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Magazine of the

Jefferson County Historical Society

Volume XLVII
December 1981

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Magazine of the

JEFFERSON COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY



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"No man is fit to be entrusted with the control of the present who is ignorant of the past, and no people who are indifferent to their past need hope to make their future great."

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JEFFERSON COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Organized May 21, 1927

Post Office Box 485

Charles Town, West Virginia 25414

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Publications and Prices—One copy of the Magazine is mailed to each person holding a paid membership. Until the publication of next year's Magazine, members may purchase additional copies for $4.00 each; order these from William H. Wilson, Box 716 , Charles Town. Original volumes or facsimile reproductions are available to all persons at $5.00 per Magazine; quantity discounts are allowed. Mr. Wilson also has available copies of *Prominent Men of Shepherdstown* for $7.50 each, mailed, *Old Norborne Parish (1744-1816)* for $5.00 each, mailed and *The Washington Homes of Jefferson County* for $2.00 each, mailed.

Major James Walton Thomson

Three days before General Robert E. Lee surrendered his embattled Army of Northern Virginia to the victorious Union forces at Appomattox there occurred an unimportant engagement at High Bridge, near Farmville. Although the number of soldiers who participated in this fight was relatively small and the Battle of High Bridge had no effect on subsequent events, it was of tremendous importance to a Jefferson County family who lived in the Summit Point neighborhood. One of their sons, James W. Thomson, who had survived four years of warfare and had risen to the rank of major in Stuart's Horse Artillery, paid the supreme sacrifice. He had transferred temporarily to the cavalry and, although wounded in his arm the day before, he led a charge against the numerically superior enemy and received two new wounds which proved fatal. He was not quite twenty-two years of age.

James Walton Thomson was born in Berryville, Clarke County, Virginia, October 28, 1843. His father, John A. Thomson, inherited the "Hawthorn" farm in Jefferson County and, with his family, was living there when John Brown staged his ill-fated raid at Harpers Ferry in 1859. This threat to the peaceful neighborhood was met by hundreds of militiamen who marched to the picturesque town at the junction of the two rivers. Mr. Thomson, accompanied by his eldest son, James, joined the throng and helped to surround the Northern abolitionist's small band until relieved by the arrival of United States Marines commanded by an army colonel, Robert E. Lee.

As was customary with many Virginia young men in similar circumstances, James Thomson enjoyed the outdoor life. He was especially interested in riding, shooting, and fishing. He learned to ride almost as soon as he learned to walk and he learned many equestrian skills from his older cousin and fellow-Virginian, Turner Ashby, who was destined to become one of the Confederacy's most expert horsemen.

In September, 1860, Jimmie Thomson entered the freshman or plebe class at the Virginia Military Institute. He endured the Spartan existence at the Lexington institution without complaint until the outbreak of hostilities in 1861, when he volunteered his services to his native state. At first sent to Richmond to drill raw recruits, Thomson was later ordered to Harpers Ferry, a particularly congenial assignment since he would be under his former V.M.I. professor, Thomas J. Jackson, and close to Turner Ashby. At the First Battle of Bull Run, he served as a courier to Jackson, after which he returned to the Valley as a scout for Ashby.

Lieutenant Colonel Ashby's operations had been so handicapped by the lack of artillery that he sought authority to organize a battery to be attached to his cavalry command. In this way, he could exercise full responsibility. This was the organization on November 11, 1861, of Chew's Battery, which was the first battery of horse artillery in the Confederate army. The original officers were: Roger Preston Chew, captain and first commander; Milton Rouss, first lieutenant; and J. W. McCarty and James Thomson, second lieutenants. A fourth officer was James H. Williams, who was also a lieutenant. After the deaths of Ashby and Jackson the battery served with Stuart's Horse Artillery. When Lieutenants Rouss and McCarty resigned to join the cavalry in 1862, Thomson was promoted to first lieutenant. In February, 1864, when Captain Chew was promoted to the command of Stuart's Horse Artillery, Thomson succeeded him as captain of the battery. The same year he was promoted and commanded, with the rank of major, a battalion of horse artillery attached to Rosser's Cavalry Division.

As a member of Chew's Battery, Lieutenant Thomson saw considerable fighting. In the Shenandoah Valley Campaign of 1862, he participated in the Battle of Kernstown, where Stonewall Jackson received his only defeat. Near Edinburg, where Ashby attempted to delay the Federal advance up the Valley, Chew's Battery fought twenty-eight skirmishes in thirty days. Thomson was present when Ashby was mortally wounded near Harrisonburg on June 6 and held the dying general in his arms until life passed away. The death of his idol, Turner Ashby, cast the deepest gloom over the young artillerist, who never afterwards mentioned Ashby's name without uttering a sigh. There was no time then to give expression to his grief, for the Federals were pressing Jackson closely and Chew's Battery helped in the final victory of the Valley Campaign at Port Republic.

The battery was ordered to join General J.E.B. Stuart at Culpeper and then crossed the Potomac River into Maryland for Lee's first invasion of the North. It was engaged in the Antietam Campaign and later, in 1863, served with the main force of the Army of Northern Virginia at Gettysburg. In 1864, Chew's Battery fought constantly on Lee's flanks and was in most of the cavalry engagements of that year. It returned to the Valley to participate in General Jubal Early's Shenandoah Valley Campaign of 1864.

In the final retreat from Petersburg and Richmond in 1865, Major Thomson and the other horse artillery officers joined the cavalry to which their commands were attached. The terrain precluded horse artillery operations in the area and some of them, including Major

Thomson, really preferred cavalry service to that in the artillery. In order to protect the wagon-trains of the retreating Confederates, the cavalry fought a skirmish with their pursuers on April 5 and Thomson received a slight flesh wound in the arm.

The next day, April 6, the cavalry divisions of Major Generals Fitzhugh Lee and Thomas Rosser were ordered to move to High Bridge on the road to Farmville. When a courier sought Major Thomson's aid to engage Federal infantry who had advanced too far ahead of their main body, the artillerist-turned-cavalryman took charge of the Confederate skirmishers. As he rode to the front, Major Thomson was unusually silent. When a friend inquired the reason, Thomson replied, "I dreamed about home, and for the first time, since I've been in the army, I feel as if something is going to happen."

Something did happen. As the Confederate cavalry were attacking about one thousand enemy foot-soldiers, with Major Thomson leading the advance, the brave officer was struck by two bullets, either of which would have proved fatal—one in the jugular vein and the other in the body. After uttering a deep groan, he reeled in the saddle and fell dead. Although the Confederates lost several other valuable officers at High Bridge, they succeeded in defeating and capturing most of the enemy. Thomson's remains were later taken to Winchester, where they were interred close to the grave of Brigadier General Turner Ashby and his brother, Captain Richard Ashby.

As for his physical appearance, Major Thomson was described as being six feet tall, broad-shouldered, erect and soldierly in bearing, free from fleshiness, and brown-haired. His eyes were dark gray.

