

Name: Joseph Bridger

the subject of this sketch, was born in 1628, and in March, 1657-58, he represented Isle of Wight in the house of burgesses, as also in 1663. The following year, he was one of the commissioners to decide upon the boundary line between Virginia and Maryland, and on July 12, 1666, he was one of the commissioners to treat with Maryland upon the subject of tobacco culture, and in the same year he is mentioned as a member of the general assembly with the title of adjutant general Bridger. In 1670, he was sworn a member of the council and was present at meetings in 1674. There seems to have been some question of his eligibility for membership, however, for in a list of the councillors made for the lord of trades and plantations, the name of Joseph Bridger is marked "query," and their lordships stated that they would inquire further into the ability and deserts of Col. Joseph Bridger to be of the council. The King, however, on March 14, 1678-79, directed that Joseph Bridger be continued in the council, and he is mentioned as a councillor as late as 1683. In 1675, Col. Bridger took part in the Indian wars, and in the year following, was described by Nat. Bacon, as one of Berkeley's "wicked and pernicious councillors." During Bacon's rebellion, Gov. Berkeley gave to Col. Bridger the command of "all the country south of James River." In 1680, he was commander-in-chief of the militia forces raised "so as to be ready for the Indians" in Isle of Wight, Surry, Nansemond and Lower Norfolk. In 1683, Lord Culpeper appointed him his deputy in the office of vice-admiral. Gen. Joseph Bridger died on April 15, 1686. He had acquired a very large landed estate in Isle of Wight county besides grants in Surry and James City counties and in Maryland. He has numerous descendants.

III--Colonial Councillors of State

"Inscription on the tomb of the Honble Joseph Bridger, Paymaster-General to the British troops in America during Bacon's Rebellion, in the reign of Charles the Second of England.

"Sacred to the memory of the Honble Joseph Bridger, Councillor of State to Charles the 2d. He dyed Aprill 15, Anno Domini 1688, aged 58 years, mournfully leaving his wife, three sons, and four daughters."

Some eulogistic verses are added, from which we select the following:--

"Can nature silent mourn, and can dumb stone  
Make his true worth to future ages known?  
Here lies the late great minister of state,  
That royall virtues had, and royall fate."

Perhaps it was as great an honour to him to be the son of the man who built Old Smithfield Church as to have been one of the Councillors of the corrupt Charles II., and to have acted with Sir William Berkeley against him who is called the rebel Bacon.