

The Messenger

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The Chesterfield Historical Society of Virginia, P.O. Box 40, Chesterfield Courthouse, Virginia 23832

THE INGENUOUS RAILROAD ON FALLING CREEK, VIRGINIA'S FIRST, ABOUT 1810

BY FREDERICK C. AND MARILOU GAMST

Professor Gamst, of the department of anthropology of the University of Massachusetts at Boston, Harbor Campus, is a former railroad employee in engine service. He and his wife, Marilou, have researched railroads (and other subjects) together since 1961, covering areas such as Ethiopia, great Britain, Germany, Mexico, Canada, and the United States. Thanks go to Mrs. Lucille C. Moseley, Director of the Chesterfield County Museum, for her knowledge, support and graciousness connected with the local research for this paper.

Constructed and operating about 1810, one of North America's earliest railroad was in Virginia. Serving a gunpowder mill, this pioneering railroad of the Old Dominion was the first in the United States to haul hazardous loads and it became the nation's first, nonrevenue, passenger line. Called in this essay the "Falling Creek Railroad" (FCR), it was located along the Arbor Spring Branch of Falling Creek,¹ a tributary of the James River. When built some 180 years ago, the railroad was out in the then rural countryside of Chesterfield County about 12 miles south of a much smaller Richmond. Today the area is along the semi-industrial southern boundary of the modern, expanded city of Richmond.

In the technological and operational senses, the FCR was an authentic railroad and can not be dismissed simply by calling it a tramway. During the pioneering history of railroading, prior to 1840,² the terms tramway, wagonway, railway, and railroad were interchangeable. A railroad may be defined as an overland right-of-way with a guide way consisting of paired rails supporting self-guided vehicles. Self-guidance is usually provided by flanges on the vehicle wheels riding on the rails but may be

provided by flanges on rails supporting flangeless wheels. Kinds of motive power, materials for components of the track structure, and designations as private or common carrier are irrelevant to a functional definition of a railroad.³

Railroads in North America had beginnings with the Beacon Hill line in 1805, the Thomas Lieper's lines in the Philadelphia area and the FCR railline of 1810 in Chesterfield. These pioneering American railroads were constructed in the New World as a product of the railroad developments in the technologically contiguous mother country, Great Britain. There such developments had occurred from about 1600 to 1830, before the common use of the locomotive steam engine. The FCR is about the sixth of approximately twenty-five pioneering railroads in North America before the common use of the locomotive occurring after 1830.⁴

It is thus among the earliest of the American railroads developed on the British model. Transportation historian Seymour Dunbar, in his *A History of Travel in America*, perceptively generalizes concerning the FCR: "The details of this Virginia railway show that in its general features it was not far removed from similar constructions then being used in England...⁵ Draft animals, gravity, and sometimes other forms of energy such as wind or water flow were used as motive power by the pioneering railroads. Rails were usually made of wood during the first 215 or so years of railway development; therefore most pioneering lines have been properly labeled as "wooden railroads."

Virginia's Gunpowder Industry

The FCR served a gunpowder mill. To understand this line, we must first consider the powder industry of early Virginia and its central problem of destructive explosions. The explosive problem was the underlying reason for building the FCR.

During the Revolutionary War, America's first gunpowder mill

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QUARTERLY MEETING

Sunday, October 28, 1990

3 p.m.

OLD COURTHOUSE

You are invited to hear Al Schalow speak on "The Medicine Wagon; Quackery and Fads, Yesterday and Today". An old-time medicine showman complete with top hat and tails, magic, humor, snake oil and cure-alls, will create the era when medicine wagons were prevalent across America.

Two new photographic exhibits from Hugh Goodwyn's collection will also open that day. (See Calendar of Events)

We hope to see you then!

Reports ♦ Reports ♦ Reports

HAIL AND FAREWELL

Laurie Horner, Assistant Director of the Museum and Magnolia Grange since January 1988, has resigned her position, effective October 12th. With an appropriate educational background in historic preservation from Longwood College, a talent for research, an ability for public speaking, and a warm personality, she has been a capable and congenial co-worker. She will be sorely missed! We wish the Horner's our best as they soon will become new parents.

We welcome **Jennifer Wright** who will take up Laurie's duties on October 15th. A native of Charlottesville with a degree in history from Virginia Commonwealth University, she was selected from a field of 31 applicants.

Jennifer worked at Monticello during her summer vacations; assisted in the James Branch Cabell Library during her college days; served as an intern at the Valentine Museum; and, comes to us from her position at Ash Lawn. We believe her to be eminently qualified and welcome her to Chesterfield.

