

Colonial
NATIONAL
HISTORICAL PARK

VIRGINIA



A springtime scene along a park road

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THE COVER

The Victory Monument at Yorktown, commemorating the victory by which the independence of the United States of America was achieved. In 1781, when the news of the surrender of Cornwallis reached Congress, that body immediately moved that a suitable monument be erected "at York, in Virginia."

One hundred years later Congress put the resolution into effect. The ground was selected and paid for through the Secretary of War. A commission of three artists designed the shaft, which was assembled under the direction of Lt. Col. Wm. P. Craighill. The cornerstone was laid October

18, 1881, as an integral part of the Centennial Celebration.



1941

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

HAROLD L. ICKES, *Secretary*

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE · NEWTON B. DRURY, *Director*

Colonial National Historical Park

THE "Virginia Peninsula," lying between the James and York Rivers, not only is associated with the genesis of English civilization in North America, but embraces the site where occurred the decisive event that assured American independence. Here, within a space of a few miles, are Jamestown, site of the first permanent English settlement in America, and Yorktown, where the surrender of Cornwallis ended the American Revolution and inaugurated a new era in American history. Between them lies Williamsburg, Colonial capital of Virginia and scene of the flowering of Colonial Virginia culture.

To protect and preserve these sites significant in the Nation's history the President of the United States, by proclamation of December 30, 1930, established the Colonial National Monument, to comprise Jamestown Island, parts of the city of Williamsburg, the Yorktown Battlefield including Gloucester Point, and a parkway connecting the three areas. Colonial National Monument was dedicated October 16, 1931, as part of the Sesquicentennial Celebration of the Victory at Yorktown. By act of Congress, approved June 5, 1936, its name was changed to Colonial National Historical Park. In 1939, by authority of Congress, the Cape Henry Memorial (First Landing Dune) was

included in the park by transfer from the War Department.

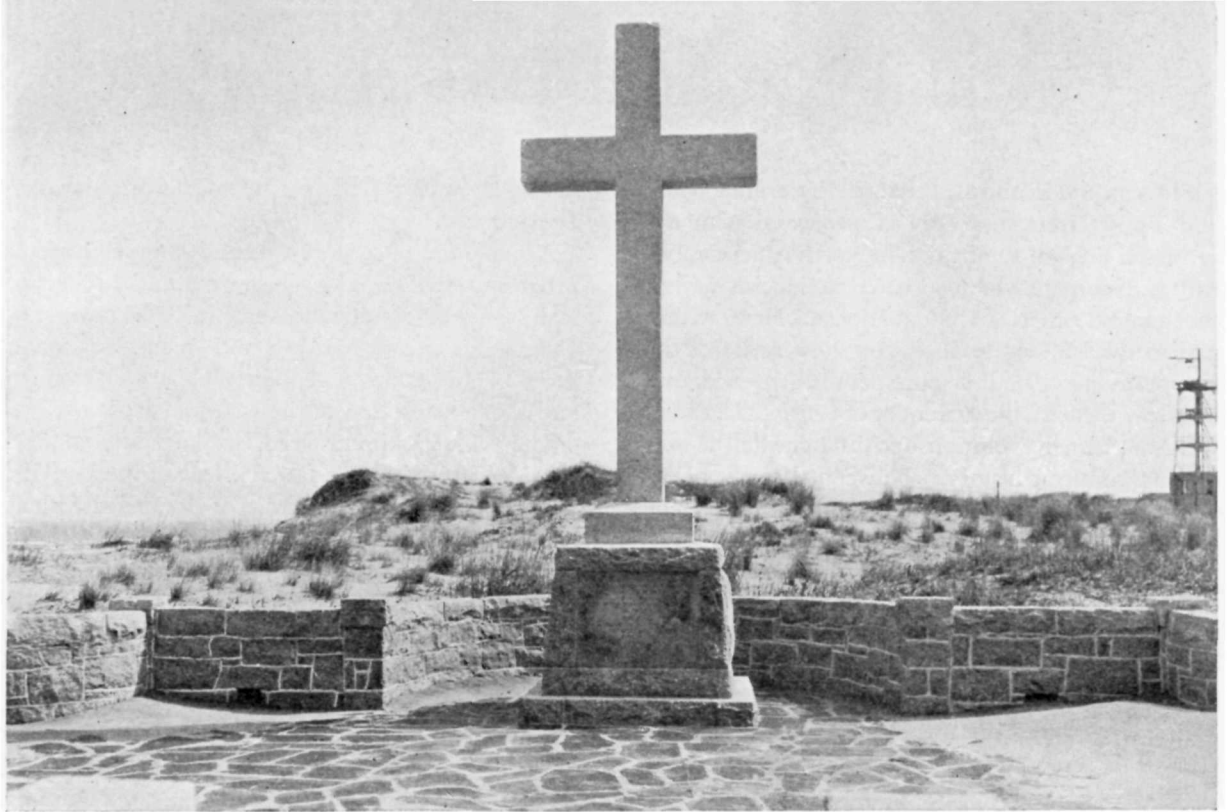
A program of research and development is in progress, which includes historical and archeological study of significant sites in Yorktown and Jamestown, the restoration and reconstruction of parts of the town and battlefield of Yorktown, and the construction of the Colonial Parkway.

The park is administered by the National Park Service, United States Department of the Interior, under the immediate charge of a superintendent, with headquarters at Yorktown. A ranger office is also maintained at Jamestown Island.

A fee of 10 cents is charged visitors over 18 years of age at the Moore House and at the Yorktown Historical Museum. There is a small fee at Jamestown Island for admission to the archeological laboratory and museum, the archeological excavations, and the area administered by the Association for the Preservation of Virginia

At the Moore House, the American, French, and British commissioners met to draw up Articles of Capitulation on October 18, 1781. Today it has been restored as nearly as possible to its Colonial appearance and, through the generosity of the National Society, Daughters of the American Revolution and the Society of the Daughters of the Cincinnati, has been partly refurnished in keeping with the period.