His military career was distinguished for coolness under fire, unflinching courage, solicitude for the comfort and safety of his command, quickness in seeing and seizing advantageous positions, dash and audacity in action, implicit obedience to orders, superb horsemanship, and deadly marksmanship.

One of Major Thomson's admirers eulogized his hero with the following comment: "Thus endeth the brief story of a youth who, in the simplicity of his life, in the singleness of his patriotism, in the perfection of his courage, in the faithfulness of his friendships, and in the promptness of his self-sacrifice equalled any young Greek immortalized by Homer."

Millard K. Bushong

A Factual Account of the Wedding At Harewood Of James and Dolley Madison

It appears that the long accepted account[1] of this wedding was published in a volume entitled *Memoirs and Letters of Dolly Madison, Wife of James Madison, President of the United States.* Below this title there appears *Edited by Her Grand-Niece.* In the copy made available to this writer at the University of Virginia Library, the name *Lucia B. Cutts* is handwritten beneath this editorial statement.[2]

The printer of the book was Houghton Mifflin and Company. The date was 1886, almost a century after the event.

The grand-niece's account of the wedding is printed as follows:

> . . .and in September, 1794, Mrs. Todd left Philadelphia to drive to Harewood, her sister's place in Virginia, where the wedding was to take place. Fortunately, the weather was bright and beautiful, as the gay calvalcade were a week on their way: Mrs. Todd in an open barouche, accompanied by her sister, Anna, a child of twelve years, the little boy and a maid; Mr. Madison and several of their mutual friends driving or riding beside them.
>
> A most delightful picture is given of this country wedding; friends and neighbors from far and near driving over. Francis Madison, Harriet Washington, and many of the connection staying for days, keeping up a prolonged merry-making.
>
> The girls, vying with each other in obtaining mementos of the evening, cut in bits the Mechlin lace from Mr. Madison's shirt ruffles; and amid a shower of rice, the laughing bride and groom drove off to Montpelier, his father's estate in Orange County, Virginia.

In order to present a factual account, it is necessary to give a brief review of the lives of each of the participants prior to the event at Harewood. Fortunately, during the past decade, two biographies have been published. In 1972, there appeared *Mrs. James Madison, The Incomparable Dolley*, by Ethel Stephens Arnett, published by the Piedmont Press, Greensboro, North Carolina and, in 1979, *The Madisons* by Virginia Moore, published by the McGraw Hill Book Company.

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[1]Vol. I, p. 27.

[2]Dolley's sister, Anna Payne, married Congressman Richard Cutts from Massachusetts' District of Maine in 1804.

Dolley Payne's birth is recorded in the records of the New Garden Quaker Meeting in North Carolina. After recording the names of her parents, John and Mary Payne, and two older brothers, there appears "Dolley, their daughter was born ye 20 of ye 5 mo 1768." The Paynes had moved from their home in Hanover County, Virginia to this all-Quaker settlement in 1765. In 1769, a yearning for their native county caused them to return, where they settled on part of Mrs. Payne's family property, Coles Hill. Here they lived for much of the fourteen years preceding the move to Philadelphia. The children attended school at the Quaker Meeting House.

In later life, Dolley recalls having lived at Scotchtown, which was bought by Patrick Henry in 1771. Virginia Moore refutes the belief that John Payne once owned this plantation and speculates that he and his family lived there for several years during which he rented it or was the overseer.

The move to Philadelphia in 1773, when Dolley was fifteen, placed the family in a hospitable Quaker environment where higher education was available. John Payne's outspoken opposition to slavery and his action in freeing his own slaves had antagonized a majority of non-Quakers in Hanover County.

In Philadelphia, Dolley was to witness her father's grief-stricken death after failing in business resulting in his being read out of meeting for not paying his debts; and in 1791, her valiant mother's establishment of a "select" boardinghouse. This date coincides with the first influx of United States senators and congressmen, who in 1790 had voted to move from New York.

It was in 1790 that Dolley married a young Quaker lawyer, John Todd, whose success enabled them to purchase a substantial home in which were born two sons. In 1793, disaster struck the city in the form of yellow fever. John Todd sent his family to safety and paid with his life for refusing to desert the stricken populace. On the same day, the infant son, who had never been sturdy, also died. The widowed Dolley returned to live in their home with the surviving son named John Payne, and called Payne.

James Madison (1751-1836) was eight years old when his father built, on his Orange County property, the new house which he named Montpelier. James was a studious lad and was persuaded by his tutor at Montpelier to attend the Presbyterian College of New Jersey at Princeton. There he was a brilliant student, a free thinker majoring in Theology and becoming intrigued with all aspects of religion. When he returned to Montpelier in the spring of 1772, he had decided not to be a

minister and had been jilted by a young lady whom he had hoped to marry. His father had planned that he would act as a tutor at Montpelier. His mind became alarmingly unsettled and he actually spent some weeks at Berkeley Springs in an effort to gain his equilibrium.

Madison's complete restoration to health began with the news of the Boston Tea Party. As Virginia joined Massachusetts in evicting its Royal Governor, his astute mind envisioned the possibility of devising a form of government which respected the rights of the individual. Considered unfit for military service, in 1776, he was chosen by his district as their representative at the first Virginia Convention. As he set out for Williamsburg, he was beginning a term of public service which was to last for forty years.

At the convention, he helped draft the famous Bill of Rights, so widely copied elsewhere, and here he began his lifelong friendship with Thomas Jefferson. In 1778, he became a member of the Governor's Council, working closely with Jefferson and Patrick Henry. As an elected member of the ineffectual Constitutional Congress in 1780, he supplied to that feeble body an essential quality of statesmanship. Back in the Virginia Legislature in 1783, he carried on successfully Jefferson's struggle for the separation of church and state. Finally, as a member of the Constitutional Convention in 1787, at the age of 36, he took "a leading part in the management of every great question" and earned the lasting title "Father of the Constitution."

In Philadelphia during the spring of 1794, it was as a member of Congress from Virginia that he noticed the handsome young widow, Dolley Payne Todd. He asked his friend, Senator Aaron Burr, who had boarded with Mrs. Payne, to introduce him. Evidently, he quickly dispelled her uneasiness over being visited by "the great little Madison," and before the summer was over he had asked her to marry him. She was twenty-six and he forty-three years of age.

Dolley could not make up her mind. Congress adjourned and Madison returned unhappily to Montpelier. She decided to rent her house, and, with her sister, Anna, and son, Payne, went to visit relatives in Hanover County and then her sister, Lucy, at Harewood. During the previous year, Lucy had married the President's nephew and ward, George Steptoe Washington, who was finishing his education in Philadelphia. This Payne connection with the First Lady lends credence to the story that Martha sent for Dolley and encouraged her to accept Madison's proposal.

During her stay in Hanover County, Dolley made up her mind. Stopping briefly in Fredericksburg, she sent a letter to Montpelier

promising Madison to "share her life with him." Madison's delighted reply is dated August 18. As soon as he was able to complete several commitments, he joined her at Harewood.

