The Family Tree Searcher

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Visit the website for Gloucester Genealogical Society of Virginia at
http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~vaggsv/
NEW: LRHunt.ggsv@gmail.com
Roane and I regularly urge people to put their memories onto paper. Or perhaps now that’s a computer disk or somewhere out there on the internet.

In this issue, we have several such stories - just to show you how easy it is!

Not long ago, I had the pleasure of touring the old Abingdon Glebe and attending a talk to the Gloucester Historical Society by Margaret Lamberth and Agnes Lamberth Hogge. This was especially interesting to me because I have many pleasant memories of tagging along with my father on trips to Lamberth’s Mill for lumber or hardware, and being in awe of the maze of buildings. I am happy we can include the notes she made for her talk in this issue of our journal. You see, you never can tell what memories you might stir up in other people when you talk about your own.

In 1980, Laura Wyatt Field published a story about Blake’s Store, which we are reprinting here. Now I don’t have any recollection at all about Blake’s store, or Laura Field either, but her sister was Eleanor Field Martin, my second-grade teacher and a friend of my parents. See how this works?

Another auto-biographical article in this month’s journal, by Rachel Foster Armistead, was written in 1968. I didn’t know her either, or anyone she mentions, but I do know the several areas in Gloucester where she lived (several in the vicinity of Blake’s Store). In particular, she writes of the old skating rink by Cow Creek Mill Pond, where I was a regular on Saturday afternoons (when about the same age as when I was exploring Lamberth’s Mill). I spent many an afternoon going around in circles there - good preparation, as it turned out, for life in the corporate world! One thing the skating rink and Lamberth’s Mill had in common was lots and lots of wood. I remember the rink floor, the plank walls, the big counter, the benches, and the heavy wooden railings - all painted the same green.

Our own Wray Page was interviewed recently by a William & Mary student, as part of a series of interviews she is conducting in Gloucester. I could tell you that I have some long-ago connection to him, too, but mostly I just see him in the post office or around town. He does, however, mention Dr. Spencer’s school which I know from stories of my mother as the Camp Chesapeake summer camp, which touched a relative or two of mine. We hope to collect some information about this school and camp for an article in the future, so if you have anything to share, please do.

This issue of the journal starts with the Fontaine family tracing its generations using the internet of their day. Their day starting in the 18th century, that meant the family Bible, the precursor to the rootsweb.com of today. Though the entries are short, like those of a 21st century trend, Twitter “tweets”, they nevertheless help us reconstruct a family story, a story starting with an important long-ago minister at my church.

You are probably familiar with the concept of “six degrees of separation” – where at most six people separate you from anyone on the planet. Write your own story and see how your memories interact with the memories of other people near and far.

Lee Brown, Editor
The Rev. Mr. James Maury Fontaine’s Bible

By L. Roane Hunt and Lee Brown

Recently, the Gloucester Museum of History received the Bible that belonged to the Rev. James Maury Fontaine who ministered to the four parishes of Gloucester County from 1762 until his death in 1795. The Bible contains numerous pages of family records. Fontaine served the people of Gloucester in a most critical time during the years leading up to the Revolutionary War, the war years, and the years required to replace the established Church of England with the Episcopal Church of Virginia in 1785.

His Bible remained with his family until it was donated to the museum. The Abingdon Church: A Chronology of its History 1650-1970 states, “The Bible used by Mr. Fontaine is preserved and is in the possession of Mrs. Russell Gray (nee Mary Sinclair Wiatt) of Gloucester.” The Bible was passed to her granddaughter, Nancy Gray Stanford Saunders-Pierre. (Nancy is also the step-daughter of Carmen Stanford.)

Betty Jean Deal, Museum Director, considers the donation of the Fontaine Bible to be a most significant donation for Gloucester County. It was added to the museum archive collection until a permanent display can be prepared. James Maury Fontaine was the grandson of James Fontaine, the French Huguenot minister, who wrote A Tale of the Huguenots or Memoirs of a French Refugee Family. James Fontaine was born in France in 1658 and found refuge in Ireland where he died in 1728. His son, Francis (1697-1749), came to America and settled in King and Queen County, Virginia. James Maury Fontaine was born in Virginia in 1738 to Francis and Susannah Brush of Williamsburg. Spotswood Hunnicutt Jones wrote about the ministry of the Rev. Mr. Fontaine in her book, The World of Ware Parish in Gloucester County, Virginia.

The Reverend Mr. Fox died presumably in 1758, leaving Ware Parish temporarily without a rector. The Reverend James Maury Fontaine, who was minister of Petsworth Parish from 1762 until 1764, accepted a call from Ware Parish in that year.

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He served as rector of Ware until his death in 1795. During his rectorship he was to witness perhaps ever growing signs of discontent within the social, political and ecclesiastical structure of the parish and colony. It was his lot to administer and serve Ware in its final moments as an Established Church of England.

Fontaine’s father was the Reverend Francis Fontaine, one of the professors at the College of William and Mary, and the younger Fontaine was educated at the college. He was ordained in 1762 for Petsworth Parish and licensed as a minister for Virginia on October 10, 1763. He received on December 8, 1763, the king's bounty of 20 pounds sterling to help defray his travel to back to Virginia from England.

According to the History of the College of William and Mary from its Foundation, 1660, to 1874, he served on the board of visitors for the College of William and Mary in 1767, a position he seems to have held until at least 1772. In addition to his duties as clergyman, James Maury Fontaine taught a school near Ware Church from 1773—1776. He was living at the “Upper Glebe” in 1774 when, according to the Virginia Gazette, it was advertised for sale. He married December 14, 1771, to Alice Burwell born at “Brandon,” Middlesex County in 1745 and the daughter of Carter Burwell, and his wife Lucy Ludwell Grymes. After her death in 1775 he married Betty Carter Churchill on January 3, 1778, the daughter of William Churchill of “Wilton” and his wife Betty, daughter of Charles Carter of “Cleve” and his first wife Mary Walker. Of the clergy in Virginia at the outbreak of the American Revolution Fontaine is listed as being loyal to the American Cause.

The first references to James Maury Fontaine, at age 24, appear in the Petsworth Parish vestry book, in records describing the selection of a new minister. The entry of November 13, 1761, reports the death of their minister, Robert Yates, and charges the Rev. Mr. William Yates with “seeing the Parish supplied by himself or some other minister.” The next entry, for December 30, 1761, reports that the Rev. Mr. Richard Hueit [or Hewit] “is by this vestry unanimously chosen minister of this parish, in the room of the Rev’d Mr. Rob’t Yates, deceased, and is to enter into this parish at the laying of the next parish levy or on the 10th day of October next to take upon him the cure of the said parish and to be endued with all the benefits and spiritualities due to a minister of the Church of England, by the Laws of Virginia.”

However, the entry of October 11, 1762, reports the failure of Mr. Hewit to come to the parish and the unanimous selection of the Rev. Robert Reade to be minister. And the entry of December 8, 1762, reveals that Mr. Reade also did not show up. But it goes on to say (spelling and grammar as quoted):

“This Vestry therefore hath thought proper to Recommend Mr. James Fountain to his Lordship the Bishop of London to be Ordained A Minister of the Church of England, he promising to go to England as soon as he conveniently can, & at his return to Virginia after Ordination, this present Vestry do Agree to receive Him as Minister of this Parrish, & it is resolved by this present Vestry to receive Him as Minister, Provided He comes to the Parrish Within two months after his arival in Virginia & take upon him the Curateship of the Parrish, & that he shal Be endowed With all the Spiritualities and Temparilities due to A Minister of the Church of England by the Laws of Virginia.”

The next entry mentioning Mr. Fontaine is that of September 18, 1764, which says:

“As the Rev’d Mr. James Murra Fountain [sic] who was minister of this parish has left it to go to Wear [sic], this parish is become vacant of a minister..."
Petsworth recorded payment of his salary of 8000 pounds in the November 13, 1764, entry.

Although Mr. Fontaine seems primarily to have been serving Ware Parish, he is known to have supplied at all of the Gloucester parishes. Bishop Meade [Old Churches, Ministers, and Families of Virginia Vol. I, 1857] confirms from church records that James M. Fontaine was minister of Ware in 1773-4 and 1776. Bishop Meade also quotes from Mr. Fontaine’s funeral service for Frances Burwell Page.

The vestry book of the Kingston Parish includes one entry regarding Rev. Fontaine on January 27, 1783, “Order that the Rev. Mr. Fontaine be requested to preach once a Month until a minister resides in the parish.”

He was present at the Petsworth Parish vestry meeting of April, 1791, at which time the vestry agreed to “continue” him as lecturer of the parish through April 11, 1792, “and this year and that he have the benefit of the glebe.” In May the following year, his lecturer appointment is reaffirmed, and he is “to attend the church once a fortnight unless prevented by sickness or other accidents. Mr. Fontaine is at liberty to attend the Church of Abingdon at least three times in the year. Also he is to have the benefit of the glebe for the present year when it can be collected from the tenant.”

But in September of 1792, he declines attending as lecturer.

Another reference to Rev. Fontaine is found in the 1770 Gloucester County Quit Rent Record Book on page 57, shown on the following page. It appears that he was charged 17 shillings-9.5 pence for 700 acres of land. It seems odd that he was taxed if he had the benefit of the Church Glebe. (Evidently, this book was used as scrap paper for practice writing before it was rescued.)

The Rev. Mr. Charles Mann wrote about the Ware Parish history and said simply “The Rev. James Maury Fontaine was once minister of this parish and kept a school near it” but Bishop Meade said the following:

There is no mention of this minister in the history of the Maury and Fontaine families by Dr. Hawks and Miss Ann Maury; but we doubt not he was one of them, probably the son of Mr. James Fontaine, one of the five brothers, and who settled in King William.

This differs from the conclusion of Mrs. Jones who suggests that he was the son of a Francis Fontaine. Mrs. Jones cites J. E. Morpurgo from Their Majesties’ Royall Colledge, p. 85:

Tradition has Fontaine an Ulsterman of Huguenot ancestry whose family emigrated to Virginia in 1715 or 1716. In fact, though the Fontaines had French blood, Francis was born in 1696 in Cork and lived throughout most of his boyhood in Dublin. He matriculated at Trinity College in 1713 and took his M. A. in 1719. [Many of the first Huguenot refugees to England, after the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, moved into Ireland.]

One distinguished nineteenth century authority suggests that Francis’ father was farming in Virginia before 1717 but James Fontaine was a Church of England clergyman who kept a school in Dublin as late as 1721.

However, there was one member of the family, Francis’ brother, John, already in Virginia and it was he who became a close friend of Governor Spotswood [who made him a “Knight of the Golden Horseshoe” after the trip with the governor across the Blue Ridge Mountains in 1716] and it was probably at his instigation that, in 1716,
the Governor offered the Chair of Mathematics and Philosophy at William and Mary to a Mr. Fountain “resident in D....” Again, historians have stumbled into the trap and have insisted that this invitation was intended for Francis, then only twenty years old and only halfway through his studies at Trinity whereas, almost certainly, it was addressed to his father. Although the Rev. James did not accept the Chair, it may have been these preliminaries that persuaded him to follow his son John to Virginia and to take with him his son Francis.

During his long tenure, the Episcopal Church thrived and suffered. Toward the beginning of his time at Ware, he participated in selling the glebe property so a larger property (on Indian Road, perhaps a mile from Ware Church) could be purchased. At the end, the disestablishment of the Church of England meant that the state was poised to take possession of glebe properties (which happened shortly after Mr. Fontaine’s death). As the Revolutionary War approached, adherents of other Christian denominations worked to diminish the privileged standing of the established church, leading to new challenges for a minister. During the war, Mr. Fontaine’s loyalties were with the American patriots, though apparently he did not serve as a chaplain for the American forces. After the war, the
elimination of the parish levy threatened to bankrupt parishes who had always had obligatory taxes to support them, and all local churches suffered. Nevertheless, the four parishes who relied upon Mr. Fontaine all survived, and he is remembered as a man of exceptional character.

Poplar Spring church in Petsworth Parish, where he might have been a parishioner before his ordination, mirrors in some way the life of James Maury Fontaine. The church was ordered built in 1723, a little more than 10 years before the birth of James Maury Fontaine. It flourished – at one point considered the most beautiful church in the county - and its demise in the years after 1793 coincided with his death.

Describing what was remembered of Poplar Spring Church, Bishop Meade included in a note a letter “from a lady who in her youth saw this church at Poplar Spring” which contains this remark: “Our dear mother’s teachings, on that and other occasions, were so mixed with a sorrow for the state of the Episcopal churches, and the want of ministers ‘since Mr. Fontaine’s death,’ that, childlike, I thought Mr. Fontaine must have been the best and greatest man in the world, except my grandpapa.”

The Rev. William Byrd Lee, Rector of Ware, [in Colonial Churches, 1907, p. 219-220] wrote: One of his descendants, Mr. Francis Maury Wyatt, reports he [James Maury Fontaine] was “stricken with apoplexy on his return from Ware church and died March 13, 1795, and was buried under the floor of Ware Church, and a brown slab was placed over his grave.” Church records do not substantiate that. Mr. Lee also wrote of seeing Mr. Fontaine’s Bible, at that time in the hands of Francis Wyatt.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Family of James Maury Fontaine</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>James Maury Fontaine, b. 1738, d. 1795</td>
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<tr>
<td>+m 1st. Alice Burwell</td>
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<tr>
<td>Carter Burwell Fontaine , b. 1773</td>
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<tr>
<td>Catherine Carter Fontaine , b. 1774</td>
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<tr>
<td>Susanna Harrison Fontaine , b. 1775</td>
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<tr>
<td>+m 2nd. Elizabeth Carter Churchill, b. ___, d. 1806</td>
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<tr>
<td>Betty Fontaine , b. 1779</td>
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<tr>
<td>Susanna Harrison Fontaine , b. 1780</td>
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<tr>
<td>+m. George Nuttall</td>
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<tr>
<td>James Fontaine, b. 1781</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mary Fontaine, b. 1783</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caroline Carter Fontaine , b. 1785, d. 1855</td>
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<tr>
<td>+m. John Robinson Wiatt , b. 1876, d. 1855</td>
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<tr>
<td>Katherine Frances Wiatt , b. 1811</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elizabeth Hannah Wiatt, b. 1814, d. 1855</td>
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<tr>
<td>James Maury Fontaine Wiatt, b. 1816, d. 1865</td>
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<tr>
<td>+m. Elizabeth Chapman, b. abt 1816</td>
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<td>John Chapman Wiatt, b. 1850, d. 1886</td>
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<td>Edgar Fontaine Wiatt, b. 1851, d. 1909</td>
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<tr>
<td>Francis Churchill Wiatt, b. 1818, d. 1858</td>
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<tr>
<td>+m. Virginia Stubblefield Leigh , b. 1830, d. 1908</td>
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<td>Frances Leigh Wiatt, b. 1853</td>
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<td>John Milson Wiatt, b. 1855, d. 1882</td>
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<td>Francis Fontaine Wiatt, b. 1856, d. 1930</td>
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<tr>
<td>+m. Nannie Wadrop Booth, b. 1862, d. 1953</td>
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<td>Virginius Churchill Wiatt, b. 1858, d. 1930</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mary E. Foster, b. 1869</td>
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<td>Frances Fontaine , b. 1787</td>
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<td>Sarah Fontaine , b. 1788</td>
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<td>Francis Churchill Fontaine , b. 1789</td>
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<td>William Maury Fontaine , b. 1790</td>
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<td>Betty Carter Fontaine , b. 1791, d. 1806</td>
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<tr>
<td>Betty Carter Fontaine , b. 1792</td>
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<tr>
<th>Family of Charles Nuttall</th>
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<tr>
<td>Charles Nuttall, b. ___, d. 1805</td>
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<tr>
<td>+m 1st. Unknown</td>
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<tr>
<td>George Nuttall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+m. Susanna Harrison Fontaine , b. 1780</td>
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<tr>
<td>Betty Ann Carter Lewis Nuttall , b. 1800</td>
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<td>John Francis Nuttall , b. 1806</td>
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<tr>
<td>Caroline Frances Nuttall, b. 1812</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nancy New Nuttall , b. 1788</td>
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<tr>
<td>+m 2nd. Elizabeth Carter Churchill, b. ___, d. 1806</td>
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<tr>
<td>Charles Churchill Nuttall , b. 1800</td>
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(Continued on page 11)
James Maury Fontaine & Alice Burwell were married December 14th 1771
Carter Burwell the son of James Maury and Alice Fontaine was born 22 July 1773
Susanna the daughter of James Maury Fontaine and Alice Fontaine was born May 3rd 1775.
James Maury Fontaine departed this life Wednesday the seventh day of March 1795 at 10 o'clock p.m.
James Maury Fontaine and Betty Carter Churchill were married January 3rd 1878/
Betty the daughter of James Maury Fontaine and Betty Carter his wife was born July 20th 1779.
Susanna Harrison the daughter of James Maury Fontaine and Betty Carter his wife was born August 12, 1780.
James the son of James Maury Fontaine and Betty Carter his wife was born November 25th 1781.
Mary the daughter of James Maury and Betty Carter Fontaine was born March 23, 1783.
Judith the daughter of James Maury and Betty Carter Fontaine his wife was born 18th April 1784.
Caroline the daughter of James Maury and Betty Carter Fontaine his wife was born December 10th 1785.
Caroline Carter Fontaine daughter of James Maury Fontaine married John Robinson Watt of Gloucester County Va in 1809. Her children were Katherine Francis born January 25, 1811, Elizabeth Hannah born in 1814, James Maury Fontaine born in 1816, and Francis Churchill born September 1st 1818.

