

## CHARLOTTE COUNTY, VIRGINIA

By Cora V. St. John

Charlotte County helps to make up the area known as south central Virginia. The name of the South Central Virginia Genealogical Society was derived from this area and the counties which make it up are those we cover (Amelia, Appomattox, Brunswick, Buckingham, Campbell, Charlotte, Cumberland, Halifax, Lunenburg, Mecklenburg, Nottoway, Pittsylvania and Prince Edward).

The County was created by legislature in 1764 from Lunenburg and formed in March 1765. It was named after Queen Charlotte, wife of King George III. Charlotte County has a present population of approximately 12,500 people and consists of 471 square miles, with the county seat being Charlotte Court House. Other incorporated towns are Keysville, Drakes Branch and Phenix. Unincorporated towns are Abilene, Cullen, Harrisburg, Madisonville, Randolph, Red House, Wren and Wylliesburg.

European settlement of the area now in Charlotte County began in the early 18<sup>th</sup> century with settlers consisting mostly of English, French Huguenots, and Scotch-Irish. During the French and Indian War, frontier settlements were under constant threat from Indian attack. Governor Dinwiddie ordered supply depots or magazines to be erected in these areas. Col. Clement Read of the Lunenburg Militia suggested a location in what we know today as Charlotte Court House. His suggestion was approved and he completed the building of a magazine and dwelling which he maintained. This site, owned by Col. Read and John Pleasants, consisted of 100 acres for which the two men would petition the Virginia Legislature for a town charter which would be granted in February 1759 and named Daltonsburg. Col Read then worked for formation of a new county, but died before its completion in 1764.

Very soon after the formation of Charlotte County, the country would be embroiled in the turmoil of the Revolution with the Declaration of Independence being signed in 1776. Soon, one of the County's most famous residents, Patrick Henry, would be at the forefront of hostilities.

The South Central Virginia Genealogical Society is located in the Family History and Research room of the Charlotte County Public Library. The address is 112 LeGrande Ave., Charlotte C.H., VA. We can be reached at our mailing address of P.O. Box 295, Charlotte C.H., VA or through email or website address located elsewhere in this newsletter.

The library is conveniently located across the Courthouse Square from the clerk's office where you can obtain copies of births, marriages, deeds, etc. The clerk's office retains complete records dating back to 1765. The address is 125 David Bruce Ave., Charlotte C.H., VA and can be reached by phone at 434-541-5147.

Another good resource for historical and genealogical information is the Charlotte County APVA (Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities). This organization has been publishing a quarterly magazine since 1982 that features the history of Charlotte and surrounding counties, as well as that of historic properties and the families that owned them. Visit them at their website at [www.charlottecountyapva.org](http://www.charlottecountyapva.org) or write to CCAPVA, P.O. Box 5, Charlotte C.H., VA.



**CHARLOTTE COUNTY, VIRGINIA, PART I**  
**PLACES OF GENEALOGICAL AND HISTORICAL INTEREST**

By Cora V. St. John

(Information gleaned from Historical Register applications.)

**ANNEFIELD** was constructed in 1858 by master builder Jacob W. Holt for Hillery M.L. Goode, local planter, businessman and legislator who commissioned Holt to construct a house on his land that befit his wealth and standing in the community. Built in a popular 19<sup>th</sup> Century style known as Italianate Villa, it is a rare example of antebellum high-style in the county. Though not built until 1858, the property on which it stands had a number of prior owners.



The land was first patented in 1746 to Abram Martin, born 7 February 1716 to John & Letitia Martin who owned land in several counties. Abram married Elizabeth "Betty" Marshall 2 October 1744. Her father is believed to be William Marshall, brother of John Marshall, grandfather of Chief Justice John Marshall.

In 1770, Martin conveyed 899 acres to William Jameson (1745-1785), a native of Glasgow, Scotland. Jameson had married Anne Read, daughter of Clement and Mary Hill Read. Association with this "first family" of Charlotte County helped him acquire a number of important commissions in the county despite his foreign birth. It was Jameson who named the property "Annefield" after his wife. William and Anne had at least two sons, Clement R. Jameson and Edward Jameson. The will of William Jameson was written in 1784 in advance of a trip overseas and proved 2 Sept 1785.

