

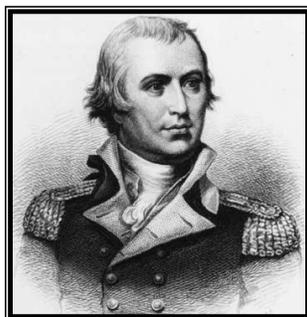
# Greene County Historical Society Newsletter



Vol.17

Spring-Summer 2011

Issue 2



*Nathanael Greene*  
*Major General of the Continental Army*  
*Born 1742--Died 1786*

## 8870 Formula

*Source; Compendium for Historical Resources by Robert A. Brenner as printed in the Bedford Museum and Genealogical Library Newsletter, Winter 2010, Issue 2.*

“Using the 8870 formula to ascertain a birth date can be a tremendous help to the genealogist. If a tombstone or death record shows that a person died at the age of 71 years, 7 months, 9 days, and also shows the death date, May 6, 1889, but no date of birth is listed, in order to obtain the birth date one has only to use the 8870 formula.”

	18890506	Died 1889, May 6
Subtract	<u>710709</u>	71 yrs. 7 mos. 9 days
	18179797	
Subtract	<u>8870</u>	Constant
	18170927	Born 1817 Sept. 27

## Museum hours:

Friday and Saturday 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM and by appointment. During inclement weather please call the Museum at 434 985-1409 to be sure it is open.

***President's message:***

Greetings to all from a very soggy Stanardsville – while not inundated the way that the lower Mississippi is, we have been having some very high waters and occasional road closures. On the positive side, our spring blooms this year have been wonderful, if I thought roses would always look this good, I would plant more of them. It would be interesting to go back through old issues of the Greene County Record to see what people were saying in earlier Mays, when the newspaper took more notice of these things.

Since our last newsletter, we have had some fun social and learning occasions. At the beginning of March, the Louisa Hearth Cooking Guild put on a fabulous cooking class for us, using the enormous stone fireplace in the cafeteria at the Blue Ridge School. It was a perfect location and we learned lots – not just delicious and interesting recipes, but how very hard it was to cook food before the advent of the oven. At the end of a day of churning butter, turning a pork roast on a spit, cooking pies and cornbread in Dutch ovens, we enjoyed a feast.

Our annual dinner at the Rosebrook Inn was the occasion of another feast, attended by 50 members and guests – including a couple from Texas, here to do family research, who were of course related to many of the people in the room, and delighted with our hospitality. The Society's Annual Meeting was as thought-provoking as promised – Frank Walker of Orange gave us much interesting information about early times in Stanardsville and some of its early residents. An added bonus was a presentation about the formation of the Shenandoah National Park. Two William Monroe Middle School students, Samantha Hammer and Yancey Harrison, will be competing in mid-June in the finals of the National History Day 2011 competition at the University of Maryland, and we were treated to a preview. Using a few simple props, Samantha and Yancey portray the debate 75 years ago about the formation of the Shenandoah National Park, from both sides – both residents who were displaced and political figures involved in the decisions. Their portrayal of such characters as residents E.P. Shifflett and his wife, Etta; G. Freeman Pollock (who owned Skyland Resort); Miriam Sizer, the sociologist whose patronizing and negative stereotyping did so much damage; and the Park itself, in the form of a Park Ranger identified by a Ranger hat, is compelling. Winning second place at the State finals was a pretty big deal, and we wish them every success as they compete against schools large and small from across the country.

There was also a short business meeting that afternoon, but before that your Society revealed its latest fund-raiser – we have gone into the mug business. We now offer coffee mugs transfer-printed with a beautifully rendered painting of the Old Jail, donated by member and talented artist Charlene Swartley. The mugs sell for \$12 and would make a lovely addition to your breakfast table. See [www.greenehistory.org](http://www.greenehistory.org) for a photo.

I look forward to seeing many of you at the Independence Day parade in Stanardsville and at the Fair, August 2<sup>nd</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> .

*Jackie Pamenter*

*Newspapers from the Past, Not Just Genealogy Information: by J. Pamenter*

Eugene Powell continues to field many genealogy inquiries coming into our website from across the country, and I echo the thanks of the people he helps. Lots of others visit the museum to research their roots.

