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History of the Xerox Property

Land initially inhabited by Algonkian (Algonquin) Indians, the same tribe of Powhatan and Pochantas fame. Indians there during 17th century, gone by early 18th century; probably the remnants left for central Virginia to join others of that nation. Remnants of Indians on property in shape of mounds along Potomac. Indian names: Potomac (usually spelled Potowmack in colonial times) means great trading place; an alternate name, Cohongarooton, meaning River of Swans (in reality probably geese), the birds used by the Indians for ceremonial garb. Cokongoloto, the Indian word for Goose Creek, means smaller river of Swans. Only the word Potomac in use today.

Land on right bank (east) of Goose Creek initially granted by Thomas 6th Lord Fairfax, to Thomas Lee, 7,520 acres, in 1719. Lee later acting governor of Virginia, owner of more than 10,000 acres in present Loudoun, gave name to Town of Leesburg. Land on left bank Goose Creek, 285 acres, granted to Richard Lee in 1715. Thomas Lee at the time was resident agent (realtor) for the Fairfax family interests and often bought the tracts along major rivers or sold them to others of his family. Land along major rivers though to be the most valued--England a maritime society. Thomas Lee tried to impose his name upon Goose Creek, calling it Lee's Creek in his grants. When Robert 'King' Carter took over the resident agent's position in the 1720's he again used the Indian transliterati Goose Creek. That Lee had not accepted this change with good grace is evident in his 1749 will in which he calls the stream "Goose or Lee's Creek." The entire grant of Lord Fairfax, some 5.28 million acres, all land between the Potomac and Rapidan and Rappahannock Rivers and a line drawn between the head springs of the Potomac and Rapidan, called the Northern Neck of Virginia or Fairfax Proprietary.

By the late 1720's or early 1730' the Lees probably had an overseer on the land and slaves who farmed it in tobacco or corn. I can name all who lived on land from about 1749 through to present day--including first names of slaves, but this would take some time.

Could name most 18th-century residents, including first names of slaves, in a few days' time.

First description of property, other than in a deed (I have, incidentally, descriptions of these first grants hitherto mentioned, but there are no names other than those mentioned), on April 18, 1699: "About six miles ffarther [from Broad Run] came to another greate branch [Goose Creek] of about sixty or sentey yeards wide with a strong streeme making ffall with large stones, that caused our horses sometimes to be up to their Belleyes and sume times nott above their knees; so we conceave if a ffresh [freshet--flood] then nott ffordable." The writer was either Giles Vandercastel or Burr Harrison, emisaries sent by Virginia Governor Francis Nicholson to visit the Conoy Indians on a Potomac island to the northwest.

In 1712, Baron Christopher de Graffenried, a Swiss adventurer, crossed over the property, again visiting the Conoy Indians, and though he did not mention the Xerox tract in his notes, he placed on the map accompanying his journals "R. de Hiccari" at the fork of Goose Creek and the Potomac, with this notation, translated from the original French: "There is in Winter such a prodigious number of swans, geese and ducks on this river from Canavest [his name for the Conoy village--just east of Point of Rocks] to the Falls [Great Falls] that the Indians make a trade of their feathers." Franz Louis Michel, a member of the same Swiss syndacite as de Graffenreid, drew a 1707 map of the Potomac with no writing on the map, but again with the drawing of a bird near the confluence of the Potomac and Goose Creek.

DeGraffenried was looking for precious metals in his travels as there had been rumors of silver found in the area. He did not find the mine on the Xerox property, but undoubtedly came within yards of it. This early enterprise was initially described on March 29, 1775, by Nicholas Cresswell, a Britisher staying in Loudoun County: "Went to look at a silver mine. Saw some appearance of metal, but don't know what it is." Stephen Donaldson and other Leesburg silversmiths of that period used silver. Some can be seen at Loudoun Museum, Leesburg.

No mention of mine in early 19th century, simply "farm on Goose Creek" in deeds or sometimes "the Goshen Tract." Goshen a Hebrew word--the area between the Nile Delta and present Suez Canal where Israelites were settled (see Genesis 45:10, 46:34, 47:4), word in U. S. became synonymous for idyllic farm because in Exodus 8:22, 9:26 there were no plagues, hail, in Goshen. There was a short-lived Goshen Post Office in Loudoun (about twelve miles from Xerox tract), not related to above tract, in early 19th century, and there still is a Goshen Farm near the old post. Few know of the post office.

Loudoun geographer Yardley Taylor wrote of the geology of the area about the silver mine in his "Memoir of Loudon" [sic] in 1853: "A bed of micaceous iron ore is met with on Goose Creek, below the Leesburg Turnpike road. This ore is magnetic and believed to be very rich. Copper ore is associated with this ore, and a copper mine has been opened here that promises to be valuable, and is now actively worked." Four years before the California Gold Rush had begun, and the region around the silver mine and copper mine--they may have been the same mine--began to be called California, and the public road in the area is still called California Road.

To continue with the mine's history, there was a general awakening to Virginia's mineral resources after the Civil War, and mine owner Robert Harper (in Who's Who of the time, trustee of Riggs Bank and wealthy man, lived at Caradoc Hall, now the motel west of Goose Creek on Rt. 7) sold the mine and fifty-seven acres to Millard P. Vincent, secretary of the newly formed Eagle Mining Company. The eagle graced most U. S. coins of the period. The price was $2,865, indicating that the mine had been worked and had potential, for normally the price would not have exceeded $1,200. The deed specified the inclusion of "mines, minerals, dips, spurs, angles."

In a year, 1884, the mine was cited in The Virginias, a magazine promoting the state's mineral wealth, as editor Jedediah Hotchkiss printed a letter from general manager Frank N. Wise to president Peter Wise: "From vein I have taken a considerable quantity of the richest carbonate ore found in this or any other country showing by actual and reliable tests from 20 to 80 percent in copper and 20 ounces of silver to the ton . . . I am working a force of 6 men a day shift of 10 hours and making good progress."

During this period the main shaft was ninety feet deep, recalled the last-remembered miner, Fred Miller, an ex-Goose Creek and Chesapeake and Ohio Canal boatman. Miller believed that the mine's underlying granite spelled out costly digging, and the expected gain of copper and silver could not justify large-scale operations. The 1893 edition of "Virginia - A Hand-Book," notes that among the county's extensive minerals wealth were copper and silver.

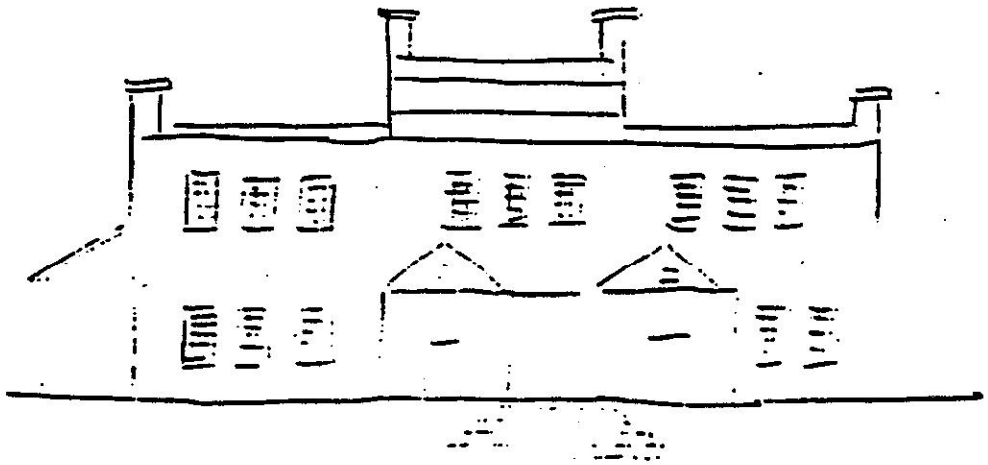
The Eagle Mine made money for the Vin ents, Wises, and stockholders when it was sold in October, 1908, to John Guthrie Hopkins (another Who's Who man) of Greenwich, Connecticut. The price for the fifty-seven acres was $40,000, and the deed specified "buildings, shafts, mines." Hopkins undoubtedly was interested in the Eagle Mine because he had made his fortune mining copper in the west.

During the same period another mining baron, William Morris Stewart, Nevada's "Silver Senator," who lived at nearby Ashburn Farm, bought the entire 1,841 acres of the old Lee tract east of Goose Creek, hoping that the veins of precious metals would extend across the creek. Stewart's mining engineers specifically looked at a granite outcrop within view of Goose Creek a few hundred yards up-creek. Evidently they were discouraged, because Stewart's Ashburn Company sold out to James D. Yeomans in 1904. During the Depression of the early thirties the mine's shafts and recesses housed a well-known still. The mining area and closed-in shafts and pits are readily visible a few yards from the left bank of Little Cattail Run.

Returning to the main tract, Thomas Lee's 1749 will specified that second son Thomas Ludwell Lee was to receive 4,700 acres--"the remainder of all my lands between Goose or Lee's Creek and Broad Run. Joining to the lands I have given to my first son [Ludwell Lee]." Also, Thomas Ludwell Lee would be given "fifty Negroes above the age of ten years which are now on the lands I have given to him." Thus the land was a working plantation. During this time Thomas Ludwell Lee lived at Bellevue in Stafford County--absentee landlords were the rule for the large plantations of eastern Loudoun. Upon

Thomas Ludwell Lee inherited the plantation and he chose the name Coton sometime in the late eighteenth century, after Coton Hall, County Salap, Shropshire, England, ancestral home of the Virginia Lee family.

