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THE PORT TOWNS OF THE PAMUNKEY

By MALCOLM H. HARRIS, M.D.

A century has now disposed of almost the last trace of the four port towns that once successfully existed on the south side of the Pamunkey River. Only the antiquarian knows their sites or of their existence. The story of these places is of supreme importance in understanding the settlement, commerce and social life of New Kent and Hanover and adjoining counties.

The development of the tobacco cultivation up the Pamunkey River valley lent impetus to the rise of these towns; likewise the decline in the foreign tobacco trade brought about their decline and gradual disintegration. In each instance the town grew up about the warehouse and port, which were essentially projects of a large plantation, and sponsored by the plantation owner. Trade and commerce prospered at these ports and the community found itself alive as a center for the merchant and planter to exchange their produce and wares. Then, when the one staple commodity of export no longer had a demand the town, its commerce, and its people disappeared and the town lots reverted into fields. The land tax returns show the rapid changes.

The population of Virginia has always been essentially rural. About 1735 there was a decided movement in Colonial Virginia to establish towns at different points in the colony. The coming of the Scotch merchants seems to have had a considerable influence on this trend. This will be seen particularly in the towns along the Pamunkey, where many of these Scots settled, trading in tobacco, exporting and importing goods from their correspondents in London and Glasgow.

One of these early Scotchmen deserves special mention. Francis Jerdone, born in Jedburgh, Teviotdale, Scotland came to Virginia about 1745. He developed the first chain of stores in Virginia and likely in America. He had stores at York, in New Kent, in King and Queen, in Hanover and in Louisa. He assembled produce for shipment along the Pamunkey and transacted business for the planters thru his friends beyond the seas. His papers have many of them been preserved and afford an interesting contemporary view of methods of merchandizing, the manner of trading and facilities used by the merchants of London and other English ports.

The period following 1740 might be well called the Golden Age in Virginia's colonial history. Trade was good. The rich and poor were not seriously disturbed by the events beyond

the seas. Peace and contentment were abroad in the land. Governor William Gooch was well liked and lent himself to the economic interests of the colonists. The piedmont country was being settled by a continual influx of new settlers, who helped to push back the frontier westward to the Alleghanies.

That day is now two centuries gone. The Pamunkey port towns have reverted to open fields, wood yards, or river margins thickly overgrown with brush. Bare traces are left of a few foundations. A few bricks, small pieces of glass and pipestems, china and the ballast rocks remain to mark the sites. It requires a vivid imagination to repeople these ports with their cosmopolitan elements, the seamen, the sailing vessels, the merchants, the numerous negro slaves, and hogsheads of tobacco and English goods on the wharves.

It is hardly conceivable that vessels ascended the Pamunkey to Hanover town, loaded with foreign merchandize, discharged their cargoes, reloaded with tobacco, shingles and other things which could be sold at a profit. The ebbing tide buoyed the vessels up and they floated down to the deeper channel, where, spreading sails, they went on to sea with the kindly aid of wind and tide. It was a slow and tedious commerce, replete with dangers and difficulties beyond our modern conception, and equally blessed with romance and adventure which cannot be duplicated today.

The unrest over taxation spread throughout the colony. Political upheaval turned into war and destruction. Destruction of warehouses, the seizure of vessels, sequestration of British subjects and deprivation of their property added to the calamity. Tobacco, the essence of the foreign trade, gradually petered out. The Scotch merchants for the most part were tories. They saw their business decline. The ports and towns disappeared and new places of trade were established.

The details of the towns will be given in their chronological sequence and the several towns treated in point of settlement.

BRICKHOUSE

Across the Pamunkey from West Point, in New Kent County, is the site of the earliest port town on the Pamunkey, still called Brickhouse. Here on the south side of the Pamunkey the first port town was incorporated, and the warehouse called Brickhouse was established. The broad reach of the Pamunkey lies to the north and east and the York River spreads out to the south. This site can be reached by county

road from the West Point-Williamsburg road, about half a mile east of the Eltham Service Station.

The site of the Brickhouse stood next the river, and the house from which it took its name was standing at the time of Bacon's Rebellion and likely was built as early as 1660. The house was in a field of several hundred acres, and about two hundred paces from the shore. As to who built the house or gave the place its name, nothing is known.

William Bassett appears to have become owner in 1669, and to have possessed a total of 1800 acres in a single tract, which included his home tract Eltham.¹ This land he received after the tract escheated to William Brook, and it remained in the Bassett family until after 1800, so long in fact that the names Brickhouse and Bassett are thought of as one.

At the time of Bacon's Rebellion, Brickhouse was an important place in New Kent, and it is believed that here was the court house and the office of the clerk, Thomas Hall, who was a Bacon supporter and suffered the extreme penalty of hanging for his part in the uprising.² It will be recalled that New Kent furnished Bacon with a number of recruits, and being near the Indian country, was heartily in his favor. At Brickhouse in the last days of the rebellion, Drummond and Lawrence, two of Bacon's most loyal and trusted friends, fortified themselves. Various writers speak of them in a brickhouse, and undoubtedly there was here then a brick house, a rare thing in 1676 in New Kent county.

The purpose of their remaining at Brickhouse was to prevent Berkeley's forces making a landing. Across the river at West Point other rebel forces under Ingram were massed and when informed of Bacon's untimely death dispersed or were captured. Due to the difficulty of communicating across the river, and the courage of Drummond and Lawrence, and the intense hatred borne them by Governor Berkeley, their forces were the last to go home. The subsequent story of the rebellion has no bearing on our subject, though the inhabitants of New Kent suffered greatly because of their part in supporting Bacon. Thomas Hall was hanged, and Col. Henry Gooch was compelled to pay an indemnity of 6000 pounds of tobacco.

A ferry from Brickhouse to the upper side of the York and to West Point in Pamunkey Neck constituted an important highway. The rates for the ferry are set out in the Acts of the General Assembly.³ Fontaine writing in 1714 mentions crossing on the ferry to King William on a visit to Augustine

¹ Patent Book 6, page 248.

² Force I, p. 46.

³ Hening, v. 3, p. 219.

Moore of Chelsea. Two years later he crossed again in the company of Governor Alexander Spotswood on his journey to the mountains. They also visited Chelsea and there organized the Knights of the Golden Horseshoe.⁴

The act of the General Assembly incorporating the town at Brickhouse was a general law providing the same regulations for several proposed towns. The language of the act is worth quoting:

. . . that there be within two months next and immediately after the publication hereof in every respective county within this his majesty's colony fifty acres of land purchased by the feoffes of the several counties at the rates hereafter set down and expressed that is to say . . .

In New Kent county at the Brickhouse along the high land from Marsh to Marsh.

