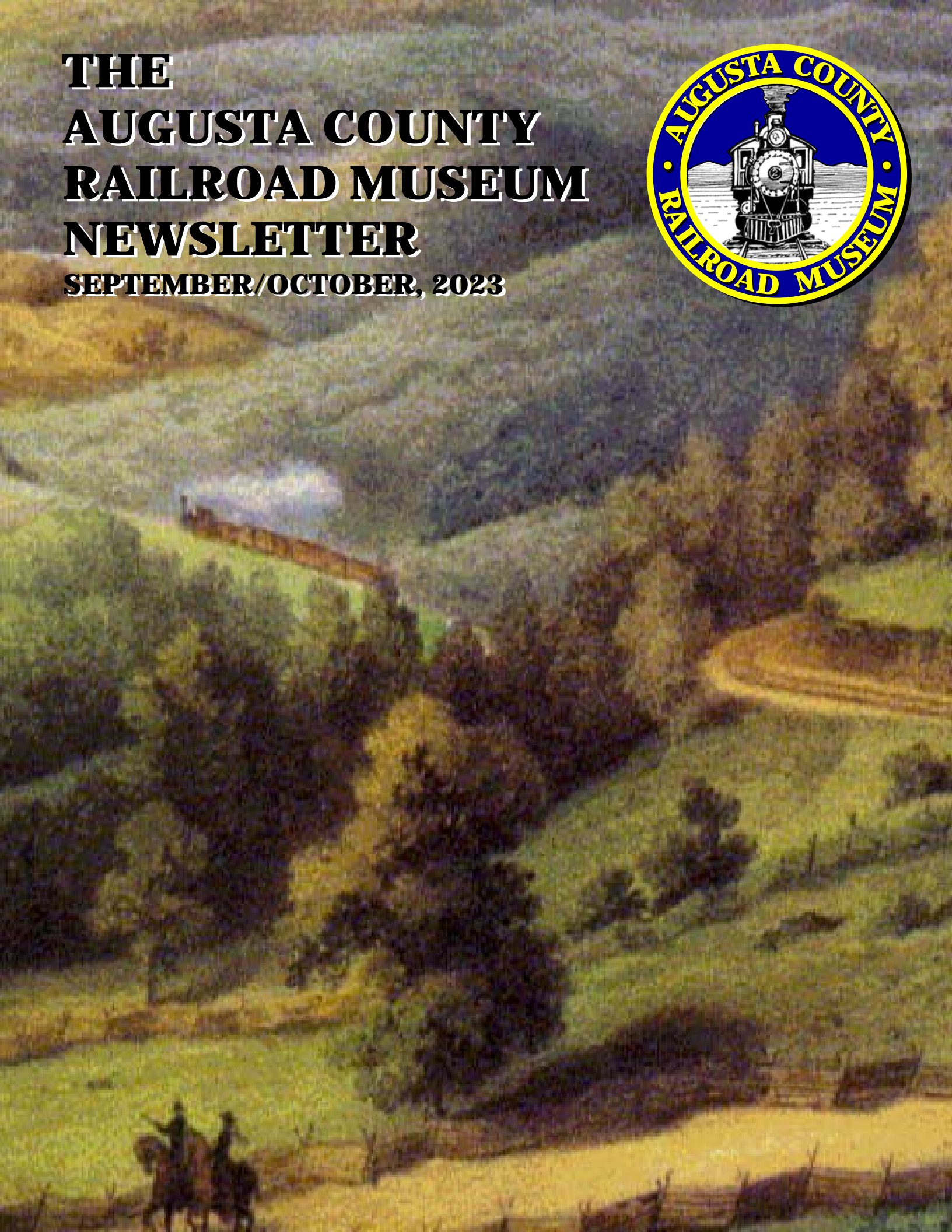


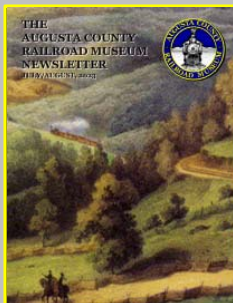
**THE
AUGUSTA COUNTY
RAILROAD MUSEUM
NEWSLETTER
SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER, 2023**



Our mailing address is:

**AUGUSTA COUNTY
RAILROAD MUSEUM
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*ON THE COVER...
Augusta County's first railroad,
the Louisa Railroad, newly re-
chartered as the Virginia
Central heads over Afton Gap
and into the Shenandoah
Valley to Waynesboro abiding
by the motto 'Westward Ho'.*

The Augusta County Railroad Museum is a 501(3)c non-profit organization chartered under the laws of the State of Virginia in 2001. It's purpose is to promote the interest in railroading and model railroading. Persons participate with the Museum as members, volunteering their time and talents to promote the hobby of model railroading and the public's awareness of railroad safety. Participation is open to the public. Annual membership dues are assessed at the rate of \$60 per year, pro-rated.

Regular monthly business meetings are held at the Augusta County Library in Fishersville Virginia on the third Thursday of the month beginning at 6:00 p.m.

The Augusta County Railroad Museum continues it's quest to find a new permanent location to serve as space for exhibits, displays and layouts. So far our attempts to find a modern retail rental space have been futile. The Museum still engages the public by participating in community events.

We will continue to continue to offer the community our support and resources to promote the railroading culture. Should you wish to support this organization, you can contact our Editor at editor@acrrm.org or write to our PO Box.

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Editor's Note

Dear Reader,

Welcome to the inaugural issue of the Augusta County Railroad Museum Newsletter. As our first inaugural issue goes to press, I'm delighted to announce that over 400 individuals have elected to receive updates about the Augusta County Railroad Museum via Constant Contact.

As you may know, the newsletter is authored in two editions, one bears a historical tone and the other a modeling tone; and depending on your selection of preference you are receiving one, or the other, or both.

In keeping with the theme of a beginning, I selected articles describing the first locomotive, first tracks, and first train to arrive in Augusta County; noting that the history of how it began, occurred with much planning in the decades previous. We intend to author a series of articles on this railroad in later editions.

I'll note that Augusta County surprisingly had many railroads, a few

no longer exist, many abandoned, and in most cases the track, ties, and iron recovered as scrap.

There were also railroads that were planned in fascinating detail, documented in surveys, and cost estimates; and for one reason or another, never got built. I plan to include a few articles on those as well.

So recognizing that we'll cover a broad subject, at a reasonable level of detail and depth, let's begin... with a story of the lil engine that could.

Kindly,

Brian A. Day
Editor



What's Happening Now ?

Tunnel Exhibit on Saturday September 23rd, 2023, from 10:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m.

The Augusta County Railroad Museum is pleased to be the invited guests of the Blue Ridge Tunnel Foundation at the East Parking Lot of the Blue Ridge Tunnel in Afton, Va, Saturday, September 23rd, 2023.

The Museum will have volunteers on-hand to answer railroad questions and display a handful of relevant museum exhibits from 10:00 a.m.- 4:00 p.m.

The Tunnel, parking, and restroom facilities are open to the public without fee and attendance is encouraged and welcome.

Likewise the exhibits, hands-on demonstrations, and activities of the Augusta County Railroad Museum are free as well.



Augusta County Railroad Museum volunteers display a handcar and exhibits in Afton Va.



The N&W 611 was the center piece of the original display of railroad equipment in Roanoke at the old museum location in June 1972.

The Virginia Transportation Museum's N&W 611 Class J Northern begins fall excursions on the ex-C&O Mountain Sub-division between Goshen Va. and Staunton Va. starting October 6th, 2023.

The Augusta County Railroad Museum is please to announce the news that the Virginia Museum of Transportation and Virginia Scenic Railway have organized a series of fall excursions on Fridays Saturdays, and Sundays;

- October 6–8, departs Goshen 9:00 a.m. roundtrip and Goshen 2:30 p.m. roundtrip
 - October 13–15, departs Goshen 9:00 a.m. roundtrip and again 2:30 p.m. roundtrip
 - October 20–22, departs Goshen 9:00 a.m. roundtrip and again 2:30 p.m. roundtrip
 - October 27–29, departs Goshen 9:00 a.m. roundtrip and again 2:30 p.m. roundtrip
 - November 3–5, departs Goshen 9:00 a.m. roundtrip and again 2:30 p.m. roundtrip
- All journeys start from Goshen without stopping to board or discharge in Staunton.

