

Elvin - Settled by Jacob Virts, Sr.

The following information has been graciously provided by Jeanie Virts LaGrave.

Jacob Virts, Sr., son of Peter Philip Wurtz, began the settlement at Elvan, contracting with master builder, Ben Lakin, for a two and one-half story house overlooking the South branch of Dutchman's Creek. The creek, and the Germans who settled there were affectionately known as Dutchmen. The settlement was a mile and one-half west of Lovettsville (once called Thrasher's store.) The house was built in 1810 and became known as the *Stone House of the Dutchman*. The Virts place remained the area's only farm until 1866 when Silas D. Kalb built a two story stone house a mile and one-half west. A few years after the stone house was built, Jacob had a log cabin built for his farm help, a quarter mile south of his home place. By 1910 the cabin had collapsed.

Jacob and his wife Elizabeth George lived on the farm and raised their family there, until his death in 1829 and according to Jacob's will, their eldest child, Elizabeth "Betsy" inherited the *Stone House on the Dutchman*.

Betsy married David Conrad in 1816 and their daughter Jane Conrad was next in line to inherit the *Stone House on the Dutchman*. Jane married Charlie Johnson and she and her family lived on the farm for many years. During the Civil War, Matt Conrad (a cousin) fought off Union Soldiers who tried to confiscate the horses. The Johnsons had always had fine horses and had a race track where Curt Johnson trained them. Many of these fine animals were sold in the District of Columbia. Robert G. Johnson was one of the many Johnson children and the father of Freida, Esther and Columbia who live in the George House at George's Mill.

After the elder Johnson's died, John Ebb George bought the Virts farm in 1908. The estate still remained in the Virts family, as John Ebb's wife was Orra Virts, granddaughter of Jacob Virts Sr. After the death of John Ebb George the farm came into the hands of Samuel Henry George and his wife Cecelia McKimmey who lived on the place most of their lives. The farm was then left jointly to their three daughters, Edna George Albaugh, Margaret George Keena and Eliza George Myers.

"I was born in the *Stone House on the Dutchman*, and although I did not live here for many years, I have always thought of the Stone House as home. When I returned a few years ago, I began at once on a program of restoration and improvement which is still in progress. I am fortunate in have a good many old family furnishings for the house", writes Eliza George Myers.

During 1870's and 1880;s George Anderson, a New Yorker and a school teacher walked two and one-half miles one way over the 800 foot climb over Short Hill to teach at Water's School. Anderson had practiced walking in the Union Army. He settled by the Kalbs after the war and married Mary Ann Elizabeth Shores, raised by a Mrs. Brown at the Virts' cabin.