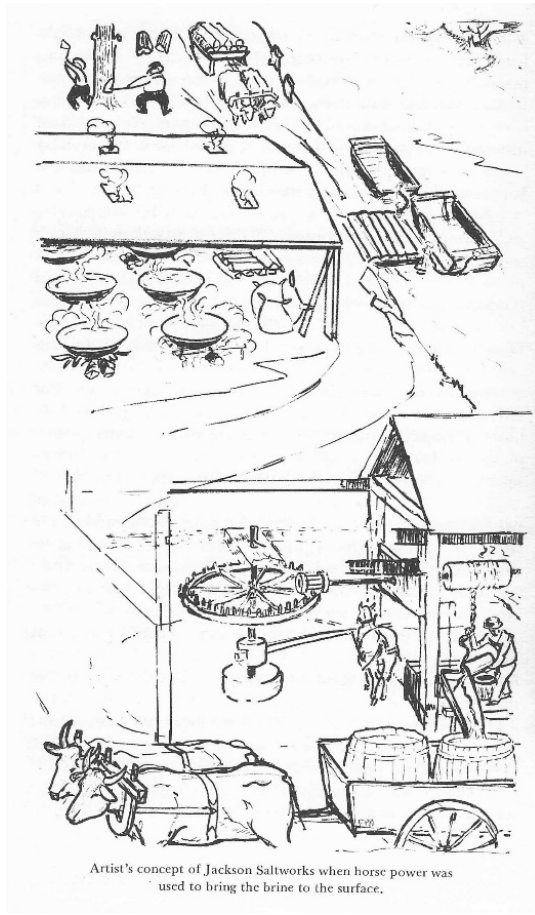


John George Jackson's Salt Works and Grist Mill Clarksburg, WV



John George Jackson established industries on both the west and east sides of Clarksburg. The Salt Works and Grist Mill were located about 3 miles west of Clarksburg on the same side of the road as the Indian Mounds and across the West Fork River from the Custer Addition.¹ John George and his uncle Col. Edward Jackson shared interest in the industry. Edward, who owned a mill south of Clarksburg at Jackson's Mill, WV, would supervise the saltworks while John George was away in Congress in Washington D.C. Drilling began in 1813 and they were producing salt by summer of 1814. By July 1815, John George sold salt to Clarksburg region residents for \$1.00 less per bushel than what he paid Kanawha County the year before.² John George was anxious about the slow progress made at the salt works. He expressed his displeasure with his Uncle Edward in an undated letter to his wife claiming him to be *"the most unlucky man in his movements I ever heard of – always tinkering at the salt works and doing nothing."*³ By 1817 Uncle Edward stopped

communicating with John George.⁴ About this time, John George hired his first cousin, Jacob Brake, to assist in the management of the salt works. Jacob held this position until after John George's death in 1825. By this time competition had taken over the Jackson Salt Works and was selling salt to Clarksburg for fifty cents a bushel.⁵ After 1825 someone would occasionally operate the salt works furnace and was in operation as late as October 24, 1839.⁶ In 1828, John Rhodes "leased from John Jackson's widow, the Judge's saltworks, and saw and grist mill on the river south of Clarksburg. The lease was for a period of five years, at an annual rental of five hundred dollars a year, to be paid and delivered at Mrs. Jackson's residence in "Clarksburg, in good merchantable whiskey at twenty-five cents a gallon, or salt at one-dollar per bushel."⁷

¹Houchin, David, *"The 1821 John Wood Map of Harrison County, Virginia shows this as approximate location of the Salt Works."*

² Davis, Dorothy, *John George Jackson*, McClain Printing Company, Parsons, WV, 1976, p. 233, hereafter: *John George Jackson*.

³ Davis, Dorothy, *John George Jackson*, p. 381, she sites letter from J.G. Jackson to Mary M. Jackson, n.d. FLN : *Florrie Jackson Needham Papers*, Clarksburg, West Virginia.

⁴ Davis, Dorothy, *John George Jackson*, p. 271.

⁵ Davis, Dorothy, *History of Harrison County, West Virginia*, p. 720.

⁶ Ibid, Dorothy sites *Chapin Papers (West Virginia University)*, Phineas Chapin remarks in a letter on October 24, 1839, "They are making salt in a furnace at the old Salt Works".

⁷ Harmer, Harvey W., *Old Grist Mills of Harrison County*, Charleston Printing, 1940, p. 111.