

People and Places in the City of Bedford

By William B. Rucker and Barbara L. Rucker

Rucker Family Reunion

The Rucker Family Society

June 10 -12, 1994

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Part I - The Ruckers

The Ruckers have been prominent in Bedford for many generations. Many are descendants of Ambrose⁴ Rucker, Jr. (Ambrose³, John², Peter¹) who was born in Amherst County in 1763 and moved to Bedford County by the early 1800's. Among those currently living in Bedford are Joseph⁸ Anthony Rucker, Jr., William⁸ Vincent Rucker, M.D., and Ambrose⁸ Alexander Rucker, children of Joseph⁷ Anthony Rucker, Sr., M.D. (Joseph⁷, Moses⁶ Peter, Anthony⁵, Ambrose⁴, Jr., Ambrose³, John², Peter¹) and Eliza Cauthorn Rucker. Also currently living in Bedford is Robert⁹ Rucker (Henry⁸, Samuel⁷, William⁶, Garland⁵, Ambrose⁴ Jr., Ambrose³, John², Peter¹) who lives in the family home at 410 Avenel Avenue.

Joseph⁸ Anthony Rucker, Jr. is retired from the Rubatex Corporation in Bedford and resides at the Elks National Home. He and his wife, Alice Herndon, had one son Joseph Anthony Rucker, III who lives in Annapolis, Maryland.

William⁸ Vincent Rucker, M.D. ("Dr. Billy") practiced general medicine in Bedford for over 50 years and retired in the early 1980's. He was of the old school and made housecalls to the most remote places in all kinds of weather. He had both patients and patience. He once commented that after delivering his 5000th baby, he stopped counting. He first married Emily Eliza McClain of Philadelphia, and adopted her son William Warnock who now lives in Midlothian, Virginia. They had a daughter Eliza Spangler Rucker who now lives with her husband Michael Hager and their three children in Raleigh, North Carolina. Emily McClain Rucker died in 1982. Dr. Rucker is now married to Hilda Lawson. They reside on Dogwood Lane in Bedford.

Ambrose⁸ Alexander Rucker is a retired lawyer who at one time served as Commonwealth's Attorney and Judge in the Bedford City and County General District and Juvenile Relations Courts. He and Helen Louise Wingfield have been married for 55 years and have four children: Alex, Bill, Mike and Barbara. Ambrose and his wife live at 922 Lake Drive in Bedford.

Joseph⁷ Anthony Rucker, M.D. (28 Jun 1871 - 29 Jun 1948), the father of the above-named brothers, was a general practitioner in Bedford and resided at 404 N. Bridge Street. He received a 50-year pin for his dedicated service as physician to the employees of the Norfolk and Western Railway. He also served as physician to the residents of the Elks National Home. He was a pillar of the Bedford Baptist Church and served as a deacon and teacher of a men's Sunday School class for many years. He loved sports and games of all kinds, but was vehemently opposed to gambling and the use of alcohol. The impassioned speech (attached) he gave to a church group in 1932 in opposition to the repeal of prohibition is quite interesting measured by today's standards. (Page 13)

Dr. Joseph⁷ Anthony Rucker had a brother, Moses⁷ Peter Rucker, Jr. who also was a doctor and life long resident of the City of Bedford. In fact, he lived only two houses away at what is now 502 Longwood Avenue. During World War II when many of the younger doctors were called into service, "Dr. Pete", as he was affectionately called, took up the slack. He married Mary Pryor Williams and they had a daughter, Nancy, who died in 1959 without heirs.

Joe⁷ and Moses⁷ Peter had two brothers, Will⁷ and Dave⁷, who lived in the little village of Moneta in southern Bedford County. Will carried mail by horse and ran a little country store in Moneta. Dave farmed. They have no living heirs.

Moses⁶ Peter Rucker, Sr., is one of ten children raised on a farm in Moneta. He served in the 2nd Virginia Cavalry in the War Between the States and years later dictated his memoirs of those times to his daughter-in-law, Eliza Cauthorn Rucker, who wrote them up. The Bedford Museum has a copy.

Orlando⁷ C. Rucker (Ambrose⁶, Anthony⁵, Ambrose⁴, Jr., Ambrose³, John², Peter¹) was an attorney who lived in Bedford during his lifetime. He resided at 1009 Longwood Avenue which at a later time was used as the Hartwell Hospital and is now an apartment building. "Lan", as he was called, was a first cousin to Dr. Joseph⁷ Anthony Rucker, as their fathers Ambrose⁷ and Moses⁷ Peter, respectively, were brothers. Orlando had several children, none of whom now live in Bedford. His son, Ney, lived in Bedford; is now deceased. "Lan" was the son of Ambrose⁶C. Rucker of Otter Hill.

Robert⁹ ("Bobby") Saunders Rucker, a son of Henry⁸ Latham Rucker (Samuel⁷ Burks Rucker, William⁶ Garland Rucker, Garland⁵, Ambrose⁴, Jr., Ambrose³, John², Peter¹) resides at 410 Avenel Avenue which is where his father lived before him. He is a retired salesman. He and his wife, Marjorie, have three children: Robert,¹⁰ Jr., James¹⁰ Leonard, and Ann¹⁰ English Rucker. Robert⁹ has a brother Henry⁹ who retired from Dupont and lives in Aiken, South Carolina. Henry⁹ is married to Dorothy Vail. They have two daughters, Nancy Rucker Goslen and Elizabeth Lee Rucker.

Henry⁸ Latham Rucker came to Bedford from Lynchburg around 1900 and took a job at the Saunders Brothers' Tobacco Warehouse at the southwest corner of Bridge and Washington Streets. Henry married Blanche Saunders, the daughter of W.R. Saunders, one of his bosses.

Samuel⁷ Burks Rucker, Henry's father, served in the cavalry and was taken prisoner by the Yankees near Culpeper, Virginia. He spent the last 1½ years of the war in prison in Elmira, New York. He went into the tobacco business in Lynchburg after the Civil War. In 1930 he wrote his memoirs, a copy of which is in the Jones Memorial Library in Lynchburg.

Not mentioned above is yet another descendant of Ambrose⁴ Rucker, Jr. who nows lives in Bedford. He is Richard⁹ Rucker. (Dr. Samuel⁸ L. Rucker, L.⁷W. Rucker, Tinsley⁶ Rucker, Thomas⁵ C. Rucker, Ambrose⁴, Ambrose³, John² and Peter¹). Richard⁹ was born in Moneta, practiced dentistry for many years in Grundy, Roanoke and Gretna, Virginia, and now resides at Campbell Rest Home in Bedford where his sister also lives. He is a bachelor and has received much praise from the citizens of Gretna.

Part II - The Places

In 1753 Bedford County was formed out of Lunenburg County and named in honor of John Russell, Fourth Duke of Bedford. The county seat was moved from New London to what is now the City of Bedford in 1782. Originally named Liberty, the town's name was changed to Bedford around 1890.



Source: Map published by First National Exchange Bank, 1976

A sense for Bedford's colorful history and the role of the Rucker family is apparent from landmarks which in many cases still exist today. Much of the following information and many of the photographs are excerpted by permission from Echoes of Olde Liberty published for the Peaks of Otter Chapter of the DAR, Bedford, Virginia, in 1976 by Progress Publishing Corporation, Lynchburg, Virginia. Points of interest are identified on the accompanying map. (Page 19)

A good place to begin a tour is the **Bedford County Courthouse (1)**. The present courthouse was erected in 1930 and replaced the 1834 courthouse on the same site. Records in the clerk's office indicate an earlier 1786 courthouse preceded the 1834 one on the same site. An even earlier temporary courthouse, probably a log structure, was erected during the summer of 1782 on the corner diagonally across from the present courthouse.

