

June 7-July 4, 2013 • ONE COPY FREE

Scottsville

Your News Source For Scottsville On The James

Monthly

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Revitalized Town

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Scottsville MONTHLY

Your News Source For Scottsville On The James

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The Cover

After a decade of Improvements the Scottsville Streetscape project is finally complete. Photo by Ronald Smith

Cover designed by Marilyn Ellinger

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MLS 509433 \$249,100

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NEW PRICE
MLS 507708 \$134,999

This lovely 2BR, 1BA ranch with garage and basement is just minutes away from Scottsville and the James River. Many upgrades, large living room with gas log fireplace, and updated kitchen. Basement could easily be finished with large rec room, extra bedroom, and bath for extra room. Owner is very anxious to sell. Prior tax assessment was \$198,800. Call Larry.



MLS 507618 \$249,000

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Larry Barnett
434-960-6038
BROKER



MLS 509818 \$139,000

Location is perfect on this 2BR, 1BA w/full unfinished walkout basement. New Paint, new carpet, new stove and refrigerator and so much more. Land across the street from house is in conservation easement and will never be built on. House is being sold "AS IS". Priced to sell quickly. Heavily wooded 2+ acre lot. Call Larry



MLS 509816 \$79,000

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MLS 509546 \$369,000

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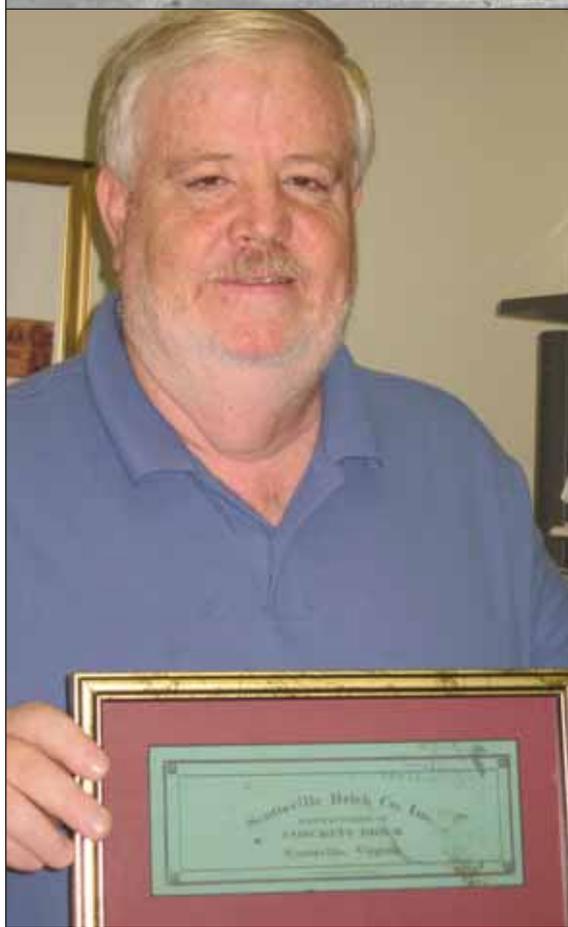
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Scottsville bricks: the puzzle remains

By Ruth Klippstein
Correspondent



George Godwin, grandson of Brick Co. founder, with blotter advertising the bricks.
All Photos by Ruth Klippstein.

Victory Hall Theatre bricks are made by the Scottsville Brick Company.

Every day in Scottsville we can pass by structures made of Scottsville Brick Company bricks. Often called sand bricks, with a yellowish-grey color, they are made of concrete. This we know; much of the rest of the story is gone.

There are Scottsville bricks in Victory Hall, Lucinda and George Wheeler's house on Bird Street and garage on Page; and most likely, the train depot. Local information always says the bricks came from a foundry across the James, on the flood plain at the Snowden estate, run by John Staples Martin (1853/8-1933). I started with this information, and an ad from the June 29, 1921 "Scottsville Enterprise" that says, "Scottsville Concrete Bricks Make Beautiful Buildings. They last longer—cheaper in the end. With our enlarged plant of modern machinery we are now prepared to make prompt delivery. Write for prices." While the ad undoubtedly ran elsewhere, I have only been able to see it in the "Scottsville News" for August of 1922.

