

THE HEADSTONE

Vol. II

March 2024

Issue III

Greetings to everyone! As we set our sights on spring, I hope that winter has not been too terribly tough for any of you all. Not a lot has happened over at the cemetery since the fence was installed...good or bad. I peak over that way about every morning hoping I don't see a huge Wild Cherry tree laying across the fence, but if I do, we'll get it cleaned up and count it as one less to fall in the future.

Aubrey Von Lindern, who presented the cemetery nomination at the hearing for inclusion on the Virginia Landmarks Register, informed me in mid-February that the submission to the National Park Service had been completed in January and that she felt we were still on track for the submission to be reviewed and a decision made by April 1 or so. On February 22, 2024, I checked the NPS website and it was placed on the "pending review" list February 3, 2024 so we are officially awaiting their review and decision! The Department of the Interior has 45 days to make a decision on the nomination which can either be no, yes, or need more information. Below is a copy of the Virginia Historic Landmarks Register Plaque that will be placed at the cemetery. It has been ordered and should arrive in early April.



The biggest news I have to report is that The Augusta County Historical Society has asked that the presentation for their annual spring meeting be a program on the cemetery! That meeting usually draws between fifty and one hundred attendees each year and I believe it will be a great opportunity to get the word out to a little broader audience about what has been done at the cemetery. I believe that public awareness is the best way to make sure the graveyard is looked after and kept up after we no longer can. I have attached the preliminary announcement about the program below, which went out in the Winter edition of the ACHS newsletter, *Augusta Annals*.¹ I have prepared a PowerPoint presentation and have more than enough slides to do a good overview....I hope. Dr. Kathleen Connor, Dr. Carole Nash, and Paul Parish all plan to attend and speak to their areas of expertise as it applies to the cemetery. Dr. Connor on Cadaver Canine work, Dr. Nash on the forensics and archaeology of the cemetery, and Mr. Parish, on research concerning the suspected Beverley Manor line station marker in the cemetery.

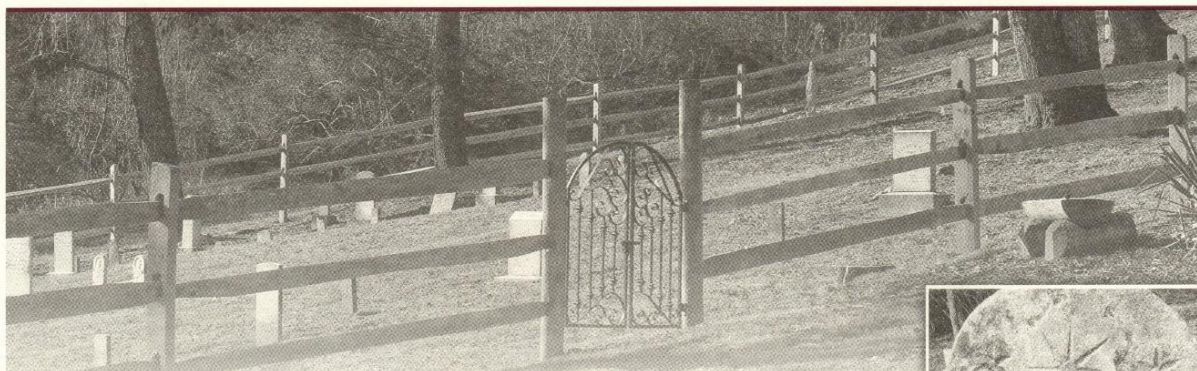
My appeal to you now and in next month's newsletter is that you come to the meeting. We will have a time of meet and greet after the presentation so who knows what good things will come out of this. I am counting on each of you to do your best to attend. It goes without saying that it might mean more for the perpetual care of the cemetery than it will for any single one of us. And that really is why we are doing what we are doing I suppose.

The Augusta County Historical Society has also chosen to place a short story about the cemetery in their 2023 *Augusta Historical Bulletin* which I wrote at the request of historian and past ACHS President, Nancy Sorrells. I do hope it is adequate and for anyone who is not a member of the ACHS, it is a worthwhile membership, and the benefits are exponential for anyone who loves history and its preservation.

