

The Three Rivers Chronicle

**Publication of the Three Rivers Historical Society at Hemingway, S.C.
29554**

Volume VII March, 1987 No. 1

William and Sarah Stone of the Northern Neck of Virginia, by Bertha C. Chandler

The Northern Neck of Virginia is more than an historic Place. It's past history lives and breathes with you, and it's pulse beats with yours if you walk along the old Indian Paths, and the creeks that still bear Indian names. In that ancient land where the "Rappahannoc" Indians were the first settlers, and were members of the powerful "Powhatan Confederacy", there is much history. Their tribe along with others made a strong group on the east coast. They traveled by water or on land by foot, and made the first roads which were paths made by animals. They followed the animal paths that went to water, and these paths later became the roads that the settlers used to roll their tobacco hogsheads to the nearest port.

The Indians left their names behind when they were pushed further and further inland. Names like "Rappahannoc Indian Towne", Indian Banks, Menokin, Morattico, Tappahannock, Powhatan and Totuskey are still in use there. I found the Northern Neck of Virginia to be a neck or peninsular of land lying between the Potomac and the Rappahannock Rivers. It is almost an island. It most likely was referred to by the early settlers at Jamestown as the Northern Neck. The name appears in print in early records as "Ye Northern Necke". It is a narrow strip of land about twenty miles wide and runs inland between the two rivers for about one hundred miles before it narrows at Fredericksburg, Virginia. There the Rivers almost join, almost making it an island. It was to this place that William and Sarah Stone brought their young family and seated their Plantation on Totuskey Creek, Old Rappahannock County.

William Stone bought 200 acres of land on Totuskey Creek from Gyles and Mary Cole on October 20, 1672. (deed book 5, p. 86 & 87, Essex County Court House in Tappahannock, Va., for 600 Lbs. of tobacco received from Wm. Stone...a conveyance of 200 acres of land on Totuskey Creek;)

Another deed in Essex County, where the Old Rappahannock County records are kept at Tappahannock, is dated April 3, 1680. On page 105, Robert Bedwell to William Stone....Robert Bedwell of Farnham Parish of Rappahannock County, Planter, with consent of wife, Susanna, and for 250 lbs. sterling paid by William Stone, of Kingston Parish, Gloucester County, Planter, do sell....720 acres in Farnham Parish." April 3, 1680

Witnesses:

Dominick Rice Robert and Susanna Bedwell

Henry Albin Recorded 7th, April, 1680

Peter Ellis Edmo. Craske cl cur.

Another deed for William Stone is recorded on Page 106.

Deed: Richard Gregory to William Stone - "Richard Gregory of Farnham Parish, Rappahannock, Planter...in consideration of 12 lbs. 10 shillings sterling, and a breeding mare...from William Stone of the Parish of Kinston, County of Gloucester, do sell...250 acres in Farnham Parish Rappahannock County on south side of Hoskins Creek." 14th February, 1679/80.. Richard Gregory

Witness: rec: Rappahannock; 7th April 1680

George Seaton Edmo. Craske c l cur

George Axe

William and Sarah Stone's homestead on Totuskey Creek was close to the Lancaster County line and not far from North Farnham Church. When the North Farnham Parish Register opens (1663-1814), there was no such Parish. It was simply Farnham Parish and covered both sides of the Rappahannock River in Old Rappahannock County, Virginia. In 1684 Farnham Parish was subdivided into North Farnham Parish and the Rappahannock River as the natural boundary. Then, in 1692 Old Rappahannock County was abolished and became the parent of two new counties, South Farnham Parish fell into Essex County and North Farnham Parish fell into Richmond County.

Totuskey Creek; an Indian name of unknown meaning, is a big creek, with lots of branches. It arises near the Northumberland County line and flows northerly, then westerly, and finally southwest into the Rappahannock River. I walked along the banks for a ways and stood by the bridge where the Highway #3 crosses it on it's way to Lancaster County; and I thought of these ancestors who, three hundred and thirteen years ago, bought their first land on Totuskey Creek, fought the Indians, cleared the land by girdling the trees like the Indians, and planted their seeds in between the stumps like them. It is really peaceful there. No noise and no one is hurrying. Many families with names familiar to us here also lived along Totuskey Creek, and the Rappahannock River. Along with William and Sarah Stone there was living in the Northern Neck of Virginia in 1680 William, Thomas and John Chandlor; John , William and James Creel; Robert, James and Henry Austin, who also lived on Totuskey Creek. There was Charles and Thomas Dodson; **Charles, John, William, and Alexander Fleming; William, John, George, and Robert Taylor**; Samuel Godwin, many Turners and Tunes, Many Colemans and Coles, and Pursells and others.

The settlers along Totuskey Creek and Rappahannock River were planters. They grew tobacco, corn, peese, and garden vegetables. They all had a few cows and hogs and several horses if they were fortunate. The animals all ran loose in the swamps and each planter had his own mark or "crop" on each one so they could recognize them. In reading the Virginia Court records, there were many law suits in those day too. The settlers concentrated on growing tobacco, and had their problems in that too; mostly with the prices of their tobacco. I read that they transplanted the tobacco plants between the stumps the first week in May. Then it bloomed; they pinched off the blooms and harvested the tobacco in Fall, and hung the leaves up to dry. When the weather turned wet, they gathered it up in "Hands" and "Prized" it by packing it tightly in barrels called Hogsheads. When the time was ready they simply rolled it over the Indian paths to the plantation landings where it was put on boats for Europe. But, after some years without fertilizer, the land was depleted and the prices dropped, and they had to look for new land.

