

Newsletter

Orange County Historical Society

Research Center 130 Caroline St.; Orange, VA 22960, or call us at 540-672-5366

Spring, 2005

Visit our web site at www.orangevacohist.org

Vol. 36 No. 1

V's Trip: From Luxembourg to Germany, 1944-45

By Virginius R. Shackelford, Jr.

Editor's Note: Just weeks before he died, Virginius R. Shackelford, Jr., gave a copy of his memoirs to long-time friend Joe Rowe, with instructions that when he had finished reading it, he should give it to the Historical Society. This Joe did. After securing Mr. Shackelford's — and, later, the family's — permission, we are extracting the memoirs in this and future issues of the Newsletter as a tribute to one of Orange's most prominent citizens who saw a lot of life and seemed to find something of value in the experience.

By the time I arrived in Luxembourg and established the Advance Section of G4, (Ordnance) the Panzer units of the German army had surrounded Bastogne and the Battle of the Bulge was in full sway. The relief of the troops in Bastogne was largely carried out by the troops under Gen. Patton's command with great help from the Air Force. At a staff briefing on December 23rd, when Gen. Patton was advised that the weather had cleared sufficiently for airdrops to be made, he is reported to have ordered the Chaplain to print up 2,000 more copies of the prayer that was being sent with Christmas rations to the front lines.

Before the breakthrough by the Germans, the area in the vicinity of Bastogne had been the responsibility of troops under the command of Gen. Bradley. After the breakthrough, this area was turned over to Gen. Montgomery. It infuriated Gen. Patton when Gen. Montgomery trumpeted through the British press

that he had come to the rescue of the U.S. troops when actually it was the Third Army which blunted the attack of the Germans and forced them to withdraw. As a matter of fact, Gen. Montgomery promoted a withdrawal behind the line of the Meuse so that he could regroup for a spring offensive across the Rhine. Gen. Patton directed his Staff officers to comment on Gen. Montgomery's proposal, and since I was in charge of the Advance Section of G4 it became my responsibility to state our position. I reported to the Chief of Staff that we were prepared to support the attack and that there should be no withdrawal behind the line of the Meuse as recommended by Gen. Montgomery.

The battle of Bastogne lasted until early in January when the troops under the command of Gen. McAuliff were reinforced after he had said "Nuts" to a demand that he surrender. Gen. Montgomery continued to be intent on maintaining a holding position, but Gen. Patton was equally intent on continuing the attack. It was bitter cold, and although Gen. Patton never got the green light to conduct an attack, he pressed forward on limited offensives. There was no such thing as staying put.

Gradually the Germans were forced to withdraw and by the end of January the ground lost on the breakthrough by the Germans was regained. Much to the chagrin of Gen. Patton, the Combined Chiefs of Staff decided that the main thrust across the Rhine was to be made by

Gen. Montgomery and Third Army was delegated the task of conducting a diversionary attack to the South. Nevertheless, Gen. Patton continued
continues on page 12

Memories of Wartime

War as a defining life experience emerges as a theme for this edition of the *Newsletter*. It contains five articles recalling aspects of the various wars of our Nation, most them highly personal accounts from people who were there. On this page, the late Virginius Shackelford recounts his experiences as a part of Gen. George Patton's Third Army during World War II. Coincidentally, on page 4, there is a photo showing Haywood Johnson, a driver in the famed Red Ball Express, receiving thanks from Ted Scott, of Harrisonburg, who was also in Patton's Third Army and was a grateful recipient of desperately-needed supplies delivered by the Red Ball Express. Then, on page 11, there is an excerpt from Richard Cote's new book, *Strength and Honor: The life of Dolley Madison*, about the evacuation of Washington, D.C. during the War of 1812. The Civil War is well represented on pages 4, 7, and 14 with letters and observations from soldiers serving in Orange County and the description of another sighting of General Lee in Orange County.

In My Opinion

Spicer Mill Farm Filled a Need

by Frank Walker

Editor's note: Recently, we received a flyer from the Joseph. T. Samuels Real Estate Service. You know the kind. Lots of beautiful properties at prices that give new meaning to the saying, "Better buy land. They ain't making any more of it and it ain't getting any cheaper." But it was Joe Samuel's commentary that captured our attention.

Keeping Rural Values In a Robust Market

by Joseph T. Samuels

"Growth seems to be an issue for every community in the states I have visited. For the most part, Central Virginia citizens are cognizant of the importance of our rural areas and the need to provide for their protection. We are fortunate that while rural areas are under such pressure (1) there is an increase in conservation easements which protect them in perpetuity, (2) the dynamic changes to the City of Charlottesville make it one of the few growing cities in Virginia reversing flight to the suburbs, and (3) zoning changes taking place throughout the region place an emphasis on smart growth, open space and natural areas protecting our watershed.

This is all good news as the real estate market continues to be robust. Equally impressive is the willingness of newcomers to share with us in the protection of our rural areas essential to the quality of life. We wholeheartedly welcome that interest and shared goals."

Editor's note: One Orange County development seems to measure up in terms of what kind of development works well. Frank Walker explains why.

