

CHAPTER IX

Roanoke – Derivation of the word – Big Lick – Its inception – Original owners of the soil – Its inhabitants – Its sudden progress – Change of name to Roanoke in 1882 – Roanoke's rapid growth – The causes of it – The Shenandoah Valley Railroad – The Roanoke Machine Works – Incorporation of the place as a city in 1884 – Its manufacturing industries, commercial enterprises, and joint-stock land companies – The peculiar patriotic spirit of its inhabitants – Their pluck and energy in a material way – The laboring population – Strikes – Present number of people – Capital and financial condition of the city – Its churches, schools, and journals – Some general remarks about the city – Its probable future.

The name of Roanoke throughout Southwest Virginia is as synonymous with the term rapid growth as the region we have just named is throughout the rest of Virginia. So quickly has it become a commercial mart and manufacturing centre that it is known almost everywhere as the "Magic City" of Virginia, and some account of its birth and wonderful progress is fraught with unusual interest. The name of this city of which we are now writing is not less romantic than the development of it is marvelous, being derived from the Indian word Raw-re-noke, or precious money, an appellation formerly bestowed upon the valley. Almost in the centre of this valley, in Roanoke County, on Roanoke River, rests the place which is fast growing to be a city of large dimensions, and a railroad centre second to none in our State.

The original soil on which this city rests, which was formerly known as Big Lick, was granted by royal personages to one Thomas Tosh, an old settler in this county, which at that time was known as Botetourt. From the original map and grants now in the possession of Colonel Thomas and Andrew Lewis, descendants of Mr. Thomas Tosh, we find that in the year 1747, and thence on until 1767, grants were made of some sixteen hundred acres to Thomas Tosh lying in that section of country from near Tinker Creek to Roanoke River, south of the city, and across, bordering the lands of the Tayloes and others. This land included what was known as the Terry place, the Rorer tract, and what is now called the Carr Farm. The land covering these particular tracts named was granted Thomas Tosh in 1767 by George III, while the balance was granted during the years previously named by both George II and III, while the balance was granted during the years previously named by both George II and III. It fell to the heirs of Thomas Tosh,, and a portion afterwards was conveyed to Ferdinand Rorer, and at the time of Big Lick's incorporation, in 1874, the land around was possessed by Peyton L. Terry, William Carr, John Trout, S.M. Fergusson, Mrs. Jane Lewis, Colonel Thomas and Andrew Lewis, and B.T. Tinsley. The latter owned all that ground between the Carr property and Franklin Street, and sold Peyton L. Terry his farm, a large part of which the latter disposed of to the Roanoke Land and Improvement Company when that was first organized. This particular piece of land was that owned by William L. Peyton, an old Virginia gentleman as noted for elegance and refinement as his hospitality.

Prior to the year 1874, a small little village lay in a "Sleepy-Hollow" kind of way on the Atlantic, Mississippi, and Ohio railroad, containing some three or four hundred people, known as Big Lick. It derived its support for the rich surrounding agricultural country and some tobacco trade, and had for its amusements old-time Virginia customs, entertainments, and "fish-fries" - the latter of which is so beautifully delineated by the pen of Mr. George P. Button, the graceful and fluent writer, of Virginia. In 1874, on the 28th day of February, the town was incorporated as "Big Lick" with John Trout as mayor, Ferdinand Rorer, John A. Fergusson, Peyton L. Terry, James M. Gambill, Dr. James G. McG. Kent, and William Raines as councilmen. These

