Kinship Migration to Northwestern Virginia, 1785-1815: The Myth of the Southern Frontiersman

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ABSTRACT

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For nearly 100 years American historians, with few exceptions, have maintained that migration of colonists to the trans-Appalachian frontier was a communal experience for those from New England and Northern regions but that the Southern frontiersman represented a non-communal, individualistic spirit of colonization. This dissertation traces the migration and settlement patterns of the earliest colonists along the northwestern Virginia frontier, the area organized as Wood County in 1799, from three Eastern regions, New England, the Middle Atlantic, and the Northern Neck of Virginia. It determines that emigrants from all regions migrated cohesively and sequentially in large kinship/neighbor groups and that their settlement behaviors were remarkably similar. It challenges the myth of the individualistic Southern frontiersman.

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The phenomenon of American interregional migration in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries has been noted by American historians for over a century , and its significance in the social and economic evolution of the new nation is pivotal: "In the era between the Revolution and the Civil War, a key determinant of American economic development was the westward migration of its people."[1] Not only the economic significance but also the social and political nature of outmigration from the East to the West has further engaged scholars of several generations, as they have noted regional differences in population movement and even stereotyped those processes. The father of American frontier history, Frederick Jackson Turner, observed an essential difference between settlers of the trans-Appalachian region based on ethnic and regional dissimilarities. He wrote: "The important contrast between the spirit of individual colonization, resentful of control, which the Southern frontiersman showed, and the spirit of community colonization and control to which the New England pioneers inclined, left deep traces on the later history of the West . . . But in general, the Northern stream of migration was communal, and the Southern individual."[2] Turner noted this antithesis particularly in the areas north and south of the Ohio River, where the officer class of the Ohio Company of Associates and of the Connecticut Western Reserve seemed to him to differ materially from the emigrants of the Upland South.

Ray A. Billington, a Turnerian disciple of the mid-twentieth century, came to disagree

with this bipolar model of Northern and Southern colonists. His studies brought new attention to the role of the land speculator in westward migration, who sold tracts to the highest bidder "with little thought of contiguous settlement by nonprofit-seeking true believers." He concluded that "[t]his desire for profits changed the whole course of New England's westward advance by breaking down the emphasis on groups and preparing the descendants of Puritans to move into the trans-Appalachia area as individuals."[3] Billington, then, saw migration to the West as an individual rather than as a communal effort, not only for the Southern frontiersman but also for the New England emigrant as well.

Among more recent studies, Joan E. Cashin's account of the migration of planter families from the Old to the New South reaches a similar conclusion but for different reasons. She notes the solidarity of kinship networks among the coastal settlement of Virginia and the Carolinas: "[S]eaboard relatives frequently settled near each other, so that individual families lived surrounded by kinfolk. . . . These kinship networks operated on the principle of reciprocity: the assumption that relatives should help each other manage plantations and households and support each other through the vicissitudes of life."[4] However, when planter families migrated westward, often due to economic necessity or a family dispute, they tended to move in nuclear units limited to parents, children, and slaves. Once settled on their plantations in the New South they usually found themselves adrift, having to forge new friendship rather than kinship associations: "In contrast to seaboard families, who lived surrounded by kinfolk, Southwestern families lived near a few relatives or none at all. The planter family was reduced to its nuclear core."[5] Cashin's book, limited to aristocratic families, draws no conclusions about ordinary westward-moving settlers from the tidewater region.

Other studies of family systems and cohesion unrelated to migration reveal inconsistent regional patterns. A comparison by Stephanie Grauman Wolf of familial homogeneity in the eighteenth century between Chatham, Massachusetts, and Germantown, Pennsylvania, suggests a much higher rate of kin propinquity in New England: 4.56 families per surname compared to 1.47.[6] Another analysis refers to the phenomenon of kinship proximity in New England as an "anomaly" and reports lower rates of isonymic (same-surname) relationship within the same community in the mid-Atlantic region and the South.[7] These conclusions are limited by a methodology that Daniel Scott Smith concedes to be "quick, easy, cheap, and crude,"[8] the determination of kinship solely on the basis of like surnames.

In northwestern Virginia, every major kinship group was bound together at the core by the ties of sisterhood more often than of brotherhood. Whether this is anomalous may be determined only by similar studies on other frontiers. But it suggests that a genealogical approach to kinship migration, cohesion, and persistence is a legitimate method of study. In early Wood County, (West) Virginia, the area of this study, a single kin network of the Neal-Phelps families and the Kincheloe-Creel-Leach-Athey clan linked together by their mutual relationship to the Hardin-Wycliffes accounts for at least one-fifth of the total population of the county in 1800. Analysis of another half dozen kinship groups reveals analogous connections accounting for four-fifths of the first generation colonists of northwestern Virginia. Only a systematic and painstaking examination of the connections between both-sex siblings, in-laws, and collateral families can fully reveal such linkage.

A monograph which overcomes some of these isonymic limitations and stereotypes is John Mack Faragher's Sugar Creek, based on the early frontier experience of settlers in

Sangamon County, Illinois. Three-fourths of those who settled at Sugar Creek near future Springfield were Southern frontiersmen from Kentucky, Tennessee, the Carolinas, and the Virginia upcountry. Another fifteen percent came from Northwest Territory regions after having moved there from the Southeast. In other words, ninety percent of these settlers had roots in the South. In view of the conclusions of Turner, Billington, Cashin, Wolf, and Smith, one would expect this migration to have been individual rather than communal. Nothing is further from the truth.

Faragher analyzed persistence rates of Sugar Creek colonists prior to 1840 and noted, not surprisingly, that landowners were much more likely to remain in the community than were squatters or leaseholders. More significant is that the most persistent settlers were those who arrived in the area as members of kinship groups. Faragher concluded:

> Among persistent heads of households, eight in ten came to Sugar Creek as members of large kith and kin associations, and each census enumeration found eight in ten persistent heads of households living near kinfolk in other households. By contrast, only one in three settlers who appeared on just one enumeration had kin connections in the Sangamo. The Sugar Creek community, in other words, was built by families in association.[9]

Faragher further observed the phenomenon of sequential migration. One or two families of a kinship group came first, patented a claim or bought a tract of land, to be followed, perhaps for several years thereafter, by other kin and in-law families. Frank L. Owsley was one of the first frontier scholars to note this pattern. In a prescient article on migration to the Southern frontier, he noted that the typical settlement pattern was that of "transplanted organisms rather than synthetic bodies." He used a biblical analogy which flatly contradicted the myth of Southern individualism:

> The method of migration and settlement in the South was fairly uniform during the frontier period. Friends and relatives living in the same or neighboring communities formed one or more parties and moved out together, and when they had reached the promised land they constituted a new community . . . and other settlers would come in after the first trek in smaller groups or in single families and fill in the interstices. These later comers would often be relatives or friends of those who had come first, or friends of their friends. . . . These groups did not move into the public domain in ignorance of their exact location, but rather, like the children of Israel, they sent their Calebs and Joshuas ahead to spy out the land and prepare the way.[10]

This premise has become generally accepted by those who have looked more closely at specific frontier communities in the past twenty years. "Recent scholarship suggests that most migrants did not come as rootless individuals but as members of well-defined ethnic, religious, or kinship groups. . . . Settlement everywhere on the colonial frontier involved clear attempts to transplant familiar forms of family and community life."[11]

The kinship patterns of migration that Faragher found in Sangamon County were very much like those of the colonists who migrated to the northwestern Virginia frontier in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries into Wood County along the Ohio River, organized in 1799. They came cohesively and sequentially in large kinship/neighbor groups, and they practiced the principles of reciprocity and preferment among their own kin. But the mid-Ohio Valley provides a better historic laboratory to test the conclusions of Turner, Billington, et al. Faragher's colonists were mostly of Southern origin; those of northwestern Virginia were far more heterogeneous. While most settlers came from the Northern Neck and Shenandoah Valley counties of Virginia, a substantial number also came from the mid-Atlantic region and from New England. Among the Southern frontiersmen, there were almost no colonists from the Carolinas and only a few from Maryland. One in seven were African-American. One is therefore able to

identify the major kinship groups who came to the area and who constituted the mass of colonization, trace them back to their origins, follow their patterns of migration to the Ohio Valley frontier, and compare and contrast their settlement behaviors.

There were obvious and predictable differences. Without exception, the early towns were founded by emigrants from Pennsylvania, Delaware, and Connecticut. Virginians neither built towns nor were they much attracted to living in them. They preferred the farm and plantation lifestyle to which they were accustomed before moving. Colonists from eastern Virginia were more likely to own slaves and to possess more of them. But frontier Wood Countians from each region of origin and of every major kinship group were slaveholders, though patterns of ownership differed. The highest rate of slave ownership was among Virginians, the lowest among New Englanders. Among the professions, Virginians were more likely to be lawyers, while Yankees and those from the Middle States tended to be merchants and tradesmen. These differences are not exceptional and, in fact, are rather typical.

But there were far more similarities than differences among the kinship groups that settled in northwestern Virginia in the frontier period. For one thing, most of these clans were led by petty speculators who had acquired a few thousand acres and whose purpose was to resell much of that land for a profit to other members of their own kinship/neighbor group. Captain James Neal, who led the largest such colony to the region beginning in 1785, was an assemblyman and deputy surveyor of Monongalia County and a commissioner to validate unpatented lands under the Virginia Land Law of 1779. In those positions he was aware of abandoned or unclaimed tracts, and he claimed 8,200 acres in Monongalia, which included all of what later became Wood County, before resettling along the Little Kanawha River. He and his

son-in-law/brother-in-law, Hugh Phelps, sold dozens of small farm parcels in Monongalia and its successor counties, Harrison and Wood, over a period of three decades. Likewise, Dr. Joseph Spencer acquired more than 100,000 acres in Ohio and Harrison (later Wood) counties, reselling smaller plots of two hundred acres or less to families which he recruited from Connecticut. The sons of Alexander Henderson, Sr., the rich merchant and legislator of Dumfries, Virginia, managed for and received from their father thousands of acres in western Virginia which he had procured with military land warrants obtained in his chain of stores at Colchester, Alexandria, Dumfries, and Occoquan. They, too, resold smaller tracts to settlers, few of whom were kinfolk. George D. Avery of New London, Connecticut, bought the Belleville tract of Dr. James Craik, surgeon-general of the Continental Army and friend of George Washington, which he surveyed and sold in town lots and small farm tracts, some of them to kin connections. Clearly, none of these individuals were speculators in the class of Henry Banks, Richard Claiborne, or Dorsey Pentecost in western Virginia or Robert Morris, Dr. Benjamin Say, or John May in Kentucky, who speculated in hundreds of thousands or even millions of acres, but they were nevertheless animated by the same fascination for western lands and the same profit motive, though on a smaller scale.

The petty speculators of Wood County were leaders of kinship groups from each of the main areas of origin: New England, the mid-Atlantic, and Virginia. One fails to see any distinction between the Yankee and the Southerner in this regard. In spite of their origins, the kinship groups which came to northwestern Virginia exhibited remarkably similar behavior. They both migrated and settled together, attempting to reproduce their old neighborhoods on the new frontier as much as possible. They lived near each other, preferred each other's friendship

and association, and practiced the principle of reciprocity. To a high degree, they practiced regional endogamy, often marrying near relatives as opposed to strangers. The highest rates of consanguineity were among Virginia planter families and New England emigrants, who rarely married outside their kin and regional circles. Emigrants from the Middle States, including the first generation Virginians who came to the Little Kanawha River region from the Monongahela Valley, the Neal-Phelps kinship group, were more likely to marry outside their own cluster.

It was in the area of political preferment and competition for political control that the kinship groups behaved most congruently. The earliest groups to come, those who arrived in the decade after the close of the Revolutionary War, fought bitterly for control of the new county court when it was formed in 1799 and for the location of the county seat on lands which they owned. Except for regional and political differences (the Connecticut men were Federalists, while the Virginians were Jeffersonian Republicans), there were no perceptible variations in the methods they used, the ferocity of their conflict, or the level of chicanery to which they resorted. The winning faction became so dominant in its control of county affairs that many of the losers did not persist but rather moved on to other settlements where they might have a better chance at political office.

There is an overall lack of understanding about the nature of frontier settlement in western Virginia generally and in the mid-Ohio Valley in particular, along with a tendency to overgeneralize. Charles H. Ambler's seminal monograph on antebellum sectionalism in Virginia is typical of a broad-brush approach:

> The motives and interests which attracted settlers to trans-Allegheny Virginia were determining factors in the society and politics of that section. The only common object of attraction was the new and cheap lands. From the Piedmont

> of both Virginia and North Carolina came those who had been small landowners and the landless. In many instances the farmers had sold their holdings in retreat from the encroaching institution of negro slavery. The farmers of the Valley sent their sons thither to seek new homes, and the graziers of the same section pushed their holdings into the Allegheny highlands. Others, squatters for the most part, came to trap upon the large tracts of land held by foreign capitalists.[12]

Ambler does mention that some of these settlers hoped to become plantation owners and that a few brought gangs of slaves to clear the wilderness. But central to his thesis of bipolar sectionalism which culminated in the new state movement in the western counties is a monolithic approach to the overall nature and composition of western settlement. He perpetuates the myth that the yeoman farmer and the squatter, i.e. the Southern frontiersman, was the norm. To the contrary, trans-Allegheny settlement patterns were as complex and varied as is the geography of West Virginia itself. The Ohio Valley is no more like the Allegheny Plateau or the Allegheny Highlands than is the Potomac Region. The stream of migration to northwestern Virginia included the small farmer and the squatter, but it was thoroughly laced with plantation aristocrats, New England Revolutionary War veterans, and Middle Atlantic entrepreneurs and town builders who had far more impact on the development of the society and the economy of the area. Ambler was, like so many frontier historians of the first half of the twentieth century, a reliable disciple of Frederick Jackson Turner.

The myth of the Southern frontiersman is rooted in the Turnerian thesis. In a chapter entitled "The Ohio Valley in American History" Turner asserts that that region was colonized primarily by emigrants from the Valley of Virginia and its southward extensions:

> [T]he Upland South was intensely democratic and individualistic. It believed that government was based on a limited contract for the benefit of the individual, and it acted independently of governmental organs and restraints

> . . . It was moreover a rural section not of the planter or merchant type, but characterized by the small farmer, building his log cabin in the wilderness, raising a small crop and a few animals for family use. It was this stock which began to pass into the Ohio Valley."

One of the problems faced by Turner and succeeding generations of frontier historians was that they ignored northwestern Virginia, mostly because they knew little about it. Unlike Kentucky, with its host of historical record-keepers, or the well-documented regions on the Ohio side of the river, like Marietta, Gallipolis, Cincinnati, the Western Reserve, and the Virginia Military District, northwestern Virginia has been overlooked. Except for unpublished manuscripts and a few antiquarian writings, there are but a handful of readily available sources and almost no professional treatments of the Virginia side of the river in frontier times.[13] When one thinks of western Virginia generally in the antebellum period, two regions readily come to mind because their history has been far better preserved, the Potomac and Shenandoah valleys and the Kanawha Valley. The Ohio Valley of historical conception typically suggests Kentucky and/or Ohio rather than Virginia. Misunderstanding of northwestern Virginia is not pernicious or deliberate. The region has invited a stereotypical treatment because of the dearth of material, scholarly or otherwise. No frontier area of the trans-Allegheny has been so neglected. An excellent example of this neglact is found in Thomas P. Abernethy's Three Virginia Frontiers, a mid-twentieth-century work which suggested a pattern of frontier settlement that has persisted among historians. One would have anticipated his three frontiers to have included western Virginia, in addition to the Tidewater as the first and the Piedmont and the Valley as the second. But his third frontier is Kentucky, a region which became a separate state in 1792.[14] More recently, David Hackett Fischer and James C. Kelly have divided their study of Virginia

migration into three sections: “Migration to Virginia,” “Migration in Virginia,” and “Migration beyond Virginia.” Their work is a stellar performance when judged from the standpoint of outmigration. But discussion of in-state migration stops at the Alleghenies and ignores the story of the settlement of western Virginia by migrants from the eastern part of the state.[15]

While a great deal of insight has been gained about the nature of western migration and the importance of kinship groups as a model of migratory behavior, it is surprising that the myth of the Southern frontiersman has persisted and still permeates frontier scholarship of the Ohio Valley. A common error is to consider the settlements of the mid-Ohio Valley as discrete units, separated by a large river and governed under different jurisdictions, one allowing slavery and the other not, one settled by New Englanders, the other by backwoods Virginians and Pennsylvanians. While there were in fact administrative and geographical disconnections, the region was fully unified economically and socially, settled simultaneously by the same heterogeneous groups of people. Settlements on both sides of the river attracted colonists from New Hampshire to Virginia, and they were remarkably similar in their ethnic and regional composition. Virginia residents subscribed to and advertised in the Marietta newspapers, since none was founded in Parkersburg until 1832. They deposited savings and borrowed money at the Bank of Marietta, because a branch bank of the Northwestern Bank of Virginia was not chartered until 1839. Business partnerships flourished across river and state lines: Harman Blennerhassett and Dudley Woodbridge, Jr.; John Pennybacker Mayberry and Levi Barber; Waterman Palmer and John Mills.

Wayne Jordan in the mid-twentieth century wrote of the superiority of the New England associates at Marietta, a Yankee settlement across the river from Wood County, while noting the

presence of a large but contemptible group of squatters and n'er-do-wells from the Virginia-Pennsylvania frontier: "Earlier presence of the backwoodsmen detracts in no way from the achievements of the men and women who wore shoes instead of moccasins and who proposed to plant civilization instead of a few hills of corn."[16] Andrew R.L. Cayton and Paula R. Riggs, in their bicentennial history of Marietta, refer to these frontiersmen as "the hunters." They, too, stereotype them as Scots-Irishmen whose "interests were short-term" and who "did not plan elaborately for the future. . . . They supported their families with a few acres of corn and vegetables, the meat of hogs that were allowed to run wild to find food, and what they could get by hunting and fishing. These frontier families were no more self-sufficient than the Delaware Indians."[17] As recently as 1996, R. Douglas Hurt has written that "other settlers, primarily back-country Virginia and Pennsylvanians, soon came to Marietta and upset all hopes and plans for the creation of a uniformly cultured society based on good breeding, high education, and honest piety."[18] These accounts, written by historians with a New England-Ohio point of view, perpetuate a stereotype that is not based on actual knowledge of the type of settler who lived in northwestern Virginia and which reflects an ancient prejudice that Cayton and Riggs recognize but do nothing to mitigate: "[I]t is not surprising that many historians have had a low opinion of settlers born outside of New England since most of our knowledge of them comes from the Ohio Company associates themselves." It is akin to the same bias that has always existed between residents of the two sides of the river, arrogantly and acidly expressed in an editorial in *The Pilot*, a Marietta newspaper of the early nineteenth century:

> The Parkersburg Gazette — printed in an obscure little village, twelve or thirteen miles below Marietta — is advocating a steamboat mail from that place to the city of Cincinnati, or, to use the Gazette's own language,

> between the two great "*commercial points*." A carrier pidgeon, making a trip twice a year, would carry the entire mail from Parkersburg, with ease. The same paper is in ecstacies, at the idea of having a Market House built at that "*great commercial point*." — Puffing is the order of the day, but when carried too far, it is ridiculous.[19]

One has to go back to perhaps the best Ohio historian of the twentieth century, fully two generations back, to find a fair and perceptive assessment of Virginia frontiersmen. Randolph Chandler Downes of the University of Pittsburgh viewed the Ohio settlements like Marietta and Cincinnati, not as oases in a desert of illiteracy and squalor, but as "merely extensions further west, at various points, of the frontier of white settlement already existing in Pennsylvania and Virginia." He credits the backcountry settlers for their sustenance of the Ohio colonies:

> In the first place, Pennsylvania and Virginia frontiersmen paved the way for further settlement by bringing the frontier, at several places, to the left bank of the Ohio River. Secondly, their frontier towns acted as clearing-stations where the thousands of transients were received, harbored for a while, equipped with the settlers' necessities, and sent on to provide the bone and sinew of every frontier settlement in Ohio.[20]

Of recent historians of the mid-Ohio Valley, only Ray Swick, historian of the Blennerhassett Island Historical State Park, has been deftly even-handed in his presentation of the frontier Virginian, because he knows and understands the colonists of early Wood County. While allowing that settlement on the Virginia side was disorderly and sometimes violent, like all early frontiers, he accurately describes the Northern Neck plantation aristocratic nature of its society:

> Virginians around 1800 were immensely proud of their state which was the oldest, largest, most populous, and most politically powerful in the Union. This feeling showed in their influence on Wood County's lifestyle which was often elegantly Tidewater in tone, characterized by plantations and farms . . . bearing names such as "Oak Hill," "Bacon Hall," "Beech Park," "Locust Camp," and "Spring Creek Farm"; slavery; barbecues; horse races; fox hunts; and the soft Southern speech. Also indicative were the old Virginia/Maryland surnames . . . transplanted from the eastern shore: Henderson (the county's

> richest — after the Blennerhassetts — and most powerful family), Tavenner, Shanklin, Kincheloe, Davis, Foley, Ralston, Harwood, Saunders, Page, Leach, Wells, Neale, Creel, Lewis, Wilson, Edelen . . ., Keene, Triplett, Anderson, and Tomlinson.[21]

It seems clear, then, that a study of the background and nature of the settlement system of northwestern Virginia is needed to examine and clarify the stereotypical treatment of the southern frontiersman in the history of the region.

This dissertation is based on a wide variety of primary as well as secondary sources ranging from sociological perspectives like Claude Levi-Strauss's The Elementary Structures of Kinship, to scholarly monographs like Richard C. Wade's The Urban Frontier and James M. Miller's The Genesis of Western Culture: The Upper Ohio Valley, 1800-1825, to biographies of key individuals, like Stephen W. Brown's Voice of the New West: John G. Jackson, His Life and Times, the Virginia assemblyman, later congressman, who shepherded the bill through the House of Delegates which created Wood County in 1798. Local antiquarian and less scholarly works are referenced where they provide reliable information found nowhere else, including Judge Donald F. Black's History of Wood County, West Virginia, Stephen C. Shaw's Sketches of North-Western Virginia, and John A. House's The Pioneers of Wood County, W.Va. Reliable histories of other counties are used like Nan Netherton's Fairfax County, Virginia: A History, John W. Wayland's A History of Shenandoah County, Virginia, and Earl L. Core's The Monongalia Story: A Bicentennial History. A number of privately-printed family genealogies are utilized, which, when used with caution and verification, provide valuable linkage information about northwestern Virginia kinship groups. For the most part, however, this dissertation is based on original research in county court records, including deeds, wills, estate inventories,

estate administration records, minute books, and execution order books of several northwestern and eastern Virginia counties, as well as from the county, district, circuit, and superior court records of Wood, Harrison, and Monongalia counties.

The purpose of this dissertation is to dispel the myths of the Southern frontiersman and the supposed bipolar nature of Northern and Southern migration, at least in the mid-Ohio Valley, as well as to demonstrate how the northwestern Virginia frontier was settled mainly by large kinship networks from every region between the Rappahannock and the Connecticut rivers, which migrated cohesively and sequentially to the Little Kanawha and Ohio rivers. Settlement experiences and patterns are examined in the context of social, political, and economic history.[22] The approach used in this dissertation is strongly narrative and genealogical. There is an inherent need in community and kinship studies to relate families and unravel their experiences and relationships in order to present an orderly analysis of frontier settlement. Therefore, the dissertation includes four chapters which delineate and introduce the major kinship groups, trace their migration patterns, and compare and contrast settlement behavior. One chapter traces the political rivalry of kinship groups as they competed for control of the county seat and courthouse on or near their own lands. Two chapters discuss economic issues: land speculation and tenancy is covered in one; the other examines town-building and the relationship between town and country in the context of the debate between competency/mentalite (Daniel Vickers and James A. Henretta) and commercialism (Robert D. Mitchell and Warren R. Hofstra).[23] The final two chapters examine the experiences of women, slaves, and free blacks on the northwestern Virginia frontier.

NOTES

1. Peter D. McClelland and Richard J. Zeckhauser, Demographic Dimension of the New Republic: American Interregional Migration, Vital Statistics and Manumissions (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 5

2. Frederick Jackson Turner, The Frontier in American History (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston,1920), 125.

3. Ray A. Billington, "The Origin of the Land Speculator as a Frontier Type," Agricultural History, 19 (October 1945), 211.

4. Joan E. Cashin, A Family Venture: Men and Women on the Southern Frontier (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 17.

5. Ibid., 80.

6. Stephanie Grauman Wolf, Urban Village: Population, Community, and Family Structure in Germantown, Pennsylvania, 1683-1800 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976), 288-90. Wolf notes that while Germantown was founded by members of a closely connected kinship group, other factors quickly worked against homogeneity, like the arrival of immigrants from other places, outmigration of early settlers, and the splitting of families at the sibling level.

7. Daniel Scott Smith, "'All to Some Degree Related to Each Other': A Demographic and Comparative Resolution of the Anomaly of New England Kinship," The American Historical Review, 94 (February, 1989), 44-79.

8. Ibid., 48.

9. John Mack Faragher, Sugar Creek: Life on the Illinois Prarie (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986), 56.

10. Frank L. Owsley, "The Pattern of Migration and Settlement on the Southern Frontier," The Journal of Southern History, 11 (May 1945), 171-72.

11. Gregory H. Nobles, "Breaking Into the Backcountry: New Approaches to the Early American Fronier, 1750-1800," William and Mary Quarterly, 46 (October 1989), 648. Among the best studies of frontier community, kinship, and migration using newer sociological methodology are journal articles, including Ralph Mann, "Mountains, Land, and Kin Networks: Burkes Garden, Virginia, in the 1840s and 1850s," The Journal of Southern History, 58 (August 1992), 411-34; Richard R. Beeman, "The New Social History and the Search for 'Community' in Colonial America," American Quarterly, 29 (Autumn 1977), 422-43; Richard R. Beeman and Rhys Isaac, "Cultural Conflict and Social Change in the Revolutionary South: Lunenburg

County, Virginia," The Journal of Southern History, 46 (November 1980), 525-50; Joan E. Cashin, "The Structure of Antebellum Planter Families: 'The Ties that Bound us was Strong,'" The Journal of Southern History, 56 (February 1990), 55-70; Jane Turner Censer, "Southwestern Migration among North Carolina Planter Families: 'The Disposition to Emigrate,'" The Journal of Southern History, 57 (August 1991), 407-26; and John Solomon Otto, "The Migration of the Southern Plain Folk: An Interdisciplinary Synthesis," The Journal of Southern History, 51 (May 1995), 183-200.

12. Charles Henry Ambler, Sectionalism in Virginia From 1776 to 1861 (New York: Russell & Russell, 1964), 45.

13. The best published work is by the late Judge Donald F. Black, History of Wood County, West Virginia, 2 vols. (Marietta, Ohio: Richardson Printing Co., 1975, 1990). Judge Black's work is especially valuable for its record of early settlers and their land claims. It lacks any sense of professional interpretation or discernment of the major issues of frontier history. Among the most valuable antiquarian manuscripts, neither widely available, are S.C. Shaw, Sketches of North-Western Virginia (Typescript manuscript, Leafy Glen, West Virginia, 1878), and John A. House, Pioneers of Wood County, W.Va., 2 vols. (Parkersburbg, West Virginia: Wood County Historic Landmarks Commission, 1984). Both contain valuable genealogical information about early Wood County families. House's work is also significant because he discusses early land claims and chains of ownership.

14. Thomas Perkins Abernethy, Three Virginia Frontiers (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1940).

15. David Hackett Fischer and James C. Kelly, Bound Away: Virginia and the Westward Movement (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 2000).

16. Wayne Jordan, "The People of Ohio's First County," Ohio Archeological and Historical Quarterly, 49 (1940), 3.

17. Andrew R.L. Cayton and Paula R. Riggs, City Into Town: the City of Marietta, Ohio, 1788-1988 (Marietta, Ohio: Marietta College Dawes Memorial Library, 1991), 62-3.

18. R. Douglas Hurt, The Ohio Frontier: Crucible of the Old Northwest, 1720-1830 (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1996), 182.

19. The Pilot, Marietta, Ohio, April 27, 1839. This article seriously misrepresented a town which had a viable commercial economy, extensive river traffic and a sizeable wharf, a new branch of the Northwestern Bank of Virginia, a large manufacturing company and shipyard, and which had recently become the Ohio River terminus of the Northwestern Virginia Turnpike. I am indebted to Dr. Ray Swick for sharing a copy of this editorial with me.

20. Randolph Chandler Downes, Frontier Ohio, 1788-1803 (Columbus: The Ohio State Archeological and Historical Society, 1935), 55

21. Ray Swick, An Island Called Eden: An Historical Sketch of Blennerhassett Island near Parkersburg, West Virginia, 1798-1807 (Parkersburg, West Virginia: Parkersburg Printing Co., 1996), 10-11.

22. Two helpful, somewhat parallel studies of other regions of western Virginia are L. Diane Barnes, "Avenues to a Market Economy, Harrison County, West Virginia, to 1860," Master's thesis, West Virginia University, 1995, and John M. Boback, "Commercialism, Subsistence, and Competency on the Western Virginia Frontier, 1765-1800," Master's thesis, West Virginia University. Both reach a similar conclusion as does this dissertation, that a viable market economy may be seen in the early years of frontier settlement.

23. Representative articles and monographs of this debate are Daniel Vickers, "Competency and Competition: Economic Culture in Early America," William and Mary Quarterly, 47 (January 1990), 3-29; James A. Henretta, "Families and Farms: Mentalite in Pre-Industrial America." William and Mary Quarterly 35 (1978), 3-32; Robert D. Mitchell, Commercialism and Frontier: Perspectives on the Early Sh,enandoah Valley (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1977); and James T. Lemon, The Best Poor Man's Country: A Geographical Study of Early Southwestern Pennsylvania (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1972). For a middle-of-the-road position, see Allan C. Kulikoff, "The Transition to Capitalism in Rural America," William and Mary Quarterly, 46 (January 1989), 120-44.

Chapter One
First Generation Virginians:
The Neal-Phelps Kinship Group

The most politically potent kinship group in northwestern Virginia at the close of the eighteenth century was that which migrated from Fayette County, Pennsylvania, with the family of Captain James Neal. They resided in the Georges Creek region of Springhill Township in an area which was part of Monongalia County, Virginia, until the Mason-Dixon Line was extended in 1784. Members of this clan thought of themselves as Virginians, and their unhappy inclusion in Pennsylvania was one of the causes of their migration. After the settlement of the Virginia-Pennsylvania boundary dispute in 1779-80,[1] residents of the region south of the Ohio and west of the Monongahela rivers resisted the arrangement with a variety of measures designed to thwart acquisition by Pennsylvania. Some supported the creation of a new state "which was to include Western Pennsylvania, Ohio east of the Muskingum, and Virginia northeast of the Kenhawa, with Pittsburgh as the seat of empire."[2] Others prevented the surveyors from running the line or drove away Pennsylvania assessors who tried to collect taxes.[3] Dorsey Pentecost, a leader of Virginia's Yohogania County and a land speculator who claimed hundreds of thousands of acres in Virginia and Kentucky, wrote to President Joseph Reed of the Pennsylvania Council on July 27, 1781: "This country (I mean west of the Monongalia River) has ever been considered by a majority of the inhabitants to be within the State of Virginia."[4] The James Neal kinship group was part of that majority.

James Neal (originally O'Neall) was born in 1738 at Christiana, New Castle County, Delaware, son of an Irish immigrant, Hugh O'Neall, and his wife, Ann Cox O'Neall. The

O'Nealls moved their family to the Susquehanna Valley, where Hugh died in 1754. Following the father's death, the family moved to Winchester, Frederick County, Virginia, where the mother died in 1764. Since some of the O'Nealls were married at the Hopewell Friends Meeting at Winchester, it may be assumed that the O'Nealls were Quakers.[5] After their mother's death, the O'Neall's migrated in different directions. Five brothers and their only sister went to South Carolina in the mid-1760s, while James and his youngest brother George settled on Georges Creek in 1769 in an area that was included in Fayette County, Pennsylvania, when it was formed in 1783.

In 1764, James Neal married Hannah, daughter of Martin and Lydia Waters Hardin. The Hardins had operated an ordinary near Elk Run along the main road connecting Falmouth on the Rappahannock River and Winchester, shown on Fry and Jefferson's 1751 map of Virginia.[6] Through his marriage Neal became connected to the most extraordinary kinship group with the most complex set of extended family relationships ever to settle in frontier Wood County. Ironically, none of Hannah Hardin Neal's immediate family settled permanently in northwestern Virginia, but dozens of her kin followed her husband there in the last decade and a half of the eighteenth century.

The lives of James and Hannah Neal illustrate the role of chance, if not destiny, in the migration patterns of westward-moving pioneers. The "if onlys" of happenstance must be legion in the annals of population movement. For example, if James Neal had not married into the Hardin clan, he most likely would have accompanied his siblings to South Carolina. The Hardins had already established a westward rather than a southern migration pattern, unlike the O'Nealls, who moved from the Susquehanna down the Valley of Virginia to the lower

Shenandoah and then to Carolina in a dozen years. The Hardins had come to Frederick from Prince William County (Fauquier after 1759) in the Northern Neck. Like many migrants of the era, this would not be their only removal. For Virginians of almost every class in the last half of the eighteenth century, outmigration had become recurrent, if not habitual. Having been reprimanded by the colonial secretary, Lord Dartmouth, for permitting surveys of bounty lands claimed by veterans of the French and Indian War, Governor John Murray, Lord Dunmore, responded in December 1774:

> [The Americans] do and will remove as their avidity and restlessness incite them. They acquire no attachment to place, but wandering about seems engrafted in their nature, and it is a weakness incident to it, that they should forever imagine that the lands further off are still better than those upon which they are already settled.[7]

In 1762 the Hardins migrated to Patterson's Creek in Hampshire County, then to Georges Creek, Monongalia County, seven years later. In the mid-to-late 1780s, the entire Hardin extended family moved sequentially to Nelson County, Kentucky, including all of Hannah Hardin Neal's siblings. James Neal might have been part of that migration, too, if his wife had not died in 1784. Instead, he married into the Phelps family of Fayette County, which had migrated earlier from Connecticut, and it was a refashioned Neal-Phelps clan that arrived in northwestern Virginia in 1785 and after. But James Neal's ties to other Hardin kin was strong and, as noted earlier, many of them followed him to the banks of the Little Kanawha River between 1785 and 1800.[8]

James Neal and his brother George settled with the Hardins in the area between where Georges Creek and the Cheat River empty into the Monongahela. Here he claimed a tract of 332-1/4 acres, which he called "Rich Land Valley," on November 24, 1769.[9] Like most young

men on the Virginia frontier, he answered the call when war came. Neal served in Lord Dunmore's army in 1774 and accompanied him to the Scioto.[10] During the Revolutionary War, he served as captain, recruiting a company of local men attached to the Thirteenth Virginia Regiment under Colonel William Russell.[11] According to family tradition, his company mustered at Valley Forge, where it served under George Washington at the battles of Brandywine and Germantown.[12]

Under the patronage of his wife's uncle, Major John Hardin, one of the first boatbuilders on the Monongahela River and justice of the peace of Monongalia County, Neal was appointed as deputy surveyor under Samuel Hanway, one of the legendary surveyors of the western Virginia frontier. He represented Monongalia County during three sessions in the Virginia General Assembly, 1780-82.[13] During the same period he served as one of the Northern commissioners for registering unpatented lands under the Virginia Land Law of 1779. His position as deputy surveyor and as a commissioner allowed him to join a circle of petty land speculators in buying unclaimed or abandoned tracts, some 8,200 acres in Monongalia County.[14] His prominence in area affairs resulted in his appointment as justice of the peace and of the court of common pleas of Fayette County on February 5, 1785, though his impending removal precluded his becoming actively involved in Pennsylvania politics. This appointment may be viewed as an attempt by the Supreme Executive Council to mollify the Virginia element.[15] It was, at least, a recognition of the fact that James Neal had become the most prominent of the citizens of the Georges Creek neighborhood.

When the Mason-Dixon Line was extended in 1784, Neal's farm was a scant mile north of the Virginia line. For a man whose adult life, kinship ties, deed records, military and political

career were tied to Virginia, this outcome was unacceptable. Another consideration which factored into the decisions of Virginia-leaning residents of the region was slave ownership. On March 1, 1780, the General Assembly of Pennsylvania passed "An Act for the Gradual Abolition of Slavery," which provided for the incremental freedom of slaves born after enactment.[16] The formation of Fayette County in 1783 and the negative attitude of state legislators toward slavery influenced some Virginias to leave. "There was some resistance to the new county, particularly in the Georges Creek section, and several Virginia settlers who could not hold slaves under Pennsylvania law, migrated across the line."[17] Prior to the boundary extension and the death of his wife, Neal seems to have had no intention of leaving. On October 2, 1783, he purchased one and one half lots in Uniontown, consisting of a house, outbuildings, and a tan yard.[18] But beginning in 1785, scores of unhappy Old Dominion families joined an exodus to northwestern Virginia and regions further south in Kentucky. The entire Monongahela region was an axis of uncertainty. Insecure land titles and the machinations of speculators dampened the spirits of most settlers:

> Land speculators, including the Indiana and Vandalia companies, had claims upon considerable quantities of land, which claims of course clouded the titles of others until adjudicated. Under Virginia laws the acquisition of land was easier than under the laws of Pennsylvania. In the disputed area for a time, land might have been secured from a speculator, from Pennsylvania, or from Virginia. The unlearned frontiersman would not know where to apply to secure a good title.[19]

It comes as no surprise that James Neal and the Hardins were at the forefront of this outmigration.

Neal's familiarity with the bottom lands near the mouth of the Little Kanawha River in northwestern Virginia came early in the 1770s. Two of his closest associates served as chain

bearers for Colonel William Crawford when he surveyed the claims of George Washington and Dr. James Craik along the Ohio River in 1771: his brother-in-law, Mark Hardin, and a neighbor, Joel Rees, who lived along the Cheat River near its mouth.[20] Hardin and Rees, in fact, were among the first to claim Little Kanawha lands in 1772. Hardin's claim was for 1,000 acres; Rees claimed 1,200. As a followup of the Crawford survey party, a group of young men from Georges Creek and from Prince William County descended the Monongahela and Ohio rivers in 1772 to make their own settlement and preemption claims. Members of the party included Mark Hardin; his cousin, Benjamin Hardin; James Neal; brothers Charles W. and Nathaniel Wickliffe; and Daniel Kincheloe.[21] All were members of an extended kinship group with roots in Prince William County. Both James Neal and Charles W. Wickliffe were married to sisters of Mark Hardin, Hannah and Lydia. The Wickliffes were uncles of Kincheloe, son of their sister Elizabeth.[22] Nathaniel Wickliffe and Daniel Kincheloe chose adjoining 1,000-acre tracts along the northern bank of the Little Kanawha, while Neal's two 500-acre claims lay directly north of theirs. Mark Hardin's 1,000 acres and Charles W. Wickliffe's 400-acre tract were located across the river on its south bank.[23] It is quite likely that Joel Rees accompanied these kinsmen, though he was not a relative. Another individual who may have journeyed with them was Thomas Batton, Sr., who lived on the adjacent farm east of Neal's "Rich Land Valley." In the same year, Batton claimed a 400-acre tract near the confluence of the Ohio and Little Kanawha rivers. The fact that he was Neal's next-door neighbor in Springhill Township and that he claimed a nearby tract makes it more than possible that he was in the same party. In 1773, Batton's son-in-law, Robert Thornton, husband of his daughter Elizabeth, claimed 1,350 acres at the mouth of the Little Kanawha where the Wood County seat of Newport (later Parkersburg) was designated in

1800.[24] Thornton's claim was the most prime location in the immediate area, and one wonders why no one in the 1772 party marked it. There may have been concern that lands at the confluence of the rivers had been previously claimed by Colonel Washington, Dr. Craik, or Colonel Crawford. Furthermore, acreage further up the Little Kanawha River would have been considered less conspicuous in terms of Indian attack. The venture of this small band of tomahawk claimants in 1772 was a watershed event in determining the settlement of the ascendant kinship group in what later became Wood County. The relatives of these six men, by blood and marriage, who settled along the Little Kanawha before 1810 number into the hundreds. No other single occurrence of the frontier era was more significant in determining the outcome of the nature and composition of settlement. And those who came first became, indeed, the foremost.

All of these claims were based on settlement and preemption rights and were secured by marking trees with an axe, clearing an acre or two, and perhaps planting a crop of corn or wheat. None of the claimants of the 1770s actually moved their families to northwestern Virginia, which was soon thrust into a cauldron of Amerindian warfare beginning with Lord Dunmore's War and merging into the western conflicts of the Revolution. Their intention was either future settlement or assignment to others. They were the advance agents of the border settlement that came after the close of the Revolutionary War, among the first of a band of frontiersmen who began the assault on the virgin forests of northwestern Virginia.

The Revolution halted the resettlement plans of thousands along the edges of the frontier. The widespread enlistment of men of all ages, along with the Indian threat in the West, led virtually every individual in forward settlements to pull back to safer regions. In the ensuing

decade, the scattered improvements of the early 1770s were reclaimed by the wilderness; notched trees sometimes decayed and fell. But James Neal and his companions remembered their claims along the Little Kanawha and vowed to return when war ended. From August 13 to 15, 1784, ownership having been upheld by the Northern commission of which James Neal was a member, he surveyed the Wickliffe and Kincheloe claims, along with his own, and they were recorded in Monongalia County. He had previously laid out the Thornton tract on April 25.[25]

When the time came for Neal to move his family to the mid-Ohio Valley, he did not settle on either of the tracts which he had claimed in 1772. Instead, he purchased the claim of his neighbor, Joel Rees, south of the Little Kanawha, in 1785.[26] Only a small portion of one of his original tracts fronted on the river, while the Rees claim was prime bottom land near the mouth of the tributary. Rees, apparently, had decided not to make permanent settlement. Original claimants who assigned tracts to someone else rather than migrate themselves were the rule rather than the exception.[27] A pattern of kinship migration had characterized Neal's life by 1785. From his birth in New Castle County, Delaware, son of an Irish immigrant, he had moved with his family to the Susquehanna, then to Frederick, Hampshire, and Monongalia counties in Virginia. Each removal had been occasioned by a transition in his life: the death of his father, then of his mother, and then by his marriage into the Hardin clan. At each stop of the journey, he had made new acquaintances and then moved on, leaving some behind, kin as well as cohort. And it was another transition which propelled him westward again. On December 28, 1784, his wife of twenty years died in childbirth at "Rich Land Valley." With six children ranging in age from sixteen to infancy, Neal remarried to Mary Phelps, daughter of a near neighbor, Captain John Phelps, whose farm lay along the north bank of the Cheat River near its mouth. Then he set

his eyes toward the Little Kanawha and prepared to make his fifth and final move. Born in Delaware and a Virginian by choice, James Neal led a large group of settlers to the Ohio Valley who were very much like himself, those with roots in the Middle States of New Jersey, Delaware, and Pennsylvania, and a few in New England, who had clustered near the Monongahela River in Virginia's Monongalia County, settled there for a decade or two, and then left the region when the extension of the Mason-Dixon Line in 1784 detached them from the Old Dominion. Their sojourn in Springhill Township had bound them to Virginia and blended their families into a tightly-knit, often consanguineous network which migrated cohesively and sequentially to the Little Kanawha beginning in 1785. A desire to remain in Virginia was the most important factor in the migration of this kinship/neighbor group.

In the fall of 1785, Captain Neal brought a small company of male relatives and neighbors to the Joel Rees claim, where they spent the winter and early spring clearing land and constructing a blockhouse, known throughout the Indian Wars as Neal's Station. Their arrival was contemporaneous with that of the earliest Belleville settlers, and it marked the first permanent settlement of what is now Parkersburg, West Virginia, the seat of Wood County. Neal returned to Georges Creek that spring, took his second wife, and moved his entire extended family to northwestern Virginia in the spring of 1787.[28] This group included his three young sons, Henry, John, and James Hardin, and his three daughters and their husbands: Hannah, wife of Hugh Phelps, Mary Phelps Neal's brother; Nancy and Daniel Rowell; and Catherine and Joseph McCoy. The bonds of the Hardin-Neal kinship group had been broken by the death of Hannah Hardin Neal and by the migration of the Hardins to Kentucky, but a new one had taken its place, the Neal-Phelps clan. Accompanying the Neals were members of the Phelps family,

John, Jr., James, and Elijah, though their father chose to stay behind. Another in-law family which soon settled in the area was that of William Rowell, Daniel's father, who had served as captain in the Second New Hampshire Regiment, in which he was breveted major at the end of the war.[29] It seems significant that the children of James Neal appear to have had a preference for marrying into the New England officer class, perhaps an indication of his own local prominence; his son John married Ephlis Hook, a young woman of Yankee extraction. These Neal kinsmen were but the vanguard of scores of persons who followed them sequentially in the next decade and a half.

The number of families which migrated to the Little Kanawha from the Springhill Township region between 1785 and 1800 is remarkable. More early Wood Countians came from the small area bounded by Georges Creek and the Cheat and Monongahela rivers than from any other comparable district. If one includes older sons already married or near marrying age (those who were wed soon after their arrival), along with heads of households, more than forty family units joined the Neal-Phelps group by the turn of the century.[30] When Kentucky-bound families like the Hardins are considered, one must conclude that there was a mass outmigration from southwestern Pennsylvania in the late eighteenth century. Much of that exodus was related to the lure of the frontier ("Kentucky fever," some called it), the vision of better economic opportunity, the sense that new lands were richer than old, the perception that the Ten-Mile Country[31] was overpopulated, and the belief that land was becoming too expensive there. The tan yard lot with improvements that James Neal had purchased at Uniontown in 1783 for three hundred pounds had sold three years earlier for five pounds.[32] For fathers like James Neal, who had sons and daughters married or near marrying age, the prospect of providing them with a farm of workable

size was unlikely. Daniel Vickers has suggested the word "competency" to express what he defines as "the possession of sufficient property to absorb the labors of a given family while providing it with something more than a mere subsistence. It meant, in brief, a degree of comfortable independence."[33] In these terms, Neal no longer had a sense of competency concerning provision for his family.

Most of those who came as part of this kinship/neighbor group were people of the middling sort, though a handful were of the officer class of the Revolutionary War. Their descendants in Wood County are numerous. Several of them became leaders in the government of the new county after its formation. Among them were Captain John Stokely, who had come originally from Lewes, Sussex County, Delaware, along with three nephews, Cornelius Stokely, Shepard Conwell, and Yates Stokely Conwell[34]; John, Daniel, and Ezekiel McFarland[35]; Edward Stephenson, Sr., whose farm lay on both sides of Georges Creek, and his sons John and Edward, Jr.[36]; Philip Dils, son of a German immigrant originally from Hunterdon County, New Jersey, who bought "Rich Land Valley" from James Neal in 1788 and resold it in 1799 to follow Neal to the Little Kanawha, along with his six children[37]; and Moses Hewett, who was captured by Indians and escaped in May 1792, and his brother John.[38] Others included James Gillespie and his sons, John and Henry[39]; brothers William and John Hill[40]; Jacob Bennett[41]; James Fought; and two brothers, Adam and Jacob Deem, sons of a German immigrant who had been born at Hagerstown, Maryland. Among the nineteen children of the Deem brothers were twelve sons, several of whom were already wed.[42] Along with Captains Neal and Stokely, the most prominent of the Fayette County migrators were Jacob and Jonas Beeson, whose father, Jacob, Sr., and uncle, Henry Beeson, were the founders of Beeson Town, later Uniontown, Pennsylvania, the

county seat of Fayette. The migration pattern of the Beesons was so similar to that of James Neal that it is a virtual certainty that their paths were congruent. Like Neal, they had been born in New Castle County, Delaware, sons of Richard Beeson, and at some point they emigrated to Chester County, Pennsylvania.[43] Then they moved to Frederick (later Berkeley) County, Virginia, and thence to Bedford (later Fayette) County, Pennsylvania, before 1770. Only four years apart in age,[44] Neal and the Beesons may have been part of the same migration group which moved from New Castle to the Susquehanna and then to Frederick. In any event, it is likely that the elder Beesons, who were Quakers, had known James Neal in Frederick, since both families were associated with the Hopewell Monthly Meeting at Winchester.[45]

These Fayette County families were closely connected by kinship. Some had already intermarried before they migrated to the Little Kanawha; others continued their endogamous practices by wedding soon after their arrival. They had lived near each other in Springhill and adjoining townships, and they tended to perpetuate close settlement in Wood County. The Dilses intermarried with the Deems, who in turn were related by marriage to the Foughts. Edward Stephenson, Jr., was married to Elizabeth, daughter of Philip Dils. David Deem married Catherine, daughter of Robert Thornton and granddaughter of Thomas Batton, Sr. Jacob Deem, Jr., was wed to Margaret Hill. Peter Dils married Jane Stephenson, and Daniel Rowell Neal took Elizabeth Beeson as his wife. Adam Deem, Jr., married his first cousin, Hannah Deem. Other factors bound them together besides intermarriage. For example, both Adam Deem and James Fought served in the Revolutionary War under John Stokely's brother, Captain Nehemiah Stokely, Eighth Regiment, Pennsylvania Line.[46]

Virtually every family was related to the others through an intricate pattern of

endogamous relationships. They lived near each other, mostly on divisions of tracts south of the Little Kanawha River. They assisted each other in house and barn raisings, harvesting, fence mending, corn husking, quilting, and birthings. Margaret Blennerhassett, an English aristocrat who lived in a mansion on an island below the mouth of the Little Kanawha River from 1800 to 1806, wrote of frontier hospitality. She told of "evening parties . . . where the females preside after having gone through the numerous domestic occupations of the day," of the "quilting frolick" where ladies sewed and chatted from morning till evening and "at the close of which the Husbands and other male friends generally join them and the evening closes in mirth and festivity," and of house and barn raisings where the walls were raised and roofs timbered by "the inhabitants of the Country who assemble in a crowd."[47] Because there were no banks, they lent each other money and sold parcels of land on credit.[48] But it was in the area of political preferment that their alliance was most remarkable. Among the first permanent settlers in Wood County, this kinship/neighbor group became the dominant political faction soon after the organization of the county in 1799.

When the Neal-Phelpses arrived in northwestern Virginia, the area was part of newly-created Harrison County.[49] James Neal's experience in military and political affairs was soon recognized by leaders in Clarksburg, the county seat. He was commissioned as a justice of the peace, the first from the new settlements near the Ohio, at the October 1791 term of the county court.[50] Just as Colonel John Hardin, Hannah Hardin's uncle, had used his political influence to gain Neal his first position in Monongalia County, he followed suit by advancing the career of his son-in-law/brother-in-law, Hugh Phelps. Only twenty-one when he settled permanently on the Little Kanawha, Phelps was destined to become Wood County's foremost political figure

during the first two decades of its existence. On April 10, 1793, Phelps was commissioned as justice of Harrison, at the age of twenty-seven, followed by his election as captain of militia in 1795.[51] With the formation of the new county, James Neal's political career ended; though he never held public office thereafter, his influence was considerable. The omission of Neal's name from Governor James Wood's commission of the eleven original justices of Wood County must have been at his request, since it was customary to name all magistrates from the parent county when creating the new. His second wife, Mary Phelps Neal, died in 1795, leaving him at the age of fifty-seven with a four-year-old daughter. There is a tradition that he "lost interest in outside life, and devoted himself wholly to his child."[52] In effect, Hugh Phelps succeeded Neal as the leader of the kinship group. He was the principal justice at the formation of Wood County; the court was instructed by the General Assembly to meet at his house, which served as the first seat of government.[53] In 1800, he was chosen as colonel of the first militia formed in the new county. The same year the voters elected him to be their first representative to the General Assembly in Richmond, where he served two terms. Then he was commissioned by Governor James Monroe as high sheriff of Wood County, 1801-03. In 1807, as colonel of militia, Phelps was in charge of the attempt to thwart the departure of the personal army and fleet of boats leaving Blennerhassett Island on the Aaron Burr expedition. Close family members also benefited from the clan's political prominence. John Neal was justice of the peace, deputy sheriff, high sheriff, and state representative. His youngest brother, James Hardin Neal, became clerk of the county court in 1806 at age twenty-two, and simultaneously circuit clerk, serving from 1809 until his death in 1850.[54] Daniel Rowell, who had made a daring escape from an Indian attack in which Henry Neal was killed in 1792, was a deputy sheriff in Wood County.

Political preferment was extended beyond the immediate family to almost every kindred and neighbor connection. John Stokely was chosen as the first county clerk in 1800. Yates Stokely Conwell was the county coroner; John Stephenson and Jonas Beeson each served multiple terms as sheriff. Edward Stephenson was elected to one term in the General Assembly, while John Stokely served four and Jacob Beeson six. Serving with Hugh Phelps and John Neal as justices of the peace were Jacob Bennett, Jonas and Jacob Beeson, John Stephenson, and Ezekiel McFarland. John Stephenson was the second postmaster of "Wood Court House," as the county seat was sometimes called, under appointment of President Thomas Jefferson. Jacob Beeson was named by President James Monroe as the first prosecuting attorney for the Western District of Virginia when it was created in 1819. James Gillespie was a constable in both Harrison and Wood counties. To have been a member of the Neal-Phelps kinship/neighbor group from Springhill Township was to share in the political leadership of Wood County in its early decades.

The Neal-Phelpses were not the only clan to migrate from the area southwest of the Monongahela River, the disputed territory which became part of Pennsylvania after 1784. For example, the Enochs, who settled thirty miles from the mouth of the Little Kanawha, were important in the early fabric of the county's history. They were originally from Bucks County, Pennsylvania, and then the Cacapon River region of Frederick (later Hampshire) County, Virginia, where they constructed Fort Enoch in the mid-eighteenth century. A second generation of Enochs moved into the disputed area to Ten-Mile Creek in Yohogania (Washington, later Greene) County, Pennsylvania, in the early 1770s. There Henry Enoch, Jr., was justice of the peace and lieutenant colonel in the Revolutionary War. Like James Neal, they had migrated from

eastern Pennsylvania to the lower Shenandoah, then to the Monongahela. Five of Colonel Enoch's children settled along the Little Kanawha River in the 1790s. William Enoch was a blacksmith at Newport, the county seat. Isaac Enoch built a mill at Newark above Beauchamp's Mill (later Elizabeth) and served as deputy sheriff beginning in 1806. Hannah Enoch was married to Thomas Pribble, one of the original justices of Wood County in 1799, among those allied with the Neal-Phelps faction in the early disputes over political control of the county and the location of its seat. He was chosen as the third sheriff, 1803-05, succeeding Hugh Phelps. Henry Enoch III lived in northwestern Virginia for several years before moving westward to Rockford, Illinois. Armelia Enoch was the wife of Jeremiah Sargeant, a Revolutionary War veteran, who lived on the Little Kanawha above Beauchamp's Mill. Their daughter Hannah became the second wife of Captain William Rowell, thus connecting the Enoch clan to the Neal-Phelpses.[55] Though they were unrelated and perhaps did not know each other prior to their arrival in northwestern Virginia, their similar migration patterns, their shared experiences, their officer class status, and their Jeffersonian politics bound them together as members of the dominant faction. The Enochs and others like them were virtual appendages of the Neal-Phelps clan.

