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New London The Forgotten

By Claude A. Thompson

No section of Virginia contributed more to the cause of freedom than the Piedmont region of Virginia, particularly that section comprising Bedford and Campbell counties. Action of its people for liberty centered in and around New London the seat of the first courthouse for Bedford County. Historians have failed miserably, however, to record the part so loyally taken by the people of Bedford and Campbell Counties to make this the great nation it is today. Those Piedmonters did much to make it possible for the framers of the Constitution of the United States of America one hundred and fifty-two years ago, on September 17, 1787, to declare to the world their creed contained in the Preamble to that great instrument:

“We the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general Welfare and secure the Blessing of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.”

The people of the Piedmont section of Virginia were as much a part of “we the people” as those of any other part of the thirteen colonies. They contributed their share of men, arms, and food in order that those who wrote the preamble and the constitution could do so in safety.

To know something about “we the People of Bedford and Campbell counties”, we should first bear in mind that they were not “We, the wealthy, the powerful, the ruling class, the aristocrate.” They were democrats at heart who thought in terms of “Establish Justice”, “Domestic Tranquility”, “Common Defense”, “General Welfare”, and, above all, “Securing the Blessings of Liberty for themselves and their POSTERITY”. They well knew they themselves were soon to be passing on their way, yet unselfishly, they thought of their “posterity”. They had won their liberty on the battlefield, and had made their homes and farms secure from the tyranny of the agents of George III. These blessings came to them only by their valor, their hard work, and their self-denial. Such hard won blessings were dear to them. They knew what law and order meant to them and were determined that respect for the rights of man should never again be trodded upon on this soil when they declared openly and defiantly “to secure the blessings for our posterity.” The Piedmonters have never taken “liberty” to mean “license”. They respect law and order. For them it means the liberty to worship God according to the

dictates of their conscience, to be free from legislation in which they had no part, and to be untrammelled by a state religion. Liberty to be safe and secure in their homes, in their property and possessions. Life for them was a correlative thing. They understood they owed certain duties to others and that others owed certain duties to them, for they emphasized such understanding when they used the words, “Insure domestic tranquility.”

To understand who these people were who lived in Bedford and Campbell counties we should first know something of their county origin, the boundaries thereof, and their local government.

In 4 Henning’s Statutes of Virginia, page 366, there is found the Act of the General Assembly of the House of Burgesses (Williamsburg) in the 5th and 6th years of the reign of George II (May 1732), creating the county of Lunenburg, from which county Bedford was formed (1754).

The Act reads,

“An Act for dividing every of the counties of Richmond, King George, and Prince William.

- I. Whereas, by reason of the great length of the parishes of North-Farnham, Sittenburn, Hanover, and Hamilton, in the counties of Richmond, King George and Prince William, the inhabitants of those parishes do lie under divers inconveniences:
- II. Be it enacted, by the Lieutenant Governor, Counsel, and Burgess, of this present General Assembly, and it is hereby enacted, by the authority of the same, That from and after the first day of November, the aforesaid county of Richmond, be divided into two distinct parishes; by Totaskey, and the Cross Creek thereof, to Colonel John Tayloe’s mill, and up that mill branch to the Forest-Quarter road, and by that road till it intersects with Westmoreland County, And that all that part of the said county of Richmond, which lies below the said bounds, shall, forever thereafter retain, and be called, and known, by the name of North-Farnham: And all that other part of the said county; which lies above those bounds, shall thereafter be called and know by the name of Lunenburg****”.

Twenty-one years later (November 1753) in the General Assembly of the House of Burgesses (7 Henning’s Statutes of Virginia p. 381, Chapter XVI, 27th George II), an Act was passed dividing the county of Lunenburg and the parish of Cumberland in said county. The Act reads.

“An Act for dividing the County of Lunenburg, and parish of Cumberland”.

- I. Whereas many inconveniences attend the inhabitants of the county of Lunenburg, by reason of the extent thereof, and the said inhabitants have petitioned this General Assembly that the said county may be divided:
- II. Be it therefore enacted, by the Lieutenant Governor, Council, and Burgesses of this present General Assembly, and it is hereby enacted by the authority of the same, That from and immediately after the tenth day of May next ensuing, the said county of Lunenburg be divided, from the mouth of Falling-river, up the said river to the fork, running by John Beard's to the head, thence by a line to be run from the head thereof north, twenty degrees east, to the line dividing said county from the county of Albemarle; and all that part of the said county of Lunenburg, which lies on the upper side of the said river, and line to be run as aforesaid, shall be one distinct county, and called known by the name of Bedford; and that all the other part of said county of Lunenburg, shall be one other distinct county, and retain the name of Lunenburg.
- III. And for the administration of justice in the said county of Bedford, after the same shall take place, Be it enacted by the authority aforesaid, That after the tenth day of May, a court for said county of Bedford, be constantly held by the justices thereof, upon the fourth Monday in every month, in such manner as by the laws of this colony is provided, and shall be by their commission directed.
- IV. (This section provides for the sheriff to collect debts, serve process etc. in Bedford)
- V. (Provides that Lunenburg shall retain jurisdiction of all suits begun before the creation of Bedford).
- VI. (John Payne and Matthew Talbot, the elder, of Bedford County and Peter Fontaine, the younger, and Lyddal Bacon, of Lunenburg County, were appointed to demand and receive all debts due the counties and to pro-rate it for the benefit of each county).
- VII. (Provides that Cumberland parish be divided, and the part in Bedford County to be known as Russell parish).
- VIII. (Provides that the freeholders and housekeepers in Bedford County are to meet one month before July 10, 1756 and elect 12 vestrymen who must take an oath in court for the performance of their duties).

Twenty-eight years later, November 5, 1781, after the Revolution was about to come to a close, after General William Campbell had Valiantly led the Piedmonters to victory against General Ferguson at Kings Mountain, North Carolina, the General Assembly, meeting at Richmond, Virginia, passed an "Act for dividing the county of Bedford." 10 Henning's Virginia Statutes, p. 447, Chapter VII, 6th year of the Commonwealth. The Act reads,

- I. Be it enacted by the General Assembly, That from and after the first day of February next, the county of Bedford shall be divided into two distinct counties, by a line to begin at the mouth of Judy's creek on James river, thence to Thompson's mill on Buffalo creek, thence to the mouth of Back creek on Goose creek, thence the same course continued to Staunton river, and that part of said county lying east of the said line, shall be called and known by the name of Campbell; and all the residue of said county shall retain the name of Bedford. That a court for the said county of Campbell shall be held by the justices thereof on the first Thursday in every month after the said division shall take place, in such manner as is provided by law for other counties, and shall be by their commission directed.
- II. And be it further enacted, that the justices to be named in the commission of the peace for the said county of Campbell shall meet at the house of Micajah Terrill, in the said county, upon the first court day after the said division shall take place, and having taken the oaths prescribed by law, and administered the oath of office to, and taken bond of the sheriff according to law, proceed to appoint and qualify a clerk, and fix upon a place for holding courts in said county, at or as near the center thereof as the situation and convenience will admit of; and thenceforth the said court shall proceed to erect the necessary public buildings at such place; and until such buildings be completed, to appoint any place for holding courts as they shall think fit. Provided always, That the appointment of a place for holding court, and of a clerk, shall not be made unless a majority of the justices of the said county be present. When such majority shall have been prevented from attending by bad weather, or their being at the time out of the county, in such cases, the appointment shall be postponed until some court day when a majority shall be present. That the governor, with advice of the council, shall appoint a person to be the first sheriff of the said county, who shall continue in office during the term, and upon the same conditions as is by law appointed for other sheriffs.
- III. Provided always, and be it further enacted, That it shall be lawful for the Sheriff of said county of Bedford, to collect and make distress for any public dues or officers fees which shall remain unpaid by the inhabitants thereof at the time such division shall take place, and shall also be accountable for the same in like manner as if this act had not been made; and that the court of the said county of Bedford shall have jurisdiction of all actions and suits in law or equity, which shall be depending before them at the time of the said division, and shall try and determine the same, and issue process and award execution thereon.

IV. And whereas by the division of the said county, the court-house in the county of Bedford will be inconveniently situated; be it therefore enacted, That the justices thereof shall hold their first court at the home of David Wright, and the said justices, or a majority of them, shall have power to fix on a place in the said county, as near the center thereof as the situation and convenience will admit of, for building a courthouse and prison, and until such buildings are completed, to hold courts at such place in the said county as they shall think proper. That in all elections of a senator, the said county of Campbell shall be of the same district with the county of Bedford.”

Campbell County was named for General William Campbell, a second cousin of Colonel Arthur Campbell, who was adjutant of the state militia in Western Virginia including Virginia’s largest county, Kentucky. Francis Preston Campbell wrote the biography of his illustrious father, General William Campbell, the hero of the Battle of King’s Mountain, North Carolina. He was, after a great debate in the Congress of the United States, declared the hero in that battle against General Ferguson, the British general who was killed there. Sevier of Tennessee and Shelby of North Carolina having taken part in that engagement contested Campbell’s right to the glory. General Campbell met the other generals near the old courthouse in Surry County, North Carolina and was selected to lead all the troops southward to meet Ferguson. General Campbell married Elizabeth, sister of the immortal Patrick Henry. He was the son of Captain Charles and Mary Buchanan Campbell. Captain Charles was the son of Patrick and Delilah Thompson Campbell the latter being the daughter of Captain William Thompson and _____Patton. Margaret, a sister of the General, married Colonel Arthur Campbell, the latter being the son of David Campbell brother of Patrick Campbell, the Grandfather of General William Campbell.

Campbell county’s poet, Frederick G. Speece, who was reared near New London, immortalized his county in 1829 with the following poem:

“Land of my birth! To thee belong
The bard, the subject, and the song:
Fair Campbell, tho’ thy verdant vales
Resound no shepherd’s fabled tales,
For thee no minstrel’s harp be strung,
And all thy beauties bloom unsung,
Yet thine are charms that might inspire
The pen, the pencil and lyre.