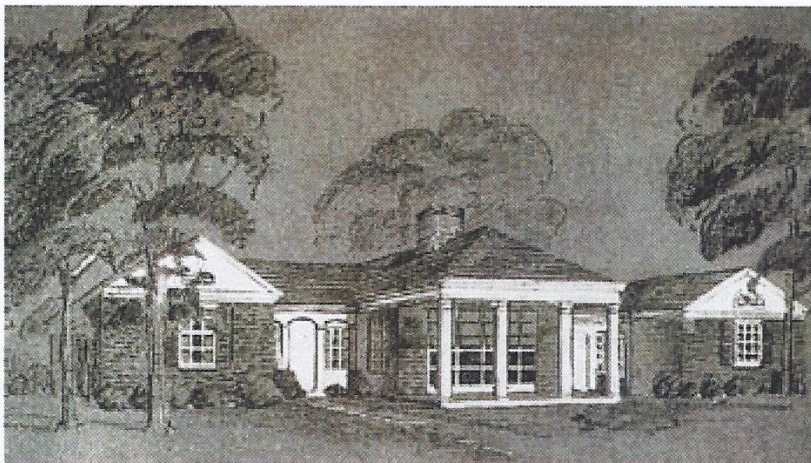
Amid all of the development and rumors of development that have convulsed Orange County in recent months, a small delegation that included Society members and a Spicer Mill Farm resident met with David Edwards, Director of the Winchester Regional Office of the state's Department of Historic Resources. The purpose of the gathering was to discuss the possibility of placing part or all of the county's Spicer Mill Farm development area into an historic district.

Spicer Mill Farm was a dream and project of Woodbury S. Ober, who had retired to Orange County in the late 1940s after a career in banking. As he had done during his working days, Woody Ober, along with his wife Jane, looked for ways to improve their community, and the Spicer Mill Farm development was but one of their significant contributions to Orange County.

As the Obers noted, Orange County had its palatial residences on farm-sized tracts, plus a number of small-to-medium sized residences on lots of the same description. What was in short supply were moderate-sized homes on several-acre lots, something that would attract and retain the business and professional people that Orange County needed for its future. A few such homes had been built along Little Skyline Drive, and the old Spicer farm adjacent to them was for sale. The Obers bought the farm and started planning.

First, they assembled a team of consultants. O. Robbins Randolph provided expertise in engineering; advising on building sites, lot layouts, and roadways. The legendary Charles F. Gillette was retained for his expertise in landscape architecture. Noted architect William Newton Hale of Charlottesville advised on house designs until his death in 1954, after which the Charlottesville firm of Johnson, Craven, and Gibson assumed that responsibility. Lots were laid out, with specific homes designed for certain of the lots, and

continues on page 3



Until June 20, 1954, \$39,000 got you 1,121 square feet, plus two baths, a garage, a laundry room, a tool room, an entrance hall and a porch.

Spicer Mill Farm: A Vision of Quality...continued

Spicers Mill, continued from p. 2
the Spicer Mill Farm subdivision became a reality.

The lots sold slowly, but that is a matter of no great moment. The emphasis remained on the quality of the development, not the rate at which money rolled in. Even now, years after the Obers' deaths, some half-dozen lots of the approximately fifty-lot subdivision await their homes, but the quality of the development is established. The question has now become: Does this development, one that was unique even for its day, now qualify for Historic District recognition?

David Edwards pointed out that a Historic District designation would have no effect on what private landowners, using their own money, wished to do. They could conceivably

build a structure totally at odds with the architecture of the subdivision or tear down one of the original houses. There would be guidelines and controls, however, where public money was used within the district. For a mature subdivision such as Spicer Mill, work involving the roads would be the most likely trigger for that sort of oversight. The most important contribution of a Historic District designation would be to assist homeowners who wish to rehabilitate or restore a "contributing structure," affording possible access to sources of funds and the availability of tax credits.

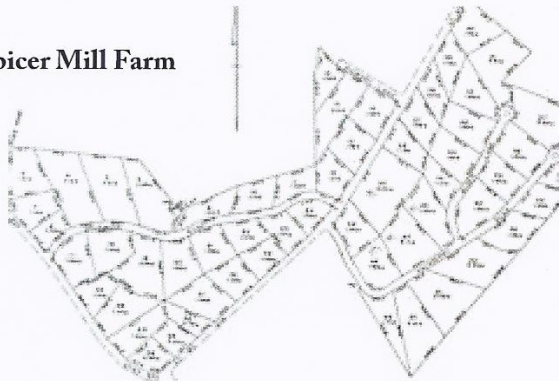
A "contributing structure" in the contemplated historic district would have to be at least fifty years old, and it may turn out that a few more years are needed before enough of the Spicer

Mill Farm residences qualify. If that is so, the idea will be put on hold, but not dropped. As development engulfs Orange County, the need to recognize the vision of Woody and Jane Ober and the quality of their subdivision becomes an even more important benchmark for its residents. ■

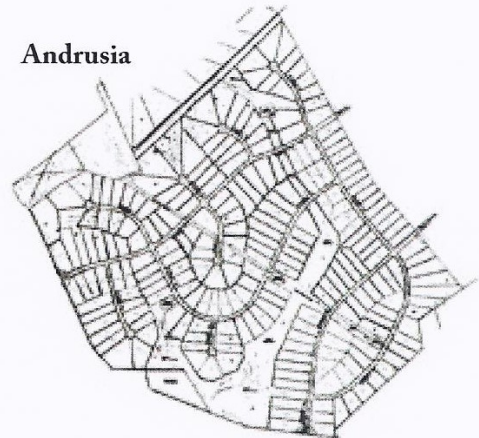
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Editor's Note: The contrast between the Spicer Mill Farm development described above and the proposed Andrusia development below, is size and density. Orange County residents driving along Spicer's Mill Road have seen several (we counted nearly 60) test perk holes on the property. Lou Thompson, husband of Board Member Laura Thompson, remarked as we went by: "Looks like they're burying Orange County in development."

