

BRIEF SKETCH
OF PASQUOTANK COUNTY

From Volume One

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By John Elliott Wood

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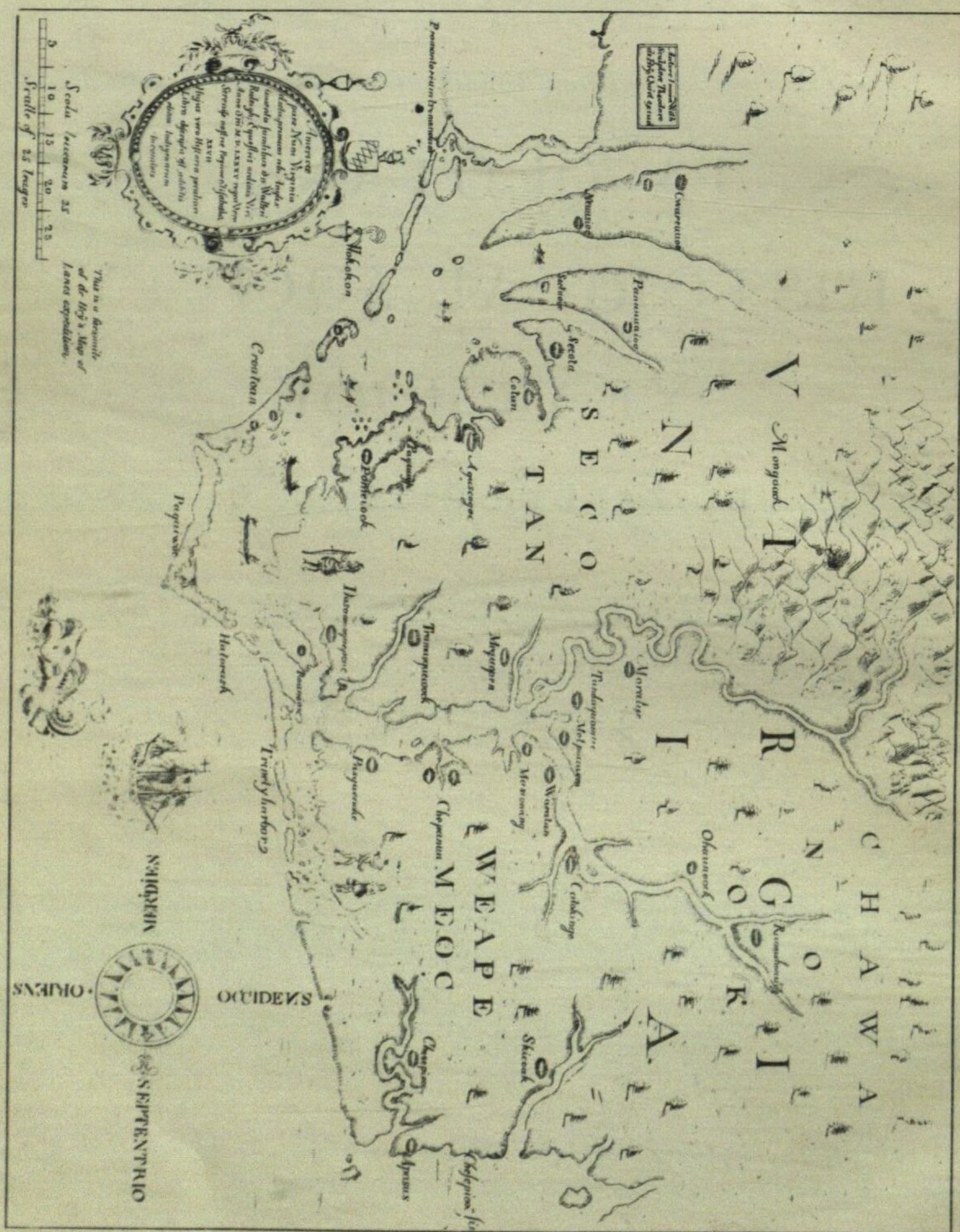
By John Elliott Wood