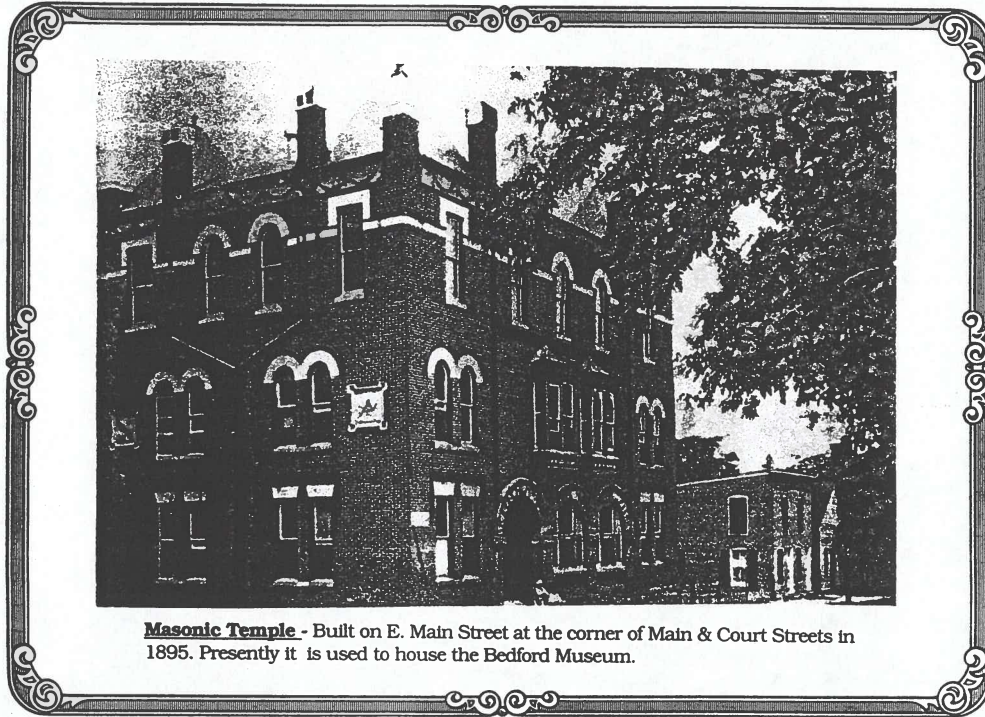
A 1909 monument erected to the memory of the Confederate dead still stands on the west side of the courthouse. Back in the days when there were Confederate Veterans, the soldiers assembled in uniform at the courthouse and marched to nearby Belmont Theater for the annual ceremonies. Another monument nearby honors those Bedford men who died in the preparation for and participation in the Normandy Invasion and later battles of World War II. Twenty-three names appear on the memorial. Tiny Bedford had an inordinately high percentage of casualties on D-Day.



Bedford County Courthouse

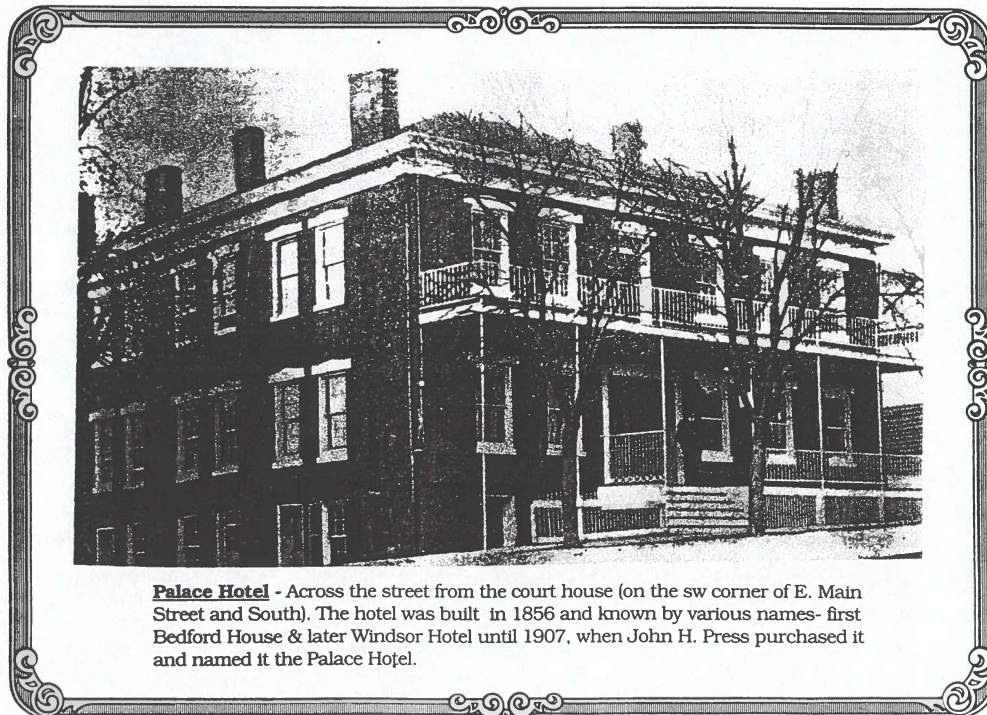
Photo: Barbara L. Rucker 1994

The **Masonic Lodge (1)** to the east of the courthouse now houses the **Bedford City/County Museum (2)** (worth a visit). The building was built in 1895 as the Liberty Lodge of Masons. Over the years the building has been used for other purposes. In 1939, Ambrose⁸ Alexander Rucker opened his first law office in the room which now serves as the gift shop of the Bedford Museum. Later, as Commonwealth's Attorney, Ambrose occupied the second floor offices over the front entrance to the courthouse next door.



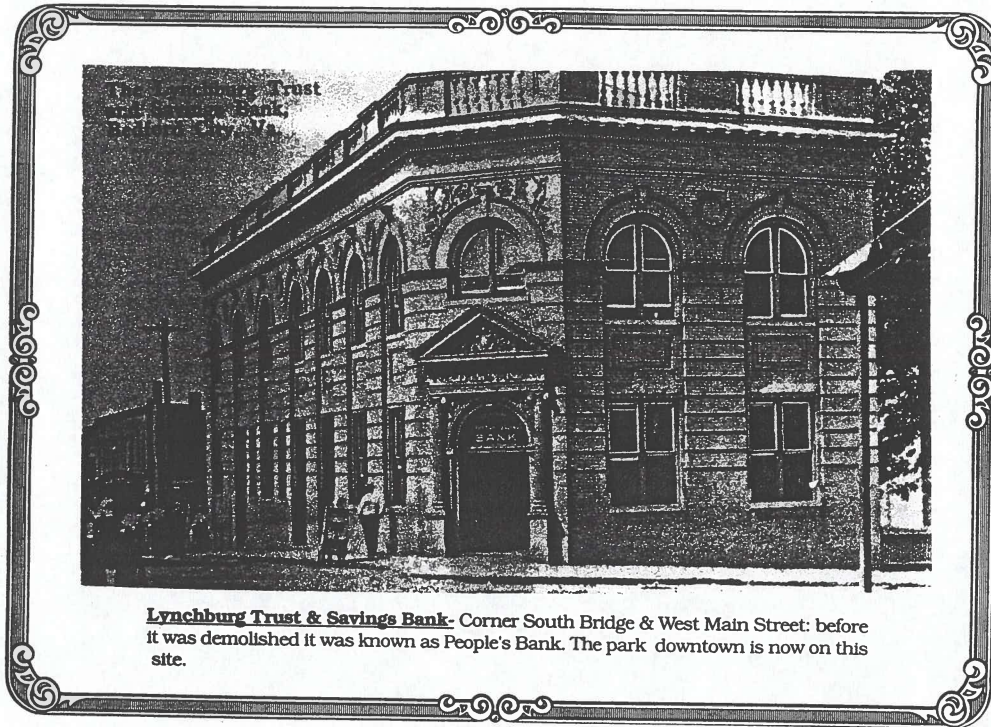
Source: 1994 Bedford Calendar

Across East Main Street from the courthouse is the site of the former **Palace Hotel (3)**. Henry⁸ Latham Rucker, the tobacconist, once resided at the Palace Hotel.



Source: 1994 Bedford Calendar

Less than one block to the west at the southwest corner of Bridge and Main Streets once stood the **Peoples National Bank (4)**. The site is now a small park. Dr. Joseph⁷ Anthony Rucker's medical offices at one time were located here.

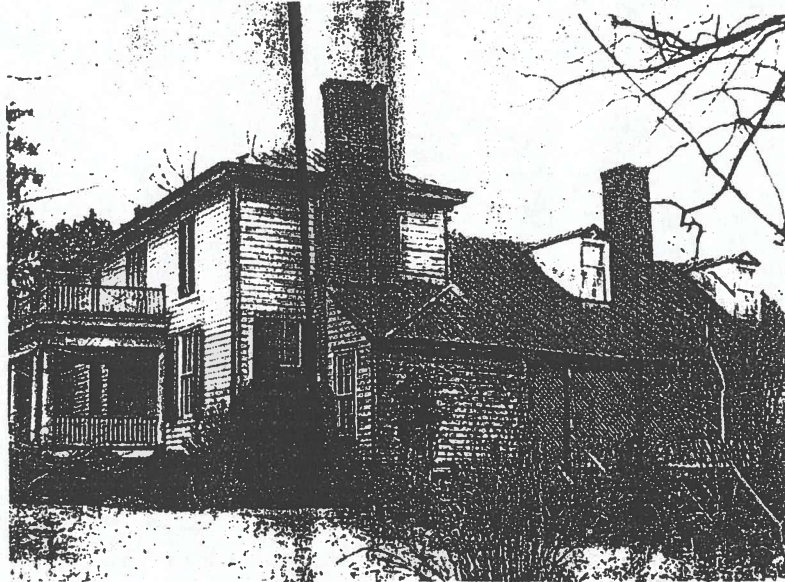


Lynchburg Trust & Savings Bank- Corner South Bridge & West Main Street: before it was demolished it was known as People's Bank. The park downtown is now on this site.

