


**Old Houses
In Princess Anne
Virginia**

KELLAM

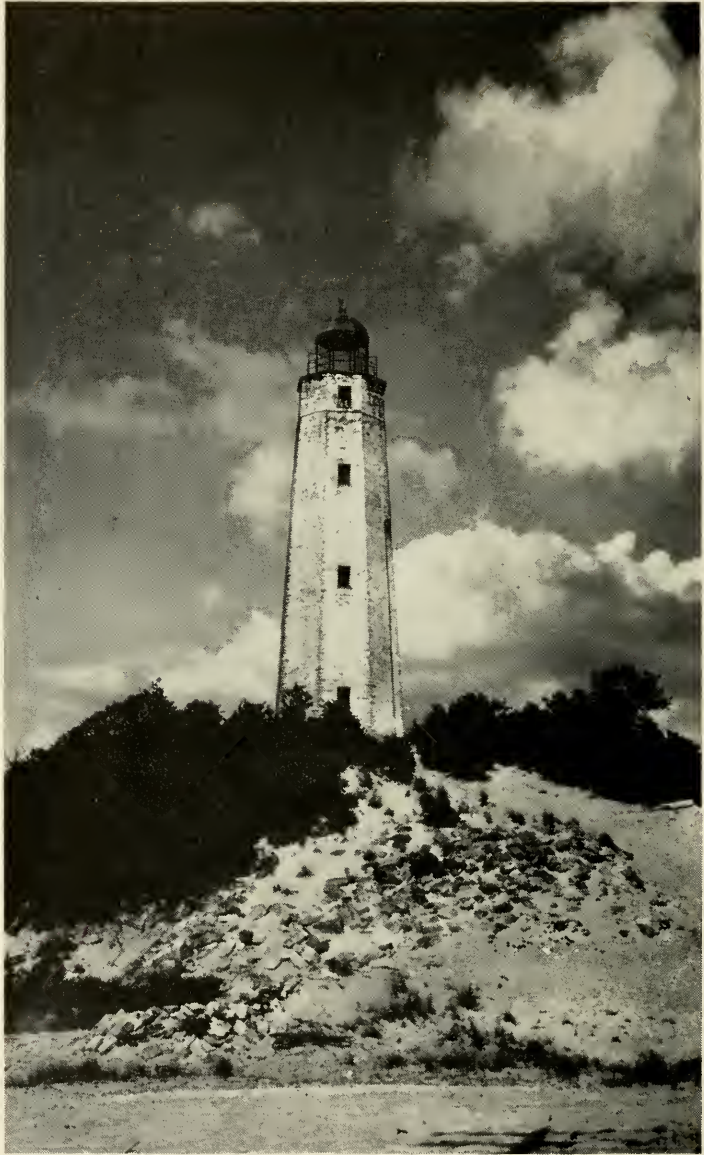
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Old Light House—Cape Henry, 1791

*Courtesy Chamber of
Commerce, Norfolk, Va.*

Old Houses in Princess Anne Virginia

BY

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AND

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FULLY ILLUSTRATED

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Grateful acknowledgment is made to Mrs. Floyd G. Price whose efforts encouraged the authors in re-printing this edition of "Old Houses in Princess Anne, Virginia."

P R E F A C E

This little volume is the outgrowth of a series of journeys up and down the roads of old Princess Anne. At first there was no thought of a book, only an album collection of kodak pictures with maybe a jotting here and there where emphasis would be laid on account of an unusual feature. Interest among our friends rather spurred us on toward a more pretentious undertaking.

Should these notes come into the hands of one who knows architecture as an art or science, bear in mind that the authors are laymen, whose only excuse for committing their findings to print, is the sincere desire to preserve for coming generations a record of what is left today of the homes builded in Princess Anne prior to 1800. Pray, therefore, be "To our virtues very kind, To our faults, a little blind."



INTRODUCTION

Much has been written of Virginia and practically all phases of its history have been touched upon; however, little has been told of its separate units. Few places in the State are richer in historical material than Lynnhaven Parish—coterminous with Princess Anne County. It is the purpose of this book to tell the story, as shown by the records, of extant colonial houses in this county, which, with the brief sketches of some of the original owners, will be no small contribution to the history of this section.

We, of this part of Virginia, go far in the State to view and study the habitations of those whose names are written high, little realizing that there is as much of equal interest close at hand in the remaining homes of the very earliest settlers in Lynnhaven Parish. The style of architecture may not be as elaborate as Brandon, Shirley, Westover and many others, yet these Princess Anne houses are sturdy, honest buildings, so substantially constructed that at least forty or fifty erected prior to 1800 have withstood the gnawing tooth of time as is herein demonstrated by the illustrations of their exteriors. It has remained for the authors of this book to bring before the public these very early homes and some of the story of those prominent at that time in this immediate section of Virginia. The compilation required patience, industry and detailed examination of the style of bricks, methods

of bonding and details of construction of each house; the examination of the records and other sources of information demanded much time. Some facts herein stated from the records may be disappointing to a few, in that certain traditions may be shattered, yet when statements are from the record they are a verity.

Here in Princess Anne is so much of interest it is difficult to know where to begin or where to end. There is the story of Parson Dickson, the thrifty Scotchman, for many years rector of Lynnhaven Parish, whose educational donation in 1774 gave to Donation Church its name; or that of Lawyers Boush (who in 1706 prosecuted Grace Sherwood for witchcraft), and Robinson (he of the peculiar will); then there are the doctors with their queer prescriptions, and the many other interesting subjects, but such is not the purpose of this book. Let us hope that at an early day the authors will tell more of the story of this old and honorable county.

BENJAMIN DEY WHITE.

Old Houses in Princess Anne Virginia

CHAPTER I



BY FAR the most thrilling phase of this adventure into the building projects of bygone days is the great care given by the Builder, be he rich or poor, be the building "Great House," Manor, or humble two-room cottage, to the selection of the site of the house. Invariably the house is located on the highest ground, the yard sloping in all directions. Almost without exception, there was bay, river, creek, or branch close to what was the front of the house. We say "what was" advisedly, because with the building of roads, water as the means of transportation has ceased to be, and many times now we find the back door of other days bravely facing the county road in true style of Virginia hospitality. Last, but by no means least, we find that our Builder seemed carefully to select the trees for the yard. And magnificent specimens they were! Tulip, poplar, cedar, water oak, elm, "paper" mulberry, sycamore—even in these days still standing guard after the storms of two centuries. These facts are evidences, we take it, that more than a house was being built. A home was



Live Oak at Woodlawn

being made, a place of peace and safety, rest and quiet, after the cares of the day. A place to which one invited his friends and neighbors (there were such things then), where the stranger always found someone at home with a welcome for the wayfarer. Now, after all these years, they stand as testimony of work well done.

When we take note of the consideration given to the choice of a home-site, and also take note of how substantially our forefathers built their homes as we see them today, it is hard to believe that in the beginning at Jamestown, cottages and log cabins were so inadequately constructed, and so long time continued to serve as dwellings in spite of complete dilapidation, that Governor Wyatt, in 1637, thirteen years after the dissolution of the old Virginia Company, was instructed to require every owner of one hundred acres of land to build a brick dwelling 24x16 feet with a cellar. Owners of five hundred acres, or more, must build proportionately. Maybe at that time each man expected to find a



Part of a boxwood avenue and well sweep at home of James White near Sandbridge

fortune at once and return to Old England for the enjoyment thereof. Governor Wyatt, however, seems never to have put this order into effect.

The early colonists were familiar with stone, brick and wood as material for housebuilding. There being no stones available in Tidewater, the earliest dwellings were of wood; the log cabin first, followed shortly by frame, when a method of wood-sawing, easier than the "John Smith Method", had been devised. Splendid forests of pine, oak, gum, cypress and cedar were theirs for the taking. Also one found then, as now, much fine clay for brick making. The oyster shells, so easily available, furnished lime for the mortar in brick construction.

These earliest Virginia houses were undoubtedly one story, sharp roof, with chimney at each end. The first chimneys were probably daubed of stick and clay. Soon these Englishmen, who were fast becoming Virginians, began the making of bricks,

and from this point of time one finds the construction of the brick chimney an outstanding and fascinating feature of Virginia architecture.

Soon after Dale came in 1611, announcing that brickmaking was to be an important item in Virginia's economic scheme, brick kilns were developed at Henricus. Bricks were successfully made there, and elsewhere, in quantities far beyond the immediate needs of the colonists. Not that more houses could not well be made of brick, but transportation beyond the waterfront property was prohibited by lack of roads.

Ralph Hamor, early secretary to the colony, in his history of Virginia written in 1614, tells of the laying of the brick foundation of a church at Henricus, the foundation to be 100x50 feet. That there were large quantities of brick made is evidenced by the fact that in one report of the Indian massacre of 1622, we note that the Indians were repulsed by the throwing of brickbats. Also we know that bricks were an article of export to Bermuda at a very early date.

There has long been a tradition, and invariably you hear it at each old house, "Yes, this is an old house; just look at the bricks, they were brought here from England." It does not seem kind ruthlessly to disallusion a man who has always held this legend as law and gospel, a choice bit with which to take away the breath of an outsider. If one would be diplomatic the situation may be handled without doing hurt to any feelings. Agree that the bricks are old, and that they are "English." Follow this with the information that Englishmen

came here to this country for the express purpose of making bricks and building houses, for we know that in 1609 there were four brickmakers in Virginia. None are listed with the second and third supply, so Mr. Phillip Alexander Bruce says in his *Economic History of Virginia*. From this same source comes the information that brickmakers were advertised for in 1610. We actually know the name of one who lived in Lower Norfolk County: it was John Robert. We had plenty of good clay, the brickmakers used the same measurements and method of brickmaking as they did at home in England, so of course the bricks are "English." This explanation has always proved an acceptable substitute. Most likely then your host will tell you of plowing up in a field an old pile of bricks.

As a matter of fact, the theory that these bricks came here as ballast seems most unlikely. In the first place the holds of the small sailing vessels were needed far more for the accommodation of articles of actual necessity than for bricks, which could be, and were being, made here. In the second place, the price of bricks quoted in England between 1650 and 1700 was 18s. 8½d. per thousand while in Virginia the price at that time was from 8 to 15 shillings per thousand. In the third place, undoubtedly, when we consider the careful stowing the little holds would have required in order to bring over any considerable quantity of brick (our type of construction was so lavish in the use of brick), and the length of time the crossing of the Atlantic took, one is forced to the conclusion that the term "English" had reference to the type

of brick, measurement, baking, etc., in contradistinction to the "Dutch" brick used in New York State and thereabouts.

Nails, blacksmith made, did come from England, were scarce and expensive. One actually finds them listed in old inventories of estates; that they came from England is based on the finding of nails—so many pounds—in old bills of merchandise. So valuable were nails in comparison with the timber in a house, we find a man burning the house he is abandoning, in order to salvage the nails for his new home. This was so prevalent that in 1644-45 it became necessary for the government to make an allowance to a man who was moving, for the nails left in his old house. This allowance was based on an estimate made by two of his neighbors.

Such, briefly, were the building conditions in Virginia in the early days.

Probably the first brick house built in Virginia was that of Secretary Kemp, built at Jamestown in 1638, to be followed in about two years by the house at Green Spring, two miles away. This was the Governor Berkley Mansion. Mrs. Mary Newton Standard, in her book, *Colonial Virginia, Its People and Customs*, published in 1917, says that the Warren house in Surry County, Virginia, built in 1654, on the farm given by the Indian king to Thomas Rolfe, son of John Rolfe and our Indian Princess, Pocahontas, is the oldest house now standing in Virginia whose date can be positively identified. This date is fixed, we have found, by court record at Surry, of a lawsuit, defended by

the man employed to build the house. Mr. Warren complained of the poor workmanship, and the rejoinder was to the effect that a brick house of that size could not be so well built when the short time of five years was allowed for the building.

It may be interesting to note the following men (among others) had houses according to records before 1686 in Lower Norfolk County:

- Record Book (1651-56), page 54—John Sibsey.
- Record Book (1651-56), page 168—Cornelius Lloyd.
- Record Book (1656-66), page 346—Francis Emperor.
- Record Book (1666-75), page 125—Thomas Willoughby.
- Record Book (1675-86), page 223—Adam Thorowgood.
- Record Book (1676-86), page 163—Adam Keeling.

Of the above list, Emperor, Thorowgood and Keeling were in the part of the county lying now within the boundary of Princess Anne.

Since Mr. Willoughby also owned land in Princess Anne, and since his Manor Plantation was located on "Willoughby Spit," or "Point," the acres stretching along the bay toward Little Creek, the boundary line of Princess Anne and Norfolk Counties, then the boundary of Lynnhaven Parish, we pause to say a word of him. Thomas Willoughby was born in 1601, and early came to Virginia. It is not known whom he married. His son, Colonel Thomas, married Sarah Thompson, and their children were Thomas (3), who married Mary Herbert (daughter of the first John Herbert), and a daughter, Elizabeth. One record says Major Thomas, son of Thomas (3) and Mary Herbert died in 1753, leaving a son, Colonel John, who was a Tory. Another record says Major Thomas (4) was the Tory. It is agreed

that the estate suffered greatly for this reason during the Revolution. For a time James Willoughby lived on the northeast corner of Freemason Street, Norfolk, but returned to England, and recovered his peerage. He is one of two men in the Virginia colony who did this, we are told. The other person was Lord Fairfax.

We have just referred to the boundary of Lynnhaven Parish, and to the boundary between Norfolk and Princess Anne Counties. Let us see how the lines were determined.

CHAPTER II



PRIOR to the formation of the eight shires in Virginia in 1634, the colonists were grouped and record made according to plantations, hundred, congregation, parish. The ruling body of the parish was the vestry. Just what extensive power these vestrymen had may be judged from a reference to Henry Cabot Lodge's, "A Short History of the English Colonists in America," p. 58-9. In brief he says of the parishes of the Established Church ". . . these were governed by the vestries, which were very important and active bodies. They represented all the local and municipal government there was in Virginia, and had attained, moreover, a commanding position in church affairs. At an early date secular functions were assigned to them by the Burgesses. They were to make returns of births, marriages and deaths, present for crimes under the statutes against vice, command the sheriff to hold the election for Burgesses, and assist the county courts in building the work houses. To the vestry belonged the duty of 'processioning the land' once in four years, and upon them devolved the care of the roads and ferries."

From Hening's Statutes at Large, volume I, page 224, we learn the names of the eight original shires. From other sources we are able to supplement this information with further items telling who were honored in the selection of names, &c. Our compilation is:

Accawmake, comprising the eastern shore of Virginia, the Indian name Accawmake continuing until 1642 when it was changed to Northampton; Warrasquake, the Indian name giving way to Isle of Wight in 1637; Charles City, named in honor of King Charles the First of England; Henrico, in honor of Prince Henry; Elizabeth City, for Queen Elizabeth; Warwick River, later the "River" was dropped; York, honoring the Duke of York; James City, again a king is honored, James the First of England

About 1636 the county of New Norfolk (a good old English name, by the way, if you properly swallow the last syllable in the pronunciation thereof) was created from the shire of Elizabeth City. This New Norfolk was to comprise the territory across the now Hampton Roads, south of the James River. The next year, 1637, New Norfolk was divided into Upper and Lower Norfolk Counties, Upper Norfolk soon becoming Nansimun, later spelled Nansmond. The designation Lower Norfolk County remained until 1691, when Princess Anne was carved out of lower Norfolk, conforming generally to the boundaries of Lynnhaven and Southern Shores Parishes.

That the citizenry of Princess Anne was pleased when the person for whom the county was named became the ruling head of old England is seen by reference to an article appearing in *The Richmond Standard* for Saturday, December 10, 1881, by T. H. Ellis, from which the following is taken:

"The humble Address of the House of Burgesses in Virginia, to Her Most Excellent Majesty

Queen Anne, congratulating her on her happy accession to the throne of her ancestors, by undoubted right . . ." is signed by Adam Thorowgood as justice of the peace, along with other signatures. Now this Adam was the grandson of Adam Thorowgood, one of Princess Anne County's first citizens.

The Princess Anne of the House of Stuart in England was one of two sisters, each in turn ascending the throne of England. These sisters were daughters of the king's brother, James, Duke of York, and Anne Hyde. Anne Hyde was the youngest daughter of the Edward Hyde, Earl of Clarendon, one time Prime Minister of England, who in 1667 was impeached by the Commons, afterward living in exile in France, where he wrote his famous "History of the Rebellion."

On record at Princess Anne Court House is a copy of the proclamation of the accession of the Queen:

QUEEN ANNE PROCLAIMED

Whereas It hath pleased Almighty God to Call to his mercy our Late Sovereigne Lord King William Ye Third of Blessed Mercy by whose decease ye Imperiall Crowne of England, Scotland, France and Ireland, as also ye Supreme Dominion & Sovereigne right of this Collony & Dominion of Virga. & all other his late Maj. territories & dominions in America are solely & rightfully come to ye high mighty Princess Ann of Denmark we therefore ye officers military & civil & inhabitants of Princess Ann County in ye Collony and Dominion of Virga. do now hereby with one full voice & consent of tongue and heart publish and proclaime that the high and mighty Princess Anne is now by ye death of our late Sovereigne of happy mercy become our only lawfull and rightfull Leidge Lady Anne by the Grace of God Queen of England, Scotland France & Ireland Defender of the

Faith Supreme Lady of the Collony Dominion and plantation of Virginia and all other his late Majesties Territories and Dominions in America &c; To whome ye doe acknowledge all faith and constant obedience with all hearty and Humble affection beseeching God by whom King and Queen Do reigne to bless the royall Queen Anne with long and happy years to reigne over:

God Save Queen Anne.

Since we are to tell of houses in Princess Anne, it may be wise to refresh one's memory as to the boundaries of the county. This may best be done by reference to Hening's Statutes at Large, volume 3, page 95—Act XX, "Lower Norfolk County Divided:"

That the said county of Lower Norfolk shall be divided and made two counties in the following manner, that is to say, beginning at the new inlet of Little Creek, and so up the said Creek to the dams between Jacob Johnson and Richard Drout, and so out of the said dams up a branch the head of which branch lyeth between the dwelling house of William Moseley Sr., and the new dwelling house of Edward Webb, and so to run from the head of the said branch on a direct line to the dams at the head of the Eastern Branch of the Elizabeth River, the which dams lie between James Kemp and Thomas Ivy and so down the said branch to the mouth of a small branch or gutt that divides the land which Mr. John Porter now lives on, from the land he formerly lived on and so up the said second branch according to the bounds of the said plantation, where the said Porter now liveth, and from thence to the great swamp that lyeth on the East side of John Showlands, and so along the said great swamp to the North River of Corotucke, and down the said North River to the mouth of Simpson's Creek, and so up the said creek to the head thereof, and thence by a south line to the bounds of Carolina, and that this division shall be, and remaine, &c. That a court for the said Princess Anne

County be constantly held by the justices thereof upon the second Wednesday of the moneth in such manner as by the law of this country is provided, and shall be by their commissioners directed.

The William Byrd Commission of 1728 adjusted the line between Virginia and North Carolina. This, of course, is the southern boundary of the county. This same line is still recognized between these states.

The first justices of Princess Anne commissioned in 1691, and sitting in that year as the constituted court of the new county were: Mr. Malachy Thurston, Mr. Wm. Cornick, Mr. Benony Burroughs, Mr. John Sandford, Mr. Argall Thorowgood, Mr. John Thorowgood, Mr. Francis Morse, Mr. Evan Jones and Mr. Henry Woodhouse.

The first clerk of the court for the new county was Patrick Angus. He served for nine years, 1691-1700, being succeeded by Christopher Cocke. Mr. Cocke was clerk from 1700 to 1716.

In the following pages we shall tell briefly of the present condition, ownership, and where possible the approximate date of construction, and probable builder. So much of tradition has come down to us about the age and ownership of many of the houses it is a difficult problem to separate fact from fiction. However we shall in every instance make an honest effort to give as facts only such dates as we may substantiate from original source. On the other hand, there is no desire to upset any priorities already claimed by historians and writers of "Virginia."

The tracing of ownership of the plantation from the time of the builder of the house to the present time has led to the finding of many interesting family connections that, for a while, have not been thought of as Princess Anne history. But after all, what is history other than a recital of the acts, the achievements and failures of man, attempting to trace a relationship of cause and effect along the way?

As we turn to our first group of buildings, we hope that those of this generation who are following us will have as keen a satisfaction in this study as has been ours in the assembling of data.

CHAPTER III



NO ENUMERATION of historic buildings in Princess Anne is complete without telling of the old light house at Cape Henry. There can be no question that more people, of more nationalities, of more classes and conditions, have looked for and upon Cape Henry light than any other landmark in Tidewater Virginia. The old light house was the first project of the new Republic on the Atlantic coast.

In 1791 brown sandstone was made into a tower on a sand hill not far removed from the shore. There for ninety years it did valiant service for the men who "went down to the sea in ships." John McComb, Jr., was the architect. He will be remembered as the designer of the old New York City Hall.

On the old light house is a bronze tablet, surmounted by a cross. The inscription thereon tells us:

NEAR THIS SPOT
LANDED APRIL 26, 1607
CAPT. GABRIEL ARCHER CHRISTOPHER NEWPORT
HON. GEORGE PERCY BARTHOLOMEW GOSNOLD
EDWARD MARIA WINGFIELD
with twenty-five others
who
CALLED THE PLACE
CAPE HENRY
PLANTED CROSS
APRIL 29, 1607
"Dei Gratia Virginia Condita"
This Tablet
is erected by the
Association
for
Preservation of Virginia Antiquities
April 29, 1899

Much of the early history of Virginia is woven in and around the church and her vestrymen, therefore, we feel impelled to say a word about the old church buildings in the county.

When Lower Norfolk became a county in 1637, Elizabeth River was the parish name; the rector, John Wilson. There is a record as early as 1639, October 18, wherein a wrongdoer was directed by the court on Sunday "come sennight at the pish church at Linhaven" to acknowledge publicly his misdeed before the congregation.

In 1640 at a court sitting at Mr. William Shipp's, the first vestry of "Linhaven pish" was elected. Mr. Thomas Todd and John Stratton became wardens. The vestrymen were: Mr. Edward Windham, Mr. Henry Woodhowse, Mr. Bartholomew Hosskine, Mr. Thomas Todd, Mr. Christofer Burrowes, Mr. Tho. Bullock, Mr. Tho. Caussonne, Mr. Tho. Keelinge, Mr. Robt. Hayes, Mr. John Lanckfield.

From the following quotation the recognition of Lynnhaven Parish as such, with the designation of bounds and authority is authenticated.

(Hening's Statutes at Large, volume 1, page 250, March 1642/3, 18 Charles I).

Act XVI. Be it further acted and confirmed upon the petition of the inhabitants of Linhaven parish, by the Governor, Council and Burgesses of the Grand Assembly that the parish of Linhaven be bounded as followeth (vizt) To beginn at the first creek shooting out of Chesopiack bay called the Little Creek including all the branches of the said creek and thence extending to the head of Linhaven river, and thence down to the head of the eastern branch of the Elizabeth River to a creek on the northward side of the said branch called Broad Creek provided it be not prejudicial to

the parishes of Eliz. River and Southern shoare by taking away any parte of the said parishes. And it is further enacted and confirmed by the authority aforesaid that the inhabitants of Lynhaven parish shall not be compelled by any officer to be exercised in martiall discipline beyond the lymitts of the said parish. And that the said parishioners shall have the free liberty and privilege of electing and choosing Burgesses for the said parish.

The bounds of Southern Shores we have been unable to find recorded. However, in a map of Princess Anne, lately made by Mr. C. Whittle Sams, he draws a line east and west about midway the county; from this line south to the North Carolina line he designates Southern Shores Parish. In that territory were located two reading places, one at Blackwater, the other at Knott's Island. This last bit of history may be found in the record of the church as published in the *Southern Churchman* during 1907.

Bishop Meade says the first church in Lynnhaven Parish was "about half a mile from Little Creek, which ran east and west in a narrow channel separated from Chesapeake or Lynnhaven Bay by a sand beach a quarter mile wide." Then the good Bishop goes on to tell the story of the digging of the ditch across the narrow strip of sand at the point of the present entrance to the Lynnhaven River; of how the tide rushed in, changing the river and overflowing the banks. This is a tradition that the whole of the countyfolk agree is true. Certain it is that there was a brick church on the western shore of the western branch of the Lynnhaven, that across the river was the Glebe Land, and that there

were tombstones years ago in the bottom of the river at a point called "Church Point." The Bishop says that in 1819 Commodore Decatur, with a friend, deciphered some of the inscriptions on the tombs, the water being not very deep. Be it remembered, however, that this was Lynnhaven Church, or Old Brick Church, not Donation as is recited in a review of "Old Virginia Parish Churches, Built Before the Revolution and Still Remaining" (Francis Marion Wigmore, Gunston, Virginia, author) by Bess Furman (Associated Press staff). In the Sunday edition of Virginia-Pilot and the Norfolk Landmark of May 26, 1929, page 8, part 5, in the fourth paragraph is told the incident of the submerged churchyard, the concluding sentence of which is, "This happened to the churchyard of Old Donation Church, Princess Anne County."

The site of the Old Brick Church is on a farm years known as Church Point Farm. It belonged to the John Thorowgood branch of the Thorowgood



Old Donation Church

family and was a part of Adam Thorowgood's "Grand Patent."

In Deed Book I, page 68, at Princess Anne is recorded a deed for two acres of land on which the new brick church stands. This was 1694. The deed is made by Eban Ezar Taylor to the Parish Vestry. The next year Mr. Taylor makes a deed to Richard Corbette for the remaining acres of the tract, excluding carefully the two acres he previously sold to the vestry "whereon the new brick church now standeth." In each deed Mr. Taylor recites the history of the ownership of the whole tract. Beginning with John Lankfield, the land escheated, was regranted, and so on he details the title. Many people have felt that this gives the date of the first Donation Church. No description of the property was given in the Taylor deed, so it was hard to prove that Donation was the church to which reference was made. It seemed such a valuable clue that it was worth digging in the oldest record for any verification of Mr. Taylor's statements, and with the hope always that some description might be found. We were rewarded, for not only did we find that the tract was near Mrs. Mary Moseley, but it was by Robert Hodge, "at Samuel Bennett's Creek, in Linhaven at ye head of ye Cattayle Branch." This description locates the whole hundred-acre tract, on two acres of which we know the church was built. We also found a plat, signed by Jno. Wallop, the surveyor. The date of the plat was 1672. To us these records fixed beyond a doubt that by 1694 there was a brick church at Ferry, Donation it was later called.

The parish record of November 20, 1723, notes the Brick Church, the upper and lower chapel. In 1724 there was a new wooden chapel on Eastern Shore. July 7, 1725, Capt. Robert Vaughan was authorized to have repairs made to the chapel at Machipungo (Pungo, as it is now better known). In 1736 the vestry agreed that since the Old Brick Church was very dilapidated and not fit for services it could be used for a school.

In 1733 Peter Malbone was authorized to build and furnish the "new church" near "Ferry." In 1736 the "new church" (Donation) was received from the builders. This was at least the second building at this place. The Donation Church has been beautifully restored during the last few years, and now serves, as of old, in that community.

There is nothing left of the chapel at Pungo except a memory in the mind of some old-timer as to where the ruins were, and maybe a few bricks in a field. In 1779 Anthony Fentress was paid 20£ for the care of the chapel.



Eastern Shore Chapel—Built 1754

According to a brick over the front entrance to Eastern Shore Chapel, the present brick building was erected in 1754. The following is a copy from the parish register of that time, telling of the building:

Lynhaven
Parish

At a Vestry held on the 1st of October 1753
Rev'd. Mr. Robert Dickson Minister

Capt. James Kempe, Capt. William Keeling, Ch. Wardens

Present Col. Antho Walke, Capt. Antho. Moseley, Maj. Thos. Walke, Capt. Jno. Whitehurst, Mr. Francis Land, Mr. William Woodhouse

Resolved by the majority of three voices of this Vestry that at or near adjoining the place where the present Eastern Shore Chapple now stands is a fit and convenient place to erect a new chapple & that the same be erected

Resolved that the new Chapple at the Eastern Shore be built Fifty five feet long, Twenty five feet wide in the clear, with a convenient large gallery not to be less than eighteen feet in width, at the West end, the Walls of the said Chapple to be eighteen feet in height, with three windows on each side, two at the East end and one in the gallery; the windows to be of the same dimensions with the church Windows. The Communion to be raild and ballasted neatly, the Walls of the said Church to be two brick and a half thick from the foundation to the Water Table and two brick thick upward; the windows to be of good crown glass 8x10 In. 6 lights by three beside the Arch; the middle isle to be five feet wide with a decent desk and pulpit; the whole Church to be compleatly painted where tis requisite of a sky colour; the covering of the said Chappel to be of good heart Cypress Shingles and all the rest of the work to be finished in a work man like manner after the model of the Church. At this Vestry the aforesaid Chappel being put up to the

lowest bidder Mr. Joseph Mitchel of Norfolk having the last vote voted to undertake and compleat the aforesd. Chapel in a workmanlike manner by Xstmas, next come twelve months for Three hundred and twenty four pounds Ten Shillings and he is according to enter into bond for the good performance of the same

At a Vestry held this Twelfth day of March 1754
 Prestt. Revd. Robt. Dickson Minister

Capt. James Kempe Capt William Keeling Ch Wardens
 Col. Anthony Walke Col. Nath Newton Majr. Thos. Walke
 Capt. George Wishart Mr. Jno Bonney Mr. William Woodhouse Senr. & Mr. Francis Thorowgood Land Vestrymen

This day received from Mr. Joseph Mitchel the New Eastern Shore Chapel and do discharge him from his obligation of building and finishing the same, the above Vestry being satisfied with his performance thereof

Antho Walke

During the passing years when repairs were made to this Eastern Shore Chapel, its architectural design was not always considered. We understand that just now there is a movement on foot toward a restoration.

Much of the record of the court and of the vestry, from their inception in the county, deals with the effort to force the colonists to conform, certainly so far as outward observance, to the practices of the established Church of England, which was the Episcopal form of worship and church government. The Quakers seemed to be the sect most persistent in its determination to follow its own bent, meeting when and where it chose, flouting the constituted authority in Lower Norfolk County by meeting at the home of Richard Russell. Governor

Berkeley spurred the authorities on in their efforts to suppress the Quakers.

The Govern^r. his Lve to y^e gent of ye County of Lower Norffe

Gentlemen I thanke you for yo^r care of y^e County & desire you to continue it, & Especially to pvide y^t y^e abominated seede of y^e Quakers spread not in yo^r County which to p^rvent I think fitt to add these fower to the Commission viz^t Mr Addam Thurrowgood Mr W^m Carver, Mr W^m Daynes & Mr Thomas ffulsher Mr Hall I heare is annient. Once more I beseech you gent: to have an Exact care of this Pestilent sect of y^e Quakers.