Spicer Mill Farm



Andrusia



On the left is the lot plan for Spicer Mill Farm, circa 1954. On the right is the lot plan for the proposed "Andrusia." The Spicer Mill Farm has about 50 home sites on less than 100 acres, or an average of approximately 1.50 acres per home site, while the "Andrusia" development proposes about 236 home sites on 268 acres, or about 1.1 acre per site. The principal difference between the two developments, of course, is in the number of homes being built, the amount of time it would take to complete the development, the likely impact on the infrastructure of the community, and, perhaps most importantly, the purpose for the development. As Frank Walker points out above, there was a lack of affordable housing for those who wanted to live and work in Orange County. Spicer Mill Farm was created to fill that need. The "Andrusia" development, however, fits a pattern of development that is moving inexorably toward Orange: housing for those who may or may not work in the county. While development is perhaps best managed by keeping it close to the community's core, rather than let it develop on a spot basis throughout the county, the effect on the community's road system, water supply, schools, etc., must be of prime concern because the residential tax base generated by new construction in most cases does not pay for the improvement or expansion of the infrastructure required to serve the increase in population. The Newsletter is indebted to Bill Nevell for providing the plans of "Andrusia".



Another Spotting Of Lee In Orange County!

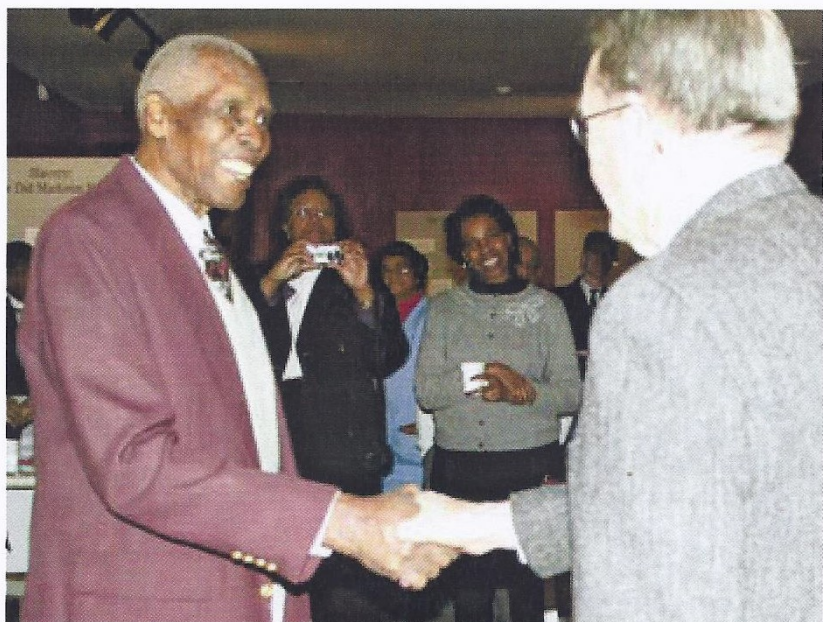
Editor's Note: Immediately after the battle of Cedar Mountain in Culpeper County on August 9th, General Jackson retired to Gordonsville. General Longstreet joined him on August 13, and General Lee arrived August 14th. The three began planning for what would be called the Second Battle of Manassas.

A young physician, Dr. E. A. Craighill, serving as an assistant surgeon in the Gordonsville Receiving Hospital, recalls seeing General Lee as he arrives in Gordonsville. The impressions he recorded in his Confederate Surgeon: The Personal Recollections of E.A. Craighill, edited by Peter W. Houch and published by H.E. Howard, Inc., are typical of the high esteem and near adoration accorded General Lee by those of his generation. The book is for sale at the Exchange Hotel in Gordonsville. This excerpt was provided by Carol Couch.

During the summer the Federal army seemed to abandon their attempt to capture Richmond. At any rate, their army was transferred from the vicinity of Richmond to a point beyond the Rappahannock River, and between Gordonsville and Washington. In a little while Jackson's and Longstreet's corps, which constituted General Lee's army, confronted them, mostly encamped in the neighborhood of Gordonsville. I will never forget the morning General Lee arrived from Richmond to assume command in person. He came unheralded on the

train from Richmond and there was no demonstration when he landed from the car. There must have been some sort of an understanding, because pretty soon his old horse (Traveler) was brought out and the general mounted him. I have never seen a grander, or as grand a combination of man and beast. General Lee was a strikingly handsome and distinguished looking man, graceful and attractive in every way, dressed in what seemed a new suit of Confederate gray, with the usual soft hat and drooping plume, gauntlets and top boots, his insignia of rank, every inch a soldier and the highest type

of Virginia gentleman, and faultless commander. The crowd cheered and he bowed, taking off his hat; but he seemed to me all the time to be preoccupied, thinking of something else, very likely of the mighty work which was to come. He did not tarry long, but pretty soon was joined by an aide and body guard from Jackson's headquarters, and soon afterwards disappeared on old Traveler with his aide and guard accompanying, his staff having preceded him. He established his headquarters not far from Jackson's and only a few miles from Gordonsville. ■



Haywood Johnson greets fellow veteran Ted Scott. Details on page 12.

The Real House(s) On The Hill

By Joe Rowe

Editor's Note: Orange County viewers who watched the made-for-TV movie Widow on the Hill probably did not recognize the house used in the movie, and for good reason: it was located somewhere in Canada. So, we thought we'd remind our readers that there was more than one Mt. Athos and their history is pretty interesting, too.

Our story begins long ago in Ancient Greece. There lived the God Poseidon, the powerful Lord of the Seas, and his son Athos. Poseidon and Athos quarreled. (Poseidon quarreled with Athena and Odysseus as well; he was a pretty obnoxious God.) Athos became very angry and decided to throw the biggest rock he could find in all of Greece at his father. But, he missed. The rock fell into the Aegean Sea, forming a peninsula that ever since has been known as Mt. Athos.

The barren rock just stood there empty for many centuries. Man could not live on it because the soil was not deep enough to plant in, nor was there any grazing for sheep or cattle. In short,

it was a perfect place for a monastery. In the ninth century, a group of Orthodox monks decided to establish the first monastery. Today, Mt. Athos hosts a community of twenty monasteries.

The monks who call Mt. Athos home observe strict vows of poverty and celibacy. They are self-sustaining and visitors are welcome only under certain conditions. Only males, human or beast, are allowed. Automobiles are forbidden. When a potential guest learns his visit will involve a walk of several miles over rocky and hilly terrain, he usually changes his mind.

