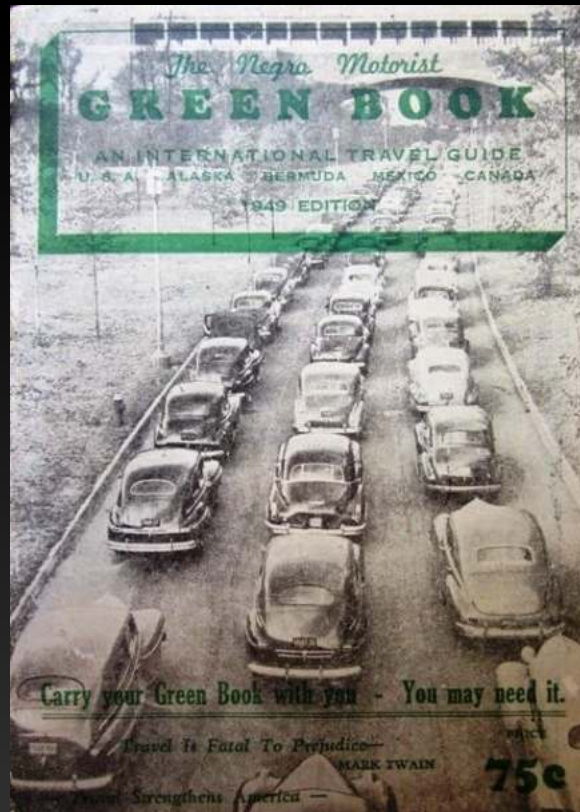


Beyond “*The Green Book*”: Navigating Jim Crow in Rockbridge

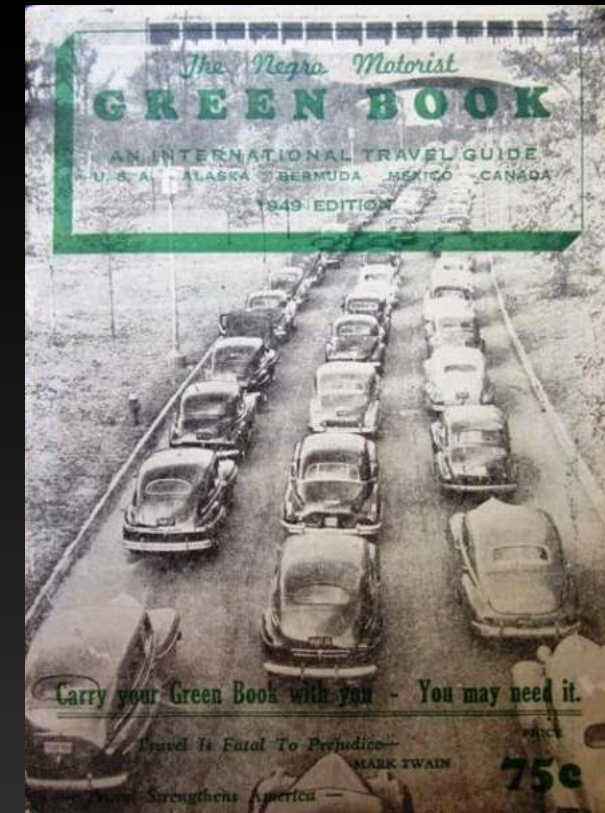
Eric Wilson, Executive Director, Rockbridge Historical Society



Black Lives at Natural Bridge:

Re-Imagining Virginia's Frontier Icon, from
Patrick Henry & Thomas Jefferson to *The Green Book*

Eric Wilson, Rockbridge Historical Society



Institutional & Personal Thanks

Jurette Heckscher, Library of Congress

Jefferson Looney, Monticello

Matthew Jackson & Jim Jones Natural Bridge State Park

Christopher Oliver, Virginia Museum of Fine Arts

David Coffey, Rockbridge Historical Society & VMI

Seth Goodhart & Lisa McCown, Washington & Lee Univ. Archives

Ted DeLaney, W&L Dept. of History

Alison Bell, W&L Dept. of Anthropology

Lynn Rainville, W&L Institutional History & Museums

Matthew Gibson, Virginia Humanities

Adam Scher, Virginia Museum of History and Culture

Christopher Wilson, Smithsonian Museum of American History

Henry Louis Gates, Harvard Univ. Hutchins Center for Af-Am Research

Na'im Ziyad

Pat Wright

Lois Nadine Carter Hubbard

Michelle Cooper

Beatrice Johnson

Irene Thompson

Marylin Evans Alexander

Michael Blankenship

Beverly Tucker

Larry Spurgeon

Cinder Stanton

Charles Patrick Henry

First Baptist Church, Natural Bridge

First Baptist Church, Lexington

Natural Bridge Historic Hotel

Natural Bridge State Park

Descendant Histories

Instrumental Resource: Diamond Family History: *“In the Shadow of Natural Bridge”*
Authored by descendants Na'im Ziyad & Pat Wright

Conversations with descendants of the Diamond, Hunt, Dixon, Hubbard, Dunn, Elliott families – in Rockbridge, and across the East Coast, South, Midwest – were crucial in developing early research on community histories near Natural Bridge (2017 →)

Continued extension through contributions from members of the Thompson families, in February 2023 program “Bond of Family” which partnered descendants, the Rockbridge Regional Library, Concerned Citizens of Glasgow, Rockbridge Historical Society

Consider what YOU can contribute to Family, Local, National Histories?

There are more Bridges than you may think, between them.



Jean Deltil, Natural Bridge, *Views of North America* (1834)
French Wallpaper Series, Zuber et Cie



Tourism, Transportation, Labor

Democracy in America (1835): contemporary travelogue, Alexis de Tocqueville
Above, Natural Bridge sections from a popular 1830s French Wallpaper Series (includes Niagara Falls) →
Projects 'Imagined Communities' of French *bourgeoisie*, not Black tourist class in Virginia

"Majestic . . . brilliant." —Kevin Boyle, *New York Times Book Review*

THE MAKING OF AFRICAN AMERICA

The Four Great Migrations

IRA BERLIN

AUTHOR OF *MANY THOUSANDS GONE*



COLORED TRAVELERS

*Mobility and the Fight for
Citizenship before the Civil War*

ELIZABETH STORDEUR PRYOR

OVERGROUND RAILROAD



*The GREEN BOOK and the ROOTS
of BLACK TRAVEL in AMERICA*

CANDACY TAYLOR

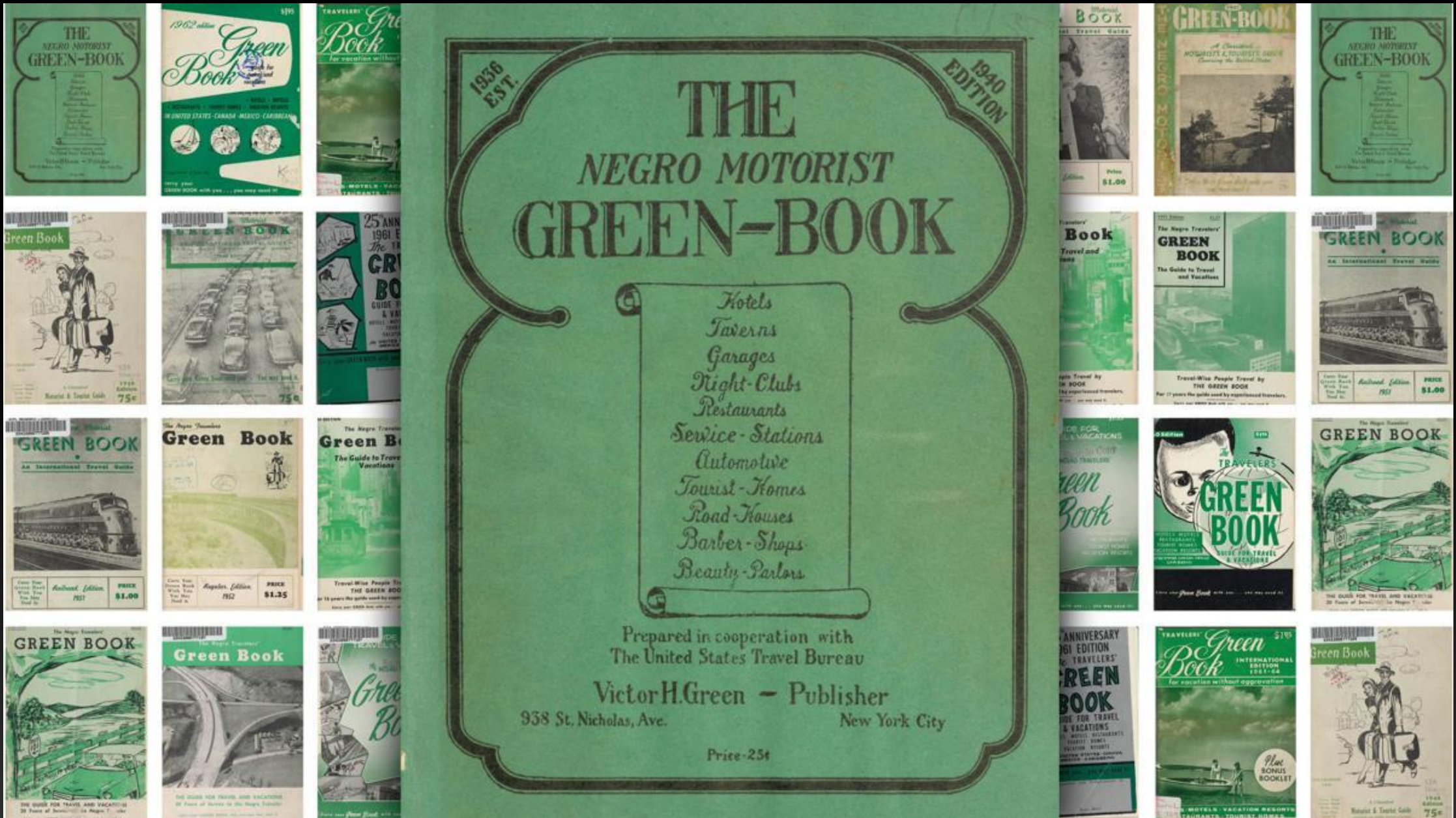
**Movements & Migrations:
Mobility, Opportunity, Constraint: Individuals & Groups**

KEY THEMES:

Frontiers & Change: Late 18th → Mid-20th Centuries:

Geo ~ Social Mobilities: In Virginia, in the Valley, at the Bridge

- * Frontiers: Where? When? For Whom?
- * Labor → Leisure (Entrepreneurs & Explorers)
- * Native / Business ↔ Visitor / Consumer (Who is Served?)
- * Local ~ Global (Frames of Reference & Reach)
- * Singular + Collective (Individuals & Institutions)
- * Transportation → Tourism? Work? School? Family? Church? Entertainment?



