

## EARLY HISTORY OF GLENMEADE FARM

Robert (King) Carter, who was the agent for Lord Fairfax, in 1731, granted to his son George 2,941 acres of land encompassing what is now Bluemont. That same year Warner Toward was granted land for "a road that leads to Williams' Cabbin in the Blew Ridge." This old Indian road, now the Snickersville Turnpike, led from Winchester in the Shenandoah Valley through Williams Gap and continued on until it met, near Aldie, the road from Ashby Gap to Alexandria. In 1748, George Washington used this old road when he returned to Mount Vernon after a survey in the Shenandoah Valley. Later, in 1769, from his diary he "set out from Charlie West's (an ordinary near Aldie), dined at Snickers (a tavern on the Shenandoah River), and got to Mr. Warner Washington's (his cousin who lived near Berryville) at 5 o'clock." After 1772 Williams Gap was usually called Snickers Gap.

In 1769, Edward Snickers, who also operated the ferry next to his tavern, bought 624 acres of land, lying across the Turnpike, from John Augustine Washington, the General's younger brother, who had bought the 2,941 acre patented land in 1768 from George Carter. Snickers then sold the 624 acres to Richard Wistar of Philadelphia in 1777. In 1792 William Clayton bought these 624 acres from Wistar's estate, the property having on it "an apple orchard of 300 bearing trees, other fruit trees, and a good meadow." In 1795 John Chew and his wife Margaret bought property near Snickers Gap along what is now Route 7 and built a home there. The road from Leesburg to Georgetown had been extended to Snickers Gap around 1791.

In 1807, a post office was established at "Snickers Gap", although it was more commonly called "Punkentown," a term used then for any small rural village. The

