

Washington Co., Virginia Waterways

Early Names and Their Modern Day Equivalent

By Robert E. & Donna Jean Ford, 1633 Cheryl Way, Aptos, CA 95003

August 31, 2013

All Rights Reserved

NFHR = North Fork Holston River; **MFHR** = Middle Fork Holston River; **SFHR** = South Fork Holston River. Old records show the Holston River as Holstein River at times and very old records occasionally as Indian River.

The name “**Holston River**” was used in many of the old land records to describe that section of the South Fork of the Holston River that flows southwest from it’s junction with the Middle Fork of the Holston River to the Sullivan County Tennessee border. Washington County maps such as the 1890 Boyd map and various current maps name that section as “**South Fork of the Holston River.**” The SFHR continues to flow through Tennessee until it’s junction with the NFHR on the Sullivan/Hawkins County line west of Kingsport. From that point on the river is called the Holston River until it reaches its confluence with the French Broad River just east of Knoxville, Tennessee. The merged waters from both the Holston River and French Broad River then become the Tennessee River.

Some Washington County names of rivers, creeks, branches, runs, etc., have had name changes over time. The following are some of the old stream names and their replacement names. Occasionally there are slight variations in the spellings on USGS topographic maps and in surveys and deeds.

Abrams Creek (a south branch of the NFHR) was also called Abrahams Creek in the old records.

Baker Creek (a north branch of the MFHR) was also called Stalnaker or Thompson Creek and is now called Hutton Creek.

Beaver Creek There were two Beaver Creeks in early Washington County:

- (1) The main one with headwaters between Abingdon and Bristol that flow southwest and then south through Bristol and empties into the SFHR in TN. This Beaver Creek was formerly called Shallow Creek according to Washington County District Court Book A, page 261.
- (2) This Beaver Creek is a south branch of the NFHR in Smyth County. (Smyth County was formed from Washington and Wythe counties in 1832).

Brights Creek (a south branch of the NFHR) is now called Nordyke Creek.

Carmacks Creek is now called Stoffel Creek which is an east branch of Steele Creek. Steele (also Steels) Creek is a north branch of Beaver Creek which is a north branch of the SFHR. An east branch of Carmacks Creek may have been called Moore’s Creek.

Cove Creek. There were four Cove Creeks in early Washington County:

- (1) One Cove Creek is a south branch of the NFHR and is now located in both Scott & Washington counties with the larger part and the mouth in Scott County.
- (2) This Cove Creek is now called Locust Cove Creek and is a north branch of the NFHR. It is located in Smyth County where the mouth of the creek is near where (when driving west) Route 42 meets up with the NFHR. The creek extends east from it’s mouth along Route 42.
- (3) This Cove Creek is now called Cave Spring Branch and is west of Denton Valley and flows in both Washington County, VA and Sullivan County, TN.
- (4) This Cove Creek was also called Jerrys Creek at the same time in the old records. Today the creek is in Smyth County and just called Jerrys Creek which is a branch of Rowland Creek, a south branch of the SFHR.

Eleven Mile Creek (a north branch of the MFHR) is now called Greenway Creek.

Eighteen Mile Creek is now called Town Creek. Town Creek flows through Abingdon then south to Wolf Creek.

Gaspers Creek is now called Gaspard Creek (a south branch of Smith Creek) on the USGS Bristol 1:100 000 scale topographic map and is also on the 1890 Boyd Map of Washington County. (Bing & Google maps give the name of the road along Gaspard Creek as “*Jasper Creek Road*”). Smith Creek is a south branch of the NFHR north of Rocktown and Fleenors.

Grays Creek (a south branch of the NFHR) which was also called Davis Creek, is now called Garrett Creek. (There is currently another creek called Gray Creek near Roebuck).

Grumley Creek is called Brumley Creek on USGS maps.

Halfacres Mill Creek (a south branch of the NFHR) is now called Stonemill Creek which is located near Clinchburg.

Harrolds Creek was also called Scotts Creek and is now called Greendale Creek. The creek flows north along side highway U.S. 58 and empties into the NFHR upstream a ways from the mouth of Little Moccasin Creek which is a north branch of the NFHR.

Hunts Creek is now called Spoon Gap Creek which is a branch of Wolf Creek which is a north branch of the SFHR.

