Essex County Historical Society

ESSEX COUNTY 1692

VOLUME 14 TAPPAHANNOCK, VIRGINIA NOVEMBER, 1978

BEAVER'S HILL

by EDWARD WRIGHT HAILE

This old home has gone through an eventful hundred and sixty years and is still owned by descendants of the original owner and builder Capt. Robert Gaines Haile (1787-1863). Even today the lands may touch on the patent made to his thrice great-grand-father Capt. Richard Haile in 1694. The name "Beavers Hill" is said to pre-date the present estate and so the association of that name with the Haile family is longer than known records can describe.

When his father John Haile, Sr. made his will in 1809 he made no mention of his son Robert Gaines though he includes his other two sons Richard Thomas and John Jr. To John Jr. fell the bulk of his estate. We assume Robert Gaines was about to have the will upset after his fathers death for soon after his brother John Jr. deeds him half equity. Robert Gaines thereupon bought out the other half and this property is apparently where he erected the present house of Beavers Hill.

John Jr. married Sarah Aldridge, daughter of Adam Aldridge of Frederick Co. and he evidently removed there.

Robert Gaines Haile married first Matilda I. Wright (1789-1817), daughter of Edward Wright and Polly Pitts Wright of "Wrightsville", King and Queen County. They had two daughters, Mary C. Haile (b. 1812) who married first Arthur L. Barnes and second R. G. Leavel, and Emily A. Haile (b. 1815) who married N. I. E. Whitlocke.

Robert Gaines went in the army, served in the war of 1812, and returned home with the rank of Captain. In the year 1818 he began the construction of Beavers Hill.

Matilda Wright Haile had died in 1817 and Robert Gaines married in 1821 Elizabeth Buckner Jones (1798-1874), daughter of Captain William Jones (d. 1818) and Elizabeth Buckner (d. 1818). Capt. Jones was the son of Capt. John Jones (c. 1730-1779) and Ann Madison (Jones) (1733-1819) and was through his mother, a second cousin to President James Madison.

By 1822 the house was near completion and the newly-weds went to live there. An old story says the front steps had not yet been built and he carried his bride over logs raised to reach the threshhold of the front door.

It is also said they brought five children with them. Two were daughters of his first marriage, the bride's younger sister Mary and brother Madison Jones and Captain Haile's nephew Benjamin Haile. By the records of the Jones Bible, Mary was six and Madison T. age 3 years. There is however no definite record of these children at Beavers Hill.

There the Hailes lived out their lives. Of their nine children, eight were raised to maturity:

John Haile, who married Mary H. Semple, daughter of James Semple, February 13, 1851. To this union there were born 14 children, seven boys and seven daughters. John Haile's second marriage to Matilda Wright, June 5, 1872, no children.

William Jones Haile, a doctor, married Kate Jones, June 1857. No issue. William's second marriage to Ella Gresham, December 21, 1892. No issue.

Elizabeth Buckner Haile, married John D. Hutchinson, December 18, 1844. To this union was born 12 children, five boys and seven girls.

Ann (or Mattie) Madison Haile, married Dr. Thomas Latane. To this union were born nine children, five boys and four girls.

Robert Gaines Haile Jr. (Captain in Civil War) married Mollie Burke, June 12, 1856. To this union were born three girls.

Edward Littleton Haile died at three months of age.

Lucy Edmonds Haile, married J. G. Cannon, June 26, 1884, no issue.

Sarah (or Sally) Matilda Haile, married Alexander Woodford Broaddus, April 19, 1859. To this union were born 11 children, four boys and seven girls.

Virginia (or Virgie) Haile, married James G. Cannon, October 26, 1870, three sons were born to this union.

Robert Gaines Haile Sr. died in 1863. A large share of the land seems to have been left to the two daughters by his first marriage the Mrs. Barnes-Leavel and the Mrs. Whitlocke, but no will survives. On the basis of plats at the Essex Court House the lands amounted to some 1700 acres. The balance in land and the house itself fell to his widow Elizabeth (Jones) Haile.

