

## Haymarket, Virginia

By Tommie S. Burton

From the beginning of history the topography of Northern Virginia has provided two natural routes of traffic between the north and south. One of these was the trail traveled by Susquehannock Indians from Point of Rocks on the Potomac River to the Carolinas. It passed along the eastern slope of Bull Run Mountains through what was to become Haymarket, following the natural route of least resistance. In 1662, Colonel Abraham Woods reported on the trade the Susquehannocks had established with the Carolina Indians, using this trail. By the end of the seventeenth century, the trail had been taken over by the Iroquois Indians. The Treaty of Albany, in 1722, moved the Indians west of the Blue Ridge Mountains, opening the Piedmont for settlement. The trail gradually became a road, as the white man moved in, and it was called the Carolina Road. Later, it was frequented by thieves and became known as Rogue's Road. The country around settled so rapidly that Prince William County was created in 1731.

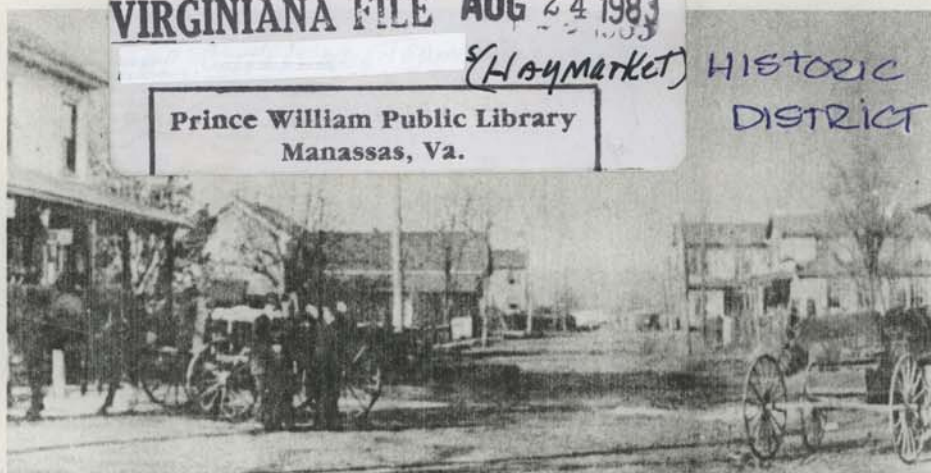
In 1734, Samuel Skinker, a wealthy merchant from Bristol, England, added to his holdings a tract of land on the Carolina Road - Green Hill Plantation - the future site of Haymarket. When he died in 1752, he left to his son, William, that land along with five other tracts. William had been sent to England for his education. Upon returning to this country in 1772, he married and settled on his Green Hill Plantation. About 1779, he erected an ordinary on the Carolina Road where it crossed the Dumfries tobacco road (the present site of Haymarket). The tavern was built of large, red bricks made in the English-style mold. Characteristically, it was called "Red House."

Red House was so well known that when Thomas Jefferson made a map of the region in 1787, he named the locality "Red House." The *Virginia Gazette*, on October

### FAIRFAX COUNTY, continued

in which the rich, natural, and historic past of the County can be preserved and interpreted. This scholarly and comprehensive report was doubtless the final push that succeeded in boosting the historical activity of the county to its present, and highly laudable, level of effort.

H.H.D.



E. Main Street looking west about 1900. The farthest building on the right is the Post Office. The other building on the right is the Red House Tavern. The town hall is the farthest away on the left. Jordan's store, now Fewell Melton's antique shop, is at the left foreground. (Courtesy E. F. Watson)

4, 1787, announced the opening of another ordinary - Haymarket Inn. During the eighteenth century, Haymarket was the scene of Jockey Club races. People came from far and wide and stayed in the two taverns.

A race course once adjoined the courthouse. Bishop William Meade wrote in 1857: "... in preaching there in former days I have, on a Sabbath seen from the courthouse bench, on which I stood, the horses in training for the sport which was at hand. Those times have, I trust, passed away forever."

General Anthony Wayne marched his brigade of the Pennsylvania line over the Carolina Road. They were encamped at Red House June 4, 1781.

William Skinker took into partnership his nephew of the same name, William Skinker, Jr.

On January 11, 1799, the General Assembly decreed "that the land of William Skinker, lying at the place known as Red House ... as the same is already laid off in lots, with convenient streets shall be established a town by the name of Hay Market." Henry Washington, Bernard Hooe, Edward Carter, Edmond Brooke, Richard Alexander, William Tyler, George Tyler, Washington J. Washington, and Matthew Whiting were appointed trustees. Regulations were formulated for buying lots in the town. A house built to specifications was to be completed within five years or the lot would be forfeited. All the streets were 60 feet in width, and each block was 250 feet by 350 feet, divided into four lots. Each lot was on a corner facing two streets. The lots were numbered 1 to 140 on a survey of 1800.

