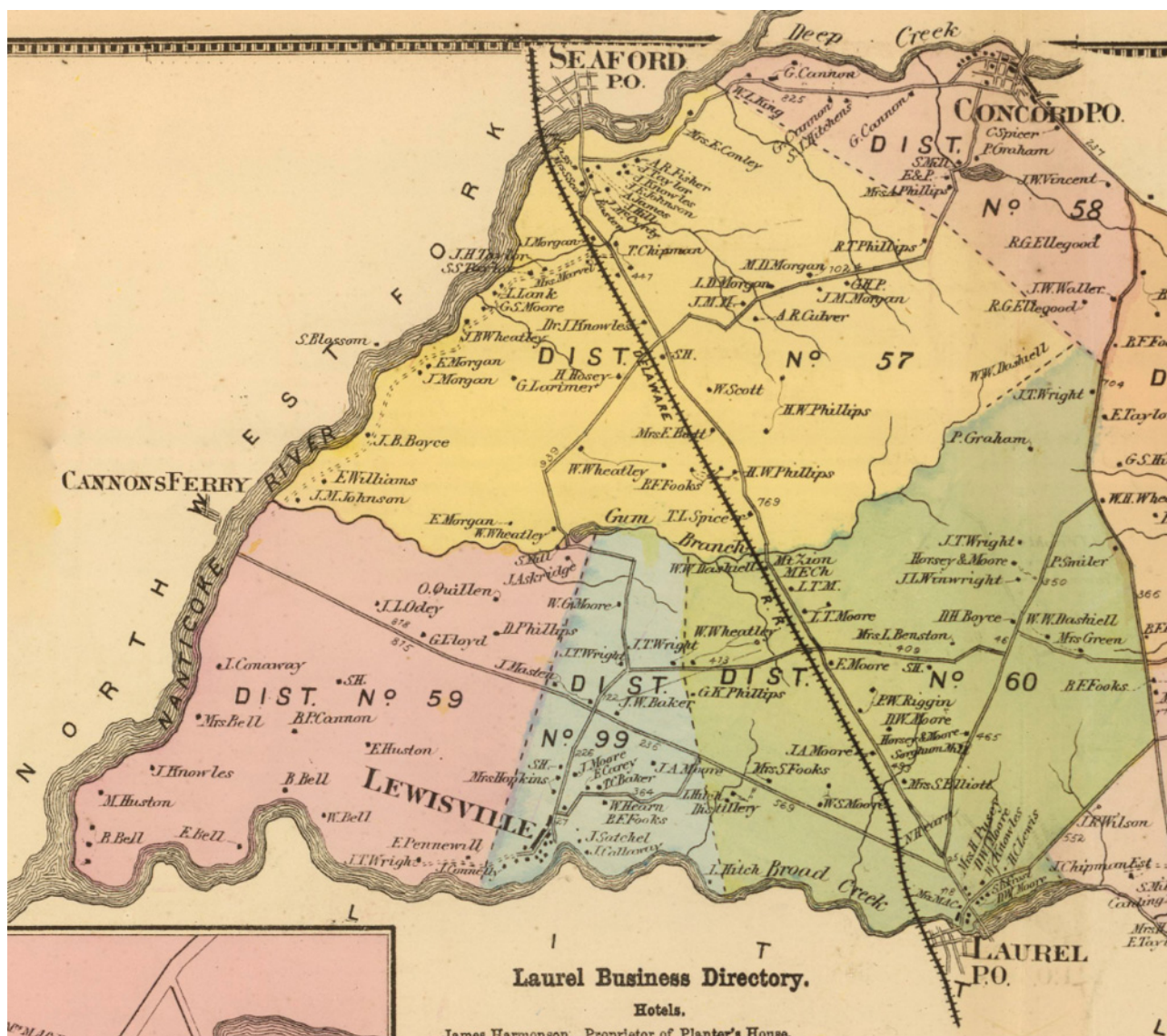


Road Trip!

If you want, you can accomplish a tremendous amount of genealogical research without ever leaving your desk, but there's still a great benefit to getting out of the house and visiting the places where your ancestors lived.

For the past twenty years or so, my family and I have vacationed with friends and acquaintances at [Fenwick Island](#) in Sussex County Delaware every summer. Most of the time, this vacation is a few weeks of sun and sand, conversations on the beach all day and happy hour at the tiki bar in the evening. But for the last couple of years, I've spent many of my vacation mornings traveling to western Sussex County to see some of my ancestral stomping grounds.



I explored several areas this year, but spent most of my time in the triangle of land roughly bounded by the Nanticoke River, Broad Creek, and the line running between Laurel and Concord. This area was (and still is) a major farming area. During the mid 1800's, Lewisville

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(now [Bethel, Delaware](#)), Laurel, Seaford and Sharptown, Maryland were part of a major shipbuilding region, constructing the [Chesapeake sailing rams](#) designed to move freight on the Chesapeake Bay. I've found several relatives who were involved in the shipbuilding or shipping industry.

I have records of ancestors surnamed Clifton, Callaway and Morgan living in this area back to the mid 1700s, as well as Waller and Lloyd ancestors in more recent years. You can see several of these family names on the Pomeroy and Beers Atlas map from 1868.

So what was I able to do that couldn't be done on the Internet?

- Meet with local genealogists and researchers with an in-depth knowledge of the area.
- Visit local libraries, historical societies and town halls that have records not available online or in the official archives.
- Explore local cemeteries and find grave markers not listed on [findagrave](#) and see family plots in the context of others buried nearby.
- Gain an appreciation for the local geography and architecture of area homes and churches.

I was originally drawn to this area based on the will of Obediah Smith (~1728 - 1796) who left property to his daughter Margaret (~1750 - ?) and her husband Benjamin Clifton (~1750 - 1820) described as "all of the land called 'Pine Grove' on the south side of the Nanticoke River". I followed the river roads from the town of Concord to Woodland Ferry (shown as Cannon's Ferry on the Pomeroy and Beers map), to Phillips Landing to see what the area looked like today.

The picture below was taken at Phillips Landing at the confluence of Broad Creek and Nanticoke River.