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Beaver's Hill

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She died in 1874 and in that year was drawn a note by which her daughter Lucy Edmonds Haile (1835-1896) agrees to make three payments to John Haile and Dr. William Jones Haile, her brothers, of $634.15 over three twelve months, a total of $1902.45. The note does not say for what, but this will have to be for the purchase of their shares of the estate of Beavers Hill left by their mother. Lucy Edmonds Haile later wills the house and 311 acres surrounding, to her three nephew/step children in 1896. From this I assume the same acreage with the house to have been the amount left by Captain Robert Gaines Haile to his widow, and most likely corresponds to all the lands he owned on the south side of Piscataway Creek. This acreage comes down intact to the present. If we add this to the 1700 acres he left (apparently) to the heirs by his first marriage, the total acreage of Beavers Hill at the death of Captain Haile in 1862 runs to over 2000 acres. It is in fact told that Beavers Hill once took in property extending all the way to Whitlocke's Fork (now Kino P.O.), an area easily containing this vast amount of land.

Virginia Haile (1841-1882), daughter of R. G. Haile and Elizabeth Jones Haile, married James Gibson Cannon in 1870. They had three sons, Robert Haile, James Mason, and William. Virginia died September 12, 1882 and her sister Lucy Edmonds Haile, married the widower Cannon and became stepmother to her three nephews.

Mr. Cannon was a native of Bridgetown, Caroline Co., Maryland. He was an educated man and served as superintendent of public schools in King & Queen County and a State Senator (1878-1880). He is remembered as "rough speaking" and committed the outrage of joining the Republican Party. For this behavior his own brother, John Cannon, an attorney in Kansas, demanded an explanation in a letter dated 1894.

Evidently when Virginia died the man was on the point of returning to Maryland with the children. He was not popular with the Hailes in-laws but Lucy was so attached to the children that she could not let them go. She had lived with the Cannons and seems to have made the boys her special concern, at any rate she married their father.

Lucy died in 1897 and, excluding her husband, she left Beavers Hill to her three stepsons equally. James M. bought out his two brothers and lived there. During the dry years he got mixed up in the illegal whiskey business and became notorious. He narrowly missed arrest in raids on the property. One still was so close to the house it was stumbled upon by a guest at one of the Haile reunions. James met his downfall when he went bail for one of the men arrested operating a still on the place. The man didn't show up for trial. The debt over-whelmed James and Beavers Hill was put up for auction December 1928. It was bought entire by John Robert Mann, originally of Powcan, King & Queen and returned from North Dakota. He left the estate to his wife and children. His son William Page inherited one quarter, bought out the remainder, and is the present owner (1976).

William Page Mann married in August 1939 Matilda Wright Haile, daughter of John Haile of Elton, and great granddaughter of Robert Gaines Haile of Beavers Hill. They came there to live in 1934. The house was in great disrepair. Through a courageous effort the house and farm were restored and are today one of the finest adaptation of the old and new of which I am aware.

Captain Robert Gaines Haile, Jr.

Captain Robert Gaines Haile, Jr., the son of Captain R. G. Haile Sr. of the War of 1812, and Elizabeth Buckner (Jones) Haile, was born at "Beavers Hill", Essex Co. on April 1, 1832.

Here he spent his early life. In 1856 he married Mary Susan Burke. To this union there were born three children, Lucy Emma, Susie Burke and Betty Buckner.

In the early days of the war between the states Captain Haile volunteered and joined the company of Essex volunteers gotten up by Thomas Burke, a young VMI student. Captain Haile served with Company F of the 55th Regiment.

He received a mortal wound in the battle of June 30, 1862, at Gaines Mill near Richmond, and spent a night of unutterable anguish on that bloody field, from which he was borne to a hospital in the city; but, through the intervention of friends, was removed to the private home of Mr. Barnes, where, after every attention and effort of kindred, physicians and friends failed to heal him, he breathed his last on the 26th of July, 1862, and his remains were conveyed to "Beavers Hill", the place of his birth and riper years, for interment where amid weeping relatives and friends, the services were performed.