Thomas Ludwell Lee married Fanny Carter in 1786; she was sixteen, and was the daughter of Robert F. Carter of Sabine Hall, of the Tidewater, and by 1795 they were living at Coton, for Lee's uncle, Francis Lightfoot Lee, in his will left lots in the 'ghost town' of Matildaville"to my nephew Thomas Ludwell Lee of Loudoun County." By April, 1803, Mutual Assurance Folicies indicate he was living in a two-story frame building, 24 by 32 feet, and the ploicy indicates the still-standing stone kitchen-laundry and stone meat house were then part of his complex. By December of 1803 a second Mutual Assurance Policy shows that a new dwelling, 24 by 96 feet, was his residence, and a sketch (below) of this Coton mansion appears on the policy:



Thomas Ludwell Lee died in 1807 leaving a thirty-six-year-old widow and eleven children. She was forced to sell her two mill properties in 1812 and 1818 because her late husband had secured a note which had not been paid, and a suit was brought against his estate for the unpaid note.

Her daughter, Sally McCarty Lee (Pleasants), in her reminscences, published in 1916, recalled that her mother was still residing at Coton in 1814, when the British burned Washington, and "watched from the upper windows of Coton the flames of the

burning Capitol fired by the British." She also describes the American army passing by: "She rushed to the door to welcome them. They had been defeated at Bladensburg and were in full retreat; but had time to stop for hot corncakes and the mugs of steaming coffee which the cooks dispensed. The officers--lucky fellows--breakfasted on fried chicken and batter bread and honey served on the old Canton china."

In 1819 Fanny Lee employed an agent, William Brent, to lease part of the Coton tract, and Mr. Brent entered into a five-year lease with James Hook of Frederick County, Maryland, for the Coton mansion and 941 acres. Evidently Mrs. Lee still lived at the mansion because the house and lot around it was to be reserved for the owner. She evidently came upon hard times in 1824 because the Mutual Assurance Company of Leesburg filed suit against her and the heirs of Thomas Ludwell Lee for non-payment of insurance on some of the Coton buildings. She testified that some buildings had been torn down, others sold, and paid the insurance on the mansion, office, kitchen-laundry, and meat house.

"The Nation's Guest," the Marquis de Lafayette, made his farewell visit to America in 1825, and during his stay of about a week in Loudoun was feted at Belmont, the plantation across Route 7 (now IBM) by Ludwell Lee, the marquis' aide-de-camp during the Revolution. Sally McCarty Pleasants recalled that the slaves of both Coton and Belmont lined the lanes between the two manor houses, and held lanterns so the guests could see their way to each celebration--neither house was large enough to hold all the guests.

In 1852 the Superior Court of Richmond sold the Lee heirs' Coton property in two tracts. What became known as West Coton, or the bulk of the Xerox property, went to Robert Bentley, 800 acres for $9,640. What became known as East Coton was sold to George Kephart, then the owner of Belmont, 988 acres for $4,816.15. As the average price for unimproved farm land was about twenty dollars an acre, the above amounts indicate that the Coton mansion of Thomas Ludwell Lee still stood. Robert Bentley deeded the West Coton tract to his two sons, Robert Bentley, Jr., and Edgar L. Bentley, and as Robert, Jr., was living at Rokeby, south of Leesburg, Edgar Bentley may have lived at Coton, when he deeded the tract to Gustavus Lersner in 1868. Sometime during mid-century the Coton mansion apparently burned; no mention of it is made in

the various transfers, and the prices do not give a clear indication of what might have happened to the mansion. Lee family lore states (in a letter of 1922) that the manor house was "burnt down or pulled down by the Yankees," if so, probably during the time of the nearby battles at Edwards' Ferry and Ball's Bluff in the fall of 1861.

During Edward Bentley's and Gustavus Lersner's tenure at Coton, part of the tract, adjoining Goose Creek and present Route 7, was known as the Wilson Farm. On this tract in the early 1930's the Warner Sniders built a stone house taken down with the building of the second lane of Route 7 a few years ago. Fred Dove, the farm manager for John Hopkins, built the present frame wing atop the foundation of Coton manor's east wing about 1895. His family lived in this house.

Of other names associated with the farming aspect, Belmont Ridge is the name of the ridge going through the property; on it the present Xerox complex and the old Coton houses stand. Before the advent of the telegraph (1844), Belmont Ridge was one of a series of many ridges and hills that were used as communications points to bring news from Washington. Smoke signals were used to indicate who was the new president, and in two days the news would have reached the Mississippi River. During the Civil War the ridge was also used as a signal outpost.

Present Route 7 was originally known as The Great Road from its beginnings, ca. 1740, and within a few years, before 1748, the road was generally called the Vestal's Gap Road, as a W. Vestal, and later, John Vestal, owned land at the Blue Ridge Gap (today where Route 9 crosses the Blue Ridge) and had the ferry franchise across the Shenandoah River. This road was the main colonial way between Alexandria and Winchester--among the four largest cities in Virginia--in the late 18th century. The road became a toll road in 1809, and was known as the Leesburg to Georgetown Turnpike; people generally used the name Leesburg Turnpike or Leesburg Pike--the latter the common name today. The official name for the road, since the early 1970's is Harry Flood Byrd Highway, named for the late U. S. Senator

from Berryville, who took the road from Rosemont, his home near the town, to the capital. Few use the name.

Tolls came off the road after the Civil War, but were reinstated in 1911 when a Good Roads Association was formed by prominent county businessmen to macadam (lay rock) the road. These tolls remained until 1924; the road was paved in 1930.

At the village of Mahala--a popular girl's name--from the Hebrew Mahalah, meaning illness, there was a post office from 1898-1906, a small store and blacksmith shop (all across the road from Xerox at the intersection of Rt. 641 to Ashburn. This settlement was called Frankville, probably for a Frank family--tenants--and is commonly called Ashburn Junction today.

An intrepid lady by the name of Tillie Downs was the tollkeeper in the 1911-1924 years, and there was a wooden pole across the road from Mrs. Downs' home (again on the south side of the pike), which was apinted red and was called "The Red House," as it was the one red building in the neighborhood. I mention this because in the thirties this building was moved onto the Xerox tract where it stood until about 1980. Tolls were then three cents for a horse, six cents for a wagon, and thirty cents for an auto, and Mrs. Downs is remembered because she could hear an auto a mile off, and always strode to the center of the road, before the lowered gate, with hands on hips, waiting for the auto to arrive. Ned and Evelyn McLean (owner of the Hope Diamond) were then living at Belmont, and were good friends of President Warren G. Harding. When Harding's two-car motorcade first came down the pike, in one of his many visits to Belmont, Tillie Downs was at her usual spot, and when the first car, occupied by the secret service, stopped, she strode over to the driver and asked for the toll. He smiled and told her to see who was in the second car. She went over and looked, came back to the secret service man, and said that she was not paid to recognize the occupants of cars, but only to collect tolls--could she have her sixty cents please. She hadn't the slightest idea of what Harding looked like, and always collected the sixty cents from the president's entourage.

There was a ferry on the Xerox property called Edwards' Ferry, named for Benjamin Edwards who rented landed there in the late 18th century. The Virginia legislature authorized this ferry in October, 1791, and it shortly became an important east-west crossing place for migrants to the new public lands in Kentucky and Tennessee. The land was flat, and Leesburg, just four miles away, was a good place to halt for the night. Ben Edwards may have been operating the ferry as early as the 1750's or 1760's for he owned several parcels in and about Leesburg during that time. He had also owned the Edwards tract at the left (west) bank of Goose Creek and its confluence with the Potomac (the old Richard Lee grant) since Loudoun's formation in 1757. Running through the Edwards tract is a stream called Cattail Branch, a name in use by the 1750's; the branch was named for the tall marsh plant, locally called cat-o-nine tails. An ordinary called Cattail Ordinary or The Cattail stood off the Xerox property, about two miles from the ferry on Edwards' Ferry Road leading to Leesburg.

Ben Edwards died in 1803 and his wife, Elizabeth, and son, Philip, took over the management of the ferry, which remained in the family through the first half of the 19th century. The ferry was a skiff ferry which landed at both banks of Goose Creek depending on one's directional preference. A rope tied to a tree or post spanned the Potomac, and the ferryman kept the rope under his arm so the currents would not take the skiff awry. By the early 1850's Daniel G. Smith, a large landowner on the Loudoun side, appears to have taken over the ferry franchise, but it was still--and still is--known as Edwards' Ferry.

Five battles or skirmishes, all named Edwards' Ferry, took place during the Civil War. The major action was usually on the Maryland side because that's where a town of Edwards' Ferry was, along with Lock 25 of the Chesapeake & Ohio Canal, put through that section in 1829. Confederates guarding Leesburg in fall of 1861 felt that Union troops trying to take the town would come via Edwards' Ferry because of the flat approach to town. On the eve of October 20th Union batteries opened up from the Maryland shore and there were several feints in the crossings of Minnesota troops to the ferry's shores; but the troops were recalled within a half hour. The Union

troops were trying to dislodge Confederate Col. Nathan George Evans--known as 'Shanks' because his "thinnest members received stoutest acclaim." Colonel Evans had set up a number of fortifications (yet visible) at the ferry and along Edwards' Ferry Road. The main fortified position (off the Xerox property) was called Fort Evans (hence today's Fort Evans Road). The main Federal attack came on October 21, some three miles northwest, at Ball's Bluff, but was not successful.