The Memorial Cross at Cape Henry marks the approximate site of the first landing of the Jamestown colonists on American soil, April 26, 1607.

Antiquities. No fee is charged members of school groups, who are admitted free up to 18 years of age. Free guide service is available to visitors. Organizations or groups will be given special service if arrangements are made in advance with the superintendent.

All communications relating to the park should be addressed to the Superintendent, Colonial National Historical Park, Yorktown, Va.

CAPE HENRY MEMORIAL (FIRST LANDING DUNE)

ON December 20, 1606, three small ships, the *Sarah Constant*, the *Goodspeed*, and the *Discovery*, left England, carrying about a hundred men sent out by the Virginia Company of London to establish a colony in the New World. After a 4-month voyage, they finally sighted "the land of Virginia" early on the morning of April 26, 1607. That day they entered the Chesapeake Bay, between two capes which they named Henry and Charles in honor of the sons of the King of England, and landed on the southern one, Cape Henry. Two days were spent exploring the site, and on April 29, before leaving to go farther inland to establish their colony, they erected a cross in the sand to mark the spot of their landing.

No trace of that cross can be found today; but through the efforts of the Assembly of Tidewater Virginia Women, the approximate site of this first landing has been marked. In 1935 the National Society, Daughters of the American Colonists, erected a stone cross to indicate the approximate site and commemorate the first landing of the Jamestown colonists on American soil.

JAMESTOWN

ON May 13, 1607, after 2 weeks of exploration, the colonists arrived at Jamestown Island, then a marshy peninsula on the north side of the river, connected with the mainland by a narrow isthmus. It was decided that this peninsula, or island, was a favorable spot, so the next day the men landed and started to build a fortified town. They named it Jamestown, after James I, King of England.

The perils and difficulties of the ensuing years nearly caused the abandonment of the colony. Many of the "adventurers" had come to acquire gold and jewels in this fabled country and were not prepared for the arduous physical labor of wresting the land from wilderness. Owing to the warm and humid climate, sickness and death

took a heavy toll. The fever-breeding marshes and brackish drinking water of Jamestown soon began to exact a tribute which lay heavily on the town throughout its entire existence. There was a food shortage almost from the beginning, and only the generosity of friendly Indians saved the colony from starvation on several occasions. Jealousy and selfishness among the council caused dissatisfaction and on more than one occasion almost led to mutiny. The Indians were an ever-present menace. Sometimes they were friendly, but more frequently they were hostile.

Capt. John Smith soon emerged as the dominant personality and most resourceful leader in the settlement. His expeditions among the Indians and skillful trading with them had much to do with keeping the colony from famine and slaughter. Through his energy and wisdom in ruling and firm handling of the men, the necessary work was done and the sometimes rebellious adventurers were kept in order. His return to England in the fall of 1609, because of injuries received in a gunpowder explosion, was a great misfortune to the colony.

The winter of 1609–10, following his departure, was the terrible season of the “starving time.” Nine-tenths of the colonists died during those months, and when the relief ship failed to arrive in the spring, the few men remaining alive decided to abandon the town. When only a short way down the river they encountered Lord Delaware, the newly appointed Governor, and the fleet bringing fresh supplies. All returned to Jamestown, and by this narrow margin the colony was saved.

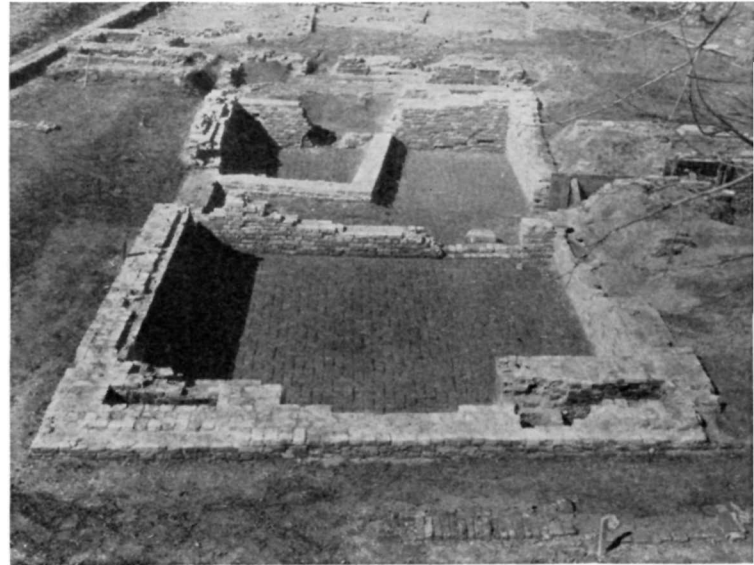
Jamestown, almost at the beginning, was to know and to be benefited by Pocahontas, daughter of Chief Powhatan. She became the wife of John Rolfe, and within 10 years of the founding of the colony was presented at the Court of King James as Lady Rebecca.

About 1612 John Rolfe developed a method of curing tobacco which was to make its culture profitable and determine the economic basis of Virginia life for a century and a half. Settlement began to spread over the peninsula. Soon the communal system of land ownership was abandoned, and grants were made to individual settlers, thus affording a greater stimulus to private initiative.

The year 1619 was a “red letter” year in the annals of Virginia. The House of Burgesses met



The foundation ruins of the first statehouse at Jamestown, where the House of Burgesses met from about 1640–55, have been excavated and studied.



One of the largest of the Jamestown foundations, this structure has been identified tentatively as the “Country House,” or Governor’s house.

This early house on Jamestown Island was small, but well built, judging by its brick-paved cellar uncovered by excavation.