As remarkable as the Neal-Phelps group was, it is only part of the migration story that is linked to the earliest claimants along the Little Kanawha. James Neal's relationship by marriage to the men who accompanied him to the region in 1772, the Wickliffes and their nephew, Daniel Kincheloe, Jr., extended his influence back to Old Virginia as well as forward to the Ohio Valley. His settlement plans ultimately affected the lives of hundreds of persons who had never lived in Frederick County or in Springhill Township. An almost endless chain of kin and their

in-laws from Prince William County came directly to northwestern Virginia without any interim stopovers, giving Wood County the distinctive character of the Northern Neck. At the center of this kinship chain was the Wickliffe family. Most of them, like the Hardins, bypassed the mid-Ohio Valley on their way to Kentucky. But James Neal, a Hardin in-law, was related through them to the Wickliffes, who were related by marriage to the Kincheloes. And when two brothers of that family, Daniel, Jr., and Robert Wickliffe Kincheloe, patented their claim and removed to the northern bank of the Little Kanawha, they set off a chain reaction of outmigration from Prince William to northwestern Virginia that seemed to have no end. David Hackett Fischer and James C. Kelly refer to this phenomenon as "chain migration": "[F]amily-centered thinking shaped the structure of migration. Virginians tended to move west in family groups. If they traveled individually, they settled in a place where they already had relatives. Chain migration was common in this great hegira."[56]

Daniel, Jr., and Robert were sons of Daniel, Sr., and Elizabeth Wickliffe Kincheloe, members of the gentry class of Prince William County. Robert Wickliffe, Sr., their maternal grandfather, was a planter and vestryman of Hamilton Parish. Their paternal grandfather, John Kincheloe, possessed a large plantation which straddled Bull Run, located therefore in both Prince William and Fairfax counties. He was warden and vestryman of Truro Parish. Their step-grandfather, Edward Epps, also served as warden and vestryman of Truro Parish as well as justice of the peace of Prince William County. Captain Daniel Kincheloe, their father, led a company of county militia in the French and Indian War. His plantation was called Canterbury, named in honor of his mother's family.[57] Daniel Kincheloe, Jr., brought a family of five children and his brother Robert, nine children. But other immediate family members came as well. Their

sister, Elizabeth Kincheloe Prince Whaley, brought with her two sons by her marriage to Hubbard Prince and six younger children by her then husband, William Whaley. Her children produced numerous descendants, and her eldest son, Captain William Prince, led a company of Wood County soldiers in the War of 1812. The fourth Kincheloe sibling to migrate to Wood County was the youngest, Jesse Kincheloe, father of six children. In addition, their niece Mary, daughter of their eldest brother, John Kincheloe, migrated with her husband, Wileman Kincheloe, a first cousin once removed, and one child born before leaving Prince William. In other words, members of five sibling Kincheloe families arrived in Wood County during the frontier period, bringing with them twenty-nine unmarried children.[58]

The Kincheloes were but one link in the Prince William chain. Robert W. Kincheloe's second wife, mother of all his children except his eldest son Jeptha, was Mary, daughter of George Creel, Sr., and Mary Athey Creel. In 1797, Creel sent his nineteen-year-old son, George, Jr., to northwestern Virginia with a gang of slaves to clear land and build a cabin. The permanent home which replaced this primitive structure he named "Bacon Hall," one of a number of plantation homes which perpetuated the Northern Neck lifestyle in Wood County throughout the antebellum period. The next year the Creels brought their entire family of seven remaining living children to join the Kincheloes in northwestern Virginia. Creel purchased two tracts, 1,000 acres north of the Little Kanawha and 400 acres directly south on the opposite bank. These purchases were made from kin connections. The larger was from the heirs of Nathaniel Wickliffe, who had died in Kentucky in 1790. The smaller tract was bought from Charles W. and Lydia Hardin Wickliffe, who also had migrated to Kentucky.[59] This kind of claim-hopping sequence was a common occurrence on the frontier; a person bought land from a kinsman or former neighbor

who had marked a claim and then gone on to a forward frontier. In addition to Mary Creel Kincheloe, two other siblings were married before coming to Wood County, and they brought not only their spouses but other in-laws with them as well. George Creel, Jr., migrated with his wife, Clara Buckner Creel, her father, Colonel John Anthony Buckner, a widower, and her sister Mary, wife of Abner Saunders. Another Creel daughter, Sarah Ellen, was married to Abner's brother, Nimrod Saunders. The five remaining unmarried children all married into prominent northwestern Virginia families, including Thomas Athey Creel, who married Priscilla, daughter of Hugh Phelps, and David and Alexander H. Creel, who married sisters, Elizabeth and Lucy Neale, daughters of another Northern Neck migrant, George Neale.[60] In 1804, the Creels built a mill at Bald Eagle Riffle on the Little Kanawha, the largest grist and sawmill in Wood County in the first half of the nineteenth century.

The marriage connection between the Phelpses and the Creel-Kincheloes was an important one. It was not only a linkage of kindred families, but it also cemented two clans together into a political alliance that controlled the county for two decades. A coalition based on kinship ties and Jeffersonian politics was formed as soon as the Kincheloes arrived. Soon after Wood County was created, Daniel Kincheloe was commissioned as justice of the peace, in March 1800. In the same year he was appointed by the State Republican Committee to the Wood County Corresponding Committee, along with Hugh Phelps, Colonel William Lowther, and other leading Jeffersonians,[61] with the responsibility of campaigning for the election of Thomas Jefferson and other party candidates.[62] From 1819-21 he served as high sheriff. Robert W. Kincheloe became a justice of the peace in 1812. Both brothers had a military bent, as had their father: Daniel was captain and recruiting officer of the Third Regular U.S. Rifles during the War

of 1812,[63] while Robert was elected captain and then major of the Second Battalion of the Wood County Militia. Jeptha Kincheloe began his political career as a justice of the peace in 1818 and later served as commissioner of revenue and high sheriff. George Creel, Jr., was a deputy surveyor and the county's first commissioner of revenue; his career ended tragically with his drowning in the Little Kanawha River in 1807. John Kincheloe, son of Robert, was a county justice for many years. Nimrod Saunders was captain of militia during the War of 1812.

The bonds of sisterhood were strong when migration to a frontier region were contemplated. This was true of Mary Athey Creel and her sister, Margaret, wife of Bartlett Leach, who followed the Creels to Wood County. And again, another chain reaction was the result. The brothers of Bartlett Leach, George and Thomas, followed, and the area where they lived along the Little Kanawha River has been known as Leachtown ever since. George Creel, Sr., was generous in giving land to his children. But he was also charitable to older kinsmen of his own generation, who had been uprooted in migration with their extended families. To Bartlett and Margaret Athey Leach, he gave a seventy-acre farm from the Nathaniel Wickliffe tract "in consideration of love and affection," and to Colonel Buckner he gave one hundred acres for "love and affection."[64]

Several other Prince William County families that had no apparent kinship ties with the Kincheloe-Creels or the Hardin-Wickliffes migrated to Wood County during the frontier period. Two in particular put down roots and left large progeny, the Tripletts and the Foleys. Robert Triplett was descended from two middling gentry families of Prince William, the Tripletts and the Hedgmans, and settled along the Little Kanawha River sometime in the 1790s. When his father, Colonel Francis Triplett, died in 1795, he willed his children 20,000 acres in Kentucky

and provided the money from the sale of movables to defray the expenses of his family's removal to the new commonwealth.[65] Some members of the family stayed in northwestern Virginia rather than go with the rest of the family to Kentucky. Robert Triplett was appointed deputy surveyor of Harrison County on October 17, 1796.[66] He allied himself with the Neal-Phelps faction and subsequently became the first surveyor of Wood County in 1800, serving for over thirty years. His brother, Hedgman Triplett, assisted him as deputy surveyor. The Tripletts, originally from Prince William County, had stopped over for a time in Monongalia County, as evidenced by the fact that Hedgman had served as one of the early county justices there.[67] Frances Emelia Triplett, their sister, gained notoriety when she bore an illegitimate son to Delegate John George Jackson of Harrison County, son of Congressman George Jackson of the Third Virginia District. Unfortunately for Frances, Jackson was betrothed to and soon married Mary Payne, sister of Dolly Madison. She later married another man and moved to Kentucky, leaving young John Jay Jackson to the care of his father in Clarksburg, though not before successfully suing Delegate Jackson for breach of promise in the District Court at Morgantown and in the Virginia Court of Appeals in Richmond.[68]

Captain James Foley and his wife, Mary Langfitt Foley, parents of eleven children who came with them to Wood County or were born shortly thereafter, were progenitors of one of the most numerous families in the county's history. The Foleys of the Northern Neck had intermarried in the past with some of the patrician families of that region: Greens, Masons, Pogues, and Scarletts.[69] In northwestern Virginia, Captain Foley's children married Neals, Phelpses, and Dilses, thus cementing their relationship with the dominant political faction of the county; his eldest son, Mason Foley, served two terms as county sheriff. While it was

uncommon for a Virginia family in the first generation after migrating to intermarry with Yankees, his son James married Bathsheba Cook, daughter of a Massachusetts immigrant, Captain Joseph Cook. The Langfitts, of Fairfax County, also migrated with the Foleys: Mary Langfitt Foley's father Philip and two brothers, Francis and John T.[70]

James Neal, then, was the central figure of an extensive kinship group which transplanted itself from the lower Shenandoah and the Northern Neck in a series of westward moves which brought it to northwestern Virginia. His only blood relative who did not migrate to South Carolina, his brother George, soon removed to Kentucky. But through his two marriages into the Hardin and Phelps families, his prominence in Monongalia County politics, and his role as deputy surveyor, land commissioner, and petty speculator, Neal became a town founder and the central link which accounted for the migration of dozens of families and neighbors to Wood County. In the final accounting, members of the Neal-Phelps and the Kincheloe-Creel clans, along with associated families, represented about one-fifth of the total population of the county when it was created at the turn of the century.

The Neal-Phelps family/neighbor group was the dominant and most persistent of all the kinship groups which settled in northwestern Virginia. But they were soon joined by other kin associations originating in other parts of the nation, including two large families from Connecticut.

NOTES

1. William Waller Hening, The Statutes at Large of Virginia, 1619-1792, 13 vols. (Richmond, 1819-23), X, 534-6.

2. James Veech, The Monongahela of Old Or, Sketches of South-Western Pennsylvania to the Year 1800 (Pittsburgh, 1858-1892; reprint, Parsons, West Virginia: McClain Printing Co., 1971), 257.

3. William Derrick Barns, Southwestern Pennsylvania During the Pennsylvania-Virginia Boundary Controversy, 1763-1784 (Masters thesis, Pennsylvania State College, 1947), 109, 112.

4. Ibid., 107.

5. William Wade Hinshaw, (comp.), Encyclopedia of American Quaker Genealogy, 3 vols. (Ann Arbor, Michigan, 1938; reprint, Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., 1991), I, 374, 1022, 1025.

6. Miles S. Malone, "Falmouth and the Shenandoah: Trade before the Revolution," American Historical Review, 40 (July 1935), 701-03; "John Hardin," Dictionary of American Biography (New York: Scribners, 1931, 1932), IV, 245. (Hereafter cited as DAB)

7. Quoted in Isaac S. Harrell, "Some Neglected Phases of the Revolution in Virginia," The William and Mary Quarterly, 2nd series, 5 (July 1925), 161.

8. Dorothy Ford Wulfeck (comp.), Hardin and Harding of Virginia and Kentucky (Naugatuck, Connecticut: privately published, 1963), 43, 94-5. In Kentucky members of the Hardin family were particularly notable. Hannah's brother, Colonel John Hardin, was a noted Indian fighter who was killed while on a peace mission to the Miami in May 1792. Both Hardin County, Kentucky, and Hardin County, Ohio, are named for him. His son, Martin D. Hardin, husband of Elizabeth, daughter of General Benjamin Logan, was speaker of the Kentucky House of Representatives and United States senator. Ben Hardin, nephew of Hannah Neal and John Hardin, served in the Kentucky House and Senate, as well as five terms in the U.S. House of Representatives. Charles Anderson Wickliffe, son of Charles W. and Lydia Hardin Wickliffe, Hannah Neal's sister, was governor of Kentucky, 1841-45, (see DAB, IV, 243-7).

9. See map of Springhill Township, Pennsylvania, in W.F. Horn, The Horn Papers: Early National Movement in the Monongahela and Upper Ohio, 1765-1795, 3 vols. (Scottdale, Pennsylvania, Herald Press, 1945). III, Virginia Survey Order No. 3088. The narrative in the Horn Papers is notoriously unreliable, but the maps that I have cross-referenced with deed books seem generally accurate. With rare exceptions, I have relied only on a small number of maps in vol. III.

10. Donald F. Black, History of Wood County, West Virginia, 2 vols. (Marietta, Ohio: Richardson Printing Co., 1975, 1990), I, Section 6-2-1.

11. Land Office Military Certificates, The Library of Virginia, Richmond, Virginia, LO 5125-5126, Box 136, 4.

12. Joseph Beard Neal, "The Old Settlers — Brief Sketches of the First Neal Family," The Parkersburg Sentinel, September 21, 1899.

13. Earl G. Swem and John W. Williams (comp.), A Register of the General Assembly of Virginia, 1776-1918, and the Constitutional Convention (Richmond: David Batton, Superintendent of Public Printing, 1918), 11.

14. Reports of Commissioners for Adjusting Claims to Unpatented Lands in Monongalia, Yohogania, and Ohio Counties, Virginia (Unpublished manuscript, West Virginia State Archives, Charleston), 30 [Hereafter cited as RCUL]. Among his fellow commissioners were John Pearce Duvall, a near neighbor at Georges Creek, and William Haymond of Clarksburg, the first surveyor of Harrison County. Colonel William McCleery of Morgantown and Hedgman Triplett, who later served as deputy surveyor of Harrison and Wood counties, acted as clerks for the commissioners. All these men claimed substantial tracts of land in Monongalia County.

15. Franklin Ellis (ed.), History of Fayette County, Pennsylvania (Philadelphia: L.H. Evarts & Co., 1882), I, 152-3; Minutes of the Supreme Executive Council of Pennsylvania, 16 vols. (Harrisburg: T. Fenn & Co., 1851-53), XIV, 346.

16. The Avalon Project at Yale Law School, www.yale.edu/lawweb/avalon/states/statutes/pennst101.

17. Earl L. Core, The Monongalia Story: A Bicentennial History, 2 vols. (Parsons, West Virginia: McClain Printing Co., 1976), II, 96.

18. Fayette County, Pennsylvania, Deed Book A:19; Ellis, Fayette County, I, 282-3.

19. John D. Barnhart, Valley of Democracy: The Frontier versus the Plantation in the Ohio Valley, 1775-1818 (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1953), 49. For a good brief discussion of the Pennsylvania-Virginia boundary dispute and the resulting complications for settlers in the region, see Barbara Rasmussen, Absentee Landowning and Exploitation in West Virginia, 1760-1920 (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1994), 25-6.

20. Nancy Stout Beckwith, Gleanings from Wood County, West Virginia, History (Washington, West Virginia: privately published, 1969); Horn, The Horn Papers, III, 19.

21. Lewin Dwinell McPherson, Kincheloe, McPherson, and Related Families (Washington, D.C.: privately published, 1951), 59.

22. The Hardins and Wickliffes were connected in other ways as well. The maternal grandmother of Mark Hardin and Hannah Hardin Neal was Rose Wickliffe Waters, wife of Thomas Waters, parents of their mother, Lydia Waters Hardin.

23. See Black, History of Wood County, I, Plat 6-3, tracts 28, 29, 31, 32, 45, and 46.

24. Monongalia County Patent Book 2:159; Patent Book 3,:80; RCUL, 39, 80, 83, 119; Black, History of Wood County, I, Sections 6-3-8 and 9, 6-3-16, 6-3-45 and 46, and 6-3-50 and 51; Philip W. Sturm, A River to Cross: The Bicentennial History of Wood County, West Virginia (State College, Pennsylvania: Josten's Printing Co., 1999), 1, 4.

25. Monongalia County Patent Book 2:378, 433; Patent Book 4:454; Patent Book 5:184; Parker Heiresses v. John Stokely, In Ejectment, Monongalia District Court, Morgantown, (West) Virginia, West Virginia and Regional History Collection, West Virginia University Library, Morgantown, Microfilm, Envelop 86-B..

26. Monongalia County Patent Book 2:246.

27. Among the listings of claims in RCUL, many cite one or more, and sometimes a chain of assignments prior to the hearing before the commission.

28. Black, History of Wood County, I, Section 7-4.

29. John A. House, Pioneers of Wood County, W.Va, 2 vols. (Parkersburg, West Virginia: Wood County Historic Landmarks Commissions, 1984), II, 597-8.

30. Using the standard of four members per household, this kinship group comprised more than one-tenth of the entire population of Wood County when it was created in 1799, an area which included 1,233 square miles, slightly larger than the State of Rhode Island.

31. The area south of the Ohio River and west of the Monongahela River was often called the Ten-Mile Country, for Ten-Mile Creek, a tributary of the Monongahela.

32. Ellis, History of Fayette County, I, 282.

33. Daniel Vickers, "Competency and Competition: Economic Culture in Early America," William and Mary Quarterly, 47 (January 1990), 3.

34. Black, History of Wood County, I, Section 7-4.

35. Black, History of Wood County, I, Section 6-7, 8, 9, and 10; Horn, The Horn Papers, III, 19.

36. Fayette County, Pennsylvania, Deed Book C:1271-2; Black, History of Wood County, I, Sections 6-3-16 and 7-4.

37. Mary McKendree Johnson (comp,), The Dils Family in Wood County (n.p., 1930), 3; Fayette County, Pennsylvania, Deed Book B:65, and Deed Book C:1286.

38. Black, History of Wood County, I, Section 7-4 and 10-5-4; Fayette County, Pennsyvania Deed Book D:347.

39. Black, History of Wood County, I, Section 6-3-36; Horn, The Horn Papers, III, 19.

40. Black, History of Wood County, I, Section 6-3-46; Horn, The Horn Papers, III, 19.

41. Harrison County Deed Book 3:137.

42. Caroline Kownig, The Deem Family (btd111@ns.net); Black, History of Wood County, I, Section 14.

43. Joint Committee of Hopewell Friends, Hopewell Friends History, 1734-1934, Frederick County, Virginia: Records of Hopewell Monthly Meeting and Meetings Reporting to Hopewell (Strasburg, Virginia: Shenandoah Publishing House, 1936), 21; Horn, The Horn Papers, II, 651.

44. Neal was born in 1738, Henry Beeson in 1740, and Jacob Beeson in 1742, Horn, The Horn Papers, II. 651.

45. James Hadden, History of Uniontown, Pennsylvania (Uniontown, privately published, 1913), 13-15; Henry Hart Beeson, A Genealogy of the Beeson-Beason Family (Houston, Texas: privately published, 1968), 24; Nelson's Biographical Dictionary and Historical Reference Book of Fayette County, Pennsylvania, 3 vols. (Uniontown, Pennsylvania: S.B. Nelson, 1920), II, 729; Black, History of Wood County, I, Section 6-3-6.

46. While no record of James Neal's company is known to exist, it is likely that several of the Springhill Township men who later came to the Little Kanawha had served with him.

47. Margaret Blennerhassett, The Emigrant's Guide (Unpublished manuscript, The Blennerhassett Papers, Museum of the Northwest Territory, Marietta, Ohio.)

48. The early estate administration records and deed books of Wood County are replete with examples of personal lending and purchasing land on credit.

49. Named for Governor Benjamin Harrison, the county was created in 1784 from Monongalia County.

50. Harrison County Minute Book, 1784 to 1792:464.

51. Harrison County Minute Book, 1792 to 1797:60, 197.

52. House, Pioneers of Wood County, II, 526.

53. Samuel Shepherd, The Statutes at Large of Virginia From October Session 1792, to December Session 1806, Inclusive, In Three Volumes, (New Series), Being a Continuation of Hening (Richmond, 1835), II, 170-1.

54. The Neals had a virtual lock hold on the offices of county and circuit clerk. Except for nine years (1862-71), sons and grandsons of James Neal held the offices until 1879.

55. Mabel Williams Bean (comp.), Williams-Enoch Genealogy, With Allied Families (Privately publihsed, 1953), 113, 119, 168-70; House, Pioneers of Wood County, II, 592-3, 598-9; Black, History of Wood County, I, Section 14. George Washington surveyed 288 acres at the forks of the Cacapon for Henry Enoch, Sr. Twenty years later, on November 28, 1770, Washington and his party returning from the Ohio dined with Henry Enoch at his home on the Cacapon.

56. David Hackett Fischer and James C. Kelly, Bound Away: Virginia and the Westward Movement (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 2000), 216.

57. McPherson, Kincheloe, McPherson and Related Families, 7, 51-2; "Kincheloes," The William and Mary Quarterly, 1st ser., 22 (January 1914), 185-6. Many of the Kincheloes, like the Wickliffes and Hardins, migrated to Kentucky. Among their cousins there were Nathaniel Hart, one of the proprietors of the Transylvania Company, and his son-in-law, Isaac Shelby, the first governor of Kentucky. Another cousin was Colonel William B. Kincheloe, whose family was among the first of Stephen B. Austin's three hundred families to settle in Texas in 1822.

58. Ibid., 57-9, 66-7, 88, 107-08.

59. Black, History of Wood County, I, Sections 6-3-32 and 6-3-45; Plat 6-3.

60. McPherson, Kincheloe, McPherson and Related Families, 88; Black, History of Wood County, I, Section 14.

61. Colonel Lowther was the first sheriff of both Harrison and Wood counties. The other members of the committee were Hezekiah Bukey, an early justice and assemblyman from Wood County, and Harman Blennerhassett, the wealthy Irish emigre who later joined the Burr expedition.

62. H.W. Flournoy et al.(eds.), The Calendar of Virginia State Papers, 11 vols., (Richmond, 1875-93), IX, 90, 96.

63. House, Pioneers of Wood County, II, 431.

64. Wood County Deed Book 2:55, 250.

65. Major, later Colonel Francis Triplett, 1735-95, served under Brigadier-General Daniel Morgan at the Battle of Cowpens in the Revolutionary War. Morgan refers to him as Frank Triplett. He had previously served in both the French and Indian War and Lord Dunmore's War, and it was through his extensive military service that he obtained such large military bounty warrants for his land in Kentucky. Most members of the Triplett family resettled in Kentucky after the colonel's death. See A.H. Hord, "Triplett Family Genealogical Notes," Accession 22754, The Library of Virginia, Archives Branch, Richmond, Virginia.

66. Harrison County Minute Book, 1792-97:416.

67. Core, Monongalia Story, II, 255.

68. Dorothy Davis, John George Jackson (Parsons, West Virginia: McClain Printing Co., 1976) 65, 68, 72; Stephen W. Brown, Voice of the New West: John G. Jackson, His Life and Times (Atlanta: Mercer University Press, 1985), 9. John Jay Jackson was graduated from West Point, served in the Seminole War as an aide to General Andrew Jackson, and returned to Parkersburg in 1822, where he became one of the county's most prominent citizens. He practiced law, served six terms as president (mayor) of the city and as brigadier-general in the state militia, commanding the 113th Regiment. He was Wood County's representative to the Virginia Secession Convention, where he cast his vote against secession. Three of his sons gained distinction in West Virginia politics: Governor Jacob Beeson Jackson, Federal Judge John Jay Jackson, Jr., and Congressman James Monroe Jackson. His large family of children all married into equally prominent families and dominated Parkersburg society and business in the nineteenth century. Descendants are still prominent today.

69. House, Pioneers of Wood County. II, 522.

70. Black, History of Wood County, I, Section 14.

Chapter Two
The Connecticut Yankees:
Kinship Migration to Vienna and Belleville

One of the two most powerful kinship groups which settled in northwestern Virginia in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century was the Spencer-Lord extended family of Connecticut. This group soon emerged as a leading contender in the dispute over political control of Wood County when it was formed in 1799. They were attracted to the area, in part, because of the large migration of members of the Ohio Company of Associates who had established the Marietta colony in the Ohio country in 1788. A group of Revolutionary War veterans, led by General Rufus Putnam, the first surveyor-general of the United States, and the Rev. Manasseh Cutler, formed an association which petitioned Congress and received a large tract of land northwest of the Ohio River and south of the Seven Ranges. In the first year of settlement, associates constructed the Campus Martius stockade, cleared land and planted crops, and surveyed town lots and share lots. By the end of 1790, some five hundred men, a number of whom had brought their nuclear families, had migrated to Marietta or nearby settlements like Belpre and Waterford. Nearly all had come from Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Rhode Island.[1] Clearly, settling close to a large colony of like-minded, literate, and well-educated New Englanders of English descent was an incentive for the Spencer-Lords. They were, in fact, part of that great migration stream. They settled in Virginia rather than in the new Northwest Territory because of their contacts with Connecticut speculators who owned Virginia lands and, to a lesser extent, because slavery, outlawed northwest of the Ohio River, was legal there.

The key figures of this kinship network were two brothers-in-law, Dr. Joseph Spencer and

Colonel Abner Lord, both of whom, like the Marietta founders, were members of the officer class of the Revolutionary War.[2] Spencer, of East Haddam, Middlesex County, Connecticut, and Lord, of nearby Lyme, New London County, were married to sisters, Deborah and Mary Selden.[3] They came first to Marietta as shareholders in the Ohio Company.[4] Dr. Spencer purchased his share on September 20, 1793, from General Putnam, agent for the Ohio Company, for one hundred dollars, consisting of Lot #250, though he later sold it to Ephraim Cutler on October 27, 1800.[5]

The first member of this clan to migrate to the mid-Ohio Valley was Thomas Lord, Abner's brother. A Yale graduate and lawyer who had studied for the ministry, Thomas arrived in Marietta in 1788 during the first year of settlement, though he was not a member of the original party of colonists. He was, however, the first person to officiate as clergyman for the townsmen prior to the arrival of the stated pastor of the Congregational Church, Rev. Daniel Story, and among the first justices of the new Washington County, appointed by the governor of the Northwest Territory, Arthur St. Clair, in 1788.[6] Thomas Lord was the son-in-law of Colonel Robert Oliver, one of the directors of the Ohio Company. Though named as one of the original justices of Wood County in 1799, he resided for only a short time in the county and returned to the Northwest Territory after the Connecticut Yankees lost their bid to control the new county court.

More powerful than the attraction of the Ohio Company settlement was the lure of land. Both Dr. Spencer and Colonel Lord purchased large tracts of land in Ohio and Harrison counties in Virginia from non-resident land speculators. They were virtually alone among the Ohio Company stockholders in their interest in lands southeast of the Ohio River. Their intention,

based on their subsequent conduct, was to resell smaller parcels to settlers, some of whom they recruited to accompany them to the West. In short, they became the leading resident land speculators in Wood County's early frontier history, and they led a sizeable kinship/neighbor group to the banks of the Ohio in 1794.

Of all the land purchased by Dr. Spencer and his associates in northwestern Virginia, it was a 2,800-acre tract purchased from William Smith, a Baltimore merchant-speculator, to which he moved his family and kinship/neighbor group in 1794. It was the most ideally situated, most desirable of all the tens of thousands of acres he acquired, one of the largest and widest stretches of bottom land in the entire Ohio Valley.[7] Spencer's plantation was described by Lewis Summers, a young Fairfax County gentleman traveling through the Ohio Valley in July 1808 searching for acceptable settlement property for his father, George Summers:

> Rode to Dr. Joseph Spencer's; he lives on and owns a farm called Vienna. This tract is equal to any I have seen on this river. It contains 1800 acres. Dr. Spencer offers 1000 acres of this land, which would have about 400 poles front, two good dwelling houses, kitchen, barns, cabins for tenants, orchards, meadows, etc., in high order, price $10 per acre, half down, half 12 months. On this land are not more hills that are necessary to support the farm in timber. The reason it is now offered for sale is to enable the present owner to relieve a deed of trust on it.[8]

Dr. Spencer was able somehow to satisfy his deed of trust without selling off a large portion of his acreage. He continued throughout his lifetime to buy and sell lands and even acted as agent for William and Mary Parker Robinson in selling town lots in the new county seat of Parkersburg after it was resurveyed in 1810.

In the first decade of his residence, Spencer sold small plots of his Vienna tract, most of which were approximately 120 acres in size, to New England emigrants. Notably, he sold

Vienna plots to fellow New Englanders, while tracts elsewhere in the county were sold to any interested party. It was as if he were deliberately trying to recreate a New England community at Vienna. The result was a transplanted colony of Yankees, one of the most conspicuous examples of kinship/neighbor migration to northwestern Virginia. Several of the settlers were near relatives: Thomas Lord, Abner's brother; Nehemiah and Betsey Swan Spencer, the doctor's half-brother; George D. Selden, brother of Dr. Spencer's wife; Stephen R. Wilson, Spencer's Virginia-born son-in-law; and Eleazer West, whose sister Olive was George Selden's wife. All but Wilson were Connecticut emigrants. Other Connecticut men who brought their families to northwestern Virginia and settled on the Spencer lands were Elijah Backus, of New London; Ichabod Comstock Griffin and his brothers, William Zebulon, Asahel, and Allen Griffin, of East Haddam; Samuel and Thankful Towner Beaumont, of Saybrook, Middlesex County; Captain Elijah and Eunice Hatch Gates of Preston, Fairfield County, four of whose nearly-grown children, Sabra, Elias, Eunice, and Jasper, accompanied them to the Ohio Valley and married into New England families from the Ohio Company settlements; Captain John James of Stonington, New London County, along with two sons-in-law, brothers Seth and Caleb Bailey; John Pratt of Colchester, New London County; and Richard Sparrow of East Haddam. In short, no less than eighteen families from adjacent Middlesex, New London, and Fairfield counties in Connecticut emigrated and settled on the Spencer tract within five years. At least seven of those families were related by blood or marriage to Dr. Spencer and Colonel Lord.[9] Others were related as well. William Z. Griffin, for example, was married to Virginia Frances (Fannie) Beaumont, daughter of Samuel Beaumont.[10]

Spencer and Lord moved quickly to survey and sell town lots on a one-acre plat which

they named Vienna.[11] Upon their arrival they heard talk of the separation of Harrison County to form a new county along the Ohio River, and they intended that Vienna should become the county seat. Their Connecticut background suggested a pattern of village living, though almost all of them were farmers to one degree or another. Several had professions or trades. Both Joseph Spencer and George D. Selden were physicians. Abner Lord was a merchant and shipowner, and his brother Thomas, a lawyer. Samuel Beaumont was a merchant and innkeeper, assisted by his son-in-law, William Zebulon Griffin, and the Bailey brothers were carpenters. The Jameses actually lived on an island in the Ohio River, now known as Neale's Island, and the captain was a deputy sheriff. Elijah Gates and his son Elias kept one of the earliest ferries across the Ohio River to the farm of Jonathan Stone in Belpre, opened before 1800.

On December 1, 1795, the General Assembly of Virginia chartered the town of Vienna, naming several leading citizens as gentlemen trustees. The act authorized the trustees to lay off lots and streets, sell the lots at public auction, with the requirement of "building on each a dwelling house sixteen feet square at the least, with a brick or stone chimney."[12] One should not assume that only Yankees laid out towns. In fact, two other villages had already been surveyed in the area soon to become Wood County. Issac Williams, a Pennsylvania-born, Virginia-reared frontiersman, had a town laid out in 1790 on his lands across from Marietta. Two Pennsylvanians, William Tilton and Joseph Wood, surveyed the town of Belleville south of the mouth of the Little Kanawha River in 1785-86. In 1796, John Stokely, of Sussex County, Delaware, who had come to northwestern Virginia via Fayette County, Pennsylvania, had a town surveyed at the mouth of the Little Kanawha. Stokely's town, in fact, was designated as the county seat in 1800.[13]

The Spencer-Lord kinship group was allied with the Federalist party, and they vied with another family network of Jeffersonian Republicans, the Neal-Phelps clan, for control of the county court when it first met in 1799. Four of the eleven original justices appointed by Governor James Wood were drawn from this kinship group: Dr. Spencer, Colonel Lord, Thomas Lord, and Ichabod C. Griffin. Two other Connecticut men, Caleb Hitchcock and Elijah Backus, neither of whom were directly connected to the Spencer-Lords, were also named to the commission. Thus, a majority of the members of the original court were Connecticut immigrants. However, the relocation of one of the Yankee justices, Backus, to Marietta, a resulting even split at the first meeting of the court in May 1799, a bitter personal and political feud lasting for several years, and the packing of the Wood County court with Republican justices by the new governor, James Monroe, finally dashed the hopes of Joseph Spencer and Abner Lord of establishing a New England village on the banks of the Ohio, a county seat town which would have been the capital of their speculative ventures.[14]

The second Connecticut kinship group which settled along the Ohio was the George D. Avery party, which disembarked at Belleville on August 8, 1796, two years after the arrival of the Spencer-Lord families at Vienna. The two groups may have known each other prior to their arrival in northwestern Virginia, since the Averys were from New London. This group did not play a major part in the political battle for control of the county court, since the Belleville area was not separated from Kanawha County and added to Wood County until December 30, 1800.[15] It had, however, a significant role in the economic development of the new county.

George Dolbeare Avery, named for his maternal grandfather, was born at Groton, New London County, Connecticut, on August 19, 1763, son of William and Mary Dolbeare Avery.

He migrated to Marietta with the Ohio Company of Associates about 1790 and operated a store on Muskingum Street before the outbreak of the Indian Wars.[16] He was intimately connected to some of the most prominent settlers of the Ohio Company, the Woodbridge and Backus families. Thus, his relationship with the Marietta associates was stronger than that of Joseph Spencer, who had no close kin northwest of the Ohio. Avery's aunt, Susannah Avery, was the wife of Oliver Woodbridge, brother of Judge Dudley Woodbridge, and his stepmother, Hannah Woodbridge Avery, was the judge's first cousin. Judge Woodbridge, a 1766 graduate of Yale College, was a merchant and postmaster of Norwich, Connecticut, before migrating to Marietta in 1789, where he served as the first judge of the court of common pleas and as a business partner of Harman Blennerhassett, the aristocratic Irish emigre later involved in the Burr conspiracy.[17] George Avery's wife, Mary Richards Avery, was a sister of Elijah Backus's second wife, Hannah Richards Backus. Elijah Backus's family was one of the most distinguished in Connecticut. His maternal uncle, Matthew Griswold, was governor of Connecticut, 1784-86. He was a first cousin of Major General Samuel Holden Parsons, one of the directors of the Ohio Company of Associates. His father's sister, Elizabeth Backus, was the wife of General Jabez Huntington; his great-aunt, Eunice Edwards Backus, was a sister of Jonathan Edwards. His father, Elijah, Sr., a Revolutionary War officer, owned Backus Iron Works at Yantic, which provided ship anchors and cannon for the Continental navy and Connecticut's armed navy during the war, and represented the town of Norwich five terms in the General Assembly in the 1770s.[18] Elijah Backus, Jr., appointed as one of the original eleven justices of Wood County in 1799, was distinguished in his own right. A graduate of Yale, 1777, he served as collector of customs at New London before migrating to northwestern Virginia. He lived in Wood County for only a

few years, removing to Marietta, where he served as receiver of public monies for land, editor of the *Ohio Gazette and Territorial and Virginia Herald* [the first newspaper in Marietta, 1801], and as a member of the Ohio State Senate.[19]

George Avery did not forsake northwestern Virginia as quickly as did Abner and Thomas Lord and Elijah Backus, but his ties to Marietta were strong, nevertheless. It seems as if the Lords and Backus lost interest in Vienna when it was determined that their town would not become the seat of Wood County. Neither of the Lords resided in Wood County after 1801. Abner was a merchant at Marietta until his removal to Columbus, Franklin County, Ohio, where he died in 1821.[20] Thomas Lord, who owned only a town lot at Vienna and whose interest in Wood County was minimally political, quickly rejoined his in-laws, the Robert Olivers, at Waterford, Washington County, Ohio. Elijah Backus, after a brief career as a politician and journalist at Marietta, moved to Ruskin, Illinois, where he died in 1811.[21]

Having lived at Marietta for a half decade, George Avery purchased a 1,374-acre tract along the Ohio River at Belleville from Dr. James Craik, surgeon-general of the Continental Army and personal physician of President George Washington.[22] Avery had returned to Connecticut, recruited a colony of settlers, and completed the purchase at Alexandria on the return trip. Having hired thirteen wagons at Alexandria, the party left there on June 30, crossed the mountains to Cumberland, Maryland, and arrived at Morgantown in Monongalia County on July 18. The main party left that place on July 22 by flatboat, descending the Monongahela and Ohio rivers, and arrived at Belleville on August 8. Three young men drove the horses and cattle overland from Morgantown to Wheeling and then downriver to Belleville, arriving on August 9.[23]

The Avery party was, not surprisingly, a kinship group, though their relationship is not readily discernible since they did not share the same surnames. The nucleus of the group was the immediate family of George Avery, including his wife, Mary Richards Champlin Avery, their son, George, Jr., and Mrs. Avery's son by a previous marriage, Lodowick Peter Champlin.[24] More numerous was the family of Mrs. Avery's sister, Esther Richards Prentiss Hempstead, widow of John Prentiss, Jr., of New London, and her second husband, Samuel Hempstead of Stonington, New London County, Connecticut.[25] Four of Esther Hempstead's children accompanied the group: one married daughter and her husband, Samuel Allen, and her three youngest unmarried children, Jonathan, Catherine, and Henry L. Prentiss.[26] Samuel Hempstead's son by a previous marriage, Giles, also accompanied the group.[27] Within a few years, the younger Prentiss children married into families of Virginia origin. They were unlike most Connecticut emigrants, who were regionally endogamous in choosing marriage partners. Even Esther Hempstead, widowed once again after her settlement in northwestern Virginia, remarried to Colonel William McCleery, an Irish-born immigrant who lived most of his life at Morgantown in Monongalia County.[28] Also accompanying the Averys to Belleville was the family of Gurdon R. Saltonstall, whose mother, Hannah Hempstead Saltonstall, was a sister of Samuel Booth Hempstead. The Saltonstalls bought a town lot from Avery, but they soon moved on to Hamilton County, Ohio.[29] Another young Yankee who either came with Avery's party or arrived shortly thereafter at Belleville was Ebenezer Griffing of New London. He bought a farm from Avery and lived in the community for the rest of his life.[30]

Belleville was far less homogeneous than its sister village to the north, Vienna, which was settled exclusively by New Englanders. Samuel Allen's letter describing the Avery party's

journey across the mountains to Belleville mentions two young men who joined the Connecticut emigrants at Alexandria, Allen Davis and John Turner. Their chance addition to the Avery kinship group added a vital diversity to the community in the coming years. Davis was a resident of Prince William County; Turner lived in Fairfax County. The exact details of their attachment to the Avery group are unknown, though Allen mentions that Avery hired a joiner at Alexandria.[31] Perhaps both were employed for specific skills by Avery, who became one of the most important entrepreneurs on the new frontier. What is significant about their attachment to the Avery group is that they both became links to kinsmen in northern Virginia who soon settled in southern Wood County within the next decade in a pattern of sequential migration.[32]

Allen Davis was unmarried at the time of his departure. He returned to Prince William, where he qualified as executor of his father's will on February 6, 1798,[33] but only for a short time. On December 20, 1798, he married Mary Elizabeth Crooks in Harrison, soon to become Wood County.[34] Davis lived in the county till his death in 1835. He acquired a large farm at Belleville, operated a tavern at Parkersburg, the county seat, for a number of years,[35] and sired eight children. Several of Davis's children married into the Keene-Lewis-Neale kinship group, which migrated to Wood County from Loudoun and Fairfax counties beginning in 1806. It is uncertain whether Davis knew these Northern Neck families before his migration, but he was certainly attracted to them as marriage partners for his own children. Endogamy was typical of migrants to northwestern Virginia. Virginians tended to intermarry with other Virginians, especially those who came from the same or nearby counties; New Englanders tended to marry other Yankee emigrants.

John Wheeler Turner was the first of three brothers and their families who came

sequentially to Wood County from Fairfax. He was followed by his brothers, Thomas and Thomasin Ellzey Turner, in 1799.[36] The sons of old patrician families, their story is told more fully in Chapter Four. John apparently did not stay long in the area, but both Thomas and Thomasin purchased property from the creditors of George Avery after his subsequent bankruptcy.[37] The Turners exemplify another aspect of migration patterns, that of collateral kinship migration. Four brothers, first cousins of the three Turners, migrated to Wood County in the first decade of the nineteenth century: Newman, Tapley, Marmaduke B., and Lewis Beckwith. Their mothers were sisters, Sarah Ellzey Turner, wife of William Turner, and Sybil Ellzey Beckwith, wife of Marmaduke Beckwith, all of Fairfax County. The lure of the frontier seemed irrestible to young men like the Turners and Beckwiths. And invaribly, each of them, through intermarriage with other Prince William-Fairfax-Loudoun families like the Lewises, Neales, Keenes, Edelens, Harwoods, Simpsons, Kings, and Coffers, were part of an intricate web of migrators who may be referred to as the Northern Neck group.[38]

George D. Avery was a frontier entrepreneur of the first order, opening his first store at Marietta ca. 1790. His purchase of the Craik tract provided him greater opportunities as a town founder to expand his business enterprises. Almost immediately, he opened a general store and tavern. Within a half decade of settlement, Avery was operating a horse, grist, and sawmill at the Falls of Lee Creek and a shipyard north of Belleville. He served as a justice of the peace in Kanawha County before the separation of the Belleville area from that county and, beginning in 1800, as a justice of Wood County. By 1805, however, his business venture had virtually collapsed, and he was remanded to debtor's prison. The causes of the debacle included overexpansion and poor management, along with the disastrous effects of the Jeffersonian

embargo, which destroyed the infant shipbuilding business in the mid-Ohio Valley. Another blow was the burning of his barns, grain stacks, and mills by discontented neighbors, some of whom were squatters that he had evicted after his arrival in 1796. Fortescue Cuming, an Irishman who visited the area in 1807, recorded the tragedy:

> [G]oing largely into shipbuilding, he was so unfortunate in that business that in consequence, he is now confined in Wood county gaol . . . Last fall Mr. Avery's barn with two thousand bushels of grain, several stacks of grain, and a horse, grist and saw mills, were burnt by incendiaries, who, though known, could not be brought to justice for want of positive proof.[39]

The lease and sale of land and slaves held off most creditors until 1811, when his second imprisonment for debt led to the final dissolution of his Belleville holdings as well as 50,000 acres which he owned in Kanawha County. Financial ruin was only the beginning of Avery's tragic story. He buried two wives at Belleville, and his only surviving child, namesake George, Jr., a midshipman in the U.S. Navy, died at New York City in 1815. Avery's departure from Wood County ca. 1818 was unlike that of most county residents who chose to move on. For them, northwestern Virginia was one stop in a westward-moving pattern that took them to Kentucky, Illinois, Missouri, or even Oregon, Texas, or California. Returning eastward, Avery served as surveyor of the city of Georgetown, a suburb of the District of Columbia, and ultimately to Oxford, New York, where he died in 1860, aged 97, having outlived all other members of his immediate family by forty-five years.[40] Though he did not stay permanently in Wood County, Avery left behind a core of families like the Prentisses, Allens, and Turners, who were important to the early settlement of the southern portion of the county. And he left an indelible imprint as the surveyor of the county seat of Parkersburg in 1810, even naming one of the streets after himself.[41]

Joseph Spencer's Vienna was strikingly homogeneous; though several families like the Lords, Griffiths, and Beaumonts moved away within a few years, his descendants and those of other New England families farmed the rich bottom land there until the early twentieth century. The Spencers and others, like the Cook and Gates families, persisted for generations to come, giving Vienna a New England character. This was not at all true of Belleville, where Pennsylvania squatters had lived for a decade before George Avery's purchase of the Craik tract.

The Avery kin were not the first to settle at or near the Belleville site, though they were the first to have legal title to the area. Two brothers, Joshua and Joel Dewey, from the Susquehanna Valley, camped and hunted at the mouth of Lee Creek during the summer and fall months of 1784. The site had been marked the previous year by David Lee, for whom the creek was named.[42] After wintering with the settlers at Wheeling Creek (later Ohio County), they returned early the following spring with two brothers-in-law whom they had met there, Peter Anderson and John Coleman.[43] When they arrived at their camp of the previous year, they found at Lee's Creek five young men who were the advance party of a group of kindred settlers from the Susquehanna, members of the Flinn and Parchment families. These two groups of young men in the late teens and twenties joined forces to build a small blockhouse which they called Flinn's Station. During the summer of 1785, Jacob Parchment, Sr., joined his sons Jacob and John there. John Flinn, his daughter Mary, and two daughters-in-law and their children joined Thomas and James Flinn, along with a single man, John Barnett. In 1786, Peter Anderson and John Coleman returned to Wheeling and brought back their own families, along with John's brother, Malcolm Coleman, and five of Anderson's siblings, James, Andrew, Alexander, Rebecca, and Nancy, wife of David Lee.[44] This was a kinship group fairly typical of the ordinary

settlers who came to northwestern Virginia. It was based, in part, on chance meetings, like those of the Deweys, Anderson, and Coleman at Wheeling, and on-the-spot encounters like that with the Flinns and Parchments at the settlement site. Their extended families were soon connected by marriage. For example, Joshua Dewey married Rebecca Anderson; his brother Joel married Jane Coleman, John's sister. And Nancy Flinn was married to John Barnett in 1787, the first recorded marriage in northwestern Virginia in what later became Wood County.

Another group of Pennsylvanians who settled illegally on the Craik tract in the 1780s was that recruited by William Tilton and Josiah Willard Gibbs, Philadelphia merchants, who acquired a tract of 91,557 acres below the mouth of the Little Kanawha River.[45] Each settler was promised a 300-acre tract and given provisions for the journey and initial settlement. An advance party left Pittsburgh in July 1785, located what they believed was the intended site, christened it Belleville, and returned. They came back in December, accompanied by William Tilton and Joseph Wood, agent and surveyor for Tilton and Gibbs, and began laying out town lots and out-lots along the river for immediate cultivation. Among the settlers in this group were William Ingles, James Pewtherer, and David Jamison, Scots-Irishmen from the Philadelphia area who had been recruited by Tilton and Gibbs, Merchants.[46]

Unfortunately for these two groups of Pennsylvanians, they had unintentionally encroached on the James Craik survey. When George Avery arrived in 1796, he evicted those who could not or would not repurchase the lands which they had already bought in good faith and worked to improve. This was one of the greatest tragedies of the western Virginia and Kentucky frontiers, since Virginia land law and custom recognized "tomahawk" claims, and those claims often overlapped or encroached on lands of speculators or veterans. The late Wood County

Circuit Judge Donald F. Black, who spent decades studying the frontier land patents in Augusta, Monongalia, Harrison, and Wood counties concluded: "It can safely be said that almost every square foot of the original and present Wood County was subject to some form of litigation between the years 1790 and 1860."[47] Overlapping and disputed claims had disastrous effects: insecure titles, expensive litigation, discouraged settlers who moved on to new locations and, worst of all, economic retardation. For George Avery, though he defended his title successfully, the result was total economic disaster. It comes as no surprise that his barns, grain stacks, and mills were destroyed by incendiaries a few years later. He was caught up in a web of ethnic and sectional jealousy and competition, a bitter feud between New Englanders and Virginians/Pennsylvanians who struggled for control of the county court and political leadership. He was resented not only because he had evicted earlier settlers but also because he was among a minority of Connecticut Yankees in a northwestern Virginia frontier county.

Samuel Allen observed from Belleville in 1796 that "[t]he country is as good as it was represented to be & is seteling verry fast . . . There is now at this place a number of familys that came since we did from Susquehanah."[48] Among them were the families of three German immigrants, Jacob Kiems, Philip Wigal, and Peter Derenberger, among the first "Pennsylvania Dutch" to add to the ethnic mix of the northwestern frontier.

A discussion of kinship migration to Belleville would be incomplete without reference to the Mayberry-Pennybacker-Samuels kinship group, which came a decade and a half after the Averys. In fact, members of this extended family bought land from the creditors of George Avery, supplanting members of a New England colony with Virginians, in effect altering the Yankee social character of the locality. Belleville, in fact, became a Southern plantation

community, much like Washington Bottom, its near neighbor. These three families were part of a large clan of Shenandoah County, some of whom stayed behind while others came west. The connecting link of this clan was ironmaker Dirck Pennybacker, who migrated from Philadelphia, first to Sharpsburg, Maryland, where his iron furnace was destroyed by a flood, and thence to Hawksbill Creek, Shenandoah County, near Luray, where he built Redwell Furnace in the early 1780s. Pennybacker may have been influenced to come to Shenandoah by Issac Zane, founder of the famous Zane's Iron Works.[49] Both were Quakers from the Philadelphia area. Pennybacker and his wife, Hannah DeHaven Pennybacker, were the parents of a large family, and ironmaking was a family business. Their daughter Rebecca married George Mayberry who, along with her brother, Benjamin Pennybacker, built Columbia Furnace in 1803, operated as George Mayberry & Company. Both the Redwell and Columbia Furnaces used a number of slaves, owned and leased, as evidenced by the company daybooks.[50] Dirck Pennybacker died in 1799, and his widow, along with several children and grandchildren, migrated to Wood County in the second decade of the nineteenth century.[51] In addition to the matriarch, Hannah Pennybacker, George and Rebecca Pennybacker Mayberry, along with four of their children, Benjamin, John P., Catherine, and Rebecca, as well as George's brother, William Mayberry and his family, settled at Belleville in 1810. Mayberry sold Columbia Furnace and abandoned his trade for the life of a plantation farmer along the Ohio River. In addition to his family, he brought thirteen slaves.[52] Some of the Mayberry children who had already married remained in Shenandoah County, but three came to Wood County: Benjamin, who married his first cousin, Nancy Samuels; Rebecca, who married Henry L. Prentiss, nephew of George Avery; and John Pennybacker Mayberry, who married Lucy Fearing, daughter of the first common pleas judge at Marietta.[53] Three of Rebecca

Pennybacker Mayberry's brothers, John, Abraham, and Dirck Pennybacker, Jr., migrated with the Mayberrys. John Pennybacker, named for his grandfather, married Phoebe Fugate in Shenandoah, and they had a large family of twelve children. Abraham was married to Elizabeth Ruffner, whose family lived on Hawksbill Creek.[54] They were the parents of eight children. Most Wood County Pennybackers of the antebellum period were the descendants of John and Abraham. Dirck, Jr., later married Elizabeth Neal, granddaughter of Captain James Neal, the first permanent settler at Parkersburg and head of a huge kinship/neighbor network from the Monongahela Valley.[55] Another Pennybacker sibling, sister of Benjamin, Rebecca, John, Abraham, and Dirck, Jr., was Elizabeth, wife of Isaac Samuels. While the Samuelses did not migrate, three of their children did: Joseph Hope Samuels, who married his first cousin, Catherine Pennybacker Mayberry; Nancy Samuels, who married a first cousin, Benjamin Mayberry, Catherine's brother; and Abraham Samuels, who married another granddaughter of Captain James Neal, Hannah Neal. These families were all very prominent in Shenandoah County. The three brothers-in-law, George Mayberry, Isaac Samuels, and Benjamin Pennybacker, were all county justices in the first decade of the century. This clan had a flair for politics and the law: Abraham Samuels, Joseph H. Samuels, and John P. Mayberry were lawyers who held county offices after their migration to northwestern Virginia.[56] Members of this kinship group, strengthened by intermarriage with Neals and Prentisses, became the dominant clan at Belleville during the first half of the nineteenth century. Their influence gave the southernmost portion of Wood County a decided Old Virginia quality.

Emigrants from New England and the communities which they founded in northwestern Virginia provide an interesting set of similarities as well as contrasts in a study of kinship

migration patterns. Like all migrants to the mid-Ohio Valley, they left more comfortable homes in search of economic opportunity, and they migrated cohesively and sequentially in compact kinship/neighbor groups. They favored their own kin and preferred endogamous marriages. They fought vigorously to advance their own political and economic power, often at the expense of other groups. The contrast between homogeneous Vienna and heterogeneous Belleville can best be explained by the fact that the former was unsettled when the Spencer-Lords arrived, while the latter had been occupied a decade before the arrival of the Avery party by innocent and unknowing squatters from Pennsylvania. When one adds the Davis and Turner families from the Northern Neck, the Pennsylvania Germans and Scots-Irish, and the Shenandoah County patricians to the mix, the result is a blend as diverse as the county as a whole.

The Neal-Phelps kinship group was comprised of middling families which had originated, for the most part, in the mid-Atlantic region. The Spencer-Lord and the Avery colonists of Vienna and Belleville were members of elite families of Connecticut. Both of these groups of colonists were led by members of the Revolutionary War officer class. Quite in contrast was the cluster of emigrants who settled in the last two decades of the eighteenth century at Isaac Williams' frontier station, later known as Williamsport. They were quite ordinary westward-moving plainfolk, that group which most closely approximates the stereotypical image of the Southern frontiersmen.

NOTES

1. Arthur Butler Hulbert (ed.), The Records of the Original Proceedings of the Ohio Company, 2 vols., (Marietta, Ohio: Marietta Historical Commission, 1917). Among older secondary works, the best concise account of the Ohio Company of Associates is found in Washington County

Historical Society, History of Washington County, Ohio, 1788-1881 (Cleveland, Ohio, 1881; reprint, Knightstown, Indiana: The Bookmark, 1976), 30-59. For a more contemporary account, see Andrew R.L. Cayton and Paula R. Riggs, City Into Town: the City of Marietta, Ohio, 1788-1988 (Marietta, Ohio: Marietta College Dawes Memorial Library, 1991).

2. Dr. Spencer served as a surgeon and aide to his father, Major General Joseph Spencer, who commanded the Second Connecticut Regiment and who, in 1779, was elected to represent his state in the Continental Congress [see Charles Barney Whittlesey (comp.), Historical Sketch of Joseph Spencer (Hartford, Connecticut: n.p., 1904), 5,6]. Abner Lord was lieutenant colonel of the Thirty-Third Connecticut Militia. Serving in the same unit as major was Richard Ely Selden, brother of the wives of Dr. Spencer and Colonel Lord.

3. Deborah and Mary Selden were daughters of Captain Samuel and Elizabeth Ely Selden of Lyme, Connecticut. Their father died in a British prison in New York in 1776.

4. Hulbert, Records and Original Proceedings., II, 239, 241.

5. Cutler Collection, Dawes Memorial Library, Marietta College, Marietta, Ohio. By this time, Spencer had already purchased thousands of acres in Virginia and had settled his family several miles below Marietta on the Virginia side of the Ohio River; he obviously no longer had any interest in the Ohio parcel.

6. Hulbert, Records and Original Proceedings, II, 12; Samuel Prescott Hildreth, Biographical and Historical Memoirs of the Early Settlers of Ohio (Cincinnati: H.W. Derby, 1852), 441; Henry Howe, Historical Collections of Ohio, 2 vols. (Cincinnati: Bradley & Anthony, 1849), II, 782.

7. The entire town of Vienna, West Virginia, with some 14,000 inhabitants, and a portion of Parkersburg, West Virginia, the county seat, now occupy this area. It is one of the few stretches of the Ohio River where wide bottom land runs for several miles along both sides of the river. The town of Belpre, Ohio, is situated on the opposite shore. One wonders why George Washington did not claim it on his trip to the region in 1770.

8. James Morton Callahan, History of West Virginia, Old and New, 2 vols. (Chicago: American Historical Society, 1923), I, 132. The entire Summers clan soon settled at Charleston in Kanawha County. Both Lewis and his brother, George W. Summers, were prominent in law and politics in the antebellum period.

9. There are likely other kinship relationships among these Connecticut settlers that I have been unable to determine. For example, I suspect that the Griffins and Richard Sparrow were related to Dr. Spencer or his wife in some way. There are others, like Mrs. Spencer's youngest brother, Roger Selden, whom I believe lived in the settlement for a period of time.

