (Albert) stated flatly that Adam Harman's cabin was located where the Kent mansion stands today, although he cited no definite evidence. See also Montgomery County Deed Book E:31, MCCC, LVA microfilm reel 3: Abram Trigg and his wife Susana sold to Philip Harless [Jr.] a tract of 133 [sic] acres on Tom's Creek "where the said Abram now lives & deeded to him by John Smith." The tract began on an old patent line "at the mouth of Tom's Creek" and ran "near the line of the sd. Philip Harless's Land where he now lives," crossed Tom's Creek, and met a corner with Harless' 600acre survey. It also included "one acre at the waggon ford [on Tom's Creek] for the benefit of a mill seat," apparently just above the mouth of Tom's Creek; Deed of 1,630 acres "on the east side of New River adjoining & below Tom's Creek...Beginning at a hickory and white oak at the mouth of Tom's creek on the lower side being corner of the survey on Buchannans bottom," from Abram and Susana Trigg to Gordon, Thomas, and David Cloyd, Montgomery County Deed Book E:392–93, MCCC, LVA microfilm reel 3.
- See for example: Frederick B. Kegley, Kegley's Virginia Frontier: The Beginning of the Southwest; The Roanoke of Colonial Days, 1740–1783 (Roanoke, Va.: Southwest Virginia Historical Society, 1938), 51–201.
- Wood's River Land Entry Book 1745–1781, Preston Family Papers, 1658–1896, Davie Collection, Folder 52, Mss A P937d, FHS.
- 8. John Buchanan's survey of 700 acres at a place called Clamper Ground, 14 November 1747, PP-VHS, Folder 25, LC microfilm reel 2.

- John Buchanan's "Memorandum Book 1745: Memorandams Relating Sundrey passages With Respect to my Journey to wood's River commencing ye 4 octobr 1745," 4–29 October 1745, Preston Papers (PP), Draper Manuscripts (DM), 1QQ38–48, Microfilm reel 110.
- 10. James Patton's Memorandum, 1749, PP-DM, 1QQ58, Microfilm reel 110.
- Journal of Dr. Thomas Walker 1750, William C. Rives Papers, 1674–1939, MSS37937, Library of Congress; Lewis P. Summers, *Annals of Southwest Virginia 1760–1800* (Abingdon, Va.: L.P. Summers, 1929), 8–26.
- Journal of Council, 25 October 1743, CO 5/1423, PRO, Library of Virginia microfilm reel 18, Virginia Colonial Records Project; Wilmer L. Hall, ed., *Executive Journals of the Council of Colonial Virginia*, vol. 5 (Richmond, Va.: Virginia State Library, 1945), 133–34.
- 13. This was the old style of dating based on the Julian calendar in use at the time. The new year began on 25 March and both the old and new year were written together during the months of January, February, and March until 1752. Therefore, March 1741/42 is the same as March 1742 (by the Gregorian calendar, new style).
- 14. John Peter Salling (Sally), "A Brief Account of ye Travels of Mr. John Peter Salley, a German living in the County of Augusta in the Colony of Virginia to ye Westward of that Colony as far as the River Mississipi between March 1741,2 & May 1745," CO 5/1327, PRO, LVA microfilm reel 44. This document was sent to the Board of Trade by acting Governor Lewis Burwell in August 1751. It was probably not written by Salling, but transcribed and perhaps polished from the original, which seems not to have survived. The author has found Salling's signature on documents in Augusta County Courthouse and the handwriting certainly does not match. For example: Augusta County Court Case, Judgment March 1755, Bond dated 6 June 1751, John Buchanan vs. John Peter Salling, File 395, August County Courthouse (ACCH). Here Salling signed as "Jahan Pator Saling." The note was written by Colonel Buchanan. Buchanan also mentioned in his journal of 1745 that he copied Salling's journal on 7 October at Salling's cabin, which stood along the James River at the modern town of Glasgow in Rockbridge County: John Buchanan's "Memorandum Book 1745: Memorandams Relating Sundrey passages With Respect to my Journey to wood's River commencing ye 4 octobr 1745," 7 October 1745, PP-DM, 1QQ39, Microfilm reel 110. However, Buchanan's transcription, too, is apparently lost. For discussions of the John Howard expedition and John Peter Salling, see: Fairfax Harrison, "The Virginians on the Ohio and the Mississippi in 1742," Virginia Magazine of History and Biography 30 (1922), 203-222; Richard Batman, "The Odyssey of John Peter Salley," Virginia Cavalcade 31 (1981), 5–11; and Dan Kegley, "Searching for the Explorer Johan Peter Saling," Journal of the History Museum and Historical Society of Western Virginia 16 (2004), 51–60.
- 15. Hall, Executive Journals of the Council, 156-57.
- 16. Frederick County Order Book 1:265, FCCH, LVA microfilm reel 66.
- 17. Orange County Judgments, March 1745, OCCH, LVA microfilm reel 93. The memorandum is unsigned but is clearly written in the hand of Colonel John Buchanan. On the back of the document is written in the hand of Frederick County clerk Colonel James Wood: "Memm. To Motion Orange Court to Appoint proper persons to Lay of the Road from Fredk. County thro Augusta." Cherry Tree Bottom was located on the north side of the James River just west of present-day Buchanan in modern Botetourt County. The "Egle Bottom" [Eagle Bottom], which Buchanan marked out in his memorandum, was located along the New River around the site of the later Ingles Ferry (operated by William Ingles, husband of Mary Draper Ingles) and where Interstate 81 now crosses the New River downstream from the mouth of the Little River. Eagle Bottom was probably the bottomland on the present-day Montgomery County side of the river at or near what is now known as Ingles Bottom. A man by the name of John Stroud appears to have been the first settler to have occupied the locale, if only for a short period. See: Kegley and Kegley, *Early Adventurers*, 1:284–285; Augusta County Land Entry Book 1:13(2), ACCH, LVA microfilm reel 108a; David John Mays, *The Letters and Papers of Edmund Pendleton 1734–1803*, vol. 1 (Charlottesville, Va.: University Press of Virginia, 1967), 9.

- 18. Orange County Order Book 4:331–32, OCCH, LVA microfilm reel 31.
- Christopher Gist's Journal, Entry of 8 May 1751, Ohio Company Papers, 1736–1813, DAR.1925.02, Darlington Collection, Special Collections Department, University of Pittsburgh. Another transcription of the original journal, which is now lost, in this same collection reads: "The Conhaway or new River (by some called Wood's River)." See also: Lois Mulkearn, ed., *George Mercer Papers Relating to the Ohio Company of Virginia* (Pittsburgh, Pa.: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1954), 120.
- Alan V. Briceland, "Abraham Wood" in *American National Biography*, vol. 23, John A. Garraty and Mark C. Carnes, eds. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 748–49.
- 21. Alan V. Briceland, Westward From Virginia: The Exploration of the Virginia-Carolina Frontier, 1650–1710 (Charlottesville, Va.: University Press of Virginia, 1987), 124–26; Jim Glanville and Ryan Mays, "Where Was Totera Town," Historical Society of Western Virginia Journal 20 (2011), 31–43. The surnames "Batts" and "Fallam" used so often in the literature are simply incorrect. Their names were Thomas Batte and Robert Hallam. See, for instance, Alan V. Briceland, "Thomas Batte," in Dictionary of Virginia Biography, vol. 1, Sara B. Bearss et al., eds. (Richmond, Va.: Library of Virginia, 2001), 390–92.
- 22. A valuable recent study of Colonel James Wood is Richard W. Stephenson, "The Life and Times of Colonel James Wood, Surveyor and Founder of Winchester, Va.," *Journal of the Winchester–Frederick County Historical Society* 13 (2001), 55–95. James Wood once wrote the following salutation in closing a letter to Colonel John Buchanan dated 19 December 1746: "I hope you are in good health and am Sr. [Sir] Yr. [Your] real friend & hble [humble] Servant JWood." PP-VHS, Folder 33, LC microfilm reel 2. For this and other reasons, it is the author's opinion that Buchanan and Wood may have surveyed land together during the early 1740s. Buchanan was the principal agent and surveyor of land on the Virginia frontier from circa 1745 through 1751.
- 23. John Buchanan's Account with the New River Company, invoiced 18 April 1751, PP-VHS, Folder 13, LC microfilm reel 2. His dating the account to 1 May 1743 suggests that most of the subsequent entries pertained to this one expedition, since no other dates apart from that of the invoice itself were listed.
- Proclamation of the Terms of the Grant for 100,000 acres on Wood's River and Two Rivers to the Westward Thereof, 10 October 1746, PP-DM, 1QQ57, Microfilm reel 110; Wood's River Land Entry Book 1745–1781, Preston Family Papers, 1658–1896, Davie Collection, Folder 52, Mss A P937d, FHS.
- Wood's River Land Entry Book 1745–1781, Preston Family Papers, 1658–1896, Davie Collection, Folder 52, Mss A P937d, FHS.
- 26. Johnson, Kentland at Whitethorne, 6-8.
- 27. Augusta County Court Case, Chancery Cause 1752-003, *Michael and Augustine Price vs. Israel Lorton and James Patton*, Documents dated 1748–1752, File 392, ACCH. The author first examined and made photocopies of the documents in this case file in 2009. The file has since been removed from the courthouse by the Library of Virginia for digitization along with all other Augusta County chancery records. It is now located at LVA. For a new analysis of the records of this lawsuit, see: Ryan S. Mays, "The Draper's Meadows Settlement (1746–1756) Part I: George Draper and Family," *Smithfield Review* 14 (2014), 25–50.
- Lyman Chalkley, Chronicles of the Scotch-Irish Settlement in Virginia Extracted From the Original Court Records of Augusta County 1745–1800, vol. 1 (Rosslyn, Va.: Commonwealth Printing Co., 1912), 307–8.
- 29. A road order of 19 November 1746 listing Thomas Looney as a settler directed to help clear the Indian Road from Adam Harman's ford on the New River (at present-day Whitethorne) to the North Fork of the Roanoke River, indicates that Looney was probably then living in the New River Valley: Orange County Order Book 4:413, OCCH, LVA microfilm reel 31. However, he could have been located somewhere on the North Fork of the Roanoke. Thomas Looney was later involved in a lawsuit with a man named William Pepper in 1756. He had evidently been

living on the New River because in March of that year a deputy sheriff, who had been ordered to arrest him, noted that he was afraid to go the New River because of the recent murders committed by Indians. Another paper noted that by March he had left the county: Augusta County Court Case, Judgment August 1756, *William Pepper vs. Thomas Looney*, File 399, ACCH.

- Madge L. Crane and Phillip L. Crane, Most Distinguished Characters on the American Frontier: Robert Looney (b. 1692–1702 d. 1770) of Augusta (now Botetourt) County, Virginia and Some of His Descendants With Histories of the Great Road, Looney's Ferry, Crow's Ferry, Anderson's Ferry, Boyd's Ferry and Beale's Bridge, vol. 1 (Apollo, Pa.: Closson Press, 1998), 138, 327; Madge L. Crane and Phillip L. Crane, Most Distinguished Characters on the American Frontier: Robert Looney b. 1692–1702 d. 1770) of Augusta (now Botetourt) County, Virginia and Some of His Descendants, vol. 2 (Apollo, Pa.: Closson Press, 2008), 37–38, 49, 713–14, 716.
- 31. John Buchanan's Account with the New River Company, invoiced 18 April 1751, PP-VHS, Folder 13, LC microfilm reel 2. (See also endnote 24 above.)
- 32. See for example: Alexander C. McLeod, "A Man for All Regions: Dr. Thomas Walker of Castle Hill," *Filson Club History Quarterly* 71 (1997), 169–201.
- 33. James Patton's Levy Account, 1743–1745, PP-VHS, Folder 15, LC microfilm reel 2. For a biographical sketch of Thomas Lewis, see: Arthur T. McClinton, *The Fairfax Line: A Historic Landmark, Written by Arthur T. McClinton, John W. Coleman, Francis F. Wayland, Including Republication of The Fairfax Line Thomas Lewis's Journal of 1746, John W. Wayland, Editor* (Stephens City, Va.: Commercial Press, Inc., 1990, originally published 1925), 23–29. For much additional information on Thomas Lewis, Thomas Walker, and James Wood, see: Sarah S. Hughes, *Surveyors and Statesmen Land Measuring in Colonial Virginia* (Richmond, Va.: The Virginia Surveyors Foundation and The Virginia Association of Surveyors, 1979), which includes important discussions on the early history of surveying in Virginia and provides a wealth of information on the land companies and surveyors of western Virginia during the colonial period.

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Letitia Preston Floyd: Supplementary Notes

Jim Glanville and Ryan Mays ©2016

This article provides a correction and supplementary notes to the authors' sketch of the life of Virginia First Lady Letitia Preston Floyd (1779–1852) published in the previous volume of the *Smithfield Review*.¹ That sketch presented the first comprehensive biographical account of Mrs. Floyd and was divided into six principal periods of her life. It presented fourteen of her letters, twelve of which were published for the first time. A reading of her correspondence led to the conclusion that she was a well-educated, sophisticated, and intelligent woman and an intellectual equal to her husband Governor John Floyd. A study of her life provides a useful insight into the Jacksonian period of American history.

Correcting the Location of Cavan

The 2015 article showed in figure 5 on page 102 a picture of what was judged to be the site of Cavan. The estate named Cavan in Burke's Garden, Tazewell County, Virginia, was where Virginia First Lady Letitia Preston Floyd spent the last dozen years of her life as a widow. It was here Letitia Preston Floyd was baptized by Bishop Whelan, who traveled for that purpose from Wheeling (in present-day West Virginia) in August 1852, and where she died in December of that year.