The wedding occurred on September 15. In a letter to Eliza Lee, her maid of honor when she married John Todd, Dolley states that the only persons invited ouside the immediate family were a Mr. and Mrs. Lee who had "left the neighborhood to our great regret." Mentioned as being present were Dolley's sister, Anna Payne; George's sister, Harriot Washington; Mrs. Payne, who was probably living at Harewood with her younger daughter, Mary;* and, of course, two-year-old Payne Todd. The minister was a cousin of the groom, the Reverend Mr. Alexander Balmaine of Winchester.

Dolley's wedding dress and bridal wreath are preserved in the Greensboro Historical Museum in North Carolina. Also displayed are a pair of low-heeled satin slippers. Both participants were five feet, six inches in height. The low heels ensured a uniformity in this respect as they spoke their vows.

That the wedding be a simple one was especially appropriate for Mrs. Payne who was witnessing for the second time the marriage of a daughter to a non-Quaker. That Dolley would be read out of meeting for being married by a "hireling priest" was bound to follow, and did.

But certainly Lucy and George could be counted on to provide appropriate gaiety. Both biographers refer to Lucy as the liveliest of the Payne sisters and James Madison's conversations are described as filled with witticisms.

The newlyweds stayed at Harewood for five days before setting out on their wedding trip. Since the house contains only two bedrooms, it has been surmised that they used the one room stone office which faces the house. It has been said, however, that there were other one-storied structures built of log.

The place chosen for their visit was the home, twenty miles south of Winchester, of Madison's sister, Nelly, who had married Major Isaac Hite, Jr. At that time, the Major was absorbed with the building nearby of a new home, Belle Grove.

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*Mary Payne married Congressman John George Jackson from western Virginia in 1800. (From a later generation of this Jackson family, there emerged a member known as "Stonewall.")

On their return to Harewood, Madison wrote the following letter to his father at Montpelier:

Harewood, October 5, 1794
Dear and Honord Sir:

I have detained Sam, by whom I send this, so much longer than I intended and you expected, that many apologies are due for the liberty. I hope it will be a sufficient one that I found him indispensable for a variety of little services, which I did not particularly take into view before I left Orange. These he can himself explain, and I therefore leave the task to him, proceeding to the history of what relates to myself. On my arrival here, I was able to urge so many conveniences in hastening the event, which I solicited, that it took place on the 15th ult. On the Friday following we set out, accompanied by Miss A. Payne, and Miss Harriot Washington, on a visit to my sister Hite, where we arrived the next day, having stopped a night at Winchester with Mr. Balmaine. We had been a day or two only at Mr. Hite's, before a slight indisposition, which my wife had felt for several days, ended in a regular ague and fever. The fits, tho succeeded by compleat intermissions, were so severe that I thought it prudent to call in a Physician from Winchester. Docr Mackay not being in the way, Docr Baldwin attended, and by a (decisive) administration of the Bark soon expelled the complaint. She has since recovered very fast, and I hope, notwithstanding a slight indisposition this morning which may be the effect of fatigue and change of weather, that its return is not in the least to be apprehended. We left Mr. Hite's the day before yesterday. Our time was passed there with great pleasure on our side, and I hope with not less on the other. Our departure however was embittered by the loss* sustained the night preceeding by my sister, which you will have an account of from Mr. H. by this opportunity. In about 8 or 10 days we expect to set out for Philadelphia, and your daughter-in-law begs you and my mother to accept her best and most respectful affections, which she means to express herself by an early opportunity. She wishes Fanny also to be sensible of the pleasure with which a correspondence with her would be carried on. . .

With my sincere prayers that perfect health and every other good may attend you both I

remain yr affect son
J. Madison, Jr.

So in thinking of this wedding at Harewood, we must discard our accustomed picture of high frivolity and envision instead a quiet ceremony which united two persons who together were destined to play a major role in the early and rugged years of our nation's capitol.

*Stillborn infant.

ADDENDUM

When the widower, Thomas Jefferson, entered the White House in 1801, he appointed, as his Secretary of State, James Madison. During Jefferson's eight year tenure, Dolley was counted upon to act as hostess on state occasions. During the following eight years of Madison's presidency, Dolley was First Lady in her own right.

The following tribute was written by the Danish Ambassador after a gala reception during Jefferson's presidency:

> What need you manners more captivating, more winning, more polished, than those of that amiable woman? I have, by turns resided in all the courts of Europe, and most positively I assure you, I never have seen any Duchess, Princess, or Queen, whose manners, with equal dignity, blended equal sweetness. Her stately person, her lofty carriage, her affable and gracious manner, would make her appear to advantage at any court in the world. Upon my soul, I have often exclaimed to myself, as I have seen her moving through admiring crowds, pleasing all by making all pleased with themselves, I often have exclaimed—'She moves a goddess, and she looks a queen.'

The high point of Madison's presidency was the War of 1812, called by his many detractors "Madison's War." Its outcome ended forever Britain's contemptuous attitude toward its former colonies, which included the repeated impressment of our captured sailors to serve on English men-of-war. The humiliating burning of Washington was an incidental event in the progress of the British fleet up the Chesapeake Bay with the objective of destroying the port of Baltimore. Shipyards here built the sleek Baltimore clippers which repeatedly out-maneuvered and outdistanced their pursuers. The repulse of the fleet at Fort McHenry and of the British troops at North Point, together with naval victories on Lake Erie and Lake Champlain were capped by the staggering victory at New Orleans; 700 British regulars killed, 1,400 wounded and 500 captured, against 7 Americans killed and 6 wounded.

The entire world took notice. The United States had become a world power.

J. A. W., M. D.

Pottery in the 1800s

The Weis Pottery, Shepherdstown, West Virginia

Reprinted by permission of *Studio Potter*

During the late 1700s and early 1800s, a thriving pottery industry existed along the east coast of the United States from New England to Florida, and across to the Midwest. Many potters worked in the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia, and in the area that is now known as West Virginia. They made storage jars, batter bowls, pitchers, and other crockery containers which have now become collector's items.

For the growing number of twentieth century potters searching for an American tradition in the crafts, these potters and the wares they made are significant. Early American potters served society in a very functional way, and , as it has recently been realized, in an artistic sense as well.

Many of the pots of this period are beautiful in the simple understatement, where function takes precedence over form. The rough pebble texture of salt glazing, the occasional dents from saggars, the smoke from firing, and the inherent roughness of the clay (due to impurities and coarse grinding of the clay), have caused them to be overlooked by those who are more familiar with the Japanese or European tradition of pottery making.