The Negro Motorist Green Book (published 1936-1966)

Diamond Hill Development - 1877

The overlaid maps, photographs, and panoramic views jointly provide you the opportunity to visualize change in the Diamond Hill neighborhood – overlooking Lexington, Virginia and the historical center of its African-American community – between post-war and mid-20th century. Find your way into the past by sliding between Historic street maps from the 1870s and 1890s, as well as Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps. Click on the thumbnailed 'Points of Interest' for more detailed captions, and a collage of images related to cultural institutions, commercial establishments, 'Green Book businesses,' schools, churches, homes, notable residents, and facilities at the Virginia Military Institute that have overtaken parts of the neighborhood. Click here for Thanks and Credits

Panoramas

POIs



Knights of Pythias Hall



Rose Inn Colored Tourist Home



Old School Book Depository/
Red Hen



Rockbridge Historical Society's Campbell House



Lyburn Downing School



Old Lexington Jail



The Castle



Old Colored School



Pure Oil Station



First Baptist Church



Washington Restaurant



G.U.O. of Odd Fellows,
Lexington Lodge



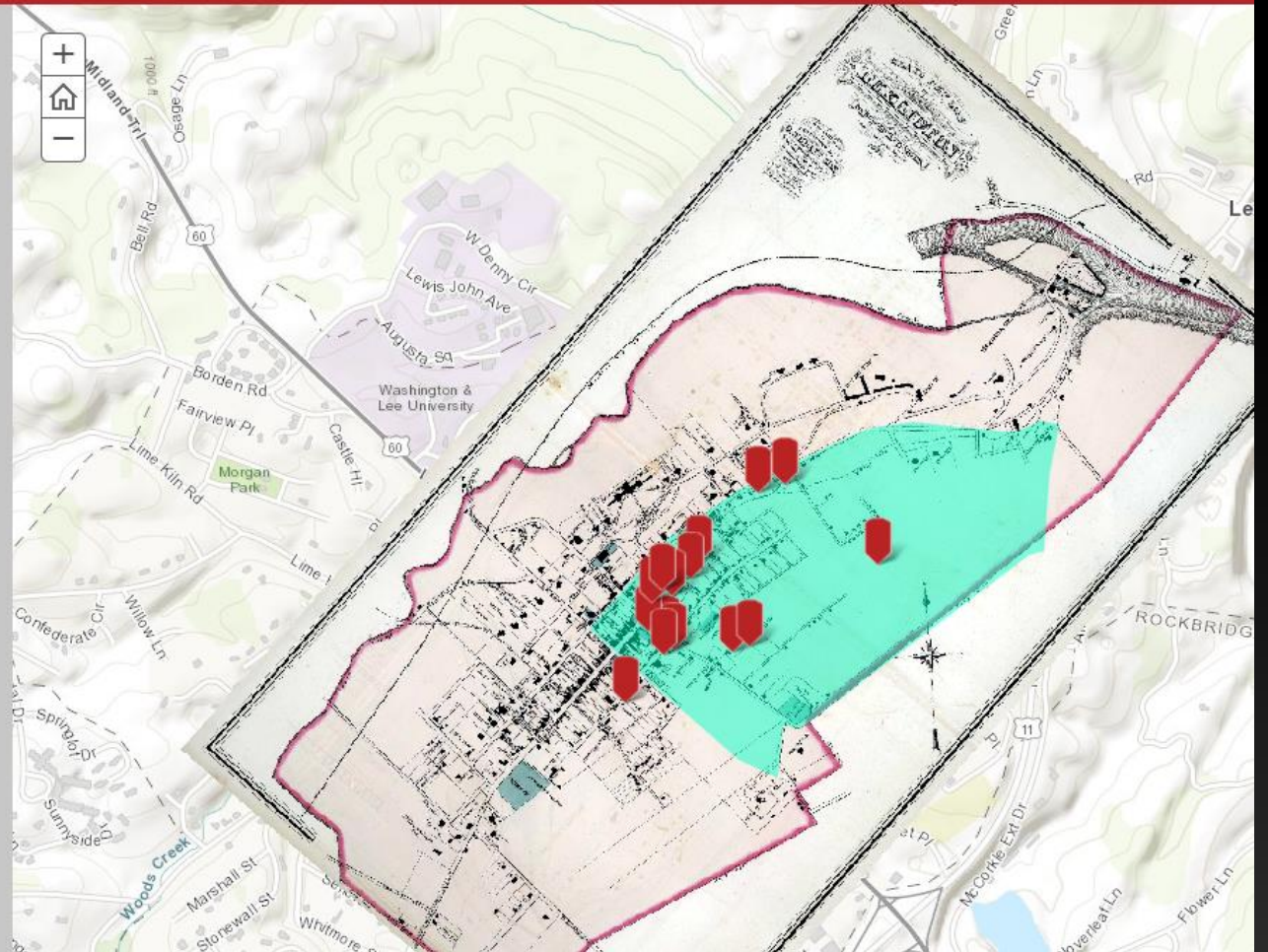
Willson-Walker House



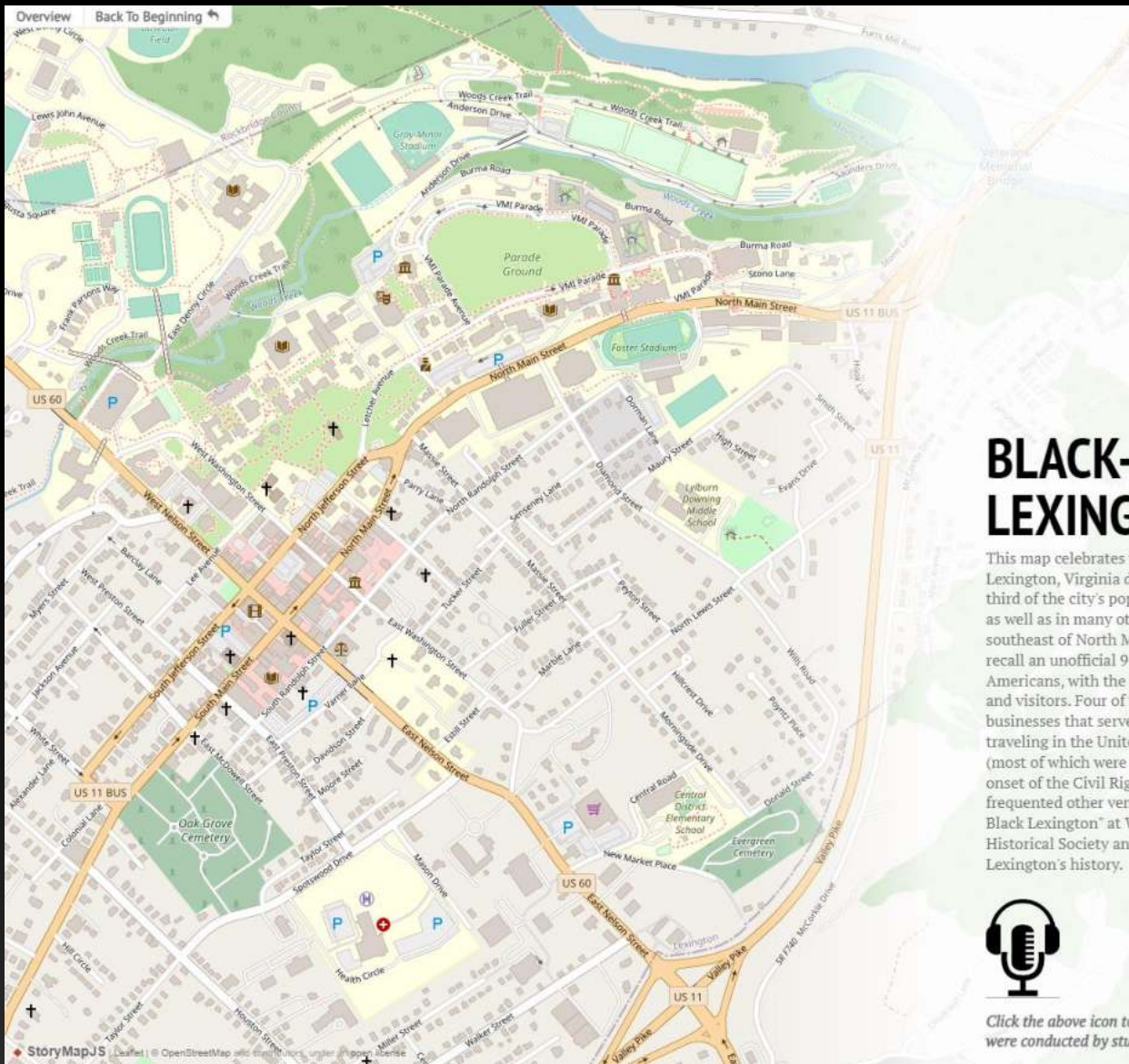
Franklin Tourist Home



Blandome



RHS Interactive Map (with JMU Public History & Computer Sci. Students)
Green Hill, Diamond Hill & VMI: Historic Sites & Change over Time (2018)



Looking down North Main Street, Lexington. 1950s.

BLACK-OWNED BUSINESSES IN HISTORIC LEXINGTON

This map celebrates the accomplishments of Black women and men who established their own businesses in Lexington, Virginia during the Jim Crow era. Members of the Black community during this time totaled nearly one-third of the city's population. Due to segregation laws, Black people were not welcome in white dining establishments, as well as in many other public and retail spaces. Black residential areas included Diamond Hill and Green Hill (to the southeast of North Main Street) and Mudtown (between the Oak Grove Cemetery and East Nelson Street). Residents recall an unofficial 9 p.m. curfew for Black citizens south and west of the Oak Grove cemetery. Entrepreneurial African Americans, with the help of their families and friends, opened up businesses to cater to the needs of their community and visitors. Four of these establishments were featured in *The Negro Motorist Green Book*, a guide providing a list of businesses that served Black patrons during a time when they faced racial prejudice, price gouging, and violence while traveling in the United States. While this map features restaurants, barber shops, guest houses, and doctors' offices (most of which were along North Main Street), it is not an exhaustive list, as more research needs to be done. With the onset of the Civil Rights movement and desegregation, many Black-owned businesses closed as their main clientele frequented other venues or moved away. Students in Professor Sascha Goluboff's course CBL 100: "Unheard Voices of Black Lexington" at Washington and Lee University produced this map in 2021 in partnership with the Rockbridge Historical Society and Rockbridge Regional Tourism in order to increase awareness of Black residents' contributions to Lexington's history.



Click the above icon to listen to podcasts featuring voices from the Lexington Black Community and their allies. Interviews were conducted by students in Professor Goluboff's 2022 CBL 100 course.

WLU Website – Black-Owned Businesses in Lexington Partnered with RHS, Visitor Center (2022)



- All Establishments
- Automotive
- Entertainment
- Food
- Lodging/Housing
- Personal Care
- Other Establishments

Events

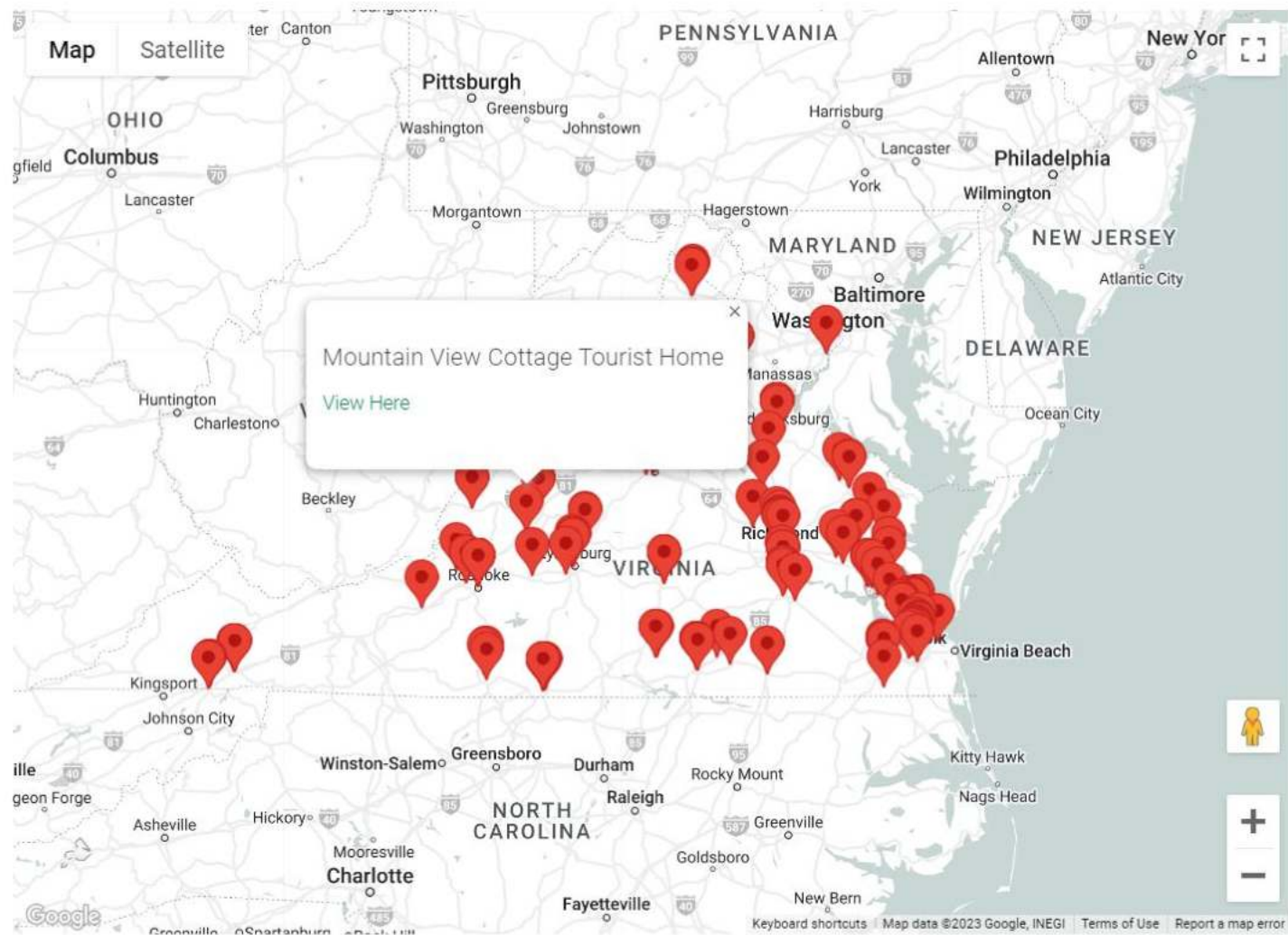
In the early 20th century, African American travelers required the same types of establishments as their white counterparts. The *Green Book's* listings were varied enough to enable travelers to find a place to stay in a strange city to arrive at the local YMCAs and YWCAs after finding a place to eat. The book also helped travelers find a place to stay at the train station while also helping families find their way to a place to see a doctor or a pharmacist to a suitable hotel.

