



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Great Dismal Swamp National Wildlife Refuge

The Great Dismal Swamp and the Underground Railroad

The Great Dismal Swamp, located in southeastern Virginia and northeastern North Carolina has long been recognized as a mysterious place and a place in which people have easily lost their way. During slavery, many African Americans used the Great Dismal Swamp as a means to find their freedom. Some bondsmen, who were permitted to hire themselves out, earned enough money, through boat work on the Great Dismal Swamp Canal or through cedar and cypress shingle production to purchase their freedom. Others found refuge deep within the swamp, living off the land, and what they could steal. These “outlyers” established maroon communities on the higher points of the swamp. Still, for others, the swamp was a “stopping point” to get to Norfolk or Portsmouth, VA, or to the Albemarle Sound and Elizabeth City, NC where they could secure passage on a ship traveling north. During the Civil War US Colored Troops passed through the swamp in order to liberate enslaved people. Despite the method or living conditions, the swamp provided the means of freedom which so many sought.

The name “Dismal Swamp” originated in the 18th century for the swampy area of land that lies between the James River in southeastern Virginia (Norfolk) and the Albemarle Sound (Edenton) in northeastern North Carolina.¹ Estimates of the size of the original swamp have exceeded one million acres. Located approximately 30 miles west of the Atlantic Ocean, the refuge is within the city limits of Suffolk and Chesapeake in southeastern Virginia and the counties of Gates, Camden, and Pasquotank in northeastern North Carolina.

Development

In 1728, a controversy between Virginia and North Carolina forced their governors to assign a commission to draw a dividing line between the two colonies. Headed by William Byrd II, the

survey crew had relatively easy going until it encountered the Great Dismal Swamp. Although the men eagerly tackled the task in their desire to be the first group to cross the morass, the swamp proved to be nearly impossible to traverse. In Byrd’s journal, written in 1728, he described the swamp, and his work to survey the line through it, with the following passage:

This dreadful swamp was ever judgd impassable, ‘til the line divideing Virginia from North Carolina was carryd through it in the year 1728, by the order of his late majesty. Nor would it have been practicable then, but by the benefit of an exceeding dry season, as well as the invincible vigor and industry of those that undertook it. Some of the neighbors have lost themselves here for some days, but never had either the courage or curiosity to advance very far. Nor can the difficultys of passing this inhospitable place be better conceivd, than by the long time that was spent doing it, even by men who were not altogether without apprehensions of being starved- they being no less than ten whole days in pushing on the line 15 miles, tho’ they proceeded with all possible diligence and resolution, and besides, had no disaster to retard them.¹

During the same tour on March 11, 1728, William Byrd and Carolinian John Lovick camped out near an area called Mossy Point. During a walk in the swamp, the two men came upon a family of mulattos that William Byrd was sure were runaway bondsmen:

It is certain many Slaves shelter themselves in this Obscure Part of the World, nor will any of their righteous Neighbors discover them. On the Contrary, they find their Account in Settling such Fugitives on some out-of-the-way-corner of their Land, to raise stocks for a mean and

inconsiderable Share, well knowing their condition makes it necessary for them to submit to any Terms.²

(Simpson. p70)

While Byrd came away with the distinct impression that the place was bleak, he believed that the land could be reclaimed and suggested forming a company of British and American investors and using enslaved labor to drain portions of the swamp and produce, among other commodities, hemp.² His suggestion was acted on nineteen years later, when several prominent Virginia land speculators, including George Washington, Anthony Bacon and John Robinson, organized the Dismal Swamp Land Company, otherwise known as the “Adventurers for Draining the Dismal Swamp.” Establishing the Dismal Plantation, the founders used enslaved people to dig ditches to drain the swamp, farm, and cut timber.

In spite of grandiose farming ideas, the swamp’s primary attraction was its timber- cypress and Atlantic white-cedar. Long before the Land Company was organized, local settlers had been supplying Norfolk markets with shingles, staves, planking, and naval stores made from trees harvested in Dismal Swamp. Bondsmen were often sent by their owners to cut shingles in the swamp. They were expected to provide the owner with a specified amount. Anything beyond that amount, the bondsman could keep.