10. Samuel Beaumont, a corporal and sergeant in the Third Connecticut Regiment, had three daughters, Fannie, Anna, and Sophia, before he emigrated, and three other children were born at Vienna, Amelia, John Towner, and Eliza Sybil. While living at Vienna, they, along with the

Spencers and Lords, became founding members of the First Congregational Church of Marietta, Ohio. The Beaumonts and the Zebulon Griffiths removed in 1804 to Ames, Athens County, Ohio, and again in 1818 to Charleston, Kanawha County, (West) Virginia, where Griffith established a hotel. The Beaumonts built a large plantation house on the south bank of the Kanawha River. They and the Griffiths lived and died there and were buried in a family cemetery on the bank of the river.

11. Unfortunately, the Vienna town plat has not survived.

12. Samuel Shepherd, ed., The Statutes at Large of Virginia, from October session 1792, to December session 1806 inclusive, in three volumes (new series), being a continuation of Hening (Richmond, Virginia, 1835-6), I, 428.

13. Wood County Minute Book I, November 11, 1800.

14. A fuller account of the county court battle is given in Chapter Five.

15. Shepherd, Statutes at Large, II, 263. This act was passed by the General Assembly in response to a petition of Belleville residents who, since the creation of Wood County the year before, wished to be nearer the new county seat at the mouth of the Kanawha River. They had previously been required to travel to Charleston, some seventy-five miles away, to conduct court business. Avery, who was a justice of Kanawha County, was commissioned as a Wood County justice, along with Peter Anderson, another Belleville resident.

16. Washington County Historical Society, History of Washington County, 366.

17. Charles Penrose, The Woodbridge and Related Families (Potsdam, New York, privately published, 1974), 45, 46; Hulbert, Records of the Original Proceedings, I, 132. The judge's son, William Woodbridge, who as a young man was admitted to the practice of law both in Wood County, (West) Virginia [on November 9, 1814, Wood County 1814 Order Book, 320] and Washington County, Ohio [in 1804, Samuel P. Hildreth, Biographical and Historical Memoirs, 296], served as governor of Michigan, 1839-41, and United States Senator from Michigan, 1841-47. His home in Detroit was later the location of the old Tiger Stadium.

18. Josephine E. Phillips, "Ohio's Deep Roots in Connecticut," Ohio Archaeological and Historical Quarterly, 48 (January, 1939), 74-82. This article traces the connections between the Backus and Woodbridge families of Connecticut and the Marietta settlement. It features a good discussion of the Backus Iron Works at Yantic.

19. William W. Backus, A Genealogical Memoir of the Backus Family (Privately published, 1889), 9-14, 141, 316-17; Reno Warburton Backus, The Backus Family of Early New England (Duluth, Minnesota, privately published, 1965), 20-22, 31-32, 44; Hildreth, Memoirs, 186; Hulbert, Records of the Original Proceedings, I, 97. The connections between these families seem endless. Lucy Backus, sister of Elijah Backus, Jr., was the wife of Judge Dudley Woodbridge. Elijah's son Thomas married Temperance Lord, daughter of Abner Lord of

Vienna, niece of Dr. Joseph Spencer. Their son, Abner Lord Backus, was President of the Ohio State Board of Public Works in the mid-nineteenth century. Lucretia, daughter of Elijah Backus, Jr., married Nathaniel Pope, a district court judge and congressman from Illinois. Their son was Major General John Pope.

20. Document L-23, Special Collections, Dawes Memorial Library, Marietta College, Marietta, Ohio; Julia Perkins Cutler, Life and Times of Ephraim Cutler (Cincinnati: R. Clarke & Co., 1888), 118.

21. Reno Warburton Backus, The Backus Family, 4.

22. Edgar B. Sims, Sims Index to Land Grants in West Virginia (Charleston, West Virginia: n.p., 1952), 78; Black, History of Wood County, I, Section 6-2-4. Dr. Craik, who accompanied Washington to the Ohio Valley in 1770, claimed this land based on his service in the French and Indian War. Surveyed by Colonel William Crawford, the grant was recorded in Botetourt County Deed Book 1:593, on December 15, 1771. The deed from Craik to Avery, dated July 1, 1796, was recorded in Kanawha County Deed Book A:225.

23. Letter dated November 15, 1796, from Samuel Allen to his parents in New London, reproduced in James Morton Callahan, History of West Virginia, I, 122-25.

24. An infant son, William Avery, born January 24, 1796, died en route to Alexandria, on June 8, 1796.

25. Mary Avery and Esther Hempstead were sisters of Hannah Backus, wife of Elijah Backus. These three sisters were the daughters of Guy and Elizabeth Harris Richards of New London, Connecticut. [See Reno W. Backus, The Backus Family, 44.]

26. The Allens, like the Averys, lost a son during the trek to Belleville. John Prentiss Allen died at the home of John Simkins, Allegany County, Maryland, on July 14, 1796, and was buried there [see Callahan, History of West Virginia, I, 123]. A daughter Lydia remained behind in New London with Samuel Allen's parents for a few months.

27. Giles Hempstead soon settled in Marietta, where he became city recorder, clerk of the court of common pleas, and a member of the town council. He was educated at Muskingum Academy and the college in Athens, Ohio, now Ohio University. See John A. House, Pioneers of Wood County, W.Va., 2 vols. (Parkersburg, West Virginia: Wood County Historic Landmarks Committee), II, 279.

28. History of Monongalia County, West Virginia, from its First Settlement to the Present Time (Kingwood, West Virginia: Preston Publishing Co., 1883), 333-35. McCleery served as deputy attorney general of the District Court at Morgantown and represented the county in the Virginia General Assembly.

29. House, Pioneers of Wood County, II, 276. Saltonstall was a direct descendant of Sir Richard Saltonstall, member of Governor John Winthrop's colonial council in Massachusetts, and of Governor Gurdon Saltonstall, colonial governor of Connecticut, 1708-24. Samuel Booth Hempstead and Hannah Hempstead Saltonstall were children of Nathaniel and Hannah Booth Hempstead of New London.

30. His arrival no later than 1797 is proven by his marriage to Grace Roberts, June 19, 1797, in Washington County, Ohio.

31. Callahan, History of West Virginia, I, 123-24.

32. Sequential migration means that one person or family migrated to a place and were then followed over the next few years by other kin or near neighbors. Most of the people who settled in Wood County migrated sequentially. This is one of the most distinguishing characteristics of kinship migration, reminiscent of the "America letters" of later European immigrants to encourage kin left behind to migrate.

33. Prince William County Will Book H:250.

34. Allen Davis Family Bible. Mary Crooks Davis was the daughter of James and Ann Braden Crooks, formerly of Sussex County, New Jersey. The previous generation of Crookses had lived in Massachusetts (now Maine), thus the typical pattern of three generations, from New England to New Jersey, then to Virginia. Some of Mary Crooks Davis's siblings further migrated to Kentucky and then to Oregon. Pages of the Davis Bible were lent to me by Dr. Robert D. Crooks of Parkersburg.

35. The Allen Davis Tavern is shown on John Wood's 1821 map of Wood County, redrawn by Dr. Robert D. Crooks and reproduced in Philip W. Sturm, A River to Cross: The Bicentennial History of Wood County, West Virginia (State College, Pennsylvania: Josten's Publishing Co., 1999), 20.

36. House, Pioneers in Wood County, II, 618; Black, History of Wood County, I, Section 7-8.

37. House, Pioneers in Wood County, I, 167, 172. The Turner brothers were grandsons of Captain Lewis Ellzey, justice of both Prince William and Fairfax counties and the first sheriff of Fairfax when it was formed. Their paternal grandfather, Fielding Turner, was among the original justices of Loudoun County.

38. The kinship connections among the Prince William, Fairfax, and Loudoun families is so complex that it is presented in Chapter Four.

39. Fortescue Cuming, Sketches of a Tour to the Western Country (Pittsburgh: Cramer, Spear, & Eschbauer, 1810), 112.

40. Robert D. Crooks, "Early Wood County Settler's Accomplishments Vast," *The Parkersburg News*, May 19, 1991, 1G.

41. The original plat of Parkersburg is recorded in Wood County Deed Book 5:337. The north-south streets, including Avery Street, still bear the names that he labeled on the original survey. True to his Connecticut origins and training as a surveyor, his town survey follows the familiar New England gridiron pattern, with in-lots, or town lots, and out-lots, or farm lots.

42. David Lee was also Peter Anderson's brother-in-law, husband of his sister Nancy.

43. Anderson, born at Wills' Creek (Cumberland), Maryland in 1758, lived at Buffalo Creek (later Brooke County) during the Revolutionary War and served in the Virginia militia. Coleman was originally from Lancaster, Pennsylvania. His sister Margaret married Peter Anderson at Carlisle, Pennsylvania, near Pittsburgh. (Unpublished manuscript in possession of Erma Anderson, great-great-granddaughter of Peter Anderson, a copy of which was provided to me by Dr. Robert D. Crooks.)

44. Draper Collection, Series F. Volume 4-5, Reel 2, #219; Samuel P. Hildreth, "Brief History of the Settlement at Belville in Western Virginia," The Hesperian: A Monthly Miscellany of General Literature, 3 (June 1839), 25-34. Two members of this extended family were killed during the Indian War: Jacob Parchment in the fall of 1790 and Malcolm Coleman in February, 1793.

45. Monongalia County Patent Book 2, various entries; John Jarvis et al. vs.. Josiah Gibbs et al., Circuit Superior Court of Law and Chancery, Harrison County, (West) Virginia, Office of the Circuit Clerk, Clarksburg, 1820, Document File 7, No. 1; Black, History of Wood County, I, Section 6-4.

46. Jarvis vs. Gibbs, contract between David Jamison and Tilton and Gibbs, June 1, 1785; depositions of William Ingles (April 22, 1820) and Joseph Wood (April 24, 1820). See also Black, History of Wood County, I, Section 7-8.

47. Black, History of Wood County, I, Sections 6-1 and 6-2-1.

48. Callahan, History of West Virginia, I, 124.

49. Several of Isaac Zane's children, including Colonel Ebenezer Zane, Captain Jonathan Zane, Captain Silas Zane, and Elizabeth "Betty" Zane, had settled in 1769-70 at the mouth of Wheeling Creek along the upper Ohio.

50. John W. Wayland, A History of Shenandoah County, Virginia (Strasburg, Virginia, 1927; reprint, Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., 1998), 235-41.

51. Hannah Pennybacker purchased Lot #11 in Parkersburg on June 9, 1818. She died in 1825. See House, Pioneers of Wood County, I, 38.

52. Wood County 1810 census.

53. John P. Mayberry became one of the leading citizens of Wood County in the first half of the nineteenth century. He was a lawyer, judge, and member of the Virginia General Assembly. He was also a proprietor of Barber & Mayberry, the largest merchant establishment in Parkersburg.

54. Elizabeth Ruffner Pennybacker was a cousin of David and Lewis Ruffner, the saltmakers and politicians of Kanawha County, and of Dr. Henry Ruffner, president of Washington College in Lexington, Virginia (now Washington and Lee University). Her father was Peter Ruffner, Jr. See Wayland, History of Shenandoah County, 637-38.

55. Dirck Pennybacker, Jr., died while on a business trip to New Orleans a few years later, leaving only one infant daughter.

56. Green Berry Samuels, brother of Abraham and Joseph, who remained in Shenandoah County, was a member of the U.S. House of Representative and Justice of the Virginia State Supreme Court of Appeals. Green Hope, the plantation home of the Isaac Samuels family, was one of the most elegant in the area. The two-story brick structure, along with slave quarters, still stands near Edinburg, Virginia..

Chapter Three
The Stereotypical Frontiersmen:
The Isaac Williams Kinship Group

Among the earliest claimants and settlers in northwestern Virginia was Isaac Williams, the stereotypical frontiersman. If any settler in the mid-Ohio Valley came at all close to fitting the Turnerian concept of the Southern frontiersman, it was Williams who, ironically, was born in southeastern Pennsylvania. His exploits and experiences were equal to those of more famous frontier scouts like Daniel Boone and Lewis Wetzel, though he led a more settled existence. In Williams, the myth of the rugged, individualistic trailblazer and Indian fighter, whom Andrew R.L. Cayton and Paula R. Riggs call "the hunter," begins to break down. Their description of these Ohio Valley frontier backwoodsmen, as they compare them to the New Englanders of the Marietta settlement, is classic:

> The "Hunters" . . . came largely from the backwoods of Pennsylvania and Virginia. Most of them were probably the descendants of Scots-Irish families who had been moving west for generations. Their major orientations were to their local community and family, which often overlapped. Their interests were short-term, not long-term. They did not plan elaborately for the future or live lives of discipline and denial. Their goal was not to accumulate property. They supported their families with a few acres of corn and vegetables, the meat of hogs that were allowed to run wild to find food, and what they could get by hunting and fishing. These frontier families were no more self-sufficient than the Delaware Indians, however. They traded furs, skins, and meat for flour, whiskey, cloth, and other amenities. But their economy was almost completely local and it depended more on individual initiative than that of the most ambitious associates [of the Marietta colony.][1]

Some aspects of the stereotype ring true in the life of Isaac Williams. He was born July 16, 1737, in Chester County, Pennsylvania, but moved with his family to the frontier near

Winchester, Virginia, as a young child. In his youth he served as a scout and ranger and saw militia duty in Braddock's disastrous campaign of 1755 and with General John Forbes in the capture of Ft. Duquesne in 1758. In the 1760s he hunted and trapped throughout the Ohio and upper Mississippi valleys to the mouth of the Missouri River. In 1769 he accompanied Ebenezer, Silas, and Jonathan Zane to the mouth of Wheeling Creek, later Ohio County, to prepare for the settlement of their families in that region.[2] At the same time, he claimed a tract at Buffalo Creek, later Bethany, becoming the first settler in what is now Brooke County.[3] After serving in Lord Dunmore's Northern Army in 1774, he married a young widow, Rebecca Tomlinson Martin; her first husband had been killed by Indians while on a trade expedition on the Big Hockhocking River in the Ohio country in 1770. It was through the family of his wife, the Tomlinsons, that Isaac Williams came to live in future Wood County. Rebecca Williams had acquired 400 acres across from the mouth of the Muskingum River from her brother, Joseph Tomlinson, Jr. In the year of their marriage, Williams made improvements and cleared land on this forward settlement but was forced to abandon it until after the close of the Revolutionary War.[4]

In 1785, Williams returned to clear the underbrush and saplings which had overtaken the claim during a decade of warfare. More clearing and planting followed in 1786, and in the early spring of 1787 he brought his family to take up permanent settlement. The site had become particularly attractive because of the construction of Fort Harmar at the mouth of the Muskingum River, directly across from Williams's clearing. Joseph Buell, a soldier at the fort, noted their arrival in his journal on March 24: "Isaac Williams arrived with his family to settle on the opposite shore of the river. Several others have joined him, which makes our situation in the wilderness much more agreeable."[5]

It is here in Buell's observation that the stereotype of the non-communal frontiersman begins to unravel. Isaac Williams, scout, trapper, and soldier, had become Isaac Williams, town founder, peacemaker, ferryman, and farmer. Almost immediately, he exhibited the same kind of entrepreneurial spirit seen among all the other settlers in northwestern Virginia and across the Ohio, whether they were Scot-Irish, English, German, or otherwise, whether they had migrated from New England, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, or Virginia. In 1789 he was authorized by the General Assembly to operate a ferry below the mouth of the Muskingum River across the Ohio, the first such license granted in the mid-Ohio Valley. The following year, Williams optimistically hired the surveyors who had just completed laying out the extension of the State Road from Clarksburg to the Ohio to survey town lots and streets on his tract. Only the second surveyed town on the Virginia side of the river, future Williamstown was laid out twenty years before the final survey of Parkersburg, the county seat. Among the first structures erected was Williams' Station, a small stockade which gave the new settlers protection during the Amerindian Wars which followed in the early 1790s. At the time of the negotiation of the Treaty of Greenville in 1795, Williams was sent to convince the Wyandots to accept the settlement.[6] He had traveled among the Ohio Indians for thirty years, and the Wyandots had once occupied a village on the site of Marietta at the mouth of the Muskingum, just opposite his clearing.

Throughout the 1790s and well into the first two decades of the nineteenth century, Isaac Williams played the role of frontier capitalist, acquiring slaves and operating his own small plantation, leasing lots and small farms to tenants, and selling his grain, hogs, beef, and furs in the growing regional and international marketplace. Always the inveterate hunter, he never let the advance of civilization or his economic ventures interfere with his ancient passion. It is said

in his later years, "if he heard of the signs of [a beaver] being seen within fifty miles of his home, he would mount his horse with his traps, and not return until he had caught it."[7] Christian Schultz, Jr., a New Yorker traveling on the Ohio in 1807, reported his difficulties in trying to cross the river at Marietta: "When we arrived at the ferry we lost near an hour before we could obtain an answer from the opposite shore, when, at last, we were informed that the ferryman [Williams] had gone a hunting, and they had no one to bring the boat over."[8]

Isaac Williams was a man whose appearance and bearing inspired the confidence of those who knew him. "In person he was of the medium size, with an upright frame and muscular limbs, features well formed and marked, a mild expression of countenance, with taciturn and quiet manners, securing confidence and respect.[9] When he died on September 25, 1820, he was buried among a grove of trees on the tract of land he had first cleared forty-five years earlier. Unlike Boone and Wetzel, Isaac Williams lacked the wunderlust of the drifter. He turned out to be, not the stereotypical frontiersman, but the fairly typical frontier settlement leader. Though he was illiterate to the end, his will signed with the telltale "X," nevertheless his last testament was unusual for its prescience, thoughtfulness, and honesty.[10] He provided for his wife, sister, and several nieces and nephews, and manumitted his slaves at the death of his spouse. Five pages long, it accounts for a respectable estate and much forethought to its execution. The fact that his only legitimate child, Drusilla Williams "married up" to a wealthy Virginia planter, John Glassford Henderson, an assemblyman and son of an assemblyman and friend of George Washington, demonstrates not only his economic success but also the high regard in which he was held on the northwestern Virginia frontier.[11]

Joseph Buell's note that "Several others have joined him" is the first evidence of a large

kinship/neighbor network which came to the Ohio as a result of the leadership of Isaac Williams. The first to come to the bottom land across from the Muskingum was Joseph Tomlinson, Jr., brother of Rebecca Williams, who actually preceded Williams and who had claimed a one-thousand-acre preemption tract north of the one he had given his sister. Joseph and Elizabeth Harkness Tomlinson were the parents of eleven children born at the Grave Creek settlement, most of whom accompanied them to their new home above Marietta on the Virginia side. He was a planter and politician who served three terms in the House of Delegates, 1812-14. Two sons-in-law in particular were prominent citizens of Wood County: John Asher Kinnaird, husband of Mary "Polly" Tomlinson, and Hezekiah Bukey, husband of Drusilla Tomlinson. Kinnaird was a county justice and sheriff, 1848-51; Bukey was appointed as justice of the peace in 1800 by Governor James Monroe and later represented the county nine terms in the Virginia House of Delegates.[12] Bukey's parents, originally from Sussex County, New Jersey, were among the first settlers of Ohio County. One of Hezekiah Bukey's sisters, Mary, was the wife of Major John McCulloch, the noted Indian scout; another, Jemima, was married to the Rev. Joseph Doddridge, the first Episcopal minister in northwestern Virginia and author of Doddridge's Notes on the Settlement and Indian Wars of the Western Parts of Virginia and Pennsylvania.

Though Isaac Williams had only one legitimate daughter, who died childless, three of his siblings accompanied him to northwestern Virginia. All were married and had several children, including his brother, John Williams, and his half-brother, James Davis. His sister, Letitia Williams Keller, was the matriarch of a large family with endless connections. The intricate pattern of her mostly in-law kinfolk points up one of the most difficult problems of frontier demography, that of different surnames of persons closely connected and living near each other

as part of a kinship migration network. Linking such families is a genealogical challenge of the first order. Mrs. Keller may have already been widowed when she migrated with her brother's family, since the name of her husband is unknown.[13] At some point she remarried a man by the name of Gill, as Williams mentions two of her children by her second marriage, Joseph and Julia Ann Gill, as well as her daughter, Catherine Keller, in his will. Her second husband was likely a member of the Gill family that migrated from Fairfax County and who leased land in Vienna from Dr. Joseph Spencer.[14] Letitia Keller's brother-in-law, Francis Keller, brought a large family of marriageable children when he joined the Williamses in the late 1780s or early 1790s. His children soon intermarried with the children of other Frederick-Hampshire-Ohio County families which had followed Isaac Williams to the Ohio Valley — Pughs, Riggses, and Ogdins, along with the Hietts and Gards. Almost all of these families had originally migrated from the region near Fort Edwards[15] on the Cacapon River, constructed after Braddock's defeat to protect settlers in the region, then followed Isaac Williams to Grave Creek (later Moundsville), thence to Williams' Station. The family of Joseph Edwards, the builder of Fort Edwards, had followed a migration pattern similar to that of Isaac Williams. Both were from Chester County, Pennsylvania, and both migrated to Frederick County about the same time. It is entirely possible that these families knew each other and had migrated together; they may, in fact, have been kinsmen. At least five grandchildren of Joseph Edwards joined the Williams kinship group in Wood County, all children of Robert and Mary Edwards Pugh: Samuel and Sarah McDonald Pugh, Jesse and Martha Hiett Pugh, John and Amy Pugh Danley, Nathan and Eleanor Pugh Gard, and James and Lucretia (Lucy) Pugh Hiett.[16] All these couples were married in Hampshire County prior to their migration to Williams' Station, and they were tied to Isaac Williams and his

sister Letitia through the Pughs.[17] The Hietts were further related to the children of Joseph Edwards: two sons, Joseph, Jr., and Thomas, were married to Hiett cousins, Rebecca and Mary. James Hiett, husband of Lucretia Pugh Hiett, was Mary's younger half-brother.[18]

The in-law Nathan Gard links another large family to the Pughs. Two sons of Jeremiah and Elizabeth Johnson Gard of Hampshire County settled with their families at Williams' Station in the 1790s: John and Cornelius Gard. This family had an interesting migration pattern in the eighteenth century. Originating in Stonington, New London County, Connecticut, they had settled at Morristown, New Jersey, then moved on to Frederick (later Hampshire) County by the 1770s. There they intermarried with the Hiett, Pugh, Hancher, Watson, and Caudy families and found themselves in a surge of settlers in the last decade of the century from Hampshire to northwestern Virginia. At Williams' Station children of John and Cornelius Gard married near kinsmen of Isaac Williams. Rachel Gard, daughter of John, married his nephew, Joseph Williams,[19] and Timothy Gard, son of Cornelius, married his niece, Nancy Davis, who had been orphaned and reared by Isaac and Rebecca Williams.[20] John Gard and his eleven children remained in Wood County, where they continued to intermarry within the same kinship group. Charity Gard became the wife of Jesse Pugh, for example, while Hannah Gard married Richard Arnold, whose family was connected by marriage to the Kellers. Cornelius Gard soon moved to Washington County, Ohio, across the river, where they settled and practiced the family trade of shoemaking. His son David had married Mary Hiett, as previously noted.

Two other interconnected families were the Ogdins and the Riggses. Ignatius Ogdin, and his wife, Mary Riggs Ogdin, were among the first to follow Isaac Williams to what became Wood County. They were not from Hampshire County, having migrated from Pennsylvania to

Grave Creek, where they joined the Williamses. Their son Alvin married Hannah Keller, daughter of Francis and Nancy Keller. Another son, Absalom, married Sarah Pugh. Their nephew, Jeremiah Riggs, was wed to Hannah Keller's sister Rachel. Mary Riggs Ogdin, widowed within a decade of her arrival, offered her home near Williamsport as the first meeting place of the Baptist Church when it was formed in Wood County in 1815.[21]

There is an interesting connection between several families of the Isaac Williams kinship group, and other frontier Wood Countians, as well, and the Quaker religion. This link may explain the presence of so many colonists from New Jersey, Delaware, and Pennsylvania among the migrants to northwestern Virginia, the "First Generation Virginians," discussed in Chapter One, as well as many of the settlers at Williams' Station. A large number of the early settlers of Frederick-Hampshire came into the region as part of a continuous migration of Quakers from the middle colonies into the Potomac region. David Hackett Fischer and James D. Kelly note that in the eighteenth century "a new spirit of toleration in Virginia was officially extended to Quakers," including the recognition of affirmation in oath-taking and exemption from military service, the two legal barriers that hindered earlier settlement by Friends. They continue:

> As a consequence Quakers began to return to Virginia in large numbers. The epicenter of this migration was the Delaware Valley, where a growing scarcity of land, increasing tenancy, and rising real estate prices caused many Quakers to move west and south. By 1725 they had begun to settle in western Maryland. In 1732 they had crossed the Potomac, and a group headed by Alexander Ross obtained a charter for 100,000 acres in Frederick County, Virginia. By 1776 perhaps 5,000 Quakers had moved into the colony and founded at least fifteen monthly meetings — mostly in the piedmont, the Valley, and the west.[22]

The migration of the parents of Isaac Williams to Frederick County before 1750 may be accounted for by this factor. Their movement paralleled that of another frontier Wood County

family, that of Jacob and Jonas Beeson, whose Quaker grandparents, Richard and Ann Brown Beeson, emigrated from Chester County, Pennsylvania, to Frederick.[23] Another Wood County kinship group leader with a Quaker heritage was James Neal, born in Christiana, New Castle County, Delaware, whose family moved successively to the Susquehanna Valley, and then to Frederick. Among the colonists at Williams' Station who were associated with the Hopewell Monthly Meeting in Frederick (later Hampshire) County were the Hietts and the Pughs, whose names frequently appear in church records.[24] Members of other northwestern Virginia clans who had Pennsylvania Quaker backgrounds were the children of Issac Zane, the ironmaker of Shenandoah County, who settled in Ohio County, and two families who were associated with the Zanes in Shenandoah, also ironmakers, the Pennybackers and Mayberrys, who came to Wood County in 1810. There was no Monthly Meeting in northwestern Virginia, as members of these families had not continued to practice the strict discipline of the Society. The records of Quaker meetings are replete with examples of those who were "disowned" for a variety of offenses, like "marrying out of Society," "taking arms," oath-taking, "use of spiritous liquors," owning slaves, and a number of other imperfections.[25]

Members of the Williams-Tomlinson kinship group were, for the most part, ordinary westward-moving colonists. Cornelius Gard and his sons, David and Timothy, were shoemakers. John Danley, husband of Amy Pugh, had been a teamster across the mountains while they lived in Hampshire County.[26] All of them farmed plots of land smaller than four hundred acres, and most of them owned the land they tilled. Other than Joseph Tomlinson and his sons-in-law, John Kinnaird and Hezekiah Bukey, none took an interest in politics. Even Isaac Williams himself, one of the most highly respected men on the frontier, never held public office in the county. He

rejected a commission as justice when it was offered. They were somewhat superstitious people, as illustrated by an account of the life of John Danley: "He had never seen his father, and superstition used to bring people from miles around with children who had sore mouths. Though he had none of the superstition himself, yet he would gratify them by breathing into the mouths of his patients, their parents trusting that they would be cured in some way."[27] These families lived on small neat farms along the Ohio River between Briscoe Run and Big Run, visited frequently, intermarried, cooperated in harvesting crops, witnessed each other's wills, and attended one another's funerals.

The striking thing about them is that they behaved very much like other kinship groups that came to Wood County. They settled near each other, and they practiced reciprocity and cooperation. They surveyed a village, though it was never as developed as the contemporaneous New England town of Marietta just across the river. They were less literate than the middling and elite groups, but many of them knew a little of reading and writing. Most were able to sign their names to wills and inventories. There was an occasional fracas, like one resulting in Nathan and Lott Gard being charged with assault and battery before the county justices. But they were no more or less violent than John G. Henderson, Isaac Williams's son-in-law, the patrician justice and assemblyman, who fought a duel with Stephen R. Wilson, whose father, Colonel Benjamin Wilson, was the first clerk of Harrison County. The main difference was that Henderson and Wilson fought with pistols in the gentlemanly tradition of the *code duello*, while the Gard rowdies used their fists.

Much has been made of the rugged individualism of the "hunters," of their hand-to-mouth existence, their primitive lifestyles, their subsistence farming, their ignorance, and their illiteracy.

They minded their own business, stayed out of politics, worked their farms, followed their trades, and left fewer records of their existence. But they, in fact, were the most typical of all the kinship groups who came to northwestern Virginia, people caught up in the American dream of a better life somewhere further west.

Northwestern Virginia called persons to its hills and valleys from all classes of people: middle class entrepreneurs, Revolutionary War officers and soldiers, ordinary yeoman farmers, squatters, seasoned town dwellers. But the least known of its frontier residents were the sons and daughters of old elite plantation families of the Northern Neck of Virginia who came to the Ohio River frontier with their moveable property and slaves. They were attempting to recreate the patrician society of their parents and grandparents which had been diminished by ruinous tobacco farming and partible inheritance, while still remaining in the Old Dominion.

NOTES

1. Andrew R.L. Cayton and Paula R. Riggs, City Into Town: the City of Marietta, Ohio, 1788-1988 (Marietta: Marietta College Dawes Memorial Library, 1991), 62-3. Their choice of Isaac Williams as an example of the "hunter" class is perhaps unfortunate. There were a number of squatter families living on both sides of the Ohio River who fit the stereotype more accurately.

2. Alexander Scott Withers, Chronicles of Border Warfare, Reuben Gold Thwaites, ed. (Cincinnati: R. Clarke & Co., 1895), 124.

3. Accounts of the life of Isaac Williams may be found in S.P. Hildreth, Biographical and Historical Memoirs of the Early Pioneer Settlers of Ohio (Cincinnati, Ohio, 1852; Facsimile reprint, Bowie, Maryland: Heritage Books, 1991), 475-91; Williamstown Historical Committee, Fruitful Valley Revisited: A Chronicle of Williamstown, West Virginia (Marietta, Ohio: Richardson Printing Co., 2003), 8-17; Scott Powell, History of Marshall County: From Forest to Field (Moundsville, West Virginia: n.p., 1925), 75-8; Cayton and Riggs, City Into Town, 63-5.

4. Reports of Commissioners for Adjusting Claims to Unpatented Lands in Monongalia, Yohogania, and Ohio Counties, Virginia (Unpublished manuscript, West Virginia States

Archives, Charleston, West Virginia), 78.

5. S.P. Hildreth, Pioneer History: Being An Account of the First Examinations of the Ohio Valley, and the Early Settlement of the Northwest Territory (Cincinnati: H.W.Derby & Co., 1848), 150.

6. Randolph Chandler Downes, Frontier Ohio, 1788-1803 (Columbus: The Ohio State Archaelogical and Historical Society, 1935), 47.

7. Hildreth, Biographical and Historical Memoirs, 489.

8. Christian Schultz, Jr., Travels on An Inland Voyage through the States of New York, Pennsylvania, Virginia . . . in the Years 1807 and 1808 (New York, 1810; reprint, Ridgewood, New Jersey: Gregg Press, 1968), 160.

9. S.C. Shaw, Skethces of North-Western Virginia (Unpublished manuscript, Leafy Glen, Wext Virginia, 1878), 53.

10. His will was likely drafted by Marietta attorney Paul Fearing, a close friend of Williams, one of the executors of the estate, as three of Fearing's sons were witnesses. Wood County Will Book 1:39-43.

11. Drusilla Williams Henderson died childless a few years after her marriage, preceding both her parents in death and leaving them no legitimate issue. Williams's will revealed his conception of two slave children whom he had already freed.

12. The Tomlinsons were unique among the Williamstown settlers in their interest in politics; most individuals in the community avoided politics.

13. She was married either to Jacob or Abraham Keller, brothers of Francis Keller, who accompanied Williams. They were sons of Jacob and Barbara Heyn Keller, both of German descent, of Kingston, Ulster County, New York, in the Hudson Valley. The precise migration pattern of this family is uncertain, but likely they came first to Frederick or Hampshire County, where they met Isaac Williams, thence to Wheeling or Grave Creek, and finally to Williams' Station.

14. The Gills of Fairfax County are mentioned in the journal of Lewis Summers of Fairfax while traveling through Wood County in 1808. Summers later settled in Kanawha County, where he became a judge and state legislator. See James Morton Callahan, History of West Virginia, Old and New, 2 vols. (Chicago: American Historical Society, 1923), I, 132. In his will, Issac Williams refers to his sister as Letitia Keller, not Letitia Gill. I am certain, however, that she first married Keller, and that Gill was her second husband. The Gills did not come to northwestern Virginia until after 1800, and the Kellers were among the earliest settlers at Williams' Station. It is highly unlikely that the Williamses could have known the Gills prior to their coming to Wood County.

15. Fort Edwards is best remembered as the site of an Indian massacre on April 18, 1756. Captain John Fenton Mercer, Ensign Thomas Carter, and fifteen soldiers were killed by Indians when they left the fort. George Washington to Robert Dinwiddie, April 19, 1756, Letterbook 3, 95, The George Washington Papers at the Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. See also William H. Ansel, Jr., Frontier Forts Along The Potomac And Its Tributaries (Parsons, West Virginia: McClain Printing Co., 1984), 78-85.

16. John A. House, Pioneers in Wood County, W.Va., 2 vols. (Parkersburg, West Virginia: Wood County Historic Landmarks Commission, 1984), II, 340-41.

17. John Pugh, son of Samuel and Sarah McDonald Pugh, was married to Nancy Keller, daughter of Francis and Nancy Keller. Hence, John and Nancy Keller Pugh were nephew by marriage and niece of Letitia Williams Keller.

18. Maud Pugh, Capon Valley: Its Pioneers and their Descendants, 1698 to 1940, 2 vols. (reprint, Baltimore: Gateway Press, 1982), II, 96-7, 142-3, 146-7.

19. Wood County Marriage Book 1:1, on February 4, 1803.

20. Wood County Marriage Book 1:1, on April 4, 1804.

21. House, Pioneers of Wood County, II, 336-37.

22. David Hackett Fischer and James C. Kelly, Bound Away: Virginia and the Westward Movement (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 2000), 109. See also Rufus M. Jones, The Quakers in the American Colonies (New York: W.W. Norton, 1966), 295-96.

23. Joint Committee of Hopewell Friends, Hopewell Friends History, 1734-1934, Frederick County, Virginia: Records of Hopewell Monthly Meetings and Meetings Reporting to Hopewell (Strasburg, Virginia: Shenandoah Publishing House, 1936), 21.

24. Hopewell Friends History, 20, 246.

25. Jones, The Quakers, 147-51. See also Larry Dale Gragg, Migration in Early America: The Virginia Quaker Experience (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1980), 54, 62-5.

26. Washington County Historical Society, History of Washington County, Ohio, 1788-1881 (Cleveland, Ohio, 1881; reprint, Knightstown, Indiana: The Bookmark, 1976), 666-67.

27. Washington County Historical Society, History of Washington County, 666.

Chapter Four
Northern Neck Kinship Migration:
The Planter Aristocrats

Andrew R. L. Cayton has studied the careers of frontier Ohio politicians Nathaniel Massie and Thomas Worthington, both of whom migrated from eastern Virginia to the Ohio Military District in the Scioto River Valley in the late eighteenth century. He concludes:

> Massie and Worthington worked hard to reproduce the kind of world in which they had grown up. They tried to become Ohio versions of their fathers, men of economic position who commanded deference, men of local influence who prominently displayed their standing in society, men of personal honor and pride in being Virginian above all else.[1]

One finds in northwestern Virginia dozens of the sons of eastern Virginia planters who migrated for the same reasons that Massie and Worthington did. Tobacco farming in the Northern Neck, the region from where most of them came, had exhausted the soils, and partible inheritance had rendered their legacies too small to maintain the lifestyles of their parents and grandparents. Like Massie and Worthington, they migrated West "to reproduce the kind of world in which they had grown up." But there is a significant difference between these Ohio migrants and the plantation aristocrats who came to northwestern Virginia. Whereas thousands of Virginia families had gone to the Northwest Territory, Kentucky, or the Southwest to find their fortunes, a few score chose instead to resettle in the westernmost portion of their home state. The desire to start a new life on the frontier but to remain within the Old Dominion may have been the most important single factor in explaining the presence of so many planter families among the early inhabitants of Wood County. Frontier historian Frank L. Owsley has noted that migrants often resettled in regions of similar topography to the area they were leaving: "The

similarity of appearance is of great importance for both psychological and practical reasons. The fact that the emigrant shakes from his feet the dust of his old community does not mean that he divests himself of the mental picture and love of the old countryside."[2] The wide, rich bottom lands of the mid-Ohio Valley provided the opportunity to begin anew, in the Ohio and Little Kanawha instead of the Potomac Valley, without leaving Virginia. "[B]eing Virginian above all else" meant for them, literally, staying in Virginia.

The number of families which migrated to northwestern Virginia from the Northern Neck counties is noteworthy. The Prince William County connections of Captain James Neal, the first permanent settler at Parkersburg, numbered into the scores. But there were other kinship groups with no apparent connection to the Neal-Hardin or Kincheloe-Creel groups which came to the Little Kanawha in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. They were members of the planter class of Fairfax and Loudoun counties, and several family members are mentioned in the diaries and correspondence of George Washington.[3] The most notable were the endogamous families of George Lewis, a Loudoun planter, and Francis Keene who, prior to his migration, was the lessee of Belvoir Plantation, the ancestral home of the Fairfaxes, along with the Henderson brothers, sons of Alexander Henderson, Sr., a wealthy merchant of Dumfries and friend of George Washington.

In fact, Northern Neck families were so numerous in the early history of the region that they largely shaped the social and economic configuration of Wood County in the antebellum period. One cannot understand the area's history without tracing the origins of so many of its early residents to Prince William County and those formed from it, Fairfax in 1742 and Loudoun, 1757. The Northern Neck of Virginia consisted of the area between the Potomac and

Rappahannock rivers, the area granted to Lord Fairfax in 1661 as a proprietorship. It was a region of fertile soil given over first to tobacco planting and eventually to wheat and other grain crops by the end of the eighteenth century. Its natural advantages

> caused the eastern portion of this section to be taken at a very early date by the highest class of planters. . . . The custom of making grants for 'headrights,' so prominent in other parts of the colony, was not followed by the proprietors, who thus excluded a large number of small landowners from this area. In 1776 the society of the Northern Neck was consequently older and more aristocratic than that of the Piedmont south of the James.[4]

Not only was this region more aristocratic, it was less democratic, though with a strong legacy of *noblesse oblige*. "The Northern Neck was very much a part of the culture of Virginia, but it gave culture a special meaning . . . little of democracy and nothing of equality, but a strong tradition of service, character, right conduct, and the rule of law."[5] When one considers the rural plantation style, the system of social stratification, the settlement systems and patterns of landholding, the persistence of slavery at the periphery, the Jeffersonian and states' rights political views of its early leaders, the extent of endogamy, and cultural values like the tradition of hospitality that is evident, the Northern Neck antecedents of the Little Kanawha region are apparent. It was this group which dominated the rural economy and society, if not the politics, of frontier Wood County.

A key question that one must pose in relating the settlement experiences of the plantation aristocrats is, why did they leave comfortable homes and familiar surroundings to migrate to the Ohio Valley, an area at the periphery of the frontier and but a few years removed from the presence of Indians? Ordinary settlers seemed to have a particular itch to move on. Some members of the Revolutionary officer class were lured by the attraction of bounty lands. But

these Northern Neck gentry folk seemed to have a great deal more to give up and far less to entice them. The answer is largely an economic one. The productivity of large plantations had declined rapidly in the late eighteenth century due to soil exhaustion and erosion, the ruinous effects of one-crop tobacco farming. Dumfries, the first town chartered in Prince William County, in 1749, was located on Quantico Creek. And despite its location on a tributary of the Potomac, it rivaled Alexandra in tonnage shipped. However, soil erosion caused the silting up of the creek, resulting in a sharp downturn in agricultural production and the decline of Dumfries as a port.[6] A committee of the General Assembly in 1816 lamented that "a considerable part of [Virginia's eastern section] has receded from its former opulence. How many sad spectacles do her lowlands present of wasted and deserted fields, of dwellings abandoned."[7] Another problem was the abolition of primogeniture in Virginia. Once sizeable estates were subdivided among large numbers of children, who found themselves increasingly unable to maintain the old standards of living.[8] The result was that many of them "migrated to bounty land in Kentucky or on the Ohio River where they were encouraged to settle."[9] James Backus, who wrote from Marietta to his parents in Norwich, Connecticut, on the last day of the year 1788 was astonished at the number of boats which had descended the river since his arrival: "The fire of emigration seems to rage with greater fury than ever on the other side of the mountains from the number of people that pass here."[10] John Randolph of Roanoke later referred to this vast exodus as "the rage for emigration."[11]

Some young gentlemen had political ambitions that could not be gratified in Old Virginia. "Budding politicians dreamed of elections and offices in new places that promised to be more open to talent."[12] This was true of John Glassford Henderson, who came to northwestern

Virginia in 1798 and was named by Governor James Wood as a justice when the county was formed the next year. He was only twenty-three years old at the time. In 1800, voters chose him to represent them in the House of Delegates in the first legislative election held in the new county. In other words, he migrated at twenty-three, became a county justice at twenty-four and an assemblyman at twenty-five.

Historian Joan E. Cashin has argued convincingly that many young aristocrats left their homes in the Old South to seek personal independence and to put space between themselves and their families, the antithesis of kinship migration.[13] This may have been the intent of John Wheeler Turner of Fairfax County. In a civil suit in May 1784 in which his grandfather, Captain Lewis Ellzey, was the plaintiff, Turner was found guilty of trespassing. He was jailed for twenty days and fined twenty-five pounds. Unable to pay the fine, he was forced to sell property to satisfy the execution order. For the grandson of gentlemen justices and churchwardens on both the maternal and paternal sides, as well as for the ordinary debtor and lawbreaker, migratory flight might well have been the resolution. "[T]ragedy might be put out of mind in a country so new and exciting. Thus sanctuary for all those desiring escape seemed to lie out beyond the fringe of settlement. Indeed, going from the old communities into the new country was, to many a migrant, like passing through a doorway, which closed behind him and through which he returned no more."[14] Family conflict was a likely motive in Turner's decision to leave Fairfax a decade later. Ironically, his flight westward soon brought siblings and cousins to the Ohio Valley.

A chain reaction of migration from the Northern Neck to Wood counties was begun by Turner, son of William and Sarah Ellzey Turner, who joined a party of Connecticut migrants

during a stopover at Alexandria in June 1796. This group was led by George Avery, and its migration story is related in Chapter Two. The reason for Turner's inclusion in this kinship group is unclear. He may have been hired by Avery because of a particular skill, or he may have just had a yen to go to the frontier to escape family and financial difficulties. Since his family was acquainted with Dr. James Craik, from whom Avery purchased his tract of land, he may have learned of the venture from him. But the results of his somewhat chance enlistment are significant. Turner's family connections were extensive and impressive. His maternal grandfather, Captain Lewis Ellzey, with whom he had feuded, was the first sheriff of Fairfax County, vestryman of Truro Parish, 1744-48, and a prosperous planter.[15] His paternal grandfather, Fielding Turner, a planter of considerable means, was one of the original justices of Loudoun County and churchwarden in Cameron Parish.[16] His uncle, William Ellzey, an Alexandria attorney, was frequently employed by George Washington, George Mason, and other Fairfax planters; he was also a stockholder in the Potomac Company, of which Washington was president. Other members of the Ellzey family, including another uncle, Thomasin Ellzey, were mentioned in George Washington's diary.[17]

John Turner was only the first of a string of kinsmen who came in the early nineteenth century to Wood County. The Turner family exodus from Fairfax began sometime after the death of Sarah Ellzey Turner in 1803. Father William and two brothers, Thomas and Thomasin Ellzey Turner. came to the Ohio Valley first as tenants of Dr. Joseph Spencer. For the young Turner brothers, removal from Fairfax to Wood County meant a new start, away from the ruined soils of the Northern Neck. But for their elderly father, who had spent his entire life in Loudoun County, outmigration was painful. William Turner had left his wife in the soil of their birth. In a

strange and new county where few persons were impressed with his heritage, he was lonely and isolated. Young Lewis Summers of Fairfax County, who traveled through western Virginia in 1808, left a record of their melancholy encounter: "The old Mr. Turner shed tears at parting, and walked with me a mile on the road to talk over the situation of all his old acquaintances."[18]

Among the emigrants who came with the Turner family were eleven slaves, eight of whom were named in a deed of gift from William to son Thomasin in 1811: Lydia, Sarah, Kersey, Robert, Daniel, Hannah, Jenny, and Esther.[19] In 1810 they resettled at Belleville, where they purchased land from the creditors of George Avery, who was bankrupt.[20] Two other brothers, Vincent and Lewis Ellzey Turner, and a sister, Sarah Turner Beatty, settled in Fayette County, Kentucky, about the same time.[21] Thomasin Turner eventually moved on to Missouri, completing a relocation process which took him halfway across the nation from the place of his birth. The Turners joined a legion of pioneers who had been cradled in the plantation lifestyle of the Northern Neck but who became rather ordinary westward-moving people. Few of Wood County's settlers had more patrician tidewater credentials than the Turners, but when they resettled they faded into the throng of plainfolk. Unlike the other Northern Neck aristocrats, there were no justices, militia officers, or high sheriffs among them. John Wheeler Turner, who began the outmigration, alone among the eight Turner siblings, is unaccounted for by descendants. His strident personality may have led him to an early grave or to a further distant frontier.[22]

The Turners did, however, attract other relatives to the region. Four of their first cousins, children of Marmaduke and Sybil Ellzey Beckwith, followed the Turners to Wood County: Marmaduke B., Newman, Tapley, and Lewis. Marmaduke Beckwith was among the most

important citizens of Fairfax County, having served as a justice of the peace, along with George Washington.[23] The Beckwiths were well-to-do farmers who settled south of the Little Kanawha River, where they socialized and intermarried with members of another large kinship group with whom they were already connected before relocating to Wood County, the Lewis-Neale-Keene families. Barnes Beckwith, Jr., son of their first cousin, Barnes , Sr., who followed them to the Ohio Valley, served as county sheriff, 1841-44. The contrast between the cousin Turner and Beckwith families is an interesting one which raises the issue of persistence. Why did one stay and prosper while the other moved on? It seems that the intermarriage between the Beckwith and Neale families, which made them an appendage of the endogamous and persistent Lewis-Neale-Keene clan, may account for the difference.

The large Lewis-Neale-Keene kinship group came to the 2,314-acre tract known as Washington Bottom, south of the mouth of the Little Kanawha River along the Ohio, claimed by George Washington in 1770 and surveyed for him by Colonel William Crawford in 1771. This plot was settled rather late because of the singular nature of its ownership. The first president did not sell or subdivide this land during his lifetime, and under the terms of his will it passed by lot in 1802 in two sections, the northern half to his niece, Elizabeth Lewis Carter, wife of Charles Carter, and the southern half to his nephew, George Steptoe Washington. Both portions were sold within a decade to two Loudoun-Fairfax gentrymen, who purchased them as a patrimony for their children. George Lewis acquired the upper tract in 1806, while Francis Keene procured the lower in two sales, 1810 and 1811.[24] Both men brought their large, interconnected families to the banks of the Ohio.

However, the first member of this clan to migrate was Thomas Neale, maternal

grandfather of Thomas "Stonewall" Jackson. He came to Wood County in 1801, settling near the mouth of the Little Kanawha on the north side. The Neales had been prominent in Northumberland and Westmoreland counties (from which Prince William was formed) since the seventeenth century. Neale's great-grandfather, Christopher Neale, represented Northumberland in the House of Burgesses, 1685-86, and successive generations had intermarried with local gentry families, the Rodhams, Presleys, and Fauntleroys. Thomas Neale, in 1794, married Margaret, daughter of Captain Minor Winn, of Rockhill Plantation, Fauquier County. At the time of their removal to Wood County, the Neales were living at Aldie, Loudoun County.[25] In keeping with the Old Virginia tradition of hospitality, Thomas Neale kept a tavern and hotel at Newport, the county seat, and owned an out-lot plantation north of the town, along the Ohio River, where he worked thirteen slaves.[26] His coming to northwestern Virginia was but one early link in a kinship migration chain which had begun five years earlier with the George D. Avery party which settled at Belleville. Thomas Neale's only sister, Judith Ann, was married to Newman Beckwith, a first cousin of the Turner brothers, John, Thomasin, and Thomas.[27] So he, too, was connected by marriage to the Turner-Beckwiths. And the chain of sequential migration continued through Thomas Neale to his brother George, with his in-law relationship to the Lewises, who were connected by marriage to the Keenes,[28] thus providing another one of those endless networks which so effectively settled the northwestern Virginia frontier in a single generation.

The fact that these linking marriages occurred before rather than after removal to Wood County is testimony of the cause and effect relationship of kinship migration. In other words, John Turner, who came rather incidentally as a pickup member of the Avery group, urged his

brothers and cousins to come. Thomas Neale, brother-in-law of a Beckwith cousin of the Turners followed. He, in turn, became an advocate of the region to his brother, George Neale, whose entire in-law family, the Lewises, migrated in 1806. They preceded the Keenes, to whom they were related by marriage. This does not, of course, minimize the relationship of the Lewises and Keenes to the Washington family in making their decision to buy the inherited tracts on the Ohio.

When one takes the time to unravel the genealogical ties that bound families which migrated cohesively and sequentially from one place to another, the collateral kinship principle is astounding. The intricate pattern of in-law relationships produced a settlement pattern of families who lived near each other but who did not share the same surname. Therefore, any demographic study of kinship migration, settlement patterns, and persistence based solely on census records is inherently flawed. Nowhere do we see this better illustrated than with the Keenes and Lewises, who had more daughters than sons. Of the eighteen siblings of these two families, thirteen were women. In looking at the antebellum census records of Washington Bottom, the chance demographer would assume, given the diversity of surnames, that there was little or no kinship relationship among the families when, in fact, they were an intimately connected kinship network. Every family that lived on Washington Bottom in the early nineteenth century were akin. Daniel Scott Smith, while conceding the limitations of methology based on the principle of isonymics (same-surname), nevertheless bases his conclusions of regional patterns of kin propinquity on what he admits is "a quick, easy, cheap, and crude way" to conduct such a study. Smith's finding of a low level of kinship index for the South in comparison to that of New England may suffer from this methodology.[29] If our hypothetical

census taker (and those who rely on his data today) had come to Washington Bottom in Wood County during the frontier period, he would have found Neales, Lewises, Keenes, Coffers, Simpsons, Edelens, Harwoods, Kings, Beards, and Mauzeys, never suspecting (or perhaps caring for that matter) that they were all closely-related members of a single kinship group. Furthermore, other than slaves, there were no persons living in the immediate vicinity who were not connected by blood or marriage. In the sister-connected kinship groups in other parts of Wood County, the same phenomenon may be observed: the Spencers, Lords, Seldens, and Wests at Vienna; the Williamses, Tomlinsons, Kinnairds, Kellers, Gills, Davises, Pughs, Hietts, and Gards at Williamstown; and the Averys, Prentisses, Hempsteads, and Allens at Belleville are but a few examples.

George Lewis, the first to settle at Washington Bottom, in 1806, was born in 1743 in Cameron Parish, Loudoun County. He married Violet Gist, a distant cousin of the famous Ohio Company explorer, Christopher Gist. The Lewises were parents of six children, four daughters and two sons, all of whom migrated to Wood County except the eldest daughter, who died prior to their leaving.[30] Daughter Sarah married George Neale, brother of Thomas; daughter Elizabeth was married to Robert Edelen; and daughter Nancy was the wife of John Hall Harwood.[31] Their younger son, William Gist Lewis, married Mary Keene, daughter of Francis Keene, thus providing the linkage to the Keene extended families who soon followed. Lewis subdivided his 1,157-acre tract among his five surviving children prior to his death in 1811. Like all the Northern Neck gentry who came to Wood County, the Lewises practiced the principle of endogamy almost exclusively. All the Lewis children had intermarried with other middling plantation aristocrats before their out-migration, and they married their children into Old Virginia

families after their arrival. The grandchildren of George and Violet Gist Lewis were intermarried with the Neale, Powers, Davis, Mayberry, Kincheloe, Creel, Keene, Bradford, Hardin, Simpson, King, Clark, Leonard, Logan, and Chancellor families, all of respectable tidewater or piedmont lineage. Only six of their forty-two grandchildren married outside this circle, and then only into families of prominence from other regions, like southwesterrn Pennsylvania and New England. Six married Neale and Keene cousins.[32]

The migration story of the Francis Keene family is similar to that of George and Violet Neale, except that Keene had buried two wives in Fairfax County and came to the banks of the Ohio River a widower.[33] Francis Keene was a planter of considerable means. His father William had deeded him a 100-acre plantation on Pohick Creek; in addition he owned a 166-acre parcel on the upper side of Bull Run and a 350-acre tract on Pohick, which he sold to Richard Bland Lee in 1806. He also leased Belvoir Plantation on the Potomac River, fourteen miles below Alexandria, between Mt. Vernon and Gunston Hall, from Ferdinando Fairfax, during the decade prior to his removal to northwestern Virginia.[34] While the spacious manor house of Belvoir had burned in the late eighteenth century, it was still one of the largest and most prestigious properties in all of Virginia. The fact that he could afford to lease the Fairfax estate is an indication of the prosperity of the Keene family. When his father William died in 1806, Francis Keene, along with three brothers, inherited a substantial estate.[35]

Keene was the father of twelve children, nine of whom were daughters. Most of these daughters were already wed into Northern Neck families: Mary to William Lewis; Sarah to her cousin, Eli Keene; Susan to James King; Keronhappach to another cousin, William Simpson; Nancy to Thomas Mauzy; and Mathila to William F. Coffer. Among these in-law kin, the Coffer

family was especially prominent in Fairfax. William was a grandson of Thomas Withers Coffer, a fellow vestryman of George Washington at the Pohick Church, whose family pew was next to that of George Mason.[36] The Keene family, like the Neales, was highly endogamous after their arrival in northwestern Virginia. Among the younger children, Anastasia married William Neale, Francis Marhsall Keene married Mary Ann Harwood and later Mary Edelen, and Frances wed Thompson Simpson, brother of her brother-in-law William, all members of the same extended kinship group.[37] One might reason that such a pattern of intermarriage can be explained by the close proximity of their farms and their social intercourse, and this is true to an extent. But the extremely high incidence of endogamy further indicates the preference of both parents and children for consanguine marriage partners.

The plantation lifestyle of the Washington Bottom families was full of gentility and hospitality, as they had merely transplanted their folkways from the Northern Neck to the Ohio Valley. By 1830 they had built large, comfortable homes of frame and brick, some of which stood well into the mid-twentieth century.[38] Their plantations were among the most productive in Wood County, and their lively entertainment and society were considered to be the best in the region. A descendant, Nancy Stout Beckwith, has described their way of life:

> They brought their household goods, tools, horses, cattle, sheep and hogs. Many of their slaves were highly trained workmen, blacksmiths, carpenters and farmers. The women could weave and were fine cooks and house-keepers. By the time their homes were completed there was a well-traveled road leading from one house to another (the houses being built on the ridge just above the highwater line.) They set out Bois-D-Arc hedges along the road, and each house was surrounded with fruit trees, resulting in the plenti-ful supply of cider, vinegar, peach brandy, and other kinds of refreshments of which our pioneer forefathers were fond.[39]

The plantation aristocrats of Washington Bottom, unlike all the other Virginia kinship groups,

had little taste for local politics. Of the first generation, only Robert Edelen served as high sheriff, 1825-27. The names of Keene, Lewis, and Neale are generally absent from the list of gentlemen justices. This is not surprising, however. They had not played key roles in the politics of Fairfax and Loudoun counties before migration, tending rather to mind the economic duties of their plantations, as they continued to do along the Ohio. Because they were not part of the earliest migrations and because they had few ties with the Neal-Phelpses and Kincheloe-Creels, the dominant political clans, it is likely that they were not brought into the governing circle of the county. Furthermore, Wood County politics was very tumultuous during frontier times, and the Washington Bottom gentry may have felt themselves above the conflict, that Northern Neck sense of character and right conduct.

