

The Teaford Family
By Sarah Clayton and Nellie Teaford Wood (1932-2012)
Upper Kerrs Creek
Denmark

Including an account of the journey most German and Swiss immigrants would have taken in the 18th century to the New World, where the first Teaford, Jacob Duffordt, arrived in 1846 from the Palatinate region of Germany.

The Palatinate region, in southwestern Germany, was one of the small, independent states that became part of the Federal Republic of Germany in 1949 with a name change to the Rhineland-Palatinate.

In 1749, 22 ships with a total of 7000 immigrants from the Palatinate arrived in Philadelphia. By the start of the Revolutionary War in 1775, Some 70,000 Germans had landed at this the most important port for European immigrants in the 18th century.

“It is possible to state with a degree of accuracy,” Nellie Teaford Wood wrote in her comprehensive and meticulously researched book, THE TEAFORD FAMILIES OF AMERICA, “that Jacob Teaford [or Duffordt as he was on the ship’s list] was a typical Palatine immigrant, following the usual migratory patterns after landing in this country [the New World], founding a normal family who in succeeding generations followed typical patterns of development and migration....Where the frontiers pushed, there were Teafords....When the Civil War erupted, Teafords suffered and fought and died on both sides. To know and understand the history of the Teafords is to know and understand the history of this country. The family was typical but not ordinary.

“That the immigrant [Jacob Düffordt 1764-1800] entered through Philadelphia in the years of heavy immigration from France, Switzerland, and the Germanic states especially the Palatinate, [and Northern Ireland and Scotland], offers insight into his background....

“One look at conditions in Europe comes from a letter written in 1761 in Mannheim, [then the capital of the Palatinate; today it is Mainz] to make inquiries in Holstein [Germany] about relatives who had not returned after seeking refuge there during one of the wars plaguing the region....The writer reveals that four of his eight nieces and nephews have recently gone to Philadelphia. He is thankful for ‘reasonable liberty’ and ‘citizen’s rights’ and that he has not had ‘any great burden on account of the war’ but considers himself fortunate, for he adds: ‘As far as our countrymen [it is presumed he’s speaking of the French Huguenots] are concerned, they have somewhat heavier burdens to bear because of the war and winter quarters and forage for the army. Still we fare better than the people who have to provide quarters for the soldiers both summer and winter. This we have not had to do here in the Palatinate, for which we cannot be sufficiently grateful to the Lord. Everything is, of course, dear—food and other necessities. For the French army [Catholic] is stationed only eight miles away and is lying in winter quarters only two miles away.’

“And this describes conditions in the Palatinate only three years after Jacob Teaford arrived in the colonies.”

It seems from family records that Teafords came from the heavily disputed Alsace-Lorraine region, fought over for centuries by the Germans and French, with the staunchly Catholic French being fiercely opposed to the protestant French (Huguenots), Swiss and

German protestants. Pioneer Jacob's last name then was DeFord. When he fled Lorraine for the Palatinate region of Germany, it became Düffordt.

Family history suggests that Jacob was a German speaking Frenchman from Nancy in Lorraine. In his long journey to Augusta County, Virginia, his name got spelled at least seventeen different ways, including Dufort, Deford, Defort, Teeford and Telford, depending on who, at the time, was interpreting his thick German accent. The name finally settled out to Teaford around 1798, according to some accounts, and 1840 in others, though earlier iterations continued to pop up here and there. It is an invented name with no long lineage. In her book, Nellie wrote that any time a Teaford travels in America, the first thing they do in a new place is look up 'Teaford' in the phone book. "If the name is Teaford, we must be related," said Nellie.

"...Henry Melchior Muehlenberg, [the pioneering patriarch of the Lutheran Church in America], who himself arrived in America in 1742, gave much attention to the question of immigration and in his reports...makes frequent comments on conditions once stating that most ships arrive just when the hardships of winter threaten [The usual trans-Atlantic sailing season was April to October].

"Our Jacob," says Nellie, "was more fortunate for he had some time to prepare for the worst of winter entering Philadelphia 27 October 1764 on the ship *Hero*, captained by Ralph Forster. *Hero* had sailed from Rotterdam, stopping at the English port of Cowes, on the Isle of Wight, before completing the journey to Philadelphia.

