

Pattee Family Research Newsletter

by David Goudsward

#### PETER & RICHARD PATTEE IN VIRGINIA Summary of Research

In November of 1677, Peter Pattee took the Oath of Allegiance in Haverhill, from which point his life can be traced with comparative ease. Of his life prior to 1677, only two pieces of documentable evidence have surfaced; a record of Peter as a Salem, MA resident being sent to Maine at the end of the King Philip's War in June 1677 and a court case from March of 1681 at the Ipswich Quarterly Court: Peeter Pate, presented for absence from his wife, told what means he had used to get her to come and live with him. Court ordered him to make arrangements with some master of a vessel that goes to Virginia to bring her and report to the court under the master's hand what been done. He was to pay costs to Andrew Greely and (\_\_\_\_) Aires. James Pecker, sr of Boston, sometimes an inhabitant of Haverhill, certified, on Jan. 17, 1680, that upon request of Peter Patta of Haverhill in 1679 he took letters which Patta had written to be delivered to his wife, if alive, at Varganah. The letters were not sealed and he asked said Pecker to read and direct them to the places where she might be. Patta earnestly desired her to come to him in New England, said he would pay her passage and gave her other encouragement. Pecker delivered the letters to men who would be careful of them, but he never heard anything from them, although he had inquired of men who came from the same town as to which the letters were directed. "Peter Patee having lived neare three years in this country, & been in service in the warr, & somewhat wounded, & living without offence in the Towne of Haverhill for some space of Time, as I am Informed, I doe allowe him to dwell in the Country. Dated 9th of April 1678. Samuel Symonds, Dep. Govern" George Browne deposed, on Mar. 27, 1681, that when the Deputy Governor gave an order to Pate to remain in the country deponent told the court that he had left his wife in Virgini and that he was a wounded man. Ensign Pecker engaged to send the letters to Virginia, etc. Nathaniel Ayer deposed that he heard Peter Patye say a year and a half or two years ago that he had left a wife and child in Verginia about two years before. Sworn, 26:1:1681 before Nathaniel Saltonstall. Samuell Shepard of Haverhill certified, Mar. 29, 1681, that he wrote the letters for Peter Pateye. Thus, we learn that Peter had a wife and child at the time he came to New England. The November 1677 date for a Haverhill arrival is supplemented by Samuel Symond's 1678 statement concerning Pattee's having lived in the country for near three years, suggesting that Peter arrived in New England circa 1675. This earlier date helps explain Peter's listing as a Salem (MA) resident in June 1677. Salem also becomes a prime suspect as Peter's port of arrival.

Richard Pattee is confirmed as Peter's son in various land deeds, and is treated as the eldest son in such matters as executor of Peter's will, and taking over the family business (the ferry). Since the birth of all of Peter's children except Richard are recorded in Haverhill records, it is safe to assume that Richard is probably the child from Virginia. Richard's date of arrival in Haverhill is not known, but can be narrowed down some. Samuel Pattee, Peter's oldest surviving son prior to Richard's arrival, is still active in the role of eldest son as late as 1709 when he is reimbursed by Haverhill for ferry operation expenses. Richard's wife is mentioned in Haverhill First Parish church records as of 1715, suggesting a 1709 to 1715 arrival date.

Armed with these two possible arrival dates (Peter arriving in 1675 and Richard 1709-1715), a new look was taken at the southern records. Part of the problem has always been fire damage inflicted to Richmond by the Confederate Army during the Civil War. This has limited the number of records available, and most of the early extant records of Virginia are in print. As every researcher back to W.T. Eustis in 1898 can attest, there is no record of Peter or Richard in Virginia. This time, the search was expanded to include the surrounding states of West Virginia, Delaware and Maryland. Rather than search for Peter and Richard specific, all mentions of the name Pattee prior to 1776 were noted and plotted on a map to show where to concentrate attention.

The results are inconclusive, with the name appearing the entire length of the Chesapeake Bay

coast, almost continuously appearing from Delaware and Maryland to the North Carolina coast. However, removing the listings that occur after the 1715 date, the list narrows considerably with the name appearing in the following locales:

Virginia

Nancimond1664

Lancaster1665

Richmond1694/95

Middlesex1684 & 1687

Delaware

Sussex1676/77 & 1679

Maryland

Baltimore1667/78, 1703, 1705, & 1706

Worcester Co 1687 & 1709

If we arbitrarily remove the Virginia counties on the assumption that they have been checked by various researchers, we can also remove Baltimore and Sussex by virtue of distance from Virginia borders. Worcester County, Maryland is left, and initial research indicates that a closer look is merited. Worcester County is next to and formerly part of Somerset County, Maryland, which along with Wicomico County are known collectively as "Old Somerset". Old Somerset is the Maryland portion of the peninsula that creates the eastern shore of Chesapeake Bay and borders on Accomack County, Virginia. The actual border between Virginia and Maryland in this area was disputed from the original grant to Lord Baltimore until it was finally settled in 1877. The period between 1660 and 1689 found the border contested quite vehemently, with court battles and armed excursions. What makes this of interest is not only the date of these border skirmishes, but also that Virginia's claimed territory went 30 miles into Maryland, virtually all of Old Somerset. A final note of intrigue is that the 1687 reference of a Pattee in Worcester County is a Richard Patty, owner of 200 acres known as Patty's Folly.

Research will now concentrate on Worcester County, Maryland. It is possible that Peter, believing himself to live in Virginia, left for New England prior to the border determination that would show he was actually in Maryland.

It is too early to determine if this will prove to be the key to unlock the mystery of Peter and Richard in Virginia,  
but it seems to be a tantalizing lead.