

BOLINGBROKE NECK, TRAPPE, MD.

by

Wilson M. Tyler

from the Easton Star Democrat Oct. 29, 1927

“BOLINGBROKE NECK IS OF LARGE EXTENT

The Broad Choptank Gives To This Part Of Talbot County Its Greatest
Beauty--Many Estates There Have Musical Names

The Great Choptank River sweeps along the eastern border of Talbot county in a southwesterly direction until it comes to the extreme southern limits of the county. Here it makes a right-angle bend before it broadens out into the waters of the Chesapeake Bay. On the Talbot side of this bend is Chancellor's Point, the southern limit of that Neck known as Bolingbroke. It is very improbable that "brook" has any authoritative origin as a final syllable. No running brook in the Neck is of sufficient size to give character to the section. It is much more probable that the early occupants were admirers of the very spectacular career of Bolingbroke, whom Queen Anne made Prime Minister of England, about that time, and in whose honor the new country may have been named. This is merely given for what it is worth. It was Bolingbroke that Pope consulted when writing his Essay on Man."

Chancellor of Maryland, Phillip Calvert, came into possession of some thousands of acres of land of the tract known as "Woolsey Manor," since which time it has been known as Chancellor's Point. If we could trace the name of the manor to his Eminence spelled with one "o", it would, in truth, be a "Cardinal" point. Whether the names of Bolingbroke or Cardinal Wolsey are associated with the naming of these lands or not, matters nothing to the present. Here we have a beautiful and fruitful block of Talbot presenting a leg-of-mutton shape, containing approximately nine square miles of surface, with its broad end inland, tapering to Chancellor's Point. The shore line of the river rounds the "knee" of said leg-of-mutton, and is not indented with ragged margin.

The west side of Bolingbroke Neck is just as ragged in outline as the waters of Bolingbroke Creek permit. This Creek can be seen in the map published last week. The eastern border of the Neck terminates with Raccoon Creek, which has length but no appreciable width, and is simply a little stream flowing into the Choptank while with the opposite Creek, the Choptank flows into it. In this sense "creeks is creeks" just like "pig is pigs."

Chancellor's Point farm is now owned by Emerson Harrington of Cambridge, and occupied by Elias Walker and family. It formerly belonged to Alfred Kemp and came down through the Hughlett heirs. A vessel wharf projects into the river but steamers no longer use it. The Hughletts began their financial career three or four generations ago by merchandising at Greensboro, at the head of the Choptank and later acquiring large acreage in this section of the country. These acres, much of them, are still retained within the family limits. Richard Hughlett, of Cambridge, rents his Talbot estate to William Bradley, at the present time. Another home site facing the creek is owned by the heirs of Bayless, a Baltimore contractor. Royal entertainments were given in this crowded spot in the days of the Hannigan owners before the Civil War, to say nothing of the many hospitalities since.

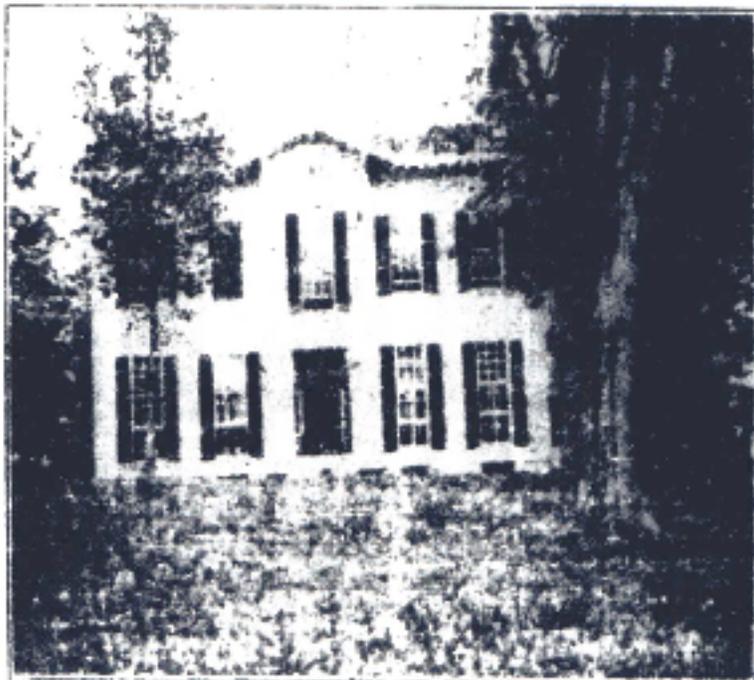
Adjoining these farms, to the east, and on the Choptank is "Ingleside," part of the Hughlett tract. This has long been and still is owned by Robert J. Dawson who resides with his son, Hall, who carries on the farm. The word ingleside, is simply the Scotch way of saying "fireside," and carries the full import of the word. The Hughlett interests were here sold to Franz Scheppers of Philadelphia, who built a race track in one of the fields and employed a Mr. Powers, of Hambleton, to take care of it. On it Scheppers built splendid and spacious stables for those days. The barn was 400 feet long, though destroyed by fire many years ago. John Henry C. Watts of Western Maryland, was the predecessor of the present owner. Ingleside is one of the manor houses of the county, of frame and semi-antique. it has not been modernized. Spacious comfort is its atmosphere. On the more than mile river front of the Choptank, high banks and broad water is presented. Indians were wont to assemble in just such places. Here, as elsewhere, the "foot-prints on the sands of time" of the Red Man are in evidence. Here is where have been found some quarries of Indian relics.