Francis Churchill Fontaine youngest son of Rev James Maury Fontaine died in Norfolk, Va. at the home of his sister Mrs. Caroline Carter Watt August 184__.

Virginia James, wife of Francis Churchill Watt and daughter of John Leigh, died January 18, 1908, in the 78th year of her age. She was buried in the lot of her father at Bellamy’s Church, Gloucester Co., Va.

Edgar Fontaine Watt, second son of Maury Fontaine and Elizabeth his wife died suddenly in Richmond, Va., in the 57th year of his age. He is survived by a wife and five children.

Caroline Carter, daughter of Rev. James Maury Fontaine died during the Yellow Fever epidemic in Norfolk August 1855. Her husband John R. Watt died a few days later of the same disease.

Elizabeth H. Watt, daughter of John and Caroline Watt died August 1855. Fannie Hale, youngest daughter of James Maury Fontaine also died at the residence of his sister Mrs. C. C. Watt August 1855 of Yellow fever.

Another victim of the fever was Elizabeth wife of James M. F. Watt who died the same month and year.

Francis Churchill Watt youngest son of John R. and Caroline Watt died in Norfolk in February 1858.

James Maury Fontaine, eldest son of John R. and C. C. Watt died in Norfolk in 1865.

Katherine Francis Watt eldest daughter of John R. and Caroline Watt died at the residence of Bishop W. W. Duncan of the M. E. Church South Spartanburg, SC July 21, 1888, aged seventy-seven years.

John Chapman Watt eldest son of James Maury Fontaine Watt died in Jersey City, NJ, November 1885. He left two children Elizabeth Lillian and Walter V. C. Watt. Age 36 years.


Edgar Mathew Watt eldest son of William Francis Watt and grandson of James Maury Fontaine died in Brooklyn, N.Y., December 1903, age 26 years.

Francis Fontaine Watt and Nannie W. Booth were Married in Baltimore, MD, December 22, 1885. Francis F. Watt is a great-grandson of James Maury Fontaine.

Margaret Leigh Daughter of Francis F. and Nannie W. Watt was born September 24, 1886.

Katherine Frances was born October 8, 1888.

Francis Churchill son of F. F. and N. W. Watt was born April 21, 1890.

Addie Virginia was born April 19, 1891.

Robert Booth was born April 5, 1893.

John Fontaine was born August 24, 1896.
Mary Sinclair was born October 5, 1898.
Ellen Booth was born December 17, 1900.
Margaret L., Katherine F., Francis C., Addie V., and Robert B., were baptized by Rev. William B. Lee, Rector of Abingdon and Ware, Gloucester Co., Va., August 24, 1893.
   Sponsor for Margaret, Kate Taliaferro (Mrs. Lawson of Middlesex).
   Sponsor for Katherine, Mary B. Catlett (Mrs Keith Sinclair Jr.).
   Sponsor for Francis, Fannie L. Wiatt.
   Sponsor for Addie, Mrs. Addie L. Martin.
   Sponsor for Robert, Miss Ellen D. Booth.
John F. and Mary S. Wiatt were baptized August 1900 by Rev. W. B. Lee.
   Sponsor for John, Mrs Annie E. Reid of Norfolk, Va.
   Sponsor for Mary, Ellen D. Booth.
Ellen Booth Wiatt was Baptised August 18, 1905 by Rev. W. B. Lee.
   Sponsors — Ellen D. Booth and Fannie L. Wiatt.
___y New Nuttall, the daughter of Charles Nuttall & Elizabeth Nuttall his wife was born September the 6, 1788.
Charles Churchill Nuttall the son of Charles Nuttall & Betty Carter Nuttall was born May the 3, 1800.
Frances Fontaine daughter of James Maury Fontaine and Betty Carter his wife was born April 4th 1787.
Sarah Fontaine daughter of James Maury Fontaine and Betty Carter his wife was born April 14th 1788.
Francis Churchill son of James Maury Fontaine and Betty Carter his wife was born August 29th 1789.
William Maury son of James Maury Fontaine and Betty Carter his wife was born October 29th 1790.
Betty Carter daughter of James Maury Fontaine and Betty Carter his wife was born November 7th 1791.
Charles Carter son of James Maury Fontaine and Betty Carter his wife was born December 8th 1792.
Betty Carter Nuttall departed this life this 3rd day of March 1806.
George Nuttall and Sussanah H. Fontaine were married February 1798.
Betty Ann Carter Lewis daughter of George Nuttall and Sussanah H. Nuttall was born May the 7, 180_.
John Francis Fontaine son of George Nuttall and Sussanah H. Nuttall was born June the 24, 1807.
Caroline Frances daughter of George Nuttall and Sussanah H. Nuttall was born June the 24, 1807.
Caroline Frances daughter of George and Sussanah H. Nuttall was born March the 15, 1812.
Fontaine Bible Records

A portion of one page is presented on page 8 followed by a full transcription of all the records on pages 8-10. The marriage, birth, and death information is given for both of his marriages. It also includes records for his daughter’s marriage to John Robinson Wiatt and their family. Also, information about his widow’s marriage to Charles Nuttall and their family was included. Apparently, the Bible was passed through the Wiatt family who extended the family records of their branch beyond the death of Rev. Fontaine.

As shown in the above family chart, Mary Sinclair Wiatt was the daughter of Francis Fontaine Wiatt and Nannie Wadrop Booth, and as previously stated, the Fontaine Bible was in her possession. Mary Wiatt Gray is known for her textbook, *The History of Gloucester County, Virginia*. Others remember her long teaching career at Botetourt Elementary School. Her granddaughter, Nancy, inherited the Bible and donated it to the Gloucester Museum of History. ‡
The Abingdon Glebe
The Home of the Lamberth Family

By Margaret Lamberth

Margaret Lamberth and her sisters, Virginia, Mildred, and Agnes, and their parents George E. and Rettie W. Lamberth, owned the historic Abingdon Glebe property for most of the twentieth century. Margaret spoke to the Gloucester Historical Society in 2009 in the chapel of St. James Anglican Church, which is a renovated farm building on the historic Abingdon Glebe property. This is what she said.

I lived on the Glebe property off and on about fifty years, beginning in the 1920s. In the 1930s, when Williamsburg was being reconstructed, many architects, historical architects, constructors, and others came to our house to look, to measure, and to talk with my father. One of the ones who came most often, and was most interesting, was a Mr. Thomas Waterman. You may have heard of him. He retired to Tappahannock. When the kitchen and the back porch were added in the 1930s, Daddy sought Mr. Waterman’s advice to be sure that what he did was authentic outside. Again, when wall work was done inside the house, in the mid fifties, Daddy visited Mr. Waterman several times. I was in Africa then, so you’re going to have to talk to my sister, Agnes, to find out what went on in the mid-1950s.

When Mama and Daddy married in 1920, Mama was a city girl living in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and didn’t like the idea of coming to the country to live, so she tried to persuade Daddy to move to the city. They compromised. Daddy promised her that if she would come and live with him in the country for twenty years, then he would consider going to the city to live with her. But after twenty years of living in the country she liked it so well she didn’t want to move.

The Abingdon Glebe is described in Mr. David Brown’s study report, “Archaeological Assessment of Abingdon Glebe, Gloucester County, Virginia” Some historical architects thought that the Abingdon Glebe was one of the most interesting surviving colonial
buildings in Virginia because of the architectural detail and because of the religious significance. It is unusual: a T-shape with steep roofs. What most people are interested in are the three huge, very wide chimneys. Much of the interior was changed in 1955 when the house became riddled with termites, and Daddy was very concerned about somebody falling on the steps going up, and the upstairs was creaky. He told my mother that he wanted to do some renovation. Mama tried to persuade him to abandon the Glebe house and go out on the front, near 17, and build a new house. At first Daddy went along with it, and then Mama said, one morning he awakened to say, “This house is in my blood. I can't leave it. I tell you what. If you let me do what I want to the outside and keep it authentic, I'll do what you want on the inside.” So we know the inside is not authentic. In 1970 when the Glebe was nominated and placed on the Virginia Historical Landmarks Register and the National Register of Historic Places, in nominating the house for the National Register, Virginia Commission wrote that the oldest portion of the Glebe may date from the late seventeenth century.

Mr. Brown wrote in his report that the work done in the fields did not find any seventeenth-century artifacts. He wanted to do some research digging around the house, especially the foundation, but Daddy wouldn't let them. He said all the work he had seen in the county was messy. And it left the place a disaster. He didn't want that to happen to our place. So he would not let anyone dig around the foundation. If somebody had dug around the back foundation they might have found some interesting things, I don't know. The reasons why we feel as though that the back part was built in the seventeenth century are: first, there's a Throckmorton house in Virginia Beach. The historical architects seem to feel that house and the back part of the Glebe are similar enough to be built at the same time. It's known that the Throckmorton house was built in the late 1600s. So it's felt that possibly the earliest portion of the Glebe was the back with the front being added later. Another reason we think that they were built in two parts is that the back bricks are not bonded to the front part. Back then they always kept building and bonding without any break. And there is a break. The back portion and the front portion are separate. Besides, the back portion has some English brick bond, and the front is completely Flemish. A lot of the architects seem to feel that some of the bricks in the back portion came as ballasts in ships from England. There was, they know, a large tobacco warehouse at Gloucester Point. And when the ships came from England to get the tobacco, they would have to have something in the bottom of the ship to keep it from overturning, especially if there were storms. It's felt that possibly they had bricks, which they left at Gloucester Point and picked up the tobacco. Possibly the bricks came to Abingdon Glebe. We don't know for sure, but they could be. There's no site that we have found where bricks were made right on this property. And it's unusual for a brick house to be far from where they were made.
The Abingdon Glebe

My earliest recollection of Abingdon Glebe was when, as a three-year-old, my parents drove off Route 17, past piles of lumber, down a dirt road, with high weeds on either side, to a whitewashed brick building: Abingdon Glebe. Inside the house we found disaster — piles and piles of trash everywhere. I remember the high ceilings of the rooms, the huge chimneys, and the front door, which was very thick. I had never seen such a thick door. There were several very wide pieces of wood that went across, and then it seemed as though there were several thicknesses of wood for that door. In order to safeguard the door and be sure that it stayed closed, there were two pieces that came out on either side and up, and then there was a thick piece of wood that went across between those two pieces to keep the door intact. I had never seen anything like that before either. Upstairs was a disaster and unlivable. One of the front rooms was full of chicken droppings and feathers. Mama said it looked like it had been a chicken house. (This is at the Glebe house before we moved in.) The room upstairs across the hall from that smelled of meat, and Mama said, that smelled like a smokehouse. Now I don’t remember anything about the back of the house when I was a three-year-old.

After the downstairs was cleaned up, four of us—my mother, father, and my sister Virginia and I moved in. Going from the front door, the present front door, on the right-hand side we had a bedroom. The bedroom had two double beds in it and a wood stove. That’s all I remember that was in there. On the left-hand side of the hallway was our living quarters. Daddy had put a wood cook-stove there, a dining-room table, chairs and a sofa. That was the main area where we lived.

There was no inside electricity. We used kerosene lamps. There was no inside kitchen. We were told that the earlier homes did not have inside kitchens because of the likelihood of fire and that was true of the Glebe. There was a run-down building on the other side of the present picket fence. It was a rectangular building, long, not too wide, that was, I’m sure, used as the kitchen. Because we had no electricity, we had an icebox instead of a refrigerator, and the upper part of the icebox held a hundred-pound block of ice. We had an ice-house here in Gloucester that made ice, and a truck came by a couple of times a week to sell hundred-pound or fifty-pound blocks of ice that kept our food from spoiling. We had no central heating. The wood stove took care of heating the kitchen. There were potbellied stoves in the bedrooms. At night-time we girls undressed downstairs in front of a stove, put on an overcoat over bed clothes to go into our bedrooms, left the overcoat on the side of the bed and snuggled under multiple blankets and maybe a heated brick wrapped in a towel at the foot of the bed. We took baths on Saturday nights in the clothes wash tub getting into warm soapy water one at a time. The rest of the week we took “bird-baths” using a small china bowl. Later, when the upstairs was cleaned up, Mama used the two front rooms upstairs for storage, because we didn’t have any closets downstairs. The back part of the upstairs became our bedroom. There were two bedrooms there. By then, two sisters had been born. These two sisters were born in the back room which was used at first as our guest room. After it was cleaned up, it became a bedroom for Mama when she was pregnant. We had a telephone on the wall, and you didn’t just have one ring. There were rings for about six or eight different families who were also on our line. We know that a lot of people spent time just listening on the telephone whenever it rang. They didn’t care who was on. As soon as somebody answered they’d pick up the receiver. You’d hear all the clicks of the people putting up their receivers. So you had to be careful what you said. Later, we had a two line telephone, just the lumber yard and the house. Again there were rings that told whether it was the lumber yard or the house. Then we came to a time when it became a single line.
When we bought the place, we inherited an old gentleman who may have been a slave there at one time, I'm not sure. We called him Uncle Tom. He entertained us with stories about what used to happen and especially during the Civil War. He said that the Union Army and the Confederate Army had skirmishes out in the front fields. We suspect they were looking for food. He said some of the people living here ran to the woods when the skirmishes were going on. But he stayed and watched and found it very interesting.

The farmland was rented out in a barter-like situation. We had a Mr. Hudgins who came, and Daddy provided the grain and the fertilizer for the farmland while Mr. Hudgins provided the work. When it was harvested, each one of them took a certain portion of the produce.

When we first moved into the Glebe, Mama couldn’t drive a car, and Daddy taught her at nights when he went down to the White Marsh post office for mail. The Glebe had a number of wire fences: fences around where the chickens were, where the pigs were, and there was a fence around the house - wire fence with a wire gate right in front of the front door. (The road was not at the site it is now. Presently, the road goes by the side of the house. At first it came straight towards the front door of the house.) One of the first times Mama tried to drive by herself, she couldn't find the brakes, and ran straight into the wire gate, bowing it, and Daddy had a time getting it straight so he could use it.

In the 1930s, Daddy added the present kitchen, with a basement below, and when that was done, the carpenters found a number of bottles and bottle pieces. There was one beautiful bottle, and we were told that it was so many colors because it had been in the ground so long. It was a wine bottle, we think, used by one of the workers. Then there were lots and lots of bits of glass and pottery. Mama kept all of these in a bowl in the living room for a long time, but none of my sisters nor I know what happened to it.

