

Historic Franconia Legacies

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The Colonial Crump Family in What is now Franconia

Before the Revolution, the Colonial Crump family owned land in what is now Franconia. Adam Crump, an Irish dance master, who married two well-off widows and died wealthy himself, bought most of his 1,500 acres of land in 1735 (from John Warner, a Fairfax surveyor) before there were any towns. Alexandria would not be founded until 1749 and now-gone Colchester on the Occoquan River not until 1753.

Crump may have built a house on this land before 1742 when he married Hannah Bushrod Heale. They lived near Lancaster, about 120 southeast where she had widow rights. Crump died there about 1750 and Hannah and their three children moved to the present Franconia land about 1764. They raised a tobacco cash crop on it.

Their land spread all the way from the present Capital Beltway past the Franconia-Springfield Metro Station to present-day Crestleigh Way. It bordered on the present-day Springfield Mall and the Long Branch of the Accotink on the west and present-day Beulah Street on the east.

In fact, part of Beulah Street quite likely began as what a 1767 land deed called "the old path that goes from John Taylor's to Ms. Hannah Crump's upon a stone ridge." The path was about 1,800 feet east of a Long Branch fork now carved away by the Amtrak, Conrail and Metro tracks bed beside the present Fleet Industrial Park. That puts the path near present Beulah Street

The stone ridge must have been leveled by later construction of the street. The road was first built in the 1850s as a cut-across from present Telegraph Road to present Franconia Road for travel to the Fairfax courthouse.

The Crumps' house and tobacco fields were probably near Fleet Drive because one of the last parts the Crumps sold was a relatively small 18-acre tract there, bordering a now-gone stream along Walker Lane. The house and fields could have been further north.

Hannah Crump opened an account at the

Scottish John Glassford & Co. store at Colchester in February 1764. The next year she paid her account with a hedgehog of 1,178 pounds of tobacco. She probably had about twelve slaves on the farm and sold the tobacco at Daniel McCarty's Pohick Tobacco Warehouse. But a Chesapeake tobacco depression in the early 1760s put the Crumps in severe debt. Half a dozen creditors including the store and a Colchester tavern owner sued for collection.

The Crumps began selling off the land. Son John Bushrod Crump sold the first parcels in 1767, and moved to North Carolina where he became a doctor and a justice. Son James and daughter Hannah followed later. James was commander of the Montgomery County militia there during the Revolution.

The daughter married in present Franco-

nia in 1766, but her mother had the future husband, Robert Moss, sign a marriage agreement ensuring the daughter's inherited property would be returned to her brothers if she died without children.

Hannah died early in 1774 and James sold the last of the Crump land in Franconia in 1778.

Jim Adams

Crump Plat in Franconia