Streets running north and south were: Mountain Street, Skinker, Fayette, Jefferson, Madison, Columbia, and Republican. Streets running east and west were: Marshall, Fox, Washington, Franklin, and William.

One legend has it that Haymarket was named after Haymarket, England, by the founder, a homesick Englishman, William Skinker. Another legend says it was the market created for hay with the horse races that caused the town to be called Haymarket.

In 1788, Virginia established a system of superior District Courts. For ten years court convened at Dumfries for the district comprised of the counties of Prince William, Fairfax, Loudoun, and Fauquier. In 1799, it was urged upon the Assembly that Dumfries was remote and inconvenient. Commissioners were appointed to select a central location.

Samuel Love, Jr., Israel Lacy, Edmond Brooke, and William Edmonds placed a notice in the Alexandria newspaper on July 18, 1800, that a courthouse and other public buildings would be erected at Red House by the lowest bidder. For the sum of five pounds, William Skinker, Sr., William Skinker, Jr., and wife Harriet, deeded two and one-half acres and two perches to the courthouse commissioners, William Edmonds, Jr., Israel Lacey and Edmond Brooke, on September 4, 1801. James Wren, architect of The Falls Church Christ Church in Alexandria, the Fairfax Court House, and other buildings in Northern Virginia, was the architect.

Haymarket Masonic Lodge No. 62 was organized in December 1802 and their first meeting was held in the gallery of the courthouse. The first record of court in



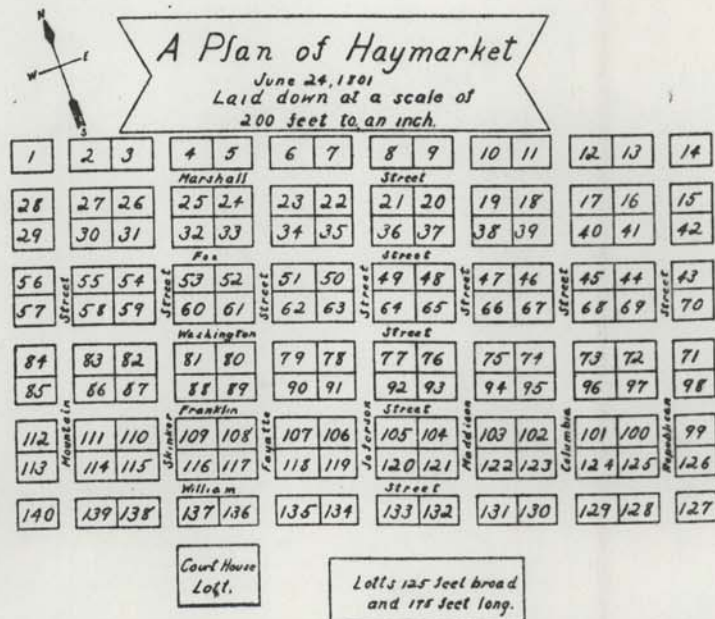
Post office about 1900. (Courtesy E. F. Watson)

Alexandria Railroad at Manassas Junction. William Skinker's executors sold to Thomas A. Smith, in 1852, 382 acres of Green Hill Plantation, including Red House Tavern, excluding the streets and lots already owned in the town. In 1857 Garrett Hulfish bought 47½ acres of Skinker's land. Deeds were also recorded for Thomas B. Gaines and John W. Tyler. The town plan was disregarded in these deeds where it was yet undeveloped. One of the first deeds in the town was to John Barnett for lots 107 and 118 on Fayette Street. On lot 107 he built a small, log, one and one-half story house with a cellar. On lot 118 he built a small house to comply with requirements for holding the lot. These two dwellings, plus one other, and St. Paul's Church were the only buildings to escape the fire in Haymarket on Novem-

the building was in the spring of 1803, but Haymarket was a bustling court town for but a short time since, in 1807, district courts were abolished in favor of circuit courts. In 1812, the General Assembly ordered the courthouse to be sold. For about four years the Hygiea Academy occupied the building.

The property was not sold again until 1822, when it was purchased by William Skinker, Jr. The Reverend "Parson" Steele came to Haymarket in 1822 and organized an Episcopal congregation and held services there. In 1830, Skinker deeded the building and one and one-half

1801 plan of Haymarket. Washington Street is now Route 55. Houses on lots 107, 118, and 135 and the church (on Court House lot) did not burn in 1862. All three houses were built by John Barnett. (Map courtesy Charles R. Jordan.)