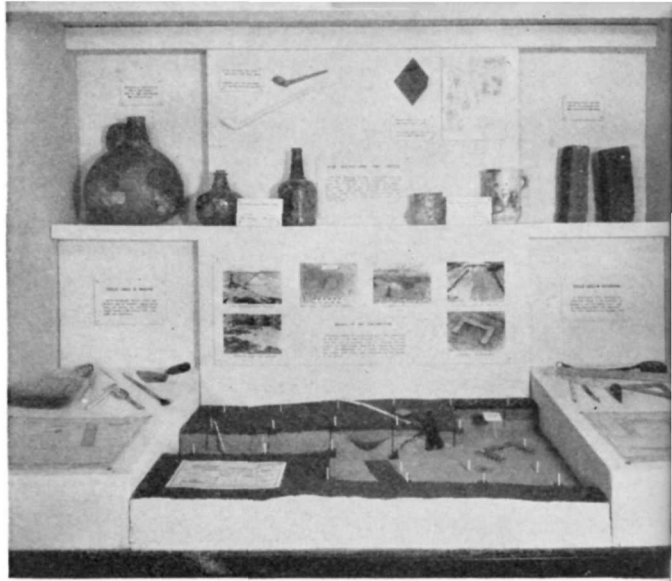


in the church at Jamestown, the first representative legislative assembly in America. A shipload of women arrived from England to become wives of the settlers and to assist in securing the permanency of the colony.

In spite of this steady growth, the menace of the Indian still was great. The powerful Powhatan Confederacy had looked with disfavor at the encroachment on land they had long regarded as their own, and in 1622 the tribes united in a mighty effort to rid the country of the Englishmen. They struck on March 22, at almost the same hour up and down the peninsula. Three hundred and forty-seven men, women, and children were killed, and only the timely warning of Chanco, an Indian convert, saved Jamestown itself. The colonists fled in terror to the protection of the fort there. Most of the outlying settlements temporarily were deserted. Although many years were to pass before the Indian ceased to be a dangerous factor, he never again threatened the existence of the colony.

During the next 25 years the colony became firmly established. Settlement continued to spread, up the eastern shore of Chesapeake Bay, north of the York River in Gloucester County, and along both sides of the James, south as far as the Nansemond and Elizabeth Rivers. The revocation of the charter of the Virginia Company in 1624 freed the colony of a control that had frequently been a hindrance rather than a help. Virginia now became a crown colony. In spite of objections from the King and continual attempts to interest the settlers in other products, tobacco had become the

The old church tower, standing in the grounds of the Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities, was probably built about 1639, and is the only standing ruin which goes back to the seventeenth century town of Jamestown.

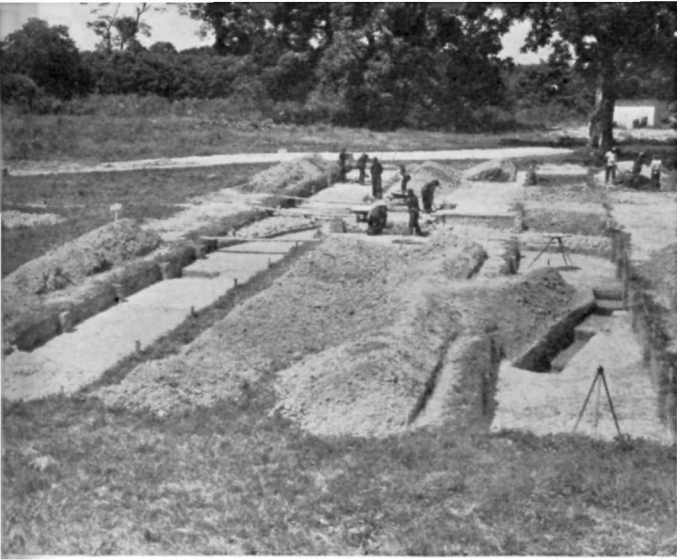


One of the exhibits in the Jamestown Museum is a model showing method of conducting archeological excavation.

staple money crop. Jamestown increased in size and importance, and had brick houses, a statehouse, and a Governor's residence. The year 1635 is of especial interest, for in that year a group of leading colonists, resenting some of Governor Harvey's high-handed acts, "thrust him out," and appointed another Governor in his stead, thus marking the first rebellion in America against constituted royal authority.

The era of the Great Rebellion and the Commonwealth in England, 1642-60, had important results in the social structure of the population of Virginia. Sir William Berkeley was removed from the governorship, but no drastic changes were made in the laws, and Virginia was guaranteed the enjoyment of her former privileges. The colony was predominantly royalist in sentiment, and it was during this time that some Cavalier families emigrated to the colony to escape the Cromwellian regime in England. The restoration of Charles II in 1660 was received with great rejoicing, Berkeley again became Governor, and the King is said to have been so touched by this loyalty that he called Virginia his "Old Dominion."

But on the flood of this tide of royalist feeling a House of Burgesses was elected which Berkeley did not dissolve for 16 years. The colony soon became dissatisfied with this method of government, and the ground was ripe for the rebellion which flamed in 1676. The immediate cause was Indian raids on the frontier which Berkeley refused to put down because of his interest in the fur trade. Protesting this failure to protect the lives and property of the



The beginning of an excavation at Jamestown is a series of exploratory trenches to locate significant remains.

settlers, a group of men assembled, appointed Nathaniel Bacon, Jr., their leader and marched against the Indians in defiance of Berkeley's orders. Berkeley was forced by popular opinion to give Bacon a commission, but immediately afterwards declared him a traitor. Bacon marched on Jamestown, captured and burned it, and was supported by many sympathizers throughout the colony. But he died suddenly, and soon afterwards royal troops sent from England came to Berkeley's aid. The rebellion collapsed almost immediately, and some of the leaders were captured and put to death. Berkeley's unpopularity, however, was known in England, and he was shortly superseded by a new Governor.

Jamestown never recovered from this destruction. In spite of considerable agitation to move the capital, the statehouse and some of the private dwellings were rebuilt, and the Assembly continued to meet there. But because of its reputation as an unhealthy spot, there were few permanent residents. From then on it probably consisted mostly of taverns and warehouses to house and feed the Burgesses while the Assembly was in session and to carry on the business of the port.

