



REVOLUTIONARY SHORE!

A Self-Guided Driving Tour of Northampton County, Virginia

#1 – Introduction

Southern Gateway Welcome Center at the Chesapeake Bay Bridge-Tunnel. 32383 Charles M Lankford Jr Memorial Hwy

You are standing at the gateway to the Revolutionary Shore. The United States of America's story starts well before 1776 right here in Northampton County, once part of the ancient Kingdom of Accawmacke. Near this area Spanish explorer Lucas Vaquez d'Ayllon arrived in 1524, long before the first English landing party led by Bartholomew Gilbert in 1603 and well preceding Captain John Smith's famed 1608 exploration of this remarkable peninsula bounded by the Chesapeake Bay and Atlantic Ocean.

Don't be fooled by the beautiful idyllic landscape before you today. These roads, buildings, and waterways are teeming with Revolutionary stories: wartime stories of fierce independence, spies and international smuggling, waterfront battles, divided loyalties, religious discord, political intrigues and protests, even a colorful scandal or two. Are things so different now from 1776?

You are beginning an expedition into history with the self-guided driving tour of Northampton County, home to the oldest continuous court records in the United States. You will drive an old stagecoach route off Route 13 and travel scenic byways where patriots who fought with Washington once mustered and where Martha Washington's first father-in-law is buried. The quaint coastal spots you will visit are perfect Americana today but were once prime targets for British attacks. You will pass farmed fields known as "the breadbasket of the Revolution" and learn of enslaved workers who risked their lives to be part of the great wave of liberty. Along the way enjoy our wonderful cuisine, unique shops, and engaging museums. Now, let's start this journey!

Before you go, we suggest you take a copy of Kirk Mariner's book Off 13: The Eastern Shore of Virginia Guidebook available at local bookstores, museums, and some giftshops. Binoculars are recommended and bug spray from spring to fall. If you have any concerns, get lost, or need local information, please call the ESVA Tourism Welcome Center at 757-331-1660. Keep in mind that cell phone reception is limited in many areas on the Shore. Paper maps may be available at Stop 1 – the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel (CBBT) Welcome Center.

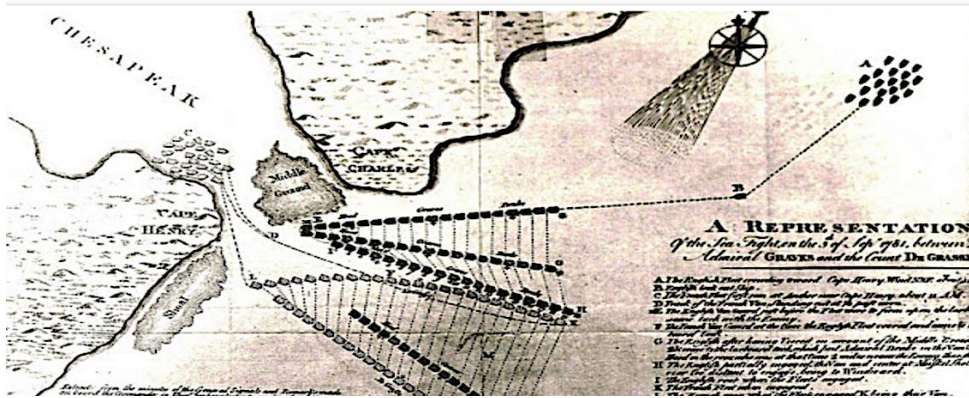
To start the tour: *Drive distance 1.6 miles. Turn right onto Route 13, heading north. In .3 miles, turn right onto Seaside Rd. Go .3 miles. Turn right onto Fitchetts Road and go to the end, which is an intersection with Hallett Circle. You will see a parking lot and trail markers to the overlook. *** You can also walk from the trail entrance at the back of the CBBT Visitor Center parking lot; turn right at entrance. OR you can walk from the ESVA Wildlife Refuge Visitor Center, 32205 Seaside Road, parking lot on a marked trail.*

#2 Battle of the Capes and Golden Quarter

ESVA National Wildlife Refuge, 5348 Hallett Circle, Cape Charles. *Note: Not an exact address!*

Down the marked trail are two overlooks that have a grand view of the opening of the Chesapeake Bay and a historic cemetery. Interpretive signage also provides historical information about prior military uses of the Refuge property. After this stop, enjoy visiting the Refuge Visitor Center, which is free and has public bathrooms. You will also see directional signage to the refuge wharf, which has a nice view toward the seaside's Smith Island.

From this spot in 1781, you would have seen and heard the fierce fighting between the tall ships of the English and French. The Battle of the Capes, also called the Battle of the Chesapeake, is considered by historians to be the most important naval battle of the Revolutionary War. On the late afternoon of September 5, 1781, after sailing southward from New York along the Shore coast, the British Fleet commanded by Sir Thomas Graves engaged the French Fleet commanded by Comte de Grasse between Cape Charles and Cape Henry. They fought until the sun went down and, when it arose, the British were too embattled to resume the fight. The French now firmly controlled the Chesapeake, Lord Cornwallis and the British army at Yorktown was encircled, and he surrendered on October 19, 1781.



Golden Quarter

This property was part of a large plantation called “Golden Quarter.” When we look at the history of this property, we can learn about the legal rights of women around the time of the Revolution War. Anne Neech Eyre Mifflin Roberts was heir of lands at Golden Quarter. Northampton court records show that she and her husband Humphrey Roberts sold part in 1764, but Anne appears still in ownership of lands nearby in 1801, as are her heirs.

Anne and her British born Loyalist second husband, Humphrey Roberts, primarily lived in Portsmouth, Virginia, but he fled to Great Britain during the Revolution. Anne likely then returned to Golden Quarter for a time. She freed, or promised freedom to, her enslaved workers at the prompting of her cousin, Quaker abolitionist Warner Mifflin. Upon Anne's husband's post-war return, he demanded return of the enslaved property with the claim that it was his property and she had no right to her actions. His demands ultimately led to the complicated and revelatory 1794 case of *Tom v. Roberts* heard by the Virginia legal scholar, Judge Henry St. George Tucker, Sr.

The case is still studied as a precedent in women's property rights, as well as judicial activism and confiscation. Under the law of “coverture,” the legal status of a married woman, Anne Neech Eyre Mifflin Roberts had to fight in court to protect her property rights, including enslaved and real property rights.

To Stop 3: Drive distance 9.2 miles. Turn right onto Route 13, heading north. In 5.8 miles, turn left onto Arlington Road. Go straight east toward the Bay. At one point Arlington Road veers left, but keep going straight on Custis Tomb Drive. In a bit, the road will make a hard right past some houses. Take the road to the end and turn right onto Arlington Chase Road. After a few hundred feet, you will find a small parking lot with signage on the right.

