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Research made by
Vivian Black,
Luray, Va.

September 2, 1936.

1. SUBJECT:

Michael Rinehart Home and Fort cellar.

2. LOCATION:

5.5 miles north of Luray, Virginia, on Route #615, on west side of Shenandoah River.

3. DATE:

Prior to 1735.

4. OWNERS:

Land Office, Richmond, Virginia, patent book No.15, page 129, December 15, 1733. Jacob Stover's patent for 5,000 acres.

Orange County, D. B. I, page 190, November 24, 1737, Jacob Stover to Ludewick Stone (Stein).

Frederick County, D. B.II, page 480, March 22, 1738. In this deed I found where Michael Rinehart bought 600 acres out of "mescuting" (Massanutten) of one Jacob Stover, recorded at Orange County.

D. B. No. 10, page 249, I found that Michael Rinehart willed to Lewis and Mathias Rinehart, a great tract originally granted by patent from the King's office to Jacob Stover and by him sold to and conveyed to one Stone, who sold the same to Michael Rinehart.

D. B. No.10, page 294, April 6, 7, 1765, Lewis, Mathias and Elizabeth, his wife, to Charles Keyser, Sr., land and buildings.

Shenandoah County, D. B. No.1, page 265, Charles Kiser and Elizabeth, his wife, to Andrew Kiser.

Page County, W. B. A, page 99, March 18, 1826, Andrew Keyser, to Charles Keyser.

Page County, D. B. U, page 387, March 1, 1879, Charles and Amanda, his wife, to A. B. Fleming.

Page County, D. B. 2, page 104, November 15, 1883, A. B. Fleming and wife to Mary Strickler.

Page County, D. B. 12, page 234, February 25, 1889, Mary Strickler and her husband to Peter Long.

Page County, D. B. 60, page 317, November 24, 1908,
Peter Long to Susan D. E. Ruffner.

Page County, D. B. 87, page 260, October 31, 1925,
Susan D. E. Ruffner to A. P. Kibler.

5. DESCRIPTION:

The outside of this very old home is very pretty. It is the only one in this section that has the old English roof with dormer windows. The structure is long and narrow, sixty five feet by twenty two feet, with an immense rock chimney in the center and another one on the north end. It consists of four rooms on the lower floor and three bed rooms on the second. To go through the house from the south door, one steps up two large blue limestone steps to a long narrow porch, six and one half feet by twenty two feet. This porch, after standing nearly two centuries (1936), is still in a good state of preservation. The original post and lattice still stand. A plain door made of boards about an inch thick, admits one into a large room nineteen by nineteen feet. The walls are not sealed and one can see the large logs. These are all walnut, cut from trees along the river. The walls were built, then the doors and windows cut. One log across the front is over forty feet long. Next, one enters the sitting room, nineteen by thirteen feet. Here we see the large chimney. It measures ten feet, three inches long, and seven feet wide. The log beam over the fireplace is nineteen inches thick and fourteen inches wide. There is a window on the east and one on the west and a door opening on the front porch which faces east. In the southeast corner is a narrow stairway leading to the bed rooms. The steps are very steep. At the top is a hall. The first thing one sees is the large chimney again. The room on the north has a dormer window on the east and one on the west. These are two feet wide, three feet high and two and one half deep. The walls extend up five feet where they join the roof, which runs upward at a steep angle. The room is sealed with boards cut with a broad axe, hand tongued and grooved and hand finished. The partitions are finished in like manner. The bed room on the south is larger and finished the same way. This has a window in the south, but no dormer windows. The dining room is not so large, but has a very interesting feature. All across the ceiling on the south is a space two and one half feet wide and a little higher than the other part finished with boards laid crosswise, while the other ceiling is lengthwise. This is said to be a secret closet, and is supposed to have held valuable papers and money.

The kitchen is large, with a fireplace on the north. In the southeast corner is a stairway that leads to a bed room above. This room also has a dormer window in the east and

one in the west. It is finished like the other bed rooms. There is a large closet on the south the full length of the room, and more than likely holds the secret entrance to the closet in the dining room.

The front porch adds much beauty to the house. It is twelve feet wide and forty feet long. Recently Mr. Kibler replaced the original posts. The floor is hard pine (yellow). Over the porch is an attic the same size as the porch and was used for storage and drying vegetables.

FORT CELLAR.

On the porch, near the outer edge is a trap door opening to a stairway leading down nine stone steps to the Fort Cellar. This cellar is built of blue limestone rock, laid in keystone style. It is ten feet wide and eighteen feet long and arched over with solid masonry, the ceiling in the middle being six and one half feet high. An iron beam still in place across the arched entrance leaves the impression that at one time an iron door suspended from it, and thus made the fort secure against molesting Indians. In the south end is a port hole, the only one in this fort. To the east of the port hole is a square hole or niche, used for a pine torch. Several iron hooks protrude from the walls, placed there at the time the walls were built. The cellar is covered with a foot or more of dirt. Should the house be burned the occupants of the cellar would still be safe.

SLAVE QUARTERS.

The slave quarters is a two room log building, with attic bed rooms above. It has two large rock chimneys, one in the center of the two rooms and one on the north end. This building is now used as a wash house and for storage.

7. ART:

photograph

8. SOURCES OF INFORMATION:

Informant: Mr. Peter V. Keyser, Rileyville, Virginia.

Court Records of the City of Richmond, Virginia, Orange, Frederick, Shenandoah and Page Counties.



