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Planters, Plantations and Places in Old New Kent County, Virginia.
By Malcolm H. Harris, M.D. 2 vols. 999 pp. West Point, Virginia
23181: Published by the author, 1977. \$25 (soft covers \$20) including
postage.

A reviewer who must appraise a book from the author's typescript works under a handicap, but Dr. Harris' two volumes are so important to the many families who claim a homeland in this area that there should be no unnecessary delay in making known to readers the availability of this long-awaited work.

Since this bulletin will not be issued again for a year and since Dr. Harris' book should appear printed and bound by Christmas, there is little choice but to tell something about it, based on the typescript, a little in advance of its actual publication, so that those to whom the book will mean most can arrange to purchase their copies.

Dr. Harris, one of the great antiquarians and genealogists of Virginia, has stored a lifetime of research in the two volumes. They are available by writing him in West Point and putting in an order at the board and paperback prices quoted above, which include shipping charges. *Planters, Plantations and Places*, however, is not strictly a genealogical work. Certainly it is a tool of reference for those whose roots trace back to King William and neighboring counties. But it is also a delightful record for those who care to read, not only about families, but also about the by-ways of parochial and county history in this part of the Tidewater.

The work is a perfect example of the kind of research that dedicated authors in the counties or shires of the British Isles have been producing for many years. As does this book, they breathe their peculiar pride and heritage in local towns, farms, homes, churches, monuments and people.

Before exploring a work so lengthy, one should be aware of the organization of Dr. Harris' book. It is in three major parts, embracing the three counties of New Kent, King and Queen and King William. The first volume begins with the formation of Blisland Parish and old New Kent County, both, as it happens, in 1654. Dr. Harris quite correctly stresses the importance of the six parishes which he deals with in these counties, because the establishment of parishes in colonial Virginia usually preceded the creation of counties — though Blisland and New Kent, both formed in the same year, are the exception that proves the rule.

Generally, the parish, representing the cross, was the precursor of the political subdivision, representing the mace of governmental authority. Blisland Parish gave birth to Stratton Major and, by 1679, to St. Stephens. The latter two parishes were the forerunners of King and Queen County. Old Stratton Major, which included all the land between the Mattaponi and Pamunkey Rivers, then known as Pamunkey Neck, gave birth soon after the creation of King and Queen to King William County. Part of Stratton Major became St. John's Parish (1680) and St. David's (1744) — the latter being created with the erection of Caroline County on the western border of King William.

Almost one-half the book is devoted to King William County, but the space given to New Kent and King and Queen is voluminous. Part of the difference is made up by the longer articles on the planters, plantations and places in King William, Dr. Harris' county of

residence for the last fifty-four years, about which his collection of lore may be more extensive. The book is aptly named since under each broad division there are dozens of articles, short and readable, about the land, the people and the places in what are now the three present-day counties.

Not all the research comes from books, manuscripts and local county records. In his early days, Dr. Harris was an inveterate amateur archeologist. His circumspect probing with long steel rods into the soil of forgotten and nearly erased historic sites brought to light what the prayer book creed calls "things visible and invisible." The visible ones are obvious if you know your houses and gardens in this part of Tidewater. The invisible ones lie below the earth's surface in the form of hidden foundations and artifacts at odd sites which Dr. Harris has troubled to seek out and identify for posterity.

He writes, for example, about Doncastle's Ordinary in New Kent County near Barhamsville on the old road that led from King William to Williamsburg. Here is a site — with nothing now above ground — where stood a historic tavern. At Doncastle's, Patrick Henry's ill-considered march on Williamsburg with Hanover and King William militia was halted in 1775 by Edmund Pendleton and other conservatives, using Carter Braxton as their emissary to prevent a southern Battle of Lexington that probably would have ended in a blood-bath for the civilian population of the colonial capital. There is also — to select at random one of many of the short articles — the site of Donald Robertson's famous school in King and Queen County, which Dr. Harris describes as being —

... a very pretty one, standing above the lands which fall away from the river. In 1782, Donald Robertson was charged with 150 acres here, which was a small plantation but a worthy one to aid in the support of the school itself.