For a solid year the ACHS *Bulletin* editorial staff of Katharine Brown, Daniel Metraux, and Nancy Sorrells, have been gathering, editing, and assembling our annual journal. Within a few weeks the 2023 *Augusta Historical Bulletin* will be printed and winging its way to your mailbox.

Here's a sampling of the treat that you will find. For starters, there's an article on the historic Dutch Hollow Hanger Cemetery that has just earned listing on the Virginia Landmarks and National Historic Registers. Glenn Hanger, who has literally brought this graveyard back to life, has written an article about the cemetery and many of its "residents." The cemetery, located in southern Augusta County where the Beverley Manor and Borden Land grants meet, will be the subject of the Spring Meeting.

¹ Sorrells, N. T. (2024 Winter) Bringing Historic Cemetery Back to Life Topic of Spring Meeting. *Augusta Annals*, Vol. 33, Issue 1, Page 3.



Bringing Historic Cemetery Back to Life Topic of Spring Meeting

ACHS Spring Meeting: Sunday, April 28, 3 p.m.

Program: "Silent Stories: Preserving the Dutch Hollow Hanger Cemetery" by Glenn Hanger

Where: Old Providence ARP Church, 1005 Spottswood Rd, 24476, followed by program in the sanctuary, and refreshments in the fellowship hall.

Pre-meeting field trip: Dutch Hollow Hanger Cemetery, 12-2 p.m. For those who wish to visit the cemetery before the program, Glenn Hanger and others will be available at the cemetery to show people around and answer questions. 913 Wagon Shop Road, 24459.

Upon arrival follow the signs to the cemetery parking lot.

Program is free and open to the public.

In 2021, Glenn Hanger, who was newly retired, decided to begin the task of restoring the historic cemetery across from his house. He knew some of those buried in the cemetery were his ancestors, but many others were not. He also knew that the cemetery was very old. The task was a daunting one. Only a couple of stones were standing and the entire cemetery was enveloped in invasive vines, bushes, and trees. Livestock had damaged many stones and others were simply buried many inches deep as soil on the hillside cemetery had slowly worked its way downhill.

Three years later, the cemetery tract is cleared, fenced in, and over 70 stones have been found to mark the burial site of Augusta's earliest settlers. The work has taken both brawn and brains. The brawn has come in clearing the invasive vegetation, finding and re-erecting stone markers long buried under the soil on the southern Augusta County hillside, and building a fence. But Hanger has done so much more than tidy up the land. He has meticulously researched the stories of those buried at the Dutch Hollow Hanger Cemetery and untangled the complicated family trees. His research has even uncovered the stories of some of the men who carved the stone markers.

Recently, because of his work, the cemetery has been listed by the Virginia Department of Historic Resources (DHR), on the Virginia Landmarks Register and will soon be on the National

Register of Historic Places.

The DHR website describes the cemetery as containing "the graves of some of the first German immigrant settlers to inhabit the community known

as Dutch Hollow and the surrounding area in the early to mid-1700s. The earliest known burial dates to 1798, with the last known burial dating to 1919. Collectively, the cemetery's grave markers are a significant display of funerary art, with headstones that include improved fieldstones, fashioned limestone, local sandstone, shaped markers inscribed in Germanic script, and marble markers made by known artisan marble-cutters.... The work of these artisans included motifs such as foliated carving, folk symbols, including the seven-pointed star and five petal blossoms associated with Germanic folk culture."

And, even though there are now more than 70 stones standing in the cemetery, in the 18th and 19th centuries, many grave markers were wooden or simple stones that have long vanished. Suspecting that there were many more graves at the cemetery than there were stones, Hanger contacted James Madison University professor Carole Nash who has had her students map the cemetery using ground penetrating radar. Complementing that work has been veterinarian Dr. Kathleen Connor whose trained cadaver dogs help locate burials from the distant past. The results have been exciting and both Connor and Nash will share some of their discoveries as part of the program.

Those who would like to learn more about the Dutch Hollow Hanger Cemetery before the meeting can visit the website that Hanger has created at www.dhhcemetry.org.

Watch for more information on the meeting on Facebook and through the Society's eblasts. We hope to see you out in southern Augusta County on Sunday, April 28. As always, the ACHS Spring Meeting and the visit to the cemetery are free and open to the public.

Nancy Sorrells, ACHS Past President

TOP: The restored and fenced in Dutch Hollow Hanger Cemetery.
INSET: One of the older stones in the cemetery has a German inscription and carving on it.



