

FEBRUARY 2016

Broad Run Lifestyle

MAGAZINE

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Broad Run

A TIME
CAPSULE
IN THE
GAP

A busy community grew
along the historic waterway

by John T. Toler

Framed by the Bull Run and Pond mountains at the Prince William-Fauquier county line, Broad Run has witnessed a lot of history over the past 200 years: early settlement, the coming of the railroads, the Civil War, and expansion of the interstate highway system.

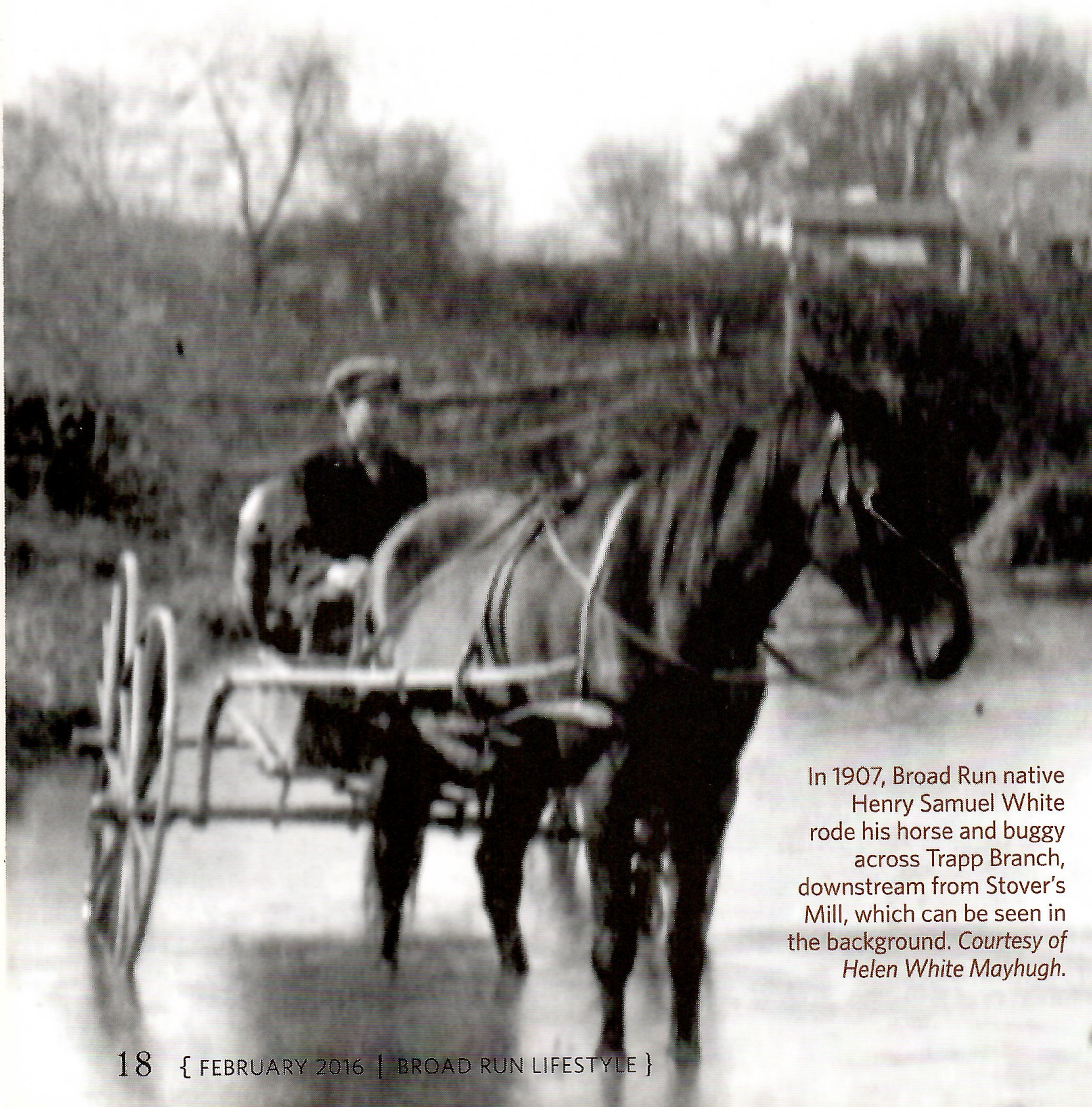
In 2009, the Broad Run-Little Georgetown Rural Historic District, comprised of 9,500 acres in Prince William and Fauquier counties, was added to the Virginia Landmarks Registry. It was noted that the history of the region dates back to "...the first wave of European settlers, which were part of the westward expansion of Prince William County in 1725."

