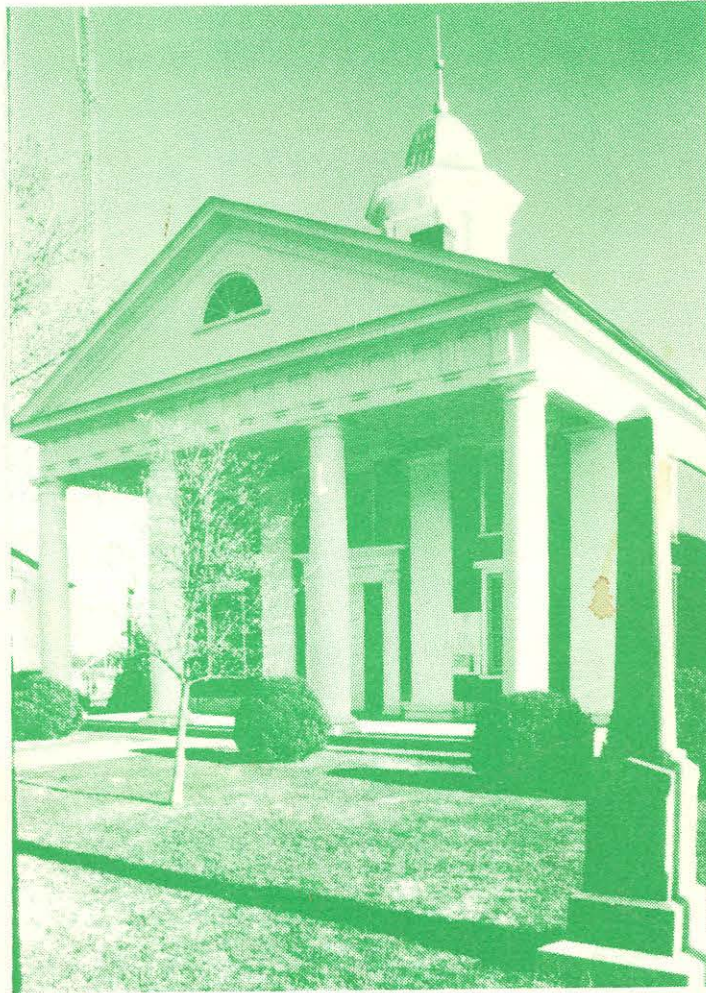

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Community of Family



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COMMUNITY OF FAMILY ✓
by Emily McMullen Williams

I wish to acknowledge my grandmother, Sarah Cornelia McMullen; my uncle, Dulaney Kendall McMullen and my father, Newcombe Pemberton McMullen for instilling in me a love of family at an early age. Appreciation goes to my husband, Edward K. Williams, for computer work. Readers' comments that may enhance the telling of this story are appreciated.

* * * * *

Saddleback Mountain provided a pristine backdrop for the small, closeknit community of family that developed on South River. Rolling hills along the Blue Ridge Mountain Range unfolded with new and spectacular vistas from each approach to the community. This nestled community became the hamlet of McMullen, Virginia.

Henry Kendall was one of the first pioneers of the early 1700s to acquire land at the base of Saddleback Mountain and settle this part of what was at that time Orange County¹. He may have immigrated from Kendal, at the east edge of the English Lake District, where there is also a Saddleback Mountain.

John McMullen, the immigrant progenitor, settled on the eastern slopes of the Blue Ridge Mountains, in Swift Run Gap. Here Governor Spotswood and his "Knights of the Golden Horseshoe" had crossed the mountains in 1716. Now settlers were occupying land all along the mountain ridges and hollows. John's tract of land, a grant or patent, was supplemented by an additional 310 acres of land purchased in 1790. His father-in-law, James Beasley, had settled here in 1748, and had acquired extensive real estate holdings along Swift Run². This proved to be a safe place for John and his new wife, Theodosia, and five children - James; Mary; Patrick; John, Jr. and Catherine.