The date of this act as found in Hening fixes the date the Brickhouse was chartered. This was the first town located on the Pamunkey. The actual town lands and town government if ever in operation have failed to leave a record, but the warehouse at Brickhouse down thru the century was of importance, serving as it did the lower part of New Kent.⁵

William Bassett at his own expense built a warehouse here in 1742, the dimensions of which are given as forty feet by twenty feet with two sheds on either side each ten feet. This was rented to the colony at a fixed rental of thirty-five pounds per annum, for three years, when Bassett found his rent cut to twenty-five pounds. Burwell Bassett in 1758 petitioned for relief on account of the warehouse and wharf on his lands at Brickhouse, asking for a yearly rental of twenty-five pounds.⁶

In connection with the warehouse here is often mentioned the warehouse at Taskanask, on a creek of that name lower down the York. Ultimately the two were consolidated and the one at Brickhouse did the whole duty. John Meredith and John Timberlake, inspectors at Brickhouse, asked for a salary of thirty pounds per year as late as 1770, which brings us down to the period of the decline in tobacco exports.⁷

THE BASSETTS AND ELTHAM

The history of the Bassetts and Eltham are so closely interwoven with that of Brickhouse that something must be added regarding the family and their home.

⁴ *Memoirs of a Huguenot Family*, p. 281 et seq.

⁵ Hening, v. 2, p. 473.

⁶ *Ibid.*, v. 6, p. 408.

⁷ *Journal of House of Burgesses*, 12:249.

The first William Bassett established himself here about 1670. His estate went to his son William who was the Councilor and husband of Joanna Burwell. This William Bassett built the mansion at Eltham, as when he patented the Eltham Marsh in 1695 he mentions the new house, and also Brickhouse where the court was formerly held.⁸ His tombstone was removed from Eltham and is to be seen in Hollywood Cemetery, Richmond, Va.

Here lies inter'd the Body of the Hon'ble
William Bassett, of the County of New Kent
Esq'r. son of William Bassett, Esq'r and
Bridget his wife of the County of
Southampton in the Kingdom of England
He married Joanna, the eldest daughter
Of Lewis Burwell, Esq'r with whom
He happily lived 29 years and 10 months
And was blest with 5 sons and 7 daughters
He departed this life the 11th of October
1723, in the 53rd year of his Age. He
was a good Christian, A kind and Indulgent Father
An Affectionate, Obliging Husband, A good
Master: His Loss was greatly
Lamented by His Country
County and Family and Inexpressibly to his
His Mournful Disconsolate Widow
Who also Departed this life the 7th day of
of October 1727 in the
53rd year of her Age.

William Bassett, the son of the Councilor, married Mrs. Ralph Wormeley, of Middlesex County. They reared a family who became prominent in the colony, and widely known because of their connection with the Washingtons. The eldest son, Burwell Bassett, inherited Eltham on his father's death in 1744. He married Anna Maria Dandridge, a sister of Martha Washington.

George Washington spent more time at Eltham than in any other private home in America. For many years his trips to and from the sessions of the Burgesses brought him to Eltham, where he "lodg'd" or "din'd". On his visits to Eltham he hunted, fished, traded horses, visited the neighbors and rode about the plantation with Col. Bassett. On these occasions he visited Brickhouse going by the way of the mill, traces of which still remain. The mill stones lie near the site and the dam still holds a nice fish pond.

The Eltham mansion site is still to be seen; though the house was destroyed by fire many years ago. The accompany-

⁸ Patent Book: 8, page 419.

ing drawing was made from descriptions and measurements, and shows the house to have been one of the finest and most commodious of the colonial mansions. In the garden here John Parke Custis was buried in November 1781. His death occurred just after the siege of Yorktown, and General Washington made his last visit to Eltham on that occasion. The grave of this young patriot has never been marked.

Brickhouse is still called Brickhouse after three centuries but little of its antiquity remains besides the name and bits of pottery, and glass and brick bats. One broken tombstone bears the fragmentary inscription:

Here Lyes interred
ohn King
1699.

CUMBERLAND TOWN

The site of Cumberland Town is on the south side of the Pamunkey River, on Cumberland Farm about two miles from New Kent Courthouse. In recent months the plantation has been acquired by new owners and already is more pleasing than formerly when it was a mere wood-landing.

There are a few contemporary remains of the former town. The gravestones in the Littlepage's burying ground, ballast stones along the river, and the usual fragments of old glass bottles, pipestems, and brickbats, the indestructible things of colonial days, bear a silent testimony of the ancient settlement. The foundation walls of one house have been excavated, which certainly stood in the town two hundred years ago.

There is no doubt that the Littlepage family acquired this land prior to 1700. They called it "Cumberland" and from then it has been so called in the records. The Littlepages held title to the plantation until about the middle of the eighteenth century. It was during their tenure that the warehouse was established and an attempt made to develop here a town.

It was in the year 1734 that the General Assembly passed an act which made the warehouse belonging to William Chamberlayne at Peaseley's Landing a place for the inspection of tobacco.⁹ Later the same year this act was repealed and an inspection was appointed for Richard Littlepage's in New Kent.

⁹ *Journal of House of Burgesses*, V:190.

These tobacco warehouses were privately built for the inspection of tobacco and rented to the government. The rent allowed for the warehouse on Littlepage's land was set at fifteen pounds per annum and the inspector's salary at thirty-five pounds per year.¹⁰ Two years later, Richard Littlepage built three warehouses and two prizes, which he rented for thirty-five pounds.¹¹

In May 1742, an act was passed establishing a ferry over the Pamunkey, from the lands of Mr. Richard Littlepage to the plantation of Mr. Thomas Claiborne, where then lived the Rev. Mr. Daniel Taylor, minister in St. John's Parish, King William County. The rates for ferriage were set at six pence for a man and six pence for a horse.¹² This ferry contributed the name to the plantation on the upper side which it still bears: Smith's Ferry.

This ferry afforded a direct route from King William Courthouse to New Kent Courthouse. It was over this route that Washington traveled in going to Williamsburg. The ferry did not go directly across the river but followed the stream up and down for some distance. The river on the lower side is guarded by high banks and on the upper swamps engage the margins.

Pilot fees were set from West Point up the Pamunkey for vessels plying the stream for cargoes, "all ships, snows, and brigantines from West Point to Hill's, or Dansie's, one shilling; to Littlepage's, one shilling six pence."¹³ New Kent cultivated a large crop of tobacco during this period and commerce came to Cumberland by water and road.

Sometime prior to October 1748, Richard Littlepage, the third of that name to own Cumberland, petitioned the House of Burgesses to establish a town on his land contiguous to the warehouses. The result was an act establishing a town at Cumberland. This act has been lost, but the title is mentioned in Hening's *Statutes at Large*.¹⁴ This agrees with the petition which asked for its revocation many years later.

There are no records left at New Kent Court House to show the transfers of lots in the town. The lots were sold by Littlepage to buyers directly, as was the custom in those days. There was advertised in the Virginia Gazette in its issue for October 6, 1752, a house with the following description:

¹⁰ *Journal of House of Burgesses*, V:202.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, V:286.

¹² Hening, VI:190.

¹³ *Ibid.*, VI:492.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, VI:211.

To be Lett or Sold

The two lots formerly belonging to Mr. William Parry, in Cumberland Town, Pamunkey River, there being very good Conveniences for a merchant, or Tavern Keeper, having one large New House with Brick Chimneys, Rooms above and below, plastered and whitewashed; a small house with one Brick Chimney, one New Kitchen, and necessary Houses and Garden. Any Person inclinable to purchase the same may be informed of the Price by Mr. Richard Chamberlayne or the Subscriber.

Edward Langford.

N. B. It's thought to be a very good place for a merchant it being on a navigable river, and no store within ten Miles of the Place.

