

Early-Poindexters-in-America Research Committee

6. WINTER REPORT

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Committee Activities

Communications and actions by PDAers have continued unabated since our *Autumn Report*.

1. D. D. Cayce has investigated the possibility of graffiti or other genealogical clues which may have survived in George-1 Poindexter's home Christ's Cross in New Kent Co., VA. He contacted Mr. Frank Horton, who supervised the replication of a room from the house for the Museum of Early Southern Decorative Arts in Winston-Salem, NC. Mr. Horton has been seriously interested in genealogical aspects of the house, and inspected it before beginning the replication. Regrettably, he found no names, initials, or other relevant graffiti of any kind.

2. D. D. has also tracked down the location of the Claiborne collection of Governor George Poindexter's letters. They are in the state capitol, Jackson, rather than at the University of Mississippi in Oxford. He plans to visit Jackson for research on the library originals this winter. We expect any genealogical clues to be subtle. The state archives office says numerous other Poindexter materials are available. Depending on D. D.'s findings, repeat visits may be necessary, and copies may be needed. The entire Claiborne collection is available on microfilm for purchase.

3. We have completed an examination of the book *The Early Life of George Poindexter*, by Mack Swearingen. Although the author seems interested in the genealogical history of his subject, Governor George Poindexter of Mississippi, his inspection of records appears to have been rather cursory. He did not do any serious searching beyond literature readily available in libraries as of 1932. He assigned the first John of Louisa County as grandson of George-1, the first immigrant, but did not know who John's father was.

4. Doris Gilbert contributed a document on the Mosby family, which indicates that a Benjamin Mosby married Mary, daughter of a Benjamin Poindexter, in New Kent County around 1715. This Benjamin Poindexter is a new name to us. We presently have no idea where he fits, as there are no Benjamin Poindexters in any New Kent records to our knowledge. There are a few Benjamins in Payne's *Armorial of Jersey*, so the name is not unknown to the family. Quite by coincidence, we also discovered the name in the book *Virginia Wills and Administrations, 1632-1800*, by C. Torrence, and then acquired the will from the clerk of Cumberland County. It is dated 1765; it reinforces and extends the information from the Mosby work. There is an amusing new development. The Mosby wedding was apparently bitterly resented by Benjamin Poindexter, as the groom was a mere shoemaker, while the bride was from the landed gentry. However, the will indicates that Benjamin had come to regard the Mosby family as friends in later years.

5. Virginia Ripberger submitted information on Julius Caesar Poindexter from *Louisa County Records You Probably Never Saw*, by J. C. Bell. The record indicates that Julius Caesar died in 1756. Recall that he was born 1719 and was a mysterious fatherless son of Sarah Poindexter; and he is currently hypothesized to be the illegitimate son of Jacob-1. An Elizabeth Poindexter was estate administrator. Virginia is also researching the origins of Joseph Poindexter, son of William and Margaret. It is important to establish Joseph's exact birthdate as corroboration of Margaret's genealogical situation. She submitted documents on the May family connection (Joseph married Rhoda May). We have also searched (unsuccessfully) for the graves of Joseph and his sister Sally (m. John Tate) in Louisa County.

6. We are scrutinizing extensive Louisa County records furnished to us by Mrs. Janice Abercrombie, an expert genealogist, in an effort to reinforce or correct the birthdate of John Poindexter of Louisa County, presently cited as 1703.

EPARC Philosophy and Approach

At this time, it seems desirable to restate the goals and methods used by EPARC, due to a large number of communications from members who did not hear our reunion presentations or who missed previous explanations in the *PDA Newsletter*.

1. The main goal of EPARC is to develop the best possible genealogical model for the Poindexter family in America for the period 1650-1750. This is a real challenge, as records are scarce. Some of our data extend to 1800 or so; but the main usefulness of our limited files of these later data is to aid in the mosaic reconstruction of earlier family relationships. We are genuinely sorry to have disappointed PDAers who have asked us to help them "link up" in the years after 1750. It is hoped that PDA will soon be able to prepare a complete Poindexter genealogy to a later date, so that everyone may be easily connected. For now, the computer runoff of a tentative genealogy based on all the lineages submitted by all PDAers to date may help members in their quest,

2. EPARC does not consider any data as 100% reliable or as proof of any particular relationship. Rather, all facts are assessed for the probability of their meaning what they seem to mean, or for establishing a particular genealogical connection. To clarify, consider wills, for example. These are usually considered as very good indication of parent-child connections. Yet there is always the specter of adopted children who aren't specified as such. Thus we might say wills are 99% reliable, but not 100%. With this warning in mind, we gather all available data, including evidence which is considerably less than 99% reliable or conclusive.