After his military service in the Revolution, John returned to Swift Run Gap to resume tobacco farming and subsequently married Elizabeth Stowers and had six children in Virginia, before selling his Swift Run property in 1797. Three of the children by his first wife, Theodosia, accompanied John and Elizabeth, his second wife, and their six children to Hart County, Georgia³. There John used his farming skills to grow cotton⁴, added four more children to the second marriage, and remained until his death in 1817.⁵

James, Sr., and his sister Mary remained in Virginia. Edith Kendall, granddaughter of Henry Kendall,⁶ attracted James McMullen, Sr. from Swift Run Gap and their courtship led to marriage. The most direct "courtship" trail led across Turkey Ridge to the Kendall property. This could be reached quickly since these two mountain families were only three or four miles

apart depending on the curves and changes in the mountain trails.

This rough approach certainly was faster than traveling eastward along the Spotswood Trail to the budding Town of Stanardsville and then working one's way up the South River Trail first on one side of the river and then the other.⁷ This became necessary because of the washing away of the trail by heavy rains. When summer storms hit the mountain slopes behind the hamlet, large amounts of water roared over the river banks, relocating the river bed and destroying the river trails completely.

Born in 1770, over two decades prior to the founding of the Town of Stanardsville, and reared on the Swift Run near Lydia, James McMullen, Sr. knew well the hard times associated with the land. As remote as it was, it provided comfort to the early settlers. It was good to have his father, back from the Revolutionary War, where he served with George Washington at Valley Forge⁸

James, Sr. had heard his dad's story of making sails for ships in Dublin, Ireland.⁹ Many times he listened to the stories of his dad's desire for sailing to the New World. The excitement of seamen returning to Dublin was contagious indeed. The accessibility of a land opened to freedom from Ireland's religious and economic struggles finally convinced James' father, John, at twenty years of age, in 1760, to follow his dreams, take his chances and leave his parents and five brothers in Dublin and brave the long hard voyage to America. No other family members joined him on this once-in-a-lifetime venture.

Now that James McMullen, Sr. was a son-in-law of the Kendall family, he soon became a landowner of part of the Kendall tract. He fathered six sons and one daughter - John, b. 1797; James, Jr., b. 1800; William, b. 1803; Neal, b. 1804; Henry Kendall, b. 1806; Jeremiah (Reverend Jerry), b. 1816 and Elizabeth, b. 1811. Thus, the McMullens of McMullen, Virginia owe their Virginia heritage to James McMullen, Sr., since he remained in Virginia and settled on the remote land at what was to become McMullen, Virginia. This was home. His marriage to Edith Kendall had firmed up his ties to the Virginia mountains.

