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Magazine of the

Jefferson County Historical Society

Volume XXI
December 1955

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Magazine of the

JEFFERSON COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY



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JEFFERSON COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Organized May 21, 1927

Headquarters — County Offices Building
Charles Town, West Virginia

OFFICERS

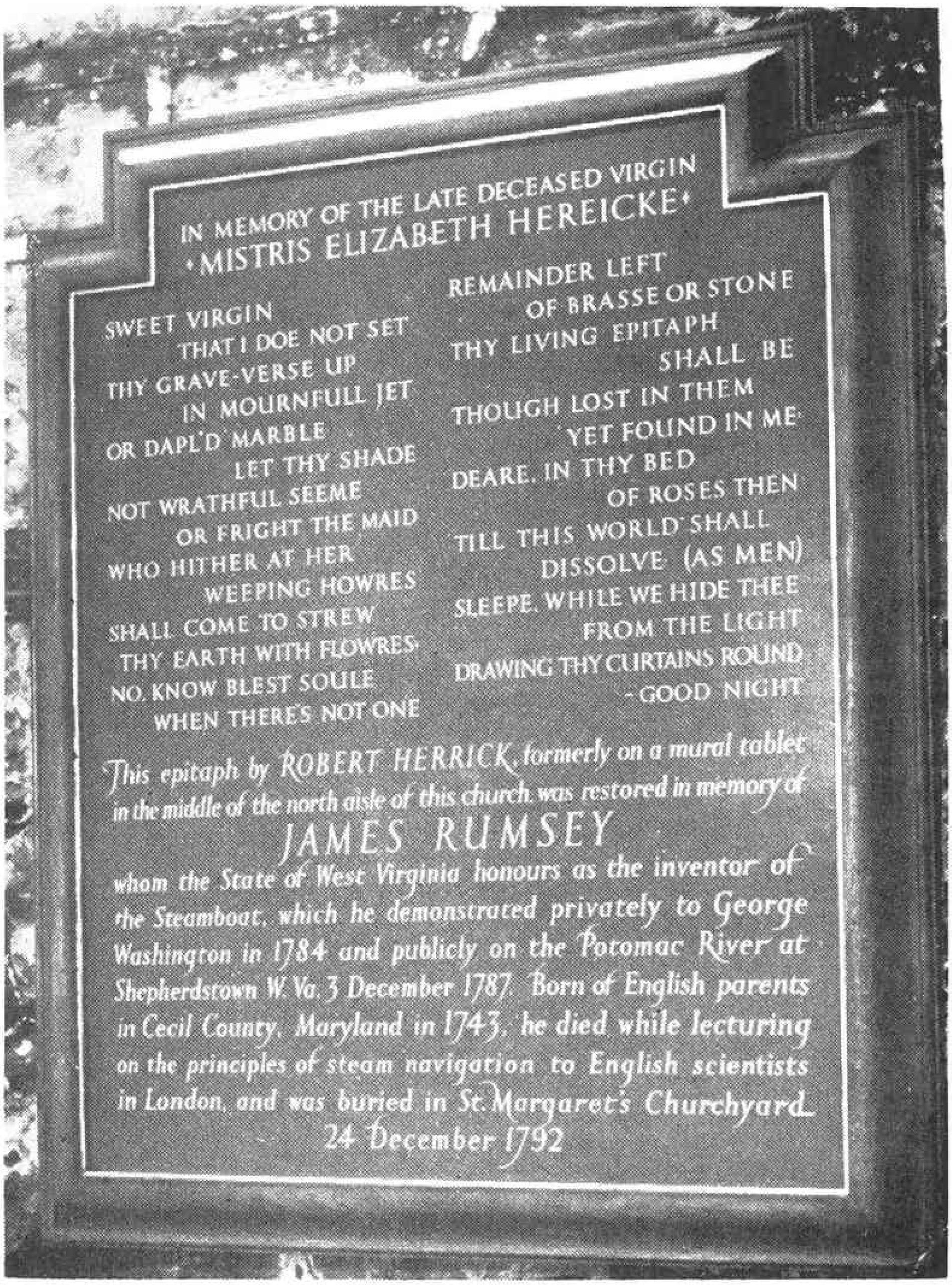
President—A. D. Kenamond, Shepherdstown, W. Va.
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Recording Secretary—Thornton T. Perry, Jr., Charles Town, W. Va.
Corresponding Secretary—Ella May Turner, Shepherdstown, W. Va.
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ADDRESSES

(Delivered before the Society since December 1, 1954)

March 18 at Charles Town—Wright Denny, by Stanley P. Shugert.
May 13 at Charles Town—David Hunter Strother, by Cecil Eby, Jr.
November 18 at Charles Town—The Rumsey Plaque in St. Margaret's by Miss Rachel Snyder; The Story of Redmond Burke by Mrs. L. M. Lynch; A Tragedy at Harpers Ferry in 1834 by Mrs. John W. Link.

Price of the Magazine—$1.00 a copy. Copies of the 1937, 1938, 1939, 1940, 1943 and 1944 issues are no longer available.


IN MEMORY OF THE LATE DECEASED VIRGIN
'MISTRIS ELIZABETH HEREICKE'
SWEET VIRGIN
THAT I DOE NOT SET
THY GRAVE-VERSE UP
IN MOURNFULL JET
OR DAPL'D MARBLE
LET THY SHADE
NOT WRATHFUL SEEME
OR FRIGHT THE MAID
WHO HITHER AT HER
WEEPING HOWRES
SHALL COME TO STREW
THY EARTH WITH FLOWRES.
NO. KNOW BLEST SOULE
WHEN THERE'S NOT ONE
REMAINDER LEFT
OF BRASSE OR STONE
THY LIVING EPITAPH
SHALL BE
THOUGH LOST IN THEM
YET FOUND IN ME
DEARE. IN THY BED
OF ROSES THEN
TILL THIS WORLD SHALL
DISSOLVE (AS MEN)
SLEEPE. WHILE WE HIDE THEE
FROM THE LIGHT
DRAWING THY CURTAINS ROUND
- GOOD NIGHT
This epitaph by ROBERT HERRICK, formerly on a mural tablet in the middle of the north aisle of this church was restored in memory of
JAMES RUMSEY
whom the State of West Virginia honours as the inventor of the Steamboat, which he demonstrated privately to George Washington in 1784 and publicly on the Potomac River at Shepherdstown W. Va. 3 December 1787. Born of English parents in Cecil County, Maryland in 1743, he died while lecturing on the principles of steam navigation to English scientists in London, and was buried in St. Margaret's Churchyard
24 December 1792

THE JAMES RUMSEY MEMORIAL IN LONDON

On December 3, 1953, one hundred sixty-six years after James Rumsey publicly demonstrated his steamboat on the Potomac River at Shepherdstown, West Virginia, the eighth grade students of Shepherdstown High school formed a Junior Rumseyan Society. To honor the occasion, they read the play, "James Rumsey and his Steamboat", which had been written some years before by another group of eighth graders. There was also discussion of the fact that, though Rumsey was buried at St. Margaret's Church, Westminster, London, there was no marker in any way to call attention to his burial there.

It was decided to write to Hon. W. P. C. Perry, delegate to the state legislature from this district, and ask his aid in sponsoring a project to place a memorial tablet to James Rumsey's memory in St. Margaret's. Their teacher had her notes, taken in school, when she was in the eighth grade in 1907, saying that James Rumsey was buried in Westminster Abbey, which of course, was not true. The impression at that time in some circles was that Rumsey was buried in the Abbey.

There came a day when Mr. Perry attended a meeting of the Junior Rumseyans, and spoke to them, promising to help them in their project, and advising them in various ways. The next step was to write to the Rector of St. Margaret's, Canon Charles Smyth, and ask him to confirm from the records in the Parish Register that James Rumsey was buried there. Canon Smyth's reply came soon, stating that Rumsey had been buried there on December 24, 1792, and that following the notation in the parish register were the letters, "G. D.", or Great Dues, meaning that Rumsey was a person of some consequence.

A letter was sent to Canon Smyth, asking what possibility there was that West Virginia might be allowed to place a memorial tablet to James Rumsey's memory on the grounds at St Margaret's, or in the church. Canon Smyth replied favorably to the Junior Rumseyan's question, and after much correspondence, permission was given on this condition: if an epitaph by Robert Herrick that had formerly been in the church would be restored, then at the bottom of the tablet might be placed the

memorial inscription concerning James Rumsey. (See Editor's Note 1.)

EDITOR'S NOTE 1—On October 1, 1906, H. Hensley Henson, Canon of Westminster & Rector of St. Margaret's, gave The Rumseyan Society, organized on February 26, 1906, permission to erect in St. Margaret's a tablet, 20 by 30 inches, to the memory of James Rumsey, on payment of a license fee of fifty guineas. There was no specification of the amount the Society should expend for the tablet itself. At that time The Rumseyan Society had no available funds aside from those being conserved for the erection of the Rumsey Monument in Shepherdstown.

In 1920 the Society again took up Canon Henson's offer, but deferred action, doubtless because all available funds had been spent on the Rumsey Monument and Park.

It would appear that Canon Smyth, in giving permission to place a memorial inscription concerning James Rumsey at the bottom of a restored Robert Herrick epitaph, acted either without knowledge of the earlier Canon Henson permit or under the restrictions of decreased available space in St. Margaret's.

In the meantime, Mr. George Rumsey, a distant relative of James Rumsey, became interested in the project, and sent a check for a thousand dollars. This money was turned over to the Historical Society and was used to pay for the tablet, and for the passage back and forth to England, of a representative of the society, the eighth graders' teacher.

The date for the unveiling of the tablet was set for May 18, 1955. On that day at noon a distinguished group was assembled in the church to witness the unveiling of the tablet. The Second Sea Lord (Admiral) The Hon. Sir Guy H. E. Russell, G. B. E. K. C. B., D. S. O. unveiled the tablet in the presence of His Excellency the American Ambassador (The Hon. Winthrop W. Aldrich). He declared in ringing tones, "I unveil this tablet, the gift of the citizens of West Virginia, in honor of James Rumsey, Pioneer of Steam Navigation". The address, linking the poet, Herrick, and the inventor, Rumsey, was given by Basil Willey, King Edward VII Professor of English Literature in the University of Cambridge.