Source: 1994 Bedford Calendar

Two blocks west is located the **Bedford Historical Society (5)** at 135 West Main Street. This structure is the oldest church edifice still standing in Bedford. The **Meeting House**, as it was called, was erected in 1838 and served as the First Methodist Meeting House until 1886 when it became St. Philip's Episcopal Church. A day school was organized in the church where many boys and girls were taught. The building is now owned and used by the Bedford Historical Society.

Approximately ¼ mile further west on the south side of West Main Street is the former site of **Cedar Hill (6)**. Known by many citizens today as the Cauthorn house, it was the oldest house in Bedford. In the mid-1980's it was dismantled and rebuilt in the New London area of Bedford County. Cedar Hill was the homeplace of Dr. Joseph⁷ Anthony Rucker's wife, Eliza Cauthorn.



Cedar Hill

Photo: The Bedford Bulletin-Democrat, 1982

The vicinity around Cedar Hill was the site of several Rucker homes, specifically the early Bedford homes of Dr. Joseph⁷ Anthony Rucker and his father Moses⁶ Peter Rucker on Crenshaw Street. Joseph⁷ and his brother, Dr. Moses⁷ Peter Rucker, Jr., later lived at 404 North Bridge Street and 502 Longwood Avenue, respectively. (See Page 14)

Across West Main Street from Cedar Hill at the bottom of the hill are the Norfolk & Western railroad tracks and the **Train Station (7)**. Presently used as a restaurant (Liberty Station), this was built in 1905. It was originally located on the opposite side of the Norfolk & Western tracks and a little further west. It was moved to its present location in 1907 when double tracks replaced the old single one.



Norfolk and Western Station built in 1905 — still in use today.

Photo: Echoes of Olde Liberty

Approximately $\frac{3}{4}$ mile to the west on the north side of the N & W tracks is located **The Elks National Home (8)**.

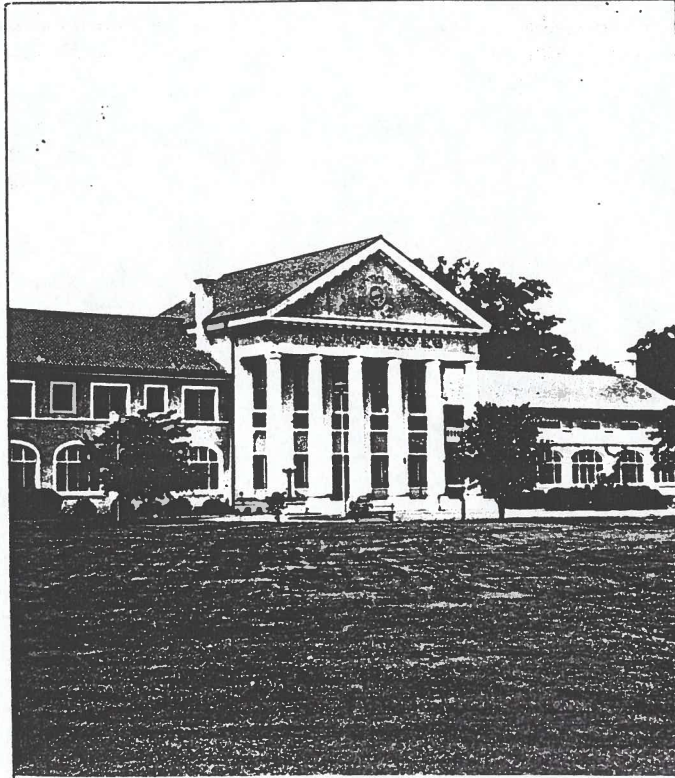
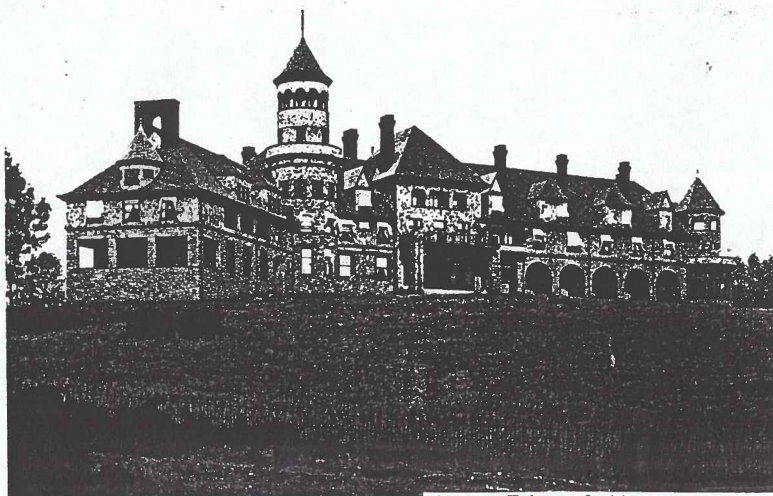


Photo: Echoes of Olde Liberty

The current building was dedicated July 8, 1916 and has a capacity for 300 men. Elks from all over the country make their retirement home here. The Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks was organized in New York City in 1868 by Charles Algenon Sydney Vivian. Its declared purposes are Charity, Justice, Brotherhood, Love, and Fidelity and to promote the welfare and enhance the happiness of its members; to quicken the Spirit of American Patriotism; to cultivate good fellowship. The Elks Home appeared prominently as the psychiatric hospital in the recent movie, "What About Bob?" The predecessor to the Elks Home on that site was **The Bedford Hotel**, built in 1890.



Source: Echoes of Olde Liberty

Hotel Bedford

The photo below shows members of the Bedford Lodge of the Elks in 1905, including Dr. Joseph⁷ Anthony Rucker who is seventh from the left in the top row.

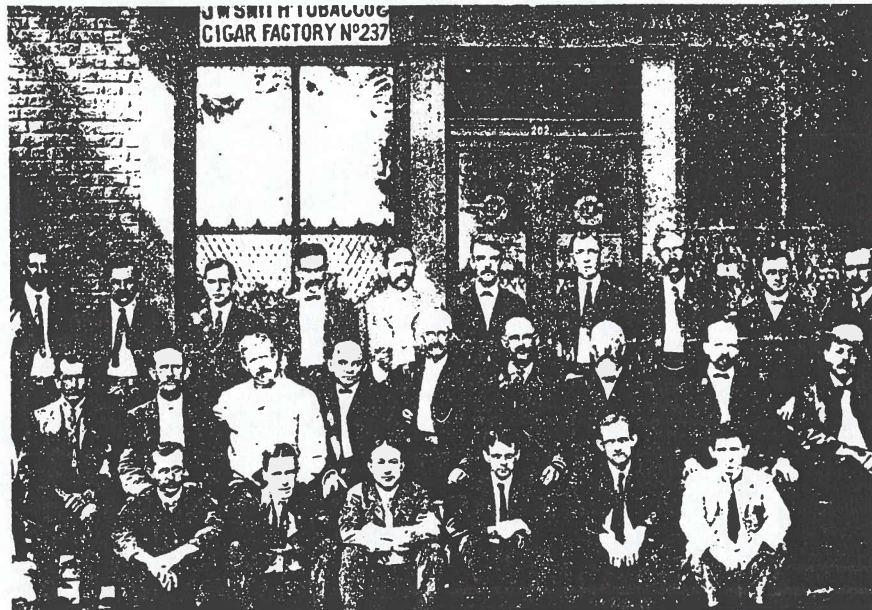
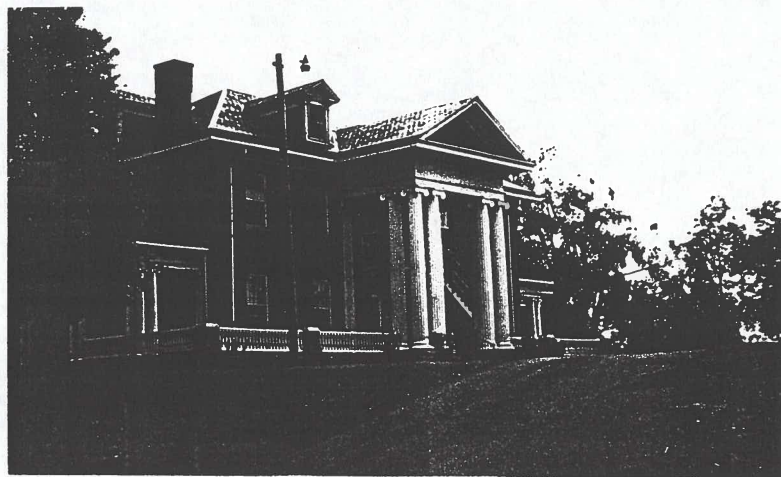