The tobacco planters had gone westward and the prospects of developing a town here grew less each year, as the commercial advantages declined. The records continued to evidence the smaller activities of port and warehouse for many years.

In the Gazette for April 1751, William Smith, Commander, Ship Prince William, at Littlepage's offered a pistole reward for the return of David Caldwell, "who speaks broad Scotch".

There has been an interesting story of cannon belonging to the Virginia Militia being thrown into the Pamunkey at Cumberland. The facts concerning the cannon are of record. Early in the year 1776, Mr. Archibald Govan was engaged to furnish the county of New Kent with cannon. On March 12, 1776, Mr. George Mutter and Lieutenant Denny were appointed to view the cannon at New Kent Courthouse and report which were fit for use, their size and their value. The cannon were accepted and Robert Warren was paid by order on the State Treasurer, the sum of two pounds nine shillings six pence for hauling the cannon from the courthouse to Cumberland. A warrant dated April 6, 1776, to Mr. Govan evidences the fact that he was paid seventy-five pounds, eighteen shillings, nine pence for six double fortified four pounders.¹⁵

The following year Mr. Govan was apprehended as a British subject and appeared at Hanover Courthouse and asked for a further extension of time to take his leave of the colony. He was given until the last of May 1777 to depart. On March 18, 1778 Peter Lyons, John White and David Cochran were appointed a commission to handle the affairs of the estate of Archibald Govan, in Hanover and King William under the act for Sequestering British Property.¹⁶

¹⁵ *Executive Journals of the Council of State*, ii:449.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, II:104.

The final year of the Revolution brought both British and American armies to New Kent on the march to Yorktown. The British were in the neighborhood of New Kent Court House and Cumberland in the summer of 1781.

The American forces under LaFayette accumulated store at Cumberland in 1781. Richard Adams delivered to Carter Braxton at Cumberland fifteen barrels of pork for the army. During the same year sixty hogsheads of tobacco and five hundred barrels of flour were collected at Cumberland and Richard Adams was paid for the freighting the provisions to this point. Hospital supplies were requisitioned here by Dr. Pope in August 1781 for troops attached to General Daniel Morgan's forces. Some of the troops under LaFayette were put across the Pamunkey at Sweet Hall and were later stationed and fortified at West Point. After the capitulation, Rochambeau brought his heavy artillery to West Point for winter quarters.

The condition of things at Cumberland after the Revolution is set forth in the petition previously mentioned asking that the town charter be revoked. This petition was drawn by William Clayton, clerk of Court for New Kent, November 13, 1787. It gives a history of the title of the Cumberland land and town. In 1748, Richard Littlepage set apart eighty acres of land for a town. This land was divided into lots and some were sold. Sometime later Littlepage conveyed his entire holdings, consisting of one thousand acres of land and lots in the town which had not been sold. Stephen Fournace Holmes died and left his estate to his brother, John Holmes, who after a short time sold the whole to Henry Watkins. Henry Watkins died in March, 1785 and left heirs among whom the petitioner, his son John Dandridge Watkins. The petitioner further states at the time (1787) there are only eleven lots which can be claimed and only four of these have any buildings on them. There were two families living in the town, namely those of Robert Hayes and William Owen. There being no prospects of any further development in the town, it was deemed feasible to ask that the charter be revoked and the lands returned to the owners.¹⁷

The tax returns for Cumberland Town in 1782 show the lot holders to have been: Richard Adams (3), John Watkins (3), Thomas Ivey (1), and James Otter (1). In 1810 the town lots were reduced to four, held one each by William Armistead, William Owen, Robert Warren, and John Adams. The total tax for the town being \$1.80.

¹⁷ New Kent petitions, State Library, Department of Archives 1800a.

The following description of the house of Mr. Toler at Cumberland is recorded by a Northern newspaper reporter who was with the Federal Army under McClellan:

This was a two storey house, framebuilding, having a porch in front, and was almost entirely imbedded in foliage. Brick chimneys were built at each end, and the house was surrounded by a high peaked roof It was on this man's extensive plantation that the Federal Army encamped while at Cumberland This house was much decayed, and was a poor representative of Virginia Mansions. (*The Siege of Richmond*, Joel Cook, Philadelphia, 1862).

THE LITTLEPAGE FAMILY

The first Littlepage appeared in New Kent about 1680. The first land patents to Richard Littlepage in New Kent were about this time. It is supposed that he married before coming to Virginia. Richard Littlepage, his son, succeeded to his property at his death, April 20, 1688.

Richard Littlepage, Jr. married Frances Austin. He died March 20, 1717 and his wife survived him until 1732 as indicated by her tombstone still at Cumberland:

Here Lyeth Interred
the body of rd
Mrs. Frances Littlepage
Widow of Capn Richard Littlepage
Departed This Life
The 21st day of February
Anno Domini 1732
In the 55th Year of Her Age.

Among the children of Capt. Richard and Frances Littlepage, were Alice who married Rev. Mr. Daniel Taylor, William who married Sarah Meriwether, Travis, Richard, Edmund, Col. James who married (1) Miss Carter, (2) Miss Lewis; John, twin to James; Judith, and Susanna whose tombstones indicate they died in youth and Elizabeth who married first William Chamberlayne and second William Gray.

Here Lyeth the Body of
Judith Littlepage
who was born the 6th August
1715 and departed this
Life the 17th of June 1723.

Ah Littlepage
1732.

The stone from which the legend below was taken has been removed to St. Peter's Church in New Kent. There is also at St. Peter's in the wall a tablet to the memory of Mr. William Chamberlayne, the father of these children. He died in 1736.

Here Lyeth Interred the Body of
 Frances the Daughter of
 Mr William & Elizabeth Chamberlayne
 who Departed this Life the 17th day
 of November 1722 age 30 days.
 Also the Body of Ann Chamberlayne
 who Departed this Life the 8th day of
 October 1725 age I year
 6 mos and 25 days.

The inscription taken from another stone near the graves of the Littlepages, shows the names of the Watkins owner and his children:

lies the Body of
 Henry A Watkins Esq
 of New Kent Co deceased
 Departed this Life the 10th day of
 March 1785 aged 55 years
 He married Betty Claiborne
 the eldest daughter of Philip
 Whitehead Claiborne
 of the County of King William
 By whom he had children
 one son and two daughters
 John Dandridge Watkins
 Elizabeth Dandridge Watkins
 Ann Dandridge Watkins.

NEWCASTLE TOWN

The bridge over the Pamunkey river on the Richmond-Tappahannock Highway still bears the name Newcastle. The old road passes thru the site of the town and the bridge there built prior to 1740 was the first bridge in Virginia constructed over a tidal river. The present bridge is about half a mile up the river from the old bridge, which can be reached by a dirt road thru the flats on the south side.