The movement to establish a new capital gained strength, and when the statehouse burned in 1698, the Burgesses, meeting the following spring, voted to move the capital to Middle Plantation, which was renamed Williamsburg in honor of King William, the then reigning sovereign of England.

Before many more years had passed, Jamestown was abandoned, and almost all the inhabitants

moved to Williamsburg. It was not long before only ruins remained to mark the site of the town that had been the first permanent English settlement in America and for nearly a hundred years the capital of Colonial Virginia.

THE JAMESTOWN ARCHEOLOGICAL PROJECT

WHEN the United States Government acquired the larger part of Jamestown Island in 1934 and added it to the Colonial National Historical Park, the Jamestown archeological project was set up and a program of historical, archeological, and architectural research initiated. Early land patents and other documents were carefully examined to find out who had lived at Jamestown and what the physical appearance of the town was during the seventeenth century, and to study the life of the Colonial period. Archeological excavation revealed the foundations of many of the houses, the lines of old fences and property line ditches, and innumerable objects left behind by the former residents—pottery and glassware, domestic implements and utensils, farming tools, weapons, and articles of personal adornment. Bricks and tiles, hinges and locks, mortar and plaster told something of the appearance and style of the houses that once stood here. This study is still in progress and will be for many years to come. From it, the story of Jamestown will be gleaned, and a knowledge gained of the manner of living in the early days of the colony.

It is not contemplated to restore the town to its seventeenth century appearance, but it is planned to stabilize house and other foundations for display.

At present the temporary archeological labora-

The archeological excavations at Jamestown are observed by many visitors, who can watch the work of uncovering seventeenth century artifacts that help tell the story of the early settlers.



tory houses the storage rooms and workshops of the Jamestown archeological project and contains a small museum telling briefly of the history of Jamestown and of the archeological research now in progress. Visitors may also observe the laboratory work and see the many objects which have been recovered in the course of the excavations. During the field season the excavations may be visited, and the actual process of extracting buried evidence of the past observed.

ASSOCIATION FOR THE PRESERVATION OF
VIRGINIA ANTIQUITIES

THE SITE of old Jamestown lay almost forgotten for nearly 200 years after the town was abandoned. Public attention was directed to it in 1893, when the Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities acquired a 22-acre tract surrounding the ruins of the old church tower and graveyard. In 1901, through their efforts, a sea wall was constructed by the United States Government along a part of the river shore to check the washing away of the island. The celebration of the Jamestown Tercentennial in 1907 gave added impetus to their work, and in that year a memorial church was constructed by the Colonial Dames on the foundations of the seventeenth century church adjoining the tower ruin. Statues of Capt. John Smith and Pocahontas, commemorating the part these two played in the establishment of the colony, stand just inside the grounds, and other interesting markers may be seen.

The Colonial Parkway along the York River.

By cooperative agreement between the Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities and the National Park Service, admission to both areas is covered by a joint fee.

THE COLONIAL PARKWAY

EXTENDING from Yorktown to Williamsburg and planned to continue to Jamestown Island, the Colonial Parkway combines scenic beauty and historical interest. From Yorktown it follows the banks of the York River for about 5 miles, passing many old plantation sites. Along this section of the drive several parking overlooks have been constructed where the visitor may stop and enjoy the beauties of river and woodland. After turning inland, it traverses forested country into Williamsburg. Throughout its length every effort has been made to give the traveler the maximum of safety, at the same time preserving the natural beauty. All cuts and fills have been carefully graded so that their contours fit naturally into the surrounding country. Seeding of grass and planting of native trees and shrubs have obliterated the scars of construction.

WILLIAMSBURG

WILLIAMSBURG was originally a palisaded outpost, called Middle Plantation, established in 1633 to protect the river settlements from Indian attacks. The college of William and Mary, the second

oldest in the United States, was established here in 1693. In 1699, following the disastrous fire at Jamestown the previous year, the capital was removed to Williamsburg. Here was the center of the intellectual, cultural, and political life of Virginia during the eighteenth century. Recently, through the munificence of Mr. John D. Rockefeller, Jr., the town has been restored in large part to its eighteenth century appearance as the Colonial capital of Virginia. The United States Government has no holdings in Williamsburg, except the right of way for the Colonial Parkway.

YORKTOWN

YORKTOWN today is a small village in the heart of Tidewater Virginia, remembered because of the surrender of Lord Cornwallis to General Washington and the Allied Army on October 19, 1781. The history of Yorktown, however, dates not from 1781, but from the early seventeenth century.

Soon after a permanent settlement had been effected at Jamestown, exploration and expansion began. By 1630 the settlers had reached the York River, and in a few years, plantations were "staked out" all along the shore line, above and below Yorktown. Leaders in this wave of settlement were John West, Robert Felgate, John Utie, and Governor Harvey. In 1634 the population of the area was sufficient for the formation of York County, first called Charles River Shire.

The Swan Tavern, built by Joseph Walker and Thomas Nelson before 1722, has been reconstructed on original site.