Again they had to push the Indians further inland to get more land. They had many skirmishes and many lost their lives. In the old records the Indian paths are often referred to. One of these I found was the "Chickacon" Path, that led upward from the "Chicacoon Indian Village" and was the trail up the Northern Neck. It always crossed the creeks where wading was possible. On this path the largest stream that the Indians waded across was at "Cross Creek". It was the East Branch of the Totuskey Creek. This ancient path passed near where Farnham Church stands and near by William and Sarah Stone's homestead, and on to Passapatany; to the Great North and South Indian Trail that became known as Port Tobago Path (now Port Tobacco); where it crossed the river there and joined the Kings Highway. The Kings Highway was first known as "Rappahannock Path". It was ordered developed in 1662. References to it can be found in Deed Book 4, pp. 144 and 246; Deed Book 5, p.3, Deed Book 8, p. 230 and in Land Trails Vol. 2, p. 15.

Rappahannock County was short lived. It was formed from Old Lancaster County in 1656 and abolished in 1692. It was a big county, covering all that territory on both sides of the river that was drained by the river. By 1692, a separation was necessary. In the fourth year of Reign of King William and Queen Mary of England it was enacted that Rappahannock County be divided into two counties, "So that Rappahannock River divides the two, and that part which is on the North side be called by the name of Richmond County, and that part on the South side be called Essex County...., That the records belonging to the county seat of Rappahannock before, shall be kept in Essex County, that belonging to Their Majesties, and the other to the proprietors of the Northern Neck...." The name of the new county of Richmond was put in the County Court Records on the 12th Day of May, 1692.

Richmond County has nothing whatever to do with the city of Richmond. There was no city of Richmond at that time. Richmond City sits in Henrico Co., Va, but it has no Court House. The county was named for His Grace, The First Duke of Richmond, or for Richmond in Surry County, England.

William and Sarah Stone's land fell in Richmond County, not far from North Farnham Church which was built in 1737. William and Sarah were dead by then, but their Grandchildren's birth records are recorded there. Also, some marriage and death records. We stayed over the week end so we could attend a service there on Sunday, October 26th, 1986. The Church is kept in perfect condition and it is beautiful inside and out. The communion silver was given in 1720 by Queen Ann. It is engraved with "Pharnham Parish" since it was given before the new Church was built. William Stone and his children most likely helped to build the first Farnham Church which stood a little nearer the river or the creek. Only the foundation remains, the records are not to be found. The county seat for Richmond County was first called "Richmond Court House" but was changed to Warsaw about 1831 in sympathy with the polish struggle for liberty. It is a quiet little village. I saw the old hand written register in the Court House there. When I opened it the first page had this written, "Original North Farnham Parish Register, from about 1672 to 1800; property of the Circuit Court of Richmond, Virginia, to be kept on file in the Clerk's Office forever" in Warsaw, Virginia.

In the War of 1812 the Church was bombarded, bullet holes may be seen in the Church walls from a skirmish with raiders from the British in 1814. In 1838, repairs were done and a service of consecration was led by Bishop Meade, Author of "Old Churches, ministers, and Families of Virginia." During the Civil War Federal and Confederate troops used the Church as a stable, a granary, and as a shelter for themselves. In 1871 restoration was again begun. Today it is very beautiful. No history of Richmond County has been published but you can read of the affairs of the county in countless volumes in the Virginia State Historical Society or the Virginia State Library in Richmond.

William and Sarah Stone died in Richmond County on Totuskey Creek. His Will was written or dated Nov. 7, 1704 and is recorded in Warsaw in Folio F. 114V and it was recorded on Jan. 31 1707/08. He mentions wife, Sarah, sons Philip and Joshua, son-in-law Robert Schofield, Grandsons Gregory and John Glascock, Daus. Elizabeth and Mary Fann. Exor. Wife. No Witnesses. He does not mention his youngest son William or his daughter Sarah Glascock, or the daughter who married Robert Schofield.

Recorded in Warsaw in Folio F 113R is a statement of the mother, Sarah Stone, dated Jan. 31, 1707. The old documents are 279 years old now and very hard to read. There was a strong controversy about the Will and it disappeared for a while. Philip Stone was the eldest son and therefore the heir-at-law of his father. William Stone in the Will, says that he has provided for Philip and Joshua, and for the daughters, and it must have been his intent for William II, to have the homestead place after his wife died. After much sorrow, Sarah Stone found the Will and succeeded in getting it on record.

Sarah Stone, wife of William Stone I, died in Richmond County, Va. at her homestead on Totuskey Creek about ten years after her husband died. Her Will is

dated July 2, 1711 and proven on May 1, 1717. William and Sarah lie buried in one of the old cemeteries along Tutuskey Creek that have long been forgotten, and now lost.