George Goodwin and Mayor Raymon Thacker told me that George's grandfather, Tyler Goodwin, was also a principal in the company, and owned the large Snowden property, now called Belle Mead. George has an advertising blotter from the company, found by Jack Hamner, framed in his office in the Municipal Building, built of those bricks. He said that Jack Hamner has located some miscellaneous metal on the property, unusually called "the low grounds of Snowden," including a door knob, as well



Portrait of the brick.
This is a Scottsville Brick Co. brick.

as a red brick foundation, but nothing conclusive.

In Thomas Jefferson's notes, he says that the property was his father, Peter's, home (1708-1757), deeded to his younger brother Randolph. It was a tradition with the Jeffersons that "Snowden, Wales, was the supposed birthplace of the family." The original home was on the high bluff overlooking Scottsville, and burned by 1857; a new house was built in a different spot on the bluff. According to the WPA's 1940 "The Old Dominion," Snowden was

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Bird St. front of the John Martin house, c. 1914.



The Scottsville depot.



2 handmade clay bricks from an old farm near Point Fork.

Bricks In their blood

By Ruth Klippstein
Correspondent

Master carpenter, builder, and brick collector Mac Derry, of nearby Dixie, says that clay brick making is “something most people could do.” Helping to dismantle Nydrie, the 1890 manor house near Scottsville, he remembers the beautiful purple-hued clay bricks, said to have been made on site. There were “a million or more.”

He found the two bricks illustrated here, his favorites, at an old farm near Point of Fork. The hand print is as long as an average adult’s, but quite narrow. The other brick shows warping, probably from inconsistent heat when it was fired.

“Virginians have brick in their blood,” wrote Elizabeth Barbour in a “Virginia Living” article in 2007; clay brick was produced in Jamestown in 1612, “ensuring the colony’s permanence.” Kilns have been found in Williamsburg from the 1630s.

In Scottsville, 2003, archeologists working at Bruce Park, with Charles Cheek, son of Scottsville’s Dale and Delzie Cheek, as project manager, uncovered not only vestiges of Native American use, but “the most significant find was the remains of a brick ‘clamp,’ which was a kiln for firing handmade bricks. The site probably provided brick for the [c. 1840] hotel in the front of the lot....The bricks in the clamp match the size and external characteristics of the bricks in the rear wall of Bruce’s Drugstore, the only remaining original external wall.” (“Scottsville Monthly,” 9/03)



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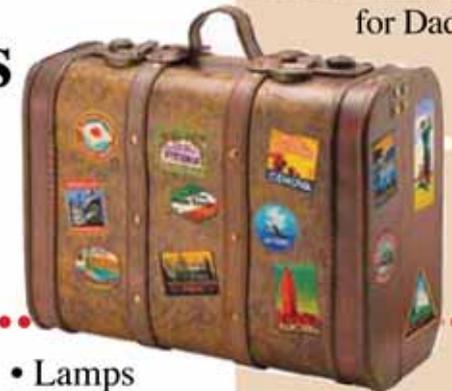
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originally 1900 acres owned by a now-unknown Mr. Snowden, with Captain John S. Harris acquiring it in 1857. John Schuyler Moon got it in 1870—he was married to James Barclay’s sister and bought the place at auction; his younger brother Jacob Luther was married to John Staples Martin’s sister. There were then no structures on the land. In 1937, the Scottsville High School students wrote and mimeographed a booklet of local information, identifying the property as Buckingham Cliff, and bringing the ownership up to “Mrs. D.W. Hancock, Mr. F.L. Holt, Mr. Howard Ragland, and Mr. Tyler Goodwin.” George Goodwin says that the land was divided several times, often among relatives. He thinks the best way to describe the possible site of the brick works is about three-quarters of a mile along Valley Street and across the river, past the apex of the James River’s Horseshoe Bend.

Raymon Thacker remembers that Tyler Goodwin was instrumental in establishing the Disciples of Christ Church with James Barclay, as was Thomas Staples, in 1846. John Samuel Martin, John’s father, married Martha Ann Staples. In a scrap of history for 1859, recorded in the “Scottsville Register,” May 7, we read that Staples and Martin are “in receipt of their Spring Goods,” and are selling clothing and groceries. The elder Martin also farmed. Thacker says that later, Tyler Goodwin and John Martin, the son, had a real estate business, with an office on the north side of Main Street. “I used to go and sit and talk to Mr. Martin. He was the nicest man.” Census records show that he owned a home and lived in Scottsville, and was never married.