On March 12th 1682/3, 1316 acres of land were patented by David Crafford, and the patent sets forth that the land had been formerly patented by Mrs. Hannah Clarke and after her decease was found to escheat and was since granted to John Langston under the date of Septmbre 28th 1681, and was by him assigned to David Crafford. The land is described in the patent as follows: "on the south side of the York River

and known by the name of Esaquin plantation, in the county of New Kent."¹⁸

David Crafford made a deed to his grandson, William Merriwether, son of his daughter Elizabeth and her husband Nicholas Merriwether, a Welshman, and progenitor of the Virginia family of that name, under date of April 1693, giving to him the plantation called Assaquin, and after him to his grandson, David Merriwether, and after him to his daughter Elizabeth and her husband Nicholas Merriwether. It would appear from the deed that he desired that the Merriwethers should have this land.¹⁹

It appears that William Merriwether assumed proprietorship of the plantation and established the warehouse about 1730. It was from that date called Merriwether's. In 1734 the rent was set at 10 pounds.²⁰ The inspectors' salary was stipulated in the act of the Assembly at 35 pounds per annum. John Talley and Thomas Glass were inspectors.

William Merriwether laid off forty acres of his land above the warehouse for a town, and divided it into half-acre lots, which he sold to various persons. The town was called Newcastle, after the English one of that name. Often the place appeared as Merriwether's. The land was surveyed by Col. John Henry in 1738 and a plat was made of the town at that time as indicated by the copy, a photostat of which is here reproduced.²¹ The plat of the town names the lot holders, who were for the most part gentlemen of the adjacent counties. A second list opposite the first shows either the lot holders at a later date (1751) or those occupying the lots in the town.

In a petition to the House of Burgesses in 1744, William Merriwether asked that the entail on his lands be broken in order that he might be able to give persons proper title to their lots. He set forth that the town had grown, the population had increased and the place was improved and would become a town of some importance, having a considerable trade. The only deterrent at the time being the fear that the title to lots bought of him might not be good. The entail set up by David Crafford was still in effect.²²

In the year 1740, a bridge was built over the Pamunkey by the following gentlemen: William Merriwether, John Henry, John Bickerton of Hanover County and Francis Jer-

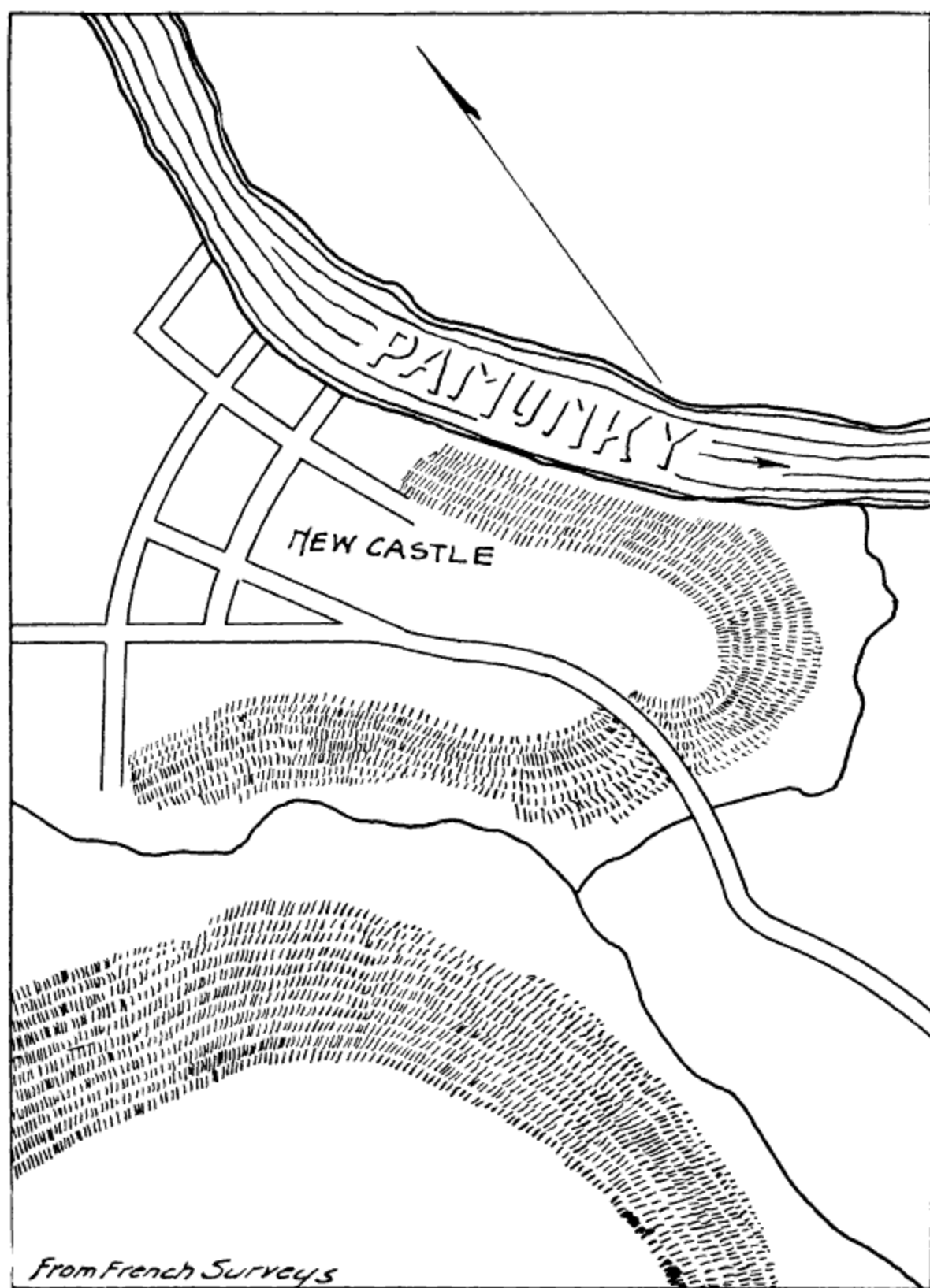
¹⁸ Patent Book, 7:234.

¹⁹ Hening, 5:257.

²⁰ *Executive Journals of Council*, iv:237.

²¹ Hening, 5:257.

²² Hening, 3:257.



Newcastle

done, executor of William Johnson's estate. Two years later the Assembly was petitioned to compel the Justices of the Counties of King William and Hanover to maintain the bridge.²³ The same year an act in Hening states that the bridge was to be pulled down. At the same time provisions were made for making the bridge more commodious, followed closely by further provisions for rebuilding the structure, declaring it had served a most useful purpose. This is believed to be the first highway bridge built over a tidal river in the colony and probably in America. This bridge was used by post rider Francis Taylor on his route from Newpost to Williamsburg.

A dispute concerning the capital being maintained at Williamsburg arose. It was proposed to move it to a place further inland. Several places were mentioned and among them Newcastle. When the question was discussed by the Assembly, a resolution was offered to build a town at Newcastle adjoining Newcastle, in consideration of the offer made by William Merriwether of land for the town and public buildings.²⁴

The same year an act was passed declaring that the days for fairs were set for the Second Tuesday in May and the Third Tuesday in November for the town of Newcastle. A previous act had been passed prohibiting wooden chimneys in the town, and had set aside the First Tuesday in April and the Third Tuesday in November. It also afforded protection to those going to and from the fairs, including the two days before and two days after, in order to promote "the sale and trade in cattle, victuals, produce, goods, wine and merchandize."²⁵ (The Chamber of Commerce must have been active.)

