

**OLD KEYSER GRAVEYARD**  
Luray, Page Co., Virginia



*Charles Keyser Cemetery*  
*17 February 2019*

## CHARLES KEYSER CEMETERY INVENTORY

Luray, Page County, Virginia

18 February 2019

1. **CHARLES KEYSER, SR. / (CARL SEBASTIAN KÄYSER) (16 Jan 1726 - 1778) aged 52 years.** The date of his death is unknown, but he was buried before 28 May 1778. A very unusual incident happened after Charles had been laid to rest. While his great-grandson, **Isaac C. Dovel**, was visiting his relatives in Virginia, a conversation with some of them arose as to where Charles and his wife were buried. Some inclined to the opinion that both were placed in the same grave, so they decided to open it. On 9 October 1876, his **grave was opened** by Peter and Henry Keyser, sons of Andrew Keyser, Jr. Also present were Charles Keyser, (*grandson*), Capt. Joseph Keyser, (*son of Noah Keyser*), Joseph W. Keyser, (*son of Peter Keyser*) and Uphemia Richardson, (*daughter of Andrew Keyser Jr.*). The skull, teeth and hair were found to be in a wonderful state of preservation after having been buried [98 years]. [Dovel Family Record.] Apparently, after they **reburied him**, they did not mark the spot, and currently there is no marker designating his exact place of burial. A small modern memorial stone, bearing the incorrect year of birth (1702), was placed in the ground at a later date, but was not visible during a visit in Feb 2019.



2. **WIFE OF CHARLES KEYSER, SR. (-)**

Some early researchers attributed the name of **Mary Shelly** as Charles Keyser's wife; others list her name as **Elizabeth Grossgloss/Grossclose**. No definitive evidence has been found either way, and her name remains in dispute. No original marker was found. The exact location of her grave is unknown, and it is possible she was reburied with her husband on 9 Oct 1876. At some later date, a memorial stone bearing the name, **Elizabeth G. Keyser**, was placed along the fence line looking toward the Charles Keyser, Jr. home and was visible in 2019.



3. **CHARLES KEYSER, JR. (about 1752 - 1796) aged 44 years.**  
 Son of Charles Keyser, Sr. Died in the **Yellow Fever Epidemic** of 1796 along with at least four of his children, all of whom were buried in this cemetery. No marker for him has been found. His wife, **Elizabeth Baker Keyser**, moved “west” with several of her children, and died in Ohio before 1843. Her body was interred in **Kizer Cemetery, Champaign Co, Ohio.**
  
4. **CHARLES KEYSER, III (about 1788 - 1796) aged 8 years.**  
 Son of Charles Keyser, Jr. and Elizabeth Baker Keyser. He died in the **Yellow Fever Epidemic** of 1796 with his father and three of his siblings. No marker identified.
  
5. **ELIZABETH KEYSER (about 1790 - 1796) aged 6 years.**  
 Daughter of Charles Keyser, Jr. and Elizabeth Baker Keyser. She died in the **Yellow Fever Epidemic** of 1796 along with her father and three of her siblings. No marker identified.
  
6. **UNKNOWN KEYSER (- 1796)**  
 Child of Charles Keyser, Jr. and Elizabeth Baker Keyser. Died in the **Yellow Fever Epidemic** of 1796 along with his/her father and three siblings. No marker identified.
  
7. **UNKNOWN KEYSER (- 1796)**  
 Child of Charles Keyser, Jr. and Elizabeth Baker Keyser. Died in the **Yellow Fever Epidemic** of 1796 along with his/her father and three siblings. No marker identified.

In 2001, researcher Julie Voyles wrote: Charles Keyser, Jr. died of Yellow Fever, along with four of his children, two of whom have not been identified. He is buried in the Old Keyser Farm in Page County, Virginia. In the family graveyard are several rough, unhewn stones of native blue limestone on which inscriptions have been carved by an unskilled workman. **All of these stones appear to have been set up at the same time, and carved by the same hand.** An attempted reading of one is as follows: “*Here lies the body of C. Keyser. He was born ----- 1752 -----1799.*” [Sources E.J. Sutherland; Louise Keyser Cockey; “Keyser-Kiser-Kizer” by Denise Mahan Moore; “Mead Relations” by A.M. Prichard; and Ann Hart Stewart.]

On my visit in 2019, six unidentified stones were found; some of them could possibly have marked the graves of Charles Keyser, Jr. and these children, or someone else. Two had indications of markings, but were much too faint to read (photos below).

