

## CLIMBING THE FAMILY TREE

The Daily Press NEW DOMINION  
Newport News, VA

Sunday, March 10, 1974

### HUDGINS FAMILY

HUDGINS FAMILY OF MATHEWS COUNTY, VIRGINIA, AS WELL AS ENGLAND. This data continues from the previous issue of this feature and since the Hudgins family connects with many other Tidewater families, this space is allowed. The name connects with Gloucester, York, Elizabeth City Co. (now the City of Hampton) and Norfolk Counties, Virginia. This issue begins with the Mathews Co., Va. Brothers, so we continue:

"In the year 1743 William Hudgins, his three brothers and their families left their homes in Liverpool, England to settle permanently in the Dominion of Virginia. They had frequently visited the Tidewater area in prior years in their capacities as captains of the ships owned and operated by their father, Robert Hudgins. The locality appealed to them as a good base for shipbuilding and as a staging point for their trading business. The farming and fishing opportunities were also great, their prospects were bright and their hopes were high."

William (Hudgins) selected Milford Haven in the County of Gloucester as the most likely place to live and purchased there a small manor known as 'Hesse Castle' from a retiring army officer named John Armistead. He had purchased from the Crown considerable lands in the nearby Counties of Middlesex, York, Elizabeth City and Hanover which he and his brothers worked as plantations. The group prospered, exchanged and purchased more land, ever closer to the base in Milford Haven. Within a period of a few... <illegible> ...almost the entire shore of the Planketank River from Gwyns Island to Hampton. Most of this land was in what was then Gloucester Co."

"By the act of the Virginia Assembly of December 16, 1790, the County of Gloucester was divided and that portion in which the Hudgins family lived became Mathews County effective January 1, 1791. Mathews County was named in honor of General George Mathews, and Indian fighter and officer in the Revolutionary War. He was famous for his winning

command at the Battle of Point Pleasant which was said to have been one of the bloodiest Indian wars in history. In the Revolution he distinguished himself at the Battle of Brandywine and at Germantown. Following the Revolution General Mathews moved to Georgia where he became the Governor of the new state, and office which he held from 1793 to 1796."

### HUDGINS BROTHERS

"Robert Hudgins of Liverpool, Eng., married Charlotte Lewis, daughter of Henry Lewis of Trelech, Wales in 1701. They had five children:

William Hudgins - 1702-1771  
John Hudgins - 1705-1784  
Lewis Hudgins - 1706-1799  
Robert Hudgins - 1710-1791

"As a group the four brothers moved to Gloucester County, Virginia in 1743. Undoubtedly each of them was married at the time, however, the names of wives, if any, are not known except for the wife of William Hudgins, Mary Anne Holder. Each married Virginia women later."

"William Hudgins (1702-1771) married twice:

First wife married in 1737 was Mary Anne Holder and had issue:

Houlder Hudgins, I. (1738-1815)  
William Hudgins, Jr. (1740-1800)  
Lewis Selwyn Hudgins (1744- )  
Robert Hudgins (1746- )

William Hudgins mar. 2<sup>nd</sup>, on 1756, Joanna Dreggs, and had:

Anthony Hudgins (1757- )  
Millie Hudgins (1759- )  
William Dreggs Hudgins (1761- )

Of these, the principle subject of this paper is Houlder Hudgins, I."

John Hudgins (1705-1784) married three times:

Mar. 1<sup>st</sup>, in 1754 to Anne Respass, no children.

Mar. 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1764, Sara Molin, no children.

Mar. 3<sup>rd</sup>, in 1774, Mary Carney and had one child:

Iveson Hudgins (1775- )

"Lewis Hudgins (1706-1799) married only once in Virginia to Elizabeth Burton in 1757; and had issue:

William Hudgins born 1758.

John Hudgins, born 1760.

"Robert Hudgins (1710-1791). There are no Virginia marriages or

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children recorded for him. It is not known whether he had a wife and children from England."

"HOULDER HUDGINS, I, OF MATHEWS COUNTY, VA. AND HIS FAMILY.