Mute is the chord whose tones should flow
In sprightly mirth or melting woe,
Silent the voice whose polished lays

Should vindicate the poets bays
Yet are the sons and daughters graced
With genius, learning wit and taste:
Plenty and health and hope abound
And peace and gladness laugh around.”

A few years after Bedford County was created New London was selected as the county seat. The General Assembly recognized it as a town and the County seat of Bedford, and in so doing provided (November 1761, 7 Henning’s Virginia Statutes, p. 474) certain building restrictions, among the most important were those prohibiting wooden chimneys. The court for Bedford county met on March 20, 1757, present John Phelps, William Callaway, Zachariah Isabelle, William Mead, Robert Ewing and Matthew Talbot as the presiding justice, and received and acknowledged and ordered recorded William Callaway’s deed to the trustees of Bedford County of 100 acres of land for “the building up and promoting the town of New London.” The court ordered that the trustees for the county lay out the land belonging to the county in lots of one-half acre each as long as wide to be sold for 101 pounds 8 shillings, with the provision that the purchase build a house framed twenty by sixteen within one year after purchasing same and a brick or stone chimney within four years, otherwise the lots to revert to the county. It was also provided in the order of the court “***that the subscribers for the said lotts after being numbered draw for their lotts at the May court and that the said town be called by the name of New London.”

Lot No. 10 was reserved for the courthouse and prison. It may be located today (1940) by a sunken place in the section of land lying in the southeast intersection of the present road, leading from the south into the Williamsburg-New London road, or opposite the home of Mr. William D. Abbott in the southwest intersection of the roads, whose home stood at the time of the old courthouse days, and the lot on which it stands was first purchased by William Stead from the county. The road from the south crossed the main road and continued to the north. The home of Dr. Nick Kabler now stands on the north side of the main road about in the center of where this old road from the south. His descendants still live on this site. Col. Richard Callaway bought lot 30 north of and adjoining the Thompson property. Colonel John Smith owned lot No. 11 on the main road east of the courthouse. Next came Henry Darnald, owner of lot No. 12, adjoining Col. Smith, then Joshua Early, owner of lot No. 20. The plat calls for a street across the main road east of Early’s lot. On the east side of that street Matthew Talbot, the first presiding chief justice, owned lot No. 21. Others who owned lots were: Col. Wm. Callaway, Lot No. 1; James Callaway, No. 2; Richard Doggett, Nos. 3 and 16; Alexander Sawyer, Nos. 13, 36, and 37; William Bumpass, No. 14; John Thompson, No. 10; 40 acres; William Inglis, Nos. 17 and 39; William Christian, No. 23; Ambrose Bramblatt, No. 28; Thomas Walker, No’s. 26 and 27; Alexander Boreland, No. 32; Matthew

Talbot, No. 29; Patrick Hennies, No. 31; John Callaway, No 35; John Payne, No. 4; William Stead, No. 6; Nathaniel Geist, No's 8 and 42 the latter containing 8 acres. James Noil (probably Noel) No. 18 and 19; James Nail (probably Noel) No. 44, 8 acres, adjoining lots 18 and 19 lying next to and south of the courthouse. Howard and Mead, merchants, owned Lot. No. 41, 11 acres; Lot 43, 8 acres; Lot 45, 5 acres. The foregoing enumerated list of the owners of lots in the town is not given so much to show the property owned but to show who were some of New London's first settlers.

The road leading to the south from New London continued on the Staunton River, crossing that stream at Pocket Ford. It crossed the present Altavista - Leesville road at Mount Herman near Lynch's station. It was known as the "Pocket Ford Road". Troops moving south to the aid of General Nathaniel Green, as well as many people migrating to the Carolinas and Tennessee traveled over that old road.

Settlers who were pushing southward and westward replenished their stocks at New London, and sought protection from the Indians at that place. New London is on a plateau and had military advantages because of its elevation. The Militia located there gave protection not only to its inhabitants but, to the traveler, long before the Revolution.

When we consider the important part New London played in the early development of the Piedmont region and in the Revolution we shudder to think that its name was removed from the maps and replaced with the name of Bedford Springs solely because an adventurer wished to establish a summer resort hotel and needed the name to attract patrons. Those who had its name changed have long since passed on to their reward, and it remains for "posterity" to restore the fair name of New London.

Because of the importance of New London the General Assembly in 1787 established a general court (District Court) there for the counties of Bedford, Campbell, Franklin, Pittsylvania and Henry, and in order that those charged with a felony should not be forced at great expense to travel to the general court Richmond with their witnesses. This court (District Court) also had civil jurisdiction in matters beyond the jurisdiction of the justices' courts in the enumerated counties. After Campbell County was formed in 1782 the land upon which the old Bedford county courthouse stood (Lot No. 10, New London) reverted together with the old courthouse to James and John Callaway, sons of William Callaway, who, at their own expense, repaired the old courthouse (1787), which had been out of use for 5 years, for use as the District Courthouse. In that same old courthouse Patrick Henry and William Cowan, both good lawyers- Cowan noted for his legal acumen and Henry for his oratorical abilities- opposed each other in the celebrated case of John Hook vs. Venable, an army commissary. Hook the plaintiff was a Scotsman and a merchant of great wealth in Bedford County. He evidently

came to Bedford about 1772. The marriage records of that county show that he married Bett, (Betty?) daughter of John Smith, on February 29, 1772. James Donald was surety on his marriage bond.

Let J. L. Blake, a youth of 12 years of age and author of “The American Revolution and History”, published by Derby & Jackson, 119 Nassau Street, New York, 1857, (not copyrighted) tell about the celebrated Hook case. He says:

“The versatility of talent of which Patrick Henry, the American orator and patriot, was distinguished, was happily illustrated in a trial which took place soon after the war of independence. During the distress of the republican army, consequent on the invasion of Cornwallis and Phillips, in 1781, Mr. Venable, an army commissary, took two steers for the use of the troops, from Mr. Hook, a Scotsman, and a man of wealth who was suspected of being unfriendly to the American cause. The act had not been strictly legal and on the establishment of peace, Hook, under the advice of Cowan, a gentleman of some distinction in the law, thought proper to bring an action of trespass against Mr. Venable, in the District Court at New London.

Mr. Henry appeared for the defendant; and is said to have conducted himself in a manner much to the enjoyment of his hearers, the unfortunate Hook always excepted. After Mr. Henry became animated in the cause, he appeared to have complete control over the passions of his audience; at one time he excited their indignation against Hook – vengeance was visible in every countenance; again, when he chose to relax and ridicule him, the whole audience was in a roar of laughter. He painted the distress of the American army, exposed, almost naked, to the rigor of a winter’s sky; and marking the frozen ground over which they marched, with the blood of their unshod feet.

“Where was the man”, he said, “ who had an American heart in his bosom who would not have thrown open his field, his barns, his cellars, the doors of his home, the portals of his breast, to have received with open arms the meanest soldier in that little bank of famished patriots? Where is that man? - There he stands; but whether the heart of an American beats in his bosom, you, gentlemen, are to judge.”

He then carried the jury, by the power of his imagination, to the plains around York, the surrender of which followed shortly after the act complained of. He depicted the surrender in the most glowing and noble colors of his eloquence; the audience saw before their eyes the humiliation and dejection of the British, as they marched out of their trenches; they saw the triumph which lighted up every patriot’s face; they heard the shouts of victory; the cry of Washington and liberty, as it rang and echoed through the American ranks and was reverberated from the hills and shores of the

neighboring river; “but hark’! continued Henry, “what notes of discord are those which disturb the general joy, and silence the acclamations of victory? They are the notes of John Hook, hoarsely bawling through the American camp, Beef! beef! beef!”

The court was convulsed with laughter, - when Hook, turning to the clerk, said, “Never mind you mon; wait till Billy Cowan gets up, and he’ll show him the law.” But Mr. Cowan was so completely overwhelmed by the torrent which bore upon his client, that when he rose to reply to Mr. Henry, he was scarcely able to make an intelligible or audible remark. The cause was decided almost by acclamation. The jury retired for form’s sake, and instantly returned a verdict for the defendant”.

In 3 Calendar of Virginia State Papers, p 604 is found this reference to John Hook.

“New London, Va., August 10, 1784, John Hook to the Governor of Virginia, requesting the seal of the Commonwealth attested upon a power of attorney he proposed to send to England, in order to collect a bond of 2000 pounds sterling, left by Jeffrey Gresley, late of King William County. This bond having been bequeathed to him by his mother Lady Gertrude Gresley of Leitchfield, England, payable to him or to his heirs at her decease.”

William Cowan was from Halifax County and practiced law in that and other adjoining counties. Notwithstanding Henry got the best of him in the famous beef speech at New London they were good friends. They had served together on the board of trustees of Hampden-Sidney College, Hampden-Sidney Virginia near Farmville, which college was established in 1775 and chartered in 1782, and for many years had as one of its distinguished professors Conrad Speece of New London, who taught there during the time Henry and Cowan were trustees of that school. Speece was not only a teacher at Hamden-Sidney, but he taught at Washington College (now Washington and Lee) and is buried at Staunton, Va. He was also a minister of the gospel in the Baptist and Presbyterian Churches in Campbell and other counties in the state. He never married.

The citizen of Campbell is ever turning his eye toward the lowlands of Virginia when there is mention of Colonial and Revolutionary times, yet within the limits of his own county much transpired during both eras to make him proud that his ancestors did so much for American independence and the progress of civilization. The name of New London was frequently mentioned in the Colonial House of Burgesses, the Continental Congress, and in the halls of the Congress of the United States. Many important personages were frequently mentioned in the Colonial House of Burgesses, the Continental Congress and in the halls of Congress of the United States. Many important personages were frequent visitors in the homes and taverns

at old New London before, during and after the war of independence. Many British prisoners of war were quartered at New London. Muskets, sabers and other implements of war were manufactured at New London for use by the American patriots. A laboratory for the making of gun powder was one of New London's landmarks. Colonel Charles Lynch of Campbell was a familiar person on the streets of New London. He had charge of the lead mines at Wytheville and was ever busy, with his many other duties, in mining the lead and zinc ore, extracting the lead and forwarding it to New London to be made into bullets for use by the armies of Washington and Green and the Militia. Lead was not only important as a war material but was used to hold the panes of glass, then made only in England, in place in the homes of these people. No doubt Colonel Charles Lynch had charge of the soldiers who were ordered to visit the homes of the people throughout the Piedmont section and remove the lead from the windows to be used by the army in waging the war of independence.