When the inside bathroom was built, they took the room outside the back room and made half of it into a bathroom. When they dug out the dirt, every shovel brought up more and more pieces of Indian pipes. Then they found one, but only one, intact Tommyhawk. It was small and looked like it had been handmade. We told one of the historical architects about these finds. They said that possibly the land where the back of the Glebe was built, at one time had been an Indian meeting place. Now what type of Indian meeting place we don't know, but this person said, “It’s unusual to have an Indian meeting place this far from the water. Do you have a river nearby?” We said, “No, but we do have a stream.” We knew that because, when we first moved in, Daddy had dug a well out front, and then Mama had insisted that somehow we needed to have the water brought into the house. So Daddy had rigged up pipes from the well to a pump inside the kitchen so we could pump the water into the kitchen from the well instead of having to go out and dip the water from the well. At least once a year that water would become so cloudy that Mama didn’t think it was safe for us to drink it. So then we’d have to go into the wooded area and down a little hill to a stream which began as springs. I remembered this and so I said, “We’ve got some springs out in our woods because I sometimes every year go there to get water for us to drink.” The visitor nodded saying, “Well, that sounds logical.” We knew the Indians went regularly from the York River to the Piankatank River, and we know that Routes 17 plus 14 are partially part of an Indian trail that went from the York to the Piankatank. So they would need some place to stop in their treks, and it could be that this could be one of the stopping places. Again, if there was enough water, it might have been more than just a stopping place. They might’ve built a settlement there. He continues, “It would be real interesting if we could dig in the wooded area and see what we could find.” But nobody ever dug to my knowledge.
What food did we eat? We raised most of what we ate. Daddy had a large vegetable garden, and we ate a lot of the food fresh from the garden. Mama canned what was left over and stored it in the basement, so that in the wintertime we could go there to get canned vegetables to eat. We had fruit trees on the place—apple trees, peach trees, pear trees, also a grape arbor, and a strawberry patch. Also when the wild fruit was ripe, blueberries, blackberries, etc., we went to the woods to pick them in spite of the chiggers. Our meat was mainly raised by us. In the summertime we ate chicken and more chicken. Early in the spring, Daddy would buy several hundred baby chicks, and they were Mama and the girls’ responsibility to keep alive, feed, water, and all. There was a small house behind the regular chicken house that we called the brooder house, because that’s where the baby chickens went at first. I don’t know how she kept them warm but Mama had some apparatus in there that kept them warm, like a mother hen whose feathers would keep them warm. When they got to the size where you could cut them in half, and half a chicken would be a meal, enough meat for a person, then we started eating them. Later we’d eat them quartered, when they got a little bigger still, and then when they got a little bigger, we’d cut them into pieces. We girls were the ones that, after Mama killed the chickens, put them in the hot water, pulled the feathers off, and cut them up for eating. We also had pigs in one of the swampy sections. Daddy always raised two or three pigs, and there were black people who went around and did nothing but kill pigs for people that raised hogs. (They would come, first cold spell usually, after Christmas.) They would kill the pigs and cut them up for us. Daddy had a smokehouse in which he cured the bacon and hams. Mama would fry a lot of the meat to eat. She’d make sausage into patties and fry it, and the tenderloin, (which is that part on either side of the vertebrae), she would cut up and fry, putting it into jars to eat later in the wintertime. Occasionally, the community would buy a cow or a baby calf. We would get a portion, maybe one leg. There was an ice house up in West Point, and Daddy would take his portion of beef up there and tell them how to cut it. Usually they would cut it into various-sized roasts. Then, if there was something special, we would have roast beef.

Our clothes were usually hand-me-downs. We got leftovers from our older cousins and sometimes from our aunts. But some of the clothes had to be taken apart and remade. That was mainly what we wore. We got one new outfit a year— that would be Christmas. We took a trip to Richmond in early December. Lunch that day would always be the same and we loved it. We stopped at a grocery store en route to buy a loaf of sliced bread (that’s about the only time we ever got store-bought sliced bread). Then we got a pound of bologna. We ate the bread and bologna without anything on it. Also my parents would buy some fruit—either an apple or an orange. And I think Mama used to bring some glasses from home, because she would buy several bottles of Orange Crush and that was our drink. When we got to Richmond, we had fun going to the stores and buying our clothes.

The Christmas tree was always found in our woods by the family. Daddy would cut it down and bring it to the house. He would put dirt in a large bucket with water and put the tree in that. He kept it watered, so the needles wouldn’t go dry. It was put in one corner of one of the rooms. One of the things that Santa Claus did was to put the balls and ornaments on the tree, so we always looked forward to what that would be. Mama liked the Christmas tree so much (we didn’t have central heating then, and the room that the Christmas tree would be in was not used most of the time) that she would keep the tree with the Christmas decorations on it until Easter. She said if she wanted to read or meditate, she’d put on her overcoat and go into that room, entertaining herself close to the Christmas tree.
We didn't have much time for recreation. There was so much work to do so most of our time was taken up, and most of our parents' time was taken up with work. Our father was definitely a workaholic. He woke up before dawn and made fires in the kitchen wood stove and the potbellied stove. Mama would then cook breakfast for him, and he would go off to work. When it was time, several hours later, she would call us. Usually, it would be cold in the bedroom, but we had our overcoat on the floor beside the bed, and we'd put on our overcoats and come downstairs to dress, because our school clothes would be in the room where the fire was.

Mama would have breakfast for us. After we ate, we'd walk up the lane to catch the school bus. Daddy took off Sundays to go to church, as well as Thanksgiving, Christmas, the Fourth of July, and the one shopping day early in December. He also took off after Christmas. It was traditional for our family to go from house to house of relatives after Christmas and have the most fabulous meals. Everybody tried to outdo everybody else. Because Mama was one of the last to join the group, she had New Year's as the day she would have her entertaining day.

What did we do for entertainment? We played games. A lot of socials were held at the church or in private homes. We played games like Pass the Penny and Post Office. We visited and talked. We played a Victrola which wound up. (It didn't have a battery.) We sang songs that we knew. My father made a violin, and he encouraged me to take violin lessons which I did. We played cards. That's some of the things we did.

Over the years, while we lived in the Glebe, there were several excavations. In the 1930s, there was the excavation where we had the basement dug and also the indoor bathroom dug. Then in the mid-fifties, there wasn't excavation, but Daddy took the roofs off the house and completely redid the inside. I remember him saying that the house had been there almost three hundred years then, and he was going to use the best materials so that it would last another three hundred. Individuals came to ask permission to dig. I remember a lot of them coming, and Daddy would usually give them permission to dig in the fields but not around the foundation because they weren't clean diggers. The farmers who were farming the place at that time collected pieces of pottery, glass, and china which Mama saved in bowls, but I don't know what happened to them. I'm told that there are several hundred pieces collected from the place which are now stored in boxes somewhere in the county. In the 1970s when I was a member of the Gloucester Historical Committee, we tried to find boxes from some of the excavation sites and were given the run-around. Secretaries who had worked in the office then said the boxes might be in the Kennedy Building which at that time was sealed off because of asbestos. Now I don't know whether there was any in there or not or whether anybody looked to see. Another one of the secretaries said some of the boxes were taken to a home or storage in the Hayes area. I don't know about that. Mr. Brown said that there were a number of boxes now under county control somewhere in the Ordinary area. The only thing I had when we sold the Glebe was a box of locks and keys which had belonged to the Glebe, and I offered them to Mr. Riddick when he bought the place. He said he didn't know what to do with them, so I gave them to the Gloucester Museum. There's a small box, the size of a pound of Whitman's chocolate. In it are some of the old locks and keys for the Glebe. ‡
Charles H. Blake

By L. Roane Hunt

Barbara Phillips sent us an inquiry about her husband’s grandfather, Basil Blake, who operated a store near Cow Creek Mill. After checking the Blake families of Gloucester, we found that William Basil Blake’s father, Charles H. Blake, was listed as a retail merchant in the 1910 and 1920 Gloucester censuses. The Mathews County marriage records showed that Charles had married Lottie G. Foster on February 21, 1886. After Lottie died, Charles Blake married Maggie Virgie Streagle in 1924. She was the widow of Alexander Emerson, Jr.

Subsequently, Barbara sent a 1994 GLO-QUIPS newspaper clipping and copies of Bible pages of family records. The Bible appears to have belonged to Lottie G. Foster. The transcription of the pages are as follows:

Lottie G. Foster was born July 29th 1867.
John William Lee Foster was born on February the 20, 1866 and is now twenty years old at this time.
Nettie J. Foster was born Dec 28th 1887.
Carroll Lee Foster was born Oct the 19, 1889.
John W. Foster and Lottie G. Ingram was married Dec 26th 1886.
George W. Shipley died June 30th 1916.
Eve B. Pratt ___
Eliza Ann Shipley was born May
Rebecca Ann Foster was born July 12, 1847.
Sarah Manday Shipley was born December 21 day of 1853.
George Washington Shipley was born January 12, 1857.
John William L. Foster was born February 20, 1866.
Mary Eliza Foster was born May 21, 1869.
Eve B. Pratt was born on March the 3, 1880.
Beco Shipley was 48 years old when she died.
___ dide March the 23, 1894.
Ann Rebecca the daughter of John Shipley and Eliza his wife was born July 12th 1847.
Sarah Amanda daughter of John Shipley and

This page of Lottie's Bible includes her brother John William Lee Foster, his first two children, and their parents' marriage date.
Eliza his wife was born December 21th 1853.

George W. Shipley son of John Shipley and Eliza his wife was born January 21st 1857.

John William Foster the son of Peter Foster and Rebecca his wife was born February the 20, 1866.

Willie Basil Blake the son of Chas. Blake & Lottie his wife was born in April 27, 1893.

Basil Blake was born in April 27, 1893 the son of C. H. Blake & Lottie his wife.

Edith Lewis was born on October 13, 1896.

Miss Sarah Shipley the daughter of John Shipley and Eliza his wife was born December the 21, 1853, and was married February the 5, 1874 to Alonzo L. Platt married by Mr. Consel.

Ruker L. Pratt son of Alonzo L. Pratt & Sarah his wife was born June the 26, 1875.

Edith Lewis was born October 13, 1896.

Maggie Vergie Striagle was born Feb 8, 1887.

Basil Blake and Edith Lewis was married February 18, 1917 by Preacher Folks at his home.

Mary Ellen Blake was born Sept 30, 1920.

Miss Willie M. Peters.

Miss Annie Peters.

George W. Shipley

Mother dide August the 1898 on Friday morning 23 min of three o’clock and buried Sunday. She was 84 years old.

Edith Pearl Lewis was born Oct 13, 1896.

Lottie E. Blake died February the 21, 1918 the wife of C. H. Blake. She was 49 years old and a friend until the end now rests at Ebenezer Church. Born 5/21/1869.


Charles William Blake was born Aug. 4, 1929.

Edith Lewis Blake died Sept. 12, 1953 (was 57).

William Basil Blake died Jan. 17, 1945 (was 52).

Hubert C. Phillips 5/18/78 (was 59).

Charles William Blake 11/30/93 (was 64).

(Baby) Bridget Saville 10/10/04 (was 49).

The newspaper clipping that we received was from page 8 of the GLO - QUIPS dated May 19, 1994. The article included a story written in 1980 by Laura Wiatt Field, previously published in a booklet entitled, “Gloucester, Fun and Facts.” Laura died January 12, 1983, at age 75.

Laura was the daughter of William Stephen Field and Mary Eleanor Benson. She wrote her story about her childhood living at “Holly Hill,” for a long time the home of her sister, Mrs. Eleanor Field Martin, and now “Holly Hill Antiques,” on Route 14, John Clayton Memorial Highway.
Laura wrote about walking to the Blakes Store and Nuttall Post office less than a mile from her home. The GLO-QUIPS described the home as having been “a general mercantile store and Nuttall Post Office, operated by members of the Blake family.” William Basil Blake inherited the property when his father, Charles H. Blake, died in 1930. He sold it to Carroll Douglas Thomas in 1940, and his widow, Viola Streagle Thomas, was living there in 1994 when the GLO-QUIPS article, “Thomas Home was Nuttall Post Office,” was published.

Here is Laura Wiatt Field’s story:

As soon as my mother felt my younger brother and I were old enough to walk three quarters of a mile up the road -- there were no cars on the road then -- she would send us for what she needed at Blake’s Store. Now Blake’s Store was a small country store run by a Mr. and Mrs. Blake. Mother’s needs might have been a spool of thread, a box of gelatin (there was no seasoned jello in those days), or some sugar, vanilla extract, or what not. She would give us thirteen eggs to trade; twelve eggs bought what she wanted and one egg was for us to buy penny candy. I remember so well the length of time it took to stand before the showcase holding the penny candy, deciding which pieces we wanted. As I remember, we got two or three pieces each for the one egg.

Now Blake’s Store was the center of gathering for the community, particularly the men at night. In the center of the floor sat a potbelly stove which kept the place nice
and warm during the winter. Along one side of the wall there were a number of nail kegs with a board across the top on which some of the men sat, and as I remember there were two or three chairs on the other side of the stove. There was a counter that ran pretty much the width and length of the store. In Mrs. Blake’s time, she not only sold a few groceries, but she also sold piece goods, buttons, tape, lace, hooks and eyes, and thread.

Mr. and Mrs. Blake had one son whom I never remember seeing until he was a grown man. Mrs. Blake died at a rather young age, and of course, after that Mr. Blake soon got rid of what he called all the “Tom Foolishness” like the materials and the things that a woman would need to sew. But he continued to run the store for many years, and at one point the Post Office Department decided that there should be a small post office in that area. Mr. Blake’s Store was elected. The post office was literally a wooden soap box in the corner from which he sorted the mail and handed it out, sold stamps, and did a little bit of parcel post business. But still, all the problems of the neighborhood were settled sitting around Mr. Blake’s stove in the evening. Sometimes there were as many as eight or ten men there.

In time, Mr. Blake’s son Basil married a girl by the name of Edith, but Mr. Blake never called her anything but “Jack,” and in speaking to her, he always spoke of her as “Jack-She,” never just Jack. At this time, the old plantation homes down on the river were beginning to take paying guests for the summer. People came from miles and miles—perhaps all the way from Baltimore—in their cars, and usually quite luxurious cars, just to sit on the lawn, sit in the swing, have three good meals a day, a comfortable bed, and a small rowboat which they could take out to go fishing. All of these people had to come up to Nuttall Post Office, as it was called, in Blake’s Store to get their mail. As the cars drove up,
usually the man in the family would come in to get the mail. But Mr. Blake’s
daughter-in-law, Edith, would go out and hang on the front door talking to the other
people in the car. One day, stroking his mustache, Mr. Blake peered out the window
and said, “Jack, Jack-She, would like to get up in the high Gees, but her shirttail ain’t
quite long enough.”

Mr. Blake smoked a clay pipe which he called “Old Nancy.” When cars became
quite frequent on the road going up and down and up and down all day, he would
peer out and say, “Boy, here they go, some’s goin’ to Norfolk, and some’s goin’ to
Richmond, and some’s goin’ all the way to Baltimore. I don’t know what de’ think de’
goin’ to find up there; I’d rather jus’ sit here and smoke ‘Old Nancy.”

Charles H. Blake

Sainsbury MSS., 1686-1688, 12; ibid., 1691-1697, 260; ibid., 1715-1720, 698.
Calendar of Virginia State Papers, I, 192.

One of the most interesting and important cases that were tried by special courts of oyer and
terminer was that in which George Talbot, a prominent citizen of Maryland, was arraigned for
killing Christopher Rousby, the King’s collector of customs. The act was committed on board The
Quaker, a revenue vessel, which at that time was lying in the harbor at the mouth of Patuxent Bay
in Maryland. The captain of the vessel was unwilling to deliver Talbot up to the Maryland
authorities, as he feared that they would not punish him as he deserved. He, therefore, sailed to
Virginia with his captive and gave him over to Lord Howard, the governor. Lord Howard thought
that his commission as vice-admiral gave him authority to punish offenses of this class, and so
Talbot was confined in the jail of Gloucester County. The Maryland council wrote to Governor
Howard asking him to send Talbot back to Maryland for trial, claiming that no other colony had
jurisdiction in the case. At a meeting of the Virginia council, which was called to consider the
matter, it was decided that all depositions should be sent to the King for his opinion as to whether
Talbot should be tried in Virginia according to the rules of admiralty or be sent to Maryland to be
tried according to common law. The Committee of Trade and Plantations at first recommended that
Talbot be sent to England for trial, but afterwards decided that a special commission of oyer and
terminer should be sent to the council of Virginia for his trial. The King also sent instructions to
Lord Howard authorizing him to suspend the execution of the sentence against Talbot if he should
be found guilty. But before this special court convened for his trial, Talbot escaped from the
Gloucester jail and returned to Maryland. Fiske says that he was liberated by his wife, who one
dark, wintry night sailed with two companions down the Chesapeake Bay and up York River until
they came to Gloucester. Talbot was delivered from prison and taken back to his home in
Maryland. The sheriff of Gloucester County and another prominent Virginian were sent to
Maryland for the prisoner, but it is not stated whether they succeeded in bringing him back. At any
rate, the case was put on trial in Virginia before the General Court acting under a special
commission of oyer and terminer, and he was sentenced to death. The King commuted the sentence
(1686) to five years banishment from the British dominions. Sainsbury MSS., 1682-1686, 134,
138, 142, 143, 146, 150, 162, 195, 209, 212; ibid., 1686-1688, 3, 12. Randolph MSS., 426, 427.
Fiske, Old Virginia and Her Neighbors, II, 158.
What Do I Remember?