We shall call this place Mt. Athos #1.

Our Orange County story begins in the late 1880s when our Mt. Athos was purchased by Mr. Strothers Newman. Careful now! The Newmans of Mt. Athos must not be confused with their nearby neighbors, the Newmans of Bloomfield. The house in which Struthers Newman lived we will call Mt. Athos #2.

It seems that Struthers decided to invite his nephew, Walter George Newman, to come and live with him at Mt. Athos. Walter George did indeed move in. Not only did he live with his uncle, he worked for him. He cleaned the stable and performed other such farm chores as were needed. As he became older, he drove a hack, went to sea, moved west and back again, to New York City, where he would make his fortune. And not incidentally, he married his cousin, Uncle Struthers's daughter, Leila Moore Newman.

How did he make his fortune? Even today, more than a century later, much of this is shrouded in mystery.

The story goes something like this: New York's Governor, Roswell P. Flower, lent him seed money. No one knows how he came to be acquainted with the Governor, but the story is that Walter George divided the seed money into two parts. One part was used for buying speculative issues on Wall Street. The other was used to purchase a bogus gold mine in North Carolina.

Walter George was a lucky man. His Wall Street investments paid off handsomely. The mine was full of fool's gold: not of the mineral variety, but of the investment opportunity type. Using a U.S. Senate letterhead, Walter George sent a letter to all investors and prospective investors stating the mine had a value in excess of \$60 million. The letter was signed by an undocumented geologist. The stock quickly soared.

With financial success under his belt, Walter George returned to

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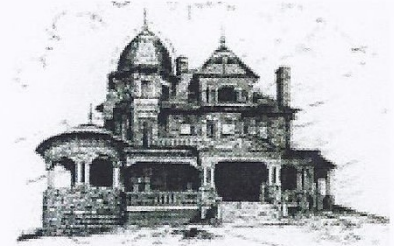


The original Mt. Athos in Northern Greece.

continued from page 5

Orange County in 1899. He bought Mt. Athos and 250 acres from Uncle Strother for \$8,000. He also bought up adjacent farm land for the asking prices until the Mt. Athos estate embraced almost a thousand acres.

Walter George was now ready to build his house or "Newman's Castle," as he liked to call it. Before dirt flew, however, he removed his uncle's house from the crest of the hill. A topographical map showed that Mt. Athos had the same elevation as nearby Somerset House. That would never do. Walter George hauled in dirt to increase the elevation of Mt. Athos. Mt. Athos towered majestically over Somerset House by five feet. Let us



The "Newman Castle"

call this Mt. Athos #3.

It was a mail-order house, complete with material, labor, and even furnishings, all for \$80,000, picked from plans in a catalog published by George F. Barber, a Knoxville, Tennessee architect.

Some thought the house magnificent, others thought it grotesque. But, as opulent or ostentatious, as hideous or gorgeous as it was, it was not unique. There was another one just like it in Winchester. Nor was it the only house owned by Walter George. He owned a house near his gold mine in North Carolina. Both houses were in the name of his wife, Lelia Moore Newman.

Early in the year 1904, when the castle was scarcely three years old, it mysteriously burned to the ground. On the same night, his North Carolina house also burned. Some

thought Walter George had a hand in things because he and his wife were divorcing and he might have feared she would get the house in the settlement. Walter George moved into the caretaker's house located just down the hill from the remains of his castle. Much expense was incurred in upgrading the house, but it never achieved the grandeur or pomposity of the original. Walter George lived off and on in this house until 1910. This was Mt. Athos #4.

After Walter George's death in 1918, this house sat vacant for two decades. Souvenir hunters hauled away stones from the castle; vandals took what they could, and the curious came and gawked.

During the time Walter George was building his castle, William duPont of Wilmington, Delaware moved into Montpelier, only a mile away. Among those who moved in was his daughter Marion.

Fast forward to the 1930s and a new set of players grace the stage of Mt. Athos. William duPont's children are all grown. Marion had married and divorced Tom Somerville. As a part of the divorce settlement she was obligated to furnish her ex-husband a home. So she purchased Mt. Athos, and built Mt. Athos #5. It was a nice, but not lavish house, this last house on the hill, with seven rooms and two and a half baths.

Mr. Somerville owned a house



The present Mt. Athos.



Hennie and John Weaver

in Camden, South Carolina, as well and divided his time between there and Orange. Eventually, he found Camden more to his taste and decided to sell Mt. Athos. It was purchased at public auction by Mrs. Ada Donaghy of Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania, who conveyed the property to her daughter, Henrietta. Henrietta was married to Hamilton Somerville, a brother of Tom Somerville.

Soon, there was a son, Ham Jr. But things were not well between Henrietta and her husband and soon the two were separated. Ham Jr. and his mother continued to live at Mt. Athos. In 1958, Ham Jr. was enrolled as a student at Woodberry Forest, where he was taught algebra by Mr. John F. Weaver, a handsome Princetonian. John and Hennie first came to know one another through a parent-teacher conference. Soon a friendship developed and

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This letter was written by Walter Clark, a sergeant in Company I, 3rd North Carolina Infantry Regiment (the "Jeff Davis Rifles"), in George H. "Maryland" Stuart's Brigade, Edward "Allegheny" Johnson's Division, Ewell's (II) Corps of Robert E. Lee's Army of Northern Virginia. During the winter of 1863-64, Stuart's Brigade camped near Morton's Ford in Orange County, at the far eastern end of a Confederate defensive line that extended west along the Rapidan twenty miles to Somerset. On November 26 — Thanksgiving Day—Federal Commander George Meade's Army of the Potomac crossed the Rapidan at fords just east of Walter Clark's position. Meade's plan was to turn west and force Lee out of the Rapidan Line. His army moved slowly, however, and the Confederates had ample time to shift and meet the threat. Clark and his brigade held the far left of the Confederate line, a position in which they experienced a small amount of the fighting. At the time he writes, Clark is behind formidable earthworks on the west side of Mine Run, and unbeknownst to him, enemy units are being pulled from his front for an assault on the Confederate right, an assault that will be called off. When Clark and his comrades splash across Mine Run on the morning of December 2, they will find the Federals had gone back to their Culpeper County winter quarters. The Mine Run Campaign is over. The following May will find him at the side of the Orange Turnpike (Route 20) in Saunders' Field, firing the opening shots of the Battle of the Wilderness. The following is one of a collection of transcripts of Walter Clark's letters donated to the Orange County Historical Society by his great-granddaughter, Elizabeth Gathright.