For those traveling between the relative freedom of a hometown to less familiar places, the listings for gas stations, motels, and pharmacies ensured safe passage in distant towns. For guests traveling to large cities for social events, the publication helped travelers find dance halls and restaurants in a timely manner. As time passed, *The Green Book* grew to include a very wide range of establishment types that answered every possible traveling need.

Title	Addresses
Zarin	557 Clinton St. Buffalo, NY
Zion Inn	UT-9 Zion National Park, Hurricane, UT
Zion Lodge	1 Zion lodge Springdale, UT
Zombie Bar	1745 Boston Road Bronx, NY

« first < previous ... 124 125 126 127 128 129 130 131 132





1900 TO THE PRESENT

The Green Book



Rockbridge Historical Society

The Virginia listings featured dozens of establishments across the Commonwealth, including the Morocco Motel in Bristol, Washington Restaurant in Lexington, the Dunbar Tea Room in Winchester, the Harris Service Station in Richmond, Walker's Barber Shop in Warrenton, the Danville Family YMCA in Danville, and the Plaza Drive Inn in Newport News.

Virginia listings from the 1949 edition of the Green Book.



BEFORE 1750

1750-1899

BONUS STORY >

1900-TODAY

ROADS

VALLEY TURNPIKE TO INTERSTATE 81

APPALACHIAN TRAIL

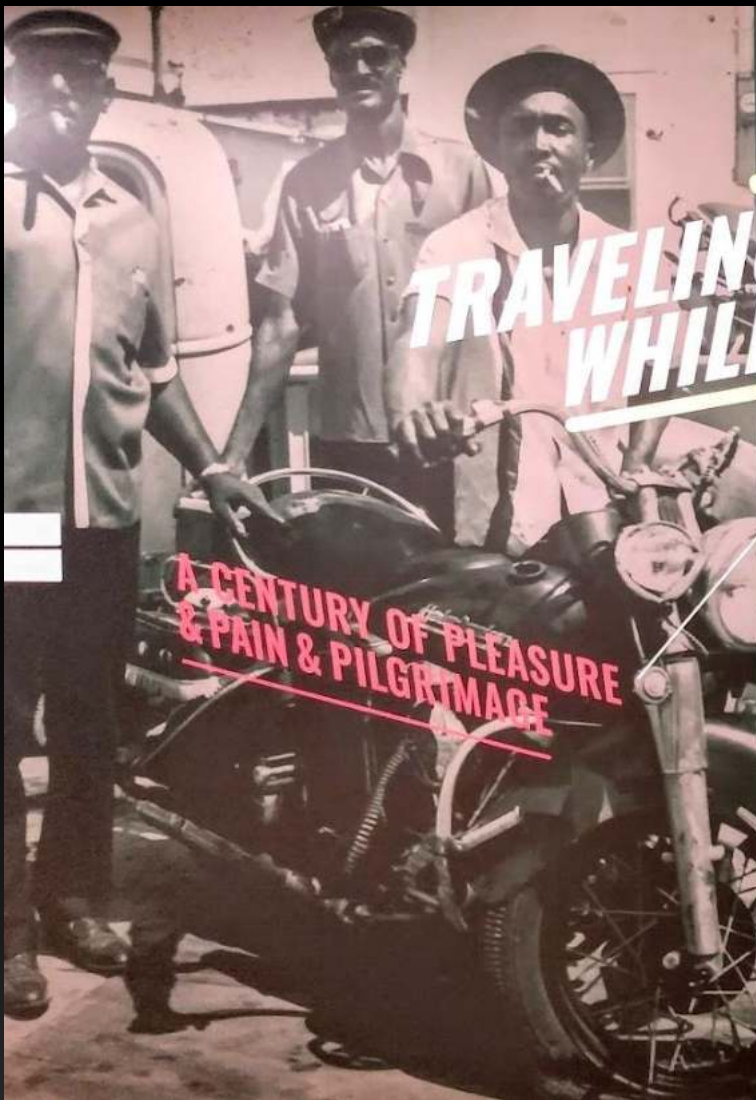
PASSENGER TRAINS

CHESAPEAKE BAY BRIDGE-TUNNEL

AIR AND SPACE



“Our Commonwealth” – Interactive Travel & Transportation Table
Virginia Museum of History & Culture , partnered with Rockbridge Historical Society (2021)



TRAVELING WHILE *Black*

Since the start of their experience in the Americas, Black people have been defined by travel, displacement, and resistance.

Whether in the horrors of the Middle Passage or the rebellion of Maroon communities made up of escaped slaves, travel has meant much—and something much more—for Africans in the Americas. This exhibition, our first as we celebrate The New York Public Library's 125th anniversary and the Schomburg Center's 95th, explores over a century of travel. Moving from the Great Migration of African Americans north and west at the start of the twentieth century to the restrictions and resistances of travel in the Jim Crow South and the Jane Crow North, *Traveling While Black* examines a history of travel, from those who found themselves exiles within their own country down to the pilgrims and pleasure seekers of our time.

War marks many of the peregrinations of the last century, often offering African American soldiers their first glimpse of other cultures beyond the United States. They returned with a new energy and

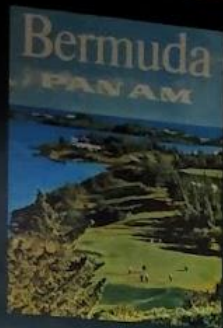
renewed hope, whether in the offerings of jazz after the Great War, or the opportunities abroad for expatriates after World War II. The freedom that African Americans sought at home and fought for abroad they often found in travel. Returning Black officers and recruits started motorcycle clubs and organized tour groups, traditions that continue today. The somewhat open road and the mostly great outdoors provided Black sojourners with literal and emotional vistas to revel in.

While confronting restrictions from Jim Crow laws and surveillance by would-be law enforcement agencies stateside, everyday travel meant obeying unspoken rules of the road. Domestic journeys involved ingenuity, often employing the Green Book, that guide for Black travelers developed in Harlem by Victor Green. *Carry your Green Book with you...you may need it!* reads one tagline for the guides. The Schomburg Center retains the largest and most complete collection of Green Books in the world; in many cases we hold the only known copy. But as any number of African American guidebooks found here indicate, from runaways to resorts, the idea of escape has had larger resonances for Black culture.

Questions surrounding Black bodies in motion—whether driving, walking, or traveling while Black—still persist, asking us to consider the meaning of migration, movement, and freedom.

—Kevin Young
Director, Schomburg Center
for Research in Black Culture

“*Traveling While Black*” 2021 Exhibit
Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture – Harlem, NYC



IMMIGRATION



Items in Traveling While Black Gallery

[View All Items in This Section](#) >



Traveling While Black Gallery
Introduction



Migrations



Bessie Coleman, Aviatix



Ralph Bunche Travel Trunks



Restrictions



View of Street Showing Segregated Taxi Cab Sign



Servicemen and ladies hold up newspapers announcing "Victory in Japan"



End of Traveling While Black Online Gallery

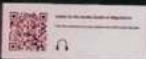
nypl.org/events/exhibitions/galleries/traveling-while-black-gallery



MIGRATIONS

The Great Migration, one of the largest movements of human beings in history, meant Black people from the South and Caribbean seeking their way north and west—for jobs, for community, for safety, and sometimes simply for a sense of adventure.

Many settled in Harlem, leading The New York Public Library's 135th Street Branch to initiate its Negro Division in 1925, the predecessor to the current Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture. At the center of the Harlem Renaissance, the Schomburg Center has served as a crossroads for migrants from the American South, African nations, and the Caribbean, bringing a unique mix of cultures and foodways to the Black Cultural Capital that is Harlem.



Such migrations didn't stop at the United States border, however, as significant numbers of Black soldiers remained abroad after the war to explore Europe and Africa and the newfound Soviet Union, with Harlem Renaissance figures such as Langston Hughes, Claude McKay, Alain Locke, Augusta Savage, and Arturo Schomburg himself traveling abroad to create art, gain perspective, and enjoy freedoms they didn't always find stateside. *We return. We return from fighting. We return fighting*, wrote W.E.B. DuBois about the dilemmas confronting those back from the war.

Back home, artist Jacob Lawrence used the Schomburg Center's rich resources to inform his historic paintings on the Great Migration and the American Struggle, capturing the daily life of Black travelers headed north or simply headed to work on the subway. With the recent debates over immigration and refugees, we do well to remember the ways migration, exile, and establishing home has long been part of the African American experience—making a way out of no way.

GREEN BOOKS

One of the best known solutions to the problems facing the Black traveler are the Green Books, a set of travel guides issued nearly yearly from 1938 to 1967 by Harlem's own Victor Green. While the guides enjoyed national distribution, helping travelers navigate segregated spaces and racist "sundown towns," the largest number of Green Book sites were right here in Harlem, suggesting services for Black visitors, from diners to tailors. Though reports have up to a million copies distributed some years, fewer than three dozen copies of the Green Book remain known today. The Schomburg Center retains the world's largest collection of Green Books, with one of its few missing volumes added last year.

NEGRO HOTELS
AND
GUEST HOUSES

State	City	Hotel Name	Address	Phone
ALABAMA	Birmingham	Central Hotel	1000 12th St. S.W.	5-1234
	Birmingham	Edgewood Hotel	1500 12th St. S.W.	5-2345
	Birmingham	Hotel DuPont	1200 12th St. S.W.	5-3456
	Birmingham	Hotel Hamilton	1100 12th St. S.W.	5-4567
	Birmingham	Hotel Jefferson	1300 12th St. S.W.	5-5678
	Birmingham	Hotel Lincoln	1400 12th St. S.W.	5-6789
	Birmingham	Hotel Madison	1500 12th St. S.W.	5-7890
	Birmingham	Hotel Monroe	1600 12th St. S.W.	5-8901
	Birmingham	Hotel Roosevelt	1700 12th St. S.W.	5-9012
	Birmingham	Hotel Washington	1800 12th St. S.W.	5-0123
ARIZONA	Phoenix	Arizona Hotel	1000 Central Ave.	2-1234
	Phoenix	Hotel El Comodoro	1100 Central Ave.	2-2345
	Phoenix	Hotel El Estrella	1200 Central Ave.	2-3456
	Phoenix	Hotel El Gallo	1300 Central Ave.	2-4567
	Phoenix	Hotel El Gato	1400 Central Ave.	2-5678
	Phoenix	Hotel El Indio	1500 Central Ave.	2-6789
	Phoenix	Hotel El Jirafin	1600 Central Ave.	2-7890
	Phoenix	Hotel El Leon	1700 Central Ave.	2-8901
	Phoenix	Hotel El Oso	1800 Central Ave.	2-9012
	Phoenix	Hotel El Puma	1900 Central Ave.	2-0123



NOTE: Under No Circumstances Does the Listing of a Particular Hotel or Guest House Imply a Recommendation of the AFRO-AMERICAN Travel Bureau

NEGRO HOTELS
AND
GUEST HOUSES

State	City	Hotel Name	Address	Phone
NEW YORK	New York	Hotel Commodore	1000 Broadway	4-1234
	New York	Hotel Hamilton	1100 Broadway	4-2345
	New York	Hotel Jefferson	1200 Broadway	4-3456
	New York	Hotel Lincoln	1300 Broadway	4-4567
	New York	Hotel Madison	1400 Broadway	4-5678
	New York	Hotel Monroe	1500 Broadway	4-6789
	New York	Hotel Roosevelt	1600 Broadway	4-7890
	New York	Hotel Washington	1700 Broadway	4-8901
	New York	Hotel DuPont	1800 Broadway	4-9012
	New York	Hotel El Comodoro	1900 Broadway	4-0123
NEW JERSEY	Newark	Hotel Newark	1000 Newark Ave.	3-1234
	Newark	Hotel El Comodoro	1100 Newark Ave.	3-2345
	Newark	Hotel El Estrella	1200 Newark Ave.	3-3456
	Newark	Hotel El Gallo	1300 Newark Ave.	3-4567
	Newark	Hotel El Gato	1400 Newark Ave.	3-5678
	Newark	Hotel El Indio	1500 Newark Ave.	3-6789
	Newark	Hotel El Jirafin	1600 Newark Ave.	3-7890
	Newark	Hotel El Leon	1700 Newark Ave.	3-8901
	Newark	Hotel El Oso	1800 Newark Ave.	3-9012
	Newark	Hotel El Puma	1900 Newark Ave.	3-0123

*Afro-American
Travel Map, 1942*

Schomburg Center,
Harlem



Small caption text located below the framed photograph.