Member and volunteer Ron Mosher has been indexing the Greene County obituaries that had been clipped from old newspapers in the 90s, to help make research easier. Earlier papers hold much useful information too. On May 17<sup>th</sup> Ron held our first 'clip and paste' party, complete with pizza (thank you Ron!) to sustain the clippers and pasters. In attendance were Ron, Chelsi Smith, Bill Steo and myself. Although there were only four of us we got lots done!

We are not cutting up the complete set of Greene County Records going back to the 1950s that was given to us by Ben Sims 3<sup>rd</sup> of Alexandria, but the duplicates we have for some years are fair game. On the 17<sup>th</sup> we worked on papers from the late 60s and 70s, which had been given to us by Mrs. Jerri Tata. I make slow progress with obituaries because the whole paper makes such fascinating reading, from editorial to small ads. For example: January 27<sup>th</sup>, 1972: a long article describes the history of the Blakey Store, which closed that month after serving Stanardsville for more than one hundred years. March 30<sup>th</sup> 1972: Page 2 carried an article that starts: "A 1922 Telephone Directory, of the Greene County Mutual Telephone Company, has come to light in Roy W. Powell's Store at Quinque." There were 213 phones, each of which had a number – but the numbers were less important than the end of the listing: "L. 2S. L. (long, two shorts, long)," or "2S. L. 2S. (two shorts, long, two shorts)." You might have had to listen for the phone to ring two longs and three shorts to find out that the call was for you, not your neighbor, on what was called a 'party line.'

August 1<sup>st</sup>, 1974: a display ad for McMullen's Grocery store on Route 230 (open Thursday, Friday and Saturday) advertised 2 pounds of bananas for 25 cents, Jamestown Vacuum Pack Bacon for 89 cents a pound, butter also for 89 cents a pound.

July 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1980: a photograph shows the Courthouse under reconstruction after the disastrous fire of October the previous year. The caption states: "J. S. Mathers, contractor, began work on the roof of the Court House last Wednesday..... A delighted citizenry eagerly awaits the day when the roof is completed and the bell tower, complete with bell, is restored to its original condition before the fire." Is there now a bell in the bell tower?

We will copy these items and add them to the pages in our County archives. Meanwhile, Ron plans to hold more 'clip and paste' parties to uncover more treasures in past newspapers. For a bigger crowd, we can move the venue to the library meeting room. Let us know if you are interested, by leaving a message at the museum (434-985-1958) or email me at [jpamenter@greenehistory.org](mailto:jpamenter@greenehistory.org) and I will pass on your name.

Thank you, Ron for all your hard work.

*Cut and Paste Party*



*Ron Mosher*



*Chelsi Smith*



*Jackie Pamenter*



*Bill Steo*

## ***REWARDS OF MUSEUM MINDING: A LESSON ON FLETCHER, VA***

**By Cheryl Ragland**

Once a month I volunteer as a “Museum Minder” at our wonderful little museum in the old county jailhouse. I do this because I am concerned about preserving treasures of the past and present for our future generations. In addition, I am still learning about the County’s history, and the museum houses many interesting documents and artifacts. As an added bonus, the visitors who come to the museum are usually on some interesting quest for information, and I often learn along with them.

One Saturday last year while I was “on duty”, Sonya Ogura came into the museum looking for information on Fletcher, Virginia. I learned that Sonya was a part-time student at PVCC and was working on a research paper for a history class. She had decided to write about the place where she lives. Residing in a different part of the county, I had never heard of Fletcher, so I was intrigued to learn more. Sonya found some information at the museum, used our genealogy data base and was also assisted by Eugene Powell. I asked her to share the results of her project with the Historical Society, which she has graciously done.

The introduction to Sonya’s paper clearly shows that this was a labor of love for her. She begins her paper with the following: “I have chosen to write about a wonderful place that has a lot of history and to my knowledge has never been written about before. I own some of the land that is Fletcher, VA. I call it home. It is such a beautiful place; Majestic Mountain views, peaceful Running River, dirt roads, tall old oaks, dogwood, poplars and pine trees. It’s peaceful and serene. Years ago there used to be an old store, post office, school house, flour mill and lumber mill. Now there are only remnants of what was once a booming town for the mountain folk in the surrounding area.”

