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CONTENTS

Princess Louisa: Louisa County's Royal Namesake	3
by <i>Milton Rubincam, F.A.S.G.</i>	
Providence Presbyterian Church – A Historic Landmark	13
by <i>Helen McCoy Hart</i>	
Queries	19
Moss Family Cemetery Tombstone Inscriptions	20
contributed by <i>Anne Lewis Harris</i>	
Letter to a Confederate Camp	21
Barret and Winston Family Bible	24
contributed by <i>Nancy Chappelle Baird</i>	
A Descriptive Letterhead	26
Fox Prayer Book	27
contributed by <i>George H. S. King</i>	
Shelton Family Bible	29
contributed by <i>Nancy Chappelle Baird</i>	
United States Census, 1850 – Louisa County	30
New Members	48
Necrology	

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Cover: Louisa County Courthouse, 1818-1905

FREDERIK V



Dronning Louise, født Prinsesse af Storbritannien. Maleri C. G. Pilo paa Frederiksborg.

Knud Fabricius, editor, *Danmarks Konger* (1964).

PRINCESS LOUISA: LOUISA COUNTY'S ROYAL NAMESAKE

by Milton Rubincam, F.A.S.G.
West Hyattsville, Maryland

In May 1742 the General Assembly of Virginia passed "An Act for dividing the county of Hanover; and erecting the upper part thereof into a distinct County". The first paragraph of the Act reads:¹

WHEREAS, many inconveniences attend the upper inhabitants of the county of Hanover, by reason of their great distance from the court house, and other places appointed for public meetings, *Be it therefore enacted, by the Lieutenant-Governor, Council, and Burgesses of this present General Assembly, and be it hereby enacted, by the authority of the same,* That from and immediately after the first day of December next ensuing, all that tract of land now deemed to be part of the said county of Hanover, lying above a straight course to be run from the mouth of Little Rockey creek, on the river Northanna, south twenty degrees west, until it intersects the line of Goochland county, be divided from the said county of Hanover, and be made a distinct county, to be called by the name of Louisa county

The Act does not so state, but the new county was named in honor of Her Royal Highness Princess Louisa, the fifth daughter and youngest child of Their Majesties King George II and Queen Caroline.² A great many Virginia counties bear the names of members of our former Royal Family – King George, Prince George, Caroline, Amelia, Augusta, King William, Prince Edward, Princess Anne, etc. Brunswick, Hanover, Lunenburg, Mecklenburg, and Orange Counties were named for the European territories once ruled by our erstwhile Sovereigns.³

¹William Waller Hening, *The Statutes at Large: being a Collection of all the Laws of Virginia, from the First Session of the Legislature, in the year 1619*, Vol. V (1819), pp. 208-209.

²Martha W. Hiden, *How Justice Grew. Virginia Counties: An Abstract of Their Formation* (Virginia 350th Anniversary Celebration Corporation, Williamsburg, 1957), p. 26.

³*A Hornbook of Virginia History*, published by The Division of History of the Virginia Department of Conservation and Development, compiled and edited by J. R. V. Daniel (1949), pp. 11-20.

Princess Louisa was born on 18 or 19 December 1724,⁴ at Leicester House, the rented residence of her parents, then the Prince and Princess of Wales. In the male line she represented the ancient House of Guelph (*Welf*), which in the course of eight centuries gave dukes to Bavaria, Saxony, Brunswick, and Luneburg, and emperor to the Holy Roman Empire, electors (in the 19th century kings) to Hanover, and kings to Great Britain and her American colonies. Originally of Italian origin, the Guelphs are a branch of the great House of Este. Through her mother, Louisa was sprung from a cadet branch of the mighty House of Hohenzollern, her maternal grandfather being Johann Friedrich, Margrave of Ansbach, a scion of the old Counts of Zollern and of the 15th and 16th century Electors of Brandenburg.

At the time of Louisa's birth her paternal grandfather, King George I (Georg Ludwig, Elector of Hanover and Duke of Brunswick-Luneburg), was still alive. He had succeeded to his British dominions in 1714 on the death of his kinswoman, Queen Anne, but he was always at heart a Hanoverian and a Brunswicker. He died, unlamented by any one except possibly his mistresses, on 11 June 1727, when the Prince and Princess of Wales ascended the throne.

