

MOUNT PLEASANT

Westmoreland County, Virginia
1664-1996

Researched and Written by

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1997

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Richard Lee I (the Emigrant)

Richard Lee I immigrated to America in 1639 or 1640.¹ Soon after his arrival he began to acquire many large tracts of land, several of which were in the Northern Neck of Virginia.² These included "1000 acres upon the south side of Potomac River, beginning at the mouth of a creek issuing out of Machotic [Machodoc] River, dividing this from the land of Mr. Lewis Burwell, 11 October 1657."³ Lee expanded this patent twice, first as "2000 acres upon south side of Potomac River, beginning at the mouth of a creek issuing out of Machotic [Machodoc] River, dividing this from the land of Mr. Lewis Burwell, 5 June 1658,"⁴ and again on 1 December 1664, as 2600 acres.⁵

This tract of land was first known as Matholic⁶ and is the patent that Mount Pleasant originally was a part of. It is shown in the *Historical Atlas of Westmoreland County Virginia* as southwest of Lewis Burwell's tract, and the creek dividing those tracts is shown as Lee's Creek.⁷

Richard Lee I died at his Dividing Creek plantation in Northumberland County on 1 March 1664, having previously made his will in England on his last voyage there.⁸ His eldest son, John Lee, inherited the 2600 acres Machodoc River estate.⁹

John Lee (eldest son of Richard Lee I)

On 30 March 1670 John Lee joined into an agreement with Henry Corbyn, Thomas Gerrard and Isaac Allerton, each of whom were to "bear an equal charge" in the erecting of a house "for

¹ Nagel, Paul C. *The Lees of Virginia*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), 8.

² Norris, Walter Biscoe, Jr., Editor. *Westmoreland County Virginia, 1653-1983*, (Marceline, MO: Nalworth Publishing Co., 1983), 173-4.

³ Nugent, Nell Marlon. *Cavaliers and Pioneers*, (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., 1983), I:346. [In the interest of clarity, abbreviated words used in the book have been spelled out in this report. Also, spellings of place names used in the original documents have been altered to conform with the spelling used today.]

⁴ *Ibid.*, 390.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 522.

⁶ Eubank, H. Ragland. *The Authentic Guide Book of Historic Northern Neck of Virginia*. (Richmond: Whittet and Shepperson, 1934), 57.

⁷ Eaton, David W. *Historical Atlas of Westmoreland County Virginia*, (Richmond: The Deitz Press, 1942), 70-72.

⁸ Nagel, 16.

⁹ *Ibid.*

the body of my dear wife deceased." He named his son Richard III, "merchant in London," as one of the executors of his will.¹⁹

Richard Lee III (son and heir of Richard Lee II)

Richard Lee III, born in 1679, was an absentee owner of the Machodoc property all his life. By the time of his father's death, he was well established as a London merchant. He married Martha Silk, an heiress in her own right.²⁰

Choosing to remain in London, shortly after his father's death, in 1716, Richard Lee III leased the 2600 acres to Reuben Welch and to his brothers Thomas and Henry Lee [then living in Essex County] for a period of one year.²¹ The following day, in a complicated deed (which was marginally indexed as a deed of release), he leased the Machodoc property to Welch and his brothers for ninety-nine years, then after the death of his wife, Martha, to his brothers for an additional five hundred years, after which time, it apparently reverted to the heirs of Richard and Martha's eldest son, George Lee. If George had no heirs, there were reversionary clauses for other members of their family.²² (Although the intent of this lease is difficult to determine, it seems probable that the "lease" was actually a trusteeship for the property, thereby guaranteeing an income without the burden of management of land an ocean away. Apparently, it was not an irrevocable trust.)

Three years later, in 1719, Richard Lee III died, survived by his widow and three children.²³

George Lee (son of Richard Lee III)

The year after the death of Richard Lee III, his widow, Martha Silk Lee, leased the Machodoc property for a period of twenty-one years to Thomas Lee,²⁴ (builder of Stratford, then living in Essex County), brother of her deceased husband.

At some time in the period of John Lee or Richard Lee II's ownership, the property was called Mount Pleasant. Thomas Lee and his family were living at Mount Pleasant when it burned on 29 January 1729.²⁵ The site of that dwelling is now known as "Burnt

¹⁹ Westmoreland Co. Deeds & Wills 5, 445ff.