Ketron Creek (a branch of Cove Creek) has headwaters near the Scott/Washington County line but is located almost entirely in Scott County. Ketron Creek had various mis-spellings of the name in the old records such as: “Kettrons, Ketterons, Kittorns, Kitterons, Kiterons, Keelring's, Kathrens, Catrins, Cathrins, and even Catharine.”

Keywords Creek or **Keywords Mill Creek** is now called Keywood Branch and is a branch of McHenry Creek which is a south branch of the NFHR.

Keywords Fork (or Kaywoods Fork) is now called Yellow Spring Branch which is an east branch of Logan Creek (a south branch of the NFHR).

Lees Creek is now called McHenry Creek (a south branch of the NFHR).

Little Holston Creek (a north branch of the MFHR) is now called Byers Creek from its mouth to Tattle Creek & Indian Run and then the upper part of Little Holston Creek is now called Hall Creek north of Byers Creek.

Mobleys Creek (see Wallaces Creek).

Moffett's Creek (see Rattle Creek).

Moore's Creek may have been an east branch of Carmacks Creek.

Opossum Creek is now called Possum Creek and is now located in Scott County, VA (part of Scott County was formed from Washington County in 1814).

Owens Branch a north fork of Beaver Creek is now called Goose Creek.

Rattle Creek. There are currently two creeks in Washington County named Rattle Creek:

- (1) The longer one is an east branch of Nordyke Creek which is a branch of the NFHR.
- (2) The other Rattle Creek runs along Route 684 south of Barnes Chapel to Route 700 and then east along Route 700. This Rattle Creek was also called Moffett's Creek.

Reedy Creek (a north branch of the SFHR) was also called Ready Creek in the early records. The north fork of Reedy Creek is now called Boozy Creek and is located in Scott County.

Scotts Creek (see Harrolds Creek).

The Sinking Creek in the early records that was a north branch of the Holston River was actually a branch of the SFHR. Today this Sinking Creek flows in a southerly direction east of Bristol and then becomes Paperville Creek in Sullivan Co., TN. Paperville Creek then flows south to where it becomes Beidleman Creek which then flows into the SFHR.

Talley's Branch was a stream on the Washington/Scott Counties border on the south waters of the NFHR.

Trimble Creek was an east branch of Gaspards Creek on the 1890 Boyd Map of Washington County that is now called Krimmel Creek.

Tumbling Creek. There were two Tumbling Creeks in Washington County.

- (1) The Tumbling Creek that flows west from Smyth County to the Russell/Washington/Smyth corner then turns south and flows into the NFHR. This creek was also called Big Tumbling Creek to perhaps distinguish it from Little Tumbling Creek that is to the east of Tumbling Creek.
- (2) This Tumbling Creek (also Tumbling Fork) was a small creek that emptied into the Laurel Fork of the SFHR and was only called that on a couple of surveys (Survey Books 1:40-41 & 2:61; VA Land Grant Books 9:730-731 & 44:433-434).

Valley Creek was what is now the East Fork of Wolf Creek. That Wolf Creek being a north branch of the NFHR. The West Fork of Wolf Creek was just called Wolf Creek and was looked at as just an extension of Wolf Creek. Currently there is a second Wolf Creek in Washington County that is a north branch of the SFHR.

Two Mile Creek is now called Parkers Branch and is located in Smyth County on the south side of the SFHR.

Wallaces or **Wallan Creek**, **Mobleys Creek** and **Ewings Creek** are now called Maiden Creek which is a southernly continuation of Finley Creek (a south branch of the NFHR). Maiden Creek flows north to the Rich Valley where it becomes Finley Creek near the community of Glenford. Wallaces Branch was an southeasterly branch of Wallace Creek that flows through what is now the community of Shortsville. Wallaces Branch was sometimes just called a spring branch in the old records and was not named. Wallaces Branch was the boundary lines between John, Joseph & Moses WHITE's three deeds from George & Jean FINLEY on 20 Jan 1795 (see Washington County Deed Book 1:407-409) also see George FINLEY's 370 acre survey dated 27 May 1785 (Washington County Survey Book 1:282).

There were two **Youngs Creeks**:

- (1) Youngs Mill Creek (a south branch of the NFHR) was also called Youngs Creek, Marklands Mill Creek (sometimes spelled Marklins Mill Creek), just Mill Creek, Logans Mill Creek and is now called Logan Creek.
- (2) The other Youngs Creek was another south branch of the NFHR and is now called Rattle Creek. This creek was also called Mill Creek, Youngs Mill Creek and John Youngs Mill Creek.