

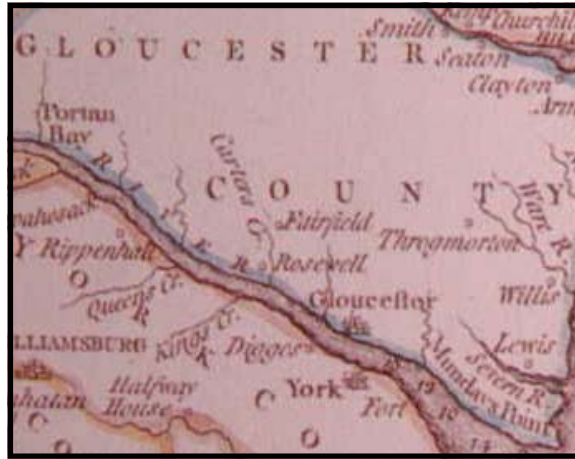
## WINDOW TO THE PAST

*The Thrustons farmed the plantation until it was sold to the Leavitt brothers in 1847. The history of Fairfield since that time is one of failing fortunes and gradual decay. For decades prior to its destruction in an 1897 fire, the house was rented to tenants and used for storage. The massive brick walls were dismantled after the fire and the site quickly became overgrown, leaving little trace of its former grandeur.*

*The story of Fairfield does not end there. Descendants of the Burwells reacquired the property in 1930 and have preserved the core of the plantation. It was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1973. Today, little remains above ground of the once commanding structure. Excavations are now uncovering the foundations and intricate brickwork of this magnificent building that preceded the grand Georgian mansions of Rosewell, Carter's Grove, and Westover.*

*The manor house was but one of many buildings at Fairfield. A kitchen, smokehouse, dairy, barns, and other dependencies peppered the surrounding landscape, producing the necessary food and crops for the plantation. Throughout the plantation's history, this community included indentured servants and African-American slaves who worked the fields and served as craftsmen. Their lives and actions form a large part of the undiscovered history of Fairfield plantation.*

The Fairfield Foundation is funded with generous donations from private individuals and institutions interested in promoting education and historic preservation through archaeology. Please contact us if you are interested in supporting our research.



*A New and Accurate Map of Virginia, by John Henry (1770). Fairfield was one of many prominent plantations along the York River.*

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# Fairfield Plantation



## Seventeenth-Century Home of the Burwell Family



*1847 sketch of the manor house and kitchen.*

## HISTORIC FAIRFIELD

*Fairfield, also known as Carter's Creek, is the ancestral home of one of colonial Virginia's largest landholding and politically influential families. The family entertained some of the colony's leading figures such as Robert "King" Carter and William Byrd of Westover. Together with properties such as Rosewell and Warner Hall, Fairfield represents the height of Gloucester County's "golden age" when it was Virginia's most populous county. Originally patented in 1648 by Lewis Burwell I, his family and descendants raised tobacco and cattle on the surrounding farmland and across the colony throughout the eighteenth-century.*

*As a major landholder in Gloucester County, the Burwell family also owned numerous slaves. Operating a 7000-acre plantation would have been impossible without a significant workforce of enslaved Africans, who raised tobacco and grains, constructed buildings and fences, prepared food, and produced other necessary goods such as barrels, tools and clothes for use on the plantation. For a time, Fairfield functioned as the dispersal point for newly arrived Africans among nearby Burwell plantations such as King's Creek and Kingsmill. The study of the African-American experience is one of the primary aims of the foundation.*

*The Burwell family sold Carter's Creek plantation in the late 18th century, and the core acreage was purchased in 1787 by Robert Thruston, Sr., a Gloucester farmer.*