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 Moomaw Newsletter
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138 South Fifth St, Greenfield, Oh 45123

Vol. 4

No, 1

MUMMA REUNION

Pond Pavilion, Frank Park - Fort Wayne, Ind.

Sat. Sept. 5, 1987

Basket Dinner 12:30

This is the annual gathering of the descendents of the Mummaw who settled on Adams County Indiana. They were descendents of George the son of George Anthony, the oldest son of the immigrant Leonard. For more on this branch see The Genealogy of the George Mumma Family of Westmoreland County Pa. 1732-1971 by Richard Glenn Huffman. John Mumma and his wife Magdalena Fretz moved from Westmoreland County Pennsylvania to Tuscarawas County Ohio before 1850. At least three of the next generation moved on to Adams County Indiana: Christian Mumma born in Pennsylvania 12 June 1812, and his wife Rebecca Snyder born in Washington County Maryland 5 Nov, 1815. Barbara Mumma b 1805 Pa married to Michael Weltz and Catherine Mumma b 20 July 1814 Pa m Rev William Lower.

MOOMAW REUNION

Denver Williams Park

Wilmington, Ohio

Sun. Sept. 6, 1987

Basket Dinner 1:00

This is a gathering of the descendents of 221 John Moomaw and his wife Barbara Ranck. They were born in Earl twp. Lancaster County Pennsylvania and attended the Muddy Creek Reformed Church where their older children were baptised. Before 1790 they moved to Botetourt County Virginia. About 1812 their son John who had married Sophie Snyder and daughter Barbara married to Joseph Beath, moved to Ross County Ohio. A few years later John and Barbara and their younger children followed. Leaving in Virginia their sons Christian married to Catherine Snyder and Philip married to Mary Catherine Biggier. In Ross County John bought two pieces of land then they sold all but 17 1/2 acres to daughter Elizabeth and sons David and Jacob. On the 6th of July 1837 John made a will leaving the 17 1/2 acres to daughter Eva Fisher, who was a widow and \$1 to each of the rest of the children. It is probable that at this time John and Barbara returned to Virginia to see the families of Christian and Philip.

The John C Mumma of the following article from the Roanoke times was a grandson of Phillip and was born about the time they would have returned to Virginia.

One Man's Vision Largely Responsible For Roanoke

John C. Moomaw, Of Cloverdale, Said To Have Been First To Work To Bring Shenandoah Valley Road To Big Lick—Dramatic Episode Recalled

By C. W. Thomas.

By W. E. THOMAS

It is a well authenticated bit of history, but not generally known, that the first comprehensive suggestion that led to the establishment of a city here should be attributed to John C. Moomaw who in the early eighties was one of the outstanding citizens of Botetourt county. Mr. Moomaw lived at Cloverdale. He had a magnificent estate there and was a pioneer in peach growing and the fruit packing business.

In 1881, when preliminary surveys were made for the Shenandoah Valley railroad, Mr. Moomaw was appointed an adviser and right-of-way agent for the company. The preliminary line had been run from Balcony Falls along the south side of James River to Buchanan; thence through Buchanan to Looney's Creek; thence following Looney's and Back Creek to Troutville; thence to Cloverdale, passing near the residence of Mr. Moomaw; and from there on to Salem where it was proposed to tap the Atlantic Mississippi & Ohio railroad, later known as the Norfolk and Western.

Many Obstacles.

The preliminary surveys revealed quite a number of obstacles, and hence gave rise to other feasible outlets, with all of which Mr. Moomaw was conversant. One of these was said to be the abandonment of the west course of the road from Balcony Falls and to divert it thence in an eastern direction to Lynchburg. It was held that while that route was difficult, the mileage was less, shorter, and tapping the Norfolk and Western at Lynchburg it would also come in contact with the Virginia Midland railroad.

Foreseeing the probable diversion, Mr. Moomaw conceived the idea of terminating the road at Big Lick. Then, too, the rights of way from Cloverdale to Salem were rather difficult to obtain, as the proposed line crossed much valuable farmland. This, coupled with the probable diversion toward Lynchburg, caused Mr. Moomaw to look over a possible route from Cloverdale to Big Lick. After consultation with the engineers, he saw that the grade could be negotiated and immediately had a conference with the leading citizens of the town.

Big Lick, in 1880, was a way station on the Atlantic, Mississippi & Ohio railroad. Its chief business was the manufacture of tobacco, but there were other small industries in the town, together with quite an extensive lumber and planing mill enterprise conducted by J. Kefauver & Son, several mercantile stores and a bank.

The First Conference.

Mr. Moomaw came to Big Lick and had a conference with P. L. Terry, F.

