DAVID BYERS

In

Colonial Virginia

I have found only one entry for David Bires in the Colonial Records of Virginia. He was a member of Capt. John McDowell’s Militia Company in Augusta County in June of 1742.

Dear Reader – Beware

This is a last minute entry and caution should be given to any speculation. I now believe the above David is none other than David of Family I. Here is my logic. We know that Eliza (Cox) Byers, the mother of David and Capt. William Byers, died in Chester Co., PA in 1741. We also know that their father, William Byers, died in Virginia in 1742. Both David and Capt. William were close neighbors of John and Jean Allison in Augusta Co., Va.

I believe William and his sons, David and William, went to Virginia with the above Allison's and that Jean Allison was a daughter of William who died there in 1742. This would mean that Capt. William Byers, a teen ager, was living with the Allison’s and that David returned to Chester Co., Pa. where he married Margaret Carson sometime after 1742. I believe Capt. William Byers was born in Cavan County, Ireland and not in Pennsylvania.
The Borden Grant

The records in the Court of James Bell vs Bordens Exor's (Court Papers, 389, Augusta County, Virginia) give a brief but clear account of the manner in which the tract of land, mostly in present Rockbridge County, Virginia, was settled.

On February 21, 1738, Alexander Brackenridge and George James, Robert and Adam Brackenridge, John Moore, Quantin Moore, George Henderson, James Bell (the Plaintiff), John Mackellan (Bell's servant), James Wattes, William McCanless, Robert Poage, Seth Poage, Daniel McNair and John Graves, made a contract with Benjamin Borden, Sr., in which they agreed to build a small log house and make improvements upon the land, in return for which they were each to receive 200 acres of land.

This was evidently one of the first, if not the first, step taken by Benjamin Borden, Sr., to colonize the grant. And the parties named came to Augusta County in the year 1738. But some of them changed locations prior to 1745. Alexander Brackenridge was the ancestor I of the distinguished family of this name, and he made his permanent home on Lewis Creek, about two miles below Staunton. Robert Poage settled on the “Pennsylvania road” or “Irish Path” as the present Valley Turnpike was then called, about three miles north of Staunton, Virginia. James Bell settled at the head of Long Glade, about ten miles north of Staunton; and Daniel McNair settled on Jenning’s Branch in the neighborhood of present Churchville, Augusta County, but settled in the Stone Church neighborhood.

Robert Poage and James Bell were among the first members of the county court of Augusta County, and Daniel McNair was a Captain of Militia in 1747. He married a daughter of Capt. James Allen, Sr., whose Will is recorded at Staunton.

Ephraim McDowell and his family are the only settlers who are definitely known to have preceded these parties as settlers upon the Borden grant.

Kegley’s Virginia Frontier
General Area of Militia Companies In The Fall Of 1742.

1, John Smith  
4. John Christian  
7. John Wilson

4. John Buchanan  
5. Peter Showll  
8. George Robinson

7. James Cathey  
6. James Gill  
9. John McDowell

X. Andrew Lewis  
Y. Samuel Gay  
Z. Hugh Thompson
Militia Companies in Augusta County, Virginia in 1742

Among the collections of manuscripts made by the late Dr. Lyman Draper and left by him to the Historical Society of Wisconsin, are lists of the men composing nine companies of militia in Augusta Co., Va. in 1742. The total number of companies was twelve but the rolls of only nine were obtained or have been preserved. The Captains of the three companies of which we have no rolls were Andrew Lewis, Samuel Gay and Hugh Thompson. The other Captains were: John Smith, John Buchanan, James Cathey, John Christian, Peter Showll, James Gill, John Wilson, George Robinson and John McDowel. The rolls were made in late summer or the fall of 1742.

The time is only ten years after the first settlement of white people in the county. Settlements had been made only within the present county, in Rockbridge, Rockingham and possibly Bath, all then in Augusta. The company rolls appear to embrace all the male population from boyhood to extreme old age. Ephraim McDowell was enrolled as a member of his son John's company and was a very aged man when he came here in 1737. Estimated from the muster rolls, the number of white people in the county, men, women and children, was about 2,500. Some of the names, as written, are twisted beyond recognition.
Militia Companies of Augusta County, Virginia in 1742


The following were the members of John McDowell’s Militia Company and they constituted the adult male population of the Lower Forks Community.