Only bits of brick, shards and pipestems remain to mark the presence of the school. Yet a few years ago, Dr. Harris reminds us, one could see the ruins of the cellar walls and chimneys. Today? There is Dr. Harris' book to keep alive the memory.

So much for places or plantations. There is much more in the book
(Continued on Page 2)

1977

The King William County
Board of Supervisors
requests the honour of your presence
on the occasion of the presentation
of the
King William County Coat of Arms
by the
Richmond Herald of Arms
The College of Arms of London
Sunday afternoon, the twenty-third of October
at half after two o'clock
The Courthouse

about persons. Most of them are heroes, but there are a few villains to keep the cast of characters interesting. Consider, for example, one of the "hopeful progeny" of Daniel Parke, Sr., (1628-1679) of New Kent — that curious phrase having been carved on a funereal monument of the family in the county of Surrey, in England. As Dr. Harris relates it:

Among the hopeful progeny was the son Daniel Parke, Jr., (1669-1710) who became one of the most notorious scamps of the colonial period. It is true that he was but ten years of age when his father died, and his youth lacked the paternal guidance necessary to the development of a man of goodly character, but withal this does not seem sufficient to excuse his behavior. His father had left him a good fortune, and his position in society prompted his appointment to the Council when he was but twenty-three years of age.

He married Jane, the daughter of Col. Philip Ludwell, by whom he had two daughters: Frances, who became the wife of Col. John Custis, and Lucy, who married Col. William Byrd of Westover.

It seems useless to recount the unrestrained career of this man, who insulted the wife of Commissary James Blair in Bruton Church and pulled her from a pew used by the Ludwell family . . .

He left his wife and two daughters at Green Spring and went to England and settled in Hampshire. He was elected to Parliament, from which he retired to engage in the war against France. At the Battle of Blenheim he served as an aide to Marlborough, who dispatched Colonel Parke with the official announcement of the victory to Queen Anne, who rewarded him with a miniature which his portrait shows hanging from his neck.

Later, while in favor, he was appointed governor of the Leeward Islands, and in 1710, when a riot broke out, he was killed at Antigua and left in the broiling sun. His career while short was immoral and corrupt.

Dr. Harris' persistence as a researcher is shown by his resolution of a genealogical question regarding Mrs. Deborah Dunlap, wife of the Reverend William Dunlap of King and Queen County. Mrs. Dunlap was believed, even by some twentieth century scholars, to be a sister of Benjamin Franklin. She died in King and Queen, but her grave has not been found. Dr. Harris proved by a somewhat lengthy correspondence that she was a niece of Dr. Franklin's wife. It must have tempted the author to speculate on a few other subjects regarding unlocated burial places — as, for example, the unfound grave of Carter Braxton. But Dr. Harris spares us most of the conjecture and confines himself to the hard facts laid bare by family Bibles and the inexorable records of the courthouses, where, of course, these records survive.

Planters, Plantations and Places in Old New Kent County is highly recommended. It will inform you about such unconsidered trifles as the quotation from the Lord Byron that supplied the name of the estate Marialva in King and Queen:

Convention is the dwarfish demon styled
That foil'd the knights in Marialva's Dome
Of Brains (if brains they had) he then beguiled
And turn'd a nation's shallow joy to gloom.

—Lord Byron, "Childe Harold's Pilgrimage,"
Canto I, xxv (1812).

Or, you may prefer to learn about the decorative building technique called pargetting — a stucco mixture of lime, sand and sugar applied by Dr. William Gwathmey to the manor house he built at the plantation Burlington in upper King William in 1842 (one of the few colonial estates, incidentally, that remain in the original family today). In Dr. Harris' variorum, there is something of interest for everybody.

—A. T. Dill
West Point, Virginia.

