

Early-Poindexters-in-America Research Committee

17. WINTER REPORT

[PDA Newsletter, Vol. XV, No. 1, pp 11–13 (Jan. 1996).]

Committee Activities, Summer–Fall 1996

1. Researches are continuing in the Channel Islands. Mr. Bonamy Moullin has completed our search of an extensive series of property transactions on the isle of Guernsey for the period 1601–1699, and found no Poindexter references. He has further discussed the matter with other researchers, and has been assured that the name Poindexter is extremely rare in Guernsey archives of that period. Thus our study of Guernsey seems quite definitive, if disappointing; we are now free of any nagging doubts about stones unturned there, and can concentrate our focus on Jersey. We have a small balance in our account with Mr. Moullin, and will have him explore a final few alleys of his suggestion. A particularly nice thing about this hired study is that the researcher got right at it, and didn't keep us in suspense for months or years.

2. On Jersey, we have been unable to engage professional researchers, and must rely on volunteers. Just as when people ask for assistance from PDA, things may go well for a while, but sometimes bog down at a critical point. As mentioned in our last report, we have uncovered a very exciting lead on the children of our George-1 Poindexter. The volunteer support ran out at the climax; and despite our enthusiasm, we have been unable to get things going again. We must point out, though, that we are extremely pleased with the assistance provided by Jerseyans to date; they have proceeded much more diligently than most of our domestic researchers, including yours truly.

3. Doris Lucas sprang a stunning surprise with her modest and unheralded publication of the birthdates of John-1 and his son John in her computer tome. The dates (1696 and 1728) are super; the first seems to confirm the EPARC range (1695–1698) deduced from previously unappreciated property records. Recall that a number of analyses have cited 1703 as John-1's birthdate, based on the off-hand and apparently vain estimate by John's brother Thomas in a late-1700s Louisa County legal proceeding. This crucial new data is from a Bible owned by Mrs. Austina Brodnax, and it is a major discovery. The Bible and related matters are discussed in *Technical Topics*, below.

4. Wilma Powell dropped her own bomb with her report of the marriage of James Brechin/Sarah Poindexter and birthdates of their kids: married—1707; Anna—1708; Jane—1711; James—1714; William—1719. Great! Solidly confirms the death of Thomas Poindexter before 1707, and lays to rest the notion that the troublesome Julius Caesar Poindexter was born (1719) to this Sarah Poindexter. Again, unhappily, the source archive is in the records or deductions of a late Mr. Hunsaker of Joplin, MO. We hope Wilma may be able to retrieve the archive for examination and making of copies.

5. Madeline Stewart sent a published excerpts with quite a number of unknown (to

EPARC) details on property affairs of George-1 Poindexter, Otho Thorpe, and their associates. These significantly flesh out our picture of George-1 and his doings, and will be included in our updated historical treatises. Among the interesting facts was the arrest and litigation against George-1 by a builder who disputed terms of his agreement to build a new church for Bruton Parish.

6. Nan Overton West is still working on the Clough and Overton lines; we wish her well. The mystery of our oft-cited but unverified Mary Overton, ascribed as wife of George-2, continues without glimmer of hope at this time.

7. Estie Lawrence cast doubts on some of the interpretations of the Chief Donahoo legend in the Thomas Poindexter–Pledge–Wentworth group. We are presently unable to comment in this area.

8. Doris Gilbert phoned with exciting news of her studies on the background of the “Bond Veale” names in our clan. These names are juxtaposed with “Bondville;” and the whole business sounded fishy. Doris has now uncovered a Normandy nobleman named George de Bonneville, who seems to be tied into our clan by subsequent geographical moves and connections with our ancillary lines in the early 1700s. We look for much of interest as Doris pursues these leads.

