

# Essex County



# Historical Society

ESSEX COUNTY 1692

NUMBER 1

TAPPAHANNOCK, VIRGINIA

NOVEMBER 1971

## Essex County Historical Society Reactivated

## Charles H. Ryland, Guest Speaker For Meeting

In March a number of the former members of the Essex County Historical Society decided that the organization should have a meeting and become reorganized so that they could take part in helping to preserve our local history. A meeting was called and about forty former members and interested citizens met with Arnold Motley, Clerk of the Circuit Court of Essex County, presiding. A nominating committee was appointed with Mr. Joseph Ewing, Chairman; Mr. Charles Warner, Mrs. J. M. Evans, Mrs. Raymond Wallace and Mrs. Wm. A. Wright as members. It was decided to have the first meeting of the reactivated Historical Society on April 21, 1971 in the Essex County Court Room at the Court House in Tappahannock, Virginia.

The following officers were nominated and elected at the short business meeting preceding the program on April 21, 1971. Mr. Robert L. Pettigrew, President; Mr. Arnold Motley, Vice-President; Mrs. Henrietta Wolfe, Secretary, and Mrs. Juliet Ware Parker, Treasurer.

Mr. Pettigrew, the newly elected president stated the aims and desires of the organization and asked Mr. Charles W. H. Warner to introduce our guest speaker, Mr. J. Paul Hudson, Curator of the Jamestown Museum for the National Park Service at Jamestown, Virginia. Mr. Warner stated that Mr. Hudson is one of the foremost authorities on Seventeenth Century Artifacts in the United States.

Mr. Hudson's program was "*Preserving Our Heritage*". He gave a very interesting talk illustrated with slides showing how our history has been preserved through the restoration of such historical landmarks as Mount Vernon and a number of the APVA restorations beginning with the old Jamestown Church. He also showed many slides of Colonial Williamsburg when the restoration started and other historical shrines and landmarks throughout the state; concluding with contemporary projects.

We were off to a good start. Everyone enjoyed this program very much. Mr. Pettigrew stated he would appoint committees before the next meeting in July.

The Essex County Historical Society met in the County Court Room at the Court House in Tappahannock at 8:00 p.m. on July 21, 1971, with Mr. Robert L. Pettigrew, President, presiding. Mr. Pettigrew announced that Mr. Charles W. H. Warner had been our representative at the meeting of the Eastern Virginia Historical Society at Hampton, Virginia and Mr. Warner gave us a very interesting resume of the meeting. Mr. Pettigrew also announced the appointment of the Publications Committee, with Mr. Charles W. H. Warner, Chairman; Mr. Joseph Ewing, Mrs. J. M. Evans, and Mrs. Wm. A. Wright, members. Mr. Warner presented the committee report which had planned a bulletin to be published by our organization semi-annually and showed the four-page format of the publication. It was voted to have the bulletin published semi-annually by Mr. S. W. Barbour, Tappahannock, Virginia. The first issue to be published in November and the second issue in May. These bulletins will be mailed to all members and additional copies will be on sale for anyone interested in keeping them for their historical value. The first issue will deal with the very early history of this community.

Mr. Pettigrew introduced the speaker for the evening, Mr. Charles H. Ryland, Attorney of Warsaw, Virginia, and a native of King & Queen County. Mr. Ryland gave us a very interesting talk on history which is a lesson for us and helps us to avoid the mistakes made by previous generations. He had a number of old papers and documents of interest including a collection of Continental and Virginia currency. He had some old account books of Muscoe Garnett, Inc., who had an importing business in Tappahannock and discussed the War of 1812, including a Muster Roll of the King & Queen troops who marched to Tappahannock in the War of 1812. Other papers included some of the estate of William Garnett in 1771 and 1779. These were all papers he had discovered in his old home and had preserved by taking them to the State Library where they were preserved by the laminating process.

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# The Establishment of Tappahannock

*With Sketches on its Founders:*

BARTHOLOMEW HOSKINS, THOMAS & BENJAMIN  
GOODRICH, THOMAS GOULDMAN &  
HARRY BEVERLEY

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This first bulletin of Essex County Historical Society begins with "The Establishment of Tappahannock" for several reasons. Tappahannock has been the continuous county seat since the first courthouse was built here in 1728. Tappahannock was established as a town in 1682 and the village preceding the town known as Hobbs His Hole had its origin in the Bartholomew Hoskins patent first made on January 1, 1645. Thus Tappahannock is the only unit in the county which has continuity in its history and origins to the first settlement of this section by the English. To the original counties of York, Northumberland and Lancaster, to old Rappahannock County which developed out of Lancaster in 1656 and which finally gave way in 1692 to Essex and six other Counties.

