

## Leaders

**Colonel Giles Brent** arrived in Maryland from England in 1638. He became Lt. Governor, Lord of the Manor at Kent Fort, Magistrate and Chief Captain of the Providence of Maryland. He married Kittamaquad, a Native American Piscataway Princess. At the death of her father, Brent claimed all Piscataway lands, which was most of Maryland. After a futile fight with Lord Baltimore over the land, Brent eventually came to “Brent’s Point” in Stafford near the junction of Aquia Creek and the Potomac River. He called his plantation “Peace.” He became one of the County’s first permanent settlers and started the first Catholic Settlement in Virginia. Brent continued to patent land from present day Arlington to Westmoreland County but lived and died in Stafford County.

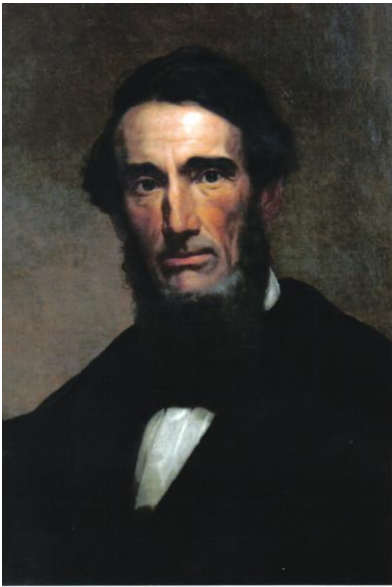
**Robert Brent** (1764-1819)—was the son of Robert Brent (1730-1780) and Ann Carroll (1733-1804). Robert was born at Woodstock in Stafford and, like his father and brother, was involved in the cutting of sandstone from Brent’s/Government Island in Aquia Creek. He was a judge of the Orphan’s Court in Washington and paymaster of the army. Thomas Jefferson appointed him mayor of Washington and he held this position from 1802-1812. Robert Brent resided at Brentwood, his country estate near Washington. This was designed for him by Benjamin H. Latrobe and was located near the present campus of Gallaudet College.

**William Brent** (1733-1782)—the son of Capt. William Brent (1710-1742) of Richland, Stafford County. In May 1757 William became a justice for Stafford but in October 1765 he resigned in protest of the Stamp Act. Shortly thereafter, he resumed his office as justice and served until his death. In 1776 William was elected one of two delegates to the last Revolutionary Convention. On July 23 of that year Lord Dunmore landed his ship at Richland and burned Brent’s house and other outbuildings. William served in the House of Delegates in 1776 and 1778 and in 1780 was elected to the Virginia Senate as representative of Stafford, King George, and Westmoreland counties.

**John Taliaferro Brooke** (1761-1821)—the son of Richard Brooke (died 1792) and grandson of Robert Brooke who accompanied Alexander Spotswood and the Knights of the Golden Horseshoe on their expedition west. During the American Revolution, John T. Brooke and his three brothers served in the Continental army. John practiced law in Fredericksburg and was a partner with James Madison. After the Revolution, he abandoned his law practice and concentrated on running his farm, Millvale, on which

now stands the present Brooke VRE station. He was the first president of the Farms Bank of Fredericksburg and represented Stafford in the House of Delegates from 1805-1808. In 1812 he was presidential elector for his old friend, James Madison.

**Charles Adams Bryan** (1849-1918)—was born in Maryland and came with his parents to Stafford around 1858 and lived at Ingleside just outside Falmouth. After the Civil War, Charles' father, Richard H. Bryan, lost his farm and the family moved to Stafford Courthouse. Their house stood very near the Fas-Mart across from the courthouse. From 1885-1906 Richard Bryan served as a magistrate for the county and held several other offices, as well. In 1869 Charles became deputy clerk of the court; he was just 20 years old. In 1887 he became clerk of the court and remained in that office until 1910. Charles and his wife, Margaret N. Morton, operated a boarding house and served meals to people doing business at the courthouse. Both Richard and Charles Bryan were known for their unflinching integrity and their tireless efforts to help people. Because of their efforts, a Black family was able to keep their land, which likely would have been lost had the Bryans not intervened.