While there has been residential growth in the Rural Historic District, the agricultural landscape has remained basically intact, due largely to several conservation easements that protect the open land and viewsheds in both counties.

Broad Run was in the early travel network that by 1748 ran from the commerce centers in Alexandria and Georgetown, D.C. westward through Thoroughfare Gap. From there, the road went to White Plains (present-day The Plains) and on to Calmes Gap in Clarke County, and ultimately to Winchester. In addition, by 1764, road improvements were made to the path (now known as Blantyre Road), connecting Warrenton to the Gap.

Broad Run and Little Georgetown developed along the Gap Road (Rt. 55), Old Busthead and Blantyre roads (Rt. 628), Georgetown Road (Rt. 674) and the recently-renamed Trapp Branch Road. The community included farms and residences in Thoroughfare Gap, and later the structures built along the Manassas Gap Railroad.

Historic ruins can be found that recall the early days of Broad Run, including Meadowland, Jonathan Chapman's 1740s stone mansion house, located just inside the Prince William county line. The ruins sit above the railroad tracks, which were built along the right-of-way of the 18th



In 1907, Broad Run native Henry Samuel White rode his horse and buggy across Trapp Branch, downstream from Stover's Mill, which can be seen in the background. Courtesy of Helen White Mayhugh.

century Gap Road.

"The house was the center of a large plantation village, with sawmills, a grist mill (the Chapman-Beverley Mill), tanneries, a slaughterhouse, store, saloon and slave quarters for 150 slaves," according to the 1937 WPA Historical Inventory Project done by architectural historian Susan R. Morton. "Several trenches remain that once were the graves of soldiers, since removed. Many of the outbuildings were burned during the war. The Chapman cemetery is nearby."

Jonathan Chapman died in 1759, and five more generations of the Chapman family – Nathaniel, Pearson, John, George and another John – lived at Meadowland until the last John's death in 1866. It remained in the family until 1870, when it was acquired by the Bleight family of Haymarket, descendants of the Chapmans. The house burned in the 1880s.

THE WATER-POWERED MILLS

Obviously, the name "Broad Run" comes from the stream that runs through it, and the waterway and the gap in the hills have much to do with what happened there. In ancient times, the pass was used by Native Americans. In later years, the gentle slopes and rich soils were tilled by generations of farmers.

The production of grain crops necessitated the construction of water-powered grist mills on Broad Run. The first two mills were built in 1742 by Jonathan Chapman and his son Nathaniel. The ruins of the large Chapman-Beverley Mill, which are being actively preserved, are easily recognized from I-66 and Rt. 55.

Chapman's second mill, located about 150 yards further upstream, stood only until 1757, when it burned and was never rebuilt. According to Lee Moffett in *Water Powered Mills of Fauquier County* (1977), the second mill was built without a dam or mill race, since due to the fall the normal flow of Broad Run at that point was adequate to power the mill.

In the years that followed, at least ten more mills of different sizes were built on Broad Run from east of The Plains to Buckland. Much has been written about the Chapman-Beverley Mill, but lesser known are the seven mills on Trapp Branch, a tributary of Broad Run that runs

southeast of Little Georgetown.

The first two mills on Trapp Branch were built by a Capt. Frogg sometime before 1747, but their precise locations remain unknown. The third mill on the branch was built around 1818 by James Skinker of Haymarket for James Gunnell, a planter with large landholdings north of Little Georgetown.

Built of stone, the mill was three stories high. It had an overshot wheel and was equipped with rollers to produce flour, and an up-and-down sawmill. The long mill race ran through the relatively flat land above the mill known as the "Mill Race Field."

"The greatest portion of the Gunnell tract and all of the Trapp Branch Mill property were transferred to a Mennonite family of farmers and pioneer millers who migrated from Pennsylvania in the 1830s," according to Architectural Historian Cheryl H. Shepherd in the nomination to place the Stover-Brawner-Heflin Store on the National Register of Historic Places. A highly detailed survey, Mrs. Shepherd's research has uncovered many historical facts about the region.

Abraham and Rachel Stover and their sons Ralph, Charles and Albert came from Bucks County, Pa., in 1833. They purchased the Trapp Mill Branch property, consisting of 135 acres and the mill, from William Skinker in 1834, and moved the family into a small house above the mill.

