

THE HEADSTONE

Vol. II

May 2024

Issue V

I hope this newsletter finds each of you in good health and for those that may not be, that same hope is extended for a speedy recovery. As I have commented in previous newsletters, this section is usually written early in the month and this one yet again is no exception. The solar eclipse is still five days in the future as of this introductory salutation. Which got me to thinking about just how much attention our celestial world got during the early years of our country. I did a little checking and found an article printed in the March 23, 1832, edition of the *Staunton Spectator*.¹ It was on the front page. While many of our ancestors could not read or write, many could, and if they saw and read this, I just bet they read it to someone else who couldn't.

And if you are wondering just how much the eclipses were talked about by our ancestors, the word "eclipse" appears in 148 editions of the *Staunton* newspaper alone from 1832 until 1900. Granted, not all the uses of that word were in reference to a celestial event and many articles were run in more than one edition, but many were articles about different events.

CELESTIAL PHENOMENA.

A late number of the London *Literary Gazette*, contains a brilliant description of the transit of the planet Mercury over the Sun's disc, on the 5th of May next. It will appear as a circular black spot on the face of the Sun for nearly seven hours.

This interesting phenomenon will be visible, from its commencement to its termination, to the whole of Europe and a part of Africa; the ingress will be visible to Asia, and the egress to America.

The eclipses and transits of Mercury, for many centuries to come, can take place only in the months of May and November.

The year 1832 will be distinguished by several remarkable celestial phenomena. The comet of Eucke will cross the earth's orbit in the spring, and the comet of Biela (the dreadful comet of 1832,) in the autumn. In July a solar eclipse, remarkable for the minuteness of the obscuration; 1-58 only of the Sun's diameter will be concealed. Several occultations of the planets will occur during the year. In September the ring of Saturn will disappear.

¹ Newspapers.com. *Staunton Spectator*, Staunton, Virginia. 23 March 1832. Page 1.

It also appears that our ancestors had a few doomsdayers in their midst as well. I have attached one more article from an 1870 edition of Staunton's the *Valley Virginian*² where the writer tries to dispel any notion of end times for the world.

Storms of the Sun.

Professor J. D. Steele has communicated the following to the Elmira Advertiser :

There appeared in the Advertiser some weeks since a paragraph, copied, I believe, from a Michigan paper, declaring that a column of magnetic lights shooting out from the sun at a prodigious speed—that it already reaches half way the earth—and that, in all probability, by another summer we shall have celestial and atmospheric phenomena beside which our roughest winter winds will seem like a 'June morning in Paradise.' In fine that when this big tongue of fire touches the earth it will likely lap up our globe at one mouthful. Very many have made inquiries of me concerning this prodigy, and, with your leave, I will try to satisfy their curiosity and perhaps allay their fears.

It has been known for some time that during a total eclipse red flames were seen to play about the edge of the moon. During the eclipse of 1868 and 1869 it was definitely settled that they were entirely disconnected from the moon, and were vast tongues of fire darting out from the sun's disc. By observation with the spectroscope, and also by means of the wonderful photographs of the sun taken by De la Rue during the eclipse of 1860, it was discovered that these fire mountains consisted mainly of burning hydrogen gas. This was precious information to secure in the midst of the excitement and novelty, and in the brief duration of a total eclipse. It did not, however, satisfy scientific men. For two years Mr. Dookyer, aided by a grant from Parliament to construct a superior instrument, had been experimenting and searching in order to detect these flames at other times than at rare occurrence of a total eclipse. On the 20th of October, 1893 he obtained a distinct image of one of the prominences, which he afterward traced entirely around the sun. Astronomers can, therefore, now study these flames at any time.

Observations now being taken show that storms rage upon the sun with a violence of which we can form no conception. Hurricanes sweep over its surface with terrific violence. Vast cyclones wrap its fires into whirlpools, at the bottom of which our earth could lie a boulder in a volcano. Huge flames dart out to enormous distances and fly over the sun with a speed greater than that of the earth itself through space. At one time a cone of fire shot out 80,000 miles, and then all died away in ten minutes' time. Besides such awful convulsions the minor display of a terrestrial volcano or earthquake sinks into insignificance.

