



CLAIBORNE CLIPPINGS



National Society of Claiborne Descendants

Sixth Reunion

Williamsburg, Virginia

June 4 – 8, 1997

Claiborne Clan Reunion, 1997

This past June the descendants of William Claiborne gathered for yet another reunion. The meeting place was set for the George Washington Inn in Williamsburg, Virginia, and it was here that everyone met on Wednesday, June 4th. Claiborne "cousins" came from all directions that day eager to register, meet for the first dinner, visit with all their cousins, and find out what exciting things were planned for the reunion.

The calendar of events included visiting various Claiborne sites along the Pamunkey River including St. Peter's Parish church, Sweet Hall, and Windsor Shades Plantation, both historic homes of the Claibornes; a tour of Jamestown; genealogical workshops, and lots of delicious meals. There was a slide show presentation with guest speaker Dr. Donald W. Linebaugh who spoke about the recent Claiborne dig he conducted, permitting the most exciting part of the reunion: the dedication ceremony of the Claiborne Historical Marker in Hampton, Virginia.

This reunion had the largest turn out yet of Claiborne "cousins" present. Past friendships were renewed and new friendships were made, but most importantly everyone had a splendid time and we were all able to learn more about the history of William Claiborne.

REUNION ACTIVITIES

Thursday- Mrs. Sam V. Claiborne

Thursday morning was the first full day of the reunion. There was coffee and danish to wake us for the first meeting. President Tom Claiborne welcomed us and brought us up to date on activities past and present. The morning passed quickly with interesting discussions and questions, especially from the new members present. Our Vice President, Mary Louise Briscoe, gave us a teasing taste of what was to come later in the week at Hampton and Jamestown.

There was a short break before starting the Pamunkey River tour, organized by cousin Curly Moore. The first stop on the tour was St. Peter's parish Church, built in 1701. It is the oldest Parish church in the Diocese of Virginia. There was time to wander through the cemetery before Curly called us to the hall for a bountiful picnic lunch. Then we went to the church to hear a lecture by James Harris, a long-time member of the church, who was able to tell us a great deal of history about the church.

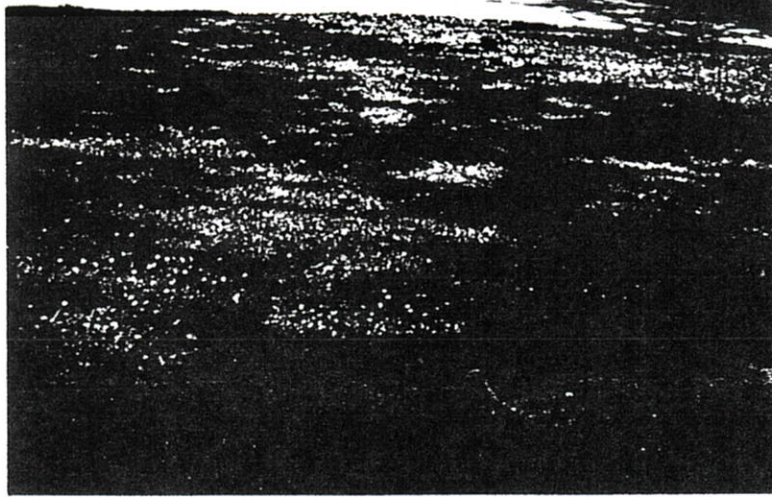
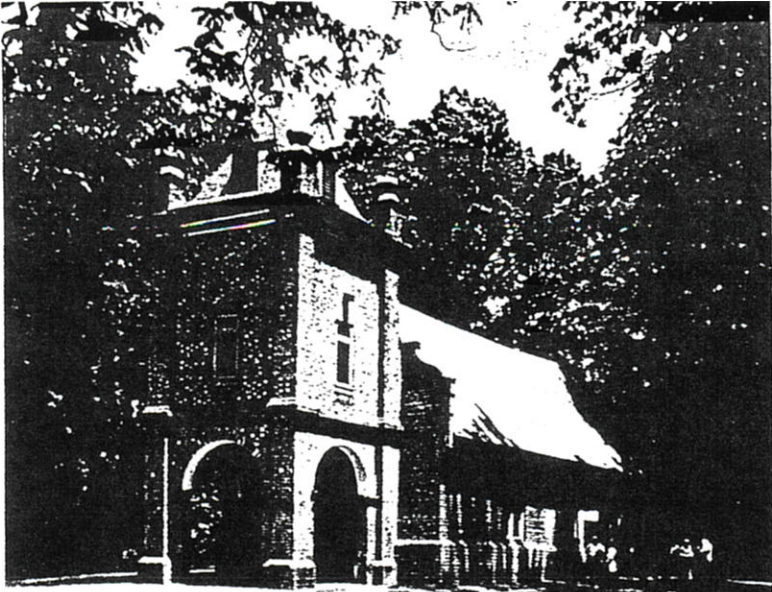
The church was lovely. Highbacked pews, three-decker pulpit, Holy Table, octagonal font and cover, the Royal Arms, etc. There were many other furnishings of the period reminding us of the three centuries that the church has borne to the glory of Christ.

The church and area were closely associated with the first lady Martha Washington. She was born at Chestnut Grove, near by. From a plaque on the wall we read, "The Reverend David Mossom baptized Martha Dandridge. He officiated at her wedding to Daniel Parke Custis, June 1749. On the 6th of January 1759 he solemnized her marriage to George Washington."