Yo^r most affectionate frend

William Berkley

Dated 27th of June
1663.

The following is a list of persons whose names were presented to the court in session in November, 1663. The "undershrieve," Thomas Lovell, presented the names with the statement that they, as Quakers, were in meeting, contrary to Act at the home of Richard Russell on the "twelfth day of November."

Viz^t John Porter Jun^r who was speakinge

Richard Russell	John Porter Sen ^r
Michaell Mason	Eliz ye wife of Ben: fforby
Tho: hollaway & his wife	the wife of James Johnston
Richard Yates	Mrs. Porter
Mrs. Mary Emperor	With divrse. others to ye
Anne Godby	number of 22 psons or more
Robte Springe	ye rest of whose names he
	did not Knowe

However, the Quakers were not alone in the violation of the Acts having to do with religious observance. In February, 1662, the jury presented the whole county in general for breach of the Sabbath, and Linhaven Parish in particular for not providing a reader as recommended by Act of the Assembly. The jury rather excuses the lack of service on the ground that there was a want of able and sufficient ministers to teach and instruct. They further offer financial assistance to "the uttermost of o^r abilities And doe hope y^t y^e rest of the Inhabitants of the sd County Wilbe willinge to doe the Like."

The proclamation of Queen Anne in 1703 would seem to allow the colonists much liberty in the manner and matter of their religion. We quote the proclamation of religious liberty to protestants.

LIB. COUSIENIE TO ALL PROTEST & ESSENT

WHEREAS by one of her Majt. Royall Instructions to his excellency this day communicated to ye councell, his excellency. is directed to permitt a liberty of Cousience to all persons (except papest) so they may be contented with a quiet peaceable enjoymt. of ye same not giving offence of scaundall to ye Governmt. it is therefore Ordr. yt ye Court of each respective County within this Collony Transmitt to his excellency an Acct. of all separate congregations of religious meetings of any person descending from ye Church of England & of what number of psons yt ye sd meeting & every of them consist & yt they also certify to his excellency whether ye sd congregation or meeting be conformable to ye act of parlimt. made in ye first yeare of their lat Majt. King Wm. & Queen Mary entitled an act for excepting their Majt. protestant subjects descending from ye church of england from ye penalty of several laws; whereas it is very

necessary yt all county courts within this her Majt. Colony & dominion be provided with ye act of parlimt. & statutes of England for ye survice of ye sd Courts it is ordered that the Justices of peace of ye sd Serv. County take care to send for such a collection of ye sd acts as are now wanting in their Courts as yt they continue ye like care for ye futor yt ye Courts be duely provided with ye laws & Statutes of England as from time to time they come out—Read in open Court the 6th 8ber 1703 & Odr. to be recorded.

Will Roberson, Cl. Curr.

In 1703 there is also recorded in Princess Anne a deed by James Kempe for land on which a meeting house may be erected. Mr. Kempe, or the person who wrote his deed, was reticent as to the name of the congregation or persons who were to benefit by his generosity.

Since none of the meeting houses, as they were called, of the sects, or societies, who made such a determined struggle for recognition in those early days are now standing, we shall pass to the year 1764. On July 16 of that year John Whitehead, Jr., and Mary, his wife, for the sum of one pound, five shillings, current money of Virginia, granted to the elders and rulers of the Baptist Church, called regulars, at Pungo, "one half acre where the meeting house now stands." The present Oak Grove Baptist Church stands on this spot. The old church building was long ago replaced.

The present site of Nimmo Methodist Church was deeded to the society of Methodists of Princess Anne County in 1791 by Anne Nimmo, wife of William Nimmo. The Nimmos lived close by the church. The same year a house of worship was here

erected. The present building is the result of a remodeling process of forty, or more, years ago, conforming for the most part to the original foundations, we are told.

Other public buildings of the early days were stores, warehouses, markets; and courthouses, clerk's office and jails. Of the first group nothing remains, of the second we shall tell in our chapter on the town of Kempsville, for there it is that one courthouse and jail, of the several built in the county prior to 1880, still stand.

CHAPTER IV



WITHIN the shadows of an old house fancy and fiction play havoc with facts and figures. So vividly is one reminded of the romance and adventure of the day-by-day lives of these first builders of homes in Virginia, all sense of proportion and balance is lost! Far easier would it be to let one's feelings and imagination run riot, picturing charming fireside episodes, or maybe conjuring scenes of thrilling Indian encounters, than to hold firmly to realities and recount only what is written record as we find it today of the times, the places, the people of nearly three centuries ago.

There are now standing in Princess Anne County seven houses which conform in most respects to every rule laid down for the judging of "oldest houses." These houses are of the story-and-half brick, sharp roof type. By reason of the bricks and method of bricklaying, three of the seven stand out as probably antedating the other four.

In the three houses above designated as probably the oldest, we find: first, the bricks are roughly and irregularly molded, showing less skill in workmanship; second, the English bonding is the method used in tying the bricks, for the most part. This method was used in England before the introduction there, after the London fire, of Flemish brickmakers and bricklayers, who, of course, pursued the Flemish method of bonding.

The distinction between the two is: in English bond, bricks are laid in alternate courses of stretchers and headers, the pattern being preserved by the use of queen closers (half header) in making the quoin; in Flemish bond, bricks are laid in the same course as alternate stretcher and header, the pattern being preserved by the use of king closers at the rebated openings.

The Wishart house is English bond throughout; the Thorowgood house has both gable ends and rear of English bond, with front of Flemish bond; the Weblin house has one gable end and rear of English bond, with front of Flemish bond. The other end of this house is evidently of a later



Original brick end of Weblin House.

period; bricks, bonding, chimney, all indicate a later date. In the attic we found the gum rafters were charred by fire. The north gable has been built up from a sharp roof, the angle of which is easily traced by blue headers, to its present form of gambrel roof. These facts lead one to the conclusion that at some time the

house was partially burned, one gable end being rebuilt in the fashion of the later day, the other gable run up to conform thereto. Each of these houses is worthy of detailed study.

Known throughout this section by all people and elsewhere by all connoisseurs of colonial architecture as "The Adam Thorowgood" house, stands this quaint Virginia home, beautifully restored, entirely and completely groomed in every detail. Scarcely does one ever fail to find reference to, and description of, this place where colonial architecture is the subject. Miss Grace Keeler is the present owner, and it is due to her that we have so splendidly preserved what must be one of the oldest brick houses in English-speaking America. Miss Keeler has not spared money, time, or personal care in her work of restoration. Also the present owner has been most generous in sharing her treasure with those pilgrims who come to see, and stop to marvel at so perfect a shrine.

Adam Thorowgood (we use the spelling we find in all the oldest records, and also it is the spelling in a will which we have recently seen, made in the handwriting of John Thorowgood, his lineal descendant in 1800) came to Virginia about 1621 as an adventurer, and as such, and for inducing one hundred and five others to come at one time or another, in 1635, June 24th, by Governor West to Capt. Adam Thorowgood, 5350 acres, bounded on the north by Chesapeake Bay, ". . . granted unto him at the espetiall recommendation of him from their Lordshipps and others, his M^ties most honorable privie Councill the Governor and Councill of State for Virginia."

Among the persons listed as making the hundred and five are, Adam Thorowgood, Sarah Thorowgood (his wife), Thomas Keeling, Henry Hill, William Kempe (whose wife was Mary, son Anthony, William was a Burgess for Upper Elizabeth City 1629/30), George Whitehead, John Hill, Mary Hill, Mary Hill, Jr., Augustine Warner, William Burroughs and Anne Burroughs.

The Augustine Warner above noted is the ancestor of the mother of George Washington and presumably the founder of Warner Hall in Gloucester County, Virginia.

There is an interesting item about John Hill which we are giving; the Hill family, for so long a time, having been residents of Princess Anne. "Court held January 20th, 1647, These are to Certifie that Mr. John Hill appeared this day in Court, and declared himselfe to bee the age betweene ffifty and Sixty yeares, and hath Continued in this Collony of Virginia twenty-six yeares and upwards: Alsoe the said John Hill doth affirme himselfe formerly to have lived in the university of Oxford of the trade of Booke binder, and that he is the Sonne of Stephen Hill of Oxford aforesaid ffletcher; And the said John Hill is well at present, and in good health as appears to the court, and in likelihood of life."

Just here it may be pertinent to say something concerning the granting of land in the early days. From a report on Virginia recorded in the Virginia Magazine of History and Biography, volume I, page 155, we find reference to a Discourse of the old Virginia Company, drawn up and presented by

the members of the former London Company in 1625, to The Board of Trade and Plantations. The original of this paper is filed in the British State Papers Office, Colonial Department, volume 3, No. 40. From this Discourse we see given as one of the reasons the colony had not so much prospered up to this time (1625) was attributed, among other reasons, to "There being no Dividents of Land laid out." This, of course, has no reference to the gifts by the wholesale made by the crown to certain favorites of the king, but rather has reference to individual ownership among the adventurers.

Again quoting from the same volume of the Virginia Magazine, Mr. W. G. Stanard, formerly Registrar of the State Land Office in Richmond, Virginia, says in substance: The records of the patents recorded for Virginia begin in 1623, only a few years after right of holding property was conferred upon societies and individuals. With the exception of a brief interval before 1623 the continuity is substantially unbroken. The granting of lands in Virginia was in the hands of the company from 1606 to 1625. The condition for making grant was meritorious service of some kind; emigration of patentee to Virginia in person, or transportation to colony of some one at own expense, or purchase of a share of the Company. Valuable service was estimated by the colonial authorities. Purchase of a share in the company carried a grant of 100 acres, to be increased to 200 acres when the first 100 acres had been seated. Pay for self, one's own servant, member of the family, or any one else, entitled one to 50 acres per person so paid for. After the dis-

solution of the old Virginia Company, service played small part in obtaining land. Head rights became the chief factor and so continued until the right to purchase public land with money was established in the eighteenth century. Throughout the colonial period head right was in force.

The first grant we find recorded in the Land Patent Books at Richmond is to Richard Stephens for 60 roods in James City at his dwelling house "that others may be encouraged by his example to enclose some ground for garden." This was 1623. In passing it is interesting to note that this same Richards Stephens fought the first duel of which we have record. His antagonist was George Harrison. Richard Stephens married Elizabeth, daughter of Abraham Persey, before 1644/5. She, as the widow Stephens, married Sir John Harvey, sometime Governor of Virginia.

The first we know of our Mr. Thorowgood as a landowner is recorded in Elizabeth City Land Patent Book. There is a bill of sale made to Capt. Adam Thorowgood by John Grundy in 1626—one hundred and fifty acres on Southampton River. The next record is to Mr. Adam Thorowgood, gentleman, 200 acres (purchased from Capt. Stephens) on Back River, adjacent to John Robinson and William Capps. Granted by Governor Harvey in March 1634. Immediately following this grant is the record to Mr. Adam Thorowgood, 200 acres on Back River, due him as adventurer.

And this brings us back to the point of digression, Adam Thorowgood, the patentee of 5,350 acres of land, situated on Chesapeake Bay, readily

recognized as within the confines of the present Princess Anne County, though at the time of first issuance, 1635, this part of Virginia was designated Lower Elizabeth City Shire.

Subsequently Mr. Thorowgood patented smaller acreages along the Lynnhaven River and Bennetts Creek, bringing his total land in this vicinity to nearly 7,000 acres. For some good reason, no doubt, this 5,350-acre patent was renewed, as were several others in this territory, in 1637. As this is the year Norfolk came into being as a county (Mrs. Philip Alexander Bruce claims it is the first division called county in Virginia) it may account for the step. However, in 1643, three years after the death of Adam (1) Thorowgood, we find again recorded in almost identical words this same 5,350 acres to Adam Thorowgood. In court records the Thorowgood family in the following years always referred to this as "The Grand Patent."

Mr. Thorowgood was a man of consequence in the colony. In the first volume of Hening's Statutes we find the Assembly at "James Citty" on the 20th day of March, 1628/9, giving permission to commissioners to hold court monthly within the corporation of Elizabeth City and "partes near adjoining." For this court there were named eight commissioners, viz: Capt. Thomas Purfury, Capt. Edward Waters, Lieut. Thomas Willoughby, Lieut. George Thomson, Mr. Adam Thorowgood, Mr. Lunell Coulston, Mr. William Kempe, Mr. John Downman. A like permission was given and commissioners appointed on the same day for holding monthly courts in the "upper partes."

In the same volume we find among the Burgesses present from the various plantations, hundreds &c., Mr. Adam Thorowgood as one of the six Burgesses for "Elizabeth Citty." At the session of the Assembly convening at "James Citty" on March 24th, 1629/30, present for Lower Elizabeth City as Burgesses are, Capt. Thomas Purfury, Adam Thorowgood, Launcelot Barnes. Likewise in the session of September 4th, 1632, Mr. Thorowgood is one of the three Burgesses for Lower Elizabeth City. In 1636 Mr. Thorowgood was a member of the Governor's Council. This probably accounts for the fact that his name does not appear as a Burgess for the new county of Norfolk in 1637.

Capt. Adam Thorowgood, for so he is styled in the first record book of Norfolk County, married Sarah Offley, we are told, and left at his death in February 1639/40, surviving him beside the widow, a son Adam (2) and three daughters, Ann, Sarah and Elizabeth. The widow was not long inconsolable, if ever. Soon she became the wife of John Gookin, shortly to be again bereaved, and in just as short order marrying Col. Francis Yardley. It was as the widow Gookin that Sarah kept the tavern at Lynnhaven.

In the next generation and so on, we find the Thorowgoods marrying into the most prominent families in the county, Lawson, Moseley, Keeling, Nimmo. So from their plantations along the Bay-side and Lynnhaven River have issued men and women who had no small share in the making of the history of Princess Anne County.

It is difficult to say which Thorowgood built

the house now standing on Lynnhaven, and it is just as difficult to say when the building took place. Adam Thorowgood (1) made a will dated February 17th, 1639. It was admitted to probate at a quarter court held at James City the 27th of April, 1640. He bequeathes to the Parish Church at Lynnhaven one thousand pounds of tobacco in leaf to be disbursed for some necessary and decent ornament. He devised to his wife, beside certain domestic animals, all the houses and the orchard with the plantation at Lynnhaven so far as it extended: to-wit: from the pond to the further stile that parts it, and the grounds called by the name of the quarter, during her life time; all of which he gave her as a memorial of his love. To his son Adam he devised all the rest of the estate in Virginia or elsewhere, at the age of twenty-one. After the decease of the widow, son Adam is to enjoy and possess land, house, and orchard which had been given to wife Sarah during her life time.

In 1679 we find Adam (2) Thorowgood married to Frances Yardley, daughter of Argoll Yardley, and the father of the following sons and daughter, Argoll, John, Adam (3), Francis, Robert, Rose. At this time he is making his will, which was probated in Lower Norfolk County, 1685/6. These are his bequests: To his wife Frances, for life, the plantation whereon he was living with six hundred acres most convenient to the house. This tract was laid out in 1686 by Anthony Lawson and Malachy Thurston in accordance with the will and in the record the pond in the yard is mentioned. The rest of the estate is to be divided by these gentlemen

into five equal parts, one part for each son to have choice as he reaches twenty-one years. This Adam (2) expressly stipulates that his wife Frances have the house wherein he was then living (in the division called the Grand Manor House), plantation, &c., during her life, and after her decease "to goe unto my son Argoll Thorowgood and his heires forever." And so by will this plantation is devised from father to eldest son until 1780 when William Thorowgood, son of Argoll Thorowgood and Elizabeth Keeling, makes his will, leaving the plantation to his wife Elizabeth Nimmo Thorowgood (she was the daughter of James Nimmo of Shenstone Green) for life, and at her death to his nephew William Thorowgood Nimmo, son of his (William's) sister Elizabeth and James Nimmo (2) of Shenstone Green. You see brother and sister Thorowgood married sister and brother Nimmo.

In Norfolk County is to be found an inventory of the personal estate of Frances Thorowgood, widow of Adam (2). This inventory is made by her eldest son Argoll. The rooms listed in her home are: kitchen chamber, hall chamber, parlor chamber, passage, parlor, hall, cellar, kitchen. Mr. Philip Alexander Bruce in his *Economic History of Virginia* refers to the house of Adam Thorowgood who died in 1686. He says that there were in this house three chambers, one hall and parlor, a kitchen and cellar. In the inventory of the Argoll Thorowgood, who was the son of Adam (2) and made the inventory of Frances above referred to, who likewise was the third in line, Adam (1), Adam (2), Argoll, each in turn to possess a certain

Manor Plantation, the last two by will, after his death in 1699 when his inventory was made and recorded, the rooms in his home were: hall, parlor, parlor chamber, kitchen, porch chamber, passage room, kitchen chamber, hall chamber, milk house, "In ye sellar."

Beginning with John Thorowgood, brother of Argoll, both sons of Adam (2), the son of Adam (1), this John being the second son in the third generation (the eldest, Argoll, having inherited the home plantation) we are able by wills, chancery suits, and deeds of record in Princess Anne and Norfolk counties, to trace John's (3) property to John D., Grace M., and Rufus P. Keeler, who in 1906 purchased the part of the Church Point farm on which the old mansion house of the John Thorowgood family stood.

In the inventory of the first John Thorowgood, who married Margaret Lawson, daughter of Col. Anthony Lawson (first of the Anthony Lawsons in Princess Anne County), we find in 1701 the following rooms: parlor, parlor chamber, porch chamber, hall, milk house, kitchen, buttery. This John, who in his will styles himself the son of Col. Adam, deceased, was himself a colonel and a man of much importance in the county. He was one of the first justices of the new county of Princess Anne. With these facts as they relate to the earliest members of a family and the homes in which they lived, we pass to a more intimate view of the quaint home of the Thorowgoods now standing on a branch of Lynnhaven River in the county of Princess Anne.

As we see the Thorowgood home today it is

oblong, 46' x 20' 7" above the water table. Entering by the front door, a hall runs through with a door at the back opposite the front door. The stairway of heart pine goes up on the right to a height of about seven feet, then turning at right angles to the left on a platform 10 feet wide, which is the width of the downstairs hall. After a series of sev-



Thorowgood House

Courtesy Miss Keeler

North Room of Thorowgood House

Courtesy Miss Keeler

eral steps again up at right angles and to the left we are in the upper hallway. Here there are two rooms, one on each side of the hall. The same arrangement is true downstairs, on the right the kitchen or dining room, on the left the parlor. There is no cellar, nor is there any evidence of there ever having been one. The water table presents an unbroken surface of perfect brickwork all the way round the four walls. This point must be explained away if this house be accepted as the original home of Adam Thorowgood the first or second, or Argoll (1).

By reference to the picture a very clear idea is gotten of the house proportions. The outside chimney will be discussed more at length later because it is a striking example of the type used at a very early period of building in Virginia.

The brick walls of the house, front and back, are 8'2" from the water table to eaves. The two gable ends are brick all the way up to a sharp point, making what the colored people term an "A" roof. In the end to the left of entrance, in the parlor, the chimney is built within the room. It is around this that is found the magnificent pine panelling seen in the interior view on page 46. This fireplace is 62" wide, 49" high, with two flues. However, the outside chimney, which, by the way, is on the south end of the building, is far more interesting. It is said that very early the thrifty New Englanders abandoned the method of building the chimney outside, building around the chimney instead, in order to conserve heat. We wonder if that is the reason that when we find one chimney

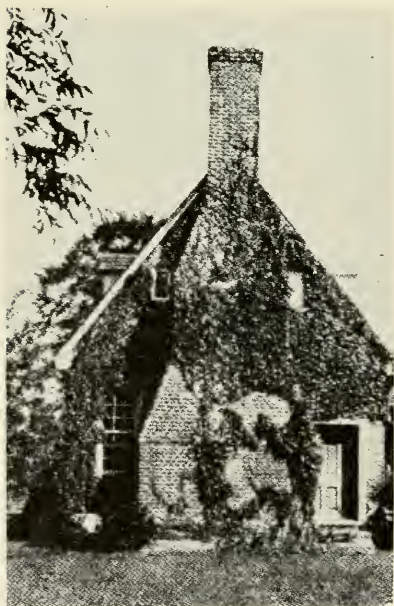
in and one outside the building here in Tidewater, the inside chimney is nearly always on the northern exposure?

The measurements of this southern chimney taken just above the 24" water table are 10'5" across the breast, rising for 6'9" to the first weathered setoff, up again for 4'7" to the second weathered setoff, on up from the second setoff with a tall stack far above the roof ridge. The depth of the chimney breast is 48". In the dining room or kitchen, the fireplace measures 8'6" in width, 58" in height, 53" in depth. As has been said the brickwork is English bond on three sides, with the front wall of Flemish bond, the headers in these courses are often times very fine "blue headers," causing

the pattern to stand out in an effective way.

We fear that too much time has been given to a description of this house, but its beauty justifies every minute given to the study.

In conclusion may we recommend to you a visit to this spot, if you have not already had the pleasure. So far we have not



South end of *Courtesy Miss Keeler*
Thorowgood House

seen an accurate architectural description of the Thorowgood house, Eberlein in his *Architecture of Colonial America*, published by Little, Brown & Co., in 1915, chapter 5 on Colonial Architecture in the South, says, that in the South the chimneys were built outside the house wall. Then he cites the Thorowgood house. Likewise an article by Delos H. Smith in the magazine *House Beautiful*, October issue, 1928, on page 456, in describing the house on Lynnhaven Farm, says, "The chimneys are built outside the gables." The same error has crept into each publication, for in reality, one chimney is within the wall, the other without.

But there is a house in Princess Anne oblong in ground plan, with a huge outside chimney in each of its two gable ends, with two weathered setoffs in each of these chimneys, with brickwork showing the English bonding throughout. This house is very generally known as the "Boush House." It is now the property of Mr. William W. Oliver of the county. As a matter of fact, the house did not come into the Boush family until 1795 when William, son of Frederick Boush, purchased the property for 1,000£ specie from Thomas Wishart and Porcia, his wife. It is described as lying in Little Creek, about 300 acres with house, "the same which Thomas Wishart the elder, late of Princess Anne County willed to his son William, who in his will devised to Thomas." The whole story is this.

In 1653 Adam (2) Thorowgood, son of Adam (1), sold to William Richerson, shipwright of "London Citty," a parcel of land shooting off a mile into the woods. In 1673 Richerson causes to

be recorded this bill of sale, as it is called, because he is selling the same "parcel of land" to James Wishart. James Wishart dies in 1679/80 and leaves his plantation in Little Creek, which he bought of William Richerson, to his son William Wishart; to his son James "the plantation whereon I now live;" he mentions a son Thomas, a son John, and two daughters, Joyce and Frances. By a deed of gift recorded in 1700 in Princess Anne William Wishart gives half of his plantation to his brother Thomas. He says ". . . left me by my father James Wishart, lying in Little Creek, the same Thomas to have the southeast part divided by a line running . . . from a pine at the head of a cove neare the *old house*." In 1736 William devises the plantation he now lives on to cousin Thomas, and certain slaves to cousin Francis. Now it would seem that William is a little mixed here on his relationships. His brother James had a son Francis, his brother Thomas, to whom he had already given half of his property, had a son Thomas. These therefore were his nephews, and not cousins. This Thomas in 1772 wills to son William, who in turn devises to brother Thomas in 1783, after the death of his wife Mary, the plantation in Little Creek. And Thomas, brother of William, both sons of Thomas the elder, makes the deed to Boush. It is interesting to note that William in 1700 speaks of "the old house" on this tract. Very evidently it was a landmark at this time as he uses it as a designation in reciting the bounds of the property he is giving to his brother. Just who built this house we can not say, but William Richerson was a London shipwright, own-

ing this property prior to the London fire. It seems the accepted theory that the Flemish method of bonding did not generally come into use among the English until the influx of Flemish brick-masons after the London fire, in 1666. This house is English bond throughout in its bricklaying, the roof until very recently was sharp, there are gable ends with outside chimneys in each gable, the interior very modest and unpretentious.



Wishart House before roof was changed



Wishart House, opposite end

One enters the main room on opening the front door. From this room a blind stairway goes to the two rooms above under the roof. There is one other room and that is to the left downstairs. The house on the outside measures 32'6" by 21'2", the height to the eaves is 10'5".

At the back there is a door reached by several steps opening into the other downstairs room. Near this door is an opening and by stooping slightly entrance is made to the cellar. This cellar is about the height of a tall man. It is interesting to speculate on the use to which the cellar was put. From this point of vantage the foundation brickwork is easily studied, also the sills, most of the original one still doing service after these many years, are in clear sight. The sills are hewn from oak and are 8"x6". The joists supporting the roof and upper floor project beyond the outside walls, secured by wooden pegs. These joists measure 24" from center to center and are 18" apart. The interior measurements of the downstairs rooms are very nearly coincident with the same measurements in the Thorowgood house. Viewing the house from the outside there is one other feature that is different. At the eaves on each end of the front wall there is a graded projection of bricks, probably put there to support a porch across the front. Also on the back near the cellar entrance and by the back door is a projection of single bricks at intervals in a vertical line. What for, to support or tie a shed to?

On the right of the house nearby under cedar trees lie buried several of the Boushes whose home this had been. The tombs are going rapidly to

decay. Here is the tomb of William Boush, 1759/1854, and by his side Mary, his wife, 1764-1822. Here also is the gravestone of Wm. F. M. Boush who died in 1816 at the age of twenty-five years. There is an elaborate inscription on this marble, all of which, for the most part is illegible. From a word decipherable here and there the impression is gotten that he was a most distinguished person. Here also lies buried Eliza J. S. Walke, widow of David Walke, daughter of William and Mary Boush. She died in 1884 at the age of eighty-two years. There is one other brick vault. The slab is gone, a large tree is growing out.

The third house in this group is called the Beachy or Babcock place. It is now owned by Mr. H. C. Moore. Mrs. Moore appreciates this old home, located as it is far back from the Bayside Road. She has visions of a day in the near future when the house and garden will be restored as she believes it was in the days when it was the home of Robert Moseley, and immediately following, as the plantation Jacob Hunter purchased and devised in 1780 to his son Josiah Hunter. This Jacob Hunter was the third generation of the Hunter family in Princess Anne. Dr. William was practicing medicine in Lower Norfolk County in 1678. His three sons were Thomas, James and John. Jacob is the eldest son of John. Jacob married twice, first Susannah Moore, second Elizabeth Wilson Boush. Josiah Wilson Hunter was one of four sons by the second marriage. Jacob Hunter had six sons and in his will left a plantation to each. But this house seems to date back much

farther than 1751 when Robert Moseley bought it from Daniel Hutchings, the house with 102 acres.

Between the meanders of Little Creek is a tract of land called Paggett's or Puggett's Neck, containing 750 acres, named for the man to whom it was first granted in 1643, when the adventurers first began taking up land hereabouts "south of the James River in Elizabeth City." The grantee was Cesar Puggett. As sometimes happened, this tract was later granted to Capt. Thomas Lambert in 1648. It is described in the grant as being 750 acres in Paggett's Neck in Linhaven Parish. The grantee is the same Thomas Lambert who in 1635 obtained a grant for the land the description thereof strongly indicating a subdivision of the present city of Norfolk generally known as "Lambert's Point." Norfolk County records disclose that in the year 1671 Lieut.-Col. Thomas Lambert is dead. Four daughters survive him, married to the following men: George Fowler, Henry Snaille, John Weblin, Richard Drout. A partition deed is spread upon Book "E" on page 14 wherein these sons-in-law, styling themselves as co-heirs of Mr. Lambert, divide the 750 acres in Puggett's Neck. John Weblin and Richard Drout got 350 acres between them, this being the northwest part of the tract. Of the 350 acres John Weblin's portion is "that part wherein he now lives, with one half of woodland . . ." to him and his heirs forever. John Weblin died in 1686/7 leaving his property to his two sons John and George.

In 1716 John sells his 75 acres to John Hutchings, who three years later sells to Nathaniel

Hutchings 75 acres he describes as being the land which came to him (John Hutchings) from John Weblin, John Weblin having come by the same by his (John Weblin) father's last will. In 1728 Nathaniel Hutchings buys of Thomas Lawson 27 acres. The deed says that Hutchings already has this enclosed in his pasture. And so we have accounted for the 102 acres that in 1751 we find Daniel Hutchings selling to Robert Moseley. In this deed Daniel describes the tract as the same land that Nathaniel Hutchings purchased of John Hutchings, mariner, and Thomas Lawson. Robert Moseley in his will in 1771 directs his executors, Capt. Daniel Hutchings of the Borough of Norfolk and Mr. William Woodhouse, to sell his plantation in Little Creek whereon he lived, there being 102 acres with house. The title continues with equal clarity through the next century down to the present owner.

In the first part of this chapter a sketch was given of the "Weblin" House. There is not much else to be added. A diagram of the interior is similar to the plans of the Wishart house. The houses measures 37'4" across the front. This front wall is Flemish bond of the blue header type very much like the front wall of the Thorowgood house. The chimney is built almost exactly as are the chimneys previously discussed, the breast measuring 10 feet across, with weathered setoffs appearing twice between the breast and stack. There may have been a cellar at one time.

In summarizing the three houses have we proved: In 1653 when William Richerson of

“London City” bought 200 acres from Adam (2) Thorowgood there was no house on the tract, it is described as shooting off into the woods a mile; however, in 1700 the house is referred to as “the old house.” The earliest date of this house could be late 1653. The plantation not far away in Puggett’s Neck had a house on it in 1671 when the four sons-in-law of Col. Thomas Lambert made a partition deed, setting aside to each a part of a 750-acre tract. John Weblin, on whose acres the house stood, was dead in 1686, his sons not quite of age. This house was surely built prior to 1671. Just down the road on Lynnhaven River is the Thorowgood house. After the death of his father Adam (2) in 1686, when John Thorowgood came into the 600 acres comprising the lot of his choice (he on account of his age, being second to choose) did he build this “Mansion House” for his bride, Margaret Lawson?

CHAPTER V



HAVING Little Creek Precinct of Lynnhaven Parish where Adam Thorowgood was the largest landowner, as one drives down the Great Neck road from London Bridge toward Long Creek one is in the Upper Eastern Shore Precinct of Lynnhaven Parish, where the Cornicks, Keelings and Woodhouses were large landowners. Henry Woodhouse and Thomas Keeling patented land in Lower Norfolk County very shortly after Adam Thorowgood did. Wm. Cornick's first grant was in the year 1657.

One of the hundred and five persons with whom Adam Thorowgood is credited as having brought into the colony is Thomas Keeling. By the side of this record in the *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* is the bracket "(Brother of Adam Keeling)." It would seem that this is a mistake and that Adam is the son of Thomas Keeling. We know that Adam Keeling was the godson of Adam Thorowgood, for Mr. Thorowgood remembers him in his will . . . "to godson Adam Keeling, one breeding goat." This was 1640.

