JOHN GRIGSBY, THE IMMIGRANT - HIS RESIDENCE?

by Robert E. Grigsby

Everyone loves a good mystery story. The Life and Times of John Grigsby, our immigrant ancestor, is a subject his many descendants could find both exciting and fascinating. Considering it begins somewhat over 300 years ago, there is quite a bit of information in the records that can be researched and explored in depth. Let's take a look at some of the most quoted of these records. Use your imagination and see where it can lead.

Item: 1661 and 1665 Stafford County, Va. deeds for land sold to John Grigsby are recorded in the County Court House. The September 26, 1665 deed describes land sold by Major James Ashton to John Grigsby.

Item: A will dated August 18, 1686 left Richard Elkin 100 acres adjoining lands owned by John Grigsby in Stafford County.

Item: The estate of Ralph Elkins, father of Richard Elkins, lists John Grigsby as an appraiser on September 9, 1690 in Stafford County.

Item: A document which conveys a total of 887 acres of land, from the Lord Fairfax Grant in the Northern Neck of 5,000,000 acres, is recorded April 8, 1699. Land is in Stafford County's St. Paul's parish district.

Item: A deed conveying 600 acres of land from John Prosser to John Stephens lists John Grigsby as a witness. Recorded in Essex County (then Rappahannock Co.) June 9, 1671.

Item: In Essex County, June 17, 1714, John Grigsby, Henry and John Fitzhugh met to value a plantation called "Chatterton."

Since the earliest references are in Stafford County, it should be looked at as it was when formed in 1664 and included what is now King George County. This "lower" part of Stafford was the location of St. Paul's Parish which had the Potomac River as its northern boundary. St. Paul's Church, the seat, was located near present day Owens (Va.). The records of the Church Register carry this notation, "Died, John Grigsby, supposed to be one hundred and seven years old, October 11, 1730." Records in the Register from 1715 include the marriages and deaths of others with the Grigsby name. From these records it may be able to establish the approximate location of the residence of John Grigsby within the St. Paul's Parish (where he probably paid his tax) and the county of Stafford, Virginia.

When John Grigsby, the immigrant, died October 11, 1730, he left a will wherein he named five sons and a daughter as his inheritors. One of the sons carried the name of John Grigsby and it should be considered a possibility that the son, John, is the John Grigsby who met with Henry and John Fitzhugh at Chatterton in 1714. John, the immigrant, would have been 91 according to the Register. However, "Chatterton" is within reasonable travel distance being nearer the Rappahannock River to the south and the distance between the two rivers is about 18 miles - so he could have ridden over, and probably did.

Here we come to a more speculative but none the less fascinating possibility of our ancestor's background. The

1699 land acquisition in Stafford Co. was from a Lord Fairfax grant. Thomas Fairfax, 3rd Baron of Cameron (1612-1671), became commander-in-chief of England's Parliamentary Army in 1645 with Oliver Cromwell his lieutenant general. Later, Fairfax presided at the trial of deposed Charles I but resigned when he did not approve the measures being taken and also gave up his military command and seat in parliament. Following the death of Cromwell, 1658, Lord Fairfax lead the movement to restore Charles II to the throne of England - ending this period of English civil war. By tradition, John Grigsby, our immigrant ancester, had come from England and had been a soldier in Cromwell's army. William Fitzhugh, father of Henry, had immigrated from England about 1670. His lands were near those of John Grigsby. Chatterton was the estate of the Ashton's who had some from England - near Lincolnshire, and whose ancestrial home in England was called "Chatterton." Upon careful checking and proper documentation of the foregoing "connections," it might be possible to establish some basis that our ancester John Grigsby came to the northern neck Fairfax grant by design and with full knowledge of where he was going and how he was to establish his life and fortune in colonial Virginia.

By the 1740's the second and third generations had moved into the upper part of Stafford County and had established themselves on the south side of the Occoquan River near its junction with the Potomac. This location was shown on the Fry-Jefferson Map of 1754 with the road leading from Fredricksburg to the south terminating at the Occoquan's south bank to

go by ferry to Colchester on the north bank. The Overwharton Parish located on the Aquia seems to have been the Parish for the port plantation of Grigsby. In the Register of Overwharton are listed the births and deaths of a number of family members of the 1740's and 1750's. Grigsby on the Occoquan was accessible to the "lower" Stafford (now King George) plantation of John the immigrant by Potomac River waterway as well as the land roadways which are shown on the 1754 map. While the general location of "Grigsby" is shown, much remains to be known of when this land was acquired and by whom as well as details of the families who lived here.

