

**A BRIEF HISTORY
OF
DANVILLE, VIRGINIA
1728-1954**

BY
L. Beatrice W. Hairston



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BY

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Dedication

IN LOVING TRIBUTE TO MY SON,
ROBERT LEA (BOBBY) HAIRSTON, JR.
WHOSE ENCOURAGEMENT INSPIRED THE RECORDING
OF THESE EVENTS.

PREFACE

*A leader is best
When people barely know that he exists,
Not so good when people obey and acclaim him,
Worse when they despise him.
Fail to honor people,
They fail to honor you.
But of a good leader, who talks little,
When his work is done, his aim fulfilled,
They will say, "We did this ourselves."*

MAN in society, to be worthy of serious consideration, must contribute to the general good, patriotism, and defence of his country.

The history of Danville is the history of its river. A river makes a town what it is; molds its life and the life of its people, the kind of work they do and the kind of pleasures they enjoy.

From the first beginning the Dan has made Danville what it is, for businesses were brought here, or influenced in some way by the fact that a rapid little river made a horseshoe bend in a green and fertile valley.

It was a peaceful, inviting country, especially appealing to sound businessmen who recognized the land's potentialities and had the sense to make good use of it.

The first record of the Dan River is found in the Westover writings of William Byrd, founder of Richmond, who tells of its discovery when, in 1728, he was surveying the line which was to divide Virginia from North Carolina.

There are twenty-five Danvilles in the United States, however there were no Dans in Byrd's party. It is assumed that he had

PREFACE

discovered the "Land of Eden," and probably that the name was suggested by the Dan of the Scripture, "from Dan to Beersheba."

Danville is "Virginia's Largest Agricultural Center," "The World's Best Tobacco Market," "The World's Largest Textile Mills," "The Fourth Largest Combined Trade Center in Virginia."

The slogan for Danville is: "For a Better Danville Area." Everyone working for better citizenship—better community—better government—better living." A community's progress doesn't "just happen"—it is the result of unified effort by its forward-looking citizens.

Acknowledgments

IN a period of over six years, the research and assimilation of data accumulated for the proper arrangement of this work was made possible only through the patient assistance of many individuals. The personal encouragement of Robert L. Hairston, Jr. was primarily responsible for the writer's original wish to acquire and compile all available data which led to the present edition.

To my editorial staff goes my unending appreciation, not only for their help in re-editing and re-writing, but also for their imaginative stimuli and sound criticisms in all of the final stages of this work.

So many people, have been so very helpful and generous that the author feels that the credit for compiling this work should go to them. Many names could be added to the foregoing, but to those unnamed contributors also goes my sincere appreciation. Without the combined efforts of all of these individuals, this bit of history of Danville, Virginia, this recording of footprints, would not have become a reality.

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—L. B. W. H.

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Chapter I

THE FOUNDING OF DANVILLE

DANVILLE is by no means one of the oldest Virginia cities. Lynchburg, Chatham and Martinsville, next door neighbors, are older. Danville is the only city in Virginia which really began its history as a "community." Other Virginia cities date back to someone's "trading station" for their beginning, a trading station established because the trader had gotten to the head waters of a river perhaps, and could go no farther, or for some other reasons.

Danville had a "social reason" for its beginning. The sturgeon once leaped high at "Wynne's Falls" on the Dan River, and it was here that old Revolutionary soldiers, pioneering in this part of the state, met to talk over their battles and to fish.

There were good geographical reasons, also, why a settlement began at "Wynne's Falls," in the "horseshoe of the Dan," for Colonel William Byrd, who was the first "booster" Danville ever had, in his *History of the Dividing Line*, described the surveying of the Virginia and North Carolina boundary line, and thus prophesied the future of Danville.

"We breathed in pure air which seemed friendly to the lungs, and circulated the blood and spirits very briskly. Happy will be the people destined for so wholesome a situation, where they may live to fulness of days, and which is much better still, with much content and gaiety of heart."

It was in 1728 that Colonel Byrd as a member of the joint commission to establish the exact boundary between Virginia and North Carolina discovered the "Land of Eden," as he called Pittsylvania County, but it was some years after the Revolutionary War before there was any settlement on the banks of the Dan. The early history of the settlement is vague, but Dr. George W. Dame, who became the rector of Epiphany Church in 1840 and served the church for forty years, records its early history, which he says was gotten by him by "word of mouth" from the older inhabitants of his day who had it handed down to them. "Virginians who had been impoverished by the Revolutionary War in the Eastern part of the state moved into this, the then

very thinly settled part of the state to begin life again." "To keep up their acquaintance, and talk over the past, they agreed to meet at Wynne's Falls annually at the fishing season and enjoy themselves."¹

In such a "community spirit" did the history of Danville begin. Just where the ford of the Dan got the name "Wynne's Falls" none of the early historians of Danville seem to know, but soon the planters who came annually to fish for the sturgeon in the Dan, and to enjoy the delights of conversation with old friends, decided that such company should last the year round, and they stayed at Wynne's Falls.

The Dan River was named the "Dan" by Mr. Byrd, probably because when he found it to be in the midst of a land of plenty, he felt that he had wandered "from Dan to Beersheba" but at last found the land of plenty. Wynne's Falls did not become Danville until November 23, 1793, the exact date of the founding of the city by an act of the Virginia Legislature. Colonel Byrd had named the Dan, and the Legislature named the town on its banks for the "charming river" over which Col. Byrd had rhapsodized in his *History of the Dividing Line*.

"There was no Dan in his party. In the case of the many other streams named by Byrd in honor of persons, he gives the explanation where the reason was not obvious. It is most probable that the name was suggested by the Dan of the Scriptures which was a famous and proverbial boundary point—the northernmost of Canaan, at the source of a branch of the Jordan. Byrd's dividing line was about to cross the river. What more natural, in fixing limits, than to think of those traditional ones, Dan and Beersheba?"

There is an historic spot south of the city about three (3) miles from Walter's Mill. We can locate it from Byrd's manuscripts and his reference to "Cliff," now Hogan's Creek. It is on the river's brink. It is the scene of the first coming of the white man into these wilds.

Young Captain William Byrd succeeded to the business of his Uncle Thomas Stegg, about 1671, and became an active competitor of Major Wood for the Indian trade to the south and

¹ Maud Carter Clement, *The History of Pittsylvania County, Virginia*. J. P. Bell Company, Inc., Lynchburg, Va., 1929.

west. While Batts and Fallam were at the Tolera Towns in 1671, they heard that "Mr. Byrd and his great company's Discoveries" were three miles away. Besides the great companies of traders, there were also the independent traders, such as Henry Hatcher, who had reported to Major Wood details of Needham's death at the hand of the Occaneechi. When Col. Byrd visited his estate of Eden in North Carolina in 1733, he saw cut upon a great beech the following inscription, "J.H., H.H., B.B., Lay here the 24th of May 1673." The initials read Joseph Hatcher, Henry Hatcher, and Benjamin Bullington, three Indian traders who had camped under that tree on one of their trips to trade with the Indians sixty years before.

From the foregoing narrative we learn that this section was well known to the traders by 1675, with well marked trade paths leading through to the West.²

Since John Hatcher, Henry Hatcher, and Benjamin Bullington were known, back in the settlement, to have been famous woodsmen and the first traders with the Sauro Indians, who had a town about fifteen miles up the river from Danville, the names were easily supplied. Coming as it does from Byrd's, the historical evidence is perfect. Here is the earliest recorded visit at least, of white men, and it is safe to say the very first.

In June, 1641, Walter Austin, Rice Roe, Joseph Johnson, and Walter Chiles petitioned the General Assembly "for leave and encouragement to undertake the discovery of a new river of unknown lands bearing west southerly from Appomattox River." Their petition was granted in March, 1642, with a right to enjoy all profit from their adventure for fourteen years. "West southerly" from Appomattox would lead to Pittsylvania and its vicinity, where the Saponi and Occaneechi Indians lived, who were famed for their trade.

The Occaneechi Island, situated at the junction of Dan and Staunton Rivers, still retains its name of Occaneechi Island.

An Act of the Assembly, 1662, recites that the northern Indians frequently came "to the heads of our rivers whereby plain paths will soon be made which may prove of dangerous consequences." The plain paths across Virginia so feared by the

² William Byrd III, whose father William Byrd II was granted 105,000 acres in southern Halifax.

Assembly led from the north across James River to Manakin Town and ended at the Occaneechi Island. It is of interest to note that this early trade route across Midland Virginia, was opened first by the Indians.

Low rounding hills by the side of a stately, beautiful river form a situation designed by nature for man's abode. The Indians were quick to perceive the fitness of the location and established one of their towns there. But it is to the tobacco plant which has wielded so tremendous an influence upon Virginia life that we owe the founding of the City of Danville.

THE LOCATION OF DANVILLE

The location of the town of Danville—a slight elevation by the side of the broad river with excellent water power from the falls, was one calculated to induce growth.

The city of Danville, on the Dan River, is located three miles from the North Carolina line, the hub of U. S. Routes 29, 58, and 360 in the southern part of Pittsylvania County, and in the heart of the justly celebrated Piedmont section. It is 200 miles from the seacoast, at an elevation of about 500 feet above sea level.

The city was founded in 1793 and chartered in 1833.

The incorporated city covers an area of 6.3 square miles which includes territory annexed in 1947 of 504.7 acres of .476 square miles.

THE NAMING OF DANVILLE

An Indian fort is mentioned in a grant on Rutledge's Creek of Dan River:

"To William Wynne, May 1753, leave is granted to take up 2000 acres joining the lines of his survey on Dan River, beginning at a branch below the old Indian Fort running up Rutledge's Creek."

Rutledge's Creek, now a tributary, was at that time all of Pumpkin Creek, which flows through Schoolfield and enters Dan River on the outskirts of Danville.

In June 1738 William Wynne, one of the justices of Brunswick County, entered for 200 acres on the southside of Dan

River; and in 1746 Wynne and others had orders of Council for 4,000 and 5,000 acres on Beavers Creek. William Wynne later moved with his family to this new country; and Wynne's Creek of Dan River and Wynne's Falls where the City of Danville stands were named in his honor.

William Wynne is thought to be a descendant of Captain Robert Wynne who in his day was one of the most influential men in Virginia. He was a member of the House of Burgesses for Charles City County, 1657-60; and Speaker of the House from 1661-1674. His sons were living and married early in the 18th century. Thomas Wynne, Gent., was living in Prince George County in 1707, aged fifty years. Major Joshua Wynne was a justice of Prince George County in 1708. These brothers are believed to be the ancestors of the Wynnes of southern Virginia. The will of Captain Robert Wynne was proved in 1678; he desired to be buried in Jordans Church as near as possible to son Robert; to son Thomas he bequeathed a farm near Canterbury, England, and two homes in Canterbury and two other houses there; rest of estate in Virginia and England to wife Mary.

At Wynne's Falls there was a ford across the river which ran the great mail road from north to south. The cultivation of tobacco was the main industry of the people of Pittsylvania County, and the burden of carrying their product to Richmond and Petersburg for inspection was so great that the inhabitants of the county petitioned Legislature for an inspection of tobacco at Wynne's Falls on Dan River. The petitioners further stated that "the situation of the place is suitably calculated for a Town, which will make the convenience of the Inspection more serviceable," and asked that a town be established "on the south side of Dan River, adjoining Wynne's Falls on the lands, I, Larkin Dix sold to John Barnett,"—Signed George Adams, William Harrison, Robert Harrison, John Wilson, John Wilson, Jr., William Ramsey, Joel McDaniel, William Ware, Fray Mayberry, Robert Somerhays, James Paine, Peter Perkins, John Sutherlin, George Sutherlin, Sr., Thomas Fearne. This was done between March 5th and November 23rd, 1728, under the leadership of Colonel Byrd, surveyor, planter, writer, and owner of the lordly estate of Westover.

In answer to the petition Legislature enacted on November

23, 1793: "That 25 acres of land, the property of John Barnett adjoining Wynne's Falls, on the Southside of Dan River, in Pittsylvania County, shall be and they were hereby vested in Thomas Tunstall, Matthew Clay, William Harrison, John Wilson, Thomas Fearne, George Adams, Thomas Smith, gentlemen trustees, to be by them or a majority of them laid off into lots of half acre each, with convenient streets and established a town by the name of Danville."

While this act of the Legislature actually founded Danville it was not until two years later that Wynne's Falls was "subdivided and sold." Some historians think there must have been some controversy over the price of the land, but this does not seem logical as Danville at that time was without a single industry and land was almost as cheap as dirt.

On May 4, 1795 the trustees of Danville offered for sale the lots into which the town had been laid off, the purchasers of the lots obligating themselves to build upon them within five years "a dwelling house sixteen feet square at least with a brick or stone chimney." In December 1799, the owners of several unimproved lots petitioned that a further time of three years be allowed them to build thereon, which petition was signed by Beverly Barksdale, George Williamson, William Beavers, William Spiller, James Colquehoun, James Arnett, John Sutherlin, early citizens, some of whose parents' names are preserved in the streets of the city.

In 1830 an act to incorporate Danville was passed by the General Assembly, but again Danville was deliberate and not until February 14, 1833, was it ready to incorporate and select a commonalty. The twelve citizens selected to comprise the commonalty were: William Chaplin, George Townes, Jas. Lanier, Nat Greene, Thomas Rawlins, B. W. S. Cabell, John Dickinson, George Johnson, Herbert Ross, Robert Williams, John McAllister, and George Craghead. Mr. Townes and Mr. Chaplin, however, did not choose to run, and Major A. Price and E. Collier were elected to fill their places.

The first city government of Danville was comprised of the following officers: Mayor, James Lanier; Recorder, George Johnson; Aldermen, Thomas Rawlins, John Dickinson, Robert Williams, John McAllister. The Common Council was composed

of the following members: Nat. Greene, B. W. S. Cabell, Robert Ross, George Craghead, and Major A. Price. Allen Jones was city sergeant and John C. Cabinis was the first city treasurer.

EARLY SETTLERS

Low rounding hills by the side of a stately, beautiful river form a situation designed by nature for man's abode. The Indians were quickly to perceive the fitness of the location and established one of their towns there. But it is to the tobacco plant which has wielded so tremendous an influence upon Virginia life that we owe the founding of the city of Danville.

There was a point on Dan River known as Wynne's Falls named in honor of William Wynne, a very early settler who had moved with his family to this section from Brunswick County. At the Falls there was a ford across the river over which ran the great mail road from north to south. The cultivation of tobacco was the main industry of the people of Pittsylvania County, and the burden of carrying their product to Richmond and Petersburg for inspection was so great that the inhabitants of the county petitioned Legislature in October 1793 for an inspection of tobacco at Wynne's Falls on Dan River. The petitioners further stated that "the situation of the place is suitably calculated for a Town which will make the convenience of the Inspection more Serviceable." and asked that a town be established "on the south side of Dan River, adjoining Wynne's Falls on the lands Larkin Dix sold to John Barnett."

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According to the old records, as seems correct, Lot 1, as well as No. 19, were sold to Thomas Barnett for "twenty-five pounds current money of Virginia." No. 1 stood at the intersection of

Main and Craghead Streets, and No. 19 at the southwest corner of Main and Union Streets.

No. 6 went to James Colquehoun for twenty-two pounds. It was on the north side of Main Street, near the present Market Street. Halcourt Townes bought No. 15, opposite the site of the old Post Office, and numbers 34 and 36 far out up the hill, in what is now the 700 block, all for twenty-eight pounds.

If these half-acre lots seem cheap to us, we must remember that they were entirely unimproved ground, laid out along the rough wagon road leading to the south, known for many years as the Salisbury Road." And John Barnett was apparently satisfied.

General Benjamin Cabell³ was another outstanding early citizen who frequently represented the county in Legislature, in both upper and lower houses, and was a member of the Constitutional Convention of 1829-30. He was the son of Joseph Cabell of Repton, and settled in Pittsylvania about 1820, making his home "Bridgewater," about a mile above Danville, overlooking Dan River. He held in succession the commission of major-general of the militia, the last two being by election of the General Assembly.

The highway about seven miles north of Danville, known as Beavers' Tavern, was a favorite stopping place with travelers. The tavern was owned by Major William Beavers,⁴ a gentleman of good standing, a justice of the peace and major of the militia. As a rule the Southern Tavern was ill kept and uninviting—the host a man of few opportunities in life—so that Beavers' Tavern was the great exception, with a genial gentleman for the host and one's needs comfortably supplied. The tavern is now the home of Mr. John Blair, and has recently been remodeled into a modern dwelling. It sits well back from the road in a wide grassy lawn, flanked by rows of boxwood. Across the road stood the stables in a grove of great oak trees. Here the Southern statesmen were wont to await one another and from here continue the journey to Washington in company together. Calhoun of South Carolina, would spend days resting at Beaver's Tavern, in his journeys to and from the capital; you can picture

³ General Benjamin W. Cabell, was born May 10, 1793, was the son of Joseph Cabell of Repton. He was educated at Hampden-Sydney College.

⁴ Major Wm. Beavers married Elizabeth Fontaine in March 1802 (marriage bond at Pittsylvania County Courthouse).

to yourself the great statesmen walking in the grove nearby, deep in thought, or conversing pleasantly with the genial major.

"The first house on Main Street after crossing the canal was on the right hand side of the street—a large frame building occupied by James M. Williams, Senior, (the owner of the mills) as a residence and house of entertainment, known as Williams' Tavern. Above that, as one passed up Main Street (which was a common roadway, unimproved and without sidewalks) on the right hand side was a small frame building occupied by S. S. Gilmore and Nicholas Lyon as a hatter's shop, just back of which was their dyeing house built of logs.

Tradition says that the first building erected at the ford of the Dan was a blacksmith shop where horses could be shod before going down into the rocky river. Then since travelers were often detained by high water, an "ordinary" was added to care for man and beast, finally combining in a single log building, tavern, grocery, and blacksmith shop. All early sources agree that this building stood for many years about where the American National Bank now stands, on the corner of North Market and Main Streets.

B. W. S. Cabell came to Danville in 1816, after serving as a lieutenant-colonel in Pegram's Division of Virginia State Troops in the War of 1812, William F. Lewis erected a large flour, corn and oil mill which stood near the toll bridge until washed away on August 10, 1850. He was a leader in the cutting of the Danville canal, and represented the county in the House of Delegates and later in the Virginia Senate until 1838.

The oldest house in Danville which stood where Patton Street now crosses Craghead Street was known as the old Craghead House and was occupied by Dr. Bowling and family prior to 1827. This was an old house in 1838.

George Craighead came to Danville from Lunenburg about 1816. A physician, he died on his way home from a medical convention.

John Beverly Roy was a lawyer who came to Danville from Norfolk about 1818. He was a founder and first master of Roman Eagle Lodge. With Thomas Rawlins he conducted a newspaper, and was a member of a local tobacco firm until he moved to New Orleans in 1822.

George Egge Welsh, born in Richmond, came to Danville in 1830. A former captain of the Richmond "Blues," he was made captain of the Blues here. After three years in the mercantile business he became an officer in the Bank of Virginia, and remained with that organization until his death in 1864.

Thomas P. Atkinson, a native of Petersburg, came to Danville around 1832 to be president of a large manufacturing concern. Difficulties over the granting of the firm's charter caused it to be dissolved, but Atkinson remained. He became editor of the *Danville Reporter* and later mayor and president of a local bank.

The following was taken from the diary of an old resident, Thompson Coleman, who lived in Danville more than a century ago:

When I went to Danville to reside there, in 1829, I approached the place, then a straggling village, by way of the country road leading north towards Pittsylvania Court House. This road was a common country road, unimproved by grading or otherwise, narrow and often impassable in winter because of the sticky red mud into which vehicles sank to the hubs.

The country on the north side of the river was at that time a natural forest of primeval growth, unbroken by any house, settlement or clearing.

The road led directly down the steep red clay hill to the river bank, made a short turn there, and brought up at the entrance to the bridge; but beyond this turn of the road it also extended down the river bank into the stream and across it by way of the ford, above the bridge, which was often used to save the tolls then required of those who crossed the bridge. At the north end of the bridge was the tollhouse, a small wooden building of one room, about ten feet by twelve in size.

After crossing the bridge the first building to be seen was the flour mill. It was an extensive establishment for those days. Just below the flour mill was a sawmill, with an old-fashioned sash saw. Just above the bridge between the canal and the river was a common "tub" mill with one pair of stones for grinding corn. Above that was a small building in which were a linseed oil mill, a cotton gin and a wool carding machine. These mills were all run by water power from the canal.

Passing from the toll bridge the canal was crossed by a small

frail bridge, built of hewn logs laid from bank to bank, and covered with two-inch boards; and then the road took up the hill and out of town to a point about a mile from the bridge, where it forked—one branch leading south into Caswell County, N. C., and the other west, and known as the Salisbury, N. C., road.

The business of the town was small. There were only two regular stores, one kept by Thomas and Samuel D. Rawlins, and the other by John Ross & Co. There was an agency of the Farmers' Bank of Virginia, with very small capital. There were two tailor shops, one blacksmith shop and one shoemaker's shop. There was one tan yard. Hats were manufactured on a small scale by Gilmore & Lyon.

The tobacco trade was in its infancy, and was carried on by Thomas and Samuel D. Rawlins and John B. Roy, who may be called the pioneers in the trade here. No leaf tobacco was sold loose, but all was prized in hogsheads and sold at the warehouses.

There was no church in the town, and but little preaching. Occasionally there was preaching at some private residence, and sometimes at the "Yellow House" or the Male Academy.

There was one newspaper, the *Telegraph*, published weekly by Col. Thomas H. Clark. The educational facilities of the town were good; there was the Male Academy, with Robert B. Gilliam at the time principal of the school; there were also two mixed schools for girls and boys, one of which was conducted by James Aiken and the other by Robert White. Such was Danville in 1829.

SOME OF THE EARLY NEGRO SETTLERS

Lewis Scott, the grandfather of Mrs. Virginis Watkins Fuller, owned and operated a bateau (boat) from Danville to Madison, N. C. Mr. Scott was also an excavator, and laid the foundation for most of the older buildings (Wynne' Falls) Danville. Mr. Phil Hubbard was also an excavator.

Mrs. Mary Littlejohn, the great grandmother of Mrs. Virginis W. Fuller, was born about 1790. Records show that she died August 27, 1886, at the age of 90. Mrs. Littlejohn was the grandmother of Mr. Preston Watkins.

Lewis Scott, owned quite a bit of property on what is now North Union Street (Mechanicsville).

In 1820, Letha Flagg, lived on Market Street (now Craighead), on Dr. Craghead's farm. Porter Flagg, her husband drove the stage-coach from Danville to Chatham and Chalk Level, leading to Lynchburg, where the horses were changed.

June 28, 1834, the Baptist Church (white) met in the Masonic Hall on Craighead Street. Three colored members joined: Lucinda, Mary, Richard.

In 1880 the population of Danville was 7,526 persons. There were 3,129 whites and 4,397 colored.

Monroe Street was Canal Street, Ridge Street was Branch Street.

Alexander Averett and James M. Clark owned the first skating rink in Danville. It was on Loyal Street.

T. G. Bannister owned store 38 and 40 on Union Street.

Henry Barksdale was the father of Mrs. P. M. B. Hodge.

James Barrett, blacksmith, Lynn Street.

James Barrett, Jr. was a student.

E. D. Coles—Patton near Market, blacksmith.

William Norris and Peter Hairston, corner High and Union.

Louis H. Bartlett, barber and hair dresser, Arlington Hotel, on Union Street.

James M. Clark, Alexander Averett, skating rink.

George P. Holland, groceries, 8 City Market.

Minus Alexander Lee, laundry, Union Street near Main.

Alfred P. Patrick, staple and fancy groceries, fish, 26 Market Street.

Pleasant Watkins, dry goods, ready made clothing, wines, etc., Lower Main Street.

Hector H. Bell, all kinds of human hair work, Patton Street. (Made a pretty hair ornament from the hair of General T. J. Jackson's horse.)

Mrs. Matilda Lanier Greene, grandmother of Mr. E. G. Adams on mother's side. (Born a Lainer on Lanier's farm.)

Mr. Moses Greene, husband of Matilda Greene. Born on Greene Street. When Danville was Wynne's Falls all east of Main Street belonged to the Greens. The colored section of Greene Street cemetery was given to the city by Mr. Moses Greene.

Mr. Spy Ross oldest brother of J. T. R. Cobbs had a store on Main Street about where Moskins is now located. Lucius Henderson owned Henderson & Ross, grocery store.

Adelaine Ross, wife of Spy Ross, had a restaurant in the back of the store.

Chapter II

TRANSPORTATION

BATEAU

AT the time of the founding of the city of Danville the waterways were the chief means of conveying produce to market. The fact that the rivers which drained this section—the Dan, the Staunton and the Roanoke—flowed into North Carolina much of the produce of Pittsylvania found market. The clearing and opening of the waterways was a matter of such concern to the people of south Midland Virginia that the subject was brought before the General Assembly, and on November 24, 1796, George Carrington, John B. Scott, Richard N. Venable, Henry E. Coleman and Clement Carrington, or any three of them were appointed “to wait upon the Governor of North Carolina and enter into proper mutual stipulations for improving the navigation of Roanoke River.” Men caught the vision of a great waterway of trade formed by the Roanoke and its tributaries, with boats and bateaux laden with produce swiftly covering the many miles to market. The project offered relief from the weary miles of rough travel over the roads leading to the Richmond and Petersburg markets.

The Roanoke Navigation Company flourished for many years, adding greatly to the prosperity of this section. With exclusive rights and state aid the company opened navigation from Weldon, N. C. up the Staunton to the mouth of Pigg River; and up Dan River to Meade, N. C. Howe said in his *History of Virginia*, 1850, that Dan River was navigable for bateaux carrying from 7,000 to 10,000 pounds as far up as Meade, N. C. Bateaux plied regularly up and down the Dan and Staunton rivers, propelled by long poles, and the blowing of the bateau horn gave notice of its approach at the landing places where hogsheads of tobacco, cargoes of flour, wheat and other produce were loaded on to be conveyed to market. Bateaux on the Staunton continued in use until recent years, bringing their cargoes to the railroad bridge at Hurts, where by means of pulleys it was loaded into freight cars.

The river bateaux were long, narrow boats and were the

invention of Robert Ross and Anthony Rucker. It is said the idea was suggested by the Indians' custom of lashing their light canoes together with poles when a very heavy load was to be carried. The bateaux on James River at Lynchburg were described in 1796 by Isaac Weld as "boats from 45 to 54 feet in length, but very narrow in proportion to their length. Three men were sufficient to navigate one of these boats."⁵

CANAL

The building of a canal through the Dismal Swamp opened uninterrupted water carriage from this section to Norfolk. With the benefit of open water communication between the town and Norfolk grew rapidly. A rock canal with locks was built by the navigation company around the falls at Danville, and so substantial and enduring was their work that the canal is in use today by the cotton mills.

DIRT TURNPIKE

The necessity for improved highways over which to move the farm products to market was engaging the attention of the people. In 1832 a petition was presented to the Legislature from Pittsylvania, Henry, Patrick, Grayson, Floyd, Montgomery, Franklin, and Wythe counties for a turnpike from Danville to Evansham in Wythe County, to be built after the manner of the Kanawha Pike. It was considered that \$50,000.00 would be sufficient funds to construct the road. A map of the road was surveyed at this time.