This note corrects by about two miles the location of the site of Cavan.

The authors' previous conclusion of Cavan's location was based on an analysis of the available literature and a visit to Burke's Garden. The literature has been reviewed and another visit to the Cavan site has been made. Doing this has caused relocation of the site about two miles to the northeast of where it was previously placed in the 2015 article.

The best single piece of evidence for the location of Cavan comes from a picture in a 1920 book about the history of Tazewell County,² shown in figure 1. During a second visit to Burke's Garden in August 2015 the authors were able to accurately locate the Cavan site by standing on the exact spot where the 1920 photograph had been taken. As shown in figure 2, the pattern



Figure 1. The legend to this picture in William Cecil Pendleton's 1920 *The History of Tazewell County* reads: "This beautiful landscape shows the location of the house of the Floyds when they lived in Burke's Garden. The house stood in the grove of sugar trees at the left of the picture. On the right is seen the handsome residence of Mr. R. M. Lawson, who now owns one thousand acres of the splendid Floyd estate, that consisted originally of about three thousand acres." This image is not dated, but the picture must have been taken sometime shortly before 1920.



Figure 2. A picture of the Cavan site taken in August 2015. The former Lawson House is at the present time obscured by a cluster of Norway Spruce trees and the "grove of sugar trees" has vanished. Gose Knob is in the distance in the background. Photograph by Ryan Mays.

of standing trees has changed, but otherwise the view is remarkably similar to the earlier one. A close-up view of the cabin site is shown in figure 3.



Figure 3. The Cavan Site. The sugar maple grove noted by Pendleton was here in 1920. The GPS coordinates of the Cavan site are 37.117468 N, -81.313630 W. Photograph by Jim Glanville.

A Brief History of the Cavan Property

The history of land acquisition and transfer in Burke's Garden is very complex. The following summary attempts to trace through the years the land named Cavan.³

Col. John Buchanan surveyed what was reportedly approximately 4,400 acres⁴ for Col. James Patton and Company on 26 October 1749. Buchanan recorded the name of the tract as Fanad.⁵ This tract was patented by William Thompson and Col. William Preston, executors of James Patton's estate, on 23 December 1779.⁶ It was later claimed by Col. James Thompson, son of William and Mary Patton Thompson. James Thompson eventually owned over 6,000 acres in Burke's Garden, including most or all of the original 4,400 acres. He sold large portions of this land to Col. Robert Sayers around 1800.⁷

Samuel Sayers, nephew of Robert Sayers of Anchor and Hope in Wythe County, Virginia, inherited about 2,000 acres in Burke's Garden from his uncle in 1826. Robert had noted in his will that he bought the 2,000 acres from "James Thompson and others." Judging from the impressive inventory of his Burke's Garden estate, which included 26 slaves, Robert had established a sizable plantation there by the time of his death, in addition to his even larger Wythe County estate.⁸ Samuel and his wife Elizabeth Gose lived at the Sayers estate in Burke's Garden until 1841, when they moved to Missouri.⁹

On 26 May 1841, Samuel and Elizabeth Sayers sold to John Buchanan Floyd and George Rogers Clark Floyd their land in Burke's Garden, which by then they had increased to 3,040 acres.¹⁰ On 10 June 1841, the Floyd brothers sold to their mother, Letitia Preston Floyd, the northeastern portion of their purchase, a tract containing 800 acres.¹¹ However, John T. Sayers, acting as trustee for Samuel Sayers, sold 2,240 acres of the original 3,040acre tract to the Meek family and others in 1845 on default of a debt John B. Floyd had owed Samuel Sayers since 1835. The 800 acres the Floyd brothers sold to Letitia was evidently the only land the Floyds could afford to keep.¹²

The Caves at Cavan

Letitia Floyd probably did not move to Burke's Garden until late 1841 or sometime in 1842. She is said by Gose to have lived in a log house built by Samuel Sayers. Gose also wrote that she "called her plantation 'Cavan' due to a number of caves on this tract."¹³ Having seen the cave entrances, the authors now understand why Gose could speculate that its name came from the place's geology. Indeed, large cave entrances are located in a deep sinkhole ravine only 500 feet from where Letitia's house is said to have stood.¹⁴ However, as noted in the authors' 2015 article, this geologic explanation seems fanciful. Possibly any one of the many people noted above with Irish connections could have introduced the name Cavan from the Irish county — though as previously noted there is no known connection of the Preston family to County Cavan. Until someone finds documentary evidence of how Cavan got its name, only speculation is possible.

Census Data and Floyd Family Household Members and Slaves

In preparing their 2015 article about Mrs. Floyd,¹⁵ the authors did not take into account the available United States census data for the Floyd family. The census schedules are quite detailed and give information about the number, sex, and approximate age of the free white persons, free black persons, and black slaves present at the then-current place of Floyd family residence for the five recording decades from 1810–1850. Table 1 presents a summary of this census data.

In summary, table 1 shows that the Floyd family owned slaves in every census decade and that in the later years they owned significant numbers of them.

For convenience and brevity, in table 1 the children of John and Letitia Floyd are referred to by their initials. Table 2 shows those initials. Table 2 also gives the birth and death dates of the Floyd children and notes their ages at the five census decades. Only seven of the twelve children lived to adulthood, and the dashes in table 2 show children who were not alive in a year when a census was taken. Two of their children were named George Rogers Clark Floyd, the first of whom lived only nine months.

Table 1: Summary of Floyd Family Census Data 1820-1850										
Census Year	Census Place	Free White Persons	Slaves	Total Persons						
1810	Christiansburg, Montgomery County ¹⁹	John and Letitia Floyd, three of their children (JBF, GRCF, WPF), and an unidentified female aged between 16 and 25 Total 6	4 (not enumerated)	10						
1820	Blacksburg, Montgomery County ²⁰	John and Letitia Floyd, seven of their children (JBF, GRCF, WPF, GRCF, BRF, LPF, ELF) and an undentified male aged between 16 and 25 Total 10	5 male (including one child), 5 female Total 10	20						
1830	Blacksburg, Montgomery County ²¹	John and Letitia Floyd, nine of their children (JBF, WPF, GRCF, BRF, LPF, ELF, NBF, CPF, MLMF), an unidentified female aged between 20 and 29, and an unidentified male aged between 15 and 19 Total 13	13 male (including 3 children), 12 female, plus one free colored person Total 26	39						
1830	Monroe County ²²	John Floyd, two boys under nine, two girls under 9, ELF and NBF?, and unidentified male aged between 30 and 39 (maybe JF), and an unidentified female aged between 40 and 49 (maybe LPF) Total 8	None	8						
1840	Tazewell County ²³	John Buchanan Floyd and wife Sarah Buchanan Campbell Floyd, BRF aged 29, an unidentified femal aged between 30 and 39 and two unknown teenage males Total 6	23 male (including 10 children), 14 female (including 3 children) Total 37	43						
1840	Newbern, Pulaski Coun ły	Letitia Floyd and two of her daughters, ELF and NLF (not LPF2 who was married) Total 3	12 male (including 7 children), 11 female (including 3 children) Total 23	26						
1 850	Monroe County ²⁵	Letitia Floyd 71, William L. Lewis 50 Letitia Lewis 36, Susan M. Lewis 12, Letty N. Lewis, 10, William L. Lewis 6, John F. Lewis 3, Mary Bowen 18 (born in New York) Total 8	None	8						
1850	Tazewell County ²⁶	Nicati Floyd 71, George F. Holmes 27, Sarah H. Holmes 31, Mary A. Holmes 4, Letitia Holmes 1, Peggy Vance 30 Total 6	None	6						
1850	Wythe County ²⁷	Benjamin R. Floyd Aged 39	1 male and 3 female slaves	5						
1850	Wythe County ²⁸	George Rogers Clark Floyd aged 40	10 male and 2 female slaves	13						

and their ages in the census years ²⁹											
	Child	Initials	Dates	1810	1820	1830	1840	1850			
1	Susanna Smith Floyd	SSF	1805-1806	-	_	_	-	-			
2	John Buchanan Floyd	JBF	1806-1863	4	14	24	34	44			
3	George Rogers Clark Floyd	GRCF	1807-1808	-	-	-	-	-			
4	William Preston Floyd	WPF	1809-1870	1	11	21	31	41			
5	George Rogers Clark Floyd	GRCF	1810-1896	_	10	20	30	40			
6	Benjamin Rush Floyd	BRF	1811-1860	_	9	19	29	39			
7	Letitia Preston Floyd II	LPF2	1814-1887	_	6	16	26	36			
8	Eliza Lavalette Floyd	ELF	1816-1887	-	4	14	24	34			
9	Nickette Buchanan Floyd	NBF	1819-1908	_	1	11	21	31			
10	Coraly Patton Floyd	CPF	1822-1833	_	_	8	_	-			
11	Thomas Lewis Floyd	TLF	1824-1824	_	_	_	_	_			
12	Mary Lewis Mourning Floyd	MLMF	1827-1833	-	-	3	-	-			

 Table 2: The Children of Dr. John and Letitia Preston Floyd and their ages in the census years²⁹

The place at which the census recorder obtained the census information was not always the principal place of residence of the Floyd family. Thus in 1820, while Thorn Spring in Pulaski was where they lived, the census enumeration was made at Blacksburg, and presumably at Smithfield. The same situation occurred in 1830, with an added enumeration being made that year in Monroe County, where John and Letitia presumably were visiting the Lewis family at Lynnside.¹⁶ In 1840 the Floyd family was in the process of collectively moving from Thorn Spring (near Newbern) in Pulaski County to Burke's Garden in Tazewell County, and enumerations were made in both counties. Interestingly, the 1840 census lists John Buchanan Floyd as living in Tazewell County (presumably Burke's Garden) and owning a total of 37 slaves. There were 43 total persons in the household. By 1850 he was in Richmond and apparently no longer owned slaves. In 1840, Benjamin Rush Floyd was listed as living in Wythe County. His residence was occupied by six persons, of whom four were "free colored persons." By 1850 he was living in Wythe County with Nancy age 30 and Malvina age 6.

In 1850 four different places of enumeration are listed. The Monroe County listing is no doubt again from Lynnside, where their daughter Letitia

Preston Floyd (LPF2) was living with her husband William Lynn Lewis. The Tazewell County enumeration would have been at Burke's Garden, where the slaves were owned by the two sons (George Rogers Clark Floyd and Benjamin Rush Floyd) living in Wytheville. Ralph Mann's 1990 article gives an extended account of the interactions among the sons in Wytheville and their mother in Burke's Garden.¹⁷ Also, in 1850 in Monroe County four children of William and Letitia Preston Floyd Lewis are enumerated. The identity of Mary Bowen who was born in New York has not been established.

Finally, the census data provide a tantalizing hint that Mrs. Floyd had the family nickname "Nicati" as listed in the 1850 census from Tazewell County. This possible nickname was first noted by the genealogist Alex Luken and reported in the Floyd family genealogy prepared by General Pat Stevens.¹⁸

Future Work

The authors' 2015 article listed a number of archives where Letitia Preston Floyd's letters may be found, one of which is the University of Virginia at Wise. A detailed copy of the finding-aid for the Trigg-Floyd-Johnston papers at the John Cook Wyllie Library at the University of Virginia at Wise reveals that there are approximately 60 letters in this collection either written by or to Mrs. Floyd. A very preliminary assessment of these letters is that "Most of the letters were about health, and people not writing."³⁰ There is, however, another copy of the "My Dear Rush" letter. A future article based on some of these letters may be forthcoming.

Acknowledgments

The Cavan site is currently owned by Mr. John L. Moss, whom we gratefully thank for giving us a guided tour of his property in August 2015. He owns 379 acres of Letitia Preston Floyd's original 800 acres that she bought from her sons John Buchanan Floyd and George Rogers Clark Floyd in June 1841. We thank General Pat Stevens IV for generously sharing his Floyd family genealogical records with us. We thank Mrs. Alex Luken for investigating the Floyd family records at the Wyllie Library at the University of Virginia at Wise.

Endnotes

- 1. Jim Glanville and Ryan Mays, "A Sketch of Letitia Preston Floyd and Some of Her Letters," *Smithfield Review* 19 (2015), 77–120.
- William Cecil Pendleton, *History of Tazewell County and Southwest Virginia:* 1748–1920 (Richmond, Va.: W. C. Hill Printing Company, 1920), 505.
- 3. The origin of the name Cavan is uncertain. Any of the many owners of Cavan of Irish birth or with Irish ancestors named in this section could have introduced the name Cavan as a nod to County Cavan, Ireland.

