

Many veterans did not go West but sold their land grants. Some of them never applied for the grants and as late as fifty years after the end of the War Congress was compiling lists of veterans who had not called for their land warrants and was employing agents to track them down.

The tracing of our ancestors has been made very difficult by two other historical facts. In 1790 the first United States census was taken and the census records were placed in the Capitol Building in Washington, D. C. During the War of 1812 the British burned the Capitol with all its contents. In the case of most counties copies of the census records were available. However, there were no copies of the records for Prince William County or Fairfax County. Therefore there is no record of where our ancestors were living in 1790.

Also Fairfax County and to a greater extent Prince William County suffered irreparable losses during the Civil War. Many of the records in the Courthouse at Fairfax were destroyed and both the Courthouse in Prince William and all the records (except for some which had been removed by the clerk) were destroyed. These records contained many documents which would be helpful in tracing our ancestors.

Occoquan

The Town of Occoquan is in Prince William County at the head of the navigable portion of Occoquan River. Fairfax County is on the north side of the River. There was an

*Martin Scarlett File
Source: Mrs. Stephen Darrow
Wentbridge, Va.*

Indian settlement at Occoquan when the Spanish came in 1565. In 1608 Captain John Smith in his voyage up the Potomac went to Occoquan. After the settlers arrived, the entire area from the falls down to the Potomac was known as Occoquan (Harrison).

In the early years the areas between the various rivers which flowed from the mountains into the Potomac were called "Necks" and were so designated on all the maps. The area from Neabsco Creek to Occoquan River was known as Burbage's Neck. It was so named because the original owner Thomas Burbage of Nansemond received a land grant of 3,000 acres in the area in 1653 (Harrison 46). The area on the northerly side of Occoquan River where High Point is located was named Dogues Neck because it was inhabited by the Doeg Indians.

In the early days all supplies for settlers living north of the Occoquan River were brought by ship to a place on the River which was later named Colchester and a large and prosperous town developed which was officially established by an Act of 1753 (Slaughter's Truro Parish). One of our ancestors William Lindsay was engaged in the shipping business there.

As a result of the prosperity at Colchester, communication was opened from the south by road and a ferry was established over the Occoquan by George Mason one of the ancestors of George Mason of Gunston Hall. Later a wooden bridge was built at Colchester and this resulted in the establishment of the Town of Woodbridge. However, Colchester

soon fell into decay due largely to the fact that shipping lanes were opened up to what is now the City of Alexandria and also due to the fact that a highway (so-called) was laid out from Alexandria to Occoquan and in 1795 an iron bridge was built over the River at Occoquan near the Falls.

In the meantime in the early 1700's Scottish merchants, most of whom were from Glasgow, established their businesses at Dumfries, and that town was officially created in 1749. The businesses flourished and large homes were built. However, by 1800 the town was almost abandoned, due to the fact that silt had reduced the depth of water in the River to such an extent that ships could not come up to the Town.

Occoquan then entered upon its period of prosperity. It was named as the county seat and the local church which was later named the Pohick Church and was attended by George Washington, George Mason and other notables was known as the Occoquan Church. The Hammill Hotel was built in 1804 and at or about this time an iron foundry, a cotton mill and a flour mill were all built and operated by waterpower from the Falls. However, this prosperity did not last long. The iron foundry was abandoned, the cotton mill burned and only the flour mill continued until fairly recent times. The town received a near-fatal blow in June, 1972, when Hurricane Agnes destroyed the iron bridge and low-lying portions of the town.

Deep Hole Farm

The farm is located on Burbage's Neck between Marumsee Creek and the Occoquan River, at the point where the

...flows into the Potomac. It is now the site of a radar station maintained by the United States Government.

As stated above, Thomas Burbage received a grant of this area in 1653 but it is doubtful if he ever settled there as Martin Scarlett received a grant in 1657 for the entire area which was described as Deep Hole Estate (Northern Neck 1:150). Apparently, Thomas Davis and Henry Corbin had some claim to the property as Scarlett received a deed from them about 1689. He did not live there long as he died in 1695 leaving a son who died in 1698. There was also a Richard Scarlett in Virginia in 1678 but his relationship to Martin Scarlett is not known (23 Va. 596).