The epitaph by Robert Herrick was formerly on a mural tablet in the church, and is in memory of the poet's niece, Elizabeth Hereicke. The poem and the inscription are in ivory lettering on a deep blue background. The last lines of the epitaph are as follows:

"Sleepe, while we hide thee from the light,
Drawing thy Curtain round—Good night".

The inscription follows:

This Epitaph by Robert Herrick . . . was restored in memory of

JAMES RUMSEY

whom the State of West Virginia honours as the inventor of the Steamboat, which he demonstrated privately to George Washington in 1784 and publicly on the Potomac River at Shepherdstown, W. Va., 3rd December, 1787. Born of English parents in Cecil County, Maryland, in 1743, he died while lecturing on the principles of steam navigation to English scientists in London, and was buried in St. Margaret's Churchyard, 24th December, 1792.

The dedication of this memorial to James Rumsey stirred up, in the weeks following, interested comment on early steamboats, in the form of letters to the London Times. G. Percival Kaye wrote as follows:



JAMES RUMSEY

To the Editor of the Times:
Sir, —

The memorial tablet you referred to recently being set up to commemorate Rumsey as the pioneer steamboat inventor is scarcely correct. In the New World he, along with Fitch and Fulton, might have a prior claim, but in the Old World both French and Spanish claims were before him. Claude, Marquis de Joaffrey had several steamboats on the Rhone, one in 1779, another in 1781-82, and a third in 1783 . . . . In 1543 Blaxo de Garay, an officer in the Navy of Charles V, gave a public exhibition in the harbour of Barcelona on June 10 of that year . . . . Garay got promotion and died a rear-admiral, but the Holy Office persuaded the Emperor that the scheme was too dangerous and it was never followed up. When three tugs were ordered from the Thames Ironworks in the 1850's by

the Papal State, one of them was named De Garay in memory of this sixteenth-century pioneer steamboat inventor.

Yours very truly
G. Percival Kaye

Another letter from one who signed himself "Zetland" tells that the good folk of Stirlingshire claim that the "Charlotte Dundas" was the first practical steamship. It was 56 ft., by 18 ft., and the inventor, William Symington, had such confidence in its being able to make headway in the face of a violent headwind, that he caused two vessels of 70 tons each to be attached to the stern of his boat. Zetland says, "Symington's confidence proved to be well founded, for in spite of the gale the Charlotte Dundas reached Port Dundas, Glasgow, safely, covering the distance of all but 20 miles in six hours, and thus achieving, in spite of the most unfavorable conditions, a speed of something over three miles an hour." The Charlotte Dundas made this trip in 1802.

Shortly after the dedication at St. Margaret's the Historical Society's representative was asked by the British Broadcasting Corporation to make a recording for broadcast for the Overseas Service. Mr. Robert Furnivale prepared a list of questions concerning James Rumsey which he would ask in the course of the unrehearsed conversation, which would bring out facts about the life and work of James Rumsey. His introduction to this interview showed that through the years, St. Margaret's has had happy contacts with America, and American generosity. He spoke as follows:

"St. Margaret's Church, Westminster, stands next to Westminster Abbey, where England's monarchs are crowned, and facing the Houses of Parliament, where England's laws are made: on the very pulse of English history you might say. It was in St. Margaret's Churchyard that James Rumsey, West Virginian pioneer of steam navigation, was buried, on Christmas Eve, 1792, and here that a tablet was unveiled to his memory last Wednesday. It was a simple and dignified occasion. The choir sang verses by Herrick and Milton. The Second Sea Lord. in the presence of the American Ambassador, drew the Stars and Strips from the tablet, pale blue against the mellow stone, with

Herrick's verses lettered in white. The Cambridge Professor of English Literature delivered an address on Herrick. After the service we gathered to inspect the tablet, and all the other visible proofs of the ties between this church and the United States: the great Raleigh window, given by American generosity to commemorate Sir Walter Raleigh, whose headless body was buried here after his execution; the Milton window, donated by George W. Childs; the memorial mosaic and tablet to Bishop Phillips Brooks of Massachusetts, who often preached here. Someone pointed out a solemn small boy, slightly mystified—a descendant of Herrick he said. Coming out into the sunshine afterwards, in the heart of London, it was possible at that moment to feel that America was very near".

In the coming years it may be well to follow the suggestions of Mr. Wilmer Latimore Snowden, Sr., who says, "Since James Rumsey was beaten out of his fame as inventor of the Steamboat by one Robert Fulton, he still has a greater and far more important claim to fame that has never been mentioned. It is a very important thing in this modern age and should be mentioned. And that is that James Rumsey was not the inventor of the steamboat but probably the inventor and certainly the first to use jet propulsion for a vehicle. James Rumsey's steamboat was propelled by a simple jet engine, operated by steam rather than hot exhaust gases." (See Editor's Note 2.)

We should work along that line and add more glory the story of James Rumsey's achievements.

— Rachel Snyder

EDITOR'S NOTE 2—The invention here mentioned by Mr. Snowden was given elaborate treatment by Matthew Page Andrews in the October 1939 issue of the magazine, West Virginia History, published by the State Department of Archives and History.

On July 15, 1939, when the James Rumsey Bridge at Shepherdstown was opened, Rear Admiral Russell Randolph Waesche, giving the dedicatory address, paid high tribute to Rumsey's genius in thus improving the means of marine transportation.

Miss Ella May Turner, in her book on James Rumsey, published in 1930, gave Rumsey's description of the jet propulsion invention and included a photostatic copy of one of his drawings of "The Pipe Boiler."

It would seem that James Rumsey is unquestionably entitled to all the honor suggested by Mr. Snowden.

ALBUM of HISTORIC HOMES VII

RETIREMENT

Time marches on! Even in the days of rapid moving wheels, we pause at times, to wonder, when viewing an old, old building just what, if it could speak, would be its story. After having been born and reared in Leetown, Jefferson county, W. Va., I naturally have a keen interest in old property in that section of the country.

"Retirement," the quaint grey stone house "on the way to Charles Town" from Leetown always interested me. Why didn't it face the road and many other questions would come to my mind, as a child. It was always easy to understand why such a location should have been selected. The many springs, giving ample water, were numerous, and the fertile lands offered a haven for early settlers.

The house is small and of very simple structure as were most of the homes in that period.

After much study and research, I have this article to offer the Historical Society.

Long, long ago in far away Ireland there lived a family by the name of McSherry. Richard and William McSherry (twins) were born at St. John's, County Down, Ireland, July 29, 1774. At the age of eighteen years they left Ireland and went to Kingston, Jamaica, where in the course of a few years, by industry and capacity for business, they acquired a considerable fortune. Toward middle life they left Jamaica for the United States. After traveling through the country, then just recovering from the war with England, William established himself at Baltimore, Maryland, as a hardware merchant.

Richard McSherry purchased large tracts of land in Virginia in the Valley between the Blue Ridge and Alleghany Mountains, which has been called the Garden Spot of Virginia. He selected for his home, an estate near Leetown, then Berkeley County, Va. The new home he called "Retirement," by which name the estate is still known.

It is interesting to note that the McSherry brothers brought with them to this country from their native Ireland, James Faulkner, born in 1776 and left an orphan

at the age of ten years. We are told that the two families had been friends in Ireland. It is not known just how much time the young lad spent at "Retirement".

In July 1791 Richard McSherry married Anastatia, the third daughter of Richard Lilly of Frederick, Maryland, and granddaughter of Samuel Lilly of Pennsylvania. He, at once, brought his bride to "Retirement" where they "set up" housekeeping. We are told that Mr. McSherry, "was of fine personal appearance, dressing carefully in the fashion of the day, with laces, ruffles, powdered hair and silver knee buckles".

Mr. McSherry died at his home, "Retirement," September 7, 1822 and was buried in the Catholic cemetery at Martinsburg, now West Virginia. He left a widow and nine children, five daughters and four sons: Richard, doctor; Dennis Lilly, lawyer; William, provincial of the Jesuits; James, lawyer; Susan, Catherine, Cecila and Ann, (I do not know the name of the fifth daughter).

According to tradition, many mysterious happenings occurred at the house known as "Retirement", in connection with "The Mystery of the Wizard Clip", just four miles from the above mentioned estate. Visitors were always welcome; therefore, it was the stopping place for the Catholic priests, who might be in the neighborhood. This was the reason that General Charles Lee's valet, Guiseppi Minghinia, directed Adam Livingston to the McSherry family, when he came asking for advice after having experienced the clipping articles and hearing the strange voices. The story is that when Mrs. McSherry saw Mr. Livingston (whose estate was near what is now Middleway, W. Va.,) coming toward her home, she met him at the gate. Mr. Livingston told her that a Voice told him the night before that her sister living in Baltimore, Maryland, had died. Later the news came that she had passed away about the same hour as Mr. Livingston had heard the message of the strange Voice.

Another story is that the McSherry girls were trying on their beautiful dresses before a large mirror; suddenly it was shattered in tiny pieces before their very eyes.

Mrs. McSherry, "the dear helpmate," as she was affectionately called, had still another remarkable experience. One day she was frightened at seeing a cradle containing her infant son, William, rocked violently without

being touched. This same child became the very Rev. William McSherry, one of the provincials of the Society of Jesus in the United States. The cradle is now at the Georgetown University, Washington, D. C.

In the Court House in Charles Town, W. Va., there is on record a deed stating that on April 1, 1840 the then living members of the McSherry family deeded to George B. Beall, of the county, the estate "Retirement" containing 470 acres for the sum of $18,000 dollars. Mrs. McSherry had died. Mr. John Piet and Mrs. (Susan McSherry) Piet were living at "Retirement" at the time of the transfer.

December 1, 1870 David English Henderson, son of Richard Henderson and Elizabeth English Henderson, and Miss Ann Orfia Yates Beall were married. The Rev. Hopkins Meade performed the ceremony. They lived on the farm "Retirement", which had been inherited from her father, Mr. George B. Beall.