Anne Read Jameson married Col. Richard Elliot in 1787. In 1801, Anne and her two sons conveyed the property to Phillip Goode Sr. who in 1805 conveyed the property to Thomas and Delanson Goode. In 1810, Goode conveyed it to their neighbor Jeremiah Williams. Williams died the following year leaving the property to his daughter, Sarah Williams Hutcherson who after the death of her husband, Collier, married Hillery Moseley Sr.

In 1855, Richard E. Moseley, son of Sarah and Hillary, conveyed 870 acres on Big and Little Horsepen Creeks to Hillary Mackiness Langston Goode, the youngest son of Hillary and Sarah Bacon Goode of Charlotte County and builder of present day "Annefield." (All records indicate that the "Manor House" passed down through the years is not any part of the present house and must have set in another location on the property.)

By 1870, Goode's fortunes took a downturn when he executed a deed of trust for debts owed. By 1882, after apparently not meeting the terms, the property was advertised for sale and sold in two parts and Mr. Goode moved to Tennessee.

Robert D. Adams (b. 1834) would hold the property until 1908 when he and his wife Laura would convey to Henry C. Marshall (b. 1870), superintendent of the nearby State Experimental Farm. Marshall and his wife Emma Gray conveyed the property in October 1942 to James W. Scott (1901-1963) and his wife Julia T. Scott. They would hold the property for over 50 years, longer than any other owner.

Mr. Scott was in the lumber business and bought Annefield primarily for timber, amassing a fair amount of acreage in the process. He grew a small quantity of tobacco and diversified the operation into dairy cattle farming in the early 1950's. At his death, he left a farm to each of his children, leaving Annefield to his eldest son, David Lee Scott. Julia survived him and died in 1990.

After her death, the property was conveyed to four investors who immediately sold the land on which the house sits to John and Anne Wilson of Wake Forest, NC. With the house having been neglected for a number of years, the Wilsons began the careful preservation of the house and brought the land back to productivity as a cattle farm.

In June of 2005, the property was purchased by Stephen M. Ballard and Michael T. Leary who have lovingly restored and updated the home. (Listed 2009)

**THE CHARLOTTE COUNTY COURTHOUSE** was designed by Thomas Jefferson at the request of a commission of six men who were sent to Monticello to ask Thomas Jefferson for advice and architectural drawings for a new courthouse. It was constructed by John Percival and completed in 1823. In use for almost 250 years, it now sits idle after the construction of a new courthouse in 2015. (Listed 1980)

**THE CHARLOTTE COURT HOUSE HISTORIC DISTRICT** is situated along two principal streets and contains the courthouse square on which you will find the 1823 Jefferson designed courthouse as well as two county clerk's offices, (one which was also built in 1823 as a tavern and has been converted) the registrar's office), the old county jail (presently housing the Museum of Charlotte County) and a Civil War monument. The courthouse square is considered to be one of the best preserved in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Other government buildings will include the 1918 treasurer's office, the county library built in 1810 having served as the law office and residence of Judge Hunter Marshall and the 1830 District Court building.

A walking tour of the area will also include 1835 Tankersley Tavern, 1810 Deane's Store, 1825 Masonic Lodge, Smith's Store and Tucker's Store buildings. The Historic District also includes the Village Presbyterian Church, the Charlotte County APVA Museum and many lovely old houses. Worth the visit. (Listed 1985)

**CLARKTON BRIDGE** was erected in 1902 by Virginia Bridge & Iron Co., of Roanoke and spans the Staunton River connecting Charlotte and Halifax Counties. It was the only surviving "Camelback" steel truss system in Virginia built for highway use. In 2005, the Virginia Department of Transportation, in association with the Clarkton Bridge Alliance, rehabilitated it for non-vehicular use. However, it was recently slated for destruction. (Listed 2007)

**FOUR LOCUST FARM** was formerly known as the Pettus Dairy Farm and is located near the intersection of Rt. 15 and 360 just north of the town of Keysville. In 1780, records show the property was purchased from William Rowlette by Pearce Beach (also "Pierce Baysbeach"), of Chesterfield County. In 1823, 480 acres was sold by the James Beach estate to Thomas Whitworth, identified as a resident of Petersburg. The property was said to be the "piece of land whereon James Beach resided." Land tax records of 1826 showed a value of \$600 for buildings, but it is not known where they were located on the property.

