

WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION OF VIRGINIA
HISTORICAL INVENTORY

COUNTY: Prince William

CLASS : Home Sites

HOMES ALONG THE OLD MOUNTAIN ROAD

This write-up is a part of the Virginia W. P. A. Historical Inventory Project sponsored by the Virginia Conservation Commission under the direction of its Division of History. Credit to both the Commission and W. P. A. is requested for publication, in whole or in part. Unless otherwise stated, this information has not been checked for accuracy by the sponsor.

Research made by
Susan Rogers Morton,
Haymarket, Virginia.

October 14, 1936.

1. SUBJECT:

Homes Along The Old Mountain Road.

2. LOCATION:

Beginning at the corner of the Old Mountain Road at Antioch, Virginia, and going south to Thoroughfare Gap.

3. DATE:

4. OWNERS:

Prince William County.

5. DESCRIPTION:

To write the history of the Old Mountain Road is to go far into the past. It was once an Indian Trail, and here some of the dreaded Doegs lived, after they had been driven out from other secluded spots, but all that is another chapter closed before any of the sites that can be seen today were in existence.

When the old Chapman Mill at the Gap and the mills at Waterfall were doing such a thriving business there was much travel along this road, which was the nearest connecting thoroughfare between the two points. After one leaves the Antioch Church, there is on the right of the road the ruins of the old Foley house. It had a stone basement, and a long flight of stone steps to the front entrance. The great chimney is still standing, but the house has fallen into decay. Turning to the left one is on the Old Mountain Road, with here and there a branch crossing it, but there is no site that can be traced for some distance, although I am told there were several cabins there in the past, white settlers who had drifted in from the lower part of the country and then gone westward across the mountains. The first lane on the left about a mile from Antioch Road, close by La Grange, was a well traveled road once, but now it is impossible to get through except on horseback or on foot. In a grove at the corner is the old negro burying ground and opposite is a chimney and the ruins of a house, now it is grown up in woods and the orchard is lost in the midst of pine and oak.

To the left, a half mile farther on, is a site of the old Roach House. This belonged to the miller at the Chapman Mills. It was a six room house of log construction, it is said, with a wide porch in front, and a good orchard surrounding it. This house was destroyed by fire about sixty years ago. There is nothing left now except a few flowers and a few bits of shrubbery in a tangle of honeysuckle.

A short distance from this is the site of another house, known as the Swartz place. Until a few years ago the very fine stone chimneys were standing, and the fireplaces could be seen. It was a fairly large house, and the site is remarkably fine, commanding a view of

the country for miles. There is an old graveyard here, part of which is surrounded by a stone wall, but some of the graves are on the outside which have inscriptions, but they are in such a tangle of rose bushes and honeysuckle that they could not be read.

Another mile farther on takes one to the old Blight Place, as it is known today, although it once had a name. This is on the right of the road, a log house that has been added onto the original containing four rooms. It is now occupied by a colored man whose grandfather was a slave on the Chapman Place, and this was used as the overseer's house. It is about one hundred and twenty-five years old.

A few rods further down the road on the left-hand side is an entrance to another one of the Chapman houses. There were three brothers who owned over eight hundred acres in that vicinity. There is nothing to show the site now but a pile of stones, a cellar dug-out, and a group of Mulberry trees. Here too is an old graveyard in a grove of oak and sycamore, which according to local tradition is haunted.

Half a mile south along the road at the junction of the old abandoned road that runs to High Point and into the mountains finally coming out at Hopewell is another Chapman place. This was a larger house than the rest and until a few years ago was standing. The chimneys are still to be seen and some of the ruins of the out buildings. This was occupied by one of the Chapmans, and was a substantial home in its day. It too was of logs, boarded over, and the out buildings were the same. The house was destroyed by fire, but the land is still in the family. There are some graves here, but unmarked save by field stones. These are the same Chapmans that were so prominent in the lower end of the county, owning large tracts there as well, the elder Chapman coming from Maryland as manager of the iron furnace of which George Washington's father had an interest.

6. HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE:

The Gap at Thoroughfare which has has such a colorful past, has always something new coming to light.

There was much hand to hand fighting all through the Gap in August of 1862 which culminated in the second Battle of Kanawha. On the right of the mountain road as one near the highway, at a point marked by a rail-road sign, can be seen what was once a trench where thirty-eight Union soldiers were hastily buried, they were later removed.

There are but two families living on this section of the road today, and one may walk the length of it without meeting any one, but it its memories, and the thick tangles of undergrowth were once cultivated fields.

7. ART:

8. SOURCES OF INFORMATION:

Informants: Mr. Burgess, Broad Run, Virginia.
Mr. Graham, Thoroughfare, Virginia.
Mr. Powell, Lanassas, Virginia.
Miss Laud Ewell, Haymarket, Virginia.
Mr. R. B. Gossom, Waterfall, Virginia.

WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION OF VIRGINIA
HISTORICAL INVENTORY

COUNTY: Prince William

CLASS : Mountain Lore

----FOLK LORE SONGS ----

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Research made by
Susan R. Morton
Haymarket, Va.