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New York



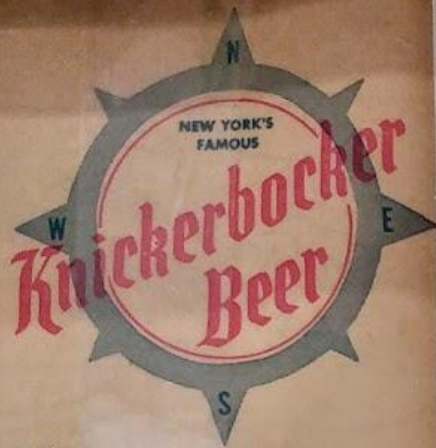
Whites call it Manhattan. Blacks know it as Harlem and Bedford-Stuyvesant. However you call it, though, New York is the biggest city in America and nerve center for the world.

The Dutch settled New York in 1615—they called it New Amsterdam—and used it as a trading post until the British captured the City in 1664 and renamed it in honor of the Duke of York. The city was under British control until 1783 when American Revolutionary forces captured the area. George Washington was inaugurated president in New York in 1789 and the city served as the nation's first capital during 1789 & 1790.

From those beginnings, New York has grown to be the country's financial capital, the largest port, center of national advertising, publishing headquarters, garment center, and leader in the arts & entertainment. The city covers 319.8 square miles and consists of five boroughs: Queens, Brooklyn, the Bronx, Richmond and Manhattan. Eight million people live in New York—more than a million are black—and over four million people work there. Its 237 miles of subway & elevated trains carry over 1½ billion passengers a year. Ask for any statistic, it'll astound you. More than 16 million tourists a year can tell you that if you don't find it in New York, it probably doesn't exist.

National headquarters for many black organizations are located there, making New York the US city blacks look to most for leadership & guidance. From New York have come many voices of resistance & struggle that have mobilized the nation's blacks for change; Sojourner Truth, Frederick Douglass, WEB Dubois, A Phillip Randolph, Malcolm X, Walter White, Marcus Garvey, A Clayton Powell Sr and Jr, James Baldwin, Whitney Young, Langston Hughes, Roy Wilkins, Henry Highland Garnet, Stokely Carmichael, Shirley Chisolm and many, many others.

The first black slaves were brought to New York by the Dutch in 1626. The city became a slave center and the Mead or Wall Street Market thrived on the buying and selling of blacks. The Dutch, and later the British, thought the slaves inferior in all ways and allowed them to mix with whites only to attend church. Blacks and Indians, rebelling against such treatment in 1712 & 1741, looted and burned white property (sound familiar?), killing nine whites. 39 slaves were executed for their actions.



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Roy Walker

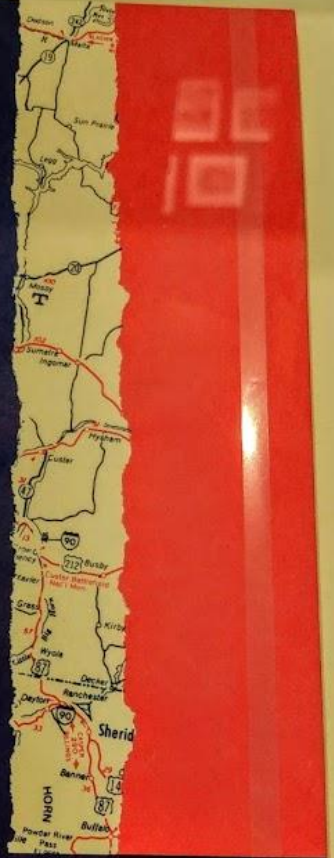
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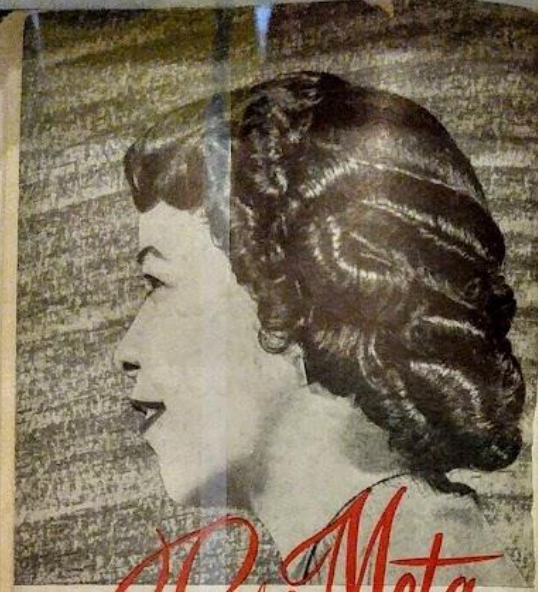


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	Birmingham	Edgewood Hotel	100 1/2 1st St. S.	5-1234
	Birmingham	Hotel
	Birmingham	Hotel
	Birmingham	Hotel
	Birmingham	Hotel
	Birmingham	Hotel
	Birmingham	Hotel
	Birmingham	Hotel
	Birmingham	Hotel
ARIZONA	Phoenix	Phoenix Hotel
	Phoenix	Phoenix Hotel
	Phoenix	Phoenix Hotel
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	Phoenix	Phoenix Hotel
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	Phoenix	Phoenix Hotel
	Phoenix	Phoenix Hotel
CALIFORNIA	Los Angeles	Los Angeles Hotel
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	Los Angeles	Los Angeles Hotel
	Los Angeles	Los Angeles Hotel
	Los Angeles	Los Angeles Hotel
	Los Angeles	Los Angeles Hotel
	Los Angeles	Los Angeles Hotel
FLORIDA	Miami	Miami Hotel
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	Miami	Miami Hotel



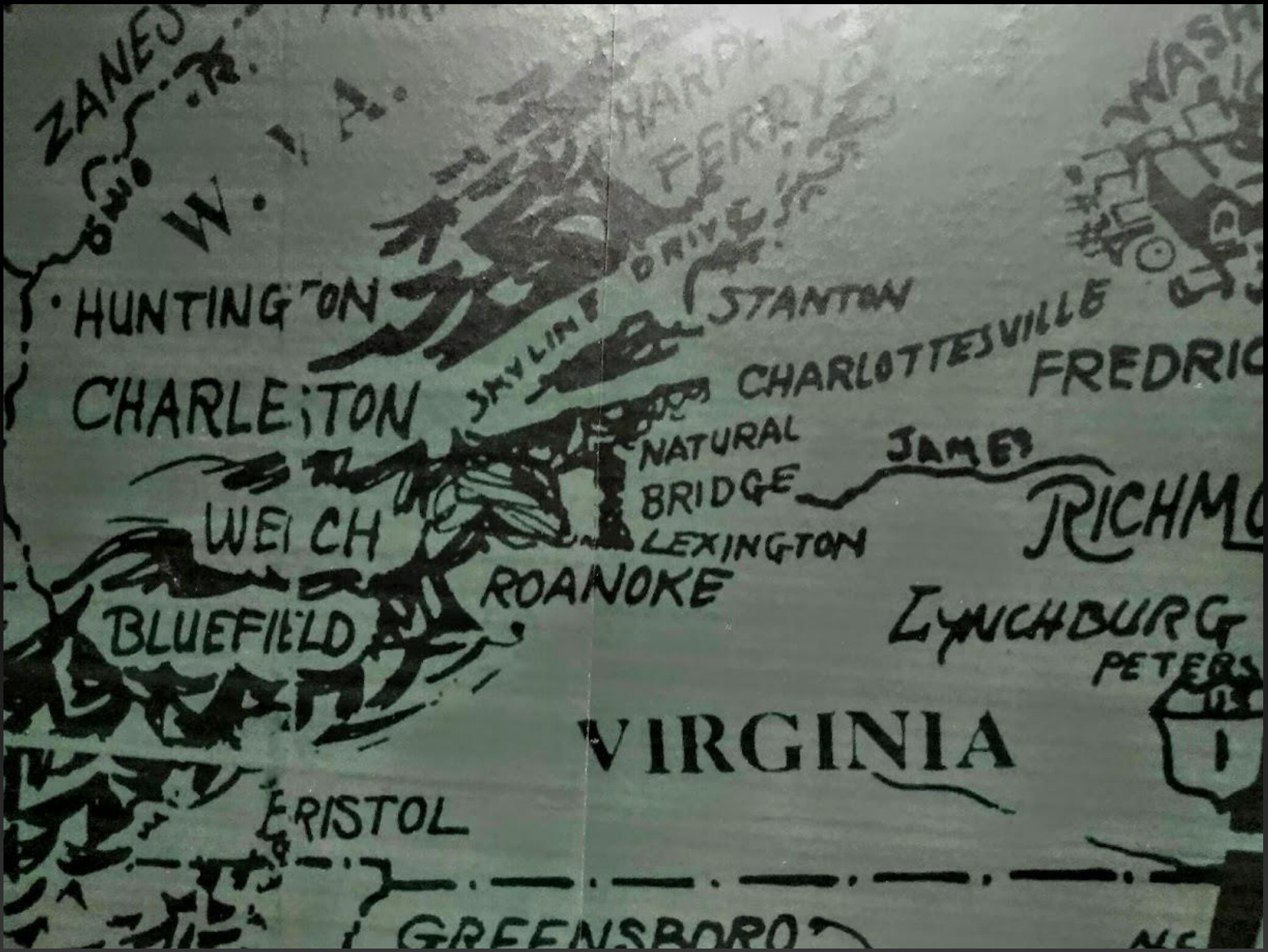
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	New York	New York Hotel
	New York	New York Hotel
	New York	New York Hotel
PENNSYLVANIA	Philadelphia	Philadelphia Hotel
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OHIO	Cincinnati	Cincinnati Hotel
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	Cincinnati	Cincinnati Hotel
	Cincinnati	Cincinnati Hotel
	Cincinnati	Cincinnati Hotel
	Cincinnati	Cincinnati Hotel
	Cincinnati	Cincinnati Hotel

*Afro-American
Travel Map, 1942*
**Schomburg Center,
Harlem**





ZANES
W. V. A.

HUNTINGTON

CHARLESTON

WEICHA

BLUEFIELD

CRISTOL

GREENSBORO

SKYLINE DRIVE

NATURAL BRIDGE

ROANOKE

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HAPPY LAND LAKE TOURIST HOME

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Virginia Inn—W. Main St.

Chauffeur's Rest—129 Preston Ave.

Alexander's—413 Dyce St.

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BARBER SHOPS

Jokers—North 4th St.

CHRISTIANBURG**HOTELS**

Eureka

DANVILLE**TOURIST HOMES**

Yancey's—320 Holbrook St.

Mrs. M. K. Page—434 Holbrook St.

Mrs. S. A. Overby—Holbrook St.

DUNBARTON**TOURIST HOMES**

H. Jackson—Route No. 1, Box 322

FARMSVILLE**TOURIST HOMES**

Mrs. Kate Wiley—626 S. Main St.

RESTAURANTS

Reid's—236 Main St.

TAVERNS

Ried's—200 Block, Main St.

SERVICE STATIONS

Clark's—Main St.

HEWLETT**TAVERNS**

Beverly Bros—R. F. D. No. 1

LEXINGTON**TOURIST HOMES**

The Franklin—9 Tucker St.

RESTAURANTS

Washington—16 N. Main St.

TAVERNS

Rose Inn—331 N. Main St.

LURAY**TOURIST HOMES**

Camp Lewis Mountain—Skyline Drive

LYNCHBURG**HOTELS**

Phyllis Wheatley YWCA—613 Monroe St.

