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The Kanawha Road. Ready to Copy

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- The Kanawha Road -

With all the bad roads which the early pioneers were under the necessity of using, one would imagine that men would remain at home, and thus avoid the unpleastness, and inconvenience of travel; yet, any one, who has ever had access to the early records, diaries, and writings, of our forefathers, cannot fail to be impressed, with number of persons journeying, over the mountains, and elsewhere. It is probably true, that the absence of newspapers, and and ready means of communication, made people more inquisitive, at that early day than now. This travel made it necessary, that "Houses of entertainment" be established, at more, or less regular intervals; otherwise, the general public would be under the necessity, of caring for the travel, from the glowing accounts it often read of the hospitality of the early pioneers, we would infer that every home was open, to anyone who might chance to pass through Therefore, we are surprised to find these Houses of Entertainment so widely distributed, as an examination of the County Court records, would indicate. The writer has carefully examined the records of Cabell County, for several years from 1814, and finds this statement to be correct.

The law required every person, who wished to keep tavern, to obtain a license, from the County Court, and to enter into bond and security. The following is a copy of one of the records grant ing a license: to Thomas Morris, in 1814: "On the motion of /Thomas Morris, ordinary license is granted him, to keep an ordinary in the Town of Barboursville at the house now occupied by Ben Maxey, who thereupon, with Cadwaller Chapman, his security, came into Court and gave bond, as the law directs". The earlier County Court records are misplaced.

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The license fee was usually about \$18.00 per year, and proportionately less, for a shorter time.

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The records show that Peter Dirting, (now spelled Dirton) such was granted a license, in 1814. He was jailer also, but died about 1815, and his widow, Elizabeth Dirting, continued to keep an order nary, at her house, in Barboursville, for several years. In 1815, license were granted to John Everett, Samuel Short, Jeremiah Ward, Thomas Morris, Adam Black, George Chapman, John McConahan, John Morris, June and Joseph McGonigle,

Jeremiah Ward lived somewhere, in the region of Four Pole creek; Thomas Morris lived in Barboursville; John McConihan in Adam Black lived near the present Town of Ona; Guyandotte; while John Morris June lived on the road, a few miles above Qua. Adam Black continued to keep ordinary for years, although it is not certain he kept all the time. In fact, he was keeping hotel hotel and stage stand, in a building yet standing about three miles belowMilton, up to the Civil War. John Y. Chapman kept, in Guyandotte and Ben Maxey kept in Barboursvelle. In 1817, Ben Maxey, Phillip Baumgardner, Elizabeth Dirting, William Mc-Comas, June and Thomas Morris, were all keeping in Barboursville. In 1818, James Conner, who lived in the valley, near Culloden, took out a license, where he continued to keep, for some time, while John Shelton was licensed to keep "at a brick house he rented of Thomas Ward, in Barboursville", on the corner of main and center streets

The County Cort had the legal right, to fix the ordinary rates, in this county, but, as usual, except, that lodging 12-1/2¢, oats and corn 12-1/2¢ per gallon, Morse, standing in hay all night, 12-1/2¢. Cordial, cherry bounce and gin 18-3/4¢ per

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half pint? The Court seemed to forget to fix the rates, on this occasion, for "Whiskey and Peach Brandy, but a little later, they were fixed at 18-3/4¢ per half pint, peach brandy, per ditto 18-3/4 c. On page 215 of this same record, we fijd whiskey could be sold at \$2.00 per gallon, the best wine and peach brandy at \$6.00 per gallon, while meals were 25¢ each.

It is not likely that these rates were always charged, as they awere the maximum. Nearly all the old men with whom the writer has conversed on the subject, insist that liquor could be had at a very much cheaper rate, in their day. Long before this 1802, the County Court of Kanawha County had established a rate of 8-1/3¢ for lodging, meals 25¢, whiskey per half pint 10¢ #1 peach brandy 12-1/2¢, "Beer, or cider, per qt. 10¢

Stepher Teays settled at Coalsmouth about 1800, "on the lower side thereof. Here he established a ferry, and kept an Inn and worked his farm, and entertained the travel, which was then from, and to the Ohio River, at Gallipolis and Point Pleasant. Later, his son, James T. Teays, came and settled where the turnpike crossed Coal Riverin 1831, and built a small two-story hotel, frame When Judge Lewis Summers made his tour from Alexandria to Gallipolis, he kept a Journal, in which he makes the following Note: "Tavern kept by Tyree; pretty good house." This was Richard F. Tyree, who, it is claimed, kept the first House of Entertainment in Lewisburg.