In 1837, Pittsylvania, Franklin and Botetourt petitioned for a dirt turnpike to be built from ~~Danville by Rocky Mount~~ and Big Lick (now Roanoke city),^{*} to Fincastle, and stated that the ~~road from Danville to Rocky Mount~~ be constructed at \$300 per mile. This road it was thought would be of great benefit to travelers from the south seeking the mineral springs of Virginia. Books were to be opened at Danville under the direction of John Dickenson, Robert W. Williams, Thomas Rawlings, Robert Wilson, John Ross and George Townes; at Pittsylvania Courthouse under George H. Gilmer, Coleman D. Bennett, James M.

^{*} *William and Mary Quarterly*, Vol. II, p. 154.

Whittle, William Rison, James F. Johnson and William H. Tunstall; at Jabez Smith's stores under Vincent Witcher, Jabez Smith, James Hopkins, James Mitchell, and W. B. Roger.

The road was surveyed by Crozet, the French Engineer, and was built at once. It ran from Danville to Rocky Mount, leading by Swansonville and Callands, and was known as the Franklin Turnpike. It proved to be a great trade artery, being the outlet to market for the mountain counties of Franklin, Grayson, Floyd and Carroll. Along its dusty way traveled droves of horses, cattle, sheep and hogs, flocks of turkeys, wagon loads of chickens, apples and produce of all kinds seeking the market of Danville. It was a rare sight for the country boy who was not so fortunate as to live on the Turnpike, to be permitted to stand for an hour on the roadside and watch the traffic down this busy highway of trade.

In 1842 a turnpike from Danville to Lynchburg was chartered which led by Chatham and Chalk Level, crossing Staunton River at Ward's Bridge where it entered Ward's Road and led on to Lynchburg. A stage-coach plied daily between the two towns, a distance of some seventy-five miles, and the Turnpike was known as the "Stage Road." Porter Flagg had the mail contract for years. Four horses driven at a long gallop were used to the stage, and relay stables were placed at Chatham and Chalk Level, where the horses were changed. The approach of the stage was heralded by blowing a horn, and its passing was a picturesque event of each day.

General B. W. S. Cabell⁶ built a canal around the Dan at the falls.

For about thirty years the freight bateaux plied the Dan, laden with tobacco, cotton and produce that was brought into Wynne's Falls by Mr. Lewis Scott (colored).⁷ He was the proud owner of his bateau. His journey was from Madison, North Carolina down to the falls. Here Mr. Wynne conveyed the cotton and tobacco down to the Dan, to the Albemarle Sound and into Norfolk, Virginia, to be shipped to England.

⁶W. S. Meacham, *History Sketch of Danville*—City Incorporated, p. 17.

⁷Lewis Scott, grandfather of Mrs. Virginia Watkins Fuller.

TOLL BRIDGE

The year 1801 shows that the foundation of one of Danville's leading industries had been laid at that early time, when flour inspection for the town was sought, "as the flour manufactured here is generally shipped down the Dan River and has to be inspected lower down." Another petition sought permission for the erection of a toll bridge over Dan River from the land of John Barnett to the land of Thos. Worsham, to charge the customary rate of toll. A petition for the proprietors of the toll bridge in 1818, asking to raise the rate of toll stated that the bridge was built in 1802, just below the great falls opposite the town of Danville, and was 325 yards in length. "Owing to the great changes in the times, the progress which has been made and is making in the navigation of Roanoke River and its branches, and the rapid growth of the town of Danville," an increase in toll rates was deemed necessary to keep the bridge in repair; for "the road which passes through the counties of Halifax and Pittsylvania to Danville and from there through the State of North Carolina is one of the most public in the United States being the principle Highway of Travellers from the south and southwest to Richmond, the city of Washington, Baltimore, Philadelphia, and other large commercial towns of the North and East."

The petition was granted and the rate was fixed as follows: Horses, 4 cts.; man, 4 cts.; hhd. tob., 4 cts.; four-wheel carriage, 24 cts.; two-wheel carriage, 8 cts.; neat cattle, 4 cts.; hog, $\frac{3}{4}$ cts.

With the assembling of a few families there on the banks of the Dan, a pleasant social life developed at once. And as the Fourth of July Ball was generally held at the Courthouse, preceded by the races and a barbecue dinner, so the Washington Ball was usually held at Danville, to which came the socially elite of the county.

In the proceedings of Roman Eagle Lodge Masons for August 4, 1821, appears the following resolution, which embodies an interesting story:

"Resolved, that the sum of five dollars be appropriated by way of donation and reward to James Battles, a free man of color, and Bill, a slave of color, for their noble and praiseworthy exer-

tions in rescuing from drowning a gallant horse belonging to Rev. Joseph Thomas, which in passing over the Danville toll bridge had taken fright, and together with a gig, had been hurled off the bridge into the river.

"The horse, gig, etc., had been saved chiefly through the exertion of these colored men and two white men, William Franklin and John Taylor, at the evident hazard of their own lives in consequence of the rapidity and strength of the current which was materially accelerated by a freshet in the river."

The thanks of the lodge were presented to Franklin and Taylor, who were understood to have refused pecuniary reward.

Another instance of the same sort occurred in 1822, when two Negro men saved a Mr. Welles, whose overloaded wagon broke the bridge down and hurled him and his six horses into the river. The horses were drowned, but Welles, though injured, was saved by the colored men who were given a reward as encouragement to others to do the same if necessary.

One of the numerous tales told about Danville's old bridge, which was washed away in 1850, concerns a time in its history when it was being repaired, and all the flooring taken up except a broad sleeper right across the middle. A storm came up and the workmen ran for shelter without taking time to put up a barricade or warning sign at the ends of the bridge. Night soon came, and a watchman was set to guard the floorless bridge on the Danville side. In the darkness a traveler named Baird, from Nelson County, rode through the storm and came to the far end of the bridge. He had no way of knowing that the bridge had no floor, and his horse, stepping on the lone sleeper, walked safely across the river to Williams' tavern. The tavern-keeper, in some surprise, asked Baird how he had managed to get into town.

Baird, surprised at this apparently foolish question, answered:

"Why over the bridge, as usual."

"But there is no bridge there."

"Man are you crazy? Certainly the bridge is there. I came right over it—how could I have done that if it wasn't there?"

"But I saw them take it up."

The dispute waxed warm, and they finally betook themselves to the river bank, each determined to demonstrate to the other that what he maintained was impossible. They soon found the

true state of affairs—and also a very scared watchman still trembling from having watched Mr. Baird approach on horseback across the one sleeper.

He had, at least, had the good sense not to call or cry out for fear of startling the horse and causing him to miss his footing.

RAILROADS

The building of railroads as an improved quicker mode of transportation next engrossed the minds of men of this section. A brilliant and gifted son of Pittsylvania, Whitmell P. Tunstall, was the leader in a determined movement for a railroad from Richmond to Danville. A railroad was a revolutionary idea at this time in which many people had no confidence, and Tunstall met with strong opposition from those who considered him a vain dreamer, as well as from the Roanoke Navigation Company, which feared lest Tunstall's dream be realized and they find a rival in the transportation business.

Tunstall was a lawyer by profession and for many years a member of the Legislature. With firm belief in his plans and the future development of his country, he pursued his course with persuasive eloquence. A railroad convention met in Danville October 5, 1835; and another in Richmond on June 11, 1836, at which Danville was represented by Ben Cabell, George Townes, Thomas Rawlins, Robert Williams, and John Price; Pittsylvania, by William Swanson, Walter Fitzgerald, and Vincent Witcher. At this convention it was resolved that the Legislature of North Carolina incorporating the Roanoke-Danville and Junction R.R. Company was liberal, and requested Virginia to do the same.

Mr. Tunstall introduced the bill to charter the Richmond and Danville Railroad April 1838, in a strong and eloquent speech. Again in 1845 Pittsylvania County petitioned that the railroad from Danville to Richmond be built, and pointed out the advantages which the state would receive from the expenditures in building the road—that only through this railroad could the products of this section of the state reach the Richmond markets, which would furnish “an outlet of trade for the counties of Franklin, Roanoke, Floyd, Carroll, Grayson, Wythe, and other western counties to the Tennessee line.” That no other section of the state could furnish to eastern markets so great a quantity of products.

After a struggle of nine years the charter was granted on March 9, 1847, with state aid assured, and in a letter to his brother-in-law, Col. George Townes, written one hour after the passage of the Bill, Mr. Tunstall wrote: "'Tis the proudest day of my life and I think I may now say I have not lived in vain." The first train entered the city of Danville on June 19, 1856, but Mr. Tunstall did not live to see the completion of the railroad of which he had been elected first president, but his vision has been more than fulfilled in the expansive development of his native section, accomplished through the work of the railroad. Whitmell P. Tunstall⁸ passed away at the early age of 44 years "and with him perished much of genius, work and worth." He was buried in Belle Grove, his ancestral home.

At the close of the war in 1865 the Richmond and Danville Railway, the pride of the city, was in a most deplorable condition, with the trackage largely destroyed and the bridges burnt. At this crucial point another brilliant and gifted son of Pittsylvania and Danville was called to take charge and was made president of the railroad, Col. Algernon Sidney Buford.⁹ For twenty years he held this responsible position and through the trying period of reconstruction, when the South was battling for its existence, with meager resources at his command he extended the line to 3,000 miles of trackage, and thus established the great system known as the Southern Railway, which had its inception in the Richmond and Danville Railroad. Col. Buford was the son of William Buford of Lunenburg and his wife Sarah Robert-

⁸ Whitmell P. Tunstall, born April 1816, died Feb. 19, 1854, was the son of Col. William Tunstall and his wife Winnefred Pugh. He married first the beautiful Mrs. Doneche, who lived only a short while, and secondly, Mary Liggot, Sept. 29, 1840, by whom he had issue: John L. born 1845, Alex Augusta, Norman. He served in the House of Delegates from 1836 to 1841; the session of 1841-42 he was elected to the Senate; from 1845-48 he was again in the House of Delegates. He was forceful in debate, quick with repartee, and withal such a genial, pleasing personality that he made for himself a host of friends. His portrait hangs on the walls of the Courthouse of Pittsylvania.

⁹ Algernon Sidney Buford was born Jan. 2, 1826. In 1854 he married Emily W. Townes of Pittsylvania County, sister of George Townes, by whom he had a daughter, Emily, now Mrs. Clements Manley, of Winston Salem, N. C. He married secondly Katie Wortham of Richmond, had issue: Kate T. Buford, Wm. E. Buford, Ambrose Buford was living in Pittsylvania County at the time of the Revolutionary War, and died in the service. His will was probated in 1780, and wife Mary his executrix.

son Shelton of Pittsylvania, and spent his boyhood in Pittsylvania, being brought up in a school taught by his father. For a while he himself taught a school for boys in Chatham. Later he graduated in law at the University of Virginia and began the practice of his profession in his mother's native county of Pittsylvania. He soon removed to Danville, where in addition to his practice he became the owner and editor of the *Danville Register*. He represented Pittsylvania in the House of Delegates for the session 1853-54 and 1861-65.

Another outstanding figure in the founding of the city of Danville, also a builder of railroads, was Major William Sutherlin, a son of Pittsylvania. He was born in 1822, and was educated at the Danville Academy and in the private school of Joseph Godfrey, that famous teacher who trained so many of the youth of the county. William Sutherlin was a manufacturer of tobacco and a man of vision, who planned for the development of the resources of his native section. He built two railroads, the Milton and Sutherlin and the Danville and New River. He was deeply interested in the science of farming and aided in re-organizing the State's Agricultural Society of which he was president for four years. Major Sutherlin's beautiful home in Danville is preserved as a Memorial Mansion and houses the public library of the city.

With the coming of the railroad, began the decline of the Roanoke Navigation Company, and finally its dissolution. The Bateaux lay idle in the basin, the shrill voice of the locomotive replaced the mellow songs of the boatmen. The era of water travel on the Dan was past.

Danville was not content with one railroad, since another was now slowly growing south from Washington, from Alexandria to Manassas, then to Orange. Danville business men determined to hasten a connection with this direct route to the nation's capital. Accordingly in 1866, partly as a means of recovery following the war, a charter was secured to construct the Danville and Lynchburg Railroad. Work was begun, but little progress was made until its consolidation with the Orange, Alexandria and Manassas road in 1871, under the name of the Virginia Midland Railroad. So successful was this road that in 1894 it actually bought the Richmond and Danville road, an act of the Virginia

Legislature authorizing the purchasers to incorporate and adopt a name. Thus came into being the Southern Railway Company.

STREETCAR TRANSPORTATION

The sketchbook of Pollock, states that "among recent innovations, and one that has proved a great convenience to the up-town people, is a Street Bus Line, established by an enterprising young citizen, Mr. J. R. Noell." This line consisted of several omnibuses, drawn by horses, which met the Richmond and Danville trains, at the depot on Craighead Street and the Virginia Midland trains at their station in North Danville, near the end of the covered bridge, from these points conveying passengers to their destinations in the town. The next year narrow gauge rails were laid from the depot to Mt. Vernon Church, and streetcars drawn by mules superseded the omnibuses, beginning June 3, 1886. At this time, the Danville Street Car Company was granted a franchise to build lines in the town, and "to operate them, propelled by horses, or mules, cable, or electricity, or such other motive power as may be best adapted to the purpose." Later, on November 13, 1888, the mules, were retired and the first electric streetcars made their appearance in Danville.

February 3, 1900, a new charter was granted the Danville Electric Company, financed by Newport News capital. This company saw a need of extending the lines, since it was such a paying business, and planned to run the line out to Reservoir Park. This caused a community protest since Judge A. M. Aiken and Mr. H. C. Ficklin, with others, were the chief objectors: thus "they did not wish to disturb the peace and quietness of the people of that territory by the clicking of the street-cars." Therefore the Newport News Company, made an agreement with other citizens, and instead of directing the line on West Main Street past Judge Aiken's house, detoured the line through the wooded undeveloped area now known as South Main Street into Watson, and Montague Street to the Park.

After a lengthy time, the objectives were overcome, and West Main Street was widened and tracks laid.

In the course of time it became advisable to extend the electric car line to Neapolis, (North Danville) up the hill to a point then known as Gitt's Drug Store or Gitt's Switch. The North Danville

residents objected to this proposition, contending that the peace of their residents would be broken by the changing noise, and moreover, the town would be ruined, since farmers' horses were not acquainted with the sights. So to alleviate this situation, Worsham Street was built to provide a route for farmers to the tobacco markets (that their mules and horses could be free from the sight of horseless cars).

April 11, 1938, the city of Danville bade farewell to street-cars forever, in favor of motor buses, the last ride on the last car was an occasion never to be forgotten.

As the car went across the bridge for the last time it was crowded to capacity with city and power company dignitaries, and others who went along "just for the ride."

On the car were two who had been on the first car to cross the Dan River many years ago. These were Mayor Harry Wooding and Mrs. F. O. Kidd. Also a passenger was Adolphus Campbell, who had ridden on Danville's first horsecar.

Chapter III

SOME OF THE TOWN'S VERY EARLY CITIZENS

TRADITION says that the first building erected at the ford of the Dan was a blacksmith shop where horses could be shod before going down into the rocky river. Then, since travelers were often detained by high water, an "ordinary" was added to care for man and beast, finally combining in a single log building, stood many smith shops. All early sources agree that this building stood for many years about where American National Bank now stands, on the corner of North Market and Main Streets.

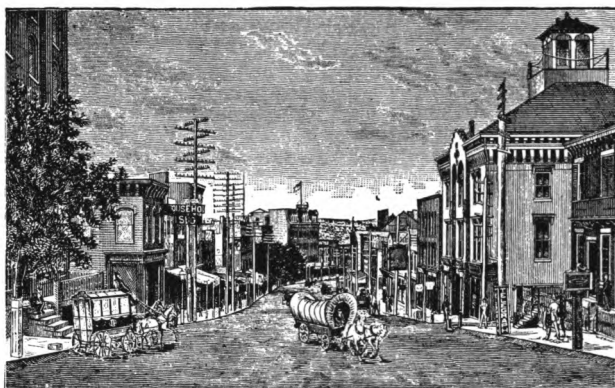
B. W. S. Cabell came to Danville in 1816, after serving as a lieutenant-colonel in Pegram's Division of Virginia State Troops in the War of 1812. With William F. Lewis he erected a large flour, corn, and oil mill which stood near the toll bridge until washed away on August 10, 1850. He was a leader in the cutting of the Danville canal, and represented the county in the House of Delegates and later in the Virginia Senate until 1838.

George Craghead came to Danville from Lunenburg about 1816. A physician, he died on his way home from a medical convention.

John Beverly Roy was a lawyer who came to Danville from Norfolk about 1818. He was a founder and first master of Roman Eagle Lodge. With Thomas Rawlins he conducted a newspaper, and was a member of a local tobacco firm until he moved to New Orleans in 1822.

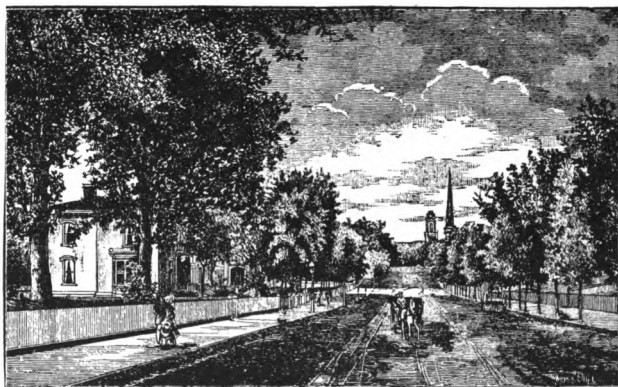
George Egge Welsh, born in Richmond, came to Danville in 1830. A former captain of the Richmond "Blues," he was made captain of the Blues here. After three years in the mercantile business he became an officer in the Bank of Virginia, and remained with that organization until his death in 1864.

Thomas P. Atkinson, a native of Petersburg, came to Danville around 1832 to be president of a large manufacturing concern. Difficulties over the granting of the firm's charter caused it to be dissolved, but Atkinson remained. He became editor of the *Danville Reporter* and later mayor and president of a local bank.



VIEW ON LOWER MAIN STREET

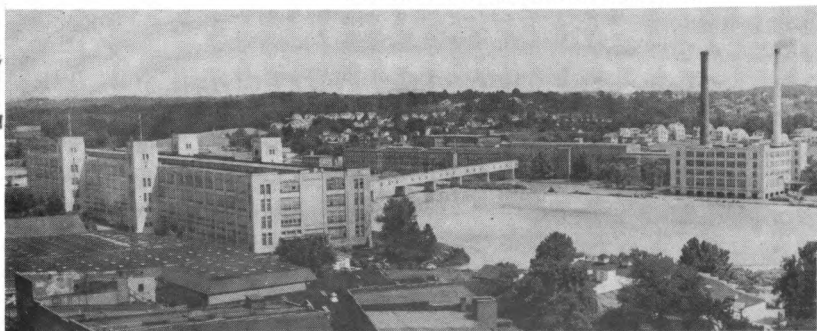
Pollock's Sketchbook of Danville, Va. - 1885.



VIEW ON UPPER MAIN STREET

(Residence of E. H. Miller, Esq., in the Foreground)

Pollock's Sketchbook of Danville, Va. - 1885.



AERIAL VIEW OF RIVERSIDE DIVISION OF DAN RIVER MILLS, INC.

(W. L. Taylor, Director)

FIFTY-EIGHT BUILDINGS

The young town experienced a real "boom" in the 1820's. At this time it was still strung out along Main Street, and consisted of 58 structures, four of them built of brick. Lots on Main Street are said to have been sold then for around \$100 a front foot.

Leading tobacco merchants during this period were Samuel D. Rawlins and John D. Roy. One newspaper, *The Telegraph*, was edited and published by Thomas H. Clark, and there was a post-office located in the counting room of a store.

There was no church, but visiting preachers came through the section occasionally, and "preaching" was held at the Male Academy or the Yellow House, a tavern on Water Street which was then the principal hotel in town.

In 1826 a two-story brick Masonic hall was built opposite the tavern, and the first floor was used for monthly preaching, court sessions and schools operated by Ann Benedict and Levi Holbrook, as well as for dancing and other parties.

HARD TIMES

In 1837 the financial panic which swept the whole country struck the thriving little town. It resisted valiantly for a while, but was forced to give in and for 20 years was in the throes of deep depression.

Its tobacco warehouses—by then there were four—were forced to close, as well as many of the other businesses which had begun during the days of prosperity.

Property could hardly be given away. One lot on Main Street which at the start of the year had sold for \$10,000, brought only \$500 at the year's end.

The town stagnated. Few barges floated on the once busy river. Many settlers who had come to town during the preceding decade were forced to go elsewhere. Only those were left who not only had faith in the town's future but the means to stick out the depression.

DANVILLE DESCRIBED IN 1850

Would you like to know what sort of place Danville was exactly a century ago? Here is the way Mayor Harry A. Wooding

described it to members of the Rotary Club when he addressed them on August 17, 1932.

At that time (1850) Danville had a population of less than 2,000; the only bridge across Dan River was a one-way bridge, and there were only four houses on the north side of the river.

Tallow candles were used for lighting purposes; sperm candles were used on special occasions. When kerosene oil was first brought to Danville, people were as much afraid of it as they are of dynamite today.

There were four churches at that time, namely, Methodist, Baptist, Presbyterian, and Episcopal. It took three days' travel from Danville to Richmond. There were no traveling salesmen, and merchants bought their goods only twice a year.

Manufacturers bought their tobacco direct from barns. The first auction sale of tobacco was made on Main Street in front of what is now Kaufman's clothing store.

DANVILLE IN OLD DAYS SUFFERED MANY FIRES

To judge from the notebook kept by Jacob Davis from 1855 to 1875, Danville suffered more than its share of supposedly incendiary fires in those days.

One of the most destructive seems to have occurred on April 24, 1855, for his journal has this to say: "At 10½ P. M. a destructive fire burning all between Craghead Street and the Toll Bridge, both sides of Main Street."

A total of 16 business establishments were destroyed and the loss was estimated at \$75,000. Insurance was said to amount to about \$28,000.

"The fire commenced in Hardy & Davidson's Lumber House," Davis wrote, "supposed by many to have been intentional, but I think it most probably the effect of carelessness.

One of the severest losses was suffered two years before that, on January 23, 1863. There is an entry in the notebook stating: "Wm. B. Milner & Jas. Hankins Tob'o Factory, 600 boxes Manufactured Tob'o, 70,000 lbs. Leaf—Loss \$100,000. No Ins. Believed to have been set on fire."

Although ten other fires occurred from 1865 to 1876 they are said by Davis to have been the work of incendiaries. Here are his descriptions of them:

February 3, 1865: "Doct. Thos. P. Atkinson's Dwelling House. 1 o'clock A. M. The family believed it to have been one of several attempts before by his negroes. Doubtful how it took fire. No ins."

February 8, 1865: "Rison & Grasty Grocery & Comm. Store, Sorey's Grocery Store & the Market House, Main Street—Work of incendiary."

March 25, 1866: "Danville Woolen Factory, Lynn & Bro.'s Planing Machine, Brown & Jeter's Grocery Store, Wm. Robinson's Grocery Store, & several other stores very much damaged. That fire broke out in Lynn & Bro.'s Machine Shop on the Canal, and then commenced to cross Main St. Set on fire by incendiaries."

July 16, 1866: "2 o'clk A. M. Ayres & Son Tob. Factory, Bridge St. with large stock of leaf Tob. & 15,000 lbs. belonging to David Ayres—Very little doubt but it was set on fire by incendiaries."

August 13, 1866: "1 o'clk. A. M. James M. Walker's Mill, Machine Shop, Foundry, Saw Mill & 6 or 8 small Houses (north side of river). Work of incendiary."

September 13, 1866: "Doct. Boatwright's residence. ½ past two o'clk night—supposed to be set on fire."

1872: "Lash Steam Saw Mill. Supposed to have been set on fire."

November 15, 1872: "1 ½ o'clk A. M. Danville Mills, Jones Snuff Factory, Linn's Machine etc. Loss estimated at \$100,000. Supposed to have been set on fire. No insurance."

March, 1876: "New Tob. Factory, A. B. Chambers. Set on fire."

April 14, 1876: "New Tob Factory, Jno. T. Stoval. Incendiary."

Jacob Davis' notebook is a part of the public library's Danville history collection.

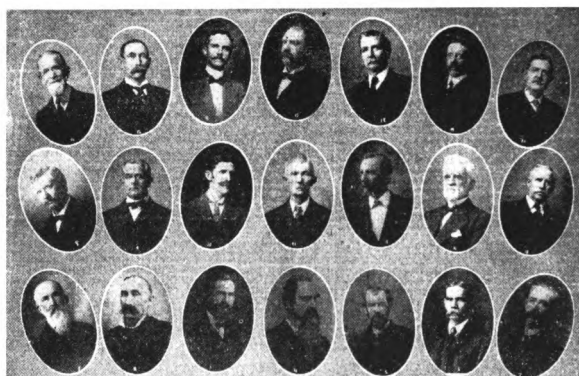
Chapter IV

LIFE OF DANVILLE TO 1865

DANVILLE WAREHOUSES

CONSIDERATION of Danville from the industrial point of view inevitably opens the whole chapter of tobacco culture, sale and manufacture, since it is through the tobacco industry that Danville has sturdily developed through past generations to the rank it holds today among the cities of the South. While economic necessity has brought about subtle changes in outward industrial appearance it remains a fact that tobacco is still the traditional and basic industry, until trusts, twenty years ago, reduced the manufacturing activity here and saw it replaced to a large extent by the development and enlargement of the local textile plants. The casual traveler going through Danville obtains the impression that the city's chief asset is its textile industry. This is true only in the sense that the textile payrolls constantly stimulate local business. The Danville tobacco market and its correlated businesses have their effect far beyond the corporate limits. The state and city tax return is over \$100,000 annually. It actually furnishes the ways and means of thousands of farmers throughout the contiguous growing area who view Danville as their business center.

In the tobacco leaf is enfolded the most romantic chapter of Danville's development and one which goes back to that very distant day when Wynn's Falls was composed of a few clapboard buildings clustered around the only ferry across the Dan River in this immediate neighborhood. The first settlement was in their relatively small space around the junction of Bridge and Main Street, the ferry being where the Main Street Bridge now stands. That was in a day before dams had been built and when Dan River in appearance at least was more pretentious than it is today with its boulders and sand bars. It was less turbid than today, its channel was open to navigation by flat-bottomed boats operated by the Roanoke Navigation Company which plied between Madison, Danville and Milton. The ferry was a convenient stopping



EARLY LEADERS OF DANVILLE'S TOBACCO INDUSTRY

This old picture shows the presidents of the Danville Tobacco Association from 1873 to 1908 inclusive. *Left to right, bottom row:* 1, P. W. Ferrell; 2, T. L. Brown; 3, R. C. Herndon; 4, T. J. Talbott; 5, P. C. Venable; 6, James G. Penn; 7, M. P. Jordan. *Middle row:* 8, J. G. Covington; 9, O. W. Dudley; 10, R. L. Dibrell; 11, I. S. Bendall (out of sequence since the secretary-treasurer was placed in the center); 12, George S. Hughes; 13, Orlando Wemple. *Top row:* 14, C. H. Hickey; 15, E. K. Jones; 16, H. L. Boatwright; 17, E. G. Moseley; 18, E. W. Dixon; 19, J. F. Rison; 20, A. B. Carrington.



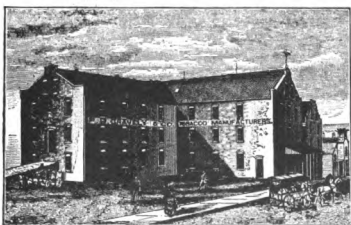
BROWN & STOVALL

Pollock's Sketchbook of Danville, Va. - 1885.



