

March 7, 1989

R. C. Ball  
5307 Imogene  
Houston, Texas 77096

Hello, Mr. Ball:

My mother, Nancy Ball, recently shared your letters to her, copies of the Ball Newsletter and the voluminous work which provided my father much pleasure.

Although genealogy has not been a particular interest to me as yet, the hard work and pleasure you enjoy in its pursuit is obvious. I am grateful to you, my father and others that so much Ball history has been documented and is continuing to be recorded for future generations.

Enclosed is an article which may be of interest sent to Nancy Ball by her brother George Mason Hudgins living in Hampton Roads, Virginia concerning Balls Point.

R.C., you know about Thomas I. Ball, my mother Nancy Watson Ball and brother Courtney Ward Ball. I married Nancye Christiana Frazier of Louisville on July 17, 1976. We have a son, Alexander Ward, born on September 22, 1981 and a daughter, Kelly Hudgins, born September 24, 1983. I have another daughter, Elizabeth Courtney Ball, born July 12, 1964 by a previous marriage, who is living in San Francisco, California.

My brother Courtney married Heath Weir and has one daughter, Lee Courtney, born April 6, 1977.

Both my brother and I live outside Louisville in Goshen and Prospect respectively.

Best regards,



Tom Ball  
13803 Lakewoods Court  
Prospect, Kentucky 40059

# Another 'lost' Virginia town revealed

Lost towns give archaeologists spasms of ecstasy. On TV and in movies, we learn of National Geographic expeditions to faraway places to dig up fragments of some long-forgotten hamlet of long-ago times.

Actually, I'm excited by lost towns of Colonial times right here in Virginia. Jamestown was one of them until archaeologists dug it up early this century. Wolstenholme Town at Carter's Grove is another, accidentally discovered in a search for plantation out-buildings. Still "lost" is the tiny hamlet of Archer's Hope, which sprang up in the 17th century at the James River entrance to Archer's Creek, now called College Creek.

Recently in the news was Gloucester Town, which in the 18th century was a small village on the lowland portion of Gloucester Point. At one time some 20 or 30 houses stood there, but after the town was repeatedly damaged by hurricanes, residents moved out.

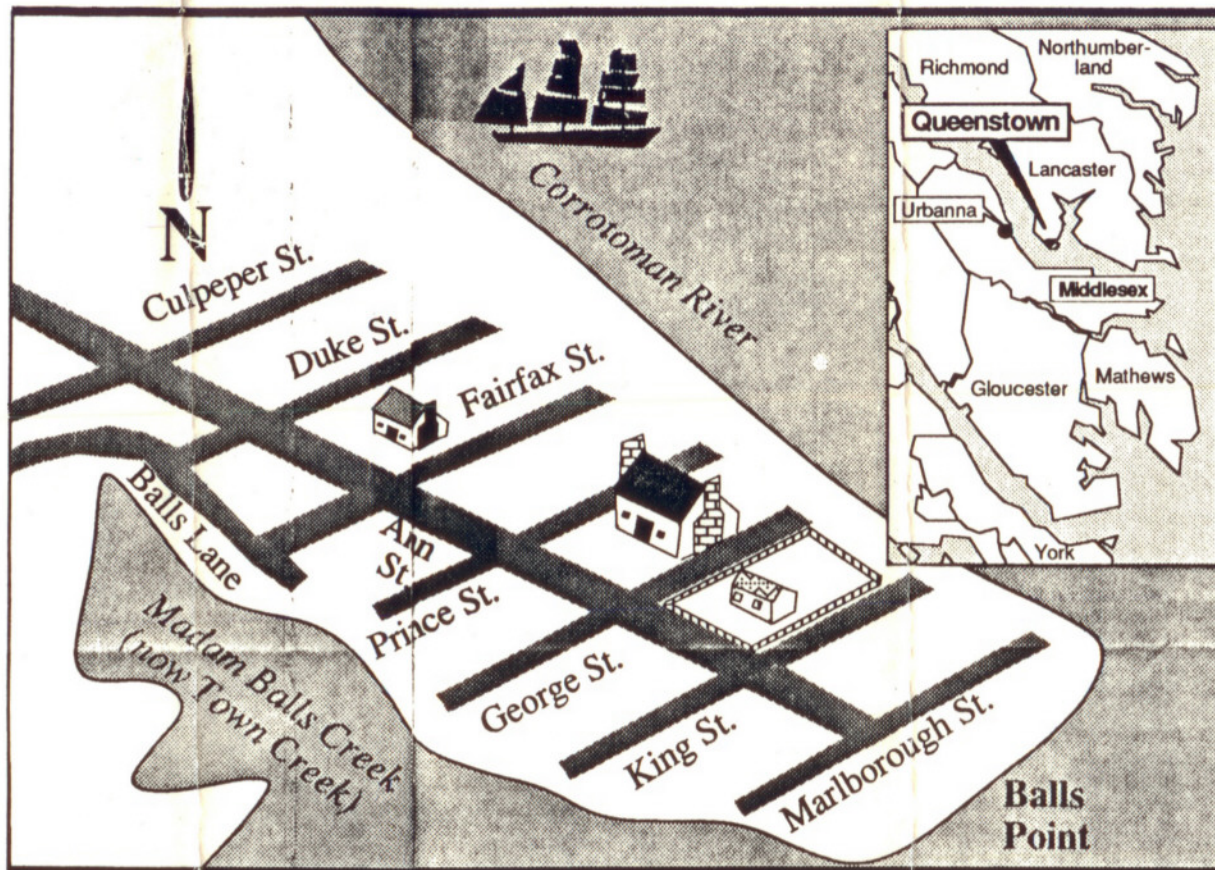
Now comes another lost Virginia town I'd never heard of before. It's Queenstown in Lancaster County, on the beautiful Corrotoman River. Its story is fascinatingly told by Maurice Duke of Virginia Commonwealth University in the December issue of Chesapeake Bay Magazine. A summer visitor to Lancaster County and a sailor on the Rappahannock River, Duke explains that he learned of Queenstown's existence and then researched it in the Northern Neck's excellent Mary Ball Washington Museum and Library.