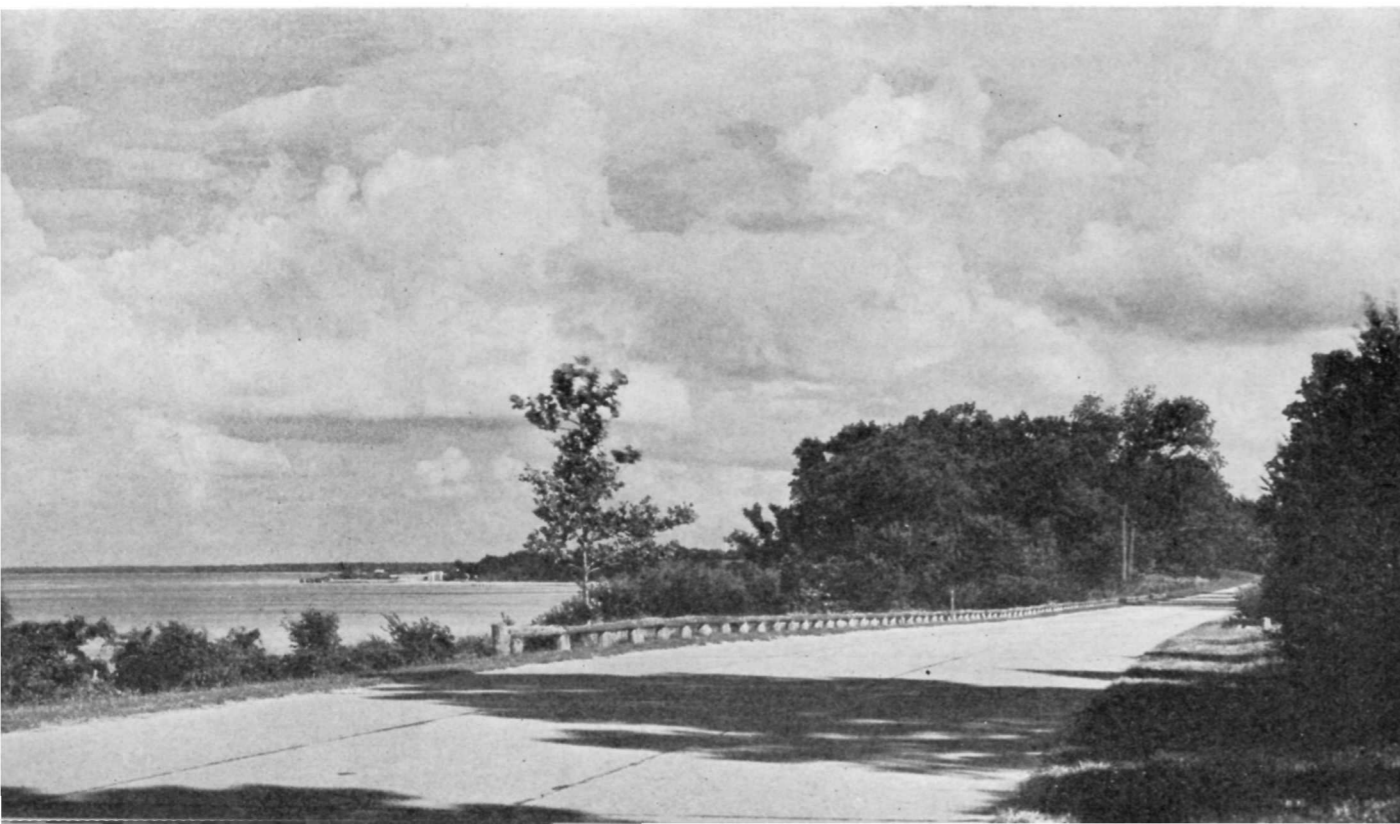
The first settler in the environs of present Yorktown was Capt. Nicholas Martiau, a French Huguenot, who for several years served the colony as a military engineer. His first holdings were secured shortly after 1630 as compensation for encouraging settlers to enter the York River area.

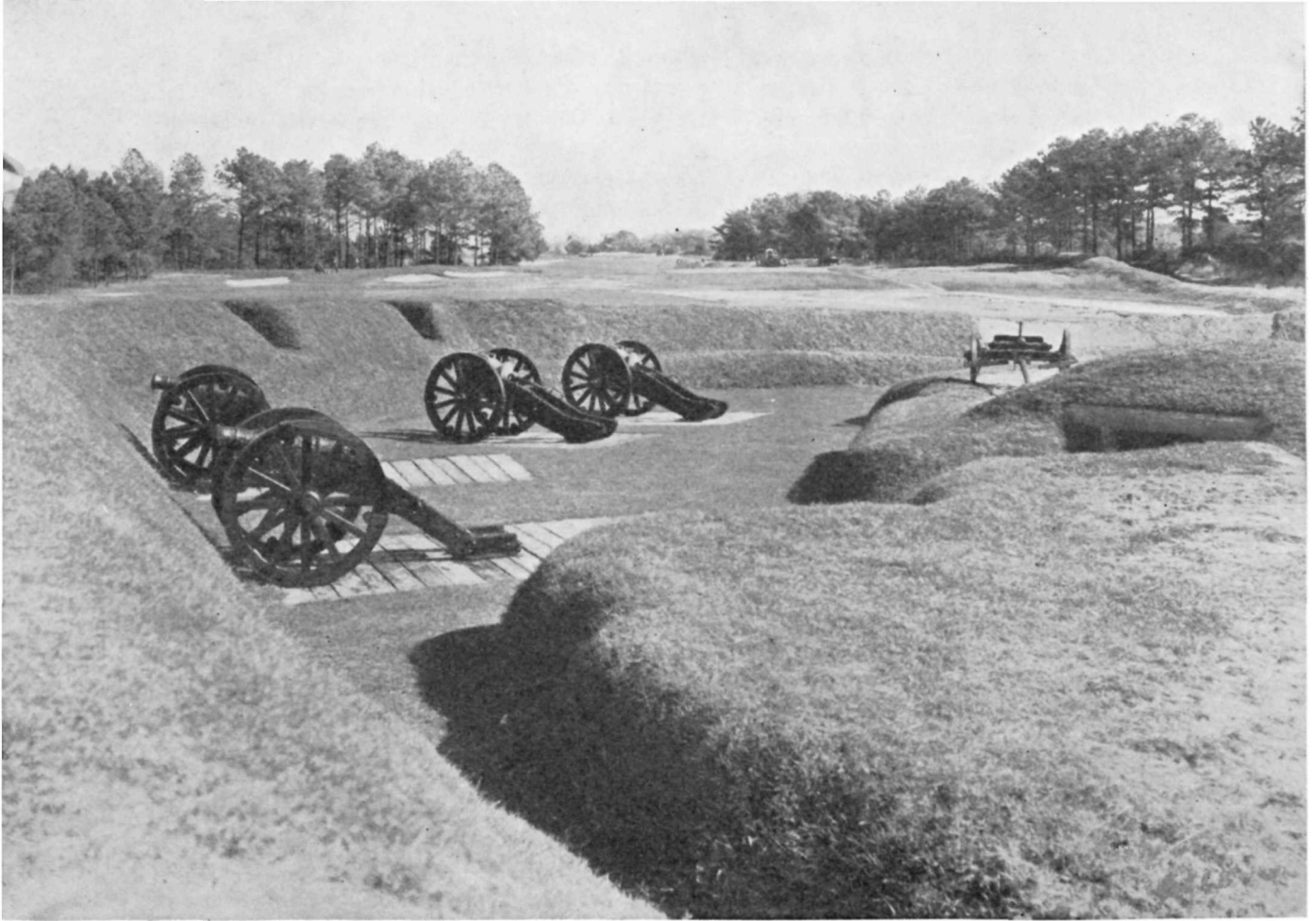
In 1691, in accordance with an act for ports and towns passed by the House of Burgesses, 50 acres of land were purchased from the original Martiau tract and surveyed into ½-acre lots. This was the birth of the "Town of York."