It is likely that the first Englishmen who set eyes upon what is now Pasquotank County were those comprising the reconnaissance party of fourteen men sent by Captain Ralph Lane from Roanoke Island to explore the inland waters in 1584. These men went as far as Chowan River and apparently mapped what they saw. The DeBry map dated 1585 which appeared in London shortly after that date shows the land on the north side of the main water as "PASQUENOKE," and the shore outline while crude as would be expected of surveys of that nature is recognizable and remarkably faithful considering the method employed.

Seventy years were to pass before settlers occupied the land and established a permanent settlement in this particular area. The beginning was no mass migration which can be fixed as a historic event like the landing at Jamestown in 1607 but rather the chance wandering of pioneers seeking unoccupied land, hunters in search of meat or furs, refugees in need of asylum, explorers, or just plain adventurers. By 1650 the land of Tidewater Virginia was pretty well taken up, some of it already exhausted by intensive cultivation. Settlers were moving upland to the westward while some preferred to remain near seaboard; and these latter chose to go southward where there were numerous rivers emptying into the sounds and the ocean. They were English who had never lived more than thirty miles from blue water, and they were reluctant to leave tidewater. It was the most natural thing in the world for them to follow one of the two Indian trails leading across the Great Dismal to the south, which would bring them to one of the four main streams flowing south-easterly towards the ocean. The area was not unknown to colonists at Jamestown for the Secretary John Pory had explored the upper Chowan River as early as 1623 and published his optimistic findings in London in 1625.

It is probable that individuals began filtering into the area of Pasquotank as early as 1650, some using it as headquarters for foraging expeditions, others occupying it with the idea of staying permanently. Certainly by 1663 there were numerous settlers scattered hereabouts, for in that year Governor Berkeley of Virginia issued patents for twenty-eight tracts varying from 250 to 3300 acres each. These grants may have been confirmation of holdings already occupied. This was the year when Charles II rewarded eight of his principal supporters by establishing for them the Proprietary of Carolina which included "Pasquotank Precinct."

The Lords Proprietors named the northern portion of their domain "ALBEMARLE" after one of their number, General George



DEBRY MAP

Gift

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Monck, First Duke of Albemarle. This area extended from the Virginia border to what is now Albemarle Sound, from the Atlantic Ocean westward without limit. No time was lost in establishing a government. Governor Berkeley of Virginia who was one of the proprietors appointed William Drummond governor of Albemarle, and the first General Assembly of Carolina was held 6 February 1665 at Halls Creek about a mile from Nixonton (the spot is marked by a modest monument). The Assembly at first consisted of one councilor for each of the absentee lords proprietors which formed the upper house or governor's council, and all freemen who owned land. Later, the lower house was limited in number to five from each of the four precincts, elected by property owners. Pasquotank was not designated as the capital; it merely was a central location at a time when there were no public buildings, and the general court as well as legislature met at or near the home of some official, by arrangement.

Little is recorded of events of the first few years in Albemarle. One of the most auspicious occasions of these early days was the arrival in 1672 of the eminent Quaker missionary William Edmundson who was followed a few months later by his associate, George Fox. Like the peripatetic Englishmen of all centuries, these scholars heard of new places, sought them out regardless of difficulties and hazards, and returned home to write copiously of their travels and experiences. The journals of Edmundson and Fox give us the most authentic record available of the places and persons in the colony at that time, with pertinent observations of their own on manners and customs. From them we learn that the settlers were earnest, wholesome, industrious, and rugged; living with their families in the essence of simplicity to a point in all but exceptional cases of rigorous austerity. A few families had luxuries comparable to life in England, but these were few indeed. There were neither churches nor schools; no towns nor settlements. The only occasions of public gatherings were the court sessions, for then as now there was contention between conflicting interests. The courts as a matter of fact offered all the diversion there was in the wilderness, and everybody attended. Those not required as principals, attorneys or jurymen found this the ideal occasion to market their produce in exchange for supplies they needed. A pig might be swapped for a farming implement or some cloth, although the medium of exchange was usually tobacco. There was no money—except in the hands of the rich, used for the purchase of land or other costly items. Each planter took his entire family to court sessions, usually by boat; there were no roads, and most of the farmers built their homes and warehouses near the river landing. Sessions of the court initially were the sole means of intercourse between neighbors.