In 1843, Whitworth placed his 480-acre farm and other real estate into a Deed of Trust. Defaulting in 1845, the property was sold to Walter W. Cole. The 1850 census lists 47 year-old Cole as living with his wife, Elmira. The slave schedule indicates he also owned eight slaves. In 1857, land holdings increased to 585.5 acres and in 1859, value assessment of buildings increased to \$1600. It is assumed that this was a reflection of the construction of a new dwelling which still exists today. The census of 1860 lists Cole as having been born in Lunenburg County, 59 years old, owning \$7,000 of real estate and \$12,000 in personal property.

Walter W. Cole died in 1865 at which time an appraisal was made of his estate listing his personal property holdings, including livestock, at \$869.10, no doubt reflecting the economic downturn caused by the Civil War. Elmira Cole was awarded 138.75 acres on the west side of the "road from Keysville to Prince Edward Court House" (present-day U.S. Route 15) that was valued at \$1,300, plus one cow and three yearlings valued at \$40, and \$60-worth of household and kitchen furniture. Elmira is listed as living with her son Edward L. Cole in the Walton magisterial district. After Elmira's death, the farm was divided and sold to non-local owners; some of the conveyances were made through default on debts and through public auction. The property was owned by Marcus Neville of Washington, D.C., then was owned by Perdida and Aaron W. Fetzer. Deeds referred to the property as "dower land of the late Elmira Cole" with a 30-acre portion which was sold separately mentioning the "dwelling house."

In the 1890's, the house was owned by Albert W. Cornick of Norfolk, but would later be sold for taxes to Charles W. Stephens of Washington D.C. along with the remainder of most of the original Cole farm. The property would change hands a number of times until 1919, when it was purchased by George O. Pettus Sr. Family history indicates that the house was never occupied by George Sr., but served as a tenant house until 1937 when George Pettus Jr. (1913-2006) and his wife, Kathleen Shackleton (1913-2008) moved in after their marriage. George Pettus Sr. died in a car accident in 1937 and all his properties were divided among his three children and widow, Bertha. George Overton Pettus Jr. received the 365-acre "Dairy Farm" as his portion of the estate. The farm prospered and he and Kathleen would raise their two children, George Overton Pettus III (1939-1996) and Bernadine Shackleton Pettus (b. 1943) on the estate.

Pettus would eventually convey the bulk of the farm to his grandsons, Robert Zachary Tucker and Daniel J. Farnsworth, Jr. In addition, he would also sell a portion to his daughter, Bernadine and her husband Robert B. Tucker. All have built modern dwellings on their parcels. (Listed 2009)

**GRAVEL HILL** was originally part of a crown grant of 32,000 acres given in 1743 to Richard Kennon. A speculator, Kennon immediately sold 12,000 acres of this land to members of the Caldwell family of the Cub Creek community, with the remainder was purchased by various speculators. In 1768, Major John Brent of Lancaster County, Virginia, who married Margaret Caldwell in 1761, purchased 2,000 acres of the original Kennon lands from William Nichols and David George. They established a home and named it "Grove Hill" which would eventually become known as "Gravel Hill." Major Brent died shortly after the American Revolution and his widow and son moved to North Carolina. They traded the house at Grove Hill and 800 acres to Robert Gaines. The property remained in absentee ownership until 1806 when it was purchased by Captain George Hannah (1780-1870) and Patsy Brent Hannah, the granddaughter of Major John Brent who would make it their home. After Patsy's death, George Hannah married Lucy Morton, daughter of Colonel William Morton. Their son, George Cunningham Hannah married Eliza Spraggins in 1842. They built the present Gravel Hill. In 1847, George Hannah contracted the Richmond firm of Dabbs and Thomas to construct the main section of Gravel Hill. The new house was built in front of and joined to a part of

the previous house. Tradition holds that this was necessary since old Captain Hannah (George Hannah's father) refused to leave his house, a one-room, one-and a half story built in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, to live in a new one. The original beaded weatherboards survive on some walls, as does the stone chimney.