**UNIDENTIFIED FIELDSTONE MARKERS**



8. **ANDREW KEYSER, SR. / (MAJOR ANDREW KEYSER) (16 Dec 1758 - 23 Nov 1833) aged 74 years.** Son of Charles Keyser, Sr. He was a **Soldier in the Revolutionary War** in Pvt. Oldham's Company. Andrew Keyser, Sr. has two tombstones in this cemetery:

(A) Military Tombstone



*Tombstone with its whitewashed face (left), date of photo unknown; and as it looked in Feb 2019 (center and right).*

(B) Hand Scribed Field Stone



*Whitewashed field stone (left), date of photo unknown. To the right is the stone as it appeared in Feb 2019. The inscription originally read, "Sacred to the memory of A. Keyser who departed this life on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of Nov. 1833, aged 75 years."*

9. **SARAH MARGARET “SALLY” RINEHART KEYSER (1770 - 1820) aged 49 years.**  
 First wife of Andrew Keyser, Sr., and sister of Catherine Rinehart, wife of her husband’s brother,  
 John Keyser.



*Whitewashed hand scribed field stone (left), date of photo unknown. At that time, part of the inscription could still be read, “**HERE LYS THE BODY OF SARA KEYSER WHO WAS BORN...**”. To the right is the stone as it appeared in Feb 2019. After Andrew Keyser, Sr.’s death, his second wife, **Elizabeth Grove Strickler Keyser**, went to live with her daughter and was buried in the **Heiston Family Cemetery near Dry Run in Page Co.***

10. **ANDREW KEYSER, JR. / (COLONEL ANDREW KEYSER) (30 Mar 1804 - 20 Jul 1876) aged 72 years.** Son of Andrew Keyser, Sr. and Sarah Rinehart Keyser. **Colonel in the Virginia State Militia.**



*Tombstone with its whitewashed face (left), uprighted by Owen Kiser and John Parrott in May of 2000. During a visit in Feb 2019, the stone had fallen flat on the ground but was not cracked (right). Inscription: “**Andrew Keyser Died July 2<sup>nd</sup> 1876 Aged 72 years, 3 mos. & 20 days. The father----- and soldiers’ friend.**”*

11. **MARY EMELINE BRUBAKER KEYSER (28 Mar 1810 - 11 Nov 1834) Aged 24 years.**  
First wife of Andrew Keyser, Jr.



*The tombstone as it appeared at an unknown date, (above left), and as it appeared laying on the ground during a visit in 2019, (above right). Inscription reads: **MARY** wife of **ANDREW KEYSER** died Nov. 11, 1824. Aged 24 years, 7 months & 14 days. Another stone was found with only the initials M. K., which may have been the footstone marker for her grave.*



12. **PAMELA A. KEYSER HOTTEL (26 Dec 1826 - 25 Jan 1862) Aged 35 years.**  
Daughter of Andrew Keyser, Jr. and Mary Brubaker; wife of Jared M. Hottel.



*Marker as it appeared at an unknown date (left), and in 2019 (right). Inscription reads: **In Memory of PAMELA A. Wife of JARED M. HOTTEL, and daughter of ANDREW & MARY KEYSER. Dec. 26, 1826 - Jan. 25, 1862.***

13. **ROBERT G. KEYSER (8 Mar 1828 - 7 Oct 1828) Aged 6 months.**  
Son of Andrew Keyser, Jr. and Mary Brubaker.



*Marker as it appeared at an unknown date (left), and during a visit in 2019 (right). Inscription reads: **ROBERT G. Infant Son of Andrew and Mary Keyser.....***

- 14, **CHARLES KEYSER (2 Sep 1806 - 18 Oct 1891) aged 85 years, 1 month and 16 days.**  
Son of Andrew Keyser, Sr. and Sarah Margaret Sally Rinehart.



*The marker when it was still upright (left) at an unknown date, and lying on the ground as found in 2019 (right).*

15. **AMANDA HAUN KEYSER (12 Jan 1814 - 7 Feb 1900) aged 86 years and 25 days.**  
Wife of Charles Keyser, son of Andrew Keyser, Sr. and Sarah Margaret Sally Rinehart.



*The stone as it appeared at an unknown date (left). The headstone, still upright (center), along with a plain stone lying on the ground (right) inscribed with the initials A. K., which could have been her foot stone, as they appeared in 2019.*

16. **JULIA ANN (THOMPSON or COX) KEYSER (13 Sept 1813 - 22 Mar 1880) Aged 66 years, 6 months and 9 days.** Second wife of Andrew Keyser, Jr. Per handwritten records found in Andrew Keyser's 1829 Bible, Julia's name is given as **Julia Ann Thompson Keyser**, however other sources, such as the research of **Julie Voyles**, and the article, "**The Keyser Family**", in the **Page News and Courier, 29 Apr 1897**, give is as **Julia A. Cox**.