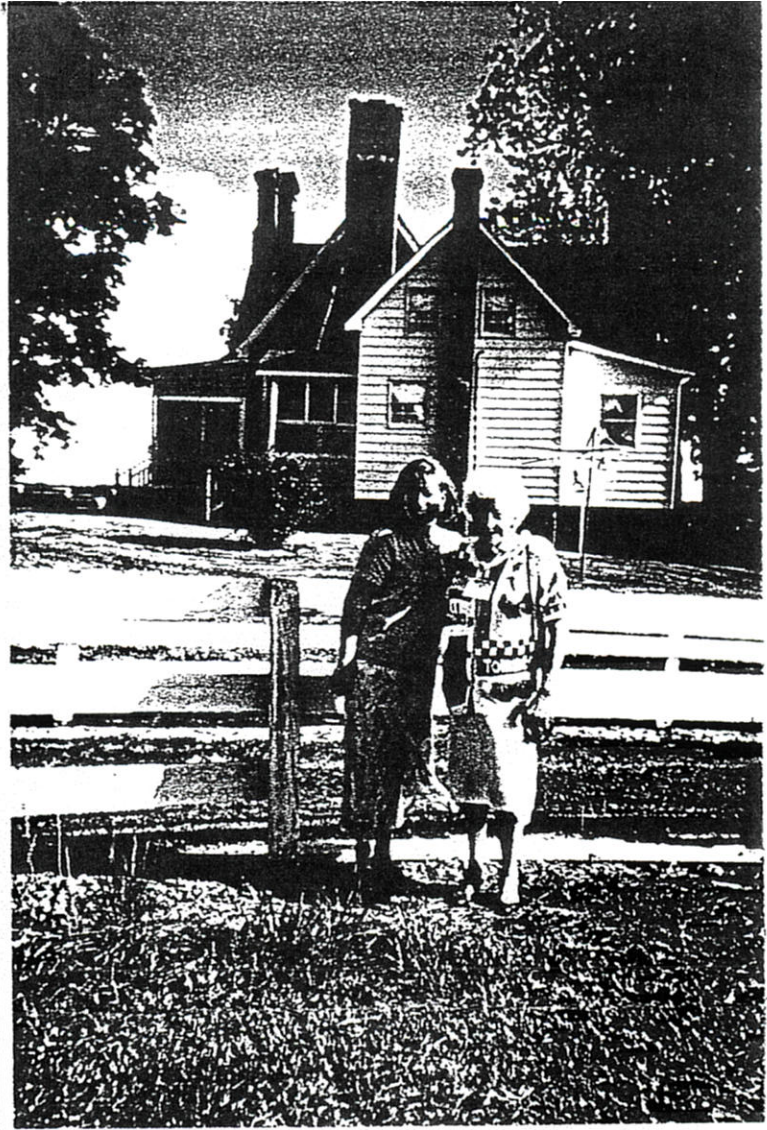
During the War Between the States the church was desecrated by Federal troops. General Robert E. Lee, whose wife was Mary Anne Randolph Custis (Martha Washington's great grand-daughter) wrote, "This is the church where George Washington was married. It would be a shame to America if allowed to go to destruction." His son, General William Henry Fishugh Lee, instructed the work of restoring the old church.

After touring St. Peter's Parish, the Claibornes went on to Sweet Hall Plantation, home of William Claiborne and the grave-site of his grandson, Thomas Claiborne. Along the way, some Claibornes took a detour to visit Sara Fenn's grave marker. She was the first Thomas Claiborne's wife.

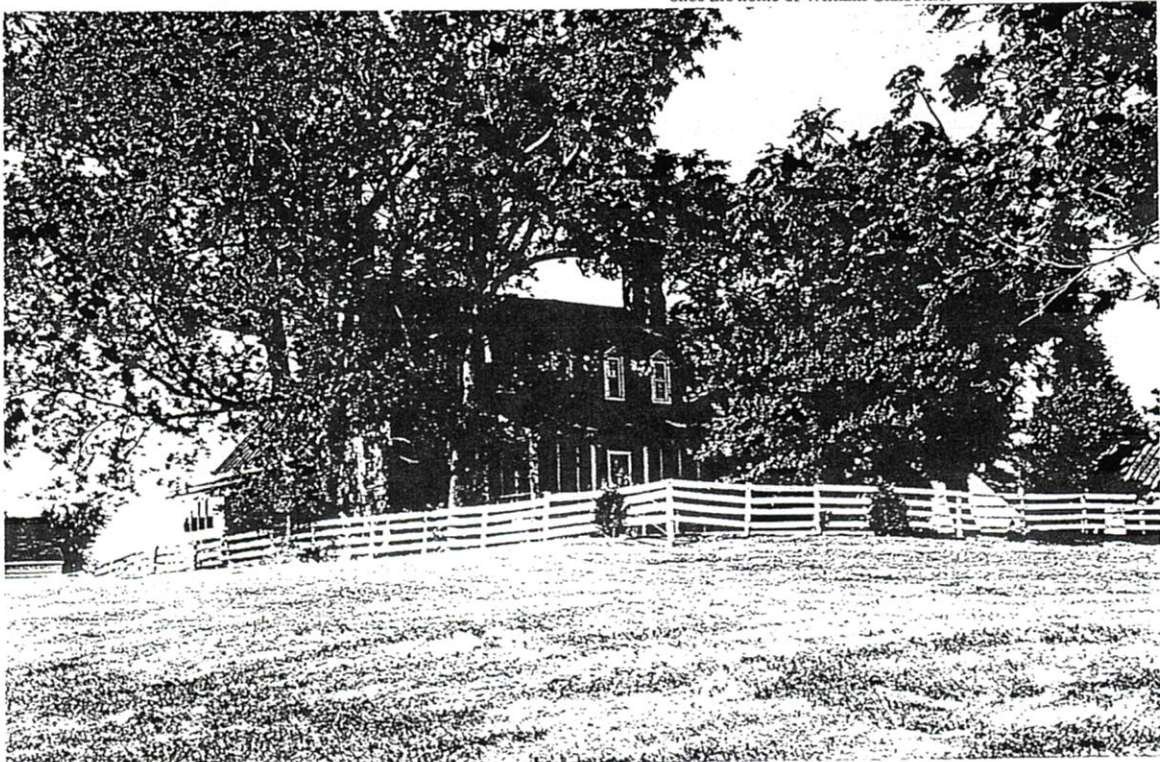
Thursday night there was a busy workshop and geology exchange with Sue Forbes in charge. Jill Price, our cousin in England, brought the Clan up to date on the work/research being done in England. Many stayed for discussion, sharing of pictures and notes afterwards.



