

William Hubball or Hubbell-unidentified

Formation and Development of the Town of Matildaville, Virginia

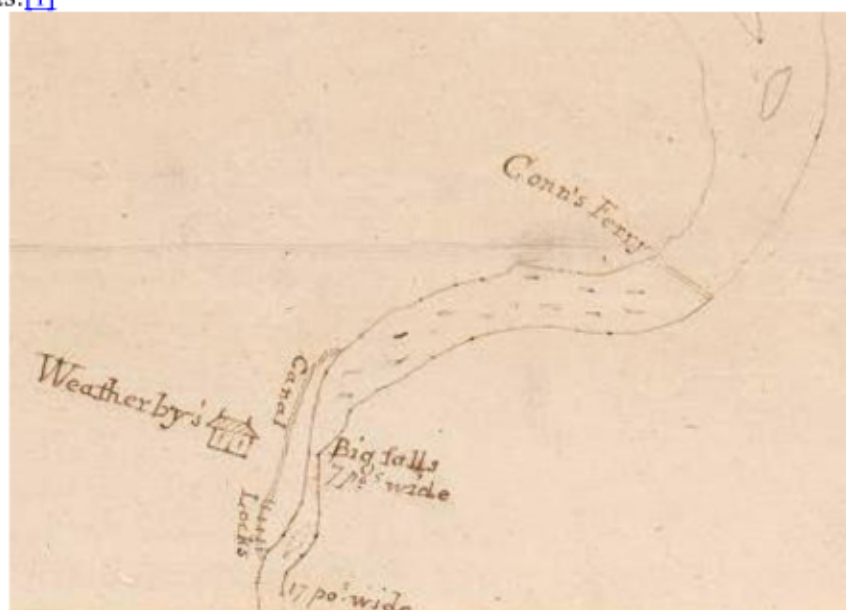
by Debbie Robison

The former town of Matildaville was located on land within present-day Great Falls Park Virginia. While only ruins remain of the structures that were built in the town, these traces of the past provide a link back in time to the country's early struggles to build a skirting canal around the Great Falls. The canal was part of a larger project conceived by George Washington to provide an avenue of transportation for goods from the country's interior to ports at Georgetown and Alexandria. Washington was the first president of the Potowmack Company, which was formed to construct the canal.

The town of Matildaville was authorized by the Virginia General Assembly in 1790 on 40 acres of land belonging to Bryan Fairfax. The town would be located adjacent to a strip of land along the Potomac River at Great Falls condemned for use by the Potowmack Company (later Potomac Company). The trustees of the new town were to have the town laid off into 1/2 acre lots with convenient streets.^[1]



In 1798, Horatio Ross and Joseph Evans Rowles of Georgetown purchased lot 4 from Roger West.^[45] It is unknown how West came into possession of the lot. James McCubbin Lingham purchased Horatio Ross's one half undivided interest in the lot that same year.^[46] And at some point David Weatherly & Co. purchased the other one half undivided interest in the lot.^[47] Weatherly's is depicted on a survey map of the Potomac River drawn in 1820 by Hugh P. Taylor.^[50]



David Weatherly & Co. obtained merchant licenses in 1818 and 1820, so it is possible the firm operated a store out of the building; however, Weatherly was operating a store elsewhere in the county prior to owning this lot so the fact that he obtained merchant licenses doesn't prove anything.[\[48\]](#) Certainly by January 1820, though, the building was operated as a tavern. At that time, David Weatherly entered into a trust agreement and used his interest in the lot as collateral. The agreement stated that the building was in the possession of **William Hubball**.[\[49\]](#) **Hubball was a tavern keeper. (see below for further information on William)**

William B. Randolph purchased a half interest in the lot from the heirs of James M. Lingham in 1820.[\[51\]](#) Therefore, the lot was then owned jointly by David Weatherly & Co and William Randolph. They rented the house out to tavern keepers.

In 1821, Isaac Adams advertised that he opened a public house here. He called it the Great Falls Tavern.

GREAT FALLS TAVERN.

Isaac Adams respectfully informs his friends and the public that he has taken that most convenient House formerly occupied by David Weatherly & Co. The house being in good order for the accommodation of visitors, travelers, &c. he flatters himself that his attention to business will entitle him to a share of public patronage. Such as wish to visit the natural curiosities of this place can be accommodated with private rooms if required, and all necessaries both for themselves and horses.[\[52\]](#)

He did not remain the tavern keeper long. By April 1823, **William Hubbell** was again the tavern keeper. In letters to the National Daily Intelligencer and Alexandria Herald, visitors to the falls expressed their gratitude to Hubbell for his services.

*...Our party had just reason for feeling greatly indebted to **Mr. Hubbell**, a young gentleman, lately from Alexandria, who has located himself conveniently to the falls, purposely to accommodate visitors, and whose polite attentions, united with those of his mother, ensured the best reception [sic] to us, and promise comfort and convenience to those making this delightful trip. Yours, &c. A.B.C.*[\[53\]](#)

In February 1826, **Hubbell** was still operating the tavern, which he called a House of Entertainment. **Hubbell** is shown in the Personal Property Tax lists as having obtained ordinary (tavern) licenses.

*House of Entertainment. GREAT FALLS OF THE POTOMAC. The subscriber respectfully informs the public, that he continues to keep a House of Entertainment, at the above named place, where he will be happy to accommodate such as visit this truly romantic spot; and pledges himself to use his utmost exertions to give satisfaction to those who may favor him with a call. He is always supplied with the best of liquors. &c. **WM HUBBELL**. Great Falls of Potomac, Feb 28*[\[54\]](#)

Hubbell's career at the tavern ended when Lewis Sewell purchased the interests of William Randolph and David Weatherly.[\[55\]](#) In 1829, Sewell set himself up as the tavern keeper. He enlarged and improved the structure and boasted that his stables were large and well supplied.

GREAT FALLS OF THE POTOMAC. *The Subscriber now keeps that well known tavern, on the Virginia side of the Great Falls, lately occupied by Mr. Hubble. He has considerably enlarged and otherwise improved this establishment, so as to enable him to accommodate, with comfort and convenience, all who may honor him with their company. His stables are large and well supplied with provender of every kind. This tavern is not more than a half mile from the turnpike from Washington to Leesburg. Mar 23-2aw 1st June*
LEWIS SEWALL. [\[56\]](#)

In 1830, Sewell established a ferry across the Potomac River just below the Great Falls. A news article announced the opening of the ferry.

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Rick, I don't know who he is. The area is called Great Falls of the Potomac and there is a Great Falls on the Potomac just above Washington. There is Fletcher's Boat House that some say used to be a tavern at the Great Falls but this building only goes back c1850. More likely has to do with the C & O canal.

There is a William Hubble lived in DC 1830. (1830 Washington DC census) He was born between 1790 and 1800 so he fits the time frame but I have not identified him.

Hilbert