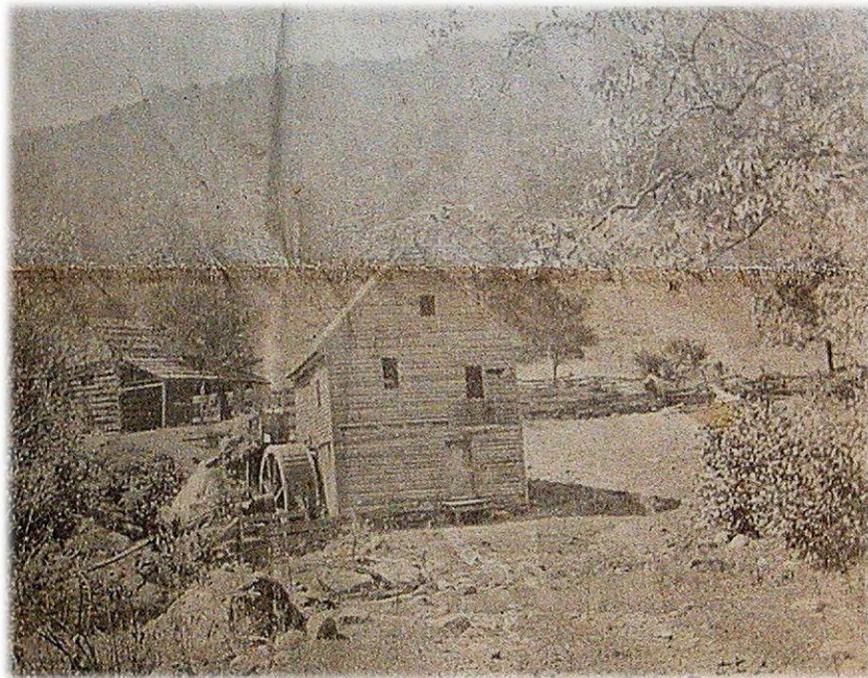
Sonya explains that Fletcher is located on the Conway River (also called Middle River), which forms the boundary between Greene and Madison Counties. It is approximately six miles northwest on Middle River Road. It appears to have been named after John Emile Fletcher (1837 – 1906), who has been described as a “scholarly Christian gentleman” who became schoolteacher, merchant, postmaster and miller. According to Sonya, John is “the one who really got this community going”. He originally came from Fauquier County, having been invited by Abraham Taylor, who wanted him to develop a deposit of copper that was on his property. Sonya notes in her paper that the more western part of the Fletcher area is still called “Copper Ridge”.

In 1880 John Fletcher married Louisa Taylor, daughter of Abraham, granddaughter of Zachariah Taylor. It appears as though John inherited his land through his wife, who was also the granddaughter of James Warren, who received land grants for his services in the War of 1812. Consequently, common names in the Fletcher area are Warren and Taylor. In addition, Zachariah Taylor was married to Susanna Jarrell (1772 – 1850), another popular name in the Fletcher area. Interestingly, on the Madison County side of the river, Fletcher is known as “the old Jarrell Homestead”.

Sonya determined that the last Fletcher who actually lived on the property was Mary Fletcher (1883 – 1966), who was one of John’s four children (Mary, Irma, Wilbur and Grace). Finding Mary’s last will and testament at the Greene County Court House was a significant breakthrough in Sonya’s work. It was learned here that Mary had donated all her old maps and papers to the Virginia Historical Society in Richmond. Sonya discovered that most of these documents were, in fact, John Emile Fletcher’s papers. They yielded much family information and interesting anecdotes that are included in Sonya’s paper. Sonya has even talked with two of John Fletcher’s grandchildren, Anna and Harry, who are children of Wilbur, the only Fletcher child who married. In addition, Sonya has spoken with neighbors who also own part of what was once Fletcher land. A few residents in the mountains (mostly 70 and 80 year-olds) still recall going to the Fletcher store, post office and mill.