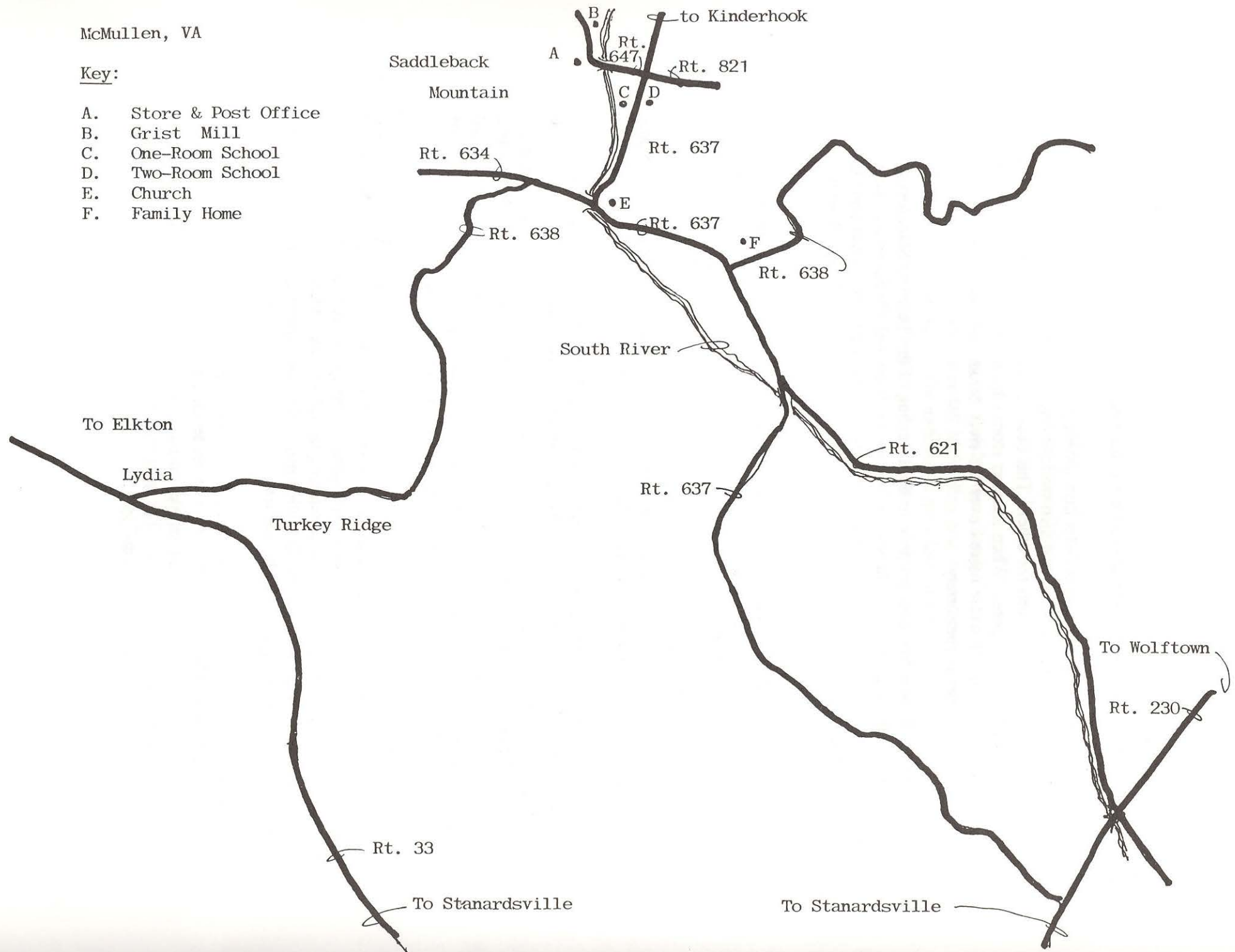
The same year (1796) that James, Sr. married Edith Kendall and settled on his father-in-law's property, his sister Mary married William Lewis Powell, whose family homestead was just east of the Kendalls, and they subsequently bore and reared eleven children at this location.¹⁰ The neighboring Powell children also helped populate McMullen, Virginia and, although they did not carry on the McMullen name, they did indeed help build and bond a community spirit of family and family character.

James, Sr. built a saw mill, grist mill, cooper shop, carding machine and was also a merchant. He owned the first wagon driven to Fredericksburg.¹¹ It took a week to make the trip to carry flour to the boat. Wheat proved to be a good money crop, because it did not destroy the soil as quickly as tobacco. The grist mill, with its millrace fed by South River, provided excellent water power for grinding grain.

McMullen, VA

Key:

- A. Store & Post Office
- B. Grist Mill
- C. One-Room School
- D. Two-Room School
- E. Church
- F. Family Home



Because of the common practice of sons remaining in the home of their parents until the age of twenty-one,¹² this first and only McMullen household in the McMullen hamlet at the time of the 1820 census¹³ was self-sufficient and provided services for neighboring families as well. The 1830 and 1840 census reports three and four McMullen households, respectively.

James, Sr. died in 1842. He lived to see his family well established in the community that bore his name. His widowed wife Edith, now 75 years old at the time of the 1850 census, was part of the household of her only daughter, Elizabeth and her son-in-law, Walter Houseworth, who was the hamlet's wagon maker¹⁴

The 1860 census indicates six McMullen households and lists the post office as McMullan's Mill, although the official post office wasn't established until 1885.¹⁵ The 1866-1875 map also shows McMullan's Mill. At some point, James, Jr. changed the spelling of the last name from "an" to "en". Thus the spelling of the name may be "McMullen" or "McMullan", depending on the time frame and the family line referenced. The name subsequently given to the Post Office was "McMullen".