Captain Haile, only thirty years of age, fell another martyr to the cause of the south—and there added to the long list of heroes who trod the same glorious, yet bloody path.

He was a useful man—highly esteemed and loved in his own county. He was a gentleman, a patriot and above all, a Christian.

He left to mourn his death a young widow and three young children, an aged father, mother, brothers and sisters.

"They shall grow not old, as we who are left grow old.
Age shall not weary them nor the years condem.
In the going down of the sun, and in the morning
we shall remember."

The following are excerpts of his unfinished diary written during the seven days Battle around Richmond. This diary is owned by Mollie Haile Banks of Essex County.

June the 1st.

This morning the fight has commenced again. I have just gotten back from a hill, from which there is a very fine view of the surrounding country. While there I could hear a perpetual roar of small arms and cannon, and could see very distinctly a balloon on the opposite sides of the river, sent up by the yankees to find our position. I could see a man in the basket very plainly.

Our brigade is stationed here to guard the central railroad bridge which crosses the Chickahominy at

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Captain Robert Gaines Haile, Jr.

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this place. About one o'clock today we received an order to strike tents and get ready to march. After packing everything up and the men having put on their knapsacks another order we received, ordering us to unpack and raise our tents again. The men declared they would not raise them before night for fear of having to strike them again.

I walked to Gen. Fields headquarters just now in front of Mrs. Gooche's. I found Andrew Whitlock there; he was staying there as courier for the General. We took a seat under the shade on the road, had been there but a short time before Gen. Anderson's brigade came marching by. Judging from appearances it seemed to be a most excited one, the men looked as if they could do good fighting.

The weather today is sultry and hot and the men seemed to suffer very much from it. It took fully an hour for the brigade to pass me, it almost made my head giddy, the constant tramp of the men as they passed by.

Dr. Gresham arrived here this evening from Richmond, he says that he was on the battlefield yesterday evening. Our forces drove the enemy back on the right and captured some two thousand of them. Our loss is severe, some seventeen hundred killed and wounded, amongst them a great many fine officers. General Johnson is said to be slightly wounded. There are thousands of reports, it is hard to get the truth. The drum has just beat for our Regiment to go on picket.

The sun is now nearly down and I am stationed with thirteen men on the railroad bridge across the Chickahominy River to keep the enemy from crossing. They are not more than eight hundred yards off and have a masqued battery which commands the railroad and bridge. They could kill us very easily if they wanted. It made me feel quite nervous as I marched up on the railroad. We have cannon posted to command the road also. I don't reckon the enemy would fire unless we were to attempt to cross to the side which they are on. It is now six o'clock, I will be relieved at ten. The black gnats are very annoying. They keep me slapping my face and hands most of the time. I will now close my narrative for the day.

June the 2nd.

I have heard no news today from the fight of yesterday, I can hear no sounds indicating that a fight is going on today. I made sure on yesterday that the fight would become a general one and that matters would soon be decided one way or the other, I am getting weary of waiting and don't care how soon the great struggle takes place: I shall go into it with fear and trembling I know, but I am determined to discharge all my duties as a brave man should as far as it is in my power to do so.

I have just gotten and read today's paper. I would cheerfully give a five dollar bill if I was at home. There is a long description of the fight which took place yesterday and saturday. There was great loss of life on both sides. We have to morn the death of a great many fine officers.

Our forces succeeded in driving the yankees back from all their positions. We captured their camp and a great many provisions, among them one hundred barrels of whisky. It is said that our soldiers feasted on oranges and lemons. I would like to have had a hand in that. The enemy is reported to have fought very desperately. We captured twenty eight pieces of artillery and seven hundred prisoners. The news from Jackson is very encouraging. It has been very hot today. I am feeling better this evening than I did this morning.

June the 6th.