a Ibid

County Court record of Cabell County for 1814-9 P.40 @ Kanawha County Court records Apr. 15, 1802. @ Lewis Summers Journal & West Va. Hist. Magazine Vol V. gazine Vol.V. No.1 Coals-Was until 1872 near where Wheelers residence now stands mouth Ibid

Probably the most celebrated tavern, on the whole route, with the possible exception of the one, at White Sulphur Springs, was Callaghans, of whom more anon. He came, at a very early time, and left his name perpetuated by Callaghan Station, on the C & O. Railroad, near which he was located.

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John Hansford moved to the Kanawha River below Paint Creek, in 1799, and built the first frame house on the Kanawha River. He kept^A_AHouse of Entertainment, and was militia Captain and also a magistrate. Henry Clay and H nry Banks, land speculators, Members of the Legislature, and of Congress, and travelers generally, stoppedthere. They had muster rolls each year, spring and fall. Heøre, from all parts of the county, the militia would gather. Mr. Hansford made peach and apple brandy, and let it age. After the muster practice, he would roll out a barrel of brandy, and then purposely disappear, as the sequel did not fully accord with the dignity of his official position. The fighting would SDOM com-

mence. amused themselves, by what was known as "gouging, in a process of fighting with nails, purposely trimmed sharp?". Such were the mountain tavern's before the building of the Kanawha Road. They had their origin in the very necessities of the time. From the list of names of these early taverns, it seems that almost every backwoodsman was a tavern keeper. This indicates that there was considerable travel in that early day, and also, that money was scarce. (The early landlords differed from those of a later day, in that they were not tavern keepers by profession. They were hunters, taxernxkeepers farmers, a ferry keepers, as well. Aside from the fact that they kept liquor for sale, they made little, or no extra preparation for their guests. (Remuniscences of Alwah Reminiscences of Alwah Hansford. The travel was of a transient and spasmodic nature, and, if one house should be over-crowded, the doors of all the others were open. Most of the buildings, even in the towns, were of until a fur years ago, logs. Almost in the center of Barboursville to this dayan old log dwelling US standing yet, a reminder of the days, when only the wealthy could afford better buildings. The traveler, who chanced to stop at one of these first ordinaries, found little to distinguish it, from average mountain cabin. The food consisted of whatever the season afforded; molasses of homemade sugar, we game, fruit, if the natural state, or dried, but never canned.

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Pumpkin and beans, dried in strings over the fire, formed the bulk of the food. This, with the corn bread, made of meal, ground at the little water mills, was a meal fit for a king. At night, it was no uncommong thing for guest and family to occupy the same room, as sitting room and bedroom, tell their hunting and Indian stories, and drink liquor from the same demijohn.

After the building of the pike, the Inns took on a more mercenary character. The landlords were no longer, to the same extent as before, men of all trades, but they now became Inn keepers, by profession. As the stages only stopped at certain places, it is probable that there were not as many, as before; at least, they were not so scattered. About the only source we have, as to the character of the of the Taverns of that day, is the newspapers published, at Charleston; and of those only a few files are known to be in existence, and those covering only a period of only about ten or twelve years at the beginning of the pikeShistory. In Charleston, George Goshorn kept at the sign of the "Jackson Hall", on the bank of the river, just above the Middle Ferry, and opposite the Court House". Mr.Goshorn kept the ferry, Kanawha Banner, April 11, 1831.

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and hence was able to direct much of the travel his way. The add was dated 1820, but, he states, that "he still continues to carry on the business of tavern keeping", showing that he was there, previous to that date.

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The Charleston Hotel stood "in the center of the beautiful Vilkage Gfa@harleston and immediately on the bank of the Great Kanawha River, nearly opposite the steam-boat landing". George Spottswood was the proprietor. At first it was a stage stand, but a chamge was made to Major Ruffner's, about a mile and a half above town. Mr.Spottswood adroitly calls attention to the fact that the charges at stage establishments are sometimes unreasonable, and "hopes the removal of the stages will not prevent those desirous of resting a few days, and awaiting a boat from putting up at his house. Charges are

25¢ for each meal

 $12\frac{1}{2}$ for lodging,

50¢ for horse (24 hours).