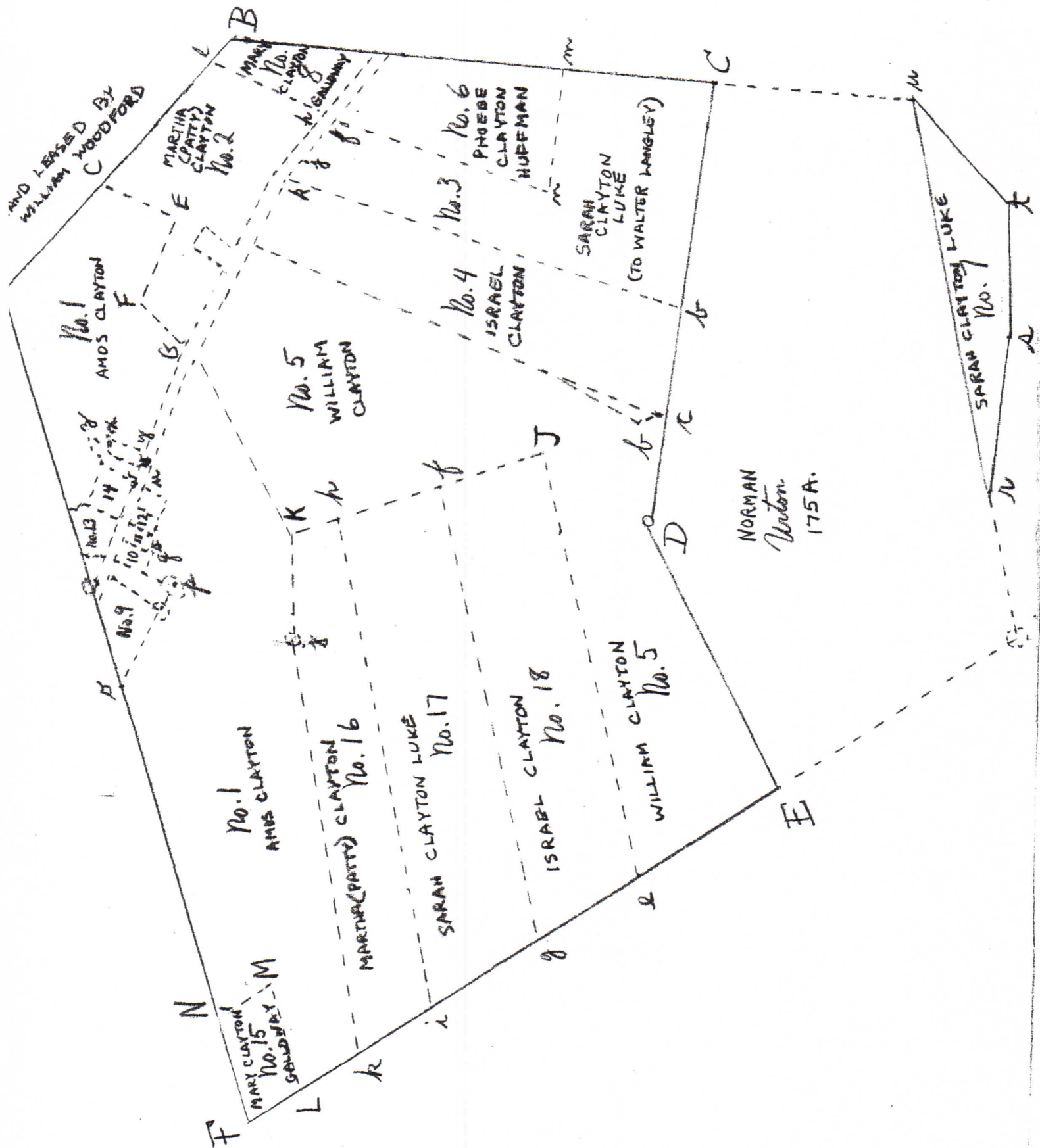


FIGURE 1

Snickersville Turnpike was created in 1810 by the Virginia General Assembly. William Clayton in 1813 made a will devising his property to his children, and he died in 1817. Some of his children got small house lots in what he clearly intended for the start of a village, and others received larger plots of his 624 acres as shown in Figure 1. Captain Robert Chew, son of John and Margaret Chew, married Dorcas Osburn on March 6, 1821, and they went to live in her hometown Bath (now Berkley Springs, West Virginia). On July 29, 1822, Robert Chew bought  $49 \frac{3}{4}$  acres (Lot #4) and  $51 \frac{3}{4}$  acres (Lot #18) from Israel Clayton, who had inherited them when his father's will divided the 624 acres. Dorcus Chew died in childbirth on October 14, 1823, and Robert Chew brought his infant son back home to Snickersville to be cared for by the grandparents and immediately started to build a new home on the farmland he had bought a year earlier. Previously, on March 18, 1823, he had sold a half acre lot (fronting on the "paved" Turnpike) next to his future home to Ruel Marshall, the village's first carpenter. Snickersville, named after Edward Snickers' son William, was incorporated in 1824. Robert Chew's personal property at the time he built his house was "tools, a large quantity of lumber, pigs, and a few books and treasures." Sadly, he died on March 11, 1826, and his 3-year old son died the same year, in November.

The following year, via deeds dated March 2 and March 22, 1827, Robert Chew's father, John acquired 155 acres 3 roods 5 poles from his son's estate and from Walter Langley who had been sold the adjoining 44 plus acres Sarah Clayton Luke property (Lot #3) and 10 plus acres of the William Clayton land (Lot #5). Timothy Carrington, who was in the process of building his new house in the village, bought from the estate sale 500 feed of lath, 213 feet of cherry plank, 4 lots of scantling (framing studs), a gate post,



a hammer, a cross cut saw, 2 sows, and 13 pigs. Minor Reed bought the hay in the stable, and Craven Osburn bought the horse. Margaret Chew, Robert's sister, had married Timothy Carrington in 1820, and they lived in their new house from 1828 until his death in 1830. On November 3, 1835 she married Alfred Glasscock.

On December 2, 1836, John Chew sold the 155 plus acres to his son-in-law Alfred for \$4,127.70. John Chew's wife died in 1837, and he died in 1838. The senior Chews had lived in Robert Chew's house from late 1823 until 1838. On 30 March 1840, Alfred and Margaret Glasscock, having lived in the house since their marriage in 1835, sold the "about" 154 acres to James Stephenson. In December 1842, Nancy Chew, Robert and Margaret's younger sister, married David Hall, a Massachusetts man who came to Virginia selling clocks, and they moved into the Stephenson-owned house. Nancy died in 1847, just one month after the birth of her son. David Hall, noted "as a cruel master", even though he was a "rank Abolitionist", had inherited slaves from his wife. He remained in the house to bring up his son, but when the boy was only eight years old, on April 1, 1856, he was accidentally killed by his eight year old cousin (Roger Chew's youngest son) when the two boys were playing with a gun.

George Emory Plaster, the son of Henry Plaster, Jr. and Frances (Fannie) Lloyd Plaster, was born May 12, 1826 on their farm in Union (changed to Unison during the Civil War). He received his MD degree from the University of Maryland Medical School in Baltimore in the late 1840's. "A victim of the gold fever in 1849, Dr. Plaster, accompanied by 11 of his neighbors, set out for California. Leaving Baltimore in a small sailing vessel, it took his party six months to reach El Dorado by way of Cape Horn. Not long after he arrived in California he 'struck it rich'. He amassed a fortune in gold

nuggets, was robbed and recouped. He fulfilled a promise to his mother, however, that he would come back in two years." David Hall returned to New England after his son's death, and Stephen R. "Squire" Mount, a widower, moved into the Chew/Stephenson house. His daughter, a widow, kept house for him and her brother Palm's six children. Dr. Plaster moved in with Squire Mount in order to be closer to his office in the village (possibly still remaining) and had with him his apprentice John Chamblin.

The first farm property acquired by Dr. Plaster was on January 1, 1858, when 25 acres 2 roods 7.84 poles across the Turnpike from the farm house was bought from Armisted M. Moore and his wife. Ten acres of this land was sold to James B. Throckmorton (now the Gress property) and in 1888 a 16 ½ foot-wide lane was sold by Throckmorton to James B. Hill (Whitehall Farm).