LORD CHESTERFIELD'S MOUSE MEETS GEORGE WASHINGTON

The National Park Service (NPS) at Great Falls, Virginia, did a great job on May 19th to make the canal the main feature at the second annual Patowmack Canal Festival. Not only did they call it a canal festival, but they invited the LORD CHESTERFIELD and its crew to come up, set up their period camp, and pole the bateau down George Washington's canal where it could be visited all day.

The Potomac River water level was low causing the NPS crew to put in a lot of time repairing the wing dam at the entrance, and moving stones out of the channel. A large rock (now known as Paul's Rock) still blocked the canal. It was levered up out of the channel by Captain Paul Kreynus with the help of NPS and the bateau crew where it still remains today.

Presiding at the festivities was none other than George Washington, Honorary President of Virginia Canals and Navigation Society (VC&NS), to whom we regularly send a copy of the latest TILLER. In fact, General Washington (very convincingly played by William Sommerfield, a professional living history reconactor) had seen our canal material in the library at Mount Vernon.

Also offered were tours of the canal, period music recitals, and demonstrations of period crafts including spinning, weaving, knitting, quilting, and basket and dulcimer making.

We hope the NPS will continue to hold its annual Patowmack Canal Festival and devise ways to focus more attention to the canal itself. Until the canal is filled, most visitors won't know there was a canal at Great Falls, despite the signs and exhibits. The best-placed sign is the one erected in 1989 by VC&NS, which is no substitute for the canal itself.

The NPS has been proceeding with work to stabilize the canal locks. They need our continued support and encouragement to get the job done so the lock chambers can be seen again. The NPS is also looking for donations to build a bateau for permanent display to provide pole-powered bateau rides as opposed to the mule-drawn canalboat rides already available on the C&O Canal across the Potomac.

The mouse? Well, a little grey mouse had its home in the LORD CHESTERFIELD bateau when it was in Paul Kreynus' backyard. The mouse was still there when the boat was back on its trailer after its dip in the Potomac. The mouse was watching George Washington when he came aboard to take a trip along his canal. We have been reliably informed that this is probably the first mouse from Chesterfield County to have travelled by bateau with General Washington along the Patowmack Canal.

Bill Trout, May 1990



Replica 18th Century Bateau on James River

◆ Reports ◆

continued

NEW MEMBERS

The Society welcomes the following new members who have joined The Chesterfield Historical Society since April 1990:

Rusty A. & Stephanie B. Lescault	Clyde H. Ratcliffe
Pamela C. Wiley	Mabel T. Boyd
Patricia A. Stoner	Freida J. Davis
Karen Abse	Jay A. Langston
Lillian S. Baucom	Beverly R. Rothert
Erma B. Pittman	Ruby D. Cole
Doris B. Turner	Mildred Hill Bradford
Mabel T. Boyd	Julian H. Osborne
Mattie Rucks Taber	Catherine Claiborne Kinker
Evelyn Lewis Cox	J. A. Henry
Rachel Lipowicz	Susan V. Henry

MEMBERSHIP

The Society appreciates those members who have responded so promptly to our dues notice.

Soon to be available are new laminated membership cards. Watch for yours!

Chesterfield Historical Society Officers 7/89 - 6/90

President, Dr. Robert Wagenknecht
 1st Vice-President, Col. Gordon E. Jonas
 2nd Vice-President, Bryan H. Walker
 Recording Secretary, Elizabeth Ann Muttart
 Corresponding Secretary, Nancy R. Dunnivant
 Treasurer, S. R. Hilbert

Directors

Steve Cormier	John Pearsall
Charlotte Farley	James Schiavo
Arline McGuire	Angie Wilderman
Edward A. Moseley, Jr.	Baxter Perkinson

Ex Officio:

Lucille Moseley

◆ Queries ◆

MARKHAM, MATTHEWS, TUNSTALL. Seeking the parents of John (d.1770 Chesterfield County) and Catherine Mathews Markham. Suspect that Catherine was the daughter of Samuel and Catherine Tunstall Mathews of King and Queen County. Also seeking information about the family of John and Catherine's second son, John (d. 1801 Pittsylvania County). He may have married Mary Tunstall about 1780.

Arthur D. McCoy
 1620 Ross Circle SE
 Olympia, WA 98501

WANTED: WORLD WAR I ARTIFACTS

The Museum is seeking memorabilia from World War I in order to establish an exhibit on that event in 1991. Uniforms, equipment, photographs, insignia and other items pertaining to that period in our nation's history are being sought. If you can contribute any such items, we would welcome knowing about them in the near future. Please call Lucille Moseley at 748-1026.

