

WINTERGREEN
NELSON COUNTY, VIRGINIA

(SOME HISTORY)

WINTERGREEN/Nelson County

A History

There is much more unwritten than written history of that (wonderful) County of Nelson in Virginia and of the particularly rare and beautiful country of WINTERGREEN which is the keystone of the Rockfish Valley and its surrounding Blue Ridge Mountains (in the extreme northeastern portion of the country). This relatively brief history will be added to in the years ahead from the gleanings of people particularly interested in the area with their primary sources being county records and the memories of its people who have always lived there. The history of WINTERGREEN country and of Nelson County as it relates to WINTERGREEN is particularly relevant as it has shaped the character of the country and of the people in that region which character remains as real, beautiful, and true as it was 175 years ago which will have such a valuable bearing on many people's enjoyment of WINTERGREEN for many years to come.

Down in old Virginny land,
Blessed by God, our maker's hand
Stands our home, yours and mine
Whose borders both man and God assigned.

By west the Blue Ridge Range,
By east the winding James,
By south the river Piney,
By north Albemarle County.

Within this small domain you'll find
People, land and bounty
And a place called Nelson County.

By J.B. Coincon

BEFORE SETTLEMENT

The rare and beautiful country of WINTERGREEN - the Rockfish Valley and its surrounding Blue Ridge Mountain and Monadnocks - began to be shaped about four hundred million years ago with the original uplift of the mountains. The character of the country today reflects primarily the forces of nature on the land but also in the last ten thousand years the activities of man. The wealth of mountain beauty and flora in these ancient Blue Ridge, particularly in the WINTERGREEN country, can be attributed mainly to geographical location. These mountains underwent neither long submergence by ancient seas nor scouring by glaciers in the ice age. In fact, these mountains were a haven for many species of northern flora and fauna which retreated from the glaciers southward and remnants of which still remain in the higher elevations. Much of the beauty and diversity of WINTERGREEN is a direct result of the geology of the area; and the development of WINTERGREEN as it unfolds will be guided and controlled in large measure also by the geology, i.e., "the environmental factors that make the area a gem for development of a community of excellence (which factors are based primarily on its geology) are the same factors composing the diversity and the attenuated warp and woof of its environmental fabric."

Until about ten thousand years ago this country remained uninhabited by man and from about that time until 1730 the only men who set foot there were the American Indians. There is no end even today to the evidence of Indian occupation of this region, although it is believed that it was not so much a country of Indian settlement as it was of visitation by various tribes attracted primarily by its abundance of game. Until about 1730 the Delaware Indians (which included the Monacans) for the most part as well as some other tribes of the Iroquois Nation had the WINTERGREEN country to themselves and their game. Besides visitation, as referred to above, this country and the valley of the Shenandoah were the scene of many bloody encounters between the different tribes who frequented the areas in the days before its discovery and settlement. The Monacan and Delaware Indians who frequented this country primarily were a fierce and bold people and did not leave the region until sometime before the French and Indian War. These people controlled all the land from the falls of the James River to the Blue Ridge Mountains. No one, including the Indians of the Tidewater country of Virginia, save the bravest white hunter, dared enter this land of hostile Indians. These Indians left a permanent and indelible mark on this country. The very beautiful stream that drains the majority of WINTERGREEN and which has carved out the broad and very deep gorge between Crawford, Black Rock and Devil's Knob Mountains as late as 1794 bore the name SHAMOKIN which to the Delaware Indians meant "where horns, or antlers, are plenty". This gorge and

stream were well named and still would be (instead of "Stoney") as it remains a country of abundant wildlife. As long as this was Indian country all of the mountains and the Rockfish Valley were in original forest save for clearings (earlier called "savannahs") made by fire--lightning or Indian lit--in either event fostering better game populations. The Indians knew much before the white man what today is so well recognized--that there is much more game wherever there is fringe and diversity of feed and cover created by woods interspersed by clearings than there is in continuous forest. Today throughout the WINTERGREEN country one can still find numerous Indian relics and on the site of the mountain village center (White Oak Flat) there was apparently a significant Indian crossroads which not infrequently was a battleground.