During these fall, 1861, actions, the several tobacco and storage warehouses and small houses standing at and near the ferry on the Loudoun side (all on the Xerox property) were probably destroyed. Some were rebuilt after the war, but are again in ruins.

On December 14, 1861, Thaddeus Sobieski Coulincourt Lowe, chief of the fledgling aeronautic section of the U. S. Army, in one of the first military balloon flights, took Gen. Charles Pomeroy Stone, who had commanded the unsuccessful Ball's Bluff expedition, several hundreds of feet above the Potomac and Edwards' Ferry to observe happenings in Leesburg. The hot-air balloon, moored on the Maryland side, was called the Intrepid. It went up again on the 20th and 25th, but then something happened to the balloon.

Some of the old fields by Goose Creek and the Potomac had names. The field just east of the ferry was known as Ferry Field, the field to the west of the ferry, Creek Field, the field along Goose Creek southwest of the ferry, Canal field. Fields east of Ferry Field along the Potomac were called the Indian Fields because of the Indian mounds there.

No other names are connected with this phase of the Civil War, but I mention that in June, 1863, when all roads led to Gettysburg, twin pontoon bridges, one from the left bank of Goose Creek, one from the right bank, carried some 100,000 men of the Army of The Potomac across to the Maryland side of Edwards' Ferry. There are several photographs and some artists' engravings of this operation and others near and at the ferry.

Shortly after the war, Col. Elijah Viers White, an ex-Confederate officer of considerable local fame, owned the ferry franchise, and

the store and warehouses on the Maryland side. His ferryman through to the late years of the 19th century was an old Negro by the name of Harper, who people called 'Old Harper.' When you wanted the ferry to come to your side you cupped your hands around the mouth and yelled, "Harper, come across with the boat." Old Harper came and charged twenty-five cents, one way. Many a Marylander would come across on horseback, on way to woo a Leesburg belle. They would slip Old Harper an extra quarter so he'd be sure to be there when the evening's courting had finished.

By 1887, Old Harper couldn't manage the pole any longer, and Colonel White decided to phase out the ferry. He had previously built a large warehouse on the Loudoun side of White's Ferry, some five miles to the northwest, and as north-south travel had declined, did not see the need for two ferries. A bridge at Point of Rocks on the Potomac was built in 1849, destroyed during the war, but had been rebuilt by the early 1890's.

Old Harper's skiff was still moored at the ferry, and about 1900, Sam Jarboe--sister of Moselle Jarboe, who ran the store on the Maryland side--started running the ferry again. The crossing price was now a dollar a boatload. He poled the skiff until about 1915; the ferry was called Edwards' to the end.

Sam Jarboe also ran a two-horse and wagon taxi service from the right bank of Goose Creek to the railroad station at Ashburn. There he'd pick up passengers on the Southern Railway and would take them for fish and picnic at the ferry site, and hope they would take the ride across the Potomac. This area of the Potomac was always a prime fishing site. At the right bank (on Xerox) one can still see the remains of a stone stable and shelter (probably pre-Civil War) used by Jarboe to shelter his horses and jitney. Both public roads to Edwards' Ferry, from Leesburg (Edwards' Ferry Road) and from the pike through Xerox, often called the Belmont Ridge Road, were closed in the late 1920's.

The other important happenings at the Xerox property concern the mills along Goose Creek and the Goose Creek Canal.

The first mention of the downstream mill on the Goose came April 10, 1793, when Thomas Ludwell Lee (Jr.), owner of the Coton tract, was allowed to erect a "Water Grist Mill" by the Loudoun County

Court. The stone mill was valued at $8,000 in 1806, a nearby stone distillery at $800--Coton Hall, the Lee mansion, was valued at $6,480 These figures represented eighty percent of the actual value. In 180 Ludwell Lee, Thomas Ludwell Lee's cousin, bought 232 acres across Goose Creek (on the west side, on Xerox) for 1,277 Pounds, the steep price reflecting the manufacturing complex and increased traffic because of Ben Edwards' Ferry. This, again, was the Goshen Tract, and was described in the deed as "a little below the old red rocks ford & a little above a cliff of red rocks hanging over Goose Creek." Of interest, the new regional park between Leesburg and Edwards' Ferry is called Red Rocks Park.

At the brick house at the mill village lived Dr. Stephen Cooke and wife Catherine Esten Cooke, of the prominent Virginia Cooke family. The husband practiced in Leesburg and was a fairly prolific writer on medical subjects during the period. Their son, Philip St. George Cooke, was born at the house in 1809 (the chimney still stands and the outlines of the home are above ground). Cooke, who joined the army and travelled widely in the West. His autobiographical Scenes and Adventures in the Army became a classic and his second book, Cavalry Tactics, became the standard text for the U. S. Army Cavalry Corps. While stationed in Kansas in 1855, Cooke's daughter, Flora, married the famed Jeb Stuart, then a lieutenant. His son, John R. Cooke, became a Confederate General, and his nephew was the romantic novelist and Confederate propagandist John Esten Cooke. Cooke the elder did not follow the family, however, and became a brigadier general in the Union Army. His final work, The Conquest of New Mexico and California (1878), was an outstanding historical narrative. He died in 1895.

Fanny Carter Lee, her husband Thomas Ludwell Lee dead and with a heavy mortgage to pay,, sold the mill tract and buildings, fifty-one acres in all, to Samuel Clapham for $7,000. In the non-payment suit brought by the Mutual Assurance Society of Richmond, Fanny Lee mention the selling of the mill, "subsequently pulled down," and the demise of the distillery, "pulled down some seven or eight years ago." Samuel Clapham probably took down the mill in order to build a new brick mill based on the conveyor-belt principles of Oliver Evans, the Ellicott City, Maryland, miller, who was revolutionizing the milling

industry at that time. The new mill was named Elizabeth Mills in honor of Clapham's wife. Elizabeth, incidentally, was by far the most popular women's name in Virginia at that time, the cue taken from Elizabeth I, Queen of England and Ireland and a renaissance woman. The plural 'mills,' rather than mill was used as there were several burrs or millstones, each used for grinding different grains.

In April, 1828, Elizabeth Clapham placed this ad in The Genius of Liberty, a Leesburg newspaper: "To Millers, Farmers, Mechanics, and enterprising men of every description--Look Here!" The ad continued by describing the mill as "four stories high, built of brick . . . Its contiguity to the Potomac renders it one of the most convenient situations for the reception of grain, and furnishes the greatest facility of transportation to market, of any establishment in this part of the country."

By 1833 boats laden with ground grain and cut timber plied down Goose Creek from the mill, across the Potomac, and into the new completed outlet lock on the Potomac downriver from Edwards' Ferry on the Maryland side (and still intact). This outlet lock connected the river to the Chesapeake & Ohio Canal. It took eight hours for produce to reach Washington.

The Claphams sold Elizabeth Mills in 1834 to John P. Smart, and in 1841, Daniel B. Kincheloe and others, trustees for Smart, sold the mill--for the first time in a deed called Elizabeth Mills--to George Kephart for $3,505.

Kephart had himself a bargain, for by 1850 a mile-long canal with double outlet locks (still intact) was complete from Kephart's mill pond, to Goose Creek, emptying into the creek about a mile from the Potomac. The canal bypassed the mill dam and rapids by the mill so produce could be transported from up-creek across the Potomac and to Washington and Alexandria. The canal and locks were the first structures built by the Goose Creek and Little River Navigation Company, chartered by the State of Virginia in 1832. The stonework ranks with the best of the period, and as the canal boats measured 11 by 42 feet, the locks were slightly larger than that size. In the creek they were poled, and in the canal they were pulled by mule

By 1852 the canal extended seven miles up-creek, with bypass canals around two other mills (not on Xerox). By 1857 the canal bypassed nine sets of rapids and mill dams--there actually were nine

Mills

canals, the one around Kephart's Mill the longest, and other shallow sections of Goose Creek were dredged. While the canal company went broke that year the canals were in use through to the Civil War, and appeared on the 1883 H. H. Hardesty Map of Loudoun County. Some may have been in use at that late date, but the responsibility of upkeep was with the mill owner, not the canal company--which had been dissolved.

A sidelight: The canal company's contractor, in order to receive final payment, had to prove the various canals and the creek navigable. It had been a dry year, and to satisfy terms of the contract the contractor had slaves nearly pull a canal boat through the waters and canals to the mill pond at Evergreen Mills. A canal boat, sunken but visible in very low water, still rests in that mill pond.

In the early or mid-1850's a stone bridge was constructed across Goose Creek just north of the mill at the village of Elizabeth Mills. This was at the site of the old Red Rocks Ford, and the road took off from the pike at the eastern edge of the Xerox property, cut south of the Coton mansion and down to the creek. The road is still visible in most stretches.