One of the early potteries located in the Shenandoah Valley was the Weis[1] Pottery located in Shepherdstown, West Virginia, (not far from Harpers Ferry), which began in the early 1800s and operated until 1901. John George Weis, founder of the Weis Potteries, lived in Hagerstown, Maryland (then called Elizabeth Town), where he was a potter and a schoolteacher. He established potteries in Hagerstown and in Shepherdstown. The pottery in Shepherdstown (a town that was part of the state of Virginia until 1863, when it became part of the separate state of West Virginia) was, for years, called "Weis's Corner." Although now there is no visible sign of the original pottery, recent excavations in this area have uncovered a shard dump several feet deep.

When John George Weis died in 1804, his son George took over the operation of the Hagerstown and the Shepherdstown potteries. George Weis had four sons: Henry and John, who operated the pottery in Hagerstown; and William and James, who with their father operated the Shepherdstown pottery. George died in 1857 and the pottery operations then fell to his sons.

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1. Pronounced locally as either "wice" or "vice."

The story of the pottery made by the Weises is very much like that of other early American pottery which was made in the rural South. The shapes were simple, forthright, functional, and uncomplicated. The clay used at the pottery was always earthenware, a low-fire red clay which was abundant throughout the country. A wagonload of raw clay in the late 1700s cost less than two shillings—approximately the same as the price of a cord of firewood. The Weis' clay came mostly from a cliff above the Potomac River, west of Shepherdstown.[2]

The red clay was brought to the pottery by horsecart. It was then ground much the way that flour was ground at a mill—between two large, round, flat stones. The top stone was attached to a pole, which in turn was attached to the harness of a horse. The horse walked slowly in a circle, turning the stone which ground the clay.

Next the clay was mixed with water, until it had the consistency of heavy bread dough, and it was then wedged to remove impurities and air. (The process was not a refined one by today's standards.) After the clay was mixed and wedged, it was ready to be thrown. The Weis family used a treadle wheel. The treadle moved a shaft which was offset at its connection in a way similar to an automobile crankshaft, and then connected to a flat round head upon which the clay was turned.

Along with common storage jars, the Weises made dough trays, cuspidors, cake molds, pie plates, and pitchers. An accomplished potter could produce, in one workday, more that 200 "gallons" or "pounds"—terms which refer to the holding capacity of the containers produced.

Once made, the pots were set out to air dry. Occasionally, the lip of a flower pot or a pie plate was fluted after the pot was thrown. There was no biscuit firing of the ware. Dry pots were then glazed, usually only on the inside, with little or no decoration. Since the earthenware was porous, the pots had to be glazed on the inside if they were not to leak or permit the evaporation of the contents of the pot. Some pots were purposefully left unglazed because the process of evaporation would cool the liquid in the pot, and the farmers in the field could count on a drink of cool water from an unglazed vessel.

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2. This land was located behind a large stone home called "Bellevue," which belonged to the Shepherd family, the founding family of Shephardstown. For a time, there was a falling out between the two families, and the dark red clay so familiar to the Weis Pottery was temporarily replaced by a lighter red clay from a different source.

Most earthenware glazes of this period contained lead, and a recipe from the Eberly Pottery in nearby Strasburg, Virginia was typical:

Common Pot Glaze
6 Measures of Clay
9 Measures of Red Lead
1 Pint of Pap[3]

Pottery was fired in what was called a groundhog kiln. A typical kiln in the Shenandoah Valley was woodfired and dug into the ground, or at least surrounded by a great deal of earth in order to support the Roman arch roof that made up the top of the kiln. Groundhog kilns were difficult to load, as they had to be stacked through the firemouth of the kiln. Often, a child who could fit easily through the firemouth would help stack the kiln.[4]

Once stacked, the kiln was ready to light off in what was called a "burning of the ware." The first few hours went slowly in order to drive out the moisture remaining in the clay since the preliminary biscuit firing was omitted. Fired with wood, the Weis kiln could reach its final temperature of 1800°F (982°C) within 12 to 15 hours. Cooling could take several days, depending on the size of the kiln.

As soon as the kiln was unloaded, the pots were either shelved and sold at the pottery, or loaded onto horse-drawn carts packed with straw and taken around the countryside for sale. The need for pottery was constant, and the most of the pots were sold as soon as they became available. In the early 1800s, a gallon jug sold for twenty-five cents; a teapot for twenty cents or twenty-five cents depending on size; a pie dish for four and one-half cents; a glazed chamberpot sold for five cents.

The primary purpose of the Weis's pottery was to function as kitchenware, and whether a pot was warped or had sagged from an excess of heat would not affect the sale of the pot. There was such a demand for the earthenware pots in the early 1800s that time was seldom taken to decorate them. Either the Weises did not have ready access to the oxides used for decorative purposes, or they had little interest in surface decoration, as their pottery is distinctive in its plainness. None of

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3. Mash of some sort, probably grain or fruit.

4. In their book, *The Shenandoah Pottery* (Strasburg, Va.: Shenandoah Publishing House, Inc., 1929), A.H. Rice and John Stroudt include a letter dated 1848 from John Bell of Strasburg, to his brother Samuel Bell, of Waynesboro, Pennsylvania. The letter gives a description of a stoneware groundhog kiln which John had constructed, and which Samuel subsequently moved into a round, dome-roof kiln with 124 flue holes and four fire holes.

the Weis potters signed their pots. Few rural potters did. Seldom did the rural potter view himself as an artist, or what he was making as an art form. Signing a pot may have seemed presumptuous to the early potters of our country. The Weis's pottery is, however, distinguished by the thick enunciated lip, a faint thumbnail banding on the collar, and open, upright shapes with predominate.

The Weis house in Shepherdstown was originally a wood frame building. In 1815, a fire at the pottery destroyed the frame house. The story goes that one night, after he and his friends had had their fill of whiskey to keep them warm, James Weis, who was in charge of the pottery at Shepherdstown, fell asleep while firing the kiln. The fire in the mouth of the kiln got out of control and ignited the wooden fence which, unfortunately, ran alongside the kiln to the house, and the fire burned down the house.

The brick house which was built by George Weis in 1818 to replace the wood frame house was sold in 1901 to George Beltzhoover, a lawyer and the founder of Shepherd College. Thus ended a pottery business which spanned three generations and more than one hundred years.