EARLY SETTLEMENT

The Indians left this country to head west and north prior to occupation by the first white settlers in WINTERGREEN country in 1734. The first prominent settlement known to have been made in Nelson County was made by one Dr. William Cabell. He was also the first Englishman to spend much time in the then wild mountainous region west of the mouth of the Rockfish District except for possibly Allen Tye. The location of his settlement is that of Warminister. The first white settler to make his home in the Rockfish Valley was James Wood (later a Major in the Revolutionary War) who came from Scotland and settled near the present site of the WINTERGREEN Store. The year 1744 saw this region split off from Goochland County and put into the newly formed Albemarle County of which it remained a part until 1761. Then it and what is now today known as Amherst County were broken off as Amherst County. Nelson County, as such, was formed in 1807 and named for General Thomas Nelson, Jr., third governor of Virginia.

The earliest white settlers to WINTERGREEN country naturally occupied the fertile and more easily tilled lands of the Rockfish Valley first. In short time the Valley was largely cleared and growing tobacco, wheat, orchards and hay. The principle

livestock--cattle and hogs--were almost entirely supported in the mountains where on "open range" they fed on honeysuckle, chestnuts and other mast.

The earliest recorded land grant in the high country of WINTERGREEN--in the Pryors Camp/Devil's Knob region--was in 1789. This land grant in the Clerk's Office of the Circuit Court of Nelson County on its original sheepskin was made to whom we guess must have been a liberated lady, one Rachel Ayres. To have settled that country she must have also been a very perceptive, bold and hardy woman. The very limited settlement of the mountains, it is obvious, occurred much later, in the order of fifty years, than the settlement of the valley.

The bulk of WINTERGREEN's mountain country as it is comprised today was originally granted by the Commonwealth of Virginia to one James Fleming in 1794 being surveyed as ten thousand acres. Almost since this date this portion of the property has been known as "The Big Survey". It's quite interesting and exceptional that the boundaries of this portion of the property are today almost identical with the original survey. A review of this original land grant on display in the WINTERGREEN offices shows that this country, mostly around but to some extent within the bounds of the Big Survey, was already inhabited by persons with names still well-known in the area-- Charles Rodes (The Rodes Farm), Hudson Martin, Hawes and William Coleman, James and William Wood, Samuel Shropshires, _____ Malloy (Malloy's Creek). Particularly interesting among the

early names of settlers in the area are that of David Crawford, 1756, and Hawes Coleman. David Crawford was the original owner of that part of WINTERGREEN called the Crawford Farm. William Harris Crawford, David's son, of Nellysford, who was born on this farm February 24, 1772, was to become our Ambassador to France and was a Presidential Candidate in 1824. It is said that except for the difference of one vote in the electoral College he would have become President of the United States instead of John Quincy Adams. He, along with Andrew Jackson and Henry Clay, lost to Adams. The Crawfords were Scots as were most of the early settlers of the Rockfish Valley and of the mountainous areas. Hawes Coleman was the original owner of "Valleymont", the farm lying between Shamokin Creek and the Crawford Farm on the east whose descendants would later own all of the Big Survey (mountain portion of WINTERGREEN).

Nelson County was severed from Amherst in the year 1807 and a review of county records for the year 1809 list some names still meaningful today and their ownerships:

Nathan Crawford	Rockfish Valley 505
William Crawford (Presidential candidate in 1824)	Nelly's Ford 413 3/4
Hawes Coleman (very early settler)	Rockfish Valley 1,450
Thomas Goodwin	Rockfish Valley 766
Moses Hughes	Rockfish Valley 1,711
Hudson Martin	Dutch Creek 1,496

John Mosby
(ancestor of Col. Mosby of the famous
Mosby Rangers in the Civil War)

Dutch Creek 580

Jane Wood

Rockfish 2,436

During the years prior to the Revolutionary War WINTERGREEN country became more and more settled. It changed from a bare wilderness to a rich farm country backdropped by a still original forest of the Blue Ridge Mountains. Grain, corn and tobacco were the main crops followed by orchards, gardens, flocks of sheep, droves of hogs, and herds of cattle. Apples were early introduced into the county and the famous Albemarle Pippin was originated in WINTERGREEN country which today is one of the few places in the world that it still is grown. So famous was the Albemarle Pippin that by a special act of the British Parliament this particular apple had no tariff on it because of its excellent taste. It has been estimated that the population of Nelson County prior to the Revolutionary War was about two thousand persons about half of which were black. Travel was difficult other places as witnessed by the fact that when the Revolutionary War broke out the first contingent of Nelson County people traveled by canoe to Williamsburg to fight for the independence of America. This initial contingent fought in a battalion commanded by Patrick Henry. Later they were joined by others and there follows a list of names still prominent in the WINTERGREEN country today of men who served in the Revolutionary War.

