

**Figure 21. The Hungerford Genealogy from mid-1700 to mid-1800.**

In addition to the seven children of Eleanor (Bourne) Hungerford above, we have added (using the 1850 Census lists) her descendants through her oldest son William Elt Hungerford, who moved to Baltimore after 1820. What is curious about Eleanor Hungerford's will (see Appendix A) is that she bequeathed eight of her fifteen slaves to her youngest son, Jesse Hungerford. Since the latter was only about 5 years old, she designated her son-in-law, Samuel Turner, as guardian. It is odd that she didn't give more than one slave to her older sons. She also only gave one slave to each of her daughters except Eleanor who received Manor Jinny and her child. Maybe Eleanor Hungerford had a falling out with her older children. There are indications of considerable friction in the Hungerford family in the Chancery proceedings (Appendix C) and she was obviously a very high-spirited and possibly vengeful woman. Another possibility is that the older children had received their share of property in her lifetime either as a direct transfer from her or from her husband's will. We still do not have a clear idea when her husband James Hungerford had died. Interestingly, one of the slaves that Jesse received from his mother's will was named Porringer, a very distinctive name that stands out in a crowd. An old slave by this name was featured in James Hungerford's (1859) The Old Plantation. Set in southern Calvert County in 1832, Porringer was then at a plantation fictitiously called "Old Delight".

We can not take everything that James Hungerford says at face value since this is essentially a non-fictional novel. The author says that this is an account of a month in Southern Maryland in the early fall of 1832. In late summer of that year, the author, then just twenty-one years of age and a law student, gives an account of taking a sailing packet from Baltimore to Calvert County. He was returning to the place where he grew up, which he says was his father's original home. The reason for the extended visit was ostensibly to flee an epidemic of Asian cholera, which was then ravaging

Baltimore. Many of the characters' names are concealed in the book. For example, he calls himself Charles Audley and his Uncle Mr. Weatherby. No doubt he was attempting to maintain privacy of close friends and relatives. However, James Hungerford made absolutely no attempt to disguise the name of Col. William Fitzhugh. The reason for this is that unlike the other subjects of the book, Col. Fitzhugh was long dead. Using later census records (i.e. 1870 Baltimore City), we know that James Hungerford was born about 1814. By that time only John Fitzhugh was left of the Fitzhugh Family in Calvert County. When James Hungerford's book was published in 1859, Col. Fitzhugh was only a memory --but one that was etched in the minds of the local gentry (see pp 177-118 above).

Throughout his book, James Hungerford (1859) portrayed Porringer as amiable and wise, a preacher of sorts and an excellent fiddler as well, who played for cotillions and parties of the Calvert gentry. As an epilogue, James Hungerford mentioned that Porringer was still living in the late 1850s when the book was published, but had given up any regular work and was confined to a warm place near the chimney of his slave cabin at "Old Delight". It certainly seems that Porringer would have gone to Samuel and Sarah H. Turner's plantation along with Jesse Hungerford after the death of Eleanor Hungerford. One reading of the Hungerford genealogy is that Samuel Turner is actually "Uncle Weatherby" in James Hungerford's book. Jesse Hungerford "Cousin Walter" had just come of age and eventually he inherited "Old Delight", although of course would have had the same last name as the author (a slight discrepancy from the novel). This scenario would easily explain how Porringer ended up there. A search of the 1870 Census records for the first district did not reveal the name Porringer, so he no doubt had died by then. We do not know if he lived long enough to be emancipated. Another more remote possibility is that "Aunt Mary" in the "Old Plantation" was actually Hungerford's real Aunt Mary (see genealogy above), who may have married someone else (who was "Uncle Weatherby"). Another slave at "Old Delight" was Jinny who was in charge of the kitchen. It very well might be she was the same slave that Eleanor Hungerford had left her daughter Eleanor in 1811.