- 4. Augusta County Surveyors' Record 1:46a, Augusta County Courthouse (Staunton, Va.), Library of Virginia microfilm reel 107. This tract actually measured closer to 7,000 acres.
- 5. The Fanad is the peninsula to the west of the outlet of Lough Swilly into the Atlantic in County Donegal.
- 6. Virginia Land Office Patents B, 1779–1780: 240–243, Library of Virginia microfilm reel 43.
- 7. Louise Leslie, Tazewell County (Radford, Va.: Commonwealth Press, Inc., 1982), 422.
- 8. Mary B. Kegley, *Early Adventurers on the Western Waters: The New River in Pioneer Days*, 1745–1805, vol 3 (Wytheville, Va.: Kegley Books, 1995), 768–75.
- 9. George B. Gose, *Pioneers of the Virginia Bluegrass (and Their Descendants)* (Radford, Va.: Commonwealth Press, 1971), 240.
- 10. Tazewell County Deed Book 7: 134–35, 287–88, Tazewell County Courthouse (Tazewell, Va.), Library of Virginia microfilm reel 3; Gose, *Pioneers of the Virginia Bluegrass*, 240.
- 11. Tazewell County Deed Book 7: 285–86, Tazewell County Courthouse (Tazewell, Va.), Library of Virginia microfilm reel 3; Gose, *Pioneers of the Virginia Bluegrass*, 240.
- Gose, Pioneers of the Virginia Bluegrass, 240; Crockett A. Harrison, The Allens and the Harrisons of the Kingdom of Callaway: Where They Came from, Why They Came to America, What They Encountered and Their Part in Settling and Developing a New Land (Grove City, Pa.: C. A. Harrison, 1981), 296, 311.
- Gose, *Pioneers of the Virginia Bluegrass*, 241. Burke's Garden is a gigantic collapsed sinkhole. See Byron N. Cooper, *Geology and Mineral Resources of the Burke's Garden Quadrangle*, *Virginia*, Virginia Geological Survey Bulletin 60 (Richmond, Va.: University of Virginia, Division of Purchase and Printing, 1944).
- 14. "Lawson Cave" contains about 1,740 feet of passage. It was evidently named for the Lawson family who acquired the Cavan land in the late 1800s; Robert M. Lawson built the large mansion house now standing at the Cavan site around 1900. For a detailed description of Lawson Cave see: John R. Holsinger, *Descriptions of Virginia Caves* (Charlottesville, Va.: Virginia Division of Mineral Resources, Bulletin 85, 1975), 358–59.
- 15. Glanville and Mays, "A Sketch of Letitia Preston Floyd."
- 16. United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service National Register of Historic Places, Registration Form for Lynnside Historic District, Sweet Springs, W.Va., on line at *http://www.wvculture.org/shpo/nr/pdf/monroe/91000452.pdf*.
- 17. Ralph Mann, "Mountains, Land, and Kin Networks: Burkes Garden, Virginia, in the 1840s and 1850s," *Journal of Southern History* 58 (1992), 411–34.
- 18. Pat M. Stevens, *Genealogy Report: Descendants of John Floyd.* 392 pp. On line at the link *http://familytreemaker.genealogy.com/users/s/t/e/Pat-M-Stevens-iv/* and copy in the authors' files.
- Census Place: Christiansburg, Montgomery, Virginia; Roll: 70; Page: 619; Image: 00068; Family History Library Film: 0181430. Source Information: Ancestry.com. 1810 United States Federal Census [database on line]. Provo, Utah: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2010. Images reproduced by FamilySearch. Original data: Third Census of the United States, 1810. (NARA microfilm publication M252, 71 rolls). Bureau of the Census, Record Group 29. National Archives, Washington, D.C.
- Census Place: Blacksburg, Montgomery, Virginia; Page: 173A; NARA Roll: M33_130; Image: 333. Source Information: Ancestry.com. 1820 United States Federal Census [database on line]. Provo, Utah: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2010. Images reproduced by FamilySearch. Original data: Fourth Census of the United States, 1820. (NARA microfilm publication M33, 142 rolls). Records of the Bureau of the Census, Record Group 29. National Archives, Washington, D.C.
- 21. Blacksburg, Montgomery, Virginia; Series: M19; Roll: 198; Page: 65; Family History Library Film: 0029677.Source Information: Ancestry.com. 1830 United States Federal Census [database on line]. Provo, Utah: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2010. Images reproduced by FamilySearch. Original data: Fifth Census of the United States, 1830. (NARA microfilm publication M19, 201 rolls). Records of the Bureau of the Census, Record Group 29. National Archives, Washington, D.C.

- 22. Census Place: Monroe, Virginia; Series: M19; Roll: 198; Page: 18; Family History Library Film: 0029677. Source Information: Ancestry.com. 1830 United States Federal Census [database on line]. Provo, Utah: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2010. Images reproduced by FamilySearch. Original data: Fifth Census of the United States, 1830. (NARA microfilm publication M19, 201 rolls). Records of the Bureau of the Census, Record Group 29. National Archives, Washington, D.C.
- 23. Census Place: Tazewell, Virginia; Roll: 579; Page: 70; Image: 145; Family History Library Film: 0029693. Source Information: Ancestry.com. 1840 United States Federal Census [database on line]. Provo, Utah: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2010. Images reproduced by FamilySearch. Original data: Sixth Census of the United States, 1840. (NARA microfilm publication M704, 580 rolls). Records of the Bureau of the Census, Record Group 29. National Archives, Washington, D.C.
- 24. Census Place: Newbern, Pulaski, Virginia; Roll: 572; Page: 194; Image: 980; Family History Library Film: 0029690. Source Information: Ancestry.com. 1840 United States Federal Census [database on line]. Provo, Utah: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2010. Images reproduced by FamilySearch. Original data: Sixth Census of the United States, 1840. (NARA microfilm publication M704, 580 rolls). Records of the Bureau of the Census, Record Group 29. National Archives, Washington, D.C.
- Seventh Census of the United States. 1850. 23 July, "Letitia Floyd" age 71, District 39, Monroe County, Virginia. National Archives Microfilm Publications, Roll M432_961, page 437A, Records of the Bureau of the Census, Record Group 29, National Archives, Washington, D.C.
- Seventh Census of the United States, 1850. 15 August., "Nicati Floyd" age 71, Western District, Tazewell County, Virginia. National Archives Microfilm Publications, Roll M432_979, page 261B, Records of the Bureau of the Census, Record Group 29, National Archives, Washington, D.C.
- Ancestry.com. 1850 U.S. Federal Census Slave Schedules [database on line]. Provo, Utah: Ancestry.com Operations Inc, 2004. Original data: United States of America, Bureau of the Census. Seventh Census of the United States, 1850. Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 1850. M432, 1,009 rolls. District 68, Wythe, Virginia.
- Ancestry.com. 1850 U.S. Federal Census Slave Schedules [database on-line]. Provo, Utah: Ancestry.com Operations Inc, 2004. Original data: United States of America, Bureau of the Census. Seventh Census of the United States, 1850. Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 1850. M432, 1,009 rolls. District 68, Wythe, Virginia.
- 29. John Frederick Dorman, *The Prestons of Smithfield and Greenfield in Virginia* (Louisville, Ky.: The Filson Club, 1982), 68–70. The only datum in this table not taken from Dorman is the 1870 death date of William Preston Floyd. That date can be found on line at many genealogical web sites.
- 30. Alex Luken, personal communication. Email message to the authors, September 2015.

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Letitia Preston Floyd's "My Dear Rush" Letter

Jim Glanville and Ryan Mays Copyright 2016

Introduction

The present authors gave a sketch of Letitia Preston Floyd (1779– 1852) in the previous volume of the *Smithfield Review*.¹ As background for the reader of this article, it may be briefly reiterated that Letitia Preston Floyd was born on the Virginia frontier in the newly created Montgomery County. Her parents were the Scotch-Irish immigrant William Preston of Augusta County and Susanna Smith of Hanover County. In 1804 she married John Floyd in Kentucky and went on to become a plantation owner, the mother of twelve children (seven of whom survived to adulthood and marriage), and the First Lady of Virginia.

The "My Dear Rush" letter is a 32-page manuscript written by Mrs. Floyd dated February 22, 1843. The authors of this article discovered the *original* copy of this document in January 2014 (after its being closely held within the Preston family for 161 years and ten further years in a Smithfield closet) in a storage box at the Smithfield Plantation.² The manuscript is in the form of a letter to her son Benjamin Rush Floyd and because of its opening salutation is referred to as the "My Dear Rush" letter.

The letter was written at her home on the Cavan estate in Burke's Garden in Tazewell County, Virginia, at the instigation of the historian Lyman Draper.³ The letter is in Mrs. Floyd's own hand and records many things that can be found nowhere else in the historical record. It is also a crucial document for understanding the European settling of southwest Virginia that was spearheaded by her great-uncle James Patton and her father William Preston. Additionally, the letter is foundational for the study of the westward expansion of America during the Early Republic Period. It is the most significant of all the writings about the early history of the Patton, Preston, Floyd, Breckinridge, and other families in Virginia, Tennessee, and Kentucky.⁴

^{1.} Jim Glanville and Ryan Mays, "A Sketch of Letitia Preston Floyd and Some of Her Letters," *Smithfield Review* 19 (2015), 77–120.

^{2.} Jim Glanville and Ryan Mays, "An Important Smithfield Plantation Archive," *Historic Smithfield Newsletter*, Spring 2014.

^{3.} Glanville and Mays, "A Sketch," 104–107.

^{4.} The letter's wealth of family information has made it a famous resource for genealogists.

During the second half of the nineteenth century the "My Dear Rush" letter was in the possession of Mrs. Floyd's daughter Nickette Buchanan Floyd Johnston. After Mrs. Johnston's death the letter remained in the possession of Floyd family members for about a hundred years until three great-great-granddaughters of Mrs. Floyd and their mother brought it and donated it to the Smithfield Plantation in October 2004.⁵

The original copy of the "My Dear Rush" letter remains presently at the Smithfield Plantation in Blacksburg. The provenance of this original letter is discussed in the appendix to this article.

Previous Transcriptions of the "My Dear Rush Letter"

It was an interesting experience for the authors to be following 170 years later in the footsteps of the previous transcribers, James Cochran and George Frederick Holmes.⁶ In a few places the authors were able to make use of their transcriptions. The Smithfield original letter has holes on a few pages at folds where the paper has worn away over the years. Occasionally, reference was made to the Cochran and Holmes transcriptions for help. Some of the later transcriptions of the "My Dear Rush" article and present-day archival and Internet copies are described in the appendix.

About this Transcription

This transcription is a readable modern version of Mrs. Floyd's letter with regularized spelling, punctuation and capitalization. The authors' intent has been to make it as easy as possible for a modern reader to follow Mrs. Floyd's language with a minimum of distraction. Thus they have added many commas, added capitalization, regularized and corrected spelling, and added explanatory transitions in brackets. Our intent is that the bracketed comments will serve either to ease the modern reader's path or to call attention to ambiguities or uncertainties. A principal purpose of the footnotes is to elucidate matters that will be obscure to a modern reader.

This transcription keeps Mrs. Floyd's pagination. Images of the original pages of her letter are posted on line.⁷ Thus anyone reading this transcription can readily check and compare it against the images of the handwritten version.⁸

^{5.} Original family letters brought simultaneously with the "My Dear Rush" letter to Smithfield Plantation by three great-granddaughters of Mrs. Floyd and their mother give a good account of its provenance. The mother was great-granddaughter Evelyn Byrd (nee Henry) Sargeant. The great-great-granddaughters were Jane Byrd (nee Sargeant) McCurdy, and her sisters Evelyn (nee Sargeant) Hutton and Louisa (nee Sargeant) Dent. For further details see the appendix to this article.

^{6.} Glanville and Mays, "A Sketch," 104–107.

^{7.} See www.lynnside.org/MDR-Images.pdf

The first photographic copies of the letter were made by coauthor JG in February/March 2014. High quality copies were made by staff of the Library of Virginia at the Montgomery County Court House in April 2015.

Transcript of the Original "My Dear Rush" Letter

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Cavan⁹ Feby 22' 1843

My dear Rush:

From the extreme rigor of the winter and diminished vision I have postponed answering your Letter of December 30th. enclosing one from Mr. Lyman C. Draper of Buffalo, New York. The object of Mr. Draper's letter is to collect materials for a work Sketches of the Pioneers though it be irrelevant in reply to repeat the traditions I have so often interested your childhood with on the facts of the life and death of Col. James Patton etc. He was born in the North of Ireland in the Town of Newton Lemavaddy¹⁰ in the year of our Lord, 1690.¹¹ He was bred to the sea and in the wars of England with the Low Countries served as an officer in the Royal Navy. After the Treaty of Utrecht [made in 1713] he procured a "passenger ship" and traded to the Colony of Virginia, at Hobbes Hole, on the Rappahannock. He penetrated the then wilderness of the state as far as Orange County, thence across the Blue Ridge and commenced a settlement near Waynesboro in Augusta County. He crossed the Atlantic twenty three or twenty five times. His traffic was peltries [animal skins] and tobacco, his return cargo was what was then termed "Redemptioners" - poor families of Irish who served a given time for the price of the passage. In this way the greater part of the County of Augusta was settled. The descendants of these emigrants, have furnished the West with many of its governors, senators, judges and distinguished literary men, and even intermarried with "the Imperial Family of Virginia" as the historian Burke terms the Pocahontas

Cavan was Mrs. Floyd's estate in Burke's Garden, Tazewell County, Virginia. She lived there as a widow from about 1839 to her death in 1852. See our accompanying article in this volume titled "Letitia Preston Floyd: Supplementary Notes." See pp. 69-77 of this issue.

^{10.} Mrs. Floyd probably erred in recollecting her great-uncle's birth place. On page seven of her manuscript she states that her father's birthplace was also Newton Limavaddy and probably confused the two men. The present authors (in "The Mysterious Origins of James Patton," 46–47) offered circumstantial evidence that Patton was born near Lough Swilly, some miles to the north of Limavaddy.

^{11.} The earlier transcribers of this letter, James Cochran and George Frederick Holmes, both wrote 1692 not the correct 1690. Following Cochran and Holmes, for many years, writers have been giving 1692 or "circa 1692" as the date of James Patton's birth.

