The Brockenbrough House

by BETTY WISE BLAIR

From: Old Homes of Essex County, Virginia published by Woman's Club of Essex County; pages 6 and 7. The Brockenbrough House was built on Lot No. 1 in Tappahannock by Archibald McCall, a Scotch merchant who acquired the land from Robert Beverley in 1763 and built the house before the Revolution. It is Georgian in its style of architecture; the rooms are large and well proportioned, with their paneling, cornices, and fireplaces in the style of late Colonial houses. It is believed that the black marble used in the mantels came from a quarry in Scotland belonging to the Mc Calls.

Excerpts from Correspondence of Archibald McCall and George McCall, 1777-1783 edited by Joseph S. Ewing.

The correspondence between Archibald McCall a merchant in Tappahannock, Va. who was forced to reside in Great Britain during the Revolutionary War, and his cousin George McCall, who was left at Tappahannock to manage affairs in Virginia, is here printed for the first time. The Mc Calls were wealthy merchants in Glasgow, Scotland, trading in the American colonies. Archibald McCall had settled in Essex County, Va. by 1754, with his older brother, James McCall, their father had purchased land on Piscataway Creek, where the Piscataway warehouses stood, to which he had given the name of New Glasgow. In 1757 James McCall went back to Scotland. Shortly after this Archibald went into business for himself as a merchant in Tappahannock. In 1763 he bought a lot on the Rappahannock River within the town and built there a handsome house, which is still standing. William Buckland, master builder, well known for his work on Gunston Hall and for his house in Annapolis, was living in Richmond County, across the Rappahannock River from Tappahannock, when Archibald McCall built his house. They apparently knew each other, for McCall loaned Buckland money when he was moving to Annapolis.

Archibald McCall married Katherine Flood, the only daughter of Dr. Nicholas Flood and Elizabeth Peachey Flood, the heiress of a well-known family of the Northern Neck. Katherine died January 5, 1767, shortly after the birth of her second daughter, who was named for her. Left a young widower with two infant daughters, Archibald McCall decided to take the children to Glasgow where they could be properly cared for and educated. In 1772 he began to get his affairs in order prior to his departure, but when this took longer than he had anticipated, he was forced in 1775 to send the children, aged six and eight, to Scotland ahead of him. When serious fighting broke out between Great Britain and the colonies on April 18, 1775, McCall's little girls were on the other side of the ocean. Expecting the trouble to last not over six months, McCall put his business affairs in the hands of William Shedden, who managed his stores in Tappahannock and Richmond County, and his young cousin, George McCall, and set sail for Scotland in Sept. 1775. After his departure, he was accused of joining Lord Dunmore, the Royal Governor in Norfolk and of supplying him with flour and other things. But the county committee of safety, which met in Tappahannock to investigate, found no basis for such a charge. As a matter of fact, McCall had stayed with Colonel John Fleet, a patriot, on his way out. When William Shedden was ordered out of the county as a British sympathizer by the Essex Court on Jan. 30, 1777, George McCall was left in charge. The reports sent by George McCall to Archibald in Glasgow—in which the young man desperately urged his cousin to return to Virginia in order to save his estate—comprise the chief items in this correspondence. However, it became increasingly difficult for Archibald to return because of the war. When peace was restored, Archibald chartered a ship, loaded it with merchandise, and with his sixteen-year-old daughter Catherine Flood McCall set sail for Chesapeake Bay, the first vessel to depart London for Virginia after the War. His elder daughter, Elizabeth, had died of fever in London. Once more in his home in Tappahannock, McCall sought to reclaim his estate. But there were domestic diversions. A young cousin, Robert Hunter, the son of a London merchant, spent the winter of 1785-86 in the McCall home. His diary gives an intimate account of McCall's home life after the return to Virginia. Romance enlivened the scene as Robert Hunter and his traveling companion from England, Joseph Hadfield, competed for the affection of the lovely Catherine, now a young lady of nineteen. Both

(Continued on page 2)
The Brockenbrough House

(Continued from page 1)

lost, for she rejected all suitors and never married. On May 25, 1789, Archibald McCall made deeds of trust for his Essex properties to the heirs of his former London partner. His home in Tappahannock was ultimately taken over by them, and finally sold to Dr. Austin Brockenbrough in 1818. Archibald by that time had moved to Richmond with his daughter. An obituary in the Virginia Argus for Nov. 2, 1814 brings to a close the record of this Virginia merchant.

