

A Status Report from Gayle Hix

From the Taylor Times Vol 9 # 4, Autumn 2004:

The Taylor Research Team sends a special thanks to all those volunteers who have helped us collect the thousands of pages of land and probate records and arrange them in some sixty binders. They have collected copies from scholarly lineage journals and family history books. They have drawn large Taylor pedigrees on poster paper. They have copied statewide indexes to land grants and wills, and the list goes on. Six volunteers have been busy since September arranging these records for data entry and entering data into the computer. More about this later.

Next a short history lesson comparing the 1978 research study to the present research study. In 1978 the area to be searched was defined as a 90-mile radius circle centered at the mouth of the Roanoke River. This included Norfolk county in Virginia and six counties in North Carolina. The area being searched by the present study is best described as a blob reaching from Baltimore, Maryland, through Norfolk, Virginia, to Raleigh, North Carolina. This study picks up three counties in Maryland, sixteen counties in Virginia, and sixteen counties in North Carolina.

Data from the large area search made in 1978 were to have been entered directly to family group sheets with the group sheets being used as notepaper. A single event was to be recorded on the front of each group sheet. The source of each event was to be recorded in detail. After all the data had been entered, the group sheets were to be manually sorted into piles by county, then by first name. These piles of group sheets were then to be evaluated, and decisions made. There was no reference in the 1978 final report to group sheets, nor were there any family group sheets attached to the final report.

The present research study could be referred to as a “massive” area search. The biggest question was how to display the data for evaluation. Could the data still be put on group sheets, then evaluated? Remember that researchers didn’t have computers in 1978 and they didn’t have genealogy software like PAF 5.2 and Legacy Family Tree.

Present technology allows me to set up a database on my computer, input all the data, sort the data, display the data, evaluate the data, and enter my conclusions. Then I could transfer this information directly into my PAF. It sounds simple. But notice the word “I.” There is no way I could do all this by myself. There are others in the Taylor family who could set up a database, but they would still have the same problems of data entry and evaluation.

The Taylor Research Team has gone back to the books of abstracted deeds and wills to include the immediate neighbors of Joseph Taylor on Conetoe Creek. This was done to confirm a suspicion that William Crisp, William Barden, and John Holland were squatters on their land prior to 1760. They were! We suspect that Joseph Taylor was also occupying his plantation prior to filing on it in 1756.

We are submitting this report primarily to explain what we have done during the last three months, as well as what we plan to accomplish during the next three months. Our goal simply stated - we are looking for a Joseph Taylor! We are looking in the states of Maryland, Virginia, and North Carolina.

We are looking for land grants, purchases, and sales by a Joseph Taylor. We are looking for land adjoining a Joseph Taylor. We are looking for land transactions witnessed by a Joseph Taylor. We are looking for Joseph Taylor will. We are looking for a Joseph Taylor in the wills of others. We are looking for wills witnessed by a Joseph Taylor. We are looking for administrations of the estates of a Joseph Taylor where there was no will.

There are five Joseph Taylor wills and six Joseph Taylor administrations in the index to Virginia wills and administrations. Three Joseph Taylor wills are listed in Accomack County (1745, 1751, 1776), one in Essex County (1769), and one in Northumberland County (1782). The six administrations were in Lancaster County (1716, 1737), Brunswick County (1794), Northumberland County (1783), Princess Anne County (1700), and Westmoreland County (1722).

There are seven Joseph Taylor wills in the index to North Carolina wills. Joseph Taylor wills are listed as follows: two in Carteret County (1815, 1860), one in Gates County (1827), one in Granville County (1815), one in Halifax County (1784), one in Northampton County (1788), and one in Rutherford County (1878).

At our October 29th meeting, we picked the first seven North Carolina counties to be processed using the information collected on the Taylors and their neighbors. We are being especially mindful of when these families came to the subject county and when they left. We are using the eight new maps of the Edgecombe/Martin as recently prepared by Bill Thorndale to determine if these people really left the area, or if the county lines were changed during this period of time. Most of the time it was the county line that moved.

You will quickly see that we have concentrated on counties with one or more Joseph Taylors in them. It seems like such a basic rule when you stop to think about it. As you know, for more than two years we have been making copies of records for counties in southern Maryland, southeast Virginia, and northeast North Carolina. Now it is time to put it all together.

The seven North Carolina counties selected to be processed first include: Beaufort, Chowan, Edgecombe, Halifax, Martin, Pitt, and Tyrrell. We are using a checklist of names to make sure that we include the same neighbors in each county. We are using abstracts of land records and probate records to save the time required to search these records on microfilm. Records used in making decisions will be verified by reading the original records on microfilm.

All the family information is being put onto the computer and is being fully documented. If assumptions are made, they are included with the documentation. Initially we are top-loading the headrights, Crown grants, Granville grants, and tax list information for each county.

The data for several of the first seven North Carolina counties has been processed and some evaluation has been completed. The remaining data for the first seven North Carolina counties will be processed and evaluated during the next three months. Data for the Maryland and Virginia counties will be processed concurrently with the matching North Carolina county.

The family information will be analyzed for each county and a special "Joseph Report" will be written for each Joseph Taylor found on a family group sheet printed from PAF. The first "Joseph Report" will highlight the Joseph Taylor found in the family of a Robert Taylor whose will in Edgecombe county was proved by the September 1758 court. (see copy of report attached)

The second "Joseph Report" will highlight the Joseph Taylor found in the family of an Abraham Taylor whose will in Johnston county was dated April 2, 1751 and proved in the December court of that year.