My English grandparents, Mary Louisa Kitto Chapman, and Edward Henry Chapman, honeymooned on the Isle of Wight in 1911, not long after returning to England from India where they met in 1909 at the height of the British Raj. Grandfather was a captain in the Indian Army, having run away to sea at 16; his parents died on the same day when he was 12. His father drowned; he was a lighterman on the Thames, bringing goods to the docks in small boats from the bigger ships arriving from around the world into the port of London, when his boat overturned. Few could swim in those days. His mother, ill in hospital at that time, died, neither aware of the other's demise. Edward was sent to live with aunts, hated it, and fled to sea. How he went from ships on the high seas to the army in India, I have no idea. He must have been a good soldier, though, as he was assigned to the small cadre escorting King George V and his new bride, Queen Mary, during the Delhi Durbar, a coronation ceremony held by the British Viceroy in India, Charles 1st Baron Hardinge of Penshurst (1910-1916) at that time, to proclaim the Royals, Emperor and Empress of India. My grandfather was awarded an officer's commission which he had to decline as he was unable to meet the considerable financial obligations of such a position--servants, uniforms, maintaining a horse, and all the other accoutrements of the high life the Brits engaged in in imperial India.

My grandparents returned to England where Edward set himself up as a chicken farmer and later owned a soda water company. My mother told me it broke his heart to leave the military; it was a life he was well suited for. And loved. My father, in England as a fighter pilot with the U.S. Air Force during World War II, remembered him as a reserved, intelligent man who loved to read, especially Joseph Conrad.]

“The trip to the New World [from Germany and Switzerland] in the 18th century fell naturally into three parts,” continued Nellie, “the first for most passengers the trip down the Rhine to Rotterdam [in Holland, a journey of some 297 miles], the most common departure port [from the continent]. A contemporary account, written by Gottlieb Mittelberger, an organist....who began his journey from his home on 1 May 1750 to accompany an organ shipped from Heilbronn [Germany] to Pennsylvania, to then return home, describes the difficulties in his JOURNEY TO PENNSYLVANIA IN THE YEAR 1750:”

This journey lasts from the beginning of May to the end of October, fully half a year, amid such hardships as no one is able to describe adequately their misery. The cause is because the Rhine boats from Heilbronn to Holland have to pass 26 customhouses, at all of which the ships are examined, which is done when it suits the convenience of the customhouse officials. In the meantime the ships with the people are detained long, so that the passengers have to spend much money. The trip down the Rhine lasts therefore four, five and even six weeks. When the ships come to Holland, they are detained there likewise five to six weeks. Because things are very dear there, the poor people have to spend nearly all they have during that time [for food and other personal necessities].

“The second part of the journey,” related Nellie, “took the passengers from Rotterdam to an English port, usually Cowes, the favorite stopping place of one of the seven other channel ports. Of the 324 ships bringing immigrants to Philadelphia between 1727 and 1775, 142 are reported as having sailed from Rotterdam to Cowes. In the English ports, the unfortunates again waited, sometimes to be passed through the customhouse, at other times waiting for favorable winds. The hapless passengers were unable to control the delay, victims of whimsical

officialdom as well as winds and tides. But whatever the cause, each delay increased the discomfort of the passengers and added to the cost of the journey.

“No matter the relief with which they finally left the English port to enter the final stage of their odyssey, it was that final stage which was the most insufferable. Already weakened by the hardships of their journey, they found the ocean voyage worst of all.

Mittelberger wrote: *The real misery begins with the long voyage. For from there the ships, unless they have good wind, must often sail eight, nine, ten to twelve weeks before they reach Philadelphia. But even with the best wind the voyage lasts seven weeks.*”

“Overcrowded conditions, shortages of food and water, diseases such as dysentery, scurvy, typhoid and smallpox,” added Nellie, “increased the suffering of the passengers. And then there were the terrors of the ocean itself:”

“The misery reaches the climax,” wrote Mittelberger, “when a gale rages for two or three nights and days so that everyone believes that the ship will go to the bottom with all human beings on board. In such a visitation the people cry and pray most piteously. When in such a gale the sea rages and surges, so that the waves rise often like mountains one above the other, and often tumble over the ship: when the ship is constantly tossed from side to side by the storm and waves, so that no one can either walk, or sit, or lie, and the closely packed people in the berths are thereby tumbled over each other, both the sick and the well—it will be readily understood that many of these people, none of whom had been prepared for hardships, suffer so terribly from them that they do not survive.”

Nellie summed it up: “The migrations of Germans in the 18th century have been called one of the grimmest chapters of American history.”