Photo: Echoes of Olde Liberty

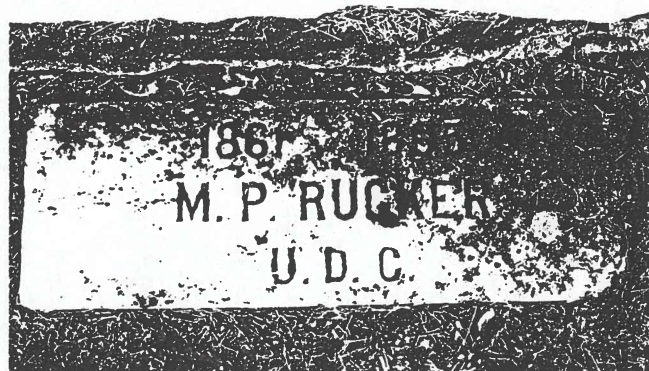
At the opposite end of Main Street on the Lynchburg side of town is the **Liberty Manor Home for Adults (9)**. This building at 812 East Main Street was originally built around 1847 as the Piedmont Institute -- an academy for boys. Dr. Walter Reed, the bacteriologist, attended Piedmont Institute. The school was closed during the War Between the States, when the building was used as a hospital. It later was the residence of Walter L. Lyle before becoming Liberty Manor.



Liberty Manor

Photo: Barbara L. Rucker 1994

Approaching Bedford from the east on Rt. 221 (the Forest/Lynchburg road) one comes to **Oakwood Cemetery** and **Longwood Cemetery (10)** on the left side of Longwood Avenue. Many Ruckers are buried here, including Moses⁶ Peter Rucker and a number of his descendants in the vicinity near the Confederate Marker.



Longwood Cemetery

Photo: Barbara L. Rucker 1994

Continuing on Longwood Avenue about one mile further toward downtown Bedford on the right is **1009 Longwood Avenue (11)**, the former home of Orlando⁷ C. Rucker. Still further, on the left is **502 Longwood Avenue (12)**, the former home of Dr. Moses⁷ Peter Rucker, Jr. Two lots beyond on the same side of the street is **404 North Bridge Street (13)** where Dr. Joseph⁷ Anthony Rucker lived until his death in 1948.



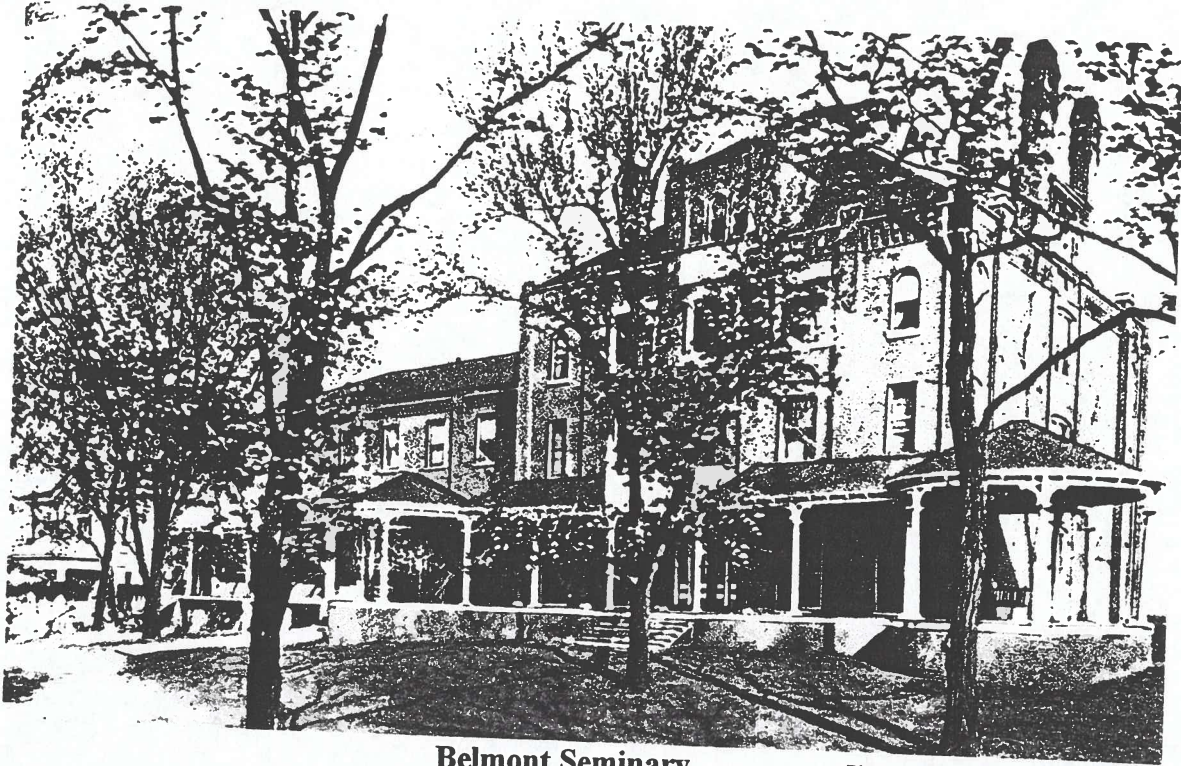
502 Longwood Avenue



404 North Bridge Street

Photo: Barbara L. Rucker 1994

On the north side of Longwood Avenue, across from the forementioned two Rucker houses, is **Bedford Elementary School (14)** on the site of the former **Belmont Seminary**. The stucco building was built in 1912 as an elementary school. The red brick building was built in 1928 initially as **Bedford High School**, prior to the time of the larger consolidated high schools in the county. Many Ruckers attended these schools.



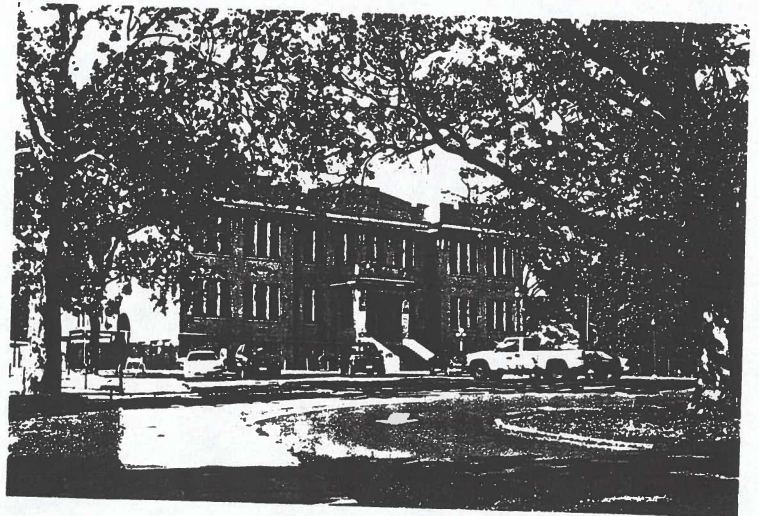
Belmont Seminary

Photo: Echoes of Olde Liberty



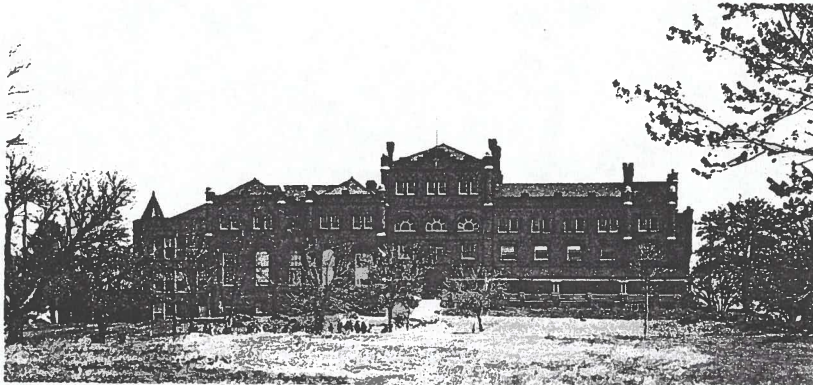
Bedford High School

Photo: Barbara L. Rucker 1994



Bedford Elementary School

An earlier school of wide repute was **Randolph Macon Academy (15)** located until the 1960's on College Street near the Elks National Home on a site now occupied by Bedford Primary School.