In 1635 Thomas Keeling obtained a grant for one hundred acres on Back River. Ensign Thomas Keeling was a vestryman of the Lower Norfolk County Church in 1640. Adam Keeling makes a will in 1683. In this will he mentions a brother Alexander. Elizabeth Keeling making a will in 1670 names as her brothers Alexander and Thorow-

good and her father-in-law Bray. However, she means father-*by-law* or step-father, for Thorowgood Keeling in his will (1679) speaks of his "father Bray." In 1682 Anne Bray makes a deed to her son Alexander Keeling and Anne Keeling, daughter of Adam Keeling. Anne Bray makes another deed in which she says her sons Edward and Thomas are deceased, leaving Alexander as surviving son of her husband Thomas Keeling.

Therefore we are sure that the Adam Keeling who made his will in 1683 was the son of Anne and Thomas Keeling. He had a sister Elizabeth, brothers Edward, Thomas, Alexander and Thorowgood. At the time of the making of his will Capt. Adam's mother lived on his property at London Bridge. His bequests are: to daughter Anne twelve hundred acres lately bought of Anthony Lawson, called Black Walnutt Ridge, and joining Rudee; to daughter Elizabeth, three or four hundred acres near Machipungo; to son John, fourteen hundred acres that formerly belonged to "my father-in-law, John Martin," provided John makes a deed to son Adam for two thousand acres lately patented in the name of John Keeling. This is the London Bridge tract. To son Thomas he devised the home plantation after the death of wife Ann. Son Thomas also received a parcel of land "commonly known by ye name of Dudlies . . . beinge neare four hundred acres." In the inventory of this Adam Keeling we find he had the following rooms in his house: hall, hall shed, parlor shed, parlor, hall chamber, porch chamber, kitchen, and little buttery.

There are many interesting relationships here

that may be worked out, but the subject matter of this book is houses, not genealogy, so let us take up our thread at "Dudlies" which Adam Keeling left to his son Thomas. This is the only plantation of the Keelings on which today we find standing an original home.

It has been our general observation while reading old records that where there is a house on the property the donor, deviser, or grantor, as the case may be, usually describes the land as a plantation, or as "seated," or as the tract whereon "So-and-So" now lives. If there is no building the term used in the description is most frequently "parcel of land," sometimes dividant or patent. If this conclusion be true, then in 1683, Dudlies had no house on it. However, in 1714 this son Thomas Keeling in making his will devises "all the land I now live on, which my father Adam left me," to his son Adam.

In the meantime Thomas Keeling had married Mary Lovett, daughter of Lancaster and Mary Lovett. The sons of Thomas and Mary Lovett Keeling were Adam, John and William. The Lovett and Keeling wills of this time are quite interesting and dovetail entirely.

In 1771 Adam Keeling makes a will leaving to his grandson Adam "the plantation whereon I now live, together with the land whereon my son Thomas' widow lives, the marsh adjoining the plantation" and . . . "Hog Pen Neck." There may seem a long time unaccounted for between the will of Thomas in 1714 and his son Adam in 1771, especially when one counts thirty years to a generation, but in this last Adam's will he makes be-

quests to his great-grandchildren, thus showing he lived to be very old.

Adam Keeling makes a will in 1805, naming Dudlies as the Manor Plantation. He owns Hog Pen Neck, swamp land, &c. A chancery suit is brought in 1823 for a division of the land under this will. The devisor stipulated that the land was to be divided, but he did not say how the division was to be made, except that Adam was to have the tract with the house on it. Recorded in Chancery Report Book I at Princess Anne is a plat of Dudlies, locating the Manor House on the $261\frac{3}{4}$ acres set aside to Adam Keeling, the remaining 108 acres was set aside for Solomon Keeling.

The house as it stands today is an exquisite example of the Flemish method of bonding brick. Notice particularly the design worked out in the gables by the use of the "blue headers." It is the only house in which we have seen this pattern. You will also notice the pitch of the roof, the height to which the chimneys rise above it. There is one chimney in each end, and both chimneys are within the walls. The black line which veers off near the top of the roof toward a tree is not a crack in the wall. It is an old blacksmith-made wrought iron lightning rod.

The house is oblong 48'6"x20'4", height from the ground to the eaves is 12'6". The four little windows in the north gable end are 16"x21" outside measure, but the pegged wooden inside frames are 15" square. On entering at the front door there is an 8' hall with stairway on the left turning at right angles across and above the back door, caus-

ing this door which faces west and the water, to be slightly lower than the front door. At right angles again the stairs proceed up to the hall and two rooms under the roof. Just as there are two rooms upstairs, one on each side of the hall, so are there two rooms down stairs similarly situated.

The most interesting room is downstairs on the north, or to the right of the front entrance. The



Keeling Home on "Ye Dudlies"



Keeling Home rear

chimney end of room is panelled, the fireplace measures 5'7" in height, in a 7' chimney. The lintel of the fireplace is 11"x11½" heart pine. This timber seems to be almost untouched by time. On each side of the fireplace is a closet within which is one of the little windows. This construction gives a fine chance for study of the workmanship of those days. Many old hinges and doors are still in use in the building. The indications are that there never was a cellar. Through air vents around the foundation a glimpse may be caught of the sills. These timbers are 6"x10".

The lane leading up from the main Great Neck road is little traveled, giving one the feeling of remoteness from the busy life of today, a satisfying approach indeed to a house from out the long ago. The setting is well nigh perfect on an afternoon when the sun has turned a portion of the Lynnhaven into liquid gold. For one is driving toward this radiance, while on the left is a magnificent skirt of pines, whose reflection in the cove making far up on that side of the yard, affords a marvelous study in contrasts. Truly one feels that here has been left a little bit of very old Virginia. On closer inspection one finds that there is much to be desired by way of restoration. The old garden is almost completely gone, a crepe myrtle or so being all that is left. There are several old cedars out on the far point. The house is in an unusually sound condition. Maybe some time soon, before it is too late, Col. Charles Consolvo, the present owner, may restore to all its former beauty the home of the Keelings on "ye Dudlies," down on

Lynnhaven. Surely after weathering so many storms it is entitled to a process of rejuvenation, provided the rejuvenation be in keeping with its own style, the style of the late 1600.

On the same side of the Great Neck road as the Keeling house, near the part of the village of London Bridge touched by the Virginia Beach Boulevard, is another gem. To reach this, one again drives up a long lane having turned in from the main road at an old wild cherry tree. This old tree has long been a landmark in the neighborhood. At the end of the lane is a fine grove of beech trees, hiding almost completely the home of Mr. Jim Smith.

Mr. Smith reminds one of the words Riley puts in the mouth of his grandfather Squeers:

“He said when he’d rounded his three score and ten,
I’ve the hang of it now, and can do it again.”

With pardonable pride Mrs. Smith will tell you about her trees. Forty-odd years ago when she moved to this home the yard trees were all cedars. It was an unusually hard winter, with heavy snows. The weight of sleet and snow, together with the freezing, caused limb after limb to split from the trees. In the spring not much loveliness was left. Mrs. Smith had the scarred old trunks dug up and set about growing new shade for her yard. Today she revels in all this beauty she has helped create.

But one begins to speculate about the location of the old house for that is what one set out to see. Immediately behind the house Mr. Smith built about twenty-five years ago, is the old one. It shows a house very similar to the Keeling. However, this

is smaller; there is no hall downstairs. One enters the larger of the two rooms, this room is in the south end. There is an inside chimney in each gable. The chimney stack does not show the height one would expect for the reason that several courses of brick have fallen off.

The fireplace is 7' wide and 5' high. The room arrangement upstairs is just a little different, but



Eastwood on Great Neck Road



Interior at Eastwood

then in all probability when the house was built the space under the roof was not partitioned off into rooms. One room runs across the north end, then from the head of the steps on the front runs a narrow passage, a door at the end leads into the north room, a second door to the west enters the other room. This room occupies the remaining area. Upstairs there is a space all way around the house between the side wall and the eaves. This construction is also found in the Thorowgood house.

With a picture of this quaint home in mind, the question comes, who was the builder? As with many of the other old houses in these parts it is largely a matter of conjecture as to who the builder was and when he did the building. Find the answer to one and the other answer will not be so difficult to determine. The records are very interesting.

Just how long before 1777 this home was called "Eastwood" we can not say, but in the will of William Aitchison made in that year he devised to his son Walter, and in the event of son Walter's death without issue, to son William, the "plantation in Princess Anne called 'Eastwood' purchased from Capt. John Willoughby."

William Aitchison was a merchant of the Borough of Norfolk. So was Capt. Willoughby. Mr. Aitchison was also the son-in-law of Jacob Ellegood, Sr. Now Jacob Ellegood, Sr., in making his will leaves the home plantation (Rose Hall, of which we shall say more later) to his son Jacob, and the three plantations he bought of the heirs of Capt. James Condon he directs to be sold. He

names his son-in-law William Aitchison executor. In 1754 the executor sells to Capt. Willoughby the land directed to be sold, and in the course of a few months we find Capt. Willoughby selling to Aitchison 316 acres, the same that were "given to be sold by the will of Jacob Ellegood, being the same plantation bought of James Condon's heirs."

Now Ellegood had bought this Condon land in two parts, or to be more exact, by two deeds. One deed was made by Dr. Robert Paterson for 126 acres which the widow Sarah Condon had for the love she bore her "dear son-in-law" given to him; from John Mercer, et als., heirs of James Condon, a deed for 180 acres of high land and some swamp was made to Jacob Ellegood. You will see this aggregates the 316 acres sold under the will. It was not entirely a satisfactory answer as Mr. Ellegood said there were three plantations, so we decided to look further for the answer.

We found that Capt. James Condon (for so his appraisers, Jacob Ellegood, Lemuel Cornick and William Keeling, Sr., call him) bought three parcels of land. One of the tracts had a house on it. This tract contained 100 acres and was bought from William Cox and Ann, his wife. The second tract was bought from Maximillian Boush and others and is the parcel containing some marsh land. The third tract Condon bought from Ellegood. This would seem to explain the use of the term "three plantations."

Of course the land on which there is mention of a house is the piece that is of most interest to us. In the deed by which William Cox and his wife

convey to James Condon 100 acres with house appears this interesting connection. The deed recites that it is a part of the 500 acres which Cason Moore, the elder, devised by will to his son Cason Moore. The will of the elder Moore was made in 1720. In 1726 the son, Cason Moore, made a will leaving certain lands to his son John. He stipulates that son John shall not molest his mother Anne in her occupancy of the home, but that he (John) may "build where he will." Then to wife Anne, Cason, Jr., devises the rest of the plantation not before mentioned. He names wife Ann and Brother Henry Woodhouse as executors.

By putting two and two together we conclude that the widow Anne Moore married William Cox, bringing with her this house in which she was not to be molested. She joins him in making the deed to Condon. This would indicate that the wife owned the property. Cason Moore, the elder, bought 100 of his 500-acre tract from Henry Woodhouse.

Between the two families of Moore and Woodhouse there was undoubtedly a close relationship. The Henry Woodhouse who made his will in 1686/7 mentions his daughter Sarah, wife of Cason Moore, and daughter Mary, wife of William Moore. The Cason Moore who made his will in 1686/7 names three children, Cason (evidently the one making a will in 1720 to which reference has been made), Henry and Sarah; a brother William, and brother-in-law Henry Woodhouse. So when Anne Woodhouse married Cason Moore the third; her brother Henry Woodhouse is evidently Henry Woodhouse, son of the Henry Woodhouse whose will we have

just cited. This is a complicated relationship. But it is always an interesting problem to speculate on to what degree propinquity enters into who we are.

As a conclusion we feel justified in saying that we believe that Ann Woodhouse Moore-Cox lived in the house now standing on Mr. Jim Smith's "Eastwood" plantation at a date prior to 1726 and that the house was built about the close of the 17th century. Inasmuch as her first husband, Cason Moore (the second of that name in Princess Anne) gave her the property outright, rather than for life, we believe we are safe in saying this was probably a Woodhouse home. This we can not prove further than by inference from the above facts.

Returning, we add a few items of interest that we have gleaned relative to "Rose Hall," the home plantation of Jacob Ellegood when he made his will in 1753. In 1714 we find William Ellegood patenting 214 acres on Lynnhaven, known as "Thomas Cannon's Old Landing Cove." This tract was repatented by Jacob Ellegood in 1730. Before making his will as above mentioned, more land had been bought and added to the original patent.

The son Jacob Ellegood left the Colony of Virginia and moved to the Parish of Prince William in the County of York, Province of New Brunswick. From the Calendar of State Papers, volume VIII, Mr. Edward James in his *Antiquary* quotes the verbal proposition of Lord Dunmore on the exchange of certain prisoners. The exchange offered was Col. Alexander Gordon and Col. Jacob Ellegood for Col. Anthony Lawson and Col. Joseph Hutchings. Since we know Col. Lawson was an

ardent patriot and member of the Princess Anne Committee of Safety, we reach the conclusion that Col. Jacob Ellegood was a Tory, thereby accounting for his removing from Virginia and taking up a residence in what is now the Dominion of Canada.

From his home in New Brunswick in 1801, Col. Ellegood made his will in duplicate. Col. Jacob Ellegood left "Rose Hall" plantation in Virginia, consisting of 615½ acres, to his friend Col. Anthony Walke, his brother-in-law John Saunders, and to two of his sons Jacob (3) and John Saunders Ellegood. Col. Walke refused to act as an executor since he was also beneficiary under the will. So Jacob Ellegood (3) in 1803, as acting executor of Col. Jacob, sold the property to William Ellegood, a younger son. By a deed from William and his wife Sarah Ellegood to William Plume, Thos. Moran and Walter Herron, merchants and partners, trading as William Plume & Co., of the Borough of Norfolk, the estate passed in 1804 from the Ellegood family.

The chain of title from this time briefly to the present day is: from Plume by will to other members of his firm; from John Moran to Jas. Stone; from Jas. Stone by will to son John W. Stone; John W. Stone and wife Frances to Eliza Woodland and Elizabeth Stone; Virginia Duncan, executrix of Woodland and Stone, to Baker; from Barnabas Baker and Louisa, his wife, Joseph Baker and Rachel, his wife, Moss W. Armistead and Rebecca, his wife, and Robert A. Graves and Emily, his wife, to Blow; from Blow to Jas. S. Gaskins; from Gaskins to Alice Anne Mallory;

by Jas. A. Saunders, trustee for Alice Anne Southall in her marriage contract with William S. Mallory in 1854, to Tazewell Taylor and Jas. R. Hubard.

About this time it seemed quite the mode for wealthy young maids and widows to make marriage contracts. And so in 1858 we find the young widow Mary H. Brooks, mother of Swepson Brooks, conveying to W. W. Sharp, as trustee, in a marriage contract she was making with James Cornick, all her property in trust for her solely. Mrs. Mary H. Brooks Cornick lived in Norfolk. She died in 1879. Her son Swepson was her heir. In the meantime she had bought the "Rose Hall" farm of 615 acres on which her son Swepson was living. This was 1858. We also find the interesting item that she owned pew No. 17 in Christ's Church.

On "Rose Hall" one may still see several old tombs. The most interesting is that of William Aitchison, bearing his coat of arms. You will recall that William Aitcheson was son-in-law to Jacob Ellegood of 1753. During a recent visit to Mrs. Brooks, widow of Mr. Swepson Brooks, she told us of a piece of silver, now in the possession of Dr. Swepson Brooks, on which is embossed the same coat of arms as it appears on the Aitchison tomb. The silver came to them with the house.

It is too bad that only a memory of where the old house stood is all that remains to us. However, the new house, surrounded by fine trees, is fully a century old.

CHAPTER VI



AT THE time when one usually says, "We'll do this, or that, on the Fourth," we decided this year to devote the whole day to a jaunt in Princess Anne in quest of further information and pictures. Friends were quite disgusted when fishing trip or swimming party failed to lure us from our plan.

It was July 4, 1930. The sun was valiantly doing his mightiest to make it a "Glorious Fourth," as our faithful old Buick carried us down a narrow lane. This narrow lane is bordered at irregular intervals by cedar trees as it leads to a tiny little old house set with a background of green. The next time you drive from Norfolk to Virginia Beach, after you pass the road on the right of the boulevard leading to the present village of Lynnhaven, just on the curve, before reaching the Eureka Brick Plant, look back over your right shoulder and you, too, will see this tiny little old house. Surely it must have been watching the sunshine on fourth of July nearly a hundred years before July fourth became "the Glorious Fourth" to us peoples of the Republic of the United States of America.

On this particular day as we drove into the yard of the tiny little old house we were surprised in having an old colored man greet us. He apologized profusely for not seeing us in time to open the gate. When we went inside the house we found what had been so engrossing the old man that

he had failed (so he declared) in showing proper respect toward "white folks" coming to his house. On the table were a big bowl of coffee, a dish of gravy in which cornpone had been sopped and another dish on which were several beautifully fried "spots." On still another plate a pile of fish bone (no, not fish heads; you know to our colored friends the fish head is a "piece de resistance") told the story.

Uncle Gus Cornick, for this he told us was his name, is a darkie of 'fore the war. He was proud of his name. With a great flourish of his gnarled old hand he summed the matter up thusly to his own entire satisfaction: "Y'all knows who de Cornicks is!" Strange, isn't it, why the colored people invariably chose distinguished names for their own when freedom came, but rarely ever took the name of his former master? Well, Uncle Gus was quite talkative, and laid himself out to entertain. He complimented the male member of us on his beauty and family "favor." Then he launched out further into his own history. Which is something like this:

Seventy-nine winters have whitened his hair, his eyes are not so clear, his mouth is as guiltless as a new-born babe's of teeth, but I tell you his back is erect and his shoulders square. His present wife is not his first wife. The "ole 'oman" died forty-two years ago. Uncle Gus claims that he was so crushed that for six months he didn't even "look at no wimmen folks." He need not have told us the present wife was of a newer generation, for all the while we had been chatting she had remained seated peeling green apples. Trying to establish

more cordial relations with her by means of displaying a knowledge of housekeeping, the female member of us asked if she were not preparing to make apple pie. The old man piped up, "N'm, it's gwine be bile dumplins'. I allus has 'em, and fried chicken, too, on Fou'th o' July!" This food for the gods he hospitably offered us, if we could dash around that way about twelve o'clock.

Uncle Gus electrified us by saying he was the father of fifty-seven children. You may imagine our exclamations! He insisted he was right, if we counted "the three sets." In trying to unravel the snarl of the fifty-seven varieties in three sets, this was the answer. He had seven children of his own, these with their children and the childrens' children, three generations, gave the total. But he insisted that surely he *was* the father of them all, if you counted the three sets. Would this be a problem in genealogy, arithmetic or biology?

Another item in his conversation was of much real interest. The old man said he had sent "all his seven head, 'scusin' one, to free school with slate and book." He had always been a farm "hand," and had never earned on an average over sixty dollars per month. Is Uncle Gus a model in thrift or ingenuity, I ask you?

This house is one of the two left in the county of the type story-and-half, brick ends, sharp roof. The bonding of the brick is Flemish, one chimney is inside, one outside. A part of the weathering on the first setoff in the south end (the outside chimney would be on the south!) has fallen away, thereby giving a chance for seeing how the mortar



Huggins House at present village of Lynnhaven



North end of Huggins House



Stairway in Huggins House

was put into the crevasses before the bricks were laid flat as weathering. Uncle Gus was very eager to have his picture taken. In preparation he took down his clothes line, threw aside the garments which were sunning on the line, then posed himself. Of the result you may be the judge.

The measurements of chimney, fireplace, &c., are in accord with the measures of the similar parts of houses already discussed. The outside chimney is 48" deep, 9'3" broad at the base; height of house to eaves 9'. The fireplace in the south end is 7' wide, 55" high in a room with an 8' ceiling; the fireplace in the north end is 6' wide and about the same height as the southern. There are two rooms downstairs. At the front door one enters the larger room. Opposite is the back door, by which is a stair to the space under the roof. The stairs go up on the left with one turn, and are exposed. The old doors, hinges, banister rail, in fact all the original woodwork is there. In the north end at each side of the chimney are closets whose doors form a part of the interior panelling in that end. In each closet is one of the small nearly square windows observable in the picture of the north end of the house.

Now just a word about the history of the place. It is the property of young Melvin Gimbert, son of Mr. Harvey Gimbert of Lynnhaven. It was devised to Melvin by his maternal grandfather, E. E. Brooker, who came to the county from New York state about 1890.

In this house Mr. Jim Smith of London Bridge set up housekeeping before the new Cape Henry Lighthouse was built. His father, Bartholomew

Smith, whose wife was Mary Frances, owned the place for some years. And from a search of the records as they relate to this title we find that Bartholomew Smith's father was Ezeziel Smith; his mother's name was Keziah. Ezeziel was the son of a John Smith. Mary Frances Smith had a sister, Margaret Wilkins, wife of Peter Wilkins. Mary Frances and Margaret were daughters of Sarah Burgess. In the deed which these sisters make Sarah is called the widow of Charles Burgess, she was formerly a Carraway. When Mary Frances and Margaret owned the property in 1835 Peter Land, John N. Walke and Henry Keeling were their near neighbors.

The land on which Peter Land lived he heired from his father Hillary Land. Hillary Land married the widow Gardner. She had been Elizabeth Huggins, widow of William Huggins, and as such was administering on the Huggins estate when she married Gardner. Mr. Gardner did not live long. Then she married Hillary Land. Evidently the ex-widow Huggins liked the Huggins property, because Hillary Land bought three portions of it from Elizabeth Archer Shepherd (wife of John Shephard), Mary Archer and Margaret Archer Ferguson. The three Archer sisters lived in Norfolk. They were nieces of a William Huggins, from whom they heired the farm.

The tract of Huggins land in which our chief interest lies adjoined the tract that Hillary Land bought. On it was the very old house that we believe was the property and home of Philip Huggins. When Robert Huggins made his will in 1753, he

devised to his son Nathaniel his father Philip's plantation of 150 acres. Twenty years later Nathaniel made a will, leaving to his wife Sarah for life his plantation. In 1808 Sarah died. Some of her furniture she bequeathed to her granddaughter Sarah Huggins Carraway.

When Charles Burgess married it was Sarah Carraway who became his wife. On the land books, when the 150 acres of the widow Sarah Huggins go off the book, the land is charged to Charles Burgess. We feel these records prove that the land which had been the Philip Huggins plantation thus came to Mary Frances Smith and Margaret Wilkins, daughters of Sarah Burgess, widow of Charles Burgess, and by them was sold to Bartholomew Smith, whose wife was one of the sisters.

Old Philip Huggins did not make a will, but his inventory and appraisal are recorded as of 1727 with his wife Margaret administering thereon. We could not find any record of Philip Huggins as a purchaser of land. But when Nicolas Huggins died in 1691/2, after devising certain land to grandchildren by the names of Jameson and Colings, he left the rest of his land to his cousin Philip Huggins. Thus we know that Philip Huggins was in the county of Princess Anne and owning property before 1692. And so, you see, we were justified in the start when we told you that a certain little old house near the Virginia Beach Boulevard was an old, old house, when we were a very new Republic.

As the crow flies it is not far across the fields in a southeasterly direction from the Huggins home

to a small wooden bridge over a little stream sometimes called London Bridge Creek. This location, since the earliest days, has been named London Bridge. Crossing the bridge and turning sharply to the right over a second bridge, this time within a fenced field, on a hill to the left is the home of Mrs. Perkins, widow of Dr. R. C. Perkins. This house, like the one we have just left, has two brick ends, with frame front and rear. Here the simi-



London Bridge Creek, head of Eastern Branch Lynnhaven River



Home of Mrs. R. C. Perkins, London Bridge

larity ceases, for, unlike the Huggins house, this home has been revamped and enlarged, not once, but several times. In this evolution a sharp roof story-and-half house has become full two story in front with an elongated roof in the rear covering an addition whose first floor area is quite as great as the ground area of the original building.

Mrs. Perkins is one of four sisters (Mrs. Perkins, Mrs. James, Mrs. Spence, Mrs. White) all daughters of James Edward Land. Their father planted four cedar trees in front of the house, naming one tree for each daughter. There are three trees living, and the names are the names of the three living sisters.

James Edward Land bought this plantation of 300 acres from Bennett Land in 1840. Bennett Land's wife was Sarah Gaskins, sister of James Gaskins, from whom Bennett Land and his wife purchased the tract. In 1802 James Gaskins had married Nancy Shephard. There is a tradition that this couple built the house when they married. This we do not believe because the original end of the house shows a type of brickwork of a much earlier time.

The Gaskins were living in the London Bridge neighborhood as early as the middle of the eighteenth century, having purchased land from the Keelings prior to 1750. It has been difficult to trace this particular acreage because it was devised in several generations of the Gaskins, not by acreage, but by chopped lines of trees, a portion north or south, as the case might be, of London Bridge Creek, where it flows under the bridge.

Of the following items we are sure: London Bridge Creek is the head water of the Eastern Branch of the Lynnhaven; this territory was included in one of the grants to Capt. Adam Keeling; in 1756 Job Gaskins gave to his son Lemuel the tract on the north side of the road that leads to London Bridge, beginning at the foot of the bridge and along the meanders of the creek that part it from the land of Mr. Robinson &c., back to London Bridge; at the same time son Charles is given the lands to the south; Charles Gaskins wills to his son George his plantation; in 1837 James Gaskins sells to Bennett Land 300 acres running under London Bridge inherited from his (Gaskins) father, George Gaskins.

The two gable ends of the front portion of the house, as it stands today, show conclusively by the bonding of the brick and the mortar used, that the construction took place years apart. It may be that one end became unsound, was torn down and rebuilt along a newer pattern. Perhaps this may account for the tradition that the James Gaskins, whose wife was Nancy Shepherd, did the building. The newer end is of a period not antedating 1800. It is most probable that at this time the house became a full two stories, the additions on the rear coming from time to time as the family grew, or some other exigency, made the enlargement of the roof tree appear an economic family need.

About forty years ago the ship "Dictator" went ashore near Virginia Beach. It was during a fearful storm. There are two relics preserved in the county from the wreck, one is the ship's bell. It is

hanging close under the eaves about midway in front of the old house in which Mrs. Perkins lives, the oldest part of which house was built by a Gaskins, we believe Job Gaskins, prior to his death in 1756. The other relic of the "Dictator" is the old figurehead, so long time familiar sight near the ocean at Seventeenth Street, Virginia Beach. In days gone by sailors set much store by the symbol carried just under the bowsprit. The custom seemingly has become entirely obsolete. The figurehead was abolished in the British navy in 1796; however, in the U. S. navy the custom continued many, many years longer. Indeed the Cincinnati and Iris kept theirs until a few years ago when they themselves were forced to give way to modern construction necessary to meet modern needs.

Of the nine sharp roof houses of the oldest style of architecture now extant in Princess Anne we have given, to the best of our belief, the true history of seven. The two remaining will be discussed in later chapters, one for the reason that it is part of a composite of homes on the Broad Bay farm, and we believe it will be more interesting to talk about this composite as a sequence of buildings, rather than as disjointed units. The other house is at Kempsville, the only old town left in the county. It seems but fair to group in one chapter all the places of interest in and about the village.

CHAPTER VII



SUCCESSING the sharp roof, story-and-half phase of building in Princess Anne there is an interlude around 1725-35, in which span two homes, each of an unusual type, were built. Next to these we find the homes built of the gambrel roof and of the Georgian type, according, we take it, to the taste and pocket-book of the builder. For the time we shall pass the "strange interlude" in building, and present some of the older of the gambrel roof type.

It is said that one paid tax in colonial times on a dwelling in ratio to the number of stories under the roof. This is often given as an explanation of the extreme popularity of the gambrel roof as a successor to the sharp roof, when our colonial gentlemen and their good wives felt the need of more space in the sleeping quarters of the family. For legally and technically the gambrel is a story-and-half, with the advantage of greater clearance in the overhead.

The English form of gambrel has the pitch from the eaves much steeper and shorter than does the Dutch form. Both are adaptations of the roof originally designed by Francois Mansard, the distinguished French architect of the seventeenth century. We are told that the gambrel was used in New England as early as 1680. From observation and comparison of coincident phases of building in Princess Anne with the dates assigned, by

those who know, to similar buildings among our sister states to the north, we believe that Princess Anne was ever slow to adopt new modes.

The gambrel mode was developed in Princess Anne with four brick walls; with both gable ends of brick, front and rear of board; one gable end of brick, with other gable, front and rear of board; all four walls of board, with massive outside chimneys of brick, just as seemed most expedient, no doubt. Under these four variants we shall proceed to place the twenty-odd gambrel roof houses now standing in the county, every house of which was used as a home before 1800.

South of the Eastern Branch of the Elizabeth River, on and near a creek called King's Creek, nowadays known as Murray's Creek, David Murray, Michael Macoy, and William Whitehurst, each in his own right and name, obtained grants for land after 1650. David Murray and Michael Macoy were kin, for in his will made in 1680 Michael leaves his son James, one of many, by the way, in the care of "my father David Murrah." A patent of some 767 acres was taken out by David Murray in 1683. A part of this patent became a part of the farm on the Indian River turnpike called "Level Green." This plantation was the home or manor plantation of the E. H. Herbert, who died in 1862.

In 1833 E. H. Herbert began buying land in this neighborhood, piece after piece, until his acres stretched away on all sides around a quaint little brick house. Soon Mr. Herbert built immediately in front of this old house a very handsome home, typical of the "ante-bellum" days in Virginia. Since

then the new house on "Level Green" has completely overshadowed the one in which lawyer Handcock lived and raised a family in the years preceding and during the American Revolution. But we believe the brick house is even older than that.

In 1736 Richard Standley and his wife Mary, who was a sister of John Murray, and with him coparcenor, sold 180 acres of land south of the Eastern Branch to William Handcock. By following this title we found it to be a part of the David Murray tract as above related. In this record we found no mention of a house. But Mr. Handcock in 1752 bought from Benj. Dingley Grey 102½ acres on which there was a house. This tract Mr. Grey had bought from Thomas Bolitho, to whom it came from his father John Bolitho, who bought a part of the Michael Macoy patent. On this tract there was a house, probably the Bolitho home.

The William Handcock who made the above purchases made a will in 1759, leaving all his land south of the Elizabeth River in Princess Anne to his son William. Out of this devise emerged a 200-acre tract with house, which by various changes in ownership, in the course of the next fifty years after the decease of son William, became the property of E. H. Herbert.