Committee Chairpersons

Archaeology, Dawn Burns
 Bateau, Paul Kreynus
 Cemetery, Margaret Burgess
 Civil War Sites, George Fickett
 Courthouse Restoration, Lucille Moseley
 Finance, S. R. Hilbert
 Genealogical, Angie Wilderman
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 Picture Collection, Hugh Goodwyn
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 Program, Gordon Jonas
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 Preservation Liason, Brad Hammer
 Special Events, Lucille Moseley
 Ways and Means

The Messenger

of

The Chesterfield Historical Society of Virginia

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was built and operated near the confluence of Falling Creek and Pocoshock Creek and was the beginning of the nation's vital powder industry. A Bavarian chemist who was an immigrant to Chesterfield, Jacob Rubsamens, supplied the technical expertise. His partner in the entrepreneurship of the mill was Archibald Cary of Amphill. Besides producing powder for the war effort, Rubsamens instructed Americans from elsewhere in the South in the production of saltpeter (potassium nitrate). This chemical was ground and mixed with sulfur and charcoal to make gunpowder. Rubsamens later received a commendation from the fledgling U.S. Congress for his militarily vital activities in ordnance. During the war, Rubsamens' production was interrupted by the explosions common to powder plants, but these destructive events were not the customary accidents. Instead, on two occasions, British and Hessian forces destroyed Rubsamens' mill and its quite perishable product. One of these attacks was under the command of the British General Benedict Arnold.⁶

After the Revolutionary War, the gunpowder industry was re-established in Chesterfield County, just in time for the conflict of 1812. On the south side of Falling Creek in the area of what became the Miniborya Farm, the Richmond firm of Brown, Page, and Burr built and operated a new powder mill on a 312-acre tract. Another powder mill, belonging to the Richmond firm and located two miles east of Richmond in Henrico County, experienced a massive explosion, killing fifteen workers, on September 9, 1812.⁷

To decrease the chances of the catastrophic explosions so common in the industry, at its new Falling Creek facility the Richmond company prudently built the powder magazine a distance of one mile from the powder mill. A wooden railroad linked the paired mill and magazine. Jeffrey M. O'Dell, author of *Chesterfield County: Early Architecture and Historic Sites*, gives the crucial date of erection of the powder mill as "around 1810". In his *Chesterfield: An Old Virginia County*, Francis E. Lutz says that the event occurred "about 1811".⁸ First-hand documentation of the erection dates of the mill apparently do not exist, other than in the McKibben account, which follows. A review of the Chesterfield "County Court order Books" and of materials in the research library of the Chesterfield Historical Society yielded nothing regarding the exact starting dates for the mill or its railroad.

The Origins of Falling Creek's Wooden Railroad

The most comprehensive primary source on the FCR is the eyewitness account given in 1886 by a Mr. McKibben, at age 82, to his nephew, Thomas McKibben, who was interested in early railroad. The elder McKibben had no first name recorded by his nephew. In the present and the following ten paragraphs, the primary data regarding the FCR and gunpowder plants are taken from



Chesterfield Railway, circa 1810

the written record made by nephew Thomas. The elder McKibben was in the gunpowder business as were his father, uncles, and grandfather before him. This McKibben family of Baltimore had a powder mill, near that city, which "blew up about 1810, — this had happened frequently before." About 1790, the elder McKibben's grandfather lost his life in such an explosion.⁹

As a boy, the elder McKibben "often rode" on the FCR. He did this, undoubtedly because his Baltimore family had commercial and, thus social connections with the members of the Richmond firm. According to the elder McKibben: "About 1810 it seems, a colony of powder makers (the members of the Richmond firm) started to engage in the business of powder making at a place in Chesterfield County, Virginia, on Falling Creek....."

The firm of Richmond powder makers had at its Falling Creek facility a talented practical engineer, George Magers, "who was quite a genius in his way." A number of innovations were crafted at the plant by Magers. An important improvement automatically regulated the granulating mill which pulverized the ingredients for the gunpowder. This grinding machinery was powered by a water wheel. Magers mechanically regulated the mill to operate for 40 minutes, and so forth. "Another of his inventions was the tram or railway referred to," said the elder McKibben.