Although George Washington concluded that farming was possible on certain kinds of reclaimed soil, nearly another decade passed before the company began to build canals to Lake Drummond, such as the Washington and Jericho Ditches, and farm the land, using enslaved labor. Soon after the experiment began, a general economic downturn, internal problems, and the Revolution brought it

to an end.

The 22-mile Canal was predominantly built by enslaved labor and was a major highway between the Chesapeake Bay in Virginia and the Albemarle Sound in North Carolina. The Dismal Swamp Canal, connecting the Elizabeth River, a branch of the Chesapeake Bay, to the Pasquotank River, a tributary of the Albemarle Sound, is located along the eastern edge of the current Great Dismal Swamp National Wildlife Refuge. The canal was first proposed in 1728 by William Byrd II-- the same person who surveyed the state line between Virginia and North Carolina. Merchants, farmers, and timber interests in both states had an obvious need for such a connection. The Dismal Swamp Canal Company began digging the canal in 1793 and open the "causeway road" (now Rt. 17) in 1804. The Dismal Swamp Canal opened in 1805, located about three miles east of Lake Drummond. The canal permitted the development of new shingle timbering grounds in a relatively unscathed portion of the swamp. By 1812, the large volume of business required a major reconstruction of the canal, including the addition of several locks and a feeder ditch to Lake Drummond to provide a steady and adequate supply of water. The canal was only navigable for shingle flats and small lighters, until the late 1820's when enslaved workers widened and deepened its channel for safe passage of vessels with a 5 ½ feet draft. In 1829, the Dismal Swamp Canal Company's enslaved Africans also opened a navigable route to Currituck Sound by digging a six-mile canal to the Northwest River, and several smaller canals to float shingles and staves out of the old-growth in the swamp forests.

Willis Hodges, a free African American, worked on the Dismal Swamp Canal between 1835-36 to earn money to repay his father for land purchased in Princess Anne County. He noted that there were over 500 laborers, of whom only 12 were free men. He described the harsh treatment the laborers received. After an unnecessary beating of one of the laborers, he considered working with the laborers to revolt against the offending overseer and assist the slaves with escape to the North. He determined that this was an impossible task since

the laborers had no guns. He resigned himself to leave South Mills, NC and return to Princess Anne County, Virginia, and move his family to New York.⁵

Moses Grandy was an enslaved waterman who was offered the opportunity to hire himself out and keep the money. The Narrative of the Life of Moses Grandy; Late a Slave in the United States of America (1843) describes the life of an enslaved African American who worked in the Albemarle region and in the Dismal Swamp Canal as a ferry man and canal boatman. Grandy described the hardships, while digging and lumbering the canal in the Great Dismal Swamp. He remembered, "Negroes are up to the middle or much in the mud and water, cutting away roots and baling out mud. If they can keep their heads above the water, they work on." (Grandy. p35) The enslaved black laborers encountered torturous insects, copperheads, and cottonmouths. After earning enough money to pay for his freedom twice, Grandy was finally allowed to purchase his freedom.⁶

Swamp as Refuge

Besides being a potential business venture, the Great Dismal Swamp proved to be a refuge for escaped slaves as well, many hiding in the dense underbrush of the swamp to live in a state of freedom. How many people found refuge in the Dismal Swamp? We may never know. In Runaway Slaves- Rebels on the Plantation, by historians John Hope Franklin and Loren Schweninger, the Great Dismal Swamp is identified not only as a place where runaways would congregate, but also, referring to respected historian Herbert Aptheker, one of the largest maroon colonies in the United States, with an estimated population of several thousand.¹¹ Dr. Tommy Bogger, researcher from Norfolk State University, however, theorizes that this estimate may be overstated.¹²

In 1784, John Ferdinand Smyth, in his book A Tour of the United States of America, wrote the following:

But there is a swamp in this province which is indeed dismal far beyond description, and can only be exceeded by another; on the borders next to Virginia, actually distinguished by the name of the Great Dismal Swamp, in dreadful and horrid preheminance.

This one first mentioned is also called the Great Alligator dismal Swamp, and lies between those two vast expanses of

water or rather seas, named Pamphlico and Albemarle Sounds....

As the account I had of this Dismal Swamp is only from the report of those who have been in and around it, and who resided in its vicinity, I shall defer any farther description of it until I come to mention the Great Dismal itself, which I examined personally and passed through; as I understand they bear so strong a similitude, that a representation of the one will give a good idea of the other.

