

Early-Poindexters-in-America Research Committee

22. SPRING REPORT

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Committee Activities, 2000

1. We have made preliminary progress in the Jersey records, mostly in regard to our Thomas-1 problem, with some items pertinent to Susanna, wife of George-1.
2. Nan Overton West has informed us of the publication of her treatise, *The Overtons: 700 Years*. A copy can be purchased from her. Recall that Mary Overton is a possibility for wife of George-2.
3. Patsy Shrewsbury Griffin has contacted us with numerous questions and items of interest in regard to the Shrewsbury line. Ruel S. married Elizabeth, daughter of Sarah Crawford and Thomas-1 Poindexter.
4. Hart Felder wrote to us on behalf of a cousin who descends from a Poindexter line. He is concerned about whether George-1's wife was Susanna Nicolle or Benskin. See *Technical Topics*, below.

Technical Topics

General Overview of Jersey Records. We have very recently become aware that a substantial portion of the restricted archives in the Jersey greffe had been copied by Mormon (LDS) genealogists before 1990.¹ These records comprise the *Land Registry* (perhaps the most important Jersey archive) and *Wills of Personality*. It is too bad that our awareness was delayed; but happily, our research prospects are now brightened by the knowledge of much greater accessibility of vital records. So we have plunged into our first findings, no longer feeling hopelessly dependent on scarce assistance from overloaded Jersey researchers.

We have examined parish records obtained directly from Channel Islands Family History Society researchers in Jersey, a few select *Land Registry* records from Pat Neale, and some microfilmed records at the LDS Library in Salt Lake City. The LDS *Land Registry* entries are generally in fair-to-good condition: clear, good contrast, complete. Unfortunately, most are in (legal) French, which obstructs confident understanding. The wills are generally poor to awful; they are often badly faded, illegible, fragmentary. As noted in our EPARC Winter Report from the last *Newsletter*, we have no hard copies of LDS records; the analysis here is based on sketchy notes.

We have also re-examined in a new light the records of York County, Virginia, needed to correlate with the info from Jersey for extension of our model.

Origin of Thomas-1 Poindexter: Jersey. Our main thrust *re* Jersey records is to establish the parentage of Thomas-1 Poindexter, about which we have NO direct evidence. A

detailed analysis² based on indirect evidence indicates that Thomas was most likely the son of George-1, as opposed to George-2. But another prospect looms: that Thomas-1 was Thomas-J, son of Jacob, who was brother of George-1, and who remained in Jersey. See Fig. 1.

Thomas-J was born in 1654, and John-J, his elder brother, in 1651.³ This is critically important new information. Our old model for Thomas-1 was most reasonably fit if he were born between 1657 and 1677; it became increasingly implausible for earlier dates, and all but impossible if a bit later. The Jersey info, coupled with enhanced York County info, not only defines the chances of Thomas-J's being our Thomas-1, but also tightens the model for Thomas-1 because of a narrowed birthdate range.

John-J, Jacob, Thomas, Sr. (father of Jacob and George-1), Philip (eldest son of Thomas, Sr.), and Marie (Thomas-J's sister) are mentioned in several recorded property transactions over the period 1662-1675.⁴⁻⁶ Our George-1 is included in two of them. Thomas-J has not been found in these, or yet in any other transactions. A very notable transaction is the gift from George-1 of his residual Jersey property to John-J and Marie in 1675.⁶ Property transfer, especially if in any way related to inheritance, is governed by very strict laws and traditions in Jersey,¹ and persons may not easily be disinherited or given more than their share. It is suggestive that George gave property to John-J, eldest son, destined to receive top priority in Jacob's estate; but gives nothing to Thomas-J, who would be less fortunate. Thus Thomas-J's general absence from the records, and especially from the latter transaction, strongly implies that he was not in Jersey, and maybe not alive. There are records of deaths of four Thomas Poindexters in St. Saviours Parish in the 1660s.⁷ An alternative idea is that he had moved to Virginia, perhaps expecting a substantial gift there.