Report of the Treasurer

Statement of Condition

June 30, 1990

Petty Cash	200.00
Central Fidelity Bank	200.00
Dominion Bank	55,439.00
Investors Bank	<u>40,976.81</u>
Equity	<u>96,815.88</u>
	<u>96,815.88</u>

REVENUES AND EXPENSES

12 Months

REVENUES

Magnolia Grange donations	49,298.90
Magnolia Grange - other	2,098.64
Historical Society - dues	6,605.00
Historical Society - other	2,950.88
Civil War Sites Committee	1,250.57
Bateau Committee	983.80
Historic Sites book	1,435.40
Genealogy Committee	256.05
Interest Income	<u>4,675.94</u>
	69,555.78

EXPENSES

Magnolia Grange disbursements	33,630.39
Historical Society - disbursements	4,131.24
Civil War Sites Committee	1,096.63
Bateau Committee	1,143.66
"The Messenger"	1,264.05
Genealogy Committee	46.85
Library	312.37
Picture Collection	54.27
Treasurer and miscellaneous	<u>422.24</u>
Total Expenses	<u>42,101.70</u>
Net Gain for period	<u>27,454.08</u>

RECONCILIATION OF EQUITY

Equity as of 7-1-89	69,361.80
Net gain - 12 months ending 6-30-90	<u>27,454.08</u>
Equity as of 6-30-90	<u>96,815.88</u>

Respectfully submitted,
Samuel R. Hilbert, Treasurer

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Operating the FCR

The work of railroading, has three aspects or parts. One is engineering, or the construction and maintenance of track, bridges, buildings, and other structures of and along the right-of-way. Another is mechanical, or the construction and maintenance of rolling stock running on the rails. And the third is called transportation, or the movement of rolling stock and related work in the handling of freight and passenger traffic. We now examine each of these on Virginia's FCR.

The FCR's engineering crafted by Magers was both quite substantial and impressive. On a grade of about 8 percent, the wooden railroad made a descent of about one mile from the powder mill to its magazine for storing the dangerous explosive. Using approximately "an ordinary wagon gauge," Magers laid "solid timer" rails made of hardwood upon crossties (Most likely of cheaper Virginia pine). Between the rails, Magers attached a continuous floor of boards upon the ties, which thus also served as joists. This flooring between the rails ran for the entire length of the line. (The plant personnel could, therefore, traverse the mile from mill to magazine dryshod, on what amounted to a wooden boardwalk).

One of the massive timber rails was grooved, having a U-shape, and the other one tongued. The car wheels on one side of the vehicle were tongued and on the opposite side grooved, to mate with their matching rails. Technically speaking, the vehicle wheels were half double-flanged, to fit the supporting single-flanged rail, and half single-flanged, to match the double-flanged rail. Mager's pairing of the two different forms of flanging for rails and wheels may be unique because normally just one or the other form was used. The undulating countryside traversed by the FCR, required a truly large-scale engineering work by Magers. His line crossed a valley about one-quarter mile wide upon "an immense trestle some 75 feet high" at its middle This trestle was "securely braced in every conceivable way."

Mechanical details were rather simple - apart from the intricate car wheels, each 2 feet in diameter. These double and single-flanged wheels consisted of two circular pieces of hardwood, cross-grained to one another and securely fastened together. Apparently only one car or "wagon" ran on the line. It had a body about 18 or 20 feet long with the width of a common wagon. (It was undoubtedly made of wood, in keeping with the contemporary road vehicles).

Transportation was by a variety of single-track gravity railroad. Thus the line could not have the self-

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acting principle of most of the pioneering double-track gravity lines. On these, descending and ascending cars on each of the two tracks helped balance the weight of one another. On the simpler FCR, a lever-actuated manual brake, manned by an employee, controlled the single loaded car on its descending run to the magazine. Such transport of gunpowder was without any destructive incident; a fortunate circumstance considering the catastrophic results of a runaway carload of blasting powder on a downgrade crashing into a magazine.

A thick rope winding onto a large vertical drum, powered by the mill's water wheels, hauled the empty car upgrate (no doubt the rope paid out behind the car, unrolling from its coils on the drum, as the vehicle descended the grade). The elder McKibben could not recall the means for either signaling the mill to begin the return trip or otherwise timing this ascent. Nephew Thomas, however, thought that the return could well have been timed automatically by a device of Magers similar to the one used to throw the mill's granulator in and out of gear. If such a timing of the vertical power drum existed, then the descent required careful synchronization with the period when the application of water power was automatically stopped.

The Demise of Magers and the FCR

George Magers died in 1818 and was buried in a churchyard near the Chesterfield County Courthouse. As far as we could determine, nothing has been published about him specifically in a biographical or historical account. An article on Mager's life, technical backgrounds, and achievements would make an interesting and valuable project into local history having a broader significance for the history of technology in America.