#3 Arlington Plantation and Custis' Tomb

2157 Arlington Chase Rd

Interpretive signage describes archaeological discoveries at this site. You will also have a beautiful view of Old Plantation Creek. Bring your binoculars for birding. There are no convenience facilities at this site. Everything but the tomb area and field with signage is private property. Thank you for respecting the neighbors' privacy.

One hundred years before 1776, this site played a key role in a well-known rebellion against the colonial government, a rebellion known as Bacon's Rebellion.

This was the site of Arlington plantation, built by John Custis II, the founder of the Custis family in Virginia. Custis was raised in Rotterdam, in the Netherlands, and moved to the Eastern Shore of Virginia in 1649 or 1650. Custis became wealthy through land speculation, tobacco planting, and facilitating trade between Virginia and the Netherlands and its colonies. Early in the 1670s he built a mansion here and named it Arlington. The house was the namesake of Arlington House, the nineteenth-century home of the Washington and Custis families, the grounds of which now serve as our Nation's Arlington National Cemetery.

John Custis had accumulated more than 1,000 acres of land by 1664 and an additional 10,000 acres during the next quarter century. The Custis workforce of servants and slaves grew into one of the largest on the Eastern Shore. His commercial activities centered on New Amsterdam, a logical trading destination for a man with his background. He assembled cargoes of tobacco for shipment to the Dutch colony and acted as the Virginia agent for merchants from New Netherland and Rotterdam, as well as New England. Custis's facility in the Dutch language enhanced his value as an intermediary in international commerce. When Peter Stuyvesant, the governor of New Netherland, corresponded with the governor and Council of Virginia on an important admiralty matter in 1663, Virginia officials relied on Custis to translate the documents. New Netherland was the Dutch colony that was in the present states of New York, New Jersey, Connecticut, and Delaware.

In 1659 Custis became county sheriff, and the following year the governor appointed him to the Northampton County Court. He served another term as sheriff in 1665 and 1666, and remained a justice of the peace until 1677. Custis became a captain in the county militia in 1664, was commissioned a colonel in 1673, and ended his career in 1692 as commander in chief of all forces on the Eastern Shore. John Custis II then became a member of the governor's Council from 1677 to 1692.

During Bacon's Rebellion in 1676, Custis was a major general in Governor Sir William Berkeley's army. After the governor fled Jamestown and took refuge on the Eastern Shore, Berkeley made his temporary headquarters at Arlington. Custis's loyalty to the government won plaudits from two of the commissioners the king sent to investigate the rebellion. Sir John Berry praised Custis's courage and generous offer to lend the Crown £1,000 sterling to provision the king's ships, and Francis Moryson once addressed him as "Honest Jack."

While Thomas Jefferson portrayed Nathaniel Bacon as a hero in the fight for independence, modern scholars are now viewing Bacon in a not-so-favorable light. Nathaniel Bacon's role in raiding and attacking Native American villages and killing their residents paints a dark picture of his rebellious intentions. Some scholars also refer to his rebellion as planting seeds of racism, which lent justification to the enslavement of Africans.

Fast forward four generations, let us turn to John Custis's descendant Daniel Parke Custis, best known as Martha Dandridge Custis Washington's first husband. After his death, the widowed Martha married General George Washington. Martha and Daniel Parke Custis's grandson, George Washington Parke Custis, built Arlington House, site of the National Cemetery. George Washington Parke Custis's daughter, Mary Randolph Custis married General Robert E. Lee. As we said at the beginning of this tour, the Eastern Shore has been a seed for independent, if not rebellious, thought.

To Stop 4: *Drive distance 4 miles.* Return to Route 13. Turn left, heading north. Drive 1.8 miles. You will see the church with the historical marker on the left, but you will need to drive a bit further and make a U-turn.

#4 Elijah Baker and Northampton Baptist Church

Elijah Baker Historic Marker Lower Northampton Baptist Church, 24280 Charles M Lankford Jr Memorial Hwy

There are no convenience facilities at this site. Please be respectful of sacred grounds.

The Eastern Shore faithful have long fought for religious freedom. Baptist, Methodist, and Presbyterian Protestant denominations in the United States have their earliest roots on the Shore.

On Easter Sunday, 1776, Elijah Baker preached what was the first Baptist sermon on the Eastern Shore about one mile from this spot. His revolutionary act highlights the

Freedom of Religion we enjoy today. The King's religion was the Church of England, which was the sole legal religion prior to our Nation's independence.

Elijah Baker, the pioneer of the Baptists on the Eastern Shore of Virginia, was born in Lunenburg County, Virginia, in 1742. He was baptized in 1769, by Elder Samuel Harris. Illiterate though he was, he immediately began to speak in public. While preaching in Gloucester, Virginia, he made the acquaintance of Mr. Thomas Elliott, a former resident of the Eastern Shore, who desired that his brethren in the flesh might be saved.

Accordingly, in the spring of 1776 the two set sail and arrived on the Eastern Shore of Virginia on Easter Sunday. They went immediately to an Established Church in which a clergyman was to preach that day. After waiting for some time, and finding the minister did not come, Mr. Baker told the people that he would preach for them if they would go down to the road.

We would infer from this that the use of the established church was denied them. The novelty of the scene excited the people and they went. Mr. Baker had no other pulpit other than a horseblock which he mounted, and delivered the first sermon preached by a Baptist on the Eastern Shore.

A few weeks later Baker and his brother, Leonard, returned. The parson of the Anglican Church "gave notice" that he would prove the Baptists to be in error at church service. Baker continued to preach in homes, barns, and outdoors for over a week. He also preached in Accomack.

His continued efforts led to his being charged for preaching without a license on May 27, 1778. He was imprisoned at in the Old Debtor's Prison in Drummondtown, now called the Town of Accomac. Baker was released on a £100 bond with the help of local resident William Gibb who loaned half. After continuing to preach thus violating court order, Baker was reimprisoned because Gibb asked to be discharged from his £50 bond. Baker continued to preach from his prison window and was sometimes pelted by apples and stones, though some continued to come listen. By the time of his death in 1798, Elijah Baker established eighteen Baptist churches on the Delmarva Peninsula.

To Stop 5: *Drive distance 4.8 miles.* Return to Route 13, heading North. Drive about 2 miles to the stop light and turn left onto Stone Road, VA-184, heading into the town of Cape Charles about 2 miles. The road becomes Randolph Ave. Turn right onto Fig Street and continue straight into Marina Villages Circle. You will see signs for the Marina. There is also a nice view from the Oyster Farm Restaurant deck where you can enjoy a nice lunch and facilities.

#5 Kings Creek

Kings Creek Marina, 500 Marina Village Circle, Cape Charles.