This Whole Country Is a Complete Wilderness...

Camp in the Field
Sunday, 29th Nov. 1863

Dear Parents,

It has been some time, or at least over a week, since my last. We have been moving about so constantly for the last several days that I've not had the opportunity. We are on the eve of a great event, for a trial of strength between the two armies is expected every minute.

The enemy crossed the Rapidan at Eley's Ford (about the mouth of the River) on Thursday 26th inst.¹ We moved from camp that evening. The next day Friday the 27th the two armies were skirmishing very heavily till late in the evening, when a portion of Rhodes and all of our Division fought a portion of two Yankee corps for over two hours. At first, our men charged & drove them back over two hundred yds. Then the enemy coming up with larger numbers drove us back, not however beyond the part of the field over which our men fought. About this time night put an end to the contest, which gave our part of the line (the extreme left of the whole army) time to fall back in good order.²

This portion of the corps is now strongly fortified by hasty breastworks in the west side of a small creek running almost parallel with the line of the battle field of Friday 27th & about 2½ mls. from the field. Our Div. is in the same position it had all day yesterday (on the bank of the creek). It is not thought by many that the Yankees will attack, for they will meet with an awful defeat as our men have thrown up sufficiently strong works to drive back any force. All day yesterday heavy skirmishing was going on & at one time the artillery opened so terrifically that we thought

the great contest had begun. Today, however the skirmishing has been very little. The enemy know that in a regular engagement that he couldn't whip this army; so we are constantly expecting them to attempt some flank movement on our extreme left. The battle of Friday proved quite disastrous to our Division. There were not many killed, but a great many wounded, & some taken prisoner when we fell back.

I am very glad to say that Brother is but quite slightly wounded on the left cheek.³ A spent minie ball, or something else, he does not know which, bruised the cheek. It will soon be well & his face will not be disfigured. He is now at the hospital or somewhere in the rear. I hope the contest will be over before he gets well. I write now for fear he will not get the opportunity. There were 5 killed in the Regt. on the field, almost 75 wounded & about 25 taken prisoner. The Adj. put down the casualties in the Regt. at 100. None of the boys from Pantego were hurt as I know of. It is quite probable that the big fight will come off before I shall have the opportunity of mailing this.

I reckon you have heard in this of Bragg's defeat at Chattanooga & his retreat to Chickamauga. And also that Burnside had surrendered to Longstreet at Knoxville with 7000 prisoners. This last report needs confirmation.⁴ The battlefield of 27th inst., I think is about 8 mls. above that of Chancellorsville.

This whole country is a complete wilderness. The weather has been quite pleasant, but is growing colder. I fear the wounded will suffer very much. Your letter of Nov. 20th & Padgett's of 19th came to hand three days ago. There is a probability of our remaining down in this country all

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Immediate Past President Gail Marshall presents Ulysses “Pete” Joyner with his Honorary Lifetime Membership in the Orange County Historical Society. The text is reproduced on page 9.

Our records show that Pete joins a small and exclusive group of Orange County Historical Society Honorary Lifetime Members. In fact, he is one of only three. Atwell Somerville was awarded his Honorary Lifetime Membership in September of 2003, and Helen Marie Taylor was awarded hers in 1977. The award is made for extraordinary service to the Society and must be proposed by the President of the Society and agreed to by all of the Directors of the Board.

We are indebted to the *Orange County Review* for permission to use this photo and the one of Haywood Johnson and Ted Scott on page 4.

The Orange County Historical Society bestows this

HONORARY LIFE MEMBERSHIP

upon

Ulysses P. Joyner, Jr.

In recognition and appreciation for his many years of service to the
Society and the Community.

The researches are published in the hope of preserving from decay the remembrance
of what men have done, and of preventing their actions from losing their due meed of glory.
after Herodotus

“Pete” Joyner began his long association with the Orange County Historical Society in 1978,
when he was first elected to the Board of Directors. During his more than a quarter century of service he has
served as President of the Board, as Assistant Secretary, and four years as Treasurer.
He has been a source of inspiration, a calm and steady influence, and an arbiter of the highest standards.

His meticulous historical research as resulted in the publication of several major works, including
The First Settlers of Orange County, the *Orange County Land Patents* (narrative and map),
The Clerks of Orange County, *Orange County Methodism — The First 200 Years*, and *Joyner of Southampton*,
as well as several other historical publications. He also contributed the “Courthouse Notes” to the
Orange County Historical Society *Newsletter* and created the various computer indices for the county records,
which have greatly aided the organization of and research in, those records.

Of particular note is his tremendous effort to preserve and conserve the county’s court records.

Pete’s civic contributions extend to Orange and Orange County at large. He served as Town Attorney for the towns
of Orange and Gordonsville and became the first County Attorney for the County of Orange in 1978. He was
appointed clerk of Orange County in 1982, serving through 1997. He served as Chairman of the Orange County
Bicentennial Commission and has served as President of several civic organizations.

Pete Joyner’s detailed research on the early development of the Town of Orange is without parallel and his
contribution can best be summed up by quoting from Justice Oliver Wendell Homes, Jr.