Until his health failed, Abraham actively operated the mill, grinding grain for flour and stone for plaster. Sons Ralph and Albert took over the mill while Charles worked the surrounding farmland. When 270 acres of Gunnell land adjacent to their property was auctioned in 1837, Charles convinced his father to buy it for him, in order to expand his farming operation. It proved to be a good investment.

Eventually, ownership of the mill passed to Charles Stover, and later to Ralph. Sadly, both Abraham (at age 67) and Albert Stover (at age 26) died in 1854.

In 1889, Ralph Stover sold the property to William Beverley (1852-1937), but the property returned to the Stover family five years later, when it was purchased by Robert C. Stover. "It seems that the last people to run the mill were a Mrs. Stover and a Fred Stover, who worked the mill until 1935 or 1936," wrote Mrs. Moffett. Not long afterward, milling operations ceased and the building was used for storage, mostly for hay and barley.

The next owner was Dr. William Pinkney Herbert, who bought the mill from Ella Antrim Stover (1893-1990) in



Top: Meadowland, the Jonathan Chapman home above the Chapman-Beverley Mill, was built in the 1740s, and burned in the 1880s. Today, the ruins stand as a reminder of the large plantation that once flourished there. *Courtesy of the Turn the Mill Around Campaign.* Bottom: Jonathan Chapman's second mill on Broad Run burned in 1857, and was never rebuilt.



This watercolor of Stover's Mill was painted in 1928 by Mrs. Mary White Drowne Gale (1904-2005), an artist who was born and raised in Broad Run. It is one of the few surviving images of the mill. *Courtesy of Mr. Kenny White.*

1943. It was sold again in 1955 to Wendell M. Adamson.

Stover's Mill was destroyed by a fire on the night of Nov. 12, 1961. According to the account in the Nov. 14 edition of *The Fauquier Democrat*, "One of the county's few remaining grist mills, Stover's Mill at Broad Run, burned Tuesday night. A lofty structure of beautiful stone and 70-foot beams, it was built in 1732. About 2,000 bushels of grain and 900 bales of hay were destroyed in the fire, according to Grant Creel, chief of The Plains Fire Company...the firemen were called late and arrived only to find the roof already aflame."

"It is thought that someone was spending the night there and accidentally started the fire," wrote Mrs. Moffett. "Mr. Adamson was upset by the fire. He had planned to make it a recreational area of some type." Sadly, this tragedy would be repeated in October 1998 when arsonists destroyed the Chapman-Beverley Mill, just as plans were being made to restore the structure.

COMMERCE AND WAR COME TO LITTLE GEORGETOWN

Remarkably, it was the Stover family that owned and operated the first store in the Broad Run-Little Georgetown area, built in 1845 by stonemason John M. Fry at the intersection of the Gap and Blantyre roads.

In addition to creating a "trading post" for customers in the area, the business plan – or whatever it was called back then

– was logical and efficient. Packaged flour, grain and other local products processed at Stover's Mill were loaded up and taken by wagon to Alexandria and sold. The wagon would then return packed with sugar, coffee, tobacco, alcohol, cotton, baling twine and household items that were sold at the store.

Mrs. Shepherd notes that because the Stovers were Mennonites, they would not own slaves. "Whether working in the fields, at the mill or within the store, the family labored and was supported by hired hands only."

During the Civil War, both Union and Confederate troops occupied the area. In 2012, Mr. John T. Hazel Jr., who lives nearby at Huntley, and his son Jack met with Lee W. Sherrill Jr. who was working on the history of the 21st North Carolina Infantry. He was particularly interested in Hazel property at Blantyre, located just northwest of Little Georgetown.

In the autumn following the Confederate victory at First Manassas, the 21st North Carolina Infantry (11th North Carolina Volunteers) were encamped near Manassas when a typhoid epidemic broke out, due to the crowded, unsanitary conditions. As the situation worsened, it was decided to "scatter the sick," sending them to clean, safe areas to recover.

Some of the men were sent to Front Royal, while others were moved to the fields around Blantyre, arriving in mid-September 1861. At the time, the property was owned by William Skinker

Boswell, who had removed with his family to another Skinker property in Orange County, Va., to avoid the conflict. Before the war, 125 slaves worked the plantation. The vacant main house at Blantyre became a hospital, and the plantation a campground.