Dr. Austin Brockenbrough and his wife Frances Blake lived here for a number of years and kept it as their town house. Following the War Between the States, Mrs. Brockenbrough allowed Mrs. Judith Brockenbrough McGuire and her husband to have a school for young ladies in this house. Mrs. Brockenbrough left the house to their son, Benjamin Blake Brockenbrough and his wife, who had no children. Their daughter, Gabriella married Joseph William Chinn and the Chinn's are buried in the Brockenbrough family cemetery which is the walled brick grave yard behind Aycock's on Water Lane. Mrs. Brockenbrough was a lovely lady and enjoyed young people very much, she was known particularly for always having lots of delicious cookies, one known as Raleigh Rowena Roll Out Ginger cookie. She also held a little mission school every Sunday near Bray's Fork. She was also a very devoted member of the United Daughters of the Confederacy and a devout Episcopalian belonging to St. John's. The Brockenbrough House was devised to Judge Joseph W. Chinn, of the Supreme Court of Appeals, by his uncle. Judge Chinn was devoted to his aunt and uncle and spent much time with them. After Judge Chinn sold the property to St. Margaret's School, his children returned the portrait of Uncle Ben to hang in the drawing room of the Brockenbrough House.

Mrs. Blair who gave this address has lived in the Brockenbrough House for the past 15 years since she came to St. Margaret's School and she recalled some of the ghost stories which the girls have continuously carried forward, particularly the "Gray Lady" and hearing the almost silent whish of the satin slippers on the stairs of Sally McCall which she has heard as well as other faculty members who have made their home in the "B" House.

St. Margaret's Hall

by ANNE T. WRIGHT

St. Margaret's Hall which served as the main building when the school opened in 1921, was built by Dr. Thomas Gordon and occupied by him for about forty years. This property was part of the original land grant in 1650 to Epaphroditus Lawson. This tract was later acquired by Robert Coleman and was sold by his descendants in 1824 to William A. Wright. It later passed to Benjamin Jones who sold to Thomas C. Gordon. In 1876 it became the home of the late Judge Thomas Roane Barnes Wright, son of William A. Wright and Charlotte Barnes Wright. Judge Wright was born July 4, 1859 in Tappahannock just 3 blocks from this spot on what is known as "The Old Lot" in a Georgian brick house built by James W. and Dorothea Hoomes and sold to William A. and Charlotte Wright in 1831. This lot included Lots 27, 28, 31 and 32 and slips 79 and 80 shown on the original map of Tappahannock in 1705. The home Judge Wright bought in 1876 included a farm which included all the property from this point to Hoskins Creek and bound by the creek to the bridge and the old highway which was Essex Street in Wakefield, consequently all the streets developed later as the farm was broken up carry names of Judge Wright's children. Judge Wright's grandparents were Edward and Mary Pitts Wright of Wightsville, King & Queen County. In both paternal and maternal lines he was descended from ardent patriots who were gallant Revolutionary soldiers, and men who later became eminent patriots. His father was a lawyer and a Captain in the War of 1812. In his family line appear such distinguished Virginia names as Roane, Barnes, Ruffin, Ritchie, Brockenbrough. His legal tastes were almost equally an inheritance with his patriotic devotion to his country.