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descendants of our state. Col. Patton had two sisters who married men of "quality" as the nieces termed them. This state of things kept two other sisters unmarried. The youngest sister Elizabeth, crossing the river Shannon¹² in a boat was much attracted by the beauty and deportment of a young man, whose name was John Preston. On inquiry he was found to be a ship carpenter. Nothing daunted by his humble pursuit an understanding took place and Miss Patton consented to a runaway match. This step placed her out of the pale of her family. Her brother Col. James Patton had by this time obtained governmental distinction in Virginia as well as a grant of land from Governor Dinwiddie of two or three hundred thousand acres. Col. Patton determined to remove his family from Whitehaven¹³ to his residence in Augusta County. He proposed to John Preston his brother-inlaw to accompany him to America, and for his services as a shipwright he would secure him four thousand acres of land. Preston did not hesitate. He embarked with his three daughters and his only son William Preston who was then eight years old. In the summer of 1738¹⁴ both families settled in Augusta, Mr. Preston seven miles below Staunton and Patton at Springhill.¹⁵ As Preston had left the sea board his pursuits were changed and he worked at the cabinet trade. A silly augury of a native Irish woman, to wit, "that William Preston would get his uncles fortune" so impressed Mrs. Patton (who was a proud haughty lady) that no intercourse

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was allowed of in the two families. Seven years after their landing John Preston died at "Gibsons old Place" eight miles below Staunton. Mrs. Preston's situation was then a straightened one. She sent her son to her brother's with a message. The youngest daughter of Col. Patton, knew her

^{12.} The Shannon River watershed is considerably distant from Patton and Preston hearth territory of Londonderry and Lough Swilly. The meeting described by Mrs. Floyd may more plausibly have occurred on the Lennon River, which is in Ulster. See Jim Glanville and Ryan Mays, "The Mysterious Origins of James Patton, Part 1," *Smithfield Review* 15 (2011), 35–64, at 46.

Whitehaven is a port in Cumbria, England on the Solway Firth. See Richard K. MacMaster, "Captain James Patton Comes to America 1737–1740," *Augusta Historical Bulletin* 16(2) (1980), 4–13.

^{14.} The earlier transcribers of this letter, James Cochran and George Frederick Holmes, both wrote 1735. The correct date was 1738, and the original letter shows some indication that an unknown later hand has corrected the manuscript.

^{15.} Springhill was about 10 miles southeast of Staunton in present-day Augusta County near the town of Lipscomb along the South River, a tributary of the Shenandoah River.

cousin, but her mother did not. Peggy (afterwards Mrs. Buchannan¹⁶) passed William Preston off as a neighbor's son to prevent her mother turning him out of doors. By this time William Preston was 15 or 16 years of age. Mrs. Patton's dread of his getting the fortune by marriage with one of her daughters urged their early marriage with a kinsman of hers by the name of Thompson (who was a rich man), and the youngest to Col. John Buchannan. Shortly after their marriage, Mrs. Patton died. This event led her husband [to] look into the situation of his sister's family. Col. Patton placed his nephew with the Rev. Mr. Craig, pastor of Tinkling Spring congregation. A classical education was not attempted because William Preston was thought be too much grown. However an excellent course of history, mathematics, and penmanship was afforded. Col. Patton had the affairs of the then Mountain Region of the Colony entrusted to him by Gov. Dinwiddie. His sister Mrs. Preston was induced to remove to Hangers (Judge Baldwin's seat)¹⁷ for the purpose of affording her son the opportunity of posting merchants books and doing whatever writing her brother needed. Col. Patton left his seat and removed to Staunton and lived at his sister's house. Shortly after that he was sent to Logstown somewhere near Pittsburgh to make a treaty with the

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Northwestern Indians.¹⁸ William Preston then eighteen years of age was made his private Secretary. I remember to have read Col. Patton's journal, written by himself – with the speeches of Ocanostoto, the old Mingoe chief. After peace was made Col. Patton came up to the extreme western counties (now) of this state.¹⁹ He located all the fine lands of Upper James River, Catawba, and the Amsterdam lands in Botetourt County. He then came to North Roanoke, Stroubles Creek, embracing the Blacksburg lands and Smithfield the present seat of Gov. James Patton Preston. After that he came to Burke's Garden and the Rich Valley on Holstein, in which the celebrated salt works of Mrs. Sally Preston and Mr. William King are situated. Col. Patton tried to rally the settlers to defend the country from the inroads of the Indians on the frontiers of Virginia. This he was unable to effect. All the settlers from South Holstein to South Roanoke left the Country and went below [east of] the Blue Ridge. Patton maintained his ground as did Col.

^{16.} Throughout her letter Mrs. Floyd uses the spelling Buchannan. It was always spelled "Buchanan" by Col. John Buchanan and his descendants, and that is the accepted modern spelling.

^{17.} This is apparently a reference to the location of Judge Briscoe G. Baldwin's law school at Staunton.

^{18.} The Treaty of Logstown was made in 1752.

^{19.} Colonels James Patton and John Buchanan had actually been exploring and surveying the backcountry since the early 1740s, long before the Logstown Treaty.

William Ingles, Philip Barger, and Philip Lybrook on Sinking Creek.²⁰ On the 8th. day of July 1755,²¹ it being Sunday, a party of Indians came up the Kanhawa [River] thence to Sinking Creek thence to Stroubles Creek. Ingles and Draper, brothers-in-law, were living at Solitude²² the present residence of Col. Robert T. Preston. Barger half a mile nearer to the mountain.²³ The Indians came to Barger's, cut his head off put it in a bag (Barger was a very old man) [and] then came to Ingles and Drapers, killed old Mrs. Draper, two children of Col. Ingles, by knocking their brains out on the ends of the cabin logs, took Mrs. Ingles and her son Thomas, a boy of ten years of age, prisoners, as well as her sister-in-law Mrs. Draper, who was trying to make her escape with her infant in her arms, but was shot at by the Indians who

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who broke her arm, by which means, the infant was dropped. The Indians caught it up, and dashed its brains out on the end [of] the cabin logs. Col. Patton that morning after having dressed himself in his uniform and getting his nephew William Preston to sew up in the fob of his small clothes thirty English guineas, told him to go to Sinking Creek to get Lybrook to help take off the harvest which was then ready to cut. Preston went very early. After breakfast Col. Patton had sat down to his table to write. The Indian war-hoop was heard and some five or six of the[m] surrounded the cabin to set it on fire. The colonel always kept his sword on the table, he rushed to the door with it in hand and encountered two of them. (Patton was almost gigantic in size.) He cut two of them down, in the meantime another warrior had leveled his gun, fired, and killed the brave old pioneer — Patton fell. The Indians then ran off in the thicket and made their escape before any pursuers could be brought together. Lybrook and Preston came through the mountains by an unfrequented route, arrived at Smithfield (then called

^{20.} It was Casper Barger who settled at Draper's Meadows. Phillip Barger, who settled on Casper's tract of land at Draper's Meadows after the French and Indian War (1754–1763), was probably his son.

^{21.} Mrs. Floyd is here in error. The date of Patton's death was actually Wednesday, July 30, 1755.

^{22.} Much altered, Solitude stands today as the oldest structure on the Virginia Tech campus. It received its name circa 1800.

^{23.} Phillip Lybrook was located along Sinking Creek, a tributary of the New River, in present-day Giles County. See: Ryan S. Mays, "The Draper's Meadows Settlement (1746–1756), Part I: George Draper and Family," *Smithfield Review* 18 (2014), 25–50; Ryan S. Mays, "The Draper's Meadows Settlement (1746–1756), Part II," *Smithfield Review* 19 (2015), 1–32. Ingles and Draper were living in the vicinity of what later became known as Solitude; Barger was either near Solitude or at the location of Phillip Barger's later settlement about half a mile to the northeast.

Draper's Meadows) where they found Patton, Mrs. Draper, the mother of Mrs. Ingles and the children buried. The whole settlement was destroyed. The Indians on their retreat back stopped at Lybrook's told the Old Mrs. Lybrook they had killed two men one woman and three children, [and] to look in the bag and she would see an old friend. She immediately recognized the head of Philip Barger who was then aged and very gray. Mrs. Ingles, her oldest son a

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a boy of ten years of age, Mrs. Draper [and] her sister-in-law were taken to the Indian towns on the other side of the Ohio River. They traveled down the Kanhawa or as it is sometimes called "New River," [and] went through the northeastern part of Kentucky. Mrs. Ingles in three months after her capture, gave birth to a daughter. Her sister-in-law had been traded off to another tribe of Indians, as was her son. Three months after the birth of her child she determined to run off from the Indians who were dreadfully barbarous to her. Another strong impulse to return to her husband made her undertake a journey unparalleled in the incidents of pioneer life. She and a Dutch woman who was taken from the upper part of the Ohio, determined to run away from the towns. Mrs. Ingles left her child in a bark cradle asleep, knowing as soon as she was missed, the Indians would kill the infant. A series of remarkable events occurred to them on the route. Mrs. Ingles keeping up the water courses when she got to the Ohio river she and the Dutch woman tied logs together with a grape vine made a raft and crossed the stream. They were near perishing of hunger, living on blackberries, sassafras leaves, frogs, and in one instance eating a snake they found dead, then a raccoon in a great state of decomposition. All means failing, a proposition was made that lots should be cast [to decide] which of them was to be eaten by the other. The lot fell on Mrs. Ingles, who understanding her traveling companions temper, promised her a sum of money if she would refrain from killing her — Col. Ingles was a rich man. This had the desired effect [and] the Dutch woman forebore. Mrs. Ingles however, slipped off leaving the old woman to find her way as she could. After many weeks travel Mrs. Ingles arrived at Ingles Ferry on New River, the

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then residence of Col. Ingles. She was afterwards the mother of a highly respectable family who have always been distinguished for bravery and honesty. Her grandchildren lived on the place she made such wonderful efforts to return to. These transactions took place the year of Braddock's defeat [1755]. Mrs. Ingles lived to a very great age I remember to have seen her fifty years ago at a large Baptist Association, thirty miles from her home. She was then eighty years old, looked florid, and erect. Mr. [Lyman C.] Draper desires to know whatever particulars of my father Col. William Preston I may have a knowledge of. He was the only son of John Preston and Elizabeth Patton [and] was born in Ireland in the town of Newton Limavaddy on the 25th of December 1729. When he was seven or eight years of age his father emigrated to the colony of Virginia. His father was remarkable for fine personal appearance, great industry and unabated piety. The mother's qualities were masculine understanding, great ambition and impetuosity of temper. Humble fortunes which she brought on herself by marrying a ship carpenter, were powerfully resisted. She was however left a widow with a family of four daughters and an only son who was but stripling at his father's death. The forest was to conquer. This her young son did by daily labor in cutting down trees and making fences. After Mrs. Patton's death, Mrs. Preston removed to Hangers near Staunton. Her daughters were skillful needle women. It was the age of cross-stitch, embroidery, etc. They wrought diligently at the business [and] obtained a sufficiency of money to

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purchase a Negro woman. A little while afterwards, a young Presbyterian clergyman from Ireland, by the name of John Brown, settled in Staunton, became attracted to Margaret Preston, second daughter [of John and Elizabeth Preston], married her, went to Rockbridge County, took charge of a Congregation and preached fifty years in New Providence Meeting House. The eldest Daughter Lettice Preston married Col. Robert Breckinridge – a man of some wealth, who had been married before, and had two sons by that marriage. The third sister Ann Preston was then married to a young gentleman by the name of Francis Smith. During this period Col. William Preston was employed by Wallace Estill²⁴ the High Sheriff of Augusta to

^{24.} Patton served only a one-year term as sheriff, being succeeded by several other men. No record has been found of Wallace Estill being sheriff of Augusta County, at least not in the 1750s–60s. He probably lived on the Bullpasture River in present-day Highland County, Virginia. No primary source record has been found of William Preston having served as a deputy sheriff in Augusta County, although he was appointed sheriff in 1759.

ride as deputy sheriff. The year after, Preston and Col. John Buchannan were elected Burgesses²⁵ to [the] House of Burgesses. Preston was required by the congregation of Episcopalians in Staunton to procure a carpenter to undertake the building of a church in town. A carpenter and undertaker living near Hanover Court house by the name of Francis Smith, who kept a tavern a short distance from the court house, was applied to by Col. Preston to attend to the building. Mr. Smith was a rich man, had an extremely beautiful daughter by the name of Susanna, who was educated by the Rev. Patrick Henry. Col. Preston was soon attracted by her beauty and manners. He addressed her and was married the 17th of July 1761. The summer of 1757, Col. Preston had been appointed Commissioner to hold a Treaty with the Shawnees and Delaware Indians at the mouth of Big Sandy River, a branch of the Ohio. Col. Thomas

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Lewis of Rockingham County²⁶ was likewise a Commissioner. Lewis I believe did not accompany the party. The treaty was made I think with Ocanostoto, who was now very old, and a chief called Cornstalk. Col. Preston endured singular hardships in this expedition.²⁷ He had tied his moccasin somewhat too tight. The string chafed the instep of one of his feet which produced partial mortification. The skills of a physician by the name of Dr. Thomas Lloyd saved his life. Lloyd had been purchased by Preston a year or two previously. Finding him a man of fine education with great knowledge of medicine the Dr. was made the companion and died very many years thereafter the firm friend of Preston's family. On their return from the mouth of Sandy they took up a fork of the river which was through a very rugged region [and] got so entirely out of food as to be compelled to eat the buffalo tugs which tied on their packs and hence the stream was named by Col. Preston the "Tug Fork of Sandy." The County of Fincastle was taken off Rockbridge County about the year 1764.28 Col. Preston obtained the surveyors place, which determined him to leave Staunton. He settled on "Greenfield" near Amsterdam,29 a valuable estate yet in possession of his granddaughter. Having some business to transact in Augusta Court in the month of May he left his family at Greenfield, early in the morning

^{25.} Mrs. Floyd is here in error. Buchanan was never a member of the Virginia House of Burgesses.