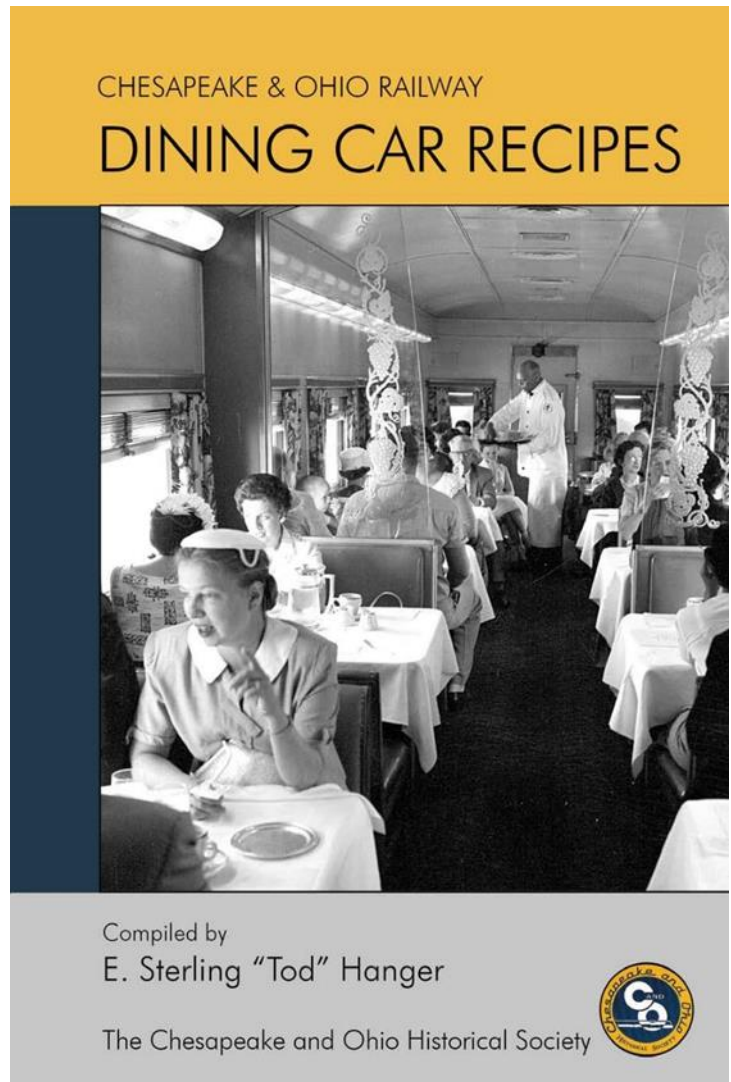
If you have done much genealogy work you can fully understand just how easy it is to get sidetracked, derailed, and just plain lost in your work. If you ever used a minnow trap as a boy or girl to get bait to fish with, you know that just like our research funnels us in a certain direction, once through the “hole” and in the trap, much like the minnows, you just can’t get back out! I knew in early February when I was the victim of this that I would have to share the experience, and the bit of family history I gained from it. It goes something like this:

Oddly, I was minding my own business one day perusing an email from the Chesapeake & Ohio Historical Society which had some great books for sale. Books are a weakness of mine. If I were a deer and you dangled a book of any kind with history in it from your tree stand where I could see it, I would be strapped across your car hood before the sun ever came up. But I digressed there, sorry.

The name of the compiler of the book at right caught my eye, E. Sterling “Tod” Hanger. The search was on! To make a long story many days shorter, the name led me to uncover some of the history of the Hangers that went to what is now West Virginia. The Greenbriar Valley at Fort Spring to be exact.

I was able to add, edit, or correct about twenty Hangers and their spouses that I just had only basics for. In the process I was also able to connect with a relative of Sterling’s, (and mine) who filled in a lot of gaps which would have otherwise gone unfilled. That same relative has uploaded

dozens of photographs of the Fort Spring clan to Ancestry, and I have learned so much from her. Thank you, Colleen. Hopefully in a subsequent newsletter I can lay out some of what I discovered and with Colleen’s permission, share some of her very old family photographs. I have attached below one piece titled *Memoirs from Charles David Hanger*. Charles’ grandfather, David Hanger, was the son of John (Frederich’s son) & Catherine Hanger. (Based on my research thus far) David died in 1854 at Western State Hospital. (More on that in a later newsletter.) David’s son, John Harvey Hanger had a son, Charles David Hanger, the writer of the memoir. Charles David had a son, Charles Dana, who had a son named Ellsworth Sterling Hanger. And there you have that. Sterling was my 4th cousin 1 X removed. Colleen is my 5th cousin.