The entrance into Bolingbroke is from the little village of Barber, named as a Talbot County post office in honor of the Congressman who established it, the late Isaac A. Barber. On the old maps this place

is called Manassas, and by some still retains the name. The postoffice, as such, is discontinued since the advent of rural delivery from Trappe. Turning to the right at Barber, and proceeding along as pretty a country road as one could expect to find, without a detour to the left or right, one comes to the above mentioned Ingleside. This highway is worthy of notice. It is well built, and where necessary, surfaced with gravel sucked from the bottom of the river by power machinery. This surface is more enduring than shell. It does not grind to powder to blow away, but becomes harder and harder as it packs into the ground beneath it.



“Ingleside” At The Tip End Of The Neck



“Creefields” The Borden Smith Home

“Belmont” another worth-while place is now the residence of E. J. Cryer, and family, tenants; and owned by the heirs of Mrs. Alfred Kemp, who was a Hughlett. Like its neighbor, Belmont is a wonderful old farm, and produced this year an astonishing yield of tomatoes. The mansion, in its day, was built with the

attempt to “surpass” all that had gone before. Well-appointed extravagances seemed to be paramount, all of which is ephemeral. The Belmont of today makes no pretensions, though it still retains much of its bygone glory.

Just beyond Belmont, toward the waters of Bolingbroke Creek, where it is delightfully located with ample grounds, trees and boxwood, one comes to “Hilton”, now called “Creekfield” by the present owner, Mrs. Annie E. Borden-Smith, who purchased the property from Miss Helen Orandorff, a prominent lady of the county during “troubulous days”. Previous to that it was owned by Mr. Baggs, the Clerk of the Court, who obtained it from the Hughletts. Creekfield is now conspicuous by and through the merits of the Borden-Smiths who have made the place more attractive with flower gardens, and other evidences of culture. Here is a well-stocked library of rare books, paintings and antiques. The Reverend, a delightfully scholarly gentleman, enjoys his library. The sons are interested in the out-door affairs and are paying strict attention to the raising of sheep, as well as general farming.

“Moneymake”, originally something like twelve hundred acres, is now divided into two farms: one owned by Mr. Harry Barnes, who lives upon it and the other tenanted by Carroll Warner, and owned by the heirs of the late George W. Dexter, Judge of the Orphans Court. Moneymake lies within the prong or upper branches of Bolingbroke Creek. It is reached by leaving the road between Trappe and Barber at a point just touching the latter, turning to the south and west. After proceeding a little over a mile on this road one can turn to the left straight into Moneymake reaching the farm by good road a full mile from the entrance.

Going back to the Choptank shore farms, the next one to Ingleside is Goose Point, belonging to Robert Warner and occupied by his brother Joseph. Thence on to Jamaica Point farm, now owned by Edward B. Hardcastle of Easton, and tenanted by Robert Warner. William R. Hughlett built the mansion on Jamaica Point and established the wharf where river vessels, and later steamers have done considerable business for that territory. The romance and flattery of two generations ago still is reflected in the old building and its surroundings. It is simply “another” of the many lordly estates of the past. Just up the river shore from Jamaica Point is “Cherry Grove” still part of the landed estates of the Hughletts, now owned by the heirs of Frederick Fletcher of Cambridge, and tenanted by Paul Leonard. Then just beyond the county public landing one comes to “Springdale”, owned by the occupants, Mrs. Ida Webb and family. This is a delightful old house with a remodeled brick house.

We are now at the Choptank limits of the Neck and proceed away from the river along the banks of Raccoon Creek, coming to a tract recently bought by the Griffith brothers of Tunis Mills for lumber purposes, and now occupied by Thomas Griffith, part owner. This tract has a history, and does not propose to be out-done by its neighbors. It was originally a part of “Lowes Ramble” or “Little Bristol,” taking the latter name from that section of England where its owner originated. The grant given to Col. Nicholas Lowe was the first man in Talbot county to own a carriage, and it was not a one-horse-shay either. If raccoons indulged in “hallowed memories” of their ancestors, as man does, it must be that Raccoon Creek is fragrant with the departed spirits of coondom.

At the head waters of the creek are tracts owned by the heirs of E. H. Leonard, J. Rembert Simpson, and others. The central farms, those not bordering on the water, in Bolingbroke, are only less narrative because they have been more lately detached from the early tracts, and lend no particular history. The land as a whole is gently undulatine, just stiff enough to hold to the plowshare, well timbered, and what is called a “white oak” soil. The fields present a large population of domestic animals and poultry. Were it not for the sonorous honking of the auto-horn it is difficult to tell how many guineas, chickens and turkeys would have met premature dissolution by the trip which made this write-up possible.”

[*Easton Star Democrat* Oct. 29, 1927]

Editor’s note: Creekfields, with its valuable antiques, was destroyed by fire Sept.10,1939.