St. Peter's Parish Church, built in 1701, is the oldest church in the Diocese of Virginia.



Mrs. Elizabeth Riddle and her granddaughter, Catherine Poore, pose for a picture at Sweet Hall, once the home of William Claiborne.



Sweet Hall Plantation, located on the Pamunkey River, was the home of William Claiborne and is the gravesite of his grandson, Thomas Claiborne.

Friday- Mr. William Claiborne and Mrs. Curly Moore

Friday morning Dr. Donald Linebaugh, Director of the Archaeology Department at William and Mary College, showed slides from the Hampton dig where William Claiborne was believed to have lived in the early days of the colony. This is the same area that was saved two years ago from becoming a city parking lot when Gene Williamson and the Claiborne Clan rallied to preserve and defend this historical property. Such efforts proved worthy, as Dr. Linebaugh revealed numerous important artifacts dating from the mid-17th century as a result of the dig.

This area, through research into deed ownership and title transfers, was determined conclusively to have belonged to William Claiborne in the early to mid-1600's, and was then transferred to Thomas Jarvis who maintained a wealthy trading plantation on this site until the turn of the century.

The excavation began in early 1996 as the parking lot project was put on hold until after a full examination of the site could be completed. With local help from the Hampton City Administrators, a small amount of federal funding was granted for an archaeological survey to be conducted by the Virginia Department of Transportation.

Every 75 feet, a deep square hole was dug (25- 30 total) to determine, by layered depth, the time sequence of artifacts discovered. (The deeper the find, the older the material) Dating from the mid-17th century were: painted pipes, a hoe for tobacco cultivation, European manufactured pottery, a broad hoe, a brazier (gold), a warming pan for the table-a high class item, jugs, a punch bowl, a painted artifact with a 1689 date, a sunburst plate dated 1668, a salt dish to dip meat, a sterling silver thimble, and pictures of Charles II and the Queen of England.

Dr. Linebaugh stated that the particular site in question was probably not a home of William Claiborne, but part of a trading plantation he owned and operated. The house discovered on the site was very large for the time period, and was a "post house" built on a foundation of posts 8 to 10 feet apart. Also, evidence of a large barn was found in addition to several other outbuildings of various sizes. Seven-inch long oyster shells were found suggesting that this bountiful seafood was a mainstay of the tidewater diet in the early days.

There was great public participation as the crew under the direction of Dr. Linebaugh held an "open house" to the community for tour groups and allowed volunteers to come in one weekend to help in the dig. Twenty-five people showed up to offer a hand, and the work they did was significant in aiding the progress of the operation.

A future exhibit of these artifacts and their history is planned for Hampton, either in a designated section of their current museum, or in a new museum that may be built exclusively to house the discoveries from this dig.

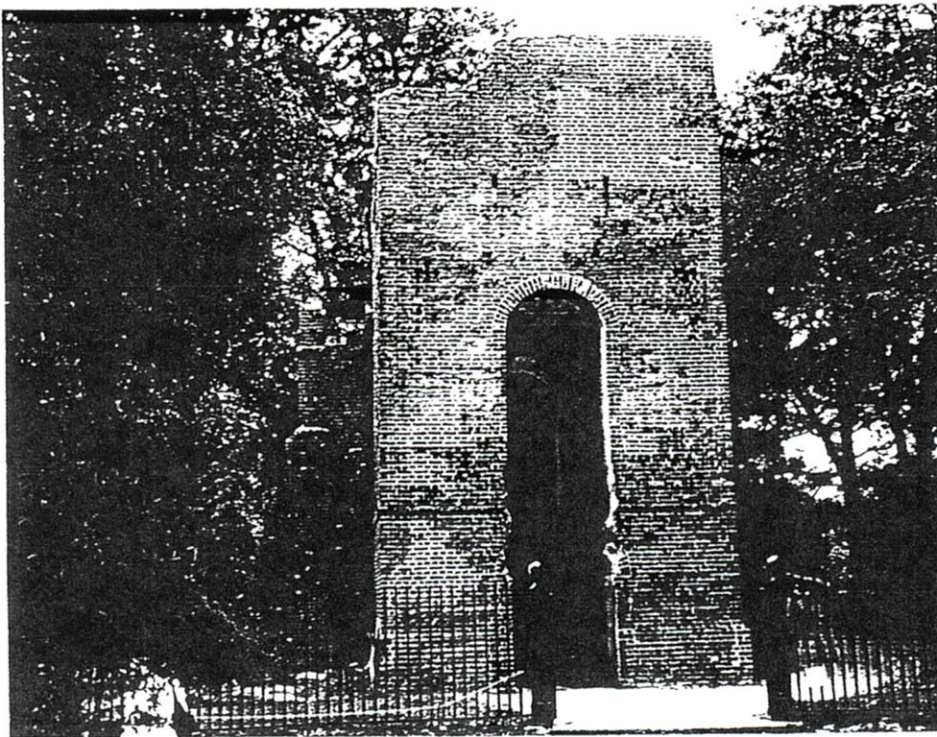
On December 22, 1996 the excavation was finished and two feet of soil was spread over the site to preserve it for any future examination. Now it is paved and is currently being used as a bus parking lot. Nevertheless, we should be grateful to all the fine efforts that have resulted in what we now enjoy as part of our growing heritage.