It was not until 1749, however, that the session of the Assembly in April passed the act for incorporating the town of Newcastle. The details of the act are not given in Hening, the title being reported only. The Journal of the House of Burgesses recorded the vote as 38 to 32 for establishment of a town. Staunton was incorporated at the same time.²⁶

The original plat of the town was made in March 1738/9, on the basis of a survey by Col. John Henry for Col. William Merriwether. This was copied in June 1744 from the original plat which was then in the possession of Col. Merriwether. John Thompson made the copy. The information conveyed

²³ *Journal of House of Burgesses*, 7:310.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 7:283.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 7:298.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 7:361.

by this plat shows the lot owners in 1744, and number of the lot in the plat, and the later owners:

<i>Lot Holder</i>	<i>Number of Lot</i>	<i>Later Owner</i>
Wm Morris	1	Blackburn Hughes
John Baylard	2	The Heirs of Ballard
Farquhar Mathison	3	Dr. Shores
<p>"To be sold February 15 1750/I a lot in Newcastle Town with Dwelling House, 3 fireplaces therin, Kitchin with Brick Chimney, Stable, Smoak House, Dairy & Pailed Garden, another house on same lot 12 feet square plastered above and below, a drawed well bond & bricked". Farquhar Mathison, <i>William and Mary Quarterly</i>, (I) 12:73.</p>		
William Taylor	4-5	
William Nelson	6	
John Poindexter	7	
John Bullard	8	His heirs
John Henry	9	Col. John Chiswell
John Poindexter	10	Col. John Chiswell
John Holt	11	
James Littlepage	12	Hyndman & Donald
William Parks	13	His heirs
John Dandridge	14	
William Nelson	15	
Samll Hill	16	William Coles
John Thompson	17	Duncan Graham
William Parks	18	His heirs
Joseph Meaux	19	Duncan Graham
William Johnson	22	David Taylor tenant Graham
Richard Johnson	23	George Webb
Edmund Littlepage	24	Donald & Hyndman
Leighton Wood	25	Robt Jennings
Thomas Walker	26&27	
William Chaman	28	His heirs
William Taylor	29	Mat Anderson
William Bellamy	30&31	Mat Anderson
William Bellamy	32	Duncan Graham
David Holt	33	Duncan Graham
William Macon	34	
<p>"To son William Massie house & lot in New Castle"</p>		
William Massie	35	His Heirs
Edmund Littlepage	36	John Thompson
Leighton Wood	37	Robert Jennings
David Holt	38	David Holt jr
Peter Marks	39	
David Holt	40	William Holt
Francis Jerdone	41	Duncan Graham
John Dixon	42	
<p>"sold two lots in Newcastle town in 1751"</p>		
John Holt	43	
Richard Littlepage	44&45	
Peter Marks	46&47	
Noell Buchanan	48	Duncan Graham
John Dixon	49	sold 1751 (W&M (I)13:160)

The Tax Returns made by the Commissioners for Hanover County beginning with 1782 give the lot owners in the town and number of lots held by each:

John Cunningham	4
David Cochran	6
John Cockburn	1
Edward Cook	2
William LeMay	4
Doer Marshall	4
Doer Riddick	2
Constantine Riddick	2
John Webb	3
John Webb & Co.	2
Joseph Thompson	1
Henry Morris	1
William Holt	1
Samuel Grantling	40
Joseph Fox	1
Thomas Nelson Esq.	1
Colo. John Syme	4

This shows a total of 79 lots in the town. Samuel Grantling (Grantland) was owner of 40 lots. It is evident that additional lots were laid out after the first survey for the town.

The Deed Book for 1785-90 in Hanover Records contains transfers of lots in Newcastle:

<i>Deed Book Page</i>	<i>Grantor</i>	<i>Grantee</i>	<i>Price</i>	<i>Date</i>
171 Lot 44, 45, 52	Edward Cook	Gwyn Jones	110L	7/6/86
232	Mary Anderson	David Cochran		

The Land Tax Returns give transfers of lots and the owners as follows:

1783	William LeMay	Edward Cook	two lots
1788	Colin Riddick	Isaac Brown	two lots
	Henry Morris	David Cochran	one lot
1790	David Cochran	John Thompson	One lot
1783	Col. John Syme	Samuel Staley	Two lots
1809	Francis Taylor	Thomas Tinsley	Four lots

For the first time in 1813, the Commissioners reported the lot owners, number of lots owned and the number of each lot:

1813.	John W. Tomlin	Lots: 13, 14, 25, 37, 22, 34, 45.
	John W. Tomlin	from Francis Taylor
		Lots: 19, 29, 30, 31, 35, 38, A, B, C.

John W. Tomlin	from Representatives of Gideon Grantlin Lot: 51
John W. Tomlin	from Nicholas Johnson Lots: 26, F, 41, 42, 47, 48, H, 9, 44.
John W. Tomlin	from Joseph Thompson Lots: 3, 17, 18, 36.
John W. Tomlin	By Court order Lot: 11.
John W. Tomlin	from Mary Cochran Lots: 1, 7.
John W. Tomlin	from Thomas Tinsley Lots: 4, 20, 21, 32.
William M McDougale Estate	Lots: 2, H, K.
John Grosjean	Lots: 3, 12, 23, 24.
John Cochran	Lots: 2, 39, 46.
John B Johnson	Lots: 1, 3.

In 1809, John W. Tomlin purchased from William Cochran the White House Lot and gardens, the Blue House Lots and the lot of Gwyn Jones, a clover lot opposite the white house and also all other vacant lots in Newcastle. Mr. Tomlin was well on the way to own the town, when the transfers were all made in 1813.

LIFE IN NEWCASTLE

This small settlement soon became a social center for the lower end of Hanover and the upper end of King William, and the vicinity. The Virginia Gazette carried a news item on August 28th 1746 concerning Newcastle:

Gentlemen of Hanover County gathered to express their joy and loyalty at the defeat of the Scots at Culloden (April 16th 1746). They met at the house of Mrs. Waters and 50 gentlemen and ladies dined. There was a large amount of punch, volley from small arms after each toast. The Loyalist illuminated windows in the town. Bonfires were lit and dancing engaged in. All conducted with decorum and good order at Newcastle.

This was an English celebration. It might well have been in honor of the influx of Scots who came to Virginia soon after. There was an increase each year after this of the Scotch merchants. The letters of Francis Jerdone, of the Nortons, and scattered letters show that a good part of the trade was conducted by these thrifty people after the loss of Culloden. Jerdone speaks of a Cock Match at Newcastle in 1751, which would afford him an opportunity of meeting people.²⁷ Of a different type of gathering

²⁷ *William and Mary Quarterly*, (I) xi:159.

were the vestry meetings of St. Paul's Parish which were held here. Jerdone wrote in 1751, "James Brown of Newcastle carried off John Thompson's eldest daughter some time last August to Maryland and there married her, which has so much offended Mr. Thompson that he has neither spoken to Brown or as yet seen his daughter, and to disappoint Brown in his expectations, immediately married his housekeeper who is young & not unlikely to have children."