August 4, 1937

1. SUBJECT:

Folk Lore Songs.

2. LOCATION:

In the Bull Run Mountains.

3. DATE:

4. OWNERS:

5. DESCRIPTION:

The following verses were heard in a Mountain Home in some of my travels through the Bull Run Mountains, and they were taken down as accurately as possible from word of mouth, and while I think the words are correct, it was hard to emphasize the accent that was put on some of the words, as well as the time.

6. HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE:

MELINDA

Lovely Melinda, come now my dear,
I'm waiting, I'm waiting for you;
Shut down the window, dry up the tear,
And walk with me over the dew.

CHORUS

Lovely Melinda, Melinda, Melinda,
My sweet Melinda May;
I could walk in the field and be happy all day,
If you only would smile again, my sweet Melinda May.

Laugh in the sunshine, weep in the rain,
And walk where the lily buds bloom;
Down in the meadow, over the lane,
Oh come, my Melinda, love come.

CHORUS

Lovely Melinda, as bright as the beam;
No snow drop was ever more fair;
She smiles like the roses that bloom'd round the stream,
And sings like the birds of the air.

If I were a hero, and people would fall,
Wherever I'd tell them to lie;
I'd make my Melinda the queen of them all,
And live on the light of her eye.

Gaily in the woody nook the conkshell did swell,
As the coal black coon escaped his foe, down by the
haunted well;
The coon, he went with all his might, thro mud and
over the stump,
And the darkey sped or'er heels and head came butt
against a pump.

All around he sought the coal black coon,
That made him lose the boys so soon,
Except himself, no other swell,
Was by the lonely haunted well.

CHORUS

Have a care, don't go there;
For the dark maid watches near;
For the dark maid all can hear,
For the dark maid watches near.

The pale catnip growing there, it's fragrance 'round did swell,
As the darkey lay all night that day, down by the haunted well,
A girl was there, she stood on air, her features were mild,
She took a horn and blew these words, "Kh, Kh, boy, you're
the child.

My ebony rose, my darky pride,
Come live with me and be my bride;
Nor like a pump disgrace your self,
By standing in the haunted well.

Down in the water, she did stoop for a ring on what a sell;
On his finger then she placed the hoop, the both slid down the well
Twas on that day the coon did stray, twas then poor Sambo fell,
When folke are near, they often hear, a voice cry out, "all's well"

At midnight there their forms are seen,
Propelling a coon around the green,
Voices are heard, all conkshells swell,
Around the lonely haunted well.

WALKING IN THE PARLOUR

I'm right from old Virginny, with my head so full of knowledge,
I never went to freeschool or any other college;
But I will tell you one thing, it is a certain fact,
I'll get you 'scription of the world with the twinkling of a crack.

First voice, so walk in,
Second voice, - walk in,
Third voice, walkin, I say,
Fourth voice, walks into the parlour and hear the bango play.

CHORUS

Walk into the parlour, and hear the bango ring,
And watch his fingers while he picks it on the string.

Lightening is a yaller gal who lives up in the clouds,
Thunder is a black man and he can holler loud;
When he kisses Lightening, she darts up in wonder,
He jumps up and grabs the clouds and that's what makes the thunder.

CHORUS

Walk into the parlour and hear the bango ring,
And watch his fingers while he picks it on the string.

Noah sent the bird out to look for dry land,
When he come back, he had the bango in his hand;
I took up the bango, and played them this here tune.
All the animals 'cept the elephant, fell into a swoon.

Walk into the parlour and hear the bango ring,
And watch his fingers while he picks it on the string.

Virginia Rose Bud, or the Lost Child,
I had a bud, twas in my garden growing,
I slip I nourished with a mother's care,
When they ground that plant were hoeing,
A fragrant nether seemed to fill the air;
Oh how I've watched that little plant while creeping,
She was ever lovely, bright and gay;
One night I left her on her pallet sleeping,
And in the morning, she was stole away.

CHORUS

They stole, they stole my child away,
Oh hear me now calling, here me, I pray;
My heart is breaking, my heart is breaking,
For my child, for my child, they've stole away,
I hear the hoofs upon the hill,
Their footsteps growing fainter still;
They stole, they stole, they stole my child away,
They stole, they stole, they stole my child away.

And then this heart is withered and dejected,
Wandered through the fields, but all in vain;
And every plant on me a shade reflected,
My tears they flowed upon them like the rain,
The thunder storm that breaks in horror o'er us,
Throws back the rainbows bright refulgent rays,
Though dark the night that now is hovering o'er us,
Bringing back the light of other days,
Though dark the night that is now hovering o'er us,
Bringing back the light of other days.

WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION OF VIRGINIA
HISTORICAL INVENTORY

COUNTY: Prince William

CLASS : Folk Song

FOLK SONG

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Research made by
Susan R. Morton,
Haymarket, Virginia.

October 5, 1937.

1. SUBJECT:

Polk Song.

