

outlying portions. The Dismal Swamp is in nowise different from many other large swamps to the south of it in general aspect, but has long been known by reason of the fact that in the latter part of the last century it was cut through by a canal extending from the James River to Albemarle Sound. This canal was constructed for the double purpose of affording an inland water-way and making available large areas of juniper, cypress, and pine forest. It was one of the great engineering works of its day, and by making this otherwise inaccessible region easy of access, afforded an attractive field for hunters and naturalists, as well as the best known of our great swamp areas.

The geological relations of the Dismal Swamp are of special interest from the fact that an examination of its surroundings proves, according to Shaler, that no less than four cycles of elevation and subsidence have been undergone since the early Pliocene, there being a slow subsidence at the present time. Furthermore, it is the northernmost extension of the nearly continuous swamp region which extends thence southward along the Atlantic coast and all along the Gulf shore. This great swamp region is one of features of the Atlantic coastal plain, a term which, for the sake of clearness, is here defined. This plain begins at the edge of deep water, or about one hundred miles out from the Atlantic coast, and extends inland, varying in width from a few miles at the mouth of the Hudson River to several hundred miles in the Carolinas. It is terminated to the west in Virginia, the Carolinas and Georgia by a low range of hills marking the edge of the "pine barrens" and the beginning of the "uplands" country. For its size, this range of hills, or "falls country," as it has been called because the streams rush down the slopes in falls and rapids to the low-lying coastal plain, is one of the remarkable features of this country, as may be seen by a glance at the map. Richmond, Petersburg, Raleigh, Columbia, Augusta and many other places of importance are situated along it. A line drawn parallel to the "falls line" about twenty miles to the east or west of it will not cut through one-fifth as many towns and cities. The obvious reason for the position of these cities is that the rapids and falls of the streams give abundant water power, while the wide and deep estuaries of the richly wooded coastal plain stretch back to the very foot of the "falls line," affording a natural outlet to the ocean.