The Scottsville Brick Company enters what I can find of official records with a line in the “Annual Report of the Secretary of the Commonwealth...for the year ending 9/30/21.” This records the charter of the Scottsville Brick Company, Inc., 12/27/1920—formerly the Scottsville Sand and Silica Company, Inc., itself entered into the record February 21, 1920.

It is possible these companies were related to one listed in the 1909-10 “Bulletin issues 6-9, Virginia Division of Mineral Resources,” the Pure Silex Company, with “office and bed or pit” in Scottsville. A different publication, the “Biennial Report on the Mineral Production of Virginia during the Calendar Year 1909-1910,” by Thomas Leonard Watson of the Virginia Geological Survey, also lists the Pure Silex Co., and says it was a producer of sand.

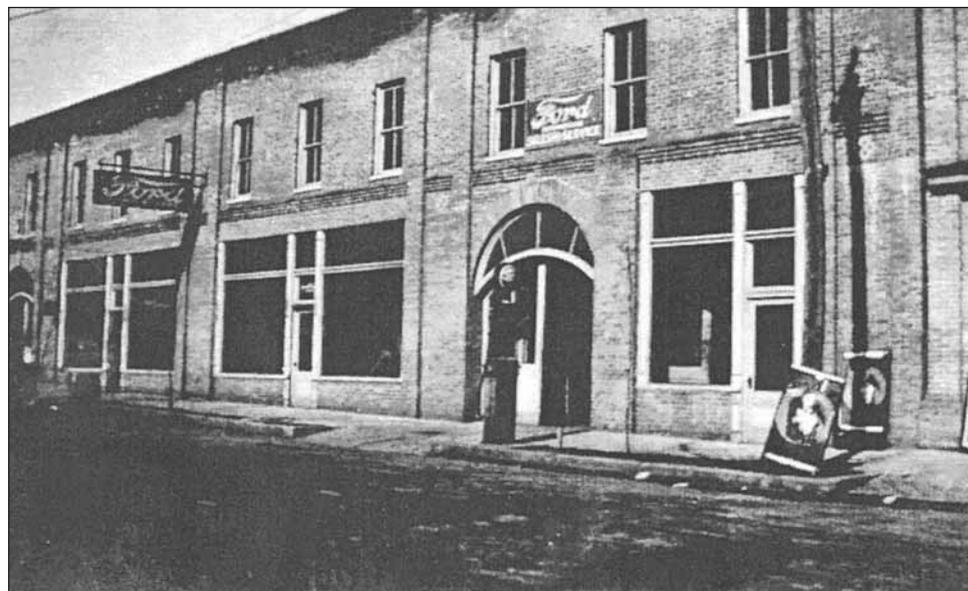
The Biennial Report describes the term “sand-lime brick” as “all brick made by mixing sand or gravel with a relatively small percentage of slaked lime, pressing the mixture into forms in a brick mold, drying or hardening the product either by sun heat or artificial methods. The manufacture of sand-lime brick in Virginia commenced only a few years ago...” with only two producers in 1909, neither of them in Scottsville. This seems, however, a possible model for the men of Scottsville Brick; the Pure Silex Co. is another question left without an answer.

A journal named “Concrete Products,” published in Chicago, says in volume 18, June, 1920, “Scottsville, Va., is the home of Scottsville Sand and Silica Co., which has received concrete brick making machinery for installation in their new plant which is nearing completion. The company is composed of local capitalists and owns a vast deposit of silica sand which is located just across the river from Scottsville, in Buckingham County, Va. The company has been operating for several months a small plant to demonstrate the possibilities of the material and their experimental work was so satisfactory that the new plant was started which will have a capacity of 30,000 bricks per day. It is also proposed that the company will manufacture concrete roofing tile.”

The Romans developed concrete in the first century BCE from burned limestone as a binder mixed with crushed rock or possibly some volcanic ash, or cinders.



The garage on the Page St. side of John Martin house.
Photo by Ruth Klippstein.



