

Indians Bartering

The Manahoc Indians, who had a village above the site of the present Belmont Estate, used fish caught in the Rappahannock as “barter goods.” They caught these fish in traps located near the “fall line” in the river where the present Falmouth Bridge is located. They strung the fish on green willow poles and smoked them over low fires built alongside the river bank. There is evidence these fish were traded as far west as the present Ohio Valley. The stone weirs the Manahocs used were still visible until the 1942 flood on the Rappahannock destroyed them. The weirs were used to channel the fish either into woven cone shaped baskets or “fall traps” made from willow saplings.

