

**OLD CHARLES KEYSER FARM
AND GRAVEYARD
2019**

Marie Rasnick Fetzer



Overlooking the Hawksbill Valley in Page Co., Virginia.

Emigrant **CARL SEBASTIAN KÄYSER** of Möckmühl left **Germany** in 1749 and embarked on a whole new life in the “*English Island Pennsylvania*”. Sometime after February 1751 he left Pennsylvania and migrated down the **Great Wagon Road** into the **Valley of Virginia**. We know that he was living in Frederick County by 1755, because court records from that year list him as **CHARLES KYZER**, member of the **Colonial Militia of Frederick County** under the command of William Bethel, Captain of Foot Company. By 1765, the man we now call **CHARLES KEYSER**, purchased a farm (seen in the center of the photo above) along the **Shenandoah River**, just across from the mouth of **Hawksbill Creek**, where he lived the rest of his life. **CHARLES KEYSER** allied himself with Hawksbill neighbors **JOHN COUNTS** and “**Hessian Soldier**” **JACOB RASNICK**, whose families intermarried and migrated together for generations. These three men and their descendants became important **EARLY VIRGINIA PIONEERS IN THE HAWKSBILL VALLEY, in Page Co. and later, in the CLINCH RIVER VALLEY in Russell Co.** These are my **Pioneer Ancestors**, witnesses to, and participants in, the birth of a new nation called **AMERICA**, who I came in search of in the Winter of 2019, and this is my report of what I found left of the **OLD KEYSER FAMILY** of Page Co., Virginia. For more information, go to: www.kayser-counts.org.

THE OLD CHARLES KEYSER FARM



The farm Charles Keyser purchased in 1765 is located in present day Page County, Virginia.

DIRECTIONS:

From **Luray, Virginia:**

GPS: 38° 43' 0" N
78° 28' 2" W

Take **Mechanic's St.**, which becomes **Hwy. 675/Bixler's Ferry Rd.** out of town. Once you cross the **Shenandoah River**, turn **right** onto **S. Page Valley Rd./Hwy. 684** and follow along the river for just over 2 miles, and the **Charles Keyser, Jr. Fort Home** will be on the **left**. This fort home was originally built by **Michael Rinehart prior to 1735**. You will recognize it by its distinctive bright yellow roof. Please be mindful this is a very old house that is **Posted** with a **No Trespassing** sign due to its **potentially unsafe condition**. It sits on **Private Property** and **permission should be obtained before approaching**.

Just past this home, in the curve, lies the **Old Keyser Graveyard**. It is on the **left** just up a small bank on the edge of the road. You will recognize it by an **American flag flying above the graves**.

Across the street in the same curve you will see a dirt road leading to the location where the **Charles Keyser, Sr.'s Fort Home** that he built in 1765 once stood. It was demolished around 1967; unfortunately, only the fort cellar remains. After his death, both **Andrew Keyser, Sr.** and **Andrew Keyser, Jr.** also lived in the fort house. The large old house still standing nearby is the **Andrew Keyser, Jr. Mansion House**, which he built around 1840. The **Old Keyser Farm** now stands on **Private Property**; **do not enter without permission from the owner**.

CHARLES KEYSER FORT HOME



*Photo by Vivian Black 24 Aug 1936
WPA Historical Inventory Report No. 222*

In 1765 Charles Keyser purchased one hundred and eight acres of land on the South Fork of the Shenandoah River, across from the mouth of **Hawksbill Creek**, from Lewis and Matthias Rinehart. Today this land lies near the town of **Luray**, in present day **Page County, Virginia**. Although the farm is no longer held in Keyser hands, it has been our ancestral home for over two hundred and fifty years, and much still remains that would be easily recognizable to Charles Keyser today.

At the time of the sale, all buildings on the land were conveyed by deed to the buyer. Even though that included the **Michael Rinehart Fort Home** (built prior to 1735), Charles Keyser immediately began to build another house a short distance away. It was one of the “Fort Homes” unique to the Massanutten area, built over a reinforced vaulted cellar constructed to protect against Indian attacks. The new home, where he and his wife raised their ten children, became known as the **Charles Keyser Fort Home**. Charles died in 1778, and both he and his wife are buried in the family graveyard just south of the house.

As Charles Keyser left no will at the time of his death, the land descended to his eldest son, Charles Keyser, Jr., who chose to live in the older **Michael Rinehart Fort Home**, which then became known as the **Charles Keyser (Jr.) Home**. Charles, Jr.’s sons, David and Joseph, sold their portions to Andrew Keyser, who then owned the home place, and it became known as **(Major) Andrew Keyser (Sr.) Home**. **Andrew, Sr. was a Revolutionary War Soldier** who served in the **Virginia Regiment** and was reportedly raised to the rank of **Major**. It was said that he was not a wealthy man, but a “good liver” and a good provider for his family. Besides **farming**, he ran a **distillery** and owned quite a few **slaves**, including one named **Newman** mentioned in his will.

Andrew Keyser, Jr. inherited the home place from his father in 1833. Soon after his father’s death he began building a larger and more elaborate home next door, which was called the **(Colonel) Andrew Keyser (Jr.) Home**, or the “**Mansion House**”.

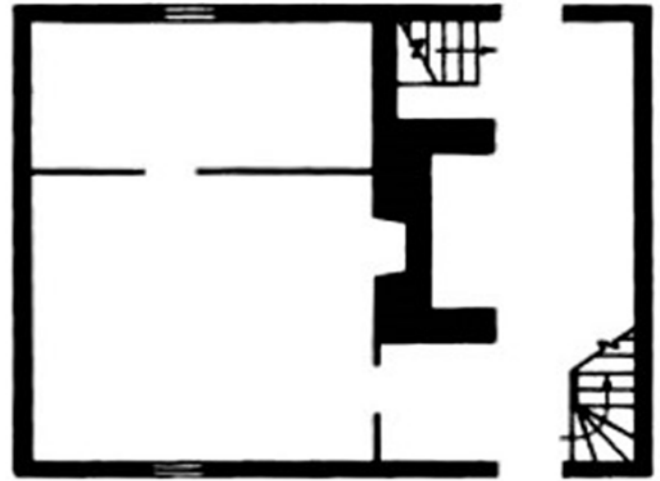
Sadly, the **Charles Keyser Fort Home** was demolished about 1967, however the fort cellar remains. The **Charles Keyser, Jr. Home** and the **Colonel Andrew Keyser, Jr. Home** still stand. Fortunately, these three homes on the old Keyser Farm have been well documented over the years, but sometimes it can be confusing to know which one is which.

