

A watercolor illustration of a winged figure, possibly a spirit or elf, wearing a green hooded cloak and orange leggings. The figure is holding a large branch of holly with several clusters of bright red berries. The background is a soft, light green wash. The entire scene is framed by a thin black border.

The Historic Centreville Society

INVITES YOU TO ATTEND THE

OUR DELICIOUS TRADITIONAL
Annual Christmas Dinner

MONDAY, DECEMBER 3, 2018, AT 7 PM
MOUNT GILEAD, 5634 MOUNT GILEAD ROAD,
CENTREVILLE, VA 20120

BRING AN ARTIFACT FOR SHOW & TELL AFTER DINNER.

\$25 PER PERSON.

CHECKS PAYABLE TO HCS, IN ADVANCE,

RSVP: HCS, P.O. Box 1512, CENTREVILLE VA, 20122.

We hope to see you there!



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UPDATE FROM THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Greetings to all the members of the Historic Centreville Society (HCS)!

Our HCS quarterly event on September 8 unfolded in two parts: (1) a Girl Scout Silver Award project presentation; (2) our own Growing Up in Centreville panel discussion.

At this point, you might reasonably ask, why was there a Girl Scout Silver Award project presentation at the quarterly event of our historical society? The answer is it directly related to the history of Centreville. Lauren and Elizabeth Bradshaw are twin sisters from Centreville who have undertaken, as their Girl Scout Silver Award project, to clear the overgrowth, clean up, restore, and improve a small, forgotten cemetery that dates back hundreds of years and is in what is now the Gate Post Estates community of Centreville. It is the Orr Family Cemetery, which is the last resting place of John Orr, a Revolutionary War patriot. Prior to his death by drowning in 1795 at Cub Run Creek, he was a trustee for Centreville, and he is the only such trustee to have a burial location that we know. No headstones remain on site, but there are field stones that mark the locations of perhaps 25-30 graves for Orr and other family members. Lauren and Elizabeth told their story of this project before an audience of 17 people and indicated they are accepting donations to defray the cost of materials (gravel, mulch, periwinkle plants, etc.) for this project.

Immediately thereafter, the Growing Up in Centreville event began. A panel of native Centrevillians reminisced together about what Centreville was like when they were young. This panel included Ted McCord, Mark Khosravi, Claudette Ward, Bill Hatcher, Carol Robinson, and Stuart (Snooky) DeBell. As moderator, Ted introduced everybody, and they spoke about their earliest memories. Claudette lived outside of town, Bill lived on five acres off Stone Road, and Snooky was

born and raised on a dairy farm that was right where we were for this event, property that is now the location of the Centreville Regional Library. Snooky spoke of why his father had to sell the farm (taxes were too high) and described the businesses there at the time. Mark spoke of his fondness for Centreville and memory of exploring the area and learning its history. Claudette talked about how Payne's Store, churches, and schools really were Centreville. The discussion turned to the size of the Centreville area back in their youth and how many dairy farms there were. Carol commented on the relationship between the Chantilly Country Club and the Washington Dulles International Airport.

Claudette stated that Centreville was a place that people went through to go from the city of Fairfax to Manassas. There was some mention of ghost activity in houses behind where the CVS on Pickwick Road is now. All in all, there was much reminiscing, and this was a lively and interesting discussion that was over much too soon. (Our event location, the Centreville Regional Library, was starting to close.) We may have to do this kind of thing again someday.

October 20 is worth mentioning here for a couple of events: (1) the Rededication Ceremony for the Orr Family Cemetery, and (2) Centreville Day, which included a couple of historic recognitions.

I attended that Rededication Ceremony and saw the Orr Family Cemetery for myself. As mentioned previously, this is Lauren and Elizabeth Bradshaw's project to restore an old (Eighteenth Century) cemetery in Centreville. The Rededication Ceremony began with a flag ceremony by the Fairfax Resolves Chapter Color Guard, Sons of the American Revolution. It continued with remarks by both Lauren and Elizabeth and those of several other noteworthy people: Lidia Soto-Harmon, CEO, Girl Scout Council of the Nation's Capital; Delegate Tim Hugo, Virginia's Fortieth District; and Mary Lipsey, Fairfax County Cemetery Preservation Association. I found it to be a moving experience.