William Handcock, son of William, made a will in 1782. From this we learn that his wife was Anne, his children were John, to whom he left the home plantation; William, to whom he left a tract called the "Denn;" Simon, Tully, to whom he bequeathed his law books, and a daughter Anne Robinson

Handcock. In ten years John Handcock sold to "Pade" Parker 200 acres whereon his father William Handcock had resided. Passing quickly through several ownerships, one of which was a David Murray, the circuit, or rather chain, links with the point at which we started, E. H. Herbert.

Mr. Herbert died in 1862, leaving a wife Margaret; a daughter, Mrs. Laura McAlpine; Abner T., whose wife was Charlotte; an infant daughter, Ellen C.; daughters Alice and Mary N.; a son, Arthur E.; a sister, Ellen Tatem. Mrs. McAlpine is still well remembered in Norfolk, singing, even at the age of more than ninety, delightful little songs in her own charming way, on occasions when friends of her younger days met together in celebrations. Abner T. Herbert was the gallant Confederate soldier, better known as "Buck" Herbert, who died in 1929 at the ripe old age of eighty-five.

The old house on "Level Green," which was probably used as the home of the Handcocks for a longer period than by any of the other owners, had originally two rooms downstairs, from one of which the steps lead to the rooms above. A room was added, most probably for the kitchen or dining room. This we say on account of the large fireplace.

All the walls are brick, 9" thick, Flemish bonding, with gambrel roof. The sills are hewn and pegged. The fireplace is 5'3" wide, the ceilings in the two-room part downstairs are 6' 4", in the addition the ceiling is 6'. Probably Mr. Handcock made the addition. Having five children it would seem that the new room was a necessity.



The old brick house on Level Green

As we said, Mr. Herbert built the later house, whose date we fix at 1833, for the reason that Mrs. Wilson tells us that her father ("Buck" Herbert) told her he was born in the new house in 1844, some nine years after it was built by his father. It is entirely probable that John Bolitho built this for his home, his son Thomas selling it to Benj. Dingley Grey.

There is such a feeling of satisfaction in finding that from the coming to Virginia of Henry Woodhouse in 1637 even to the present day the Woodhouse family of Virginia in a large measure has stayed by its ancestral hearthstones. The five hundred acres granted to Henry Woodhouse in 1637 is described as being within the mouth of the second bay proceeding from the Long Creek on the eastward side of Chesapeake. We take this as locating his land below Broad Bay and on Linkhorn Bay. The acres stretched away to the westward and north of Wolf's Snare. We understand from Mr. Shep-

herd Woodhouse of Princess Anne that a portion of this tract remained in the family until a very few years ago. However, there are many members of the family living on beautiful farms in and near this location. A family, which, through some nine or ten generations, stays home, remaining during the passing centuries among the first families, is of more than passing interest.

Capt. Henry Woodhouse, son of Sir Henry of Waxham and Anne, his wife, daughter of Sir Nicholas Bacon, the Lord Keeper, was at one time governor of Bermuda. Capt. Henry claimed that Charles the First promised him the governorship of Virginia, and accordingly made petition to the king in 1634/5 for a fulfillment of the promise. Doomed to disappointment he purchased land in Bermuda and was governor of that island. This land he had purchased he left by will to his son Henry. This son Henry was born about 1607, and he or his father (the record is not clear) settled in Virginia in 1637. There is a will probated in 1655 distributing to the sons and daughters of Henry Woodhouse Virginia and Bermuda possessions. This Henry's wife was named Maria; the sons were Henry, Horatio, John, William; daughters were Elizabeth, Mary who married Edward Attwood, Rachel and probably Judith.

In 1640 we find Henry Woodhouse a vestryman of Linhaven Parish. From volume 1, page 140, foot note 2, of Mr. Edward James' *Lower Norfolk County Antiquary* we take the following interesting item. "At the present time, May the first, 1896, after a lapse of 256 years, three of the descendants

of Henry Woodhouse bearing his name are vestrymen of the Eastern Shore Chapel, Princess Anne County (built 1754), Judge John J. Woodhouse, Jonathan Woodhouse and Maj. John T. Woodhouse." Of the three gentlemen just named, Mr. Jonathan Woodhouse is still living, making his home in Norfolk with his daughter, Mrs. J. W. C. West (Adelaide Woodhouse).

At least three generations of Jonathan Woodhouses made their home in the house now owned by Mr. Willie Butt. We know that a Captain Jonathan was the son of Major Jonathan, son of Captain William, Sr. On each side of the front of this home are the letters, W.W.P. 1760.

From the description in deeds of an adjoining property we know that in 1756 Horatio Woodhouse (one of the many) bounded a certain fifty-acre tract on the east. When this same acreage changed owners in 1788 Captain Jonathan is recorded as on the eastern boundary. It has been disappointing to us not to be able to prove conclusively that



Jonathan Woodhouse Plantation Home, 1760

Capt. William Woodhouse, whose wife was Pembroke, built the home. In this we have not been successful.

This building is of the decidedly Dutch gambrel. The angle at the eaves is more acute than the corresponding angle in any of the other gambrel houses now standing in Princess Anne. All four walls are of brick, Flemish bond, and 14" thick. The height of the walls on the outside from the ground to the eaves is 12'. The two rooms (there is no hall) on the first floor measure 10' to the ceiling. The front and rear windows are deeply recessed. Each measures 38" in width, 6'8" in height. The mantles are very high with narrow shelf. A pretty chairboard, wide floor planks, old doors with H & L wrought iron hinges, lead one to believe that the original woodwork has been preserved through the years. The wood is all heart pine.

The house faces east, the south end to the lane leading to the main road. The larger room is on the south and it is into this that the front door gives entrance. By means of a blind stairway in the smaller room on the north one goes above to the rooms directly under the gambrel. In the room immediately reached there is a brick well by the chimney, beneath the floor. This well is several feet deep. Very probably it was made for the safe keeping of valuables.

The strange hiding place and the Dutch gambrel make this house just a little different, stimulating one's imagination to find the answer to the whim that caused the Woodhouse (Mr., Capt., or Maj.?) to build differently.

Maybe Wolf's Snare was first called Oliver Van Hick's Creek—sometimes spelled Yan Hick's. In 1651 Ensign Thomas Keeling patented 700 acres on Oliver Van Hick's Creek. Where this creek was, seemed for a long time to defy solution. No map would divulge the secret, no amount of searching lessened the mystery. Crossword puzzles are as child's play in comparison with seeking the answer to some of the land problems which arise in tracing ownership in these early days. Many times the name given to a location remained unchanged during the years. Sometimes the name changed with each new owner's whim. Then it is only by accident one stumbles on the key.

Just such a piece of luck did we have in tracing the title of a very pretty old house known as the Jacob Hunter home. In the chain we found two loose ends which linked perfectly.

In 1843 Jacob Hunter bought from John James and his wife Mary a 300-acre tract known as "Pallets." For this Mr. Hunter traded a house in town valued at \$2,000, a negro girl valued at \$250, and \$250 in cash. This two thousand dollar house was in the city of Norfolk and was the property of his wife and his wife's mother. As its name indicates the tract he brought was part of the Pallet plantation of 600 acres, which was devised by John Pallet in 1719 to his son John. He calls it the Wolf's Snare Plantation.

The second John, in 1777, divides the 600 acres between two sons, Matthew and John. John gets the western side. We believe that Matthew's part had the house on it, because the will set forth that

the mother was to have the use, during her widowhood, of the place, the furniture, utensils, &c.

There were three other sons beside Matthew and John. They were to be cared for during childhood. These infant children were William, "Henery" and Gisborn. There was also an unborn child. The only daughter was Elizabeth Cannon. Father John in his will desires that his wife "bring up and Scout my youngest children." Just what the term "Scout" implied we are at a loss to know.

The Matthew Pallet known as senior in the first quarter of the nineteenth century, sold the plantation to his son Matthew, Jr. for \$1,000. It was from the heirs of this Matthew Pallet that Mr. James bought the estate bounded by Wolf's Snare for \$1,395. At that time, 1836, George M. Lovett was living here. This, of course, was prior to the time at which George M. came into his part of his grandfather Lovett's plantation and Stratton Island. Of this we will tell you more in a later chapter.

No doubt you are wondering what this has to do with Oliver Van Hick's Creek. In 1714 Adam Keeling sold to John Pallet the Wolf's Snare Plantation of 600 acres, all that was left of a patent of 700 acres formerly granted to the said Adam's grandfather, whereon his (Adam's) deceased father lived, being bounded by Wolf's Snare Creek and marshes.

In 1651 Ensign Thomas Keeling patented 700 acres on Oliver Van Hick's Creek. John Keeling, son of Capt. Adam, son of Ensign Thomas, in 1682 patented 2,137 acres in the Parish of Lynnhaven, 700 acres of which being on Oliver Van Hick's

Creek. In his will Capt. Adam leaves a certain 1,400-acre tract to his son John, provided John make out unto his brother Adam Keeling a "divident or tract of Land about 2000 acres Lately pattented in the name & to the use of my said Sone Jno. Keeling, being that land that now my mother lives on and called London Bridge." And so it comes about that if the patent for 700 acres each time named the creek as Oliver Van Hick, then, when two generations later an Adam Keeling sells the remaining 600 acres of the patent, he calls the creek "Wolf's Snare," we feel justified in the conclusion that the name had changed during the fifty years the Keelings had been living in the county. Even today Wolf's Snare and London Bridge are so called. Let us hope that they may so continue to be named.

The house on Pallets, or Wolf's Snare Plantation, or the Jacob Hunter farm, was surely built by the Pallets, probably by the John who died in 1777. Today there is an unmistakable air of for-



Pallets, or Wolf's Snare Plantation

lornness about the house as the colored tenant shows you around. He seems to recognize the fact that the home has seen better days.

There are four brick walls of Flemish bonding, which, sad to relate, at some time were white-washed. This coating now has a pinkish tinge, not becoming, we assure you, to the complexion of the handsome old bricks. Above the four walls is a gambrel roof, the pitch of which is very, very steep—almost perpendicular. Beneath is a cellar, half above ground, with a sleek clay floor.

Notice to what height the chimney stacks rise above the roof. There is a large hall with well proportioned stairway; one room downstairs on each side of the hall; the same plan obtains on the second floor. All the old mantelpieces have been taken out, and that, of course, detracts from the beauty one has a right to expect. From the picture it is very obvious that a doorway by the south chimney has been bricked-in in recent years, thus made into a window. It is more than probable that this was the way to the outside kitchen. The fine old trees in the yard go a long way toward helping one conjure up a picture of what the place was in its hey-day.

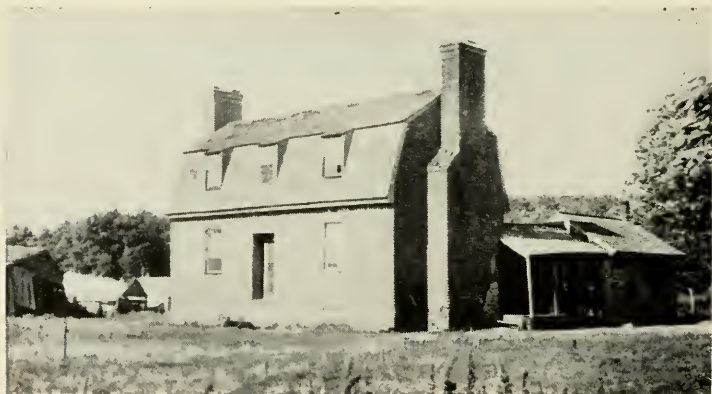
Jacob Hunter's widow became Sarah A. Cornick. When she sold the plantation she reserved a burying ground for her and her family in the "rear of the Manor House."

There is another house of whose date of building we are sure. It is the home of Francis Ackiss, on the Pungo Ridge road. This locality is now called "Blossom Hill."

A very pretty conceit accounts for the name. In the spring of the year there is a veritable riot of color, exquisitely beautiful, when the tender foliage is just putting out, and the buds and the blossoms of the many wild flowers hereabouts flaunt themselves in gay array beside the road. People familiar with the section make the trip annually and are always repaid by the lavish display nature has provided in this festival of blossoms.

The Ackiss home, not so large as some, measuring 19'2"x32'3", is set well back from the road, and faces the west. The walls are all brick, Flemish bond, of 19" thickness, with gambrel roof. On the southern gable are the letters F. A. 1782. In this year Francis Ackiss bought an acreage on Pungo Ridge, and from the legend on the house, we believe he immediately set about his building.

In the southern room downstairs (there are two rooms down—two upstairs) is a pine corner closet. We were told it was made for the first mistress of the home. It is considered a part of the



Francis Ackiss Home, Blossom Hill, 1782

premises and may not be removed. This house, in its dilapidation, has not even the softening influence of trees in the yard.

The property has for many, many years belonged to a Fentress estate. It has been rented from year to year, changing tenants frequently. There is such a difference in the aspect of a building when it is a veritable home and when it is only a house in which someone sojourns for a term of years as one of a succession of tenants.

The Ackiss family is also one of the oldest families in the county, and one that has always been prominent in church and civil affairs. Col. John Ackiss was a vestryman of Lynnhaven Parish in 1772. John Ackiss was a member of the Princess Anne Committee of Safety in 1775.

Passing to the other extreme, we shall next tell you of a house which is probably the largest and also the best known of all the gambrel type homes. Before examining this title we were prepared to be led by our research into the history of almost any of the old families of the county. We had heard this plantation referred to as the ancestral home of so many different families.

When this was the home of the Francis Lands the village nearest was London Bridge, the Virginia Beach Boulevard, at this point, was the "Kempsville road to London Bridge." Across the road was the William Hunter Plantation (Mr. W. G. Winter's home is on a part of the Hunter plantation, we think), and here began the road leading down Little Neck to the Glebe. In Order Book No. 7, under the date of 1757, Francis Thorowgood Land

petitioned the court to close the road that led from Robert Huggin's plantation on the south side of the said Land's plantation to the main road.

Before Renatres, or Renatus, Land made a will in 1680, while living "in Linhaven Pish, Lower Norfolk County, in Virg^a," there was a Francis Land in the parish. At a court sitting in 1647, Francis Land was made a warden of Lynnhaven Parish. In 1654 he patented 1,020 acres of land. Renatus Land had a brother Francis, so he says in his will.

In 1736 a Francis Land had a son, Francis Thorowgood Land. This son lived on the place we are discussing, and we believe he built the house. Francis M. Land (son of Francis Thorowgood Land) was the next owner of this plantation of 689 acres. On the death of Francis M., in a chancery suit, the plantation was divided between his two daughters. To Anne Land was set aside 389 acres to the westward along the road; to John N. Walke, whose wife was Mary E. Land, was set aside 300 acres with the house, known as the "home tract." This home tract passed from the Walke family when the late Dr. Frank Anthony Walke, of Norfolk, sold to John Petty.

As we have said, this is probably the largest of all the gambrels. There are four rooms, two on each side of a wide hall, on the first floor. In the cellar, or to be more exact basement, which extends under the whole house, there are two fireplaces. A brick wall runs from the front to the back, dividing the basement into two parts, a doorway in this wall connecting them. This partition is continuous as a

wall on up between the hall and rooms on the main floor. Mrs. R. G. DeFrees, the present owner, discovered this while doing some wiring when modernizing the house. It was she who pointed out this feature to us.

All four brick walls are done in Flemish bond, they are 18" thick, and from the ground to eaves measure 14'7" in height. The timbers are hewn 10x10 inches, cut nails, blacksmith made, where nails were used at all, appear in the wood. The roof has been raised, windows and doors changed and enlarged, a new uncovered porch added in front, all these tend to lessen the appearance of age in the building. Also much of the interior has been renewed.

Besides being an old family, the Lands were important persons as well. A Francis Land was a Justice of the Court as early as 1728. Capt. Francis Land was a vestryman of Lynnhaven Parish in 1723—warden in 1728; Capt. Francis Thorowgood Land was vestryman in 1754—warden in 1758.



Francis Land Home

Francis Thorowgood Land was dead by 1760, leaving a son Francis M. Mr. Perin Moseley administered on the estate. Since in 1753 we find the father, Francis Thorowgood Land, adding substantially to his acres by buying one-half of a 670-acre tract, formerly the property of Edward Land, we believe that shortly thereafter he built the big house.

In such spacious surroundings, maybe under the old elm in the yard, one can easily picture this home as the scene of lavish hospitality, taking the form of fox hunt, perhaps, followed at night by a ball. Remember that at this ball the music will be furnished by one or two "fiddlers." Perhaps the "fiddlers" will be "darkies" from the "quarters." Can you see the young folks as they dance the Virginia reel? Of course near midnight supper will be served. Tables groaning under the weight of the meat supper will be cleared away, and then the sweets appear. Life in Virginia then was beautiful! And in some parts it still is.

In the remaining pages of this chapter we shall tell you of the homes of the Murrays, all within a stone's throw of each other, all of the gambrel type, with Flemish bonding of brick in all four walls. These houses are in the neighborhood where David Murray the first came about 1650; that is to say, on the western side of the county, close to the Norfolk County line, and south of the Elizabeth River.

This David had several sons, among them was John. It is this John Murray, we believe, who made a will in 1731, making devises and bequests



Richard Murray Home on King's Creek



1780

The two houses Isaac Murray built for his sons

1791



Thomas Murray Home, 1791

to certain grandsons, one of whom was a Richard. By 1777 this Richard Murray, having acquired by purchase certain acres, and evidently having built himself a home thereon, devised to his only son, Isaac, his plantation.

Although the acres are not so extensive, the location on King's, or Murray's, Creek is very, very pretty. Here is the most complete colonial establishment anywhere existing today in this county; the "Manor House," root and smoke house, quarter kitchen and warehouse. Just across the creek, on just as pretty a cove, is the home of Isaac's son, Thomas. Nearer the main road and south of the Manor House are two more houses, most probably built by Isaac. One house is generally called the home of Isaac's son, the other the quarter kitchen. Frankly we think they were both homes that Isaac the elder built for his sons, one in 1780, the other in 1791. We name these dates for the reason that they are the years etched, each on the side of a house. Accompanying the 1780 date are the letters F. D. Isaac had a son David, maybe David's wife's name began with an F.

The home tract of 276 acres, although there were three houses on it, was not divided until 1846 when Isaac the younger, who had heired the whole plantation from his father Isaac in 1814, had died. One house with 115 acres was set aside to one son, the other house with 161 acres was set aside to the other son. The sons were Elijah and Elisha. This division is made on the land books. Therefore we can only tell you that judging from the tax the division was supposedly an equality. One son

received the Manor House with all the buildings attached thereto, the other received the tract on which were the two houses.

The interior of the Richard Murray house, in which Mr. J. A. Shumadine lives, has been much changed in plan during the passing years, although in the west end the panelling remains. The ceilings downstairs measure 9'5", upstairs they are only 6'. The old floor boards are eight and nine inches in width. There are several old doors still to be seen with the old hinges.

The combination roothouse and smokehouse is just behind the Manor House. Some one hundred feet away is the quarter kitchen with its huge chimneys and fireplaces, the stacks of the chimneys, however, are not tall. Behind the quarter kitchen at a little distance is a slight indentation from the cove of the creek. Near this is the warehouse 45x9. At first we thought it was a tobacco warehouse. And yet, why should there be so large a one on private property? Princess Anne was never very successful in growing tobacco. While reading old records of the Murrays we accidentally stumbled on the fact that the Murrays set much store by their flax pond. From this fact, and the fact of the warehouse we evolved this theory—take it or leave it.

It would appear that the cove at this point was called the pond and it was used for retting the flax grown on the family acres. In order to separate the fibre from flax it was necessary to soak the flax thoroughly, causing maceration to the point at which a hackle could be used to remove the fibre



Quarter kitchen and end of Manor House of Richard Murray



Smokehouse and roothouse on Murray plantation



Flax drying house on Murray Plantation

from the tow. The fibre, when so removed, was then stored in the warehouse of many vents to dry. Since Norfolk has ever been the safest of harbors, and since much of shipbuilding and ship repairs have ever been a leading industry, it seems reasonable to believe that the Murrays found a ready sale for rope, the product of the family's industry, among the shipmasters in port.

Anyhow, they had money and believed in having good homes. There are substantial witnesses to this fact in the houses as they are today.

As early as 1792 Isaac Murray bought from Dingley Grey, son of Benj. Dingley Grey, certain acres that the father Grey had devised to son Dingley in 1784. Benjamin Dingley Grey had come to Princess Anne from Northampton County about the middle of the eighteenth century. Mr. Grey was a Tory and during the Revolution was tried for treason.

The construction of the house on this tract which father Isaac left to son Thomas, is much the same as the Manor House across the creek. The interior is different in that there is a hall with a very pretty stairway. Each house is built well up from the ground before the first floor is laid; providing space for cellar. Each house is in clear view of the other across the water, although the road around is long and rough. Here were deep water and sand beach used for bathing up to twenty years ago.

Coming back across the creek to the western side and the Manor House, just south are the other two houses, built by the father for his sons. We

feel sure they were separate establishments, certainly for a time, because in the smaller, the one built in 1791, there is a hand carved mantel. This by no means was intended to be a kitchen. These two houses are now owned by Mr. J. N. Phillips. Here he makes his home. This place is splendidly preserved as is Mr. Shumadine's. All of which goes to prove what attractive homes these old places make, if one appreciates and really cares for them. Mr. Phillips' houses are smaller than the Manor House, or the house of son Thomas across the creek. It is 38' across the front, which, by the way, we think was originally the back, and 19'5" in depth. Unlike the other houses this one is built close to the ground, rising to a height of 10'8" at the eaves. These walls are 16" thick.

And so from the Murrays and their homes on the Eastern Branch of the Elizabeth River, on the south side thereof, at a creek called Kings, we turn again to the Eastern Shore of Lynnhaven Parish to hear of the Cornicks and a house they built long, long ago.

CHAPTER VIII



THE third family of a triumvirate of early colonists whose descendants are still living in Princess Anne, is the Cornick family. Simond Cornick, or Cornix, as we find the spelling in the oldest records, did not arrive at quite as early a date as the Woodhouses and Keelings, but his generations have impressed themselves in no less prominent and vital a way on the community.

On May 16, 1653, Mr. Simond Cornix was in attendance on the Lower Norfolk County Court, so says the record in Book C of Norfolk County Clerk's Office at Portsmouth, Virginia. There are two entries made on that day which show his presence. The one on page 46 is of most interest to us, for it records the granting of a certificate for 650 acres due Simond Cornix for bringing into the Colony thirteen persons.

Quoting from this entry we find the following names of persons whose passage was paid by Mr. Cornick: Jane, Martha, William and Thomas Cornix, Jane Simons, William Patreme, George Lawson, Plummer Bray, John Jennings, John Sealy, Thomas Gregory, John Turner and John Brock.

A most diligent search has failed to reveal a patent for these acres in the name of Simon, nor have we been able to find any conveyance to or from him, to or from any person. However, we did find that son William and his wife Elizabeth

made a deed in 1671 to Robert Bray for 500 acres which had belonged to his (William's) father Simon, so the deed says. This tract was in Little Creek, bounded by Maj. Adam Thorowgood, Capt. William Moseley and the "dammes" of the said creek. The land had originally been granted to Robert Hayes and Rowland Morgan and by them sold to Simon Cornick.

We do not know whom Simon married; William, Martha and Thomas were his children. (Jane may have been his wife). William is the only child whose record we have. So it is really from this William, we suppose, that the future generations came.

In 1657 William Cornix patented 500 acres called "Salisbury Plains." And thank heaven it is still so called even today! It does seem too bad that we have lost, and continue to lose, so many of the old names—names which really had a significance. In this instance we are assured that the Cornick family came from Salisbury in England.

The patent does not record on what ground William's grant was made. There is a difference of 150 acres in the certificate of Simond and the grant of William. It may be that three persons died, did not remain in the colony, or some other eventuality cut the count from thirteen to ten, and William actually received 500 acres on his father's account. This is merely a suggestion as a solution of what happened to Simond's certificate and on what ground William received his grant.

William married Elizabeth Martin, probably a daughter of John Martin, who was a brother of

Joel. Notice the names of William's and Elizabeth's children: Martin, John, Joel, Elizabeth, Barbara, William and Simon. With the exception of the name Barbara, the others are easily placed in the immediate family group.

We believe we are warranted in telling you that William Cornick was a loving father in spite of making no gift to his daughter Elizabeth Cannon or her children. This is the basis for the statement. In 1683 we find him making a deed to his son William and to his son Simond, each for a tract of land. William was seated on his at the time. A few years later in 1692 he makes a deed of gift to son Joel for a part of the "Salisbury Plains" patent of 1657, and again he makes a similar deed, this time to his daughter Barbara, wife of Capt. Francis Morse, for about 300 acres of his 1692 patent. This deed was made in 1692/3. The deed says the Morses are then seated on this tract.

Before the father William died in 1700 disposing of the remainder of his property by will, his wife Elizabeth Martin was dead, and he had married Alice Ivey, widow of Thomas Vicisimas Ivey. Of this union there was one child, a daughter Aloh. Of Aloh we find no mention in the will. Also sons William and Simond were dead and son Martin was dead in 1701. Daughter Elizabeth, wife of Thomas Cannon, was dead in 1684. This left Joel and John, surviving sons, and Barbara Morse, surviving daughter, as heirs.

By the will, the home tract of 530 acres was divided by an east and west line, the northern portion being devised to son Martin, and in event

of his death, to son John. John was the youngest son. To John was devised the other half of the home tract, the town lot at Lynnhaven and the Poplar Ridge tract of 230 acres. In the will Chincopin Ridge was divided between Joel and Barbara, Joel's part lying toward the south. Joel was also to have the young orchard and the land adjoining.

Joel married Elizabeth Woodhouse. Their children were Endomion, Nimrod, William, Joel, Henry and Prudence. Now in 1701 Joel sold his half of Chincopin Ridge to Barbara and Capt. Morse. We do not find that he made any purchases of land. Therefore when he makes a will in 1727, devising to his son Joel his plantation, the plantation must have been the "Salisbury Plains" given him by his father in 1692. With this devise the father Joel imposed on the son Joel the responsibility of ". . . finishing the house I am now building." We believe this very definitely places the builder and the time of the building of the house now standing on Salisbury Plains, near Eastern Shore Chapel. This property remained in the Cornick family until after the death of Capt. John Cornick (son of John Cornick and Amey Keeling Cornick) in 1859, when under his will, the place was sold. And so after two centuries only the burying ground remained in the possession of the Cornicks.

Just here, while relating the disposition the first Cornicks made of their lands, it may be pertinent to add that we have not been able to find record of any deed by which a part of Salisbury Plains was conveyed to the parish. Undoubtedly the Eastern Shore Chapel is built on a part of this

tract, but we hesitate to believe that William was the donor of the land to the parish for the reason that in making land gifts to his own sons and daughters he so meticulously makes record of the transaction. It would seem that he would carry out the same policy in his gift to the church. Also we doubt whether the chapel was built prior to 1700, which year William died. Previously we have told you that in 1724 the parish register notes the new wooden chapel at Eastern Shore. From this we believe that either John or Joel, or both, sons of William, gave the land. However, we have not been able to find any court record of the gift.

To return to the house on Salisbury Plains that we believe Joel Cornick was building in 1727, the time of his death. About this time most writers on colonial architecture date the beginning of the first period of Georgian architecture. Our observation has been that Princess Anne builders generally were just a few years behind the rest of the colonists in adopting a change in building design. May this be accounted for by the fact the people for the most part were not extremely wealthy, they had built in the beginning very substantial homes, many of them of brick. Therefore they were content with the home as it was, and were not eager to outdo each other in the elaboration of the dwellings. For this reason the new fashions in buildings were slow to reach the county.

“Salisbury Plains” house is an unique style of architecture. Today there is one brick end of Flemish bonding. It is a moot question what the other end was at the time of building. There is strong



Salisbury Plains, 1727



Hall and front door, Salisbury Plains, built 1727



Parlor at Salisbury Plains

evidence in the foundation in the cellar that the two ends were originally identical. On the front the house presents an English type of gambrel roof. The interesting and unusual feature is the rear of the roof. It starts out on a gambrel line, but is extended to cover a shed. The picture will give you a good idea of this feature, should our description fail.

The stairway is a Queen Anne; the front room downstairs on the north, or left of entrance, has very handsome panels and cornice, as has also the hall and room to the rear of the parlor. There still remain several old doors and hinges. But on going into the cellar comes a great thrill! For here is a sill, hewn of course, 12x12, or thereabouts, measuring forty feet in length. Picture to yourself that pine, for so it is, as it towered in the nearby woods at the turn of the century in 1700! Truly it must have been a giant to have yielded a timber of that size. But in those days the pine woods of old Princess Anne did much in the way of producing a revenue for the people.

In the new series, number two, of the *William and Mary Quarterly*, volume 3, page 209, we ran across an article which seemed of interest. Among the British transcripts in the Library of Congress is a report by E. Jennings to the "Right Honorable Her Ma'tyes Lords Commissioners for Trade and Plantations" in the colony. The report is an answer to a question of the Lords Commissioners relative to production of pitch and tar in Virginia. The report in substance is: Annually in Virginia was produced near 3,000 barrels of pitch and tar, com-

ing from Princess Anne and Norfolk Counties. This was 1704. There were 97,891 acres of patented land in Princess Anne and a part of Norfolk County. There were about 50,000 acres of low pine land, not "agreeable" for tobacco. This low land was of the "worst esteem and so little value" the people were forced to clothe and maintain themselves by the manufacture of woolens and leather, by raising stocks, cattle and hogs.

The report goes on to tell that the tar was made of knots and pieces of fallen trees, the selling price was ten to twelve shillings. Pitch was stored in "double barrels" containing thirty gallons. The Swedish barrel at that time contained from thirty to thirty-six gallons. Some of the tar and pitch were used for the houses and boats, some was sold to ship masters, some was transported to Barbadoes, Jamaica, and Seward Islands. Mr. Jennings recommends as a means of encouraging the production of these commodities, that no custom be charged, that an allowance for each last that came from the plantation be made, there be no restraint or contract on account of the uncertainty of the voyage, that England use Virginia tar and pitch in her own navy in preference to the Swedish product. From this we get a pretty clear vision of how a living was being made in the county in the early days. Today we find conditions much changed as to the source of revenue.

The Mary Washington House in Fredericksburg, Virginia, has a roof very similar to the roof of the house we are about to discuss. In Princess Anne there are two houses now standing which do

not conform to any other style of building left in the county—Salisbury Plains is one, the Henley House is the other.

We wish actual architectural surgery were within our power, for then by removing the little frame kitchen on the Henley House the whole length of the slope of the rear roof would be entirely visible. However, by an imaginary cutting away try to vis-



Henley House



Interior of Henley House

ualize the roof as extending at the same angle for about the same length as appears between the two chimneys; or until it bisects a perpendicular at the height of 8 feet from the ground at the eaves.