* * *

Dr. Harris will accept orders for his book at the October meeting. If they have arrived from the publisher, delivery will be made on that date.

A mystery surrounds the name "Warsaw" - the mid-18th century white clapboard house on secondary route #608 one mile from Aylett, Virginia. A former owner, Mrs. Tom Pete Cross, felt it may have been named in sympathy for the Poles in our Revolutionary period. If so the date of it would correspond to the tenancy of Loftin Newman whom Dr. Malcolm Harris, our King William historian, said lived there in 1787, having purchased it from William Hickman around 1770.

It has been repeatedly stated that a house has stood on this site since 1730. It is quite evident that one side of the present Warsaw is older than the other. It would seem from internal evidence that it was a tall, narrow dorner-windowed house built perhaps by William Hickman, its first owner. The heavy beamed basement room was both dining-room and kitchen, the room above was the Chamber and living-room with the children sleeping above. Loftin Newman, who purchased Warsaw around 1770 from William Hickman, built the other half, enlarging the hall, raised the roof and built an outside kitchen. The older half of the house is lined with brick and heavy diagonal beams between the plaster and weatherboarding, resembling somewhat English half-timbered construction. It is thought to be built on a part of the Aylett grant. In 1794 the widow of Col. Thomas Hickman, Gentleman, gave title to the point of land between the two roads, the old Richmond Road and the present #608.

Architects have dated Warsaw in its present Georgian form from the middle of the 18th century. It was acquired from Loftin Newman by Robert Pollard, Sr. and given to his son John Camm Pollard in 1815. In 1833 John Camm Pollard offered for sale "Warsaw 505½ acres the plantation whereon he resided". Subsequently his niece, Mrs. Christopher Pollard Taliaferro, bought it. Her daughter prior to the Civil War freed her slaves, giving them tickets to Liberia. It is said that in later years missionaries returning from Liberia commented on the fact of meeting inhabitants by the name of Taliaferro.

In 1907 after many vicissitudes, Warsaw returned to the Pollard family when it became the home of Robert Pollard. He moved from there in 1917 and the property was bought in 1923 by Dr. and Mrs. Tom Pete Cross. Mrs. Cross was a descendant of the Pollard family. She and her husband found Warsaw in a sad state of disrepair. With infinite pains and careful study they restored Warsaw, being most careful to keep all the old characteristics that make up its charm. They did not change the exterior except to add two small wings on either side with Palladian windows. They removed the front porch and added a back porch. Two of the original out-buildings remain, a brick dairy and a meathouse. The outside kitchen with a huge double fireplace collapsed shortly after the Crosses took possession of Warsaw.

This is a two story house with a complete basement, central hall and a graceful stairway landing leading to the second floor. It is not panelled but has good chairrails, excellent 18th century mantels, heavy doors with H hinges and a fireplace in each room except the small bedroom. Many of the panes of glass in the windows have defects which characterize old glass. In the English basement dining room with its brick floor, some of the beams supporting the ceiling are hand hewn and measure 14 inches in width and 13 in depth. This is also true of the adjoining kitchen and furnace room.

Warsaw was purchased from Mrs. Cross in 1955 by Mr. and Mrs. Laurel McIntyre. It was bought from them in 1960 by Dr. and Mrs. Henry Decker. It has 158 acres.

Bibliography:

1. Dr. Malcolm Harris, West Point, Va. Historian of King William Co.
2. Mrs. Tom Pete Cross. "Warsaw" published in "The Spur," Life in Virginia Past and Present. Number VI Sept. 1953.
3. Historical American Bldg. Survey Works Progress-Virginia State Library.