In his book, Mr. Sherrill described the mansion at Blantyre. "The imposing stone and frame house sat on a dominant hilltop, with a large, sloping lawn falling gently on three sides from the house." The two-story, garreted mansion had eight rooms (four up and four down), a free-standing kitchen, 30-ft. deep well, three springs within walking distance, an ice house and other outbuildings.

Sympathetic Broad Run neighbors descended on the makeshift hospital, bringing beds, linens, food, "four milk cows" and more for the sick soldiers. Mentioned in the book are the Turners of Kinloch, the Skinkers of Huntley, the Beverleys of Avenel and the Hendersons of Roland.

Nurses with the Salem (N.C.) Ladies Aid Society arrived by train on Sept. 21 to care for the men at Blantyre. In addition to what was sent from North Carolina, supplies were bought at Stover's store, described as "...a welcome destination for the nurses." In addition, "Pay day came on Oct. 6, 1861, and created a rush on Stover's Store," according to Mr. Sherrill.

But soldiers were still dying. By Sept. 22, 1851, ninety of the soldiers at Blantyre had died. By Oct. 4, the number had risen to 120. They were buried at Blantyre, but their graves were lost over time. Mr. Hazel believes that the graves are possibly under present-day I-66.

By mid-October 1861, the first 200 able-bodied men at Blantyre were ordered to help man the defenses at Centreville, and by Nov 3, 1861, hospital operations there were terminated. By early spring 1862, Union troops would be in the area, and on



Aug. 28, 1862, the Battle of Thoroughfare Gap was fought there, the day before the Second Battle of Manassas.

Stover's Mill also played a minor role during the action at Thoroughfare Gap, when wounded Confederate soldiers were brought there. As it was with the sick soldiers at Blantyre, those who died of their wounds were buried nearby in unmarked graves.

Union troops who came to Little Georgetown also left their mark. On Nov. 13, 1862, two Yankees – Sgt. Thomas F. Hamilton and Pvt. Warren W. Hull of the 73rd Ohio Infantry – were at the store, and penciled their names and regiment on the inside wall next to the east gable window.

THE STORE CHANGES HANDS

The Stover family owned the store building until 1895, when it was purchased by Henry Newlon Brawner, a member of the family whose property on the battlefield figured prominently in the Second Battle of Manassas. At age 16, he is believed to have been the youngest of Mosby's Partisan Rangers during the war.

H.N. Brawner had rented Stover's Store starting sometime before 1884, and operated the business there for eleven years before buying the property. Later, Brawner became involved in the emerging regional telephone services. By then, he had built a nine-room house, barn and other outbuildings in the open area just northwest of the store.

Wishing to focus his energies on the telephone business, in 1897 Brawner offered the store and the other buildings on the property for sale. There were no buyers, and in May 1899, the real estate, the store's inventory and Brawner's livestock were sold at auction.

The buyer was Edgar W. Heflin, who changed the name to Heflin's Store, and expanded the product lines to include clothing, hats and shoes. He operated the store until 1926 when, due to mounting debt, it was again put up for auction. The purchaser this time was his son, Carlton Heflin.

"Carlton practiced law and had no interest in operating the store, but he wanted to help his father," wrote Mrs. Shepherd.

"Although situated in a prime location for pull-off travelers in addition to providing fuel for local tractors and cars, Mr. Heflin appears to have resisted the trend to add service pumps or a canopy, unlike many country stores across America that adapted to the automobile age."

Edgar Heflin ran the store until his death in 1945, at which time his wife took over. She lived in the house next to the store and kept sporadic hours, until finally closing it down in the early 1970s.

In November 1999, Mr. and Mrs. John T. Hazel Jr. purchased the 1.3-acre store property from Matthew Carlton Heflin Smith, a Heflin descendant. The Hazels had extensive stabilization and restoration work done on the store, including repair of a large bulge in a side wall that was near collapse.

The decrepit old house and other outbuildings were demolished, leaving only traces of one stone foundation. After the work was completed and the extensive nomination prepared by Mrs. Shepherd, in 2004 the Stover-Brawner-Heflin Store was added to the National Register of Historic Places.

In the survey for the registry, Mrs. Shepherd notes that the store, "...is distinguished for remaining in its original form without envelopment by a larger commercial or residential addition," and that it is "...the solitary surviving example of an unaltered storehouse built of stone in Fauquier County."