^{26.} Mrs. Floyd is here in error. Rockingham County had yet to be created.

^{27.} Mrs. Floyd is here in error. The purpose of the 1756 Sandy Creek expedition was for warfare not treaty making.

^{28.} Mrs. Floyd is here in error. Fincastle county was created in 1772 (not 1764), and it was formed from a part of Botetourt (not Rockbridge) County.

^{29.} Near the modern town of Daleville in present-day Botetourt County, Virginia.

Mrs. Preston was startled by the firing of two guns in quick succession, at a neighbor's house within a half mile of hers. Very shortly afterwards Mr. Joseph Cloyd rode up on his plough horse with the gears³⁰ on, telling Mrs. Preston that the Indians had

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killed his brother John, shot at him, but missed him, although his shirt was powder burnt. They had gone to the house and he expected had killed his mother. Mrs. Preston sent a young man living at her house, to Captain Francis Smith, who commanded a small fort on Craig's [now Craig] Creek³¹ to bring his troops to pursue the Indians. She wrote a letter to him, which was free from tremor or trepidation. She then sent a white man and two Negro men to Mr. Cloyd's where they found Mrs. Cloyd tomahawked in three places [and] all the household destroyed. The money [had been] carried off - (Mr. Cloyd had a large sum of gold stowed away). Mrs. Clovd was perfectly in her senses [and] told all the circumstances of the savages' revelry, in getting drunk, ripping up the feather beds, and one of them taking a corn cob and wiping off the blood from her temples. She died the next morning. After this irruption of the Indians, there appeared to be a pause in their depredations. I think about the year 1765 an expedition was ordered by the then Governor of Virginia Lord Botetourt and the command given to Col. Byrd who penetrated as far as the Tennessee line.³² What his success was I am not able to state. I think however the settlements were insecure. In 1773, Colonel Preston became possessor of Draper's Meadows, (now Smithfield), the County of Botetourt was divided and Col. Preston determined to follow the surveyor's office. Whilst Col. Preston lived at Greenfield, Col. John Buchannan determined to leave his residence near Pattonsburg,³³ and remove to Reed Creek to settle at Anchor and Hope, a splendid estate Col. Patton had given his daughter Margaret.³⁴ On his journey, he stopped at Greenfield took sick and died after several weeks illness.

^{30.} Plow "gears" comprise the horse harness of a plow. The horse was wearing its plow harness.

^{31.} A tributary of the James River flowing through Montgomery, Craig, and Botetourt counties.

^{32.} Byrd commanded a Virginia force during the Anglo-Cherokee war of 1761 (not 1765). The force indeed reached Tennessee, but under the command of Adam Stephen. Byrd gave up command in present-day Wythe County, Virginia. See: Harry M. Ward, *Major General Adam Stephen and the Cause of American Liberty* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1989).

On the James River at the present-day town of Buchanan in what is today Botetourt County, Virginia.

^{34.} James Patton willed his daughter Margaret his Cherry Tree Bottom plantation on the James River in present-day Botetourt County. Col. John Buchanan received a patent for his Anchor and Hope tract in present-day Wythe County in 1753.

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Whilst on his death bed he desired Mrs. Preston to take charge of his daughter Jane, then ten years old. This was done. Col. Buchannan made Col. Preston the executor of his immense estate. A long and unbroken friendship existed between them. Buchannan is favorably mentioned by Gen. Washington (in Sparks' Life of Washington).³⁵ During Col. Preston's residence at Greenfield in the year 1770, a young gentleman by the name of John Floyd was introduced to him by Col. Joseph Cabell of Buckingham County, as very well qualified to a post as a deputy in the surveyor's office. It was always a rule with Col. Preston to require of every young man who was employed in his office to teach school six months at least, thereby finding out his temper, diligence, habits and trustworthiness. Messrs. Breckinridge's [and] Smith's children and my sisters and brothers constituted Floyd's School. When my father removed to Smithfield in 1773, Col. Floyd accompanied him. In the autumn of that year Col. Preston, with Col. Nathaniel Gist were appointed to make a treaty with the Cherokee and I think the Chickamauga Indians at Long Island on the Holstein River in the [future] State of Tennessee. The treaty was made and the Southern Indians were perfectly quiet. In the March of 1774 Col. Preston removed my mother and her children to Smithfield. There was a fort or stockade³⁶ around the house. Several of the neighbors families came into it for safety, because the Northwestern Indians made constant attempts on the settlements. Maj. John Taylor who had married a niece of Col. Buchannan, was one of the families. Mr. Robert Preston, Captain James Charlton, his brother Frank, and Capt. John Lucas were mainly the persons who defended the Fort. In the June of 1774 my brother Gov James Patton Preston

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was born at Smithfield. Mrs. Preston's confinement was so protracted from typhus fever that a nurse for her infant was procured by the kindness of Mrs. Vanlear, who affectionately took upon herself that office. She was the mother of the Rev. John Vanlear. During the summer and autumn of 1774 the entire region of the Northwest of the Mountains of Virginia was put in commotion by the movements of the Indians on her borders. The Governor

^{35.} John Buchanan is not mentioned in Sparks' *Life of Washington* (1839). However, he is mentioned in Jared Sparks' earlier book, *The Writings of George Washington* Vol. 2 (Boston, Mass.: Russell, Odiorne, Metcalf, and Hilliard, Gray, and Co., 1834).

^{36.} Preston commented in a 1774 letter to George Washington that he was building a stockade around Smithfield. See Jim Glanville and Ryan Mays, "The William Preston / George Washington Letters," *Smithfield Review* 18 (2014), 51–77.

of the State Lord Dunmore made a visit³⁷ as far as Fincastle in Botetourt County to organize an expedition against the Shawneese, Guyandottes and Delaware Indians. Gen. Andrew Lewis, who had served in Braddock's war as a colonel and in the old French war as a major, was appointed to [be] the commander of the expedition. His youngest brother Col. Charles Lewis of Bath County, Gen. Lewis' sons, Samuel and Thomas Lewis, his nephew Thomas Lewis of Rockingham County and Andrew John Lewis and his nephew in-law Captain Trigg, and Capt. John McClannahan, were all in his Army. I think Col. William Christian, Col. William Flemming, his brotherin-law, Col. John Stewart, and Col. John Floyd were also in the Campaign. The battle of "Point Pleasant" was fought on the 10th of October 1774 -Col. Charles Lewis was killed, Col. Samuel Lewis wounded, Capt. John Lewis of Rockingham killed, Capt. Trigg killed, and Capt. McClannahan as was Capt. Monroe the brother-in-law of Col. Charles Lewis, Col. Floyd was sent on a foraging expedition and did not arrive until the day after the battle. I remember distinctly to have read a Letter from Col. Thomas Lewis of Rockingham County to my father giving a detailed account of that battle. Col. Preston was detained

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by the illness of Mrs. Preston, who was not expected to survive. The year after this battle, the country of Kentucky attracted much attention. Col. Preston's surveyor's office comprehended all that beautiful state. Col. Preston sent Col. Floyd out on an exploring expedition, with a view to take up the Lands for the benefit of Floyd and himself. For a long time it was supposed Floyd was killed by the Indians, however he returned to Smithfield by the route of Guyandotte, Coal River etc. having endured hardships which few men could have survived - In the summer of 1776 the American Revolution fairly commenced, [and] all plans for a settlement west were suspended. Col. Preston found himself surrounded by a neighborhood of Tories that kept him continually on the alert, to prevent their murdering himself and family as [well] as every other Whig³⁸ in the Country. Gen. William Campbell of Washington County, Col. Arthur Campbell of the same county, a brother inlaw of Gen. Campbell's, Col. Patrick Lockhart of Botetourt County, William Madison the son-in-law of Col. Preston, were all good Whigs and kept the Tories in check. Col. Preston was very intently engaged in educating his family, and improving the valuable estate he had by this time acquired. To

^{37.} Mrs. Floyd is here in error. There is no record of Governor Dunmore ever visiting southwest Virginia.

^{38.} Whig refers to American "patriots," persons who rejected the authority of George III.

effect the first named purpose he had purchased a gentleman by the name of Mr. Aaron Palfreman. This person was a poet and a scholar. He was the correspondent and friend of the celebrated Miss Carter the poetess. Mr. Palfreman had in a drunken frolic, consented to be married to a beautiful woman, who was represented to him as a Lady by his companions. Next morning finding he was made a dupe of, and that his wife was a woman of

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and was wounded, whilst performing some military [illegible] in the small of the back. The wound was a serious one – the Surgeons almost despaired of [illegible] it. Lewis had heard that the tongue of a dog would heal a wound when all else failed. He had a favorite dog in camp, which followed to Fort Cumberland when Lewis was taken. The dog was taught to lick the wound, which was healed –

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of the town, he embarked in a few hours for America. On landing at Williamsburg Col. Preston met with him, purchased him, and ever afterwards kept him in his family as a teacher. Col. Preston, Col. Thomas Lewis of Rockingham, Gen. Andrew Lewis of Botetourt, Col. Fleming, Mr. John Madison of Augusta, engaged Mr. Gabriel Jones an Englishman⁴⁰ to select for their libraries in London. This Mr. Jones was Mr. Jefferson's first partner in the practice of law. A good selection of the classics, ancient history, the distinguished poets of England, "The Dictionary of Arts and Sciences" a sort of encyclopedia, with much polemic and religious production constituted the libraries. I would observe that the use of these books gave to each family possessing them a station which outranked very many wealthier families than the above named. The multiplicity of business growing out the surveyors office, organizing the counties, and their civil politics seemed to require all Col. Preston's energies. In addition he held extensive correspondence with many of the then active Whig partisans of the Revolution. In this business he was greatly assisted by his nephew Mr. John Breckinridge who was undergoing the ordeal of teaching school at Smithfield. Mr. Breckinridge studied Law at William & Mary College, married Miss Polly Cabell the

^{39.} This overlay (a hinged flap that lays over lines 3-9 of page 13) was apparently not seen by either Cochran or Holmes.

Mrs. Floyd is here in error. Gabriel Jones had spent time in England being educated, but he was born in Williamsburg. His sobriquet was "Valley Lawyer." See Lucille Griffith, *The Virginia House of Burgesses*, 1750–1774, second revised edition (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1970), 90–91.

second daughter of Col. Joseph Cabell [and] received a large fortune with her. In 1796 [he] removed to Kentucky acquired great celebrity as a lawyer, presented the famous Kentucky Resolutions on the Alien and Sedition Laws, [and] was elected to the Senate of the United States

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where he made a great display of political knowledge and an oratory that was not equaled ever by Governor Morris, who was in the Senate at that time. Mr. Breckinridge was made Attorney General of the United States by Mr. Jefferson, in which office he died, leaving four sons of distinguished talents. His eldest Daughter Laetitia married Gen. P. B. Porter Secretary of War in Mr. John Q. Adams' administration. After Mr. Breckinridge's leaving Smithfield his brother Gen. James Breckinridge took his place as teacher and assistant. Previous to this period there was a Company formed called "The Loyal Company" for the purpose of entering lands in the western counties of Virginia. Dr. Thomas Walker of Albemarle [County], Judge Edmund Pendleton, and one or two others [formed the company and] much surveying was required. Col. Preston was employed which still increased his estate. Col. Preston planned many of the military movements of that period. He was a man of consummate judgment and unremitting industry. He planned the campaign which made the demonstration in North Carolina that led to the battles of Guilford and King's Mountain. His health had greatly declined from frequent apoplectic premonitions, yet he undertook as Commandant of his County to march at the head of his regiment into North Carolina, to join Gen. Green at Guilford. You will see an account of this matter in Lee's Memoirs of the Revolution. A skirmish had taken place between the Americans and British at Whitsells Mill a short distance from the main battle. Col. Preston was riding a large fiery young horse, that took fright at the report of the guns, dashed through the

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mill pond, threw Col. Preston off who was likely to be cut down by the British light horse. At this critical moment Col. Joseph Cloyd dismounted put Col. Preston on his horse and thereby saved his friend's and officer's life. This signal service was always held in memory by Col. Preston and a sincere friendship continued during Preston's life. Cloyd was the young man who escaped when his brother and mother were killed near Greenfield. Cloyd married an excellent worthy lady – without any fortune, which so displeased his father that he was banished from [under] the paternal roof.

Preston furnished money to Cloyd which enabled him to purchase the estate his son David Cloyd lives on. After Col. Preston's return from North Carolina his health continued to decline. In the month of June 1783, he had spent the evening with his intimate friend Gen. Evan Shelby (the father of Governor Isaac Shelby) on the morning of the 28th he prepared to attend a Regiment muster at Michael Price's three miles from Smithfield. His eldest son Gen. John Preston, then a youth, accompanied him as did Gen. Shelby. The day was exceedingly hot. After being on the field a few hours, he beckoned to his son John to come to him, complained of pain in the head, desired to lie down on Price's bed. In a short time afterwards [he] requested his son to help him on his horse, he wanted to go home. When the horse was brought to the door he made an attempt to put his foot in the stirrup, sank down, was caught by his son, laid on the bed again. By this time he had lost his speech but took his son's hand rolled up his shirt sleeve and made a sign for his son to bleed him,

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this Gen. Preston could not do. Mrs. Preston was sent for who immediately reached the place. Col. Preston's reason had not been staggered in this conflict - he caught his wife's hand kissed it - shed tears - and made a motion to be bled. This could not be effected, from consternation and ignorance. Soon after the stentorious breathing of apoplexy came on and about midnight he breathed his last. Col. Floyd was killed on the 12th of April 1783. When the news reached Col. Preston such was the feeling produced by it, that Preston was never seen to smile afterwards. Col. Preston was above the ordinary height of men, five feet eleven inches – he was large inclined to corpulency – was ruddy, had fair hair and hazel eyes. His manners were easy and graceful he had a well cultivated intellect, and a fine taste for poetry. I remember reading several beautiful productions of his, addressed to my mother in praise of her domestic virtues. On the 18th of June 1823 this excellent lady expired, after having lived a widow forty years. She desired to be buried in the same grave with her husband this was done. A tombstone was placed over the grave by their second Son Gen. Francis Preston. No portrait of either was ever taken.⁴¹ Col. Preston and wife had twelve children. The oldest was Mrs. Elizabeth Madison. She married the second son of Mr. John Madison, the father of Bishop James Madison, the learned President of William and Mary College, likewise Mr.