Whatever the exact identity of the characters, James Hungerford's rendition of life in Calvert County is illuminating. He very carefully describes the **Devils Woodyard** lying just north of **Eltonhead Manor** (Hungerford 1859 p.28&29):

"Along the shores of the Chesapeake, some miles above the mouth of the Clearwater [i.e. Patuxent] lies an extensive tract of forest land which tradition - its origin long since forgotten - has given the name of "The Devils Wood-yard". Whether his infernal majesty ever made use of the right, which its title seems to concede to him, of appropriating the wood of this forest to keeping up the heat of his dominions, we have no means of knowing. If he ever did so, it must have been at a period so far in the past as to have allowed the timber an undisturbed repose of upward of a hundred years; for, although modern enterprise and love of money making have sent the axe into the very centre of the forest yet at the time of which I write there was no evidence that the wood-cutter had committed any ravages in its fastness for at least a century. It is not improbable, indeed, that it had never been used by the settlers either during or since the earliest

days of the colony; nor is it wonderful that, when wood and land were so plentiful, a place like this should be left unmolested.

There could scarcely be a more impenetrable wilderness. Seldom, except in the winter days when the branches were bare of leaves, did sunshine have an opportunity of looking into its secret places. Briers and various undergrowth filled up the spaces between the trees; and over among these lay, at frequent intervals, vast piles of decaying trunks. The ground too, on which the forest stood was almost one continuous swamp; either because of numerous springs, or because the rain-water, being restrained from oozing through the soil on account of its clayey base, and receiving but little heat from the sunshine to cause it to evaporate, remained it fell, or still more probably on both accounts. Serpents of various kinds, venomous and otherwise, gathered upon the few dry spots, or dragged their slimy lengths along the dead trunks in search of prey. And it is said that the most ferocious wild animals found an abiding place long after they had disappeared from the surrounding country.”

What is fascinating in his description is that they still called this area the **Devils' Woodyard**, but were unaware that this was the original patent name for this tract. Also it confirms the idea that although this area had been wooded for quite sometime it had been more recently subject to cutting. By this time an active fire wood trade was carried out between Baltimore and Calvert County. Also of interest is an account of a boat trip from St. Leonard's Creek past Point Patience, which he calls Point Quiet (Hungerford 1859, p. 190):

“We had some time before rounded Point Quiet [i.e. Patience], the long point to the south of the Flats, and had nearly gained the channels leading to Weatherby's [possibly Hungerford's or Back] Creek. Our boat was now speeding at a swift rate along the lee shore; and the water shielded from the wind by the high cliffs of the river, lay tranquil around us.

‘How clear the water is,’ remarked Miss Susan, looking over the side of the boat; ‘I can see the fishes moving among the sea-grasses on the bottom.’

‘Our river is famous for the purity of the water,’ said the major, with some enthusiasm of manner, ‘and has been said by those who are competent to give an opinion, to be one of the most beautiful streams in the world.’”

This is the earliest mention of submersed aquatic vegetation (SAV) we have found in the Patuxent River, and is significant because some have said that many tributaries of the Chesapeake were always turbid and could not support grasses. This provides at least anecdotal evidence that this is not the case. Obviously it would be useful to know the location of the grasses for future sediment coring to determine the presence of SAV pollen and/or seeds. From the description of “Old Delight” presented by Hungerford (1859 p. 52-57), it was located to the west of **Eltonhead Manor** in Calvert County, possibly above the headwaters of Hungerford Creek, and it had a clear view of Sotterly across the River.

On the other hand, “Audley Hall” which James Hungerford says that he purchased from his “Cousin Charles” Audley's widow, seems to have been actually located at **Eltonhead Manor**. At the end of the book, Hungerford says that he and his

wife had married in 1833 after finishing law school and lived outside Baltimore where he practiced for twenty years before retiring. While much in this book is obviously factual, the dates that James Hungerford presents in his book (1859) are slightly out of kilter. He was obviously a few years younger than the book portrays and he did not really marry Mary E. Burbridge until December 12, 1837 (Sun 12/20/1837). In the 1850 Census he listed his profession as attorney at law with five children ranging from 11 years old to less than a year. In the same census James Hungerford's father, William and his mother, Sophie were living in the in the 19th Ward in Baltimore City with their two grown daughters. At the time William was 60 and apparently retired since he listed his occupation as "none".

In 1859 James Hungerford wrote that he had retired and settled down at "Audley Hall". One of the things his wife insisted upon was that they put in an oriel window in the library to open up the view, so they could see a portion of the Bay as well as the Patuxent River. This would indicate a location close to the Bay. Despite the phrase that James Hungerford (1859, p. 366) used indicating that after "retiring from the practice of law", he and his wife "settled at Audley Hall", they seem not to have entirely abandoned their home outside of Baltimore. In 1860, James Hungerford was still listed as living in the vicinity of Reistertown (U.S. Census, Baltimore County, p. 183). Therefore, this follows a pattern that would be increasing in Calvert County where the owner is absentee, making his living in Baltimore or Washington.