Buckingham Branch diesel locomotives pull the excursion in return. Seating options include, Coach, Premium Coach, First Class, and Dome Classes, ranging from \$99.00 -\$249.00 per seat. Tickets are on sale at the Virginia Scenic Railway's website.

Durbin and Greenbrier Valley Railroad announces first season of the Greenbrier Express from Cass WVa to Durbin WVa Roundtrip

Fall foliage is coming and scenic train excursions are abundantly available after only a three hour drive to Cass in Wild, Wonderful, West Virginia. Cass was once a lumber town and the remains of the old mill is still seen leaving town. The Durbin and Greenbrier Valley Railroad operates the Cass Scenic Railroad and Greenbrier Express trains using the fleet of geared Shay locomotives. The Shay is an industrial locomotive that features a three cylinder engine mounted vertically to a crankshaft. Universal joints, slip shafts, and beveled gear transmit power to each axle. Three journeys depart Cass, heading to Whittaker (about 2 hours), Bald Knob (about 4 hours), or along the banks of the Greenbrier River (about 6 hours). Reservations are highly recommended. A cold lunch is included in ticket price for Bald Knob and Greenbrier trains. Tickets are on sale at the mountainrailwv.com website.



The DGVR engineer lubricates locomotive Shay No. 4 in preparation for a six hour journey to Durbin and return.

Our Most Recent Museum Activities

Augusta County Fair at the EXPO Center in Fishersville Va.

The Augusta County Railroad Museum spent the week of July 25th-29th as one of the many exhibitors at the Augusta County Fair.

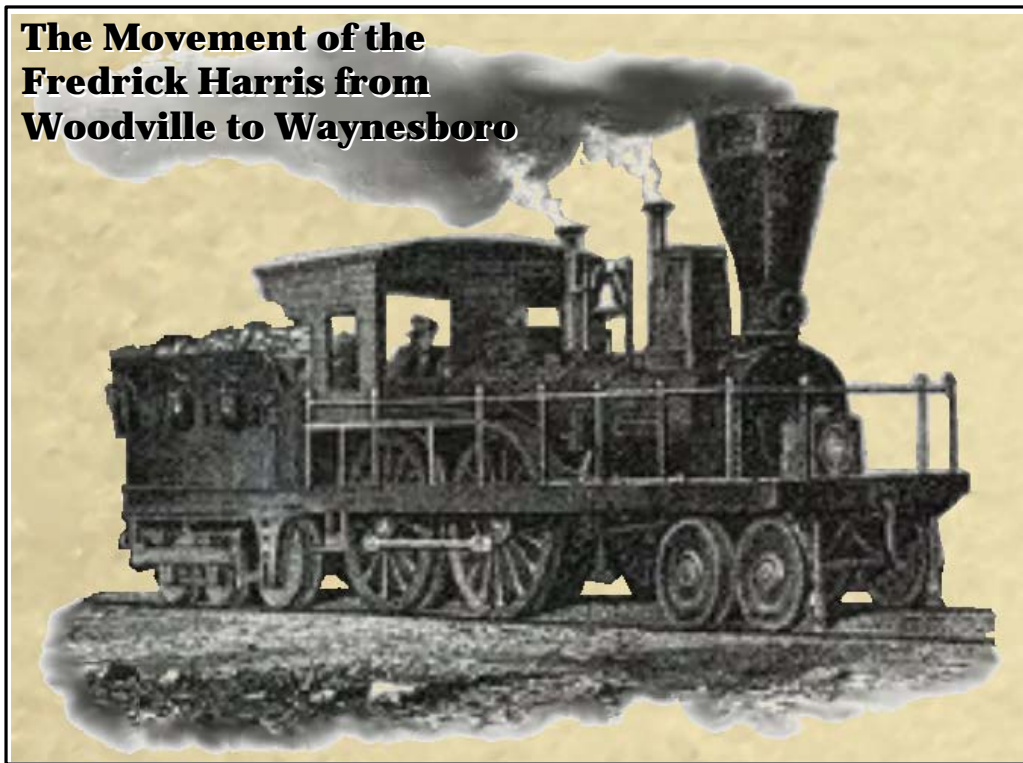
The display included one of the organization's HO scale modular layouts which features three separate track circuits. Coloring books, key chains, rulers, and crayons courtesy of Operation LifeSaver and the Virginia Scenic Railway were distributed to the children in attendance. Volunteers were on-hand to answer questions and operate trains on the layout.



Layout display at the Augusta County Fair.

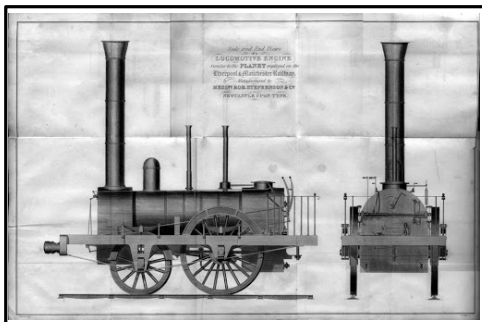


The Movement of the Fredrick Harris from Woodville to Waynesboro



The locomotive **Frederick Harris** was constructed by Norris Bros. of Phila. In 1847 as part of an initial order of four locomotives for the newly chartered Virginia Central. Weighing in at 14 1/2 tons, it marked a sizable improvement from the 9 ton Stephenson locomotives used by the Richmond, Fredericksburg, and Potomac Railroad. (Engraving Courtesy of American Bank Note Company, originally published 1858)

In 1836, the Louisa Railroad was granted charter to build a railroad from Doswell Junction (Taylorsville) west to Louisa and beyond to Gordonsville. It reached Louisa in 1838, and Gordonsville in 1840. During that period, the Louisa Railroad contracted with the Richmond, Fredericksburg and Potomac Railroad to operate their locomotives and rolling stock over the line.¹ It ran up til 1845 as an agricultural railroad hauling produce, lumber, and livestock to Richmond.



The RF&P reported in 1838, that four of six locomotives had been delivered for service by Robert Stephenson of England. These worked the RF&P and Louisa Railroad trains.

But by 1846, it began to consider extending it's line west. While originally chartered to continue towards Harrisonburg, the more lucrative route

headed towards Charlottesville, Staunton, Covington, and west via the New River to Guyandotte². In a politically unfavorable climate, it exercised its option to end its line in Gordonsville and seek a new charter as the Virginia Central, authorized to construct to the Blue Ridge. The new charter was approved.³

Now with the freedom to choose it's route, it constructed a perfect U turn in Gordonsville and headed southwest directly to Charlottesville.⁴



The Norris Bros. 1848 built **Tioga** illustrates the open and primitive conditions early engineers faced. It took only one winter to convince resourceful shop employees to build improvised cabins to stay warm. Later term for the vehicle driving area would be abbreviated to cab.

It immediately ordered locomotives and rolling stock, four locomotives were ordered from Norris Brothers. Cars were built from castings and lumber using the railroads own resources. Eventually, cars would be purchased in Richmond.

With the backing of the State of Virginia, it negotiated for the RF&P to operate it's service through 1847 and 1848.⁵

But for the RF&P, the Virginia Central was emerging as a hostile rival, and the RF&P was less than cooperative moving it's new freight cars in a timely manner. After hostilities became very public in the newspapers, the Virginia Central applied for charter to extend it's track to Richmond.⁶ This was granted in 1848 and resulted in the RF&P cross-over at Doswell as well as downtown access to Rocketts Landing and the Tredgar Iron Works.

**LOCOMOTIVE
STEAM ENGINE
Manufactory**

WILLIAM NORRIS,
SCHUYLKILL SIXTH AND MORRIS STREETS,
PHILADELPHIA.

Locomotive and other
STEAM ENGINES,
For Boats, Mills, and Manufactories. Mining Machinery,
Pumps, Sugar Mills, Rice Mills, Mill Gearing, and every other
description of Machinery.