Up to this time the established church had made little effort to serve residents of the Albemarle. A priest occasionally would come down from Virginia on horseback to baptise the children, and not infrequently would end by marrying the parents. There was no stigma in this delay. Visits of the priests often were years apart, and

marriages performed by magistrates might or might not be sanctioned. Young couples made known their intentions, appeared before neighbors or kin as witnesses, and then set up housekeeping—awaiting the next coming of the itinerant parson to bless their union. Under these conditions, the early families need feel no embarrassment if the marriage date of their ancestors seems irrational. This situation explains in large measure why the Quakers became so well entrenched in Pasquotank and Perquimans. Edmundson and Fox offered something which did not exist—means of meetings between neighbors periodically, social intercourse, and procedure for marrying the young, baptising the children, and burying the dead. It was not until about 1704 that the established church sent out missionaries under the S. P. G. to correct the spiritual deficiency in the Albemarle. By then the Quaker faith had over thirty years start during which time it had established and maintained the most effective system of vital statistics among its members to be found anywhere in the colonies. We are indebted to this day to the excellent Quaker records for much of our best genealogical information of that period.

Government in those days had few functions; means of carrying out instructions of the Lords Proprietors, collecting quit-rents and taxes on tobacco, issuing grants of land to new arrivals who qualified, and providing courts for adjudicating differences between settlers or punishing criminals. Unlike Virginia, there was no connection between church and state. The people were happiest with the least of government; and this characteristic of Carolina attracted many from Virginia smarting under the strict rule of the ageing and now irascible Governor Sir William Berkeley. There was in the Albemarle an independence somewhat like that which characterized our western frontier later. The atmosphere of the new settlement encouraged rugged individualism, where every man felt himself the equal of the next; and the directness of the Quaker faith and practice added to the leveling influence. The condition of affairs may help us understand why the settlers took their government for granted, and gave to the governor and other officials little more respect than that accorded the least. Realization of this attitude will explain much of the history of the next fifty years.

Pasquotank was the scene in December 1677 of what some historians have called the first blow struck for American independence. In the previous year Thomas Miller, "an apothecary of Pasquotank" as he was then called, had distinguished himself as a man of careless and indiscreet garrulity when in his cups. He had been arrested for insulting remarks about the King's brother, James Duke of York, and had been sent to Virginia for trial under charges of treason. But he was not without his adherents in Pasquotank; he belonged to the Biggs faction which was in opposition to the Durant faction. Acquitted by Governor Berkeley he made his way to England. Here he was joined by Mr. George Eastchurch who was speaker of the Assembly and a man of temperance and prominence in Albemarle—another