By the mid-1800s, high-fire stoneware was gaining popularity in America, and this affected the sale of the Weises low-fired earthenware. There is no evidence that the Weis family ever attempted to fire stoneware. George Weis died in 1857, and the overall responsibility for the potteries, both in Hagerstown and in Shepherdstown, fell to his son William. The growth in importance of high-fire stoneware with its light-colored clay and deep blue cobalt decoration, as well as its durability—greater than the more fragile earthenware—contributed to the decline of the Shepherdstown pottery in the 1880s. When the pottery closed, the unsold redware remaining was dumped in the Potomac River.[5]

One can only wonder what might have happened to the Weis family pottery had they changed from earthenware to stoneware, as did other potters in the area at that time. No doubt the American Civil War also affected the operation of the pottery. The great battle of Antietam was fought a few miles from Shepherdstown, as were the many battles at Harpers Ferry. Nearby Winchester, Virginia, changed hands seventytwo

5. As sales of the redware fell, the Weises led a very meager existence. They never fully paid for the new brick house, and according to local lore, family members began suffering the effects of lead poisoning—loss of hair and "pallor of cheek."

times during the war. It is possible that William and James Weis took advantage of the bushels of lead bullets found on the battlefield at Antietam, grinding them into glaze material.[6]

Potters contributed to the development of this country during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in very practical ways. In the 1600s, most of the ware used by the colonists was imported from England. Slowly, the American pottery industry, with its English and German heritage, developed. One needs only to look at the ware produced by early American potters, especially in the northern colonies, to realize the high level of craftsmanship which the potters possessed. The pots were strong, sound, and fitted to their purpose and the everyday conditions under which they were used. Many potters today would find it difficult to duplicate the shapes made by these potters. The importance of pottery was attributable to the lack of alternatives. What would a person use for a storage vessel, if not clay? What would he use for bowls, if not clay? Only the wealthy could afford pewter or tin.

The general decline of the family pottery industry in this country can be traced to the growth of cottage crafts in England and of factory potteries in America during the latter part of the 1800s. The English produced a great deal of commonware, much of which was imported into this country. By the beginning of the twentieth century, the potteries in America, whether they produced stoneware or earthenware, were in great decline. Machines had been developed that could turn out functional ware faster and cheaper than the throwing potter could.

Some potters continued working in the Shenandoah Valley through the 1920s because their services fulfilled a need for the people living immediately around the potteries. The last days of the wheel-using potter came with the Depression and economic collapse of this country during the 1930s. Prohibition also played a part in the decline of family potteries, as much of the country's whiskey had previously been packaged in wheel-thrown jugs and bottles.

What had been a great heritage in this country disappeared by the beginning of the Second World War. After the war, most universities that had pottery or ceramics courses employed as an instructor someone who had been trained in Europe or by a European. The tradition of American pottery was ignored in the fifty-year decline.

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6. Rice and Stroudt, in *The Shenandoah Pottery*, described how the Bell family in Strasburg took copper kettles, zinc utensils, and lead bullets and lead weights to grind for glazes. The authors say that after the Battle of Fisher's Hill (south of Strasburg), Joseph Fisher told how he gathered a bushel of lead bullets, after his father plowed their field, and took them to the Bell pottery for use as glaze material.



Several storage crocks which show the utilitarian nature of the Weis pottery. A faint banding done with a thumbnail, under a thick lip, lead glaze on the interior, and the red color of the clay are clues to the maker's identity as none of the pots were ever signed.



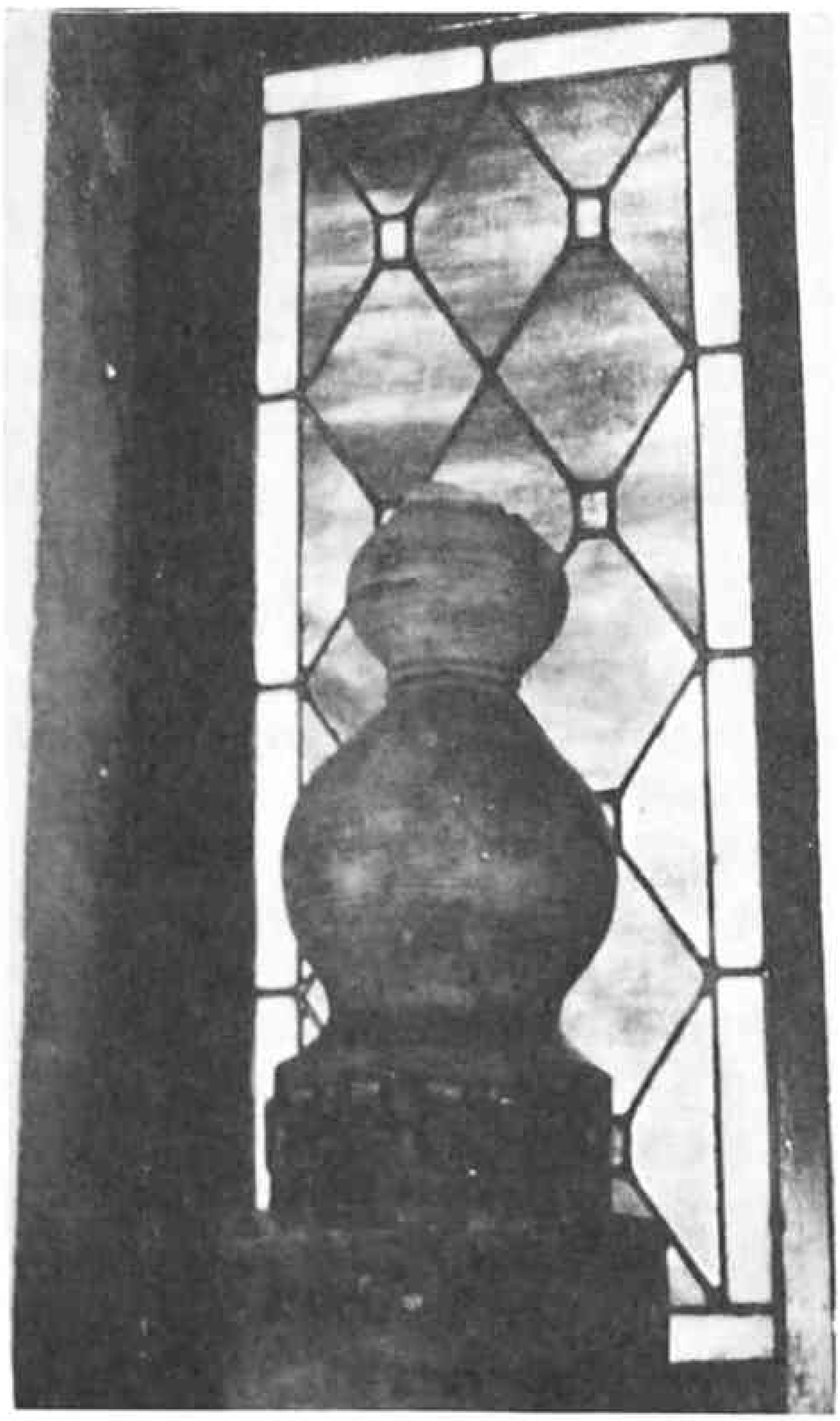
This 8" high storage crock shows wear on the lip where it was used as a knife sharpener in the kitchen of Miss Gladys Hartzell, Shepherdstown. As a storage jar, cheesecloth dipped in wax would be tied with a string under the thick enunciated lip.