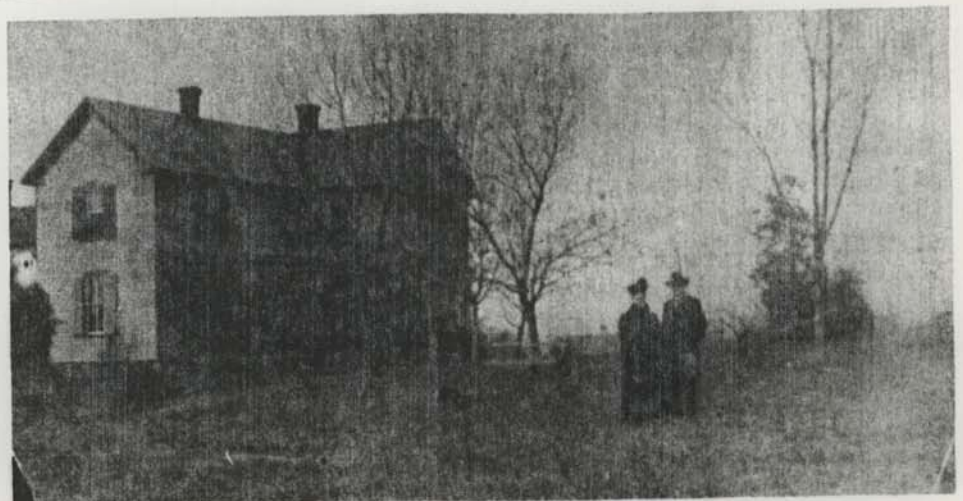


acres to the Episcopal Church in memory of his wife. In 1833 the congregation was named and consecrated St. Paul's Church by Bishop Meade.

General Lafayette, of France, passed through Haymarket in 1825 on his last visit to America. He came over the old Carolina Road from Warrenton and Buckland, within a block of the street named in his honor. About 100 years later, a Haymarket resident, Will Jordan, found a bronze medal, with a French inscription on it, in the dust along the road.

A stage coach line operated over the Dumfries Road in the 1840s, with a stop at Red House Tavern.

In 1850, the Manassas Gap Railroad (Front Royal to Manassas) skirted Haymarket to connect with the Orange and



The Doctor Henry Mazyck Clarkson home in Haymarket about 1900. The man and woman in the picture are doubtless Dr. and Mrs. Clarkson. (Courtesy E. F. Watson)

ber 4 and 5, 1862, when Federal troops burned the town.

The first house Barnett built is today the oldest house in Haymarket. It was sold to Thomas McCormick in 1821 and was in that family for 100 years. It is now the residence of Miss Elizabeth Cobb.

On April 28, 1861, only nine days after the Virginia Convention Ordinance of Secession, the Prince William Rifles were organized in Haymarket. George Hamilton was captain; Grayson Tyler, first lieutenant; Winston Carter, second lieutenant; John Jordan, first sergeant; and James Terrell, second sergeant. The volunteers drilled on the lawn in front of St. Paul's Church. Small boys with wooden rifles mimicked them nearby. Young Charles Jordan was drummer boy. On June 19 they were united with neighboring companies as Company F of 17th Regiment of Virginia Infantry.

On Sunday, July 21, 1861, the guns were booming at Manassas. The wounded Confederates were brought to St. Paul's. Eighty soldiers died and were buried in a long trench on the south side of the churchyard. After the Battle of Gainesville in 1862, the northern wounded were taken to St. Paul's and those who died were buried in a trench at the extreme west of the churchyard. The church became a hospital for the third time when the 11th Alabama Infantry was sent there suffering an epidemic. The fifty men who died were buried on the south side of the churchyard.