Cheaper rates by the week or month". He makes the significant remark, "A mocerate allowance of genuine old rye free to travelers, gratis"., and "In conclusion, he begs to assure the public that nothing an old Virginian can do for the comfort of those who may call on him shall be keglected".

One of the most celegrated houses of entertainment on me and a h the whole route, was kept by Major Daniel Ruffner, 1-1/2 miles east of Charleston. He owned hundreds of acres of land, has as fine pastures as the Kanawha Valley could boast of. A traveler, in 1832, described it as "a fine brick house, embowered in trees and grapevines. with a noble apiary, about a mile south of the 6

village of Charleston. We regretted to see the mixi family mansion of the old worthy Cohoe desecrated to the use of a hotel. The fields of the Western man of Uz we could not discover nearer than four miles from the mansion. He further states that more than a thousnd acres of fine corn and grass were growing on the place. Major Ruffner began keeping here about 1820. There was a camp meeting ground near his **pixmex** farm at which the people gathered every year from all parts of the country. Here they would listen to the wit, wisdom, and eloquence of ministers of earnestness and ability rarely surpassed at the present day; whice their horsex fed on the great pastures of Mr.Ruffner. The name of this typical old Virginian is still perpetuated by his descendants in the Ruffner House at Charleston, one of the finest hotels in the city.

Most of the advertisements for these old Houes of "Enter tainment " were of a condescending nature. In 183^O C.W.Drecks ler opened the Saline Hotel at the Salines, 6-1/2 miles east of Charleston. He had "extensive stabling provided with wholesome hay, corn and oats and careful ostler. "By strict attention to the comfort of travelers he hopes to merit a share of public patronage" "Separate rooms for the accomodation of private families always in readiness". This was to accomodate the local travel to the Salines, as it was too close to Ruffner's to be a stage stand, a hack would run to Charleston morning and evening.

A Northerner, traveling over this route rarely failed, the condescension, of the landlords. Said one: The mountain taverns are moreover, exceedingly hospitable, and attentive, with a full measure of "Yankee" curilosity. - Kanawha Banner, Jam 7, 1831

& Kan. Banner Jan. 7, 1831

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The same writer, speaking of the Tavern, at Kanawha Falls, says: "The tavern is kept, by a good natured chunk of a man, who, like Sancho, cast a shadow of nearly the same, when lying, as when standing. He was obliging, almost to annoyance, and officiousso ness, as I may remark in passing, and are all the lanelords, in these new routes, where passing has recently been let in, upon the solitudes, like light in ancient fable, upon the lower regions". Mountaineers are fixed along the new route, allured by the passing, and are either tavernéers, or people who furnish them with supplies". the way

The editor of the Banner, however, takes is sue, with this opinion of our landlord. "The author has already mistaken the part, and bearing of mine host, at the Falls. True native politeness is one of the most striking, among the many good qualities of this gentleman." "A better tavern or a more agreeable landlord, is seldom met with anywhere. Another writer, quoted in 2002 Gazeeter, of Virginia, speaks of it as a "spacious hotel," which stands opposite the Falls.

Fourteen miles east of Kanawha Falls, Phillip Metzger, in 1831, owned a large farm and stage station. In an ad. to sell the property, he said there was over a hundred acres cleared. "It was a large and commodious dgelling house, with all necessary outhouses. It has a barn 80 feet in length, and 20 feet in width; and under the barn, thirty-two stalls. Part of them are not

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Robert W. Poindexter was Proprietor of "Liberty Hall", situated, on the turnpike, ten miles below Charleston, at the "house formerly occupied by Mts. E.B. Thornton". This would be a mile or two above St. Albans.

One mile below Charleston, at "Willow Grove", Mrs. Watson "is prepared to entertain travelers, at her house, on the south side of The Kanawha."

The Kanawha Banner, of 1266.13, 1831, contains an ad.,by Daniel Morgan, of Washington County, Ky., offering to rent for one year, and perhaps, more,all that farm, ferry, and tavern seat, in Cabell Co., Va., on the Ohio River, and immediately above the mouth of Big Sandy, at the termination of the turn-pike road". We learn, from this ad., that "David McCormick lived, on the premises, and that "considerable land has been recently cleared, and there has been considerable made, by keeping store house".

