

COUNTY HISTORY

Colonial Virginia, lying between the Rappahannock River, the Blue Ridge Mountains, and the Carolina Colonies, was divided into eight shires. The territory to the west was called Northumberland by the English. Chickasaw by the Indians. Following Governor Spotswood's exploration in 1692, this area was added to Essex County. In 1771, Spotsylvania County was formed from Essex, and in 1773 Orange County was made in 1734. From Orange in 1738 came the vast area known as Augusta County, which extended from the Blue Ridge to the Mississippi River. A portion of Augusta became Botetourt County in 1770, the northern boundary of which divided the headwaters of the James and the Shenandoah Rivers. The long vanished County of Fincastle came into being in 1772, and comprised Kentucky and South West Virginia. The eastern boundary of Fincastle County was the old line between Montgomery and Botetourt Counties. Roanoke County was formed March 30, 1838, and with a portion annexed from Montgomery in 1849, and with a portion given to the new County of Craig in 1857, retains its present area of 305 square miles. The derivation of the county name has been taken generally as the Indian name Roanock, meaning shell money, although it is commonly accepted that the county was named after Roanoke River. The first deed in the new county was recorded May 24, 1838. The first Clerk of the County was William H. Cook, the first Sheriff Elijah McClanahan, and the first Commissioner of Revenue, Armistead Neal. The names around the border of this map are those of prominent men in the history of Roanoke County.

MILITARY HISTORY

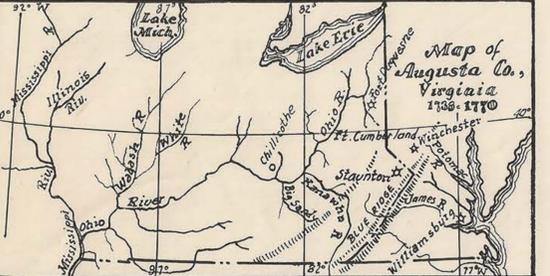
Soldiers from Roanoke County have served on every battlefield of the Nation. General Andrew Lewis, whose home was at Richfield, near Salem, was an outstanding military hero. His chief renown was gained in 1774 at the Battle of Point Pleasant; he served also at Ft. Mifflin, was at Braddock's defeat and was captured by the French at Ft. Duquesne. Colonel William Fleming, one time acting Governor of Virginia, was also a noted soldier. During the War between the States, the only engagement on Roanoke County soil was McClanahan's attack on Hunter in June 1864, at Hanging Rock. The Union General Averill came to Salem in December 1862, but retreated. The following military companies served the Confederacy: The Salem Flying Artillery, 1st Virginia Regiment, fired the last shot of the war April 9, 1865. The Roanoke Grays, Company I, 28th Virginia Infantry, were captured by General Custer at Saylor's Creek. The Dixie Grays, Company E, 42nd Virginia Infantry, were wiped out at the Bloody Angle at Spotsylvania Court House. One member survived at the Surrender in 1865. The last command, the Roanoke Guards, Company K, 44th Virginia Infantry, had 30 men surviving of an original enlistment of 130. The County sent soldiers to the Spanish American War; many more fought in France in 1917-1918, and a still greater number served in the Sar. Lung battle lines of World War II. From frontier days to the present time, Roanoke County may well be proud of her soldier sons.

Map of the Town of Salem

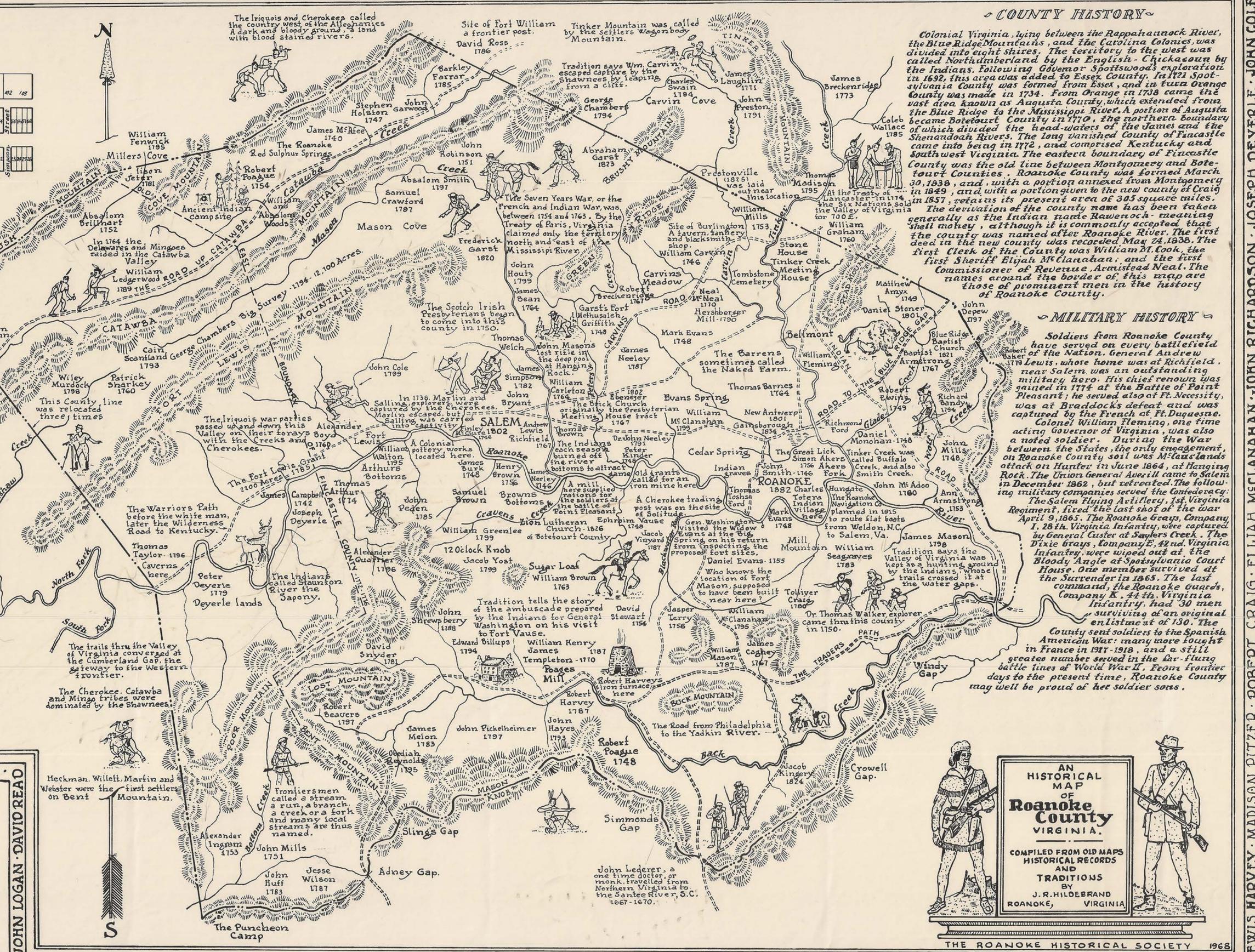
Grid table with columns for Clay Street, Roanoke or Main Street, and Calhoun Street. Rows contain numbers for street intersections.