Louisa was not reared in particularly happy circumstances. Discord in the Royal Family was rife. King George II⁵ and Queen Caroline had an intense hatred of their oldest son, Frederick Louis,

⁴New style. Authorities differ as to the precise day. "The Royal Lineage" in *Burke's Peerage, Baronetage and Knightage* (any edition) gives 7 December 1724 (Old Style). James Anderson's *Royal Genealogies* (1736), a contemporary work, states (p. 769) she was born on 19 December. Isenburg's *Stammtafeln zur Geschichte der europäischen Staaten*, Band II (1956), has 27 December in Tafel 65 (the House of Hanover) and 18 December in Tafel 73 (the Kings of Denmark)! A month after her birth, *Mercure Historique et Politique* reported (vol. 77, Jan. 1725, p. 91): "La Princesse, dont S.A.R. Madame la Princesse de Galles est accouchee le 19. Decembre, a été nommee *Louise* aiant pour Pariant le Prince Royal de Prusse represente par le Comte de Grantham & pour Marianne, la Princesse Royale representee par la Duchesse de Richemond, & la Princesse Amelie." The Prussian Crown Prince who was her godfather was her first cousin, afterwards the renowned Frederick the Great. Her godmothers were her two oldest sisters, Anne (the Princess Royal) and Amelia. Incidentally, in Louisa's obituary in 1752, *Mercure Historique et Politique* declares she was born on 29 December 1724! But the 18th or 19th of the month (New Style) appears to be the correct date.

⁵As Elector of Hanover and Duke of Brunswick-Luneburg, he was known as Georg August.

Princess Louisa: Louisa County's Royal Namesake

Prince of Wales,⁶ who cordially reciprocated their feeling. The King, by his own admission, really had no love for any of his children. When he was congratulated on Princess Louisa's birth, he is reported to have said, indifferently: "No matter, 'tis but a daughter".⁷ She was his eighth child, the others being Frederick Louis, Prince of Wales (1706/7-51); Anne, Princess Royal (1709-59), wife of William Henry Charles, Prince of Orange;⁸ Amelia Sophia Eleanor (1711-86);⁹ Caroline Elizabeth (1713-57); George William (1717-18); William Augustus, Duke of Cumberland (1721-65);¹⁰ and Mary (1723-72), wife of Frederick II, Landgrave of Hesse-Cassel. The daughters were not particularly fond of their father, but for the most part they were devoted to their mother. Queen Caroline was a remarkable woman – intelligent, well-educated, strong-minded, a good administrator who capably fulfilled the role of Regent during her husband's frequent absences abroad, and *very* tolerant of the King's love affairs. Louisa closely resembled her mother; all accounts agree that she possessed keen intelligence, vivacity, grace, and charm.

The Princess was nearly 13 years old when she lost her mother (20 November 1737). The Queen had suffered from a hernia which she neglected until it was too late. Her family, all except the Prince of Wales,¹¹ were with her at the end. To the youngest she said: "Louisa, remember I die being giddy and obstinate, in having kept my disorder a secret". Prophetic words! Fourteen years later Louisa was to die from the same cause! The Queen commended her two

⁶Frederick County, Virginia, was named in his honor in 1738; it was organized and a place of record in 1743.

⁷W. H. Wilkins, M.A., F.S.A., *Caroline the Illustrious, Queen-Consort of George II and sometime Queen-Regent. A Study of her Life and Times* (1901), Vol. I, p. 367.

⁸Orange County, Va., is said to have been named for William III, King of England and Prince of Orange, who died in 1702. But it was created in 1734, in the same year that Princess Anne married a later Prince of Orange. Could it not actually have been named in honor of the Princess Royal's marriage? King William County, Va., does commemorate William III.

⁹Amelia County, Virginia, was named in her honor in 1734.

¹⁰Cumberland County, Virginia, was named in his honor in 1748.

¹¹Frederick Louis asked permission to see his mother, and the King angrily refused. When the Queen learned about the matter, she sent her forgiveness to her oldest son.

youngest daughters to their sister Caroline's care, expressing the hope she would support Mary's "meek and mild disposition" and not let Louisa's vivacity "draw her into any inconveniences". In spite of his infidelities, the King was devoted to his wife and was greatly shaken as her end drew near. In reply to her suggestion that he should re-marry, he replied with sobs: "*Non, j'aurai des maitresses*". He never took another wife — only mistresses to console him in his sorrow.¹²

It is said that Louisa's early ambition was to share the throne of Denmark and Norway (which had been united for centuries), but whether this story be true or false, the fact remains that her hand was asked in marriage by young Crown Prince Frederick. He was born in Copenhagen Castle, 31 March 1723, son of King Christian VI and his wife, Sophie Magdalene of Brandenburg-Bayreuth. Through their mothers, Frederick and Louisa were both Hohenzollerns.