The Pennsylvania German Society, Vol. XXVI, 1915, reported that: “The innocent oppressed of the Palatinate, seeking hope, were given false promises, impossible guarantees and assurances, for which they faced the shocking conditions of the immigrant ships, hardship and peril, only to be exploited by unscrupulous promoters and indenturing agents. The ships were small sailing vessels but some carried as many as four hundred people.”

“If the number of people on the ship contributed to the difficulties of the voyage,” wrote Nellie, “we can be sure our Jacob’s was extremely unpleasant, for *Hero* listed her cargo as ‘500 whole freights, 200 [signing the list upon arrival].’ Since whole freights were used for adults with children of younger age going as half-freights, we can be sure the ship carried more than 500 passengers. That only 200 signed the list of that number is also a bleak statistic, for it indicates there were many who were unable to appear for signing the list, either because they were ill or had died on the journey. A macabre comment on the deaths of passengers came with the treatment of their passage debt. If less than half of the journey across the ocean had been completed, the deceased owned nothing, but if more than half of the voyage was over before he died, his survivors were required to pay the full amount....

“The good people of Philadelphia became concerned about overcrowding and illness on the ships, and citizens began to petition the Assembly to remedy conditions and prohibit greedy ship owners from exposing immigrants to the evils. In 1750 an Act was passed preventing masters and owners from overcrowding and declaring they should carry no more: ‘than such as may be well provided with good wholesome meat and drink and necessaries and have room for

single passengers of the age of over 14 years, 6 ft. in length and 1 ft 6 in. in width, and if under 14 to contain the same length and width for every two passengers.'

"The Act to improve the conditions of immigrants was passed 27 January 1750 and Gottlieb Mittelberger did not set out until 1 May 1750 of that year. But he expressed concern about the crowding of his ship with 400 passengers.

"Even when the journey's end seemed within reach," Nellie reported, "there was another delay, for law required the visit of a health officer. Any infectious diseases on board required, in the early days, for the ship to stand off one mile from the city....In 1754 an undertaker handed to the [Philadelphia] council a bill for the burial of 253 passengers from only five ships....and these deaths occurred after a 'safe arrival' in Philadelphia and after the citizenry of the colony had taken steps to improve conditions!"

In a report of 1769, Muehlenberg describes the end of the journey:

"After much delay one ship after another arrives in the harbor of Philadelphia, when the rough and severe weather is before the door. One or more merchants receive the lists of the freights and the agreement which the emigrants have signed with their own hand in Holland, together with the bills for their travel down the Rhine and the advances of the 'newlanders' for provisions, which they received from the ships on account.... Before the ship is allowed to cast anchor in the harbor, the passengers are all examined, according to the law in force, by a physician, as to whether any contagious disease exists among them. Then the new arrivals are led in procession to the City Hall and there they must render the oath of allegiance to the King of Great Britain. After that they are brought back to the ship. Then announcements are printed in the newspapers, stating how many of the new arrivals are to be sold. Those who have money

are released. Whoever has well-to-do friends seeks a loan from them to pay the passage, but there are only a few who succeed. The ship becomes the market-place. The buyers make their choice among the arrivals and bargain with them for a certain number of years and days. They then take them to the merchant, pay their passage and their other debts and receive from the government authorities a written document, which makes the newcomers their property for a definite period."

"The unique system of servitude called indenturing," wrote Nellie, "permitted the enterprising captains and the owners who financed their ventures to offer 'free passage' and 'employment' to destitute Europeans who saw in the New World a chance for improvement. Few persons were fooled by the system, for critics even then referred to it as the 'German Slave Trade.' German workers were much desired, for their skills and hard work made them quite different from the English indentured servants more common in early Virginia and Maryland, who were given terms in America to free the jails [in Britain] of minor criminals. The industrious Germans were redeeming the cost of their passage and were called in their day 'Redemptioneers.' However, the formal term, indentured servants, was used often to describe the process by which more than one-third of the Palatines paid for their passage.

"The number of years of servitude varied, determined by the best bargain that could be secured between the colonists and the merchants. Four to five years was a common term, but children were indentured until they reached maturity....Eventually the laws required a master whose servant had fulfilled the indenture to provide for his freedom by furnishing some clothing, livestock, farm and household tools, the minimum required to sustain a farming life, and called his 'freedom dues'....It was not uncommon for a thrifty man, with gold available to

pay his passage, to set it aside, going into indenture, and thus saving his *gelt* [money] for the purchase of a rich farm later, when he was better acquainted with the country and people.