The bridge was still standing in fall, 1861. The Leesburg Democratic Mirror reported that October 23: "Our pickets now extend a mile inward from Edwards' Ferry, and about the same distance from Goose Creek, occupying the bridge." Three days later a dispatch from Union Maj. Gen. Nathaniel Prentiss Banks notes: "When the 16th Indiana Regiment withdrew from the Virginia side, they brought with them two prisoners; the owner of the mill on Goose Creek [George Kephart], with his son, who, it was charged had prepared combustibles to fire the bridge over Goose Creek, but were prevented from carrying their plan into execution by the sudden descent upon the bridge by our skirmishers."

But Loudouners loyal to the South carried through the Kepharts' intent in about March 10 of next year, after Col. John W. Geary's forces had occupied Leesburg. The mill was burned at an unknown date by Northern soldiers, probably in retaliation for the bridge burning.

With the mill and bridge gone, the commissioners' sale of George Kephart's fifty-one-acre mill seat in July, 1868, noted: "This is the tract on which The Elizabeth Mills formerly stood and it is exceedingly

valuable. The water power is ample sufficiently to drive 4 pairs of 5 feet burrs. It has a right of way to the river and flour can be taken from the mill door to Georgetown and Alexandria for 17 cents per barrel. There is a good brick miller's house and other out buildings and is well adapted for all manufacturing purposes." There was no sale until March, 1874, when the mill site and fifty-one acres were sold to W. F. Chrisman for $1,500.

The last mention of the mill appears on a deed for a one-acre schoolhouse lot from Henry and Sarah Saunders, who owned the farm to the west of Xerox (west of Goose Creek) in 1875. The lot was located "on an old road leading from Elizabeth Mills to the turnpike."

In the summer of 1909 a second mill was built on the present Xerox property, and it and its dam still stands. Coton owner John Guthrie Hopkins had his farm manager, Fred Dove, Fred's brother, Julian Dove, and a team of men build the last water-powered mill in Loudoun County. This mill stands a half-mile up-creek from the old Elizabeth Mills site on Goose Creek. Hopkins had the mill built so he could water his animals and irrigate his crops; he wanted five cuttings of alfalfa a year. There was not enough well water. The dam extends 220 feet long across the creek and is about four feet high. There is a spillway on the west side to allow for the passage of fish migrating up-creek to spawn in the spring. The mill wheel was geared to a three-piston engine that pumped water 200 feet up the hill and more than a half mile. The mill stopped pumping about 1917, shortly after the Coton property was sold to Martin Snider.

Another early historic site along Goose Creek was at the present Route 7 bridges. As early as 1749 Fairfax County (of which Loudoun was a part until 1757) paid Thomas Evans 2,000 pounds of tobacco yearly to keep a ferry at the Vestal's Gap Road. The court order specified that the banks of the creek were "to be cut down to enable tobacco carts and wagons to reach shore."

By 1752 Edmund Sands took over the running of this ferry for the same salary, and for extra income ran an ordinary (inn) at his house by the creek (not located). By 1755, Henry Awbrey ran the ferry and ordinary for the same salary, and Capt. John Dalyrmple, who surveyed the 1755 edition of the Jefferson-Fry Map of Virginia noted "Avery Ford" at the crossing--a misspelling of Awbrey's name.

In 1756, John Moss, next pusher of the Goose Creek ferry, was paid only 1,200 pounds of tobacco, and did not run an ordinary. With the formation of Loudoun County next year, John Jenkins became the last known operator of the ferry, again for a stipend of 1,200 pounds of tobacco. The first court minutes of the new county indicate that Thomas Sorrell was to be the overseer of the road from "Goose Creek ferry to the run near Capt. Nicholas Minor's [now Leesburg].

By 1759 John Hough established a competing ferry, with an ordinary to boot, at his mill about a mile south of the Goose Creek Ferry, and by the eve of the American Revolution, this crossing, on the old Ox Road, had captured a lot of traffic. A court order of October, 1773, notes that the Goose Creek Ferry was not in operation: "Ordered that the surveyor of the road leading from Leesburg ot Goose Creek at Luke Youngs Ford do open a convenient way out of the said Road to the Mouth of Tuscarora [Creek] where a Ferry is intended to be kept, and that the Surveyor on the other side do open a way from the said Ferry landing into the said Road."

Mention of the Goose Creek Ferry then fades, but in 1822 or 1823, under the auspices of the Leesburg Turnpike Company, the stock company that took care of maintenance of the Leesburg Turnpike, the first bridge crossed the creek. This bridge was probably a wooden one, for October, 1861, dispatches between Union generals note a "Burnt Bridge" at the Alexandria Turnpike across Goose Creek.

The bridge across Goose Creek at the turnpike was not rebuilt until 1872 or '73, for on December 5, 1871 the Board of Supervisors "Ordered that a levy of $1,200 be made for the erection of a bridge over Goose Creek on the Turnpike from Leesburg to Dranesville . . . provided that the said levy shall not be paid until citizens of the County shall have subscribed and Paid for the like Purpose." When the cash came in Samuel Norris of Leesburg was contracted to build the bridge, one of two known covered spans in the county. He remembered the site well, for during the war, while fishing at the site, he found himself looking into a Yankee carbine. Norris's bridge lasted until the flood of May, 1889, washed it down Goose Creek and the Potomac, depositing it at the tip of Van Deventer's

Island, six miles down river.

That June 10, the Board of Supervisors proposed that seven bridges, all washed away by the flood, be rebuilt, and the first of the seven named was "On the Leesburg and Alexandria turnpike over Goose Creek." But money was short, and during the early 1890's Depression and through to 1899 a ferry again spanned the creek at the turnpike. The Goose is 150 feet wide at the point. Finally, on June 24, 1899, a bridge had been erected, for the Board of Supervisors appointed viewers "to view the Bridge over Goose Creek on Leesburg-Georgetown Turnpike and have said bridge repaired whould it in their judgement need any repairs. This bridge was a Pratt iron-truss span built by the Variety Iron Works, Cleveland, Ohio. Variety's motto was the three B's: "Bridges, buildings, boilers." Alfred Stanton was the engineer that supervised the bridge building.

With increased traffic on Route 54 (the pre-1934 number for Route 7), there were some close calls on the one-lane span and steep grades leading down to it. These problems led to the construction of the present double steel-truss bridge, built by the Virginia Bridge & Iron Company of Roanoke in 1932. One of the casualties of this bridge building was the destruction of a log cabin that stood just about where the north land of Rt. 7 crosses the creek. Known in those days as the Dove homeplace, the cabin was supposed to have been the home of the early ferry operators. The old bridge, the last Pratt truss span in Northern Virginia, was moved to Mead's Ford (today's Rt. 673 north of Waterford), where it still spans Catoctin Creek. The bridge was made a state historic landmark in 1973.

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Coton Plantation

Mary Ellen Mullarkey Rosania

Concealed from public view by a thickly wooded hillside, the Xerox International Center for Training and Management Development, located just east of the town of Leesburg on Route 7, is a unique contemporary complex. It consists of classrooms, living and eating facilities for a thousand students, a large athletic building with tennis courts and a swimming pool, a beauty salon, gift shop and miles of jogging trails.[1] Coincidentally, it also contains the extant remains of Coton Plantation, the home in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries of Thomas Ludwell Lee, Jr., his wife, Fanny Carter Lee, and their seven active, playful children.[2] Here where the world's largest industrial training center now stands, two little girls once made "baby houses under the low branches of the old pear tree" for dolls made of scented wood and painted to resemble their owners.[3]

The story of Coton actually begins at Stratford Hall Plantation in Westmoreland County, home of the illustrious Lee Dynasty whose descendants played such a dramatic and effective role in shaping the history of our nation. A major driving force of the Lee Dynasty was Thomas Lee, the builder of Stratford Hall, who at age twenty-one had been given power of attorney by Lady Fairfax as resident agent of the Northern Neck Proprietary, an area (ultimately determined to exceed five million acres) which lay between the Potomac and Rappahannock Rivers.[4]

As the enterprising Lee became familiar with the territory, he recognized the advantages of early acquisition. In 1718, he obtained 4,200 acres in Fauquier County, including the site of Warrenton. By the following year he secured from Lord Fairfax 3,700 acres at the Falls of the Potomac, extending down into present day Arlington County. In 1758, when the town of Leesburg was established as the county seat of Loudoun County, it was named in honor of Thomas Lee by two of his sons who were among the Trustees.[5]

The sons of Thomas Lee of Stratford Plantation would exceed even their father's high expectations: five of his six sons would play a significant role in leading the rebellion of the colonies against England which culminated in American independence. John Adams was so impressed with the role played by the Lees of Virginia that he remarked to Samuel Cooper on February 28, 1779 that "The family of Lee . . .has more men of merit in it than any other family."[6]

On the national scene, Richard Henry Lee introduced the resolution for independence and both he and his brother, Francis Lightfoot Lee, signed the Declaration of Independence. Younger brothers William and Arthur served in key diplomatic posts representing the American cause in London and Paris. On the home front, Thomas Ludwell Lee, the second son of Thomas Lee, bolstered the efforts of his brothers by active participation in legislative and organizational efforts to solidify the patriot cause in Virginia.[7]

Described by observers as a man of intellectual vigor and courtly behavior, Thomas Ludwell Lee was born at Stratford on December 13, 1730. It was he who would inherit the 4,700 acres which eventually became Coton Plantation. In addition to the education received at Stratford, he studied law at the Inner Temple in London. When their widower father, Thomas Lee, died in 1750, Thomas Ludwell Lee and his older brother Philip assumed guardianship over their four younger brothers.