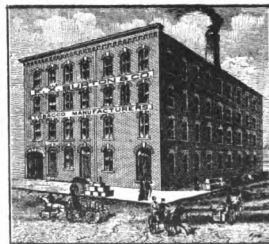
STAR WAREHOUSE

Pollock's Sketchbook of Danville, Va. - 1885.



P. B. GRAVELY & CO.

Pollock's Sketchbook of Danville, Va. - 1885.



F. X. BURTON & CO.

Pollock's Sketchbook of Danville, Va. - 1885.

place over night. There was a tavern and hence there was a gradual development of the community.

The official inspection of tobacco began in 1733, and continued throughout the ante-bellum period. However, during this period there was a general decline in the inspection of places which received little tobacco.

As a place of tobacco inspection, warehouses were erected at once for the reception of the tobacco, and there is on record in the clerk's office at Chatham a report from the inspectors as follows:

Dan River Danville Warehouse

a List of Tob. received from 22 Sept. 1795

'Til 19th September 1796—

18 hhds. of Tob, Shipped by Thos. Barnett.

44 hhds, of Tob, Shipped by Col. John Wilson

28 hhds. Tob, Shipped by James Colquehoun

29 hhds. of Tob, Shipped by Ro. Payne & Co.

7 hhds. Tob, Shipped by George Baskerville

1 hhds of Tob, Shipped by John Jones

1 hhds of Tob. Shipped by Geoge Cook

7 hhds of Tob. Shipped and prized heavy by John Wilson
& James Colquehoun.

70 hhds. Tob. remaining in the warehouse.

249. Sept. 17, 1796.

John Sutherlin & John Dix¹⁰

Of the 23 inspection warehouses in Virginia in 1849, one of these was located in Danville. Before this time, in 1833, there were five tobacco warehouses and 10 factories.

They were known as "State" warehouses, and were subject to the control of the State Government with the inspectors being bonded officers appointed by the governor.

Catastrophe almost overtook the tobacco industry in Danville when closing of four warehouses was forced by the panic of 1837. At first the buyers rode their horses into the country, and dealt directly with the growers.

¹⁰ Maude C. Clements, *History of Pittsylvania County*, p. 232.

Eventually some of the growers began to bring their tobacco to town and pile it along the streets, where they exhibited it for sale. A bugle was blown to announce the starting of such sales, which grew to the point that in 1850 practically all tobacco sold in Danville was through this method, consequently escaping the official inspection system.

This city had become the most important manufacturing center in the Dan River Valley by 1850, having as its chief products plug and twist tobacco. Seven tobacco factories had sprung up in Danville, representing an investment of \$36,600, an annual purchase of 2,475,000 pounds of tobacco and a production valued at \$331,500.

Ten years later there were 13 factories with finished products valued at \$610,000. The value of tobacco sold in Danville in 1860 was \$574,000.

The Danville Tobacco Association was formed in 1869 by a group of 20 men who were interested in seeing Danville become a leaf center. They organized the Association for the purpose of promoting and regulating tobacco sales in Danville. And it was largely through the endeavors of these men and their successors that this city became the center of loose leaf tobacco auction sales.

In the year 1858, Thomas Neal built a warehouse in Danville. Neal consulted a Dr. Stovall who conceived the idea of laying tobacco on the warehouse floor in graded piles, allowing the buyers the chance to examine each pile of leaf as they followed the auctioneer along.

A record of the tobacco in Danville is found in the year 1829. Thomas Rawlings, Samuel Rawlings, and John B. Roy are the patriarchs of the business which later was to bring international fame to this city. They established a warehouse, though not of the type as known today. Tobacco was purchased outright in the barns and it was brought here in wagons and put up in hogsheads. No tobacco was sold at auction but by sample, and state inspectors visited the community to see that sound practices were employed. They did a business of about 850 hogsheads per year. William Linn and William Chandler were the first manufacturers and they named the small plant "The Pioneer Tobacco Manufacturers of Danville," which quite accurately described it.

From these humble beginnings Danville embarked on an industrial career which was to bring it a reputation which curiously enough few Danville people realized was to give it a world-wide fame. Wherever tobacco is used and wherever tobacco is dealt with in bulk, it is a household word, be it in the distant Orient or in Europe or the Antipodes, this being due chiefly to the fact that through the years shipments have steadily increased from this city.

Reasons for Danville's steadily increasing sales are readily understood when the progress of the state is seen and constantly improving methods of transportation are noted. Virginia's development of good roads which has come within the past fifteen years is in large measure responsible for this. In the early days when most of the highways were terra cotta ribbons stretching over hill and dale it was a day's journey from Greensboro. The hardy grower in Franklin harnessed up his four mules to a schooner, took along his gun and was all set for a four-day adventure to market where he usually invested the returns from his crop in necessities for the home, clothing, coffee, sugar and other staples not produced on the farm. So long as this condition existed the progress of the community remained slow. As good roads came into being there came along the automobile. The farmer adopted it and as a result the tobacco grower now in a few days makes the distance it took weeks to accomplish, and thus more than anything else has widened Danville's tobacco trading radius. Danville has benefited from this in many ways. The name of the market was well-established, it was known that the auction sales were covered by the buyers of all the larger corporations and independents as well as by a small army of pinhookers. The farmer was quick to react to the fact that the more bidders there are on his offerings the larger will be his return, hence the gradual reputation of Danville as the market with the "high dollar" and where a few more miles of travel would bring larger returns than from the smaller and less well-covered market. That condition still prevails in Danville. It may have been overtaken in the number of pounds sold but its average price still stands ahead of the list.

THE DAN RIVER MILLS

The year 1828 was a memorable one in the annals of the city, for in that year was established the first cotton mill, known as the Danville Manufacturing Company; and among the promoters were Eustance Hunt, George Craighead, Samuel Pannill, Ed. Carrington, John W. Paxton, John Ross, James M. Williams, John Noble, Robert Payne, Nathaniel Wilson, James Lanier, James Patton, Ben Cabell, and others. Eight years later the company's stock was increased to \$300,000. This plant was the forerunner of the great Dan River and Schoolfield mills of today.

The modern industrial supremacy of Danville in the textile industry began with the development of the water power of the Dan by the Dan River Power and Manufacturing Company. This development did not come, however, before the textile industry had begun in Danville with the manufacture of yarns by the Gerst brothers in 1881, and on July 27, 1882, the charter of the Riverside Cotton Mills was granted to T. F. Fitzgerald, B. F. Jefferson, J. H. Schoolfield, H. W. Cole, J. E. Schoolfield, and R. A. Schoolfield.

A building was erected in 1883 at the corner of Bridge and Main Streets, and in that year the first cloth was produced. The original equipment included 2,240 spindles and 100 looms. A dam constructed across the Dan River supplied water power for this mill and for the Morotock Mill, a separate organization headed by F. X. Burton and C. G. Holland.

The first goods made at the mill were cotton plaids, a line which was its most important for many years. In 1890 the production of 36-inch unbleached sheeting was begun. As was common throughout the South at that time, this brown goods had to be sent to northern states for bleaching, sometimes as far as Lewiston, Maine.

From its beginning in 1882 to 1895 the mill's history is a story of constant expansion. One by one, six new buildings were added, each complete in itself with carding, spinning, and weaving equipment, and each run by water power.

Mill No. 2 was built in 1887 on the north side of the Union Street bridge. In the following year an extensive addition was made to the building, and was called Mill No. 3. In 1894 the

Riverside Cotton Mills bought the Morotock Mill and called it Mill No. 4. (This building is no longer standing.)

Mill No. 5 came into being in 1893-4 when an addition was made to Mill No. 3, and Mills No. 2, 3, and 5 thus became known as the "Long Mill."

Another Mill, No. 6 was constructed in 1893-5 on the north side of the river below Main Street bridge, and a second dam was built across the river to supply it with water power. Mill No. 7 was erected in 1895-6 as an addition to the Long Mill.

STEAM POWER

During the first ten years, all plants were run entirely by water power. The river's water supply, however, varied so in dry weather that production sometimes had to stop. As a result it was found necessary to supplement water power with steam, and the first boiler houses were built in the early 1890's.

Because the river was also used as a source of water power by the city and by Neapolis, by an ice company, and by the flour mills, it was decided to investigate alternative sites on the Dan which would be suitable for construction of new dams.

This resulted in the formation in 1895 of the Dan River Power and Manufacturing Company, with the purpose of developing a power source on the river which would be outside the city of Danville. This new company was organized by Riverside's directors and stockholders, and after about 1895 Riverside Cotton Mills was the largest stockholder.

NEW MILL BUILT

For about eight years representatives of the new company explored the river. Land was bought at several sites which were under consideration, but the present Schoolfield location was finally decided on, and the large dam was built therein 1902-3.

After a long dispute with the city over river pollution from the proposed mill, The Dan River Power and Manufacturing Company decided to erect its buildings on high land away from the river and to operate with electricity. Such a source of power was most unusual in cotton textile manufacturing at that time.

Manufacturing was begun at the new Dan River mill in 1904. Its first product was chambray, which has been a main line ever

since. It soon began the production of unbleached sheeting, as well.

In 1908 a bleachery was established by Dan River, and it thus became one of the first southern mills to sell bleached sheeting.

Chapter V

POLITICAL AND INDUSTRIAL DANVILLE

WYNNE'S CREEK AND WYNNE'S FALLS

IN June 1738 William Wynne, (Winn, Wynn) one of the justices of Brunswick County, entered for 200 acres of land on the south side of Dan River. He later moved with his family to this new county, and *Wynne's Creek* of Dan River and *Wynne's Falls*, now the city of Danville was named in his honor.

BIRTH OF DANVILLE

The town was born November 3, 1793 by an enactment of the General Assembly of Virginia. While this act actually found Danville, it was not until two years later that Wynne's Falls was "subdivided and sold." Some historians think there must have been some controversy over the price of the land, but this does not seem logical, as Danville at that time was without a single industry and land was almost as cheap as dirt.

DANVILLE INCORPORATED

On May 4, 1795, the new Danville community decided to attend to the business of formal organization, and sold the lots. In 1830 an "Act to incorporate the town of Danville" was passed by the General Assembly, but again Danville was deliberate and not until February 14, 1833, was it ready to incorporate and select a commonalty. The twelve citizens selected to compromise the commonalty were: Thos. Rawlins, Wm. R. Chaplin, Geo. Townes, Jas. Lanier, Nat. T. Greene, John Dickinson, Geo. W. Johnson, Robt. Ross, Robt. W. Williams, B. W. S. Cabell, John McAllister, and Geo. Craighead. Mr. Townes and Mr. Chaplin, however, did not choose to run, and Major A. Price and E. I. Collier were elected to fill their places.

FIRST CITY GOVERNMENT

The first city government of Danville comprised the following officers: Mayor, Jas. Lanier; Recorder, Geo. Johnson;

Aldermen, Thos. Rawlins, John Dickinson, Robt. Williams, John McAllister. The Common Council was composed of the following members: Nat. Greene, B. W. S. Cabell, Robt. Ross, Geo. Craighead, and Major A. Price. Allen Jones was City Sergeant and John C. Cabiniss was the first City Treasurer.

Danville's governmental history can be evently written in the history of 34 mayors since the city was first incorporated. In none of the 34 administrations is there a history of scandal or malfeasance in office. Captain Harry Wooding saw Danville grow from a small town to a large city noted all over the world for its industries. The complete list of Danville's mayors follows:

Jas. Lanier	Hobson Johns	J. C. Luck
N. T. Green	P. L. Watkins	Geo. C. Ayres
Thos. Rawlins	Thos. P. Atkinson	J. C. Johnston
John Dickinson	A. W. C. Terry	W. P. Graves
Jas. Lanier	T. H. C. Grasty	R. V. Barksdale
Thos. P. Atkinson	W. T. Sutherlin	W. P. Graves
R. W. Williams	Thos. P. Atkinson	Harry Wooding
Thos. Rawlins	W. H. Wooding	E. S. Meade
Jas. Lanier	W. T. Clark	W. E. Gardner
S. C. Brewer	J. M. Walker	Everett Carter
R. W. Williams	J. B. Lowry	Curtis Bishop
	H. W. Cole	

FIRST POSTOFFICE

The first postoffice in Danville was established in 1800, with Charles Hoyle as the first postmaster.

While the date of the establishment of a postoffice here is listed as 1800, records show Hoyle took office on November 7, 1797, which indicates there were certain duties connected with the transportation and delivery of mail that fell to Hoyle two and a half years before there was an official postoffice here.

Old records show the postoffice reported the amount of \$49.99 as profit for the first year.

In the early days letters were reported taxed according to the distance they had to travel.

It was during the tenure of John M. Johnston, who assumed the position of postmaster in 1858, that the Danville postoffice first had a building to itself instead of being in the counting room

of a store. This building was located where Efird's department store is today, and later was moved to the present location of Herman's.

In 1880 a large brick building was erected on a site next to the present Arcade Building. This postoffice, completed in 1881, served Danville for over 50 years. In 1934 it was torn down upon construction of the present modern Federal building.

THE LAST CAPITAL OF THE CONFEDERACY

Danville, however, was to afford the final setting for the tragedy of the fall of the Confederacy. With the fall of Petersburg on April 2, 1865, President Jefferson Davis and his cabinet officers were forced to evacuate Richmond and on April 3, 1865, arrived in Danville accompanied by his cabinet and various officials of the Confederate Government. James M. Walker appointed a committee to receive the city's distinguished guest consisting of the following citizens: Captain W. T. Clark, Rev. C. H. Hall, Rev. J. M. Kirkpatrick, Rev. C. C. Chaplin, William Ayres, C. W. Watkins, P. W. Ferrell, E. N. Sorey, Dr. J. M. Smith, and Dr. J. M. Waddill. Major W. T. Sutherlin who held the office of Chief Quartermaster at Danville, invited President Davis to his home, which became the Capital of the Confederacy. The executive offices were maintained in an old school building on Wilson Street.

Just as Danville was from April 3, 1865 to April 10, the unofficial capital of the Confederacy, so the city was from April 10 until the assassination of Lincoln, the unofficial capital of the State.

It was on April 10, 1865 that His Excellency, William Smith, Governor of Virginia, rode into Danville on horseback, attended by his aide-de-camp, Col. P. Bell Smith, and a servant.

He went at once to the Keen home on Main Street, and later to the residence of C. G. Holland. From there he went directly to President Davis at Major Sutherlin's home.

The news of Lee's surrender had just been received, and instead of conferring with the Confederate executive on future plans Governor Smith could only hear the tragic news and bid him godspeed on his flight into North Carolina.

A day or two later Governor Smith moved his quarters to the

home of Captain W. T. Clark at the corner of Main and Ridge streets. Here he issued a proclamation to the people of Virginia, which was printed in handbill form at the office of the *Register* and distributed through the town.

After the flight of Davis and his party, the officers in charge of army stores in Danville began sending all remaining supplies by rail to Greensboro, but Smith made them stop, for soldiers were beginning to come through the town in great numbers, all of them in direct need.

Hundreds came through every day, and from the army stores the officers could supply practically all their wants except shoes. These were sorely needed, but had all been sent to Greensboro before the order came stopping the shipments.

At one time a group of soldiers, incredulous that no shoes were to be had, threatened to sack the town to see if they could find some, but the governor remonstrated with them and soon they could find shoes and grew calm and went peacefully on their way.

Governor Smith remained in Danville until he received the news of Lincoln's assassination, when he left hastily for Chatham.

Although President Davis faced the bitter ending of the hopes of the Confederacy in Danville, he nevertheless always remembered the kindness and hospitality of the city and he gave Danville his thanks and tribute in his *Rise and Fall of the Confederate Government*, written during the years of persecution which followed for the leader of the lost cause.

In Danville is the Sutherlin Mansion, "The Last Capitol of the Confederacy," now used as the Memorial Library.¹¹

STREETS OF DANVILLE

March 4, 1854, Mr. John Hardley surveyed and laid out the first five streets of Danville: Patton, Ridge, Wilson, Craighead, and Union.

In 1882, when Danville was really just a town, there were two wards, one including all the area north of Main Street and the other all south of Main Street.

"The buildings are unnumbered," the compiler of the 1881-

¹¹ *Register*, Danville, Va., Sunday, October 28, 1928, p. 18.

1882 city directory pointed out plantively, "and the streets although named, are unknown to a majority of citizens.

As a result, addresses could be shown only with difficulty. For example, Stephen E. Adams' business address was listed as "ss Main Street, 6 doors west of the corner Market Street," and his residence was given as "Jefferson between Main and Patton."

CITY'S FIRST TELEGRAPH MESSAGE

The first telegraph message ever to come into the city was received on November 20, 1860, when the telegraph line from Richmond to Danville was completed. It consisted entirely of news of the day, as follows:

"Richmond, Nov. 20—Bell's majority over Breckenridge is 262, as far as heard from, Webster County alone remaining unheard from now, thus rendering his carrying the state uncertain."

"The Farmer's Bank of Virginia suspended specie payments today."

"Wilmington, N. C., Nov. 20—a large public meeting held here last night passed strong secession resolutions. Similar meetings are being held in several counties in this state."

The first manager of Western Union was Frank S. Woodson, his first two initials "F. S." was where your office call "FS" originated. Mr. Woodson was later editor of the *Danville Register*.

My first knowledge of Western Union was around 1890. It was located just opposite the main entrance of old Hotel Burton, was about fifteen or twenty feet from Main Street and about three feet elevation from the street. There was a rock or stone wall on Union Street. You had to walk down rock or stone steps to get to the street. Almost to the rear of Western Union was the office and printing department of the *Danville Register*—they had a hallway that came by the side entrance of Western Union and into Main Street. Below Western Union and on the corner of Main and Union Streets was the Planters Bank. (I believe Penny or some chain store is located there now.)

The office personnel at that time were T. P. Kinney, manager, Frank Kinney, day operator (no relation to T. P.), E. W. Stone, night operator, Sam. W. Hood, clerk, Luther Williams, linesman

and three messengers: Ernest Harvey, James Wilkerson, and J. A. Scruggs. All telegrams were copied by pen and all messages were delivered by walking messengers wearing dark blue uniforms. The office opened at 8 A. M. and closed at midnight. There were two day messengers and one night. They alternated in their tour of duty.¹²

DANVILLE, 1829

The following was taken from the diary of an old resident, Thompson Coleman, who lived in Danville more than a century ago:

“When I went to Danville to reside there, in 1829, I approached the place, then a straggling village, by way of the country road leading north towards Pittsylvania Court House. This road was a common country road, unimproved by grading or otherwise, narrow and often impassable in winter because of the sticky red mud into which vehicles sank to the hubs.”

The country on the north side of the river was at that time a natural forest of primeval growth, unbroken by any house, settlement or clearing.

TOLL BRIDGE

The road led directly down the steep red clay hill to the river bank, made a short turn there, and brought up at the entrance to the bridge; but beyond this turn of the road it also extended down the river bank into the stream and across it by way of the ford, above the bridge, which was often used to save the toll house, a very small wooden building of one room, about ten feet by twelve in size.

After crossing the bridge the first building to be seen was the flour mill. It was an extensive establishment for those days. Just below the flour mill was a sawmill, with an old-fashioned sash saw. Just above the bridge between the canal and the river was a common “tub” mill with one pair of stones for grinding corn. Above that was a small building in which were a linseed oil mill, a cotton gin and a wool carding machine. These mills were all run by water power from the canal.

¹² Western Union, Danville, Virginia, November 22, 1949.

Passing from the toll bridge the canal was crossed by a small frail bridge, built of hewn logs laid from bank to bank, and covered with two-inch boards; and then the road took on up the hill and out of town to a point about a mile from the bridge, where it forked—one branch leading south into Caswell County, N. C. and the other west, and known as the Salisbury, N. C. road.

SMALL BUSINESS

The business of the town was small. There were only two regular stores, one kept by Thomas Rawlins and the other by John Ross & Co. There was an agency of the Farmers' Bank of Virginia, with very small capital. There were two tailor shops, one blacksmith shop, and one shoemaker's shop. There was one tanyard. Hats were manufactured on a small scale by Gilmore & Lyon.

The tobacco trade was in its infancy, and was carried on by Thomas and Samuel D. Rawlins and John B. Roy (who may be called the pioneers in the trade here). No leaf tobacco was sold at the warehouses.

There was no church in the town, and but little preaching. Occasionally there was preaching at some private residence, and sometimes at the Yellow House or the Male Academy.

There was one newspaper, the *Telegraph*, published weekly by Col. Thomas H. Clark. The educational facilities of the town were very good; there was the Male Academy, with Robert B. Gilliam at that time principal of the school; there were also two mixed schools for girls and boys, one of which was conducted by James Aiken and the other by Robert White. Such was Danville in 1829.

BANKS

The First National Bank was founded on April 25, 1872 as a result of the meeting in the Paxton House of a number of men, among whom were Messrs. John D. Pace and A. C. Lindsey. The bank was organized under the name of the Planters National Bank of Danville on that day. On August 1, 1899, the name was changed from Planters National Bank of Danville to the First National Bank of Danville.

LEGAL TENDER PRINTED BY BANK OF DANVILLE

The American National Bank, and the Commercial Bank, 1926; catalog of Averett College, Randolph-Macon Institute, and Danville Military Institute, 1926; copies of *The Register* and *The Bee*, June 7, 1926; program of the corner-stone laying; Stone Mountain coin (one half-dollar), Confederate Memorial; Danville, Virginia, 1913; Danville, Virginia, Sketch Book, 1898; roster of the membership of the American Legion, 1926; tax ordinance, City of Danville, 1926-27.

A few Danville people still possess currency printed here by the Bank of Danville. Such bills were legal tender, for the bank's charter dated March 1, 1858, authorized it to be a "bank of issue." It wasn't until the National Bank-Wag-Act of 1872 transferred this right to Federal banks only that the practice was discontinued.

The bank charter was sponsored by William T. Sutherlin, George W. Read, William Rison, John W. Holland, William T. Clark, William C. Claiborne, John M. Johnston, Greenville T. Pace, S. H. Holland, John P. Price, A. G. Walters, W. C. Grasty, T. D. Neal, and A. S. Buford. Authorized capital was \$500,000.

William T. Sutherlin was president, Julius A. Gray was vice-president, and John M. Johnston was cashier.

A clause in the charter reads: "the total amount of the paper circulation of said bank shall never exceed three times the amount of cash in possession of and actually the property of said bank; in such case the committee of said bank shall thenceforth make no new loan or discount, until the coin shall bear to its paper circulation the proper ratio of at least one to three."

Double liability was incurred by stockholders in event of the failure of the bank to redeem its notes or pay its debts.

IN LUTHER ROBERTSON BUILDING

The bank was housed in the red brick structure known in recent years as the Luther Robertson building. The last building to remain in downtown Danville from the days before the Civil War, this local landmark on the corner of Main and Floyd Streets has only recently been razed and replaced by modern stores.

At the time it was built, the building was divided into two parts, one to be used for the bank offices, the other to serve as a home for Cashier Johnston and his family.

GOVERNMENT DEPOSITORY

The bank had an extra strong vault, and was for the first year of its existence a depository of the United States government. When the Civil War began it became a depository for the Confederate government.

Johnston received as guests in his home several of the members of Jefferson Davis' party during the last week of the war, when the Confederacy's president and his cabinet paused in Danville on their flight from Richmond.

BANK PROPERTY SOLD

The National Bank Act of 1872, transferring the right of issuing currency from state to Federal banks, rang the death knell for the Bank of Danville.¹⁸

The building was later the residence of Dr. James S. Irvin, and was then bought by Dr. Luther Robertson who used it for many years for office space for himself and other doctors.

DANVILLE UTILITIES

For 78 years the City of Danville has owned and operated, for the benefit of its citizens, its own gas, water, and electric plants.

Danville was one of the first cities of America to have municipal ownership of public utilities. Even today, while a number of cities own one or the other of its utilities, there are very few who own all three.

The city can make a unique claim in connection with its length of ownership of the utilities. As far as can be learned, no other American city has such, as can be found, a long record of continuous ownership and operation of utilities.

The 78-year-old history of the municipally-owned utilities dates back to 1874 when the town council granted the gas and water franchises to a private corporation called "Danville Water

¹⁸ *Danville Commercial Appeal*, p. 4, Monday, May 26, 1952.

and Gas Company.” Both water and gas works were completed the following year. In 1876 the town bought both of them from the company.

Danville’s first reservoir, with a million and a half gallons capacity, was situated at Mount Vernon and Virginia Avenues, with the pumping plant located on the river, near the Giles flower gardens. The water plant soon proved inadequate and a new reservoir was built in Ballou Park, where it has remained without enlargement until two years ago.

The city’s first gas plant was built on the present site in 1874 with a capacity of about five percent of the present plant. The gas plant was built on the present location. The gas plant equipment is the oldest now in use in any of the city’s utility plants. The plant was originally installed for the purpose of street lighting, but later gas began to be used for cooking.

Although considerable improvements have been made to the gas plant in recent years, the repairs have been largely of a temporary nature due to the hope that the city may soon be able to have natural gas.

By 1885 the municipally-owned gas works became inadequate to supply light for the city and an electric plant was built and was in operation by January 15, 1886. The original electric utility of the city consisted of two dynamos, ten miles of street lighting circuits and fifty-nine 1200-candle-power arc lights.¹⁴

¹⁴ *Danville Commercial Appeal*, September 19, 1949, p. 20.

Chapter VI

STORES

A BRIEF HISTORY OF L. HERMAN, INCORPORATED

THE story of L. Herman, the man as distinguished from the fine department store, is a saga of American enterprise, based upon personal integrity, resourcefulness and an interest in people and their needs. It is the story of the new South which looks ahead, and of the one of her sons who helped give impetus and direction to the forward march out of the sloughs of the Tragic Era to the more stable and more abundant years of the twentieth century.

In 1886 Mr. L. Herman began his career in Danville as a merchant, at that time conducting a mercantile business as a member of the firm of Bendheim & Herman, located two doors above Craighead Street, the store being known as "The Bee Hive." After a year this partnership was dissolved and Mr. Herman opened in a building where the Rialto Theater is now located, the business which has been known since that time as L. Herman. Within a few years, the business had grown to the extent that it was necessary to seek larger quarters, and the building site of the First National Bank was leased.

Twelve years later it became again necessary to seek a larger home and the firm of L. Herman moved into the present location of Efrd's Department Store. It was here that Herman's became known as "Danville's Best Store."

In 1910 the present site was bought and three stories and a basement were built to house the ever growing business. In 1940 this store was remodeled and an 80-foot extension added to the rear. Beautiful new fixtures and the most modern facilities that could be found in stores in cities many times the size of Danville. Honest merchandising, fair representation and courteous attention have characterized the sincere service which this one price store has given to its patrons from its first day of operation.¹⁵

Louis Herman died January 24, 1950 at the age of 90.

¹⁵ L. Herman's, Incorporated. A copy.

J. & J. KAUFMAN, INCORPORATED

1866—The firm of J. J. Kaufman, the oldest establishment in Danville, located in the same place, operated by the same family, under the same name; it has been in operation for 88 years.

The business was founded by Mr. Jones Kaufman, in 1866, later his nephew, Mr. Julius Kaufman, became a partner. About 1912, Jonas Kaufman retired, and Louis Kaufman, son of Julius Kaufman became a partner.