“...Although the histories make much of the plight of the ‘poor Palatines’ and their cruel servitude, it is important to remember that nearly two-thirds among them were adequately supplied with passage money and were able to finance their new lives. Some had been prosperous artisans and skilled workers in Europe, but despite that relative prosperity were unable to purchase land. The love of land, the desire to make it produce and the need to pass that ownership and love on to sons for a number of generations appears to be been such a strong character trait in Jacob Teaford’s descendants that I must credit it to the progenitor as well.

“The earlier arrivals had bought up much of the land surrounding Philadelphia. The farms in Pennsylvania and New York were attractive, but the price was relatively high. Maryland and the Shenandoah Valley offered land similar to what the pioneers had left and at much cheaper prices. A letter to Governor Gooch of Virginia in 1732 declared the price was six or seven pounds [one pound sterling then is worth \$4000 today] per hundred acre cheaper.”

Klaus Wust (1925-2003), one of the founders of the Museum of American Frontier Culture in Staunton, Virginia, and overseer of finding and transporting the Palatine farm from Germany to the museum, wrote in his award-winning book, *The Virginia Germans*: “Despite the fact that much of the Shenandoah land reached the actual settler only after the original grantee, and often a middleman too, had profited handsomely in the transactions, prices in Virginia were still considerably lower than those in Pennsylvania.”

“And thus our immigrant ancestor,” wrote Nellie, “ten years after arriving in Philadelphia, appears in the records in 1774 as ‘Jacob Defort of Shannandoah County, buying land...granted to the [English] Lord Fairfax...268 acres’ ...that lies slightly southwest of the present-day county seat of Woodstock.

“The changing attitude toward religion in the Piedmont area of Virginia had contributed to the western settlement, for if the political leaders had insisted upon maintaining the state religion [the English Anglican church] and the laws barring dissenters--the Lutheran, Reformed, Mennonite and Dunkards, who made up most of the settlers, would have remained in Pennsylvania. Governor Gooch [of Virginia] is usually given credit for the desire to create a buffer state on the west as protection from the Indians and for applying the religious restrictions only to settlements east of the Blue Ridge.

“Weary of suffering under the continuing yoke of a state religion, the immigrants would not have welcomed the restrictions of Virginia, which required the payment of church levies [to the Anglican church]. The increasing religious cooperation from Eastern Virginia, combined with tolerance from the Indians, permitted the early settlements in the Shenandoah Valley. Although the Indians hated the Virginians, they had come to trust William Penn’s brothers, whom they considered ‘honest, virtuous, humane and benevolent.’ So they left the northern settlements [of western Virginia] relatively free, considering them within the Pennsylvania border, reserving their raids on settlers for the more southerly settlements [which included what became Rockbridge County].

“As soon as a few settlers gathered in sufficient numbers to be considered a community, they loosely organized churches and a few schools, meeting in homes, barns or

fields....However, as early as 1747, an appeal from Shenandoah settlers had gone out to Holland, asking for 'a minister of their own'....Little significant response came from this or from subsequent pleas....Sometimes itinerant ministers gave baptism, communion, and marriage to all—dissenter and Anglican--alike. Sometimes schoolmasters doubled as preachers without ordination, capable of giving sermons and homilies, but not able to perform the much needed sacraments of marriage, baptism, and communion....Visits of traveling Reformed ministers in 1774 and 1775 relieved the problem somewhat, but with the coming of the war years, the problem was still unresolved. The first formal request for a pastor from a Reformed congregation in Augusta was made in 1791, when our Jacob and his family had been residents for eleven years.

“...on 21 March 1780, he [Jacob] bought from Michael Dougherty 200 acres in Augusta County [near Staunton] and moved his family to what came to be known as the 'old place' where he was to live out his life. He built the cabin for his family home, part of which was still standing in 1926....Land was cheaper in Augusta [County] than in Shenandoah [County]. The purchase price was only 800 pounds, leaving him, when the Shenandoah sale cleared, with a tidy profit of 700 pounds.

“Here is a man in middle life, encumbered with a large family—a wife, boys aged four, six, eight and twelve; a daughter nine to eleven; and an elder daughter whose age is unknown—risking a move into wilder territory, leaving the relative safety of an established town nearby....They were people, we have been led to believe, to whom religion was of primary concern; yet they left an area with an established church with an educated pastor who could

preach in German...to go into an area where the home meetings found only occasional traveling ministers to meet their needs.