IRON CASTINGS,
AND
FOUNDRY WORK IN GENERAL.

Norris Bros. produced a variety of locomotives. Most sported a Bury firebox and boiler. A pair of unpowered wheels supported the front of the locomotive and helped guide it through curves. (Norris Bros. advertisement, about 1842)

In the meantime, contracts to begin grading the right-of-way had been let from Waynesboro to Staunton.

STATEMENT

Of the Names, Dimensions, Condition, &c. of the Engines on the Virginia Central Railroad, and the Number of Miles run by each, during the year ending September 30, 1853.

NAME.	BUILDER.	When placed on road.	Assumed weight in tons.	Diameter of cylinder in inches.	Stroke in inches.	Diameter of drivers in inches.	Number of drivers.	Connection.	Dimensions of fire box.	Length of flues.	Gallons of oil used.	Miles run during the year.	CONDITION.
J. Hunter,	Norris & Brother,	1851,	18	12	26	54	4	Outside,	41 by 36,	10.6	455	15,270	Good order, (Freight.)
Westward Ho,	" "	1847,	14	10½	20	48	4	" "	37 by 35,	8.10	371	20,316	" "
Kimbrough,	" "	1847,	14½	10½	20	48	4	" "	37 by 35,	8.10	265	12,798	" "
F. Harris,	" "	1847,	14½	10½	20	48	4	" "	37 by 35,	8.10	219	10,442	" " west Bl. Ridge.
Blue Ridge,	" "	1847,	14½	10½	20	48	4	" "	37 by 35,	8.10	244	10,899	Out of order, but in use.

The September 30, 1853 Stockholder Report lists the four 1847 Norris Bros. locomotives, as *Westward Ho*, *Charles Kimbrough*, *Frederick Harris*, and *Blue Ridge*. Note the column **Condition** indicating that the *F. Harris* is in **Good Order** west Bl. Ridge.

STAUNTON:

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 5, 1849.

THE RAILROAD, FROM WAYNESBORO'.

We are happy to inform our readers that the contracts for the various sections of this work have been promptly filled. Col. FONTAINE and a quorum of Directors, with the Engineers, Messrs. KUPER and RUGGLES, were on the ground at the time specified in the advertisement, and the contracts awarded as follows:

RICHARDSON & Co.	Section 1, 2, 3 & 4
MULLEGAN & MASTERS	" 5, 6, 11 & 12
WRIGHT & FARISH	" 7, 8, 2 & 10
PETER CRICKARD & Co.	" 9
G. B. MANLY	" 13

The terms of the contracts require the work to be commenced on the 1st of January, 1850, and completed by the 25th day of December, 1851.—The work is divided into sections of about one mile each, making the total distance about twelve miles and three-fifths. It is estimated that the grading and masonry, according to the contract prices, will cost about \$85,000, some \$8,000 less than the estimate of the Engineer. It has not been determined as yet which route will be selected—the Northern by McCLEURE's, or the Southern by Dr. DOLD's. The decision of this question will probably turn upon the liberality displayed in the cession of lands. We understand that the maximum grade of the road between Staunton and Waynesboro', going East (which is with the trade) will be *sixty five feet per mile*, and the maximum Westward *sixty eight feet per mile*. The curves are all of large radii, varying from 2,000 to 2,500 feet.

The gentlemen into whose hands the work has

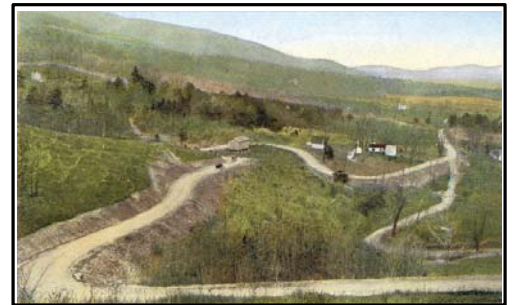
Contracts for the Valley portion of the Louisa Railroad were issued before the Commonwealth's Blue Ridge Railroad started work on the tunnel.

With the Virginia Central extending construction in the valley, and the State of Virginia working on the construction of the Blue Ridge Railroad; it was becoming obvious that work on the line in the valley was being impeded by the absence of a locomotive. With this in mind, plans were put forth to transport a locomotive to Mechum's River and haul it by road over the mountain.

The locomotive selected was the Frederick Harris, named after the Louisa Railroad's first President, now deceased. Weighing in at 14 ½ tons, it happened to be one of the lighter locomotives, and if partially disassembled, readily transported by cart or wagon. It was steamed to Mechum's River Depot, just west of the new bridge and the last accessible and level point on the ground prior to the unfinished roadbed to the mountain.

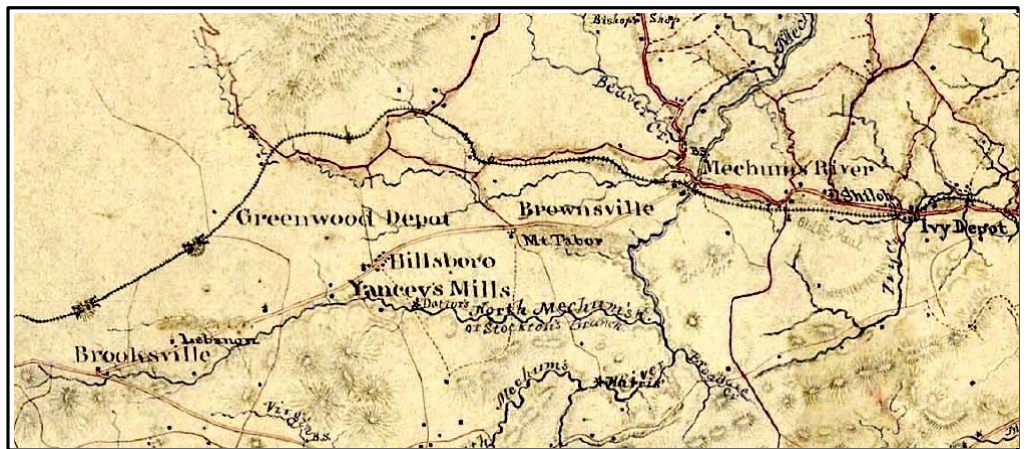
With the boiler cooled, the locomotive boiler was lifted by framed timbers onto a specially constructed wagon for transport. A mule team, roughly eighteen in number were attached, and the slow and tedious journey began.

From Mechum's River west the Old Turnpike road basically follows U.S. Rte 250, straightened by passing the



The approach to Afton followed the 'old road', winding back and forth, in and out along the curvature of the mountain. This presented difficulties to the lengthy mule team as there was more than one instance of zig-zagging the team to traverse the sharp curves.

numerous old road sections alongside the route, notably Rt. 796 Brooksville Rd. Just west of the Rockfish Gap Country Store, Rt. 750 Old Turnpike Rd. veers left and winds its way up the mountain. Let's briefly pause to describe mule skinning.



The 1867 map of Albemarle County shows Woodville to as several houses adjacent to the tracks between Mechum's River and Ivy Depot. It still exists as a lengthy siding. The route west, illustrated in red, is now used by U.S. Route 250. After Brooksville the original road travel straight along the floor of Rockfish Gap. The old route is still accessible between the new traffic circle village of Afton.



It's difficult to comprehend or understand that heavy wagon haulage, or what we see today on the Interstate as 'CAUTION WIDE LOAD, existed in the mid- eighteen hundreds because it's rarely described. But we know it existed.

Muleskinners were a special group of mule team drivers. They are often grouped with those that drive teams of horses, called teamsters.