In the busy years after his father's death, Thomas Ludwell Lee became a member of the House of Burgesses in 1758 representing Stafford County. Apparently he was a great success as he was described as "the most popular man in Virginia and the delight of the eyes of every Virginian."[8] Married to Mary Aylett, Thomas Ludwell Lee became the father of six children. On February 27, 1766 he signed the "Westmoreland Resolves" whose purpose was to prevent the execution of the detested Stamp Act in Virginia.

Thomas Lee of Stratford Hall. Courtesy Virginia State Library and the Fairfax County Photo Archives.

Active in provincial disturbances, Thomas Ludwell Lee had been one of the instigators behind a resolution submitted by Thomas Nelson at the Virginia Convention meeting in Williamsburg, Virginia in 1776. The resolution, which was passed, commanded Virginia's delegates to the Second Continental Congress to introduce a resolution for independence. After Richard Henry Lee introduced the resolution to the delegates at the Second Continental Congress on June 7, 1776, Thomas Jefferson began to draft the Declaration of Independence which was adopted on July 4, 1776.[9]

Limner

Bonnie Meyer

I carry squares of canvas in my pack,
Some big enough
To hang taut over a marble-edged fireplace.
Others, locket-size,
Or for lovers to keep by their beds at night.
In winter, if traveling runs hard
Or the times when money's tight,
I sit in a rented room, somewhere —
Behind a rowdy tavern,
In a barn above horses that snore in their sleep,
Or at homes where lonely people live —
And I paint bodies on those canvas squares —
Well-fed with plump, ringed fingers
Or pinch-waisted, wispy thin.
I paint bodies without heads;
Customers think long about those canvas squares,
Being careful to choose the figure
That suits them very well.
It is nothing to paint in the rest —
A day's work, perhaps, if the light is good.
After, people stand around, wide-eyed.
"It looks just like you, Dear," they tell each other.
You,
And the ferry boat captain
And the wealthy doctor three towns back
Or the woman who held my hand a bit too long
Or anyone whose body I ever painted
In a cold, rented room somewhere.

At some point during his eventful life, Thomas Ludwell Lee moved to Stafford County where he resided at his estate, "Bellevue." Meanwhile, fifty Negroes above the age of ten years were working on his inherited lands in the Leesburg area which had been defined in the will of his father, Thomas Lee, as " . . . the remainder of all my lands between Goose or Lee Creek and Broad Run. Joining to the lands I have given to my first son [Ludwell Lee] etc."[10]

Thomas Ludwell Lee never moved to his working plantation in Leesburg. He continued to reside at "Bellevue" where he died of rheumatic fever on April 13, 1778.[11] The next generation, represented by his eldest son, Thomas Ludwell Lee, Jr., and his family, took up residence at "Coton" as it was called when it became a separate entity. It was named "Coton" after the ancestral home of the Lees, "Coton" Hall in Shropshire, England.[12] Thomas Ludwell Lee, Jr. made extensive additions to the manor house in 1803 and by the end of that year a distillery, mill, stone kitchen-laundry, stone meat house and a frame office completed the complex of buildings. The story of the family's occupancy of Coton is revealed in the reminiscences of his granddaughter, Sally McCarty Pleasants. Her book, *Old Virginia Days and Ways*, is an interesting document in social history, often endearing in its charming family scenes and amusing in its revelations of the unsophisticated manner and mores of a young nation.

Two powerful Virginia families were united when teenaged Fanny Carter, daughter of Robert Carter of Sabine Plantation, married Thomas Ludwell Lee, Jr. in 1786. From the very beginning of the marriage, Fanny tried to assume a matronly air belying her youth. On the morning after her wedding, Fanny came down to breakfast wearing a "queen's nightcap", an elaborate structure of muslin and lace which completely covered her beautiful auburn hair. In keeping with the social convention of the time, "from that morning, not long after her sixteenth birthday, to the day of her death at the age of eighty, she was never free from the thraldom of caps". While still a young woman, she became a victim of smallpox. Her husband, who had been on a trip at the time of her illness, fainted at the sight of her altered appearance.[13]

Other troubles besieged the residents of Coton. Extant letters from Thomas Ludwell Lee to his kinsman, George Carter at Oatlands, state that the "accursed worms" that had ravaged other farms had hurt Coton only slightly, although a hailstorm and rust had caused considerable damage. "But" he added, "I got 500 barrels of flour, which you'll say is a very good crop for my poor farm."[14]

On the 8th of June, 1806, in his will, Thomas Ludwell Lee stated that he was in weak health and requested upon his death, his body be interred beside his deceased infant son Thomas Ludwell Lee, III. He directed his executors, George Carter Esquire of Oatlands and his executors, his wife Fanny, to sell specific pieces of land to satisfy his debts. Among the lots to be sold were those in the town of Matildaville at the Great Falls of the Potomac which he inherited from his uncle, Francis Lightfoot Lee.

Lee also asserted that each of his daughters was to receive 1,000 pounds as a dowry when they married. His seven daughters were Elizabeth, Mary Aylett, Winifred Beale, Fanny, Lucinda, Catherine and Sydney. Lee was insistent in his will that Coton be kept intact. The land, slaves, furniture, stock, farming utensils and carriages were designated for the sole use of his unmarried daughters after the death of his wife, Fanny Lee. Towards the end of his will, Lee declared that he had made ample provision for the payment of all of his debts. Less than a year later, on March 5, 1807, Lee died.[15]

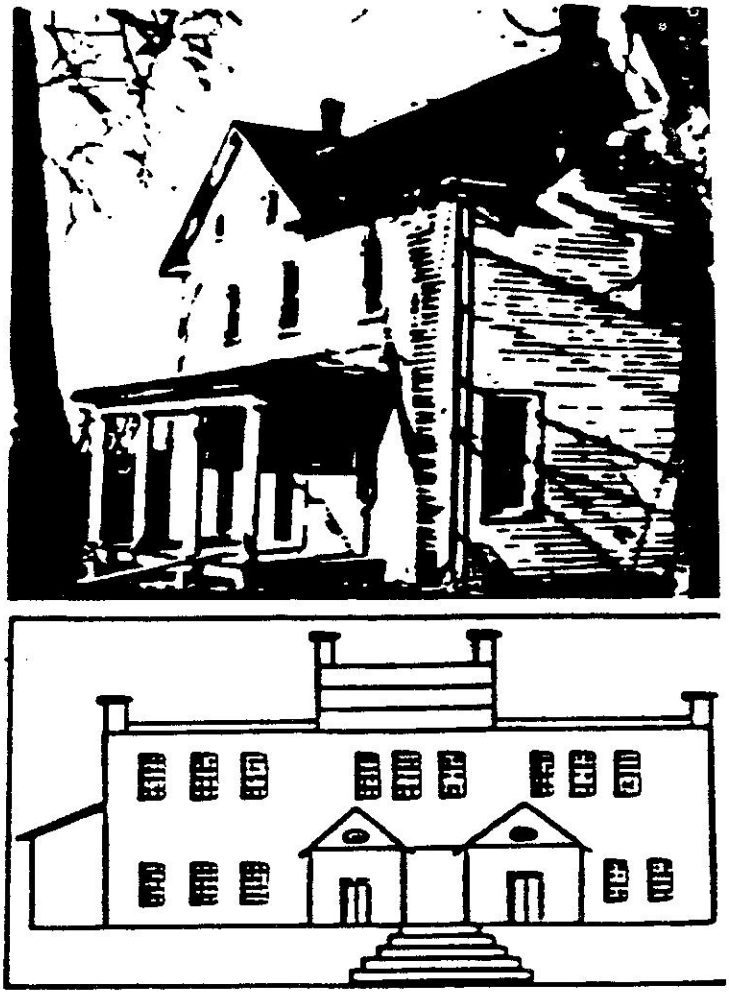
After the death of her husband, Mrs. Lee's life became extremely difficult as she had the responsibility of running a large plantation, nurturing and caring for seven daughters and living through years of serious financial problems which resulted in numerous court suits.

Lee family tradition states that Mr. Lee had "gone security" for his brother-in-law. Lee told his wife that this, as well as other debts, had been settled and told her where the vouchers were. After her husband's death, Mrs. Lee took the vouchers to her lawyer's office in Leesburg where they reportedly disappeared, and a suit was brought against the estate for the repayment of the note which Mr. Lee said he secured.[16] The debts amounted to $8,354 excluding interest, and were owed to George Carter of Oatlands Plantation!

Perhaps the first sign of the enmity that would exist for many years between Fanny Lee and George Carter occurred when the will of Thomas Ludwell Lee was probated on October 14, 1807. Appended to the probate order was this note, "George Carter the Executor therein named *refused to qualify or act.*" Thomas Ludwell Lee had borrowed the $8,354 from George Carter in 1804 and according to a Mr. Henderson, Carter's attorney, neither Lee nor his widow Fanny Lee had repaid the loan. In September 1813, George Carter finally brought suit against Fanny Lee in the Chancery Court, Loudoun County.[17]

As a result of her precarious financial situation, Mrs. Lee sold a mill in 1818. In 1819, she leased 941 acres of Coton to Mr. James Hook of Maryland, including the right to use the drawing room of the Mansion House and the room above it in the north end, as well as the frame office building. Other court suits were waged against Mrs. Lee by the Mutual Assurance Company concerning premium payments on Coton property and incredibly, the case dragged on for twenty-seven years.[18]

Somehow, Mrs. Lee, a woman of strong character, was able to provide many of the usual amenities that were part of the plantation culture, and her children had recollections of a pleasant childhood. Two of them, blue-eyed, blond Lucinda and raven haired, brown-eyed Fanny wearing low-necked white cambric frocks and red morocco slippers, are depicted playing with their look alike baby dolls on idyllic summer days near the Potomac.