“The best service that we can do for our country and for ourselves (is) to see so far as one may,
and to feel the great forces that are behind every detail.”

With admiration and affection, we are

THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE ORANGE COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

January 30, 2005

“Head ‘Em Up; Move ‘Em Out!”

Editor’s Note: Bill Speiden, who’s been known to drive a few cattle, wanted to know more about cattle drives in Orange County, especially in the 1900s. He talked with Linsey Utz, 94, whose father drove cattle on the Blue Ridge Turnpike to Gordonsville and later to Somerset.

Before trucks became the cattle transport of choice, cattle were driven to the nearest railhead all over the nation. Although the famous long cattle drives of the West died out with the coming of the railroad and improved food preservation processes, local cattle drives continued throughout the 1900s.

One such example were cattle drives originating in the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia, coming over the Blue Ridge via Madison and down the Blue Ridge Turnpike to Gordonsville until the railroad came through Somerset. Cattle pens were then built in Somerset that could hold over 200 head of cattle and were used until the late 1920s. The cattle drives from the valley stopped when the railroad came to Stanley, which made it unnecessary to go over the mountain to get cattle to market.

Linsey Utz’s father, Fisher, farmed in the Blue Ridge. At one

point in his career, Fisher worked for the Graves Brothers and drove their ox team. Linsey tells of his father’s frustration bringing home a load of ear corn pulled by independent-minded oxen. On crossing a river on a hot day, the oxen would decide to lie down in the river to cool off and rest and would not get up until they felt like it. Linsey could also recall the use of oxen on farming and logging operations in Madison County until 1938. Local trailing of cattle involved the spring ritual of taking cattle up the mountain for summer grazing. Larger farmers in the Valley would hire mountain farmers to look after their cattle for the summer, then trail them to a railroad head in the fall. This practice continued until the Shenandoah National Park was formed in the 1930s. The open space at Big Meadows is an example of the pasture these cattle used.



Sandra Speiden’s Odyssey: *Nearly 20 years ago, Sandra Speiden purchased at auction what might have been a pipe used by Sitting Bull. In that time, she has searched for a descendent of the famous Native America chieftain so she could return the pipe. Eventually, she realized her ambition and returned the pipe to Ron McNeil, a great-great-great grandson of Sitting Bull. Mr. McNeil, who uses the name “His Horse is Thunder,” a name given him by his grandfather, so appreciated Sandra’s gesture that he invited her to participate in a two-week Big Foot Memorial Ride. The pipe was duly transferred. Immediately afterwards, Ron His Horse is Thunder’s mother, Ina, who had traveled from New York for the presentation, gave Sandra a quilt (above). When Sandra unfolded the quilt, she discovered that it was a Star quilt. Being given such a quilt is a high honor. “I was in awe of what it implied,” says Sandra. It turns out that Ina had begun making the quilt when she learned that Sandra intended to return the pipe to its rightful owners.*

The Many Houses of Mt Athos continued from p.6

then a romance and eventually a marriage.

John continued to teach at Woodberry Forest until 1974. He and Hennie divided their time between Mt. Athos and Woodberry. These were idyllic years for the Weavers, among the most happy of troubled Mt. Athos. In 1975, John suffered a fatal heart attack while vacationing with Hennie at Hope Sound. Hennie continued to live on at Mt. Athos until she succumbed to cancer in 1991, when the estate passed to her son. ■

Dolley Madison: Preserving a Nation's Heritage

Editor's Note: The following is an excerpt from Richard N. Cote's new book: Strength and Honor: The Life of Dolley Madison. The book may be ordered from Corinthian Books; PO Box 1898; Mt. Pleasant, SC 29465, or by calling 843-881-6080. The price is \$29.95.

Wednesday afternoon, August 24,
1814 Inside the White House

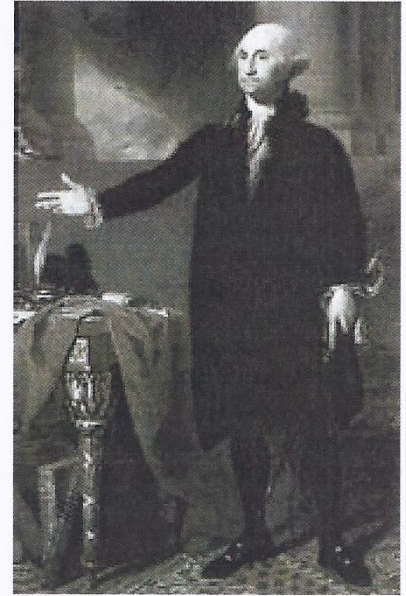
About three o'clock that afternoon, a frenzied James Smith, the president's messenger, galloped up to the White House, his horse frothing at the mouth, panting from the heat and exhaustion. Smith ran inside without bothering to knock and thrust a paper into Dolley's hand. The message was simple: "Run for your life or be taken prisoner by the British." She knew the directive was final. The remaining citizens and defenders of Washington were evacuating in frenzied droves. Even the one hundred soldiers who were supposed to defend the White House with their lives had evaporated into the dust, along with their commander, Colonel Carberry, who had not bothered to say good-bye to the First Lady or ask if he could assist with her departure.

She was overwhelmed with the choices that faced her. What to take? What to leave behind? Where to go? How to get there? The decision she made would forever define Dolley Madison as a woman of strength and honor. On that searing-hot day, dust-saturated day, she proved herself to be so totally devoted to her county that she was willing to sacrifice everything precious to her in order to save as many of the nation's treasures as possible.