TOURIST HOMES

Mrs. C. Harper—1109 8th St.

Mrs. M. Thomas—919 Polk St.

Mrs. Smith—504 Jackson

Happyland Lake—812 5th Ave.

BEAUTY PARLORS

Selma's—1002 5th St.

NATURAL BRIDGE**TOURIST HOMES**

Mountain View Cottage

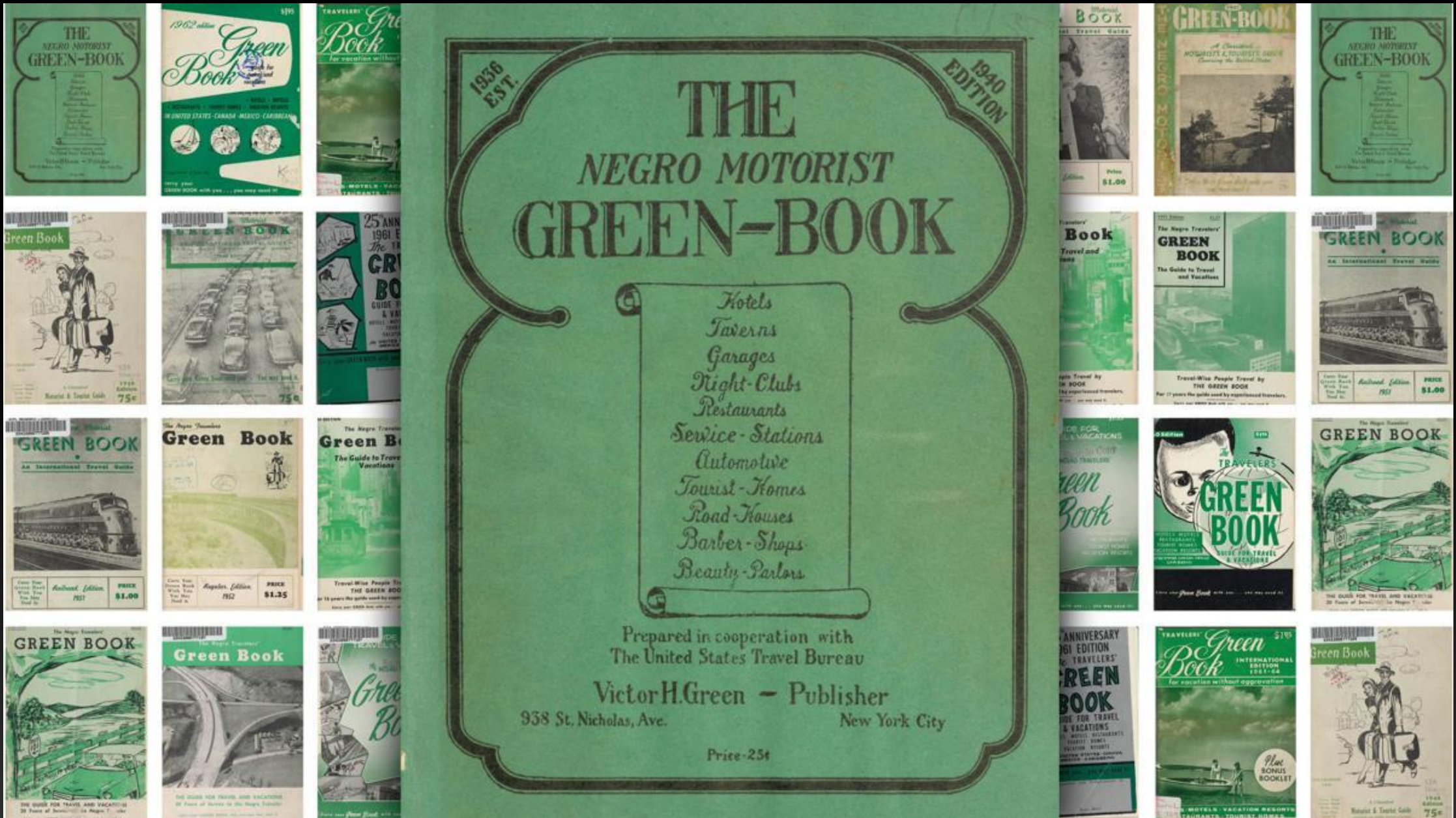
NEWPORT NEWS

1949 Green Book

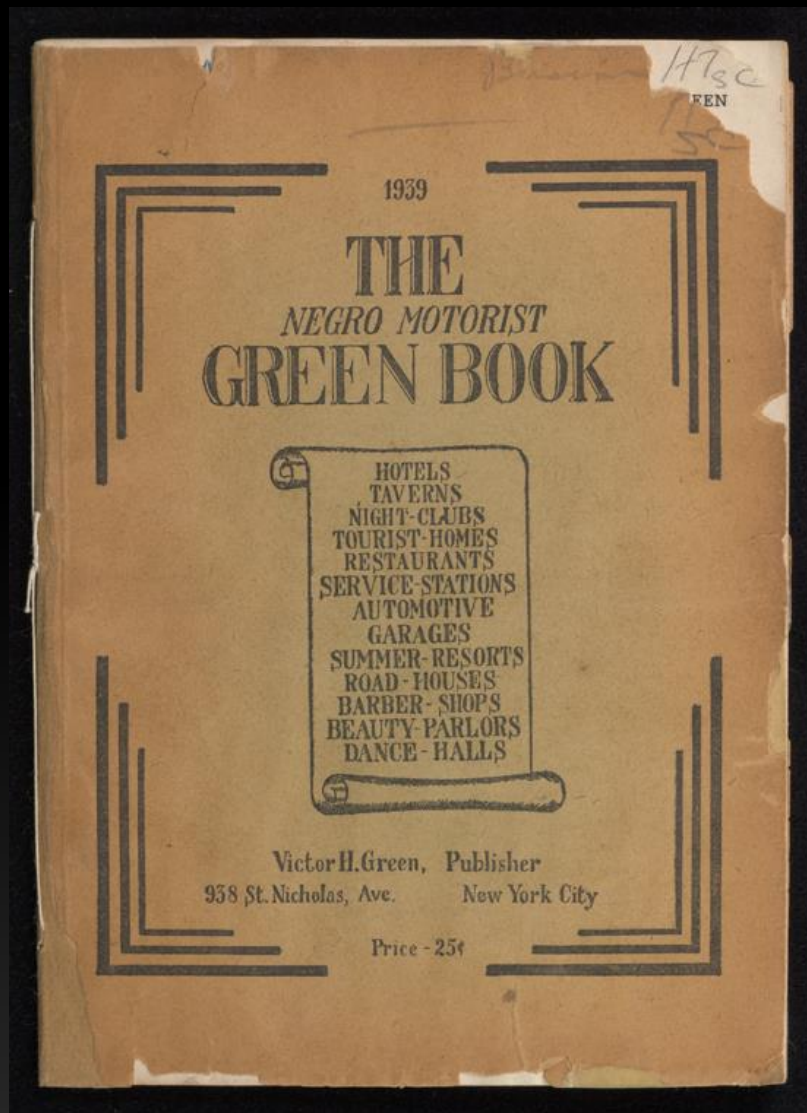
3 Lexington Listings

+ Natural Bridge

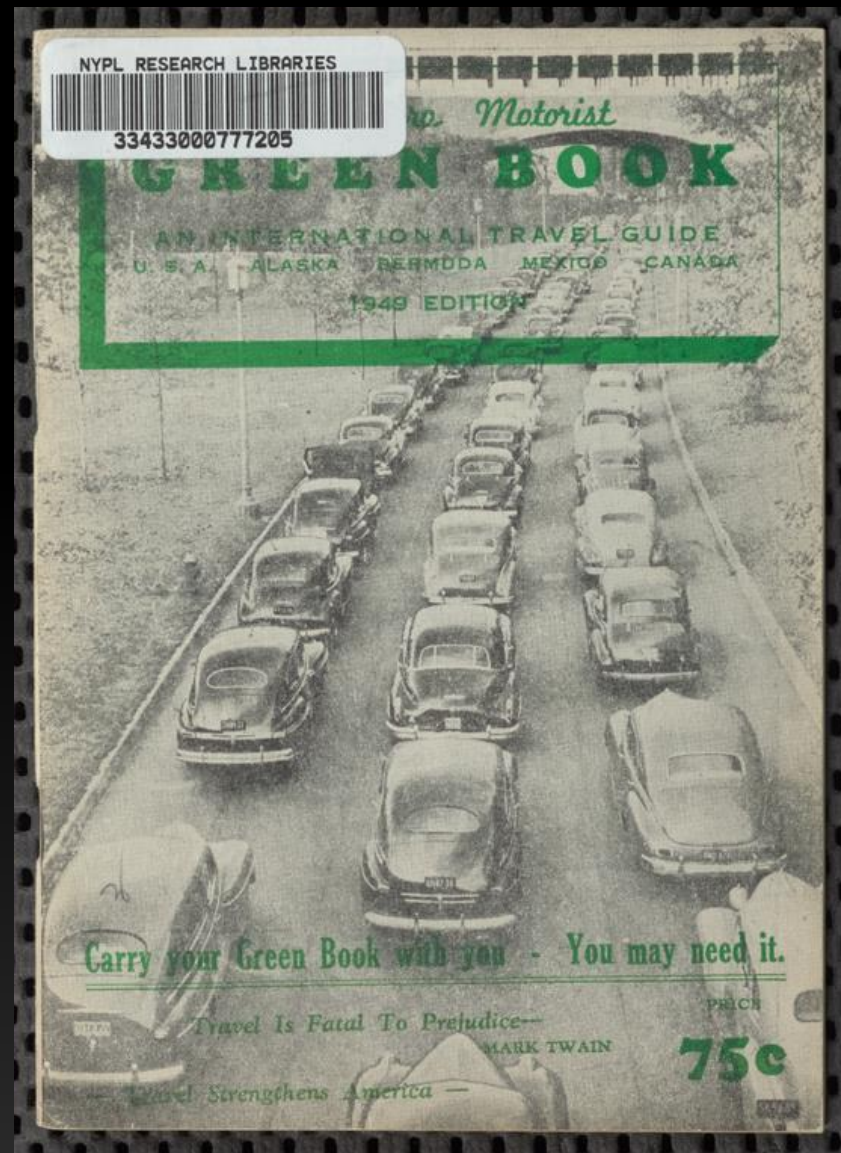
+ Others Unlisted



The Negro Motorist Green Book (published 1936-1966)



1939 Green Book:
First Year of Lexington Listings &
Rockbridge Historical Society Founded



**1949 Green Book:
'Mountain View Cottage, Natural Bridge' and 3 Lexington Listings**

CHARLOTTESVILLE**HOTELS**

Carver Inn—701 Preston Ave.

TOURIST HOMES

Virginia Inn—W. Main St.

Chauffeur's Rest—129 Preston Ave.

Alexander's—413 Dyce St.

BEAUTY PARLORS

Apex—211 W. Main St.

BARBER SHOPS

Jokers—North 4th St.