From the upper and lower Stafford County locations the descendants of John the immigrant began to follow the general expansion as new land was opened for settlement. In time, descendants traveled and settled beyond the Virginia colony, but for many generations they took with them the skills and knowledge of farm management and with this they made their way.

COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA
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STATE LIBRARIAN

April 28, 1978

Mrs. C.S. Bush
1758 Elm Street
Napa, California 94558

Dear Mrs. Bush:

The bounds of the lower parish of Stafford County, called Chotank Parish from before 1680 to about 1702 and called St. Paul's Parish there after, remained unaltered during the colonial period. It included all territory between Machodoc Creek and Passapatanzy Creek. The territory encompassing St. Paul's Parish was taken from Stafford County in 1777 and added to King George County.

The above description of St. Paul's Parish was abstracted from Parish Lines Diocese of Virginia by Charles Francis Cocke, 1967.

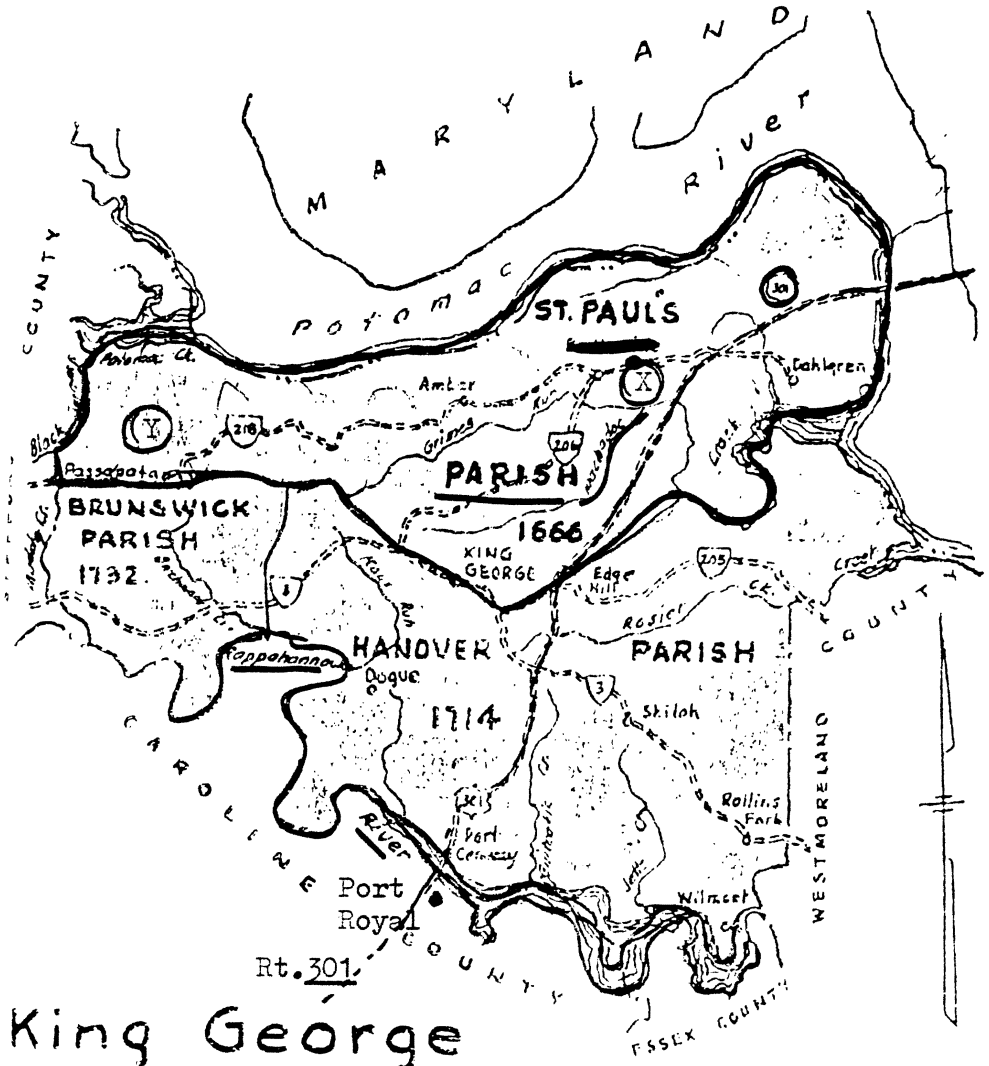
Enclosed is a map of King George County with the parish boundries.