Gravel Hill declines after the War Between the States. George died in 1870, with the property remaining in the family under absentee ownership. In 1913, Gravel Hill was purchased from various heirs by Ann Atkinson Chamberlayne, a granddaughter of George C. Hannah. She restored the house as well as a 1914 addition, planted formal gardens and a rustic log guest house.

With the exception of a few years, ownership of the house remained in the Hannah family until recently being sold by 5<sup>th</sup> generation descendant Lucretia Phillips Whitehouse. (Listed 2001)

**GREENFIELD**, built in 1771 by Isaac Read, is the oldest standing two-story frame dwelling in Charlotte County. Clement Read patented 10,000 acres in the 1730's in what was then Lunenburg County, but later became Charlotte County. He established himself at "Bushy Forest." Following his death in 1763, his widow, Mary Hill Read proved herself to be most competent and the matriarch of the most powerful family in the county. Clement and Mary Read's children would make their homes at Ingleside, Ash Camp (now destroyed), Greenfield and Retirement.

Greenfield was the plantation home of Col. Isaac Read (1739-1777), member of the House of Burgesses and of the Virginia conventions of 1774 and 1776. Read was mortally wounded while serving as an officer in the Revolutionary War. Isaac married Sarah Embra in 1771. Following Isaac's early death, his widow held tenancy in the estate until their son (born the year his father died) attained his majority. That son, Isaac Read II (1777-1823), then left the estate to his widow, Anne Mayo Venable Read (1785-1869), under whose direction the plantation would prosper. It wasn't until after the impoverished years of the War Between the States that ownership and administration would return to male hands when William Watkins Read (1821-1889) inherited the property.

Greenfield has been well taken care of and lovingly restored. Today it still remains in the hands of descendants of Isaac Read. It is owned by Read and Anne Charlton. (Listed 1973)

**KEYSVILLE RAILROAD STATION** was built in phases between 1890 and 1900 on the Richmond and Danville Railroad, occupying the site of an antebellum deposes that was destroyed during the War Between the States. Unfortunately, though designated to the Virginia and National Historic Landmark lists, very little, if any, progress has been made towards preservation. (Listed 2008)

**MAPLE ROADS** was built by Captain John D. Richardson (1779-1855), son of John Richardson (Blackhead) of Charlotte County. He was a large landowner, miller, soldier and politician. He was a hero in the War of 1812 and represented Charlotte County in the General Assembly for 28 years, from 1809 to 1837. John and his wife Elizabeth Spencer, daughter of Colonel Thomas Spence of Charlotte County, were married in 1803. Following the death of Elizabeth's father in 1806, Richardson purchased some of the Spencer land at public auction on which they would later build their home. Built in two sections, it was begun in 1813 and reached its present form by 1821. The two-story, five-bay brick house with molded brick cornices has Federal interior woodwork including fine mantels and the remarkable survival of decorative graining and marbling.

After Richardson's death in 1855, his children inherited the property. Due to hard conditions after the War, they were forced to sell the property in 1870 to Alexander and Rolina Garden who would sell it in 1877 to Ann W. Pettus. In 1910, the house and 349 acres were sold to Mrs. Elsie J. McCorkle, whose granddaughter, Ellen Mercer Clark Maxwell acquired the property in 1952. Mrs. Maxwell, upon her death in 1983, willed the property to the Charlotte County Branch of the APVA and Briery Presbyterian Church.