Technical Topics

Birthdate of John-1 Poindexter. Our initial delight in the Brodnax Bible citation of John-1’s birth was soon marred by the usual fly in the ointment. Specifically, his birth is inscribed there as 09 Nov 1696. In itself, this is fine. The problem is that the St. Peters Parish register gives the birthdate of his sister Susanna as 06 Feb 1696/7.¹ This is tight no matter which way you look at it, February–to–November or November–to–February; November–to–February is, of course, impossible for a viable pregnancy. An unhappy explanation might be that this is not our John-1, thus not only disappointing us at the loss of a long-sought date, but also introducing an unwelcome new John. So we have been eager to inspect the Bible, take photographs, and study it carefully for ancillary facts and associations which clear up the conflict in birthdates (and we hope, preserve our John-1 relevance).

We now have the next best thing to a photographic copy, viz, a transcription with numerous ancillary facts and characters. We reproduce here the seemingly most pertinent ones.

John Poindexter the Elder b. 9 Nov 1696 d. 22 May 1753
Christian Poindexter, his wife, b. 2 Oct 1702 d. May 1779
Thomas Poindexter (brother of John) b. 5 Jul 1705 d. 8 May 1796
John Poindexter b. 29 Aug 1728
Sarah (his wife) b. 15 Apr 1738
Their daughter Elizabeth was born May 17, 1757, and marr. Charles Slaughter 3 Feb 1780
and on 3 Feb 1780 had a dtr. born unto them who died the next day. Other children are:
Ann Poindexter Slaughter b. 27 Mar 1784
Polly Smith Slaughter b. 2 Jan 1786 d. 16 May

Robert Harrison Slaughter b. 6 Oct 1789

Elizabeth Slaughter b. 22 Jul 1796

[space]

Ann Grisage Poindexter (dtr. of John and Sarah)(sister of Elizabeth) b. 3 Sep 1762, married

Capt. Robert Cable 19 Mar 1783

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Thomas Poindexter married Sarah Crawford

John Poindexter married Sarah White of Louisa County

Elizabeth Poindexter married Charles Slaughter

Ann Poindexter Slaughter married Glaser Davenport in 1801 (Glover?)

There is no doubt that this is our John-1; there are numerous familiar facts and persons, and the whole group fits very well and greatly reinforces our EPARC model.² The problem of the conflict in birthdates remains, and we still consider it critical to get a photographic copy of all pertinent Brodnax Bible pages. It supports our EPARC model, and further discredits brother Thomas's suspicious estimate³ of his older brother's birthdate.

The Calendar in the EPARC Era. Many of you have no doubt noticed peculiar dates in archives from the EPARC era, such as 21 January 1712/13. Apparently, some sort of calendar correction was underway, and the dual dates appear only in January, February, and March of each year. Heretofore, we have ignored the matter, as most of our data need not be more precise than the nearest year. But now we have the situation of John and Susanna, children of Thomas and Sarah Poindexter, as noted in (3), above. It is vital that we have a clear and correct explanation of the calendar, as in this case, a precision of a few months is necessary. We have not been able to lay hands on an explanation. If anyone knows it, and can send some documentation or an exact reference citation, we would surely be most grateful for the saving in time and effort of searching it out.

As to our immediate problem above, we have done a quick scan of many dates in the St. Peters records, and cannot be sure what was going on. There occur several confusing sequences of dual and single year entries, which suggest errors and confusion by the scribes of that era as a possible explanation of our John/Susanna conflict.

1. *The Register and Vestry Book of St. Peters Parish, Virginia, 1684–1766*, edited by C. G. Chamberlayne (Library Board, Richmond, 1937) p. 384.

2. *PDA Newsletter*, Vol. IX, No. 2, 22 (1989).

3. Deposition by Thomas Poindexter in case of *Sneed vs Poindexter*, Louisa County, VA, 5 March 1765, as quoted in John Poindexter Landers, *Poingdestre-Poindexter—A Norman Family* (Robert Downs Poindexter, location unknown, 1975) pp 94-95.

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