

A Note from the Editors

Over the years, *The Smithfield Review* has published a wide variety of articles ranging in time from prehistoric periods through the early 20th century, covering a vast expanse of geography throughout the eastern United States, and dealing with subjects as diverse as anthropology, geology, sociology, architecture, and military history. We invite the reader to observe how the articles presented in this issue continue this pattern.

Dr. James I. Robertson, Jr., the well-known Civil War historian, annotated a sequence of old letters that tell a compelling story of a young Montgomery County family overcome by Civil War events. Dr. Robertson offers the following description: “The letters are as pure a picture of a semi-educated Confederate soldier as exists,” and “are a delightful exercise for any reader in deciphering the phonetic spelling of that age.” Dr. Robertson is an Alumni Distinguished Professor of History at Virginia Tech, Executive Director of the university’s Virginia Center for Civil War Studies, and the author of numerous books about the Civil War.

The second article, by Dr. Wirt Wills, is entitled “The Genesis and Dissolution of William Preston’s Smithfield.” It traces many of the land transactions over the 230-year period of Preston family involvement. In the last issue of *The Smithfield Review*, Dr. Wills, in a companion article, traced the ownership of the Smithfield Manor house from its construction in the mid-1770s to the present. Dr. Wills is a retired faculty member at Virginia Tech, a former Director of Smithfield, and a long-time member of the Smithfield Board.

In the 19th century, it was not unusual for boys who delivered newspapers to present their customers with poems during the Christmas season to encourage large tips. Mr. John Long, a Senior Lecturer from the History Department of Roanoke College presents an entertaining history of this practice — complete with numerous poems and illustrations to exhibit the wide variety of subject matter and talent. Mr. Long is also the Director of the Salem Museum and Histori-

cal Society. The article is entitled “‘Fork Me Out the Dimes’: Newspaper Carriers’ Addresses of Salem, Virginia, 1854-1904.”

In the last issue, Ms. Ellen Brown presented the remarkable story of Mary Draper Ingles with a discussion of the sources that contributed to the various versions of the story. In this issue, she examines the life of Mary Draper Ingles by “posing a different set of questions concerning the meaning and significance of her story.” Ms. Brown uses the answers to conclude that in “delving into history one encounters people who lived their lives so powerfully and so well that they remain an inspiration to future generations.” The author of “Portrait of a Survivor: The Long and Eventful Life of Mary Draper Ingles” recently completed her master’s degree in history at Virginia Tech and now is the Director of the Radford Heritage Foundation and Glencoe Museum in Radford.

The region around Saltville, Virginia, is a place of significance for the chemical industry. Therefore, it is not surprising that Dr. Jim Glanville, a recently retired professor of chemistry at Virginia Tech, possesses a strong interest in the town. In his preparation for a future book, he discovered material in the literature that provided evidence of a 16th-century Spanish presence in the Saltville region. “Conquistadors at Saltville in 1567? A Review of the Archeological and Documentary Evidence” is the result of Dr. Glanville’s extensive research. In addition to providing a synthesis of some recent discoveries, the article includes a significant summary of the literature about Saltville.

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— Hugh G. Campbell, Editor

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