

AN HISTORICAL LOOK  
AT  
BLUEMONT'S HOUSES  
BY  
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2005

BLUEMONT HOUSE DESCRIPTIONS  
SNICKERSVILLE TURNPIKE (ROUTE 734)  
AND RAILROAD STREET  
WITH MARTIN MITCHELL

The first house on the north side of the Turnpike (33361) coming off of Route 7 was built by John McCloughry in the late 1840s. The logs for it were reportedly floated down the Shenandoah River. Porches were added in the 1950s. Two old ladies lived in the 2<sup>nd</sup> house in the mid-1900s. The 3<sup>rd</sup> house was built for Minnie Murrill in 1912. William Kephart was there in the 40s. The second oldest and still standing house in Bluemont was built by Leven Stephens and is the first house on the south side of the Turnpike after the hairpin turn. He married Harriet Reed in 1808 and owned it at least until 1820. He was the first Postmaster (the P.O. was in the house) in 1807 when Snickers Gap became the official name for the village. Carl (Hawkeye) Reid lives there now. Marvin (Buck) Reid's mother-in-law, Hazel Reed, built the next house in the 1950s.

After 1870, several houses were built here. Jeremiah Moreland's was the furthest to the west. Presley Reed, a blacksmith, and his brother William, a wheelwright, and their relatives the Triplett's all built houses. Two of these houses (33557 and 33563) are described by Martin Mitchell. Walter Robey and the Smith family lived there in the late 1930s. Minor Reed's house was built in 1822. He was a blacksmith. It is no longer standing. Nearby, another house was built in the 1960s where the previous house had burned down. The Walters live there now. Before the Civil War, George O'Calihan and

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his wife Margaret Slack lived in a house near the road to the tan yard. During the war, their son George, while home on sick leave, was captured at Snickers Gap, but returned home after the war. Then, Mason Alder, a carpenter, lived there. The Morrisises live there now.

Down in the glen was the tan yard, owned by Meshack Silcott and operated by Alfred Fox, a much respected free black man who lived on Foggy Bottom Road. Silcott, who also ran the Snickersville General Store, lived with his wife Emily Lodge nearby for more than 30 years in a house built in 1847 from logs of the original log cabin. Two additions were subsequently added. He sold the tan yard in 1865, and in 1866 he sold the log house at the tan yard to David Jenkins, a farm laborer and cooper, who had lived there as a tenant for 20 years. Dr. George E. Plaster was trustee on his note. Around 1886 after the deaths of David and Caroline Jenkins, Meshack Silcott's son John bought the house. Clayton Littleton, the mailman, lived there in the mid-1900s.

Across the turnpike is the "Mary Lodge House," according to Thomas Osburn. He also states he was "unable to recall the early occupants. The first that I remember was Sam Weadon, then Armistead Johnson, and later Frank Osburn." Eugene Scheel lists Armistead Johnson there beginning in 1866. The 1870 Census lists Mary J. Lodge, age 38, and four children, ages 6 to 17, as living in Snickersville. About 1900, William K. Milhollen, a dentist, bought the Mary Lodge House and, on the foundation of the old shoemaker's shop across the street, first operated by Sam Weadon and later by Ashford Weadon, built his office. An old undated photograph also shows a barber pole there. The Corleys own it now as well as their house (33661) nearby. Levan Stephens, Snickersville's first Postmaster (1806-1813), was its original owner. It was later

occupied by Mrs. Sarah Stone and her three daughters in the 1850s and later owned by Mrs. Stickles, who later married Mr. Reed. Walter Beatty lived in the Lodge house in the early 1940s. During the 1930s and until the late 1940s, the Bluemont Telephone Switchboard was in the front room. Walter Beatty's wife was the Chief telephone operator. Mrs. Nixon, another operator, would answer, "Hello, Central." The current brick telephone company building to the east was built in 1948.