“Despite the statements by historians that the free practice of religion was the strongest motivating force for immigrants, this move supports the idea that land was our progenitor’s primary motive for moving. [Jacob] appears four times in the Augusta County deed books to buy land; but only once releasing any, deeding a small tract to his son Henry.

“...during the Revolution and in the thirty years following, western Virginia underwent a significant population shift, not only with young men and their families moving west, rushing into newly-opened lands with bounties from the Revolution, but moving east and south as well.

“The general restlessness created by these movings produced some strange results. Many families changed locations three, even four times within a few years.

“...And despite departures and arrivals, the Shenandoah Valley remained the ‘heart of the German settlement in Virginia,’ spreading from Shenandoah to Rockingham and Augusta counties. By 1785....the solidly German section of the Shenandoah Valley extended some sixty miles from southern Frederick [the Virginia county north of Shenandoah County] into the heart of Augusta, along both forks of the Shenandoah [River] with a heavy infiltration of the gaps and vales of the western mountains. It was the territory of which Henry Ruffner (1790-1861), Presbyterian minister and president of Washington College (later Washington & Lee University) from 1837-1848, wrote: ‘So completely did they occupy the county that the few stray English or Irish settlers among them did not sensibly affect the homogeneousness of the population.’

“...In 1782 Jacob is listed as owning five horses and fourteen cattle and hogs. By 1787 one horse has been added, and the cattle and hogs have increased to eighteen....In 1788 there

are now eight horses....The listing for 1792 was a startling one, for it shows Jacob as a slave owner, with one black male between the age of twelve and sixteen....Few Germans ever owned more than one slave and usually worked alongside them....at the time of his death...he owned three slaves: a mother and a child and a boy....in 1794 his total acreage is 778, a rather impressive total for a man who thirty-six years before came as an immigrant to the colonies.

“The final appearance of Jacob in the deed books of August County is in 1798 when...he deeded seventy-five and a half acres to his son Henry, for the price of 100 pounds. It is in copying this deed that the Augusta clerk [crossed] out Jacob *Dufford*...to write in *Teaford*.”

Jacob died at his home near Staunton late in 1799 or early in 1800, leaving his family to expand rapidly out of Augusta into the greater United States, including Georgia, Alabama, Texas, California, Indiana, Washington state. Another branch settled the Alone Mill area of Rockbridge County. Daniel Teaford owned and operated the mill there and, of the 19 charter members of the nearby Bethany Lutheran Church, 12 were Teafords and their spouses. According to the website, *forebears*, 99% of those with the Teaford surname live in the U.S., a total of some 920 people.

Pioneer Jacob Teaford's grandson, also Jacob, came to Kerrs Creek in 1846 through Goshen Pass and up the far side of North Mountain with his wife, Philaska (Greever) and five small children. When they arrived at the bottom of the mountain to find the flat, fertile land of Upper Kerrs Creek, it struck them as a perfect place for a hostelry. They bought an existing two-story log cabin and hung out a sign offering accommodation and refreshment for man and beast before the long trek up the steep-sided North Mountain.

When the Civil War broke out, Teafords signed up. When Jacob and Philaska got the telegram that their son, George W. Teaford (1840-1862), first lieutenant with Company G, 58th Virginia Infantry, Stonewall Brigade, had been killed at the Battle of Port Republic down the valley (north) some 50 miles, Jacob hitched the horses to the spring wagon [a four-wheeled, all-purpose wagon popular with farmers then] and, with his 13-year-old surviving son, Henry Hileman Teaford, Sidney's great-grandfather, rode off to bring George's body home. He was buried in the family cemetery on the hill behind the inn until the 1920s when Henry, grown now with sons and grandsons of his own, moved all the bodies to the Stonewall Jackson (Oak Grove) Cemetery in Lexington. "Valued only from beyond," spake the plinth.

In the late 19th century, before the railroad came in, people heading for the resorts of Hot Springs or the Greenbrier on the Lexington to Covington Turnpike, would often stop at the genteel Teaford Inn. Even after the railroad arrived, loyal patrons still took their holidays at Teafords. For the last few years of its incarnation, until it closed in 1949, it offered Sunday lunch. By this time, the original log cabin had long since been transformed by later additions into a white clapboard house with wide porches and tall shade trees, like a Victorian maiden in repose beneath her umbrella. I remember it well, though only in passing.

