

THE HEADSTONE

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Issue VIII

Greetings to all!

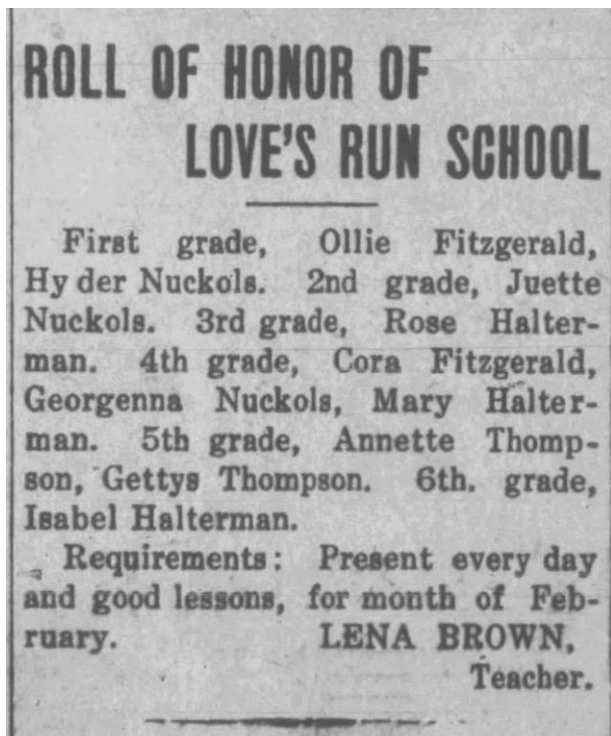
Last month I reported that hot and dry seems to be our official introduction to summer here in the Shenandoah Valley. Well, that introduction had become the “theme” for this summer up until early July. We were certainly in a drought situation, but recent rains have once again restored our crops and streams to some extent. Many areas around the valley are still in dire need of moisture. I hope this is not the case wherever you may be reading this.

One of the many things about genealogy research is that it makes you talk to folks about what they know or what they remember. As a result of those conversations word gets around that you might actually know something about something too, and those same folks and others come calling on you. The end result is usually a very productive and fruitful exchange of information even though it seems like others always help me more than I do them. Such is the case with Leonard Swortzel. Leonard and I go to the same church in Spottswood, Virginia, Old Providence, and it is there before Sunday School starts that we have time to talk about all things history, especially genealogy. That’s because Leonard is my 3rd cousin 1 X removed. And that is because David Sylvester Swortzel (1818-1874) was his great grandfather and his great grandfather’s brother, Henry Swortzel (1815-1882), was my great, great grandfather.

Some time back we got on the subject of old schoolhouses and if you read last month’s newsletter you may recall that I am still on the subject of old schoolhouses. Four Sunday’s ago, Leonard reported to me that his mother, Lena Brown Swortzel, prior to marrying his father, was a schoolteacher sometime around 1913 or so. He said that he would like to know where and when she taught school. So, I had my assignment, which was perfect timing given that I am, as I have said, currently working on the very subject of old schoolhouses. I started digging a little and found a plethora of information on his mother, all good of course. As it turns out, she taught at several of the one-room schoolhouses in the early 1900s, including McKamy Schoolhouse, the very place (now a house) that I lived with my parents until 1978. My father attended McKamy School from 1921 until 1926 when they closed it. Lena taught there the 1910-1911 school year and maybe other years that I have not found yet. So, I printed some of what I found and gave it to Leonard three Sundays ago. He was very pleased to finally know some of the places she taught. Below is a sampling of some of what he got. The article on the left is from 1912¹ and as it turns out, Love’s Run School was only a stone’s throw from where Leonard lives now, near a spot in the road in Augusta County near Greenville called Avis. The 1910 article on the right² is the year Lena taught at McKemy schoolhouse, my old home. She would have been twenty years old then.

¹ Newspapers.com. Staunton Daily Leader, Staunton, Virginia. 2 March 1912. Page 4.

² Newspapers.com. The Daily News Leader, Staunton, Virginia. 17 May 1910. Page 1



Now back to that “exchange of information” that I said always seems to come from genealogy conversations. Two Sundays ago, Leonard was waiting at the church door when I got there. In his hand he had a history booklet printed in 1975 from St. John’s Reformed United Church of Christ³, formally St. Johns German Reformed Church. He handed it to me and asked if I had one, I replied, “no.” He replied, “well you do now, I had two copies.” I opened the booklet and discovered that he had also included a photograph of his grandparents, William Sylvester and Mary *Fauver* Swortzel, for me! Now that is genealogy at its finest in my opinion. Thank you, Leonard. I have included a copy of the booklet cover and the photo of William and Mary Swortzel below.



³ St. John’s Reformed United Church of Christ Historical Committee. A Brief History, St. John’s Reformed, United Church of Christ Founded 1780. 1975. Cover Page & page 36.

ST. JOHN'S REFORMED
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST



Founded 1780

MIDDLEBROOK, VIRGINIA



William Sylvester Swartzel
Mary M. Favour Swartzel

I have also included a 1912 photo of St. John's Church below. I had not seen this particular photo before. The current church was rebuilt after it burned some thirty-plus years ago and it looks considerably different now.