gentlemen were staunch citizens, and in every way administered the affairs of this village with care and prudence, while time rolled on nearer to the day when the place would suddenly grow into a city. The country surrounding this town had been richly blessed with the gifts of nature, and when formed had the most substantial blessings poured upon the face of the soil, from which the village drew its support. It literally flowed with milk and honey, and no country in the New South could boast of more prodigal gifts in a natural way than this lovely valley. The truth is best stated when we say that for health of climate and diversity of soil, for lovely mountain scenery on every side, from green foliage to blue mist, for every kind of agricultural pursuit, from wheat growing to sheep-raising, Roanoke can have no superior and but few equals. It is watered by rivers and mountain streams, affording abundant water of the best type. From the year 1874 until the sudden rise in 1880, Big Lick gradually grew and moved peacefully on, its inhabitants slowly increasing and following the various pursuits of life, enlivened by innocent occasional amusements already noticed, to which may be added Queens of May and strawberry feasts. A portion of what was once Big Lick is still in existence north of the city of Roanoke, and is a rambling, hilly place of two hundred people or more. Some of the buildings originally composing the town south of the railroad are remaining, although there are but few left to tell the former existence of Big Lick, so completely are they absorbed by Roanoke. On Salem Avenue two or three of Samuel Grigg's buildings remain, while on Commerce Street Startzman's house still stands, and the store occupied by Kinnear was formerly the Farmer's Bank, over whose counters many a dollar passed from the plethoric pockets of the farmers around. Some "Old Lick" buildings, as they are called, remain on Commerce Street, between the large brick wholesale house of P.L. Terry & Co. and Salem Avenue, while the old Trout House is back of the new Ponce de Leon Hotel. Rorer Park Hotel, old with many memories, was first a mere log building, and afterwards was added to until it has become a long rambling house, looking like a fit residence for bats and owls. But these relics of this place heretofore existing, now almost historical, are fast becoming things of the past - forgotten in the bustle and rush to found a mighty city. And the location geographically of this town was a fortunate one for the foundation of a place of magnitude. Some of the best counties in the State surrounded Big Lick. Botetourt, Franklin, Montgomery, Craig, Bedford - all rich in agricultural resources - lay with hidden trophies for the future city, and even now pay their tribute to Roanoke. Another feature which was of immense value to this locality, and has been an important factor among the original causes of Roanoke's progress, is the fact that the place was almost the centre of what is known as the "springs region of Virginia." This point is but seven miles distant from Coyner and Botetourt Springs, ten miles from the Blue Ridge, thirteen miles from the Roanoke Red Sulphur Springs, twenty-five miles from the Craig Healing, thirty-five miles from the Craig Alum. The Alleghany Montgomery White, and the Yellow Sulphur Springs are but an hour's ride, while half a day's journey by rail will reach many others so familiar to the traveling public. Nature, so far and it was in her power, smiled in the most pleasant manner upon the country which was to support the place about to spring into existence.

During 1881 Big Lick seemed to suddenly cast off its lethargy and awake from its quiet repose with the avowed purpose of astonishing the world. All at once it began to lay off lots, the sound of the hammer and saw could be heard on all sides, and on February 3, 1882, the Legislature of Virginia changed the name of Big Lick to that of Roanoke, enlarging its territorial limits. During this year the Roanoke Machine Works were placed in course of erection, and various other enterprises began - dwelling houses, stores, and warehouses; contractors, artisans, mechanics, and laborers came in to construct and build them, while dealers, merchants, and suppliers followed the latter. This year was a memorable one for Roanoke, and

will long be recollected as the beginning of an end which has not been reached as yet. But notwithstanding what wonders were performed during that memorable period, the place, to what it is now, was nothing. Creditable information, derived from the accomplished architect and engineer, Mr. Charles Jacobsen, now at Pulaski City, reveals the fact that Salem Avenue was then a marsh, and was filled up late on in the fall of 1882 and the winter of 1883. This gentleman, with other friends, hunted rabbits where Hotel Roanoke now stands, and picked up genuine arrowheads. In going from his room to the office Mr. Jacobsen waded through mud, and rubber boots were the order of the day. The first house constructed on Salem Avenue, as well as we can gather, was the grocery stand formerly occupied by Page, and at that time was the Star Saloon. Grant occupied the first store on Salem Avenue, and Rorer Park Hotel was the first boarding house known in the city, except the Trent House, kept by John W. Ryal, and the Neal House was the first local proper. The old Lutheran church on Bunker Hill was turned into a boarding-house, and afterwards sold to the Colored Baptist Association, who are still in possession of it. During this year of 1882, there was a large influx of people, and improvements advanced rapidly. Things continued on a progress until about April, 1883, when, the machine works being completed and the railroad offices built, there was an almost magical growth until January 1, 1884, when, by act of Legislature, the place Roanoke shed its youthful name of town and took the full-fledged title of city. People stood aghast and wondered at the cause. The intersection of the Shenandoah Valley railroad with the Norfolk and Western at this point was the reason. Why did they happen to intersect here? An answer will assist in elucidating the wonderful start of the magic place, as well as the subsequent growth.