His education was the best that ante-bellum Virginia could furnish. He attended Fleetwood Academy, King & Queen County, then conducted by Oliver White; Hanover Academy of which the distinguished Colonel Lewis Minor Coleman was principal, who later was professor of Latin at the University of Virginia. He entered the University of Virginia in 1859 where in the School of Latin, he came under his old teacher, Professor Coleman. Taking the academic courses, he had won several diplomas when, in April, 1861, the Civil War broke out, and the young man as ardent in his patriotism as his ancestors, dropped his studies to become a soldier.

With his elder brother, William A. Wright, and his younger brother, Richard Edward Wright he enlisted. The elder brother became captain of the Essex sharpshooters and played a very important role at Fort Lowry here in Essex (which I just learned recently from Mr. Carrol Garnett who is writing a book about Fort Lowry). William fell in one of the Seven Days' Battles around Richmond while gallantly leading his company. The two younger brothers participated in the charge on Fort Harrison and there the younger brother was killed, falling into the arms of the surviving brother. Undismayed by these fatalities which had taken his beloved brothers, the survivor continued to discharge every military duty with fidelity and courage. His war record began two days after the fall of Fort Sumter when, as a student volunteer in a company of University students known as "The Southern Guard", he went to Harper's Ferry. He then became a private in the Second Company of the "Richmond Howitzers" which won fame at the battle of Big Bethel. In 1862, after the failure of McClellan's campaign against Richmond, he was transferred to Company F, 55th Virginia Regiment, then commanded by Colonel Francis Mallory and attached to Field's Brigade of Captain A. P. Hill's Division.

While acting as Field Marshall of Ordnance for Archer's and Walker's Brigades he was elected Lieutenant of Company A and later promoted on the field of battle for gallantry. Dangerously wounded in the assault on Fort McRae, in front of Petersburg, on Sept. 30, 1864, he lay exposed on the field of battle for several days and nights. Rescued from such dangerous surroundings he was carried to the old Seabrook warehouse in Richmond and thence transferred to Chimborazo Hospital, where he lingered for a long period between life and death. Loving the Lost Cause with all the ardor of his nature, his love did not grow cold when peace came, and "old soldiers"

(Continued on page 3)
came to him as to one willing and ready to aid them in
time of trouble. His interest and love survived to the end
of his life, as was evidenced by his election as commander
when Wright Latane Camp was formed and still com-
mander when death came.

The War ended, the young man took up the duties
of peace with the same serious-minded devotion that he had
given to his duties as a soldier. He studied law, profiting
much in his studies by the friendly instruction of James
M. Mathews. He was licensed to practice by Judge W. T.
Jovines, of the Supreme Court of Appeals, and by Judge
Meredith, of the Circuit Court of Richmond.

In 1868 he entered upon the practice of his profession
but had only been at the Bar two years when he was
elected Commonwealth's Attorney for Essex County. By
successive re-elections he served in that office twenty
years until elected by the General Assembly, on Dec. 14, 1891,
as Judge of the Ninth Judicial Circuit, and by successive
re-elections he continued to fill that office until after the
adoption of the new Constitution, when he became Judge
of the Twelfth Judicial Circuit, in which capacity he was
serving at the time of his death. His service as Com-
monwealth's Attorney and as Judge covered a period of
more than forty years of continuous service, and the bare
statement of that fact is in itself the highest eulogy.

As a Judge on the bench, no man was ever more in-
sistent for justice than Judge Wright. No detail of a case was
lost sight of, no labor was spared to insure justice. When
remonstrated with by friends that he was imposing un-
necessary labor upon himself, his only reply was that he
was doing no more than his duty. It is not surprising
that he was re-elected term after term.

A many sided man, but with great singleness of pur-
pose, he was ready to expend time, labor and money in
the interest of any movement that would contribute to the
welfare of his beloved country and his fellowmen. Busy as
he was, he often found time to initiate movements con-
tributory to the purpose which lay so close to his heart.
Out of this feeling grew the movement which resulted in
making the county courthouses of his section veritable
museums of history.