CHRISTIANBURG**HOTELS**

Eureka

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NATURAL BRIDGE**TOURIST HOMES**

Mountain View Cottage

NEWPORT NEWS

1949 Green Book

4 Rockbridge Listings

Rose Inn & Tavern
The Washington Cafe
Franklin Tourist Home

Mountain View Cottage
(Natural Bridge)



**Mary Rose at her Rose Inn Tavern & Tourist Home (“Colored”)
331 N. Main St., Lexington (demolished for VMI Training Facility
She listed annually in *The Green Book*, 1939-1966 (exc. WW2)**



Franklin Tourist Home: 9 Tucker St.
Listed annually in *The Green Book*, 1939-1966 (exc. WW2)



Washington Restaurant (black awning)

16 N. Main Street (now, Sugar Maple Trading)

Listed annually in *The Green Book*, 1947-1957

Part of Lexington's 'Black Business Corridor'

Diamond Hill Development - 1877

The overlaid maps, photographs, and panoramic views jointly provide you the opportunity to visualize change in the Diamond Hill neighborhood – overlooking Lexington, Virginia and the historical center of its African-American community – between post-war Reconstruction and the mid-20th century. Find your way into the past by sliding between Historic street maps from the 1870s and 1890s, as well as Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps. Click on the thumbnailed 'Points of Interest' for more detailed captions, and a collage of images related to the site. Cultural institutions, commercial establishments, 'Green Book businesses,' schools, churches, homes, notable residents, and facilities at the Virginia Military Institute that have overtaken parts of the neighborhood. Click here for Thanks and Credits

Panoramas

POIs



Knights of Pythias Hall



Rose Inn Colored Tourist Home



Old School Book Depository/Red Hen



Rockbridge Historical Society's Campbell House



Lyburn Downing School



Old Lexington Jail



The Castle



Old Colored School



Pure Oil Station



First Baptist Church



Washington Restaurant



G.U.O. of Odd Fellows, Lexington Lodge



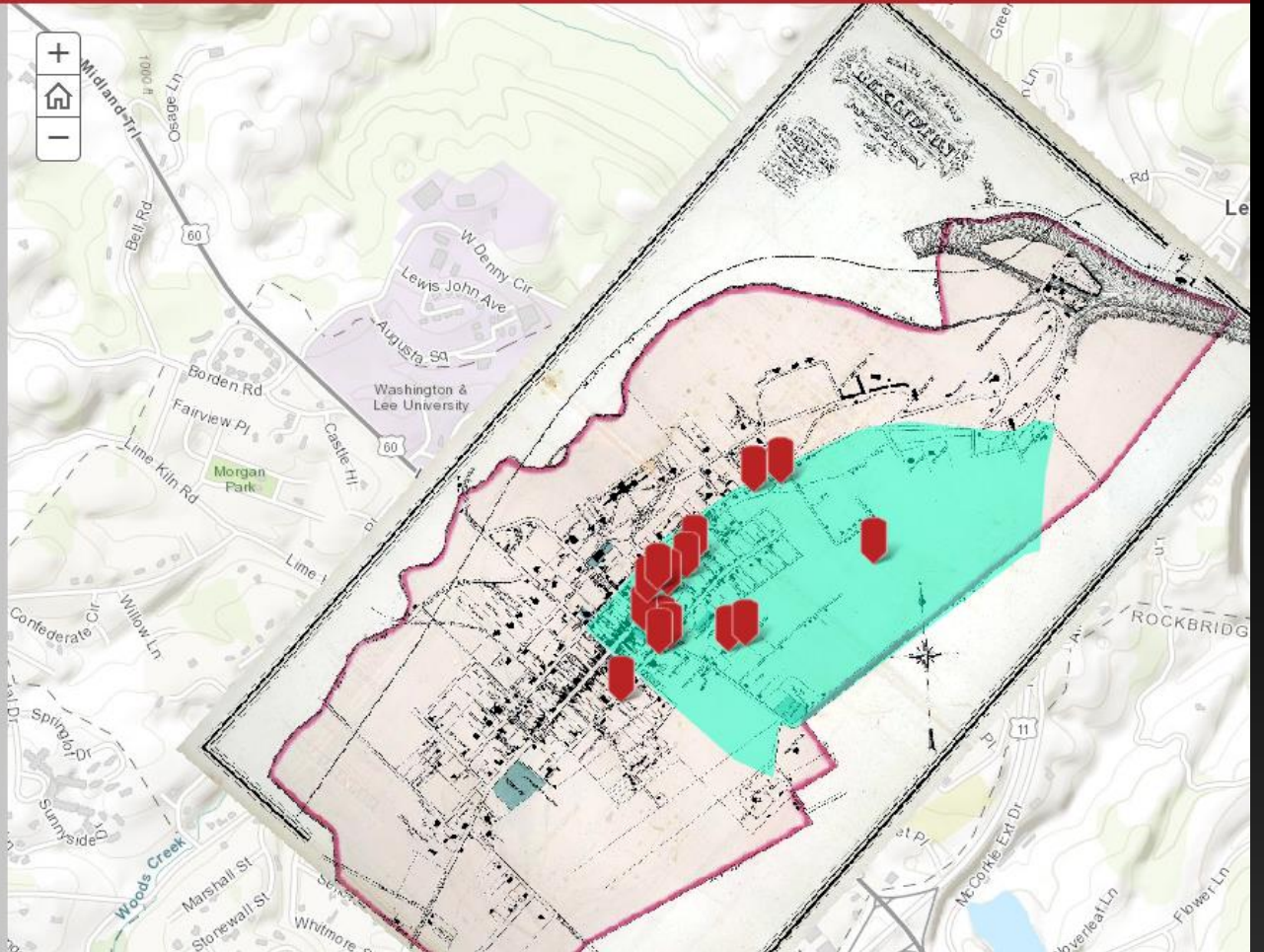
Willson-Walker House



Franklin Tourist Home



Blandome



**RHS Interactive Map (with JMU Public History & Computer Science Students)
Green Hill, Diamond Hill & VMI: Historic Sites & their Change over Time**



Looking down North Main Street, Lexington. 1950s.

BLACK-OWNED BUSINESSES IN HISTORIC LEXINGTON

This map celebrates the accomplishments of Black women and men who established their own businesses in Lexington, Virginia during the Jim Crow era. Members of the Black community during this time totaled nearly one-third of the city's population. Due to segregation laws, Black people were not welcome in white dining establishments, as well as in many other public and retail spaces. Black residential areas included Diamond Hill and Green Hill (to the southeast of North Main Street) and Mudtown (between the Oak Grove Cemetery and East Nelson Street). Residents recall an unofficial 9 p.m. curfew for Black citizens south and west of the Oak Grove cemetery. Entrepreneurial African Americans, with the help of their families and friends, opened up businesses to cater to the needs of their community and visitors. Four of these establishments were featured in *The Negro Motorist Green Book*, a guide providing a list of businesses that served Black patrons during a time when they faced racial prejudice, price gouging, and violence while traveling in the United States. While this map features restaurants, barber shops, guest houses, and doctors' offices (most of which were along North Main Street), it is not an exhaustive list, as more research needs to be done. With the onset of the Civil Rights movement and desegregation, many Black-owned businesses closed as their main clientele frequented other venues or moved away. Students in Professor Sascha Goluboff's course CBL 100: "Unheard Voices of Black Lexington" at Washington and Lee University produced this map in 2021 in partnership with the Rockbridge Historical Society and Rockbridge Regional Tourism in order to increase awareness of Black residents' contributions to Lexington's history.



Click the above icon to listen to podcasts featuring voices from the Lexington Black Community and their allies. Interviews were conducted by students in Professor Goluboff's 2022 CBL 100 course.

WLU Website: "Black-Owned Businesses in Lexington"
Partnered with RHS, Visitor Center (2022)

11. **109 Henry Street** With the construction of the railroad following the Civil War, the area's Irish immigrant population grew. In 1873, St. Patrick's Parish was formed in Lexington. The same year, construction began on the parish church at 109 Henry Street. Irish immigrant John Sheridan played a major role in the establishment of the parish and construction of St. Patrick's Church.

12. **103 N. Main Street*** The present First Baptist Church building was completed in 1896. The Negro membership of the Lexington Baptist Church (now Manly Memorial) requested and received letters of dismission in 1867 in order to found the Lexington African Baptist Church. For 25 years, worship services were held in a frame building on a lot adjacent to the present building. One of the first financial contributions to build the 1896 church came from Lyburn Downing, Lexington-born African-American minister at Roanoke's First Avenue Presbyterian Church.

13. **29-33 N. Main Street** The Sheridan Livery Stable was completed in 1887 for John Sheridan. Sheridan had the responsibility for carrying the mail and operating the stagecoach line between Lexington, Staunton, and Hot Springs. In 1919, the building became the Rockbridge Steam Laundry Corporation.

14. **23 N. Main Street** The John Ruff House was built in 1811 and served as the Ruff family residence and hat factory for the next 70 years. In 1883, Lexington Lodge No. 2461, G.U.D. of Odd Fellows, established residence in the building. The Grand United Order was the African-American Odd Fellows organization founded in 1843, whereas the Independent Order of Odd Fellows was the white counterpart.

15. **30 N. Main Street** The Willson-Walker House was built in 1820 as the residence of Captain William Willson, local merchant, postmaster, and treasurer of Washington College. In 1911, Harry Lee Walker acquired the property and turned the ground floor into his butcher shop, while the family lived above. He would subsequently purchase Blandome (see 101 Tucker Street) and move his family to Tucker Street.

16. **118 S. Randolph Street** In 1864, the black and white members of the Randolph Street Methodist Church separated. The white congregation built a new church, while the black congregation retained the frame church building on Randolph Street. The congregation tore down this building in 1892 and replaced it with the present brick structure. Andrew Carnegie donated half of the cost of the church's pipe organ.

17. **300 Diamond Street*** Now a community center, the school was dedicated on September 11, 1927 in honor of the African-American minister Lyburn Downing. Downing was born in 1862 in Lexington in the household of wartime Governor James McDowell. The school served Lexington's black students grade 1 through 10 until 1944, when it added grades 11 and 12. It was only then that black students in Lexington could graduate from high school without having to leave Lexington.

18. **321 N. Main Street** In 1927, Progressive Lodge No. 266 of the Knights of Pythias purchased this property and built the current structure. The African-American Knights of Pythias was a secret society founded in Richmond in 1864 and dedicated to the principles of Friendship, Benevolence, and Charity. After the lodge failed to make payments during the beginning of the Great Depression, the building was purchased at auction by Knights of Pythias Trustee John B. Thompson. It continued to operate as the Knights of Pythias and was a major center of the African-American community. Members of the Count Basie Orchestra are said to have jammed there during one Fancy Dress performance. Following John Thompson's death, the property was sold in 1977 to American Legion Post 291.

**Listed on the National Register of Historic Places*

THE DIAMOND HILL & GREEN HILL COMMUNITY OF LEXINGTON, VIRGINIA

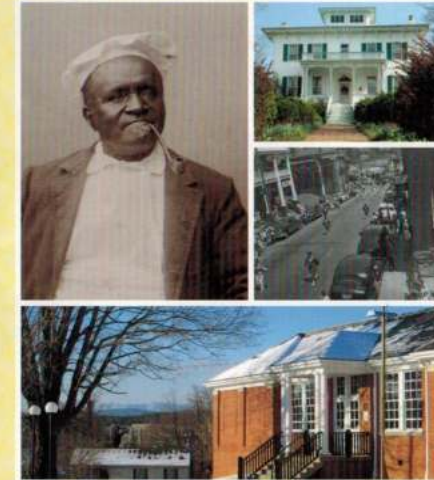
Diamond Hill is the story of people. It is the story of African-Americans, such as William Hayden Holmes, Harry Lee Walker, John B. Thompson, and Zach and Arlena Franklin. It is also the story of European-Americans like Irish immigrant and Civil War veteran John Sheridan, who lived on Diamond Hill and helped in its development.

Diamond Hill is also a lesson in 19th and 20th century architecture, from the elegant "Blandome," an Italianate villa built in the late 1820s, to numerous vernacular styles of the early 20th century. Additionally, the neighborhood and nearby North Main Street is home to several late 19th century churches and a National Register designated building constructed in the late 1920s as Lexington's "Colored School."

Following the Civil War in 1865, nearly 4,000 African-Americans in Rockbridge County had been freed, and they joined several hundred others known as free blacks. Many came to Lexington to seek work and an education. They settled mainly along north Main Street and eastward along Randolph Street. Across from VMI lay a largely open hill that became known as Diamond Hill. The origin of its name is unknown.

In 1883, a street from North Main to the top of the hill was called Diamond Street. Other streets followed. Fuller Street had begun as an antebellum lane where Jacob Fuller, a classical scholar and librarian at Washington College, built a large brick house, later known as "Blandome." In 1883, Maury Street, named after oceanographer Commodore Matthew Fontaine Maury, was also laid out. On top of the hill, Lewis Street, named for attorney William C. Lewis, was recognized in 1912 as the town's northeastern boundary.

John Sheridan, local land speculator, who owned most of the upper hill, created the Green Hill Subdivision in 1925. With its fifty lots, it became the nucleus of the town's black community. Other African-Americans also lived on Davidson and Moore Streets and along North Main Street. After World War II, most of Diamond Hill's lots were filled.