Part 2, to be published in March, describes the coming of the railroad, the post offices, local industry, and the churches that served Broad Run. ❖

Left: The home occupied by Abraham Stover in the 1830s still stands above the mill site. The original part is on the left; the addition on the right was built as a separate dwelling by Ralph Stover in 1838, and later connected to the older house. Restored and updated, it is now the home of Tony and Barbara Smith. Right: Built in 1845, Stover's Store was later operated by H. N. Brawner and finally by Mrs. Edgar Heflin, before closing in the 1970s. It was purchased by Mr. and Mrs. John T. Hazel Jr. in 1999 and carefully restored. It was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 2004.

John Toler is an author and historian who has served Fauquier County for over 50 years, including four decades with the Fauquier-Times Democrat. Toler is the co-author of 250 Years in Fauquier County: A Virginia Story, and author of Warrenton, Virginia: A History of 200 Years.



Broad Run

A TIME CAPSULE IN THE GAP, PART II

by John T. Toler

Part 1, published in February, recounted the origins of Broad Run and Little Georgetown, and the early industry and commerce that originated there. Part 2 starts with the impact of the Manassas Gap Railroad, the churches, and the story of a family that lived there for many years.



Photographed at a July 4, 1932 gathering in the meadow on the White property in Thoroughfare Gap were Addie White (wife of Wesley White) in the car; an unidentified woman in polka-dot dress, and Lila White Drowne. Blurred figure at far left was Dorothy Chloe, Addie White's granddaughter. House in background, built in 1904-05 for Hugh and Bessie White, still stands in ruinous condition. Courtesy of Helen White Mayhugh.

Broad Run was greatly impacted by the coming of the Manassas Gap Railroad, which was completed from Tudor Hall (present-day Manassas) to The Plains by May 1852, and ultimately reaching Strasburg, Va., by October 1854.

Railroad stations were built along the route, including the one at Broad Run - a white frame structure with a slate roof. It had a large freight room, general store (and later post office), segregated waiting rooms, and a loading dock.

The Manassas Gap Railroad figured prominently in the Civil War, and the Broad Run Station was used alternately by Union and Confederate forces. "Gen. Lee, mounted on his old gray horse Traveler and with his staff rode down to Gen. Longstreet's headquarters near Broad Run Station, and ordered him to clear the Gap of federal forces," wrote William Beverley (1852-1937), recalling the Battle of Thoroughfare Gap, which took place on Aug. 28, 1862.

The railroad line was rebuilt after the war, and with the trains running again, the Broad Run Station returned to being a community gathering place. "The store had two long, sturdy wooden counters that sloped inward at the bottom to accommodate hoop skirts," wrote Lelia R. Lawrence in Vol. 34, No. 1 of *News and Notes*, published by the Fauquier Historical Society (2012).

"Merchandise such as stick candy was sold in glass jars, along with work clothes, washboards, nails and horseshoes stored in wooden bins. One could buy coal, oil in steel drums, canned goods and molasses by the barrel. Many persons from surrounding farms would barter eggs, butter, huckleberries and chickens for sugar, coffee and mincemeat."

"Cattle herded in droves from surrounding farms - Avenel, Galemont, Cedar Hill and Millbrook - were put in pens at Broad Run Station, and later loaded on passing freight trains," according to Ms. Lawrence.

By the late 19th century, four passenger trains and two freight trains passed through Broad Run each day. "Farmers in the surrounding fields would hear the 11 a.m. whistle and know it was time to go to lunch. The 6 p.m. whistle was judged an indication to stop work in the fields for the day."

A post office served the area between Haymarket and Broad Run as early as 1828, and by 1855, there was a post office in Broad Run Station. It closed during the Civil War, but by 1886, the post office was back at the station, under Postmaster Henry F. Robertson, who served until 1897. He was followed by George Burgess from 1897-1901; P. D. Brawner from 1901-1919; and Elizabeth V. "Bessie" Bloxton from 1919-1958.

Serving as postmistress for nearly 40 years, Mrs. Bloxton (1888-1976) was unique to Broad Run for other reasons. Her father, Franklin D. Vaughn,



Top: The Broad Run Railroad Station had changed very little by the time this photograph was taken in the early 1920s. Locomotives passing through were powered by steam, and took on water from the large tank at the far right. Bottom Left: This 1945 photograph shows Broad Run postmistress Elizabeth V. 'Bessie' Bloxton at work behind the counter at the general store in the station. Mrs. Bloxton was the postmistress from 1919 to 1958. Bottom Right: Bessie Bloxton was born in this house next to the railroad station. It was built in the 1870s by her father, Franklin D. Vaughn, and Bessie lived there her entire life.

was a skilled carpenter and builder from Culpeper who came to Broad Run in the 1870s, and built several houses there. These included Millbrook, the Beverley home in the Gap, and his own home just north of Broad Run Station.

