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"Fare Fac - Say Do"

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# The Fare Facs Gazette

The Newsletter of Historic Fairfax City, Inc.

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Winter 2005

## Richard Ratcliffe: The Founder

by William Page Johnson, II



One of the most influential and often overlooked figures in the early history of Fairfax is Richard Ratcliffe. Born in Fairfax County, Virginia about 1751, Richard was the son of John Ratcliffe and Ann (Smith) Moxley, the widow of Thomas Moxley. John Ratcliffe, was a contemporary of both George Mason and George Washington. In fact, Washington recorded the Ratcliffe's in his diary: "*Mrs. Ratcliffe and her son came to dinner.*"<sup>1</sup>

From 1771 until his death in 1825 Richard Ratcliffe served variously as the Fairfax County sheriff, coroner, justice, patroller, overseer of the poor, constable, commissioner of the revenue, jail inspector, superintendent of elections, candidate for the Virginia General Assembly and designer and developer of *Providence*, the town that we now call the City of Fairfax.

By the 1750s Virginia colonial culture was becoming distinctly different from that of Great Britain. Political and religious dissent was increasing. Large crowds would gather in cities, towns, and rural areas to hear stirring sermons by preachers such as Jeremiah Moore, a Baptist, and George Whitefield, a Presbyterian. Both men advocated religious freedom. The seeds of revolution were being sown. At about the same time a young surveyor and militia officer named George Washington was busy surveying the Virginia frontier and, while so engaged accidentally touched off an international incident – The French and Indian War.

It was in this environment Richard Ratcliffe came of age. Richard was an educated man. He was, most likely, instructed at home by his father. He enjoyed a middle-class lifestyle by 18<sup>th</sup> c. standards and was undoubtedly exposed to a variety of cultural activities when he accompanied his father on business to Alexandria. As a young man Richard was ambitious. In 1771, at the age 21, he was appointed a deputy sheriff for Fairfax County, the beginning of a public service career that would span fifty-four years.

Little is known of Richard's activities during the Revolution. In 1770, his father signed a Non-Importation Broadside against British goods. Richard did not serve in the Continental Army or militia, but he did supply them with provisions. By 1777 Richard had met and married Louisiana "Locian" Bolling the daughter of Gerrard and

**Ratcliffe... - continued from pg. 1**

Martha (Moxley) Boling. The couple raised a sizeable family of nine children: Robert, Samuel, John, Charles, Patsy, Penelope, Locian, Nancy, and Jane.

Richard began acquiring land near the headwaters of Accotink Creek in 1786. Also located here at the intersection of Payne's Church Road (now Rt. 123) and the Falls Church Road (now Rt. 237) was a store operated by Caleb Earp. The area was known as Earps Corner, or Earps Ordinary. By the mid-1790s Richard Ratcliffe owned nearly 3000 acres of land in this vicinity including all of the present Downtown Historic District of the City of Fairfax. He called his plantation *Mount Vineyard*. He could not have imagined then the changes that were to come, but he would benefit greatly from them.

In 1789, the fledgling United States Congress created our federal capital - the District of Columbia. At George Washington's suggestion the Town of Alexandria was included in the new federal capital. Unfortunately, the Fairfax County Courthouse, which had been located in Alexandria since 1752, was now outside of the legal boundaries of Fairfax county. The General Assembly acted and ordered the Fairfax County Court to find a new courthouse location near "*Price's Tavern*." (present day Backlick and Braddock Roads). Citizen opposition to moving the courthouse from Alexandria was very vocal and nothing further was done for a decade.

In 1794, Richard was appointed as a Fairfax County Court justice. Such appointments were made by the Governor and were very prestigious. Justices, who were appointed for life, had immense power in the 18<sup>th</sup> century—all but the power of life and death. With the exception of slaves, capital crimes were heard in General Court in Williamsburg and later in Richmond.

In 1798, the General Assembly adjusted the boundary between Fairfax and Loudoun giving Fairfax nearly forty additional square miles of land. The Virginia General Assembly once again directed the Fairfax

County Court to find a new location for the Courthouse near the center of the county.

Richard Ratcliffe offered four acres to the county for one dollar. The county accepted his offer and the property transferred in June 1799. Construction of the new courthouse buildings began immediately. The new buildings were completed by January 27, 1800 and the county accepted the building.