There is nothing in these phenomena to alarm us. They have, in all probability, happened constantly for ages past. That we have now means of investigating their nature, and measuring their height and velocity, furnish no cause of anxiety. Rumors of these discoveries have crept into the papers, and exaggerated by repeated copying and sensational additions, have given rise to these mysterious and uncalled for predictions."

Worldwide from 1801 until 1900 there were 242 solar eclipses recorded. 87 were partial eclipse, 77 were annual eclipses, 63 were total eclipses, and 15 were hybrids.

I did not know what a hybrid eclipse is, nor had I ever heard of one. I have now heard of one and I am still not sure I know what one is. But I will give you the experts' answer and promise not to do this to you again, at least until the next eclipse. From Wikipedia.³

"A hybrid solar eclipse shifts between a total and annular eclipse. At certain points on the surface of Earth it appears as a total eclipse, whereas at other points it appears as annular. Hybrid eclipses are

comparatively rare. This eclipse is a hybrid event, a narrow total eclipse, and beginning and ending as an annular eclipse."

I have opined on a number of occasions that the reason for what we do concerning the cemetery is to preserve history and respect those buried there. As a matter of fact, those very words can

² Newspapers.com. *The Valley Virginian*, Staunton, Virginia. 13 January 1870. Page 1.

³ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Solar_eclipse_of_February_11,_1804

be found in the first sentence on the home page of the website. And there is another reason for doing so, and those words can be found on the home page as well. Those words are, "To provide information to those interested in the cemetery, in those buried there, their ancestors, and yes, their descendants. This is without question a work in progress, and if the website is successful in meeting the information needs of those that visit and become a part of its success, it will continue to be a work in progress for the extent of its existence."

It was the "*meeting the information needs of those that visit and become a part of its success*" from the home page that was in my opinion fulfilled yet again on April 7th, or that is certainly my hope. It was a Sunday, and when I got home from church, I found that I had an email from website members Andy and Carolyn who live in Ohio. Carolyn is a descendant of the Cook family and at least two cooks married two Hangers in the early 1800s. So that is the tie that binds Andy and Carolyn to Dutch Hollow and to a greater extent, to Cook-Teaford Cemetery just west of Staunton. They advised that they were going to try to make time to visit Dutch Hollow while close enough to it to do so. And they did! It was a great visit from my perspective, and they are great people. I shared as much as I could about Dutch Hollow and they could barely get a word in edgeways, but I do keep several years of names and dates all bottled up and every time I get the chance to pour some out for folks, I end up running the glass over if you know what I mean. I have attached a photo of Andy & Carolyn during their visit to the cemetery, and they have the distinguished honor of being the first official visitors (other than neighbors) to visit the cemetery since the sign was erected. A little more about the sign shortly, but first, enjoy the photographic moment.



The sign above looked a little bare, but the section at the bottom left and right are reserved for the Virginia Historic Landmarks plaque and the National Register of Historic Places plaque, respectively. Right in the middle will be a 15" X 18" plastic laminate sign that tells a little about the cemetery, who is buried there, and the history of the reclamation project. Zimmerman Foundries emailed on April 5th to report that both plaques have been cast and would be shipped out in a few days. The laminate sign was ordered on April 6th.

I went back a couple of days after the sign was set and stuck some day lilies in that I repurposed and mulched around the base. The daffodils we already there, planted I am sure by a descendant many, many years ago. Below is a photo of the completed sign. All I have to do yet is put another coat of sealer on the back.



To circle back to the words on the home page, in the case of Andy and Carolyn, I hope that the cemetery and the website are *"meeting the information needs of those that visit and become a part of its success"* With Carolyn being a member, she and Andy are doing their part, I have got to just make sure I am doing mine. And speaking of distinguished visitors, Andy and Carolyn make the sixth state that folks have traveled from to see Dutch Hollow Hanger Cemetery. That list consists of: West Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Ohio, Illinois, and Washington state.