With the reinterest in pottery in this country in the 1950s, we did not look toward ourselves, but toward the centuries-old tradition of potterymaking in Japan. Only in the past few years have American potters started to look at their own heritage, and they have found it a sound one. The pots of the eighteenth and nineteenth century American potters may not be light, graceful, or highly decorated; in fact, they are comparatively heavy and unsophisticated. There is something about the shapes, however, that is right for their use in the kitchens of a young and rapidlygrowing nation. This is the spirit of the pottery of our country. The pots had a purpose, and their shapes fit that purpose. From the time

the ball of clay got on the head of the wheel, the pot had an owner. It had a purpose and a place where it would be used again and again. Most important, the potter had an obligation to fulfill. There was no making of the pot for its own sake. The pots were made to fulfill a need, not an aesthetic, for the pots were meant to store lard, help quench thirst, serve food, and light the dark. There is an inherent quality called *rightness of purpose* that developed into the gracefulness of early American pottery.

Reynolds and Pamela Parziale

Placement of Urn in Church



This pottery grave marker was made by William Weis for his family plot in Elmwood Cemetary, Shepherdstown. Seeing its deterioration, Miss Blanch Yontz, Weis' granddaughter had it removed and given to St. Peter's Lutheran Church. The shape of the urn is similar to the drain tiles and artesian well pipes made by the Weis' pottery during the 1800's.

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Jefferson County Landmarks Commission

During the past year, this commission has been much concerned with the routing of the projected Charles Town Bypass as it joins Route 340 south of Charles Town on its way to Rippon.

In October, the West Virginia Department of Highways announced that its preferred route would cross Old Cave Road before joining the Rippon road. This choice ignored the recommendation, which had been requested from this Landmarks Commission, that the alternate route be used which would swing to the right and join the Rippon Road before its junction with Old Cave Road.

This commission responded by appearing before the County Commissioners, who appointed us, with a protest which subsequently was supported by them in a letter to the Department of Highways.

The substance of our objection to the "preferred route" is as follows:

The first outstanding house affected as one drives southward is Vinton, built c. 1840 and now owned by Mr. Randolph Hayes, a descendant of the builder. Here the dual road would streak across the broad view to the east at a distance to 550 feet.

The intersection with Old Cave Road would occur in the broadest portion of this scenic valley. The asphalt strips which compose an intersection with a dual highway would replace the present greenery and the noise of high speed trucks would reverberate between the enclosing hills. On the hilltop to the east at a distance of 660, feet stands Springland built c. 1840 and handsomely retored by its present owner, Mr. Roy Singleton. Settled into the opposite hillside to the west stands Little Elmington built in the early 1800s and now owned by Mr. Edgar Whiting. From its main floor with its elevated columned porch, this spoilation of the valley would be a disaster. The highway would then slant toward the southwest and enter a cut in this hill which would pass the Whiting house at a distance of 300 feet. The modern home of Mr. Allen Marshall would be demolished.

The alternate route, which would avoid this landmark area, would curve to the right passing for a short distance past the northwest corner of Vinton at a distance of 550 feet, beyond which it would enter a cut in the hill to the west and emerge immediately in front of the modern home of Mr. Manning Smith, one of the directors of this Society.

Recent reports from Charleston indicate that the latter route is now "preferred." Also a much longer route is being considered which would swing to the southeast of this entire area and cross Old Cave Road near the cave itself.

Historic Shepherdstown Commission Restoration Project

Phase One of the Entler Hotel restoration project, begun in September 1980, is all but complete. While volunteers are continuing to put the finishing touches on the Princess Street side of the building, two large meeting rooms, modern bathrooms and the pantry are already in use.

Several local organizations have selected space in the second floor and are renovating rooms for offices and meeting places.

Thanks to a Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation grant, professional structural work on the oldest extant section of the hotel, a two-story wing destined to hold formal reception rooms, a museum and archives, will begin in Autumn 1981. The remainder of the work in this area will be completed by skilled and non-skilled volunteers.

The Shenandoah-Potomac Garden Council has made a major contribution toward exterior restoration by donating funds to rebuild the stone walls and iron fence on the east side of the building and to landscape the sunken garden.

Meanwhile, the Historic Shepherdstown Commission is engaged in a number of fund-raising activities designed to match the Federal grant used for the Phase One adaptive-use restoration and to pay for material and maintenance of the old hotel. The newly renovated Princess Street rooms have already seen use as the site of functions to attract public support for the Entler Hotel project.

Pride in Action

Members of Pride in Action, a Charles Town City Countil appointed committee, worked with members of the city council on the All-West Virginia City Award. Charles Town won the award for the second consecutive year. The book of evidence was reviewed and revised. A Completely new slide presentation was developed with sound effects and musical background. These slides have been shown to civic grups in town with more showings being scheduled. This has aroused citizen interest in the improvements still needed.

In anticipation of the 200th birthday of Charles Town, members of Pride in Action are planning further action on beautification, restoration and revitalizatin of our town. Already several business leaders have repainted their stores in keeping with the style of architecture. There has been a special effort to coordinate colors and preserve the integrity of the buildings.

The Memorial Tree Program continues to expand. Special expressions of appreciation have gone to the merchants who have so carefully cared for the trees planted in front of their businesses. More trees are scheduled for planting this fall. Citizens of our town and visitors have commented on the tree plantings and the fact that they add much to the appearance of the town.

Garden clubs, civic organizations and individuals have contrituted to the beautification and maintenance of buildings, mini-parks, and to Jefferson Memorial Park. A committee of citizens worked with the city council on a sign ordinance for residential areas. The result has been that new signs in residential areas must conform to standards that complement the residential environment.

There is a consensus of opinion among the people of Charles Town that the environment is being upgraded in many different ways through preservation, beautification, and revitalization. This is a result of the work of many individuals, assisted by the Pride in Action Committee.

Report to the Membership On the Miss Louise C. Briscoe Bequest

Because of the importance of Miss Louise C. Briscoe's bequest to the Jefferson County Historical Society (the Society) and because of the issues involved in addressing the questions that arose from the instrument, this report is intended to outline and to record for the membership the Society's disposition of the matter. Full discussions of the situation have occurred on at least three occasions before publicly announced meetings of the Society's membership. All parties present were heard and all questions were answered. In addition, newspaper and wire service accounts have related to a local and statewide audience various versions of the bequest and of the Society's meetings connected with the situation. Nevertheless, it seems appropriate that a written report be presented to the members, many of whom reside outside Jefferson County and the immediate geographical area. The establishment of a public account is in the interest of the Society and in keeping with the intentions of the late Miss Louise C. Briscoe.

In 1979, Miss Louise C. Brisoce died and devised by holographic will her home and the adjacent 31.031 acres known as Piedmont to two men for their lifetimes and after their deaths to the Society "to be used and maintained as an Historical Landmark." Also included in the bequest were between 30 and 40 items or groups of items of personal property. This bequest was subject to the right of Miss Briscoe's brother to have possession of the real and personal property devised for one year if he wished. Her brother did notify the estate's executor that he wished to do so. In addition, the will provided that the residue of her estate be sold and the proceeds be used by the trustee for the benefit of her brother for his lifetime. After his death, "said trust fund shall be paid = one half to the Jefferson County Historical Society to be used for the upkeep and maintence (*sic*) of the Piedmont Property heretofore devised" and the other half to the executor. In one of the will's codicils, Miss Briscoe provided that "(i)f at any time the Jefferson County Historical Society should sell the 'Piedmont' property," the "trust fund" income provided for care and maintenance would pass to anther party.