The house in deteriorating condition on the south side of the Turnpike was built about 1825 by Captain William Bradfield from Pennsylvania, the village's first shoemaker. He served during the War of 1812. During General Lafayette's visit to America in 1825, Captain Bradfield's cavalry troops escorted him, President John Quincy Adams and former President James Monroe from the latter's Oak Hill home to the lavish celebrations in Leesburg. He was the Snickersville Postmaster from 1836 to 1864. It was later occupied by Mrs. Mary Humphrey and her family. The Martz family lived there during the 1930s and '40s. John Holland lived there in the 1950s, and his niece (Helen Riley in Arlington) currently owns it.

According to Martin Mitchell, behind the house (33674) where there is a stone chimney, the related old log cabin came from up on old Route 7, when it was the Nimrod Mercer house. Clyde Beck, when he owned the place, that's when he tore the original down, when Route 7 was enlarged in the 1960s. He used the logs for his studio. He was an artist. Thomas Osburn said there were originally two buildings right together, one was called the Odd Fellows (formed in 1848) Hall and he said the other one, the Lodge Room (active until 1852) was always the source of wonderment and curiosity. Of course there was a ghost and he was often heard galloping around up there. Attached to the Hall was

a part of the Lodge building occupied by Mrs. Adams and her two daughters as a residence. Her daughters were Elizabeth and Drucilla. The former never married, and Drucilla became the wife of Frank Murphey, and they lived just below the village at Murphey's Corner, at the intersection of the Turnpike and Foggy Bottom. Ibby Kapp said that this was the Edward P. Davis house who was a Welsh tailor, and it was built in 1841. His vote was the only vote cast against Secession. He was a staunch Union man. He disappeared one night and was never heard from again. Ibby said this house was sold by Davis to Armistead M. Moore and John W. Luke for \$400, who operated a store there in the 1840s. In 1874, John Silcott bought the property from his father, Meshack, and his partner, H.C. Chamblin, for \$1,600.

The Carrington House (33679) was built in 1827. In 1820, Timothy Carrington had married Margaret Chew, the daughter of John Chew, who in 1795 had purchased 150 acres on Williams Gap Road and built his log home, known as Locust Grove. The Carringtons built their stone house on the quarter acre they bought in 1824 from Amos Clayton. When Timothy died childless in 1830, there were 9 people plus 6 slaves all living in this six-room house. In 1839, Margaret and Alfred Glasscock, her second husband whom she married in 1835, moved and sold the house to Dr. Maddison C. Klein, who besides doctoring, ran a tavern and store there from 1839 to 1848. It was then occupied by Joab Osburn and his wife Emily. Volney Purcell operated the store from the 1850s until 1875, when he sold it to Walter Osborn. He lived in the house and ran the store until 1890. In the early 1900s, Will Purcell ran the store there, but he retired in the '30s. From 1895, Molly Weadon lived in the house and ran it as a boarding house, known as the "Virginia House." She died in 1944. The shingled store and its one room

attachment were torn down by the Butlers in the 1970s, and a stone attachment was added in its place.

William Bradfield had a little log shoe shop between his house and Molly Weadon's, which it was actually attached to. It was sold to A. Maria Ramey who lived there for 10 years until her death. It was then owned, in turn, by two of Dr. Plaster's children until it was sold in 1904 to Mrs. Elizabeth Poston. She and husband, Plaster Poston, named after Dr. George E. Plaster, were newly married. They tore down the old log shop and built their new house (36675), also an attachment to Molly Weadon's. Mrs. Poston lived there for sixty years. The Colberts have lived there subsequently.

We are passing the Old Mountain Road. Just across Butcher's Branch, Amos Clayton had, in 1825, donated one half acre of land for a school and place of public worship (a "free church"). It is now referred to as the "Bluemont Academy." It is currently owned by Mrs. Hatcher's heirs.

Clayton Hall was built in 1797. The detached barn was probably of the same era. An attachment to the house on the Route 760 side was removed sometime before the 1930s. There was a wooden picket fence seen in earlier photos rather than the fence there today. It was long known as the Patsy Clayton House, and later as Clayton Hall. The first occupant that Thomas Osburn remembered was Captain Mason Moore, who operated a tavern there. Just before the Civil War it was bought by Mahlon and Mary Thomas. In 1919, Clayton Hall was sold to Abraham and Della Longerbeam. In 1934 it was sold to Elizabeth Shawen. It is currently occupied by Evelyn Johnson.