²⁰ Nagel, 29-30.

²¹ Westmoreland Co. Deeds & Wills 6, 187ff.

²² Westmoreland Co. Deeds & Wills 6, 191ff.

²³ Nagel, 30.

²⁴ Westmoreland Co. Deeds & Wills 7, 76ff.

²⁵ Norris, 180.

House Field."

A second house, also called Mount Pleasant, was built by Thomas Lee near the present residence, and as late as 1934 its site was marked by two clumps of shrubbery. One of the clumps of shrubbery covered the second burial grounds of this branch of the Lee family.²⁶ Thomas and his family lived in this house until he built Stratford and moved there.²⁷

Martha Silk Lee, widow of Richard III, died in 1734. After her death, her three children, George, Lettice and Martha, came to Virginia.²⁸ In 1752, George Lee married the widow of Lawrence Washington, Anne Fairfax Washington.²⁹

Although a document was not found, apparently the lease that Thomas Lee had for Mount Pleasant was renewed at a later date, and continued throughout his life. In his will, written on 22 February 1749/50, Thomas wrote the following:

Whereas I have a long lease of lands in Cople Parish in which the fee is in my nephew George Lee, my will and desire is that my eldest son do convey to the said George Lee all my right to the said land to the said George Lee in Tail male....³⁰

In 1754, Phillip Ludwell Lee (son of Thomas Lee), in accordance with his father's wishes, conveyed all his rights to the Machodoc property to George Lee.³¹ In that document he mentioned the one acre parcel where his father was buried.

George and Anne Fairfax Washington Lee continued to live at Mount Pleasant until their deaths, in 1761.³² In his will, dated 13 Sep. 1761, George Lee requested that he be buried "in my garden as near to my wife as possible." He devised to his eldest son, George Fairfax Lee, and his heirs forever, "besides the tract of land I live on, which is entailed on him," three other tracts of land, one of which was the tract "known by the name of the Burnt House tract, which was held by the late President, the Honorable Thomas Lee, esquire, and which was conveyed to me by the Honorable Philip Ludwell Lee, esquire, agreeable to the will

²⁶ Eubank, 57

²⁷ Nagel 42-44.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 30

²⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁰ Westmoreland Co. Deeds & Wills 11, 311ff.

³¹ Westmoreland Co. Deeds & Wills 12, 133ff.

³² Nagel, 30.

of his father...."³³

George Fairfax Lee

During George Fairfax Lee's ownership of Mount Pleasant, he reduced its acreage to 1800 by selling off parcels to John Turberville, John Crabb, Crump and Collins, and George Garner. On 10 May 1798, he exchanged the 1800 acres (which was all that remained of Mount Pleasant) for 3,408 acres of land in Loudoun County. The new owner of Mount Pleasant was John Tasker Carter,³⁴ who was the son-in-law of George Fairfax Lee. Carter had married Lee's daughter, Louisa Lee.³⁵ [Although the Mount Pleasant land had been entailed to the male issue of George Lee, an Act of Assembly passed in 1787 ended the entailment of this land.]

In George Fairfax Lee's will, written in 1804, he requested that he "be decently interred in Mount Pleasant Garden, where my wife and children are."³⁶

John Tasker Carter

John Tasker Carter was the son of Counsellor Robert Carter, of Nomini.³⁷ In the division of Robert Carter's estate, John Tasker Carter received three significant tracts of land, including one tract of 3,408 acres in Loudoun County, on Goose Creek.³⁸ It was this tract which John Tasker Carter traded for the Mount Pleasant estate. (In addition to receiving the 3,408 acres, Lee was also to receive 1,000 lbs. current money for Mount Pleasant.)³⁹

In 1805 Carter leased his Westmoreland County property to George Whitelock, stating in the lease that "a certain Thomas Chandler" then lived at Mount Pleasant.⁴⁰

There are many details about the life of John Tasker Carter that remain a mystery. As one researcher has stated, "The trend

³³ Westmoreland Co. Deeds & Wills 14, 91ff.

³⁴ Westmoreland Co. Deeds & Wills 19, 351-2.

³⁵ Lee, Edmund Jennings, *Lee of Virginia*, (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., Inc., 1983 reprint), 302-3.

³⁶ *Ibid.* Also, Westmoreland County Deeds & Wills 21, 213f.