This house, we judge, was built soon after 1720; Salisbury Plains, the other house in this group was being built in 1727. The Henley house is neither so large nor so pretentious as Salisbury Plains.

The interior view shows the high mantel with very narrow shelf; the little door goes into a cubbyhole by the chimney side. It is evident that originally the stairway was in this front room, the partition then, probably, was behind the stairs, cutting off the back room under the shed.

At the present time Mr. Fitzhugh Brown, a grandson of the late Carey Brown, lives here and manages the farm for his mother. To most of the older persons in this section the place is still called the "Henley Place," Mr. T. C. Henley having bought the property about 1859 and made it his home for a number of years. Here, from 1795 to 1815 lived William James, father of an Emperor James to whom, by will, he devised the plantation. In his will father William says he purchased this home from Tully Moseley. In Moseley's deed he sells 198 acres with house. Thomas Reynolds Walker sold approximately the same acreage, with the same description, as near Pungo Chapel with the house in 1777 to Moseley. Thomas Reynolds Walker was county surveyor, member of the vestry, and escheator of the county. Col. Thomas Reynolds Walker bought this tract with the house from James Mason and wife in 1767. Fourteen years prior

Robert Mason willed to his son James his (Robert's) home. About 1720 Robert Mason bought the land. From these facts we know the house was not here in 1720, but, that when Robert Mason died in 1753 he had raised to legal age a son, James, to whom he devised the home. In every deed mention is made of the house on the property.

As a matter of fact the farm is several miles from the old chapel site. We can think of no landmark other than the chapel by which, at that time, relative location might be fixed in this area. Pungo seemed to cover a vague stretch of territory between North Bay on the Seaside, and North River on the west. Remember that the present Princess Anne Court House did not come into being until 1824, when the geographic center of the county was sought for the county seat. This locality was not developed at so early a date as the sections on Lynnhaven and Little Creek.

From the "Henley House" to a house on the West Neck road near Princess Anne Court House, is not far in a straight line to the westward. This house on the West Neck road is known as the "Zachariah Sykes" home. It was built in 1777, so a brick on the chimney indicates.

More than seventy-five years elapsed between the building of the home and the time that Mr. Sykes bought it from Noah Simmons and his wife Franky. Mr. Simmons bought this as the estate of J. C. Butts, deceased, three hundred acres, with house. Mr. Butts had purchased two 150-acre tracts, each a home plantation, each adjoined the other, each being described as being on the West

Neck road. The first one purchased was the place whereon Batson Murden died, it being then in the possession of a son Zachariah Murden. This was 1835. Two years later Mr. Butts bought the John Woodhouse estate of the same number of acres.

Batson Murden had bought land from Joel Simmons, which Simmons had purchased from Joshua Whitehurst. Mr. Whitehurst had purchased the land from John and Richard Land and Edward Frizzel. The Woodhouse tract came to Mr. Butts by purchase from Philip and John Woodhouse, sons of John Woodhouse. In the first land book in Princess Anne (1800-1811) this place is charged to John Woodhouse from the estate of his father Wm. or W. N. (writing is rather difficult on book) Woodhouse.

There are several lines of reasoning that come to the mind as to why, and why not, the house was built by each of the gentlemen more remotely (in point of time) connected with the plantation. We have no prejudice in the matter. It may be that Mr. Woodhouse built this home; it may be that Joshua Whitehurst built it. We do know that the building was done in 1777.

Originally this gambrel roof house had two brick gables of Flemish bond with front and rear of weatherboard. Years ago one end fell out, however, the panelling did not. The panels in both rooms were of the narrow boards, running all the way in two sections to the ceiling, forming an arch for the fireplace, instead of the usual straight line across the chimney breast.

There are two rooms downstairs, one on each

side of a small hall. The hall ran all way through to the back door.

The unusual feature in this building is the chimney. It is built without the wall. The breast barely exceeds the height of the fireplace on the first floor. The setoff is very severe, causing a slender stack to rise from this point to the usual number of feet above the roof.



Zachariah Sykes, 1777



Original mantel and paneling in brick end of Sykes House, 1777

Two handsome water oaks, the old well and well gum are still in the yard. However, the well has long since been discarded as a source of supply for drinking water. F. E. Kellam of Princess Anne is the present owner.

Only one house is left standing in Blackwater of what were the homes of the Olds, Corprews, Greshams, Tooleys and Wickings. Mr. Amos Ives, son of the late Jesse Ives, makes his home in the house that was James Wickings'. At that it has been the home of the Ives for nearly a century. In all the title from 1772 to the present, there is only one deed.

In a will made by Jesse Ives in 1887 he devised in the eighth paragraph his home place to his son Amos. Since 1834, when he purchased the John Wickings property, Mr. Jesse Ives had made his home here, in the meantime rearing beside his son Amos, the following sons: Jesse, Ed Bright, M. T., W. L., Preston W., together with three daughters, Martha (Mrs. Oscar Smith), Eleanor (Mrs. Y. B. Miller), Mary (Mrs. J. N. Woods).

The generations of the Wickings were John, who, making a will in 1772 devised to his son John the plantation whereon he (the father) was then living, the run between the two houses (one house father John lived in, the other house son John occupied) to be the dividing line. Son William was to have the house and land whereon son John now lived, son John was to take up his abode in the house wherein father John had been living.

There is a date, 1772, or 1792, and the initials J. W. on the gable. In 1783 this son John devised



Wickings House in Blackwater

to his son James his plantation; in 1821 James devised to his son John the plantation. Beyond a doubt John or James Wickings built the house in 1772, or 1792. The third figure is not clear on the brick. We rather feel that 1772 is the correct figure.

In order to reach this home of the Ives in Blackwater one drives over a very rough road through the Pocaty Swamp. The discomfort of the drive is swallowed up in enthusiasm over the beauty of the swamp, if it be late spring or early summer. Thick with trees and smaller growth, standing in dark pools of water, pierced here by a gold bar of sunlight, splashed there by lilies and lilies varying from palest shades of lavender and lilac, to mauve, and even royal purple, stems and foliage of tender green—truly it is marvelously beautiful. Sometimes, we think, we travel far to see gardens, faultlessly, perhaps, designed as to form and color by man, when near at hand may be some rare spot of nature, equally as ravishing.

In Mr. Ives' yard are several unusually large and symmetrical trees. The house is set with the dark background of the swamp, a very, very lovely location. The two brick gables of the house are of Flemish bond. The house is without hall; the mantel shelf is very high. Little has been done to change the original style of either interior or exterior.

The Wickings were in Blackwater and around Pocaty by 1746, for in that year John Wickings patented 61 acres in Blackwater in his own line. The Ives were in Lower Norfolk County by 1675, for then Timothy Ives, Jr., patented 270 acres on the Southern Branch of the Elizabeth River.

Leaving Blackwater and Pocaty, let us return to one of the very old roads in the county. Almost at the intersection of this road, leading from Kempsville to Great Bridge, with a continuation of the Indian River road from Norfolk County, at a corner now known as Mear's Store, there is tumbling down what was once quite a pretentious home. Before the War Between the States this plantation was called "Ashland." It was then the home of Edmond F. Dozier and so remained for twenty-five years. For nearly ten years more his son, James W. Dozier, lived here.

Besides this father and son, no other owners have seemed to make it a home for any length of time after John Parsons devised it to his son Samuel in 1795. The father John had purchased the land, so far as we can find, about ten years prior to his death. When he built the house there were evidently two gables of Flemish bond brick. The southwestern end has long ago fallen away; the space is covered



Ashland

now with tin. Here again we find the familiar two rooms on the first floor, this time separated by a hall in which is a particularly pleasing stairway. The quaint little front porch is only a pile of old lumber today, but it was interesting to notice the painstaking workmanship exhibited in the mortises and tenons, whereby the timbers had been held together.



The dining room of Ashland

In the remaining gable, on one side of the fireplace is a deeply recessed window, on the other side is a huge door, leading, no doubt, to an outside kitchen. The panels in this end are much wider than in any of the houses about which we have yet told. The chair board, old doors, stairway, floorboards, panels, are all of pine.

Mr. Claude Carver now owns the house. It would take much money and careful workmanship to restore the whole, And yet, it does seem too bad to see it pass.

Farther on down this old Kempsville to Great Bridge road is the home of the Nathaniel Nicholas family, better known now as "Pritchards." Here Lemuel J. Pritchard made his home from 1869 until his death in 1893. This plantation is now the property of the Etheridge heirs.

Here is a house that is splendidly preserved. As to construction it is similar to the brick gable gambrels of which we have been relating, with the difference that the room on the right of the hall as



Nathaniel Nicholas Home

Courtesy Mrs. Berry

one enters, is much larger than the room across the hall on the left.

Nathaniel Nicholas purchased land in this neighborhood from the Fentresses as early as 1752. In 1792 this Nathaniel Nicholas was dead and a Nathaniel Nicholas (we presume a son) was purchasing from certain heirs their title in the home plantation. This latter Nathaniel was dead in 1824, devising to his son, Joshua H. M. Nicholas, the home place. There was another son, James W. L. Nicholas. As early as 1655 there was an Andrew Nicholas in Lower Norfolk County. This family and the Hunter family intermarried on at least two occasions. It was from Joshua H. M. that the home passed by purchase to Mr. Pritchard.

There is another family in Princess Anne that counts its generations here since the very early days. It is the Gornto family. We first find them recorded in 1684 when William Grinto (later Gornto) patented 550 acres in Bear Quarter, Lynnhaven Parish.

There are two houses near Nimmo Church, on roads more or less forgotten since they were not included in a roadbuilding program, homes of the Gorntos, Reuben and his son, Reuben Gornto. In the home that we believe most probably was the home of the father, and by him was devised in 1809 to his son Thomas, today lives Mr. Ernest Shipp, a son of the late Andrew W. Shipp.

The exterior of this house does not show the lines of an old house. On closer inspection of the brick gables it is easy to trace the new bricks used in converting this from a gambrel roof to a full two story house. Here the interior house plan shows



At present home of Ernest Shipp



Interior of south room in Shipp Home

no variation from what must have been a standard for such houses. The panelling in the room to the left, it must have been the parlor, is extremely wide, and in a fine state of preservation. By this we mean that the panels have not warped, shrunk or cracked. The pictures of this work tell the story much better than we can.

The second of these houses that were the homes

of the Gorntos was bought by Reuben, son of Reuben, in 1788 from Jesse Hill. In this deed Jesse Hill says that it was his father Thomas's. When the father Reuben died he devised this property to his son Reuben, in spite of the fact that the place was bought by the son. For this reason we believe the father must have furnished the money for it, else why should he devise it?



At present home of Luke Ballance



Interior of parlor in Luke Ballance Home

This house is almost a replica of the "Sykes" home built in 1777. The queer chimney, we told you of, is the type here found in each gable. The narrow panelling is found here also, with the difference that the line across the mantel is straight instead of the curve, as in the "Sykes" house.

Son Reuben devised this plantation to his son James in 1819; James gave it to his son George R., who likewise for the better advancement in this world of his son James, gave him his plantation of 263 acres. Mr. Luke Ballance now makes his home here. Unlike the place on which Mr. Shipp lives, Mr. Ballance has some fine trees in the yard.

And so we have two homes of the Gorntos, each built, we believe, prior to 1788. The father's home he, or his father John, probably built; the son's home was certainly owned by the Hills before 1788. How it came to the Hills, unless by marriage, we can not say, there being no record in Princess Anne that would give us an answer.

But Princess Anne had towns also, one of which was New Town. We'll tell you about what is left.

CHAPTER IX



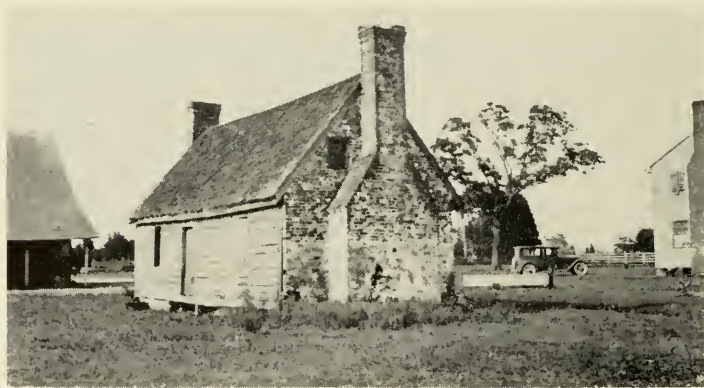
O great haste was made in sending to Princess Anne to fetch Mr. Moseley to lead the dance with the Lady Dunmore." This brings to mind the oft told story of the anxiety of the people of Norfolk Borough to find a partner whose elegance and grace were a match for those of the Royal Governor's wife. The result was that old Princess Anne came to the rescue of Norfolk, saving the day by producing a beau par excellence. This beau was Edward Hack Moseley.

On a hot dusty afternoon this summer we were driving over this same road, certainly we had the same destination in view. And as vehicles cover distance in *this* day and time, our progress was slow. The road was very rough, deep holes cut during the spring thaw still gaped treacherously at one's tires. We were on a hunt for New Town, once the civic and social center of the county. And what did we find? Here and there the twisted trunk and fallen limb of an old cedar, which probably in bygone days had touched with its pungent branches the family carriage as it rolled on its way to or from some function. Here and there seedlings were spreading new and vigorous growth over the remains of what had once been stately trees. Here and there a rut was filled with bricks, crumbling

to dust. This dust perhaps had once been a foundation in the manor house of a Moseley. And so, on we rode.

Several miles after leaving the boulevard and pursuing this almost forgotten way, to the left, in the midst of a plowed field, we spied an overgrown, disintegrating wall of brick. With the help of a good stout blade the vines and brush were cut away, disclosing a graveyard. All that could be deciphered on the marble was the inscription on one stone, seemingly put there in more recent years. It bore this legend: Martha Bloggett, Edward Hack, Edwin Daingerfield, Ann Taliaferro, Henry Power, Burwell Bassett and Alexander, children of Samuel and Hannah D. Moseley.

Pursuing the road to its end, we came to a yard, sloping gently down to a branch of Broad Creek. In this yard is a quarter kitchen, built maybe just prior to the War Between the States. The bricks in the two ends seem to be old. There is a large fireplace, outside chimney, in each end. The interior



Quarter kitchen at New Town

is divided into two rooms, now used for storage, a blind stairway leads to the space under the roof.

Turning to the right at the yard gate, and driving down a farm road, we came to the edge of Mill Creek. As it winds its way on, the old Greenwich plantation is divided from Rolleston, the first home of the Moseleys in Virginia, more recently owned and recalled as the residence of Henry A. Wise, Governor of Virginia during the "late unpleasantness," as some of our old-time friends refer to the struggle of the eighteen-sixties. Here, as you see for yourself, on that very hot afternoon, still remained the stones of the old mill race. The tide was coming in rather swiftly, so the picture does not show as great a depth of the stones as one would like.

Crossing on a most insecure and clumsy foot bridge we followed a path, overgrown with vines, honeysuckle, Virginia creeper, until in order to go further, a huge branch of mock orange had to be pushed aside. Mock orange! Who knows but what at one time this was the garden of the mistress of



Mill race between Rolleston and Greenwich

Rolleston? At any rate mock orange brought to one's mind the hackneyed, but ever expressive, "Sic transit gloria mundi."

William Moseley the emigrant came, with Susannah his wife, to this country certainly by 1649, for on the thirtieth day of November of that year we find him attending the Lower Norfolk County Court. And there were two sons in this family. William and Arthur were the names. At a court held March 26, 1650, a certificate was granted to William Moseley showing that 550 acres of land were due him, the pay at 50 acres per person on eleven head rights as follows: himself, wife Susannah, two sons Arthur and William, Susan Robinson, alias Corker, Eliz. West, Ann Lambert, Edw. Foreman, Hen. Lambert, Jost Williams, and Tho. Warrington, transported into the colony of Virginia by William Moseley. However, the first grant we find in the name of William Moseley is recorded as patented on February 17, 1652, for 540 acres, in Lynnhaven Parish, beginning at a point by the river side. This was probably Rolleston. In a court record of 1652 Mr. Moseley styles himself as William Moseley, late of Rotterdam in Holland . . . a merchant and now resident in the Eastern Branch of Elizabeth River, in the county of Lower Norfolk in Virginia.

Mr. Lancaster in his *Virginia Homes* says that William built Rolleston about 1650—the land escheated during the Commonwealth, but was restored to his grandson, Col. Edward Moseley, in the time of Charles II, and was continuously occupied by a lineal descendant until 1865. There are

two grants to Edward Moseley that we found, one for 1,130 acres in 1682, and one for 490 acres in 1688. There are also grants in the names of other members of the family. Today no trace of the Manor House on Rolleston remains.

William Moseley (2) married Mary, daughter of John Gookin and Sarah Offley. Sarah was the widow of Adam (1) Thorowgood. As the widow of William Moseley, Mary Gookin Moseley married Anthony Lawson. Edward, son of Mary Gookin and William (2) Moseley, was a member of the court which tried Grace Sherwood, the witch of Princess Anne. He was also a Knight of the Golden Horseshoe. Hillary Moseley, son of Edward, married Hannah Hack, and one of their children was Col. Edward Hack Moseley, Sr., who, by the way, was a friend of Benedict Arnold. To Mr. James' *Antiquary* we are indebted for the following note. He gives credit to the courtesy of Edward Higgins, Esq.

"Brigadier General Arnold presents his Compliments to Colonel Edward Moseley Senior requests the favor of his and Mrs. Moseleys Company to dinner and pass the Evening on Wednesday next.

"Portsmouth 22 Feby. 1781."

E. H. Moseley, Sr., was a magistrate of the county, a vestryman and church warden, and an officer of the customs in the Lower District of James River. Beside all this he was the father of our "Beau Brummel." But in spite of being known as a dandy, E. H. Moseley, Jr., is better known to Princess Anne people as the clerk of the court for forty-three years, 1771-1814.

Today, except for the written record, no one would suspect that once a prosperous town flourished on the Eastern Branch of the Elizabeth River. No trace is left of home, store, court house, jail, warehouse. Judge White tells us that some years ago when he was living nearby, there were foundations to be seen in the fields. Now only an occasional red stain in the fields marks the passing of New Town.

At New Town also lived the Hancocks. In the earliest records this name is spelled "Handcocke." Simond Handcock was in Lower Norfolk County by 1650. As early as 1654 we find Sarah (probably his widow) receiving 300 acres, situated at the head of Mr. Moseley's land, on Faran Creek. Finally in March, 1662, William Hancock (her son, we think) patents the same land (200 acres near Mr. Moseley, 100 acres bought of Thomas Holt) all formerly patented by Sarah Hancock, so says the record.

In 1687 this William made his will. He devised to his eldest son Simon the plantation whereon he (William) was living, "being Bounded with a small C^r ye mouth of w^{ch} runs in a little below the Chappell and runneth up nigh my dwelling house & bounded E^{ly} with an old trench on ye N^w on a C^r form^rly Cald. hoskins Cr. and n^{ly} on a branch cald. deepe branch." To son William he devised all the land on the "S^r Side of the above sd small Cr. being where ye chapel now stands." Son Samuel's land was bounded by William Cockruft, Edward Moseley and Lt. Col. Anthony Lawson . . . "over ye Swamp along to white pine Swamp & ye path that leads from my house to Linhaven Church."

There were other sons, John, Edward and George. The daughters were Mary and Frances; his mother was Sarah Piggott. William Moseley was a kinsman.

We quote this will so much in detail on account of the reference to chapel and church, as well as for the family relationships.

Nearly a hundred years later, in 1782, another William Hancock is making a will. The exact devise each of his sons shall receive is contingent upon what William's brother John (both sons of William—1759) does with his property.

For ten years Uncle John, or John Sr., after the death of his brother, seemingly gives no intimation what disposition he intends to make of his lots at New Town. In the meantime John Jr., eldest son of William (1782) sold the home place (Level Green, of which we have told you) of his father. Now John was not to have this plantation, should he fall heir, or should his uncle devise to him, his (the uncle's) land, so father William says in his will.

In 1792 Uncle John made a deed to John, Jr., for the New Town lots. What adjustments were made in order to fulfill the devises of William's will we do not pretend to say. The father William had a tract he called "Denn," this he devised to his son William. The father says should he (the son) "for any causes set forth fall heir to my Manor, then" he devises the "Denn" to his son Simon.

There is a farm at New Town Cross Roads called "Lion's Den." In 1824 Simon Hancock made a will of which his son Peter Singleton Hancock

was sole executor. By this will twelve years must elapse after Simon's death before the plantation on which he was living could be sold. Then the sale became compulsory. In 1836 the terms of the will were fulfilled.

Simon Hancock had married first Susannah Singleton. After her death about 1816, and by 1822 he married Jacomine ___? This wife survived him and became Jacomine Joyce, who owned the Thorowgood land around Lake Joyce. Remains of her home and garden, together with the family burying ground are interesting. The location is beautiful.

The house that we believe Simon, or maybe his brother William, Hancock built on "Denn" or "Lion's Den" at New Town Cross Roads just before 1800, is full two stories with small attic and cellar. The two gables are brick of Flemish bond, one outside chimney in each gable. There is no setoff in the chimney until after the second story fireplace is passed. This makes a short stack.



"The Denn" at New Town Cross Roads

B. A. Troyer, one of the large colony of thrifty Mennonite farmers in this section of the county, lives here.

About the same time that Mr. Hancock made his will, an Edward James, living near the present Nimmo Church, made his will. By this will he devised to his son Joshua the house and certain acres of his manor plantation, the remaining acres he devised to his son John. During the course of the next fifteen years, or in 1798, John built his home. This home he sold to Smallwood Thomson in 1834.

Ten years later Smallwood Thomson exchanged plantations with Elizabeth Anne Woodhouse and her husband John. The name of the Woodhouse plantation on Lynnhaven was "The Hermitage." It was one of the Thorowgood tracts, and adjoins the acres on which the Thorowgood House now stands. At present it is the home of Mr. Wiley Halstead, a descendant of Richard Holstead, son of Jacomine N. C. and Richard Holstead.



The James House, 1798

John Woodhouse and Elizabeth Anne were the parents of Maj. John T. Woodhouse, whose son Paul today makes his home in the house John James built in 1798. During the eighty-odd years this has been the home of the Woodhouses there have been additions by way of wings on each side of the original brick end house, Also a room has been added in the rear. On account of so many old time shrubs, plants, and trees, it was quite impossible to get an unobstructed view of the house.

Like the "Lion's Den" this house is full two stories and a half. The outstanding feature is the exquisitely proportioned stairway. The hall is quite wide, therefore the gallery on which the stair turns is long. The designer made the gallery wide in proportion, with the several steps easy and gentle in their upward flight.

Maj. Woodhouse was a familiar figure on the court house hill for many years. He was a Confederate officer in Mahone's brigade. He was commander of the Veterans and a leading member of the Masonic Lodge at the Court House when the Confederate monument was erected in the early years of the present century. Maj. Woodhouse married a Miss Whitehurst, daughter of James Murden Whitehurst. Of the Whitehurst home we shall tell you in another chapter.

By grants, by purchase, by marriage, the Cornicks continued to add to their lands in Princess Anne. One of their homes, built, we believe, before 1800, is in the rear of the home of Mrs. Fannie Colonna. Mrs. Colonna's mother, Mrs. Fentress, is a daughter of the late Henry T. Cornick (1814-1892).



Home of late Henry T. Cornick



Mantel in Henry T. Cornick Home



George Fentress Home

Not so far away is the Fentress home. Here lived George Fentress, son of Lancaster, son of John, son of Moses. From the record in the land books at Princess Anne it would appear that this home was built before 1800 by William Henley, father of Charles Henley and Francis, who married Lemuel Simmons. The house is odd in that the roof has the long slope on the rear, like the Henley house near Pungo. The brick end is built partially within the weather boards.

Across the road from Mrs. Colonna and a little nearer Eastern Shore Chapel and Salisbury Plains lives Mr. Julius Cornick, a son of Henry T. Cornick. From Mr. Cornick we have gotten much of the family history. He says that even in his day there stood in the yard, a little removed from either of the present dwellings, the oldest house. This was the home of Endymion before he built the new house. This Endymion Cornick is probably the grandson of the "Endomion" mentioned in the will of Joel Cornick of Salisbury Plains in 1727. The father of Endymion (1765-1812) was Henry, and to his son he devised his plantation in 1772. Sad to relate the oldest house was torn down.

Endymion married Frances Henley. Their son was Henry. This Henry Cornick married twice; first, Mary Old. There were two sons, Endymion D. and Henry T. The wife of Henry T. Cornick was named Mary. These generations rest in the family burying ground close by.

Maybe when the Henry, whose wife was Mary Old, was holding some festivity with blithe companions, the following was cut on a window pane in the parlor:

John Fortescue
Evelyn Byrd Chamberlyne,
February 1807.

In this parlor is a very handsome mantel, with accompanying woodwork in perfect taste. All the house is finished in the same style. It appears that every part of the building has been left without jarring attempt to modernize. On the rear was added, in the early nineteenth century, an ell. This was the kitchen and above was a bedroom, both reached only from the outside. In this bedroom the carving is lovelier than in any of the other mantels in the house. We believe that Endymion D. was a bachelor. Maybe this was his particular domain. We know that his father gave him the manor plantation, which in a few years he gave to his brother Henry T. Cornick.

From near the front door the steps go up, flight after flight, to the two little rooms under the roof, passing on the way two bedrooms and hall on the second floor. The porch is still preserved, the picket fence around the small yard, the dairy just back of the dwelling, seemingly no changes, other than the addition of the ell, have been made since Endymion Cornick built his home some one hundred and thirty-five or forty years ago.

So many people have asked if we found much of the original furniture in these old homes. Here we did, for the home has never gone out of the family. Mr. Julius Cornick has much of the original mahogany furniture in his little home down the road. There one finds the dining table with its two oval ends, six beautifully carved chairs, the side-

board; the tester bed and wardrobe are in the old house; in the little house is the bureau (the oldest style), the sewing table, brass candle stick (even the candle is in the holder as his mother arranged it), the family Bible (1838). And he loves them all.

The pictures tell you the rest of the architectural story of the home of this branch of the Cornick family.



Home of Capt. John Shepherd



Smokehouse at Shepherd House

Just a word about one other house in which a Cornick lived. She was Elizabeth Cornick, daughter of Horatio Cornick, and the wife of Capt. John Shepherd. She was dead by 1815 at the age of thirty-five.

Capt. John died in 1822. He was then fifty. He had married a second time. This wife's name was Jennet. His children were John C., to whom he devised his plantation; Lemuel Cornick Shepherd, to whom he devised a house and lot on Marriner Street in Norfolk; a daughter Elizabeth Frances; his son-in-law was a John James.

There is not much to tell you of this modest, but substantial home, other than what the pictures tell. The smoke house, with its whipsawed boards, is interesting. There is a fine spring about midway between the house and the road. The water is crystal clear and delightfully cool. This supplies the drinking water for the Whitehurst family now making their home where Capt. John and Elizabeth Cornick Shepherd lived.

CHAPTER X



CEAN storms with consequent tidal disturbances causing the shifting of sands have played queer tricks with the shore line of Princess Anne. Many, many years ago there used to be a Brinson's Inlet. This inlet was near Dam Neck. Today, to all intents and purposes as a water route, it is no more than a myth or legend. Mr. A. F. M. Burroughs, whose father, E. E. Burroughs, was so long a time county surveyor, tells us that he feels sure he could trace from the Fresh Ponds the course of what was Brinson's Inlet as it wound its way to the sea. Mr. Burroughs says so often as a boy he would paddle all around these waters in a boat, accompanying his father on a surveying expedition which covered the high land and marshes adjacent to the ponds. He has very definite recollections at even so recent a time, of certain depressions, indicative of an inlet hereabouts.

This inlet was evidently named for Thomas Brinson, the first of the name in these parts, who, making a will in 1675, names two sons, Matthew and John. In 1689 Matthew Brinson patented 388 acres in John James' line and near the land of Ed. Moore. Now we know that Ed. Moore was bounded on the east by Basnett's land. Basnett's patent was for a large tract described as being "on the Seaboard Side, at the head of the Great Ponds."

Matthew Brinson must have been delayed in

having his certificate for land acted upon, for his deed of gift to his brother John Brinson for 100 acres with a house in Dam Neck on the Fresh Pond is dated 1688. A gift of land is again recorded in the first deed book in Princess Anne in 1691. For this duplication there may be assigned two reasons: first, when the original deed was admitted to record in Lower Norfolk County, Matthew's grant was not then consummated; second, when Princess Anne was cut off from Lower Norfolk County it was a wise precaution (shall we say it was thrifty?) to have the deed a matter of record in the new county. From John, who made his will in 1737/8 to 1766 we do not find a conveyance of this tract. Therefore, when Hillary Brinson in that year makes a deed to John Morrisette for a tract of land with house on the Ponds in Dam Neck, we are sure it is the same place.

Under this John Morrisette's will (1793) the place was sold, but in a few years (1827) a John Morrisette again comes into possession by purchase. This John Morrisette was the grandfather of Mr. Kader Morrisette, who now makes his home on the adjoining farm with Mr. Peter Dyer. Mr. Morrisette says his father was born on the place in 1830. This is borne out by the inscription on the tomb. Mr. Morrisette further told us that it was a very, very old house when his grandfather bought it prior to the birth of his (Kader's) father. All of this the deed books show.

The house on the interior is in a style all its own, so far as architecture in Princess Anne goes. Before reading further look at the picture. In the

brick end the Flemish bond stands out sharply. It is easily seen that originally the pitch of the gambrel was more acute. There was once a small porch on the front. The house faces what used to be called Fresh Pond (or Salt Pond), now Lake Tecumseh.

Since from the date of the earliest grants in this neighborhood down to the latest deed, the one by which A. H. Grimstead became the owner in 1920, the Fresh Pond is a distinguishing landmark, it seems too bad to change it to Tecumseh. This name is too modern, nor does it belong to this locality, but rather to Ohio, where the Shawnee Indians lived. You recall that old Chief Tecumseh was born, we are told, in 1768, dying during the War of 1812. After Harrison suppressed the Indian uprising in Ohio, Tecumseh was put in command by the English of their Indian allies and given the title of brigadier-general. He was killed while fighting in Canada in 1813. Because with a new title the old chief of the Shawnees was fighting against the new Republic of the United States of



Brinson Home on Fresh (Salt) Pond

America is no reason why our Fresh Pond should change its name to do him honor.

There must have been at one time some garden, for you will see that five old box bushes are left standing in a row, running toward the pond. Four are evenly spaced, then there is a gap large enough to accommodate two other bushes equally distant each from the other, then there is the fifth bush.

As we said, there is no other similar interior in the county with which we may make comparison. The front door stands in the center with a window on each side. Entering here, there is one room nearly square. On the right of entrance a short, narrow, flight of steps goes up to a door, which gives entrance to a narrow platform on which the steps turn and continue to the room above. The platform is on a level with the window sill.

