



## Historic Fairfax City, Inc. "Fare Fac - Say Do"

### Executive Officers

David L. Pumphrey	President
Karen L. Stevenson	Vice-Pres.
Albert L. Leightley	Treasurer
Betsy K. Rutkowski	Secretary

Ann F. Adams	Director
Hildie A. Carney	Director
Patricia A. Fabio	Director
Mary D. Gauthier	Director
D. Lee Hubbard	Director
Hon. Wm. Page Johnson, II	Director
Claudia J. Lewis	Director
Jenée L. Lindner	Director
Deborah E. Mullan	Director
Michael A. Pappas	Director
Hon. John E. Petersen	Director
Hon. Penny A. Rood	Director
Hon. John H. Rust, Jr.	Director
Dolores B. Testerman	Director
Edward C. Trexler, Jr.	Director
Sandra S. Wilbur	Director

1861-1865



2011-2015

to pursue a career in business. In the middle of the nineteenth century there were many private boarding and day schools for young men in Virginia. Nearly every county had at least one such school, and quite often more than one. However, there were significantly fewer institutions for young ladies. This was primarily due to the fact that at the time a women's role outside of the home was very limited. Consequently, the private boarding schools that did cater to women existed for two primary reasons; to

# The Fare Facs Gazette

## The Newsletter of Historic Fairfax City, Inc.

Volume 8, Issue 1

Summer 2011

## Coombe Cottage

by Hon. William Page Johnson, II

*'Where young ladies will prove themselves not only ornaments, but useful members of society.'*



Coombe Cottage was a boarding and day school for young ladies at Fairfax Court House in the mid-nineteenth century. The school was located at 10560-70 Main Street in Fairfax, adjacent to Truro Episcopal Church, on the site now occupied by The Mosby Building. Also known as the Fairfax Ladies Seminary, the Ladies Select School at Providence, or Dr. Baker's Academy, Coombe Cottage was operated by Hannah Maria (Burgess) Baker and her English husband, Dr. Frederick Baker from 1844 until about 1863.

Public education in Virginia had been in existence since colonial times, but varied greatly from county to county. Free schools existed to provide a minimum level of education to children in a largely agrarian society. These schools concentrated primarily on the three "R's" – Reading, Writing and Arithmetic. By contrast, private boarding and day schools offered extensive curricula well beyond this basic level, with instruction in advanced mathematics, foreign languages, literature, and the sciences, to name a few. These institutions were designed primarily to prepare young men for college or



**Coombe Cottage**, 10560-70 Main St., Fairfax, VA. Built 1845. Demolished c. 1962.

Photo credit: Jeanne Johnson Rust  
Photo courtesy: John H. Rust, Jr.



Fairfax, Virginia, July 2011-

Greetings from the President--

During the past fall and spring, the HFCI Board has continued to work to improve our historic resources and to educate the residents of the City about our shared history.

The Board and the City are sharing the cost of stabilizing "Grandma's Cottage", an historic property that was moved to the Blenheim site to make way for the Farrcroft community. This structure has been deteriorating for a number of years and this project will add heating and cooling systems and a new roof. This will set the stage for future renovation work on the property so that it can become a useful part of the Blenheim site.

HFCI worked closely with the City Historic Resources to hold this year's Civil War Day in early May. This event has continued to grow in terms of attendance and activities. HFCI also worked with the City of Fairfax's Sesquicentennial Committee to put on the reenactment of the skirmish at Fairfax Courthouse in June. This event commemorated the first land engagement of the Civil War and the death of the first Confederate officer, John Marr.

In June we also had the second presentation of the oral history project. HFCI volunteers interviewed 5 more long time residents of the City and have produced another video of these interviews. This project is allowing us to permanently capture the reminiscences of the City's residents who discuss a range of social, cultural and political dimensions of our history. This video will be shown on Channel 12 during the next month.

On Friday October 14<sup>th</sup>, HFCI will host "A Taste of the Vine at Historic Blenheim". This event has become our major fund raiser. Last year it was a very popular event. We will be featuring the wines of Lost Creek Winery from Leesburg. You can find additional information on our newly revamped website, [www.historicfairfax.org](http://www.historicfairfax.org).

Thank you for your continuing support.

David L. Pumphrey

## At The Museum...

### Second Sunday Museum Programs

August 14 — Living history with Jon Vrana as Silas Burke, 19th century farmer, merchant and Northern Virginia local politician.

### Civil War Interpretive Center Series

#### The Military Bugle during the Civil War and the Origin of the Call 'Taps', 2 p.m. August 27

Jari Villanueva, considered by foremost authority on "Taps," will demonstrate bugle calls and explain their usage during the war, the origin of the famous call, performance practices and the myths associated with it.

#### Archaeology Day

Noon- to 4 p.m. October 22

Archaeological activities, tours, and more. No digging will occur but a variety of artifacts will be displayed, including Civil War artifacts.

#### Christmas in Camp

Noon to 4 p.m. December 4

Find out what Christmas was like for those at war in Camp with the 17th Virginia Infantry (Historic Blenheim). Visit a Civil War camp during winter and learn about holiday customs from re-enactors from 17th Va. Infantry, Co. D, "Fairfax Rifles".

**LAW PARTNERSHIP.**—The undersigned having entered into partnership for the practice of Law, under the name of **EDWARDS & DULANY**, will promptly attend to any professional business entrusted to their care, in the counties of Fairfax, Loudoun, Prince William, and Fauquier.  Office at Fairfax Court House, opposite Pritchard's Hotel.  
**W. L. EDWARDS.**  
**W. H. DULANY.**  
Fairfax Court House, Va., jy 20—2aw2m

*Alexandria Gazette, July 20, 1844, p. 3, c. 4*

## In an Upcoming Issue...

Look for the story of the *Last Hanging at Fairfax Courthouse*.



Continued from pg. 1



Location of 15½ acre Coombe Cottage parcel in 2011.

prepare women to assist their husband's in the management of the farm, primarily the household, or, to become teachers.

Hannah Maria Burgess was born in Otsego County, New York about 1818. She was the daughter of Captain William Burgess, a farmer and Jane Davies, a teacher. In the 1830's, Hannah's mother operated the Gilbertsville Female Academy in Gilbertsville, Otsego Co., NY.<sup>1, 2</sup> Hannah received her education as a school teacher at this location.

Dr. Frederick Baker immigrated to the United States from London, England in 1837. The passenger list for the *Montreal*, which arrived in New York on December 14, 1837, listed a "Frederick Baker, age 28, Surgeon".<sup>3</sup> Frederick Baker is believed to have studied at the prestigious Guy's Teaching Hospital in London under the eminent English Physician Sir Astley Cooper, Surgeon to King George IV.<sup>4</sup>

After arriving in America, Frederick made his way to Otsego Co., New York. There he met and married Hannah Burgess of the Town of Butternuts. This marriage most likely occurred at St. Luke's Episcopal Church, Otsego Co. in 1839. Following the death of Hannah's mother in the fall 1842 the Baker's moved to Fairfax Court House, Virginia with their three year old daughter, Eugenia (*Jane or Jennie*) Davies Baker. In August 1843, they leased the personal residence of Ferdinand D. Richardson on Main Street for the sum of \$90.00 per year.<sup>5</sup> This location is believed to be Lot 13 of the original plan of the Town of Providence, located on the sw corner of Fairfax (Main St.) and Mechanic (University Dr.). Presumably, Dr. Baker began his medical practice in Fairfax from this location. Also, while at this location Frederick Baker became a naturalized American citizen in Fairfax County, Virginia on October 21, 1844.<sup>6</sup>

The Baker's were part of a significant migration of Northern families, primarily from New York, who came to Fairfax because of the comparatively cheap land. In the early 1840's land in Fairfax was selling for as little as \$5 to \$25 per acre, while in New York it was selling for \$50 to \$100 per acre, ten times as much.<sup>7, 8</sup> Northern farming methods differed as well. With the use of additives, such as lime, and deeper plowing techniques these newcomers were able to make what was thought to be useless land productive again.