After the death of Julius Kaufman in 1920, Mr. Harry Hirsh became associated in the business. He was an uncle of Mr. Louis Kaufman. Mr. Hirsh died in 1921 and Herbert Hoffman, of Statesville, North Carolina, a brother-in-law of Mr. Louis Kaufman, entered the partnership.

Seven years ago Mr. Louis Kaufman passed away and his son Jules Kaufman, and Julian Hoffman, son of Herbert Kaufman came into the firm.

While this store is the oldest in point of existence, it has become thoroughly modernized from time to time and a few years ago, it was completely changed in exterior as well as interior appearance.

Having always the reputation for selling good dependable merchandise for men and boys, it has served three and in many cases four generations in Danville and surrounding area.

The owners have always entered active participation in the civic life of Danville and assisted in every worth while endeavor for the improvement of its citizens.¹⁶

A lot of water has flowed down the old Dan River since the establishment of Danville's oldest store and there has been continual progress all the way. New fabrics, new styles, new textile fibers, new processes to increase the comfort and aid in the appearance of a man's clothing. But down through the years from 1866 until the present time, there has been one thing everybody can count on. That is "it pays to buy from J. & J. Kaufman."

HISTORY OF THE LINK-WATSON, CORPORATION

In 1865, almost a century ago, the firm began as the Schoolfield-Hodnett-Watson Company. Located at the lower end of

¹⁶ J. J. Kaufman, Incorporated. A copy.

Main Street, this partnership dealt in a general line of hardware and farm supplies until 1900. Details of the operations through these first thirty-five years are not available.

In 1900, the business was incorporated as Hodnett Vass Watson Co. The charter stated, "the chief business to be transacted by said company is the sale and manufacture of hardware, putting on and repairing roofs, galvanized cornice, skylight work, and the doing of all business germane to the same."

As demands of modern living conditions have changed and grown, the business has expanded to meet these needs. To the roof and sheet metal work was added glass installation. As demands for plumbing and building material grew, these became an important part of the store's volume. Heating and air conditioning, were added services performed by the store. As electrical appliances were perfected and offered for sale, these were added to the items carried by the company, until the appliance department, which also handles the heating and air conditioning, is now a prominent part of the business. The glass department, in line with a changing trend in business, was discontinued in 1948. Other departments, new and old, have grown until almost any need in the hardware line from a small nail to a huge and complicated air conditioning unit can be found here.

Up to 1913, the firm was located on Main Street, operating in two buildings on opposite sides of the street, where Lewis Furniture Company and Schewel Furniture Company are now located.

It is interesting to note that by that time, plumbing and mill supplies business had grown until the inventory of these items amounted to one-eighth of the entire stock carried.¹⁷

In this year 1913, an "Automobile Truck" account appears for the first time in the records, along with "Team and Wagon," which must have been the delivery equipment up until then.

By this time, the expanding business felt the need of new quarters, with all operations under one roof. This need was enhanced by a destructive fire in November of that year.

Some of the employees still working for the company remem-

¹⁷ Link Watson Corporation Company, Craighead Street, Danville, Virginia, March 25, 1949.

ber that fire. At least two of these employees worked for the company as early as 1910.

We are told by the manager of the sheet metal department that if the equipment in the shop could speak, it too might tell stories of the fire. Some of the heavier tools were housed on the second floor of the building which burned, and were plunged down into the basement as the floors collapsed.

By the end of the year, the firm was located in the first of its buildings on Craighead Street, a three-story structure, 48 x 160 feet, which at that time housed all the operations of the business, with the exception of the explosive stores, which were, and still are kept in a magazine outside the town.

In January, 1914, the title of the firm was changed to Vass-Watson Corporation.

By 1923, volume of business in building materials had become such that additional warehouse room was needed, and property on Monument Street, along the Southern Railway, was secured for that purpose.

January, 1925, marked another change in the name of the firm, to Swain-Watson Corporation.

In 1936, additional property on Craighead Street was secured, making the present 115 feet front of the store.

1944 marked the last change in the name of the firm, when it became the Link-Watson Corporation, with Mr. H. R. Link as president, and Mr. E. P. Barnett as vice-president and treasurer.

A roll call of the men connected with this firm through its existence, the largest part of a century, would form an imposing list of well known citizens of the town—too many for listing in this outline. The reputation and long life of the venture marks the excellence of their work.

Chapter VII

DANVILLE'S CHURCHES

IF one happens to be in Danville when the dusk falls at the close of a Sabbath day, he may hear the strains of the hymn, "Lead, Kindly Light," pealed from great bells in the steeple of Main Street Methodist Church. It is significant of the character of the city's people.

Religion came with the first inhabitants and, in its organized form, has kept pace with the development of the community. Legend tells of a crude wooden cross which stood on the brow of a small hill above Wynne's Falls, before which scattered inhabitants were wont to gather for spiritual worship long before the spire pointed the way heavenward for the early Pittsylvanians.

In the year 1795, an act of the Legislature of Virginia authorized the laying out of the town of Danville on the south side and at the falls of Dan River. An academy was erected in 1804. There being now a commodious house for public worship, the monthly pastoral labors of the Rev. James Tompkins (of the Presbyterian order) were obtained. After twelve months labor, Mr. Tompkins withdrew without having organized any church.

During the years 1822 and 1823, the Rev. John Jenkins (of the Baptist order) preached monthly in the house now known by the name of the Danville Academy.

PRESBYTERIAN

In December, 1826, William S. Plumer, a licentiate of the Presbyterian Church of the Presbytery of New Brunswick was sent to Danville by the Missionary Society of the Synod of North Carolina. He preached for the first time in Danville on the first Sabbath in December. On the 30th and 31st of December, the Rev. Samuel L. Graham officiated, and on the last of those days administered the Lord's Prayer. This was to many adult persons a novel sight—it being the first time that by bread and wine "Jesus Christ had been evidently set forth "crucified" in this town. The scene was solemn. A church of two members was at the same time formed. These members were Mrs. Jane Thornton, who

presented a certificate from Pearl Street Church, New York, and Mr. James Ross, who presented a certificate from his church in Ireland. May, 1827, the Orange Presbytery met in Danville to ordain Mr. Plumer. The membership had grown to thirty-four. A few months later three ruling elders were set apart, Samuel Patton, John W. Paxton, and John McAllister, and in September the young church was received under the care of the Presbytery. With his mission successfully accomplished, Mr. Plumer left at the end of the year, and was succeeded by Rev. A. D. Montgomery. The first church was a frame building on the chosen site on Jefferson Street facing Patton Street, but with a succession of consecrated, highly educated pastors, Revs. W. C. McElroy, B. M. Smith, J. B. Anderson, and James N. Lewis, the congregation increased in numbers and outgrew this building. In 1850 it was replaced by a substantial brick building which in turn gave way in 1879 to the present edifice of brick and stucco. Mr. Lewis was succeeded four years later by Rev. John M. Kirkpatrick, whose able pastorate extended through the trying period of the Civil War. His successor, Dr. Alexander Martin, was a man of such impressive and inspiring character that his name was revered forever after by all who had come under his influence. For nearly a quarter of a century, Dr. Martin was a leader and example among the ministers of the town, honored by all. During the last two years of his life, on account of his failing strength, Rev. C. W. Maxwell was his stated supply, to assist when necessary. Dr. Martin was followed by Dr. William R. Laird, whose pastorate was from August, 1896 to July, 1918, the time of his death. "He is held in loving remembrance by the church," and by all who knew him.

PROTESTANT EPISCOPAL

The Episcopal denomination organized its church here in 1840 through the efforts of Rev. George W. Dame, who became its first pastor. In his memoirs, Dr. Dame recites the early struggles of the church to gain a foothold in a community that had already been largely occupied by other denominations. In these days the feelings of one denomination for another were not nearly so cordial as they are today. But the fine spirit and high character of the young rector soon won for him respect and admiration of

the citizens of the town. He served the Church of the Epiphany for a half century, retiring on April 21, 1895, rich in years and in the love and esteem of the citizens of Danville.

The church has had four pastors since: Dr. J. Cleveland Hall, Rev. Malcolm Taylor, Rev. N. E. Wicker, and the present Rev. Gr. R. MacClintock. The congregation now numbers 400 members and conducts three missions—Christ Church Chapel, Dame Memorial and Peytonsburg. The Church of the Epiphany is located at the corner of Main and Jefferson Streets.¹⁸

THE BAPTIST CHURCH

The Baptist was the second church established in the little village of Danville. Although members of the Primitive Baptist faith had from time to time preached in the Masonic hall, then on Craighead Street, no attempt had been made to perfect an organization. But on June 28, 1834, a group of elders, "The Presbytery, met to constitute the Church in Danville."

The first pastor of the new church was Elder Joseph S. Baker, who during his year of service undertook the collection of funds to build a church. The church was erected on Patton Street, and when some years later the Roanoke Female College was established across the street, the locality became known as "Baptist Hill." There the church under succeeding pastors grew in numbers and influence, until the building became inadequate for its purpose. It was then sold to the First Christian Church and in recent years remodeled into an apartment building.

During Dr. Holmes' ministry, a lot was purchased on Main Street at a cost of \$8,000, and a brick edifice costing \$32,500, was completed in 1883. This move marked the beginning of a great growth of the church.

After an unusual series of meetings in May, 1884, more than two hundred persons became members of the church, and the next year, when the auditorium was finished, the building was dedicated. It continued in uninterrupted use until May, 1905, when during a severe storm the steeple was struck by lightning and the building almost destroyed by fire.

Restoration plans, with some improvements, were started at

¹⁸ Miss Lucy N. Brydon, daughter of Dr. G. W. Dame.

once, and in the interim the congregation met at Roanoke Female College and in the Jewish Synagogue on Sutherlin Avenue. Dr. J. E. Hicks had entered on his ministry in 1903 and supervised the restoration. During World War I, was absent about a year, and after his return, resigned his pastorate. On February 1, 1921, he was succeeded by Dr. James M. Shelburne, who still makes his home in Danville, as pastor emeritus, having rendered notable service to the church and the community.

In 1943, Dr. L. D. Johnson was called to the pastorate, and under his inspiring leadership the church completed a program of extensive improvements that added materially to its seating capacity and comfort. For the greater part of a year, the building was under construction, during which time the congregation worshipped in the Capitol theater.

The First Baptist is the mother church of the Moffitt Memorial, the Second Baptist, the Lee Street and Schoolfield churches.

METHODIST

The Methodist denomination is the largest in the city in point of membership. In 1832, the Rev. Mr. Hammett while on a business trip to Danville gathered together the few Methodists in the village, and suggested that they organize and ask for a minister from the Conference. He also began a subscription for funds to build a church, and Colonel Nathaniel Wilson with praiseworthy impartiality, donated a lot for that purpose, as he had done for the Baptist church, and as he later did for the Danville Female Academy.

The first site is described in the deed as "a certain lot of land situated in the town of Danville, fronting fifty feet on the corner of the north side of Wilson, and running back therefrom with Lynn Street a distance of sixty-five feet."

The next year, 1833, Rev. S. S. Bryant was sent to Danville by the Conference, and construction of the church was begun. The "small frame building with a steeple and a bell" was complete in 1834, and being in the North Carolina Conference at that time was served by ministers from that State. Little is known of them, but it is known that besides Mr. Bryant, Rev. Messrs. Wyche, Hood, Hall and Stanley were pastors of the church in

this period. The last named died here very suddenly, having become ill while in the pulpit. Rev. Charles Fisher was appointed to take charge in 1854, succeeded in 1857 by Rev. Milton Frost. The next year, 1858, care of the church was transferred to the Virginia Conference.

By 1865, the small building had been outgrown by the congregation and was becoming structurally unsafe, necessitating a move to a larger lot. This situation brought about a divergence of views on the question of a site. Some of the members were in favor of the same locality, at that time the principal residential section. Others, more far-sighted, wished to follow the trend to the westward and build on Main Street. This group prevailed, led by Major Sutherlin who had recently built his new house on Wilson Street. He selected and purchased the lot on Main Street, and a substantial brick building known as the Lynn Street Church, under the ministry of Rev. W. W. Duncan.

DISCIPLES OF CHRIST

The Disciples of Christ or Christian Church was established here in 1883 through the instrumentality of two laymen: J. A. Craddock and R. M. Tuck, both of Richmond. The first meetings were held in an old building at the corner of Jefferson Avenue and Loyal Street near the spot where the First Presbyterian Church had its beginning. In 1912 they purchased the old First Presbyterian Church building on Jefferson Street.

The founders of the West End Christian Church were originally members of this congregation. They withdrew in 1929 to build a church in that newer section of the city. For some time services were held on Sunday in John L. Berkeley School, but the year 1940 saw the congregation under the leadership of Rev. Allen B. Stranger, occupying their own church on Montague Street and growing in numbers and influence.

ROMAN CATHOLIC

The Catholic Church was organized and the building consecrated by Bishop Jansen, of the diocese of Richmond—afterward Archbishop Jansen of New Orleans—in 1879. A beautiful memorial window has been placed in the building in memory of Archbishop Jansen. The first priest was F. X. McCarthy, the

church having been built under his ministry. Sacred Heart Church, formerly located at the corner of Holbrook and Ross Streets, is now located on West Main Street.

LUTHERAN

The Lutheran Church is one of Danville's younger members of sisterhood, having been organized in 1922 with Rev. J. W. Link as its first pastor. It was located on Sutherlin Avenue.

In 1934 a lot was acquired on West Main Street, and with the assistance of the Virginia Synod, the present church was completed and occupied on the first Sunday after Ascension Day, which suggested the choice of its name.

JEWISH

The Orthodox Jewish Synagogue is located on Wilson Street, near Dame Street. The synagogue was organized about sixty years ago to meet the spiritual needs of the Jewish colony here, with Rev. M. Schmidt as pastor.¹⁹

CALVARY BAPTIST CHURCH

In the year of 1892 there was a group of Christian believers who had become disturbed in their church home—they had been worshipping around with different congregations in our city. Finally all were invited to the home of Rev. R. G. Adams, 442 Holbrook Street, for the purpose of deciding on a plan of procedure. A number gathered that evening, and after songs, prayer, and Scripture reading, the chairman stated the object of the "call," and all were asked to speak as he so desired.

After much discussion, Bro. Lorenzo Cunningham moved that we organize a "New Baptist Church," seconded by Bro. Andrew Morton. This motion was adopted unanimously.

Meetings were held by this group and "Letters of Dismission" to join another Baptist church were granted from their home church.

On Friday night, December 9th, 1892, in the "True Reformers' Hall," Union Street, Danville, Va., a meeting was held by

¹⁹ *The Register*, Danville, Virginia, Sunday, October 28, 1929. Arthur Davidson, "Danville's Many Beautiful Churches," pp. 34, 37.

this new Baptist group, with the Rev. H. H. Mitchell, D.D., President of the Baptist State Convention, presiding, and the Calvary Baptist Church was organized and properly recognized.

HIGH STREET BAPTIST CHURCH

The High Street Baptist Church is the oldest colored church in Danville. Rev. Harrison Scott was the first pastor. It was formerly called the First Baptist Church (colored) of Danville, Virginia. Established 1877.

OTHER CHURCHES

The sixty-six churches now listed in the city include fifteen denominations, white and colored, and several community churches in the suburbs which are now undenominational.

MT. VERNON CHURCH

All Methodism in Danville began with the Wilson Street Church on the corner of Wilson and Lynn Streets. This congregation divided into the Main Street Church and the Lynn Street Church; from the latter came Calvary and Sledd Memorial Churches in North Danville, and Mt. Vernon Church.

When the old Wilson Street Church was abandoned in 1865, the congregation bought a lot on Lynn Street just opposite the old church, and undertook to build a new church and new organization. Wilson Street was at that time the principal residential section. North Danville was only a scattered hamlet, and Craighead was part of the shopping district. The church building was completed in 1872, at a cost of \$12,000, largely through the generosity of Mr. Greenville T. Pace, who died in 1878 and was buried from the church.

By 1884, the Lynn Street Church began to feel the encroachment of the business section of the town, and many of its most influential members had followed the trend from Wilson Street to the western part of the town. It was time for the church to follow, and at the Conference of 1884 the old site was abandoned and the building sold to Saint Paul's Methodist Church, colored. The end of the old Lynn Street Church marked the beginning of

the new Mt. Vernon Church, situated in the angle between South Main and West Main Street.

HOLBROOK STREET PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Rev. J. Richard Barrett, uncle of William Payne was founder of the Holbrook Street Presbyterian Church and School. This church sprang out of the first Presbyterian Church (white).

The following pastors were Rev. Maggager G. Hoskins, Eggleston, W. E. Carr, Hargrave, C. J. Baker, and Dr. Walter G. Anderson.

Chapter VIII

HISTORY OF SCHOOLS

DANVILLE's first school after the town was chartered in 1795 was established in 1802, and in 1806 an "Academy" was built with funds raised by subscription. This building was destroyed by fire in 1808, and it was several years, Dame wrote, before another teacher came to Danville.

And not just in the beginning but throughout the years of private instruction, a number of the town's teachers were secured in strange ways and were men whose preparation for the work seems even stranger to today's generation.

Teacher of that first school in 1806 was a Mr. Matthews, a Presbyterian minister who was dismissed in 1805 from two churches in Granville County. He was followed by a man named Summerhez—whence he came and whither he went are alike unknown.

A Mr. Warnock took over the job in 1812. As for his background, Dame wrote, "We know nothing of the past or the future of him. He, as it were, dropped into town when a teacher was wanted, remained as long as his predecessors had done, and left."

In 1814, two brothers, Hickerson and William Spiller, opened a store in town. "As the former was a man of some education and no one had come to open a school, he was asked to take it. The business of the store did not need a great deal of his time and he therefore accepted the place and continued the business, as his profession, until the time of his death in 1825."

Levi Holbrook, a native of Massachusetts, opened "a good school" in 1817 that was attended by Spiller's advanced pupils—the first time there were two schools in the town. He taught in an old log house until 1820, then used the lower story room of the Masonic Hall.

Dame apparently was not enthusiastic about the way teachers were secured for Danville youngsters, for he wrote about Holbrook: "Knowing the views of the South in reference to teaching, he adopted that work as his profession, with a certainty that he

would find employment. For it is only in modern times that persons of any family or any means did not consider teaching a low-down employment in which they would not engage. As a result, people from the North could come here and have a school. It was strange that people should entrust their children and their whole training to those whose views were foreign to their own. The effect of this was the gradual change of our old Virginia dialect and manners and the substitution of those foreign to us. A Northern man or any foreigner would be employed at any time to the exclusion of our own people."

Holbrook was succeeded in 1828 by a Mr. Co—"whence he came and whither he went at the end of his own term, we can learn nothing. He must have had some recommendation or he would not have been elected."

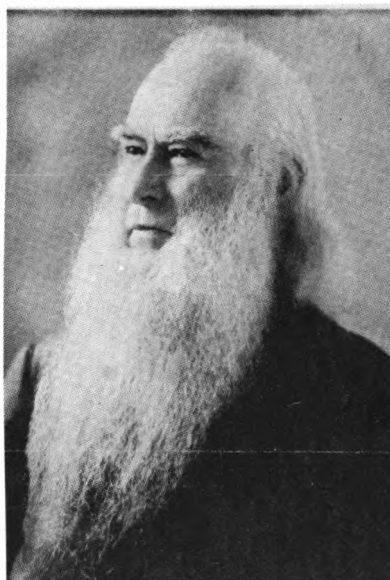
About Co, Dame wrote: "From a writing on the wall, made by some of the boys at the close of some school day and signed by three of the boys, that they wished him a HOTTER CLIMATE, when the writing remained for some time and no proper notice taken of it, it is presumed that he was neither loved nor respected. He lacked judgment, and would at a table of mixed company ask questions which it would be improper to answer."

Another native of Massachusetts, "a fine scholar and an excellent teacher," succeeded Co, and the school's next two teachers in 1830 and 1832—also came from Massachusetts. The first native Virginian to teach here after Spiller according to Dame, took over the school in 1838. He was W. J. Berryman of Buckingham County.

He was succeeded by a North Carolinian in 1841, a Virginian in 1846, another Massachusetts man in 1847, the local Presbyterian minister (who "was in some respects not qualified for the position, especially as the successor Mr. Curtis") in 1848, a North Carolinian in 1849 and another in 1850.

From 1852 through 1857, the school had four Virginians as teachers, and in 1858 came "Col. Kenan, an officer in the Mexican War," and in 1859 a North Carolinian, J. C. Robbins, both of them described as good scholars and good disciplinarians.

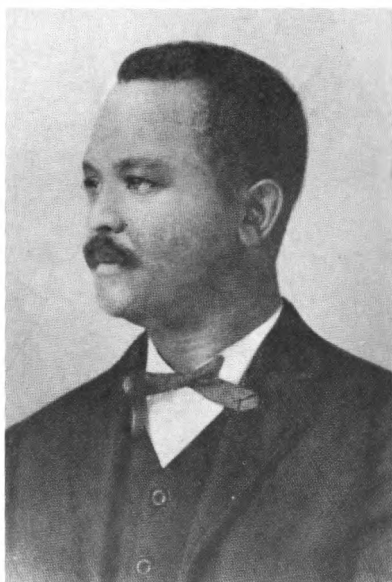
Col. E. C. Edmunds, a graduate of VMI, took over the school in 1860. "With Col. Edmunds," Dame wrote, "the regular lines of the school, and especially of the Male School, closes. The war



**REV. GEORGE WASHINGTON
DAME, D.D.**
First Superintendent of Public Schools



O. T. BONNER
Present Superintendent of Public Schools



PROF. W. F. GRASTY
First Principal of Negro Schools

was on us. The army had drawn away our teachers. The Trustees had lost interest in the work and the building was soon sold."

Education suffered during and after the Civil War. For a few years the Presbyterian minister, Rev. J. M. Kirkpatrick, taught here. "The country was too impoverished" to support the "female academy" that had been in operation, and when, "in December, 1865, Mr. Pike Powers, an eminent teacher and graduate of the University of Virginia, took charge of our male school, the times were presumably too hard for boarders and the town did not afford pupils enough to sustain a school of the advanced grade which Mr. Powers desired.

Small wonder, then, with such a haphazard educational past, that Danville's public free school was considered by Dame as the most marked step in the progress of education in Danville.

Space does not permit the discussion of the membership of the various boards nor do the available records show this completely. Former superintendents, in the order of their terms of service, are as follows: G. W. Dame, J. R. Herndon, Abner Anderson, William Homes Davis, F. H. Wheatley, W. C. Griggs, G. L. H. Johnson, and O. T. Bonner.

School Enrollment

<i>Year</i>	<i>White</i>	<i>Colored</i>	<i>Total</i>
1875	361	428	789
1892	684	926	1,610
1905	1,627	1,022	2,649
1909	1,794	942	2,736
1915	2,404	1,082	3,483
1921	3,005	1,022	4,027
1926	3,130	1,095	4,225
1928	3,418	1,227	4,725

DANVILLE MILITARY INSTITUTE

Danville Military Institute was established in 1890 by Colonel Isaac H. Saunders and a group of public-spirited citizens of Danville who desired a high class preparatory school for their own sons, and who realized the value of such a school to the community.

For thirty years the institute was administered by a board of trustees who represented the citizens in control of the property.

In 1921 the property of the institute, then valued at \$100,000 was presented to the Synod of Virginia, on condition that a high class preparatory school for boys be maintained. The Synod of Virginia accepted the gift, and elected a board of trustees of fifteen men. J. E. Perkinson was chosen president of the board.

During the past six years, about \$100,000 has been invested in promotion and in additions to equipment, grounds and buildings. The enrollment has more than doubled, and the barracks are now filled to capacity.

The Danville Technical Institute is a unit of the Danville Public Schools. The instruction is planned and given under the supervision of the Vocational Division of the Virginia State Board of Education.

The Danville textile employees. In 1941, this unit was re-organized to give training in other trades such as machine shop, radio and electricity. At the end of World War II, the courses were changed to provide technical training and additional courses were added.

In 1947, the school was moved to its present buildings which provide space for classrooms, shops, dormitory, and cafeteria for the Danville Technical Institute. Space is also provided for the Danville Branch of the Virginia Polytechnic Institute which offers the first two years of engineering and business administration.

AVERETT COLLEGE

The earnest group of men and women out of whose interest in the higher education of women sprang Averett College in 1859, builded better than they knew. After seventy years it stands as one of the institutions in Southern Virginia giving educational opportunities beyond the high school grade.

Roanoke Female Institute, Roanoke College and for the past several years Averett College, are the names by which this school has been steady and permanent. For the greatest part of its history Averett College was in the down town district on Patton Street.

In 1910 a tract of fourteen acres was secured in what has now become the heart of the most desirable residential section of the city, and on the highest elevation in the city.

NEGRO SCHOOLS

The first school for Negroes was taught by Yankee teachers on "school-house hill," commonly called Dan's Hill. Later an eight-room brick building was erected on Holbrook Street, with a white principal and seven Negro teachers. It was then known as the Danville School but later was changed to Westmoreland. In 1881 the principal died and the unexpired term was completed by Rev. William A. Yancey, a well-known missionary and school teacher, the first of his race to serve in this capacity. In the fall of 1882 Charles J. Daniel of Louisa, Virginia was elected principal and served here until 1888 when he accepted the position as secretary at Virginia State College. Prof. W. F. Grasty, a Danvillian by birth, succeeded him and remained principal until 1929 when he retired because of poor health. He was succeeded by E. A. Gibson, of Atlanta, Georgia.

Meanwhile as the Negro population had increased schools in other sections of Danville became necessary so that in 1893 the present Monticello School on Franklin Street was erected, followed by The Arlington Public School on Abbott Street, in North Danville. The latter school served the children of that community until 1932 when it was replaced by a modern brick structure and the location changed as well as the name to the William F. Grasty School in memory of the veteran teacher and principal.

When Almagro was annexed to Danville, The Almagro Training School became another Danville public school.

In 1925 the first school building on Holbrook Street was razed, and replaced by a modern structure; the high school department was for the first time completely separated from the elementary department and occupied the building known as the annex, an addition which had been made in 1913. Prof. I. W. Taylor was made principal of the elementary department, with Professor Grasty as supervising principal over both elementary and high schools, until his retirement.

In 1936 a new high school building was erected on Gay Street, the name changed to the John Mercer Langston High School with Prof. E. A. Gibson serving as principal until his death in 1948.

The Industrial High School, a parochial school supported by the Presbyterian Board of Christian Education, played a great

part in the lives of Negro boys and girls of Danville for nearly fifty years. It was destroyed by fire in 1929.²⁰

In 1951 a four-year building program was begun in the Danville School System. The five projects completed under this program as of June, 1954 included two new elementary schools and three new cafeteria buildings to serve existing schools.

The first two buildings completed were the Edwin A. Gibson Elementary School and G. L. H. Johnson Elementary School, the former being completed in 1952 and the latter in 1953. The capacity of each building is 480 pupils and the same plans were used for the two buildings except for re-arranging units to suit the terrain. The total construction and equipment cost of the Edwin A. Gibson School was \$447,656, and the construction and equipment cost of the G. L. H. Johnson School was \$441,813.

Of the three cafeterias completed under the four-year building program two were opened in 1953 and the third in 1954.

The George Washington High School cafeteria was constructed as a separate new building at a cost of \$138,879. The cost includes equipping the building for a 450-pupil capacity.

A cafeteria and auditorium addition was completed at the existing Stonewall Jackson Elementary School at a cost of \$128,259. This addition is a two-story structure housing a cafeteria on the top floor with a 250-pupil capacity and a combination auditorium and playroom on the ground floor.