Duke found that Queenstown was one of those customs collections towns decreed by the 17th-century British crown. It was duly laid out and the first courthouse of Lancaster County was placed there.

To acquire the peninsula, which is bounded by the Corrotoman on one side and by Town Creek on the other, the county paid 13,000 pounds of tobacco. The seller was William Ball, whose little daughter, Mary, was later to become the mother of George Washington. In fact, the riverside promontory of the Queenstown Peninsula is known as Ball's Point.

The new county paid 45,000 pounds of tobacco to Robert "King" Carter to build a courthouse at Queenstown. If you know Lancaster County, you know that King Carter was the political czar of the area, owning most of the Northern Neck. In fact, he was Virginia's wealthiest man.

Carter built the Queenstown courthouse in 1698, placing it on one of the 12 original half-acre lots of the Queenstown Peninsula. The town was to be



Staff graphic by MICHAEL ASHER

Queenstown, an early Lancaster County town on the Corrotoman River, was abandoned sometime after 1742.

## Parke Rouse

Columnist



simply a double row of structures centering on Ann Street. The intersecting streets were named Culpeper, Duke, Fairfax, Prince, George, King and Marlborough.

Five miles from Queenstown, Lancastrians in 1669 built the charming St. Mary's White Chapel. It remains one of the oldest churches in Virginia, ranking not far behind St. Luke's at Smithfield, built in 1626, and the Jamestown Church, 1639. The oldest marked grave in the churchyard is that of John Stretchley, who died in 1698.

"As the small town of Queenstown grew in the late 17th and early 18th

centuries," Duke writes, "half-acre lots were sold to anyone who would agree to put up a building of at least 20 square feet within 12 months following the sale." Records of 1708 show 39 people purchased lots, though few built.

Whimsically, the founders of Queenstown decreed an annual tax of one ounce of flaxseed and two of hemp.

But as Lancaster County grew, its tiny Queenstown courthouse proved inadequate. In 1742 county citizens notified the General Assembly in Williamsburg that Queenstown was unsuitable as a port and a town, being difficult to reach by land and dangerous to approach by water. Accordingly, the General Assembly permitted the building of a new courthouse between the towns of Lively and Kilmarnock, on what is now Route 3. It is one of Virginia's oldest courthouses still in use.

In 1754, the Queenstown courthouse and jail buildings were ordered to be sold, but no record exists as to when

the other buildings were abandoned. As happened at Jamestown after it was abandoned in 1699, bricks were removed from the decaying structures to build new buildings.

In any case, all the Queenstown courthouses and houses have disappeared. "All that remains of Queenstown today," writes Duke, "is a barely visible foundation of what must have been the old courthouse." Also visible are two roadways leading to the head of Town Creek, which were probably access roads to warehouses that once stood there.

But the tiny church of St. Mary's White Chapel still serves an active congregation. As one of Virginia's oldest and most unusual churches, it attracts many history-minded visitors.

Parke Rouse is a Williamsburg writer.