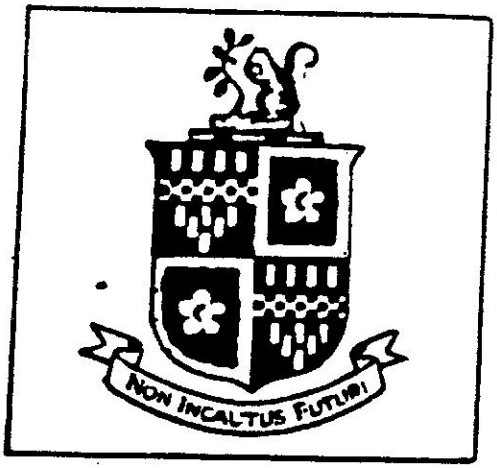
A fairly recent photo of the west end of the original quarter and the wing added by John G. Hopkins.

The sketch of the north elevation of Coton Plantation done in 1803 after additions gives a better feeling of the grandeur of Coton when Thomas Ludwell Lee, Jr. and his family lived there. Courtesy of Xerox Corporation.

Soon Lucinda and Fanny were of school age and they joined other children in their family in an improvised schoolroom set up in a plantation office at Coton. Monsieur Mongrand, an abbe forced to flee France during the "Reign of Terror" that followed the French Revolution, was their teacher. He gave each of his students a nickname in keeping with their outstanding characteristic. He called Fanny, the family beauty, "Venus", Winifred, the studious sister, "La Bonne", and Betsy, the sleepy head, "La Belle Doremuse."[19]

As was fitting for young ladies of their station, Fanny and Lucinda made their debut into Washington society by spending a season in the capital city. They were introduced into society by Mrs. Dolley Madison at one of her levees as "specimens of Virginia ladies." Perhaps, Lucinda and Fanny were there the day Mrs. Madison showed a party of Lees two immense mirrors with the Lee crest, a squirrel on them. The mirrors had been purchased from a Lee relation for use in the White

House, and Mrs. Madison showed tactful reluctance in hesitating to replace the squirrel crest with the national symbol the American eagle.[19]



The famous Lee crest. The Latin inscription means essentially, be not inconsiderate about the future, advice many members of this remarkable family took close to heart.

For street wear in the winter of their season in Washington, Fanny wore a long pelisse (or loose lightweight cloak) of yellow silk; Ludinda's was of blue and both were trimmed of swansdown. Fashionably protected against the winter wind, each sister wore a chinchilla cap. Lucinda had received a unique gift and might have been sorely tempted to flaunt it. An admirer had given her a pair of remarkably fine soft gloves that had been folded into an English walnut shell which was lined with green silk and laced with silken cords.

When the Lee girls were home, they and their mother entertained relatives and friends, often for long periods of time. No doubt the endless stream of guests were treated to two of the succulent specialties of the time, "Old Yellow Pickle" and peach preserve. "Old Yellow Pickle" took weeks to prepare. Day after day, baby cucumbers, onions, ears of corn and cauliflower were boiled in brine and exposed on trays to the burning sun until sufficiently cured for the addition of oil, vinegar, and spice. A peach preserve was prepared in a similar manner, "by paring ripe peaches in circles from the stone, scalding the luscious spirals in syrup and spreading them on dishes in the sun."

Another unique culinary delight served at Coton was a very unusual pie baked at Christmas and not served until Twelfth Day after Christmas.

> *A peck of flour went into the making of the crust which was three feet in diameter. It was filled with boned fowls of every kind from a chicken to a turkey and included birds, small and great, pheasants, partridges, robins and even the tiny sora [a small, short billed bird commonly found in the marshes]. By the time it came to be cut the gravy had become a jelly and the different flavors so blended that the result was a delight to the palate.*[21]

The wisdom and courage of Mrs. Lee was tested again as the War of 1812 interrupted the lives of the Lee family. After the disastrous defeat of the American forces by the British at Bladensburg, Maryland on August 24, 1814, parts of Washington City including the White House were set afire and burned. Virginia troops who had been called to the capital at the request of President Madison were in retreat and tumult prevailed on the main roads.[22]

Mrs. Matilda Lee Love (a cousin of Thomas Ludwell Lee) who lived at "Rokeby" in the McLean area of Virginia, about thirty-five miles from Coton, gave an eyewitness account of that eventful day in her recollections. She stated that the night the British captured the city of Washington, Mrs. Madison and a number of city people took refuge in her house.[23] Earlier in the evening, Secretary of State James Monroe and his aide, Tench Ringgold had also stopped at Mrs. Love's house for an improvised supper.[24]

While Matilda Lee Love was sheltering Dolley Madison, Mrs. Fanny Carter Lee and members of her household were said to have watched from the upper windows of Coton as Washington was engulfed in flames. As the invaders ravaged the countryside, a terrified servant informed Mrs. Lee that the British were marching up the turnpike. Ordering all doors and windows fastened, Mrs. Lee and her household prepared to defend Coton. After what seemed an interminable wait, Mrs. Lee "heard the tramp of feet, the clank of sabres and all the terrifying sounds that herald the approach of troops." She lifted the corner of a curtain and peered out to find the yard and road swarming with soldiers, "not in the Scarlet of the British, but in the Blue of the American Army." Although the Americans were in full retreat after their defeat at Bladensburg, they had time to stop at Coton for "hot cornCakes and mugs of steaming coffee which the cooks dispensed. The Officers - lucky fellows - breakfasted on fried chicken and batter bread and honey served on the old Coton china."[25]

As there were several pretty unmarried Lee sisters, Coton was the focal point for romantic young beaux from neighboring counties. In 1820, Lucinda Lee married the fiery John Mason McCarty who had killed his cousin, General Armistead T. Mason of Selma Plantation in a duel the year before. (The story of the duel, "The 'Fire-eater' and the General," appeared in the February 1982 issue of *Northern Virginia Heritage*.) Another Lee daughter, Winifred Beale, married William Brent, Jr. of "Richland", Stafford County while Elizabeth married her cousin, St. Ledger Landon Carter. Mary Aylett became the second wife of Tench Ringgold, the same Tench Ringgold who served as an aide to Secretary of State Monroe and took refuge at Matilda Lee Love's plantation, "Rokeby". Surprisingly, the family beauty, Fanny, remained unmarried as did two other Lee sisters, Catherine and Sydney.[26]

In August 1825, a major social event occurred in the Leesburg area. General Lafayette had made a triumphal return to the United States as a guest of the nation the year before. Prior to returning to his native France, he expressed a desire to see his old friend, James Monroe, who was living in retirement on his estate, Oak Hill, in the Leesburg area. John Quincy Adams wrote in his diary, "Aug. 6-At four, General Lafayette, his son G.W. [George Washington Lafayette], Mr. Ringgold and I departed on a visit to Mr. Monroe at Oakhill."[27] After visiting at Oak Hill for a few days, Lafayette,

President Adams and former President Monroe were welcomed to Leesburg where colorful parades and an outdoor banquet awaited them. A crowd of over 10,000 people ringed the small town.

The distinguished guests then drove through the summer night to Belmont Plantation, the home of Ludwell Lee who had been Lafayette's aide-to-camp in the American Revolution. Belmont was across the Leesburg Turnpike from Coton and Ludwell Lee of Belmont was a cousin of Thomas Ludwell Lee of Coton. It is said that a great festival was staged that night, August 9, 1825 at both Coton and Belmont as neither mansion was large enough to accommodate all the assembled company. "A double line of slaves, each holding aloft a flaming torch was stationed between the two mansions to light the way of the celebrants as they passed from one house to the other."[5]