Retirement

Mr. Henderson was an artist of ability. He had a window cut larger in the third story of the house, in order to have a better light from the north in the room he used for a studio. We are told that he built a small balcony outside this window, that he might dry his paintings to a better advantage. The balcony, also, aided in drawing up fuel from the ground to be used for his stove. The larger window remains, but the balcony is gone. It is easy

to detect that at one time there was an addition to the north end of the house because of the filled in door-way and window. A resident of the community says that his family moved to Jefferson County in 1873, when an old foundation was still in evidence.

Mr. Henderson was a soldier in the Confederate Army and was a member of Botts Grays, 2nd Virginia Infantry, Stonewall Brigade. After the war when he had gone to Brooklyn, New York, to open a studio, his mother had him come back to his boyhood home, "Ellerslie", near Halltown to help provide for her large family, which had been ruined by the war.

Mr. Cambpell Tabb, a neighbor boy, became very interested in art, so it was that Mr. Henderson and Mr. Tabb had much of mutual interest. The former enjoyed watching the later at the easel.

Among Mr. Henderson's paintings were the following pictures:

A—General Stonewall Jackson sitting at a table in his tent holding a New Testament between the candle and his sleeping aide;

B—Old colored mammy and two small girls beside a brook in the edge of a woods;

C—Harpers Ferry from Maryland Heights;

D—Halt of Stonewall Brigade, and others which many of us have seen.

David English Henderson died at his home "Retirement," November 16, 1887, and was buried in the Beall lot in Zion Episcopal Church Yard, Charles Town, West Virginia.

Mr. and Mrs. Henderson were the parents of two children, John and Janet.

John died a young man, unmarried, Miss Janet, became the wife of Walter C. Riely of the county. To them were born two sons, David Henderson Riely and William Alexander Riely. Mrs. Riely died at an early age, leaving the small sons in the care of their father and her mother, Mrs. Henderson. When the grandmother died, she left a will (dated December 4, 1909) leaving the farm "Retirement" to her grandsons, David and Alexander Riely.

In May, 1926 the Riely family sold "Retirement" to Mr. and Mrs. Lee Osbourn of the county. October 1953 they sold it to Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Dodson.

October, 1954 Mr. and Mrs. Dodson sold the farm, just five (5) miles northwest of Charles Town, to Mr. and Mrs. Robert Butler, who are the present owners of "Retirement".

Sources Of Information

History of the Lower Shenandoah Valley—J. E. Norris—1890
Story of David English Henderson—Esta Burton Hilleary—Mar. 29,1940
The Mystery of the Wizard Clip—Raphael Brown
Mr. James E. Tabb — Leetown Road
Jefferson County Court House

—Louise Gardner Langdon



Rose Hill

ROSE HILL FARM

One of the most beautiful country homes in Jefferson County is Rose Hill Farm, about one mile west of the Leetown and Kearneysville Pike, and one-and one-half miles from Leetown. Located on the top of a high ridge, the fine brick house commands a magnificent vista of rolling fields, hills and mountains. The elevation here is 525 feet and the view extends to North Mountain, Berkeley County, in the west and as far northeast as the Harpers Ferry Gap.

Rose Hill is the home of the Right Reverend Robert E. L. Strider, retired Episcopal Bishop of West Virginia and his family, and its lands have been continuously in the possession of the Strider family for more than 130 years. Isaac Strider II, the great-grandfather of the present owner, having acquired through several purchases about 900 acres of land including the old Hopewell Mills property about one mile southwest of the present Rose Hill mansion.

Isaac Strider II operated Hopewell Mills for many years, remains of which may still be seen standing by the old mill race. He took his flour by ox team to Alexandria, Virginia, and returned with his carts filled with commodities purchased for the families living near him. His large land holdings included several farms, among them the Travelers Rest Farm which had been the home of General Horatio Gates.

Isaac Strider III was the grandson of the owner of Hopewell Mills, and having been left an orphan at an early age, he grew up in the home of his grandparents at the Mill. The young Isaac served in the Confederate Army with Co. B of the 12th Virginia Cavalry commanded by Capt. Geo. Baylor of Charles Town. When the War was over he returned to Jefferson County and in 1866 married the young lady to whom he had been engaged through his four years of Army service. This was Miss Sarah Elizabeth Reich of Frederick, Maryland. The bride and groom took up residence at Hopewell Mills with the bridegroom's grandmother, and in 1867 began the construction of the Rose Hill house, the site having been chosen for the beautiful view it afforded.

The bricks with which the original house was built were burned on the farm, and door sills and window sills

were made of black walnut wood cut on the farm. The four large rooms which form the front of the present house were completed in 1868, and the young couple moved into their new home with their first child, now Mrs, Georgette Willis of Charles Town. The name, Rose Hill, was chosen by young Mrs. Strider who planted roses near the house along with many other shrubs and fine trees which may be seen around the house today.

Seven children were born to Mr. and Mrs. Isaac Strider III at Rose Hill, Robert E. L. Strider being the youngest of the family. Over at The Bower, about two miles from Rose Hill on the Opequon Creek, the Dandridge family made their home. Here was born Edmund Pendleton Dandridge. Though he was several years older than Robert Strider, the two boys were childhood friends and both families attended St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church at Leetown.

Robert E. L. Strider served his Church as Bishop of the Diocese of West Virginia from 1923 to April 1955 when he retired. Edmund Dandridge left his native state for Tennessee where he became Episcopal Bishop of that state. For a period of about twenty years they both served as Bishops.

Jefferson County was the home of three Revolutionary Generals, and in recent years Nelson Parish of the County has given these two Bishops to the Episcopal Church as well as two Generals—Major General John P. Lucas (U. S. A.) (died 1949), and General J. Mitchell Willis (M. C.) (U. S. A.) retired. General Lucas was born at Kearneysville, and General Willis grew up at Middleway.

The present Rose Hill house has ten rooms, a wing on the north having been added in 1949 when Bishop and Mrs. Strider modernized the house. They have made it their home since 1950. The addition of a modern heating plant and other improvements were carried out skillfully so that the charm of the old house with its thick walls, large windows and wide hall has been carefully perserved.

Since his retirement last April, Bishop Strider devotes himself to supervising the three farms of 537 acres which comprise the Rose Hill estate. Bishop Dandridge who retired in 1952 is now dean of the Theological School at the University of the South, Sewanee, Tenn., but returns each summer to spend a month at his birthplace, The Bower, near Rose Hill.

— Linnie Schley

BELMONT

About 400 yards east of Duffields and just north of the old "Winding Road," leading to the southeast in the general direction of Harpers Ferry and called the Harpers Ferry Road in old deeds, stands a stately old brick dwelling called Belmont on the Shaw-Whitmer map of Jefferson County. The place is better known as the home of the Warren Hunter family. It is said that for its first two decades it was simply called Duffields, the name Belmont being a memorial to a deceased member of the James H. L. Hunter family.



The accompanying picture gives some idea of the beautiful setting and approach to the house, entrance to which is from a high porch of classic design at the second or main floor level. On each of its three floors there are four spacious rooms, with a small thirteenth room over the front part of the hallway. The lower or basement floor, no longer used as a part of the living quarters, had a kitchen and dining room on the east side, each with a large fireplace, the kitchen fitted with a large crane now used only at butchering time. Originally there were open fireplaces in the eight rooms of the main and upper floors, but, with the introduction of modern heating systems, all but two were closed, one in an upstairs bedroom and the one in the front part of the double parlor.

In spite of the spaciousness of the house, there has been small chance to add to the old mahogany and walnut furniture installed there by the Wright-Hunter family nearly a hundred years ago. A trio of four-poster beds and

a mahogany sideboard, a Wright heirloom, are the more massive pieces. The silver service of Mary Ellen Wright, doubtless given her when she became a Hunter by marriage in 1855, finds its place on the old sideboard.

As with the furniture, there has scarce been found a place for any but the old portraits and paintings. In the front parlor one finds ancestral portraits, those of Samuel Wright (1796-1865) and Mary Snyder Wright (1802-1874) done by Alexander about 1855. There are also reminders to the visitors that the fathers of both Mr. and Mrs. Warren Hunter fought in the Confederate cause. In the front hall hangs a painting, "Last Meeting of Lee & Jackson," and in the dining room one finds a large framed picture, "Generals of the Confederate Army."

However, at least two of the present occupants have been accorded space for additions to the furniture and pictures or paintings. A few of the latter were secured by Miss Jane Hunter during her several extended visits to England, and the old walnut corner cupboard in the dining room belongs to Mrs. James Hunter, of McKee parentage.

Belmont is located in Elk Branch territory, with the Elk Branch Presbyterian Church almost within a stone's throw of the Hunter home. It is almost needless to remark that the family has had a long and prominent connection with the Elk Branch Church. Warren Hunter was an elder in the church from 1933 till his death in 1947. His son, James Osbourn Hunter, now managing the Belmont farm lands, has been a deacon since 1937. His daughters, Jane Wright Hunter and Christine, have been active in the Women of the Church organization, as has been their mother, Elizabeth Osbourn Hunter. Mrs. Hunter's father, James Burr Osbourn, served as a deacon from 1870 to 1875 and as an elder from 1875 till his death in 1928. Four generations back of Warren Hunter was John Wright, one of the commissioners from Elk Branch Church who succeeded in having John McKnight accept a call to the pastorate of the church in 1776. Intervening generations of the Wrights were connected with the Charles Town Presbyterian Church, Elk Branch not existing as a regularly organized church for about thirty-five years, from 1792 on.

Belmont is also in Darke territory. As shown by the county map General William Darke's home was only a few hundred yards to the east. In the 1770's John and Joseph

Darke-together owned at least 846 acres in this territory, but it would be well-nigh impossible to state authoritatively whether these holdings were by William Darke's father, Joseph, born in 1702, and his uncle John, born in 1698, or by his younger brothers, John, born in 1741, and Joseph born in 1744. Reference has been made to Deed Book 3, page 430, Berkeley County, recording a deed dated October 17, 1775, from Joseph Darke to William Darke, conveying 200 acres on north side of Elk Branch, including "tract on which William Darke now lives," a part of a larger tract granted to Joseph Darke by the Proprietor of the Northern Neck on August 20, 1770.