Halifax County was formed from Lunenburg County two years before Bedford. Pittsylvania County was formed from Halifax thirteen years after Bedford. Eleven years after Lunenburg gave Bedford produced Charlotte, the beloved aunt of Campbell. Albemarle was formed in 1744, ten years before Bedford. Amherst County was formed from Albemarle in 1761, seven years after the formation of Bedford and twenty one years before the formation of Campbell.

The early maps of Virginia show the old road from Williamsburg to the wilderness of western Virginia. New London is one of the few places shown on these old maps. Lynchburg was yet to come into existence. There was a cross road in New London. The people from the northern part of the state came to New London over that old road, making their way to the south or west. Many were bound for Kentucky, then Virginia's largest county. Considering that Kentucky, in 1787 the year the Constitution was framed – had a population of 50,000 of whom one-fifth were slaves, we may imagine how important New London was to the pioneer. There he replenished his larder, sought the militia for protection on his westward journey.

There is little reason to doubt that Daniel Boone frequently passed through and visited at New London with the Callaways' and Col. Charles Lynch at Wytheville. While it may be said that Daniel Boone blazed his own trail and made his own roads yet it is reasonable to suppose that he followed the old trail from Kentucky through New London on to Richmond.

The student recalls the capture of Daniel Boone's daughter and the two daughters of a Callaway by the Indians in Kentucky and how the girls tore off strips of their dresses and dropped them along the trail in order that their parents might come to their rescue. No doubt these Callaway girls were born in New London.

New London was not unknown to George Rogers Clark, that indomitable and courageous little redheaded warrior son of Anne Clark of Albemarle County, who with his little band of one hundred and fifty men set out on May 12, 1778 to wage a war against the British and Indians in the West. No doubt some of that little band of 150 patriots came from Bedford. Clark with his resourcefulness, small means and rare diplomacy with the Indians fought the good fight in the West, without hope of assistance, and held back the British, the Tomahawk and scalping knife from the Eastern army. In 1777 Clark met with Patrick Henry, Thomas Jefferson, George Wythe, and George Mason and formulated the plans for his expedition. With his band, he marched through the wilderness to Pittsburg (Fort Pitt) and from there they floated down the Ohio to a Somt (Summit?) near and made their way to Fort Harrod, and then struck off again in the wilderness, and on July 4, 1778 captured Kaskaskia on the Mississippi, and by December of that year he had captured Fort Vincennes on the Wabash River. It is clear that had Clark not captured these forts and driven out the British in the country east of the Mississippi before the surrender of Cornwallis and the close of the war of independence the boundry of the United States may well have been established along the eastern and southern boundry of the Ohio River when a treaty was made with the British.

The following message from Governor Patrick Henry to the Honorable Speaker of the House of Delegates of Virginia on May 18, 1779, shows some interesting facts concerning Clark's expedition and the imprisonment of the British, captured by Clark and his little band, at New London:

“I have enclosed a letter for the perusal of the assembly, from Col. Clark at the Illinois. This letter among other things inform me of an expedition which he had planned and was determined to execute, in order to recover Fort St. Vincent, which had been formerly taken from the British Troops, and garrisoned by those under the Colonel's command. This enterprise has succeeded to our utmost wishes, for the garrison commanded by Henry Hamilton, Lieutenant Governor of Detroit and consisting of British Regulars and a number of volunteers were made prisoners of war. Col. Clark has sent the Governor with several officers and privates under proper guard, who have by this time arrived at New London, in the County of Bedford. Proper measures will be adopted by the executives, for their confinement and security. Unfortunately, the letters from Col. Clark containing no doubt particular accounts of this affair were in the possession of an express, who was murdered by a party of Indians on his way through Kentucky to this place, as I am informed were destroyed. As the facts which I have mentioned, are sufficiently authenticated, I thought it material that they should be communicated to the Assembly. I have the Honor to be, Sir, Yr. Most Obedient Servant.” (See 1 Cal. Va. State Papers 319).

Prisoners of war were often marched through New London, some were quartered there, and others were moved on the other prison camps. In a letter from Edmund Hyrne, dated New London, Va. February 14, 1781, addressed to Governor Thomas Jefferson; he says that he was in charge of a number of prisoners captured by General Green that he was marching them through Henry and Bedford Counties to Staunton; that some of them escaped and were concealed in the county. He request the Governor to make arrangements to relieve him of his prisoners. (See 1 Cal. Va. State Papers 514)

New London was an important militia post for protection of the people from the Indians long before the war of independence. Its strategic location, on a plateau, made it the logical place for the manufacture and storing of arms, and gathering of people for protection against the Indian.

In 1757 there were large bands of marauding Cherokees and Catawbas constantly robbing, assaulting and annoying the settlers, and sometimes murdering them and carrying off women and children. Bedford citizens petitioned to be allowed to kill them (North Carolina Historical Review, Vol. 2 p 619. The pioneer settlers were prohibited from shooting or killing the Indian for fear that it would start an uprising among them.

Matthew Talbot, Presiding Justice of Bedford and Clement Read, presiding Justice of Halifax held a general court at Mayes Ferry (now Booker's Ferry) in Halifax County and took the testimony of many people, among whom were Henry Snow, Richard Thompson, John Wheeler, William Vardeman Sr., and his son of the same name, Robert Jones, Jr., Wm. Morgan, Pinkentham Hawkins, Thomas Overstreet, George Thomas, George Watts, Charles Bright, Samuel Brown and John Craig. One part of Captain Haristone's company of Bedford testified that "they went in search of them" and found them within a few miles of Bedford Court House. John Hall, Sr. was killed in one of the skirmishes. Others who testified were John Wallocks, Phillip Preston, Patrick Johnson, George Adams, Robert Pepper, John Allcorn and James Moore.

Among the old records extant there may be found today, many interesting and enlightening letters and papers from officers and men stationed in and around old New London.

On May 13, 1781 Captain Nathan Reid at New London writes to a fellow officer in Richmond:

"Dear Col.. Since my arrival at this place I have had a very easy time of it, not more than seven soldiers has been delivered to me, and two of them deserted. They tell me that Arnold and his crew burnt all the Hutts at Chesterfield Courthouse, and I am afraid has took my portmantem and

cloaths, which I left at Mr. Balls. If they are gone I wish the first man that puts any of them on may break his neck. I wish I know'd whether the enemy was at Mr. Ball's or not. Captain Lovely went through this town to the Sweet Springs. He was very unwell at the time. I expect he is dead as I have heard nothing of him since he went away." (2 Cal. Va. State Papers 93).

June 13, 1781 Major John Pryor, Commissioner General of Military Stores, while at Charlottesville, writes Colonel Davies at Richmond, and refers to a large number of riflemen to join the Marquis (Lafayette), the necessity for increase of supply of "loose ammunition", the fact of having sent out express 40 miles to the southwest mountains to take lead from windows, the stoppage of laboratories "that at Bedford is of the first importance, as the operations of General Greene entirely depend upon its supplies", and that since the arrest of Captain Irish it (laboratory at New London) had been discontinued, but says that he has sent Captain Gear to New London to undertake its operation. He mentions the importance of sending to the lead mines at Wytheville for lead. He refers to "Seven Islands" as having been destroyed by the enemy on "Saturday Last". Says he has sent 20 men to Buckingham for find powder if any is left. Says the enemy is then at Elk Island with some of their light troops about Bird Ordy (sp?) Informs the Colonel the American troops lay at Mr. Allegries. "I think we shall touch them up tomorrow. Pray dispatch the powder and lead." (2 Cal. VSP. 156).

June 17, 1781. Major John Pryor had arrived at New London to establish the laboratory. Thomas Smith, District Commissary of Military Stores at New London writes to Colonel Davis at Staunton, informing him of the arrival of Major Pryor and asks that Col. Davies supply tin, cartridge paper and other military stores from Staunton. (2 Cal. VSP. 166).

July 1, 1781, Thomas Smith at New London writes Colonel Davies at Staunton, expressing great concern at the situation of "our public matters", and regrets that the Continental and State affairs have blended at to involve both in common difficulties, but that he has, however, removed all stores from Prince Edward Courthouse. (2 Cal. VSP. 195)

July 15, 1781 we find Major John Pryor back at Charlottesville writing to Colonel William Davies at Richmond, thanking Colonel Davies for approval of his conduct. He laments the endeavors of the Quarter Master not crowned with success. Says he has followed the instructions of Baron de Steuben, mentions artificers idle for want of material., "men threatening to leave", requests that Captain Bohannon come for these men; is informed by Mr. David Ross the enemy is at Amelia Courthouse. Says that he has sent officer to New London to have the "whole of the military stores removed over the Ridge from that place." He scores Major Claiborne for not furnishing wagons to remove stores from Charlottesville. Marquis (Lafayette) orders

him to send 300 stand of arms to General Lawson. He says further: "I am sick of the whole world." (2 Cal. VSP. 221).

Colonel William Davies writes Colonel William Preston in July 1781 and refers to the posts at New London and Staunton as a place for imprisonment of deserters. The deserter was given six months more army service. (28 Virginia Magazine of History 112).

July 20, 1781 Captain Bohannon writes from Irving's Store to Colonel William Davies at Richmond, stating that he had removed the stores "at New London twenty miles farther up the country being apprehensive the enemy coming to that post." (2 Cal. VSP. 231).

July 22, 1781, Bourne Price at New London writes to Major John Pryor, stating that having heard the enemy had returned down the county determined to remain at New London and save the expense of moving stores in hired wagons; stores not damaged by weather; none lost except a few sword; about forty pounds of powder, owing to barrels giving way when removed. He wished to be informed if laboratory is to be moved and where. Says men will certainly go off if money is not furnished them as they have none and "can get no credit in this part of the world", Captain Grice is not able to "to buy himself a chicken." (2 Cal. VSP. 235).