The cafeteria addition to the William F. Grasty Elementary School was completed as an additional wing to the existing building. This cafeteria has a 150-pupil capacity and was constructed at a cost of \$74,754.

Mr. O. T. Bonner, born in Roanoke, Alabama, taught school at Bedford, Virginia before coming to Danville in 1948.

During Mr. Bonner's term as superintendent: a \$3,500,000 building program has been launched following a long-range survey of building needs. Three cafeterias and one auditorium have been completed and occupied; a 55-acre site has been purchased and graded for a new senior high school for white students for which plans are about complete; planning has begun on a senior high school for Negroes; old buildings have been renovated and playground areas around several schools enlarged and improved;

²⁰ Mrs. Nannie Greene Gibson, wife of the former E. A. Gibson.

planning for the second phase of the long-range building program is under way.

BELLEVUE SCHOOL

The Bellevue School was originally the Claiborne home. It was located on the high hill overlooking the Dan River, enclosed with beautiful pines. The first teacher was Mr. Tucker, the second Mr. Tyru, then Mr. and Mrs. F. H. Wheatley. Mr. Wheatley was married to Mrs. Wheatley at the time they were teaching there. Mr. Wheatley afterward became principal of the Bellevue School. That school was torn down and the present building put on the same site.

RISON PARK SCHOOL

The Rison Park School was built in 1908 on the grounds formerly occupied by Colonel William Rison, on Holbrook Avenue. The high school was on the second floor of the old Robert E. Lee School, Loyal Street, until overcrowded conditions required more space. A lot was purchased on Grove Street in 1910, which became the Grove Street High School. Again the increase in population necessitated larger quarters. In 1926, the old Rison Park High School was transferred to Holbrook Avenue and the name changed to George Washington High School, while the school on Grove Street was named in honor of John L. Berkeley, one of the city's educators. The Berkeley School became an elementary school.

STRATFORD COLLEGE

The Stratford College was called the Danville Female College. In 1883 its name was changed to the Danville College for Young Ladies. In 1887 it became a part of the Randolph-Macon system of schools, and is still affectionately remembered as R. M. I. by many Danville people.

By that time the school was situated in its present Main Street location, and the building it had formerly occupied on the corner of Jefferson and Loyal Streets was being used by the newly founded Danville hospital.

It was in 1930 that representative Danville citizens purchased the grounds, buildings, and equipment from the Randolph-Macon

system, and since that time the institution has been known as Stratford, a non-denominational school for high school and college students. Stratford College (once Danville College) hoarded the last gold of the Confederacy. It was then Methodist College. The gold was given to the grandfather of William Holmes Davis by two Confederate soldiers.

Chapter IX

HOME FOR THE SICK—1886

ABOUT the time that the Home for the Sick was started by the ladies of Danville, there were quite a number of young men living here who had come from the country or small towns nearby. Among them were Colonel O. W. Dudley, Colonel A. B. Carrington, Joe Edmunds, Terry Orgain, J. C. McFall, and others.

Organized at the suggestion of Dr. James C. Green, one of the community's beloved physicians, the first gathering was held at the home of Mrs. Berryman Green on Paxton Avenue.

The meeting was attended by Mesdames M. P. Jordan, A. D. Keen, C. W. Guerrant, John C. Guerrant, E. T. Ferrell, W. E. Bouldin, P. T. Barrow, James C. Green, T. M. Hamlin, W. E. Barnard, and H. F. Vass. Mrs. Green was elected the first president.

In 1884, after the ladies had worked hard at various small projects for some years and had accumulated a few hundred dollars and a large membership, the group was incorporated by act of the General Assembly of Virginia as "The Ladies' Benevolent Society of Danville," and as such it has continued to this day.

The membership at the time of incorporation included Sallie A. Rison, James S. Sutherlin, Alice W. Jordan, Fannie C. Guerrant, Lucy E. Bouldin, Agnes Venable, Mary P. Talbott, Nannie P. Estes, Maria R. Grasty, Alice D. Keen, Mary D. Jones, Alice S. Burton, Bettie R. Jones, Laura A. Patrick, Eleanor H. Hancock, Mary Wheeler, Bettie M. Martin, Mary Pendleton, Adela C. Green, and Nellie R. Green.

FIRST HOSPITAL

In 1886 a frame two-story building on the north side of Ridge Street between Main and Patton Streets, owned by W. T. Clark, was rented and became Danville's first hospital. Mrs. A. B. Carrington was president of the society at that time.

A couple named Burnett lived at the hospital and looked after

the sick, who at first were mostly young men living at boarding houses in the town who had no one to look after them if they became ill.

The orderly, and the only other attendant, was a colored man named Silas. The charge of \$8 a week covered all expenses. Members of the society brought furniture from their own homes to furnish the rooms.

HOSPITAL MOVED

In 1887, at the suggestion of Captain W. T. Clark, a request was made of the board of trustees of the Danville College for Young Ladies that the hospital be allowed to use the school's old building on Jefferson Street near the corner of Loyal Street. This building had housed the college when it was the Danville Female Academy, prior to new quarters on upper Main Street.

Through the effort of Captain Clark and John M. Johnston, members of the board, it was decided to make the society a gift for the building. Later a public contribution of \$20,000 made it possible to add a new wing and front to the structure.

NURSES TRAINED

In 1897 a nurses' training class was begun, of three years' work. This was directed by Lucy Ashby Sharp, the hospital's first superintendent. She served from 1898 to 1901.

Miss A. Gulley was the second superintendent, and was succeeded by Elizabeth Detwiler. From 1907 to 1922 Celia Bryan held this position, and she was followed by Margaret Doolin. Jean Forrest, who was with the hospital for many years, served as acting superintendent several times.

In 1900 interested citizens contributed \$10,000 to assure the continuance of the training of the school, and in 1901 a nurses' home was established.

During all these years devoted service was being rendered by the Ladies' Benevolent Society. Mrs. Laura Patrick, who was the society's president at the time of the move in 1887, gave unstintingly of her time and strength until her death on March 20, 1921. She lived to see the institution, which had been founded as the Home for the Sick and had become the Danville General

Hospital, grow wonderfully in capacity, equipment, and efficient care of the sick.

HUGHES' BEQUEST

It is doubtful, however, if the present hospital would have developed without the bequest of \$250,000 by the late John Edward Hughes, tobacconist and philanthropist. Today's hospital on South Main Street is self-supporting and without endowment fund, was built in 1926 with this money. It was completed and named Memorial Hospital in Hughes' honor.

Emily Allison was the first superintendent in the new building. She was followed in 1931 by Ferma E. Hoover, who holds that position today.

Chapter X

MASONIC LODGE

ROMAN EAGLE

ROMAN EAGLE Masonic Lodge is believed to be the oldest organization of any kind in Danville. Founded in 1820, its history and growth are so identified with that of the city that they are practically one.

Its records, complete except for a period from December 29, 1844, to May 15, 1852, when they were destroyed by fire, present a remarkable year-by-year story of civic work and fraternal assistance.

Those applying in October, 1820, for the opening of a lodge were John B. Roy, Stokeley T. Foster, Thomas W. White, Thomas Rawlins, Dabney P. Snead, Edmund W. Cabell, James Connor, and Matthew Sims.

At the first meeting John Bennett and B. W. S. Cabell were received as members from other lodges. Other men who were initiated, passed, or raised were Warner L. Williams, James Lanier, Dr. Thomas G. Tunstall, Dr. George Craighead, Thomas H. Clark, Joshua Howerton, George Price, Reuben Hopkins, Walter Coles, and James Lanier.

In its lifetime the lodge has owned four homes. The first was a small brick building constructed in 1826 on Tunstall Street (now Craighead Street). A second larger building, with stores and a saloon on the first floor to assure an income, was erected in 1851 on Main Street on the site of the present Masonic Temple.

In 1901, a three-story edifice considered very handsome in its day, replaced the fifty-year-old structure, and a resolution was passed that no liquor-selling concern should be allowed to rent any of the business space.

On January 3, 1920, this building along with most of the others on the block, was destroyed by a disastrous fire.

TALLEST BUILDING

In 1921 the present Masonic building was erected on the same site occupied by the previous two. It is a ten-story structure with

stores on the first floor and office and professional suites on all other floors except those reserved for lodge meetings. One of the most modern office buildings in this section, it is also Danville's best.

Many of the names prominent in Danville history are seen also in the history of Roman Eagle Lodge. Among them are George Townes, Dr. George Craighead, William T. Sutherlin, Edwin Claxton Edmonds, Samuel C. Williams, Joseph R. Cabell, Herbert Lee Boatwright, William Edward Boisseau, Robert Brydon, William M. Brydon, A. B. Carrington, James T. Catlin, Sr., Richard Louis Dibrell, and Oliver Witcher Dudley.

DR. G. W. DAME

The most prominent name on the list is probably that of Dr. George Washington Dame, founder of the Episcopal Church in Danville. A Mason for sixty-two years, he was a member of Roman Eagle Lodge for fifty-four of them. He served as worshipful master of the lodge for thirty-eight years, and for forty-five years was chaplain of the Grand Lodge of Virginia.

In 1895, the year in which he later died, Dr. Dame compiled a history of Roman Eagle Lodge for the existing records. In 1939 this history was brought up to date and published, and it constitutes an unusually rich record of the growth of an organization and of a town over more than a century.

OTHER LODGES

Other Masonic organizations in the city are the Morotock and Roman Lodges. Morotock Lodge is another of the older Masonic groups in Southwest Virginia. It was founded in 1866 by a band of citizens who were determined to combat the "carpet-bagger" menace that threatened the community's peace following the Civil War.

Grand United Order of Odd Fellows, Bethesda Lodge, No. 57, of Danville, Virginia. Established 1846 by Mr. Hobson Johns. The society was then just beginning to receive attention from the people of Virginia, and its Grand Lodge had been in existence about ten years, with a membership of at least fifty subordinates.

Good Templars, chartered in 1884.

North Danville Lodge, No. 478 J.O.G.T., organized in 1884.
Knights of Honor, Spartan Lodge, No. 937, chartered March 6, 1878.

“Euclid” Chapter of Royal Arch Masons, chartered December 15, 1842.

“Dove” Commandery of Knights Templars, No. 7, chartered December 11, 1851.

Chapter XI

DANVILLE DURING THE CIVIL WAR

WHEN war loomed ahead in the South in 1861, Danville faced the situation realistically. On January 12, 1861, a meeting was held at Neal's warehouse, and a home guard organized "for the enlistment of citizens who had attained the age of 45 and upwards and whose duty it should be to protect the homes, the families and firesides, the honor and interest of the citizens of Danville and its vicinity, from invasion from without and insurrection from within."

This meeting resulted in the enlistment, then and there, of forty-seven men.

In the early days of 1861, while the Southern States were seceding one by one and setting themselves up as a confederacy, Virginia hesitated, torn between two factions, which could come to no decision. A state convention was called to determine by vote whether the State should secede or not, and every district was called upon to send a delegate. Pittsylvania County, by virtue of its size, was practically one while a district, and as such voted overwhelmingly for delegates representing the Union cause.

Danville, however, the county's largest town, was hotly in favor of secession. William T. Sutherlin, Danville's delegate, was the only member of the group attending the convention from Pittsylvania who was pledged to vote against the Union.

SECESSION VOTED

While the convention was in session the demand came from Washington that Virginia should furnish her quota of men to help crush the "rebellion," and at once all anti-secessionist spirit vanished. If staying in the Union meant taking up arms against the Southern States, there was no longer any choice to make. The convention by a large majority voted allegiance to Jefferson Davis, and war was on.

Though Virginia was one of the main battlegrounds of the four-year war, Danville, in a comparatively quiet region, escaped

the actual conflict. However, the town suffered, as did all Virginia towns, during those years. Nearly all the men, except the very old and the youngsters went to war, and many of them were killed. Hardly a family was left untouched by loss and grief.

PRIVATIONS SUFFERED

The lack of supplies grew crucial as the South was gradually drained of foodstuffs and raw materials. Transportation was a mockery, for the armies fought back and forth for the railroads that were the country's lifelines. The Richmond and Danville continued to operate through the war, but toward the last it was badly crippled and what service it had to render was used mainly by the Confederate forces.

Taxes went higher and higher, while incomes went lower. By the end of the war all of the South was completely impoverished.

WAR'S LAST WEEK

Danville's high moment during the war came at the very end, when on April 3, 1865, President Davis, cabinet members, and other government officials fled from Richmond after news of the fall of Petersburg. They came to Danville, and Davis spent the last week of his presidency at the home of Major Sutherlin. There was some attempt to make a new rampart of defense of the Dan River, and breastworks were thrown up.

Davis issued a proclamation, printed in the *Danville Register*, in which he declared that the Confederacy would never yield. This fleeting hope was crushed, however, by the news that Lee had surrendered at Appomattox, and the Davis party fled on into North Carolina leaving Danville truly a desolate town.

RAILROAD DESTROYED

In the fighting of the last week the railroad was destroyed near Richmond and telegraph lines were down, so that no news came through. Also the railroad toward the south had been so threatened that, although, communication was never actually out for all practical purposes, it was useless.

The anxious families of Danville had to wait for weeks and sometimes months, before they knew whether or not their sons,

husbands, and brothers would ever come home. Gradually the soldiers who were left alive made their way back home, and as best they could the people of Danville tried to get back to some semblance of normal living.

BLUE COATS CAPTURE DANVILLE APRIL, 1865

On Thursday, April 27, 1865, the people of Danville saw for the first time the blue coats of the victorious soldiers to whom the town had to surrender. In the morning information came that the vanguard of the 6th Corps, U. S. Army, under General Wright, was approaching by the Halifax road. Mayor J. M. Walker, with some aldermen and several members of the town council, went out on horseback to meet them so that no violence would be done to the town. The place of meeting was in the main road just beyond the North Side station.

The first entry was made at 10 A. M. by the 3rd Brigade, 2nd Division, 6th Army Corps, commanded by Col. Thomas W. Hyde. Col. S. C. Fletcher, commanding the First Regiment Maine Volunteers, was appointed Provost Marshal of Danville and opened his office at the Virginia building on Main Street.

The printing establishment and equipment of the *Register* was at once confiscated for the time being, and a daily newspaper called the *Sixth Corps* was printed there for nearly a month, from April 27 to May 16. In the last issue appeared the news of Jefferson Davis' capture at Irwinville, Georgia.

DESTRUCTION OF ARSENAL KILLED MANY

The explosion of the Confederate arsenal in Danville which occurred April 11, 1865, the day after the news of the surrender at Appomattox had been received, was a tragic climax to the months and years of suffering the people of Danville had undergone. The arsenal, located near the river bank at the lower end of Craighead Street, just below the Richmond & Danville railroad station, had been carefully guarded, with its contents of gunpowder, cartridges, bombshells, rockets, and other explosives, but in the stress of that day the guard must have been relaxed. According to the most reliable accounts, small boys got in and began to play, spreading gunpowder all over the floor.

HUGE EXPLOSION

No one knows how the powder was ignited, but suddenly a tongue of flame gushed up and a tremendous explosion shook the town. Crash followed crash as one after another the explosives went off, and the building itself leaped into the air, to fall in pieces.

It was never discovered how many lives were lost. Fourteen bodies, terribly mangled, were found, including those of two women who were drowned when they flung themselves into the river to extinguish the flames in their clothing. A number were injured, and some died later.

"But so accustomed had the people become to scenes of suffering and death," says an old authority, "that this event, which, under ordinary circumstances would have been justly regarded as an appalling calamity, caused only a passing ripple of excitement, and was soon forgotten except by the relatives and personal friends of the victims."

ROSTER OF BLUES AND GRAYS

The two military organizations of Danville, the Blues and the Grays, early in the Civil War were formed into two companies, and became part of the 18th Virginia Regiment. Their officers were as follows:

<i>Danville Blues</i>		<i>Danville Grays</i>	
William P. Graves	Captain	Thomas D. Claiborne	
Dr. James M. Smith	1st Lieutenant	Edward N. Sorey	
Dr. E. D. Withers	2nd Lieutenant	J. Daniel Turner	
James A. Holland	3rd Lieutenant	Robert McCullough	
William D. Coleman	1st Sergeant	Archibald Pleasants	
James M. Walker	2nd Sergeant	Samuel S. Grasty	
Stephen A. Rice	3rd Sergeant	William H. Lipscomb	
Robert S. Neal	4th Sergeant	Harry Wooding	
(none)	5th Sergeant	James Fitzjames	
John C. Enright	1st Corporal	James M. Murrie	
Jacob Wolff	2nd Corporal	John M. Womack	
John S. Paxton	3rd Corporal	Lewis L. Vaughn	
Thomas G. Wooding	4th Corporal	Charles E. Daughtery	

Chapter XII

HISTORY OF NEWSPAPERS

THE Roanoke *Sentinel*, was printed first in 1820. Its life was short. In 1822 Honorable Thomas H. Clark founded the newspaper, *The Telegram*. It was never self-supporting and consequently it failed to exist long. In 1833 Honorable B. W. S. Cabell and Joseph Megginson started a weekly paper, called *The Reporter*. This paper grew into the *Register* under different and various proprietors.

Richard W. Lyle and E. A. Howard edited the paper called *The Herald*. In 1851 A. W. C. Terry purchased the paper from Lyle and E. A. Howard, and named it *Danville Register*. The next year the *Register* was sold to Colonel A. S. Buford. In 1854 it was resold to Mr. Lyle. It was then called the *Weekly Register*.

After the death of Mr. Lyle, Anderson and Shumaker partners, became the sole owners of the *Register*. In 1884 Captain Anderson sold the *Register* to Judge A. W. C. Nowlin, who in turn sold it the next year to Colonel J. Richard Lewellen. In 1893 Mr. Copeland sold out to his partners, Messrs. Freeman and Woodson. In 1899 the paper and the property was sold at auction and John R. Webster of Reidsville, N. C. purchased it. However, Hon. Rorer A. James upset the bid and was the purchaser. The *Register* to this day is owned by Mr. James' family.

In 1836 a weekly paper called the *Republican* was published. The founder was a man named Jackson, who sold the paper later to William M. Tredway and Albert Waddill. The *Republican* was really started about 1852 by Sterling A. Lester and James L. Claiborne. In 1860 it merged into the *Democratic Appeal*, under George C. Cabell and William Coleman. A year later Coleman became sole owner, and in 1863 he resumed publication, issuing the first daily edition ever brought out in Danville, called the *Bulletin*. A year or two later the *Bulletin* was sold first to Robert D. Wade, and then to L. Keen, Jr., who continued to publish it. It was finally purchased by Mr. Powhatan Bouldin.

He changed the name to *The Times*, and it remained a weekly publication for a number of years.

The *Daily News* was published from 1875 to 1879. The *Daily Post* was published 1879; *Danville Free Press* was published in 1900-1902 by Harry C. Ficklen.

In 1900, Mr. James purchased the *Bee*, a small paper which had been owned by Colonel Fairbrother. This paper developed into an afternoon daily newspaper. It is one of our best supporting papers today in the South.

RICHARD LYLE

Richard Lyle was born in North Carolina in 1821 and came to Danville and spent some twelve years reading law in the office of Judge J. M. Tredway. He passed the State Bar examination and engaged in the practice of law, but in 1854 when the opportunity came to him to buy the Danville newspaper he did so. Col. A. S. Buford, who owned the newspaper had just concluded an ineffectual campaign to prevent the building of the Richmond to Danville railway and is said to have been so chagrined that he sold the paper for a small sum. (Later Buford became president of that railroad.)

But Lyle found that publishing paid less well than advocacy in the courts and within two years he had sold the newspaper and had resumed the practice of law.

He was known for his courtroom rhetoric no less than he had been for acidulous editorials, and he developed a large criminal practice.

But somewhere in his life he had passed through an episode which left its imprint on him and which caused him to seek forgetfulness by simple means. It was under those circumstances that he wrote the famous lines which have been published at one time or another in practically every State of the union. Even today newspapers or the public library receive requests for copies of the lines.

Lyle died a spectacular death. He had just concluded a long summation in defense of a client when he collapsed to the courtroom floor and died before the eyes of the jury which had just been listening to him.

The famous lines he wrote are as follows:

I have been to the funeral of all my hopes
And entombed them one by one.
Not a word was said
Not a word was said,
Not a tear was shed,

When this mournful task was done.
Slowly and sadly I turned me round
And sought my silent room
By the cold hearthstone
I wooed the midnight gloom.

And as the night wind's deepening shade
Lowered above my brow
I wept o'er days
When manhood's bays
Were brighter far than now.

The dying embers on the hearth
Gave out their flickering light
As if to say,
This is the way
Thy life shall close in night.

I wept aloud in anguish sore,
O'er the plight of prospects fair,
While demons laughed
And eager quaffed
My tears like nectar rare.

Through Hell's red halls an echo rang
An echo loud and long
As in a bowl
I plunged my soul,
In the might of madness strong.

And there within that sparkling glass
I knew the cause to lie
This all men own
From zone to zone
Yet millions drink and die.

Chapter XIII

DANVILLE AFTER CLOSE OF CIVIL WAR

WHEN the Civil War ended in 1865, Danville citizens at once set to work with characteristic realism and energy to restore the town to normal life and prosperity.

The city was under strict military rule, with an oath of allegiance to the United States required before anyone could hold office, own or operate a business, practice a trade or profession, receive or ship goods, have private property restored, marry or be married.

The leading townsmen humbled their pride to do this, so that life in Danville could resume normal trends and business could continue.

RAILROAD CHARTERED

A movement was at once begun to build a railroad from Lynchburg to Danville. However, it was not until the winter following the war's end that the Lynchburg & Danville Railroad Company was incorporated through the efforts of Colonel E. F. Keen, state senator from the district composed of Danville and Pittsylvania County.

The town of Danville voted \$200,000 for the new railroad in 1870, and the counties interested were also liberal.

The new company was consolidated in 1871 with the Orange, Alexandria and Manassas Railroad Company. A few years later, under the title of the Virginia Midland Railway Company. The first train finally rolled into Danville from Lynchburg.

HUSTINGS COURT

In 1870 the corporation, or Hustings Court of Danville was established and H. W. Flournoy elected its judge. He held his first court on August 1 of that year. He was re-elected in 1876, but resigned the office January 1877, when he was succeeded by Archer M. Aiken. J. D. Blackwell succeeded Aiken as judge in 1882.

In 1873 the town bought for \$20,000 the private toll bridge which had been built by William T. Sutherlin in 1851, and the collection of tolls was discontinued.

NEW BRIDGE

In 1878 the legislature was petitioned and a charter granted for the building of a new foot and wagon bridge at the upper end of town. The charter was granted December 18 to S. H. Holland, J. M. Walker, T. J. Corbin, T. D. Stokes, W. J. Crews, J. M. Hutchins, and James M. Neal under the name of the Union Bridge Company. The work was completed and the covered bridge, known as the Union Street Bridge, was opened to public travel about November 1, 1879.

In February, 1880, Congress appropriated \$70,000 for the construction of a United States Court House and Post Office building. This large red brick structure, very handsome and modern for its day and time, was completed by the end of 1881 on the site selected on Main Street between Union and Floyd Streets. With two stories and mansard attic, with brownstone trim in the prevailing mode, ten gables and dormer projections, a cupola supported by eight Corinthian columns, brickwork pressed and molded into intricate designs, ornamented with terra cotta rosettes, and the center of the wall facing Main Street, a quadrangular tower mountings, this building was the pride of Danville citizens and the admiration of visitors.

PUBLIC UTILITIES

In 1874 a franchise was granted a private concern to build and operate water and gas works. The gas and water were turned on in 1875, but the operation was not satisfactory. The town council in 1876 voted to buy out the company, and Danville became one of the first towns in the United States to own its own utilities. At that time the streets were lighted with fifty gas lamps. When electricity came to Danville ten years later—and here again the town pioneered in municipal ownership—electric street lighting was used. The turning on of the gas lamps a decade before had been a wonder and a miracle to the community, and the change to electricity provided another thrill.

POLITICAL CONFUSION

The passing of military rule had left the South very unsettled politically. The simple setup of "before the war" did not suffice to handle the problems which now faced the disrupted governments. The Readjuster party, brilliantly conceived to handle some of these problems but failing in the practice, split the Democratic party in what was almost the equal of another civil war.

A union of portions of this party with the Republicans, which included the new Negro vote, to form a Coalition party, brought abuses and humiliations worse than anything that had yet happened to the South.

The accession of a number of the lowest element among the Negro vote, to form a Coalition party, brought abuses to public office in Danville. It also brought meetings of the white people, and an attempt through these meetings and the circulation of a handbill to bring out the district's voting strength in order to force out the Coalition party at the next election, to be held in November, 1883.

Chapter XIV

DANVILLE RIOT, NOVEMBER 3, 1883

IN the election of a large majority of the party nominees to the town offices in the May election of 1882, and the subsequent appointment of the Council so elected of Negro policemen, as well as by the conduct of the officials so elected, there was engendered in the minds of the Negroes of Danville a belief that as against the white men they would receive the support and protection of the municipal government.

The census of 1880 showed the population of Danville was 7,526 persons: 3,129 were white and 4,379 were colored. Bad temper and ill-feeling between the races thus generated continued to increase and was of late greatly aggravated by the heated political canvass preceeding the election on November 6, 1883; and that in the midst of the intense excitement of the last days of the canvass, Wm. E. Sims, Coalition candidate for the Senate from Pittsylvania County and Danville, made in front of the courthouse of the town, on the night of November 2, 1883, preceeding the riot of the 3rd, a most incendiary and violent speech to more than five hundred Negroes, in which he denounced many of the most respectable and prominent white citizens of the town.

The political faction was the "Coalition," or colored people, against the whites. The Coalitionists succeeded in carrying a local election, causing the crisis. The Coalition party met on the same night as the Democratic party.

Since the population of Negroes was greater than the whites, more offices were held by the Negroes. There were four Negro policemen—of the twelve members of Councilmen, seven were Negroes, and Negroes owned valuable property in the city. J. H. Johnson was a Negro mayor.

November 3, 1883, the date of the Danville riot, when white Democrats took over the city government. C. D. Noel and Hense Lawson, a Negro, had a personal difficulty on Main Street. This was followed by the arrival of troops, congressional investigation, and a grand jury proceeding. About seven Negroes were wounded, four of whom died, and two white men seriously, but not mortally wounded.

Within one-half hour after the start of the riot the town was completely under the control of the sergeant and his police force, and there was no further disturbance of its peace and good order.

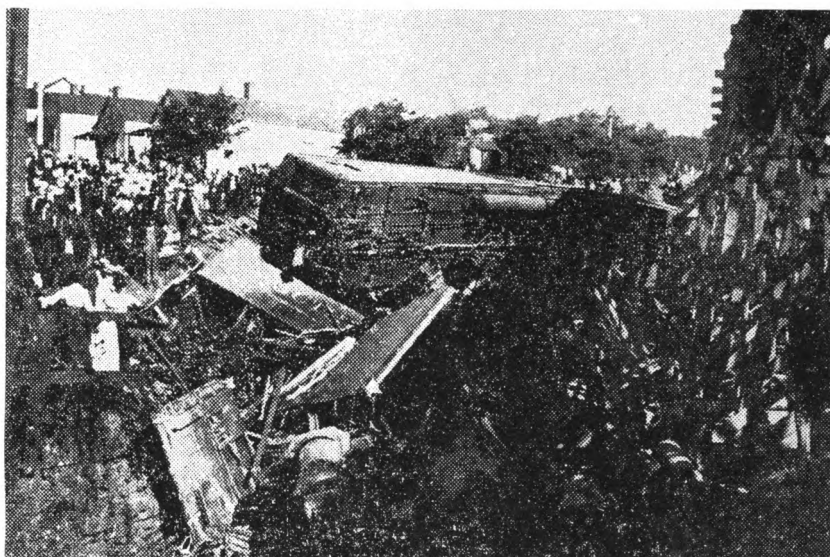
Captain John G. Lea practically took over the town. J. B. Raulston was given a right to dictate Virginia Federal patronage, after gaining his support, to the Republican party.