Another set of notable Northern Neck emigrants were three sons of Alexander Henderson, Sr., and his wife, Sarah Moore Henderson, who came to Wood County in 1798 or soon thereafter, Alexander, Jr., John Glassford, and James Henderson.[40] Henderson, Sr., emigrated from Scotland in 1756 and settled in Colchester, Virginia, where he became a prominent merchant.[41] He served as a justice of Fairfax County for over twenty years and represented Fairfax in the House of Delegates in 1781, then from 1783-85. Later in the decade, he sat for Prince William County in the Assembly, 1789-90.[42] Born in Lanarkshire, near Glosgow, Scotland, Henderson was the resident factor for John Glassford & Company, Scotland's largest tobacco importer. He was an avid fox hunter who on occasions enjoyed the chase with George Washington and Bryan Fairfax.[43] In 1787 he removed to nearby Dumfries, in Prince William County, though he continued to maintain his store and warehouse in Colchester, along with others in Occoquan and Alexandria. The twenty-one-room Henderson House in

Dumfries still stands today.[44] In 1784, Alexander Henderson, Sr., was appointed as one of four Virginia commissioners, along with George Mason, James Madison, and Edmund Randolph, to meet with representatives of Maryland to discuss problems related to taxation and Potomac navigation and commerce, the so-called Alexandria Conference of 1785.[45] Henderson served as a vestryman of the Pohick Church, along with George Washington, where he purchased two of the six pews in front of the cross aisle, reserved for the parish's most important congregants; the other four were bought by George Washington, George William Fairfax, Lawrence Washington, and Harrison Manley.[46] In addition, Henderson was a stockholder of the Potomac Company, an ambitious and visionary project to connect the Potomac River to the western waters, thus opening the interior to the major Virginia port cities, particularly Alexandria.[47]

Though the Henderson brothers were from the Northern Neck, like the Lewis-Neale-Keenes, and though there were similarities in their lifestyles, the contrasts between the two groups are striking. Alone among the major slaveholders of Fairfax County[48] and the leading vestrymen of Pohick Church, Alexander Henderson was the only first generation immigrant and the only merchant. His interest in the frontier region was largely economic. The Washington Bottom families sold their land in Fairfax and Loudoun and bought Ohio River tracts for the purpose of permanent resettlement of an extended family unit. Henderson sent his young unmarried sons to the Little Kanawha and Ohio valleys to hew plantations from the wilderness and enlarge his profits and wealth. The contrast is one of modest gentility and the profit motive. While he certainly was interested in obtaining good situations for his sons, their migration was not part of a wholesale family exodus; three other sons remained behind in Fairfax to follow military and legal careers, along with four daughters who (except for one who remained single)

married into prominent Northern Neck families. The Wood County farms were part of his large entrepreneurial ventures, which included shipping the wheat, pork, beef, and tobacco of his Potomac and northwestern Virginia plantations abroad.

Alexander Henderson's endeavors to exploit his western Virginia bottom lands resulted from his having received, as a merchant, a number of Revolutionary War bounty land warrants through trade at his stores. As a result, he claimed 25,950 acres in Harrison County (later Wood) and smaller amounts in Hampshire and Randolph counties.[49] During the war, those states with western lands offered bounty land as an incentive to attract men to enlist. Payment in land, which was plentiful, was preferable to payment in scarce cash. However, at the end of the war "[o]nly a few soldiers actually received title to bounty land or settled on it, as most veterans sold or exchanged their warrants."[50] Henderson was not the only Eastern merchant who thus benefited from the cash-starved economy of the post-war period. As related in Chapter Six, merchant-speculators claimed the great majority of acreage in northwestern Virginia, like the Philadelphia firm of Tilton and Gibbs, which appropriated a tract of 91,557 acres in 1785 in future Wood County. Other leading merchants, like Henry Banks and James Caldwell, also claimed large amounts of acreage in western Virginia.

The Henderson brothers brought a gang of slaves[51] from Fairfax to clear land, where they soon established working plantations at Cow Creek and Spring Creek.[52] Though the early years were difficult ones, they quickly involved themselves in the politics and society of the new county. They soon hired a manager, John Griffith, of Washington County, Maryland, which gave them more time for business, political, and leisure activities.[53] Lewis Summers, traveling in the Ohio Valley in 1808, visited the Cow Creek plantation on July 18, having early that day called on

Dr. Joseph Spencer at Vienna. He was impressed with the progress that had been made by the Hendersons in only a few years: "Crossed over [the Ohio River] and took a view of Marietta and proceeded to Henderson's Quarter, 10 miles from Marietta. This farm contains 2,000 acres, about 200 in corn; expect to make 2000 barrels. They work 30 hands. Stock of hogs, cattle and horses fine."[54]

John Glassford[55] was the politician among the Henderson brothers, the eldest of ten children. He was named by Governor James Wood as one of the eleven original justices of Wood County when it was formed in 1799, allying himself with the Neal-Phelps Republican faction in the early struggles over control of the county court. On November 11, 1800, the court appointed him as major of the First Battalion of Wood County's militia. Earlier that year he had been elected to the House of Delegates. John G. Henderson was a combatant in the only recorded duel to take place on the northwestern Virginia frontier. He was challenged by Stephen R. Wilson, the hot-headed son-in-law of his political rival, Dr. Joseph Spencer, over a rumored slur of one of Spencer's daughters. To avoid arrest in Virginia, the duelers and their seconds went to a high bluff overlooking the Ohio River on the Ohio side near Belpre, where both were seriously wounded. Henderson was taken to an inn at Newport (Parkersburg) along the south side of the Little Kanawha River, where he was treated and cared for by Esther Prentiss Hempstead, wife of the innkeeper.[56] Dueling was not inconsistent with the values of the time, and he later served as high sheriff from 1817-19 despite this earlier indiscretion.

Alexander, or "Sandy" as he was known to contemporaries, was well-named after his entrepreneurial father. He joined his brother as a county justice in 1807. In 1815, he was elected as the third cashier of the Bank of Marietta, which had been founded in 1808, the first banking

institution in the State of Ohio.[57] Three years later, Henderson joined with thirty other business and agricultural leaders of the region, most of whom were from Marietta, to form the Agricultural and Manufacturing Society of Washington [Ohio] and Wood Counties; he and the former Henderson overseer, John Griffith, were elected trustees. Henderson was appointed, along with Ephraim Cutler and Joseph Barker of Marietta, to draft "An Address to the Citizens of Washington and Wood Counties," which highlighted his commitment to agriculture as well as his interest in promoting improved farming techniques. They declared that the purpose of the new society was

> giving stimulus and facility to industry, by granting premiums to those who have excelled in practical husbandry, in domestic manufactures, in improving the different breeds of domestic animals, and the various implements of husbandry. . . . Among the first objects contemplated by the society for the improvement of our agricultural and manufacturing interests, are the collection of such interesting facts as are the results of practical information, and encouragement and reward of experiments and improvements requiring time, care, situation, and expense, not within the reach of every individual, and thus to promote the interest of all by the encouragement of industry and enterprise and the improvement of productive labor.[58]

Alexander Henderson applied this rhetoric to his own plantation; he was one of the first professional horse breeders and trainers in the Ohio Valley, as well as one of the area's most successful farmers.[59] In 1814, Henderson built a two-story brick plantation home at Cow Creek, later occupied by his brother James. The oldest house in what is now Pleasants County, West Virginia, it has been renovated as a conference center by American Cyanimid, Willow Island Division.[60]

Two of the Henderson brothers, Alexander and James, chose wives from among the gentry families of Fairfax County; only John G. married into a local family. His wife was

Drusilla, only child of frontiersman and town founder Isaac Williams and his wife, Rebecca Tomlinson Williams. His father-in-law was a man of humble origins and limited means, though he was one of the most highly respected men on the northwestern Virginia frontier. Alexander returned to Fairfax for a bride, Jane Hutchison Lithgow of Colchester. James Henderson married Nancy Holliday, also of Fairfax County. Unlike the Turner-Beckwiths and the Lewis-Neale-Keene families, the Hendersons did not induce large scale resettlement. The Henderson's farm manager, John Griffith, settled permanently in the county and married the daughter of a Rockingham County emigrant, William Rolston. And Nancy Holliday's brother, William Holliday, came from Fairfax County ca. 1810 following his marriage to Ann Morton, daughter of a Prince William County planter. Holliday purchased out-lot #15 in Parkersburg, where he established one of the earliest brickyards in northwestern Virginia.[61] Another family which may have come to Wood County as a result of the influence of the Hendersons was Hector Ross Eskridge and his wife, Susannah Cockerell Eskridge, plantation aristocrats of Fairfax County.[62]

The sizeable number of Northern Neck plantation aristocrats who settled in frontier Wood County and their successful efforts to replicate the lifestyle of their parents along the banks of the Ohio and Little Kanawha rivers lays to rest the stereotype of Southern colonists as illiterate, shiftless, squatter types "who were no more self-sufficient than the Delaware Indians."[63] In reality, the frontier of northwestern Virginia attracted a wide spectrum of settlers which included slaves, squatters, tenants, yeoman farmers, villagers, the middling sort, members of the Revolutionary War officer class, and Virginia and Maryland plantation aristocrats, most of whom came as members of tightly-knit kinship/neighbor networks.

Regardless of their origin, there are remarkable similarities in the settlement behaviors of

all kinship groups. They migrated cohesively and sequentially, settled near each other, practiced reciprocity, generally intermarried within their own circle, and engaged in an economic pattern of competency. They clearly preferred their own kinsmen to strangers from other sections of the country. Conflict between kin groups was most obvious in the political arena, however, and their partisan behaviors were largely indistinguishable. All but the plainfolk and the gentler plantation elites got involved in the sordid feuds of the political factionalism of frontier northwestern Virginia.

NOTES

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2. Frank L. Owsley, "The Pattern of Migration and Settlement on the Southern Frontier," The Journal of Southern History, 11 (May 1945), 165.

3. Philander D. Chase (ed.), The Papers of George Washington, Colonial Series, 10 vols. (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1983-95). Thomas Withers Coffer is mentioned in 7:361, 378, 384, 428-9; 8:146, 148, 248; William Keene in 6:257, 390; 7:380; 8:145-6; George Lewis, 9:36; Christopher Neale, 1:290, 292; and William Simpson, 7:382; 9:396. Alexander Henderson, Sr., with whom Washington had a close personal and business relationship, is mentioned most often: 7:361, 380, 384, 428-9, 491-2; 8:141-2, 247-8, 487-9; 9:8-9, 134-5, 178-9, 191, 222-3, 229, 394; 10:144, 150, 284, 305, 316-7, 319.

4. Charles Henty Ambler, Sectionalism In Virginia From 1776 to 1861 (Chicago, 1910; reprint, New York: Russell & Russell, 1964), 11,12.

5. David Hackett Fischer and James C. Kelly, Bound Away: Virginia and the Westward Movement (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2000), 86.

6. "History of Dumfries," highway marker, Route 1, Dumfries, Virginia.

7. Quoted in Roger G. Kennedy, "Introduction" to The Smithsonian Guide to Historic America: Virginia and the Capital Region (New York: Stewart, Tabori, & Chang, 1989), 16, found in

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9. Ibid., 163.

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11. Hugh A. Garland, The Life of John Randolph of Roanoke, 2 vols. (New York: D. Appleton & Co., 1850), II, 15.

12. Fischer and Kelly, Bound Away, 212.

13. Joan E. Cashin, A Family Venture: Men and Women on the Southern Frontier (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 33-9.

14. Owsley, "The Pattern of Migration," 147.

15. Donald Jackson and Dorothy Twohig (eds.), The Diaries of George Washington, 6 vols. (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1976-9), II, 33. Captain Ellzey's wife was Mary Thomasin Griffin, widow of Walter Griffin, who was a near kinswoman of his mother, Isabel Thomasin Ellzey.

16. Ruth and Sam Sparacio, Virginia County Court Records: Deed Abstracts of Loudoun County, Virginia, 1757-1762 (McLean, Virginia: Antient Press, 1987), 1, 6.

17. See Jackson and Twohig, George Washington, III, 69, 127.

18. James Morton Callahan, History of West Virginia Old and New, 2 vols, (Chicago: The American Historical Society, 1923), I, 132. Summers soon removed to Kanawha County near Charleston, along with his parents, George and Ann Summers. Their Fairfax estate was called Summer Grove. Both he and his brother, George W. Summers, were prominent in Kanawha County affairs in the antebellum period.

19. Wood County 1810 census; Wood County Deed Book 4:266.

20. Wood County Deed Book 4:166, 268. Thomas sold his 63 acres in 1819 and apparently moved on. Thomasin E. and his wife Mary sold their 243 acres in 1829 and 1831 and removed to Marion County, Missouri, Deed Book 5:417; Deed Book 7:286, 519.

21. 1810 Census of Fayette County, Kentucky; 1840 Census of Green County, Kentucky. The habit of migration continued in this family, as in most others. Another sister, Nancy Clark, settled in Indiana. Vincent Turner moved on to Iowa and Thomasin Ellzey Turner to Missouri, where they died in old age, having made two migrations taking them halfway across the

continent.

22. Pam Sulzer, a Turner descendant, during years of research has accounted for all the children of William and Sarah Ellzey Turner except John, e-mail discussion on June 25, 2002.

23. Netherton, Fairfax County, 65. Marmaduke Beckwith is mentioned in the diary of George Washington, who attended a horse race near his plantation. See Jackson and Twohig, George Washington, II, 76.

24. Charles M. Boso, A View of Washington Bottom (Parsons, West Virginia: McClain Printing Co., 1984), 23-4.

25. Roy Bird Cook, The Family and Early Life of Stonewall Jackson, 5th ed. (Charleston, West Virginia: Education Foundation, Inc., 1967), 25-6.

26. 1810 Census of Wood County..

27. Thomas J. "Stonewall" Jackson's mother, Judith Beckwith Neale Jackson, was named for Mrs. Beckwith.

28. George Neale was married to Sarah, daughter of George and Violet Gist Lewis. Sarah's brother William was the husband of Mary Keene, daughter of Francis Keene, thus joining the Lewis-Neale-Keene families.

29. Daniel Scott Smith, "'All in Some Degree Related to Each Other': A Demographic and Comparative Resolution of the Anomaly of New England Kinship," The American Historical Review, 94 Supplement (February 1989), 44-79.

30. Mary Lewis Beard's children, however, accompanied the family to northwestern Virginia and later married into Old Dominion families.

31. Jean M. Dorsey and Maxwell J. Dorsey, Christopher Gist of Maryland & Some of His Descendants, 1679-1957 (Chicago: privately published, n.d.), 170-71. Robert Edelen was born in Charles County, Maryland, scion of one of the most distinguished gentry families of that area. He later settled in Loudoun County, where he married Elizabeth Lewis. See Harry Wright Newman, Charles County Gentry (Baltimore: Gateway Press, 1971), 203-05. John Hall Harwood was a native of Anne Arundel County, Maryland, where his family had been prominent from the earliest colonial days. See Nancy Stout Beckwith, The Story of Washington Bottom, Wood County, West Virginia (Parkersburg, West Virginia: West Augusta Historical & Genealogical Society, 1955), 44-7.

32. Dorsey, loc. cit.

33. His first wife was a Simpson, first name unknown to me; his second, Mary Ann (Molly) Marshall, daughter of Thomas and Jane Keene Marshall of Loudoun County.

34. Fairfax County Deed Book X-1:463-4; Deed Book GG: 439-41; Deed Book J-2:82-3, 101-03. Gunston Hall was the Fairfax plantation of George Mason.

35. Fairfax County Will Book J-1:41-2.

36. Netherton, Fairfax County, 75-6. Citizens were seated by order of their prominence in the parish, and only George Washington, George William Fairfax, Lawrence Washington, Alexander Henderson, Harrison Manley, and Mason were more prominently seated.

37. Nancy Stout Beckwith, Gleanings from Wood County, West Virginia, History (Washington, West Virginia, self-published, 1969), 41; LDS Records: AFN:SBBF-6C, AFN:SBBD-Z6,AFN:SBBF-7J, AFN:SBBK-27, AFN:SBBF-8P, AFN:SBBK-4K, AFN:SBBK-73, AFN:SBBF-FK, AFN:SBBJ-N6, AFN:SBBJ-PC, AFN:SBBJ-SV, AFN:SBBJ-V7, AFN:SBBK-0V, and AFN:SBBH-LP.

38. For example, the homes of Robert Edelen, John Hall Harwood, Francis Keene, and Lewis Neale, all built before 1830, survived until after World War II, when the DuPont Company, Borg-Warner Chemical, and the Carborundum Corporation bought 1,200 acres of bottomland to locate industrial facilities. The old homesteads, in various stages of disrepair, were razed.

39. Beckwith, Story, 20.

40. Three other brothers stayed behind and became prominent men: Brigadier General Archibald Henderson was commandant of the U.S. Marine Corps, 1820-59; Richard Henry Henderson was a lawyer at Leesburg and member of the Virginia House of Delegates; Dr. Thomas Henderson was an army medical doctor. See William Meade's Old Churches, Ministers, and Families of Virginia, 2 vols. (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott, 1900), II. 233; Capt. William D. Parker, USMCR, A Concise History of the United States Marine Corps, 1775-1969 (Washington, D.C.: Historical Division, United States Marine Corps, 1970), 15-21. All four sisters stayed in Old Virginia and three married into gentry families.

41. Robert Carter and Kate Mason Rowland, "Merchants and Mills," William and Mary College Quarterly Historical Magazine, 11, 2nd series, (January 1903), 245-6.

27. "House of Delegates, 1781," Virginia Magazine of History and Biography, 5 (October 1897), 217.

43. Jackson and Twohig, George Washington, II, 114.

44."The Henderson House," @www.geocities.com/TheTropics/Equator/6490/hendersonhouse.

45. Netherton, Fairfax County, 130-31. This meeting led to the Annapolis conference of 1786, which called the Philadelphia convention of 1787. See also Jackson and Twohig, IV, 105-08. Washington was interested in the outcome of this meeting. The Maryland delegates first met with Mason and Henderson at the latter's Alexandria home, where they waited for the arrival of

Madison and Randolph. They later adjourned to Mt. Vernon, where the commissioners met from Friday, March 25, 1785, until they signed their agreement on Monday, March 28, leaving the following day.

46. Netherton, Fairfax County, 75-6; a diagram of the front pews is shown on page 75. A photograph of the Pohick Church showing the front pew boxes is displayed in "Where a President Worshipped," Southern Living (November 1975), 68-9.

47. Corra Bacon-Foster, Early Chapters in the Development of the Patomac Route to the West (Washington, D.C.: Columbia Historical Society, 1912), 59. Other major stockholders included George Washington, who served a president, James Rumsey, Lund Washington, William Hartshorne, George Digges, Horatio Gates, Charles Lee, Thomas Sim Lee, Philip Pendleton, and William Ellzey.

48. Alexander Henderson owned 72 slaves in 1782, making him the eighth largest slaveholder in the county. Only George Washington, George Mason, William Fitzhugh, Penelope French, Benjamin Dulaney, Thomas Fitzhugh, and Philip Lee owned more. Henderson was the only merchant and first generation immigrant among this group. See Netherton, Fairfax County, 35.

49. Edgar Sims, Sims' Index to Land Grants in West Virginia (Charleston, West Virginia: n.p., 1952), 194-5, 298-9.

50. Myra Vanderpool Gormley, "Revolutionary War Military Records," @www.genealogy.com /24_myra.html; see also Lloyd DeWitt Bockstruck, Revolutionary War Bounty Land Grants Awarded by State Governments (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., 1996), and Lloyd DeWitt Bockstruck, "Revolutionary War Bounty Land Grants," @www.genealogy.com/24_land.html.

51. In the 1810 census, the first which lists slaves in Wood County, the Hendersons were working fifty slaves on the Cow Creek and Spring Creek plantations, most of which would have been brought from Fairfax County.

52. An interesting account of their settlement and early experiences is found in the Henderson-Tomlinson Family Papers, West Virginia and Regional History Collection, West Virginia University, Morgantown.

53. Allan Peskin (ed.) North Into Freedom: The Autobiography of John Malvin, Free Negro, 1795-1880 (Kent, Ohio: Kent State University Press, 1988), 29-30.

54. Callahan, West Virginia, I, 132.

55. John G. Henderson was named for the well-to-do Scotsman who owned John Glassford & Company, the largest tobacco importing firm in Scotland. His father was a factor for Glassford.

56. Henderson-Tomlinson Family Papers, West Virginia and Regional History Collection, West Virginia University, Morgantown. Mrs. Hempstead was the sister-in-law of George D. Avery, a county justice from Belleville, and Elijah Backus, a former justice who then lived at Marietta.

57. Washington County Historical Society, The History of Washington County, Ohio (Cleveland, 1881; reprint, Knightstown, Indiana: The Bookmark, 1976), 373. Perhaps the only attempted robbery of the bank in the nineteenth century occurred while Alexander Henderson was cashier. His son, George Washington Henderson, a clerk at the bank, was struck on the head by an assailant who tried to snatch the keys. The blow was deflected by an umbrella; when he shouted for help, the unsuccessful thief fled.

58. Constitution, &c of the Agricultural and Manufacturing Society of Washington and Wood Counties in Virginia and Ohio (Marietta, Ohio, 1819), 6, 7. Rare Book and Manuscript Collection, Dawes Memorial Library, Marietta, Ohio.

59. Henderson Farms in Williamstown, West Virginia, continued to breed and race champion quarter houses well into the twentieth century.

60. "Oldest House in Pleasants Co. Will Be Calco Company Offices," Parkersburg News, April 28, 1946.

61. John A. House, Holliday Graveyard (reprint, Parkersburg, West Virginia: Wood County Historical and Preservation Society, 2001), 1, 4-5.

62. Hector Ross, for whom Eskridge was named, was a prosperous merchant of Alexandria and a friend of the Hendersons. The Eskridges seem to have had no ties to any other group of colonists who came to Wood County.

63. Andrew R.L. Cayton and Paula R. Riggs, City Into Town: the City of Marietta, Ohio, 1788-1988 (Marietta, Ohio: Marietta College Dawes Memorial Library, 1991), 63.

Chapter Five
The Revolution of 1800:
Kinship Controversy and the Creation of Wood County

The Revolution of 1800, such as it was, was played out in microcosm in newly-created Wood County. Two factions, one made up of Connecticut Federalists, the other of Virginia Jeffersonians, vied with each other for control of the county court and the location of the courthouse. It was a struggle which flirted with violence and which manifested the territorial instincts and the kinship preferences of the combatants, one which highlighted the regional, economic, and ethnic as well as the political differences between the two groups. Interestingly enough, it was settled only when the new Republican Governor James Monroe intervened to tilt the county court in favor of his own party by appointing additional justices.

The years from 1797 to 1801 were among the most intense periods of political partisanship in American history. The Federalists had narrowly held on to the presidency in the last election, and the vice president, Thomas Jefferson, was the founder and leader of the opposition Republican party, still a minority faction but challenging the leadership of the Federalist party because of its appeal to backwoodsmen and recent immigrants who were swelling the ranks of the Jeffersonians. It was an emotional period of high party spirits feuled by the quasi-war with France, the XYZ dispatches, the Alien and Sedition Acts, and the Virginia and Kentucky Resolutions. In fact, the disclosure of the Marshall-Pinckney-Gerry correspondence in April 1798 had seemingly halted the decline of the Federalist Party, establishing its dominance in the Congress at least for the time being, as Americans closed ranks to support the president when it seemed that war was imminent.[1]

In Virginia, where the Republicans were dominant not only in the Congressional delegation but also in both houses of the General Assembly, the war scare created an intense struggle which resulted in the most serious Federalist challenge to the Republican majority in a half-decade. In the 1799 elections, the Federalists doubled their Congressional representation, from four to eight. They also added to their numbers in the Assembly, though they still remained in the minority. "It was the era of . . . irresponsible language, of partisan and personal journalism, of public meetings, and mass resolutions — all in the process of helping to define party interests, build party organizations, and divide previously united Virginians."[2] It was an age when politics divided communities and set neighbor against neighbor, when innuendo and personal grievance set the tone for elections and determined the nature of community relationships, and when kinship connections often determined one's position on local, regional, and national issues.

It was in this political milieu of bitterness and strife that the new county of Wood was created along the Ohio River in northwestern Virginia. Some of its major kinship groups were caught up in the agitation which resonated from the northwestern Virginia frontier to Richmond and Philadelphia and soon to the new capital along the Potomac. Its leading citizens became embroiled in a dispute over control of the county court, of other county offices, and over the location of the county seat which mirrored the state and national conflict. Like the national struggle, the local one ended in a Republican victory.

In 1798, 146 "Sundry Inhabitants of Harrison County, Little Kenhawa and Hughes Rivers, Bull and Plum Creek settlements" petitioned the General Assembly to create a new county along the Ohio River, citing "[t]he Distance from the Center of our Settlements to the

courthouse [at Clarksburg, Harrison County] of Seventy four Miles the way mountainous and many dangers [and] no comfortable accommodations."[3] In response to the petition, Wood County was created by act of the General Assembly passed December 21, 1798, and effective May 1, 1799. The new county was named for the current governor, James Wood, who was directed to appoint justices to meet at the home of Hugh Phelps to organize the county on the first court day following the effective date of its creation.[4] Phelps, who had served as a justice of Harrison County, was the son-in-law/brother-in-law of Captain James Neal, the first permanent settler in what is now Parkersburg, the county seat. Neal and Phelps had once resided in the Georges Creek section of Monongalia County, Virginia (later Fayette County, Pennsylvania), before settling in 1785 south of the Little Kanawha River at Neal's Station. A number of kinsmen and neighbors followed them sequentially in the decade and a half before the formation of Wood County. Theirs was the most numerous clan in the area south of that river which would divide the new county in half.[5]

Pursuant to the act creating Wood County, Governor Wood appointed nine justices on January 9, 1799, including three who had previously served on the Harrison County Court, Colonel William Lowther, Phelps, and Elijah Backus, as well as six others: Thomas Pribble, Caleb Hitchcock, Thomas Lord, Jacob Bennett, John Glassford Henderson, and Ichabod Comstock Griffin. Residents of the new town of Vienna petitioned the governor to appoint two more justices from that part of the county. Governor Wood obliged them by appointing Dr. Joseph Spencer and Colonel Abner Lord to the court on March 29, 1799. Vienna, located on land owned by Spencer and Lord, who were brothers-in-law, had been created by the General Assembly in 1795. It was centrally located in the new county several miles north of the Little

Kanawha River, it had already been surveyed into town lots, and its trustees hoped that it would be designated as the county seat.[6] Phelps and the senior justice, Colonel Lowther, had a different idea. They intended to have the county seat located on lands owned by Phelps south of the Little Kanawha River.[7] Thus, the stage was set for a breach of the court before it ever held its first meeting. The Phelps faction petitioned Governor Wood for redress of what they believed to be an inadequate distribution of justices, with almost half of those appointed coming from the town of Vienna:

> [T]he Virginia (or County) party Petitioned . . . for an Equal distribution of Justices throughout the County to prevent a partial administration; remonstrating at the Same time against the usurpation of Vienna, infering that Joseph Spencer and Abner Lord had been Commissioned on very Iniquitous grounds having used the names of Sundry people as petitioners without their consent or knowledge, through which sordid medium their Commissions Issued.[8]

Thus, in the minds of the appointed justices, lines were already drawn and two factions, the Virginia party and the New England party, had emerged before the court held its first organizational meeting. And the struggle had a typical frontier character pitting two communal groups with territorial interests. Each of the two factions centered around extended kinship networks which had already developed a keen dislike for each other.

The seeds of discord had been sown between these two factions at least two years earlier, and the nature of the strife was personal as well as political. The feud had erupted on February 19, 1797, when James Neal, acting as a justice of Harrison County, had sworn a warrant for the arrest of Dr. Spencer on a complaint of hog stealing. The Vienna doctor, a recent emigrant from Connecticut, was an unlikely petty thief. He was the largest resident landholder in the area, a Revolutionary War officer and surgeon, and son of Major General Joseph Spencer. Nevertheless,

he was hauled before Neal like a common criminal, though he was subsequently cleared of the charges. Then Spencer sued Neal for trespass and false arrest. In the complaint filed by his attorney, Philip Doddridge, a young Federalist from Wellsburg, Spencer claimed that the arresting deputy had come for him "with Swords Clubs and Knives . . . did make an assault and Did then and there beat wound and imprison and Evil intreat him . . . so that his Life was greatly despaired."[9] The jury found Neal guilty and fined him ten cents, far less than the one thousand dollars that Spencer had sought. From that day forward there was bad blood between the Spencer-Lord faction and the Neal-Phelps clan.

Then the feud took on a political tone in 1798 when Colonel Benjamin Wilson, clerk of Harrison County, came to Vienna where he addressed a group of leading citizens likely to be named as justices of the new county when and if it were formed. He proposed a "Reciprocal Service" whereby he would "assist and promote the division of Harrison County" in return for a promise of support for his son, Stephen R. Wilson, as clerk of the new county when it was created.[10] The younger Wilson, by the way, was Dr. Spencer's son-in-law. This self-serving intrusion by the county clerk was resented by the Phelps faction in part because of the political chasm that separated them, a divide rooted in Harrison County politics. Colonel Wilson was the leading Federalist in Harrison County and the arch-enemy of George Jackson, the Republican Congressman from the Third District who had been unseated by Federalist James Machir in 1797 and who was preparing for a rematch in April 1799. Wilson, of course, had supported Machir. Colonel William Lowther, the first sheriff of Harrison and a justice of that county, was a close friend and supporter of Jackson.[11]

To further complicate the political rift, George Jackson's son, John G. Jackson, was a

candidate for the House of Delegates from Harrison County against Federalist Benjamin Robinson, who was backed by Colonel Wilson. Jackson was soon to become the best-connected Republican in western Virginia, as he was then betrothed to Mary Payne, sister of Dolly Madison. He had prevailed on his father's friend, Colonel Lowther, now living near the Ohio River in what would become Wood County, to introduce him to Republicans there. John G. Jackson campaigned on a promise of introducing a bill for the separation of Harrison County, and this gained him the support of the majority in that section, thus assuring his victory.[12] In short, the members of the Phelps faction were Republicans who had emigrated from Monongalia County and who were allied with the Jackson clique. Phelps and Lowther, in fact, were appointed in January 1800 by the Virginia State Republican organization as members of a special county committee of correspondence to work for the election of Jefferson and other party candidates.[13] And the Spencer-Lord faction were Federalists from Connecticut with political and marital ties to Benjamin Wilson.

The feud between these two groups deepened when John G. Jackson succeeded in pushing the bill through the General Assembly creating Wood County and then tried to influence Governor Wood, a neutral who had tried to steer a non-partisan course, in his appointment of justices for the new county. Jackson allegedly told the governor and members of the Council that Joseph Spencer and Abner Lord were "hog thieves" who were unworthy to sit on the bench. The allusion was, of course, to Spencer's unceremonious arrest in 1797. This explains why Spencer and Lord were not named in the original commission. Both Spencer and Lord filed suit against Jackson for defamation in the Monongalia District Court, though the verdict was for the defendant. Appearing as witnesses in behalf of Delegate Jackson were James Neal, Hugh Phelps,

and William Lowther, the sworn enemies of Spencer and Lord.[14] The plaintiffs were represented by Philip Doddridge and Noah Linsly, both young Federalist lawyers in northwestern Virginia. Linsly, like Spencer and Lord, was a native of Connecticut.[15] This incident further poisoned relations among the newly-appointed justices of Wood County.

The situation could hardly have been more divisive when the justices of Wood County first met at the home of Hugh Phelps on May 13, 1799. Of the eleven justices commissioned, ten appeared on the appointed day, five committed to the Republican Neal-Phelps faction and five to the Vienna Federalist faction. Elijah Backus, who still owned property in Wood County but who had recently removed to Marietta in the Northwest Territory, was reported to be absent from the area. If he had attended, his decisive vote would have gone to the Vienna faction, since he was also a Connecticut man.

After a considerable delay in which the Republican justices "appeared Very Backward in taking their Seats,"[16] the ten finally sat down together in the appointed room. A dispute immediately arose over an alleged misnomer in the governor's commission. William Lowther admitted that he had received the original commission from John G. Jackson, who had delivered it from Richmond, but stated that he did not have it in his possession. Joseph Spencer then produced a letter from the governor to the justices, along with a copy of the original commission naming nine justices as well as the subsequent commission naming himself and his brother-in-law to the court. He pointed out that there were errors in the original commission, that Thomas Pribble was styled Thomas Tribble and that John Glassford Henderson was named as John Graham Henderson. Henderson agreed to swear in as John Graham Henderson, commonly called John Henderson, but Pribble refused to take the oath by the name of Tribble. Phelps

countered that if an issue were made of the misnomer, he would object to the commission of Spencer and Lord as being in violation of the Revised Code. When the Vienna justices insisted that Henderson and Pribble swear in as named, Lowther and Phelps "With a Contemptious air walked out,"[17] followed by the rest of the Republican faction.

Another issue which complicated the court's organization was that Governor Wood had appointed Phelps as sheriff. It was the custom to appoint the senior justice as sheriff for at least a year, and when he retired to rotate the office among the sitting justices on the basis of seniority, since the sheriff was remunerated with fees, and the office could be somewhat lucrative.[18] This posed a problem since Phelps apparently did not want the office or, perhaps, wished to defer to Lowther, who had served as sheriff in Harrison County and who outranked Phelps in terms of service. In any event, the sheriff, though a justice, did not sit with the court and therefore did not have a vote. That might be remedied by additional commissions to the court in the future, but on that day every vote was crucial. So Phelps "declined the Sheriffalty for want of security."[19] When the Vienna justices summoned Phelps to swear into office as sheriff, "his Reply Was that he would be Damned if he Did."[20]

Acting on the advice of Benjamin Wilson, who had come from his home in Clarksburg to witness the court's opening, the Vienna justices took their seats, appointed a crier, and called the court into session. They proceeded to conduct the business of organizing the court by electing Stephen R. Wilson as clerk, recommending Daniel Henry as surveyor, and issuing other orders. As evening approached, they voted to hold the next court in Vienna at the house of John Pratt and prepared to adjourn. At that point, William Lowther entered with the commissions in hand and suggested that the Republican justices would take their oaths if they agreed to set aside all

business conducted that day. The Vienna justices refused and replied that they could apply at the next session, whereupon the court was adjourned and the Spencer-Lord party prepared to leave.[21] Benjamin Wilson described the unpleasant circumstances surrounding the departure of the Vienna justices:

> At this time your Deponent Expected the Insults of a Mob and believes the Court were alarmed the Chief of the time they sat to do Business Thereat was Some persons who appeared prepared by their Willfull Disorder whilst the Court was sitting to answer any Base purpose — The Sun was about Three quarters of an hour high when the Court adjourned Your Deponent with the Justices who Composed the Court Immediately Decamped, and Took a passage over the Kanaway River Towards their Respective houses.[22]

Not to be outmaneuvered by the Federalist justices, the Phelps faction "appointed a cryer who made proclamation while the Vienna justices were Departing," took oaths of office, and began to organize their own court. They "appointed Elias Lowther Clerk & Recommended Robert Triplett Surveyor, made Sundry orders and adjourned until Court in Course to the said House of Hugh Phelps."[23]

John A. House, in his Pioneers in Wood County, W.Va., characterized the courthouse battle as "sectional, not personal, the result of the contest between the upper end and the lower end of the county for the site of the county seat."[24] This is a serious oversimplification of a much more complex set of issues, an observation typical of antiquarian writings which choose to see no villains. While it was true that four of the justices, Spencer, the two Lords, and Griffin lived at Vienna, and three lived near or on the Little Kanawha River closer to Neal's Station, Phelps, Henderson, and Pribble, the other three, Lowther, Hitchcock, and Bennett lived north of Vienna in what House calls "the upper end" of the county. Caleb Hitchcock, a New Englander,

supported the Vienna justices, while Lowther and Bennett, Virginia Republicans, backed the Phelps side. It was kinship, ethnicity, origin, and politics that explain the polarization.

Another factor which separated the two groups was wealth and land ownership. In 1801 Dr. Spencer paid taxes in Wood County on 25,000 acres, some of which he owned jointly with Abner Lord and Stephen R. Wilson. Of the Republican faction, only Phelps had substantial land holdings, 4,248 acres. Thomas Pribble owned 436 acres, Jacob Bennett 101 acres, William Lowther 53 acres, and John Henderson 500 acres, although his father, Alexander Henderson, Sr., of Dumfries, Virginia, had substantial land holdings in western Virginia and had once been a neighbor and friend of George Washington.[25]

Furthermore, the Connecticut Federalists were of English ancestry, while the Virginia Republicans were mostly Scots-Irish. There were certainly ethnic and regional overtones to their conflict, as evidenced by a statement in the pleading of defendant justices in a suit by Stephen R. Wilson to recover the office of county clerk: "Wood County having Just been Extricated from the Sanguinary hand of Savage Cruelties, was immediately pitched at by a set of Sharpers who has studiously Harrassed this County ever Since by one speculative Pretention or another."[26] The word "sharper," meaning a shrewd swindler, was often used as a regional slur applied to Yankees.[27]

There was far more at stake, however, than personal vendetta, regional and ethnic differences, or even politics. First of all, there were appointments to public office, and the majority of the court determined who would hold those offices. The court made recommendations to the governor for the appointment of the sheriff, county surveyor, coroner, county lieutenant and other militia officers, and appointed others outright, like the clerk. The

sheriff, for example, controlled election procedures in the county, including "when, where, and by whom votes were cast."[28] County militia offices were positions of leadership which gave officers a considerable amount of influence and deference in the county.[29] The county clerk was important because he was the only official who regularly frequented the courthouse, who received the laws passed by the General Assembly and thus became the local authority on the law, and who recorded deeds, court actions, and other proceedings of the county court.[30] In short, the justice of the peace, who as a member of the court, appointed other county officials and dominated the legislative and judicial branches of county government, was "a kingpin in the Virginia political system."[31]

Then there was the all-important decision of the county court as to the location of the courthouse. This was the question which caused the immediate division of the court in Wood County. Dr. Spencer had obtained a charter for his town in 1795 and had already divided it into town lots, some of which had been sold to Connecticut emigrants. He had also designated lots for the courthouse and jail, which the trustees were willing to donate to the county.[32] Phelps had not been so visionary. He did not obtain a charter for his projected town of Monroe, named for the new governor, until January 6, 1800. Not surprisingly, the trustees of the infant village included allies like William Lowther, James Neal, Jacob Bennett, and John G. Henderson.[33] But Phelps was, nevertheless, anxious to accommodate the court to ensure its choice of his land as a site for the courthouse. He donated two acres south of the Little Kanawha River and offered to "Ferry any person and all persons that may reside on the upper side of said Kenhawa in Wood County free of all charge to all Courts and Elections."[34]

The location of the courthouse was of primary importance because there were no well-

established towns, only crude settlements in Wood County, and the county seat would become the most important town in the county. Whoever owned lands near the seat of county government would prosper from the sale of town lots and nearby out-lots. Spencer, Abner Lord, and Wilson had sizeable holdings near Vienna, while Phelps and the Neals owned all the land near Neal's Station, or Monroe. It was a battle of the pocketbook as well as of influence.

The divided courts continued to meet throughout the year 1799, and the one attempt to bring them together failed. Having been informed of Hugh Phelps's unwillingness to serve as sheriff, Governor Wood on May 28 commissioned William Lowther as sheriff. The Virginia Republican faction met at Phelps's house in early July to swear Lowther in, but they were prevented from doing so because John Henderson was ill, and they did not have a quorum. They adjourned at 11 a.m., and then the Vienna justices, having held court that morning, arrived at Phelps's to see if Lowther had been sworn. They noted the failure of the rival court to meet and informed the governor that Lowther did not intend to accept the office. Governor Wood, unhappy over the confusion but assuming that this information was correct, on July 30 appointed Josiah Halley of Vienna as sheriff.[35]

In the meantime, an attempt was made to heal the breach. In late July, a meeting convened in Vienna with justices of both factions attending. "[I]t was then determined by a vote of the Justices . . . that at August Term all of the Justices of Wood County should meet again at the house of Hugh Phelps and organize Said County."[36] Unfortunately, the August 12 meeting was a fiasco. The justices disputed once again about the misnomers in the original commission and the validity of the governor's appointment of Spencer and Lord. Pribble and Henderson were able to keep their seats, but the two Vienna justices were asked to withdraw because of "the

unreasonable Cluster of Justices residing at that small village Vienna."[37] Dr. Spencer and Colonel Lord dared anyone to remove them, but when William Lowther came forward to swear in as sheriff, they departed along with the other Vienna justices. Then the Phelps faction organized the court, chose John Stokely as clerk *pro tem*, recommended Robert Triplett as county surveyor, and voted to hold court at Phelps's house until a courthouse could be erected.[38]

On September 2, both courts again met separately. The Phelps justices adjourned due to lack of a quorum, adjourned again the following day, and on September 4 ordered the sheriff to give notice to the Vienna justices to appear, though they refused to do so.[39] Vienna held its own court on September 2, and this time they seemed to have the upper hand because Elijah Backus appeared and was sworn in as a member of the court, thus giving them an undisputed majority of the eleven justices commissioned. They reasserted the appointments of Stephen R. Wilson as clerk and Daniel Henry as surveyor, formally designated Vienna as the county seat, and debated whether or not they should proceed to Phelps's house to swear Josiah Halley as sheriff:

> [I]t ware mentioned by the Magistrates weather it ware Safe for them to go that Day to the Kenhawa to Mr Phelps and Swear in Josiah Hally and to hold Court and they said from the usiag that they got there Before they allowed it was not Safe Stephen R Wilson made answer he would Risk himself but he would take his pistols to try to Defend himself.[40]

At that point both sides petitioned the governor to intervene since it was clear that there would be no agreement between the rival courts. Governor Wood did not act before leaving office on December 6, following the election of James Monroe the previous day.[41] Monroe's elevation to the chief magistracy boded ill for the hopes of Vienna. Harrison County Delegate John G. Jackson and his father, George Jackson, who had been returned to his Congressional seat from the Third District in 1799, had a direct connection to the new governor through their

friendship with James Madison, soon to become the younger Jackson's brother-in-law. In fact, in less than a year, Governor Monroe packed the Wood County Court, appointing ten additional justices, almost all of them partisans of the Republican faction.

On January 10, 1800, the General Assembly, apparently at the urging of John G. Jackson, passed an act noting "that the justices of the county of Wood, [have] not as yet formed a court agreeably to the terms" of the original enabling measure. This act authorized the governor to appoint four additional justices and instructed all of them to meet at Phelps's house in February to constitute a court.[42] Due to inclement weather the court did not meet until March 10, with four additional justices seated: Hezekiah Bukey, John Stephenson, Daniel Kincheloe, and William Hannaman. Except for Bukey, the new justices were kinsmen or friends of the Neal-Phelpses, and they tipped the court permanently in favor of the Republican faction.[43] They swore in William Lowther as sheriff, elected John Stokely as clerk over Stephen R. Wilson, and appointed a committee to recommend a site for the courthouse.[44]

At the April session, the justices divided evenly over a recommendation to locate the courthouse on Phelps's land, and there was sentiment expressed for a compromise location on acreage owned by John Stokely, clerk of the court, at "The Point" near the mouth of the Little Kanawha River. This decision transcended politics, since some Republican justices lived in the northernmost part of the county and traveling to sessions south of the river would pose difficulty in the winter months. The court did not make a final determination until November 11, 1800, when the justices voted unanimously for the Stokely compromise. The Vienna justices absented themselves throughout most of the year 1800, with Dr. Spencer not returning to his seat on the bench until February 1801.

At the May 1800 term of the Monongalia District Court, Stephen R. Wilson filed suit against the county justices, and that court subsequently issued a writ of mandamus ordering them to show cause why they should not reinstate Wilson to the clerkship. The case gave rise to the filing of complaints and pleadings, the issuance of subpoenas, the production of minutes and other documents, and the taking of depositions which delayed the final outcome for over a year, but which provide a remarkable record of the facts and nature of the dispute. In 1801, Wilson finally appeared before the district court and formally relinquished his claim of the clerk's office to Stokely. This was a bitter pill for young Wilson, whose father had been the clerk of Harrison County since its creation.

One final contest had to be resolved before the Republican faction could declare a complete victory. In the April 1800 elections to determine Wood County's first delegates to the General Assembly, Sheriff Lowther declared Hugh Phelps and John G. Henderson as the victors. But the Federalist candidates, Joseph Spencer and Abner Lord, challenged their election. On June 9, 1800, the county court appointed five commissioners to take depositions relating to the dispute. When the Assembly met on December 1, Phelps and Henderson were seated until the tenth, when the House declared that Spencer and Lord were the rightful delegates. Two days later, the House reversed itself and reinstated Phelps and Henderson. At issue was a charge, accepted by the House, that "Lord had granted lands to sixteen persons, who presumably lacked the necessary property qualification for the franchise, with the understanding that they would vote for him and Spencer."[45] This episode ended the brief legislative careers of the Vienna leaders and settled the political battle between Republicans and Federalists in Wood County.

This episode in miniature of the "Revolution of 1800" illustrates how the national conflict

was mirrored in the local politics of an emerging frontier county, and how the struggle reflected the ethnic, regional, and economic as well as political differences of the participants. The role of kinship/neighbor groups both in the settlement of the region and in subsequent power struggles is central to understanding the struggle. The image is complete with a Republican Jeffersonian victory over the Federalists in a contest which helps us to understand the bitterness of the period and the factional and communal nature of the struggle.

NOTES

1. Among the best monographs which deal with national politics of the period 1797 to 1801 are Noble E. Cunningham, Jr., The Jeffersonian Republicans: The Formation of Party Organization, 1789-1801 (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1957); David Hackett Fischer, The Revolution of American Conservatism (New York: Harper & Row, 1965); Lisle A. Rose, Prologue to Democracy: The Federalists in the South, 1789-1800 (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press , 1968); James Roger Sharp, American Politics in the Early Republic: The New Nation in Crisis (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993); and James H. Broussard, The Southern Federalists, 1800-1816 (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1978).

2. Particularly useful introductions to Virginia politics in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries are Daniel P. Jordan, Political Leadership in Jefferson's Virginia (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1983); Myron F. Wehtje, "The Congressional Elections of 1799 in Virginia," West Virginia History, 39 (July 1968), 251-73; Richard R. Beeman, The Old Dominion and the New Nation, 1788-1801 (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1972); and Harry Ammon, James Monroe: The Quest for National Identity (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1971).

3. Donald F. Black, History of Wood County, West Virginia, 2 vols. (Marietta, Ohio: Richardson Printing Co., 1975, 1990), II, 1, 2, 132.

4. Samuel Shepherd, The Statutes at Large of Virginia From October Session 1792, to December Session 1806, Inclusive, In Three Volumes, (New Series), Being a Continuation of Hening (Richmond, Virginia, 1835), II, 170-1.

5. For biographical and family information about early Wood County leaders, see Black, I; John A. House, Pioneers in Wood County, WV, 2 vols. (Parkersburg, West Virginia: Wood County Historical Landmarks Commission, 1984); Stephen C. Shaw, Sketches of Northwestern Virginia (Typescript manuscript, Leafy Glen, West Virginia, 1878).

6. Shepherd, Statutes at Large, I, 428-9; Black, History of Wood County, I, Section 12-3; Stephen R. Wilson vs. Justices of Wood County, Monongalia District Court, Morgantown, (West) Virginia, West Virginia and Regional History Collection, West Virginia University, Morgantown, Microfilm, Envelop 69-B, hereafter cited as Wilson vs. Justices.

7. Wood County Minute Book I, March 10, 1800.

8. Wilson vs. Justices, Pleading of Defendant Justices, May 4, 1801.

9. Joseph Spencer vs. James Neal and John James, Jr., Monongalia District Court, Morgantown (West) Virginia, May Term 1800, West Virginia and Regional History Collection, West Virginia University, Morgantown, Microfilm, Envelop 68-B, Complaint filed by Philip Doddridge in behalf of Joseph Spencer. Dr. Spencer was soon to become the father-in-law of Lewis Cass, the 1848 Democratic nominee for president, who married Elizabeth Spencer in 1806.

10. Wilson vs. Justices, Pleading of Defendant Justices, May 4, 1801.

11. Henry Haymond, History of Harrison County, West Virginia (Morgantown: Acme Publishing Co., 1910); Dorothy Davis, John George Jackson (Parsons, West Virginia: McClain Printing Co., 1976), 33, 37.

12. Davis, John George Jackson, 42-3.

13. H.W. Flournoy et al. (eds.), Calendar of Virginia State Papers, 11 vols. (Richmond, 1875-93), IX, 80.

14. Joseph Spencer vs. John G. Jackson; Abner Lord vs. John G. Jackson; Monongalia District Court, Morgantown, (West) Virginia), September Term 1800, West Virginia and Regional History Collection, West Virginia University, Morgantown, Microfilm, Envelop 69-A.

15. "Philip Doddridge," Dictionary of American Biography, 10 vols. (New York: Scribner's, 1930), V, 243; History of Wheeling City and Ohio County, West Virginia, and Representative Citizens (Chicago: Biographical Publishing Co., 1902), 223.

16. Wilson vs. Justices, Deposition of Daniel Hinrie (Henry), September 18, 1800.

17. Wilson vs. Justices, Deposition of Benjamin Wilson, September 19, 1800.

18. Albert O. Porter, County Government in Virginia: A Legislative History, 1607-1904 (New York: AMS Press, 1966), 121.

19. Wilson vs. Justices, Pleading of Defendant Justices, May 4, 1801.

20. Wilson vs. Justices, Deposition of Benjamin Wilson, September 19, 1800.

21. Wilson vs. Justices, Pleading of Defendant Justices, May 4, 1801; Deposition of Benjamin Wilson, September 19, 1800.

22. Wilson vs. Justices, Deposition of Benjamin Wilson, September 19, 1800.

23. Wilson vs. Justices, Pleading of Defendant Justices, May 4, 1801. It is interesting to note that there are no minutes of any court proceedings in the official Wood County Minute Book I until the August 12, 1799 meeting.

24. House, Pioneers in Wood County, II, 365.

25. Wood County Tax Records, 1801.

26. Wilson vs. Justices, Pleading of Defendant Justices, May 4, 1801.

27. Jordan, Political Leadership, 16.

27. Random House Dictionary of the English Language., 2nd ed. Unabridged (New York: Random House, 1987), 1760.

28. Dorothy Davis, History of Harrison County, West Virginia, Elizabeth Sloan (ed.) (Clarksburg: American Association of University Women, 1970), 85.

29. For an excellent discussion of deference shown to county officials on the Virginia frontier, especially militia officers, see Albert H. Tillson, Jr., Gentry and Common Folk: Political Culture on a Virginia Frontier (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1991).

29. Jordan, Political Leadership, 15.

30. Wilson vs. Justices, Minutes of the Vienna Court, September 3, 1799.

31. Shepherd, Statutes at Large, II, 224.

32. Wood County Minute Book I, March 10, 1800.

33. Wilson vs. Justices, Pleading of Defendant Justices, May 4, 1801; Deposition of Daniel Hinrie (Henry), September 18, 1800.

34. Wilson vs. Justices, Pleading of Defendant Justices, May 4, 1801.

35. Ibid.

36. Wood County Minute Book I, August 12, 1799. This is the first set of minutes recorded in the official minute book. Records of earlier sessions are found only in the documents produced in Wilson vs. Justices. John Stokely had previously served as collector of revenues of Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania, before his resettlement in northwestern Virginia; Robert

Triplett, son of Colonel Francis Triplett, who had served under General Daniel Morgan at the Battle of Cowpens, had been deputy surveyor of Harrison County.

37. Wood County Minute Book I, September 2, 3, and 4, 1799.

38. Wilson vs. Justices, Deposition of Daniel Hinrie (Henry), September 18, 1800; Minutes of the Vienna Court, September 2, 1799.

39. Beeman, Old Dominion, 213.

40. Shepherd, Statutes at Large, II, 232-33.

41. Bukey, a nephew-in-law of Isaac Williams, though technically neutral, often voted with the Republican justices. His father-in-law, Joseph Tomlinson, was an ally of Republican assemblyman and Congressman John G. Jackson; see Stephen W. Brown, Voice of the New West: John G. Jackson, His Life and Times (Atlanta: Mercer University Press, 1985), 81.

42. Wood County Minute Book I, March 10, 1800.

43. Wood County Minute Book I, April 14, 1800, November 11, 1800.

45. Brown, Voice of the New West, 24; Wood County Minute Book I, June 9, 1800; Earl G. Swem and John W. Williams, A Register of the General Assembly of Virginia, 1776-1918 (Richmond, 1918), 56.

Chapter Six
Kinship and the Uses of Land:
Resident and Non-Resident Landowners and Speculators

Like all regions on the trans-Allegheny frontier, most land in northwestern Virginia was claimed well before the close of the eighteenth century, mostly by merchant speculators and military veterans. In the region that became Wood County in 1799, seventy-five non-resident speculators patented 903,853 acres. Another class of owners, identified herein as nearby speculators, claimed 130,977 acres; these were western Virginians like George Jackson of Clarksburg, congressman from the Third District of Virginia, who held the largest such tract, 47,000 acres. A third group of five resident speculators paid taxes on 117,699 acres. The largest numerical group were the resident owners of small farm parcels, 271 individuals who owned a combined acreage of 82,320. The average improved farm parcel, then, was just slightly over 300 acres. These figures are based on a quantitative study in which information from the 1810 census of Wood County and the 1811 tax records were merged by name of householder and name of taxpayer. A resulting total of 682 individuals was identified, of whom eighty were classified as "unknown," since they did not appear on the census and the status of their land ownership was unclear.[1] Absentee owners accounted for 83.8% of the total land claimed. County residents, including the five resident speculators, owned only 16.2%. Forty-six percent of residents owned no land at all. These statistics are consistent with those of Wilma Dunaway, who has calculated rates of absentee engrossment not only for West Virginia but throughout Southern Appalachia. For all of western Virginia in the same period, she has found a rate of absentee ownership at 93.3%.[2] The 10% differential of region-wide to county statistics is due to

the higher rate of settlement along the Ohio River. (See Tables 6.1, 6.2, and 6.3.)

