

Committee for the Fort Monroe  
Casemate Museum  
2914 West Avenue  
Newport News, Virginia

To be  
used in Chap.  
describing: Crossing  
Houghton Road

Dr. Leonidas H. Berry  
412 E. 47th Street  
Chicago 15, Illinois

file the  
March 7, 1956  
file with  
Biography Source Data

Dear Leonidas:

My informant, who has sailed all over these waters, says it is entirely possible that the raft could have been rowed all the way with sweeps (long oars). They could even have rigged up a square sail to help them along. In the summer months the prevailing winds are from the south. Of course, when they got to Back River they would have had to depend on the sweeps alone.

They certainly could not have "floated" the raft to its destination, for that implies drifting with the currents. And the currents would have carried them out into Chesapeake Bay.

They would not have towed the raft with small boats, because it would be simpler to propel the raft with sweeps. In those days, before the advent of good roads and the automobile the people of this area were very much at home on the water.

The navigation would have been no problem, for they had only to hug the shore. At night the shore lights would guide them. Furthermore, your grandfather, due to having been stationed at Fort Monroe, would have known the area intimately.

I hope this information is of help. Kindest regards.

Sincerely yours,

Chester

Chester D. Bradley, M.D.  
Co-Chairman and  
Curator of the Exhibits

CDB/db