On December 1, 1859, Dr. Plaster purchased the 155 acres of farmland and the farmhouse from the Stephenson estate, although the deed listed it as 190 acres. The purchase price at \$17 per acre was \$3,255.31. One year later, on December 31, 1860, he bought from James W. Nichols 12 acres 2 roods and 8 perches, a triangular portion of William Clayton's Lot #5. When the war came in 1861, Dr. Plaster enlisted with his friend Richard H. Dulany, who formed a company later to be Company A, 6<sup>th</sup> Virginia Cavalry. He was promoted to 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant on July 25 and commanded the Company during its travel to Ashland. A year later, while at Upperville only nine miles from home, he was captured and sent to the Old Capital Prison in Washington, DC. Following his exchange, while on picket duty near Culpeper, he checked the advance of the enemy until his Company could rally, engaging in a hand-to-hand conflict with Colonel Davis of the 8<sup>th</sup> Pennsylvanians. For this act of valor and skill, General Lomax recommended his



promotion to Captain, which was approved by President Jefferson Davis on October 27, 1864. While the recommendation for promotion was being processed through channels, Lieutenant Plaster continued to fight and was wounded at Forestville (near New Market) on October 9, 1864. The next spring, having recovered from his wounds, he was fighting in Company H (the Wise Dragoons) at Dinwiddie Court House 8 days before Appomattox and was again taken prisoner. He was sent to the Union prison at Johnson's Island, Ohio. On June 1865, George E. Plaster, age 39, took the oath of allegiance to the United States, was released, and walked home to Snickersville.

In 1873, Dr. Plaster, age 47, married Sallie Meade Taliaferro, age 23, and sometime thereafter named the farm Glenmeade. Henry Taliaferro was born March 28, 1874, died February 10, 1875, and was buried near the doctor's office gate at the farm. George Emory (Pflaster), Jr. was born in 1875, followed by Frances (Fannie) Meade in 1876, Marion Mason in 1877, Henry Garnett in 1879, Hubert Taliaferro in 1881, Nellie Byrd in 1883 (?), Lucy Ashton in 1885 and Lloyd Stafford in 1886. All children are believed to have been born at Glenmeade. Two additions to the 1823 house were made, both probably in the 1873 to 1880's period.

The remainder of the current 14 Glenmeade deeds were acquired over an extended period of time. In 1870, 33 acres was bought for \$600 by Dr. Plaster at a sale of Phoebe Clayton Huffman's property, and 40 acres was bought from Madison Galloway, son of Mary Clayton. In 1874, the half-acre sold by Robert Chew to Ruel Marshall in 1823 was bought from his estate. In 1887, 18 acres containing the "church lot" and the "cow shed lot" was acquired in a Chancery Suit covering all remaining property belonging to Madison Galloway. In 1889, four acres beyond the barn and, in 1900, 6

acres 37 poles of the corner lot were acquired. Across the Turnpike, 2 plus acres adjoining the remaining originally purchased land was bought from James Alder, Sr. in 1878. The "Alder Lot," the "Weadon Lot," and the "Hill Lot" were purchased for \$150 per acre by Dr. Henry G. Plaster in 1923. In conjunction with Dr. George E. Plaster's will in 1909, the farm was deeded to Dr. Henry G. Plaster after he, at age 30, had given to each of his seven brothers and sisters their proportional share at \$200 an acre. The house and surrounding 15 acres was reserved for his and his wife's lifetime. In 1921, Dr. George E. Plaster and his wife went to live with their daughter Fannie Meade and her husband, Dr. Archibald Osborne in Berryville and released the reservation on the deed. Dr. Plaster died at 98 and Sallie Meade at 75, both in 1925.

*Henry G. Plaster, Jr.*  
2005



# EARLY HISTORY OF GLEN MEADE

800's

0	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63
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6 MARCH  
ROBERT CNEW (31)  
M. DORCAS OSBORN

ROBERT CNEW  
BUILDS LOG HOUSE

14 OCT  
DORCAS DIES -  
SON BORN

11 MAR  
ROBERT CNEW DIES (36)

NOV  
SON DIES (3)

JOHN CNEW  
BUYS HOUSE

"HEIR IN  
LAW"

CARRINGTON  
DIES -  
WIFE JOINS  
HER FATHER

WIFE JOHN DIES  
(AGE 89)

MARGARET  
CNEW  
M. ALFRED  
GLASSCOCK

BUYS  
HOUSE  
MOVES  
OUT

STEPHENSON  
BUYS HOUSE

23 DEC  
NANCY CNEW (34)  
M. DAVID HALL  
SON BORN

SON DIES (8)  
DAVID HALL LEAVES

12 MAY  
DR. G. E. PLASTER  
BORN

DR. G. E. P.  
AT MED.  
SCHOOL

DR. G. E. P.  
IN GOLD  
RUSH

DR. G. E. P.  
BUYS HOUSE

CIVIL  
WAR