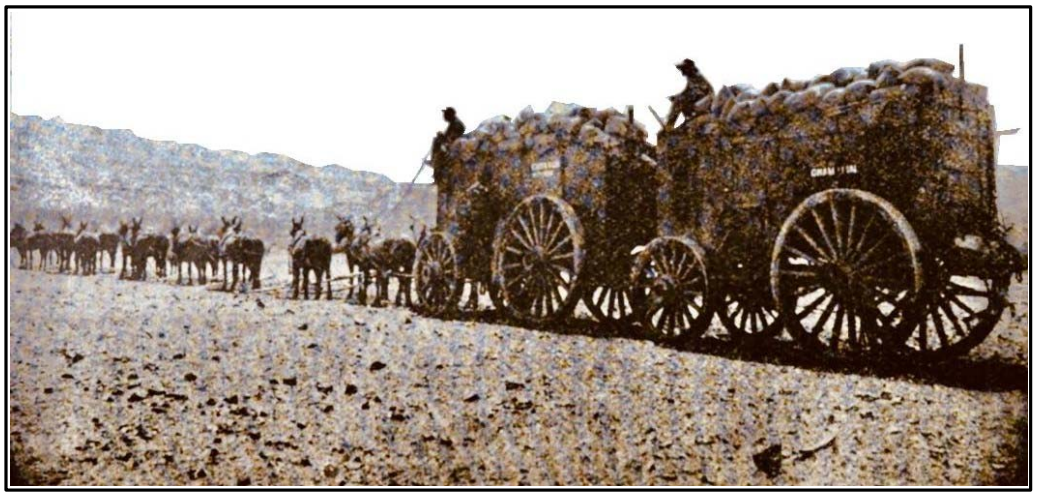
On July 18th 1853, the fabled "20-mule team", was called to the task of moving the *Frederick Harris*, and a young David Sheeler mastered the reigns of 18 mules and two horses. Mule skinning was a talented trade skill.

The mules led the team in pairs, their harnesses attached to a guide chain in the center, with the pair of two horses in immediate front of the wagons. You put your smartest mules as the two forward pair, and then midway at the break point. The chain was attached and braced to front wagon axle and passed beneath to the second wagon's front axle. When combined as described, the 20-mule team could pull 40 tons. Easily better than the 14.5 tons of the *Frederick Harris*.

A shake of the reigns, and a few kind words of motivation, such as "git, get ye up, git along mules, " would start the procession at a slow trot.

As you held your hands, the reigns for the front two pair were up on top separated left side and right side of the head to signal that you desired to veer toward the left or right. 'Driving' was simple, you basically let the mules pick their way, others following, and guided them at each fork in the road.

At the point of reaching a curve, a special technique was used. 'Whouoo, whouoo mules, halt!'. Often your assistants, dismounted to the front and midway pairs. As the head group curved aside either right or left, the midway over the chain to the outside of the curve, pulling outward. This would cause the chain to stay roughly in the middle of the road, and all of the pulling force would be transmitted to the



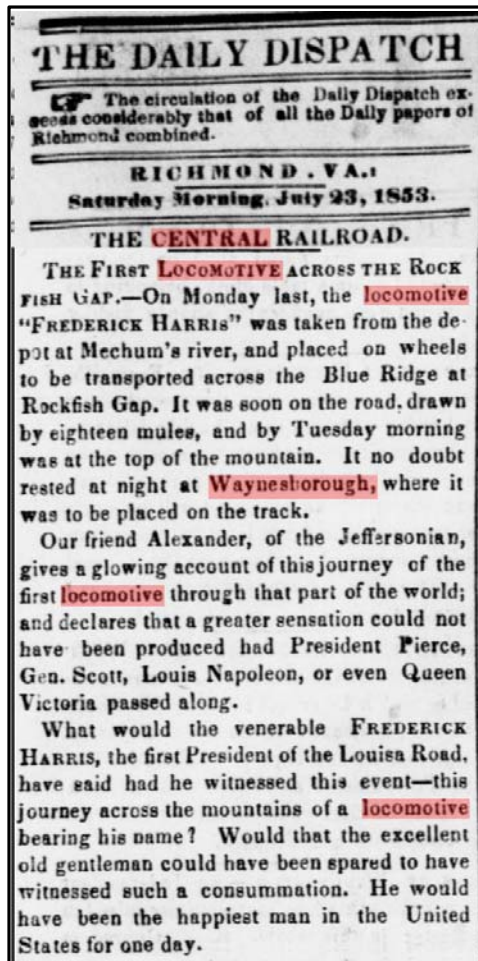
Photographs of a 20-mule team are rare. Later in the century, the Pacific Borax Company would employ the technique to move heavy shipments of Borax across Death Valley. (Photograph Courtesy of Illustrated Sketches of Death Valley and the Borax Deserts of the Pacific Coast by John R. Spears, Rand McNally & Co., Chicago and New York, 1892)

wagons.

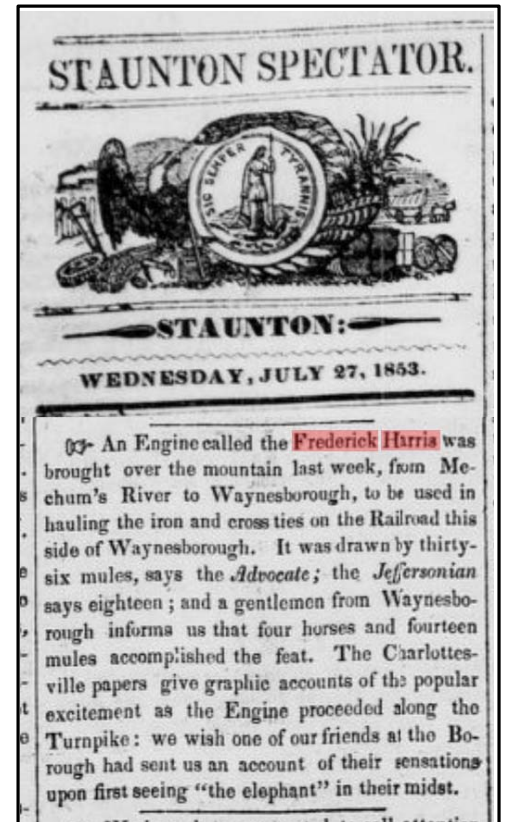
As this maneuver was taking place, roughly half the team was pulling the wagons while the other half was maintaining chain alignment. So as we started with an estimated pulling power of 40 tons, this diminished to 20 tons as

we curved and climbed the mountain, but still adequate for the *Frederick Harris*⁷

Of course climbing the mountain was only half the task. On both the front wagon and rear wagon, heavy braking blocks fulcrumed by large levers were applied on the descent. Everything relied on the muscle of the driver and his assistants in setting and bracing the brakes. But as with the ascent, the descent passed without error or tragedy.



The Richmond Daily Dispatch of July 23rd 1853 described the event.



The Staunton Spectator of July 27th 1853 described the feat.

In Waynesborough, the task of preparing for the arrival of the locomotive had begun with the construction of track near Ohio Street. Richardson and Co. had gathered ties, plates, rails and joiners and built a siding to serve as the railhead. Missing was the A framed timber lift used at Mechum's River, but a similar it not the identical was erected and used to hoist the locomotive and tender upon new rails.

With the locomotive placed upon the rails and the tender coupled and

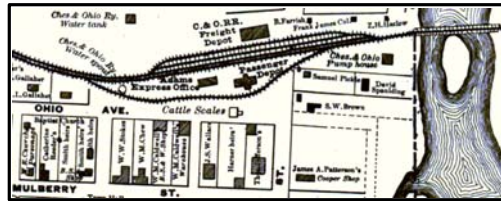


Fatal Railroad Accident!
We are called upon by a resident of Waynesborough to record the first Railroad casualty in Augusta county. On Wednesday last the arrival of the Locomotive in Waynesborough created, as might have been expected, an unusual excitement in that usually quiet village. The Engine was placed upon the track, and remained blowing off steam for some time before starting. This strange noise attracted together perhaps the entire population of the place, and when the Engine started the excitement became intense. The outside of the crowd pressed heedlessly upon those standing close to the track, and ceased not until they actually forced under the crushing wheels of the Locomotive an unfortunate individual, a favorite dog of the corporation, and the poor fellow was instantly and cruelly killed. "A bad beginning makes a good ending," and as this is the first, we hope it may be the last and the worst accident ever to happen in Augusta. An investigation proved, as usual, that "no one was to blame." The misfortune is attributed solely to the inexperience of the sufferer himself, who seemed altogether ignorant of the dangerous character of the object of so much public curiosity; he had so frequently gone out with the other citizens to see the arrival of Elephants, Stages, &c., that he had become quite too careless for such an occasion. We trust the sad lesson may not be lost. Alas poor TRAY!!!