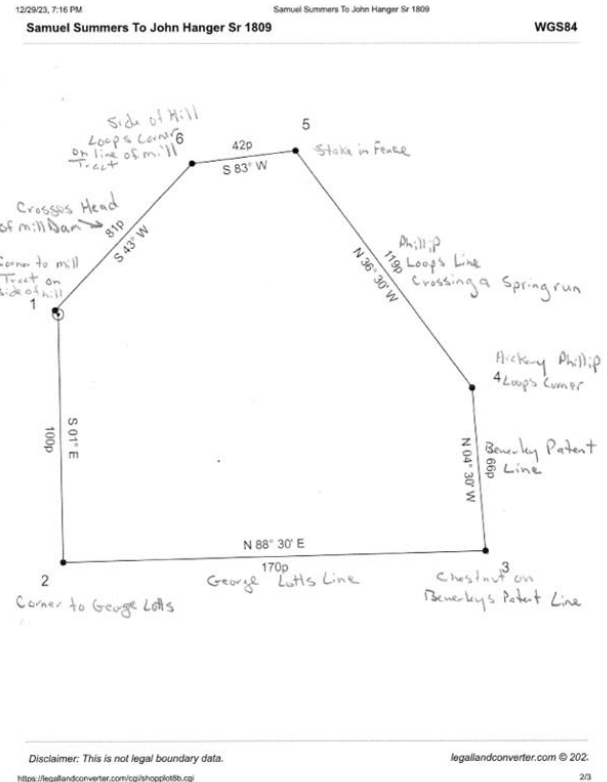
I keep harping about my belief that many of our German ancestors were here long before the 1798 burial of Maria Kaufelt Bright in Dutch Hollow Hanger Cemetery and very simply put, everyone knew or was related to everyone else. Just to give an example of why I have that belief, I offer the following deed plat⁴ dated December 3, 1778, from Joseph Alexander to Peter Black for the parcel of land known as Flat Spring. This is the land which adjoins the cemetery to the south, and the same land that would be purchased by John Hanger, Sr. in 1809. Francis Hull is a witness to the signatures, as is Robert Harris. Indulge me for a moment if you will.

We know that Franz "Francis" Hull was the father of Catharina Hull Fulwider, wife of Johannes Fulwider. (Their headstones, located in Dutch Hollow Hanger Cemetery, are the ones inscribed in German) Franz was also the father of Maria M. Hull who married Johann Frederick Hanger, Jr. He had a son Daniel who married Mary Summers. Samuel Summers and Phillip Summers both owned land in Dutch Hollow, and Samuel sold 136 acres to John Hanger, Sr. December 25, 1809. I took the liberty of drawing an unofficial plat of that purchase based on the surveyor's metes

and bounds. That parcel is to the right, I labeled the plat just as the surveyor described the lines and you will notice the one line is described as crossing the head of a mill dam. There are a number of other familiar references, George Lotts Corner, Beverley's Patent Line, and Philip Loops Line. As for the reference to Phillip Loop's line on the north side of the survey, George Hanger, son of John Hanger, Sr., married Susannah Loop October 24, 1822. Susannah's father, Simon, was the brother to Phillip Loop.

But it was the mill dam head reference that caught my eye.

Which brings me to the next question, who was this other witness on the Alexander-to-Black deed, Robert Brown? Very little is known of him but for a letter that was found just down the road from this described parcel in the Captain Callison house, built in 1849. The house, a log structure of spectacular dimensions as log structures go, was being taken down in 2018 to be rebuilt elsewhere.