In 1819, the Falling Creek mill "blew up," but the specific reason is unknown. The Falling Creek Railroad remained in operation, but only as a passenger line. Former mill hands in the neighborhood now ran it "for their own amusement making excursions on the road." During this later phase of operations after the death of Magers, local inhabitants such as the elder McKibben, when a boy, were carried as passengers. The elder McKibben returned to Baltimore in 1823 and, at that time, the FCR still operated as a passenger line. It is unknown when the line ceased operations. But the deterioration or other destruction of the massive, and therefore costly, trestle can be assumed as the reason.

The Beginning Date of the FCR and its Remains

Lutz says that George Magers "erected this tramway in 1811 according to an article published in the American Engineer for 1886."¹⁰ The date is a prudent

approximation, but the cited article contains no such date. The firm of Brown, Page, and Burr offered to make gunpowder for the state of Virginia in 1812. The Richmond Enquirer when reporting, in September 1812, the explosion of the firm's Henrico plant said the company then possessed "another mill on the other side of the (James) river,"¹¹ that is, on Falling Creek. Transportation historian John L. Ringwalt in his Development of Transportation Systems in the United States states that the date of the FCR was "soon after 1810," and Seymour Dunbar estimates "the year 1811."¹² Given the "about 1810" date actually mentioned by the elder McKibben, the Falling Creek plant and its necessary rail line to the magazine could have been operational in either 1810 or 1811. But the later date seems more probable.

What is the surviving physical evidence of the FCR? A field inspection today shows no remains of the FCR, and no map exist regarding the location of the line. Some industrial archeology could probably uncover the holes for the upright timbers of the massive trestle and other relics. It should be noted that Edwin P. Cox, a local investigator into the FCR, was unable to locate its remains in the mid-1930s. He, however, believed it to be along Falling Creek near the mouth of Pocoshock.¹³ Did Cox confuse the site of Rubsamen's powder mill with that of the Richmond firm? Lutz says, "on the old Seguin Plantation ... evidences of the tramway existed until recent years."¹⁴ Perhaps this time was until the 1930s. The Seguin Plantation was a precursor to the Miniborya, Meadowbrook, Argyle, and other estates of later years.

The Significance of the FCR in History

The FCR and the later Chesterfield Railroad, discussed in the following section, were varieties within the range of British wooden railroads. Both the FCR's U-shaped channel rails and its double-flanged wheels were known in Europe.¹⁵ By employing both, Magers hedged the engineering bet of whether to use either flanged wheels or flanged rails for insuring the self-guidance of a rail vehicle. Perhaps Magers was only partially aware of the knowledge from the then current literature and practice concerning railroads. Thus he might have been unsure of the permissibilities and limitations regarding the dynamics of wheeled vehicles running on tracks. As with the FCR, some inclined railroads in Europe were also worked by ropes powered by water wheels.¹⁶ The FCR, however, had to be the first regular carrier of hazardous loads, in this instance gunpowder, on a railroad in the United States.

In southeast Wales during 1807 on the Swansea and Mumbles Rail-Way, the world's first carrying of revenue passengers on a railroad occurred when a contractor began hauling paying patrons in a flanged-wheeled coach pulled by a horse.¹⁷ Since the beginning of railroads

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in England about 1600, however, nonrevenue passengers in the form of mine and rail personnel and also passers-by must have been carried. In the eighteenth century, Ralph Allen was a reforming innovator, and thereby a prosperous entrepreneur, in the service of the British Post Office. He built a short wooden railroad, descending from an elevation of some 500 feet at a stone quarry he owned near Bath, in western England, past his estate at Prior Park, to the River Avon. Here his stone, which was transported in four-ton blocks, could be sent by boat to Bath and along the English inland waterway.

By about 1750, Ralph Allen's railroad besides hauling stone was carrying nonrevenue passengers on an excursion basis. It was considered a fashionable outing to take a trip at Prior Park on Allen's line. Excursionists rode, gratis, on one of the cars pulled up grade by horse and moving down grade by gravity.¹⁸ This, then, could well be the world's first nonrevenue excursion carriage of rail passengers. Beginning in 1819, the FCR must be the first passenger railroad in North America. But, similar in the Prior Park line, the FCR was most likely used for excursions on a no-fare basis. It is difficult to determine whether the mill hands running the post-mill passenger line ever charged anyone for the tip.

The pioneering North American railroads, before 1830, often do not have any visible remains and frequently do not have any contemporary or later published accounts. Therefore, some of the earliest lines could be entirely lost to posterity. Railroads similar to the FCR could have existed in North America and not even have been preserved by anecdotal accounts such as those of the elder McKibben, as recorded by his railroad-enthusiast nephew.