RANDOLPH-MACON ACADEMY

Source: Echoes of Olde Liberty

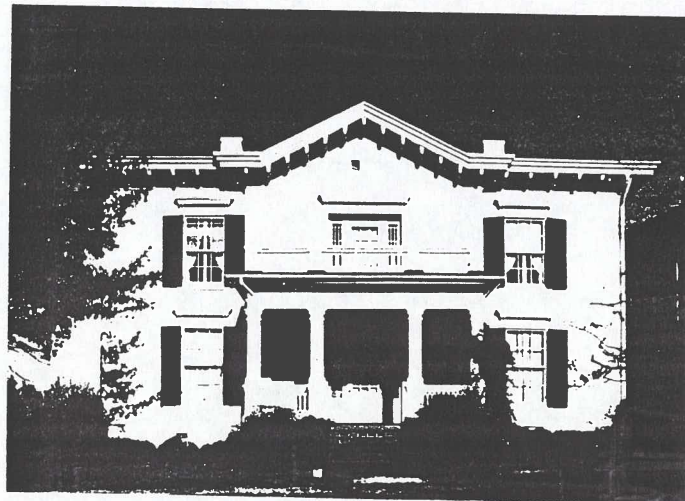
The drive northward on Peaks Street from its intersection with Bridge Street/Longwood Avenue goes by several lovely old homes, an example of which is "**Kingston**" (16) built in 1865.



Source: Barbara L. Rucker 1994

Peaks Street Home

Built in 1884

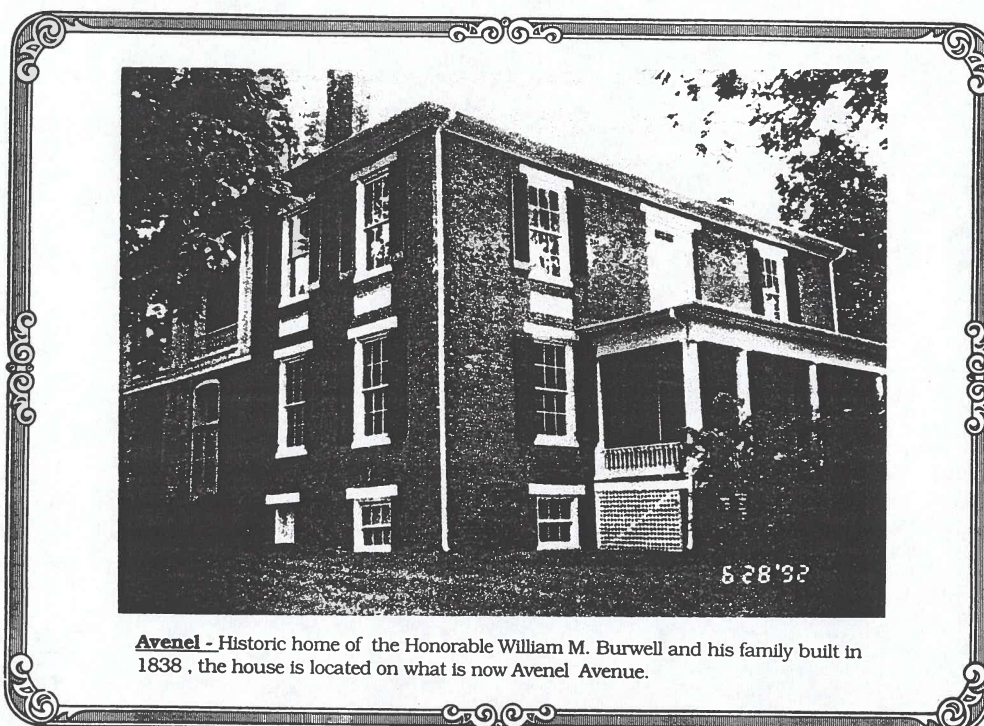


Source: Echoes of Olde Liberty

"Kingston"

Built in 1865

Nearby at **410 Avenel Avenue (17)** is the home of Bobby Rucker, son of Henry L. Rucker. Across the street is the site of **Avenel (18)**, a stop on the Rucker Society Tour. William H. Burwell, a representative to the Virginia General Assembly, built this plantation mansion in 1836. The walls are over two feet thick and a brick over the main door has the date 1836. The entrance to the lawn was by a cedar lane from North Bridge Street. Mr. Burwell was a friend of Thomas Jefferson and once received a solid mahogany secretary as a gift from him. The desk is now at Monticello. The children of Mr. and Mrs. J.W. Ballard were the last occupants of the home prior to its purchase by The Avenel Foundation. Legend has it that Avenel is haunted by "The White Lady of Avenel". The whole story is told in the attached article from the Roanoke Times & World News. (Page 15)



Avenel - Historic home of the Honorable William M. Burwell and his family built in 1838, the house is located on what is now Avenel Avenue.

Source: 1994 Bedford Calendar

A TALK ON TEMPERANCE

By Dr. J. A. Rucker Before A Meeting of Christian Workers at Mt. Hermon Church.

OCTOBER 27th, 1932.

A talk on temperance on an occasion like this might seem out of place—but since your president has requested me to make it, and since temperance is a Christian virtue, I will endeavor to give you a few thoughts, along this line.

Never has there been a time in our nation's history when temperance talks and temperance thoughts were worse needed. It seems, certainly so far as our own county and town are concerned, that we have given up the fight and lain down on the job. Never before has there been such a fight on against our great temperance cause. The wet forces with their millionaire brewer allies, well financed organizations, a corrupt, subsidized metropolitan press, the great dailies, the weekly and monthly magazines, the movies, the modern novels, the radios and, in fact, about every possible means of communicating thought and disseminating knowledge, are all in a devilish conspiracy to deceive the people and to repeal the 18th amendment.

One has every reason to believe that the recent Literary Digest poll was sponsored by and paid for by the liquor gang, purely for the purpose of deception and for political propaganda. They claimed a fair cross section of every community. Take a poll of your church or Sunday School and see how few of them even received a ballot, and even granting the Digest all its claims, what is three and one-half million votes, compared to our nation's voting strength of forty million votes. Be not deceived; there are still millions of souls in this good old U. S. A. who have not bowed the knee to Baal.

The reasons the Booze gang can so easily finance their organizations, bribe the press, etc., is largely due to a few ruthless millionaires who wish to shift the Federal income tax from their shoulders on to the poor laboring man and his ragged wife and starving children. The great beer-thirsty gang claims a billion dollars revenue from the license of beer and a return of prosperity. Let's see how this would work out. To secure a billion dollars revenue from beer this would mean putting two billion dollars into the brewer's coffers, and a few hundred thousand to the laborers who manufactured the stuff, and O, think of the poverty, degradation and crime it would mean to the people.

In the palmiest days of the licensed saloon the greatest amount the Government ever collected from the sale of beer was \$125,000,000, and now the beer-thirsty crowd would have us flood the country with ten times that much. It seems to me, as we read from the daily newspapers, and hear from the radio, etc., that our nation is headed straight for the Devil. When did you, outside of a religious or local weekly paper, ever read a moral, wholesome editorial? The great moral influence of the press is gone and without a moral reformation of the mass our nation's future is well-nigh less.

When Adam and Eve entered the Garden of Eden, God told them, if they ate of the tree of good and evil they would surely die. The Devil told them they surely would not die. When the great Christian mass of our people saw how fast the liquor traffic was sending our nation into ruin, they outlawed it through the 18th amendment, and now the booze gang are

telling us if we do not allow the drinking of liquor, wine and beer that our country will certainly go to the bad. Which shall we believe? God, or the devil and his staunchest allies, the booze gang.