*Upright stone as it appeared at an unknown date (left). Headstone and footstone as they appeared during a visit in 2019 (above). Inscription reads: **JULIA A. Wife of Col. ANDREW KEYSER died March 22, 1880. Aged 66 years, 6 months & 9 days.***

17. **ANDREW NEWTON KEYSER (9 Aug 1849-17 Jan 1852) aged 2 years, 5 months and 8 days.** Son of Andrew Keyser, Jr. and Julia Ann Keyser.



*The headstone as it appeared at an unknown date (left), and what I believe is the same headstone, lying on the ground (center) and the footstone with the initials A. N. K. (right) during a visit in 2019.*

## ADDITIONAL BURIALS

According to previous inventories of the CHARLES KEYSER GRAVEYARD, the following people are also buried there, although no markers for them were found in 2019.

**18. ESTHER KEYSER (10 Mar 1851 - )**

During a survey on 20 Mar 1983, **Mrs. Jeanette Conner Ritenour** found a hand inscribed fieldstone for: *Esther Keyser Born 10 Mar 1851*. She noted that the rest of the inscription was too faint and illegible to decipher. Also noted, Esther was the **daughter of Sarah Keyser**.

**19. SARAH KEYSER (17 - 1851)**

In WPA Historical Inventory Report No. 182 dated 14 February 1938, **Vivian Black** noted a home made stone with the following inscription: *Here lies the body of Sarah Keyser. She was born D C M 11, 17--. Died 1851.*

**20. UNKNOWN DAUGHTER OF ELIZABETH KIZER**

During a survey on 20 Mar 1983, **Mrs. Jeanette Connor Ritenour** found a fieldstone hand inscribed as follows: *Here lies \_\_\_\_\_ Daughter of Elizabeth Kizer. She was born 2-14-\_\_\_\_\_ and died 12 \_\_\_\_\_*. She noted that the rest of the inscription was very illegible.

**21. LUCRETIA BELLE KEYSER BRUBAKER (15 Aug 1862 - 6 Feb 1922) Aged 59 years.**

Daughter of Charles Keyser (son of Andrew Keyser, Sr. and Sarah Margaret Sally Rinehart) and Amanda Haun; wife of Dr. John C. Brubaker. According to her death announcement, she was buried in the Keyser burial ground, owned by Raymond Strickler.

<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/88646884/lucretia-belle-brubaker> . No marker for her was found during a visit in 2019.

**22. DR. JOHN C. BRUBAKER (1850 - 23 Jan 1917) Aged 66 years**

**Farmer and prominent Page Co. physician** for forty years. Husband of Lucretia Belle Keyser. According to his death announcement printed in the **Harrisonburg Daily News Record, 25 Jan 1917**, <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/63598861/john-c.-brubaker> interment was in the Old Keyser burying ground near his home.