9. Capt. John McDowel (McDowell), James McDowel, Ephraim McDowel, David Dreden (Dryden), Alexander McClewr (McClure), Jonathan McClewr, John McKnab (McKnabb) Andrew McKnab, Thomas Whiteside, John Aleson (Allison), David Bires (Byers), John Gray, Moses McClure, Patrick McKnab, John Cosier (Colier), William Hall, Erwin Patterson, Edward Patterson, John Miles, Joseph Finey (Finney), James Harderman (Hardman), Charles Quail, Samuel Wood (Woods), William Wood, Richard Wood, Henry Hiram (Kirkham), Joseph Lapsley, Gilbert Camble (Campbell) Robert Young, Joseph Long; Samuel Long, James More (Moore), Hugh Cuningham (Cunningham), John Cares (Kerr), Francis McCowen, Hans Beaker, John Peterdaley (John Peter Salling), Michel Miller, Loromor Mason, John Mathews, Samuel McRoberts, Thomas Taylor, Malcolm Whiteside, Michael Finey (Finney), and William Miles.

Community Life on the James and Roanoke Rivers 1740-1760.

The people who made these early settlements on the James and Roanoke Rivers were Scotch-Irish Presbyterians who moved southwest from the eastern counties of Pennsylvania and New Jersey through Maryland into this unoccupied region.

The Forks of James Community

The Local Officials 1738-1745 while yet in Orange County.

July 20, 1742 A petition to Governor Gooch.

To Honorable William Gooch Esq., His Majestys’ Lieut. Governor.

Sir,

We your petitioners humbly sheweth that we your Honours Loly and Dutiful Subquackes hath ventred our lives & all that we have in settling ye back parts of Virginia which was a veri Great Hassirt & Dangerous for it is the Hathins Road to Ware, which had proved hortful to severil of ous that were ye first settlers of these back woods & was your Honibill Petitionors some time agoo petitioned your Honnour for to have Commissioned men amongst ous which we your Honours most Dutifull subjects thought properist men & men that had Hart and Curidg to hed us yn time of (trouble) & to defen your Contray and your poor Sobjacks Intrist from ye voilince of ye Haithen.

But yet agine we Humbly persume to poot your Honnor yn mind of our great want fo them in hopes that your Honner will Grant a Captins’ Commission to John McDowell, with follring ofishers, and your Honnours’ Complyance in this will be great settisfication to your most Duttifull and Humbil petitioners and we as in Duty bond shall Ever pray.

Orange County, Virginia near Balcony Falls 19 Dec 1742.

A party of northern Indians on their way south, failed to procure a pass from the authorities of Virginia, They came into Borden’s Settlement where they were entertained for a day by Capt. John McDowell. They were given whiskey. Moving down South Branch of North River they disturbed the whites by foraging, shooting horses, etc. On complaint of the people Capt. McDowell was directed to call out his company and conduct the Indians beyond the settlement. They were taken beyond John Peter Salling’s, then the most southern habitation. Some of the whites were on horse and all passed a lame Indian behind, except one, who shot at him. This brought on a fight in which Capt. McDowell and seven of his men were killed. The Indians lost seventeen.
Augusta County, Xber 23, 1742

Honored Sir,

Thirty-six Indians appeared in our County ye 5th instant, well equipped for War, Pretending a visit to the Catabaus, they had a letter dated the 10th of 9ber from James Silver, near Harris’s Ferry in Pensilvania, directed to one William Hogg, a Justice o’piece desiring him to give them a pass to travel through Virginia to their enemies, which letter they shewed here, and it served as a pass where Silver’s hand was well known. Instead of going directly along the road they visited most of our plantations, killing our stock, and taking provisions by force.

The 14th instant they got into Borden’s land about thirty miles from my house. The 15th, Capt. McDowel by an express, informed me of their insolent behavior as also of the uneasiness of the neighbours, and desired my directions, on which I wrote to him and Capt. John Buchanan that the law of nature and nations obliged us to repel an enemy force by force, but that they were to supply those Indians with provisions which they should be paid for at the Government charge. At the same time to attend their actions until they got fairly out of the County.