Houlder Hudgins, I, son of William and Mary Holder Hudgins, was born in Liverpool, England, in 1738, came with his father to Gloucester County, Virginia in 1743, was sent back to his grandfather's house in 1748 shortly after the death of his mother. Here he was educated by the wealthy Robert Hudgins, who returned him to Virginia in 1766 to take over a grant of land on the Planketank River at Milford Haven, where he build this magnificent manor 'Clifton'."

"Houlder Hudgins, I, built and operated two shipyards, one at Milford Haven in the lce of Gwyns Island, the other in the 'Back Bay' behind Old Point Comfort in Elizabeth City County (now the City of Hampton, Va.) He built and operated a fleet of packet boats which plied their trade along the coast from the Barbados to the Massachusetts Bay area. He was a former naval officer and Captain of the Royal Navy, bully conversant with the sea, sailed his own ships on their trials and some voyages (the last year a copy of Blount's 'American Coast Pilot' dated 1809 bearing the signature of Houlder Hudgins of Mathews, Va. was found in a collection of Mystic, Conn. Houlder had given this book to a friend of his Newburyport, Mass.)."

"It might be assumed that a man who had served in the Royal Navy as an officer might have Tory leanings at the outbreak of the Revolution. We do not know about this, but one thing we do know is that when actual war broke out and hostilities approached the shores of Virginia, Houlder took sides with his new country in no uncertain terms."

"During the year 1780 Lord Dunmore conducted a campaign against the forces of Revolutionary General Andrew Lewis, who was placed in the area of Mathews County. Dunmore's assault was by sea up the Planketank and by a landing party via Point Pleasant. This placed Milford Haven directly in the line of battle.

Enraged by this, Houlder Hudgins fitted out one of his fleet, the brigantine 'Queen Charlotte', as a war vessel, manned it and presented it to General Lewis to repel the invaders. There ensued the Battle of Gwyns Island at the end of which the attack was thwarted and the forces of Lord Dunmore dispersed."

"An account of the above incident appeared in the July 10, 1812 issue of 'The Virginia Argus' as follows:

'Houlder Hudgins, Esq., was a member of the Gloucester County committee of Safety and in 1780 fitted out, manned and presented to General Andrew Lewis a vessel called the "Queen Charlotte" which played a critical part in the Battle of Gwyn's Island in which the forces of Lord Dunmore were decisively defeated.'

"Mr. Hudgins was the owner of a fleet of vessels trading to and from the West Indies. His home was situated directly in the line of attack of the Dunmore forces. It was a natural and patriotic action for him to assist in the destruction of the enemy by driving him from the shores of his own County and his very home."

Other facts:

"Houlder Hudgins was appointed one of five Justices of the Court of Oyer and Terminer for Gloucester pursuant to an act of the Virginia Assembly in 1789. When Mathews County was created in 1791 he was appointed the same Judgeship for Mathews, a position he held until his death in 1815."

"From birth Houlder Hudgins was a devout Christian, a member of the Church of England and a Vestryman of Kingston Parish from 1780 to 1787. As a sample of the constitution of the Vestry, the following is a copy of the Register for the year 1780:

Precinct 1. Sam'l Buckner and John Elliot  
Precinct 2. Duncan Glinn and Joseph King  
Precinct 3. Dudley Cary and Richard Gregory  
Precinct 4. Thomas Hayes and Josiah Dean  
Precinct 5. Houlder Hudgins and Ezekial Lane

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Precinct 6. Geo. Gayle and Thos. Tabb

Precinct 7. Robert Billups and Henry Knight

Precinct 8. Thos. Billups and Joseph Degge, Sr.

Precinct 9. Jas. Hunley and Jos. Degge, Jr.

Precinct 10. Jas. Thomas and Jno. Armistead

Precinct 11. Jas. Harper and Joseph Miller.

(NOTE: With the permission of Mr. Edward A. Hudgins the above data has been printed and in hopes that others would be able to furnish more data on the lines of the Hudgins family in order to place them in print. We do know that the records of Mathews and Gloucester Cos. are very sparing. It is suggested that those who have Hudgins connections keep these articles for future reference. Any additional material, please forward to Mr. Edward A. Hudgins, 8148 Tidal Road, Norfolk, Va. 23518, telephone 587-9023.)