In 1936, local resident, **Vivian Black**, wrote her observations and impressions of these old Keyser homes in **Virginia WPA Historical Inventory Reports**. When she visited the **Charles Keyser Fort Home**, she described it as an oblong house built in 1765 out of large walnut logs cut from the banks of the river, put together in a dovetail fashion and sealed with red clay and cut straw. There was a low porch in the front, which at one time extended the full length of the house, and some years later, the house had been weather boarded.

The house consisted of three rooms on the first floor and two on the second. As she entered the house she saw one long narrow room with an immense chimney in the center and a stairway on the north wall. The fireplace opening was four and one-half feet deep, seven and one-half feet wide and five and one-quarter feet high. The log beam over the fireplace was fifteen inches thick, eighteen inches wide and twelve feet long. In the fireplace were two iron cranes, one on either side, which swung back and forth. On them, large iron pots were hung with the most delicious food cooked in them. From this room, one entered another room fourteen by sixteen feet, with a small fireplace. In the walls about two feet from the ceiling was a row of hand wrought, slightly curved hooks used for coat hooks. From there one entered another room, probably used as a bedroom. The front door was divided, hanging on long narrow hinges and fastened with iron latches.



Charles Keyser Fort Home built in 1765. "Old Homes of Page County, Virginia", Jennie Ann Kerkoff 1962.



Restored first floor plan. "Acculturation in the Shenandoah Valley: Rhenish Houses of the Massanutten Settlement", Edward A. Chappell 1980.

In one corner of the room used for cooking, a very steep enclosed stair rose to the upper bedrooms. In the opposite corner was a staircase that descended to the cellar. The floor was partitioned into three rooms. On the second floor, the first thing that impressed was the large chimney almost in the center of the first room. The chimney at that point measured three and one-half feet square. The next thing one noticed was the high ceiling, fifteen feet high at the center. The roof was "V" shaped and tapered to the log walls, which extended three and one-half feet above the floor. Second floor logs were exposed and whitewashed. Until recent years, they were sealed with boards cut with a broad axe, hand finished and hand tongued and grooved. Part of the partition, finished in like manner, was still standing and in a good state of preservation. Vivian noted the rafters were very interesting, all numbered in Roman numerals, made one at a time and numbered, then set in place. Just at the head of the stairs was a crude drying rack suspended from the ceiling on four poles. The shingles were hand split and put on with homemade nails.

Tradition says that **prisoners**, when being taken to **Woodstock Jail**, were kept overnight at the old Keyser home. In the wall of one of the upstairs rooms could be seen places where **iron hooks** were fastened in the walls.

A fort or **vaulted cellar** below the northwest corner of the house was entered only by a flight of interior steps under a **trap door** opening about six feet from the door in the main room used for cooking. The cellar, like all through that section of the valley, was built of blue limestone and laid in keystone style. The spaces between the stones were filled with mortar, so as to present a smooth surface. The mortar was in excellent condition in 1936 and as smooth as if it had been put on by an expert present day plasterer. The ceiling was arched and measured eight and one-half feet high in the center.

The vault was twelve feet wide by eighteen feet long. In the south and east walls were openings called **port holes**. These were narrow at the outside and widened inwardly, allowing the pioneer in the vault ample room for **shooting**. At one time there was a door at the foot of the stairs to make it more secure from attacking enemies. Just outside the door in the west wall was a niche, used for a pine torch. Also inside the cellar on the south wall was another niche, larger than the outside one. In the southwest corner was a **clear spring**.

No slave cabins remain on the property.



Cellar entrance (left) and vaulted ceiling (above) of the Charles Keyser Fort Home. "Acculturation in the Shenandoah Valley: Rhenish Houses of the Massanutten Settlement". Edward A. Chappell 1980.



Remains of the fort cellar (left) and close up of the stone work as it appeared on 18 Feb 2019.



Window outside the fort cellar.



Arched entry into the fort cellar.



A peek into the cellar through the outside window. Photos by Marie Rasnick Fetzer



HOME OF MAJOR ANDREW KEYSER of the Revolution, log construction, standing, opposite the mouth of the Hawksbill.

This is the Charles Keyser Fort Home, (also known as: Andrew Keyser, Sr. Home; Major Andrew Keyser, Sr. Home; Andrew Keyser, Jr. Home; Colonel Andrew Keyser, Jr. Home.) Block print made by Harry M. Strickler in the Winter of 1936. "A Short History of Page County, Virginia", Harry M. Strickler.

CHARLES KEYSER, JR. HOME



*Rear view of the Charles Keyser, Jr. Home
"Acculturation in the Shenandoah Valley:
Rhenish Houses of the Massanutten Settlement"
Edward A. Chappell 1980.*

CHARLES KEYSER, JR. HOME



Side and Front View of the Charles Keyser, Jr. Home. Photos by Marie Rasnick Fetzer 17 Feb 2019.

The Charles Keyser, Jr. Home is located on the Shenandoah River near the mouth of Hawksbill Creek in Luray, Virginia. According to WPA Historical Inventory Report No. 223, this home was originally called the **Michael Rinehart Home**. It was **built as a “Fort Home” to protect from Indian attacks prior to 1735**, making it at least **284 years old**. Amazingly, it still stands! It was conveyed by deed along with the land that Charles Keyser, Sr. purchased from Lewis and Matthias Rhinehart in **1765**.



