Mr. John McManus October Speaker

The Essex County Historical Society met in the Court House, Tappahannock, Va. at 8:00 p.m., October 16, 1974, with our president, Mr. Sidney J. Hilton, Sr. presiding. Mr. McManus was introduced by the president. Mr. McManus is the chairman of the Historical Society's Committee to work on Essex County's Bicentennial Celebration. Mr. McManus gave us a very interesting history of Tappahannock from 1645 to 1781. He did a great deal of research and all members listened enthusiastically to the beginning of our town and the part it played in Virginia history until the end of the Revolutionary War. Bartheolomew Goskins, for whom the original land grant or patent was made in 1645, was the first owner of what is now Tappahannock. Later history records that Benjamin Goodrich sold the 50 acre plot which was surveyed by George Morris and is now the central part of Tappahannock. Tappahannock has had several names, Hobbs His Hole, New Plymouth, and then was renamed for the Indian Village which was here, Tappahannock. In 1680 the House of Burgesses passed a bill for the Ports of Entry and our village was established in 1682 and is older than Richmond, Fredericksburg, or Baltimore. It was a thriving port in those days. We were a part of Tappahannock County until 1692 when a division was made and Richmond and Essex Counties were founded out of old Tappahannock. From this time and through the Revolution citizens of Tappahannock and Essex County contributed a great deal to the War for Independence. They upheld Patrick Henry in the fight against the Stamp Act, they were against the Townsend Acts, the Intolerance Acts, and took part in the Virginia Resolves edited by George Mason and they were in sympathy with Boston's plight and Massacre of 1770. Many prominent citizens of Essex County, on July 4, 1774, participated in passing 15 resolutions against the Mother Country. Most of these men were still loyal to the Mother Country but such acts as the foregoing they could not take and insisted upon their rights as Englishmen. Mr. John Upshur of Essex was chairman of this group, others were Williams Young, Clerk William Roane, James Edmondson, Thomas Boulware, John Lee, Meriwether Smith, Thomas Roane, Muscoe Garnett, Robert Beverley, John Henshaw, William Smith, Augustine Moore, John Beal, Henry Garnett, Robert Reynolds, John Brockenbrough, Thomas Streshly, Thomas Waring and Archibald Ritchie.

This committee of gentlemen voted to send the Schooner Sally to Boston in the spring of 1775 with many pounds of corn, etc. This was mentioned in an article on the Bicentennial in the September issue of The Reader's Digest. Essex was the only county in the United States mentioned as sending such a ship to aid the people of Boston.

When war was declared, Essex produced approximately 2,000 men of military age. There were approximately 30,000 from Virginia in the Militia and approximately 26,000 Virginians served under Washington's command. Mr. McManus told of his visits to Yorktown, Williamsburg, Gettysburg and many other battlefields and ended his remarks with "Virginians

(Continued on page 4)
Essex Bicentennial Commission

The Essex County Board of Supervisors appointed the Essex Bicentennial Commission on March 12, 1973. Named on the Commission were: Mrs. R. L. Ellis Jr., Barbree Spindle, John McManus, Catherine DeShazo, Mrs. B. F. Harrison, Mrs. Juliet W. Parker and Charles Warner. Mrs. Parker resigned and Mrs. Margaret Hilton was named to fill her place.

The Commission was authorized to plan and carry out the Bicentennial plans for Essex County. It was given authority to name as many committees as needed. A token expense allotment of $25 was made and the Commission was instructed to go back to the Supervisors for further funding. At present the Chairman has the authority to make essential expenses and send in the proper requisition for re-payment.

At the organizational meeting the group elected Catherine DeShazo, Chairman; John McManus, vice chairman; Mrs. B. F. Harrison, treasurer and Mrs. Juliet Parker, secretary. After Mrs. Parker's resignation Barbree Spindle was elected secretary.