It is asserted that prior to the construction of the Shenandoah Valley railroad the Chesapeake and Ohio Company made many promises as to traffic arrangements if the former would construct its line to Waynesboro Junction and intersect the latter there. It is further said that the Shenandoah Valley Company did not rely upon these promises, but for other reasons pushed the route forward to that point. We are inclined to think the latter solution is correct, for early in 1881 the Norfolk and Western was purchased by Clarence H. Clark and *his associates*, and at that time it is but reasonable to suppose that a route to the Flat Top coal field was the object, for even the controlling interest in the coal options were held by Philadelphia parties – presumably the same who purchased the Norfolk and Western Railroad Company, since the latter, in its first annual report for the year 1881, makes this statement on page 15:

“The Norfolk and Western Railroad Company has acquired the control of the various roads in the states of Virginia and West Virginia which, aggregated, constitute what is known as the New River Railroad Company.”

As Mr. J.D. Sergeant, by his preferred contract to Roane, showed that he treated this road and these options as his property, then the Norfolk and Western, which afterwards controlled it, must have had an idea of reaching the coal lands by an extension of the Shenandoah Valley railroad, for a short time after, the Shenandoah Valley Railroad was controlled by the same parties who governed the Norfolk and Western. At all events, in April, 1881, the Shenandoah Valley Railroad was completed to Waynesboro Junction, and when the Norfolk and Western was purchased, in May, 1881, by the Philadelphia parties, an intersection was determined upon. Roanoke (or Big Lick then) was the point chosen, and in June, 1882, the Shenandoah Valley Railroad was completed to Roanoke, and a new era dawned for this place as well as Southwest Virginia. From this on the town seemed as assured city on the future.

The incorporation of the town of Roanoke as a city, in the year 1884, was an epoch in the history of the place which marked a forward movement in a material way. The inauguration of a hustings court, under the executive ability of that cultivated gentleman, accomplished scholar, and eminent jurist, William Gordon Robertson, had a salutary effect upon the new city, and law and order was brought out of chaos as quickly as possible. A disciplined police force, with municipal law brought to bear upon the people, assisted in materially advancing them, as well as the interests of the city.

In the meantime the Crozier iron and steel furnace was completed, which gave an impetus, too, to the city, and the Roanoke Land and Improvement Company, pursuing a conservative policy, assisted in advancing the interest of the town.

But though Roanoke commenced a new era in 1884, that year was not without some drawbacks, which are still within the recollection of many people here. During this time a fearful depression prevailed, and to Mr. S.B. Haupt's superior management is due the fact that Roanoke weathered the storm. The prosperity of the place then was mainly dependent upon the Roanoke Machine Works, and when it was thought that they would stop work, Mr. Haupt, in conjunction with Mr. D'Armond, captured the contract for the building of five hundred cars for the New York, New Haven and Hartford railroad at as reduced price, and started the shops with renewed energy and vigor. Nor was that contract secured without trouble, because the competition of other works was so great that the utmost delicacy was required to secure it. This temporary depression retarded the growth of the city for a short time only, since during the latter part of 1884 everything continued to progress and move forward. We allude to the killing of Lizzie Wilson, a bright young lady of some seventeen summers. Everything was done that it was thought possible to bring the guilty persons to justice, but all without any effect. The officers of the law as well as citizens united their efforts to satisfy justice, but the criminal escaped, only to meet another and worse fate in all probability.

