

# Yorke Village

In 1629, the Virginia Council encouraged the settlement of the south bank of the York River. The following year, Governor John Harvey was given a land patent of 752 acres at Wormley Creek, establishing Yorke Village. By the 1650s, settlement had developed so rapidly that the county court had regular meetings at Captain Robert Baldrey's house at Yorke.

Although the exact size and population of Yorke Village is unknown, history clearly indicates that it served as the social, economic, political, and religious center for this area during a large part of the 1600s. The only significant, remaining feature of the village is the gravestone of Major William Gooch. Dating back to October 1655, it is one of the oldest legible tombstones in America.

The eventual abandonment of Yorke Village coincided with the upriver development of Yorktown as a superior deepwater port in the late 1690s. The original village site is now home to the U.S. Coast Guard Training Center.



*Original art by Dennis Crawford.  
Photo courtesy of U.S. Coast Guard TRACEN Yorktown.*