On August 26, 1862, General Jackson passed through Haymarket and returned

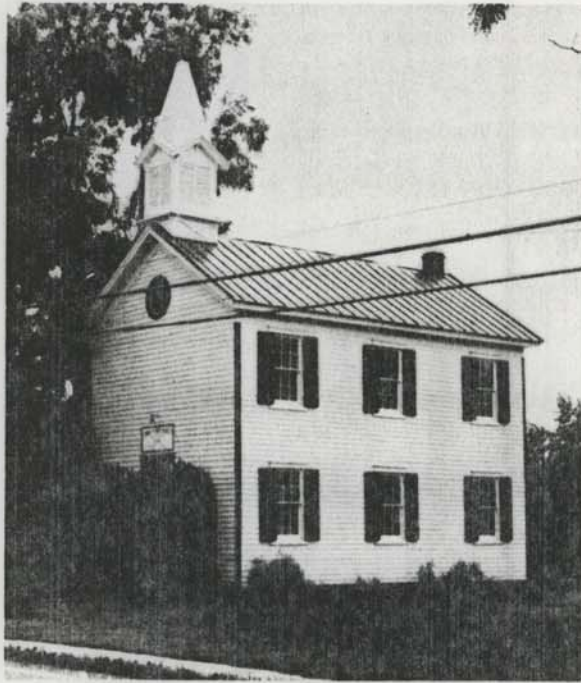
two days later to occupy the railroad. Stuart's Cavalry skirmished with Federal troops around Haymarket on August 28. That afternoon, General J. B. Rickett's Federal division left its knapsacks at Haymarket as it advanced to Thoroughfare Gap. Haymarket was behind Confederate lines for the next two days. All able bodied men were away in the army, but old men and boys did their part defending their homes. Before Mosby's Rangers

became active in the area, the blue coats were the target of sniping by these defenders at every opportunity. Passing trains, heavily loaded with Federal troops and supplies, were especially vulnerable. The sniping had assumed such proportions that by the fall of 1862, an order was given that all houses within one mile of a railroad should be burned.

General A. von Steinwehr's division of Sigel's corps were camped about two miles west of Haymarket. These troops of Pennsylvania Dutch were known to the Confederates as "Blinker's Dutch."

In *A Letter from Charles Edward Jordan to His Family and Friends*, a book published privately in 1932, Mr. Jordan gives an account of the calamity at Haymarket on November 4 and 5.

Jordan tells how the soldiers ransacked the town on the afternoon of the fourth, scattering objects and taking what they wanted. By nightfall the mob dispersed and returned to camp. The townspeople gathered up what was left of their belongings. The soldiers reported to their commanding officer that they had been fired upon in Haymarket. Said to be engaged in a game of cards, and not wishing to be disturbed, the commanding officer growled, "Burn the damn place." At one o'clock in the morning on November 5, while the town slept, "the fire fiends came and the town was doomed to be burned." All the buildings in Haymarket



Haymarket Town Hall today and (below) about 1900 when it was a combination school and town hall. (Courtesy E. F. Watson)



at that time were frame except the church.

Garrett Hulfish was said to have been a northern sympathizer. His house at the far eastern end of town was the first set on fire. When he tried to stop the soldiers, he was hit on the head with a sabre. He rushed back into his burning house to rescue his family. Within an hour the whole town was ablaze, leaving only three small houses and St. Paul's in the southwest part of town. At that point, a messenger from headquarters halted the burning. It had obviously been a mistake.

Jordan said:

*The night was cold and a heavy frost covered the ground. As day dawned, all that was left of our homes were the blackened and smoking chimneys and the half-burned shade trees. The homeless families, each little group just a safe distance from the smoking ruins, were huddled beside the few things they had managed to drag from their burning homes.*

*They were wondering where they should go, where they could find shelter and in dire dread of what might happen next, for the future seemed hopeless for those women and children — some of the children dead, others ill — who were at the mercy of the invaders of our land, while their husbands and sons were away on the battlefields.*



Red House, at Washington and Jefferson Streets, Haymarket. (The author, June 1974)

*When the fires burned low enough we drew near to the hot foundation stones to warm our feet. The writer, then eleven years of age, and a few others, gathered some turnips from the garden and roasted them on the stones, and this was our breakfast — a one-course repast. We were told to trust in God and Davis for the next meal.*

Those responsible for the fire were arrested and a court martial was held at the store in Gainesville, according to

Colonel Berkeley who was a Confederate prisoner there.

After the town burned St. Paul's was used as a stable for northern cavalry horses, and it was ultimately burned. Only the walls were left standing.

Reverend William Alrich became rector of St. Paul's in 1867. Formerly of Delaware, he went north and collected \$600 to repair the church. The church has been in use by the Episcopal congregation ever since.

February 21, 1882, an act was approved to reincorporate Haymarket. A journal of the Town Council on May 2, 1882, lists G. A. Hulfish, mayor; T. A. Smith, Jno. L. Reid, W. W. Meade, and C. E. Jordan, councilmen elect. D. E. Saunders was clerk and James McDonough sergeant.

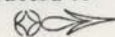
On May 25, 1882, ordinances were adopted. "No person shall run or ride a horse at dangerous speed within streets of the corporation. No saloon or barroom shall be kept open at night for sale of intoxicating drinks after 12 o'clock at night or on Sunday or during corporation elections." Other ordinances restricted stock running loose in the town, and so forth.

