MAIN FILE

REV. ROBERT KIRTLAND
331 THOMPSON STREET
ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN 48108

C110-5

25 November 1969

Mr. Axel T. Mattson,
Mail Stop 117,
National Aeronautics and Space Administration,
Langley Research Center,
Hampton, Virginia 23365

Dear Mr. Mattson:

Even Saturday's football game could not obliterate my sense of pleased amazement at the time you gave me, and the interest you displayed in the site of the Wythe plantation, during my visit last week. Thank you very much.

Enclosed are two items for your file on Chesterville: (1) the deed given Wythe by the Court commissioners on his repurchase of Chesterville in 1801, reciting from records now apparently lost the earlier sale to Daniel Hylton; and (2) Hylton's advertisement describing the condition of Chesterville in 1795 and raising serious question, I think, about Wythe's connection with the house whose foundations remain. I told Mrs. Joyner that I would ask you to let her know when you received them.

Although I have no information yet, I am in the process of consulting experts here about the feasibility of locating the foundations of other buildings by the use of infra-red photography of the site, and about the use of the heavy-carbon process on the oyster shells in the mortar to make more precise a guess as to their age.

Thank you, again, for your time and interest, and thanks, too, to Mr. Ford and Mrs. Joyner. With warmest good wishes, I am,

Sincerely yours,

Robert Kirtland

Robert Kirtland.

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FROM PPM

NASA-LANGLEY NOV 28 1969

Extract from Elizabeth City County Deeds and Wills, Book 12, pp. 87-88.

This Indenture made this fifteenth day of June in the year of our Lord One thousand eight hundred and one between George Booker, Everard Robinson, and William Moore (Commissioners appointed by the honorable the General Court to carry into effect the decree of the said Court which was pronounced on the fourteenth day of November in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred in Chancery in the suite wherein the honorable George Wythe Esqr. Judge of the High Court of Chancery is Plaintiff and Daniel Lawrence Hylton Defendant) of the one part and George Wythe of the other part, WITNESSETH that whereas the said Commissioners after having advertized for three weeks previous to the day of sale in
[n. 1] one of the Richmond Newspapers the lands contained in the Indenture made on the twenty third day of October in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and ninety two between the said
[n. 2] George Wythe and George Wythe Sweeney and Jane his Wife of the one part, and Daniel Lawrence Hylton of the other part, mentioned in the said decree the said Daniel Lawrence Hylton having made default in the payment of the principal money, Interest and Costs at the time mentioned in the said decree This day did expose to public sale on the Premises by Auction for ready Money the lands and Appurtenances in the said decree mentioned which was sold to the said George Wythe he being the highest bidder, for the sum of fourteen hundred and thirty one pounds fifteen shillings and one penny in hand paid Current Money of Virginia. Now this Indenture further witnesseth that the said George Booker, Everard Robinson, and Wm. Moore Commissioners aforesaid, for and in consideration of the premises and pursuant to the power and Authority vested in them as aforesaid have granted, bargained and sold, [demised] and confirmed, and by these presents do grant, bargain and sell, alien and confirm unto the said George Wythe his heirs and Assigns (he being the highest bidder) all that tract or parcel of land situate in the County of Eliza. City containing by estimation seven hundred and fifty acres, except sixteen Acres and two thirds of an Acre part thereof sold by Thomas Wythe the brother of George Wythe to one Thomas Francis and which tract or parcel of land hereby intended to be sold is bounded by the North Branch of the Back-River, formerly called old Poquoson River by three lines of the Fifty Acres lease hold land herein after mentioned by the lands of Sym[e]'s Charity School, Ross, Moore and Parsons, by the lands of Mallory, and by the land herein before said to have been sold to Francis, with all the houses and improvements thereon; And the said Commissioners do also sell, Assign, and transfer to the said George Wythe, and to his Assigns the aforesaid fifty Acres of lease hold land which by a certain Indenture made the twenty third day of No-
[n. 3] vember in the year of our Lord 1670 Between James Ransone of the one part and Abraham Savy and Sarah his Wife from the date of that Indenture for and during the term of Fourscore and Nineteen years thence next ensuing, which said lease was renewed by an Indenture from Richard Ransone heir at law of the said James Ransone to the said George Wythe for and during the term of fourscore and nineteen years from the twenty third day of November which was in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and sixty nine, as may more fully appear reference being had to the said Mortgage. To have and to hold the said seven hundred and fifty Acres of land (except as