As I expected our regiment went on picket last night. As our company the last time it was out, had the hardest time of it, I claimed that it should be on the reserve this time. I therefore got as much sleep last night as usual. I have been looking at the Yankees on the opposite side of the river this morning entrenching themselves. That is the system that they are going to preserve, they will entrench on that side and then every inch of ground they get on this side. I don't think it should be allowed. I go for attacking them at once and never stop until they are driven from our side.

The very idea of two large armies only separated by a small stream to be entrenching themselves is out of the question. I go in for their meeting each other in the open ground and fight it out and be done with it. From present appearances I fear that things will continue pretty nearly as they are all summer.

This morning after a good deal of form and trouble I got permission to visit Richmond and return in the evening. The walk is about three miles from where we camp. It has been fifteen months since I was there last. Under what different circumstances I find it now. It was then all quiet and peaceful, now it is threatened by an army of two hundred thousand seeking to destroy or capture.

A bloody fight has already taken place near it and hundreds of brave men have been killed in defending the capitol. There are now hundreds of others lying in the hospitals of the city wounded. I saw a great many of these poor fellows, they seemed to be nursed with the utmost especially so by the ladies.

What a sad picture it is to the spectators to look at them as they lie scattered on small cots or beds in a large room. Some perhaps thousands of miles from those whom they love most dearly on earth. How they must long to have them near, to nurse and care for them.

I found everything selling at exhorbitant prices. I bought very few things, had my deguerreotype taken and got some candy and toys to send home to my little daughters. I got a most excellent dinner at the Pawhatan Hotel, the first good one I have had since leaving home.

June the 10th.

We got to our picket station a little after sundown yesterday. Myself and Albert Mecare went to sleep on some planks not thinking it would rain before morning. We were awakened by the rain about day, got up and went to a fire. It was raining very fast and a real cold one at that, we had a most disagreeable time of it. At eleven o'clock I had to take sixteen men and relieve the guard at the bridge.

The Yankee pickets and ours are on very friendly terms, they are not more than two or three hundreds yards apart. I had not been there long before one

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Captain Robert Gaines Haile, Jr.

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of the Yankees adavnced, waved his cap and made signs for someone to meet him. I told Fergerson to take a paper and exchange it with him, he went but the man did not have a paper with him. He told Fergerson he would return and get one for him he also asked how we were off for provisions, Fergerson replied that we had abundance of everything except coffee, that article was not so abundant as one could wish. The Yankee then told him he would bring him some of that too if he would accept it.

In about an hour he returned and sure enough brought both paper and coffee.

About one O'clock two men came riding down the road waving a white flag, I immediately started and met them half way between the pickets when I met them they asked me if I was in charge of the post. I told them I was not, Capt. Burke was. They said they came to pass Mrs. General Lee to our line and would like to see the officers in charge. I called to Mr. Stone and told him to go and ask Capt. Burke to come. I had quite a long conversation with them. One was Col. Trobert, commander of the first New York Vol. Regiment, the other a surgeon. In a few minutes a Lieut. came he was an officer in the same company that Gen. Field used to command. All three seemed to be men of refinement and sense. After talking a while one of them took out a flask and asked me to take a drink. As I was wet and cold I thanked him and took a good pull at it, found it to be very nice whiskey.

I wanted to know of them how they could claim a victory in the late fight below Richmond. When we had driven them back two miles capturing their camp and taking a great many other things, they said they would admit that we got the best of it on Saturday but they made up for it on Sunday, said they buried twelve hundred of our dead for us.

After a good deal of talking and formalities Mrs. Lee was passed to our lines. Thus ended a day that I never shall forget.

Matilda Wright Haile

by Christine McRae Cocke

Something was going on. Grandma was mad, she was talking in a high excited voice. I must have been about 12 years of age and slipped quietly out on the porch. Mr. Barefoot, the local carpenter was on the ground looking up at Grandma carefully explaining something and ending with "I never had a lady mad at me". Instantly Grandma shouted, "you can no longer say that again, you can no longer say that again". Suddenly she was no longer mad, which was one of her charms for me. She and Mr. Barefoot arranged matters in a most business like manner.