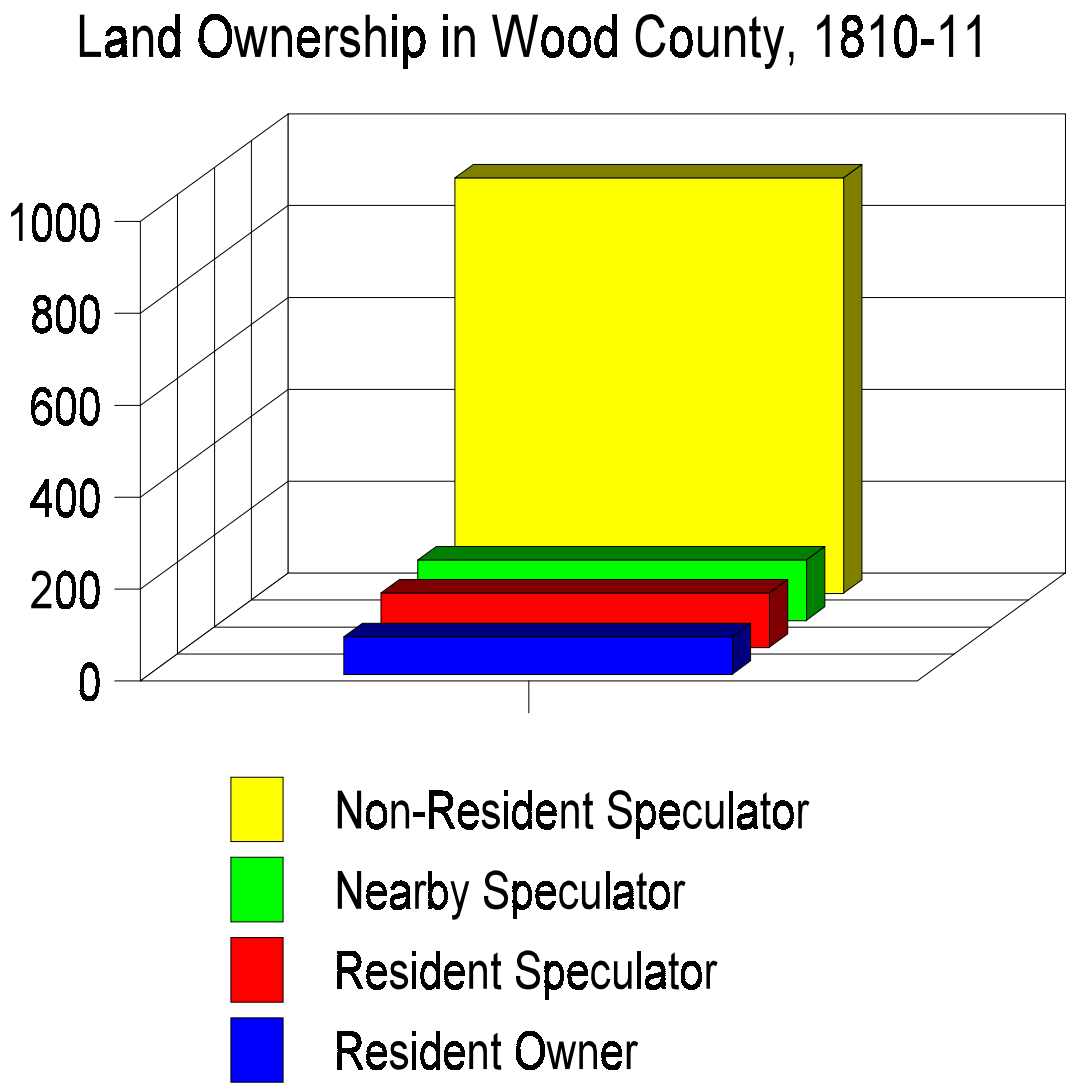

Table 6.1 -- Land Ownership in Wood County, (W)Va., 1810-11, based on the 1810 Census and the 1811 Tax Records (in thousands of acres).

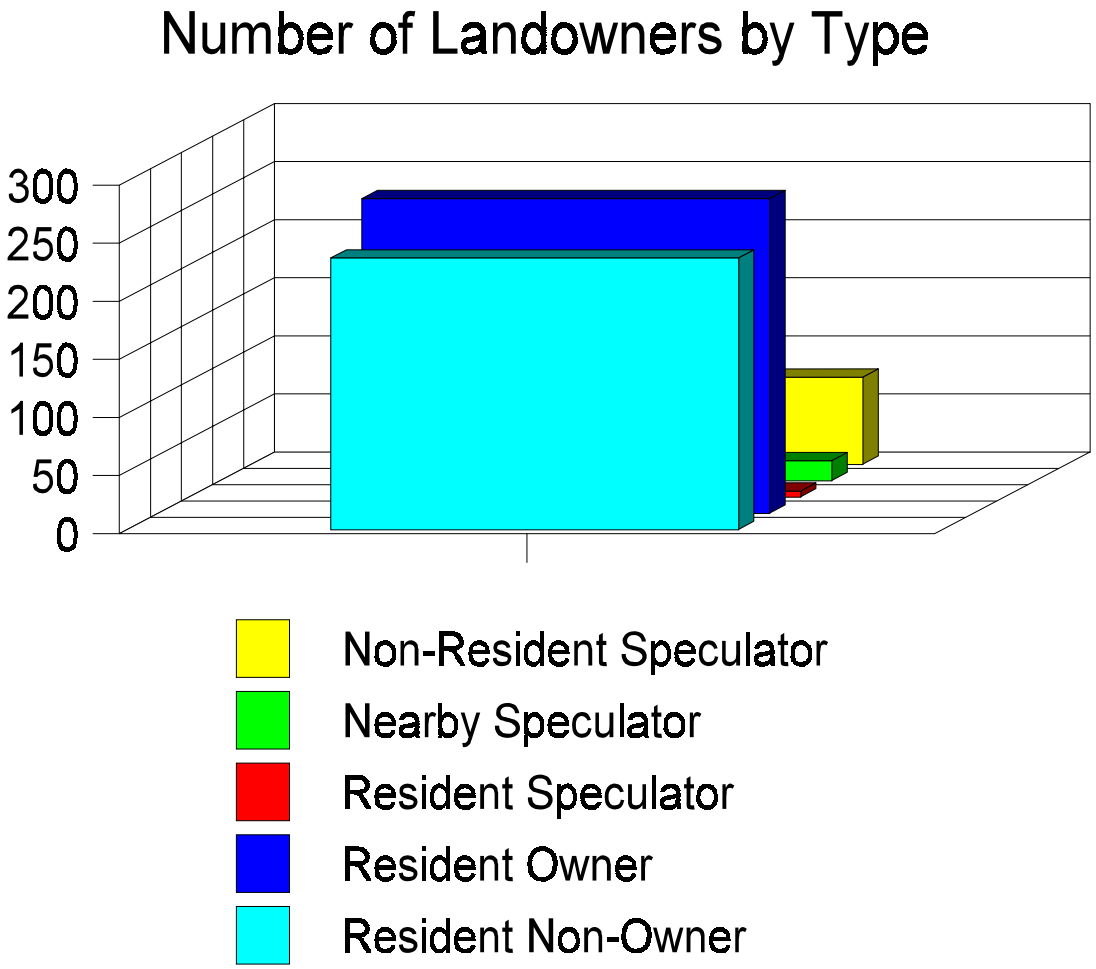

Table 6..2 — Number of Landowners by Type, Wood County, (W)Va., 1810-11, based on the 1810 Census and the 1811 Tax Records.

A comparison of Tables 6.1 and 6.2 illustrates the imbalance of land ownership in western Virginia in the frontier period. The two tables are the near inverse of the other.

Speculators account for the great majority of the amount of land claimed, but resident owners and non-owners constitute the numerical lion's share of the sample.

Percent of Total Ownership of Land by Type of Landowner

Type of Landowner	Total Acres Owned	Percent of Total
Non-Resident Speculator	903,853	73.2
Nearby Speculator	130,977	10.6
Resident Speculator	117,699	9.5
Resident Owner	82,320	6.7
TOTAL	1,234,849	100.0

Table 6.3 — Percent of Total Ownership of Land in Wood County, (W)Va., 1810-11, by Type of Landowner, based on the 1810 Census and the 1811 Tax List.

An analysis of the 1811 Wood County tax list reveals that non-resident speculators paid 59.34% of taxes in the county, rightfully so since they owned almost three-fourths of the land. On the other hand, resident owners, who owned only 6.7% paid 21.12% of the county taxes. This regressive tax structure was based on the fact that improved land was taxed at a higher rate than unimproved land. Farmers, in effect, were penalized for building houses and barns and clearing land for crops. (See Table 6.4)

Percent of Taxes Paid by Type of Landowner

Type of Landowner	Taxes Levied	Percent of Taxes Levied
Non-Resident Speculator	$906.21	59.34
Nearby Speculator	$115.10	7.54
Resident Speculator	$183.34	12.00
Resident Owner	$322.55	21.12
TOTAL	$1,527.20	100.00

Table 6.4 — Percent of Taxes Paid by Type of Landowner, Wood County, (W)Va., based on Tax List of 1811.

There were fewer than one hundred resident and non-resident speculators who held Wood County lands in 1810-11. Not counting five resident speculators who held large tracts, there were 271 residents who owned small farms. But the second largest group which appeared in the 1810 census but were absent from the 1811 tax records were 234 heads of households who owned no land: lessees, laborers, and, presumably a few squatters.

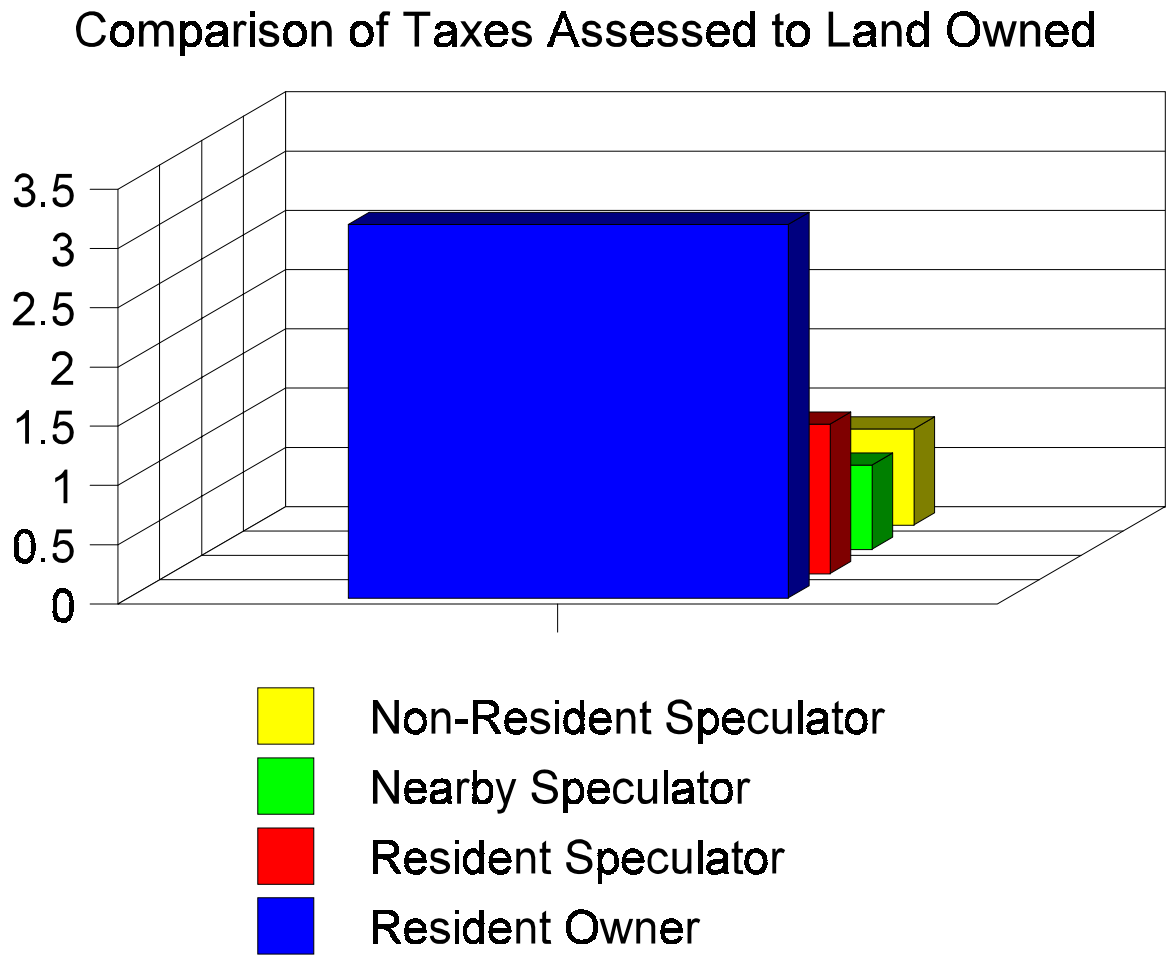

Table 6.5 — Comparison of Taxes Assessed to Percent of Land Owned, Wood County, (W)Va., based on the Tax List of 1811.

The regressive nature of the tax structure on the northwestern Virginia frontier is more visually apparent when one graphically represents a comparison of the amount of taxes paid to the percent of land owned. (See Table 6.5, which is also the inverse of Table 6.1.) The ratio is 0.81 for non-resident speculators, 0.71 for nearby speculators, 1.26 for resident speculators, and 3.15 for small

resident land owners.[3]

Chief among the non-resident land speculators in northwestern Virginia were Eastern merchants in cities like Philadelphia, Alexandria, and Richmond, who "acquired land warrants worth thousands of acres through the normal trade relations between trans-Allegheny settlements and the Atlantic seaboard,"[4] and wealthy land barons like William Tilton, William Deakins, and Henry Banks and their associates.[5] In the years following the Revolutionary War, merchants in many locations, villages as well as cities, traded goods or extended cash loans for treasury warrants from veterans who were desperate to satisfy immediate needs and who had no interest in locating and settling on their claims. Every state with western lands had paid soldiers in treasury warrants during the cash-starved war years. In fact, these warrants circulated as a form of currency in the lean years of the 1780s.[6]

Among the notable Philadelphia merchant land speculators who made claims in northwestern Virginia were William Tilton, Josiah Willard Gibbs, and his brother, William Gibbs, principals of the firm of Tilton & Gibbs, and Archibald McCall. The Gibbs brothers were among the most enterprising merchants of the Northeast, with stores in Boston, Hartford, New York, and Philadelphia; scions of old Puritan stock, their New England lineage was impeccable.[7] Their Philadelphia mercantile was located at 53 Second Street.[8] Tilton & Gibbs entered a tract of 91,557 acres below the mouth of the Little Kanawha River in Monongalia (later Wood) County.[9] Unlike most patentees of large claims, Tilton & Gibbs actually recruited a small band of settlers at Philadelphia to be the avant-garde of colonization. The typical pattern was to sell small tracts to would-be colonists or residents through an agent. But Tilton, along with his surveyor, Joseph

Wood, accompanied the group in 1785 and selected a site for settlement along the Ohio River, which he named Belleville.[10] McCall, who owned 34,500 acres in Wood County, also acted as agent for another Philadelphia speculator, Joseph Sims, who held extensive tracts in western Virginia, including 12,000 acres in Wood, as well as for his wife's sister, Elizabeth Ringgold, wife of General Samuel Ringgold, of Frederick, Maryland, claimant to 14,000 acres in Wood.[11] McCall was an entrepreneur with numerous and varied interests. A merchant in the East India trade, Philadelphia agent for the sale of DuPont gunpowder, and director of the First U.S. Bank, he and his brothers Robert, Samuel, and John were engaged in joint ownership of a cotton spinning and weaving factory on the Brandywine with Eleuthere Irenee and Victor duPont.[12]

When one begins tracing the names of western Virginia and Kentucky land grantees, many roads lead back to Philadelphia. Land speculation among Philadelphians must have been the armchair sport of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Another Philadelphian who speculated in northwestern Virginia lands was Major General Thomas Proctor. Proctor, who paid taxes on 20,000 acres in Wood County, typifies yet another kind of land speculator, the Revolutionary War officer who acquired land from his own military service and that of his close friends. A master carpenter by trade, Proctor was an officer during the American Revolution and later led Pennsylvania militia during the Whiskey Rebellion. He served as high sheriff of Philadelphia County from 1783-85.[13] Another was Richard Renshaw, Jr., a grocer and justice of the peace of the District of Southwark in Philadelphia, 1807-35, who owned 27,400 acres in Wood County. Apparently speculation was a family venture, as his father had earlier claimed 5,000 acres in Washington County, along the North Fork of the Holston River, in 1786.[14]

Yet another Philadelphia family group which speculated in Wood County lands were

Joseph and Wooddrop Sims, who paid taxes on 17,000 acres in the county. Their brother-in-law, Benjamin Wynkoop, married to their sister Sarah, was associated in land speculation with Levi Hollingsworth, one of the great barons in western Virginia and Kentucky lands, and his agent, Dorsey Pentecost.[15] The Hollingsworth-Pentecost-Wynkoop syndicate laid claim to more than a million acres in western Virginia and Kentucky.[16] All except Pentecost were wealthy Philadelphia merchants.[17] The principals of Reed & Ford, whose merchant business stood on Front Street between Chestnut and Market, were heavily invested in northwestern Virginia lands. Standish Ford owned 57,457 acres and John Reed, 39,312 acres. Together they claimed an additional 20,696 acres. Though they patented their claims in Monongalia County, they adjoined those of Tilton & Gibbs in what later became Wood County.[18] Another Philadelphia merchant/speculator whose house was located near that of Reed & Ford was John Moylan. His holdings in Wood County amounted to 5,000 acres, but he also held lands in Harrison and Monongalia counties.[19] Though he was a Massachusetts man, Colonel Timothy Pickering, quartermaster-general of the Continental Army, while living in Philadelphia as a Cabinet officer in the 1790s, acquired 31,000 acres along the Little Kanawha River and Middle Island Creek in Harrison and Ohio (later Wood) counties, in association with his business partner, Samuel Hodgdon.[20] It is noteworthy that these Philadelphia merchant speculators all knew each and lived within a few blocks of each other.

Several Alexandria, Virginia, merchants were deeply involved in land speculation in northwestern Virginia, including William Hartshorne, Humphrey Peake, and Alexander Henderson. Hartshorne was a Quaker planter, flour miller, and grain and flour commission merchant who moved from Philadelphia to Alexandria ca. 1774. Like other land speculators,

Hartshorne relied on resident agents to broker his lands. His power of attorney to Joseph H. Samuels, a young lawyer whose family had recently migrated from Shenandoah County, mentioned ten to twelve thousand acres on the Hughes River; another local agent was Thomas Neale, maternal grandfather of Thomas J. "Stonewall" Jackson, an innkeeper and merchant who had once lived at Aldie, Loudoun County, near Alexandria.[21] Hartshorne was one of several speculators in northwestern Virginia lands who had close ties to George Washington. This is not surprising since Washington had visited the Little Kanawha area in 1770, when he staked out his own claims in the region, and it stands to reason that he would acquaint friends and business associates in Fairfax County with speculative opportunities in the Ohio Valley. Hartshorne's correspondence with Washington was fairly frequent; some was related to their respective interest in the Potomac Company, of which Washington was president and Hartshorne treasurer, from 1785 to 1799.[22]

The family of Dr. Humphrey Peake, sheriff of Fairfax County, 1816-18, was socially connected to the Washingtons and other Fairfax elites. The plantation of his parents, Humphrey, Sr., and Sarah Stonestreet Peake on Little Hunting Creek adjoined Mt. Vernon. Dr. Peake, his parents, and siblings were frequent guests of the Washingtons, and the first president was an occasional visitor to their home.[23] In some ways Dr. Peake was the most interesting of the speculators with extensive holdings in Wood County. Many were not interested in leasing their lands due to supervisory difficulties, and of those who did, few recorded the details of the terms of lease. Peake's leases are an exception. They reveal two fascinating particulars: his interest in coal and minerals and his employment of lessees to increase the value of his land. In leasing a one hundred-acre tract along the Ohio River to Hector Ross Eskridge, Peake reserved "all

colemines" to himself and required the lessee to plant fifty apple trees.[24] Eskridge's lease of a tract from Peake debunks any notion that those who rented rather than purchased land were all plainfolk. His own kin and those of his wife, Susannah Cockerell, were first-rate planter families in Fairfax and Loudoun counties.[25] In a 25-year lease of a tract to Jesse Murdoch, a Wood County blacksmith and Dils family in-law, Peake reserved to himself "all Cole Mines and ore banks" and required the lessee to "build a House of sixteen feet or upwards with a stone or Brick chimney and Shingle Roof [and] to plant fifty apple trees."[26] Spencer Sharp, a Revolutionary War veteran, agreed in his lease from Dr. Peake to reserve "all coal mines and ore banks" but in addition contracted to "not bark sell or destroy any timber" except that for his own use, along with "a reservation of free liberty of ingress, egress, and regress."[27] Eskridge, Murdoch, and Sharp all became landowners within a few years, and all but Eskridge remained in Wood County for the rest of their lives.

Of all the non-resident speculators in northwestern Virginia, the one who left the greatest imprint on the economy and society of Wood County was Alexander Henderson, Sr., merchant of Colchester, Dumfries, and Alexandria. He held title to 25,950 acres in Harrison (later Wood) County, as well as smaller tracts in Randolph and Hampshire counties.[28] The typical speculator dealt with agents, but Henderson sent three of his six sons, John Glassford, Alexander, Jr., and James, to manage his affairs. All three became permanent residents of the Ohio Valley, and all but the eldest left numerous descendants in the area. The Hendersons first carved a plantation out of the wilderness at Spring Creek along the Little Kanawha River in what is now Wirt County. Then they cleared a tract at Cow Creek on the Ohio River, in what is now Pleasants County, where Alexander built a two-story plantation home that still stands today. The work of

clearing land and tilling fields was performed by more than sixty slaves, many sent from their father's plantation in Fairfax County, supervised by overseers. All three Henderson brothers became gentlemen justices of Wood County, engaging in business, commercial farming, and horse breeding.

Alexander Henderson, Sr., had arrived at Colchester, Virginia, in 1758 from Scotland as a factor of John Glassford & Company of Glasgow, the largest Scottish tobacco importer. The company operated stores in Maryland at Baltimore, Benedict, Bladensburg, Chaptico, Georgetown, Leonardtown, Lower and Upper Marlboro, Newport, Nottingham, Piscataway, and Port Tobacco, and in Virginia at Alexandria, Colchester, Quantico Creek, Dumfries, and Norfolk. Henderson's older brother Archibald was a partner in the firm. Glassford & Company owned twenty-five ships, which brought supplies to the stores and returned laden with tobacco, flour, oyster shells, coal, and bar iron. This firm of Scots merchants imported ten percent of all the tobacco imported to Great Britain, amounting in value to more than L500,000 sterling during the years immediately prior to the Revolution. Henderson advanced his personal estate and became active in parish and county affairs. He was a justice of Fairfax, vestryman of Truro Parish, assemblyman representing Fairfax and Prince William counties for several years in the Virginia House of Delegates, and a member of the Virginia delegation to the Alexandria Conference, which met at Mt. Vernon in 1785. Like Hartshorne and Peake, Henderson was a friend of the first president, with whom he occasionally hunted. His family's two pew boxes at the Pohick Church were located immediately behind those of George Washington and George William Fairfax. After the war, Henderson purchased much of the escheated property of his former employer. In association with two other Scots merchants, Robert Fergusson and John Gibson, as

Henderson, Fergusson, & Gibson, Alexander Henderson acquired the chain of stores on both sides of the Potomac.[29] Henderson was a remarkably acquisitive man. As one of the trustees of the estate of Richard Graham, another western land speculator, merchant of Dumfries, and former sheriff of Prince William County, Henderson and the other two trustees sold 3,500 acres of Graham's land to his own son, John Glassford Henderson, for less than 35 cents an acre.[30] Alexander Henderson had once written in his letterbook, "It is a maxim with me never to refuse money."[31]

Merchants from Richmond, Virginia, not surprisingly, bought sizeable tracts of land in northwestern Virginia. None was more important than Henry Banks, whose holdings in western Virginia and Kentucky were rivaled only by those of Robert Morris, financier of the American Revolution, who held nearly two million acres in Virginia and Kentucky lands.[32] A member of the Richmond firm of Hunter, Banks & Company, he was in partnership with James Hunter and his own brother, John Banks. Their merchant house was located across the street from the state capitol building. During the Revolutionary War, the company had a supply contract for the Southern Department of the Continental Army. Though his partners were less enthusiastic about land speculation, Banks secured a large number of treasury warrants through the normal channels of trade, as well as claims against the state government and the army for supplies as yet unpaid for and losses of vessels and cargo. He was able to broker his warrants and claims into more than one million acres in Virginia and Kentucky, some tracts which he owned himself and others with various partners. Much of the land he claimed in northwestern Virginia was held in partnership with Richard Claiborne, including 69,000 acres on the Little Kanawha and Hughes rivers in Harrison (later Wood) County, and 77,000 acres in Monongalia County.[33] Banks and

Claiborne had become associated during the war, when Claiborne was assistant quartermaster-general for Virginia, serving under Quartermaster-General Timothy Pickering.[34] The linkages between land speculators seem endless, as Pickering, too, had a large claim in northwestern Virginia, as previously noted. The two commissaries, Banks and Claiborne, were also partners in a 113,482-acre tract in Jefferson County, Kentucky. The Virginia Land Office records include more than one hundred fifty separate grants under Claiborne's name, which suggests that Banks may have been a silent partner.[35]

Another Richmond firm which held tracts in Wood County and elsewhere in Virginia was Harvie & Price, though they were small players compared to Henry Banks and his partners. The two principals of this firm, John Harvie and William Price, both served terms as Register of the Land Office of Virginia. Their claims were held in trust by none other than Henry Banks.[36] Another Virginia merchant partnership which owned a 15,000-acre tract in Wood County was Lenox & Scott of Fredericksburg, Spotsylvania County. The principals were Hugh Lenox and William Scott.[37] A few individual eastern Virginians also claimed northwestern lands, like the patrician Richard Bland Lee of Fairfax County, who owned 7,000 acres in Wood County, and Stephen West, who lived on Opequon Creek, near Winchester, in Frederick County. West claimed 12,860 acres, which passed in its entirety to his heirs.[38]

Residents of other Eastern cities also speculated in northwestern Virginia lands. Daniel Denison Rogers, a Boston blueblood with a house on Beacon Hill, owned 58,293 acres in Wood County.[39] Henry Purviance, a Washington, D.C., lawyer, held title to 10,000 acres in Wood County, part of an inheritance from his father, Samuel Dinsmore Purviance, an Irish immigrant merchant who headed Baltimore's committee of correspondence during the Revolutionary War.

Samuel and his brother, Robert Purviance, had patented 54,873 acres on the Little Kanawha and Hughes rivers in Monongalia (later Wood) County.[40] The Purviances were also associates of Levi Hollingsworth and Dorsey Pentecost in a number of land deals.[41] William Deakins and his brother Francis were among the largest landholders in Maryland and Virginia. They lived in Prince George's County, Maryland, and had extensive holdings in the western part of that state. William owned 21,000 acres on the Hughes River in Wood County, while Francis claimed 5,000. Together they owned 69,442 acres in Monongalia County, eighty-one small tracts, mostly settlement and preemption claims which had been assigned by earlier settlers.[42]

One would anticipate speculation in Virginia lands by merchants of Philadelphia, Alexandria, and Richmond, but the primacy of not one but three syndicates of New York merchants and politicians seems distinctive if not unusual. One of the most interesting networks of non-resident land speculators in frontier northwestern Virginia, both for its composition and its persistence, was that organized by James Caldwell, an Albany, New York, merchant. Caldwell had emigrated from northwest Ireland to Philadelphia with his brother Joseph but soon established a retail business in the Hudson Valley, selling imported commodities and Virginia tobacco. In 1790, he opened Caldwell's Mills, the largest factory in the United States at the time, producing snuff and cigars. With the profits of his highly innovative mill and expanding retail enterprise, Caldwell purchased 220,000 acres in undeveloped New York regions, then diversified his speculative activities to Vermont and Canada.[43] Caldwell's partners in western Virginia land were two very prominent residents of Albany, Jeremiah Van Rensselaer and Elkanah Watson. Van Rensselaer, born at Rensselaerswick Manor, first cousin of the Hudson Valley patroon, Stephen Van Rensselaer, and brother-in-law of General Philip Schuyler,[44] certainly the best-

connected member of the partnership, was a member of the First Congress and served as lieutenant governor under George Clinton, 1801-04.[45] Scion of old New England Pilgrim families and a direct descendant of Edward Winslow, third governor of Plymouth Colony, Watson was the most unusual of the trio. He traveled widely in Europe as a young man, where he became interested in canals as a means of inland waterway transportation. Along with Van Rensselaer, Stephen Bayard, and General Philip Van Cortlandt, he formed the Inland Lock Navigation Company in 1792, a precursor of the Erie Canal project.[46] What brought the Irish immigrant, the Dutch patroon, and the Plymouth patrician together was their common interest in commerce, economic development, land speculation, and banking. All three served as directors of the Bank of Albany, with Watson and Van Rensselaer both acting as president of the bank in the 1790s.

These Albany partners employed a series of nonresident and resident agents over a period of thirty years to manage their claims and sell parcels: William Weedon, a surveyor from Bristol [later Broome], Schoharie County, New York, near Albany; William Howe Cuyler, son of a prominent Albany family; Peter Anderson, a resident Belleville merchant, blacksmith, and Wood County justice; Rev. Joseph Willard, Newark, New Jersey; and finally Willard's brother Benjamin in partnership with Edward Blackford. As a group of agents for a single employer, these men were remarkably different. Weedon and Anderson were of humbler origins, but they were skilled craftsmen chosen for their experience. Cuyler's family was old patrician Dutch. He later practiced law and served as a major in the War of 1812, in which he lost his life. Rev. Willard, a 1793 Harvard graduate, had served as rector of two large Episcopal parishes, St. John's in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, and Trinity in Newark, New Jersey. Benjamin Willard,

Harvard, 1809, studied law at Newark; he became the town founder of St. Marys in 1849, seat of Pleasants County in Virginia. His daughter, Marie Antoinette, was married to Jacob Beeson Jackson, governor of West Virginia, 1881-85.[47] It is clear that these disparate land agents were generally responsible men from older settled regions, chosen for positions of trust by wealthy Easterners. They accepted their assignments as a way of improving their economic status, a recognized method by which men of ability might gain the wealth and status denied them in older urban centers. Joseph Willard, in turn, tried his hand at land speculation. He bought 7,000 acres on the Hughes River in 1816 from John Delafield, an English-born merchant and founder of two of the earliest insurance companies in America, Mutual (1787) and United (1796). Delafield, a major speculator in upstate New York lands, was a charter director of the New York City Branch of the United States Bank.[48]

James Caldwell's first agent, Weedon, recorded claims for 72,916 acres in Monongalia, Randolph, Harrison, and Wood counties in 1802; Cuyler paid taxes on 64,965 acres during his tenure, which began in 1805, and advertised 100,000 acres for sale on the Ohio River in a broadside printed in Richmond in December of that year.[49] The powers of attorney filed in early Wood County records by Caldwell and his partners are informative in regard to the problems and pitfalls of sending agents to sell faraway lands. Caldwell's instructions to his agent, William Weedon, suggested some dissatisfaction with the location and quality of his tracts. He wrote, "In your rout particularly Carlisle Pennsylvania I request you will try to effect a sale or exchange my lands for northern property" and to try to sell "indifferent land on Tyger [Tygart] valley."[50] Weedon's services, along with his behavior, proved unsatisfactory. The county court found him guilty of swearing a profane oath at the August term, 1804, and of assault and battery at the

November term. In July 1805 he was jailed for failing to pay $1,125, the receipts of land sales, to Caldwell; he escaped from jail in October and remained at large for several months before his recapture.[51] Having revoked Weedon's power of attorney, the partners appointed Cuyler as agent in 1805 and instructed him to appropriate "all monies, bonds, notes, securities or other property or effects he [Weedon] may have recovered from the sale of our land" as well as "all the original patents, deeds, maps, contracts, surveys, & papers of what ever nature or kind soever."[52]

Caldwell, on behalf of the syndicate, continued to manage the land through agents until his death in 1829, and by his administrators after his death well into the 1830s. He sold a number of small tracts to residents like John Neal, Peter Anderson, John Coleman, and John Stanley, all members of first generation families that settled near the Little Kanawha before the end of the eighteenth century. He was frequently in litigation with squatters and disputes with agents and, in the end, realized little profit from the venture.

Another syndicate of New Yorkers who speculated in northwestern Virginia lands was composed of James Watson, Samuel Miles Hopkins, and Oliver Wolcott, Jr., all three Yale graduates and celebrated citizens of New York City with political and economic connections. All were politicians of the first order. Watson, a 1776 Yale graduate, was a lawyer and United States Senator, 1798 to 1800. He was defeated in a race for lieutenant-governor in 1800, ironically, by Jeremiah Van Rensselaer, another Virginia land speculator.[53] Hopkins, also a Yale graduate (1791), practiced law in New York City and served in the U.S. House of Representatives in the Thirteenth Congress, 1813-15.[54] The most eminent of the three was Wolcott (Yale, 1778), who had succeeded Alexander Hamilton as secretary of the treasury under Presidents Washington and Adams, 1795-1800.[55] In 1806, Hopkins and Watson transferred

ownership of 427,460 acres in Kanawha, Harrison, and Wood counties to Wolcott for only $5.00. In 1827, Wolcott transferred the same tracts back to Watson for $10. Inexplicably, neither deed was recorded in Wood County until July 5, 1827; no land had been sold, and the partners realized nothing from their efforts.

Speculation in Western lands was so pervasive among well-heeled citizens of the East that, unlike a few of the best known claimants like Tilton, Deakins, and Banks, their names have slipped from any notice at all, only to be found on the pages of old deed books and land grants. This is true of two influential residents of Brooklyn, King's County, New York, Joel Post and James B. Clarke. Post and Clarke had engrossed 59,080 acres on the Hughes River in Wood County, placing them among the top five landowners in the region. Clarke was an attorney and vestryman of St. Ann's Episcopal Church in Brooklyn. Post, whose merchant house stood on Hanover Square in New York City, owned a country seat known as Claremont, later the site of Grant's Tomb in Riverside Park.[56]

Land speculation was a potential slippery slope, sometimes resulting in the bankruptcy of the principals. The financial ruin of Robert Morris, who over-invested in Kentucky lands, is a case in point. At the very least, dreams of financial bonanzas vanished within a few years. Most of the merchant speculators of northwestern Virginia realized little profit from their grand ventures. For example, in 1808 Christian Schultz, Jr., a New York City grocer, politician, and speculator, sold 14,847 acres between Middle Island Creek and Briscoe Run to his brother-in-law's brother, George Lorillard, a tobacco manufacturer of New York City. Virtually all of this tract had been claimed, sold, and resold by others as early as 1770. The heirs of Michael Cresap and other assignees, like Alexander Henderson, Sr., also claimed all or a portion of the same

land.[57] Lorillard paid Schultz $1,380 for the acreage, held it for twelve years, then sold it to his brother Peter, husband of Schultz's sister Maria, for $100.[58] Unlucky in land speculation, the Lorillards fared much better trading on the nicotine habits of generations of Americans. Peter and George were co-founders of the Lorillard Tobacco Company. Perhaps the ultimate statement of the outcome of frontier land speculation was the transfer of the residue of Henry Banks' claims. Banks, who had moved from Richmond to Frankfort, Kentucky, sold, on April 30, 1830, to James W. Denny of Frankfurt "all lands held or claimed in the Commonwealth of Virginia" for $500. Two days later, on May 1, Denny sold the claims he had just purchased from Banks to James Hector of Giles County, Virginia, for $2,500! The catch was that 219,237 acres of Banks' land in Harrison and Wood counties had been sold in 1821 for $90.83 in back taxes by William D. Taylor, U.S. Collector of the 18th District of Virginia, to James Williams.[59] One thing is certain. Hope springs eternal in the heart of the speculator.[60]

The transfer of speculators' land by sheriff's sale was a common occurrence. Entries in Wood County deed books illustrate the perils of tax delinquency and the presence of courthouse hangers-on who were all too ready to seize forfeited lands. [61] These entries record the sale for back taxes of tracts held by speculators like Thomas Wilson, John Vanmeter, William McCleery, Elkanah Watson, Jeremiah Van Rensselaer, James Caldwell, and Peregrine Foster. Tracts were bought for amounts ranging from 15 cents to $36.59 by local residents like William Holliday, James H. Neal, John Dils, John Stokely, and Matthias Chapman. Holliday, Dils, and Chapman were county justices, while Neal succeeded Stokely as county clerk. Furthermore, Chapman, in his position as Escheator of the Commonwealth of Virginia for the County of Wood, was in a particularly good position to know of lands on which taxes were delinquent.[62]

The resident speculator with the largest holdings in northwestern Virginia was John Spencer of Loudoun County, who himself settled in Wood County bringing other families with him. Spencer had the most impressive Virginia pedigree of any colonist of the region. He was a great-great-grandson of Colonel Nicholas Spencer, who lived on Nominy Creek, Westmoreland County, a near neighbor of (King) Robert Carter of Nomini Hall, and John Washington (the Immigrant), great-grandfather of the future president. Colonel Nicholas was a member of the Virginia Council, 1671-89, Secretary of State, 1679-89, and as President of the Council served as Acting Governor of Virginia from September 1683 to April 1684.[63] John Spencer was associated in western lands with Israel Lacey, also of Loudoun. Spencer paid taxes on 54,860 acres, Lacey on 30,000 acres, all in Wood County. They frequently sold land to kinsmen. Lacey's father-in-law, Pierce Bayly, for example, bought a tract of 5,250 acres on Cheat River in Monongalia County from Spencer and 6,000 acres in Harrison (later Wood) County from Lacey, referenced in his will.[64] Lacey remained in Loudoun County, but Spencer moved to Wood County in northwestern Virginia in 1805.[65] Between 1801 and 1826, he sold more than forty tracts, including several to relatives and friends from Loudoun County: William Spencer, his brother; John Rightmire, his brother-in-law; John Gulick, his son-in-law; Elisha Timms, a close friend who later married his widow, Phoebe Rightmire Spencer; and Andrew Redmond, whose son Benjamin settled in Wood County and married John and Phoebe Spencer's granddaughter, Nancy James. John Spencer was one of just a handful of resident speculators who owned large tracts numbering into the tens of thousands of acres. These local speculators had at least one thing in common: they brought kin and neighbors with them when they resettled.

Also among the resident speculators, those who actually settled in the county, were Dr.

Joseph Spencer and Colonel Abner Lord, who purchased large tracts of land in Ohio and Harrison counties in Virginia from non-resident land speculators.[66] They came initially from Connecticut as members of the Ohio Company of Associates, the Revolutionary veterans who colonized Marietta beginning in 1788. But they were virtually alone among the Ohio Company stockholders in their interest in lands southeast of the Ohio River. They soon became the leading resident land speculators in Wood County's early frontier history, and they led a sizeable kinship/neighbor group to their new town of Vienna, along the Ohio, in 1794.

The largest land purchases were from Richard Nichols, of Newtown, Fairfield County, Connecticut, who lived near the Spencer and Lord families in the 1780s. Nichols had made his first surveys and entries on Middle Island Creek in Ohio County in 1785.[67] On August 28, 1792, he sold 30,000 acres on the Ohio River at Middle Island Creek to Dr. Spencer, who was then living in Rensselaer County, New York.[68] Spencer, in fact, appeared to be acting as an agent for Nichols at the time. While living in Rensselaer County in June 1794, he and his son, Joseph, Jr., witnessed deeds of grantor Nichols, still a resident of Connecticut, to four citizens of Hosick, New York, for small tracts on the Hughes River in Harrison County.[69]

Nichols continued his acquisition of land in Ohio and Harrison counties. On April 18, 1793, he purchased 100,000 acres on Middle Island Creek and the Ohio River from a partnership composed of James and John Caldwell, Robert and Archibald Woods, and Moses Chapline. He sold a portion of this, 16,000 acres, to Abner Lord on July 8, 1794.[70] On May 6, 1796, he purchased an additional 23,460 acres in Ohio County and 28,000 acres in Harrison County, also from the same grantors.[71] In turn, he conveyed 11,000 acres of the Hughes River lands to Dr. Spencer on December 2, 1798.[72] Three weeks later, on December 24, he sold 14,000 acres in

Ohio County to Spencer and a like amount to Abner Lord the same day.[73] These purchases by Spencer and Lord were mostly intended for resale to small purchasers. For example, in July, August, and September, 1794, Lord resold nine tracts ranging in size from 500 to 2,000 acres to Connecticut grantees, including his cousin, Samuel P. Lord of East Haddam, his brother-in-law, Samuel Selden of Lyme, and John Pratt of Colchester, New London County; the latter soon emigrated to the Spencer-Lord town of Vienna on the banks of the Ohio in future Wood County.[74] Not all sales, however, were to would-be resident settlers or small investors. On separate occasions, they sold two 100,000-acre tracts in Harrison County to another speculator, Jabez Bacon of Litchfield County, Connecticut. In these transactions they were joined by Austin Nichols, who had settled in Ohio County and who, like his brother Richard, speculated in Ohio and Harrison county lands.[75] The business relationship between the Spencer-Lords and Richard Nichols continued for nearly twenty-five years. Dr. Spencer's Virginia-born son-in-law, Stephen R. Wilson, whose only connection with Nichols was through his wife's family, was administrator of Nichols' estate in 1815.[76] It is clear, then, that the primary reason behind the migration of the Spencer-Lord families to northwestern Virginia was the profit motive in land speculation.

There were other reasons, however. Richard Nichols was not the only non-resident speculator with whom Dr. Spencer had connections. A Baltimore merchant speculator, William Smith, had acquired 4,200 acres along the Ohio River north of the mouth of the Little Kanawha River from members of the family of Dr. John Briscoe IV of Berkeley County.[77] Dr. Briscoe, for whom Briscoe's Run above Vienna in Wood County is named, and his sons John, Parmenas, and Walter, each claimed 1,400 acres in settlement and preemption rights in 1773. The Briscoes stayed only briefly and made settlement improvements before the general evacuation of the area

at the time of Lord Dunmore's War. In fact, their intention may never have been to settle permanently; they likely made minimal improvements to claim cheap land for later resale. The Briscoes were wealthy planter aristocrats of Berkeley with roots to the earliest settlement of Maryland. Their settlement along the Ohio River is mentioned in a letter from Captain William Russell at Ft. Blair (Point Pleasant) to Colonel William Preston, county lieutenant of Botetourt County, dated November 12, 1774.[78] Smith acquired the tracts of all the Briscoes except Parmenas in 1785, patented them in Monongalia County, and sold all 4,200 acres to Joseph Spencer and Austin Nichols in the early 1790s.[79] At some point during the decade, Nichols apparently conveyed his interest to Spencer, who entered into a partnership agreement of ownership on April 15, 1801, with Abner Lord and Stephen R. Wilson for the unsold portions of these tracts.[80] The Vienna settlement was made on 2,800 acres of Ohio River bottom land south of Briscoe Run, one of the most beautiful and inviting spots along the river's entire course. The non-contiguous 1,400 acres encroached on other claims, including that of the heirs of Captain Alexander Parker, and was disputed for many years thereafter. Eventually Lord left the area, selling his share to Spencer and his son-in-law, Wilson.

In spite of his prominence as a county justice and high sheriff, Dr. Spencer sometimes ran into financial difficulties. Lewis Summers of Fairfax County, who visited the plantation in 1808, noted that Spencer had 1,000 acres of his tract for sale to satisfy a deed of trust.[81] Since the sale never took place, it may be assumed that he was able to satisfy the obligation without resorting to severe measures. At the May 1817 term of the county court, Spencer was sued for $2,510 plus costs by John Wilson, Jr. Judgment was "executed on 50 head of horned Cattle 9 Horses 90 head of sheep 60 head of Hogs" and seven Negro slaves, including a mother and her four children.

The deputy sheriff noted, "Bond Security taken for the Delivery, which was not done nor the money paid." The following year, the slaves were put up for sale, but the court noted, "not sold for want of bidder." There was a reluctance on the part of county residents to purchase at sheriff's sale the property of a prominent member of the community. There is no record that the debt was ever satisfied.[82] Late in his life, in the years before his death in 1823, Dr. Spencer became the agent of William and Mary Robinson, who owned the yet unsold in-lots and out-lots of the county seat of Parkersburg.[83]

There was a group of petty speculators who resided in the county, usually kin group leaders or town builders, like Captain James Neal and Colonel Hugh Phelps, and John Stokely, who founded the town that became the county seat and served as the first county clerk. In 1805, Phelps bought 999 acres from the estate of his wife's uncle, Mark Hardin, for $1,200. In less than two months, he sold four parcels, amounting to 672 acres, for $1,780. The balance he conveyed to two daughters and their husbands, Thomas and Priscilla Creel and Mason and Hannah Foley, "for and in consideration of the love and good will which they bear toward the aforesaid."[84] Thus, he made a profit of $580 and obtained a patrimony for his children as well. Stokely bought and sold dozens of small tracts; his name appears in early deed books more often than any other individual. Near the end of his life, he deeded eighteen separate tracts, totaling 6,971 acres, to his nephew, Samuel Stokely of Steubenville, Ohio.[85] There was a spirit of what Daniel Vickers calls "competency" in these real estate transactions. Providing for one's near relatives was the most important objective of the frontier family. A sense of community was demonstrated by County Clerk James Hardin Neal, son of the first permanent settler at Parkersburg, and his wife Harriet. The Neals bought land at public auction solely to quiet the

claims of family members and friends who held insecure titles: Scarlet G. Foley, Samuel Barrett, Henry Deputy, John Phelps, Thomas Tavenner, William Radcliff, Reece Woolf, and Walter Coe, Jr. A series of deeds contained the same language: "[T]he said Neal having purchased the said Tract of Land with no other view than to strengthen the title and quiet the possession of those who are actually Settled within the supposed limits of the Tract of Land aforesaid."[86]

A petty speculator with a clear profit motive was William Robinson, whose wife, Mary Parker Robinson, inherited the Robert Thornton tract bought in 1783 by her father, Captain Alexander Parker, for whom the seat of Wood County was named. The Robinsons obtained clear title to this contested tract in 1810, the year of their marriage, and then proceeded to sell the 152 in-lots and eighteen out-lots which were re-surveyed by George D. Avery. The lots sold slowly, and in 1843 the Robinsons divested themselves of the remaining unsold lots to a group of five Parkersburg businessmen.[87] Robinson, later a brigadier-general in the Pennsylvania militia during the Mexican War, was elected in 1840 as the first mayor of Allegheny City, now North Pittsburgh. He was one of the greatest entrepreneurs of Pittsburgh in the first half of the nineteenth century, builder of the first bridge from the north side across the Allegheny River to Pittsburgh in 1819 and founding president of the Exchange Bank of Pittsburgh in 1836.[88]

Like William Robinson, the dream of many land speculators was to become the town founder of the next Cincinnati or Louisville. Everywhere along the frontier, towns were founded contemporaneously with the earliest settlement, since the town and the countryside were economically interdependent. The story of town building in northwestern Virginia is the logical extension of the land speculation which both preceded and accompanied the migration of kinship groups to the Ohio and Little Kanawha valleys.

NOTES

1. Most of these unknown individuals were likely small non-resident holders of settlement and preemption claims or military grants, but since early census-takers often missed families in their canvass, this group of unknowns was eliminated from the analysis due to uncertainty of their status.

2. Wilma A. Dunaway, "Speculators and Settler Capitalists: Unthinking the Mythology about Appalachian Landholding, 1790-1860," in Mary Beth Pudup, Dwight B. Billings, and Altina L. Waller (eds.) Appalachia in the Making: The Mountain South in the Nineteenth Century (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1995), 53.

3. Taxes in West Virginia are still quite regressive. Property taxes are assessed in relation to the extent of improvements on the property. Rural tracts with valuable minerals and fossil fuels are taxed at rates less than those of real property with houses and other improvements. And the 6% sales tax on most sales, including food, falls most heavily on those least able to pay.

4. Otis K. Rice, The Allegheny Frontier: West Virginia Beginnings, 1730-1830 (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1970), 138.

5. Wilma A. Dunaway, The First American Frontier: Transition to Capitalism in Southern Appalachia, 1700-1860 (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996), 61.

6. Hening, William Waller (comp.), The Statutes-at-Large: Being a Collection of All the Laws of Virginia from the First Session of the Legislature in the Year 1619, 13 vols. (Richmond, 1809-23), X, 159, 326-43, 373-75; Edgar B. Sims, Making A State (Charleston, West Virginia: Mathews Printing Co., 1956), 100-02. For a good summary of the historiography of land speculation on the Ohio Valley frontier, see Jonathan J. Bean, "Marketing 'the great American commodity': Nathaniel Massie and Land Speculation on the Ohio Frontier, 1783-1813," Ohio History, 103 (Summer-Autumn, 1994), 152-69.

7. Their maternal grandfather was Josiah Willard, colonial secretary of Massachusetts for thirty-nine years, and their great-grandfather, Rev. Joseph Willard, was minister of the Old South Church in Boston and acting president of Harvard College, 1701-07. Among their Willard cousins were Robert Treat Paine, Massachusetts signer of the Declaration of Independence, and Colonel Return Jonathan Meigs, one of the founders of the Ohio Company Associates and agent to the Cherokee Nation, 1801-23. Their paternal grandfather, Henry Gibbs, Sr., was a prominent minister and fellow of Harvard College, 1700-07, and their father, Henry Gibbs, Jr., was clerk of the Massachusetts House, 1755-59. See Joseph Willard and Charles Henry Pope, Willard Genealogy (Boston: The Willard Family Association, 1915), 15-17, 28-9; Samuel A. Green, An

Historical Sketch of Groton, Massachusetts:1655-1890 (Groton: T.R. Marvin, 1894), 69; Caleb Butler, History of the Town of Groton, Massachusetts (Boston, 1848), 157.

8. MacPherson's Directory for the City and Suburbs of Philadelphia (Philadelphia: Francis Bayley, Printer, 1785), 87.

9. Monongalia County Patent Book 2, various entries; Donald F. Black, History of Wood County, West Virginia, 2 vols. (Marietta, Ohio: Richardson Publishing Co., 1975, 1990), I: Section 6-4.

10. John Jarvis et al. vs. Josiah Gibbs et al., Circuit Superior Court of Law and Chancery, Harrison County, (West) Virginia, Office of the Circuit Clerk, Clarksburg, 1820, Document File 7, No. 1. Dr. Samuel P. Hildreth of Marietta, Ohio, included an account of the roles of Tilton and Wood in "A Brief History of the Settlement at Belville, in Western Virginia," The Hesperian, A Monthly Miscellany (June 1839), 26-28. His source of information was Joseph Wood. Tilton's mercantile establishment was on Third Street between Arch and Race streets in Philadelphia. He is listed in the 1791 Philadelphia directory as a "custom-house officer" located at 190 North Fifth Street.

11. Otis K. Rice, The Allegheny Frontier, 145; Wood County Deed Book 7:393-394.

12. Records of DuPont Allied Business Firms, 1798-1856, Series B, Hagley Musuem and Library, Wilmington, Delaware. See also Wood County Deed Book 7:132. Archibald McCall was well-connected socially as well. His wife Elizabeth was a daughter of General John Calwalader, who fought with Washington at Trenton, Germantown, Brandywine, and Monmouth, but who is best remembered for having shot General Thomas Conway, Washington's detractor, in the mouth during a duel. Archibald and Elizabeth McCall's siblings and children were all prominent members of Philadelphia society. Elizabeth's sister Frances was married to David Montague, Lord Erskine, British ambassador to the United States. McCall lived in the most fashionable neighborhood in Philadelphia, on Second Street and Union, one block from the home of Thomas Willing, senior partner with Robert Morris in the firm Willing & Morris, whose wife, Ann Shippen Willing, was Philadelphia's most celebrated socialite of the era. Robert Morris and Thomas Willing's younger brother Charles were deeply involved in land speculation in Kentucky.

13. Benjamin M. Nead, "A Biographical Sketch of Gen. Thomas Proctor, with some account of the First Pennsylvania Artillery in the Revolution," Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography, 4 (#4, 1880), 454-70. Proctor lived on Walnut Street between Second and Third streets; he was buried near his home in St. Paul's Churchyard on Third Street across from Willing's Alley.

14. Wood County Tax List, 1811. Virginia Land Office Grants, No. 3, 1786, 407 (Reel 69), Virginia State Library, Richmond. Richard Renshaw's family papers are housed at the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia. His business was located on Union Street between Third

and Fourth streets in Philadelphia.

15. Barbara Rasmussen, Absentee Landowning and Exploitation in West Virginia, 1760-1920 (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1994), 122.

16. Willard Rouse Jillson, The Kentucky Land Grants, 2 vols. (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., 1975), I: 64-6, 104-05, 138; Edgar B. Sims, Index to Land Grants in West Virginia (Charleston, West Virginia: n.p., 1952), 490, 569, 587-88, 808-10, 816.

17. Wynkoop's enterprise was located on Third Street between Spruce and Walnut; the Sims' establishment was on South Water Street.

18. Edgar B. Sims, Sims' Index, 463-64, 493-94.

19. Wood County Tax List, 1811. Moylan's establishment was also located on Front Street, between Walnut and Chestnut, one block from Reed & Ford.

20. Wood County Tax Lists, 1807-1815; Otis K. Rice, The Allegheny Frontier, 139.

21. Wood County Deed Book 5:99, 214. Hartshorne, who lived with his family at Strawberry Hill Plantation in Fairfax County, near Alexandria, was a major promoter of the Little River Turnpike, connecting Alexandria with Aldie, Loudoun County, 1803-06. See Nan Netherton et al., Fairfax County, Virginia: A History (Fairfax: Fairfax County Board of Supervisors, 1978), 43, 192.

22. The George Washington Papers at the Library of Congress contain a correspondence that spans the period from 1785 to 1797; see also Donald Jackson and Dorothy Twowig (eds.), The Diaries of George Washington, 6 vols. (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1976-79), IV:77.

23. Jackson and Twohig, The Diaries of George Washington, II:45, 46, 52, 53, 186, 226, 229, 235, 333; III:77, 78, 290; IV:72; V:35; VI:249.

24. Wood County Deed Book 6:24.

25. Eskridge's father Charles was a justice of Fairfax County, Fairfax County Deed Book D:568. He was named for another Fairfax justice, merchant Hector Ross, Fairfax County Deed Book D:590. Members of another Northern Neck elite family, Thomasin and Lewis Ellzey Turner, grandsons of Lewis Ellzey, first sheriff of Fairfax County, leased land from Dr. Joseph Spencer for several years prior to their purchasing land in their own right. Spencer was a resident speculator who owned more than 30,000 acres in Wood County.

26. Wood County Deed Book 6:117.

27. Wood County Deed Book 6:315.

28. Edgar B. Sims, Sims' Index, 194-95, 298-99.

29. Edith Moore Sprouse, Colchester: Colonial Port on the Potomac (Fairfax, Virginia: Fairfax County Office of Comprehensive Planning, 1975), 41, 50, 69, 85, 88; Netherton, Fairfax County, 75-6, 130-31.

30. Wood County Deed Book 4:113-30, 143.

31. Sprouse, Colchester: Colonial Port, 41. Most of Graham's land lay in Kentucky near Limestone (Maysville). There is a copy of a broadside advertising sale of his land, dated August 22, 1789, Virginia Historical Society, Richmond.

32. Otis K. Rice, The Allegheny Frontier, 139-40.

33. Edgar B. Sims, Sims' Index, 281-82, 453-54; Otis K. Rice, The Allegheny Frontier, 136-37.

34. Erna Risch, Supplying Washington's Army (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Army Center of Military History, 1981), 22, 125.

35. Virginia Land Office Grant V, 1786, p. 8 (Reel 62), Virginia Land Office Grants, Library of Virginia, Richmond. Claiborne's grants date from 1784 to 1797 and are far too numerous to cite.

36. "Lands for Sale," *The Richmond Enquirer*, Richmond, Virginia, March 7, 1823.

37. Wood County Tax List, 1811.

38. Ibid.

39. Ibid. Rogers was a direct descendant of Sir Richard Saltonstall, one of the charter members of the Massachusetts Bay Company, and John Rogers, fifth president of Harvard College, 1682-84.

40. Ibid; Edgar B. Sims, Sims' Index, 493. Samuel Purviance was killed by Indians in 1788 on the Ohio River near Cincinnati, perhaps the greatest single massacre of whites, every member of the parties of three flatboats.