To learn more about Cape Charles, visit the Cape Charles Museum and Welcome Center at 814 Randolph Ave. There are also two different walking tours of the town available at the Museum. Cape Charles has a public library which includes a local history collection. In addition to the beautiful town beach, you can enjoy a walk at the Cape Charles Natural Area Preserve, 301 Patrick Henry Avenue. The historic Rosenwald School is on Old Cape Charles Road. Cape Charles has numerous eateries and fun shopping experiences.

You are standing in a strategic port that was hotly defended in the fight for independence. From this point you can view King's Creek, historic Townfield, and Cherrystone Neck.

By 1622, settlement on the Eastern Shore centered on three creeks on the Chesapeake Bay: Old Plantation Creek, King's Creek, and Cherrystone Creek. The majority of settlers were located on King's Creek and Cherrystone Creek. This area offered favorable climate and geography, friendly Indians, and the encouragement of the Virginia Company. The 1622 attack on settlers across the Bay created a hiatus in Shore settlement following upheaval in Colonial government and its policy to concentrate settlers. This hiatus lasted for about ten years and then there was a surge in renewed settlement. In 1634, a ferry service across King's Creek was started, indicating the need to transport a growing population as it built economic and social networks.

Cherrystone was the key Patriot Bayside port and rendezvous point on the lower peninsula during the Revolutionary War. On August 14, 1777, Virginia officers of the brig *Northampton* and other vessels near Isaac's Shoals spied the British fleet (sixty plus vessels) sailing southward. They fired warning signals and moved into Cherrystone to "watch the enimeys motions," then secreted a whale boat to Williamsburg with warnings. The British were coming!

In April 1778 the Virginia Militia established a fort at the point of "Cherry Stones" on John Stratton's land called Old Castle. The battery was tasked with protecting trade and the inhabitants (in that order) and repelling the enemy. The site engaged the countryside and bustled with soldiers drilling, firing, shouting, and sharing the experience of war. Mr. Stratton endured this "trespass;" his summer crops did not.

To Stop 6: *Drive distance 6.8 miles.* Return to Route 13. At the light, cross over to Business Route 13. Drive into the town of Cheriton. Turn right onto Sunnyside Road, US-638. Drive into the village of Oyster and turn left onto Crumb Hill Road. *Note: Do not turn right into the Anheuser-Busch Research Center.* Crumb Hill Road has a bend left and then you will bend right to the marina.

#6 Privateering – Oyster Harbor

Oyster Harbor, 21209 Crumb Hill Road & CR 638

You will want to bring your binoculars here for birding. While in the Village of Oyster, enjoy The Nature Conservancy's Horse Island Nature Trail located at the end of Sunnyside Road, Route 638. A kayak launch is available at the marina. Porta-potties are available at the marina. On the way to the next stop, you will pass the Edward S. Brinkley Nature Preserve, 20190 Seaside Road, that has a mile of trail and boardwalk to a beautiful seaside view. The back part of Travis Chapel was moved here from Hog Island after the great hurricane of 1933 as were several of the houses (see [Off 13](#)).

During the Revolutionary War, the Virginia and Maryland State Navies went to war with His Majesty's Navy, but it was General George Washington's call to patriot supporters to disrupt British shipping and a similar call from Lord Dunmore to loyalist citizens that produced much of the conflict. Privateers on both sides took up arms and used boats like schooners, sloops, and whaleboats to plunder merchant ships including those that sailed near the Eastern Shore. Northampton patriots like James Powell disrupted British trade from Central America and the Mississippi River while merchants like Michael Christian used the county's creeks to try and hide their goods from Tory privateers. Official orders from England and America known as letters of marque deputized sailors to become privateers, but for their victims the fear of being

To Stop 7: *Drive distance 6.5 miles.* Return to Sunnyside Road. Soon after, turn right onto Seaside Road. Drive 4.5 miles and turn right onto Indiantown Road. Drive to the end of the road into the county park.

#7 – Gingaskin Reservation – Indiantown

Indiantown Park, 7399 Indiantown Rd., Eastville

Enjoy this 52-acre County park that has walking nature trails, a disc golf course, playground, and picnic tables. Bring your binoculars for birding. Porta-potties are by the ballfield. The building is closed.

The Accawmacke tribe occupied the southern part of the Eastern Shore, in what is now Northampton County, when the English arrived in 1607. The Occohannocks lived further north, in what is now Accomack County. The leader of the Accawmackes, Esmy

Shichan, appointed his brother Kiptopeke to rule as werowance over the Occohannocks. Powhatan's warriors had crossed the Chesapeake Bay in canoes, and Accawmacke were part of his paramount chiefdom. His control over the Accawmacke was not as complete as his control over tribes within the core of Tsenacommacah. In other words, the Eastern Shore was on the "ethnic fringe."

The arrival of the English gave the Accawmackes more freedom from the Powhatan overlords, and, traditionally, the tribe was viewed as friendly to the colonists. When Powhatan sought to isolate and weaken the English by banning any of his subordinates from providing corn, the Accawmackes did not comply.

In the early 1620's, the Accawmacke chief, known to the English as "Laughing King" because he was so friendly, willingly gave a large tract to ensign Thomas Savage. Part of those 9,000 acres are still known as Savage Neck, named after the English immigrant rather than after the Native Americans.

Savage had emigrated to Virginia in 1608, and John Smith sent him to live with Powhatan in 1609. He fled Werowocomoco to shelter among the Potowomeke, and became a valued interpreter for both English and Algonquian-speaking tribes seeking to trade with each other. Savage became friends with the Occohannocks and Accawmackes on the Eastern Shore when he assisted in trading expeditions starting in 1621.

The Accawmacke "Laughing King" allowed the Virginia Company to occupy lands on the Eastern Shore, including a salt-making operation. In 1621, the Accawmackes refused to assist Powhatan's brother, Opechancanough, in his plans for a violent uprising against the colonists. Opechancanough was unable to convince them to supply a poison that could be made from the water hemlock plant, which was abundant on the Eastern Shore. Because of the Accawmacke's resistance to follow the directions of the Powhatan Chief, many Western Shore colonial settlers' lives were saved.

The Accawmackes were allowed to sell lands to the English without special approval from the General Assembly. To protect the core of the Accawmacke territory and maintain the capacity of the tribe to supply furs and food to the English, the colony established a 1,500-acre Gingaskin reservation in Northampton County in 1640. By that time, the Accawmackes were called the Gingaskins.

The tribe used the county courts to sue Englishmen who were occupying lands that were supposedly reserved, but encroachment by colonists was so successful that a 650-acre tract finally was surveyed to mark the boundaries of the remainder of the

reservation. A patent for that land was issued in 1680, formalizing ownership according to English law.