In 1832, Maupin's Corners, and Wilson's Twerns, were scattered along the route, between Barboursville and Hurricane Brdige.

From the "Gazeteer of Virginia and District of Columbia, published in 1835, we learn that there was a hotel.at Gauley Bridge, a stage stand, and a "good tavern at Coals Mouth". At Hansford P.O., opposite the mouth of Paint Creek "The only houses are a mercantile store, and a House of Entertainment. There were three hotels, each at Charleston and Lewisburg, while around White Sulphur Springs "Several large and handsome hotels have sprang up in the neighborhood, for a distance of six or seven miles, with the

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view of merely accomodating the company over-flowing, from the limited accomodations of the Springs". At Frankford, a tavern ten miles N.E. of Lewisburg, & short distance off the pike, were two taverns. There were also excellent taverns at Blue Sulphur Springs, and other springs, in the vicinity of White Sulphur. May, kept noted hostelries. At Lewisburg. Frazier and This was a great court town, in those days. The State Law Library was located there. Around these taverns, judges, lawyers, and jurors, mingled with the aristocracy, of the road. When court was in session, tourists from the White Sulphur, frequently came over, to spend the day, and listen to the great speeches, made by such men as Judge G.W.Summers, an orator, of such ability, as to have attracted attention, in any court, in the United States.

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From the Guyandotte Herald, of Dec. 1, 1854-5, we learn the names of some of the hotels, in Guyandotte, and Barboursville, at that time. The "Eagle Hotel", at Guyandotte, was kept by John W. Baumgardner. O. Moore and J.H.Vandiver were proprietors, of the Union Hotel, on the Corner of Guyan and Front Streets, mear the steamboat landing". James Stuart ran the Stuart House, which he had recently enlarged. This was situated on Main Street. Baggage was brought, from the river, free of charge.

An old lady living in Guyandotte, stated that John G. Wright kept a hotel, on the river babk, and that the hotel, on Main Street, stood where the Page & Everett Building now stands. She claims the Wright Hotel was the better of the two. The Main Street hotel was operated by many, by many different people, among whom was one hand Smith, who fell down stairs, and broke his neck. He was not related o the Smiths new living, in Guyandotte. -10Mes. EvenBlume and Mrs. Alton McKendree ran a temperance tavern, on Front Street, in Barboursville, Free from "a set of drunken loafers, who always lay around a whiskey tavern". -

John Hatfield, and William Merritt also kept taverns.

The stage stands, along the route, were always located, in connection, with the taverns. Mr. Anderson Bias, whom I have previous ly quoted, and who worked on the road, about 1852, said, at that time, the stage stands were located as follows: The first was, at the mouth of Sandy. Adam Black, Coals Mouth, of which the proprietor was John Overshiner," The next of which he has any recollection was kept by Geo. P. Huddleston, three miles below the Falls,

on the left of the Pike, going east.

Aaron Stockton had a tavern, at the Falls. It was a threestory brick, located just above the Fall Rock, on the right of the Pike, going east, two and a half miles, above Stockton's. Old man Miller Miller kept at the foot, of Gauley Mountain, in a frame house, on the right hand side of the Pike, going east.

Vaughniss Tavern, a large twoo-story frame, was located four miles beyond Hawk's Nest, on the top of Gauley Mountain.

John Morris kept in Teay's Valley, in a house still standing, and occupied by T.J.Berkeley. It is zbout three miles below the Village of Hurricane. This was some years ago,

The house, in which Adam Black kept, is standing ximent at the present day, also. It is now occupied by

Andrew Curry kept tavern, at Hurricane Bridge, a long while before the War.