Chesterfield County's Other Wooden Railroad

Something must be said about the other pioneering wooden railroad in Chesterfield county, to prevent any confusion between the two different lines associated with Falling Creek.¹⁹ During the winter of 1827-28, Nicholas Mills and Beverly Randolph, two owners of coal mines had Claudius Crozet, survey a rail route. Crozet was later to become a noted civil engineer of railroads.²⁰ The route ran westward 13 1/2 miles from Manchester, South Richmond, at tidewater to Falling Creek in the vicinity of the coal mines at Midlothian. The line was surveyed to be almost entirely on a grade gently descending down to tidewater. A charter was obtained for the Chesterfield Railroad Company in 1828 from the Virginia legislature. Monocure Robinson superintended the road's construction. He was also to become a noted railway civil engineer.²¹ The Chesterfield line was planned either while the FCR was still in operation or immediately thereafter. It is inconceivable that the planners of one pioneering line to Falling Creek would not know of the existence of another in the same valley. Speculation about the influence of the earlier line upon the later one is difficult.

Opened for traffic on July 1, 1831, the Chesterfield railway was of a 4-foot 6-inch gauge and almost entirely single track. Wooden rails were covered by 1/2-inch-thick, wrought-iron straps. Draft animals in the form of mules and horses and the force of gravity provided the motive power. During a typical three-hour eastbound trip down grade to tidewater, a single horse pulled two cars each carrying three tons of coal. Near the mines at the upper, western end of the single track line on the sole steep grade was a self-acting inclined plane, 1,100 feet long and descending to the west.²² Here the draft-animal livestock was detached and the cars then attached to the single continuous loop of heavy rope on the plane. The mechanism of this plane was used to raise and lower the rolling stock along some 80 feet, down to and up from the upper slope of the Falling Creek Valley. The plane was double tracked and equipped with a manually operated friction brake on the drum of the upper of the two pulleys for the continuous rope. The pulleys guided the rope and the brake regulated the speed of the simultaneously balanced descent of empties to and ascent of loads from the pit heads.

To transport bituminous coal in 1839, the Chesterfield Railroad had 50 to 60 horses and mules and 200 open cars, having a capital cost of \$50,000. Trains of cars were run in multiple, following sections called "caravans," in the transportation parlance of the period. Daily movements totaled about 80 loads eastbound in the morning and 80 empties westbound in the afternoon. In the evening at the west, mine, end of the road, empty cars were loaded and switched into trains for the following day's movements. The capital cost of the line's physical plant was an additional \$150,000. Virginia's coal-hauling railroads have been profitable and this grandfather of them all was no exception. From 1831 through 1839, it paid a 6 per cent annual dividend plus a pay back of \$73 on each share of stock. The Chesterfield Railroad was a chartered private carrier, Virginia's second railroad, and about the thirtieth in North America.²³ The FCR was a prechartered private carrier.

(please see pages 8 & 9 for footnote information.)

Legendary Christmas Comes Alive at Courthouse

On Saturday, December 8 from 6 to 9 p.m. the Chesterfield Parks and Recreation Department will sponsor the annual Ledegary Christmas event at the Courthouse complex. This event is free and offers entertainment for all ages. Tour Magnolia Grange, the County Museum and the Old Jail. Visit Santa and enjoy hot cider and cookies. Listen to community groups perform carols. All this is free! .

Our Appreciation

The Society wishes to thank the following persons for their generous gifts to the collections of the Library, Magnolia Grange, and the Museum, September 1989 - September 1990:

The Library:

Dr. Benjamin Weisiger	"Chesterfield County, Virginia Deeds 1756 - 1764"
Mrs. Robert Scott Spilman	"Robert E. Lee, the West Pointer"
Aileen E. Near	"Salem Baptist Church Minute Book, 1835 - 1858"
Betty Mann	"The Boy Gangs of Richmond in the Dear Old Days"
Pattie M. Grady	Historical Map of Bedford County, Virginia, 1750-1865
Dr. George E. Pankey	"John Pankey of Manakin Town, Virginia, and his Descendants" (3 volumes)
Dorothy Geneva Simmons Skelton	"The Squire Simmons Family, 1746 - 1986"
Dr. Frederick C. Gamst	"Virginia's First Railroad on Falling Creek, ca. 1810"
Julia A. Winckler	"From Wurtemberger to Winterpock, the Genealogy of John Stephen Winckler" "The Genealogy of George William Bantham" "Virginia on Guard, Civilian Defense and the State Militia in the Second World War" "Richmond After the War, 1865 - 1890" "The Jamestown 350th Anniversary Historical Booklets" (23 booklets)
Rovens Jones	"The Pankey Family of Virginia, 1635 - 1968"
Laura Hurt Sloan	"Life of Samuel Thomas Miller"
James Samuel Patton	"The Family of William and Elizabeth Bolling Robertson"