WALKING TOUR
OF THE
DIAMOND HILL
& GREEN HILL
COMMUNITY
Lexington, Va



Historic Lexington Foundation Walking Tour RHS Museum Exhibit, 2012

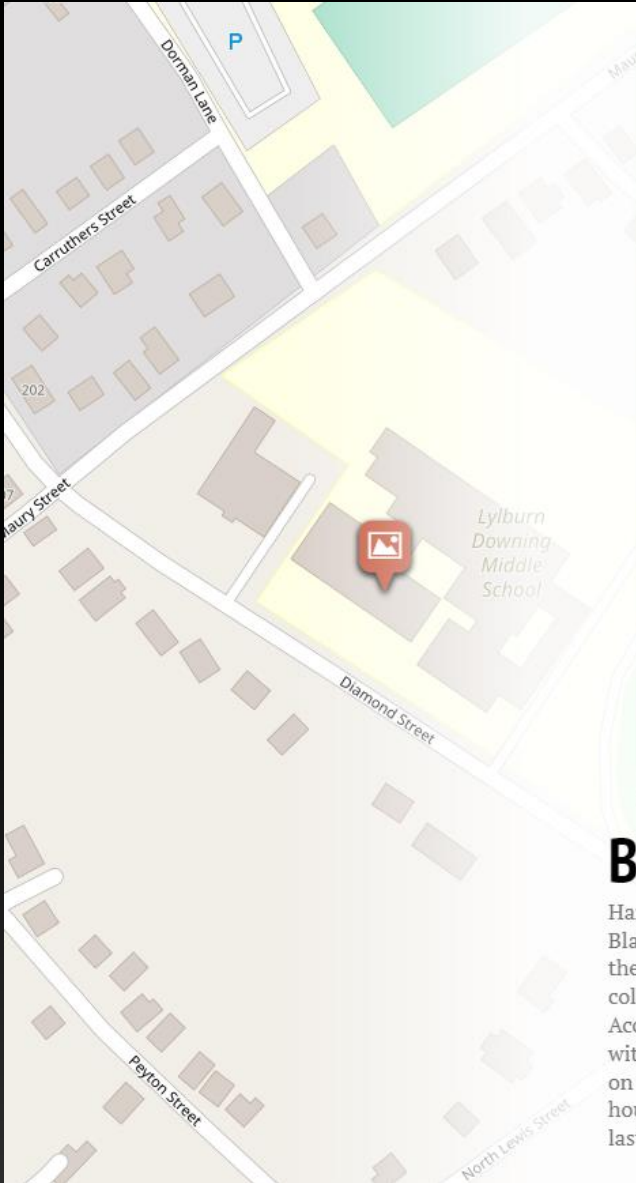


Blandome (atop Henry Street)

Purchased by Harry Lee & Eliza Bannister Walker in 1917

Their family played important roles in civic life, hosted events

Helped establish Lylburn Downing School, for Black students across Rockbridge 1927

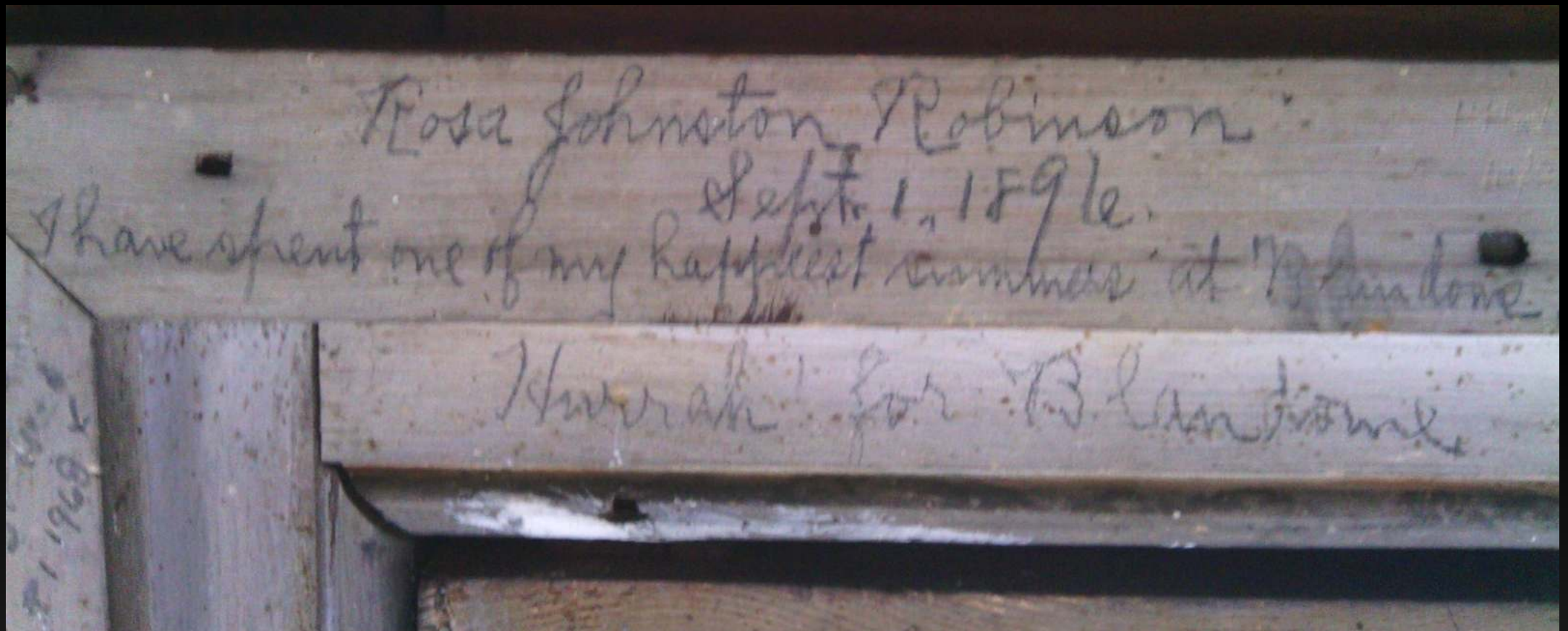


Blandome, 101 Tucker Street

BLANDOME

Harry Walker (the co-owner of Walker and Wood Brothers Meat Market) and his wife [Eliza Bannister Walker](#) bought Blandome, the grand Italianate-style home at 101 Tucker Street, in a sealed bid auction in 1917. Blandome was built in the mid 1800s by Jacob Fuller, a graduate of Washington College who founded the Lexington Preparatory School for college-bound boys. During the summer, the Walkers advertised their home as a vacation spot for Black visitors. Accommodations included "the type of Southern Aristocracy with all modern convenience seated on a three acre lot with a spacious lawn, and shaded with rare species of giant trees." Guests also could stay in the "cottages and cabins" on the property. Eliza supplied "an abundance of fresh milk and vegetables daily," and the rates were "reasonable." The house was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 2002. Alex Wood, Henry and Eliza's grandson, was the last family member to reside in Blandome. He died in 2015.

WLU Website: "Black-Owned Businesses in Lexington"
Partnered with RHS, Visitor Center (2022)



**“I have spent one of my happiest summers at Blandome...
Hurrah for Blandome”**

**Inscribed in the Cupola at Blandome: Rosa Johnston Robinson
Patterns of Seasonal Stays in Rockbridge, from further Cities**



**1921: Virginia Federation of Colored Women (Eliza Walker, Chapter President)
Meets at Blandome, with outing to Natural Bridge & Picnic at Cedar Creek:
The First State Conference after 19th Amendment passed in 1920**

CHARLOTTESVILLE**HOTELS**

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TOURIST HOMES

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BEAUTY PARLORS

Selma's—1002 5th St.

NATURAL BRIDGE**TOURIST HOMES**

Mountain View Cottage

NEWPORT NEWS

1949 Green Book

Mountain View Cottage

The only listing for
Natural Bridge
(1947-1949)



**Mountain View Cottage Ruins
Overlooking Natural Bridge
(up driveway off Route 130)**

East of Hotel & NB Baptist Church

Listed in *Green Book* 1947-1949



Mountain View Cottage: *Green Book* Colored Tourist Home

Natural Bridge State Park Ranger, Matthew Jackson
Remains of metal roof, limestone foundation & brick rubble



History's Remains → Archaeologist's Goldmine: Mountain View Cottage



Natural Bridge Hotel Scrapbooks → Commercial Advertising & National Notice

Visit



Natural Bridge

on your way to

NEW YORK WORLD'S FAIR

Higher than Niagara ...
Old as the Dawn ...
Natural Bridge is one of
the Seven Natural Wonders
of the World. By
all means see it on your
way to the New York
World's Fair. Exquisite
night illumination.
Excellent accommodations
to suit any purse.

HOTEL \$1.50
Rooms 1 and up

COTTAGES \$1.00
Double Rooms 1 per Person

For only 10c we will send you
a beautiful 8 x 10 picture of
Natural Bridge in four colors,
suitable for framing, together
with a 32-page booklet en-
titled "The Story of Natural
Bridge of Virginia"

NATURAL BRIDGE, VIRGINIA

Natural Bridge Hotel: How to Advertise?
... It's right on your way to the 1939 New York World's Fair
"Excellent accommodations to suit any purse" (*but ... any person??*)

THE COLUMBUS DISPATCH

Sunday, April 22, 1951

Enjoy a real vacation at world famous

NATURAL BRIDGE

HOTEL and MOTOR LODGE

in the Beautiful
Shenandoah Valley
of Virginia



A "miracle in stone," owned by Jefferson, surveyed by Washington. Higher than Niagara. Nightly illumination, musical pageant. One of 7 Natural Wonders of the World.



Natural Bridge Hotel, a famous landmark. Completely modern. Ideal for honeymoons, vacations. Open the year 'round. Recommended by Duncan Hines.

Natural Bridge is a complete resort . . . 1600 acres . . . hotel, cottages, motor lodge . . . swimming, fishing, golf in nearby historic Lexington, tennis, shuffleboard, dancing, playground for children. Excellent food. Moderate rates. Make your reservations now. Write for rates and illustrated folder.



The new 52-unit Natural Bridge Motor Lodge - A Quality Court.

Write for free illustrated folder. Moderate rates. Congenial surroundings. Every employee trained in courtesy and service. Address Dept. CD

NATURAL BRIDGE OF VIRGINIA
INCORPORATED
NATURAL BRIDGE, VA.
JAMES H. HUNTER Gen. Mgr.

1951: Hotel, Motor Court, Amenities for White Guests



**LUCKIES TASTE BETTER
THAN ANY OTHER CIGARETTE !**

**L.S./M.F.T.-
Lucky Strike Means Fine Tobacco**

See Spectacular **NATURAL BRIDGE**



Famed Natural Bridge. One of the 7 Natural Wonders of the World. Nightly illumination and musical pageant. Higher than Niagara.

**Your Complete Resort in the
Beautiful Shenandoah
Valley of Virginia**

1,800-acre-resort estate—hotel, cottages, new 32-unit motor lodge offering splendid vacations at moderate cost. Swimming pool . . . golf, tennis . . . shuffleboard, dancing, indoor games. Playground for children. Excellent food. Unsurpassed scenery, tonic mountain air. Make this charming resort headquarters for seeing historic Shenandoah Valley. Thrill to famous Natural Bridge, "The Miracle In Stone" owned by Jefferson and surveyed by Washington. Make reservations now . . . for an unforgettable vacation at Natural Bridge!

Hotel, Cottages and new 32-unit Motor Lodge. Modern, new decor. Pleasant surroundings, traditional hospitality and flawless service. Moderate rates.