The 16th, 17th and 18th instant they killed several valuable horses, besides carrying off many of their luggage, which so exasperated our men that they upbraided our two Captains with cowardice. Nevertheless, our Captains, to prevent mischief, sent two men with a white flag the 19th instant, desiring peace and friendship, to which they answered “O Friends, are you there, have be found you?”, and on that fired on our flag, killing Capt. McDowel and six more of our men, on which Capt. Buchanan gave the word of command and bravely returned ye compliment, and stood his ground with a very few hands, (for our men were not all come up). In 45 minutes the Indians fled, leaving eight of our men dead on the spot, amongst whom were two of our Captains. Our Captain pursued with only eight men several hundred yards, the enemy getting into a thicket. He returned to the field where he could not by any means prevail on his men to keep and stand by him.

The night before the engagement, I heard of the Indians behavior, and marched up with twenty three men, and met our Captain returning 14 miles distance from where they had engaged, to which place I went next day and brought off our dead, being eight in number, Capt. Buchanan having taken off ye wounded the day before. I have ordered our Patrowlers on all frontiers well Equipped, and drafted out a certain number of young men out of each company to be in readiness to reinforce any party or place that first needs help, having ordered the Captains to guard their own precincts. Have appointed places and rendezvous where each neighbor may draw to our occasion, and have called in the stragling families that live at a distance.

A few medicines for our wounded would be very acceptable.

I am........James Patton

Natural Bridge, Virginia

In the journal of his travels in 1742, John Peter Salling describes very satisfactorily the bridge as it was then. He says, “We set off from my house and went to Cedar Creek about five miles, where is a Natural Bridge over said Creek, reaching from the hill on one side to the hill on the other. It is a solid rock and is two hundred and three feet high, having a large spacious arch where the water runs thro.”
On the petition of the inhabitants of Borden’s Tract for a road from where James Young lives on ye said Bordens Tract to ye Gapp in the Blue Ridge of Mountains commonly called Michael Woods Gap. Just north of Rockfish Gap.

It’s ordered that the said road be cleared from the said Youngs through the timber grove from thence to ye foot of ye Mountain leaving Patrick Campbells - to ye northward continuing an easterly course so on ye south side on ye South River to Samuel Davis’s plantation, thence to ye Gapp of ye Mountains. And its further ordered that Francis McCowen, Samuel Walkar, Capt. John Buchannan, Patrick Hays, Charles Campbell and Capt. John Christian be hereby appointed overseers of ye said road and that Col. James Patton be desired to lay off for each overseer his precinct and men to clear each precinct on ye said road.
This is the southern area of Borden’s Grant, Augusta County, Virginia. Those names outlined were members of John McDowell’s Militia Company in the Summer of 1742. Among those listed but not shown on the map was David Bires. He was a neighbor of John Alison. In 1754, Capt. William Byers, (Family II) was a neighbor of John Alison and they were working on a road gang.

3 Oct 1755 John Alison & Jean, to Joseph Walker £100 for 291 acres (shown on map) on North Branch of James (at Whistle Creek) corner Gilbert Campbell and John Moore lines.

Teste: Andrew Hall, (son of William Hall) and William Buyers.
Sarah Byers

The sister of David and Capt. William Byers, was born October 21, 1716 in Exeter, Devonshire, England. Since David was born in 1721 in Ireland the family would have moved between those years. Sarah married Samuel Porter, born December 18, 1701 in Belfast, Shire of Down and Province of Ulster in Ireland. Available evidence would suggest they were married in Chester Co., Pennsylvania.

Samuel died at the age of 87 and Sarah died when 78. Both died in York Co., South Carolina and are buried in Beersheba cemetery with a single stone for both.

Lancaster County, PA. Wills

On September 9, 1745 the Will of Robert Porter was proved with Mary Porter, wife, listed as Executrix. Listed as children were: Robert Porter, John Porter, James Porter, Samuel Porter and Jannet Porter.

From the Will of Samuel Porter we obtain the names of his children. Viz: Mathew Porter wed Mary; Agnes Porter wed Enoch Enloe; David Porter wed Jane Byers [Daughter of David Byers Family I] Ann Porter wed Robert Kennedy; Ruth Porter wed William Wallace; and Rebecca Porter.

Nathaniel Porter


Rutherford County, North Carolina


Excerpt from the Will of David Porter:

27 Apr 1812 Rutherford Co., NC. To my brother James, my wearing clothes; Ruth Wallace my waggon without gears; Violet Enlow and Ann Kennedy, five shillings each.