We are most grateful to Sonya for sharing her hard work with us. Her paper alludes to the many difficulties in tracking down the data and the frequency of conflicts and discrepancies in information. This does not seem to have discouraged her, and I sense that she will continue to pursue her research. Sonya has resided in the Middle River area since 1967, when her parents bought some of the Fletcher property. She graduated from William Monroe High School in 1980. Since then she has also acquired the property which contains the Fletcher Graveyard and also the Old Fletcher Mill.

Sonya’s paper will be on file at the Museum. Thank you, Sonya. And for all you potential volunteers – there is much interesting work to be done at the Museum.



*Breeden’s Mill at Fletcher*

## *Stanardsville 1868*

This recollection was written by Mr. Tom Gurley of Windsor North Carolina on January 21, 1926 and appeared in the January 26, 1926 edition of the Greene County Record. It describes Stanardsville just after the Civil War, as a busy community. Whatever he might have forgotten, Mr. Gurley did have a good memory of the girls. It is interesting that he was sent several hundred miles to attend school here, and also that Sallie Ham, daughter of Joseph Ham the tailor, married a Windsor man, T. J. Webb. The article was reproduced in the August 9, 1996 Record, where we found it amongst the clippings, it was reprinted again last month, but for those who missed it, here it is again.

### *STANARDSVILLE FIFTY-EIGHT YEARS AGO*

In the fall of 1868 a small lad 13 years old, with his brother, two years his senior, left the little North Carolina town of Windsor to attend school in Stanardsville. It was a round-about trip for the youngsters; but they made it safely and arrived in Stanardsville about the first week in September. They went from Windsor to Plymouth and from there across the Albemarle sound; then up the river Chowan; then up the Blackwater to Franklin, Va.; from there by train to Norfolk; thence up the James river to Richmond; thence by train to Gordonsville. There we boarded a hack driven by a colored man named Moses. It was 20 miles to Stanardsville. It took us about five hours to make the trip, although the hack was pulled by a fine pair of mountain horses and Mr. Mose [sic] was a good driver.

We were put out at Castle inn, a boarding house run by Uncle Billie Shelton and Aunt Lu, his wife. Right here let me say, never in my life have I met two better people. They have long gone to their rest. They were both as good as any one could be on this earth, and I loved them as if they were my own father and mother. They had a family of five boys and two girls.

I did not attend school the first day, but went around the town to see what it was like. And this is as I remember it: At the farther end next to the mountain was a toll-gate. Coming back from the toll-gate through the town again, on the left side was Mrs. Gibbons' with her daughters, Alice and Gracie and son called Buddie, and he surely was a live-wire, up to all kinds of mischief and fun with his pal, Sam Ham. Then next door was Mr. Jacobs with his daughters, Bettie and Lizzie. I think Bettie married Bennie Watson.

Across the street was Mr. Ham's. I do not think I remember all his children, but I think there were four girls and three boys. Miss Sallie married T. J. Webb, from our little town, and is living here now. Mr. Ham was postmaster that year. I will never forget how he delivered the mail. The bags were brought into the office and emptied on a large table. Mr. Ham then took the letters and read out each name aloud, and if the owner was in the office he answered, and it was given over to him; but if no one claimed the letter it was dropped in a box besides the table and remained until called for.

Next to Mr. Ham's was the store of Mr. Mitchell. He kept a general merchandise store.

*STANARDSVILLE FIFTY-EIGHT YEARS AGO, continued;*

Then below him was the old town pump. I wonder if it is there.

Then came the Dunn hotel. Behind the hotel on the other street were the M. E. church and courthouse.

Across the street from the Dunn hotel was a saddle and harness shop kept, I think, by Mr. Davis. Then came the schoolhouse upstairs where we went to school until a new house was built on the road to South River [the Forest Hill Academy]. This house was on the left side above Lynn McMullan's.

Between the saddle shop and Mr. Jacobs' was a bar-room and shoemaker's shop. I think the bar was run by Billie Woodson.

Below the schoolhouse was a doctor's office kept by Dr. Hume and he had a dwelling nearly opposite.

On the next corner to the right was the Saunders hotel. In it was a small store and tin shop. Mr. Saunders had one daughter, Annie, and two boys, Jim and Mareo.