During the 60 years from 1820-1880 there were fourteen McMullen households in the county (Orange, later Greene)- eleven in or near the hamlet with a peak of ten families in six households at the time of the 1870 census. (see chart)

* * * * *

Jeremiah Newcombe (b. Dec. 7, 1832) was only five years old when the new county of Greene was established in 1838, but he had memories of the long business trips to Orange Courthouse and special Orange County gatherings that may have included James Madison, the aging former President of the United States, before his death in 1836. Jeremiah Newcombe liked to think of his first three and a half years of life being within the life span of James Madison, in the same county of his birth.

Business trips to Stanardsville, the new county seat, replaced many trips to Orange. However, wagons taking flour to Fredericksburg continued to bring products back, thus stocking additional items for resale by Jeremiah's older cousin, James William McMullen, the peddler.¹⁶

Jeremiah Newcombe remembered the excitement around Uncle Neal's grist mill when the peddler's wagon came into the hamlet.

People along the trails from Lydia and Kinderhook came to the McMullen mill if it was closer than other grist mills.¹⁷ They brought their wheat and corn to be ground, purchased products from the peddler and socialized with neighbors. Meanwhile, children playing ball nearby often had to jump quickly into the millrace to retrieve the ball.¹⁸ The mill served as a communication center and exchange place for products until the building of the McMullen store by Henry Moyer,¹⁹ son of John Moyer, who married Jeremiah's older sister, Mary Edith. Like the Houseworths and Powells in the two previous generations, the Moyer cousins contributed to the growth and success of the hamlet.

While Jeremiah Newcombe's grandfather had a rather diverse business operation, including farming, milling and merchandising very close together in the very heart of the McMullen community, the businesses of the next generation not only became more specialized, but expanded further away from the hub of the community. Jeremiah Newcombe as a teenager and young adult began to see this expansion of the McMullen community and to dream of his opportunities in adulthood.

Jeremiah's father, James, Jr. and Uncle John had large productive farms.²⁰ Two uncles, William and Henry Kendall, had left for Indiana earlier - William, as a minister and Henry Kendall as a farmer. A letter from Uncle Henry Kendall McMullen dated November 1858 to his brothers, James and Neal, (administrators or executors of their father's estate) told about his family living in a sod house and his deceased brother William's son and family living in a tent. Offsetting these poor temporary living conditions, he wrote of high yields of corn and wheat crops and offered the opportunity for a young man desiring to move west and farm with him. The letter also included a request for money most likely due them from his father's estate.²¹

Jeremiah Newcombe's uncle, Reverend Jerry, was an active participant in the founding of South River Methodist Church in 1846.²² He joined the Virginia Methodist Conference and helped in the organization of a new church in Albemarle Circuit prior to moving his family to North Carolina.²³

The construction of South River Methodist Church took place when Jeremiah Newcombe was an early teenager. He was proud that it was even older than the Methodist Church in Stanardsville, thus revealing the age of the McMullen hamlet relative to the new county seat. Worshipping in the large frame building with a gallery in the back for the colored brethren was certainly different from worshipping outside in the summer months and in homes during the winter months. All day services with lunch on the grounds and lawn parties including mutton sandwiches made church life memorable. This first church served the community until the end of the century. By this time it was heavily damaged by flood waters.²⁴ It had served the community well not only as a church, but also as a school where Uncle Reverend Jerry had taught for a short time while organizing the church.²⁵

Jeremiah Newcombe also had vivid memories of early schooling. His grandfather, James, Sr., had hired a Mr. Clark to tutor Jeremiah Newcombe's father and uncles.²⁶ This was perhaps the first tutor in the McMullen community. His grandfather was considered a man in the learned professions,²⁷ which was indeed significant, since early schooling in Swift Run Gap during the Revolution was most likely rare. A generation later, home schooling in the McMullen community perhaps included neighborhood children if space was available and the hired tutor agreed.