In 1792, the General Assembly mandated that the Northampton County court appoint trustees to manage the reservation and to deal with disputes over land leased to local farmers. The trustees were white men, able to testify in the courts. When they performed their duty, the trustees could limit the ability of land-hungry colonists to ignore the boundaries and start using Gingaskin territory without legal authority. Trustees could also limit the ability of Gingaskins, especially werowances, to sell community-owned land. Nevertheless, tribal identity and population diminished to the point that no Gingaskin werowances or council members are documented after the 1660's.

The willingness of the General Assembly to help the tribe hold onto their land changed by the 1800's. The Native Americans had intermarried with free blacks rather than colonists. The whites on the Eastern Shore considered the Gingaskins to be more "mulatto," a slang term for mixed race, than "Indian." The men continued their Native American pattern of hunting and fishing, while their tax-exempt reservation lands were leased to local farmers.

Local whites feared that the reservation was becoming a reservoir of free blacks that posed a threat to the white community. As Native Americans, the Gingaskins were able to carry guns on their reservation. Slaves and free blacks in the community were not allowed to be armed. Just before the start of the War of 1812, a rumor of a slave revolt frightened whites on the Eastern Shore. The Shore was isolated by the Chesapeake Bay, and if a slave uprising occurred, the whites would have a hard time getting reinforcements.

After one of the Gingaskins was convicted of subversive behavior, the reservation's trustees tried to convince the Ginkaskins to terminate their protected--and tax-exempt--status and be classified as "free negroes." The Gingaskins did manage to block proposals to sell the entire reservation and give money to each member of the tribe. Despite their efforts, this was the first instance of termination or legal allotment of reservation lands and detribalization of its owners in United States history.

In the end, the trustees petitioned the General Assembly for allotment of reservation lands to individual owners, and allowing the individual owners to sell whenever they wished. The legislature quickly authorized distribution of community-owned lands at the Gingaskin Reservation in 1813. Each of the 27 remaining adults on the reservation

received about 25 acres, with the right to sell that land. The Gingaskins were in no hurry to sell and leave, however. Only 1/3 of the total land was sold in the next 15 years, and 3/4 of the Gingaskin who received allotments of land held onto their property.

The Nat Turner insurrection in 1831 in Southampton County frightened whites on the Eastern Shore, and a surge of land purchases by whites displaced many of the Gingaskins. Many continued to live in the area, but the once-compact community centered on the reservation lands was broken up after 1831. Today, the former reservation consists of farmed fields, patches of woodlands, and the Indiantown Recreation Park.

To Stop 8: *Drive distance 2.4 miles.* Head west on Indiantown Road through the residential town of Eastville. Cross Route 13 and continue straight to the end, Courthouse Road. The Green is across the street to your right. You can park on Courthouse Road or there is a municipal parking lot to the left of the historic Eastville Inn.

#8 Courthouse Green

Historic Courthouse Green, 16404 Courthouse Rd (Business US Route 13)

In addition to walking around the Courthouse Green which includes interpretive signage, you can view exhibits in the County Administration building (large center building, first floor) during hours of operation. Many historical photos are also hanging in the hallways. The exhibits were curated by the Northampton Historic Preservation Society. A history walking tour of Eastville is available at the [Northampton250 webpage](#). Also nearby is Savages Neck Dunes, if you would like a nice nature walk to a Chesapeake Bay beach.

You are standing at the home of the oldest continuous courthouse records in the United States of America. Thanks to stubborn, independent stewards of these valuable documents, we can learn much about the earliest history of our country.

Local government began on the Eastern Shore late in 1632 with the commissioners (or justices, as they later came to be known) meeting as a court. They gathered in homes of individual members or in other privately-owned buildings such as taverns and ordinaries, migrating from one meeting place to another. The early court records kept by the clerks in their homes miraculously have survived to the present day and are the oldest continuous county court records in the United States, dating from 1632.

In 1663, following the division of the peninsula into the two counties of Northampton and Accomack, the first courthouse was built at the "Towne," a small settlement on the Bayside between Cherrystone Inlet and Kings Creek.

The Courthouse Green in Eastville has been the location of the courthouse for Northampton County since 1715. The courthouse in 1715 was constructed of wood and was replaced in 1731 by a brick courthouse which is still standing today on the north side of the green. This building served as the courthouse until 1799 when a newer building (subsequently taken down in 1899) was constructed.

Northampton County records make fascinating reading and frequently portray the character of the 17th century inhabitants of this peninsula: sturdy English stock, proud and fiercely independent. Two petitions sent to the Assembly in Jamestown indicate a certain propensity for contentiousness.

In March 1653 a group of citizens signed a protest against "public Taxacons," stating that Northampton County had not had an elected burgess as representative in the Assembly since 1647 and consequently the forty-six pounds of tobacco levied per poll was not only considered excessive, but "arbitrarye and Illegal" and should not be collected. This Northampton Protest was perhaps the first cry of "taxation without representation" in the New World.

In 1766, ten years before the colonies collectively denied Great Britain, the justices expressed strong disapproval of the Stamp Act passed by Parliament as a revenue measure. Patrick Henry had denounced the act in the House of Burgesses, and at a court held on February 11, 1767, the Northampton justices declared that it "did not bind, effect or concern the inhabitants of this colony inasmuch as they conceived the said act to be unconstitutional" What the Burgesses hesitated to say officially to Parliament this small county court declared on its own!

On August 30, 1774, "the people of Northampton County" deployed Captain Nathaniel Brown with 1,000 bushels of Indian corn to the "people of Boston" to support the needs of their "glorious cause." All freight costs were to be borne by the "affectionate brethren and countrymen" of Northampton. The "thank you" from the Bostonians is terrific and a great read, as well.

Patriots viewed the refusal to drink tea as test of loyalty to the American cause. On January 11, 1775, county inhabitants gave their tea, totaling 416 pounds, to Littleton Savage, a local representative to the Committee of Inspection, for safekeeping to be stored agreeable to the committee. Some felt the need to make a more public Patriot statement by burning their tea in the most public space in the county: the courthouse. John Bowdoin, Chairman of the Committee of Inspection reported: "Some gentlemen also brought their tea to the courthouse and desired it might be publicly burnt, in

which reasonable request they were instantly gratified," as cited in the Virginia Gazette, February 4, 1776.

Disapproval and dissatisfaction may have been the tone of many edicts handed down by the justices and recorded by the clerk, but on August 13, 1776, upon arrival in Northampton County of the news that the Continental Congress had "Declared the thirteen United States of America free and independent," the justices caused the declaration to be "acclaimed at the door of the Courthouse" and then "proceed to take the Oath of fidelity to the state and the Oath of Office, in order to take upon them the administration of Justice." Thus, the Declaration of Independence was read from the courthouse steps.