*Walker Peyton Conway*

**Walker Peyton Conway** (1805-1884)— was the son of John Moncure Conway (1779-1864) and Catherine Storke Peyton (1786-1865). 1832-33 Walker represented Stafford in the Virginia House of Delegates. 1832-1861 he was a justice for Stafford and for much of that time served as presiding justice. Highly regarded for his integrity, Walker was often called upon to administer estates for whom there were no known heirs or no heirs capable of acting as administrators. He was heavily involved with the Falmouth textile and flour industries.



**William Fitzhugh** (1741- 1809) Scion of a prosperous and powerful Virginia family, William was born in 1741, the only son of Henry and Lucy Carter Fitzhugh. His father died before William's second birthday, leaving him the young heir of a vast fortune. His mother, daughter of extremely wealthy Robert "King" Carter of Williamsburg fame, soon remarried. She wed Colonel Nathaniel Harrison of Brandon, who brought his two children to live with William and his mother. One of these children received a whip for his birthday and in playing with it, he accidentally hit William in the face causing the loss of an eye. Much of Fitzhugh's youth was spent at the home of his uncle, Charles Carter.

On April 2, 1763, Fitzhugh married Ann Randolph. The two lived at Somerset, one of two plantations Fitzhugh inherited by 1765 (the other was Eagle's Nest). Having as yet no children and being desirous of company, the couple sold 9000 acres of land in Spotsylvania County to finance the building of another home, this on the banks of the Rappahannock River. They named the house **Chatham** after William Pitt, the Earl of Chatham.

Construction of the home began around 1768 and was completed about 1771. The large home had only ten rooms, though it was 210 feet long and 30 feet wide. After completion of Chatham, Fitzhugh put his name up for election to the House of Burgesses, serving in that august body between 1772 and 1775. When the assembly was dissolved by Lord Dunmore, Fitzhugh continued to serve King George County in ad hoc conventions held in Williamsburg and Richmond. He was also a member of the Revolutionary Committee of Safety at this time (1774-75). Fitzhugh supported the revolution whole-heartedly. During the war he acted as a commissioner of two arms and munitions factories in the area, while also serving as a member of the Virginia House of Delegates (1776-77) and later as a state senator (1780-87)

After the war, Fitzhugh continued to be active in politics and farming as well as a variety of speculative ventures. Much time, too, was spent entertaining. Chatham was

constantly besieged by visitors. In those days it was customary for travelers to stay at private homes, and Fitzhugh, a man of noted hospitality, was a favorite destination for many a weary wayfarer. He is reported to have entertained 43 such guests on one occasion. Among those sometimes seated at his table was George Washington.

Over the course of many years, Fitzhugh was driven into debt by these visitors and in the 1790's he left Chatham, later putting the house up for sale. He moved to Alexandria, Virginia, on the outskirts of the new nation's capital. He and Washington visited one another frequently until the latter's death in 1799. The last person Washington visited outside of Mount Vernon before his death was William Fitzhugh.

Fitzhugh himself died ten years later at the age of 69, leaving behind his three children. His eldest son, William, rented the Alexandria home to the mother of Robert E. Lee mother (whose maiden name was Carter and hence related to Fitzhugh), who had fallen on hard times. The future Confederate general was raised at this Orinoco Street residence (today known as the Boyhood Home of Robert E. Lee). Fitzhugh Lee, the cavalry general and governor of Virginia, grew up at another Fitzhugh property, "Ravensworth." William Fitzhugh's youngest child, Mary, married George Washington Parke Custis (Washington's adopted grandson), and their daughter, Mary Ann Randolph Custis, married Robert E. Lee reuniting the Fitzhugh and Lee family trees. As for William Fitzhugh, he was initially buried at Ravensworth, but was moved to Pohick Church graveyard when the mansion was destroyed. His grave may still be seen today.

**Field trip:** Visit Chatham Manor, open every day from 9:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m., except Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's Day.

**James Garrard** (1749-1822)—son of Col. William Garrard (c.1715-c.1786) of Stafford. James resided at Hampstead on Poplar Road (Route 616) in Stafford. During the American Revolution, James served as a captain in the Stafford militia. From 1779-1780 James represented Stafford County in the Virginia House of Delegates. From at least 1779-1784 James was a justice for Stafford. In 1784 he moved to Kentucky and served as the second governor of that state from 1796-1804.



**Basil Gordon** (1768-1847) was one of many Scottish merchants that settled in Virginia in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Merchants by trade, Basil and his brother Samuel Gordon (1759-1843) came to Virginia in 1784 and maintained extensive mercantile stores in Falmouth. Samuel lived at what is now called Gordon Green Terrace in Falmouth and Basil lived in a brick house below the Falmouth Bridge on River Road. Basil married Anna Campbell Knox, daughter of another local Scottish family. Local lore holds that Basil was America's first millionaire, but this distinction has not been proved. Both brothers were extremely successful in their mercantile ventures and Samuel moved from Falmouth to Kenmore, the old Fielding Lewis house in Fredericksburg. A newspaper article of 1874 read, "Basil Gordon, whose powdered hair, gold spectacles and scrupulously neat black suit is still remembered by the old residents...Mr. Gordon was a Scotchman, and settled in Falmouth more than half a century ago. By sterling integrity and extensive commercial transactions he accumulated and bequeathed to his heirs over two million dollars."

**Duff Green** (1792-1854)—was born in Culpeper and came to Stafford around 1810 and resided in what is now known as Gordon Green Terrace in Falmouth. Among other activities, he commanded the Falmouth militia company and, during the 1830s, was inspector of flour for the port of Falmouth. He was a director of the Farmers Bank of Fredericksburg and worked on the committee to build the Mary Washington Monument in Fredericksburg. During his years in Falmouth, Duff owned a merchant flour mill, a cotton mill, a wool carding mill, two retail stores, and the Falmouth Hotel. He was also a director of the Baltimore and Rappahannock Steam Packet Company and was an active member of St. George's Episcopal Church in Fredericksburg. Duff was also involved in coal mining in western Virginia and in canal building in that part of the state. In 1837 he built the Elm Factory near the present Falmouth Bridge. Unlike the other mills in Falmouth that were water-powered, Elm was powered by a steam engine, thus allowing it to be back some distance from the river. Duff also owned a farm called Ridgeway.

Although it stood just north of Falmouth, he never lived there as his primary residence. This is now the site of Stafford High School.

**James Hunter** (1721-1784)—born near Glasgow, Scotland, he was from a well-established mercantile family that was involved in the tobacco trade between America and England. James frequently visited Virginia on his father's ships but settled her permanently around 1746 for the purpose of helping his ailing Uncle William Hunter manage his store in Fredericksburg. After William's death in 1753, James purchased a large plantation called Stanstead from Charles Carter (1707-1764). The Stanstead house stood behind what is now the McDonald's restaurant at the I-95/Rt. 17 interchange. The plantation was quite large and extended all the way down to the Rappahannock River. James recognized the need for a local iron works and in the mid-1750s conceived of building one on the river just above Falmouth. This was in operation by about 1759 or 1760. In addition to pig iron, Hunter built a forge for processing pigs into usable iron products such as tools and hardware, which was much in demand. He also built a still for making whiskey or brandy, a wire mill for making all manner of objects from eyeglass frames to chain. This mill also made the pins used in cotton and wool combs, necessary implements for making wool and cotton fabrics. His initial intention was to produce domestic goods needed by local patrons. Being unfamiliar with iron manufacturing, he hired Quakers who were often employed by Chesapeake iron companies. As relations between America and England deteriorated, Hunter's manager, John Strode (see below), altered and expanded the facility to produce arms and supplies for the military. Within the iron works complex, Hunter and Strode established a gun manufactory that made a wide variety of pistols, rifles, carbines, amusettes (a cross between a cannon and a shoulder arm), and swords. In 1770 British customs officer, John Williams, called Hunter's "the greatest Iron Works that is upon the Continent." In reality, Hunter's operation didn't peak until 1776 and 1777. This facility was a major producer of weapons and supplies during the American Revolution.