We then construct the most probable model based on the whole mass of information. Sometimes, when there is little conclusive data, we fit all the much weaker or indirect data into a composite or mosaic, which then in toto reveals a picture of specific persons or events. In legal terms, we are using circumstantial evidence, which is acceptable in court if the certainty of the entire mass is equivalent to the certainty provided by a very few direct and conclusive data. This approach is essential if we are to fashion a

connected genealogical model for the era 1650-1750, since direct and highly conclusive facts are not available for all relevant persons.

Technical Topics

William Poindexter's wife, Margaret. A number of extant models name the wife of William Poindexter of Louisa County, son of John and Christian, as simply *Margaret* without her maiden surname. Although we have not found any single piece of evidence which conclusively proves her surname, there is ample indirect evidence to yield a high-probability conclusion.

The first and most nearly conclusive fact is the recording of a birth to William Poindexter and "Marg." Daniel, 9 June 1782.¹ As noted above, the exact birthdates of the two youngest children of William and Margaret (Sally and Joseph) might strongly substantiate the name of his wife, which is given as Margaret in his estate record² Sally was married in 1799³. Joseph in 1803³. However, lacking this birth data, we proceed.

Sometime before 1768, Charles Daniel and family moved from Middlesex County to Louisa County. In 1768, Charles Daniel, Sr. lived in the same tithables precinct as William Poindexter.⁴ In 1770, another instance, Charles Daniel, Jr. and William Poindexter are listed as being next to each other.⁵ The processioning records allow construction of a homeomorphic map of lands of the Daniels and Poindexters. It is thus found that Charles Daniel lived about 2-3 miles from John Poindexter, brother of William, in 1755.⁶ Charles Daniel, Jr. deeded land to John Poindexter (brother of William) in 1773⁷. Thus it is clear that the Charles Daniel family was well acquainted with the relevant Poindexters, and they probably were reasonably close neighbors.

The estate of William Poindexter lists children Peter, John, William, Charles, Joseph, and Sally.² Birth records indicate some of the children of Charles Daniel, Sr. to be Jane, Peter, Charles, James, and Thomas.⁸ Inspection of several large compilations of Poindexter lineages.⁹⁻¹¹ shows that Charles and Peter are rare names among Poindexters prior to 1750. Yet, here we have the sudden emergence of both Peter and Charles as sons of William Poindexter and Margaret. Further, among the children of William's son John, we find Margaret and Daniel alive in 1826;¹² these, too, are rare names among earlier Poindexters. Examination of our PDA records shows later Poindexter progeny named Daniel: grandson Joseph Daniel Poindexter and great-grandsons Daniel Horace Rhodes and William Daniel Rhodes.¹¹

The above facts add up to the conclusion that William Poindexter's wife was indeed Margaret Daniel with high probability. As always, we earnestly invite comment on this analysis.

1. *The Douglas Register*, transcribed and edited by W. Mac Jones (Genealogical Publishing Co., Baltimore, 1977) p. 275.

2. Estate of William Poindexter, in *Louisa County Will Book 5*, p. 289 (original document).

3. *Marriages of Louisa County, Virginia, 1766-1815*, compiled by Kathleen Booth Williams (C. J. Carrier Co., Harrisonburg, VA, 1977) pp 82, 98.

4. *Louisa County, Virginia, Tithables and Census, 1743-1785*, edited and compiled by Rosalie Edith Davis (Heritage Trails, Manchester, MO, 1981) p. 16. This publication is hereinafter designated *Louisa Tithables*.

5. *Louisa Tithables*, p. 50.

6. *Fredericksville Parish Vestry Book*, Vol. 2, transcribed and edited by Rosalie Edith Davis (Heritage

Trails, Manchester, MO, 1978), p. 26.

7. *Louisa County, Virginia, Deed Books C, C^{1/2}, D, D^{1/2}, 1759–1774*, abstracted and compiled by Rosalie Edith Davis (Rosalie E. Davis Books, Manchester, MO, 1977) p. 149.

8. *Register of Christ Church Parish, Middlesex County, Virginia, from 1653 to 1812*, reprint of transcription originally published by the Colonial Dames of America, Richmond, 1897 (Genealogical Publishing Co., Baltimore, 1964) pp 137, 140, 144, 149, 150.

9. J. Bertrand Payne, *An Armorial of Jersey* (publisher information unknown, 1865) pp 321–324.

10. John Poindexter Landers, *Poingdestre-Poindexter—A Norman Family* (Robert Downs Poindexter, location unknown, 1975) pp 24, 104–105.

11. Poindexter Descendants Association, compiled lineage charts, unpublished.

12. *Poindexter to Poindexter*, deed, Fayette County, Kentucky, Deed Book 2, p. 132, 09 Oct. 1826 (original document).

Ed Poindexter
6284 Stofer Road
Chelsea, Michigan 48118

Phone: 734-433-9648
Fax: 734-433-9649
Email: epoindex@tm.net