This split existence may have been the only way for families like the Hungerfords to maintain themselves in the upper tier. Family size tended to be large in the 19th century and the means to maintain them were limited in Calvert County. Indeed the three Hungerford families who stayed in Calvert County were in modest circumstances just before the Civil War. The 1860 Census data is especially revealing. The eldest, James I. Hungerford was then 56 years of age with a wife named Rebecca, 40 and five children ranging from 4 to 21 yrs old. He listed his occupation as a farmer, but his land was valued at only \$80 and their personal property worth a mere \$10. Furthermore, he could not read or write. Benjamin Hungerford was only a little better off. In 1860 he was 41 years old and his land was valued at \$100 with his personal property worth \$28. Benjamin Hungerford's wife, Elizabeth was 35 years old and they had five children ranging from three to sixteen years of age. He was a carpenter, and neither he and nor his wife could read or write. The other Hungerford family living in Calvert County in 1860 was only incrementally better off. Zachariah Hungerford was 39 and is wife Margaret was a year younger. They had personal property valued at \$300, but no real estate, even though he was a farmer. Their children ranged in age from 7 to 21 years old, with the oldest listing his occupation as a farm hand. However, Zachariah and his wife could read and write. The fact that their youngest children were attending school is indicative that they had descended from a family where education was valued (unlike the other Hungerford children in the neighborhood).

This is hardly the portrait of a wealthy family used to gracious southern living that one might imagine from reading James Hungerford's (1859) book of the period. In fact



the Civil War seems to have shattered whatever dreams James Hungerford had of returning to the easy life in Calvert County. His mother Sophie W. Hungerford had died in 1866 in Baltimore City, leaving her personal property to her two daughters Laura L. and Ann S. Hungerford (Baltimore Wills IPC; Liber 33, folio 279-280). In the 1870 Census, James Hungerford was listed at 56 years of age and "of good standing" -- so he must not have joined the Confederate cause. But his personal property is only valued at \$100 with no real estate. He now listed his occupation simply as a railroad clerk. His wife was still alive and keeping house and two of their daughters were still living at home. None of the family appears to be listed in the 1880 Census in Maryland and we have found no will or death record in Baltimore City. Maybe they sought greener pastures in some other part of the country.

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The law-suit brought by the Hungerfords ran so long that it was still going on when Dorcas Gray Bourne married John Parran. Although their marriage was recorded in the Christ Church register, we do not have an exact date (Bowen 1992). It must have been after Dorcas signed the final deed for 4½ acres at Cove Point to the Federal Government for the lighthouse on June 12, 1828 (Turbyville 1995, p.57) and before January of 1830, when John Parran was first mentioned as her husband in the Chancery proceedings. Eventually John Parran petitioned for dismissal based on the longevity of the case. Although all the details of the outcome are not clear, it appears that the case was resolved in such a way that John and Dorcas Parran were certainly well off. By 1850, the census listed John and his wife Dorcas Parran in dwelling #154 of Calvert County's 1st District, at age 52 and 54 respectively. John Parran's occupation is listed as a farmer with \$10,000 worth of real estate. They had living with them a girl of 22, Ann M. Parran, most likely his daughter from a first marriage. The couple also had four other people listed in their household: Richard Graham (31 yrs.), John Nedwell (16 yrs.), Mary Taylor (27 yrs.) and Eliza Taylor (23 yrs.).

The 1860 census-taker, visiting the year before the Civil War broke out, found John and Dorcas Parran living alone in dwelling # 239 in Calvert's 1st District. Annie M. Parran had moved to Lower Marlborough in the 3rd District when she married James Thompson Briscoe on December 11, 1851 (O'Brien 1992 p. 54). Although John Parran is listed simply as a farmer, his real estate was now valued at \$45,000 and the personal property at \$70,000. The combined net worth was higher than anyone else in the 1st district, including the wealthy Alexander Somerville whose real estate was valued at \$35,000 and personal property at \$40,000. By 1860, John Parran's son-in-law, James T. Briscoe was 31 years old and was a successful lawyer as well as a farmer. He had real estate worth \$36,000 and personal property worth \$22,000. By this time Annie and James T. Briscoe had three boys: John, Phillip and James; ranging from two to six years of age. Before the war John Parran and James T. Briscoe ranked with the handful of men in Calvert County who had more than 50 slaves each (Stein 1860). The last census recording John and Dorcas Parran shows the effect of Civil War on the