After much study the Commission set up several areas of research: 1. To formulate a roster of Essex men who fought in the Revolution—Charles Warner and Arnold Motley, co-chairmen; 2. Life styles of the 1750-1780 period in this area of Virginia. Catherine DeShazo, chairman; 3. The role of religion in the events leading to the Revolution, Barbree Spindle and Jeanette Ellis, co-chairmen; 4. The history of Black people during that period, Mrs. Harrison, chairman; 5. General research, John McManus, chairman; 6. Pageant—Writing, Catherine DeShazo, Directing, Margaret Hilton.

It was agreed that all research will be prepared and then placed under the care of Arnold Motley, Clerk of the County and kept by him in the Court Record room to be freely used, but not removed from that location. It is anticipated that a number of papers and articles and one or more books may grow out of this research, but the authors will be responsible for printing or otherwise using the materials.

The roster committee has found that almost 2,000 men were in military service from Essex County in the Revolution. In working on this subject Charles Warner has made interesting discoveries including a previously unknown fact pertaining to actual combat on the Rappahannock River during the Revolution.

The committee studying life styles has assembled material in limited amounts pertaining to the life of the slaves, the servants, the ministers, the farmers, the merchants, the plantation owners and the “early nobility.”

Barbree Spindle’s committee numbering over 30 has done extensive research in the Baptist movement, some in the Church of England and is now concerned with the Methodist movement. Mrs. Agnes Ware has proposed that a history of the churches and denominational developments of Essex County be written. This is under study at the present time, but details of finances, authorship, etc. have not been solved.

Mrs. Harrison has established goals for her research and has assembled certain books and references which her committee is using. This committee has the most difficult assignment due to the lack of previous research in this field, but it also offers one of the greatest challenges.

Mr. McManus has compiled a valuable list of reference materials, is heading the committee collecting available materials and hopes to be able to secure donations with which to purchase some outstanding books which will help the work of all members of the Commission. It is hoped that by the end of the Bi-

Revolutionary Soldiers

This is but a brief account of the information the Bicentennial Commission is assembling on soldiers.

The District committee of Safety (Essex and Middlesex) referred their nomination of either Griffin Fauntleroy or Charles Reade as their choice to be Second Lieutenant to the “company of regulars for that district,” to the State Committee of Safety—“whereupon this committee determine the appointment in favour of Mr. Griffin Fauntleroy” —Williamsburg, March 2, 1776 (8, Calendar of Virginia State Papers, 104). Committee of Correspondence of Essex County, chosen 6 December, 1774—(5, William and Mary Quarterly, (1) 254): John Upshaw, Chairman; William Roane, James Edmondson, Thomas Boulware, John Lee, Meriwether Smith, Thomas Roane, Robert Beverley, Muscoe Garnett, William Young, Clerk; John Henshaw, William Smith, Augustine Moore, John Beale, Henry Garnett, Robert Rennolds, John Brockenborough, Thomas Streshley, Thomas Waring, Archibald Ritchie. “The number of men of military age in Virginia in 1776 from “Virginia Legislative Papers” Essex—400. (18, Virginia Magazine of History, 35). Convention of Delegates for the counties and corporations of Virginia, Richmond, Va. July 17, 1775—“An ordinance for raising and embodying a sufficient force for the defence and protection of this colony”—Be it therefore ordained, by the authority aforesaid, that this colony be immediately formed and divided into sixteen districts”—Gloucester, Middlesex, Essex, King and Queen and King William were one of the 16 districts organized to defend the colony—(9, Hening’s Statutes, 16). Officers for Essex: William Roane, Colonel; Thomas Streshley, Major; John Webb, Captain; Streshley Rennolds, Captain. In an order from Williamsburg for the distribution of salt, the Essex Militia of 550 men were to receive presented during March 27, 1776 (8, Calendar of Virginia State Papers, 140).

Cornelius Bussey entered service as a resident of Essex County about March 22, 1781, 5th Va. Regt. under Capt. Woodson. “They marched up James River to Point of Forks where Col. Tarleton approached and took their baggage.” Soldier of Infantry, continental line. He returned to Essex from his regiment, served under Generals Wayne and Greene in South Carolina. He returned to Essex with Richard Cauvain, Thomas Hardy, William Fisher, Benjamin Fisher, Richard Johnson, Archelaus Merritt and William Merritt.