Henry Hileman Teaford (1849-1926) was remembered in the family book by his grandson and Sidney's cousin, Henry St. George Teaford's (1910-2004): "Memories of my Grandfather: My grandfather taught that through education there was no goal impossible to attain. He used to say, 'I grow old learning something new every day.' Even though he himself was the product of a one-room, all-grades school, he saw to it that his three sons had better

training, and one son attended VPI [Virginia Polytechnic Institute—today’s Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (Virginia Tech) in Blacksburg] for a time.

“Grandfather’s first job was teaching at a one-room school, Oak Knoll, which later became the second house on the farm [where Sidney, Terrall and Danny lived before moving into the inn]. When he [HH] was 19 and she 16, he married Mary Martha Miller. In the summer following their marriage, they moved to her home place near Natural Bridge....They returned to Kerrs Creek in 1885 and moved back to Teaford’s Inn after his [HH’s] mother’s death in 1890.

“In addition to farming, for about 30 years Henry Hileman was Commissioner of Revenue for Rockbridge County [in which capacity he signed the birth certificate for his future granddaughter-in-law—Seatta Emma Hardbarger (sic)], checking the output of all the distilleries and collecting taxes due on production. He served as a justice of the peace for the Kerrs Creek precinct for a number of years and acquired the title of ‘Squire’ Teaford....

“Grandfather and I delivered butter, eggs, frying chickens, and other farm products to friends and customers in Lexington. We delivered his and grandmother’s produce, also my father and mother’s [Frank Blair Teaford and Neola Margaret Cunningham] in a 1917 Ford that came equipped with the first self-starter in the county....On cold mornings this Ford was hell to start. You had to jack up the rear wheel, put it in high gear, pour all the boiling water available on the manifold and carburetor and try to crank it by hand. You always took chances on a backfire resulting in a broken arm....Grandfather was a good, though fast, driver as long as the car was in high gear. He never learned to use the clutch, brake, or reverse.

“Grandfather liked fast, spirited horses....He could not stand for someone to pass him in a horse and buggy. I’ve seen him race for miles in the buggy through fordings in the creek

rather than permit someone to pass. He was the same way in the Ford, sitting erectly in the middle or the rear seat, calling out if someone wanted to pass, 'George, won't this car go faster?'

"He had a good voice and had been choir leader before I remember, so when he rode in the back seat with me driving to and from Lexington or to and from Bethany Lutheran Church at Alone Mills, where we often attended church services and had dinner with friends and relatives, he would sing hymns....

"He was not afraid of work or getting his hands dirty, but when he dressed up for church or for Lexington when court was in session, he was erect as could be and as neat as a pin....He felt that a properly trained and disciplined mind was a person's best defense in case of trouble....He was fearless, I believe.

"I know for a fact that Grandfather was almost single-handedly responsible for US Route 60 being built up Kerrs Creek instead of through Collierstown and across the mountain to Clifton Forge. [The Virginia Highway Commission had already planned the route through Collierstown 'without physically checking both routes.' Henry Hileman was advised by his lawyer to get a petition for the road from the Kerrs Creek people, which he did]...."Grandfather and I left Lexington for Upper Kerrs Creek, 12 miles on a dirt road. We stopped at every house on the way, getting signatures and no refusals....the Commission voted to come to Rockbridge County and travel over both routes. There was quite a caravan of interested people following the Commission with Grandfather among them, of course. I enjoyed seeing the long string of cars go by the house....the Commission voted to reverse the previous decision and build US Route 60 via upper Kerrs Creek. In talking with me, Grandfather used this as an illustration of

not giving up without exhausting all possible solutions to a problem. He always said, 'You are not ever whipped until you admit it to yourself.'"

Henry St. George Teaford and his grandfather, Henry Hileman Teaford, were the only Teaford males born at the Inn.

Sidney's grandfather, Frank Blair Teaford (born in Oak Dale, in the Buffalo District of Rockbridge County), and grandmother, Neola Cunningham Teaford from "Waterloo," on the east side of nearby North Mountain ran the place until he died in 1943; Neola kept the inn going before closing in 1949. Soon after, she became wheelchair-bound and Sidney's parents, David Cunningham Teaford and Seatta Hartbarger Teaford, moved into the inn with their three sons: Sidney Melrose, five; Terrall David, nine; and Dannis "Danny" Langley, two.