It was in this home that Bessie was born, and would live her entire life. She married Stamper Dandridge Bloxton (1875-1931), who worked as a telegrapher for the Manassas Gap Railroad. She ran the general store at the station before being appointed postmistress.

"President Eisenhower had ordered the Broad Run Post Office closed in 1954, but he forgot that was the address of Congressman Howard W. Smith," wrote historian Eugene M. Scheel in *Crossroads and Corners* (1996). "Judge Smith could pork barrel anything, and in this case, he did."

Following Mrs. Bloxton's retirement, Mollie Lunsford served as acting postmistress from 1958 to 1960, at which time Elaine Wiser was appointed postmistress. The post office was moved to the stone building in front of the Chapman-Beverley Mill, and a postal trailer was later added to the site.

The post office was moved again across Rt. 55 to Lunsford's Store, and later occupied the new store built on the site by Earl Burton, where it remains today.

THE CHURCHES AND SCHOOL

The histories of the two churches established in Broad Run are unique, but share similar beginnings. Some church members' involvement with "Benevolent Institutions" caused a doctrinal split within the Broad Run Baptist Church in New Baltimore, founded in 1762.

Following a meeting in June 1837, it was determined that, "...in the opinion of this church, the conduct of such members is in violation of the discipline of regular Baptist churches, and that they are not considered as having any connection with this church," according to the *Broad Run Baptist Church Bicentennial History* (1962).

The fifteen "disconnected" members left the church, and started a new church just outside of Little Georgetown on property purchased by John Brown from the Stover family. Mr. Brown conveyed 1.5 acres to the trustees of the new church,

and the Upper Broad Run Baptist Church was built on the site in 1838.

Considered an "Old School Baptist Church," baptisms were conducted in nearby Trapp Branch, and the revival services and fried chicken and ham dinners held there each August attracted worshippers and local villagers alike. The Upper Broad Run Baptist Church served its congregation until they moved to The Plains in the early 1870s.

The old church building was used as a county public schoolhouse until the early 1900s, after which it was re-sold, rented out and eventually fell into disrepair. Fortunately, subsequent owners stabilized and remodeled the building as a unique private residence, as it exists today.

Fifty years after the Baptists established their church at Little Georgetown, there was a similar split at Grace Episcopal Church in The Plains (founded in 1855). The rector, the Rev. James Grammer, "...refused communion to leading members of the congregation who were said to indulge in dancing, gaming and other unsuitable practices," according to the history of Grace Episcopal Church. "These modern spirits established the Church of Our Savior in 1887."

Charles Mackall, who lives at Selby, east of The Plains, recalls that one of these "modern spirits" was his great-great-grandfather, Robert Beverley (1822-1901).

The small group from Grace built the charming country classic Church of Our Savior at Little Georgetown on property purchased from the Stover family. In 1887, they established the Greenwood Cemetery east of the chapel on property purchased by William Beverley from Ralph Stover, and granted to the church. Three years later, the name of the graveyard was changed to the Little Georgetown Cemetery.

Over the years, most of the members of the Church of Our Savior passed away or returned to Grace church. The chapel was rented to other congregations from time-to-time, and in later years, the graveyard was managed by the Georgetown Cemetery Inc.

In 1967, the chapel and cemetery were acquired by Grace Episcopal Church, and in 1993 a non-profit foundation was established to maintain the chapel and ensure efficient management of the cemetery.

"The cemetery serves diverse needs. Some families and individuals are members of Grace Church parish, while others belong to different denominations,"

according the church history. "Little Georgetown Cemetery offers a place of tranquility and peace to all."

The historic chapel is available for weddings and other special events, and in order to maintain its consecration, one service is held there each year on All Souls Day.

A BROAD RUN FAMILY, LONG AGO

Hugh Watkins White (1839-1912) was born in Upperville, and served with Col. John S. Mosby's Rangers. He returned home after the war, and finished learning the cabinet-making trade from his father, Wesley Willis White.