instance where politics makes strange bedfellows Mr. Eastchurch was an anti-Durant man; he was a kinsman of the Lord Treasurer Clifford; and in his appearance before the Lords Proprietors to whom he made report of conditions in Carolina he made so excellent an impression that he was appointed governor of the province to fill the existing vacancy. For his companion Miller, he obtained appointments of secretary of the council, a deputy, and collector of the King's revenue. With this notable success, the two gentlemen then embarked upon several months enjoyment of the gayety of London's attractions. Meanwhile, Mr. George Durant of Perquimans, an early settler and perhaps the most affluent citizen of the Albemarle, arrived in London in the summer of 1677 and protested to the Lords Proprietors over the appointments of Eastchurch and Miller. The official record shows that he used vehement language and indulged in threats; but he went away empty-handed. About this time Eastchurch and Miller returned to America using a devious route. Their ship touched at the island of Nevis in the West Indies which then was a popular resort. Here Governor Eastchurch met a rich and charming lady and set himself up to win her hand, sending Secretary Miller on to Carolina with his instructions to assume presidency of the council (an authority beyond his legal power), which in effect would make Miller acting governor. Mr. Miller who had left Pasquotank in chains a year before under charges of treason now returned armed with indisputable commissions for three offices and claim for the acting governorship, all of which functions he entered upon with confidence bordering arrogance. At first he was accepted with outward complacency, and in some of his offices he was effective. In others he was so aggressive that he became generally obnoxious; but the people bided their time to allow events to determine the issue. This was not long in coming. In December there arrived at Crawfords Landing (later Relfe's Point, Cobb's Point, the Winslow home) the armed ship "CAROLINA", Captain Zack Gilliam, master, bringing the sort of supplies from England always eagerly awaited by the settlers. As soon as Gilliam was rowed ashore, he was met by Miller who placed him under arrest charged with having evaded paying tax on a previous cargo. Arrival of ships of these New England traders was always heralded as they beat their way slowly up Pasquotank River. Planters living along the river ceased work, saddled a horse, and rode to the landing for news, supplies, gossip, or any of the other reasons common to an unusual occasion. Gilliam was an experienced hand in intrigue and recognized in the crowd assembled an opportunity to take advantage of any unrest. He protested his innocence of any past wrong-doing, and was so outraged at such a reception when he was on a good-will mission that he threatened to sail away immediately, taking his goods with him. He won the crowd; they beseeched him to stay and unload his cargo, promising to protect him against the unpopular collector who had usurped and abused the office of governor. Miller withdrew; but learning that Mr. Durant, leader of the hated opposition, was on board Gilliam's ship a passenger returning from his unfruitful trip,

he went back late the same night, boarded the ship, and arrested Durant at pistol point charging him with treason. This was the crisis—the occasion for which the restless had been waiting. The revolt broke the following morning; armed men with John Culpeper the leader and many of the most influential citizens in support seized Miller and his principal assistants, and placed them in log prisons removed from one another incommunicado. The insurgents then set up a new government to their own liking and controlled affairs in Albemarle without opposition. Meanwhile Governor Eastchurch having won his bride and finally thinking of his office, arrived in Virginia. The news which met him was most discouraging; he was warned by the rebels not to enter Carolina; he sought military aid from the new Governor of Virginia but received only token sympathy; within a few weeks of frustration, he saddened and died. This uprising was characterized by its noble purpose of supplanting tyranny, its forthright and prompt seizure of all offices within the province, singleness in purpose, adroit planning and execution, and formation of an effective government without delay. There is no doubt that it was both political and partisan, not without selfishness and excesses; but by standards of the day, it met a need and had the support of the majority of the leading men. It was known as the Culpeper Rebellion and was distinguished by its bloodlessness and complete success. When Culpeper was tried for treason in England later, he was acquitted with Lord Shaftesbury acting as his defense.

Whether the people were overly critical, or their governors were unequal to their office, is a moot question. Certainly not one of a long list of appointees immortalized himself as either brilliant or benign. It may well be that the settlers were selfish, opinionated, contentious; it seems that there were always two or more factions pulling against each other in an atmosphere where there should have been harmony. Relations with the neighbor colony of Virginia were in a state of armed truce. Economically, the Virginians made it impossible for Carolinians to ship their tobacco; in religion, no suasion other than the established church was tolerated in Virginia. These and other matters caused people of the Albemarle to turn to Boston for commercial intercourse. Trade brought New Englanders to Carolina, settlers like the Baileys, Nicholsons, Charles, Winslows, Hathaways, Fearings, and others. Families came in from Virginia and Maryland, too, but mostly due to dissatisfaction with former conditions. About 1703 the Church of England had awakened to religious needs on the frontier and began sending out missionaries sponsored by the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, or the S.P.G. by its short name. The first of these was Mr. Blair who arrived in 1704. He found many children to be baptised, more than a hundred; but he performed no marriages because, as he wrote, that was then a prerogative of the magistrates! He complained of the long distances separating the scattered residents, the atrocious roads, and the utter futility of one man making any progress. He returned to England the same year. Not until 1708 did Rev. James Adams arrive, who had

Currituck Precinct as well as Pasquotank for his charge. His reports to the Society show the Quakers were dominant and inimical to the Church, often interfering in the government. He confirmed the lack of harmony among settlers.