³⁷ Booker, J. Motley, *Northern Neck of Virginia Historical Magazine*, "Robert Carter of Nomini," (Montross: 1966), 1524. In a 1780 letter to Rev. Mr. Bartholomew Booth, Carter wrote, "I earnestly desire to put under your tuition my son, John Tasker Carter, now eight years old. He is crafty, though adverse to letters."

³⁸ Research of John R. Barden.

³⁹ Westmoreland Co. Deeds & Wills 19, 351-2.

⁴⁰ Westmoreland Co. Deeds & Wills 21, 258f.

for John Tasker Carter seems to have been steadily downhill, and by February 1805 he appears to be in bankruptcy or...close to it."⁴¹ In a letter written then by George Whitlock to John Tasker Carter's brother, George, he stated, "His [meaning JTC's] ideas of economy are so different from ours...." Apparently, this prompted George Carter to make the following offer to his brother:

....I will pay such of your debts as in my judgment are just--but of this I must be the only judge--you must be released by the law as to the remaining debts--you will make over to me your estate in trust, with provisions in the deed that should you die without legal issue the estate will descend to myself and my heirs. For your support I will bind myself...to pay you annuity (during the time that you remain single). As to the amount thereof that may be agreed upon between our selves to maintain you genteelly when we next see each other.⁴²

Apparently, John Tasker Carter declined his brother's offer, as no evidence was found that he accepted it.

John Tasker Carter died intestate in early 1808, and the administration of his estate was granted to the sheriff on 23 May 1808.⁴³ However, by 1813, a case styled Laird versus Carter Mitchell et als was filed in the Superior Court of Chancery for the Fredericksburg District. The outcome was that commissioners were appointed to sell Mount Pleasant.

Giles Fitzhugh

On ~~25 April~~ 1815 Mount Pleasant was sold by the appointed commissioners to Giles Fitzhugh. However, he apparently did not record the deed in Westmoreland County.⁴⁴

Muscoe Garnet Hunter

Giles Fitzhugh then sold the property on 11 January 1817 to Muscoe Garnet Hunter as 1031 acres.⁴⁵ Hunter and his wife promptly mortgaged it, but by 1 January 1819, the bonds having

⁴¹ Letter from John R. Barden to Mrs. O. J. Emory, Jr., written 20 Aug. 1994.

⁴² Research of John R. Barden, quoted from the Carter Letterbook, 1800-1804, 274-5.

⁴³ Research of John R. Barden, abstracted from Westmoreland Co. Orders, 1807-1810, 175.

⁴⁴ Westmoreland Co. Deeds & Wills 23, 238ff.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

been satisfied, the mortgage was released.

John Augustine Smith

By October 1819, Muscoe Garnet Hunter was deceased, and his executor filed suit (styled Ex parte Hunter) in the Superior Court of Chancery for the Fredericksburg District, asking for permission to sell Mount Pleasant for the benefit of Hunter's orphans.⁴⁶ Their petition was granted, and on 9 October 1819 the property was sold to John Augustine Smith, of Williamsburg, Virginia. However, for some reason, a further order was made which confirmed the first order, and commissioners were to "make conveyance of the land & premises to the said John A. Smith." This was not done until 31 March 1834. By that time, Smith was a resident of New York City.⁴⁷ It is impossible to determine whether Smith ever became a resident owner, or how the land was worked.

Dr. John Augustine Smith, who was born 29 August 1782 and died 9 February 1865, was the youngest son of the Reverend Thomas Smith, rector of Cople Parish from 1765 until his death in 1789.⁴⁸ At the time Dr. Smith purchased Mount Pleasant he was President of William and Mary College, a position he held from 1814-1826.⁴⁹

It is interesting to note that Dr. Smith had married Lettice Lee, daughter of "Squire" Richard Lee (son of Henry, who was son of Richard II, who was son of Richard I), of Lee Hall. So when Dr. John Augustine and Lettice Lee Smith purchased Mount Pleasant, it went back into the hands of a descendant of Richard Lee.

Squire Richard Lee, born 1726, had waited until he was about sixty years of age before marrying his sixteen year old first cousin. At his death, in 1795, he was survived by his widow and four children, a son and three daughters, one of whom was Lettice.⁵⁰ Squire Lee had bequeathed his estate to his son; however, the son lived to adulthood but died soon after his father's death. Therefore, Squire Lee's extensive real property was divided among his daughters.