Thomas-1 Poindexter in Virginia. Thomas-J's birthdate makes him a close contemporary of George-2 and John-1.⁸ It is a plausible date for our Thomas-1. But issues similar to those on Jersey arise in Virginia. The Virginia records⁹⁻¹² are full of transactions involving George-1, George-2, John-1, and Katherine (John-1's wife) over the period

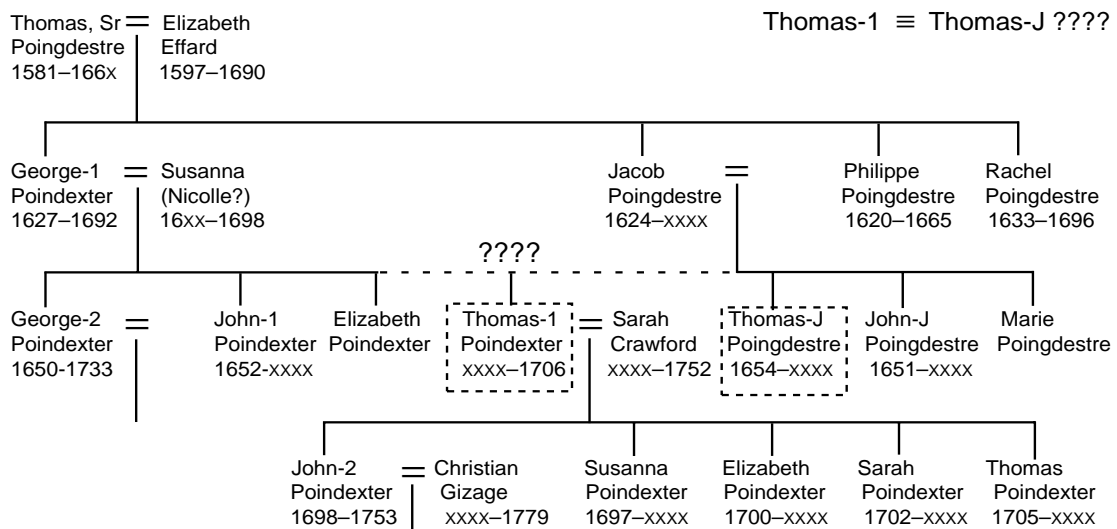


Fig. 1. Genealogical Environs of Thomas-1 Poindexter

1657–1691. In general, since Thomas-1 eventually became a big landowner,¹³ it is highly unlikely that he would not appear somewhere among all these records if he had attained age 21 by 1675. The absence implies that Thomas-1 was not yet 21 years old, and/or that Thomas-J was not in Virginia during this period; and thus Thomas-J was not Thomas-1.

Two items are of special interest. First, Peter Effard, a Jersey kinsman in Virginia, gave a cow to cousin George-2 in 1664,¹⁴ and to cousins John-1 and Elizabeth-1 in 1665.¹⁵ If Thomas-1 were son of George-1, existing in Virginia at the time, and of similar age *re* his purported siblings, he would surely have received a cow along with them. Regarding the possibility of Thomas-J being Thomas-1, it is probable that he would have been a ward of George-1, in view of affection for Jacob's children shown by the gift in Jersey. It seems likely that Thomas-J, Peter's cousin—equivalent to George-2, would have received a cow if in Virginia at the time.

Second, In 1688, George-1 gives substantial lands to son John-1¹⁶ (George-2 would automatically inherit the main home and property.) It is likely that he would have also given lands to Thomas-1, if Thomas had been at least 21 years old. If Thomas-J had been Thomas-1, it might be expected that he would receive something, in view of the generosity of George-1 toward his niece and nephew in Jersey. Thus our Thomas-1 was not yet 21 (in accord with the analysis cited²), and therefore, not Thomas-J.