From there the street ran down the hill to Hungary run. There was a nice lawn and dwelling just before you got to the bridge, but I have forgotten the name of the family. There were several girls there, and the lawn was a fine place for slaying (sic) when it snowed. Next over the run came Mr. Mitchell's. I remember two of his children, Bettie and Bennie.

Then came the Dunn house. I can see Mr. Dunn come out of his house now, a tall man with beaver hat on, and make his way up town.

Across from Mr. Mitchell's was the Sorrell home. Here were Billie Sorrell, Mrs. Sorrell and Maggie. After that came our boarding house. A little ways further up the road was Lynn McMullan's place. I do not remember any of his children, except Leola.

Across South river was the magnificent home of Mr. Page with his daughter, Cora, and three sons. He also had an overshot mill on the river. His home stood high up on a hill, and commanded a good view of the surrounding country.

Mr. Shelton's boys were Meredith, Dump, Asbury, Jim and Monroe. The girls were Mattie and Luwillie.

I have made this longer than I intended.

The happiest days of my childhood were spent in your little town.

Wonder how many there are living there now who remember - Tom Gurley.  
Windsor, N. C., Jan. 21, 1926

## *The Circle of Fate*

We credit Mrs. Jerri Tata with the gift of newspapers elsewhere in this issue, and credit is again due for donating to us a curious little notebook, called *The Circle of Fate*. This little book, only measuring 5 inches by 3 inches, contains sayings, signs, Napoleon's Oraculum, and many other curiosities. It was published by Fisher and Dennison, of New York and Baltimore, probably in the late 1800s – an ad in the back for "The National Text Book" says it includes the Emancipation Proclamation ("bound in Illuminated Paper Covers, Price 25 cents: sent by mail, postpaid, on receipt of price").

Other volumes for sale included "*The Little Flirt*," containing the secrets of handkerchief, glove, fan, and parasol flirtations. "*The Little Flirt*" promised the correct interpretation of all signals, and was deemed superior to the deaf and dumb Alphabet, as the notice of bystanders would not be attracted. In fact, using this slim volume, the most delicate hints could be given without danger of misunderstanding.... Or so the ad said.

Jerri's volume contains much useful advice, including the following:

TO KNOW WHETHER A WOMAN SHALL HAVE THE MAN SHE WISHES – get two lemon peels and wear them all day, one in each pocket, and at night rub the four posts of the bedstead with them; if she is to succeed, the person will appear in her sleep, and present her with a couple of lemons, if not, there is no hope.

PHYSIOGNOMY, or the art of telling the Disposition etc. of a Person by the Lines and Forms of the Face, Hair, Eyes, etc. This is a whole chapter, including one on "The Face in General" – "the face that is round, plump, and ruddy, shows the person to be of an agreeable temper, well deserving of friendship, faithful in love; in a man it denotes that he will sometimes be led astray." It goes into detail about eye color: "Blue eyes are mostly to be depended upon for fidelity, though there is never a rule without an exception, for many blue eyed people are capable of bad deeds; but you may draw conclusions from the whole of the face."

The advice seems geared to young women, on the whole. Take for example, "How to Write Love Letters secretly, that they cannot be discovered." *Take a sheet of white paper and double it in the middle, and cut holes through both the half sheets; let the holes be cut like a pane of glass, or other forms that you fancy; then with a pin, prick two little holes at each end, and cut your paper in two halves, give one half to you friend to whom you intend to write, lay your cut paper upon a half sheet of writing paper, and stick two pins through these holes that you did cut, write your mind to your friend; when you have done, take of your paper holes again, and then write some other idle words both before and after your lines, but if they were written to make some little sense, it would carry the less suspicion, then seal it up and send it. When your friend hath received it, he must lay his paper on the same, putting pins into the pin holes, and then he can read nothing but your mind that you write, for all the rest of the lines are covered.*

Thank you Jerri for giving us this volume so that we may share it with others.