⁴⁶ Communication from Barry McGhee, Director of the HFFI-Records Conservation Project.

⁴⁷ Westmoreland Co. Deeds & Wills 28, 76f.

⁴⁸ du Bellet, Louise Pecquet, *Some Prominent Virginia Families* (Baltimore: Clearfield Company, 1994 reprint of 1907 edition), III, 11-12.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 12.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, IV, 86-7.

After the death of Squire Lee, his widow, Sally Boythress Lee, married a neighbor, Captain Willoughby Newton.⁵¹ It is not known whether the Willoughby Newton to whom Dr. Smith sold Mount Pleasant was his step-father-in-law, or another of the several persons of that name.

Willoughby Newton

John Augustine Smith held Mount Pleasant until 12 September 1838, when he sold 650 acres of it to Willoughby Newton, it being the eastern portion of the estate. Newton paid \$10,000 for "the eastern portion of the estate called and known by the name of Mount Pleasant."⁵²

The 1850 Real Property Tax records show that Mount Pleasant was valued at \$10,829 with \$429 of that for building/s on the property. The 1870 records show that the total value had increased to \$16,250 with the building/s valued at \$200. The following year, 1871, the value had dropped to \$2,400 and the building/s value to \$300. (This decrease in value is consistent with the economic recession that followed the Civil War.)

Willoughby Newton, Jr.

On 14 April 1871 Willoughby Newton sold to Willoughby Newton, Jr. for \$12,000 "all that tract of land called Mt. Pleasant containing five hundred and sixty acres more or less."⁵³ Newton held the property until 1886, when he sold it, as 550 acres (having sold off a small lot previously), to John E. R. Crabbe for \$8,000.⁵⁴

John E. R. Crabbe (Builder of Mount Pleasant dwelling)

John E. R. Crabbe was born circa 1830 in Westmoreland County, son of a John and Mary Crabbe.⁵⁵ However, for many years before his purchase of Mount Pleasant, he had been a resident of Baltimore, and a member of the firm of Johnson, Sutton & Company. In reporting his purchase, the local newspaper stated, "It is not known whether Mr. Crabbe intends to reside in Virginia or not, but it is said that he will retire from the firm with which he has been connected for many years at the end of this year."⁵⁶

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 86.

⁵² Westmoreland Co. Deeds & Wills 29, 286-7.

⁵³ Westmoreland Co. Deeds & Wills 39, 71-2.

⁵⁴ Westmoreland Co. Deeds & Wills 46, 394ff.

⁵⁵ Westmoreland Co. Death Register, 103.

⁵⁶ Northern Neck News, 10 Dec. 1886, 3, column 2.

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⁵³ Westmoreland Co. Deeds & Wills 39, 71-2.

⁵⁴ Westmoreland Co. Deeds & Wills 46, 394ff.

⁵⁵ Westmoreland Co. Death Register, 103.

⁵⁶ Northern Neck News, 10 Dec. 1886, 3, column 2.

The Westmoreland Co. Real Property Tax records for 1886 show that improvements on the Mount Pleasant property were valued at \$250. The following year's records show the value increased to \$10,250. A notation states: "\$10,000 added for buildings." This indicates that extensive building on the property took place in 1887.⁵⁷ A further newspaper article, appearing in the 18 May 1888 issue of the Northern Neck News, states, "The handsome residence of Mr. John Crabbe is nearing completion, and is a beautiful addition to the neighborhood."⁵⁸ There were no changes in the assessed value of the improvements until 1910, when it decreased to \$5,000.

Various records show that Crabbe made significant contributions to the county during the remainder of his life. One of his first activities after moving there was to lead in the organization of the Westmoreland County Stock Association, the purpose of which was to "aid and encourage the production of blooded stock." He became its first president.⁵⁹ Two years later, with Crabbe still president, the Association held the "1st Annual Stock Fair" in the county. It is interesting to note that Crabbe's horses, Isaac and Eastover, each took first place in the races in which they were entered.⁶⁰

Another of Crabbe's activities on behalf of the county was to campaign for a railroad line to the county. In a meeting held with railroad officials at Colonial Beach in autumn of 1889, it was reported that "Mr. Crabbe stated the views of the county of Westmoreland and dwelt on the importance and necessity of opening up the Northern Neck."⁶¹

Crabbe was very active in the Episcopal Church.⁶² Prior to 1876 he had given an acre of land at Nomini Grove on which St. Paul's Protestant Episcopal Church was built.⁶³ Then, in 1891, Crabbe and his wife, Annie C., gave 2 acres at Hague for the building of a Catholic church.⁶⁴

⁵⁷ Since the value on the tax records is the value as of January 1, the appearance of the increased value in 1887 indicates that a significant amount of new construction had been completed before January 1 of that year. It is probable that the house was begun during that time.