Richard's offer was not entirely philanthropic. He owned all the land around the four-acre courthouse lot and he hoped to benefit from the commercial development that would follow. Evidence supporting Richard's commercial hopes is apparent in the following advertisement which appeared in the *Alexandria Gazette* just weeks after the new Court House was completed:

**To be Rented,**  
*And Possession given about the 10th of next month,*

**A** Newly built two story **BRICK HOUSE** 44 by 32 feet, calculated for a Tavern, with other necessary buildings, viz. Kitchen, Smoak House, Stables, &c. situated at the new Court House of Fairfax county, with other accommodations and privileges, which (as it is presumed a person inclined to rent would first view them) are unnecessary to enumerate, as it is conceived there are but few situations that offer greater advantages in that line than the above, it would be worth the attention of a person who is calculated therefor.—I will rent the premises for one, two, or more Years, as may best suit the Tenant, at a very reasonable Rent, to a man of activity, and good character as an innkeeper.—For further information, application to be made to me near the said Court House.

**RICHARD RATCLIFFE.**  
 January 22. 1800.

*Alexandria Gazette*, February 1, 1800, p. 4.

Apparently, while the courthouse was under construction Richard was busy constructing a new *Brick Tavern* on the site of Caleb Earps store directly opposite

the new courthouse. Caleb Earp had died in 1799. The Tavern stood until it was demolished in 1934 to make way for the present Bank of America building.

After the courthouse was completed the Fairfax County Court justices deemed the size of the courthouse lot too small to accommodate a clerk's office, jail, pillory, stocks and stable and all other buildings that would be required. Accordingly, in March 1800, the Court ordered the acquisition of an additional six acres. That same month the Alexandria Gazette printed the following notice:

**NOTICE.**  
**T**HE County Court of Fairfax is adjourned from the Town of Alexandria to the new Court House, in the centre of the County, where all Suitors, & others having business, are hereby notified to attend, on the third Monday in April next—and the Freeholders of the County of Fairfax are also notified that on the fourth Wednesday in April next and Election will be held at the said new Court House, for one Senator and two Representatives, to serve in the next General Assembly.  
**WILLIAM DENEALE,**  
 Sheriff of Fairfax,  
 March 24.

*Alexandria Gazette, March 29, 1800, p. 1.*

In October 1800, Richard's vision grew more ambitious. With the probable assistance of his son Robert, who was then the deputy county surveyor, Richard began to lay out a town around the new courthouse. He once again advertised his intentions in the *Alexandria Gazette* (see opposite page).

The new courthouse was centrally located within the county but only two roads, the Payne's Church Road (Rt. 123) and the Falls Church Road (Rt. 237), connected it to the rest of the county. Before construction of the new courthouse, farmers to the west had tried for years

**THE TAVERN**  
 OF  
**FAIRFAX COUNTY COURTHOUSE,**  
**To Let.**  
**I** WISH to rent for one or more years, to a person or persons able and qualified to keep it, the **BRICK HOUSE** erected for a Tavern at this place. I am now making some additional improvements which will be completed in a few weeks. The house is large and well calculated for the purpose, as will be the stable, to which are adding sheds on each side, that will then hold 48 horses, with a very large quantity of hay. To the Brick house will be added a large piazza, the full length, &c.  
 From the small trial a ready experienced, I am authorized to say, but few situations of this kind would be equally productive of profit to the occupant, if well calculated for the business. There will be let with the buildings and lot on which they stand, a grazing lot of about four acres, and other privileges will be allowed a tenant. Possession can be had at any time between this and the first day of January next.  
**Also to Rent at the same place,**  
**A HOUSE CALCULATED FOR A STORE,**  
 with store and counting rooms, and a Cellar under the whole.  
 This has been heretofore considered as a suitable place for a store, but has now become much more so, from the public buildings having been erected thereat.  
 I will let to mechanics, on ground rent forever, a few **LOTS** at this place—and think it a very suitable situation for a saddler, blacksmith, wheelwright, tanner, shoemaker, &c. as the country custom is their chief dependence. A fine situation for a **Lan Yrd** can be had, where a never failing stream may be conducted to any part, at an expense no greater than the labour of a hand for one day.  
**Also to Rent,**  
**A DWELLING HOUSE, KITCHEN AND STABLE,**  
 with a Lot of two Acres inclosed, situate on the turnpike road, within one and a quarter of a mile from this place—the lot is rich and the buildings new and convenient, and will suit a Mechanic, or for the purpose of entertainment, possession will be given the first of January next.

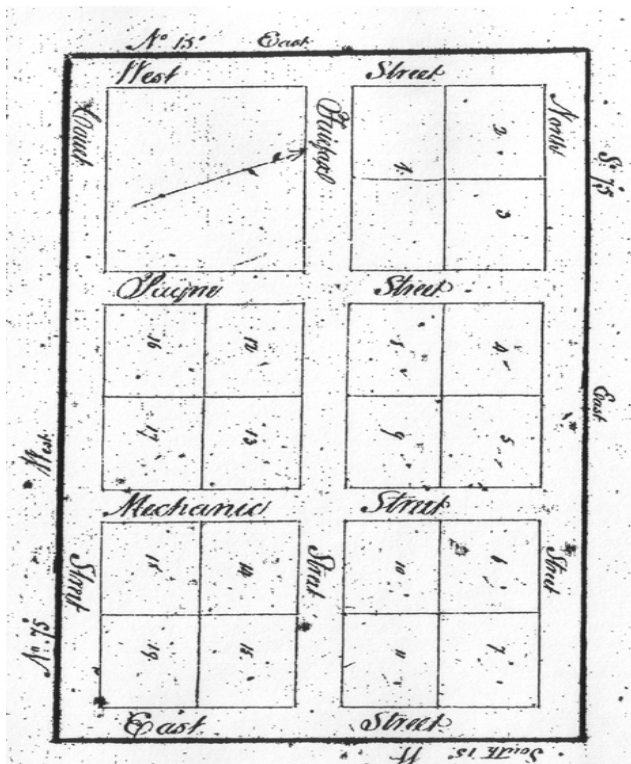
*Alexandria Gazette, October 30, 1800, p. 1.*

to establish a more direct route from their farms to markets in Alexandria. In 1802, the Little River Turnpike Co. was established to connect these areas with Alexandria. The route of the new turnpike was established by the fall of 1803 and was to be from Alexandria, through central Fairfax county and the courthouse, to the Little River (Aldie) in Loudoun



county. Richard, who was still a Fairfax County justice and probable a stockholder of the Little River Company, may have influenced the route, but it is more likely that the new courthouse location dictated the route. In either case fortune again smiled on Richard Ratcliffe.

In the fall of 1804 construction of the new turnpike neared the courthouse. Richard asked his friend, Virginia Delegate Richard Bland Lee of nearby Sully Plantation, to introduce legislation to the General Assembly establishing a town at Fairfax Court House. The legislation was approved and the Town of Providence was created on January 14, 1805. According to the plan of the town six streets, fifty feet wide were to be established. North, Fairfax, and Court Streets, were to run east-west, while West, Payne, Mechanic, and East Streets were to be oriented roughly north-south. Fairfax Street, now known as Main Street, was to be aligned with the Little River Turnpike. Mechanic Street is now University Drive, Payne Street, is now Chain Bridge Road, and Court Street is now Sager Avenue. There were to be 19 lots of a half-acre each. All lots were to be sold at public auction except the lot No. 1, the Tavern Lot, which was retained by Richard Ratcliffe.



Plan of Town of Providence, Fx. Co. DB M2, p.137.

Providence lacked a political body, or council for governing, that existed in other Virginia towns. But this was apparently intentional. Trustees were established for the town, but it is not clear what their function was. Presumably they had legal responsibility over the town lots that were to be sold at auction. The trustees were Charles Little, William Payne, Richard Bland Lee, John Jackson, John C. Hunter, Richard Coleman, Daniel McCarty Chichester, Henry Gunnell, Jr., Marmaduke B. Beckwith, Daniel Lewis, Francis Coffey, David Stuart, William Middleton, and Richard Fitzhugh. Apparently, Richard Ratcliffe desired that the Fairfax County Court, of which he a justice, administer the political affairs of the town. Incredibly, Providence and subsequently Fairfax were administered in this manner until the late 19<sup>th</sup> century when a board of supervisors and later a town council were established.

By the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century Providence had come to be known as Fairfax Court House. The name was officially changed in 1874 to the Town of Fairfax. Fairfax became an independent city in 1961.

As he grew older Richard Ratcliffe continued to promote his town. As late as 1819 he advertised building lots for sale or rent in the *Alexandria Gazette*.

Richard Ratcliffe died in 1825. He, and his wife Locian, are probably buried in the Ratcliffe Family Cemetery. The old cemetery is located on Moore Street not far from the Ratcliffe home, Mount Vineyard.

While it is not known for certain why Richard chose the name for his town, all should agree that *Providence* did shine on Richard Ratcliffe.

#### (Sources)

Constance K. Ring, "Richard Ratcliffe: The Man, His Courthouse, and His Town." Yearbook: Historical Society of Fairfax County, 1995, pp. 85-178.

Donald M. Sweig, "Courts Were Appointed In Convenient Places." Fairfax County History Commission, 2001.

Ross D. Netherton, "The Fairfax County Courthouse." Fairfax County Office of Comprehensive Planning, 1977.

Fairfax, Virginia, January 2005-

Messeage from the President:

Greetings from the President--

At our December meeting I was nominated to continue my presidency of Historic Fairfax City Inc for the year 2005. I am honored to accept this post and thank the Board and all our members for their continued confidence. The Vice-president Ann Adams and Secretary Karen Stevenson will also continue serving and we welcome our newly elected Treasurer John Petersen.

Farewell to our "acting" Treasurer Pat Cummins. Pat has been an extremely active and valuable member and will be missed sorely. We are happy to be able to immediately fill that Board vacancy with Sidney Williams who will begin his term February 1<sup>st</sup>. We welcome him to this active board – and if any of you are interested in serving on our Board please call our Nominating Chair Ellen Wigren at 703 273 4950 – and read more about her in our "getting to know you" article.

What an exciting year we are about to begin! Our City's 200<sup>th</sup> birthday will be celebrated all year long. The Board of Historic Fairfax City, Inc. (HFCI) would like to extend an invitation to all of you to attend our various celebrations throughout the year. (See the City's 2005 calendar for details.)

HFCI is proud to be sponsoring the ceremony and the dedication of a marker honoring the founder of our City on January 14<sup>th</sup> at 2PM. There will be an unveiling of the marker dedicated to Richard Ratcliffe, the founder of the City, at the corner of Main and Oak streets. We are proud to say that about 20 of the direct descendants of Richard Ratcliffe will be attending from all over the United States. Come and meet "Richard Ratcliffe": and his descendants at the dedication – and join us at 5PM for the grand opening of the newly renovated "upstairs" room at the Museum and enjoy the exhibit about our City's progress throughout these 200 years.

The celebration will continue on January 15<sup>th</sup> with a Bicentennial Ball at Old Town Hall. Proceeds from this event will support HFCI's capital campaign. Board members will be informing you of how you can help us raise money so that we can continue our work of preservation in the City. Come have fun dining and dancing and support our cause. For more information about the capital campaign call Bill Jayne at 703 352 1534.

April 30<sup>th</sup> is the date of our next project which is the City Homes Tour. This year we will follow the bicentennial theme by showing 6 beautiful homes depicting the growth of the City throughout the century. For information call Co-Chair Karen Stevenson at 703 352 1255.

HFCI will have an active quarter beginning with the activities of the bicentennial. On January 18 there will be an outreach meeting for the citizens of the City to present the final version of the Master Plan for the Blenheim site. Please come and support our efforts to continue the preservation of the historic mansion and begin construction of the interpretive center. For more information call our Blenheim Committee Chair David Meyer at 703 691 8852. In February there will be further outreach to the citizens to support the preservation of the Manassas Gap Railroad site.

This is a new membership year and dues are due in January for 2005. Your membership dues provide us with the funds to assist with the work of preservation in the City of Fairfax. If you haven't sent in your dues please use the attached form and join HFCI's mission. Thank you to you donors who generously provide us with additional funds for special projects. Those of you who received the newsletter for the first time, we hope you enjoyed reading it and decide to join.

I always look forward to meeting you and please call or e-mail me if you have any suggestions or ideas to make our organization a better one. My phone # is 703-591-5305 and e-mail is hilcarn31@aol.com.

Hildie Carney



**(Endnotes continued from pg. 9)**

<sup>4</sup> Wikipedia The Free Encyclopedia. Clarence Saunders.  
[www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Clarence\\_Saunders](http://www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Clarence_Saunders)

<sup>5</sup> Washington Post, September 24, 1919, p. 11.

<sup>6</sup> Washington Post, December 25, 1921, p. 59.

<sup>7</sup> Washington Post, December 25, 1921, p. 58.

<sup>8</sup> Fairfax Herald 1921-1923 various issues.

<sup>9</sup> Fairfax Herald, April 22, 1921, p. 5.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid 9.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid 1.

<sup>12</sup> Washington Post, July 31, 1924, p. 16.

<sup>13</sup> Washington Post, August 30, 1927, p. 18.

<sup>14</sup> Washington Post, April 17, 1907, p. 3.

<sup>15</sup> Fairfax Herald, December 17, 1926, p. 5.

<sup>16</sup> Washington Post, January 27, 1941, p. 7.

## To Market, To Market...

by William Page Johnson, II

Today, we take our trip to the local grocery store for granted. We shop in large, well-lit stores with clean, tidy aisles that are lined with nearly everything you could want. In addition to aisle after aisle of every type of food product imaginable, most of these stores have their own bakery, meat counter, and deli, as well as freezer and refrigerated sections for perishable foods. Today you also have at least five different stores to choose from in Fairfax: Giant Food (two in fact), Safeway, Harris Teeter, Shoppers Food Warehouse, Trader Joes, plus an assortment of convenience and ethnic markets. But it wasn't always like this. Before 1921, a trip to the grocery store in Fairfax meant a trip to the local General Store. In fact, it may have meant several trips to acquire everything you needed – a trip to the general store; a trip to the dry goods store; a trip to the butcher.

If you were a resident of Fairfax in 1905 that meant a trip, every couple of days, to Sauls Brothers Grocery located at 10389 Main Street (now home to The Second Yard) on the corner of Main Street and Mechanic Street (now University Drive).



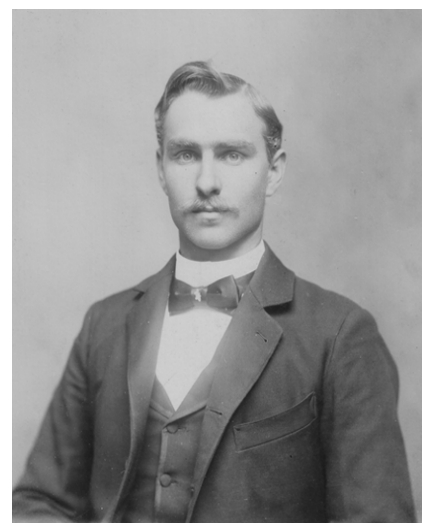
Sauls Grocery (1903-1914) formerly Whiteheads Mercantile.

S.E. cor. of Main St. & University Dr., Fairfax, VA.

Photo courtesy of Gladys Potterton

Sauls Grocery was operated by Hugh Gardner Sauls (1876-1948) and his brother Charles William Sauls (1880-1936) from 1903 to 1926. The Sauls brothers set up their business in the Mercantile Store and Post Office

previously occupied by Joseph N. Whitehead (1869-1930). Apparently, the entire family was involved in the business, including Hugh and Charles mother, Mary C. (Litchfield) Sauls (1852-1910), who baked fresh bread for the business "daily". Charles Sauls left the business about 1914



Hugh Gardner Sauls (1876-1948)

Photo courtesy of Gladys Potterton

when a disastrous fire destroyed the store. Hugh rebuilt the store on the same site. This is the same building standing today. In 1923 he constructed a shed addition to the east and moved the Post Office to this location. This structure was demolished in 1982.

Think of Ike Godseys Store from the 1970's television series *The Waltons* and you'll get an idea of

**Sauls Bros.,**  
**Fairfax, Va.,**  
 DEALERS IN  
**Fine Family Groceries,**  
**Canned Goods, Meats,**  
**Flour, Meal, Feed**  
**and Tinware.**  
**Our Bread Stuff**  
 IS ALWAYS FRESH. WHY?  
 Because we receive it DAILY, not EVERY  
 OTHER DAY.  
**Give Our MOTHER'S BREAD a Trial**  
 Oct. 9

Fairfax Herald, October 23, 1903 p. 2.



what Sauls Grocery may have looked like inside. The experience would be very different than today.

Because most homes still lacked refrigeration people used the general store as their pantry, buying only what they intended to use immediately. Upon arriving at Sauls, a member of the Sauls family would greet you personally. The greeting may have gone something like this, “*Good morning, Mrs. Farr! I’ll be right with you as soon as I finish with Mrs. Richardson.*” While you were waiting you could peruse Mr. Sauls merchandise, which was arranged on floor to ceiling shelves behind a counter. The counter itself was a glass case where other items were stored and could be retrieved for you. When it was your turn to be waited on you would tell Mr. Sauls

what you wanted and *he* would get it for you. If you wanted flour or sugar Mr. Sauls would measure out the requested amount. Most often your order would be small enough for the items to be placed in *your* shopping bag. If your order were large enough, Mr. Sauls would box your items and arrange for their delivery to your home. As Mr. Sauls was filling your order, perhaps he would converse with you about the weather, the news of the day, or inquire on the health of your family. But sooner or later he would probably suggest that you try this new baking powder, or the latest expensive perfume he had just received all the way from Paris! With your order filled and your purchases properly tallied and charged to your monthly account, you were done and you would be on way to your next stop!

Not a bad experience all in all, but very inefficient. What if you didn't want to wait in line at the general store to be served? What if you wanted pick out your own items from store shelves that were accessible to you? What if you didn't want to make additional trips to the butcher, baker, etc...? Amazingly, before 1916 this was simply not possible.

In 1916, a man named Clarence Saunders single-handedly changed the way we shop and launched a retail revolution in America – a revolution that touched Fairfax too. While not exactly a household name like Ford, or Rockefeller, Saunders contribution is no less important as he is credited with selling the concept of *self-service retail* to a public still accustomed to being waited on in stores.

Clarence Saunders was born in Bedford, Virginia in 1881. He left school at an early age to clerk in a general store. He then became a traveling salesman for a wholesale grocer around 1900. Through this experience he became convinced that many small grocers failed because of heavy credit losses and high overhead costs. Consequently in 1915 he organized his own wholesale grocery, which sold for cash only – a more efficient and cost effective business practice.<sup>1</sup>

In 1916, he expanded on this idea of efficiency by opening his own grocery store in downtown Memphis, TN, with the unusual name *Piggly Wiggly* – the first self-service grocery store in the country! It is believed that

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Fragment of Hugh Sauls Store Ledger  
Account of Wilson Malone Farr May & June 1922.  
Courtesy of Gladys Pottterton.

he came up with the name while traveling on a train and watching three little pigs struggling to get under a fence.<sup>2</sup>

Piggly Wiggly Stores were innovative and featured many retail firsts. After entering through a trademark turnstile a Piggly Wiggly customer was offered self-service aisles and shelving within easy reach; a full line of nationally advertised brands; all store items price marked; patented uniform fixtures and equipment, including shopping baskets; refrigerated cases; employees in uniform; cash-only checkout stands at the store exit; and low prices. The store was a huge success and within a year Saunders was selling Piggly Wiggly franchises to independent grocers all across the United States.<sup>3,4</sup>

In September 1919, Piggly Wiggly Stores expanded into Washington, DC.<sup>5</sup> The first of 38 stores opened in May 1920.<sup>6</sup> In 1921, the *Washington Post* actually featured a full page pictorial on how to shop at a Piggly Wiggly with an article titled "A Trip Through Piggly Wiggly".<sup>7</sup> That same year the company expanded into Northern Virginia with stores in Alexandria, Fairfax, Falls Church, Fredericksburg and Vienna.<sup>8</sup>

The first Virginia store was in Alexandria followed by stores in Fairfax, Falls Church and Vienna. It is thought that Fairfax attorney, Fairfax Shield McCandlish (1881-1934), purchased the Fairfax Piggly Wiggly franchise which was located on Main Street across from the Fairfax County Jail and adjacent to the Wilcoxen Tavern (now site of Bank America).<sup>9</sup> The store was constructed in 1921 by Alfred Biddle McClure (1881-1961), a Fairfax Contractor who lived on Main Street, and was opened just before Christmas that year.<sup>10</sup> Conway Brawner, of Alexandria, was the first store manager followed by Edwin C. Jones in 1922. Robert J. Clarke became the manager in 1926.



Fairfax Herald December 23, 1921, p. 2.

By 1923, the Piggly Wiggly chain included 1,268 stores and was the third largest retail grocery in the country. Early that year several New York brokerage houses attempted to drive the price of Piggly Wiggly stock down by advising their clients to sell. Saunders responded by acquiring 98% of the Piggly Wiggly shares. The New York Stock Exchange declared Saunders had illegally cornered the market to manipulate the price of the stock. Saunders had to sell his stock at a tremendous loss along with several stores in an attempt to raise cash. He thus lost control of his company and was forced into personal bankruptcy.<sup>11</sup>

In 1924, the Virginia Piggly Wiggly locations filed for bankruptcy. The stores continued to operate however, until 1927 when they were purchased by the *Sanitary Grocery Company*, which was organized in Washington, D.C. in 1907.<sup>12,13,14</sup> The arrival of the Piggly Wiggly in Fairfax was undoubtedly not a welcome sight for Hugh Sauls. However, Sauls continued to operate his business until he retired in 1926.<sup>15</sup> In 1927 the Sanitary Grocery moved into the former Sauls Brothers Grocery. Shortly afterward they moved to a new building located 10409 Main Street (now The Christmas Gallery). The company changed its name in 1941 to Safeway Food Stores.<sup>16</sup> Safeway operated at this location from 1927 until 1963 when they moved again to 10320 Main Street (now Harris Teeter). Safeway moved a final time to 10350 Willard Way in the late 1970's.

Today, nothing remains of the Fairfax Piggly Wiggly. Its former location now serves as a parking lot for the Bank America on the corner of Main Street and Chain Bridge Road. My own personal memory of Piggly Wiggly is of the store located in Fredericksburg which continued to operate until the late 1960s. It was located east of town on Rte. 3 and was a usual stop for my family on our way to the beach. My grandfather would jokingly refer to it as the "Hoggly Woggly".

Some joke! Nearly every retailer in the world today employs the *self-service* methods a poor Virginia farm boy instituted in his Piggly Wiggly less than a century ago.



## Getting To Know You

HFCI Board Member Ellen R. Wigren



Ellen has been on the HFCI Board since 1995 – making her one of the longest standing Board members. She is also a volunteer for Historic Resources Museum and Visitors Center so her dual role keeps her active and involved in all historic issues. Ellen is currently Chair of the HFCI Collections

Acquisitions and Nominating Committees as well as participating in other projects such as Civil War Days, Historic Homes Tours and working at the Fall Festival and as a docent at the Ratcliffe-Allison House.

Ellen's interest in history began when she was very young. As a native of Botetourt Co., VA she is a member of a family that settled there in the 1700's. Her paternal grandparents lived with her family and her grandmother exposed her to not only family history but peaked her interest in all history. Ellen inherited many of the hand made family furniture items and donated much of it to the American Frontier Culture Museum in Stanton, VA. A special item was her cord bed which was made by her great-great grandfather. Ellen enjoys going back to the Museum to see her bed and is proud that others can enjoy seeing it also.

Ellen has been in the area since the 1940's, teaching in the Arlington County school system. After her marriage to Lee Wigren in 1952 they moved to Fairfax. They both began to get involved in City affairs. Lee's interest in historical matters began while he served, first, on the Planning Commission and later as a Councilperson. He was one of the first HFCI Board members. *"Preservation was uppermost in his actions – and he was most instrumental in the founding of the City's Museum,"* says Ellen of her husband. Ellen continued his work after his death in 1993.

In her spare time she is active in the Methodist Church, belongs to several organizations: Fairfax Antique Arts, Virginia Association of Museums, National Trust for Historic Preservation, Fairfax County Historic Society, Botetourt Co. Historic Society, and the American Frontier Culture Museum. Ellen is our advocate at the many meetings and conventions around the State on historic

issues. Ellen also enjoys reading (usually history related) and doing needlework and baking.

Ellen and Lee have 2 sons, Chris who inherited his parent's love of history and is the Deputy Director of the Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation in New Haven. Eric lives close by in Lorton and is a Branch Manager of a mortgage company. They have blessed her with 2 grandsons and Ellen continues the legacy by spending time with her eleven year old grandson teaching him about family history and visiting Museums and historic spots in the area.

*"I have always been interested in history – beginning in my childhood learning all about my family's history. My husband and I have spent many hours touring and visiting historic sites up and down the East Coast,"* says Ellen. Her interest in history and her participation on the Board is invaluable to our cause of preservation. Thanks for all your good work Ellen.



### Grocery Stores in Fairfax

H.G. Sauls	10389 Main Street	1903 to 1926
Joshua P. Taylor	10430 Main Street	1908 to 1909
Charles F. Broadwater		1916 to 1919
Piggly Wiggly	10460 Main Street	1921 to 1927
Sanitary Grocery	10409 Main Street	1927 to 1941
Safeway	10409 Main Street	1941 to 1960
Safeway	10980 Lee Highway	1960 to 1972
Safeway	10334 Main Street	1963 to 1980
Safeway	9480 Main Street	1967 to 1979
Safeway	9520 Arlington Blvd	1964 to 1980
Safeway	10350 Willard Way	1980 to Present
Giant Food	11200 Main Street	1961 to Present
Giant Food	9570 Main Street	1968 to Present
A&P	10700 Lee Highway	1960 to 1979
A&P	9640 Main Street	1980 to 1983
Grand Union (Food Fair)	10930 Lee Highway	1956 to 1975
Grand Union	9683 Lee Highway	1964 to 1968
Food Town/Kroger	10364 Lee Highway	1956 to 1967
Memco	3201 Old Lee Hwy	1980 to 1982
Magruder's (formerly A&P)	10700 Lee Highway	1985 to 1990
Shoppers Food Warehouse	9622 Main Street	1983 to Present
Lotte Plaza	3250 Old Lee Hwy	1991 to Present
Dong-A Asian Market	9590 Lee Highway	1995 to Present
Trader Joes	9464 Main Street	1998 to Present
Harris Teeter	10320 Main Street	2001 to Present
Super H Mart	10780 Lee Highway	2002 to Present

### (Endnotes)

<sup>1</sup> Freeman, Mike, "Clarence Saunders: The Piggly Wiggly Man," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly* 51 (1992): 161-69.

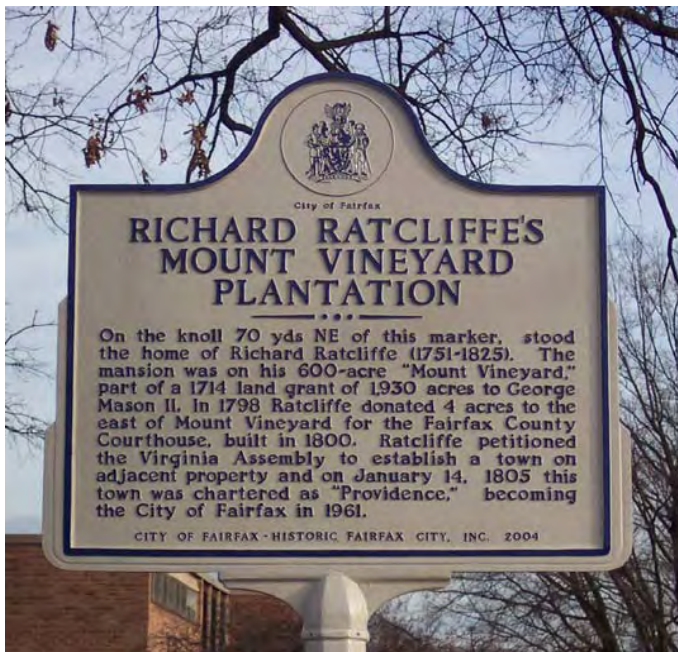
<sup>2</sup> Ibid 1.