Mrs. Henry Walker Decker

RICH LANDOWNERS OF KING WILLIAM IN 1845

The following comprises the names of all inhabitants of King William County whose real estate was valued at five thousand dollars and upwards as per the assessment of Samuel Robinson, Esq. for the year 1845. The heirs of the persons therein named and other readers of this paper may find it interesting:

Thornton Alexandria	\$ 5,406
Philip Aylett	19,669
Lewis Berkley	14,995
George W. Bassett	18,160
William Boshier	12,774
Benjamin R. Blake	5,646
John Burruss	8,641
Diana Dabney	5,076
Martin Drewry	7,332
William Duncan	8,835
Jas. B. Ellett	6,575
William S. Fontaine	10,196
Mary Fox	8,084
William Gwathmey	12,558
Daniel H. Gregg	6,256
Mary Hawes	8,650
Edward Hill	7,060
Nathaniel B. Hill	5,924
Aylett Hawes	11,274
Ann W. Lumpkin	5,440
William I. Lumpkin	6,811
William C. Latane	8,176
William Nunn	7,525
Benj. D. Nelson	12,782
Robert Pollard	14,088
Chas. S. C. Page	6,976
William S. Ryland	6,295
Mary E. and Thomas Roane	5,962
James Roane	10,763
Geo. Sizer	5,285
Jno. L. Stevens	7,992
Anderson Scott	8,336
John Sizer	7,245
Dandridge Sale	8,757
Eliza M. Sutton	5,926
Geo. Taylor	60,822
Richmond S. Taylor	7,182
Christopher Tompkins	5,428
Wm. E. Taliaferro	5,368
Wm. Washington	9,715
Carter W. Wormley	13,287
Chas. T. Braxton	8,253
Corbin Braxton	15,916
Archie Brown	7,452
Wm. P. Braxton	7,295
John and Richard Bagby	11,059
Thos. Carter	27,113
Philip Croxton	11,865
Sophia M. Croxton	7,205
John Cooke	15,486
Henry Corr	6,581
Geo. W. P. Custis	33,900
Thomas W. S. Gregory	13,187
Roger Gregory	15,336
Ann Gregory	5,325
Fendall Gregory	6,819
Evelina Brooks	5,700
William Hill	6,272
James Johnson	7,679
Wm. C. Johnson	8,210
Wm. W. Jones	7,050
Sterling Lipscomb	8,080
Lewis Littlepage	6,222
Nancy F. Moore	7,940
Geo. B. Mills	5,080
John Motley	7,050

P. H. Slaughter	8,700
Jos. H. Travers	5,063
Wm. P. Taylor	39,130
Baylor Temple	9,548
Ambrose White	8,280
William Payne Waring	8,056

This article was taken from "THE STAR"
West Point, Virginia Thursday, September 25, 1884

OLD CEMETERIES

A list of the inscriptions taken from the tombstones in twenty-six old cemeteries has been compiled. Some of the burial grounds include several families with many stones, others contain a solitary marker. The following list includes the location of the grave sites and the predominant family names on the tombstones:

- "Sweet Hall" — Claiborne and Lipscomb
- "Airville" — Slaughter
- "Marl Hill" — Wright
- "Lilly Point" — Mill
- "Smith's Ferry" — Lipscomb
- "The Shooting Box" — Johnson
- "Winchester" — Robins
- "Auburn" — Lewis
- "Langbourne" — Robinson and Straughan
- "Mount Airy" — Edwards
- "Rutledge" — Robinson
- "Mount Columbia" — Boshier and Scott
- "River Hill" — Hawes
- "Oak Spring" — Braxton
- "Cherry Grove" — Edwards
- Allison property — Jeter
- "Cool Spring" — Pemberton
- Chesapeake property near Epworth — Morrison
- "Old Town" — Johnson and Lipscomb
- "Spillers" — Spiller
- Road leading to "White Bank" — Winston
- Near Campbell's Fork — Kelly
- "Marlbro" — Poynter
- Church Cemeteries: Acquinton, St. John's, Sharon (oldest stones)

Many thanks to all who have contributed to this list which is incomplete. Copies of inscriptions may be sent to Mrs. L. J. Russ, Route 1, West Point, Virginia 23181.