Old field schools replaced home schooling as more families became interested in the education of their children. "Old" fields no longer suitable for crops were ideal because play areas were considered important. The rocky land by the river not far from the gristmill provided the site for the last one-room school house at McMullen on South River.⁸ Hiram McMullen

taught here for many years.²⁹

Jeremiah Newcombe went from home and one-room schooling to the University of Virginia,³⁰ where he studied for several years before discontinuing his formal education to join the Confederate Army³¹ He served as a captain, as did two of his cousins, Lynn Banks and Francis Marion. Also serving were three of Jeremiah Newcombe's brothers: Benjamin Alexander, Thomas Walker and William Henry and five cousins: James William, Edwin Broadus, Hiram Andrew, Albert Gallatin and William Walker³²

A total of eleven McMullens enlisted from the McMullen community. Three, Albert Gallatin, William Walker and Thomas Walker lost their lives, the latter killed in the Battle of Cedar Mountain³³ and leaving a wife and two young daughters. William Walker died of typhoid fever³⁴ and Albert Gallatin died in a train wreck in Orange enroute home on furlough.³⁵

Of the ones that survived, "...All returned to run-down homes, but in their hearts they brought General Lee's message - "Go home and make the best of it." Following the war there came into the county men who followed the Confederate battleflag..... These men put their shoulders to the wheel and helped rebuild the county and helped rebuild the love for the Union flag."³⁶

Soon after the war, Jeremiah Newcombe married Sarah Jane Early Dulaney and brought her to live at the brick homeplace, that his father, James, Jr., had built in 1854 and where his parents had now lived for eleven years.³⁷ Born to Jeremiah Newcombe and his new bride at the brick homeplace were eight children, five of whom lived to adulthood. They were: William Benjamin, Jubal Early, John Newcombe, Sarah Cornelia and Fannie Dulaney.

Jeremiah Newcombe's mother died in 1872, followed by his father's death in 1873. Now Jeremiah Newcombe headed the household at the McMullen homeplace. The 1870's brought changes,³⁸ not only to Jeremiah Newcombe and his growing family, but to Greene County as well. By 1874, a stage line was available Monday, Wednesday and Friday from Stanardsville to Gordonsville. This was a big event in the development of transportation linking Greene County to the outside world³⁹ Road repairs between McMullen and Stanardsville became even more important in order for people to get to the stage coach.

Jeremiah Newcombe taught school for 15 to 16 years before becoming Superintendent of Schools for Greene County February 1, 1882.⁴⁰ The 1883 State Report indicates a total of 27 schools and 27 teachers in Greene County during the five to six month school term.⁴¹ Visiting each of the schools one or more times during the school year was done on horseback. Jeremiah Newcombe submitted timely and accurate reports to the state and attended the annual conference in Richmond where meetings were held in the Hall of the House of Delegates of the State Capital.⁴² Most likely Jeremiah Newcombe was taken by horse and buggy to meet the train at Orange, since the train was not available at Somerset until 1890.⁴³ His cousin, Francis Marion, who served in the legislature 1871-1879 would have experienced similar trips to Richmond.

Jeremiah Newcombe's daughter, Sarah Cornelia, told of visits to the Gordonsville cousins by stage coach and to Francis Marion's home in Madison by horse and buggy. Francis Marion as Judge in Madison and Jeremiah Newcombe as Superintendent of Schools in Greene enjoyed business conversation on these visits, as well as old war stories of their days as captains.

Sarah Cornelia's marriage to her first cousin, John Neal, son of William Henry, took place at the brick homeplace January 11, 1899. To this union were born twelve children. That is a new era, a new century and another story!