Friday afternoon, after a fabulous lunch at the George Washington Inn in Williamsburg, the group drove to Jamestown Island where we had an opportunity to visit the Old Church Tower where a plaque hangs memorializing William Claiborne.

Thereafter, Dr. William Kelso gave us a personal tour of the recently discovered James Fort. It was most interesting and we were able to view artifacts in a small museum at the site, including a complete skeleton of a colonist. An actor portraying William Claiborne as an early settler provided a good history of his surveying activities and the lay out of New Towne, including where various people lived. It was a day of thrills and excitement



Dr. Donald Linebaugh presented us with a slide show from the Hampton Dig revealing numerous artifacts dating from the mid-17th century. These artifacts were found on land owned by William Claiborne.



This is the Old Church Tower at Jamestown where a plaque hangs memorializing William Claiborne. The partially ruined brick tower is of great significance for it is the only 17th-century structure standing above ground at Jamestown today.

An actor portraying William Claiborne provided a good history of his surveying activities and the lay out of New Towne, including where various people lived.



Saturday- Mrs. Susan Rura

Saturday began with a business meeting early in the morning. President Tom Claiborne opened the meeting, receiving key reports from Sue Forbes, research chairman, and Susan Rura, treasurer. The president reported the content of the Wednesday night executive officers meeting, held the election of new officers, and led a discussion about the next reunion location.

With business concluded, the Clan proceeded in various automobiles from Williamsburg to Hampton, Virginia for a luncheon at the Radisson Hotel followed by the ceremony of the unveiling of the historical marker dedicated to William Claiborne. Numerous Claibornes gathered with the city fathers of Hampton to celebrate an occasion rewarding for both groups. From a protest to delay the paving of the parking lot, an archaeological dig, and the recovery of numerous artifacts, we have all gained in this venture.

Hampton is acclaimed as the oldest continuing English- speaking settlement in the United States. It is here that the marker is located, on an inlet near the city's carousel park and Air and Space Museum. William Claiborne also had a windmill not far from this spot. At the ceremony was Mayor Eason, a county council member, the head of Parks and Planning, a newspaper photographer, the Claiborne Clan, and a crowd of people from the city of Hampton.

A reception was held after the unveiling ceremony by the Hampton History Museum Association, which is raising the funds for the new museums in the city of Hampton.

Saturday evening found us enjoying a final banquet in the Greenery Room at the George Washington Inn. Special recognition was granted to Gene Williamson who conducted research and work for the marker. He was made an honorary member of the Claiborne Clan. An honorary member is someone not related to the Claibornes but who does things for the Clan above and beyond the call of duty.

After dinner there were several light readings made by some "outlaws" or spouses of the Clan members who were asked to speak. This way we could learn more about them, as opposed to them always learning about us. They told many stories they had put together by observing us and made us laugh. A few of the "outlaws" have attended several reunions. Maria Wynn Claiborne put all of her thoughts together in a poem. It was a fine ending to a splendid Claiborne Clan Reunion.

Special thanks goes to Mary Louise Briscoe, our former Vice- President, and to her reunion committee for the splendid job on this reunion. All of the activities were interesting and fun. We left with a closer connection to our ancestor William Claiborne and to each of our cousins.

Saturday's dinner banquet was the finale of the reunion. After dinner, "outlaws" as they are called, or spouses of the Clan members actually related to William Claiborne, were asked to speak so we could learn more about them, as opposed to them always learning about us. After all of the outlaws had spoken, we were read a poem that Maria Wynn Claiborne wrote.

OUTLAW LAMENT

I have written a few silly rhymes to explain the situation,
I guess to sum it up we are like a poor relation.

We first have to learn the rules of what we can or cannot do,
If we get our feelings hurt, we are not allowed to sue.

We can attend a business meeting, but we aren't allowed to vote,
We can't even make suggestions and do not sign a note.

We must be very careful to get our research right,
Play up all the heroes, but keep the black sheep out of sight.

When there is a business meeting with some interesting speeches,
The room is full of Claibornes, but outlaws are doing the dishes.

Men outlaws do their part, I've seen Joe Johnson in the kitchen,
While Millie's ad hoc committee is working up a new petition.

When things get all bogged down guess who takes up the slack?
And when the family photo's taken, you know who is in the back.

On the night of all reports, when Claibornes make their claim,
If there happens to be an error, you know who gets the blame.

In the spirit of family fun, everyone becomes a cousin,
So even an outlaw spouse has new cousins by the dozen.

If I have to be an outlaw, I don't know a better place to be,
Than in the Claiborne Clan, for I like them all you see.

-Maria Wynn Claiborne

SPECIAL RECOGNITION AWARD

Dr. Claiborne T. Smith, Jr., a retired psychiatrist from Philadelphia, co-authored a book that won the Best Book in Genealogy Award in 1996. His book is entitled CLAIBORNE OF VIRGINIA, Colonel William Claiborne and His Descendants, The First Eight Generations. In his honor a special recognition award was proposed. This award was written by Mary Louise Briscoe and produced by Adele Tallman, and is to be called the **Claiborne T. Smith Jr. Award**. Dr. Claiborne T. Smith, Jr. is to be the first recipient.

Dr. Smith thought highly of the Program we had at the reunion. To show his appreciation to the Clan members for the great honor they have bestowed upon him, he has given the funds to have the program reproduced and mailed to all Clan members who did not receive a copy in Williamsburg. Dr. Smith felt it was very well written, and contained an abundance of history about William Claiborne that would interest Claiborne descendants for years to come. We are indebted to Claiborne Smith for making it possible to give one to each member.

In addition, Claiborne Smith also gave 12 copies of his genealogy, as well as the funds to mail them to genealogical libraries all over the country.