"They maintained open house to the family and made the home seem to belong also to everyone who visited," wrote Nellie in her family history. "Work parties at time of butchering in the winter, woodcutting or canning in the summer, always with time out for making ice cream and having fun."

By the time young Sidney was ready for school, the drafty old Denmark Graded School, opened in 1917, had closed and the Upper Kerrs Creek students attended Highland Belle.

"They were very strict over there," he recalls. "You couldn't chew gum. You behaved. I don't think the kids today could make it. But I think it was good."

"He [father David] went to work for Hill and Kutz Construction Company in the early 50's," wrote Terrall in the family history book, "as he could no longer make a living farming full time. He tried both public work and farming a few years, but gradually the hogs, chickens and

cattle disappeared. He tried to keep the farm going, plowing and cutting hay at night but it was too much. Sometimes it would be midnight before he got to bed. I think he had to get up a couple of times in a night with Grandmother Neola. We boys could run the tractor and keep the weeds mowed but we knew nothing much about how hard Dad was working. Neola died in 1958.

“In 1969, Sidney and I decided to use the farm for a beef cattle operation,” wrote Terrall. Dad helped us repair and build fence and get the operation going.”

It only lasted a few years.

“We bought five steers and built fence,” says Sidney. “But Terrall worked at the bank and I was in DC. If a cow got out, he’d have to leave the bank. It didn’t work out too well.” The 100-plus acres of the original farm are still in the family, rented out now to others for hay-making and cattle grazing.

“Dad was not a hunter,” wrote Terrall, “but we boys loved it. He would go with us, carrying an old shotgun. He never shot at a deer, always tried to run it to us for a shot. He let us put a baseball diamond in the barnyard, helping us to mow the infield grass so we could have a big Sunday afternoon game. He would also play.

“In 1972-3, he helped Norma [Terrall’s wife] and me design and build our house on a piece of Teaford land. I think he loved the farm....When things didn’t work out, it was the weather or the government [at fault].”

In 1974, David Cunningham Teaford, died from a bulldozer over-turning on him.

“...looking back,” says Terrall, “I see him as a good father, respected in the community, hard-working, and usually left the discipline of us three boys to Seatta. I think he just wanted to be one of the boys.”

When Seatta needed care in old age, Sidney, retired, but still living in Washington, would come home every six months to look after her. Then Danny would take over for the next six months, a routine that lasted 11 years until Seatta’s death in 2012. She and her husband, David, are buried in the family cemetery at Waterloo.

And, then, on Thanksgiving Day 2014, 168 years after the first Teafords took up residence there, the inn burned to the ground. Sidney Teaford, Pioneer Jacob’s six times great-grandson and the last Teaford to occupy the inn, was home at the time.

“I woke to the smoke alarms all going off,” Sidney recalls. “About 11 o’clock. I tried to get out. Opened the kitchen door and was hit by a wall of flames so went out the front. There was a bit of snow on the ground and all I had on was socks and pajamas. I headed down to White Rock Road to call for help but a lady came by. She dialed 911 then went home and got me some shoes. I don’t even know her name. I had a coat in my car. But all I could do was stand there and watch the house burn.”

The only part of the building to survive the fire, ignited by faulty electricity, were the charred logs from the original cabin left thereafter in a corner of the adjoining field to return to the earth.

“I lost everything. I didn’t have the keys for my car or my wallet or anything,” says Sidney, a one-time cycling enthusiast. “I stayed the first night with my brother Terrall up in

Waterloo, then a year with my brother Danny, while the new house was being built. I moved in 13 months later. And I love it. It's great to live in a new house. No more dirty wood."

I knew exactly what he meant. I'd spent a lifetime in beloved 18th and 19th century homes stoking fires, wrestling with cantankerous chimneys, and loving it. Until one day...you just don't.

Sidney doesn't even have gas logs in his new home, and sold all the family antiques stored in the 1899 barn built of siding and logs hauled over by his great-grandfather from a dismantled structure in Goshen. "Dad built a basketball court in the barn for us boys," he says. "All the neighbors would come over and play.

"[The inn] was just the place I grew up in," states Sidney "I left home at 18 and went to work for the government in Washington. In security. For 37 ½ years."

When Sidney and I wander outside as I prepare to leave, he points out a huge magnolia not far from the front door.

"It survived the fire," he says. "Got burned pretty bad but it came back. Like me." He laughs. "There's no place I'd rather be at my advanced age than right here. I'm back full time."