He turned the galleries of the court houses into art
galleries, adorned with portraits of the worthiest who had
made the country. Impressive and appropriate
ceremonies marked the presentations and due entry was
made in the Order Book of the Court. The addresses in
full were published in local papers, periodicals and
magazines, thus making a valuable contribution to the
historical literature of the country. The donors and the
people generally thus became more interested in the do-
ings of by gone patriots and proper pride was aroused in
the care and improvement of the buildings in which these
treasurers are housed. As far back as 1907, the Baltimore
"Manufacturers Record" made a list of 273 of these por-
traits preserved in the Counties of King & Queen, Essex
Lancaster, Matthews, Middlesex, Northumberland,
Gloucester and King William.

Judge Wright frequently contributed articles to law
journals, periodicals and newspapers. His only writing
outside of these was a booklet entitled "Westmoreland
County, Va." of which Chas. Francis Adams wrote:
"Your account of Westmoreland County, Va., is so
valuable that it seems wrong to retain it in a private
library, I have therefore, donated it to the Massachusetts
Historical Society to complete their much consulted col-
lections."

There is real inspiration in such work as this in-
augurated by a true patriot whose earnest desire was to
see the men of today emulate, if they did not surpass,
their forbears of herc memory.

Another similar work deserves special mention. Judge
Wright was baptised in St. John's Protestant Episcopal
Church at Tappahannock by Rev. Henry Waring Lewis
Temple, Rector of South Farnham Parish, and confirm-
ed by Bishop John Johns, he was a lifelong and devout
churchman, holding office for forty years as a vestryman.
Growing out of his love for the church he was an active
member of the Commission on Colonial Churches ap-
pointed by the Episcopal Council of Virginia. The Jour-
nal of the Council held at Richmond, in May 1914, thus
spoke of his giving unstintedly of his time and effort to
protect the Colonial Churches of the Diocese.

The Rev. George M. Brydon read a Report on the Co-
mmission on Colonial Churches:

"The Commission on Colonial Churches has, during
the past year, been carrying on its work as opportunity
has offered. It has suffered a serious loss in the recent
death of one of its members, Judge T. R. B. Wright, of
Essex County. Loving his Church and his State with an
intensity which showed itself in constant action, and in-
tensely proud of the history of both, for many years he
gave unselfishly of his time and care to the preservation
of the historical material, and the commemoration of the
makers of history in the Counties of the district over
which he presided as Judge. He gave the same interest
and care to the work of the Colonial Churches Commis-
sion. His historic work won from the people he loved the
title of Father of County Shriners in Virginia. He richly
deserved the title."

Not a politician in the usual sense of the word, he was a
profound politician in the correct sense, and impelled by
civic duty, was never lazy in the discharge of that duty. It
thus happened that he frequently participated in State
and National campaigns as canvasser for the State-at-
Large several times; Presidential Elector in 1888 for
Grover Cleveland, member of the Democratic State Com-
mitee; and at the time of his elevation to the Bench, was
chairman of the First District Committee. His son,
William was also Member of Democratic State Com-
mitee, also chairman of the First Congressional District
and was a Presidential Elector in 1941 for President Franklin
D. Roosevelt's 3rd term.

On November 29, 1876, Judge Wright married
Margaret Davidella Preston of Lewisburg, West Virginia,
at Farmington, the home of a cousin of Miss Preston's in
Charlottesville, where she was making her home. She met
Judge Wright while he was at the University taking special
law courses. Miss Preston's ancestry included such
families as the Prestons, Creighs, Stuarts, and Lewises of
Virginia and West Virginia. She was the daughter of the
Rev. David R. and Jeannette Creigh Preston. She was
born at "Tuscawilla" a lovely old brick home set in the
foothills of the beautiful mountains of Greenbriar County
between Rocevert and Lewisburg, West Virginia, with
the drive to the house bordered by twin lakes. This
beautiful section was always Virginia to Mrs. Wright.
From the windows of her home—a home soon to be
ravaged and occupied by the enemy—she watched the

(Continued on page 4)
Battle of Lewisburg, and aided in nursing soldiers wounded in that encounter.