From 1885 on, Roanoke rapidly increased in every way. We often see towns spring up and grow as if by the stroke of some magic wand, but they soon fall into decay and become, as it were, dead, resulting from the fact that the necessary industries to support them do not keep apace. On the other hand, we find places which have gradually grown, and commercial and manufacturing enterprises supported them; but Roanoke is unique in this: not only has its growth been marvelously rapid, but its commercial and manufacturing industries have kept ahead of the waste of this phenomenal growth. Following the two large industries we have already named others came in train – valuable ones, too, such as the American Bridge Works, the rolling mills, the Rorer Iron Works, the Bridgewater Carriage Works, the West End Furnace, the Virginia Brewing Company, tobacco factories, planing mills of every description, and almost every other kind of manufacture that can be imagined. The necessary result of these industries was the establishment of a good commercial basis, which has been of infinite service towards up-building the place. Solid mercantile firms, both wholesale and retail, opened up to supply not only the wants of the people at home, but to enlarge the borders of their trade into foreign territory. The mercantile interests of the people at large throughout the great Southwest, and the mineral counties of Mercer and McDowell, West Virginia, can testify to the fact that, from the year 1886 and on, this place has made fearful inroads on the wholesale trade of other surrounding cities. Her commercial interests in this branch compare favorably with even the more experienced efforts of the Northern States. The banking system and institutions are on a first-rate footing, and while not having the same large deposits which older ones of larger capital may boast, still they compare well with any that we know of. In fact, taking the

Commercial National Bank, the existence of which is mainly due to the efforts of J.W. Coon, now president, we scarcely know of an institution which has accomplished more than this in the same length of time. From Mr. J.C. Davenport we obtained the following statistical information:

The bank has now a paid-up capital stock of \$100,000, with an undivided profit and surplus of \$22,000. It has only been in existence a few years.

But it is mainly to the joint-stock land companies that Roanoke is indebted for its rapid development. The Roanoke Land and Improvement Company, the Home Building and Conveyancing Company, did wonderful work towards inducing capita and labor to locate in the place. These companies may be said to be the pioneers in the Southeast of all others which have pursued their course in locating industries and developing the resources of the country. From these companies in Roanoke have sprung many others, such as the Virginia Land Company, the Belmont Land Company, the Melrose Land Company, the Fairview Company, the Hyde Park Land Company, and numerous ones to mention which we have not the space. These not only brought in outside capital and manufacturing industries, but stirred up the citizens within. Almost everyone in Roanoke has an interest in one of these companies, and thus every man is more or less on the order of a land agent, and through the untiring efforts of all millions of dollars of capital has been brought in, either by way of public industries or private enterprises, which have really caused a continual boom. Numbers of manufacturing concerns owe their existence to these companies, which seem determined to allow nothing to pass the borders of the Magic City. These have all been conducted on the very safest financiering policy; for no stockholder has ever lost by investing in their shares, and persons buying their real estate have all turned a handsome fortune in accordance with the amount invested. Even the Hebrew race, who generally turn their attention to mercantile pursuits, finding that money was to be made otherwise, formed a joint-stock land company known as "The Phoenix Land Company," and have done well. By its manufacturing powers, its commercial interests, and these joint-stock developing companies, Roanoke has grown since 1884 from a town of five thousand inhabitants to a city of eighteen thousand people in 1890, and at present is rapidly increasing in every way and extending its limits out in all directions. From Roanoke to Vinton is almost one continual city, while the West End is fast encroaching to the railroad between this point and Salem. The amount of capital invested in the manufacturing enterprises will range from five thousand to one million dollars, while that of the commercial interests goes from one to one hundred and fifty thousand dollars. The capital invested in the land companies ranges from ten thousand to one million dollars. It is not hard to see that with all this capital Roanoke was obliged to advance.