July 28, 1781 Bourne Price at New London writes Colonel Davies at Richmond and says that he will leave as many arms put in order for the Militia to march, as he can, but is in great want of musket cartridge paper. He says Major Mazurat has called on him for all fixed ammunition he has, to be forwarded to Halifax Old Courthouse, amounting to ten or twelve wagon loads. He desires to be informed in regard to rumored removal of the laboratory over the mountains, which place has been mentioned by Colonel Callaway, although all the houses would have to be built." (2 Cal VSP 264).

June 25 and Sept 29, 1781, Captain Christopher Irvine certifies that he had received for public use at New London from John Thompson 21 bushels of oats, and 475 pounds of beef. Many other inhabitants of that region were constantly furnishing supplies for the army on credit. Captain Irvine was the District Commissary agent at that time and it was his duty to forage the country for supplies.

August 8, 1781 Colonel William Davies writes the Governor that he contemplates organizing a corp of artificers, such as gunsmiths, gunstockers, blacksmiths, strikers, nailers, carpenters, saddlers and harnessmakers, wheelwrights, shoemakers, tailors, and placing them between New London and the River (evidently the James), where provisions can be secured with more ease and the stores readily sent down the river, besides the advantage

to be derived from the neighborhood of Mr. Ross' iron works. (2, Cal VSP 304).

August 10, 1781 Colonel James Callaway writes from New London to Colonel William Davies at Richmond, stating that he had discharged the militia ordered to the South in as much as those of adjoining counties had been discharged, but says that he had ordered them to hold themselves in readiness to march at a moments notice. He thanks Colonel Davies for the compliment paid to the militia of Bedford, and assures him that if the enemy ever makes it necessary, the will entitle themselves to credit. (2 Dal. VSP 312).

August 10, 1781 Captain Bourne Price at New London writes Colonel William Davies at Richmond, stating that before he had removed any stores from New London to Crow's Ferry the order was countermanded by Major John Pryor; that the laboratory is idle for want of material; that the "tinsmen" time is out: that Mr. Clark, the Armorer's time is also out; that it is impossible to keep workmen without money; that should the militia march from Bedford he will issue all the arms fit for service: that he has 500 arms on hand, most of which wants stocks and locks; that the guns and tools are branded "U. S., and that Mr. Anderson has sent to him for all the tools in his hand as State Property, but that orders must come from Major Pryor or Colonel Smith before he will turn them over, the credit of the state is so bad he cannot get a thing done without personally being responsible- "they take their wagons to pieces, cut the gear, and ride the horses"-, and to impress a horse is to bring "a fight on my hands." Implores the Colonel for some clothing for a few Continental soldiers who have not drawn any for three years "it is discouraging to the men to hear that money is furnished at every other post, but they get none." (2 Cal. VSP, 310).

On August 11, 1781, Captain Henry Greer at New London writes to William Davies Commissioner of War at Richmond, a most interesting letter as follows:

"Sir: As my situation in this place is so bad, I hope you will excuse me in taking the liberty to inform you me and my men is Almost neaked for want of clothing and this post without any money which render it disagreeable as we cannot purchase. But as for the men if it is agreeable to you, they can be supplied by Coln. Callaway. I can assure you they are almost neaked and constantly mermering for their pay as they have not received any this eight months. As for me I met with a Great loss at whear Capt. Bohannon and me carried on the laboratory below Charlottesvillle. But I strove to save all the stores which would be affected had not the barron left the point of fork for I got two hundred barrels powder in canoes in order to get protection under the barron. But he was gone the enemy hearing of me fowled and took all that but what I got hid in the woods. Was all saved which I went back and

sent it all to the Barracks, but there was two wagon load of very valliable stores left by me at Buck Island Creek, such as bridles, axes, spurs, camp kettles which came from Fredericksburg. I believe if Captain Bohannon has not forgot he may have to then the man's name is Lovly. I hope you will please to consider my situation and order as you think best. I am your obt. himble svt." (2 Cal. VSP, 321) This was certainly a sad day for poor Henry Greer. No doubt he had returned to his home in New London. Bedford County records show that one Henry Greer married Susanna Hatcher, September 24, 1792, daughter of Benjamin Hatcher. Samuel Hatcher was surety on the marriage bond. Other marriage records of that family in Bedford are: James Greer married Anne Low, widow, April 28, 1767, Parmenas Haynes, surety. Martin Greer married Mary Wright, February 28, 1788, Joseph Wright, surety. The Greers were patriots and hospitable even in times of great sorrow and distress, for witness a letter written from New London on August 18, 1781 from Captain Nathan Reid to Colonel William Davies at Richmond: (An old custom around N. L. A. – The Irish Wake C. A. Thompson) " Nothing of moment has transpired of later, but that Mr. Greer's wife is dead, and I had the pleasure of drinking part of two bowls of excellent punch. The soldiers come in very slowly, and the Laboratory men idle for want of cartridge paper." In all probability that "excellent punch" partaken of by Captain Reid was made from some of the "good old corn" made by John Thompson at his still on Buffalo Creek operated in connection with his flower and corn mill. Further circumstantial evidence that the "Excellent Punch may have been made from John Thompson's "Good Whiskey", ("Old Thompson" is still on the market) is a receipt signed by Christopher Irvine, District Commissary, and witnessed by Caleb Tate, acknowledging on July 18, 1781, shortly before the "wake" at Mr. Greer's home, which reads: "I hereby certify that I have recvd, of Mr. John Thompson twenty five gallons of good Whiskey for Public Use. Given under my hand-25 Gall: Whiskey at 4/5. (2 Cal, VSP 344; John Thompson's Will. Campbell County, 1792, Book 1 pp 207 at seq. and Revolutionary Claims of Bedford County, Va., for supplies furnished army). (Italics supplied). John Thompson was evidently a frugal man for at the time of his death he owned approximately 3000 acres of land in and near New London besides a large farm on the head waters of the Appomatox River in Prince Edward and Buckingham counties. He held Colonel John Callaway's bond for 1500 pounds, owned 14 grown slaves and a number of their "increase". He had settled near the town of New London early in the eighteenth century, fought the Indians along with other settlers, established a mill on Buffalo Creek, and operated a still and made good whiskey, which was then a very important thing in the life of the soldier and the frontiersman both of whom suffered the rigors of the winters because of lack of housing and shelter, and proper clothing. Surviving Thompson in 1792 were his wife, Margaret, and children; John; Andrew; Matthew, then living on his Prince Edward and Buckingham County farm; Elizabeth Gill; Jane Mitchell; Ester Phair; and the children of his deceased son William, among whom was the grandson of

David. All of his other children had married at the time of his death and had children. In 1761 he had a grant of 360 acres of land on Dreaming and Tomahawk Creeks adjoining Callaway's land. (Patent Book 34 p. 913).

There seems to have been considerable rivalry and discontent over the ownership of arms and ammunition at New London. September 14, 1781 Captain Bourne Price, Deputy Commissary Military Stores at New London, writes Colonel Davies at Richmond as follows:

“Sir: In your last letter you wished for an explanation of the arms at this post. I assure you, so far as it was in my power (I) have done it. As to our Smiths branding the arms U.S., get your information where you may, it is without foundation, except when the muskets were branded on the barrel and not on the lock, in that case they were branded on the plate of the lock. I should consider myself a rascal in attempting to defraud our State out of a single gun. You must from every circumstance believe I have no interest in keeping a single article of the state's from you. I have delivered up my charge of the stores to Capt. Irish. I have informed him of what I know of the matter, who will be with you in a few days with a return of the whole of the stores at this post. The bearer Mr. Smyth is a Gent. worth your notice &c. He has been of infinit advantage to this post by furnishing necessarys for the Business that could not by other means have been procured. I am with respect &c.” (2 Cal. VSP, 431)

September 17, 1781 Captain A. Bohannon writes Col. Davies, approving the mode for transporting the cartridge boxes from Maryland, especially as he can ill afford to spare Mr. Frazer who is collecting the cannon balls and shells. Says he has ordered the militia stores at New London and Staunton to be collected at Irvin's Store, to be sent hence to Westhem: that he has sent Mr. Jordan to New London to take inventory of Arms at that place but found Captain Irish had “claimed them as Continental Arms and had put some of them in repair and sent them to General Green's camp.” (2 Cal. VSP, 453).

It is interesting to learn that General Greene relied upon arms and other military supplies from New London. But at the time Captain Irish sent the supplies to General Greene's camp, the General had already met Lord Cornwallis, on March 15, 1781, at Guildford Courthouse, and had been defeated, yet he had waged such a severe battle against Cornwallis that the latter failed to see the advantage of following up the General but moved his army on to Wilmington, N. C., thence into Virginia and Yorktown where he was defeated by the forces of Lafayette Courthouse. Captain James Tate, Virginia Riflemen, was mortally wounded in the first skirmish with the British. The name Tate is familiar in Bedford and Campbell. Captain Griffin Fauntleroy, 1st Virginia Light Dragoons, was also mortally wounded at Guildford. Captain Fauntleroy was born September 28, 1754 in Northumberland County. He was a direct descendant of Colonel Moore

Fauntleroy, who was born in England in 1610 and came to America in early manhood and established “Naylor’s Hole” in Richmond County on the Rappahannock above “Cat Point Neck”, about 1650, where he purchased a large tract of land, conveyed to him by a written conveyance, dated April 4, 1651, and signed by Accopatough, “the true and right born King of the Indians of Rappahanoc Town and Towns” which transfer was confirmed by Act I the grande assemblee at James Citie Virginia, the 23rd of March 1660-1. While a member of the grande assemblee Colonel Moore Fauntleroy absented himself on March 1, 1658-59 and was suspended, but on the 8th following he appeared, acknowledged his error and was reinstated. Captain Griffin Fauntleroy’s home was probably at “Fauntleroy’s” in Cherry Point Neck on the Potomac river in Northumberland county which was established by Colonel William Fauntleroy, son and heir of Colonel Moore Fauntleroy, and who married Katherine Griffin, a daughter of Colonel Samuel Griffin of Northumberland county. The Fauntleroy family of “Avoca” on highway route 29, just north of the city of Altivista; are descendants of Colonel Moore Fauntleroy’s line. On the maternal side they are also related to Colonel Charles Lynch, who lived at the present site of “Avoca” and often held court at his home, and whose greatest pastime was to punish the Tories and make them cry out “liberty.”