* * * * *

What came of the dreams of John McMullan, the young tailor from Dublin? He prolifically added to the population of the young nation, and his descendants helped develop the agricultural life of their part of Greene County. It has been written of John McMullan:

"...He raised fifteen children; ten sons and five daughters, all of whom married and lived prosperously to old age and died leaving numerous descendants, now scattered in most of the states of the Union, and today numbering more than five thousand persons.... John McMullan was a man of noble traits which were a rich inheritance for his children: strong features, positive convictions, keen intellectual insight, lofty moral ideals and tireless energy are natural endowments which characterize the family...."⁴⁴

NOTES

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3. Captain Albert L. McMullan, U.S.N.R., (Ret.), History of McMullan and Allied Families, 1968, p.11.
4. Nellie R. McMullen, Front Royal, VA. Family Records, 1936.
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7. Cecil Brill and Lillian J. Brill, Conversations July 31, 1994.
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9. Captain Albert L. McMullan, p. 9.
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12. John Neal Parrott, Fairfax, VA, Conversation, July 1988.
13. U. S. Census Report, Call No. 19, Dwelling No. 590. 1820.
14. U.S. Census Report, Dwelling No. 106, August 13, 1850. p.7.
15. Frances Claiborne Johnston, Jr., The Williams/Sims Families of Greene/Orange Counties, Virginia & Allied Families (Riddle, Powell, McMullan, Walker, Maupin, Banks, Miller and Beadles), p. 9 & 10.

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17. Lucuta Powell Parrott, Conversation, Aug. 1994.
18. Mary Melone Smith, mother of Greene Co. Treasurer, Mary Ellen Smith Garth, tour in July 1990 of hamlet including mill site owned by her grandfather, Neal McMullen in whose house she was born and reared.
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26. Nellie R. McMullen.
27. U. S. Census Report. Greene County, VA, 1840. Call No. 37, p. 431.
28. Newcombe P. McMullen, Tour of buildings and grounds with daughter and five grandchildren, July 1977. "Appearance of school is altered by the addition of two later wings for hay storage."
29. Floyd Jarrell, Longmont, CO, letter to Mrs. Neal McMullen, Front Royal, VA., March 6, 1955.
30. David F. Riggs, 7th Virginia Infantry, The Virginia Regimental Histories Series, 2nd Edition, 1982, p. 84.
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33. Davenport, p. 4.
34. Riggs, p.84.
35. Davenport, p. 4.
36. Miss Ewell's Historical Sketch of Greene County, "Out of the Past", Greene County Record, Stanardsville, VA, Dec. 17, 1964. Read before the District U.D.C. Convention, April 14, 1932.
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40. R. F. Walker, "Thirteenth Annual Report of the Superintendant of Public Instruction." Virginia School Report, Richmond, 1883., p. 7.
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CENSUS DATA

McMullen Heads of
Households with number
of family members
each census year: 1820** 1830** 1840 1850 1860 1870 1880

James, Sr.	4	6	9				
John		7	11	14*	6	5*	
James, Jr.		5	9	6	7	8*	
Rev. Jerry			7*	8	Moved to N.C.		
Neal				8	6	6*	
James William				3	8	died in CO	
Lynn Banks					6		
Benjamin A.					4	5	
Hiram Andrew					2	5	5
William Henry						8*	9
Edwin Broadus					3		10
Francis Marion					2		4
John Walker					7		
Jeremiah Newcombe							8
Total McMullen Households in Greene County	1	3	4	5	10	6	5
Total McMullen People in Greene County	4	18	36	39	51	37	36
Total McMullen Households in or near hamlet	1	3	4	4	5	6	4
Total McMullen People in or near hamlet	4	18	36	36	29	37	32

= In Greene County, but not close to McMullen hamlet

* = Two family household

** = Orange County Census

Ancestor Chart
McMullens of McMullen, Virginia
Heads of Households at some time during 1820-1880

James McMullen, b. 1770, Swift Run Gap
d. McMullen, VA
m. 1796, Edith Kendall, b. 1774, d. 1855

John McMullen,
b. 1797; m. 1818,
Peachy Walker.

—Lynn Banks,
b. 1826

—Edwin Broadus,
b. 1833

—Hiram Andrew,
b. 1835

James McMullen,
b. 1800; m. 1825,
Frances Walker

—Benjamin Alexander,
b. 1829

—Jeremiah Newcombe,
b. 1832

—William Henry,
b. 1834

Neal McMullen,
b. 1804; m. 1831,
Lucretia Walker

Rev. Jeremiah McMullen,
b. 1816; m. 1835,
Frances Shelton