In addition to the protection afforded by the general disposition of the people, there was present a sufficient military force to enable the civil officers to protect and if necessary to enforce the rights of all citizens desiring to exercise the right of suffrage, and the whole command was ready to execute the orders of the commanding officer, who was especially enjoined to see that all persons were protected in their life, person, property, and the peaceful exercise of their lawful rights.

Any and every voter might have had complete protection from the military by simple request at any time.

Crowds of citizens of both races and parties freely mingled on the streets in converse with each other and with the troops without the slightest apprehension of danger, and prominent men of both political parties repeatedly assured the officers and men of the military force that there was not the slightest necessity for their presence, as, all things considered, there was never a more quiet and peaceably disposed community, both parties having united in the determination to have complete submission to the law and its officers, and to mutually aid in its enforcement.²¹

²¹ Danville Riot, November 3, 1883. Report of committee of forty with sworn testimony of thirty-seven witnesses, & C. Richmond: Johns & Goolsby, Book and Job Printers. 1883.



"WRECK OF OLD 97"

This picture of the "Wreck of Old 97" was taken shortly after the famous crash into Still House Creek in North Danville. The nose of Engine Number 1102 is still buried in the creek bank. The 75-foot wooden trestle carrying the main line of the Southern Railway at the time is visible to the right while a corner of the "red mill" is seen at the left.



REPRODUCTION OF FRONT PAGE
OF THE FIRST ISSUE OF *THE DAILY
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Chapter XV

RECONSTRUCTION DAYS

LOCAL TEXTILE MILLS

IN the early 1880's, because several of Danville's outstanding citizens saw the need for industrial development and for employment for the city's white laborers, the city's textile industry came into being. At this period there was much resentment among white workers because they could find few opportunities for employment, while local Negroes could find work in the tobacco factories. Because of this situation race conflicts were constantly brewing. This need, together with the desire of Danville's water-front landowners to make profitable use of the available water power, resulted in the chartering of the Riverside Cotton Mills on July 27, 1882. Original capital amounted to \$75,000.

Six men were its founders: R. A. Schoolfield, J. H. Schoolfield, T. B. Fitzgerald, and R. A. Schoolfield was the secretary-treasurer.

The first principle of this great industry was to make a material just as good as it could possibly be made, and then to sell it at a fair price; not to see how cheap it could be made. The second was to treat their employees with justice and consideration, whether it involved wages, hours or labor, working conditions, or living conditions. The third was to build up a spirit of confidence and good will with their customers by honest dealing and strict policy formed a wonderful foundation on which to build, and the years adherence to the spirit of the Golden Rule. This set of principles have demonstrated its solidity.

The little Riverside Mills, with its force of scarcely a hundred workers, placed on the market a durable fabric which they called Riverside Plaids. The label bore the picture of a little girl, and in the course of forty-six years that little girl has gone out on literally millions of pieces of goods, mutely telling the story of an enterprise that was slowly but surely bringing light into the industry. So well did she tell the story in terms of durability and honest value, that the fame of Riverside Plaids spread throughout the land, and the demand grew steadily, relentlessly.

As a result, the little mill grew and prospered, and other lines were added, each of which, like the Riverside Plaids, took its place as a leader in its particular class. And this was not surprising, for what family of products ever had behind it such ideals of true progress?

July 27, 1882, operations were commenced with 2,240 spindles and 100 looms in a building on the north bank of the Dan River in the city of Danville.

For the year ending October 1, 1884, the company produced 5,400,000 yards of cloth, valued at \$365,000. The measure of change from that day to this is emphasized by the fact that those 5,400,000 yards today could be hammered out by these massive plants in a week.

A dam constructed across the Dan River supplied water power for this mill and for the Morotock Mill, a separate organization headed by F. X. Burton and C. G. Holland.

The first goods made at the mill were cotton plaids, a line which was its most important for many years. In 1890 the producing of 36-inch unbleached sheeting was begun. As was common throughout the South at that time, this brown goods had to be sent to Northern States for bleaching, sometimes as far as Lewiston, Maine.

From its beginning in 1882 to 1895 the mill's history is a story of constant expansion. One by one, six new buildings were added, each complete in itself with carding, spinning, and weaving equipment, and each run by water power.

MOROTOCK BOUGHT

Mill No. 2 was built in 1887 on the north side of the Union Street bridge. In the following year an extensive addition was called Mill No. 3. In 1894 the Riverside Cotton Mills bought the Morotock building and called it Mill No. 4. (This building is no longer standing.) Mill No. 5 came into being in 1893-4 when an addition was made to Mill No. 3, and Mills No. 2, 3, and 5 thus became known as the "Long Mill." Another mill, No. 6, was constructed in 1893-5 on the north side of the river below Main Street bridge, and a second dam was built across the river to supply it with water power. Mill No. 7 was erected in 1895-6 as an addition to the Long Mill.

STEAM POWER

During the first ten years all plants were run entirely by water power. The river's water supply, however, varied so in dry weather that production sometimes had to be stopped. As a result, it was found necessary to supplement water power with steam, and the first boiler houses were built in the early 1890s.

Because the river was also used as a source of water power by the city and by Neapolis, by an ice company and by the flour mills, it was decided to investigate alternative sites on the Dan which would be suitable for the construction of new dams. This resulted in the formation in 1895 of the Dan River Power and Manufacturing Co., with the purpose of developing a power source of the river which would be outside the city of Danville. This new company was organized by Riverside's directors and stockholders, and after about 1895 Riverside Cotton Mills was the largest stockholder.

NEW MILL BUILT

For about eight years representatives of the new company explored the river. Land was bought at several sites which were under consideration, but the present Schoolfield location was finally decided on, and the large dam was built there in 1902-3.

After a long dispute with the city over river pollution from the proposed mill, the Dan River Power and Manufacturing Company decided to erect its buildings on high land away from the river, and to operate with electricity. Such a source of power was most unusual in cotton textile manufacturing at that time.

Manufacturing was begun at the new Dan River mill in 1904. Its first product was chambray, which has been a main line ever since. It soon began the production of unbleached sheeting, as well.

FIRST BLEACHERY

In 1908 a bleachery was established by Dan River, and it thus became one of the Southern mills to sell bleached sheeting.

The two companies continued their separate existence until August 1909. At that time the stock of both organizations was exchanged for stock in the Riverside and Dan River Cotton Mills, Inc., and the two companies became one under that name.²²

²² *The Register*, Danville, Va., Sunday, October 28, 1928.

Chapter XVI

TOWN-OWNED POWER PLANT

SIXTY-FIVE years ago, on January 15, 1886, Danville's first electric street lights were turned on. For eleven years prior to that date, since April, 1875, the streets had been lighted with gas. The lamp-lighter going about at dusk to turn on and light each lamp was a familiar character about town.

In 1885 it was found that with the growth of the city the gas works were inadequate to supply street lighting for another year, and a committee was appointed by the president of the city council to investigate improved methods. A favorable report was made on the use of electricity, which at that time was being adopted by the larger cities.

FIRST PLANT

The plant was built, and it is believed that, on the date the street lights went on, Danville possessed the first municipally-owned and operated electric light plant in the United States. Equipment included two 30-arc dynamos, ten miles of street lighting circuits, and 59 1200-candle-power arc lights.

Danville's pride in the new plant was short-lived, however, for on September 10 of that year the plant and all the machinery was destroyed in a disastrous fire.

When the plant was rebuilt, two 45-arc dynamos were installed to meet the growing demand for electricity, and also during that year 15 arc lights and four incandescent lamps were installed on the street lighting circuits and rented to the citizens.

NEAPOLIS DYNAMO

On August 1, 1893, the council contracted with the council of Neapolis (North Danville) to move their 30-arc dynamo to the Danville plant and to operate it at an annual charge of \$900. In 1895, a new 50-arc dynamo was added. There were at that time 90 street lights. When Neapolis was annexed to Danville in 1895, under the name of North Danville, the number of arc lights

was increased to 119 on the streets, with 15 arc lights and 50 incandescent lamps rented to the citizens.

In 1899, the city bought the Crews and Westbrook water power lot and installed a 200-horsepower wheel, which was leased out for the day and used to help supply the street lighting system at night. By 1902 it was found necessary to build a 300-horsepower plant to supplement the water power in order to meet the town's growing needs.

GAS FIRST TURNED ON IN DANVILLE IN 1875;
CITY NOW HAS 6,200 USERS

In April, 1875, gas was first turned on in Danville, following the granting of a franchise to a private corporation which built the water works at the same time. Danville had a population then of approximately 5,000.

The original gas plant consisted of two benches of retorts, to each bench, four purifying boxes four by five feet, gas holder of 16,000 cubic feet capacity and about five miles of three- and four-inch pipe.

The price of gas then was \$4.20 per 1,000 feet, \$4 if paid promptly.

In 1876 the Danville Water and Gas Company sold out to the city of Danville for \$141,500.

At the time gas was being supplied to 50 street lamps and only 20 private consumers. The city spent more money on the works, which it found in poor condition, and soon had to enlarge the gas plant as patronage increased.

While the street lighting system was changed from gas to electricity in 1886, the growth of the town, plus added use of gas for cooking purposes, made further demands for improvements. From 1876 to 1920 gas was made by coal only. In 1920 the city spent \$32,000 for a water plant, and a gas plant, and added an additional water and gas plant in 1927.

TWO GROUPS OF FIREMEN WERE RIVALS

Danville first had a fire department in 1875. In fact, the city had two, the Pace Hose Company and the Chambers Hose Company, both with two hand reels, a host of volunteer fire fighters, and a grim determination to beat each other to a fire.

In those days citizens paid for the privilege of having their conflagrations extinguished, and the company who got there first got all the gravy. So bitter was the rivalry that it is recorded that on occasions the two fire companies would stop to fight it out with each other while the fire to which both were headed blazed merrily away. A far from satisfactory system it would seem!

Anyway, Danville got something better in January, 1884, when the first paid fire department was organized and equipped, with C. S. Bennett as chief. The department consisted of one Button fire engine, two Ainsleys, one horse reel, four horses, and a number of "call men" or runners, who ran to haul the equipment and fight the fire when the alarm sounded, and who were paid for so doing by the city.

C. C. Snead became chief in 1885. In December, 1887, the city council elected N. F. Reid to the post. It was a position he held for a number of years, during which time the first department was greatly enlarged and its usefulness expanded.

BRIDGE BURNS AFTER FIFTY YEARS OF USE

The Main Street iron bridge, built in 1877, was destroyed by fire exactly fifty years later on June 30, 1927.

An exceptionally swift, hot, fire, it was difficult to fight. It began when a tar wagon, which was being used to repair the floor of the bridge, turned over and blazed up.

The floor of the bridge, made of wooden blocks covered with asphalt, caught fire as the intense heat cracked the asphalt and exposed the wood. The flames, running very quickly the length of the bridge, caused the steel girders and supports to buckle and collapse before the fire could be brought under control.

Work was begun at once on a fine, modern cement bridge, and this was opened for traffic on January 11, 1928. The completion of a bridge of this type, length, and capacity in six months and eleven days was said at the time to have set a world's record for speed of construction.

Chapter XVII

DANVILLE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, 1884

DANVILLE'S Chamber of Commerce, today a live-wire organization of some 500 members with a full-time staff and a suite of offices is located at 664 Main and Ridge Streets. This important and influential body was organized on May 13, 1884, and is now in active and useful operation. Its objects are, inter alia, to disseminate general and statistical commercial information, reconcile differences, adjust claims, regulate freights, watch over and protect the manufacturing and mercantile interests of the town, and oppose all attempts—no matter what, when or by whom they may be made—to discriminate in any way to her disadvantage.

A committee of five was appointed by the president at his leisure to cooperate with a similar committee from the merchants of the city to take into consideration the subjects of freights and adopt such measures as they may deem best to bring our markets upon equal terms with other markets in this respect and do away with the unjust discrimination against us.²³

August 6, 1884 at a called meeting of the Danville Tobacco Association, held at Holland's warehouse President R. C. Herndon in the chair. The president then stated that the object of the meeting was to comply with the request of the Chamber of Commerce, as set forth in the following resolution recently passed by that body.

The Tobacco Association be requested to appoint a committee to act with the committee appointed by this association to wit—C. G. Holland, president; J. E. Schoolfield, vice-president, R. W. Ferrell and J. L. Tyack, in the matter of endeavoring to get insurance rates reduced, and that the committee so appointed by your association may have the same powers as those conferred upon the committee of this association.²⁴

In 1888 the Chamber of Commerce and the association shared a room in the rear of the Commercial Bank. It was gratifying

²³ Pollock's *Sketchbook of Danville*, p. 125.

²⁴ Old Record of Tobacco Association, Danville, Va., August 6, 1884, p. 82.

to mention the fact that by a joint effort of the Tobacco Association and the Chamber of Commerce very great relief in insurance has been made attainable and by like concerted efforts we have a fair prospect that material relief from onerous and discriminating tariff of freight to which we have so long been subjected.

It recommended cooperation of the association in every effort to forward the general interest of the town whenever such cooperation is practicable. It therefore recommended that the Board of Trade and Chamber of Commerce jointly take this matter under advisement and recommend some plan by which manufacturing interests may be stimulated and reputation for fine manufactured goods be made to correspond with the present enviable reputation as a leaf market.—Thos. J. Talbott was president.

May 17, 1904, the Commercial Association met in the old Pace block in a second floor room which was reached by a stairway running up from the sidewalk beside what is now the Bledsoe Furniture Company.

A. W. Traylor was president in 1904, and was succeeded by A. B. Carrington, who served from 1905 through 1916.

The Commercial Association grew in numbers and influence. Meeting quarters were changed to the Hotel Burton, and later to a room in the Holland building at the corner of Main and Union Streets (the site now occupied by the Woolworth building).

On January 23, 1915, the members by then there were 174—at their annual banquet at the Hotel Burton voted to become the Danville Chamber of Commerce, and on February 8, 1915, the charter was obtained.

Fifteen directors were elected at this banquet, with three more to be chosen later. It was planned that these directors should then elect the president of the body. Mayor Harry Wooding, Gardner, Jr. Harry W. Smith, however, took the floor at this point. He made a motion that since it was a foregone conclusion that everyone wanted Carrington for president, no one should be denied the pleasure of voting for him, and therefore the election should take place on the spot. This was done, and Carrington was unanimously chosen to become the first president of the new organization, just as he had been of the old.

Since that time the Chamber of Commerce has assumed an increasingly active role in Danville's development.

Other past presidents were Frank Talbott, Sr., W. P. Boatwright, James T. Catlin, Jr., L. B. Conway, Jr., W. R. Harrison, J. E. Overbey, L. R. Wyatt, L. N. Dibrell, C. G. Holland, W. E. ———, A. A. Farley, O. L. Roach, Glenn B. Updike, and Dr. Curtis Bishop.

Other officers were George W. Aron, president; S. T. Martin, Jr., first vice-president; J. Blair Kerns, second vice-president, and James Bustard, treasurer. Howard Hylton is now executive vice-president and secretary of the organization, and J. B. Hess, Jr., serves as assistant secretary.

Acknowledgment to Mr. Howard Hylton, executive vice-president of Danville Chamber of Commerce for the following information: From Pollock's *Sketch Book of Danville, Virginia*, page 124; Danville Chamber of Commerce. This important and influential body was organized on May 13, 1884, and is now in active and useful operation.

"So that, as a matter of fact, our records which we now use of the Organization of The Chamber of Commerce as of 1904 is not a complete record but we arbitrarily picked up the record 1904 because the two organizations were closely related and continuous from that year when the Danville Commercial Association was organized. We have not been able to get anyone to do enough research or to find the records which would tie in the activity of the Danville Chamber of Commerce from the year it was originally organized in 1884 until the organization of the Danville Commercial Association in 1904."²⁵

Present officers of the Chamber of Commerce are J. Blair Kerns, president; Hosea E. Wilson, first vice-president; C. Stuart Wheatley, second vice-president; R. L. Stembridge, Jr., treasurer; Howard Hylton, executive vice-president and secretary.

²⁵ Howard Hylton, Executive Vice-President, Danville Chamber of Commerce, February 17, 1953.

Chapter XVIII

DANVILLE AS IT WAS IN 1890

AT the turn of the century Danville had a population of about 15,000. There were by then six Methodist churches, three Baptist churches and a Baptist mission, three Presbyterian churches, two Episcopalian churches and mission, one Christian church, and a Catholic chapel. There were, in addition, several Baptist, Methodist, and Presbyterian colored churches.

BUSINESSES

Danville at this time was the largest loose leaf tobacco market in the world, and also had the largest warehouses as well as a storage and inspection warehouse.

The Riverside Cotton Mills consumed annually more than 20,000 bales of cotton, and had a weekly payroll of over \$10,000—a staggering figure for those days. Thomas B. Fitzgerald was president and S. I. Roberts, superintendent.

Dan Valley Flour Mills, established in 1893, produced 300 barrels of flour each day. James I. Pritchett, president, also operated a corn mill.

One national bank, five state banks, and one private bank were all in sound financial condition.

CITY CONDITION GOOD

The city itself, with an assessed real estate valuation of over \$6,000,000, and bonded indebtedness of less than \$1,500,000, was also in sound financial state. Municipal ownership of utilities served to lower both taxes and indebtedness.

THE WEDNESDAY CLUB

Oldest and largest of the women's clubs of Danville is the Wednesday Club. It has been a potent force for betterment socially, culturally, and in many civic ways for more than half a century.

Organized by Augusta Yates in October, 1893, among a small group of women called together at the home of Judge A. M.

Aiken, the club was named the Wednesday Afternoon Club, and Miss Yates was elected its first president.

Charter members were Mesdames Abner Anderson, Landon C. Berkley, John A. Craddock, William Nelson, M. P. Jordon, C. H. Hickey, E. F. Acree, John W. Carter, W. T. Harris, Virginia Stuart, W. T. Paxton and Miss Yates.

CIVIC WORK BEGUN

During the first decade of the club's existence its activities were purely literary, consisting of varied programs given at weekly meetings in the homes of the members. In 1898 the membership was increased to 20, and the first yearbook was published.

Since its beginning the growing club moved into its first home, a rented room over the West End Pharmacy.

Dr. Thomas Wheeldon, Richmond orthopedic specialist, contributes his services without charge, and last year the Wednesday Club spent more than \$3,000 for X-rays, casts, braces, medications, hospitalization, and other expenses.

The clinic, which is held on the third Friday of every month, has been expanded to serve adults as well as children of Danville and Pittsylvania County who otherwise could not afford the necessary medical attention.

CLUBHOUSE PURCHASED

Although the clinic has been the club's major work and one which has grown increasingly important during its thirty years of existence, no worthy cause has ever lacked support from the Wednesday Club. Now enlarged to a membership of 330, with a clubhouse of its own, it is a leader both in the city and in the State.

The club soon outgrew its first meeting-room, and after holding parlors of the Confederate Memorial, on February 15, 1922, it purchased the former Westbrook house at 1002 Main Street. This was during Mrs. W. T. Paxton's administration, and Mrs. Rucker Penn was chairman of the committee that completed the arrangements.

In January, 1940, a celebration meeting was held, at which the mortgage was destroyed. Thus the clubhouse, after years of

hard work, at last was completely paid for and became solely the property of the club.²⁶

The following is an excerpt, from the skit celebrating the Sixtieth Anniversary of the Wednesday Club:

“Miss Augusta” builded better than she knew, when she gathered those eleven friends that October afternoon into a literary club, which in time became The Wednesday Club, active in almost every line of woman’s work. “Those earnest souls,” as written in a far later record, from which I quote, “were unconscious of the momentous event to which they were giving birth, unconscious that they were launching a movement which was to shape the mental and spiritual development of their members and the womanhood of the city as well as to raise the standard of culture.”

From that group germinated an influence before which in years to come strong men trembled, schoolboards invested in brooms, school children rejoiced in hot lunches, the Southern Railway Company invested in Sarah, a model maid who whisked its disreputable waiting-room into order and courtesy; and hundreds of lame children learned to walk at the Crippled Children’s Clinic. A member of this group became the first woman in Virginia to be appointed judge of a juvenile court, and the first woman elected to a Virginia school board was a member of the Wednesday Afternoon Literary Club.

Nor were their achievements limited to their own direct efforts. Little did they dream in those early days of the pride with which they would later see their daughters and friends develop the Junior Wednesday Club into a vital force in civic welfare, responsible for successful humanitarian contribution to the community in the County Children’s Clinic.

Assuredly the Wednesday Club will ever revere the memory of its charter members, one of whom we still cherish among us, ever strive to follow them worthily.

All honor to its founders.²⁷

²⁶ Danville *Commercial Appeal*, Monday, May 26, 1952, Danville, Va., p. 17.

²⁷ Courtesy of Mrs. Stanley C. Cunningham.

Chapter XIX

NEAPOLIS JOINED CITY IN 1896

THE area known today as North Danville was once an independent town known as Neapolis. Its name was said to have been suggested by a Methodist minister named Whitley. He was struck by the beauty of the village on the steep bank overlooking the river, and named it for the Italian city of Naples, famed for its loveliness.

With the typical condescension of towns toward smaller towns, the citizens of Danville in those days were known to speak disparagingly of their smaller but no less worthy neighbor. A local wit, paraphrasing the well-known saying, "See Naples and die," was quoted as having said, "See Neapolis and drop dead."

OBJECTIONS VOICED

Neapolis did not like Danville a bit better, and when the town councils decided to merge in the interests of civic betterment for both sides, there were vigorous protests.

One of the objections voiced was that the extension of the Danville street-car line across the bridge would frighten the horses bringing tobacco into town.

However violent the mutual recriminations, though, it was obvious that a merger would work for the best interests of both towns, and the people reinforced the council's decision by a popular vote to join forces.

Thus Danville, a town of some 10,000 population at that time, by the addition of the sturdy and progressive little community across the river, increased its size by 5,000 and Neapolis was no more.

In 1898 Captain Harry A. Wooding was mayor, G. P. Geoghegan was city treasurer; Robert Brydon, city auditor; P. H. Woolfork, high constable; and C. A. Ballou, city engineer, a position he had held for more than 25 years.

Hotels of those days were The Burton, The Normandie, and The Carolina. It was at The Carolina that the first classes of the Danville Military Institute were held until the school's building was completed.

PROFESSIONAL MEN

Lawyers and legal firms admitted to the town's bar were Cabell, Cabell & Custer; Green & Miller; Edwin F. Bouldin; Peatross & Harris; Withers & Withers; Berkeley & Harrison; F. F. Bowen; Thomas Hamlin; Julian Meade; and N. T. Green.

There were nineteen doctors and surgeons, formed into an Academy of Medicine, which held bi-monthly meetings for discussion and the reading of papers.

A home for the sick, run by twelve of the town's good ladies and managed by a board of directors, served as hospital.

Some of the prominent ministers of the period were the Reverend J. Cleveland Hall, J. C. Holland, J. T. Busman, L. P. Bransford, J. O. Babcock, T. B. Thames, R. N. Sledd, P. G. Elson, W. T. Doggett, J. C. Harry, W. P. Wright, and W. R. Laird.

SPRINGS POPULAR

Watering places nearby, to which Danville people flocked in warm weather, were Patrick Spring, Buffalo Springs, Franklin Magnesia-Lithia Spring, Park's Spring, Carter's Sulpho-Calcic Springs, and Hodnett's Springs.

Most of these were within a few miles of the city, and some of them boasted excellent family hotels. One of the chief recreations of Danville families was a drive to one of them on a summer afternoon, with perhaps a picnic supper on the lawn or dinner at the hotel, and a drive home in the moonlight.

Danville itself had changed greatly since the Civil War. Hardly a building was left that had been standing then. Old ones had rapidly given place to new as the town had grown. The architecture was mainly that of the time the town was actually flowering into citydom—the eighties and nineties.

TWENTIETH CENTURY

With the coming of the new century, Danville saw the changes that were common to all towns in the country. For one thing, automobiles began more and more to fill the streets, and with them came a whole chain of new businesses.

The educational system, on the eve of World War I, consisted

of a high school and three primary and grammar schools for white pupils, and three schools for colored. F. H. Wheatley was the superintendent.

Randolph-Macon Institute and Roanoke College (formerly Roanoke Female College) continued to offer education to young ladies. The Danville Military Institute was educating boys who were later to become some of the leading citizens in the city.

MILLS GROW

The cotton mills were rapidly taking their place as the largest and most efficient in the section. In 1903 the mills built a large dam on the upper Dan to supply power for the Schoolfield plant of the company now known as Dan River Mills, Inc.

About this plant, named for the Schoolfield family who had played such a large part in the company's success, there grew up a thriving village called Schoolfield.

Danville continued to maintain its position of prominence in the tobacco industry throughout the years.

The Dan Valley Flour Mills had also grown tremendously. Pritchett was still its president, and William B. Hill secretary-treasurer. More than 500 barrels of flour were ground daily in 1913, the most popular brand being Dan Valley Superlative Patent.

ANNUAL FAIR HELD

Beginning in 1910, a fair was held each fall. People came from all the countryside around, and it was looked forward to from year to year.

Also in 1910, L. Herman's business, which had continuously grown in size and in the town's esteem during the twenty-four years since its founding, was moved into a new three-story and basement building, very modern for its time.

The Danville Knitting Mills established in 1898, developed from its small beginning into one of the most prominent industries of its kind in Virginia. By 1913 its three-story building, with a floor area of 60,000 square feet, had been found inadequate, and a second large building was nearing completion.

Chapter XX

DANVILLE, VIRGINIA IN 1900

DRAW on your imagination and take a little journey to see Danville as it appeared in the good old days of half a century ago. Turn a few wheels, twist a dial or two, press a button, and presto! Here we are in Danville, in the autumn of the year 1900, at the corner of Main and Craighead, the most congested corner in the city. The terrific clanging of a gong is heard. Turning around, one discovers that the noise proceeds from a first cousin of the "Tooneyville trolley." The motorman is pounding his bell in an effort to shoo from the track the clutter of wagons and drays that block his path of progress to North Danville. Even then, lower Main Street was a bottleneck!

The roadway is paved with cobble-stones, the narrow sidewalks with brick. The walk way is further reduced by fenced-off steps leading to basements, and the pedestrian has to pick his way carefully through bales of wire, hay, ploughs, farm tools, and cases of goods.

To quote a commentator of that day, "single file is the word, and no lady with children can get beyond Craighead Street. Aren't the merchants standing in their own light? Isn't there a law that gives pedestrians some rights in the premises."

Electric arc-lights are placed on the street corners, but the merchants are still using gas to illuminate their stores. The city government produced electric current for street lighting, and had a small surplus for sale, but this is not available in the daytime, as the city plant operates only at night.

Some of the stores use current provided by the Traction and Power Company, to operate overhead fans, cash registers, etc., but not for lighting. The Power Company's current is on a 500-volt basis, and the City Council is considering ordering the company to reduce their voltage, and the hazards thereof, on complaints filed by the insurance underwriters. The city charges ten cents per kilowatt for current, with 20% off for prompt payment.