"Miss Til" as she was called by most people was the best farmer and the best business woman anywhere in the neighborhood, maybe in the county.

Grandma was born Matilda Wright, December 20 in the same year Queen Victoria was crowned. When about grown she decided she needed a middle name so she chose Roland and became, Matilda Roland Wright.

In 1875 an old maid of over 30 years, she married a neighbor, John Haile whose wife had died leaving 10 children, and became Matilda Roland Wright Haile. All her mail came to M. R. W. Haile and I think that is the way she signed all her papers.

Grandma was born at Retreat, an old 18th century house in Essex County, Virginia and that is where I lived with her. Her father died when she was very small, she and her mother then moved to Poplar Grove, a farm about 6 miles away where her Grandmother Wright lived and reigned.

Betty Wright who was Mrs. Emanuel Jones and her family lived at Retreat and farmed it in a sort of way. Grandma thought Mr. Jones a little too aristocratic to be a good farmer.

At Poplar Grove Grandma learned to work for her servants (they were never called slaves). Before she was 5 she learned to knit and sew in order to clothe the many servants she had inherited. Nobody in that part of Virginia ever sold a servant. To sell a slave or flog one was simply not done. The servants they could not employ were sent to Richmond and rented. Frequent letters of complaint came from Richmond because the slaves were not behaving. Sometimes crimes were committed and as Grandma grew up she had to decide what should be done with them.

Over and over I heard her say the happiest day of her life was the day Mr. Lincoln freed the slaves. A great burden was lifted. She did not have to feed and clothe them or take care of them when sick or decide what was the best way to make them behave.

Grandma went for one year to the Virginia Female Institute in Stanton and won a gold medal for scholarship and conduct dated 1857. It was one of her treasures which she gave me. A few years ago realizing my grandchildren would never have time to even look at that medal, I gave it to Stuart Hall the present name for the old school. Grandma roomed with a cousin, another Matilda Wright and they were known as Matilda R. and Matilda J., all their lives they were devoted.

Matilda J's grand-daughters were my best friends. Strange to say they died the very same time.

I use to try to get Grandma to talk about the civil war. Some of our neighbors fought in the war and they could talk by the hour, but Grandma usually spoke of the favor Mr. Lincoln bestowed on her and let it go at that. Dahlgreen made a raid through King & Queen, but just before he reached the county line of Essex he turned around and went back so the people of Essex never saw any real fighting.

I expect during that time Grandma had moved back to her own home Retreat. She and her mother were busy learning to farm. She often repeated a little rhyme.

She also began to teach a little private school. The neighborhood children came and two or three little girls from a distance boarded in the house. One of the rooms at Retreat was known as the school room. After the war when everybody else was desperately poor Grandma and her mother were fairly comfortable. She always felt she set a good table and lived like a rich woman. She never did anything in a stingy or

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Matilda Wright Haile

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niggardly fashion. Plenty of her friends had to live that way, but she was fortunate.

When a penniless widower, John Haile, walked across the fields and began to court Miss Til, nobody thought she would have him.

I only know Grandfather by hearsay. His father died during the war, a man rich enough to give his children big farms for wedding presents. When the war was over only the farms were left and Grandfather like other southern gentlemen never expected to work and had no intention of learning. Once Grandma said she was sorry, I could not remember Grandpa for he was a man of courtly manners and a queer little sense of humor that appealed to her.

In 1875 when she married she moved to an old house in full view named Elton and her mother continued to live at Retreat. She said it took her a long time to get Elton cleaned up and running smoothly but the children helped. Some of the older children were grown and had left home. Two older girls, Mollie and Annie were teaching in South Carolina and eventually married there. The oldest son Jimmy was working and studying to be a doctor.

The washing was a big job so Grandma surprised the community by buying a washing machine. It had to be worked by hand, but there were plenty of children to do that. By the time I came along the washing machine was just a memory for she was affluent enough to put her washing out. Using a washing machine was something you could use under pressure, but did not get the clothes as clean as a wash board.