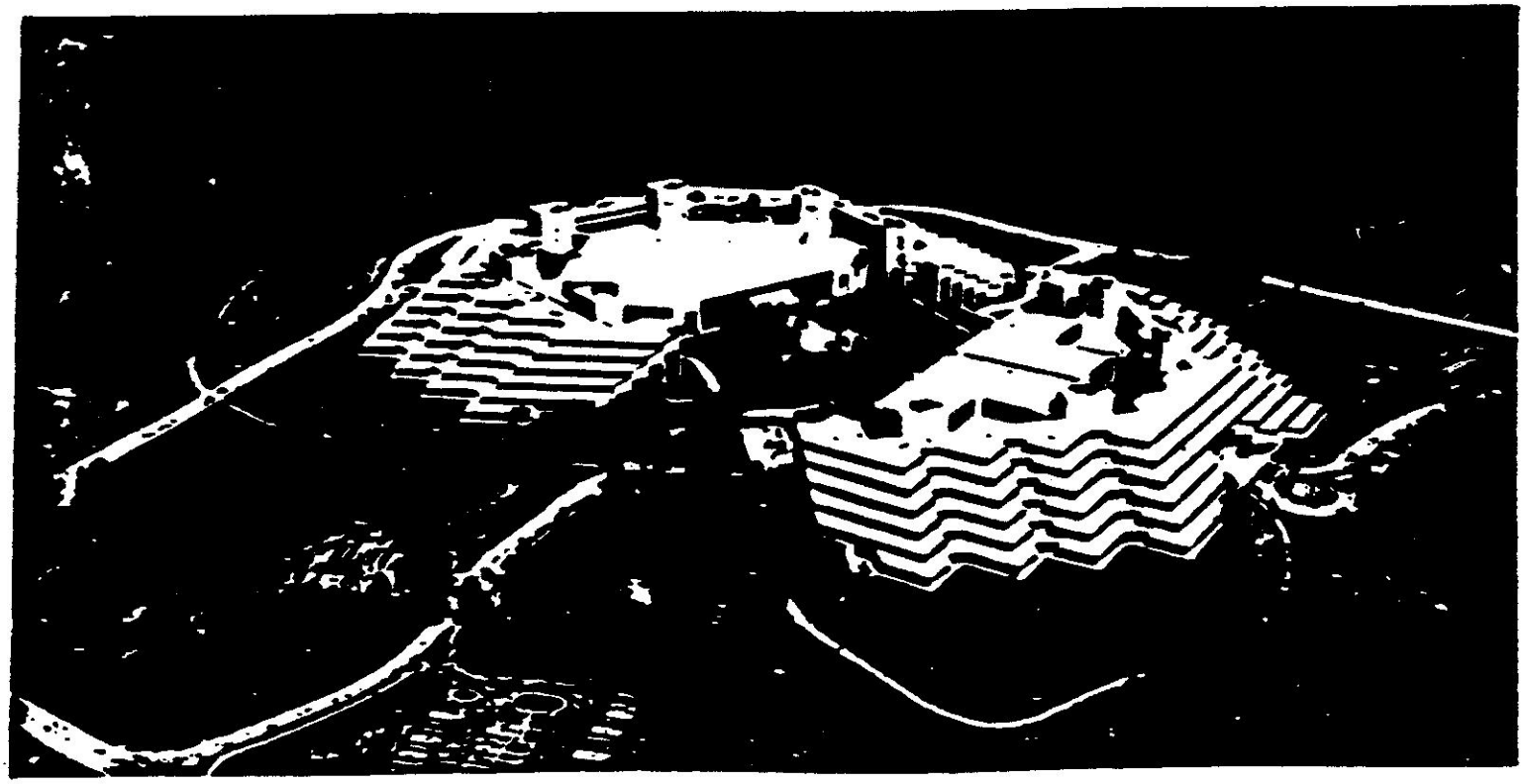
In 1852, the Lee occupation of Coton Plantation ended. The chancery case against Mrs. Lee was finally settled in the Superior Court in Richmond, Virginia and Coton was sold in two parcels. "West Coton", consisting of 800 acres, the original manor house and out buildings, was sold to Robert Bentley for $9,640.00. "East Coton", an area of 988 acres, was sold to George Kephart for $4,816.15. The two tracts of land exchanged hands several times before 1971 when the Xerox Corporation purchased the site in order to consolidate its training facilities in one central location.[6]

An aerial view of Xerox International shows two six story contemporary structures which bear a resemblance to the Aztec temples of Mexico, a complete departure from the architecture of Coton Plantation whose extant remains include part of the manor house, the stone kitchen-laundry house, the stone meat house, part of the plantation mill and part of the mill house along Goose Creek. The navigation lock system installed by the Goose Creek and Little River Navigation Company in the second quarter of the nineteenth century also survives. Nearby, a reconnaissance survey of the Xerox site performed on November 16-18, 19[illegible] by the Virginia Research Center for Archaeology located three pre-historic sites in the Potomac River floodplain. One contains a scattering of ceramics and lithic debitage which may indicate small non nucleated hamlets or encampments from the Middle and Late Woodland time periods, ca. A.D. 1-1600.[7]

The land currently occupied by Xerox International is an excellent example of the economic evolution of an area. Beneath the surface, artifacts of an Indian civilization dependent on hunting and fishing have been unearthed. Still on the surface are remnants of Coton Plantation representing a way of life of Virginia's elite planter class whose lives were marked with periods of gracious living as well as sharp, financial downturns. Finally, dominating the land, where once seven charming Lee sisters chatted and gossiped, stands a huge important training center of a major American corporation whose current residency affects the lives of employees, the town of Leesburg, the state of Virginia and in ever widening circles, the nation itself.

(See page twenty for footnotes)

Mary Rosania is the author of the article *The 'Fire-Eater' and the General* which appeared in the February, 1982 issue of *NVH*. She also wrote and developed a program, "Northern Virginia: Past and Present" which was broadcast over WEEL last year.



A modern view of the Xerox Corporation showing some of its facilities. Courtesy of the Xerox Corporation.

Footnotes

Coton Plantation

1 Blythe Homer, "Xerox Warrior 'Images' and Found in Loudoun Is County's Benefit," *Washington Star*, March 31, 1981; Fairfax Business B.)

2 Frederick Warren Alexander, *Stratford Hall and the Lees* (Oak Grove, Virginia: Frederick Warren Alexander, Publisher, 1912) p. 139. Alexander lists seven daughters and one deceased son. This contradicts Sally McCarty Pleasants who said that her grandparents had eleven children. Letters about the Lees of Coton appear to back Alexander's count.

3 Sally McCarty Pleasants, edited by Lucy Lee Pleasants, *Old Virginia Days and Ways* (Menasha, Wisconsin: George Banta Publishing Company, 1916) p. 35.

4 Eleanor Lee Templeman, *Virginia Homes of the Lees* (Arlington, Va.: Privately published by Eleanor Lee Templeman, 1975), p. 7.

5 *Ibid.*, p. 24.

6 Burton Hendrick, *The Lees of Virginia* (Boston, Mass.: Little Brown and Co., 1935) Frontispiece.

7 Templeman, *Virginia Homes of the Lees*, p. 7.

8 Alexander, *Stratford Hall and the Lees*, p. 73.

9 Hendrick, *Lees of Virginia*, pp. 80, 85-87, 89, 97, 110, 111, 135, 209, 210.

10 John G. Lewis, "Coton" *Bulletin* (The Loudoun Historical Society, 1975) Vol. 5, p. 4.

11 Alexander, *Stratford Hall and the Lees*, p. 73.

12 Templeman, *Virginia Homes of the Lees*, p. 24 and Frontispiece.

13 Pleasants, *Old Virginia Days and Ways*, p. 29.

14 "The Rambler Writes of Old Coton Farm," *The Sunday Star*, Washington, D.C., December 1, 1918, p. 2.

15 Edmund Jennings Lee, M.D., *Lee of Virginia 1642-1892*. (Philadelphia, Pa., Franklin Publishing Co., 1895) p. 316.

16 Lewis, "Coton", p. 16.

17 Loudoun County Chancery Court, Record M2622, "George Carter vs Thomas Ludwell Lee, Extrix.," September, 1813.

18 Lewis, "Coton", p. 17.

19 Pleasants, *Old Virginia Days and Ways*, p. 83.

20 Matilda Lee Love, *Journal of Mrs. Matilda Lee Love* (1790-1875), Lee Family File, Lloyd House, Alexandria, Va., p. 5.

21 Lewis, "Coton", p. 17.

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23 Love, *Journal of Mrs. Matilda Lee Love* (1790-1875) p. 6.

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28 Harrison Williams, *Legends of Loudoun* (Richmond: Garrett and Massie, Inc., 1938) p. 193.

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Martha Washington's Will

1 Letter of Mary Thomson in *Annual Report of the Attorney General to the Governor of Virginia, 1916*, quoted in *Historical Society Yearbook, Fairfax County 1952-1953*, p. 56 (hereinafter cited as *Yearbook*.)

2 *A Trooper's Adventure in the War for the Union*. By a Cavalryman. Hunt and Co., quoted in Washington Will file, Fairfax County Clerk Judicial Center Archives (hereinafter cited as FCCJCA)

3 National Archives and Records Service, Military Record of David Thomson, 82nd Ohio Volunteers, A Company (hereinafter cited as NARS)

4 *Ibid.*, and NARS David Thomson Pension File 78,841, Civil War.

5 Alistair Cooke, *Alistair Cooke's America* (New York: Knopf 1973), p. 296.

6 *The New York Times*, November 7, 1914, p. 18 (hereinafter cited as *Times*.)

7 *The Last Will and Testament of George Washington*, edited by John C. Fitzpatrick. The Mount Vernon Ladies Association, 34th ed., 1960, p. 63, note 1.

8 *Yearbook*, p. 45.

9 Letter of Mrs. Mary Grimsley Barbour, quoted in *Yearbook*, p. 45.

10 Letter of Bella da Costa Green, *Ibid.*, p. 46.

11 *Times*, November 11, 1914, p. 14.

12 *Ibid.*

13 *Ibid.*, November 7, 1914, p. 2.

14 Chapter 5 of Act of 1914, quoted in *Yearbook*, pp. 46-47.

15 Letter of J.P. Morgan Jr., quoted in *Ibid.*, pp. 49-50.

16 Letter of Governor Henry C. Stuart, quoted in *Ibid.*, pp. 51-52.

17 *Ibid.*, p. 53.