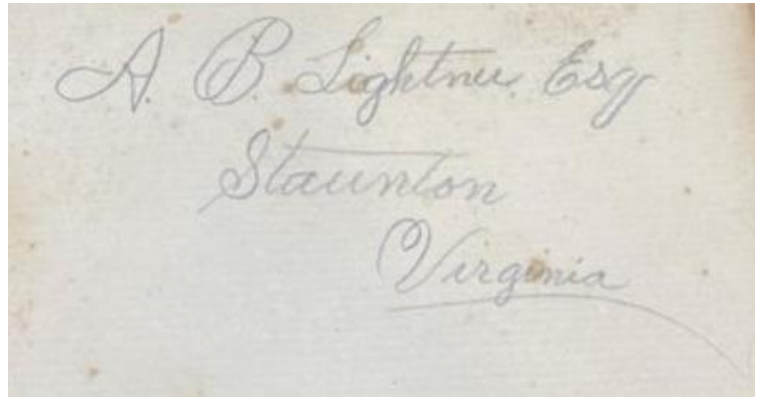
So much can be learned from the St. John's German Reformed Church Register regarding those buried at Dutch Hollow and others in the Dutch Hollow area. Peggy Shomo Joyner put the register together in book form and it was published in 1995 as *St. John's Church Register German Reformed And Lutheran Augusta County, Virginia (1748) 1786-1872*. For a number of dates and names it is the only known source available to researchers.



1912 view of St. John's Church, built 1850.
"Saddle house" in right background.

Because of my personal work schedule I have not gotten anything of mention accomplished at the graveyard this summer except weedeating and mowing. My list of things to do are much longer than the days but hopefully the work will get done. The lane work will hopefully come later this fall. The neighbor/landowner has moved his horse pasture fence which will give visitors all the room they need to park and turn around once the new gravel goes down. We are Blessed to have Jeff and his wife, Karen, as neighbors, members, and supporters. Please thank them if you happen to see them while you are visiting the cemetery.

Adding to what was written earlier in the newsletter about conversing with others on history and genalogy, I have found that the more research one does, the greater the chances he or she will recognize something of importance later if they run across it. As an example of this, I was looking through the Green Valley Auctions website a few days back and noticed two books for sale. One was *Blood of Our Blood*, the publication by Francis Clemmer which is listed in the cemetery website store. The other was *History of Augusta County* by J. Lewis Peyton and was a first edition, printed in 1882. It had a broken spine but was otherwise in decent condition. It was not really anything I was interested in bidding on, but then I looked at the additional photographs of the item on the auction website. The book had the inscription shown here on the inside front cover. So many books printed in the 19th and early 20th centuries were personalized with the owners name, but this name



caught my attention. Why? Because I had seen it before while doing research but at the time I could not remember where. Well, I did what most folks would do and started doing a little digging. It was due to A. B. Lightner's public service during the mid and late 1800s that I remembered seeing the name from time to time and finally recalled that it was while doing courthouse and newspaper research. Alexander Brownlee Lightner was born in 1824 and died September 7, 1891. He was laid to rest in Thornrose Cemetery in Staunton, Virginia. I have attached his obituary⁴ at left for your reading. Not a big discovery in the scheme of things, but I am glad it rattled my memory enough to look further. And yes, I have entered a bid on it which closes August 1st around 8:00 pm. We will see if I get it.

Death of Hon. A. B. Lightner.

Hon. A. B. Lightner, whose illness we noticed in former issues, died at his residence near West View, of typhoid fever, at 5 o'clock Sunday morning, aged 67 years. The funeral services were performed by Rev. J. E. Booker, Pastor of Hebron Church, at the residence of the deceased, Monday morning, after which the remains were brought to this city and interred in Thornrose cemetery at 2 o'clock, p. m. He had been for many years a prominent man in this county and held official positions—those of constable, deputy sheriff, sheriff, justice of the peace, and for several terms a member of the House of Delegates. He was an active, shrewd, and energetic business man and accumulated considerable property. He leaves a widow by a second marriage and seven children of both marriages as follows:—

Mrs. David B. O'Rourke and Geo. S. Lightner, this city; W. T., and John near Churchville; Charles A., near West View; Mrs. M. W. Bucher near Churchville, and James of Basic City.

W. T. Lightner is a son by the first marriage to Miss Gardner, and the others are the children by the second marriage to Miss Wayland.

When needing table linens, towels, napkins, and want them cheap, call at the Bee-Hive Store.

Drawing to a close, I realize that this newsletter has been brief, actually the shortest one that has been written thus far, but I consider it an accomplishment just to be able to communicate with you, the membership, given my current personal schedule. Maybe a more substantive newsletter next month. That's my goal.

Website Updates: Members Section

⁴ Newspapers.com. Staunton Spectator, Staunton, Virginia. 9 September 1891. Page 3.

In The Library / Archives Section

Ship Passenger Lists 1732-1754 - 15 Total

Unpublished Documents - 9 Total

Published Documents - 11 Total

Life in Dutch Hollow - 144 Total

Obituaries & Death Notices - 678 (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

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:

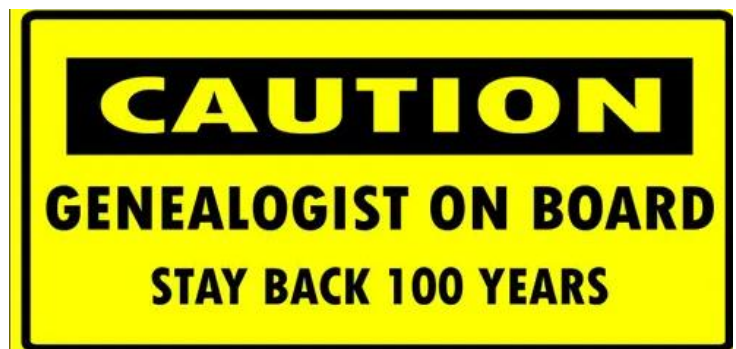
Elijah Jacob Hanger Private Collection (Approximately 450 files to be uploaded as time permits)

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 39 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!

Looking for just one more bumper sticker?
How about this one?



Until next month, Blessings & Happy Trails.

Glenn Hanger

President, Dutch Hollow Hanger Cemetery