The time was critically short, help was scarce, and the means of transportation was even scarcer. The only other people left in the building that afternoon included the White

House major domo, French John Sioussat; Madison's fifteen-year-old mulatto body servant, Paul Jennings; a maid, Sukey; a cook; Thomas McGraw, the Irish gardener; John Freeman (an enslaved butler), his wife, and his child; and Joe Bolin, a coachman. The treasurers of the nation, housed in a building that the British troops — now only minutes away — had sworn to burn to the ground, were entrusted to Dolley. She was the only person empowered to choose what would be preserved and what would be defaced, stolen or destroyed by the enemy. ■

Editor's Note: Most of us know that Dolley save the Stuart portrait of George Washington. But what else did she save? Read the book and find out.



Gilbert Stuart's portrait of George Washington was saved by Dolley.



SPEAKING OF PORTRAITS — Frank Walker and daughter Austin stand beside an oil portrait of Frank presented him at the March 28th meeting, during which he spoke of "The Rapidan Line," a Civil War Confederate defensive line extending through Orange County toward the Wilderness. The portrait, which shows Frank holding his book, *Remembering: A History of Orange County, Virginia*, was painted by William Clark Dunn, brother of Warren Dunn, Executive Director of OCHS. Bill is a professional artist most noted for his pyroiconography (a fancy word for very fine woodburning) of Native Americans. The Society has agreed to represent Bill in Orange County because of the quality of his work and the affordable prices (\$500 - \$1,000). The Society will receive a 30% commission on each painting. Anyone interested in seeing a sample of his work is invited to stop by the Society's Research Center. Bill is currently working on a portrait of Past President Joe Rowe.

V's Trip, continued from page 12

to make plans for an assault across the Rhine and asked his staff to report on the relative merits of crossing in the vicinity of Koblenz as compared with a crossing in the vicinity of Worms-Mainz. I was given the task of preparing a memorandum on this subject and concluded that an attack in the vicinity of Worms-Mainz was to be preferred (*because of the better road and rail network — ed's note*).

The initial crossing of the Rhine was accomplished by the Ninth Infantry Division, a part of the First Army, the command of which had been restored to Gen. Bradley. We did, however, cross the Rhine over a pontoon bridge in the vicinity of Mainz, and it was reported that halfway across, Gen. Patton pulled out his *** and *** in the Rhine, fulfilling a long-awaited experience. You have never seen such destruction as there was at Mainz, which had been flattened by successive bombings by the Air Corps. To see it now, reconstructed with funds made available through the Marshall Plan, makes it hard to believe that at the time it was a mass of smoking ruins.

By the middle of March it was clear that the German Army was in complete disarray and thousands of their soldiers were surrendering. This created a great problem of keeping them alive and getting them into prisoner-of-war camps. Most of them were terrified that they would be captured by the Russians, who would have shown no mercy, and were glad to have been captured by the Allies.

We were shifted to the Southeast after we crossed the Rhine to seize the so-called "National Redoubt" in Bavaria, where it was supposed that Hitler would make his last stand. There was considerable resistance, but elements of Third Army finally crossed over the Danube into Czechoslovakia

in the latter part of April. I was in Regensburg on the Danube when on May 7th we received a TWX from SHAEF advising that the Germans had surrendered.

Several days later Gen. Patton, accompanied by his staff, including General Muller, met with the Commanding General of the Russian force occupying the area opposite from Third Army. It is my understanding that prior to the meeting they consumed considerable quantities of olive oil to counteract the vodka which they were expected to consume in toasts with the Russians. The long and short of it was that we were directed to withdraw all troops from Czechoslovakia and proceed south into the Bavarian area in the vicinity of Munich.

Gen. Patton wanted to go to the Pacific and show Gen. McArthur how to lick "the ***** Japanese," but that was not to be. The Headquarters of Third Army was established in Munich and the Advance Section of which I was a part was stationed at Bad Tolz about fifty miles south of Munich. Bad Tolz was a lovely village and I had the pleasure of being billeted in a small hotel in a grove of trees. There was a well-appointed casern adjacent to the village which had been an officers training facility of the German army, which we used to house enlisted personnel. The people of that area were very friendly, as a matter of fact they were so frightened that they would be taken over by the Russians that they bent over backward to be nice to us. During my stay at Bad Tolz I had the pleasure of a visit from Lyne who, with Lew Baldwin and Harry Gilbert, went with me on a tour of the Alps in a command car which I was able to arrange to be put at our disposal. We went up on a small car to the Zug Spitzen, where there was still unmelted snow

for skiing and had a great time in the mountains of Austria. On the way back as we came around a sharp curve we passed a U.S. Army jeep which was driven by Ted Scott who had grown up across the road from us when we lived at "Greenock"—a small world. Later we visited the "Tergen Zee" area where the Germans had established hospitals and rest camps for their troops. I talked the proprietor of one of these camps into letting me use a small sailboat, which I assured him would be well taken care of. Well, we got the sail up and were having a great time when a thunderstorm suddenly hit us with hail the size of golf balls. Our sail was ripped up and we barely made it back to shore. I think I came closer to being killed on this occasion than at any other time when I was overseas.

Editor's Note: Major Shackelford returned to the United States in the late summer of 1945, having had, in his words, "a helluva experience."

Johnson Honored

A crowd of nearly 100 packed the James Madison Museum to honor Orange resident Haywood Johnson for his service with the Red Ball Express during World War II. The Red Ball Express delivered high priority war material to front line troops. He is shown in the photograph on Page 4 shaking hands with Ted Scott, who also served in Patton's Third Corps, and who observed that when the Red Ball Express was rolling, "troops scattered because the trucks stopped for nothing and nobody." Ted and his wife Carolyn are currently volunteering at the Research Center, transferring family files into acid-free folders as part of an extensive archiving project.

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this winter, so I reckon we better give out the idea of the box.⁵ Padgett has various excuses for not coming. Pa. don't express anything to Richmond. I had much rather for it to be at home. I have heard of hundreds of boxes that were sent in express for the army but they never get them. Unless you see some one coming directly to this regiment don't forward any thing. I will write in a day or two if we have a fight. I am quite well & so was Brother when I saw him last on the night of the 27th inst.