ERROR EVERLASTING

Though crushed to earth, truth rises,
But quicker still rebound
The old historic falsehoods
Whenever they are downed:
Upset, explode and smash them,
And in the novel guise
Of facts too long forgotten,
Refreshed, they will arise.

Time-honored myth and legend,
Of actual proof devoid,
Beloved but false tradition,
Pure fiction unalloyed;
Grandfather's cherished fables
Of quaint ancestral lore,
Disproved by Hening's Statutes
And many a record more;

Historic misconceptions,
Wrong dates for house or church,
Evolved from wishful thinking,
Untrammled by research,
Refute, expose, uproot them,
No matter how you strive
To extirpate and spike them,
Immortal, they survive!

SEVEN SPRINGS

KING WILLIAM — Seven Springs is situated on the Mehixen Swamp near the Pamunkey River in western King William County. The present house, probably built ca. 1725-40, is a square, story-and-a-half structure notable for its half-hipped roof and central, T-shaped chimney set just behind the ridge. The house is built of brick laid in Flemish bond with glazed headers above the beveled water table and in English bond below it. Raking courses of glazed headers accent the eaves. The brickwork is further distinguished by the use of rubbed-brick corners, jambs and jack arches; by the throating under the window sills; and by the handsome segmental arches which bridge the grilled basement window openings.

Seven Springs is three bays long, with doors in the southern bay of each facade and in the west bay of the north end. All of the first-floor nine-over-nine sash are modern replacements of Victorian two-over-two sash, but the window frames are original. Three of the four gable-end windows have been enlarged, but the east window in the southern end, including the frame and four-over-four sash, is original. Three hipped dormers with modern six-over-nine sash light each of the two main roof planes. Those on the front (east) were added early in the nineteenth century, while those on the rear are modern. There is the ghost of a hood over the rear door. Nailing blocks set into the brickwork and the absence of a jack arch over the rear door suggest that this hood was original to the house. There was apparently no such protection of the front entrance.

The installation of the dormers was part of a general remodeling in the early nineteenth century which included the painting of the brickwork red and the jack arches white (this was carefully cleaned during the recent renovation) and some interior redecoration.

The plan of the house is an unusual one and consists of four unequal-sized rooms clustered around the central stack. One enters the stair hall, a narrow room in the southeast corner, and moves either to the northeast parlor, the largest room in the house, or into the southwest dining room which, like the small northwest room (now the kitchen), has a corner fireplace.

Much of the original woodwork was removed, either in the Federal remodeling or subsequently, during the house's intermitten periods of neglect, but significant clues remained to guide the restoration of the structure. The parlor has a large, rectangular-plan fireplace, with a small closet to the left. The three-panel, raised-panel door to the closet and the chair rail which encircles the room are original; the remainder of the woodwork is a restoration.

The dining room also retains its original chair rail and three-panel closet door. On this door survive original foliated H-hinges, an early feature not often found in Virginia.

In the stair hall the chair rail is original, as is the triple-run walnut stair (with some balusters renewed). The latter has elaborate sawn brackets, a square newel, a molded rail, and three turned balusters to a tread.

Seven Springs is a striking and unusual specimen of eighteenth-century Tidewater domestic architecture. Its odd, square, central-chimney plan, one not found in any other known Virginia house, lends additional interest to a house distinguished by its excellent brickwork, clipped gables, T-chimney and fine surviving interior details. Built ca. 1725-1740 by the Dabney family, the exterior of the house remains substantially as it was when it was erected.

Captain George Dabney I (d. 1729), possibly the builder of the house, received a land grant in St. John's Parish (then King and Queen County) in 1701. Dabney, described as "Gent." in early documents, was a prominent figure in the early history of King William County, serving as a member of the County Court from the county's organization in 1702 until at least 1716, as its first sheriff, and as an original feoffee of Delawaretown (now West Point) in 1706. In 1722, the legislature authorized the establishment of a ferry at Dabney's plantation.