In 1845, not long after the Baker's arrived in Virginia, the following description of Fairfax appeared in *Southern Planter* magazine:

*"The Town of Providence, usually called Fairfax Court House, occup[ies] a pleasant and healthy location and within a few years past has increased in population and materially improved in appearance. A number of commodious and tasteful dwellings, and two neat edifices for public worship,<sup>9</sup> have lately been erected. It is said there has been a corresponding improvement in the morals and habits of the people. In the vicinity of the Court House, the price of improved land has doubled within four or five years, and a striking change is already perceptible in many of the farms. This improvement is not confined to the new comers, but their example has stimulated some of the old residents who are making strenuous and well directed efforts to renovate their lands."*<sup>10</sup>

Several years later, while Fairfax was much improved, in the eyes of at least one northern farmer it still had a long way to go:

*"Providence, or Fairfax Court House, as it is indifferently termed, the county seat and only village of Fairfax County, consists of a straggling collection of buildings, mostly of wood, and several, even among the principal shops and stores, of logs – and rather resembles what you are accustomed to term [a] crossroads, than the flourishing villages which dot the surface of the Empire State."*<sup>11</sup>

It is unclear exactly why the Baker's decided to start a school for girls in Fairfax. This was clearly the environment that Hannah Baker was raised in as her mother had operated a similar school in New York. They may also have been motivated by the need to educate their own daughter, Jane. At the time, there were no other educational opportunities for young women in Fairfax County. There were several such facilities operating in Alexandria: *Mrs. Kelsey's Institute for Young Ladies*; *Mrs. Moore's Boarding & Day School for Young Ladies*; *Mrs. Hagarty's Female Literary Institute*; *The Misses Muirs' Female Boarding & Day School*; and *Miss Margaret*



E. *Banque's School for Young Ladies*. Further afield, in Fauquier County, were the *Warrenton & Upperville Female Institutes*.<sup>12</sup>

Initially, the name of the school was the Ladies Select School. The school was first located in the Baker home on the south side of Main Street, between Mechanic St. (University Dr.) and Chain Bridge Road. This location is apparent because of the small number of students, "four to six," Mrs. Baker intended to "receive into her family." Room and board was \$125.00 per year. Students would receive instruction in Common English, French and Drawing. The fact that Mrs. Baker was an accomplished musician is evident from the educational offering of "Music on the Piano," although "Use of the Piano" was apparently an additional cost option.

**LADIES' SELECT SCHOOL.**  
**MRS. DR. BAKER** begs leave to inform her friends and the public generally that she intends opening, on the 1st of January, 1845, a Select School at Providence, Fairfax county, Virginia. It is her present intention to receive into her family only from four to six young ladies, who will be guided and instructed with parental care in all the useful and elegant branches of education, at the same time that due attention is paid to moral excellence of character.

Mrs. BAKER feels a confidence in recommending herself to the public, from having been for many years a successful teacher in a highly respectable Seminary, under the superintendence of her mother, the late Mrs. BURGESS, in Otsego county, N. Y. Unexceptionable references can be given, if required.

**Terms for Boarders.**

Board, washing, and bedding per annum	-	-	\$150
Common English studies per quarter of 12 weeks	-	-	8
Higher do do do do do	-	-	5
French do do do do do	-	-	6
Music, (piano) do do do do do	-	-	12
Drawing do do do do do	-	-	8
Use of piano do do do do do	-	-	1
Stationery, &c extra.			

A select number of day scholars will be admitted at the above charges per quarter.  
 Providence, October 11, 1844. oct 19 -

*Daily National Intelligencer*, October 21, 1844, p. 1, c. 3.

In October 1845, the Baker's purchased 15½ acres on the western edge of town from William T. & Caroline Rumsey, for \$321.00.<sup>13</sup> The Rumsey's too, had just recently arrived in Fairfax being natives of Dutchess County, New York. The 15½ acre property was located on the north side of Little River Turnpike (now Main Street) and adjoined a small ½ acre parcel Rumsey had sold to the trustees of Zion Episcopal Church (now Truro Episcopal Church), in 1842.

Dr. Baker named his new purchase *Coombe Cottage*, presumably for his homeland and quite possibly the area in England where he originated. The word *Coombe* is Celtic in origin and is derived from the Old English word *cumb*, meaning deep straight wooded valley. The use of Coombe is common today throughout England. Coombe Abbey, Coombe Castle, even *Cumblerland* County are examples. However, the use of Coombe is most prevalent in Cornwall County in the extreme southwest of the country. Another clue is a small village of

Coombe in Cornwall and even more compelling is the adjacent village of Truro.

This 15½ acre parcel of land was a long, fairly narrow, irregular rectangle (see diagram pg. 3). This description, assuming it was wooded, is nearly identical to the meaning of the word Coombe.

The Baker's immediately granted a Deed of Trust for \$1,000.00 on this land to secure Hannah Baker's sister, Sarah (Burgess) Pierce, executor of their aunt Hannah Burgess of Athens, Greene County, New York. The Will of Hannah Burgess granted her brother, William Burgess, Hannah Baker's father, income on \$1,000.00 during his lifetime, which bequest then passed to her niece, Hannah Baker.<sup>14</sup> Evidently, at some point the Baker's borrowed against the estate necessitating the need to secure the estate by the Deed of Trust mentioned.

Zion Protestant Episcopal Church, adjoined the Baker's new purchase. The church was organized at Fairfax Court House on February 8, 1843 and was the first Episcopal Church in Fairfax County since Payne's Church, located three miles south, was abandoned during the American Revolution.<sup>15</sup> The Baker's, as Episcopalians, were instrumental in rebuilding the Episcopal faith in central Fairfax County. In fact, the Truro Parish Register, which is arranged in the order in which each family became connected with the parish, lists the Baker family as number one ("I"), ahead of the Rumsey's, who are listed as, two ("II").<sup>16,17</sup>

Hannah Baker was a prominent member of the *Providence Ladies Sewing Society* as noted by one of her students:

"...Mrs. Baker went to the Society, which met at Mrs. Turner's. Mrs. Baker takes quite an active part

**LADIES' FAIR**—The Ladies of the "Providence Sewing Society," Fairfax Court House, Virginia, contemplate holding a Fair, on Tuesday, the 24th instant, (the first day of the Superior Court,) at the house of Captain R. Wilcoxen, the proceeds of which, are to be applied to the Episcopal Church, now erecting near said town. A variety of useful and fancy articles will be offered—refreshments and a warm dinner served up. They appeal to a generous public, and to those in the District, and adjoining counties, who favor the object of their exertions, for their aid and support, and most respectfully invite them to attend.

Fairfax County, Va., oct 18—oct 24th

*Alexandria Gazette*, October 18, 1843, p. 2, c. 5.



*in the Society. [She] sends her carriage after the Ladies to carry them to Mrs. Turner's."*<sup>18</sup>

The Provident Ladies Sewing Society was instrumental in raising funds to complete the construction of the new Zion (now Truro) Episcopal Church.

Surviving Fairfax County land tax records indicate no assessment for improvements on the 15½ acre parcel until 1847.<sup>19</sup> However, the following advertisement appeared in the *Daily National Intelligencer* in December 1845:

**LADIES' SEMINARY,**  
**Providence, Fairfax County, Virginia.**

**MRS. DR. BAKER** will re-open her School, after a vacation of two weeks, on the 5th day of January, 1846, in the new and commodious house, near the Episcopal Church. The situation is healthy, pleasant, and retired, and peculiarly eligible for a boarding school. The rooms are convenient and airy, and the play-grounds extensive.

Mrs. BAKER will always be assisted by competent female teachers: all the branches of a useful and accomplished education will be taught, and every indulgence, consistent with moral and intellectual improvement, will at all times be extended to young ladies placed under her charge.

The scholastic year consists of four quarters of 12 weeks each.

Board, washing, bedding, &c. per annum.....	\$125 00
Common English studies do per qr. 12 wks....	3 00
Each of the higher do do do....	50
French and Drawing each do do do....	5 00
Music on the Piano do do do....	10 00
Use of Piano.....	1 00

Instruction in plain and ornamental Needle-work will be given if desired.

A select number of day-scholars will be received at the above charges.

dec 13—ept 5 Jan

*Daily National Intelligencer*, December 13, 1845, p. 4, c. 2.

This ad clearly indicates that a “new and commodious house” was constructed that was “peculiarly eligible for a boarding school.” This rather convincing indicates that Coombe Cottage was constructed in the late summer and fall of 1845.

Based on surviving inventories and the testimony of former resident Terry Kirkpatrick, a clearer description of the property emerges. Coombe Cottage was a collection buildings built specifically as a boarding school and contained a collection of buildings. The main house, (see photo on page 1), was a two-and-a-half-story, center-hall style bungalow, with floor to ceiling windows, a front and rear porch, a wide front entry with cranberry colored glass sidelights. The main floor featured small office to the right of the entryway, which may have been used as Dr. Baker’s Medical office or study. Continuing down the 10 foot wide center hall on the right was a library followed by a small bedroom. Across the hall from the office was a formal parlor for receiving guests. The parlor contained pocket doors which opened onto a large school room. Here, in addition to classes, the girls enjoyed music recitals. Behind this, at the rear of the house was a large dining room. Below the dining room was an earthen root cellar.

The second floor featured two large bedrooms and a smaller third bedroom behind the staircase. The 3<sup>rd</sup> floor attic level also featured three small bedrooms. Behind the main house was a large two or three story detached kitchen. The main level featured a large walk-in brick fireplace and cast iron cook stove. Adjacent to the kitchen was a well and pump house. Water was pumped to two large holding tanks on the third floor of the kitchen. Flanking the kitchen were at least two dormitories, which could accommodate twenty to thirty students each. The students slept two-to-a-bed. There was a separate wash house, corn crib, a log smoke house, a carriage house, a large stable built into the hillside with stalls on two levels. As there was no indoor plumbing there were the requisite and ubiquitous outhouses. A subsequent owner, Fairfax attorney James M. Love, built a small exterior office that was connected to the main house by means of hallway to the dining room (see photo pg. 1).