A considerable part of the Darke holdings later came into the possession of Richard Duffield. In the generation before him, John William Duffield was a prominent citizen of the community and one of the trustees to whom John Snyder deeded land for the Elk Branch Church on April 6, 1830.

On October 6, 1851, as recorded in Deed Book 32, page 117, Charles Town, Richard Duffield and his wife Mary S. (Strother) conveyed 276 acres, not including the parts of their larger tract extending to the north and west, to Dr. Lewis E. Eichelberger. Approximately 156 acres of this tract was east of the Shepherdstown Road, the part now comprising the Belmont or Hunter farm, and 200 acres west of the Shepherdstown Road. The price paid was $17,361.25.

On October 1, 1856, as recorded in Deed Book 36, page 198, Charles Town, Lewis S. Eichelberger deeded the 156 acres lying east of the Shepherdstown Road, the present Belmont or Hunter farm, to Samuel Wright for $15,000. That would seem a right profitable transaction, buying 276 acres for little more than $17,000 and selling 156 acres of it five years later for $15,000. The explanation is easy enough. Dr. Eichelberger had in that five-year period erected a handsome dwelling on the tract sold Samuel Wright, the present home of the Warren Hunter family.

Samuel Wright of this period—the earlier Samuel Wright had died in 1819—had extensive land holdings in the county and bought the Eichelberger home to settle therein his daughter, Mary Ellen, who had been married to James H. L. Hunter on May 17, 1855.

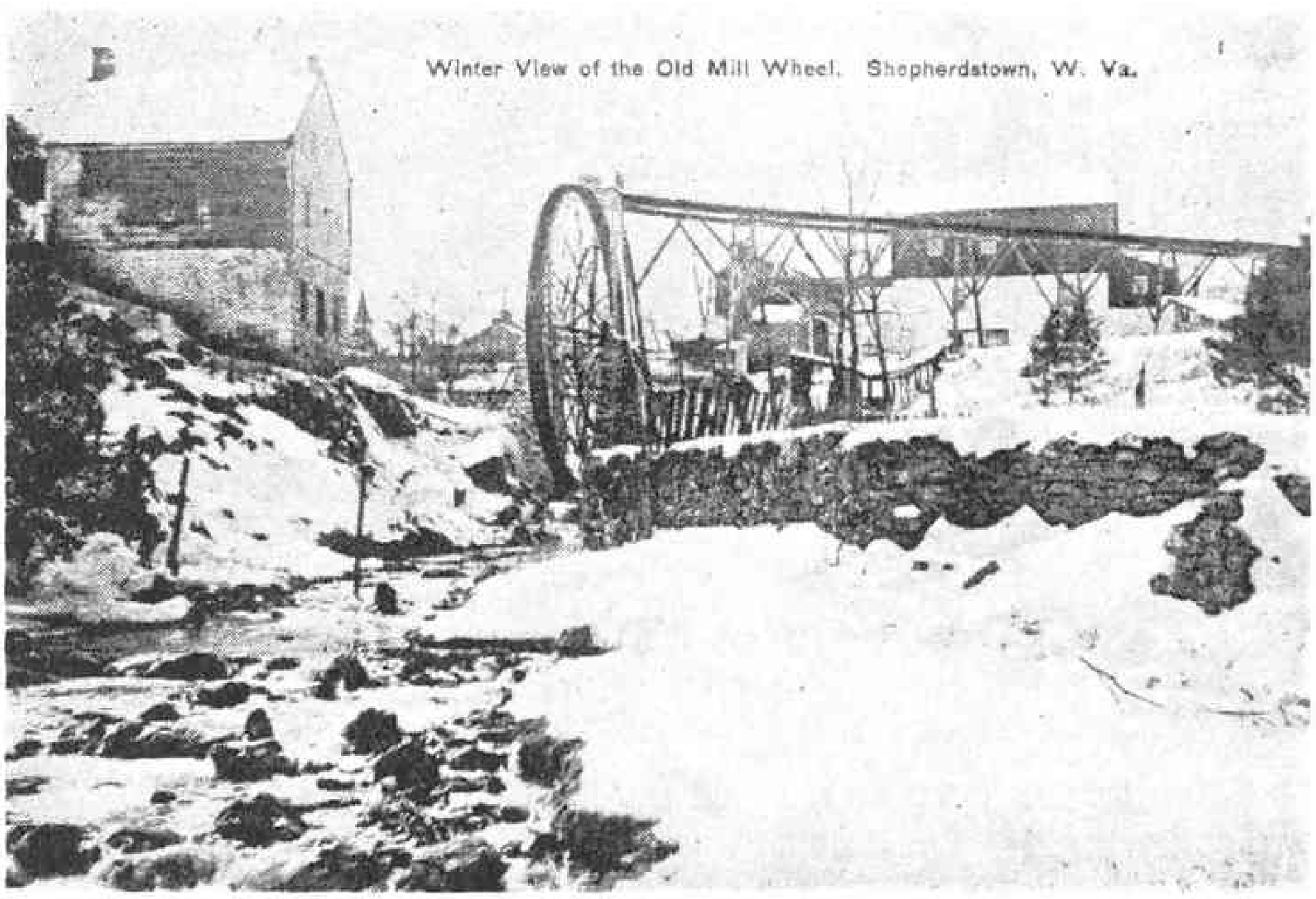
James Henry Lee Hunter, son of Thomas and Anna Quigley Hunter, was born in Cumberland County Pennsylvania, and came to Jefferson County at the age of 23, two years before his marriage to Mary Ellen Wright. He was a Captain in the 2nd Va. Regiment, in the Stonewall Brigade, serving throughout the war.

In the settlement of the estate of Samuel Wright and the partitioning of his land holdings, the Belmont place was deeded to James H. L. Hunter and his wife on January 6, 1871. Only two of their five children lived to maturity—Samuel Wright Hunter, born July 6, 1868, and Warren Hampton Hunter, born January 8, 1871.

James H. L. Hunter died on August 17, 1891, but his wife continued to live at Belmont till her death on October 14, 1908. After her death the property was held in the name of the James H. L. Hunter heirs.

On July 1, 1915, the sons Samuel Wright Hunter and Warren H. Hunter made a division of the property, Warren taking the house and 40 acres and Samuel taking the then remaining 114 acres.

On January 30, 1926, Warren H. Hunter bought out Samuel Hunter and thus gained possession of the whole of the Belmont estate, now held by Mrs. Hunter.



OLD MILLS

In looking over an old map made in 1809, by Varle, you wonder at the number of mill sites. Almost each Plantation had its own mill. When you stop and think how many families it took to run these large Estates, you can readily understand why. The first and more numerous were grist mills built of logs and a few had saw mills run by the same water power. The flour mills were larger mills and usually built of stone. After 1809 a number of mills and woolen factories were built of brick but we are just dealing with the mills on the map of 1809 and previous to that date.

I will give you a list of the mills that were on this old map of 1809 which were located in what is now Jefferson County:—

Rocks' Mill at the mouth of Long Marsh
Muse's Mill on Long Marsh
McPherson's Mill on Long Marsh
Jas. or Jon. Gaunt's Mill on Bull Skin
H. S. Turner's Mill on Bull Skin
Hammond's Ferry Mill (Run by water Power taken from river)
Robarder's Mill on Evitts Run
Mill in Charles Town on Evitts Run
J. Briscoe's Mill on Evitts Run
Two Mills on river before you get to Bloomery (Run by water power taken from river)
Mill and saw mill on Cat Tail Run
John Yates' Mill on Flowing Spring
Kelptrusts' Mill on Elk Branch
Taylor Mill or Manning Mill on Potomac River
Mill at Shepherdstown on Potomac
M. Smith's Mill at Smithfield
Wever's Mill at Lee Town
Four mills on border of Berkeley County.

A number of mills and factories were built after 1809.

The Rocks' Mill

We have an old wooden mortar and pestle from The Rocks. I suppose it was made before they could get the log mill built. We have been told it is more perfect than

the one at Williamsburg. It is 31 inches high, hewed out of a log. The base is solid; the bowl 11 inches deep and 15 in diameter. The pestle is solid wood and carved on the bottom are wooden teeth.

Battaile Muse bought The Rocks from James and Arianna Wormley in 1789. In 1811 when his widow, Margaret Muse, sold The Rocks to her son-in-law, Dr. John Hancock Lewis, a grist mill is mentioned in the deed. Then later in the diary kept by Dr. Lewis and after his death in 1833 by his widow, the mill is mentioned. It is evident they converted the old grist mill at the mouth of Long Marsh Run into a merchant flour mill.

In 1824 Dr Lewis writes in his diary and I quote, "Finished water wheel and shaft Dec. 10th. Cleaned up and put in the mill 189½ bu. wheat. 200 bu. is about a day's work with the present fan. Dec. 1st, 1825: Tramping wheat 28th & 29th. 8 parts of the time with 9 horses and 5 hands." In 1834, after Dr. Lewis's death, Mrs Lewis writes and I quote, "Sept. 10th carpenters commenced work at the mill and finished the 27th. Another hand with him every day except two days. 1835 November 4—Tony went to Alexandria with 14 bar of flour-paid for his toll 3$63½cts. 1840 April 25th—The Mill Wrights came to work 4 hands in the evening commenced work. August 1844—Mr. West repairing mill. Johnson repairing mill. 1 hand cleaning race 7 days. 1848, Mill Wrights at work about the mill. Ford & Miller came to board." It went on, so many men so many days working on mill. Again quote, "Oct. 18th, finished so far as to set the mill running."

In 1851 Mrs. Lewis died in February and some one else wrote in the diary,—I think one of her sons. Again I quote, "1852 March 17th. —The river commenced rising on Sunday morning and rose very fast. It rose five feet that day, five feet that night and on Monday eight or ten feet. That day rose up to the floors in the middle part of mill. Commenced falling on Tuesday morning."

There is nothing more about Rocks, Mill that I can find. We know in 1870 Mr. John Hancock Berkeley Lewis was running it and was washed away with his house and the mill September 30th, 1870. His body was found in Avon Bend bottoms. The mill was never rebuilt after 1870.