Located on the York River, where a projection of the opposite shore line narrows the river to less than half a mile, the town was in an excellent position for early commerce. For this reason Yorktown became a port of entry and clearance for much of the lower Tidewater tobacco country.

It was quite natural that a group of enterprising merchants should be attracted to Yorktown; among them were "Scotch Tom" Nelson, William Reynolds, John Norton, and Francis Jerdone. The chief export crop was tobacco, while the imports covered a wide variety of needs—clothing, furniture, hardware, slaves, salt, rum, wines, molasses, and other things required in an agricultural country of that time. By 1750 there were 2,000 people in and around Yorktown; and by means of ships coming in from abroad, roads leading to the inland parts of the colonies, ferries

The restored Lightfoot House, originally built between 1707 and 1710, is now used as the headquarters for Colonial National Historical Park.





French Battery No. 2 was constructed on the left of the second parallel and within close range of the British works.

operating in the Tidewater region, and a growing postal system, the town kept in step with the changes of the period. Yorktown today retains much of the atmosphere of colonial times, through the old buildings, such as York Hall (Nelson House), West House, Digges House, Thomas Sessions (Sheild) House, and the building which became the customhouse, dating from the early part of the eighteenth century, or earlier, and still standing. The present Grace Episcopal Church stands on foundations erected in 1697.

The outbreak of the Revolution found Yorktown ready to fight for self-government and separation from England. Inward growth and outward restriction had stimulated a demand for independence. The gentry was capable, educated, and schooled in political strategy.

SIEGE OF 1781

AFTER the withdrawal of Governor Dunmore in 1776, Virginia saw little real warfare until the beginning of the southern campaign. After the

occupation of Charleston in 1780 the British Army in the South, then under Lord Cornwallis, made several campaigns in North and South Carolina without decisive result. After the battle of Guilford Courthouse and the march to Wilmington, Cornwallis had either to retire toward the south or march north. He chose the latter and in the spring and early summer of 1781 pursued General Lafayette through Piedmont Virginia. Unable to draw Lafayette into battle, he turned toward the Chesapeake Bay region, where his orders were to select a base for future operations.

After careful examination his engineers advised that he select Yorktown, and not Portsmouth or the present site of Fort Monroe. Yorktown possessed an excellent harbor for naval anchorage, and was a suitable base for a second campaign in Virginia. Thus it was that in August 1781 the British moved into Yorktown and began the construction of fortifications around the town. For additional security Gloucester Point, just across the river, also



Redoubt No. 9, on the left of the British line, was successfully stormed by 400 French soldiers on the night of October 14, 1781.

was fortified. While this was taking place on York River, General Washington, with his army, was encamped before New York City, which was held by a strong British force.

News regarding activities of Cornwallis reached Washington about the time he learned of the presence in the West Indies of a large French fleet under the command of Comte de Grasse, who had orders for a rendezvous in American waters. The stage was set for a combined land and sea attack on the British in Virginia. Washington, with a part of his force and a body of French troops under Comte de Rochambeau, pretending to launch a drive against New York, slipped away and marched south toward Yorktown. In the meanwhile, de Grasse had sailed up from the West Indies, and on September 5, off the Virginia Capes, he defeated the English fleet under Admiral Graves and established a naval blockade around Cornwallis who was depending on relief from the sea.

During the second and third weeks of September, Allied Armies under Washington, Commander in Chief, and Rochambeau, together with troops under General St. Simon, which had come up from the West Indies, assembled at Williamsburg. In Williamsburg the troops were organized and instructed regarding the attack on Yorktown. It was on the morning of September 28 that the troops began the march to Yorktown. On arrival, the French troops encamped west of the town, with the Americans moving to the east.

For a week the army encamped around Yorktown, busily engaged in preparation for siege operations. About 16,000 troops of the American and French forces faced approximately 7,500 British. On the night of October 6 all was in readiness for the opening of the first parallel in front of the enemy works. On October 9 the batteries began firing, with disastrous results to the British works.

So successful were the American gunners that on October 11, at night, the second parallel was begun

within short musket-shot range of the town. Before this could be completed, it was necessary that Redoubt No. 9 and Redoubt No. 10 of the British outer defenses be stormed. This was done after severe fighting on October 14, and the second parallel was extended to the river without delay.

Cornwallis found himself blockaded by sea and shut in by land, with his defenses crumbling. In one last effort he tried the strength of the second parallel and found it too strong to assault; next he attempted unsuccessfully to escape by way of Gloucester Point. With no alternative, on October 17, he asked for time to discuss terms of surrender. On the following day the British, French, and American commissioners met in the Moore House to draft the Articles of Capitulation.