^{41.} No portrait of William Preston is known to exist. A portrait of Susanna Smith Preston, which is a copy of an original by John Wallaston held at the Filson Historical Society, today hangs in the Smithfield Plantation house.

Thomas Madison who married the youngest sister of Patrick Henry, also Governor George Madison of Kentucky who married Miss Jane Smith the niece of Col. Preston. The next child was Gen. John Preston

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who married Miss Polly Radford, the daughter of Col. William Radford an officer of the Revolutionary Army. The third Child was Gen. Francis Preston, who married the only daughter and heiress of Gen. William Campbell of King's Mountain memory. Her mother was the third sister of Patrick Henry. The fourth child was Mrs. Sarah M^cDowell, the wife of Col. James M^cDowell of Rockbridge. She was the mother of Mrs. Susan Taylor, Mrs. Benton and her only son is Governor James M^cDowell of this State – the fifth Child Anne, died at 13 years of age. the sixth child was Major William Preston who was a captain in Gen. Wayne's Army. He married Col. George Hancock's second daughter. Hancock was a Revolutionary officer. The seventh child was Mrs. Susanna Hart who married Mr. Nathaniel Hart of Kentucky whose father was killed at the siege of Boonsborough. The eighth child was Governor James Patton Preston, he married the second daughter of Mr. Robert Taylor a merchant of Norfolk Borough. Gov. Preston was wounded at the battle of Crysler's Field⁴³ in Canada during the last war. He is yet living at Smithfield, is a pensioner, a gentleman of exceedingly graceful manners, greatly beloved by his neighbors and relatives. The ninth child was Mrs. Mary Lewis. She was the wife of Captain John Lewis an officer of the Revolution, he was entitled to half pay during life. He was the proprietor of the celebrated Sweet Spring⁴⁴ of Virginia. The tenth child is Mrs. Letitia Floyd [the writer of this letter] who married Gov. John Floyd of Virginia, the youngest son of Col. John Floyd and Jane Buchannan. The eleventh child was Thomas Lewis Preston, who married Miss Edmonia Randolph

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the second daughter of Col. Edmund Randolph of Williamsburg. Col. Randolph was at one period the aide of Gen. Washington, then Attorney

^{42.} On manuscript page 18 there are five places where it has been corrected by striking out a word and writing another above it. The changes all involve ranking changes with second becoming third, etc. It is unknown when and by whom the changes were made.

^{43.} The battle of Crysler's Field was fought on November 11, 1813, near Cornwall, Ontario.

^{44.} The Sweet Springs resort in present-day Monroe County, West Virginia, was for many years a prominent and successful summer resort for the wealthy. See Agnes E. Gish, *The Sweet Springs of Western Virginia: A Bittersweet Legacy* (Westminster, Md.: Heritage Books, 2009). Mrs. Floyd is buried not far from the resort.

General of the United States, then Secretary of State under Washington's administration. Thomas Preston was a lawyer of great popularity and a fine orator. The twelfth child was Mrs. Peggy Brown Preston the wife of Col. John Preston of Washington County, his Father was Mr. Robert Preston, surveyor of that county. Mr. John Preston the father of Robert and Mr. Walter Preston emigrated to Virginia in the year 1770. He was a distant relation of Col. William Preston's. In the year 1790, Mr. Robert Preston made a voyage to Ireland. On his return he brought a Coat of Arms of the Preston family. I remember to have seen it. There was a Fox passant. The other armorials I do not recollect. The motto was "Sans tache."45 Mr. Robert Preston claimed descent from the family of Prestons from Lancashire in England, stating "that there was seven belted knights" that fought at the siege of Londonderry in 1688. Mr. Robert Preston's father was a shoemaker. This Mr. Preston acquired great wealth by the surveyors office. He married Miss Margaret Rhea, the oldest daughter of the Rev. Mr. Rhea, likewise the father of the Honorable Johnny Rhea of Tennessee. Their only child Col. John Preston of Washington was the heir to his father's wealth. This concludes the chapter of my father's family. I will add that Mrs. Brown was the mother of Mr. John Brown, who was the first member of Congress from the State of Kentucky. He was afterwards Senator to the United States. Mr. James Brown's second son was a representative in Congress from the State of Louisiana, afterwards Senator to the United States then Minister to France under Mr. J. Q. Adams. Dr. Samuel Brown was President of Transylvania University in Kentucky. Dr. Preston Brown was a skillful physician, and a wealthy man

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Mr. John Brown married a Miss Margareta Mason of the city of New York the daughter of a seceding clergyman.⁴⁶ Mr. James Brown married Miss Nancy Hart, the daughter of Col. Thomas Hart and sister of Mrs. Henry Clay. Dr. Preston Brown married Miss Elizabeth Watts the eldest sister of Gen. Edward Watts of Roanoke. She was exceedingly rich. Miss Elizabeth Brown married the Rev. Thomas Craighead. Miss Mary Brown married Dr. Alexander Humphreys of Staunton – a distinguished physician. Dr. Samuel Brown married a Miss Percy, of the State of Mississippi. Mrs. Lettice Breckinridge's sons were William Breckinridge, who married a Miss Gilliam of Augusta, [and] Mr. John Breckinridge the distinguished lawyer of Kentucky who married Miss Mary Cabell. Gen. James Breckinridge married

^{45.} Sans tache = "without stain."

^{46.} Seceding clergymen were ministers of the established Church of England who left it for nonestablished Protestant denominations. Many emigrated to America.

Miss Nancy Selden of Hampton, Virginia. Preston Breckinridge married Miss Betsy Trigg the daughter of Col. Stephen Trigg who was killed at the battle of the Blue Licks in Kentucky. Mrs. Smith was the mother of Mrs. Blair whose son is the distinguished Editor of 'The Globe." Mrs. Smith's second daughter married Maj. William Trigg, the son of Col. Stephen Trigg. The third daughter Mrs. Jane Madison was the wife of Governor George Madison of Kentucky. The youngest daughter married Dr. Louis Marshall the brother of Chief Justice Marshall, he is the father of Mr. Thomas Marshall now in the Congress of the United States. Mrs. Smith had two sons only, the oldest Mr. John Smith married Miss Chinoe Hart the daughter of Col. Nathaniel Hart. William was a major in the Army and died at Baton Rouge. Mrs. Mary Howard was the youngest sister of Col. Preston. She was born in Augusta County in the year 1740. She married Mr. John Howard

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a young gentleman of great patrimonial wealth and superior education. She was the mother of Gen. Benjamin Howard, who died Governor of Missouri. Her youngest daughter married Mr. Robert Wickliffe of Lexington Kentucky. Mr. Wickliffe became possessed of those immensely valuable lands in Fayette County which accrued to his first wife from the death of her Sister Miss Howard and her brother Gov. Howard.

I will now give you an account of your Grandfather Floyd's Family. Early in the last Century his ancestors emigrated from Wales [and] settled on the Eastern Shore of Virginia. Mr. William Floyd the father of Col. John Floyd had two brothers one named John who went north, and whose family (if he ever had one) is lost sight of. Charles the youngest son went to Georgia and is the ancestor of Gen. John Floyd of Darien in that state. William Floyd left the Eastern Shore [and] went up the Country as far as Amherst County, which was then a very wild region. He met with a family by the name of Davis, whose ancestors had come from Wales. They had traded with the Catawba Indians, and got much property in that way. The father of Robert Davis had married a half breed Indian girl.⁴⁷ This Robert Davis owned many of the rich lands of Amherst. His other daughters married a Mr. Venable and Gen. Evan Shelby of Maryland. His oldest son Robert Davis emigrated even at that early day to Natchez where many of his descendants live. John Floyd, the

^{47.} Some of the typescript copies of this letter and several of the online versions here insert "Nickette." The authors consider this insertion an act of genealogical larceny committed by some unknown person at some unknown time with the intent of changing the historical record. See details in the appendix.

oldest son of William Floyd and Abidiah Davis his wife, was born in 1751 [correct is 1757] [in] Amherst County, Virginia. At the age of eighteen

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he married a Miss Burfoot. In twelve months after their marriage Mrs. Floyd died, leaving a daughter of a few days old. The mother of Mrs. Floyd took charge of the child. Shortly afterwards Col. Floyd came to Botetourt and engaged in the business of teaching school and writing in the surveyors office. He remained at Col. Preston's until the year 1773. Whilst at Smithfield his duties were arduous. Whenever the business of the surveyors office did not require his personal attention he rode as deputy sheriff with Col. Daniel Trigg, both being employed by Col. William Christian the High Sheriff. In the year 1775 Col. Floyd went to Kentucky where he made many surveys of all the best lands on Elkhorn Creek, many in Clark County in Woodford County, Shelby County, and Jefferson County. He returned to Smithfield after unparalleled sufferings. The Declaration of Independence had been made at this time. Dr. Thomas Walker, Edmund Pendleton, Col. Preston and one or two other gentleman purchased a schooner, had it fitted up for a privateer, and gave the command to Col. Floyd.⁴⁸ I remember to have read a letter from Col. Floyd to my father dated [no date given] on "On board the Privateer Phoenix." He sailed to the West Indies [and] obtained a very rich prize. Amongst the articles on board the merchantman, was a very fine suit of wedding clothes for a lady. Col. Floyd was at that time engaged to a Miss Jane Buchannan to be married. He thought his fortune was made in the rich cargo he had taken. On his return, whilst nearly in sight of the capes of Virginia, he was overhauled by a British vessel of war, captured, taken to England put in irons, and imprisoned. Whether it was in London or on the coast of England I do not recollect. Whilst he was there Col. Radford was brought to the same Prison. They were nearly a year confined. The jailer had a daughter, to whom Col. Floyd appealed so successfully

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that she obtained the keys and let him out. Col. Radford told me when Floyd left them all the prisoners shed tears, so great a favorite had he made himself. Floyd begged his way to Dover where he found a clergyman who was in

^{48.} Floyd was commander of some soldiers, not the commander of the ship. See Wirt H. Wills, "The Phoenix Caper—A Frontiersman Goes to Sea," *Smithfield Review* 10 (2006), 21–32. See also David L. Mordy, and James C. Mordy, "The Phoenix Privateering Syndicate and Marine Captain John Floyd," *Smithfield Review* 16 (2012), 45–68.

the habit of concealing all American fugitives and procuring a passage for them to France. It was in the season of the vintage. The French gave him grapes and sometimes bread [and] in this way he got to Paris [and] applied to Dr. [Benjamin] Franklin, who furnished him with money and instructions to return to the United States. Whilst in Paris Col. Floyd was attacked with the small pox which nearly cost him his life. During his sojourn he obtained his wedding clothes, a rich and beautiful pair of brilliant shoe buckles for his intended bride, [and] a scarlet coat for himself. No intelligence of the privateer or its crew had reached the United States. The inference was that all was at the bottom of the sea. A year after, Col. Robert Sawyers [Sayers] a distant kinsman of Miss Buchannan's, an officer in the army and a rich man, addressed the young lady. Sayers had requested her to walk with him in the garden to which she consented and whilst there [she] agreed to marry him. In an hour thereafter Col. Floyd arrived at Smithfield much to the surprise and joy of his friends. Miss Buchannan's last engagement was immediately canceled, and in the month of November 1778 she married Col. Floyd. Soon afterwards they went to John's Creek⁴⁹ and settled there. Col. Floyd's father and family had left Amherst and were living on John's Creek. He remained a year there and then determined to move to Kentucky (by this time their eldest son William Preston Floyd was born) in the month of October 1779. Col. Floyd his brothers Robert, Charles, and Isham, with his brothers-in-law

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Le Master and Sturgis, husbands of his sisters Jemima and Abadiah went with them. There were also two single sisters one married a Mr. Pryor the other a Mr. Alexander. The two oldest sisters Mrs. Powell of Lynchburg and Mrs. Taley remained in Virginia, when the latter moved to Kentucky the autumn after her brothers death. Col. Floyd went to his fine estate on Beargrass Creek, six miles from Louisville. He commenced building a fort, got the houses completed in a short time and a good stockade made. The place was called Floyd's Station. As soon as his family was secure, he commenced organizing the county.⁵⁰ Mr. John Howard, Col. Robert Todd, I think Benjamin Sebastian and perhaps Judge Muter [and] Judge Samuel McDowell endeavored to arrange or enact laws for the better regulation of the people. When they convened to do so, Floyd made an address to them saying "he felt he had placed his foot upon the Threshold of an Empire."

^{49.} John's Creek is a tributary of the James River, flowing eastward through present-day Giles and Craig counties, Virginia.

^{50.} This was Jefferson County. It was one of three counties created by Virginia in 1780 when Kentucky County (contiguous with today's state) was subdivided.