In 1988, Mrs. Elsie Edmunds and Caroline Freeman, her daughter, acquired the property through probate with deed restrictions stipulated by the Charlotte County APVA protecting portions of the interior, exterior and office building. In November 2000, Max & Carol Sempowski acquired the property containing the house, various outbuildings and the Richardson / Pettus cemetery (1843-1917)) along with 92.73 acres. They have lovingly restored this remarkable property and are the present owners. (Listed 2002)

**MULBERRY HILL** was the home of Judge Paul Carrington who was born at Boston Hill in Cumberland County on 16 March 1733, to George and Ann Mayo Carrington. He was a distinguished jurist and leader in Virginia's movement from colony to commonwealth. He was a local justice and represented the county in the House of Burgesses. He served on the 1776 committee that framed the Virginia Declaration of Rights. On October 1, 1755, he married Margaret Read, daughter of Col. Clement Read and settled at Mulberry Hill. Here they would live and welcome five children until her untimely death in 1766. It wasn't until 26 years later in 1792 that he would marry his second wife, Priscilla Sims. During their marriage, they would welcome six more children, two of whom died in infancy. Priscilla would die in 1803. Paul Carrington would live until 23 June 1818. He and both of his wives were buried on the property at Mulberry Hill.

Carrington's son, Robert inherited the house and somewhat less than half of the original 4000 acres of Mulberry Hill. The remainder was divided among his brothers, Judge Paul Carrington (the younger), Col. Clement Carrington, and the Honorable Henry Carrington. In 1830, Robert conveyed Mulberry Hill to his brother Clement, whose descendants retained the property for many years.

In the 1830's, John Blair McPhail and family, including twelve children, would inhabit the house. In June of 1864, Mulberry Hill would play a very significant part in the Battle of Staunton River Bridge when Mrs. John B. McPhail stood bravely before advancing Union troops and informed them (untruthfully) of the no less than 10,000 Confederate troops assembled at the bridge. (Actually, there were 938, with most of those being old men and young boys who had volunteered.) These volunteers were able to thwart three advances of nearly 5000 Union troops attempting to destroy the bridge. The bridge was spared and the Union troops withdrew.

The residence, overlooking the Roanoke River valley, blends two periods of construction. The facade incorporates as its center section the late 18th-century gable end of the original house. Flanking it are two-story, early 19th-century wings. On the grounds is an unusually complete set of early outbuildings including Judge Carrington's office. The property also preserves a family graveyard and traces of a large formal garden.

In 2003, seeing a need to preserve this vestige of history, the descendants of Judge Paul Carrington donated the house and 40 acres to the Staunton River Battlefield Park. (Listed 1973)



**RED HILL**, was the last home and burial place of Patrick Henry "Orator of the Revolution. He would assemble this Charlotte County plantation, the bulk of which lies on the Charlotte County border of with Campbell County near Brookneal, through several purchases. He built a modest frame house with several outbuildings including a law office.

Two of Henry's children by his second wife, Dorothea Dandridge, were born at Red Hill.....John (who would inherit the estate) and Jean Robertson. Two of his daughters were also married there. Upon her death, Patrick Henry's wife Dorothea would be buried beside him in the graveyard.

After the War Between the States, and during the absentee ownership of William Wirt Henry, the property fell into disrepair. When William died in 1900, the property was divided between his daughters, Patrick Henry's great-granddaughters, Lucy Gray Harrison who inherited Red Hill proper, and Mrs. James Lyons, who received "the Quarter Place" lying in Campbell County.

Mrs. Harrison took up residence at the home with hopes to revive it. She began to undertake a general renovation of the property to include a new residence incorporating the original structure. Prior to this construction, she employed architect named Stanhope Johnson to do detailed measurements and drawings of the original Henry house and other buildings, some of which were to be removed. Structural work was completed prior to October 1912. However, just seven short years after the completion, the house burned in 1919.

Mrs. Harrison then moved into the guest house incorporating the original law office which she continued to use until her death in April 1944. Luckily, some of the Patrick Henry artifacts and early furniture were salvaged from the first floor of the main residence prior to its collapse and preserved in the guest house.

Following her death, the Patrick Henry Memorial Foundation was formed and would purchase Red Hill containing 960 acres. After acquiring the property, the Foundation, with the help of benefactor, Eugene B. Casey, was able to reconstruct a replica of the original home and undertake a renovation of the property which today serves as a museum and is open daily.

Nearby is the family cemetery containing the graves of the Revolutionary patriot, his second wife, Dorothea Dandridge Henry, and other members of the Henry family. (Listed 1978)

**NOTE:** Due to the large number of historic properties in Charlotte County, Part II will be printed in the next edition of our "Family Ties" newsletter. CVS