In the late 1700's the village which would become Eastville was simply known as "Northampton Courthouse". In addition to the courthouse and clerk's office, there

To Stop 9: *Drive distance 4.4 miles.* Head north on Courthouse Road, Business Route 13 to Route 13. Turn left, heading north on Route 13. In 2.4 miles turn left onto Willsonia Neck Drive, crossing over Bayside Road. Got straight about .6 miles. Turn left onto Pear Cottage Road. You will see a dirt road on the left that goes back to the cottage. You can see the cottage from the road, unless corn is planted.

#9 Pear Valley

6390 Wilsonia Neck Rd., Machipongo

Standing here gives you a genuine feeling of life for rural colonists unlike any elsewhere. Compare this homestead to the hustle and bustle of Colonial Williamsburg and Norfolk.

The location of "Pear Valley" in "Wilsonia Neck" has been a homesite since about 1672 when Mr. Teigue Harman acquired 300 acres from Mr. William Whittington. The property passed into the Nottingham family through Mr. Harman's two stepdaughters. The present house was constructed about 1740 for Mr. Robert Nottingham and his family.

During the American Revolution, this building and 188 acres was the home of William Nottingham, his wife, Leah and five children. William died in 1783, just as the war was concluding. According to the inventory of his estate, he owned eight enslaved persons. Their names were App, Moses, Betty, Maty, Jean, Nicy, Elsy & Cate.

Pear Valley is significant on a national level as an excellent, rare surviving example of a distinctive form of architecture that developed in the Chesapeake as early immigrants to the colonies adapted to their new circumstances. The world of the early Chesapeake in which these men and women lived depended on trade networks, agricultural produce, and bound or enslaved labor. The economy that emerged from these sources supported the development of Colonial Virginia's social and political system, one that depended on all social classes especially those of the "middling sort," such as the builders of Pear Valley. The middling sort were needed in the marketplace, churchyard, courthouse, cultivated fields and, ultimately, battlefields.

The scale of Pear Valley and the landholdings of 100 or so acres of the Nottingham family are indicative of the financial means that defined many middling planters. The survival of so many of Virginia's large, masonry mansion houses that once belonged to her social and political elite obscures the former presence of the once common one-room house in the landscape as represented by Pear Valley. Few of these houses are extant today despite the fact that many planters chose to build modest dwellings throughout the eighteenth century. These planters invested in the foundations of profitability, land, and labor. They indulged in fashionable finishes and furnishings for their houses instead of creating unneeded, and perhaps in the case of the saloon or dining room, not yet conceived, social spaces. The spatial differentiation, and incipient accommodation of established social hierarchies, is harder to discern in these small dwellings. The one room or hall plan house accommodated a myriad of activities, including the rituals of sociability and refinement. Imagining where those rituals occurred without dedicated or articulated spaces, such as the dining room, is difficult, and it is this difficulty that highlights the importance of Pear Valley's survival.

Pear Valley is a rare survivor, and resonates as a representative example of the second generation of housing as it evolved in the early Chesapeake. Its small size combined with high quality craftsmanship exemplifies the character of many early planters' houses now long lost.

Pear Valley was owned by successive generations of the Nottingham family until it was sold in 1900. Since then, it was used as a storage house and for raising chickens. In 1986 the building and 1.4 acres were given to the Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities (APVA) and has since been preserved for purposes of public education and scholarly research.

To Stop 6: *Drive distance 1 mile.* Head back toward Route 13, but turn left onto Bayside Road before the highway. Drive a short way and turn right. Continue past Historic Northampton County High School on your left. The Barrier Island Center is just past the school on the left, before the highway.

#10 – The County Almshouse

1804 “old quarter” kitchen at Barrier Island Center, 7295 Young St, Machipongo

Take time to enjoy the Barrier Island Center’s exhibits and giftshop. Across Route 13 is the Machipongo Trading Company eatery and the Quail Cove local produce and grocery market.

The Barrier Islands Center is located on the remaining eighteen acres of the Northampton County Almshouse Farm. The farm was as large as 51 (or more) acres at one time. For nearly 150 years the Almshouse provided shelter, food, and medical treatment for the most-needy members of the community. Its mission to aid the poor arose from a long tradition of public aid established by the Church of England.

In 1780 the Virginia General Assembly replaced the Anglican vestries and church wardens of the colonial period with elected bodies called Overseers of the Poor. The Overseers of the Poor made policy, levied taxes, and distributed public money. They provided food, clothing, shelter, and medical treatment for the persons who were too poor to support themselves or too ill to provide for their own basic needs. In Northampton County the Church Wardens of Hungar’s Parish had overseen needs of the community’s most vulnerable since early days of the Virginia colony, and they allocated funds for a “house for reception of the poor of the parish” in 1767. No further action was taken during time of the Revolutionary War.

Northampton County Court records show an 1802 order to consider erecting a poor house. In 1803 the court granted authority to a five-man commission to borrow monies on behalf of the county for the purchase of land and the building of a “house of brick 40 feet long by 30 feet wide, in the clear, two story high.” The original 51-1/2 acre parcel of land was cut out from the northeast corner of Hungar’s Plantation. Over the next few years, a brick quarter kitchen, smokehouse, cornstack and 18’x20’ foot barn were added to the working farm. The Almshouse farm was intended to be a self-sustaining operation which was large enough to provide crops as sustenance, along with livestock such as cattle, chickens and hogs. Those physically able were expected to do farm work, or help with cooking or other domestic chores, such as spinning fibers. Children of a certain age were customarily bound out as apprentices, and they frequently remained in servitude until the age of 21 years for boys, or 18 years for girls.

The earliest annual reports found from the Northampton County Overseers of the Poor, filed with the Clerk of Court, date to 1817. The Overseers were mostly a group of local doctors, and they made evaluations of citizens' particular needs throughout the county. Until about 1870 the reports each contained a list of paupers by name, along with their age, medical condition, and race. From these lists we learn about the segregation of races, and how the living conditions for "people of color" were improved gradually over the course of time. For example, in 1844, when Mrs. Ellen Dalby took over Stewardship after her husband died, the Cellar was reported as too dark and unhealthy for the "people of color" and a new building was ordered be made for them. This resulted in the addition of an 18' x 18' frame structure connected to the west end of the 1804 Quarter Kitchen. Also contained in the reports are occasional inventories of goods held in possession by the Almshouse. Of interest is an 1849 inventory listing four slaves as property.

The public records available span most of the Almshouse's years of operation. They provide a view of social and medical assistance in Northampton County as it was transitioned away from the Church of England, then administered and modified from post-revolutionary times, through the Civil War years, reconstruction, World War I, the Great Depression, various Works Progress Administration (WPA) projects, and then winding down its functions after the close of WWII. The farm's land holdings changed along with the social and political times, being reconfigured, and re-apportioned during the construction of the railroad in 1884, and later with paving of Route 13. It originally extended eastward beyond the highway, and westward to the Bayside Road.

