

NORTHAMPTON COUNTY.

Topography.—There are no topographic maps covering any portion of the area of this county. A few field observations have been made, however, and some data have been obtained from railroad elevations. The Chowan terrace plain of the Pleistocene borders Roanoke River at probable elevations of 50 to 60 feet. This plain is probably present, also, along Meherrin River. The next higher Pleistocene plain, the Wicomico, is believed to cover a considerable area in the east and southeast at elevations of 70 to 100 feet. The Sunderland plain covers a portion of the northern and central part of the county at probable elevations of 110 to 150 feet. A considerable portion of the narrow area which extends westward north of Roanoke River consists of rolling hills with elevations probably amounting to 300 or 400 feet above sea level.

Geology.—Basement rocks form the hills in the western part of the county. They are mantled over in part by discontinuous patches of sandy clays, sands, and gravels of the Lafayette formation. The uneven rock surface dips to the eastward and passes beneath the deposits of the Coastal Plain. In the eastern part of the county beds of the Patuxent formation, consisting principally of compact, arkosic sands and drab clays, rest upon the rock surface. These do not rise more than a few feet above water level in Roanoke River. Miocene beds consisting of sands, clays, and shell marls rest upon the Patuxent surface and overlap westward upon the basement rocks, and, except for a portion of the long, narrow strip extending westward, underlie the whole county beneath the thin, surficial, Pleistocene terrace deposits. The latter, consisting of sandy loams, sands, and gravels, belong to the Coharie, Sunderland, Wicomico, and Chowan formations.

Water Resources.—The lower sandy portions of the Pleistocene formations and the upper sandy beds of the Miocene are the principal sources of water for domestic purposes. The wells range in depth from 10 to 50 feet, the average for driven wells being about 30 feet and for dug wells about 15 feet. A few wells have been driven as deep as 60 to 80 feet, which have obtained a sulphurous, ferruginous water from the Miocene beds. In the extreme western part of the county, in the vicinity of Ingram and Vulture, the open wells range in depth from 10 to 80 feet. The water comes from basement rocks. A few springs are also used in this section.

But one flowing well exists in the county. This is located at Margarettsville on a low terrace bordering a tributary of the Meherrin River. The flow is small. The reported depth of the well is 163 feet.