⁵⁸ Northern Neck News, 18 May 1888, p. 3, column 2.

⁵⁹ Northern Neck News, 15 May 1889, 2, column 5.

⁶⁰ Ibid., 13 Nov. 1891, p. 3, column 3.

⁶¹ Ibid., 25 Oct. 1889, p. 1, column 4.

⁶² Davison, Bertha Newton, *Northern Neck of Virginia Historical Magazine*, "The Life of Cople Parish, 1864-1964," XLV, 5251-5289. Beginning at p. 5265, Mrs. Davison details some of the involvement of Crabbe with Cople Parish. Some of the Vestry meetings were held at Mount Pleasant.

⁶³ Westmoreland County Deeds & Wills 41, 404.

⁶⁴ Westmoreland County Deeds & Wills 49, 469.

John E. R. Crabbe died, intestate, on 4 August 1895, of Bright's Disease [nephritis].⁶⁵ With the settlement of his estate, Mount Pleasant passed to Walter R. Crabbe, his only son and sole heir.⁶⁶

Walter Randolph Crabbe

Like his father, Walter R. Crabbe remained involved in the activities of the community. He and his wife, who was nee Lizzie [Elizabeth] Zimmerman of Baltimore, entertained frequently, and newspaper accounts tell of various social affairs held there.⁶⁷

The Northern Neck News tells of his farming and sheep raising at Mount Pleasant as well as boarding, breaking and training horses. The Mount Pleasant flock of Delaine Merino sheep were said to be the finest on the Atlantic Coast.⁶⁸

In 1892, Mrs. Crabbe represented Westmoreland County on the Auxilliary Board for the World's Fair.⁶⁹

Walter R. Crabbe found it necessary to mortgage Mount Pleasant in 1904 as security for a \$1,500 debt. At that time, the estate contained 550 acres.⁷⁰ This mortgage was released two years later. In 1906, he again mortgaged Mount Pleasant, this time as security for a \$6,000 debt.⁷¹ Before that mortgage was released, Walter R. Crabbe died. Newspaper accounts of 1 August and 3 August 1906 tell the story.⁷²

The first account was copied from the Baltimore Sun of August 1.

Walter R. Crabbe, 52 years old, of Hague, Westmoreland County, Va., died suddenly at 6:50 a.m. Tuesday in the office of the Hotel Lombard, 117 West Lombard Street.

Mr. Crabbe had entered the office just a few minutes before, and, after registering, complained of the heat. He seated himself in one of the office chairs, and a few minutes later it was noticed that

⁶⁴ Westmoreland County Death Register, 103, line 63.

⁶⁵ Westmoreland County Deeds & Wills 62, 168.

⁶⁷ Northern Neck News, 30 March 1894, 3, column 3 and 15 July 1892, 3, column 6.

⁶⁸ Northern Neck News, 22 Jan. 1892, 2, column 6; 15 May 1896, 1, column 1 & 23 Mar. 1928, 1, column 5.

⁶⁹ Ibid., 5 May 1892, 3, column 4.

⁷⁰ Westmoreland County Deeds & Wills 62, 168.

⁷¹ Westmoreland County Deeds & Wills 64, 150.

⁷² Northern Neck News, 3 August 1906, 3, column 2 and 3, column 4.

he appeared to have fainted.

The clerk started to administer restoratives, but Mr. Crabbe pitched out of his chair on to the floor. Several physicians were sent for, but none came, and the man died a few minutes later without regaining consciousness.

Coroner Hayden decided death was due to apoplexy....

A second account, written locally, gives further details, as follows:

Our people were never more shocked than to hear of the death of Mr. Walter Randolph Crabbe. Mr. Crabbe had been unwell for several months, but only those nearest to him were aware of his trouble. He left here last Monday alone to consult a specialist in Baltimore, and died there at Hotel Lombard early Tuesday. His wife, daughter and son hurried to Baltimore on Tuesday and he was buried there.