Alcoholic beverages are an unmitigated curse without one redeeming feature. Any intelligent, truthful man will tell you that, and the only argument we hear for a repeal of the law is that we can't enforce it. Will these same parties advocate the repeal of the laws against dope, against murder, theft, racketeering, kidnaping, etc.? For they are all being daily violated.

And who are decrying the terrible conditions of bootlegging and crime, and calling for repeal of the 18th Amendment? The Booze Gang. If they were honest and telling the truth about there being more liquor drunk now than during the saloon days you would never hear a word from them. Sh-h-h-h, mum is the word. The situation would be just like they want it, and just like they are trying to make it. You don't hear any cry of repeal from any one else than the booze gang who fought the enactment of the law; have hated it ever since, and who have violated and nullified it at every opportunity.

Those of you who listened in on the Democratic convention in Chicago, with galleries packed with Chicago's underworld and with only boozers and booze, were doubtless thoroughly disgusted. Mr. Hoover, who has seemingly been a friend of the prohibition cause, in his acceptance speech was very little better—he admitted that it was a great law, but that he could not get some States to concur in enforcing it, hence a compromise with these outlawed States and a repeal of the 18th amendment.

What did Washington do?

And Mr. Hoover, with all the resources of the richest nation on earth, a standing army and large navy at his command, meekly submits—thereby confessing that the outlawed liquor gang is greater than the United States government. So much for the compromise with evil.

Let's see for a minute what compromise old John Barleycorn ever makes with his victim. He assiduously leads them on a step at a time. "I can take it or let it alone"—and ultimately I never let it alone, until, through a distorted appetite, he holds them in his grip and then he is unrelenting. Blighted hopes, wrecked lives, ruined homes, broken-hearted wives, and miserable, starving children, dethroned reason and helpless bodies, is his price, and nothing ever satisfies him short of a drunkard's grave and a drunkard's hell. Thus John

Barleycorn deals with his victims. He doesn't compromise like Mr. Hoover.

If the 18th amendment is ever repealed, and God forbid that it ever be, and the booze gang once gets its nose under the flap of the tent, he will at once take possession of and dominate the whole show and dictate the policies of our government, and no decent Christian man or woman will any longer have a voice in our government. The liquor gang always has, up to the passage of the eighteenth amendment, corrupted and dominated our government, and now why return them to power? The 18th amendment has been a great success and a great blessing to Bedford county, poorly enforced as it has been, and I can testify of my own experience, for as I go

and come throughout the town and county I do not see one drunken man where I used to see ten.

If you legalize beer and wine there will be a beer joint on every corner, in hotels, restaurants, cafes, and road-houses, with its attendant evil the gambling den and the brothel plus the rum-runner plying his trade as actively as ever. The rum-runner has been taught through the wet newspapers and the nullificationist's propaganda that he can violate the law with impunity and get by with it. He can undersell the legalized liquor by the amount of the tax on the liquor and he can escape detection because his patrons will always swear they got their liquor from a legalized place, and what a merry old time we will have.

State regulation. What chance have we to enforce State regulation with forty-eight different liquor laws, with imaginary State lines, with concrete roads leading from State to State, high-powered automobiles, airplanes, railroads, and with every facility of the liquor gang to violate the law? If the combined force of the United States Government and the States cannot patrol her borders under the present law, how is she going to patrol the borders of forty-eight States?

Mrs. Charles Sabin, of New York, leader of the so-called movement of "Prohibition Reform," is typical of the booze gang. She wants to reform conditions by making liquor more plentiful and cheaper, that all the people may be debauched thereby. The entire logic of the liquor question can be summed in three brief statements:

1. In all our nation's history there never was a liquor law passed that was not bitterly and persistently fought and opposed by the liquor crowd.

2. There never was a law passed restricting the use and sale of liquor that was respected and observed by the liquor people.

3. In all our nation's history there never has been a law passed that has been as well observed and enforced, and that has been as conducive to the welfare, sobriety and happiness of the people as is the 18th amendment and the Volstead law.

Let's keep it up.

As to the agitation for repeal, modification or referendum. Modification or a referendum would be unconstitutional and is all bosh. Our constitution provides an orderly legal process for the repeal of any amendment. We have lived by this old constitution for 166 years, and now why should we, for the accommodation of the vicious and outlawed liquor traffic, resort to some other plan? Be not deceived. Don't let them fool you. Let's stand "pat" on the constitution alone.

Our Federal Prohibition Director Woodcock tells us the prohibition law is being better and better enforced each day. The great rum-running gangs are being gradually broken up. District attorneys and judges are bearing down on the prohibition criminals. The situation is improving and real

prohibition sentiment is just as strong today as it ever was.

Do not let the wet press fool you. Keep your powder dry and your poll tax paid and be prepared to cast a real vote when votes are needed. Do not let your political convictions outweigh your moral principles, and let's not vote for any wet man for any office, irrespective of party.

And finally, let's every one of us, with the help of Almighty God, do everything in our power to keep the 18th amendment and the Volstead law on our statute books, unpealed, unmodified and unimpaired.

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Cedar Hill's historic significance cited

Cedar Hill, known by many citizens today as the Cauthorn house, located on West Main Street, is the oldest residence still standing in Bedford and could meet the criteria for the State of Virginia and National Registers of Historic Places, according to Calder Loth, senior architectural historian of the Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission.

Loth is his written report concerning Cedar Hill, the Cauthorn house, commented as follows:

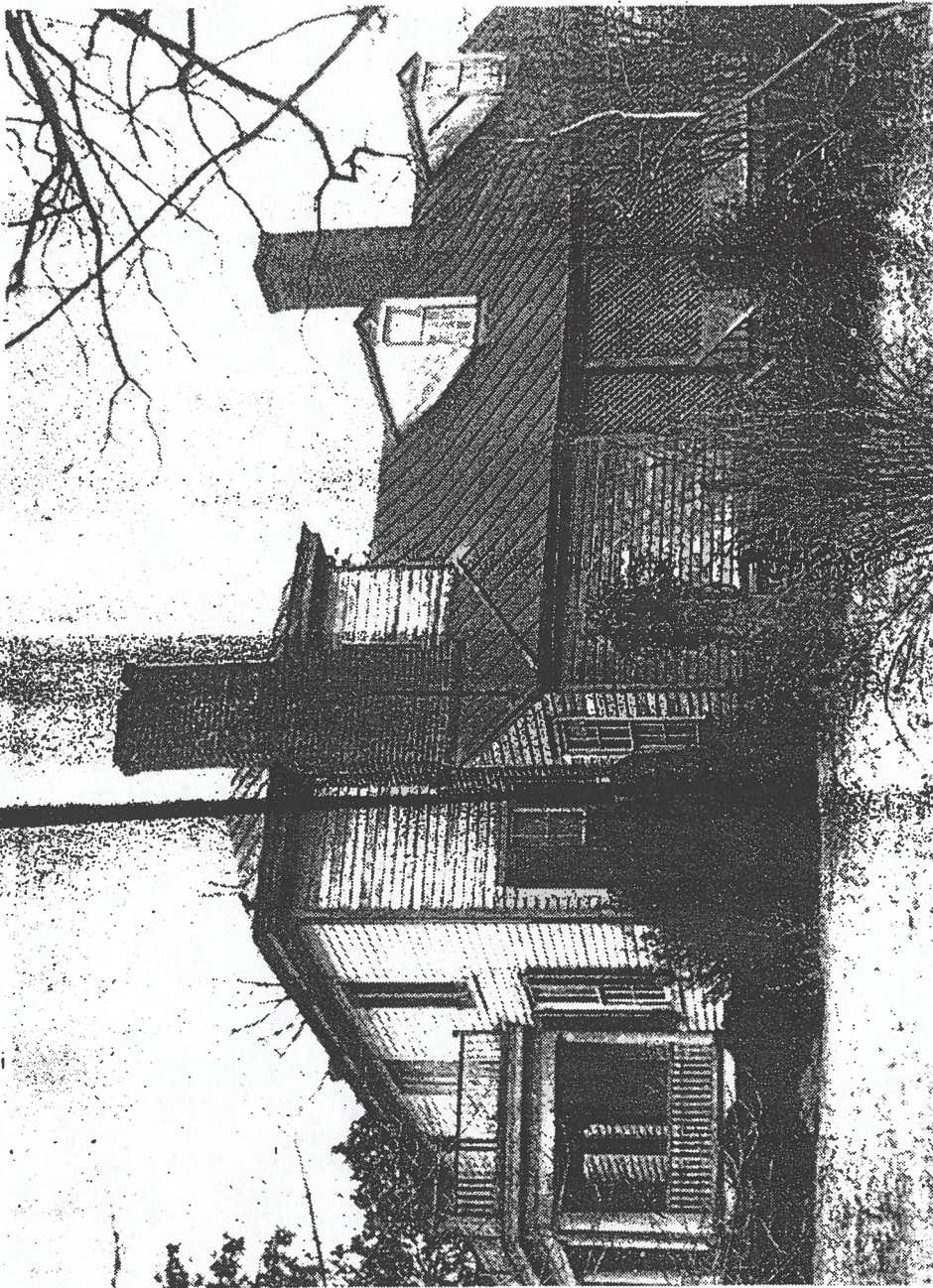
"The rear, or 18th century section, deduced to James C. Steptoe by heirs of William Bramblett, after the County seat was moved from New London to Liberty, is a very interesting example of early Piedmont Vernacular architecture, preserving much of its original detailing. Its two-room, center chimney plan is most unusual, being one of the few recorded in the Bedford County area. With the exception of the unusual plan, the general form of the early section is of the classic Virginia type evolved in Williamsburg and the surrounding country side."