Early in 1743 the Court of Copenhagen entered into negotiations with the Court of St. James' with the result that later in the year announcement was made of the young couple's betrothal.¹³ On 30 October 1743, in St. James's Palace, the Lord Mayor, Aldermen, and Common Council addressed the King, begging permission "to felicitate Your Majesty on the occasion of the marriage of your Royal Daughter *Louise* with the Crown Prince of Denmark, an alliance which gives us all reason to hope that the interest of the *Protestant Cause* will be sustained more and more firmly in Europe".¹⁴

Her Royal Highness had a frightening experience on the voyage from England to Germany, as reported by Henry Hastings to his kinsman, Theophilus, 9th Earl of Huntingdon: "Princess Louisa had a very narrow escape in going over. They stuck upon a sand and were

¹²Dr. Doran, *Lives of the Queens of England of the House of Hanover* (New York, 1865), Vol. I, p. 410; Rodney Sedgwick, editor, *Lord Hervey's Memoirs* (The Macmillan Co., New York, 1963), p. 246; R. L. Arkell, *Caroline of Ansbach, George the Second's Queen* (Oxford University Press, 1939), pp. 289-294; J. H. Plumb, *The First Four Georges* (The Macmillan Co., New York, 1957), pp. 84-86; Alvin Redman, *The House of Hanover* (Coward-McCann, Inc., New York, 1961), pp. 80-82.

¹³Dr. Hans Jensen, "Frederik V", in *Danmarks Konger*, edited by Knud Fabricius (Copenhagen, 1964), p. 357.

¹⁴*Mercure Historique et Politique*, Vol. 115, pp. 686-687.

Princess Louisa: Louisa County's Royal Namesake

24 hours in sight of land, but could not make it, expecting every moment the vessel would have been dashed to pieces. Her Highness and Lady Albemarle¹⁵ frequently fainted away and all the time were in the greatest of agonies."¹⁶

Princess Louisa proceeded to Hanover, where on 10 November 1743, she was married by proxy to Crown Prince Frederick of Denmark and Norway. Her brother, William Augustus, Duke of Cumberland,¹⁷ represented the absent bridegroom at the ceremony. She then went to Altona where, for the first time, she saw her husband. The young couple journeyed to Denmark and on 11 December 1743¹⁸ they were united in marriage by religious ceremony in Christiansborg Castle.

It was not a happy Court of which the new Crown Princess became a member. Christian VI, her father-in-law, a diligent and conscientious ruler, was gloomy and puritanical. Her mother-in-law, Queen Sophie Magdalene, was so extravagant that the realm's finances were thrown into almost complete chaos. Neither of the Sovereigns was popular with his subjects.

Crown Princess Louisa brought a ray of sunshine to Denmark, and, fortunately, Frederick was very like her — in some respects. Both were young and light-hearted, and preferred gayety and laughter to the monastic austerity of the Court. They set up their own little court at Charlottenborg Castle. She had a small figure and, while not pretty, was very attractive. She took a systematic course of instruction in the Danish language under Court Preacher Erik Pontoppidan, and with great pains learned to converse easily with all kinds of people, yet always in a regal manner.¹⁹

¹⁵Anne, Countess of Albermarle, wife of William Anne van Keppel, 3rd Earl of Albemarle, and daughter of Charles Lennox, 1st Duke of Richmond, an illegitimate son of King Charles II.

¹⁶Historical Manuscripts Commission, *Report on the Manuscripts of the late Reginald Rawdon Hastings, Esq., of The Manor House, Ashby De la Zouche*, vol. III (1934), p. 41.

¹⁷He was later called "Butcher" Cumberland because of the severity with which he suppressed the Jacobite rebellion in 1745-46.

¹⁸New Style. "The Royal Lineage" in *Burke's Peerage* still gives the date as 30 November 1743.

¹⁹Jensen, *loc. cit.*, p. 358: "Hun var lille af Skikkelse og maaske ikke saerlig smuk, men hun havde megen Evne til at omgaas alle Slags Folk paa en menneskelig og dog kongelig Maade . . ."