Let's get back on the track, and follow the street-car for a block and a half, to the south end of the bridge across the Dan:

the old iron bridge which later became famous by burning down.

We at once get an eye full of the huge buildings of the River-side Cotton Mills, on both sides of the river; their march of progress is a story in itself.

We note the large buildings of the Dan Valley Mills, which began operating in 1894. The demand for their flour required an increase of 50% in production in two years. J. I. Pritchett, Jr. is president of the company, a place held in 1950 by J. I. Prichett, Jr. That building in the distance must be Bellevue School on "yon hill."

Looking up Canal Street, we see the plant of the Danville Ice Company. They stated that they carried large stocks on hand, and made a specialty of carload shipments.

There are a lot of fine old homes, and many churches on the North Side, and in recent years, hundreds of new homes have been built in that area.

Re-tracing our steps to Craighead and Main, as of 1900. Looking westward, we see much that is familiar. The Burton Hotel, with the cupola on top. There is a Main Street "Ladies' Parlor" on the mezzanine floor, without being observed. Banquets and dances at the hotel are frequent.

In the middle of the block above Union, stands the red brick Post Office, with a terra-cotta eagle surmounting the main entrance. Mr. Champe Barksdale is Postmaster. We read in the chronicles of the business section, with four collections. The residential section has three deliveries, and two collections.

On the corner of Main and Floyd stands the City Hall. (The site later will be occupied by the Hotel Danville.) The city had just completed the paving of Main Street from Union to Ridge with vitrified paving bricks, set in cement. It looked wonderful! But the horses could not get a toe hold to go up the hill, and going down they slipped, slid and fell.

The cement was dug out and filled in with sand; still the slipping. Finally, the bricks had to be removed and granite Belgian blocks replaced them. In due time, the Belgian blocks disappeared with the horses!

In this year 1900 the First National Bank of Danville, a "U. S. Depository," had a capital of \$100,000 and a surplus of \$50,000. Their current advertisements do not show the amount

of deposits. J. R. Jopling is president, and H. M. Victor is cashier. Their policy is simply stated as, "Every accommodation and courtesy extended, consistent with sound banking."

Looking over the tobacco district, we see eleven large warehouses which sold leaf all day at the rate of 175 piles an hour.

At the turn of the century, there are about a score of tobacco manufacturing factories, most of them five stories high.

At this time they had for years been turning out great quantities of plug, twist, and smoking tobaccos; many of the brands are nationally well-known. But the Tobacco Trust is buying some firms and applying the pressure on drastic competition to others. The halcyon days of tobacco manufacturing are ending.

Having seen the business area, hop off the "time machine" and resort to the record, found in *The Danville Register* and in that new afternoon paper, which the publishers call the *Danville Daily Bee*.

For a city of approximately 20,000 (Census of 1900 showed 16,520) Danville boasted a large number of merchants, who not only served the city well, but their trade extended far out into Pittsylvania, Halifax, Caswell, Rockingham, and Henry counties.

In the dry goods line there were L. Herman, Rosenstock's, Goldsmith & Co., Harnsberger & Bro., Rathvon's, Blatman's, and others whose names we cannot recall.

It was interesting to note that L. Herman's, then, as now, used the slogan, "Danville's Best Store."

There were ten or more tailors, catering to both men and women, showing a solid demand for custom-made clothes. Men's clothing and accessories were offered by J. & J. Kaufman, J. Berman, Wildmans, P. A. Patterson & Co., and others.

Jewelry, watches and silverware could be had at E. P. Sangston's, Frank's, Otto Salzman's, and probably others. Sangston advertised that he was a "Doctor of Refraction," Oculist and Optician.

Bakeries operated by Francisco, L. D. Moorefield and F. O. Kidd, each claimed to produce the best fancy cakes, bread, and cream puffs.

The grocerymen did not advertise much in those days, only by H. C. Swanson and Hamlin's announcing their offering.

Baroody's at Main and Market, offered choice fruits and home-made candies, fresh daily.

The John W. Ferrell Furniture Co. appeared to be the leading furniture dealer of that day.

There were eight or ten drug stores: the only one using the same name today is the J. C. McFall Pharmacy.

The methods of merchandising in the old days were not as "Old-timey" as the modern shopper might think. The store-houses were smaller, the stocks of goods were not as varied and the "displays" were limited; but the general service was good. The sales-people knew many of their customers personally, and tried to give them friendly advice. Sales were unhurried, and if the article desired was not in stock, it could be ordered.

In the dry goods business, a main feature was still the sale of "piece-goods," for dressmaking at home. It was a far cry from the ready-made garments of that day and this.

Some of the stores made no pretense at adornment; the shelves, counters, and tables were plain. Others had hardwood fittings, adorned with carving, and handsome showcases, as interior view of a jewelry store in that line today.

A shoe store, which also sold men's hats, umbrellas, trunks, and luggage, was attractively fitted, and the same interior could be used with credit today.

Formerly in the larger stores, your purchase was hoisted to an overhead trolley basket, and gravity carried it to a central wrapping station. Today, your cash or a charge slip is shot through a pneumatic tube to the cashier, and your purchases placed in a neat package. For a small fee, they may be done up as a gift package, with a pom-pom of fancy ribbon.

In later years there has been a vast improvement in displaying in volume, in rows or piles; today they are given individual display and highlighted to attract interest.

Instead of piling articles in heaps, to collect dust, now they are shown in cellophane wrappings, or carefully selected samples, under glass. The main stock is under cover. Window displays now are often works of art; once they used to be a melange of everything thrown in with little thought of decoration or arrangement.

The greatest single improvement in merchandising has been the gradual realization on the part of the merchant that he *must* tell his prospective customers about what he has to sell.

In proof of this, just take a look at the advertisements of former days and today. There was a time when handbills were much in use, but they are seldom used now, for it was finally realized that they reached a few hundred people whereas the newspapers and magazines appeal to thousands and millions.

In poring over some of the advertisements of 1900, we uncovered a good many interesting things. Most of them were small; the larger firms used from six to ten inches, covering two or three columns only.

The larger dry goods stores repeated the same advertisement daily for a week and frequently for two solid weeks. They often offered "Special" prices, but very few special sales. The special sales seemed to be mainly "Removal" or "Fire" sales.

The 1900 prices were really something to read about; by comparison they were astounding!

See if these are interesting! "Ladies Petticoats. Mercerized material, black and colors, deep accordian flounces—special, 75c; Ladies' Muslin Drawers with clusters of tucks—special, 25c; Full-Boned Bust Corsets, extra long waist—special, 39c; Mohawk Sheets, 81 x 90, at 57c; Fruit-of-Loom, yard-wide Muslin, 8c; Pillow Cases, 8½c; Eleven-quarter All-Wool Blankets, \$4.00; Rainy Day Skirts, "unlaundried."

Another firm stated they had in stock, seven brands of Corsets; they favored no special brand, you choose the one suited to your figure.

For those who desired stimulants: 10-year-old Private Stock rye, \$1.00 quart; \$3.50 a gallon, Hennessy's Three-Star French brandy \$1.50 per quart—only one to a customer.

The druggists were extolling the virtues of "Peruna," Mrs. Winslow's Soothing Syrup, California Syrup of Figs.

Frequent offers were made of young Kentucky saddles and ladies' driving horses.

Statistics are tiresome, but here are some 1900 prices. On the wholesale market, wheat 72c, corn 39c, oats 22c, mess pork 11c, lard 7c, short ribs 6c, spot cotton 9½ to 10c, Rio coffee 8½c.

At retail: bacon 14c, F. F. V. hams 15c, others cheaper, dried apples 8c, country butter 22c, eggs 20c.

But when you read those prices remember that leaf tobacco, for the first ten years in the new century, brought an average of slightly less than ten cents per pound.

And if prices were low, wages also were low, and hours long!

With random strokes a sketchy picture has been drawn of Danville as it used to be. Little has been said of the city as it is today, for with that picture all are well acquainted.

Merchandising progress has received tremendous help from progress in all other lines. The manufacturers of today turn out vast quantities of goods and articles that were undreamed of a few years ago.

The past half century has been an era of material progress, which has eclipsed all recorded history. The automobile alone, completely revolutionized merchandising customs and practices.

Good roads come into Danville from all directions, bringing customers who formerly could not get here.

Improved communications, transportation, publicity, have all helped the merchant to help himself. The half century has given us the aeroplane, moving pictures, the radio and television, better medical practices, better food, clothes, houses and creature comforts, and all kinds of goods and services from new sources, and new inventions.

The merchants of Danville have kept in step with the march of progress.

Long absent visitors express pleased surprise at the city's progress. In the business section, many new buildings have been erected, and the old ones have been given handsome new fronts, or at least painted and improved.

Along with material progress, the cultural elements have not been neglected, as evidenced by the additional schools and churches.

A writer in a little magazine of 1896, had this to say, "The chief attraction of Danville, however, is its cordial and hospitable people. The warm clasp of the hand, the hearty welcome, and the interest manifested in the stranger, coming with such easy grace, making him feel at once that he is with friends, and the

memory of his stay among them will abide with him for many a day."

That attitude is still a Danville characteristic.²⁸

WRECK OF OLD "97," 1903

The wreck of the Southern mail train No. 97 on the curving cotton mill trestle in North Danville on the Sunday afternoon of September 27th, 1903 caused more excitement in a national sense in after years than it did at the time of its happening.

Thousands of people had never heard of Danville or the spectacular wreck until there came a strange era in American history which capitalized the bromidic ballad—songs set to plaintive tunes and emphasizing some quaint and obvious moral. It was then that the song which David George wrote about the Danville catastrophe came into popularity and coupled with the doleful tune about the prisoner repining in durance vile suddenly came to the fore. The graphic narrative of the fatal run of the Southern mail train that killed ten people was more interesting in fact than it was in tune. People asked "was there really such a wreck?" and "did it really happen?" to bring scores of inquiries to railway men in this city.

Crowds flocked to the scene that afternoon. A haze of steam and dust hung over the scene. There was a gaping hole in the trestle itself and far below was the splintered train with the coaches smashed to pieces and with baggage, express material and letters littering the ground. The newspaper accounts of the day confirm the story that a consignment of canary birds was in the express car and that those birds which were not killed in the wreck flew to liberty and remained here for some time.

The ten who died were either railway men, express agents or postal clerks. The seven injured were of the same category. That there was some realization on the part of the complement of workers on the train that things were amiss is indicated by the fact that several tried to jump before the train toppled over. One of these men on the rear coach jumped as the train left. The train fell quicker than he did and he landed on the roof of the coach from which he had jumped a few second before. He was unconscious.

²⁸ *The Bee*, Danville, Va., Tuesday, April 25, 1950.

Prominent officials came here to investigate the wreck the same day but all they could do was to reduce to paper the obvious physical facts that the train had piled up.

Wrecking crews came here from strategic points. By Thursday the wreckage had been cleared, the buried engine withdrawn, the trestle repaired and the injured were improving. Many people profited by free firewood for the Southern gave permission to anyone who wanted firewood to gather it. In this way the remnants of the wreck were soon gathered up.

The coroner's jury which probed the wreck to become famous in song was composed of Charles E. Hughes, E. L. Gerst, B. F. Motley, C. L. Booth, M. F. Dove, and W. S. Morrison.²⁹

TORNADO, 1911

An inky black, funnel-shaped cloud, switching its long tail from one side of the Dan River Valley to the other as it came whistling down upon Danville, brought disaster to the city on Sunday afternoon, June 18, 1911.

Plenty of people still living here remember the sudden darkening of the sky as the clouds came nearer, and the 80-mile-an-hour gale that swept screaming through the streets, snatching roofs and the tops of trees as if by a giant hand.

Citizens living on the far end of West Main and on Grove Street could see the clouds coming, and ran indoors in fright. For the rest of the town, the wind, the rain and the darkness shot with lightning flashes were a nightmare surprise.

The tornado lasted only a few minutes, as its funnel-like shape passed over, following the river front; and when it rose into the air and was gone as abruptly as it came, the whole town turned out to see the damage. Thousands of people milled up and down the flooded streets, picking their way over the broken limbs and trunks of fallen trees. Many streets lined with fine old trees, especially Paxton, Jefferson, Sutherlin, Grove, Main, and Holbrook streets, were so piled up with fallen trunks and trolleys, telephone, and telegraph wires that they were practically impassable.

²⁹ *The Register*, Danville, Va., Sunday, March 19, 1933.

Fire, wind, and rain took their toll of almost every building along the river front, mostly factories and mills, and stocks of leaf tobacco and other goods were ruined.

The roofs of the factories of E. K. Jones & Co. and Dibrell Brothers were ripped clean off, and those of the R. J. Reynolds Company and John E. Hughes were taken partly off.

The great five-story plant of the Riverside textile mill, with its thousands of dollars worth of machinery and great stores of goods, was completely flooded when its roof blew away. On Main Street, the Hotel Burton also lost part of its roof and several chimneys, one of which fell through a skylight. No one was injured, though several hotel guests just missed being struck by flying bricks and glass.

The Bell Telephone Company with between 600 and 700 telephones out of order, and its service entirely disrupted, called for repair crews from Lynchburg, Richmond, and Norfolk.

The electric system was also put out of commission, and the Western Union and Postal Telegraph services were interrupted for a time. A number of people were knocked unconscious by lightning, but no one was seriously hurt.

WORLD WAR I

Danville had one military organization before the war—Company M, First Virginia Infantry. The company was composed of sixty-three enlisted men and two commissioned officers. Howard W. Rains, who had been interested in the organization for seventeen years prior to the World War, was captain.

War work became paramount in Danville in 1917. The various units of the Red Cross, under the chairmanship of J. Allan Herman, organized and utilized the energies of almost every able bodied person left in the city.

The surgical dressing unit, organized on July 9, 1917, and supervised by Rena Herman, was busy night and day. At two sewing rooms, under the direction of Mrs. A. B. Carrington, Sr., women gathered daily to cut and sew garments for the men wounded at the front.

Everywhere a woman went, her knitting bag went with her. Hundreds of gray and khaki colored items were made for the organization of the Red Cross knitting unit on June 1, 1917.

Other garments for which attics were ransacked, were cleaned and mended for shipment to the refugees of war-torn Europe.

More than 200 canteen workers ministered to the comfort of the thousands of soldiers passing through town on troop trains every day.

Local women who earned Red Cross badges for 800 or more hours of work were Mrs. T. A. Weller, Mrs. C. E. Harper, Mrs. Herbert Martin, Mrs. A. B. Carrington, Mrs. Treadway Graveley, and Rena Herman.

November 11, 1918, which brought the signing of the Armistice, was a day of mighty rejoicing and Thanksgiving in Danville, as in the rest of the nation.

Local men had returned from overseas by June, 1919, and so on June 14 the city staged a great "Welcome Home Celebration."

Eight hundred returned men marched in uniform through gaily decorated streets, escorted by a civic guard of honor, a platoon of uniformed and mounted police, and the Danville Home Guard. After the parade there was a basket picnic dinner, and two street dances were held, one on Main Street and one on Patton Street.

Armistice was signed ending World War I, November 11, 1918.

MILL STRIKE IN 1931

One of the worst features of the 1929-1933 depression in Danville was the great textile strike. It followed an epidemic of strikes in one mill after another along the eastern seaboard, and succeeded in closing the Dan River and Riverside mills on September 29, 1931.

The strike was conducted by Francis Gorman, nationally known labor leader, under the supervision of William A. Green, president of the A. F. of L. The organizers, leading on the thousands of workers with promises they were unable to fulfill, caused among them more suffering than they had ever known before.

With the main body of mill employees out of work, there were far too many for the strike organizers and welfare workers to feed and care for. When at last the strikers were forced to

leave their company-owned homes, famine and influenza combined disastrously against them.

DISORDER

Although the strike generally was conducted in an unusually orderly manner, there were numerous instances of disturbance. Workers who stayed on the job and kept a few machines busy were interfered with, and some violence resulted.

Several bombs were thrown during this period, causing damage to homes in Danville and Schoolfield, among them that of Police Justice Fitts of Schoolfield. The textile union, however, disclaimed responsibility for these acts.

The local police force found it difficult to maintain control of the increasingly serious situation, even though a number of special officers had been sworn in. Finally, when on Thanksgiving Day the strikers blocked U. S. Highway No. 29 at Schoolfield, Governor Pollard ordered four companies of militia to the scene to preserve order.

SAD CHRISTMAS

Christmas, 1931, was a miserable season, probably the most unhappy Danville has ever known. Harried pickets paced before the mill's great plants, warming themselves at flickering fires. Their families tried to keep warm in tents and other make-shift shelters. Strike organizers had begun at last to lose the note of encouragement and hope from their voices.

Early the following year the strikers apparently realized that their cause was a hopeless one, for the strike broke on January 29, 1932, exactly four months after its inception. The workers, without having gained any of their objectives, went back to their looms and warps, their spinning and carding machines. They were too weary to vent their wrath on the organizers, who slipped quietly out of town, leaving behind them a mountain of wrecked homes.

HARRY FICKLEN ONCE LITERARY LIGHT OF CITY

They say that Harry Ficklen died April 25, 1937, but do you believe it—any of you, in whose memory he lives still, so much

more alive than dozens of people you see walking around every day? A man like Harry Ficklen does not die. For one thing, he was a man with a mind, and mind is immortal. Its powers make itself felt on and on, and whether the flesh is there or not doesn't matter such a lot. For another, he was a man with a wit, and men who make other men laugh are but nuclei of widening circles that ripple on and on throughout the years.

He made you think, and he made you think, and he made you laugh, and some things he said made you squirm a little bit—but always he made you welcome, for the “sage of Danville” loved people and loved life.

TO UNIVERSITY

Harry Ficklen was born in Fredericksburg, the son of John Fielding Ficklen and Sarah Anne Slaughter Ficklen. The family moved to Danville when Harry was a child. He went to Miss Harris' school and on to the University of Virginia, where his keen mind won him friendships among those who were to become great. Woodrow Wilson was his friend there, and other lads who were to become senators and governors.

Back in Danville, he read law under the late great Judge Berryman Green, but his mercurial and imaginative temperament led him instead into the field of writing. He went to New York where his wits found play in contributions of *Judge and Life*. He was associated with John Kendrick Bangs in editing *Munsey's Weekly*, and finally was a friend and protégé of Walter Hines Page.

He returned to Danville to become editor of the *Danville Register*, and later the *Danville Free Press*; and in 1916 married Mary Lou Tucker. Successful, happily married, and with a host of friends he entered upon a period of civic service in which his mental powers, presence, and eloquence served his city well.

Ficklen waged a brilliant, relentless campaign against political powers of which he did not approve, and won election to the State House of Delegates. His keen relish of a battle of principle and his whole-hearted championship of the people's rights made him a foe to be feared by selfish interests.

He loved action, especially the sort which brought his imagination into full play. When not engaged in political tussling he

was busy planning or leading community programs and entertainments, or lambasting the city fathers for what he considered their extravagance or stupidity—nor did he mince a single word.

NEWSPAPER WRITINGS

His writings continued to appear in Danville newspapers. A “column”—which usually covered several columns—called “Things in General” enlivened the pages of the *Register*, encompassing many subjects from dogs to the Dan River, and many moods, from the deeply spiritual to the gay and frolicsome. In his column he also published a few of the poems he was constantly writing mostly in sonnet form.

The inscription of the bronze tablet on the library building, once the Sutherlin mansion and the home where Jefferson Davis stayed on his flight after Petersburg’s fall, bears witness to Harry Ficklen’s powers of saying much in few words:

“*Corona post Imperium* (The crown awarded after the power has gone). Last capitol of the Confederacy, April 3-10, 1865. Lest I forget thee, O Jerusalem.”

His failing health, and the necessary confinement to a hospital in 1935 was a source of distress for his friends.

DEATH COMES

A stroke the following year was too much for a man who had always lived up to the limit of his strength. A valiant struggle of more than a year was in vain. Harry Ficklen died, and was buried from the Lutheran Church of the Ascension on April 27, 1937.

In many scrapbooks in Danville and the surrounding country his poems and erudite observations on life and living are yellowed, prize possessions. One cannot talk about old Danville to any native without bringing forth reminiscences in which he has a part.

Others had parts, too, but now many of them are forgotten. But Harry Ficklen was the sort of man who leaves his stamp on the minds of those who knew him.

DANVILLE’S HANDSOME BUILDINGS

Danville in the last thirty years has seen the erection of a number of fine new structures in the business section of the city.

Most recently completed, on the site of the old Luther Robertson building are the A. B. C. store and Rippe's.

The Danville Loan and Savings Bank is located on a part of the old postoffice lot. With office suites for professional men upstairs, it is the only completely air-conditioned office building in the city.

MASONIC TEMPLE

Danville's largest office building, the Masonic Temple, is also its tallest. The corner-stone was laid on December 11, 1921, with distinguished Masons of national importance taking part in the ceremonies.

The previous Masonic Temple, located on the same site at Main and Union streets, had been destroyed by a catastrophic blaze on January 3, 1920, along with most of the other buildings on the block. Immediately plans for a new building to cost half a million dollars were drawn, and when it was completed in 1922, it gave Danville a real skyline. Ten stories high, it contains offices, professional suites, and business places as well as the Masonic lodge rooms.

MUNICIPAL BUILDING

On June 7, 1926, the Masons turned out again, this time to assist in the corner-stone laying of Danville's new municipal building. Opened to the public on September 21, 1927, and covering a whole block on Patton Street, the new structure replaced one at the corner of Main and Floyd streets which had long been outmoded and outgrown. Rooms or suites in the new building were planned for the city officials, courts, tax departments, health department, and numerous others.

HOTEL DANVILLE

At the same time that the new municipal building was being erected on Patton Street, there was being constructed on the lot where the old building had stood another Danville "skyscraper"—the Hotel Danville, owned by Clements, Chism and Parker, Inc. The lot was purchased from the city for \$100,000, and demolition was begun in February, 1926. The new ten-story

building, begun in June of that year, cost a total of \$750,000.

The hotel was opened for business in July 1927. Also located there are the Capitol Theatre, which began operation in February, 1927; the furniture store of Clements and Parker, which opened to the public in August, 1927; and the studios of Radio Station WBTM, with a separate entrance on Floyd Street.

POST OFFICE

Just as Danville's old post office was built during the hard days following the Civil War, so the present post office was built during the hard days of the depression. The corner-stone for the handsome new building was laid in 1932. By that time the old post office, completed in 1881, was too small to meet the growing city's needs. Once a source of vast pride, its terra cotta ornaments, brownstone trim, cupola, and large clock were new architecturally outdated, and the new building was constructed of marble, along classic lines.

In 1935 the gleaming white building on the corner of Main and Ridge streets was dedicated, and Henry A. Swanson, who had been postmaster for two years, took charge. The structure houses the Federal offices and courts as well as the post office.

OTHER BUILDINGS

In the 1930's Main Street changed considerably. The Grant building at the corner of Market Street and the Woolworth building at the corner of Union Street were both constructed in that period, as well as Oratory building at the foot of the street by Main Street bridge.

On November 11, 1932, the corner-stone was laid for the Armory and City Auditorium building at the corner of Floyd and Spring streets.

MUTUAL BUILDING AND LOAN ASSOCIATION ARCADE BUILDING

Organized February 3, 1908. Organizers and First Board of Directors: S. W. Martin, A. B. Carrington, W. F. Patton, A. D. Clement, N. A. Fitzgerald, J. A. Boatwright, L. Herman, W. G. Benefield, A. W. Douthat, A. D. Starling, W. T. Walton, and W. P. Horner.

During more than forty years of service, approximately \$13,000,000 representing the savings of thousands of citizens of this community have been invested in the Mutual. In return, there have been more than 6,000 loans made to homeowners, with such funds, for the betterment of our community.

DANVILLE DURING WORLD WAR II

Danville people began to worry about subversive activity as early as June, 1940, when the lights went out in the armory during Flag Day exercises. And Governor-elect Darden was making an address at Main Street Methodist Church when news of the Pearl Harbor attack on December 7, 1941, reached the city.

The city's first move for local defense followed immediately, for a conference was called on December 8, 1941 by Mayor W. E. Gardner to discuss the protection of local utilities. On December 13 the State Defense Council started the work of local organizations, and by that night Danville had already begun to organize enthusiastically.

The Virginia Protective Force, which had begun on January 2, 1941, was already using the armory which had been turned over to them when the National Guard marched out on February 3, 1941. Later the Virginia Reserve Militia, known as the "Minute Men," was organized to supplement the V.P.F. Danville was one of the few cities in the State to pay for the uniforms to be worn by the Minute Men.

Rubber, rags, metal, and paper were collected in the first salvage drive. The paper collection was overly successful, for local junk dealers were swamped with waste paper. They had fifteen box-cars packed with it and refused for a time to buy any more.

On June 15, 1942, Roosevelt proclaimed a mammoth scrap rubber drive, and at six o'clock on Monday morning Jaycees began to knock on Danville doors.

The salvage of an abandoned railroad line was delayed temporarily when the residents of a small community near the city threatened to defend with guns the spur tracks that had once carried them into town. They were eventually persuaded, however, that the rails were more needed elsewhere.

Junk rally week began September 21, 1942, Danville was first among all the cities of the nation for a day, but when final

returns were in, Lynchburg held top place in the country. G. K. Linkous, was the "scrappiest" individual in the State.

The "Win With Tin" campaign was held in October of that year. Housewives were already saving their kitchen fats by then, and in November their silk stockings were collected in a drive directed by the Credit Women's Breakfast Club.

In 1943 tin cans were collected in a special salvage drive, but by then salvage operation took place generally on a day-to-day basis rather than by high-pressure campaigns. By 1944 paper was again in such short supply that another successful campaign was conducted.

On February 28, 1942, partial blackout regulations were put in force in every major Virginia city except Danville. On April 20 however, Danville was included in an executive order issued by Governor Darden which required both blackout and a daylight air raid drill every month. Soon afterward a train whistling at a crossing set off a premature alarm in the city, and made local officials question the advisability of using steam whistles as warning signals.

Because most air raid wardens were assigned posts near their homes, they found it difficult to reach their stations for daylight drills. As a result, in July, 1942, Danville and Richmond conducted a successful experiment by adopting women as auxiliary wardens to serve when the men were away from home.

Chapter XXI

DANVILLE, 1947

POPULATION—The city has a present estimated population of 38,000 within the corporate limits and 67,000 including the suburbs within a five-mile radius. 1940 census: city population, 32,749; city and county, 94,446.

Climate—At an elevation of nearly 600 feet above sea level, and within sight of the beautiful Blue Ridge Mountains, the citizens enjoy a moderate and healthful climate all the year. The temperature averages 77 degrees in all the summer and 41 in the winter, with an average annual rainfall of 42.2 inches.

Health and Sanitation—Health conditions in Danville are good. There is a natural drainage and a modern sewerage outfall system. The streets are well paved, lighted and kept clean. The city maintains garbage incineration, regular inspection of food and milk supplies and establishments, school medical and dental inspection and public clinics.

There are three hospitals and a tubercular sanitarium.

City Government—Danville is governed by a mayor and nine councilmen, elected at large. The city's affairs are administered under the general supervision of three council committees: finance, public welfare and public works. The municipal business is handled by departments efficiently operated. Handsome municipal and federal buildings house the governmental offices. The city is now undertaking a one and one-half million dollar street improvement program.