***New members Winter/Spring 2011***

Tom and Patti Phelps, Stanardsville VA  
Sonya Ogura, Stanardsville VA  
Constance Dudley, Harrisonburg VA  
Alisa and Dale Lam, Stanardsville VA  
Kerry Snow, College Park MD  
Carrie Clark, Washington DC  
Kerry Snow, College Park MD  
Bill Holman, Earlysville VA  
Doug Graves, Graves Mill VA  
Carroll J. Good, Charlottesville VA  
Ed Fuller, Stanardsville VA  
David Vanderveer, Stanardsville VA

***Financial Donations***

Cheryl Haney Deane, Madison, VA  
Wendy Mathias, Chesapeake VA  
Edwin Deane, Stanardsville VA  
Tom and Dorothy Lawson, Stanardsville VA  
Martha LeClere, Stanardsville VA  
Marianne Shepard, Ruckersville VA  
John Peterson, Greensboro NC  
Tom and Louise Hayes, Stanardsville VA  
Ron Sparacino, Stanardsville VA  
Ben Sims 3rd, Arlington, VA  
Mia & Keith Gardiner, Falls Church VA  
Margaret Ramsey, St. George VA  
Joyce Morris, Stanardsville VA

***Artifact Donations February to May 2011***

Game hunting license issued to World War 2 soldier serving in Europe, ceramic fragments from Middle River, James Eddins, Stanardsville  
1935 Virginia hunting license, some hand wrought nails, and 1930s tokens used in barter transactions in the Stevens Store in Quinque, David Lawson, Troy VA  
Crazy quilt top with foundation papers, Hunter Birckhead, Stanardsville  
Worm from moonshine still, Henry Shelton, Charlottesville VA  
Wooden lock and unidentified leather working tool, Bobby Rhodes, Stanardsville  
*The Circle of Fate*, published in the late 1800s, containing much good advice for young ladies, and a postcard view of the Rotunda at Uva, postmarked 1924, Jerri Tata, Stanardsville  
CD of Deane family photographs, from Guy Estes, Santa Fe, NM  
Copy of letter from Robert E. Lee, Jenelle McMullen, Stanardsville  
Two wooden implements, use unknown, Lillian Baird, Stanardsville  
Bill Henry, four books and a reproduction of the mid-1800 map of Albemarle  
Eddins Family genealogy, Dick Early, Stanardsville  
Mid-20<sup>th</sup> century meat grinder, 1960s match books from Ruckersville Motel, Jackie Pamerter, Stanardsville  
Campbell Genealogy, and fund-raiser cookbook, Ann Reel, Stanardsville  
Horse Collar and Hames Ray Sullivan Sr., Stanardsville, VA

The Greene County Historical Society

P.O. Box 185  
Stanardsville, VA 22973



**Membership Application Form** (Rev. 4/19/09)  
Telephone: 434 985-1409 or < [www.greenehistory.org](http://www.greenehistory.org)>

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip code \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Day \_\_\_\_\_ Evening \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Membership Status: \_\_\_New \_\_\_Renewal \_\_\_

**Type of yearly membership (January 1 through December 31)** *Payment deadline Feb 1<sup>st</sup> of each year*  
New dues rate effective 1/1/10

Individual \$15 \_\_\_\_\_ Family \$20 \_\_\_\_\_ Institution \$35 \_\_\_\_\_

Individual lifetime membership \$300 \_\_\_\_\_

Please, complete this form and mail to the above address, with a check for the type of membership desired, made payable to the **Greene County Historical Society**. Since you have an interest in history, we encourage you to support the Greene County Historical Society by becoming a member, and participating as you desire. Joining will ensure that you are invited to all of our events, and in addition you will receive our Newsletter, and a Magazine featuring local and family histories, which is published as material is acquired.

As a member of the GCHS, I am interested in the following. Check all that apply:

Museum Minder\* \_\_\_\_\_, Genealogy \_\_\_\_\_, Family Cemeteries \_\_\_\_\_, Events \_\_\_\_\_, Historical Buildings and Structures \_\_\_\_\_, Officer or Board member \_\_\_\_\_, Submit Articles for the Newsletter or Magazine \_\_\_\_\_, Other \_\_\_\_\_

*\* Museum Minding requires a commitment of only 2½ hours a month on a Friday or Saturday, either 10-12:30 or 12:30-3:00. Training is given, schedules are flexible, you meet interesting people, and we thank you for helping us to keep the doors open!*

The Greene County Historical Society

P.O. Box 185  
Stanardsville, VA 22973



ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED