

Dominion Research Service

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Warren Culpepper
3600 Mansell Rd
Alpharetta, GA 30022-3093

Dear Mr. Culpeper:

I will not be available tomorrow; however, if you have questions, I should be home most of the day on Thursday. I am leaving Friday and will not return until late Monday. It has been an interesting project. However, as I note in my report, I am not satisfied that Henry lived near the Western Branch until late in life. I suspect that all of the land he owned was south of the Eastern Branch and that that was where he first settled. I also suspect that he was out of the country for extended periods either traveling or working on a sailing vessel which would explain his giving his wife a power of attorney.

If you have any questions or I can be of further service, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely yours,



Barbara Vines Little, CG, FVGS



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Information provided:

Website with Sykes-Gwathmey map, 1907 USGS and MBL files of early patents.

Data Already Gathered

Please refer to our family tree record for Henry Culpeper of Lower Norfolk Co., VA. There, and on linked pages, are all of the deeds, tithables, tax lists, wills, probate and other historical records that we have found to date for Henry and his descendants.

Information requested:

Project Scope and Phasing

Baseline. Assuming this is practical, the effort should start with the platting of the earliest land grants for and around people from whom the Culpeppers first bought their land. Geographically, the platting should start at the easternmost point of the south side of the Western Branch of the Elizabeth River. Today, that easternmost point is the site of the CSX-Portsmouth docks and yard. However, that facility may have been built on landfill and the original river contours did not extend that far east. From where ever the early lands did start, proceed to the west along the south side of the Western Branch until you find and can plat the original land grants to Thomas Fulton (Fulcher), Thomas Whyte (White), John Creekmore (Creekmur) and **Thomas Greene**. All four are mentioned in some of the earliest Culpepper deeds, and we believe all lie within the confines of old Portsmouth Parish. In the case of Thomas Greene and his wife Jeane, we have extra interest in them. We believe them to be the parents of Henry Culpeper's wife, Elizabeth, and each of them has a page in the family tree. We are not sure how far westward along the Western Branch the applicable lands extend: it could be less than a couple of miles, or as much as five or six miles. In any event, we believe a baseline of plats along the south side of the Western Branch will provide a more detailed context for the later Culpepper purchases and transfers of land.

Culpeppers thru 1749. After establishing the baseline described above, we would like to plat all Culpepper land transfers up to 1749 in the area that was once called Lower Norfolk County. In 1691, the Culpeppers were in that part of Lower Norfolk that became Norfolk County, and today the early Culpepper land is in the independent cities of both Portsmouth and Chesapeake. The period through 1749 should cover most of the transfers involving Henry Culpeper, his children and grandchildren. It appears that most of these deeds will be found inside the 25 or so square miles of land lying between the Western and Southern Branches of the Elizabeth River. The area encompassing the Culpepper plots may be much smaller.

1750-1849. Assuming (a) the first two phases produce information that can be useful in untangling the subsequent generations, and (b) funding has not been exhausted, we'll want to extend the platting project by an additional 25 years at a time, at least to 1800 and perhaps to 1850, all within Norfolk County.

North Carolina. At some point, we may want to extend this project into the bordering North Carolina counties of Currituck, Camden and Pasquotank, although this could be with a different

researcher if there is one who has more familiarity and easier access to NC records.

Ownership. Warren Culpepper will have full rights to publish on the Culpepper Connections website, or in whatever other form he sees fit, the transcriptions, plats and reports that are produced as part of this project, giving full credit to the researcher for his or her work. The researcher will also be given, if desired, the opportunity to review and critique any of the researcher's work that is publically published. The researcher will also be entitled to use his or her work on this project however he or she sees fit.

Search: Thomas Fulcher is mentioned five times in *Cavaliers and Pioneers* 2¹ and not at all in *Cavaliers and Pioneers* 1. Two of the references are to land on Daniel Tanner's Creek which should place them north of the Eastern Branch of the Elizabeth River. Two of the references are to escheated land that he patents, but which have no description. One is to a tract patented by John Thrower on Col. Mason's Little Creek that is described as joining Thomas Fulcher.

To Thomas Fulcher 200a in Lower Norfolk formerly granted to Henry Wake decd escheated 16 May 1666; patent issued 26 October 1666. No further description given.² I found no patent issued to a Henry Wake. This appears to be the tract of land that Fulcher sold to Culpeper in April 1667. See details in Culpeper's deed of sale to Hallowell.³ The deed does not include a description, but does describe Henry as of the western branch by the date of the deed (7 July 1675). Since his wife does not release her dower, the presumption is that she is deceased by this date.

To Thomas Fulcher sixty acres in Lower Norfolk formerly grant to Capt. Robert Page and escheated January 1671; granted to Fulcher 28 October 1672.⁴

To John Thrower granted Thomas Ivey 22 August 1648. I found no grant to Thomas Ivey. The land was sold by Ivey's sons to William Richardson and then to Thrower. There were no metes and bounds.⁵

Search:

The tract sold by Thomas White has already been identified as part of a patent to Thomas White and Sexton. This tract and adjacent patents were already placed when I accessed the information. Although they are anchored on creeks, I have been unable to verify that the creeks on which the patent is placed was historically known as Gayther's Creek. (See comments about creek names later in this report.)