In the right end is the unusually broad chimney; that end is panelled. There are cunning little doors, one on each side, giving entrance to closets by the chimney. In each closet is a little window 15"x15".

The lintel in the chimney is a roughly hewn timber 18"x18" and 15' long. The ceiling of the room is guiltless of lath or plaster. The hewn beams have seen many, many coats of whitewash, as spring after spring brought the necessity for freshening up a bit after the use during the winter months of the old fireplace. Across these beams is laid the floor of the room above. Very wide floor boards, they are.

The exposed beams and the one room are the unique features.



Henry Brock Home

We are told by Mr. W. C. Brinson of Norfolk that the family came from Scotland. Surely there is no waste in material or in space in this Scotchman's house, built, we believe, in 1688 by Matthew Brinson and made a gift by him and his wife Margaret to his brother John "for the love and affection he bore him." For thus the first deed reads, but by looking a little farther we found John gave Matthew some acres also. After all then, this is really a true Scotch love story.

At not a great distance to the westward of the Ponds is the home known to this generation as Mr. Sandy Brock's. Two hundred years ago there was an Elizabeth Brock, who gave to her brother Henry Brinson 100 acres in Dam Neck—for the love and affection she bore him.

The story we shall tell you of this home of the Brocks came to us largely from Mrs. Claude Nimmo of Oceana. Mrs. Nimmo was Ella Whitehurst, her mother was Elizabeth Brock, one of two sisters whom her father in turn married.

The plantation came to the Brock family through marriage with the Shepherds. In 1720 Samuel Boush was escheator for Princess Anne. One hundred acres, formerly granted to Joseph Deserne, had escheated, and was now to be granted to Smith Shepherd. This, we believe, is the Smith Shepherd who married Frances, daughter of Lemuel Cornick and his wife who was Frances Attwood. Be this as it may, Mrs. Nimmo has the old grant, all yellow with age. It is dated at Williamsburg on March 12, 1739. William Gooch, Lieutenant Governor of Virginia, signed as witness.

Elizabeth Shepherd, granddaughter, we take it, of this Smith Shepherd, married Henry Brock in 1793, bringing with her these acres. The ceremony was performed by Rev. Anthony Walke. It is most probable that this year marks the date of the building of the oldest part of the house and the slave quarters. Mrs. Nimmo says she has always been told that the quarters belonged to the original house. The worn place under the closed door in-



Slave Quarters on Henry Brock Plantation

dicates the passing of many footsteps during the years.

Henry Brock and his wife Elizabeth had a son Henry who married Eliza Spratley in 1837. For this bride the house was remodeled, the new part (the front) being added. The children of the union were Lysander (Mr. Sandy), Thos. H., Charles S. (married Ella, daughter of William Nimmo), Elizabeth F., Eleanor F., Henrietta A. Elizabeth and Eleanor were the wives of Mr. Whitehurst.

Here we find another home which remained the family plantation for generations.

Turning from this home of the Brock's into the main road from Oceana to Nimmo Church, thence into the road to the present Court House, one passes the home of William Nimmo, whose wife Anne gave the land on which the church stands. This church acre is part of a larger tract which was devised to Anne by the will of Sarah James.

The Nimmo house was built about 1790. There was a William, son of William and Anne Nimmo,



William Nimmo Home



"Peter's House" near Princess Anne Court House

who was the father of Claude Nimmo and Ella Nimmo Brock. In this house, originally a gambrel, remodeled some fifty years ago to its present style, lived this branch of the Nimmo family of Princess Anne, until most recently. The yard trees are very lovely and make a satisfying setting for the house, which, though remodeled, has not lost in the process its comfortable and hospitable air. These were undoubtedly characteristics of our old Virginia homes.

Traveling on toward Princess Anne Court House one finds an old house built on land that once was a part of the Thomas Lovett estate, we believe. The house was probably built by a Lancaster Lovett a year or two before 1800. In 1803 it was his home. In 1840 it became the home of John Peters, whose son is the Rev. J. Sidney Peters of the Virginia Methodist Conference. This house was once the parsonage of Nimmo Church. For many years it was the home of Judge John J. Woodhouse. Now it is the property of George W. Bratten of Princess Anne.

The house has been added to at least twice. The oldest part is the corner nearest in the picture. Each addition has been done in a thoughtful way, in simplicity and good taste, making the composite seemingly a whole. Those of us who knew this as the Woodhouse home miss the rose garden of Mrs. Woodhouse. From no other garden have we ever seen a greater variety or more perfect specimens of each variety than she grew here.

There are two other homes at Princess Anne that must be told of together. One is now the home of Frank Kellam. It is the oldest of all the buildings hereabouts.

In 1790 Thomas Lovett had made a will. The plantation and manor house were devised to his son Thomas, the remaining acres to be divided between sons Randolph and Reuben. Reuben's are described as being near the swamp. This will was proved by Joshua and Daniel Whitehurst and John Lovett.



Reuben Lovett Home at Princess Anne Court House

This Reuben (1765-1819), added to his acres and built a house. He had a son Reuben (1801-1818), and a son Wilson H. C., whose wife was Jane. There was a daughter Amy who married Capt. William Whitehurst.

Now Captain William had a brother, James Murden Whitehurst, both were sons of Daniel. Here near the Court House is the home of Daniel Whitehurst, his acres joining Reuben Lovett's. From the Captain William Whitehurst line comes the late Judge Frank Whitehurst; from the James Murden line comes the late Mrs. John T. Woodhouse, whose daughter, Mrs. William Loftin Prince (Grace Woodhouse) now owns the homestead of the Whitehursts.

Francis Whitehurst was the father of Daniel. To him he devised the plantation and 150 acres in March, 1793. This year is coincident with the date etched on the chimney. However, this will was not proved until January 1, 1794. It may well be that Francis did the building. The other children of



James Murden Whitehurst Home, 1793

Francis were Batson, Tulley, and daughters Anne Land, Peggy, Betsy and Keziah Whitehurst.

The two houses are very similar in construction. Each has been added to, not once, but several times, during the passing years. In neither interior has there been much change.

The inclination here is to tarry and tell you more of these families. We must continually remind ourselves that this history is of houses. In a later chapter, where it is pertinent, we shall tell you more of the earlier members of the Lovett family and their family connections.

CHAPTER XI



YOU will recall that in a previous chapter we told you how an Anthony Fentress was paid by the vestry of Lynnhaven Parish in 1779, 20^l for the care of the chapel at Pungo. Rev. Robt. Dickson was the rector, the vestrymen were Capt. James Kempe, Col. Edward Hack Moseley, Sr., John Whitehurst, Capt. William Woodhouse, Sr., Thomas Old, Gent., Capt. Dennis Dawley, Thomas Reynolds Walker, Gent., Major Anthony Walke, Anthony Walke, Gent., John Ackiss, Gent., Col. Edward Hack Moseley, Jr., in 1772, who declared the parochial chapel called Pungo Chapel, was in a ruinous state, the foundations being dangerous, thus making it impossible that the building be used for the assembling of a congregation for worship. Accordingly this august assemblage of titled members, constituting a vestry of the said parish of Lynnhaven, purchased from Anthony Fentress and his wife Anne one acre of ground, the price being 5^l. The acre was a part of a tract Mr. Fentress had purchased in 1758 from Charles Cason.

We suppose Anthony Fentress built his house, there being no evidence to the contrary. Surely he was living on the place and in this house in 1772. It is now the property and home of Mr. W. G. Eaton. At one time a member of the Capps family made his home here.

The first mention we have found of Pungo is in a

grant to George Fowler in 1675 for 670 acres called "Meechepongo," lying easterly from the North River. In the will of Capt. Adam Keeling, 1683, he devises "unto my daughter Elizabeth Keeling a pcell. of land about three or foure hundred acres by mee entered wth. Rights toward ye Southward neere Matchepongo, and doe desire ye Same bee surveyed and pattented in my said daughter Elizabeths name." We find this patent was granted, as Capt. Adam desired, in the name of Elizabeth Keeling in 1685, containing 350 acres "in the woods towards the North Branch of Currituck at the land of Henry Woodhouse." In 1688 John Richardson patented 819 acres, "lying in the woods toward matchepongo, Beginning by the Eastern Pocoson, thence near to the land of Col. Mason, thence to his land . . . &c." So you see somebody did live in and near Pungo at a very early time.

In a deed made in 1871 the sixty acres with the house built we believe by Anthony Fentress prior to 1772, now the home of Mr. Eaton, is described as lying adjacent to Capp's Shop and Pungo Chapel, bounded by the main road and the lands of J. W. Lane. Out in a field near Mr. Eaton's, not many years ago, the foundation of the old chapel could still be seen. It seems that the spot should certainly be marked before it is too late. The chapel acre was taken into a tract of land very many years ago, and record made.

This old house has one brick end of Flemish bond. By the front door one enters a hall, there are two rooms on the left. The house has been added to, the interior greatly changed. From the



Anthony Fentress Home, across the road from site of Pungo Chapel

road one would suppose it were a very modern home. There is a windowless cellar under one end. The yard is large. Its firmness shows it has long been used only as a yard. The picture gives a view from the side looking toward the Pungo Ridge Road.

The land in Princess Anne runs in ridges, with oftentimes swamps between. These ridges were named Poplar, Black Walnut, Chincapin, Long Ridge, Templemans, Possum, Beech, Brushby, Bullock's, Eastern Ridges, Cow Quarter, Porters, Rattlesnake and Pungo. These are names we find in the earliest records. For the most part these ridges are exceedingly fertile. Particularly is this true of Pungo Ridge.

Today Mr. John Anthony Fentress, one of the county's oldest citizens, lives on a farm that many people say is the *creme de la creme* as goes farms. For many years it was known as the Land Farm. This is the reason.

In 1789 Hillary Land married Amey Henley. In 1793 Ree Land and Mary Anne, his wife, gave to their son Hillary, for the love and affection they bore him, 149 acres, described as being the remainder of a tract Ree Land Sr., purchased of his brother Jeremiah. We judge that Hillary built his house soon after the gift was made.

Amey was dead before 1808 and in this year Hillary married Elizabeth Gardner; she who had been the widow Huggins. This story we have told you. In 1822 Hillary Land made his will. To his son Andrew he devised the plantation in Pungo, given Hillary by his father, except that portion on the west of the road. Also he devised to Andrew a 30-acre tract Hillary had purchased called "Griffin's Pasture" adjoining. He bequeathes to Andrew all the furnishings in the Pungo plantation that he had left there. Evidently Amey was Andrew's mother. The plantation he bought at London Bridge, after marrying the widow, he devised to



J. A. Fentress Home on Pungo Ridge

his son Peter Land. You see now why Mr. Fentress' farm was called the Land farm.

This house was once the home of Dennis Capps, father of Vann and Enoch Capps. It was the home of Capt. Solomon Caffee during the War of Secession. Beside Captain Caffee (1814-1867) is buried in the family burying ground in the yard, John W. Caffee (1837-1861). Here also lived and are here buried Caleb C. Chaplin (1801-1859) and his wife Sarah A. (1806-1857), mother and father of Wilson and Caleb Chaplin.

There are nearly as many "Necks" in Princess Anne as there are "Ridges." From Pungo Ridge let us return to the Little Neck road that led down to the Glebe. After turning from the Virginia Beach Boulevard into the Little Neck road, if one be observant, may be seen on the right, well back from the road, a house most probably built prior to 1773. In that year Robert Williamson sold to James Moore his plantation of 276 acres.

In 1799 James Moore devises to his son Kader a half of the acres, the residue to his son Joshua. In 1830 Kader Moore, whose wife was Frances Fentress, daughter of John Fentress, devises to his daughter Fanny, wife of James F. Henderson, his home place. In five years the Hendersons sell to Mr. Norris.

George Norris was the son of Thomas Norris. The other sons and daughters were William, Molly Buskey, Sowell and Peggy Burgess.

During his lifetime George Norris acquired quite an estate as well as quite a family. At the time of the death of George Norris, Sr., his wife was

Elizabeth, the children were Margaret, whose husband was William Braithwaite (there were three Braithwaite grandchildren), George, Joseph, and Martha Ann, wife of Amos Ives. Bartholomew Smith, a near neighbor, is the witness to the will.

Here it would seem that the widow Elizabeth Norris lived with the Ives, or vice versa, for in 1848 Mrs. Norris made a will, probated in 1861, in which she devised all her estate to her daughter Martha Ann Ives. For eight years more the Ives family continued to live here, finally in 1869 selling to James H. Burgess. Because Mr. Burgess continued to remain on the farm during forty years at a time when property was changing hands so rapidly (the changes due no doubt to the Reconstruction Days and all the havoc they wrought) accounts for the calling of this home by the name of the Burgesses. However today there are several prominent members of the Ives family who look back to this place as the home of their grand- and great - grandfath-



North End of Julian Powell Home

ers. Mr. Julien Powell now owns the farm, making his home on it.

So much for the history of the ownership! Let us now say something of the house and its manner of building.

There is one brick end of Flemish bond, with one chimney. This is in the north end of the house. The old bricks are almost entirely covered with a mass of ivy. The front door gives entrance to a hall, running back along the south side to a back door opposite the front. On the southside also is the stairway which turns on a platform over the back door, a few more steps and the second floor is reached. On the left of the front entrance



Mantelpiece in Julia Powell's Home
in Little Neck

are two rooms. The chimney is of triangular form, thus furnishing sufficient space in each room for a fireplace. The picture will help visualize this form of construction. The mantelpiece is in the front room. The rooms are not large, nor are the fireplaces large. There is a very nice chairboard around the rooms and in the hall.

There are many interesting stories of war days recounted by this generation of the Ives. It has not been our good fortune to hear them from a member of the family. Mrs. Powell keeps the yard a mass of bloom. It must be a gratification to those who feel so near the place, on account of associations of other days, to have the home loved and continually beautified.

In the genealogical notes just given you we mentioned William Braithwaite, who married Margaret Norris. Near Eastern Shore Chapel is the home of a branch of the Braithwaite family, which home has been in this family a long time.

In 1795 James Braithwaite bought from William Brock, Sr., and his wife Frances, administrators on the estate of William Brock, Jr., 73 acres, it being the land young William Brock had bought from George Reynolds Walker, part of a larger tract George Walker got from his father, Thomas Reynolds Walker. Before 1826 Mr. Braithwaite had bought the remainder of the Walker land,



Braithwaite Home

bringing his total to 257½ acres. In this last named year the plantation with 12½ acres of Lamont's pasture were transferred on the land books from James to his son William Braithwaite. The house has been added to and thereby almost doubled. The end on the right of the front door is the new part.

Nearly a hundred years after James Braithwaite built his house his son William devised the same plantation to his son James Braithwaite and his daughter, Mrs. M. T. Ives. In the meantime Mr. William Braithwaite had bought and made his home farther down on the Great Neck road and on the Eastern Branch of Lynnhaven River.

Of all the homes that must have been built on Little Creek, only one is left. That has been added to on the front during the years since it was the home of Joseph Powers before 1800. Mr. Powers had a daughter Priscilla who in selling her girlhood home to Abel Kellam in 1815, reserved the family burying place. In this graveyard today there are only two stones, each one marks the grave of a wife of this Abel Kellam. The first wife was Frances, daughter of James Jones; the second was Elizabeth, daughter of Erasmus Hayes.

Mr. Kellam devised the acres south of the road with the buildings thereon to his nephew, James Drayton; the acres north of the road he devised to his granddaughter, Sarah Frances Taylor, daughter of Burton Taylor and Nancy Kellam.

In 1865 the part of the plantation on which the house stands was bought by Reuben Gornto.



House on Gornto Farm, Little Creek

More recently it has been the home of the Harry Gornto branch of the family.

There are many home sites in and around Little Creek, but with this exception, the houses have all disappeared. To the west of this plantation were the Talbot lands; also in the neighborhood and nearer the creek was the William Holmes estate. The graveyard of this family still has many interesting tombs. A pine thicket has grown up all around this spot. Elizabeth Holmes married Joshua Fentress. There was a James Warren who lived at Little Creek when these other families did in the first quarter of the nineteenth century. Mr. Warren's wife was Mary Boush.

And so one could continue, both forward and backward as to date, telling of people who had made their home on Little Creek and along the main road which led from Little Creek Bridges to Tanners Creek Cross Roads.

CHAPTER XII



IN THE map division of the Library of Congress at Washington there are several very old and very interesting maps of Virginia. On these maps may be traced the progress made in discovery and development of this territory beginning with 1580 when Florida is designated with a vast unnamed area to the north. The next map is dated as of 1585. On this sheet record is made of Virginia as it was believed to be at the time Sir Walter Raleigh undertook colonization in the New World at Roanoke Island. Next we see the John Smith map of 1612, showing that very little was known of this section of Virginia. The only names mentioned in these parts are Morton's Bay and Chesapioc Bay. The word Morton is written about where one would look for Lynnhaven River, Chesapioc at about the place one would expect to see Little Creek. In 1630 a map designates two Kings houses, Apasus, near the mouth of Lynnhaven, as we know it, and farther up on a deep bend in the river is Chesapioc. These then are the two Indian villages of which we may be certain as existing within the boundaries of Princess Anne County.

At the clerk's office in Princess Anne is found the authority for the following facts concerning the laying out of a town by Argall Thorowgood in the year 1695. The town was located on the south side of the mouth of Lynnhaven River. (This would

probably be in the neighborhood of what is now Lake Joyce.) The town site covered sixty acres, these acres being a part of the patent of 5,350 acres granted to Argall's grandfather, Adam (1) Thorowgood, on September 19, 1637, and by the last will and testament of his (Argall's) father, Col. Adam (2) Thorowgood, devised to the said Argall Thorowgood.

The sixty acres was laid out in lots a little over two acres each. The deed reserves streets, market place, and other conveniences. The names of the streets were King, Queen, and Princess. The following is a list of the names of the purchasers of the lots: Robert Thorowgood, John Moncrief, Adam Thorowgood, Eben Ezer Taylor, Jno. Richerson, William Moseley, George Poole, Peter Malbone, Adam Hayes, Adam Keeling, William Capps, Jacob Johnson, Francis Bond, William Cornick, James Lamont, Thomas Benson, John Mackie, Jno. Moseley, Francis Morse, William Haslett, Robert Adams, Edward Attwood.

While scanning the further title of the lots as they passed to new owners, we never came across any reference to buildings having been erected thereon. In a few years the lots were owned by some one, or two, persons. Before 1771 James Tenant owned a number of them, for in his will made in that year, he says, "All my land at the Bayside called Lynnhaven Town" shall be rented until William Thorowgood, orphan of Argall, comes of age.

It may well be that in the earliest days the colonists were more or less centered near Lynn-

haven, making somewhat of a village. Certainly here in 1655, "upon the land or plantation of William Johnson, being M^{ers} Yardleys land scituate on Linhaven River to be the place both for Church & Markett for Linhaven parish two myles in length Northward & Southward and noe further," the commissioners appointed by the court made this designation.

During the years wherein much development was taking place on the Eastern Branch, when Norfolk Town had been laid out with Maj. Anthony Lawson and Capt. William Robinson as feoffees for the sale of lots, when the court house for the new made county of Princess Anne was ordered to be built at John Keeling's plantation at London Bridge (this was rescinded), we say, it may be that Argall laid out his town hoping to stem the tide which seemed to be sweeping inland away from the more exposed waters towards a more protected roadstead.

Of this town today there is no ruin by which the spot may be more definitely located.

In a previous chapter we have told of New Town, the next town in chronological order to rise, flourish for a time, then cease to be. And so we come to Kempsville, which followed New Town as the urban center of the county.

Before the incorporation of Kempsville the place was known as Kemp's Landing. There was a deep water landing here with a drawbridge; tobacco warehouses flourished on the banks of the canal. The drawbridge and warehouses were in use within the memory of persons now living. Beside the

family of George Kempe, we find Anthony Walke on his splendid plantation "Fairfield," George Logan, the Tory, keeping a drygoods and wet goods store, William White, Jacob and Edward Valentine, James Kempe, Dr. Thomas Kempe, Peter Singleton, William Carraway, Frederick Boush, Mitchel Thorowgood, Capt. Samuel Tenant, John Michael Kenline, and others. Of the families just named, there is only one that would appear today on the roster of the citizens of the village. That name is Carraway. However, there are several extremely interesting buildings remaining through all these years.

We know that Kempsville was the scene of a skirmish during the Revolution. Recently the Old Donation Chapter D. A. R. has erected a granite marker, recording the date, etc. During that time the citizenry was divided in its allegiance. Several prominent men were called up and closely questioned by the Committee of Safety concerning their activities, and more especially concerning a visit to Benedict Arnold when Arnold was in the city of Portsmouth.

George Logan, a Scotchman, left the country for all time. There is a record at the court house of his inquisition. His wife, Isabell Campbell, remained in the community and made an effort to regain some of his forfeited estate.

It was not at Kempsville, however, that the first blood was shed in Princess Anne in the attempt of Englishmen to establish for themselves in the New World a country whose principle of government was to become a government of the people, by

the people, for the people. When, from the Sarah Constant, the Goodspeed and the Discovery, that band of adventurers came ashore to reconnoitre near Cape Henry, when strawberries were ripe in April, when also they learned from the feasting Indians of that succulent bivalve, now the far-famed Lynnhaven oyster, a skirmish took place between this band and the native redskins. Blood was shed, but loss of life is not recorded.

Recently there has passed away in Kempsville one of its oldest citizens, Mr. John I. Herrick. Fortunately for this record just shortly before his passing, it was our delight to sit with him by the side of the stove in his country store at Kempsville and hear him tell of his recollections of notable personages who had called the village home. He told us of young Peter Singleton, of his wealth, his extravagance in dressing, his recklessness at cards. Of course young Mr. Singleton was not living during Mr. Herrick's lifetime, but he knew people who had seen Peter Singleton decked out in velvet suit with lace at the sleeve and buttons of solid gold.

Mr. Herrick also told us of "Fairfield," the almost baronial establishment of the Anthony Walkes, of the hugeness of the parlor, of the coat-of-arms over the handcarved mantelpiece in the dining room, and then of that day—that windy day in March, maybe in 1865, certainly years ago—when a spark from out the chimney snuggled down in the shingles of the roof, seeking surcease from that buffeting, billowing March wind, became the spark that caused the manor house of the Anthony Walkes of Virginia, in the ancient country of Prin-

cess Anne, to become a mass of crumbling bricks, dusted over with ashes from the very mantelpiece and its companions, so recently the decorations of the spacious rooms of Fairfield.

Mr. Herrick faltered; said he, "I've been in all the rooms. I was at the funeral of David Walke. You should have seen the crowds that came from all the county, from Norfolk!—But I don't like to talk about it—The wind's not blowing today, is it?—That's David Walke's tombstone you see standing so tall up there in the graveyard." . . . And so we went out into the glorious sunshine of a well nigh perfect day, just such a day as we like to picture in thinking of the first landing at Cape Henry.

Tradition has it that the "Victory Ball" was danced at the house on the corner, lately occupied by Mr. Herrick. Tradition also says that the very imposing brick house, set back in a grove of trees on the left of the present boulevard, was the home of George Logan. It is said that here Logan entertained Lord Dunmore after the firing of Norfolk. This entertainment would be the last time a royal governor of Virginia, as such, was entertained here or elsewhere. The county records of land transfers do not bear out the fact that this house was Logan's home. On the contrary the chain of title proves other ownerships. True it is that Logan lived in the village, that he kept a wet and dry goods store, that he owned a tenement and lots, but these were to the northwest of this location, his house being probably nearer the water. And true it may be that in Kempsville final hospitality was

extended to Virginia's last royal governor, but the scene was not laid in the particular house erroneously called Logan's home.

In 1750 Anthony Walke sold a certain lot to one Samuel Tenant, a mariner. Later Capt. Tenant purchased other lots from Mr. Walke. They were a part of Fairfield. The lots were subject to the making of two streets in the proposed town of Kempsville. Before the actual incorporation, whereby in 1783 Kempe's Landing acquired the more dignified title of Kempsville, these lots again changed hands. Probably the disturbing and distressing years of Revolution delayed the incorporating. Be this as it may, Capt. Tenant's heirs sold the lots to Peter Singleton for 67 pounds and a few shillings in March, 1777.

Now above the basement window on the right, near the front door, in a brick, is "April 19, 1779." Maybe that window marked the progress Mr. Singleton had made in his building. By will in 1790 Mr. Singleton left the mansion, for such it was and is, to his son Isaac. Isaac married Sukey Thorowgood. Their son, Peter Singleton, inherited quite a nice estate from his Thorowgood kin as well as from his father, but lost it nearly all about the time of building the large house on the Bayville farm, now owned by Mr. Burruss. This was in 1828.

From the time Isaac Singleton sold the house at Kempsville it changed hands often. In the early part of the nineteenth century it was the home of Mrs. Anne Walke, wife of Anthony (3) Walke, the Episcopal clergyman. At one time it was the home of Dr. Oscar Baxter; later a member of the wealthy

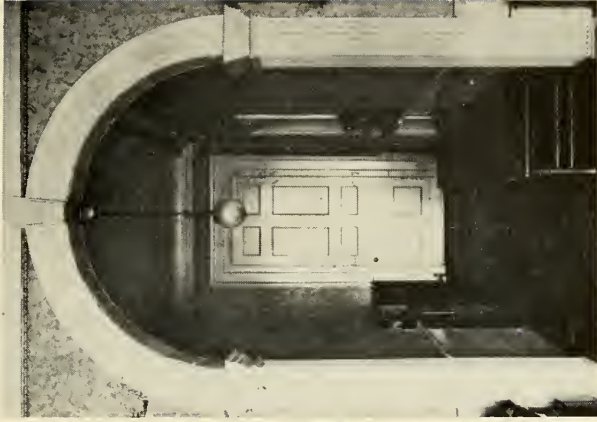
Garrison family owned the place; for a number of years it was the home of the Miles Selden family; for the past quarter of a century Dr. R. E. Whitehead, member of one of Princess Anne's oldest families, has made it his home.

In the title chain we can not find that Logan ever held title. It is true that in a description of the property in one of the deeds we find the Logan lot, or lots, as a boundary. From the price Mr. Peter Singleton paid therefor in comparison with the later selling price, we feel justified in believing that Mr. Singleton was the builder of "Pleasant Hall"—such is the name according to the deeds.

"Pleasant Hall" is Georgian architecture of the second period. The bonding is Flemish. The interior is one of the handsomest, if not the handsomest, left in the county. At one time we are told there were wings on each side. There is substantiating evidence to this on the right outside wall. In fact an old resident remembers the wings. It is



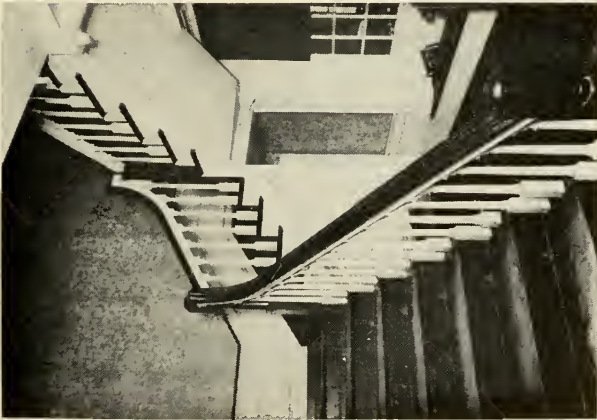
Peter Singleton Home at Kempsville, "Pleasant Hall"



Hall



Parlor
at "Pleasant Hall"



Stairway

said that as a former owner (whose name has not appeared in this text) had need for ready cash, bricks from the wings or from the fence, would be torn out and sold.

On entering the front door, there are two rooms on the right, the front one presenting handsome wainscoting. On the left is an exhibition of even more elaborate woodwork by way of cupboard, panels, and pilasters topped with Corinthian capitals. Midway the hall, which runs all way through from front to back door, is a very graceful arch, hiding from view the stairway on the left. The stair is easy of ascent and comports entirely with the stateliness of the whole. Just in the rear of the stair is a doorway, leading into a tiny bedchamber, known as the governess room. Dr. Whitehead says he has been told that it was through this room entrance was had to one wing. That wing housed the school rooms. Opposite the stairway is a door entering the rear room previously referred to as being one of two rooms on the right. In the fireplace in this room is a very old pair of fire dogs. Dr. Whitehead says they came from Rolleston, the home of the Moseleys. Practically all of the interior has remained unchanged and has been well cared for. Of course there is a new roof. That is to be expected, but in the attic one has a rare treat in viewing the supporting timbers. The pictures we offer are recent and give an accurate idea of the whole place.

While "Pleasant Hall" was and is a show place, just up the country road a short distance to the right and beyond the Kempsville High School is a

little gem of a house. It is of that early story-and-a-half, sharp roof type. The old hand molded bricks are laid by the Flemish method, now, however, not noticeable because the bricks have been white-washed. This little house stands in the shade of an old elm tree that is sixteen feet in circumference. The sturdy old elm and the sturdy little house are all that is left to us of the home of Anthony Walke's plantation "Fairfield." Just across the ravine outside the fence on a high spot are the rapidly disintegrating tombstones of several generations of the Walke family. It would not take a very vivid imagination to see, as in days gone by, a stream of water running through this ravine converting it into a tributary of the Eastern Branch.

When we first visited the little whitewashed house we were told that it was the quarter kitchen of "Fairfield"—all that was left of the buildings as they were in the days when that plantation vied with Lawson Hall, Greenwich and Rolleston as dispenser of hospitality in that part of the county. After looking at the picture carefully, and after hearing about the interior of the house, see if you believe it was built for a quarter kitchen.

In the first place the roof is very steep. Notice that windows have been let into the roof on one side. The other side, we take it, is as it was originally. On the interior there is the usual 8' hall with one room on each side. The stairway goes up from the hall. There are two rooms upstairs under the roof. The two chimneys are in the east and west ends of the house. The fireplace in the east room downstairs measures 34" in width and 32½"



Little House and Elm tree on Fairfield



Front View of Little House on Fairfield

in height. This is the larger one. Now just a word about the history of the place.

Thomas Walke, the emigrant, came to the Virginia Colony from the Barbadoes in 1662. In 1689 he married Mary Lawson, the daughter of Lt. Col. Anthony Lawson. The children of this union were Anthony, Thomas and Mary. It would seem that the early colonists were not long lived,

therefore both men and women often married more than once. With the proclivity there was toward the wedded state, it is surprising that Mr. Walke remained so long a time in the colony before becoming a benedict.