At our November 26th meeting, we picked the next six North Carolina counties to be processed using the information collected. We will be especially mindful of when these families came to the subject county and when they left. We will use the eight new maps of the Edgecombe/Martin area to determine if families really left the area, or if the county lines were changed during this period of time. That is exactly what happened in the two reports referred to above.

The six North Carolina counties selected to be processed next include: Bertie, Craven, Dobbs, Granville, Nash, and Northampton. As with the other counties we are using a checklist of names to make sure that we include the same neighbors in each county. As with the other counties we are using abstracts of land records and probate records to save the time required to search these records on microfilm. Records of these counties used in making decisions will be verified by reading the original records on microfilm.

Hopefully the data for these other six North Carolina counties can be processed and evaluated during the first three months of 2005. We will continue to create and update "Joseph Reports." A report will be closed as soon as the evidence indicates that this Joseph Taylor is no longer in the race. You will note that the first report has already been closed. The Taylor DNA Study will provide information for these updates.

At this time we have hundreds of Taylor families entered into PAF. One of the more interesting families in our PAF being that of Etheldred Taylor. His descendants did not seem to intermarry with other Taylor lines, even though there seemed to always be one of them living next door or down the street. Samuel Taylor, one of Etheldred's descendants, was into Edgecombe county very early and raised a large family in the Flat Swamp area. We have not found a Joseph Taylor in the entire family of Etheldred Taylor and his descendants.

Likewise we have not found a Joseph Taylor in the family of Richard Taylor of the Southern Branch of Elizabeth River in Norfolk county, Virginia, nor his descendants. We have all of the Elizabeth River Taylor families entered into PAF. There are lots of Joseph Taylors in the Maryland Taylor families. We also have lots of these Maryland Taylor families entered into PAF.

Joseph Report #1

Date created: December 20, 2004

Last update: December 22, 2004

Date closed: December 22, 2004

This brief report highlights the Joseph Taylor named as son in the will of a Robert Taylor whose will was proved by the September court 1758 in Edgecombe county, North Carolina.

This Robert Taylor has been well documented by others. Robert married Ann, daughter of William Hudson, and named the following children in his will: sons Robert, Edward, Joseph, William, Henry, Richard, Thomas, Billington, Hudson, and Nimrod; and daughters Judith, Rachel, and Ann. (see family group sheet attached)

William Hudson, Sr. and William Hudson, Jr. were both witnesses to the will of Robert Taylor. William Hudson, Sr. died in 1759 in Northampton county, North Carolina leaving a will in which he named his daughter Ann Taylor.

As shown on Thorndale Map 4 of 8, Halifax county was formed from Edgecombe county in 1759. The land records of Halifax county have many entries for this Joseph Taylor and his brothers.

The will of this Joseph Taylor was dated 6 Feb 1784 and proved by the May court in Halifax country, North Carolina in 1784. This will names children: Siros, Mary, John, Sarah, and Benjamin. This will refers to land he had of Hudson Taylor and names his uncle, Tom Hudson, as one of the executors. This clearly identifies this Joseph Taylor with the Hudson family and as a son of Robert and Ann (Hudson) Taylor. (see family group sheet attached)

Mary, wife of Joseph Taylor, also left a will dated 13 Feb 1792 and proved by the Feb court. She named children: Mary, John, Sarah, and Benjamin.

Conclusion: Since the subject Joseph Taylor died in 1784, he can no longer be considered as one of the two Joseph Taylors known to be living on Conetoe Creek in 1800.

Joseph Report #2

Date created: December 22, 2004

Last update: December 24, 2004

Date closed:

This report highlights the Joseph Taylor named as son in the will of the Abraham Taylor whose will was proved by the December court 1751 in Johnston county, North Carolina.

The earliest Taylor landowners in Craven county, North Carolina were: a George Taylor (1737), an Abraham Taylor (1738), a Robert Taylor (1739), and a Joseph Taylor (1741). Abraham Taylor (1748), Joseph Taylor (1748), and Robert Taylor (1749) also received early Crown grants in Johnston county, North Carolina. What may seem to be a move of these Taylors from Craven county to Johnston county is explained by Thorndale Map 3 of 8. The new county of Johnston was created in 1746 from the southwest corner of Craven county.

An early Craven county land deed refers to this Abraham Taylor as “of Baltimore county, Maryland.” The records of Baltimore county give birthdates for seven children of Abraham and Dinah (White) Taylor. The names and birth years of these children are: Robert (1709), Ann (1712), Jacob (1714), Rachel (1717), Joseph (1720), Abraham (1723), and Isaac (1725).

The published index to North Carolina wills shows that Abraham Taylor’s will was recorded in Craven county deed book 5, page 262, proved by the December 1751 court in Johnston county, and that the original will is filed with secretary of state loose wills in the State Archives.

The Joseph Taylor of this report was named as executor of his father’s will, and Joseph’s daughter, Dinah, was also named in the will. The other grandchild named in the will was Abraham, son of Abraham. This raises the interesting question as to why he singled out these two grandchildren to be named in his will. Dinah would have been ten years old or less, and Abraham was probably about seven years old. Were they singled out because they had health problems or were they just favorites of their grandfather?

Conclusion: Since the year of his birth fits what we are looking for, and we have not found his death date, we must consider this Joseph Taylor still in the running. There is much information on this individual yet to be discovered and explained