Monthly reports to the Board of Supervisors by the Superintendent (or Steward) of the Poorhouse reveal details about regular expenditures for supplies, maintenance, and cemetery burials. Also in the minute book records are details of construction taking place on the property, such as the rebuilding of the main Almshouse building after the original brick structure burned in 1881. The construction lasted for two years and a temporary barracks type building was quickly put up to house inmates after the fire. The 1908 construction details of a 40' x 80' barn are also found in the Board of Supervisors' records. In 1910 a new dormitory for Black inmates was constructed and that building is one of several still standing on the property today. In 1914 a Pest House was built north of the barn as a quarantine hospital for control of communicable diseases during a smallpox epidemic. Information packets accompanying the Minute Book records include detailed receipts for goods and services purchased.

A 1938 USGS aerial survey reveals with photographic accuracy the number and relative size of buildings remaining on the Almshouse Farm at that time. When the farm was sold after several years of inactivity in 1953, a land survey by George H. Badger confirmed the location of the cemetery and the other structures on the property (see attached survey detail).

Virginia death certificates verify the cause of death and family information for many of the Almshouse Cemetery burials after 1912. While just over 500 individuals have been identified this way, possibly hundreds more are buried in unmarked graves in the fields and woods at the north end of the Almshouse property. The cemetery was also used by the county for those who could not afford a burial plot or who were found unidentified.

The last year of operation for the Almshouse was documented in Northampton County Board of Supervisors minutes from 1946. Mr. Goodwin Underhill resigned as Superintendent of Poor at that time. The Farm facilities continued to be used for storage, agriculture, and timber harvest, until sold at public auction in 1953.

To Stop 11: *Drive distance 3.5 miles.* Return to Bayside Road and turn right. Hungars Episcopal Church is about 3.3 miles on your right. The old brick church is just after a bend. You will pass Shorter's Chapel on your left. *Please be respectful of the cemeteries and sacred sites.*

#11 – Hungar's Church, Shorter's Chapel A.M.E. Church, and Bridgetown Elementary School

10107 Bayside Rd, Machipongo

The Shorter Chapel/School is located across the street at 10228 Bayside Road. No public convenience facilities are available at these sites. Nearby is Chatham Vineyards, 9232 Chatham Road, Machipongo. Historic Bridgetown is not visible today.

The Hungars Cure Parish is made up of two Episcopal churches on Virginia's Eastern Shore. Christ Church is in Eastville and Hungars Church is in Bridgetown. "Cure" is an old English term. Basically, it defines a church partnership in which a rector serves two or more churches.

Prior to the Revolution the interior of Hungars church was very handsomely furnished. Many of the furnishings were gifts from Queen Anne and everything was brought over from England. They were of the highest quality. Only fragments remained; for in the antagonism to everything English, which followed the Revolution, the Church fell upon evil times. Still the "Church of England," it was without Bishops of her own, and was pillaged and desecrated, with none able to protect her. Most of the clergy, being

Englishmen, returned to their own country. The deserted churches, still beloved by the faithful, could not be preserved from vandalism, under the name of patriotism. The large pipe organ was taken from the church and destroyed. Tradition says the fishermen in the neighborhood used the metal as "sinkers" for their nets.

During the Revolutionary War, churches on the Eastern Shore continued to handle some county government responsibilities. In Virginia's first Constitution, there was no mention of the separation of church and state, except an article of the Bill of Rights that provided freedom to worship.

The official board of Hungars Parish, called the vestry, appointed two members each year to handle the governmental tasks. These executive officers, called church wardens were paid for the time they worked. The vestry books of Hungars Parish shows examples of the church warden's responsibilities. The most costly task was caring for the sick, poor, indigents' and poor orphans until they were old enough to be apprenticed. Supervising the apprentice orphans and prosecuting certain moral offenders were handled by the vestry until they were assigned to Overseers of the Poor.

In 1802, the General Assembly enacted a law for the county courts to appoint overseers of the poor. These officials were authorized to sell the Glebes, the name for the Parish House & property, when the ministers ceased to serve. Part of the money was to be used to for the care of the needy.

Bridgetown Elementary School, now Shorter's Chapel

Shorter's Chapel A.M.E. Church was built on the foundation of Bridgetown Elementary School, one of the first African American schools established by the Freedman's Bureau after the Civil War in 1867. The school gifted the building and land to Shorter's Chapel in 1896.

Shorter's Chapel was organized in 1870 by Reverend John H. Offer, the first black Methodist minister on the Eastern Shore of Virginia. It was named for the African Methodist Episcopal Bishop James A. Shorter. It took almost a century before African Americans could legally have the right to practice religious freedom and even longer to have the right to an education and then, even longer after that, an equal education.

To Stop 12: *Drive distance 3.7 miles.* Continue north on Bayside Road. The large stone veneer church is on your left before your get to Franktown. A historic marker is in front of the church. *Please be respectful of the cemeteries and sacred sites.*

#12 – Bethel Baptist Church

7638 Bayside Rd, Franktown

After this stop, you may want to enjoy a leisurely walk through historic Franktown.

After the Civil War, African Americans had the freedom to establish their own places of worship. Franktown's Bethel Baptist Church was organized in 1882 and built on property donated by the Honorable Peter J. Carter. The cemetery is named in his honor.

Carter was born into slavery in the town of Eastville, in Northampton County, on May 29, 1845. Carter, a younger brother and sister, and their mother belonged to Calvin H. Read, a schoolteacher who may have taught Carter to read. By 1858 Calvin Read had moved to Baltimore. To repay \$1,000 he had borrowed from his wife's separate estate, he deeded to her on December 5, 1860 enslaved property: Carter, two of his siblings, and their mother, all enumerated in the deed as residing in Northampton County. The Read plantation in Machipongo, called Jeffersonia, was where Carter was enslaved. Ironically, Carter later owned this property and sold it in 1881 to the school district to become the two-room Readtown Elementary School.

Carter escaped from slavery and then served for more than two years with the U.S. Colored Infantry. In 1871 he won election as a Republican to the House of Delegates representing Northampton County. He was reelected three more times, and his eight-year tenure was one of the longest among nineteenth-century African American members of the General Assembly. Carter was a Funder Republican—that is, he supported the aggressive repayment of Virginia's antebellum debt—a rare position for an African American politician. Conservatives gerrymandered Carter out of his district ahead of the 1879 elections, and he lost his bid for a seat in the Senate of Virginia. He retained much of his political power, dispensing federal patronage and chairing the state's delegation to the Republican National Convention in 1880. He left the party to join William Mahone's Readjusters, a Republican-allied coalition that sought to readjust Virginia's payment of its antebellum debt. Carter was rewarded for his support by being elected doorkeeper of the Senate of Virginia in 1881 and appointed rector of Virginia Normal and Collegiate Institute (later Virginia State University) in 1883.