Housing—A recent survey of building permit data shows that permits for 598 housing units were issued during 1947 in the city. This would make a total of approximately 1,372 housing units in Danville. The record for permits for the Greater Danville Area shows 1,372 housing units constructed or under construction during the two years, 1946 and 1947.

Hotels—The Hotels Danville, Leeland, Burton, and Stonewall Jackson with improved facilities, serve the traveling public.

Total hotel rooms, 400. There are a number of boarding and tourist homes, an apartment hotel, and tourist courts.

Trade—Danville's retail trade area, of approximately thirty miles radius, includes a population of about 250,000 and is per capital one of the richer sections of this region. Portions of this richer section include Pittsylvania, Henry and Halifax counties in Virginia, and Person, Rockingham and Caswell in North Carolina are included. Retail trade for Danville and Pittsylvania County in 1946 exceeded 48 million dollars. Preliminary estimates for Danville's wholesale trade indicate in excess of 125 million dollars.

Industry—Danville, southern Virginia's largest industrial center, is recognized as one of Virginia's leading manufacturing cities. Among her diversified products are cotton and rayon fabrics, shirting, dress goods, sheeting, yarns, sheets, pillow cases, hosiery, work uniforms, elevators—passenger and freight, flour and feed, tobacco processing, harness, printing, lithographing and bookbinding, paints, enamel, ice, dairy products, ice cream, beverages, bakeries, brooms, window shades, awning and blinds, tents, custom-made golf bags, proprietary medicines, brick, truck bodies, trailers, industrial trucks, lumber and mill work, cabinet-making, metal work and machine shop fabricating, tobacco flues, castings, veneer, plywood, cinder and concrete block, concrete, mattresses, fertilizer, stone-cutting and finishing, sausage, frankfurters, baloney and other meat processing.

Danville is the home of the largest single-unit textile mills in the world, makers of the "Famous Dan River Fabrics." Dan River Mills, Inc., largely owned and operated by local citizens, employs some 12,000 people to convert 90 million pounds of raw cotton into 92 million dollars worth of cotton fabrics and yarns annually (1947). With one exception, Dan River Mills, Inc. has more people employed than any other industrial plant in the State. Payroll for this industry alone in 1947 exceeded \$29,000,000.

Leaf tobacco is Danville's second largest industry. There are the following leaf dealers or manufacturers, with headquarters or branch plants at Danville for processing and/or storage of tobacco: American Supplies, Inc., Danville Storage and Inspection Warehouse, Dibrell Bros., Inc., Export Leaf Tobacco Co., Imperial Tobacco Co., W. B. Lewis & Sons, Liggett & Myers To-

tacco Co., P. Lorillard Co., Pemberton & Penn, Inc., J. E. Perkinson & Co., Reliance Storage and Inspection Warehouse, R. J. Reynolds Tobacco Co., Virginia Tobacco Co., and T. S. Williamson & Co.

P. Lorillard Co. is Danville's second largest local employer.

The Danville Knitting Mills operate 800 knitting machines and employ 400 operators. They are quantity producers of seamless hosiery in cotton, wool, silk, and rayon.

A newly organized corporation sponsored by the Industrial Committee of the Chamber of Commerce, Danville Industrial Development, Incorporated, has been established for the purpose of providing financial and material assistance in the further development of existing and new industry.

Labor—The Danville employer finds a population composed of 69% native white, 30% Negro and 1% foreign born white, resulting in an intelligent, loyal and stabilized type of employee, free from "isms" and labor strife. The labor supply from a 250,000 population within the Danville's thirty-mile trade radius is accessible to Danville.

Agriculture—Danville is Virginia's largest agricultural and marketing center. The estimated farm income in 1946 for Pittsylvania County alone was in excess of seventeen million dollars. The value of farm products for the county in 1945 was in excess of fifteen million dollars, in both cases leading the other ninety-nine counties of the State in income from farm products. Preliminary estimates indicate fifteen million dollars farm income for 1947.

The principal agricultural crops are: tobacco, dairy products, livestock, poultry, grain, hay, fruit, vegetables and forest products.

Danville's facilities and services for agricultural processing and marketing include: livestock auction market, city curb market, egg grading station, new frozen food locker and processing plant, three abattoirs, poultry dressing, flour and feed mill, seed recleaning, meat processing, lumber processing plants, lumber veneering plant, fertilizer factory, farm supplies and equipment, horse and mule stables, veterinary service, harness-making, and twelve tobacco auction warehouses.

Tobacco Market—Danville is one of the world's largest bright tobacco markets for the sale and handling of bright flue-

cured types of tobacco, known the world over as "Virginia Tobacco." There are twelve immense auction warehouses, with a combined space of nearly fourteen acres, for the sale of leaf tobacco at Danville.

Eighteen great storage warehouses have a capacity of over 190 million pounds and many of the largest plants for re-drying and processing tobacco of over 59 million pounds of tobacco from other markets are shipped into Danville each season for re-drying, processing and storing.

TRANSPORTATION

Rail—Danville is located on the main line of the Southern Railway system, double tracked between Atlanta and Washington, with a direct line to Richmond, and the eastern terminus of the Danville and Western Railway which connects with the Norfolk and Western Railway at Fieldale, 47 miles west of Danville, providing direct short line service to the West.

The rail lines provide frequent and fast freight service between Danville and the entire South, North, East and West, and to and from Virginia ports. Passenger service is provided to all points with overnight sleeper service between Danville and New York, Atlanta, and intermediate cities. In addition to the sleeper service the Southern Railway operates streamlined, air-conditioned coach trains between New York and New Orleans, and local air-conditioned and service to and from intermediate main and side line points.

Motor—Highway buses are operated on frequent schedules to and from Danville daily between all points over practically all U. S. and State primary highways. The regular scheduled bus service is supplemented by local suburban bus lines operated within a radius of 25 miles. Within the city, the Danville Traction and Power Company operates buses between the business and industrial areas and the residential sections to meet the needs of the public.

Four common carrier motor freight lines have terminals at Danville, providing service to many points, including those not reached by rail service.

Air—The Danville Municipal Airport, one of Virginia's finest,

is located only three miles from the city on U. S. Highway No. 58 and is one of the three Class 4 municipal airports in Virginia, having three 5,000-foot paved runways, adequate hanger and administration buildings and facilities, including C.A.A. communications and weather service.

In November, 1947, air transportation—passenger, mail, and cargo service was inaugurated by Eastern Air Lines, which now operates two scheduled flights daily north and south, connecting Danville with all parts of the country. Piedmont Aviation has been certificated by the Civil Aeronautics Board to render feeder line service northwest and southeast, connecting with major airlines. Two local concerns operate charter service and pilot training.

Streets and Highways—There are 97.7 miles of streets in Danville, of which 66.62 are paved, 23.35 unpaved and 2.73 miles unimproved. A progressive street and highway improvement program is under way.

Highways radiating from Danville are: U. S. 29 north and south, U. S. 29 (alt.) north and south, U. S. 58 east and west and U. S. 360 east. Also served by Va. Highways 125, 41 and 86, and N. C. 86.

Newspapers—There are two daily newspapers in Danville, published by the Register Publishing Company. These are a morning newspaper, *The Register*, with a circulation of 12,535 daily average in 1947 (*Sunday Register*, 16,752), and *The Bee*, an evening issue, with a daily average circulation of 13,227 (1947). The combined daily circulation of both papers is 25,762. (1947) to make the fourth largest city circulation in Virginia. These papers have a 164.7% family coverage in the city, and 80% family coverage in the principal towns in the trading zone.

The Danville Commercial Appeal is published Monday mornings. It has the largest circulation (5,717) of any non-daily newspaper in Virginia.

Radio—Danville has three commercial radio stations: WBTM-AM, and WBTM-FM, both operated by the Piedmont Broadcasting Corp., an affiliate of the American Broadcasting Corp.; and WDVA operated by the Virginia-Carolina Broadcasting Corp., which is affiliated with the Mutual Broadcasting System.

WBTM was established in June 1930, with a power of 250 watts, sharing time with WLVA in Lynchburg, Virginia. In 1933 WBTM became full time 250 watts. In 1939 WBTM joined the Mutual Network. In 1942 WBTM joined ABC, and for one year, carried both Mutual and ABC programs. In 1943, WBTM dropped Mutual Network to establish itself with what is today's number 2 network, ABC. In June 1947 WBTM opened a sister station, WBTM-FM, the most powerful station in Southern Virginia, 32,000 watts, day and night. In November, 1947 WBTM increased its power to 5,000 watts day and 1,000 watts night on 1330 K.C. WBTM has the distinction of many firsts in Virginia radio including the first disc jockey show, the first school programs and the first "tri-city," and many, many, more.

WBTM-FM is one of the first eight stations of its type in Virginia, and broadcasts on 97.9 megacycles, with 32,000 watts power, to make it one of the most powerful FM stations in Virginia. This station operates normally from 11 A. M. through 11 P. M. daily.

WDVA broadcast on 1250 kilocycles, with 5,000 watts power daytime (1,000 watts at night), having operating hours from 6 A. M. to 12:30 P. M. daily, except Sunday (which is 7:30 A. M. to 12 midnight), giving primary and secondary coverage of an area of approximately 75 miles radius, reaching an estimated population of 1,000,000. This station gives full time U.P. Service.

Financial Facilities—Danville's banking facilities include two National and four State banks with a total capital investment in excess of 3,000,000, deposits of \$43,731,385, and resources of \$48,401,934. There are several strong Building and Loan Associations with assets of \$3,218,471. Bank clearings for 1947 were \$363,932,336. The financial institutions are well managed and aggressive.

Taxes—Danville has a comparatively low tax rate, the rate on real estate being \$2.25 per hundred (basic for assessing property for taxes 50% to 60% of market value) with no special assessments and the rate on personal property being \$2.50 per hundred, (assessed valuation said to be under 25 %).

Tax assessments on real estate and personal property for 1947 amounted to \$45,099,296.

Civic and Social Organizations—Danville's civic and social organizations have shown a consistently progressive spirit and have added much to the civic development and social life of the city. Among the civic and social organizations are: Chamber of Commerce, Junior Chamber of Commerce, Danville Tuberculosis Association, Exchange Club, Kiwanis Club, Lions Club, Rotary Club, Y.M.C.A. (white and colored), Y.W.C.A. (white and colored) Young Men's Club, Danville Inter-Club Council, Little Theatre, Community Agencies Council, Danville Fair Association, Blanks, Inc., Travelers' Aid Society, American Red Cross, Danville Golf Club, German Club, Civic Music Association, Wednesday Club, Junior Wednesday Club, Music Study Club, Shakespeare Study Club, Garden Clubs, Greek Community, Danville Community Chest, River Dan Benevolent Fund, Boy Scouts, Credit Women's Breakfast Club, Business and Professional Women's Club, and many others.

Business and Professional Associations—Auto Dealers Association, Danville Real Estate Exchange, Danville Tobacco Association, Insurance Underwriters Association, Grocers' Association, Retail Merchants Association, Chamber of Commerce, Junior Chamber of Commerce, Coal Dealers Association, Danville-Pittsylvania Academy of Medicine, Danville Bar Association, Danville Dental Society, Nurses Association, Danville Ministerial Association, Danville Education Association, Restaurant Association, Danville Retail Druggists Association, and many others.

SUMMARY, DANVILLE 1919 TO THE PRESENT

A disastrous fire struck Danville. Almost an entire Main Street block, including the Masonic Temple, was wiped out, but building of the bigger and better Temple was begun at once. Citizens got a thrill in 1924 when they watched the dirigible *Shenandoah* fly majestically over the city. Dan River Mills built the Aberthaw Mill on Union Street.

1925-1929—There was excitement right and left. Lindbergh flew the Atlantic, the *Graf Zeppelin* flew around the world. "Talking pictures" began to revolutionize the movie business;

there was even a demonstration of television. War was outlawed with the signing of the Paris Peace Pact. Then came 1929, and the stock market crash.

The city was electrified by a “believe it or not” happening of the new Municipal Building and of the Hotel Danville. Along with the rest of the world Danville was flying-conscious and a city airport was completed.

1930-1934—World-wide depression caused misery everywhere. The gold standard was suspended and a bank holiday declared. Post and Getty flew around the world, and in Germany a former Austrian paper hanger became dictator.

With the great textile strike and the failure of the Commercial Bank & Trust Company, Danville was hard hit by the depression but still managed somehow to progress. In 1932 the city annexed Forest Hills and Almagro. The new post office and armory were constructed, the city farm was opened, and in 1934 the Union Street bridge was built.

1935-1939—Gradual economic recovery brought the dedication of Boulder Dam, and the launching of the *Queen Mary*. An Inter-American Peace Conference was held at Buenos Aires; ominous war clouds hung over Europe. Germany took over Austria in 1938, and by the end of 1939 the world was at war again.

Danville had its first electricity from the Pinnacles during this period, and a new city market. A concrete bridge replaced the old “Humpback Bridge” on South Main Street, and buses superseded the trolleys. In 1938 Holland’s Warehouse was destroyed by fire and the whole city was saddened by the death of Mayor Harry Wooding.

1940-1944—These were bitter war years. The attack on Pearl Harbor brought the United States into the struggle, and Allied soldiers finally got a firm toehold in Fortress Europe itself.

The rebuilding of the First National Bank was completed in 1940, and the Danville airport was commissioned. In 1944 the Community Chest raised the largest sum in its history—\$113,391. All of Danville’s energies were poured into the war effort, and there were nightmare days of sweat and sacrifice, optimism and despair.

1945-1949—Atomic energy was used for the first time, and soon the war ended. The news was received with prayer and thanksgiving, and the United Nations began its task of saving the world from itself. The Philippines received independence, as did India. After months of Arab-Jewish difficulties Israel was a reality as a nation of the world.

In Danville the Brantly Electric Station was constructed, and V. P. I. Extension was launched. New residential areas were fast built up, the city manager contest fought, and annexation proceedings started. The city met the halfway mark of the century with growing prosperity and great hopes for the future.

Danville is Growing in Importance

In July, 1951, Danville was the seventh largest city in the State with a population of almost 45,000 people.

It is on that date that the recently authorized annexation of county territory will be effective.

At this time the area of the city will become more than 15 square miles, which is more than twice the present area of 6.29 square miles.

Trade

The city's retail trade is drawn from an even larger territory, however. Approximately 250,000 people within a thirty-mile radius turn to Danville as their shopping center. This trade area includes portions of Pittsylvania, Henry, and Halifax counties in Virginia, and Person, Rockingham, and Caswell in North Carolina.

In 1948, retail trade exceeded \$62,000,000, and wholesale trade was over \$120,000,000. Nearly 2,000 retail and wholesale stores, service establishments, and professional offices in the greater Danville area benefited when these sums changed hands.

On the basis of these figures, Danville rated third in the State in volume of wholesale trade, seventh in retail and wholesale trade, although in population it was only the eighth largest city in the State.

Agriculture

No other city in the State is as large an agriculture and marketing center as Danville. The wide variety of facilities and services available for agricultural processing and marketing include a live-

stock market, a city curb market, an egg-grading station, a new frozen food locker and processing plant, three abattoirs, a flour and feed mill, a fertilizer factory, poultry dressing, horse and mule stables, 14 tobacco auction warehouses, veterinary service, farm supplies and equipment and plants for seed re-cleaning, lumber processing and veneering, and meat processing.

Principal crops in the area are tobacco, dairy products, livestock, poultry, grain, hay, fruit, vegetables, and forest products.

In addition to the auction warehouses, there are 18 tobacco storage warehouses in Danville with a capacity of over 190,000,-000 pounds. About 100,000,000 pounds of tobacco besides that bought on the local market is shipped into the city each season for re-drying, processing, and storing.

Danville's First City Manager

T. Edward Temple took the oath of office September 15, 1950 as Danville's first City Manager and stressed that "the door to my office is open to all citizens—I truly mean that."

Afterwards, as he opened his office in the former mayor's quarters on the main floor of City Hall, he said that his first work will be to hold conferences with each department head, look over city facilities, meet as many city employees as possible and then settle down to work on the 1951 budget.

The installation ceremony was presided over by Acting Mayor Hosea Wilson in the absence of Mayor Curtis Bishop, who was recovering from a recent operation.

Except for the mayor, all councilmen were present. All other seats were taken by department heads, city employees and citizens at large.

Clark Hall administered the oath following prayer by Judge W. W. Moore of the Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court.

In a brief statement, Temple stressed five points:

"I shall give the very best I have within me to carry out the duties that have been placed upon me.

"The door to my office is open to any city employee and any citizen at all times.

"It is good to get back to Virginia where I was born, reared and have spent most of my time.

"To members of the Council I say I may be in disagreement with you at times, but when I am proven wrong, I will be ready to admit.

"I pledge the best within me to do this job."

After Temple had been in office for a short time, he realized the need of planning, for the development of our city. This plan is known as the comprehensive, general, or "master" plan for the city, and will vary in complexity and detail, according to the potential growth and problems that it faces.

Urban planning is necessarily a municipal process which operates under the general objective established by State legislation. It is regulated by the voters of the city and its officials. It deals with uses of public and private property, and services to property, persons, and organizations.

Its product is, or should be, a desirable, efficient, and economical place in which to live, work, do business, and produce articles of commerce and trade.

George W. Aron was elected chairman of the Danville Planning Commission, Hamilton Vass was elected vice-chairman, and City Manager T. E. Temple secretary.

City planning is an essential element in the process of seeking qualitative as well as quantitative answers to urban problems through its endeavor to better the physical elements of our urban communities.

CHRONOLOGY OF DATES

- 1633 Official inspection of tobacco, begun.
- 1641 Walter Austin, Rice Roe, Joseph Johnson, Walter Childs, petitioned General Assembly to discover "New River."
1642. Petition granted to discover "New River."
- 1657 Captain Robert Wynne, member of House.
- 1661 Captain Robert Wynne, Speaker of House.
- 1662 Assembly granted trade route across Midland, Virginia.
- 1671 Thomas Stegg, Indian trade for furs.
- 1673 Joseph Hatcher, Henry Hatcher, Benjamin Bullington, buried.
- 1675 Wynne's Falls, well known to traders.
- 1678 Captain Robert Wynne's will proved.
- 1707 Thomas Wynne lived in Prince George County.
- 1708 Major Joshua Wynne, Justice of Prince George County.
- 1728 William Byrd II surveyed and named Dan River from Dan to Beersheba as taken from the Bible meaning a "Land of Plenty."
- 1733 Col. Byrd recognized inscriptions of hunters cut in beech tree, presumably Indian traders.
- 1753 William Wynne, May 1753 granted 2,000 acres joining the lines on Dan River.
- 1793 October, legislature petitioned for inspection of tobacco at Wynne's Falls.
On November 23, Wynne's Falls became Danville.
General Benjamin W. Cabell, born May 10, 1793.
- 1795 Legislature authorizes laying out of Danville.
Danville Warehouse, received hogshead of tobacco.
- 1796 General Assembly interceded for improving navigation of Roanoke River.
- 1799 Owners petitioned for further time of three years be allowed for building.
- 1800 Establishment of a post office.
- 1801 Petition for erection of a toll bridge.
Flour inspection.
- 1802 William Beavers married Elizabeth Fontaine.
- 1804 Academy erected. (Presbyterian) Rev. James Tompkins.
- 1814 Hickerson Speller, schoolmaster.

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- 1816 George Craighead came to Danville.
W. B. S. Cabell came to Danville.
- 1818 John Beverly Roy came to Danville from Norfolk.
- 1820 General Benjamin Cabell settled at Bridgewater about a mile
above Danville.
Roman Eagle Lodge organized.
- 1821 Three hundred fifty hogsheads of tobacco were sold.
- 1822 Hon. Thomas and H. C. Clark founded the first newspaper which
was called the *Telegram*.
J. B. Roy moved to New Orleans.
Two Negroes saved Mr. Wells from drowning.
Rev. John Jenkins, Baptist minister, Danville Academy.
Major William Sutherlin, born.
- 1825 Danville's population was less than five hundred.
- 1826 The first school was on Wilson Street.
The first Presbyterian church established.
Masonic Hall built.
- 1827 The oldest house in Danville was where Patton Street now crosses
Craighead. The house was known as "Old Craighead House." It
was an old house in 1838.
- 1828 First Cotton Mill established—Danville Manufacturing Company.
- 1829 Thomas Coleman came to Danville.
The first definite record of Danville tobacco market was recorded.
General Benjamin Cabell, member of Constitutional Convention.
- 1830 Act to incorporate "Danville" passed by General Assembly.
George Egge Welsh came to Danville.
- 1832 Petition for turnpike from Danville to Evansham.
Thomas P. Atkinson came to Danville from Petersburg.
- 1833 Another paper was started by B. W. S. Cabell and Joseph Meggin-
son. The paper later grew into the *Register* under different and
various proprietors.
Feb. 14 Danville was ready to incorporate and select commonality.
The first mayor of Danville was elected; his name was James Lanier.
- 1834 Baptist church met in Masonic Hall on Craighead Street.
- 1836 *Republican* published—newspaper.
- 1837 There was a panic in Danville.
Dirt turnpike built from Danville to Rocky Mountain and
Fincastle.

- 1838 B. W. S. Cabell represented House of Delegates.
- 1840 Episcopal church on Patton Street.
- 1841 The first court held in Masonic Hall on Craighead Street.
- 1842 Turnpike chartered from Danville to Lynchburg.
- 1847 A great fire destroyed greater part of Danville.
Old covered bridge washed away.
- 1850 The population was 2,000.
First tobacco sold on street in front of what is now J. & J. Kaufman's.
Flour Mill washed away August 10, 1850.
Dan River's bridge washed away.
Dan River navigable for bateaux.
One way toll bridge across the Dan River.
- 1851 Danville *Register* published.
- 1852 Methodist church at Lynn and Wilson Streets built.
Baptist church on the present Patton Street Hill, then called Baptist Hill, Dan's Hill, Red Hill.
- 1854 John Hadley layed out the first five streets: Patton, Ridge, Union, Craighead, Wilson.
Weekly *Register* published.
- 1856 The first train to enter Danville from Richmond.
Buying loose leaf tobacco by sample.
- 1858 Thomas Neal built warehouse.
Where Stephens Drug Store now stands was the first drug store in Danville. Opened January by Dr. H. C. Cole.
First post office building—where is now Efrd's Department Store.
- 1859 Averett College known as Roanoke Female Institute, established in 1859, in the downtown section on Patton, where Anderson Hotel now stands.
- 1860 J. Talbott became first president of city council.
Paper—*Democratic Appeal*.
W. F. Grasty born.
First telegram message received in Danville November 20.
- 1865 Link-Watson established.
Danville was the last capital of Southern Confederacy and the President at that time was Jefferson Davis.

- 1866 Morotock Lodge founded.
J. & J. Kaufman's was founded in Danville.
Charter to construct Danville to Lynchburg railroad.
- 1869 Danville Tobacco Association founded.
- 1872 First National Bank established.
Corner-stone for Danville's first courthouse laid in August.
The first city water and gas pipes were layed. A Negro named Sidney Matthews was first employee.
- 1873 Town bought private toll bridge.
- 1874 William Rison was appointed Clerk of Court.
Danville Water and Gas Company founded.
- 1875 First fire station founded.
First Fire Department was organized. C. S. Bennett was first chief.
- 1876 The first gas plant was purchased by the city.
- 1877 High Street Baptist Church established.
Main Street iron bridge built.
- 1878 Archibald Murphy Allen was appointed Judge of Corporation Court of Danville.
- 1879 Catholic church established.
- 1880 First post office was built; Charles Hoyle first postmaster.
Population of Danville 7,526—4,397 colored, 3,129 white.
- 1881 Gerst Brothers manufactured yarn.
- 1882 On July the 27th, the charter of the Riverside Cotton Mills was granted to T. F. Fitzgerald, D. F. Jefferson, J. H. Schoolfield, and R. E. Schoolfield.
Danville Chamber of Commerce organized.
On September 23 the *Daily Register* cost 3 cents.
- 1883 First cloth produced.
Danville riot.
- 1885 The first street-cars in Danville. They were drawn by mules.
- 1886 L. Herman established.
Narrow gauge rails were laid from Depot to Mt. Vernon Church.
First street lights were turned on.
Home for the sick established.
The first hospital in Danville; was called "Home for the Sick."
- 1887 Mill No. 2 built on north side of Danville.

- 1889 Paul Barrow owned the first telephone. Jenkins Tobacco Co. owned telephone number 3; Joplins owned telephone number 8.
- 1890 May, 1890 J. Allen Patton was elected City Treasurer.
Riverside Mills took over control of Morotock Mills.
- 1892 Calvery Baptist Church (colored) was organized.
- 1893 Wednesday Club organized.
- 1895 Dr. George Washington Dame died.
- 1896 Neapolis (North Danville) was incorporated.
- 1897 First nurses' training class.
- 1898 Street-cars were drawn by horses from Claiborne Street to River Street. Tom Johnson was the driver.
- 1899 The first *Bee* was published.
Danville Knitting Mills was established.
Danville hardware store established on Union Street where it now stands.
- 1900 The first street-car to North Danville; it was car number 14.
New charter granted Danville Electric Company.
- 1901 Business Men's Association took up matter of securing telephone service with Martinsville, Va. on March 1.
Nurses' Home established.
- 1902 First mill constructed in Schoolfield; was named R. A. Schoolfield for the president.
- 1903 The wreck of Old 97; the firm of Patton Noell was formed.
- 1905 First water pumped through new filter plant July 7.
- 1906 Bad train wreck on December 8.
- 1908 Rison Park School built.
Mutual Building and Loan Association organized.
Bleachery established at Dan River.
- 1909 Arrangements made to ring bell at 6:30 at Central Warehouse.
Dan River and Riverside Cotton Mills merged.
- 1910 Mr. Noell withdrew from the firm of Patton and Noell and moved to Gretna; Mr. Patton retired.
Grove Street High School built.
May 7, Library established in Danville.
First Annual Fair held.
- 1911 Council approves Bridge Street for location of power plant.
Tornado.

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- 1912 Power plant under water, March 16.
- 1915 Horses were pulling the fire engines.
Hill Top established October 1.
- 1917 City market on North Main Street in back of the fire department.
It was run by G. E. Harris—N. G. Ferguson and A. Paul Patrick
as fish cleaners.
- 1918 Frank Gunn was a mail clerk at the postoffice.
- 1919 Dudley block burned January 3.
- 1920 Masonic Temple burned.
- 1921 Masonic building erected.
- 1922 Children's Clinic founded by Dr. Garnett.
Lutheran Church established.
- 1923 *Register* prints first page on new press on August 30.
- 1924 Highland Burial Park purchased.
- 1925 City votes large bond issue for municipal sewers and streets May 6.
- 1926 New school—Holbrook Street—Westmoreland.
Hotel Danville contract let May 12.
- 1927 Main Street Bridge burns June 30.
Municipal building completed and occupied.
Construction started on Main Street Bridge.
- 1928 Main Street Bridge opens January 11 for traffic. World's record
set for construction.
- 1929 Industrial High School destroyed by fire.
- 1930 On September 24 Dan River Mills strike starts.
September a branch library for colored set up in Westmoreland
High School.
WBTM Radio Station established.
- 1931 Cotton Mill strike.
- 1932 Corner-stone laid for city Armory.
- 1934 New Federal Post Office constructed.
- 1936 Langston High School built.
- 1947 June, WDVA Radio Station established.
- 1950 T. Edward Temple, first City Manager appointed.
- 1953 George W. Aron elected President of Planning Commission.
- 1954 Landon R. Wyatt, Senator from 13th Senatorial District.
WBTM Television, Channel 24.

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