Excerpt from the Will of Jane (Byers) Porter:

10 Dec 1818 Rutherford Co., NC. To my brother, Samuel Byers, several notes: To my brother, William Byers, a note. To my three sisters-in-law, Violet Enlow, Ann Kennedy and Ruth Wallace, one hundred acres of land.

Endorsed: What property has not been mentioned to be given to my brother, Samuel Byers. (At the time Samuel Byers lived in Buncombe Co., NC and has many present day descendants living in northern Georgia and western North Carolina.)

See page 198
Samuel Porter - Will

State of South Carolina

In the name of God. Amen. The twenty eighth day of July, I, Samuel Porter, of Camden District in the Province of South Carolina, being sick in body but of good and sound memory, thanks be to Almighty God, calling to remembrance the uncertain estate of this life, do make, constitute, ordain and declare this my last Will and Testament in manner and form following, revoking and annulling by these presents all and every testament or testaments, Will and Wills heretofore by me made and declared either by work or writing and this to take place only for my last Will and Testament and none other.

I give and commit my soul unto Almighty God my Creator, and my body to be buried in such a place where it shall please my Executors, hereafter named, to appoint. And now for the settling of my temporal estates and such goods and chattels as it hath pleased God to bestow upon me.

I do order, give and dispose the same in manner and form following.

That is to say first I will that all those debts and dues I owe to any person or persons whatsoever shall be well and truly paid or ordained to be paid within a convenient time after my decease by my Executors, hereafter named.

I give and bequeath unto my oldest son, Mathew Porter, the sum of five shillings Sterling.
To my daughter, Agnes, the sum of five shillings Sterling.
To my son, David, the sum of five shillings Sterling.
To my daughter, Violet, the sum of five shillings, Sterling.
To my son, James, the sum of five shillings Sterling.
To my son, Nathaniel, the plantation or tract of land that I now live on with the improvement I will and bequeath.

I will that my well beloved wife, Sarah, shall have the one third of the produce of said plantation or tract of land with the one third share or part of any profits arising from said plantation during her time of life, with all my household furniture at her disposal, use to be disposed of her with an equal divide betwixt Ann, my daughter, and my daughter, Ruth. As likewise to my wife, Sarah, I will and bequeath my horse and mare together with my horned cattle and hogs, excepting one sow I give and bequeath to my daughter, Rebecca.

I give and bequeath to Rebecca the young horse colt and twenty five pounds lawful money of South Carolina. I give and bequeath to Rebecca to be paid unto her by my son, Nathaniel. It is my will that Rebecca shall have and enjoy the use of my horse and mare to ride to sermon and other necessary places.

I do order and appoint William Byers Senior (Capt.) and David Porter to take care that this my last Will and Testament be executed and disposed of according to the true intent and meaning thereof.

Signed and Sealed in presence of us this 28th day of July 1774.

Samuel Porter Seal

William Williamson
William Byers

Recorded February 13, 1789 Book “A-12” Page 12 Case No 61 File No 357
CAPT. WILLIAM & ELIZABETH (Walton) BYERS

of

Augusta County, Virginia

&

York County, South Carolina

& Descendants

[Family Number II]

Compiled

by

Thurlo Vermont Byers

St. Louis, Missouri
Our Byers Immigrants

As we walked in the woods my father, Henry Walton Byers, (1845-1945) would tell me about three brothers whose father came over here from Ireland. The brothers were William, David, and James. This William was the great grandfather of Henry Walton Byers and also a Revolutionary ancestor.

Charles Grady Byers
Panola County, Miss.

The Brothers
David Byers

Family #1
Of York County, Pennsylvania & York County, South Carolina

Capt. William Byers
Family #2
Of Augusta County, Virginia & York County, South Carolina

James Byers
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THE NUMBERING SYSTEM

Each person has been given a number in sequence, following Capt. William F. Byers who is designated as #1, the sole subject, together with his wife, of the First Generation.

William and Elizabeth’s children comprise “The Second Generation”, where as much biographical detail is given about them as is known. Since the oldest child is the second Byers in this list of descendants, his number is #2 and his place in the family unit is #1. Hence: his genealogical number is [2.1].

The children of the second generation are described under their own numbers in “The Third Generation”. If any children of a person are known, there will be a number in square brackets [ ] after that person’s name to indicate where those children will be listed in the next generation. Persons also have an inside number to show their place in their own family unit - (whether they are the oldest, the second or eleventh child in that particular family.)