The writings of John Lawson who became Surveyor-general of the province show that the principal inlet from the ocean in 1701 was Roanoke Inlet which gave ten feet of water over the bar. This was located at latitude 35° 50" near the north end of Roanoke Island and was the channel commonly used by ships from London or Boston. Lawson spoke in high terms of Nature's bounty to the planters, and was more flattering in his general estimate of the people and their manner of life than were the clerics. The population of Pasquotank in 1700 seems to have numbered about 1200, having about the same as Perquimans. Currituck and Chowan were the thinnest settled, but there was a noticeable gravitation of the center of population towards the southwestward. Accordingly, the periodic meetings of the government and the general court were being held more often in Perquimans than in Pasquotank as formerly.

By 1728 the Crown was dissatisfied with the administration of the province by the lords proprietors who had ruled their holding through absentee methods, only one ever visiting Carolina. It purchased the rights of all but one of the proprietors and set up a royal colony. Each precinct was made a county, the seat of Pasquotank being established at the mouth of Newbegun Creek where there was a ferry across Pasquotank River. This location, just below the present Naval Air Facility, was one of the two crossings for travelers using the trails leading from Virginia to Charleston. Site of the county seat in days when there were no settlements, neither churches nor schools, no public buildings, determined the focal point of public gatherings whenever there was a reason for the people coming together. Its location at a river crossing served two purposes and ordinarily should have encouraged some sort of settlement. The river was so wide, however, that crossing except in perfect weather was both difficult and dangerous. So BROOMFIELD, as the place was called, was doomed. It was superseded in 1756 when a ferry crossing was established at RELFES POINT, site of the outbreak of the Culpeper Rebellion eighty years before, and the county seat moved accordingly, name of the new location being WINDFIELD. From here, the road to Chowan and southward ran across the peninsula to HALLS CREEK, passing the point where the first general assembly had been held in 1665, thence across LITTLE RIVER into Perquimans. It is uncertain whether the old Relfe house, which had been built in 1670, was used as the court house or a new structure built. In any event, one room of the building still exists and has been incorporated into the home of the Winslow family, the ancient brickwork now being incased in wood frame like the remainder of the home. As at Broomfield, no settlement sprang up at Windfield; people came and went to court meetings, but the site did not attract business or homes.