The Talbot/Gruber house (33697), across from Clayton Hall, was built in 1845 by James Stephenson. James Murphey, the shoemaker, lived in the nearby house, also

owned by Stephenson, facing the lane. Dr. George E. Plaster also had his office in the building attached to the Stephenson house. Following Stephenson's death in 1857, the house became a store operated by Townsend M. Osburn and Tarleton V. Osburn in the late 1850s. Townsend Osburn married Rose Lodge, and their daughter married Dr. Charles Turner. This house was next occupied by Mason Osburn, who died around 1861, and then by Volney Purcell. He sold his store in 1875 to Walter Osburn. In 1890 it was sold to Burns Osburn, Volney's brother. In 1897 it was sold to Rose Gibson who enlarged it into a boarding house known as "Virginia House" twenty-some years later. Mrs. Powell owned it next.

Just up Route 760, on the east side, Henry Beatty had a garage. In the early 1930s and on into the '40s, movies were shown there. Mrs. Gibson, a black woman, and her two daughters lived in rooms that were part of the garage until the mid 1940s, when it burned down. To the west of Route 760 on old Route 7 was Walter Beatty's "beer joint," built in the early 1900s. It burned down in 1947.

The "Snickersville General Store" was built in 1846 and operated by Silcott & Chamblin. James Stephenson was Snickersville's Postmaster from 1832 until 1836 and died in 1842. His son James owned large farming lands around the village, which he bought in 1840, and had been living in Clayton Hall since late 1845. He built the store the next year. In 1848 Joab Osburn lived here, having moved from the Carrington house. Next came James Love, again by Joab Osburn, Dr. George Plaster and then Hector Pierce, which is probably when its sign said "H. Clay Lynn, Manufacturer of Stoves and Tin Ware." Next were Mason Moore, the family of James Murphey, and Joseph Alder, who, in 1888, sold it to John W. Silcott. He built a new store there, probably on the old



foundation and operated it until about 1907 when the Price brothers, Wilbur and Bushrod, took over. They went out of business about 1920, to be followed by Henry and Lydia Reid. Then, Mrs. Winifred Osburn Forrester was there. Walton Mann and his wife Mary Emma ran it from 1948 to 1974, and then for two years. Bill and Donna Miner did so.

The house just to the east of the store was built around 1848 and was the home of Mrs. Kline, the mother of Edward Davis, who himself lived in it until just before the Civil War.

Across the Turnpike on the corner, Dr. Charles B. Turner had his log office (33704) around 1900 while he was living in Clayton Hall. It was later added onto. The house to the east was built in 1834 by Dr. Thornton Offutt, Amos Clayton's son-in-law. Tholemiiah Rhodes lived there beginning in 1844 and sold it in 1884 to Armstead Frank Osburn. His daughter, Mrs. Forrester, lived there in the mid-1900s and ran the Snickersville Store. According to Thomas Osburn, this was the home of William (Billy) Brown, a saddle and harness maker during the 1850s. Tholly Rhodes was "associated with him." Billy had a separate saddle and harness shop to the east of his house. In about 1900, Charles Osborn built the house that is there today. The saddle shop was probably torn down on the same spot. Further to the east, John Kelly built a house in 1930, then owned and lived in by Earl Virts, Sr. from 1935 to 1996.

Across the Turnpike, the "dance hall" was built in 1920 by Dr. Plaster's son George. There was a garage built into it for his brother, Dr. Henry Plaster. Bobby Jones, at age 16, operated an ice cream parlor known as "Foxy's Sweet Shop" there in the '40s. Cochran Lumber used it for a number of years at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. Nielson Landscaping currently owns it.