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Notes to Railroad article

1. Jeffrey M. O'Dell, Chesterfield County: Early Architecture and Historic Sites (Chesterfield, Va., 1983), p.473.

2. Cf. Michael J. T. Lewis, Early Wooden Railways (London, 1970), pp.135-36, 232, 254-56, 280. For other information on pioneering railroads see also, Marshall (n. 3 below); Bertram Baxter, Stone Blocks and Iron Rails, (Newton Abbot, 1966).

3. Frederick C. Gamst, The Hoghead: An Industrial Ethnology of the Locomotive Engineer (New York, 1980), pp.122-23; C. F. Dendy Marshall, A History of British Railways down to the Year 1830 (London, 1938), pp.1-2.

4. Frederick C. Gamst, "Von Gerstner's Monumental study of U.S.

Pioneering Railroads: A Sesquicentennial Commemoration, 1838-1988" (Unpublished report to the Railway and Locomotive Historical Society, 1988), pp.39-41.

5. Seymour Dunbar, A History of Travel in America, vol.3 (Indianapolis, 1915), p.879.

6. Francis E. Lutz, Chesterfield: An Old Virginia County (Richmond, 1954), p.127; O'Dell (n.1 above), pp.409-10; Johann D. Schopf, Travels in the Confederation, 1783-84 (New York, 1968[1911]), p.67. Dr. Schopf was an army surgeon for the Hessians under the German King, Georg von Hannover, of England and Scotland.

7. Lutz (n. 6 above), p.162.

8. O'Dell (n 1 above), p.473; Lutz (n 6 above), p.162.

9. The nephew's primary written record is found in, Thomas A. McKibben, "Another Addition to the Railroad History of the Country." The American Engineer 12(July 7, 1886): 3. His piece was written in response to a note, "Proceedings of the Engineers' Club of Philadelphia," in the June 17 issue and concerning the Lieper quarry railroad of 1810 at Crum Creek. Without any explanation, McKibben said the FCR was "the third in America," p.3 — perhaps following the Lieper line and the Beacon Hill railroad, both mentioned in the note.

10. Lutz (n. 6 above), p.163.

11. Lutz (n. 6 above), p.162.

12. John L. Ringwalt, Development of

Our Appreciation, continued

Marguerite Friend Christian	"The Story of The Friend Family"
Martha Gresham DuBose and Charlotte Gresham Milles	Loose papers relating to Charles M. Friend, 1896 - 1909. Loose papers relating to Chester School, 1903 - 1911. <u>The Chesterfieldian (newspaper)</u> Vol. I, No. 1, Oct. 1915 Virginia Historical Society Map: Drewary's Bluff, 1864 Map: Chesterfield County, 1864
Mary C. Dance	"A Partial History of the French Huguenots by name Soblets" "Midlo Mirror, 1925" (Yearbooks, Midlothian High School) "Midlo Mirror, 1929" (Yearbooks, Midlothian High School)
Waverly K. Winfree	"Colonial Virginia", 2 volumes "The General Assembly of Virginia, 1885 - 1918" "The General Assembly of Virginia, 1919 - 1939" "Chesterfield County, Virginia" "Official Letters of the Governors of the State of Virginia" "Virginia on Guard, Civilian Defense and the State Militia in the Second World War" "Richmond After the War, 1865 - 1890" "The Jamestown 350th Anniversary Historical Booklets" (23 booklets)
Irene McDaniel	"Virginia Company of London, 1619 - 1624"
Mildred P. Daffron	"Winfree Family Bible Records"
Margaret Burgess	Map: Chesterfield County, 1926
Dorothy G. Lawson	"Bethlehem Baptist Church, 1790 - 1990"
Lucie Titus	"Chesterfield, an Old Virginia County" "Historic Sites and People of Chesterfield County, Virginia"

Transportation Systems in the United States (Philadelphia, 1888), p.69; Dunbar (n. 5 above), p.878.