About 1866, he met Elizabeth Jane "Bessie" Jordan (1847-1929), the daughter of Benoni and Jane Jordan, of LaGrange, near Waterfall. They were married in 1869, and lived in Upperville where their first child, Hugh Jordan White, was born.

They moved to Broad Run Station, where their second son, Wesley Lawson White, was born in 1872. Two years later, they moved to "Bee Cottage" (so named for its beehives) in Thoroughfare Gap, where they raised their four sons and three daughters.

Hugh White opened a shop in Little Georgetown, where he repaired and built furniture, using hand tools and a foot-powered lathe. He sold honey from the hives at Bee Cottage, and set trap lines and sold the skins to fur companies. Bessie grew vegetables and gathered eggs from her hen house, which she traded for groceries at the store at Little Georgetown and Broad Run Station.

As they reached adulthood, three of the boys – Hugh, Wesley and Paul – went to Washington to work and learn a trade, but often returned home on weekends.

Recalling the situation at Blantyre, during the 1898 Spanish-American War, a large group of soldiers were sent from Camp Alger near Falls Church to Thoroughfare Gap to recover from the effects of a flu epidemic. A sick soldier from Rhode Island named Robert Drowne was placed in the care of a male nurse at Bee Cottage. During his convalescence, Robert's mother and younger brother Frederick (1880-1930) came from Rhode Island to visit him.

Fred Drowne and daughter Lila Charity White (1880-1960) fell in love and eloped in 1902, while Fred was in medical school. He earned his M.D. degree in 1904, and opened a medical practice in Rhode Island. They moved to a farm near Richmond, Va. in 1907, where Fred tried

his hand as a farmer and "country doctor." In 1911, the Drownes returned to Warren, R.I., where he was the town doctor.

In the meantime, Lila's brothers began work on a new home for their parents, in the meadow below Bee Cottage, which was completed in 1904-05. Although expecting their first child (Mary), Lila came home to help with the project.

"It was an elegant house of seven large rooms, a big hall through it, a wrap-around porch that was covered over to make an upstairs porch," according to the family history written by Mary Drowne Gale. "It also had a lean-to kitchen with a pass-through to the dining room, and a bathroom. Outside was a large wash house,



Top: The Church of Our Savior at Little Georgetown was established in 1887 by former members of Grace Episcopal Church in The Plains. The chapel and cemetery surrounding it were acquired by Grace church in 1967. Bottom: During the Spanish-American War, sick soldiers from Ft. Alger, near Falls Church, were sent to Broad Run to recuperate. They lived in tents, or in serious cases, with local families. *Courtesy of the Kansas Historical Society.*

with a loft higher up than the bathroom, in which there was a storage tank for the water."

Because their children liked to entertain company in the new house, Hugh and Bessie didn't move in right away. But due to the deteriorating condition of Bee Cottage, they finally made the change. Sadly, Hugh died in July 1912, and was buried in the cemetery at LaGrange. It is interesting to note that Bessie received a Civil War veteran's pension from the

federal government for Hugh's service as a Confederate soldier.

After the U.S. entered World War I, Fred Drowne volunteered to serve in the Medical Corps, and Lila and daughters Mary and Christine came back to Broad Run. Bessie needed a new barn for her horse and cow, and Lila – who had already proven her talents as a builder – dismantled Bee Cottage board-by-board, and dragged the lumber down the hill.

There she built a sturdy stable that stood until the mid-1930s, when the property was sold to Addie Flynn, the widow of Wesley White who had married family friend Ashby Flynn. The stable was torn down, and in 1936, a small, single-story house was built on the site.

Lila and the girls lived in Haymarket until 1920, by which time Fred had completed his military service and was ready to resume his practice in Rhode Island. Ten years later, Mary and Christine had finished school and had jobs, but Fred's health was failing. Suffering from stomach cancer, he died on June 27, 1930.

By then America was in the Great Depression, and Lila decided to sell the house in Rhode Island and return to Broad Run. That took until early 1935, but in the meantime Lila designed the home she wanted to build there – on the site of Bee Cottage, where she had been born 55 years earlier.

A contractor was hired, who was most impressed with Lila's design. By August 1935 the foundation was in and the floor beams in place; by December, the house was up, and the stone work for the porch was started. In May 1935, the stone facing was completed, using material dragged down from the quarry on Pond Mountain.

Lila did much of the work herself, including clearing the land, digging the cellar, sanding and varnishing the floors, hanging wallpaper and painting. The water system and septic tank were ready by the summer of 1936, and a coal-burning hot-air furnace installed in the cellar.

