

Early-Poindexters-in-America Research Committee

11. RICHMOND REPORT

[PDA *Newsletter*, Vol. IX, No. 4, pp 14–18 (Oct. 1990)]

Committee Activities, Spring–Summer 1990

1. Doris Gilbert has continued probing of the Huguenot connection, primarily to establish the correct position of Thomas-1 Poindexter. This study has had much ancillary fallout. It has been learned that our early links with the curiously-named Rocket family have a greater significance because of a recently discovered original spelling of the name: Rochet or Rochette. These have portentous French origin, as well as making better sense as surnames.

2. Mildred Marshall has been pursuing the lineage of Samuel Poindexter, who is apparently a grandson of William and Margaret Poindexter. She has discovered a Lovel Poindexter who was orphan of John Poindexter and apprenticed to Samuel Shelton in 1778. Which John is presently unknown.

3. Mildred has in the course of her study obtained documents which fortuitously are important evidence on the relationship between John and Peter Poindexter who married Frances and Lucy Arnett. This is discussed in *Technical Topics*, below.

4. Robert W. Poindexter has found references to early Poindexters in a family history of the Pettitts, in the Genealogical Library, Salt Lake City, Archive Record Books 689 and 690. This document assigns Thomas-1 as son of George-1, with birthdate 1664.

5. Betsy Owen has found some hitherto unreported deeds in early York County records. They report small commercial transactions in 1662 involving George Poindexter, and a disputed debt involving Mr. Effard. Also, George was replaced as constable in 1661.

6. Virginia Ripberger sent high-quality transcriptions of William Poindexter's estate inventory, and several deeds involving William and Margaret. See *Technical Topics*.

7. Ralph Poindexter has kept EPARC up-to-date with new member lineage charts.

8. Doris Ann Lucas has been studying the connections of Samuel Wiley Poindexter. Doris L. and Doris G. both believe that Samuel is a late child of Bondville Poindexter, and that Bondville, in turn, may have been born as Jan Poindexter in France. (EPARC comment: the name Bondville has always sounded fishy to us. Perhaps it is a corruption of some French name, or of the two names Bond and Veale.)

9. Virginia and Mildred have been examining the Gizage/Gorsuch-Shelton-Bickley-Ellis connection; these are tributaries to the Poindexter line. They have good evidence that Christian Gizage was daughter of Richard Gizage and Sarah Shelton; but earlier than that is confusion. Recall that Landers highlights the Shelton connection because of prestigious connections with English Royalty.

10. Mildred and Virginia are working together on finding direct evidence on the maiden surname of Margaret (supposedly Daniel), wife of William Poindexter.

11. Ralph Poindexter sent information on the as-yet-unassigned Mosby line.

12. Doris L. has continued her comprehensive computer compilation of all known and tentative Poindexter lines.

Reunion Activities

1. Doris Gilbert reported discovery of a Charles Poindexter who was a commercial shipowner, active in the late 1600s in the southern colonies.

2. Dr. John Poindexter of Richmond, a new member, donated a family history which was written and published by his grandmother around 1950. It extends back to George-1.

3. Doris G. found a reference to George Poindexter at Gravesend harbor in 1684. He apparently traveled to America via Holland on at least one occasion.

4. Ed Poindexter reported a close scrutiny of the photostats of the original St. Peters Parish vestry records, discussed in *Technical Topics*.

5. Doris G. reported as part of the Huguenot study that the Rev. Nicholas Effard was born in France, and later moved to Jersey via a short stay in Guernsey. This may have important ramifications for the Thomas-1 problem. Rev. Effard eventually officiated at St. Saviours Parish on Jersey, the church of the Poingdestre family. It is conceivable that he was party to some reputedly clandestine affairs of the Poingdestres, perhaps on Guernsey.

6. Doris G. also found a number of new Poindexters in a church register from Southampton, England, in the period 1567–1666: Cornelia; George—godfather to son of his sister Elizabeth; and Joanne, who married Richard Gates.

Plans for 1991

1. The Huguenot connection will be intensively pursued. Guernsey archives have offered to conduct searches at little or no cost.

2. The collected personal letters of Governor George Poindexter of Mississippi

will be scrutinized for evidence on the parentage of Thomas-1 Poindexter, who was George's great-grandfather.

3. A task force for analysis, evaluation, and preparation of EPARC's first major report will be convened.

4. Procedures for inspection and certification of EPARC reports as the official PDA genealogical model will be proposed to the officers of the Association.

5. Research will be started on the important line of Thomas-2 Poindexter, ancestor to so many of our PDA membership.

Operational Remarks

Our data gathering activities over the past year and earlier have continued to unearth useful information. We want to urge everyone to continue to send in any information on the Poindexters in the period 1550–1750. We also urge everyone to reveal where you got the information—hopefully, a reference to original sources or documentation; but if not that, even an informal source, such as your grandmother, is better than no source. And finally, if you don't know where the data came from, send it anyway—but please tell us specifically that you don't know where it came from. This really helps!