**23. CATHARINE KEYSER (- )**

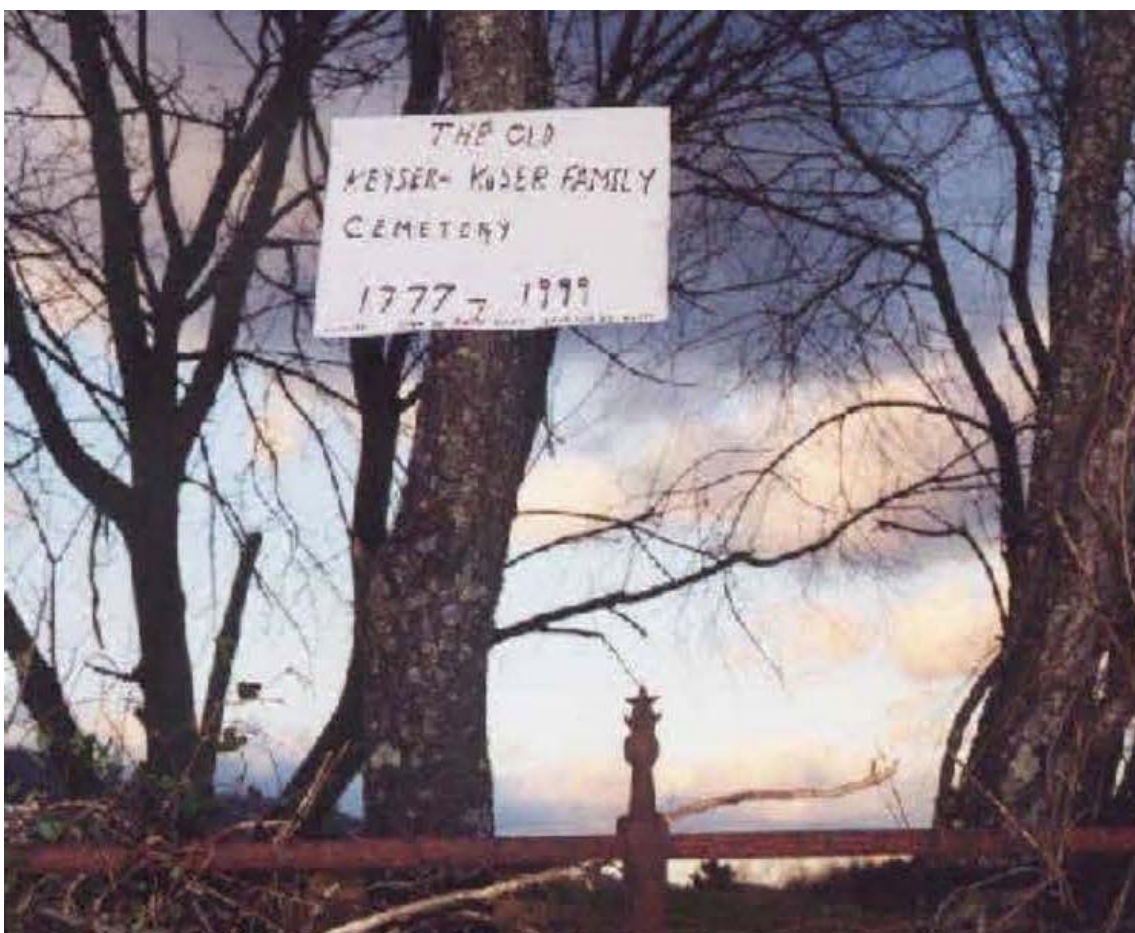
Catharine Keyser was the daughter of Charles Keyser, Sr. and his wife. Because she **never married** [Mead Relations, A.M. Prichard] Catharine probably remained at home and was **probably buried in this cemetery**.

## MASS SLAVE GRAVE

During the construction of a new highway (date unknown), **individual slave graves** were discovered just outside the fenced cemetery. Per Mark Kiser/Jim Keyser, **a contractor was hired to disinter and rebury the remains in a mass grave inside the cemetery.**

## KEYSER CEMETERY CLEANUP MEMORIAL DAY WEEKEND 2000

In the Fall of 1999, **Owen Kiser of Salt Lick, Kentucky**, visited and photographed the old **Charles Keyser Farm and Cemetery**. During Memorial Day the next year, Owen and a small group of men took upon themselves to cleanup and repair the **Old Keyser Graveyard**, and the photos appear below. Known workers were: **Owen Kiser, John Parrott, Phillip Lamb and Jim Keyser**. All photos of the cleanup were taken by **Owen Kiser** and appear in "*Keysers of Shenandoah and Page Counties of Virginia*", compiled by **Julie R. Voyles, 2001**.



*Sign made and hung by Owen Kiser.  
Photo by Owen Kiser.*



*Charles Keyser, Sr. Cemetery, Page County, Virginia, in the little clump of trees on the right. Owen's car in the distance. Sep 1999. Before cleanup. Photo by Owen Kiser.*