Oct. 25, 1781 Thomas Anderson Deputy Commissary, writes Col Davis seeking post of director of a magazine of provisions to be established in Buckingham County. He says the houses at Irving’s will do for such purpose since they are convenient to all parts of the river; to Charlottesville Barracks, Staunton, New London and the Southern Army, “there being direct roads to all these places”; and that there is abundance of timber for making barrels for salted meats; that canoes should be built and kept there to transport stores down the river, and to collect forage, of which there is abundance; that the lately captured prisoners if lodged at Charlottesville or Staunton could be supplied from Irving’s store; that he is anxious to secure the position “as the commissioner for the county has no such business of riding” and he cannot stand it. (2 Cal. VSP, 566).

November 6, 1781, Colonel C. Febinger writes Co. Davies from Cumberland Courthouse and among other things says: “ Reid, I should suppose is well fixed at New London and Conway with him.” He complains of his own men having small pox, and asks for molasses, vinegar and rice; he says his men need clothes, and that they are hungry and naked. (2 Cal. VSP, 584).

No doubt the people were pretty well worn out with war after the surrender of Cornwallis to Washington at Yorktown on October 19, 1781, if we are to take literally the expressions of Colonel Nathan Reid who writes to Col. Davies at Richmond on December 13, 1781. He says:

“I am here yet, and here likely to be, however I don’t grumble about that, but I think it rather tight on those folks who have no money nor cloaths. I would be much obliged to you for your opinion in regard to a Virginia officer that is, whether he had better continue in the army until he is broke for going on parade without a coat, or for him to retire while times is good. Leutenant Rankin who was ordered to this place to recruit has not enlisted anybody, nor I am sure will not, as the people would not turn around three times for ten thousand dollars.” (2 Cal. VSP, 657.)

New London was not the only place where the people were complaining of the lack of pay for supplying the army. The following letter from Captain E. Read, Virginia Light Dragoons in quarters near Winchester, Virginia, on December 27, 1781 to Col. Davies at Richmond:

“I received your (letter?) by Colonel Holmes, dates 17th and 18th instant, they will be immediately complied with and shall leave one of the smallest troops of 22 men, with their officers, the remaining two troops of 61 men I should have marched this very day to New London in Bedford County agreeable to your order of the third. But Colonel Homes informs me that the Acts of the Assembly for impressing provisions, forage &c is replaced and the County Commissioners and Commissarys are discontinued. Therefore I am at a loss how to subsist the Coar (Corp.?) to that place. The repeal of that act has had such an affect on the mindes of the people heare already, that they will not part with anything they have without cash and were the British prisoners not heare, I think there would be scarcely a suffitancy to support our Coar of Horeses throught the winter. The Dragoons weights on you for instructions, how I am to proceed to furnish Coar to Bedford. We shall be in readiness to march amediatly on his return. I must beg leave to remind you of clothing necessary for this Coar, they are getting extreme naked, particular for Breeches and Regimentals.” (2 Cal. VSP, 672).

Captain Edward Reed appears to have had a hard time getting started for New London. On January 5, 1782, he writes Governor Harrison from Winchester and among other things says:

“When I left Richmond I had orders to march Major Nelson’s corps of calvary to New London, but I found them ill with inoculation and small pox.” (3 Cal. VSP, 8).

On February 5, 1782 Captain Edward Read arrives in New London with the troops from Winchester. On the 7th he writes Governor Harrison as follows:

“Men marched from Winchester to New London, arrived two days ago.” He then says that he found nothing to feed the men and horses and but for some “principal gentlemen” they should have starved. He says that extreme

nakedness and low accoutrements makes it impossible to take the field if called upon; and that he has no power to impress. (3 Cal. VSP, 55).

March 2, 1782 Colonel John Pryor at New London reports to Col Davies the progress he has made in collecting and making returns of Public arms and other military stores; that he has embraced those of Washington County with Colonel Campbell (Arthur Campbell), also those at New London. 3 Cal. VSP, 82

March 29, 1782 Captain John Pryor at New London reporting to Colonel Davies in the laboratory at Richmond about to be moved to New London that it is important that the men be instructed in the “different composition for fixed ammunition.” He says that Captain Green and Captain Allen are at Richmond and that Green says he was never paid for his service and is willing to take “one piece of Irish linen “for former service.” (3 Cal. VSP, 114).

Colonel William Preston advises Colonel Davies on April 5, 1782 to send clothes to New London for the Montgomery county drafted men.” 28 Va. Mag. of History 115).

July 23, 1782 Captain Bourne Price at New London writes Captain John Pryor that he had received his order for five hundred weights of powder to be sent to Colonel Campbell (Colonel Arthur Campbell) Adjutant of Virginia State Militia in western counties of Virginia, and second cousin of General William Campbell) but that Captain Irish forbade the order being complied with until Captain Pryor turned over to him the Continental stores. He says he has no musket powder but some cannon powder and militia arms on hand. (3 Cal. VSP, 227).

Those “principal gentlemen” at New London referred to by Captain Edward Read in his letter to Governor Harrison appear to have inconvenienced themselves in feeding Read’s men and horses for we find on May 28, 1782, Colonel Harry Innes somewhere in Bedford County writing the Hon. Beverly Randolph requesting his aid in behalf of himself and many other citizens who, when Captain Edmund Reads “State Corps of Horse” came to New London in February last and suffering severely for want of supplies, furnished provisions to their quarter master with the understanding that such supplies should be accredited to their share of “Specific Tax”. He says the County Commissioners are disposed to allow the credit, but that the Court of Claims will not entertain the case? He therefore appeals to the Governor and council. (3 Cal. VSP, 178).

On July 21, 1782 we find Harry Jones, somewhere in Bedford County, reporting to Colonel Davies on the “issues” in his district for the year. He says the business delayed “by the indisposition of Mrs. Jones who has been

lingering for six months past, and how long this be the case God only knows.” He says he must resign unless a “favorable change takes place to prevent ye state from being injured and maintain my character as a man of business.” He further says that the cost of transporting specifics to the contractor at the Point of Forks is more than they are worth, thinks some of them might be disposed of to the Continental Contractor at New London, which is better than transporting them upwards of 100 miles; that there is no money in the hands of the people with which to purchase anything at public sale. (3 Cal VSP, 226).

September 20, 1782 Harry Innes, District Commissioner, writing to Col. Davies, from somewhere in Bedford County, asks to be informed whether the powder and lead manufactured at the Laboratory at New London is State or Continental, both Captain Irish and Captain Bourne Price had failed to give him the information. He says that Colonel Carrington on his way to the Southern Army promised punctual payment for the provisions furnished to Continental posts at New London and Peytonsbury (first county seat of Pittsylvania County) from January 1, 1782 to January 1, 1783.

On May 6, 1783 Colonel Arthur Campbell, Adjutant State Militia for Western Virginia, writes to Hon. Samuel Matthews desiring information concerning ammunition ordered sent to Washington County, stating that the Commissioner of War had directed him to receive 500 pounds of powder from New London to replace powder “lent out of the county magazine” for Colonel Martin, but not a single pound had been received. He also complains that out of 1000 pounds of lead ordered by the Executive to be delivered to him only 300 pounds had been received by him from Colonel Lynch (Colonel Charles Lynch in charge of the lead mines at Wytheville, Virginia), and owing to that fact their was want of arms during the late “alarms”.

On December 11, 1783, we find Captain John Preston at the Point of Forks writing to Col. Thomas Meriwether, stating that he had inspected the Posts where Colonel Lynch had reported the State’s lead to be lodged; that at New London he found 63 pigs weighing 9, 500 pounds; at Mr. Ross’ Iron Works in Bedford 20 piggs weight 3000; none at Edward Winston’s “although Colonel Lynch reported 4,751 pounds stored there”; that he had arranged for the stocks at New London removed to Mr. Winston’s “three miles below Lynch’s Ferry on the river and thence to that post.” (3 Cal VSP. 547).

May 27, 1788 we find the expense account of Colonel William Fleming, who was born in Scotland February 29, 1729, came to Virginia in 1755 and settled at Staunton, Va., showing that he stopped at Captain Austin’s in New London and paid 2 shillings 6 pence for his keep; the account also shows he spent two shillings at Hook’s Old Store, which was either in or near New

London. Hook was evidently the same person who sued Venable whom Patrick Henry so ably defended in his great “Beef Speech” in the old District Court at New London.

On February 8, 1782, the Justices of Campbell’s Court meeting at the home of Micajah Terrell recommended William Jordan, John Caffery and others be commissioned by the Governor, as captains of the militia. The John Caffery mentioned married Mary Donelson, eldest daughter of Col. John Donelson. Her youngest sister Rachel, married Lewis Robards of Virginia. Rachel subsequently married Andrew Jackson. Colonel John Donelson had 11 children. He married Rachel Stockley of Accomac County, Virginia. He was born April 7, 1725 in Somerset County, Maryland. His father was an importer. His grandfather on his maternal side was an Episcopal minister. Colonel Donelson moved to Pittsylvania County and his speculation there in iron works failed in 1778, and having heard glaring reports from the “Long Hunters” about the Cumberland Valley decided to go westward to recoup his fortune. It is said that Rachel at the age of 13 when she left Pittsylvania was as tanned as an Indian and agile as a boy. The Robards from Louisa County, Virginia had stopped near Harrodsburg and built a large stone house. Rachel stayed with them while her father went ahead. Before she was 18 she married Lewis Robards. Peyton Short who lived at the Robard’s home was attentive to Rachel. Robards became jealous and notified the Donelson’s who had established a block house ten miles from Nashville to send for Rachel. After Rachel left Robards admitted his mistake and sent John Overton a lawyer and relative to intercede for her return. Andrew Jackson, Solicitor General for all of North Carolina’s Western County Rowan, which then included Tennessee, was then living with the Donelson’s more as a protection to the family against the Indians than as a boarder, (Colonel Donelson only recently having been killed by the Indians) fell in love with Rachel, a mutual love that lasted until the end of their days- and secured her divorce and married her.