**Gen. Fitzhugh Lee** (1835-1905)—was the son of Sidney Smith Lee (1802-1869) and nephew of Gen. Robert E. Lee. In 1861 Fitz Lee joined the Confederate cavalry as a

lieutenant and fought at the First Battle of Manassas. He was promoted to lieutenant colonel later in 1861 and to brigadier general in 1862. At the close of the Civil War, the Smith Lee's family had lost everything. Family friend, Anna Maria Fitzhugh, allowed them to live at Richland, a farm she owned in Stafford. After Smith's death, Fitzhugh Lee continued farming at Richland and Mrs. Fitzhugh willed the property to him and his brothers. Fitz continued in residence at Richland until becoming Governor of Virginia in 1886. He held this office until 1890. After the war, Fitz traveled and gave speeches helping Southerners accept the war's outcome. He also served as a general in the Spanish American War.

**Thomas Ludwell Lee** (1730-1778)—was born at Stratford Hall and was the son of Thomas Lee (1690-1750) and Hannah Ludwell (1701-1750). His brothers were Francis Lightfoot Lee (1743-1797) and Richard Henry Lee (1732-1794), signers of the Declaration of Independence. 1759-1761 Thomas Ludwell Lee represented Stafford County in the House of Burgesses. He also represented Stafford in the Third through Fifth Virginia Conventions during the American Revolution. From at least 1757 to at least 1773 Thomas was a justice for Stafford. Thomas lived at Bell View on the south side of Potomac Creek and near Belle Plains.

**John Mercer** (1704-1768)—immigrated to America in 1720 from Dublin, Ireland, settling first in Maryland, then in Virginia. He soon became a prominent entrepreneur, attorney, and landowner. John arrived in Stafford around 1725 and almost single-handedly rebuilt the failed town of Marlborough. On the site he built houses, a racetrack, distillery, warehouses, and a windmill for grinding grain. Until very recent times, Marlborough Point was known as Windmill Point. Mercer also built an enormous brick home which disappeared sometime after his death. Here, also, were the courthouse, jail, several ordinaries (taverns/hotels), a ferry across Potomac Creek to King George County, and another ferry across the Potomac River to Maryland (on which Mercer transported his race horses to Maryland tracks). Mercer was extremely outspoken on many subjects, especially on independence from England. He practiced law and argued cases in the Dumfries and Stafford courts, but his ill-tempered tirades resulted in his being barred from the Prince William court. From at least 1748 until at least 1766 he served as a justice in Stafford County. Mercer owned one of the two largest personal libraries in colonial Virginia.

**Anne E. Moncure** (1895-1984)—the daughter of Robert Ambler Moncure (1864-1923) and Agnes Waller (1864-1951) of Stafford. "Miss Anne E." began her teaching career in 1921 at what is now the office of the Stafford County School Board. Her first class of first graders contained 65 children from age 6 to teenagers. Over the years she was a teacher, administrator, and Superintendent of Elementary Education, this latter position including schools in both Stafford and King George counties. As Superintendent, Miss Anne E. gathered a collection of books and carried them from school to school in a large station wagon; there were no school libraries. Children were able to borrow books from the collection and exchange them the next time she came by their school. She retired in

1960 and Anne E. Moncure Elementary School in Garrisonville was named in her honor. Miss Moncure's farm is now the site of Aquia Town Center on U. S. Route 1.