upper crust of Calvert gentry. Not only had the value of the personal wealth of John and Dorcas Parran dropped precipitously (to \$3,000) because of emancipation, but the value of their real estate had declined in value to \$40,000. However in 1870, they no longer lived alone. Their grandson, William C. Briscoe lived with them and was attending school. His mother Annie Maria Briscoe (the daughter of John Parran) had died on March 21, 1864 (O'Brien 1992, p.190). According to O'Brien 1992), both John Parran and his wife Dorcas died in 1876. In searching through the Calvert Journal for that year for their obituaries, we came across this bit in the local affairs section (Saturday, Sept 30, 1876):

“The Calvert County Murder. -- His excellency Governor Carroll has recovered a letter from C. F. Gant, sheriff of Calvert county stating that the county commissioners have offered a reward for the arrest and conviction of B. Joseph Hughes alias St. Lene, the magician, who on the night of the 12 instant, murdered Richard S. Hook, near Cove Point, and seriously wounded another citizen. The particulars of the tragedy have already appeared in the *Gazette*. The letter requests The governor to offer an additional reward that the criminal may be brought to justice. The request is endorsed by a number of the citizens of Calvert -- *Gazette*”

We were once again reminded that in researching Cove Point-- one mystery often leads to another!

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In the 1820's lighthouses were under the jurisdiction Treasury Department of the U.S. Government and more specifically the Fifth Auditor of the Treasury, Stephen Pleasantron (Heynen et al. 1990). Since the Treasury Department had little engineering expertise, lighthouse design and construction were contracted out to private individuals. Among the contractors in the Upper Chesapeake Bay was John Donohoo who had built his first lighthouse in 1824 at Thomas Point on a patent known as **Davidge's Purchase** (deGast 1973, p. 73). Although the tower was reportedly poorly constructed, he must have improved his technique three years later when he built Concorde Point Light on the east side of the town of Havre de Grace. His success there (it still stands), earned him several more contracts including Maryland's next lighthouse built at Cove Point in 1828.

The first lighthouse keeper was James Somerville. He was chosen out of seven applicants (deGast 1973 p. 75). In 1850, A. G. Bowen, the census-taker, listed John Hance, aged 53, as the light house keeper. John Hance was living in the caretakers

cottage (dwelling house #241) with his wife, Elizabeth, then 40 years old. Living with them was their son, James R. Hance (16 yrs.), and three girls: Louisa (12 yrs.), Areanna (8 yrs.) and Alice J. Hance (2 yrs.). By 1860 James Griffis, then 45 years old, and his family had moved into the cottage. His wife Ann was 29 and they had a daughter (9 yrs.) attending school and a son Joseph (6 yrs.). James Griffis also owned some land which was valued at \$2,250 in 1860. After the Civil War, James Griffis moved onto his land in Calvert County's First District. The 1870 Census lists farming as his occupation in dwelling house #284. The value of his land had dropped a little (to \$2,000), but he was able to claim some personal property at \$300. Maybe James Griffis felt like he needed more space than the lighthouse cottage afforded; it was only a 20 X 34 foot single story stone structure (Turbyville 1995, p. 58), and in 1870 James Griffis had six children. In addition to the three mentioned above there were John (9 yrs.), George (8 yrs.) and Young (4 yrs.). His oldest son Joseph was now 19 and was then listed as a farm laborer. We can picture what it must have been like for these children to grow up along the extensive beaches of Cove Point as the bay waters intermingled with the sand and steamboats plied the Bay.