No doubt Colonel Donelson and his little daughter Rachel, were frequent visitors at old New London, and in the homes of Colonel Lynch, Mr. David Ross, and Colonel Callaway. Rachel Donelson was at Harrodsburg, Kentucky, when the intrepid George Rogers Clark, the redheaded son of Ann Clark, and his little band of 150 Virginians, stopped at Old Fort Harrod and planned the campaign that saved the Northwest Territory for the Nation. Clark was a bachelor and was probably much infatuated by the beautiful Rachel, who was yet too young to marry, being only 14 at the time, and Clark had more problems on his mind- restoring the Northwest Territory to Virginia – yet when he reached St. Louis he did fall in love with Mile Terese Leyba, daughter of the Spanish Commandant. His defeat of the British at Vincennes, Indiana, restored to Virginia that great expanse of country which now comprises the great states of Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Wisconsin, Michigan and eastern Minnesota, as well as making it possible

for many who had gone into Virginia's largest county – Kentucky – to return to their homes without fear of the Indian who was allied with the British. Later Clark's brother William blazed the Oregon trail with Captain Merriwether Lewis of Fredericksburg, Virginia. The Clark boys home site was on a creek between Jefferson's Monticello and the present city of Charlottesville.

March 15, 1784 John Reid, who had been sent to deal with the Chicasaw Indians at Great Island on the Holston River stopped at New London.

February 20, 1785, Col. John Peyton, while on a trip of inspection to the lead mines at Wytheville, writes Colonel Thomas Meriwether at Richmond, stating that the public Negroes at the lead mines had been taken away, except Fielding, who escaped and deserted the mines, one wench and three children left- too cold for the children; that he had left for Colonel Lynch's Ferry (Lynchburg); that he had left 74,000 pounds of public lead at the mines in care of Mr. Robert Saunders "who lives at that place". Mr. McGaffoc (McGavock) ordered to take charge but too much expense to move it to McGaffoc's place; that he could not examine the Continental arms and powder at New London, but that the same had been much examined by Mr. William Price. (4 Cal. VSP, 12)

Point of Fork, Feb. 26, 1790 Capt. E. Langham to Beverly Randolph, advising that he had examined the U.S. powder at New London and that it was not as good as that furnished the Indians by the State; that there was a considerable quantity of muskets (U.S.) at New London in need of repair; 3000 pounds of powder at New London going to waste. He suggest that the Secretary of War be notified.

April 15, 1790, Secretary of War, Henry Knox, writes Governor Randolph thanking him for Capt. Langham's report, and says Congress too busy to make disposition. Powder was sent to Richmond. (5 Cal. VSP, 139)

November 26, 1791 "On the road twelve miles east of New London" John Rogers writes Governor Henry Lee, telling him that while crossing Spanish America by land and passing in Kentucky on November 15, 1791 of the defeat of the army of General St. Clair, and that Ft. Jefferson fell. He says the Chicasaws gave aid to the Americans; that General Butler was tomahawked by the Indians in his tent while doctor was treating wounds. (5 Cal VSP, 399)

June 7, 1788 Thomas Holt at New London writes Colonel Arthur Campbell that he has sent him nine quarter and two half barrels State powder from New London.

August 3, 1792, Governor Henry Lee, while stopping at New London, writes to Hon. Gen. Wood at Richmond, directing him to send his private letters to New London in care of Mr. James Steptoe. "Jimmy" Steptoe was Clerk of the District Court at New London) "where he shall meet them on his return"; and says that he has heard nothing from the southwest or northwest. (5 Cal. VSP, 650).

February 3, 1792, James Hawkins, Captain of the Rangers writes the Governor from Fincastle, Va. As follows:

"My company will be in want of about thirty musquits with the necessary accuretemens. If it will not be improper would thank you for an order on New London magazine for the same, and as much ammunition as you may think sufficient. If the time and place of our endzvou is fixed, would be glad to be informed thereof. I have the Honor to be Sir, with much respect, Your very himble servant." (6 Cal. VSP, 281).

October 19, 1793. Payroll of militia over public arsenal at New London from September 22, 1793 to October 19, 1793, shows Lieutenant Benjamin Stith, 4 sgt, 2 corporals, (42?) privates. (6 Cal. VSP, 603-0).

September 1, 1794. Colonel Edward Carrington writes to Lieutenant Gov. Wood informing him that the expedition against the insurgents in Western Pennsylvania by the militia was in rendezvous at Winchester and that the subs from New London, Staunton and Culpepper Courthouse were not necessary. (7 Cal. VSP, 287). The foregoing letter referred to the Whiskey Rebellion on Western Pennsylvania which was the first test of the strength of the National government, which soon put an end to any opposition to its authority as a government of all the people. (7 Cal. VSP, 287).

September 16, 1794, General Daniel Morgan was at Winchester, Virginia, and wrote the Governor that he was expecting 1500 pounds of ammunition from New London. (7 Cal. VSP, 316).

The old District jail at New London must have been getting into a dilapidated condition in 1796, for on September 22 of that year R. Snoddy, jailor at New London, tenders his resignation to the governor because of the insecurity of the jail and insufficiency of compensation. (8 Cal. VSP, 390).

As late as February 20, 1797, the old Armory at New London was still being operated by the general government, for on that date James Penn writes to the governor of Virginia suggesting the retention of "New London Armory", established by the general government under Joseph Perkins, superintendent, now about to given up by the general government, with the operatives there for the use of the state for the manufacture of arms needed. (8 Cal. VSP, 420).

The records of the deeds of William Callaway to the Trustees of Bedford County conveying the land upon which the town of New London was founded, as well as the courthouse and jail at that point, are recorded in Deed Book "A", page 113, and Deed Book "C" page 97. The first deed dated March 28, 1757, was recorded in March 29, 1757, Elizabeth Callaway, wife of William having relinquished her dower right in the property. William Callaway had appeared before the court on August 26, 1754 and agreed to give to Bedford County "One hundred acres of land at the forks of the road near his house to erect a courthouse and prison." He agreed first to make a deed in fee simple for 50 acres, and to deed the other 50 acres as soon as he could obtain a patent. The trustees for the county were Richard Callaway, Zachary Isbell (sometimes spelled Isabelle) and Benjamin Howard, Gents.

On May 27, 1767, ten years after the first 50 acres was deeded to the trustees for Bedford County, William Callaway made a second deed to William Mead, Richard Callaway and Richard Stith, Trustees; of 50 acres; being part of a tract of 560 acres granted to him by patent of March 27, 1767, and being "That piece, parcel or lot of land containing fifty acres, which is laid off in lots in the Town of New London, in said county, and adjoining the fifty acres whereon the Court House is erected, which was formerly granted to said county by the said Callaway according to his agreement."

In those early days of the court at New London the court examined and admitted to practice before it such men the court felt were learned in the Law. On May 23, 1757, the court admitted Gideon Marr as an attorney at law.

There must have been some stirring scenes in the Bedford Courthouse at New London. In one of the old Order Books of Bedford County we find the following order dated May 24, 1756 and entered by direction of Matthew Talbot, C. J., Richard Callaway, William Mead, Mark Cole, and Samuel Harstone, justices:

"That at the courthouse of Bedford County on Monday the twenty fourth day of May 1756 his Majesty's commission under the seal of this colony bearing date the sixteenth instant directed to Matthew Talbot and others on any four or more of them to hear and determine all treasons cept treason and murders and other offenses committed or done by Hampton and Sambo belonging to John Payne of Goochland County, Gent. was openly read as was in like manner his Majesty's dedimus potestatem under the seal and of the same date administering the oaths etc. to the said justices by virtue of which Richard Callaway and Robert Ewing administerd the oaths appointed by act of Parliament etc. to Mathew Talbot, who took the said oaths and

repeated and subscribed the test and also took the oath of a justice of oyer and terminer (meaning a court constituted with power to hear and determine treasons, felonies and misdemeanors) and thereupon the said Matthew Talbot administered the oaths etc. to John Phelps, Richard Callaway, Robert Ewing, Mark Cole, and Samuel Harstone, who took the said oaths and repeated and subscribed the test and then took the oath of justices of oyer and terminer. The Court being thus constituted: The said Hampton and Sambo were set to the bar under the custody of Charles Talbot to whose custody before they were committed on suspicion of their being guilty of the felonious preparing and administering poisonous medicines to Ann Payne and being arraigned of the premises pleaded not guilty and for their trial put themselves up the court, whereupon divers witnesses were charged and they heard in their defense. On Consideration whereof it is the opinion of the court that the said Hampton is guilty in manner and form as in the indictment, therefore, it is considered that the said Hampton be hanged by the neck til he be dead and that afterwards cut in quarters and quarters hung up at the cross roads (probably the cross roads at the old courthouse mentioned in Callaway's deed), and it is the opinion of the court that the said Sambo is guilty of a misdemeanor, therefore, it is considered that the said Sambo be burnt in the left hand and that he also receive thirty-one lashes on his bare back at the whipping post, and it is ordered that the sheriff do immediately exor thereof and the he then be discharged."

The record shows that Hampton was valued at forty five pounds and this fact was certified to the general assembly. The law provided that the owner of slave should be paid for the loss of his slave. Whether the governor and council pardoned Hampton the writer is without information. To them he had the right of appeal. But it may be definitely assumed that the sheriff immediately executed the sentence on Sambo by burning him in the left hand in the brawn of the left thumb and giving him 31 lashes in open court. The burning in the hand arose out of the plea of "Benefit of Clergy" during the papal usurpation. The clergy claiming exemption for criminal process before the secular judges. Finally "benefit of clergy" was extended to the layman, and in order that the criminal might not have the benefit twice he was burned in left hand, sometimes burned with the letter "M" indicating murderer. The "quartering" of Hampton, while gruesome enough was not as barbarous as in ancient days when "quartering" was done on the living person by tearing them apart by four horses pulling in opposite directions on chains fastened to the legs and arms of the victim.