18 Letter of J.P. Morgan Jr., quoted in *Ibid.*, pp. 56-57.

19 *Ibid.*, p. 59.

20 *Alexandria Gazette*, January 21, 1875, in FCCJCA.

21 *Yearbook*, pp. 60-61.

22 *Ibid.*, pp. 61-62.

23 *Alexandria Gazette*, October 19, 1915, in FCCJCA.

Articles Planned for Future Issues of NVH

The Freedmen's Bureau in Fairfax County

Slavery in 18th Century Fairfax - 3 Tragic Vignettes

John Carlyle

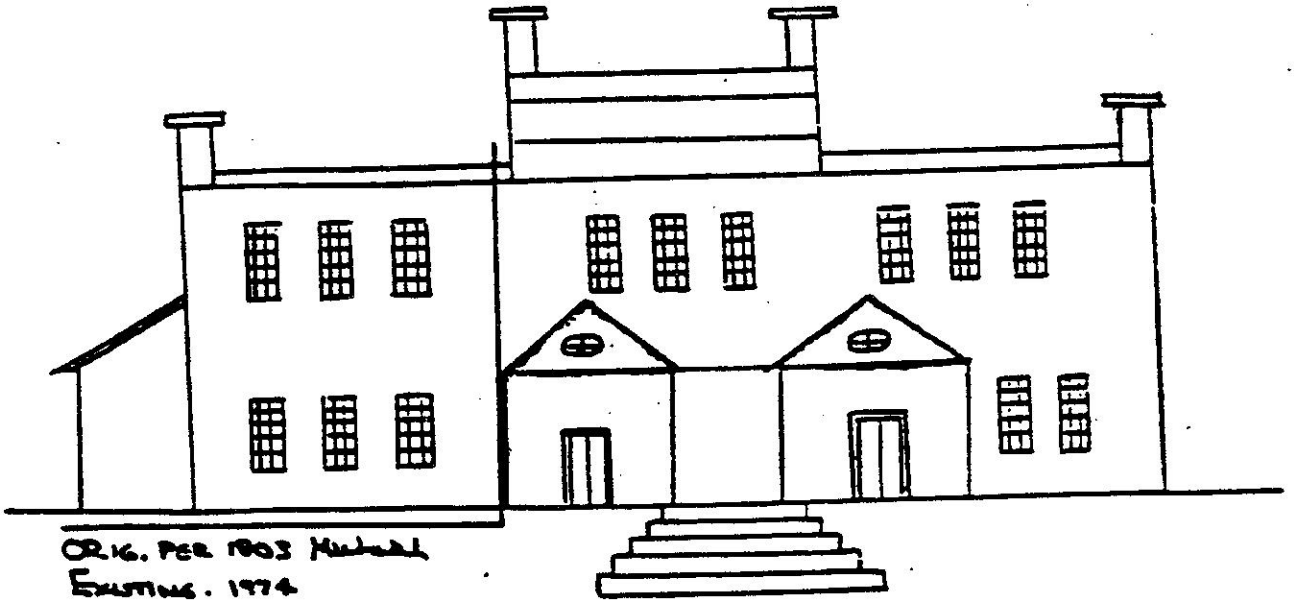
Thomson Mason

John Posey: George Washington's Scapegrace Neighbor

Elijah Fletcher on Life in Early 19th Century Alexandria

"Quaker Sam" Means and the Loudoun Rangers

An Execution in Vienna



COTON

Home of Thomas Ludwell Lee 1803
- From a sketch done in 1803 -
Of wooden construction 24' X 96'

Information ATTACHMENT A

History.

When Xerox purchased 2265 acres of rolling countryside 35 miles northwest of Washington, D.C., and opened, on June 2, 1974, the Xerox International Center for Training and Management Development, little was known of the rich history of the land.

The Historic Trail project will feature the following sites and the marker legend will explain the background:

(1) Indian mounds. Area settled by Algonquins, circa 500 A.D. Mounds have not been excavated. Algonquin tribe left area due to attacks from Iroquois. All Indians were eventually destroyed by smallpox from white settlers.

(2) Coton Plantation. Coton was named for the ancestral Lee estate in England. It was once the residence of Francis Lightfoot Lee, a founder and trustee of Leesburg and a representative from Loudoun County to the House of Burgesses. He was a signer of the Declaration of Independence; one of the only two brothers to sign i

Records indicate that another Lee, Thomas Ludwell Lee, and his wife Fanny Carter, lived on the Coton land in the early 1800s. They built a frame manor house and two outbuildings, a stone meat house and stone laundry house. The two latter structures still stand. Lee also erected a stone distillery and two mills on Goose Creek. In 1807 Lee died, leaving Fanny to manage 11 children and a growing plantation.

A remarkable insight into the life and times of Fanny Lee came to light in a diary, found by her daughter and edited by her granddaughter, Lucy Lee Pleasants:

"Grandmother Lee and her household watched from the upper windows of Coton the flames of the burning Capitol fired by the British." (In August 1814 the British landed 4,000 troops, routed 5,000 U.S. troops at Bladensburg, Maryland, and then burned the Capitol and White House.)

"Coton ...was in the heart of the enemy's country. The (British) invaders ravished the country, leaving desolation behind them. My grandmother was living alone with her younger daughters...and lived in a state of nervous terror.

"One morning a servant rushed to tell the news that the British had just come marching up the turnpike. Summoning all her courage, she called her household together, ordered every door and window t be fastened and prepared to make such defense as was possible.

ATTACHMENT A (continued)

History

Coton.

"Time went by, but the British did not appear. At last, a long way off was heard the tramp of feet, the clank of sabres and all the terrifying sounds that herald the approach of troops. When the suspense was unbearable, my grandmother ventured to lift a corner of the curtain and peep out.

"Judge her delight when she saw the yard and the road beyond swarmi with soldiers, not in the scarlet of the British but in the blue of the American Army. She rushed to the door to welcome them. They had been defeated at Bladensburg and were in full retreat but time to stop for hot corncakes and the mugs of steaming coffee which the cooks dispensed. The officers--lucky fellows--breakfaste on fried chicken and batter bread and honey served on the old Canton china."

Edward's Ferry

One of the earliest river ferries in the United States; chartered in 1792 but possibly operated before the Revolutionary War. This was a main north-south crossing until 1915 when it ceased operation due to railroad competition. During the Civil War it was a major crossing route for the troops of General Grant en route to Gettysburg. About a million men crossed on canal boats and pontoon bridges. Ruins of an old stone warehouse, burned by the troops in 1861, are at the site.

Elizabeth Mills - "Ghost Village"

Named for Elizabeth, wife of miller Samuel Clapham, the mill and house were built by Thomas Ludwell Lee (Coton) about 1795. Also here is the foundation and brick chimney of the home of Philip St. George Cooke, whose books on cavalry tactics were famous in the Civil War. He was infamous in Virginia because he remained a Yankee during the Civil War, especially since his daughter married the famed Confederate cavalry leader James Ewell Brown Stuart (JEB Stuart.) Upstream is the intact mill of John Hopkins, and the latest mill to be built (1910.) Also of interest is the mill dam spanning Goose Creek. The dam is about 15 feet high in low water.

First Aerial Balloon and Aeronauts

On April 5, 1861, and for one week following, Union troops at this site sent up two hydrogen-filled reconnaissance balloons with gondolas and crew, across the Potomac to scout Confederate troops. The southerners were so surprised that instead of shooting, they just stared. These balloons were the first aircraft ever used in warfare.

ATTACHMENT A

History

Goose Creek Canal

Goose Creek is the longest "bold stream" in Virginia. It empties into the Potomac river. In the language of the Algonquins it was called "Cohongarooton" or "River of Swans." At the time of Indian settlement (circa 1715) hundreds of ducks, geese, and swans would rest from their north-south migrations on its waters. White settlers called it "Goose Creek" or simply "The Goose."

The Goose Creek Canal was constructed in the early 1850s, a time when canals were considered the best means of transportation in America. Boats, poled or drawn by mules along a towpath, transport grain and produce from upstream mills on Goose Creek to the Potomac Each boat carried three tons of grain, and moved at speeds of two t three miles per hour. The double pair of stone locks are among the finest examples of double-lock construction in the nation, according to former U. S. Canal Society president, Dr. William Trou

Above are the most important sites on the Historic Trail. Other markers would describe:

Civil War troop transport road

Floodplains of Potomac

History of agriculture (worn land, tobacco, cotton)

History of lumbering

White Oak Tree (significane of white oaks-used to delineate early grants, deeds

Introductory marker to trail. Location: near yellow commons area and visible from road which circles training center

Background/Present Status

Experts in archaeology, history, and architecture have been consulted with regard to Coton and the Historic Trail project.

A preliminary dig took place in 1976 when a team of eight archaeologists under direction of Dr. William Kelso, Commissioner, Virginia Research Center surveyed Coton and the Indian mounds and canal locks. Dr. Kelso worked with John G. Lewis, regional representative for the Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission in Loudoun County. Lewis has supervised the restoration of more than 100 homes, and edits the Loudoun County Architectural Review.

As a result of this dig, the following artifacts were recovered. T are now on loan from Xerox to the Commonwealth of Virginia Researc Center, Williamsburg, Va.

Fragment of cast iron (19th century)
Iron rose-headed nail (18th century)
Brown earthenware (18t
Glazed brick (18th ce