The peculiar patriotic spirit of the inhabitants of this city is proverbial in every way. To any one dwelling here the material advancement of the best interests of the place is the first consideration. If any enterprise is to be founded or industry started, then no question is asked farther than the fact whether it is to be located in Roanoke or not. If it is, then a liberal subscription is donated and every impetus given to forward the undertaking. This patriotism has been exhibited from the start – almost in the inception of the place. The Palace Hotel, erected by S.W. Howerton when Roanoke was almost hanging in a balance, is one of the instances, for though small now in proportion to others, at that time it was evidence of Mr. Howerton's faith in the place, and not a few predicted that he was going too far. Then it was a spacious structure, and the patriotism of such men towards the city in those early days goes far towards showing why Roanoke improved rapidly. This gentleman has been here from the inception of the place, and comes from an eminently respectable family in Halifax County,

Virginia, noted for their Episcopalian proclivities. If our Roanoke friend's cousin, Captain Phil, could rise from the grave and know that this patriotic son of Roanoke had departed from the Episcopal faith and had gone into another sect, he would usurp Mr. S.W. Howerton's place in the justice's court, sit in judgment upon him in the sternest manner, and wonder at the change in this "new era." The "Wright Block," on the corner of Jefferson and Salem Avenue, was one of the earliest substantial buildings in the city, and still bears testimony to the founder's faith in Roanoke, for it was constructed in those times when faith in the city meant something. But perhaps no people deserve more credit for their patriotism in this way than Messrs. D.C. and W.P. Moomaw, originally citizens of this county, and descendants of the Moomaw family of Botetourt. Block after block of handsome brick buildings testify to their faith in and patriotism to their native heath, and some were constructed in the earlier days of trial and tribulation. The material necessary for the construction of these, with the money paid the artisans who constructed the buildings, forged strong links in the chain which holds the complete fabric of the city's progress together. To all such men – and there are many more coming afterwards – Roanoke is deeply indebted for her rapid material advancement. The Norfolk and Western Railroad Company has done all in its power for the development of the town. The principal office being here, with its hundreds of employees, who have invested and built their homes, is another strong link in the chain of Roanoke's prosperity which should not be omitted. We can all remember a short time back, when the question was mooted as to the Roanoke and Southern railroad not running into the place, that just such a subscription as the road required was promptly made and the right of way secured into the city for it as demanded. R.H. Woodrum, Simmons, Grey, Boswell, Powell, Wingfield, Pugh (editor of *the Times*), and many others too numerous to mention, worked and engineered in every way until the road was secured and a route into the city an assured fact. Such earnest zeal must build up any place, and in this the citizens of the town have made a pathway which the neighboring places may well follow. And while these men by their untiring efforts have done much towards advancing the city, they have in no small measure carved out their own fortunes.

In every new place where the manufacturing interests are large and the population a cosmopolitan one, the best interests of the city depend more or less upon the class of labor which resides there. Whether the city advances or is retarded depends very materially upon whether there is a quiet, orderly set of laborers, or a turbulent, agitating one. In this respect Roanoke has been particularly fortunate. The place has treated the mechanical and laboring part of the population well, and in return the latter has been peaceful and quiet, making good, faithful, and efficient citizens. This city has a [peculiar charm for the man who has to earn his bread by the sweat of his brow, for two reasons: wages are remunerative in almost every calling on account of the demand for labor, and the mechanic who earns two dollars a day can sit under his own vine and fig tree, on account of the installment plan here. Houses may be purchased for the sums of \$15, \$20, and \$25 per month – as cheap almost as the rent of a house. East Roanoke is the dwelling place of many of those workmen, and they live in comparative ease, enjoying their own fore-sides and many of the comforts, and not a few of the luxuries of life.

The logical result of all this is that disturbances and agitations have been almost unknown on the part of the laboring population. In 1884 there was some talk of a large strike, but owing to the united efforts of Dr. H.A. Sims and James A. McConnell the calamity was averted, and things flowed on in their usual channels. Afterwards the men at the rolling mills went off on a short strike, but the differences they had with their employers being soon adjusted, they returned to

duty. No place, for the number of workmen, has been freer of this nature than Roanoke, and it may be reckoned as one of the causes of its prosperity.