Actual surrender followed on October 19, when French and American troops formally occupied Yorktown. At 2 o'clock in the afternoon the British forces marched out to Surrender Field between a column of American and a column of French soldiers. With their flags cased and furled, and to the tune of "The World Turned Upside

Down," they stacked their arms and gave up their colors, becoming prisoners of war. General O'Hara, representing Cornwallis, gave his sword to General Lincoln, representing Washington, in token of defeat. With the surrender at Yorktown, British military efforts to suppress the rebellion in the colonies virtually ceased.

The results achieved at Yorktown in 1781 have their greatest significance, perhaps, in symbolizing the end of an era of Old World dependence and the releasing of forces long restrained which were now free to develop the vast hinterland of the continent with a democratic social objective hitherto unachieved by mankind.

After the Revolution, with the shift of settlers to new regions and the development of new inland systems of communication, Yorktown lost its position as an important Virginia port. Since 1781, however, Yorktown has remained a strategic point in wartime. During the War of 1812 the town

The Fusiliers' Redoubt, an outer work on the right of the British line, was stoutly defended until the surrender of Yorktown. Part of the area covered by the redoubt has been washed away by the York River.



was threatened by a British fleet and garrisoned for a period by militia. In 1862 it was the scene of a second siege, being held by the Confederate forces until abandoned before the advance of General McClellan with numerically superior forces. During the World War the harbor was used as a base by the Atlantic fleet, and today it constitutes an integral part of our national defenses.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE YORKTOWN AREA

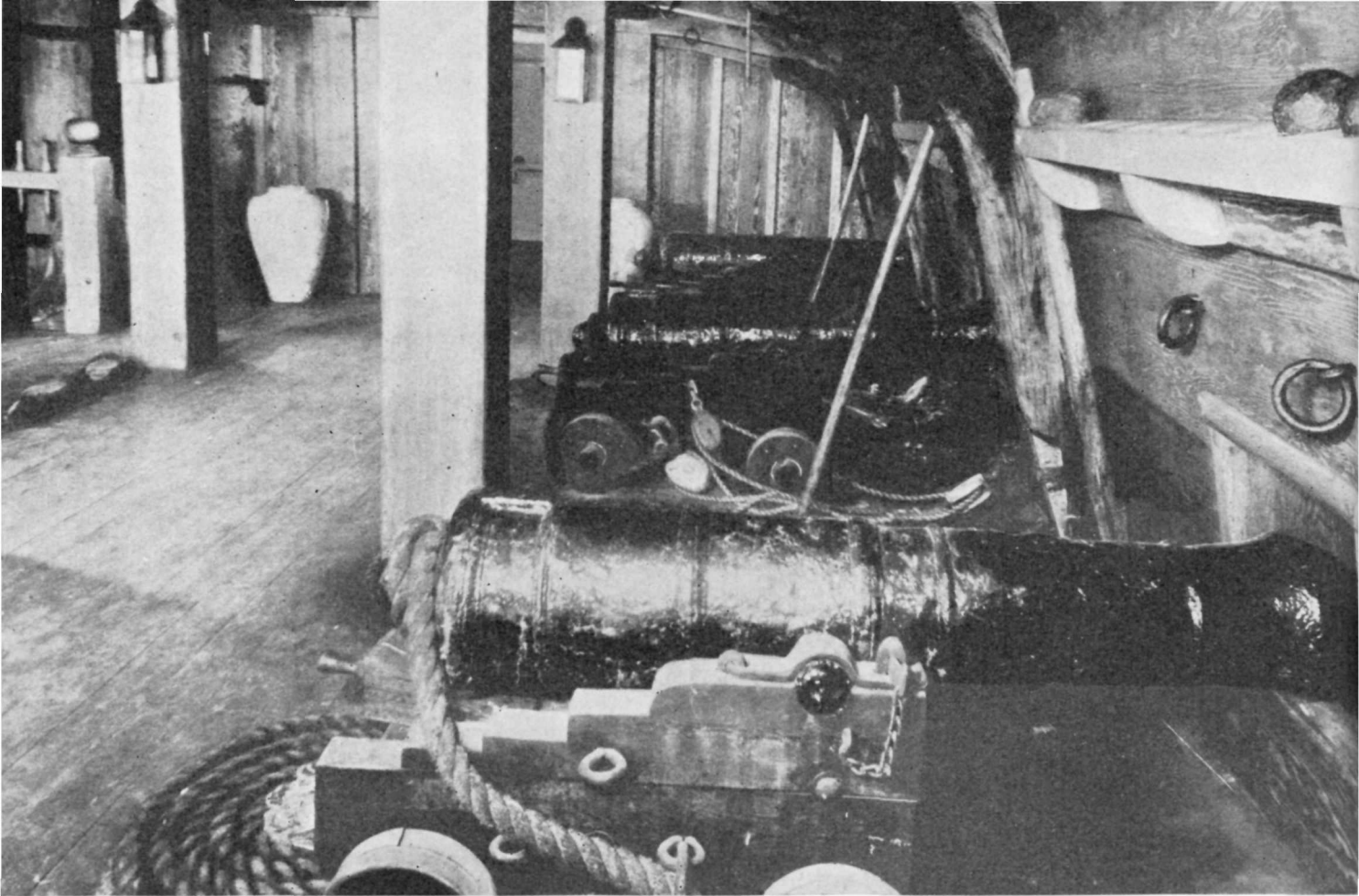
THE central theme for the development of Yorktown by the National Park Service has been the re-creation of the physical appearance of the area as it was in 1781, to commemorate the historically significant events that took place here. This development includes the reconstruction and restoration of buildings, fortifications, roads, and other features as they existed during the siege of

Yorktown.

In conformity with this idea, the Moore House, where the Articles of Capitulation were drafted on October 18, 1781, has been restored as nearly as possible to its original condition and is being furnished to reflect the Revolutionary period. In like manner the Lightfoot House, dating from about 1710, has been restored. At the present time it is being used as the headquarters building for Colonial National Historical Park. The Swan Tavern and its dependent structures are reconstructed buildings resting on their original sites. The work of reconstruction is based on archeological, historical, and architectural study by trained technicians of the National Park Service.

