

# **EPPINGTON TECHNICAL REPORT**

## **HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

### **Virginia's Native People**

Thousands of years before the first European colonists arrived in Virginia, an indigenous population inhabited the coastal plain, leaving a faint imprint upon the land. Between 15,000 and 8000 BC, when the Paleoindians lived, the climate and environment were vastly different than they are now, for there were enormous continental glaciers. The sea level was much lower than it is today and the Chesapeake Bay was just a narrow river. Winters were long and hard and summers were short, cool, and moist. Streams flowed through tundra-like grasslands and forests of spruce, pine and fir covered most of Virginia at that time. Large portions of the continental shelf were exposed that currently are underwater and many of today's slow-moving rivers were much more active. The first people, the Paleoindians, lived in small, mobile groups called bands that anthropologists liken to an extended family. They roamed across a large but somewhat limited area, establishing small, temporary encampments where food was available. They derived much of their nourishment from plants, small game and fish, and meat from large mammals like deer, elk, bear, and moose. Hunters developed stone tools that enabled them to kill animals that were attracted to rivers, lakes and salt licks (Egloff et al. 2006:10-12).

On the basis of their findings, archaeologists divide the Archaic period, which extended from 8000 BC to 1200 BC, into three major time spans. During the Early Archaic period, from 8000 to 6000 BC, significant environmental changes occurred, for the cold, moist climate of the Pleistocene Age changed to a more temperate, dryer one. Warmer winds melted the glaciers hundreds of miles to the north of Virginia and the ocean's temperature rose. A rise in sea level spread water across the coastal plain. It created the Chesapeake Bay and covered or eroded most of the places frequented by the very early hunters. Forests of pine and oak replaced open grasslands. Elk, deer, and bear were abundant and readily available to hunters. As vegetation became more profuse, Early Archaic people gathered more plant foods such as fruits and nuts. As nomadic hunter-gatherers, they made abundant use of animal skins, especially those of deer. They also began to vary the size and shape of their stone tools, making side or corner notches that were used to attach points to spears. During the Early Archaic period, the population grew, thanks to a more hospitable environment (Egloff et al. 2006:12-15).

By 6000 to 2500 BC, the Middle Archaic period, Virginia's Indians had adjusted well to their new environment and long winters and short summers had been replaced by seasons much as we have today. Large amounts of rain forced rivers to overflow their banks, depositing rich topsoil on the floodplain. The Indians went about their hunting and gathering, in accord with the seasons, and tools and weapons became more functional and sophisticated. Women began using mortars and pestles to crush nuts and seeds from which they could prepare food. Using their stone axes, Middle Archaic people cut wood they used to build houses and make fires. Game animals became more accessible, making hunting easier (Egloff et al. 2006:17-20).

During the Late Archaic period, that is, 2500 to 1200 BC, there were perhaps tens of thousands of Indians in Virginia. Because the floodplain, which was forested, contained an abundance of plant and animal life, Late Archaic period Indians enjoyed a wide variety of foods, greatly enhancing their diet. The floodplain attracted small bands of people, who merged to form small settlements or hamlets. Native people also began learning how to nurture certain

plant species. Some commenced raising varieties of gourds and squash, and they began to store crops for leaner times, placing food stuffs in storage pits in or near their homes. The transition from foraging to collecting gave rise to the establishment of substantial, perhaps semi-sedentary, base camps along major streams, where fish and shellfish could be gathered. In the coastal plain, saltwater oysters became an important food source. The Indians' discarded oyster shells formed middens or refuse heaps. When excavating Late Archaic sites, archaeologists have found the remains of dogs, the Indians' only domesticated animal (Egloff et al. 2006:23-26).

Like the Archaic period, archaeologists have divided the Woodland period into three parts, on the basis of cultural evidence. The Early Woodland period (1200-500 BC) embraces the more sedentary Native cultures that lived in the woodlands of the eastern United States. Although the pattern of subsistence varied little in the Late Archaic and the Early Woodland periods, a major innovation occurred. During the Early Woodland period, Native people began making and firing clay vessels for cooking and storage. First, they dug good clay from a riverbank or bluff and blended it with water. They added crushed rock or shell, for they had learned through experience that these additives (tempering) reduced shrinking and cracking during drying and firing. The clay pot, once fabricated by hand, was allowed to air dry. Then it was baked in an open fire. Once cooled, the Indians had a vessel that could be used for cooking or storage. Archaeologists use differences in the size, shape, body, surface treatment, and decoration of clay vessels to assign dates to sites that Woodland period Natives occupied (Egloff et al. 2006:26-27).

As the population grew, the diverse groups who lived in scattered but settled hamlets made the transition from bands to tribal-level organization. Subsistence patterns began to evolve and eventually culminated in sedentary horticultural practices. By the Middle Woodland period (500 BC to AD900), Native people had begun planting corn, a domesticated plant that was brought into the eastern United States from Mexico. The introduction of corn, in combination with better nutrition, enabled the population to increase during this period. Archaeologists believe that religious ceremonies linked to the harvesting and planting of corn may have led to the development of societies in which rank and status were important. The Natives began using the bow and arrow as a hunting weapon instead of spears. Middle Woodland period people experimented with specialized crafts and increased their trading activities. This enabled Native leaders to spread their cultural traditions and beliefs and share their knowledge of farming (Egloff et al. 2006:29-30).

By the Late Woodland period (900 to 1600 AD), Tidewater Virginia Indians, though more sedentary than their forebears, followed a seasonal pattern of hunting and gathering. They lived along the banks of tidal waterways during the warm months and in winter, when their gardens were dormant and fishing was less productive, they moved into the interior and relied upon stored food and whatever game they could procure. Therefore it was a relatively mobile existence. Coastal Virginia's Natives lived in large villages that included hundreds, perhaps thousands, of people. Their relatively substantial houses usually were built upon the floodplain or low-lying necks of land that had rich, sandy soil. The Indians' houses were clustered close together or interspersed with fields used for gardens. Sometimes villages were surrounded by a palisade. Late Woodland villages were organized around a complex economic, social, and political structure. Village life provided residents with social contacts, security, and an opportunity to accumulate wealth. Ceremonial life was important and creativity flourished. The Indians fabricated a wide variety of pottery forms and wrought objects of stone, copper and shell that reflected their belief system.

The Indians typically grew maize, beans, and squash during the spring and summer months and as time went on, they began growing tobacco. Women and elderly men usually planted crops, employing the slash-and-burn method of clearing the ground they used for agriculture. The vegetable crops the Indians grew helped to fulfill their nutritional needs. This allowed them to linger in one location for longer periods of time. Improved nutrition enabled Late Woodland people to thrive and become more populous. Waterways were viewed as a source of food and a conduit of transportation and sometimes, if a stream were narrow, the Natives would build their towns on both sides. Their houses usually were located close to the shore and sometimes extended along the waterfront for a considerable distance (Rountree 1990:6; Egloff et al. 2006:31-32).

Archaeologists believe that control of the food supply led to the development of Native societies with differences in the rank or status of certain individuals. In chiefdoms, which had begun to develop by the late 1500s, leaders accepted tribute, which they retained or redistributed. In time, the literally hundreds of villages that existed in Tidewater Virginia began to compete for territory and economic supremacy. Weaker tribes were forced to pay tribute to stronger ones that guaranteed them protection in times of war. By the mid-to-late sixteenth century a paramount chiefdom began to emerge. Virginia's Algonquians shared a common linguistic bond with some of the Native peoples to the north and south, a distinct dialect that set them apart from those communicating in the Iroquoian, Sioux and other tongues. By the time the first colonists arrived, the Indians' way of life was well established (Egloff et al. 2006:31-33, 42-45).

In 1994 when archaeologists examined portions of the cultivated fields to the northeast of the main house, they found evidence of what appears to be a relatively large prehistoric campsite that was used repeatedly by people from the Archaic Period (8,000 BC to 1,000 BC) and possibly from the Early Woodland Period (1,000 BC to 500 BC). This campsite was located on the upper edge of a terrace to the northeast of the main house. Among the artifacts found were an abundance of quartz and quartzite flakes two quartzite blade fragments, a quartzite projectile point, and debitage. Nearby was additional evidence of prehistoric occupation. When excavations were undertaken in the cellar directly below the oldest part of the Eppington mansion, scant evidence of prehistoric occupation was found (Festler 1994:61-62).

### *Colonization of the Appomattox River Basin*

The earliest recorded European exploration of the Appomattox River occurred in 1607, when Captain John Smith and a small party of adventurers sailed into its mouth and proceeded upstream as far as the falls. Later, when Smith prepared his well-known map of Virginia, he indicated with a cross-mark the extent to which he had explored the Appomattox and he identified Indian villages he had sighted along its shoreline, which he attributed to a tribe called the Appomattocks (Smith 1910:I:347; 1612) (Figure 1- Smith map).

By 1609 officials of the Virginia Company of London had advised their representatives in Virginia to build settlements in a more wholesome environment than Jamestown, which was in a marshy area. Sir Thomas Dale, upon arriving in Virginia in May 1611, set about implementing his superiors' instructions and resolved to build new settlements upstream toward the head of the James River. Having declared martial law, he set about shifting the focus of the colony's development from Jamestown to an environment he considered more healthful and relatively secure from foreign invasion. In 1612 Dale and his men took a strong stand against the Native population and drove the Appomattox from their habitation near the mouth of the river

that bore their name. By Christmas 1613 he had undertaken the establishment of a cluster of settlements he called the New Bermudas or Bermuda Incorporation, within the immediately adjacent area (Smith 1910:II:510); Hamor 1957:31).<sup>1</sup>

According to Ralph Hamor, initial settlement in the Bermuda Incorporation occurred at the Nether Hundred, a neck of land on the upper side of the Appomattox River, which later became known as Bermuda Hundred. Here, Dale constructed a two-mile long palisade measuring some eight miles of good corn ground. Upstream, above the Nether Hundred, Dale laid out Rochdale Hundred, which he impaled for the grazing of livestock. Directly across the mouth of the Appomattox River from the Nether Hundred, Dale built what he called Bermuda City in the fall of 1614, at a location that later became known as City Point, an area with which the Eppes family later was associated. Sir Thomas Dale also settled men at three sites on the northern side of the James River: at Digges Hundred (across the James from Rochdale Hundred); at the Upper Hundred or Curles (which lay just downstream from Rochdale Hundred; and at West and Shirley Hundred (the island and mainland that lay across from the Nether Hundred and Bermuda City, an area now known as Eppes Island and Shirley Plantation) (Hamor 1957:31-32).

To promote the development of the Bermuda Incorporation, the aggregate of the Bermuda settlements, which were joined by charter to the Bermuda Town, Sir Thomas Dale allocated planters a small plot of ground for their own personal use and exempted them from public service for eleven months a year, emergencies excepted. Some Bermuda settlers, however, had signed contracts or indentures whereby they agreed to serve for three consecutive years on behalf of the Incorporation. In 1614 Ralph Hamor reported that there were “faire houses already builded . . . not so few as fifty” (Anonymous 1896:77-78; Smith 1910:II:516; Hamor 1957:32).

John Rolfe in his *True Relation of the State of Virginia* in 1616 listed Bermuda Nether Hundred and West and Shirley Hundred as two of the six settlements within the colony that were then inhabited by the English. He described the population of the two hundreds as “members belonging to the Bermuda Town: a place so called there, by reason of the strength of ye scytuation, were it indifferently fortified” (Rolfe 1971:7). He stated that Bermuda Nether Hundred had 119 inhabitants who lived at :

a seate [which] conteyneth a good circuit of ground the river wynding round, so that a pale running cross a neck from one part of the river to the other, maketh it (as it were) an Isleland. The houses and dwellings of the people are sett round about by the river and all along the pale so farr distant one from the other, that upon anie all-arme [alarm] they can second and succor one the other [Rolfe 1971:9].

Rolfe also shed further light upon the rules governing the Bermuda Incorporation’s work force, for he wrote that the corporation admitted no farmers unless they had procured from the governor four of the colony’s men [Virginia Company servants] to be their servants, on whose behalf they paid rent in corn. Bermuda Nether Hundred’s inhabitants included 17 such farmers, who with their four servants each, would have accounted for 85 people out of the Hundred’s population of 119, or approximately 71 percent of the area’s occupants. Other residents, according to Rolfe, were engaged in making pitch and tar, potashes, charcoal, and other industries. Dale chose to make Bermuda Hundred (that is, the Nether Hundred) his home and the colony’s deputy-governor, George Yeardley, was residing there in 1616 (Rolfe 1971:10; Hamor 1957:32). The system Dale instituted, whereby farmers could grow crops for themselves after making their own contribution to the colony’s common store, demonstrated that when Virginia

settlers were able to labor on their own behalf, as opposed to living communally, they were much more productive.

The establishment of the headright system in November 1618, under the Virginia Company's Great Charter, fueled the spread of settlement, for it provided a means whereby colonists could claim 50 acres of land by paying for their own transportation to the colony and they could acquire a like amount for anyone else whose passage they had paid. So-called "Ancient Planters," people who had arrived in Virginia before Sir Thomas Dale's departure in 1616, were entitled to 100 acres of land as a personal dividend..

Although some of the outlying plantations established by Sir Thomas Dale appear to have been abandoned around the time of his departure, in 1619 the Bermuda City and Bermuda Hundred settlements were still viable, for they were represented in America's first legislative assembly by Samuel Sharpe and Samuel Jordan (Tyler 1966:249). Even so, in 1624 when a group of Ancient Planters wrote an account that was highly critical of the Dale years, they said that Bermuda Hundred was built by men laboring under martial law, who were already exhausted from hardship and deprivation. At Bermuda Hundred, the Ancient Planters reportedly "built such houses as before and in them lived in continual repairs, and building new where the old failed, until the massacre." In 1619, when Sir George Yeardley arrived in Virginia to assume the governorship, he found "sixe Houses much decayed at Charles City," that is, Bermuda Hundred (Anonymous 1896:76, 80).

In March 1620 Bermuda Hundred had 184 residents: 123 men, 30 women, and 31 children and young people. The population was inflated by refugees from Captain Christopher Lawne's plantation, who by November 1619 had moved there to recover their health. Some parcels in Bermuda Hundred had been assigned to individual landowners by 1620. Samuel Jordan, who later established the plantation called Jordan's Journey, received a 50-acre tract on the riverfront. Abraham Peirse's plantation, called Peirse's Toile, was on the west side of the Appomattox River, near Swift's Creek. In March 1620 there were 27 men, 7 women, and 3 children or young people residing at Bermuda City. When a well-planned Indian attack occurred on March 22, 1622, people were killed in the immediate vicinity of Bermuda Hundred, though perhaps not within the main settlement. Later, the Natives returned and burned some settlers' abandoned houses.

The Ancient Planters later said that there were no fortifications against a foreign enemy and protection against the Indians was negligible. This vulnerability may in part account for the fact that when the Indian attack occurred, four men were slain at Master Abraham Piercy's plantation on the Appomattox River, five were slain at Charles or Bermuda City, and eight others in the vicinity also lost their lives (Kingsbury 1906-1935:III:566; Smith 1910:582-583).<sup>2</sup> Although Bermuda City was abandoned after the massacre, some of the other upstream settlements were held. However, sporadic attacks continued to plague the settlers who remained and one writer claimed that the Indians returned to the abandoned settlements, where they burned the colonists' houses and killed their livestock (McIlwaine 1924:51; Kingsbury 1906-1935:III:612; Tyler 1966:417). Virginia Company officials, though not unsympathetic to the settlers' plight, ordered them to reoccupy the plantations they had abandoned. In February 1624 there were 41 people residing in Bermuda Hundred, and a year later the population consisted of 44 individuals who lived in 16 households. Some of these people may have been living at Abraham Peirse's plantation (Ferrar Papers No. 40, 138-139).

Demographic records suggest that the community at Bermuda Hundred was taking on an air of permanency. By the 1630s new settlers had begun streaming into the area, establishing

homesteads along both sides of the James and Appomattox Rivers. By May 1625 when a list of patented land was sent back to England, a total of 2,900 acres “upon Appomattox River” had been claimed by ten men. None of these tracts was describe as being “planted” or occupied at the time, though a notation was made that “here is land laid out for Charles City and ye Common Land (Patent Book 1 Part 2:467, 525, 557; 2:26-27; 5:483; 8:125; Kingsbury 1906-1935:IV:551). Some of the tracts “upon Appomattox River” were claimed by men employed as indentured servants by other planters, who apparently intended to relocate to their own property at some future time. Abraham Piercy’s 1,150 acre patent, by far the largest amount of land in the area claimed by a single individual, had been occupied by his servants in 1622 when the Indians attack and four men were killed. Land records suggest that his tract lay on the north side of the Appomattox River along the upper part of Ashen or Ashton Creek, and extended toward the James River (Nugent 1969-1979:I:88, 549).

In April 1625 Francis Eppes I, the immigrant ancestor of Francis Eppes VI of Eppington, was elected to the colony’s assembly as the burgess for Shirley Hundred. He was appointed Commissioner for the Upper Parts on August 8, 1625, and as a military commander he led an attack on the Weyanoke and Appomattocks Indians on July 4, 1627. In 1629 Francis Eppes I apparently returned to England, for his wife, Marie or Mary, gave birth to their son, Thomas, in London on September 8, 1630. He had returned to Virginia by 1632 and served as a burgess for Shirley Hundred, the Farrar plantation (Jordan’s Journey), and Chaplain’s Choice. In August 1635 Eppes patented 1,700 acres on the lower side of the Appomattox River’s mouth at City Point, in what was then Charles City County. Mentioned in his patent were his three sons, one of whom was Francis Eppes II (Dorman 2004:I:855-856).

### *Establishment of the Tobacco Economy*

During the second quarter of the seventeenth century the development of Virginia’s tobacco economy led to a land use pattern that consisted of dispersed, relatively self-sufficient farmsteads. Although the majority of plantations at first were relatively small, by the third quarter of the seventeenth century a significant number of individuals who took advantage of the headright system managed to accumulate literally thousands of acres of land (Billings et al. 1986:55, 122). This attests to the fact that relatively successful tobacco planters, by paying for the passage of indentured servants, could not only increase their property holdings dramatically, but also be assured of having the work force that was necessary to clear and seat the land to which they asserted a claim (Nugent 1969-1979:I:vii). Another way in which planters accumulated substantial quantities of land was though a succession of marriages. In the seventeenth century, when a colonist’s lifespan was relatively abbreviated, the majority of men and women married more than once. These serial unions typically led to the consolidation of their landed estates. Research has shown that women remarried more often than men, for Virginia society had a surplus of men and a shortage of marriageable women, making widows likely candidates for remarriage. Households were smaller in size during the mid-seventeenth century than they were later in the century, when the population increased and mortality rates declined (Kelly 1972:84, 137).

Generally, shoreline areas with the best soils for agriculture were patented first. But as more successful planters were able to acquire smaller tracts that had been abandoned, they were able to consolidate their holdings into what became major plantations. These same men usually served as governmental officials and therefore had a greater opportunity to enhance their own

positions, socially and economically. Ultimately, this led to the emergency of a planter elite that served as the colony's ruling class (Billings et al. 1986:66-68). The forebears of Francis Eppes VI epitomize this phenomenon.

The earliest extant patents for land on the upper side of the Appomattox River are relatively easy to relate to modern topographic features, for they follow the convolutions of the river and its tributaries, making it possible to chronicle the spread of settlement. To the west of Swift Creek and bordering south upon the Appomattocks Indian town were the 650 acres granted to Charles Magnor in 1620, a plantation whose marsh was known as the Conjurers Field. To Magnor's east, across the creek and further inland, lay the patent of Samuel Sharpe. At the head of Ashen Swamp was Abraham Piercy's land. John Baugh, who in 1638 patented 250 acres on the Appomattox River, acquired land that extended from Swift Creek eastward to Ashen Swamp, bordering directly upon the river. Baugh gradually increased his landholdings in the area and eventually, 750 acres of his land was sold to William Walthall, a merchant whose name became permanently identified with the area. To the east of Baugh's property line, in the vicinity of a massive geological outcropping known as the Great Rock (or Point of Rocks) was the acreage of Ambrose Cobbs. To his east was the patent of Abraham Wood, who was in possession of extensive landholdings on both sides of the Appomattox River (Nugent 1969-1979:I:81-82, 88, 95, 110-111, 137, 352, 549; Hotten 1980:233).

### ***The Eppes Family Becomes Established On the Appomattox***

During the second quarter of the seventeenth century, Francis Eppes I consolidated his patent on the lower side of the Appomattox River's mouth into a tract of 1,980 acres. He served as Charles City County's burgess in 1640 and 1646 and prior to his death in 1674, had managed to acquire land on Shirley Hundred (or Eppes) Island (Dorman 2004:I:855-856). During the mid-seventeenth century Abraham Wood's landholdings along both sides of the Appomattox River grew to encompass literally thousands of acres. In the aftermath of a second major Indian attack that occurred on April 18, 1644, a military garrison and trading post known as Fort Henry was established on Wood's land on the lower side of the Appomattox. In 1646 Fort Henry, by law, became the focal point of all Indian trade on the south side of the James River and it was one of the official checkpoints through which members of Virginia's tributary Indian tribes could gain access to the James-York peninsula (Hening 1809-1823:I:315, 325-326). It was from Fort Henry that Abraham Wood and a party of fellow adventurers set out on a westward journey in 1650. They followed in the wake of Walter Aston and another group of men, who in March 1643 had been authorized to explore the area. In 1671, the Batts and Fallam expedition, which involved Wood's son-in-law, Peter Jones) headed west to discover the mountains (Sally 1911:5-20; Hening 1809-1823:I:262; Batts et al. 1906:235).<sup>3</sup>

### ***Relations with the Indians***

In October 1646 a treaty was made with the Indians, an agreement whereby the natives ceded to the colonists the acreage of the James-York peninsula inland as far as the fall line, and they agreed to vacate the lower side of the James as far south as the Blackwater River. The area on the south side of the James, between the head of the Blackwater River and the Old Manakin Town, also was reserved to the use of Virginia planters and an arbitrary boundary was established (Hening 1809-1823:I:325, 348).<sup>4</sup> Thus, the land that later became part of the

plantation known as Eppington lay within the vast territory that was left to the occupancy of the Indians.

In 1662 the boundary line separating the Indians from the settlers who lived within the ceded territory was reaffirmed and natives who had a reason to enter that area were obliged to carry copper or silver badges that identified the Indian town to which they belonged. Parties of armed horsemen were ordered to procession the boundary annually, a line that later was visibly demarcated by surveyors. The western portion of the boundary line was more explicitly defined than it had been previously and was said to run from the head of the Blackwater River to the Appomattocks Indian town, then across to the Monacan Town. In October 1669 when a census was taken of the colony's Indians, the Appomattocks, who had only 50 warriors, were living in Charles City County, what is now Prince George County (Hening 1809-1823:II:219-220, 274; III:85).

During the 1670s, the rebel Nathaniel Bacon, who lived at Curles Neck, across from Bermuda Hundred and on the upper side of the James River, claimed that settlers who lived near the head of the river were being harassed by the Indians. Rallying popular support, he led an uprising that generally became known as Bacon's Rebellion, the underlying causes of which are still a subject of scholarly debate. Bacon's men sought revenge against all Indians indiscriminately and attacked any that were within convenient range, including the Pamunkeys, who were tributaries to the colony's government. King Charles II, concerned about the unrest in the colony, dispatched a group of commissioners to investigate its causes. They, in turn, queried county officials about the issues that had fomented the discontent.

The people of Henrico County, which then included the Winterpock area, prepared a list of grievances in which they claimed that the bloodshed caused by Indian attacks had never been revenged and that the forts that had been built by Governor William Berkeley in 1676 were utterly useless.<sup>5</sup> They also alleged that certain people had monopolized the Indian trade and that the monopolists, who were high-ranking officials, had betrayed the settlers to the Indians. They also stated that when the natives wore body paint, friend and foe were indistinguishable and that they couldn't determine whether the Indians who entered their territory were peaceful tributaries or members of the more aggressive tribes that lived inland. The Henrico citizens closed their list of grievances by demanding that a war funded by donations rather than taxes be waged against virtually all Indians (British Archives, Colonial Office Papers 5/1371).

Whether Bacon's followers were right or wrong in their allegations about the Indians, the laws passed by the Grand Assembly in June 1676, later dubbed "Bacon's Laws," offered to the land-hungry planters a legal means of acquiring the Indians' property as soon as they abandoned it. Thus, if the natives could be driven from the land that had been allocated to them by the government, it could be claimed by opportunistic colonists. This policy undoubtedly hastened the spread of settlement inland into what previously had been native territory (Hening 1809-1823:II:26-328, 351).

After Nathaniel Bacon's death from natural causes, the uprising he had led quickly lost momentum and order was restored. On May 29, 1677, a new treaty was made with the Indians, a document that ushered in peace that endured. That autumn a law was passed, authorizing officials in certain counties (including Henrico) to establish marts for Indian trade. In response to that act, on February 12, 1678, Henrico County's justices of the peace "nominated the Manakin town (soe called) on the south side of the James River to be the place for the faire or mart with the Indians." In December 1679 the Grand Assembly again passed an act establishing forts on the heads of the colony's four main rivers. Each fort was to include a strongly built

storehouse and magazine (Henrico County Wills, Deeds, Etc. 1677-1692:Book I; Hening 1809-1823:II:410, 433-434).

The Henrico County trade mart was discontinued in 1680 and the third in this series of forts was abolished in December 1682, as settlement became more dense on the south side of the James River. Meanwhile, the course of the boundary line between the colonists and the Indians was reaffirmed (Hening 1809-1823:II:480). In 1691 the line that ran from the head of the Blackwater River to the old Appomattocks Town fields and then continued on to the Manakin Town was resurveyed and clearly marked. The Virginia assembly enacted legislation declaring as null and void the patent of any planter who had attempted to settle beyond that line. Rangers were ordered to patrol the forest as a means of keeping peace and in 1694, the law that had been passed in 1662 requiring Indians to wear copper or silver badges was repealed.<sup>6</sup> Although conflict over trade flared sporadically, and the employment of Indian servants in settlers' homes generated some ill-feeling, the native population radically was forced to yield its land to the burgeoning number of European settlers. The records of Henrico County demonstrate clearly that during the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, many settlers had Indian servants living in their homes and that there was a considerable amount of trade with the natives who lived beyond the boundary line that separated their land from that of the colonists. But there also is evidence suggesting that some of the stronger, more warlike tribes that lived above the heads of the colony's rivers continued to prey upon the homesteads of settlers that lived on the fringes of the colony's frontier, including those who lived in what became western Chesterfield County (Henrico County Wills, Deeds, 1688-1697:V:171, 532-535).

A map prepared by Augustine Herrman (1673) in 1670 indicates that plantations were then scattered along the banks of the colony's four major rivers and across the Chesapeake Bay, on the Eastern Shore. Shown prominently was Abraham Wood's property on the lower side of the Appomattox. But contemporary land records indicate that settlement also had spread into Virginia's interior. It was this change that ultimately resulted in the relocation of the colony's capital from Jamestown to Middle Plantation, later known as Williamsburg (Reps 1972:141).

### *The Texture of Colonial Society*

As the seventeenth century wore on and the colony's population increased, social distinctions between the classes became more apparent. Indentured servants who had fulfilled their obligation to their employers often sought to procure land of their own, but lacked the financial resources to purchase it. This led to a growing proportion of Virginia's population that was free but landless. Some of these people leased land from larger planters or became sharecroppers, while others became transient. The gap between the wealthier, more powerful families and those who had fewer opportunities became more pronounced, with the result that Virginia became a distinctly stratified society. It was an era when navigable waterways were the main means of transportation and communication and the more affluent planters generally controlled the land closest to major rivers and their tributaries (Billings et al. 1986:66-68).

In some respects, Francis Eppes I's son and namesake, Francis Eppes II, epitomized the wealthy and successful Virginia planter, for like his father, he took an active role in public life and seized opportunities to enhance his family's fortune. In 1658 he became a Charles City County justice of the peace and by 1660 he had been made captain of the local militia. In 1661 Eppes was ordered to Fort Henry with a group of armed men, who at a moment's notice were to be ready to respond to an alarm. By 1665 he had moved to Henrico County, where he served as

a justice and later, as a burgess. Francis Eppes II followed another pattern that was typical of the planter elite: he married a succession of wealthy widows, thereby enhancing his fortune considerably (Dorman 2004:I:857-858). He also continued to accumulate land through the headright system.

Thanks to the increased competition for good land and growth in the colony's population, in 1666 the Virginia Assembly enacted legislation that legally defined the minimum standards that were required for planting or "seating" a patent. It was resolved that "building an house and keeping a stock one whole year upon the land shall be accounted seating, and that clearing, tending and planting an acre of ground shall be accounted planting, and that either of these shall be accounted a sufficient performance of the condition required by the patent" (Hening 1809-1823:I:244). It was in late 1673 that Francis Eppes II was granted more than 927 acres of land on the north side of the Appomattox River on Swift Creek (Patent Book 6:480).

Documentary records reveal that Virginia planters, when initially establishing homesteads on their land, constructed crude huts, which provided shelter while they erected weatherproof but insubstantial and relatively uncomplicated frame dwellings out of the abundant supply of wood that was available. Constructing a simple house enabled a patentee to legitimize his land claim while fulfilling the need for basic shelter. It also allowed him to postpone building something more substantial until time and financial resources were more abundant. As the cultivation of tobacco, a labor intensive crop, required prospective planters to make a substantial investment in servants and/or slaves, new patentees were inclined to skimp on housing costs, putting the bulk of their limited resources into the purchase of labor. Wealthy and successful planters such as the Eppes' could rent their newly patented acreage to landless freemen who "for seven year's lease will build themselves a convenient dwelling and other necessary houses and be obliged at the expiration of their time to leave all in good repair," thereby substantiating their landlord's claim to the new property (Carson et al. 1982:141, 158, 168-170).

A Frenchman who visited Virginia in 1687 wrote that:

. . . the farmers' house are built entirely of wood, the roofs being made of small boards of chestnut as are also the walls. Those who have some means cover them inside with a coating of mortar in which they use oyster-shells for lime; it is as white as snow, that although they look ugly from the outside, where only the wood can be seen, they are very pleasant inside, with convenient windows and openings. . . . Whatever their rank . . . they build only two rooms with some closets on the ground floor, and two rooms in the attic above, but they build several like this, according to their means. They build also a separate kitchen, a separate house for Christian slaves, one for the negro slaves, and several to dry the tobacco, so that when you come to the home of a person of some means, you think you are entering a fairly large village [Billings et al. 1975:306].

Many well-to-do planters owned several large tracts of land which they operated as subsidiary farms or quarters, placing overseers there to supervise gangs of slaves. Others simply leased their land to tenants or sharecroppers. As time went on, the shortage of workers to till the soil and raise tobacco, became more pronounced, for the number of whites immigrating from Europe as indentured servants declined steadily, just as new lands became available for planting. Gradually, a system of slave labor evolved that enabled Virginia planters to depend upon enslaved blacks who could be compelled to work. Seventeenth century Virginians generally believed that blacks were "by nature cut out for hard labor and fatigue" and found that it was not only practical but profitable to employ slaves of both sexes "in tiling [sic] and manuring the

ground, in sowing and planting tobacco, corn, etc.” (Beverley 1947:37). Slavery became a deeply entrenched institution by the end of the seventeenth century as Virginia planters consciously sought to eliminate any avenues by which their black workers could gain their freedom. With the passage of the slave code of 1705, slavery became a legally enforceable institution that soon became the foundation of the colony’s plantation economy, in the colonial period and beyond (Morgan 1975:310-314; Billings et al. 1986:124).

### *The Forebears of Eppington’s Builder*

Francis Eppes III, as a member of Virginia’s wealthiest and most successful planter families, inherited a vast amount of acreage within what became Henrico, Chesterfield, Charles City, and Prince George Counties. Like his father and grandfather, he accumulated land and played an active role in public life. He lived at Bermuda Hundred, in what was then Henrico County, where he served as a justice in 1683, and became a militia captain. In 1690 he was one of the commissioners appointed to take subscriptions toward the construction of the educational institution that became known as the College of William and Mary. Francis Eppes III also served as a Henrico County burgess in 1691-1692, 1693, 1703-1705, and 1705-1706. He had numerous land grants and in 1704, when a quitrent roll was compiled and sent back to England, he was credited with 2,145 acres of land in Henrico County and 226 acres in Prince George. Eppes and his brother-in-law, William Randolph, were trustees of the town of Bermuda Hundred, on the peninsula of that name, and in 1688 they laid out the community into lots. Eppes had a store in Bermuda Hundred, an establishment that generated a considerable amount of disposable income. In 1691 Bermuda Hundred became one of Virginia’s official ports and as time went on, it became increasingly important. A tobacco inspectorate was established there on William Eppes’ lots in 1731 and a year later, a ferry commenced running from Bermuda Hundred to City Point. Shortly thereafter, a court for the convenience of Henrico County residents who lived on the south side of the James River was established at Bermuda Hundred. (Dorman 2004:I:860; Hening 1809-1823:III:179, 266).

Generally, the social position and political power of gentry families solidified as time went on, with the result that they tended to monopolize the most lucrative public offices and pass them down through successive generations. Although middling planters sometimes were appointed to minor political offices, such as surveyor of highways or constable, after 1680 the opportunity for newcomers to enter even low level offices became far more difficult (Wheeler 1978:99). Toward the end of the seventeenth century an estimated 60 percent of all estates of 2,000 acres or more belonged to families of past or present officials. In each of the colony’s twenty counties, a fourth of the landowners were in possession of half or more of the land (Billings et al. 1986:123). The pattern of success the Eppes family enjoyed in accumulating real estate conforms to this model. In 1680 Francis Eppes III and three other men patented 580 acres of swampy land in Henrico County that was known as Captain Martin’s Swamp. During the 1680s he served as a justice of the peace and as high sheriff of Henrico County. In 1696 he purchased from John Davis 240 acres of Henrico County land known as Longfield (Henrico County Deeds 1677-1705:124, 243, 271, 332, 372, 404, 554). As a highly successful planter and a member of the colony’s elite, Eppes’ business associates included such men as William Byrd I, William Randolph, Colonel Edward Hill, and Benjamin Harrison (Tinling 1977:47, 94).

In 1690 Captain Francis Eppes (that is, Francis Eppes III), Richard Kennon, Joseph Royall, and George Archer patented 2,827 acres on the north side of the Appomattox River in

Bristol Parish of what was then Henrico County. The tract being claimed was in the vicinity of a “great creek to the main river” at Wortapock (Winterpock) (Nugent 1969-1979:II:362). In August 1703 Captain Eppes and George Archer, who were joined by Eppes’ sons, Isham and Francis Jr. (that is, Francis Eppes IV), and granddaughter Elizabeth Kennon, plus the Rev. George Robertson (rector of Bristol Parish), Philip Jones, Martha Stratton, and James Hill, obtained a patent for 4,000 acres at the mouth of the main Winterpock Creek. The nine investors pooled their total of 80 headrights in order to assert their claim (Nugent 1969-1979:III:72; Patent Book 9:540). As time went on, the 4,000 acre patent on Winterpock Creek became known as “the Old Survey” or “the old Winterpock Survey” and Captain Eppes and his fellow investors sometimes were identified as “Captain [or Colonel] Francis Eppes and Company.” Each of the nine investors in the 4,000 acre tract was entitled to 1/9<sup>th</sup> of it or 444 acres apiece, the quantity of land attributed to them when a quitrent roll was compiled in 1704 (Wertenbaker 1922:184).

Most of the Winterpock patent’s boundary lines, which were irregular, extended from tree to tree and therefore are not readily identifiable in the modern landscape. Even so, because the eastern boundary line conformed to Winterpock Creek’s main branch and its southeastern corner lay just east of the creek’s mouth and because its southern boundary line extended westward from that point and followed the banks of the Appomattox River, it may be safely assumed that the 4,000 acre Winterpock tract encompassed the land upon which the Eppington mansion eventually was built (Patent Book 9:540). If the patent was laid out in accord with the surveying convention traditionally employed when “new” (previously unclaimed) river front land was patented for the first time, the Winterpock tract probably ran inland for a distance of one mile and followed the Appomattox River upstream for a distance of 6 ¼ miles.<sup>7</sup>

Francis Eppes III and his partners in the Winterpock patent were obliged to fulfill certain legal requirements in order to legitimize their land claim, for according to law, anytime a tract of land was patented initially, those who held its title were obliged to see that some minimum developmental requirements were met. In October 1705 patenting criteria were upgraded beyond the standards that had been set in 1666 and legislation was passed whereby

... the building of one house of wood, after the usuall manner of building in this colony, being at least in length 12 foot and in breadth 12 foot, and clearing, planting and tending at least one acre of ground, shall be and is hereby declared to be a good and sufficient seating and planting of land [Hening 1809-1823:I:313]

Simultaneously, the vestries of parish churches were assigned the task of processioning local land annually so that property boundaries would remain accurately fixes. In 1713 the legal definition of planting and seating was amplified further. Those patenting land that was deemed unfit for cultivation unless it was improved or manured, were given three years in which to building “one good dwelling house after the manner of Virginia building, to contain at least 20 feet in length and 16 feet in breadth, and to put thereon three cattle and six sheep or goats” in order to preserve their claims. Those who patented arable land could secure its title by draining or clearing three acres of marsh or swamp per 50 acres claimed. Persons establishing a claim to 50 acres of barren land could maintain three neat cattle or six sheep or goats upon their property for three years in order to legitimate their title, whereas those with rocky or stony land could dig a quarry or mine, using one worker for every hundred acres claimed (Hening 1809-1823:IV:39).<sup>8</sup>

The 4,000 acre Winterpock patent seems to have been divided into equal shares in November 1708, when James Hill’s heirs (John, Edward, William, and James Hill Jr.) were

assigned their late father's portion of the tract. The deeds whereby 440 acres were conveyed to the Hill heirs note that the investors "did in Hill's lifetime agree to divide the land and to cast lots for the parts" (Henrico County Deeds 1706-1737:121, 123, 125).

After the 4,000 acre Winterpock tract was subdivided, some of the men and women who had invested in the patent began disposing of their shares. In 1711 the Rev. George Robertson sold 125 acres "called Winterpock" to George Worsham Sr., who in 1717 conveyed it to John Worsham.<sup>9</sup> Meanwhile, Philip Jones deeded a 100 acre parcel "at Wintepock" to his daughter, Martha, and her husband, Samuel Goode.<sup>10</sup> In 1719 Elizabeth Kennon conveyed 44 acres "at Winterpock" to her son, Richard (Henrico County Deeds 1706-1737:78, 89, 239, 471). Martha Stratton Browne bequeathed her 400 acres "at Wintopock" to her grandson, Henry Cox, and George Archer did likewise, leaving his acreage to his grandsons Peter and George (Henrico County Wills Part I:1654-1737:320, 517).

Francis Eppes V, the son of Francis Eppes IV, the investor who in 1703 was identified as "Francis Eppes Jr.," inherited 444 acres "called Wintopock" from his uncle Isham Eppes, one of the original investors in the 4,000 acre patent (Henrico County Wills Part I:1654-1737:191). Meanwhile, in ca. 1719 Francis Eppes IV, who already owned 444 acres of the Winterpock patent, by 1720 had fallen heir to the 444 acre share that had belonged to his father, Francis Eppes III. Francis IV, having accumulated 888 acres at Winterpock, or 22 percent of the patent's original 4,000 acres, set about purchasing two other investors' shares. In 1726 he bought 444 acres at Winterpock from Henry Cox, the heir and grandson of Martha Stratton Browne, and in July 1726 he procured from Elizabeth Kennon's son, Richard, her 444 acres of the Old Survey "on Wintopock Creek on the north side of the Appomattox called Wintopock." Prior to 1733 Francis Eppes IV also managed to acquire the 444 acres that his son, Francis V, had inherited from Isham Eppes. Thus, by the time Francis Eppes IV made his will in November 1733, he had come into possession of 2,220 acres (or more than half) of the 4,000 acre Winterpock patent (Henrico County Deeds 1706-1737:471; Wills Part I:1654-1737:29, 459; Order Book 1719-1724:176).<sup>11</sup>

Francis Eppes IV also acquired additional acreage in the vicinity of Winterpock that was contiguous to the original 4,000 acre patents. In October 1716 he patented 690 acres of "new land" that was "on a branch of the Winterpock Survey belonging to Capt. Francis Eppes and Co." and in 1717 he was allocated 1,000 acres of "new land" at the mouth of Noonung Creek. In 1724 he laid claim to 1,000 acres of "new land" that lay further inland, on the north side of the "Wintopock Main Creek" (Patent Book 12:1). Others who acquired land in the same vicinity included William Rowlet, Timothy Harris, William Trayler, and Philip Jones, one of the original investors in the 4,000 acre Winterpock tract. Eppes' inland 1,000 acres abutted the head of a branch of Buckshorn Creek, whereas Jones' patent bordered Surline Creek. Thus, both parcels lay somewhat northeast of the original Winterpock patent. Eppes' 1733 will refers to his two tracts as the "upper" and "lower" quarters and reveals that a black slave named Cesar was then living at the lower quarter. Court records reveal that Francis Eppes IV also owned land along Swift Creek and that he took an active role in public life, serving as a Henrico County justice, surveyor, and sheriff (Henrico County Deeds and Wills 1725-1737:134, 140, 154, 198, 219, 420; Court Book 1710-1724: 29, 58, 173). William Kennon in 1718 claimed land to the east of the old Winterpock tract, acreage that abutted Noonung Creek, and in 1725, Thomas Jefferson, the grandfather of President Thomas Jefferson, purchased a 250 acre tract called Wintopock that originally had belonged to Richard Womack (Nugent 1969-1979:III:204; Henrico County Deeds 1706-1737:16).

### *The Establishment of Petersburg Quickens Regional Commerce*

William Byrd II of Westover, whose entrepreneurial spirit influenced the course of Virginia's development, surmised that the area near the falls of the Appomattox River would be a good location for a town. In 1733 while returning home with the surveying party that had laid out the boundary line between Virginia and North Carolina, Byrd stopped at Colonel Robert Bolling's home at the falls of the Appomattox. They agreed that two large cities ought to be laid out: one on the lower side of the Appomattox, to be called Petersburg, and one at Shoccoe, to be called Richmond. Byrd was convinced that both locations were ideally situated, for at the falls, trade from the interior of the colony could interface with waterborne commerce. Major William Mayo, who was with Byrd at Bolling's, offered to lay out both cities into lots. Soon after, a community called Blandford, which was a short distance downstream, was laid out into lots (Reps 1972:221-222).

Petersburg and Blandford thrived and in 1748 the House of Burgesses, at the request of their inhabitants, officially conferred town status upon both communities. During the 1740s, people who lived in the counties above the fall line began sending petitions to the assembly, asking for measures that would improve the Appomattox River's navigation. Provisions were made for dealing with mill dams, fish traps, and other obstructions to waterborne travel, an indication of the extent to which Petersburg was becoming an important marketplace. In 1752 a town called Wittentown was laid out on the upper side of the Appomattox River. When it began to develop, it was renamed Pocahontas. All of these changes reflect the importance of the Appomattox River shipping in commerce and trade. (Hening 1809-1823:VI:211, 276; VII:602).

### *The Eppes Heirs*

On November 7, 1733, when Francis Eppes IV made his will, he left his wife, Sarah, life rights to the home they shared in Bermuda Hundred, plus 200 acres, and distributed the rest of his landholdings among his sons and daughters.<sup>12</sup> To son Francis V he left his land in Bermuda Hundred plus 908 acres called Longfield and 500 acres called Skinquarter, all of which tracts were then in Henrico County. Francis V also was to receive a 3,500 acre parcel in Goochland County. Son Richard Eppes, who went on to become the father of Francis Eppes VI of Eppington, received 250 acres called "the Nuttree;" 280 acres on Swift Creek; 1,100 acres ; described as "part of Winterpock Old Survey;"<sup>13</sup> 700 acres called "Winterpock Upper Quarter;"<sup>14</sup> half of the land the testator had purchased from Henry Cox (that is, 222 of the 444 acres that Martha Stratton Browne had left to Cox);<sup>15</sup> and half of the land the testator had bought from Richard Kennon (222 of the 444 acres that originally had belonged to Richard's mother, Elizabeth Kennon) (Henrico County Wills Part I:1654-1737:459). It was through Francis Eppes IV's bequest to his son, Richard, that the Winterpock acreage on which the Eppington mansion was built came into the hands of Francis Eppes VI, the testator's grandson.

Francis Eppes IV bequeathed to his son, William, 1,1000 acres of the "Winterpock Old Survey;" 222 acres of the Cox tract; 222 acres of the Kennon tract; and the Winterpock "lower quarter where negro man Cesar lives;" plus acreage he had purchased from Thomas Tanner. William and Richard Eppes also were to receive their father's land in Goochland except for that portion of the Swan's Creek plantation that had been devised to daughters Ann and Martha (Henrico County Wills Part I:1654-1737:459). As it turned out, Francis Eppes IV's son, Francis

V, outlived his father by only three years. In 1737 when he made his will, he stated that he was leaving his land in Bermuda Hundred to his brother, Richard, if the latter were willing to relinquish his personal interest in the Longfield tract to their brother, William. Francis Eppes V left to William the land at Longfield that had been purchased from Robert Burton and he divided his Skinquarter tract between William and Richard (Henrico County Wills 1654-1737:612).

Richard Eppes, like his forebears, enhanced the quantity of land under his control and he took an active part in public life in Henrico and in Chesterfield County, formed in 1749. In 1753 he purchased Richard Royall's interest in the tract called Captain Martin's Swamp and in 1760 he bought the old abandoned glebe of Dale Parish. He also acquired acreage from Thomas Stratton and one or more lots in Bermuda Hundred. In 1750 Eppes and his kinsman William Kennon, were designated to hire someone to build a bridge across the Appomattox River at Burton's and a year later, he was appointed to have a ducking stool built at Bermuda Hundred. In 1752 he took the special oaths that were necessary in order to serve as a vestryman and county justice. The legislative act that established Chesterfield County made it part of Dale Parish, which was created in 1735. Dale Parish was reduced by half in 1772, when Manchester Parish was formed from the western part of Chesterfield.<sup>16</sup> One of Dale Parish's clergymen, the Rev. Archibald McRoberts, ran afoul of ecclesiastical law because he made use of hymns and poems in church services instead of reading the psalms (Hening 1809-1823:IV:443; VIII:604, 655; Henrico County Deed Book 1:505; 4:200, 252, 557; Chesterfield County Order Book 1749-1754:93, 117, 216, 279).<sup>17</sup>

Richard Eppes, who married Martha Bolling, came into possession of the Bermuda Hundred land that his late brother, Francis V, had inherited even though he seemingly failed to relinquish to his brother, William, his personal interest in their late father's Longfield tract. In 1756 when a list of Chesterfield County tithables was made, Richard Eppes paid taxes on himself and five other white males (Alexander Dinck, Joseph Harris, Joseph Worsham, William Beverley, and John Williams), who probably were his employees, and 34 slaves: Hannibal, Hercules, Scipio, Charles, Jack, Mumpain, Dick, Cesar, Tom, Peg, Melinda, Suke, Isbel, Judy, Easter, Diley, London, Jeremy, Olford, Ned, Trish, Sam, Bristol, York, Pompey, Primus, Toby, Cato, George, Cyrus, Isbel, Hannah, Moll, and Tom. In 1762, when Richard made his will, he bequeathed his wife life rights in the 500 acre tract they occupied and 400 acres they owned in Bermuda Hundred, as well as their lots and houses there. He left to his son, Richard Henry Eppes, his 908 acre tract called Longfield and a lot in Gatesville (a town established in Chesterfield in 1761), plus half of his lands at Winterpock and in Amelia County. To son Francis Eppes VI, who was still a minor,<sup>18</sup> he left the remaining half of his Winterpock and Amelia County land, the acreage at Bermuda Hundred to which his mother had life rights, and any other property the testator owned at the time of his death. Richard Eppes bequeathed to his son, Francis VI, slaves and half of his livestock from his Winterpock, Longfield, and Amelia property, whereas son Richard Henry received slave and the other half of his father's livestock.<sup>19</sup> Francis Eppes VI also was to inherit his father's silver tankard, seven silver spoons marked "MB," a dozen silver teaspoons marked "FE," two silver salts, and three beds with their furnishings.<sup>20</sup> Son Richard Henry was to receive a silver tankard, a dozen silver spoons, and two silver salts that were to be purchased by the testator's executors. In the event of one son's death, the other was to inherit the deceased brother's share of their father's estate (Henrico County Will Book 1:355-358; Chesterfield County Will Book 3:673-674; Hening 1809-1823:VII:408). Richard Eppes died in 1765 and thanks to son Richard Henry Eppes' untimely death a year

later,<sup>21</sup> Francis Eppes VI inherited the bulk of his late father's estate as soon as he attained his majority (Parks 1987:589).

### *Burgeoning Commercial Activity*

By 1766 Petersburg was connected with other towns in eastern Virginia, thanks to the operation of a stage line, and within a decade, the town had its own post office. Petersburg rapidly emerged as a major center of the tobacco and milling industries. Tobacco warehouses were built and merchants and craftsmen flocked to the town, seeking patronage. At that time, Scottish factors dominated Petersburg's trade. The expanding international markets for grain, beginning in the 1740s, prompted Virginia's larger planters to learn more about Old World agricultural techniques, which included the use of plows and rotating crops. By the 1770s, wheat had become a second staple crop in eastern Virginia. Wheat production diversified Petersburg's – and the region's – economy. One visitor to the area during that era noted that a wooden bridge linked Petersburg to Pocahontas and that a canal had been cut to circumvent the falls of the Appomattox River (Walsh 2010:419; Scott and Wyatt 1960:20-24). This would have made it possible for workers in bateaux to transport large cargoes from one point to another. Tobacco inspection warehouses were located at several sites close to the junction of the Appomattox and James Rivers, notably at Bolling's Point, Turkey Island, Rocky Ridge, and Warwick. By 1762 the tobacco inspectorate at Bollingbrook, in Petersburg, had become operational (Hening 1809-1823:VI:173; VII:531). All of these facilities were close to Eppes properties.

In November 1769 Francis Eppes VI purchased 378 acres in Lunenburg County's Cumberland Parish from David Garland, who had the entail on his land and slaves docked in order to make the sale. Eppes himself presented a petition to the House of Burgesses, whose permission he sought to dock the entail on some Henrico County land, the Longfield tract, which had descended to him through inheritance. Docking the entail also would have allowed him to sell the Longfield tract and move the slaves living there to what he considered a much more valuable piece of property: 400 acres of Chesterfield County land that he owned in fee simple, acreage that adjoined his 150 acre tract that contained a brick house.<sup>22</sup> His proposal received the assembly's approval and was forwarded to England, where it could receive the king's consent. (Hening 1809-1823:VIII:442-443, 450-451; VCRP Survey Report 00716, 00718, 00747, 01474, 05828). By October 1773 that hurdle had been overcome and it became possible for Eppes to dispose of his Longfield property and attach the entail to his 550 acres. It was then recorded in the court of Henrico County that Francis Eppes VI, great-grandson of Francis Eppes III, had sold his 908 acre Longfield tract to Archer Branch (Henrico County Deed Book 1767-1774:498-499). The consummation of that sale provided Eppes with £200. Around that same time, he sold 400 acres on Swift Creek to Valentine Winfrey and deeded to John Osborne Lot Number 15 in the town of Gatesville (Chesterfield County Deed Book 6:68-72; 7:81-82). Collectively, these transactions would have provided him with an infusion funds, perhaps the money he needed to develop his property at Winterpock into a genteel family seat, for by that time he was a married man with two children.<sup>23</sup> He may have been looking ahead to a time when he would be able to produce large crops of tobacco and wheat on his plantation and ship them to market.

Archaeological tests revealed that in preparation for the construction of the Eppington mansion, the site on which it stands was carefully graded, undoubtedly by slave labor. Enormous quantities of gravel and rock were excavated from the slope south of the house site and redeposited on several acres on the dwelling's north side. This not only would have

facilitated good drainage, it also would have created a large, well-drained yard suitable for landscaping. Archaeologists also determined that pebbles were redeposited to the south and east of the mansion. Interestingly, Thomas Jefferson employed the same landscaping technique at Monticello (Hanna and Petrone 2013:7).

### *Francis Eppes VI and the Wayles*

Francis Eppes VI came of age in 1768 and around 1770 he married Elizabeth Wayles, the daughter of John Wayles and his second wife. The Wayles family lived at The Forest, a Charles City County plantation that was located on Herring Creek, not far from Westover Church. John Wayles, a successful merchant and attorney who in 1756 became the King's Attorney in Virginia, was a wealthy planter who had accumulated a handsome fortune and was heavily involved in overseas commerce, especially the slave trade. Like his contemporaries, he conducted business in a credit-based economy, at times extending massive amounts of credit and taking on equally large amounts of debt. Among those with whom Wayles did business was William Byrd III of Westover, Colonel John Syme of Hanover County. John Wayles married Martha Eppes, who gave birth to a daughter, Martha Wayles, on October 28, 1748, and died shortly thereafter. Wayles married a second time and with his wife, the former Elizabeth Lomax, produced daughters Elizabeth, born on February 24, 1752; Tabitha, who was born on November 16, 1753; and Anne (Ann), who was born on August 26, 1756. Wayles' second wife died sometime prior to January 1760, by which time he had remarried (Bergh 1903:5; VCRP Survey Report 02181).

Afterward, John Wayles embarked upon a lengthy relationship with Elizabeth (Betty) Hemings, one of his slaves, with whom he had several children. On April 15, 1760, when John Wayles made his will, he designated the children he had had by his first and second wives and Francis Eppes VI (all of whom were minors) as his future executors. He bequeathed to his third wife, Elizabeth, whom he wed sometime prior to January 1760, all of the slaves she had inherited from her late husband, Reuben Skelton, along with those slaves' offspring. He also left her life rights to 20 slaves and his landholdings (including The Forest) and named as reversionary heirs the three daughters he had had by his second wife. He left his eldest daughter, Martha, the slaves that were part of his and her late mother's marriage settlement, with the exception of Betty Hemings and "Jenney the cook," who were to descend to her after his current (third) wife's demise. Wayles noted that if Martha was dissatisfied with her inheritance, she could relinquish it and like her half-sisters, take a share equal of his estate. On March 5, 1770, John Wayles added the name of Thomas Jefferson to his list of executors, an indication that he was well acquainted with the testator. By that time, Wayles' eldest daughter, Martha, had married Bathurst Skelton, produced a son, and become a widow,<sup>24</sup> and Martha's sister, Elizabeth, may have wed Francis Eppes VI. In accord with tradition, each of John Wayles' daughters most likely received a marriage settlement, probably slaves. Wayles' third wife, Elizabeth, died on February 10, 1761. Tragedy struck again in May 1771 an unprecedented flood swept down the James River, wreaking widespread devastation at the Wayles plantation. Afterward, the *Virginia Gazette* reported that John Wayles's losses amounted to £4,000 and that his people, that is, his family members and slaves, and only five of his horses survived (Bergh 1903:5; Purdie and Dixon, May 30, 1771).

On December 23, 1771, Francis Eppes VI joined Thomas Jefferson in signing the widowed Martha Wayles Skelton's marriage bond, immediately prior to the couple's wedding on

January 1, 1772 (Boyd 1950:I:86-87).<sup>25</sup> Martha had lost her 3-year-old son, John Skelton, on June 10, 1771. Thomas Jefferson's account book documents his presence at The Forest during the fall and winter of 1770 and he was a frequent visitor there throughout 1771. It was likely during that period that the loving relationship between widowed Martha Wayles Skelton and Thomas Jefferson developed and Francis Eppes VI and Jefferson formed a steadfast friendship. Thomas Jefferson noted in the front of his late father's prayer book that John Wayles Eppes was born in April 1772.

On February 17, 1773, John Wayles added a codicil to his will, instructing his executors to purchase one female slave between the ages of 12 and 15 for each of his grandchildren: Richard Eppes, John Wayles Eppes, and Patty (Martha or Patsy) Jefferson. Wayles also said that he wanted his estate to remain intact until after his debts were settled and he specified that all of his tobacco was to be sent to the mercantile firm Farrell and Jones, of Bristol, England. He asked his executors to establish new quarters on two of his properties, one at St. James and the other in Bedford. Wayles also instructed his executors to see that his son-in-law, Robert Skipwith, was paid £250 (Tyler 1925:266-270; Jefferson n.d.; Boyd 1950:I:100). Letters Wayles wrote on May 14, 1772, and September 24, 1772, reveal that he and Colonel Richard Randolph of Curles, as trading partners, had asked the Farrell and Jones firm to cover their debt to the slave traders John Powell and Company, whose ship, the *Prince of Wales*, a Guineaman, had delivered 280 slaves to Virginia. Moreover, Wayles and Randolph had realized more than £7,421 as their commission for selling the slaves, leaving £85,361 that was supposed to go to Farrell and Jones. Wayles, in a letter to his creditors, acknowledged that debt, which he and Randolph shared (*Litchfield Gazette*, September 28, 1808).<sup>26</sup> Wayles personally abhorred debt and in a letter he wrote on August 30, 1766, talked about Virginia planters' overspending. He said that "Within these 25 years £1000 due to a Merchant was looked upon as a Sum immense and never to be got over. Ten times that sum is now spoken of with Indifference & thought no great burthen on some Estates." He went on to say that as time passed, many people's estates had increased more than tenfold, but he added that "Luxury & expensive living have gone hand in hand with the increase of wealth." He said that didn't remember seeing Turkish carpets "except a small thing in a bed chamber," but added that "Now nothing are so common as Turkey or Wilton Carpets, the whole Furniture of the Roomes Elegant & every appearance of Opulence." He blamed this trend on the overly generous credit British merchants were extending to the colonists (Hemphill 1966:305).

John Wayles died on May 28, 1773, and on July 7<sup>th</sup> his will was presented for probate. Because he had outlived his third wife, virtually all of his landholdings would have descended to his daughters, who also would have inherited all of his slaves and personal possessions. Martha Wayles Skelton Jefferson seems to have accepted the inheritance her late father had proposed, i.e., the slaves included in her late mother's marriage contract, instead of taking a proportionate share of the slaves in his estate, and at her stepmother's death, she also would have received custody of Betty Hemings and "Jenny the cook." In addition to those slaves, Martha would have received a fourth of her late father's real estate. In accord with the law, a married woman's property was transferred to her husband unless there was a written agreement to the contrary. Therefore, members of the Hemings family would have reverted to the ownership of Thomas Jefferson. At first, Betty's eldest sons stayed on at The Forest, to assist Francis and Elizabeth Eppes, but Betty and her younger children, were sent to the Cumberland County home called Guinea, later Hors du Monde, that belonged to Henry and Anne Wayles Skipwith.<sup>27</sup> Later, Jefferson relocated Betty and her children to Goochland County and placed them at Elk

Hill, a plantation that Martha Jefferson had inherited from her first husband. Later they were moved to Monticello where Betty Hemings may have begun supervising the household servants. Sally, Betty Hemings' youngest daughter, probably became Mary and Lucy Jefferson's nursemaid, as slave girls as young as six or eight often tended young children and assisted an older head nurse. Thomas Jefferson later said that when his father-in-law died, his daughters stood to inherit a handsome fortune and that his wife, Martha, was entitled to a sum equal to his own patrimony (Betts and Bears 1966:206; Bears and Staunton 1997:I:342; Bergh 1903:5).

Although the proceeds of John Wayles' estate normally would have provided his daughters and their spouses with a potentially abundant and relatively prompt infusion of wealth, correspondence between Francis Eppes VI and Thomas Jefferson reveals that the decedent's debts were enormous and that more than 35 years after his death, his executors were still paying off his creditors (Betts and Bears 1966:206).<sup>28</sup> On July 9, 1773, Thomas Jefferson sent a letter to Farrell and Jones, informing them of John Wayles' death and acknowledging Wayles' debt, noting that the decedent's four daughters, were his heirs. Jefferson also stated that Wayles had some debts in Virginia, undoubtedly some that hadn't come to light, and asked the British firm's permission to draw upon their credit. He indicated that the late John Wayles' estate was worth at least £30,000 and that there was no question about their being paid. He indicated that Wayles owed around £1,000 to Messrs. Cary and Company of London, around £200 to Thomas Walker of London, and around £600 to a Mr. Flood. Jefferson said that he and the other executors expected to pay all of Wayles' debts from sale of the grain, livestock, and other commodities from his plantations (*Litchfield Gazette*, September 28, 1808). Ultimately, they were obliged to sell off part of his real estate and a number of his slaves.

On July 15, 1773, and on September 9, 1773, co-executors and sons-in-law, Francis Eppes VI, Thomas Jefferson, and Henry Skipwith (the husband of John Wayles' daughter, Anne) placed an advertisement in the *Virginia Gazette*, offering for sale the decedent's real estate in Cumberland, Goochland, and Charles City Counties.<sup>29</sup> The properties they offered to sell included Wayles' 2,520 acres in Cumberland County; his 1,420 acres in Goochland and Cumberland Counties, across from Elk Island; and his 1,480 acres in Charles City County. The following summer 150 of Wayles' slaves were offered for sale at Rocky Ridge near Manchester and Richmond (Purdie and Dixon, July 15, 1773; September 9, 1773; February 24, 1774; June 16, 1774). On April 20, 1774, Henry Skipwith sent a letter to Farrell and Jones, indicating that the late John Wayles' estate had been divided among his heirs. He said that he intended to sell land and slaves, which he expected to raise more than £5,000, which would be more than enough to discharge his share of Wayles' debts. Moreover, on December 31, 1774, Francis Eppes VI sent a letter to Farrell and Jones, saying that he had disposed of £2,000 worth of slaves in order to settle his share of Wayles' debt and that he intended to ship all of his tobacco to them every year, an estimated 45 hogsheads, until he had paid what he owed. He added that he did not intend to purchase anything else on credit until his debt was paid (*Litchfield Gazette*, September 28, 1808).

Economic forces and the American Revolution's impact upon international commerce resulted in the late John Wayles' debts not being settled. The issue was further complicated by the death of Colonel Richard Randolph, Wayles' partner and the fact that a jury of the United States District Court determined that Randolph's estate was responsible for half of the debt and then dismissed the suit. In 1808 John Tyndale Warry, the executor of William Jones, who was the surviving partner of the firm Farrell and Jones of Bristol, England, vented his frustration in an article in the *Philadelphia Political Register*, describing how impossible it had been to

recover the debts owed by John Wayles and Richard Randolph. Drawing upon Thomas Jefferson's fame, he entitled his article "Mr. Jefferson in His Private Costume" (*Philadelphia Political Register*, September 28, 1808).

### *Francis Eppes VI Moves to Chesterfield County*

Francis Eppes VI and perhaps his household were living on his late father's property in the upper reaches of the Appomattox River on August 3, 1771, when Thomas Jefferson asked his brother-in-law, Robert Skipwith, to convey his affections "our dear Tibby" and "to Wintipock, cloathed in the warmest expressions of sincerity." In November 1773 Eppes identified himself as "Francis Eppes of Winterpock" while serving with Jefferson as co-executor of John Hyleton's will (Chesterfield County Will Book 2:103).<sup>30</sup> Therefore, Eppes probably began construction of a family home around 1770. By that time, he not only had sold his Longfield property in Henrico County and his Gatesville lot and Swift Creek acreage in Chesterfield, he also had fathered his short-lived son, Richard, and John Wayles ("Jack") Eppes, who was born in April 1772 (Stanard 1895-1896:33:26; Parks 1987:588-589; Thomas Jefferson to Robert Skipwith, August 3, 1771).<sup>31</sup> Francis and Elizabeth Wayles Eppes most likely were residing at The Forest, not Winterpock, at the end of 1773 when Dr. Philip Mazzei, a physician, surgeon, and horticulturist who had just arrived in Virginia, wrote of meeting them at a home approximately four miles from the James River and an equal distance from Williamsburg (Marraro 1942:189).<sup>32</sup> By that time, Eppes and his brothers-in-law would have been in the throes of settling John Wayles' estate and probably made numerous court appearances in the colonial capital.

The Eppington dwelling, oriented on an approximately north-south axis, was built on a dramatic rise of land overlooking the Appomattox River, which is approximately a mile away. Most visitors would have approached the house from landside instead of making a lengthy uphill trek. An analysis of Eppington's architectural attributes reveals that over the years, the house has gone through several phases of construction. At first, the two-story dwelling consisted solely of the central block. There was an exterior door in the north side or front of the house. Visitors to Eppington, who had traveled overland, entered by a front door that admitted them to a long, narrow passage or hallway. On the first floor and directly behind that passage was a spacious room, a hall where visitors would have gathered. An exterior door in the hall's south wall provided outdoor access and faced toward the Appomattox River. A door on the west end of the front hallway allowed access to the Eppes' dining room, a long and relatively narrow space that had two windows in the front side of the house and one in the rear. There were neither exterior windows nor doors on the east end of the house. However, there was a door on the west end, which appears to have been covered by a porch; beneath, there was an entrance that led to the cellar. Evidence of these features can be seen in the cellar itself, where there is a bricked up opening next to the base of the west chimney. A flight of stairs in the northeast end of the entrance hall led to the second floor, where there were two bedchambers. One would have been used by Francis and Elizabeth and the other probably was a nursery in which their young son and one or more of his sisters would have slept. On each end of the house was a shallow fireplace and an exterior chimney that protruded through the dwelling's hipped roof. In the initial phase of construction, the rooms of the Eppes' home had no interior finish, such as plaster or paneling, and the house had no dormers (Wenger et al. 1995:9-10, 13). Francis Eppes VI seems to have postponed further work at Eppington until a later time. He may have been away from home for lengthy periods of time and preoccupied with settling his late father-in-law's estate or perhaps he

was concerned about the financial constraints the decedent's debts imposed upon the Wayles heirs.

Eppington, like other eighteenth century Virginia plantations that belonged to the elite, was a reflection of its owners' wealth, status, and regional power. Its landscape would have been organized into distinct areas that accommodated domestic and agricultural functions and leisure pursuits. The acreage close to the main house would have included a detached building in which food preparation would have occurred, and perhaps a laundry. The plantation's other outbuildings probably included a smokehouse, a laundry, a tobacco barn, and one or more shelters or sheds for domestic animals. Close to the main house there would have been a kitchen garden and perhaps a formal garden and an orchard. The Chesapeake's planters typically housed their slaves in small wooden cabins that had dirt floors and provided little privacy or living space. Often these structures were built of logs that stood or lay on the ground or were erected on posts that were driven into the ground. The walls and roof were covered with riven clapboards and the inside was left unfinished. Such structures usually had wattle-and-daub chimneys, small doors, and windows that had only sliding wooden shutters. As Lorena Walsh noted, worker housing sometimes was in plain sight of the main house. "This juxtaposition of luxury and deprivation underscored the slaves' degraded position at the bottom of the social hierarchy." She also observed that "The communal work and living spaces that the slaves fashioned for themselves" in and round their quarter were "salvaged from a very different cultural tradition." (Walsh 2010:414-416)

During 1775 and 1776, Thomas Jefferson sent several letters to "Francis Eppes, Esq., At the Forest, Charles City." His presence there would have enabled him to oversee management of the Wayles plantation, on behalf of the late John Wayles' heirs. In June, July, and August 1775 Jefferson passed along to Eppes the latest military news and he sent his warmest regards to his sister-in-law, Elizabeth. In early July he said that he assumed that the Skipwiths "have left you." Francis and Elizabeth Eppes and Martha Wayles Jefferson were at The Forest when Thomas Jefferson wrote again on October 24, November 7, and November 21, 1775. He said that he'd written to his wife with "a proposition to keep yourselves at a distance from the alarms of Ld. Dunmore." The Eppes family was still at The Forest when Jefferson reached out to Francis again on July 15, 1776. By that time, Elizabeth Eppes was pregnant again, probably with her oldest daughter, whom they named Elizabeth Wayles.<sup>33</sup> Jefferson, in a July 23, 1776, letter, said that when Francis Eppes' wife, Elizabeth, failed to write to him, he was hard pressed not to insist that his own wife do so. Jefferson's July 23<sup>rd</sup> letter and one he wrote the following day suggest strongly that Francis and Elizabeth Eppes, Martha Jefferson, and both couples' children were still living together at The Forest. The Eppes' and Martha were there on August 9, 1776, when Thomas Jefferson wrote to Francis from Philadelphia, informing him that

... the whole glass stores of the city could not make out anything like what you desired. I did therefore get what I thought would be best, imagining you wanted the number you mentioned in any event, and that not being able to get them of that form, you would take them of any other. I therefore got 4 pint cans . . . 2 quart ditto . . . and 6 half-pint tumblers . . . all of double flint.

He also told Eppes that his "heckle [hackle] is not yet come" but later purchased one on his behalf from another vendor (Boyd 1950:I:174-175, 184-185, 237-238, 248-249, 251-252, 264, 458-460, 472-474, 487-488; XV:576).<sup>34</sup>

In 1779 Francis Eppes VI and several other wealthy planters pooled their resources in order to transport a large cargo of cloth, dishes, glassware, and clothing from Surinam, that is, Dutch Guiana, to Virginia. The ship, which was owned by St. George Tucker of Williamsburg, encountered two British cruisers that chased it toward North Carolina's Currituck Inlet, where it ran aground, broke up, and was lost. This episode resulted in a law suit that ended up in Virginia's High Court of Chancery (St. George Tucker vs. Francis Eppes, 1779-1780). Although the outcome of this litigation is unclear, it appears that Eppes and his fellow investors believed that the loss of their cargo canceled out any funds they might have owed Tucker for transporting their goods. Francis Eppes VI and his household obtained some of their imported goods from Petersburg. A receipt dated March 14, 1793, reveals that he had purchased 13 ¼ pounds of Imperial Tea from Samuel Myers & Brothers, a mercantile firm in Petersburg, for which Colonel Eppes paid £9.5.6. He also bought a canister in which it was kept (Samuel Myers & Brothers, March 14, 1793, Swem, Dept. of Special Collections).

### *The Late John Wayles' Sons-in-Law*

The necessity of settling John Wayles' estate required three of his three sons-in-law to collaborate and seems to have led to their becoming lifelong friends. Henry Skipwith, the son of Sir William Skipwith of Middlesex County and a brother of Sir Peyton Skipwith, was from a prominent family and like Francis Eppes VI, he was one of John Wayles' business acquaintances. Likewise, Thomas Jefferson's connection with the family was well established. Robert Skipwith, who by 1771 had married the former Tabitha Wayles, turned to Thomas Jefferson for advice on books he could use to further his education in the classics and from time to time, the two men exchanged cordial letters about books Skipwith would find edifying.<sup>35</sup> Henry Skipwith also corresponded with Jefferson. In April 1781 he sent a letter to Governor Thomas Jefferson, providing information about an Amelia County man who reportedly was a mechanical genius and a skillful repairer of firearms. In January 1784, while Skipwith and his wife, Anne, were living at Hors du Monde, that is "Out of the World," their home in Cumberland County on the Appomattox River between the Big and Little Guinea Creeks, he and Thomas Jefferson corresponded about slaves they identified as "white negroes." Skipwith, after describing their appearance and the progeny they produced with black slaves, noted that "their eye sight is not strong, their eyes are much affected by the rays of the Sun," thereby raising the possibility that they were albinos. Skipwith also mentioned hearing that Jefferson's daughter, Martha, had joined him in Philadelphia. In May 1786 Jefferson sent a letter to Skipwith, providing information about a legal matter that involved British courts and sent his daughter's fond regards to the Skipwith family. In a letter sent the following summer, Jefferson spoke of political turbulence in Europe and sent daughters Patsy and Polly's affectionate regards to their aunt and the rest of the Skipwith household.

On December 11, 1789, while Thomas Jefferson, who had returned to Virginia and was visiting at Eppington, he sent a letter to Henry Skipwith at Hors du Monde. He urged Henry to meet with him at Eppington, as he found "that Mr. Eppes will hardly consent to go from home." He added that the three men's mutual interests necessitated that they meet and said that he hoped that Mrs. Skipwith also would make the trip to Eppington. On December 26, 1789, Jefferson mentioned that his "voyage from Hors du Monde was pretty easy," which suggests that he had made his way down the Appomattox River. However, on April 7, 1791, Henry Skipwith, who was in Richmond, sent word to Jefferson that he had been conferring with respected lawyers in

the state capital, in an attempt to determine what the Wayles heirs' obligation was with respect to the debts owed to Farrell and Jones. At issue was whether the debts against Wayles' estate had descended to his business partner, Richard Randolph, through right of survivorship or whether the Wayles heirs were obligated to pay half of those debts. Skipwith closed by saying that on April 10<sup>th</sup> he planned to "remove my family to Eppington, and in conjunction with Mr. Eppes, shall endeavor to ascertain the certain date of the contract" between John Wayles and Farrell and Jones. He closed the letter by saying that his wife sent her "warmest affection." A month later, Jefferson informed Skipwith that he was convinced that the late Richard Randolph's estate was obligated to pay the debt owed to Farrell and Jones. Jefferson's legal opinion was received gratefully by Skipwith, who was prepared to pay his share of Wayles' debt. On October 5, 1791, Jefferson sent word to Skipwith that he had hoped to visit Hors du Monde and Eppington, but was obliged to go elsewhere. In subsequent years the two men corresponded about some other debts that were associated with the Wayles estate. The two men were still discussing the late John Wayles' debts in 1809 (Robert Skipwith, July 17, 1771; September 21, 1778; Henry Skipwith, April 16, 1781; May 6, 1786; July 28, 1787; December 11, 1789; April 7, 1791; May 6, 1791; September 4, 1791; October 5, 1791; April 10, 1793; January 4, 1795; July 10, 1809).

Over the years, Henry Skipwith became a county justice and county lieutenant (or commanding officer) of the Cumberland County militia. During the Revolutionary War he earned a reputation as a "warm, sincere, steady, and undeviating patriot." He also had a distinguished military career and in 1780 Colonel Henry Skipwith was in command of a regiment of armed volunteers that assembled at Petersburg and was under the overall command of General Robert Lawson. When British General Benedict Arnold invaded Virginia, Lawson and his men managed to prevent him from surprising Richmond, the seat of government. Six weeks later, they joined General [Nathaniel?] Greene in opposing Cornwallis and participated in the Battle of Guilford. A month later, they received orders to join the men of the Marquis de Lafayette in the western end of Hanover County (*Columbian* [New York], October 9, 1815). By the end of the war, Colonel Henry Skipwith was considered an excellent officer and patriot. He lost his wife, Anne Wayles, sometime prior to December 17, 1799, when he married Elizabeth Hill Byrd, the daughter of William Byrd III of Westover. She was a wealthy widow who had outlived two previous husbands, James Parke Farley and the Rev. John Dunbar, rector of the College of William and Mary, and inherited part of their property. Dunbar had purchased George Wythe's house in Williamsburg in 1793 and at his death, it became his widow's. Skipwith moved to the former capital city, became an alderman, and although he died in Powhatan County in early October 1815, he was a resident of the city. The friendship enjoyed by brothers-in-law Francis Eppes VI, Thomas Jefferson, and Henry Skipwith endured over the years and it is likely that whenever Eppes had business in Williamsburg, he stayed in the Skipwith home, now generally known as the Wythe House. (*Washingtonian* [Windsor, Vermont], November 8, 1813; Stephenson 1955:44-47; Headley 1987:115).

### ***The American Revolution's Impact Upon the Region***

Despite the fact that military activities during the Revolutionary War had no direct impact upon Eppington, the principal market cities Francis Eppes VI<sup>36</sup> would have used (Petersburg, Williamsburg, and Richmond) were affected. There was a spirited battle at Petersburg in 1781 and the city was occupied twice by British troops. It was Petersburg's strategic importance as a seat of commerce that brought war to the town. Thomas Anburey, a

British prisoner-of-war who visited Petersburg, said that its warehouses were crowded with tobacco, whose owners could not find purchasers. He surmised that the planters wouldn't export it themselves because of the dangers posed by British privateers and noted that a few merchants had made trips to Bermuda but that most of Petersburg's stores were closed. Anburey said that Richmond and Petersburg had "formerly supplied the back settlers with all manner of stores for their plantations." American General Henry (Light Horse Harry) Lee described Petersburg as "first among the commercial towns of the state" and that it was "the great mart of that section of the state which lies south of the Appomattox, and of the northern part of North Carolina." He said that the city's principal export was tobacco and that during wartime, public stores (military supplies) were concentrated there. Notably, Petersburg was the depot for all of the imported supplies that were furnished to the American army for its southern operations (Scott and Wyatt 1960:27). It is likely that the war's adverse impact upon Petersburg's tobacco and flour trade and mercantile operations had serious economic implications for Francis Eppes, who grew tobacco and wheat on his extensive landholdings that abutted both sides of the Appomattox River.

On April 25, 1781, British General William Phillips and his army of 2,300 to 2,500 men marched into Petersburg, bent upon destroying the tobacco in the town's warehouses and seizing the public stores. Facing the invaders were around 1,000 soldiers of the Virginia militia, many of whom were inexperienced. The Americans offered stubborn resistance in Blandford and beyond and then made a stand in Petersburg. After nearly two hours of fighting under a severe cannonade, they were forced to retreat over the Pocahontas bridge, which they destroyed in their wake to prevent the British from pursuing them. General Henry Lee said that "Everything valuable was destroyed, and the wealth of this town in a few hours disappeared." But the British claimed that they had removed the tobacco from the town's warehouses before setting it ablaze so that the crop and not the buildings would be burned. Only one warehouse is known to have been destroyed, the one at Cedar Point. General Phillips and his men returned to Petersburg in early May 1781, awaiting the arrival of the army of Charles Lord Cornwallis, who was marching in that direction. The return of British troops to Petersburg surprised several American officers, who had been sent to the town to collect boats. On May 10<sup>th</sup>, the Marquis de Lafayette's men, who were located on the upper side of the Appomattox River, commenced shelling the British position in Petersburg. General Phillips died while he was in Petersburg. Afterward, the General Benedict Arnold assumed command of the British troops there. Thomas Jefferson, writing in 1782, said that although Virginia's towns really were villages or hamlets, he believed that certain communities, among them Petersburg, might become important due to its position at the head of tidewater shipping. In 1784 the Rev. Johann David Schoepf estimated that Petersburg had around 300 buildings. He said that the city "exports a great quantity of tobacco and other produce, supplied not only by the Virginia plantation round-about, but brought in even from North Carolina (Scott and Wyatt 1960:28-31; Reys 1972:222-223).

In 1784 the towns of Petersburg, Blandford, Ravensworth, and Pocahontas were united as an incorporated city called Petersburg, which had a mayor, recorder, aldermen, and a local court (Hening 1809-1823:XI:382). Noah Webster, who visited Petersburg in 1785, noted that the town's 300 houses were "nearly the same number as in Richmond." However, Josiah Flagg, a New Englander, declared that Petersburg was the dirtiest place he ever saw. He said that:

Nine months of the year the mud is half-leg deep, it is a very Sickly place oweing in a great measure to its Situation, the Streets are very irregular and not a Respectable Building

in the Borough, it stands upon the River Appomattox, the water thereof is almost [as] stagnant as it is navigable for ships of 500 Tons 120 miles, the Vapours arising from it contaminate the air, with the most pestilential disorders. Agues and fevers of Every kind prevail [Scott and Wyatt 1960:40-41].

On the other hand, Isaac Weld, who visited Petersburg in 1796, said that he found it a lively community, teeming with commercial enterprise. He said that it was:

. . . the only place of consequence south of the James River, between Norfolk and Richmond. The rest of the towns, which are but very small, seem to be fast on the decline and present a miserable and melancholy appearance. The houses in Petersburg amount to 300; they are built without any regularity. The people who inhabit them are mostly foreigners; ten families are not to be found in the town that have been born to it. A very flourishing trade is carried on in this place. About 2,400 hogsheads of tobacco are inspected annually at the warehouses; and at the falls of the Appomattox River, at the upper end of town, are some of the best flour mills in the state [Scott and Wyatt 1960:41-42].

William T. Barry, in a letter he wrote in 1804, said that Petersburg was “a very unpleasant looking place, but it is a busy one and much trade is carried on here.”

### *The Consequences of War*

In 1780 General Assembly members, concerned about war debt, decided that all land, with the exception of urban lots and property that contained ferry landings, mills, mines, and specialized buildings, would be placed in one of six categories, based on its fair market value and its physical characteristics: that is, low, high, flat, hilly, marshy, or prime agricultural land. Based on those categories, the fair market value of a property owner’s land was to be used as the basis of his/her annual assessment. Significantly, in November 1781 the General Assembly informed assessors and other county officials that when they determined land values, they were not to take into account any buildings that were present (Hening:1809-1823:X:9-11, 243, 502-503). Thus, it did not matter whether a landowner’s acreage contained an upscale dwelling or a small farmhouse; both would pay the same amount of tax. This policy was in effect until the assembly changed the law in 1819. Francis Eppes VI was representing Chesterfield County in the assembly when these policies were adopted. Another important change occurred in October 1782 when the General Assembly convened. Delegates discussed the fact that there were vast differences in the values that Virginia’s county assessors were assigning to the six (or less) types of land within their jurisdictions. In an attempt to overcome this inequity, the assembly divided the state into four tax districts, each of which shared common attributes and had soils of similar quality. Then, they assigned a standard monetary value per acre to the soil types that could be found within each district. Chesterfield County, like Henrico, was grouped with other eastern Virginia counties that were considered part of the tidewater region. By law, county clerks of court and the clerk of the General Court had to provide local tax commissioners with a list of the properties that had changed hands during the previous year. (Hening 1809-1823:XI:141; Leonard 1976:141).

Francis Eppes VI, like his forebears, continued to enhance the quantity of land under his control. In June 1782 he purchased Thomas Charleton's fractional part-interest in the tract known as Captain Martin's Swamp, adding it to the land that his late father had owned there, and in 1785 he bought a 12 ½ acre tract in Bermuda Hundred that was known as Locketts and two half-acre lots. He received some tax relief in December 1782 when the county court relieved him of paying personal property taxes on eight old and infirm slaves (Chesterfield County Deed Book 10:333, 540; Order Book 6:384). Land tax rolls for Amelia County (an area whose antebellum records are incomplete) reveal that in 1782 Francis Eppes owned 3,547 acres of land.<sup>37</sup> In 1785 he purchased an acre of land from John Dodson and during the following year he bought 400 acres from William Cousens (Cousins). It may have been during 1785-1786 that he acquired the land on the Amelia County side of Eppes Falls that he used as a mill seat, for his future son-in-law, Archibald Thweatt, later purchased additional Cousens acreage (Amelia County Land Tax Lists 1782-1788).<sup>38</sup> In 1787 when Thomas Jefferson (1787) published his well-known map of Virginia, he identified by name the site of Eppington and indicated that it was close to the old river road that paralleled the Appomattox, crossing at Bevil's Bridge.

In 1791 when land tax rolls become available for Chesterfield County, Francis Eppes VI was in possession of 3,441 acres of land. Only the late Thomas Mann Randolph's estate was larger, having 4,614 ¼ acres. But in 1793, when the Randolph estate was subdivided, Eppes became the county's largest landowner. He retained that distinction up until the time of his death in 1807. Eppes' land, which was assessed at 10 shillings per acre, was of middling value in a county whose assessment rates ranged from 4 shillings 4 pence per acre to 4 shillings 3 pence. It is likely that the scope of his landholdings, its remoteness, and perhaps the quality of his arable acreage were reflected in the rate per acre at which he was assessed. His assessment per acre remained constant at 10 shillings per acre from 1791 to 1807.<sup>39</sup>

In October 1779, the General Assembly's members decided to apply personal property taxes to all white males who were age 21 or older with the exception of those serving in the military. All slaves were to be taxable except for the aged or infirm. The tax code was modified from time to time and from 1782 on, the owners of wheeled vehicles, such as coaches, riding chairs, wagon stages, and chariots were taxed; this was the forerunner of today's personal property tax. Personal property tax rolls for 1787 reveal that Francis Eppes VI's investment in slaves and livestock was extensive. Simultaneously, the tax assessors in Cumberland County credited him with 19 slaves over the age of 16 and 27 younger slaves, plus 11 horses, asses, and mules, and 49 cattle. In Amelia County Eppes had 32 slaves who were over age 16 and 38 who were younger, plus 14 horses, asses, and mules,<sup>40</sup> and 102 cattle. His Amelia acreage apparently was entrusted to a free white male who was between 16 and 21, probably a farm manager or overseer, upon whom Eppes paid poll tax. In Chesterfield County Francis Eppes of Eppington paid taxes on one free white male over the age of 21 (himself), 42 slaves who were age 16 or older, 45 younger slaves, plus 13 horses, 64 cattle, and a four-wheeled carriage. He also was credited with a modest sized herd of livestock at Bermuda Hundred (Schreiner-Yantis 1987:331, 335, 380).<sup>41</sup> Although the state of Virginia tabulated its heads of household in 1784 and 1785, no list for Chesterfield County seemingly has survived. Even so, Francis Eppes' listing for Amelia County is helpful in understanding how he managed his subsidiary farms, for in 1785 he was credited with seven whites, three dwellings, and seven other buildings (Jackson 1908:83). Thus, tenants and/or overseers occupied his outlying property.

The responsibility of maintaining one's slaves was considerable and slaveholders, whether motivated by humanitarian or economic reasons (or a mixture of the two) were obliged

to see that their slaves were adequately fed, clothed, and housed, and that their health was maintained. In fact, agricultural publications of the early-to-mid nineteenth century addressed these issues, making specific recommendations. It was generally agreed that a sick slave was not only unprofitable but also a financial liability. Therefore, by taking adequate care of their slaves, planters were protecting a substantial financial investment (Breedon 1980:163).<sup>42</sup> Archival research has shown that a typical slave quarter contained a minimum of nine and a maximum of 20 to 30 slaves. Individual dwellings within the quarters (typically huts or cabins) usually housed nuclear families, whereas unmarried adults lived in small, separate buildings. Although field laborers usually were housed close to their owners, if nearby fields were under cultivation, slaves working the outlying acreage of very large plantations often lived in distant quarters that were convenient to the ground they worked. Planters sometimes provided their slaves with garden plots in which they could grow some of their own food (CWF 1985:II:35).<sup>43</sup>

When a census of the United States was compiled in 1790, Francis Eppes VI of Chesterfield County was credited with 124 slaves, or approximately twice as many as the number on whom he paid personal property tax (Jackson 1908:50). This discrepancy is attributable to the fact that slaves below the age of 12 were excluded from taxation. Notably, not all of Francis Eppes' slaves were on his property at Eppington. Some would have been on his land at Bermuda Hundred and Captain Martin's Swamp. In 1790 Chesterfield County's population consisted of 14,214 persons. Of that number, 1,652 were free white males who were age 16 or older; 1,557 were free white males under the age of 16; 3,249 were free white females of all ages; 7,487 were black slaves; and 369 were free persons whose ethnic groups were not identified (UVA 1983:16-17).

Between 1791 and 1796 the Chesterfield County tax assessor credited Francis Eppes with between 50 and 52 slaves who were age six or older and 28 to 30 horses, asses, and mules. He was credited with a four-wheeled coach or chaise and a two-wheeled riding chair.<sup>44</sup> Eppes paid poll taxes on himself and three other free white males who were age 16 or older. These individuals likely included himself, his son, and two farm managers or overseers who helped him with his agricultural operations in Chesterfield County (Chesterfield County Personal Property Tax Lists 1791-1796). At a time when only 62 percent of Chesterfield County households had slaves and the overwhelming majority of slaveholders had between one and five slaves, Francis Eppes owned far more slaves than anyone else in the county. Likewise, his investment in livestock greatly exceeded that of his peers (McCartney 1988).

### *Disestablishment of the State Church*

As early as October 16, 1776, when Virginia's General Assembly held its very first session, 10,000 of Virginia's male freeholders presented a 125-page petition, asking for disestablishment of the Church of England and religious equality under the law. This manuscript initiated a lengthy public debate over the relationship between church and state and whether the church should have public support. James Madison, who became our fourth president, circulated his "Memorial and Remonstrance against Religious Assessments," which received widespread support. The act that Virginia's General Assembly passed in October 1784, authorizing the incorporation of the Protestant Episcopal Church, maintained parish vestries' taxing authority and designated them trustees with the right to hold and manage church-owned property such as glebes and houses-of-worship. This legislation produced backlash and registered voters in many Virginia counties called for its repeal. When the legislature convened in October, the Statute of

Religious Freedom became law, abolishing the State Church and denying it the right of general taxation. Separation between church and state was achieved, thanks to that legislation. The new law was not applicable to actively used Episcopal churches and vestries were allowed to retain the parish glebe until the incumbent clergyman died or moved away. Under the Statute of Religious Freedom, much of the former State Church's real estate reverted to the Commonwealth of Virginia and could be sold as surplus property. Funds yielded by the sale of parish-owned real estate were to be given to county Overseers of the Poor, who had taxing authority and were responsible for providing public welfare.<sup>45</sup> On at least four occasions, freeholders in Chesterfield County sent petitions to the General Assembly, urging its members not to give the newly incorporated Protestant Episcopal Church special privileges, such as owning property that formerly had belonged to the Church of England and taxing authority. Neither Francis Eppes VI nor his sons-in-laws were signatories to the four petitions that were submitted to the legislature (Chesterfield County Legislative Petitions, November 14, 1785; December 9, 1785; November 24, 1786; November 13, 1790). Members of the Eppes family made the transition to the Protestant Episcopal Church and probably attended the nearest Episcopal Church, probably what was known as the Sappony Church, which was near Sappony Creek in western Chesterfield County.

### *The Jefferson Family's Association With Eppington*

Numerous letters that Thomas Jefferson exchanged with Francis and Elizabeth Wayles Eppes reveal that both households placed an exceptionally high premium on family life and enjoyed a mutually beneficial relationship. The Eppes couple had at least six living children: one son and six daughters. The birth of John Wayles Eppes in 1772 was followed by that of Elizabeth Wayles, probably in 1776. Afterward came Martha Bolling, born in 1778, and Lucy Elizabeth, who died in 1784. A second daughter named Lucy Elizabeth was born to the Eppes' in 1786. Daughter Mary was born in 1788 but her twin failed to survive. Afterward came Sally, who was born around 1789, and Matilda (Stanard 1895-1896:33:26; Parks 1987:588-589).<sup>46</sup> Thus, the Eppes household at Eppington would have been lively and teeming with children, especially little girls, and as the family grew, more living space was needed.

Martha Wayles Jefferson died at Monticello on September 6, 1782, a few months after the birth of her sixth child, Lucy Elizabeth. Martha's death left her devoted husband, Thomas, so deeply immersed in grief that he became withdrawn. He also resolved to retire from public life. He took his three daughters to Ampthill in Chesterfield County, for he found at Monticello too many memories of his late wife. In early October, Jefferson wrote to his sister-in-law, Elizabeth Eppes, assuring her that his daughters were in good health. He said that taking care of his children provided him with a welcome distraction from his grief, but closed by saying that he was not going to visit Eppington because he was still too sad to avoid casting "a damp on the cheerfulness of others." He said that he was looking forward to a visit from Jack (John Wayles Eppes) in a week or ten days and that he would keep the Eppes' informed about him. On October 3, 1782, Thomas Jefferson noted in his account book that he gave a slave named Jupiter the funds he needed "to pay ferrges [ferriages] by Eppington to Richmond" (Boyd 1950:VI:198-200). This reference to the Eppes' Winterpock plantation as "Eppington" is the earliest documented reference to that name.<sup>47</sup> By this time, many members of the planter elite had begun calling their homes by names that celebrated their families' prominence. On December 28, 1782, Thomas Jefferson placed an announcement in the *Virginia Gazette or American Advertiser*, a

Richmond newspaper, stating that he had given Francis Eppes VI his power-of-attorney (Boyd 1950:VI:210).

Around 1783, shortly after the American Revolution had drawn to a close, Francis Eppes VI resumed work on the home he had begun calling Eppington, again using the southern yellow pine that had been used in the initial phase of construction. In anticipation of adding a wing to the east and west ends of his dwelling's central block, he had workmen demolish and then rebuild the existing chimneys that flanked the building and may have been a source of leaks. They were replaced by new chimneys that stood clear of the roof and had finely finished masonry. Architectural historians surmise that the new chimneys, which were deeper than the originals, were intended to accommodate the fireplaces that were to provide heat to the wings Eppes intended to add to his home. Around the time the chimneys were replaced, Eppes added dormers to his home, windows that would have provided the attic with light, and he extended the stairs in the northeast corner of the house by building a flight that ran from the second floor to the attic, creating a third bedchamber. During this second period of construction at Eppington, trim work was added to the interior of the house, although there was neither lathing nor plaster. Sometime after trim work was installed, there was a fire on the second floor. Architectural historians determined that it was within the wall to the left of the chimney in the east wing. In order to extinguish the blaze, one of the raised panels in the wainscot abutting the chimney had to be chopped out. During this second period of construction, Francis Eppes VI did not embellish the stairs that led from the first to the second floor. However, the improvements he made signaled his interest in making his dwelling fashionable and that he had the means to do so. He would have been familiar with at least three tripartite houses: Battersea in Petersburg and the Finnie House and Tazewell Hall in Williamsburg. (Wenger et al. 1995:16, 23, 25, 45, 56).

In early 1783 Thomas Jefferson reluctantly responded to the demands of public service, which required him to go to Philadelphia. He decided to leave his youngest daughters, Mary (called Polly by her intimates)<sup>48</sup> and Lucy Elizabeth, at Eppington, along with at least one or two of his slaves, and took his eldest daughter, Martha, to Philadelphia. One of the slaves he left at Eppington was Sally Hemings, the youngest daughter of John Wayles and his slave, Betty Hemings. Sally, who was around 10 years old, would have been considered mature enough to look after 5-year-old Mary Jefferson and her baby sister, Lucy. The renovations at Eppington, made around 1783, would have enhanced the amount of upstairs living space and would have occurred by the time the Jefferson girls joined the Eppes household, which already included at least four children. This raises the possibility that one of the bedchambers on the second floor was occupied by the Eppes couple and the other, by their daughters and the Jefferson girls. Meanwhile, 11-year-old John Wayles Eppes would have been able to sleep in the attic or in an overhead space in one of the more refined outbuildings (Edward Chappell, personal communication, December 8, 2015).

On March 3, 1783, Thomas Jefferson wrote to "Francis Eppes, Esq., Eppington," providing him with the latest news from Europe. He closed his letter by asking Eppes to convey his love to Mrs. Eppes and the children. He also said, "I hope Mrs. Eppes has recovered better health." In early November 1783 Jefferson dispatched a letter to Francis Eppes in which he provided a military update and made a few remarks about women's fashion. He asked Elizabeth Eppes to deliver half-a-dozen kisses to his daughters and said that he had not been able to arrange safe transportation that would enable them to join him. In late December, Francis Eppes wrote Thomas Jefferson that his wife, Elizabeth, or "Betsy" as he called her, had given birth to "a fine Girl" on November 7<sup>th</sup>. He also said that he was uncertain what to do about his own

son's education and welcomed Jefferson's advice. He said that, "As great an objection as I have to keeping Jack at home I wou'd at present do it provided I cou'd git [sic] a man who cou'd be depended on and wou'd give generous wages to such a one who wou'd undertake him and half a dozen others" (Boyd 1950:6:252-253, 349-350, 415-416).<sup>49</sup>

Thomas Jefferson was generous with his advice to his daughters on how to proceed with their education and the importance of personal decorum. On December 22, 1783, he chided his daughter, Martha, who was in school in Philadelphia, for not writing to him weekly and sending copies of her schoolwork.<sup>50</sup> He stressed the importance of being neat, clean, and properly attired at all times of the day and told her that, "A lady who has been seen as a sloven or slut in the morning will never efface the impression she then made with all the dress and pageantry she can afterwards involve herself in." He also said that he had dispatched a letter to Martha's sister, Mary, at Eppington (Boyd 1950:VI:416-417).

More than a year after Jefferson left his daughters, Mary and Lucy, and Sally Hemings<sup>51</sup> at Eppington, he and daughter Martha set sail for Europe, where he joined Benjamin Franklin and John Adams, then ministers plenipotentiary to Europe. On April 1, 1784, Mary Jefferson, who was still living at Eppington, wrote her father, inquiring when she would see him and her sister again. She also said that she appreciated the sashes he had sent her and that she was almost able to read. On May 9, 1784, Thomas Jefferson, who had just been appointed a minister plenipotentiary, again gave Francis Eppes VI his power-of-attorney and authorized him and Nicholas Lewis of Albemarle County to manage his property while he was living abroad. As it turned out, he left his business affairs in their hands for another two years. Toward the end of 1784, Jefferson made arrangements for two barrels of brandy to be sent to Eppes, whom he asked to send him a dozen or so hams from Monticello. He also requested specimens of cypress, cedar, magnolia, and myrtle (Boyd 1950:VII:39, 58, 239, 501; IX:388-390).

On September 16, 1784, Francis Eppes dispatched a letter to Thomas Jefferson in which he told him that both families' children had come down with whooping cough. Eppes said at "Your little Lucy, our youngest, and Bolling<sup>52</sup> are I think very ill. Polly [Mary] has it badly but she sleeps well and eats heartily, tho she is not fallen off in the least. Doctr. Currie is here attending on your children and ours. He promises to write you very particularly by this opportunity." But on October 13, 1784, little Lucy Elizabeth Jefferson, who was only 2-years-old, succumbed to whooping cough, as did little Lucy Elizabeth Eppes. Both children would have been buried at Eppington, perhaps some of the first of the interments in what became a family cemetery located approximately 500 feet north-northwest of the mansion. Although Elizabeth Eppes immediately dispatched a letter to her brother-in-law in Paris, he did not receive it until May 1785. She said that her daughter's death occurred first and that the death of "Your dear angel" occurred a week later. She said that Mary Jefferson also had had whooping cough but had recovered completely and that her own daughter, Martha Bolling Eppes, "is reduced to a skeleton" (Boyd 1950:XV:615-616; Hanna and Petrone 2013:5).

On November 20, 1784, Dr. James Currie sent a letter of condolence to Thomas Jefferson in Paris. He said that he was sincerely sorry to tell him of the death "of poor Miss L. Jefferson, who fell a Martyr to the Complicated evils of teething, Worms, and Hooping [Whooping] Cough, which last was carried there by the Virus of their friends without their knowing it was in their train." Currie said that he "was call'd too late to do anything but procrastinate the settled fate of the poor Innocent, from the accounts of the family, a Child of the most Auspicious hopes and having among other shining qualities an ear nicely and critically musical." He said that "Mr. Eppes lost his own youngest child from the same Cause" and that it was with great difficulty that

Bolling's life was saved. He said that Mary Jefferson "got early over it and is now in good health" (Boyd 1905:7:538-539).

Jefferson, upon learning of Lucy's death, wrote to Francis Eppes, saying that his anguish over the loss of his daughter was indescribable and that to discuss the matter "would pour balm neither into your wounds or mine." He said that he had received Francis's September 16, 1784, letter, saying that the children were ill, and then gotten Doctor Currie's, written on November 20<sup>th</sup>. He closed by sending his love to his sister-in-law and asked her to kiss his daughter for him (Boyd 1950:7:635-636). Afterward, Mary Jefferson, then age 6, settled into life at Eppington, where she was comforted by the companionship of her aunt Elizabeth and uncle Francis Eppes and their several children, who were near her own age (Weaver 1969:32).

The loss of daughter Lucy compelled Thomas Jefferson to insist that Mary, or Polly as he called her, join him and her sister, Martha, in Paris. In late August 1785 he wrote the Eppes that he longed to see his daughter and wanted her to be sent to him the following summer (Boyd 1950:8:451-452). But Mary had developed a strong attachment to the Eppes family, especially Elizabeth, and resisted the idea of going to Paris. On September 20, 1785, Jefferson wrote Mary that he and her sister, Martha, "cannot live without you." Tactfully, he said he knew "how sorry you will be, and ought to be, to leave them [her aunt and uncle] and your cousins," but he promised that "after a while we will carry you back again to see your friends in Virginia." In Paris, he said, she would learn to play the harpsichord, to draw, to dance, and to become fluent in French. He said that "above all things, by our care and love of you, we will teach you to love us more than you will if you stay so far from us." He also offered a bribe of sorts, for he said "When you come here you shall have as many dolls and playthings as you want for yourself nor to send to your cousins." But Mary stubbornly and very directly replied "I hope that you will send me a doll. I am very sorry that you have sent for me. I don't want to go to France. I would rather stay with Aunt Eppes." Later, when Jefferson grew more insistent, she wrote "I want to see you and Sister Patsy [Martha], but you must come to Uncle Eppes's house."

Mary Jefferson's 13-year-old cousin, John Wayles Eppes, interceded on her behalf. He sent a letter to his uncle Thomas in Paris, saying that "notwithstanding your great desire to have Cousin Polly with you, it cannot be effected without forcing her, for she seems very much adverse to it." But Thomas Jefferson pressed on with his plans. Well aware of the risks involved in a young girl's making a transatlantic crossing, he asked Francis Eppes to make arrangements for her to be transported on a ship that had made at least one voyage but was no more than four or five years old and he insisted that she was only to make the trip during April, May, June, or July. He said that ideally, she would be accompanied by "some good lady" or "a careful gentleman" or even a female slave who had had the smallpox (Boyd 1950:8:451-452).

At the end of August 1785 Jefferson wrote to Francis Eppes, saying that two Mr. Fitzhughs, who were heading for Virginia, were going to bring him a pack of seeds "for both the kitchen and flower garden." He said that as he was unfamiliar with the French names, he had gotten a good seedsman "to pack up a few of what are deemed the best kinds in this country" and that "there is only enough of each to begin a stock with." He observed that "You will soon see whether any of them are preferable to what you already have. . . . The Peach Apricot is one of the most valuable fruits in this country and very lately known." He said that he was enclosing a list of the seeds he wanted and reminded Eppes that earlier on he had asked him for specimens of cypress, cedar, magnolia, and myrtle. He also reiterated his requirements for the type of vessel that should be used to transport his daughter, Mary, across the Atlantic, and said that it shouldn't be a new vessel or one that was more than five years old. In a separate communication he said

that he depended upon the Eppes' to find "some good lady passing from America to France, or even England," or perhaps "a careful gentleman," but he added that "a careful negro woman, as Isabel, for instance" would do, if she'd had the smallpox. He closed by sending his affectionate regards to the Eppes' and to "the family at Hors du Monde."

Jefferson's letters already were on its way to Virginia when Francis Eppes wrote that he understood Jefferson's need to be reunited with his daughter but pitied her when he thought of the length of the trip and that she'd be among strangers. He also said that "Her attachment to her Aunt is so great I am certain that it will be a very difficult matter to persuade [sic] her to leave this place with anyone except yourself," but noted that he had someone suitable in mind to accompany Mary to Paris. Eppes closed by saying that "In one of my letters I requested you wou'd endeavor to procure me a tutor for our children if such a one as I describe can be got or anyone who you think will answer the purpose. I cou'd wish to have him here as soon as possible" (Boyd 1950:15:621-624; [www.encyclopediavirginia.org/letter\\_from\\_Thomas\\_Jefferson\\_to\\_Francis\\_Eppes](http://www.encyclopediavirginia.org/letter_from_Thomas_Jefferson_to_Francis_Eppes)).

On September 22, 1785, Thomas Jefferson sent a letter to Elizabeth Eppes in which he expressed his uneasiness about Mary's crossing the Atlantic, but said "She must come." He stated that he'd been weighing his desire to see her against his concerns about the dangers of the trip and ultimately concluded that the advantages to her coming would be considerable. Jefferson said that he had sent by Mr. Fitzhugh some garden and flower seeds and bulbs that "will fall in your department" and noted that he would have preferred to send more but didn't want to impose upon Fitzhugh's kindness. Less than three months later, Jefferson dispatched another letter in which he asked Francis Eppes to send Mary to him in Paris with Mr. Berkeley (Barclay), the American consul, and expressed his concern over the Barbary pirates' threat to travelers. Close on the heels of this letter came one recommending that Mary be sent aboard a French or English vessel that had a Mediterranean pass. He said that he knew that Elizabeth Eppes dreaded being separated from Mary and that his greatest comfort was his certainty of her kindness to her daughter. He concluded by saying that he had sent the Eppes a little package with anchovies, oil, fruit, and other things that would be a special treat for them (Boyd 1950:8:539-540; 9:91-93, 159, 211-212; 15:624-625).

On April 11, 1786, Francis Eppes informed Thomas Jefferson that everyone at Eppington was well and that Mary was "in as high health as ever you saw her." He also forwarded a lengthy letter from Colonel Lewis, who was managing Jefferson's property in Albemarle. The following month, Eppes wrote again, saying that he was

. . . sorry you are so desirous of having Polly sent to you as I am certain nothing but force will now bring it about. We have try'd every argument we are capable of in order to induce [her] to agree to it. I have told her you wou'd meet her in Philadelphia and that I wou'd accompany her to that place. This however had no affect except distressing her. She is in tears whenever its mentioned. I shall not send her until I hear farther from you unless Mr. Berkeley shou'd call for her [Boyd 1950:8:517].

During spring 1786 Thomas Jefferson went to London on business. He wrote to Francis Eppes that he had found "a light neat pattern of chessmen" that he had sent to him and spoke of his and Eppes' role in settling John Wayles' estate. He said that he had recently informed two people he saw in London that in his absence Eppes was handling his (Jefferson's) part of the estate as well as his own. The tone of Jefferson's letter suggests that the debts against the

Wayles estate were considerable and that a settlement wasn't anticipated until a much later date (Boyd 1950:9:395-396).

Meanwhile, Thomas Jefferson pressed on with his plans to transport his daughter to Paris. In July 1786 Elizabeth Eppes wrote him that his sister, Martha Carr, had become so dear to Mary that she had consented to visit her alone. Although Mary's departure for the Carrs' was delayed by a rash on her arms "occasion'd by eating too freely of butter'd Muffins," she was to go in about three weeks "by way of preparing her for a separation which my heart saddens at, though I will say no more." Elizabeth Eppes concluded her letter by saying that there was no other news that would be of even the slightest interest to him and teasingly added "You did not recollect I am sure the neighborhood we live in, or you would not expect sheets of paper filled" (Boyd 1950:XV:625, 628-629).<sup>53</sup>

In August 1786 Francis Eppes informed Thomas Jefferson that the Fitzhugh had brought him a letter and a packet of garden seeds "which I declin'd taking after knowing its contents." He said that the postage had been 12 pounds and asked Jefferson not to go to such expense on his behalf in the future. He said that Isabel, the slave who was going to accompany Mary to France, needed to be vaccinated against smallpox, which would delay their voyage until next spring, but that he had found a ship meeting all of Jefferson's criteria. In reference to an earlier request to Jefferson, whom he asked to find the children a tutor, Eppes said he had hoped to procure "a man or Woman not younger than forty and capable of teaching our girls French, English, erethmatick [sic] and musick [sic]." He said that in light of Jefferson's comments about the "expectations and dissatisfied dispositions of the French," he had asked someone else to send to Britain for a tutor, which he expected to arrive at Eppington in early spring. That fall, Eppes wrote to Jefferson again, informing him that he had sent along a bushel of Virginia magnolia cones and seeds. He said that he'd send the other plant materials Jefferson wanted as soon as he could and he commented that he had an abundance of cedar berries on his own plantation but that procuring the myrtle he wanted had proven difficult. He thanked Jefferson for the chess set, which he pronounced "very handsome" and noted that he had to refresh his knowledge of the game (Boyd 1950:15:621, 632).

When Francis Eppes wrote a letter to Thomas Jefferson in October 1786 he told him that he was sorry that the summer had passed without an opportunity to send Mary, in accord with his instructions, but that he could not be assured of her arrival the following summer. He said that Mrs. Eppes was delighted with the gift of anchovies, oil, and other items and that he had received four boxes of claret, some of which he'd use soon to drink a toast to Jefferson's health (Boyd 1950:9:395-396; 10:483). Thomas Jefferson also enjoyed occasional gifts from the Eppes. In September 1787 he told a friend that he intended to ask Francis Eppes "for a particular kind of cyder he makes" that he would like to have sent to Paris (Boyd 1950:12:132-133).

In early January 1787 Martha Jefferson Carr wrote her brother in Paris that last summer she had spent five or six weeks at Eppington, where she had observed the loving attention that Elizabeth Eppes lavished upon the children. She said that little Mary loved Elizabeth dearly and that according to Elizabeth, Mary's aversion to going to France "Increases daily and that she fears she must at last be dragged like a calf to the Slaughter." Martha Carr said that the slave Isabel was not due to deliver her baby until April, which had prevented her from being inoculated with smallpox, and that the French consul's wife, who was planning to return home, would be a suitable traveling companion for Mary. She said that the Eppes had planned to bring Mary to Monticello to visit the Carrs, but the illness of the youngest Eppes child had kept everyone at home but Francis Eppes himself (Boyd 1950:15:632-633).

On December 14, 1786, Thomas Jefferson wrote to Elizabeth Eppes, expressing his joy at her news that Mary would join him the following summer. He acknowledged that “She is better with you, my dear Madam, than she could be anywhere else in this world, except with those whom nature has allied still more closely to her.” But he said he feared that the lengthy separation ultimately would diminish the love that should bind him and his daughters together and he frankly admitted that this was his main reason for sending for her. He apologized to Elizabeth for the condition of the garden seeds he had shipped to her via Mr. Fitzhugh and expressed his concern that some of the other parcels he’d dispatched from various places had failed to arrive safely. Jefferson enclosed a letter to Francis Eppes, giving him additional instructions on his daughter’s upcoming trip to Paris (Boyd 1950:10:594-595).

### *Mary Jefferson Sets Sail*

On March 30, 1787, Francis Eppes, in a letter from Eppington, told Thomas Jefferson that his daughter was well “and will sail by the first good opportunity.” He said that a friend of his had written to the French Consul, whom he had heard was going to France with his wife, and expressed his hope that Mary Jefferson would be able to travel with them. Eppes also informed his brother-in-law that he’d sent him a box containing a bushel of cones and holly berries and that he was forwarding some cedar berries with his current letter. He said that thus far he had been unsuccessful in his attempt to procure some myrtle berries for him. He reported on a visit he had made to Monticello earlier in the year and gave an estimate of the quantity of tobacco he might expect to be produced. He added, however, that the men to whom Jefferson had entrusted his properties were in a much better position to advise him on the productivity he could expect. In the same packet with Francis Eppes’ letter was one from his wife, Elizabeth, who urged Jefferson to countermand his orders for Mary to be sent to France. She said that “We have made use of every stratagem to prevail on her to consent to visit you without effect. She is more adverse to it than I could have supposed.” She closed by saying that her children would gladly take Mary’s place “for the number of good things she is promised.” Mary herself penned a note that was short and to the point. She said, “Dear Papa, I should be very happy to see you, but I can not go to France and hope that you and sister Patsy are well. Your affectionate daughter. Adieu.” On another occasion she wrote “I want to see you and sister Patsy, but you must come to Uncle Eppes’s house.” Mary’s letters’ abruptness said much about her resistance to the idea of leaving Eppington and the Eppes kin she had grown to love (Boyd 1950:11:255-261). But Thomas Jefferson’s desire to be reunited with his young daughter overruled her own wishes and those of her Eppes relatives, who ultimately acquiesced.

In April 1787 Francis Eppes sent word that he had found an appropriate ship, the *Robert*, which was “a fine ship.” He said that the arrangements he had hoped to make with the French consul had fallen through and that Mary was to be chaperoned by John Amonit, a young man who came highly recommended. Eppes said that “Isabel or Sally will come with her either of whom will answer under the direction of Mr. Amonit.” As it turned out, neither Mr. Amonit nor the slave named Isabel Hern, who was 27 and pregnant with her fifth child, was able to serve as Mary’s chaperone. Instead, Mary was entrusted to the care of 14-year-old Sally Hemings, under the protection of Captain Andrew Ramsey (Boyd 1950:15:631, 636).

On May 7, 1787, Elizabeth Eppes wrote Thomas Jefferson from Osborne’s, on the James River, to say that she hoped Mary would be handing the letter to him personally. She also begged him to let her know that Mary had arrived safely. She closed by stating that she and the

children would spend a day or two aboard the ship *Robert*, captained by Andrew Ramsey, that would convey Mary to France (Boyd 1950:11:356). She implied that the Eppes' intended to slip away while she was napping. Toward the end of May 1787 Jefferson wrote Francis Eppes that he had sent him six dozen bottles of 1784 vintage Bordeaux wine from the vineyard of Obrion. He said that he was omitting all references to Mary, whom he hoped was then on her way to France (Boyd 1950:11:378-379).

Abigail Adams, who was in London, sent a letter to Jefferson on June 26, 1787, indicating that his daughter, Mary, had arrived safely and "in fine Health." She said that Mary "was so much attached to the Captain and he to her, that it was with no small regret that I separated her from him." She added that "The old Nurse [probably Isabel] whom you expected to have attended her was sick and unable to come." Therefore, she had been accompanied by Sally Hemings, "a Girl about 15 or 16" who was "the Sister of the Servant you have with you." The next day Abigail Adams sent another letter, indicating that Mary had stopped crying and was "as contented today as she was miserable yesterday." She described "The Girl who as with her" as "quite a child" and said that in Captain Ramsey's opinion, she would be of so little service that he might as well take her back to Virginia." She added that Mary seemed fond of the girl, who seemed to be good natured (Abigail Adams to Thomas Jefferson, June 26, 1787; June 27, 1787). Sally Hemings may have been eager to accompany Mary Jefferson to France because her older brother, James, was already there, training to become the household chef.

On July 2, 1787, Thomas Jefferson sent word to the Eppes that Mary had arrived safely in Paris. He said that she had become very much attached to Captain Ramsay, who had been extremely kind to her during the voyage, as had Mrs. Adams, and he said that it was painful for Mary to bid them adieu. Elizabeth Eppes responded promptly, expressing her appreciation for the good news she had received. She modestly brushed aside Jefferson's praise for the training she had given Mary and said, "You have almost made me vain." Jefferson, in turn, complimented her on Mary's ability to read and write and on her good manners. He said that Mary's

. . . kindles with love whenever she hears your name, and I assure you Patsy is not behind her in this. She remembers you with warm affection, recollects that she was bequeathed to you, and looks to you as her best future guide and guardian. . . . We love you both sincerely, and pass one day in every week together, and talk of nothing but Eppington, Hors-du-monde, and Monticello.

Jefferson congratulated Elizabeth upon "the double blessings of which heaven has just begun to open her stores to you" and said that "Polly is infinitely flattered to find a namesake in one of them. She promises to teach them both French." Thus, Elizabeth Wayles Eppes had given birth to twins, one of whom was named Mary after her Jefferson cousin. George Gilmer, a family friend, had written Thomas Jefferson in December 1787 that Francis Eppes had visited the Piedmont but "was anxious to return to nurse his twins, two little Girls."<sup>54</sup> Jefferson sent a separate letter to his nephew, John Wayles Eppes, congratulating him on obtaining his degree and offering him advice on the course of his future education (Boyd 1950:11:524-525, 634-635; 12:454, 497-498; 13:347-348).<sup>55</sup>

Jefferson continued to urge his daughters to study hard, to cultivate habits of activity, and to try to be well behaved so that everyone would love them. Their enslaved servant, Sally Hemings, may have had relatively little to occupy her time while Martha and Mary Jefferson

were at school, although she may have received some training in sewing and the care of clothing. Her main duties as a lady's maid probably included taking care of the girls when they were at home, maintaining their wardrobes, and assisting them whenever friends visited them from their convent boarding school. Many scholars believe that it was around this time that Thomas Jefferson began a liaison with Sally, his late wife's enslaved half-sister. When Martha Jefferson began making appearances in Parisian society, Sally Hemings would have accompanied her as an attendant.

As the months passed, Jefferson grew increasingly uneasy about the political instability in France and in April 1789 he began making plans to set sail, so that he could escort his daughters to Virginia. He wrote Elizabeth Eppes that he intended to take a leave of absence in order to spend some time at Monticello and he expressed his hope that the Eppes' would visit him there for a while. He indicated that he had kept his daughters in France a year longer than he originally had intended, so that Mary could become proficient in French. However, the political instability, which included the July 14, 1789, storming of the Bastille, led Jefferson to hasten his plans to take his daughters back to the United States. At the end of August he wrote Francis Eppes that he and his daughters expected to depart in late September or early October and that they looked forward to seeing him and his family at Eppington in November.

The Jeffersons and Sally and James Hemings set sail for Norfolk, Virginia, aboard the *Clermont*, and upon arriving there, obtained a wagon and embarked upon a circuitous journey to Monticello, taking time to visit with friends and family along the way. In December, while Thomas, Mary, and Martha Jefferson were stopping over at Eppington, he received a letter from President George Washington, who informed him that he had been appointed Secretary of State. Jefferson dispatched a response and then set out for Monticello to check on conditions there. In his memoirs, he said that his "wish had been to return to Paris, where I had left my household establishment," and that he had expressed his sentiments candidly in a letter to Washington, but accepted the position. On December 17<sup>th</sup> Jefferson wrote to Francis Eppes from Hors du Monde, Henry Skipwith's home in Cumberland County, reminding him to send the wild cherry trees and ray grass. Jefferson also took the time to send a letter to George Wythe, who had been his law professor at the College of William and Mary, asking him to make recommendations that would benefit the education of his young nephew, John Wayles Eppes. He said that Eppes' father wanted him to study law, but that he also should be prepared for "the equally respected occupations of agriculture and domestic life." In March 1790 Jefferson wrote Elizabeth Eppes that he would like to leave his daughters at Eppington, where they could learn "many things of the most useful in life." He said that Mary, who had adopted the name "Maria," the French equivalent of "Mary," while she was living abroad, needed her help with penmanship and Spanish and that he had given her detailed instructions on how to proceed with her studies. He planned to continue on to New York, then the new nation's capital, but hoped to return to Eppington and Monticello before too long. Jefferson later wrote to Mary at Eppington, reminding her to "Love your aunt and uncle, and be dutiful and obliging to them for all their kindness to you. What would you do without them and with such a vagrant for a father?" On May 23, 1790, Mary Jefferson drafted a letter to her father, outlining her educational routine. She said that she read *Don Quixote* to her aunt daily and practiced her Spanish and English grammar. She also wrote daily and read in Robertson's *America*, usually working until dinnertime and then resuming her studies. She closed her letter by saying that her aunt had given her a hen and chickens to look after, an indication that young Mary had begun her training in

housewifery (Boyd 1950:14:355, 357-358; 15:370; 16:34-38, 208, 435-436; *Republican Star*, Easton, Maryland, July 21, 1829; www.encyclopediavirginia.org).

When the nation's capital was shifted from New York to Philadelphia later in 1790, Jefferson was obliged to follow. Immediately before his departure, he wrote to Elizabeth Eppes, again expressing his appreciation for her taking care of his daughters. He noted, however, that he'd always found "that you disputed with me the first place in [Mary's] affections" and said that although he'd like to have her join him, his life was too unsettled then. From Philadelphia, Thomas Jefferson wrote to Mary, chiding her for not having written. He pummeled her with questions about her progress with her Spanish, how many chickens she'd raised, what the crops and weather were like, and how the Eppes' were doing. He also asked her to remind him what books he had promised her at various times. On July 25, 1790, Jefferson wrote to Elizabeth and Francis Eppes, saying that he expected to leave for Monticello in September and hoped they would visit him there. He told Elizabeth that Martha, too, had mentioned needing a maid and said that he would see to it while he was in Virginia. He also expressed his desire to situate Martha in Albemarle County and proffered that it might induce the Eppes to visit more often. Elizabeth responded that she'd like to visit Monticello in the fall, but that Francis "will at that time be so engag'd in manufacturing [probably processing wheat], it will be impossible to leave home." Instead, she suggested that Jefferson visit Eppington and said that she continued to do everything in her power to see that his daughters were happy and well cared for. She also expressed her disapproval of Martha's moving to Albemarle, where they would see her less frequently.

In mid-August Mary Jefferson wrote her father that while she was visiting Cumberland County, she'd heard some excellent singing masters at church, who had been invited to Eppington to teach her cousins how to sing. She added that "I know you have no objections to my learning anything I am [can] to be a scholar and hope to give you the pleasure of hearing an anthem." She mentioned that they had had a harvest of peas on May 14<sup>th</sup> and strawberries on the 17<sup>th</sup>, but that she'd failed to note when the whippoorwills and martins arrived. She said that she and her cousin Bolling were involved in raising their chickens, but that they'd lost half of them. She said that she was "determined to write to you every day till I have discharged my debt," implying that she was somewhat annoyed by her father's insistence that she communicate so often and in such detail (Boyd 1950:16:489, 599; 17:265-266, 331-332).

### ***Francis Eppes VI Modifies Eppington***

Around 1790, Francis Eppes VI added wings to the east and west ends of his house, enhancing its size and appearance significantly. This occurred at a time when gentry families began building larger homes that included public spaces for entertaining and private spaces like bedchambers and libraries. Both wings were one-story in height and had hipped roofs. During the early 1790s he also added a porch on the landside of the house and probably added one to the rear. The presence of the slender balusters and handrail of the stairs that led from the first to the second floor, which are distinctly federal in design, suggest that these improvements occurred around 1790 or shortly thereafter. Below these stairs' landing, Eppes had a set of steps built that led to the cellar that had an earthen floor and lay beneath the central block, the original part of the house. A doorway connected this main cellar with a newly excavated one that was located beneath the west wing. There also was a cellar beneath the house's newly constructed east wing.

An exterior opening on the new wing's easternmost end provided access to its cellar. Significantly, there was no interior access between Eppington's two cellars.<sup>56</sup>

The large hall on the south side of the house was converted into a drawing room and the original dining room became a parlor or family sitting room. The wing on the east end of the house became a large dining-room or space for entertaining guests, whereas the west wing, which had interior trim, accommodated a bedchamber, a study or an office, and a closet, all of which were connected by a small L-shaped hall. The construction of the downstairs bedroom followed the birth of at least two of four more children. There is evidence that an exterior door in the end of the west wing led to the kitchen yard. A door also connected the parlor with the bedchamber. Eppington's east wing had a closet on each side of the chimney and two windows in front and in back. A door at the back of the southernmost closet connected the dining-room with the drawing room and there was an exterior door in the east wing's end wall. This access to the out-of-doors would have made it possible for food and drink to be carried from a detached kitchen to the dining-room. The east wing's interior remained unfinished until a later period of construction. Thanks to the modifications that Francis Eppes made around 1790, his dwelling's public and private spaces were clearly defined, just as they were in other elaborately built houses of the period. (Wenger et al. 1995:26, 32, 37).

Samples of paint were taken from the woodwork in two of Eppington's downstairs rooms, neither of which had plaster. When those specimens were analyzed, it was determined that the paint used by the Eppes' was oil-based and that the early woodwork was painted with varnish tinted with a plant-based resin. Coatings of shellac, with and without pigments, were found on the doors and baseboards. The first layer of paint in the drawing room, in the oldest part of the house, was blue-gray. That paint was applied to the paneling, mantel shelf, and cornice, whereas the paint on the doors and baseboards was a deep red-brown, perhaps to conceal the yellow pine that was used as trim. The paneling, mantel shelf, and cornice in the dining room that was located in the east wing, built around 1790, was coated with a glossy green or verdigris paint, whereas the doors and baseboards were painted a deep red-brown. It is likely that both of these rooms were repainted each time the house was altered (Buck 2007:42).

Thomas Jefferson wrote to Francis Eppes in October 1790, saying that the brevity of his stay in Virginia had not permitted him to visit Eppington. He offered to do whatever he could to assist in the education of his nephew, John Wayles Eppes, and indicated that the colleges in both Princeton and Philadelphia were good. He said that if Jack wanted to attend school in Philadelphia he could live with Jefferson. He noted, however, that if Jack preferred to stay at Eppington, he would provide him with law books and ample instructions on what to read. He also offered to let Jack work in his own office, but said that he felt that it would be the least advantageous way for him to become educated in law. Francis Eppes responded to Jefferson on October 14, 1790, thanking him warmly for his kindness toward his son. He said that he would rather have his son live in Jefferson's household than anywhere else and would leave it to him to choose the best course for him to pursue in his education. Significantly, Francis Eppes added that he had been unable to see Jefferson in Richmond, "being at present confined by workmen who are repairing [sic] our houses." He also said that their "horses are so worn down with wheat treading and other drudgery that they are unfit for so long a journey" as a trip to Monticello (Boyd 1950:17:579-582, 592).

At the end of October 1790, Thomas Jefferson wrote Francis Eppes that he was setting out for Philadelphia and hoped to be there soon to receive his nephew. He said that as soon as his house was ready, he would send for Jack. In a separate letter to Elizabeth Eppes, he told her

that he was planning to leave both of his daughters at Monticello, at least through the winter, and that he intended to send for Martha in the spring. He urged Elizabeth to caution her son “not to give his heart to any object he will find” in Philadelphia, for he knew of “no such useless bauble in a house as a girl of mere city education” who “would keep him there and ruin him” (Boyd 1950:17:656-658).

The workmen who were remodeling Jefferson’s house in Philadelphia fell behind schedule and in January 1791 he wrote Francis Eppes that it would be March before he could send for his son. John Wayles Eppes made the journey to Philadelphia that spring, where he took up residence in Thomas Jefferson’s home and commenced his studies at what became the University of Pennsylvania. He reportedly attended classes for two to four hours a day, spent four hours reading law, and then worked as a copyist an hour or so to learn “the stile [sic] of business and acquire a habit of writing.” He also was supposed to read history and government texts daily. The compliments the young man received from his uncle reveal that he was an apt and devoted pupil. In March 1791 Jefferson wrote Francis Eppes that he hoped to see his wife, Elizabeth, when he made his annual trip to Virginia, but that she “seems to consider herself as immovable” in her reluctance to leave Eppington. A month later Eppes replied that he was entrusting his son totally into Jefferson’s care and asked him to keep a watchful eye on his behavior. He said that “Jack is fully apprised of my circumstances and he will be unpardonable if he exceeds the bounds of moderation in his expenditures.” On May 15, 1791, Jefferson sent word that Jack “passes from 2 to 4 hours a day at the College, completing his courses of sciences, and 4 hours at the law.” In addition, “he will write an hour or two to learn the style of business and acquire a habit of writing, and will learn something of history and government.” Jefferson added that, “The course I propose for him will employ him a couple years. He added that he intended to impress on Jack “a due sense of the advantage of qualifying himself to get a living independently of other resources” and said that he seemed to be working hard. On April 7, 1793, Jefferson sent word to Francis Eppes that Jack was leaving for Virginia so that he could commence a term of studies at the College of William and Mary. Jefferson said that he was relinquishing his house in Philadelphia, which was the reason he was sending Jack back to Virginia. He indicated that in his opinion Jack had many good qualities and that he needed the experience of speaking in the college’s moot courts to develop his oratorical talents (Boyd 1950:18:578-579; 19:549, 555; Clark 1942:283-284).

### *Concern for the Future*

The unanticipated debts against the late John Wayles’ estate and the troubled economy apparently continued to worry Francis Eppes, for he told Jefferson that the situation was growing more dismal. He also may have been concerned about the costliness of the improvements he had made to Eppington. He said, “For Gods sake endeavor to impress on [Jack’s] mind the necessity of his qualifying himself in some profession which will enable him to git his bread, for shou’d this business go against us it will not be in my power to do much for him.”<sup>57</sup> In another letter, he reiterated his concerns and said that he and his son, Jack, agreed that the study of law might be a good choice and said that it would be beneficial if he could work in Jefferson’s office. He added that he was prepared to provide funds for Jack’s maintenance, but wasn’t sure what sort of allowance he should have. Eppes asked Jefferson to have Jack account for his expenditures, for he realized that “Boys of his age in such a place as Philadelphia are as little capable of following a proper line of conduct as a Ship at Sea without Helm or Pilot.” In April 1791 Jefferson wrote

to his daughter, Mary, chiding her for not apprising him on the weather and crops in Virginia. But he softened his rebuke by sending along two veils for her use in decorating hats. Jefferson also dispatched a letter to William Smith in Philadelphia, describing the strengths and weaknesses of John Wayles Eppes' education prior to entering college and he said that whenever the curriculum offered something redundant, he (Jefferson) would set him to work studying something he needed. A month later, Jefferson reassured Francis Eppes that his son was studying diligently and was a good pupil. He enclosed a note to Elizabeth, saying that he intended to bring his daughter, Mary, to Philadelphia as soon as he could find a suitable situation for her. He explained that he had left her in Albemarle County so that she would be near her sister, thereby strengthening the bond between them (Boyd 1950:20:250; 21:152; 23:323; Francis Eppes to Thomas Jefferson, April 5, 1791).

During the winter of 1791 Mary Jefferson left Eppington and joined her father and cousin in Philadelphia, where she was enrolled in Mrs. Pine's School. It was likely during those months that the friendship between 13-year-old Mary Jefferson and 18-year-old John Wayles Eppes grew, a bond that culminated in their marriage in October 1797. Meanwhile, daughter Martha Jefferson, who had remained behind in Albemarle, had married Thomas Mann Randolph Jr. on February 23, 1790, and in the spring of 1791 presented Jefferson with a granddaughter (Weaver 1969:34; Boyd 1950:20:157, 413; 21:313; Tyler 1925:267; Headley 1987:115).

On January 16, 1793, Thomas Jefferson, who was in Philadelphia on official business, sent a letter to Francis Eppes in which he answered Eppes' queries about whether there would be a great demand for wheat in overseas markets. Jefferson said that he expected that there would be a shortage, even a famine, in France and that Spain was purchasing a lot of wheat. He pointed out that the French West Indies always bought large quantities of wheat and said that the demand had increased on account of the military men sent there. Jefferson advised Eppes to wait to sell his wheat until the market had reached its peak and had just begun decline, noting that although he might miss a penny or two of profit, he would be assured of getting a good price. He sent his love to Mrs. Eppes and the family and assured them that "Jack is well" At the close of 1793 Thomas Jefferson resigned as Secretary of State and withdrew to Monticello so that he could put his personal affairs in order. John Wayles Eppes completed his education and in 1794 began practicing law in Richmond, where he quickly attained professional prominence (Chesterfield County Order Book 10:344; <http://dc.lib.unc.edu/utis/ajax>; Johnson et al. 1931:170).

When Mary Jefferson and John Wayles Eppes made their feelings known to their kin in 1796 or 1797, an elated Thomas Jefferson informed his daughter, Martha, that Mary "could not have chosen more so to my wishes, if I had the whole earth free to have chosen a partner for her." In March 1797 Francis and Elizabeth Wayles Eppes executed a deed of gift whereby they conveyed to their son, John Wayles Eppes, 750 acres of land at Bermuda Hundred, plus 23 slaves and a lot known as Styltons that was located in the town of Bermuda Hundred. They also gave him 131 acres on the James River that adjoined Amphill, the plantation of David Mead Randolph, and Francis's share of the tract known as Captain Martin's Swamp.<sup>58</sup> Providing their son with land and a means to financial independence is a reflection of the Eppes' socioeconomic status, for in less affluent families, male parents often retained legal control of a sizeable portion of their holdings until death. This was done in an effort to protect their own financial wellbeing in old age and to ensure their widows' economic security. In October the Eppes couple made a new deed, conveying a joint interest in the 750 acre and 131 acre parcels to their son and to Thomas Jefferson and his daughter, Mary. Jefferson, in return, conveyed to Mary "from natural love . . . and for her advancement" fee simple ownership of 819 ¼ acres of land on the Rivanna

River called Pantops, plus 31 slaves, a herd of livestock, and some plantation utensils. The agreement noted that “marriage is now intended to be made between Thomas Jefferson’s daughter, Mary, and John Wayles Eppes” (Chesterfield County Deed Book 14:32, 258-259). According to a contemporary newspaper account, the young couple wed on October 13, 1797 (Headley 1987:115). Thomas Jefferson’s personal correspondence reveals that over the years, he maintained a close and affectionate relationship with his daughter and son-in-law (Boyd 1950:1:264-265; Jefferson to Maria Eppes, April 25, 1803). Francis and Elizabeth Wayles Eppes’ gift to their son was reflected in the real estate tax rolls for the late 1790s (Chesterfield County Land Tax Lists 1796-1800). Even so, they still owned more land than any of their contemporaries in Chesterfield County.<sup>59</sup>

John Wayles Eppes and his wife, Mary, made extended visits to Eppington during the early years of their marriage and sometimes, Thomas Jefferson joined them there. Eschewing Pantops, John and Mary settled in Chesterfield County, where he became a justice of the peace, dividing their time between Mount Blanco (near Petersburg) and Bermuda Hundred. On February 1, 1798, Mary Jefferson Eppes was at Eppington when she sent a letter to her father, saying that her aunt, Anne Wayles Skipwith, had just died; she added that Anne had been insane for a few months. Mary was still at Eppington on April 1, 1798, when she sent a letter to her sister, Martha Jefferson Randolph, mentioning their Aunt Bolling’s medical issues<sup>60</sup> and recommending that Martha try a cure for back pain that she had learned about from “my Mother,” that is, her mother-in-law, Elizabeth Wayles Eppes. She also mentioned her Aunt Carr.<sup>61</sup> Mary said that she hoped to hear that Martha had returned to Monticello and said that “the family here all send their love to you & My Brother.” During April 1798, while Mary was visiting Eppington, Thomas Jefferson wrote, asking her to “tell Mr. Eppes I will make a visit from Monticello rather than lose the colonnade and octagon. So he will not get off from his purpose by that excuse.” Thus, it appears that Jefferson had prepared a set of plans that he hoped to see Eppes implement, probably at Eppington. However, Jefferson’s tongue-in-cheek remark about Eppes’ excuses suggests that the latter had a limited amount of enthusiasm for his ideas. Jefferson commented upon Eppes’ reluctance to leave home, which suggests that he was a “homebody” who hesitated to leave his plantation. Francis Eppes, on the other hand, tried to convince Jefferson to visit Eppington more frequently and said “Would you try the air of this place you would find it as healthy as any situation below the mountains.” He added that it was indeed “uncommon for anyone to be sick here.” Mary Jefferson Eppes sent word to her father in January 1799 that she intended to join her husband at Bermuda Hundred in a week or two,<sup>62</sup> after which time they would adjourn to Mount Blanco. She returned to the familiarity of Eppington for the birth of her first child in 1800, a son who lived only two weeks and was buried there in the family cemetery. (Weaver 1969:35; Betts and Bear 1966:154, 158-159, 171, 78-179, 204, 206, 231; <http://tjrs.monticello.org/letter/559>).

In 1797 John Wayles Eppes’ name was listed in Chesterfield’s personal property tax rolls, at which time he was credited with two free white males who were age 16 or older (likely himself and a farm manager), 14 slaves who were age 16 or over, one who was between 12 and 16, and seven horses, asses, and mules. Young Eppes, unlike his father, owned no taxable wheeled vehicles. Between 1797 and 1802 John Wayles Eppes showed very little variation in the number of slaves and quantity of livestock he owned. In 1800 he paid taxes on a four-wheeled riding chair, his first passenger vehicle that was deemed taxable. It was likely that the chariot that Thomas Jefferson had offered to the young Eppes couple when he wrote to them in April 1798 (Betts and Bear 1966:158-159). In June 1798 John Wayles Eppes disposed of 5 acres

of land he owned in Bermuda Hundred, part of the property he had received as a gift from his father. During the late 1790s and early 1800s the number of slaves and quantity of livestock in his possession remained relatively constant. However, in 1807 there was a dramatic decline in the amount of his taxable personal property, suggesting that he had moved the bulk of his slaves and livestock out of the county or sold some of them when political life called him away. (Chesterfield County Deed Book 14:290; Personal Property Tax Lists 1797-1807). John Wayles Eppes was elected to Virginia's House of Delegates in 1801 and served in that capacity until 1803 when he was elected to the United States Congress. He served in the House of Representatives from 1803 to 1811 when he moved to Millbrook in Buckingham County.<sup>63</sup> He was reelected to Congress and served from 1813 to 1815, but became a United States Senator, holding office from 1817 to 1819, when he resigned on account of ill health. Throughout his political career, Eppes was a strong proponent of Thomas Jefferson's ideals. (U.S. Government 1989:916; Johnson et al. 1932:171; Leonard 1976:223, 227).

On June 18, 1801, Mary Jefferson Eppes, who was at Bermuda Hundred, sent word to her father that she was planning to go to Eppington and would stay there until he could join her. In a letter he sent to her on June 24<sup>th</sup>, he said that he expected to spend some time with her there, as he was going to be working on the settlement of John Wayles' estate. While Mary was at Eppington, she was nearing the end of her pregnancy, for Francis Wayles Eppes was born at Monticello on September 20, 1801. He was her second child and the only one who lived to maturity. On July 2, 1802, Thomas Jefferson sent a letter to his oldest daughter, Martha, telling her that her sister and Mary's child were sick. He indicated that Elizabeth Eppes stayed with Mary and her baby until both were well enough to be moved to Eppington, where "the air and the bark had already produced a favorable effect" (Betts and Bear 1966:204, 206, 231; Francis Wayles Eppes tombstone).<sup>64</sup>

In late 1802 then-President Thomas Jefferson persuaded both of his daughters to visit him at the White House, which was then under construction. Afterward, Mary apologized at length for the great expense her visit had cost her father. A second trip was planned for the following spring, but Mary's third pregnancy and generally poor health made that impossible. In 1803, when John Wayles Eppes went off to serve in Congress, she returned to Albemarle County where she took up temporary residence at Edgehill, her sister's home. On January 21, 1804, she sent a newsy letter to her husband, who was still in the nation's capital, providing him with the latest news from his family. She said that she had had a letter from his mother, that is, Elizabeth Wayles Eppes, who passed along his father's request for some umbrella-trees which could be procured from "up the country."<sup>65</sup> She said that Mr. Higginbotham would procure some if it was not too early or too late in the planting season, and said that his father (Francis Eppes VI) was eager to proceed. She said that she had had a letter from brother-in-law Jerman Baker, a Petersburg attorney, letting the family know that he and his wife, Martha Bolling, had another son and that both were in good health. Mary said there had been an outbreak of "nervous fever" at Pantops and that the plank-house at Monticello had burned shortly after it had been filled with flooring plank and timber for the cornices. She closed by saying that she and their son were well. Mary was still living at Edgehill on February 15, 1804, when her baby daughter and namesake, Maria Jefferson Eppes, was born. Unfortunately, Mary failed to recover from childbirth and her condition gradually deteriorated. She was transported from Edgehill to Monticello, where she died on April 17, 1804. Her young daughter, Maria, was taken Eppington where she died at age 2 (Weaver 1969:35; <http://tjrs.monticello.org/letter/564>). On July 29, 1804, John Wayles Eppes was at Eppington when he sent word that his little son, Francis, had

“recovered entirely from the complaint in his bowels” and that his little daughter “is the picture of health.”<sup>66</sup> John Wayles Eppes remarried on April 15, 1809, taking as his bride 19-year-old Martha Burke Jones, the daughter of North Carolina’s governor, Willie Jones of Halifax. Within two years’ time, the Eppes household relocated to their newly built home, Millbrook in Buckingham County.<sup>67</sup> On June 5, 1812, Thomas Jefferson wrote Eppes that he had just heard that he intended to sell Pantops and that he would like to purchase the estate, since it was in his own neighborhood. He added that he would expect to be able to buy it on the same terms that were being offered to other prospective purchasers (Randall 1965:III:369; *Richmond Enquirer*, April 25, 1809; <http://rotunda.upress.virginia.edu/founders>).

### *Francis Eppes VI’s Economic Strategy Changes*

Francis Eppes VI of Eppington, like many of his contemporaries in Chesterfield County, may have felt that there was money to be made through exploiting the belt of coal that ran through the county. The black mineral was discovered in Chesterfield during the early 1700s and commercial coal mining got underway in the Midlothian area by 1730. During the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries Midlothian had the largest concentration of mines in the Richmond Coal Basin, a geological formation that traverses several counties above the James River’s fall line and is close to Eppington, reaching Clover Hill and Eppes Falls. After the Revolutionary War, coal mining quickly emerged as Chesterfield’s most important industry, which enabled the county’s citizens to lobby successfully for so-called “internal improvements” such as turnpikes, canals, and railroad lines (O’Dell 1983:84-85). These schemes most likely were seen as a way out of the economic stagnation that descended upon Virginia planters during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, when wartime debts, westward migration, and changes in foreign and domestic trade patterns had exacted a heavy toll. One nineteenth century writer observed that “the influence of the ancient families has in large measure disappeared with their great landed possessions.” A contemporary said that “a large proportion of the families who composed [the gentry] and who remained after the Revolution in the country . . . have since passed in all their branches through a poverty-stricken period.” Outmigration played a role and Chesterfield County’s population declined from 14,488 in 1800 to 9,979 in 1810. Undoubtedly a substantial number of those who left sought better opportunities in the city or migrated westward. (Kuroda 1972:197).

Eventually, some enlightened planters recognized the need for a new type of agriculture and began implementing changes that brought about economic improvement. Leaders in the field of agriculture ridiculed the tobacco farmer who would begrudge the application of a bushel of manure on a garden plot that would grow an abundance of Irish potatoes, preferring instead to feed his insatiable tobacco crop. Farmers adjusted to changing market conditions by reverting to a system of mixed agriculture and produced a variety of grain and vegetable crops as well as fruit, livestock, and grasses. Although these changes served to strengthen local economic development and self-sufficiency, it was not until overland transportation systems became more sophisticated, linking rural areas to urban markets, that farm production and agricultural specialization began to expand on a large scale (Schlotterbeck 1980).<sup>68</sup>

Given Eppington’s location in western Chesterfield County and Francis Eppes VI’s acumen as an agronomist and his concern about his family’s financial wellbeing, it is not surprising that he took an active interest in the development of improvements to the region’s transportation network. In October 1792 he was appointed a trustee of the Upper Appomattox

Navigation Company, which was chartered by the state and charged with the task of extending the Lower Appomattox Canal Company's navigation improvements, which then covered a distance of ten miles and made it possible to navigate the islands below Petersburg. The purpose of the Upper Appomattox Navigation Company was to make the Appomattox River navigable for boats, bateaux, and canoes capable of carrying eight hogsheads of tobacco. The company's trustees collectively had the right to condemn, buy, and sell land, in accord with regulatory legislation. The Upper Appomattox Navigation Company was chartered in 1795 and commenced work immediately. Some of the improvements the company built were completed in 1807. Ultimately, the canal provided a 123-mile-long sluice that accommodated bateaux and extended from Petersburg to a site that was 23 miles east of Farmville. Numerous wing-dams were constructed and there were four well-built stone locks that were connected in staircase fashion. There was a stone-arch aqueduct, several stone culverts, and a basin. The four mills built along the river had locks in their dams. The construction of a canal that paralleled the Appomattox River served Amelia, Chesterfield, Cumberland, Dinwiddie, Nottoway, Powhatan, and Prince Edward Counties and the dams that were built along the way promoted the development of milling and manufacturing (The American Canal Guide Part 5:28; Hening 1809-1823:XIII:568-570; Shepherd 1870:I:390-394).<sup>69</sup>

Francis Eppes VI, as the owner of land that abutted both sides of the Appomattox River, was in an excellent position to reap personal benefits from the project, which was intended to give those who lived near the river's head (and beyond) access to urban markets, especially Petersburg, which had become a well-established port and flour-milling center. There also was the potential to develop new mill seats within what had become a major wheat growing area. In November 1795, when an act was passed that summarized several earlier pieces of legislation regulating the extension of the Appomattox River's navigation, Francis Eppes VI again was named as a trustee of what was called the Upper Appomattox Navigation Company. This time, the trustees were authorized to extend the navigation as far above Banister's Mills as they judged practical "so as to have a sufficient depth and width of water to navigate boats, bateaux or canoes capable of carrying eight hogsheads of tobacco." The company was authorized to charge set fees for use of the canal they were building and to apply such funds toward "cutting canals, erecting locks, and other labour for opening and extending the navigation of the said river . . . as well as keeping the same in repair." A fee schedule set the rates that could be charged for transporting numerous types of agricultural crops, manufactured goods, and other commodities (Shepherd 1970:I:390-394).

In June 1796 the noted architect Benjamin Latrobe set out on horseback, intending to reach Colonel Henry Skipwith's plantation near the head of the Appomattox River. He and some men who were involved in the canal company intended to make their way downstream toward Petersburg. On June 11<sup>th</sup> Latrobe stopped at Hors du Monde, the home of Colonel Skipwith, a canal company trustee, and met his wife, Anne, and the couple's two daughters. He mentioned the remoteness of the Skipwith home, which he described as "a strange building, but whoever contrived it, and from whatever planet he came, he was not a Lunatic, for there is much comfort and room in it, though put together very oddly." Latrobe's sketch of Hors du Monde, dated June 14<sup>th</sup>, indicates that it was a tripartite frame dwelling whose central block had a gambrel roof. Although each of the dwelling's wings had a gable roof, there was a gambrel-roofed wing to the rear. Latrobe said that the dwelling was near the north bank of the Appomattox River and that trees had been cut, down to the water's edge, a choice he said "has been found to render situations subject to fever and ague." He said that thanks to the unhealthiness of Hors du Monde,

“Mrs. Skipwith is a melancholy instance, having for 5 years past labored under a fever and ague, which nothing I think can cure but a change of air.” He said that the rest of the family had had “the same complaint” and declared their situation “A miserable existence, this!” A mile below Hors du Monde was Colonel Skipwith’s mill. Later, Latrobe noted that Colonel Skipwith’s brother was Sir Peyton Skipwith. He commented that the colonel “is a man of strong mental powers” and added that “His house is a most pleasant one, though the illness of Mrs. Skipwith operates as a drawback.” He said that they “were most hospitably entertained, the sense and wit of Mrs. Skipwith and Venables [a man traveling with Latrobe] provided also a mental feast.” Latrobe said that Colonel Skipwith was in the process of building a small house for his son-in-law, Thomas Randolph. (Latrobe 1977:I:141-145).

Latrobe purposefully sought out the home of Francis Eppes VI. Having reached Eppington on June 17<sup>th</sup>, he noted that “Mr. Eps [sic] has a charming estate about 4 miles below Watkins mill on the North bank. Here we met with . . . a hearty welcome, an excellent breakfast, and provisions for the day. We took in Major Eggleston<sup>70</sup> whom we found there, and about 2 o’clock arrived at Moore’s Mill.” While Latrobe was at Eppington, he made a sketch of the house and its environs, depicting it from the land side. He showed the dwelling and its wings, ample front porch, dormers, basement windows, and the door in the east wing’s end. In his “Essay on Landscape,” Latrobe reflected upon his visit to Eppington, “the seat of Mr. Francis Eppes,” and said, “Here all is good humour, kindness and mirth. We breakfasted with him and his charming family, and forgot ourselves so far as to stay almost till noon. During the day we passed two more Milldams, dined on stores given us by Mrs. Eppes and in the evening arrived at the Falls.” John Epperson (1797), a trustee of the Upper Appomattox Navigation Company, made a map on which he showed many of the sites along the Appomattox that Latrobe’s group visited. Prominently identified was the site of Eppes Falls near Eppington. Benjamin Latrobe also visited Hors du Monde, the Cumberland County home of Francis Eppes’ brother-in-law, Henry Skipwith. He said that the Skipwith home, which was in a remote but beautiful setting, “is a strange building, but whoever contrived it, and from whatever planet he came, he was not a lunatic, for there is much comfort and room in it, though put together very oddly” (Latrobe 1977:I:152-153; II:529, 540; Stephenson 1955:44). A painting of Hors du Monde reveals that like Eppington, the main portion of the house was flanked by wings.

Francis Eppes VI had a keen interest in horticulture and agronomy and according to his grandson, Thomas Jefferson considered him “the first [foremost] horticulturist in America.” By the 1740s and 1750s the libraries of elite planters usually included works on animal husbandry and gardening and such men often acquired new works on agriculture soon after they were published in Great Britain. In 1856 Francis Wayles Eppes, the son of John Wayles Eppes and his wife, Mary Jefferson, described Eppington during his late grandfather’s lifetime, though he was quick to admit that he would have been around seven years old when Francis Eppes VI died. He recalled that:

The mansion house itself, an old-fashioned, two-story building, with hipped roof in the centre and wings on the sides, with a hall or passage in front running from one wing to the other and opening on the offices, and with piazzas front and rear, was placed at the extreme side of a large level or lawn, covered with green sward, extending to a considerable distance in front and in the rear to the low grounds of the Appomattox, a mile off. In front, over the neighborhood road which skirted the lawn, was situated the garden, long famous in the vicinity for its fine vegetables and fruit; and to the right of the lawn, as

you entered, was an extensive orchard of the finest fruit, with the stables between, at the corner and on the road. The mansion, painted a snowy white, with green blinds to the windows, and its rows of offices at the end, was almost imbedded in a double row of the tall Lombardy poplar – the most admired of all trees in the palmy days of old Virginia – and this row reached to another double row or avenue which skirted one side of the lawn, dividing it from the orchard and stables. The lawn in front was closed in by a fence with a small gate in the middle and a large one on either extremity, one opposite the avenue of poplars, and the other at the end of the carriage-way which swept around it.

The plantation was quite an extensive one, and in the days of my grandfather, Francis Eppes, sen., was remarkably productive. Indeed it could hardly have been otherwise under such management as his; for he was eminent for his skill both in agriculture and horticulture; and I have heard Mr. Jefferson, who knew him intimately, say of him, that he considered him not only “the first horticulturist in America” but also “a man of the soundest practical judgement on all subjects that he had ever known [Randall 1865:II:359-360].

Francis Wayles Eppes described his paternal grandparents in loving terms. Of Francis Eppes VI, he said:

Well do I remember his venerable appearance – his grave and dignified demeanor; his serious, thoughtful, loving look, so expressive of the mingled firmness and kindness of his character; and from these boyish impressions can well credit what I so often heard in after life of his inflexible adherence to principle. Sure I am that he, beyond most men, was a man who could not be easily turned from his purpose; that he was calm and deliberate in counsel and resolute in action – worthy of the poet’s praise, “Justum et tenacem propositi virum,” etc. And yet my own boundless love for him, the love of his children, his wife, his friends, his neighbors, his domestics, shows that the sterner features of his character were softened and subdued by the possession of a heart overflowing with love, and a constant and active solicitude for the happiness of all around him. Never, I believe, was there a husband, father, master, friend, more truly and justly beloved while living and mourned when dead [Randall 1865:II:359-360].

As for Elizabeth Wayles Eppes, he said

. . . it is but a just need of praise to say that she was entirely worthy to be the companion of such a man. Full of love and gentleness, she won and held not only the heart of her husband, but the affections of all who approached her; while her well-ordered household and excellent management made her long famous as a “housekeeper” in that part of Virginia. Endowed with a mind of superior order, she soon perceived the excellence of the outside economy of her husband, and felt and understood that it was her part and duty to present a perfect parallel within doors; and with a vigor and determination of spirit only equaled by its uniform kindness, she set herself to the work, and most effectually did she accomplish it to the entire satisfaction of her husband, and the admiration of her children and friends [Randall 1865:II:360].

In closing, Francis Wayles Eppes said:

Such were the Heads of the House, and such was Eppington itself as seen through the vista of bygone years! Here were reared a family of one son (my father, John W. Eppes) and six daughters,<sup>71</sup> all happily married and settled in the world. And here was the abode of a hospitality only known in the happiest days of the “Old Dominion” – when friends and even acquaintances would visit each other with their carriages, horses, and servants and sojourn for months and months, always sure of and always receiving the kindest welcome. Here too, under the tuition of my grandmother, who taught me to read, and in the society of my grandfather, whose constant companion I was in his daily rides over the plantation, were spent the earliest, happiest days of my life. Here I remember but one sorrow, the death of my loved playmate and only sister, Maria. Never can I forget the picture of loveliness and innocence of which she was to my mind the fairest type! Never the grief which seized upon my young heart when they told me she was dead! In the garden at Eppington repose her mortal remains, and by the side of those of my beloved grandmother [Randall 1865:360].

Around 1798 Francis Eppes VI, who was 51-years-old, decided to make some major changes to Eppington. During this phase of development, he reconfigured the dwelling’s interior so that his servants could go from the kitchen yard to dining-room without going outdoors. To achieve this floor plan, he made a number of major changes. He removed the closets that originally had flanked the dining-room chimney and cut a new doorway that opened into the narrow passage at the front of the house, where the stairs were located. Then, through the installation of partitions that reduced the size of the parlor and bedchamber and the addition of two new interior doors, Eppes created a long, interconnected passage that extended across the front of the house and its west wing. These changes made it necessary to relocate the stairway that led to the cellar. It was during this period of construction that plaster was installed throughout the house and paneling was applied to the chimney breasts in the parlor and dining-room. Thanks to these changes and the addition of wings around 1790, Francis Eppes VI transformed his relatively simple two-story frame house into a tripartite dwelling with a sophisticated internal layout, a residence suitable for a gentleman of means. (Winger et al. 1995:40, 42, 44).

The analysis of paint samples reveals that during this period, the paint used on the walls and cornice of the drawing room was blue-gray, just as it had been earlier on, but deep red-brown paint had been applied to the mantel shelf and a glossy deep red brown paint had been used on the doors and baseboards. The color scheme of the dining room had changed, for the glossy green paint used on the paneling, mantel shelf and cornice when the east wing was first built had been replaced by paint that had a tannish-yellow color. A glossy deep red-brown paint had been applied to the doors and baseboards, just as it had in the drawing room, and the mantel shelf was painted a glossy deep red-brown (Buck 2007:42).

Eighteenth century household inventories reveal that Virginians of means tended to embellish certain rooms of their houses to reflect that space’s social importance. For example, rooms used for entertaining visitors usually were the largest, the most elaborately decorated, and the most readily accessible. Conversely, smaller, more remote rooms, considered private space, received less enhancement. Around 1800, visitors to Eppington, who arrived by land, would have ascended the stairs to the piazza or shed porch, which extended across the north side of the house. If invited in, they would have entered a narrow passage that extended across the front of

the house. Opposite the front door was a door that led into the drawing room, typically the most elaborately appointed space in a gentleman's home. This was a formal reception room where visitors and family members would have exchanged pleasantries and women would have gathered for tea after a meal. Beyond the drawing room was another porch, which overlooked the Appomattox River, approximately a mile away. To the east of the drawing room was the east wing, which consisted of an immense dining room, the center of public life at Eppington. There, Francis Eppes' guests would have dined sumptuously at a formally laid table, waited upon by house servants who carried food and drink through the passage at the front of the house. (Wenger et al. 1995:57-58).

The private space or family quarters used successively by the Eppes and their successors was not readily available to visitors. At the west end of the stair passage was a large living space that was simply appointed. It most likely was a family parlor or informal sitting-room that was used exclusively by family members and their close friends. In the west wing that adjoined the family parlor was a large bedchamber that was Eppington's most private area. There, in what would have been a private suite, women and children would have gathered, sometimes joined by the men of the family. Close at hand was an unheated study, accessible by a small vestibule. According to architectural historians, when Francis Eppes VI completed Eppington around 1800, its layout was perfectly aligned with contemporary domestic trends among central Virginia's gentry. There was an increased emphasis on separating private space for that to which visitors and servants had access. Also, the importance of the dining room had grown while that of the hall had diminished. Thus, Eppington's layout and embellishment reflects the level of refinement and sophistication enjoyed by Virginia gentry after the Revolutionary War (Wenger et al. 1995:58).

During the spring and summer of 1798, Francis Eppes and his wife sold some of the land they owned in Cumberland County, perhaps as a means of raising the funds they needed to make some significant improvements to the Eppington mansion and to the plantation's mill. They also had to provide each of their newly married daughters with what would have been considered a respectable dowry. In April 1798 Francis sold 517 acres of their Cumberland County land to Edmund Eggleston of Dinwiddie. Then on June 2<sup>nd</sup> Francis and wife Elizabeth sold 200 acres of their Angola tract to Francis Jackson and they conveyed 500 acres, part of their Cumberland plantation, to George Nicholas Skipwith. Next, the Eppes couple conveyed to their daughter, Martha Bolling, who in November 1798 became the wife of Jerman Baker of Dinwiddie County, 500 acres in Cumberland County in exchange for 5 pounds of Virginia money, a nominal sum. Then, on December 23, 1799, they executed a second deed of gift, conveying to their oldest daughter, Elizabeth, the wife of Dr. David Walker of Dinwiddie County, 500 acres in Cumberland County in exchange for 5 shillings, noting that they were transferring the land to her on account of their "natural love and affection" for her. Around the same time that these transactions had occurred, George Markham, a Chesterfield County neighbor, conveyed to Francis Eppes the right "to cut a canal through my lands in order to convey the waters of Winterpock and Surline Creek into his mill pond on Buckham [Buckhorn] Branch." Eppes also had the right "to raise the dam on Winterpock and Surline in order to turn the waters into the said canal to the height of the bank." Eppes, in turn, agreed to allow his neighbor, James Blankenship, the right to cut rail timber and firewood from a 25 acre tract that bordered Buckhorn Branch (Cumberland County Deed Book 8 [1797-1801]:162, 226, 236, 422, 424; Chesterfield County Deed Book 14:30; 15:280; Headley 1987:16).<sup>72</sup>

On June 8, 1802, Francis Eppes purchased his first insurance policy from the Mutual Assurance Society. His decision to insure his property followed the example of his brother-in-law, Henry Skipwith, who in 1800, 1806, and 1815 purchased policies for his Williamsburg property, the home that had belonged to George Wythe. In 1802 the insurance policy on Eppington described it as being in Chesterfield County between the plantations of Mrs. Moore and Maria Ward. The men who issued the policy indicated that the dwelling-house had an estimated worth of \$3,010 and that two buildings, which were identified as a schoolhouse and a kitchen/weaving-house, were worth \$220 apiece. They noted that “it would cost \$4,000 to build the same and is now (after the deduction of \$550 for decay or bad construction) actually worth \$3,450.” A sketch that appears at the bottom of the insurance policy depicts the house from the front, describing it as “a wooden Dwelling house 36 by 24 feet. Two stories high, underpinned with brick.” This central block had “a wooden gallery [a porch or piazza] on each side.” “A wooden wing 28 by 20 feet, one story high, underpinned with brick” was attached to each end of the dwelling-house. Seventeen feet west of the main dwelling’s western wing was a structure that was identified as “a schoolhouse &c.” It was said to have “walls built of wood, one story high, underpinned with brick, 40 by 16 feet” and was shown with a central chimney.<sup>73</sup> The other outbuilding, which was identified as “a wooden kitchen and weaving house, 40 by 16 feet, one story high, underpinned with brick,” also had a central chimney and was located 27 feet west of the schoolhouse (Mutual Assurance Society Policy 1802, Volume 15 Policy No. 694; Goodwin 1938:23, 26-27).

On March 26, 1806, when Eppes’ insurance policy was updated, his three buildings were listed at precisely the same values they had been assigned in 1802. However, the insurance agent noted that it would take \$4,600 rather than \$4,000 to replace the buildings and that \$1,150 had been deducted to arrive at their actual worth, \$3,450. The 1806 insurance policy, unlike the 1802 version, showed in outline form the parameters of the “Dwelling house of wood, two stories, 36 by 24 feet, covered with wood,” to which ends were attached a “wing of wood, one story, 28 by 20 feet covered [with] wood.” Seventeen feet from the dwelling was a “School house of wood, one story, 40 by 16 feet, covered [with] wood.” Twenty-seven feet from the schoolhouse was a “Kitchen of wood, one story, 40 by 16 feet, covered [with] wood.” A chimney was shown at each end of the dwelling’s central block and a central chimney was shown in both the kitchen and the schoolhouse. At the head of Eppes’ 1806 insurance policy, the insurance agent noted that it was a “Revaluation of the buildings Insured per declaration #694,” the policy dating to 1802. Francis Eppes signed each of these insurance policies (Mutual Assurance Society Policy 1806, Volume 59, Policy No. 1020). Archaeological testing undertaken by WMCAR in 2001 identified the remains of the schoolhouse shown on the 1806 insurance policy, a building that by 1815, when Archibald Thweatt insured Eppington, had been converted into a kitchen. Found at the site was a single slate pencil fragment, a reflection of its original function. Also found was a substantial quantity of domestic artifacts consistent with the structure’s eventual use as a kitchen. (Cline and Blanton 2001:10-11).

Lucy Eppes Thweatt displayed great affection toward her family. Sometime prior to 1804, she sent a letter to her sister, Martha Bolling Eppes, the wife of Jerman Baker, who had settled in Cumberland County, perhaps on the 500 acre tract that she had received as part of her dowry.<sup>74</sup> Lucy expressed her concern about the pain their sister, Matilda, was experiencing on account of a swollen jaw. She also asked Martha to give her love to their brother and his wife, Mary (<http://tjrs.monticello.org/letter/568>). On December 9, 1805, Elizabeth Wayles Eppes Walker, Francis and Elizabeth Eppes’ eldest daughter and the wife of Dr. David Walker of

Petersburg, died while she was visiting Eppington. Although the cause of death is uncertain, her obituary appeared in the Petersburg *Republican*, the Petersburg *Intelligencer*, and the *Virginia Argus*. Her widower continued to live in Petersburg (Dorman 2003:III:399; Petersburg *Republican*, December 12, 1805; Petersburg *Intelligencer*, December 13, 1805; *Virginia Argus*, December 14, 1805).<sup>75</sup>

On March 8, 1806, Francis Eppes VI sold four shares of stock in the Upper Appomattox Canal Company to John Bell of Petersburg in exchange for \$300. His health may have been failing, for only two days earlier, he made his will. Eppes also deeded to his widowed son, John Wayles Eppes, 200 acres called “Old Coxes” that adjoined Eppington on the east and abutted “a corner on the road to the new spring.” Subsequent land transactions reveal that the “Old Coxes” parcel abutted the west side of Winterpock Creek. Father and son made a private agreement whereby John had the right to retain the property rent-free for a given period of time before purchasing it outright or deeding it back to his father or to his estate (Petersburg Hustings Court Book 4:11; Chesterfield County Deed Book 17:282; 19:463-465; Order Book 1805-1807:341). Perhaps Francis hoped that his son would settle nearby, take care of his mother, and oversee Eppington. As it turned out, John Wayles Eppes decided to transfer “Old Coxes” back to his father, but the elder man died before that transaction occurred.

Over the years, Elizabeth Wayles Eppes continued to maintain a close relationship with both of Thomas Jefferson’s daughters. In September 1807 when she sent a letter to Martha Jefferson Randolph, she inquired about her health and said that she would like to take her “amiable Father” up on his offer to give her his instrument if his new one had arrived. She also asked Martha to send her “a little solemn musick – as it is now one of the greatest gratifications I have on earth.” She closed by saying that she hoped to enjoy “the company of yourself & family at Eppington this winter” and said that “it would delight us all.” (<http://tjrs.monticello.org/letter/570>).

### ***Francis Eppes’ Death and the Settlement of His Estate***

Francis Eppes VI died on July 4, 1808, and in 1809 Chesterfield County’s tax assessor credited his estate with 2,513 acres of land (Chesterfield County Land Tax Lists 1809). John Wayles Eppes apparently made no attempt to utilize his property at “Old Coxes” and later dated deeds reveal that he exercised his option of letting it flow back into his late father’s estate so that it could be divided among three of his sisters, Sally, Mary (Polly), and Matilda. John Wayles Eppes remarried in 1809 and in 1811 he and his new wife established a home, Millbrook, in Buckingham County. Eppes’ son, Francis Wayles Eppes, later recalled that:

At the age of sixty-three, my grandfather, who until three years before had enjoyed uninterrupted good health, died, and was buried at the Sweet Springs, in Virginia,<sup>76</sup> wither he had gone in company with my father, in the hope of being relieved of a chronic disease; and in a few short years my grandmother followed him to the spirit world. The establishment at Eppington passed into other hands, and I went forth with my father to his new home [Randall 1865:360].

After Francis Eppes’ death, his son, John Wayles Eppes, and Francis’s son-in-law, Jerman Baker, both of whom were attorneys, served as his executors and set about settling his estate.<sup>77</sup> The testator instructed his executors to see that his will, which was dated March 6,

1806, was recorded in the Richmond District Court and Henrico Superior Court (Chancery) rather than the court of Chesterfield County.<sup>78</sup> Unfortunately, in 1865 when Richmond burned, Francis Eppes VI's will was destroyed. Even so, the will's contents are inferred by many of the actions his executors took. Eppes' executors hired Willis Pillar, a surveyor, to lay off 1,000 acres, the land surrounding the Eppington mansion, which comprised the house tract allocated to the widowed Elizabeth Wayles Eppes. The executors had the remaining 1,500 acres of the Eppington tract subdivided into three 500 acre lots that were assigned to three of the decedent's daughters. Matilda, who became the wife of Richard Field, was assigned Lot 1; Mary, the fiancée of Archibald Thweatt's brother, Richard Noble Thweatt I, was allocated Lot 2; and Sally, who married John W. Lane Sr., received Lot 3 (Chesterfield County Deed Book 19:265-267, 463, 538-540).<sup>79</sup> A January 1812 deed for one of those lots reveals that the plat surveyor Pillar prepared was not recorded in the Chesterfield County courthouse (Chesterfield County Deed Book 19:265-267).<sup>80</sup> Neither John Wayles Eppes nor his sister, Lucy, who had married a respected Petersburg attorney, Archibald Thweatt sometime prior to December 14, 1802, received an allotment of land, probably because they was supposed to receive half of the 1,000 acres on which the family home was situated.<sup>81</sup> In June 1806, while Francis Eppes VI was still alive, Archibald and Lucy Thweatt executed a deed of exchange, agreeing to convey to John Wayles Eppes some land in Buckingham and Cumberland Counties in exchange for some land in Chesterfield County (Chesterfield County Order Book 16 [1805-1807]:558).

On September 8, 1808, two months after Francis Eppes VI's death, nine horses were auctioned off at Charles Randolph's tavern at Holcomb, in Amelia County. Most of the animals were identified as offspring of mares that lived at Eppington. However, it is uncertain whether the animals were taken to Amelia expressly for the sale or whether they normally lived on Eppes' property there. The identification of the mares as the progeny of the Eppes family's riding horses indicates that Francis Eppes, like many other elite planters, utilized selective breeding practices (Chesterfield County Will Book 9:637-644). He may have instructed his executors to sell some of his livestock to cover any outstanding debts, thereby preserving the rest of his estate for his widow and children. Thomas Jefferson visited Eppington in late October 1809, pausing there while on his way to Richmond. According to a newspaper account, he was expected to return to Eppington after his business in the state capital was finished. Another newspaper account reveals that Jefferson was attending a dinner held in his honor at the Eagle. Among the invited guests, which included a number of dignitaries were the late Francis Eppes VI's sons-in-law, Jerman Baker, Archibald Thweatt, and Colonel Henry Skipwith (*Strength of the People*, Charlestown, South Carolina, October 31, 1809; *Farmer's Repository*, Charles Town, West Virginia, November 3, 1809).

Lucy Eppes Thweatt, who resided in Petersburg, frequently visited her widowed mother at Eppington. On December 28, 1809, she sent a letter to her sister-in-law, Martha Burke Jones Eppes, who was in Halifax Town, North Carolina, at the home of her father, Willie Jones. Lucy said that her trip to Eppington "at this time was caus'd by the indisposition of our Dear Mother." Lucy went on to say that Elizabeth Wayles Eppes "has had a most violent attack. [S]he was for several days extremely ill. This circumstance may prevent her visiting you but she wishes to do so." She added that "We speak & think very frequently of you, I am sorry to observe that the many letters that have been written from E- have not reached you err this they must have come to hand & you will no longer accuse those who tenderly love you of neglect." Martha Burke Jones Eppes may have been experiencing a bout of sickness, for Lucy said "Your days to this period have been as gay as your spirits" and added that "it is now therefore that your fortitude has its

first debt to pay for its hitherto happy exemption [sic].” Lucy said that their sister, Polly, that is, Mary Eppes Thweatt, hadn’t visited her in Petersburg since her marriage but was expected next week. She added that “Mr. Harwood & also S.P. appear to have deserted E- but during my stay there Sally [Lucy’s sister] had a visit in form from Mr. Patterson from Manchester.” She added that “he very soon received his *quietus*,” a statement suggesting that Sally had spurned him as a suitor. Lucy said that John Wayles Eppes had recovered his health and that when they saw him on Saturday he was walking “without his cane & has never had the smallest return of the last attack.” She indicated that she was enclosing a sample of the fabric that Martha had inquired about (<http://tjrs.monticello.org/letter/583>).<sup>82</sup>

Little is known about the approximately two years that elapsed between Francis Eppes VI’s death in September 1808 and that of his widow on June 10, 1810. However, Elizabeth and the couple’s unmarried daughters almost certainly stayed on at Eppington.<sup>83</sup> It was during this period that John Wayles Eppes married for the second time and his sister, Mary, wed Richard N. Thweatt I of Dinwiddie County.<sup>84</sup> The management of Eppington’s agricultural operations was entrusted to a Mr. Childers, the plantation’s overseer or farm manager, whose name was mentioned in an advertisement dated September 18<sup>th</sup> that appeared in a succession of identical advertisements that appeared in the *Richmond Enquirer* on September 21, September 28, and October 9, 1810. John Wayles Eppes and Jerman Baker, as the late Francis Eppes VI’s executors, announced that on October 10<sup>th</sup>, an auction would be held at Eppington, where:

... twenty valuable NEGROES, consisting of men, women & children, among them is a good carpenter and a good miller. Also the stock of horses, mules, cattle, sheep and hogs, a neat coach & harness for four horses, a gig and harness, the plantation tools, some household and kitchen furniture – amongst the horses are two valuable brood mares – Mary Gray the dam of Wonder and Palafox – a bay mare out of Mary Gray by Dare Devil.

The stock of cattle and sheep are equal, if not superior to any in Virginia. Cash will be required for all sums of thirty dollars or less – for all purchases exceeding thirty dollars a credit of twelve months will be allowed, on the purchasers giving bonds with the most approved security – interest from the date of the bonds will be demanded, if they are not punctually paid [*Richmond Enquirer*, September 21, 1810].

The executors went on to say that:

At the same time and place may be purchased of the representatives of the late Mr. Eppes that valuable plantation called Eppington, lying on Appomattox River about 24 miles above Petersburg, containing one thousand acres: about four hundred of which are in woods. Mr. Childers manager on the plantation will shew it to those disposed to purchase [*Richmond Enquirer*, September 21, 1810].

The advertisement appeared again on September 28 and October 9, 1810 (*Richmond Enquirer*, September 28, 1810; October 9, 1810).

An account of the estate sales that were held on October 10 and November 29, 1810, recorded in Chesterfield County’s clerk’s office, reveals that Francis Eppes VI had instructed his executors to sell his personal belongings after his widow’s demise by offering all of his possessions for sale. The account indicates that before anything could be sold, his unmarried daughters, Matilda and Sally, were allowed to choose household items whose value was

equivalent to what had been given to their married sisters. After that distribution was made, all of the Eppes couple's children were given an opportunity to purchase whatever they wanted at the appraised value, before the sale was opened to the public. During this preliminary sale, items, whose value was recorded, were purchased by Matilda, Sally, and John Wayles Eppes, and by Archibald Thweatt on behalf of his wife, Lucy, and Jerman Baker on behalf of his wife, Martha. Conspicuously absent from this list of buyers were Mary (Polly) Eppes and her husband, Richard N. Thweatt I. However, later when the sale was opened to the public, Richard joined John Wayles Eppes, Archibald Thweatt, Jerman Baker and others in making purchases (Chesterfield County Will Book 9:637-644). They may have preferred to wait, hoping to purchase items at less than the appraised value by becoming low bidders at a public auction. An account of the estate sales that occurred in October and November 1810 at Eppington reveals that all of Francis and Elizabeth Eppes' household furnishings, agricultural equipment, livestock, and produce were sold. As a result, only the items acquired by Archibald Thweatt and his wife, plus whatever she received as part of her dowry, would have been left on the property. The decedent's older slaves and 20 others were sold, but the majority probably were passed along to his heirs by means of his will.

A list of the items purchased by the Eppes couple's children and their spouses at the October 10, 1810, provides a considerable amount of detail on how the family home had been furnished when Elizabeth and Francis Eppes VI were alive. Certain rooms most likely were outfitted for entertaining. Within that public space could be found a sideboard, a set of dining tables plus three other tables, a sideboard, 66 chairs (including 20 Windsor chairs and a rush-seated row chair), an easy chair, two mirrors, and two card tables. The rooms reserved for family use were furnished with ten beds, at least three of which had curtains, and a trundle bed. One bed and a press or cupboard were made of mahogany, furniture then considered a luxury item. Also present were three toilet tables, two toilet stands, three chests of drawers, five pine wash stands, and a portable writing desk. There were 12 pair of window curtains, a large clock, six carpets, an assortment of books, and a copy of Bishop James Madison's map, which may have been framed and hanging on a wall. The Eppes household had an abundance of bed and table linens and flatware that would have accommodated two dozen guests. They also had a substantial amount of sterling flatware and service pieces and a box containing old knives and forks. No information is available on the type of china on which the Eppes' guests were served, but they did have specialize serving vessels, such as a tureen and a pitcher, tea china, and an assortment of decanters. A 30 gallon coffee boiler, tea kettles, iron pots, an oven, and other culinary equipment were available for the preparation of food and beverages.

John Wayles Eppes, who spent \$487.76 at the sale, purchased 19 silver teaspoons and 19 tablespoons; two silver tankards; a silver soup ladle; silver sugar tongs; a sideboard; two card tables; a mahogany bedstead; a common bedstead; a trundle bed; two beds with pillows and bolsters; a marble slab; three pair of white sheets and three pair of brown sheets; two pairs of blankets; a lot of bed curtains; three pairs of window curtains; 19 breakfast napkins and 35 towels; 1 bell metal skillet; a gun; a 30-gallon coffee boiler; tea china; nine decanters; a plate basket; four brandy sliders; and a broken set of table china. He also acquired an "old Bible," three books, and a copy of Bishop James Madison's map. Archibald Thweatt and his wife, Lucy, for an expenditure of \$193.00, bought a silver cross; six silver salts; a gold watch; a bed, pillows, bolster, and mattress; two dimity counterpanes; and a pair of blankets. Jerman Baker and his wife, Martha, purchased an easy chair; a bed, pillows, bolsters, six pillow cases, and a mattress; a marble slab; two pair of brown sheets; two counterpanes; a portable writing desk; seven window

curtains; a book called *Blair's Sermons*; and 100 pounds of bacon, all for an expenditure of \$162.50. Miss Matilda Eppes bought a mahogany press; a bedstead and curtains; a dimity counterpane; and a pair of blankets for a total of \$86.00. Her unmarried sister, Sally, acquired a mahogany bureau; a bedstead and curtains; a mattress; a pair of blankets; two counterpanes; two history books (identified as Marshall's *Washington's Life* and Winterbotham's *History of America*); and the family Bible, all for a cost of \$193.00. On November 29, 1810, when the Eppes couple's remaining personal property was exposed to a public sale, John Wayles Eppes purchased 20 Windsor chairs, two toilet stands and two toilet tables, counterpanes, a cradle, some water glasses and goblets, a toddy glass, glass salvers, and a carpet. Archibald Thweatt acquired a set of dining tables, three pine washstands, a flax wheel, three old cotton wheels, some old scythe blades and cradles, a low of plows, and four oxen. Richard N. Thweatt I bought sheets and a bed but no other household furnishings. At that time, neither of the Eppes' unmarried daughters nor their brother-in-law, Jerman Baker, made purchases (Chesterfield County Will Book 9:637-644).

On October 10<sup>th</sup> Eppes family members bought most, if not all, of the older slaves at Eppington, men and women of African descent who were past their prime as workers and therefore required ongoing support. It appears that the purchasers made a conscious effort to keep married couples together although other kinship ties would have been disrupted by the sales that occurred. Archibald Thweatt purchased Old Sampson and his wife, Nancy, whereas John Wayles Eppes acquired Old Jacob, Old Joe and his wife, Mary, and a slave called Sheppard. Jerman Baker bought Old Captain, Little Captain, and Gorn and probably took them to Cumberland County, whereas Richard N. Thweatt I bought Samuel-the-carpenter, Jack, and a slave known as Coachee and probably moved them to Dinwiddie County. William Belcher purchased Billy Fisher and his wife whereas Colonel Pelham Goddin bought Quent and his family. John Robertson bought a slave named Peter, whereas Samuel Moody Sr. bought the man called Order; Robertson and Moody then lived in the Eppington neighborhood (Chesterfield County Will Book 9:637-644).

Jerman Baker bought Francis Eppes VI's bay mare, Dare Devil, and her colt, whereas John Y. Tabb purchased the gray mare called Mary Gray. Historical records show that both had been used as breeding stock. Along with the two mares, the livestock at Eppington was sold. The herd included oxen, mules, sheep, young ewes, a substantial number of beef and dairy cattle, and a couple bulls. Surveyor Willis Pillar, who had surveyed and subdivided the Eppington house tract, bought the Eppes' gig and harness. (Chesterfield County Will Book 9:637-644).

Agriculture products that were sold off during the Eppes estate sale included 4,032 pounds of pork, 206 barrels of corn, seven casks of brandy, plus nine gallons of peach brandy. The presence of a cotton gin and cotton wheels implies that cotton was being raised on the property. The absence of swine is inexplicable, unless all of the family's hogs had been slaughtered and converted to cured pork or disposed of in a separate sale. A notation at the end of the account of Francis Eppes' two part estate sale indicates that it "was made out immediately after the sale on the 29<sup>th</sup> Nov. 1810." The individual recording the items that were sold noted that, "There are some more in addition and including some of the animals" (Chesterfield County Will Book 9:637-644).

The accounts made of the Francis Eppes VI's estate sales, when taken as a whole, reveal much about his household's material culture, a tangible reflection of their socioeconomic status. When Eppes' possessions are grouped categorically, it can be ascertained that his household had use of ten beds (three of which were curtained), plus a trundle bed, a cradle, and four extra

mattresses. The family's linen supply included 17 counterpanes, four pairs of blankets, 14 pairs of sheets, six pillow cases, 35 towels, 31 breakfast napkins (some of which were old), and eight tablecloths. Household furnishings included a portable writing desk, a mahogany press, a sideboard, two card tables, two toilet stands three toilet tables, three chests of drawers, two mirrors, an easy chair, a set of dining tables, 66 chairs (20 of which were Windsor chairs), two old tables, five pine washstands, and a small table. Miscellaneous household furnishings included twelve pairs of window curtains, a "large family clock," seven carpets (three of which were small), an assortment of books, and a copy of Bishop James Madison's map of Virginia.<sup>85</sup>

Silver flatware and serving vessels included 18 teaspoons and 19 tablespoons, two cans or tankards, six silver salts, a soup ladle, a toddy ladle, and sugar tongs. There also were two boxes that held a dozen knives and forks apiece along with a pine box that contained "old knives and forks." Vessels for food service and consumption included tea china, covered cream pots, table china, a plate warmer, glass goblets, brandy snifters, decanters, casters, and other specialized vessels of china or glass. Also present were utilitarian items, such as andirons, candlesticks and snuffers, candle molds, bread trays, and two marble slabs that would have been were for culinary use. (Chesterfield County Will Book 9:637-644).

Many of the datable artifacts that archaeologists recovered during a preliminary survey of Eppington's grounds were associated with Francis and Elizabeth Eppes' residency. Their tableware included creamware or cream-colored earthenware plates, saucers, tea bowls, and serving vessels, a ceramic that was popular in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Among the patterns of creamware that graced the Eppes' dining room table were styles known as Queen's ware and feather-edged ware. One or more members of the household had use of a creamware chamber pot, which would have been considered a luxury item. The Eppes' tableware also included an assortment of pearlware, a ceramic whose glaze had a hint of blue and therefore whiter than creamware, and they had a Chinese porcelain teapot, plates and saucers. Archaeologists from the James River Institute of Archaeology, when working at Eppington, found a fragment of white salt glazed stoneware plate in a basket-weave pattern, a style that was popular from 1720 to 1760 and therefore may have belonged to the Eppes before building their home. Among the other early ceramics that were uncovered at the site were sherds of a scratch-blue chamber pot; and a piece of a black basalt teapot lid. Also present was a substantial quantity of wine bottle glass, along with glass from tumblers and other vessels for beverage consumption and storage (Festler 1994: artifact inventory). In 2001 when archaeologists from the College of William and Mary examined the site that of what had been a schoolhouse and then a kitchen, the domestic artifacts they found included fragments of creamware, an underglazed blue Chinese porcelain plate, a blue hand-painted pearlware bowl, a blue transfer-printed plate, blue and green shell-edged pearlware plates, and glass stemware. Also present were sherds of stoneware and whiteware that would have reflected a somewhat later period of occupancy (Cline and Blanton 2001:8).

### *Eppington During Archibald Thweatt's Ownership*

On October 10, 1810, John Wayles Eppes and his second wife, the former Martha Burke Jones of North Carolina, joined Miss Sally Eppes, Mary and Richard N. Thweatt I, and Martha and Jerman Baker in deeding their legal interests in Mrs. Elizabeth Eppes' "1,000 acres called Eppington" and all of the tract's improvements to Archibald Thweatt of Petersburg, an attorney and the husband of Francis and Elizabeth Eppes' daughter, Lucy. The deed noted that Mrs.

Eppes had died without assigning her land to anyone, with the result that it had reverted to her children (Chesterfield County Deed Book 18:484-488; Order Book 1810-1811:368). By that time, Archibald and Lucy Eppes Thweatt had deeded her interest in Francis Eppes VI's land in Buckingham and Cumberland Counties to John Wayles Eppes in exchange for his interest in their parents' house tract (Chesterfield County Order Book 1805-1807:558). The Thweatts also raised some additional money by selling their 756 acre plantation in Bermuda Hundred, at the junction of the James and Appomattox Rivers. According to an advertisement Thweatt placed in the *Richmond Enquirer* in March and April 1810, the plantation included good wharfage on the James River, 300 acres of good agricultural land, a dwelling and dependencies, and an overseer's house. Thweatt also offered for sale a 500 acre farm on the Appomattox River that adjoined the land of Jerman Baker. Less than two years after Archibald Thweatt acquired the 1,000 acre Eppington house tract, he purchased Lot 3, the 500 acres that had been set aside for Sally Eppes, who had married John W. Lane around 1811. Lot 3, which abutted the Mill Road and part of Winterpock Creek, was located in the eastern part of the 2,500 acre plantation, but was west of Lot 2 and inland behind the 200 acres known as "Old Coxes" that originally had been offered to John Wayles Eppes (*Richmond Enquirer*, April 13, 1810; Chesterfield County Deed Book 19:265-267).

Archibald Thweatt appears to have moved to Eppington during 1810, for Chesterfield County's census-taker listed him as a free white male head of household between the ages of 26 and 44, who had 31 slaves. His wife, Lucy, seems to have stayed behind in Petersburg temporarily, for no one else was attributed to the Thweatt household (Chesterfield County Census 1810). In 1810 Petersburg had nearly 7,000 inhabitants. Within three years' time, Petersburg officials embarked upon a program of improvements. The town's older streets, once described as quagmires, were filled in and paved and efforts were made to build a municipal water system. For a time, Petersburg rivaled Richmond and many people thought that it was likely the region's future metropolis. However, in time, river commerce lost much of its appeal (Reps 1972:222). On March 19, 1811, Lucy wrote to her sister-in-law, Martha Burke Jones Eppes, that her home in Petersburg was very quiet after her family members had left. She expressed her concern about their sister, Matilda, who had been depressed. Lucy indicated that her husband, Archibald, had been away from home a lot and that a Mr. Perkins had continued to visit. Lucy said that she was pleased to hear that Martha had arrived safely at Woodville, in Cumberland County, for she had heard that she had been detained for a day because her carriage had broken down. Lucy expressed her concern about their sister, Sally, who had left hastily and added that she hoped that Joe had reached home safely. Lucy closed her letter by asking Martha to give her affectionate regards to her brother and sisters (<http://tjrs.monticello.org/letter/600>).

In December 1812, Francis Eppes VI's executors sold Archibald Thweatt, who was living at Eppington, an additional tract, the 200 acres called "Old Coxes" that Eppes in 1806 had agreed to sell to his son, John W. Eppes. "Old Coxes" abutted the Appomattox River and the 1,000 acre Eppington tract that Thweatt had purchased in 1810. It also adjoined Lot 3, the 500 acres that Sally Eppes Lane and her husband had sold to Thweatt earlier in the year, and Lot 2, the 500 acres that Mary (Polly) Eppes Thweatt had inherited (Chesterfield County Deed Book 19:538-540). In April 1813 John W. Eppes executed a quitclaim deed in which he relinquished any legal interest he might have in "Old Coxes" and the 500 acre lots that his sisters had been assigned (Chesterfield County Deed Book 19:463; Order Book 1812-1814:481). Through these transactions, Archibald Thweatt came into possession of the 1,000 acre Eppington house tract, Lot 2 (Sally and John W. Lane's 500 acres); and the 200 acres traditionally known as "Old

Coxes.” However, the size of Francis Eppes VI’s Eppington plantation was reduced by 1,000 acres, for Richard N. and Mary (Polly) Thweatt conveyed Lot 2, her 500 acres on the east side of Winterpock Creek and fronting on the Appomattox, to John Robertson and Richard and Matilda Eppes Field sold Lot 1, her 500 acres bordering Winterpock Creek, to Francis Patram and James Moody. As it turned out, Lot 1 reverted to the Fields because Patram and Moody defaulted on their mortgage. Therefore, during July and August 1817 the Field couple, Francis Patram, and James and Peter Moody deeded to Archibald Thweatt their respective interests in 90 acres of Lot 1, noting that the transaction was critical in maintaining the right-of-way to the road that ran from Richmond to Petersburg. Separately, Richard and Matilda Field conveyed to Archibald Thweatt “a small piece of land formerly owned by Francis Eppes of Eppington on the opposite side of the Appomattox River in Amelia County,” that is, the decedent’s mill seat. It was noted that the land in Amelia was supposed to have been encompassed by an earlier deed but had inadvertently been omitted (Chesterfield County Deed Book 21:571, 574, 577, 582, 584).

Real estate tax rolls reflect the transactions Archibald Thweatt made during this period, for in 1813 he was credited with 1,500 acres (the 1,000 acre Eppington house tract plus Sally Eppes Lane’s 500 acre lot) and in 1815 he was credited with the 200 acre tract called “Old Coxes.” Thweatt’s land was described as abutting the Appomattox River and the property of John Robertson, the man who purchased Lot 2 from Richard N. and Mary Eppes Thweatt. Later, the 90 acre parcel that Thweatt had bought from the Fields, Moodys, and Patram was included. Eppington, though somewhat reduced in size, was still one of Chesterfield’s largest plantations and Archibald Thweatt was one of the county’s largest landowners. Although he wasn’t among the county’s wealthiest men, he was a member of the upper middle class (Chesterfield County Land Tax Lists 1810-1824).

It was while Archibald Thweatt was residing at Eppington that he commenced serving as one of Chesterfield County’s two representatives to the General Assembly. He served his first term in 1813 and was returned to office from then until 1818 (Leonard 1976:273, 277, 285, 289). He may have continued practicing law while he was living at Eppington. In July 1817 he was recommended for a judgeship when a vacancy occurred in the Petersburg Circuit Court (Richter and ---- 19--:17). Archibald Thweatt also derived income from raising sheep, some of which were purchased at his late father-in-law’s estate sale in 1810. On December 3, 1815, he sent a letter to a man in Staunton, thanking him for having Thweatt’s wool yarn made into cloth. Thweatt said:

I regret living in a part of the country where we are so backwards in improvements. We have not even a fulling mill within 70 miles of us. Our flocks of sheep have considerably increased and improved. The merino sheep I have raised are superior to those from Spain. They are larger, the wool equally fine and longer. The best shepherds admit that they flourish here better than they do to the north.

I lately compared some of my wool of the  $\frac{3}{4}$  th blood and it was allowed to be equal in quality to the wool of the whole blood directly from old Spain. I could furnish about 200 a year ( $\frac{3}{4}$ ) and should be glad to take broad cloth for my own use and coarse woolens for my negroes in exchange, or to have it all manufactured in[to] good cloth. If the manufacturers would establish agents at Petersburg and Richmond, they might collect immense quantities of wool, merino and common, in exchange for coarse woolens and blankets – provided they would do us justice. Our domestic manufacturers and mechanics are unjust and oppress the planter. They are not content with a reasonable

profit. A bootmaker will ask you for a pair of boots \$16 to \$20 – new leather, shoe thread, provisions and house rent are cheaper here than in any European country, and \$16 would buy materials enough to make eight or ten pair of boots. A saddler asks \$20 to \$25 to \$30 for such a saddle as ten years ago we gave \$8 to \$12 when saddles were imported. Yet the materials for saddles are cheaper in this country than in Europe. I have changed one of my old political opinions. I would only lay duties for the purpose of revenue. If domestic manufacturers cannot, with the raw materials at hand at prime cost free of every duty or tax, undersell the Europeans who are burdened with so many charges, freights, insurance, commissions, duties, etc., the former do not deserve encouragement.

Archibald Thweatt closed by saying:

I should be very glad to present you with a merino ram next summer or fall, if you can find a conveyance. I could lodge him in Richmond, if you have any friend there who would receive him [Thweatt 1815].

Archibald Thweatt, upon moving to Eppington, made some changes to the dwelling's west wing. Like Francis and Elizabeth Wayles, he seems to have preferred a ground floor bedchamber, but he wanted it to be larger. He achieved this by having his carpenters move the bedchamber's western wall toward the west end of the house, thereby reducing the size of the former office or study while taking in part of the entryway. This floorplan preserved the lengthy hallway that extended across the front of the house, providing access to the kitchen yard, and it created a second closet that was parallel to the original closet. (Winger et al. 1995:45-46). The analysis of paint samples reveals that Archibald Thweatt had lime-wash (a mixture of slake lime and water) applied to the walls of the drawing room, but he preserved the color scheme that Francis Eppes VI had chosen around 1798. He had the room's paneling painted blue-gray and continued to have the doors and baseboards painted a glossy deep red-brown. However, he had the color of the mantel shelf changed from a deep red-brown to blue-gray. He also modified the color scheme used in the dining room, for he replaced the tannish-yellow paint that had been used on the paneling, mantel shelf, and cornice with a shade of tan (Buck 2007:42).

On April 22, 1815, Archibald Thweatt insured his buildings at Eppington with the Mutual Assurance Society. The policy he purchased assigned a value of \$3,010 to the manor house, the same value it had had when Francis Eppes VI had insured it in 1806. The house was depicted just as it had been in 1806, when Francis Eppes insured the property. However, the insurance agent noted that Eppington was located between the Appomattox River and William Blankenship's property and there was at least one significant difference between the 1806 and 1815 policies. Eppes' 1806 policy insured two outbuildings that were worth \$220 apiece, a 40 foot by 16 foot wooden schoolhouse that was 17 feet away from the main dwelling and a 40 foot by 16 foot wooden kitchen that was 27 feet from the schoolhouse. Thweatt's 1815 policy, however, cited only a 40 foot by 16 foot kitchen that was 15 feet from the main dwelling and worth \$300. John Kelso, the Mutual Assurance Society's agent, wrote – and then struck out – the words “schoolhouse,” suggesting that the original building's function had modified (Mutual Assurance Society Vol. 39, Policy No. 1336). The new kitchen's increased value suggests that it may have been more elaborate than Eppington's original kitchen as well as the schoolhouse it replaced. By 1815, Archibald and Lucy Eppes Thweatt, who had been married for 13 years and were childless, may have assumed that they weren't going have youngsters to educate.

### *Archibald Thweatt's Connection With Petersburg*

During the early nineteenth century Petersburg suffered from a series of great fires, major conflagrations that inflicted severe damage on the town's buildings, which were primarily wooden. Fires occurred in 1808, 1815, 1819, and 1826. The most devastating fire occurred in 1815 at which time an estimated two-thirds of the town's buildings were destroyed. One contemporary wrote that:

A few days ago the town of Petersburg was prosperous and flourishing – commerce crowded its wharves, a busy population thronged its streets – and new buildings, daily erected, announced its increasing wealth and importance. In one awful night the whole scene was changed; a fire, the most fierce and desolate which has ever afflicted a town in Virginia, has involved the larger portion of our citizen in distress, and reduced many among them to beggary [Scott and Wyatt 1960:57].

Thanks to its annihilation, the town was rebuilt, this time more substantially. An estimated 300 brick buildings reportedly were erected between 1815 and 1817, growth that many observers considered symbolic of the town's tenacity, prosperity, and general vitality (Scott and Wyatt 1960:57-61).

In 1816 a legislative act was passed, enlarging the town of Petersburg and for the first time, the community was allowed to send a representative to the House of Delegates. The enactment of legislation that permitted the town to expand its boundaries was of major consequence to Petersburg's growth and development, for the new territory, which encompassed 1.68 square miles of new territory that lay to the south of the town made it a total of 3.66 square miles in size. A great deal of commercial and industrial expansion occurred within the newly annexed territory. Petersburg's boundaries were to remain fixed for another century. (Scott and Wyatt 1960:63-64). With the growth of Petersburg's population came a desire for improved thoroughfares leading to the town. In 1816 a joint stock company was formed whose investors proposed building a gravel-and-stone surfaced turnpike from Petersburg to Manchester. Although the turnpike was not a financial success, shareholders were allowed to convert their stock into certificates in the Richmond and Petersburg Railroad (Scott and Wyatt 1960:92).

### *Archibald Thweatt as an Agriculturist*

Personal property tax rolls for 1813 include the name of Archibald Thweatt and credit him with 18 slaves over the age of 16, three who were between 12 and 16, and 12 horses, asses, and mules. In 1814 he was the owner of four additional slaves and a four-wheeled carriage that was worth \$230.<sup>86</sup> He, unlike his late father-in-law, was not among the county's wealthiest slaveholders or owners of livestock, but he was firmly ensconced in the ranks of the upper middle class. When Chesterfield County moved into the nineteenth century, the number of small farmers increased and the position of the large landowner gained stability, trends that were accompanied by growth in personal wealth. Because the War of 1812 left the state of Virginia with a substantial amount of debt that General Assembly's members were eager to retire, in 1814 they modified the tax code, making it more comprehensive. Those who owned houses worth \$500 or more were supposed to pay a special tax. Besides the usual taxes on slaves, livestock,

and wheeled vehicles, certain types of personal property, classified as luxury items, was taxable in 1815. Those who owned mahogany or walnut furniture, silver or gold flatware and serving vessels, mirrors or picture frames of a certain size, pianos or harps, or fine timepieces had to pay a special tax, as did the owners of thoroughbred horses they used as studs. Personal property tax lists for 1815 provide us with insights into the material culture of Chesterfield County's wealthier residents, among whom were Archibald and Lucy Eppes Thweatt of Eppington. Archibald was then in possession of two gold watches and several items of gold or silver plate, including an urn, a coffee pot, a tea set, and six candlesticks. He also was credited with two cut-glass pitchers, two portraits in oil and one in crayon, ten pictures that were at least 12 inches wide, and eight engravings that were displayed in gilt frames. Two looking-glasses or mirrors that were 3 feet or larger in size were in the Thweatts' home, along with 14 pieces of mahogany furniture. They included a secretary or desk, a chest of drawers, a sideboard with double drawers, a wardrobe, a four-piece dining-table,<sup>87</sup> two tea tables, two card tables, two bedsteads, a sofa, and two chairs. Also in the Thweatts' possession were a sofa and 12 chairs that were enameled in gold leaf, two carpets that were worth between \$20 and \$30, along with an unspecified number of calico and dimity window curtains. They also had a four-wheeled carriage. Thus, among Chesterfield County households that owned taxable luxury items, Archibald and Lucy Thweatt of Eppington ranked highly. Archibald paid capitation taxes on himself and 15 slaves who were age 16 or older, five slaves who were between 12 and 16, and three who were between 9 and 12. The Thweatts' taxable livestock included 12 horses, asses, and mules plus 32 cattle (Chesterfield County Personal Property Tax Lists 1815).

In 1817 Archibald Thweatt of Chesterfield County was credited with 300 acres of Amelia County land that he had purchased from Robert Cousens (Cousins) Jr. The acreage bordered the Appomattox River and was in the same vicinity as the mill seat to which he had obtained an unencumbered title from Richard and Matilda Eppes Field of Brunswick County in July 1817.<sup>88</sup> On March 1, 1819, the General Assembly authorized Thweatt to erect a mill or mills or "other waterworks" at Eppes Falls on one or both sides of the river, where the waterfall was three feet high. He moved ahead with his project, although it is uncertain how quickly he proceeded. By 1821 Archibald Thweatt had disposed of all but two acres of the land he had bought from Robert Cousens, which suggests that he was obliged to purchase 300 acres in order to obtain the two acres he needed to enlarge his mill seat. Tax records demonstrate that Archibald Thweatt and his heirs were credited with the two acre lot in Amelia for the entire time they owned Eppington. Moreover, in 1862 when Eppington was sold out of the family, the mill seat stayed with the property (Amelia County Land Tax Lists 1817-1862; ; Chesterfield County Deed Book 21:574-577, 584-588; *Richmond Enquirer*, October 1, 1830).

In 1820 the census-taker credited Archibald Thweatt, who was a household head, with two free white males between 26 and 44 (probably Archibald and a farm manager) and two boys who were between one and 10 years of age. Free white females included three who were between 26 and 44, one who was between 16 and 26 and three girls who were between one and 10. The Thweatt household also included 8 enslaved men who were between 26 and 45, 9 who were between 16 and 26, and 14 boys who were under the age of 16. Female slaves included one woman who was over 45, three who were between 26 and 45, four who were between 16 and 26, and six girls who were 16 or younger (Chesterfield County Census 1820). During this period, providing food, clothing, and shelter to 53 people probably was a financial strain for Archibald Thweatt, who was still paying his in-laws for the land he was purchasing. It is likely that the slaves at Eppington subsisted on corn, a little meat, and whatever vegetables they were able to

raise in their own gardens. Personal Property Tax Lists for 1820 credit Archibald Thweatt with 23 slaves who were age 16 or older and two who were between 12 and 16. He also paid taxes on 14 horses, asses, and mules, and two wheeled vehicles, including a carriage that was worth \$400 (Chesterfield County Personal Property Tax Lists 1820).

In 1820 when Virginia's tax assessors commenced including in their estimates the aggregate value of the habitable improvements that stood upon each landowner's property, he noted that Archibald Thweatt's 1,455 acres in Chesterfield County contained buildings whose collective worth was \$3,500.<sup>89</sup> That value, which may represent only half of Thweatt's buildings' fair market value, placed him in the top 10 percent of Chesterfield County property owners. In 1820 Thweatt was credited with the 90 acres he had bought from the Fields, Moodys, and Patram in 1817, land that was undeveloped. Significantly, tax records for 1824 indicate that \$1,000 worth of buildings on Eppington's core acreage had been destroyed by fire, leaving him with structures that were worth only \$2,500. As there is no physical evidence that the Eppington mansion sustained significant damage, the burned buildings may have been elsewhere on the property, perhaps on Lot 3 or on the 200 acres known as "Old Coxes." This raises the possibility that there had been a secondary domestic complex somewhere on the plantation, most likely a building or buildings that were occupied by a farm manager or tenant. On the other hand, it may have been around this time that some of Eppington's outbuildings were destroyed (Chesterfield County Land Tax Lists 1810-1824). Even though some of Archibald Thweatt's buildings were destroyed, the structural improvements on his property continued to earn him a place among the county's elite. In 1820 when cartographer John Wood (1820) made a map of Chesterfield County, he showed the River Road prominently. That road and the one utilizing Bevil's Bridge also were emphasized by Wood's successor, Herman Böye (1826).

By 1821 the quantity of land under Archibald Thweatt's control had declined to 1,458 acres and he began swapping small parcels with some of his neighbors. He acquired 11 3/8 acres from John Robertson, whose land was on the east and formerly had been part of Eppington, in exchange for 6 7/8 acres; both men previously agreed to give each other the right to use an old road that was in the immediate vicinity of their common boundary line (Chesterfield County Deed Book 24:224, 536). In 1825 Thweatt conveyed 5 1/4 acres to William Blankenship, his neighbor to the west, from whom he acquire 16 7/8 acres (Chesterfield County Deed Book 25:598). Having made these adjustments in his boundary lines, Archibald Thweatt's Eppington property was defined as an aggregate of 1,462 acres. During the early 1830s, however, he sold 3 1/2 acres to William Blankenship from whom he bought 9 acres, and he deeded 2 1/4 acres to John R. Walke, who had come into possession of John Robertson's farm. In 1833 he bought 20 1/3 acres from Walke, which gave him a total of 1,486 acres in all (Chesterfield County Deed Book 28:634; 29:155). These transactions consolidated Thweatt's holdings while eliminating some acreage that was separated from Eppington by a new road that Benjamin Moody had opened. Archibald Thweatt was obliged to borrow money to finance his various purchases and in 1825 he and his wife, Lucy, deeded Eppington to his brother, Thomas Thweatt, as his trustee. Thomas, in turn, gave Archibald an undivided interest in the plantation. This legal maneuver was done to eliminate Lucy's dower interest in the property and would have enabled Archibald to use Eppington as collateral when seeking a loan (Chesterfield County Deed Book 26:188).<sup>90</sup> Eppington was defined as 1,486 acres for the remainder of Archibald and Lucy Eppes Thweatt's lives. Between 1839 and 1840, the value of the buildings on the Thweatts' property rose from \$2,500 to \$2,972. The county assessor failed to offer an explanation for the increase and the change in the Thweatts' assessment does not appear to be part of a countywide revision in the tax

base (Chesterfield County Land Tax Lists 1821-1860). Perhaps an overseer's house was erected on the property or some additional outbuildings.

During the 1820s Archibald Thweatt paid taxes on 25 to 35 slaves and the size of his herd of taxable livestock remained relatively constant at slightly more than a dozen animals. He retained his gig and riding carriage but does not appear to have enhanced his taxable personal property during this period (Chesterfield County Personal Property Tax Lists 1821-1829). In 1830 the census-taker listed Archibald Thweatt as the head of a household that included a free white male who was between 50 and 60 years old (presumably Archibald) and two more males who were between 20 and 30. Free white females consisted of one who was between 40 and 50 (likely Lucy) and another who was between 20 and 30. Although the older couple almost certainly was Archibald and Lucy, the identity of the three younger adults is uncertain. The Thweatt household in its entirety had 54 members, 49 of whom were black. There were two black men and two black women who were between 55 and 100 years of age. Perhaps purposefully, the Thweatts' enslaved men of prime working age outnumbered comparably aged women by a ratio of two or three to one, for there were seven men and two women who were between 36 and 55 and eleven men and three women who were between 24 and 36. However, among those under the age of 24, there were nearly as many females as males (Chesterfield County Census 1830).

In 1830 the county tax assessor credited Archibald Thweatt with 30 slaves who were age 12 or older and therefore taxable; they comprised 61 percent of his 49 slaves. Archibald also had 12 horses, asses, and mules and he was taxed upon a gig and a four-wheeled carriage, both of which were considered luxury items. During the 1830s the number of slaves upon whom Archibald Thweatt paid taxes remained relatively constant and the size of his livestock herd fluctuated slightly but reflected very little change (Chesterfield County Personal Property Tax Lists 1830-1839). Although slave ownership among Chesterfield County householders increased slowly but steadily during the first two decades of the nineteenth century, ultimately reaching an all-time high of 80 to 90 percent, that number began to decline during the 1830s and 1840s and it continued to diminish up until the time of the Civil War. This trend most likely reflects the decline in the cultivation of tobacco, a labor intensive crop (McCartney 1988).

### ***Edmund Ruffin's Influence upon Virginia Agriculture***

Traditionally, Virginians gave relatively little attention to soil maintenance and improvement, with the result that much of the state's farmland was depleted of its nutrients, lessening productivity. Although eastern Virginia farmers experienced hard times during the early nineteenth century, economic conditions improved once they learned that marl could be used to restore the fertility of soil acidified by the long-term production of tobacco. This important discovery usually is attributed to Edmund Ruffin, who tested soil samples and discovered that abandoned fields covered with second-growth pine could be made productive if marl or "calcareous earth" were applied. Once the soil's acidity was neutralized, manure and vegetable waste could be added as fertilizer. Ruffin also studied crop rotation, drained overly moist fields, and penned his livestock in order to obtain a supply of manure. His essays on scientific farming were published in the *Farmer's Register*. Some farmers sent letters to newspapers, sharing the results of their own agricultural experiments. Thanks to advances in scientific farming, by the 1830s small and middling farmers throughout Virginia had been able to improve their standard of living. Increasing numbers of people switched to a mixed crop system

and grains became an important part of the local economy. Most rural households raised sweet and Irish potatoes, peas, and beans and a substantial number of farmers raised beef and dairy cattle, sheep, hogs, and poultry. These changes, fueled by readily available waterborne transportation, strengthened Mathews County's economy. In 1831 the mowing machine replaced the labor-intensive process of hand-cutting hay and then during the 1840s the grain reaper came on the market. Edmund Ruffin reported in 1842 that farm income had increased by hundreds of thousands of dollars and that Tidewater land values had risen significantly. He attributed much of that economic progress to advances in agricultural technology, such as improved equipment to till the soil. By the mid-nineteenth century, progressive farmers eagerly embraced improvements as soon as they came along.

By the mid-nineteenth century, improved agricultural techniques and reduction in farm size led to a revitalization of Virginia's agricultural economy. The cultivation of tobacco gradually yielded to the production of grain crops and the adoption of more sophisticated farming techniques, such as the use of marl to restore soil that had been acidified by the long-term production of tobacco and erosion, became common. Crop diversification also offset overdependence upon a single crop's success. By the time of the Civil War, a mixed-crop system of agriculture predominated in Virginia, with wheat and corn followed in importance by potatoes. Cattle production for both beef and dairy products and other forms of animal husbandry also became increasingly popular (Bruce 1932:12).

### *Insights into Life at Eppington and the Eppes Family*

On January 26, 1820, Lucy Eppes Thweatt sent a letter to her sister-in-law Martha Burke Jones Eppes, giving her an update on life at Eppington. She said that she and her husband had been planning for some time to visit Millbrook but that various sets of circumstances had prevented it. She said that the most serious issue was Archibald Thweatt's breaking his leg, which "has frequently pained, swelled, & confined him to the House this winter." In addition, he "has had several attacks of Ruematism [sic]. Lucy said that she was extremely disappointed that they were unable to visit and promised to write frequently in the future. She said that she was "almost sorry we heard of your thriving situation for my impudent Husband very often says it is an evidence of Brothers doing well." He also said that "he thinks after so much bad weather the trip would be impracticable." Lucy pointed out that it had been "more than five years since you were at Eppington" and said that "my Brother mentions he shall turn out with the Frogs," that is, when warmer weather comes. She expressed great fondness for the Eppes couple's children, whom she missed. In a less generous tone, Lucy added that "You will scarce believe me when I tell you I have had a visit from Mrs. P. Randolph – cold civility was even irksome to practice towards her – we are told she will very soon be fixed at Winterpock. I hope however she will remain in Richmond for I assure you our neighbourhood has become sufficiently stilish [sic] without her Ladyship." Lucy closed by saying that Mary Johnson, a schoolgirl, had learned to play "a handsome instrument Mr. Thweatt says it is an agreeable change from the cry of the Owl & whipowill – and at least reminds him of town." (<http://tjrs.monticello.org/letter/841>).

Later in the year, Martha Bolling Eppes Baker, whose husband, Jerman, had just become the Commonwealth of Virginia's treasurer, sent a letter of apology to John Wayles Eppes. Although the nature of her husband's offense is unclear, it appears that Jerman Baker had written to Eppes, requesting that he repay a debt. Martha said that all of her children had been ill and that she had heard that her sister, Sally Eppes Lane, the wife of John W. Lane, was ill and had little hope of recovery. John Wayles Eppes seems to have been having some medical problems

of his own, for Martha made reference to his suffering from a persistent headache (<http://tjrs.monticello.org/letter/846>). On March 30, 1820, Martha Bolling Eppes Baker sent word to Martha Burke Jones Eppes that she had heard from her sister, Sally Eppes Lane, who had recently given birth. She added that Sally's husband was very ill and not expected to live much longer.<sup>91</sup> At the end of her letter she shared news that she had received from various family members. She indicated that her husband was spending a great deal of time in Richmond on account of his new responsibilities.<sup>92</sup> By June, she herself had moved to the state capital. In a June 7<sup>th</sup> letter she said that there were a great many parties in Richmond but that she had attended only one and "the Fayet Ball" although her husband loved parties and relished attending them. Martha, who apologized for her poor penmanship, said that she had acquired a pew in the Monumental Church although she was not fond of the Bishop's preaching and that she went to church every Sunday and took along her children. She indicated that some of their servants had whooping cough and that she was hoping that it was not going to spread through the family (<http://tjrs.monticello.org/letter/851>; [letter/858](http://tjrs.monticello.org/letter/858); Kneebone 1998:I:292-293). Martha Bolling Eppes Baker sent another letter to Martha Burke Jones Eppes on October 5, 1820. She was still in Richmond and said that every member of her household, except herself, had been "sick with the ague & fever." She said that "Mr. A. Thweatt has been here. They are all well, Mr. T. was in fine spirits." She indicated that he had told her that she "had no business to leave Cannons [Kennons] and that the money I spent here would make one of my children quite rich at Cannons." She responded by telling him that her living at Kennons during the summer entitled her to being in Richmond during the winter and added that "he is as fond of giving advice as ever." She said that she would be very glad when her husband was tired of going back and forth between two houses. Again, she apologized for her poor handwriting and said that she was writing by candlelight (<http://tjrs.monticello.org/letter/869>).

Tragedy struck the Eppes family twice in five years' time. John Wayles Eppes of Buckingham County, whose health was failing, made his will on May 5, 1823, bequeathing his real and personal estate to his beloved wife, Martha Burke Jones Eppes. He named her and his eldest son, Francis, and a friend from North Carolina as his executors. He died on September 5, 1823, at age 50 (<http://tjrs.monticello.org/letter/958>). Then, in early April 1828 State Treasurer Jerman Baker, who was discovered to have been embezzling state funds to cover his numerous real estate purchases, committed suicide at his home in Richmond. According to a newspaper article that appeared on the night of April 8<sup>th</sup>, the day after his malfeasance had come to light, he tried to hang himself but was discovered by his wife, the former Martha Bolling Eppes, shortly before he had died. A physician tried unsuccessfully to revive him. Later, it was learned that he had written a farewell letter to his family and to one of his old acquaintances, begging for forgiveness. He requested to be buried unshrouded in a pine coffin and asked that he be laid to rest in Chesterfield County. It was determined that Baker had misappropriated approximately \$25,000 from the state treasury. Later he was found to have \$8,000 to \$9,000 of debt (*Richmond Examiner*, April 8, 1828).

A few months after her husband's death, Martha Bolling Eppes Baker sent two of her children to Eppington to stay with Lucy and Archibald Thweatt. On October 21, Lucy asked her sister to make a personal visit and to bring the rest of her children along. She said that she was sending Martha some pamphlets that she hoped would be entertaining but also "edify a mind disposed to dwell too much on the troubles of this World." She closed her letter by saying "God bless you my dear Sister & restore you to happiness" (<http://tjrs/monticello.org/letter/1057>).

### *The Construction of Internal Improvements*

As early as 1816 a joint stock company was formed whose investors proposed to build a turnpike from Petersburg to Manchester. The road was to be 30 feet wide and surfaced with gravel and stone. Although the turnpike project was not a financial success, shareholders were allowed to convert their stock into certificates in the Richmond and Petersburg Railroad (Scott and Wyatt 1960:92).

On October 1, 1830, Archibald Thweatt posted a notice in the *Richmond Enquirer*, stating that when the General Assembly reconvened, he intended to present a petition, asking for the amendment of an act passed in 1819 concerning the Appomattox River Mills at the Eppington Falls in Chesterfield and Amelia Counties. He said that he intended to propose that wing-dams, lateral dams, canals, or other improvements be erected that would circumvent the falls, which were three feet high and “the most perilous falls on this river.” He pointed out that numerous boats had been wrecked at the site, their cargoes lost, and boatmen seriously injured. He added that he would have expected that the Appomattox River Navigation Company to build a dam and locks or at least to collaborate with him in making those improvements. He also said that during dry seasons, his mill was inoperable and that if the navigation company would work with him, he would be willing to make his rock, wood, and other materials available to them and he noted that there was a road on each side of the falls. Thweatt reiterated his offer in public notices that were published on October 5<sup>th</sup>, November 6<sup>th</sup>, and November 12<sup>th</sup>. He initiated his proposal around the time that engineer John Couty undertook major improvements of the Upper Appomattox River Navigation. He saw that an additional 3 ½ miles of canal were built and 13 more locks. Portions of the Upper Appomattox River Navigation were still in use in the 1890s. (Richmond Enquirer, October 1, 1830; November 6, 1830; November 12, 1830; Trout 1967:1-22).

In September 1831 some residents of Amelia and Chesterfield Counties proposed that a new road and a new bridge be built across the Appomattox River in the lower part of Amelia County. Archibald Thweatt and several others filed a counter-petition, objecting to the proposed project, recommending instead that a bridge be built at the Exeter Mills, which were midway between Petersburg and Bevil’s Bridge. They also said that the matter had been investigated by a group of special commissioners, who had agreed that the proposed site was unsuitable. The petitioners, probably following Archibald Thweatt’s lead, noted that the proposed road’s right-of-way, which was “near the confluence of Winterpock Creek and the River in Chesterfield,” was impractical “on account of the low grounds” which were subject to flooding. They went on to say that the proposed road’s trajectory crossed “Winterpock Creek a few yards above the junction of Buckhorn Branch, to which the back-water of the River flows in Freshes.” They added that “it passed by the Old Mill on the Branch, near the Creek, formerly Francis Eppes’, afterward Childers” and then went “across the bed of the old mill pond, besides the bridge and causeway on each side of the creek.” They pointed out that a great deal of ditching and bridging would be required along with the construction of a causeway (*Richmond Enquirer*, November 29, 1831; December 6, 1831. The petitioners’ viewpoint prevailed, at least for a while, for the proposed road and bridge don’t seem to have been built for another decade or so.

In March 1840 Archibald Thweatt, in exchange for \$200, agreed to allow the Upper Appomattox Company to use as much of his land on each side of the Appomattox River as was needed “for the safe construction of a dam and lock.” Company officials acknowledged that Thweatt possessed land “opposite and adjoining to Eppes’s sometimes called the ‘Eppington

Falls' in the River and he owns in fee simple the Eppington land and plantation in Chesterfield, situated on the Appomattox River, opposite to the falls, extending several miles on the River above and below the falls, with a large body of low grounds." In addition to the funds he received, Thweatt reserved the mill seat, sites for other waterworks, water power on both sides of the river, and water power furnished by the dam. He agreed not to impair navigation and to leave sufficient water. The Upper Appomattox Company acknowledged that it intended "with all Convenient dispatch, to erect and construct a Dam across the River, abutting Thweatt's lands on each side of the river, at, near above, or in the falls, with a sufficient Lock, for the safe passage of Boats, whereby sites for mills and other water works, with the requisite machinery by water power will be and may be afforded on both sides." (Richter and --- p. 23).

It was during 1831 that Chesterfield County's first railroad was built, the second commercial rail line constructed in America. It was a mule-and-gravity powered line that was 13 miles long and connected the Midlothian coal mines with wharves at Manchester. Within a relatively short time, that primitive railway was supplanted by the Richmond and Danville Railroad. Meanwhile, the Richmond and Petersburg Railroad, chartered in 1836, began operating in the eastern half of the county. By 1840 the Winterpock Railroad had been chartered to haul coal from southwestern Chesterfield's mining district to the Appomattox River. However, before it could be built, the Clover Hill Coal Mining Company, whose facilities were not far from Eppington, built a rail line to Chester Station, preempting the Winterpock Railroad project. The Clover Hill Railroad was in operation by 1844 and covered a distance of 18 miles. It was during the second quarter of the nineteenth century that Chesterfield County's coal mines reached the pinnacle of their importance, thanks to modernized production techniques. Industrial development in the northern United States provided good markets for Chesterfield coal, as did local manufactories (O'Dell 18:473-474; Crozet 1835-1841; Hotchkiss 1848). Coal was mined on a portion of the Eppington property (Virginia Department of Historic Resources, Site No. 44CF0507).

In 1840 Archibald Thweatt embarked upon a business venture that involved the Upper Appomattox Company, which planned to build a canal parallel to the Appomattox River in order to open more of the state's interior to waterborne commerce. He deeded to the company only as much land as was need to construct a dam's abutments and a lock and he agreed for the company to take from his land as much dirt and gravel as was required to construct the dam. His deed to the company noted that he then held fee simple ownership of 2 ½ acres of land in Amelia County "opposite Epps or Eppington Falls" as well as the Eppington plantation in Chesterfield County, which extended "several miles on the river above and below the falls with a large body of low grounds." The canal company acknowledged that it intended "for the improvement of the navigation at and above the falls . . . to erect and construct a dam across the river abutting Thweatt's land on each side of the river, at or near above the falls, with a sufficient lock for the safe passage of boats." The agreement noted that "sites for mills and other waterworks with the requisite machinery by waterpower may be afforded on both sides of the river on Thweatt's land" and that the dam would only be constructed high enough "to give a rise of water on the common low watermark near the first fall – 18 inches at most," enabling Thweatt to retain waterpower on both sides of the river (Chesterfield County Deed Book 32:460). This project would have enhanced Thweatt's potential to derive additional income from his property at Eppington and in Amelia. In 1997 archaeologists identified evidence of the canal, which passed along the upper side of the Appomattox River, to the southeast of the Eppington mansion (Virginia Department of Historic Resources, Site No. 44CF0192).

### *Eppington in the Mid-Nineteenth Century*

When the census-taker visited Eppington in 1840, he noted that Archibald Thweatt was a free white male household head between 60 and 70 years of age who shared his home with a free white female between 50 and 60 (presumably Lucy), and a younger white woman between 20 and 30 whose identity is unknown. Thweatt's male slaves included a man who was between 55 and 100, six who were between 36 and 55, nine who were between 24 and 36, 10 who were between 10 and 24, and three boys who were under the age of 10. He had only three female slaves who were age 24 or older, but eight who were younger. Of the 42 members of Archibald Thweatt's household, 24 were "employed in agriculture" (Chesterfield County Census 1840). The preponderance of black males of prime working age may reflect a deliberate policy of selecting slaves on the basis of their age and gender. Personal property tax rolls for the year credited Thweatt with 29 slaves who were age 12 or older, 13 horses, asses, and mules, and two wheeled vehicles. During the early 1840s, when tax assessment criteria were expanded to include more items, Archibald Thweatt was taxed upon two watches (one of gold and one of silver), \$350 worth of gold and silver plate, a metallic clock, and a four-wheeled carriage (Chesterfield County Personal Property Tax Lists 1840-1844). He was then among the 17 percent of Chesterfield County householders who owned clocks and the 30 percent who had watches. Although he was one of the county's slaveholders, eighty percent or more of Chesterfield's household heads were making use of slave labor. Thweatt's possession of more than a dozen horses, asses, and mules at a time when 80 to 90 percent of local had ten or fewer animals indicates that his investment in livestock was substantial (McCartney 1988).

Bonds of lifelong friendship seem to have linked Archibald and Lucy Eppes Thweatt to Richard N. and Mary (Polly) Eppes Thweatt, who were his brother and her sister. When Richard N. Thweatt I, who was 55 years old, died suddenly on May 13, 1835, after a long illness, it was Archibald who assisted his widow, Mary, in settling his estate and performing an appraisal. By October 1835, another Thweatt brother, Thomas Thweatt, who had been out west, began assisting her (Chesterfield County Will Book 13:385; *Richmond Enquirer*, May 19, 1835; July 7, 1835; October 6, 1835).<sup>93</sup> Lucy and Archibald Thweatt were childless and the other Thweatt couple's children seem to have fulfilled a void in their lives. In October 1836 when Archibald Thweatt made his will, he named his nephew, Richard N. Thweatt II, as his ultimate heir but said that he wanted his estate, in its entirety, to remain intact until the death of his "beloved wife Lucy." Specifically, he left her life rights to all of his real estate and absolute ownership of all their household and kitchen furniture, watches, clocks, books, apparel, riding-carriages, wagons, carts, agricultural equipment, crops, livestock, bank stock, cash-on-hand, debts, and any other items he had not specifically bequeathed to someone else. He also bequeathed her a number of slaves, including three men with special skills: Carpenter Sam, Blacksmith Billy, and Charles "the Striker."<sup>94</sup> In addition, she was to inherit slaves named Henry, Jack, Jasper, White, James, Bob (James's son), Dianna, Dianna's children (James, Harry, Burwell, Austin, Edy, and Martha) and the future increase of the female slaves after Archibald's death. This would have given Lucy outright ownership of these slaves, who became part of her personal estate. Lucy had the right to sell any of the slaves that were part of her late husband's estate, exchanging them for others or investing the proceeds in a safe security or public stock. The testator bestowed upon his nephew, Richard N. Thweatt II, the rest of his slaves and any investments that were left after Lucy's death. Another nephew, R. Hadder Meade, was supposed to receive Archibald's law library.

Archibald Thweatt stated that upon the death of his wife, Lucy, his “Appomattox and Winterpock lands in this county, about 1500 good acres, water for mill or other waterworks at Eppes falls, Appomattox River, with two and one-half acres of land opposite to the falls in Amelia County,” along with a perpetual right-of-way, were to go to his nephew, Richard N. Thweatt II, if he were to relinquish to his six sisters (Eliza Francis, Mary Eppes, Matilda, Cornelia W., Louisa, and Julia) his personal share of the lands he had (or would) inherit from his own parents. Archibald said that young Richard, under the terms of his father’s will, could not take possession of the property in which his mother had life-rights and he noted that she (the former Mary Eppes) was younger than his own wife, Lucy.<sup>95</sup> He also pointed out that the acreage he was offering Richard II was worth more than three times his share of his father’s estate, Mantua.<sup>96</sup> In the event that Mrs. Mary Eppes Thweatt happened to outlive her son, Richard II, she was to inherit Eppington and Archibald’s other real and personal property. He stated that “being attached to my negroes I thought I would afford them the best possible chance of remaining together.”<sup>97</sup> He closed his will by appointing his wife as his executrix and he authorized her to rent out his property if she “should find it too disagreeable to manage such an estate.” He also specified that no appraisal of his estate was to be made. In May 1837 Archibald Thweatt added a codicil to his will, acknowledging that he had borrowed \$1,000 from Mrs. Mary Thweatt in 1831 and that he had used his land as collateral when securing that loan. Archibald’s will and its codicil were presented for probate on September 7, 1844. At that time, his widow, Lucy, as executrix, posted a bond and agreed to make an inventory of his estate (Chesterfield County Will Book 16:270-271, 273). However, in accord with the specifications in Archibald Thweatt’s will, no inventory was made.

After Archibald Thweatt’s death on August 14, 1844, his widow, Lucy, stayed on at Eppington. She reportedly had tombstones erected to mark the graves of her late husband and her mother, who had died 35 years earlier. In 1845 the county tax assessor noted that the 1,486 acre plantation had been transferred to Lucy for life. The value of the tract’s improvements remained constant at \$2,977 and Lucy Thweatt’s acreage was said to abut that of William Gregory. In 1851 the assessed value of Eppington’s improvements rose to \$3,000, seemingly a reflection of an overall adjustment in the county’s tax base (Chesterfield County Land Tax Lists 1845-1860). During this same period, Lucy paid personal property taxes on 25 to 30 slaves who were age 12 or older and she retained the watch, clock, silver plate and wheeled vehicles upon which her late husband had been taxed. Although she paid no poll tax on free white male household members, census records for 1850 reveal that she had in her employ Richard Maxey, a white male farm manager, who apparently paid his own taxes (Chesterfield County Personal Property Tax Lists 1845-1850; Census 1850).

When census records for 1850, which are relatively detailed, are viewed in light of agricultural census data,<sup>98</sup> a relatively complete picture emerges of life on Eppington plantation. In 1850 Lucy Eppes Thweatt was described as a 65-year-old white female who owned \$12,000 worth of real estate. Her household also included 30-year-old Richard Maxey, her farm manager, who possessed neither real estate nor taxable personal property (Chesterfield County Census 1850). The census-taker failed to include any other information about either of them. Mrs. Thweatt had 43 slaves, 21 males and 22 females, all of whom were described as black.<sup>99</sup> The male slaves in the household included nine who were in their 20s, eight who were in their 30s, and four who were in their 40s. There were only four males who were age 10 or less. Female slaves included 11 girls who were age 10 or under, five 10-year-old girls, three young

women who were between 17 and 19, one woman who was in her mid-30s, and two women who were age 40 (Chesterfield County Slave Schedules 1850).

In 1850 Mrs. Lucy Thweatt reported that during the preceding year, 600 acres of her farm were “improved” or under the plough and 886 acres were fallow or forested. The cash value of her farm, which was in Chesterfield County’s Upper District, was \$8,000 and she had on hand at least \$200 worth of farming equipment, an investment slightly less than that of her near-neighbor, John R. Walke, who occupied acreage that originally had been part of Eppington. Mrs. Thweatt’s livestock, which was worth \$1,200, consisted of five horses, five asses and mules, eight milk cows, eight working oxen, six other cattle, 50 sheep, and 40 swine. The crops that were produced at Eppington during 1849 included 1,000 bushels of wheat; 1,700 bushels of corn; 250 bushels of oats; 4,500 pounds of tobacco; and 25 bushels of Irish potatoes. Her sheep had yielded 200 pounds of wool and her milk cows had produced 100 pounds of butter. Eppington and John R. Walke’s farm were two of the most productive properties in Chesterfield County’s Upper District. Mantua, which belonged to Lucy’s sister, Mary Eppes Thweatt, also had a relatively high yield (Chesterfield Agricultural Census 1850). The crops produced on all three of these farms were common to their district, but the farms’ owners had made a greater investment in agricultural equipment.

Lucy Thweatt’s late husband, Archibald, whose business acumen reflects his intelligence, seems to have been an enlightened farmer who took advantage of the latest developments in agronomy. Such men tended to join agricultural societies and farmers clubs, which published journals, held fairs, and promoted progress and reform. By 1817 Virginia farmers had begun putting aside the primitive trowel-hoe or fluke-hoe plough in favor of more modern ones that would go deeper into the soil. Archibald Thweatt most likely took advantage of such modernizing changes, which were beginning to become popular around the time that he bought Eppington. Advances in scientific farming moved along at a brisk pace during the first and second quarters of the nineteenth century and land values rose slowly but steadily. This trend becomes evident in Chesterfield around 1845. A reference to the Thweatt couple’s owning more than one wheat (threshing) machine attests to their use of modern technology (Bruce 1932:12; Turner 1952:80-81).

An examination of Chesterfield County’s agricultural census records for 1850 reveals that the Upper and Lower Districts of the county were beginning to emerge along different lines, economically. However, in both districts almost all farmers kept some livestock. Horses outnumbered asses and mules and there were far more milk cows than working oxen. Likewise, farmers were four times more likely to own swine than they were to raise sheep. The cultivation of tobacco was much more common in the Upper District of the county, where Eppington was located, than it was in the Lower one. Relatively few farmers raised rye or orchard products and only rarely did individuals in the Upper District, in the westernmost part of the county, raise garden crops for sale in urban markets. Farmers in Lucy Thweatt’s district also tended to grow more wheat and hay than did those in the Lower District. These regional trends suggest that farm families of the Upper District were more likely to raise tobacco and wheat, which were highly saleable commodities in Petersburg and Richmond, where there were flourmills and tobacco factories. Those living in the Upper District, where the coal mining industry was well established, also would have had a greater opportunity to earn disposable income. In contrast, those who lived in the Lower District tended to emphasize raising livestock and growing crops for subsistence and for sale in urban markets (McCartney 1988).

Emmett B. Fields, who studied agricultural trends in ten Virginia counties, observed that the number of slaveholding farmers in Virginia's coastal plain declined in the decade immediately prior to the Civil War. He found that while the number of planters who owned fewer than 20 slaves declined, those who possessed 20 or more slaves maintained or even increased the number of blacks under their control. He also noted that farmers who owned 500 or more acres were far more likely to have large numbers of slaves (Fields 1953:148, 154). Personal property tax roll listings for Lucy Thweatt during the years 1850-1860, which indicate that she owned upwards of 20 adult slaves whose number increased, reflect the trend described by Fields.

On December 20, 1858, Mrs. Lucy Thweatt of Eppington., who may have been in failing health, prepared her will. Perhaps the death of 6-month-old Louise Thweatt Haskins on September 11, 1858, reminded Lucy of her own mortality and impelled her to make her will.<sup>100</sup> She bequeathed her \$4,000 worth of bank and state stock to her sister, Matilda, but added that, "I feel the same affection for my sister Polly [Mary Eppes Thweatt] but as she needs not and her son [Richard N. Thweatt II] heirs the whole property of my beloved and ever to be lamented husband I desire not to make another division of so little." She also left to her sister, Matilda, three slaves (White, Bob, Jack, and Peter) and her silver, which she described as a cross, a tea service, three dozen spoons, and two mugs.<sup>101</sup> In addition, Matilda was to receive their parents' portraits, their grandmother's book press, Lucy's bureau, wardrobe, parlor chairs, large easy chair, and sideboard. Lucy also wanted Matilda to have her family Bible and three books on religion: *Melvin's* and *Radell's Sermons* and *Melvin's Lectures*. Lucy Thweatt said that since her "bereavement and great affliction," she had "experienced from my nephew, John W. Lane,<sup>102</sup> the kindness and affection of a child. Would that I could repay it, but my fervent prayer is that God may reward him." Although another nephew, Richard N. Thweatt II, was Lucy's late husband's reversionary heir, she was able to leave John W. Lane Jr. several of the slaves she owned outright: Blacksmith Billy, Harry, Burwell, Austin, Amy and her children, and Eadith and her children. She also left him her dining-table and chairs and expressed her desire that John and his aunt Matilda, who also was an heir, divide and share the rest of her personal belongings. John W. Lane Jr. was to receive Lucy's riding-carriage and harness and he and Richard N. Thweatt II were to share equally all of the cows, sheep, and mules that were at Eppington. Thweatt, however, was to have "the superior wheat machine and all of the plantation utensils left with the house" (Chesterfield County Will Book 22:322-323).

Lucy Eppes Thweatt bequeathed to her niece, Mary Eppes Berkeley, the wife of the Rev. Parke Farley Berkeley, a secretary and the books it contained plus a slave named Carpenter-Sam and his tools.<sup>103</sup> She also left two slaves to Mrs. Berkeley's daughter, Lucy, Carpenter-Sam's daughter, Sarah.<sup>104</sup> She named her two nephews as her executors and instructed them to allow her slave, Henry, to choose his home and she said that he was not to be separated from his wife, Diane, and son, Joseph. She commented that "He will be found valuable to anyone that will treat him kindly." Lucy closed her will by expressing "one wish of my heart – I request that my two nephews, John Lane and Richard N. Thweatt [II], will perform their promise to me of having the graveyard substantially enclosed."<sup>105</sup> She said that she owed no debts other than for a few supplies that she had bought recently and added that "My nephew, John W. Lane, will not [allow] one dollar be left unpaid." At the close of her will, Lucy Eppes Thweatt appointed nephews John W. Lane Jr. and Richard N. Thweatt II as her executors and specified that no appraisal was to be made of her estate. She died on February 20, 1860, and her last will and testament was presented in court on March 12, 1860. Although no witnesses had been present

when Lucy signed her will, two respected neighbors, James H. Cox, a coal mine owner from Clover Hill, and William E. Blankenship of Edgefield,<sup>106</sup> who indicated that they were well acquainted with her handwriting, attested to its authenticity (Chesterfield County Will Book 22:322-323; O'Dell 1983:273, 291).<sup>107</sup> An index to Chesterfield County's probate records indicates that Mrs. Lucy Thweatt's inventory was entered into the county's record books, but it was not. Rather, the inventory that the index attributes to Lucy is, in fact, associated with the estate of her sister, Mary Eppes Thweatt, who died at Mantua on April 24, 1860.<sup>108</sup> Lucy Eppes Thweatt apparently died prior to the time the census-taker made his rounds in 1860.

Because Archibald and Lucy Eppes Thweatt instructed their executors not to conduct an appraisal of their estates, fragments of ceramic vessels found at Eppington, which date to the years of the couple's occupancy include Chinese porcelain and sherds of pearlware in a variety of motifs, including blue and green-rimmed plates, bowls and saucers and transfer-printed, polychrome, and spongeware vessels. Also found on the premises were pieces of brown stoneware, American blue and gray stoneware, yellow ware, and white ware (Cline and Blanton 2001:8).

### *Petersburg at Mid-Century*

In 1850 Petersburg was officially incorporated as a city. It was around that time that Petersburg residents and those who lived in the surrounding counties became interested in the construction of plank roads. However, the wood-surfaced roads proved to be short-lived, for their planks rotted, weighty teams of draft animals destroyed the planking, and rain set the boards afloat. In 1858 a Petersburg newspaper stated that:

. . . of all the abominable burlesques upon internal improvements – burlesques that even the natural intelligence of the quadruped, be his ears ever so long, may be perfectly conscious of – these plank roads are the most unmitigated. . . . Let us have paved or graveled streets or return to the ancient regime of county roads at once [Scott and Wyatt 1960:92-93].

In 1856 a local newspaper reported upon the extent to which Petersburg was growing.

To the south and west in 1851, there were open fields and ponds, and groves, though which few predicted the mechanic would have waded in this short space. Halifax, then very thinly inhabited, monopolized everything in that direction. Battersea and a few small houses were all that the west end could boast. Since then, in both sections, beautiful streets have been laid off, and are now garnished with villas, cottages, and dwellings of every description [Scott and Wyatt 1960:161-162]

During the Civil War, Petersburg became a much sought-after prize, for its railroads were a source of men and materiel for the embattled Confederates in Richmond.

### *Richard N. Thweatt II of Mantua and Eppington*

In 1861 Chesterfield County's tax assessor credited Richard N. Thweatt II, the late Archibald Thweatt's reversionary heir, with 1,486 acres called Eppington and noted that the

property had been transferred to him under the will of the late Lucy Thweatt's deceased husband. In exchange, Richard N. Thweatt II was supposed to relinquish his legal interest in his parents' plantation, Mantua, so that his sisters could inherit it. Eppington's \$3,000 worth of buildings was still one of Chesterfield County's most elaborately developed plantations when viewed in light of the values assigned to the improvements on other properties in the county. Jeffrey O'Dell, who attempted to correlate the socio-economic status of Chesterfield County property owners with the value of the buildings they owned, found that the buildings on only ten plantations in Chesterfield were worth as much as Eppington. He surmised that idiosyncratic behavior played a significant role in the housing decisions made by people whose economic position literally afforded them a choice. He determined that a middle income farmer in mid-nineteenth century Chesterfield County tended to build a domestic complex that was comparable to what the wealthy had erected earlier in the century. Such farms usually had a detached kitchen, a smokehouse, a dairy, a barn, and other outbuildings. He also concluded that constructing large and impressive dwellings was not a way in which the majority of prosperous antebellum Chesterfield farmers elected to spend their capital. In 1860, half of Chesterfield County's population was black and of those individuals, 93 percent were enslaved. There were only 643 free blacks in Chesterfield County, but a large number lived in nearby Petersburg (O'Dell 1983:99, 103, 134, 179).

A study of 261 farms that were depicted in detail on Civil War maps also yielded some interesting generalities. Very few farms that consisted of only one building were found to have orderly landscaping or to be laid out along geometric lines. However, as the number of buildings increased, so did the likelihood that the property would be geometrically-oriented or formally landscaped. Farms of two or three buildings were more likely than not to be laid out geometrically but rarely were they formally landscaped. Farms of four or more buildings were almost always laid out geometrically, but only when the number of buildings reached eight or more was formal landscaping almost always present. Such farms were more likely than not to bear property names and to be situated on river frontage or other prime real estate. It is logical that wealthy farmers would invest substantially in developing and beautifying the property they occupied, using aesthetically-pleasing features such as formal landscaping and symmetry to enhance the appearance of their plantations. Likewise, it is not surprising that those on the lower end of the socioeconomic scale would have been preoccupied with subsistence and would have had neither the disposable nor, perhaps, the inclination to develop their property in a sophisticated manner. The middling farmer, on the other hand, may have used as a statement of status some of the design elements and formality employed by those in the upper class, emulating their tastes to the extent that it was economically feasible (Michler 1864).<sup>109</sup>

Richard N. Thweatt II, who in 1860 was described by the census-taker as a 36-year-old Virginia-born farmer, was then in possession of \$20,000 worth of real estate and \$27,950 worth of personal property. The Thweatt household's white members, who resided at Mantua, included Richard and his wife, Alice, and their four children, who were between the ages of 1 and 12. Richard N. Thweatt II was credited with 14 male slaves who were between the ages of 10 and 60 and eight females who were between 8 and 50; the Thweatt slaves occupied a total of six cabins.<sup>110</sup> Richard N. Thweatt II and his family were living in Chesterfield County at the time of the census-taker's visit, but they were residing at Mount Ida, not Eppington. He had served as a county justice in 1853 and 1856 and represented Chesterfield County in the House of Delegates in 1857-1858. In 1860 the estate of Richard II's mother, Mrs. Mary Eppes Thweatt was credited with a total of 43 slaves. Agricultural census records, compiled in June 1860, suggest that

Richard N. Thweatt II had possession of 800 acres that were improved and 1,400 acres that were categorized as “unimproved” or fallow, perhaps the Eppington tract that he had just inherited. Like his late aunt Lucy had done in 1850, in 1860 Richard N. Thweatt II kept a relatively large herd of livestock and raised wheat, Indian corn, and oats, along with some Irish and sweet potatoes; however, he grew no tobacco on his property (Chesterfield County Census 1860; Slave Schedules 1860; Agricultural Census 1860; Dorman 1999:II:412-413).<sup>111</sup>

Chesterfield County historian Thomas B. Cox noted that during the second half of the nineteenth century, farmers typically used what was known as the four field system of agriculture or alternate husbandry, which operated on a four-year rotational cycle. Alternate husbandry, unlike modern farming which relies on species of crops bred to grow quickly and productively, was time-consuming and throughout a four year period, a plot of ground was used continuously. Soil restoring cover crops were rotated with staple crops on the same fields, in order to maintain soil fertility. These cover crops not only restored some types of soil but also provided abundant fodder for livestock and led farmers to fence in their animals and even commence practicing selective breeding. In the first year of alternate husbandry, field corn was planted in the spring, using the single plow, and was allowed to mature and then dry on its stalks. During the spring of the second year, the corn was removed from the field, bound up in its stalks to continue drying, and then stored in a corn crib. Afterward, the corn would be used to feed livestock and to make cornmeal for human consumption. After the dried corn was harvested, oats were planted. Around August or September of the third year, when the oats had reached maturity, the field was re-fallowed and winter oats were planted. Finally, in the fourth year, after the winter oats had matured, the acreage was used for the pasturage of livestock, so that the ground would be manured (Cox 1907:30).

When the 1860 agricultural census records for Chesterfield County’s Upper and Lower districts are compared, it is apparent that the two areas were continuing to develop along different lines. Almost all of the farmers in both districts had livestock and had a slight preference for horses rather than asses or mules. Most farmers owned cattle, but relatively few households had working oxen. The majority of farmers raised swine and approximately 25 percent also owned sheep. In the Upper District, where Eppington was located, most farmers raised Indian corn and oats but relatively few grew rye. One man raised buckwheat and another produced rice, but orchards and beekeeping were relatively common. Tobacco-growing continued to be more significant in western Chesterfield’s economy than it was in the eastern part of the county (Chesterfield County Agricultural Census 1860). This was the situation in 1861, on the eve of the Civil War. Although politicians, North and South, had been engaged in heated debates for several years, none seemed to realize that war was imminent. When South Carolina seceded from the Union in late December 1860 and Virginia officials called a state convention to decide whether the Old Dominion should follow suit. The moment of truth came quickly, for the first shots were fired at Fort Sumter on April 12, 1861, and two days later President Abraham Lincoln issued a call to arms. Five days later, Virginia seceded from the Union, and in May, Richmond became the new nation’s capital.

Richard N. Thweatt II joined the Confederate military and was captured by the enemy on the Boydton Plank Road in northern Dinwiddie County, probably on October 27-28, 1864. Although his service records are almost nonexistent, when the war ended, he was a prisoner of war and was paroled in Richmond on May 31, 1865 (www.fold3.com). It is unclear when or where he joined the Confederate Army.

### *Henry Cox II, Eppington's New Owner*

On October 10, 1862, Richard N. and Alice Thweatt joined their trustee, Benjamin Finney, in conveying "1,500 acres on the Appomattox River called Eppington" to Henry Cox (II) of Henrico County. The deed noted that the land being sold was the same property that Richard had inherited from his uncle, Archibald Thweatt, and placed in the hands of his trustee on April 22, 1859. The deed also noted that Cox had purchased the property as the highest bidder at a public auction (Chesterfield County Deed Book 46:89).<sup>112</sup> The following spring Cox purchased from his next door neighbor, Thomas O. Blankenship, 75 acres on the Appomattox River that adjoined the Thweatt property (Chesterfield County Deed Book 46:268).

When western Chesterfield County was mapped by Confederate cartographers during 1864, Eppington was identified by name and attributed to its owner, Henry Cox. Also shown were the plantation's slave quarters, which consisted of five cabins that were located at a distance from the main house. Two vacant buildings were shown at the periphery of the property and three others were depicted at widely scattered locations. The neighboring properties that belonged to Dr. John R. Walke (downstream) and Thomas O. Blankenship (upstream) as were Eppes Falls and the horse bridge that was situated nearby (Gilmer 1863). Bevil's Bridge, the Petersburg Road, and the New Bridge Road were depicted and would have provided Eppington's occupants with relatively convenient overland access to urban markets. Also fairly close at hand were the Bright Hope and Beaver coal pits at Clover Hill and the railroad that extended into the area. Cox's mill was shown to the east of Eppington, where the Bevil's Bridge or Petersburg road intersected with what was called the New Bridge Road.

Henry Cox II, who bought Eppington in 1862, was a descendant of one of Henrico County's oldest families. His forebears had owned land on the upper side of the James River, at Arrahattock, since 1665 when John Cox, the son of ancient planter William Coxe, purchased 550 acres that had been part of the 10,000 acre College tract that had been laid out in 1619 at the direction of the Virginia Company of London. Patents dating to the 1670s and 1680s for property to the north and east of Arrahattock reveal that John Cox extended his landholdings into that area, acquiring property inland, behind the 2,000 acre tract at Farrer Island that had been granted to William Farrer in 1637. John Cox conveyed his Arrahattock plantation to his son, George I, who in 1721 bequeathed it to his own son, Edward. After Edward Cox's death in 1756 his acreage descended to his son, George II, who purchased the Farrer Island plantation from Thomas Mann Randolph. Henry (I), one of the three sons produced by George Cox II and his wife, Mary, resided in Chesterfield County. He purchased the Farrer Island tract from his parents, but because he produced no heirs, he bequeathed that acreage to his brother, George Cox III, the father of Henry Cox (II) who in 1862 purchased Eppington (McCartney 1985:44-52).

Henry Cox II added to his landholdings in Henrico County during the 1830s and took up residence on one of the modest-sized parcels he had inherited on the mainland, close to Farrar Island. He was an upper middle class farmer who used slave labor and like many of his peers, he employed an overseer to run his agricultural operations. Cox's Henrico County home, Coxley, is still standing and is close to his Farrer Island farm. Henry Cox II lived in Henrico County throughout the time he owned Eppington and as an absentee owner, he left behind no information on what occurred on his Chesterfield County property. The absence of his name in Chesterfield's agricultural census records suggests strongly that he placed the farm in the hands of a tenant, one or more sharecroppers, or perhaps a farm manager. Even though Cox resided on his Henrico County property, he left his farm's management to William R. Pearce, who was his

employee (McCartney 1985:69-70; Chesterfield County Agricultural Census 1870).

Henrico County census records for 1860 reveal that Henry Cox II was 54 years old at the time he purchased Eppington. He and his wife, the former Lucy Wilson, who was six years his junior, were childless but they had four foster children who ranged in age from two to nine years old. Cox's farming operations in Henrico County included raising sheep for wool production and raising swine. He also grew oats, corn, wheat, peas, beans, sweet potatoes, and Irish potatoes. In 1860 he sold garden produce in urban markets and \$350 worth of undescribed "homemade manufactures," perhaps cured pork (McCartney 1985:67-68). Genealogical sources indicate that Henry and Lucy Willson Cox married in Amelia County on November 17, 1829, and that Lucy died shortly before her husband purchased Eppington. Although Henry had a financial interest in several properties in Chesterfield County, he continued to reside in Henrico County.<sup>113</sup> In 2004 portraits of Henry and Lucy Willson Cox were on display at Chestnut Hill (Chesterfield County Historical Society Bulletin January 2004:1, 6).

Two plats were made for Henry Cox II in mid-December 1865 and January 1866 by D. Y. Huddleston, Amelia County's official surveyor, who was in his late 20s. One portrayed the western and central portions of the Eppington tract and the other focused on the adjoining acreage that lay to the east, the parcel known as "Old Coxes." The 1865 plat includes a vignette that depicts the mansion, viewed from the side facing the Appomattox River. This image suggest that few, if any, changes had been made to the exterior of the main house since Benjamin Latrobe's visit in 1796. A spring, slave quarters, and what appears to have been a farm manager's house were located to the northeast of the main house. To the west was an ice pond. A network of farm roads traversed cleared fields and areas that were densely forested. When a survey was made of the easternmost part of Eppington in late January 1866, the adjoining acreage known as "Old Coxes," there was a similar mixture of fields that were interspersed with forestation. The Eppington Mills and a boat landing also were labeled. Winterpock Creek was shown prominently as was the old canal that paralleled it. The road that ran to the New Bridge and the Coal Pit Road delimited Eppington's easternmost boundaries (Huddleston 1865, 1866; Amelia County Census 1870).

### *War Comes to the Region*

The outbreak of hostilities between the North and South stimulated Chesterfield County's coal mining industry, for the fuel was in demand by the Confederacy, especially for use by the Tredegar Iron Works, which produced heavy ordnance. In 1862 the so-called Dimmock Line, concentric rings of low profile earthworks built under the direction of Captain Charles H. Dimmock, were erected to protect Petersburg. A total of 55 artillery batteries extended in a ten mile arc to the east, south, and west of the city and woods were cut down to provide a field of fire. The residents of Petersburg loaned their slaves to the project and one English visitor described the earthworks as "neat and extensive," placed on every hill, creek or position that would defend the city. During the war years, troop trains arrived in Petersburg, bringing men and supplies to be sent forward to the besieged Confederate capital. Hospitals were established to care for those wounded in the war effort (Scott and Wyatt 1960:170-174).

In 1862 the Confederates also fortified Drewry's Bluff, intending to thwart any attempts by the Union Army to reach Richmond, the Confederate capital. They also rimmed Richmond with concentric lines of earthworks, designed to impede an overland attack, should the Union Army move up the James-York Peninsula. As the war dragged on, Union military leaders

continued to be convinced that the most expedient way to end the conflict was to capture Richmond. Finally, in spring 1864 General U. S. Grant decided to establish a military base on the Bermuda Hundred peninsula, so that his men could apply pressure to the Confederate capital from the south side of the James. General Benjamin F. Butler, who used Bermuda Hundred as a staging area, attempted to move up the lower side of the James toward Richmond. However, the Confederates foresaw Grant's intent and embarked upon a general military buildup. The confrontation between the two armies, commonly known as the Battle of Drewry's Bluff, lasted for a long, bloody week and resulted in the Union Army's being bottled up in Bermuda Hundred. Butler, joined by Grant, set about attacking Petersburg and on June 9, 1864, the siege began. Between June 15<sup>th</sup> and June 18<sup>th</sup> the main battles of Petersburg were fought, with the result that the city fell. According to one eyewitness, after the siege, Petersburg "presented the most desolate appearance – public buildings, warehouses, private houses &c. too clearly bore evidence of the effects of the heavy shelling." He added that there was "not the slightest appearance of any business having been carried on for some time." He described the formidable earthworks and said that "The dead were buried on the plain but in the trenches, numbers were lying as they fell." He noted that "The federal troops had gone in pursuit of the retreating Confederates, so that comparatively few remained in possession of the town."

Throughout this period, the theater of war was limited to the Petersburg area and the eastern part of Chesterfield County. However, in 1864 Union General August V. Kautz led a party of soldiers into western Chesterfield, intending to cut off any reinforcements that the Confederates might hope to receive from the west and to destroy the county's railroads, an important supply line (Scott and Wyatt 1960:177-187; Robertson 1969:208-209). Neither military maps nor documentary sources suggest that military activity occurred in the vicinity of Eppington (Engineer Bureau War Department [ca. 1865]; Gillespie 1865; Hotchkiss 1867a, 1867b, 1867c; Bache 1862a, 1862b).

### *Aftermath*

During the Civil War, more than 200 military engagements occurred within the state of Virginia. Throughout the rural countryside, crops and livestock were gone, and countless homes, mills, and other businesses were irreparably damaged or had succumbed to neglect. Some 20,000 to 30,000 Virginia soldiers lost their lives and thousands of others were permanently maimed. Confederate money and bonds were worthless, inflation was at an all-time high, legal tender was almost nonexistent, and the state's economy was ruined. At least 25,000 white Virginians subsisted on army rations for the first six months after the surrender at Appomattox, as did many of the 36,000 ex-slaves who also lacked the basic necessities. As one former bondsman put it, the ex-slave was "free from the old plantation, but he had nothing but the dusty road under his feet. He was free from the old quarter that once gave him shelter, but a slave to the rains of summer and the frosts of winter." Similarly, a former Confederate general proffered that newly freed blacks had "nothing but freedom." Some Northern politicians favored giving freedmen 40-acre homesteads formed out of land confiscated from Southerners whose taxes were in arrears. This gave rise to rumors that freedmen would get "40 acres and a mule." Blacks and whites struggled to redefine their roles in society, often with mixed results.

Throughout the South, real estate values plummeted. Also gone was the slaveholder's monetary investment in slaves — typically the farmer's most valuable asset. The damage to Virginia's industrial infrastructure was so massive that the state that didn't attain prewar

production levels for several years. The loss of manpower and draft animals, the overgrown agricultural land, and labor shortages impacted the economy on a local and regional level. Undoubtedly, many returning soldiers were confronted with what seemed like an insurmountable array of problems. Neglected farmland had sprouted young pines and dense vegetation that had to be cleared away before plowing could be done. Predators had had a chance to multiply in the underbrush, creating problems for those fortunate enough to own poultry and other livestock. Most farmers' agricultural equipment was worn out or obsolete, and they lacked the disposable income they needed to replace it, if indeed new implements were available.

Many of the state's towns and cities lay in shambles or had succumbed to neglect. Throughout the rural countryside, fields were ruined and crops and livestock were gone, bridges and railroads were destroyed, and countless homes and businesses were irreparably damaged. Some twenty to thirty thousand Virginia soldiers lost their lives and thousands of others were permanently maimed. The damage to the industrial establishment was so massive that Virginia was the only state that had failed to attain its prewar production levels by 1870. The 13th Amendment to the U. S. Constitution was ratified, ending slavery and the old social order to which much of the South had been accustomed. Real estate values plummeted and land worth \$50 an acre before the war afterward sold for \$2. So massive was the damage to Virginia's industrial establishment that it was the only state failing to attain its prewar production levels by 1870. In sum, the war, followed by military occupation and Reconstruction, exacted so great a toll that Virginia was reduced to poverty and despair.

Recovery took time, money, ingenuity and a tremendous amount of hard work. Local court records bear mute testimony to the hardships of Reconstruction, some of which lingered for a decade or more. Some people, thanks to the loss of farm income, were unable to finish paying for property they had begun purchasing before the war. Many others became indebted to merchants and other business establishments. They also lacked the funds they needed to buy seed, fertilizer and livestock. As a result, many people fell deeply into debt due to circumstances that were beyond their control. Ultimately, a significant number were obliged to forfeit their real and personal property or declare bankruptcy. The state's economy was crippled by indebtedness that lingered for several years. During this period, eastern Virginia's agricultural productivity dropped by more than half and farm size declined markedly. In time, immense changes occurred in productivity and the kinds of crops raised. In 1860, Virginia's 1,771 miles of railroad track comprised 19 percent of the South's total rail mileage. But by 1865, most of these railroads were in ruins. The disruption of the railroads had a pronounced effect upon the prospects of economic recovery, especially for those in the agricultural sector of the population. The state's roads also were in disrepair (Majeske 1980:58).

Agricultural census records reveal that many farm families shifted to less labor-intensive forms of agriculture, such as animal husbandry, or raising fruit and vegetable crops that could be sold in urban markets. Moreover, there was a sharp decline in the numbers of acres tilled. Because the war had disrupted manufacturing, farm implements often were worn beyond effective use or were totally lacking, yet could not be replaced. Many farms were operated by leaseholders or sharecroppers, often landless African-Americans, who had few options; many chose to remain in the general vicinity of their former homes. Often, the blacks that stayed on the land after the war were very old or very young, or infirm and in need of support. Virginia's agricultural productivity dropped by more than half and many rural landowners were forced to subdivide their farms or relinquish them altogether. Northern speculators with expendable capital sometimes seized the opportunity to purchase cheap land, often for back taxes, and

quickly resold or subdivided them in hopes of turning a quick profit. One writer noted that trade was dead and people had neither the money nor the capital to begin anew. (Majeske 1980:29, 56; Colonial Williamsburg Foundation 1985:Section XII).

The analysis of land tax records indicates that immediately after the Reconstruction era, some Chesterfield householders moved from the lower to the middling economic range and some middling households experienced upward mobility. Small farms also became much more numerous. All of these factors presumably reflect the local economy's recovery during the postwar period, the development of new industries, and urban expansion. It is probable that those who managed to become somewhat more prosperous during the postwar period would have expended some of their income toward improving their home environment. In 1870 an estimated 32,132 acres of Chesterfield land were under cultivation; 53,658 acres were wooded; and 27,558 acres were unimproved. Substantial quantities of wheat, rye, Indian corn, oats, barley, tobacco, potatoes, peas, and beans were being produced in the county as were cotton and wool. Dairying and the forest products industry also were becoming important components of the local economy. Most of the farms in western Chesterfield County were then in production and substantial quantities of tobacco were being grown. In contrast, eastern Chesterfield County, which had sustained great damage from military activity and exploding ammunition had left a pockmarked landscape, lagged behind in terms of productivity. (Chesterfield County Agricultural Recapitulation Records 1870; Cox 1907:30).

Although the Eppington property sustained no military impact during the Civil War, Confederate troops would have marched along the River Road as they left eastern Chesterfield and Petersburg. However, Henry Cox's farm in Henrico County was overrun by the Union Army in 1864. General Benjamin N. Butler's men constructed a battery they called Fort Brady that was just west of his property line and the Dutch Gap canal was cut through part of his Farrer Island tract. Thus, the men of the occupying army most likely trampled the crops that were in the field and helped themselves to whatever they needed, carried off his livestock, and generally damaged his property. Agricultural census records for 1870 demonstrate that Cox's farming operations in Henrico were greatly diminished from their 1860 level. His wife, Lucy, died, and in 1870 he was sharing his dwelling with a housekeeper, a foster daughter (Sally Wilson), and four other young people. The overseer he had employed before the war was still living on his property and managing its agricultural operations, with the assistance of hired labor (McCartney 1985:67-68). It was, perhaps, what seemed to be insuperable economic hardships that led Henry Cox II to sell Eppington.

Between 1862 and 1875, when Henry Cox II owned Eppington, some minor modifications seem to have been made to the west wing's interior. Cox, as an absentee owner, may have been willing to make these changes to accommodate a long-term tenant or perhaps a family member. The original partition separating the two closets at the west end was removed, although both closets' doors were retained. This larger space could have been used for storage or perhaps as a pantry. The north, or landside, porch also was remodeled during this period. The frame part of the early porch seems to have been completely rebuilt and evidence of a handrail suggests the presence of a balustrade. A sketch of Eppington from the riverside depicts a door that led to the porch (Wenger et al. 1995:49, 51). While Henry Cox II owned Eppington, the main dwelling's interior was repainted. An analysis of paint samples taken from the drawing room reveal that a fresh coat of lime-wash was applied to its walls and cornice and that the room's paneling was painted blue-green instead of blue-gray, a color that had been used for the previous seven decades. Although Cox or his tenant retained the color of the glossy deep red-

brown paint that had been applied to the doors, and baseboards, he had the mantel shelf painted a deep brown. He also made some major changes to the color scheme used in the dining room. Although he had a lime-wash reapplied to the walls, the color of the dining room's paneling, mantel shelf, and cornice was changed from tan to a glossy green. However, he did retain the glossy deep red-brown paint that was used on the room's doors and baseboards (Buck 2007:42).

Demographic and agricultural census records for 1870 suggest that quite a few of the men and women who lived in the vicinity of Eppington occupied small farms and were of African descent. Many of these individuals worked on the railroad or were involved in agricultural pursuits or trades. Although it is unclear who was living at Eppington in 1870, agricultural census records associated with the Rev. Augustus A. Tizzard's property, Mantua, and the farm of Dr. John Walke, located next to Eppington, reveal that they were raising substantial quantities of tobacco but also grew wheat, Indian corn, and oats, and raised modest quantities of livestock. Tizzard, who was the rector of Dale Parish's Trinity Episcopal Church for 50 years, was married to Richard Noble Thweatt II's daughter, Juliana (Chesterfield County Agricultural Census 1870; Dorman 1999:II:413).

### *The Hinds-Scott Ownership*

On June 26, 1876, Henry Cox II and his trustees, Richard T. Willson and Richard Chaffin, conveyed Eppington and its mill seat to William Hinds of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Included was a 691 acre tract that was bound by the Appomattox River, the New Bridge Road, and land that belonged to James Howell or Howlett and Richard T. Willson,<sup>114</sup> plus 1,038 ¼ acres of contiguous land that was bound by the river, Cox's 691 acres, and property that belonged to William A. Blankenship, William Baggett, and Neis (Nace) Dyson. Hinds' deed noted that 20 acres of the northernmost part of the 1,038 acre tract already had been sold to Dyson, an older mulatto or black man from Maryland who had not yet received his title to the property. Cox, Wilson, and Chaffin also deeded to Hinds a 2 ½ acre tract at Eppes Falls that was known as "the Mill Site." Included were all of the property's appurtenances, a right-of-way to the property, water-rights, and other easement privileges (Chesterfield County Deed Book 59:123).

It is unclear how William Hinds became aware that Eppington was for sale, although during the 1870s, when economic times were hard throughout Virginia, numerous advertisements for southern real estate appeared in northern newspapers. Military records indicate that a Private William Hinds, who enlisted in the Union Army in Pittsburgh in September 13, 1861, served briefly in Company B of the 46<sup>th</sup> Pennsylvania Infantry, a unit that saw service in Virginia. Census records for 1870 reveal that William Hinds of Pittsburgh was a 48-year-old butcher who had been born in Ireland but had become a United States citizen. He was relatively successful, for his real estate in Pittsburgh, located at Liberty and Lumber Streets, was worth \$50,000 and he had \$15,000 worth of personal property. He shared his home with Thomas Hinds, a 45-year-old butcher, who operated a butcher's stall and may have been his brother. Also living in Hinds household were Thomas's wife, Lydia Hinds, age 28, and four children (William, age 9; George, age 6, Jane, age 3, and Lydia, age 6 months). The elder Lydia Hinds and all of the children had been born in Pennsylvania. The family had a 17-year-old domestic servant, Ann Kershaw, who was born in England.

In 1878 the tax assessor began crediting William Hinds, whose residence was identified as "unknown," with 691 acres known as Eppington, which had \$800 worth of buildings; he also had 1,058 acres called Eppington that had \$2,000 worth of improvements. The assessed value

of Eppington's structural improvements remained constant through 1880. Hinds was identified as a resident of Chesterfield County in 1879, but by the time a census was compiled in 1880 he was back in Pittsburgh. Census records indicate that in 1880 William Hinds, who reportedly was age 60 and was living in Pittsburgh, had married. He and his wife, Annie, who was age 37, had produced four children (Martha, age 8; William, age 6; Jane, age 4; and Nellie, age 2) ([www.fold3.com](http://www.fold3.com); Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania Census 1870, 1880).<sup>115</sup> Personal property tax rolls for Chesterfield County, which indicate where taxpayers were living, reveal that William Hinds never moved to Chesterfield County. Because he was an absentee landowner, it is uncertain who resided at Eppington. It was the guardian of Hinds' underage heirs (Martha, William, Jane, Nellie, Frank, and George) who conveyed just over 2 acres of Eppington to the Bright Hope Railroad Company in 1893 (Chesterfield County Deed Book 68:1-2).