By Rachel Foster Armistead
Written on October 18, 1968

Have you ever tried to put down on paper what you could remember? I never realized you could remember so much. I was one of six children, and we have an awful lot of memories stored up inside of us. We had some wonderful times together. There is so much that I have forgotten that I wish all of my brothers and sisters would write a book about the times we used to have. I'm sure each of us would come up with a different story.

My oldest sister is Iris Mae. She is forty-two now. She was a Foster, and she married a Foster, “Leroy.” They have two children: Dana Kaye and Roy. Dana is married to Bobby Brown, and they have a little boy named Roland. Roy is in the seventh grade at Cobbs Creek School. Diddie is next and she is forty. Her real name is Marie, but everyone calls her Diddie. She is married to Delbert Hogge. They have three girls: Bonnie Faye, Deloris, and Terri. They had a little boy, but he only lived for one day. They named him after his Daddy, Raymond Delbert Hogge, Jr. They called him R.D. They were really proud of their little boy, but God stepped in and who are we to question Him. Bonnie is the oldest, she is married to Marshall Lewis, and they have two children: Marsha Deanne and Barry. Deloris started Junior High this year, and Terri is only five. John is thirty-six now. He is married to Joyce Ann, and they have three children: Judy and Johnny are in school and Jerry will start next year. All of their names start with a “J.” Barbara is thirty-five, and she is married to my husband’s half brother, Milton Miller. They have two children: Dinah Jean and Randy. Both are in school. I’m next in line, and I am thirty-four. I am married to Maywood Armistead, and we have one daughter. Her name is Arlene. She is in the sixth grade at Lee-Jackson. My middle name is O’Neil, and all the children used to call me oatmeal. Teeny-Boy is the baby, and he is thirty-one. (His real name is Carroll Otis.) He married Patsy Hogge (Delbert’s niece). They have a little girl named Angela who is in the first grade and a little boy named Wade who is two.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Family of William Sidney Foster</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>William Sidney Foster, b. 1904, d. 1951</td>
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<tr>
<td>+m. Martha Estelle Walker, b. 1908, d. 1988</td>
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<tr>
<td>Iris Mae Foster, b. 1927</td>
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<td>+m. Leroy Foster</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dana Kaye Foster</td>
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<tr>
<td>+m. Robert Shelton Brown</td>
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<tr>
<td>Roy Foster</td>
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<tr>
<td>Maria “Diddle” Foster, b. 1929, d. 1994</td>
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<tr>
<td>+m. Raymond Delbert Hogg, b. 1930</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bonnie Faye Hogg</td>
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<td>Deloris Hogg</td>
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<tr>
<td>Terrie Hogg</td>
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<tr>
<td>Raymond Delbert Hogg Jr., b. 1955, d. 1955</td>
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<td>Lola Blanche Foster, b. 1930, d. 1933</td>
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<tr>
<td>Barbara Jean Foster, b. 1933, d. 2010</td>
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<td>+m. Milton Lee Miller</td>
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<td>Milton Lee Miller, Jr.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rachel O’Neil Foster, b. 1934, d. 2006</td>
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<td>+m. Thomas Maywood Armistead, b. 1927, d. 1995</td>
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<tr>
<td>Walda Arlene Armistead</td>
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<tr>
<td>John Sidney Foster, b. 1936</td>
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<tr>
<td>+m. Joyce Ann Hudgins</td>
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<tr>
<td>Carroll Otis “Teeny-Boy” Foster, b. 1938</td>
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<tr>
<td>+m. Patsy Hogge</td>
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I had another sister that died before I was born so I don’t remember her, but I have heard Mamma and Daddy talk about how sick she was. She died with scarlet fever and double pneumonia. Her name was Lola Blanche, but they called her Josie. Mamma said that Daddy had to burn all of her toys to keep from spreading germs after she died. She said he cried the whole time he was doing it, and when he came to her favorite doll he couldn’t do it so it was buried in the casket with her. My Daddy was a hard man with us kids, but he loved us all and would worry about us all the time.

I was born on September 1, 1934, at Nuttall, Virginia. I was born at home as most babies were in those days. Dr. Tabb attended Mamma, and my Grandma (mamma’s mamma) was there too. Mamma used to keep a diary, and we would read about when we were born and what she used to do. Mamma washed clothes the day I was born, and I washed them every day when I was expecting Arlene. I was taken on a Sunday, and she was born early Monday morning. I’ll never forget Maywood on that day. He was so sweet. I think we both cried a little when I went up on the elevator. We had never been separated in the four years we were married, and this was such a special time for us both. He sent me a card and signed it “to a wonderful wife.” I cried when I got it. He has never been one to express his feelings in so many words, but when he does it really touches me. Like a couple of weeks ago he pressed five dollars into my hand and told me to get me something for my birthday. He so seldom remembers any special occasions except on Christmas, and my heart went out to him with so much love. I love him very much. He loves me too, I know that now. I used to hug him and kiss him and he wouldn’t respond and I’d tell him he didn’t love me and sometime I would cry, but I’ve grown up now. Over the years there is so much that has counted for me. I don’t see how I could think any other way.

Christmas is coming again soon and we will all take part in sharing Jesus’ Birthday. Wywy comes and stays Christmas Eve with us every year. She raised Maywood and she has no other family now but him and his sister, Thelma. When Maywood’s father, Henry Lee Armistead, died his mother, Edna Virginia Callis, re-married and her brother, Hartley Coles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ancestors of Rachel Foster Armistead</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Peter Foster</td>
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<tr>
<td>b. 1824</td>
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<tr>
<td>John William Foster</td>
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<tr>
<td>b. 1866, m. 1886, d. 1929</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rebecca Ann Shipley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. 1847</td>
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<tr>
<td>William Sidney Foster</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. 1904, d. 1951</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thomas Walton Ingram</td>
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<tr>
<td>b. 1837, m. 1866, d. 1894</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charlotte Gilbert Ingram</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. 1867, d. 1961</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Priscilla Bassett</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. 1844</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rachel O’Neil Foster</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m. Thomas Maywood Armistead</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. 1934, m. 1953, d. 2006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John W. Walker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. 1852, m. 1873, d. 1899</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Otis Wray Walker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. 1882, m. 1907</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lilly Ann Walker</td>
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<tr>
<td>b. 1851, d. 1922</td>
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<tr>
<td>Martha Estelle Walker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. 1908, d. 1988</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William J. Diggs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. 1831, m. 1878</td>
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<tr>
<td>Danah Blanche Diggs</td>
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<tr>
<td>b. 1885</td>
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<tr>
<td>Margaret Lewis Croswell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. 1883</td>
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Note: John William Foster (1866 -1929), shown above, was a brother of Lottie G. Foster, who was the wife of Charles H. Blake in the previous article (pages 18 -22).
Callis and his wife, Mary Bertha “Wywy” Merritt, raised the two children. That is another story and would fill a book I'm sure.

As early as I can remember in my childhood was my fourth birthday party. Mamma made me a beautiful birthday cake, and then she made two more out of cornbread and set them about the room just for looks. She had them all iced and decorated just like the real one and if you didn’t know it you couldn’t tell the difference. Well, Bill Healy (my cousin) went around and told everyone not to eat any of the cake because it was made out of cornbread. Mamma was so mad she could have killed him. I remember we had apples hanging from strings on the front porch, and we tried to eat the apples without touching them with our hands. The only gift I can remember was a big black umbrella from Mrs. Jenny Clements. I was proud some of it and John took it out in the wind one day and it turned wrong side outwards and broke all to pieces. I nearly cried my eyes out that day.

I was nearly five when we moved from the place where I was born. We moved over Bellamy to a big old three story house named “Belroi.” It was just across the road from Dr. Walter Reed’s birthplace. All of my brothers and sisters say that the best years of our childhood were spent in that house. It wasn’t much to look at when we went there. Daddy had to put on a new roof, and there were steps going to the second floor porch (which we called the upper porch), and they were all broken down and had to be torn away. The water wasn’t fit for drinking so we had to haul all of our drinking water, bucket-by-bucket, from Mrs. Johnston’s across the road. Mrs. Johnston had a big black dog named Ted, and he would eat you up if you went over there and he was out so we always stood at the road and called “Mrs. Johnston” and she would put Ted in the smoke house and we would go over and get our water. They had a parrot there too and whenever we called for Mrs. Johnston, the parrot would say over and over “put Ted up, put Ted up.”

All of us loved “Belroi.” There were so many different places to play and explore and being children we didn’t miss anything. There were two large barns that were joined together, a garage, a shop, a long chicken house with an attic and adjoining storage room, an ice house, a hay barrack and a Johnny house.

When we first moved and for a few years after, we took care of Mr. [George D.] Stubbs whose family owned the house. He was very old and we didn’t pay any rent for taking care of him. He couldn’t get along without someone helping him or sometimes he did right good with just his cane. We used to laugh at him coming down the stairs and bumping down step by step. His son, Marvin, ran a little country store across the road from us and

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**Family of Otis Wray Walker**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Year (b.)</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Year (b.)</th>
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<tr>
<td>Otis Wray Walker</td>
<td>1882</td>
<td>Danah Blanche Diggs</td>
<td>1885</td>
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<tr>
<td>+m. Mary Estelle</td>
<td>1908</td>
<td>Emmett Samuel Healy</td>
<td>1903, d. 1985</td>
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<td>William Otis Healy</td>
<td>1928, d. 1985</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Harry Maxwell “Mac” Healy</td>
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<td>1908, d. 1988</td>
<td>William Sedney Foster</td>
<td>1904, d. 1951</td>
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<tr>
<td>+m. William</td>
<td></td>
<td>Iris Mae Foster</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sidney Foster</td>
<td></td>
<td>Maria “Diddie” Foster</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Lola Blanche Foster</td>
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<td>Barbara Jean Foster</td>
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<td>Rachel O’Neil Foster</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>John Sidney Foster</td>
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<td>Carroll Otis “Teeny”</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Foster</td>
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<td>Vernon E. Walker</td>
<td>1909</td>
<td>Elbert C. “Flee”</td>
<td>1920</td>
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<td>Fredrick Lee</td>
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<td>Ambrose, Jr.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Elizabeth Walker</td>
<td>1920</td>
<td>Myron Hall</td>
<td>1914, d. 1975</td>
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What Do I Remember?
Mr. Stubbs was hooked on cough drops and he would sit in the swing on the front porch and call “Marvin, I want a Luden.” We sometimes took his cane and played horsie up and down the porch. I was very young the day he died, but I remember it very good. When we came home from school that day his bed was all made up, and he had been down in bed for sometime. Mamma said he got up, dressed by himself, and came downstairs alone. He ate a large breakfast and said he had never felt better in his life. About an hour after breakfast he was dead. I can remember that his casket was so heavy that one leg came through the parlor floor. Mamma let us go in and see him before the funeral started.

His kin, Dr. Pete DeShazo, had a lot of his old medical kits in the storage room next to the chicken house, and how we used to love to go in there and go through all the things. He had some of the trunks locked but the kits and boxes were open and we would rummage through them and play with the stuff there. When Dr. DeShazo came he would take us out there and give us different things out of the trunk. Once he gave Mamma a fountain pen. There was a set of steps in the storage room that went upstairs to the attic and there were lots of boxes up there full of books and we sometimes went up there and played school. One day I fell down the stairs and nearly broke my leg. Daddy was very concerned, but after he found out I was alright, he preached because I had been walking straddle across the top of the steps. None of us ever did break a bone when we were young or since that I know of. We used to jump out the third story window and out of the hay loft but none of us got seriously hurt. God must have been looking out for us. All of the outside of “Belroi” was wooden except the first story and that was brick. We had a tractor then and one day while Mamma and Daddy were gone one of us started it up and we took turns driving it around the house. When Barbara had her turn, she drove all the way around the house and when she came back around where we were she ran the tractor right into the side of the house and the radiator cap flew off and iron rust was running all down the bricks on the house. It scared us all so but we put the tractor away before Mamma and
Daddy got back. I don't remember what Daddy said about the iron rust on the house. Mamma used to send us outside on cleaning day and we would rake all the leaves in a pile and lay in the warm sunshine to keep warm. She said we were more hindrance than we were help so she did much better if we were outside than if we tried to help her. The house was big and cold. We had no running water except for a pump in the kitchen sink. No electricity, just oil lamps and no furnace. There were fireplaces in all the bedrooms and one in the parlor. We had a woodstove in the dining and sitting room and we had a wood cook-stove in the kitchen. In the winter time we had so many covers on the bed we couldn't turn over unless all the covers went in the floor. We never considered ourselves poor although I guess we were. We always had plenty to eat, plenty of clothes to wear, and lots of togetherness. I often think of Arlene with no brothers or sisters and I wonder how she will make out in the years to come.

When I lived over Belroi, I started to school at Walter Reed School. It had only one teacher for all four grades, and they were taught in one room. Miss Eunice Clements was our teacher. We also had a large play room that we played in when it rained or was real cold, a room where we put on plays or had our puppet show and a room that was full of sewing machines. It used to be a sewing factory, but I never saw anyone there when I went there. We also had a cloak room where we put our coats and hats in the winter time. We also kept the wood there for the woodstove. The stove was large and heated the whole room. We would have to take turns each day bringing in the wood from the cloak room. I remember my big brother John brought my little brother Teeny Boy to school one day. Teeny Boy was very bad and spoiled and he threw an empty spool at the teacher and she locked him in the cloak room and dared John to bring him anymore. Teeny was only about three or four years old at the time. We walked to school most of the time, it was about a mile. Sometimes we got a ride with the teacher if we wanted a ride which we usually didn’t unless it was very cold. She would make us put our hands in cold water when it was real cold and we thought she was crazy but I guess that is what you are supposed to do. I went there for three years and three weeks and then they closed the school down and sent all the children to Botetourt. Someone has bought the school now and turned it into a real pretty home. The lady that lived next to the school was a Mrs. Walker and on every Wednesday she would make a large canner full of vegetable soup and bring it over to the children for dinner. It was the best soup I have ever had. We all had our individual bowls and would bring them to school every Wednesday. My bowl was white and had a picture of a little Dutch boy and girl on the side printed in red. Miss Eunice has since gotten married [to Rogers Everett Thomas] and is now teaching at Botetourt.

We used to go blackberry, huckleberry and chiggerpen hunting. There was an English walnut tree across the road from Belroi, and I have never seen any since we left there. They were delicious and they were shaped like a pear only they were smaller than a regular walnut. There was a big walnut tree on the grounds at Walter Reed’s Birthplace, and we sometimes went there and picked up the walnuts.

One day we saw a blimp come real low in the field next to home and it nearly scared us to death because we thought it was a bomb and we had never seen a bomb or a blimp before. Then one time after that a large blimp came by the house. It was so close to the ground that it was even with the third story and the tie lines were dragging the ground.

We used to iron our clothes with a flat iron and we would heat these on the cook-stove. One day Diddie was ironing and the iron was too hot so she put it down in cold water. The steam came up and took nearly all of the meat off her hand. The doctor treated her for a long time. Mamma packed it with raw potatoes. It got alright and you
What Do I Remember?

can’t even see a scar there. Diddie has had quite a few bad times in her life. Once when she was very little, about four or five, she liked to rub something fuzzy against her nose and one day Daddy had gone hunting and killed some rabbits. He had skinned the rabbits and given the skins to the dogs. Well, Diddie went outside and saw the fuzzy tails and she went up and got one and started to rub it on her nose. One of the dogs jumped up and grabbed it and got nose and all. Diddie’s nose was only hanging by a thread. Mamma sent Iris Mae to get Daddy who was next door. She was so excited she told Daddy to come home quick, “the dog has bitten Diddie’s head off and dragged it to the henhouse.” Poor Daddy, I guess he was scared to death. The doctor sewed it back on and you can’t tell it today unless she shows it to you. It is only a very thin scar. Poor Diddie. I guess that broke her of rubbing anything on her nose. She went up the peach tree one time to get some peaches and she got her underwear caught on a limb and couldn’t get down. When she finally got herself free the old hog got loose and stood under the tree and snorted at her and she was afraid to come down then.