As usual, Centreville Day had numerous activities, to include historic tours of Mount Gilead, the Sears House, the Old Stone Church, and others, but two recognitions are worth mentioning. First, HCS director Claudette Ward was recognized as Centreville Day 2018 Citizen of the Year and Honored Community Historian for her many community activities and

Update continued ...

contributions to local historical associations. Second, Elizabeth and Lauren Bradshaw were recognized as Young Historian Grant Award winners. The Friends of Historic Centreville provided a \$500 grant to them to contribute to the materials cost of their project, as described earlier in this Update. That is now the third time that I have mentioned them here, but they have been “in the news” a lot lately, and their cemetery project is remarkable, especially considering their age. I think I heard that these twin sisters are only 13 years old. (When I was that age, I don’t think I did anything significant!)

Paul Hancq



Pictures from Orr Cemetery Dedication Ceremony. Left column from top: Lauren and Elizabeth Bradshaw, Revolutionary War Color Guard; Right column from top: newly installed marker stone, view of cemetery, Delegate Tim Hugo speaking at dedication.

The Orr Cemetery

By Claudette Crouch Ward

Two 13 year old Girl Scouts, sisters Elizabeth and Lauren Bradshaw saw an overgrown family cemetery near where they live. They researched and found that John Orr had owned the 200 acre plantation which he named, "Waterside," he was a Revolutionary War Patriot, and was buried there. There are at least 12 other graves marked only with field stones. Whose graves they are is unknown.

The girls decided to clean up the cemetery as a Girl Scout project. They got volunteers to help them, and get donations. A huge amount of underbrush was cleared out, mulch put down, periwinkle planted, and a gravel walking path was made through the cemetery; which is about half an acre. Kline's Memorial in Manassas donated a memorial stone, the Orr Family 1795.

There had been a marker with the name John Orr and dates on it, also one for his daughter Jane Marie that were moved to the cemetery at St. John's Episcopal Church in the 1970's.

The Orr cemetery was rededicated on Saturday, October 20, 2018 at 10 a.m. Members of the Fairfax Resolves Chapter of the Sons of the American Revolution, in period uniforms and a drummer boy led in saluting the American flag and also presented the Virginia flag. Elizabeth and Lauren Bradshaw told about the cemetery and the Orr family. Lidia Soto-Harmon, CEO Girl Scout Council, National Capital spoke on the impact of volunteering. Virginia State Delegate Tim Hugo spoke on the value of preserving local history. Mary Lipsey, Fairfax Cemetery Preservation Association spoke on the importance of preservation of historical cemeteries. The Rev. Carol Hancock of St. John's Church gave the invocation.

Later on Saturday at Centreville Day, Elizabeth and Lauren Bradshaw were presented with awards and praise for their interest in local history and work in preserving a historical cemetery. Cheryl Repetti presented them with the awards and a check for \$500 from the Friends of Historic Centreville.

I had received a phone call asking me to give the girls information on the Orr family. I sent the following article to Elizabeth Bradshaw.

Revolutionary War Patriot John Orr

By Claudette Crouch Ward

John Orr was a Revolutionary War Patriot. He voted for the Leedstown Resolution 27 February 1766. This was a protest against the Stamp Act, proposed by Richard Henry Lee and passed by Westmoreland County citizens. During the War he supported the Revolution by providing materials and supplies to the troops.

Born 28 July 1728, John Orr was the son of Colonel Alexander Dalrymple Orr and Lady Agnes Dalrymple of Ayr, Scotland. He was a Scots merchant at Dunfires, then settled in Westmoreland County. He moved to what is now Fairfax County. About 1762 he married Susannah Grayson, daughter of Benjamin Grayson, who owned "Bel Air" near Occoquan. Her mother was Susannah Monroe (1693-1752). Her father was Andrew Monroe, the oldest son of Andrew Monroe who was the great-great Grandfather of President James Monroe. Susannah Grayson Orr was the sister of Col. William Grayson, officer in the American Revolution. He was one of the first two United States Senators from Virginia. His brother Spence Grayson was a Justice of the Loudoun County Court, then a Loudoun County Anglican Minister. In 1777 when William Grayson was given the command of a Continental Brigade, Rev. Grayson went with him as Chaplain. A county in Virginia is named for William Grayson.