With the exception of White Sulphur, Callaghand was the -11-

most celebrated tavern, on the route. It was situated, on Dunlap's Creek, 13 miles east of White Sulphur Springs, at the intersection of several great mail, and stage routes, through the Valley. Dennis Callaghan was landlord here for many years, before the building of the Pike. LewisSummers spent a night with him jurneying through the Kanawha Valley, in 1808. After his death, he was succeeded by his son, who, like Rip Van Winkle's son, seemed to have inherited his father's traits, with his cast off gallighaskins." Here centered all the travel, from north, east, south and west from Pennsylvania and Maryland through the Shenandoah Valley, from , from Washington, Richmond, and other great cities, of the east, from North Carolina, and from the Ohio; here, it paused a little, joked with our genial landlord, and tasted his liquor, enjoyed his itiguer hospitality, and then passed on to the Ohio, by way of the Great Kanawha, or Boones Wilderness road, or even, to the Father of Waters! Here is a view of Dennis Callahan, in 1813: "At Dennis Callaghan's, where we breakfasted, there is a little joins James River, and eventually mingles, with the stream, which ocean, and a few miles beyond there s a similar one which is tributary to the Mississippi. Here then, resides the greater mighty River God, of the Alleghanies, who carries an urn, under each arm, from one of which, he presses the waters of the east from the other those of the west. My mind expanded as it floated rapidly, like a ma cance, down the river, on & moment, dwelling on the vast and shen on that endless river, whose immeasurable tributary streams , like veins and arteries, find their common centres, in the heart of

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that great valley, forming natural links, and bonds with of common union, which will forever remind the people, of that Wast region, which of their kindred blood, and kindred interest." 17

"But I must not forget little Dennis Callighan who is neither mustleman nor oysterman, and, at any rate, would much rather have the inside of an oyster, than its shell . I'll swear for him. Dennis is a sort of "Old man of the Mountains", as well known, in these part parts, as Dennis Bulgruddy was on Muckrish Heath. He is an Irishman, having true blue pluck lives, and lights, midriff and all; and settled in this place, about the time the oyster shells foundered in a rock, nearby, and I believe, for the memory of man runneth not to the contrary, of his being here. How he got here the Lord only knows, but here he is, and here he is likely to remain and flourish , for no trouble ever passes his door without calling; either because it is the only house of entertainment, for many miles, or because Dennis is such a wag pestilent and, withal, a very honest fellow, which for a publican, is is He may be known, by being a little fellow, dressed in prodigous. long tailed coat, with buttons. about the size of a pewter plate, a pair of breeches made very loose ornamented, with new buckles, of massive workman-ship, and square or nearabout, I won't be positive. He has a mighty way of pulling up his galligastins, with one hand, and drawing the sleeve of the other aboress his nose, at the same time, I suppose, because it tickles him. His stockings were of mixed woolen, and had, in them, a pair of small, jolly, long, thick, spindle legs, that precipitated themselves, into his shoes, by means of two feet, at the end of them, which said feet were rather short, but made up in length. He wears a queue of

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some two dozen hairs, which, in their primitive institution, seem to have been black, but are now like Hamlet's Senior' beards, a sable silver. As Dennis will doubtless be recommended, by posterity, I thought it well to be particular, in giving a description of him, which will doubtless become valuable, as he shall become extinct.

We inquired of Dennis, if we coild get breakfast, being pretty sharp set with a ride of fourteen good, honest, long miles. "Breakfast, said Dennis, with infinite gravity, You can't get breakfast here. I don't keep tavern any more". "However, said he, after enjoying our perplexity, "I am just going to breakfast myself, and you are welcome to go snacks with me". In a little time, we were going away. Oliver, a traveling companion, very gravely thanked him, for his hospitality, wighout offering to pay him. This made Dennis look rather blue, for he thought it was carrying the joke a little too far. However, we paid him at length, in silver, at which he expressed no small astonishment, not having seen any, in a long time.

In the White Sulphur Springs papers, page 20, we have a view of the younger Callaghan, in 1838: "We stopped once more, on our road, at Callaghans, a great breakfast house, thirteen miles, this wide of the White Sulphur, at the intersection of sever al mail routes. We were very hospitably entertained, by the fascitious and obliging host, who never differs, in opinion, with his guests, on any subject, 'thats not fare' Dennis Callaghan, the father of the present proprietor, was immortalized by the

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author of 'Westward Ho.' I have bince. On which side of the muestion are you, Mr. Callighan?" said one of us, to him, at parting. "Why sir, I don't like to differ--"I8m sure we don't" but, how do you stand?" "Why, said my friend, "I am Van Buren, subtreasury administration, ultra Whig". "Well, said he, "Mr. Stranger, I am exactly where you are".