Chastellux speaks of his visit to Newcastle in 1781:

As the next days journey was to be longer than the preceding one, we left New Kent Courthouse before eight o'clock and rode twenty miles to Newcastle, where I resolved to give our horses two hour's repose; the road was not level as that we travelled the day before, and was rendered more agreeable by being diversified with some little hillocks. From the top of them you had a view to the distance of some miles, and at times one might perceive the Pamunkey river, which runs at the bottom of a deep valley covered with wood. As you approach Newcastle, the country becomes more fay. This little capital of a small district, contains twenty five or thirty houses, some of which are pretty enough. When our horses were reposed, and the heat was a little abated, we continued our journey, that we might arrive at Hanover courthouse before dark, from which we were sixteen miles. The country thru which we passed is one of the finest of lower Virginia. There are many well cultivated estates, and handsome houses, among others one belonging to Mr. Jones, situated near the road, two miles from Newcastle, of a very elegant appearance, which we were informed, was furnished with infinite taste, and what is still more uncommon in America that it was embellished with a garden, laid out in the English Style.²⁸

This brief description of Newcastle shows that it was a place of considerable importance at that time. A more intimate account of the little town and its people are gained from the Diary of Alexander MacCauley, the Scotch husband of Elizabeth Jerdone of Jerdone Castle, Louisa County. As they made their way down from Jerdone Castle, they passed Hanover Courthouse and Hanover town and came to Newcastle on their way to Williamsburg, February 1783:

It threatened bad weather & we know D. Cochrane kept a good Shop, and would give us a heart welcome. We were not disappointed Mr. Cochrane received us with a warm heart, a cordial sincerity that were I not a Scotchman, I would say was a peculiarity the characteristic of his country—it is said they are only kind to one another. But I should imagine where people are friendly to their own countrymen, they must have some degree of Benevolence for the rest of Mankind. Mrs. Cochrane likewise with genuine, not depreciated, Virginia politeness treated Betsy with the Hospitality due to a Virginian, & your Hble Servant with the attention due the Countryman of her Husband.

²⁸ Travels in North America in the years 1780-81-82, 1827.

Saturday, 22d. Bad weather, good Quarters & cheerful Friends spent our time very agreeable, had a visit from the amiable accomplished, Delicate genteel Mrs. Riddock, as neat, clean tug & handsome as ever; a good specimen of Scotch Ladies in this Land. Why in the name of wonder do such go abroad. She is much better calculated for the meridian of the Mull of Cantire or the Esquimaux than the polished Circles of Virginia.

Sunday 23d. Fine weather and intended to proceed. Mr & Mrs Cochrane laid an absolute embargo on us. We therefore agreed to leave the roads to dry this day & set out next morning.

Monday 24th. At Ten A. M. Bid adieu to our worthy friends at Newcastle, Betsy wishing she could have the pleasure of such a neighbor as Mrs Cochrane: she is indeed very good natured and agreeable, & they seemed mightily taken with each other, & were quite well acquainted in a few hours.²⁹

The most noteworthy gathering ever recorded at Newcastle was that group of militia and patriots who at the call of Patrick Henry gathered here and marched toward Williamsburg to demand the return of the powder which had been removed from the Powder Horn by Lord Dunmore. From this place they marched thru New Kent to Doncastle's Ordinary about a mile east of the present Barhamsville, where the representatives of the Governor guaranteed the return of the powder or payment.

The keeper of the public magazine at Newcastle was authorized to deliver to Col. Charles Lewis on his order one ton of gun powder for his army against the Cherokees on Aug. 1st 1771. Col. John Syme presented a similar order for salt; supplies were gathered at these points along the river because of the easy handling by water.

After the Revolution the Legislature was flooded with petitions for redress of one kind or another. Constantine Riddick petitioned for relief suffered in 1775 when his cargo of supplies consisting of 112 gallons of West Indies 116 gallons of Norfolk Distilled Rum, 710 pounds of Brown Sugar, and 10 pounds of coffee valued at 45 pounds was captured and confiscated by Capt. Lyons for Lord Dunmore in Hampton Roads. Riddick stated that he was taken ashore and confined for some time.

The accompanying plate was made from a sketch made by French Engineers in 1781 and shows the roads passing New Castle with relation to the streets and town itself.

HANOVERTOWN

The river road which runs from Newcastle to Hanover C. H. parallels the Pamunkey on the lower side, and passes thru the site of Hanovertown. This road follows the same roadbed as it

²⁹ *William and Mary Quarterly*, (I) xi:180.

did in colonial days. It has borne the tread of the armies of the Revolution and Civil War. It was over this road that Stuart made his famous ride, and lost the gallant Latane. At the present time it continues westward and intersects with State Route 2 not far below Hanover C. H.

On March 14th 1672, Col. John Page, a member of the Council, patented lands in New Kent County. This land was in the wilderness and in consequence, no metes and bounds were given.³⁰ Hanover County was constituted in 1721 from the upper part of New Kent County, and the Page lands mentioned above were in the newly formed county and new Parish of St. Pauls. About 1730, the warehouse at Crutchfield's on the lands of Col. Page is mentioned and two years later (1732), the two warehouses, Page's and Crutchfield's were allowed an annual rental of fifty pounds.³¹ The inspector's salary at Page's was set at forty pounds per annum and the same salary was granted the inspector at Crutchfield's. This was raised to sixty pounds in 1742, when Thomas Anderson and John Crutchfield were the inspectors.³² In 1745, at the upper landing on Page's land, the Crutchfield warehouse rental was set at eight pounds of tobacco per hogshead. The inspectors' salaries were ten pounds per annum at each warehouse in 1745.³³

It was represented to the House of Burgesses by a petition that John Wilson and other merchants of Glasgow, in August 1745 near Page's under the care of William Mullen suffered losses by fire of all his possessions except his book. He asked relief, presumably from his obligations to the planters.³⁴ A similar disaster overtook Crutchfield's warehouse in the spring of 1756 and entailed a loss of forty hogsheads of tobacco.³⁵

William Overton and Thomas Anderson in 1752 petitioned the Assembly regarding the salaries of the inspectors at Page's. The inspectors were David Richardson and John Dabney. The two former men had previously been inspectors and evidently wished to get their positions again. They failed and Richardson and Anderson were inspectors in 1761 at Page's. Nathaniel Talley was at this time inspector at Crutchfield's.³⁶

The Pamunkey was a continual burden because of filling, changes in the channel and hammocks. So great had the difficulties of navigation become by 1758, that complaints were made and the

³⁰ Patent Book, 6:116.

³¹ Hening, 4:266.

³² Hening, 5:143.

³³ *Journal of the House of Burgesses*, 7:165.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 8:364.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 8:230.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 9:218.

Assembly asked to establish a new warehouse at Newcastle, to suppress the ones at Page's and save time in the handling of tobacco for the English trade. Vessels had great difficulty in clearing from the upper warehouses and getting down the river with a full cargo. It can be readily understood when one sees the upper reaches of the Pamunkey at this time.³⁷

On the Petition of Mann Page Esq., setting forth that "he is owner of the land whereon the warehouses of Page's and Crutchfield's now stand, the tract containing 950 acres and 2000 acres in King William County, across the river, and further that he proposed to establish a town thereon, it having become a place of importance. To further this enterprise he proposed to set apart 100 acres for a town to be divided into lots and streets."³⁸

It does not appear that Mann Page disposed of the lots in the town as rapidly as he had hoped. In 1766, four years after the town was chartered, the following notice appeared as an advertisement in the Virginia Gazette:

SCHEME of A LOTTERY

for disposing of 146 lots of land in the town of Hanover yet remaining unsold. The least valuable of the lots according to price of those most remote from the water which has been sold being less than 20 pounds which is far below the medium of between that sum and what was given near the water. The unsold lots are rated at 30 pounds each accounting 1, 2, 8, 9, 10 on which Page's warehouse stands as one lot only, and 24, 35, 36, 47, 48, 49, on which Crutchfield's Warehouse stands as one lot only, so there will be 135 lots in the whole to be drawn for it is proposed that there shall be no more than that number of chances and carrying blanks.

