

LOUISA COUNTY A CENTURY AGO — 1882

by Edmund Meredith
Louisa, Virginia

With the War Between the States and the after effects of Reconstruction behind Louisa County residents, 1882 was a year of almost complete recovery and one free from dependence upon outside interference. The county was self sufficient and was responsive to the State of Virginia's central government. County government, schools (public and private), churches, and businesses were showing all of the signs of stability and growth. Records show that the county had some 450 active farms, approximately 50 general merchandise businesses, 20 or more flour and corn mills, a well established postal system covered by approximately 25 offices, and sawmills and allied small services. In addition, the county had newspapers, physicians, lawyers, dentists, and druggists.

During the early months of 1882, the weather was rainy and generally disagreeable. The Reverend Mr. L. J. Haley's Diary contained an account of heavy snow in March and frost in April that destroyed the fruit.

On February 11, the state of Virginia approved "an act to provide commiseration to such maimed soldiers, sailors, and marines, in lieu of artificial limbs or eyes as may not heretofore have received the same under the provision of former acts." The Court approved the applications of Fleming D. Tate, S. W. Cave, Nelson N. Tate, W. T. Swift, J. C. Keningham, A. B. Cooke, Joseph Davis, and Thomas J. Johnson, all of whom had suffered severe impairments in major battles.

In March, Dr. J. S. Wills, Henry J. Wale, and E. S. Mansfield were appointed to inspect the County Jail. A Barroom license was granted to J. C. Wooldridge to sell wine, spirits, malt liquors or any mixture thereof. William P. Dillard, gentleman, was licensed to practice law in the Commonwealth of Virginia, and took the oath of fidelity and the oath of an attorney at law in Louisa County. Following the death of Matthew A. Hope, William Jackson Walton was appointed a Justice of the Peace in Jackson District.

In July, Charles Danne, Jr. and others petitioned the Court to be allowed to change the location of the old Mountain Road from a point near Mr. Danne's home in the Green Springs township to a point where the road entered the estate called "Ionia." This was to be done entirely at the expense of the petitioner.

The August Court ordered that Dr. P. B. Pendleton and Alexander W. Mills be appointed Commissioners to let to the lowest bidder the rebuilding of a bridge across the South Anna River near Hart's Mill. The November Court allotted the sum of \$225.32 to R.

C. Carpenter, Contractor, for this task.

The Reverend Mr. Haley, first superintendent of schools, resigned the office on August 10. Captain John Richardson, a Confederate veteran, had been appointed by the readjusters some months previously, but Mr. Haley continued the duties to allow Captain Richardson to complete his term as a member of the Legislature from Louisa. Although Mr. Haley had served very ably, he wrote of the great relief it was to be rid of the responsibilities. In the meantime, he continued to conduct a private school at his own home, one of many in the county, where his own three sons and three boarding students were taught by Mr. William Holladay.

On October 9, Judge Woolfolk authorized the Sulphur Mines Company of Virginia to construct and build a train road on the Chesapeake and Ohio Railway. The road stretched from Tolersville (now Mineral) to Victoria Furnace.

R. T. W. Duke, Jr. and Jefferson R. Taylor, Gentlemen, qualified to practice law in the court. They took the oath of fidelity to the Commonwealth in November.

Dry weather contributed to limited grain crops in the fall.

Baptist, Methodist, Disciples of Christ, and Episcopal Churches were quite active. They made many contributions to life in towns and villages of the county.

References:

Claudia Anderson Chisholm, contributor, "The Reverend L. J. Haley's Dairy," *Louisa County Historical Magazine*, VII (Winter 1975), 91-93.
Louisa County Order Book 1877-1882.