At present I shall only just observe that these places are in a great degree inaccessible, and harbour prodigious multitudes of every kind of wild beasts peculiar to America, as well as run-away Negroes, who in these horrible swamps are perfectly safe, and with the greatest facility elude the most diligent search of their pursuers.

Run-away Negroes have resided in these places for twelve, twenty, or thirty years and upwards, subsisting themselves in the swamp upon corn, hogs, and fowls, that they raised on some of the spots not perpetually under water; nor subject to be flooded, as forty-nine parts out of fifty of it are; and on such spots they have erected habitations, and cleared small fields around them; yet these have always been perfectly impenetrable to any of the inhabitants of the country around, even to those nearest to and best acquainted with the swamps.⁷

One bondsman "Tom" left the Dismal Plantation in April 1767 and spent years "lying out", always within a few miles of the company's work.³ Cecelski identifies an 1811 item in the *Edenton Gazette* about a planter named Joseph Banks who discovered his runaway Frank working in "The Shingle Swamp" and manning a flatboat on the Dismal Swamp Canal.⁴

In October 1817, a young Yale Graduate name Samuel Huntington Perkins was bound for Hyde County, North Carolina to tutor plantation girls. After staying in Norfolk, Virginia for a short visit, he hired a horse and buggy and traveled down the canal bank road towards Elizabeth City, North Carolina. He was forewarned not to travel through the swamp without a pistol.

"Traveling here without pistols is considered very dangerous," Perkins wrote, "owing to the great number of runaway Negroes. They conceal themselves in the woods & swamps by

day and frequently plunder by night.” By the time Perkins reached Hyde County in mid-November, he learned that “not long since a woman was discovered in the center of the Great Dismal Swamp. There She and her six children had lived for years preferring the horrors Of such a place and the enjoyment of freedom, to the comforts of civilized life when attended with the loss of liberty. (Simpson. p71)

In the 19th century, timbering, specifically making shingles, and draining of the swamp was continuing to take place; however, parts of the swamp still seemed as impassable as when Byrd described it in 1728. Referring to a later source by Frederick Law Olmsted, Journey to the Seaboard Slave States, Cecelski states that in the swamp, poor white men and enslaved woodsmen would hire fugitives to work for them in exchange for food, clothes and some money. In 1861, Frederick Law Olmsted described the swamp in his book, The Cotton Kingdom:

*Except by those log-roads, the swamp is scarcely passable in many parts, owing not only to the softness of the sponge, but to the obstruction caused by innumerable shrubs, vines, creepers, and briars, which often take entire possession of the surface, forming a dense brake or jungle.*⁸

During a Southern tour in 1853, Frederick Law Olmsted gave a buggy ride to a black man he called Joseph Church, who was the property of a religious congregation. This black man told Olmsted that he knew about the slave’s runaway life. Reporting on a conversation he had with a bondsman named Joseph Church Osmstead wrote:

The Dismal Swamps are noted places of refuge for runaway negroes. They were formerly peopled in this way much more than at present; a systematic hunting of them with dogs and guns having been made by individuals who took it up as a business about ten years ago. Children were born, bred, lived, and died here. Joseph Church told me he had seen skeletons, and had helped to bury bodies recently dead. There were people in the swamps still, he thought, that were the children of runaways, and who had been runaways themselves “all their lives.”

They preyed on the farms and plantations at the Swamp’s edges. Olmsted thought that the population of runaways must be way down after years of dog-drivers-slave hunters with

hounds-on the runaways’ trails.

Blood hounds, foxhounds, bulldogs, and curs were used.... I have seen a pack of Negro-dogs, chained in couples, and probably going to the field. Oh, yes, Joseph Church answered Olmsted when he asked if the hunters ever shot runaways. But some on ‘em would rather be shot than be took, sir. (Simpson. p73-74 & Olmsted, Frederick Law. A Journey in the Seaboard Slave States, With Remarks on Their Economy. p159-162).⁹

Olmsted continued, describing their accommodations:

*Joseph said that they had huts in “back places” hidden by bushes, and difficult of access; he had, apparently, been quite intimate with them.*¹⁰

Ads widely separated in time tell the story:

Virginia Gazette, Williamsburg, April 13, 1769. CUMBERLAND, March 22, 1769. RAN away from the subscriber in April 1768, a likely young Negro man named TOM, he is near 6 feet high, and has lost part of one of his ears. It is thought he is about the Dismal Swamp. Or low down in North-Carolina. Whoever brings the said Negro to me shall have TEN POUNDS reward. JOHN MAYO.¹⁹

Southern Argus, April 16, 1852. James I. Blunt of Isle of Wight County. “I will give one hundred dollars reward for my man Bonaparte if delivered to me... in Isle of Wight... or secured in jail so that I can get him. Bonaparte ran away last Christmas without cause or provocation. He is not of very dark complexion, full eyes, large mouth, fine set of teeth, speak fluently. I have received information that he is lurking about the Dismal Swamp.”²⁰

In 1856 during a stop at Horse Camp in the Great Dismal Swamp, the author and illustrator Porte Crayon [David Hunter Strother of Winchester, Virginia] risked his life for a glimpse of a runaway slave in the swamp. Porte Crayon came upon a runaway slave with a gun. Crayon hid, and ran as soon as the runaway slave left. Crayon made a quick sketch as soon as he could and showed the drawing to others back at Horse Camp. One of the men referred to the drawing as ‘Osman’, yet apparently someone they did not want to talk about. (Simpson. p76; drawing appeared in Harpers Monthly,

1856)

Gangs of maroons in the swamps often had to steal from whites living on the outskirts of the swamp in order to live.

The actions of various runaways between 1785 and 1831 indicate that they still had to take food, clothing, and other articles in order to run. Gangs of maroons lived along the North Carolina-Virginia border. Although their force never equaled that of West Indian maroons, they were active and resourceful. They were also determined, aggressive, and sometimes desperate, consequently becoming involved in trials for murder as well as theft.” (Schwarz, Philip J. Twice Condemned: Slaves and the Criminal Laws of Virginia. 1705-1865. p225-26)

Newspapers of the time seem to concur that the Dismal Swamp was considered a safe haven for the fugitive slaves. After Nat Turner’s Revolt in August 21, 1831, in Southampton County, Virginia, there was this excerpt in The Constitutional Whig, Richmond, VA 23 August 1831:

*We understand that the insurrection in Southampton is little more than the irruption of 150 or 200 runaway slaves from the Dismal Swamp, incited by a spirit of plunder and rapine. It will be quickly suppressed.*¹⁵

The Petersburg Intelligencer, Petersburg, VA 26 August 1831, recounted:

Belfield, (Greenville County) August 24, 1831- Excerpt, *In the greatest haste I write you a few lines, I can merely say that we are all in arms and in great excitement on account of the insurrection, which broke out on Sunday night last- between eighty and a hundred of the whites have already been butchered- their heads severed from their bodies. The intention of the negroes was to reach the Dismal Swamp. I think, however; that we have them so hemmed in as to render it impossible for them to do so.*¹⁶

Problems with runaways in the Great Dismal Swamp apparently reached such proportions that, in 1847, the North Carolina State Assembly passed the **Act to provide for the apprehension of runaway slaves in the Great Dismal Swamp and for other purposes.** The Preamble of the Act is below.²¹

Whereas, many slaves belonging to persons residing or having plantations

in the neighborhood of the great dismal swamp, have left the service of their masters and taken refuge in the said swamp, and by the aid of free persons of color and of white men, have been and are enabled to elude all attempts to secure their persons and induce them again under the just authority of their masters, and their consorting with such white men and free persons of color; they remain setting at defiance the power of their masters, corrupting and seducing other slaves, and by their evil example and evil practices, lessening the due subordination, and greatly impairing the value of slaves in the district of country bordering on the said great dismal swamp...

Passing Through

The ports of Virginia, particularly Portsmouth and Norfolk, were major access points for runaway slaves to find passage onboard ship. Runaway ads (such as those listed above) illustrate that the Dismal Swamp was a refuge for those aiming toward Norfolk. Historian Cecelski states in The Waterman's Song, that "Men and women who escaped from the Albemarle Sound vicinity usually headed north through the Great Dismal Swamp to rendezvous with seagoing vessels in Norfolk and Portsmouth, Virginia."¹⁷ During a recent interview, Dr. Bogger theorized that those slaves who could pass as free may have used the swamp as a temporary stopping point before continuing to Norfolk or Portsmouth.¹⁸

William Still documents the availability of transport from Elizabeth City in the 1850s; a ship's captain allowed freedom seeker Miles White to hide in a Philadelphia-bound vessel carrying shingles (Still, 238) Daniel Carr escaped from Norfolk with Captain Fountain; Cecelski thinks that the "swamp" Daniel Carr hid in "for three months surrounded with wild animals and reptiles" was Dismal Swamp (Still 166; Cecelski 124).