It is well to review here the events which have given Tappahannock both state and national significance:

In 1608 Captain John Smith sailed up the Rappahannock and attempted a landing here but was driven back on ship by Indian arrows. From 1682 until 1775 Tappahannock was one of the leading seaports on the east coast, being older than Fredericksburg, Richmond, Williamsburg or Baltimore and preceding them in importance. Merchants and seamen from England, France, Ireland, Spain and the Barbadoes knew her mercantile firms such as Ritchie and Jameison as well as her taverns such as the Scot's Arms. On February 28, 1766 a movement begun by Col. Francis Gouldman Waring, large planter and the Essex representative in the House of Burgesses, erupted in Tappahannock. Over four hundred men protested the British mercantile policies and the Stamp Act by gathering in Tappahannock. They threatened bodily harm to Archibald Ritchie, the town's chief merchant who caused great antagonism by stating that he would abide by the hated Stamp Act. This near riot was the strongest popular protest against the Stamp Act in Virginia. Ritchie signed a resolution condemning the Stamp Act, stating that he would not abide by it. The day before, the famous Leeds-town Resolutions were signed further up the river in Westmoreland as a part of this protest. Several signers were Essex men. Later three Tappahannock men, all first cousins, were the leaders of Jefferson's Republican party in Virginia which influenced the Nation. They were Judge Spencer Roane, Chief Justice of the Virginia Supreme Court of Appeals; Thomas Ritchie, editor of the Richmond Enquirer, and Dr. John Brockenbrough, President of the Bank of Virginia. Judge Roane's first marriage was to Anne, daughter of Patrick Henry.

In a letter written on June 1, 1870, Mr. Frank G. Ruffin, Auditor of Virginia, wrote that Spencer Roane was the "guiding spirit" of the Richmond Enquirer and "contributed largely to its columns in brief paragraphs or in more elaborate essays. His residence was the headquarters of the famous Richmond Junto (also called the Essex Junto) and the resort of all members of the legislature of his own faith. His in-

fluence in his party was second only to Mr. Jefferson's, and was willingly subordinated to his, by himself." Of Roane, Thomas Jefferson wrote on January 11, 1821, "I am sensible of the inroads daily working by the Federal into the jurisdiction of its co-ordinate associates, the State Governments . . . The Judiciary branch is the instrument which, working like gravity without intermission, is to press us at last into one consolidated mass. Against this I know no one who equally with Judge Roane himself, possesses the power and courage to make resistance, and to him I look and have long looked as our strength and strongest bulwark".

The papers in the Essex County Court House telling of the establishment of Tappahannock in 1682 begin with the patent taken out by Bartholomew Hoskins on January 1, 1645\*. This patent was the first in what is now Essex County and opened the area up for colonization. This area was then completely unsettled and known still as York County. The patent was renewed by Bartholomew Hoskins on January 1, 1648 (in which year this became Northumberland County) and again in 1651 at which time the Indian Treaty made a few years earlier permitted colonization north of the York River. In 1651, this area became Lancaster County and in 1656 those counties later called Essex, Richmond, and parts of Westmoreland, King George, Stafford, Caroline and Spotsylvania were cut off from Lancaster and became Rappahannock County which was to endure until 1692. Thus Tappahannock, Essex County and much of the Northern Neck grew out of a common heritage from 1651 to 1692.

Bartholomew Hoskins, (1600-1662), came to Virginia before the departure of the Governor, Sir Thomas Dale, in 1614-15, as a boy of 15. He lived first in Jamestown and then moved to Buck Roe in Elizabeth City County. In 1624, with a small group of others he received from the crown the first land in Virginia as a private landowner. The London Company, now dissolved, had owned all land previously. He was given the title "Ye Ancient Planter", meaning an early settler of the colony. Thus he became one of the original proprietors of the Virginia Colony.