13. Edwin P. Cox, A Brief Outline of Some Salient Facts Relating to the History of Chesterfield County, Virginia, (Petersburg, Va., 1936), p.20

14. Lutz (n. 6 above), p.163.

15. Cf. Lewis (n. 2 above), pp.44-85, 193, 266, 346, 350.

16. Cf. Lewis (n. 2 above), p.55.

17. Charles E. Lee, The First Passenger Railway: The Oystermouth or Swansea & Mumbles Line (London, 1942); J. R. S.

Phillips, "The Earliest Passenger Carrying Railway Vehicle? ...," Transport History 5 (1972): 152-54.

18. John T. Desaguliers, A Course in Experimental Philosophy (London, 1734), I, pp.274-79, plates 21-23; John Wood, An Essay toward a Description of Bath, 2nd ed. (London, 1749), 2, pp.424-25; William Gregory, Ralph Allen and Prior Park (Bath, 1886).

19. The information on the Chesterfield line comes mainly from, Franz Anton Ritter von Gerstner, Die innern Communicationen der Vereinigten Staaten von Nordamerika (Vienna, 1843), 2, p.244; and some from, Nicholas Wood, A Practical Treatise on Rail-Roads, 1st Amer. ed., (Philadelphia, 1832), p.548; "Forerunner of Virginia's First Railway: A Thirteen-Mile Tramway Connected the James River with Chesterfield

County Coal Pits," Virginia Cavalcade 4, no.3 (1954): 4-7; Barbara I. Burchett, "A History of the Village of Midlothian, Virginia Emphasizing the Period 1835-1935." Masters Thesis, the University of Richmond (1983), pp.14-18.

20. See Elizabeth O. Cullen, "Train Speeds and Safety in 1826: as Expounded in the Early Writings of Claudius Crozet," Bulletin of the Railway and Locomotive Historical Society No. 17 (1925): 41-46.

21. "Monocure Robinson," Dictionary of American Biography 8 (1935): 48-49.

22. For a thorough contemporary explanation of a self-acting inclined plane see, "Inclined Planes," American Railroad Journal 7 (1838): 42-45.

23. Gamst (n. 4 above).

Calendar of Coming Events

- October 4 Exhibit at "Chesterfield by Choice" program, Central Library, 7 p.m.
- October 28 Fall meeting of the Chesterfield Historical Society, Old Courthouse, 3 p.m.
- October 28 Exhibit opening: "Chesterfield's Courthouses, 1749 - 1990", Old Courthouse, 3 p.m.
- October 28 Exhibit opening: "Chesterfield's First High School: Chester, 1906", Old Courthouse, 3 p.m.
- October 30 Lunch hour symposium: "Federal Style Clothing for an Early American Family", by Mary Elizabeth Jonas. Lunch included. Members \$4.50, non-members \$5.00. Magnolia Grange, 12:00 noon. Call 796-1479 for reservation.
- November 11 Veteran's Day Program, Confederate Monument on the Court Green followed by a reception in the County Museum, 2 p.m.
- November 30-
January 3 Christmas Exhibit, "Under the Tree, 1870-1930" by Margaret Wright, Magnolia Grange.
- December 4-
January 3 Christmas Exhibit, "Bears and Dolls of Christmas Past" by Suzanne Storti, Chesterfield Museum.
- December 4-
January 6 Christmas Exhibit, "Antique Electric Trains" by Virginia Train Collectors, Chesterfield Museum.
- December 8-28 The fifth annual "Magnolia Grange in Holiday Dress" with decorations by nine local Garden Clubs.
- December 8 Christmas open house for members of the Historical Society, Magnolia Grange, 3 - 5 p.m.
- December 8 "Legendary Christmas", open house for the public, Magnolia Grange, County Museum, Old Jail and Old Courthouse, 6 - 9 p.m.
- December 9 Music by Carol Todd, dulcimer player, Magnolia Grange, 2 p.m. and 3 p.m.
- December 10-21 Special 1st grade Christmas tours, County Museum and Magnolia Grange, daily, 9:30 a.m. - 2 p.m.
- December 11 Lunch hour symposium, "Toys - from Hand-Made to Mass Production, 1870 - 1930" by Margaret Wright, Magnolia Grange, Noon. Lunch included. Members \$4.50, non-members \$5.00. Call 796-1479 for reservations.
- December 16 Music by Tres Wagenknecht, harpist, Magnolia Grange, 2 and 3 p.m.
- February 19 Workshop, "Genealogy for Beginners", Old Courthouse, 7 - 9 p.m. Call 748-1026 for reservations.
- April 13 House tour of historic homes in the Winterpock area.
- May 5 "Plantation Days", celebrating the fifth anniversary of the opening of Magnolia Grange as a museum house.