Civil War Liberation

At the time of the Civil War, maroons joined Union troops.²² The Great Dismal Swamp and the Dismal Swamp Canal also played an important role in the liberation of enslaved African Americans by the Union Army.

In late 1863, a Federal detachment from Virginia marched to Elizabeth City by way of the Dismal Swamp Canal Road through the Great Dismal Swamp. A description of the journey through the

swamp was written:

We were in the dreariest and wildest part of the Dismal Swamp, the darkness was dense, the air damp, and the ghastly silence was broken only by the hooting of owls and crying of wild cats. For two hours we rode through the Stygian darkness of the forest, when we arrived at South Mills—a collection of about twenty houses—where we stopped to rest our horses. Here we left the canal and descended into another swamp of Hades. The narrow crooked road was flooded with water and crossed with innumerable little rickety bridges, over which our horses picked their way with great caution and reluctance. In Elizabeth City contact was made with General Wild's headquarters, and then a foray was made against the Guerillas in both Pasquotank and Perquimans Counties.

Brigadier General Edward Augustus Wild's official account of the situation, written at Elizabeth City, December 12, 1863, to General Barnes read,

"I have the honor to report that we occupy this place, and thus far without accident. Below South Mills we built a solid bridge on the piles previously standing, but partly burned, and marched hither."

Later, the report reads,

"The Army of Liberation under General Wild proceeded to Camden County by way of Indiantown, collecting on the way a large number of slaves, horses and mules. (Pugh, Jesse Forbes. "A Biographical History of Camden County".1957, 179-80)

Edward Augustus Wild, a native of Brookline, Massachusetts, was an ardent abolitionist. On April 24, 1863, Wild was appointed brigadier general of volunteers, and given orders assigning him to North Carolina to recruit and train soldiers from among the refugees gathered there, most of them recently liberated from slavery. (Witt, Col. J. V. Wild in North Carolina—General Edward A. Wild's December 1863 Raid Into Camden, Pasquotank and Currituck Counties.1993, p2)

In November of 1863, the War Department posted Wild's African Brigade (as it was then designated) to Norfolk and Portsmouth. Both cities were a part of the department commanded by Major General Benjamin

F. Butler whose headquarters were at Fort Monroe. Butler was a zealous opponent of slavery. On December 5, Butler had issued his General Order No. 46, "implementing the administration's policy to aggressively recruit former slaves and providing detailed instructions on how it was to be done." (Witt, p4 citing from Butler to Morton, 6 December 1863, Jesse Ames Marshall, ed., Private and Official Correspondence of Gen. Butler [privately printed, 1917], vol. 3, p. 182. Gen. Orders No. 46, Dept. of VA and NC, 5 December 1863, U.S. War Dept. The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies, 130 vols., Wash. D.C.: GPO, 1880-1901, hereafter cited as OR, Series 3, vol. 3, p. 1139-44) On December 6, 1863, he sent a short written response to a Norfolk resident who expressed concern and fear over the use of black soldiers, writing, "if you do not die until the negroes hurt you, if you behave yourself, you will live forever." (Witt, p4)

With Butler's permission, Gen. Wild began planning an expedition into northeastern North Carolina to free enslaved people with his United States Colored Troops (USCT). General Wild's men consisted of the 1st, and 5th regiments of USCT, commanded by Colonels John H. Holman and James W. Conine, and the 2d North Carolina colored Volunteers, commanded by Colonel Alonzo G. Draper. On December 5, 1863 Holman's and Draper's regiments left their camps near Portsmouth, Virginia, and Conine's 5th USCT left their camp with elements of the 1st North Carolina Colored Volunteers and 55th Massachusetts. The expedition marched in two columns southward, camping the first night at Deep Creek, Virginia [the beginning of the Dismal Swamp Canal Locks], and the second night at Ferebee's Farm. (Witt, p6 citing from New York Times, January 9, 1864, by a reporter only identified as 'Tewksbury'.) On the third day they camped at South Mills [Camden County] on the Dismal Swamp Canal. On December 8th, Gen. Wild and several hundred men marched from South Mills to Camden County Court House. The soldiers told the enslaved blacks they found along the way that they were now free and welcome to join the Federal procession. According to Tewksbury:

The teams of their masters were impressed, and they were taken along with their household property. In this way the train was hourly extended, until by night it was a half mile

*in length. The inhabitants being almost exclusively "secesh," [secessionist] the colored boys were allowed to forage at will along the road.*³ (Wild, p7)

On December 11th, when General Wild's regiment arrived in Elizabeth City, he met the steamers, 'Three Brothers' and 'I. D. Coleman'. One steamer ferried freed African Americans to Roanoke Island, along with their baggage, horses and carts, and other confiscated property. (Wild, p8 citing OR, Report of Gen. Wild, 28 December 1863) General Wild sent Major Elias Wright and 300 of the 1st USCT on the steamer *Frazier* to Wade's Point [located at the tip of Pasquotank County where the county meets the Albemarle Sound]. These troops were instructed to march up the peninsula to Elizabeth City, bringing in as many freed slaves as possible. Tewksbury reported:

When Major Wright returned, he was accompanied by a train of thirty-eight ox, mule, and horse carts, containing the personal property of two hundred and fifty slaves that followed him into town. The deserted streets of Elizabeth City were thronged with liberated slaves that came pouring in from the country in every direction with furniture. Colonel Holman's 1st USCT, augmented by other troops, tried to reach Hertford some fifteen miles southwest of Elizabeth City. The Confederate guerrillas frustrated their attempt by burning the bridges crossing the Little and Perquimans rivers. Col. Holman found Captain Elliott's Company A of the 68th North Carolina Volunteers. (Wild, p12 citing Walter Clark, ed., Histories of the Several Regiments and Battalions from North Carolina in The Great War 1861-1865, Goldsboro, NC: Nash Brothers, 1901, p713-14)

After seven days in Elizabeth City, Gen. Wild made preparations to return to Norfolk and began to send his men back. Col. Draper and 400 men from the 1st and 5th USCT, crossed the Pasquotank River to Camden Court House 'to scour' the countryside and meet up with Gen. Wild in two days at Indiantown. [Currituck County]. Following the hanging of a Rebel guerrilla, Daniel Bright of Pasquotank County, General Wild dismissed the cavalry and artillery, sending them, along with Colonel Holman and his 1st USCT, back toward Norfolk. With his force now reduced to 500 men, Wild began a march toward Indiantown [Currituck County] where he was to rejoin Colonel Draper. Tewksbury provides a detailed description of the

march:

At first, the country was poor and the houses were mean and far apart. But about noon we struck another road... and the march of the colored troops was that of an army of liberation. The first plantation to which we came belonged to a man named Ferebee. Fourteen slaves were found in the negro quarters... the furniture belonging to the slaves was piled into a wagon hitched to a horse, both found on the property. The women and children were placed on the top... meanwhile, detachments were sent ahead to every visible farm house to repeat this operation ... wherever a team could be found, it was borrowed or taken for the benefit of such slaves as should not be fortunate enough to have masters owning any. (Wild, p20)

By Christmas Eve, General Wild was at Norfolk and his regiments had returned to their bases. The raid was over and a flurry of complaints and protests began over hundreds of wagon loads of confiscated goods, some taken without justification from loyal Union families in addition to those from Southern sympathizers and guerrillas (Wild, p36; Wild, p37 citing Creecy, Robert B., "Old Times in Betsy", Elizabeth City Economist, August 24, 1900) On January 16th, (1864?) General Butler published a general order specifying circumstances when private property might be taken:

Cases of difficulty have arisen where the negroes, formerly slaves, joining the troops of the United States, on marches and expeditions, with intent to come within our lines for protection, bring with them property of their former masters. While the theory adopted by some officers that all the property in the rebel States belongs to the negroes, because it is the product of their labor, is theoretically true, yet it is not such a truth as can be made the foundation of Government action. Therefore, negroes... are not to be allowed to bring with them any other than those personal effects which have belonged to them, or such property as the officer commanding may order. (Wild, p38 citing paragraph 4, General Orders No. 10, HQ, Eighteenth Army Corps, Dept. of VA and NC, Fort Monroe, VA, 16 January 1864. Marshall, correspondence of Gen. Butler, vol. 3, pp. 298-300.)