An inventory of Crabbe's estate was taken in December 1906. However, the inventory appears to have included only the items in the outbuildings. Although there were a few items of furniture included, they were appraised at a very low cost, which seems to indicate that they were not the items being used in the home. It is possible that they were used items which were being stored in one of the outbuildings. The furniture items consisted of the following:

2 book cases.....	\$30.
1 Hall Piece.....	8.
1 sofa.....	5.
1 side board.....	15.
1 table.....	15.
39 chairs.....	58.
1 set furniture.....	20.
2 sets furniture.....	25.
3 stoves.....	6.
1 mirror.....	2.50
1 andirons & fender.;	2.50

The total amount of Crabbe's inventory was \$3,517.75. This included 12 colts and 15 horses. Also, there were 12 cows, 10 calves and one bull, as well as 55 sheep. For transportation, there was a carriage, a buggy and a sleigh as well as 2 old carts, 2 "road carts," 3 farm wagons, an "H." wagon and an ox

Elizabeth T. Crabbe

The \$6,000 debt for which Crabbe had mortgaged Mount Pleasant had not been satisfied by 1910. Therefore, the trustee for the property foreclosed, and sold Mount Pleasant at public auction. Elizabeth Crabbe, Walter's widow, was the purchaser for the sum of \$6,000. Her deed states that the property contained 558 acres.⁷⁴ A later deed states that Walter R. Crabbe had a \$10,000 insurance policy, and it was the proceeds from this policy that Elizabeth used to purchase Mount Pleasant. Reserving for herself a life interest in one-third of the property (186 acres, which included the dwelling house and all the personal property therein), Elizabeth promptly deeded the remaining two-thirds of Mount Pleasant to her two children, Roger P. Crabbe (who was still a minor), and Helen Crabbe Tayloe. They each received 186 acres.⁷⁵

In 1927, Elizabeth deeded 50 square feet of Mount Pleasant (the portion of "Burnt House Field" in which Richard Lee II was buried in 1714, and Thomas Lee of Stratford was buried in 1750, as well as other Lees whose graves apparently were unmarked) to the Society of the Lees of Virginia. The deed conveying this burial ground contains a partial recital of the ownership of the land (beginning with Richard Lee, the Emigrant), and a plat of the 50 square feet which shows the brick wall surrounding the burial ground.⁷⁶

On the same day that the deed for the Lee burial ground was made, Elizabeth T. Crabbe wrote her will. Her legatees were her son and daughter, and her grandchildren Harry M. Tayloe, Betsy Tayloe, Walter Randolph Tayloe, Poinsett Tayloe and Ogle Tayloe. In her will, Elizabeth detailed some of her treasures, such as items of furniture, Persian rugs, silver, china, cut glass and jewelry. These details offer clues as to how Mount Pleasant was furnished and decorated.⁷⁷

Elizabeth T. Crabbe died on 16 March 1928. At that time, her daughter, Helen, was 45 years old, and her son, Roger, was 33. They were to divide the 186 acres of Mount Pleasant that

⁷³ Westmoreland County Inventories & Accounts 31, 240ff.

⁷⁴ Westmoreland County Deeds & Wills 70, 232f. Also, see the plat in Westmoreland County Deeds & Wills 102, 562.

⁷⁵ Westmoreland County Deed & Wills 70, 234ff. Also see the plat on Ibid., 102, 562.

⁷⁶ Westmoreland County Deeds & Wills 86, 34f.

⁷⁷ Ibid., 251ff.

Elizabeth had reserved for herself back in 1910.⁷⁸

Roger P. Crabbe

The division of Mount Pleasant was accomplished by deed on 18 January 1929. The portion containing 9.7 acres and the dwelling house went to Roger P. Crabbe, along with a 25.30 acre parcel and a 10 acre parcel.⁷⁹ Before the year was out, Roger and his wife, Marie D. Crabbe, sold Mount Pleasant house with 9.7 acres and the 25.30 acre parcel of adjacent land.⁸⁰

Paul Kester

The purchaser of Mount Pleasant was Paul Kester, unmarried, of Westmoreland County. On the same day that he purchased the property he mortgaged it for a total of \$7,000.⁸¹ In 1930 Kester bought the remaining 10 acre parcel from Crabbe.⁸² He also granted an easement to Virginia East Coast Utilities, Inc., which gave them the right "to construct, maintain and operate its electric light and power transmission and distribution lines... over, upon and across the property...."⁸³