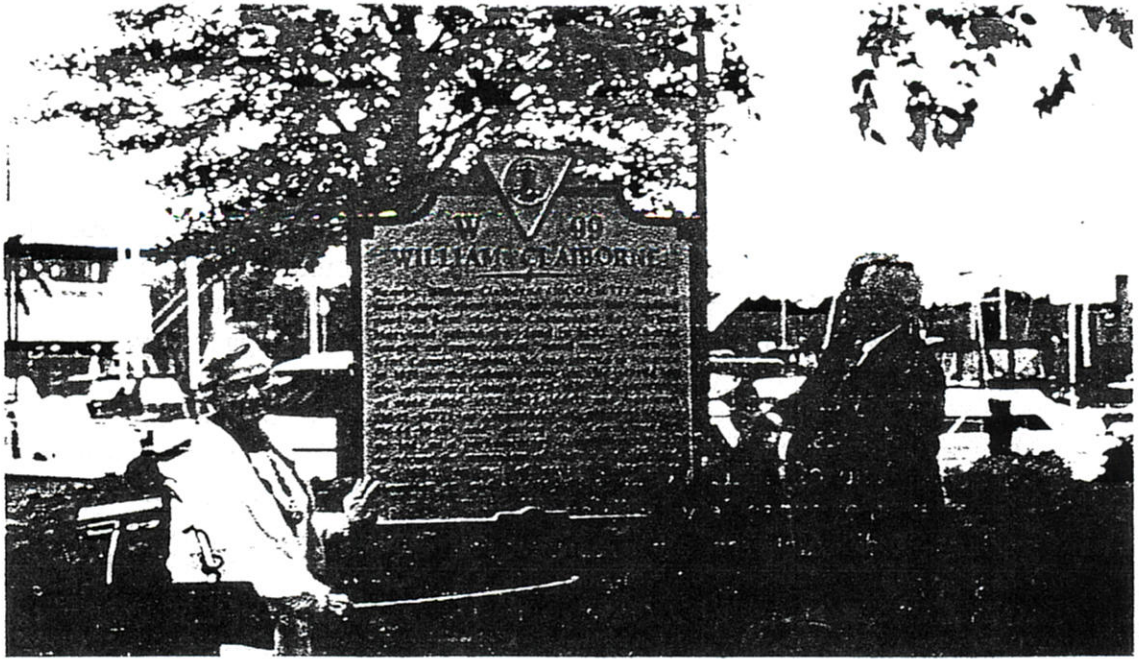
Thank you Ms. Thomas for that kind introduction, and thank you Mayor Eason, for being here on this special occasion. I would also like to thank all of the citizens of Hampton who are here today to participate in the unveiling of this historical marker to commemorate William Claiborne's legacy to your community and the New World.

As Ms. Thomas said, I am the president of The National Society of the Descendants of William Claiborne. I have been asked to tell you a little about the formation of our society. William Claiborne came to Virginia from England in 1621. Individually and separately, several of his descendants, previously unknown to each other, had become interested in tracing their English lineage. In that effort, eight had visited Cliborn Hall in Westmoreland County, England, home of a family traceable back to the thirteenth century, and had signed the guest register. From those eight names and addresses gleaned from the guest register, correspondence began which resulted in the first gathering of twenty- six Claiborne descendents at Williamsburg in 1988. From that modest beginning, we have grown to one hundred fifty members from all over the United States who gather biannually to socialize, network, and to do genealogical research on the Claiborne family. The society has held reunions in various locations, including King's Lynn, England, where William Claiborne's father and grandfather lived, and where each in turn was the town Mayor. We are pleased to have with us today six visitors from King's Lynn representing the Town Guides of King's Lynn. They have been participating in our reunion activities over the last several days.

We are honored to be with you today as a part of this year's reunion to unveil this marker memorializing William Claiborne's life in the New World. We are all proud to be descendants of William Claiborne. He was the quintessential immigrant. He was ambitious, courageous, driven, honorable, bold, and creative. He and his peers formed the model of immigration that has made this country so great. So, this marker not only honors William Claiborne, but also all of the immigrants who have come to strive for the American Dream.

We are the legacy of William Claiborne's dream, and we were proud to raise this money to pay for this marker and its installation. This marker is also a gift to Hampton to show our appreciation for all of your recent archeological efforts. With your help, another definite link has been established between the 17th century and today's city of Hampton. Now I would to call up the person who played the most vital role in this process, Mary Louise Briscoe. Mary Louise, would you please join me up here? Mary Louise, our Vice President, not only initiated the idea for this marker, but also conducted our entire fundraising effort. I would like to give her the honor of unveiling it to the public. Mary Louise, would you do the honors?