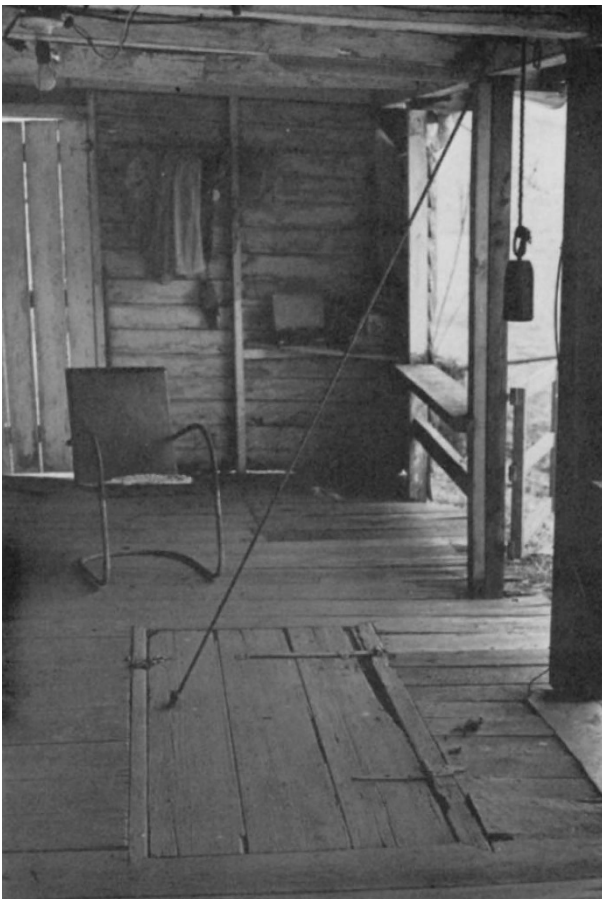
Near the outer edge of the porch is a trap door opening to a stairway leading down to the Fort Cellar.

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CHARLES KEYSER, JR. HOME



Rear View of the Charles Keyser, Jr. Home. Photo by Owen Kiser Nov 1999.



Trap Door in the Porch (left) and Fort Cellar (above). Photos from "Acculturation in the Shenandoah Valley: Rhenish Houses of the Massanutten Settlement" by Edward A. Chappell 1980.

A **vaulted cellar**, 10 ft. wide, 18 ft. long and six- and one-half feet high, is located below the south end of the porch. It was reached by nine stone steps descending from a **weighted trap door** (left) in the porch floor. On the south end wall was a **port hole for firing at marauding Indians**.

To the east of the **port hole** was a square hole or niche used for a pine torch.

CHARLES KEYSER, JR. HOME

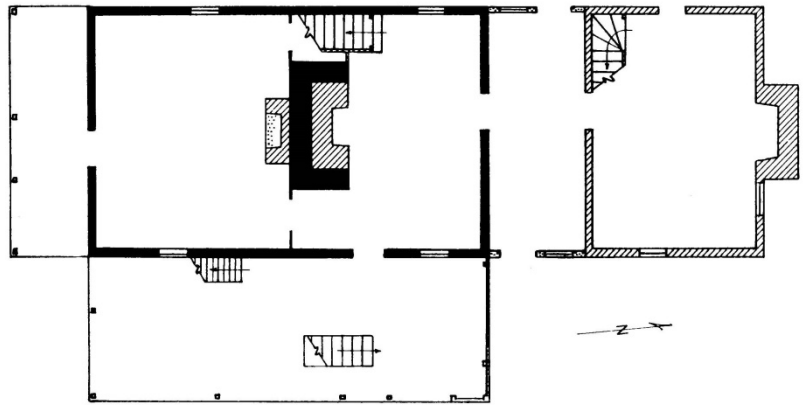
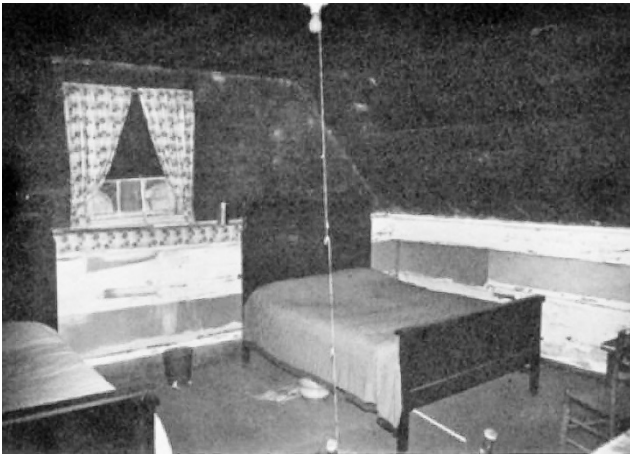
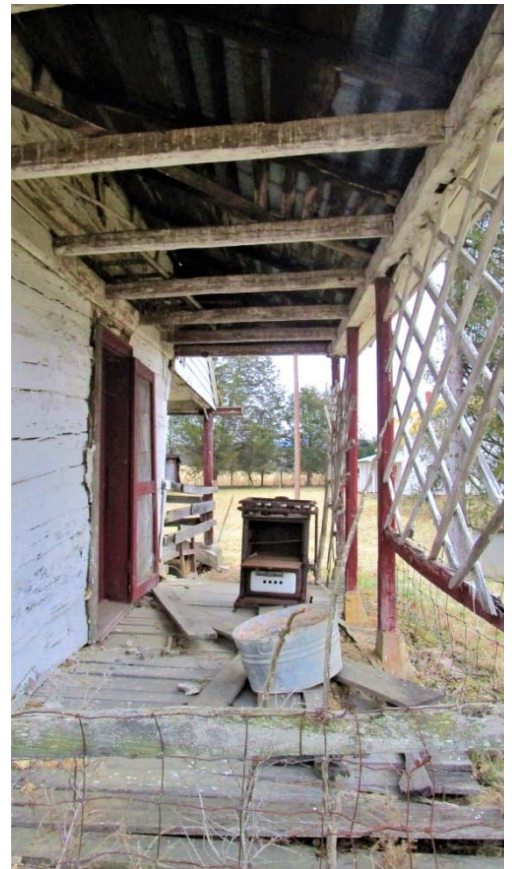
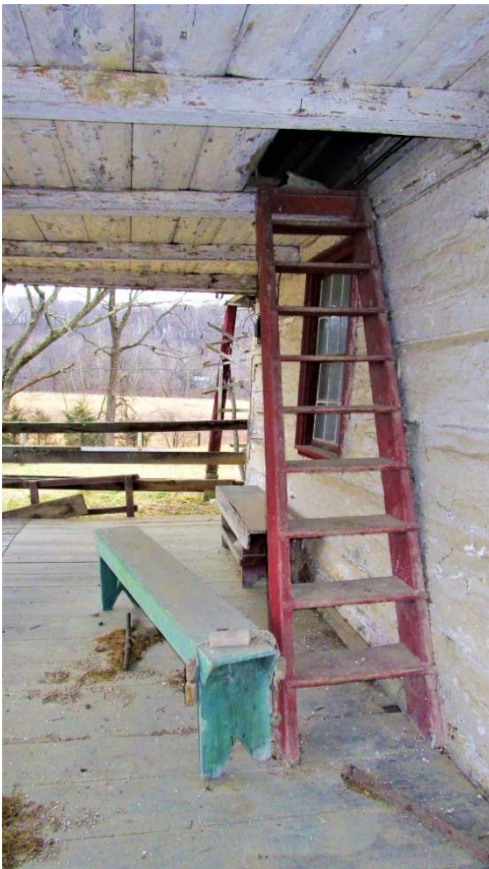