After her marriage, she made her home in Tappahannock, and as stated earlier, Judge Wright brought her to live in this house. In her obituary in the Virginia Churchman which stated "In Tappahannock, Mrs. Wright will be long and appreciatively remembered for herself; and because of her active support of church and civic enterprises and the hospitality of her home. She ever regarded it as a joyous privilege as well as an imperative duty to keep the memory of the Southern soldier and his heroic deeds vivid to the minds of younger generations. Nor did strong beliefs strongly held interfere with an inherent and sympathetic understanding of and affection for young people. Mrs. Wright was an exceptionally devoted mother to her six children, five of whom survived her death at 915 Floyd Avenue, Richmond, Va. on March 10, 1936. They were Preston L. and State Senator William A. Wright of Tappahannock, T. R. B. Wright, Jr. of Syracuse, N.Y., Miss Jeannette C. Wright of Richmond and Mrs. Everard K. Meade of Boyce. Mrs. Frank C. Scott of Orange, (Charlotte), died in 1924. It is appropriate that she now sleeps in the graveyard of St. John's Church beside Judge Wright, the church for which in life they laboured so faithfully and loved so devotedly.

Both Judge and Mrs. Wright had a wonderful sense of humor. They loved dearly their pets which they cared on to their children. All six children were born in S. M. S. in the master bedroom which is now Miss Woolfolk's office. Mrs. Wright was very talented in writing poetry and planning for the entertainment of young people. My husband particularly remembered her waking her children to watch a gorgeous sunrise over the river. She planned dances, beach parties and sailing parties of which many of my husband's friends have told me. Mrs. Wright used to join her children and friends in bathing in the river. One day she lost her wedding ring and it was several years before someone found it buried in the sand on the shore.

Mrs. Wright, Mrs. Brockenbrough and other contemporaries formed a very active Chapter of the United Daughters of the Confederacy in the County.

However, Mrs. Wright's sympathy for the lost cause which had affected their family so much was overcome when her two elder sons married ladies from the North. Miss Jeannette C. Wright, was a talented pianist and taught piano here before she went to Richmond with her mother and brother William (Billy) as he was most usually called, when they sold their home (S. M. S.) to the church in 1920. She became a secretary and worked for Carolina Chemical until she retired in 1952.

Many remember Charlotte's beautiful red hair and her lovely watercolors, pastels and charcoal sketches. Many have told me about Della's marriage to Everard Kidder Meade and the reception held here. Mr. Meade was a nephew of the Rev. William Meade, who was rector of South Farnham Parish, and were direct descendants of Bishop Meade. Della's talent was a beautiful soprano voice which she used faithfully for many years in St. John's and Christ Church Choir, Millwood, Va. She also sang at our wedding in Grace and Holy Trinity Episcopal Church in Richmond. Della's two oldest children, Margaret Dell and Everard Jr. were both born here in Tappahannock because her husband was overseas in World War I, and then later after the War he had to spend quite a bit of time in a sanatorium in N. Y. after having been gassed in Europe. He lost his health permanently and became an historian and writer of some renown even though he was semi-invalid.