The Staunton Spectator of August 3rd, 1853 described the first movement of the locomotive.

connected by hoses for water, the boiler of the locomotive and tender were replenished with water and small wood fire built inside the firebox of the locomotive.

On Wednesday July 27th, 1853, the boiler warmed and creating sufficient steam, the valve gear set forward, the cylinder cocks opened, the brakes released, and the throttle slightly opened... to produce a hiss from the cylinder as steam and water escaped, and then a second hiss from the cylinder as steam and water escaped, and slowly the machine crept forward, and repeated it's exhaust, yielding to stop on the short length of track.



Extract of map from Atlas of Augusta County by Jediah Hotchkiss showing curved team track between Ohio street and the second station of 1873.

As the news paper account describes, the crowd had overwhelmed the area, and in the mix, a poor dog, was shuffled beneath the locomotive and unfortunately injured and died of it's injury.

But the event marked an important occasion. It had taken the Louisa Railroad three and a half years since letting the contract for the first track section from Waynesboro on December 27th, 1849, and now as of July 27th, 1853, the first steam locomotive had powered itself on rails a short distance near Ohio Street demonstrating that a railroad was being built.

The little Fredrick Harris would soon be put to work pushing the ties, plates, rails and joiners need to extend the line on the freshly prepared roadbed west. Already the grading had been let beyond Staunton and the critical bridges near Christian's Creek and Staunton under construction.

But fate would menace and delay the construction of the tunnel and forecasts would estimate another four years of work to be done.

Something else would be needed to haul all the heavy rail supplies over the mountain, something better than thttwenty mule teams and wagons. What was needed, would be a railroad. And a decision would be made to build a temporary track across the mountain.

Due to space in this edition and desire to to have this a follow on article in our next issue, we will conclude here.

1. Annual Report to the Board of Public Works regarding the affairs of the Louisa Railroad and RF&P Railroad.
2. Charter of the Covington and Ohio Railroad and question of matching gauges
3. Grant charter to the Virginia Central and authorization to construct to the base of the Blue Ridge.
4. Google maps, illustrating the inverted U of track which remains to this day.
5. Mediation by The Board of Public Works to arbitrate extension of rates and terms.
6. Grant modifying charter authorizing extension to Richmond and non-compete clauses on passenger freight haulage.
7. Sketches of Death Valley and the Borax Deserts of the Pacific Coast, estimate of tonnage capacity per 20-mule team.



The Illustrations of Edward Beyer



Edward Beyer 1820-1865 born in Aachen Germany, emigrated to the United States in 1848 and emerged as painter and engraver of the American landscape. (Courtesy of the Valentine Museum of Richmond)

If you study history, and like visual illustrations, you'll soon learn that graphics were uncommon in early records of history.

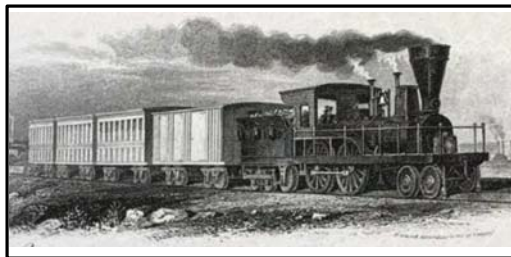
As Virginia experimented in building canals, turnpikes, and railroads; only a few witnesses had the talents of artistry to sketch these early beings, and few had the means to have them published. Newspapers, lacked wooden block sets except for circus insets that the advance promotional team carried. Books, occasionally had crudely carved graphics. The few illustrations of engravings were done in an artistic style as seen in Courier & Ives, color was mostly uncommon and unaffordable, particularly when such works were elaborate.



Currier & Ives, Co. about 1867

Unfortunately, color almost never showed up, partly due to the complexity of inking each color as a separate application. So historians struggle to imagine a world in color, particularly when viewing printed materials.

This illustration is very similar to the 1948 Norris Bros locomotive *Fredrick Harris* that served the Virginia Central. It is before "cowcatchers" mounted on the front pilot. The 'cab' literally a cabin, a crude afterthought to protect the crew from the weather. The illustration was engraved with the intent of being black on white.



Created by American Banknote Co Phila 1848

This illustration was used repeatedly as the vignette on railroad stock certificates. It must have been popular because other stock certificate companies copied it almost verbatim, adding shipping crates on the foreground, omitting the waterway in the background, and changing the village, etc.

More commonly, publishers of a newspaper bought a pre-fabricated block. Those commonly represent the trains viewed by the block cutter. So they could be from Philadelphia or anywhere else.

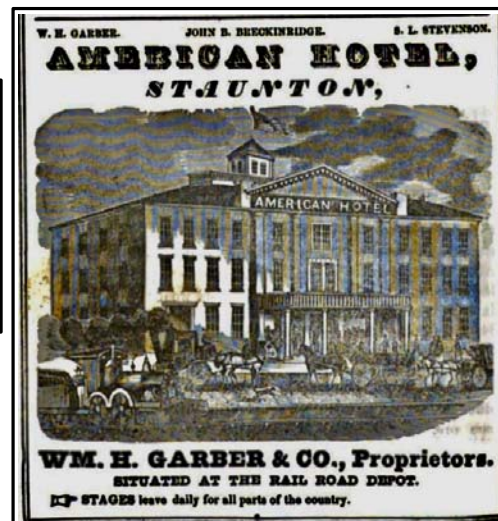


Virginia Central advertisement in the Staunton Spectator using wood blocks depicting a locomotive, freight wagon and passenger cars.

This block print set included Planet 0-4-0 locomotive, freight car, and two coaches. You can faintly see the misaligned blocks at the rail. But once you owned the set, you printed all railroad news below it as a column header. And from the period of 1837-

1848, the Richmond Fredericksburg & Potomac used English Stevenson Planet locomotives, so at that time it was reasonably accurate.

The American Hotel built in 1854 paid a small sum to have an artist carve a dedicated wood block. This advertisement featured the hotel and a Virginia Central locomotive. The building still stands in Staunton, and the likeness of the locomotive is very close the Norris Bros designs, perhaps exact.



The American Hotel and rail service began in Staunton in July of 1854. This woodblock cutting appeared in Virginia Central literature featuring descriptions of the journey along the railroad. (American Hotel advertisement, about 1871)

Unlike the Transcontinental railroad just after the Civil War, we don't have a volume of references depicting the Virginia Central Railroad and the Blue Ridge Railroad as it built the main tunnel benefit Afton Gap.

But in 1820, Edward Beyer was born near Dusseldorf Germany and after studying art at the Dusseldorf Academy he traveled to America in 1848. After visiting Philadelphia he traveled through Virginia and in the period 1856-1857 sketched a portfolio of images, which he had colorized in Germany and then sold in Virginia.

Evidently, Mrs Beyer assisted in the sales and marketing of these wares, customary calling upon the publishing desks of the newspapers as seen here in the Staunton Spectator of 1858 and 1859.

Album of Virginia.

One day last week we received an unexpected visit from our friend Mrs. **Beyer**, wife of Mr. Ed. **Beyer**, the artist. Mrs. **Beyer** is passing round distributing to subscribers the 3rd and 4th volumes of Mr. B's **Album** of Virginia. These volumes contain the following views: 1. Falling Springs, in Bath county, 2. Gamble's Hill, Richmond, 3. Bullard's Rock, on New River, in Giles county, 4. Weyer's Cave (four pictures), 5. Salt Sulphur Springs, in Monroe county, 6. Red Sulphur Springs, in Monroe county, 7. & 8. views from Salt Pond Mountain, in Giles, 9. United States Armory at Harper's Ferry, 10. Natural Bridge (a different view from that in the 1st vol.), 11. Kanawha Falls, in Fayette county, 12. Cheat River, on the Baltimore & Ohio R. R., 13. Greenbrier White Sulphur, 14. Fetter White Sulphur, 15. Hot Springs, in Bath, 16. Old Point Comfort.