Rorer, J. M. Gambill, John Kefauver, Henry S. Trout and others. The conference was held at the Neal House which was situated north of the railroad at Commerce street crossing. At this conference Mr. Moomaw suggested that if the citizens of Big Lick would sign a petition, subscribe a sufficient amount to pay for rights of way and other damages and offer a terminal site, the road could probably be brought into Big Lick. The enterprising citizens of the town, visualizing possibilities of a great development incident to a railroad terminal, immediately got busy with the movement and called a meeting for that same night to be held at Rorer Hall. In the meantime, Mr. Moomaw left to attend a meeting of the directors of the Shenandoah Valley railroad, which was to be held at Lexington the next day. Having some business on the way, he stop-

ped over with a friend near Buchanan, and left instructions that if the petition could be gotten up it was to be sent by special messenger to him that night; and the messenger should meet him at one o'clock on the following morning as he emerged from a certain line intersecting the old turnpike near Buchanan.

A hurry call was sent out, and about two dozen citizens of Big Lick assembled at the meeting. No record is extant as to those present, but M. C. Thomas, one of the survivors, is of the opinion that besides himself, among those present were P. L. Terry, F. Rorer, J. M. Gambill, Henry S. Trout, John Kefauver, George P. Terry, W. H. Starnham, James Neal, C. W. Thomas, T. T. Fishburn, S. W. Martin, C. M. Turner, M. Ward and perhaps others.

Subscription Raised.

After Mr. Terry had outlined the suggestion made by Mr. Moomaw, and several speeches had been made in favor of bringing the road into Big Lick at all hazard, it was decided to start a petition. It was hastily drawn up and set forth an invitation to the Shenandoah Valley railroad to survey and build its line into the town, and in consideration for which the town promised a terminal and a subscription to the amount of \$10,000. Mr. Terry presided at the meeting, and after the signatures had been attached he stated it was now necessary to get the document in the hands of John C. Moomaw, who was spending the night near Buchanan.



JOHN C. MOOMAW

Mr. Moomaw had left instructions as to how he could be reached in case the petition was formulated; but at whose residence he stopped is not now known. The chairman asked if anyone would volunteer to ride that night with the greatest message that Big Lick had ever sent out. The first man to respond was Charles W. Thomas, town sergeant. Mr. Thomas was for many years city treasurer of Roanoke City, and once gave the writer a graphic description of his ride that fateful night when he volunteered his services.

Petition Delivered.

The story of the night ride and the delivery of the petition to Mr. Moomaw cannot be better told than by quoting Mr. Thomas' exact words, according to his recollection after 45 years have elapsed. Says he:

"As near as I can recollect, the circumstance of the ride when I took the papers and the big subscription of \$10,000 to Mr. John C. Moomaw for the purpose of aiding in the building of railroad to cost several million dollars is about as follows:

"It was not the poor little handful of money, but the progressive spirit of the Big Lick citizens that won for us the terminal of the Shenandoah Valley Railroad. While our near neighbors slept, we painted Big Lick red; and while I had no money to give, it was one of the greatest pleasures of my life to do my little bit in laying the foundation for a great and magnificent city. As I recall the circumstances leading up to the ride, Mr. P. L. Terry came to me on Commerce Street, the only one we could boast of as a street, in front of the old Virginia Bank Building and said: 'Charlie we have a subscription of \$10,000 and some resolutions, with other papers, which we want you to take to Mr. John C. Moomaw, who will meet you at a bridge about two miles this side of Buchanan, on the macadam road, at one o'clock tonight. He will take them to Lexington where the board of directors of the Shenandoah Valley Railroad will meet tomorrow at ten o'clock.'

"I said to Mr. Terry that I was at his service. He had his riding mare saddled and shortly after dark I slipped out of town with those valuable papers. I rode leisurely along with nothing to mar the occasion or interrupt the stillness and quietness of the night except the beat of my horse's feet on the roadway. It was very dark up to eleven o'clock. Then the moon came out with its effulgent rays, making the landscape down the old highway in Botetourt most beautiful to look upon. I reached the bridge ten minutes to one o'clock. Waiting there for a short time, I saw someone coming toward me riding horseback on the road skirting the creek, and when joined the main highway just at the bridge. The rider proved to be Mr. Moomaw. To my jubilant salutation of 'Good morning, Mr. Moomaw,' he replied very quietly, said to him, pulling out my packet of papers: 'Mr. Moomaw, I have some very important papers that Mr. P. L. Terry told me to be delivered to you, and I thereupon handed him the packet. He remarked in his quiet way, 'Mr. Thomas, I believe these papers will bring the Shenandoah Valley Railroad to Big Lick.' I replied that I surely hoped they would. At this we parted, he turning his horse's head toward Lexington, I turning mine back toward Roanoke. He did not have any time to lose, as it was about 24 miles from there to Lexington. I had about 23 or 24 miles in getting back home. I got into Big Lick just at daybreak, and recall distinctly that the chickens were crowing as I came through Old Lick. "Do not fail to give Mr. John C. Moomaw great credit, as in my humble judgment he was the moving spirit. "Some of the midnight rides," Mr. Thomas concludes, "reminds me of Paul Revere's ride, the only similarity, how-

ever, between us was that we were both headed toward a town called Lexington. The difference was, that I was on a peaceful mission and Paul Revere on a most warlike one."

