# Spring Park

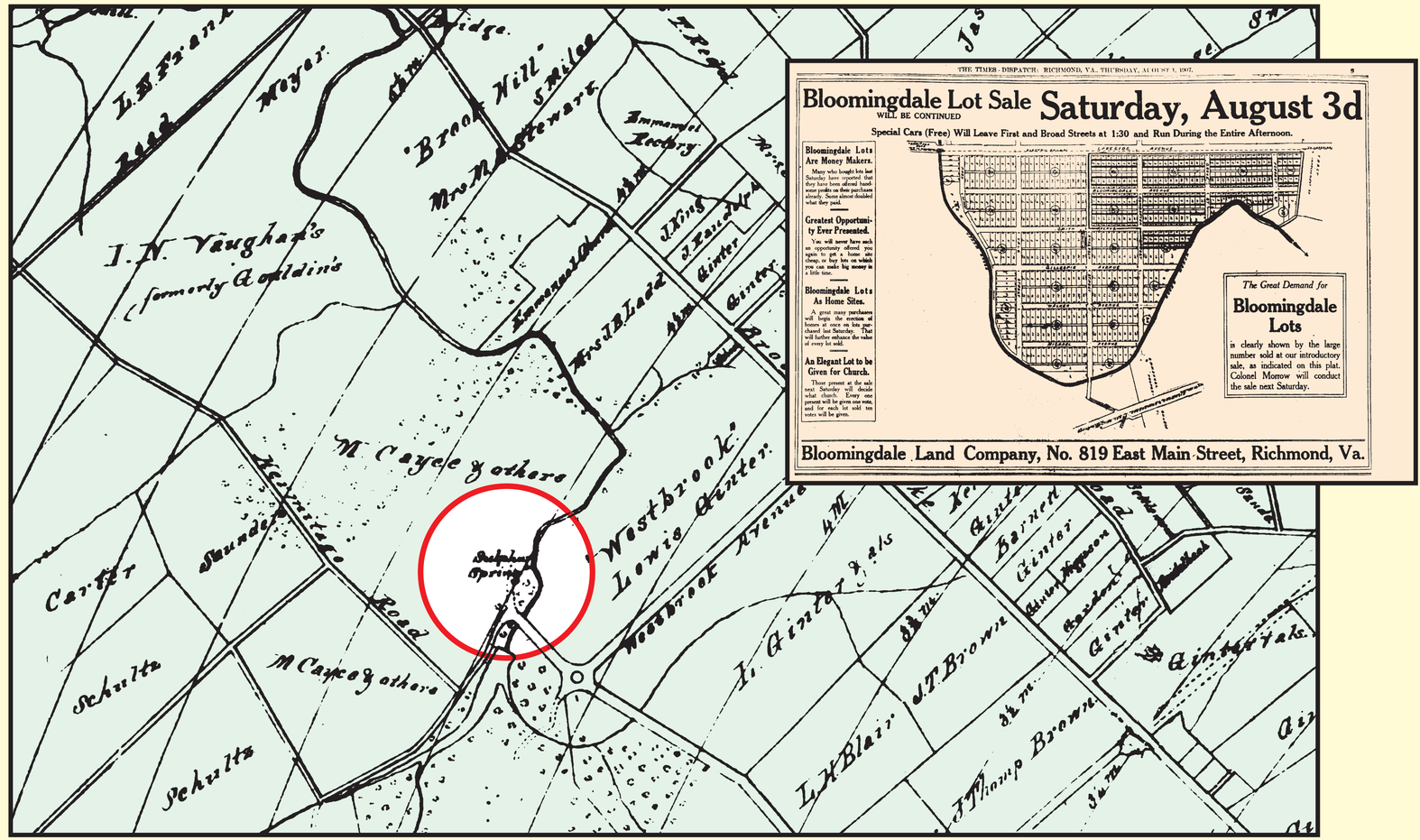
## *Healing Waters*

One of Virginia's Mineral Springs

The earliest record of the property shows that Samuel Williamson owned the 400 acre tract in 1796. His son, Dabney, who inherited the property, owned a slave by the name of Lewis who participated in Gabriel's Rebellion. Lewis attempted to persuade comrades to free those arrested shortly after the rebellion unraveled. He was tried and deported.

The first notation of the site being a mineral spring appears on a map in 1810. Later it is referred to as a sulphur spring. The Bloomingdale Land Company most likely had the granite spring house constructed sometime in the 1890s when they had many land improvements made. In 1901, a real estate advertisement appeared in the Richmond Times-Dispatch showing the park and spring referred to as Spring Park adjacent to a proposed subdivision.

By 1933, it appears that the spring was no longer in use. An affidavit presented to the County Board of Supervisors showed "that neither the county nor the public has used the spring or park for many years, or at least twenty years, and the spring no longer exists."




**A detail of an 1890 Chamber of Commerce map, and (inset) a 1907 advertisement showing Spring Park adjacent to a proposed subdivision.**

**Springs in Virginia were developed and used for health and entertainment purposes as early as the 1700s. Their heyday was before the Civil War and during the late nineteenth century. People would drink the healing water, rub it on themselves or bathe in it hoping to benefit from its medicinal characteristics. Others just enjoyed the relaxation and company they found down by the spring. Better medical treatments, changing social customs and mobility from the automobile ended the popularity of springs throughout the state in the early twentieth century.**

*Map: Virginia Historical Society  Advertisement (inset): Library of Virginia*