According to the United States Census of 1850, during the summer session of that year, there were seventeen girls boarding at the school. They ranged from ten to seventeen years of age and resided as far away as Indiana.<sup>20</sup> Daniel McCarty Fitzhugh and his wife Sinah Ellen Chichester (Lee) Fitzhugh, were also then living at Coombe Cottage, where Daniel was employed as a teacher.<sup>21</sup>

Daniel Fitzhugh was also a slave owner. In 1860, he owned five slaves. Two males aged 41 and 22, and three females ages 30, 2 and 1. All the slaves were then living in a single slave house, which suggests that they may have constituted a single family.<sup>22</sup> It appears that the Baker’s owned no slaves until 1861.<sup>23</sup> However, given the enormity of the task of running a school of 80 girls, there is a high probability that the Fitzhugh’s slaves helped run Coombe Cottage. The Fitzhugh’s slaves may have been *leased* to the Baker’s, a common practice, possibly in exchange for room and board. As there is no mention of any slave quarters on the property, the slaves may have been housed in the upper rooms of the kitchen or in the stable.

Over time the reputation of the school grew, drawing in both local Fairfax girls as well as girls from as far away as Indiana and New York. According to the Baker’s, the school was “patronized by a majority of the States of our Union.” The school was very popular with students and parents alike. According to an 1856 advertisement:

*“Mrs. Baker cannot promise to perform miracles in teaching, nor can she always overcome the evil tendency of early indulgence and want of discipline; but she can conscientiously promise to do her duty faithfully, and, with the blessing of God and the co-operation of parents, guardians and the pupils themselves, as she has hitherto done, young ladies who will prove themselves not only ornaments, but useful members of society.”*<sup>24</sup>



On admittance to Coombe Cottage girls were:

*"...requested to bring their own towels, table napkins, sheets, and pillow cases, and to have all clothing marked in full."*<sup>25</sup>

The girls also had a uniform of sorts, being required to wear *"dark dresses and black aprons"* in the school room.

Throughout the existence of the school the subjects taught remained unchanged. English, French, Drawing and Music were supplemented with evening lectures, given mainly by Dr. Baker, in botany, chemistry, astronomy & physiology. Room and board remained consistent at \$125.00 per year. However, by the 1850's the growth of the school was reflected in the need to begin to charge *".25 per dozen"* for washing.

<sup>26,27</sup>

According to a journal kept by one of the students, Frances Ellen Carper, of Dranesville, Fairfax County, Virginia, the girls were required to memorize their *"lessons"* and stand and *"say"* them, reciting them before the entire class. These *"lessons"* were *"heard"* by Mrs. Baker, or one of several assistant teachers, who would presumably advise, correct and ultimately grade the students on their performance.<sup>28</sup>

One of the classes taken by Frances Carper included instruction in map making. For this lesson, given sometime during the 1853-54 school year, fifteen year old Frances, apparently drew a map of the Coombe Cottage property, which map, unfortunately, is now lost. Local historian, Cordelia G. Sansone, included much of the Carper Journal in a 1980 article, on Coombe Cottage, which provides a fascinating glimpse into daily life at Coombe Cottage, Fairfax Court House, and many of Frances Carper's classmates.<sup>29</sup>

According to Sansone, life at Coombe Cottage was very regimented and controlled by a series of bells:

*"The daily routine was controlled by bells; week-days began with the ringing of a bell at 5:30 AM; students were to be dressed for Breakfast by the next bell at 6 AM; and on Monday's, bedclothes and other items to be laundered on the premises, must be collected and brought to the wash-house, After Breakfast, there would be Study Bells, Class Bells, or Practice Bells for those who took Music; and at appropriate times there would be a Mid-day Bell and a Dinner Bell, Sunday's there were special events that were signaled by a Tea Bell and an Evening Vespers Bell. Although evenings were free, the candles provided the students gave such poor light that not much writing could be done, Saturdays were employed to clean house; write letters; read; visit, or to be visited by, friends; or go shopping in the village for popular goodies, that were constantly desired, and devoured, by these girls."*<sup>30</sup>

In addition to shopping in the village and visiting with friends, a favorite pastime of the girls was to spend time in *The Meadow*. The Meadow was located on the extreme northern end of the property at the confluence of Accotink Creek and Tusico Branch. Located quite some distance from the house it was an apparent place of solitude and tranquility. In 1853, student Frances Carper included several entries about The Meadow in her Journal:

*"I walked down in the Meadow; sat against the Haystack and read undisturbed."*<sup>31</sup>

*"Nothing of much moment has occurred today, except a decree was passed that we should take a run in the Meadow directly after Breakfast."*<sup>32</sup>

*"Joe, Anna Kincheloe, and myself went down in the Meadow & spent the afternoon."*<sup>33</sup>

*Went to the village this morning; purchased my bonnet strings, etc, etc. Thought of spending my afternoon in the Meadow, but was prevented by a storm of rain from down there."*<sup>34</sup>

*"Walked down in the Meadow this evening – very pleasant"*<sup>35</sup>

Frances attended school with several local, Fairfax Court House, girls, Antonia Ford, Laura Ratcliffe, and Susanna Steel. These girls probably attended as Day students. Before she became famous as a Confederate Spy for Gen. J.E.B. Stuart and Col. Mosby, Antonia was simply just another school girl. Classmate Frances Carper confirmed this:

*"Antonia pesters me so that I am obliged to go to my own room. Annie & Antonia got T's[Tardy's?] for not being at their Drawing."*<sup>36,37</sup>

Evidently, income from the school and medical practice were not sufficient to meet the Baker's financial obligations. In December 1853, the couple purchased a 183½ acre farm about three quarters of a mile west of Coombe Cottage where Westmore subdivision is now located.<sup>38</sup> This venture was probably an effort to supplement their income, or at least put food on the table. This land was purchased from Matthew & Sarah Dickerson for \$842.25 with funds apparently provided by their good neighbors, the Rumsey's. As further evidence of the Baker's possible money troubles, the purchase was once again immediately secured by a Deed of Trust, this time to secure the Rumsey's for \$2,811.25. This was nearly three-and-a-half times the sales price. According to the terms of the deed this amount was to be repaid to Rumsey's over the next six years.<sup>39</sup>

The Baker's were now heavily mortgaged. Unfortunately, their money troubles only continued. In December 1854, Robert Bell, an attorney from Alexandria, acting on behalf of Edward R. Ford & Company,<sup>40</sup> secured two judgments against

Dr. Frederick Baker totaling several hundred dollars.<sup>41</sup> Perhaps not by coincidence, this same year, 1854, the school's most famous student, Antonia Ford, a daughter of Edward R. Ford, left Coombe Cottage to attend the Buckingham Female Collegiate Institute in Buckingham County, Virginia.

By 1855, the Baker's were even deeper debt to E.R. Ford & Company and others, now totaling more than two thousand dollars. He was compelled by his creditors to place all of his land and personal property in trust to Alfred Moss to secure the debts he had incurred. The land he owned consisted of two parcels, the 183½ acre farm and his 15½ acre residence. The personal property identified in the trust is interesting as it provides a window into the lives of the Baker's and the true function of the "rather large and commodious"<sup>42</sup> Coombe Cottage:

*"...the following personal property to wit, Four horses, two oxen, four cows, three yearlings, twelve pigs, four plows, one cart, one wagon and harness, mattock, spades, forks, hoes, two light wagons, one rockaway<sup>43</sup> and harness, one omnibus & harness, medicines, books, maps, globes, telescope, philosophical apparatus,<sup>44</sup> five pianos, one melodian,<sup>45</sup> four dozen chairs, six parlor tables, dining room table, six good bedsteads, forty common bedsteads, beds and bed clothing for same, pictures, looking glasses, six bureaux & drawers, two clothes presses, silver plates, guns, carpets and matting, writing desk, twelve school desks and benches, kitchen stoves and utensils for same, safes, buckets etc, three clocks, watches, lamps, one brass lamp, parlor curtains and rods, four hogs, and poultry. Also the growing crops of corn, oats, tobacco, buckwheat, hay and all other things growing or severed upon either of said lots of land, all other articles of household & kitchen furniture, farming utensils etc. upon either the aforesaid tracts and five shares of the O. & Alex. R.R. Co. Stock<sup>46</sup>*

In September 1857, a financially struggling Baker, put up additional personal property to Alfred Moss to secure E.R. Ford & Company:

*"...Frederick Baker doth grant unto the said Alfred Moss the following property to wit, One buggy and harness, also his crop of corn, oats, hay, buckwheat and potatoes, whether growing or severed, on his farm or at his residence in Fairfax County. In trust to secure E.R. Ford & Co. the payment in the sum of two hundred sixty dollars and ten cents with interest from September 25, 1856, Also in the further sum of one hundred fifteen dollars and fifteen cents with interest from August 26, 1855 due by the notes of the said Frederick Baker and the further sum of*

*one hundred and two dollars and forty eight cents with interest from December 27, 1856 due by accepted order all payable on demand."*<sup>47</sup>

In 1858, Dr. Baker, unable to pay his debts, defaulted on the trusts and conveyed his property to the trustee Alfred Moss.<sup>48</sup> However, it appears that Alfred Moss made no attempt to sell the property to satisfy the debts, doing so would have immediately left the Baker's without a home. This is almost certainly a testament to the respect that Frederick and Hannah Baker enjoyed as a Physician and Educator, within the tight knit community. By all accounts Dr. and Mrs. Baker were pillars of the community. Dr. Baker attended to the medical needs of the entire community at all hours, rain or shine. He even attended the prisoners held in the County jail and the poor. The Baker's also sponsored several orphaned children and were compensated by the Fairfax County Overseers of the Poor for seeing to their needs.<sup>49,50</sup>

However, as the old idiom goes *business is business*. In 1859, a chancery suit was instituted against Dr. Baker by attorney Robert Bell to secure E.R. Ford & Company, F. Rasche, William Richards and William T. Rumsey.<sup>51</sup> With the advent of the Civil War the suit remained unsettled and the land unsold. The Baker's continued to reside at Coombe Cottage and the school continued to operate until the early part of the Civil War.

Simultaneous to the Baker's financial difficulties, political turmoil had also gripped the Nation. The question of slavery, which had been a divisive national issue for more than a generation, came to a flashpoint in October 1859 at Harper's Ferry, Virginia, just fifty miles from Fairfax Court House. In response to John Brown's raid on Harper's Ferry, the Fairfax County Circuit Court ordered that Slave Patrols be conducted within Fairfax County to guard against a similar uprising here. In addition, a volunteer rifle company was formed, the *Fairfax Rifles*, in Fairfax County in November 1859. Tensions were running extremely high, as witnessed by the following news item regarding James W. Jackson, proprietor of the Union Hotel at Fairfax Court House and a member of the Fairfax County Slave Patrol:

*"An extraordinary memento of the late insurrection at Harper's Ferry, is that possessed by Mr. J.W. Jackson, tavern-keeper, at Fairfax Court House, Va., which is a part of the ear of one of the insurgents who was killed in the engine house."*<sup>52</sup>

By 1860, many in Fairfax County began to view the secession of Virginia, and possibly war, as inevitable. In February 1860, an advertisement appeared in the *Daily National Intelligencer* announcing the partial retirement of Mrs. Dr. Baker. With her retirement, her daughter, twenty one year old, Jennie Baker, assumed management of the school:



*"Miss BAKER will carry on the school formerly conducted by Mrs. Dr. Baker: Mrs. B. superintending the domestic department.*

*...Doctor BAKER will sell the above property. It is well adapted for a Seminary, if properly managed, and will (as can be shown) realize income from \$8,000 to \$12,000. It would also answer for a summer boarding house, having every convenience, with orchards, gardens, &c, and about fifteen acres of land. Also, a Farm of 183 acres can be bought with it. If necessary, a long credit will be given on good security."*<sup>53</sup>

The above ad also indicates Dr. Baker was actively attempting to sell Coombe Cottage to settle his debts and perhaps even relocate his family out of Fairfax. A sale of the property did not occur and the Baker's remained at Coombe Cottage throughout the coming Civil War.

It is well known that Fairfax Court House was hotly contested ground, particularly during the early part of the Civil War. Many families were forced to flee their homes as the conflicting armies fought for control of the area. Coombe Cottage was in the center of the struggle and alternately hosted both Union and Confederate armies. Throughout the spring, summer and fall of 1861 Fairfax Court House played host to several Confederate regiments. Brigadier General Milledge L. Bonham's South Carolina Infantry Brigade was encamped immediately around Coombe Cottage and General Bonham himself made Coombe Cottage his official headquarters.

By 1861, Frederick Baker's southern sympathies are apparent. Personal property records for that year indicate that he owned three slaves over the age of twelve.<sup>54</sup> Presumably, these slaves were purchased during the year as Dr. Baker's name does not appear on the U.S. Census of 1860, Slave Schedule for Fairfax County. Further support for his allegiance comes from the fact he voted for Secession at Fairfax Court House on May 23, 1861.

Additionally, the *Local News* of Alexandria, Virginia, reported the following in November 1861:

*"Two contrabands, who were the house servants of Lawyer Murray<sup>55</sup> and Dr. Baker, of Fairfax Court House, came within the lines of Gen. Wadsworth yesterday. They report that the houses of these persons were a kind of headquarters of Confederate officers, and from the conversations they heard, they do not design to advance, but will set on the defense. That a desperate resistance will be made both at Centreville and Manassas, and that the occupation of Fairfax Court House and the vicinity by the Federal forces would be no inducement for them to give battle."*<sup>56</sup>

The Civil War brought many new faces to Fairfax. In the span of a few short weeks, soldiers from all over the south converged on Northern Virginia. With them came many changes. While most these were changes were decidedly unwelcome to the local population, a few were very welcome indeed. There are several well documented examples romances between soldiers and local girls which eventually blossomed into marriage. Even in war, it seems, love knows no bounds.

However, these relationships were not always romantic and did not always result in marriage, particularly if the individuals involved were already married. Such was the case of Jennie Fairfax, of Coombe Cottage, and Pvt. James Chalmers of Halifax County and the 2<sup>nd</sup> Virginia Cavalry.

At the beginning of the war Jennie Baker hastily married Herbert C. Fairfax, on June 3, 1861. Herbert was a member of Fairfax Rifles and went off with his unit to Centreville. Some troops remained at Fairfax Court House, however. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Virginia Cavalry was attached to General Bonham's Brigade at Fairfax Court House for picket, scouting and courier duty. Their camp was very close to Fairfax Court House. Pvt. James Chalmers was a thirty one year old Lawyer from Halifax County, Virginia, serving in Co. B, of the 2nd Virginia Cavalry. He was the stepson of Anna Maria Chalmers. Anna Maria, authored several children's books in the 1830's and from 1841 to 1853 she also operated *Mrs. Mead's School* a boarding and day school for girls in Richmond, Virginia. Like the Baker's, the Chalmers were also very devout Episcopalians.<sup>57</sup> In all probability, due to a combination of the above facts and as stated James own letters and, Anna Maria Chalmers and Hannah Maria Baker became friends.

On June 27, 1861, Pvt. Chalmers wrote in a letter to his wife, Mary Frances Fannie (Saunders) Chalmers:

*"I have accidentally formed the acquaintance of an exceedingly attractive lady and elegant musician about a mile from here and a number of other ladies at a house full of refugees from Alexandria. I carried the most attractive one a letter from her husband which had unaccountably found its way into our camp, commencing "My darling wife" etc. They had been married only 2 or 3 weeks. They hastened it on account of his having to go to war.*

*He has put his estate near here in her charge and is, I believe, at Fairfax C.H. His name is Gainstad[?]. I have been to see them twice.*

*... This Mrs. Fairfax is very pretty and accomplished and has an elegant piano, in [an] old shackling house, [as] their home in Fairfax C.H. occupied by soldiers...."*<sup>58, 59</sup>

On July 5<sup>th</sup> and for the next several weeks he wrote to his wife. In quite a few letters, James' mentions Jennie Fairfax



and Mrs. Baker. Even after 150 years it is apparent that Pvt. Chalmers was quite taken with Jennie Fairfax and the feeling seems to have been reciprocated:

"July 5, 1861 –

*...I haven't been able to see Mrs. Fairfax for several days. She is an exceedingly sweet woman and offered voluntarily to entertain you if you could come on. But she herself is now staying in an old shackling house already pretty well filled with refugees, apparently. They have a very fine house at Fairfax C.H...."*

"July 6, 1861 –

*...The principal objection I had to moving is that we are further off from Manassas, Henry and letters, Mrs. Fairfax. The ladies at the latter place have been exceedingly kind to me and insisted that if I am sick or wounded I must either come there or go to Dr. Baker's (her father's) at Fairfax Court House. Their home there is now Gen. Bonham's headquarters with a portion reserved for such of the family as may be there. She insisted most kindly to bring you there...."*

"July 8, 1861 –

*...After church Henry, Charles, myself went to dine with Mrs. Fairfax determined as we were out to make good use of our time. She had a sick South Carolina Lieutenant in there nursing him...."*