**Richard Cassius Lee Moncure** (1805-1882)—was the son of John Moncure (1772-1822) of Clermont, Stafford County. He married Mary Butler Washington Conway (born 1807), the daughter of John Moncure Conway (1779-1864) and Catherine Storke Peyton (1786-1865). Richard bought Glencairne, a farm just north of the town of Falmouth. From 1827-1828 he represented Stafford in the Virginia House of Delegates. From 1852-1864 he served as presiding judge of the Virginia Court of Appeals.

**Dr. Thaddeus Constantine Montague** (1838-1906)—was born in Middlesex County, Virginia. In 1859 he graduated from the Medical College of Virginia and entered Confederate service in May 1861. He served with Generals Floyd and Albert Sidney Johnston in Kentucky and Tennessee during the campaigns of 1862. Following this he was made surgeon-in-charge of Emory and Henry Hospital where he treated soldiers from both sides of the war. Prior to his death, Dr. Montague owned a drug store on Caroline Street in Fredericksburg. From 1887-1888 represented Stafford in the Virginia House of Delegates. He was buried at his farm, Rosedale, in Stafford.

**Alexander Scott** (1686-1738)—was rector (minister) of Overwharton Parish from 1706 until his death in 1738. Alexander followed John Waugh (1630-1706) as rector of Overwharton. Scott was born in Dipple Parish, Scotland and named his Stafford farm Dipple. This stood at the junction of Chappawamsic Creek and the Potomac River. During the years that Scott lived and worked in Stafford, this area was very much a wilderness and Stafford had no known western boundary. One of his reports stated "The bounds [of the parish] is not known, it being a frontier parish but it inhabited near 80 miles in length and in some places near 3 miles, in other near 20 miles in breadth and about 650 families." In 1724 he reported to the Bishop of London that about 650 families lived in Overwharton Parish, there were about 80-100 communicants, and the parish contained one church and several chapels. At this time the parish church was Potomac Church, which had been built around 1665 and was located where Brooke Road (Rt. 608) crosses Potomac Run. The northern end of his parish was near what is now Anacostia.

**Dr. Hawkins Stone** (1816-1903)—born in Stafford, he was descended from Thomas Stone of Maryland, one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence. Thomas provided medical care to the residents of northern Stafford for about 60 years. He lived on a farm that is now the site of the Giant Food Store and Home Depot on Garrisonville Road (Rt. 610). He was said to have owned one of the first automobiles in the county. Family tradition holds that Hawkins was an outspoken opponent of the Union occupation during the Civil War. Shortly after their arrival in Stafford, Union soldiers arrested Hawkins and sent him to a prison camp. Because he was not only the sole medical provider in his north Stafford community, but also ran the local grist (flour) mill, Union authorities were forced to send him home in order to prevent further hardships for the women, children, and elderly who remained in the area. His grist mill was located beneath what is now Smith Reservoir. From 1846 to at least 1848 Hawkins served as a justice in Stafford. In 1884 he also served on the county school board. Dr. Stone's wife



and children all predeceased him. He developed a melanoma on his face and died of this awful cancer. His obituary described him as “one of Stafford’s most remarkable citizens.” The “Doc Stone Shopping Center” is named after him.

**John Strode** (c.1735-c.1820)—a Quaker from Chester County, Pennsylvania. Around 1764 he came to work at James Hunter’s iron works near Falmouth. Here he built a new dam and many of the mills and factories. Strode was responsible for converting Hunters works from a supplier of domestic needs to a maker of all manner of military supplies and equipment needed for the Revolution. He worked with Patrick Henry to obtain state funding for the expansion and to the already existing facility added a second iron furnace, a brass furnace, a steel furnace, and a massive gun factory. At the time of the expansion Strode traveled to Pennsylvania and New Jersey and hired more highly skilled Quaker craftsmen to work at Hunter’s. Hunter’s Iron Works and Rappahannock Forge, the company’s gun-making subsidiary, was a major supplier of arms and equipment to American forces during the Revolution. John Strode became ill and retired from the forge in 1779 and moved to Culpeper County. After the Revolution, he built and operated several large merchant flour mills in Culpeper County. His farm there, Fleetwood, was later the site of the Battle of Brandy Station.