Apparently, Scarlett's title escheated because in 1724 Deep Hole Estate was conveyed for one ear of Indian corn by the Proprietors of the Northern Neck to John Calvert and Jacob Gibson (Deed Book D).

In 1739 George Calvert, Jr., was living on the property and by deed dated May 26, 1739, sold his one-half share to John Gregg for 3,500 pounds of tobacco (Deed Book D pp. 141-3). Between that date and 1824 the property was acquired by Colonel John Tayloe who by his will recorded in King George County devised the property consisting of Deep Hole, Mount Pleasant and "the Farm with the Marsh Fishery". Deep Hole Estate was thereafter broken up and sold in parts by the executors and trustees of the Tayloe Estate and Deep Hole Farm was in various ownerships until August 17, 1909 when it was conveyed to John Lindsay Dawson by the executors of the estate of William Metzger. It remained in the Dawson

family until 1949.

In examining the records relating to Deep Hole, two matters were clarified. In the 1850 census, William Grigsby (black) was listed as living with the family of our ancestor Vernon Davis. On the Fry and Jefferson Map of 1755 the word "Grigsby" is written over the area of the Farm. A person named Grigsby held title to the Farm at an early date and William Grigsby was doubtless a descendant of one of his slaves.

The other matter is more complicated. From Colonial times there had been a cemetery on the Farm but some owner prior to 1909 had removed the gravestones and plowed up the cemetery. The rumor was that most of the gravestones had been used as the foundation for a large barn. However, two gravestones remained and these had been removed from the cemetery site and placed along the high-water mark of Occoquan River.

Many of you have seen these gravestones. One of them is marked "Martin Scarlett 1695" and states that "Here lyes the body of Martin Scarlett, Gent". The other gravestone bears at the top a skull and crossbones and a date 1698 and states "Here lyes the body of Scarlett Martin, son of Martin Scarlett, Gent".

It was always a matter of speculation as to the reason for the reversal of the name of the deceased son, the omission of "Gent." after his name and the addition of the skull and crossbones.

An even more curious fact is that a visitor who saw the gravestones in 1903 does not mention the second one

described above but states that on a second one the first name was not decipherable but that Scarlett was the last name (11 W. & M. 145). Another person who saw the gravestones stated that the second one bore the name "Jane Scarlett", and in the book "Prince William County, Virginia" it is stated that the second one bore the name "John Scarlett". See also Templeman's "Northern Virginia Heritage" where a picture of the first gravestone appears at page 26 and it is stated at page 179 that the second one is of a son John.

Unless there were other gravestones which disappeared between 1903 and 1909, each of these reports was incorrect. If they have not been removed since 1949 the two gravestones are still there. At that time they had been moved from their former site and placed as boundary markers by a surveyor. Their present location is set forth in a deed dated February 25, 1939, recorded in Deed Book No. 102 at page 90.

This is enough of the history. Anyone interested in details should read "Landmarks of Old Prince William, a Study of Origins in Northern Virginia", by Fairfax Harrison published in 1924; "Fauquier County, Virginia, during the Proprietorship" by H. C. Groome published in 1927; and "Adventurers of Purse and Person, Virginia 1607-1625" which was sponsored by the Order of First Families of Virginia and compiled and edited by Annie Lash Jester and Martha Woodroff Hiden.

The book last mentioned starts with the 1,232 settlers who were still living in Virginia in 1625 and after tracing them through two generations picks out 109 who were the only ones whose line had not died out during that period. It then gives a detailed account of all references in Colonial records to those 109 settlers and their descendants during two generations. It contains the name of George Calvert, who is one of our ancestors, of Captain James Davis and Thomas Davis who may be among our ancestors, of William Dawson who is probably among our ancestors, and of Arthur, Richard and Captain Roger Smith who would possibly be among our ancestors.