"July 19, 1861 –

*...Gen. Cocke sent me to escort some refugee ladies who went to a hill where in the distance we could have a bird's eye view of all the country around almost. There is dome grandeur in the sight of a battle but not near so exciting as you might imagine. The ladies remaining, Mrs. Fairfax's mother who had left all her elegant furniture and books behind, including several pianos and a melodeon, were bringing only some plunder and food in a two horse waggon[sic] traveling under the protection of negro driver. They seemed as quiet and calm as if taking a pleasure trip and not so agitated as the same ladies would probably be at a hen's scratching up their peas...."*

"July 22, 1861 –

*...Mrs. Fairfax's clothes and pretty things were taken, but piano, melodeon and furniture uninjured. They intended removing it I understand. One of the negro men is out of the way and I fear gone. The Machen's and their library were uninjured and*

*seemed almost as glad to see me as if I had been the prodigal son returned. Charley went with me there....*  
"

"August 16, 1861 –

*....A few minutes after we arrived at camp a messenger came from Mr. Fairfax to say he was at Dr. Baker's and wanted to see me. They have a beautiful place of about 15 acres, a very roomy house, somewhat defaced by the different generals who have made it their headquarters...."*

September 22, 1861 –

*"...Mrs. Fairfax is still near Manassas. Mrs. Baker as kind and affectionate as ever and she and [her] mother are great friends...."* <sup>60</sup>

On September 29, 1861, a week after the above letter, Pvt. Chalmers was seriously wounded in the arm and stomach while on picket duty at Munson's Hill near Falls Church, Virginia. I believe that James, as previously stated in his letter of July 6<sup>th</sup>, was brought back to Dr. Baker's at Fairfax Court House who attended him and may have amputated the young man's arm in an effort to save his life. The wound to his stomach, however, proved fatal. He died two days later. His commanding officer, 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Charles M. Blackford, wrote home to Fannie Chalmers just before he died:

"Fairfax C.H., September 29, 1861

My Dear Madam,

*Our poor Chalmers was wounded last night on the line of our outside pickets and is now at this place in very comfortable quarters. The character of the wound in his stomach cannot be certainly ascertained for some days. That in his arm will, I fear, cost him his arm from as little below the elbow. We trust that the symptoms will bear us out in the hope that the wound in his body is not mortal but nothing can be told in regard to it for two days at least. He bears its pain like a Christian Soldier as he is in the highest signification of the term.*

*It has not yet been definitely determined who shot him; whether our own or the enemy's pickets. It may have been either. I will write more tomorrow. I am under influence of opium taken as a pain killer and I am so much afflicted by it that I can scarcely see and hence must write only a note. Chalmers is very dear to me and shall have every attention I would give one of my own brothers. He is perfectly resigned and told us this morning that his faith in Jesus made him perfectly happy. He has my personal prayers.*





**Eugenia Chalmers Fairfax Campbell, c. 1885.**

Born at *Coombe Cottage*, Fairfax, Virginia, July 19, 1862.  
Daughter of Herbert Carlyle & Jennie Davies Baker Fairfax.

Photo credit: Kets Kemethy, Washington, D.C.

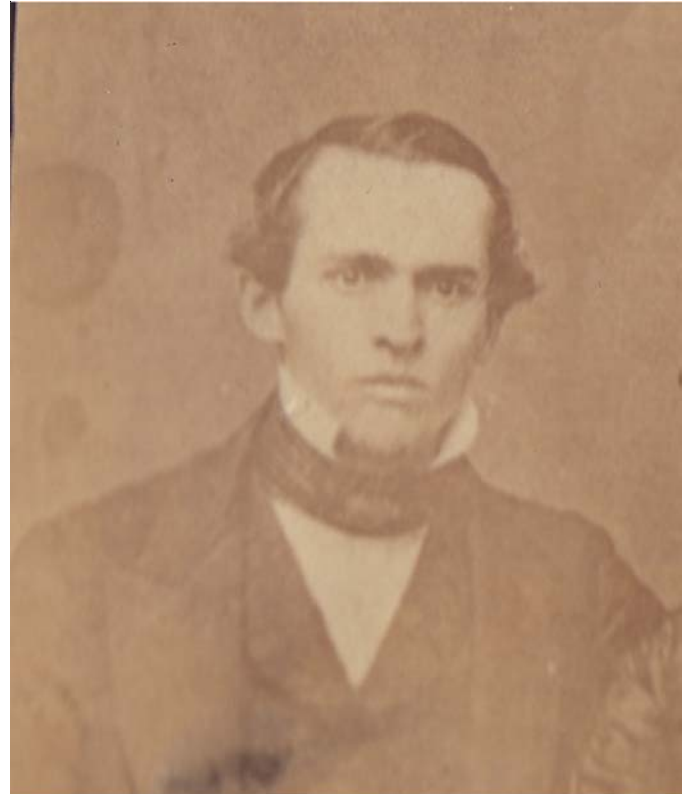
Photo courtesy: Sandra Nardo, great-granddaughter of E.C.F. Campbell.

*Your friend,*

*Charles M. Blackford*"<sup>61</sup>

Pvt. Chalmers made such an impression on Jennie Fairfax, that she named her first born daughter after this young man. Eugenia *Chalmers* Fairfax was born less than one year later on July 19, 1862.

There is no additional supporting documentation to suggest that James was taken to Coombe Cottage and attended to by Dr. Baker save his own letters and that of Lt. Blackford. However, given the level of affection that clearly passed between these two families and the relative inexperience of army doctors at this stage in the war, I am confident that James final hours were spent at Coombe Cottage. Supporting this supposition are several facts. Dr. Baker was trained as a *Surgeon* in England, as opposed to a Physician or Medical Doctor (M.D.), a distinction made, at least in England, until just recently. At age 50, he would have been considerably older, and presumably more experienced, than most army physicians. To illustrate this lack of experience of army doctors, in late 1861 and early 1862, Asst. Surgeon William Hope Peek of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Virginia Cavalry Regiment wrote several letters to his family of the incompetence of the medical staff



**James Chalmers**

Pvt., Co. B, 2nd Virginia Cavalry

Born Halifax Co., Virginia 1829. Died of wounds at Coombe Cottage 1861  
Lawyer, Lynchburg, Virginia. Univ. of N.C. and Univ. of Virginia.

Photo courtesy: Una Owen Enikeieff, great-granddaughter of James Chalmers.

of his regiment and that he was serving as a surgeon without benefit of medical training in the 2nd Virginia Cavalry Regiment.<sup>62</sup>

Also, there is the simple fact Eugenia Fairfax was named for him. If the Baker's and the Fairfax's were in attendance during James' final hours, that trauma alone may have been and inducement to their naming their first born (Eugenia) for him. Also, Lt. Blackford's assertion that James was in "*very comfortable quarters*" at "*Fairfax Court House*." I interpret this as James was taken to one of a very few *nice* houses in Fairfax at the time. The majority of dwellings were very simple and downright primitive; Log homes being very common here then. Additionally, contrary to Lt. Blackford's letter, of Sept. 29<sup>th</sup> from "*Fairfax Court House*", the camp of the 2nd Virginia Cavalry was actually located "*near Centreville*" at this time as identified on the regimental muster rolls.

Coombe Cottage featured prominently in another incident several months later. In October 1862, 300 men of the 11<sup>th</sup> New York Cavalry left Washington, D.C. on a scouting mission to Fairfax Court House. Arriving there, a slave informed them that at house not far off and operating as a girl's school, a flag of secession was regularly seen flying from their rooftop.

Hearing this, a small detachment of 8 to 10 cavalymen were sent to investigate. When the soldiers arrived at the school there was no flag to be seen. Entering the dwelling they received cold stares from the girls. The soldiers then announced why they had come. The girls quickly assured them that there was absolutely no such flag anywhere on the premises. The soldiers then asked for and received permission to search for the suspected flag. They searched the entire house, dormitories and outbuildings from top to bottom. As they did so, the girls giggled and exchanged quick glances with one another, indicating, at least to one of the soldiers, that there was indeed a hidden flag. However, they came up empty. Sgt. Henry M. Calvert of the 11<sup>th</sup> New York Cavalry remembered:

*"We failed to find the object of our search. Still we felt sure, from the giggling of the girls [that we were] 'hot,' as is said in the game of forfeits when one approaches the object sought, that the flag was concealed under the clothing of one of the girls. Being all bachelors and supposedly bashful, we refrained from further investigation...."*<sup>63</sup>

Outwitted and outmaneuvered, the Union soldiers accepted defeat and retreated from the school, chiding the girls to behave or else they would come back. They had not ridden far when they turned in their saddles to see the flag being defiantly waived from one of the windows of the school. The boys stopped in the middle of the road and discussed what to do next. According to Sgt. Calvert, the following exchange then occurred:

*"Boys, I'd give a month's pay for that flag. I knew it was there all the time they said it wasn't. And they knew well that we wouldn't look for it where they put it! What shall we do about it?"* said Sgt. Calvert.