Towns apparently originate and grow by chance rather than reason. The first settlement in Pasquotank was on Little River about a mile from Halls Creek, on land owned by Zachariah Nixon. Some shipping had sprung up here and attracted residents. At first it was called OLD TOWN and sought a charter as early as 1753. Mr. Nixon provided a tract of 162 acres, fifty of which were divided into streets and lots. The county seat was moved from Windfield to this new location in 1785 and the name changed to NIXONTON. By 1789 there were twenty homes and seventy persons living here. Landings and warehouses were built along the river with great expectation. But the Revolution had brought changes. In 1779 a new ferry crossing had been established at a point just above the Narrows by Gideon Lamb, at a location where the river was narrow and favorable to crossing in any sort of weather. That portion of Pasquotank County north of the river had been used for forming Camden County in 1777, and the seat of Camden was established at JONESBORO as it then was called which was less than a mile from Lambs Ferry. Highway traffic between the county seats of Camden and Pasquotank now used the new ferry and passed a landing at the Narrows popular for the storage and shipping of shingles taken from the juniper swamps. Here a tavern, one of the few in the area, was operated by the family of Adam Tooley; and it became a convenient stopping place for travelers, mariners, shippers, and buyers. A settlement sprang up, a house here and there, and the early stagecoach route from Princess Anne to Chowan changed horses here. Its importance grew so that it offered competition with Nixonton. In 1793 a charter was granted by the General Assembly sitting at Fayetteville for a town at the Narrows of Pasquotank River to be known as REDING. Fifty acres were purchased from Adam Tooley and his wife Elizabeth which were divided into streets and lots, the latter being sold as items the location of which was determined by a drawing after all had been sold. The three principal streets were to be 66 feet wide; others half that width; and lots were to be 1/2 acre each, two to the block except those located on the river which were to be 1/4 acre in area. The principal street was named CENTER and extended from the river westward to what is now DYER Street. Three other streets ran parallel to CENTER so that the north limit of the town was POINDEXTER Creek; the south, TIBER CREEK (now GRICE Street). Cross streets were numbered from the river, FIRST Street being 66 feet wide, later called Front and now named WATER STREET; all the other cross streets running north and south were 33 feet in width. The present names came later, some of which have been changed from time to time and losing historical significance accordingly. (Note: The Pasquotank Historical Society has a project for permanently naming all streets after persons related to history of the town, thereby eliminating such meaningless names as MAIN, ROAD, CHURCH, BROAD, LOCUST, while perpetuating the individuality of the place. Such a change could be made only by town officials, and its realization would be spread over a period of years for practical reasons).

The name of REDING which was derived from one of the early families was not to survive. In the following year, 1794, the legislature changed the name to ELIZABETH TOWN; and the new settlement thrived and grew so that in 1799 it was designated as the county seat. A site for the court house was purchased on the acre block the north side of CENTER Street between FIFTH and SIXTH streets, now POOL and ELLIOTT, respectively. A building of wood was built with broad stairs on the front exterior leading to the court room on the second floor. It was burned in 1862 when the town was captured by the Union Army. Soon after the seat was moved from Nixonton to Elizabeth Town confusion arose because the county seat of Tyrrell, which had been formed from a part of Pasquotank, also was named Elizabeth Town. In 1801 the legislature passed an act changing the names to ELIZABETH CITY for the Pasquotank county seat, and to COLUMBIA for the seat of Tyrrell. It has never been established whether Elizabeth City was named after Mrs. Elizabeth Tooley or after Elizabeth City County on Hampton Roads in neighboring Virginia. Nixonton was slightly larger than Elizabeth Town in 1800, the Federal census of that year showing a population of 103 white and 104 slaves in the former, and 70 white and 58 slaves in the latter. Henceforth, however, Nixonton fell behind and now has fewer than twenty families although it is the most beautiful location in the county and ideal for homes. The only incorporated town in the county at present is Elizabeth City which serves as the commercial center of the area and is the largest town in the Albemarle with a population in 1950 of 12,685. The population of Pasquotank County was: in 1800, 5,145; in 1850, 8,950; in 1900, 13,660; and in 1950, 24,347. Its growth has been conservative and steady, characteristic of an old frontier which was one of the cradles of the nation, and which sent out pioneers to other locations westward as new areas were opened.

The only war which physically scarred the county was that between the States 1861-1865. In the Revolution Pasquotank furnished one brigadier general and two or more colonels besides those of lesser rank, but there were no local engagements; similarly, the War of 1812 left no imprint here; but the Civil War placed its unforgettable mark. Pasquotank furnished the distinguished General James Green Martin, his brother Colonel William F. Martin, Colonel Stephen Decatur Pool, Colonel James Hinton, and many others less known but by no means less immortal for their contribution. In 1862 the Federal forces under General Burnside sent ships up the Pasquotank River from Roanoke Island and captured the town. There was no local garrison in Elizabeth City and the batteries commanding the water approach had been silenced. The civil population consisted of old men, women and children, set fire to their homes and fled. It is related that the roads leading to the south and west were crowded with refugees taking with them whatever they could carry. At the approach of the Union ships, Rev. E. M. Forbes, Rector of Christ Church, put on his vestments and went to the waterfront to meet the