Readers who are familiar with the road between Roanoke and Buchanan will easily recognize the point where Mr. Thomas met Mr. Moomaw. It was unquestionably at Looney's Creek.

Route Is Diverted.

The next day at Lexington, when the board of directors of the Shenandoah Valley railroad met there to further consider the question of routing the line and approving rights-of-way, Mr. Moomaw appeared with the valuable document from Big Lick and gave a good account of the cordial reception he had received in Big Lick, and the unusual interest manifested by its leading men. It is said that the directors voted unanimously to divert the road into Big Lick and instructed its corps of engineers to proceed with the survey.

It is a distinct loss that the records of the meeting at Lexington are not extant. Mr. I. W. Booth, secretary of the Norfolk & Western Railway company, of Philadelphia, has been very helpful to the writer in getting some data on this subject. Mr. Booth advises that the meeting was held at Lexington in April, 1881. The road into Roanoke was finished in 1882, and the first train put through in June of that year.

Mr. Flickwir's Story.

Another story of the proposed diversion of the road from the original plan of extending it to Salem is related by D. W. Flickwir, who was at that time assistant engineer under W. W. Coe. Mr. Flickwir worked out all of the proposed lines and made the final survey for the road as it is now located. He says that very little attention was given to the proposed idea of diverting the road at Balcony Falls toward Lynchburg, though Mr. Kimball did have an option on the purchase of the Virginia Midland road, which ran through that place, and it is probable that while such matter was being talked of the idea was advanced as to tapping the two roads in that city. However, Mr. Kimball very promptly abandoned the Virginia Midland project.

One of the most unusual routes suggested was that of diverting the road from a point just below Nace, through the Blue Ridge mountains to Ironville, in Bedford county, and tapping the Atlantic, Mississippi & Ohio road at that point.

The Ironville Plan.

Joseph H. Chapman, of Salem, was the owner of the mines there, and conceived the idea, submitted a drawing and wrote a number of letters to Mr. Coe explaining the feasibility of the proposed lines. If this had been carried out, both Roanoke and Salem would have been left out. Mr. Flickwir relates that at the earnest solicitation of Mr. Chapman a survey was actually made, Mr. Chapman having advanced the theory that even if a tunnel had to be cut through the mountain there was iron ore sufficient to pay for the excavation. When the survey had been completed, Mr. Chapman, who was very enthusiastic in his plans, came to see the engineering corps as to what the result was. The first question he asked was how many tunnels there were on the proposed line. He was informed there would be but one tunnel. He then asked how long the tunnel would be and was amazed when told that it would be the whole length of the pro-

Sketch of John C. Moomaw.

It is perhaps not out of place at this juncture to give a short account of the life of the remarkable man who had so much to do with the founding of Roanoke. The story of his career is one of unusual activity and energy, and all crowded into the rather brief span of 49 years.

John C. Moomaw was born at Bonack, Va., March 18, 1837, and was the eldest child of E. F. Moomaw. He received his early education in the local and private schools of his day. His first marriage was to Virginia Catherine Graybill, of Botetourt county, April 1, 1860. From this union there were born two daughters. His first wife died in 1862. The second marriage was to Honoria Elizabeth Bowman, of Johnson City, Tenn., on Nov. 28, 1867. This union was born six sons and two daughters. Mr. Moomaw died at his home in Cloverdale August 16, 1886, after an illness of one week.

Soon after his first marriage he bought a farm in Botetourt county at Cloverdale, upon which he lived until his death. He immediately established as his principal business commercial orcharding, devoting his efforts to apples, peaches, grapes and pears.

First Canning Factory.

In 1867 he entered the business of commercial canning and established the first canning plant south of Baltimore, Maryland. At that early date commercial canning in tin cans was still very largely in the experimental stage, and the little commercial canning being done was centered largely around the city of Baltimore, with some sardine canning in the vicinity of Portland, Maine. He is, therefore, considered to be the pioneer and commercial fruit grower and canner of the South.