The present population of Roanoke, after a patient investigation, numbers some 18,742 people, with an increasing tide all the time. This estimate does not include those visiting, but the actual residents of the city. The people of the place as a whole are cosmopolitan in the extreme, and on that account interesting in the highest degree. They are all busily engaged in the pursuit of their various occupations, and in this, as in all new places, are laying the foundation for the development of the city, which is yet in its infancy. In speaking of the people of the place it is not amiss to quote from a letter written by the Rev. W.C. Campbell, the learned, cultivated, literary gentleman, who fills the pulpit in the Presbyterian Church. He says:

“To me Roanoke and its people compose one of the most interesting places I have ever seen, and certainly the city is unique in the history of Virginia.”

All thinking people who stay in Roanoke become convinced of the same thing, and so express themselves. One peculiarity concerning it, which is rare, is that the people have less to do and say concerning their neighbor’s affairs than in any other place that we know of, and this is attributable to the fact that the population is extremely cosmopolitan, and the rapid development and influx of strangers prevent such inquiries. It is a state of affairs for which the place should congratulate itself.

When we consider the short time in which the “Magic City” has grown, its financial showing is undoubtedly a good one, and the rapid increase in value great. The statement which we now give, with a comparison of former years, will assist in showing the marvelous advance:

In 1885 the assessable value of real estate was....\$1,481,632.25
In 1890 it was.....\$6,750,884.00

Giving an increase of \$5,269,251.75 during the period named. The value of property upon an equitable basis in Roanoke is as follows:

Value of real estate, as per assessment.....	\$6,585,884.00
Value of personal property, as per assessment...	\$1,715,642.00
Value of capital in business on which license is paid...	\$1,600,000.00
Amount on deposit in banking institutions.....	\$1,671,760.67
Surplus on personal property not given in.....	\$571,880.66
Amount surplus on real estate, assessment not given in...	\$675,088.40
Total value of property in the city of Roanoke.....	\$12,985,255.73

In the calculations above the greatest care is taken, and, whilst there may be some variations, on the whole it is a correct statement of Roanoke’s values. Where a place increases over a million in values every year it is a difficult matter to arrive at an exact valuation any time you may desire. For ten years it is a showing of which the people of Roanoke may well be proud.

When we turn from the manufacturing, commercial, and financial view of Roanoke to its religious aspect, educational facilities, and journalistic features, the place shows a good condition in these respects. And our inquiry has been a careful one along this line, because we do not desire to misrepresent anything in any way. When an examination is made of any one of these particulars of which we are writing the facts must necessarily be gathered from the heads of each department. From completed statistics we find these facts concerning the churches:

Number of members of churches.....3,320

Number of members of Sunday-schools.....2,240
Total connected with religious denominations.....5,500

This does not include the colored people, who number some 2,740. Almost all the denominations are represented here, including Roman Catholics, Episcopalians, Presbyterians, Lutherans, Christians, Methodists, and Baptists. The community is a liberal one, and the churches – some of which are very handsome edifices – are always crowded.

Educational facilities in the city are good. In addition to the high-graded schools there are some excellent private and public ones. The Alleghany Institute, situated on an eminence north of the city, is a large, five-story brick building, with a capacity of accommodation for several hundred pupils. The free school system is a graded one, under the charge of Rush U. Derr, superintendent. The attendance numbers some eighteen hundred pupils, with a constant increase. Mrs. Gilmer's private school for young ladies has gained quite an enviable reputation, and its roll is now large. While we readily see that educational facilities here are good, on the other hand the attendance is not what it should be. This is a fact to be deplored, as every place should give every possible attention to education of the young people. The habit of withdrawing boys from school at the early age of fourteen or fifteen years, in order to obtain some situation in an office or store, can neither be too much decried nor severely criticized.