Ambrose Cameron	John Diggs (Capt)	Ben Pannelle
James Campbell	John Fortune	John Philips
Henry Campbell	William Harris (Capt)	Joel Ponton
John Cash	William Morrison	John Prior, Sr.
John Crawford	James Page	Charles Rodes (Capt)
		Ben Saunders

Coincon, J.B., Colonial History of Nelson County

A review of land grant and county records indicates that so far as WINTERGREEN country is concerned it was generally the case that the humbler citizen followed his wealthier neighbor into the back country instead of leading the way as is usually supposed. There's no question that early and always there were some squatters in the WINTERGREEN country before and after lands were sold but in the actual indications of settlement one finds few traces of them in this area. This relative absence of squatters from this region goes far toward explaining the statement made by various travellers of latter periods to the affect that this area of Virginia had very little of the shiftless and degraded population found in other parts of the south. A present evaluation of Nelson's people would also bear this out. They are superb people.

WINTERGREEN--Names and Tales

A lot of the character of a country and certainly much of its interest is reflected in its place names and the history and tales behind them. Such is certainly true for WINTERGREEN itself and its surrounding country both the mountains and the Valley. The space of this writing and of any map of the area could in no way be large enough to contain and explain the many names that provide most of the native people of this country the map they keep in their head of where they've been and where they're going. So, for the particular benefit of those who will come to WINTERGREEN as relative newcomers, we list below the names we think mean the most with as brief an explanation of each as we can manage and based on the truth as near as we can tell it. Most of these names do not appear on published maps and most name places within the legal boundaries of WINTERGREEN; but a fair number are names of areas within WINTERGREEN country and quite visible from WINTERGREEN itself.

The community of WINTERGREEN rather naturally divides into five areas: The Devil's Knob and Black Rock Mountain land south of Shamokin Gorge; the steep cliffs, rocky coves, falls, and streams comprising the gorge itself; the mountain country immediately north of the gorge and south of Pinnacle Rocks and

the quite rugged and northern most portion of the mountain country, these two latter areas together comprising WINTERGREEN's back high country; and, finally the lower slope and rolling valley country between Shamokin Creek on the south and the northern boundary of Rodes Farm.

The listing of names and tales we will give will start with the first of these areas moving north up the gorge, then to the Valley, next to the high back country by names and tales relating to the remainder of WINTERGREEN country. As one drives the Reed's Gap road (Rt. 664) approaching the mountain entrance of WINTERGREEN the very rugged mountains to the north or rather peaks are those of Rodes, Bryant and Piney Mountain. We will treat these names as we do others explaining them only when we have a basis for doing so or think it interesting.

DEVIL'S KNOB AND BLACK ROCK MOUNTAIN AREA

Rodes Mountain--So named for the Rodes who farmed lands now owned by Col. Blaylock immediately south of the mountain and who also farmed the Rodes Farm encompassed in the boundaries of WINTERGREEN.

Campbells--Immediately west of the entrance of WINTERGREEN is a body of very steep and rugged land owned today and inhabited for as long as most anyone can remember by the Campbells who earned their living and reputation in this rugged and until recently remote country. A number of their descendants are still in the area, including those of T. Maxie Campbell, a veteran bear hunter and friendly proprietor of Campbell's Store in Nellysford.

Pond Hollow--This is the hollow, up which the mountain entrance to WINTERGREEN proceeds, so named, we believe, for the reason that at sometime in the past there was a mill pond in the hollow in the vicinity of the confluence of Whistler's Branch and Pond Hollow Branch known as Whistler's Mill.

Fortune Mountain--Driving up the entrance road the mountain to one's immediate right with very steep cliffs is known as Fortune Mountain. This mountain and its beautiful cove on the east which displays an abundance of rhododendron and laurel is named for John Fortune whose ancestors settled on it around 1800 and who purchased it in 1865. John Fortune, his wife, Matilda, and his son, Johnny, all lived and died there and are buried there.

Reed's Gap--As one pulls up out of pond hollow onto Laurel Ridge and looks directly to the west there is a million mile view of Blue Ridge Mountain country visible because of Reed's Gap, one of the earliest settler's crossings on the east side of the Blue Ridge to the west. The view from this point or from Reed's Gap west is one of the most striking and pleasant in the Blue Ridge.

Laurel Ridge--You can breathe now. It's an easy road from here on. Laurel Ridge is so named for the abundance of mountain laurel growing all over it. In some time past it may have been known as Ivy Ridge as most mountain people refer to mountain laurel as ivy and to rhododendron as laurel. This is an interesting area offering tremendous views and a diversity of species of trees and understory quite different from most parts of WINTERGREEN.