In June or July of 1778 Leroy Canaday was drafted in Essex County where he resided. He was a private. “He marched under Capt. John Hinshaw to Hobbs Hole on the Rappahannock for the purpose of protecting the place from the depredations of a piratical vessel under a man named Goodridge who had been the means of depriving their owners of several hundred Negroes and had taken a vessel and lying at Hobbs Hole loaded with wheat. They succeeded in retaking the vessel with only one man killed. Within the next year he served in defending the plantations on the Rappahannock against the enemy’s marauding vessels. He often had to make short tours of observation of four or five days and other times of not more than one (Continued on page 3)

centennial there will be a respectable collection of such material in the Clerk’s Office.

Mrs. John Wall and Mrs. Hannah Overton have been added to Mrs. Hilton’s committee. They are tentatively contemplating not a pageant given in an arena or theatre, but episodes to be presented near the spot where the action took place when possible. It is hoped that at least two episodes can be during the Summer Festival in August of 1975.—Catherine P. DeShazo, Chairman, Essex Bicentennial Commission.
Religious Change and Growth

The people could not get a minister during the American Revolution and the churches were closed until 1791. The convention met in 1785 to organize the Diocese of Virginia to which the parish sent Spencer Roane and Newman Brockenbrough as delegates. Dr. John Brockenbrough of Tappahannock secured a teacher from Scotland to come in 1791 to instruct his children and those of Archibald Ritchie. His name was Andrew Syme. When Bishop Madison, the first Bishop of Virginia, was visiting in Dr. Brockenbrough's home he convinced Mr. Syme that he should become an Episcopal minister. He was the first person to be ordained by a Bishop in Virginia and became the minister of South Farnham Parish. The people of all churches came to hear him. He went to Bristol Parish at the end of two years. The parish was without a minister for another twenty years. The final blow was struck in 1802 when the Virginia Assembly passed an act seizing the glebes, churches and other properties of the Episcopal Church.

The people of South Farnham Parish gathered together in 1820 and elected a vestry and called a minister, the Rev. John Reynolds, a Wesleyan Methodist from England.

The Rev. John Peyton McGuire, “the Apostle to the Tappahannock” succeeded Mr. Reynolds in 1826 as parson of the two parishes of St. Anne and South Farnham. During the 26 years of his ministry St. Paul's Church was built in 1838. The Town Chapel was outgrown and St. John's was built in 1849 at Tappahannock. When he left to become Headmaster of Episcopal High School the life of the parish had been restored and the Rev. H. W. L. Temple became its rector. Mr. McGuire came back to retire in Tappahannock after the Civil War and is buried with his second wife, Judith Brockenbrough, in St. John's churchyard.—Rev. Joseph S. Ewing.

We do not know who deserves recognition as the first Baptist to settle in Essex County, but many distinguished family names of this area appear on the rosters of Baptist churches founded prior to the American Revolution.

Lewis Craig, a distinguished pioneer Baptist preacher of Virginia and Kentucky, was born in Orange County, Virginia about the year 1737. He was the first awakened by the preaching of Samuel Harris, about the year 1765.

“Soon after his conversion and before his baptism . . . he was indicted “for preaching the gospel contrary to law.” The celebrated John Waller was one of the jurors in the case. (Cathcart, Vol. 1, p. 285.)

Lewis Craig was largely instrumental in the formation of Tuckahoe, Upper King and Queen and Upper Essex churches. (Semple, p. 472) He died about A.D. 1824 in the eighty-seventh year of his age, leaving an honored memory as an earnest and powerful exhorter, a sweet-spirited companion, a heavenly minded Christian, and a minister of the Cross, who had endured “hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.” (Semple, p. 473)

“Many a rude arbor and shaded grove and private dwelling, unlicensed by the general court as places for preaching, yet used as such by the Baptist preachers, became witnesses of the stand which they took; while the jails in Alexandria, Warrenton, Culpeper, Frederickburg, Tappahannock and Urbanna, as well as those in King and Queen, Caroline and Chesterfield, became witnesses of the penalty which they endured.” (Semple, Preface, p. 4)