The journals of Roanoke have done a good service in developing the resources and good interests of the city. Among the earlier ones published was the *Saturday Review*, with Oscar D. Derr as editor. *The Leader*, published in the earlier days of Roanoke, was under the management of Colonel S.S. Brooke, the efficient and able popular clerk of the hustings court. To an article in one of his files we are indebted for much valuable information concerning the earlier history of Roanoke. The *Daily Times*, inaugurated and founded by M.H. Claytor, a gentleman of ability, passed into a company's hands, which has given it a new garb in the shape of an eight-page paper, and it has the press dispatches. The editorial department is under H.E. Brown, who governs that part well. The *Daily Herald* has the largest subscription, and is the leading advertising medium in the city, and is under the business management of Mr. J.W. Camper, to whom it is indebted for much of the success. J.A. Pugh, who is president of the Virginia Press Association, is editor, and C.E. Herbert, formerly with the Baltimore Sun and Manufacturers' Record, is traveling correspondent. The *Evening World*, founded by J.P. Ackerly and W.H. Dooley, is under the editorial control of H.Q. Nicholson, who is from Baltimore, a gentleman of unusually fine journalistic parts as well as high literary attainments. The World is advancing rapidly, and is a good journal in every way. All of these publications can be well commended...and are doing a wonderfully good part in advancing the interests of the community. The *Daily Herald*, under Camper's management, has become a large advertising sheet. Mr. Pugh, the editor, is very careful in dealing with every side of any case, desiring to do full justice to both, never allowing personal prejudice to influence him. The *Evening World* is both nice and discriminating in the same manner and, while fearless in the discharge of its duties, never allows a single personal feeling to become mixed with its printer's ink. ...Would that we could say the same for all journals, which have the public more or less in their power.

As time advances over the Magic City we are glad to be able to write that hotel facilities here are sufficient now. And sufficiency is not all, for we scarcely know of two more commodious and handsome buildings than Hotel Roanoke and the Ponce de Leon, recently opened to the public. The former had an addition made to it which places it second to none. Too great credit cannot be given to the Smith brothers, among the most respectable citizens here, for their

pluck, energy, and wisdom in the conception and erection of their mammoth building. The service and menu is in keeping with the house itself, which is handsomely ornamented and finished. Just such buildings add more to the value of a city than one can well imagine, and the projectors of them are entitled to thanks.

Other handsome buildings have been constructed, among which is the courthouse, fore department, and private blocks, and there is a marked improvement in every way, particularly in the class of architecture now being erected. The streets and drives are being looked to, and the boulevard by R.H. Woodrum's handsome residence is becoming a favorite resort for pleasure-seekers. Such improvements are always welcome, and it is to be hoped that they may continue until the beauty and adornment of Roanoke equals its material advancement. Many lovely residences are being erected, which not only gratify the taste for the beautiful, but renders the city so much more attractive. The city government is well conducted, and considering that the place is new, with such a heterogeneous population, it is both orderly and quiet. Some people are disposed to cavil as to Roanoke's health, but we who have lived and resided here enjoy the same health as other people. Of course people die here, but not in greater numbers than elsewhere, and considering the number of excavations going on for new buildings in the city, we wonder that, without a proper sewerage system, it should be so healthy. No place advancing like Roanoke can perfect everything in a moment, so patience must be called in question to bear the few ills along with the many blessings of the Magic City.

What is Roanoke's probable future? In reply we cannot do better than to quote from "Historical Sketches of Roanoke," so ably revised by H.Q. Nicholson, editor of the *Evening World*, which says:

"With the gigantic corporations we have discussed; with her public enterprises, in which millions are invested; with her steady, sober, and honest class of labor; with her private undertakings and mercantile pursuits; with her hotels, journals, churches, and schools; with her thoroughly organized city government, Roanoke is destined to become one of the largest, wealthiest, and most prosperous cities south of the Mason and Dixon's line. *Sic transitur.*"