Muse Mill

About one mile from Rocks' Ferry on Long Marsh there was the Muse Mill. I think it was a large stone flour mill. The mill lot was mentioned a number of times in the deeds between Mr. James Wormley and Mr. Battaile Muse and again when Mr. Muse's property was divided among his three sons. George A. Muse sold his part to Mr. Hirome L. Opie who married his sister, Margaret Muse, and built the brick house on the hill and lived there until 1862 when he sold it to Mr. Henry Castleman, and in the deed from Mr. Opie to Mr. Castleman is mentioned the old Merchant Mill dam and a saw mill race. The Old Merchant Mill was made into a barn and was used as such until 1906 when Mr. John Ware bought the farm from my Mother. My Grandmother Singleton bought Woodburn, as it was then called, from the Castlemans in 1892. At that time there was a grist mill and saw mill run by the same water power on the corner where the three roads came together. It ran until about 1900. Mr. Al Grubb was the miller when my Grandmother bought the place. He continued to run the grist and saw mill. He and his Mother lived in the house next to the mill. She was a lovely old lady and we loved them both. "Mr. Al" did beautiful carpenter and cabinet work. The mill has gone entirely. The race filled up. It was an old log mill with a big wooden water wheel.

McPherson's Mill

The Mill on John McPherson's Estate was running and making a fine grade of flour in 1788 and 1798 according to notes of Battaile Muse. It was about a mile or more above Muse's Mill on a branch of the Long Marsh. McPherson's Mill is still standing on a farm that now belongs to Mr. M. L. Adams. The large wooden water wheel has rotted away but the wooden shaft is still there and the wood cogs and wheels on the inside. It could not be run but it seems to be all there. The stream the mill race was fed by has dried up. I do not know of another mill that has anything left in it. From most of them, even the rock has been carried away.

Gaunt's Mill

Gaunt's Mill on the Bull Skin was the first mill located at what is now Kabletown. It was later owned and run by Mr. Daniel Kable. In early 1900 it was burned and

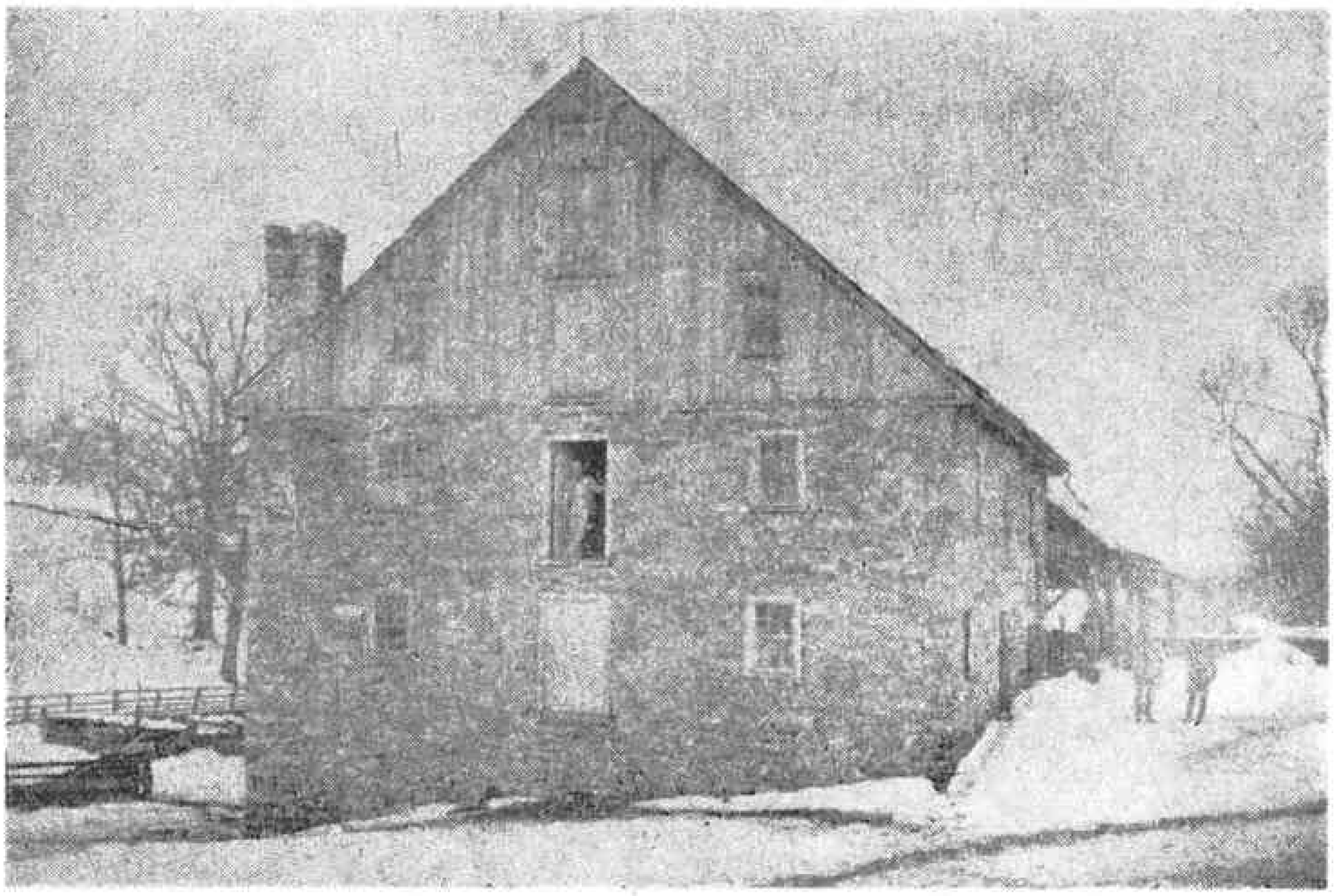
Articles of Agreement enter'd into this 9th day of August one Thousand seven hundred & ninety four, Between Battaile Muse of the County of Berkeley of the one part & Hugh Fitzsimmons of the other part. The said Fitzsimmons engages to be Miller for the said Muse from the first day of Sept^r next to the first day of July, being the space of ten Months for the sum of Forty Pounds The said Fitzsimmons to find his meat & firewood, & the said Fitzsimmons is to haul & cut the same, The said Muse to give him firewood in the land he intends to clear - Said Muse to find the said Fitzsimmons two Milch Cows on Wheat-straw during the Winter & one half bushel Bran p^r day, for the horse, from the first day of Dec^r next till the first day of May next - & the said Fitzsimmons is not to keep any other Stock of any kind - Said Muse agrees to find said Fitzsimmons & his wife with three Children, a reasonable allowance of Meal for their use during the ten Months - Said Muse agrees to let said Fitzsimmons have half an acre of land adjoining the Mill House & to let him have as much Timber as will fence the same - & the said Fitzsimmons to Haul & Lay the rails on

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the use of one of the Dams
the said Fitzsimmons agrees to take care of, & feed said Mules
Log that may be at the Mill, during the aforesaid time. -
the said Fitzsimmons agrees & engages, that whenever the running
gear is out of repair, that he will repair the same as is usually to
be done by Millers and at all times to be careful of the Irons and
Fixtures to Prevent damages happening to the same and that he
will give constant attendance to the Mills as a faithful diligent
& sober Miller - whenever there is sufficient Work for the Merchant
Mills to grind, day & night the said Muse is to furnish a hand to
attend to the Mills - at other times the said Fitzsimmons is to attend the
Mills from 8 o'clock A.M. until ten o'clock at Night - said Fitzsimmons further
agrees to endeavour to keep all Persons from fowling or fishing with
in the enclosures, on or about the premises - said Fitzsimmons
further agrees to keep a good Mill Boot & to weight in & out when called
upon & that no grain meal or other things to be given out of the Mills
without an order from said Muse &. - We the parties, above named, bind
ourselves each to the other to perform the above agreements in the penalty of three hundred
Pounds. - In Witness whereof We have, mutually, set our hands & Seals the day month
& Year above written. - Witness
Edward H. Mills
B Barnes

Battaile Muse
Hugh Fitzsimmons

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The Old Kabletown Mill

the place sold to Mr. Mercer, who in turn sold it to Rouss Brothers. They built a cold storage on the old mill site and for years ran it by water power. The cold storage is now owned by Marcus Brothers.

Turner's Mill

About two miles from Gaunt's Mill on the Bull Skin is an old mill site. It was the Turner Estate and was built of stone, the walls still standing. In 1824 John Myers bought the land from H. Turner. His daughter, Mary Alice Ellen Myers, married Dr. John J. Hunter Straith and it comes down from them to the Straith Briscoes. It is known as "Baney's Flour Mill." In 1930 the black iron water wheel was sold. Mrs. Straith Briscoe kindly gave me the above information. When the iron water wheel was put in, she did not know. Above "Baney's Mill" about one-half mile on the Bull Skin, is another mill on the Turner Estate. It is known as Renner's Mill but is spoken of in Jefferson County Historical Magazine Vol. 11, page 25 as a grist mill owned by Easton's Heirs.

Feagans' Mill

Feagans' Mill is spoken of as Haines' Mill in Historical Magazine Vol. 11, page 25, December 1936, by Mr. W. Fontaine Alexander. It is said later the land, flour and saw

mill were owned by Feagans and Haines. Mr. Isaac Feagans took the flour and saw mill and Mr. Haines took the land. Both flour and saw mill burned and Mr. Isaac Feagans put back the flour mill and it was run by the Feagans family until 1938 when it burned again. There is a building on the old foundation but it has never run as a mill since 1938. The above information was given me by Mr. Robert Feagans, Great-Grandson of Mr. Isaac Feagans.