invading force and to negotiate a surrender under the most favorable terms. As the fire was spreading one of the citizens more farsighted than the others took upon himself to save the county records which extended back to the year 1700 while it was only one of the four precincts of Albemarle. This man, subsequently known as "Colonel" Arthur Jones although he was not a military man, took a wagon and team to the court house, loaded the invaluable documents and drove hastily to Parkville at the upper reaches of Little River where he hid them in a barn. Here they remained until the end of hostilities in 1865. A back road led through the swamp and Gates County to Suffolk. It was headquarters of the resistance movement which followed the occupation by Union forces; it operated a blockade over back roads to bring in supplies for the "guerillas" as the resistance force was called, from Confederate headquarters near Suffolk.

The Union commander told Mr. Forbes that his troops would put out the fires, and that peaceful citizens would not be molested if they returned to their homes. Many of the finest homes, most of the stores, and the court house were destroyed before the fires could be extinguished. Most families returned although many of the more affluent sent their women, children, and slaves to towns to the west, some as far as Oxford and Chapel Hill, to stay until the end of war. General Burnside naturally did not leave his best combat troops to occupy a captured town. Unfortunately, organizations of troops of no combat usefulness and little discipline were placed in charge; excesses followed. Residents chose to either remain neutral or to join sides, those in the resistance movement being known as "guerrillas" and those collaborating with the occupation, or the enemy, were known as "buffalos". No love was lost between the partisans, and each side well knew who was on the other. There were raids at night followed by reprisals involving the military the following day. "Buffaloes" were shot under cover of darkness by their irate neighbors; soldiers of the occupation known to have committed crimes against civilians were shot on sight. Confederate soldiers clandestinely visiting their families were captured and hanged by the military even though not even suspected of having been party to any raid. It was a cruel and gruesome time which brought the horrors of war into the homes of innocent persons; and here was engendered much of the hate which accompanied the aftermath of fighting. After peace was restored in 1865, the worst was yet to come. The era of "Reconstruction" made its blight on Pasquotank and lasted for years. The county, however, suffered little from the "carpet-bag" administration which afflicted other parts of the state. One of this species appeared, an opportunist of color from New England who presumed to run for a county office. On the day that he was declared the loser, it is said that he was given until sundown to leave the state; that he left for South Carolina never to return.

One of Pasquotank's distinguished citizens is credited with having broken the back of the corrupt and cruel carpet-bag rule. In 1870 leading citizens of Alamance and Caswell counties were imprisoned

without charges, solely because they had supported the Confederacy. When orders of the state courts were disregarded in contempt by the military government, it fell to the lot of Judge George W. Brooks of Elizabeth City to issue a Federal writ of habeas corpus requiring the military to produce its prisoners. This it sought to defy by appealing to President Grant; but the latter declared he would not interfere with the judiciary. Forced to honor Federal injunction, the rights of individuals were restored to legal status, and innocent men no longer were subjected to illicit persecution by a discredited governor and martial law.

Following the War Between the States, Pasquotank began healing its wounds and building for the future. Several former Union soldiers returned to marry, and settled here for life—one paradoxically, becoming an officer of the local Confederate post. Other Northerners came to the county bringing their capital and talents to make their future. They married locally and have with their descendants become leaders of the community. Pasquotank people have ever been hospitable to strangers within the gates and welcome those who come to settle and join in making the county a better place to live and raise families.