This expression was looked upon as the boast of an ardent tempered man. Time has proved that it was prophetic. Much unity existed amongst the first settlers of Kentucky. Everyone sought to bring to them some agreeable friend whose fortunes might be advanced by the opening prospects of that rich country. In accordance with this feeling, Col. Floyd invited Mr. John Brown of Rockbridge, who had completed his collegiate studies at Dickinson College, Carlisle, Pennsylvania. I forget who was Mr. Brown's preceptor in the study of law. A very cordial friendship ensued. Brown was a sensible well poised man, of great application, consequently successful. Col. Floyd was frequently engaged in skirmishes

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with the Indians. Going one day to Louisville he encountered a huge Indian within half a mile of his fort, killed him [and] took all his ornaments of medals, broaches and rifle. The Indian had silver enough in his ornaments to make a dozen of table spoons. Some little time after this matter, Floyd rallied a company of eighteen or nineteen men, went about ten miles from his fort [and] met a company of Indians, I think sixteen in number. The attack was made by Floyd. They fought for several hours [and] there was fourteen of the whites killed and thirteen of the Indians - Floyd who was wounded in the foot and made his escape through the generosity of Gen. Wells⁵¹ who dismounted from his horse and gave him to Floyd. In the spring of 1801 I passed by the battle ground, Governor Madison was my escort. He showed me a large beech tree with the names of the fourteen soldiers carved on it, but it had so grown out, that few of the names could be read. The bodies of the whites and Indians were collected, placed in a sink hole near the field of battle and covered with stones and limbs of trees. This rencontre [encounter] took place on a fork of Salt River, which has ever since been called "Floyd's Fork" of Salt River. What is the date of this incident I do not recollect. I think it was in 1782 [and] you will find a statement of it in Mr. Humphrey Marshall's History of Kentucky. 52, 53 General George Rogers

^{51.} Probably the Kentucky pioneer Colonel Samuel Wells (1754-1830).

^{52.} Humphrey Marshall, The History of Kentucky (Frankfort, Ky.: George S. Robinson, 1824).

^{53.} Holmes in his 1846 copy here makes the following interpolation: "In this year (1782) Col. Floyd had learnt that a party of thirty Indians had assembled to cross the Ohio and destroy settlements at Beargrass during the night. Floyd forthwith sent a runner and collected all the men whom the neighborhood could furnish, twenty in number, crossed the river above the falls, marched to the encampment of the Indians, who were asleep, commenced the work of death; only three Indians escaped; two of Floyd's men were killed. Hempinstal (who was alive in '44 living near Shelbyville) killed with his tomahawk and butcher-knife fourteen of the Indians. Such was the contest for the possession of the 'Dark and Bloody Land."

Clark was in Jefferson County about this time. He was commissioned by the State of Virginia to raise Troop for the defense of Kentucky. The constant depredations of the Indians kept every man under arms. The Indians were instigated by the British Governor [Hamilton] to destroy the whites. Finding they would not be driven out – he made a proposition to Clark and Floyd. If they would give up the country to the British, they should have as

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much boundary of land on the west bank of the Ohio as they might wish and any title under that of Duke. Each gentleman had received the proposition at the same time but was afraid to divulge it. Floyd, having less caution than Clark, communicated the fact to Clark. They agreed to keep it concealed from the troops, who were so famished and discontented that if they had known how, they would have gone to any help to be fed and saved from the tomahawk of the ruthless savages. This incident was communicated to Mr. Charles Fenton Mercer upwards of thirty years ago by Mrs. Croghan, the sister of Gen. Clark and mother of Colonel George C. Croghan of Sandusky memory. Mrs. Breckinridge had at the same time corroborated the fact. In 1782 Mrs. Floyd gave birth to a son that her husband named George Rogers Clark after his friend and fellow soldier. About this time Isham Floyd was killed on the west bank of the Ohio. The Indians scalped him, cut off his ears fingers and toes [and] after torturing him for three days they cut out his heart and threw it to their dogs. Col. Floyd had invited Mr. William Breckinridge and his step-brother Mr. Alexander Breckinridge to make his house their home in the year 1783. During the winter they assisted in writing in the surveyors office, and surveying many of the fine lands Floyd located in now Gallatin County for Col. Preston and Mr. Howard. There was six thousand acres in one body on the banks of the Ohio for Mr. or rather Mrs. Howard. These lands with all their great appreciation mainly fell into the hands of Mr. Robert Wickliffe the husband of Miss Margaret Howard. The land on which a part of the City of Louisville and Lexington stands was located and surveyed by Col. Floyd for Col. Preston. Likewise the Land in Woodford County on which Mr. Nathaniel Hart resides, containing two thousand acres and upwards. Mr. Joseph Drake the husband of Miss Margaret Buchannan, her brother William and sister Anne settled in Kentucky. All were sustained by Floyd's princely generosity. He never received the gratuity of one cent for all his personal trouble. How much wealth he procured for others.

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Mr. Alexander Breckinridge and his brother Robert were the sons of Col. Robert Breckinridge by his first wife Miss Poage of Augusta County. After his marriage with Miss Lettice [Letitia] Preston much disagreement existed between the children and stepmother. Col. Preston to relieve his sister proposed to Col. Breckinridge to apprentice his sons to Mr. Francis Smith the brother-in-law of Col. Preston, to learn the carpenter trade. This proposal was assented to by Breckinridge. The lads were sent to Hanover County and soon became excellent workmen. After their apprenticeship was over Col. Preston employed them to build Smithfield house. This was done so well, the first Roof lasted forty years [after] being painted when the covering and weather boarding was done. Both the young men decided to enter the Revolutionary Army. Alexander got an Ensigns commission, and Robert enlisted as a Sergeant. The latter served in the South and was taken prisoner in Charleston. When peace was concluded Col. Floyd invited them to Kentucky to promote their fortunes. On the 12 of April 1783 Col. Floyd his brother, Charles Floyd and Alexander Breckinridge were going to Salt River about 20 miles from Floyd's Station. Floyd wore a scarlet coat. On their return, a party of Indians attacked them, shot Floyd through the arm [and] the ball entered the body. Floyd reeled on his horse, which his brother observing, dismounted from his, jumped on his brother's [horse], caught him round the body and rode off in full speed to a house about five miles distant. By this time Col. Floyd was so exhausted from the loss of blood that he appeared to be dying. Nevertheless he lived that night, talked much to his brother, expressed unmitigated sorrow for his young wife the unborn infant, and his two little sons. He desired to be buried at his Station on an eminence he had chosen for a grave yard. All this was fulfilled. On the

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24th day of April, Mrs. Floyd gave birth to a son, whom she named John after his father. Col. Floyd had bequeathed his wife the beautiful estate he lived on. Also a child's part in all his lands (seventy five thousand acres, of which he owned in Shelby County), made her executrix and his friend Col. Pope executor. He gave his daughter Miss Mourning Floyd a fine estate on Beargrass, his eldest son William P. Floyd a superior tract of land on Beargrass called the Dutch Station. George Floyd's Estate was in Fayette and Clarke Counties. One thousand acres was bequeathed to his youngest son on [Harrod's Creek,] Oldham County half of this land was lost by an older

entry.⁵⁴ In the course of the year 1783 William P. Floyd died of smallpox. His Lands accrued to his brother George, in right of primogeniture. Soon after Col. Floyd's death Captain Alexander Breckinridge obtained the surveyor's place in Jefferson County. One year only had elapsed, when three brothers of the Breckinridges made suit for the hand of the beautiful, rich relict [widow] of Col. Floyd. Alexander, Robert and William. The preference was given to Robert. An engagement took place. Robert went to Virginia to settle some business he had there [and] failed to write or at least his letters never reached Mrs. Floyd. Meanwhile, Capt. Breckinridge urged his suit, was successful, and became the husband of Mrs. Floyd. This union was not a happy one. Capt. Breckinridge had contracted habits of intemperance whilst in the army. He was a kind tempered man, and always treated his stepsons with the same affection he bestowed on his own children. There were six sons from this marriage. Four lived to manhood. The oldest son Mr. James D. Breckinridge is yet living. He was educated at Williamsburg. The sons of Col. Floyd had been sent to the neighborhood schools. In the year 1796 Mr. John Brown proposed to take her son.

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John Floyd and place [him] at Dickinson College. Mr. Brown was in Congress which at that time met in Philadelphia. An arrangement was made with Robert Breckinridge the guardian of the Floyds to pay the cost of John Floyd's education, by supplying and paying some workmen who were building a very large house in Frankfort for Mr. Brown, who promised to advance the money for young Floyd at College. Robert Breckinridge failed to pay the workmen. Brown ceased his advances and the young student was left to shift for himself. In this state of destitution, he was induced by the suggestions of Dr. Pendergrast to return to Kentucky. Such was his situation, that he was obliged to borrow a pair of pantaloons from a boatman. Nevertheless, through the whole of Governor Floyd's life he always felt grateful to Mr. Brown, for removing him out of reach of his guardian. That guardian disposed of all the Shelby lands to Colonels Lynch and Blanton for the sum of sixteen thousand dollars. Mrs. Breckinridge had given all her estate in trust, to Gen. Robert Breckinridge, for the benefit of her husband. In the month of February 1801 Capt. Breckinridge died at the house of Mr. John Breckinridge in Fayette County. The entire arrangement of the family devolved on Gen. Breckinridge. Young Floyd returned to Carlisle, pursued

^{54.} Lost to an older entry means that a prior claim to the land existed and the new entry was partially denied.

his studies, which were arrested by a violent illness which so impaired his health that his brother George determined to bring him home. This happened in 1802. Gen. Breckinridge proposed to John Floyd to study medicine with Dr. Richard Ferguson of Louisville. This Floyd consented to, being yet in the hands of his guardian. In the May of 1804 Mr. Floyd was married. He went to the University of Pennsylvania in the month of October [and] pursued his medical studies. In the October of 1805 he returned to Philadelphia.

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In the month of April 1806 he graduated as Doctor of Medicine. Matters had taken such a turn in Kentucky by this time, Dr. Floyd determined to settle in Virginia. George Floyd had married Miss Maupin, the daughter of Col. Gabriel Maupin of Williamsburg. She died in the June of 1807. This event determined George Floyd to enter the Army of the United States. During this year young Mr. Robert Breckinridge was sent to Williamsburg. By this time Gen. Robert Breckinridge had amassed great wealth. He sold the land he had obtained near Floyd's Station (then known by the name of Woodville) for twenty five thousand dollars. He built a good House on it, and occasionally lived at it. On the evening of the 13th of May 1812 some young ladies, the daughters of Dr. Grant who resided at the house formerly owned by Gen. Breckinridge, came to Woodville and spent it with Mrs. Breckinridge, after supper they returned home. There was no white person at Woodville but Gen. Breckinridge. About midnight he said he heard an unusual noise in Mrs. Breckinridge's room. He went to the kitchen waked the servants, got a candle, went into the room and found her in convulsions. Next morning he sent to Louisville for a physician and Col. George Floyd who was living there at that time. When Col. Floyd arrived she was speechless and died that evening. No clue has ever been furnished for this sudden and unaccountable death. Mrs. Breckinridge had always desired that Col. John Floyd's wedding coat and the scarlet one he was killed in (both of which she had carefully preserved) should be put into her coffin. This was done by Mrs. Beale the sister of Miss Maupin. Mrs. Breckinridge was buried near the grave of Col. Floyd. There is a plain stone placed over the remains of Col. Floyd without any inscription. There is no portrait of him. Col. Floyd was six feet high, somewhat slender, formed symmetrically, his complexion dark, brilliant black eyes, very black straight hair, fine white teeth. He was remarkable for his great beauty, generosity of temper, kindness of heart, and undaunted courage. There was in my father's

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possession a great number of letters from Col. Floyd⁵⁵ giving details of nearly all the striking incidents of the early settlements in Kentucky. Col. Preston's papers fell into the hands of his oldest son and executor Gen. John Preston. A family arrangement had been made, that all the undevised lands belonging to Col. William Preston should be divided amongst his children. Mr. Nathaniel Hart and Maj. William Preston were made agents for the Kentucky interests. Gen. Preston put all Col. Floyd's letters into Mr. Hart's hands. Dr. Floyd had often expressed a wish to obtain these letters, for the purpose at some future [time] to write a history of the early times of his native state. For some reason of Gen. Preston's they were withheld. Mrs. Susanna Radford of Greenfield [in] Botetourt County, has all the letters and papers that are extant belonging to her grandfather Col. William Preston. Colonel George Floyd continued in the army. He had married a second time. The young lady was Miss Sally Fountain of Louisville. At the battle of Tippacanoe Col. Floyd manifested the same undaunted courage his ancestors had been conspicuous for. He was perfectly versed in Indian warfare [and] expressed to Gen. Harrison the day before the battle "that the movements of the Indians augured some treachery." However no heed was given to the expression. The whole army lay down to sleep on the night of the attack. Floyd was in his tent when the war whoop was heard. He jumped up, seized his sword, and at the door of the tent cut down an Indian who was succeeded by a warrior, with an uplifted tomahawk. Floyd seized it struck the Indian with it [and] killed him, all this was done in the Colonel's shirttail because he had not time to put on his pantaloons. When Floyd returned to Louisville all the surviving friends of his father met him with great cordiality. In the official report of the

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battle of Tippacanoe, Col. Floyd thought himself overlooked. He retired from the service. In the June of 1823 he died at Woodville and was buried near his father. There is a tombstone placed over him by his widow. He left three children. John G. Floyd the son of his first wife, who was a cadet at West Point. From his fine attainments whilst there, he was made principal engineer to the state of Indiana. He resides at Terre-Haute in that state. He married a Miss Hager formerly of Baltimore. In 1823 the Breckinridges became the proprietors of Woodville. Gen. Robert Breckinridge gave it to

^{55.} Many of these letters from Floyd to Preston survive and have been transcribed and published. See Neal O. Hammon, *John Floyd: The Life and Letters of a Frontier Surveyor* (Louisville, Ky.: Butler Books, 2013).

his nephew Captain Henry Breckinridge whose family inherited it after his death. I have since heard that Mrs. Cowan their grandmother, is the present proprietor. Gen. Robert Breckinridge gave his great estate to his grand niece, the daughter of Mr. James D. Breckinridge. Col. John Floyd, his brother Isham, his brother-in-law Le Master, Sturgis, Pryor, Joseph Drake, William Buchannan and John Buchannan were all killed during the Revolutionary War. From the year 1755 to the battle of New Orleans, your Paternal ancestors unsheathed the Sword and poured out their blood for this Country. The "Last of the Mohicans" you will remember in your grand uncle Nathaniel Floyd,⁵⁶ whose old age did not deter him from service at New Orleans. You recollect the utter destitution of that old age. I will add a fact: In all this service given not one cent of public money was ever received by any individual of the whole race, except their daily compensation. I have done, my dear son. May this faithful history teach you to look more to individual interest, than ever your ancestors have. Should you transcribe this you will find many errors to correct from feeble hand and imperfect vision.