Sincerely yours,

Louis H. Manarin

Louis H. Manarin
State Archivist

LHM:lgw
Enclosure



King George County

VIRGINIA

SCALE · MILES

0 1 2 3 4 5

(X) Owens - St Paul's Church
(Y) Land & residence of John Grigsby, the Immigrant MAY have been in this area.

THE REGISTER
OF
OVERWHARTON PARISH
STAFFORD COUNTY
VIRGINIA
1723 - 1758
AND
SUNDRY HISTORICAL
AND
GENEALOGICAL NOTES

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Compiled and Published

By

George Harrison Sanford King

Fellow, American Society of Genealogists

Fredericksburg, Virginia

1961

M. Mary Griggs and Lewis Knowland, March 26, 1771.

M. Mary Grigsby and John Fewel, October 14, 1726.

M. Benjamin Grigsby and Anne Foly, September 5, 1727.

M. Margaret Grigsby and John Smith, November 5, 1728.

D. John Grigsby, supposed to be one hundred and seven years old, October 11, 1730.

M. Thomas Grigsby of Overwharton Parish and Anne Dishman of Washington Parish, November 25, 1729, by license.

M. Rose Grigsby and Benjamin Spicer, June 6, 1734.

M. James Grigsby and Sarah Sudduth, May 9, 1742.

M. Moses Grigsby of Overwharton Parish and Katherine Bransom, December 1, 1742.

B. Elizabeth, daughter of James and Sarah Grigsby, February 24, 1742/3.

D. Thomas Grigsby, May 7, 1745.

M. Rose Grigsby and Townshend Dade, December 12, 1745.

M. Rachel Grigsby and Isaac Rose, December 19, 1751.

M. Susannah Grigsby and Charles Stuart of King George County, November 9, 1752.

M. James Grigsby and Letitia Travers, January 18, 1753.

B. John, son of James and Sarah Grigsby, August 7, 1757.

M. Anne Grigsby and Samuel Grigsby, December 25, 1762.

M. Samuel Grigsby and Anne Grigsby, December 25, 1762.

M. Mary Anne Grigsby and John Markous, September 1, 1763.

M. Mary Grigsby and William Fletcher, June 30, 1764.

M. Jemima Grining and Stephen Cash, May 26, 1747.

M. James Grisset and Elizabeth Philips, May 19, 1791.

M. Benjamin Grymes and Betty Fitzhugh, February 12, 1746/7.

B. Benjamin, son of Benjamin and Betty Grymes, January 2, 1756.

M. GREEN, John and Phillis Smith, December 19, 1756.

B. GREEN, William son of John Green, January 18, 1757.

B. GREEN, Elizabeth daughter of William and Anne Green, June 19, 1758.

M. GREENLESS, Bathsheba and [mutilated], May 7, 1758.

D. GREGG, Elizabeth daughter of William Gregg, May 12, 1740 at William Bethel's.

B. GREGG, James son of Matthew and Catherine Gregg, May 15, 1740.

B. GREGG, John son of Matthew and Catherine Gregg, January 10, 1745.

M. GREGG, Matthew and [blank] Chinn, August 15, 1751.

C. GREGG, Matthew son of Matthew Gregg, September 17, 1752.

M. GREGG, Sarah Ellen and William Bourn, December 11, 1756.

B. GREY, William son of Anne Grey, January 26, 1751.

B. GREY, Richard son of John and Margaret Grey, May 15, 1751.

GRIFFIN : GRIFFITH

M. GRIFFIN, Elizabeth and James Phillips, September 27, 1741.

M. GRIFFIN, Thomas and Sarah Suddeth, July 18, 1745.

B. GRIFFITH, Daniel son of Thomas and Sarah Griffith, September 2, 1746.

D. GRIFFIN, Phillis April 9, 1756 at James Hardwick's.