2. LOCATION:

Heard in the Bull Run Mountains, Prince William County.

3. DATE:

4. OWNERS:

5. DESCRIPTION:

6. HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE:

"His Father's Only Son"

He was his Father's only son,
It was for love he was undone,
He was but eighteen years of age,
When first in love he did engage.

His Father oft to him did say,
My only son do me obey,
You know she is of low degree,
And come of a poor family.

Why then after her do you go?
She sure will be your over-throw,
To his Father he made this reply,
"Well, what do riches signify?

"When Lazarus died, we read also,
He to Abraham's bosom did go,
I'd rather my own love have
And always live within a cave!"

Now he was twenty years of age,
And a Preacher did engage,
He said he had a call to preach
The very Gospel for to teach.

But his Father never would be still,
But daily set forth their will,
He went to see his love one night
In hopes to see her face so bright.

Her Father to him did say,
"Kind Sir forever keep away,

My daughter is as good as you,
Forever bid my house adieu".

Under her chamber she did take,
A solitary mean to make,
She used to moan and oft times cry
"I cannot live so I must die!"

For many a doctor did they send,
And much pains for her did spend,
For all Prescriptions were in vain
For still in love she did remain.

"Farewell my brother and sister dear,
See that you both live in God's fear,
Farewell to my tru and loving mate,
No longer for you can I wait".

She bid the world and all adieu,
And every creature that she knew,
Next day to her burying did he go,
Drest in mourning from tip to toe.

And afterwards distracted run,
And so forever was undone,
Come all old people far and near,
These melancholy lines to hear.

Never matches try to break,
And always keep them for God's sake,
He has been a mourner this twentieth year,
And never can enjoy his dear.

7. ART:

8. SOURCES OF INFORMATION:

Informant:

WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION OF VIRGINIA
HISTORICAL INVENTORY

COUNTY: Prince William

CLASS : Songs

OLD SONGS AND DITTIES

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Research made by
Susan R. Morton,
Haymarket, Virginia.

October 15, 1936.

1. SUBJECT:

Old Songs and Ditties.

2. LOCATION:

These were gathered during my visits to sites in the Bull Run Mountains. Some have come from negro cabins and others from typical mountainhomes, well off the beaten track, and practically all were heard from old people who learned them from hearing them sung by mother or father.

3. DATE:

4. OWNERS:

5. DESCRIPTION:

These old songs and ditties on paper look far different from the impression one gets on hearing them in their native setting. Most of the people are English or Scotch-Irish stock with here and there some German mixture, often traceable to the Hessian soldiers who lingered here and made their homes.

My wife, she made a pumpkin pie
And in them she put fat,
She put it on the cupboard shelf
And in it crept a rat.

(This goes on in several verses to tell the sad tale of the pies,
sung in monotone, with much repetition)

Pretty Miss Pink, I once did think
That you and I would marry
But now I've come to let you know
That we can no longer tarry.
I put my knapsacks on my back
My musket on my shoulder
And off to Hopewell I will go
To be a gallant soldier.

If I had a scolding wife
I'd whip her sure as you were born
I'd take her down the street
And I'd sell her for the corn.
Corn on Canal, corn on Canal!
If it hadn't been for Liza Jane
There wouldn't be no Mell.

One morning while I was brewing
My thoughts each other thought pursuing
First malt and hops, then Lolly Pops,
Thinks I, I'll go a wooing
O yes I will, indeed I will, tol de rol, tol de rol etc.

Chance in my brew house brought her
 His' Pops, I love your daughter,
 And fell inclined to tell my mind
 And cut my longing shorter,
 O yes I do, indeed I do, tol do rol, etc.

My Molly dear now came in
 While love my heart inflaming
 Her mother said, "The lad's afraid
 His haste you will be blaming"
 O yes, he is, indeed he is, tol de rol etc.

Cried Moll "You stupid, silly cub
 Think I'd marry such a scrub?
 Shame you", and with her fist
 She sous'd me in the mash tub
 Oh yes she did, indeed she did tol de rol, etc.

How is you white folks, one and all?
 I'm glad to see you well,
 I've come to live with you this Fall
 It is the truth I tell,
 With heart and soul, I'll try to please
 It is my only joy
 I'll tell you of one Nancy Tease,
 She'd call me handsome boy.

Oh Nancy, Oh Nancy!
 She was my soul's delight,
 Her voice was like the whip-poor-will
 Her eyes, they sparkled bright.

Miss Nancy, she was very gay,
 And sprithly as the coon,
 She caught a weasel fast asleep.
 A ridin' on the moon.

And when the day was drawing near
 The stars did go to rest,
 She slept awake all night with fear,
 Her mind was decompressed.

Oh Nancy, Oh Nancy! etc.

I go to the rock to hide my face
 The rock cries out, "no hiding please",
 No hiding place down here,
 No hiding place down here"
 Don't go to the rock to hide your face,
 The Lord will see you any place,
 No hiding place down here.

7. ART:

8. SOURCES OF INFORMATION:

In the homes of the Bull Run Mountains.