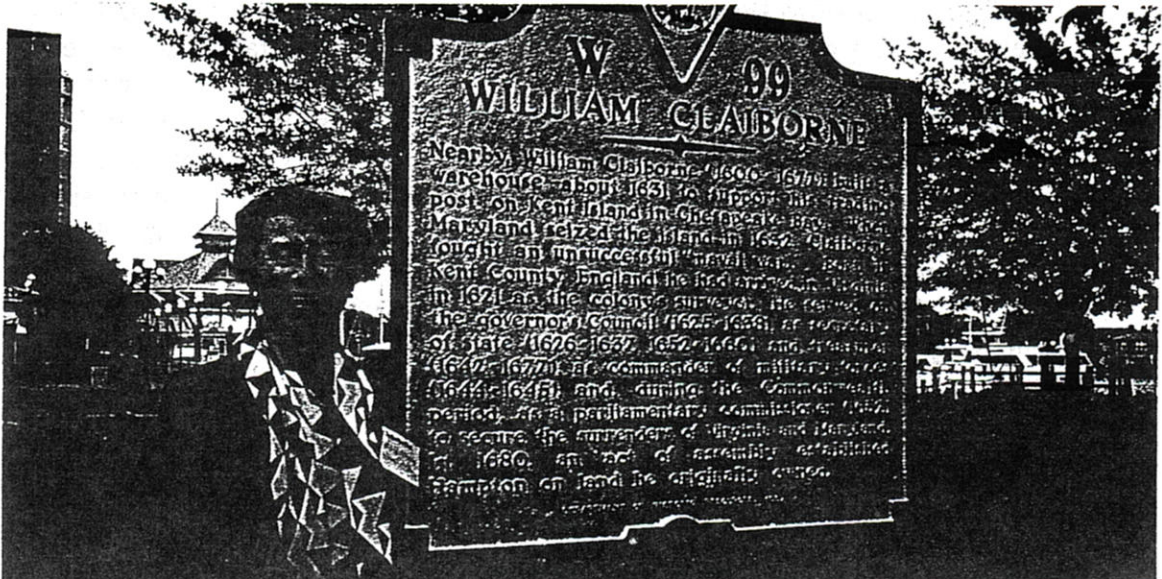
Once again, thank you for the opportunity to be here, and thank you for joining us on this special occasion.



Mary Louise Briscoe and the Mayor of Hampton, Virginia reveal the marker dedicated to William Claiborne.



The Claiborne Clan gathered around William Claiborne's marker after the dedication ceremony. The marker is located in Hampton, Virginia on land that was once owned by William Claiborne.



Curly Moore poses for a close up view of the William Claiborne Marker.

A letter from Huw and Jill Price

King's Lynn, England Reunion

At the reunion in Williamsburg this year, some of the newer members of the Clan expressed a wish to visit King's Lynn, England before the reunion in the fall of 1999. (William Claiborne's father and grandfather were merchants and Mayors in the town in 1573 and 1592 respectively). So Huw and Jill Price offered to arrange a short program for 1998 if there was enough interest.

*** DATE: Wednesday 15 July- Saturday 18 July 1998 ***

The program would include a guided tour of King's Lynn familiar to the two Thomases; a visit to the fifteenth century town hall where they both served as members of the town council and as Mayors. We would see the original book of minutes with the names of the two Thomases inscribed, and also the portrait of William Claiborne donated by the Clan. There is also the town Regalia used by the Mayors, in our Regalia Room. Other possibilities might be meetings with the current Mayor and with all the town guides. It would be possible for those interested to visit Cliburn and Cumbria either before or after.

Any Clan members who are seriously interested are asked to contact Huw and Jill as soon as possible, and in any event, NO LATER THAN DECEMBER 31, 1997, so that adequate accommodations and arrangements can be made.

- Huw and Jill Price

Please contact us at:
Huw and Jill Price
35 Lynn Road
Terrington St. Clement
King's Lynn
Norfolk PE34 4JU

Phone: 1553 828605

NEW OFFICERS

When proposing names for officers, the President wants to open the organization to as many people as possible. The goal is to have active participants rather than keeping so much in the hands of a few.

The nominating committee has developed its slate of names and voting has occurred. Tom Claiborne will serve again as President. The Vice- President will be Dr. Tom Sale. Susan Rura will continue as Treasurer. The Secretary- Registrar will be Anne Overcash.

COMMITTEE TO REVISE THE BY- LAWS

President Tom Claiborne has appointed a By- Laws Revision Committee consisting of Millie Johnson, chairman, Curly Moore and Maria Claiborne. Changes need to be made because of our dramatic growth since the by-laws were written and approved in 1995.

This committee welcomes suggestions. If you have an idea to improve the By- Laws please send it *in writing* to the Chairman as soon as possible, including those members who orally made suggestions at the reunion. Be sure and state clearly your reasons for suggesting the change.

If you would like a copy of the By- Laws please write to me (Millie) and I will be happy to mail it to you. *It takes time to change a By- Law.* It must first pass the By- Law Revision Committee and be sent as a recommendation to the Executive Board. If approved, the recommendation goes out to the entire membership *by mail*. Majority vote rules in all three cases. The committee would like to finish their work by January 1, 1998, so a prompt reply is greatly appreciated. Any Questions? Please contact me:

Mrs. Joseph E. Johnson
51 Birdsong Way A-102
Hilton Head Island, SC
29926- 1356

Phone: (803) 681- 5185
Email: jjohnson@hargray.com

ANNUAL DUES

Annual Dues of \$10.00 are due by October 1st for the 1997- 1998 fiscal year. Checks should be made payable to The Claiborne Clan. Send payment to Susan Rura, Treasurer. The names of those who have not paid dues by January 1st will go on the inactive list and they will receive no further mailings
Please mail ANNUAL DUES to:

Mrs. Susan Rura
3052 Rogers Avenue
Ellicott City, MD 21043

IN MEMORIAM

We deeply regret the passing of one of the original members of The Claiborne Clan, Mrs. Nina Rogers. Mrs. Rogers attended the 1987 Flower Festival at St. Cuthbert's Church in Cliburn, England. We send our deepest sympathy to her daughter, Patricia Trudeau.

NEXT REUNION

The next reunion is scheduled to be in the fall of 1999. Dr. Tom Sale, Vice President of the Clan, is heading up the reunion. You will hear more about the next reunion in the coming months. We hope everyone can attend.

Enclosed you will find two things in addition to the clippings. The first is an article entitled "An After Reunion Adventure" submitted by cousin Curly Moore. The second is a copy of Gene Williamson's work on William Claiborne entitled, "Brief Background on William Claiborne."

Special Thanks To:

Maria Claiborne, Mr. William Claiborne, Curly Moore, Glen Claiborne, Susan Rura, Millie Johnson, Alex Waldrop, Adele Tallman, Tom Claiborne, and Catherine Poore for contributing pictures, articles and advice to put this newsletter together. This newsletter would not have been possible without you.