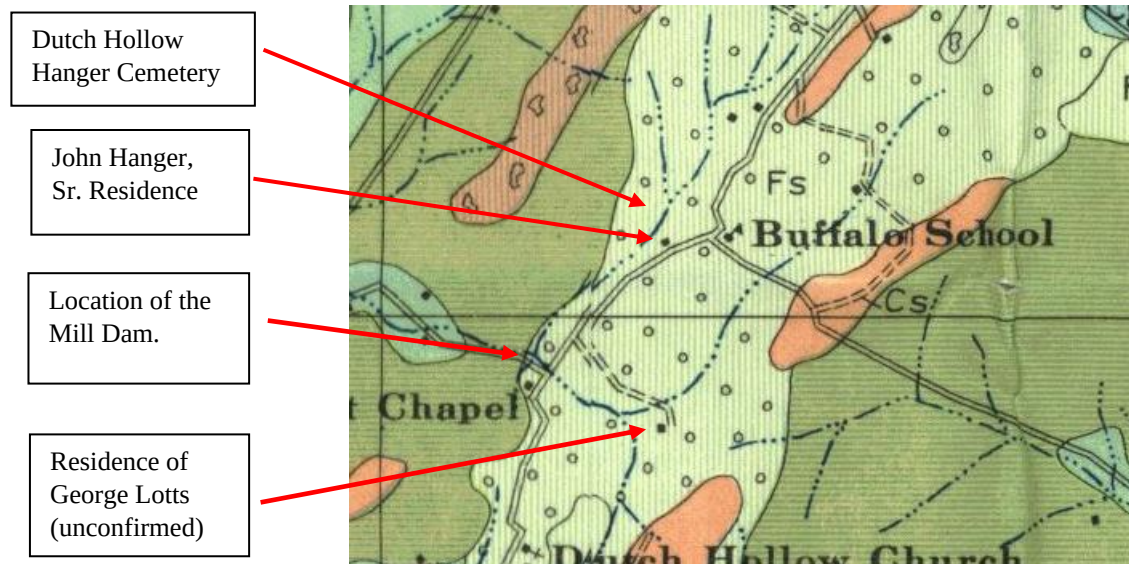
⁴ Augusta County Circuit Court, Staunton Virginia, Deed Book Will Book 1:23,24

letter was still intact and consisted of about twenty more pages. This is why we really should write things down! I don't know if Robert Harris is related to William Harris or not, but I suspect he probably is. The time between when Robert Harris witnessed the deed in 1778 and William Harris's name appearing in the 1849 letter spans 71 years. Point here is Robert Harris is witnessing a deed which touches a mill dam head. In 1849 William Harris is described as living on the creek and owning a chopping mill. The creek that flows through the property described in the deed, that forms the mill dam, and that continues by the Callison house where the letter was found is one in the same and is a tributary to Ott's Creek. To further the "everyone knew or was related to everyone else, the following excerpt from Augusta County Wills & Probate records shows William Harris, John Hanger, Jr., and his brother Jacob Hanger being bonded on an inventory of property of Daniel Lotts, deceased dated September 23, 1844. In 1825 John Hanger Sr. and wife Catherine sold Daniel twenty-five acres.

Know all men by these presents, THAT WE
William Harris, John Hanger and Jacob Hanger
 are held and firmly bound to the Commonwealth of Virginia, in the sum of *four hundred dollars*
 to the payment whereof, well and truly to be made to the Commonwealtth of Vir-
 ginia, we bind ourselves, and each of us, our and each of our heirs, executors and administrators, jointly
 and severally, firmly by these presents. Sealed with our seals, and dated this *23^d* day of *Septem-*
ber in the year one thousand eight hundred and *forty four*
 THE CONDITION OF THIS OBLIGATION IS, That, if the said *William*
Harris Executor of the last will and testament of *Samuel*
Lotts

I located the remains of a dam exactly where the plat indicates there should have been one in 1778. Actually, I have been looking at it every time I have driven past it for the last fifty years but never had anything to work from to learn more about it. It is on that same tributary of Ott's creek that I wrote about previously. As mills in Augusta County go, finding evidence of one from 1778 is pretty rare even if it was a chopping mill. Chopping mills could chop a lot of things but were primarily used to chop grain for the whiskey distilling process, at one time Augusta County's largest export. As a sidenote, the letter speaks about Robert Brown having a carding machine, sawmill, and fulling mill. The carding mill was used to detangle wool and make the fibers all align for spinning. The sawmill was for lumber of course, and the fulling mill was used for processing wool material, through cleaning it and then fulling, or thickening it. Wool felt is an example of a fulled material. Fulling generally made wool clothing much warmer.