As can be seen from a casual reading of the will, ambiguity appears as to what Miss Briscoe's intentions were, especially in financial arrangements. For example, in the main body of the will, it is provided

that "said trust fund" shall be paid in certain proportions to the Society and to her executor after the death of her brother, but the codicil states that the income of the trust fund would be used for maintenance and upkeep. It is relatively clear, and the Society's Board of Directors had so interpreted the will that Miss Briscoe wished for Piedmont to be preserved as an historical landmark.

In the months after Miss Briscoe's death, after the one-year occupancy by her brother, and after the Piedmont structure stood vacant, the Board of Directors of the Society studied the options available to it. Both life-estate holders had expressed the wish not to occupy personally the property during their lives. The options and variations thereof basically reduced themselves to four:

1) The Society might attempt to purchase the life-estate interest and own the property before receiving any proceeds from the trust fund.

2) The Society could acquiesce and do nothing. After the life-estate holders expired, the Society would receive the house, if it remained standing, and the land.

3) The Society could convey its property interest to an appropriate group or organization that could purchase the life-estates for preservation purposes.

4) The Society could join with the life-estate holders and attempt immediately to dispose of Piedmont to private parties who would have an interest in maintaining the property.

Option 1—The Society did not have the funds and had little likelihood of raising the substantial amount that would have been required to purchase the interest of the life-estate holders. Even if a purchase were possible, the Society would possess no funds for repair, restoration, maintenance, and upkeep of Piedmont until the trust fund's income became available. An architectural study revealed that even if the Society did eventually receive proceeds of the trust fund, the amount would be inadequate to carry out the restoration work required, not to mention the bearing of the costs of fuel and maintenance. Inquiries were made of other groups involved in preservation efforts and to an official of the National Trust for Historic Preservation to gauge the board's calculations. Another consideration was that maintenance of buildings by occupancy is not among the traditional or constitutional purposes of the Society.

Option 2—With preservation of Piedmont as the primary goal, the Society's acquiescence posed substantial risks. The life-estate holders expressed their determination not to occupy the property and their decision appeared to the Board of Directors to be sincere and be based on

a realistic self-appraisal of their respective situations. The question arose as to what the life-estate holders might do with Piedmont. It should be emphasized that the life-estate holders never stated what they would do and it is not entirely certain that they knew what they would do. Using life actuarial possibilities, one of the life-estate holders could theoretically possess Piedmont in excess of 40 years. Among the possible options available to them were: 1) to sell their life-estate to other parties; 2) to keep the building vacant with minimal maintenance; or, 3) to rent it. For various reasons, the possible options available to the life-estate holders, regardless of their intentions, raised great problems if the preservation of the historic property were a primary goal. Vacancy in an isolated location invited deterioration, vandalism, and destruction by fire, and the result of rental might be the same.

Cooperation with the life-estate holders for preservation purposes was impossible because the Society had not immediately received funds through the will and it might not for some time. And, when funds would become available, the amount would be insufficient for a worthy preservation effort.

Option 3—No appropriate group emerged to purchase the life-estate interest in order to engage in preservation efforts.

Option 4—The Society pursued this option for various reasons stated below, as promising the best possibilities for the preservation of Piedmont.

On January 9, 1981, at a special called meeting of the Society, of which each member was notified, the membership overwhelmingly enacted the following resolution:

> RESOLVED, whereas by her Last Will and Testament, Louise C. Briscoe devised and bequeathed to the Jefferson County Historical Society, remaindership interest in certain personal property and her ancestral home, Piedmont, located in Jefferson County, West Virginia, and
>
> WHEREAS, she also left a portion of the residue of her estate in trust to provide for the maintenance and upkeep of said properties, and
>
> WHEREAS, said portion of said residue would generate insufficient funds to maintain said properties as they should be maintained and the said Jefferson County Historical Society has no other resources for this purpose, and
>
> WHEREAS, it is the considered opinion of the membership of the Jefferson County Historical Society that said Piedmont can best be preserved for posterity by selling or otherwise disposing of

the same to a person or an organizatin with the financial ability to maintain the same and that the best interest of all parties concerned would be best served by such course of action,

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Jefferson County Historical Society sell or otherwise dispose of its interest in all devises and bequests of the Louise C. Briscoe estate and that the board of Directors of said properties upon such terms, conditions and considerations as said Board of Directors shall, in its absolute discretion, determine and that the said Board of Directors be authorized to direct the officers of the Jefferson County Historical Society to execute and deliver any and all documents necessary to accomplish said sale or other disposition.

The vote occurred after all those present who wished to speak were heard.

In a series of lengthy deliberative meetings, the Board of Directors, considering all options available to it, unanimously concluded to pursue the fourth option, outlined above, and to authorize the Society's officers to act as a negotiating committee to discuss the matter with the life-estate holders with the stipulations that appropriate restrictive covenants be incorporated into any deed of conveyance and that any final agreement be approved by the Board of Directors. The board's action came after extensive discussion and the resolution of a diversity of viewpoints that had emerged at the commencement of the meetings. The negotiating committee proceeded to discuss the situation with the life-estate holders. After many meetings, decisions were reached about the method of sale, the necessity of restrictive covenants, and financial arrangements. The Society's Board of Directors unanimously endorsed the negotiating committee's work and authorized the conclusion of a transaction in behalf of the Society.

The financial arrangements concluded were that the Society and lifeestate holders would divide all proceeds and expenses on a 60-40 per centum basis, with the Society receiving the latter portion. (The statutory yield to the Society based on the life-time actuarial expectations of the life-estate holders is approximately 18 per centum.) After entertainng several proposals, the parties accepted the highest monetary offer and a contract of sale was entered on June 1, 1981.

On August 15, 1981, at a public auction, the society disposed of its remaindership interest in the personal property of Miss Briscoe's estate. The Society's financial arangement was the same as that for the disposal of the real property. The Society's share, after deduction of expenses, was $16,472.12. On August 17, 1981, the Society and life-estate holders by a

deed of conveyance transferred Piedmont and its 31.031 acres to Mr. and Mrs. William G. Psillas, Jr., for a consideration of $175,000.00. The deed contains a preamble which explains the Society's motivations for taking its course of action:

> WHEREAS, the Jefferson County Historical Society, a nonprofit corporation, hereinafter referred to as Society, has inherited by the Last Will and Testament of Louise C. Briscoe, the remaindership interest in Piedmont, more fully hereinafter described, and
>
> WHEREAS, the Society does not possess the means whereby it can exercise total ownership, possession, and control of Piedmont, and
>
> WHEREAS, the Society is desireous of fulfilling the intentions, as can be reasonably construed from the last will and testament of Louise C. Briscoe, to preserve the premises as an historic landmark, and
>
> WHEREAS, the Society considers vacancy and unoccupation of the premises and occupation of the premises by parties not vested with full and compete ownership to constitute the greatest threat to the physical survival of Piedmont in these modern times and
>
> WHEREAS, the Society wishes to exercise its duty to future generations to insure the preservation of the premises known as Piedmont and its environs with the means that it has available, and
>
> WHEREAS, Piedmont and its dependencies have survived for two centuries or approximately eight generations in the care of considerate private owners, and
>
> The Society has concluded that the preservation of Piedmont can be best assured by occupancy, repair, restoration, and maintenance by interested and caring owners and for this reason and others now joins in this deed...