The memoir at right was used with Colleen's permission and is just one example of the dozens of pieces that have been uploaded to Ancestry in connection with the Fort Spring Hanger family. I will say that even if you are not related to any of these folks, it is still quite an enjoyable read. It only takes a few minutes to vet the facts that Charles David lays out in this memoir to discover that everything is completely correct. And any research only leads to more interesting tidbits of history.

If you have ever wondered but never checked on just how many newspapers have called Staunton, Virginia home, there are technically nine. (Eight with a repeat) They are: The Daily News Leader,

Augusta County Argus, Staunton Spectator, Staunton Vindicator, Yost's Weekly, Staunton Daily Leader, The Old Dominion Sun, The Valley Virginian, and the original Staunton Spectator, which I believe started printing in 1832.

Please take a moment and renew your membership if you have not done so. I know it is money out of our pockets to maintain membership in a time when it already goes fast enough, but so much has been done in such a short time because of everyone's generosity. And so much more can be accomplished. I will try not to be a broken record on this going forward but do give it some prayerful thought. And for those that have renewed, thank you, thank you, thank you!

One goal I have for the near future is to get some gravel down on the entrance lane so the cemetery can be accessed even when it would otherwise be too muddy. The landowners and my wonderful neighbors, Jeff & Karen Pletcher are wanting to help with this, but they have done so very much already that I hope the cemetery funds can bear the brunt of the expense.

Memoirs from Charles David Hanger

My grandfather, David Hanger, along with his brother George, came to Greenbrier County from Rockbridge County Virginia. After living awhile here, George went back to Virginia, but my grandfather remained. He located at the place where I was born and where I now reside. He married Nancy Duncan and after he died, she resided with us. I heard her say that her father served in the Revolutionary War, and was present when Lord Cornwallis surrendered to George Washington (at one time, because of the Indians making a raid on the white settlers, she was forced, along with others, to take refuge in a fort).

My father married Sarah Jane Gallagher (Gallaha), who came to the United States from Ireland, when she was sixteen years old. She came over in an old-style wooden sailing boat, and was three months and three weeks making the voyage. Two uncles and three aunts had preceded her in coming to this country. Her father and mother were deceased. She had a brother James, who remained in Ireland.

My father was a carpenter by trade. He enlisted in the Confederate Army to fight for his country in the Civil War, where he was mortally wounded in the engagement at Lewisburg on May 23rd, 1862. He died and was buried at that place in what is now known as The Old Stone Church Cemetery. He was working on a carpentry job in Rich Hollow when he was called away and never got back to see his family, except my mother, who went to see him immediately upon hearing the news of his injury, and remained with him until he died. The family took care of his wife, his aged Mother and his children. The children were: William Harvey and Margaret Ann, who were twins and Charles David (myself).

Well do I remember the struggles, hardships, self-denials and sacrifices my Mother made and experienced in trying to keep us together with her and to give us some schooling.

Jeff and Karen have been so very generous in granting access, helping in the graveyard, mowing, clearing trees and brush, and just accommodating the various visitors, that I don't want to impose on them anymore that I have already if I can help it. More about the progress on that in a subsequent newsletter and I will probably send out a blast email announcing the "Lane Maintenance Campaign" in the not-too-distant future.

I have uploaded a file to the members section of the website titled *Frederich Hanger Descendants* which may be of considerable interest to many. It may contain mistakes, most genealogy work products do, but I am sure there is information that can be found there and nowhere else. It is over 200 pages and contains the names of over 8,000 of Johann Frederich Hanger's descendants and their spouses and children. Also listed when known is the city, county, and state of their residency. A handy bit of info if you need it! The book, which was in loose leaf form when I obtained it, was given to me by Vicki Lotts, niece of the author Elizabeth Bowman Hanger. Elizabeth is deceased and I was granted permission to upload it to the website by Vicki last year but have just now gotten to it. I am sure there is a way to make it searchable and I welcome anyone that can do that to contact me, and I will promptly add them as a website editor.