AFTER REUNION ADVENTURE

On Wednesday, June 11th, I drove Jill and Huw Price, our English Town-Guide friends, to Smith Mountain Lake in the Blue Ridge Mountains of Virginia. On the way home we decided to try to find "Geddes", the ancient home of the Rose family, from which George Mason Claiborne descended, and his birthplace. G.M. (as we refer to him) provided the genealogical research and published "Claiborne Pedigree, the Jr. Branch in America". He presented this pedigree at the 1907 Claiborne family gathering at the Jamestown Exposition.

Millie Johnson and I visited G.M. Claiborne's only living daughter, Jane Calkins, a few years ago when she was in her nineties. She lived in Clifford, VA, a small town on Route 151 in Amherst County, and which route we used to return from Smith Mountain Lake.

The Prices and I had seen Geddes Mountain Road sign on our way to the Lake, so after asking a couple of people, we felt certain that we could find it. We made a few wrong turns, knocked on several doors, then decided to try Jefferson Trace, Route 700. As we approached the gate we knew we had found it. At the gate we saw a small unpainted sign which identified it.

Since the gate was open we turned down the lane and saw a car parked near the old house. Upon arrival, we saw a nice carriage house, the door was open, no one greeted us, so we began calling, "Yoo-who, Yoo-who..." Soon a lady appeared around the end of the carriage house and, after identifying ourselves, Dr. JoAnna Harris warmly welcomed us.

We soon learned that she and her husband, both physicians in Lynchburg, have bought the place, spend their weekends there, have had Colonial Williamsburg historic architects inspect and assess the house, and plan to restore it just as it was, adding a wing behind it for their residence.

Dr. Harris had an appointment, but took time to show the house to us. It is most interesting. She related that Thomas Jefferson had brought his family there and stayed overnight after Jouett warned him that Tarleton was on his way to Charlottesville. The next day he took them to Poplar Forest, his summer home, then returned to Charlottesville.

The architects discovered that another house had been attached to the original house (end-to-end), causing a step-up from one to the other in order to have the roof line at the same height. The foundation is old field stone, puttied together. There has been no electricity or running water.

Dr. Harris invited us to sit in lawn chairs and soak up the view, go to the old cemetery "where Miss Jane" is buried, with a warning to watch out for ticks. Then she left us.

It seemed a long way to walk, especially through waist-high meadow grass just to see a cemetery. I had stuck with Mr. James Harris to see Sarah (Fenn) Claiborne Bray's grave marker in New Kent County, so naturally felt I could accomplish this task. The Prices agreed.

To begin the walk a path led into the woods. We had gone only a few paces when we scared up a pair of wild turkeys with chicks. What a fun surprise. (Tom Claiborne, our president, had told me at the reunion about having visited Geddes and scaring up a pair of wild turkeys. Can you believe we did the same?) Finally, the Prices felt the tall grass, ticks and poison ivy were obstacles too much to tackle. As well, it was hot enough to need a bandana for refreshing one's face. They turned back. I, with the Claiborne stubborn-streak, plowed on. I thought I'd just go to the knoll and see what was beyond it. In doing so, something scurried to my right and as I glanced down, I realized that black with white stripes could only mean a skunk - well, in a flash I decided it had already been startled and, since it had not sprayed, I must maintain a steady gait and proceed, especially since I spied a wooden fence. I knew it had to be the cemetery.

The cemetery was very much overgrown and only one large stone was visible. It looked fairly recent and was very legible. It listed George Mason Claiborne, his wife, and all children with dates. I feel certain it was installed perhaps after "Miss Jane" was buried there. I wished for a camera.

An appropriate ending for a 1997 Williamsburg/Jamestown/Hampton Claiborne Reunion.

Submitted by: Curly Moore, 30 June 1997

Refer to Dr. Claiborne Smith's Claiborne of Virginia, page 669.

Generations: 1) William Claiborne, 2) Thomas, 3) Thomas, 4) Augustine, 5) Buller 6) Sterling, married Jane Maria Rose (page 654), 7) Charles Buller (page 668), 8) George Mason born at "Geddes" 4 July 1853 (page 668). "Geddes" was the home of Jane Rose's uncle, Col. Hugh Rose.

BRIEF BACKGROUND ON WILLIAM CLAIBORNE

Claiborne's Arrival in Virginia: In November 1620, Claiborne sailed from England aboard the *George*, as member of the party accompanying Sir Francis Wyatt, newly appointed governor of Virginia. Claiborne was 21 years of age when his ship sailed through the Virginia capes into Chesapeake Bay on August 8, 1621, en route to Jamestown.

Claiborne appointed Virginia Surveyor: Prior to leaving England, the Virginia Company appointed William Claiborne, of Kent County, England, as Surveyor for Virginia. His appointment read as follows:

The Comittee appoynted by the Preparative Courte to treat with Mr. Cleyborne (Commended and proposed for the Surveyors place) haveing mett the next day and takinge into their considerations the allowances that a former Comittee had thought fit to State that Office withall in respect of the service hee was to performe as well in generall as particular Surveys did agree for his Salary to allow him Thirty pounds per annum to be paid in two hundred waight of Tobacco or any other valuable Comoditie growinge in that Country and that hee shall have a conveyent howse provided at the Companies charge and Twenty pounds in hand to furnish him with Instruments and books fittinge for his Office which hee is to leave to his Successor....

Claiborne Wounded in Indian Hostilities: In 1624, while serving as Governor Wyatt's military aide in retaliatory raids against the Powhatan Indians (following the 1622 massacre), Claiborne and his company of 60 colonists confronted and defeated an Indian force of some 800 bowmen. None of the colonists were killed but Claiborne was wounded. He would command Virginia forces against the Powhatan Indians in 1644-45, capturing the fabled Chief Opechancanough.