Carter's life experience contrasts with that of the enslaved during the Revolutionary War. During that War, some enslaved found freedom by being recruited by the British to serve as a soldier. Others simply escaped and made their way to British lines. Once the British lost, most could not (for fear of retribution or worse) or would not return.

Some found their way to other states or even the Caribbean. Others chose to evacuate with the British to New York, then on to Nova Scotia, and even beyond to Africa.

To Stop 13: *Drive distance 2.1 miles.* Continue north on Bayside Road. In about 1 mile, turn right at the large brick church onto Rogers Drive. Continue on Rogers Drive to the stop light and cross Route 13. You will see Northampton Lumber Company to your right on Railroad Ave.

#13 – Northampton Lumber Company

7409 Railroad St., Nassawadox

The owner has some interesting photos on the back wall of this old-time hardware store. Nassawadox has a nice restaurant, shops, and a public library. A walking tour brochure is available in Northampton Lumber Company and at the library.

Even though Nassawadox is a railroad town formed over a hundred years after the Revolutionary War, we can still learn about trades and economy of these bygone times.

The Northampton Lumber Company was one of the major producers of the wood barrels used for shipping potatoes, making up to 500 barrels per day. The first building in the complex was built in 1898. The buildings are still being used for their original purposes, they retain their original detail and design, and the construction methods used while building each structure was specific to the period in which they were built. Nassawadox also had a sawmill, the large red building inside the fenced property across Mill Street.

As early as 1608, the Eastern Shore's timber was recognized as an important resource when Captain John Smith cited, "Here are vast quantities of timber for shipping, trade, and architecture." Settlers leasing properties were able to harvest timber for personal or business use as part of the lease agreement. Clearing timber created farmland so that colonists could grow tobacco, corn, and other crops to ship to England. In a 1629 report to the King, it is reported that Virginia pine trees are great timber for building ships and are in such quantity to be a good source for pitch and tar. Timber is still an important commodity on the Shore today.

Wood was also used to make casks. The craft of caskmaking is called coopering. Coopers crafted casks which held flour, gunpowder, tobacco, and other commodities. Casks served as shipping containers. They also were used to store liquids like cider and milk. There are different types of casks such as barrels, which were tight for liquids, and

hogshead which were used to ship tobacco. In its heyday, Northampton Lumber had great demand for its barrels due to the large potato industry on the Shore.

Coopers worked on plantations, towns, and even on large ships. Large plantations trained enslaved workers coopering skills.

To process lumber for sale and local uses, Colonists needed sawmills. Colonists quickly built mills to saw lumber, grind grain, and operate other machinery. Mills can frequently be found on the plats or surveys of properties in early County records. You can see some operating mills in places that have flowing streams. However, since the Shore is so flat, the colonists had to use different types of energy to run their mills. They did not have steam engines which would have been used in the Nassawadox sawmill.

Watermills were most commonly used for sawmills. Windmills were also built, usually for grist mills that ground grains. Dutch mill makers, called millwrights, were brought to the colony to build windmills. Among the 1641 records of Northampton, there is an agreement between Anthony Linney millwright, and Obedience Robins and John Wilkins for the construction of a windmill. County records also show there was also a windmill on Occohannock Creek. Remember the Dutch connection when you visited Arlington at Stop 3?

A unique type of mill on coastal properties are tidal mills that used the energy of tides to turn the mill wheel. Their limitation was the highs and lows of tidal water rather than continuous flows of streams. Dams were sometimes built at the head of creeks to provide a more controlled waterflow. For example, there are remnants of a dam behind Stop 12's Franktown's Bethel Church, at the head of Warehouse Creek. Because creeks were often the boundary line for properties, the Virginia Assembly created laws to regulate them. Mills operated like public utilities with surrounding property owners having the right to use a mill cooperatively with their neighbor. Such laws helped to establish rules of property that needed to be continued when the new government was formed after the Revolutionary War to ensure the maintenance of the new nation's economy.

To Stop 14: *Drive distance 1.5 miles.* Return to Rogers Drive and turn right. At the end of the road, turn left at the public library. In 0.3 miles turn right onto Brownsville Road. Drive to the end of the asphalt road. Do not turn right into The Nature Conservancy office, but continue a few feet to the trail parking lot. Park here. You can walk the trail. You cannot go to the historic home which is private property.

#14 – Brownsville

Brownsville at Virginia Coastal Reserve, 11332 Brownsville Road, Nassawadox. Go to trail parking lot, past The Nature Conservancy offices. The historic home property is not open to the public.

Bring you binoculars and enjoy a nature hike through wooded areas and to marshy overlooks. The historic home is only accessible to the public during special events. As you walk the nature trails, you can imagine this large plantation's fields and outbuildings and the number of enslaved people used for its operation. Please stay on nature trails. A porta-pottie is at the far end of the nature trail near the marsh overlook. Bug repellent recommended.

By the time of the Revolutionary War, many plantations lined bayside and seaside waterfronts. Many of these large farms had their own wharf to transport their products, which included castor oil, a crop unique to the Virginia Eastern Shore.

“Brownsville” was an old plantation owned by several generations of the Upshur Family. It was originally a 1200-acre parcel patented by John Browne in 1652. The northern half, containing 600 acres, was inherited by his granddaughter Sarah, who married Arthur Upshur about 1738. Their grandson, Thomas Upshur, lived there with his wife Anne Stockley and raised six children during the Revolutionary War. Family tradition holds that Thomas served in the County Militia. Their son, John Upshur, inherited the plantation upon the death of his father in 1792. John Upshur had a large brick home constructed in 1809 which still stands tall today. John Upshur was a planter and a merchant and served as sheriff for Northampton County. He operated a wharf at Brownsville on the creek which still leads out past the barrier islands to the Atlantic Ocean. From this wharf he shipped corn and other products to New England and other destinations. He also grew castor beans and managed a large castor oil manufacturing facility on this property. In 1823 he acquired another 600 acres which reunited the land originally patented by his ancestor John Browne.

In 1973 the property passed out of the Upshur family and, several years later, was acquired by the Nature Conservancy. Over the years, eight generations of Upshurs lived at Brownsville. At the same time, several generations of enslaved African

Americans lived, worked and died on this plantation. Many of their names have been recorded. Following the Civil War, many of them continued to live in this area and, undoubtedly, many of their descendants still live here in Northampton County.

To Stop 15: *Drive distance 6 miles.* Return to Seaside Road and turn right, heading north. In 4.2 miles, turn left onto Willis Wharf Road and head west into Exmore. The stop is at the end of this road on the left. Municipal parking is one block north behind the Town Hall.

#15 - Improved Order of the Red Men wigwam

3342 Willis Wharf Road, Exmore. Two-story wooden, unoccupied commercial building.

Plan to stay a bit in Exmore and enjoy fine eateries and antiquing. A history walking tour is available at <https://www.exmore.org/exmorehistorywalkingtour>.