Technical Topics

The George Poindexter Sequence. We have earlier developed a new model for the succession of George Poindexters in New Kent County, VA, during the period 1650–1750.¹ In particular, it was deduced that the George who died in 1716 was George-3, whereas his father, George-2, lived until 1738. This was based on a detailed analysis of the St. Peters Parish records, including the meticulous vestry attendance rolls,² and single-entry record of slave births distributed both before and after 1716.³ We wanted to reinforce (or change) this model by examination of the handwriting in the original records.

The Virginia State Library has a good photocopy of the original St. Peters documents. A scrutiny of 3 unequivocal George Poindexter signatures in about the year 1722⁴ revealed that George's writing at that time was often quite shaky, in one case, shaky almost (but not quite) to illegibility.⁵ This strongly suggests great age and infirmity. In 1722, George-3 would have been about 50; George-2, about 72 or perhaps older. Thus the handwriting supports the idea that the George who lived till 1738 was indeed George-2. See Fig. 1.

Incidentally, it is apparent from the photocopy that the so-called "original" St. Peters records are actually a transcription from informally-taken minutes of the vestry meetings. This is deduced from the fact that lists of vestry meeting attendees in the published book, purporting to be signatures, are seen in the photocopy to be the clerk's handwriting, just as in the attendance roster at the start of each meeting. There are relatively few instances where clearly-identifiable vestrymen's signatures

are inscribed. There is also much doodling, presumably entered at a later date. Among the latter are numerous examples of the handwritten name George Poindexter inscribed at irrelevant locations in a hand generally different from the clerk. Apparently the doodler or doodlers were charmed by the mystique of the name or the person.

Fig. 1. Signatures of George Poindexter from photocopy of vestry book, St. Peters Parish, Virginia, inscribed in 1722. Note extreme shakiness of handwriting in (a), from p. 130. Handwriting in (b), from p. 133, is better, but still less steady than other signatures on the page.

The Line of William Poindexter (m. Margaret). Documents have been found which confirm the descendants of William and Margaret Poindexter via their son John, who married Francis Arnett, and his children. These connections had been earlier assigned via mosaic logic.⁶ In the affair of Margaret's dower, we find the names of William's children: Peter, John, William, Charles, Joseph, and Sally.⁷ Then Louisa County records show that a Peter Poindexter married Lucy Arnett in 1786, and a John Poindexter married Frances Arnett in 1785.⁸ Finally, Susanna Arnett names among her heirs Peter Poindexter and his wife Lucy, and John Poindexter and his wife Frankie.⁹ All these are fine evidence, but really do not settle the issue of whether the John and Peter who married Frances and Lucy are indeed brothers, and therefore the very heirs named in the dower proceedings.

The children of John Poindexter and Frances Arnett are established to be James, David, Sarah, Mary, Zachariah, Nancy, John, Margaret, Arnett, and Daniel.^{10,11} From the new discovery mentioned above, we learn that the heirs and sub-heirs (i. e., descendants of the immediate heirs) of William Poindexter include Arnett Poindexter,

Peter Poindexter, William Poindexter, Charles Poindexter, John May, Thomas Poindexter, Samuel Poindexter, and Sarah Tate.¹² This list of names shows substantial duplication of the names of the children of William and Margaret cited in the dower affair. Thus it is certain that Arnett is a descendant of William. Since Arnett is proven to be son of John and Frances, this John who married Francis is strongly confirmed as son of William and brother of Peter.

Although this analysis is not itself within the EPARC era, we present it because it completes the proof of descent for a PDA-relevant line from Thomas-1 Poindexter and Sarah Crawford, via the EPARC-pertinent William, to the present time. It also illustrates aspects of genealogical reasoning.

1. PDA *Newsletter*, Vol. VII, No. 3, 14 (Jul. 1988).
2. *The Register and Vestry Book of St. Peters Parish, Virginia, 1684–1766*, edited by C. G. Chamberlayne (Library Board, Richmond, 1937) pp 98–253. Book hereinafter called *St. Peters Parish*.
3. *St. Peters Parish*, pp 484–485.
4. Vestry Book of St. Peters Parish, Virginia: photocopy of original, pp 130, 133, 134. Book hereinafter called “St. Peters photocopy.”
5. St. Peters photocopy, p. 130.
6. PDA *Newsletter*, Vol. VIII, No. 1, 20 (Jan. 1989).
7. Will Book 5, Louisa County, VA, p. 289.
8. *Marriages of Louisa County, Virginia, 1766–1815*, compiled by Kathleen Booth Williams (Carrier Co., Harrisonburg, VA, 1977) p. 82.
9. *Burnt Records*, Fayette County, KY, Vol. 1, p. 407.
10. Indenture between heirs of John Poindexter, 22 Mar. 1826, Deed Book 2, Fayette County, KY, p. 132.
11. Indenture between heirs of John Poindexter, 22 Mar. 1826, Deed Book 5, Fayette County, KY, p. 255.
12. Indenture between heirs and sub-heirs of William Poindexter, 14 Sep 1826, Louisa County, VA, Deeds, p. 650.

Attention!

EPARC will shortly begin researching the line of Thomas-2 Poindexter, presumably son of Thomas-1. All persons having information regarding the first 3 generations from Thomas-1 onward are urgently solicited to share it with us. Both conclusive and inconclusive submissions, data and/or analyses, are very welcome.

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