41. Otis K. Rice, The Allegheny Frontier, 140.

42. Edgar B. Sims, Sims' Index, 287, 458-59; for an account of the Deakins family's role in land disputes in Monongalia County, see the chapter entitled "Settler Politics," in Rasmussen, Absentee Landowning, 29-44.

43. Tricia A. Barbagallo, "James Caldwell, Immigrant Entrepreneur," The Hudson Valley Regional Review, , 17 (September 2000), 54-68.

44. His famous nephew by marriage was the first secretary of the treasury, Alexander Hamilton.

45. "Jeremiah Van Rensselaer," Biographical Dictionary of the American Congress, 1774-1971 (Washington, D.C., U.S. Government Printing Office, 1971), 1852-53.

46. Elkanah Watson was one of a select number of Americans to have a portrait painted by John Singleton Copley. A friend of Benjamin Franklin, George Washington, John Adams, and Thomas Paine, Watson was also known as an agricultural reformer and father of the county fair. While living on a farm in Berkshire County, Massachusetts, he became interested in the promotion of maple sugar and raising Merino sheep. As founder and first president of the Berkshire Agricultural Society, he organized the first Berkshire fair in 1811. He was the author of several works which reflected his varied interests: A Tour of Holland (1790), History of Agricultural Societies on the Modern Berkshire System (1820), and History of the Rise and Progress, and Existing Condition of the Western Canals in the State of New York (1820). His autobiography, Men and Times of the Revolution, or, Memoirs of Elkanah Watson (1856), was edited and published by his son after his death. See "Elkanah Watson," Dictionary of American Biography, 10 vols. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1936), 10:541-542; "Elkanah Watson," American National Biography. 22 vols. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 22:790-791; Mark A. Mastromarino, "Elkanah Watson and Early Agricultural Fairs, 1790-1860," Historical Journal of Massachusetts, 17 (1989), 105-18; Donald Jackson and Dorothy Twohig, eds. The Diaries of George Washington, 6 vols. (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1976-79), IV:78.

47. Willard and Pope, Willard Genealogy, 254-55. Rev. Joseph Willard lived at Marietta, Ohio, where he died during the "sickly season" on September 24, 1823, one of the public health disasters that swept the trans-Allegheny frontier in the 1820s.

48. Wood County Deed Book 5:166.

49. Of those sent out from New York as agents by Caldwell, Van Rensselaer, and Watson, only Cuyler returned, where he died while an officer in the War of 1812. The others, including Weedon, the Willards, and Blackford remained as permanent residents. Benjamin Willard later founded the town of St. Marys, seat of Pleasants County, (West) Virginia, and his daughter, Marie Antoinette, was the wife of Jacob Beeson Jackson, mayor of Parkersburg, 1879-81, and the sixth governor of West Virginia, 1881-85. Wood County Deed Books 1:252-254, 258-259; 3:5; 4:354; 6:230; 7:344; Broadside, December 24, 1805, printed in Richmond by J. Nicholson, Virginia Historical Society, Richmond.

50. Wood County Deed Book 1:1A.

51. Wood County Order Book 2, August 6 and November 6, 1804; Melba Pender Zinn (comp.), Monongalia County (West) Virginia, Records of the District, Superior and County Courts, 9 vols.

(Bowie, Maryland: Heritage Books, 1990-98), III:86. In spite of his behavior and difficulties with Caldwell, Weedon was apparently a competent surveyor. George D. Avery, a county justice and private surveyor, examined him according to state law and found him "well informed in the art of Surveying." As a result, he was appointed as a deputy surveyor of Wood County on March 7, 1803. See Wood County Minute Book 1:179, 182.

52. Wood County Deed Book 3:25.

53. "James Watson," Biographical Dictionary of the American Congress, 1774-1971 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1971), 1888.

54. "Samuel Miles Hopkins," Ibid., 1140.

55. Wolcott, originally from Connecticut where his father was governor, lived in New York City in the early nineteenth century. He later returned to Connecticut, where he served as governor, 1817-27.

56. Wood County Deed Book 4:129; Wood County Tax List, 1811; Henry J. Swales, A History of the City of Brooklyn, 3 vols. (Brooklyn: n.p., 1867), I:114, 266. "Brooklyn Churches," in Spooner's City Directory, 1822.

57. Lyman Chalkley, Chronicles of the Scotch-Irish in Virginia,1745-1800, Extracted from the Original Court Records of Augusta County, 3 vols. (Rosslyn, Virginia, 1912-13; reprint, Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., 1965), II, 192-94.

58. It is interesting to note that when this deed was recorded, August 28, 1820, Wood County Clerk James H. Neal made the following notation in the side margin: "Original deliver'd a man of colour who bro't the Deed."

59. Wood County Deed Book 6: 255ff.

60. Wood County Deed Book 7: 440-41.

59. For example, see Wood County Deed Book 5: 34, 36-38, 45-56, 58-63, 65-66, 69-71, 79-95, 97-98, 100-108, 132-135 151.

62. Wood County Deed Book 7: 305.

63. Spencer's great-great-grandmother, Frances Mottram Spencer, was the daughter of Colonel John Mottram, the first burgess to represent the Northern Neck in the House of Burgesses. The first court of Northumberland County met in his home.

64. Wood County Tax List, 1811; Loudoun County Will Book F:194-96.

65. Loudoun County Deed Book 3:34-35.

66. Though John and Joseph Spencer were both descended from the patrician Spencer family of English heritage, they were not closely related. They came from different regions and likely didn't know each other until they settled in the same county.

67. Answer of Archibald Woods to the Bill of Complaint of Stephen R. Wilson, administrator of Richard Nichols, deceased, Stephen R. Wilson vs. James Caldwell et al., Circuit Superior Court of Law and Chancery of Harrison County, Clarksburg, (West) Virginia, 1815, Document File 7, No. 1, Office of the Circuit Clerk of Harrison County, Clarksburg, West Virginia . [Hereafter cited as Wilson vs. Caldwell.]

68. Melba Pender Zinn,, Monongalia County, II, 238. The land transactions between Nichols and Spencer began to unravel by the end of the decade. In 1801, Dr. Spencer sued Nichols in the District Court of Wood County, charging that the defendant had failed to deliver the deed within the agreed-upon two years. On appeal to the Superior Court of Monongalia County, Morgantown, Spencer was awarded $15,000 in damages. This was likely a friendly suit since Nichols' appearance bond was signed by Spencer's son-in-law, Stephen R. Wilson, and by his son, Samuel Selden Spencer.

69. Harrison County Deed Book 2:15-18, shows transfers of 1,000 acres to John Waldo, and 500 acres each to John Comstock, Timothy Groves, and Gilbert Barnes.

70. Harrison County Deed Book 2:286-7.

71. Wilson vs. Caldwell. These five partners were among the earliest settlers of Ohio County in the area near Wheeling. James Caldwell was named as one of the original justices of the peace when Ohio County was formed in 1776. John Caldwell was his son and Moses Chapline his son-in-law. The Woods were brothers who later removed to Belmont County, Ohio.

72. Harrison County Deed Book 4:117.

73. Wilson vs. Caldwell.

74. Harrison County Deed Book 1:541-3; Deed Book 2:289-92; Deed Book 3:85; and Deed Book 4:169.

75. Harrison County Deed Book 2:273; Deed Book 4:182. Jabez Bacon was a prosperous merchant and shipper of Woodbury, Connecticut, and New York City. When he died in 1806, his estate was worth over $500,000. His home in Woodbury and store next door are listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

76. Wilson vs. Caldwell.

77. Dr. Briscoe was the great-grandson of another Dr. John Briscoe, one of the twenty gentlemen who accompanied George Calvert to Maryland on *The Ark and the Dove*. [See Alice Norris Parran (ed.), Register of Maryland's Heraldic Families (Baltimore: H.C. Roebuck & Son, 1938),

73-4. According to a handwritten note by Lyman C. Draper, Dr. Briscoe, along with Joist Hite and Morgan Morgan, helped to organize the first Episcopal Church in the Valley of Virginia in 1740 at Bunker Hill, Berkeley County [Draper Collection, Series BB, Vol. 1, #16]. The church building on the site is known as Morgan's Chapel even today. In 1784, Dr. Briscoe built a Georgian style plantation home, which he called Piedmont, still standing in Jefferson County. He died December 7, 1788. His son, Dr. John Briscoe V, lived at Piedmont until his death. Parmenas and Walter Briscoe removed to Nelson County, Kentucky, in the 1780s. See also Henry Howe, Historical Collections of Virginia (Charleston, South Carolina, 1845; reprint, Baltimore: Regional Publishing Co., 1969), 273.

78. Reuben Gold Thwaites and Louise Phelps Kellogg (eds.), A Documentary History of Lord Dunmore's War (Madison: Wisconsin Historical Society, 1905), 309.

79. Donald F. Black, History of Wood County, West Virginia, 2 vols. (Marietta, Ohio, 1975, 1990), I, Section 7-1. Twenty-eight hundred acres was undivided; the other fourteen hundred acres to the south was separated from the rest by the Parmenas Briscoe tract, which was sold to Jacob Beeson, Sr., of Fayette County, Pennsylvania. Beeson's sons, Jacob, Jr., and Jonas, settled on this parcel.

80. The deed from Smith to Spencer and Nichols was likely recorded in the General Court at Richmond and destroyed during the Civil War, as no documentation of this sale is recorded in Monongalia or Harrison counties. The transfer is recited, however, in the partnership agreement, Wood County Deed Book 1:265.

81. James Morton Callahan, History of West Virginia, Old and New, 2 vols. (Chicago: American Historical Society, 1923), I, 132.

82. Wood County Execution Order Book, 1810-undated, 38, 43.

83. For example, see Wood County Deed Book 5:170, 173, 174, 281. Parkersburg was named in honor of Mrs. Robinson's deceased father, Captain Alexander Parker, from whom she had inherited the site. Originally chartered as Newport in 1800, the name was changed when the Robinsons obtained clear title and had the town re-surveyed in 1810.

84. Wood County Deed Book 3:30-35; Deed Book 4:197.

85. Wood County Deed Book 6:272.

86. Wood County Deed Book 5:228-234, 250.

87. The group included some of the principal citizens of the community: John Jay Jackson, Sr., John P. Snodgrass, John R. Murdoch, Beverly Smith, and James McNeil Stephenson.

88. The Bulletin Index of the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh, February 1, 1940.

Chapter Seven
Kinship Migration and Town Building

Richard C. Wade begins his seminal work The Urban Frontier with this striking observation: "The towns were the spearhead of the frontier. Planted far in advance of the line of settlement, they held the West for the approaching population."[1] He notes that a town developed around Ft. Pitt at the Forks of the Ohio from the outset and that Cincinnati was laid out within a year of earliest settlement. Likewise Marietta, the oldest permanent settlement in the Northwest Territory, at the mouth of the Muskingum River, was a town from its inception in 1788. It was founded by Revolutionary War veterans who brought their urban customs and skills with them.

Marietta, just across the river from the Wood County settlements, was frequently mentioned by travelers who descended the Ohio. John Melish, the Scottish-born cartographer who traveled extensively throughout the United States from the years 1806 to 1811, found Marietta to be particularly attractive and thriving. He attributed the energy of its citizens to their New England character, calling them "a gay, lively people" but also "sober, industrious, intelligent, and discreet" and "very correct in their morals."[2]

There has long been a perception that what was true of the upper and lower Ohio (Pittsburgh and Louisville), and the Northwest Territory (Marietta and Cincinnati), was not true of western Virginia, that towns of any consequence did not develop on the Virginia side during the frontier period. In fact, casual sojourners like Melish were decidedly negative about the Virginia backcountry. In contrast to his blushing assessment of Marietta, he observed that the Virginians along the Ohio "seemed generally to trust to the exertions of the negroes, and we

found them, as might be expected, 'miserable and wretched, and poor, and almost naked.'"[3]

This stereotype does not fit the realities of the northwestern Virginia frontier. The early colonists to the area had emigrated from long-settled regions with established towns and cities. They were not illiterate rustics but rather ordinary, typical westward-moving settlers in the process of conquering a wilderness and creating communities as much as possible like the ones they had left. A solid minority were migrants from New England, the Spencer-Lords and the George Avery kinship group. Members of prominent Connecticut families, they had lived in established towns like New London, Lyme, and Haddam. The Neal-Phelpses, who came from that portion of Monongalia County which was included in Fayette County, Pennsylvania, when the Mason-Dixon Line was extended in the 1780s, lived near Beeson Town (Uniontown) and Morgantown. Captain James Neal, leader of the kinship group, represented Monongalia County in the Virginia Assembly before his removal to the Little Kanawha.[4] Most members of the Isaac Williams kinship group lived near Martinsburg in Berkeley County, a viable colonial town surveyed in 1774. Also nearby was Shepherdstown, laid out in 1762. At the time of their departure from Berkeley, the county had several towns and a thriving plantation economy. Two of George Washington's brothers, Samuel, who constructed Harewood in 1770, and Charles, the builder of Happy Retreat, 1780, were society leaders. And two high-ranking Revolutionary War generals were among its elites, Charles Lee at Preto Rio and Horatio Gates at Travelers Retreat. The Northern Neck plantation aristocrats, the Keene-Lewis-Neale kinship group and the Hendersons, who were in the process of taming Washington Bottom, Spring Creek, and Cow Creek at the time of Melish's visit, had just recently come from Fairfax, Prince William, and Loudoun counties, which had dozens of cities and towns, like Alexandria, Colchester, and

Dumfries. The idea that the Virginia side of the Ohio River was peopled by the "miserable and wretched, and poor, and almost naked" is ludicrous.

In the first place, European travelers like Melish were more comfortable with the New England and mid-Atlantic concept of a town as a compact and communal cultural center. And they shared the prejudices of Yankees about the frontier way of life. River towns in the Northwest Territory founded by New Englanders, like Marietta and Belpre, had frame houses, more churches and school houses, more superficial evidences of a cultured society. Weary travelers like Melish were drawn to them. Their observations of the opposite side of the river were limited largely to superficial glances at shoreline activity. Mills and tan houses, the clearest signs of frontier economic activity, were usually located upstream on creeks and tributaries away from the view of casual observers. What they saw were taverns and ferries. It was at the tavern or ordinary, that democratic leveler of the trans-Allegheny frontier, that many travelers formed their first and sometimes only impression of settlers at the periphery. And activity at the ordinary could be rowdy and raucous as well as solemn and staid. Professor James M. Miller of Waynesburg College, Pennsylvania, described the mélange of the frontier tavern in his compelling monograph of two generations ago, The Genesis of Western Culture:

> The smallest hamlet boasted at least one tavern, and ferry sites, crossroads, and 'halfway' points afforded locations for others. It became the first social center of the community it served, for here was the center for news and gossip. Here the mail coach stopped, and here all travelers tarried. Its common bar and its common table served the community as market-place and public forum, and its common beds served as the great leveler of class. . . . All men came eventually to the frontier tavern. Wagoners, drovers, packers, carrying produce to the eastern markets or returning laden with eastern goods, countrymen and new settlers, merchants and peddlers, judges, lawyers, and members of [the] legislature, all met in the common rooms of the tavern, expressed their ideas and views, and passed on. Elections, muster-

> days, court sessions were occasions of special activity. The tavern became the polling place, sometimes the court, often the church. Usually the tavern was the stage station and the postoffice, and the large barroom was a common rendezvous for dancing and entertainments.[5]

John Melish misunderstood the nature of the northwestern Virginia frontier and its primitive towns made up of log structures. The Virginia town of the trans-Allegheny had a dual purpose, one political and the other economic. Typically it was the seat or would-be seat of county government. Such towns consisted of a courthouse, jail, an ordinary or two, and a few houses, all of log construction.[6] On monthly court days, these towns were packed with lawyers, litigators, witnesses, and other citizens who had business before the justices, like serving as a juror or witness, reporting on the progress of a road, or recording a deed. On the other thirty days of the life of a courthouse town, the place had an air of idle dormancy. But appearances were deceiving. The Virginia towns were also vital centers of entrepreneurial activity, and the prosperity of their citizens was no less than that of the Ohio towns. They were the unsophisticated centers of the essential interdependence of town and country, so characteristic of the Virginia frontier, where the products of farm and forest were transformed into value-added commodities and containerized for shipment into an international economy. Ironically, Virginia courthouse villages like Wheeling and Parkersburg soon outstripped the New England towns of the Ohio country. Both became the western termini of major roads, Wheeling of the National Road and Parkersburg of both the Northwestern and the Staunton to Parkersburg Turnpikes. Both became Ohio River destinations of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad before the Civil War. Early economic activity may have seemed crude to the unversed, but it was evidence of an entrepreneurial spirit that was destined to flourish in the second generation.

The town, then, was not an accessory of the Virginia frontier; it was a focal point of economic and political activity. And crude villages did not follow colonization by a decade or a generation. They sometimes preceded or were contemporaneous with the first settlement and, in fact, "help to reveal the nature of much of the immigration moving westward. . . . By 1800 the urban pattern of the West had been established . . . [and] a wedge of urbanism had been driven into the backwoods."[7] Wade maintains that "[m]any settlers came across the mountains in search of promising towns as well as good land. Their inducements were not so much fertile soil as opportunities in infant cities."[8] This was particularly true of merchants and artisans and professionals like lawyers and doctors.

The fact is that there were at least four surveyed towns by the time Wood County was created in 1798: Belleville in 1785-6, Williamsport in 1790, Vienna in 1795, and Springville (Newport) in 1796. Unfortunately, none of the plats of these town have survived. Each of these early frontier villages was a center of kinship/neighbor settlement, except for Newport, which became the county seat in 1800. Only Vienna and Newport were actually chartered by the Virginia General Assembly in anticipation of their being chosen as the county seat.

By the time Wood County was organized in 1799, within a decade and a half of the first permanent settlement, the region had reached a stage in its economic development that Warren R. Hofstra and Robert D. Mitchell have called "the full reciprocity of town and country." Its location along the Ohio River, its early integration into the economy of the Marietta settlement, its milling, boatbuilding, tanning, ironmaking, trading and production of wheat and other grains, pork, and beef, placed its early frontier towns near the center of the most viable emerging economy between Wheeling and Cincinnati. Like Winchester and other towns a generation

earlier in the Shenandoah Valley, from which a large number of the colonists of northwestern Virginia had emigrated, the mid-Ohio Valley was well along in the transition from household to frontier commercial economy. "Although town and country represented discrete landscape elements, the marketing of agricultural surpluses in grains and livestock and the redistribution of imported goods integrated town and country in a single, continuous settlement system."[9] Kinship circles, of course, encouraged an economic system based on barter and reciprocity, but at the same time the location of kinship groups along the most important inland waterway of the western frontier encouraged their rapid inclusion into a growing regional, national, and international marketplace. The existence of these early frontier villages was far less marginal than one might suppose, given only a decade of experience. Flatboat building, shipbuilding, and the containerization, transport, and marketing of the products of farm and forest was an integral part of their economic experience.[10]

Belleville was laid out by Joseph Wood, a surveyor employed by the Philadelphia merchant firm of Tilton & Gibbs. Its principals were William Tilton, a merchant-surveyor, and two brothers, Josiah Willard Gibbs and William Gibbs. It is a fine example of a frontier town planned by Eastern merchant speculators. In June 1785, Tilton & Gibbs contracted with a small group of Philadelphia craftsmen to move to a portion of a 91,507-acre tract which they had patented the year before in Monongalia County. The emigrants were each to be given three hundred acres in return for settling on the tract and building a dwelling house. To cover the cost of "Necessary Utensils, Stock, & Provisions" valued in the amount of fifty-five pounds, eleven shillings, and two pence, each settler agreed to work at the rate of ten shillings per day in improving the common areas by erecting "Houses Mills or other Tenements." Any balance

would be paid in "Grain or other Produce."[11] In November Tilton, his agent and surveyor, Joseph Wood, and the colonists left Pittsburgh for the mid-Ohio Valley. There they built a blockhouse to protect themselves from Indian attack and surveyed a village with a number of in-lots and several twenty-acre out-lots. Following Tilton's return to Philadelphia in 1786, Wood then completed his two-year contract by surveying 280-acre "out Plantations" for each of the settlers.[12] Belleville was typical of the town boosterism of hundreds of speculators of the frontier era. Older than Cincinnati and nearly as old as Louisville, Belleville was built on the dreams of speculators and the hopes of Philadelphia artisans who longed for a better life in the Ohio Valley. Literate and skilled, men like David Jamison, James Pewtherer, and William Ingles envisioned a place where they could practice their artisanship in a new town where labor would be valued and valuable, while at the same time providing them nearby land to become prosperous farmers. For many plainfolk, farming and craftsmanship were not mutually exclusive; their ambition was to do both.

Until the Indian War was ended by the Treaty of Greenville, 1795, the Belleville residents remained close to their stockade, Belleville Station, living in cabins on their in-lots and farming and grazing cattle on small out-lots in the river bottom land. With the advent of peace the colonists began to clear their larger tracts and build cabins along the branches of Lee Creek, a tributary of the Ohio. But their plan of dual town and country living was soon interrupted by that pernicious villain of frontier settlement, the overlapping claim.

On August 6, 1796, a kinship group headed by George D. Avery arrived at Belleville from New London, Connecticut, claiming ownership of the town site, the Ohio River bottom land, and some nearby tracts as well. Avery had left New London in May and journeyed to

Alexandria, Virginia, where he purchased 1,374 acres from Dr. James Craik on June 30. Craik had claimed the land on his journey to the Ohio Valley, along with George Washington, in 1770. The Belleville residents discovered to their mortification that William Tilton and Joseph Wood had erred in their original survey of the town lots and had encroached on Craik's land. Avery evicted the residents and took possession, an action that later contributed to his economic ruin. It is unlikely that Avery was unaware of the overlap, since he had been a merchant at Marietta since 1790. Avery and his kinfolk, the Allens, Hempsteads, Prentisses, and Champlins, took over the town which had been carved from a raw wilderness and improved by the hard labor of innocent settlers, engendering bitterness that lasted for more than two decades. By 1800 Avery had constructed a store and tavern at Belleville, a horse, grist, and sawmill at the Falls of Lee Creek, and a shipyard north of the village. At least one oceangoing brig, the *Belleville*, was launched there in 1804. He also built flatboats and had an interest in shipbuilding at Marietta, where the 130-ton *Mary Avery*, named for his wife, was launched May 5, 1803.[13] In 1805 Avery cleared a note of $2,000 to Charles Greene, a Marietta shipbuilder, with property received from the sale of a brig at Boston.[14]

Avery, a surveyor and civil engineer, resurveyed Belleville after his arrival in 1796. The town lots which he sold to individuals like Peter Anderson, his stepson Lodowick Peter Champlin, and his sister-in-law Esther Hempstead were one hundred feet along the front and two hundred feet deep.[15] The original out-lots were likely eliminated, as the new town fronted the river. There were other stores and taverns at Belleville at the turn of the century, two of which were run by Anderson and John Flinn. Dudley Laukford, too, was licensed by the county court to open an ordinary at Belleville in 1803.[16] Anderson, like Avery, was a county justice. They were

the most entrepreneurial men of the town. Anderson farmed extensively and acquired several small tracts of land; in addition to his tavern, he operated a ferry below the town across the Ohio River.[17]

All too soon Avery's enterprise collapsed, and he suffered bankruptcy. Even though he was a county justice, he was committed to the log jail at Newport in 1805 upon the complaint of his creditors. Avery tried to recoup his losses by selling slaves and land, leasing his Belleville tavern, store, and lands to Samuel Weld, and returning to his trade of surveying. But ultimately, his creditors seized his Belleville property to satisfy debts. He moved to Newport, where he resurveyed the county seat in 1810.[18]

There were a variety of reasons for Avery's insolvency. The hostility of his evicted neighbors, which resulted in the burning of barns, grainstacks, and mills, was a fatal blow. Fortescue Cuming, an Irishman who visited the area in 1807, recorded the tragedy:

> [G]oing largely into ship building, he was so unfortunate in that business that in consequence, he is now confined in Wood county gaol . . . Last fall Mr. Avery's barn and two thousand bushels of grain, several stacks of grain, and a horse, grist and saw mills, were burnt by incendiaries, who, though known, could not be brought to justice for want of positive proof.[19]

Furthermore, the Jeffersonian embargo and the economic warfare which followed crippled the shipping and shipbuilding industries in the Ohio Valley and shut down Avery's infant enterprise. But the root of his difficulties was related to poor business management and overexpansion. On a buying trip to New York in the fall of 1802, he purchased $30,000 worth of goods on three- to six-month bills of credit using his land as collateral. Commodities like drugs, dry goods, hardware, and groceries were bought from several firms, and when they arrived he was unable to sell enough in time to satisfy all the notes. Though he marketed some goods at both his Marietta

and Belleville stores, he failed to recover his investment quickly in a developing frontier economy. As a result he defaulted, and several judgments against him were upheld in the Morgantown District Chancery Court. When he could not post bail, he was remanded to debtors' prison.[20] The year 1811 found Avery once again incarcerated, when in April most of his creditors agreed to divide 50,000 acres which he owned in Kanawha County in proportion to their claims.[21] After fifteen years of town building, he had nothing left of his entrepreneurial dream. Though he moved back East ca. 1818, he left behind him a number of kinfolk, a viable town, and the permanent survey of the county seat in which he named one of the streets for himself. But he also bequeathed a measure of bitterness which increased the disquiet among rival kinship factions and ethnic and regional groups. He was resented not only because he had evicted innocent squatters but also because he was among a minority of Connecticut Yankees in the county.

The frontier town developed in advance of the bulk of settlement or at least contemporaneous with it. Invariably the town was a business enterprise, and the soul and spirit behind it was a town booster with a vision that his town might become the next Pittsburgh. Malcolm J. Rohrbough has captured the essence of these enterprising individuals:

> [T]owns did not spring spontaneously into life. They were the creations of ambitious promoters and speculators. These entrepreneurs planted and nurtured their urban centers like a farmer tending a crop of corn or cotton. If the hinterland called the frontier town into existence, then the town promoter served as interested midwife. He knew the factors that made for successful towns, and he did not wait for them to coalesce. Instead he took whatever steps were necessary to bring them about, naturally if possible, artificially if necessary. . . . Anyone with a semblance to title (or prospects to one) who would give free lots to the first few hardy settlers, cut their construction thirst with a barrel of whiskey, and trust to providence thereafter could go into the town-building business.[22]

George D. Avery was such a town promoter, as William Tilton had been before him at Belleville. And there were others like them in northwestern Virginia. In fact, each of the surveyed villages in future Wood County were commenced and developed by town boosters: Isaac Williams at Williamsport, Dr. Joseph Spencer and Colonel Abner Lord at Vienna, and John Stokely at Newport/Parkersburg.

Williamsport, later Williamstown, was a village directly across the mouth of the Muskingum River along the Ohio. It served the needs of the kinship group which lived there, the Isaac Williams families who, for the most part, were simple plainfolk. Williamsport owed its existence to a combination of factors. Williams ran a ferry from his settlement to the much larger New England town across the Ohio, Marietta, where his colonists could buy, sell, and trade.[23] Williams Station or Williamsport was the western terminus of the Virginia state road. In 1786, the General Assembly appointed commissioners to open "a waggon road at least thirty feet wide . . . [from Clarksburg, the county seat of Harrison] to the mouth of the Little Kenhawa or as near thereto as the situation of the land will admit."[24] Among the commissioners appointed was William Haymond, surveyor of Harrison County, who conducted the survey in 1790. When the survey party completed its task, Haymond was contracted by Isaac Williams to lay out his town, which he agreed to do in exchange for a town lot.[25] The village was very small, but it provided basic services. Williams himself was a blacksmith as well as a ferryman, and there were tanners, carpenters, and coopers who carried on their trades. William Skinner leased a one-and-one-half-acre lot for a tannery, his rent satisfied by a promise to "tan and curry . . . three hides yearly . . . the said Isaac providing the hides."[26] Humphrey Hook operated a tavern which served the locals as well as river travelers. The townsmen had few political ambitions and no

county seat dreams. Williams' town was purely functional in nature.

Vienna, only a few miles down river, was the antithesis of Williamsport. Begun by Revolutionary War officers, Dr. Spencer and Colonel Lord, it was Marietta in miniature. Politics was at the center of its being. Its founders were land speculators and town boosters who intended for their village to become the county seat when the Ohio River and Little Kanawha communities were separated from Harrison County. Vienna was the most homogeneous town in the region, settled by some twenty families of a single kinship/neighbor network from Middlesex, Fairfield, and New London counties in Connecticut. One contemporary eyewitness who visited Vienna was Felix Renick, who traveled from the South Branch of the Potomac to the Scioto Valley in central Ohio in 1798. "Below Williams' improvement lies a very handsome bottom, and for eight miles small improvement going on. Then came to a very well improved body of land laid off by Dr. Spencer into fifty acre lots and a small town called Vienna."[27] Vienna boasted a store and tavern operated by Samuel Beaumont. Most of its inhabitants were artisans who, like those at Belleville, farmed from spring to fall and carried on their trades during the off-season. They were fortunate to have two medical doctors, brothers-in-law Joseph Spencer and George D. Selden. After its defeat in the courthouse battle, Vienna declined and eventually reverted to farmland.[28]

The fourth town surveyed was destined to become the county seat. Known successively as Springville, then chartered as Newport on January 6, 1800, it was renamed Parkersburg in 1810 and resurveyed.[29] Parkersburg was rechartered by the General Assembly on January 23, 1820, with seven trustees empowered to elect annually a president and recorder.[30] Due to its favorable location at the mouth of the Little Kanawha River along the Ohio, it soon became a

commercial and transportation center. A few frontier industries were carried on almost from the beginning: a brickyard, cooperage, mill, two tanneries, a charcoal pit and iron forge, along with associated crafts like carpentry, blacksmithing, and saddle, boot, and shoemaking. Of course, there were three or four taverns. Alone among the towns of Wood County, surveyed or otherwise, Newport was not associated with a single kinship group. It was first surveyed by John Stokely, a widower born at Lewes, Sussex County, Delaware, who had migrated in his youth with his family to Redstone on the Monongahela River. There he came in contact with Captain James Neal, who in 1785 led a kinship colony to the Little Kanawha River. Stokely, along with three nephews and a number of other friends and neighbors, followed Neal sequentially to Wood County. He first laid out his town in 1796 on both sides of the mouth of the Little Kanawha on fifteen acres of a sixty-nine acre tract,[31] with streets named Water, Kanawha, Vine, High, and Burr. On June 9, 1802, the county court authorized him to operate ferries across both the Little Kanawha and Ohio rivers at his town site.[32] Besides town planting, Stokely was a petty speculator and inveterate purchaser of military land warrants.[33] The first clerk of Wood County, 1800-06, he also served four terms in the Virginia House of Delegates. But in addition to his town building, speculative, and political activities, he was one of the most ambitious entrepreneurs along the frontier.

Thomas Pinckney's treaty with Spain in 1795 had obtained for western traders the right of deposit at New Orleans. This enabled frontier entrepreneurs on the western waters, like Stokely, to load goods like flour, whiskey, pork, furs, and ginseng on flatboats and sell them at the Port of New Orleans for shipment into the international market, with some commodities sold in the West Indies and Atlantic seaports, or even in Europe or the Far East. On May 31, 1798, John Stokely

received two hundred fourteen barrels of flour from eight local farmers, signed a six-month note purchasing one hundred barrels at seven dollars per barrel, and accepted the other one hundred fourteen barrels on consignment. He agreed to take the flour by flatboat "down the river as far as New Orleans, if it is necessary, and to sell the same to the best advantage." His profit was to be eighty-three cents a barrel, with the consignees sharing expenses, including the cost of the boat, nine dollars.[34] Whether Stokely was able to sell the milled flour at a nearby entrepot like Cincinnati or Louisville is unknown, but his experience illustrates that before the end of the century there was already the emergence of a commercial economy that linked country and town in a single venture. Middleman Stokely had brought together the efforts of the farmer, miller, cooper, blacksmith, and boatbuilder in the creation of a value-added commodity (flour) and value-added materials (barrels and a flatboat), to sell their product in an international market. Only a few years in existence, this frontier community was quickly developing a market-oriented economy. Though records of frontier entrepreneurship are rare, one senses that similar voyages occurred frequently. Charles Boso, Sr., who lived at Belleville, later recalled a similar journey in 1807 when he was ten years old. "[H]e went with this father [John Boso] and William Anderson to Cincinnati with a keel boat load of products to sell, at that time Cincinnati was only a village of fifty houses, some of log and some frame." Boso also recalled visiting the shipyard of George Avery at Belleville while they were building a flatboat for the Burr expedition.[35]

Andrew R.L. Cayton and Paula R. Riggs, in their bicentennial history of Marietta, have aptly stated the economic dream of the New England founders of that town:

> What [they] envisioned was an internationally oriented economy based on the exchange of raw materials for manufactured goods with the Atlantic seaboard states and Europe. Settlers in the Ohio Company would grow the

> rice, cotton, tobacco, wheat, corn, flax, hemp, and other crops and sell them to merchants in Marietta. The merchants, in turn, would ship these raw materials to the East, either over the mountains by wagon, or more likely, on oceangoing vessels that would be built on the banks of the Muskingum River.[36]

What the town founders of Marietta imagined is exactly what George Avery, Isaac Williams, Joseph Spencer, and John Stokely, and others like them, were contemplating as well. Economic ambition transcends class, ethnicity, place of origin, and kinship grouping. It was the capitalistic motivation behind towns as obscure as Belleville and Newport as well as those much larger and better known, like Pittsburgh and Cincinnati.

During the first decade, there were not more than twenty log structures at Newport, including the two-story courthouse/jail. At the east corner of the public square, the county court erected "stocks pillory and whipping post."[37] Ironically, the justices asked one of their merchant-members, George Avery, to "furnish two good and sufficient Stock locks for the Jail of this County."[38] Just two years later, Avery found himself incarcerated behind those same locks!

The residents represented a diversity of occupations and professions, as well as ethnic and regional backgrounds. Some were members of kinship groups when they arrived in the region but were soon attracted to Newport when it was chosen as the county seat. Caleb Bailey, of New London County, Connecticut, was a carpenter who built the public buildings, but who also was a merchant and innkeeper.[39] James G. Laidley, a Philadelphia-born lawyer, was postmaster of "Wood Court House," appointed by President Jefferson. Laidley had one of the best legal educations on the frontier, having studied under the great Virginia jurist, George Wythe.[40] Another attorney who opened an office in 1804 was Scottish-born James Wilson, lately of Petersburg.[41] William Enoch, son of a lieutenant-colonel from Greene County, Pennsylvania,

whose grandfather had built Ft. Enoch on the Cacapon River, was a blacksmith and gunsmith. John Stephenson who, like Stokely, had followed James Neal to the Little Kanawha from the Monongahela River, kept a tavern and general store and was recognized by the county court to solemnize marriages.[42] He himself was a justice of the court. Thomas Neale, maternal grandfather of Thomas J. (Stonewall) Jackson, of Loudoun County, Virginia, had a tavern and store. He was the largest landowner within the confines of the village. Neale had a house and farm on out-lot #1, which lay at the north side of the river's mouth, a tavern, store, and warehouse on in-lot #1, a garden on in-lot #2, and he also owned in-lots #3 and #4, which were vacant.[43] John Neal, son of first settler Captain James Neal, operated a tavern; a politician, he also served two terms as sheriff and represented the county in the state legislature.[44] Jesse Murdoch, a Dils in-law who was part of the James Neal kinship/neighbor group, was a blacksmith and gunsmith.[45] Murdoch tended a charcoal pit above the town along the riverbank.[46]

On the south side of the Little Kanawha, then part of the town, Peter Mixner had a small grist mill. Mixner, of Dutch descent, had come to Newport by way of the New England settlement at Belpre just opposite the Ohio River, and served as county coroner. Allen Davis, of Prince William County, operated a tavern for many years along the south side. Also keeping an inn in the same area were Samuel and Esther Prentiss Hempstead.[47] Mrs. Hempstead was the sister-in-law of George Avery of Belleville, and they had come from New London, Connecticut. Beginning in 1802, John Stewart established a tannery on three lots on Burr Street, along a spring which flowed into the Little Kanawha.[48] In the same year, John Dils, a saddler and shoemaker originally from Hunterdon County, New Jersey, who had come to the area via Fayette County, Pennsylvania, bought a lot near the tannery, and the two artisans worked in tandem. Dils was

also granted license to keep an ordinary at his house.[49] The combination of two or more trades and occupations in a frontier town was not uncommon; those present were anxious to provide any kind of service that might add to their wealth and influence. It is safe to say that nearly every individual along the Ohio had dreams of prosperity and prestige. James Riggs, husband of Fanny Creel, was the town's first doctor,[50] though he was soon joined by others like David Creel and James Holliday, both Virginians, and Eliel T. Safford, a New Englander, as the town grew.[51]

No picture of economic activity at Newport in its first decade would be complete without an account of Harman Blennerhassett, an Irish emigre aristocrat who, with his talented and gifted wife, Margaret Agnew Blennerhassett, built a large Palladian-style mansion on an island one mile below Newport, known ever since as Blennerhassett Island. Blennerhassett had sold his family estate, Castle Conway, in County Kerry, Ireland, in 1795. He and his wife, who was also his niece, came to the United States largely for political reasons related to his membership in the outlawed United Irishmen, but perhaps also to escape family disapproval of their sanguineous marriage. They were the wealthiest colonists in the area, and their decision to settle in northwestern Virginia was an economic blessing. Once in the Ohio Valley, Blennerhassett entered into a partnership with Judge Dudley Woodbridge and his son, Dudley, Jr., of Marietta, and established general stores on his island and at Newport in Virginia, at Waterford and Chillicothe in the Northwest Territory, and at the mouth of the Big Hocking River, now Hockingport, Ohio. The partners imported goods from England, including tools, household goods, clothing, and dry goods. The initial shipment which arrived at Marietta on June 9, 1799, cost Blennerhassett L2,801 sterling. Some items were useful in the frontier villages, but "many of the goods were unsalable in this country." Since cash was scarce, much of the goods was sold

on credit or bartered for ginseng, whiskey, animal skins, grain, and hay.[52]

Blennerhassett and Woodbridge also acted as wholesalers, providing other merchants with goods for resale. In 1805, for example, Newport merchant Caleb Bailey bought goods valued at $656.23 from Woodbridge & Company, including saddle bags and a piece of linen, payable "in cash or good merchantable bear skins." They also lent him $101.50 on February 25, 1805, to be paid with "twenty-nine prime sizeable bear skins.[53] (The current market value, then, of a good quality bearskin was $3.50.) The Blennerhassett/Woodbridge enterprise also engaged in shipbuilding, shipping, and the cattle business, and much of their mercantile activity was damaged by the trade war between Britain and France. But the Blennerhassetts lived lavishly, spent freely, and were overgenerous and forgiving to a fault. As a consequence, they had squandered much of their capital by the time they became involved with the southwestern intrigues of Aaron Burr. In fact, Blennerhassett's casting his lot with the discredited former vice president may be seen as a somewhat desperate attempt to recoup his flagging fortune. In all fairness, the Blennerhassetts pumped large sums of money into the cash-starved economy of the Ohio Valley. Their investments also stimulated other economic activities like barrel-making, the production of naval stores, tallow making, and the establishment of iron works, as well as providing markets for locally-produced commodities.[54] It is likely that without the hard money that they injected into the economy at such a critical juncture, northwestern Virginia's growth would have been retarded for a decade or more.

John Stokely's land on which he laid out Newport had been the subject of a legal dispute almost from the beginning. The original tract, belonging to Robert Thornton, was surveyed by Captain James Neal, then deputy surveyor of Monongalia County. Neal "in running the Courses

and Distances down the Little Kenhawa river as in the said patent expressed he left out nooks or strips of Land which he advised said Thornton to take in which he did not do but insisted upon running straight lines."[55] This created a narrow strip of land running along the northern bank of the river and then crossing the river near its mouth to a stone on the western bank of the Ohio River, a sixty-nine-acre tract which had been assigned through a chain of owners to Stokely. On July 3, 1785, Thornton conveyed his original four hundred acres to Captain Alexander Parker of Carlisle, Pennsylvania, then later issued a quit-claim deed to Stokley "for any errors or over plus land as a result of his original survey." On April 18, 1792, Stokely entered deed to the tract in Harrison County.[56] In 1802, the Parker heirs filed an ejectment suit against Stokely. At trial on June 4, 1805, the plaintiffs prevailed, but on appeal to the district court, the Wood County jury's decision was overturned. The suit, however, did not end there. In 1810, Mary Parker and her husband, William Robinson, later a general in the Mexican War and the first mayor of Allegheny City (North Pittsburgh), reached an out-of-court settlement with Stokelythrough their attorney, Philip Doddridge, hereby they would extinguish his equity by paying $1,696.16.[57] Having gained undisputed control of the town site, the Robinsons then had the town resurveyed by George Avery and renamed "Parkersburgh" in honor of Mrs. Robinson's father.[58]

The resurveyed plat of Parkersburg is interesting though not at all unique. It followed a gridiron pattern with a central courthouse square typical of Virginia county seat towns.[59] The town was laid out in twenty squares, each with eight lots of one-third acre, except for those on either side of the courthouse square, which had only six lots each, and an irregular square created by a bend in the Little Kanawha River, which had only four lots, a total of one hundred fifty-two in-lots. In addition, there were eighteen large out-lots of varying sizes. "The frequently

encountered system of in-lots and out-lots" often seen in the Connecticut Western Reserve and elsewhere, "stemmed from the New England system of home lots and related farm fields."[60] Belleville was similarly laid out, though not as a potential county seat. One is not at all surprised that a Connecticut surveyor laying out a Virginia courthouse town would adopt such a pattern. North/south streets were named Ann, Julianna, Market, Avery, and Green, while east/west streets were christened Kanawha, Neal, Court, Harriet, Littleton, and Washington. All of the streets, which divided the squares, were sixty feet wide, except Washington Street, at the edge of town, which was forty feet in width. Each square was separated by alleys which ran from Kanawha to Washington streets, with four lots on either side of the alley. Parallel to Ann Street and from Ann to Green, the alleys were named St. James, Williams, Philips, and St. Cloud courts.

Christian Schultz, Jr., a grocer and police judge of New York City and land speculator who visited the area in 1807, had a benign impression of Newport, which he confused and merged with Vienna: "After leaving Marietta we descended eight miles and arrived at [Newport], a small town, containing twelve houses, pleasantly situated on the left side of the Ohio, in the State of Virginia, at the mouth of the Little Kanawha River, which here discharges itself into the Ohio." His assessment of Marietta was much more enthusiastic. He saw a town of one hundred and eighty houses, some "elegant." It "has a market, a printing office, several mercantile stores, and a great variety of mechanics. Shipbuilding is carried on with more spirit than at any other town on the Ohio."[61] Clearly, Schultz was less impressed with a Virginia courthouse village than with a thriving New England town with "a great variety of mechanics" and spirited shipbuilding. But the casual sight of "twelve houses, pleasantly situated" masked both the current enterprise and the future potential of Newport. Schultz disembarked at Marietta but merely floated by the

future city of Parkersburg. Ironically, he returned permanently to the area in 1814, coming first to Marietta, of course. Perhaps finding the competition among merchants too great there, he settled in Wood County, where he lived the rest of his life, serving as a county justice.[62]

The stereotype of hospitality would lead one to expect that the tavern keepers of the Virginia frontier were all Southerners. This is hardly the case. In fact, there seems to be no preference or inclination among the settlers, no matter their kinship group affiliation or point of origin. New Englanders were just as likely to be innkeepers as Virginians. Humphrey Hook at Williamsport, Samuel Beaumont at Vienna, George Avery at Belleville, amd Caleb Bailey and Samuel and Esther Hempstead at Newport, had reputations for hospitality not unlike that of Allen Davis, Thomas Neale, Hugh Phelps, John Neal, and John Stephenson, who were Virginians from the Northern Neck or the Monongahela River region.

Blacksmiths, necessary in all villages, came with every kinship group to the county. At Belleville, Peter Anderson, a Pennsylvanian, and Ebenezer Griffing, a Connecticut man smithed. At Newport, William Enoch, a Virginian from Ten-Mile on the Monongahela, and John Dils, originally from New Jersey, kept blacksmith shops. Isaac Williams, the stereotypical frontiersman, did some smithing at Williamsport, as did Robert Triplett, the county surveyor, from a genteel Northern Neck family. Physicians might come from any region: Joseph Spencer and George D. Selden were from Connecticut, but David Creel, James Riggs, and James Holliday were Virginians, and all were members of elite families.

The lawyers who practiced before the Wood County Court in its first two decades were a truly distinguished lot. Nathaniel Davisson, whose family originated in New Jersey, was the first state's attorney who had already made a name for himself in Clarksburg, Harrison County. His

brother-in-law, Maxwell Armstrong, practiced with him. Harrison County Delegate John G. Jackson, a future U.S. Congressman and federal district judge, was among the early practitioners before the court. Willys Silliman and his brother-in-law, Lewis Cass, both practiced in Wood County as well as at Marietta. Later Silliman was an Ohio state senator, while Lewis Cass was the first territorial governor of Michigan, a U.S. Senator, Secretary of War, Secretary of State, and the 1848 Democratic nominee for president. He was the son-in-law of Dr. Joseph Spencer, married to his daughter Elizabeth. Silliman was from Connecticut, Cass from New Hampshire. Another attorney who practiced on both sides of the Ohio was William Woodbridge, a Connecticut emigrant and future governor and U.S. Senator in Michigan. Joseph Gilman, another Mariettan, had been the state auditor of New Hampshire and in Ohio judge of the court of common pleas and territorial judge.[63] He practiced both at Marietta and Newport at the twilight of his career. James G. Laidley, a Philadelphia-born lawyer, and James Wilson, a Scotsman from Petersburg, Virginia, were residents of Newport. Jacob Beeson, whose father and uncle were the Quaker founders of Uniontown, Pennsylvania, lived on a farm north of Newport, where he practiced law. Both Beeson and Wilson later served as federal prosecutors for the Western District of Virginia. Two brothers, Abraham and Joseph Hope Samuels, lived at Belleville but practiced at the county seat. They were sons of Isaac and Elizabeth Pennybacker Samuels, whose brick plantation home stood on the banks of the Shenandoah River in Shenandoah County, Virginia. Their cousin, John Pennybacker Mayberry, was admitted to the Wood County bar after reading in the law office of Paul Fearing, the first attorney to practice at Marietta. He married Fearing's daughter, Lucy. Mayberry also had a mercantile business in partnership with Levi Barber at Newport/Parkersburg and represented Wood County in the

House of Delegates for several terms.

As a group, these attorneys provide interesting comparisons. In the first place, most of them had roots and connections elsewhere, and most of them were somewhat transient. Except for Laidley, Wilson, Beeson, the Samuels brothers, and Mayberry, they didn't even reside in the county. In the frontier period, it was common for itinerant lawyers to practice before the courts of several counties, even in different states. Except for Joseph Gilman, all were young men at the beginning of their careers; several moved on within a decade to pursue stellar careers in law and politics. And almost none of them came to northwestern Virginia with or were bound to it by kinship groups. Their lives touched Wood County for a brief period, and then they moved on. The exceptions were those who came as part of larger kinship groups: Beeson, the Samuelses, and Mayberry, or those who married into persistent families, Laidley, who married Harriet Quarrier, and Wilson, who wed Mary Prentiss of Belleville.[64] For the most part, the connection of the lawyer element was practical and its persistence only momentary.

The surveyed towns of northwestern Virginia, then, defy the cliché and the platitude. Except for the county seat, they were founded as small market and service towns by kinship clans. They strongly typify the dependency of town and country, and they were established within a decade of the first permanent settlement of the region. The stereotype of the noncommunal and illiterate Southern frontiersman falls apart completely in this context. Of the four towns, only one was originally laid out by Yankees, though two others were later resurveyed by Connecticut surveyor George Avery. The town founders were originally from Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Connecticut.

NOTES

1. Richard C. Wade, The Urban Frontier: The Rise of Western Cities, 1790-1830 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1959).

2. John Melish, Travels in the United States of America (Philadelphia: Palmer, 1812), 345, 363.

3. Ibid., 352.

4. At the time Neal served in the House of Delegates, Monongalia County included most of what is now northern West Virginia and portions of southwestern Pennsylvania.

5. James M. Miller, The Genesis of Western Culture: The Upper Ohio Valley, 1800-1825 (Columbus: Ohio State Archaeological and Historical Soecity, 1938), 18.

6. The county seat of Wood in its first decade was often called Wood Court House, and its log courthouse and jail, constructed in 1800, served the county until a more permanent frame structure was built in 1817. It was not until 1860 that Wood County could boast a courthouse made of brick. Its fifth and current courthouse, a Romanesque Revival structure of quarried stone, is the third to occupy the courthouse square. Its cornerstone was laid in 1899 during the county's centennial celebration

7. Wade, Urban Frontier, 34-5.

8. Ibid.

9. Warren R. Hofstra and Robert D. Mitchell, "Town and Country in Backcountry Virginia: Winchester and the Shenandoah Valley, 1750-1800," The Journal of Southern History, 59 (November 1993), 620-21. Among the best discussions of eighteenth-century frontier capitalism are Allan Kulikoff, "The Transition to Capitalism in Rural America," William and Mary Quarterly, 3rd series, 46 (January 1989), 120-44; and Robert D. Mitchell, Commercialism and Frontier: Perspectives on the Early Shenandoah Valley (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1977).

10. Leland D. Baldwin, "Shipbuilding on the Western Waters, 1793-1817," The Mississippi Valley Historical Review, 20 (June 1933), 29-44; Randolph C.. Downes, "Trade in Frontier Ohio," The Mississippi Valley Historical Review, 16 (March 1930), 467-94. While both of these essays deal primarily with the Ohio frontier, their scope includes northwestern Virginia. What was true of the economy of frontier Ohio was generally true of the other side of the river.

11. Articles of Agreement between William Tilton and Josiah Willard Gibbs, Parties of the One Part, and David Jamison, Party of the Other Part, dated June 1, 1785, at Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. John Jarvis et al. vs Josiah Gibbs et al., Clarksburg, Virginia, District Chancery Court, 1820. Harrison County Circuit Clerk's Office, Clarksburg, West Virginia, Document File

13, No. 1 (hereafter cited as Jarvis vs. Gibbs). This was an ejectment suit filed by the heirs of one of the Belleville settlers, David Jamison, against Tilton and Gibbs and Staunton Prentiss, who in 1806 purchased land which was thought to have been abandoned by Jamison about 1793. The plaintiffs won the case.

12. Jarvis vs. Gibbs, Deposition of William Ingles, April 22, 1820; Deposition of Joseph Wood, April 24, 1820.

13. Robert D. Crooks, "Early Wood County Settler's Accomplishments Vast," *The Parkersburg News*, May 19, 1991, 1-G; Reuben Gold Thwaites (ed.) Early Western Travels, 1746-1846, 52 vols. (Cleveland, 1905: reprint, New York: AMS Press, 1966)), III, 353.

14. Melba Pender Zinn (comp.), Monongalia County, (West) Virginia: Records of District, Superior, and County Courts, 8 vols. (Bowie, Maryland: Heritage Books, 1990-94), III, 93.

15. Wood County Deed Book 1:221; Deed Book 4:236. The original site of Belleville was abandoned in 1853, when the town was moved one mile south. It was largely destroyed by flood in 1913.

16. Wood County Minute Book I:233.

17. Wood County Minute Book I:133.

18. This resurvey is the one which gave downtown Parkersburg its permanent configuration. The plat is recorded in Wood County Deed Book 5:337.

19. Fortescue Cuming, Sketches of a Tour to the Western Country (Pittsburgh: Cramer, Spear & Eichbaum, 1810), 112.

20. Zinn, Monongalia County, III, 74-6, 79, 93-4.

21. Ibid., VII, 316-17.

22. Malcolm J. Rohrabough, The Trans-Appalachian Frontier: People, Societies, and Institutions, 1775-1850 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978), 354-55.

23. Wood County Minute Book I:133.

24. William Waller Hening (comp.) The Statutes at Large: Being a Collection of All the Laws of Virginia, From the First Session of the Legislature, in the Year 1619, 13 vols. (Richmond, 1809-23), XII, 295.

25. John A. House, Pioneers in Wood County, W.Va., 2 vols. (Parkersburg, West Virginia: Wood County Historic Landmarks Commission, 1984), I, 24.

26. Wood County Deed Book 4:446

27. James Morton Callahan, History of West Virginia Old and New, 3 vols. (Chicago: American Historical Society, 1923), I, 127.

28. Vienna was reborn in the twentieth century when several large industrial facilities located there. It was incorporated by the West Virginia State Legislature in 1935.

29. Samuel Shepherd, (comp.), The Statutes at Large of Virginia from October Session 1792, to December Session 1806, Inclusive, in three volumes (New Series) Being a Continuation of Hening (Richmond, 1835), I, 223; Wood County Deed Book V:337.

30. Stephen C. Shaw, Sketches of North-Western Virginia (Typescript manuscript, Leafy Glen, West Virginia, 1877), No. XIII, 3, 4.

31. The Library of Virginia, Richmond, Virginia State Land Office Grants No. 46, 1797-1801, p. 506 (Reel 112); Wood County Deed Book 1:21.

32. Wood County Minute Book I:133.

33. Stokely's name appears more often in the early Wood County deed books than any other single individual. When he moved on to Greene County, Indiana, in his twilight years, he deeded to his nephew, Samuel Stokely of Steubenville, Ohio, at least eighteen tracts which he still owned in Wood County, ranging in size from twenty-four to one thousand acres. Wood County Deed Book 6:272.

34. Zinn, Monongalia County, II, 256.

35. James L. Boso, The Boso Family (Parsons, West Virginia: McClain Printing Co., 1978), 9, 21.

36. Andrew R.L. Cayton and Paula R. Riggs, City Into Town: the City of Marietta, Ohio, 1788-1988 (Marietta: Marietta College Dawes Memorial Library, 1991), 45-6.

37. Wood County Minute Book I:196.

38. Ibid., 208.

39. Wood County Minute Book I:130, 214.

40. Wood County Deed Book 2:1; George W. Atkinson, History of Kanawha County (Charleston: *West Virginia Journal*, 1876), 282-3. Laidley served as a captain in the War of 1812.

41. Wood County Deed Book 4:27.

42. Wood County Minute Book I:131, 207. Wood County Deed Book 1:182.

43. Wood County Deed Book 4:75-6; Deed Book 6:168.

44. Wood County Minute Book I:15; Wood County Deed Book 2:24.

45. Wood County Deed Book 1:183; Shaw, Sketches, No. XVII, 3.

46. Wood County Minute Book I:209-10.

47. Wood County Deed Book I:260. An anonymous description of a duel in 1805 between John G. Henderson and Stephen R. Wilson mentions that Henderson was taken to Hempstead's tavern, where he was cared for by Mrs. Hempstead, Wilson-Stribling Papers, West Virginia and Regional History Collection, West Virginia University, Morgantown.

48. Wood County Minute Book I:128; Wood County Deed Book 1:186. The deed guarantees that "said Stewart shall have the priviledge to convey the watter from the drain of the said spring into his Tan vats, pools, &c, for the benefit of his Tan yeard."

49. Wood County Deed Book I:184, 209. On at least two occasions, Dils mortgaged his personal property on deeds of trust, including saddler's tools and benches, stirrup irons, buckles, saddle skirts, bosses, and "Fifty Dollars worth of Leather," Wood County Deed Book I:210, and Deed Book 6:625; Wood County Minute Book I:155.

50. Wood County Deed Book 4:215.

51. Dr. Safford's son, Judge William H. Safford, who grew up in Parkersburg, later collected and published the Blennerhassett papers and wrote a biography of Harman Blennerhassett.