The restrictive convenants contained in the deed of conveyance are as follows:

> This conveyance is made subject, however, to the following restrictive covenants which shall run with the land and be binding on the Grantees, their heirs and assigns, and by acceptance of this deed, they agree as follows:
>
> 1) They will preserve the basic physical structure of and the architectural integrity of the historic buildings of the property herein conveyed, namely the home known as Piedmont, the stone

kitchen formerly known as Quarry Banks, the brick smoke house, and the stone spring house. It is understood and agreed that prservation might require restoration and/or repair of the exterior of the buildings.

2) They will preserve the Briscoe family grave marker and graveyard to the rear of the house, ordinary wear and tear excepted.

3) There shall be no subdivision of or erection of residential structures within the area surrounding the historic buildings. The exterior boundary of such area is defined as follows:

> The railroad tracks on the south, the Hendricks boundary on the west, a line 100 yards to the east of and parallel to the east wall of Quarry Banks, a line 20 feet north of the Briscoe grave marker and parallel to the north wall of Piedmont.

It is further agreed that the above restriction may be waived in whole or in part at any time if the written consent of the Board of Directors of the Jefferson County Historical Society is first obtained. Any such consent shall be as contained in a recorded document setting forth the terms of any such consent to such waiver.

Summer Picnic

The Historical Society summer picnic has become one of the most successful and enjoyable meetings of the year. On August 19, 1981, approximately 100 members and guests got together at "The Hill" farm, home of Mr. and Mrs. Roger Perry, everyone bringing in a basket what they cook best. Non-resident members doing their summer visiting among relatives in the area were on hand for the hand shaking and renewing of friendships.

Dr. John Stealey, President, gave a brief report on the sale of Piedmont, home of Miss Louise Briscoe. He introduced the new owners, Mr. and Mrs. William G. Psillas, Jr. All other business was tabled until the next regular meeting.

While some members toured the lovely Perry home, others remained on the spacious lawn to socialize. As the evening sun went down over the hills, and the last car had left the driveway, all that remained were the remnants of a happy evening spent with good friends, good food and beautiful weather for a picnic.

Comprehensive Listing of County Tombstone Inscriptions

The Bee Line Chapter of Charles Town, National Society Daughters of the American Revolution has just completed the compilation of all tombstone inscriptions in Jefferson County, West Virginia. These inscriptions have been put in one volume and titled *Tombstone Inscriptions, Jefferson County, WV.* It is being published by the Walsworth Publishing Company of Marceline, MO.

Chapter members have made alphabetical listings of names and dates in 120 cemeteries and burial lots. In addition, an overall index has been prepared. The total number of names exceeds 20,000. The task has taken over three years to complete.

The dates noted cover the period 1687-1980. Sixteen hundred eighty-seven appears to be the date of birth of Catarina Beirlin, buried in the Engle-Ronemus Graveyard on Elk Branch. (See Vol. XXVI, p. 35).

The Bee Line Chapter is deeply indebted to Mr. Hugh E. Voress of Charles Town for doing the indexing and proofreading. The Jefferson County Historical Society also has supported this work. The book will be back from the printers around the last of November. Orders will be taken by any DAR member or by writing Mrs. Donald Kable, Tuscawilla Hills, Charles Town, WV 25414—Phone 304-725-5108

Florence H. Moore, Chairman

Book Notes

General Turner Ashby and Stonewall's Valley Campaign. By Millard K. Bushong. (Verona, Va.: McClure Printing Company, Inc., 1980. Pp. [viii], 261.)

Neither the subject of this biography nor its author requires introduction to most Society members. General Ashby emerged to be an important figure in the Civil War Valley Campaign of 1862 and appeared to have a promising future as a Confederate cavalry commander; however, federal troops killed him in June 1862, near Harrisonburg, Virginia. Besides being a comprehensive account of Ashby's life, supplemented with useful maps and illustrations, this work conveys much additional information about the entire theater of Confederate operations in which Ashby was involved. Bushong, a Ph.D. in history and member of this Society's Board of Directors, had written his dissertation about Jefferson County at West Virginia University, had stimulated many students in United States history before his retirement at Shepherd College, and had previously published a biography of Jubal A. Early. His Charles Town origins have influenced his scholarly interests which are tinged by the color of Confederate gray.

Images of the Past: A Photographic Review of Winchester and Frederick County. Volume X, Winchester-Frederick Historical Society. (Winchester, Va.: The Winchester-Frederick County Historical Society, 1980. Pp. [iv], 144.)

Because of Winchester's allied historical relationship to Jefferson County and because of its location in the lower Shenandoah Valley, this excellent selection of black-white photographs, dating primarily in the 1890-1945 period, will greatly interest Society members. The photographs primarily concentrate on the county seat, but some focus is on county features. The arrangement is by topic such as residences by street and subject categories such as churches, trade and commerce, transportation, the fire companies, public buildings, and the apple trade. Although many historic structures continue to survive in Winchester, the photographs, especially of downtown private residences, record what has disappeared.

John Peale Bishop: A Biography. By Elizabeth Carroll Spindler. (Morgantown, W.Va.: West Virginia University Library, 1980. Pp. [xv], 267. $16.00.)

This biography of the author of *Act of Darkness* (1935) is required reading for students of Jefferson County history and for those interested in American letters. Bishop, who wrote widely in prose and poetry, based much of his best work on his county heritage, his Charles Town upbringing, and the Confederate tradition. The author temperately assesses the importance and place of Charles Town's native son in the milieu of mid-twentieth century American literary history which included such authors and critics as Edmund Wilson, F. Scott Fitzgerald, Archibald MacLeish, and Ernest Hemingway.

The publication of his novel aroused the ire of depression-era Charles Towners who, not appreciating their neighbors becoming models for literary characters in a novel about a discomforting rape case, rose to protect their own. Nevertheless, extensive local reading of the work occurred, and parlor games of assigning the characters became a favorite contemporary activity. Hushed tones of discussion in some quarters still greet any mention of the work. F. Scott Fitzgerald had warned Bishop that he might safely return to his hometown hidden in an automobile or under cover of darkness.

John E. Stealey, III
Shepherd College