FIG. 34. Charles Keyser House. First-floor plan.

Second floor bedroom (left) and Restored first floor plan (right). Photos from “Acculturation in the Shenandoah Valley: Rhenish Houses of the Massanutten Settlement” by Edward A. Chappell 1980.

The walls of this old home were made from large logs, all walnut, cut from trees along the banks of the Shenandoah River. A very narrow, steep stairway led to the second floor bedrooms.



Ladder going up to attic used for storage and drying vegetables (left). Peeking inside the house shows the whitewashed log wall (center). An old stove and wash tub stand outside on the porch (right). Photos by Marie Rasnick Fetzer 17 Feb 2019.

CHARLES KEYSER, JR. HOME



View from the porch looking toward the Shenandoah River just past the tree line. Photo by Marie Rasnick Fetzer 17 Feb 2019.



Glimpse under the porch through the stone arch entrance to the Fort Cellar. Photo by Marie Rasnick Fetzer 17 Feb 2019.

CHARLES KEYSER, JR. HOME



Slave Cabin. Photo by Vivian Black 2 Sep 1936.



Slave Cabin. Photo by Marie Rasnick Fetzer 17 Feb 2019.

WPA Historical Inventory Report No. 223 researched by **Vivian Black** and dated 2 Sep 1936 identified this building as the “**slave quarters**”. Per her description it was, “A two room log building, with attic bedrooms above. It has two large rock chimneys, one in the center of the two rooms and one on the north end.” She noted the building, at the time of the report, was used as a wash house and for storage.



*Charles Keyser, Jr. Home. Block print made by Harry M. Strickler in the Winter of 1936.
“A Short History of Page County, Virginia”, Harry M. Strickler.*

**ANDREW KEYSER, JR.
MANSION HOUSE**



*Andrew Keyser, Jr.'s. Mansion House
Photo by Vivian Black 24 Aug 1936
WPA Historical Inventory Report No. 222*

After the death of the **Pioneer Charles Keyser, Sr.**, the Fort Home that he built in 1765 was occupied by his son, **Andrew Keyser, Sr.** Upon Andrew, Sr.'s death, his son **Andrew Keyser, Jr.** inherited the home place in **1833**. In 1936, local resident **Vivian Black** wrote her observations and impressions of the homes on the **Old Keyser Farm** in several **Virginia Historical Inventory Reports**. In **Report No. 222**, she writes that soon after his father's death, Andrew, Jr. built a larger and more elaborate home; she gives the approximate date of the building as **1840**. This, like the old Keyser home, was built of **logs**, but Vivian noted that years before it had been weather boarded. It was a two-story structure, and originally consisted of five large rooms, two halls, a lower and upper back porch and a front porch. Recently, she wrote, an ell had been added on the back, and if you look at it today, you can see that indeed, it appears almost as two houses were put together. On either end was a large rock chimney six feet wide, three feet deep and thirty feet high. These were covered with mortar and gave a smooth appearance. The front porch extended the full length of the house, and until recent years, this had been supported by seven brick posts.

As she entered the hall, she was surprised to see the **original paint, walls and woodwork still existed**. The walls were between a gray and blue and had a frescoed border of pale pink and white lilies. In the center of the ceilings was an ornamental circle consisting of several rings, made of plaster. This plaster consisted of lime and sand only, and required an expert plasterer to do this work.

The doors, window cases, staircase and all wood trimming were treated with a coat of clay plaster before being varnished. Vivian stated that this woodwork at the time of her visit (1936) had the appearance of just having been finished. The floor in the hall was very unusual. The boards were painted blue and brown - first a blue board and then a brown, etc. The **staircase was all handmade**, with scroll trimming on the outside. There was a beveled strip under each step. The balustrade was plain. Over the hall door were three glass panels. The door frame was paneled with hand carved strips of wood. All the doors were finished alike. They had six panels. The two top ones were thirteen by twenty inches, while the four lower ones were the same size, twenty by twenty inches.

At the left, as one entered the hall, was the parlor. This room was eighteen by twenty feet, and had paneling two and one-half feet wide around the base. The panel was finished like the other wood trimming. The fireplace was very beautiful. The fret work was handsomely hand carved. The fireplace and mantel were very elaborate. There were four large windows to add to the beauty of the room.

On the left of the hall was another immense room, twenty by twenty feet. This, too, had four windows and a door opening on the porch. There was a fireplace, but it was not nearly so large as the one in the parlor. Originally, a log kitchen stood next to this room with a rock chimney on the north.

The hall upstairs had a door opening on the back porch. The original porch was removed when the ell was built. The two bedrooms were the same size as the ones below. Each had a fireplace.

At the time of Vivian's visit, the **slave quarters** were not standing. The only old building she noted standing was the one that housed the **blacksmith shop**. At the time of my visit in 2019, there were quite a few outbuildings on the property, however I was told by a local historian that

all the old barns in the area had been burned during the Civil War, and so the buildings I saw would have been constructed after Vivian's visit in 1936.