For example:

(issue of Capt. William [1] and Elizabeth (Walton) Byers)

2.1: Edward Byers [9.1]

Was born December 5, 1761 in August County, Virginia.

This means that you will find Edward’s biography at item 2.1:. The list of his children starts with his oldest child, Samuel Baldwin Byers who is [9.1], and so on through [18.10]. Samuel’s children will be found starting with his oldest child at [74.1] in the next generation. If no number appears after a person’s name it means that either there were no children of this person, or, we were unable to find any record of them. By using these numbers the reader should easily be able to locate any person and run down any family line in the book, working either forward or backwards.

THE INDEX

Please Note: Descendants are indexed by their GENEALOGY NUMBER, not by page!
Dedicated

To

ELMER ORIS PARKER

Columbia, South Carolina

[1915 - ]
I Have Had The Pleasure

Of standing at the gravesite of Sitting Bull. Awakening to the sight of a lone Bison grazing in the tall timber of Custer State Park. Trodding on the ground where Custer bit the dust. Watching a Gleaner, framed by a snow capped mountain, reaping a course along the contours of Washington near Goldendale. Seeing the skilled mill workers of Scotia produce beautiful lumber for home use. Standing alone in the Mojave, watching and listening to an abundance of life. Dipping my feet into the red, red water of Rio Chama. Gawking at the Do Wah Daddies of Dumas as they strutted their stuff. Trailing three grandsons into a Stillwater café, one looking like a porcupine with his new hairdo, and receiving the Sooners gaze of pity. Crossing every bridge and some ferries along the Mississippi from New Orleans to Rock Island, Watching from the Chain-Of-Rocks Park as the sun rises above that river. Being served with grace by a Creole waiter in Louisiana. Of hearing a Bama Decatur waitress express her joy at having so many wonderful customers that morning. Listening to a lad, taking a break from tending the flower beds of Bellingrath Gardens, ordering toast and grits. Having Ralph Serone as a guide for two days while touring Manhattan. Being helped by a Connecticut Police Sergeant who located a comrade whom I had not seen or heard in 35 years. Viewing the “Quonquont Farm” residence at Whatley, Massachusetts which was built in 1769 as an inn and tavern by Daniel Morton, a sixth generation ago ancestor of Helen. While waiting at a cotton gin, being honored by two gentlemen in their sixties who did not agree on the order or service of the presidents. I was thirteen and they came to me for the answer. While putting the final touches on a beautiful wall book shelf in their library, hear a three year old cousin say, “Thurlo, I love you.”

Talking or corresponding with the following contributors:

Francis Maginnis Kirkwood, Missouri
David J. Clarke Sturgis, South Dakota
Dr. Melton P. Meek Lawton, Oklahoma
Audrey Stevens Madisonville, Texas
Nancy Turner Spring, Texas
Christine Floyd Senatobia, Mississippi
Dorothy O. King Batesville, Mississippi
Lynn Akin Birmingham, Alabama
Ann W. Mathis Birmingham, Alabama
Marjorie Tucker Birmingham, Alabama
Saraharte Watson Byers Moody, Alabama
Dr. Robert J. McCombs Troy, Alabama
Danny Stewart Ashville, Alabama
Charlene Simpson Ashville, Alabama
William W. Tucker Ellenwood, Georgia
Jane Freeze Bell Iron Mountain, Georgia
Elmer O. Parker Columbia, South Carolina
Dorothy E. Hays High Point, North Carolina

To the two not mentioned, please forgive me.
First Generation

Captain William Byers of the Revolution
by
Elmer Oris Parker

William Byers was born ca 1733. In 1755 he was surveyed 335 acres in Augusta County, Virginia (now Rockbridge) west and north of Natural Bridge “on ye north side of Cedar Creek in the forks of the James River joining land of Samuel McDowell.”

In 1758 he was enrolled in the Virginia militia raised for the protection of the frontiers of the province. He met Elizabeth Walton and they were married. After the birth of their first three children they moved ca 1765 to what is now York County, South Carolina and settled on the headwaters of Bullock Creek. A short time before, his brother, David, migrated from York County, Pennsylvania and located near by on Turkey Creek. William at first built a cabin about three miles south of Bethany Presbyterian Meeting House and had as near neighbors Col. John Moffet, Col. Ezekiel Polk, grandfather of future President James K. Polk, and Co1. Charles McLean, whose home served as the Tyron County Courthouse in 1769-71.