King Christian VI died on 6 August 1746 and Frederick and Louisa ascended the throne as *Konge og Dronning over det dansknorske Rige* (King and Queen over the Danish-Norwegian Realm). Their coronation took place amid great splendor on 4 September 1747 at Frederiksborg Castle, the Sovereign's official residence. Officiating prelates were the Bishops of Zealand, Christiania,²⁰ and Jutland. The King entered the castle church carrying the sceptre in his right hand and the orb in his left. The canopy, of crimson velvet, was held above his head by four Knights of the Order of the Elephant. After his procession came that of Her Majesty Queen Louisa, who was conducted by one of the many Dukes of Holstein. Her train was borne by two ladies of the Court, and she walked under a canopy carried by four Knights of the Order of the Dannebrog. After the consecration of the Sovereigns by the three bishops, a grand banquet was held at which Their Majesties were served "only by knights" (*'ne furent servies que par des Chevaliers'*). Four fountains of red and white wine flowed from an elevated pyramid in the exterior courtyard of the castle. That evening the pyramid, on the four sides of which were inscriptions in gold letters, was illuminated by a large number of lanterns.²¹

The coronation was a gala occasion, and it inaugurated a happy reign. Queen Louisa exerted a beneficial influence on her husband. The people were once more free to sing and dance, and indulge in the popular sports which had been banned during Christian VI's time. Once more the comedies of the great national poet, Ludvig Holberg, were enacted on the Copenhagen stage. Public discussions of economic matters paved the way for much-needed reforms. The King gathered about him able ministers who improved the political climate of the twin kingdoms.²²

Frederick V and Louisa had six children: Christian, born 7 July 1745, died 3 June 1747; Sophie Magdalene, born 3 July 1746, died 21 August 1813, married 4 November 1766, Gustavus III, King of Sweden; Caroline, born 10 July 1747, died 14 January 1820, married 1 September 1764, Prince William, afterwards William IX, Landgrave

²⁰Now Oslo.

²¹*Mercure Historique et Politique*, Vol. 123, Oct. 1747, pp. 441-445.

²²P. Nors, *The Court of Christian VII of Denmark* (London, 1928), pp. 17-18; *The Historians' History of the World* (1926), Vol. XVI, *The History of Scandinavia*, pp. 413-414; Fridlev Skubbeltrang, "Frederick V", *The Encyclopaedia Britannica* (1967), Vol. 9, p. 827.

Princess Louisa: Louisa County's Royal Namesake

of Hesse-Cassel, and, still later, William I, Elector of Hesse; Christian VII, King of Denmark and Norway, born 29 January 1749, died 13 March 1808, married 8 November 1766, his first cousin, Princess Caroline Matilda, sister of King George III of Great Britain, and daughter of Frederick Louis, Prince of Wales; Louisa, born 30 January 1750, died 12 January 1831, married 30 August 1766, Charles, Landgrave of Hesse-Cassel; and a stillborn son, 19 December 1751.²³

It is said that on her departure to meet Frederick for the first time in 1743, Louisa remarked to her brother, the Duke of Cumberland, that if she were ever unhappy in her marriage she would breathe no word of it to her family. And in her correspondence with her relatives in England, she gave no indication that a shadow had crossed her path. Yet she must have had many moments of unhappiness, for Frederick, although devoted to her, had a string of mistresses of whom he was quite fond. Her influence on him was considerable, but the one thing she failed to accomplish was to separate him from his ladies of easy virtue.

Queen Louisa was only 27 years old when she died in childbirth on 19 December 1751.²⁴ She suffered the same complaint as her mother – a hernia in her womb, and, despite her mother's warning, she, too, neglected to report the matter until it was too late. As stated by one of the memoir-writers of the day: "Her death, which was terrible, and after an operation that lasted an hour, resembled her mother's – a slight rupture which she concealed, and had been occasioned by stooping when she was seven months gone with her first child . . . In her last moments, she wrote a moving letter to the King,²⁵ the Duke,²⁶ and her sisters, to take leave of them. This

²³Dr. Wilhelm Karl Prinz von Isenburg, *Stammtafeln zur Geschichte der europäischen Staaten*, Band II (1956), Tafel 73. The stillborn son is not mentioned by von Isenburg, but by Behrmann, to be cited later.

²⁴Jensen, *loc. cit.*, p. 361. "The Royal Lineage" in Burke's *Peerage* still adheres to the Old Style, 8 December 1751.

²⁵Horace Walpole, *Memoirs and Portraits*, edited by Matthew Hodgart (The Macmillan Co., New York, Revised Edition, 1963), p. 34. The King's heir, Frederick Louis, Prince of Wales, died on 20 March 1750/51, cordially hated by his father. The Prince of Orange, William IV, Stadholder of the Netherlands and husband of King George's eldest daughter, Anne, Princess Royal, died on 22 October 1751. "Poor little Edward" was Edward Augustus, Duke of York and Albany, son of the Prince of Wales and brother of George III.