*"Let us go back and demand it on proof that we have seen it in their possession,"* replied Pvt. Macdonald.

*"Suppose they tell us that they won't?"* queried Pvt. Smith.

*"Then, in that case I would tell them that one of them must get up on the saddle behind me and be kept in the camp until the rest send us the flag,"* quipped Pvt. Macdonald.

*"No, that won't do, even in fun,"* Sgt. Calvert stated. *"These girls have beaten us in as fair a fight as they can make. Let them keep their flag. They deserve to keep it. If they were men we could fight them; but we can't fight women. Besides, if it was known that we had taken a young lady out of her home and carried her off to our camp, the whole country, North and South, would cry shame.... The loss of the emblem would mean more to them than the gain of it could be to us."*

The little squad then turned and waived their hats, blew kisses to the girls and rode back to their camp. Nearly sixty years after this incident, Sgt. Calvert still wondered about the Fairfax girls in his memoirs:

*"Perhaps, since then, on winter nights, when the snows were falling without and the logs of Ole Virginia were roaring within, these same Southern daughters have related to their children and grandchildren, 'with weeping and with laughter,' how they fooled the Yankee boys by hiding the bonnie blue flag from them in the brave days of old."*<sup>64</sup>

The Civil War closed Coombe Cottage, permanently. Although the family continued to live there the school ceased to operate after 1863.

After the war, the *Bell v. Baker* suit was continued in 1868. Four years of war had left Fairfax County a virtual wasteland. This was also the beginning of Reconstruction and times were very hard and money extremely scarce. The strain may have proved too much for Frederick Baker. On September 19, 1868, at the age 59, he died suddenly at Coombe Cottage. His death and burial on "*The Rumsey Farm*," were chronicled in the *Alexandria Gazette*.<sup>65,66</sup>

### DIED.

At his residence, at Fairfax Court House, Va., on Saturday, September 19, 1868, Dr. FREDERICK BAKER, in the 59th year of his age.

*Alexandria Gazette*, September 21, 1868, p. 2, c. 5

In October 1868, his son-in-law, Fairfax County Commissioner of the Revenue, Herbert C. Fairfax qualified as his administrator.<sup>67</sup> The suit was settled in December 1868 and Coombe Cottage was ordered sold at public auction by the Fairfax County Circuit Court. After being advertised for several weeks in the *Alexandria Gazette*, the property was sold to the highest bidder in front of the courthouse door on May 17, 1869. Herbert C. Fairfax, as the high bidder, was issued a deed.<sup>68</sup>

Herbert Carlyle Fairfax was the son of Captain Henry Fairfax, a casualty of the Mexican-American War, and Caroline Herbert, of Ash Grove (two miles west of Tyson's Corner, VA). Herbert Fairfax and Jennie Baker had been married on June 3, 1861.<sup>69,70</sup> Herbert enlisted in the Civil War as a 1<sup>st</sup> Sgt. with the Fairfax Rifles, Co. D, 17<sup>th</sup> Virginia Infantry. He was later appointed Captain and Quartermaster of 1<sup>st</sup> Regt. of Confederate Engineers. From 1868 until about 1879 Herbert and Jennie Fairfax resided at Coombe Cottage, with their





### Letter from Fairfax County.

[Correspondence of the Alexandria Gazette.]

The Court adjourned at 3 o'clock, and its members, as well as the large crowd waiting on it, proceeded to attend the funeral of Dr. Frederick Baker, who died suddenly at his residence here, on Saturday evening. Our community has lost a prominent and very useful member, in him. A native of England, and a pupil of Sir Ashley Cooper, he settled here nearly thirty years ago, and during his long practice had made acquaintances and friends of nearly all our citizens. Always pleasant and humorous, and uniting the qualities of the careful nurse and attentive friend, to those of the physician, he was a welcome guest at all their houses. The poor and rich alike will remember him as a practitioner always ready to wait on them, at whatever hour of the day or night their summons came. His services and devotion during the war will be especially remembered, for, during that long night of gloom and want to the people of this vicinity, his buoyant spirits and constant pluck were always pleasant and cheering to regard. He was steadfast and true to the land of his adoption, and never compromised, during his solitary martyrdom here in those days, his fidelity to the State which he had selected as his preference and his home.—Dr. Baker's death has created a void here, which will not be easily filled.

*Alexandria Gazette*, September 22, 1868, p. 2, c. 4

daughters, Eugenia Chalmers Fairfax, Caroline Herbert Fairfax, and Jennie's mother, Hannah Maria Baker. In addition to being Commissioner of the Revenue, Herbert was a member of the Vestry of Truro Episcopal Church.<sup>71</sup> About 1879, Herbert & Jennie Fairfax defaulted on the deed of trust to Coombe Cottage secured by Thomas Moore. They then moved to Alexandria, Virginia. Jennie Davies Fairfax died at their home there, *Mt. Ada*, on October 27, 1880.<sup>72,73</sup>

While in Alexandria, Eugenia Chalmers Fairfax, met Charles Mitchell Campbell, a student at the Virginia Theological Seminary, in Alexandria. The couple was married at the Episcopal Seminary Chapel on August 25, 1885.<sup>74</sup> They moved to Charleston, West Virginia, where Charles was ordained an Episcopal Minister in 1886. Jennie's mother, Hannah Burgess Baker, died the following year on August 14, 1887, age 69,

**Mrs. H. M. Baker, for many years a school teacher of Fairfax C. H., where she was beloved and respected by all who knew her, died at her home there on Saturday last.**

*Alexandria Gazette*, August 15, 1887, p. 3, c. 2

**COMMISSIONERS' SALE OF VALUABLE PROPERTY, AT AND NEAR FAIRFAX COURT HOUSE, VA.**—By virtue of the decree of the Circuit Court of Fairfax county, rendered at November term, 1868, of said Court, in the suit of Robert Bell vs. Frederick Baker and others, the undersigned, Commissioners named in said decree, will, on **MONDAY**, the 17th day of May, 1869, that being Court day, sell, to the highest bidder, that **VALUABLE PROPERTY**, situated at Fairfax Court House, known as "**COMBE COTTAGE**." This property consists of 15½ acres of **IMPROVED LAND**; has thereon a commodious **FRAME DWELLING**, long used as a boarding school, with other buildings, shade, ornamental and fruit trees, with a well, affording excellent water.

Also, the **FARM** of which the late Frederick Baker, died seized, containing one hundred and eighty acres of land, adjoining Newman Burke and others. This property lies about half a mile southwest of the village, and has thereon a comfortable **FRAME DWELLING**, and an abundance of wood.

**TERMS**—One tenth of the purchase-money in hand; the residue in three equal instalments, payable at six, twelve and eighteen months, with interest from the day of sale, to be secured by the bonds of the purchaser, with good personal security, and a retention of the title until the last payment is made.

**THOS. R. LOVE.  
WM. H. DULANY.  
THOMAS MOORE.**

**Fairfax co., ap 19-law4w Coms. of Sale.**

*Alexandria Gazette*, April 24, 1869, p. 2, c.6

and was buried with her husband at the "*Cemetery at Fairfax C.H.*"<sup>75</sup> Following the death of his wife, Herbert Fairfax moved to Washington, D.C. He died at the home of his daughter, Eugenia, in Racine, Boone Co., West Virginia on May 5, 1904.





He is buried in the Campbell Lot of Foster Cemetery, (S.R. 94 at Millbrook Road), on a small wooded hilltop in Racine, West Virginia.

After Herbert Fairfax defaulted on the mortgage, the trustee, Thomas Moore, advertised for several weeks in the *Alexandria Gazette* that Coombe Cottage would be sold at auction at the Fairfax Courthouse door. McKim Holliday Wells, a son-in-law of Edward R. Ford, one of the original creditors of the property, was the highest bidder on April 15, 187<sub>7</sub>.<sup>76</sup> Holliday Wells was the husband of Pattie Ford, a daughter of Edward R. & Julia F. Ford. On February 15, 1879, Wells issued a contact for deed to James M. Love for Coombe Cottage and 10½ acres, consisting of the southerly portion fronting on Main Street. The transfer was not recorded however, until June 6, 1904.<sup>77</sup>

Judge James M. Love of the Fairfax County Circuit Court, resided at Coombe Cottage for more than fifty years until his death in 1933. So long, in fact, that to many in the community, Coombe Cottage was better known as Judge Love's place. During this time, Judge Love sold several of the dormitory buildings and moved them to the south side of Main Street.<sup>78</sup> After his death, Judge Love, by his Will, directed that his property be divided among his three surviving children, James M. Love, Jr., Thomas B. Love, Jesse Love Freeman.<sup>79</sup> This was not immediately done. Consequently, the property had a secession of tenants.<sup>80</sup> Thomas B. Love died in 1943. In 1945, his widow, Lydia Janney Love, brought suit against the surviving Love heirs in Fairfax County Circuit Court, to have the property sold. The case, *Love v. Love*, resulted in the sale of the property to Lyman Bickford Kirkpatrick and his wife Jane Courtney in November 1945.<sup>81</sup>

The purchase by the Kirkpatrick's included some of Judge Love's furnishings, a locked safe possibly owned by the Baker's, and the contents of the barns and outbuildings. After the sale Lyman Kirkpatrick had the safe opened and found many documents inside which he gave to the "historical society." The barn contained dozens of female saddles which were given to the Mount Vernon Association.<sup>82</sup> Lyman Kirkpatrick's son, Terry Kirkpatrick indicated that there were no indoor bathrooms in the house when his father purchased the home. There was running water in the house provided by a large wooden water tank in the attic. Water was pumped to this tank which served as a reservoir.