When the Rev. William Tennent visited the Carolina Up Country during the summer of 1775 to enlist support for the patriot cause, he lodged in the home of Byers and persuaded him to raise a Company of horsemen for Col. Thomas Neel’s regiment of militia. Soon afterwards an election for delegates to the Provincial Congress was held and Colonel Neel, Captain Byers and Captain Polk were among those chosen. Byers went to Charleston and took his seat in the State House on November 3, 1775 but four days later Col. Neel, with

Byers’ Company and those of the other Captains in his regiment was ordered to join Col. Richard Richardson’s expedition against the “Scovillites” in what later became known as the “Snow Campaign.” Upon its conclusion, Capt. Byers resumed his place in the Congress only to be called out with Col. Neel for service under Gen. Andrew Williamson in the Cherokee War of 1776, in which his company was involved in some bloody engagements with the Indians. His Company marched next to Gen. Williamson’s camp at Adams Ferry on the Savannah River opposite Augusta, Georgia but Capt. Byers, on account of a disabling sore leg was unable to command his Company in the battle of Briar Creek on March 3, 1779. He afterward marched to the relief of Charleston but resigned his commission after Col. Neel was killed in the battle of Stono on June 20th.

After the fall of Charleston in 1780, Byers and his family refugeed in North Carolina and after the battle of Cowpens his wife, Elizabeth and children fled in advance of the British Army under Lord Cornwallis, to her former home in Virginia.

During the war Byers’ indigo farm was ruined by the British. He sold it and moved down Bullock Creek to the vicinity of present Sharon and built another home in the fork of Bullock Creek and Clark’s Fork. In the low ground west of the creek he cultivated rice successfully.

In 1794 the South Carolina legislature appointed him one of the tax assessors and collectors for the New Acquisition District, as York County was then called.

He was an Elder in the Beersheba Presbyterian Meeting House in 1785 and for many years afterward. The date of his death has been lost but it appears to have been in the year 1799. It is likely that he was buried in the Churchyard at Beersheba but if his grave was marked the stone has disappeared.
Augusta County, Virginia

In 1746 Mr. John Blair visited Virginia and organized the congregations of North Mountain, New Providence, Timber Ridge and Forks of James. These were the Valley neighborhoods that favored the “New Side” or the Synod of New York. Among the ministers who lived for a while in this region were Rev. Alexander McDowell, Rev. William Dean and Rev. Alexander Craighead. With their services, occasional worship was held in all the meeting houses.

For August 21, 1752 this record is found in the Augusta Orders of Court: “On motion of Richard Woods, on behalf of himself and others, ordered that a Presbyterian Meeting House in Forks of James River, in this County, be and is hereby recorded a Public Place of Worship.” This and the [▲2] Falling Spring meeting place were generally used by the earliest inhabitants.

An order was entered for a certificate to Rev. Alexander Craighead, a dissenting minister, who took the oaths, subscribed the test, and the 39 articles, except what is exempted by the Act of Toleration.

(Orders of Court, Chalkley Vol I Page 54)

The meeting house seems to have been under the guardianship of Richard Woods and Joseph Lapsley and was built at the corner of the lands of Samuel Todd and William Hall [▲1]. About this time Alexander Craighead purchased from Benjamin Borden 553 acres of land adjoining Richard Woods on the west and Joseph Lapsley on the north. He was thus closely identified with the Woods’ Creek settlement, although it is said that he lived on the Cow Pasture. The congregation had its school taught first by Matthew Campbell, a young one-armed man to whom reference has been made. [▲3] is the site of the school.

John Bowyer, who had come into the Borden settlement as a teacher and owning only a horse and saddle, married the widow of Benjamin Borden, Jr. He purchased the above mentioned tract of land from Mr. Craighead in 1760 and lived there the remainder of his life, being an influential person in the church and in the community. He died in 1768 with the appraisal on 29 August.

Will Book 4 Page 182 Augusta County Records.

It was at the Forks Meeting House that Rev. Hugh McAden preached in July 1755, when on his way from Pennsylvania to North Carolina. He had stopped at Staunton, preaching at North Mountain and [▲4] Timber Ridge and came to [▲5] Mr. Boyer’s where he tarried till Sabbath morning with a very kind and discreet gentleman, who used him exceedingly kindly and accompanied him to the Forks, twelve miles, where he preached to a considerable large congregation. He rode home with Joseph Lapsley two miles where he stayed until Wednesday morning. It was here that he heard the news of Braddock’s defeat.