Paul Kester was later described as "one of the country's leading dramatists." He was the "author of the stage version of 'When Knighthood Was in Flower' and a number of other successful stage production[s]."⁸⁴

The circumstances are not known as to why Kester defaulted on his deeds of trust on Mount Pleasant. Perhaps the Great Depression played a part, or perhaps Kester became ill, but the property containing the dwelling house (containing 9.7 acres) and the adjacent lot (25.30 acres) was sold on 26 November 1932. The Citizens Bank of Kinsale purchased both parcels for \$1,500.⁸⁵ The remaining 10 acres was sold in 1934 for \$160 to the Bank of Westmoreland, Inc.⁸⁶

Kester died in June 1933, which was approximately 7 months after he lost Mount Pleasant. He was buried beside his mother in Pohick Church,⁸⁷ near Gunston Hall (which is approximately 10

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

⁷⁹ Westmoreland County Deeds & Wills 87, 168ff.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 554f.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 555 & 556f.

⁸² Westmoreland County Deeds & Wills 88, 194f.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, 293.

⁸⁴ *Northern Neck News*, 30 June 1933, 5, column 4.

⁸⁵ Westmoreland County Deeds & Wills 91, 382.

⁸⁶ Westmoreland County Deeds & Wills 99, 45f.

⁸⁷ *Northern Neck News*, 30 June 1933, 5, column 4.

The siding is shiplap clapboard made from local cypress. A verandah extends from the main entrance around and along the entire western facade of the building.

Mount Pleasant has a pitched roof. During restoration it was learned that the original roof was of wooden shakes, presumed to have been cedar. Four layers of subsequent roofs followed the original, with the present roof being of asphalt shingles in a design that has the appearance of slate.

The principal ridge of the roof is ornamented with a wrought iron cresting rail, each end of which terminates in a decorative finial. The apex of a tower, which is adjacent to the main ridge, contains a matching finial which is larger in size than those of the crest rail.

The house is designed with three gables. There is a single window in the west gable, a double window in the south gable, and an arched top window in the east gable. There are also four single dormers. The south and west dormers each contain a fixed arched top window, while the east dormer is fitted with a double-hung sash window. On the rear of the roof is a double shed dormer containing two double-hung sash windows. The name "Clarence Hazelwood," followed by what appeared to be a date (now illegible), was found on a shingle removed from the side of one of the twin dormers on the rear of the house.¹⁰²

All the principal rooms on first and second floors are fitted with double-hung sash windows, each having cast iron counter weights. There are fixed transoms of multicolored stain glass panes above all windows in the principal rooms. One of the first floor rooms features a projecting bay comprised of four floor to ceiling windows which open onto the verandah. Similarly, a floor to ceiling window in the drawing room can be raised to provide access to the verandah. A second floor room has two floor-length windows which flank one of the huge chimneys. Each accesses a tiny triangular balcony. When the inside window trim was removed for restoration, the name "A. M. Carroll," and "Kinsale, Va." were found penciled on several sections in various first and second floor rooms.¹⁰³

In the seventeen rooms of Mount Pleasant house there are nine fireplaces, seven of which are fitted with slate mantels. On the first floor the slate mantelpieces are faux finished in

¹⁰² Information from Phillip Beauchamp, master carpenter on the restoration.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*

divided into two separate areas, one containing the bathtub, and the other, the toilet. Both areas had hand basins.

The original massive chimney for the rear wing contained flues for the wood-burning kitchen range. There were two flues in the kitchen and two more on the basement level. (This chimney was removed during restoration, and will not be replaced.) A new kitchen with a laundry, bath, closets and dressing rooms above has been added, in a design which is sympathetic to the original structure. In the process of restoration of this wing, what is believed to be an earlier foundation and basement wall were discovered. More research on this wall is planned.

A combination barn/carriage house, and a smokehouse are the other existing original dependencies. These eventually will be restored. There also appears to be the foundations of a long hot bed, the glazed "frames" of which have been installed in the walls and doors of the barn/carriage house and the smokehouse.

Mount Pleasant is an outstanding example of late Nineteenth Century architecture and of Westmoreland County history. Meticulously and lovingly restored, it will stand another century for future generations to enjoy.

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