Vivian Black's report stated that Andrew Keyser, Jr. was **too old to serve the Confederacy**, but sent several sons. According to Page County Court records, **Andrew Keyser, Jr.** was appointed **Major of the Militia** on 28 Jul 1834. Vivian added that he was also a **Colonel in the State Militia**, and that he represented his county for one term of the **State Legislature**. The **northern soldiers** made their appearance at this home only once during the **War Between the States**, and stayed only a short time, as they were **ousted by a band of conscripts**. The sources of information she cited in her report included Peter Keyser, Page County Court records, and the books, "History of the Valley" by Samuel Kercheval and "Massanutten" by Harry M. Strickler.



In 1765 Charles Keyser, Sr. built this Fort Home, which was later occupied by Andrew Keyser, Sr. Upon Andrew, Sr.'s death in 1833, his son Andrew Keyser, Jr. inherited the house. Photo by Vivian Black, 1936.



Shortly after his father's death, Andrew Keyser, Jr. decided to build a larger and more elaborate home circa 1840, called "The Mansion House". Photo by Vivian Black, 1936.



The front of the Mansion House as it appeared in 2019. Notice the same chimneys on either ends of the house, the same roof and the same tree growing in the front yard as in the 1936 photo. What can't be seen are the same three glass panels over the front door leading into the parlor as described in Vivian Black's report. Unfortunately, today the house and much of the property is being used for storage. Photo by Marie Rasnick Fetzer.



View of one of the thirty-foot-high chimneys located at either end of the house. Photo by Marie Rasnick Fetzer.



View from the back side of the house where the newer “ell” addition is visible on the left, and the original part of the house is on the right. If you peek under the clap board, the original logs can be seen. Photo by Marie Rasnick Fetzer.



Some of the out buildings seen on the property in 2019. Photo by Marie Rasnick Fetzer.



A barn on the left. The view down the old road leads to the Shenandoah River. Photo by Marie Rasnick Fetzer.

OLD KEYSER GRAVEYARD

Luray, Page Co., Virginia



*Charles Keyser Cemetery
17 February 2019*

CHARLES KEYSER CEMETERY INVENTORY

Luray, Page County, Virginia
18 February 2019

1. **CHARLES KEYSER, SR. / (CARL SEBASTIAN KAYSER) (16 Jan 1726 - 1778) aged 52 years.** The date of his death is unknown, but he was buried before 28 May 1778. A very unusual incident happened after Charles had been laid to rest. While his great-grandson, **Isaac C. Dovel**, was visiting his relatives in Virginia, a conversation with some of them arose as to where Charles and his wife were buried. Some inclined to the opinion that both were placed in the same grave, so they decided to open it. On 9 October 1876, his **grave was opened** by Peter and Henry Keyser, sons of Andrew Keyser, Jr. Also present were Charles Keyser, (*grandson*), Capt. Joseph Keyser, (*son of Noah Keyser*), Joseph W. Keyser, (*son of Peter Keyser*) and Uphemia Richardson, (*daughter of Andrew Keyser Jr.*). The skull, teeth and hair were found to be in a wonderful state of preservation after having been buried [98 years]. [Dovel Family Record.] Apparently, after they **reburied him**, they did not mark the spot, and currently there is no marker designating his exact place of burial. A small modern memorial stone, bearing the incorrect year of birth (1702), was placed in the ground at a later date, but was not visible during a visit in Feb 2019.



2. **WIFE OF CHARLES KEYSER, SR. (-)**

Some early researchers attributed the name of **Mary Shelly** as Charles Keyser's wife; others list her name as **Elizabeth Grossgloss/Grossclose**. No definitive evidence has been found either way, and her name remains in dispute. No original marker was found. The exact location of her grave is unknown, and it is possible she was reburied with her husband on 9 Oct 1876. At some later date, a memorial stone bearing the name, **Elizabeth G. Keyser**, was placed along the fence line looking toward the Charles Keyser, Jr. home and was visible in 2019.



3. **CHARLES KEYSER, JR. (about 1752 - 1796) aged 44 years.**
Son of Charles Keyser, Sr. Died in the **Yellow Fever Epidemic** of 1796 along with at least four of his children, all of whom were buried in this cemetery. No marker for him has been found. His wife, **Elizabeth Baker Keyser**, moved “west” with several of her children, and died in Ohio before 1843. Her body was interred in **Kizer Cemetery, Champaign Co, Ohio.**
4. **CHARLES KEYSER, III (about 1788 - 1796) aged 8 years.**
Son of Charles Keyser, Jr. and Elizabeth Baker Keyser. He died in the **Yellow Fever Epidemic** of 1796 with his father and three of his siblings. No marker identified.
5. **ELIZABETH KEYSER (about 1790 - 1796) aged 6 years.**
Daughter of Charles Keyser, Jr. and Elizabeth Baker Keyser. She died in the **Yellow Fever Epidemic** of 1796 along with her father and three of her siblings. No marker identified.
6. **UNKNOWN KEYSER (- 1796)**
Child of Charles Keyser, Jr. and Elizabeth Baker Keyser. Died in the **Yellow Fever Epidemic** of 1796 along with his/her father and three siblings. No marker identified.
7. **UNKNOWN KEYSER (- 1796)**
Child of Charles Keyser, Jr. and Elizabeth Baker Keyser. Died in the **Yellow Fever Epidemic** of 1796 along with his/her father and three siblings. No marker identified.

In 2001, researcher Julie Voyles wrote: Charles Keyser, Jr. died of Yellow Fever, along with four of his children, two of whom have not been identified. He is buried in the Old Keyser Farm in Page County, Virginia. In the family graveyard are several rough, unhewn stones of native blue limestone on which inscriptions have been carved by an unskilled workman. **All of these stones appear to have been set up at the same time, and carved by the same hand.** An attempted reading of one is as follows: “*Here lies the body of C. Keyser. He was born ----- 1752 -----1799.*” [Sources E.J. Sutherland; Louise Keyser Cockey; “Keyser-Kiser-Kizer” by Denise Mahan Moore; “Mead Relations” by A.M. Prichard; and Ann Hart Stewart.]