Claiborne Appointed Virginia's Secretary of State: In 1625 William Claiborne was named to Governor's Council and in 1626 was elevated to Virginia's Secretary of State, a post second only to Governor in political influence. Claiborne's appointment read as follows:

And forasmuch as the affairs of the said Colony and Plantation may necessarily require some person of quality and trust to be employed as Secretary for the writing and answering of such letters as shall be from time to time directed or sent from the said Governor and Council of the Colony aforesaid, our will and pleasure is, and we do by these presents nominate and assign you, the said William Clayborne to become Secretary of State, for the said colony and Plantation of Virginia, residing in those parts.

Claiborne served as Secretary until 1637 (again from 1652 to 1660) and was named the colony's treasurer in 1642.

Claiborne Established Trading Post in Hampton: Land patents granted to William Claiborne (Clayborne) in 1625 include 150 acres in "The Corporation of Elizabeth City." It was on this land, located near the present Settlers Landing Road that he established the trading post used as a base for fur trading expeditions and explorations in upper Chesapeake Bay. See *Records of the Virginia Company of London* (Vol 4, pp 555-558), edited by Susan Myra Kingsbury, published in 1906 by the U.S. Government Printing Office and reprinted in 1994 by Heritage Books Inc., Maryland.

Following account re Claiborne's settlement on Hampton site is from *Old Kecoughtan* (p86), William and Mary College Quarterly Historical Magazine, Series 1, Vol. 9, No. 2, 1901:

On the west side of the river lived in these early days that very quaint character in our early history, called William Capp, who resided at "Little England," anciently known as Capps' Point, and who in 1610 represented Kecoughtan in the first American Legislature. Above him, on two tracts of land, together aggregating 150 acres, and separated from Capps by a creek, was the most famous of all the early settlers of this region. This man was the celebrated William Claiborne, surveyor, Treasurer of Virginia and Secretary of State. Here, on the very site of the present Hampton Town, he had his storehouse for trade with the Indians up Chesapeake Bay and elsewhere, and from this storehouse his sloops, loaded with goods in exchange for skins and furs, sailed to many points in Maryland, Nansemond and the Eastern Shore.

Following is from *History of Hampton and Elizabeth City County* by Lyon G. Tyler, 1922 (pp28-29):

We have seen that...Col. Claiborne obtained a patent for 150 acres at the present site of Hampton. In 1680, this land had become the property of a ship captain named Thomas Jarvis....This same year (1680) the General Assembly passed an act condemning fifty acres, in each of the counties, for towns, to be centers of trade and sole places of import and export. For Elizabeth City, the area selected was a part of Captain Thomas Jarvis' property, which was vested in trustees or feoffees, and divided into half acre lots. The limitations of the act, however, were distasteful to both merchants in England and planters in Virginia, and the act was soon suspended by the government, though several persons bought and built houses at the new town.

In 1691, the act was revived, and the town for Elizabeth City County was decreed to be built on "the west side of Hampton River, on the land of Mr. William Wilson, lately belonging unto Mr. Thomas Jarvis, deceased..." [This land on which the town of Hampton was incorporated in 1691 was the land originally owned by Claiborne and sold by his family to Jarvis in 1680.]

Claiborne Explored Chesapeake Bay: In January 1629, Claiborne was commissioned by Virginia's acting governor, John Pott, to explore

the parts and territories of this colony situate and lying to the southwards of this place as also of some particular places to the northward and in the Bay of Chesepeiacke and greatly favoring the prosecution of such enterprises tendeth so much to the enlargement and welfare of this colony.

Claiborne Discovered Kent Island: During his explorations of upper Chesapeake in 1628, Claiborne had discovered, named, and settled Kent Island (which he bought from the local Indians for 12 pounds sterling). There he built a post from which to conduct fur trading expeditions with Indians. He described his island as follows:

Entered upon the Isle of kent, unplanted by any man. But possessed of the natives of that country, with about one hundred men and there contracted with the natives and bought their right, to hold of the Crown of England, to him and his Company and their heirs, and by force and virtue thereof William Claiborne and his Company stood seized of the said Island. [The actual price that Claiborne paid for Kent Island in 1631 was 12 pounds sterling.]

The island was named for his native Kent County, England. He later would apply the name to New Kent County, Virginia.

Claiborne Lost Kent Island to Lord Baltimore: In 1632, Charles I granted Maryland to Sir George Calvert, First Lord Baltimore, but Calvert died before the royal seal was put to the charter. Rights and privileges were inherited by the son, Cecil Calvert, Second Lord Baltimore. Maryland had been carved out of territory included in Virginia's original charter, and it included Claiborne's Kent Island which Lord Baltimore confiscated. This led to a lengthy territorial dispute between Claiborne and the Lords Baltimore--and involved a Chesapeake Bay shooting war which in 1635 would include the first naval engagement in American waters. The dispute would not be resolved until Claiborne's death in 1677.

Claiborne Appointed Parliamentary Commissioner: In October 1650, following the English Civil War in which Charles I was executed, Parliament appointed William Claiborne as one of two commissioners to govern Virginia and Maryland, with authority to reduce those two colonies to the subjection of the English Commonwealth.

Suggested Reading: *Virginia Venturer, a Historical Biography of William Claiborne, 1600-1677* by Nathaniel C. Hale, Dietz Press, 1951; *The English Ancestry of William Claiborne of Virginia* by Clayton Torrence in *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography*, Vol 56, No. 33-4, 1948; *History of Hampton and Elizabeth City County, Virginia*, by Lyon G. Tyler, published by Board of Supervisors of Elizabeth City County, Hampton, Virginia, 1922; *Chesapeake Conflict* by Gene Williamson, Heritage Books Inc, 1995.