"(My mother) was 71 when she told me she was getting very tired," wrote Mary Drowne Gale, who was living in Barrington, R. I. "She said she was going to sell the place and come live with me and George (Mary's husband) so I could get a job. I didn't believe her. Then George died in 1951, and in 1952, she did sell the place and came to live with me and the kids."

Lila died in December 1960, at the home of her younger daughter, Mrs.



Above: This unique stone house was built by Lila White Drowne in 1935-36 on the site of the old Bee Cottage, and was her home until 1952. It is now the home of Don and Dolly Smith. *Courtesy of Helen White Mayhugh.*

Right: Bee Cottage, in Thoroughfare Gap, was the home of Civil War veteran Hugh Watkins White and his wife 'Bessie' for several years. In this photo taken in 1898, from left: Mr. and Mrs. White, Alice P. Drowne (mother of Robert and Fred Drowne) Fred Drowne (age 19) and Lila C. White (also 19). Seated on the wall: daughter Bessie White, her dog Stanley, Mary White (age 14), the male nurse attending sick soldier Robert Drowne, and Henry White. *Courtesy of Mrs. Helen White Mayhugh, the daughter of Henry White.*



Christine Hathaway, in Barrington. In her obituary published in *The Fauquier Democrat*, she was remembered as the "Last of a Virginia Family," although her brother Paul White, a resident of Manassas, survived her.

In the 55 years that passed since then, much has changed where the White family lived in Broad Run. The "elegant" house their sons built for Hugh and Bessie lies in ruins, its roof caved in; the Flynn house is still there, but vacant and deteriorating. Lila's unique stone house is the home of long-time residents Don and "Dolly" Smith.

ON TO THE PRESENT

A newcomer who had a lasting effect on Broad Run was entrepreneur Ralph A. Lee (1893-1963) the Northern Virginia dairy products retailer, who as general manager of the Chapin Sacks Ice Cream Co. is credited with inventing the Eskimo Pie frozen treat.

Mr. Lee retired from the dairy products business in 1943, and purchased

Millbrook, the former Beverley property in Thoroughfare Gap. He found a vein of bluestone under the old wheat field, and established the Millbrook Quarry, which provided materials for the construction of Route 55 and other roads.

After suffering a stroke in 1961, Mr. Lee transferred the mineral rights and later sold the Millbrook property to Nicholas Charles Miller, who owned an asphalt paving company in Alexandria. However, it was discovered that the bluestone was too soft to use for paving, and the water pumps used to keep that section of the quarry open were shut down.

According to Kenny Manuel of Broad Run – who along with his father and uncle once worked at the quarry – a hurricane in the 1960s caused the stream to breach the site, filling the quarry with water, and creating an 11-acre lake. Mr. Manuel notes that some of the heavy equipment they operated remains submerged at the bottom.

Today, the 100-foot deep lake is a popular destination for scuba divers and underwater training. The property surrounding it is a busy green recycling facility and dirt brokerage business operated by the Miller family as Millbrook Quarries LLC.

The landscape of Broad Run was altered forever by the building of I-66 through

the Gap in the late 1970s. Initial plans called for the highway to pass through Chapman-Beverley Mill, but the public outcry against the destruction of the mill convinced engineers to move the new highway further to the south.

As a result, Broad Run was re-routed, and Route 55 pushed up against Pond Mountain. The little store operated by Anna Lee Manuel for her family near the intersection with Route 600 was demolished, as was the Lunsford's Gap Grocery. The sites were paved-over, and dynamite was used to break up the huge rock formations that had guarded the south side of the Gap for millennia.

Because area landowners protested the proposed I-66 interchange at Broad Run, it was not built. As one highway engineer remarked at the time, "We've often had citizens petition us to have new exits added to the plans, but never before to have them taken off." This change made it easier for the Broad Run-Little Georgetown Rural Historic District to be created many years later.

Several families living in Broad Run can trace their ancestry back 100 years or more, adding to the long history and unique character of Broad Run. The special feeling they have for the place is something newcomers are quick to notice, and appreciate. ♦

John Toler is an author and historian who has served Fauquier County for over 50 years, including four decades with the Fauquier-Times Democrat. Toler is the co-author of 250 Years in Fauquier County: A Virginia Story, and author of Warrenton, Virginia: A History of 200 Years.