52. Ronald Ray Swick, "Harman Blennerhassett: Irish Aristocrat and Frontier Entrepreneur," Essay in History, 14 (1968-69), 56-60. A more recent account of the Woodbridge-Blennerhassett venture is found in Kim M. Gruenwald, "Marietta's Example of a Settlement Pattern in the Ohio Country: A Reinterpretation," Ohio History, 105 (Summer-Autumn, 1996), 125-44.

53. Zinn, Monongalia County, III, 100.

54. Swick, "Harman Blennerhassett," 61.

55. Parker's Heriesses vs. John Stokely, In Ejectment, Monongalia County District Court, 1806, Microfilm, Envelop 86-B, West Virginia Regional and History Collection, West Virginia University, Morgantown.

56. Zinn, Monongalia County, III, 88.

57. Philip Doddridge vs. William Robinson, Superior Court of Chancery, Harrison County, Virginia, October 18, 1826. Documents found in Wilson-Stribling Papers, West Virginia and

Regional History Collection, West Virginia University, Morgantown. The Robinsons apparently did not satisfy their obligations to Doddridge, who later sued.

58. The original plat is recorded in Wood County Deed Book 5:337. The name frequently, though not consistently, was spelled with a final "h" for much of the nineteenth century. This practiced ceased in 1894 when the United States Post Office stripped the "h" from all "burgs," with the eventual exception of Pittsburgh, which successfully fought to retain it.

59. John Reps, Town Planning in Frontier America (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1986), 90.

60. Ibid., 125.

61. Christian Schultz, Jr., Travels on An Inland Voyage through the States of New York, Pennsylvania, Virginia, Ohio, Kentucky and Tennessee . . . Performed in the Years 1807 and 1808 (New York, 1810; reprint, Ridgewood, New Jersey: Gregg Press, 1968), 142, 167.

62. Will of Christian Schultz, Wood County Will Book 3:147. Christian Schultz and his wife, Nancy De La Van Schultz, are buried at Schultz Cemetery near Bull Run in what is now Pleasants County. He was born November 7, 1774, in New York City, died May 28, 1830, in Wood County. She was born May 29, 1775, at North Salem, Westchester County, New York, died May 24, 1861, at Schultz Range.

63. S.P. Hildreth, Biographical and Historical Memoirs (Cincinnati, 1852; reprint, Bowie, Maryland, 1991), 302-06; Joseph Barker, Recollection of the First Settlement of Ohio (Marietta, Ohio: n.p., 1958), 23, 28.

64. Wilson Stribling Papers, West Virginia and Regional History Collection, West Virginia University, Morgantown; Atkinson, History of Kanawha County, 288.

Chapter Eight
The Bonds of Sisterhood:
Women and Frontier Kinship Migration

Severing the ties of kinship and friendship and relocating to a new frontier were difficult for every family member, and perhaps most burdensome for women. Mary Beth Norton, who has passionately and painstakingly researched the lives of late eighteenth-century women, paints a harsh picture of the frontier experiences of women:

> Backcountry women had to cope with far more rough-and-ready existence than did their counterparts to the east and south. The log cabins in which many of them lived were crudely built and largely open to the elements. Even the few amenities that brightened the lives of their poor contemporaries in areas of denser settlement were denied them.[1]

Joan E. Cashin is even more graphic:

> Planter women were shocked by the condition of their new homes . . . Many cabins had only a single room, while others consisted of two rooms linked by an open breezeway or "dog trot"; some were crawling with spiders and insects . . . [T]hese living conditions affected women more adversely because they spent more of their time indoors. . . Within these dank, dirty and badly lighted structures, women did the kind of manual labor that their grandmothers had done on the eighteenth-century seaboard.[2]

There is little contemporary evidence that indicates one way or the other how the vast majority of women dealt with the hardships and loneliness of emigration. What has been written by students of women's history suggests that the experience was unpleasant if not downright traumatic. David Hackett Fischer and James C. Kelly conclude in their expansive study of Virginia migration, Bound Away: "Women tended to think about moving in different ways from men. By and large, they were not happy about leaving home." They cite the pessimism and

eventual widowhood of Annie Christian, Patrick Henry's sister, whose husband, Colonel William Christian, took his family from the Virginia piedmont to Kentucky in the 1780s.[3] Cashin, who examined the letters and diaries of dozens of aristocratic Southern women whose families migrated westward, described the feelings of her subjects more graphically in terms of "radical and permanent" losses:

> The differences between the sexes on the migration issue were even more pronounced . . . Women, with few exceptions, feared and dreaded the possibility of moving to the Southwest. Migration could not represent independence for them, as it did for young men, because women spent their entire lives in a state of dependency. If it came during a woman's child-bearing years, it would deprive her of the practical aid of relatives in running households, and it would deprive her offspring of relationships with kinfolk that were crucial to socializing children. If a woman had to migrate in her old age, she would spend her last days far from relatives who would care for her. Finally, it would separate all women from the female kin who gave them love, companionship, and a sense of identity throughout their lives.[4]

Cashin further concludes that "in contrast to seaboard families who lived surrounded by kinfolk, Southwestern families lived near few relatives or none at all. The planter family was reduced to its nuclear core . . . Their social networks built upon kinship had virtually collapsed."[5]

Migration to the frontier was difficult for women no matter where they had originated. Annie Christian and Cashin's plantation elites came from the Southern tidewater and piedmont. For women of New England, having left settled towns for an unsettled region was traumatic. Joy Day Buel and Richard Buel, Jr., relate the story of Amelia Burr Noyes, whose husband Joseph left Connecticut in 1801 to settle in northeastern Ohio to escape financial difficulties. The trek was difficult, and Amelia remarked "that she would not repeat the journey if they sent a coach and four to fetch her." Poor Amelia would not be called upon again to do so, as she died of

consumption on May 7, 1802. Her mother-in-law, Mary Fish Silliman, had opposed their migrating to "a howling wilderness." She accepted the news of Amelia's death, the first in the new settlement, with resignation, saying that she "began to people the mansion of the dead in that part of the new world."[6]

Andrew R.L. Cayton and Paula R. Riggs cite Marietta settlers like Clarina Backus, who wrote to her parents in Connecticut of her "disagreeable" life, and Rebecca Ives Gilman who corresponded to a friend in Exeter, New Hampshire, that she "would sob and cry as loud as a child, and then wipe her tears and appear before her husband as cheerful as if she had nothing to give her pain."[7] They conclude that while most female emigrants "were less than thrilled with the move to Marietta, most of them nevertheless made the best of it. Primarily they survived by re-creating the bonds of friendship that had been shattered by their migration."[8]

While there is no doubt that living conditions were primitive and that women bore the brunt of frontier isolation, a microsocial study of specific kinship settlement patterns reveals a new dimension of the experience of women who migrated to northwestern Virginia, the bonds of sisterhood. Without exception, the ties of affection between sisters and sisters-in-law and their unwillingness to be separated is at the core of kinship migration to the Little Kanawha region. Sister connections are discovered in every kinship group. Simply put, many women accompanied their sisters to the frontier, where they continued the bonds of a lifetime. Every kinship group in early Wood County was joined together by sisters who cemented extended family relationships. This factor accounts for the great variety of surnames to be found in census and other early settlement records. At Belleville, or Vienna, or Washington Bottom, or at Williamsport, the close family connections of families living near each other can be determined

only by extensive genealogical research and re-creation of kinship ties.

The George D. Avery kinship group at Belleville was cemented by sisters who had already known much adversity at their homes in New London, Connecticut. Their migration together explains the presence of several different family names at Belleville: Avery, Champlin, Prentiss, Allen, and Hempstead, none bearing their maiden surname. Mary, Esther, and Hannah Richards, the sisters who bound this group together, were daughters of Guy and Elizabeth Harris Richards. Their father, proprietor of Guy Richards & Son, Merchants, lost his entire business, "3 stores & slaughter house," when a British fleet commanded by Benedict Arnold landed and burned New London in the fall of 1781.[9] Richards died the following year. After the war, Guy Richards, Jr., carried on the family business and, like so many merchants in the post-war recuperating economy, accepted land warrants in payment for goods. For the burned-out residents of New London, this involved the issuance of warrants for land in the Connecticut Western Reserve on the southern shore of Lake Erie in compensation for their wartime losses.[10] Richards, his brother-in-law, Lodowick Champlin, and two nephews, John Prentiss III and Daniel Henshaw, New London merchants and seamen,[11] acquired so many of these warrants that they were able to claim most of the land in Vermilion Township, Erie County, Ohio, part of a region called "The Firelands."[12] Their intention may have been resettlement in northern Ohio, but the premature deaths of John Prentiss, Jr., and Lodowick Champlin altered the lives of a family which had already experienced misfortune.

Guy Richards' sisters, Esther, wife of John Prentiss, Jr., and Mary, wife of Lodowick Champlin, were widows with young children. At that point second marriages of widows and widowers fated that the three sisters of Guy Richards would soon emigrate to the Ohio Valley

instead of to the Western Reserve in Ohio. In 1789 Hannah Richards married Elijah Backus, a Yale graduate and collector of customs at New London and nephew of former Connecticut Governor Matthew Griswold. At the time of their marriage, Backus was planning to join the Ohio Company of Associates at their new settlement at Marietta. The following year, Mary Richards Champlin married George Dolbeare Avery, nephew of her brother Guy and his wife, Hannah Dolbeare Richards. In 1790 both the Backuses and the Averys relocated to the Marietta settlement and entered into the merchant business. In the meantime, Esther Richards Prentiss, mother of nine children, remarried to a widower, Samuel Booth Hempstead, scion of one of New London's leading merchant families.[13] The Hempsteads remained in New London for the time being, but within four years of their marriage they, too, were caught up in the westward movement.

Both Elijah Backus and George D. Avery saw the opportunities of investing in Virginia lands. Both men of substance, they also had at their disposal the assets of their new wives, who were heirs of Guy Richards & Son, a firm which had prospered after rebuilding, now also selling small parcels of land in "The Firelands" to ordinary Connecticut families willing to settle along Lake Erie. The merging of their own assets with those of their prosperous wives enabled them to speculate in western lands, an enterprise that had reached astonishing proportions by the 1790s. Backus bought an island one mile below the mouth of the Little Kanawha River in the Ohio, which he resold to the Irish aristocratic emigre, Harman Blennerhassett, in 1797.[14] Backus soon became a justice of the peace in Harrison County and then of Wood County when it was formed. Avery, in 1796, bought a 1,374-acre tract at Belleville, where he evicted squatters and resurveyed the town, opened a tavern and store, and built a shipyard and mills. He soon became a justice in

Kanawha County and then of Wood County in 1800 when the residents of Belleville petitioned the state legislature to have their lands transferred to the newly-formed county nearer to their settlement.

Among the emigrants from Connecticut who came to Belleville with the Averys were Samuel and Esther Hempstead, his son Giles, and four of her children, daughter Mary (Molly), wife of Samuel Allen, and three unmarried youngsters: Jonathan, Catherine, and Henry Leonidas. Now the three Richards sisters who had shared their joys and sorrows at New London, including the destruction of the family business and the death of husbands, were reunited along the banks of the Ohio River. The composition of the George Avery kinship group was largely determined by the sisterhood of Mary, Esther, and Hannah Richards and their desire to be reunited in the Ohio Valley. The reunion, however, was short-lived. Mary Avery died in 1800, and Elijah and Hannah Backus returned to Marietta about the same time, though near enough for Hannah and Esther to see each other frequently.

Of the three sisters, the one who stayed longest in Wood County and who displayed the most irrepressible spirit was Esther Richards Prentiss Hempstead. Not only was she the matriarch of a large and rapidly expanding family of Connecticut and Virginia, but she was also a small entrepreneur in her own right. It is significant that as long as she was married to Samuel Hempstead, she always purchased land in her own name and in her own right. Her husband was never a party to her proprietorship. Her first purchases were of town lots in Belleville, one on which she erected a residence on Front Street, and three others adjacent to it. She seemed to have an eye for small but valuable parcels. In 1799 she bought eleven acres of prime bottom land from a Boston merchant, Daniel Dennison Rogers, for which she paid $465; twenty acres from

Josiah Willard Gibbs, a Philadelphia merchant; and twelve acres on Lee Creek from local resident David Chapman. In 1800, she purchased three town lots in Newport, the county seat, from Stephen R. and Martha Wilson, where she and her husband operated a tavern. Esther was shrewd in her acquisitions. When she bought the Newport lots, she was aware of disputed claims to the area south of the Little Kanawha River known as "The Military District," claimed jointly by resident settlers and veterans of the French and Indian War. She stipulated in the deed that "the said Wilson is holden to repay the aforesaid two hundred dollars" if the military claim proved better.[15] In partnership with Abisha Woodward, a New London stonemason and contractor,[16] she bought seven hundred acres north of the Little Kanawha River from Dr. Joseph Spencer in 1804 for $1,400.[17] Esther's name is listed more frequently in the early deed books than any other woman, and she was interested in improving her property. In 1805 she leased eighty-five acres at Belleville to Francis Simms for ten years, with the following conditions: that he clear twenty-five acres and surround it with a rail fence, dig a well, and "raise a good log dwelling house, with a good clapboard roof . . . a log stable and a loom cabbin." Unlike some lessors who asked for no collateral, Esther Hempstead took as security everything he owned: a horse, four milk cows and calves, two heifers, eleven sheep, thirteen hogs, and all his household goods.[18] Women were rarely sued in the Wood County courts during frontier days, but Esther Hempstead was an exception. On August 3, 1802, her brother-in-law, George Avery, filed suit against her before the county court, of which he was a member, but the justices who heard the case dismissed the charges and ordered judgment for the defendant's costs.[19] She was as active in the politics of a frontier county as a woman might be. On April 5, 1802, the county court directed that an election for overseers of the poor at Belleville be held at her house the last

Sunday of the month.[20] She was well-respected by members of the community, who considered her house to be neutral territory. Having buried two husbands, Esther Richards Prentiss Hempstead married once again to a widower, Colonel William McCleery, one of the leading citizens of Morgantown, and before the end of the decade had removed to that place, another thriving Virginia courthouse town. There she was active in the Presbyterian Church. When the church built a new building in 1819, Esther McCleery gave $150 "in behalf of the Female Society," nearly one-twelfth of the total subscriptions.[21]

The Richards sisters were in their late thirties and forties when they came to Wood County. Women of middle and old age were just as likely to migrate as young unmarried or newly-married women in their teens and twenties. Hannah DeHaven Pennybacker, widow of ironmaker Dirck Pennybacker and the matriarch of the Pennybacker, Mayberry, and Samuels families, was seventy-three when she migrated from Shenandoah to Wood County in 1810. Born near Philadelphia in 1737, she had also lived at Sharpsburg, Maryland, for a time. At the other end of the spectrum, James Neal's teenage daughters, Hannah, Mary, and Nancy, were newly married or of marriageable age when they came to the Little Kanawha in 1787. Neal brought a completely intact nuclear family with him, as none of his children had yet reached the age of twenty. Within the Neal-Phelps kinship group, there were other families tied together by sisters who came to the region. The Creel-Leach-Dawkins family, an integral part of this extended kinship network, was bound together in resettlement by three sisters: Mary Athey Creel, wife of George Creel, Sr., Margaret Athey Leach, wife of Bartlett Leach, and Eleanor Athey Dawkins, a half-sister, wife of John Dawkins, all middle-aged women.[22] Another sibling, Ethreylda, also a half-sister to Mary and Margaret, was the wife of Thomas Leach, Bartlett's brother; she died in

1800 before the great migration, leaving two children. Except for Margaret Leach, who was childless, the Athey sisters brought large families to Wood County. The Dawkinses had seven children under the age of eighteen when they came to the Little Kanawha, and an eighth was born after their arrival. Thomas Leach remarried to Sarah (Sally) Owens and brought his two children with his kinsmen to Wood County, where he and Sally had four more children.

The Creels, who sold a large plantation and who brought more than twenty slaves with them to the Little Kanawha,[23] transported their entire extended family of four married children and five unmarried ones. This clan included two other sets of married sisters: Mary Creel, wife of Robert W. Kincheloe, and Sarah Ellen Creel, who was married to Nimrod Saunders; and then Clara Buckner Creel, wife of their brother George, Jr., and her sister Mary Buckner, who was married to Abner Saunders, brother of Nimrod. The migration of sister-linked families and the double marriages among the Athey, Creel, Buckner, and Saunders siblings resulted in the most consanguineous set of kinship relationships on the new frontier and a covenant of sisterhood that virtually recreated the old ties of the Northern Neck. Cashin's observation that on the frontier "[t]he planter family was reduced to its nuclear core" is not true of this group of Virginia plantation families which merely picked themselves up, along with their moveable property, and transferred themselves to a new region. Among the outstanding women of this large clan was Margaret Athey Leach who, because she had no children of her own, took care of four young grandnieces and grandnephews in the last decade of her life, grandchildren of her deceased sister, Ethreylda Leach. When she died in 1825, she left them the bulk of her estate, consisting of her plantation, fifteen slaves, furniture, tools, farming utensils, and household goods.[24]

What was true of the Richards sisters and the Athey, Creel, and Buckner sisters was not

an anomaly. There were Hannah Enoch Pribble and Armelia Enoch Sargeant, of Greene County, Pennsylvania; Nancy Ann Foley Sutherland and her sister, Lettie Foley Coe, daughters of James and Mary Langfitt Foley, of Fairfax County, Virginia; Mary "Polly" James Bailey and her sister, Anna James Bailey, of New London County, Connecticut, daughters of Captain John and Esther Denison James, who were married to brothers, Seth and Caleb Bailey. And there were the remarkable Douglass sisters, daughters of Thomas and Ann Haymond Douglass and granddaughters of William Haymond, the first surveyor of Harrison County, who came to northwestern Virginia from Fayette County, Pennsylvania.[25] Cassandra Douglass Davisson, Hannah Douglass Gallion, Sarah Douglass Davisson, and Mary Douglass inherited in their own right 4,408 acres in Wood County in the Big Run area, making them the most conspicuous female land owners in the county. They were forced to defend their claims against squatters, and they were among the most persistent of the original patentees whose claims were based on Virginia Land Office treasury warrants. Their ownership was ultimately upheld by Governor James Pleasants in 1825.[26]

Other kinship groups in early Wood County were riveted together by sisters. At the Joseph Spencer settlement at Vienna, sisters Deborah Selden Spencer and Mary Selden Lord, daughters of Captain Samuel and Elizabeth Ely Selden of New London County, Connecticut, were pivotal members of a vital community. Their father, who fought at the Battle of Long Island, was too sick to retreat with the American forces. Left behind, he was captured and died on a British prison ship in October, 1776. Several other New England women resided at Vienna, including their sister-in-law, Olive West Selden, wife of their brother, Dr. George D. Selden. Deborah Selden Spencer brought a family of nine children with her to their settlement along the

Ohio in 1794, and had three more children later. Her children married into prominent local families of New England descent; one daughter, Elizabeth, married a young attorney, Lewis Cass, in 1806. Most of her adult life was spent as the wife of a governor, Cabinet officer, and U.S. Senator; Lewis Cass was the 1848 Democratic candidate for president with whom the doctrine of popular sovereignty on the issue of the territorial expansion of slavery is associated. Mary Selden Lord gave birth to five children before emigrating; one daughter, Eliza, was the mother of Major General Irwin McDowell. These women were refined and literate persons who were devoted to their families and children. Since both their husbands, Dr. Spencer and Colonel Abner Lord, were very active in business and politics, they spent their days managing plantations, supervising slaves and servants, entertaining, and educating their children. They were typical of New England women who came to the northwestern Virginia frontier and who had to completely alter their town lifestyles. Theirs was not only a migration from a settled area to a raw frontier, but also from established New England to backcountry Virginia. Most of the women who came to the Little Kanawha were Virginians, though from settled regions. Deborah Spencer and Mary Lord had to become acclimated to Southern ways as well. There was, for example, no Congregational Church on the Virginia side of the Ohio River, and limited means for educating their children. The difficulties may have contributed to the early death of Mary Lord at the age of thirty-nine, in 1800, though her sister outlived her husband and survived to the age of seventy-one.

Among the settlers who came to the Isaac Williams settlement, one again finds the bonds of sisterhood. Rebecca Tomlinson Williams and her sister-in-law, Elizabeth Harkness Tomlinson, were among the earliest women to come to the area. Both of their husbands were

leading citizens of the mid-Ohio Valley. Isaac Williams was a town founder, ferryman, and blacksmith, while Joseph Tomlinson was a planter. Three daughters of Joseph and Elizabeth Harkness Tomlinson also lived at Williamsport or nearby: Drusilla Tomlinson Bukey, wife of Hezekiah Bukey; Mary "Polly" Tomlinson Kinnaird, wife of John Asher Kinnaird, and Lucy Tomlinson Riggs, wife of Samuel Riggs. Bukey and Kinnaird were active in politics; both were county justices, and Bukey represented the county in the General Assembly for seven terms. The Tomlinsons had lived their entire lives at the edge of the frontier, first at Wills Creek (Cumberland), Maryland, at Redstone on the Monongahela River, then at Grave Creek (Moundsville) on the Ohio, and finally at Williams' Station in Wood County. They had witnessed Amerindian warfare and once, at Grave Creek, Rebecca was in a cabin alone when an Indian entered, took her brother's musket, and left. Rebecca Williams was renowned as a healer who was skilled in the use of herbal medicine. Dr. Samuel Prescott Hildreth, chronicler of the Ohio frontier, described an incident at Wheeling in 1784 when she and Betsy McCulloch Zane, wife of Colonel Ebenezer Zane, dressed and cared for the wounds of a border settler named Thomas Mills who had been shot fourteen times by Indians. He observed, "In a conversation many years after, she said her principal dressings were made of slippery-elm, the leaves of stramonium, and daily ablutions with warm water. Many similar cures of gun-shot wounds are related, as performed by her in the first settlement of the country."[27] Hildreth also relates the acts of kindness of Isaac and Rebecca Williams in helping the early settlers at Belpre and Marietta. In 1789-90, the supply of corn and grains were nearly gone; the Williamses sold their corn to the starving colonists at fifty cents a bushel, the usual rate in times of plenty, though they had been offered much more by speculators.[28]

Later in life, Rebecca Williams exerted a measure of independence which makes one pause to wonder. When her husband's will was probated in November, 1820, it was revealed, respecting his wife's life interest, of course, that he had left his estate to his sister, Letitia Keller, and several nieces and nephews.[29] Rebecca then instituted suit against the heirs to have the will set aside because the Williams plantation had been conveyed to her before her marriage to Isaac Williams by her brother, Joseph Tomlinson. The suit was heard before the Circuit Superior Court in Chancery at Clarksburg, which ruled in her favor on May 21, 1824, and directed the Williams kin "to convey to the defendant the said land and appurtenances."[30] When Rebecca Williams died in 1825, she left her entire estate to her nephew and niece, John Asher and Polly Tomlinson Kinnaird. The motive behind the breaking of her husband's will may lie in the will itself. Isaac Williams provided for the manumission of his slaves at the death of his wife, with three exceptions: "It is my will that Phebe my black woman be free at my decease[,] her to be at that period as fully free as though she had been born so, and it is further my will, that my executors pay to the said Phebe the sum of one hundred dollars." Then in a later clause he mentions "Anna & Milla (who have married & live in the State of Ohio and whom I conceived, I have already made free)."[31] It is quite possible that Rebecca had been vexed by her husband's miscegenetic relationship with his slave mistress and by the favorable treatment of the children of this union. Rebecca's only child, daughter Drusilla Williams Henderson, wife of John Glassford Henderson, had died young after a difficult childbirth which took the life of both mother and child. Rebecca had no children or grandchildren to whom she could leave her estate, so it was bequeathed following bitter litigation to her favorite niece and her husband. The effects of this "Abraham and Hagar" relationship on Phebe, Anna, and Milla are unknown, as is

any knowledge of them after 1820.

Another family living at the Williamsport settlement which migrated together in the bonds of sisterhood were four Pugh sisters, daughters of Robert and Mary Edwards Pugh of Cacapon Bridge, Hampshire County: Lucretia Pugh Hiett, Amy Pugh Danley, Eleanor Pugh Gard, and Hannah Pugh Horn. Also two of their brothers migrated at the same time with their wives: Jesse and Martha Hiett Pugh and Samuel and Sarah McDonald Pugh. All of these families had several children when they came to the Ohio Valley, and theirs was, therefore, one of the largest migrations of a single sibling family in the early history of the county. They did not, however, all remain in Wood County. The Danleys and Gards soon moved to Palmer Township, Washington County, Ohio, across the river but only a few miles away. Hannah Pugh Horn went to Licking County, Ohio, where she died in 1800. Such was the nature of kinship migration: a new frontier further west was always beckoning, and the bonds of sisterhood were broken by further emigration as well as by death.

Another remarkable kinship group characterized by the nurturing bonds of sisterhood were the Lewis-Keene families, who migrated from Fairfax and Loudoun counties between 1806 and 1814. George and Violet Gist Lewis, nearing the end of their lives, sold much of their estate and brought their entire extended family to northwestern Virginia in 1806. The Keenes, an in-law family headed by Francis Keene, did the same beginning in 1811. Both the Lewises and the Keenes had more daughters than sons, so this group was distinguished by sister relationships. Furthermore, the Lewis sisters, Nancy Lewis Harwood, Elizabeth Lewis Edelen, and Sarah Lewis Neale, were tied together with the Keene sisters, since their brother William was married to Mary Keene. Her sisters were Kerenhappuch Keene Simpson, Nancy Keene Mauzey, Frances Keene

Simpson, Anastasia Keene Neale, Susan Keene King, Mathilda Keene Coffer, Sarah Keene Keene, who was married to her first cousin, Eli Keene, and Jane Keene Simpson, who married her sister Frances's husband, Thompson Simpson, when she died prematurely. The two husbands of the three Mrs. Simpsons were brothers. One sister, Elizabeth Keene, remained unmarried and lived with her father, a widower. Furthermore, Sarah Lewis Neale and Anastasia Keene Neale were married to brothers, George and William, completing a nearly perfect kinship circle. This colony of highly endogamous Virginians were planter aristocrats before their migration, and they continued their lifestyle in a fine row of plantations at Washington Bottom, the area which their fathers had purchased from the heirs of George Washington. Two women of this cluster of sisters require special notice: Mary Keene Lewis and Kerenhappuch Keene Simpson. Mary Lewis migrated to Wood County from Loudoun County, a distance of over three hundred miles, on horseback, carrying her infant daughter Sarah. She gave birth to eight more children in Wood County and was one of the most highly respected and beloved pioneers of the area. When the Baptist Church was organized in Parkersburg in 1817, she was one of its founding members. She died at her home place, where she had lived almost seventy years, at the age of ninety-one, July 9, 1876. Widowed since 1858, she outlived all but two of her children.

The story of her sister was a far less happy one. Kerenhappuch[32] Keene first married William Simpson, who died in 1814, leaving her four minor children. She then married a Clarksburg attorney, Oliver Phelps, by whom she had three more children, and he died a few years later. She bore four more children to her third husband, James Neale, whom she married in 1824. In 1830, she was sued in the Superior Court by her eldest daughter and son-in-law, Harriet and Jacob Rapp, over the distribution of income from William Simpson's estate. The Rapps

claimed that Simpson had owned three slaves at the time of his death, Thomas, Harry, and John, and that the estate's administrator, William Neale, "has not hired them according to the Custom of the County at publick auction at the Court House and in truth has hired them much less then (sic) their value." Mrs. Neale responded that the slaves were given her by her father, Francis Keene, that they were not intended to be the property of William Simpson, and furthermore "that she has formed an attachment for them, and would most dislike to see them sold into the hands of inhuman masters." Ignoring her inheritance rights, the court ruled against her and "decreed that the . . . Sheriff sell said slaves at the door of the Court House." On January 1, 1831, Abraham Vandiver bought John for $393 and William Davidson purchased Thomas for $382.50.[33] Within a few years, she was thrice widowed; then Kerenhappuch Keene Simpson Phelps Neale took her youngest children to Iowa, where she was later shot to death by a servant.[34]

Kerenhappuch Keene and her father did not have the foresight to protect her interest in her slave property. After all, she had no way of knowing that William Simpson would die young, or that her eldest daughter's husband would press her for maximum income on the estate. There were ways that women might protect their personal property from their husband's control and disposition, from his creditors, or from claims against his estate, though few women took the steps to do so. This amounted to the eighteenth-century equivalent of a prenuptial agreement. Though uncommon, deeds of agreement were sometimes executed by young women guided by pragmatic estate administrators or by widows with sizeable estates who remarried. Ann Morton of Prince William County made such an agreement with William Holliday of Fairfax County, on December 31, 1808, prior to their marriage and migration to Wood County the following year. The indenture made very clear the full and complete ownership by Ann Morton Holliday of her

personal property, consisting of ten slaves:

> Ann Morton is possessed of & intitled (sic) unto a considerable personal estate consisting of ten Negroes to Wt Charles, Jack, Sollomon, William, Lewis, Harry, Thompson, Grace, Penny & Dinah & it is intended that the said Personal Estate should be setled (sic) so as to invest the full and entire right title & claim together with all its increase & profits arising therefrom in her the said Ann Morton as fully and effectually as tho' the said Ann Morton had remained single and unmarried, to have & to hold to will and to dispose of according to her own wish and desire, and be it further understood that the aforesaid Personal Estate together with all its increase & profits is to be free from the claim or claims of him the said William Holliday and of all persons claiming by from or under him.[35]

It seems that this prenuptial indenture did, in fact, protect Mrs. Holliday's property. Her husband was an enterprising man who built and expanded a brickyard and purchased property as an investment. Within ten years of their marriage, he had become seriously indebted to John Stokely, Jacob Beeson, Barber & Mayberry, merchants of Parkersburg and Marietta, and to other individuals in Wood County. Judgments were executed against himm on four horses, eleven cows, and other unspecified property.[36] To satisfy judgments, William Holliday, with his wife as a party, executed deeds of trust on two slaves, Anthony and Kitty, neither of whom are listed in the marriage agreement. However, William Holliday died unexpectedly and intestate in 1824, leaving his wife with a burden of debts. At that time, she found it necessary to encumber her personal estate by placing a deed of trust on Lewis and Harry.[37] Unable to pay some outstanding debts, she defaulted on behalf of the estate. When the deputy sheriff went to her home to seize property to satisfy the judgment, he reported "no property found and the administratrix pleads no effects."[38] Clearly, the claims against her husband and his estate were never executed against her personal property, which was protected by the prenuptial agreement. Ann Morton Holliday had learned her lesson well. When she was about to enter a second marriage in 1830 to Robert

Pollard of Todd County, Kentucky, she once again executed a deed of agreement exempting two Parkersburg out-lots and "eleven slaves viz. Anthony Harry Lewis Penny Kitty Gustavas Rebecca Aurelia Mary and Daphine."[39] Three of these slaves had been with her since before her first marriage, twenty-one years earlier.

The prenuptial agreement could work the other way. When James Wood, a widower and wealthy slaveholder, married Mary Mellenger Cluster, a widow, in 1826, the deed of indenture required her to surrender any dower right to "any part of the real or personal estate" of her husband, should he precede her in death. If, however, she received an anticipated inheritance of $2,000 from her father, David C. Mellenger, and survived Wood, "she shall have at the Death of said James Wood one third of his estate real and personal during her natural life."[40] In other words, she received nothing unless she enriched her husband with her inheritance, and then it was only a life interest dower.

A large number of Wood County women, like Esther Richards Prentiss Hempstead, enjoyed the companionship of their sisters and other frontier women, but among her closest friends was Margaret Agnew Blennerhassett, wife of the wealthy Irish aristocrat who bought his island from her brother-in-law, Elijah Backus. There the Blennerhassetts built a large Palladian-style mansion which became the showplace of the region and the meeting place of the more literate and cultured settlers.[41] Mrs. Blennerhassett wrote to her husband's business partner in Marietta, Dudley Woodbridge, Jr., on October 25, 1804:

> I must also trouble you to look for the box of glass which was purchased some time ago by Mrs. Hempstead as the one I now return I find must have [been] brought down in its place . . . I am now surrounded by ladies; no less than five with me. The two mentioned above [Miss Wallace and Miss Susan] Mrs. Hempstead & Mrs. And Miss Thornly who came over today quite

unexpectedly to make a visit.[42]

During the first decade of the nineteenth century, Margaret Blennerhassett's friendship and company were the most desirable of any woman in the region; not only was she an authentic aristocrat, but also she was gracious, imaginative, and intelligent. Her son, Joseph Lewis Blennerhassett, later recited her classical interests and talents: "Her favorite pursuits . . . were Poetry (British and Continental) Moral Philosophy, History, Voyages, Antiquarian researches Sculpture & persual (sic) of the current Light Literature of the period. Her conversational Talents were of the highest order."[43] Because of her literary skills and leisure, Margaret Blennerhassett is the only woman of the northwestern Virginia frontier who left a significant record of letters, poems, and recollections of her experiences, most of which is not contemporaneous to the decade she lived in northwestern Virginia.[44] It is, however, very useful because she often reflected on her frontier experience. Though she was not typical of frontier women of the area, she interacted with them, liked and respected them, and revealed much about them in her writings.

In an unpublished work written at Bath, England, in 1826, The Emigrant's Guide, she wrote of life on the frontier from a woman's point of view. For example, she cautioned the prospective emigrant who might think that a house or barn raising would result in a finished edifice. It was, instead, a one-day "scene of festivity" where those who come "are sure of finding a well covered table and plenty of Whiskey," at the end of which the host family has "merely the log walls or shell of a house untill (sic) you can provide it with a covering, floor, doors, windows, and chimney, etc."[45] She wrote of frontier hospitality: "[T]hey make every one who enters their dwelling welcome to share their plentiful repasts, and . . . will not consider a

friend's calling on them in the light of a visit or take it as any compliment if that friend does not eat and drink with them." She speaks of informal dinner parties, observing that "no People do that oftener" than the generous and sociable people of the western frontier, and of "social evening parties where tea and gossip are not deemed the exclusive privilege of the fair sex."[46]

As a well-born aristocrat, Margaret Blennerhassett had spent her girlhood days in classical studies and leisure pursuits. Both she and her husband were disciples of the Rousseauian concept of the "noble savage," and their sojourn on the American frontier was as much a pilgrimage as it was an escape. She admired the democratic spirit of the frontier, where men and women intermingled at informal get-togethers, where a person's gaining wealth "by honest industry" was far more respected than "to have gained it by inheritance independent of his own merit," and where a man might be allowed "to be the arbiter of his own as that 'Where feudal rights no menial toil command, Nor tyrants suck the fitness of the Land.'"[47] Though she sometimes found her household duties difficult and inconvenient, partly because of the relative isolation of her island home,[48] she nevertheless took pleasure in the redemptive quality of household duties. The menial tasks of the daytime were often followed by evening parties among friends "where the females preside after having gone through the numerous domestic occupations of the day, which not having been spent in the vain pursuits of leasure (sic) has not left them the victims of listless ennui, they can in the society of their family and friends reap the full measure of that soothing contentment that springs from the consciousness of not having neglected any of their duties."[49] The Blennerhassetts came to the northwestern Virginia frontier scarcely a decade after its first permanent settlement, but they found a large number of genial and sociable people with whom they frequently interacted, at Belleville, Newport, and Vienna in

Virginia and at Belpre and Marietta in Ohio. Women often assisted each other with domestic duties and, at the same time, shared each other's company. Mrs. Blennerhassett writes of such occasions:

> The females have however a mode of meeting which belongs exclusively to themselves and is practiced in remote parts of the Country where needle work is always done at home, and no people better prove the maxim that 'many hands make light work' than they do, there the Mistress of the house invites all her female neighbors to assist her if for instance quilting is the order of the day, then the entertainment is termed a quilting frolick, if other sorts of sewing it takes the name of a sewing frolick and on these occasions the assemblage is often very numerous and indeed may be termed parties of pleasure where a neighbourhood meets with true cordiallity to confer a benefit and enjoy that sacred intercourse not always to be found in more polished society, these female parties meet early in the day at the close of which their husbands and other male friends generally join them and the evening closes in mirth and festivity —[50]

Like many upper class English gentlewomen, Margaret Blennerhassett practiced the charming arts of coquetry with her gentleman admirers. According to one tradition, she engaged in "lisping baby talk" with them, much to the dismay of some of her straitlaced Congregational neighbors.[51] She was not above practicing her clever artifice on her own husband. During a lengthy separation, she became acquainted with a young poet and editor, Stephen Randall, in Montreal, Canada. In a poem entitled "To a young poet (on hearing him recite for the first time)" Margaret anticipated the time "when Byron's mantle round thee waves."[52] Desperate and lonely after her husband's absence of two years, she wrote to him that

> if anything can raise my spirits it will be the society of this highly gifted young Man who seems much attached to me and whose society is the most perfect intellectual feast I ever enjoyed. I call him my young Poet yet the qualities of his heart are fully eaqual (sic) to those of his head he is ignorant of the world and has often teazed (sic) me to instruct him in its ways.[53]

Though by this time an aging matron of fifty-two, Margaret still knew how to use her femininity,

and the ploy worked since her husband returned to rescue his wife before the end of the year. While the April and September relationship with Randall may have been nothing more than a platonic feast of the minds, it is interesting to note that, while Margaret Blennerhassett rarely saved letters from her husband (much to the historian's dismay), letters and a travel diary in the young poet's handwriting appear in museum collections of the Blennerhassett papers.[54]

Margaret Blennerhassett may be thought of as West Virginia's first poet, since many of her poems recite experiences of the northwestern Virginia frontier. A collection of her poetry was published anonymously at Montreal, Canada, in 1823, The Widow of the Rock and Other Poems, by a Lady. In her verses, she exhibits depth of spirit, feelings of melancholy, and moments of humor, though her style is slavishly neoclassical. What is most refreshing are the expressions of feminism. In "Warning to a Lap Dog," she exhorts her dog Rosa to beware of "[t]he faithless sighs of faithless swain" and advises her to "take thy crust, and be content, Such roving love can but torment."[55] In "Sir Walter Raleigh's Advice to his Son on the subject of Matrimony (Versified from Campbell's Magazine)," she parodies a supposed conversation between father and son, then ends with a stinging indictment of the inconstancy of men which reflects on her frontier experience:

> Thus men, of woman's power zealous,
> Endeav'ring to degrade the fair,
> (For their prerogative quite jealous)
> Asperse what they should guard with care.
>
> Blind to her charms her faults they chide,
> Nor give to nature's weakness lenience,
> Their wife is but the slave of pride
> Or sort of household-stuff convenience.
>
> A wretched life we must confess,

The Indian has a better mode.
His Squaw — his slave — no more — no less, --
To pound his corn — to lug his load.[56]

Margaret Blennerhassett represented the apex of the social hierarchy of northwestern Virginia. Esther Hempstead, Deborah Spencer, and the Keene and Lewis sisters, women of elite Eastern families of Connecticut and the Northern Neck of Virginia, were at the second tier of society. But at the other end of the social spectrum were women and girls whose lives were oppressive and whose opportunities were very limited. Sarah Fine, an illiterate woman, was forced to bind out her eight-year-old daughter, Clarissa Denness, to Susannah Cockerell Eskridge, wife of Hector Ross Eskridge, slaveholding plantation elites from Fairfax County. The term of service was ten years; Mrs. Eskridge was to see that Clarissa was instructed "in the craft mistery (sic) and occupation of housekeeping" and in return she would be given "sufficient meat drink apparel washing lodging and all other things needfull (sic) or meet."[57] Other girls were bound out by the overseers of the poor when they were orphaned and the proceeds of their parents' estate was insufficient to maintain them: Sally Rice was bound out to Mary Riggs Ogdin, and Jane Ragan was put to service at the home of Jesse Gandee, a blacksmith. Jane served until she was eighteen, at which time she was to receive sixteen dollars, or about two dollars per year![58]

The lives of women of all ages and classes on the Virginia frontier were never easy nor leisurely. From Sally Rice and Jane Ragan to Rebecca Tomlinson Williams, Kerenhappuch Keene Simpson, Esther Richards Prentiss Hempstead, and Margaret Blennerhassett, they spent much of their time working at or supervising kitchen and housework and caring for children. But for many women of the frontier in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, those menial

tasks were made easier when they shared them with sisters, sisters-in-law, and soul sisters. "Many hands make light work." The sharing hands of sisters made work a little lighter, the burdens and the loneliness of the frontier a little easier to bear.

NOTES

1. Mary Beth Norton, Liberty's Daughters: The Revolutionary Experience of American Women, 1750-1800 (Boston: Little, Brown, 1980), 13-14.

2. Joan E. Cashin, A Family Venture: Men and Women on the Southern Frontier (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 66-7.

3. David Hackett Fischer and James C. Kelly, Bound Away: Virginia and the Westward Movement (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2000), 218-20.

4. Cashin, 44.

5. Ibid., 79.

6. Joy Day Buel and Richard Buel, Jr., The Way of Duty: A Woman and Her Family in Revolutionary America (New York: W.W. Norton, 1984), 238-9.

7. Andrew R.L. Cayton and Paula R. Riggs, City Into Town: the City of Marietta, Ohio, 1788-1988 (Marietta: Marietta College Dawes Memorial Library, 1991), 73.

8. Ibid., 74.

9. *The Connecticut Gazette*, October 12, 1781.

10. Helen M. Carpenter, "The Origin and Location of the Firelands of the Western Reserve," Ohio Archaeological and Historical Quarterly 44 (1935), 163-203.

11. Prentiss was the grandson and namesake of John Prentiss, one of New London's most famous sea captains of the mid-eighteenth century. He contracted smallpox while in London, England, and died there in January 1747. Lodowick Champlin and his brother Samuel were noted seaman as well. Lodowick commanded a war ship during the Revolutionary War. His son, Guy Richards Champlin, commanded the ship *General Armstrong* in the War of 1812 and was awarded a commemorative sword by the ship's owners at Tammany Hall, New York City, April 14, 1813.

12. W.W. Williams, History of the Firelands, Comprising Huron and Erie Counties (Cleveland: Leader Printing Co., 1879), 440-44.

13. The main street of Old New London, on which the shops of dozens of merchants were located, was named Hempstead Street. All of the marriages and remarriages of the Richards siblings, as well as that of their parents, are recorded in the marriage records of the First Congregational Church of New London.

14. Wood County Deed Book 5:278, recites the history of the purchase of Blennerhassett Island and its disposition in 1816 by Harman and Margaret Blennerhassett of Claiborne County, Mississippi Territory, and their agent, Joseph L. Lewis of Philadelphia.

15. Wood County Deed Book 1:260; Robert D. Crooks, "Wood Settlement Hampered By Unclear Titles to Land," The Parkersburg News, June 5, 1988. The Military Grant, taxed in the name of David Richardson, representative of Robert Stobo, Jacob Van Bram, and others, was the subject of scores of lawsuits in the early nineteenth century. Eventually the claim descended to the Trustees of the Literary Fund of Virginia because of unpaid taxes, who made no attempt to reassert. Chains of ownership by the early settlers were upheld by local courts.

16. In 1801, Woodward designed and supervised the construction of the octagonal New London Light House.

17. Wood County Deed Book 1:202; Deed Book 2:82, 232, 260; Deed Book 4:138-9, 246, 253.

18. Wood County Deed Book 3:37.

19. Wood County Minute Book I:146. The basis of the lawsuit was not shown in the record.

20. Wood County Minute Book I:125.

21. History of Monongalia County, West Virginia, from its First Settlement to the Present Time, with Numerous Biographical & Family Sketches (Kingwood, West Virginia: Preston Publishing Co., 1883), 38, 333-36, 591.

20. Stephen C. Shaw, Sketches of North-Western Virginia (Unpublished manuscript, Leafy Glen, West Virginia, 1877), No. XXXII, 1.

23. Henry Robert Burke, "Window to the Past," *Marietta Times*, May 3, 1996.

24. Wood County Will Book 2:278. The children, aged seven to fourteen, were Benjamin Franklin Price, Lucy Elizabeth Price, John A. Price, and Frances Margaret Price. Their parents were Charles S. and Margaret Leach Price.

25. Harrison County Court Records, 1784-92, 1, 10. Thomas Douglass was a deputy surveyor of Harrison County, ibid., 10.

26. Virginia Land Office Grants No. 55, 1805-1806, 104, 106, 107 (Reel 121); Grants No. 69, 1819-1820, 336 (Reel 135); Grants No. 73, 1823-1825, 524 (Reel 139); The Library of Virginia, Richmond, Virginia.

27. S.P. Hildreth, Biographical and Historical Memoirs of the Early Pioneer Settlers of Ohio (Cincinnati, 1852; facsimile reprint, Bowie, Maryland: Heritage Books, 1991), 480.

28. Ibid., 486-7; for a contemporaneous account, see Joseph Barker, Recollections of the First Settlement of Ohio (Marietta, Ohio, n.p., 1958), 64-5.

29. Wood County Will Book 1:39-43.

30. John A. House, Pioneers of Wood County, W.Va., 2 vols. (Parkersburg, West Virginia: Wood County Historic Landmarks Commission, 1984), II, 332-33.

31. Wood County Will Book 1::39-40

32. Kerenhappuch Keene was very likely named for one of the great heroines of the American Revolution, Kerenhappuch Norman Turner. A widow living in Halifax County, Virginia, she carried dispatches for the army through British lines. When she learned that her only son, Captain James Turner, Jr., had been injured at the Battle of Guilford Courthouse in 1781, she rushed to the scene and nursed him and a number of other soldiers. Her statue was erected at Guilford Courthouse National Military Park, Greensboro, North Carolina, on July 4, 1902.

33. Wood County Execution Book I:263-65, 271.

34. Shaw, Sketches, No. XX, 5; Nancy Stout Beckwith, Gleanings From Wood County (Washington, West Virginia, self-published, 1969), 58.

35. Wood County Deed Book 4:224.

36. Wood County Execution Book I:48, 75.

37. Wood County Deed Book 6:292, 307, 594.

38. Wood County Execution Book I:272.

39. Wood County Deed Book 7:365.

40. Wood County Deed Book 7:76.

41. The Blennerhassett mansion has been reconstructed by the State of West Virginia as part of its state park system. It is one of the most delightful tourist attractions of the region.

42. Woodbridge-Gallaher Papers, Rare Book and Manuscript Collection, Marietta College Dawes Memorial Library, Marietta, Ohio.

43. Joseph Lewis Blennerhassett to Theresa Blennerhassett, June 5, 1857, Blennerhassett Papers, The Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

44. Though there are virtually no other private records produced by women on the northwestern Virginia frontier, the public records contain much valuable information.

45. Margaret Blennerhassett, "The Emigrant's Guide," (Unpublished manuscript) Blennerhassett Papers, The Museum of the Northwest Territory, Marietta, Ohio. (Hereafter cited as " The Emigrant's Guide.")

46. Ibid.

47. Ibid.

48. Margaret Blennerhassett to Harman Blennerhassett, July 28, 1807, Blennerhassett Papers, The Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

49. "The Emigrant's Guide."

50. Ibid.

51. Ronald Ray Swick, Harman Blennerhassett: An Irish Aristocrat on the American Frontier (Ph.D. dissertation, Miami University, Oxford, Ohio, 1978), 290.

52. Blennerhassett Papers, Campus Martius, The Museum of the Northwest Territory, Marietta, Ohio.

53. Margaret Blennerhassett to Harman Blennerhassett, June 27, 1824, Blennerhassett Papers, The Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. See also Susan L. Bailey, "A Critical Edition of Margaret Blennerhassett's 'The Widow of the Rock,'" (Master's thesis, University of Western Ontario, 1994), 34.

54. Stephen Randall materials may be found in Blennerhassett collections at both The Museum of the Northwest Territory in Marietta, Ohio, and at the Missouri Historical Society in St. Louis.

55. Margaret Blennerhassett, The Widow of the Rock and Other Poems, by a Lady (Montreal, Canada, self-published, 1823). Many of her poems may be found copied by Therese Blennerhassett-Adams in the Blennerhassett Papers, Campus Martius, The Museum of the Northwest Territory, Marietta, Ohio.

56. Ibid.

57. Wood County Deed Book 6:186.

58. Wood County Minute Book I, June 8, 1802; Wood County Order Book, 1815-17.

Chapter Nine
Slavery at the Periphery:
Kinship and Regional Patterns

Little attention has been given to slave ownership or to the slave experience in the Ohio River counties of western Virginia during the frontier period. Those writers who have touched on the subject of slavery in antebellum western Virginia, like Charles H. Ambler, have assumed that the "peculiar institution" existed on a limited basis and then only among the saltmakers of the Kanawha Valley and the plantation aristocrats of the Potomac Region. He writes: "The larger portion of the inhabitants knew but little about negro slavery and less about its worst features. Except in small areas along the Kanawha and in the [Potomac] Valley, slavery was more or less paternal. Few thought of deriving income from slave labor or offspring, and overseers were unknown."[1] Ambler was unaware that a substantial number of early settlers in northwestern Virginia were emigrants from the Northern Neck counties, a section where slavery had its highest incidence of any region in the state. He did not know that a thriving plantation economy based on slave labor flourished along the Ohio River or that Wood County in 1810 had a higher percentage of slaves to free whites of any county in western Virginia except for Jefferson County in the Valley.

West Virginia's best black historians of the twentieth century, like Carter G. Woodson, Walter Dean Myers, and Ancella R. Bickley, have written primarily about the African-American experience in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Bickley, for example, has lamented the lack of source material, citing the fact that census records fail to even mention the names of slaves.[2] She is right. To recapture any sense of how many slaves were brought to northwestern Virginia

or of their experiences after they arrived is not an easy task. While the census records give only numbers, there is scattered evidence in county court records: deed books, will books and estate administration records, and execution order books. Slaves are often listed by name and sometimes by age and description in deeds of trust, estate inventories, and prenuptial agreements. Some of the most unpleasant aspects of their lives are sparingly told in estate administration records and execution orders. A few anecdotal accounts have survived and, rarely, recollections and journals.

While census records tell us nothing about the lives and experiences of slaves or free blacks, they do give us important demographic information as we think generally about the African-American experience. One expects to find a few slaves in any western Virginia county, especially those of the Potomac region. But the existence of slavery along the Ohio River one expects, like Ambler, to have been minimal, particularly in view of the fact that slavery was illegal across the river in the Northwest Territory. The most astonishing fact about slavery at the periphery, however, is its high incidence. In the 1810 census, there were 2,531 free whites in Wood County, 405 households, and 446 slaves, or 15 percent of the total population. There were fifty-eight households which owned slaves, an average of 7.69 slaves per slaveholding household. Of all households in the county, 14.3 percent owned slaves, one in seven. Most Wood County slaveholding families owned a small number of slaves: 22.4 percent possessed only one, while slightly over half, 51.5 percent, owned no more than five slaves. Only one-fourth, 24.1 percent, owned more than ten slaves, and only one individual possessed more than 40 slaves. Not reflected in the 1810 census was Francis Keene, the owner of 43 slaves, who settled at Washington Bottom in 1814. (See Table 9.1 below for a breakdown of the number of

slaves per slaveholding household in Wood County, based on the 1810 census.)

NUMBER OF SLAVES PER HOUSEHOLD IN WOOD COUNTY

# Slaves	1	2-3	4-5	6-10	11-20	21-40	41+
# Hhlds.	13	9	8	14	10	3	1

Table 9.1: Number of Slaves Per Household in Wood County, (W)Va., (Based on the 1810 Census).

The percentage of slaves in the total population of Wood County in 1810 is even more remarkable when one makes a comparison with other western Virginia counties. Except for Jefferson County, which had the highest incidence of slavery at 29.8 percent, Wood County had the next highest occurrence, 15 percent. Even in other counties in the Valley of Virginia where plantation lifestyle was the pattern, there is a lower percent of slaves to the total population: Berkeley, 13.3 percent, Hampshire, 9.5 percent, and Hardy, 13.6 percent. All other Ohio River counties had a lower percentage of slaves in the total population: Brooke, 5.7; Cabell, 8.1; Mason, 12.5; and Ohio, 5.4. Only when one examines the nature of migratory kinship groups and their origin does the reason become clear for such a high incidence of slavery in frontier Wood County. A substantial number of the early colonists migrated from the Northern Neck counties where slavery was practiced more extensively than in any other region in Virginia. (See Table 9.2 below for a comparison of the incidence of slavery in western Virginia counties, based on the 1810 census.)

PERCENTAGE OF SLAVES TO TOTAL POPULATION,

WESTERN VIRGINIA COUNTIES IN 1810

COUNTY	TOTAL POPULATION	TOTAL NUMBER OF SLAVES	PERCENT SLAVES TO TOTAL
Berkeley	11,479	1,529	13.3
Brooke	5,843	332	5.7
Cabell	2,717	221	8.1
Greenbrier	5,914	494	8.4
Hampshire	9,784	929	9.5
Hardy	5,525	749	13.6
Harrison	9,958	459	4.6
Jefferson	11,851	3,532	29.8
Kanawha	3,866	352	9.1
Mason	1,991	249	12.5
Monongalia	12,793	351	2.7
Ohio	8,175	440	5.4
Pendleton	4,239	262	6.2
Randolph	2,854	111	3.9
Wood	2,977	446	15.0
TOTAL	99966	10456	10.5

Table 9.2: Percentage of Slaves to Total Population in Western Virginia Counties, Based on the Census of 1810. (Wood County census figures were hand counted)

When one broadens the study to include slave information gleaned from deeds of trust and estate administration records in the frontier era, the average number of slaves per household remains similar, ninety-seven masters owning 741 slaves, or 7.43 per household. But regional and kinship patterns of slave ownership emerge more clearly. Not surprisingly, those from the Chesapeake, mostly Virginians and a few Marylanders, represented the highest number of slaveholders, sixty-three owning 580 slaves, or 9.2 per household, much higher than the average. Slaveholders from the Middle Atlantic states, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Delaware, and New York, numbered twenty-eight owning 120 slaves, or 4.29 per household. Six New England settlers owned twenty-one slaves, or 3.5 per household. (See Table 9.3 below for a graphic representation of the average number of slaves per slaveholding household on a regional basis.)

