

**Harmon Read
SON OF HENRY READ**

In Prince George County, Virginia on 11 March 1716, HARMON READ, formerly of Westopher Parish, Charles City County, Virginia, had a lease/release agreement with Michael Wallace of the same county. It was for seventy-five acres on the north side of Blackwater Swamp. In the lease agreement, Wallace was to pay Read rent of one ear of Indian corn, to be paid yearly at the "Feast of St. Michael." In the release agreement, Wallace was to pay Read £4 current money for the property. The land was described as the plantation or tract of land on which said Harmon Read formerly lived. Harmon's wife Ann, relinquished her dower right. (1) This land selling for such a low price, suggests a family relationship. Could Harmon's wife Ann have been a Wallace?

Concerning the above seventy-five acres sold to Michael Wallace, I've been unable to locate when or from whom Harmon purchased the acreage. As Harmon was the son of Henry Read, it could be the same seventy-five acres that Henry owned, and that was reflected on the Prince George County, Virginia 1704 Quit Rent Rolls. Henry's nephews, Dorrell and John Young, are listed on the same roll with several hundred acres each. Or, the land could have come to Ann, Harmon's wife in her own right.

Because so many county records in this area of Virginia were destroyed, either by war, fire, flooding, etc., the lease/release agreement between Read and Wallace is the first record of our Harmon Read that I have been able to locate. The record proves one thing to us however. For him to be married and selling land in 1716, he had to have been at least eighteen years old. We can therefore say with some certainty that Harmon was born by 1698.

An entry in the Prince George County, Virginia Minute Book for 1737-1740 reflects the following: "Francis Poythress, one of the Executors of the Last Will & Testament of John Fitzgerrald deceased, exhibited into court an amount against Harmon Reed, for forty-four shillings and six pence." (2)

Harmon Read bought land in Isle of Wight County, Virginia (later Southampton County) as early as 11 March 1730. He purchased four hundred and fifteen acres on the north side of Meherin River on Roasting Ear Branch from William and Hugh Lee. His dwelling was probably a framed building of moderate size with a chimney at each end. Unpretentious as most of the houses in the colony were, the records frequently referred to them as the "Great House." Most, apparently, could not make any pretensions to beauty of design; even the homes of the most prominent planters were simple and plain.

According to Bruce in his "Economic History of Virginia," it is quite certain that brick was used very generally in the construction of chimneys before the middle of the Seventeenth century. They either were made locally or brought by water from the nearest kiln.