The consideration money will not be required of Gentlemen willing to become adventurers and subscribing to the scheme until next when it is to be paid to the proprietor at Williamsburg.

The drawing will soon after the subscribers shall be completed of which notice will be printed in the Virginia Gazette.

R. C. Nicholas
Thomas Everard

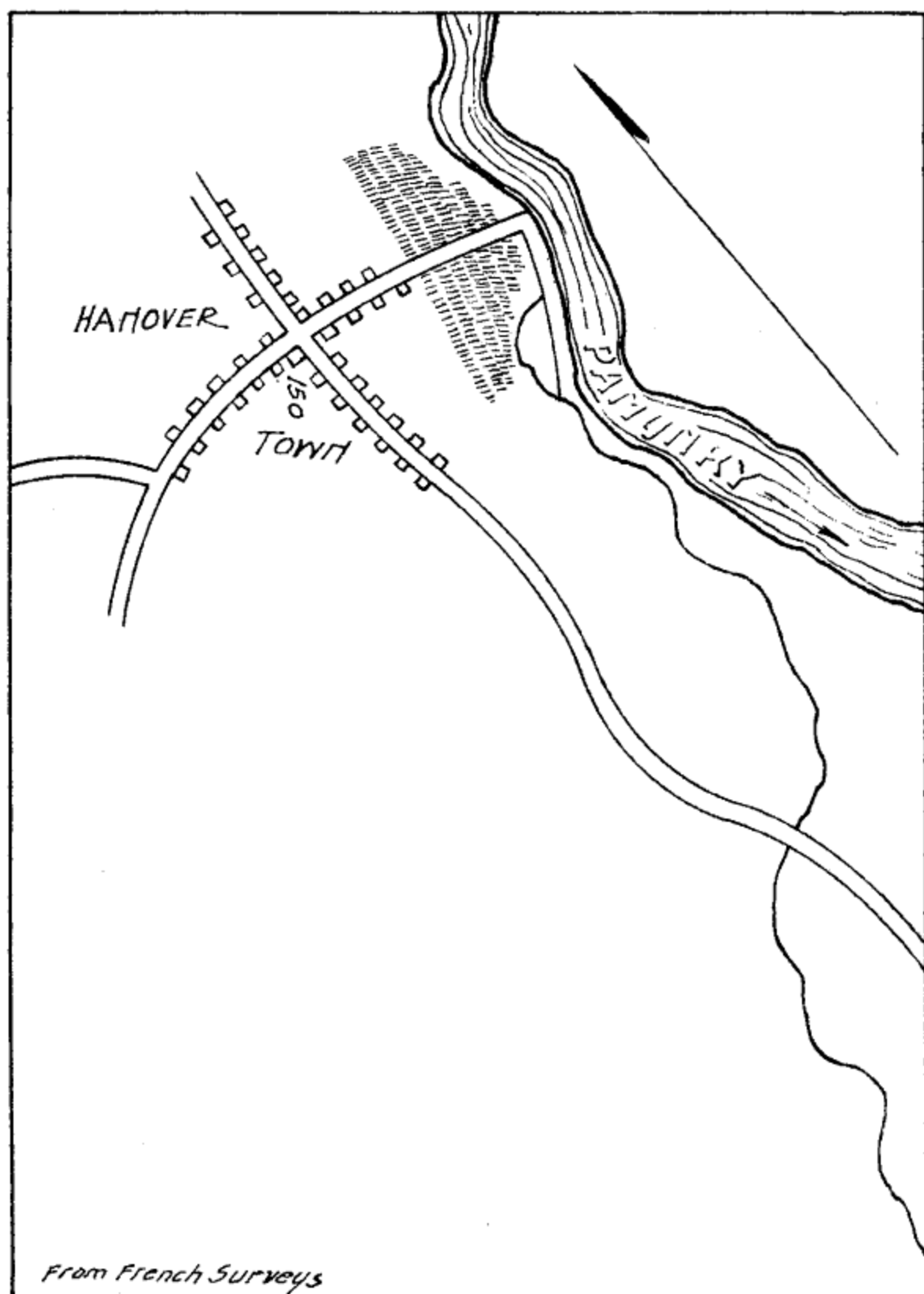
Jerman Baker
George Wythe

John Thompson
Mann Page

There is no plat of the town known to be in existence. The above statement of the lots in the two warehouse sites and the known fact that the Page's warehouse was below the Crutchfield's warehouse and the following information have made it possible to reconstruct a plan of the town. In the deed from William Nelson to William Manson the description of Lots 20 and 21 are as follows: "bounded by Lot 31 and Lot 32 on the West, Lot 9 and Lot 10 on the East, and the Street leading to Page's on the South

³⁷ *Journal of the House of Burgesses*, 9:218.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 10:149.



Hanovertown

and a two pole street on the North." The width of the streets was two poles. The lots were ranged back to back, facing on parallel streets. There were eight lots in each block, or else the cross street would have been given in the description. In addition this data has been augmented by the tracing of Hanover town on a map made by Rochambeau's engineers, who mapped out the road from York to Fredericksburg in 1781. This little map shows that the town lay in the form of a cross, formed by the two roads, which crossed at right angles in the center of the town.

The Land Tax Returns for Hanover County in 1782 furnish the names of the lot holders and the number of lots held.

<i>Name</i>	<i>Number of Lots</i>
Exec. of Benjamin Anderson	2
Capt. Bentelow	3
Nathan Burnette	1
Joseph Brand	1
Zechariah Clarke	2
Joseph Clarke	1
Revd Wm Coutts	1
Charles Carter	1
Charles Coupland	2
Fortunatus Crutchfield	3
Thomas Foster	3
Thomas Glass	2
Harry Gaines	2
Robert Hart	3
William LeMay	4
Sold to Cook	2
Dr. William Marshall	1
Thomas Nelson	2
Robert Page Esq.	1
Estate of Mann Page Esq.	90
Dr. Quinlan	1
Dr. Roberts	1
Austin Smith	1
Thomas Tinsley	1
Claudius Vial	1
Thomas Whitton	1
George Webb	1
John Barnette	1
William McClary	1

This completes the list of lot holders filed with the Commissioner. It totals 135 lots as advertized in the lottery twenty years before. It seems that Col. Page had not sold the lots as rapidly as he first anticipated. He still owned 90.

The old deed book one of two which has been saved from the Richmond fire in 1865, contains a number of transfers in 1785-90.