Robarder's Mill

A mile or more above the river is a mill on Evitts Run on Robarder land. This is according to the map of 1809. (Evitts Run is marked on this old map as Evans Run but every one says that is a mistake or misprint as it has always been known as Evitts Run). Mrs. Brooke Blackford gave me the following information. Her Grandfather, Mr. Wm. F. Weirick and Mr. J. C. Weller of the firm of Weirick and Weller bought this mill property from the estate of Benjamin Beeler in 1878 and a stone house is also mentioned in the deed. (Deed Book F, page 327 and Deed Book 97, page 25.) This mill was operated by Mr. Wm. F. Weirick as a flour mill and there was also a saw mill at the same location and operated by the same water power. After the death of Mr. Wm. F. Weirick, the mill was run by Mr. Robert J. Weirick, his son, until it was destroyed by fire. The mill site was later sold to Mr. James Clipp who rebuilt the mill and operated it for several years. It was later sold by his son, Mr. T. Wilmer Clipp, and the building completely dismantled, the lumber being used in building the Children's Haven. There is nothing left but an iron water wheel and the Miller's House now owned by Mrs. Carley Dawson.

Rutherford Mill

The next mill marked on Evitts Run is at Charles Town and I am told it was the Rutherford Mill. It was running in 1795 according to a note of Battaile Muse's and then it is mentioned in Historical Magazine Vol. V, December 1939, page 14. From Robert Rutherford's Will, he leaves to his wife, among other things, the mill, the large scales and every appurtenance to the said mill. It must have been a flour mill for they would not have needed large scales for a grist mill. Then on about two miles from Charles Town on Evitts Run is a mill on Jn.

Briscoe's land, now known as Piedmont and owned by Mr. John Briscoe and his sister, Miss Louise Briscoe.

I have tried to mention all these mill locations that were on the map in 1809, in what is now Jefferson County, to impress you with what a big industry raising wheat and making flour was from 1770-1870 and later. There were warehouses in Alexandria the flour was wagoned down to and sold from. We always heard wheat was brought down the river on barges and if we could locate the old mill books Miss Ann Lewis sold to Mr. John L. Ford, we could get a lot of information about the Rocks' Mill and The Muse Mill.

Up until about 1930 or later the farmers put their own wheat in the mills to be made into flour and then took the flour out as needed. In those days there was no way of drying the corn, so they would take it to be ground in small quantities. The Miller's pay or toll, as he called it, was a certain percentage of the grain brought to be ground. I do not believe there is a grist or flour mill running in the county today. They do make corn meal in Charles Town but it is done by modern machinery run by electricity. There is a most interesting article on Billmyer's Mill in the Magazine of the Jefferson County Historical Society Volume XVII December 1951. A perfect description of how the old mills were run. I hope we will be able to find out more about these old mills even though the buildings have been destroyed.

From "The Grist Mill in Georgia" by M. T. Thomson, I quote: "The old, dilapidated grist mill with its moss-covered water wheel has earned a place in our history that goes beyond fond memories of childhood. As the oldest continuously conducted industry known to mankind and the first to be completely mechanized, it has played an essential role in our economy. Let us hope that a few of the old mills will be preserved to remind us that life was not always a matter of turning dials and pushing buttons."

— Louise Singleton Kemp.

THE HORSE JOCKEY

(by "Porte Crayon")

Introduction by Cecil Eby

David Hunter Strother ("Porte Crayon") returned to America in 1843 after a three year "Grand Tour" in Europe. While abroad he had ostensibly developed further his abilities as a portrait and general painter, but the next nine years were employed in searching for an outlet for his work as well as for obtaining his own emotional security. Until 1849 he gravitated between Martinsburg and New York having learned the trade of engraver for books and magazines from John G. Chapman, one of the foremost American painters (indeed, almost the only one that pleased the vituperative Mrs. Trollope), but it was not until 1852 that his association with Harpers Magazine would turn him into a professional and well-received writer. As Strother himself says in his unpublished autobiography, "I devoted much of my leisure to society and worked languidly at the graphic arts like one who has not yet found his true vocation. In 1849 I married a lady of Martinsburg and took up my abode in my father's house; for the time abandoning all professional effort and amusing myself with art, literature, and field sports."

His earliest extant notebook, which covers the period from 1836 to 1860, is often little more than jottings in note form of things he witnessed, particularly on the European trip; however, there is a sketch of his adventures at a local race track—one of the "field sports" to which he alludes above. It would seem that the location of the particular track would be in the area adjacent to Martinsburg, but whether in Clarke, Frederick, Berkeley, or Jefferson County is impossible to exactly ascertain.

It cannot be said that he definitely expected to use the sketch verbatim for a written article; in fact, it must be remembered that at this time he regards himself as an artist, not a writer. Yet in style and content it resembles many of the sporting articles appearing at that period in Porter's " Spirit of the Times," the New York journal of great circulation which devoted its pages to events of a sporting kind. Contributors from all sections of the country vied with each other to present the sporting aspects of their own communities, and it is conceivable that Strother may have thought of submitting this contribution.

It would seem, then, to have been written at sometime between 1843, the date of his return to America, and 1849, the date of his marriage to Anne Wolff of Martinsburg. Although it is rough and unfinished in its form, the sketch is a vivid bit of local color and proves that, after all, race tracks have but little changed in a hundred years.

The original manuscript for this journal, as for the most of the other materials which I have used, is owned by "Porte Crayon's" grandson, Mr. David Strother of Milwaukee. It is through the generosity of Mr. Strother that this fine scene of sporting life in the '40's of the last century can now be published for the first time.

Strother's Story

On the road I overtook a man riding a very shabby looking pony and on entering into conversation with him I found that he was on his way to the races. We soon became acquainted, and having drunk and slept together at the tavern arose in the morning on terms of intimacy. On going to the stable to look after our horses, I observed that my friend took all the pains he could to disfigure his pony, which was already as sorry a jade in appearance as could be found. He curried his coat backwards until his hair stood up like the nap on a fur hat; he filled his mane and tail with burrs and entirely refused to clean off the mud which hung about his legs and tail. I was surprised at this and could not forbear asking him the reason for it. In reply he gave me a knowing wink and taking me mysteriously by the arm looked carefully around to assure himself that no one was listening. "Stranger, I will tell you a secret. That hoss is a very remarkable animal. He is a reg'lar take in, he is. You wouldn't suspect that hoss of runnin', would you?" I agreed that I would not. "Thar' now, that's what I said. Neither would anybody else. Wall, I'll tell you, that old grey is one of the fastest hosses in Virginney; can beat anything that will be at the races. We can make money on her, we can. You see I disfigures her this way on purpose. Nobody 'spects her, you see."

I was amazed at what my friend told me and delighted with his ingenuity. We departed directly for the race course, and soon entered into an arrangement to double our money. I had four hundred dollars with me, and he told me he had a thousand. Arriving on the field the grey was entered and I commenced betting. I found no difficulty in investing my stock. The appearance of the grey mare was against her to such a degree that excited the ridicule of the bystanders. No one suspected the trap and I felt some compunctions of conscience in taking in a spooney with a red head and short pants. My friend was flinging his bets right and left, occasionally taking the opportunity to give me a wink. The horses started and much to my astonishment the grey came out behind & apparently much blown. I went up to my friend to rate him for the deception which he had practiced on me. He seemed in high spirits, and on seeing me he gave half a dozen knowing winks and whispered, "Now we've got 'em.

Now's the time and big take-in." My hopes revived again and my friend went to look after his horse which he rubbed down with his own hands. "Poor feller," said he, in a mournful voice, "Broke down, broke down. Who'd have thought it. He's sick, poor feller." My sagacity enabled me to perceive the game he was playing. He was stuffing the by-standers. My confidence in the grey was entirely restored. I perceived the red-headed gentleman at my elbow. He offered a bet and immediately the only property I had left, my horse and watch, were staked against his. The drum beat and the horses started a second time. I was the only one at all surprised at the result. The grey was double-distanced. I did not remain to upbraid anyone but left the field on foot and in double-quick time. The red headed spooney and my friend of the grey mare were confederates.

GEORGE WASHINGTON TO CAPTAIN VAN SWEARINGEN

In his "George Washington, Colonial Traveller" John C. Fitzpatrick, Editor of the Washington Diaries, on page 155 has the following:

"May 15, (1761) Friday, Frederick County, Mr. Hodgson's."

"At a Cock-fight on Saturday I promised to be at a Wedding at Mendenhall's Mills yesterday, which together with an affair I had to settle on Bullskin (that detained me a day longer than I expected) prevented my taking Shepherds Town and your House in my way. I intend this day to pass along the North Mountain and tomorrow at ten at the meeting at McGills on the Cumberland Road and from thence to Winchester in order to wait my doom on Monday."

To Captain Van Swearingen. (In private hands)

The author indicated in footnotes following the above that the "doom" George referred to was awaiting news of his election or defeat as a member of the House of burgesses. He was elected.

G. B. F.

WRIGHT DENNY

(By Dr. Stanley Shugert, of the University of Pennsylvania. Delivered before the Society on March 18, 1955, at the Wright Denny School.)

It was in September of 1893 that Wright Denny became principal of the Charles Town Graded School and began that long and useful career which was to mean so much to the town and to the community. It was not Mr. Denny's first experience as a teacher in Charles Town, for



the previous year he had taught in the old Academy whose building was subsequently to be torn down to make room for the school building which a proud community has identified him with public school education by naming it the Wright Denny Graded School. Nor was this his first experience as a teacher, for he had for some six years taught in Virginia at Berryville, Tappahannock, Hampton, and Loretto, and when you add to these the forty-six years

he served as Principal of our Graded School his teaching experience covered more than half a century.

Mr. Denny was born on October 18, 1866, in Essex County, Virginia, and was the eldest child in the family of the Reverend George H. Denny, whose wife was Charlotte Matilda Wright and hence his name; he had been named for his maternal grandfather, William Alfred Wright, but he used only the family name of Wright. Both the Denny and Wright families were prominent in Virginia and among his ancestors were an eminent banker, a distinguished judge, and a famous editor. His father was a Presbyterian minister who had been educated at Hampden Sydney College and the Union Theological Seminary in Richmond and who had served as a chaplain in the Confederate Army. His several pastorates had been in Hanover, Augusta, and Amelia Counties, and his son Wright grew to manhood in these communities and received such schooling as was afforded. Mr. Denny's formal education began when he entered the Hoover Military Academy in Staunton, Va., where he spent the year of 1882-83. He then enrolled at Hampden Sydney College in the fall of '83 where he spent the next two years, interrupting his college course then to teach for two years and then returning for a third year before taking up his teaching again—one year at Tappahannock, two at Hampden, one at Berryville, and then his long and successful experience in Charles Town.