White Oak Spring and Flat--This area was once settled, has an abundance of water, rich soil, and always supported a high-quality growth of timber and understory; predominately white oak for which it must have been named. The combination of terrain, rich soils and water brought much game to this area, as it does today. Many travelled it, particularly the Indians, and on it is evidence of many battles of the tribes who crossed one another's paths.

Potato Patch Mountain - Ask anyone about Potato Patch Mountain and you'll get ten different locations for it. We believe we have the name where it belongs and it was so given by

the fact that this soil was rich enough to grow potatoes which in many places in the mountains is not the case.

Black Rock Mountain - So named for the granite outcrops most prevalent on its southern side which in certain light and at certain times of the year are prominent and black.

Pedlar's Edge - This is a new name recognizing the fact that it is the area where the Pedlar geological formation and the overlying Catoclin formation meet. There is a lot of interesting geology to be learned and seen here.

Devil's Knob - Devil's Knob is the highest point on WINTERGREEN which height is exceeded by only a few places south of WINTERGREEN in Nelson County. It is unusual because in spite of its height it is very smooth country once you get up on it. The only explanation for its name was given years ago by John J. Coleman who related that in travelling up Shamokin Gorge to Laurel Spring Gap and then south to Reed's Gap long before the Blue Ridge Parkway was in existence one had to cross a very narrow precipitous pass on the mountains since obliterated by the Parkway so tight that one had to lead his horse and then only one not too fat. This pass was called Devil's Gate because of the risk it imposed and it's reasonable to think the knob above it got its name because of it.

Pryor's Camp - Pryors Camp takes in some several hundred acres of good-lying mountain land, rich in soils and water that was originally granted to Rachel Ayres. It has never borne her name and we're not sure but believe that a Andrew Pryor was

settled there without deed prior to her grant and that the richness and remoteness of that area originally attracted him and that same combination, plus him, may have attracted her. Pryors Camp is the location of the mountain golf course and is different from almost any other area of WINTERGREEN not only because of the golf course but for the fact that it is some of the highest land and comprises almost all of the area of WINTERGREEN on the west slopes of the Blue Ridge.

SHAMOKIN GORGE

On any published map this will show up simply as Stoney Creek (no gorge) but on the original survey of the Big Survey the water was Shamokin Creek. We have added the name gorge as it more accurately reflects the extent and character of this area. According to the late Dr. Byron N. Cooper, Head, Department of Geology, Virginia Polytechnic Institute, "Shamokin Gorge ranks possibly as the deepest gorge (of such large extent) in the eastern United States and certainly one of the three deepest ones in the eastern United States." From its stream channel up its sheer cliffs it takes in heights of land 2700 feet above. Shamokin Gorge is certainly one of the most beautiful areas of WINTERGREEN and unlike any other. Although the entirety of WINTERGREEN is blessed with such a diversity of wildlife, trees and other vegetation as to make its worth excel most and perhaps all other mountain areas and to provide it unusual safety from disease and other infestations, Shamokin Gorge far and away displays the greatest diversity in vegetation, terrain and geology.

Cedar Cliff - So named for the fact that this long ridge ends precipitously in a drop of one thousand feet of sheer rock cliffs covered by hemlock which by mountain people are often referred to as cedar.

Far Knob - A beautiful spot round and smooth that extends furthest to the north into the gorge and then drops even more precipitously than Cedar Cliff.

Ballhootin - An area of cliffs which at one time was heavily forested with original timber and which was harvested by ax in the 1930's. There was no possible way for these large trees, some as much as five feet in diameter, to be skidded to the bottom so they were cabled up to a take-off point and "ballhotted" off the mountain to the bottom by the sheer force of gravity. The result - about thirty percent of the logs were recoverable.

Peggy's Pinch - A Peggy Drumheller one day with horse and buggy was making her way to Pryors Camp up the Shamokin Road. She apparently became alarmed by the pursuit of a man of whom she had some fear. Crossing the Diamond Hill Ford she whipped her horse into a run which unfortunately resulted in his not making the curve in the road beneath the Diamond Hill Cemetery. Miss Drumheller and the horse drowned in the beautiful trout pool that is still there today at this point.

Diamond Hill Cemetery - A very old cemetery of sunken graves crowded in the deepest periwinkle we've ever seen. This is one of the most singularly beautiful spots on WINTERGREEN and originally named for the fact that a number of the surface rocks had such a diamondlike sparkle.