The death penalty was meted out at New London to the horse thief. In the District Court at New London in April 1789 Francis Suttle "late of the county of Campbell" was condemned to be hanged on Tuesday, May 22, 1789 for horse stealing. Upon consideration of two petitions numerous signed by the inhabitants of Bedford county the governor granted a pardon on recommendation of his council, James McClung, James Jones, Carter

Braxton (one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence), Will Heth and James Wood. (4 Cal. VSP, 625). The District Court at New London had just started to function when Suttle's case came on to be heard. The Act of the General Assembly of December 22, 1788, creating district courts in Virginia, among other district courts created provided: "The counties of Bedford, Campbell, Franklin, Pittsylvania and Henry shall comprise another district, and the court shall be holden for the same at New London, in the late courthouse of Bedford County, now belonging to James and John Callaway, who have agreed to put them in repair, at their own expense, for use of the District Court, so be holden at New London, on the 15th day of April and 15th day of September, every year. The name of the judge who presided over the first district court at New London is not known by the writer. However, the judges of the general court meeting in Richmond on November 16, 1799, provided for the judges in the various district courts of Virginia. Edmund Winston and James Henry were assigned to the District Courts at Prince Edward Courthouse, New London, Washington Courthouse, and the Sweet Springs in Botetourt County. The general court was then comprised of Joseph Prentiss, St. George Tucker, John Tyler, William Nelson, Jr., Robert White, Jr. and Paul Carrington, Jr. (9 Cal. VSP, 56).

Women were also confined in the Old District Jail at New London. Susanna Murphy of Henry County was sent there in the summer of 1789. Hugh Dowdell and Susan Dowdell were sent to District Jail at Dumphries, Virginia, a place now also forgotten, and which in Washington's time was not only a thriving young city but a port of entry on the Potomac. Dumphries still holds to it's name, yet New London is entirely forgotten. (4 Cal. VSP, 584).

On April 20, 1797, Judges Archibald Stewart and Creed Taylor were in New London and wrote the Governor concerning the securing of the rights of individuals to territory "which may be ceded by compromise". (8 Cal. VSP, 430.) Judge Creed Taylor succeeded Judge Wythe, who was the first high chancellor of the equity court in Richmond. Taylor at one time presided over the equity court in Lynchburg.

December 6, 1793, Captain John Redd of Henry County was recommended by James Callaway of New London as collector of taxes for the New London District. (6 Cal. VSP, 273). Colonel James Callaway was the son of William Callaway who made a free gift of 100 acres of his land to Bedford County for establishment of the town of New London and a courthouse. It is said that during the war of independence New London contained some seventy or eighty houses. No doubt Colonel James Callaway who was born December 21, 1763, was a dashing young officer in and around New London. He married three times and had twenty-one children. He died at the early age of 46 on November 1, 1809.

Colonel Thomas M. Clark, in charge of the 53rd Militia of Campbell County wrote the Governor requesting an “old field piece” at New London and another from Richmond. At that time (May 18, 1804) the 53rd Militia had attached to it a company of artillery from Lynchburg. Captain Thomas W. Cooke of Lynchburg was in charge of the artillery.

Lieutenant John Marcheson was in charge of a detachment of soldiers “in defense of military stores at New London belonging to the United States government from May 25, to July 13, 1801.” Marcheson was succeeded by Lieutenant Jesse Webb who “received pay and rations to August 25, 1801.” (9 Cal. VSP, 382).

The records of Bedford County show that on October 25, 1779, Thomas McReynolds was received as Captain of the Militia; Alexander Steel, first Lieutenant, John Helen, second Lieutenant, and John Hunter, ensign. Captain Thomas McReynolds resigned and moved to Moore County North Carolina, where he died. He was the son of James McReynolds who came from Ireland about 1735 and died in what is now Appomattox County some 7 miles south of Spout Springs. Mr. Justice James C. McReynolds, Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States, is a descendant of two brothers of Captain Thomas McReynolds. His grandparents were first cousins. No doubt these two brothers or grandparents of the great conservative justice were also frequent visitors in old New London and participated in the war of independence.

Samuel Clemens and Pamela Goggin, the grandparents of Mark Twain, the great author, lived somewhere on the line between Bedford and Campbell. They were married in Bedford County on October 23, 1797, but made their home in Campbell. Their first child was John Marshall Clemens, and the father of the great American author and humorist, Mark Twain. Samuel Clemens evidently came to Campbell from Surry County on the lower James river. The records of Surry County show the will of John Clemens, May 2, 1710, whose wife was Mary, and children Samuel, John, and Anne. The executors of his will were his “loving friends” Captain William Brown, Captain Thomas Holt, and Mr. William Thompson. The will of Samuel Clemens (1727) leaves a gun and sword to his brother William. William’s will (1741), mentions his wife Ales, (Alice?) and their five children: Lucy, Elizabeth, Samuel, William, and Henry.

Matthew Talbot, the first presiding justice of Bedford County had been a justice in Lunenburg County in 1746. He died at his home in New London in 1758. His will dated Jan. 4, 1758, was admitted to probate in Bedford County on November 27, 1758. His wife’s name was Jane, and his children were: Charles, Matthew, James, John, Isham, and Mary Arthur. His son Charles was sitting as a justice with his father as early as October 1754, and

held office for many years after his father's death. In November 1758 at the time Matthew's will was admitted to probate the following justices were sitting: William Callaway, Samuel Hairstone, Richard Stith, Joseph Rentfro, Richard Callaway, Zackery Burnley, Charles Talbot, William Mead and Jeremiah Early. At a meeting of the court on June 25, 1771, there was present Robert Ewing, Francis Callaway, William Trigg, and Gross Scruggs. Gross Scruggs was sheriff of Bedford County in 1783. He married Elizabeth Arthur, spinster, in Bedford County, October 4, 1768. The Governor and council on April 25, 1772, appointed the following justices for Bedford County: John Phelps, Robert Ewing, Charles Talbot; Jeremiah Early, Francis Callaway; William Trigg; John Fitzpatrick; Thomas Watkins; Guy Smith; James Callaway; Charles Lynch; Hugh Challis; Francis Thorpe; Joel Meadow; John Pate; Gross Scruggs; Robert Owen and James Donald.

On January 24, 1774 John Talbot was a justice in Bedford and acknowledged the oath of William Mead to an affidavit that he had never received payment for three cattle taken by Captain John Winn who brought the Amelia County Militia to Bedford in 1758 to fight in the French and Indian war against the colony. He claimed 3 pounds and 16 shilling for the cattle. (10 Va. Magazine of History 14). This uprising of the Indians abetted by the French was pretty well general over the whole region from Winchester to the North Carolina border at this time. Washington then only 25-, was quite busy establishing forth along the Blue Ridge Mountains during this period. The Callaway's, Terry's and others of old Bedford had pushed further westward at that time and established forts to protect the settlers. The writer hopes to have something more to say about those old forts, their location and names.

Campbell County had two representatives in the general assembly in 1782. They were Colonel Robert Adams, Jr. and William Browne. Bedford was represented at that time by John Talbot and Richard Clark. Henry County was represented by Patrick Henry and Peter Saunders. Benjamin Harrison was governor of the state. Albemarle had Thomas Jefferson and Thomas Walker as her able representatives. Fluvanna was represented by David Ross, who may have theretofore established iron works near New London, and George Thompson.

Long before New London was established as the county seat of Bedford County settlers were pushing upstream along Staunton River, and many settling at the present site of the city of Altavista, established in 1908 by the industrious Lane families. We find among the old records a grant of land, June 14, 1739, to Charles Fisher of 2000 acres on "Staunton river high up the Roanoke river beginning on Otter Creek on the south side and running up both sides of Staunton river." (14 Va. Magazine of History 342).

When Franklin County was created in 1785, that part of Bedford County south of Staunton river was thrown into Franklin. The first court was held at the home of Colonel James Callaway of New London who had established and iron works in that part of Bedford south of Staunton River. The Callaways' probably did more than any other family to open up the wilderness and blaze the trail for civilization. Richard Callaway had gone to Boonesboro, in the county of Kentucky, as early as May 1775. He met up with John Todd, who was born March 27, 1750 in Montgomery County, Pennsylvania, and when orphaned went to Louisa County, Virginia where he was educated by his uncle, Rev. John Todd, and later studied law under Gen. Andrew Lewis and practiced for a short time before moving westward into Kentucky, settling near Todd's Station near Lexington, Kentucky. Richard Callaway settled near Todd. They were Kentucky County's first representatives to the first general assembly of Virginia. Todd had with a number of others formed the short-lived "State of Franklin." Perhaps Richard Callaway was one of its organizers.

New London was early selected as a place of education. Even in Jefferson's time he considered very seriously of establishing the University at that point. At least he thought so much of the location he built "Poplar Forest" near New London and lived there for many years. The present academy, one mile west of the old courthouse site, was chartered in 1795. Before receiving its charter it was a private school for boys. It was first built from money obtained by the sale of lottery tickets. It was governed by a board of 15 trustees. For much information concerning the Academy the writer is greatly indebted to Mrs. Bettie Sue Kirkpatrick of Evington, Va., now 88 years young, and who was its first matron, after the school became co-ed. The writer feels very keenly that the girls who came under the guidance of this estimable lady at old New London Academy shed many a tear when graduation day came and they had to take their departure from such a kindly and understanding person as "Mother Fitzpatrick", as she was affectionately known by the girls and the boys, who lingered awhile on the campus after classes for a little chat with the pretty lassies of Bedford and Campbell.