My husband Billy, had decided to go into law practice with friends in Richmond, the firm of Scott & Beverley, when they sold this house, but was asked by friends in Essex and surrounding counties to run for the House of Delegates from this area, so he decided to stay in Essex to practice law and made his home here with his cousins, the Ernest Wrights, at their home on the Green known as the "<i>Greenbrier</i>". Billy had always wanted to follow in his father's footsteps and went to Washington & Lee where his cousin Dr. George Denny was president, and lived in their home part of his college career. He received his academic degree at W. & L. and decided because his father wanted him to, to go to the University of Virginia Law School. However after staying at Charlottesville for one day, he decided it was too large and he preferred to go back to W. & L. so he received his law degree there also. He was a member of Phi Kapp Psi Fraternity, President of the Student Body, and in later in his career was initiated to O D K leadership fraternity at W. & L. He then joined the American armed forces and went overseas as a Lieutenant. He like his father, was a very patriotic man and spent much time and energy in helping the American Legion grow to a powerful organization. He helped tremendously in raising funds for the War Memorial, the Carillon in Byrd Park in Richmond. He served in the Legislature in the House of Delegates for five terms and then was elected to the State Senate for several terms. In the Senate he was Chairman of the powerful Road Committee and member of the other powerful committees, Finance, General Laws, Privileges and Elections and others. One of the first things I learned about him when I was working as a Senate secretary, my first job, in January 1958, from his colleagues from my section of the State was that they were envious of him and his constituency, because he didn't have to play politics with big business or railroad interests, as they did in the Southwestern part of the state and also that at that time there was very little opposition in the East from the Republicans. One of his greatest accomplishments in the Senate was the passage of the Bridge-Tunnel bill which allowed all the bridges in the Tidewater and Chesapeake Bay area to be built with State Highway funds. He left the Senate to become Conservation Commissioner for the Senate under Governor Darden in 1942. In this job he was very successful in promoting State Park System to the finest in the U. S., also our Water Control Board and Forestry Department were upgraded to the best.

Through the History Department of the Commission, when he learned that there was not a good History of Virginia to be used in our schools, he selected his brother-in-law Everard Kidder Meade to write the Thumb Nail Sketch called the Hornbook which was used widely in our schools for many years. Professors of History at the University and William & Mary said it couldn't be done. He had the idea of building the amphitheater near Williamsburg and putting on The Common Glory, the second most popular outdoor drama in the U. S. He got Paul Green to write it because "The Lost Colony" had been so successful in N. C. He and Gov. Darden formed the Jamestown Corp. to put on this drama which was very successful for many years. I have heard many people in Essex since I have lived here say that Mr. Wright never

(Continued on page 5)
St. Margaret’s Hall
(Continued from page 4)

turned down anyone who came to him for assistance. He helped many young people to go to college and to find jobs. He was one of the main organizers in the establishment of the Bank of Essex in 1926, and served on its Board as Vice President until his death. He was also a member for this Region of the State Highway Commission until his terminal illness. Billy, like his father, was baptised at St. John’s and was a member of St. John’s all his life and served on the Vestry many times. I could go on and on about many other accomplishments but I am sure many of you already know these and others will certainly think I am prejudiced as I am bound to be. I will end this talk by saying the words which the family chose to put on Judge Wright’s tombstone “Soldier, Lawyer, Jurist” said it all, so I chose for him “Soldier, Lawyer, Statesman”. It is a shame that this branch of the Wright family name died out, but the Wright characteristics and principles live on in the Meade children and their children and they are carrying out these by serving in the army and their church and legal profession as their great grand parents did.

Minutes of The Society

The Essex County Historical Society met February 21, 1982 in the Court House with our president, Mr. Charles W. H. Warner, presiding, this meeting taking the place of our January (quarterly) meeting.

Mr. Warner again called attention of Mr. James Mason Grove’s book about the Tappahannock Female Seminary on Monument Place run by Mrs. Lucy W. Grey. Many of the students mentioned are ancestors of our members.

The Treasurer’s Report was read and filed for future audit by our secretary in the absence of our Treasurer, Mr. Ludwulf F. Smither. The secretary asked that the minutes of the October meeting not be read, since they were published in the fall bulletin which all members received in January. Mr. Warner then presented our Vice President, Mr. Calvin Warfield, who in turn presented our guest speaker, Mr. Emory L. Carlton, local attorney, who is terribly interested in the history of our County and its prominent citizens of the colonial days. Mr. Carlton is a member of our society, Jamestown Society, Society of the Cincinnati, Yorktown Commission and others. He has done a tremendous amount of research on Colonel Meriwether Smith and his time in History. Mr. Carlton gave a wonderful account of Col. Smith, who is undoubtedly the most prominent of all of Essex County’s sons.