Iris and Diddie were courting when we lived at Belroi. I remember Iris was going with a boy in service and his name was Tiny Jackson. He used to write to Iris real often. There was a neighbor boy about Iris Mae’s age and they rode the same bus. When the bus stopped this boy named Richard Teagle would jump off the bus and go to our mail box and get Iris Mae’s letters. He would go to our house, climb up the upper porch, go through the house to Iris and Diddie’s bedroom and lock the door and read the letters out loud. Iris would get so mad, but he would just read that much louder. He was in a automobile wreck once, and he broke his collar bone and both legs. After he got better he came over to the store one day while Iris was there and he started teasing her about something and she got mad and kicked him on his broken leg. Richard, didn’t say anything more and tears came to his eyes. Iris Mae went home and looked out the window and she saw him sitting over on the store porch and he looked so sad that Iris cried too because she had hurt his leg.

I remember when Teeny Boy was about seven, he had a BB gun. He had shot up all of his BBs and didn’t have any left but I found one while I was cleaning one day and dropped it down the end of the barrel of the gun thinking Teeny would shoot at a bird or something and be real surprised if he hit it but my plan backfired on me. He came outside with it the next day and aimed it at me. I tried to tell him it had a BB in it but he kept saying he didn’t and I held up a piece of cardboard in front of my face, as if that would do any good and he shot me and missed my eye about an inch. It scared him nearly as bad as it did me, but I never put any more BBs in his gun again. John shot Barbara in the back one time. He told her not to run or he was going to shoot her, she ran and he shot her. The BB imbedded in her back. Crazy kids.

We had some large trees in the yard at Belroi and we would stay in them half of the time. We would take a baking powder can and tie a string to it and put some marbles in it and use them for telephones and talk to each other. I guess we talked real loud because we could really hear each other like we had a real telephone.

I can’t ever remember Mamma giving me a beating, I guess she figured Daddy gave us enough for both of them. She used to raise her hand as if to smack us and say “I’ve a great mind to” and she would grit her teeth like she was so mad. I don’t know how she stood it without giving us a spanking once in a while because we used to get into some awful messes. One day I was standing at the top of the stairs and Mamma was sweeping up and she asked me to go downstairs and get her the dust pan. I told her I would get it in a minute. She raised her hand up as if to hit me and gritted her teeth and said “I’m gretta mine” and I was afraid she would hit me so I started running down the stairs. I fell over
What Do I Remember?

half way down and hit my head on the door catch at the bottom of the stairs. When I came
to I was on the sofa with an ice pack on my head. I still have a scar there today. Dr. Tabb
made me stay in bed for a week. I don’t know who got the dust pan. Poor Mamma I guess.
That was the week that Bible School started at Bellamy Church and although we were
Baptist and that was a Methodist Church, we always went to the revivals and Bible School
every year. I can remember how I would lay in bed and watch the little bus come and pick
up the other children and I couldn’t go. The bus was something like today’s carryalls only it
was wider. We loved to ride on it and I would cry because I couldn’t go. Serves me right I
guess, I should have minded my mother.

We had some real bad weather when we lived there and Daddy was scared to death of
storms and he made us scared of them too. Our front hall was about fifty by twenty feet as
were the halls on the second and third floors and all the windows had shutters on them.
When Daddy saw a storm rising he would close all the shutters, and we would all go into
the front hall. We would have to light the lamps because it was so dark in there. Once we
had a real bad storm and the hail broke out thirty-seven window panes. Barbara and I were
so scared we sat huddled together hugging each other and cried. I’m not so frightened of
them now as I was then, but Barbara was long after she was married. She left me sitting on
her sofa one day and went over next door to Diddie’s because a storm was rising and it was
real black. Diddie’s house was cinderblock and I guess Barbara considered it safer than
hers. She’s not that scared now but I still laugh when I remember that day.

We had lots of animals when I was a kid. We had turkeys, geese, chickens,
dogs, cats, a cow, a horse, a Billy-goat, and lots of pigs. We all shared in taking care of the
animals every night. Mamma had enough to do taking care of six kids and a nineteen room
house. She had help with the washing and ironing sometimes but not all the time. She still
had the cooking and the cleaning to do. She deserves a medal for putting up with all of us.
Mamma was happy though as far as I know. She and Daddy were always loving. I guess
they argued some but it was mostly with us kids. Daddy built John a little cart to put
behind his goat, and John would hook it up and take us for a ride. He would always have a
dirt spot on the end of his nose when he finished playing with his goat and cart, and Daddy
would tell him that he rode too close behind the goat.

The kitchen and pantry were built a little way off the ground not like the rest of the
house, and you could crawl under there. One evening we were all getting the chickens up
and one of them went under the kitchen and Daddy sent Barbara under there to get it. She
had her hand out ready to grab it by the legs when Daddy hollered, “Did you get it
Barbara?” The chicken jumped and Barbara said real slow, “It got away.” We all liked to
died laughing. Someone sneaked into the chicken house one day and came out with a grass
bag full of chickens. Daddy shot at him with his shotgun, and he dropped the chickens
and ran. He never came back anymore.

Mamma said there were ghosts at Belroi. She said many times when she would go up
the back stairs, she would hear silk skirts rustling up the stairs behind her. She was never
scared of it though.

The house was fixed up to burn gas-lights, but we never used them. Mamma would
take a metal spoon every morning and hit it on the light in the kitchen and it would ring all
through the house. That’s how she got us up in the mornings to go to school. The pipes to
the lights ran through every room and you could hit them in any room and hear it all over
the house.
We all stayed in the dining and sitting room every night. That’s where we did our homework or played cards, dominos, and listened to the radio. We had our favorite programs just like we do television today. We used to listen to “Henry Aldridge,” “The Great Gildersleeve,” “Amos and Andy,” and all the country shows. Daddy played the mouth harp and the banjo, and he would play for us every night. He used to sing “Johnson’s Old Gray Mule” and we would nearly die laughing at him blowing and snorting like a mule. Daddy was a lot of fun. Mamma said he used to carry her to square dances and they would get him to play the mouth harp and she would dance and have a lot of fun and Daddy would play until he had blisters on his lips and he very seldom got to dance.

During the war everyone was collecting scrap iron and we had a big pile of it by the ice house. One night Iris Mae was out on a date and we all went to bed and Daddy told Diddie to lock the back screen door and wooden door and leave the front door open for Iris. She forgot to lock the door and went upstairs to bed. Soon there was a knock on the wooden door at the back. Diddie took the lamp in her hand and went downstairs in her slip. When she got about halfway down she called out, “What are you doing coming to the back door Iris?” A man answered in a very gruff voice, “I want to know the way to Clay Bank.” Diddie nearly fell downstairs, but she ran back upstairs and called Daddy. He came in our room and raised the window and called to the man to come outside. After he came out Daddy told him how to get to Clay Bank. Daddy went back to bed but in a few minutes the man was back again and Daddy realized he was drunk so he got his pistol and shot down at the pile of scrap iron we had and the bullets started to whistle off the iron. The man ran out the road and never came back. Diddie never forgot to lock the back door after that either.

Daddy was a carpenter and a mechanic, and he could build nearly everything he wanted to. During the war he used to build two wheeled flatbed wagons and put old rubber tires on them that he got at the station where he worked. The tires were not very good but they were so hard to get that someone would steal them as fast as Daddy would put them on his trailers. He put them out in the front yard to sell and after the first set was stolen he marked the next set so he could tell it if he saw it again. That set was stolen too. He put on another set and put a chain through the wheels and locked it and the next morning the tires, wheels, chain, lock and all were gone and the trailer was sitting on the ground. A little while after that he was at the store one day and saw his mark on a man’s car so he got the sheriff and they went to the man’s house and they found one set on the car and the other two sets under the man’s bed. Tires were so hard to get I remember Wendell Johnston had two made out of oak wood and put them on the back of his car. You could hear him coming a mile away.

Barbara was sick for a long time with pus on her kidneys, and I was so jealous because she got so much stuff. Mamma’s Daddy (Pappy Wray) & Aunt Esther would come over and bring her whole boxes of cereal and oranges and lots of other things. We always shared everything we got and that stuff was all hers and I would sit and pout because I didn’t get anything. I wanted to get sick too. She had about thirty dollars in money and she kept it in a little change purse under her pillow so no one could bother it. We got most of our toys together every Christmas. All the packages were marked “to Barbara and Rachel.” Our clothes were the only thing we got separate and we used to wear each other’s most of the time. We got a doll and doll bed one year and that was all, except what we got in our stocking. One Christmas when we were being bad Daddy told us we weren’t going to get anything but a bunch of switches and sure enough when we came down Christmas morning that’s all that was in our stockings. We had our Christmas tree in the front hall and we
hung our stockings in the dining room and we were sure disappointed, but when we went in the hall there were lots of toys and goodies. We always got fire crackers and roman candles and a quarter from Mamma and Daddy. We had a wonderful time at Christmas. We always went over to my Grandmother’s for supper and we got to see all our cousins and kin people and we got some more gifts. Mamma’s twin sister lived at my Grandma’s (Aunt Esther). Her and Uncle Sam had three boys named Bill, Bubber, and Mac. (They later adopted one named Peter.) Mac is my favorite cousin I guess. We were about the same age and were in the same grade at school. I remember how Grandma would give Bubber a cup of coffee and he said he didn’t want the first cup or the last cup. They always had grounds in it, so he would wait to get one out of the middle.

Daddy and Mamma always went to Buckroe for a week in the summer time, and they would get Grandma Walker to come over to stay with us. We loved her because she used to let us do most anything, and she played with us a lot too. She died when I was about thirteen, and we sure missed her when we went to her house. She always had a big pan of clabber for us, and we really liked that. It’s been a many day since I’ve had any. She used to let us turn the butter in her big butter churn and gather the eggs for her. She had sugar diabetes, but she stayed up and going right up until she died.

After Iris Mae graduated she went to Mathews to live with my Uncle Wattie and Aunt Pearl. They had a daughter named Florence and her and Iris were the same age. They both worked in the creamery at Mathews Court House. Iris came home on weekends and we used to write her sometimes during the week. She was going with Leroy then, and he was in service.

There are still lots of things that happened over Belroi that I can’t remember, but we sure had a good time there and all of us like to ride over there and look at it and remember the things we used to do there. All of the outbuildings are torn down now. The house has been remodeled and fixed up into apartments. There are very few trees in the yard, and I remember when there were crepe myrtle trees all the way down each side of the driveway. The last time I was over there I saw only one.

When we moved from there we moved to Mrs. Kern’s place near the court house [on Belroi Road]. Diddie and Delbert were married while we lived there. Daddy was working on his car and they went out and told him they were going down the court house to get their marriage license and Diddie asked him was he going with them. Daddy look at them for awhile and said to Delbert, “I might as well, I can’t do anything with her maybe you can.” They were only sixteen and seventeen, but they were married and moved into two rooms upstairs.

Leroy was in Germany then and he was missing in action. Iris would sit around and cry half the time when she was home on weekends. I remember one day Mamma and I were folding up clothes, and Iris was playing the piano and singing, “The Soldiers Last Letter.” She started crying and Mamma and I both were crying. It is a sad song, and we didn’t know then whether Leroy was dead or alive. Mamma worked at the kitchen at Botetourt then and on the last day of school she brought lots of the food home that was left over. That night after we had gone to bed a car drove up, and it was Iris and Leroy. Boy, we were glad to see him. He had lost a lot of weight, but he had been a prisoner of war in Korea for over eight months. Mamma tried to feed him everything that she had in the house, which was an awful lot. They were married soon after that.

I was eleven and in the fifth grade when we lived at the court house. One day Barbara was taken sick at school, and she came to my room and got me to walk home with her. It
was about one o'clock, and I intended to go back to school but after I got home I didn't feel good either so I stayed home. She had tonsillitis and so did I, and I didn't go back to school for nearly a month. We were supposed to go and get our tonsils out, we even went and got our blood test (I fainted) but we didn't get them out. John and Teeny Boy went instead, naturally. Daddy said they had bad adenoids. I never did get mine out, but Barbara had hers out after she got married. We stayed over Aunt Esther's while John and Teeny were in the hospital. We loved to go over there. Grandma was a good cook and she spoiled us too. We played with Mac and Bubber. Bubber was a little older than us, but he played with us when he didn't have any of his friends over to play with. I remember one time Bubber gave me a nickel to eat a handful of dirt. I used to eat dirt all the time and loved it. Mamma would catch me and dare me to eat it again, and I would if I got the chance. Anyway I ate the handful and Bubber gave me my nickel and then I lost it, and I cried and cried. After John and Teeny came home, John nearly hemorrhaged to death during the night. His bed was soaked with blood, and he didn't even know it until someone woke him up. While they were in the hospital Daddy went in to see them, and Teeny had just turned the pan he had been spitting in over. When Daddy saw it he fainted deader than a hammer because he thought Teeny was bleeding to death.

I had a bad case of rheumatism when we lived there, and I had scarlet fever with it. I peeled all over and even under my fingernails. I remember I used to scream bloody murder when Dr. Tabb would come because I couldn't stand anyone to touch my leg. It still hurts if I stand or walk a lot. While I was sick, Teeny stayed home from school one day for some reason or other and he poured kerosene on the top of the stove and it caught afire. I went to the phone to call somebody and I looked and Teeny's curls were on fire. He had the prettiest curls. I hung up the phone and grabbed a towel and wrapped it around his head. It put the fire out, but all of Teeny's curls were burnt off. The fire on the stove just burnt out by itself.

We stayed at Kern's place for about a year, and then we moved to the little house behind the skating rink by Cow Creek Mill pond. The skating rink was closed down then, but it opened up a few years later. Daddy bought a piece of land up on the point and had it cleared off, and we would go up there every evening and help Daddy cut down bushes and trees. Daddy worked at the mill for a long time, and we used to go on the meal truck with him to deliver the meal. He went to all the stores in Mathews and Gloucester. We used to help him in the mill. We would tie the meal bags and help him weigh them and put them on the truck. Of course we played in there a
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lot too. The mill was three story and had lots of cubby holes to hide in and we liked to play hide and seek in there.

We used to play under the skating rink too. That was before they had the bowling alley there. We played in the dirt and made tunnels all through the ground. There was a stairway built beside the rink, and Barbara and I played store there. There were three little platforms with stairs running between them. Barbara lived on the top floor and I lived on the bottom and the middle floor was our store and post office. We found an old vanity under the rink and Daddy sawed the thing in half and put a false drawer in one of them and a false leg on the other and we played with them in our store. After we moved Mamma painted them and gave one to Barbara and the other to me and we used them for night stands in our bedroom. We still have them and one of them still has written on the back “open until four o’clock.” That’s what time our store closed.

Daddy was a kind and thoughtful man even if he was strict with us kids. I remember I had the flu one time and when Daddy came home from work he brought me a Bible. It was just a new testament, but I was proud some of it. I still have it even though it is about twenty three years old now.

There was a duck blind behind the house down in the woods, and we would go there and play. One day while we were there, we saw an old boat that was filled with water and nearly sunk but John wanted it so he went to the dock and got his little skiff and came down and hooked on to it and pulled it back to the dock with Teeny sitting on the bow of it. I don’t know why it didn’t sink. John made him a little water wheel and put it on the back of his boat and all you had to do was turn the handle and you could just scoot across the mill pond. Daddy used to tell us our grave was at the bottom of that mill pond but being kids we didn’t have much thought and we stayed in there half our time. Since then there have been three people drown in there that I know of. One was Bradshaw the local policeman, and one was Russell Oliver that lived by the mill pond, and the other was Richard Bridges, a boy I went to school with. They had been frogging, and their boat fell to pieces. Daddy used to tell us that you could throw a three story house in there, and you wouldn’t be able to see the top of it. I had an old broom handle that I used for my boat, and I named it “Jigger.” I would push it out in the pond every night and the next morning it would be back at the dock, but one night we had a bad storm and Jigger wasn’t there the next morning. I guess it went to the other end of the pond. I never saw it again. I never knew what happened to it. I remember one day Mac and Bubber came over and all of us built a raft. After it was finished Teeny got on it and his foot slipped and he fell off and got under the raft and he nearly drowned before we got him out. Bubber had to go under

Cow Creek Mill on Route 14 being repaired in 2010
there and get him. Poor little fellow, he was so scared.