All of this really is for naught to the reader unless you too have struggled with trying to decipher what life was like in the late 1700s & early 1800s in Dutch Hollow.



And now back to the present. On April 13th Dr. Nash brought four of her archaeology students out to do more ground penetrating radar work. Dr. Connor came out as well with her cadaver canines. Long story short. 31 unmarked grave were positively identified by the radar during which time Seamus, the noble canine that he is, discovered 10 more potential unmarked graves. The graveyard looks like someone is celebrating flag day as you can see in the photo at right. It was windy but warm, and everything went really well. Two visitors came the same day. It is always good to



see Richard and Lesley, but this time they had Richard Jr. from Lexington, North Carolina in tow. Later I was greeted by a husband and wife and after talking with them, discovered that the Mrs. is my third cousin once removed. Her ggg grandparents were David Ott Hanger and Elizabeth Cale Hanger, who were my gg grandparents, so she got to visit some of her ancestors and living kin at Dutch Hollow both on the same visit. What a great day! Looking at the photos above, do I have a bunch of work to do or what! The machine in the next photo is the one that does all the work, the ground penetrating radar.



The picture at right is the JMU team starting where they left off last year. If you notice the two flags in front of the headstones with the white survey ribbon attached, those were confirmed graves as one would expect, but they used the signatures in those images to compare



to images they encountered later where there were no headstones. It all came together well, and they put in a full day. And without boring you with the math, we are now at 111 confirmed graves, marked and unmarked, with still over half the cemetery to be radar surveyed, including the remaining 40 or so canine hits, the number of which grows every time Dr. Connor and her canines show up. There are a lot of folks buried in Dutch Hollow. This one of the larger non-church affiliated cemetery in Augusta County already. I don't know what other numbers are, and it is not really important, except to make me pause and consider just how important Dutch Hollow Hanger Cemetery probably was in its day to the social fabric of the community, albeit a graveyard.

The Augusta County Historical Society Meeting held April 28th was by all accounts a success. There was a good turnout at the cemetery and Dr. Nash and Dr. Connor both spoke to folks at the graveyard about their work there and elsewhere in the state. The weather was great, and a lot of questions were asked and hopefully answered. The couple of photos below illustrate well the great weather and turnout.

Dr. Nash did a great job explaining how the GPR works, and everyone was interested in the cadaver work and the information that Dr. Connor shared about her experiences. When folks were able to see the pink flags used for marking canine alerts and the white flags used for GPR confirmations, both nearly side by side in some locations, they became convinced of just how accurate the cadaver canines are.





Maybe the best thing about the field trip and program was the number of folks that we got to meet and get to know a little better. I have had a number of email conversations with those in attendance and one has become a member. Thanks Crystal. I look forward to working on more Fulwider history with you. I want to thank every single person who gave their time to attend either or both gatherings. I hope it was worth your while. Time will tell I suppose. I still have dozens of emails to return so if you are reading this and have not heard from me yet, I do intend to get in touch with you!

I hope to do a little better next month at getting the newsletter out by the first of the month, but it was a very busy April. I will also confess that I hurriedly edited this newsletter so forgive the typos please. But then you always do. Thanks.

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 – 133 Total

Obituaries & Death Notices – 668 (Still several hundred, thousand to go)

Lucas-Fix Private Collection 109 Total

Department of Historical Resources Augusta County Archaeological Site Surveys – 16

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 37 files. There are over 350 files contained within those 37 files. Please use them. All of that work is for your benefit. Take advantage of it!

And the genealogy quote for this month:

“Genealogy: where you confuse the dead and irritate the living.”

Until next month, Blessings & Happy Trails.

Glenn Hanger

President, Dutch Hollow Hanger Cemetery