

Alexandria Gazette 04 Oct 1869

OCOQUAN AND DUMFRIES, IN PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTY, VA – Occoquan is a business like, lively town of some thirty or thirty-five houses, and about two hundred and fifty inhabitants. Situated in a valley and surrounded by lofty hills, the village is not perceptible until you are fairly “on top” of it, and you catch the roar of the mill-wheel, the ring of the anvil and the mingled murmur of voices before the first house of the town can be seen. Occoquan River is certainly one of the most beautiful streams in the state. The scenery along its banks is wild and picturesque, on one side a noble forest stretching away as far as the eye can reach, on the other level and fertile plains which are yielding rich harvests to their owners. Above the Village on the South bank of the Occoquan are the ruins of a cotton mill burnt by the citizens during the war; there was also at this point a bridge which spanned the Occoquan and which was destroyed by Southern Troops. About 1000 cords of wood are lying on the banks of the river awaiting transportation to Washington.

Joseph T. Janney has a very large merchant mill here which turns out one hundred barrels of flour daily. He has lately added some very fine improved machinery joined with all the modern improvements; he has also constructed a saw mill and plaster mill.

Messrs. Hugh Hammill & Son are building a very fine steamer designed for freighting on the Potomac. It is 90 feet, length of keel, 24 feet beam.

Mr. A. T. Lynn keeps a comfortable house of entertainment for all who may favor him with their patronage. Improvements are being made by some of the citizens. W. H. Smoot, Esq., is beautifying his residence. Mr. John Gregg has erected a very pretty cottage. John Underwood Esq., ex U. S. Marshall of Virginia, has a very fine farm and residence just below the village. The Lodge of Good Templars number about eighty members and are in a flourishing condition. The water power is unsurpassed in the State, and if it was in the hands of some corporation, who would make good use of it, no doubt would bring forth untold wealth.

The town of DUMFRIES is one of the old historical relics of the past; a stranger entering the town unacquainted with its former history would little imagine that at one time it was a commercial town of considerable importance. Strolling through the place the eye rests upon the ruins of fine buildings that Dumfries once boasts of in its palmist days, glances along grass-grown and silent streets that once resounded with the hum and confusion of business, and you see even the former site of a bank that added to the prosperity of the old town. The main cause of the decreases of Dumfries was the filling up of the channel; debarring the navigation and thus destroying at one blow its name and fame as being one of the commercial ports of the country. It is rumored that the company that purchased the EVANSPORT TRACT contemplate bringing about one hundred and fifty families, and building up a village at the mouth of Quantico. Very likely the ancient town of Dumfries will move its site to the same point and be once more on the banks of the Potomac, where it will no doubt in time resume a portion of its former prosperity and power. Socially speaking, nowhere will be found a more hospitable or entertaining community than at Dumfries, while it enjoys usual advantages in having at hand crabs, oysters, fish, and those delicacies, which we of the inland towns are deprived of – Manassas Gazette

Alexandria Gazette 22 July 1871

RAILROADS – A Prince William correspondent of the Virginia Star says: The Richmond, Fredericksburg and Potomac Railroad Company are progressing rapidly with their extension to Potomac City. A considerable portion of the new wharf at Ship Point is planked over, and the energetic agent is pushing the work. The Alexandria and Fredericksburg Railroad Company is also pushing forward the work on their road. Last week they were making preparations to build the bridge across Quantico Creek. Mr. Banks is getting the timber down to build a wharf on the Potomac front opposite the OLD EVANSPORT HOUSE. The tents and shanties dotting the site of the old town of Carboro, the great number of men busily engaged, and passing to and fro reminds one of the time when brave men were gathered here throwing up fortifications.