Thomas-1 Poindexter: Summary and Remarks. York and New Kent county records for the period 1675-1691 contain numerous references to George-1, George-2, and John-1, all known to be over 21 years old. There are no records for any Thomas, though Thomas-1 ultimately became a major landowner, which strongly suggests that there was no Thomas in Virginia who was over age 21 in that period. A similar absence of Thomas-J in Jersey records of the period suggests he was not present there. This study thus indicates that Thomas-1 was not Thomas-J, son of Jacob. The original analysis² is still favored: he was son of George-1.

The results further sharpen the model for Thomas-1 with a narrower preferred birthdate range, 1667-1677. Note, however, that much of the evidence in this study is indirect, circumstantial, or negative. The deductions are inferential, and are a working hypothesis rather than an established model. A more thorough study, or one good piece of contrary direct evidence, could overthrow the whole thing. In the next few months, we will attempt to flesh out or contradict the model with further Jersey evidence.

Susanna, Wife of George-1. *Nicolle* is the most widely-cited family name for George-1's wife Susanna. These citations, however, are no more than an oft-repeated rumor; no original source evidence is known to us. Two other Nicolle–Poindexter marriages are known from Jersey records,^{17,18} indicating links between the two families. A *Susanna Nicolle* occurs in a published genealogy¹⁹ of the Nicolle family, and she is of about the right time period. But that is the hitch: *about*, NOT *exactly*. In fact, she was born in 1635 (not good; she would be 15 at birth of George-1's first child); and she died in 1687, 11 years before the documented death of our Susanna.²⁰ Furthermore, no marriage is indicated. Thus this particular *Susanna Nicolle*, the only one for whom we have evidence, is decisively ruled out as wife of George-1.

1. Marie-Louise Backhurst, *Family History in Jersey* (Channel Islands Family History Society, St. Helier, 1991) pp. 37-40.
2. EPARC Winter Report, *PDA Newsletter*, Vol. XII, No. 2, 10-13 (Apr. 1993).
3. Register of baptisms, St. Saviours Parish, Jersey, p. 209.
4. *Land Registry*, Jersey, Bk. 15, p. 487 (in LDS microfilm 0394722).
5. *Land Registry*, Jersey, Bk. 19, p. 73 (in LDS microfilm 0394726).
6. *Land Registry*, Jersey, Bk. 24, p. 106 (original document).
7. Register of interments, St. Saviours Parish, Jersey, pp. 120,122,130,133.
8. John Poindexter Landers, *Poingdestre-Poindexter, A Norman Family* (R. D. Poindexter, [location unstated], 1975) p. 104. Book hereinafter called "Landers."
9. *The Vestry Book and Register of St. Peters Parish, Virginia, 1684-1786*, transcribed by C. G. Chamberlayne (Library Board, Richmond, 1937): numerous Poindexter entries. Book hereinafter called *St. Peters Parish*.
10. *York County, Virginia, Deeds, Orders, Wills, etc.*, compiled by J. F. Dorman (Washington, 1976): several volumes with numerous entries. Book hereinafter called *York County Deeds*.
11. *Virginia Colonial Abstracts: York County Wills, Deeds, and Orders*, compiled by L. O. Duval (Southern Historical Press, Easley, SC, 1978): numerous entries.
12. *York County, Virginia, Records*, abstracted by B. B. Weisinger (Weisinger, [location unstated], 1987): numerous entries.
13. *The Quit Rents of Virginia*, compiled by A. L. W. Smith (Genealogical Publishing Company, Baltimore, 1977) p. 69.
14. Landers, p. 91.
15. *York County Deeds*, p. 25.
16. *York County Deeds*, Part II (1687-1691) p. 17.
17. J. Bertrand Payne, *An Armorial of Jersey* ([publisher, location unstated], 1865) p. 325.
18. Register of marriages, Jersey, transcribed, parish not indicated.
19. LDS ancestor file TM-ver 416f, 04 Sep 1996.
20. *St. Peters Parish*, p. 383.

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