²⁶*Mercure Historique et Politique*, Vol. 132, Jan 1752, p. 108.

letter, and the similtude of hers and her mother's death, struck the King in the sharpest manner, and made him break out into warm expressions of passion and tenderness. He said, 'This has been a fatal year to my family! I lost my eldest son – but I am glad of it; then the Prince of Orange died, and left everything in confusion. Poor little Edward has been cut open (for an imposthume in his side), and now the Queen of Denmark is gone! I know I did not love my children when they were young; I hated to have them running into my room; but now I love them as well as most fathers'."

Queen Louisa's death, which occurred at about 4 o'clock in the morning of the 9th of December 1751, caused consternation and profound sorrow in the Danish capital. "It is easy to picture to oneself in what state of despondency the King finds himself," wrote the correspondent of *Mercure Historique et Politique*, "he who has always had for this August Wife the sentiments of the most sincere tenderness, and who considered her as the really true lover of his heart."²⁶

Her Majesty's remains were borne to Roskilde, the ancient capital of Denmark, about twenty miles from Copenhagen. In the Cathedral Church there she was laid to rest, with great pomp and magnificence, among the Kings and Queens of Denmark.²⁷

Already there were whispers that King Frederick planned to re-marry, and rumor hinted that the new *Dronning* (Queen) would be a Princess of Brunswick-Wolfenbüttel. Rumor was right; on 8 July 1752 he espoused Princess Juliane Marie of Brunswick-Wolfenbüttel, by whom he had a son, Frederick, born 11 October 1753, died 7 December 1805, married 21 October 1774, Sophie of Mecklenburg-Schwerin.

²⁷Henrik Behrmann, *Gundrids til Roskilde Domkirkes og dens Monumenters Historie og Beskrivelse* (Copenhagen, 1815), p. 118. Behrmann mentions (p. 94) Louisa's stillborn son who was buried in the same church. This author states that Frederick V's two wives, Louisa and Juliane Marie, are buried with him in Christian IV's chapel on the north side of the Roskilde *Domkirke*. However, Karl Baedeker's *Norway, Sweden and Denmark, with Excursions to Iceland and Spitzbergen* mentions a chapel built by Frederick V on the east side and declares that the King is buried there. No mention is made by Baedeker of the tombs of Queens Louisa and Juliane Marie. As a great-great-great-granddaughter of Queen Anne, wife of King James I of England (VI of Scotland), and daughter of Frederick II, King of Denmark and Norway, Queen Louisa was buried with her own ancestors, as well as her husband's, at Roskilde.

Princess Louisa: Louisa County's Royal Namesake

King Frederick V died on 14 January 1766, and was succeeded by Christian VII, his son by Louisa. Christian was, regrettably, a debauched and mentally incompetent man, and his wife, Caroline Matilda of England (Louisa's niece) was found guilty of adultery and divorced. Their son, Frederick VI, King of Denmark from 1808 until his death in 1839, and of Norway from 1808 until its transfer to Sweden in 1814, was a capable, responsible, and upright man. As he had only daughters, the Danish throne passed to his cousin, Christian VIII, son of Prince Frederick, the son of Frederick V and his second wife, Juliane Marie. His line became extinct with his son, Frederick VII, in 1863, when a collateral branch of the family succeeded in the person of Christian IX, ancestor of the present Royal Family.

Although the male line of Frederick V and Louisa of Great Britain is extinct, they are represented in the female lines. Her Majesty Queen Ingrid, consort of the present Sovereign of Denmark, Frederick IX, is descended from Louisa County's royal namesake. Another descendant was the late Empress Auguste Victoria, consort of the last German Kaiser, William II; two of their granddaughters married Americans, Princess Cecilie to Clyde Kenneth Harris, of Amarillo, Texas, by whom she has a daughter, Kira Alexandrine Brigid Cecilie Ingrid Harris; and Princess Victoria Marina to Kirby Williams Patterson, formerly of Springfield, Missouri, but now of Washington, D.C., by whom she has three children, Berengar Orin Bernhard, Marina Adelheid Emily, and Dohna Marie Patterson. Thus, two families of United States citizens are lineal descendants of Louisa, Queen of Denmark and Norway, and Princess of Great Britain and Ireland, and of Hanover and Brunswick, in whose honor Louisa County, Virginia, received its name over 228 years ago.