On March 13, 1774 the day on which Piscataway church was constituted, a warrant was issued to apprehend all Baptist preachers that were at the meeting. Accordingly, John Waller, John Shackelford, Robert Ware and Ivison Lewis were taken and carried before a magistrate. Ivison Lewis was dismissed, not having preached in the county; the other three were sent to prison. They continued in close confinement from the 13th to the 21st of March, which was court day. Being brought to trial, they were required to give bond and security for their good behavior for twelve months, or go back to prison. Ware and Shackelford gave bond and went home; Waller being always doubtful of the propriety of giving any bond whatever, determined to go back to jail. (Semple p. 40)

This imprisonment and trial took place in Tappahannock, the county seat of Essex. The old courthouse, before whose bar these godly men were arraigned, was a few years since purchased, remodelled and fitted up as a house of worship for the Centennial Baptist Church (Beale Memorial Baptist Church).

“October 9, 1790—They (Dover Cess'n.) met at Diamond meeting-house in Essex county. Letters from twenty-nine churches were received, which speak of pleasant times.” (Semple p. 123)

Submitted by Barbee Spindle, Co-Chairman of The Committee of Religion and Churches.

Revolutionary Soldiers

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or two. He claims only three months for all of this service.” (Dorman, Virginia Revolutionary Pension Abstracts, Vol. 15, p. 40).

Committee chairmen are Mr. Arnold Motley and Mr. Charles Warner of Tappahannock, members are Mr. and Mrs. W. R. Gardner of Dunsville and Mrs. Peyton Hundle of Center Cross. The objectives of the Revolutionary Soldiers Committee are: to collect all possible names of Essex soldiers who served in either the militia or the Continental Army; to record their military record as to regiment, rank and battles served in; and when possible to determine where they settled after the Revolution (whether in Essex or in another county or state). Other information where especially colorful or interesting will be recorded. Among numerous sources being used or which will be used are: the Essex Court Records, old family papers and letters, books and Revolutionary records in the Virginia State Library and newspapers of the period such as The Virginia Gazette. Mrs. W. R. Gardner has found a large ledger book in which her father, the late distinguished historian Thomas H. Warner has listed the names and military records of almost 2,000 Essex men.

Submitted by Charles W. H. Warner, Co-Chairman of The Soldiers Committee.

Officers of the Society

President Mr. Sidney J. Hilton Sr.
Vice-President Mr. Arnold Motley
Treasurer Mrs. Percy R. Eubank
Secretary Mrs. William A. Wright

** Publications Committee

Chairman, Mr. Charles W. H. Warner; Members, Mrs. William A. Wright, Mrs. J. M. Evans, Mr. Jeffrey M. O'Dell.

** Meetings are held quarterly in the Essex County Court House. Dues are $2.00 per year. For copies of publication send 60¢ to Mrs. J. M. Evans, Box 8, Tappahannock, Virginia.
Negro Culture - Revolutionary Era

Objectives: (1) To find out if there were any Negroes from Essex County involved in the Revolutionary war: (A) Who they were (B) Role (C) Approximate number (D) Burial site. (2) To determine the names of Negro people who lived in Essex County during the Revolution: (A) Where they originally came from (B) The derivation of their names (C) Heritage. (3) To investigate the home or the burial site of the same (A) Structure or type of home (B) Size (C) History. (4) To determine the types of work performed by such individuals: (A) Male (B) Female. (5) To determine church affiliation. (6) To find out if any churches existed, for Negroes only, during the Revolutionary period: (A) Location (B) History of each. (7) To determine the type of music they used: (A) List some of the songs (B) Identity or list composers. (8) To describe the types of costumes worn during the Revolutionary era. (9) To determine if there were any Negro office holders in Essex during this period: (A) Who they were (B) Office Held. (10) To determine the marital status of Negroes: (A) Average size of family (B) Medical care given families. (11) To determine the education received by Negroes during the Revolutionary period. (12) To determine the social customs of Negroes during the Revolution.