Jefferson County was a pioneer in public school education, for such schools had been established as early as 1848 in the county. Education prior to that time had been conducted only in private schools and these continued to run parallel to the public schools, which at first were not in too good favor. Of course, the War between the States played havoc with both public and private schools, so at its conclusion the public school system had practically disappeared, but as time went on the schools were gradually re-established and the public school education began to improve—better teachers were engaged, salaries were more promptly paid, and where possible a system of grades was introduced. We come to the situation as it existed in Charles Town in the early 1890's. The school term was nine months in length—longer than in most counties in the state— teachers, however, were not too well paid and neither were they too well prepared for their task.

At this time the boys and girls were taught in separate buildings, each school under its own corps of teachers and as I believe were entirely women. Discipline was somewhat difficult and sometimes out of hand, so that education naturally suffered and was at times almost chaotic. Quite a few private schools flourished at this time and a large percentage of the children, particularly the younger ones, were enrolled in them, the most successful being the one conducted by Miss Judith Sublett. There also existed the Charles Town Male Academy, which had been established before 1800, and the Stephenson Seminary of a later date, and these two schools provided education for those whose parents were willing and able to send their children where they could obtain more competent training and some advanced instruction under more favorable conditions. The public school system needed a through overhauling and the Board of Education found in Wright Denny just the man to undertake this task, for he had come into our midst in 1892 to teach at the old Academy.

It so happened at this time that the "Boom" bubble had burst and that the office building was no longer needed for the purpose for which it had been built and was therefore a white elephant on the hands of those who had dreamed dreams of a great industrial community. A larger and more commodious building was needed for the schools and this office building was purchased as a home for the new Graded School, and so for many years the children of the town and surrounding country trudged daily across the "boom" to school. While the building was not ideal for school purposes—it lacked a suitable assembly room and office space and there was little room for recreation —it nevertheless was adequate and provided some room for future expansion. Such were the conditions when Mr. Denny took over the destinies of the public school education in Charles Town. With a new building and a unified school he began his work in 1893 as Principal of the Graded School. It was a challenge to his ability as an administrator, an organizer, a disciplinarian, and a teacher, for he taught a full schedule with only an hour off at the end of the day, which was devoted to the supervision of the work of the other teachers in the school. This challenge was met with honesty, sincerity, and a faithfulness to duty.

The school was reorganized with a teacher in charge of each grade, with Mr. Denny as Principal teaching the highest grade—the eighth. He was not satisfied with only the eight years of elementary education, so he enlarged the curriculum of the eighth grade and extended the program until within a few years there had been added a ninth and a tenth grade, both of which he himself taught for many years, even though the staff of the school had been increased. This was done in order to meet the demands of the more ambitious pupils and to provide the necessary preparation for those who wished to go on to college. Latin, algebra, geometry, and more advanced courses in history and literature were introduced. Mr. Denny was a great believer in higher education and he constantly urged and encouraged his more talented pupils to go on for more education, and he saw to it that they were well prepared and he trained them to be independent in thought and in action. He believed in thoroughness in the fundamentals of education, and there was a constant drive to that end. Mr. Denny was strongest in teaching the humanities—there was no science and the mathematics was delegated to others as trained teachers were available. I had an advanced course in algebra under the late John Porterfield and I was later to teach such a course myself in the year of 1905-06 that I taught under him. However, when such teachers were not available he manfully undertook the courses in mathematics. Those of my contemporaries in the school who went on to college can bear testimony to the fact that we were well prepared and well trained for our undertaking. And so the Graded School developed, and in 1905 its name was changed to the Charles Town Graded and High School with Mr. Denny as Principal of both.

I entered the Graded School in September of 1894 and was one of eight boys of about the same age who came at the same time from different private schools with varying and irregular amounts of schooling. In order properly to assimilate us into the school, we were kept together as a group and taught by Miss Lallie Craighill as an added burden to her regular grade, with the outcome that we were all advanced to the fifth grade the following year. I mentioned this to show that in the beginning of his administration Mr. Denny was faced with many irregularities which he solved patiently and sympathetically and

always with an eye as to what was for the best interest of the pupil.

Mr. Denny's contributions to the Graded and High School were first in the strengthening and the development of the curriculum and secondly in the selection of a faulty-second-to-none until the school attained a high standard both as to educational excellence and moral leadership. The private schools gradually ceased to exist—they were no longer needed. Of course, this was not accomplished without envy on the part of other communities, for Mr. Denny's reputation as a Principal who could develop and bring to excellence our Graded School had become known. So at the turn of the century he began to receive offers elsewhere, with larger schools and greater remuneration —Martinsburg was one of them. With obligations to himself and to his family, he had some difficult decisions to make, but fortunately for Charles Town he decided to remain and in time to become one of its most distinguished citizens.

Mr. Denny was an excellent disciplinarian, as the more troublesome boys came to realize, and he undertook what corporal punishment was necessary, to the great relief of the other teachers who were quite willing to be relieved of an unpleasant task. Mr. Denny did not wish to rule by fear. By constant example and precept, he sought to bring out the best in the pupils. He believed in good manners, good morals, and punctuality to the task at hand. He was constantly on the alert and he was present at recess time, overseeing the boys at play where any excessive exuberance might be curbed. Each teacher was the authority in her own grade and was responsible for the maintenance of proper conduct and deportment, but he or she knew that the Principal was there to lend a helping hand. Mr. Denny delegated responsibility to the teachers under him and expected in return loyalty and co-operation.

Mr. Denny was a great teacher—I might say, a born teacher, for he had great native ability, which, when combined with excellent elucidation, intellectual honesty, gracious sympathy, and enduring patience, made him the wonderful teacher he was. His daily lessons were carefully prepared and clearly presented, and he had that happy faculty of organizing his material to make a lasting impression on his pupils. Circumstances had prevented his returning to college for his senior year to obtain his

Bachelor's degree, but he had furthered his education by reading and study during his vacation as well as during the school year as his rather strenous schedule permitted. He methodically planned his reading—sometimes a book on education, at other times a great classic of literature or history, and occasionally one of the better novels or books then more or less currently popular. Every summer as I visited with him he always wished to discuss with me as to what was new in pedagogy and higher criticism, for the University of Pennsylvania was a leader in the feild of education and also made extensive archaeological excavations in the Holy land. I am fraid that I was a disappointment to him in that respect, for my interests in education were in a different field of accomplishment. His method of teaching was direct and forceful; not only did he demand honesty in preparation and punctuality in performance, but by constant precept and encouragement he brought out the best in his pupils. I remember now our daily recitations in history. It was not a question-and answer period, but rather an organization of the material under discussion. Frequently you were asked "What comes next?" and you were then to carry on from where the other pupil had recited. This was good experience for me, and I can say I learned much from him that was later to be a help to me in my subsequent studying and teaching. Mr. Denny was a reader and student all his life. He faithfully kept abreast of the times and was deeply interested in political trends and all that pertained to the public life of the community, state, and nation. He was at all times liberal in his political views and a life-long Democrat.

Mr. Denny's influence on education soon came to be felt not only in Charles Town but in the rest of Jefferson County, with the result that the public school education throughout the county became better organized and teaching became a more dignified profession. Teachers up to that time were not too well trained and their success or failure depended largely upon native ability and an ability to handle children. To provide some pedagogical training in methods of teaching there was held in each county a Teacher's Institute which the teachers were required to attend for one week during the summer. I remember attending a great many of them. The State Board of Education provided the instructors, who were the persons connected with the education of the state—quite frequently

the professors of Education from the University at Morgantown or the several State Normal Schools, but also the more prominent of the principals of the schools of the State. Many topics were presented for discussion, and Mr. Denny always took part in the debates which followed. He was always a leader, and his advice was sought and respected on all occasions. The result was that he became known for his great interest in developing the best education possible, so that he was asked to serve education in West Virginia by conducting institutes, which he did for a period of ten years or more—the first one in Shepherdstown in 1904, others in Parsons, Berkeley Spring, Moorefield, Hinton—sometimes two or three in a summer. He also served on the Board of Examiners for the certification of teachers at Charleston in 1917 and 1919. Mr. Denny was invited to teach in the Summer Session of Davis and Elkins College in 1913, and he also taught in the Summer Session of Shepherd College in 1921, '22, and '24. While Mr. Denny was extremely versatile and well informed in a wide range of subjects as taught in the high schools, his chief interest was in Social Science, a field in which he read widely in order to give courses in teacher training in that subject. Mr. Denny's sense of patriotism was so strong that during World War I he did government work of a clercial nature at Camp Humphreys.

As I said earlier, the Graded School became the Graded and High School in 1905-06, with Mr. Denny the Principal of both schools, and this was to continue until May of 1926 when the High School was separated from the Graded School, and from that time until his retirement in May of 1939 Mr. Denny served out his forty-six years of teaching in Charles Town as Principal of the Graded School. I am sure that it was to his great regret that he could not continue with his High School work, for he had glorified in that work in which he had done so much for the youth of Charles Town, who were going on in greater and greater numbers for higher education. Such, however, was the trend of the times and the law when great and successful teaching and administration could not compensate for the lack of a college degree. The new Graded School building was used for the first time in 1913 and for many years was the scene of Mr. Denny's activities, so that when he came to retire in 1939 the Board of Education, after accepting his resignation with regret, adopted

a resolution honoring Mr. Denny and his forty-six years of service by naming this building the "Wright Denny Graded School," and on this building has been placed a plaque whose inscription reads:

WRIGHT DENNY
1866-1948
who for 45 years devoted his life to the moral and educational development of the youth of this community and whose Christian ability has gratefully influenced the life of many. To him this plaque is gratefully dedicated "and G l a d l y Wolde he Lerne and gladly teche"

Not only did Mr. Denny have the admiration and respect of his pupils, but he had their love and devotion as well. He was the recipient at many Christmas times of gifts of small and personal things from individuals and from his grade, and on two occasions something of greater value—in June, 1909, a silver service presented "as a token of love of his Old Pupils" and some years later a gold watch with a similar testimonial. At the time of his retirement there were many expressions of regret and also many commendations for his great life and labor in the community, and I should like to quote from a statement made at that time by Tom Peyton, who so aptly and well has voiced the opinion of so many of his old students: "To Mr. Denny I owe much of my success in life. I regard him as the greatest single benefactor in Charles Town. His influence for good has affected one generation after another . . . . No man of my acquaintance has done more to mould the character of so many men and women." Also a quotation from an editorial in the **Spirit of Jefferson** of December 25, 1930, written by one of Mr. Denny's "Old Boys," brings out the great worth of a man: "No living man in Charles Town has done more for this community. Because of his dignity, his sense of honor, his ability and his cultured background, he has made and continued to make an impression so deep that generations will not erase it."