I can remember the first fish I caught. It was a yellow belly. I was so proud of it. I took it to the house to show it to Mamma. While I was there it started to rain, but I was so anxious to catch another one I put on my raincoat and hat and went back out and fished the rest of the day. We used to catch yellow bellies, bass and some catfish, but we didn’t care anything about them because they were freshwater fish and didn’t have much taste and Mamma told us if we caught them we would have to eat them so we never fished very much. There were plenty of worms there though. Down under the mill porch where it was moist and all the corn cobs were, they were very plentiful. Daddy used to trap muskrat and otter at the mill pond and dry the skins on boards. The muskrat was pretty plentiful and had a pretty fur, but the otter was beautiful and was very scarce.

I remember one night we had a heavy rain and the mill pond was flooded. It had rained several days before and that night Daddy would go out nearly every hour to raise another flood gate, but it didn’t do any good. The dam burst and the water was all over the road everywhere. They cut a small pond opposite the big one in case this ever happened again, but it is all covered over now. I wonder if anyone has done so many things, lived so many different places and gotten into so much trouble as we used to. We really had a wonderful childhood though. We loved to explore and there was an old road that ran through the woods and came out behind Pappy Wray’s, and we’d go over there real often. Sometimes we got lost in the woods and would have to backtrack to get on the right road again. Mamma used to send us through there once a week to get her some fern. It looked like little palm leaves. She made tulips out of crepe paper and dipped them in wax and she put them in the pretty green ferns. They looked real nice but the fern died and we went every week and got fresh fern.

Daddy had a little panel truck that he hauled meal in. One day he was backing down the little hill to the back of the mill and Teeny was behind the truck and Daddy didn’t know it. He was caught between the truck and the mill porch. Daddy was scared to death, but Teeny wasn’t seriously hurt. Just frightened.

We all pitched in to help build the house on the point. Allie Leigh did the main things with Daddy’s help but we all worked hard. We put creosote on the underpinnings, we helped carry shingles to the roof, hauled cinderblocks, hauled and helped mix the cement.
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We painted, cut down trees, and stacked them up like fodder stacks. We didn't build a bathroom when we moved there, but Daddy planned to later. He planned to make me and Barbara’s bedroom into the bath. So after we had been there awhile, Daddy put some two by fours upstairs for a doorway and we helped Mamma tack up some cardboard boxes around the walls. Then she put wallpaper on top of it and hung a curtain at the door and it was a real pretty room. We liked it upstairs, but we never did have the bathroom put in.

At the other end of the attic Mamma had a clothesline she used when it rained and Daddy had an old pinball machine that Gilbert Bailey (his nephew) had given him. We didn't have to put any money in it, and we loved to play it.

The skating rink opened up while we were there, and we went nearly every time it was open because we always got in free. My uncle used to run it, and we loved to skate. We learned to skate on the back porch although Daddy always told us not to skate there because we chipped the cement. As you know by now we were pretty sneaky, and we skated there whenever Daddy wasn’t at home. Whenever we went to the skating rink during the week, we had to be home by nine o'clock and after we got in bed we could hear the music coming from the rink. I loved the music at the rink. It is the most beautiful music in the world, I think. Most of it is organ music and it's so pretty.

We had an outdoor johnny and Mamma had her clothesline strung crosswise the path to it. At night when we went to the toilet, we would be scared the devil would get us and we would walk out there real slow but we would run all the way back to the house. One night John went out there and was running back to the house and got caught on Mamma’s clothesline and nearly hung himself.

I remember Daddy and Joe Thomas were real good friends. He was the policeman in Gloucester then and everybody liked him. He would come to see Daddy real often, and he and Daddy would practice shooting their pistols. They used to shoot at Mamma’s clothespins on the line and Mamma would fuss at them because they would split them all to pieces. Joe could turn backwards and shoot between his legs and still hit them. He was a very good shot. He was killed in a helicopter or plane crash sometime after that.

We had a woods nearly all the way around the house then, but it’s all clear and houses are built there now. There were vines that hung from the trees like Tarzan swings from, and we loved to play on them. I remember once when Daddy was swinging from one that went over a deep valley, he had just touched the ground again when the whole vine came down from the tree. He was sure lucky that time.

We used to play horseshoes a lot then, too. They weren’t like those we play with today. They were like the ones the horses wore. Maywood and I play real often, but he beats me nearly every game.

John used to go frogging a lot, and we all loved frog legs. He would come home with a grass sack full of frogs and they were making the awfulest noise. We would help him skin them and cut off the hind legs which were the only part any good.

Daddy used to do a lot of hunting, mostly bird hunting with his faithful dog Nellie, but he also hunted rabbits and squirrels too. He loved to hunt and after Iris and Diddie were wed, they would come home every weekend and every holiday and Leroy and Delbert would go hunting with Daddy and John. They would talk hunting until you would nearly go nuts. I remember they nearly always lost John in the woods because he was deaf in one ear. Every time Daddy would call him he would go the other way if he was standing with his deaf ear toward Daddy.
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Daddy took us all to the movies on Saturday night when we got a little older. After the show he always stopped on the way home and got some ice cream. When we got home Mamma would divide it up and we would eat ours real slow to try to make it last. We always listened to the radio after we got home. We listened to the country show that came from Cincinnati, Ohio. Daddy would tap dance and he could jump up and kick his heels together twice before he hit the floor again. We couldn’t.

Daddy and Mamma were both twins. Mamma’s twin was Aunt Esther and Daddy’s twin was Aunt Lottie and she lived in Baltimore. We never got to see her very much. They would come down in the summertime and take turns visiting all her family, but that’s about the only time they came. One year Mamma and Daddy went up there for the weekend to celebrate his and Aunt Lottie’s birthday together. At the same time my Aunt Elizabeth and Uncle Myron [Hall] had gone on a trip to North Carolina with Annie and Willie Broaddus. They were in a real bad wreck down there, and all of them were in the hospital. We had to call Mamma and Daddy home. They were real upset and worried and so were we. All of them got alright except Mamma’s sister Elizabeth. She was paralyzed from the waist down. She has been in a wheel chair now for about twenty years. I remember she and other couples would ice skate on the mill pond when it was frozen over. She roller skated real good too and was a good dancer. She is a very brave woman though. She has accepted her injury and is always pleasant. I never see her without a smile on her face. We’re all very proud of her.

My Uncle Wattie was a mail man in Mathews and deliver the mail in an old hearse. Daddy bought it from him and sawed the back off and made a truck out of it. He closed in the cab and put a body on the back. We used to deliver papers in it. We would get so cold in the winter time that our hands nearly froze and Daddy would tell us to blow into our hands and rub them together to warm them up. One or all of us were delivering papers at one time or another for years. Mamma used to make some money too. She sold dresses called Fashion Frocks. She would get on the little Lee Hall bus and go over Cheatham Annex and sell dresses all day and come back that evening. She made something on each thing she sold and at the end of the month, she got premiums according to how much she sold. We loved to sit down and pick out different things to order from her dress sheets. Sometimes she let Barbara and I go out to sell something and let us keep the deposit which was about a dollar and we thought we had a fortune. I sold Fashion Frocks after I was married and Arlene says she is going to sell them too when she grows up.

John used to work at the mill and of course he always walked to work because it wasn’t any further than a city block, but nearly every time he went he would get a ride. One day Daddy was trying to get a ride to the court house because his car was broken down, and he stood at the gate for hours and couldn’t get a ride. He said John could get a ride to the toilet. John used to hitch hike to and from the movies, and he always put water on his hair to comb it back. When it was cold weather, he would come home with ice crystals in his hair. It’s a wonder he didn’t catch his death. John later went to work for the state in Mathews and then to Grinels Florist.

Barbara worked at Hotel Calvin her last two years in school. She had study hall her last period, and she got off and went to work every day. Barbara was pretty smart and never had any trouble keeping up her grades. After she graduated, she still worked there until a little while after she was married.

I used to do a lot of babysitting to make extra money, too. I was babysitting nearly every weekend.
After Barbara and I started courting we were going with two boys from Matthews, and we double-dated. They would ride by on Sunday evenings and blow the horn and go on up the road, turn around and come back and blow the horn again. They did this several times before they would come in the yard and Daddy hated for them to do it. He swore if they went by once more that he was going to get the pot and sit out in the front yard on it. We were scared to death they would do it again because we thought Daddy really would do what he said. I know now he never would have done such a thing, but I didn’t know that then. He hated for boys to drive up to the house and blow the horn too. One night this boy came to see me and he drove up and blew the horn. Daddy went to the door and told him if he wanted to see me to get out and come to the house, which he did.

Daddy used to help us with our homework a lot. He was real good at arithmetic being a carpenter he knew all about fractions. He didn’t go any further than the third grade, but he had a beautiful handwriting and was real smart. He always told us we didn’t need any book sense that all we needed was some common sense and we would get along alright.

I remember once Teeny Boy did something at school and was sent to the principal and he gave Teeny a beating. He came home and told Daddy, and the next morning Daddy went to school and told the principal never to lay a hand on any of his children again. He told him if any of us needed a beating to let him know, and he would beat us but nobody else better touch us.

I used to read a lot when I was in high school. I would go to the library every chance I got and get books. I read all the Nancy Drew mysteries. I loved mystery books the best and still do.

I remember on Halloween we always went over Aunt Esther’s, and she and Uncle Sam had fixed pumpkins with candles in them and sat them around on the fence post. They looked real eerie in the dark, and Bubber and Mac would sneak around the house and scare the daylights out of us. I can’t remember of us ever dressing up though, but we had a ball. Some people came to the house once all dressed up, and Daddy met them at the door with his shotgun. He nearly scared them to death. We were trying to guess who they were, and Daddy said “that one can’t be anybody but Enos Blake, just look at his feet.” Enos did have big feet and sure enough it was Milton and Enos, and they had Milton’s niece Mary Virginia with them.

Around Easter time we would pick flowers and we most always bought our Easter outfits with our money. We picked for Douglas Thomas and Steven Field and some others. I loved to pick and sometimes we’d skip school during the flower season just to go and pick. Aunt Esther always had a big Easter egg hunt at her house too, and all of my cousins would be there to try to win the big prize. There were always about twenty or more of us there and we really had a time.

We moved from the house at Cow Creek Mill when I was about fifteen. We all loved it there, but Daddy didn’t like living on the highway. We moved to Nuttall to Rose Hill. It was a big old house, and we all learned to like it there too. The Korean War broke out while we were there, and I can remember all the planes flying over. Daddy bought another piece of land down Toddsbury Lane about a mile from Rose Hill, and we would go down there in the evenings after school and help him clear it off.

I had my sixteenth birthday while we were at Rose Hill, and Mamma and Daddy gave me a party. I didn’t know what I was going to wear so one day I told Mamma that I’d like to have a new dress to wear to my party, so she went into the bedroom and came out with four pieces of material and gave it all to me for my birthday. Diddie could sew real good
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so the next weekend, I went home with her and Delbert and she made me four new dresses. One was pink and was three tiered with a big collar, one was yellow and one was green checked. These were all cotton but my party dress was navy blue taffeta, and it had a scalloped neckline and scalloped sleeves. I thought it was the prettiest thing. John gave me socks to match all my dresses, and Barbara gave me a little heart shaped wrist watch. It doesn’t work anymore but I still have it.

I quit school that year and went to Richmond to live with my cousin Florence. She was a nurse and had three little children, and I helped her take care of them and stayed with them when she was working. Keith was in kindergarten and Donna Marie was three and Winnie Arlene was only two months when I went there. I came home most weekends, and I came home at Christmas. Mamma and Daddy had moved down the lane in their new home then, and they liked it there. Mamma and Daddy gave me a coat for Christmas that year, and I still have it even though it is eighteen years old now. It was the last gift that Daddy gave me. Iris and Diddie met me at the bus stop and took me home that night, and I was so glad to see everybody. I sat across from Daddy, and we talked. He was not one for showing his affection to us kids, but he took his foot and rubbed it across my leg as much as to say “I’m glad you’re home.” I was really touched.

When Barbara got her vacation the next spring she came up and stayed with me for a week and then I went home with her and stayed a week. I remember helping Daddy wash the car and do little things about the place. The boy I was going with then lived in Richmond, and he came down the following Saturday to get me. Daddy wanted me to stay until Sunday like I had planned, but I would have had to take the bus back so I went then instead. He told us when we left to “drive careful and try to get back before dark.” They were the last words that he spoke to me because he was taken with a high blood stroke on Monday and died four hours later. Barbara called me on Monday evening and told me that Daddy was bad off, and she and Mac and another man came up to get me. When they got there they told me that Daddy was dead. He had a severe headache all day long and was taken seriously ill about four o’clock, and the doctor said that his blood pressure had gone up so high that he couldn’t get it back down. He died around eight o’clock.

How we all missed Daddy. He was always there when we went home. He was our very reason for living then. We never realized it while he was living but never was a person missed so much. We had been sitting around talking about dying and etc. the Saturday before, and I remember Daddy saying he didn’t want any flowers at his funeral. He had sixty-seven pieces. He had lots of friends and I never heard anyone say they didn’t like my father.

Daddy was never one for going to church up until about five years before he died. He always took us and sat in the car and waited for us because Mamma never learned to drive. I don’t remember what started Daddy going, but he loved to go hear Preacher Locke speak. He would go wherever he was preaching and listen to him. Once when Preacher Locke was preaching revival down Ware Neck, Daddy went with him every night, and one night after the sermon was over Daddy told him that he wanted him to preach that same sermon at his funeral he had liked it so much. Well, Daddy never told any of us about what he had told Preacher Locke and after Daddy died Mamma told someone to try to get Preacher Locke to preach at Daddy’s funeral because she knew how Daddy thought so much of him. He had been preaching at Ebenezer, but had moved to North Carolina, but they got in touch with him and he came. He told Mamma that he had preached Daddy’s funeral while he was alive and then he told Mamma what Daddy had asked him to do. He preached the same sermon at Daddy’s funeral. The preacher that was at Newington then assisted him. He was
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Preacher Stevens. John and I both joined church while he was there. I remember the night we were baptized, it was raining a flood and the car that Daddy had then leaked and he had to pull in at Hudson South’s station and park under the porch to keep us from getting wet. Preacher Stevens was a small man, and John was only fifteen but he was a grown man, and a lot bigger than him. When John’s turn came the preacher dunked him under and lost his hold on him, and John nearly drowned before he got him up out of the water. John was as white as his shirt, and he was spitting and snorting. Boy, Preacher Stevens was scared.

Daddy was only forty six when he died and he only saw two of his grandchildren, Bonnie and Dana. He loved for them to come see him, and he spoiled them rotten. Now there are thirteen grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. Mamma said that Daddy used to have some dump trucks although I don't remember it. Maywood is a driver and loves to talk about trucks so I know they would get along real good. I wish Maywood could have known him.

I never went back to Richmond after Daddy died. The next month I went to work part time at Grinels Florist. John was already working there. I worked from four to ten in the evenings, and I had Mondays off and I worked Wednesdays in the daytime until four o’clock. I loved working there even though there wasn’t much to do except answer the phone and take orders. Sometimes if there was a large funeral or a prom I would help make bows or fix the corsages. Loray Callis lived next door and she worked there too. Her daughter Jane would come over and keep me company a lot. Sometimes I would go over her house and eat supper with her. On Mondays she and I would take the bus to Richmond and go shopping and see a movie.

Our family really split up after Daddy died. Barbara and Milton were married the next month, and they moved into one of the cottages down “Glen Roy.” After a few months Mamma went back to Rose Hill and started running a boarding house there. All the soldiers that worked at the radar station stayed there. Some of them had their wives with them too. Mamma had something to do and occupy her mind, and she seemed to be happier than she had been since Daddy died. She made extra money, too. John, Teeny and I continued to live at the house for a while, but we would go up to see Mamma every day and sometimes we ate with her but most of the time I fixed our meals at home. Mamma remarried about four years later. She married a man from Syria. I have never seen him but once and that was when he was “courting” Mamma. She comes home nearly every summer if she can, but he never comes home with her. He is a Doctor of technician and is always too busy to come with her. She is living in San Francisco, California. Mamma seems to be very happy now, but I know she would rather be closer home and share in all our daily problems. That’s something that is always happening in a big family like hers, “Problems.” Maybe she’s better off not knowing all the little things that go on.