During the 1870s western Chesterfield County retained its rural character, although public roads and railroads traversed the countryside, linking its citizens to the outside world. Coal production in the Winterpock mines fell off sharply after the Civil War. In 1877 the Clover Hill Railroad went bankrupt and its property was purchased by the Bright Hope Mining Company, which undertook sweeping changes. The company replaced its predecessor's tracks with rails of a narrower gauge and it built a deep-water terminal at Bermuda Hundred. The revitalized rail line, which was 32-miles-long, was in operation by 1883. In 1887 the Bright Hope Mining Company sought to extend its railroad line further west and two years later, it merged with the Farmville and Powhatan Railroad (O'Dell 1983:473-475).

In July 1893 the Bright Hope Railroad Company, which exerted the right of preeminent domain, brought a condemnation suit against Martha, William, Jane, Nellie, Frank, and George Hinds, the minor children and heirs of the late William Hinds. The railroad company was successful in acquiring 2 1/8 acres from the Hinds, 1/4 acre for a bridge across the Appomattox, and 5 1/2 acres on which they could build a depot. A plat that accompanied the Hinds heirs' deed to the railroad company depicts the acreage that was being transferred, revealing that it was in the westernmost part of Eppington, and that there was a stable located close to the river's edge. The railroad tracks also were shown on J. E. Laprade's 1888 map of Chesterfield County as were the Eppington mansion and two nearby buildings. Local development was then concentrated in the vicinity of the Clover Hill mines (Chesterfield County Deed Book 68:1-2; Laprade 1888). Some of the buildings that were shown by military cartographers during the 1860s were no longer present at Eppington.

The Bright Hope Railroad Company's successor, the Farmville and Powhatan Railroad (the F&P), suffered such severe financial losses within its first decade of operation that it was nicknamed the "Faith and Hope" line. The F&P's facilities later were purchased by the Tidewater and Western Railroad, which was in business until 1917, at which time it went bankrupt. That same year, the railroad line's tracks were torn up and transported to Europe, where they were used by the Allies to repair war-damaged tracks (O'Dell 1983:473-475). Thus came the demise of railroading at Eppington.

In 1895 when west-central Chesterfield County was mapped by topographic engineers, the tracks of the F&P Railroad were shown prominently and the Eppington mansion was shown on a rise of land that soared 250 feet above sea level. Winterpock Creek was identified as were Eppes Falls and the site of Eppes Bridge (USGS 1895). Community development was clustered at Winterpock, the area that Laprade had identified as the site of the Clover Hill mines in 1888. The same pattern of settlement was still in evidence in 1906 when the area was mapped again (US Soil Conservation Service 1906). However, the population of western Chesterfield County

gradually dwindled and it remained at a relatively low level until the second quarter of the twentieth century. Thus, the people who moved into the region during the 1870s and 1880s to take advantage of the economic opportunities offered by mining and the construction of new rail lines appear to have departed almost as quickly as they came. It is also likely that during this period many rural families sought to better themselves economically by moving to urban areas such as Richmond, Manchester, and Petersburg. Efforts to revive Chesterfield County's coal mining enterprises proved unsuccessful although the pulpwood industry gradually gained momentum (Cox 1907:22; O'Dell 1983:83-85; Weaver 1961-1962:44-46).

Around 1910, while William Hinds' heirs owned Eppington, some dramatic alterations were made to the main house, which was modernized and enlarged. The east wing's foundations were repaired and the porch on the riverside of the house, built around the same time Francis Eppes VI added wings to his home, was demolished. It was replaced by a large two-story wing that accommodated a kitchen, bathroom, passageway, pantry, a back stair, and a second-floor chamber. The new wing had a small porch on its west side and an exterior brick chimney, features that are still present. Other significant changes were made. Double-glazed leaves replaced the original raised-panel front door and ceiling lights were added. On the first floor, two interior doors provided access to the new wing. The drawing room's old exterior doorway was reduced in size and converted to an interior door, whereas a window in the rear of the family parlor was lengthened to create a second door. Both doorways provided ready access to a flight of stairs that led to the second floor, where there were two rooms, the larger of which was heated. A door provided access from the second floor of the new wing to the long, narrow upstairs hall of the main house. In the northeast corner of the second floor were stairs that led up to the attic and down to the first floor. The attic space still consisted of one large room that was accessed by a hallway that ran along the west end of the house. (Wenger et al. 1995:52; first floor, second floor, and attic plan sketches). Around the time the Hinds family renovated Eppington, a new coat of lime-wash was applied to the drawing room's walls and cornice. Although the doors and baseboards continued to be painted a glossy deep red-brown and the mantel shelf was deep brown, the room's paneling was changed from blue-green to a yellowish-green. Some changes also were made in the dining room's décor. The walls received a coat of lime-wash and the doors and baseboards continued to be painted a glossy deep red-brown. However the room's paneling, mantle shelf and cornice were painted bright green (Buck 2007:42).

Census records for 1910 reveal that the late William Hinds' widow, Annie, a household head, had moved to the city of Richmond and was living in the Clay Ward. The census-taker indicated that she was age 55 and that she and her parents had been born in England. Mrs. Hinds reported that she had given birth to six children and that five of them were alive. Sharing her home were three of her adult children, a grandchild, and a black servant, 18-year-old Lily Hayes. William Hinds Jr., who was 36-years-old, and his brother, George, who was 27, were real estate agents and seem to have provided the household's income. Their sister, Jane Hinds, was 34. The census-taker indicated that the father of these individuals was from Ireland and that their mother was from England. Mrs. Hinds' granddaughter, Annie V. Scott, who was age 15, was born in Virginia, as was her father, Albert M. Scott; however, her mother, the former Martha E. Hinds, had been born in Pennsylvania. In 1910 the Scott couple was living in Brooklyn, New York, where Albert M., the son of a Richmond druggist, was trying to make a living as a promoter of the mining industry. In 1920, when a new census was taken, Mrs. Annie Hinds, who was age 65, indicated that she had come to the United States in 1867 and was a naturalized

citizen. Her daughter, Jane, and granddaughter, Annie V. Scott, were still part of the household, but her son, William J., was gone. By 1920 Albert M. and Martha E. Scott had moved to Chicago, Illinois, where he was employed as a sales manager for a paper company (Richmond, Virginia Census 1910, 1920).

By 1930, a significant change had occurred. Mrs. Annie C. Hinds, who was 76, was still living in Richmond, with her son, George, and granddaughter, Annie V. Scott. Mrs. Hinds told the census-taker that she had married at age 18 and that she owned real estate that was worth \$9,000. Her son, William Jr., who was age 47 and single, was living in Chesterfield County's Clover Hill District, where he was a general farmer. As he owned the acreage he farmed, it is likely that he had moved to Eppington. When he was interviewed about his family origin, he indicated that his late father was born in Northern Ireland. In 1940 when a census-taker interviewed members of the Hinds family, Mrs. Annie Hinds, an 86-year-old widow, was living in the Clover Hill District of Chesterfield County and shared her home with sons William (age 66) and George (age 58) who were farmers. Also living in the Hinds residence were Martha E. Scott, Mrs. Hinds' 68-year-old widowed daughter, and Annie V. Scott, who was 45. The census-taker noted that Mrs. Scott had been living in Chicago, Illinois, on April 1, 1935. The Hinds/Scott household was said to be close to Bevils Bridge Road (Richmond, Virginia Census 1930; Chesterfield County Census 1930, 1940).

In February 1936 when Craig Romaine of Chester, an employee of the Works Progress Administration's Virginia Historical Inventory Project, visited Eppington, he commented on its stateliness and beautiful setting. He also provided a simplified chain of title, which he reconstructed from local court records. Interestingly, he assigned a date of ca. 1770 to the house, just as architectural historians have done in modern times. However, Romaine surmised that John Wayles Eppes made Eppington his home and credited him with making many improvements to the mansion and the surrounding landscape. He indicated that the graveyard at Eppington "has not been cared for, and it has grown up in trees and bushes," and said that only a few tombstones remained to be seen. (Works Progress Administration of Virginia Historical Inventory No. 50).

On December 17, 1979, Annie V. Scott of Winterpock conveyed her interest in the 1,752.45 acre tract known as Eppington, plus 2.5 acres of land in Amelia County to Virginia Cherry Brown, Parker E. Cherry, William F. Cherry, and Jerome T. Cherry. Her will was presented for probate on October 9, 1986 (Chesterfield County Will Book 141:134). Three years later, on November 20, 1989, the late Annie V. Scott's heirs (Parker E. Cherry and his wife, Evelyn; Virginia Cherry Brown; Jerome T. Cherry; and the widowed Camilla M. Cherry) conveyed 43.035 acres of Eppington, including the mansion, to Chesterfield County. Reference was then made to a plat by J. K. Timmons that was dated August 15, 1989, and the fact that the land being conveyed was part of the property that Henry Cox et al. had conveyed to William Hinds in 1876 (Chesterfield County Deed Book 2068:198-206). It was through this deed of gift that the county acquired that portion of the Eppington plantation that includes the stately eighteenth century mansion and its grounds.

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<sup>1</sup> Dale's choice of the name Bermuda is reminiscent of the fact that Sir George Somers and his party were stranded in the Bermoothes or Bermuda Island in 1609, when their ship, the *Seaventure*, veered off course and wrecked on the islands' treacherous shoals (Smith 1910:II:635-639).

<sup>2</sup> Within the colony 347 men, women, and children lay dead, many of whom had lived near the head of the James River, where the settlers were broadly dispersed and the area, sparsely populated.

<sup>3</sup> As late as 1678 Abraham Wood, then a major-general, was still serving the public interest. In 1680 he succeeded in expanding the Treaty of Middle Plantation to include several more Indian tribes than had signed the original May 29, 1677, peace agreement (Spencer 1680).

<sup>4</sup> Indians needing access to the ceded lands were obliged to obtain a striped coat that they could use as a badge of safe conduct.

<sup>5</sup> In 1676 when forts were built at the head of the colony's main rivers and at several other locations, Fort Henry on the Appomattox again was used (Hening 1809-1823:II:326-328).

<sup>6</sup> However, the law was reinstated in 1711.

<sup>7</sup> Many of Virginia's early land patents were laid out in poles measuring 16.5 feet. According to a convention that was commonly used, a surveyor treated as his base line the banks of a river or creek, which he viewed as a straight line. Then he projected the patent's side boundaries by drawing another straight line at a right angle to each end of that base line. Such side lines typically extended inland for a distance of one mile. Thus, a two-acre patent was equivalent to 16.5 feet of river frontage by one mile measured inland (Bruce 1896:537-538).

<sup>8</sup> By 1720, anyone who cleared and fenced as pasturage three acres out of his 50 acre patent, or who expended 10 pounds current money on making structural improvements or setting out trees and hedges, was considered to have fulfilled planting and seating requirements. All of these criteria were summarized in an act that was passed in 1748 (Hening 1809-1823:IV:81; V:424-425). How conscientiously these laws were obeyed and enforced is uncertain.

<sup>9</sup> He in turn deeded it to Philip Worsham, who in 1743 sold it to John Elam (Henrico County Deeds 1706-1737:235; Miscellaneous Court Records 1738-1746:1123).

<sup>10</sup> The Goodes sold it to Philip Smith who in 1740 deeded it to Frances Wilkinson, a widow (Henrico County Miscellaneous Court Records 1738-1746:1123).

<sup>11</sup> His will, which mentions his household furnishings and silverware, attests to his affluence.

<sup>12</sup> Sarah and Francis Eppes IV were the parents of a daughter named Martha, who married John Wayles of Charles City County (Henrico County Wills Part II:10). In April 1746, when Martha Eppes and John Wayles executed a prenuptial agreement, she transferred the legal title to the slaves she had inherited to two trustees, although she and her future husband retained the right to use them (Henrico County Wills and Deeds 1744-1748:132). The Wayles couple's daughter, Martha, married in succession Bathurst Skelton and Thomas Jefferson. John Wayles' second oldest daughter, Elizabeth, his child with his second wife, married Francis Eppes VI (Dorman 2004:I:893-894). On September 30, 1768, when Bathurst Skelton made his will, he named his wife, the former Martha Wayles, as guardian of his son. The will was witnessed by Francis Eppes VI, Martha's brother-in-law through his marriage to her half-sister (Charles City County Wills 1737-1774:35).

<sup>13</sup> That is, half of the 2,200 acres Francis IV had managed to accumulate.

<sup>14</sup> This probably was the 690 acre tract that the testator had acquired in 1716, which adjoined the original 4,000 acre patent.

<sup>15</sup> During the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries the Eppes family called this parcel "Old Coxes." It abutted the west side of Winterpock Creek and fronted on the Appomattox River.

<sup>16</sup> In 1773 Winterpock Creek defined Manchester Parish's easterly boundary line. Therefore, Eppington would have been situated in Manchester Parish (Hening 1809-1823:VIII:655).

<sup>17</sup> Dale Parish's colonial and nineteenth century vestry records have been lost or destroyed. However, during the mid-nineteenth century Bishop William Meade mentioned seeing a few surviving pages from a book that ran from 1790 to 1799. In 1790 someone named Eppes was among those who pledged to help pay for church repairs (Meade 1857:I:452).

<sup>18</sup> Francis VI was born in 1747 and came of age in 1768. Between March 25, 1762, and March 25, 1764, he was enrolled at the College of William and Mary.

<sup>19</sup> The livestock consisted of cattle, horses, sheep, and hogs.

<sup>20</sup> Some of these silver items may have descended to the testator from his father, Francis Eppes IV.

<sup>21</sup> He was murdered by a slave girl on Thursday, June 12, 1766, according to two newspaper accounts that were published in New York but bore a Williamsburg date line (Headley 1987:115).

<sup>22</sup> It may have been around this time that Francis Eppes VI married Elizabeth Wayles and moved to the 550 acres that had a brick house.

<sup>23</sup> In May 1770 a Francis Eppes of Dinwiddie tried to sell a 400 acre tract in that county in order to satisfy some debts (Purdie and Dixon, March 22, 1770).

<sup>24</sup> Skelton was born in June 1744, married Martha in November 1766, and died on September 30, 1768. He attended the College of William and Mary in 1763-1764 and was a resident of Charles City County (Dorman 1999:II:389).

<sup>25</sup> Jefferson, who had begun practicing law in 1767, began representing Albermarle County in the House of Burgesses in 1769 and continued until 1776. He was elected to a succession of Virginia Conventions and served as a delegate to the Continental Congress. He not only participated in its deliberations, he wrote the Declaration of Independence. After the close of the American Revolution, Jefferson served in Virginia's House of Delegates, went on to become governor, and then became a member of the United States Congress (Dorman 1999:II:390).

<sup>26</sup> Like other wealthy Virginians, John Wayles' involvement in transatlantic trade was credit-based and very complicated. For example, documents that came to light after his death reveal that Colonels William Byrd, John Syme, and Charles Carter were in his debt as was John Lidderdale, who owed Wayles' associates Benjamin Waller and Richard Hansen (VCRP Survey Report Numbers 02181, 02499).

<sup>27</sup> Betty Hemings' oldest child, Mary, was at Wingo's or Poplar Forest, but later went to Monticello.

<sup>28</sup> This situation is reminiscent of William Byrd II's dilemma when settling the estate of his father-in-law Daniel Parke. In that instance, Byrd opted to assume Parke's assets along with his liabilities. It was a gamble he regretted, for he learned that the decedent's debts were overwhelming.

<sup>29</sup> In 1773, the *Virginia Gazette* reported that Henry Skipwith had married Tabitha Wayles. However, the newspaper announcement was incorrect, for the bride's name was Anne Wayles, Tabitha's sister (Purdie and Dixon, July 15, 1773).

<sup>30</sup> When Eppes and his wife developed his land on Winterpock Creek into their family seat, they may have decided to give the property a new name in order to bestow upon it a distinct identity. The neighborhood generally was known as Winterpock and John Anderson, Philip Smith, and George Archer, who owned nearby plantations, also used Winterpock as their "address" (Henrico County Wills 1654-1737:320, 356, 422).

<sup>31</sup> One source says that John Wayles Eppes was born on April 7, 1773 at Appomattox Manor (City Point), whereas another states that his birth occurred on April 19, 1773, at Eppington (Johnson et al. 1931:170; U.S. Government 1989:918). Neither provides supportive information. Both sources appear to be wrong, however, because John Wayles made reference to his grandson, John Wayles Eppes, in the February 12, 1773, codicil to his will (Tyler

1925:270). Also, Thomas Jefferson wrote in the front of his late father's prayer book that John Wayles Eppes was born in April 1772 but he omitted the day of the month (Jefferson, n.d.).

<sup>32</sup> They may have been visiting Powhatan Plantation, the home of Richard Taliaferro, a skillful architect and the father-in-law of George Wythe.

<sup>33</sup> Elizabeth was then large with pregnancy or "burly" as her husband put it.

<sup>34</sup> The Eppes, Martha Jefferson, and their respective children probably moved in together so that Francis Eppes could watch over both families while Thomas Jefferson was away and conditions in Virginia were somewhat unstable. That the families retreated to The Forest rather than Winterpock suggests that the older plantation was better suited to their occupancy. However, Jefferson's shopping for glassware for Francis Eppes suggests that Eppes was in the process of outfitting a personal residence. During this period Martha Jefferson also spent some time at Elk Hill, in the Virginia Piedmont and Francis Eppes visited the plantation (Boyd 1950:I:576).

<sup>35</sup> Tabitha Wayles Skipwith died sometime prior to January 5, 1775, when her widower, Robert Skipwith, married Betty Nichols of Dinwiddie County. He was living in Dinwiddie, near Petersburg (Pinkney, January 5, 1775).

<sup>36</sup> There is no evidence that Francis Eppes VI of Chesterfield County served in the military. However, his cousin, Francis (Frank) Eppes, became a major and a lieutenant colonel but became ill and died in 1776 ([www.fold3.com](http://www.fold3.com)).

<sup>37</sup> Land tax rolls for the 1790s also are incomplete for Amelia County.

<sup>38</sup> Archibald Thweatt and his brothers, John James, Richard N. I, and Thomas were born at Palestine in Prince George County. Archibald served as a member of Prince George County's corresponding committee in the 1800 election and was involved in the Republican Party (Richer and ----- 19--:17).

<sup>39</sup> Many of the men who served as Chesterfield County's tax assessors held office for many years. Although an American monetary system began to develop as early as 1793, Chesterfield's assessments continued to be recorded in pounds, shillings and pence through 1820, probably because tax officials (and those being taxed) thought in those terms.

<sup>40</sup> Asses and mules were valued for their ability to work as draft animals during hot weather.

<sup>41</sup> At the close of the nineteenth century an anonymous writer said that Francis Eppes of Eppington had a bull of what was known as "the Boyington stock," a breed known for its fine oxen. Eppes reportedly used the bull as breeding stock and the line was carried on by John Wayles Eppes (Anonymous 1926:167-168).

<sup>42</sup> This point was not lost on Mrs. Frances Trollope, who visited the United States in 1827. She not only fond slavery a mockery of the Americans' claim that "All men are born free and equal," but wrote that the "kindly attention bestowed upon the health of the slaves [because] a valued piece of property would be endangered. Unhappily the slaves, too, know this and the consequence is that real kindly feeling very rarely can exist between the parties" (Trollope 1949:245).

<sup>43</sup> Maps of Shirley Plantation, dating to 1820 and ca. 1866, show planting beds that were located directly behind each of seven slave cabins. Each garden plot, which was 15 feet wide, was separated from neighboring ones by a ditch (Anonymous 1820, [1866]).

<sup>44</sup> This was at a time when only 8.7 percent of county taxpayers owned taxable wheeled vehicles.

<sup>45</sup> During this period, many of Virginia's Anglican churches came into the hands of other denominations or simply fell into disrepair.

<sup>46</sup> According to noted genealogist, John Dorman, Elizabeth Wayles Eppes, who married Dr. David Walker, died at Eppington on December 5, 1805 (Dorman 1999:II:399). Neither Eppes nor Jefferson family correspondence include

this Elizabeth's name (*Petersburg Republican*, December 12, 1805; *Virginia Argus*, December 14, 1805; *Petersburg Intelligencer*, December 13, 1805).

<sup>47</sup> Afterward, the name Eppington was in frequent use by the Eppes and Jefferson families and their contemporaries.

<sup>48</sup> Mary was born on August 1, 1778.

<sup>49</sup> This statement raises the possibility that the schoolhouse at Eppington was constructed to accommodate the teacher that Eppes proposed to hire.

<sup>50</sup> Jefferson was then in Annapolis.

<sup>51</sup> Sally was the Jefferson children's aunt although she was only a young girl. She would have served as their nursemaid and personal servant.

<sup>52</sup> That is, the Eppes' daughter, Martha Bolling, who was born in November 1778. Thomas Jefferson's sister, Mary, had married into the Bolling family, who also were related to the Eppes. Numerous references to the presence of the Eppes, Bolling, and Jefferson children at Eppington suggest that the young cousins were close friends and congregated there frequently.

<sup>53</sup> Nearly 25 years later, Eppington was still considered remote (see ahead).

<sup>54</sup> One of the twin girls died and reportedly was buried in the cemetery at Eppington. Given the length of Francis and Elizabeth Wayles Eppes' marriage, it is likely that they lost other infants.

<sup>55</sup> John Wayles Eppes attended the University of Pennsylvania and graduated from Hampden-Sydney College in 1786. He was admitted to the bar in 1794 ([www.lva.virginia.gov](http://www.lva.virginia.gov)).

<sup>56</sup> Archaeological tests, conducted in 2001, revealed that beneath the cellar's clay floor was fill that contained fragments of refined earthenware, stoneware, wine bottle glass, cut nails, bone, and other debris (WMCAR 2001:1-11).

<sup>57</sup> On June 9, 1793, Eppes wrote to William B. Giles, one of his creditors, to say that he had a payment ready for him (Francis Eppes to William B. Giles, June 9, 1793). Some of the correspondence between Eppes and Jefferson indicates that the unsettled conditions of overseas markets after the Revolution put American tobacco growers on an uneasy and disadvantageous footing.

<sup>58</sup> The Eppes couple originally had intended to give him 3,419  $\frac{3}{4}$  acres on the Appomattox River in Cumberland County, a tract called Argola, but rescinded their offer and gave him some slaves and land at Bermuda Hundred instead (Albemarle County Deed Book 1:363-364).

<sup>59</sup> In 1796 only 11 percent of Chesterfield County landowners were in possession of 751 or more acres. By 18900 that percentage had dropped to 6 percent. In 1862 when Eppington passed out of the hands of the Eppes and their kin, Eppington's new owner automatically qualified for that elite group (McCartney 1988: Table 6).

<sup>60</sup> That is, Mary Bolling, Thomas Jefferson's sister.

<sup>61</sup> Martha Carr was Thomas Jefferson's sister.

<sup>62</sup> Mary said that John Wayles Eppes had discharged his overseer at Bermuda Hundred and intended to stay there until he could hire another (Betts and Bear 1966:171).

<sup>63</sup> Millbrook, destroyed in 1866, was near what became Farmville.

<sup>64</sup> Francis Wayles Eppes became one of Thomas Jefferson's favorites and inherited his Bedford County plantation known as Poplar Forest. Jefferson also freed John, Madison, and Eston Hemings ([www.encyclopediavirginia.org/will\\_and\\_codicil\\_of\\_Thomas\\_Jefferson](http://www.encyclopediavirginia.org/will_and_codicil_of_Thomas_Jefferson)).

<sup>65</sup> This probably was a reference to *Magnolia tripetala*, which reportedly grows in the Appalachian Mountains.

<sup>66</sup> Young Francis was very fond of his nursemaid, a slave named Betsy, and John Wayles Eppes said that "he has become so strongly attached to her that he could not possibly travel without her."

<sup>67</sup> A recipe book compiled by the widowed Martha Burke Jones Eppes, between 1823 and 1857, is preserved at the Library of Virginia ([www.lva.virginia.gov](http://www.lva.virginia.gov)).

<sup>68</sup> Although no evidence has come to light suggesting that Edmund Ruffin gave Francis Eppes VI advice on his farming operations, the two men were acquainted and occasionally exchanged letters (Ruffin, November 16, 1790).

<sup>69</sup> Henry Skipwith, who also was a trustee, was Francis Eppes VI's brother-in-law.

<sup>70</sup> That is, Joseph Eggleston, one of Francis Eppes' fellow trustees of the Upper Appomattox Company. He had been named a trustee in 1796 and in 1801 became the company's president.

<sup>71</sup> The writer made reference to Lucy Elizabeth (Mrs. Archibald Thweatt), Mary Eppes (Mrs. Richard N. Thweatt), Martha Bolling (Mrs. Jerman Baker), Matilda (Mrs. Richard Field), and Sally (Mrs. John W. Lane). He said nothing about the Eppes couple's children who died before his time: their oldest daughter, Elizabeth Wayles; their second oldest daughter, Lucy Elizabeth, who died in 1784; and Mary Eppes Thweatt's twin sister, born in 1787.

<sup>72</sup> A reference to the mill pond and old mill road in an 1817 deed (see ahead) raises the possibility that the mill was on the lower part of Winterpock Creek, southwest of topographic benchmark 172, at a site that was inundated when Lake Appomattox was constructed.

<sup>73</sup> In August 1774 John Harrower, an indentured servant who served as schoolmaster at Belvidera, William Daingerfield's plantation near Fredericksburg, said that his "school is a neate little House 20 foot Long and 12 foot wide & stands by itself at the end of an Avenue of planting" and was at a distance from the main house. He said that "There comes a bonny black bairm every morning to clean it out and make my bed." He said that he was provided with fine feather bed, a pair of sheets, a thin blanket, and a cotton bedspread. On October 31, 1774, Harrower noted in his diary that "This morning two Carpenters was to put new weather board [on] my house on the outside with featherage [feather-edged] plank, and to new plaster it on the Inside with shell lime" (Harrower 1963:56-57, 68).

<sup>74</sup> Jerman Baker represented Cumberland County in the General Assembly from 1803 to 1809 and from 1813 to 1817 (*Virginia Argus*, November 30, 1798; Kneebone 1998:I:292-293).

<sup>75</sup> Dr. David Walker, who continued to live in Petersburg, was elected the city's representative to the General Assembly and was to commence serving in 1816. However, he died in mid-July (Norfolk *American Beacon*, April 8, 1816; July 22, 1816).

<sup>76</sup> Sweet Springs, a popular resort, was in what is now Monroe County, West Virginia. It was frequented by many prominent individuals.

<sup>77</sup> Jerman Baker, who attended the College of William and Mary, settled in Cumberland County (Kneebone, John T., *Dictionary of Virginia Biography* 1998:I:292-293).

<sup>78</sup> On December 20, 1812, when John W. Eppes and Jerman Baker, as Francis Eppes VI's executors, transferred much of the decedent's property to Archibald Thweatt, they noted that his will had been recorded in the Richmond District Court and that it was on record in the Henrico County Superior Court (Chesterfield County Deed Book 19:538-540).

<sup>79</sup> Mary Eppes married Richard Noble Thweatt I in November 1809, whereas Sally or Sarah Eppes wed attorney John W. Lane in September 1811. Lane lived at Vacluse in Amelia County and served in the House of Delegates from 1814 to 1818. He also was a colonel in the local militia. John W. Lane died in Amelia County in April 1820 (Dorman 1999:II:410, 413-414).

<sup>80</sup> Interestingly, in May 1835 Willis Pillar surveyed the Henrico County farm owned by Henry Cox I, whose son, Henry II, eventually purchased Eppington (Henrico County Plat Book 1:130).

<sup>81</sup> Archibald and Lucy Eppes Thweatt granted Lot 13 of Petersburg's Bollingbrook Ward to Mary Adams on August 5, 1805 (*Petersburg Intelligencer*, December 14, 1802; Petersburg Hustings Court Deed Book 2:730-732).

<sup>82</sup> Lucy said that she was enclosing "a sample of the best narrow Diaper (a coarse cloth) I can get, also the long-lann that is very good at 9/." She added that they had sent word to a Mr. Wilcox to promised to respond at his first opportunity (<http://tjrs.monticello.org/letter/583>).

<sup>83</sup> Elizabeth Wayles Eppes was buried in the family cemetery at Eppington. Her gravestone notes that her husband, Francis, was interred at Sweet Springs (Hanna and Petrone 2013:5).

<sup>84</sup> In 1802 Thweatt, a law student, fought a duel with Edwin Fort, a merchant, near Petersburg and Fort was killed. At issue were the men's opposing views of the replacement of a port official. Thweatt was wounded in the hand and shoulder (Dorman 1999:II:410; *Petersburg Intelligencer*, September 13, 1802). Richard N. Thweatt and Mary (Polly) Eppes married on November 16, 1809 (Chesterfield County Marriage Register 1771-1854).

<sup>85</sup> Madison's map, first published in 1807, identifies the site of Eppington.

<sup>86</sup> In 1814 an estimated 41 percent of Chesterfield County taxpayers owned taxable wheeled vehicles.

<sup>87</sup> This table probably accommodated three leaves.

<sup>88</sup> Richard Field of Brunswick County, who was only 23-years-old and a captain in the militia, died in late October or early November 1817. Later, the widowed Matilda Eppes Field married A. B. Spooner, a Petersburg attorney who represented the community in the General Assembly (*Essex Register*, Salem Massachusetts, November 5, 1817; *Alexandria Herald*, Alexandria, Virginia, April 25, 1823; *Richmond Enquirer*, Richmond, Virginia, December 8, 1826).

<sup>89</sup> At its 1818-1819 session, General Assembly members enacted legislation that was intended to generate additional tax revenue. Under the new law, which took effect on February 1, 1820, county tax commissioners were to determine the assessed value of newly constructed buildings, adding their estimated worth to the assessed value of the land on which they stood. Tax officials were told not to assess any new building that was worth less than \$100 or uninhabitable and to make sure that their estimates were applied fairly and uniformly throughout their districts. Unfortunately, when assembly members crafted the new tax law, they failed to specify how county tax commissioners were supposed to deal with older buildings, that is, structures that had been erected *prior* to February 1, 1820. As a result, some tax assessors ignored the older structures, regardless of their value, and focused exclusively upon new construction. This omission, which deprived the state of revenue, was discovered when the State Auditor's Office received the records compiled during the 1820 assessment.<sup>89</sup> Therefore, when the General Assembly convened in its 1820-1821 session, its members explicitly instructed "the commissioners of the revenue to value all old buildings within their respective districts, which may have been omitted in the last assessment, in the same manner in which they are now directed by law to value new buildings." That is, assessors were to include all *habitable* buildings, whether old or new, with the exception of new buildings worth less than \$100.

<sup>90</sup> In this instance, Lucy would have waived her rights to her dower third as well as her legal interest as an Eppes heir.

<sup>91</sup> He died on April 30, 1820, at his home in Amelia County (Dorman 1999:II:413; *Richmond Enquirer*, May 5, 1820).

<sup>92</sup> He had been elected state treasurer on January 20, 1820 (Dorman 1999:II:408).

<sup>93</sup> Near an obelisk in the Eppes family cemetery at Eppington is a marker, memorializing Richard N. Thweatt I, deceased on May 13, 1835, and his wife, the former Mary Eppes, deceased in 1860. Both seem to have been buried there. Richard's obituary contradicts the claim that he took his own life (Hanna and Petrone 2013:5-6).

<sup>94</sup> The presence of these specialized workers suggests that there may have been a carpenter's shop and a blacksmith's shop at Eppington during the Thweatt ownership.

<sup>95</sup> Mary was born in 1788 and died on April 24, 1860. Lucy was born in 1786.

<sup>96</sup> Richard Noble Thweatt I, Archibald Thweatt's brother, who died in 1835, was residing in Dinwiddie County in 1820 when he purchased Mantua. He moved to Chesterfield and added to his holdings until his plantation was one of the largest in the county. According to Jeffrey M. O'Dell, Richard N. Thweatt I's will stipulated that his wife, Mary, was to have use of his estate until their seven children (six girls and a boy) came of age. Son Richard II stood to inherit 1,155 acres and the Mantua dwelling, along with all of his father's books. Richard N. Thweatt I eventually added a codicil to his will, noting that because his son Richard II, was going to inherit substantially more land than his sisters stood to receive, Richard II was supposed to give each of them \$100. The bulk of the late Richard N. Thweatt I's Mantua estate remained intact until 1861, a year after his widow's death. At that time, the Thweatts' five married daughters sold their property to their sister, Julia, and her husband, the Rev. Augustus B. Tizzard, an Episcopal minister. The deed noted that the sellers were to retain mineral rights to the property (O'Dell 1983:183-184).

<sup>97</sup> According to the Dale Parish Register, kept by the Rev. A. B. Tizzard, in 1841 and 1847 two black men "of Eppington" were buried on the plantation (Hanna and Petrone 2013:5).

<sup>98</sup> 1850 was the first year in which agricultural census records were compiled. Usually the information was collected by the same man who served as the census-taker.

<sup>99</sup> Slave schedules allowed the census-taker to indicate whether individual slaves were black or mulatto, that is, racially mixed.

<sup>100</sup> The Haskins child and another youngster, Richard Edward Haskins Jr., who were the offspring of Richard Edward Haskins Sr. and his wife, Louisa Edith Thweatt, were buried in the cemetery at Eppington during the late 1850s. In 1850 Cornelia Elizabeth Leigh, who was age 8 and the daughter of Egbert Giles Leith and Cornelia Wayles Leigh, also was interred there. All three of these youngsters were the grandchildren of Richard N. Thweatt I and his wife, the former Mary Eppes (Hanna and Petrone 2013:4-5, 14; Dorman 1999:II:412).

<sup>101</sup> At the estate sale of Francis Eppes VI in 1810, Lucy's husband, Archibald Thweatt, purchased a silver cross and two silver cans or mugs on her behalf.

<sup>102</sup> Lane was the son of Lucy's sister, Sally, and her husband, John W. Lane Sr.

<sup>103</sup> Carpenter-Sam (or perhaps his father) was one of the slaves Archibald Thweatt left to his wife, Lucy, in 1836. Another such individual was Blacksmith Billy.

<sup>104</sup> According to census records, Mrs. Mary E. Berkeley, the 46-year-old wife of Parke E. Berkeley, an Episcopal clergyman, and their 15-year-old daughter, Lucy, lived across the Appomattox River in Amelia County (Amelia County Census 1860).

<sup>105</sup> Ground penetrating radar was used as a means of identifying the boundaries of the family cemetery at Eppington. It was determined that the extent picket fence around the cemetery accurately defines its boundaries (Hanna and Petrone 2013:1-14).

<sup>106</sup> In 1851 Blankenship and his wife, Elizabeth, gave a one-acre lot on Bevils Bridge Road as the site of Trinity Episcopal Church, the successor to the eighteenth century Sapponey Church. According to Jeffrey O'Dell, the Sapponey Church was located approximately halfway between Route 360 and Taylor Road, south of Deer Range Road (O'Dell 1983:291-292, 350 note 18).

<sup>107</sup> Later, her remarried sister, Mrs. Matilda Spooner, erected a gravestone to mark the site where Lucy and Archibald Thweatt were interred. In 1850 Matilda, who was age 50, and A. D. Spooner, who was 58 and still practicing law, were living in a Petersburg hotel (Petersburg Census 1850).

<sup>108</sup> Mary Thweatt's May 25, 1860, inventory bears her name and the executors she appointed to settle her estate authenticated it. That inventory, which is room-by-room, mentions the parlor's four window blinds and four that belonged to the dining-room, precisely the same number of windows in those two rooms at Mantua (Chesterfield County Will Book 22:398-400). Thus, the person who indexed Chesterfield County's will book in 1860 made a simple mistake. Chesterfield County death records reveal that Mrs. Mary Eppes Thweatt, who was 73, died of paralysis after an illness that lasted for only three days (Chesterfield County Mortality Schedules 1850-1885). Thus, she appears to have had a massive stroke.

<sup>109</sup> Although Eppington's acreage was included on one of the maps in this collection, virtually all of its buildings were omitted (Michler 1864).

<sup>110</sup> The analysis of 146 randomly sampled Chesterfield County slaveholding households reveals that approximately 83 percent of all slave owners housed between one and five slaves per cabin (McCartney 1988).

<sup>111</sup> A diligent but unsuccessful search was made for the Thweatts, John W. Lane, Richard Maxey, and others who might have been running Eppington's farming operations. Mrs. Mary Thweatt's estate, Mantua, was listed by name in the agricultural census records for 1860 but the census-taker failed to compile information on the property.

<sup>112</sup> This means that Richard N. Thweatt II mortgaged his legal interest in Eppington approximately a year before his aunt died.

<sup>113</sup> He may have allowed one or more of his late wife's family members, or perhaps one of his kinsmen, to reside at Eppington.

<sup>114</sup> This would have been the easternmost part of the Eppington tract, as depicted on D. Y. Huddleston's January 1866 plat.

<sup>115</sup> The Pittsburgh City Directory for 1862 indicates that a butcher named William Hinds had a shop at 1 Hines Row and lived near Liberty and Lumber Streets. A Thomas Hinds, who also was a butcher but operated a butcher's stall, lived in the same location ([www.fold3.com](http://www.fold3.com)).