The E.E. Lake Store was built in 1901. A separate paper, entitled "Bluemont's Historic E.E. Lake Store" is attached. The Lakes lived in the yellow frame house (18229 Railroad Street) built in 1904. Robert and Ellen Jones lived there in the 1950s. Charlie Barton owned it before that in the late '30s and '40s. The double-gallery house (18331 Railroad Street) was built in 1931 by Eugene Hawling who lived there until the early 1940s. Mr. and Mrs. Martz lived there after that and operated a millinery shop in it. The small house on the east (18344 Railroad Street) was built from one quarter of the second Bluemont train station by Earl Iden. To the west was the original telephone office starting in 1919 as the Snickersville Telephone Company, Inc. of Virginia. It is currently owned by the Leggs. There used to be an old log house just beyond the double-gallery house, in front of the Loudoun House. James Scott was living there when it burned down.

In 1902, Mrs. Fannie A. Kerfoot bought five lots and on them erected the large hotel known as Loudoun House. Mr. John D. Chapin in the wintertime ran the Loudoun Select School for Young Ladies, but it closed in 1913. James Calvin Beatty took over in 1916, using it as a private school known as the Willowbrook Academy for Boys in the winter and a hotel in the summer, serving dinner to as many as 250 people. It closed down in 1930 and later was operated as Ruth's Home for disabled children. Earl Iden's house (18309 Railroad St.). the blue one built in 1908 is next to where Bernard Throckmorton's barn/livery stable was. The Idens operated their boarding house as the Blue Ridge Inn, after the one at Bears Den burned down in 1913, until 1930. The next house was built by Richard Bell, a harness maker, in 1917. Cora Lake on 1 May 1917 had deeded lots 11, 12, and portions of 13, 14 and 15 to Bell.

The wooden grain elevators were built beginning in 1900 and ending with the third fire in 1918. Dr. and Mrs. George E. Plaster then conveyed the remaining portions of lots 13, 14 and 15 to the Bluemont Elevator Company. In 1920, Lloyd Plaster, Hubert Plaster and Earl Iden built the current concrete elevator for Wilkins Rogers of Hamilton, and the mill next to it, which was the Bluemont Milling Company. Neither of Bluemont's two train stations remain.

The Post Office building across from the Lake Store was put up in 1928 by Earl Iden. His brick rambler (33774 Snickersville Turnpike) was built about 1959, as was the house in the woods across the street. In 1909 Earl Iden and Earl Beale had "put up a moving picture building" down on the railroad-owned lot on the Turnpike and showed movies until 1920. It no longer exists. Earl Iden's Store on the south side was built in 1933 and is no longer standing.

The house just east of the new Post Office is on land donated in 1872 by Dr. George E. Plaster for Snickersville's second school, a Virginia public free school. His son Henry was in school there in 1887. About 1890 it became a "two roomer." It converted to private ownership when the third school, now the Bluemont Community Center, opened in 1922. Mrs. Harry Turner owned and lived in it for many years, followed by Tom Rust. Martin Mitchell built his house in 1983.

In 1849, the present stone "Free Church" was built, open to all Christians. The Victorian house (33828 Snickersville Turnpike) was built about 1850 by Robert (Bob) Marshall, a carpenter who was captured during the Civil War and died in the Elmira, NY prison. The barn /house (33834 Snickersville Turnpike) behind has an unknown construction date. In the open field to the west was "the original Clayton home,"

bought it in 1948 and he and his wife, Bessie, who was Postmaster from 1959 to 1975, lived there for many years.

The house on the corner of Foggy Bottom Road (18526) was, according to Eugene Scheel, built in 1877 by James A.F. "Pat" Murphy. Thomas Osburn said that during the 1850s Frank Murphey and his wife Drucilla Adams lived "below the village." Next door is the expansion of a house built in the late 1800s by Charlie Bell, who died about 1918. Separate from this house is his blacksmith shop, which began in the early 1800s. Bell converted it to the board and batten garage, still there.