¹ Nell Marion Nugent, *Cavaliers and Pioneers: Abstracts of Virginia Land Patents and Grants, Volume Two: 1666–1695* (Richmond, Va.: Virginia State Library, 1977), 3, 57, 110, 131, 316.

² Virginia Patent Book 6, p.6; digital image, "Land Office Grants," *Library of Virginia* (<http://www.lva.virginia.gov/> : accessed 2012).

³ Lower Norfolk County Deed Book 4, p. 2.

⁴ Virginia Patent Book 6, p. 407; digital image, "Land Office Grants," *Library of Virginia* (<http://www.lva.virginia.gov/> : accessed 2012).

⁵ Virginia Patent Book 6, p. 472; digital image, "Land Office Grants," *Library of Virginia* (<http://www.lva.virginia.gov/> : accessed 2012).

I added a patent for Morton and Manning and moved one of Etheridge's patents to the area. I also moved Jones north of the Eastern Branch of the Elizabeth River. When I added some adjacent patents to his, I discovered that he was in the wrong place. On 16 April 1671 Henry sells all right, title and interest to a tract (size and place unidentified) of land. He describes it as a bill of sale of land &c. It is unclear whether it is a deed in fee simple or a quit claim deed. The margin note is difficult to read; it states in part _____ assignment h _____ to which[?] conveyance made by Jno White to Culpeper & Rect 17 April 1671 Dd Wm Poston. Given that Henry later posts a bond in 1774 using 225 acres of land which is the amount that White sold, it is possible that this references a different track. If it is a quit claim then it may involve an inheritance since Elizabeth signed the deed. It could also have been an assignment of a patent. The land would have to be traced forward to determine exactly what is going on here.

Search:

The 100-acre tract sold to Philpott does not indicate a source; it is described as lying in the Broad Neck with Church Creek on the east and Coopers Creek on the west. It is likely that this tract lies south of the Eastern Branch. I located some patents in *Cavaliers and Pioneers* that appear to refer to the Church Creek of interest.⁶ I did not find a Coopers Creek.

Search: The patents

The most practical way to work with platting patents is to follow creeks. Creeks are usually named in patents and this usually proves to be the quickest way to identify and locate patents in an area. While references to north or south of the Western Branch or the Eastern Branch allow one to quickly eliminate patents, the length of the area would mean working an area that extends out of the area of interest. Using the patent abstracts and creek indexes from *Cavaliers and Pioneers*, I was able to locate patents that were likely in the same area; however, I encountered a major issue with creek names. The maps I have been able to locate (and these are very few) do not provide creek names. In many cases I have yet to identify where a creek lies except to locate it north or south or east or west of the Elizabeth River. Some creeks appear to have had multiple names (for example, Paradise Creek also appears to have been known as Smith's Creek and Broad Creek). The same creek name (for example, Broad Creek) also appears to have been used in various areas of the county. This has created a major issue. I have groups of patents based upon creek names that I cannot locate with any assurance.

There are a number of overlapping patents. This I had anticipated; I had also anticipated issues with inaccurate metes and bounds; it is apparent that southwest by westerly is often an approximation and thus these may account for some of the overlaps. Of more concern are the repatents. While these are sometimes identified so that ones knows that one is dealing with a new patent for the same land. It appears that some are not. Other issues include the anticipated problems with landfills that obliterate original landmarks and may alter the placement of the mouth of a creek and changing creek courses. It is possible that a study of local histories for the area would provide some information on creek names. However, the most likely solution would be to carry the tracts forward until a current creek name is determined.

I located one map that did show Julian's Creek, Manning's Creek and Deep Creek. It also identifies the

⁶ Nell Marion Nugent, *Cavaliers and Pioneers: Abstracts of Virginia Land Patents and Grants, Volume One: 1623–1666* (1934; reprint, Richmond, Va.: Virginia State Library and Archives, 1992), 157, 188, 251, 285, 478.

land of the heirs of John Culpeper and T Culpeper's land.⁷ This may be the 1838 map referenced on the Manning Family website, but whose link times out each time I attempt to access it.⁸

I've made a start, but it will be a difficult task to complete what you want. I strongly suspect that Henry did not move to the Western Branch until sometime close to 1675. I think that the land he owned all lay south of the Eastern Branch. It also appears that he did not divest himself of all of his land so that in all probability his eldest son inherited part of it.

Please note that the amount of time contracted for (twenty hours) did not produce the enclosed results. I worked another ten plus hours on the project. Some of it was speculative, some was in the vain attempt to locate creek names and others were in following searches that did not pan out (ended up in the wrong area). I want to make it clear that future research will probably not produce the same amount of results. However, familiarity and the fact that some avenues have been eliminated may prove to have a positive effect on results.

I am attaching copies of the deeds involving Henry Culpeper's land and the mbl file with the maps as well as PDFs of the areas. Note that the word Culpeper in bold on the map represents the estimated location of the name on the Sykes Gwathmey map. I have abbreviated the calls to keep the corner lines as short as possible when displaying them. I checked a number of the deeds that had already been platted in order to obtain additional information; some of which I added in brackets to the original files. There are two PDF files one north and south and then four showing larger views with 4 as the northern most map and 1 as the southern most map.

⁷ Dismal Swamp Canal, 1838, Map 493, Board of Public Works; digital image, *Library of Virginia* (<http://www.lva.virginia.gov/> : accessed 2011).

⁸ Manning Family (www.manningfamily.org/mapping_projects.htm : accessed 2012).