1930s photo of Bruce White Motor Co., now the Dollar Store, with the bricks painted. Photo courtesy Frances Moore.

Portland cement came into use in the U.S. after 1872, as the Preservation in Action website writes, “and was a significant milestone in the history of our built environment.” Sears sold a concrete block-making kit in the late 19th century so that the “average man” could make his own block. Today, concrete brick manufacturers note their product’s low maintenance, fire protection and sound-deadening qualities, and variety of colors and finishes; it is considered by some more ecological to produce than clay bricks. Clay brick producers disagree on the value of concrete bricks, noting that they will often shrink and are less durable than clay.

Scottsville Brick Co. and its forerunner, Scottsville Sand and Silica, duly registered their charters with the State Corporation Commission; these are housed now in the State Library archives, in fragile leather-bound volumes numbered 106 and 110. The first company, Scottsville Sand and Silica, listing its office in Scottsville, states its “purposes are to lease, buy, hold and operate sand deposits and sand lands and silica deposits and silica lands and mines and other mining and mineral lands...and the manufacturing, buying, selling and disposing of concrete brick, concrete roofing tiles, concrete drainage tile and other concrete materials and other kinds of brick and tile and material of that character and the handling [etc] of sand, cement, lime, timber, slate, and all kinds of building and roofing material...and also the...dealing in...goods, wares, groceries, and all kinds of merchandise, and also the mining and manufacturing of other kinds of mines and minerals; and to construct...roads, tram roads, rail roads, pipe lines, water pipe lines and conduits and all buildings and structures necessary for those purposes....”

The officers are John S. Martin, President; John L. Pitts (1894-1984), Vice-President; F.C. Moon, Second Vice-President; G. T. Goodwin (1871-1944), General Manager and Secretary; with John S. Martin acting as Assistant Manager and Treasurer. The four men were also listed as Directors. “The amount of real estate to which the holdings of the corporation at any time is to be limited is Fifty Thousand acres. 14 February, 1920.” The document was notarized by S. R. Gault. Frank C. Moon (1860-1925) was one of John Schuyler Moon’s 14 children, a lawyer who practiced in Scottsville and Lynchburg, and a state senator for one term from Buckingham County.

Then in December of the same year, the board of directors met in the Sand and Silica office, with Martin acting as President of the meeting and Goodwin as Secretary. The men resolved “that it is desirable and advisable that the corporation name...be changed to Scottsville Brick Company, Incorporated, and that the charter...be amended....”

It was an ambitious set of purposes the band of capitalists proposed, and at this point we know little about their operation. But the bricks were manufactured by one or both companies and buildings at least in Scottsville were built. Victory Hall was constructed probably between 1918 and 1920. Architect D. Wiley Anderson possibly specified these bricks for his design, and Anderson’s biographer, Susan Hume Frazer, notes in a private letter that “Anderson may have consciously used brick companies located near a commission. It made good economic sense. Moreover, using local materials showed aesthetic sensitivity....When Anderson was associated with the Sprenkle Company [in Richmond], he used South Side Brickworks” from that city. “There is no question,” she concludes “that brick companies and other suppliers wanted to work with Anderson, whose knowledge of and interest in building materials was superior...and contributed to his success as an architect....”

Near Victory Hall, north along Valley Street, the White-Dorrier Ford dealership,

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Dig into Reading

Summer Reading Program 2013
Scottsville Branch Library

Scottsville is a small town on the James River in southern Albemarle, Fluvanna and Buckingham counties. A cross-road of historical and agricultural communities, this is where the seeds of American democracy sown by Thomas Jefferson at Monticello were first cultivated. Young Jefferson's father, Peter, traveled dirt roads south in the mid-1700s to serve as a justice for the newly formed County of Albemarle at Scottsville. Years later, Jefferson himself practiced law in the old Scottsville courthouse. Dig into Reading to discover your community's treasures.