Bartholomew Hoskins left Elizabeth City County by 1635 and went to live in Lower Norfolk. He owned about 3,000 acres in Lower Norfolk, Upper Norfolk (Later Nansemond) and James City Counties and was a merchant, shipowner, vestryman, a Gentleman Justice and member of the House of Burgesses, 1649-56. The Rappahannock County records refer to him in 1663 as the "late Bartholomew Hoskins, deceased, of Lower Norfolk". He was the ancestor of the Hoskins, of Mount Pleasant, King & Queen County, near Millers Tavern, Essex County. The family were represented here as vestrymen of St. Stephens Parish, members of the County Court, Colonel Commanders, majors and captains of the militia. Five of these Hoskins were in the Revolutionary War; one in the siege of Yorktown and another at Valley Forge. Another became the second wife of Judge Spencer Roane and an-

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\*Patent was a term used for a tract of land given by the government to an individual in return for beginning a plantation and transporting persons from England to Virginia. The granting of land patents was a means by which the British government encouraged colonization in the New World.

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## Officers of the Society

President \_\_\_\_\_ Mr. Robert L. Pettigrew  
Vice-President \_\_\_\_\_ Mr. Arnold Motley  
Treasurer \_\_\_\_\_ Mrs. Richard Parker  
Secretary \_\_\_\_\_ Mrs. Henrietta W. Wolfe

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### PUBLICATIONS COMMITTEE

Chairman, Mr. Charles W. H. Warner; Members, Mrs. William A. Wright, Mrs. J. M. Evans, Mr. Joseph Ewing

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other the wife of the late Andrew J. Montague, Governor of Virginia and she established the Confederate Home in Richmond, Va. for old ladies. In the past century Essex has been represented in the Virginia Legislature by a Hoskins and a near descendant was mayor of Tappahannock.

The Hoskins patent of January 1, 1645 was for 1,350 acres on the southward side of the Rappahannock River, the boundaries being from the later Duke Street up the river 600 acres above Tignor's Creek (later Brockenbrough's and now Bristow's Marina Creek). It went back from the river at this point (Mr. Hutchinson's upper line) to the foot of the hills, proceeding then along the foot of the hills, southward to Hoskins Creek. Upon reaching the creek the line followed the creek to where highway 360 enters the town from the south and proceeded along this highway north to Duke Street and thence to the river. In 1652 the land between Duke Street and Tignor's Creek was sold to Clement Thrush. Bartholomew Hoskins had Lt. Col. Toby Smith survey this area for Thrush in 1654. The court record calls for this but by the 1680 map of George Morris, surveyor, the patent went from the river back to the hills at the northwest corner and then proceeded southeast to the creek, named for Bartholomew Hoskins, thus coming to the creek behind that area known today as Wakefield. Point A in the key or "Couper's Poynt" (John Cooper, surveyor for Bartholomew Hoskins) in the 1680 Morris map was the boundary of the patent. This map may be seen in the Essex Court House, the Virginia State Library and the Virginia Historical Society. Thrush sold his land in 1656 to Col. Thomas Goodrich who gave it to his son Benjamin Goodrich in 1678. The land along the river, south of Duke Street where St. Margaret's is today, was patented by Epaphroditus Lawson in 1650. Later families owning this property were the Colemans, Jones, Gordons, and Wrights. Lawson's patent extended south to the creek. The other part of the 1,350 acre patent, extending up the river from Tignor's Creek 600 acres, was purchased in 1655 by John Green. Bartholomew Hoskins sent John Cooper from Lower Norfolk to survey it in 1656 for Green. This is the origin of the name Greenfield just above town.

In 1663 Col. Thomas Goodrich of Rappahannock County and Junifer Plover of Middlesex County, England purchased this area from John Green. Later Col. Thomas Goodrich bought Plover out and came into possession of the entire Hoskins patent. The papers

relating to the establishment of Tappahannock in 1682 trace all of this land ownership to the patent which is still referred to in local deeds as late as 1705. There was a village here before there was a town. This village originated with Jacob Hobbs who was apparently an overseer for either Hoskins or Thrush. This village was located where the elementary school grounds are and this was the settlement known as Hobbs His Hole.