On my visit in 2019, six unidentified stones were found; some of them could possibly have marked the graves of Charles Keyser, Jr. and these children, or someone else. Two had indications of markings, but were much too faint to read (photos below).

UNIDENTIFIED FIELDSTONE MARKERS



8. **ANDREW KEYSER, SR. / (MAJOR ANDREW KEYSER) (16 Dec 1758 - 23 Nov 1833) aged 74 years.** Son of Charles Keyser, Sr. He was a **Soldier in the Revolutionary War** in Pvt. Oldham's Company. Andrew Keyser, Sr. has two tombstones in this cemetery:

(A) Military Tombstone



Tombstone with its whitewashed face (left), date of photo unknown; and as it looked in Feb 2019 (center and right).

(B) Hand Scribed Field Stone



Whitewashed field stone (left), date of photo unknown. To the right is the stone as it appeared in Feb 2019. The inscription originally read, "Sacred to the memory of A. Keyser who departed this life on the 23rd of Nov. 1833, aged 75 years."

9. **SARAH MARGARET “SALLY” RINEHART KEYSER (1770 - 1820) aged 49 years.**

First wife of Andrew Keyser, Sr., and sister of Catherine Rinehart, wife of her husband’s brother, John Keyser.



*Whitewashed hand scribed field stone (left), date of photo unknown. At that time, part of the inscription could still be read, “**HERE LYS THE BODY OF SARA KEYSER WHO WAS BORN...**”. To the right is the stone as it appeared in Feb 2019. After Andrew Keyser, Sr.’s death, his second wife, **Elizabeth Grove Strickler Keyser**, went to live with her daughter and was buried in the **Heiston Family Cemetery near Dry Run in Page Co.***

10. **ANDREW KEYSER, JR. / (COLONEL ANDREW KEYSER) (30 Mar 1804 - 20 Jul 1876) aged 72 years.** Son of Andrew Keyser, Sr. and Sarah Rinehart Keyser. **Colonel in the Virginia State Militia.**



*Tombstone with its whitewashed face (left), uprighted by Owen Kiser and John Parrott in May of 2000. During a visit in Feb 2019, the stone had fallen flat on the ground but was not cracked (right). Inscription: “**Andrew Keyser Died July 2nd 1876 Aged 72 years, 3 mos. & 20 days. The father----- and soldiers’ friend.**”*

11. **MARY EMELINE BRUBAKER KEYSER (28 Mar 1810 - 11 Nov 1834) Aged 24 years.**
First wife of Andrew Keyser, Jr.



*The tombstone as it appeared at an unknown date, (above left), and as it appeared laying on the ground during a visit in 2019, (above right). Inscription reads: **MARY** wife of **ANDREW KEYSER** died Nov. 11, 1824. Aged 24 years, 7 months & 14 days. Another stone was found with only the initials M. K., which may have been the footstone marker for her grave.*



12. **PAMELA A. KEYSER HOTTEL (26 Dec 1826 - 25 Jan 1862) Aged 35 years.**
Daughter of Andrew Keyser, Jr. and Mary Brubaker; wife of Jared M. Hottel.



*Marker as it appeared at an unknown date (left), and in 2019 (right). Inscription reads: **In Memory of PAMELA A. Wife of JARED M. HOTTEL, and daughter of ANDREW & MARY KEYSER. Dec. 26, 1826 - Jan. 25, 1862.***

13. **ROBERT G. KEYSER (8 Mar 1828 - 7 Oct 1828) Aged 6 months.**
Son of Andrew Keyser, Jr. and Mary Brubaker.



*Marker as it appeared at an unknown date (left), and during a visit in 2019 (right). Inscription reads: **ROBERT G. Infant Son of Andrew and Mary Keyser.....***

- 14, **CHARLES KEYSER (2 Sep 1806 - 18 Oct 1891) aged 85 years, 1 month and 16 days.**
Son of Andrew Keyser, Sr. and Sarah Margaret Sally Rinehart.



The marker when it was still upright (left) at an unknown date, and lying on the ground as found in 2019 (right).

- 15. AMANDA HAUN KEYSER (12 Jan 1814 - 7 Feb 1900) aged 86 years and 25 days.**
Wife of Charles Keyser, son of Andrew Keyser, Sr. and Sarah Margaret Sally Rinehart.



The stone as it appeared at an unknown date (left). The headstone, still upright (center), along with a plain stone lying on the ground (right) inscribed with the initials A. K., which could have been her foot stone, as they appeared in 2019.

16. **JULIA ANN (THOMPSON or COX) KEYSER (13 Sept 1813 - 22 Mar 1880) Aged 66 years, 6 months and 9 days.** Second wife of Andrew Keyser, Jr. Per handwritten records found in **Andrew Keyser's 1829 Bible**, Julia's name is given as **Julia Ann Thompson Keyser**, however other sources, such as the research of **Julie Voyles**, and the article, "*The Keyser Family*", in the **Page News and Courier**, 29 Apr 1897, give is as **Julia A. Cox**.



*Upright stone as it appeared at an unknown date (left). Headstone and footstone as they appeared during a visit in 2019 (above). Inscription reads: **JULIA A. Wife of Col. ANDREW KEYSER died March 22, 1880. Aged 66 years, 6 months & 9 days.***

17. **ANDREW NEWTON KEYSER (9 Aug 1849-17 Jan 1852) aged 2 years, 5 months and 8 days.** Son of Andrew Keyser, Jr. and Julia Ann Keyser.



The headstone as it appeared at an unknown date (left), and what I believe is the same headstone, lying on the ground (center) and the footstone with the initials A. N. K. (right) during a visit in 2019.

ADDITIONAL BURIALS

According to previous inventories of the CHARLES KEYSER GRAVEYARD, the following people are also buried there, although no markers for them were found in 2019.