<i>Deed</i>	<i>Book</i>	<i>Page</i>	<i>Grantor</i>	<i>Grantee</i>	<i>Price</i>	<i>Date</i>
75	Lot	53	Page Exec.	Cary Wyatt	30 £	7/20/84
159	Lot	72	Page Exec.	Rob. Johnston	75 £	3/3/86
160	Lot	6	Page Exec.	W. Cocke	12 £	3/1/86
171	Lot	18	Page Exec.	Nathan Anderson	10 £	12/14/87
226	Lot	90-I	Page Exec.	Wm Radford	80 £	6/8/87
227	Lot	127	Page Exec.	Rob. Fleming	15 £	5/8/87
268	Lot	13	Page Exec.	George Dabney	10 £	1/9/87
269	Lots		Page Exec.	John Minor jr		4/3/88
274	Lot	23-4	Page Exec.	Rob. & M Hart		4/3/88
296	Lot	82-92	Page Exec.	James Oliver		4/3/88
296	Lot	45	Page Exec.	James Parker		4/3/88
372	Lot	20-I	Wm Nelson	Wm Manson	125 £	7/2/89
413			Wm Manson	Donald & Burton		
417	Lot	16	Jno Oliver	Nathan Anderson		6/17/90
501	Lot	52	Jos. Quinlan	Capt. Cary Wyatt	105 £	8/2/90
501	Lot	122	Page Exec.	Nelson & Crew	36 £	8/4/90
521	Lot	89	Page Exec.	R. Littlepage	53 £	8/4/90
520	Lot	63	Page Exec.	Mann Satterwhite	20 £	8/4/90
524	Lot	15-26	Page Exec.	George Pickett	24 £	8/4/90

The Land Tax Returns beginning in 1782 afford additional information concerning the lots and transfers in the town.

1785. Robert Page to Cary Wyatt one lot.
 1788. Page Estate to Robert Fleming Lot 127.
 Page Estate to John Holmes Lot 30.
 Page Estate to Robert & Malcolm Hart Lots 23 & 24.
 John Minor jr to Page's Estate all the lots where the warehouse stood.
 Page Estate to William Radford Lots 91 & 90.
 Page's Estate to George Dabney Lot 13.
 Joseph Clarke to Robert Fleming one lot.
 Page's Estate to Robert Johnson one lot.
 Page's Estate to Wm Coutts one lot.
 Richard Adams to Nathaniel Anderson & Co one lot.
 1790. William Nelson to William Manson Lots 20 & 21.
 1791. Nathaniel Anderson & Co to John Oliver ½ lot No. 16.
 Samuel Bird a free man one lot.
 1792. Page's Estate to Nathaniel Anderson & Co. No. 11.
 Samuel Beal & Co. to Alexander MacCaulley No. 90.
 Page's Estate to Nelson & Crews No. 122.
 John Quarles to Cary Wyatt No. 5.
 Page's Estate to Richard Littlepage No. 9.
 Cary Wyatt to Joseph Quinlan No. 42.
 1802. John Oliver to Benjamin Oliver four lots.
 Benj. Dabney to Joseph Parker One lot.
 1804. Samuel Bird a free man one lot.
 1807. Rice Hughes to Cary Wyatt one lot.
 Thomas Chrystie Doctr from Ben Oliver two lots.
 1809. William Bowe to John Bowe one lot.
 George Wiley to John Parker one lot.
 1810. Thomas Crutchfield's Estate to Edward Hallam of Richmond.

In 1813 the Commissioners for the first time gave the names of the lot holders, and the number of each lot held, in their report of Land Tax Returns for the County of Hanover.

These details which are given below with the information as to the lot arrangements already given offer a nice puzzle for the ingenious to reconstruct a complete plan of the town.

<i>Name of Owner</i>	<i>Lots</i>	<i>Number of each lot.</i>
Thomas Tinsley	3	54, 70, 71
Benj. Oliver jr	6	39, 40, 27, 28, 41, 42
Belonging to the Mann Page Estate		3, 4, 78, 80, 81, 94, 96, 99, 110, 117, 122, 138, 139, 140, 141, 154, 155, 156
John Oliver	2	98, 82
John W. Ellis	1	105
Wm Manson's Est.	2	20, 21
Claudius Veal Est	4	31, 32, 43, 44
Thomas Crutchfield	1	38
Mathew Toler Est	1	6
Cary Wyatt Est	1	52
George Pickett	2	15, 26
Mathew Anderson	3	55
Nathaniel Anderson	1	11, 18, 19
Samuel Bird	1	128
Wm McClary	1	65
Robert Fleming	2	126, 127
Samuel Gist of Eng.	3	56, 57, 71
Robert Hart	2	60, 61
Malcom Hart	3	12, 13, 34
Robert Johnson	1	72
George Wiley	1	49
Zechariah Clarke	1	79
Peter Foster	1	58
Mann Page Inspection	4	1, 2, 9, 10
Wm B. Nelson	2	29, 30
Joseph Brand	6	120, 121, 136, 152, 153
Robt. Spurlock free negro		2, 76, 77
Putnam Kidd's Est	2	25, 37
John Tombs Est	1	123
George Dabney	1	11
Edward Hallam	2	7, 8
John Parker	15	24, 35, 92, 93, 35, 36, 124, 64, 33, 106, 48, 49, 47, 14, 89
Nathan Bell's Est	2	108, 102.

The two warehouses had for a number of years been the uppermost landing on the Pamunkey. The planters of Hanover, Louisa and other counties brought their tobacco here for shipment. The Jerdone papers and store accounts of the Pottie & Dick partnership in Louisa show that they shipped tobacco from Hanover-town. The planter traded his tobacco to the merchant and he in turned supplied his correspondent beyond the seas in return for the articles which the planter demanded.

There are many features that enter into the arrangement of the lots in the town plan which would have to be considered. The

sketch given of a plat is certainly correct as far as it goes, and the lots given in the original scheme as being in the area where Page's warehouse stood: 1, 2, 8, 9, 10; and the ones in the area where Crutchfield's warehouse stood: 24, 35, 36, 47, 48, 49, fit into this plat perfectly.

TRADE AND TRADERS

As early as 1770 the merchants association had among its membership, John Johnson, John Smith and Harden Burnley of Hanover town. It was a place for the Scotch merchants to establish themselves. In the course of its history Donald and Burton, Samuel Beall, Alexander MacCauley, Robert and Malcolm Hart had business interests here. Dr. John Walker, male midwife, died here in 1774. His effects were advertized in the Virginia Gazette, his shop, utensils, surgeon and midwifery instruments, medicines and books, at his shop in Hanover town. It also had its share of physicians. Dr. William Marshall, Dr. Joseph Quinlan, Dr. Thomas Chrystie, Dr. Roberts and later Dr. Curtis all had lots in the town and practised medicine in the vicinity. Drs. Quinlan and Chrystie were surgeons in the Revolution. The latter is buried at Studley, the old Henry home. The passing of the armies during the Revolution left a mark on the place from which it did not recover. The tobacco warehouses being public property were destroyed. It had been a depot for army supplies. British prisoners were quartered in the town after Cornwallis retired to the peninsula. Wayne was encamped here in 1781, when marching to join LaFayette.

After the turn of the century with trade changing its channels, the loss of foreign commerce, and the removal of the state capital to Richmond, Hanover town like its sister ports down the Pamunkey started its period of disintegration. A half century later when General Grant crossed the Pamunkey, there was a ferry of small importance and little more.