Indeed, this intermingling of sand and waves had caused problems which by now were well documented in Washington D.C. There were reports of rapid erosion at Cove Point in 1842 (deGast 1973, p. 75). By 1849, a series of seven groins plus a 175 foot piling breakwater had been constructed at Cove Point in an early attempt at shoreline stabilization. We have found a site plan (Fig. 22) at the National Archives in College Park which shows that the eastern edge of the lighthouse was 69 feet from the high tide line in 1849. At that time, an additional stone revetment was proposed several feet landward of the piling breakwater for additional "protection of the Light House and Keepers Dwelling from the violence of the Sea" (Fig. 23). The proposed 485-foot long stone revetment was to be constructed of rock (with carefully fitted joints) rising 3 feet high above the water. The foundation was to extend an additional 6 feet below the surface and be 8 feet thick at the base (Fig. 23). This suggests that the designer, H. Easby, anticipated that major fortification was necessary to control shoreline erosion at Cove Point. Indeed he was correct. Even with continuing efforts to control erosion throughout the rest of the 19th and 20th centuries the shoreline would shift landward. A recent site plan made in November of 1985 (Fig. 24) indicates that the distance from the edge of the lighthouse to the hightide line has shrunk to only 15 feet! This means that the original fortification line of pilings and groins (Fig. 22), has long ago been claimed by Chesapeake Bay. One of the hurricanes in the nineteenth century which may have been responsible for much erosion at Cove Point is the Centennial Hurricane of September of 1876 which brought first northeasterly winds and then southeasterly winds and caused massive flooding from Cape Henry to Baltimore (Calvert Journal, September 23, 1976).

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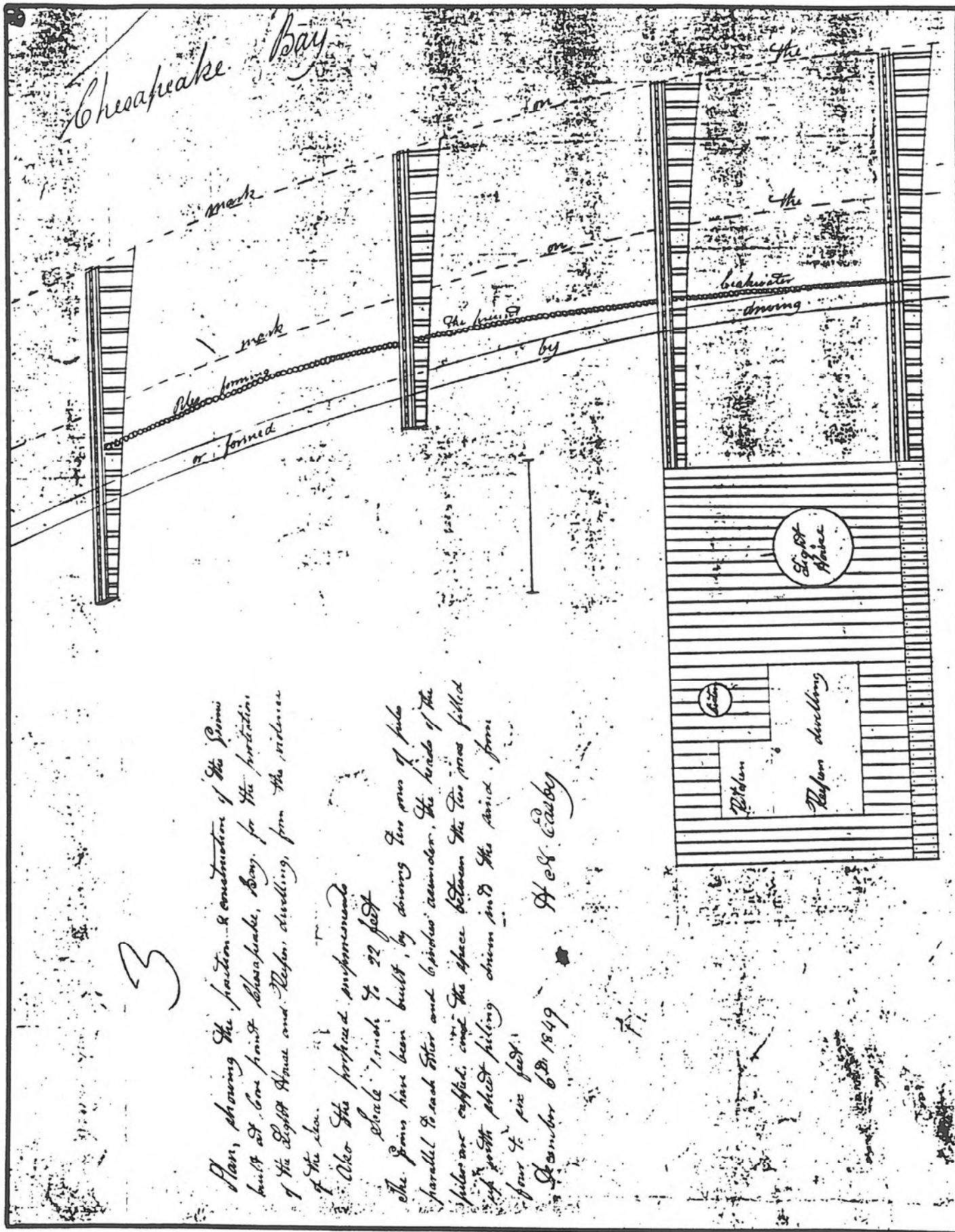