**Thomas Towson** (1779-1861)—was born near Baltimore, Maryland. A marble cutter and quarrier by trade, Towson was much involved in cutting and supplying sandstone, also called freestone, for the building of the city of Washington. During the early 1800s, Thomas split his time between Baltimore and Stafford. Around 1806 he married Eleanor Norman of Edge Hill, Stafford County. He finally moved to Stafford around 1823 and lived at Rockdale off Courthouse Road (Route 630). Towson cut stone from the old Robertson Quarry near his house; however, his most important job was cutting the columns for the U. S. Capitol from Government Island in Aquia Creek. He purchased the commercial wharf at Coal Landing which was located a very short distance downstream from the island. He also owned the warehouse and several lots in the old town of Aquia, now Aquia Harbour subdivision. The shell of his Aquia stone home is still standing and is preserved near the Austin Ridge homeowners’ pool. An historical marker is by the house. Today it is known as the Robertson Towson House. Robertson refers to the former owner of the quarry located nearby.

**Augustine Washington** (1694-1743)—was the father of George Washington. As a very young man he became interested in iron making and worked briefly with the operators of Bristol Iron Works in King George County. In 1720 a group of English investors established the Principio Iron Company and sent representatives to Maryland to seek deposits of iron ore. The company built several iron furnaces in Maryland, then decided to expand to the other side of the Chesapeake Bay. Augustine, who was well aware of Principio’s desire to expand, purchased some iron deposits in central Stafford County on Accokeek Run and very near the present Ramoth Baptist Church. Principio signed a 1,000 year lease with Washington and made him a partner in the company. Principio’s workers erected an iron furnace on Accokeek Run, the remains of which survive today. Known as Accokeek Iron Furnace, this facility made pig iron from around 1725 to around 1752. Augustine, who had been a resident of Westmoreland County, moved

closer to the works after the death of the manager in 1734. He moved first to Mt. Vernon, but when that burned, he moved down to what is known today as Ferry Farm. Augustine was noted for his intelligence and his amazing strength and was actively engaged with the day-to-day activities at the furnace. By no little coincidence, Washington married Mary Ball, who just happened to have inherited some rich iron deposits very near the Accokeek Furnace. When Augustine died, he left his Principio shares to his son Lawrence Washington.

**John Waugh** (1630-1706)—the first rector (minister) of Overwharton Parish, a position he held from 1668 until 1701. He lived at Overwharton plantation, which is now known as Waugh Point in King George County. An educated man, he attended to the spiritual needs of frontier people from what is today King George County all the way to modern Anacostia; his parish had no known western boundary. With his charismatic personality and gift of oration, he had his parishioners' unwavering loyalty. A staunch Protestant, Waugh encouraged the smoldering distrust between Virginia's Protestants and Maryland's Catholics. This very nearly resulted in armed combat, which was stopped just in time by Protestant William Fitzhugh. Waugh vented much of his distrust of Catholics on Stafford's George Brent (c.1678-1700) of Woodstock (now part of Aquia Harbour subdivision) who was a Catholic. Although Brent was well educated and had served in a variety of important county positions, Parson Waugh warned his parishioners to distrust him. Waugh also advised his parishioners that there was likely a conspiracy afoot in which the Catholic Marylanders were set to employ the local Indians to murder Virginia Protestants. Although John Waugh very nearly sparked a battle between Maryland and Virginia, it was not these activities that worried authorities. Rather, it was his repeated performing of marriages between underage girls and much older men that brought about his professional demise. He did this numerous times during his tenure as rector and was called to Jamestown to explain his actions on repeated occasions. In one instance he married nine-year-old Mary Hathaway to William Williams, then a justice of the Stafford Court. After numerous warnings, his license was finally revoked in 1701 and he retired to his Overwharton plantation.