After the war, the maroons left the swamp and assimilated into the free African American community.

Archeological researchers continue to try to locate remnants of the maroon communities. The swamp, even today, can be impenetrable in places. During a recent attempt, in March of 2003, to follow in the footsteps of William Byrd's survey crew, the group lost its way several times and abandoned the effort.²³ The swamp continues to be that mysterious place where people are easily lost. Research by refuge staff into the use of the swamp as a temporary haven on the trek to Norfolk is on-going.

Endnotes

¹Byrd, William, *Description of the Dismal Swamp and a Proposal to Drain the Swamp, 1733*. (Edited by Earl Gregg Swem, College of William and Mary), 20.

²ibid, 21-32.

³Royster, Charles. The Fabulous History of the Great Dismal Swamp Land Company. (New York, Vintage, 1999), 147. *Rinds Virginia Gazette*, June 23, 1768; Jacob Collee to David Jameson, July 31, 1781, Dec. 26, 1784, David Jameson to John Driver, Dec. 5, 1783, David Jameson to Jacob Collee, Dec. 30, 1784, Dismal Swamp Land Company Records, NcD.

⁴Cecelski, David S. The Waterman's Song: Slavery and Freedom in Maritime North Carolina. (Chapel Hill, The University of North Carolina Press, 2001), 131. *Edenton Gazette* February 1, 1811.

⁵Freeman of Color: The Autobiography of Willis Augustus Hodges. Edited by Willard B. Gatewood, Jr., University of Tennessee Press, Knoxville. 1982. Page 40-41.

⁶Moses Grandy Narrative, <http://docsouth.unc.edu/grandy/menu.html>.

⁷Smyth, John Ferdinand. A Tour in the United States of America. Volume 2 (London, 1784), 100.

⁸Olmsted, Frederick Law. The Cotton Kingdom. (New York, Mason Brothers, 1861), 113.

⁹⁻¹⁰Olmsted, Frederick Law. The Cotton Kingdom. (New York, Mason Brothers, 1861), 121.

¹¹Franklin, John Hope and Loren Schweningen. Runaway Slaves: Rebels on the Plantation. New York: Oxford University Press, 1999. Aptheker, Herbert. *Maroons Within the Present Limits of the United States*. Journal of

Negro History. Volume 24, No. 2 April 1939, page 167.

¹²Interview with Dr. Tommy Bogger, Archivist, Norfolk State University. Interviewer Julie Rowand. June 9, 2003.

¹⁵*The Constitutional Whig*. (Richmond, VA) August 23, 1831.

¹⁶*The Petersburg Intelligencer*. (Petersburg, VA) August 26, 1831.

¹⁷Cecelski, David S. The Waterman's Song: Slavery and Freedom in Maritime North Carolina. (Chapel Hill, The University of North Carolina Press, 2001), 124. William Still, The Underground Railroad: A Record of Facts, Authentic Narratives, Letters, etc., Narrating the Hardships, Hair-Breadth Escapes, and Death Struggles of the Slaves in their Efforts for Freedom (Philadelphia: Porter & Coates, 1872), 137-38.

¹⁸Interview with Dr. Tommy Bogger, Archivist, Norfolk State University. Interviewer Julie Rowand. June 9, 2003.

¹⁹*Virginia Gazette*. (Williamsburg, VA) April 13, 1769.

²⁰*Southern Argus*. (Norfolk, VA) April 16, 1852.

²¹State of North Carolina. Laws of the State of North Carolina, Passed by the General Assembly at the Session of 1846-47. (Raleigh, Thomas J. Lemay, Printer, 1847), 109.

²²Leaming, Hugo Prosper. Hidden Americans: Maroons of Virginia and the Carolinas. (Garland Publishing, Inc. New York & London, 1995), 324-494.

²³Swift, Earl. "Tracing the footsteps of "The Immortal Dismalites". *The Virginian Pilot*. April 13, 2003.

¹ Kay, Marvin Michael, and Cary, Lorin Lee. "Slave Runaways in Colonial North Carolina, 1748-1775." The North Carolina Historical Review, 1986, Vol. LXIII, p5

² Simpson, 70

³ Tewksbury