Our president, Mr. Warner thanked Mr. Carlton for his interesting and historically significant talk and stated that it would be published in our fall bulletin. It is very appropriate that we honor Col. Meriwether Smith this year during the Town’s Tricentennial celebration.

It was moved and seconded that with costs of printing increasing, we would have to charge $2.00 per copy in the future for our bulletins. Our president also stated we needed to have a project to raise extra funds and that he would appoint a committee to look into planning something in the fall.

Mr. Warner thanked Mrs. Nancy Tuck, Mrs. Robert Ellis, and Mrs. Preston Ferry for providing delicious refreshments for the social hour following our meeting in the Woman’s Club House.

Richmond during colonial days was the topic of Dr. Greer’s address at the meeting of the Essex County Historical Society held on Sunday, April 18, 1982, at 3:00 p.m. at Ephesus Baptist Church, Dunsville, Va. Our president, Mr. Charles W. H. Warner presided. The minutes of the February 21st meeting were read and approved. Mr. Warner presented a resolution asking the Board of Supervisors to place a portrait of Colonel Meriwether Smith, probably the most illustrious son of Essex County, in the Court House to replace the one which was destroyed by the fire. Dr. Warfield moved that the resolution be adopted by the society and it was seconded by Mr. Hilton and voted unanimously that it be presented to the Board of Supervisors immediately. Mr. Warner asked that Mrs. Wright, Secretary, present the resolution to the board of supervisors.

Mr. Warner stated again that we needed to have a money making project and then asked for volunteers to plan a House Tour for the fall. Mrs. Jeanette Ellis and Mrs. Lib Smither agreed to co-chairmen the project and to select other members of their committee including Mrs. Margaret Ferry. Mr. Warner stated it should be representative of the entire county.

Mr. Edward Wright Haile moved that we bind some of the bulletins to be sold in connection with the Tricentennial Celebration this summer. The motion was discussed and seconded and voted on, and Mr. Haile was named chairman to see that both, some bound copies and individual copies of the bulletins would be placed in the Ritchie House to be sold during June, July, and August.

Mr. Smither, our treasurer gave his report stating we had $489.95 in checking account and $500 in savings account, and it was placed on file for audit.

Following the business meeting Dr. Warfield, Vice President and Program Chairman, introduced Mr. Witt Garrett, Chairman of the Board of Deacons of Ephesus Baptist Church who gave a thumbnail sketch of the beginning of the church and some of its founding fathers, with delightful anecdotes about them which were most interesting.

Dr. Warfield then introduced our guest speaker, Dr. Harold E. Greer, Jr., Associate Professor of History at Virginia Commonwealth University. Dr. Greer is also an author. He is co-author of a book “Richmond During the Revolution 1775-1791.” He has written historical articles, brochures, and booklets, many about Richmond. Some of his better known works are “From Frontier Village to Revolutionary Capitol: Richmond 1779-1783.” “Everyday Life in Revolutionary Richmond.”

Dr. Greer spoke of Richmond when it was just a frontier village of a few hundred citizens, and few wooden buildings in the original part of the city, bounded by 10th and 22nd streets in the Church Hill section. Main Street has always been Main Street with all the businesses, the Court House, the jail, stocks, etc. located on it.

In 1779 the General Assembly meeting in Williamsburg voted to move the capitol to Richmond because it would be a more central location for the growing population in the western counties, because Williamsburg was too close to the British sea power, and because Richmond was at the head of the navigable portion of the James.

Dr. Greer’s talk was most interesting to all members present particularly because most of us are familiar with Richmond today, but had not thought much about its beginning and its growth for over 200 years.

Anne T. Wright, Secretary
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Vice President ............... MR. CALVIN N. WARFIELD
Treasurer ..................... MR. LUDWELL SMITHER
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Meetings are held quarterly in the Essex Court House, in an historic home or church of the County. Dues are $5.00 per year. For copies of publications send $2.00 to Mrs. J. M. Evans, Box 8, Tappahannock, Virginia.