After about four years of wedded bliss we find in 1693/4 his will probated. The home plantation was devised to his son Thomas, to son Anthony was devised "Possum Neck" adjoining Thomas Dixon's with the proviso, however, that this plantation should be sold and with the proceeds some suitable plantation be bought for son Anthony. Accordingly in 1697 Lt. Col Anthony Lawson and Mr. Edward Moseley, Sr., executors of Thomas Walke's will, purchased from "Francis Tully Emperor, formerly known as Francis, the land bought of John Porter, Sr., August 2, 1691, together with houses, orchards, gardens, fences, pasture, cleare ground and woodland." The purchase price was 150 pounds sterling.

The deed by which Francis Tully Emperor acquired this land is in itself of interest for two reasons. In the first place the deed recites that Emperor was late of the Barbadoes, but was now residing on the "Eastern Branch of the Elizabeth River, Linhaven Pish." Fairfield was made up from a part of two patents, one patent taken up by Col. John Sidney in 1647 and subsequently sold by him to John Porter, Sr., and Jr. The second patent was taken up by the Brother John Porter, Sr., in 1663. The second interesting fact, then, is that we run across two brothers by the same name, John Porter. They are differentiated by the use of senior

and junior. There are other instances recorded wherein a similar thing occurred in other families.

John Porter, Sr., in 1691, made a deed to Emperor for the major part of the 300-acre patent and for a part of the 350-acre patent, with "wood land, clear ground, timber, houses, orchards, gardens, fences, waters," &c. It is our belief that this little house was on the property when John Porter sold to Emperor, or that Francis Tully built the house when he bought the place in 1691. And further we believe that most probably this little house was used as an office, lodge, or coachman's house after the building of the manor house on Fairfield. It does not seem reasonable to think that an estate of the elegance, wealth and importance of Fairfield could, or would, content itself with a fireplace 34"x32½" for cooking purposes. And now what do you think, after hearing all the facts that we have been able to assemble?

So much has been written of the Walke family it is a twice-told tale to recount more of its history in this volume. With your indulgence, however, we will briefly rehearse a few facts that serve to connect Fairfield and Pleasant Hall. Anthony Walke, the first, was dead in 1768, at the age of seventy-six. These facts we found from the inscription on his tomb, although the greater part of the inscription could not be read. The stone slab is broken in three pieces and the supporting columns have fallen apart. This Anthony married Anna Lee Armistead, daughter of William Armistead. Their son was Anthony (2) who was twice married, first to Jane Randolph, whose mother was a Bolling.

Their son Anthony (3) was the Episcopal clergyman. And his wife Anne owned and lived at "Pleasant Hall." In 1757 Anthony (2) married Mary Moseley, daughter of Ed. Hack and Mary Bassett Moseley. Their children were William, Edward Hack, John Bassett, Mary, Francis, and Anna. For some reason Col. Anthony (2) was buried at "Greenwich," a family home of the Moseleys.

From the *Antiquary*, volume 2, page 17, we quote the Lynnhaven Parish Register for the record of the recommendation, induction, and resignation of Anthony (3) as minister of the parish.

PRINCESS ANNE COUNTY
LYNNHAVEN PARISH

At a Vestry held the 29th of March 1788

Present

John Hancock	}	Church Wardens
Peter Singleton		
Joel Cornick	}	Vestrymen
John Cornick		
and Dennis Dawley		
Thomas Walke		
Edw. H. Moseley		

Ordered that Anthony Walke, Gentleman, who wishes to obtain letters of Ordination, be recommended to the Right Revd. Bishop White, in the following words

Commonwealth of Virginia

At a Vestry held for the Parish of Lynnhaven in the County of Princess Anne the 29th day of March 1788

We the subscribers Vestrymen of the said Parish beg leave to recommend to the Right Revd. Bishop White, Anthony Walke, Gent. as a person of probity and good demeanor, who wishes to obtain Letters of Ordination and hereby Certify that on the sixth day of May next there will

be a vacancy in the said Parish for a minister of the Episcopal Church and we are willing to induct the said Anthony Walke into the same when ordained. (Here follow the names of the vestrymen.)

PRINCESS ANNE COUNTY
LYNHAVEN PARISH

At a Vestry held the 3d. of July 1788

Present

John Hancock	}	Church Wardens
Peter Singleton		
Joel Cornick	}	Vestrymen
John Cornick		
Cason Moore		
Edwd. Hack Moseley		
Dennis Dawley		

The Revd. Mr. Anthony Walke being present, and desiring to be inducted into the Parish, aforesaid did subscribe the following writing

I do hereby agree to be conformable to the Doctrine, Discipline, and Worship of the Protestant Episcopal Church, and do stipulate that I hold the appointment of Incumbent in the said Parish, subject to removal, upon the determination of the Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church in this State

Anthony Walke

The Revd. Mr. Anthony Walke having produced his Episcopal Letters of Ordination from the Right Revd. Bishop White of the State of Pennsylvania, is accordingly inducted Minister of the Episcopal Church in this Parish.

In Vestry Octr. 10th 1800

Present John Hancock, Edward H. Moseley, Lemuel Cornick, Dennis Dawley, Thomas Lawson, James Robinson, & Erasmus Haynes Esqs.

Anthony Walke, Incumbent of the Parish of Lynhaven came into the Vestry Room & resigned his office as minister of the same.

It is interesting to know that these Letters of Ordination came from the Right Revd. Bishop White of the State of Pennsylvania, because at the time of Mr. Walke's ordination, Bishop White was the only bishop of the Church of England residing in the new Republic.

Returning to the house of the "Victory Ball"—this is the site of Frederick Boush's lot in Kempsville. In his will he devised this lot he bought of Keys to his granddaughter, Elizabeth Walke Boush. Frederick Boush and Peter Singleton were next door neighbors, their gardens joining.

Before 1699 Maximillian Boush (the first of the family in this section) the elder, was in the county. His plantation was on Bennetts Creek. This, in 1728, he devised to his son Samuel Boush. To his son Maximillian, he devised his plantation called "Harnets."

There was a Sarah Boush who made a will in 1733 devising thereby her manor plantation



"Victory Ball" House on Frederick Boush lot

whereon she lived, with swamp land adjoining the land of her deceased brother Horatio Woodhouse, to her son Samuel; to her son Maximillian, her plantations called Creedles and Courtneys. In each devise she reserved to her husband his life estate.

Maximillian Boush II married Elizabeth Wilson, as his widow she married Thomas Thelaball. Maximillian II was the father of Frederick Boush; he was also the father of Elizabeth who married Gershom Nimmo. As the widow of Nimmo in 1766 she married Jacob Hunter.

Maximillian Boush (1) was Queen's Attorney of the county courts of Norfolk, Princess Anne and Nansmond. There is a record of the gentlemen justices of Princess Anne sitting "y^e 17th 9^{br} 1708" for laying of the county levy. One item reads:

Princess Anne County is Debtor
To M^r Maxm^{ll} Boush for being Queens
Atty^y agt Sherrwood
(Tobacco) 500

This was, of course, when Grace was tried as a witch.

From the appearance of the house (Fred. Boush) today, we feel sure that so much has been rebuilt that the picture gives no conception of how it appeared when the famous ball was danced. Even the chimneys are covered with stucco, so one may not say authoritatively of the brick work.

Just back of the Singleton's and Boush's was a street, running from the road (Bayside Road, passing Donation) in a westerly direction to a second street, running north and south from the



Baptist Parsonage at Kempsville

Main Street, or road to Norfolk, on the southern end, the Spring Branch at the northern end. Across the north and south street to the west were the lots with tenements, wet and dry goods store of George Logan. Facing Logan's lots is the part of Mr. Singleton's lots, in the rear of his house, which later he sold for the "Public Lott." Adjoining this, still farther to the east, touching the road to Donation and in the rear of Boush, is located the lot, or lots, whereon "Billy White" kept tavern. It is said that a brick walk ran the length of this street from the court house to the tavern. Your imagination will not lead you astray in your surmises. On this lot, or a part of it, today is the Baptist parsonage. How times do change! Again we do not believe that the present building has more than a small part of the original incorporated in it. The two chimneys, one on each end, are of Flemish bond only to the point above the breast where the weathering of the first setoff occurs.

On the lot that Peter Singleton sold to the county

still stand the court house and jail that were built at that time. We have a theory of the progression of the succession of court houses that perhaps is not orthodox. We shall tell you what we found in the records.

In the beginning let us tell you that we did not examine each separate-court entry during every year. We picked entries at random, here and there.

In 1640 a court was sitting for Lower Norfolk County at the home of William Shipp. This place is noted similarly on more than one occasion during that year.

- In 1642 at William Shipp's
- 1643 at Linhaven
- 1644 at Ensign Thomas Lambert's
- 1645 at Thomas Mear's
- 1655 at Edward Hall's
- 1657 at Mr. Edward's
- 1659 at Savill Gaskin's
- 1660 at Moses Lynton's
- 1661 at Thomas Harding's
- 1661 at John Godfrey's

In 1666 vestries of both parishes, Elizabeth River and Lynnhaven, are ordered to meet at the court house. Where this was, we do not know. When Princess Anne became a county in 1691 the court house was ordered to be built at John Keeling's plantation at London Bridge. The next year this order was rescinded and the building was ordered to be erected at the Brick Church. The New Brick Church (Donation) was near Cattayle Creek, a branch of Bennetts Creek, near

the ferry. By 1753 the Court was moved to New Town.

When the Court first came to sit at Kempsville the house of George Logan was used. A levy was laid at the December, 1778, session of the Court for fixing up and making convenient Logan's dry goods store for use as a court house and a part of the wet goods store for the jail, to be used until such places could be built. We could find no Court Order for the building of the old court house one finds today in Kempsville. It is of Flemish bond, built to the full height of two stories, but with a gallery. This may have been changed on the interior when it became the Baptist Church some years after the buildings were erected at the present Princess Anne. That the old court house was completed before July, 1789, we know, for that is the date on which Mr. Singleton made his deed to the gentlemen justices for a certain lot opposite Jacob Valentine (this had been Logan's we believe) "on a part of which stands said court house." The



Court House at Kempsville, built prior to 1787

price was 20£. However, as early as 1784 the lot was referred to as the "Public Lott."

The first jail at Kempsville was built of wood, according to an order of February 15, 1782. This order was changed a month later. Instead of two rooms above and two below, the whole 30'x20', with brick chimney in the center, the new Order called for a 16' square room above and below, with brick chimney in one end, fireplace in each room. At this time the court house had not been built, for there was a levy of 3,000 pounds of tobacco for rent, and an additional levy for repairs to the court house.

It would not appear that this wooden jail was effective as such. There are repeated Court Orders for repairs, for reinforcing the windows, &c.; also day and night a guard was employed at nine pounds of tobacco for each detail, whether day or night. This jail burned, for there is an Order for salvaging the nails, &c. therefrom. The following record tells the rest of the story:

At a court of quarterly session continued and held at the Courthouse for the County of Princess Anne the 16th day of May, 1787.

Ordered that a jail be built at Kempsville of Brick 24 feet long and 32 feet wide, the walls of which to be two feet thick till carried up four to the top of the first floor and 10 inches afterwards; and 20 feet high from the foundation, which shall be one foot under ground; That the jail shall be divided into four apartments: viz. 2 rooms below and two above: That a wall like that above mentioned shall be run up between the front and back rooms quite throughout the house and another between the back rooms and a passage which is to be left six feet wide, That a narrow Partition



Old jail building at Kempsville, 1787

shall be raised between the front Rooms and the said passage: That a chimney be built in the end of the House with four fire places properly secured with Iron grates or Bars, That 2 Windows 2 feet square be made in the back lower Room and very well secured with Iron bars: and two in the back upper Room secured in like manner: That two Windows shall be in each Front Room containing twelve panes of glass each eight by ten: That the back room below shall be lined doubly with oak Plank 2 inches thick and ceiled overhead with the same kind and nailed to the satisfaction of the Trustees appointed to conduct the Business: That the Three Floors of the two back Rooms shall be of two Inch oak Plank, the Sleepers 12 inches deep, the joist 9 inches deep, all placed very near together and nailed to the satisfaction of the said Trustees. That the Building shall have two outside doors and five inside Doors according to the Plan annexed, and shall be covered with a Square Roof ranging with that of the Court House, consisting of large Scantling Inch Plank and Heart Shingles, That the front Rooms shall be finished in a plain manner with Laths, Plaister and agreeable to the Directions of the Trustees: and that the House shall be furnished with locks and hinges Paint and every thing necessary according to the Directions of the Trustee: That if any part of the Building shall be extended

to where there is a Pond in the Public ground, the Wall shall be founded in the bottom of the said Pond, That the said Pond shall be filled up; That a pair of stairs shall run up from the lower Floor to the upper Rooms, That the Front Windows shall be secured by Iron Grates.

That a Brick Wall of 50 feet Square reckoning the Front and East end of the jail as part of the said Square be Built, That it be twelve feet from the surface of the ground and one foot under neath and of the same thickness as the jail wall and that the Top be secured by Iron Spikes in the best manner that can be secured by the Trustees.

That wherever the said wall shall strike or run through the Pond or Clay Hole, The foundation thereof shall begin at the bottom of the Pond.

Thos. Walke, Jno. Cornick, Thos. Kempe and Henry Kellam Gent., are appointed Trustees to carry the aforesaid Building into Execution, and that they set it up in a Public manner to the lowest bidder, after advertising it three weeks in the Norfolk and Portsmouth Journal.

The jail became a school (public and private) house. More recently it has been converted into a most comfortable and attractive dwelling, the property of Mrs. Alfriend (Miriam Whitehead).

There was a puzzling situation that confronted us in placing the date of the building of the jail, that is before we searched the records. For this reason we have given you the detailed story. The bricks are bonded by the English method, which, we are told, went out of vogue by 1700. Indeed during the past summer (1930) a connoisseur of early American architecture, while driving through the village was caught by this one house. As an authority he placed the building prior to 1700. See how easy it is to be mistaken!

Now the way we account for the use of the



Lynnhaven Parish Rectory at Kempsville

English bond is just this. From the order books it is most apparent that difficulty was experienced in preventing prisoners from escaping. So, our farsighted trustees of the building had this method of bonding employed because it is the strongest.

There is one other old house in Kempsville, perhaps the oldest of all now standing. It is the rectory of Lynnhaven Parish. The lot joins Emmanuel Episcopal Church, which church Bishop Meade dedicated and consecrated in 1843.

This title led us into a most unexpected ownership. This home is reputed to be the Boush house, built by Maximillian the eldest in 1680, becoming the home of his son Samuel who was Norfolk's first mayor. Here is the title as we found it at Princess Anne.

In 1765 Anthony Walke sold to John Michael Kenline for 26^l a half-acre lot, 95½ feet on the road; John Michael Kenline making a will in 1782 devised to Ann Campbell, widow of Duncan Campbell "my house and lot I live on at Kemp's Land-

ing." From this the chain is perfectly clear, when in 1818 this same property is the house with lot on which James J. Johnson is keeping a tavern. In that same year Mr. Johnson adds an additional 50' front to the east on the main road adjoining, and again a small piece next thereto in the same line and direction in 1826. By deeds we trace this same property, house and lot, to 1860, in which year we find Willoughby Dozier buying from J. E. Bell three quarters acre with house, known as Johnson's lot, bounded on the north by the road, south by Thomson, east by church lot, west by Willoughby Dozier, (this was Dr. Wright's, by Dozier it was sold to Dr. Hunter).

And so first and last, we found nowhere that any Boush owned this house and lot. There is every evidence of the age of the house when one considers the chimneys, the wide floor boards, the very high mantels with narrow shelf, the whole style bespeaks its age.

Of all these old places in Kempsville, only one is unoccupied, it is the old court house. Quite recently Judge B. D. White purchased the property from the Baptist Church trustees. Just now a new roof is being put on. We prophesy that shortly this fine old building, which has witnessed the ministrations of church and state to the people of Princess Anne will serve the coming generations in a useful capacity.

CHAPTER XIII



ONE of the earliest duties of the Parish vestries was the maintenance of ferries. At a court held at William Shipp's on September 15, 1642, it was ordered that there be two ferries for the County of Lower Norfolk, one on Daniel Tanners Creek, the other at Lynnhaven upon the land of Capt. Thorowgood's heirs, the place known as the "Quarter." This ferry from the "Quarter" was to be run to the eastern and to western shore of Lynnhaven. A levy of sixteen hundredweight of tobacco was made on the whole county for payment of the ferrymen. Capt. John Gookin was designated as the person to employ a ferryman for the Lynnhaven ferries for the next year.

Earlier in the same year a ferry had been established. To be exact, on February 16, 1642, is recorded that Savill Gaskins had engaged himself before to Capt. John Gookin, Esq., Commander Edward Windham, Esq., and Henry Woodhouse, Esq., to keep the ferry, beginning January 26th and running for a year, the ferry to be in Lynnhaven River, and to run from the "Quarter" to the Eastern Shore at Robert Cam's Point, upon notice of a "Hollow or a ffeir" (flare?), also to run from the "Quarter" to Trading Point upon the same notice. The pay was eight hundred pounds of tobacco. All of this arrangement was being on that

day carried out in accordance with a Court Order of November 15 of the previous year.

One familiar with the topography of Princess Anne knows the necessity there must have been for ferries.

Farther up on the Western Branch of Lynnhaven, formerly Bennetts Creek, was a 50-acre tract called "Ferry." In early 1700 there was much buying and selling of this particular tract. In 1730 it was the property of Charles Smythe, son of John Smythe. Charles gave to the county two acres by the spring for the new court house. Smythe sold to Moore, and in 1735 Moore sold to Thomas Martin the Ferry, "50 acres less the two acres whereon the court house now stands," and one acre reserved to Charles Smythe as a burying ground, and reserving to Moore the bridge "now building over ferry." Thomas Martin sold the plantation to Mr. Walke. The acreage had been increased, but of the original fifty acres, even in this deed, the two acres on which the court house was standing was excepted.

Anthony Walke the second, maker of the famous twenty-page will with two codicils, devised to his son William "the 'Ferry' plantation, or Church Quarter, with the use of adjacent lands when he reaches the age of twenty-one, or marries . . . Item: If I should depart this life before I can build a decent Dwelling House, with a Kitchen, laundry, Smoke-house, Dairy, and other out Houses, my will and desire is that the sum of 1000£ current money may be laid out . . . by my executors . . . in building . . . on the Land . . . called 'Ferry' Plantation at the old Court House." The



Ferry Farm, Virginia home of C. M. Barnett

use of all this with one-third of the plantation, Mr. Walke devised to his wife for life, she to keep the houses in repair at her own expense

This son William (1762-1795) married Mary Calvert. He lies buried in the field to the left of the house.

From the will of Anthony Walke it would seem that the dwelling on "Ferry" was built during the lifetime of William Walke. And yet the bonding of the brick is of the style known in this section as "Early Virginia," supposedly dating about 1820. In this method of tying bricks they are laid in three or five courses of stretchers, and then a course of headers. We are at a loss for an answer in explanation of this bonding.

The plantation of "Ferry" is now the property of Mr. C. M. Barnett of New York City. It is his country estate in Virginia. Out in the water may be seen today the piling from a more recent bridge which crossed to the other shore. The plantation on

the far shore of Lynnhaven at this point was the McIntosh estate.

There are fascinating stories that this is the old court house, the wing on the right, the jail; that in this jail was imprisoned Grace Sherwood. Even the iron bars in the window will be pointed out to you. Well this is all charming and thrilling as a good yarn. But facts are facts. The witch trial took place 1705-1708, the court house was built near "Ferry" between 1730-1735

Near by the "Ferry" of William Walke was an extensive plantation called Pembroke. A part of this tract "Billy" White, acting executor of Capt. Henry Kellam, sold to Miss Fannie Walke. Six hundred acres with the brick dwelling, the orchards, dove houses, "guardians," &c., he sold to Dennis Dawley in 1796. David Milhado and his mother Mary owned the plantation from 1803 to 1814. From 1822 for some years it was the home of Dr. James McAlpine.



Pembroke, John Saunders Home

During July, 1779, when the Princess Anne Committee of Safety was holding inquisitions of persons held to be secretly, or aggressively, friendly to the British, John Saunders was called before the jury. He was declared a "British subject" and his lands declared escheat.

March 1, 1781, is recorded the following grant :

"Thomas Jefferson, Governor, to Henry Kellam, 800 acres, more or less, lying & being in the County of Princess Anne, and the Parish of Lynnhaven, lately the property of John Saunders, a British Subject. Consideration: 32400 Lbs. current money paid to Thomas Reynolds Walker, Gent., Escheator for the County of Princess Anne. Agreeable to two Acts of Assembly passed in 1779 entitled 'An Act Concerning escheats & forfeitures from British Subjects' and the other entitled 'An Act Concerning Escheators'."

The Saunders family was old, well connected, and notable in the county. Jonathan Saunders was minister of Lynnhaven Parish in 1695. His widow, Mary, married Maximillian Boush. Mary Saunders, the daughter of Jonathan, married Cornelius Calvert in 1719. Capt Jonathan Saunders was vestryman in the parish in 1761. It is said that John Saunders after leaving Virginia, joined the British army and became an officer.

The house called Pembrook that was the home of John Saunders in Princess Anne, is Georgian architecture, though the porches which have been built all way around in these recent years, so successfully camouflage the handsome old place, one would never suspect but what it were a modern bungalow of the best California type.

There is one other home of the Walkes in



Home of Col. Thomas Walke



Dining room in Col. Thomas Walke
House



Cornice and wainscote panels in hall at
Col. Thomas Walke Home

Princess Anne that is still standing. Of it we shall tell you next.

On the Norfolk and Southern electric line to Virginia Beach, between London Bridge and Oceana, there is a stop called Maple Run. On the north, nestling back in a grove of fine trees, is another of Princess Anne's old homes. One called the Brick House farm, it is the property of Mr. W. H. H. Batten. Except for Peter Singleton's home at Kempsville (Dr. R. E. Whitehead's) and Poplar Hall, the Hoggard home, this house has, in our judgment, the next handsomest amount of hand carved wood panelling.

There are two large rooms on the front, one on each side of a broad hall. The hall runs through to the back door. In the rear of each large room is a smaller one. There are four rooms on the second floor, an attic above. In the attic there is a hole near the chimney. Tradition, as usual, says it is a passage to the outside through the walls. However, one is not able in these days and times to find the way out. More probable it is that the hole was put there for a hiding place for jewels or other valuables, should an emergency for secreting such occur.

The stairway goes up, starting immediately at the back door on the side not shown in the picture. The interior room plan is much like the interior of Pleasant Hall, both in turn, except for the location of the stairway, are like the George Wythe House in Williamsburg. The cellar is entered from outside.

The chimney on the east, or right of entrance, is built in triangular form. Consider the outside

wall as the base of the triangle, the other two sides serve, one in each room, as a fireplace.

This estate was once the home of the Ferebees, Enoch D. Ferebee devised it to his son George E., who, at the time, was then making it his home. It was also the home of Thomas Cornick, son of Lemuel III. He (Thomas) married Miss Frances Walke. In 1829 Thomas Cornick devised the estate to his son Thomas James Cornick. From him it passed by purchase to W. A. Dozier in 1847. By Dozier it was sold ten years later to Enoch D. Ferebee.

These facts briefly constitute the late history of a house which was built and was the home of the Walkes prior to 1825. Some time in 1759 Maj. Thomas Walke made a will disposing of his vast estate. The item that is of particular interest to us is that he devises the plantation and the houses he is building thereon to his son Thomas Walke, later, after the Revolution, known as Col. Thomas Walke. Here Col. Thomas made his home during the rest of his life.

Col. Thomas Walke acquired many more acres in the immediate vicinity. He bought from Philip Woodhouse a small tract of land down near Wolf's Snare for the purpose of erecting a mill. The mill was not completed before 1796 when Col. Thomas made his will, for he requests his executors to complete the mill. He says he has obtained a Court Order for the erection and operation thereof.

Evidently Col. Walke and his wife Elizabeth had no children. He devised to his wife for life the half of the plantation on which he lived together

with certain income; for life he made a bequest to his sisters, Margaret Hamilton and Anne Ramsey. There must be a family connection here with the John Thorowgood who made a will in 1786 naming Margaret Hamilton as his sister, Thomas Walke, John Phripp, half-brothers, Anne Phripp, half-sister. After the decease of wife Elizabeth and the two sisters, Col. Walke's whole estate is to be equally divided between three nephews, John Murdaugh, Wright Westcot (Waistcoat), and Thomas Willoughby. These nephews made a conveyance to Caleb Boush.

1825 sees William Walke selling the home of the late Col. Thomas Walke to John Cornick for \$4,750.00. Later in the same year William Woodhouse sold to Thomas Cornick the plantation containing over 300 acres, purchased by John Cornick from William Walke. The description locates the plantation as situated on the north side of the main road from Kempsville to the Eastern Shore Chapel.

And so, after a journey of a century and almost three-quarters with the masters of this gracious homestead we are back again among the trees, on one of which, lovers, in days gone by, carved certain initials. Some day go and see for yourself the home, the tree, the remains of a sentimental expression of other days.

It is with great hesitancy that we try to tell you of Poplar Hall, the home of the Hoggards in Princess Anne. The beauty of the location, the handsome Georgian house, the distinction of the owners, all have been recounted by pens more facile

than ours. Hence we hesitate, fearful of not doing justice to a place for so long a time a synonym of colonial elegance.

About this home are woven many fascinating stories of war times, from the days of our Revolution on down. When one visits the spot immediately the imagination is so captivated that one is ready to believe that it were possible for all romance to have emanated herefrom. Time has dealt gently with the scene. The house has mellowed with the years and has grown old ever so gracefully, caressed by the summer breezes from Broad Creek, protected from the winter winds by a grove of matchless trees.

The first record we found of the Hoggards in Princess Anne (we found no record prior to 1691 in Lower Norfolk County, nor did we find record in the old land grants in Richmond) is in Deed Book 8. Here we find a Thurmer Hoggard purchasing land from Mr. Langley, 100 acres. This was 1760. The next year Mr. Hoggard bought two more tracts, 62 acres from Alexander Poole and 200 acres from Lewis Thelabelle. These two tracts, we believe, are the acres on which was built Poplar Hall.

In 1768 Mr. Hoggard bought 300 acres from Col. Edward Hack Moseley, Sr., the following year 98 acres from Edward Parke; three years later 323 acres from Robert Clarke Jacob of Northampton County. With these 1,083 acres Mr. Hoggard seemed to be content, for we find no further conveyance to him.

Thurmer Hoggard made his will in 1773, which will was admitted to probate in 1779. This is the

first Hoggard will we can find either in Princess Anne or Lower Norfolk County records. In this will, to son Nathaniel, is devised all the landed estate. In the event son Nathaniel should not survive, then disposition is made to meet whatever contingency of survival of an heir, or heirs, arose. The daughter Susannah was either the eldest daughter or the best beloved, for it is to her that the father devises "the plantation whereon I do now live, together with 60 acres purchased of Alex. Poole." Mr. Hoggard designates from whom he purchased each tract as he devises it, with the exception of the acres bought of Lewis Thelabelle. Therefore, by a process of elimination we arrive at the conclusion that the Thelabelle tract was the tract on which Mr. Hoggard lived. Mr. Thelabelle purchased this land from Tully Robinson Smythe and Bray in 1748.

Beside his children Mary, wife of Charles Sayer, Elizabeth, wife of James Whitehurst, Diana, Susannah, and Nathaniel Hoggard, the testator names two grandchildren, Susannah and Arthur Sayer. He directs that a certain number of pounds sterling be set aside as pay to the person undertaking the education of a nephew, Peter Hoggard. This Arthur Sayer succeeded his father Charles as clerk of Princess Anne, serving twenty-one years—1740-1761.

Mr. Hoggard was a ship's carpenter. He left his instruments to his son Nathaniel, and a small sum of money to a Francis Thorowgood, his apprentice.

However, Nathaniel became the next master of Poplar Hall. He was elected to the vestry of

Lynnhaven Parish, but was never present at any recorded meeting of the vestry. This we state on the authority of the *Antiquary* of Mr. James who says his record is based on a parish entry of 1800, wherein "Mr. Anthony Walke, Sr., is elected in the room of Mr. Nathaniel Hoggard, deceased." By reference to the parish register we find an entry of the vestry election of 1823 recording the election of Mr. Hoggard as a member.

So far as we have been able to find there is no record beyond the above facts by which we may say when and by whom Popular Hall was built. It has continued the family home, certainly from 1761 or 1762, never being sold, but passing by devise or descent from one generation to the next, even to this day.

As we said, the building is of a Georgian period, the bonding of the brick is Flemish. From the picture you may judge the beauty of the yard, the trees, the house and Broad Creek, the water to which the yard so gently slopes, whose little ripples sparkling in the sunshine dictate more or less, the contour of the yard on its western bounds. There is no formal garden left, if even there was one. From the picture of the interior you catch a glimpse of the parlor. A picture of any other room would prove equally as charming, furnished as they are with original pieces of family mahogany.

Out in Broad Bay there is an island, once called Stratton's Island—now known by the name of Lovett's Island. No doubt John Stratton is the person for whom it was first called. This John Stratton obtained a grant in 1638 for 200 acres



Rear of Poplar Hall, Broad Creek in the background



Parlor at Poplar Hall

upon a creek called West's Creek, running east out of Lynnhaven River. A few years later he was granted an additional 150 acres "between the East and South Bay which belong to Stratton's Creek." The description goes on to relate that the tract begins nigh the head at the farthest side at a pine standing on the south side and running north, down the creek and easterly into the woods toward the sea.

It took quite a hunt to find Stratton's Creek authentically located. On an old map in the Library of Congress we came upon the information. On the ocean side, midway between Cape Henry and Rudee, was Stratton's Creek. The map shows a continuous water route from Chesapeake Bay into Lynnhaven River, out Long Creek (one old deed records "sometimes called Stratton's") into Broad Bay (Batts Bay), into Linkhorn (Lincolne) Bay to Little Neck Creek, or perhaps Chrystal Lake, to the ocean. That whole northeast corner of Cape Henry, the Desert, on down to near where today the Virginia Beach Coast Guard Station is located, was completely cut off from the rest of the county. The water course is marked Stratton's Creek. This map is dated 1695.

Of John Stratton we know little, except that Cobb Howell in making his will in 1656 refers to "my father Jno. Stratton and my mother, his wife." Henry Stratton, probably the son of John, in his will twenty-three years later, leaves all his land to Ruth and Elizabeth Woodhouse, daughters of John Woodhouse. He also made provision for "Henry Latny towards putting him to schoole."

In discussing the location of Stratton's Creek as an inlet from the ocean, residents of Princess Anne tell us that there are several characteristics of the sand at this point which differentiate it from the rest of the coast in the immediate vicinity. Hereabouts on the seaside after digging to a certain depth, a stratum of clay is reached. This is not true at the point where we believe this creek found an outlet into the ocean. Here one may continue to

dig, but only sand is turned up. Older heads and wiser heads than ours tell us that this is indicative of an opening, which long ago was filled by shifting sands. Also we are told that during an unusually severe storm some years ago, the ocean came near breaking through at this point.