<sup>3</sup> Piggly Wiggly Co. website: [www.pigglywiggly.com](http://www.pigglywiggly.com)

## DEDICATION OF HISTORICAL MARKER

Hosted by Historic Fairfax City, Inc.

On Friday, January 14, 2005, the bicentennial anniversary of the City of Fairfax, Historic Fairfax City, Inc. will dedicate a new historical marker identifying the home of Ricahrd Ratcliffe.



The following schedule of events associated with the inaugural of the City of Fairfax bicentennial:

- 2:00 PM: Ratcliffe Marker Dedication  
Oak and Main Street. Parking at the American Legion Parking Lot on Oak Street.
- 3:30 PM: Tour of the Ratcliffe Cemetery.
- 4:00 PM: Reception and Advance Tour of  
Museum Exhibit  
Museum and Visitors Center.
- 5-7:00 PM: Opening of Museum Exhibits
- 8:00 PM: Musical Performance Old Town Hall,  
University and Main Streets.

## OPEN MEETING THE BLENHEIM MASTER PLAN



7:30 p.m.  
January 18, 2005

*Fairfax High School Cafeteria  
Mayor and City Council  
Historic Fairfax City*

- The City of Fairfax designed and approved a Master Plan for the development of Blenheim in October 2003.
- The plan includes preservation of the house and grounds, an interpretive center, facilities for visitors, and landscaped screening of the site.  
Construction of the complete Master Plan will make Blenheim's unique and dramatic historic and cultural value available to more citizens of the City, visitors, and students on a more accessible and regular basis.
- The complete master plan provides visitors the chance to experience an introduction to Blenheim in the same way as visitors to other significant historic resources such as Gunston Hall first experience those sites.
- In addition to its primary, education purpose, the interpretive center can be used as a rental facility bringing in a diverse audience, many of whom would not come to the site normally.
- Once developed according to the Master Plan, Blenheim will assist HFCI to communicate the City's historical value to more people, more quickly, in a more focused way. The site will enhance HFCI's fundraising to support Blenheim and ALL THE HISTORIC AND CULTURAL RESOURCES OF THE CITY.

COME TO THE MEETING  
VIEW A MODEL OF THE BLENHEIM MASTER PLAN  
EXPRESS YOUR SUPPORT

## Happy Birthday Fairfax!

On January 14, 2005, Fairfax will celebrate it's 200th birthday! On that date in 1805, the Virginia General Assembly granted a charter for the Town of Providence to Richard Ratcliffe. The name of the village, which was commonly known as Fairfax Court House, was officially changed in 1874 from Providence to Fairfax. The Town of Fairfax became the City of Fairfax in 1961.

Join us and help celebrate the 200th anniversary of Fairfax.



### HISTORIC FAIRFAX CITY, INC.

**Do you want to know more about the history of where you live?**

### JOIN HISTORIC FAIRFAX CITY, INC.

**Just what is available to you as a member of HFCI?**

A newsletter, 4 times a year announcing what is happening with all HFCI projects and events

2 general meetings a year, affording you an opportunity to meet and speak with people behind the scenes working to maintain interest in the history of Fairfax.

We are looking forward to having you be a part of the City's bi-centennial in 2005. We need and value your support. Together we will preserve the heritage that has been left to us.

The Board of Directors of  
Historic Fairfax City, Inc.

### HFCI MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION/ RENEWAL

*HISTORIC FAIRFAX CITY, INC. is a non-profit  
corporation (501©(3) organization)*

#### Membership Classifications:

- Class A Individual .....\$25.00
- Class A-1 Additional Household Member .....\$10.00
- Class B-1 Non-profit Organizations .....\$35.00
- Class B-2 For profit Organizations .....\$50.00

Enclosed is my tax-deductible membership application and check made out to Historic Fairfax City Inc. for:  
\$ \_\_\_\_\_

Name or Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone #: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact name: \_\_\_\_\_

e-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Return to: Historic Fairfax City, Inc.,  
Attention: Membership Committee  
10209 Main Street  
Fairfax, VA 22030

**City of Fairfax – Celebrating 200 Years**





*"Preserving the Past. Protecting the Future."*

Return Address - Historic Fairfax City, Inc.  
Hildie Carney, President  
10209 Main Street  
Fairfax, VA 22030



## The Newsletter of Historic Fairfax City, Inc.

The Fare Facs Gazette © 2005  
Editor: William Page Johnson, II

**City of Fairfax – Celebrating 200 Years**

**1805 – 2005**



**Catch Our Spirit  
Feel Our Pride**

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**Website:** [www.historicfairfax.org](http://www.historicfairfax.org)