When Dabney died in 1729, he left a substantial estate in King William and Hanover counties. To his son George he bequeathed all of the land in King William County that he then lived on "together with the other plantation on the same, whereon he the said George lives," as well as half of his 1,200-acre plantation on Cub Creek in Hanover (now Louisa) County. George also received a silver-hilted sword, a brandy

still and seven of his father's slaves who were already in his possession. To his other son William, Dabney was able to leave the rest of the Cub Creek land, another 500-acre plantation in Hanover County, six slaves and considerable silver.

The construction of the Seven Springs house has traditionally been attributed to the elder Dabney, but the evidence is inconclusive. The traditional date, 1732 (three years after George Dabney I's death), is based upon a plank labeled "Built by W. F. Cheekings 1732", reputedly found built into one of the dormers in 1878. But the dormers were installed in the house early in the nineteenth century. It has also been argued that this was the house George Dabney the younger was living in at the time of his father's death, since the older man was "known" to have lived closer to the ferry. The destruction of most of the King William records on two separate occasions prevents the resolution of this problem. Architecturally the house can be said with some certainty to have been built ca. 1725-40, however.

No original trim remains in the kitchen.

In the basement, one mantel remains from the early nineteenth-century remodeling. It has horizontal, superimposed recessed panels and a denticulated cornice shelf. Several original doors survive throughout the house.

No original outbuildings are extant, but a mid-nineteenth-century frame office with a brick exterior end chimney and a Greek Revival mantel stands southeast of the house.

From George Dabney II, the property passed to his son James, who later moved to the Louisa County plantation, and in 1795 it was transferred to James Dabney's son William "Brick House Billy" Dabney. Early in the nineteenth century, Seven Springs was sold to an A. B. Pullen and Atkinson families into the twentieth century. After having been vacant from 1940-1967, Seven Springs was purchased by Mr. and Mrs. H. D. Moffett who have restored it.

Compiled by The Virginia Historic Landmark Commission.

ST. JOHN'S CHURCH RESTORATION ASSOCIATION

Dear Friends:

The annual "homecoming" service in old St. John's will be held Sunday, October 2, at 11 A.M. The service will be conducted by the rector and president of our Association, the Rev. Gary P. Ramsey, Jr. The Rev. Treadwell Davison, a former rector of St. John's, will preach the sermon. We hope it will be possible for many of you to attend.

You will be interested to know that the first wedding ceremony to be held in old St. John's for at least a century took place in March of this year when Robert Emmett Littlepage, a descendant of one of the early King William County settlers, whose home is less than a mile from the church, took at his bride Miss Sylvia Ruth Hinojosa, formerly of Rio Grande City, Texas. The couple arrived at and departed from the church in a wonderful one-horse shay!

It has become increasingly evident to us that no skilled contractors will quote or even estimate a price on a *portion* of a restoration project. They are not interested in coming far into the "back country", where there is no running water, to do a job unless it is for a substantial amount of money, or a large project.

It therefore seems that we must begin now to accumulate in savings enough money to pay for a *complete* interior restoration of old St. John's, instead of doing it "piecemeal" as the money becomes available, which we have heretofore been able to do.

The longer it takes for us to accumulate enough money, the more it is going to cost us in the end — that's inflation! So we beg you to continue to be as generous as you possibly can. Pledges, to be paid over three or four years, will be acceptable, as well as cash contributions.

We look forward to seeing you October 2 at old St. John's.

May God shed His grace and blessings on you.

Sincerely,

Elizebeth S. Gray

KING WILLIAM COUNTY MEDAL

The face of this is a reproduction of the original seal of the Circuit Court of King William County, Virginia. In 1863 one Daniel Herskey of Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania, a soldier in the Union Army, while with a raiding detachment at King William, saw and pocketed the seal. In 1927 the seal was located and graciously returned to King William County by Mr. Herskey, who had retained it in his possession.