before excepted to him the said George Wythe his heirs and Assigns and the said Fifty Acres of lease hold land to the said George Wythe and his Assigns for and during the residue of the last mentioned term of fourscore and nineteen years yet to come. IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the said George Booker, Everard Robinson, and William Moore Commissioners aforesaid have hereunto set their hands and seals on the day, month, and year first within written.

Signd, seal'd and delivered
In presence of
Wm. Duval
Augustine Moore
John Moore
Roscow Parsons
Wm. Seymour Miles King

George Booker (l.s.)
Everd. Robinson (l.s.) Commisers.
Wm. Moore (l.s.)

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At a Court held for Eliza. City Co. July 23:1801 this deed was produced therein And proved by the oaths of Augustine Moore, Wm. Seymour, and Miles King witnesses thereto, And ordered to be Recorded.

Teste
W. Westwood Jr. D. Clk.

Notes:

1. I have not found a copy of a Richmond paper carrying this advertisement; the copies from the period are few and broken in series.

2. This George Wythe Sweeney is almost certainly not the murderer; very possibly he is the father of the murderer (but note Lyon Tyler's reference, in the W&M Quarterly, series i, April, 1908, pp. 237-239, who in naming the children of Charles Sweeney and Margaret [sic] Wythe, "sister of Hon. George Wythe," does not give a George Wythe Sweeney and says that a son, Daniel, was "probably father of George Wythe Sweeney [i.e., the murderer]"). That he is not the murderer is suggested by the fact that contemporary accounts of the death of Wythe speak of the murderer as a young grand-nephew; William Wirt, in a letter to Monroe of 6/10/06, says that he was 16 or 17, while to have been married in 1792, he would have to have been twice that age in 1806.

3. For a reference to this Ransone-Seavey-Wythe lease of 50 acres, see GW's advertisement, searching for James Ransone's heir, in the Virginia Gazette (P&D), 8 March 1770, p. 3, col. 2.

A-2. Chesterville. Advt in Virginia Gazette, and General Advertiser, 24 June 1795 (and several other dates that year); microfilm, LC, in VSL; noted 14 July 69.

FOR SALE
Or to be Exchanged for Property in New-York, New-Jersey, or Philadelphia
A VALUABLE PLANTATION CALLED

CHESTERVILLE,

On Back-River, in Elizabeth-City County; containing by a late survey 920 acres of LAND, of which 477 are cleared, divided and ditched in 50 acre lots, 233 in wood, and 2[2]0 in fine grazing marsh, capable of producing the best salt hay, and supporting from 200 to 300 head of cattle through the winter--The upland is of extraordinary quality, fitted for either corn, wheat, barley or hay--and the natural grass is well calculated to make the latter--There is on it an orchard of about 6 acres of Hughes Crab, and other bearing apple trees; with 500 more choice apple trees ready to set out, near to the dwellings--They consist of a large new convenient brick house, nearly finished, with four large rooms in it, and offices below; a large negro quarter, kitchen, stable, and store[-]house in good repair, and a granary 60 by 22 feet, lately completed; and at which vessels of 60 tons may load.

Besides the above, there are about 400 acres of Dry and Marsh LAND, belonging to the Free School, adjoining and rented to Chesterville, at 15 l. a year, upon a life lease, and may be taken or not with the place. Also about 80 head of CATTLE and HORSES, 150 SHEEP and HOGS, and some NEGROES.

The advantages of this Plantation for game and fish of every kind, and its adjacence to Norfolk market by water, are recommendations which render it desirable and profitable. For further particulars apply to Doctor FOUSHEE, DANIEL L. HYLTON, and WM. DABNEY, Esqrs. Richmond.

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