That following September I quit the florist and went to work at the Hotel Calvin. After a few weeks I moved into the little room in the back of the hotel where Mr. and Mrs. Sutton had their apartment. They were just like a family to me and treated me as if I were their own child. I enjoyed working there. I never bought anything except clothes and I bought enough of them. I did buy me a cedar chest, but I filled it with romance comic books mostly. I had a few things other than that in there but not much. I bought a big mirror that was shaped like a ships wheel with the money Mr. and Mrs. Sutton gave me for Christmas that year. The next year I bought a 1940 Pontiac, and I named it “Ready.” It wasn’t always ready, but I thought a lot of that old car. It went most of the time.

John and Teeny went to live with Mamma after I left, and the house was empty for a while. Later it was rented and now it is sold. I don’t remember Daddy there too much.
because he moved there when I was in Richmond, and I only came home occasionally on weekends.

That spring after Daddy died I met Maywood. I had been going with his half-brother, Raymond, and we met Maywood now and then when we were out. Raymond worked on a boat and was gone all week and was home only on weekends. One day we saw Maywood down Mathews Court House, and he got in the car with us and we were talking. He told Raymond that he had called me the Tuesday before that, and I wasn't at home. Raymond and I were going steady and he thought I had gone out with somebody. I told Maywood that he must have gotten the wrong number and that I was at home working until ten o’clock and then I went to bed. He insisted that he had called the right number, but I didn’t know until later that he was just teasing. Anyway the next Tuesday night he really did call and asked me to go out riding with him. I went with full intentions of telling Raymond all about it, but fate stepped in and we fell in love. We later told Raymond all about it, and we saw each other every night from that night until we got married. If I worked until ten at night, he would be there waiting for me and he always told me that he wasn't coming the next night but he always did. If I got off at two-thirty, I would go to his house and have supper with him and then we would go out.

We were married on January 3, the day before Maywood’s birthday in 1953. We have been married for fifteen and a half years now, and we now have a little girl. I have a beautiful life now. A wonderful husband, he is not without fault but compare him entirely with anybody else in the world and in my opinion he’d come out on top. Arlene is very well mannered, but she takes privileges with us when she thinks she can get away with it, but most of the time she does like she’s told. She's growing up much too fast. I can hardly remember when she was toddling around. She is eleven years old now. Life would be very empty without her.

Daddy would be very proud of all his children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren if he were living today. Mamma says she is proud of all of us. There aren't many people who raise six children who eventually marry and never have a separation or a divorce among the six. We all see each other occasionally and live only about fifteen miles apart. Now and then we have a family reunion, and all of us get together at once. We had one last June while Mamma was home on vacation and also gave Iris Mae a surprise birthday party. She was forty-two. There were thirty-one of us then and every one was there plus a few others.

So ends the story of my single life. My married life is a whole new wonderful story and maybe someday I will write a sequel to this and tell about that, who knows? I never thought I would finish this but as the Bible says “I can do all things, through Christ who strengthens me.” So I remember that in everything I try to do. One of my very favorite verses is: God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference.

I thank God for giving me the courage to write down some of the things that “I Remember.”
Jessica Taylor is a graduate student in the Comparative Master's Program in History at William and Mary and is pursuing a Ph.D. at the University of Florida. Her research in Gloucester County focuses on rural material culture, collective memory of Civil War and twentieth-century social structures.

WP: We are living on land that was the first grant by the royal king of England to anyone in present Gloucester County: three thousand acres on the north shore of the Charles River beyond the Indian fields to the creek opposite Queen’s Creek and down to Timberneck Creek. George Minifie apparently never lived here, left the land to his children, who left it to their children, and the grandchildren sold it in 1680 to John Mann, a member of the Virginia Royal Council in Williamsburg.

John Mann lived in the southern part of this plantation, in an area called Timberneck, divided off in a large peninsula divided by two creeks: Timberneck Creek and Cedar Bush Creek. It actually had around eleven hundred acres in it. The center section of land known later as Shelly had almost a thousand acres. It was bordered by Cedar Bush Creek and Carter’s Creek. And then followed to the west, the tract where present-day Rosewell is, another thousand acres. So in 1680, John Mann acquired this property. He had one daughter, Mary, who married Matthew Page. They had a son named Mann Page, the first of that name, born in Timberneck. In the next generation, Matthew Page decided to move his house farther upriver to a place now known as Rosewell, which household he moved there about 1700, or probably a little bit before. The Page family lived there until about 1837. In the meantime, the Timberneck portion had been sold to the Catlett family. That was done about 1793.

The center portion, Shelly, was not occupied until about 1790. Apparently, the lady of the house was very capable, very strong. She had at least fifteen children, and she survived
her husband by forty-one years. He died in 1813, and she lived on until 1854. However, there was no man in the house. She was perhaps overwhelmed with the responsibilities here and acquired some debt. We're not sure, but from what I've been able to find out from what records are available, and of course the Gloucester County Records have burnt twice, it's not clear but apparently the bank foreclosed on loans and about eight hundred of the thousand acres were sold off to meet obligations. The remaining amount of land then was owned by Cornelia Page. She married Lieutenant Alberto Griffith. Therefore, her full name was Cornelia Page Griffith. She gave the land to my grandfather, provided he would build a house for her, as her house here at Shelly burned in 1883. She asked my grandfather to build a house where she could live out the rest of her life, and he was to take care of her, and then the property would be left to his children here. She lived on until 1890, and that was just about the time the house was finished, so really she never moved into it. She had lived at what my father called Aunt Cornelia's cottage. I think it would best be described as the caretaker’s house, which now is long gone.

In my recollection, the only old building left on the property was the smokehouse, but it had a shingled roof that was quite old, and you could see a lot of sunlight and daylight through the roof. It's gone now. So none of the original buildings are left at Shelly. The house that my grandfather built was of poor construction and of relatively inexpensive material. It was not a fine house. I had tried to resurrect it, but it was so difficult, so I built a new one in its place in the 1980s.

My grandfather was the one who went to college a couple years at William and Mary. He aspired to be a doctor, but the war came along and he was in the militia so he went on in the militia immediately.

### Family of Mann Page

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mann Page, b. 1794, d. 1842</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>+m. 1st Judith Nelson, b. 1797</td>
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<tr>
<td>Francis Nelson Page, b. 1819, d. 1860</td>
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<tr>
<td>+m. Susan DuVal, b. 1831, d. 1898</td>
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<tr>
<td>Powhatan Robertson Page, b. 1821, d. 1864</td>
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<tr>
<td>+m. Elizabeth Lowndes Scollay, b. 1833</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sarah Scollay Page, b. 1858</td>
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<tr>
<td>+m. 2nd Lucy Ann Jones, b. 1808, d. 1877</td>
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<tr>
<td>John Randolph Page, b. 1830, d. 1901</td>
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<tr>
<td>+m. Delia Bryan, b. 1833, d. 1902</td>
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<tr>
<td>Randolph Bryan Page, b. 1857, d. 1863</td>
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<tr>
<td>Elizabeth Coalter Page, b. 1859, d. 1863</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mann Page, b. 1861, d. 1893</td>
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<tr>
<td>Martha Throckmorton Page, b. 1832, d. 1934</td>
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<tr>
<td>+m. Henry Watson Vandegrift, b. 1821, d. 1882</td>
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<tr>
<td>Katherine Page Vandegrift, b. 1865, d. 1963</td>
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<tr>
<td>+m. Alfred Willis Withers, b. 1865, d. 1928</td>
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<tr>
<td>Alfred Duham Withers, b. 1892, d. 1948</td>
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<tr>
<td>Katherine Page Withers, b. 1895</td>
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<tr>
<td>+m. Philip Welford Hamilton, b. 1898, d. 1982</td>
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<tr>
<td>Philip Welford Hamilton, Jr., b. 1927</td>
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<tr>
<td>John Randolph Hamilton, b. 1938</td>
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<tr>
<td>Anne Franklin Withers, b. 1901</td>
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<tr>
<td>Elizabeth Vandegrift Withers, b. 1902</td>
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<tr>
<td>+m. Robert Bruce Warden, b. 1895</td>
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<tr>
<td>Martha Page Warden, b. 1927</td>
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<tr>
<td>Elizabeth Nelson Page, b. 1836, d. 1860</td>
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<tr>
<td>+m. James M. Goggin, b. 1820, d. 1889</td>
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<tr>
<td>Richard Mann Page, b. 1837, d. 1901</td>
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<tr>
<td>+m. Katharine Mallory Wray, b. 1850, d. 1934</td>
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<td>Thomas N. Page, b. 1881, d. 1901</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cecil Wray Page, b. 1883, d. 1978</td>
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<tr>
<td>+m. Elizabeth A. R. Greaves, b. 1892, d. 1977</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cecil Wray Page, Jr., b. 1920</td>
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<tr>
<td>+m. Nina Griswold Garfield, b. 1921, d. 2009</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nina Wray Page</td>
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<tr>
<td>Anne Cecil Page</td>
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<tr>
<td>John Mann Page</td>
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<tr>
<td>Elizabeth Page, b. 1929</td>
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<tr>
<td>+m. Robert Dwight Aldrich, b. 1920, d. 1983</td>
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<td>John Page Aldrich</td>
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<tr>
<td>Elizabeth Butterfield Aldrich</td>
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<td>Anne Throckmorton Page, b. 1885, d. 1968</td>
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<tr>
<td>Richard Mann Page, b. 1890, d. 1970</td>
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<tr>
<td>+m. Otelia Butler McGill, b. 1892-</td>
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<tr>
<td>Peyton Nelson Page, b. 1892, d. 1964</td>
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<tr>
<td>Peyton Nelson Page, b. 1837, d. 1901</td>
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<tr>
<td>+m. Emily Daniel Kemp, b. 1847, d. 1914</td>
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As a lieutenant after the year of service was up, they voted on their officers. My grandfather was voted to be a captain in commanding Company A of the 26th Virginia Infantry. His older brother had been the regimental commander and was a regimental commander throughout the war, except when he commanded the DuBois’ brigade, because DuBois was not available at times. The older brother was killed at the Battle of Petersburg. He was shot down and wounded and died there. My grandfather was in the troops that surrendered at Petersburg in 1864. And then he was imprisoned the rest of the war. Initially he went to Point Lookout at the concentration camp there, and then he was one of those sent to Fort Delaware in the island in Delaware Bay. While there he contracted an inflammation in one of his eyes and went blind. He was not wounded, but he was a casualty of poor sanitation and poor medicine. So after the war, things were pretty grim for him. However, he was the sheriff for a while and was able to keep the family alive until he died in 1901. The property left at Shelly was divided up at his death between his living children at the time. One of them was my father, and his brothers and sisters. And we live now on a portion of the land that Aunt Cornelia gave to my grandfather in his lifetime. And then it was divided and given to the children.

JT: As far as specific events go in your family’s oral history, what is the earliest thing that anyone has told you about?

WP: That would be about 1924, 25, 26? I was born in 1920. I guess World War I is what was talked about most in that time. This was about five years afterward.

JT: Did anyone ever talk about the Civil War?

WP: Yes, my father talked about it because he had grown up shortly after the Civil War. His father had been in it, his uncles were in, and his grandfather was in. And most of them survived. One was in the U.S. Army until he died young in 1864. He went to the military academy at West Point, was wounded twice in the Mexican War, was quite a hero there. But he was wounded in the chest; he was shot in the chest. And he never really recovered. Finally died of tuberculosis, he died in 1860, about a month or so before the Civil War started, so he did not participate in it. The next brother, down in this area was commander of the 26th infantry regiment, and he was killed at the battle of Petersburg. My grandfather was the next, and he ended up blind, and he survived the war in prison camp. But came back blind in one eye. There was a stigma attached to a blind person in those days. And he never went back to school. He stayed on the family farm and took care of his mother. All the other brothers and sisters were either married or had worked and lived elsewhere themselves, so my grandfather was the one that took care of his mother until she died. And then when she died, twenty years later or so, he married and had children and my father was born in 1883. And it was mostly from my father that I heard about the Civil War. My father had said that his father had lived in a family with three people blind in one eye. One was the father, and one was a daughter, and the other grandfather.

JT: Are there specific stories about the nineteenth century that you could comment on from your family or maybe from other families?

WP: I suppose our family was normal and typical of that in that era. But we must remember in the 1920s and 1930s, rural Virginia was a labor-intensive area, and that was before there were tractors, before there was electricity in the area, and before there were the modern conveniences. So there was just a great deal of manual labor.

And a lot of it was done by colored people in those days, but by no means was all of it. Everybody did a great deal of work, especially the women in the family. I mean, they
did the sewing, the cooking, baking, making the cheese, making the butter, and pickling of
the cucumbers and sometimes pork and beef, and raising chickens, picking up the eggs,
selling some, raising new chickens, keeping the hawks and crows off of the chickens.
Hawks were particularly dangerous. They would dive down and get a little chicken and
take it home for supper. The roads were very bad in those days. Some were corduroy
routes made with pine trees cross-ways on the road so you could drive over them without
sinking down in the mud. That was a difficult situation for horses, though, and mules,
because they had to watch where they walked so they didn’t fall down between two trees.

JT: Can you comment a little bit about the lives of the people in your immediate
family, maybe your brothers and sisters?

WP: I’m the oldest of two children. But there’s almost a nine-year difference in the
ages. So I was raised initially as an only child. In 1926 my mother’s brother and his wife
had a problem. His wife had cancer of the throat and had to be hospitalized. My mother
and my uncle’s wife were very close friends from school days, as they had known each
other since they were children. So my uncle left his two children in May of 1926 with my
parents who raised them with me until 1929. In 1929, my uncle remarried and he took his
two children back. So then I was left there, but I had a younger sister who was born a little
earlier that year. She was born the same year that my first cousins left, so there was an age
difference. So I really- I was raised for two years with first cousins who were more like
brothers and sisters.

They were younger than I. The boy was about a year and a half younger than I and the
girl was about four years younger than I. They were fine and I enjoyed playing with them,
especially the boy. The girl was born in 1924. So, when she first came out, she was just
two years old. We played, we liked to do things together, but then in 1929, his father took
him away with his new wife. So I didn’t have anyone else right in the family that was my
age. There were no children in our close kin, and the roads were bad. Cars were not very
dependable. We often went places in a horse and buggy or on horseback. So there was not
too much social life for a young boy. I was ten years old when I grew up. There was always
work on the farm. There was hunting, fishing, and in the summer there were swimming,
boating, but it was mostly with older people. Later on during the Depression, a child made
it pretty well here because there were a lot of older people who were unemployed and they
would often take me fishing and hunting with them.

JT: What is your sister’s life like?

WP: Unfortunately, I went to boarding school early on, so I did not really grow up with
her. We were together in the summer, but she was nine years younger than I, so it was a
different age group. But she’s still around. She lives next door to me now. And, she’s
much younger than I. Regrettably, her husband died young, but she has two children and
grandchildren, and we see them periodically.

JT: Did she go on to a career?

WP: Yes, she went on to school and college and was a school teacher for a short while
and was married fairly soon after college. Her husband was an attorney and was a special
agent with the FBI.

JT: Do you have anything in particular that you would like to comment on about your
life that you want us to put on record for you?

WP: My life has been a little bit different than some other people’s lives. I was very
privileged. My father knew a doctor who had a private school and camp for boys, and I was
invited to join. So when I was eight years old, I went off to boarding school. At Dr. Blair Spencer’s school, I was terribly homesick for about two weeks, then I adjusted. And I was very fortunate and very happy there. There were many opportunities for me which would not have been the case otherwise. And then I went to summer camp for two years which was good. Horseback riding, shooting, boating, hunting, and, of course, athletics and school work. In 1933 there was a terrible hurricane here in the county, probably the worst in the last hundred years, where the tidal water rose about eight to ten feet in about six hours. It stayed up a little while, then subsided almost as quickly as it rose. Dr. Spencer’s schooner was a casualty of the storm. But my schooling was very fortunate, and I had a lot of advantages there. I continued in boarding school and went off to college at VMI for a year. While I was there I received an appointment to the military academy. Went to West Point, then World War II, married, was in the Korean War for a year, retired from the Army young in 1966 at age forty-five.