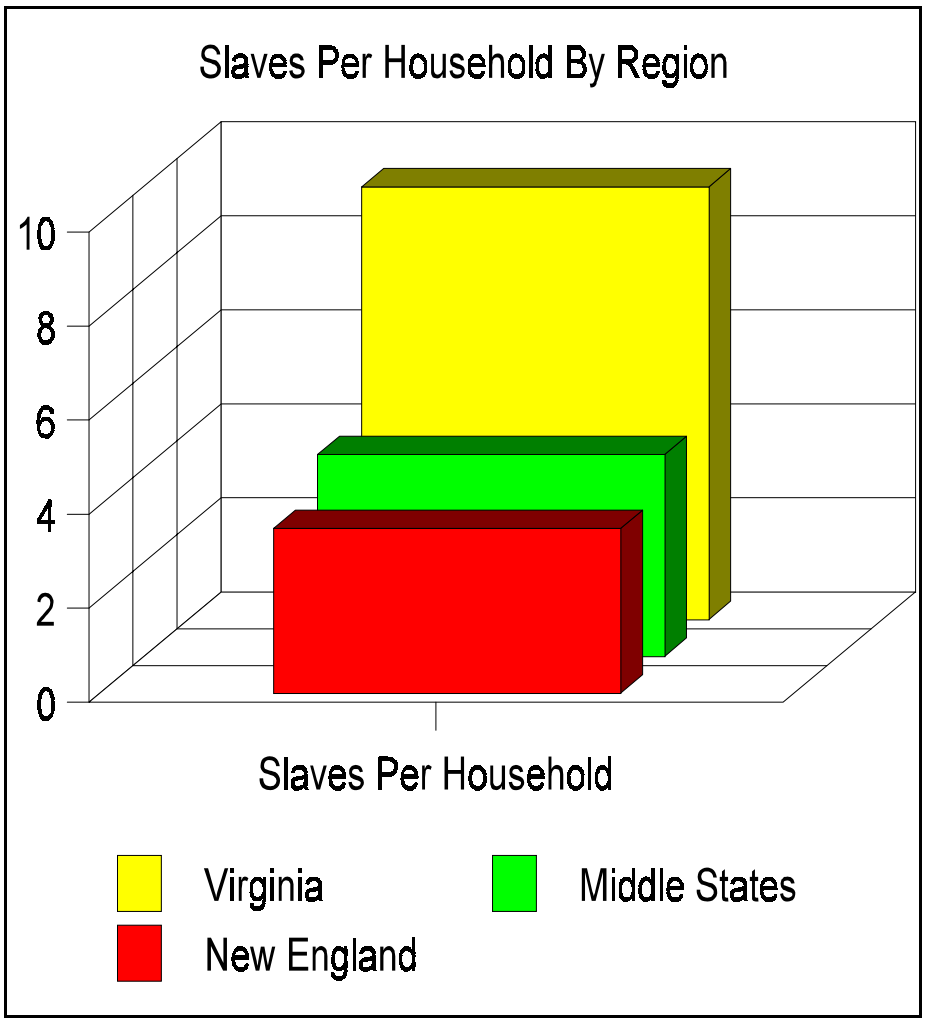

Table 9.3: Average Number of Slaves Per Household In Wood County, (W)Va., By Region (Based on Data from 1810 Census, Estate Inventories and Administration Records, and Execution Order Books).

Most slaveowners may be categorized by kin group, as most were clearly recognizable members of specific clans. Kinship patterns of slaveholding were markedly different and fairly predictable. There was no major kinship group in the county which did not own slaves,

regardless of the place of origin. In fact, the settlement of New Englanders in Virginia rather than in the Northwest Territory may be partly related to their desire to own slaves. George Avery at Belleville and Dr. Joseph Spencer at Vienna, both Connecticut emigrants, are examples.

The highest incidence of slave ownership was with the Henderson-Holliday kinship group from Fairfax and Prince William counties, Virginia. Sons, in-law kin, and employees of Alexander Henderson, Sr., the rich and prominent merchant and politician from Dumfries who was one of the leading slaveholders in Fairfax/Prince William, they constituted seven households owning 146 slaves, or 20.9 per household. The second highest rate of slave ownership was with the Keene-Lewis-Neale-Beckwith network at Washington Bottom, twenty-three households owning 231 slaves, or 10.24 per household. Again there is no surprise since these families were among the prosperous plantation aristocrats who migrated from the Northern Neck counties. The Kincheloe-Creel-Athey families, also plantation elites from the Northern Neck, represented twenty-one families who owned 164 slaves, 7.8 per household. All of these Virginia kinship groups, all from Prince William, Fairfax, and Loudoun counties, exhibited slave ownership at rates higher than the county average. Four other kinship groups owned far fewer slaves with lower rates of ownership. The Neal-Phelps clan and associated neighbors, most of whom had come from Delaware, New Jersey, or Pennsylvania through the Springhill Township region of Monongalia/Fayette County, owned few slaves. Less than one-fourth of the total families were slaveholders, eleven possessing thirty-four slaves, or 3.1 per household. Only the leaders of this group owned more than one or two slaves: Captain James Neal, Hugh Phelps, John Stokely, and Jacob and Jonas Beeson. Ironically, Neal and the Beesons were sons of Quakers, who frowned on slave ownership. In the Isaac Williams kinship group, six families owned twenty slaves, or

3.3 per household. In this group, again, only the kin leaders owned four or more slaves: Isaac Williams, Hezekiah Bukey, John A. Kinnaird, and Joseph Tomlinson. In the two Connecticut kinship groups, slave ownership was minimal. At Belleville, only George D. Avery and his nephew, Henry L. Prentiss, owned any slaves at all. There is a record of Avery owning two slaves, Prentiss only one. The Joseph Spencer families at Vienna, who tended more farmland, owned a few more. Dr. Spencer owned eight slaves and his son, Samuel Selden Spencer, had seven.[3]

One may reach a few conclusions based on these statistics. Northern Neck plantation aristocrats owned by far the largest numbers of slaves, as many as 55 in a single household; kinship groups from that region were the most numerous slaveholders in the county. Middling and ordinary kinship families, mostly from the Middle Atlantic states, owned few slaves, and then only the leaders of those clans were slaveholders. New England settlers were the least likely to own slaves, and their ownership was marginal; again, only the kin group leaders owned slaves. What is truly significant, however, is that there was slave ownership among families of all regions of origin and in all major kinship groups. Furthermore, the high incidence of slave ownership in northwestern Virginia is remarkable. These patterns of slavery and slave ownership remain constant through the 1830 census but begin to decline by 1840. By the late antebellum period, most slaves had been manumitted or had run away across the Ohio River to freedom.[4]

Most slaves were employed in agriculture, farm labor, or as household servants. Thomasin Ellzey Turner, whose grandfather, Captain Lewis Ellzey, was the first sheriff of Fairfax County and vestryman of Truro Parish, owned eleven slaves on his Belleville plantation. George Mayberry, former owner of Mayberry Iron Works in Shenandoah County, but after 1810

turned gentleman farmer at Belleville, had 13 slaves. The Washington Bottom plantation aristocrats from Loudoun and Fairfax counties were substantial slaveholders: Jonas Lewis owned eleven: George Neale, fourteen; Robert Edelen, eight; Richard Neale, six; William Lewis, three; and Francis Keene, forty-three. Members of the Kincheloe-Creel kinship group, from Prince William County, owned slaves which they used for plantation and household purposes: Robert Kincheloe, sixteen; Bartlett Leach, fourteen; Daniel Kincheloe, ten; Clara Buckner Creel, widow of George Creel, Jr., eight; Wileman Kincheloe, four; and John Dawkins, eight. The Henderson brothers of Prince William County, who had plantations at Spring Creek and Cow Creek, worked sixty-one slaves on their farms. Not all slaves, however, were used for domestic farm production. William Holliday, the Parkersburg brick maker, used eleven slaves at his brickyard; George Creel, Sr., who operated the Bald Eagle Mill, owned 25 slaves; and Thomas Neale, a Parkersburg innkeeper, used thirteen slaves in his tavern as well as on his adjoining out-lot farm. Allen Davis, who owned a tavern as well as a farm, owned six slaves, presumably using some of them in his business. Francis Gulick, who had a mill on the North Fork of Lee's Creek at Belleville, worked six slaves there. And Moses Pilcher, another miller, owned nine slaves.[5]

There is scanty information about the lives and experiences of slaves in northwestern Virginia during the frontier period, and what is available is mostly anecdotal. One is not surprised that some slaves were treated kindly and maintained good relationships with owner families even after their emancipation, while others were dealt with cruelly and inhumanly. The late Robert Cooper of Parkersburg related an account of an emancipated family slave, Saphronia Simpson Farley, who frequently visited with her former owners, James and Lucy Elizabeth Price Cooper. Cooper recalled sitting on her lap when he was a child and hearing her tell him that she

had taken care of his father when he was a baby. "Phrone," as she was known to the family, was the daughter of Henson and Polly Simpson; Polly had been willed to Mrs. Cooper by her great-aunt, Margaret Athey Leach, in 1825. The Leach family had migrated from Prince William County in 1801.[6]

Another account of warm relationships between a former slave and his owner family was that of William "Uncle Billy" Peyton. Peyton was born a slave in 1792 in Prince William County. While still a child, he was purchased by George and Mary Athey Creel for $333.00 and migrated to Wood County with the Creels in 1800. He remained with Creel and later his son David until emancipation and then worked on the Creel plantation at Davisville until 1868. "Uncle Billy" then bought his own farm in Decatur Township, Washington County, Ohio, where he lived until 1919, reportedly dying at the age of 128. Each year Peyton walked to Marietta for the Emancipation Day celebration and also made a yearly trek back to visit with the Creels. "Throughout his life he held the Creel family in high esteem, and often claimed that his back had never felt the lash."[7] It is significant, perhaps, that Polly Simpson, Saphronia's mother, and William Peyton were both owned by sisters, Mary Athey Creel and Margaret Athey Leach, and their descendants. This indicates, perhaps, that members of the Kincheloe-Creel-Athey-Leach kinship group, who collectively owned 164 slaves, had a tradition of kinder treatment of slaves.

Other anecdotes of Wood County slavery paint a darker picture. The harshness of the frontier was struggle enough, but at the edge of civilization there was sometimes more than the ordinary measure of cruelty. This was what Rhys Isaac has called a "pre-humanitarian age, where chattel slavery was an unquestioned fact of life."[8] There was an ugly account of the retributive murder of a slave of Joseph Tomlinson in 1804. Allegedly, two slaves of the

Tomlinsons, who lived near Williamsport, crossed the Ohio River at Marietta and took refuge with a sympathetic Ohioan, William Craig. Joseph Tomlinson was the brother-in-law of town founder Isaac Williams, also a slaveholder. Tomlinson and his sons determined the hiding place of the runaways and went to retrieve them. One slave escaped but another named Mike was captured by fleet-footed Thomas Tomlinson. When Thomas knocked the slave to the ground with his gun, Mike drew a knife and stabbed him to death. The Tomlinsons then allegedly executed Mike and left his body unburied. According to the account, Governor Edward Tiffin of Ohio attempted unsuccessfully to extradite Joseph Tomlinson, and the matter was then dropped.[9]

John Malvin, a free-born Negro who was apprenticed to AlexanderHenderson, Sr., left an account of his treatment at the hands of his farm manager and clerk, John Griffith:

> I was assigned by Mr. Henderson to wait upon this clerk. I attended him personally, blacked his boots, took care of his horse, and so on, and when through with these avocations, at times, I would go out into the field and work with the other hands. At dinner time my duty was to go to the house and prepare the table. After dinner I would return again to the field. Such was my daily employment. . . . During this period I had a fair opportunity of witnessing the miseries of slavery. Though I was an apprentice, I was treated little better than a slave myself. For my clothing, I was supplied every year with one pair of shoes, two pairs of tow linen pantaloons, one pair of negro cotton pantaloons, and a negro cotton round jacket. My food consisted of one peck of corn meal each week. Sometimes I received a supply of salt, but they were very sparing of that luxury, and I was compelled most of the time to go without it.[10]

Malvin, who worked on the Henderson plantations from 1802 until 1813, was forced to supplement his meager diet by stealing piglets, lambs, and milk. He was often ignored and went about his work quietly, but he was whipped more than once. One brutal flogging occurred when he left a fire unattended which burned a section of fence:

> I was taken by this clerk Griffith, my wrists were tied crosswise together, and my hands were then brought down and tied to my ankles; my shirt was taken off, and in that condition I was compelled to lie on the ground, and he began flogging me. He whipped me on one side till the flesh was all raw and bleeding; then he rolled me over like a log and whipped me on the other side in the same manner. When I was untied I put on my shirt. So severely was my flesh lacerated that my shirt stuck to my back, and I was unable to get it off without the assistance of an old lady who lived on the farm, who applied grease to it.[11]

Malvin fails to mention the three Henderson brothers, John G., Alexander, and James, who owned the farms in association with their father. They were all justices of the county, active in politics and business, and they may have had little or no contact with slaves or apprentices on a daily basis. John Griffith, the overseer, is something of an enigma. He was listed in the 1810 census as the owner of 55 slaves, making him the largest slaveholder in the history of the county. He purchased 1,000 unimproved acres on Lee Creek near Belleville in 1808 for $166 and sued the heirs of the estate of his father-in-law for his wife's division.[12] But his background fails to indicate significant wealth and status. His father died intestate in Washington County, Maryland, and there is no record of a substantial estate.[13] In 1808 Griffith married Nancy Ann Rolston, daughter of William and Mary Hopkins Rolston, who lived near the Henderson plantation at Cow Creek. The Rolstons were small slaveholders from Rockingham County, a family unconnected to any of the major kinship groups who migrated to Wood County. It is likely that he was never more than a farm manager for the Hendersons and a small farmer in his own right and that the slaves attributed to him actually belonged to Alexander Henderson, Sr., of Dumfries.

The Henderson brothers and their overseers kept careful records and reported their settlement progress to their father. Shortly after their arrival in Wood County, they inventoried the slaves which had been initially sent to prepare their first plantation for colonization, at Spring

Creek:

> The following are the names of the Slaves Sent by Alex. Henderson Esq. of Dumfries, with Henry Summers, for the purpose of affecting a settlement on the Little Kanaway River.
>
> | | |
> |---|---|
> | Harry Bull | 48 years old or 49 |
> | Suckey his wife | 36 or 37 |
> | Hethry | 9 |
> | Lucy | 7) their children |
> | Sarah | 6 months |
> | Abram (drowned in Kanhawa 13th October 1799) | 24 years old or 25 |
> | Hannah | 19 or 20 |
> | Davy her child | 18 mo. |
> | John Dingo | 11) |
> | Stephen | 9) brothers |
>
> | | |
> |---|---|
> | Tom Hannah's Son born | 20th March 1799 |
> | Daniel Suckey's Son born | 27th July 1800 |
> | Jemimy Hannah's daughter | born in the Winter 1800-1801[14] |

This inventory reflects experiences of a number of slaves brought into northwestern Virginia at the turn of the century. Life was dangerous; for example, river drownings were not uncommon in an age when there were no bridges and few ferries. George Creel, Jr., tax commissioner and deputy surveyor, drowned in the same river in 1807 when his boat capsized.[15] The list appears to include three different family groups. Two boys, aged nine and eleven, had been separated from their family and brought over three hundred miles to a frontier wilderness, likely never to see them again. For the African-American, the bonds of kinship were always fragile. Depending on the whim of the master or the exigency of the moment, they might be ripped from the family circle, one that seemed never to be unbroken. Harry Bull's family appears to be intact, but the age and sex of the three children make it likely that older children, possibly sons, had been left behind in Prince William County. While the drowned Abram was not indicated as the husband

of Hannah (since he was dead when the inventory was made), his position on the tally suggests that he was the likely father of Davy and Tom. But this raises a question of the paternity of Jemimy, Hannah's youngest child, not born for well over a year after Abram's death.

Alexander Henderson, Sr., provided his sons with land and slaves. James, the youngest, was often in debt. He had a large family and occasionally mortgaged slaves and land on deeds of trust. His father revoked his power of attorney on September 6, 1809, and transferred it to his brother, Alexander, Jr. But the father was nonetheless as generous with one son as with another. On August 15, 1806, he filed a declaration of right of property with the county court:

> [F]rom natural love & affection for my son James, having put him in possession of my 4th Survey of Land on the little Kenhawa River in Wood County together with the following named slaves to wit: Minny, Peter her Son a man, Minny a Girl her Daughter, Daniel Patience his wife, with their two Children Sam and Annie and Johnson a man which Said Slaves were delivered to my son James by my manager for his Support and on loan only — and whereas I have let him have on the same terms a negro woman named Lyddia with her two Children James a boy about ten years of age and Dinah a Girl about Six — Now know ye that the said Negroes . . . are not given to the said James Henderson but are lent to him for the support of himself and of his wife (whom I love)[16]

Another Henderson inventory, taken in 1819, testified to the expansion of the family's enterprise and raises other issues in the slave experience. Alexander Henderson, Jr., listed "property" at his Cow Creek plantation:

NEGROES 33

Allen & Delia his wife)	Caesar, Jeff, Sal, little Allen, Fanny, Kitty & Suckey, their children
Robin & Lucy his wife)	Harry, Tim, Bye, John, Dennis, (& Richmond, born March 1819) Esther at B Cooks

Jude	)	Suckey, Ned, William, Nelly, Clara, Hettie & Mary (born May 1818)
Celia	)	Maria, Winny, Simon, Isaac, Jim, (Rachel, born March 1819)

– – – – – – – – – – – – – – – – – –

6 Horses & 2 Colts, 57 head of Sheep, 44 Geese & 3 Turkeys

– – – – – – – – – – – – – – – – – –

Hogs: 137 speyed sows & barrows, 2 young boars included[17]

The enumeration of thirty-three human beings as "Property Belonging to Alexander Henderson at Cow Creek," along with horses, sheep, geese, turkeys, and hogs, artlessly depicts the chattel condition of slaves on the northwestern Virginia frontier. Again, it raises the issue of the paternity of the children of Jude and Celia, especially of their recent-born infants.

The adminsitration records of the estate of John Glassford Henderson, Alexander's brother, reveal yet other ugly aspects of human bondage. Henderson died a widower, intestate and without issue; Alexander, Jr., was appointed by the court as administrator. The account had the following entries, among many others:

1819 Apr 20	paid N. Saunders Tavern Bill Negroes to Jail	1.00
	Paid Jesse Gandy for ironing Negroes	2.00
1821 Aug 13	Three wks work of Tom making brick	7.50
Sept 10	paid Jailers Bill for Negroes	20.05
Oct 1	Negroes to Jail	1.00
Nov 7	Smith & Jennings Shoes for Negroes	2.00
1822 Jan 7	Midwifes bill	3.00[18]

These scant lines tell volumes about what happened to John G. Henderson's slaves after his death. Since he died without a will, and because his wife was dead and there were no children, no provision had been made for the disposition of any property, including his slaves. The administrator was responsible to the court for the safekeeping of all the property until it could be

inventoried, sold at auction, or otherwise disposed of. The court also had to determine who the rightful heirs were. On the Virginia frontier, this was no simple task which could be disposed of quickly. The gravest threat to the value of the estate was the close proximity to freedom across the Ohio River for slaves who ran away. Hence, the Henderson slaves were incarcerated at the Wood County jail at Parkersburg and placed in leg irons to prevent their escape. Jesse Gandee, a local blacksmith, was hired to fashion the irons. When the estate was finally settled, they would be sold on the steps of the courthouse nearby. The jailer was not responsible for feeding the slaves, who were not prisoners of the county, so meager meals were brought to the jail by Nimrod Saunders, a Parkersburg tavern keeper. To earn money for the estate, slaves might be leased to local citizens; Tom was, in effect, rented for three weeks by brick maker William Holliday, who had a brickyard at the edge of town. At least one of the slaves was a female of childbearing age who became pregnant either while in jail or while working under lease. The administrator paid $3.00 to a midwife to deliver the child. Again the issue of paternity is in question. The accounts show no expenditures for clothing, so it is likely that they had only what they wore when first confined to jail. Local merchants provided shoes in November 1821, apparently the first new pair they had been given for more than two and one-half years since they had first been delivered to the jailer. Slaves were expected to wear shoes only in the winter, which accounts for the lengthy interval. Other than a cruel overseer or inhuman master, or critical illness and death itself, the worst thing that could happen to a slave on the Virginia frontier was intestacy at the death of the owner.

The sale of slaves on the steps of the local courthouse was a common occurrence. Six slaves belonging to Marmaduke A. and Mathilda Beckwith were sold at public auction in

September 1821: Nat, Betsey, John, and Daniel to Jacob Beeson, Nancy to William Spencer, and Morton to Alexander H. Creel. When Thomas Neale was bankrupted in 1822, his slaves were auctioned: King and Eliza to George Neale; Ransom, who had once been a favorite slave of Harman and Margaret Blennerhassett, to John Janney; Jany to Francis Keene; and Reuben, Henry, John, Bick, and Dafney to Sheriff Thomas Tavenner, who apparently saw no conflict of interest though he was conducting the sale.[19] Of Benjamin Willard's "mulatto boy Slave named Samuel or Sam . . . I have sold said Slave to H.L. Prentiss at $135," wrote George Lewis, deputy sheriff for Robert Triplett, SWC.[20]

Isaac Williams, Joseph Tomlinson's brother-in-law, had an unconventional though not uncommon relationship with his female slave Phebe. In his will he referred to her as "my black woman." He names two slave daughters, Anna and Milla, whom he had conceived, presumably by Phebe, who had been manumitted and were then married and living in Ohio. According to the provisions of the will, Phebe was to be "as fully free as though she had been born so," and given one hundred dollars. Williams' other slaves were to be freed at the time of his wife's death, apprenticed in the meantime if they were underage, and given one hundred dollars at the time of their emancipation.[21] One slave received special notice: "[A]s a reward to Jesse Emings one of them for his good and faithfull (sic) Services at all times rendered to me and my family I give & bequeath to him my rifle gun with all the accoutriments (sic) to the same belonging and also I give him one of my best horses with a good saddle and bridle." For Isaac Williams, the bequest of his gun was no small thing; he had been an avid hunter for over sixty years, and his skills as a hunter were legendary throughout the Ohio Valley.[22] Miscegenation throughout the American South was common though rarely discussed or openly admitted. Williams was unusually candid

when he acknowledged siring slave children. What impact this relationship had on Phebe, Anna, and Milla and perhaps millions of African-Americans like them is a social issue of monumental proportions. Their whereabouts or their fate after 1820 is unknown. We may credit Isaac Williams only because, in the end, he was honest about it.

The only other instance of such an admission in the antebellum period, though not in the frontier era, was that of Thomas Tavenner, sheriff of Wood County, 1821-23. Tavenner was the son-in-law of a Methodist lay minister, William Beauchamp, Sr., and brother-in-law of the well-known Methodist itinerant minister, writer, editor, and presiding elder, William Beauchamp, Jr. Tavenner provided for the emancipation of his slaves by his will, setting aside one hundred dollars for any who would agree to colonization in Liberia. Then in a codicil he refers to his "negro children" and then lists them as "Coloured children born in the family of Thos Tavenner," thirteen children born to three mothers. The name of the youngest mother was the same as his eldest slave child Celia, who began bearing children at age seventeen. Assuming that Celia the mother was the same as Celia the daughter, and further that he was in fact the father of the thirteen children, then her children would be both children and grandchildren of Sheriff Tavenner.[23] John Asher Kinnaird, nephew and heir of Rebecca Williams, may have had a similar relationship with his slave Nicey. In his will he calls her "my Negro woman" and provides for her emancipation "from and after my death." He mentions two of her children by name, Isaiah and Lydia; he refers to other slaves without referencing them by name. Except for Nicey, he provided for the manumission of all of his slaves, including Isaiah and Lydia, when they reached the age of twenty-five. In the case of both Tavenner and Kinnaird, it seems likely that they were involved in miscegenetic relationships, though there was no specific admission of such.

The national debate over slavery ignited by controversy over the Missouri Enabling Act in 1819 and the Missouri Compromise of 1820 had an effect on Wood County slaveholders. John Stokely, a Delaware native who served as the first clerk of Wood County, was the first citizen of record who manumitted his slaves, doing so even before this great discourse. On November 16, 1818, Stokely wrote: "Believing as I do that the holding of any part of Humanity in perpetual bondage is a Moral evil and a great political sin," he had decided to "Emancipate and set free from the Bonds of Slavery my man York Jones and his wife Sukey, also their five children."[24] Captain James Neal, the leader of the largest kinship/neighbor group to settle in northwestern Virginia and the first permanent settler at Parkersburg, expressed similar sentiments in his will, probated April 1821: "In consideration of the faithful service of my slave named Frank — It is my will and desire that he should be emancipated and restored to that freedom & liberty which the God of nature gave him."[25] Frank Wycoff had been with Neal for over forty years. He, in fact, had had a rather unique experience for a Wood County slave. In October 1791 he was captured at Neal's Station by Shawnee Indians but escaped a few days later in the midst of confusion when they attacked a party of drovers near Williams' Station.[26] Neal was far more generous than any other Wood Countian in his emancipation of Frank. Though he waited until his death to set Wycoff free, he provided that he remain in his house and have use of it "during his natural life" as well as free access to all farm implements.[27] His son, James Hardin Neal, was less charitable with his bequest. He specified that his slaves, "Old Alfred, Young Alfred, and Susan" be emancipated when his youngest child reached the age of seventeen, then each given a "new suit of clothing," the men a horse worth thirty dollars and a bureau for Susan.[28]

Emancipation by will was uncommon in county records, but freeing a slave during one's

lifetime was very rare. George Mayberry was an ironmaker in Shenandoah County before his migration to Wood County in 1810. He purchased land at Belleville from the George Avery backruptcy, and like others who migrated westward he carved out a plantation to leave as a patrimony for his children. Mayberry was one of the largest slaveholders in the county, and on April 5, 1824, he filed deeds of emancipation for two slaves, Daniel Green and John Strother, citing their "divers faithful service rendered unto me" and "also for [their] good conduct sobriety & honesty."[29] Green stayed in the community after his manumission and worked as a gravedigger. T

he most remarkable instance of emancipation was by Argy (Archy or Archibald) Allen, who described himself as "a free Coloured man residing in Parkersburg." On May 7, 1829, Allen freed his wife Jenny after buying her from her master.[30] Allen was one of fewer than one hundred free blacks who resided in Wood County in the antebellum period, and he occupied an unusual amount of independence in the community. Allen was one of the earliest freeholders in Parkersburg, and his ownership is shown on George Avery's resurvey of the town in 1810. Out-lot No. 2 was assigned to "Arch. Allen," though there is no recorded deed. However, Allen appeared as the owner of the lot in tax records beginning in 1820.[31] His near neighbors were prominent townsmen: Thomas Neale, innkeeper and maternal grandfather of Thomas J. "Stonewall" Jackson owned Out-lot No. 1. James H. Neal, the county and circuit clerk, had Out-lot No. 3, and James G. Laidley, an attorney, militia officer, and postmaster, occupied Out-lot No. 4. He and Jenny continued to live there until his death in 1830; she inherited his property by his last will and testament and resided in a cabin on the site until her demise.[32] Argy Allen's occupation was one of the most menial of a frontier community: like Daniel Green, he was listed

on several estate administration accounts as digging the grave of the deceased. He was occasionally shown as having bought items from estate sales and on one occasion filed suit before the county court. Allen sued one of the most prominent citizens of the county, John Phelps, administrator of the estate of his father, Hugh Phelps, a militia colonel, state legislator, and the county's second sheriff. Ironically, the debt was levied on a slave, though the order was stayed prior to execution. "Execution levied on one male Negro Slave named Ned and a dispute arising as to the right of Property and no bond of indemnity being tendered the Said Slave was released as to the executor July 1st 1826."[33] Had Allen been able to post bond until the dispute was settled, the unusual circumstance of a free black possessing a Negro slave would have occurred. Allen died a year after he manumitted his wife. She supported herself by serving the community in a unique manner, receiving small gratuities by blowing a conch shell to inform those waiting in the town's ordinaries and hotels that a steamboat was approaching. She spent her days sitting at the mouth of the Little Kanawha River watching up and down the Ohio for the arrival of packets and steamboats.[34]

Since slaves were chattel, they were frequently mortgaged in deeds of trust, one of the richest sources of census-like information about slaves. One may, in fact, sometimes trace the history of a slave and the owner in deeds of trust and execution orders if a default occurred. Norman Bruce Magruder and his wife, Nancy Ann Paugh Magruder, and their children, Mary, James, and Sally, migrated from Allegany County, Maryland, to Wood County sometime after 1800 to start a new life in northwestern Virginia. His father, Zachariah Magruder, a lawyer, and his father's double first cousin, Major Samuel Wade Magruder, were leading citizens of western Maryland.[35] Magruder inherited a division of property and slaves from his father's estate in 1796,

distributed among eleven children! And like so many children of wealthy planters, he succumbed to the call of the frontier and its promises of replenished wealth. Unable to maintain the lifestyle of his parents on a portion of their estate, he came to the Little Kanawha to improve his financial condition. On May 11, 1810, Magruder executed a deed of trust to Amos Gilbert for $700, pledging personal property as collateral: "a Negro woman named Peg, a girl named Suke a Negro girl named Jean, three horses, two feather beds, furniture, fifteen head of hogs — two cows & household furniture of various descriptions."[36] On December 3, 1810, Magruder sold, for $150, to James G. Laidley "a negro Girl named Sukey about 10 or 12 Years of age who was executed as the property of the said Magruder to satisfy an Execution against him in favor of Henry Spencer, assignee of John Spencer." Sukey, who likely had begun her life in Allegany County, was separated from family and brought nearly three hundred miles to the Ohio Valley. Then she was mortgaged on a debt and had the execution order served on her as Magruder's property. Now she had a new owner, Laidley.[37] A few years later, on November 4, 1817, Laidley signed a deed of trust to Isaac Morris, another lawyer, which pledged "one Negro Girl named Sukey a slave also one Negro boy named Jess."[38] James G. Laidley died unexpectedly in 1821, and his wife, Harriet Quarrier Laidley, daughter of Alexander Quarrier, took her children and slaves to Kanawha County, where the family made permanent residence. Sukey, who began her life in western Maryland as the slave of the Magruders, spent her youth and early womanhood in Wood County, owned by two different masters, twice mortgaged on deeds of trust, and then was taken to Kanawha County in her early twenties by the Widow Laidley, whom she may have served for the rest of her life.

There are a few instances where physical descriptions of slaves are given in deed books.

The General Assembly passed "An Act Concerning Slaves" on January 9, 1813, which required persons bringing slaves into the state from outside Virginia to affirm before the county court that the slave or slaves were "not brought into the state for the purpose of evading the law for preventing the future importation of slaves nor for the purpose of sale."[39] The law was observed for a while but then ignored. For a brief period , though, the record reveals some interesting descriptions::

> By John Boyles: "Negro Ann aged about seven Years of a black Complection
> Negro William aged about six Years of a Bright Complection"
> By James Henderson: "Tom between 13 and 14 years of age about five feet
> eleven inches high is tolerable Black and shows his teeth very much"
> By James Henderson: "Jacob about twenty one or two years of age five feet
> seven or eight in his high (sic) stout built yellow complexion & marked
> with the small pox"
> By Susannah Neuberger: "James a negro man aged about Twenty five or six
> about 5 feet 5 or 6 inches high a little of a yellow Complexion a full
> or projected mouth with a flat Roman nose sometimes calls himself
> James Hollam. Joseph a negro man aged about 20 about 5 feet 10
> inches high Black skin an open good Countenance a small Blemish
> in one of his eyes occationed (sic) by the small pox."[40]

Though the records rarely reflect the fate of the thousands of slaves carried to and born in Wood County, their dwindling numbers in the census, down to 176 in 1860, suggest that most of them who survived childhood crossed the Ohio River to freedom. In 1832, George and Jeremiah Riggs obtained a restraining order from the Circuit Superior Court of Law and Chancery of Wood County, Virginia, against their brother, Dr. James Riggs, ordering him "not to take the slaves Godfrey & Daniel out of the Jurisdiction of this Court." It is unknown if Dr. Riggs was an antislavery man who eventually helped the slaves to escape, but when the judge issued his final decree in the case, on April 8, 1843, he noted that "the Slaves Godfrey and Daniel mentioned in the bill absconded from the service of the persons to whom they were hired some time in the year

1838 and are now going at large in parts unknown."[41]

Wood County was settled largely by Virginians who had known and practiced slavery, and they brought the 'peculiar institution" with them and perpetuated it. The high incidence of slavery, with Wood County second only to Jefferson County in the ratio of slaves to free persons among western Virginia counties,, may be explained only by examining the large number of Northern Neck plantation aristocrats who settled there in the frontier period, along with the nature of their kinship networks. These people sought increased prosperity in the rich bottom lands of the Ohio and along the Little Kanawha. And they chose to stay in the Old Dominion rather than go like so many others to the Northwest Territory or to Kentucky, Indiana, Illinois, or the Mississippi Territory. They were desperately trying to preserve the old way of life which they had known as children on their parents' plantations, or they were trying to achieve a lifestyle which they had never had but admired.

NOTES

1. Charles Henry Ambler, Sectionalism in Virginia from 1776 to 1861 (Chicago, 1910; reprint, New York: Russell & Russell, 1964), 108-09.

2. Ancella R. Bickley, "The African-American Experience in West Virginia," a Judge Donald F. Black lecture given in 1999 at Ohio Valley College, Vienna, West Virginia, during the Wood County Bicentennial celebration.

3. All statistics are based on studies of the Wood County 1810 census, Wood County Will Books 1-3, Wood County Deed Books 1-6, and Wood County Execution Order Book 1.

4. By 1820 the number of slaves in Wood County had nearly doubled to 852 and rose again to 877 in 1830. By 1840, the number had declined to 624, then to 373 in 1850 and to 176 by 1860. The number of free blacks in the county rose from ten in 1820 to only 79 by 1860. Clearly most Wood County slaves left after emancipation or ran away to freedom.

5. Most head counts are based on the Wood County 1810 census.

6. Wood County Deed Book 2:54; Wood County Marriage Book 2:24; Unpublished narrative, "Henson and Polly," copy given to me by Robert Cooper in 1976.

7. Henry Robert Burke, "William 'Uncle Billy' Peyton (1792-1919)," in "Window to the Past," *Marietta Times*, May 3, 1996.

8. Rhys Isaac, The Transformation of Virginia: 1740-1790 (Chapel Hill: University of North Cqrolina Press, 1982), 119. This provocative work won the Pulitzer Prize in History in 1983.

9. Henry Robert Burke, "Tragedy on the Muskingum River," in "Window to the Past," *Marietta Times*, [unknown date of issue] 1998. This account is unsubstantiated by contemporary documentary evidence.

10. Allan Peskin (ed.), North Into Freedom: The Autobiography of John Malvin, Free Negro, 1795-1880 (Kent, Ohio: Kent State University Press, 1988), 29-31.

11. Ibid., 32-3.

12. Wood County Deed Book 4:61-2, Wood County Deed Book 5:432, and Wood County Deed Book 6:607.

13. Wood County Deed Book 5:239.

14. Henderson-Tomlinson Family Papers, West Virginia and Regional History Collection, West Virginia University, Morgantown, West Virginia.

15. John A. House, Pioneers of Wood County, W.Va., 2 vols (Parkersburg, West Virginia: Wood County Historic Landmarks Commission, 1984), I, 227; II, 415.

16. Wood County Deed Book 4:29.

17. Henderson-Tomlinson Family Papers.

18. Wood County Will Book 2:165-70.

19. Wood County Execution Order Book 1:94, 103.

20. Wood County Execution Order Book 2:298.

21. The Williams slaves didn't have to wait for Rebecca's death to be freed. At the November 1820 term of the Wood County Court, she filed a deed of emancipation for "Jesse Emins, Nel & Dash," Wood County Deed Book 6:161.

22. Wood County Will Book 1:39-43.

23. Wood County Will Book 5:83.

24. House, Pioneers of Wood County, II, 365.

25. Wood County Will Book 2:57.

26. John Pierce Duvall to Governor Beverly Randolph, November 27, 1791, in William P. Palmer and Sherwin McRae (eds.), Calendar of Virginia State Papers, 11 vols. (Richmond, Virginia, 1875-93), V, 400; Donald F. Black, History of Wood County, West Virginia, 2 vols. (Marietta, Ohio: Richardson Printing Co., 1975, 1990), I, Section 10-4-4.

27. Wood County Will Book 2:57.

28. Wood County Will Book 4:177.

29. Wood County Deed Book 6:459-60.

30. Wood County Deed Book 7:245.

31. Wood County Deed Book 5:337; Wood County Tax List, 1820.

32. Wood County Will Book 3:148

33. Wood County Execution Order Book 1:353.

34. WilburH. Siebert, "Beginnings of the Underground Railroad in Ohio," Ohio Archaeological and Historical Quarterly, 56 (January 1947), 88; Philip W. Sturm, A River to Cross: The Bicentennial History of Wood County, West Virginia (State College, Pennsylvania: Josten's Printing Co., 1999), 35.

35. Zachariah Magruder was a lawyer and planter in Allegany and Washington counties in Maryland, while Major Samuel Wade Magruder was a planter and justice of Montgomery County, living on an estate called Locust Grove, near Rockville. All these counties in western Maryland were formed from Frederick County in the late eighteenth century.

36. Wood County Deed Book 4:164.

37. Laidley, born in Philadelphia, received his law training under George Wythe. As a young frontier lawyer, he was associated with both Lewis Cass and Philip Doddridge in the practice of law. He was a captain of militia during the War of 1812. See George W. Atkinson, History of Kanawha County (Charleston, West Virginia: *West Virginia Journal*, 1876), 282-84, and John P. Hale, History of the Great Kanawha Valley (Madison, Wisconsin, 1891; reprint, Gauley Bridge, West Virginia: Gauley & New River Publishing, 1994), 187.

38. Wood County Deed Book 5:345.

39. Wood County Deed Book 5:237, 282.

40. Wood County Deed Book 5:237, 239, 282

41. Wood County Chancery Order Book 1:16, 412.

Epilogue

Just as thousands of colonists emigrated in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries to frontier Wood County, most of them in kinship groups, some of them and many of their descendants migrated further west. As Governor Dunmore had complained to Lord Dartmouth in 1774, "wandering about seems engrafted in their nature, and it is a weakness incident to it, that they should forever imagine that the lands further off are still better than those upon which they are already settled." Their itching feet led them in the next generation from the Ohio River to almost every new frontier and to virtually every new territory and state.

They journeyed to the next frontier on foot, on horseback, in wagons, and, most of them, in steamboats, carrying a few treasured belongings, much as they had arrived. They had come primarily from three regions, New England, the Middle Atlantic, and the Northern Neck, bringing with them their hopes of economic betterment, land ownership, and political office. Some of them realized their dreams of opportunity; many found that they were not much better off than they had been before. Those who secured title to their lands (and many did not) and those who prevailed in politics and business, along with their relatives and friends, were the most likely to persist. Most members of the dominant political faction, the Neal-Phelpses and allied families, remained in the area, and their descendants are numbered in the thousands. After more than two hundred years, their names are still observed on streets and businesses. They serve on boards of trustees of banks, agencies, hospitals, and community foundations. Those who left the county within a few years were the vanquished, those who lost the battle for political control of the county court and the location of the court house, the Spencer-Lords. While Dr. Joseph

Spencer remained, along with a few of his associates, most of the Connecticut-born minority soon left the county seeking political advantage elsewhere. Of the stereotypical frontiersmen, the Isaac Williams kinship group, many remained in the Ohio Valley, although the less successful tended to move on. For the Northern Neck plantation elites at Washington Bottom and Belleville, the growing debate over slavery, the flight of slaves across the river, and the division caused by the coming of civil war led a number of them to relocate to the "Little Dixie" region of Missouri. Most, however, stayed behind, supported the Confederacy and, following defeat and humiliation, tried to reconcile themselves to the awkward condition in which they found themselves.

As for the nameless and faceless majority of human beings who came, willingly or unwillingly, to northwestern Virginia -- the paupers, the tenants, the squatters, the slaves — very few remained to make permanent residence in the Ohio and Little Kanawha valleys. Of the thousands of slaves brought to or born in the region, less than one hundred were still in the county on the eve of the Civil War. Like Anna and Milla, the slave daughters of town founder Issac Williams, they found freedom in Ohio or at places further west or north. Therein lies the grand irony of migratory dreams: though Williams remained at his settlement for the rest of his life and was buried in its soil, his only legitimate daughter preceded him childless in death. No direct descendant remembers or mourns him. His only progeny are those who do not know his name.

It seems odd that we still speak and think of frontier studies in terms of Turnerian models fully eighty-five years after Frederick Jackson Turner first published The Frontier in American

History. Yet such is the influence of one still thought of as the "father of frontier history" that Turner's basic conclusions, though altered, refined, and challenged on several fronts, still endure as the starting point of frontier reflection. His concept of the American frontier as the cradle of democracy is so ubiquitous that it remains one of the principal underpinnings of our general premises of the past. While professional historians, like David Hackett Fischer in Albion's Seed [1] have launched an assault on the Turnerian disconnect, nevertheless his essential premise persists in popular works and in the general consciousness.

Likewise, his bipolar view of the Northern and Southern frontiersman has endured among specialists and nonspecialists alike and has gone largely undisputed for the better part of a century. As late as 1996, so eminent an historian as R. Douglas Hurt, professor of history at Iowa State University and editor of *Agricultural History*, could write that backcountry Virginians along the Ohio Valley frontier "upset all hopes and plans for the creation of a uniformly cultured society based on good breeding, high education, and honest piety."[2] Clearly the frontier was much more complex and diverse, and our attempts to generalize invariably obscure and misrepresent the real nature of early settlement. Stereotypes are not easy to overcome. They become ingrained in our consciousness and uncritically permeate our understandings. Meticulous community studies of many and varied frontier settlement areas are the only antidote to the persistence of entrenched truisms.

Professional historians have long scorned the "ancestor worship" of genealogists. It is true that much of what poses as authentic history is nothing more than the pooling of ignorance, the perpetuation of legend, and the mindless duplication of error. But genealogy has matured in our age well beyond the pursuit of soldier forebears to qualify for society memberships or the

vainglorious quest for noble and kingly progenitors. Millions of Americans are engaged in an honest and diligent search for their precursors in an effort to discover who and what they are and where they came from. Their family information, when used with caution and verification, places at the disposal of the historian a mass of data that would take many lifetimes to discover. Internet sites, like familysearch.com, rootsweb.com, genealogy.com, and a host of family-specific, state, and regional web sites provide a monumental source of knowledge, easily verifiable by cross-referencing and consulting vital statistics records. This often eliminates the proverbial hunt for "a needle in a haystack" or the fruitless "reinvention of the wheel." It is so much easier going backward from something than forward to nothing or anything.

Any notion of debunking the Turnerian bipolar concept of the Northern and Southern frontiersman and discovering a reliable paradigm is absolutely dependent on unraveling the relationships and discovering the experiences of real settlers. One can hypothesize and speculate and generalize until the cows come home and never come to an awareness of the realities of frontier migration and colonization, i.e. that the experience was a communal one regardless of origin, ethnicity, class, or economic condition and that settlement behaviors were remarkably similar. Reliance on simplistic methods like searching for same-surname families (isonymic relationships) near each other in census records leads to impressions that communal migration and settlement were anomalous, as suggested by Daniel Scott Smith.[3] What is necessary is the kind of methodology used in John Mack Faragher's Sugar Creek, which discovers kinship relationships and persistence based on meticulous research into not only same-surname families but also both-sex sibling, in-law, and collateral family ties.[4] It is surprising that a work of such luminescence has been so rarely imitated. This approach, which necessitates narrative and genealogical

strategies, is essential in effecting an accurate, reliable, and orderly analysis of frontier settlement. One must know the actual people.

Stereotypification has been the bane of Appalachian studies at least as far back as Berea College's President William Goodell Frost and his formulaic pronouncement of mountain people as "our contemporary ancestors."[5] Thus, it is not surprising that the stereotype of the Southern frontiersman as an illiterate, noncommunal backwoodsman would persist; it is but another layer of the overall, generally accepted notion of Appalachian residents as a peculiar people. In fact, Turner formulated his thesis in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries when the Appalachian stereotype was being developed by home missionaries, local color writers, settlement house advocates, regional educators and intellectuals, and industrial capitalists. His myth of the Southern frontiersman was part and parcel of the general construction of Appalachian exceptionalism, though it was overlooked in the most outstanding philosophical work of that construction, Henry D. Shapiro's Appalachia on Our Mind. [6]

Central to the discourse of Appalachian studies in the past forty years has been a debate over how and when the region was integrated into the world market system. The "culture-of-poverty" and the "internal colonization" models of the sixties, seventies, and eighties concentrate on the period of industrialization, suggesting that capitalism was thrust upon an ill-fated and exploited people by forces entirely outside the region.[7] This study of the northwestern frontier suggests that the process was neither accidental nor one-sided nor a product of the late nineteenth century. A substantial number of the colonists of the area were not failed rejects of eastern regions who fled the settled area looking for a refuge in the wilderness. Many were successful and substantial citizens who saw the frontier as a place of greater opportunity where they might

replicate, as nearly as possible, the familiar and comfortable environs they had left. They brought with them the capitalistic values on which the development of commercialism depends. The first settlers, then, were advance agents who established the initial links to existing institutions and markets and to a worldwide market. Thus, Appalachia, especially the settlements along major rivers and their tributaries, became peripheral units of the larger economic system long before the period of industrial transition in the late nineteenth century. There is a clear need to undertake more microsocial studies of smaller frontier communities to determine if the conclusions herein are anomalous and of limited application or generally true of the entire trans-Appalachian region. This work aspires only to build on the work of many historians, contribute to, and perhaps help advance our growing understanding of the American experience.

NOTES

1. David Hackett Fischer, Albion's Seed: Four British Folkways in America (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989).

2. R. Douglas Hurt, The Ohio Frontier: Crucible of the Old Northwest, 1720-1830 (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1996), 182.

3. Daniel Scott Smith, "'All to Some Degree Related to Each Other': A Demographic and Comparative Resolution of the Anomaly of New England Kinship," The American Historical Review 94 (February 1989), 44-79.

4. John Mack Faragher, Sugar Creek: Life on the Illinois Prairie (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986).

5. William Goodell Frost, "Our Contemporary Ancestors in the Southern Mountains," Atlantic Monthly 83(March 1899), 311-19.

6. Henry D. Shapiro, Appalachia on Our Mind: The Southern Mountains and Mountaineers in the American Consciousness, 1870-1920 (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1978.

7. Perhaps the best-known work of the "culture-of-poverty" theory is J.E. Weller, Yesterday's People (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1969). For works based on internal colonialism, see Harry Caudill, Night Comes to the Cumberlands: A Biography of a Depressed Area (Boston: Little, Brown, 1962; John P. Gaventa, Power and Powerlessness: Quiescence and Rebellion in an Appalachian Valley (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1980); and Ronald D. Eller, Miners, Millhands, and Mountaineers: Industrialization of the Appalachian South, 1880-1930 (Knoxville, University of Tennessee Press, 1982).

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Collection of Edwin L. D. Dils, Parkersburg, West Virginia
- Dils Family Materials
- Neal Family Materials

Dawes Memorial Library, Marietta College, Marietta, Ohio
- Cutler Collection
- Woodbridge Papers
- Special Collections

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- Draper Collection Microfilm
- Henderson-Tomlinson Family Papers
- Monongalia County District Court Records
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West Virginia State Archives, Charleston
- Reports of Commissioners for Adjusting Claims to Unpatented Lands in Monongalia, Yohogania, and Ohio Counties, Virginia

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- Will Books

Fayette County, Kentucky
- Census Records

Fayette County, Pennsylvania
- Deed Books

Green County, Kentucky
- Census Records

Harrison County, (West) Virginia
- Circuit Superior Court Records
- District Court Records
- Minute Books

Loudoun County, Virginia
- Deed Books

Monongalia County, (West) Virginia
- District Court Records
- Patent Books

Wood County, (West) Virginia
- Census Records
- Chancery Order Books
- Circuit Superior Court Records
- Deed Books
- Estate Administration Records
- Execution Order Books
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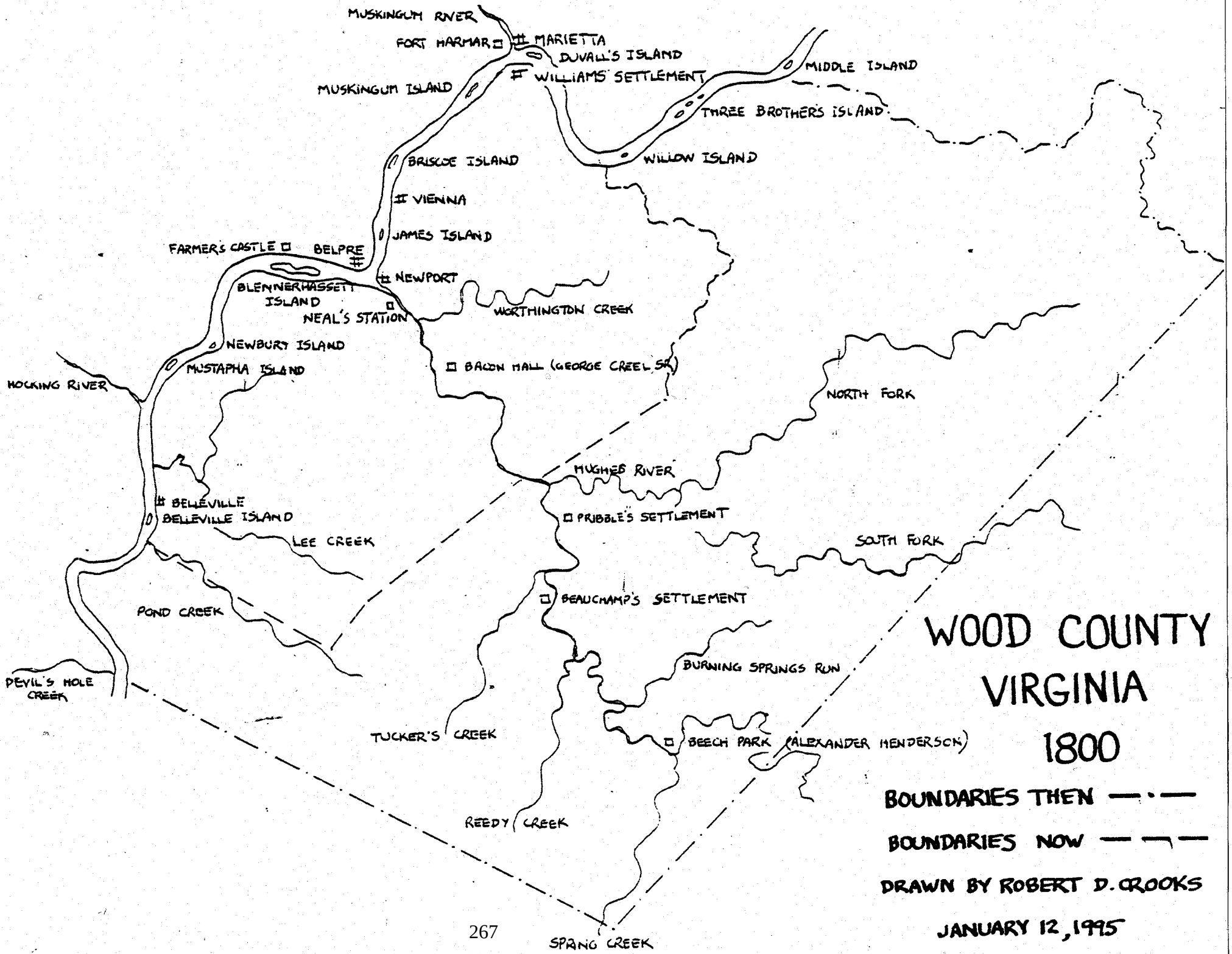
Appendix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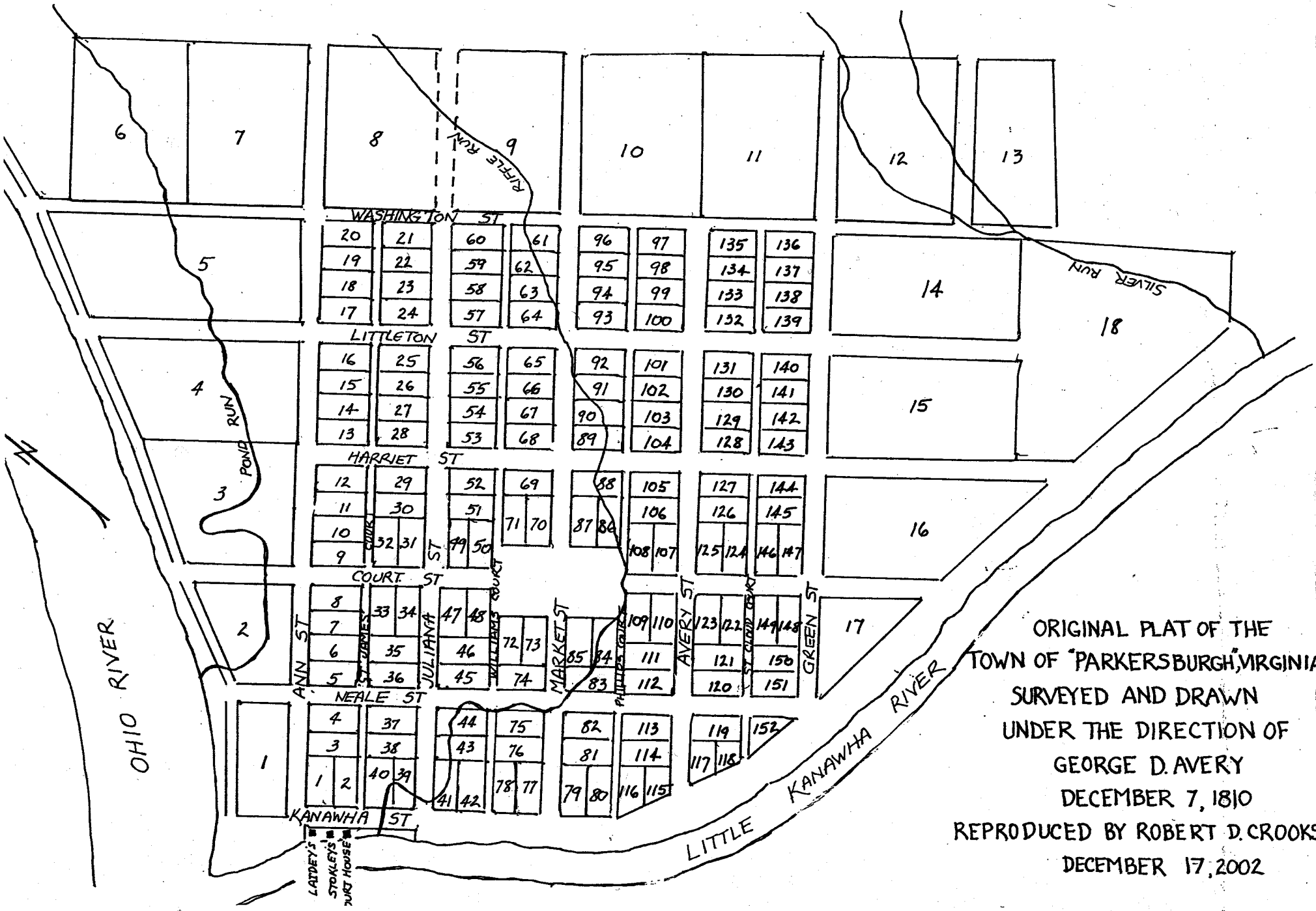
BRISCOE ISLAND
WILLOW ISLAND
VIENNA
JAMES ISLAND
FARMER'S CASTLE
BELPRE
NEWPORT
BLENNERHASSETT ISLAND
NEAL'S STATION
WORTHINGTON CREEK
NEWBURY ISLAND
MUSTAPHA ISLAND
BACON HALL (GEORGE CREEL SR)
HOCKING RIVER
NORTH FORK
HUGHES RIVER
BELLEVILLE
BELLEVILLE ISLAND
PRIBBLE'S SETTLEMENT
LEE CREEK
SOUTH FORK
BEAUCHAMP'S SETTLEMENT
POND CREEK
BURNING SPRINGS RUN
DEVIL'S HOLE CREEK
TUCKER'S CREEK
BEECH PARK (ALEXANDER HENDERSON)
REEDY CREEK
SPRING CREEK
WOOD COUNTY
VIRGINIA
1800
BOUNDARIES THEN
BOUNDARIES NOW
DRAWN BY ROBERT D. CROOKS
JANUARY 12, 1995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POND RUN
SILVER RUN
OHIO RIVER
LITTLE KANAWHA RIVER
LAIDLEY'S
STOKLEY'S
FIRST HOUSE
ORIGINAL PLAT OF THE
TOWN OF "PARKERSBURGH", VIRGINIA
SURVEYED AND DRAWN
UNDER THE DIRECTION OF
GEORGE D. AVERY
DECEMBER 7, 1810
REPRODUCED BY ROBERT D. CROOKS
DECEMBER 17, 2002