In 1826 Professor McConnell was principal. He was succeeded by Nicholas H. Cobbs, afterwards Bishop Cobbs. He resigned in 1830 and was succeeded by Henry L. Davies. Others who taught there were George E. Dabney; Alexander Campbell and Rev. Thomas Brown. In 1849 the Academy received an endowment from Harrison Chilton. In 1851 E. W. Horsley was principal. Mr. Foster was principal from 1851 to 1854. His daughter, Mrs. James R. Guy, was born there in 1852. In 1854 Mr. Carter Harris became principal. He was succeeded by Mr. John H Winston, who was principal during the war between the states. Shortly after the civil war Mr. Winston resigned and was succeeded by Colonel H. C. McLaughlin, A. M., who remained there until sometime after 1872. he was succeeded by

Captain William Robin Terry who remained until 1884 when the Academy became a public school. G. L. Brown was chairman of the Board of Trustees during Colonel McLaughlin's tenure. In 1884 the Academy was taken over by Bedford and Campbell Counties and was governed by a board of five who appointed the teachers and supervised the institution. They first appointed Rev. B. W. Moseley principal and D. W. Read as assistant. On the death of Moseley, Read became principal and remained until 1896 when he resigned after ten years of faithful and efficient service to the school. Succeeding Mr. Read for short periods of time were B.W. Arnold, Mr. Stevenson, and Albert Smith, when Robert Quarles Lowry was appointed and served for ten years most efficiently. During Mr. Lowry's tenure he was instrumental in building a girls dormitory. Miss Bushong was principal for one year after Mr. Lowry, Mr. O. A. Thomas held the principal's place for 5 years, then Mr. McDonald for two years, followed by John Alexander Rorer for 3 years. Next came Mr. Oakes, and J. C. Adams who resigned in 1937, succeeded by Mr. Hollingsworth. Among the men outstanding in the medical profession who graduated from Old New London Academy are Drs. Alexander and Thomas Terrell, Dr. J. Sinkler Irvine and Dr. Nicholas Kabler whose home stands today near the "Cross Roads" of old New London. Other outstanding men who graduated from the Academy were Captain Thomas West; Hon. John Goode; Judge E. C. Burks; Major Robert Saunders; Mr. "Crow" Harris, who gave much of his time energy to the welfare of the school.

The Virginia Gazette of October 1, 1803 carries an advertisement of New London Academy.

Thomas Preston, son of Colonel William Preston, and brother of John and Francis Preston, the latter a lawyer and statesman who married Sarah, daughter of Colonel William Campbell, hero of the Battle of King's Mountain, was a student at old New London Academy in 1799. Colonel William Preston was a familiar figure around New London, before and during the Revolution. He was born in Ireland in 1731, immigrated to America with his parents John and Elizabeth (Patton) Preston in 1740, and died at his seat in Augusta County in 1783. He lived to see the colonies free from England. His son Francis, married Sarah daughter of Gen. William Campbell. They had a son, William Campbell Preston, distinguished United States Senator from Virginia; another son, John Smith Preston, a prominent southern statesman and general in the Confederate Army. Thomas Lewis Preston, third son, served on the staff of General Joseph E. Johnston and was one time Rector of the University of Virginia. Daughters were Elizabeth wife of General E. C. Carrington; Susan wife of Governor James McDowell; Sally, wife of Governor John B. Floyd; Sophonsiba wife of Robert J. Breckinridge; Margaret, first wife of General Wade Hampton. James Preston, brother of John, Thomas and Francis, was governor of Virginia in 1816 and served three years. General William Preston, together with Robert

Adams, Jr., Colonel Charles Lynch, brother-in-law of Adams, and Colonel James Callaway, formulated a method to deal with the Tories who were giving aid and comfort to the British and constantly stirring up the Indians against the colonist. Out of their punishment of the Tories there grew an old song of Revolutionary days, a part of which read:

“Hurrah for Captain Bobby, Colonel Lynch
and Callaway. They never let a Tory rest
until he cries out, “Liberty”.

These gentlemen brought the Tories before them at “Avoca” (Altivista) and other points, and tried them in a court of their own (without jurisdiction) and summarily punished them by tying a rope around their hands and stringing them up under trees and giving them 39 lashes and making them cry “Liberty.” Out of these Patriotic yet strictly illegal acts grew what is today known as the “Lynch Law”, probably due to the fact that the law passed by the General Assembly in 1782, bore at that time the name of Colonel Charles Lynch. That Act, known as Chapter XV, 7th year of the Commonwealth, reads:

“An act to indemnify certain person in suppressing a conspiracy against this State”

- I. Whereas divers evil disposed persons in the year one thousand seven hundred and eighty, formed a conspiracy and did actually attempt to levy war against this Commonwealth; and it is represented the present general assembly, that William Preston, Robert Adams, Jr., James Callaway and Charles Lynch, and other faithful citizens, aided by detachments of volunteers from different parts of the state, did, by timely and effectual measures suppress such conspiracy: And whereas the measures taken for that purpose may not be strictly warranted by law, although justifiable from the eminence of danger;
- II. Be it therefore enacted that the said William Preston, Robert Adams, Jr., James Callaway and Charles Lynch, and all other persons whatsoever concerned, in suppressing the said conspiracy, or in advising, issuing, or executing any orders, or measures taken for that purpose, stand indemnified and exonerated of and from all pains, penalties, prosecutions, action, suits, and damages, on account thereof. And that if any indictment, prosecution, action, or suit, shall be laid or brought against them, or any of them, for any act or thing done therein, the defendant, or defendants may plead in bar, or the general issue, and give this act in evidence.”

We may assume a number of lawsuits had been filed against these gentlemen, otherwise the foregoing Act would not have been necessary. One wonders if John Hook of New London, who appears to have been quite a

litigious person, did not also file suite against Lynch and others who made him cry "Liberty". It would be interesting to find among the old dusty records of Bedford and other counties the declarations or complaints filed in the courts against these patriots. One may well surmise that the acts of the Tories led Cornwallis to approach the Piedmont section of Virginia with the aim of capturing the Armory at New London and destroying the stores at Staunton and Charlottesville and joining forces with other British troops who had routed the Assembly at Richmond and caused it to flee to Charlottesville and Staunton.

The writer understands there is extant in possession of Mrs. Fleming Saunders of Evington, Va., certain old records dealing with the organization of a church or meeting place which was erected on the campus at New London Academy in 1816. The following persons agreed in October 1815 to pay their respective quotas for the purpose of building a meeting house at New London Academy, "or at such other place as the majority may determine": William Steptoe; Abner Callaway; James Steptoe; Nathan Read; John Thompson; Henry Brown, William Irvine, Charles Johnson; _____ Langhorne. Trustees selected were: William Thompson; John Thompson; N. Price; Henry Brown; Benjamin Witt and S. White. In 1827 a number of people subscribed to a fund for repairing the church at New London Academy. The church or meeting house was non-denominational. Rev. James Turner of the Presbyterian church often preached there. All denominations were welcome and did worship in the old Academy meeting house. About 1860, it was said, the old meetinghouse became unsafe, was sold to the Masonic fraternity. Prudence Lodge was later moved to Evington, Virginia. (Prudence Lodge No. 44), moved across the Turnpike from the Academy and there erected into a building used by the Masons. In those early days there was a Presbyterian church know as Pisgah on the south side of Otter River, not so many miles from New London. The writer understands there stands today a church of that name on the south side of the river.

New London came into existence during the French and Indian War against the British or Colonist. As indicated by the affidavit of Henry Snow, heretofore quoted in this article, mentioning the names of John Thompson, old William Vardeman, John Hall and others, who engaged the Indians in battle from New London to Staunton river, one may well imagine how unsafe life was for the women and children who were left at home while their men ventured out to till the soil or to hunt for game. A militia, in those days was constantly on the alert, although it may have comprised but few men, yet it is certain they were a fearless lot. Their greatest difficulty was in getting arms and ammunition. A gun was a valuable possession. As early as 1754, just as soon as Bedford county was formed, Thomas Snow, a brother of Henry Snow, (Claude Thompson,s great great grandfather) brought a

replevin action for the possession of his gun from a “gentleman” who was about to leave the county with it.

To the west and southwest of New London the country was much less populated. There were no towns or villages. Those who had ventured farther on lived either in a fort or close by one. Fort Mayo was then in existence on the Mayo river west of Martinsville, Va. It was also known as Captain Harris Fort. On Smith river, northwest of Martinsville, the Callaways’ had a fort. It was known as Fort Trial. On Blackwater Creek, northwest of the present city of Rocky Mount, Captain Terry had a fort known as Blackwater Fort. Ft. Vaux or Capt. Hogs Fort was located near the present town of Shawsville. Washington visited all the forts from Winchester to the North Carolina border around 1756 and proposed a fort to be built near Salem. Fort William was located on Catawba river about half way between Roanoke and Buchanan. There were a number of other forts stretched along the mountain ranges on the Winchester. Even before the end of the French and Indian War other forts had sprung up to the westward of New London.

In accumulating the data, which the writer passes on to those who are interested in visualizing for themselves the conditions under which the colonist fought for their existence in the late colonial years and for their freedom and independence of Great Britain during the war of independence, he was well aware of his inability to write a connected story concerning these people, their homes, their towns and counties, and has not attempted to so do. He feels that it is far better that each person study the record and tell his own story of the times and people, of the hardships, their valor and patriotism to the cause of freedom which is today enjoyed by us all and should be preserved as a heritage for those yet to come.

All too often today, just as it has been in the past we hear people say they are not concerned about their ancestors, their wars, their trials and tribulations. If those people would only be convinced that the “past is prologue”, and to understand the future- the course we are to take- we should know something of the past. We at least profit by the errors of others, or whether we profit or not from the lives of others, we at least have experiences, as a guide to better roads.

NOTE: This essay written by Claude A. Thompson in 1939 has some obvious errors with spelling and punctuation. As Mr. Thompson was a learned man, it is likely that this essay was an early version that he never edited. Corrections that I have taken liberty with are those that were clearly typographical errors. Everything that was within a quotation has been left exactly as Mr. Thompson wrote it. There is genealogical value as well as historical value to be found in Mr. Thompson’s essay but as always, I encourage the reader to verify all information and sources.

D.S.