

*F*ROM a small wrecked vessel, in the waters of the Potomac, to the mighty giant USS WAKEFIELD, on the troubled seas, is marked by the passing of centuries. Yet to this wreck one must return to find the significance of the proud ship's name, WAKEFIELD.

It was a cold stormy day in February, the twenty-eighth of the month, in the year 1656, when an English vessel, "Seahorse of London," ran aground and foundered in the Potomac, near the mouth of Mattox Creek.

A wealthy landowner, by the name of Colonel Nathaniel Pope, owned property bordering on the Creek, and to his house came John Washington, the second officer in charge of the ill-fated ship. He fell in love with the Colonel's daughter Ann and married her. The couple received, from the bride's father, a seven hundred acre tract of land as a wedding gift. On their property, four miles to the eastward on Bridges Creek, in the year 1664, John Washington built a house.

To John and his wife was born a son, Lawrence. Lawrence became the father of Augustine Washington.

In 1718, Augustine purchased a hundred and fifty acres of land, fronting on Pope's Creek, a mile east of the Bridges Creek house, where he constructed and built his own home. Here his first wife died in the year 1729. The following year he married his second wife, Mary Ball. Their first child, George, was born at the Pope's Creek home, where he spent the first three years of his life.

Descendants of Augustine Washington continued to live in the Pope's Creek residence until it was accidentally destroyed by fire during the Revolutionary War. The house was not rebuilt.

The entire Washington property, in Westmoreland County, Virginia, became known as the Wakefield Estate.