THE VALLEY

Wintergreen - Among the oldest estates in Nelson County were Wintergreen and Valleymont. The original owner of these old estates was Hawes Coleman, 1st. He died in 1840 and his land descended to his two eldest sons - Wintergreen to John J. Coleman, II (1792 - 1869) and Valleymont to Hawes N. Coleman, II. Wintergreen house which today stands on a hill opposite the Wintergreen Store was erected by Hawes N. Coleman, 1st. This property remained in the hands of the Colemans until 1892 when it was sold to the late John Will Harris whose descendants still own it. It was the Harrises who built the store and the mill that you see at WINTERGREEN today and operated them until not too long ago. It was a Mr. Grover Harris who ran the mill until one day he fell into it meeting his death. Several people still living nearby found him and helped to pull him out. Grover Harris' wife, who was formerly a Mrs. Hughes, owned and operated the store. We estimate the store and the mill to be about one hundred years old.

Valleymont - This was originally an estate of two thousand acres owned and operated by Dr. Hawes N. Coleman, II. It was one of the finest estates in Nelson County, upon which was a brick residence of colonial style architecture. The entirety of the

Valleymont area lies in the old or ancient flood plain of Shamokin Creek which used to run rather than down its southwestern boundary along the existing channel of Allen Creek.

Tom's Shack - An old negro lady named Myria Tom resided in that spot for many years.

Shingle Hollow - A hollow so blessed with big white oak that it was the place many went to get oak, out of which to make white oak shingles.

Rattlesnake Hollow - Obviously named but probably because of an incident rather than the incidence of rattlesnakes. Its lower reaches are one of the better trout streams.

The Loop - This area has been variously called The Loop and The Punch Bowl and we know not why except it's as confusing an area as its name.

The Hanging Rock - To see it is to know its name. A massive rock that hangs and is obvious at a great distance on the south face of View Rock Mountain.

Nellysford - There are many versions on this story--one thing is sure there was a ford there across the south fork of the Rockfish River. Presumably a lady named Nelly operated a store close by and one day drowned in the vicinity of the ford. Others say it was a horse named Nelly.

Well Bottom - This is just a very small area of WINTERGREEN and like so many others different from any others. It is an extremely rugged, rocky area that contains as much game as any

single valley area in WINTERGREEN. There are some deep holes in the area which presumably were dug for wells.

The Napiers - This fine family is WINTERGREEN's only interior neighbor and it's probably blessed by the fact. The patriarch of the family is Mr. Sir Cassius Napier called by most as "Cash". He has lived and earned his living where he is today (with the help of a mighty wife) and is considered the best hunter and woodsman in the area with many other good ones behind him, his sons being among the best. He has a twin brother and when they were born his father who worked for Mr. John J. Coleman "a slave owner" consulted Mr. Coleman on naming his twin sons. Mr. Coleman suggested naming them for those two famous Roman twins "Sir Casius" and "Ladishus". He did and they bear the names to this day.

Crawford Farm - So named for the Crawfords who originally owned it and for William H. Crawford who was born there and has been previously commented on.

The Mines and Mine Hollow - In the late 1800's copper was mined at this point on the very steep east slope of Crawford Knob. It was mined by hand in narrow shafts which still exist and make for interesting though not today safe visitation. The ore was brought from the mines to the Valley by a shuttle car, the weight of the loaded car running on gravity pulling an unloaded car on the other end of the cable up to the mines for loading. It's a hard walk to the mines--straight up.

The Rodes Farm - This has always been one of the best tended and most productive farms in the entirety of the Rockfish Valley. It forms the northern portion of the Valley holdings of WINTERGREEN and cannot be exceeded in beauty.

THE MIDDLE HIGH BACK COUNTRY

This is the area situated between Shamokin Gorge, the Valley and Pinnacle Rocks. This area was never settled much and so far as we can determine only three parts of it were ever lived on, Little Levels, Turkey Scratch and Big Levels.

Turkey Scratch - Once farmed, this is still beautiful and accurately named we think for the abundance of turkey who use the area.

The Entry - In earlier times called Horror's Entry. It is an entry in the sense of its being a saddle or gap in the mountain, thus, with more soil and less rock than most areas. It is also high and remote and thus was the determined place for the burial of a considerable number of (?) Yankee soldiers who died during the war of diphtheria and thus the name Horror's Entry.

View Rock - So named because in earlier years it was reasonably accessible and a great spot for a picnic and a view.

Cooper's Whole - This particular pinnacle so far as our research has ever been able to determine has borne no name. We've taken the liberty of giving it the name Cooper's Whole for several reasons: First, it is probably the single best place from which one can take in the whole of WINTERGREEN and its surrounding country. Views from it are unsurpassed. Look long and you can see a wonderful country and future. It was also on

this spot on December, 1968 at the end of a long hard cold day that Byron Cooper first helped us really begin to formulate and understand the true greatness and potentials of WINTERGREEN. Dr. Cooper was a geologist with vast experience and interest in the Appalachians who was WINTERGREEN's geological consultant until his death. Many of the opportunities and constraints that he thought were part and parcel of WINTERGREEN are those that are being realized and abided by as it is developed.

Mayloy's Creek - A creek of cascading falls, sliding rocks, deep pools, and rocky prominences draining this entire area which contains some of the best native trout fishing to be found in the area though not the easiest. Mr. Mayloy must have been one of the first to settle on it.

Big and Little Levels - Seeing these areas, the names are easily understood as they are unusually large and easy country to be so high up in the mountains. Both of these areas were farmed and occupied, the last known occupants being the Pucketts who in this century stayed on the mountain all the year, coming down only once or twice for coal, oil, coffee, sugar, and salt and bringing with them buckwheat, wheat, hog meat, and chestnuts.

Humpback Mountain - Probably named in more recent times because of the fact that the very prominent Humpback Rock is located on this mountain. In earlier days we believe this was known either as Pinnacle Rocks or the Pinnacle.

THE NORTH COUNTRY

North of Pinnacle Rocks the character of the mountain terrain of WINTERGREEN changes dramatically. Very steep, highly intersected, rugged and rocky--hard to get over and through but worth the walking and the seeing and abundant with game.

Cold Hole of the Pinnacles - The folks who live up Glass Hollow below the Cold Hole of the Pinnacles, principally Mrs. Annie Baber Pannell, always considered this hollow to be the coldest place in the country. "I've seen snowbirds there in July and the son of Greenberry Roads who was ill with a high fever was cured by ice from the Cold Hole in June."

Humpback Rock - Seen, the reason for the name is obvious. Unless climbed on, the beauty visible from them is certainly not. From Humpback Rock, easily reached from the Blue Ridge Parkway by a forty minute walk, one feels they can see the entirety of the Blue Ridge and nearly can.

Howardsville Turnpike - This road constructed in the mid 1800's and still in surprisingly good and beautiful shape with rock bridges and walls served for a long time as a principal way for farmers of the Valley of Virginia to bring their produce to Howardsville on the James River to be shipped out on barges on the James River - Kanawha Canal.

Will Cook's Rock - On the Howardsville Turnpike Road and not

too distant from Humpback, there is a rock which if closely viewed displays the blood stains of Will Cook who was killed there. In this vicinity on the Fourth of July the people of the area used to have a celebration with beverages, music, singing and dancing. On one Fourth of July, because of an affair of the heart, Will Cook was shot and killed. That was the end of the celebrations.

Deserter's Den - In the upper reaches of Rodes Creek, there's a den formed by a "shelter rock" where during The War Between the States deserters frequently hid. It's not too far above . . .

Pug Allen's Camp - Where Pug Allen and his family provided a lot of enjoyment to a lot of people with hunting all day (primarily bear) and good music all night with Mr. Allen leading on the fiddle.

Dobie Mountain - We don't know.

Shropshire Creek - This creek, almost on the northern boundary of WINTERGREEN but still well within it, is as pretty as any stream within the bounds of WINTERGREEN. Samuel Shropshire was one of the original settlers in the area and settled on this creek. It was always known for him until the government called it Mill Creek on the map some years ago. It's an easy walk up it and worth it.

OUTSIDE THE WINTERGREEN COMMUNITY

George Washington National Forest - WINTERGREEN is blessed by being bounded on two sides by the George Washington National Forest. The forest will always be there and will be managed for timber but primarily for wildlife and recreation. Access to it is easy and varied from WINTERGREEN and it offers many exciting opportunities to owners and residents in WINTERGREEN - an understatement.

Afton - Rockfish Gap - Afton, a small community, was named by Mrs. David Hansbrough, wife of the first postmaster, a native of Scotland, for she saw a close resemblance to her homeland. Formerly one of Nelson's most interesting historical buildings and the county's oldest hostelry was Afton House. It unfortunately burned in 1962. A summer resort was constructed by James R. Goodloe in 1869 and was hosted by him and his wife until about 1925. In its heyday, Afton House attracted the "gay blades" of the area. The farmers in the vicinity fussed about the "summer boarders" who distracted the young men and rendered them "worthless" for a day's work. The Goodloes, we think, were and are still on both sides of that road.

Rockfish Gap was and is today one of the primary vantage points from which to see the entirety of the beautiful Rockfish Valley. It was in Indian times and remains today with the

crossing of I-64 one of the principal crossings of the Blue Ridge.

Rockfish Valley - As one winds his way to WINTERGREEN down Route 151 and Route 6, one travels through one of the most beautiful valleys in the State of Virginia with as much or more of a yesteryear flavor than any. Rockfish was named, we think (some know) for the fact that until dams on the James River were constructed Rockfish and probably Shad ran from the bays as far west as the Rockfish Valley. The Valley is framed in its entirety on the west by the property of WINTERGREEN with the exception of some lower slopes and Elk Mountain, the extreme northern most mountain in the Valley which is owned today by descendants of Thomas Fortune Ryan. On the east there are a number of smaller mountains and mountain ranges which frame it. These have many names individually and collectively, i.e., Blue Ridge Spurs, Blue Ridge Outliers, Broken Mountains - and are extensions of a range which begins at the Potomac and rises and disappears across Virginia. That range includes the Bull Run Mountains, Mount Pony, the Southwestern Mountains, Ragged Mountains and others. We termed these mountains in the Rockfish, the Blue Ridge Monadnocks, which take in going from north to south Turk Mountain, Ennis Mountain, Massie's Mountain, Pilot Mountain, McLean Mountain, and the Horseshoe Mountains.

One of the reasons that the Rockfish retains its yesteryear character today is that it has neither been developed, despoiled, nor does its landscape reflect large scale modern technical

agriculture. The primary reasons for this are several--land staying in families, the relatively limited acreage of highly productive soils and the fact that there are very few farms of any size. This latter situation results most probably from the fact that the land today belongs to descendants of those who originally owned it, and in the process of inheritance was highly divided. As hard as this may have been on the people who have and do try to farm it, in a way it's a blessing as it's kept the character of the country. This too perhaps offers an opportunity for a more valuable agriculture to be established in the Valley in connection with the development of WINTERGREEN and the enjoyment of the products of the Valley by its owners and inhabitants.

THE BIG SURVEY

As already mentioned, ten thousand acres of the mountain land of WINTERGREEN was surveyed for an original land grant in 1794 from the Commonwealth of Virginia to one James Fleming. In 1796 Fleming sold this property to Edward Martin who by will left it to his son who in short turn conveyed it to Thomas Morrison. In 1838 Mr. Morrison sold it to Thomas Griffin and John Pulman of the State of New York. In 1841 Pulman conveyed his interest to Griffin and in April of 1852 Mr. Griffin who held title to the property then apparently as Trustee or Nominee for William Wilson of Glasgow, Scotland conveyed the property to Hawes N. Coleman and John J. Coleman for the sum of ONE THOUSAND DOLLARS.

Apparently all was quiet and undisturbed on and about the Big Survey until there commenced in 1871 a suit having to do with the settlement of some claims against the estate of John J. Coleman, which suit ran from 1871 until finally settled in 1903. This suit was quite involved and would take seven Philadelphia lawyers to review, unravel and explain. Particular to the history of WINTERGREEN was the fact that the Big Survey was sold to a Tucker S. Coles at public auction on August 13, 1878.

The day of the sale the suit began to get immensely more complicated as no sooner had the Big Survey been knocked out to

Mr. Cole for Four thousand dollars (he being under the distinct impression that there were no inholdings within its boundaries) than a Mr. Coleman informed Mr. Coles that he owned land within its bounds. A dispute and complications of suit resulted and went on for many years but was apparently finalized with Coles getting good title to all of the Big Survey.

WINTERGREEN - THE 20TH CENTURY

Until this century little changed in WINTERGREEN. The original mountain forests were left undisturbed except for a few settlers, clearings, and cuttings and the Valley existed in a high state of intensive cultivation with its hillsides covered with orchards. Then in 1902 Kistler, Lesh and company, a Boston partnership, commenced the acquisition of the great majority of the lands today constituting WINTERGREEN, primarily to obtain the original and exceptionally abundant source of chestnut contained on the property. The bulk of their acquisition was that which Tucker Coles fought to perfect 1871-1903. It is estimated that at this time approximately fifty to sixty percent of the forest cover of WINTERGREEN was in chestnut - the most or at least as valuable a forest product as this country has ever had. The interest of Kistler, Lesh in the chestnut stemmed from the fact that at that time it was the primary source in this country of tannic acid used in the curing of leathers, which was their business. Their acquisition effort was immense, involving some sixty conveyances of land and right of ways. They anticipated harvesting the forest lands of the Big Survey by railroad--the means by which the bulk of the remainder of the Blue Ridge Mountain area of Nelson County was harvested. Anyone today

seeing the old railroad grades never built on the Big Survey but built and used in the Massie's Mill District will see what an amazing engineering and construction feat that was.

Kistler failed in their goals, because in about 1916 the chestnut blight commenced killing the chestnut in the eastern United States and by the mid twenties had scourged the east, completely killing the vast stands of chestnut over the entirety of its range. As so much of WINTERGREEN was chestnut and other forest trees were not in as great demand, Kistler, Lesh logged not at all on the property until the 1930's and then only the most mature and accessible stands. During the period of their ownership from 1902 until 1951 the property was under the supervision of Mr. Dall Small, father of B. C. Small who today farms some of WINTERGREEN's lands and lives immediately adjacent.

During this period of time though the mountains and the Valley changed forever. The loss of the chestnut changed all of Virginia's mountains as much as all other factors combined as it forced the mountain people out of the mountains and into factories. Theirs was a marginal existence; without chestnut they couldn't survive. The lumber was valuable to them for all purposes and the chestnuts themselves were a very valuable no-cost cash crop sold as a delicacy to the cities. Simultaneously the Valley was feeling the effects of the agricultural revolution which more and more was requiring mechanization and larger farms and which brought about the changes that have brought the landscape of the Rockfish Valley to what it is today--small

farms, fewer orchards, little cropping, mostly a rolling yesteryear landscape of cattle on rich grass.

In 1951 Mr. and Mrs. William R. Mattox of Durham, North Carolina, purchased the entirety of the Kistler, Lesh holdings and in the next few years cut the last of the timber ever to be cut for lumber purposes within its bounds and then held these lands as an investment in good stewardship to enhance in value and beauty. They did. In 1968 the Mattoxes reluctantly decided they should sell their property and through a rather unusual set of circumstances retained Don Faulkner of Virginia Landmark Corporation as their exclusive sales agent. Specific to their agreement to sell was a stipulation that it be sold into good hands for a potential use that would work to the benefit of the surrounding community of Nelson county. It took from February to June of 1968 for their agents (most ably guided by George Vest) to get over the property working hard and it was not until the fall of 1968 that they began to grasp and to become fully confident in the potentials of this large land holding.

In the spring of 1969 their concept of development and confidence in it won the interest of Jim Wheat (Wheat, First Securities Incorporated, Richmond, Virginia) which resulted in a purchase agreement in June of 1969--an unusual agreement which enhanced the prospects of this property's realizing its finest potentials. A commitment was made to purchase and to do comprehensive studies on the property. Before they could begin, in August of 1969 Nelson County was ravaged by Hurricane Camille

resulting in the death of many people and in the ravaging of many thousands of acres of its finest mountain hollows and bottoms. Among other things learned from this dread experience were two-- the people of Nelson are of exceptional quality, courage, faith and strength . . . and WINTERGREEN, which was in the path of the storm, survived with less damage acre for acre than any other tract of mountain land in the path of Camille.

Commencing immediately after Hurricane Camille and for the next two years comprehensive studies of the property--geology, ecology, ground water resources, meteorology, and the tentative siting and feasibility of roads, ski slopes, and mountain lakes-- were conducted to determine the extent and character of development that these lands could support. These studies were unusually comprehensive for predevelopment planning and exceeded probably at that time only by similar studies conducted by the Sea Pines Company prior to development of Hilton Head Island; and were conducted by top flight scientists and professionals. The results were encouraging and immediately followed by studies of the potentials for development, i.e. the markets and demands, economic feasibility, entrance and interest access, overall engineering, and preliminary land use and architectural planning.

Results of these studies strongly supported the view that development of WINTERGREEN would be demanding but probably quite rewarding and were convincing in respect that WINTERGREEN could

be a year-round, everyday, all time and forever recreational and resort community of unique character and unsurpassable excellence.

Subsequent to these studies more than a year's search of RTKL, Inc. of Baltimore, architects and planners, Gladstone Associates of Washington, real estate economic consultants, and Virginia Landmark corporation was conducted to seek out a developer with the integrity and the capability to bring WINTERGREEN to its best potentials.