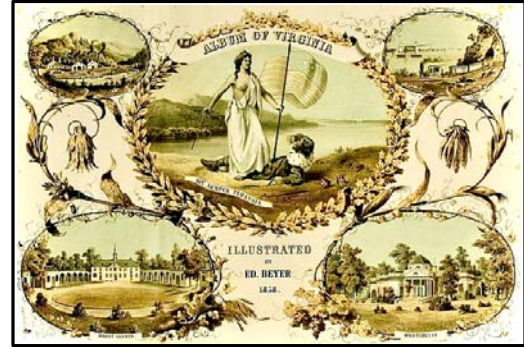
We hope that Mrs. **Beyer** will be successful in the sale of his work. It certainly deserve extensive patronage. The energy and skill which he has displayed in sketching and publishing these views of the Old Dominion, entitle him to the favor of every citizen of the State. His enterprise will doubtless have the effect of attracting visitors from abroad, and his sketches will be appreciated by every lover of the art or admirer of the grand works of nature. The present volumes are a decided improvement upon the first two.

Beyer's Album.

Mrs. **Beyer**, wife of the artist, was lately in this place delivering the 5th and last volume of the **Album** of Virginia. This volume contains nine engravings, including the title page, which is beautifully illustrated with drawings of Mt. Vermont, Monticello, the Arms of Virginia, &c.—The other engravings are two views from the Little Sewell Mountain, the James River Canal near the mouth of North River, a distant view of the Natural Bridge, a view of the Peaks of Otter, Roanoke Red Sulphur Springs, Red Sweet Springs, and the Warm Springs. The complete work of forty colored plates, bound in handsome style, is now ready for sale. The price for the bound volume is \$28; not bound \$24. Orders may be addressed to Edward **Beyer**, Richmond, or persons going to Richmond can procure copies from John H. Stecker, Bookbinder, Seventh Street, opposite the Theatre.

The work as completed is well worth the money asked for it, and every citizen of Virginia who can afford the expense should purchase a copy.

The album was handsomely bound in dark brown with gilded lettering imprinted of its cover. The inside illustrations enriched in colors.



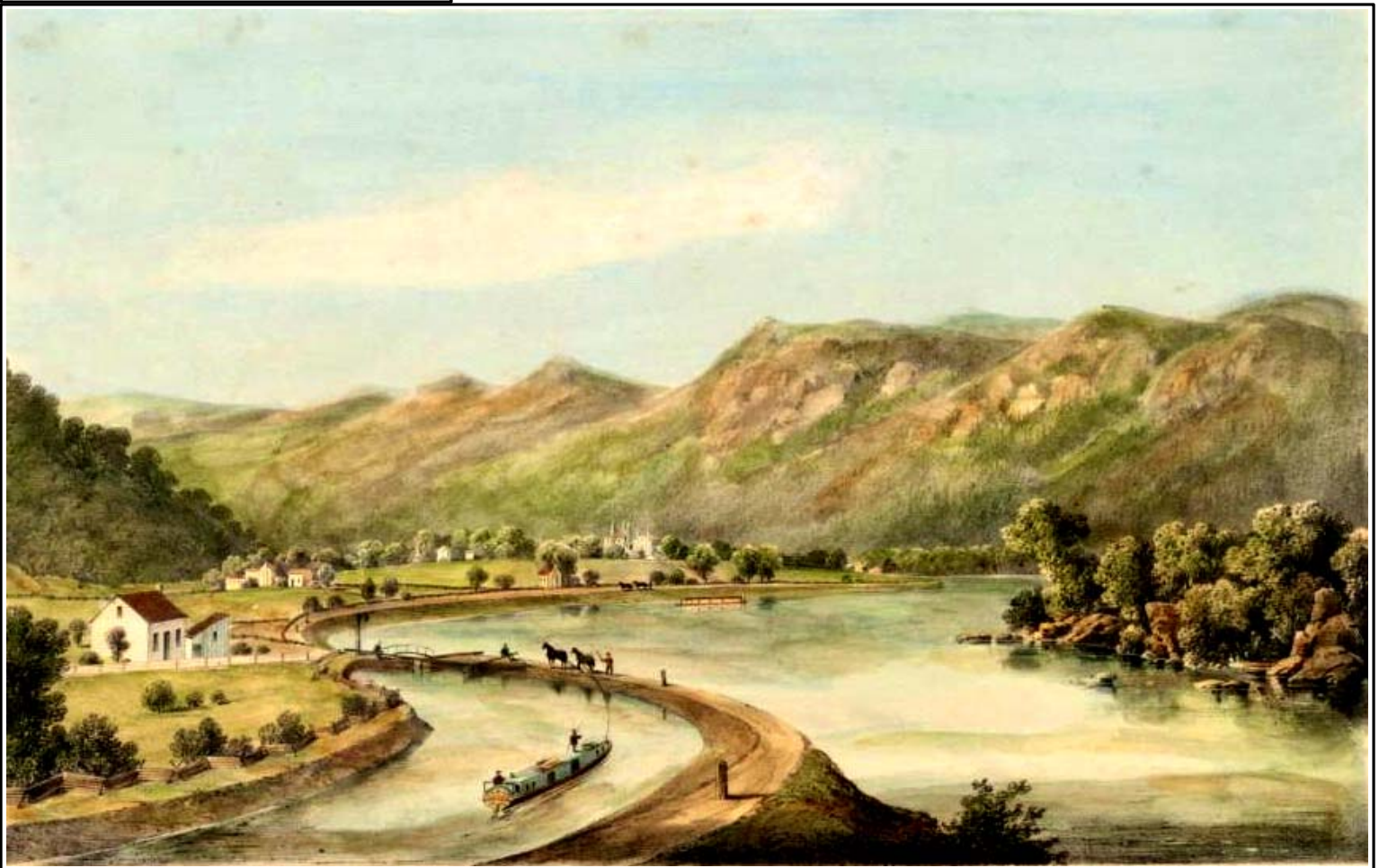
The inside cover page of the Album featured vignettes from across the State

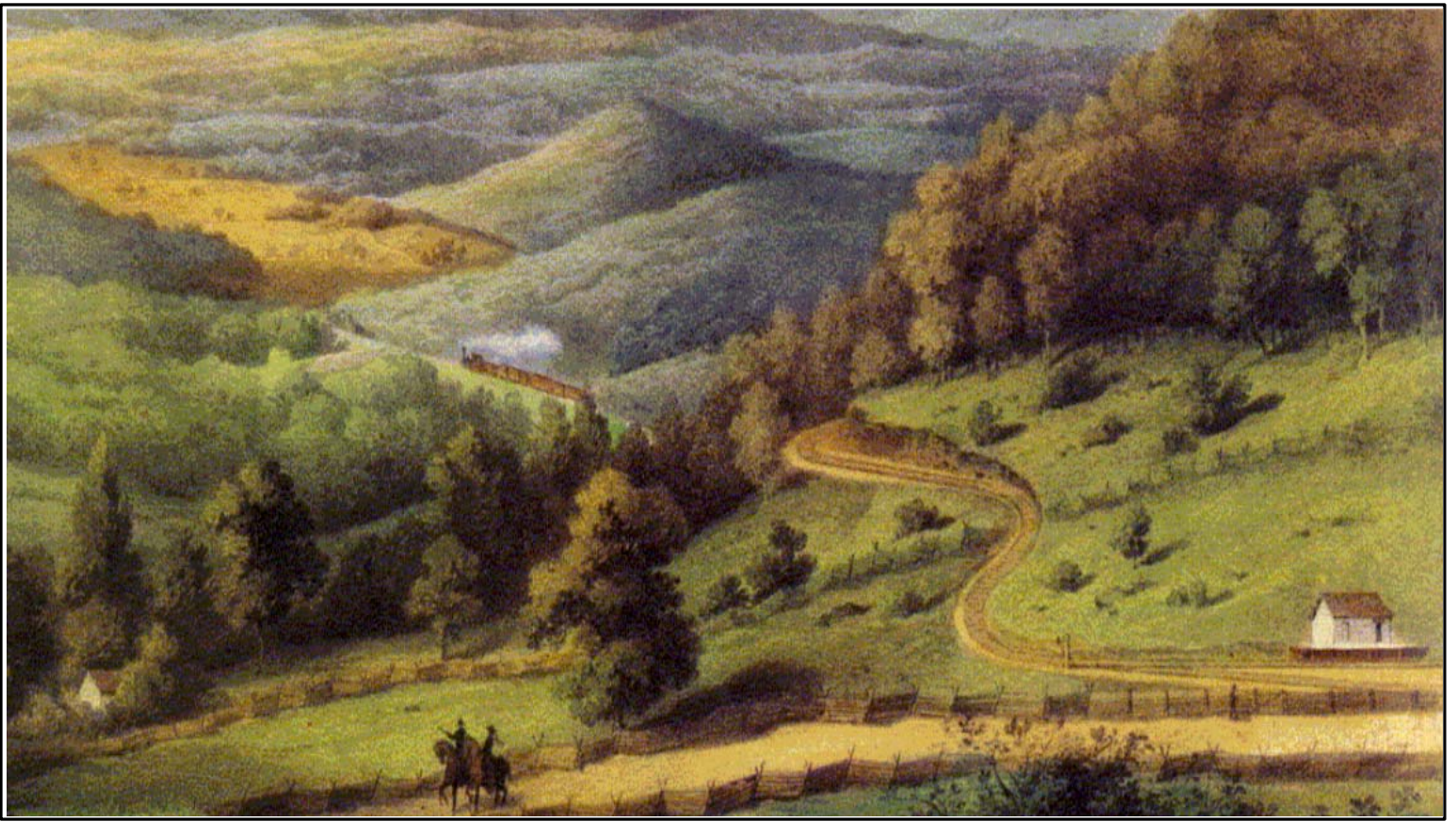
One volume featured the breathtaking vista of the James River canal at Glasgow where the James passes the Blue Ridge mountains.