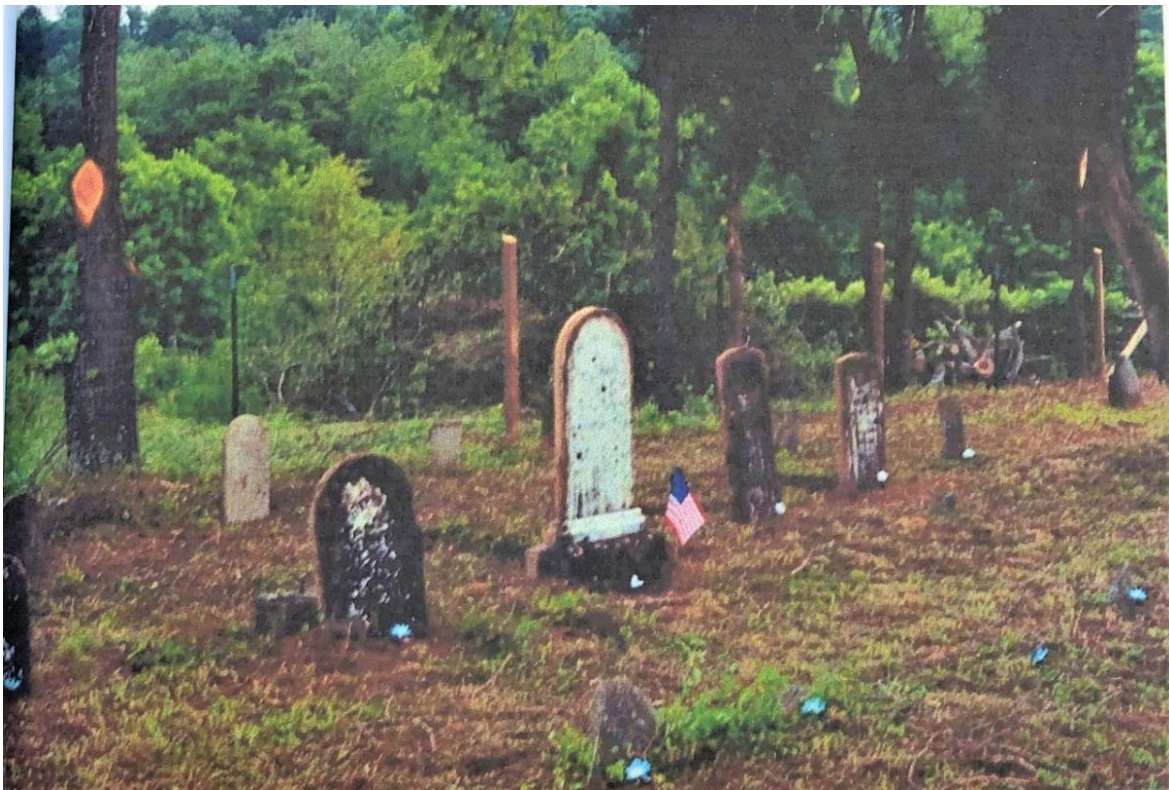
*John Parrott and Phillip Lamb, just outside the fence of the Keyser Cemetery. Phillip Lamb's house in foreground. 20 May 2000. Photo by Owen Kiser.*



*Working men, Phillip Lamb in red shirt, John Parrott in overalls, Jim Keyser in dark hat and shirt. Digging fence posts. Cemetery is on Phillip Lamb's property. 20 May 2000. Photo by Owen Kiser.*



*Tombstones righted by Owen Kiser and John Parrott, 21 May 2000. Photo by Owen Kiser.*



*Tombstones righted by Owen Kiser and John Parrott, 21 May 2000. Photo by Owen Kiser.*



*Tombstones righted by Owen Kiser and John Parrott, 21 May 2000. Photo by Owen Kiser.*



*Flag Pole and American Flag provided by Owen Kiser.  
Installed by Owen Kiser and John Parrott, 21 May 2000  
at the Tombstone of:*

**Revolutionary War Soldier  
ANDREW KEYSER, SR.  
Captain Conway Oldham's Company  
Colonel Richard Campbell's Virginia Regiment**

## CHARLES KEYSER CEMETERY

*As it Appeared on 17-18 Feb 2019*

Marie Rasnick Fetzer

The **last cleanup** of this cemetery was **twenty years ago** and it is now **in dire need of attention**. If you would like to **help contribute money or labor to the cleanup and repair of this cemetery**, or to **help purchase a memorial marker for Charles Keyser and his wife**, please contact: [mariefetzer@tds.net](mailto:mariefetzer@tds.net) .



*Photo by Marie Rasnick Fetzer.*



*Photo by Marie Rasnick Fetzer.*



*Sometime in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, two small markers for Charles Keyser, Sr. and his wife were embedded in the ground near the largest stone in this photo. **It is hoped that a proper monument can be purchased and erected in honor of this couple and their Pioneer Keyser Family soon.** Photo by Marie Rasnick Fetzer.*



*Note the bench here is the same as in the picture above. **This view looks out toward Charles Keyser, Jr.'s home, which can be seen in the distance.** Photo by Marie Rasnick Fetzer.*



*A large tree has uprooted near the Andrew Keyser, Sr. tombstone. Photo by Marie Rasnick Fetzer.*



*Most of the old cemetery fence is now missing and needs to be replaced. Photo by Marie Rasnick Fetzer.*



*Another view of the uprooted tree that just missed the flag pole and the Andrew Keyser, Sr. tombstone. Photo by Marie Rasnick Fetzer.*



*Cemetery gate has all but disintegrated over the years. Photo by Marie Rasnick Fetzer.*