No account of the life of Mr. Denny in this community would be complete without reference to his devotion to the Presbyterian Church and his active participation in its

affairs. It was the faith of his forefathers and he put forth every effort to advance its growth and influences. He was elected an elder in 1900 and also served as clerk of the session, and he frequently was selected as a delegate to many of the Presbyteries meeting with nearby churches. He not only taught in its Sunday School but was its superintendent for some time. He was always faithful in the service of his church and was always willing to give of his time and energy in supporting the several ministers who through the years succeeded one another as pastors of the church. In the school there was a brief assembly each morning when Mr. Denny read from a book on the story of the Bible and followed it by repeating the Lord's Prayer, after which each grade proceeded to the work of the day.

Aside from his very exacting and strenous life as Principal of the school and his labor and devotion to his church, Mr. Denny had little time to devote to any other interests. He was true to his Southern tradition and gave his support to the local chapter of the Sons of Confederate Veterans, and was also active in this organization, the Jefferson County Historical Society, having been one of its founders and having served it as a vice-president for some years. I feel that it is very fitting for you to have devoted this meeting to him, and I feel honored by you for asking me to take part in this occasion.

On August 21, 1895, Wright Denny married Miss Eleanor Cramer, the daughter of Ambrose and Margaret Davenport Cramer of Jefferson County. Miss Ellie had been one of the teachers in the Graded School who had been so helpful in its development. Their long and happy married life lasted more than fifty-three years and they were the parents of two children who grew up in Charles Town and after college training elsewhere followed the profession of teaching as their parents had—George H. Denny, Jr., to become Principal of the schools of Westfield, New Jersey, where he has acquired notable success in his profession, and Margaret Shannon Denny, who, after several years of teaching, some of it at Harper's Ferry, became the wife of Frank J. Beckwith of Charles Town, and now resides among us where she so graciously and modestly carries on the influence and tradition of her parents. George Denny has maintained the family home in Charles Town, where he spends his summers and may in time return to live among us.

Death came to Mr. Denny (82) on September 8, 1948, when he passed away at the Charles Town General Hospital after an illness of several weeks due to the infirmities of his age. His passing was a great loss to his family, his many friends, his church, and the community as a whole. He had come to us many years ago from his native Virginia and had remained to make his home in our midst. Surely no one had touched the lives of so many of our citizens. He was a most familiar figure on the streets of Charles Town which he had come to love so well and to serve so faithfully. Mr. Denny had a remarkable memory and he possessed that happy faculty of being able to call by name all of his old pupils. And he followed the ups-and-downs of their lives with a keen interest. He lived out his life among us so modestly, so sincerely, and the high ideals which so characterized him had been inculcated in the lives of the hundreds of boys and girls who had come under his guidance and his influence. In his life and character Mr. Denny typified the true Christian Gentleman—need I say more. He lived his life honorably, faithfully, morally, like an open book, the leaves of which are the lives of those who knew him so well, who loved him so deeply, who admired him so greatly, and who were indebted to him for so much inspiration and encouragement. He was truly a great man, and his memory will long be cherished by those of us who were fortunate to have Mr. Denny for a counselor and a friend.

THE EDITOR EMENDS

The editor of this Magazine, in looking over the issues edited by him during the past twenty years, finds much to answer for. The greater blame attaches to any misstatements contained in the numerous unsigned or unattributed articles prepared by him, through lapses in proof-reading and undetected omissions from intended copy are hardly excusable.

The editor does not now assume to make the issues of the past twenty years either fact proof or letter perfect. However, there are some notations or corrections which our readers, if they have not already done so, may wish to make in their file of the Magazine,

Notes and Corrections

Volume II, Page 23, 6th line from bottom, change "Civil War" to "Revolutionary War."
Page 27, in second paragraph, 6th line, change 1850 to 1750.
Page 29, in fourth paragraph, 6th line, change 1850 to 1750.

Volume III, Page 7, insert paragraph just above second paragraph from bottom: On June 24, 1785, he was writing from Bath, or Berkeley Springs, but on July 18, 1785, he was writing from Shepherdstown.

Volume IV, Page 40, add in alphabetic order:
Edwards, Joseph, Pvt. in Capt. Thomas Blackwell's Co., 10th Va. Regt. b. Jefferson Co., 1736, d. there Oct. 1828. See W. Va. Hist. Magazine Oct. 1941.
Ellicott, Benjamin. 7th Pa. Regt. under Col. Hartley. Applied for pension Jan. 19, 1835 from Jefferson Co., at age of 78. See W. Va. Hist. Magazine Oct. 1941.
Page 42, add in alphabetic position:
Lemen, Nicholas. Buried on Kearfott place, Kearneysville.
Link, John Adam, Jr. (1756-1835), Ensign. Buried in Lutheran Cemetery Shepherdstown.
Page 44, add in alphabetic position:
Osbourn, William (1745-1816), Patriot.

Volume V, Page 28, change last date in title from 1782 to 1872. Page 33, in 8th line from bottom, change date from 1874 to 1847.
Page 34, add before second paragraph: 1849. Henry Hardy—Classical, Mathematical and Commercial Academy. (See Shepherdstown Register, Dec. 18, 1849).
Page 36, add before second paragraph: 1857. Female School. Mrs. Rosalie E. Lock. (See Shepherdstown Register, Aug. 22, 1857). Also add: 1858. Female School. Miss Ellen Briscoe. (See Shepherdstown Register, March 20, 1858).
Page 37, under date 1868, change "Shepherdstown District School" to "Shepherd District School."

Volume XIII, Page 3, 2nd line, change 1947 to 1927. Page 30, 7th line from bottom, change "brother" to "cousin."

Volume XIV, Page 3, 2nd line, change 1847 to 1927. Page 4, in last line of first paragraph, after "products" and before "mills," insert "of its fields". Page 28, in 7th line, change "Joseph" to "Josiah."

Volume XV, Page 3, 2nd line, change 1947 the 1927. Page 51, add in alphabetic position: McMurran, Joseph, Vol. V, p. 16; Washington's Sword, Vol. I. p. 41; Wedding of Dolly Todd and James Madison, Vol. I, p. 27. Page 50, add in alphabetic position: Jefferson County in War of 1812; Vol. VI, p. 4.

Volume XVII, Page 15, in 8th line from bottom, "last survivor" recalls to the editor that one brother, John R. Billmyer, who had been living for many years in Denver, Colorado, died there on Feb. 3, 1952, thus surviving "the late Edward Billmyer." The sister, Ellen (Mrs. Robert) Grove is still living in Shepherdstown. Page 19, in 9th line from bottom, insert after "Company," one line of omitted copy, as follows: John T. Billmyer, my grandfather, being First Lieutenant of the Company,".

Volume XVIII, Page 30, last line in John Baker paragraph, change "Died in 1833" to "Died in 1823." Page 32, add to Henry St. George Tucker paragraph: Died in 1848. Page 32, add new paragraph, as follows: Richard Parker. Member of Congress, 1849-1851. Served as paymaster at Harpers Ferry Arsenal, resigning May 12, 1847, to practice law in Charles Town. Later practiced law in Berryville. Later Judge 13th Va. Circuit. Died in 1893.

Volume XIX, Page 15, 1st line of second paragraph, change "commonly" to "locally." Page 18, 13th line from bottom, change "succient" to "succinct."

Volume XX, Page 3, 2nd line, change 1947 to 1927. Page 12, 5th line from bottom, change "Dec. 1916" to "March 4, 1916." Page 17, add Editors Note, as follows: Charles Baltzell Rouss was born February 11, 1836, at Woodboro, Frederick County, Maryland and died March 3, 1902, at his home, 632 Fifth Avenue, New York City. He was the son of Peter Rouss, formerly of York, Pa., and Belinda Baltzell, daughter of Charles Baltzell, a captain in a German regiment in the Revolutionary War. So, Charles B. ("Broadway") Rouss was seventeen years old when he came to Shannon Hill. Page 40, in 1st line of first paragraph, change "Eight" to "Eighty," and in 5th line of same paragraph, change "lands" to "land."

—A. D. Kenamond

COUNTY BOOK SHELF

(Books by Jefferson Countians, or books about the County and its people. Mrs. C. F. Lyne, of the Shepherdstown Public Library, has made a list of books published since the appearance of the Society's 1954 Magazine.)

Old Jube, Carr Publishing Co. 1955. By Millard K. Bushong, who in his Charles Town days published A History of Jefferson County.

Sunday's Children, Houghton Mifflin 1955. By James Knox, who spent several childhood years in Shepherdstown as a son of the Southern Methodist minister.

The Caves Beyond, Funk Wagnalls 1955. By Lawrence-Brucker. With a chapter by Dr. Halvard Wanger, Shepherdstown physician having cave exploration as an avocational interest.

The Long March, Appleton-Century-Crofts 1955. By Jane Barry. (Daniel Morgan fiction.)

This Heritage, Carr Publishing Co., Boyce, Va., 1954 An account of the Lutherans in this part of the Valley of Virginia, by William Edward Eisenberg.

American Heritage, February 1955. American Heritage Publishing Co. Includes "The Hanging of John Brown," by Boyd B. Stutler. (Based on a manuscript rescued by Thronton T. Perry, Jr., from old papers, the handwriting being identified by Mr. Stutler as that of David H. Strother.)