Earlier, the lack of friendliness and intercourse between Pasquotank and neighbor counties of Virginia was apparent. This disappeared of course, with the common bond which sprang from the Revolution. One of the barriers had been physical—lack of any watercourse connecting the areas before roads were built. Construction of the Dismal Swamp Canal which began about 1790 and admitted craft of light draft about 1815 was continued until there was a channel suitable for commercial shipping by 1825. This water link between Elizabeth City and Norfolk served to cement relations so closely that the Albemarle all but forsook its association with the rest of Carolina. The land area between Albemarle Sound, the Chowan and Nansmond rivers, Hampton Roads, and the ocean became an island entity belonging neither to Carolina nor Virginia, and largely disregarded by both states. This was due principally to water barriers. It was not until the construction of highway bridges over Albemarle Sound that Pasquotank returned to the orbit of influence of its native state; and even now, its closest intercourse is, by convenience and migration of families, with Norfolk although its sentimental bond is steadfast with its own state.

There was no rail connection between Albemarle and the outside world until 1881 when the Elizabeth City & Norfolk Rail Road was completed. It is interesting that labor in those days could be hired at seventy-five cents per day, according to press notices. Thursday May 26, 1881 was a momentous day for Elizabeth City. The time announced for arrival of the first passenger train was 11:30. All morning people prepared for the grand occasion, crowds coming in from the country and neighboring places. At 11:40 the space about the depot on Pennsylvania Avenue was crowded, everybody in holiday

spirit; then with whistles blowing, cannon firing and with stirring music by Cook's Elizabeth City Brass Band, the gaily decorated locomotive hove into sight with its whistle wide open. The train and its distinguished passengers which included the president of the road and other officials were welcomed with cheers from the multitude, according to Creecy's Economist; and the party repaired to the Albemarle House for a banquet and speeches. A river excursion followed; and in the evening, President Phillips of the railroad was host at another banquet. Construction of the road had been under way for years and not without impatience and some friction over local financing. Violent discontent and protest followed the ensuing year when extension of the road to Hertford and Edenton suggested a change in the name of the road to the *Norfolk & Southern*, appropriate enough but bitterly fought by the locals who despaired at dropping the name "Elizabeth City". The depot was at dockside so that passengers merely crossed the tracks to go on board ship for New Bern, Edenton, or Murfreesboro whence they might make connections to Fayetteville, Charleston, and other points. This amphibious travel grew and prospered until the end of the century, by which time ferries and bridges over Albemarle Sound permitted more direct connections with Raleigh and points westward. Another railroad, the *Suffolk & Carolina*, was built into Elizabeth City about 1904, having its terminal at Lawrence and Water streets. It was absorbed by the Norfolk & Southern in later years and eventually was discontinued when highways and motor transportation made Gates County accessible. When the railroads were thriving, waterborne transportation massed ships at the docks of Elizabeth City three or more deep and provided regular scheduled sailings with river points throughout the Albemarle. The advent of the automobile has changed this scene significantly.

Elizabeth City has had its shipyards for over a century. News items of 1849 show that the yards of C. M. Laverty, Captain T. Hunter, and of Burgess & Lamb, were building ships for the West Indies trade. Commercial shipping, however, lately has fallen into disuse locally, in spite of which our shipyards are kept thriving by the yachting and racing types which still frequent the Inland Waterway route connecting New York with Florida.

Commencing about 1880, a new wave of prosperity swept over Pasquotank and except for the depression years of 1930-35 has continued. Blooded livestock made its appearance soon after 1900; then came new crops like soy beans and lespedeza and finally, hybrid corn. Variety and rotation displaced the old standard of "cotton and corn"; beef production and dairying was added to hog and sheep raising. The scarcity of good labor after the depression years led to machine methods in farming which revolutionized agriculture in the county. Now, concrete grain elevators are common sights along the countryside, and this area has begun to compete with the Middle West in grain production. Farming is one of the most profitable activities.

The elimination of distances and differences by the automobile,

paved highways, telephone, radio, and television has brought changes to be sure; but basically, Pasquotank County and its people are little changed from their forefathers and their inherited traditions. The machine age and the energy which accompanies it have not destroyed an atmosphere of leisurely courtesy and friendliness which ever characterized Elizabeth City and Pasquotank County in making visitors welcome and encouraging their return.

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