18. ESTHER KEYSER (10 Mar 1851 -)

During a survey on 20 Mar 1983, **Mrs. Jeanette Conner Ritenour** found a hand inscribed fieldstone for: *Esther Keyser Born 10 Mar 1851*. She noted that the rest of the inscription was too faint and illegible to decipher. Also noted, Esther was the **daughter of Sarah Keyser**.

19. SARAH KEYSER (17 - 1851)

In WPA Historical Inventory Report No. 182 dated 14 February 1938, **Vivian Black** noted a home made stone with the following inscription: *Here lies the body of Sarah Keyser. She was born D C M 11, 17--. Died 1851.*

20. UNKNOWN DAUGHTER OF ELIZABETH KIZER

During a survey on 20 Mar 1983, **Mrs. Jeanette Connor Ritenour** found a fieldstone hand inscribed as follows: *Here lies _____ Daughter of Elizabeth Kizer. She was born 2-14-_____ and died 12 _____*. She noted that the rest of the inscription was very illegible.

21. LUCRETIA BELLE KEYSER BRUBAKER (15 Aug 1862 - 6 Feb 1922) Aged 59 years.

Daughter of Charles Keyser (son of Andrew Keyser, Sr. and Sarah Margaret Sally Rinehart) and Amanda Haun; wife of Dr. John C. Brubaker. According to her death announcement, she was buried in the Keyser burial ground, owned by Raymond Strickler.

<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/88646884/lucretia-belle-brubaker> . No marker for her was found during a visit in 2019.

22. DR. JOHN C. BRUBAKER (1850 - 23 Jan 1917) Aged 66 years

Farmer and prominent Page Co. physician for forty years. Husband of Lucretia Belle Keyser. According to his death announcement printed in the **Harrisonburg Daily News Record, 25 Jan 1917**, <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/63598861/john-c.-brubaker> interment was in the Old Keyser burying ground near his home.

23. CATHARINE KEYSER (-)

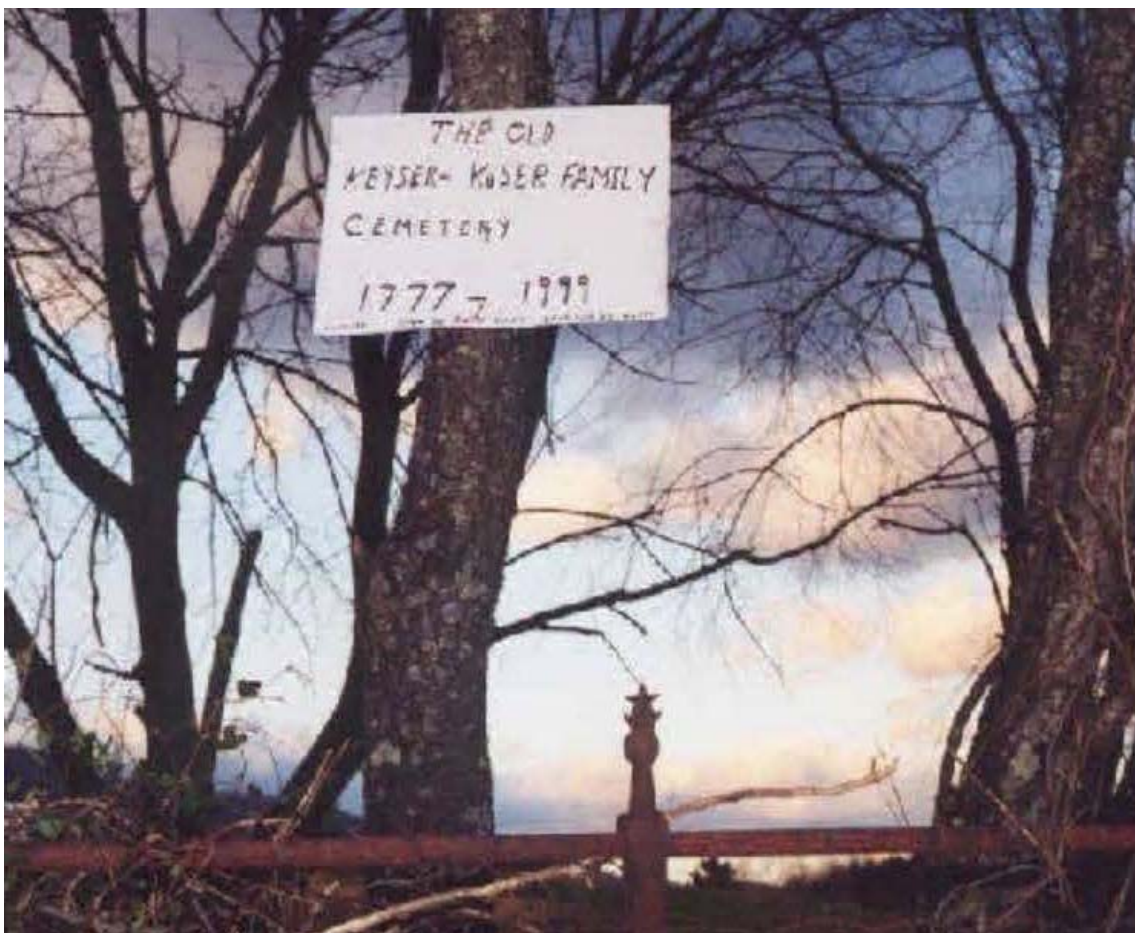
Catharine Keyser was the daughter of Charles Keyser, Sr. and his wife. Because she **never married** [Mead Relations, A.M. Prichard] Catharine probably remained at home and was **probably buried in this cemetery**.

MASS SLAVE GRAVE

During the construction of a new highway (date unknown), **individual slave graves** were discovered just outside the fenced cemetery. Per Mark Kiser/Jim Keyser, **a contractor was hired to disinter and rebury the remains in a mass grave inside the cemetery.**

KEYSER CEMETERY CLEANUP MEMORIAL DAY WEEKEND 2000

In the Fall of 1999, **Owen Kiser of Salt Lick, Kentucky**, visited and photographed the old **Charles Keyser Farm and Cemetery**. During Memorial Day the next year, Owen and a small group of men took upon themselves to cleanup and repair the **Old Keyser Graveyard**, and the photos appear below. Known workers were: **Owen Kiser, John Parrott, Phillip Lamb and Jim Keyser**. All photos of the cleanup were taken by **Owen Kiser** and appear in *“Keysers of Shenandoah and Page Counties of Virginia”*, compiled by **Julie R. Voyles, 2001**.