Lyman Kirkpatrick was an Intelligence Officer in the Office of Strategic Services (O.S.S.) and rose to become Executive Director of the Central Intelligence Agency. In 1955, the Kirkpatrick's sold the 10½ acre parcel to Walter T. Oliver and William Whitney Clark, trustees.<sup>83</sup> They in turn sold 1 acre to the Trustees of Truro Episcopal Church. This was a long narrow strip of land along the entire western boundary of the Church.<sup>84</sup> In 1961, Oliver & Clark sold the remaining

9½ acres to the Charles F. Warner Company.<sup>85</sup> The C.F. Warner Co. sold the property to The Mosby Corporation, of which Charles F. Warner was President.<sup>86</sup>

On March 1, 1883, Thomas Moore conveyed the remaining northern portion the Coombe Cottage property, consisting of five acres comprising *The Meadow* and fronting on Tusico Branch, Accotink Creek and the Ox Road, to Julia F. Ford, the wife of Edward R. Ford.<sup>87</sup> At the time, this small parcel was vacant unimproved land. On March 20, 1897, Julia Ford conveyed the five acre parcel to her son Frank R. Ford.<sup>88</sup> After Frank Ford's death in 1904, his widow Barbara brought suit, *Ford v. Ford* in Fairfax County Circuit Court in 1909, to divide his property. The 5-acre, unimproved parcel was sold to Thomas R. Keith.<sup>89, 90</sup> This property was next sold to State Senator John Warwick Rust in 1938, as part of a larger parcel belonging to Edith M. Keith, widow of Thomas R. Keith.<sup>91</sup>



Remnant of *The Meadow* at Coombe Cottage described by student Frances Carper in 1852. Now part of the common area of Rustfield Subdivision. Tusico Branch, the northern boundary of Coombe Cottage, is in the woodline on the left. Accotink Creek is in the woodline on the right. Their confluence is at the center of the picture. Photo credit: Page Johnson, July 2011



Tusico Place and Meadow Bridge Lane. Historically appropriate street names in Rustfield Subdivision. Photo credit: Page Johnson, July 2011.

For the next forty years this undeveloped land would remain in the Rust family and lost became known locally as Rust Field.

John Warwick Rust died in 1958.<sup>92</sup> His widow, Anne Hooe Rust, followed him in 1971.<sup>93</sup> The property then passed to their children, Warwick Rust Brown, Eleanor Rust Mattern and John Howsen Rust. In 1979, they sold the property to Robinson & Thayer, Inc. who built Rustfield subdivision in 1983.<sup>94</sup> The area around the present-day Rustfield Gazebo constitutes the remaining portion of The Meadow so enjoyed by schoolgirl Frances Carper as indicated in her 1853 Journal.

In 1962, Coombe Cottage was demolished and Charles F. Warner of the Mosby Corporation began construction of the Mosby Apartments.<sup>95</sup> The project was completed in 1964.

For additional information on Coombe Cottage, particularly on daily life, please see Coombe Cottage, by Cordelia Sansone Fairfax County Historical Society Yearbook © 1980.



**The Mosby Building**, 10560 Main Street, Fairfax, VA.

Photo credit: Page Johnson, July 2011

## (Endnotes)

<sup>1</sup> *Freeman's Journal*, November 28, 1842.

<sup>2</sup> *The New York Annual Register for 1836*, Williams, Edwin, © 1836, p. 260, James Van Norden, New York

<sup>3</sup> New York Passenger Lists, 1820-1957. 1837; Microfilm Roll: M237 35; Line: 8; List Number: 952.

<sup>4</sup> Obituary of Dr. Frederick Baker, *Alexandria Gazette*, September 22, 1868, p. 2, c. 4.

<sup>5</sup> Lease Purchase Agreement, F.D. Richardson & F. Baker, August 19, 1843, DB H3 Pg. 303, Fairfax Co. Clk.

<sup>6</sup> Fairfax County Court Order Book 1842, Pg. 71, Fairfax Co. Cir. Ct. Clk.

<sup>7</sup> *Christian Reflector*, May 30, 1844, V. 7, No. 44, pg. 88.

<sup>8</sup> *American Agriculturalist*, March 1849, V. 8, No. 3, p. 101 [From the *Fairfax News*]

<sup>9</sup> Zion Episcopal Church and Duncan Chapel of Methodist Episcopal Church were constructed in 1845.

<sup>10</sup> *Southern Planter*, November 1845, V. 5, No. 11, pg. 1.

<sup>11</sup> *American Agriculturist*, February 1848, V. 7, No., 2, pg. 51.

<sup>12</sup> *Alexandria Gazette*, September 2, 1844, p. 1, c. 3.

<sup>13</sup> Deed from Rumsey to Baker, October 3, 1845, DB J3, Pg. 412, Fairfax Co. Cir. Ct. Clk.

<sup>14</sup> Fairfax County Chancery Suit, CFF#7n Bell v. Baker, 1859, Fairfax Co. Cir. Ct. Clk.

<sup>15</sup> *Episcopal Recorder*, March 4, 1843, p. 3.

<sup>16</sup> Zion Church, Truro Parish Register #1, 1867-1889, *Families*, Truro Episcopal Church, Fairfax, VA.

<sup>17</sup> *The History of Truro Parish in Virginia*, Rev. Philip Slaughter, D.D., © 1907, George W. Jacobs & Co., Philadelphia, PA

<sup>18</sup> *Coombe Cottage, First Girls Academy in Fairfax County, Virginia*, © 1980, V. 16, p. 36, H.S.F.C.V.

<sup>19</sup> Fairfax County Land Tax Books, 1845, 1846, 1847, Fairfax Co. Cir. Ct. Clk.

<sup>20</sup> U.S. Census of 1850, Fairfax County, VA.

<sup>21</sup> U.S. Census of 1850, Fairfax County, VA, Pg. 134.

<sup>22</sup> U.S. Census of 1860 Slave Schedule, Fairfax County, VA, Pg. 13.

<sup>23</sup> Fairfax County Personal Property Book, 1861.

<sup>24</sup> Daily National Intelligencer, August 7, 1856, p. 1, c. 6.

<sup>25</sup> Daily National Intelligencer, August 7, 1856, p. 1, c. 6.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid p. 39.

<sup>27</sup> Daily National Intelligencer, August 7, 1856, p. 1, c. 6.

<sup>28</sup> *Coombe Cottage, First Girls Academy in Fairfax County, Virginia*, © 1980, V. 16, p. various, H.S.F.C.V.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid p. 41.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid p. 25.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid p. 38.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid p. 41.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid p. 43.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid p. 44.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid p. 45.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid p. 46.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid p. 48.

<sup>38</sup> Deed from Dickerson to Baker, December 29, 1853, DB T3, Pg. 295, Fairfax Co. Cir. Ct. Clk.

<sup>39</sup> Deed of Trust from Baker to Rumsey, December 29, 1853, DB T3, Pg. 298, Fairfax Co. Cir. Ct. Clk.

<sup>40</sup> Edward R. Ford was a merchant at Fairfax Court House. His partner was George W. Hunt.

<sup>41</sup> Fairfax County Chancery Suit, CFF#7n Bell v. Baker, 1859, Fairfax Co. Cir. Ct. Clk.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid.

<sup>43</sup> A *Rockaway* is a term applied to two types of carriage: a light, low, American four-wheeled carriage with a fixed top and open sides that may be covered by waterproof curtains, and a heavy carriage enclosed at sides and rear, with a door on each side. The name may be derived from the town of Rockaway, New Jersey, where carriages were made.

<sup>44</sup> *Philosophical Apparatus* is a term applied to various scientific instruments designed to aid teachers in illustrating principles of natural philosophy or science (e.g. microscopes, thermometers, compass & dividers, volt meters, etc.).

<sup>45</sup> A *melodeon*, also known as a cabinet organ or American organ, is a type of 19th century reed organ with a foot-operated vacuum bellows, and a piano keyboard. It differs from the related harmonium, which uses a pressure bellows. Melodeons were manufactured in the United States sometime after 1812 until the Civil War era

<sup>46</sup> Deed of Trust, Baker to Moss, July 5, 1855, DB W-3, Pg. 331, Fairfax Co. Cir. Ct. Clk.