In 1792, John Orr was one of the Trustees of the town of Centreville. He is probably the only one of the founders of Centreville whose burial spot is known, and the only one buried at Centreville. In what was described as a "cloud burst" John Orr drowned 20 July 1795 while attempting to ford Cub Run on his horse. He was buried on his property. He was 8 days short of his 67th birthday.

It is unknown at this time exactly where John Orr moved to the Centreville area. He named his plantation "Waterside." He was made guardian of Presley Carr Lane, the young son of William Carr Lane about 1777.

John and Susannah Orr had six children.

Alexander Dalrymple Orr (1761-1835) - (He represented Kentucky in Congress)

Benjamin Grayson Orr (1762-1822) - (Mayor of Washington, DC 1817-1819)

Patriot continued ...

Eleanor Grayson Orr (m. Peers) (1772-1849)

Ann Orr (m. _____ Stewart) (1762-1822)

William Grayson Orr (1782-1822)

Jane Marie Orr (1785-1804) - Jane died at age 19 years old and was buried next to her father. In the 1970's the grave marker for John Orr and his daughter Jane were moved to St. Johns.

Susannah Orr died 1822, 79 years old. The place of her burial is unknown. Her brothers, Col. William and Rev. Spencer Grayson are in a tomb at "Bel Air".

David Bullock Harris and the Fortifications at Centreville, *Part I*

By John Carter

There had not been a plan to permanently occupy Centreville, Virginia, nor to build an actual fort there. Confederate strategy, however, dictated that the heights of Centreville would be used as a springboard for an attack on Washington D. C., or as a defensive position, should that attack fail, and the Federals counter-attack. With the strategic situation in flux, and with shortages in supplies, armament, and troops, General Joseph E. Johnston and the Confederate army would become increasingly pinned down at Centreville that fall waiting for conditions to improve. Johnston, however, did not want to be in Centreville- he wanted to be in Washington, D.C., or in a more secure defensive position south of the Rappahannock River. Thus a permanent, masonry fort, like Fort Washington on the Potomac River, would not be needed.



Dauid Bullobk Harris

What would be assembled on the heights of Centreville would be a temporary fortification, as dictated by Dennis Hart Mahan's book of field fortifications. Mahan, a military engineering instructor at West Point had written A Treatise on Field Fortifications in 1860. It was the most widely referenced text on the siting and construction of earthworks. Unfortunately, by the start of the Civil war, recent improvements in rifles and artillery had rendered obsolete many of the calculations and assumptions that had been made for the development of field fortifications. Adjustments would have to be made on the fly. The temporary fortifications, also called field fortifications, were both defensive and offensive structures. The engineering officer would construct it using readily available or perishable materials for the purpose of strengthening positions of temporary strategic or tactical importance, or to conduct attacks by covered approaches against permanent or temporary fortifications.

Military science and common sense come together in laying out a fortification. The engineering officer laying out the fortifications predicts the most likely line of advance that the enemy might select, and the fortifications are built in response to that. He uses angles of defense, obstacles and clear lines of fire to ensure success of effectively deterring the attack. Mahan's principles included specific lines and angles of defenses, and the geometric shapes to be used, in developing the various parts of the fortifications: lunettes, redoubts, principal forts, bastions, rifle pits, embrasures, and salients. All of the parts were interconnected, and were laid out to support each other. The salient fort, or position, is the fortification developed at the site closest to the expected approach of the enemy to immediately take him under fire. To the rear of the fortifications, and supporting all of the positions around it, is the principal fort. It is also the final fall-back position should the enemy attack carry the positions out front, and it also covered the road or path to be used for the defenders to use in retreat.

The first thing the engineer does is to walk and survey the grounds, observing the geological structures, and determining how fortifications can be woven into the irregularities of the location. Every site contains streams, hills, valleys, roads, houses, and landscape that rises and falls, making it impossible to use merely an existing standard template. The engineer then draws a very detailed topographic map of the grounds, showing all of

Fortifications continued ...

the physical features mentioned above. He also determines where the artillery should be placed, and then traces the lines of fire from the crest of the hills toward the anticipated approaches of the enemy. The final step in the planning, is to draw a trace template that fits over the first map, using polygons and other geometric features to lay out the gun emplacements and rifle pits. The engineer computes the length and height of each position, taking into account the number of men who will be occupying the space.