The James River Canal near the mouth of North River. Edward Beyer captured the picturesque detail of the James River Canal System at the point it passes the Blue Ridge Mountains near Balcony Falls. The irony of the image is that roughly fifteen years later, the tow path would be converted to the Richmond and Allegheny Railroad.

Above - Evidently there were five Albums which featured the Virginia's. At \$28 dollars in 1859, the album was not cheap.

Left - News of Mrs. Beyer's visit to the local office of the Staunton Spectator and the offerings of the Albums for sale.





Rockfish Gap and the Mountain House

Further north, another volume illustrated the Virginia Central's passage of the Blue Ridge Mountains via the temporary Mountain Track atop Afton Gap. This crossing of the tracks and operation of the Mountain Top Track represented Augusta County's first railroad. Careful study shows the Mountain Top Track led the way for what is later the path of U.S. Route 250. The illustration was drawn one year prior to the Crozet bore

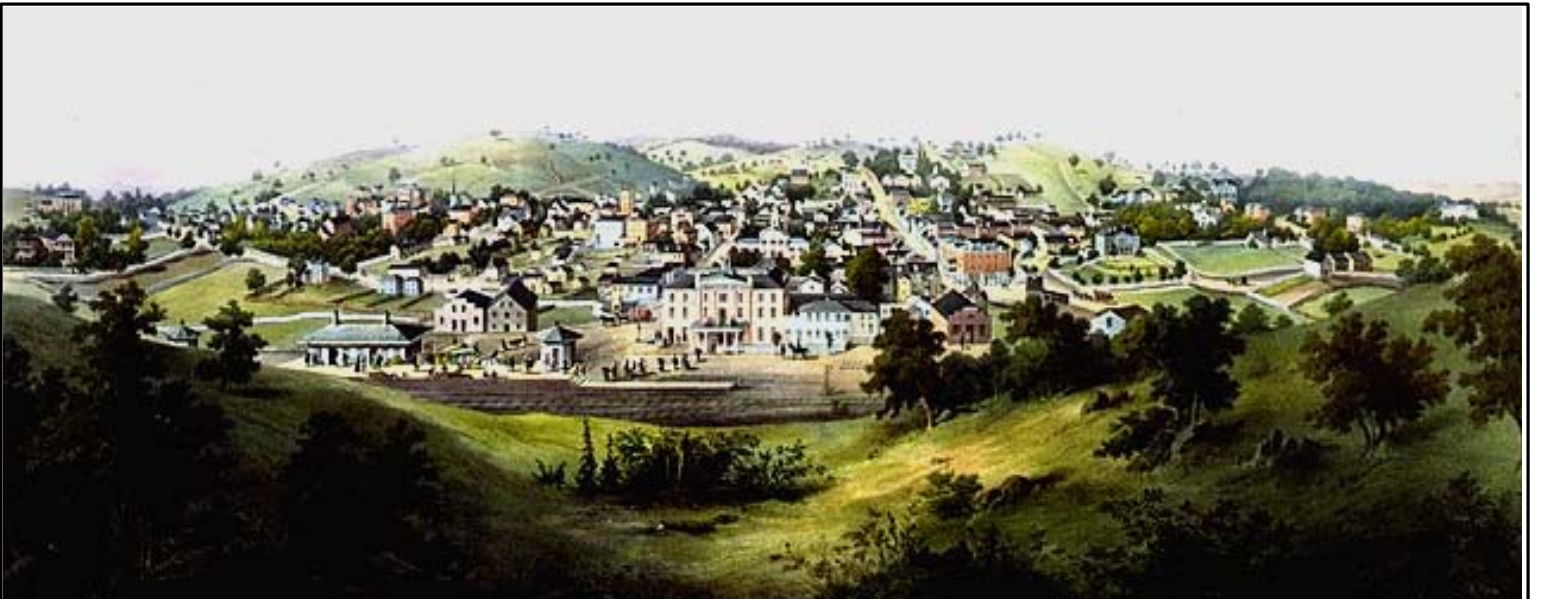
becoming operational which meant that from 1854-1858, trains traveled over the mountain rather than through it. Curiously, we see the smoke rises from the locomotive with express car and two coaches as it heads towards Waynesboro.

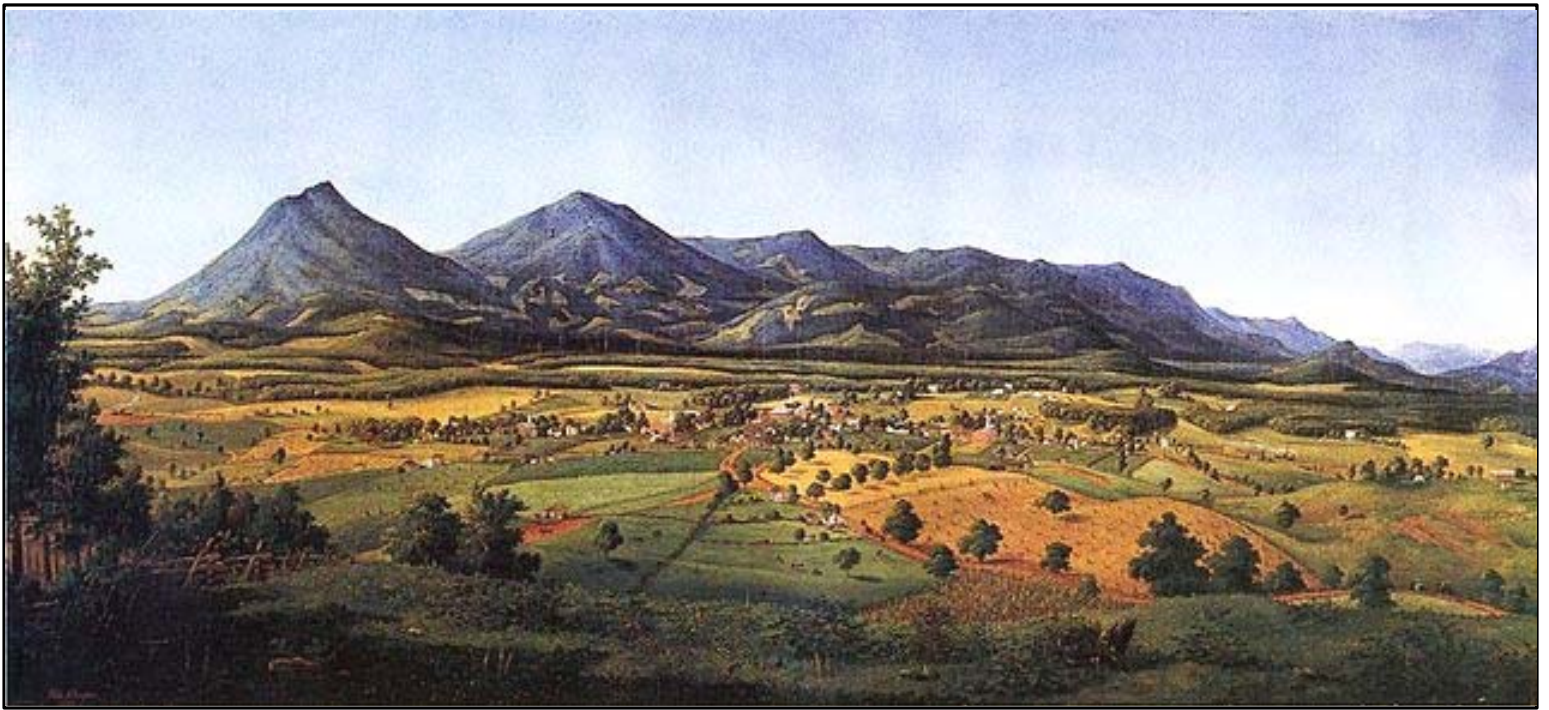
His illustration of Staunton Virginia looking north from Sears Hill provides details of the town's main structures including the train station and