M. GRIGSBY, Sarah and George Fletcher, January [blank], 1743.

M. GRIGSBY, Alice and Benjamin Rush, April 1, 1744.

B. GRIGSBY, William son of John and Anne Grigsby, October 30, 1744.

M. GRIGSBY, Priscilla and Abraham Fletcher, November 28, 1746.

M. GRIGSBY, Margaret and George Foster, December 22, 1746.

B. GRIGSBY, Susannah daughter of John and Ann Grigsby, October 10, 1747.

M. GRIGSBY, Lettice and Joshua Owens, November 19, 1747.

B. GRIGSBY, Rachel daughter of John and Ann Grigsby, August 7, 1750.

M. GRIGSBY, Sarah and William Rose, June 5, 1753.

THE REGISTER OF OVERWHARTON PARISH

NAMES	TITH-ABLES	PLANTS	NAMES	TITH-ABLES	PLANTS
Burr Harrison) Michael McCormick) A Negro	*	11,042	Peter Battue)	*	1,600
John Malt) Richard Davis) Thomas Davis)	*	2,981	Henry Filkin)	*	6,500

[Signed] Henry Filkin

Henry Young

Copy Test

Geo: Mason
Cl:Cur:

* * *

"A List of Tobacco Tenders from the South Side of Potomack [Creek] To y^e^ Lower End of Overwarton Parish" [1]

TOBACCO TENDERS		TOBACCO PLANTS	TOBACCO TENDERS	TOBACCO PLANTS
John Chadwell)			William McCarty)	10,000
John Chadwell, Jun.^r^)				
James Chadwell)		31,279	Garret Farrell)	6,661
George Chadwell)				
William Chadwell)	#		Catherin Smith)	2,689
Joseph Chadwell)	#			
			James Bates)	717
John McDaniel)				
Edward Grady)		12,388	John Gregsby)	
John McDaniel)	#		Thomas Gregsby)	15,593
			William Gregsby)	
John Travis)				
Nathaniel Morgan)		21,102	Benjamin Gregsby)	[mutilated]
Owen Sullivant)				
Thomas Hardman)			James Gregsby)	8,225
6 Negroes				

* No. of tithables not entered

1-On this list no definite ages are given. Names followed by this character [#] are in a separate column indicating they are between 10 and 16 years of age.

TENDERS OF TOBACCO IN OVERWHARTON PARISH

TOBACCO TENDERS	TOBACCO PLANTS
William Gregsby)	
Owen Daily)	
John Hum)	22,780
William Walker #)	
William Gregsby #)	
Charles Gregsby)	
James Gregsby)	8,312
John Macduel #)	
Charles Gregsby #)	
Joseph Hall)	4,938
Richard Duggins)	6,581
Capt. Chandler Fowlke)	
Edward Sweeting)	
John Cooper)	43,848
6 Negroes)	
2 Boys #)	
Joseph Chambers)	
Patrick Johnson)	38,988
6 Negroes)	
3 Boys #)	
David Waugh)	876
Mary Smith)	46
James Mullin)	2,069
Lewis Elzey's Quarter	
William Cave)	
3 Negroes)	9,157
2 Negro Boys #)	
Joseph Waugh's Quarter	
John Smith)	
Joseph Waugh #)	19,469
4 Negroes)	
1 Negro Boy #)	
James Gregg)	
Thomas Gregg)	2,072
James Gregg, Junr.)	

TOBACCO TENDERS	TOBACCO PLANTS
Vivion Limbrick)	5,188
Ann Grant)	1,546
Mealy Whitecotton)	
Husband Whitecotton #)	10,416
Timothy Carty #)	
Alexander Jeffrys)	9,085
John Waugh)	1,314
1 Negro)	
John Boring)	9,534
Thomas James)	
John James #)	23,882
Joseph James #)	
2 Negroes)	
Alexander Sinkler)	
William Stone)	
Wayman Sinkler #)	24,000
John Sinkler #)	
1 Negro)	
Thomas Botts)	
Thomas Botts #)	15,770
John Botts #)	
Seth Botts #)	
John Taylor)	
Robert Lynes)	20,076
William Chilton)	
1 Negro)	
John Pattison)	7,469
Robert Sturdy)	2,605
Edward Henson)	
Joseph Henson)	15,377
James Henson #)	
James Jones)	7,007
Richard Johnson)	9,675