The above is the 1802 map of Salem as recorded in Plat Book 1, page 1. Founded in that year by James Simpson, Salem was incorporated in 1806 as the Town of Salem in Botetourt County. Following the formation of Roanoke County, the town was chosen county seat. In and around Salem were several noted taverns, and one in particular became famed for entertaining President Andrew Jackson on his visits to and from Washington. The story of Roanoke College is interwoven with the life of Salem. The school began in 1842 as a private institution in Augusta County, was moved to Salem in 1847, and was chartered as a college in 1853. Many leaders in business and professional life in this State are numbered among the graduates of this school. In the 1870's two railroads built toward Salem from the north - the Shenandoah Valley R.R., stopping at Big Lick in 1852, and the Baltimore and Ohio R.R., acquiring rights of way through the County. Many stone culverts, as well as cuts and fills, can be seen today. Instead of making Salem the terminus, the construction stopped at Lexington. One can only surmise the change that this decision may have had on the history of Salem. The first railroad through the County was the Virginia and Tennessee, about 1852. This road was combined with the Southside and the Norfolk and Petersburg roads to become the Atlantic, Mississippi and Ohio R.R. in 1880. Many of the towns along the line were laid out by the railroad surveyors, one of which was Big Lick. In the 1860's this road was named the Norfolk and Western, and has since become one of the leading systems. The men who are responsible for the development of Salem, Roanoke County and the City of Roanoke, have been mainly the employees and officials of this railway. In the Clerk's Office of the Circuit Court are many well kept files of old surveys, deeds, wills and other records. One may glean from these old documents a great amount of personal family history, many items of humor and other interesting information. One description in a division of an estate, about 1840, refers to a corner near the preaching stand, on the old lamp Meeting ground. (A modern surveyor today - one hundred years later - would have difficulty locating this point). The Irish deed is another item of interest in the County records.

MICHAEL AIRHEART · WILLIAM BRYAN · JOHN LOGAN · DAVID READ

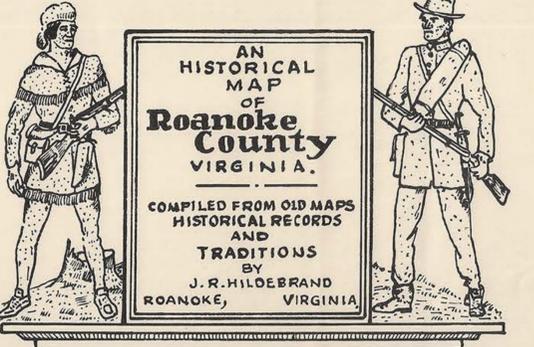


Hitchcock's Map of Augusta County as it appeared when taken from Orange County November 1, 1738. This vast area comprises the States of West Virginia, Kentucky, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, and portions of Michigan, Pennsylvania and Virginia.



ANDREW LEWIS · WILLIAM FLEMING · JAMES McAFEE · ROBERT POAGUE · WILLIAM CARVIN · THOMAS TOSH · JAMES BURK · SAMUEL WHITE · NATHANIEL BURWELL

AN HISTORICAL MAP OF Roanoke County VIRGINIA. COMPILED FROM OLD MAPS HISTORICAL RECORDS AND TRADITIONS BY J. R. HILDEBRAND ROANOKE, VIRGINIA



THE ROANOKE HISTORICAL SOCIETY 1968

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