Walter

Pa, I think you do very wrong in bringing Cilass here, for the Yanks will get him.⁶

¹The Federal army crossed at Jacob's, Germanna, and Ely's fords, creating three routes of advance that were never fully coordinated.

² Clark is describing the Battle of Payne's Farm, the only major engagement of the Mine Run Campaign. Johnson's division of some 5,300 men stalled two Federal Corps (approx. 33,000 men) for an afternoon.

³ James Clark, a 2nd Lieutenant in Company G. During that winter, he received a medical release from the army due to "chronic rheumatism." Walter stayed on to the surrender at Appomattox.

⁴ Confederate General Longstreet had laid siege to Knoxville and General Burnside's army on November 17, and it was generally thought that Burnside would surrender. On the date of Clark's letter, however, Burnside imposed an embarrassing defeat on the Confederates and broke the siege.

⁵ Boxes of that time routinely contained clothing and food — two items in desperate short supply along the Rapidan that winter.

⁶ Silas? Yanks? One suspects that the senior Clarks had sent a family slave to help their sons with the winter camp chores.

Society Announces Tour Service

President Lynne Lewis has announced that the Society will offer five tours of historic points of interest in Orange County beginning June 4. A flyer describing the new service is enclosed.

"This is an opportunity to both create a new source of revenue for the Society and, at the same time, support tourism of Orange County," she said. "At the end of the five tours, we will evaluate our experience and decide whether to continue offering the service in 2006."

Please Log On to www.orangecovahist.org using Key Words

We need all our members to log on to the web site so we can move it higher on the list of web sites accessed by search engines. The position of our web site on a search engine is determined by the number of hits (log-ons) it receives over a period of time. If every member will log on to our web site once a week by using a search engine, our web site will move higher and higher in the list of web sites accessed by using key words. The key words you can use are: **orange county, historical societies, Virginia history.**

Our web site is now being used to alert members to program meeting dates and other news. This enables us to save printing and paper costs by eliminating "Since Last We Talked" from the *Newsletter*. If you have something you would like to have posted on the web site, call the Society at (540) 672-5366 and let us know.

Win a free Membership

This is your chance to win a free membership! The first five folks who can list the most ancestors by name will receive a free 2006 membership. Give it your best shot and remember that there is a lot of research help awaiting you at 130 Caroline St.

2 Parents

4 Grandparents

8 Great Grandparents

16 Great-Great Grandparents

32 Great-Great-Great Grandparents

64 Great-Great-Great-Great Grandparents

128 Great-Great-Great-Great-Great Grandparents

256 Great-Great-Great-Great-Great-Great Grandparents

512 Great-Great-Great-Great-Great-Great-Great Grandparents

1024 Great-Great-Great-Great-Great-Great-Great-Great Grandparents

Well, you get the idea.

Newsletter

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“It is the most beautiful place I ever saw”

Editor's Note: We are indebted to Bob Krick for sharing with us the letters of Robert Young, Jr., a member of the 12th Georgia Infantry Regiment, which arrived in Gordonsville on July 17, 1862. Mr. Young was an Irish-born resident of Georgia who was wounded three times before being captured at Petersburg. He survived the war and died in Putnam County, Ga., on January 13, 1927. Very light editing of the letters was done to make them easier to read. While a good speller and clearly very literate, Mr. Young appears not to have believed in periods or commas. What is particularly interesting is his description of postal service.

Camp in the woods Orange Co. July 28th, 1862.

Dear Cousin,

I received your letter by Henry Marshall and also a pass book and pencil. I am very sorry to have caused you so much anxiety and trouble. As I wrote you by McGettrick I was only slightly wounded, a piece of a shell having struck and bruised my side and, not knowing the extent of the injury, I went to Richmond to the Chimborazo Hospital. I stayed there 3 days and then started back to the regiment. On the road I caught up with those of our company who had

been in the mountains and went on with them. The regiment was then 26 miles below Richmond. When I was in Richmond, I could not get any ink and paper to write with or I would certainly have written. T. E. Gorley is dead. He died 5 miles from Winchester. The man who owned the house when he died was named Clark. He died of Pneumonia caught from being out in the rain so much. A Sergeant (sic) from the Muckalee Guards dug his grave. He said it was about the first of July. He was in a very nice coffin and there were a great many citizens there.

We camped at Gordonsville about 3 or 4 day(s) and left there the day (indecipherable) left. We stopped here and have been here ever since except one day the 26th there was an alarm that the Yankees were advancing on the Fredericksburg road and Gen. Ewell moved us down to Gordonsville again. We came back on the same day in the rain and mud.

The residence of James Madison is about 1 and ½ miles from here. I have been over there twice. It is the most beautiful place I ever saw. His grave is close to the house. He died in 1836 at the age of 85 years. We are 6 miles from Orange CH, 6

from Gordonsville and 1 and ½ miles from Liberty Mills. Our mail goes to Gordonsville every day. When you write to me direct to 12th Ga Regt Gen Ewells Division Richmond Va and it will come straight through. Z.B. Johnson came from the Hospital yesterday. He is complaining a little. Our company is increasing. We number over 40 men now. We have the largest regiment in the brigade now. The Yankees are fortifying on the Rappahannock and we are staying here watching their movements. I have heard that there are some near Harrisonburg, we have one regiment of cavalry there. I will about here some time (The preceding has been struck out.) I think we will be here some time yet. Flournoy Adams was very much cut down when Henry Marshall came without his substitute, he had been talking about nothing else for 3 or 4 days. W. Pearman is well. Give my respects to Mr. Pearman and Jim and also to Uncle and Aunt and all of your own family. We cannot get any stamps here now and do not like to frank them. No more at present but remains

Your Cousin

Robert Young Jr.