

A Community Begins Fact Sheet¹

- The town, now called Scottsville, was founded on the **James River** because the rich farmland along the river was excellent for growing agricultural products and also transporting them to market.
- **Edward Scott** bought 550 acres of land along the James River's Horseshoe Bend in 1732, and a town called **Scott's Landing** soon grew up there.
 - This location near **Horseshoe Bend** had rich soil for farming and was along a major trading route, the James River.
- Edward Scott was the Burgess, Magistrate and Sheriff of Goochland County near Richmond.
- **Albemarle County** was formed in 1744 and **Scott's Landing** was its first **county seat**, which meant that it was the social, legal, and economic center of the county.
 - Scott's Landing served as county seat from 1744-1762.
 - Charlottesville became the county seat in 1762 and continues to serve that purpose today.
- Edward Scott died in 1738. In 1745, several important men met at his house, called Valmont, to organize Albemarle County.
 - Some of their tasks included: setting the prices of goods, collecting taxes, organizing a militia, building roads, establishing places for travelers to eat, drink, and spend the night, deciding where to build the courthouse, jail, and other important buildings and then building them.
- **Scott's Ferry** was built in 1745 by Edward Scott's son, Daniel. It connected the **courthouse** in Scott's Landing to the part of Albemarle lying south across the river (now Buckingham Co.) and was busiest when court was in session, also known as Court Days.
- **Court Days** let people visit with their neighbors and visitors who were in town and often became large parties.
 - People often gathered near the courthouse to talk, exchange letters, and enjoy food and drink, including barbecues.
 - There was often entertainment too, including wrestling matches, music, horse races, and greased-pig contests.
- Scott's Landing was incorporated as the town of **Scottsville** in 1818.

¹ Information on this sheet is adapted from the exhibit text developed by Lauren Turek and Julie Schiff.

Game Questions
Station 2: A Community Begins

Name one reason why Scottsville was founded along the James River.

Who is considered the founder of the town now called Scottsville?

What was the town of Scottsville's original name?

How do you think Horseshoe Bend got its name?

What county did Scottsville become a part of when it was formed in 1744?

What important function did Scottsville serve for the county from 1744-1762?

What were three decisions that the men who organized Albemarle County had to make?

How did people cross the river to attend court in Scottsville (after 1745)?

List two activities that usually took place during Court Days.

Why do you think Court Days often turned into large parties?

A

What would you do at Court Days?

This is an announcement that court will be in session in Scottsville, Virginia beginning one week from today. Please take the newly opened Scott's Ferry to the courthouse.

Directions:

- **Choose one activity from the list below that you would like to do when visiting Scottsville for Court Days.**

- **Activities:**
 - visiting with friends
 - exchanging news and letters
 - eating and drinking (especially BBQ)
 - wrestling matches
 - music
 - horse races
 - greased-pig contests

B

Write about it!

Directions:

- Now that you've chosen an activity, write a letter home or a journal entry about your journey to Scottsville and what you did while you were there.

Dear _____,

I went to Court Days in Scottsville and traveled there by _____. While I was there, I

_____, _____

(closing)

(your name)