His first efforts at canning were confined largely to peaches, but he later developed a general canning business and in addition to peaches he canned pears, blackberries, apples, corn, peas and tomatoes. At first he depended upon tin can manufacturers of Baltimore for his supply of cans, but after a few years operation he manufactured his own tin cans at Cloverdale, thus giving all-year employment to what was considered in that day a rather large number of employees.

His farming operations extended from the Cloverdale farm to another large farm in Botetourt county near Daleville, a farm in Bedford county near Goodes, a farm in Surry county for the growth of peas and a tract of some hundred acres in Florida, upon which he intended to develop orange groves.

Many Other Activities.

Mr. Moomaw's forebears from his grandfather back were Baptists, but his father early after marriage affiliated with the Church of the Brethren. The son, therefore, became active in that denomination and was considered one of the leading elders and preachers of his day.

He was much interested in and took an active part in every worth while social and political movement of the day, and devoted much of his time to public good.

Besides his active interest in securing for Roanoke the Shenandoah Valley terminal here, he largely interested himself in the building of the Roanoke & Southern Railroad. He was its vice-president during the period of its organization and had much to do with raising the capital necessary to build the road but he did not live to see its completion.

JOHANNAS MUMMA OF DALPHIN COUNTY

Richard Glenn Huffman sent me a copy of the work of Samuel H Mumma done many years ago, and updated by Ellen L Mumma in 1970. This deals with the family of Johannes Mumma who settled near Highspire in Dalphin County about 1752,

Samuel Mumma thought that this Johannes, born 10 Mar 1736 and died 11 Jan 1816, was the son of Jacob Mumma who arrived on the Pennsylvania Merchant in 1731 with his father Jacob. Since Jacob was under 16 when they arrived he would have been born after 1715 and less than 21 years old when Johannes was born in 1736. Jacob died in 1794 leaving a will in which he mentioned his oldest son Jacob and altho he had a son John the estate settlement indicate that he was one of the younger children. So we see that it would be impossible for John born 1736 to be the son of this Jacob. So who is he?

It is possible that the father Jacob Mumma who arrived in 1731 could have had more children after they arrived in Pennsylvania but records show no indication that he did. He died intestate in 1748 his son Jacob was administrator. And there seem to be few records of the settlement. If there had been young children we would expect to find some guardianship records.

Leonard Mumma who arrived in 1732 had a son John Jacob born 11 Dec 1735. While the difference in the birthdates might be accounted for in the change in the calender in 1752 and poor memory, this John Jacob seems to have been in Earl Township after Johannes is in Dalphin County.

Probably the best possibility is Johan Lorentz Mumma who came in 1747. The "Two Brothers" on which he arrived did not list the names of the women and children, so we do not know how many children he had or who they were. He appeared on the tax list in Hempfield township in 1750. He died in 1752 leaving an oral will mentioning a "wife and children" as his heirs. He could have had a son born in 1736, who would have been 16 when his father died. Perhaps after the death of his father he went to Dalphin County.

About 1895 Dr. Egle copied the tombstones inscriptions of a small family cemetery on the "Old Mumma Farm" north of Highspire in Dalphin County. i.

Mumma, John b Mar 10 1736 d June 11, 1816
Mumma, John (jr) b Mar 11 1776 d Aug 3, 1859
Mumma, Elizabeth b Mar 28 1780 d May 2, 1850
Mumma, John, son of John and Elizabeth b Aug 15 1807 d Aug 24, 1838
Mumma, Christian son of John b Aug 12 1783 d May 30, 1855
Mumma, Fanny b Nov 29 1789 d Aug 21, 1822
Mumma, John, son of Christian and Fannie b Nov 1, 1811 d Jul 10, 1843
Mumma, Elizabeth w of Christian, dau of Henry & Mary Hagy
b Oct 19 1793 d Mar 6 1843
Mumma, Solomon, son of Christian and Elizabeth b Oct 14 1827 d Nov 24, 1849
Mumma, Mary dau of Henry and Mary Hagy b Sep 26 1804 d Dec 26 1851
Mumma, Samuel, son of Christian and Nancy b Sep 20 1842 d Apr 24, 1877
Mumma, Elizabeth dau of Christian and Ann b Aug 2 1847 d May 30, 1862

QUERY My great grandfather William J Morris b 28 Mar 1842 Fairfield Co. Ohio

Parents? Married Catherine Mumaw, Elida Oh. 1862. Her parents Martha McMillen and John Mumaw. Need information re: John's parents and family. Patricia G. Tolly, 408 Broadway, Shelbyville, IL 62565

i Stroh, Oscar B. Pennsylvania Tombstone Inscriptions. Vol I p 37
Published by the Pennsylvania Chapter Palatines to America.