

Different Fulfillment Of Founder's Dream

Little Town Of Buckland

By I. F. FIELDS

Buckland, Prince William County, Virginia, is the substance of a dream that came true, then slept again over a period of years to awaken to a new and different fulfillment of John Love's vision of a town-site a century and a half ago.

A woolen mill was at its peak of production in 1797 when John Love laid out streets and lots for the town along Broad Run named Buckland for the young architect, William Buckland who had built Buckhall Hall, John Love's boyhood home. The mill furnished employment for many in the country-side, in the gathering of walnut hulls and sumac for dyes, as well as in the operation of the mill.

Buckland was a thriving town. At the wagon tavern near the corner of William and Mill streets four and six-horse bell teams came and went between Alexandria and Buckland, exchanging goods and supplies. Horses were fed from boxes on the sides of the wagons, and the drivers, after a hearty meal at the tavern, stretched out in their wagon beds to sleep. But eventually, as industries moved nearer the cities and the railroads, the population followed. The woolen mill burned down and was replaced by a grist mill near the same site.

In 1909, when I had my first glimpse of the town, Buckland was little more than a dusty street crossing the pike which had absorbed the north-south street once known as William street. Other streets and boundaries of lots laid out by John Love had long since been obliterated, and houses straggled on either side of Mill Street up the hill southward without apparent plan. Residents of the town at this time were the Calvert, Pendleton, Hall, Payne, Graham, Brown, McIntosh, Dellaplane, Butler and Sanders families. There were two stores, a blacksmith shop and a little chapel, then a mission branch of St. Paul's Church, Haymarket.

The bridge over the run was iron framework with a floor of wide thick planks that rattled alarmingly if anything went over it faster than a walking pace. The

pike was covered with small loose rocks that rolled under one's foot and wedged in horses' hoofs. Dirt detours on each side of the hills were used in dry weather to avoid the rocks.

Broad Run at the village was a favorite resort for picnics, baptisms in summer and skating parties in winter.

There was also good fishing all along the run.

A few years later the paved highways were begun. The old iron bridge gave way to one of cement. Motor-coaches, cars and trucks went speeding by the village.

Three of the oldest houses in the village have been modernized into comfortable, attractive homes. Some years ago the old wagon tavern was bought by Mrs. Bauer, a retired government employee who restored the old walls and remodeled the interior.

A small enclosed court where rare plants and flowers grow now occupies the space where horses once stood to feed from their wagon boxes.

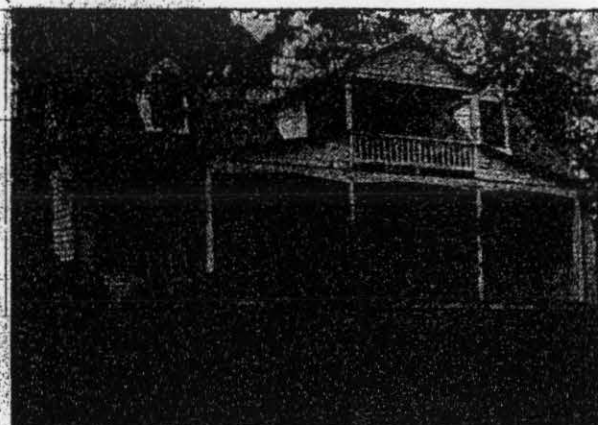
The miller's cottage still stands facing a lovely vista of the run across Mill street. Somewhere along the years a wing and a front porch have been added to the original structure. The mill property, now named Mill Brook Cottage, owned by Mr. and Mrs. Russell A. Stuart, native Virginians,ington and other cities.

formerly of Washington.

The third house faces south on Mill street. The dark rough-hewn joists in the living room give evidence of its early origin and here, also, the owners, Mr. and Mrs. Vernon Leitch, have kept to the original plan of the house in modernizing it into a charming home.

The old grist mill no longer supplies the surrounding country with flour, meal and by-products. The great water-turried wheel is gone. All that is left of the big mill dam is a foot and a half waterfall across the run. Sometimes ducks swim in the old mill pond and go sliding down the curtain of waterfall to dive in the pool below. Big rocks in the stream churn the current into foam and gently toss the sound of the water into the nearby houses all through the summer days and quite nights. Green lawns slope down to the water's edge where weed-choked lots once reached from Mill street to the run.

John Love's dream of an industrial center is today a town of small homes. Extending half a mile along highway 29-211, north and south of the run and east to Buckland Hall, it is a restful retreat for commuters, surrounded by a fertile farming country, within easy driving distance of Washington and other cities.



MILL HOUSE AT BUCKLAND—Left section is original log building; porch and right section are recent additions.

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