Loth's report continued, "Giving the house additional interest is the later front section, a sophisticated example of late federal domestic architecture, also preserving most of its original features. Unquestionably, one of the most important features of the later section is the hall wallpaper, an exceptionally

"This house is important not only because of its associations with prominent Bedford families such as Bramblett, Steptoe, Jordan, Crenshaw and Cauthorn, which give the house important historical significance to the region, but the State Review Board was especially impressed with the architectural quality of the house," said Loth.

An historical architect from the Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission inspected the Cauthorn property located on West Main Street June 7 and was accompanied by a committee from the Bedford Historical Society which is concerned about the future of Bedford's oldest residence. The historic building was found to be structurally sound.

The Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission is



Cedar Hill

Bedford's taste in interior decoration in the mid 19th century. The early wallpaperers in the adjacent rooms are all important documents, as well.

The state review board agreed that Cedar Hill is a

Historic Landmark's Commission and the Bedford Historical Society for many years. Cedar Hill has been included in the City of Bedford Comprehensive Plan under the title, "Landmarks of Historic and Architectural Importance".

The White Lady of Avenel

■ ■
BEDFORD — It's said that there's an old man in town who won't go anywhere near Avenel Avenue.

"On account of the ghost," explains Peggy Maupin, tapping her cane on the wood floor for emphasis.

At 94, Maupin is probably the town's authority figure on the ghost, referred to as "The White Lady of Avenel." Maupin lived in the historic Avenel house, a circa-1838 plantation mansion, between the years 1908 and 1986.

Which gave her plenty of opportunity to interact with the White Lady. "She's an old-fashioned girl. She wears an old-time hoop dress," Maupin explains.

"One time there was a whole crowd of us standing at the corner of the porch late one afternoon, and we saw the lady walking up in the yard. When she got to the oak tree, she just disappeared. People thought we were crazy."

Even Maupin's husband, Harry, who's now deceased, used to think his wife had an overactive imagination — until one night, when he spotted the White Lady himself. "He woke me up and said, 'I've seen her,' and he had goose pimples all up and down his arm," Maupin recalls.

"He said that was the biggest mistake he ever made, waking me up, 'cause I couldn't wait to tell it at the drugstore the next day."

Built in 1838 by William Burwell, a representative to the Virginia General Assembly, Avenel was an antebellum treasure, entertaining the likes of Robert E. Lee and other important people. Strangely, Burwell named the house after Sir Walter Scott's novel, "The Monastery," which likewise features an airy female called "the

White Lady of Avenel."

Maupin says she's not sure if the ghost was there when the Burwells lived at Avenel, or whether the ghost is really the spirit of Burwell's wife, Frances Steptoe Burwell.

Debra Frashure, a Virginia Western Community College parapsychology professor studying the house, believes there is more than one spirit inhabiting Avenel, including the ghosts of several slaves.

She took a class there last Fourth of July weekend, "and as soon as we stepped out of the car, one of the students saw a U.S. flag hanging outside. And it hit me: She [The White Lady] didn't want it there; she wanted the Confederate flag."

"It was a real rage I sensed coming from her," says Frashure, who found a Confederate flag inside and displayed it on a table. A few minutes later, she and a board member were talking in the parlor when they both heard popping and crashing sounds coming from the next room, like a lightbulb hitting the floor.

When they looked, the bulb was still hot and intact, but the light had turned itself off. "I think that was the Old Miss trying to say, 'That's exactly what I wanted.'"

Annette Allen, a board member of the foundation that now owns and is restoring Avenel, has also felt some strange sensations there. One time she heard someone picking up pans and putting them down in the next room. But when she looked no one was there.

Another time she took a group photo of some friends at the house, and half of one woman's body came back transparent in the processed picture. "Every now and then you just get a feeling of cold electrical sensation," Allen says. "The hair stands up on the back of your neck."

Tours of Avenel are open to the public from 2 to 5 p.m. Sept. 19 and Oct. 17. Cost is \$2 for adults, \$1 for students.

GRANT'S NEW MAP
OF
LIBERTY

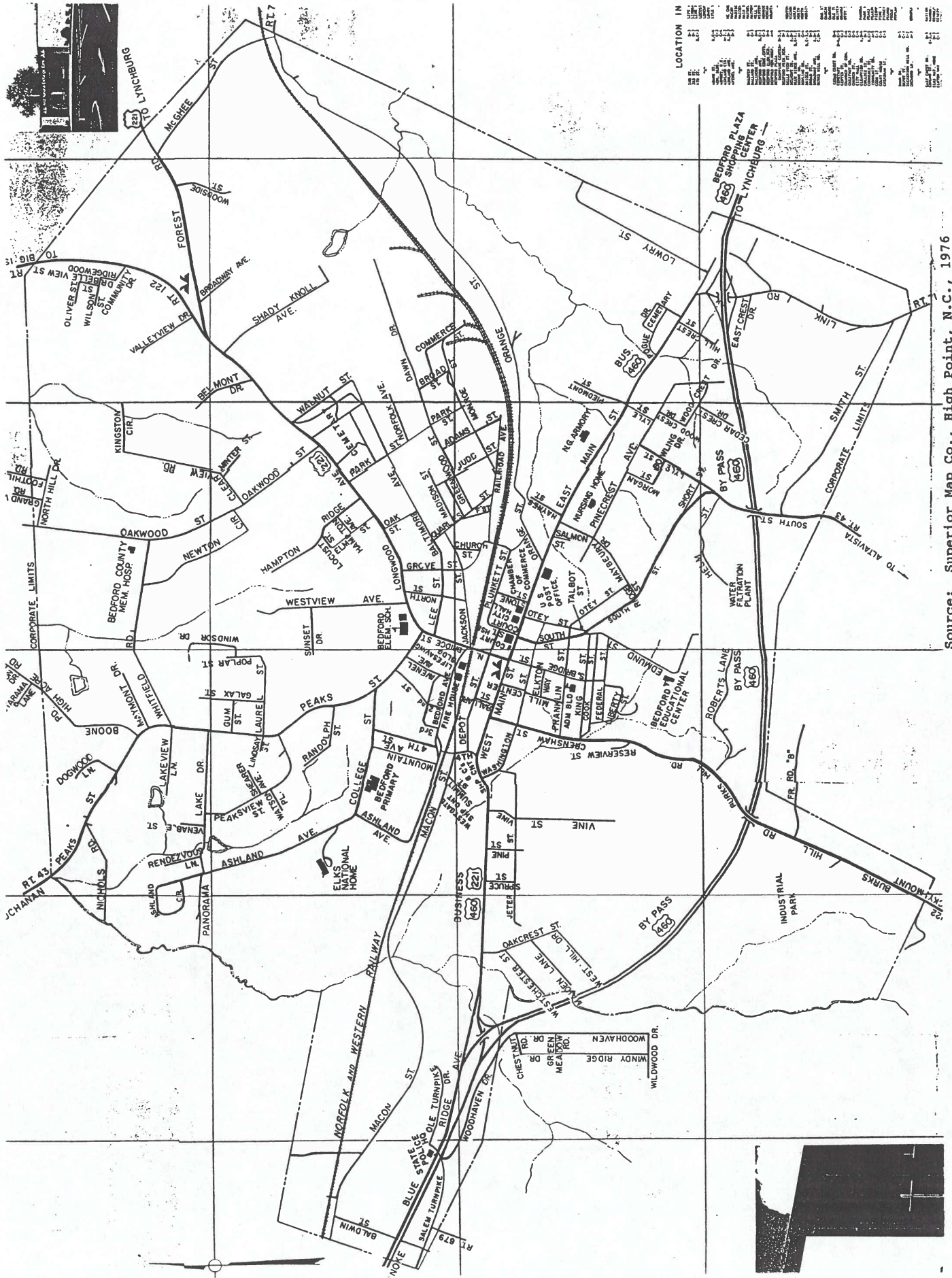
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VIRGINIA.