America's Hotel. Both the train station and Hotel were built in 1854 for the arrival of the railroad. The hotel survived the American Civil War where as the station was set fire and rebuilt. Notable is the omission of some of Sears Hill, acknowledging some artistic license.

The mountain peaks, Peaks of Otter,

Staunton Va.





Peaks of Otter at Liberty Va.

near Bedford Virginia looking north west equally depicts a train westbound towards Salem along with its cars.

One of Beyer's most breathtaking

illustrations is the interior of Weyers Cave illuminated by torchlight. This illustration is unimaginably impressive when you acknowledge that block printing could not do it justice. It is equally heartening to see that early pioneers were as

adventurous as depicted.

All told roughly 40 illustrations filled each volume of the published work. Today, the album is quite scarce, and sought by historians and collectors. A

Weyers Cave Va.



few of the most noteworthy examples have been replicated on vinyl graphics materials for framing.

Other Beyer illustrations would be done across the United States as they can easily be found by internet search. It's only after minute study of the details in these works, that we really begin to appreciate everything they represent. Finely recorded and documented are records of signs, carriages, buildings, roads, houses, agricultural and commerce. Equally interesting is the colors, bright vivid colors, which delight our eyes, as we realize that the past wasn't just shades of gray.

PBS's Antiques Roadshow featured an 1854 painting of Charleston WV. by Edward Beyer, see the pbs.org website for the video segment, the painting appraised for insurance purposes at \$ 250,000.

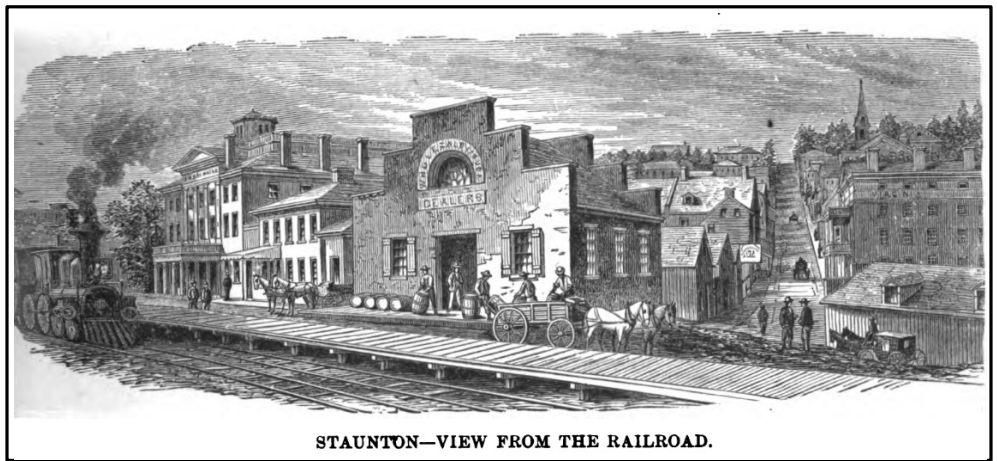
In comparison, Christies's auctioned the 1858 Album of Virginia on May 26, 2023 for \$16,380.

It would be many years later that local illustrations would appear in railroad guidebooks and for reasons of technique, printing costs, and fidelity of detail; they pale in comparison.

Around 1882 we see the C&O Railway depicted the tunnel on both sides, and downtown Staunton as well.

Photography would remain uncommon, and scarce in Staunton until the turn of the century. Thus we must thank the talents of illustrators like Edward Beyer, for recording our history in a medium that captured the era and spirit of that time.

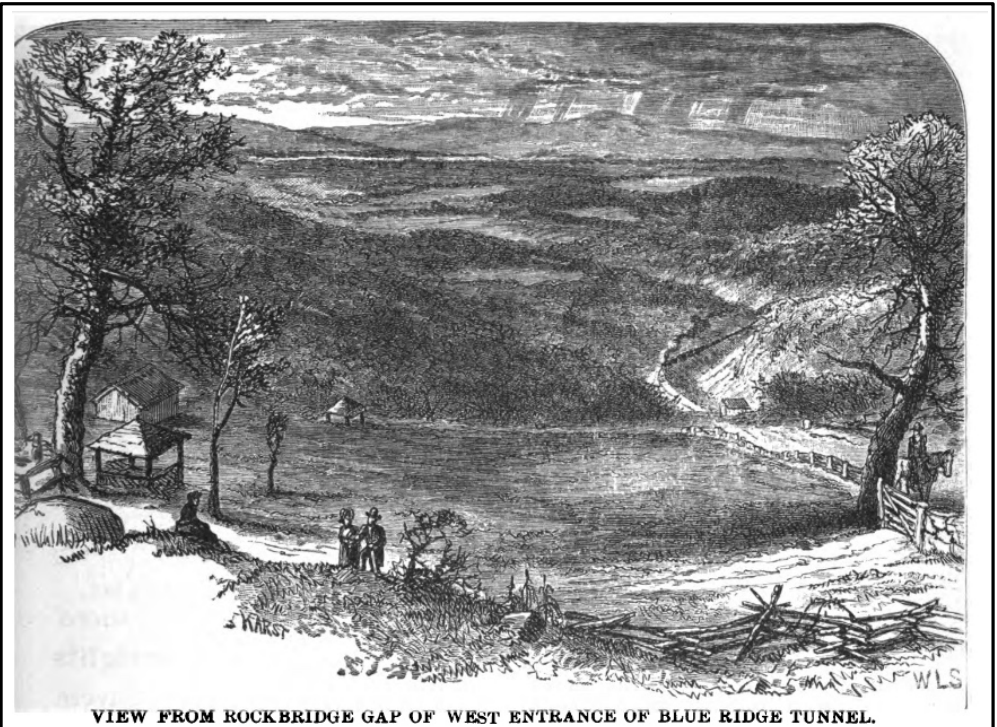
Above and Right - Three illustrations from *The Chesapeake and Ohio Directory, Containing and Illustrated History and Description of the Road*, J. Henry Chataigne Richmond Virginia, 1882



STAUNTON—VIEW FROM THE RAILROAD.



BLUE RIDGE TUNNEL, EAST ENTRANCE—OPENED TO TRAVEL IN 1858.



VIEW FROM ROCKBRIDGE GAP OF WEST ENTRANCE OF BLUE RIDGE TUNNEL.