

Dillwyn Town Hall¹

The Town Hall was originally the First National Bank, built prior to 1923, replacing a wooden frame building. Afterwards it became the Buckingham Co. Bank, then the Virginia National Bank. The fire of 1928 did not destroy the entire town only because this brick structure stopped the fire's spreading. After a succession of owners, Virginia National Bank gave the property to the Town of Dillwyn on March 31, 1965. The present Mayor of Dillwyn is Samuel Ranson. The present Town Council members are Anita Eanes, Ossie Harris, B. D. LeSueur, Leslie O'Bryant, Paul D. Seay, and Ervin Toney.

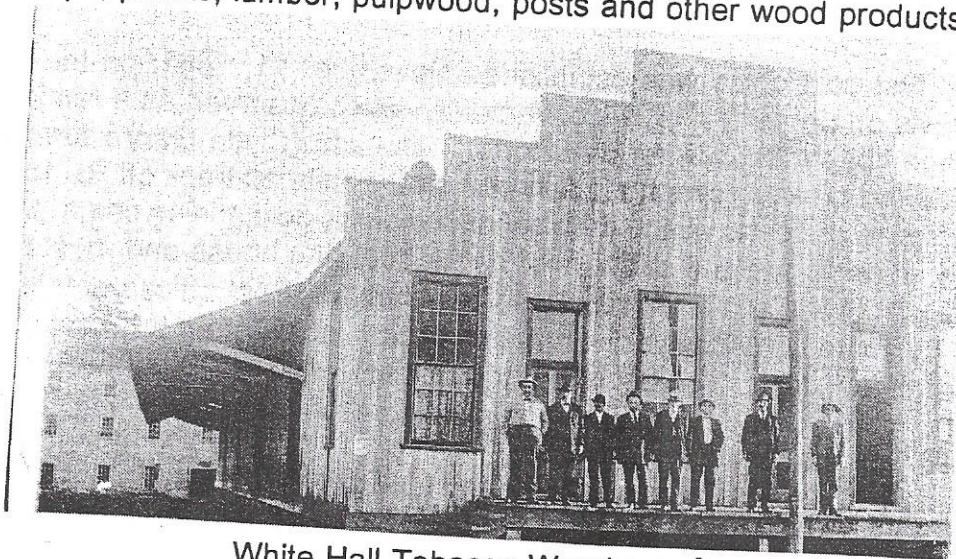
Oral history is one of our nation's oldest traditions. People look at the past and formulate different interpretations based on known facts and family traditions, which are passed verbally from one generation to another. Finding actual facts to support an interpretation of history is a time-consuming project. This "history" is a combination of oral tradition and the facts we were able to uncover in the past three months.

We start this history with Rosney, a small industrial center in the area. There were a post office and general merchandise store which sprang up around the mine for the use of workers and local residents. The Rosney Mining Company and Rosney Iron and Lumber Co. located there were the primary places of employment. The charter dates the company from November 10, 1890. The board of directors included Frank T. Shaw, John H. Walter, James H. Billingslea, John L. Reifsnider, H. Murray White, and Charles Reifsnider. Although the train was coming to Rosney, the Rosney Iron and Lumber Co. was dissolved on December 12, 1918.

Knowing about the railroad, H. M. White, an extremely gifted businessman, purchased a 316-acre tract known as the Gilliam or the Garrett tract on March 1,

1892. Originally Stephen Garrett owned the tract, which was ordered sold at auction by Chancery Court on his death. Randolph Griffin acquired the property with a bid of \$300.00 but was unable to make the last payment. On April 29, 1881, Griffin requested the Chancery Court to direct the deed be made out to Zachary Griffin with John T. Oliver as surety for the last bond payment. Subsequent divisions of property list the owners as John T. Oliver and his wife Jessie as well as Zachary Griffin along with "vendor's lein." White bought the property from Oliver and Zachary Griffin. Although some buildings remain, the present town is on the original part of the William R. Silvey Estate situated next to the Dillwyn Depot. H. M. White set up a lumber concern to make ties for the coming railroad and bought 301 acres of timber to furnish not only railroad ties but building material for the new structures he was planning. Several new businesses started, and the community began to grow. Named for Mr. H. Murray White and William E. Hall, "White Hall" was situated on what is commonly called "the bottom."

The bottom was a low spot in the topography of the area at the end of the present-day Camden Street. A survey of the grantee and grantor books from the early 1900's indicates that White Hall Company bought and sold many parcels of land which H. M. White and his wife Kate owned in and around Dillwyn. One of H. M. White's most important legacies will be bringing the timber industry to the area--from railroad ties to pulpwood to lumber and logs and even the bark used for commercial dies. As the tobacco industry dwindled in local markets, the timber business took over. Many businesses now depend on buying and selling timber, wood chips, pallets, lumber, pulpwood, posts and other wood products.



White Hall Tobacco Warehouse²

Built by H. M. White to store tobacco for future shipment by train, the White Hall Tobacco Warehouse Co. was incorporated June 21, 1897. The trustees were John T. Oliver, Bryce P. Glover, H. Murray White, Edward Moon, J. B. Hanes, A. G. Terrell, W. L. Boatwright, Jeff Davis, M. L. A. Moseley, R. M. Anderson, and James L. Anderson.