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The life of the road, terminated, set in the life, st White Sulphur Springs. They were justly called, "The Saratoga of the South", for next to that resort they were the most noted watering place, in the United States. They were known, at a very early date, but, opened as a public resort, until 1818, by William Herrdon, who had leased the property, for a period of ten years, of the owner, James Caldwell. From that day, for many years, the place was crowded, with visitors, during the warm season, for many years, and, even to this day, bids fair to be the most popular resort in the State. Here were gathered President of the United States, Senators, Judges, Governors, while whole families came to mingle, in the gay **throng** sosiety, and to recuperate their health.

"There is an arrival; it must be a family from the south, from the extent of the train, and the number of horses, and vehicles. First comes the baggage wagon, then a young gentleman, on horseback; then follows the diligence, containg the children, nurses, and band boxes. After that, comes a closed carriage, with the ladies of the family, then the gentleman himself, riding after, and the cavalcade, brought up, by several other vehicles, and several as outriders".

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So many classes of people, were sure to attract a crowd of physicians, phrenologists, dentists, and itinerant jewelers, to fatten, on the purses, and impose on the credulity of the inexperienced. The traveling museum, with its wax figures, snakes, Indian costumes, wolves, and other animals, passed through. 16

Deer were plentiful in the vicinity. A son of the proprietor, owned a pack of sixty hounds, in 1838. The season opened in August, and continued four months, almost without interruption. The deer were so plentiful, that the ladies often witnessed the hunt, from their carriages. Venison was a common article of diet.

The enjoyment and merriment were rare; that the characters were original; the stories were new, and good, and the songs were new. The traviler is seldom favored with such a treat. Claret was the general drink, I believe, among the fox hunters of old, but hock appeared to be the favorite beverage here; and, among the many sparkling songs, was the following, which was dedicated to the virtues of hock:

> Away with all grief, And let us be merry, And fill up the bumpers of wine. And let it not be,with Madeira or sherry, But Hock. Give us Hock, Sparkling Hock, from the Rhine, For Hock is the wine, And it comes from the Rhine, From the land, of old legand and song.

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And drink as we may, The heart rises gay, As night with her shades. And her joys flips along. When we drink of its nectar, The fancy in dreams, Wanders away, to the soft, flowing streams, To the land, where the maidens, Are tilling the vine, And pressing the grape, On the banks, of the Rhine.

And now, let it be, Through this land of the free, Far and wide, on her bright banners spread; While beauty, shall shine, That Hock is the wine, Through summer and winter, Till youth shall have fled.

It is estimated that there were a thousand persons, at this resort, in 1838. The following statement, for 1835, will gives an idea of the real number of people here, in the days, when the road was in its prime: "Already, there is a vast consourse of strangers, from the North and the South, the east and the west, coming from the din and bustle, of the city, or from the baneful miasmata of the marshes, to find health and pleasure at the Virginia Springs. among which this shines forth:

"Ut luna inter minores sideres". (Writers, in those days, loved to display their knowledge of Latin, and other classics

It is estimated that the buildings for 1836, would accomodate four jundred, 400 persons, at one time. And yet, as previously narrated, it was found necessary and profitable, to erect many other large at a distance of five or six miles, to accomodate the overpflow. 14

Henry Howe visited this region about 1846, and has left us a draving, showing a number of the buildings. This is reproduced on page

"The Springs are situated, in a narrow vale, between the spurs, of Laurel Mountain.

Besides the White Sulphur, numerous other springs were in the vicinity. The Warm Springs, for forty miles, on the road, toward Staunton. Besides these, are the Hot Springs, the Sweet Springs, the Red Sulphur, the Salt Sulphur, each of which were supposed to have its own peculiar curative qualities.

"Travelers to the Springs, from the North, generally came by way of Washington, where they take the steamboat, to Fredericksburg, 60 miles. The remaining part, of the journey, is by land travburghed a very good mountainous road, for the last 100 miles, of the route. Traveers, by the public stage, reach Charlottesville; by the close of the first day, after leaving Washington, passing through Staunton, on the next; breakfasting, at the Warm Springs on, the morning of the third day, and arriving at the White Sulphur, the same evening".

Appendix to White Sulphur Springs Papers, p. 153-4. (Put closer up.)