> Ever your Affectionate Mother Letitia Floyd

Manuscript page 33, the envelope

Capt. [Lieutenant not Captain] John Buchannan [Jr.] was killed at the Battle of Saratoga⁵⁷ and William Buchanan at the Siege of Boonsborough. ^{58.}

Rush Floyd

Wythe C. H. [Court House] Virginia

^{56.} Perhaps Rush Floyd's grand uncle Mrs. Floyd refers to was Nathaniel Floyd, 1767–1842. He would have been 47 years old if he had fought at the battle of New Orleans in 1814. What this man has to do with the "Last of the Mohicans" is obscure, other than perhaps to Mrs. Floyd he embodied the last of a breed.

^{57.} The Battle of Saratoga was fought on October 11, 1777. The siege of Boonesborough occurred in September 1778. This notation was added to the envelope apparently as an afterthought.

^{58.} The notation on the envelope apparently was not written by Mrs. Floyd. In our opinion, its handwriting more closely matches that of Benjamin Rush Floyd, as for example in his letters found in the Draper Manuscript collections at the Wisconsin Historical Society.

Conclusions

The overall accuracy of Mrs. Floyd's "My Dear Rush" letter is surprisingly good. As pointed out in many of the footnotes, she made minor errors in dates and places. However, it seems to us that Mrs. Floyd did remarkably well for a person aged 63 who was often writing of events about which she learned four of five decades earlier.

In an earlier article the authors cited Preston Davie's caustic opinion of the historical value of the "My Dear Rush" letter.⁵⁹ They quoted Davie as writing "Indeed some of the events as described in this letter are such a jumble of inaccurate hearsay and fact as to make them more imaginative than real." In retrospect, that judgment can be seen to be harsh and unjustified.

Acknowledgments

We thank Wirt Wills for his insistence that we track down the original letter; Corina Burner who made an excellent first draft of the new transcription; Regan Shelton for excellent copies; Mr. William Foster of Smithfield Plantation for his support and encouragement and particularly for his arranging to have copies of the letter made. We thank many librarians for their help in tracking down archival copies of the letter. Author JG thanks his wife Deena Flinchum for her ongoing support.

Appendix

This appendix summarizes the provenance of the original "My Dear Rush" letter and discusses some of the other archived copies.

The Provenance of the "My Dear Rush" letter

A letter that Mrs. Floyd wrote to the historian Lyman Draper in September, 1844, tells that her fourth daughter, Nicketti Buchanan Floyd Johnston (1819–1909), kept Mrs. Floyd's original letter for herself.⁶⁰ Mrs. Johnston was the wife of John W. Johnston, who was elected the first Virginia United States senator after Virginia was readmitted to the Union in 1869.

According to a 1941 letter written by Anne Mason Lee,⁶¹ Nicketti Buchanan Floyd Johnston died in Richmond leaving the following descendants: Lettie Floyd Johnston, who was unmarried; Louisa Bowen

^{59.} Glanville and Mays, "The Mysterious Origins of James Patton," 40-41.

Letitia Floyd, "Letter to Lyman Draper," from Cavan, Tazewell County, September 30, 1844. King's Mountain Papers, Draper Collection of Manuscripts, 15DD23, Wisconsin Historical Society. Published in Glanville and Mays, "A Sketch," 108.

^{61.} Anne Mason Lee, "Letter to J. Adger Stewart, June 9th, 1941," from her home at 1504 Grove Avenue Richmond to Stewart at 4980 Crittenden Drive, Louisville, Kentucky. Typescript with some handwritten annotations. Original at the Smithfield Plantation, copy in the authors' files.

Johnston, who was married to Daniel Trigg and had six children (letter annotated in an unknown hand: Mrs. Geo. Sargeant, 1087 [?] Westover Avenue, Norfolk, VA [was their] daughter); Sally Buchanan Johnston, who was married to Henry Carter Lee and had four children (letter annotated in an unknown hand: 1564 Grove Avenue, Richmond, Va.); Lavalette Estill Johnston, who was married to John Francis McMullen and had eight children; George Benjamin Johnston, who married first Miss Mary McClung with whom he had no children, and second Helen Rutherford with whom he had four daughters; and Joseph Beverly Johnston and Coralie Henry Johnston, who were both unmarried. Among the grandchildren, the sixth child of Louisa Bowen Johnston Trigg married George R. Sargeant. Grandchild Anne Mason Lee (the writer of the cited letter) was the daughter of Sally Buchanan Johnston and Henry Carter Lee.

The line of descent of the letter-writer Anne Mason Lee was: Letitia Preston Floyd \rightarrow Nicketti Buchanan Floyd Johnston \rightarrow Sally Buchanan Johnston \rightarrow Anne Mason Lee.

The line of descent of the Sargeant sisters who brought the "My Dear Rush" original letter to Smithfield was: Letitia Preston Floyd \rightarrow Nicketti Buchanan Floyd Johnston \rightarrow Louisa Bowen Johnston Trigg \rightarrow Evelyn Byrd Henry Sargeant \rightarrow the three Sargeant sisters.

It is not possible to state exactly which descendant held the "My Dear Rush" letter at what times. However, strong confirmation that the original letter was in family hands circa the 1920s comes from the archives of the Patricia W. and J. Douglas Perry Library at Old Dominion University. This library is the only archive known to contain a photocopy of the original "My Dear Rush" letter. The photocopy is in the Robert Morton Hughes [senior] Collection.⁶²

Robert Morton Hughes Sr. (1855–1940) was a prominent Norfolk, Virginia lawyer who served as a president of the Virginia Bar Association and helped establish what later became Old Dominion University in Norfolk. His mother was Eliza Mary Preston Johnston Hughes (the daughter of Mrs. Floyd's oldest brother John), and his father was Judge Robert William Hughes; they married in 1850. Robert Morton Hughes was born in Abingdon, Virginia, at the home of his mother's adoptive parents, Gov. John Buchanan Floyd (Mrs. Floyd's son) and Sally Preston Floyd. His mother's parents, Elizabeth Madison Preston and Congressman Charles

^{62.} Robert Morton Hughes Collection, Old Dominion University. Biography and extensive finding aid on line at *http://www.lib.odu.edu/specialcollections/manuscripts/hughes.htm*. The collection holds positive and negative copies of the original letter, which suggests that they were made in the 1910s or 20s. See the Wikipedia entry "Photostat Machine."

Clement Johnston, both died young, which resulted in Hughes' mother's adoption by her parents' cousins.

In summary, the letter written in February 22, 1843, remained in the hands of Floyd family members until October 2004, when it was brought to the Smithfield Plantation. The authors found it there in a storage box in January 2014.

Some Other Archived Copies of the "My Dear Rush" letter

The Holmes (May 1846) and Cochran (1846) copies of the "My Dear Rush" letter were discussed in our 2015 sketch of Mrs. Floyd.⁶³ Also discussed there was the well-known four-part *Richmond Standard* June–July 1880 publication of a version of the Holmes transcription.⁶⁴ Subsequently, it has been ascertained that several newspapers reprinted the *Richmond Standard* printing. For example, the *Staunton Spectator* reprinted in June 1880 the first three parts of the letter from the *Richmond Standard*. Also, the letter was reprinted from the 1880 *Richmond Standard* in *The Lexington Standard* on May 1, 1910, and in large part in the Christiansburg *News Messenger* in an article by John Nicolay dated 10 October 1982.

Under the title "Letitia Preston Floyd memoirs, 1843," the letter is cited at the WorldCat Union Library Catalog for the 72,000 libraries around the world that collaborate in the Online Computer Library Center (OCLC). It is cataloged as OCLC Number 34671586 and stated to be held in the libraries of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and the Indiana State Library. Both of these are typescript copies, and both of them incorrectly record the place of the letter being written as "Cairo," and include the added word "Nickette" after the phrase "Indian girl" on manuscript page 21.⁶⁵ The provenance information for the Chapel Hill typescript copy is a transmittal letter dated March 14, 1931, from A. Y. Walton of San Antonio, Texas to "Shook" stating that Walton obtained his information from a diary at the Filson Club. The provenance information for the Indiana copy is a transmittal letter dated April 16, 1951, from Clifton F. Davis of Shreveport, Louisiana, to Albert R. Floyd of Chicago.⁶⁶

It is the opinion of the authors that the Chapel Hill and Indiana copies derive from photostatic copies of the original letter, originating with Robert M. Hughes Sr., who is believed to have provided such copies to persons

65. For a discussion of "Cairo" see Glanville and Mays, "A Sketch," figure 6 and its legend.

^{63.} Glanville and Mays, "A Sketch," endnotes 119, 120, 123, and 124, on p. 119.

^{64.} Glanville and Mays, "A Sketch," endnotes 121 and 124 on p. 119.

^{66.} Personal communication Stephanie Asberry, Indiana State Library, telephone conversation, September 2015.

interested in Floyd family genealogy. One of these persons was no doubt responsible for the Cavan to Cairo mistranscription.

Unfortunately, incorrect copies with the place of the letter being written stated incorrectly as "Cairo," and including the added word "Nickette," have found their way onto the Internet. The most durable of these web postings is at the "Preston's Page."⁶⁷ Presumably it derives from either the Chapel Hill typescript or the Indiana typescript.

The Filson Historical Society (formerly the Filson Club) holds three typescript copies of the "My Dear Rush" letter. The first is annotated "Mss AP937d folder 25, Preston family papers, Davie collection" and includes the first 19 pages of the Holmes transcription held at the Wisconsin Historical Society. The second is a double-spaced typescript cataloged as item 929.2 F645 and annotated "Received from J. Adger Stewart April 16, 1941," and "From Mrs. Brockenbrough Lamb, Richmond, Va., April 6, 1941 through Mr. J. Adger Stewart." The third, single-spaced with pages numbered 1–19, is in the Preston Family Joyes Collection (folder 66) and accompanies a 1941 Janie Preston Boulware Lamb letter to J. Adger Stewart. The second and third Filson transcripts were likely made by Floyd family members in the 1920s or 30s.

The authors have recently ascertained that the University of Kentucky at Louisville and the University of Virginia at Wise hold transcriptions similar to the second and third copies held at the Filson Historical Society.

Fred Preston, "Letitia Preston Floyd's Memoirs." On line at *http://www.suddenlink.net/pages/ fpreston/*. Originally posted May 28, 2001 and last updated February 9, 2007. Examined October 25, 2015.

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In this issue —

On 2 January 1869, Olin and Preston Institute officially became Preston and Olin Institute when Judge Robert M. Hudson of the 14th Circuit Court issued a charter for the school, designating the new name and giving it "collegiate powers."

- page 1

On June 12, 1919, the VPI Board of Visitors unanimously elected Julian A. Burruss to succeed Joseph D. Eggleston as president of the Blacksburg, Virginia institution. As Burruss began his tenure, veterans were returning from World War I, and America had begun to move toward a post-war world. Federal programs for veterans gained wide support. The Nineteenth Amendment, giving women suffrage, gained ratification. — page 27

According to Virginia Tech historian Duncan Lyle Kinnear, "he [Conrad] seemed to have entered upon his task with great enthusiasm. Possessed as he was with a flair for writing and a 'tongue for speaking,' this ex-confederate secret agent brought a new dimension of excitement to the school and to the town of Blacksburg." — page 47

"The Indian Road as agreed to at Lancaster, June the 30th, 1744. The present Waggon Road from Cohongoronto above Sherrando River, through the Counties of Frederick and Augusta . . . To Adam Harman's at Tom's Creek on New River, above the Blue-Ridge; shall be the established road, for the Indians our Brethren of the Six Nations, to pass to the Southward, when there is war between them and the Catawbas." — [quotation from the Treaty of Lancaster] — page 55

The estate named Cavan in Burke's Garden, Tazewell County Virginia, was where Virginia's First Lady Letitia Preston Floyd spent the last dozen years of her life as a widow. It was here [she] was baptized . . . in August 1852, and where she died in December of that year. — page 69

During the second half of the 19^{th} century the "My Dear Rush" letter was in the possession of Mrs. Floyd's daughter Nickette Buchanan Floyd Johnston. After Mrs. Johnston's death the letter remained in the possession of Floyd family members for about a hundred years until three great-great-granddaughters of Mrs. Floyd and their mother brought it and donated it to the Smithfield Plantation in October 2004. — page 79

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