In rebuilding the town, the streets were made only 30 feet wide as required by the county at that time, instead of the original 60 feet.

On October 26, 1883, citizens and council met and it was reported that a total of \$561 had been raised to build a combination school house and town hall. \$411 had been raised by subscriptions and \$150 from an oyster supper. A board of trustees was elected and instructed to



St. Paul's Episcopal Church, built c. 1800-1805 as a court house. James Wren, architect of The Falls Church and the Fairfax County Court House, was also the architect of this building. (The author, 1973)



make the necessary arrangements.

The Baptist Church was built in 1893. Haymarket was a social community in the early 1900s, boasting a number of organizations. Some of these were the Dramatic Club, Old Maids Club, and the Agriculture Club. The English, German, and native-born residents mingled freely. The Agriculture Club was formed before the war and was reorganized in 1878. It had a unique meeting date system. Meetings were the Friday preceding each full moon and lasted from 2 to 9 p.m. On one occasion the club voted four to three against encouraging immigration.

Haymarket is 175 years old this year. It has remained about the same size through the years. Last year it again faced the loss of its court when the General Assembly abolished municipal courts. The second inland town incorporated in Prince William County, and the smallest, Haymarket retains its charter, and on the third Monday of each month, the Town Council meets for its deliberations in the Town Hall.

#### SOURCES AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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## Alice Fellows



Mrs. Alice Fellows passed away in May 1974. She would have been 105 in August. Jovial and buoyant to the end, Mrs. Fellows loved life and made the most of it. We interviewed her in July 1971 at her home in East Falls Church, Va. Present were her daughter Virginia Fenwick, Mrs. John Cline, and Mrs. J. R. Browning. We had a ball. I sat close to her good left ear, the better for her to hear me. The interview was published in full in *Falls Church Historical News and Notes*, Vol. I, No. 5, July 1971.

Some excerpts from that interview indicate her zest for living:

"I'm Alice Murray Fellows and I'm 102 years old. I was born August 17, 1869, at "Bleak Hill" farm in Fauquier County, between the Blue Ridge and the Bull Run Mountains. It was a wonderful farm. Father was Milton Murray, mother was Virginia Welch Murray. There were six girls and one boy. We were the happiest people in the world because we

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Bishop William Meade, *Old Churches, Ministers, and Families of Virginia*, Vol. II, p. 215.  
St. Paul's Centennial Booklet, June 1930, loaned by Francis Watson.  
Alice Maude Ewell, *A Virginia Scene*.

The old pictures, loaned by Frances Watson, were taken by Mrs. Mamie Heinekien's brother about 1900.

And information given verbally by numerous people. My appreciation to everyone who contributed to this history. The author ●●

didn't have any money. But we had a good time.

"The farm was about 300 acres. We had cattle, hogs, a big dog, and a lot of servants. Bleak Hill is between Marshall and The Plains — about two and one-half miles from The Plains on the north of Rt. 55."

/Why did you leave Bleak Hill to come to Falls Church?/

"I got a husband! I had lots of beaux."

/What year did you come to Falls Church?/

"1899!?" — Yes, 1899. I was always funny about numbers — that way no one would know my age. This house was started in the spring of 1899. Mr. Fellows and I were married on June 22, 1899 — the prettiest day in the world. At first we lived in the old Keith house where the Village House restaurant is now, and we later boarded with my cousins, the Barksdales, just across the street from here. We moved into this house on Thanksgiving Day, 1899. My daughter Virginia was born a year and a week later.

"When we came to Falls Church the population was 1,200 and they had segregation. The trolley cars had three benches in the rear for colored people.

"The trolley line ran right to Falls Church. That's how most people went to Washington. The train stopped at the East Falls Church Station, and went to Washington by way of Alexandria Junction, but we more often caught the trolley. We had a little station (shelter) here called Ashdale. The "dale" part came from Barksdale, the "Ash" part came from Ashton, Mrs. Barksdale's parents. The trolley went only as far as Ashdale for a long time because they couldn't get it up through Falls Church. It was against the law. Finally Mr. Moncure (Richard Cassius Lee Moncure, Sr.) and Mr. Harry Phillips, president of the trolley company, had it pushed up one night."

/How did they manage to "push it up one night"?/

"I couldn't tell you that. Mr. Moncure was a lawyer and lawyers can do most anything."

/How could they lay ties and track that far all in one night?/

"They got a gang of men together and they just did it. I remember that it actually happened. I was right here! From Falls Church the trolley finally went on to Vienna, Oakton, and Fairfax.

"We had a lot of interesting people here, and some that were real characters.