NATURAL BRIDGE OF VIRGINIA
INCORPORATED

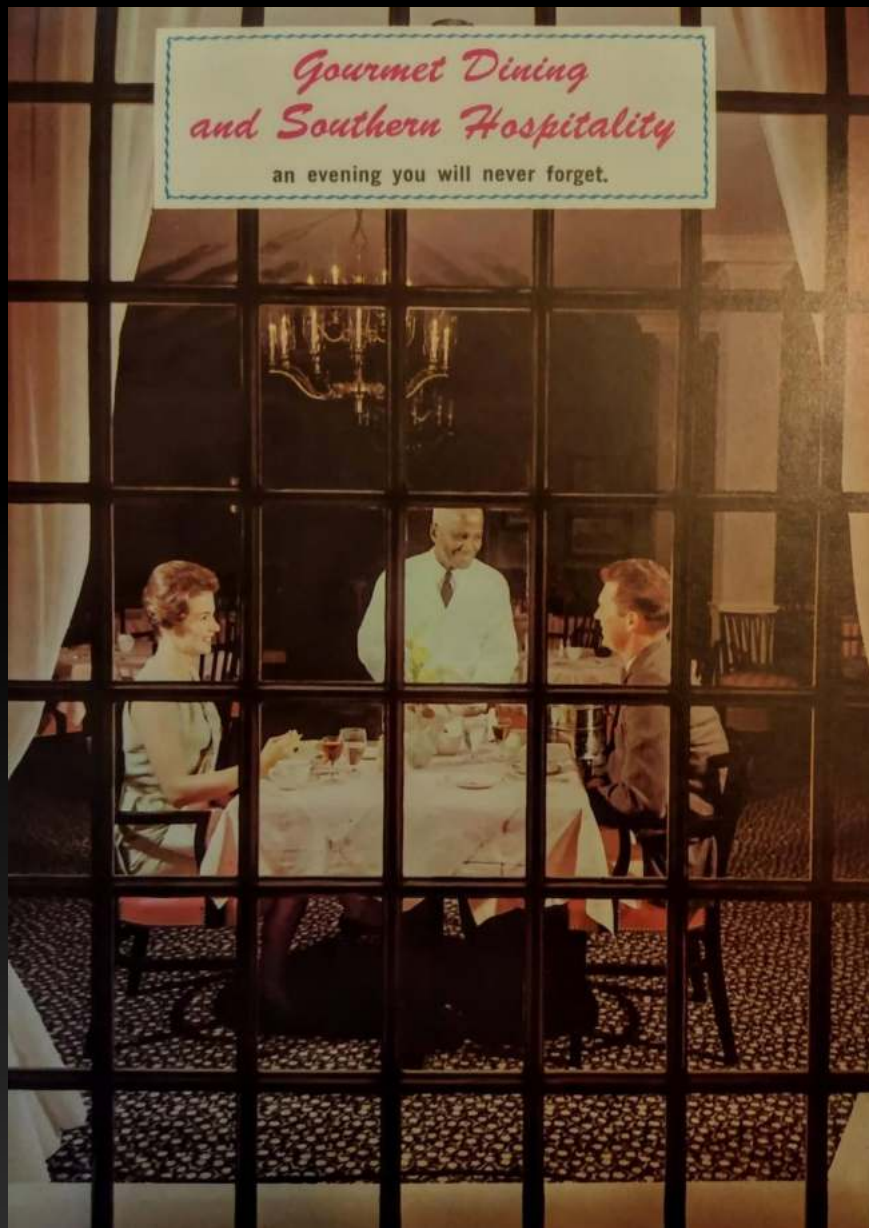
Natural Bridge, Virginia

Janis N. Hunter, Gen. Mgr.

CONVENTION FACILITIES

The hotel offers especially attractive facilities for sales meeting groups and conventions.

'Get Lucky' at Natural Bridge: Resort and Convention Facilities



Selling 'Southern Hospitality' → Two Ways: NB Hotel Brochures, 1960s



Waiters at Natural Bridge Hotel (1903)
“Every employee trained in courtesy and service.”

Some people come back just for our spoonbread.

A funny way to choose a hotel? Don't say so until you've tasted our spoonbread yourself. I have some every chance I get. I'm the doorman here at the Roanoke.

Lots of other things people like about us. The modern, comfortable rooms, the more-than-comfortable rates, the 750 free parking spaces. The old silver, fresh flowers and sparkling crystal chandeliers in our dining rooms. The ten acres of private park our hotel sits in. And the feeling of being a guest in one of the great houses of the South. (Not so surprising, considering that we've been serving travelers for over 85 years.)

Conventioners appreciate all those things—plus the Roanoke's extremely fine convention facilities. For instance, we've got over 15,000 square feet of exhibit space.

Come see us soon. And be sure to try that spoonbread. Until then, in case you want to make some spoonbread yourself, write our Chef Brown for the recipe.



- Located in area famous for scenic beauty, historical significance.
- Excellent highway, rail, bus and airline service.
- 750 free parking spaces—plus 150-car service garage in hotel.
- Heated Olympic swimming pool with crystal-clear mountain water.
- Barber shop, beauty shop, health club with steam bath.
- 425 centrally air-conditioned rooms and suites—with radio, TV, direct-dialing telephone.
- Rates start at \$9.00 for single rooms.
- Children free if sharing parents' room.



Hotel Roanoke

Roanoke, Virginia, 24006
Phone (703) 343-6992
Carl G. Thurston, Gen'l Mgr.
Fred W. Walker, Dir. of Sales

A Norfolk & Western
Railway Property.



Not pictured: Sterling Byars DeLaney, Sr. (father to Theodore, Sr., maître'd, NB Hotel)
(L): Theodore C. DeLaney, Sr., Hotel Roanoke (b. Natural Bridge, 1918-1976)
(R): Ted C. DeLaney, Jr., Chair, W&L History Dept. (b. Lexington, 1943-2020)



**Natural Bridge Stable Masters, and Children Prepare for a Ride
40-50 Horses often Stabled at NB Hotel during Col. Parsons' Tenure, 1880s**



Stage Livery in front of Forest Inn, Natural Bridge, 1890s
1912 Richmond Travelers Brochure: "First-Class Livery"



Natural Bridge Hotel Stage to Lexington, 1906
Young Teamster (could be Guy Hunt, age 15?)



**Pvt. Guy O. Hunt, U.S. Army Teamster, 407th Labor Battalion, France
(behind him, see wagon wheel signaling World War I transportation corps)**

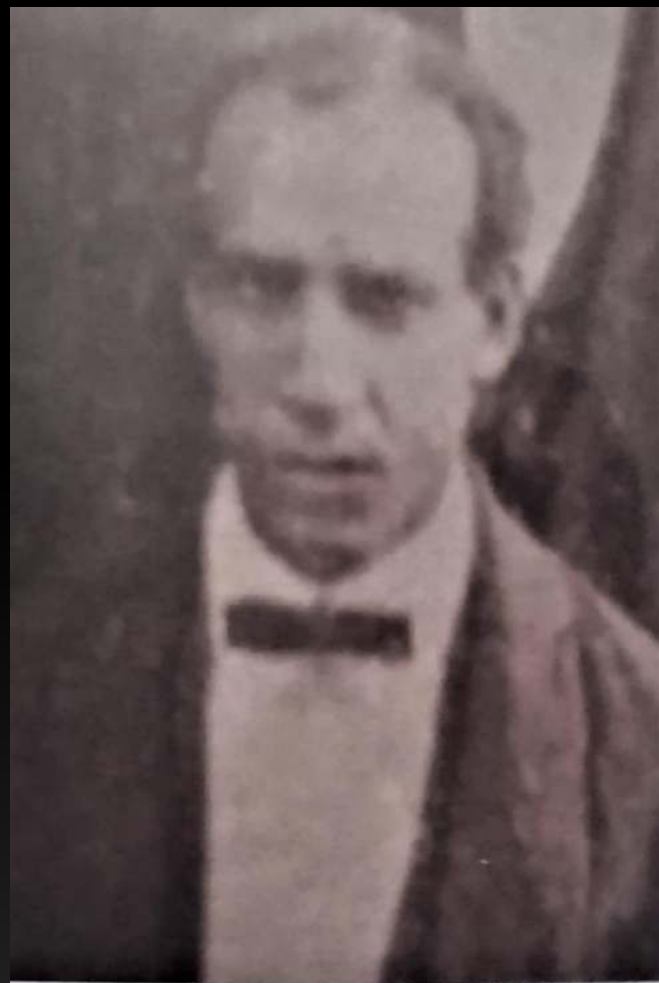


Dixon Family Home, Farm & Guest Home (unlisted)

**Buck Hill Road, 'The Enclave': 1 mi. from Natural Bridge Hotel
Built by James Dixon; Managed by Annie Virginia Sadler Dixon**



*Anna "Annie" Virginia
Sadler-Dixon 1893-1974*



*James William Dixon, Sr.
1869-1963*

Mr. & Mrs. James and Annie Dixon



Dixon House: Backyard, from Farm

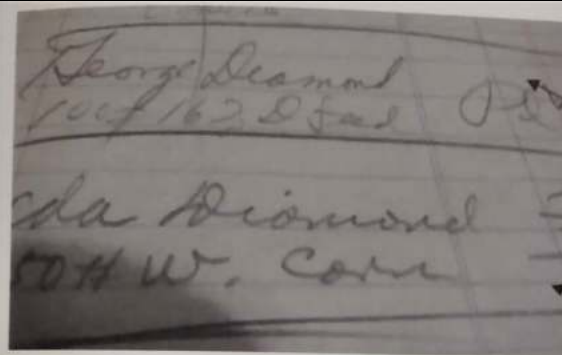
**Expanded to over 12 rooms; Tables to seat 20+ guests
Guests housed Upstairs; Family lived Downstairs**



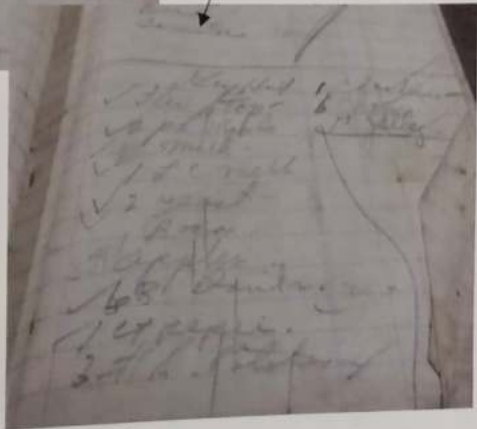
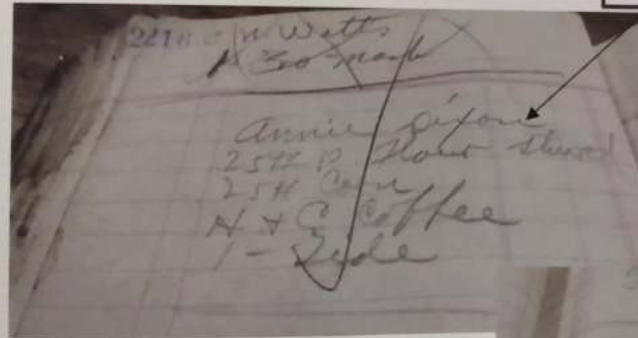
Dixons' 20 Acre Farm, Hilltop Barn



House & all Structures built by James Dixon



Entries for George Diamond,
Emily Hunt, Ada Diamond,
Annie Dixon, and Guy Hunt



Sample of commodities and items purchased:
corn for feeding hogs; laying mash to help hens
produce eggs, fatback, coffee, pepsi, 7-up, yeast,
flour, tide detergent; kennebec potatoes, bread,
bologna, apples, bacon, jelly, canned milk, etc.
Many families raised their own produce and
when they ran short of certain commodities and
items, they would purchase them.

1957 Natural Bridge General Store Ledger

Purchases registered by Annie Dixon & Guy Hunt
(compare RHS' 1798 Ledger (William Caruthers))



Buck Hill Road Cemetery (Natural Bridge)



**Home of Watts Family, also operated as Tourist Home
Forge Road, Natural Bridge**



**Boarded teachers for nearby 2-room school
Domestic Entrepreneurship**



‘Old Swimming Pool,’ fronting the ‘Tea Room’

**Across from ‘Ole Chicken Shack’: Dance Room, Bar, Social Hall
Corner of Forge & Buck Hill Roads; Community Water Spring, to the Left**

African-Americans
in the Shadow of The Bridge



*The Diamonds and Neighboring Families
Natural Bridge, Virginia
1806 - 2019*

Pat Wright and Na'im Ziyad

The Vitality & Value of YOUR Family, Neighborhood, Local Histories

Institutional & Personal Thanks

Jurette Heckscher, Library of Congress

Jefferson Looney, Monticello

Matthew Jackson & Jim Jones Natural Bridge State Park

Christopher Oliver, Virginia Museum of Fine Arts

David Coffey, Rockbridge Historical Society & VMI

Seth Goodhart & Lisa McCown, Washington & Lee Univ. Archives

Ted DeLaney, W&L Dept. of History

Alison Bell, W&L Dept. of Anthropology

Lynn Rainville, W&L Institutional History & Museums

Matthew Gibson, Virginia Humanities

Adam Scher, Virginia Museum of History and Culture

Christopher Wilson, Smithsonian Museum of American History

Henry Louis Gates, Harvard Univ. Hutchins Center for Af-Am Research

Na'im Ziyad

Pat Wright

Lois Nadine Carter Hubbard

Michelle Cooper

Beatrice Johnson

Irene Thompson

Marylin Evans Alexander

Michael Blankenship

Beverly Tucker

Larry Spurgeon

Cinder Stanton

Charles Patrick Henry

First Baptist Church, Natural Bridge

First Baptist Church, Lexington

Natural Bridge Historic Hotel

Natural Bridge State Park

Beyond “*The Green Book*”: Navigating Jim Crow in Rockbridge

Eric Wilson, Executive Director, Rockbridge Historical Society