Figure 22. Site map of lighthouse at Cove Point in 1849.



Figure 23. Proposed Breakwater for Cove Point in Dec of 1849 by H.N. Easby.

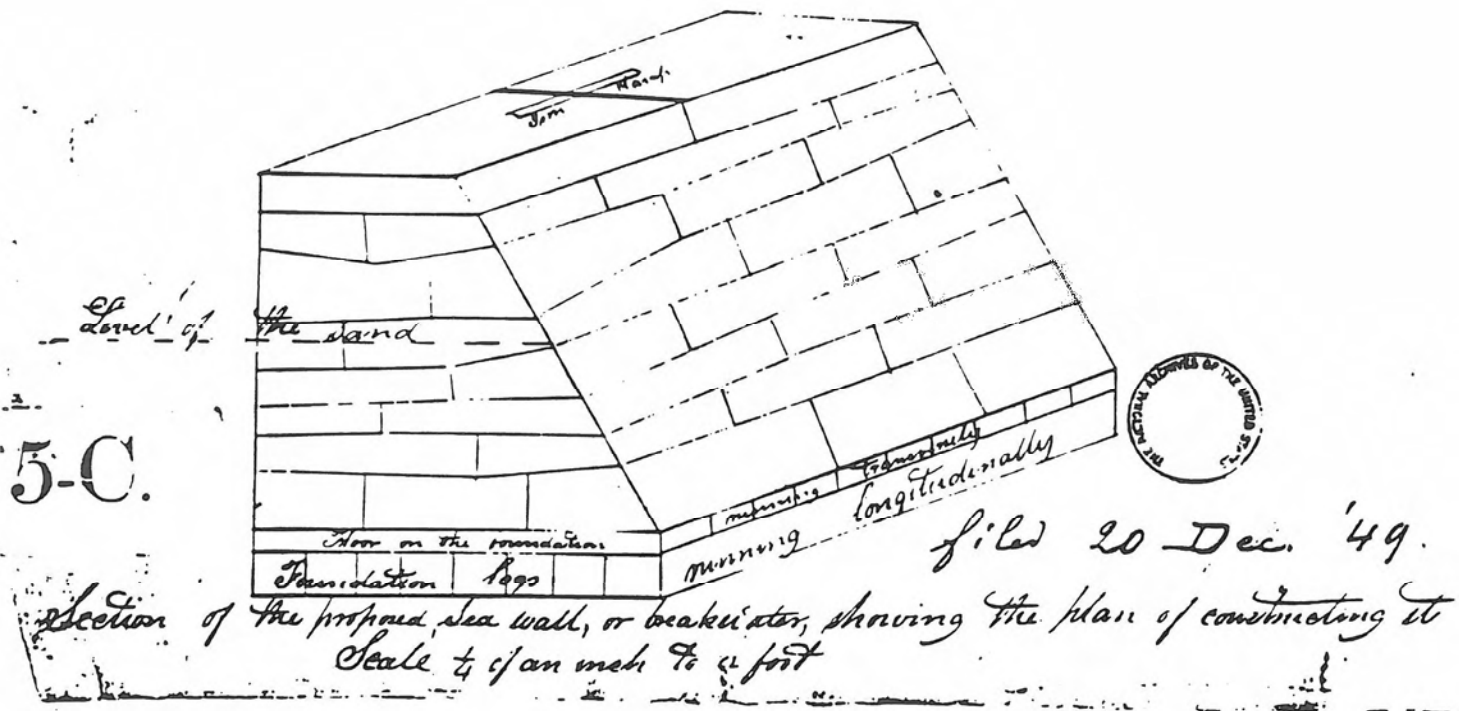


Figure 24. Site plan of lighthouse area at Cove Point in 1985.

