



WHITE HOUSE LANDING, PAMUNKEY RIVER, VA.—GRAND DEPOT OF THE FEDERAL COMMISSARIAT AND ORDNANCE DEPARTMENTS BEFORE RICHMOND.—FROM A SKETCH BY E. S. HALL.

The White House, which gave its name to the military landing on the Pamunkey River, was one of the historic landmarks of Virginia long before the war invested it with fresh associations. A very old mansion of the plain southern style, it had been the family seat of the Custises for generations. Washington paid court to Martha Custis under its roof. The vast estates adjoining it were the possession of the widow and descended to the Lees, with whom the Custis family became identified through marriage. When the war broke out the White House was the home of W. H. F. Lee, the second son of Robert E. Lee. His family continued to reside there after the army of McClellan advanced up the Pamunkey toward Richmond. Mrs. Robert E. Lee, and her daughter Mary, were visiting there at the time the Union troops took possession of the region. They remained until the armies reached the Chickahominy and the fighting for the possession of Richmond had begun. After the first great battle, Fair Oaks, Robert E. Lee became the General-in-Chief of the Confederate forces at Richmond, and Mrs. Lee, with Miss Mary, were given a pass through the Union lines to the Confederate camps. The head of navigation for large vessels is at White House, and the railway from the York River to Richmond crosses the Pamunkey at that point. A landing was established there to form a depot for military supplies. The wounded from the battlefields in front of Richmond during 1862 and also 1864, were brought to White House in ambulances and placed upon hospital steamers.