Next Month: More on the Greenbriar settlements and the Indian raids of 1763 by Shawnee leaders Pontiac and Cornstalk. (The Hangers secured a land grant there for several tracts in 1751!)

Website Updates: Members Section

In The Library / Archives Section

Ship Passenger Lists 1732-1754 - 15 Total

Unpublished Documents - 9 Total

Published Documents - 11 Total

Life in Dutch Hollow - 125 Total

Obituaries & Death Notices - 542 (Still several hundred to go)

Lucas-Fix Private Collection 109 Total

Department of Historical Resources Augusta County Archaeological Site Surveys - 13

DHH Cemetery Forensics, Etc. - Preliminary Findings of Ground Penetrating Radar for lower 35 feet of Cemetery and GPS of entire cemetery - 2

New Category! Frederich Hanger Descendants - Over 200 pages of his descendants' names with city, county, and state of residence when known.

Cook-Teaford Cemetery - 2 Files

Coming Soon:

Elijah Jacob Hanger Private Collection (Approximately 450 files to be uploaded as time permits)

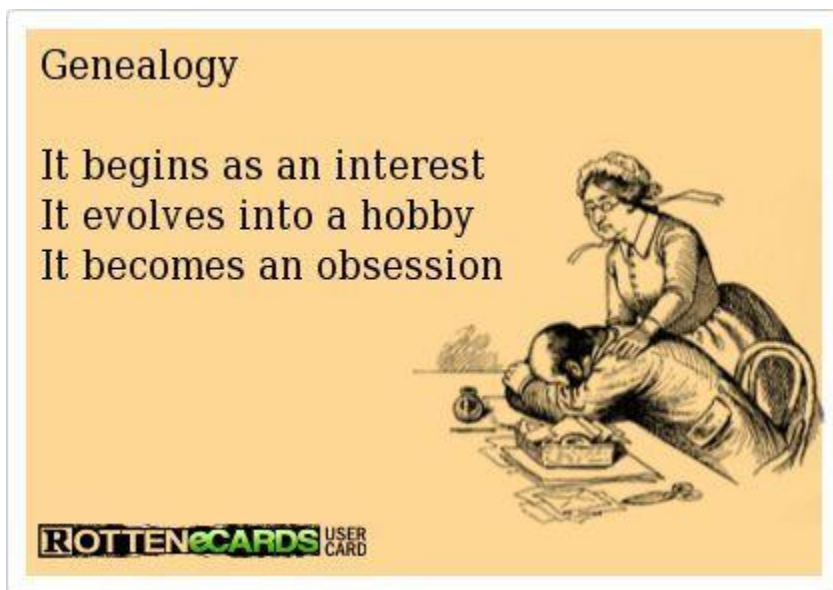
In The Focused Research Section

18 Files (40+ more to be researched, formatted , and uploaded as time permits)

The **Miscellaneous Research Files** module now contains 27 files. There are over 350 files contained within those 27 files. Please use them. All of that work is for your benefit. Take advantage of it!

**Noteworthy in my opinion is the fact that we now have over 500 obituaries uploaded to the website and accessible to members in the Library Archives Module. Most are from the 19th century.*

This month's genealogy humor² would actually be a confession for most of us. Oh, how I can relate to this one!



Until next month, Blessings & Happy Trails.

Glenn Hanger

President, Dutch Hollow Hanger Cemetery

² <https://images.search.yahoo.com/yhs/search?p=genealogy+humor&fr=yhs-infospace-009&type=ud-c-us--s-p-fb7vpvij--exp-none--subid-none&hspace=infospace&hsimp=yhs-009&imgurl=https%3A%2F%2F1.bp.blogspot.com%2F-Tpq1L4lHUWE%2FXYYWdsuWsEcl%2FAAAAAAABhAI%2FSAiYglwyz7ciJr0QKpDacPQStLHAVYQnwCLcBGAsYHQ%2Fs1600%2Fdeathbed.jpg#id=35&iurl=https%3A%2F%2Fi.pinimg.com%2Foriginals%2F52%2Fad%2F0c%2F52ad0c22a619450917d15fecf3e85941.jpg&action=click>