*Sign made and hung by Owen Kiser.
Photo by Owen Kiser.*



Charles Keyser, Sr. Cemetery, Page County, Virginia, in the little clump of trees on the right. Owen's car in the distance. Sep 1999. Before cleanup. Photo by Owen Kiser.



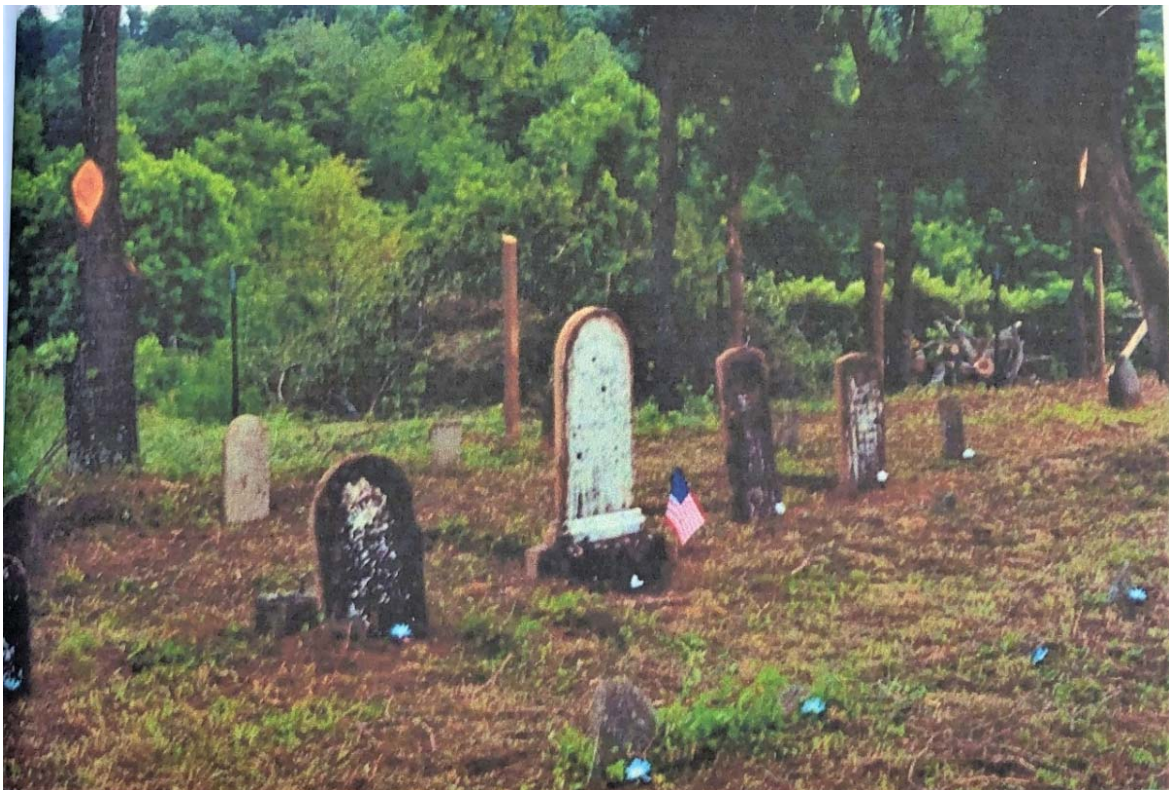
John Parrott and Phillip Lamb, just outside the fence of the Keyser Cemetery. Phillip Lamb's house in foreground. 20 May 2000. Photo by Owen Kiser.



Working men, Phillip Lamb in red shirt, John Parrott in overalls, Jim Keyser in dark hat and shirt. Digging fence posts. Cemetery is on Phillip Lamb's property. 20 May 2000. Photo by Owen Kiser.



Tombstones righted by Owen Kiser and John Parrott, 21 May 2000. Photo by Owen Kiser.



Tombstones righted by Owen Kiser and John Parrott, 21 May 2000. Photo by Owen Kiser.



Tombstones righted by Owen Kiser and John Parrott, 21 May 2000. Photo by Owen Kiser.



*Flag Pole and American Flag provided by Owen Kiser.
Installed by Owen Kiser and John Parrott, 21 May 2000
at the Tombstone of:*

**Revolutionary War Soldier
ANDREW KEYSER, SR.
Captain Conway Oldham's Company
Colonel Richard Campbell's Virginia Regiment**

CHARLES KEYSER CEMETERY

As it Appeared on 17-18 Feb 2019

Marie Rasnick Fetzer

The **last cleanup** of this cemetery was **twenty years ago** and it is now **in dire need of attention**. If you would like to **help contribute money or labor to the cleanup and repair of this cemetery**, or to **help purchase a memorial marker for Charles Keyser and his wife**, please contact: mariefetzer@tds.net .



Photo by Marie Rasnick Fetzer.



Photo by Marie Rasnick Fetzer.



*Sometime in the 20th century, two small markers for Charles Keyser, Sr. and his wife were embedded in the ground near the largest stone in this photo. **It is hoped that a proper monument can be purchased and erected in honor of this couple and their Pioneer Keyser Family soon.** Photo by Marie Rasnick Fetzer.*



*Note the bench here is the same as in the picture above. **This view looks out toward Charles Keyser, Jr.'s home,** which can be seen in the distance. Photo by Marie Rasnick Fetzer.*



A large tree has uprooted near the Andrew Keyser, Sr. tombstone. Photo by Marie Rasnick Fetzer.



Most of the old cemetery fence is now missing and needs to be replaced. Photo by Marie Rasnick Fetzer.



*Another view of the uprooted tree that just missed the flag pole and the Andrew Keyser, Sr. tombstone.
Photo by Marie Rasnick Fetzer.*



Cemetery gate has all but disintegrated over the years. Photo by Marie Rasnick Fetzer.