Committee Members: Mrs Marian Holmes—Hustle, Mrs. Lucretha Harris—Tappahannock, Mr. W. O. Willis—Dunnsville, Chairman, Marie H. Harrison. General Organization: Each member of the committee will be asked to select the objectives he/she would like to work on. We shall spend a certain amount of time to do research and then come together as a group to discuss our findings. This, I realize, will consist of several meetings. What Has Been Done: I have discussed the general plan and objectives with committee members, by phone, and have secured some books on Negro History from the Essex High School library. Future Plans: 1. Meetings with committee members. 2. Visit libraries (A) Virginia Union (B) State Library (C) Virginia State College. 3. Search records at Essex County Courthouse. 4. Secure literature and books pertaining to the Negro during the Revolution.

Submitted by MARIE H. HARRISON, Chairman of The Committee, Cultural Life Style of Negro People.

Mr. John McManus October Speaker

(Continued from page 1)

may be very proud of their antecedents who played such an important role in our country's founding."

Following Mr. McManus's address, Mr. Hilton called the business part of the meeting to order and the minutes of the July meeting were read and approved. Mrs. Percy R. Eubank, Treasurer, gave her report and our finances were looking up some. Still many of our members have not paid this year's dues.

Mr. Hilton appointed a Nominating Committee to bring in a slate of officers for the January meeting, they were: Mr. Joseph Ewing, Chairman, Mrs. Charles N. DeShazo, and Mrs. J. M. Evans.

Mr. Hilton also called attention to the fact that our by-laws state that we should have an Executive Committee, made up of the four officers and two members from the society, one to serve for one year and one to serve for two years. These will be elected at the same time the slate of officers is elected in January. There being no old business, Mr. Hilton said that he understood that "Old Essex Mill" might soon be left vacant, when the present Miller is no longer able to run it. He and Mrs. Hilton thought it might be a good idea for the Essex County Historical Society to look into the possibility of preserving this old historic site. Following discussion, Mrs. Charles N. DeShazo, seconded by Mr. Charles Warner, moved that Mr. Hilton appoint a committee to look into the matter and report back at a later date.

Mr. Charles Warner suggested that our summer meeting would draw more members if it were held at one of the seventeen historic landmark places in Essex County. Miss Willie Weathers seconded the motion and it carried. Mr. Hilton will appoint a committee to look into this matter and determine where we can hold a meeting which might be a very good drawing card for our present members and get new ones. It was suggested that the Society does not publicize its meetings and that we would like to be doing more to draw new members. One of our new members who has bought an old place in the county "Greenway," Mrs. Robert McAllor volunteered to be the publicity chairman and to try to increase our membership.

Miss Ann W. Dibble, Field Representative, of the Museum of Early Southern Decorative Arts, Old Salem, Inc., Winston Salem, N. C., who was present at our meeting, asked all members to get in touch with her at 443-2958, if we had anything that might be of interest to the museum. The Museum is very anxious to get all of these things cataloged so that in the future these valuable museum pieces can be located.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

ANNE T. WRIGHT, SECRETARY

Mrs Henrietta Waring Wolfe

WHEREAS Almighty God has removed by death our friend and late President, Mrs. Henrietta Waring Wolfe, and WHEREAS we deem it fitting and appropriate that we should give expression of our appreciation of her character and service, therefore be it RESOLVED:

I. That in the death of Mrs. Henrietta Waring Wolfe, the Essex County Historical Society has lost a faithful, efficient and distinguished member and officer, her family a loving mother and her associates and relations, a true and loyal friend.

RESOLVED II, That we tender to the family of our associate and friend our heartfelt sympathies at this time of deep distress.

RESOLVED III, That a copy of these Resolutions be recorded by the secretary in the record book of the Essex County Historical Society.

RESOLVED IV, That a copy of these Resolutions be sent to the children of Mrs. Wolfe and to her Aunt, Mrs. Lucia Waring Cooper, and to The Rappahannock Times.

CHARLES W. H. WARNER as directed by the Essex County Historical Society, Aug. 7, 1974.