Then I worked in private industry in New York, worked for the Continental Canning Company for three years in lower Manhattan in New York. We bought a house in Darien, Connecticut, where I commuted on the New Haven railroad. In three years, I transferred affiliations and joined International Telephone and Telegraph in financial management. I forgot to say along the line I picked up an MBA and that helped me out. I stayed with ITT until I retired. A small Catholic college in Vermont asked me to head up the business department. So I went to Rutland, Vermont, at St. Joseph’s College for two years. I found it too far from home and too cold in the winters. One day the high for the day was minus five. It was about five hundred miles too far north. So after two years, I resigned there and
moved back here to Shelly and started living on the land that I had inherited from the family. I wanted to try to get our business affairs in shape, try to do a little civic work, try to get a few constructive things done. I had become a member of the Gloucester Historical Society which I continued my membership. I’d been back a couple of months when I got a phone call, asking would I join the Gloucester Historical Committee. I said yes, and the lady said, “By the way, you’ll be the chairman.” So I was the chairman of the Gloucester Historical Committee for a while, and I stayed on as a member for about seven years. In the meantime, I worked with the Gloucester Historical Society and have been the president of it and other offices in it over a period of a decade. I was involved in the setting up of the Rosewell Foundation, trying to keep the interest alive there. And that finally worked out pretty well in the late 1900s. Then one day, David Brown and Thane Harpole asked me if I knew where Fairfield was and if I could locate it, and I told them yes. They said, “How about showing me?” So I took them out and showed them where the house was and where the cemetery was. That’s about all I knew about it except I knew a little about the family, as I descend from the Burwell family in two different family lines. And then in time, Gary Larsen donated fifty thousand dollars to get Fairfield on the map. And the question came up about how to get it organized. So on our porch here at the second meeting I proposed organizing it as an element of the Gloucester Historical Society initially to get tax-exempt status for the donation, and then it can be an independent organization when it had enough time to develop and get offices set up and everything. So that’s what we did. I called up the president of the Gloucester Historical Society to meet with us and he did. That was Daniel Wine who was president of the Gloucester Historical Society at the time. He said “Okay, let’s take on the Fairfield organization as a separate division.” So armed with a fifty-thousand dollar check, I went to the post office at White Marsh, got a post office box so we’d have an address. Then I went to the bank to open up an account so we’d be in business. I gave the name of the organization, and our post-office box, deposited the check, and we were in business.

Later in 1992, I decided we needed a family organization, that our family was known well enough, that we knew enough of the people to try and get an organization going, somewhat like the Lee Society of Virginia. So I wrote to different cousins and several of them came back and said, “I think there’s interest in this.” So based on that, which was the spring of 1992, I said, “Well we’ll have a meeting and have a reunion of our family.” In May of 1994, they were expecting two hundred participants. I sent out the invitations and a brief explanation of what we thought we would do. And I got different answers. One answer came back from a lady who said, “I’m not really a Page descendant because I descended from the Page family through my mother and not my father.” And I got another reply back that said, “I’m not a descendant but my father is.” Another came back, “May is too soon for this year; let’s put it off a year.” And I had to remind him that it had been put off for more than a year because this was 1992 and the first reunion was to be in 1994. We had the reunion, and there were a goodly number of people that attended. Two hundred and eighty attended one or more events over the four-day period from Thursday through Sunday. There were not nearly that many for every single event, but some people were there Thursday, some not on Friday, some not on Saturday, some not on Sunday. So we got a number of organizations joined, and they’re all surviving very nicely now. So mostly since I’ve been back the second time in Gloucester - see, I was here as a child, before I went to school and stayed away until 1985. In 1985, I came back and have been here since then.

JT: If you have something else to say, the recorder is still going!
Cecil Wray Page, Jr.

WP: I married just after graduation from West Point. My wife was an army brat; she’d grown up in the Philippines. We have three children. The oldest one is a retired army nurse, married. The second one married just after college, had three children. She married a cousin; they met at Vanderbilt University. We went in from Connecticut where we lived. We lived in Darien for nineteen years when I worked in New York, and when I worked in the Catholic College of Vermont, in Rutland, in the College of St. Joseph. But our second child’s husband is a descendant of John Page’s brother Mann Page at Rosewell. Our daughter Ann and her husband are seventh cousins, so Ann Page married Phillip Page. In Phillip’s family, that Page part of the family descended also from Pocahontas which is timely now when we consider the interest of Werowocomoco. Our third child, John, went to the military academy as I did, was a ranger airborne, then decided to take up medicine. So he’s there, board-certified in internal medicine and gastroenterology. He has four children; my daughter Ann has three. One granddaughter was married last September a year ago. Our second daughter’s second son aspires to be married next May. He has another year of college to go. He’s a first classman at VMI this year. The third child, Virginia, is at Mary Washington, and she’s on the swimming team. Last weekend she took one first place and one third place. She won the ladies’ backstroke.

JT: Do you keep in touch with them a lot?

WP: I try to. We had a nice reunion this past weekend. Most of them were here, not all of them, but most of them were here. We hope to get most of the family here at Christmas, too. ‡

Patricia “Pat” Perkinson died February 14, 2010. She and her husband, Herbert “Bert” Perkinson, were active members of the Gloucester Genealogical Society of Virginia. I met Pat in 1999 when she was program speaker for GGSV. She spoke about the sites and interests in Middlesex County. She and I discovered that we were distant relatives in the Roane Family. She joined GGSV and has contributed numerous articles to our journal. Pat’s articles are listed by volume and number:

v5n2—Cross-County Cousins: New Middlesex Cemeteries
Book Underlines Gloucester-Middlesex Connections
v7n1—Old House People - A Poem
v9n1—Looking for My Roanes
v10n1—Who Knows Where Computers—and a Bit of Footwork—May Lead You? Texarkana Couple
Discover Wealth of Virginia Ancestors, Interview with Preston and Mary Ann Philyaw
v10n3—Be Careful What You Google For
v11n1—Object of Colonial Governor’s Unrequited Love Lies at Rest in Old Middlesex Walled Cemetery

Pat and Bert have two children and two grandchildren. Pat served as Secretary of the Commonwealth and was previously press aide to Governor Mills E. Godwin Jr.; community services director for J. Sargeant Reynolds Community College; and for 18 years, was a columnist and feature writer for the Richmond Times-Dispatch and other publications. She also did public relations for a number of organizations. She was president of Virginia Press Women, Old Dominion Chapter of Public Relations Society of America, and the Richmond Public Relations Association. She served on national, state and local boards of the American Cancer Society and on boards of many other Richmond and Middlesex County organizations, including Rappahannock Community College. Roane Hunt
How to Protect Your Research

By Robert W. Plummer

What do you do if you do not have relatives who want the information that you have taken years to collect? It happens more often than it should, but that’s life. Not everyone is interested in genealogy. And when they do become interested we will be gone.

This article is written to offer some suggestions for saving the information that has taken years for you to find and record so that it will be available to your family members and others that have a direct or indirect relationship with your family.

Publish, publish, and publish. In today’s world, if you get your information published, it will be out there for just about forever. Depending on how you publish, it may or may not be available to everyone.

Online

If you publish a few paper or DVD copies for family members only, then your information will not be available to many people.

If you publish online at publicly accessible web sites like http://wc.rootsweb.ancestry.com, your family information will be available to many people all over the world. There are many free sites that make this simple to do. And don't worry if you have an error in your information—most people do. If you have something you are not sure about, then state that in the notes for that person, something like “Mary may be the younger sister of John, seems to be the right age and she does show up in the 1860 census and living with Harry and Martha, but the family Bible shows that Harry and Martha gave their youngest daughter the name Elizabeth.”

Most online genealogy sites expect you to provide the basic information about individuals in your family tree, plus additional notes, photographs, maybe even audio recordings. Then they often provide features to produce compilations from that data right from their web site without you having to do that work yourself.

Some genealogy applications, such as Family Tree Maker, have ways to upload your data to their public or subscription-service web sites directly from the application.

In addition to family tree sites, look for specialty sites. There are many sites to which people may contribute information about cemeteries, for example. There may also be web sites and online discussion forums dedicated to your family or community. If you have a particularly interesting ancestor, consider writing an article for the Wikipedia encyclopedia site.

Most social networking sites, like Facebook, MySpace, Yahoo!, and Google, allow you to create groups for your family, community, church, or school, so if you cannot find one suitable for your information, create one.

You may also build your own web site using your account on a social networking web site or one of many “blogging” sites. Your internet provider probably provides you with a personal web site as part of your account. Remember, though, that once you stop paying
for your account or your own internet domain name, then your information may be removed.

**Your Own Book**

A book published by a traditional publishing company may be quite expensive, and it is usually necessary to guess at the number of copies you want produced. If you publish a few copies for family members only, then your information will not be available to many people; but if you publish too many, you end up paying too much. There are some small private publishing companies that focus on small runs and will help you and offer economical rates.

An alternative is books for free. The web site Lulu.com is one business that offers this service. Jennie Howe says, “This is a very handy way to publish. Anyone wanting to order your book just pays ‘Lulu,’ and they print each copy on-demand, with the author getting a set fee per copy.”

Lulu.com says, “Simply upload your document, set your book’s selling price, and just like that, you’re a published author. Books are printed as they are sold, so you’ll never have to worry about inventory or order fulfillment again. Plus you’ll get 80% of the royalty and manage full rights to your book.”

A service like this would typically allow you to determine whether your book is printed as paperback or hardback, the type of binding, and the paper type and size. You can include photographs, diagrams, and anything you can get into a document on your computer. Look into how many free “proofs” you can obtain.

Lulu.com will also market your book and make it available through the major online booksellers.

But how do you create a book? If you use the software Family Tree Maker, there is a way to compile and publish your family information for free. I have not tried it, but I would guess it might take a little work to get everything in order and a cartridge or three to print. Other genealogy software applications probably offer similar features.

Otherwise, just start writing. Be sure to include interesting stories about your family members; “Just the facts” may be good advice on TV cop shows, but not so much in your family history book.

**Publications**

Our Gloucester Genealogical Society of Virginia (GGSV) publishes “The Family Tree Searcher” twice a year, and GGSV would like to publish your family information. The best way to be published in the journal would be to place each family line in an issue of the journal.

Other communities significant in your family history may have similar organizations and similar publications. Perhaps there are academic publications, alumni magazines, or
How to Protect Your Research

community newspapers (the *Glo-Quips*, for example) that would be interested in all or parts of your family tree.

**DVD**

A traditional book or publication is not the only way to allow your information to be passed hand-to-hand. You should keep your information on some kind of storage device like a CD, DVD, or flash drive or whatever new technology shows up next year.

**Archives**

Once you have your collection of family history data in a box or on DVDs or your nicely published book, you want to archive that somehow so that it will be accessible to generations to come. You will want to make your information available to researchers in the places that researchers are likely to look. For many of us, that probably means Gloucester, then elsewhere in Virginia.

What is available in Gloucester:

**Gloucester County Library**

The Director of Library Services, Melissa Malcolm, informed me, “The Gloucester Library collects and preserves historical and genealogical records that deal with Virginia. These records are housed in the Main Library. Special emphasis is placed on materials that relate to Gloucester and the surrounding counties. Material is sought from local and regional authors as well as items from area schools, churches, businesses, and organizations. Due to the nature of the collection, this material does not need to conform to the selection criteria used for the acquisition of the library materials. The Gloucester Library will supply secure space for items that are considered to be of rare or special value. This material is stored behind the desk on designated shelves and will be available for in-house use.”

You may submit documents to the library for review to determine if they meet the criteria for acceptance. However, there is limited space and concerns about the preservation of these materials, as the Virginia Room, where most local history and genealogical documents are kept, does not provide adequate control of humidity. Limited fire suppression and security are also issues that you should consider.

**Gloucester Genealogy Society of Virginia (GGSV)**

GGSV has no facilities to store documents.

**Gloucester Historical Society**

The Gloucester Historical Society has no facilities to store documents.

**Gloucester Museum of History**

The Gloucester Museum is often willing to accept family information, but at present its facilities for storing and protecting documents properly, like at most small town

When selecting one or more repositories for your information, you should consider

- fire, insect, temperature, and humidity control
- security
- acceptance criteria
- retention of ownership rights
- public accessibility
- internet access
- processing time prior to general accessibility
museums and libraries, are limited. Documents stored in the museum are kept in a secure, air-conditioned room. They are indexed and accessible by appointment.

Elsewhere in Virginia:

**Virginia Historical Society**

The Director of Manuscripts and Archives at The Virginia Historical Society, Lee Shepard, says “The Society certainly is interested in assisting in the preservation of family documentation and in making that information accessible to researchers through our library reading room and online catalog. As you might imagine, space is always at issue, so we do generally proceed on a case-by-case basis. We work with potential donors to identify materials that we would be willing to preserve—and in most cases that represents the majority of the things they offer to us—but we also craft any deeds of gift or agreements to allow us to offer back to donors duplicate or extraneous materials or to otherwise properly dispose of those materials if we are authorized to do so.

We have in the works some plans to provide electronic access to some of our genealogical collections, beginning with Bible records and the work of professional genealogists, but we are hoping to expand that in the future. For now, the basic access to such materials is though our online catalog which provides descriptions of processed materials, and through our reference staff who can assist users on-site or provide some limited research and copying services to remote users.

Along with genealogical materials, we are particularly interested in preserving family papers and selected records of local businesses and organizations. Again, for us, the best way to proceed is on that case-by-case basis. Most of that is pretty straightforward, but since you specifically mention photographs, I will mention that such items are generally most valuable when the people, places, or events depicted are identified.

Because times are tough economically for not-for-profit organizations, we work with limited budgets as regard staffing, so I can never promise how long it will take to process collections. The important thing, however, is to get such collections into proper storage and to ensure their long-term preservation, and that is something to which we are strongly committed.”

**Library of Virginia**

Lyn Hart, Director, Description Services Branch at the Library of Virginia, responded to my inquiry with this:

“The Library of Virginia would be delighted to receive the genealogical and other materials that you mentioned in your email. The Archives actively collects materials such as this and we have an extensive collection of genealogical notes and charts, Bible records, family papers, and photographs. We would be pleased to have your materials as an addition to our collection. The materials would be analyzed and added to our online catalogue. The materials would be available to researchers during our regular operating hours [presently, Monday-Saturday, 9-5]. The only items we are scanning at the present time are Bible records—these are accessible through our online catalogue. Materials are used in a monitored research room and housed in climate controlled closed stacks.

We generally send a deed of gift and acknowledgement letter to donors. Do you have some sort of donor information for the materials? Are there any use restrictions that you
or the donors have imposed on the collections?

We would probably just send a deed of gift to the Gloucester Genealogy Society of Virginia (GGSV). I assume you would be letting members of the society know what was happening to the materials. We would also encourage individual members to make donations of similar materials to The Library of Virginia."

**Tidewater Genealogical Society**

Nearby genealogical societies, historical societies, libraries, and museums should also be considered. Each will have its own restrictions on what it can or cannot accept.

**Colleges and Universities**

Virginia's public and private colleges and universities usually maintain research libraries that may accept document collections. You may wish to contact the College of William and Mary Swem Library, Old Dominion University, the University of Virginia, Virginia Tech, or others. Some of these institutions have restrictions due to space, funding, or educational mission.

Although the Swem Library has extensive information about Gloucester County, they are not looking for genealogical research that compiles information from other sources. They are most interested in original family papers and photographs that can be primary sources for other research. Their collections are indexed online (see http://swem.wm.edu) and publicly available for viewing in the library’s reading room.

Virginia Tech seems more accepting of secondary source information, shares indexes with the Library of Virginia, and may select parts of your collection for online accessibility. However, it is more interested in research related to southwestern Virginia and Appalachia.

This is based on information as of today. Remember, if you have a particular place you would like your information contributed but they cannot take it now, they may be able to take it later. Make your own arrangements early and do not assume that your first choice will accept your donation—some institutions only accept primary source material such as original family papers, Bible records, originals of photographs —and may not want your own conclusions, no matter how well substantiated. But put in your will a request that someone check one more time before they donate the information to your second choice. Whatever you decide, make sure you put the facts in your will and let your family know what your desires are. ✺