The Civil War fortifications, erected at Yorktown by the Confederates in 1862 to oppose McClellan's advance, for the most part follow the line of the British works around the town in 1781.





In the battlefield area the Revolutionary trenches, redoubts, and batteries are being reconstructed to resemble those of 1781. The battlefield area is the outstanding development at Yorktown. The reconstructions include parts of the first and second parallels with the communicating trenches, the Grand French Battery, French Battery No. 2, and American Battery No. 2 of the second parallel, Redoubt No. 9, and the Fusiliers' Redoubt. The fortifications are being rebuilt after a study of the archeological remains together with a survey of all available contemporary accounts and descriptions. In keeping with this work Revolutionary guns are being mounted on platforms and carriages con-

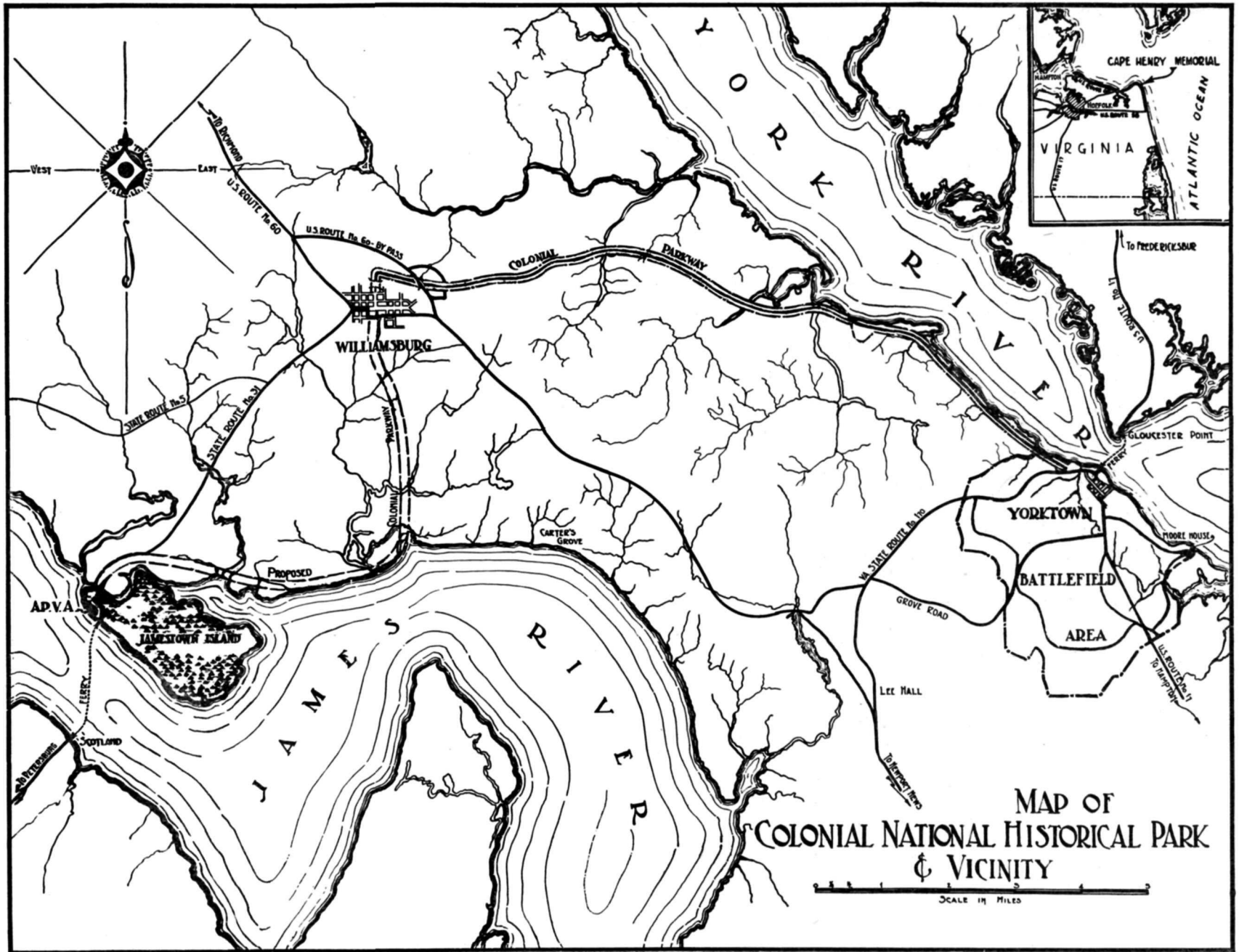
Part of the gun deck of a British frigate has been reproduced in the Yorktown Naval Museum. Some of the material and exhibits are originals recovered from British ships sunk during the siege of 1781 by diving operations conducted in cooperation with the Newport News Shipbuilding and Dry Dock Company.

structed according to the plans in use in 1781. Much of this work is being accomplished with C. C. C. labor under technical supervision.

The development includes two museums at Yorktown: the general museum, which relates the history of Yorktown in brief outline and tells the story of the Siege of Yorktown; and a naval museum, the interior of which is built to represent the gun deck of a British frigate of the Revolutionary period.



John Trumbull's painting of the scene at Surrender Field on October 19, 1781, as issued by Nathaniel Currier, shows officers of the British Army passing the two groups of American and French generals and entering the lines of the victorious armies. Among the officers shown in the picture are Generals George Washington, Benjamin Lincoln, and Henry Knox, Colonel Alexander Hamilton, the Marquis de Lafayette, and Counts De Grasse and De Rochambeau. The portraits of the French officers are said to have been obtained in Paris during 1787, and painted by Trumbull in the house of Thomas Jefferson, then American Minister to France. This painting now hangs in the Capitol at Washington.



MAP OF
 COLONIAL NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK
 & VICINITY

SCALE 14 MILES