

# Hancocks Town or Williams Town

## (Washington County)

What was the original name for Hancock? Hancocks Town or Williams Town? It appears to be both. The information begins with the tract Callidonia 1765 (Fr Co. Patent# 733 3910 Acres) for George Frazer Hawkins of Prince Georges County. The tract Callidonia covers present day Hancock Maryland.

When Callidonia was surveyed the line between Maryland and Pennsylvania had yet to be completed. When the line was settled part of Callidonia extended into Pennsylvania by about 3 miles.

George F. Hawkins died 1785 in Prince Georges County Maryland. No Frederick & Washington County deed or Provincial Court deed has been located showing a sale of any of the land. The will of George F. Hawkins makes no mention of any Washington County lands.

1783 Washington County Tax Assessment shows William Russell with 1500 acres of the tract Callidonia. 1500 acres matches up with the part of Callidonia left in Maryland after the new state line was completed.

When did William Russell obtain the property and from whom? No records have been located. Was the land part of confiscated British property, legal action or just never recorded?

The 1783 Tax also shows 9 more individuals listed with part of Callidonia. No deeds have been located for the persons listed.

The first deed located involving Callidonia is in Washington County 1787 (Deed E-468 122 Acres) from William Russell (Baltimore County) to Francis Reynolds. Records show 19 more deeds involving William Russell selling land involving Callidonia .

The first deed showing a town lot is in 1789 (Deed F-339 Lots 12,13 & 27) William Russell to Samuel McFerron. Deed states "In the town commonly called Williams or Hancocks Town in Washington County". So how does the name Hancock come into the picture? There are only 2 listings for anyone named Hancock in the early days. Edward Hancock with the first in 1782 selling land to John Donovan and the 2<sup>nd</sup> a lease from Joseph Flint to Edward Hancock in 1786.

The land sold to John Donovan in 1782 is on the far eastern edge of town. The tract was called Adventure which was patented to William McClary in 1765. Who did Edward Hancock obtain the land from? No records have been located.

What is the story behind the two names for early Hancock? How did the name Hancocks Town win out over Williams Town? How did William Russell obtain 1500 acres of the tract Callidonia? The search continues!