now the General Dollar store, opened by 1922 in a Scottsville Brick Company brick building. The Pitts' Belle Haven garage, now owned by Jan Glennie-Smith, is of Scottsville brick, as is the chimney of the Main Street house formerly owned by Janie Caldwell. The Historic American Buildings Survey description of the C&O railway station, now owned by CSX and located between the river and the levee, says that "according to local tradition, the white sand bricks (made of cement and sand) used in the [1915] building may have been produced on a site across the James River by...James [i.e. John] Martin, brother of Senator Thomas Martin. This type of brick was produced for only a brief period...before its manufacture was discontinued." Across the river, left on Snowden Drive, Montie Duncan's Craftsman-style house is said to be of Martin's bricks, and was built in the 1930s, perhaps as late as 1939. "My understanding," Duncan says, "is there's a bunch of buildings in Richmond and a bunch in Norfolk. The bricks were shipped on railroads." Mayor Thacker told him the business flooded three times before they quit. Thacker said to me that the concrete brick never took paint well and couldn't compete with our area's interest in red clay brick. "They did fair for a while, but they weren't very successful. It was a small business and they never sold a whole lot of brick."

Cliffview, a D. Wiley Anderson house made for John Staples Martin himself, is dated c. 1914 on the Scottsville Museum website. Anderson was, besides an architect, an inventor. In 1901 he filed for a patent on "Brick for Making Structures Fireproof"; in 1903, "strong and durable" brick tile; in 1904, "combined brick and tile"; and in 1926, a flashing brick. His Multifix brick was patented in 1927 and produced in Chicago. A 4x8 inch block with hollow channels, it could be made from clay or cement; a number of current concrete blocks look quite a bit like the Multifix, which was used in structures in Lynchburg and Richmond.

If D. Wiley Anderson specified Scottsville Brick Company brick in his Scottsville buildings from 1914 to 1918, and Montie Duncan's house was built of the same bricks in the 1930s, why can't we find records of the company except for 1920? At the State Library the charters are stamped "Dissolved," but without a date. No other possible records exist with the State Corporation Commission; perhaps the company simply stopped paying its annual assessment and was dissolved by law.

Despite the paucity of details in this account, it has been long-researched and was a difficult column to assemble. Many local history friends have helped: Jack Hamner found the digital books from Google while he was on vacation; Montie Duncan interrupted his corn planting to talk to me. Mayor Thacker, at 103, readily offered what he could; Bob Spencer lent me the Scottsville newspapers and lamented the on-going lack of facts. George Godwin gave time to show me artifacts he had, hoping this would elicit more. Cenie Re Moon Sturm identified F.C. Moon. Librarians from the Library of Congress, University of Virginia, Albemarle County Courthouse, Jefferson-Madison Regional Library and Albemarle-Charlottesville Historical Society, and the State Corporation Commission all answered requests for assistance. Thanks to Dr. Susan Hume Frazer of Richmond for responding to questions from a stranger, and to Mac Derry and Jeffrey Plank. Thanks to my driver Tom for trips to Charlottesville and Richmond, and to the folks at home for listening to my tales of research woe. They know more about brick now than they want to.

But none of us knows enough about the Scottsville Brick Company. Dr. Frazer suggested possible information in the D. Wiley Anderson papers at the Richmond Historical Society, but otherwise I've run out of time and leads. How can we lose history less than 100 years old? We save pictures of weddings and wars, diaries of daily domestic life, and even dance cards that old. It all matters: it's all part of the past and future of Scottsville. At least we have the bricks, and we can carefully keep the buildings they made.

...

SCOTTSVILLE LIBRARY Children's Summer Programs

Toddler Time Wednesdays, June 12 - July 24, 10 am.

A storytime especially for babies and toddlers emphasizing simple concepts, patterns, and unconditional acceptance. We stress "I Love You" rituals that help optimize your child's brain for success at school and in life. This 20 minute program includes books, songs, fingerplays, and flannel board stories.

No registration required.

Preschool Storytime Wednesdays, June 12 - July 24, 10:30 am.

An independent activity for children ages 3 - 5. This 30 minute program of books, songs, and flannel board stories introduces new concepts and ideas, increases vocabulary, improves listening skills, and promotes reading readiness. No registration required.

TUESDAY AFTERNOON ADVENTURES 3:30-4:30 pm. For 5 - 10 year olds. Registration is required and begins on Monday, June 3. Limit 10 participants

June 18 - Painted Garden Tools. Paint your set of hand tools to make them look distinctive and easy to find when you work in the garden.

July 2 - Seed Paper. Create handmade paper that has real flower seeds embedded in the pulp itself and is actually plant-able.

See Library Page 14

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