The construction of the fortifications would then commence. At the beginning of the war, there were few Confederate engineers, and no engineering corps. There was also a shortage in tools for digging trenches and building revetments, including shovels and saws. Professional armies included commands that performed a variety of engineering duties such as breaching fortifications, demolition, bridge-building, mining fortifications, and preparing field defenses. They also worked on road construction and repair. Soldiers who worked on fortifications were generally referred to as “sappers.” Those who worked on roadways were called “pioneers.” The average Confederate soldier in the regiments would be used in both those positions.

At Centreville, the design and construction of the fortifications were left in the hands of David Bullock Harris, one of General P. G. T. Beauregard’s engineers. Harris was an 1833 West Point graduate, where he graduated 7th in a class of 48. Even more striking was the fact that he enrolled at West Point when he was just fourteen years old. Being small and frail, some of his fellow classmates doubted he would survive the first year. Two of those were future Confederate officers who would later play roles in Centreville, Philip St. George Cocke and Lucius Bellinger Northrop (the Confederate Quartermaster General), who were one and two years, respectively, ahead of Harris at West Point. Cocke quickly became a friend of Harris.

Harris adjusted well to life at West Point, and his letters home and to friends indicated that he had a lot of self-confidence in both his academic and military endeavors. He planned on having a military career, despite his father’s wishes for him to use West Point for his education, and then resign to have a career in engineering. Throughout David’s days at West Point, his father, Frederick Harris, had made frequent contacts with pos-

sible employers for his son. He had especially encouraged him to seek a position with the James River & Kanawha Canal Company in Richmond, This is the company that had built the canal that ran through Richmond (portions of it can be seen today along Canal Walk) and had been completed through Lynchburg to Buchanan, Virginia, to the west of the Blue Ridge. The long-range plan had been to complete the canal across the Allegheny Mountains and connect with the Ohio River.

None of his father’s plans had worked out, and after graduation, David had gone on to his first assignments as an officer. Harris had been appointed a brevet second lieutenant, First United States Artillery on July 1, 1833, and served in the war against the Creek Indian nation, until March 6, 1834, when he was promoted to second lieutenant in the First Artillery. On March 18, 1834, he was assigned to duty as Assistant Professor of Engineering at West Point, serving as such until his resignation on August 31, 1835, at the request of his father, Frederick Harris, and against his own inclinations. David’s resignation was much to the regret of General Winfield Scott, who wrote to his father that Harris was the most promising young officer in the army. He received high praise as well from Dennis Hart Mahan, who had made him one of his assistants at West Point. [For this period of his life, see: The Education of Colonel David Bullock Harris, C. S. A. West Point Letters 1829-35, Charles W. Turner, McClure Printing Company, Inc., Verona, 1984]

Finally fulfilling his father’s dream, Harris served as an assistant engineer in the construction of the James River and Kanawha Canal from 1835-1837, and served later in the railroad surveys in the mountains of Southwest Virginia. In 1835 he also joined a relative in a large tobacco operation at Cloverport, Kentucky, meeting with much success financially. Harris became a tobacco exporter, along with his brother-in-law, Alexander Buchanan Barret, and a partner, Nathaniel W. Harris. The business was headquartered in Richmond, VA, but was expanded to Henderson and Cloverpoint KY. At Henderson, the tobacco was prepared for the European market. They grew their own tobacco, but also bought up crops from as far away as Missouri. Harris studied the tobacco market in London and Liverpool, and Gillian’s & Company of London handled their English customers. Some of the tobacco was sent to the Bowe & Crenshaw Company of New Orleans. [Source: Education of David Bullock Harris]

Fortifications continued ...