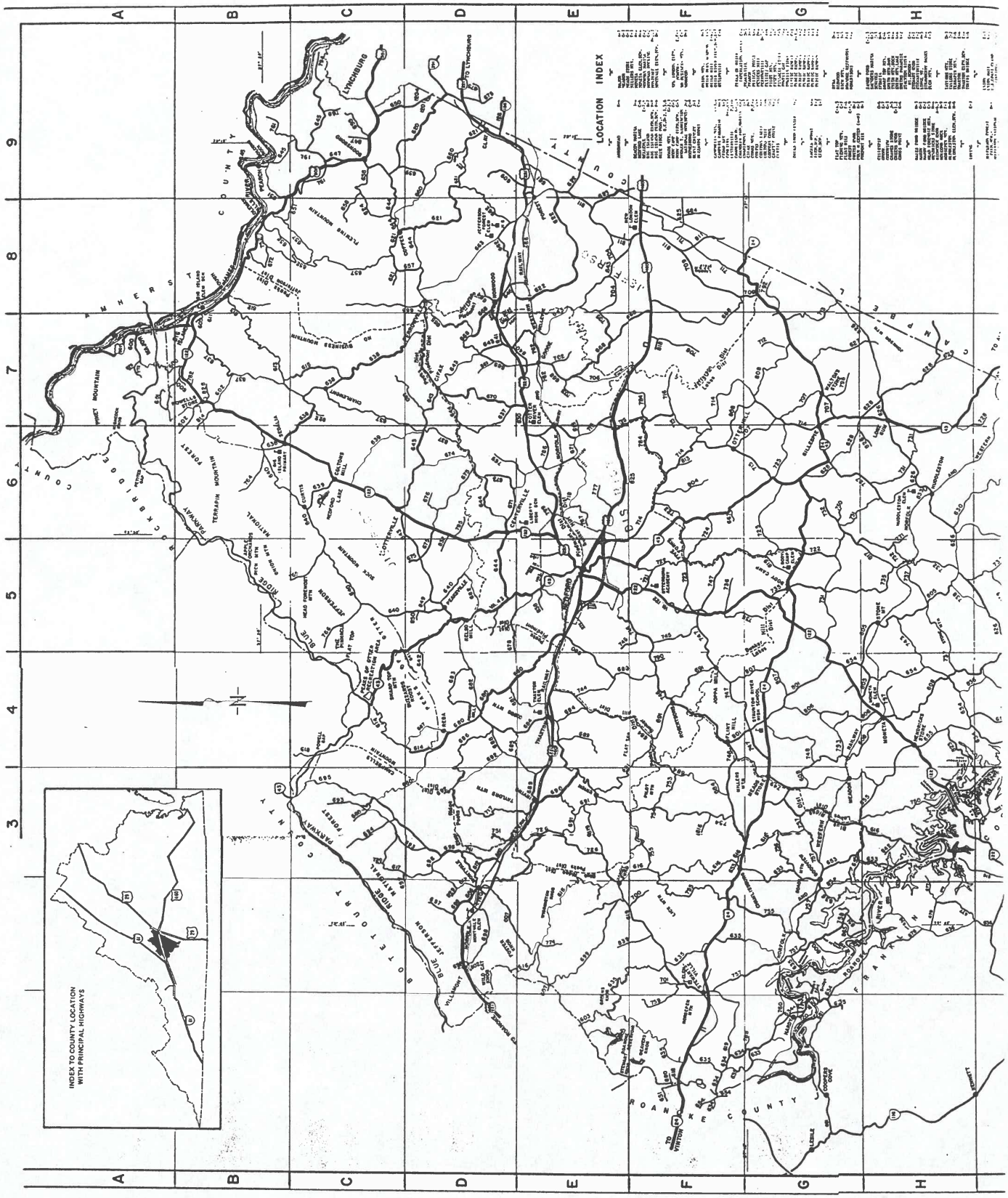
Circa 1876



City of Bedford

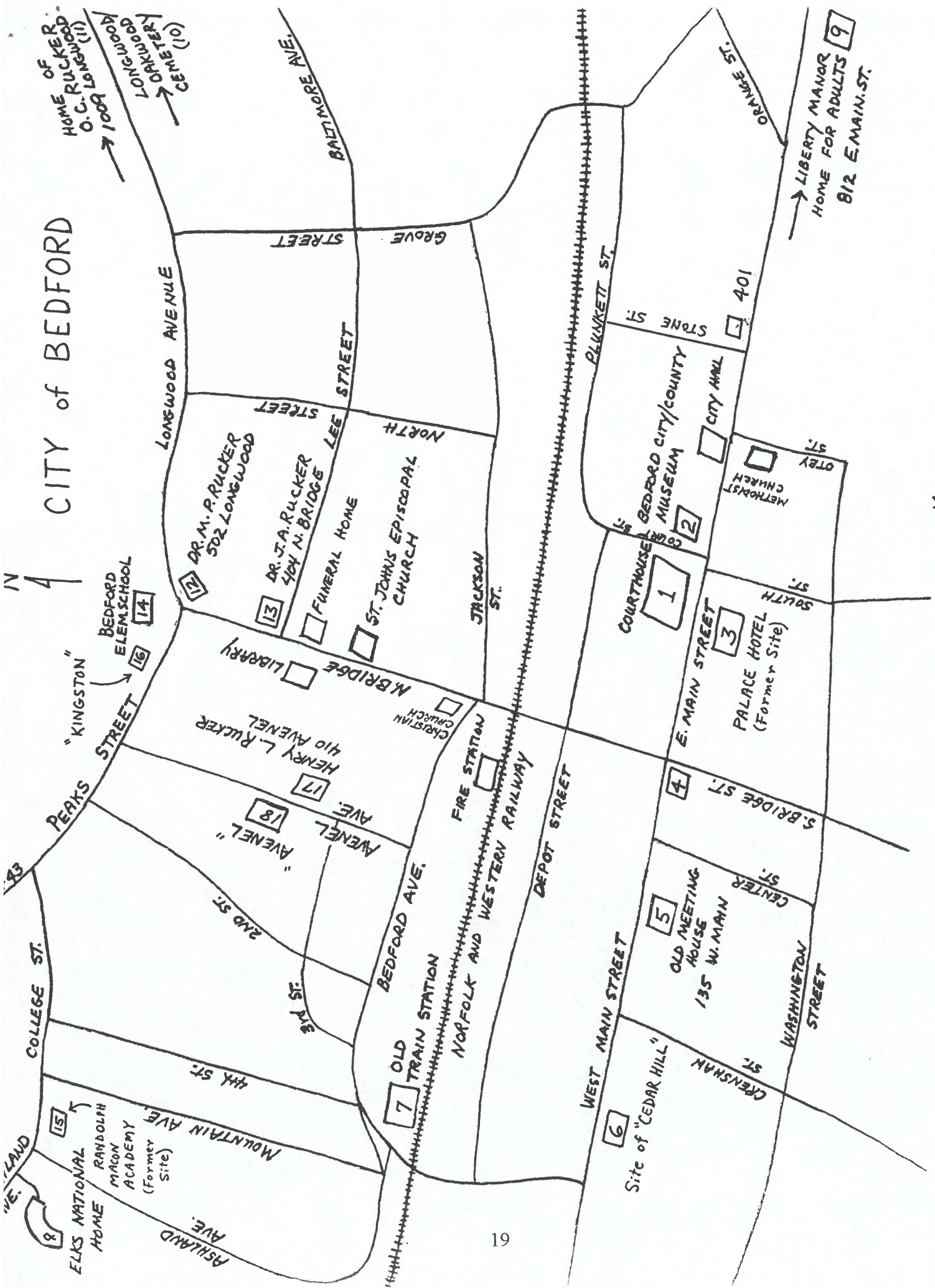


Source: Superior Map Co., High Point, N.C., 1976



BEDFORD COUNTY, VIRGINIA

Source: Superior Map Co., High Point, N.C., 1976



★ MAP DRAWN BY BARBARA RUCKER AND NO WHERE NEAR SCALE ☺