Morton says that Halls’ Meeting House in the “Forks of James” stood an hour’s walk west of Lexington. This was the Old Forks Meeting House, now called Halls’, later New Monmouth, the forerunner of Lexington. The first deed for the ground was given in 1754. William Dean was called in 1748 but there was no regular pastor until William Graham came in 1776. The meeting house is supposed to have been built about 1748 and is said to have been a large building in a beautiful grove. The second building was of stone, erected in 1789 and torn down in 1902.

Kegley’s Virginia Frontier with comments from:
Waddell, 74 and 105. Morton, Rockbridge County, 175.

See Map “Cheryl”
Ministers and Churches through the years.

Presbyterian
John Brown, New Providence
Archibald Scott, Bethel
John Montgomery, Windy Cove and Williamsville (Bath County)
Benjamin Erwin (Irwin, Irvin), Cook’s Creek, Mossy Creek
John McCue, Tinkling Spring
William Wilson, Old Stone
Samuel Shannan, Windy Cove
Samuel Carrick, Lebanon, Rocky Spring
Samuel Houston, High Bridge, Oxford (Rockbridge County)
James Waddie (Waddell), Tinkling Spring
Robert Wilson, Rocky Spring, Windy Cove, Lebanon
William Calhoun, 1st., Staunton; Hebron
Joseph Reid, Windy Cove, Lebanon
William McPhieeters, Bethel and Windy Cove
A. B. Davidson, Mossy Creek
Forks of James Community Roads

A to B

In March, 1753, Joseph Long and James Young as overseers, with Robert Young, Joseph Long, Samuel Gibson, Solomon Whitley, John Collier, William Hall, Gilbert Crawford, George Gibson, John Ruckman, Thomas Burton, William Waddington, William Brown, James Moore, John Hanna, James Huston, William Todd, James Bats, James Todd, James Young, Patrick Young, John Carr and James Campbell were to keep the road from Joseph Long’s Mill to James Young’s Mill, thence to the Great Road on James Thompson’s Plantation.

This road provided an outlet for these settlers in the northwestern corner of the Forks Community. They said, “It is our course to meeting, mill and market.” No land record can be found for some of the above.

C to D

In November, 1753, John Paxton was made overseer of a road from “Edmonston’s Mill to Fork Meeting House” with workers: James Trimble, Michael Finney, John Berrisford, William Holdman, John Hardin, Hugh Means, Joseph Lapsley, Peter Wallace, Samuel McClure, Abram Brown, John Moore, Robert Moore, Stephen Arnold, Samuel Paxton and James Edmondson.

E to F


This is a pretty complete enumeration of the people south of the Great Road, especially along the North Branch and Buffalo and Mill creeks. The two roads designated led from the fork of Buffalo and North Branch to the Great Road and Fork Meeting House near Joseph Lapsley’s and Gilkert Campbell’s and from the lower part of Mill Creek towards the west to connect with the Great Road, here called Renix’s Road.

Robert Renix ⬤ G

Robert Renicks had purchased land on the western branches of Cedar Creek and at the southern end of Short Hill, and was the leading citizen in that territory.

Kegley’s Virginia Frontier

See Map Cynthia
William Byers in Augusta County, Virginia

(See Map Thomas)

The first known record of William Byers was dated March 23, 1754 as per the following account.


Road ordered from North River to Campbell's School House, John Mathew, overseer, with Alexander MkCorkell, Edmund Crump and John Harger.

[▲ K to L] on map.

Assuming that Campbell’s School House and Fork Meeting House were near each other, we have here practically the same people below the Great Road working first their road direct from the lower part of the Forks to the Great Road near Campbell’s Ford of North River: second, their road west to the Great Road north of Cedar Creek; and third, the Great Road, or its equivalent north from this intersection toward Campbell’s School House, the Fork Meeting House and Campbell’s Ford.

This means simply that there were two available roads from the Lower Forks north, the one intersecting with the main road at Campbell’s School House and the other bearing west and intersecting the main road at a point farther south and that these lower inhabitants used both roads and hence were called upon to help keep them in order.

Kegley’s Virginia Frontier