In 1711 Edward Attwood obtained a grant for 238 acres of sand banks and marsh between Long Creek and "Batfses" Bay called Stratton's Island. Mr. Sams has recorded the fact that Broad Bay was first called Batts after a mariner by this name. How the island came to be a part of the Lovett estate we have not been able to find. The inference would be, therefore, that there was a marriage between the families.

Many moons have waxed and waned, more tides of Broad Bay have ebbed and flowed, since was built the stately home on Green Hill farm. Whether you approach the house from Broad Bay across what we are told was the bowling green, or whether you come by way of the long lane which leads from the Great Neck road, in either instance the picture is replete with rural beauty. As far back as 1738 Stratton Island belonged with the Lovett plantation, for so it was willed for several generations, "... to my son . . . the plantation and Stratton Island."

Almost anyone in the Lynnhaven district could direct you to the plantation Noah Shull bought in 1870. An older generation would know where the Cornick, or Keeling, place was. A few from each group would know "Green Hill" farm. Just who gave the name we can not say, as it it not called

by name in any record we found prior to 1837. However this does not mean that the name is new. It was not the general custom in Princess Anne for the name of the plantation to be given in the very early deeds and wills.

At Princess Anne old Deed Book No. 5 was badly deteriorated before a copy was made. The original is now in the Archives Department of the State Library at Richmond. In copying every effort was made to preserve all that was possible. On a page numbered 280 (so numbered because the index listed John Lovett's will on that page) is a partial record of a John Lovett's will. This John devised to his son John his "plantation and Stratton Island." There is no date. But from the adjoining record we judge the time to be about 1738. The island is the link with which we start.

In 1752 the record becomes very clear. Here Lancaster Lovett (probably the fifth generation, certainly the fourth of the name whose will we have) devises to his son John "all my plantation and Stratton Island." This Lancaster had a brother William; his wife's name was Alice; William Keeling, son of William Keeling, is named as executor. We would be inclined to think this Lancaster built the house except for the fact that his inventory showed he had only one bed and suit of furniture, the value of which was negligible, and except for the date in the house.

With safety we feel we may say that John Lovett, evidently the only son of the Lancaster Lovett, whose wife was Alice, built the house. This John lived to a good old age, devising in 1810 the

plantation and Stratton Island to his son John Stewart Lovett for life; then to his grandson John H. Lovett, "him and his heirs forever, the plantation and island." There is a date on the north end of the house, "1791."

The grandson, John H., is dead in 1816, under age, leaving everything to his mother Amy for life, then to be divided between brothers Charles U., George McL., and sister Susan S. Sister Susan married William E. Keeling. In a partition deed between George M. Lovett and Susan Keeling, brother and sister, grandchildren of John Lovett, to Susan Keeling is set aside 139 acres "beginning on the bay side nearly in the rear of the dwelling house, at a corner of the lot set off herein to George M. Lovett . . . &c." In George's acres was included the island "of sand banks and piney hummocks."

In a few years, as the widow Keeling, Susan, about to marry Capt. Thomas K. Cornick, records a marriage contract. These widows with landed estates surely took precaution to keep their property free from entanglement when contracting a second marriage.

The Lovetts must have been acceptable socially. They married with the best. The first Lancaster Lovett's widow, Ann, married James Kemp, son of George and Ann Kemp. These Kemps, we are told, were cousins to the Richard Kempe who was secretary to the Commonwealth. The name is spelled indiscriminately with and without the "e." Also George Kempe is the man who settled at Kempe's Landing, later to be Kempsville. The second Lancaster Lovett's wife was Mary. Their

daughter Elizabeth married Thomas Keeling, son of Capt. Adam. It was to their son Adam that Thomas Keeling devised "Dudlies," the plantation that came to Thomas by the will of his father, Capt. Adam.

Mary Lovett, sister to Elizabeth who married Thomas Keeling, married George Kemp, son of James Kemp, son of George. It would seem that little Ann Kemp, to whom grandfather James Kemp made a gift before 1706, saying she is the daughter of his son George and wife Mary, and to whom grandmother Mary Lovett, widow of Lancaster Lovett (2) and mother of Mary Lovett wife of George Kemp, made a gift in her will in 1714, had a complicated and close kinship to herself.

However it is not so close as it would seem. The widow Ann Lovett, who married James Kemp, is probably not the mother of James' son George. The Ann Kemp, who was widow of George (1) Kemp, made her will in 1677. In this will she names the same sons as does George (1) except she says they are her "sonnes in law." One item is addressed "unto my sonne Jameses Sonne Geo. Kempe," showing that James' son was born prior to 1677. We do not know just when he (James) married the widow Lovett, but presumably in 1679. In that year she makes a deed, setting forth her new marriage state, wherein she conveys to son Lancaster (he was of age in 1672) the plantation in which she had a courtesy as the widow of old Lancaster.

Anne Keeling, daughter of Capt. Adam, to whom he left "Chester Forest," also married a Lovett.

Her son was William Lovett, the younger. Later she married a Pallet and also had a son named Matthew Pallet.

In passing it may be of interest to note that this "Chester Forest" tract was on the seaside. It was granted as a parcel of land containing 1,250 acres to Anthony Lawson and Robert Hodge about 1680. In his will in 1681 Mr. Hodge devised his half of this grant to his friend Benoni Burroughs. Also by this will Mr. Burroughs became the possessor of Mr. Hodge's "great Kearsy Coat lined with red serge & ten yards of Docoles Linnen out of my great chest in y^e Store." In 1693 Anthony Lawson made a deed for the 1,250 acres to Ann Keeling, daughter of Capt. Adam. It seems that Capt. Adam Keeling had bought the land before his death, but failed to get a deed. In this deed Benoni Burroughs joins.

Benoni Burroughs was the son of Christopher, the first by the name of Burroughs in the county. Christopher's first grant is dated in 1638 and is for 200 acres joining Capt. Adam Thorowgood, on the east by the Chesapeake, or Lynnhaven. He brought four persons into the colony, they were, beside himself, his brother William, his sister Anne, and a servant. This Christopher had at least, so the *Virginia Magazine* says, two sons, Benoni and William. This book further suggests that there was a kinship here to the early minister Buck. Rev. Buck had a son Benoni.

But to come back to Green Hill, now the property of Mrs. W. T. Old of Norfolk! Slowly and surely is she going about the restoration of the

estate. Already much effective landscaping is adding to the natural beauty of the surrounding acres.

Originally there were only four rooms in the house, together with a large cellar. One nearly square room with fairly high ceiling, decorated with a cornice and deeply recessed windows is on each side of the hall. These divisions are repeated above stairs. The mantelpieces downstairs are very



Green Hill on Broad Bay, 1791



Parlor Mantel and wainscoting at Green Hill

pretty, as you will see from the picture of the one in the parlor. The hall downstairs, the upper part of the stairway and the upstairs hall have been changed, probably making the house more nearly meet the needs of the family at the time then making it their home. But the changes marred the style of architecture.

For a long time we were doubtful of the date of this house, as we had not discovered 1791 on the brick. The pitch of the roof as viewed from the gables was the upsetting thing. Close up under the roof on each side of the chimney in both gables are little round windows. These we had not found in Georgian houses. A visit to the attic showed the square wooden frame back of the window. That helped. But yet with due allowance therefor we were not satisfied. We made a third trip to the attic. This time we lifted the floor boards. Immediately it was evident that not only had the brickwork around the chimney been done over, but also a whole new structure of rafters had been set up to support a new roof. On each old beam, set well in, were the perfectly alined twin rows of mortises, indicating the use of queenposts in the original roof construction. The corresponding mortises do not appear in the rafters. From this we conclude that in setting in the new rafters consciously, or unconsciously, the pitch of the roof was disturbed.

One of the original outbuildings is standing in the yard. It is a nice little house with an "A" roof. The outside of this kitchen, for such it most probably was, has been plastered over. The brickwork on the inside of the chimneys has been done

over. There are two rooms downstairs, a loft above. Each room is entered from the outside by its own door; these doors are side by side in the west front.

From its name you guess the house is set on a hill; Princess Anne knows little of hills. A ravine recently converted into a lake, fed by a spring in the front field, accentuates the slope of the yard on the southwest side. Many handsome old trees are standing near the house, making a dense shade in summer. The afternoon sunlight, filtering through the leaves, dapples the grass in many intriguing futuristic designs.

Adjoining Green Hill on the south is Broad Bay Farm, the home of Mr. John B. Dey, once the home of three generations of Lemuel Cornicks and their next generation, also for more than fifty years the home of Enoch D. Ferebee, his son and grandsons.

In 1636, while this section was yet a part of Elizabeth City Shire, to Thomas Allen was granted by Governor West, 550 acres, beginning on the east at the first branch out of Long Creek and bounded on the west by the Great Indian Fields. There are recorded various items concerning Thomas Allen up to and including 1655. We find him witnessing wills, making a gift to Thomas Cannon (son of Edward Cannon), again patenting land, this time with Edward Canon on the Woodhouse Dams, carrying tobacco to England, executor of the will of the first Henry Woodhouse, legatee under the will of Thomas Nedham, discharging certain Bills of Sale with Capt. Yardley, &c. But not one hint can we find of the disposition he made of his land.

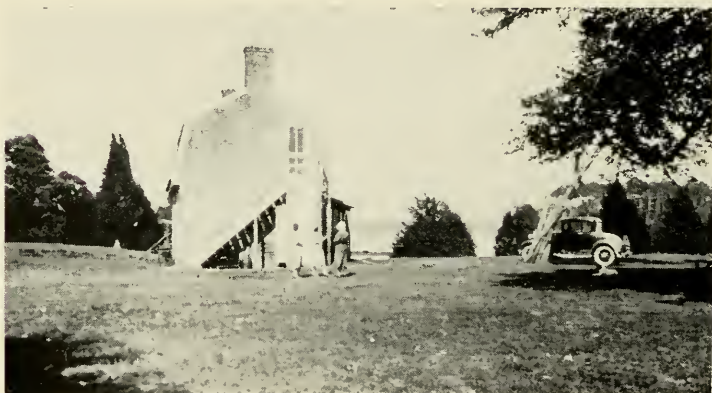
In accounting for the title of this plantation prior to 1770 there are several solutions we could offer. No special purpose would be served in suggesting any one; to give all would be burdensome to the reader; therefore, we take up our story at the point in December, 1770, in the early days of which month James Kempe made the deed by which this plantation became the home of Lemuel Cornick the first and his wife Frances, the daughter of Ed Attwood. This deed is for 300 acres bounded on the north by John Lovett, on the south by the land Lemuel Cornick had purchased from William Keeling, son of John, on the west by John Keeling, on the east by Broad Bay. It is highly probable that Capt. Kempe owned this land by virtue of a partition deed between George Wishart and Capt. Kempe, sons-in-law of George Handcock, in settlement of the Handcock estate.

There were houses on the acres in 1770. In our opinion there were two houses, each in turn, having served as dwelling. Beyond question the nearly square (24'6") sharp roof story-and-half house, of Flemish bonded brick, is the oldest building. There is only one room enclosed in these walls of 18" thickness, with a space above, under the roof. In this one room is one of the largest of fireplaces, with crane and pothook. At the head of a short flight of steps on the left of the chimney, one encounters a door, which of course may not have been there originally; beyond this door the stairs turn just back of the wall and above the chimney breast into the space under the roof.

This may have been built by Thomas Allen.



John B. Dey Home on Broad Bay Farm



Gambrel House on Broad Bay Farm

Who knows? The probabilities are he was a bachelor; he was certainly out of the colony much of the time on trips to England in pursuit of what appears to have been his occupation of trading. What need had he of more room when coming to his Virginia acres, perchance awaiting his next commission ere sallying forth from Lynnhaven River on business bent!

Nearer the shore of Broad Bay, facing the south, stands the second house in this sequence of buildings by which the masters of the plantation advanced from the quaintest and plainest of homes to the ornate late Georgian. The second house is the true gambrel roof, with all four walls of brick, $14\frac{1}{2}$ " thick, in the Flemish method of bond.

Just as the first house was nearly square, so this proportion would run here were there a partition downstairs now as there probably was when the house was first built. We believe the partition was here because there are two doors, side by side, of equal importance, in this south side, or front. There are no other doors. These walls measure $32'3'' \times 16'$, with a 10' ceiling. There are two chimneys, one in the east end and one in the west end of the house. In each chimney is a very large fireplace, all fitted out with a crane. The back of each fireplace measures $6'2\frac{3}{4}''$, while the front in the east chimney is $9'4''$, the west chimney $8'4''$. Outside the west end of the house is a stairway going up to the rooms under the roof. Here again we venture the surmise that a change from the original has occurred.

Lemuel Cornick was dead in 1773. It may well be said that he built the Georgian structure which adjoins the first little house. This Georgian part of the home is Flemish bonded brick, with two inside chimneys in the north end. In none of the houses do the bricks run with the same measure, color, or texture. The newest building has extremely high ceilings, recessed windows, fine stairway. Unlike either of the smaller houses it faces west



Home of Horatio Cornick

Courtesy Mrs. Foy Casper

toward the country road, adjoining, however, the first little house which serves as the dining room of the latest house. It is reasonable to believe that when a Lemuel Cornick built the "Great House," the gambrel, out on a lawn which boasts many handsome boxwood, some of which are very old, the gambrel, we repeat, was converted into a quarter kitchen.

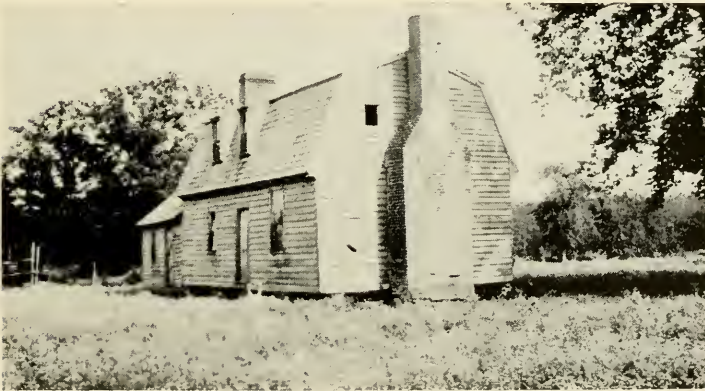
Lemuel Cornick devised this plantation, to the north of certain lines, to his son, Lemuel the second. The southern acres, together with the land he had bought of William Keeling (these acres had formerly been a part of George Hancock's plantation), plus a few acres in Middle Neck, he devised to his son Horatio.

Today the land devised to this Horatio Cornick is the farm of Mr. N. B. Godfrey, on the south of Broad Bay Farm. Horatio had three daughters, Elizabeth, wife of Capt. John Shepherd, Mary Moore and Peggy Ferguson.

The other children of Lemuel Cornick the first and his wife Frances were daughters, Frances, wife of Smith Shepherd, and Aliph. There was also another son, John, evidently the eldest, to whom Lemuel before 1773, had given certain lands, a confirmation of which is recorded in the will.

The family of the wife, Frances Attwood Cornick, had been in the county since late 1600. Mary Woodhouse, daughter of Henry (1), married Ed Attwood. This branch of the family owned lands nearby. William Attwood, son of the first Ed, patented land near The Ponds (Fresh and Salt), further south. During the years quite a settlement grew around the acres, some times called "Attwood Town." Here today one very old house is left, whose date we are not able to approximate. The bricks in the chimney, the Flemish bond, the queer little windows let in the roof, are indicative of sufficient age to entitle us to give you a picture.

Down the main road in the day of Lemuel Cornick the third the Fall Races took place.



Home of an Attwood in Attwoodtown

Quoting from a newspaper account of the day the announcement is: "On Saturday the 7th of October, 1815, will be run A Sweepstake Race, for \$75, between the Horses of Capt. Lemuel Cornick, Mr. Henry Keeling, and Mr. Josiah Hunter, on the road fronting Capt. Lemuel Cornick's." Three years later, September, 1818, appeared this notice: "On Saturday, 19th Inst. Between 11 A. M. & 3 P. M. Will Be Run, on the road near Captain Lemuel Cornick's in Princess Anne County, a Match race between Mr. Jacob Valentine's chestnut sorrel mare *Silver Heels*, and Mr. Lovett's Grey horse Liberty."

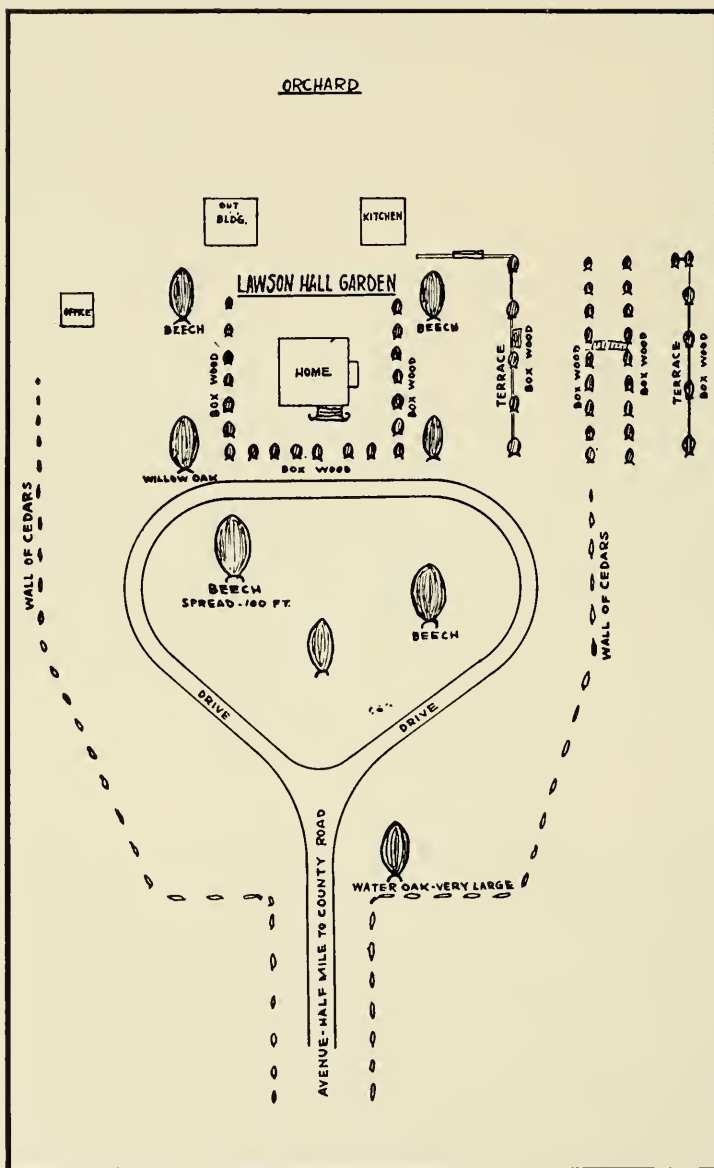
Many old wills record the gift of certain horses to certain legatees. One will in particular comes to our mind. It was made by a John Thorowgood in 1786. He names Thomas Walke and James Nimmo as executors. To them he bequeathes a "Quarter Cash" of best Madeira wine to "regale themselves while Poor Old Jack is lying in the dust." To Betsy Newton he bequeathed his riding horse.



William Dale Woodhouse Home

Just across the road to the west is the home of William Dale Woodhouse, son of William and his wife, Betty. This house is a border line in date, maybe it was built during the very last years of the eighteenth century, but certainly not later than 1802. It has been a very handsome home, especially on the interior. For some years no one has made a home within its walls and so the usual dilapidation has come about. It is now owned by Mr. Arthur Brock and Mr. Eggleston of Norfolk.

Since in recent years there has been such a revival of interest in gardens and gardening as an art, and since particularly has this interest centered in and around our old Virginia gardens, we want to tell you of the only one of colonial date left in Princess Anne.



Garden Plan of Lawson Hall

Drawing by G. R. Scott

CHAPTER XIV



TOO bad that in the early years of the present century the house at Lawson Hall should have been burned beyond repair. And that just at a time when, by purchase, it had come into the friendly hands of Mr. C. F. Hodgeman. He loved the place, its traditions, its garden, with all they held of the long ago. As has been the fate of so many of our old Virginia homes, the picturesque moss covered shingles proved its undoing. There was a spark, a puff of wind, and when discovered it was too late! All that was left of the home of the Lawsons in Princess Anne was the marble of steps and flags, a heap of bricks, most of the boxwood, the beech trees, and the cedars which formed the outside garden wall.

Fortunately the garden with its trees, its terraces, its stream of water ambling down between two lines of box to a branch of the creek in the rear, each line of box flanked by a green, or promenade, with a second row of box, has come down so well preserved that Mrs. Fernstrom (Cornelia Hodgeman) has been able to bring back much of its former loveliness. Even the brick cantilevers of the little bridge which spanned the stream, are embedded firmly in the banks. Carefully, step by step, Mrs. Fernstrom explores and then lends to nature an intelligent help in order that the planting of a



Partial view of trees and boxwood at Lawson Hall

formal garden, done nearly two centuries ago, may flourish as was intended.

In rebuilding, Mr. Hodgeman did not attempt to reproduce, although the new house, on its northern foundation, conforms to the old north wall. The old cellar is the cellar in the present building. The heavy marble step at the front door bore the same place of importance in the old house. The front walk today in its flagging has some ten or twelve of the marble flags from the side door of the old mansion, as it looked out toward the garden. From Mrs. Fernstrom we give you her account of the house plan as she knew it.

The steps gave entrance to a large reception hall on the right, through which one passed to the dining room. This is the side from which the terrace led to the garden, the south side. To the left, or north, entered from the reception hall, was the drawing room, a room of extremely large dimensions, almost square, with fireplace.

Here on the east side of the room was a door leading into the hall. From the hall, located between the dining room on the south and an undesignated room on the north, ascended the stairway. As was usual, the back door was under the stair landing. There were two chimneys in the north end, and one in the south wall, this latter accommodated the fireplace for the dining room. On the second floor there were four large bedrooms and a smaller one.

Several families now living in Norfolk and Portsmouth trace their lineage through Mary Calvert Lawson, the famous beauty, born in 1768. She was the daughter of Anthony Lawson, of Lawson Hall. This Anthony Lawson was called colonel, was a member of the Princess Anne Committee of Safety, was at one time a justice, a sheriff, twice vestryman of Lynnhaven Parish, and a church warden. He was captured during the Revolution and sent to Florida on "Otter, Man-of-War, Capt. Squires." He was one of two patriots exchanged for two Tories of which note has previously been made in these pages when recording the history of "Rose Hall."

Adhering to our rule of keeping our record only as it relates to Princess Anne and its old homes, we must refrain from telling the thrilling story of the adventure of the Lawsons on coming into the colony in its earliest days as it is told in the Neimeyer family record. The following facts we have assembled from original sources.

From the *Antiquary* we find that in December, 1668, Thomas Moncrief and others of Londonderry issued a power of attorney to Anthony Lawson of

the same city. This power of attorney extended to "Virginia, or any other part of the West Indies." The paper was proved in June, 1669. We would conclude from this that Mr. Lawson was coming to Virginia at the time.

The first patent of land to any Lawson within the territory named Princess Anne, once a part of Lower Norfolk, is dated 1673, to Anthony Lawson 490 acres on the Eastern Branch of the Elizabeth River in the woods near Broad Creek, adjoining the lands of William Moseley and William Handcock. This grant was based on his importation of himself twice, John Canter, William Church, Garrett Really, Elizabeth May, Zambo and Maria, two negroes.

Further land grants are as follows:

To Anthony Lawson and Robt. Hodge, 1,250 acres near the seacoast, going by the name of Chester Forest, adjoining the lands of William Basnett, Edward Ould, &c. This was about 1680.

To Anthony Lawson, 762 acres at a big hickory, George Fowler's corner tree, also adjoining the land of William Handcock and Chapman. This is 1681.

To Anthony Lawson, 300 acres, formerly granted Col. Thomas Lambert, and by him sold &c. This is 1682.

To Lt.-Col. Anthony Lawson, 1,206 acres in Lynnhaven Parish on both sides of the head of Lynnhaven River. This is 1684.

Other records show that Anthony Lawson had a brother George whose wife was Mary. (It may

be recalled that a George Lawson is listed by Simon Cornick in his certificate for land, granted by the Court in 1653.) George Lawson, Jr., made a will in 1678, proved by Richard Hays. He lived on the Eastern Branch of the Elizabeth River. He devised one-half of his estate to Thomas, Mary and Margaret, children of Anthony Lawson, these children to receive the one-half after the death of his wife. Later on we find a record showing that Thomas Lawson administered on the estate of his father, Lt.-Col. Anthony Lawson, dead in 1701; that Mrs. Margaret Thorowgood, widow of John Thorowgood, releases Thomas Lawson, co-administrator of her father, Lt.-Col. Anthony Lawson, of all "legasyes," and in particular of one received from her uncle, George Lawson.

In an earlier chapter on the Thorowgood house we told you that John Thorowgood, the third generation of the family in Virginia, married Margaret Lawson. This is she. Her son John married Pembroke Sayer, daughter of Charles Sayer. Charles Sayer was clerk of Princess Anne from 1716 to 1740.

Thomas Lawson, only son of Anthony (1) Lawson, in his will made in 1703 made bequests to the following children, sons Anthony, George, daughters Frances and Anne. Provision is made for an unborn child. To Anthony was devised the home plantation, to the unborn child is devised a plantation called "Elders" in Norfolk County. In 1704 the inventory was made of Thomas' personal property, from which we find the following places as having articles in them: hall, parlor, "sellar,

seller chamber," parlor chamber, garret, hall chamber, beside a few things that are listed as being at "Elders." Then there was the store, new milk house, old milk house, kitchen loft, and other out houses.

Rose Lawson, the widow of Thomas, in making a gift to her children adds to the above names, that of a son Thomas. Thus is rounded out the third generation of the Lawsons in Lower Norfolk County and Princess Anne.

At this time the Lawsons do not seem to be very hardy. In thirty-five years three generations pass off the stage, leaving this last named son Thomas as the male survivor. He married Frances Sayer, daughter of Charles. Of this union there were two sons, Anthony and Thomas.

Anthony Lawson (fourth generation) was born in 1729. He married Mary Calvert, and this brings us up to the point in the story of Lawson Hall at which we digressed.

It undoubtedly took many years to plan, to assemble the material and to build a mansion such as Lawson Hall was. We doubt, therefore, that the first Anthony built the particular house to which we have reference. The type of architecture would surely indicate a later period, if not entirely preclude its having been built in 1668, the date at which we understand it is placed. We must remember that the land on which this house was erected was not granted to Mr. Lawson until 1681/2. When Princess Anne became a county in 1691, we find that Mr. Lawson in that year was a member of the Court of Norfolk County, not of the new county. From the fact that in March, 1694/5,

Malachy Thurston was appointed "Chiefe & head Surveyor" of the . . . Roads in Tanners Creek p^rcincts . . ." in place of Lt.-Col. Anthony Lawson, removed to Little Creek, we take it that this date very nearly marks the time that Mr. Lawson became a resident of the Little Creek Precinct, always a part of Lynnhaven Parish. You will recall that the legal separation of Princess Anne from Norfolk County took place almost entirely on the geographic lines of the two parish boundaries, Elizabeth River and Lynnhaven.

Col. Anthony (fourth generation) Lawson died in 1785. In the inventory of his estate we make note of the following items from which we draw a conclusion. There were three bedsteads and furniture, two valued at 8 \textsterling each, one at 14 \textsterling ; one bed, bedstead and furniture valued at 36 \textsterling ; one small bed and furniture valued at 6 \textsterling . This seems to corroborate Mrs. Fernstrom's recollection of four large bedrooms and one small one. In the eighty-odd years between the taking of the inventory of Thomas in 1704 and this inventory there is a marked increase in the amount of the personal property and its value. This Anthony is the grandson of that Thomas.

We can not refrain from giving a few items of the record in the settlement of the estate of Thomas Lawson, the brother of this Anthony, both the fourth generation. The year was 1758. Mr. Robert Dickson was paid 40 shillings for the funeral sermon; Mr. Thomas Walke received 44 shillings for the funeral liquors; 65s 3d was spent to provide punch for the appraisers of the estate since they received no other pay.

Probably the most noted of all the distinguished family is the Thomas Lawson whose record, as it appears in the War Department at Washington, is: "Thomas Lawson was born in Virginia, was appointed Garrison Surgeon Mate, February 8, 1811, from the State of Virginia; was appointed Surgeon, 6th U. S. Infantry, May 21, 1813; was transferred to 7th United States Infantry, June 17, 1815; was transferred to 4th United States Infantry, . . . 1825; was appointed Surgeon General, U. S. Army, November 30, 1836, with the rank of Colonel, U. S. Army; was appointed Brigadier General by Brevet, May 30, 1848, for meritorious conduct in the War with Mexico, and died May 15, 1861, at Norfolk, Virginia, as Surgeon General, U. S. Army, with the rank of Colonel."

And now we shall say in closing this little journey to the old homes of Princess Anne, Virginia, our thanks, first to the present owners of these homes for their unbounding generosity and courtesy in having us investigate from cellar to garret, under, over, above and around, at our sweet will and pleasure, every nook and corner of the premise that seemed to hold any secret that would help in making an accurate report of the past or present history thereof; next, we say our sincere thanks to those in charge of records and their staffs at Princess Anne clerk's office, and in Norfolk County, for their entire co-operation, never forgetful of the basework of all, expedited by Mrs. Nell M. Nugent, the presiding genius in the Land Registry Office at Richmond; to the librarian and her staff, of the

Norfolk Public Library for great patience and forbearance in having a novice seeking what might be found in the splendid collection of *Virginiana* in the "Sargent Memorial Room;" to certain members of these old families in this generation who have given so many valuable clues in the unravelling of the maze of family relationships; to those friends who have, on faith, subscribed to this publication; to the old Buick which took us there and brought us back, wherever the road might lead; to Judge White and Mrs. White, for their enthusiasm in the undertaking, even to the point of permitting the *Antiquary* of Mr. James, in all five volumes, to remain under our roof for months; and somehow we do wish that in some way we could show appreciation for this tremendous contribution of Mr. Edward James, as well as for the publication of Mr. Charles McIntosh of the old wills; and so we think of many others who, in one way or another, have heartened us along this trail of old homes in Princess Anne, extending as it does through all the years since Cape Henry, in April, 1607.

"Mid pleasures and palaces, though we may roam,
Be it ever so humble, there's no place like home!
A charm from the skies seems to hallow us there,
Which, seek thro' the world, is ne'er met with elsewhere."

THE END

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