Grandma thought she was ugly at least she often said her face was ugly, but she had beautiful hands (she always wore gloves and took real care of her hands). This she sincerely thought, no vanity at all, only once in all her life did she have her picture taken. She was 18 years old at the time and she carefully destroyed the picture before she died. She did have some white moles on her broad jolly wrinkled face the one on her nose was small and inconspicuous because once when she was getting a ham from the top nail in the smoke house the ham fell into her face and cut the mole off her nose. There was a joke in the family that when I was very little, I said I wanted to have a mole on my nose when I grew up, just like Grannies. To a child her face was beautiful.

When Virginia passed a law establishing public schools there was opposition among the best people, against the wishes and advice of some of her friends, Grandma applied for a license to teach in a school about a mile and a half through the woods. For years she taught some of the Elton children and a great many others. The school year was only five months and the salary $30 a month. As the five youngest children one by one reached the proper age, Grandma sent them to a private school. Uncle Robert and Uncle Frank went to Abeerdeen run by Col. Council for a year each and rounded out their education. Aunt Mattie went to school in Fredericksburg and lived with an aunt. I believe this old lady went to bed early, took a little cat nap, waked up, though it was far in the night and made Aunt Mattie go to bed at once. She never had time to study. Also I have heard the little old lady did not like young people to come to visit Aunt Mattie.

Aunt Beale was sent to Mr. Garlicks School at Bruington. Grandma rather regreted her choice of that school for the Garlicks were Baptist and so was Grandma. This influenced Aunt Beale to become a Baptist instead of being an Episcopalian as the Haile family had always been. I often heard Grandma say that was a mistake. She really loved the Episcopal Church, but her family were Baptist and never expected to change.

My mother, Lizzie, except in Essex County where she was called Tiny (pronounced Teeny) was sent to Orange to Mr. Hansbrough's school. She went there two years, but assumed a debt for the second year. Somewhere I have a letter Mr. Hanbrough wrote her when she paid off the last cent. While there she heard Mrs. Hansbrough wish for a set of brass andirons when she mentioned that wish to Grandma, she said, "By all means give her ours, for polishing andirons is one thing I do not like to do."

I used to dream that some day the Hansbrough's would give the andirons back to me. I thought I would be so happy I would not mind polishing them.

Anyway mother loved and admired the Hansbrough's so much that when she married into the McRae family she persuaded Major McRae to send his two daughters to Orange to school. So Aunt Janie and Aunt Anna went to Mr. Hansbrough school also. Aunt Janie learned to make bread with yeast and was very proud of that feat. Nobody else in the McRae family could make risen bread.

Grandma lived well and set a good table. She worked hard herself over hens, turkeys, ducks and a garden and we enjoyed the fruits of her hard labor. Just before I went off to school my Aunt Christian from Lumber City, Georgia and her husband Captain Day came to pay us a visit at Grandma's. In after years she acknowledged she was nervous about that visit and put the "big pot in the little one." Uncle John Day was rich and experienced in the ways of the world. He and Aunt Christian traveled a great deal and always stayed at the best hotels. He was big hearted and articulate as well as a big eater and he and Grandma hit it off exactly. The rest of his life he bragged about the excellent food Grandma served and the wonderful manager she was.

Incredible as it seems these days when Papa wrote Grandma in 1898 to inquire whether she could take care of Duncan, my brother and me. She replied that she could for $25.00 a month. She had brought up a family of step-children and now was willing to bring up step-grandchildren with the generous assistance of $25. Once I told Grandma that my psychology teacher said if you wanted something bad enough to work for it constantly and pay the price, you could accomplish it. Grandma was very decided "not a word of truth in that, all my life I expected to die a rich woman. I have worked for that but I have failed. My reply amused her very much and I heard her quote me "But Grandma if you wanted to be rich, you should never have married a poor widower with ten children." I might have added "or taken care of two teen-agers for $25.00 a month".