Harris went to England to study the tobacco market, and while he was there, he met his future wife in London. Harris married Eliza L. Knight, in 1849, and shortly after his return, he dissolved the partnership with Barret and acquired a plantation named "Woodville," near Hadensville in Goochland County Virginia. He was primarily engaged in farming at Woodville, from 1845 to 1861, but he continued his tobacco operations at Frederick's Hall and in Petersburg. Harris was a slave owner, and the 1860 Census shows that David B. Harris of Goochland, Virginia owned 59 slaves.

Politically, he was a Whig, and he voted the Bell-Everett ticket for president in 1860 (the Constitutional Union Party). Harris had volunteered for service in the Mexican War, but his application was misplaced, and he was never called up. He, like many other Virginians, was not a secessionist, and he had hoped that the impending strife might be averted. The call, however, of President Lincoln for troops in 1861 changed all of that, and he tendered his services to the Confederacy. A command was offered to him, which, from his long abandonment of military life, he felt a hesitancy to accept. When Virginia seceded, he joined the Virginia Provisional Army as a captain of engineers On May 2, 1861 under his old friend, Philip St. George Cocke.

Later, he had asked for, and was given, the rank of major. When General Robert E. Lee heard about Harris' request, he chided him for applying for such a modest rank. Harris was assigned to General P. G. T. Beauregard's staff at Manassas, but while Beauregard worked on the defenses at Manassas, Harris was temporarily assigned to the staff of Brigadier General Phillip St. George Cocke. Perhaps his old friend had requested him as Cocke himself had been assigned to hold and fortify the position on the heights at Centreville. Previously, he had been the first commander assigned to the defenses of Northern Virginia, before being superseded by Brigadier General Milledge Bonham and then Beauregard. Cocke was responsible for developing the first redoubts at Centreville, including what probably became Artillery Hill.

Harris sketched the first topographic map of the heights at Centreville in early July of 1861. His map is the most accurate map of Centreville that was produced up to the U.S. Geologic Survey Topographical

Map of 1912. See Harris' map and read about the building of the Centreville fortifications in Part II of John's article in the next issue of the Millrace in March!



The Leedstown Resolves

Summoned by Thomas Ludwell Lee to Bray's church in the port town of Leedstown in February 1766, 115 prominent landowners and merchants from throughout Virginia banded together in opposition to the Stamp Act. They had been provoked by Archibald Ritchie, a merchant of Hobbs Hole (Tappahanock), who announced that he intended to use taxed papers and observe the hated Act.

The Resolves, written by Richard Henry Lee, asserted that the Stamp Act violated colonists' rights as Englishmen and declared their determination to act collectively to enforce a boycott. It placed Virginians at the forefront of what would become the American Revolution.

Fun fact, though the Leedstown Resolves are also called the Westmoreland Resolves, Leedstown was part of King George County in 1766.

— Editor

Roused by danger and alarmed at attempts, foreign and domestic, to reduce the people of this country to a state of abject and detestable slavery by destroying that free and happy condition of government under which they have hitherto lived

As the Stamp Act does absolutely direct the property of the people to be taken from them without their consent expressed by their representatives and as in many cases it deprives the British American Subject of his right to trial by jury; we do determine, at every hazard, and paying no regard to danger or to death, we will exert every faculty, to prevent the execution of the said Stamp Act in any instance whatsoever within this Colony. And every abandoned wretch, who shall be so lost to virtue and public good, as wickedly to contribute to the introduction or fixture of the Stamp Act in this Colony, by using stamp [sic] paper, or by any other means, we will, with the utmost expedition, convince all such profligates that immediate danger and disgrace shall attend their prostitute purposes.



Do you have a friend who might like to join the society? Pass on our newsletter and bring potential members to meetings. Members receive The Millrace four times a year.

If you have an historical article that might be of interest to our members, the deadlines for submissions are the 1st of February, May, August and November. Send articles to: The Historic Centreville Society, P.O. Box 1512, Centreville, VA 20122 or by e-mail to MillraceHCS@gmail.com

DIRECTORS

Paul Hancq, Ted McCord, Claudette Ward,
Linda Mellott, Joan Orvis, Debbie Robison,
Cheryl Repetti, Michael Frey

Picture at right depicts Queen Victoria, Prince Albert, and children gathering around a Christmas tree in 1848. Published in The London Illustrated News, it helped to popularize celebrating Christmas with a decorated tree.

The Millrace



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