<sup>47</sup> Deed of Trust, Baker to Moss, September 16, 1857, DB Z3, Pg. 132, Fairfax Co. Cir. Ct. Clk.

<sup>48</sup> Deed, Baker to Moss, September 27, 1858, DB A4, Pg. 198, Fairfax Co. Cir. Ct. Clk.

<sup>49</sup> Expenditures, Fairfax County Overseers of the Poor, Fairfax Co. Cir. Ct. Clk.

<sup>50</sup> *Alexandria Gazette*, November 11, 1855, p. 3.

<sup>51</sup> Fairfax County Chancery Suit, CFF#7n Bell v. Baker, 1859, Fairfax Co. Cir. Ct. Clk.

<sup>52</sup> *Alexandria Gazette*, October 25, 1859, p. 2, c. 1. It is not immediately known whether James W. Jackson was at Harper's Ferry on October 18, 1861. However, it is known that the body of Dangerfield Newby, a freed slave and the first of the raiders to be killed, was mutilated, his ears being cut off of his body by someone in the crowd and kept as souvenirs. *Richmond Daily Dispatch*, October 20, 1859.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid.

<sup>54</sup> Fairfax County Personal Property Book, 1861.

<sup>55</sup> Thomas J. Murray (1812-1865) was a lawyer who practiced in Fairfax from the 1830s thru 1860s. In his politics, he was a Whig who supported slavery. He was a Commissioner of Elections at Fairfax C.H. in 1849. He was the Worshipful Master of Henry Lodge No. 57, Freemasons. His wife, Julia died December 12, 1856, leaving him with six small children to care for. According to the *Alexandria Gazette*, he died at Fairfax C.H. of a stroke March 29, 1865. He and his family resided in what is now known as the Moore House on the nw corner of Rt. 123 and North St. He and Julia have a marker at Fairfax Cemetery. Julia was interred behind the Moore house. Thomas was, most likely originally interred at the Moore House as well.

<sup>56</sup> *The Local News*, November 28, 1861, p. 2, c. 2, Alexandria, VA.

<sup>57</sup> The Dictionary of Virginia Biography, Anna Maria Mead Chalmers (1809-1891)

<sup>58</sup> [http://www.encyclopediavirginia.org/Chalmers\\_Anna\\_Maria\\_Mead\\_1809-1891](http://www.encyclopediavirginia.org/Chalmers_Anna_Maria_Mead_1809-1891)

<sup>59</sup> A *Shackling House* is a derivative term used to describe a house that is small, dilapidated, or rundown.

<sup>60</sup> *Fannie and James. The Letters of Pvt. James and Fannie Chalmers*, Una Owen Enikeieff & Oleg C. Enikeieff, © 1996, from the private collection of Una Owen Enikeieff.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid.

<sup>63</sup> *Peeke Family Papers 1847- 1872*, Southern Historical Collection, Louis Round Wilson Special Collections Library, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, NC.

<sup>64</sup> *Reminiscences of a Boy in Blue, 1862-1865*, Calvert, Henry M., © 1920, pg. 41, G.P. Putnam's Sons, NY.

<sup>65</sup> *Reminiscences of a Boy in Blue, 1862-1865*, Calvert, Henry M., © 1920, pg. 43, G.P. Putnam's Sons, NY.

<sup>66</sup> Zion Church, Truro Parish Register #1, 1867-1868, "Deaths", Truro Episcopal Church, Fairfax, VA.

<sup>67</sup> In 1842, William T. & Caroline Rumsey purchased the farm known as *Mr. Vineyard*, home of Richard Ratcliffe, founder of the Town of Providence (now Fairfax). The City of Fairfax acquired the Ratcliffe Cemetery in 2005 from the heirs of Richard Ratcliffe.

<sup>68</sup> Inventory & Appraisement of the Estate of Dr. Frederick Baker, Will Book A-2, Pg. 409, Fairfax Co. Clk.

<sup>69</sup> Deed Love, Special Commissioner to Fairfax, December 1, 1869, DB L4, Pg. 3, Fairfax Co. Cir. Ct. Clk.

<sup>70</sup> Report of Commissioners Thomas R. Love, William H. Dulany & Thomas Moore c. 1868 in Fairfax Co. Chancery Suit, CFF#7n Bell v. Baker, 1859, Fairfax Co. Cir. Ct. Clk.

<sup>71</sup> *The Carlisle Family*, Spencer, Richard H., Wm. & Mary Qrly., V. 18, p. 284, © 1910, Richmond, VA.

<sup>72</sup> Truro Episcopal Church Vestry Minutes, Truro Episcopal Church, Fairfax, VA.

<sup>73</sup> Alexandria County Death Records, Alexandria Circuit Court Clerk.

<sup>74</sup> *Alexandria Gazette*, October 30, 1880, p. 2, c. 5.

<sup>75</sup> Alexandria County Marriage Register, City of Alexandria Circuit Court Clerk.

<sup>76</sup> Zion Church, Truro Parish Register #1, 1867-1868, "Deaths", Truro Episcopal Church, Fairfax, VA.

<sup>77</sup> Deed from Moore, Trustee to Wells, March 8, 1883, DB C5, Pg. 108, Fairfax Co. Cir. Ct. Clk.

<sup>78</sup> Deed Ford Heirs to Love, June 6, 1904, DB R6, Pg. 664, Fairfax Co. Cir. Ct.

<sup>79</sup> Letter of Lydia Janney Love to Jeanne Johnson Rust, August 30, 1959, copy, Coombe Cottage file, Virginia Room, Fairfax City Regional Library, Fairfax, VA.

<sup>80</sup> Will of James M. Love, June 30, 1930, WB 14, Pg. 467

<sup>81</sup> Personal communication of Lyman B. "Terry" Kirkpatrick on June 24, 2011.

<sup>82</sup> Deed from Love, Est. to Kirkpatrick, November 13, 1945, DB 470, Pg. 285, Fairfax Co. Cir. Ct. Clk.

<sup>83</sup> Personal communication of Lyman B. "Terry" Kirkpatrick on June 24, 2011.

<sup>84</sup> Deed from Kirkpatrick to Oliver & Clark, November 14, 1955, DB 1377, Pg. 258, Fairfax Co. Cir. Ct. Clk.

<sup>85</sup> Deed from Oliver, et al. TR to Prichard, et al. TR, July 3, 1956, DB 1473, Pg. 291, Fairfax Co. Cir. Ct. Clk.

<sup>86</sup> Deed from Oliver & Clark to C.F. Warner Co., April 11, 1961, DB 1884, Pg. 462, Fairfax Co. Cir. Ct. Clk.

<sup>87</sup> Deed from C.F. Warner Co. to Mosby Corp., August 29, 1961, DB 2222, Pg. 372, Fairfax Co. Cir. Ct. Clk.

<sup>88</sup> Deed from Fairfax to Ford, March 1, 1883, DB E5, Pg. 422, Fairfax Co. Cir. Ct. Clk.

<sup>89</sup> Deed Ford to Ford, March 20, 1897, DB Y%, Pg. 363, Fairfax Co. Cir. Ct. Clk.

<sup>90</sup> Fairfax County Chancery Suit, CFF#123g Ford v. Ford, 1909, Fairfax Co. Cir. Ct. Clk.

<sup>91</sup> Deed Ford, Est. to Keith, September 14, 1909, DB D7, Pg. 471, Fairfax Co. Cir. Ct. Clk.

<sup>92</sup> Deed Keith to Rust, September 15, 1937, DB W12, Pg. 77, Fairfax Co. Cir. Ct. Clk.

<sup>93</sup> Will of John W. Rust, WB 63, Pg. 233, Fairfax Co. Cir. Ct. Clk.

<sup>94</sup> Will of Anne H. Rust, WB 149, Pg. 670, Fairfax Co. Cir. Ct. Clk.

<sup>95</sup> Deed Rust et al. to Robinson & Thayer, Inc., September 5, 1979, DB 5306, Pg. 195, Fairfax Co. Clk.

<sup>96</sup> *Washington Post*, December 1, 1962, Pg. D9.



# Welcome New Members!

The Board of Directors of HFCI extends a hearty welcome to all new HFCI members.



## 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 join us. 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

-or-

Website: [www.historicfairfax.org](http://www.historicfairfax.org)  
E-mail: [info@historicfairfax.org](mailto:info@historicfairfax.org)

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

Return Address - Historic Fairfax City, Inc.  
David L. Pumphrey, President  
10209 Main Street  
Fairfax, VA 22030



## The Newsletter of Historic Fairfax City, Inc.

The Fare Facs Gazette © 2011  
Editor: William Page Johnson, II

**E-mail:** [historicfairfax@aol.com](mailto:historicfairfax@aol.com)  
**Website:** [www.historicfairfax.org](http://www.historicfairfax.org)