Somehow she managed to make money on her hens and eggs and on the farm. Into an old trunk in the

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Matilda Wright Haile

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long room she would slip a bill once in a while and when she had saved a hundred dollars she would give it to Uncle Frank when he came on his annual visit and he would pay her $6 a year interest. I think when she died Uncle Frank had about $400.00 of hers. She left it to him in her will.

Information on the Haile family was also furnished by Rachael Haile Hughes and Haile Parker of Essex County.

THE ESSEX COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY met July 9, 1978 in the Parish House of St. John's Episcopal Church in Tappahannock with the President, Mr. Sidney J. Hilton presiding. Mr. Hilton waived reading of the minutes upon motion of Mrs. Wright, Secretary, who stated the minutes had been published in the bulletin which all members had received. Mrs. Preston Ferry gave the Treasurer's Report and Mrs. Jack Acree, Membership Chairman, announced 3 new members: Mrs. Wm. B. Haile of Washington and Tappahannock and Mr. and Mrs. Edward W. Haile of Essex County.

Mr. Hill Wellford, Vice President, introduced our speaker, Mr. John W. Frye of Kilmarnock, a noted author of the Chesapeake Bay area. Mr. Frye gave a very interesting talk on the Menhaden Fish industry and its origin starting with the Indians and the Massachusetts Bay Colony and progressing southwards along the coast and what it had meant in the history of our eastern shore area and particularly in the Northern Neck Reedville area. All of us who have traveled by land or water in the area cannot help but remember the fish fertilizer plants in the area. Following our speaker's address all enjoyed delicious refreshments.

Chairman of refreshments was Mrs. Spotswood Taliaferro and those helping were Mrs. Gene Christopher, Mrs. Mary Gresham and our members from the Millers Tavern area and King & Queen County. Our thanks to all these grand members.

ANNE T. WRIGHT, *Secretary*

NOTE: FROM THE EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING SEPTEMBER 21, 1978, IT WAS DECIDED THAT WE SHOULD CHANGE OUR MEETING DATE BACK TO THE THIRD SUNDAY IN JANUARY, APRIL, JULY, AND OCTOBER OF EACH YEAR.

THE ESSEX COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY met October 7, 1978 at Vauter's Church in Upper Essex County, one of Virginia's oldest Colonial Churches, it was a perfect setting for this meeting. Mr. Hill Wellford, Vice President, presided in the absence of our President, Mr. Sidney J. Hilton. Mrs. Anne T. Wright, Secretary, read the minutes of our July meeting which were approved. Mrs. Preston Ferry gave the Treasurer's report and there being no further business presented at this time, Mr. Wellford introduced our speaker, the Reverend M. Treadwell Davison.

Mr. Davison spoke on the History of the Anglican and Episcopal Churches. He spoke of the Divine right of Kings and how history developed after the Battle of Hastings and the Magna Carta made the King responsible for all his subjects. Virginia as a colony was founded at Jamestown in 1607. The Reverends Hackler and Robert Hunt were the first ministers to serve in Jamestown and of course were sent by the Church of England. All the ministers were trained in England. Following the Geneva Conference around 1590, the church became more liberal in its views and of the rights of the individual because of the great work of Sir Edwin Sandys. Through these liberal views developed the Vestry system in Virginia.

Mr. Davison gave many interesting sidelights to the Episcopal Church's evolvement after the Revolution. Following this delightful address, members and guests were served delicious refreshments in the Parish House, with Mrs. Champ Broaddus and Mrs. Gene Noland serving the punch and members from Tappahanock providing the other refreshments. Many thanks to these ladies and to Vauter's Churchwomen for helping us in so many ways and for letting us use their beautifully restored church building to meet in.

ANNE T. WRIGHT, *Secretary*

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Meetings are held quarterly in the Essex Court House or in an historic home of the County. Dues are $2.00 per year. For copies of publications send 60¢ to Mrs. J. M. Evans, Box 8 Tappahannock, Virginia.

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