The second floor of 3339 Main Street, formerly the Horne and Stauffer furniture store, served as the “wigwam” of Exmore’s Occohannock tribe, Number 16.

After the Revolutionary War, Americans had somewhat of an identity crisis. They needed to become “Un-British.” The new nation not only wanted to create its own government, but also it’s own organizations since Americans now had freedom of religion and assembly which did not exist in the colonies prior to independence from Britain.

During the Colonial era, a number of fraternal organizations existed including the Masons, Odd Fellows, Druids and Foresters as well as the Revolutionary era Sons of Liberty and the Tammany (or Saint Tamina) Societies . Both the Sons of Liberty and Tammany Societies disbanded after Independence was secured. The Sons of Liberty were the patriots that “disguised” themselves as Native Americans and dumped tea into the Boston Harbor in protest of taxes.”

Many of these organizations offered fraternal, social, and insurance like benefits to members and their families. This included financial aid for disability or injury, and care for orphans and widows as well as assistance with burial expenses. They also supported various American ideas and ideals even though they only admitted white men as full members. Today, the Red Men continue to describe themselves as “a non-profit fraternal organization devoted to inspiring a greater love for the United States of America and the principles of American liberty.” They also “support various charitable, youth, and educational programs.”

Some organizations were secretive with passwords, secret handshakes, codes, and other oddities. In the Colonial past, patriots had cause to operate in disguise and secrecy to avoid British detection and punishment. Years later, some fraternal groups like the Red Men continued this costuming and air of secrecy.

The Improved Order of the Red Men was organized in the early 1800s from remnants of the Sons of Liberty and other revolutionary groups. The Red Men sought to recognize their newfound freedoms by modeling their organization after the Native Americans, specifically the Iroquois. They felt the Iroquois represented the ideal of democracy with their form of governing representation. They were “impressed by the noble traits of character of the Aborigines of the American continent.” Red Men also revered George Washington as their ideological “chief.” Ironically, Washington today is also recognized for his failings by not honoring treaties with the Iroquois in New York.

Red Men took liberties with cultural appropriation by assigning Native American names to their organizational roles. Lodges became “tribes,” lodge buildings became “wigwams,” presidents became “chiefs” or “sachems.” Calander dates were in great suns (years) and moons (months). Red Men members were known to dress in mock Native American regalia and hold rituals. They even assigned members “Indian” names.

In 1904, another group called the Afro-American Order of Red Men and Daughters of Pocahontas emerged in Virginia, this time composed entirely of African Americans. Tribe #23 was based in Metompkin, Virginia.

The Eastern Shore had Red Men “wigwams” in Capeville, Tomahawk Tribe; Eastville, the Mattawaman; Exmore, the Occohannock Tribe; in Harborton, the Iroquois Tribe; in Keller the Pungoteague Tribe; in Hallwood, the Assawoman Tribe; in Chincoteague, the Chincoteague Tribe; and in Greenbackville, the Accomac Tribe. Tribes often had women’s affiliates under the Degree of Pocahontas. The Improved Order of the Red Men is still in operation in limited areas of the United States, but the Red Men tribes on the Eastern Shore of Virginia are defunct.

In the 20th Century, many social support systems were developed, like health insurance, that minimized the need for fraternal organizations’ member benevolence role. Today, many fraternal organizations still exist, most accepting more diverse membership. They still focus on civic activities, community projects, and helping those in need. All are celebrating their hard-fought right to assemble.

To Stop 16: *Drive distance 2 miles.* Head the other direction, east, on Willis Wharf Road. Pass through the village, bearing right at the wharf. Go over a bridge and a marina will be on your left. The overlook is on the far side of the marina parking lot.

#16 – Hog Island and the British Occupation

5085 Willis Wharf Rd, Willis Wharf

Bring your binoculars to better view the marsh and Parting Creek on the overlook deck. A kayak launch is available. Willis Wharf is a lovely town to stroll through.

This last stop on your tour highlights the actual end of the Revolutionary War.

East of here is one of the Barrier Islands called Hog Island. It was redoubtable John Smith who was the first European that discovered this place. The second day after he landed at the seaside's Smith Island (back at Stop 1) and planted the English flag for the first time in the New World, he started out on a voyage along the coast, when a great storm arose. Smith's boat filled with water and as he escaped, he said "by ye mercy of God." He named the island upon which he landed Shooting Bears Island; as the small species of bruin which to this day abound in the cane-brakes of the western shore's Dismal Swamp were numerous on the new found isle.

It is a great pity that this place did not retain its Indian name of Machipongo Island -- which, translated, means 'Fine dust and flies' -- literally, fine sand and mosquitoes, the two afflictions that plague the natives, and made the island uninhabitable to the Native Americans, who only visited it at certain periods of the year to fish and hunt.

Over time, settlers moved to Hog Island creating the town of Broadwater. After a series of storms ravaged the island, eighteen of the houses on Hog Island were moved to Willis Wharf. Others were moved to Oyster, Exmore, and other locations on the Shore.

The Eastern Shore of Virginia was strategically located halfway on the Eastern Coast. Today, it boasts of the last ninety miles of undeveloped coastland. Barrier islands, windy creeks, and isolated homesteads allowed both patriot and tory water vessels, as well as the pirates and privateers, ample places to hold-up throughout the war. Even through World War II, the United States government and has used the Eastern Shore for posts of surveillance in monitoring sea and air traffic.

Early in the Revolutionary War, the British established an operating base on Hog Island. Small ships called tenders and barges raided the Eastern Shore to get food and livestock which were used to replenish the supplies of British warships in the area. In most

instances, they made such raids at night when all the poultry was in the roosts. They captured the entire flocks along with cattle in the pounds, hogs, and cured meat and grain. If there was any sign of resistance, or knowledge that the man of the house was in the United States army, the raiders usually took the silver and other valuables and set fire to the house. The Hog Island base was in command of Captain John Kidd.

Though Cornwallis surrendered in 1781, the war on Shore waters continued. The tables finally turned on February 12, 1783, when the Virginia militia attacked the British forces on Hog Island. One can imagine that the British soldiers may have been all too happy to leave the “machipongo” mosquitos and gritty sand of Hog Island.

The Treaty of Paris was signed by U.S. and British Representatives six months later on September 3, 1783, officially ending the War of the American Revolution.

TOUR END

On behalf of the Northampton County Virginia250 Local Commission, we thank you for taking the time to learn more about the Revolutionary Shore! We hope you will extend your stay or come back for another visit to enjoy more of our necks and crannies.

This tour was supported with funding from the Northampton County Tourism Fund and the Virginia250 Grant Program administered by the Virginia Tourism Commission.