The First Baptist Church of Bluemont, next door, has on its foundation that it was organized in 1888 and built in 1920. It was organized in the then frame schoolhouse for black children, built in the woods above Bluemont on land deeded by Dr. George E. Plaster to Benjamin Franklin Young, his apprentice doctor. In 1921, services were moved to a new church across the mountain road from the schoolhouse. Jim Henderson, Jr., one of the church deacons, donated the land, and in 1949 the congregation built the current church using material from the 1921 church. Norris Fletcher was the main contractor. He lived across the street in the log house that Lee Smallwood, builder of the old church, earlier lived in. It was built in the mid-1800s. The house (34090) next to it was built about 1910 and was a tenant house for help on the Plaster farm. Coe Elsea lived there in the mid-1900s, until he moved across the road. Geoffrey Throckmorton of Round Hill bought it in 1985.

The second house (34117 Snickersville Turnpike) east of the church was built by Eston King in 1929, and he lived there until the 1950s. Ruth Holland lives there now. The next, yellow house (34141), was built for James Hooe about 1840. It was, in the mid-

occupied during the 1850s by John Hesser and his family. Before Dr. Rufus Humphrey deeded the land for the third Bluemont School in the 1920s, Dr. Frank Grady had built his house there in 1817. The "aristocratic" Mrs. Hodgson lived in it for many years. It is now the Bluemont Community Center, owned and operated by the County.

The house (33868 Snickersville Turnpike) to the east of the Community Center was built in 1836 by John Young and was lived in by Roger Chew, son of John Chew and brother of Robert Chew. Then Hector Pierce, who ran the Snickersville Store; then Joab Osburn and Mrs. Jonab Osburn, his sister-in-law. During the Civil War, Thomas Osburn and his family lived there. Eugene Scheel claims the house was built in 1870 by James Throckmorton. This is not true. Dr. George E. Plaster sold the house and lot in 1876 to James Barbour ("J.B.") Throckmorton and his wife Eliza, who lived there until his death in 1906. The Thompson and then the Overton families lived there.

The house (33861) lot east of the lane to the Plaster farm was sold by Dr. Henry Plaster to Raymond Jacobs, the brother-in-law of Mrs. Clarence Fields, the wife of the farmer who operated Dr. Plaster's farm. Jacobs built the house about 1915. The lane to Whitehall was the first gas-lighted lane in Loudoun County. Ruel "Judge" Marshall, a cabinet maker and undertaker, built his house in the early 1800s just west of Glenmeade and it is no longer standing. A discussion of the early history of Glenmeade Farm is attached.

The log house on Foggy Bottom Road (18626) was built by Christopher Scipio around 1880. Beatrice Scipio was a well known black school teacher. On the north side of the Turnpike, Otto Kelley built the house (34056) in 1940. G. Wilmot Townshend

1900s, a tenant house for McComb's dairy farm. The large farm house on the north side of the Turnpike was either built by Joseph A. Lodge about 1845 or by his son, Flavious J.B. Lodge, after his father gave him the farm in 1867. In 1870, Harmon Lodge, a 42 year old farmer and son of Samuel Lodge, lived there. It was later owned and operated by the Boxleys. The house at an angle was built by James Allder, Sr. in the early 1800s. Gene Scheel lists Sydnor "Sidney" Hodgson as maybe the first owner.

Next is the Samuel Allder house, built in the mid 1800s. His son Clyde Allder lived there later. At 34307 Willie Littleton, who worked for Foxcroft School, lived there in the mid-1900s. On the north side is Joseph Alder, Sr's house (34300 Snickersville Turnpike), built about 1840. At 34355 is the Amanda Alder House, built in the mid-1800s. Amanda was the daughter of Ruel Marshall, the village's first carpenter and cabinet maker. She willed her house to her "helpless unmarried" daughters. Next is the James Allder, Jr. house (34455 Snickersville Turnpike), built in the mid-1800s and known as "Meadow Brook". The A.J. Tinsmans lived there from 1917 to the mid-1900s. The Wyncoop farm lay to the south. On the NE corner of the Turnpike and Yellow Schoolhouse Road is the Kelly farmhouse, owned by James, Otto and now J.J. It was built in 1880 by William Humphrey and called Rosemoor.

Henry G. Plaster

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