In 1682 the town was established immediately down river, across where Marsh Street is located today. Thus when the House of Burgesses passed the famous bill in 1680 providing for the establishment of Ports of Entry, the village was in existence. However, the Rappahannock County Court met near the mouth of Carter's Creek, just across the river. The Court purchased fifty acres of land here for a town. Col. Thomas Goodrich and his son, Benjamin wished to sell the Crown fifty acres on the south side of the river. Thus a dispute arose between the County Court and the Goodriches. The Goodrich cause was poor because both father and son had supported the rebellion of Nathaniel Bacon in 1676. They burnt down the house of the local Indian Chieftan because they resented Berkeley's fur trade with the Indians which was widely believed to be the cause for Berkeley's failure to defend the Colony from Indian attack. Father and son were placed under a fine of 100,000 lbs. of tobacco and were made to humble themselves with halters about their necks before the County Court. Their cause was saved however and Tappahannock established here due to Col. Thomas Gouldman.

Col. Thomas Gouldman owned Goldberry, the neighboring plantation, just up the river from Col. Thomas Goodrich. When Elizabeth Gouldman, his granddaughter, married Col. Thomas Waring, I (d.1754), the plantation passed into that family for several generations. Col. Thomas Waring I, and his sons by Elizabeth Gouldman, represented Essex County in the House of Burgesses until 1771. Col. Thomas Gouldman like Goodrich supported the Bacon cause and was long popular with the voters. In 1676 with Warwick Commack, Alex Donyephann and Henry Aybrey, his father-in-law, Thomas Gouldman signed a petition of fifteen grievances against the government of Sir William Berkeley. They complained of "The great want of honest able sober pious and orthodox ministers" and that the "War with the heathen—may be prosecuted effectually, and managed in such sort that some counties may not be totally ruined while others live in their full bloom height and happiness, flourishing in the profits of their labors which they enjoy in peace and quietness whilst poore Rappahannock lies a bleeding whose number of people murdered and estates destroyed can find no parallel in Virginia" and "that as often as there shall be occasion for any new election of Burgesses that the free men of the country who pay their proportionable parts of all rates of assessments may be admitted with house-keepers to give their votes for such election."

As the representative for Rappahannock County in the House of Burgesses in 1682, Col. Thomas Gouldman, was in a position to overrule the County Court made up of Berkeley men and thus his influence in the House of Burgesses persuaded the Crown to purchase fifty acres from Benjamin Goodrich. This purchase, establishing the town was on March 25, 1682.

Half of Goodrich's 100,000 lbs. tobacco fine for supporting Bacon was paid off. Therefore, the very origin of the town had its cause for being in the issues involved in Bacon's Rebellion. It is little wonder that the chief leading men for Thomas Jefferson were a product of this community which stood so early for a more democratic society in the New

world. The town was given the name of New Plymouth but in 1705 was known as Tappahannock for the original Indian village located here. The original name given in 1682, New Plymouth, may have been for the Puritan Colony in Massachusetts. The Rappahannock Valley had Puritan sympathizers, including such men as Col. William Claiborne of Northumberland, head of the Cromwell faction in Virginia and Col. More Fauntleroy, head of the Cromwell Army in this immediate area. Puritanism took a political turn in Virginia and played a great role in the development of democratic idealism.

In 1705 the first map of the new town was made showing all the streets in the old part of the town from Marsh Street to Earl Street and from Church Street to the River. This map was made by Harry Beverley who also surveyed other parts of entry. He was later to be a member of the survey party drawing the boundary line between North Carolina and Virginia.

Harry Beverley was a son of Major Robert Beverley of Middlesex, head of Berkeley's Army and later Clerk of the House of Burgesses. Harry Beverley owned land in Middlesex, Spotsylvania and Essex. He owned 2,700 acres of land in 1730 known as Port Tobago in Essex County. This had earlier belonged to his wife's grandfather, Major General Robert Smith of Brandon in Middlesex County, his wife being also a niece of Ralph Wormeley, II, of Rosegill, Secretary of the Colony and a member of His Majesty's Council. Harry Beverley owned almost 30,000 acres in several counties. He was a lawyer and, like his father, Clerk of the House of Burgesses. He was also a ship captain and was sent by Governor Spotswood in 1716 to hunt for gold on Spanish ship wrecks. He was captured and remained in prison on Vera Cruz Island in the Caribbean for several years. Col. William Beverley who built "Blandfield" about 1760 was a nephew of Harry Beverley.

There are many descendants of these founding fathers in this area and throughout the United States. As the generations pass it is well to remember such men and bear in mind a statement made by Capt. John Smith—"History is the memory of time, the life of the dead and the happiness of the living".



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