

THE BYERLY HOUSE TINTYPE

Among perhaps one thousand photographs inherited by me from my grandfather Lewis Lupton Kaylor was a small tintype of his grandparents' house in Pleasant Valley, Virginia. I have digitally scanned the photograph and made it World Wide Web accessible. Three versions are viewable (and downloadable):

1. The original scan showing the sepia tone of the tintype:
http://userweb.cs.utexas.edu/users/cline/LLK_Diary/ByerlyHouse_sepia.jpg

2. A black and white rendering of the scan:
http://userweb.cs.utexas.edu/users/cline/LLK_Diary/ByerlyHouse_bw.jpg

3. An artistic version with color added:
http://userweb.cs.utexas.edu/users/cline/LLK_Diary/ByerlyHouse_color_drybrush.jpg



Two questions need to be answered: when was the picture taken and who are the people in it. I have attempted to answer the questions by considering them simultaneously.

I begin with the assumption that the picture was taken in the late 19th century. Tintypes were patented in the United States in 1856 and were used into the 20th century. The paper jacket for the photograph says "Jacob Byerly House" so I presume the picture was taken while he was the owner.

The key I have used for more precise dating is the male sitting on the left of the porch roof. This is my great-grandfather Peter Cline Kaylor - husband of Jacob's daughter Lucy. If that person is Peter Kaylor - and we imagine that he would not have been invited to participate until he actually belonged to the family - then the earliest date for the picture would be the wedding date for Peter and Lucy - November 15, 1882. Given the leaves on the trees and the absence of heavy coats, however, I doubt that the picture was taken in the fall of 1882, so probably 1883 is a better estimate for the earliest possible date for the photograph.

Given Peter is that person, I imagine that the woman immediately to his right is his wife Lucy Margaret (Byerly) Kaylor. Certainly the man on the extreme left is Jacob Byerly and the woman wearing a bonnet and immediately behind the fence is his wife Margaret Ann (Roller) Byerly. Five people (three females and two males) remain to be identified. These are my estimates:

1. The two figures in the windows are Mary Francis (Byerly) Lupton (right) and her husband James R. Lupton (left). She would be about 26 and he about 28 if the picture were taken in the spring of 1883. They were married in 1879. James R. Lupton was the namesake for my grandfather Lewis Lupton Kaylor - son of Peter and Lucy.
2. The male sitting in the center of the porch roof is the only surviving son of Jacob and Margaret: Peter Daniel Byerly. He had married Nancy Elizabeth West in 1872. They had four children at the time of the photograph and I believe she is not in the photograph.
3. The two right-most females - the ones with the stringed instruments in their laps - I believe are 34 year old Virginia Eudora Byerly and her 15 year old sister Ella Myers Byerly. In 1989 Virginia married Philander Kiser. At some point Ella married Jackson P. Rauhof.
4. Not shown in the photograph are the eldest daughter Sarah Elizabeth who died in 1849 at age 5 and the second son Dewitt Newton who died in 1868 at age 14. The oldest surviving daughter of Jacob and Margaret was Martha Jane and she also is not pictured. She had married St. Clair Lewis in 1866 and moved to Missouri prior to 1870.

Alan Kaylor Cline