

PORTER FAMILY - UNFINISHED WORK

Posted 27 July 2006 swiftwater@lenapedelawarehistory.net who quotes research of J. T. Lamkin and others to add or corroborate conflicting documentation of this family. Credit to John M and John A Porter.

John Porter is the earliest named ancestor that we have proven in the Porter Family line of our interest. He was born 1695 - 1720. It has been suggested that John was born in Ulster County, Ireland and that he emigrated from there, first to Pennsylvania, and then to Prince Edward County, Virginia. However, no proof of that has been found yet. There have been attempts to link John Porter to Thomas Josiah Porter, George Porter Jr., George Porter Sr, and Endymion Porter of England, but that link has not been proven. It is mentioned to alert researchers to look for possible English ancestors of John Porter, but not to add it to these ancestries as such. In fairness to the author, Olive Swann Porter, who provides the interesting story of the Porters back to the 1400's in Warwickshire in her article "A Genealogical Record of the Poerter Family of England and America" she might be right. The basic problem is that there are no citations of documentation accompanying it. The principal impediment is the proving that Thomas Porter was John Porter's father. Additionally, undocumented data in the Work Family Tree gives John Porter's father as Samuel Porter born 1673-1696 in Norfolk County, Virginia and his mother as Mary Sidney. She was born between 1695-1711. Those who believe that John Porter married in Virginia point to the fact that there was a large Anthony Family in Henrico County, Virginia, some of who moved to Prince Edward County about the time of its formation. The first evidence we find of John Porter is the 1755 tithable list for the newly-formed Prince Edward County, Virginia area. In addition to John Porter, the listing includes Hugh Porter and Andrew Porter, but there is no proof of a direct relationship among them. None of the three show a prior presence in the area by being in the 1750 Amelia County tax records. (Amelia County was the parent county of Prince Edward County). In Prince Edward County, John Porter lived along Vaughan Creek and Spring Creek, (per Capt. John N Porter, "History of our Family Connection." p. 1, 1872, unpublished). John Porter first married Mary "Polly" Anthony about 1740. She was born 1715-1730. Her father was said to be William Anthony and her mother's first name was Alice. Mary Anthony died before Oct 1773 in Prince Edward County, Virginia possibly in childbirth of her daughter Rachel Porter. Unfortunately, that is about all we know of the Anthony Family. John Porter married second to Ann Dixon 13 Oct 1773 in Prince Edward County or Bedford County, Virginia. She was born 1724 or 1730. Ann had married first to John Carson, who died in 1762 and second to Walter Eakin/Akin who died about 1771. John Porter died in Prince Edward County in Virginia 1781. It appears that John Porter was active in community affairs. The Porter History, (annotation, p.2) states: John Porter was a close associate of Rev. Richard Sankey who was alleged to have been born in Ulster County, Ireland. served on the third Prince Edward County, Virginia property processing committee for boundry disputes in 1767; he signed with three sons Nathaniel Porter, William Porter and Joseph Porter, Jr along with High and Samuel Porter, the Petition of Sundry Inhabitants for religious freedom on 24 Sept 1776; he may have fought in the Revolutionary war as part of the militia. One researcher says that a John Porter served at Yorktown, but that

is unsupported and unlikely because of his age and his death about 1781. No records of him in the Revolution or militia have yet been found. The Petition which John did sign is dated 11 Oct 1776:

To the Honourable the President and House Delagates of the Commonwealth of Virginia, to meet at Williamsburg the first Tuesday in Oct 1776. The Petition of Sundury of the Inhabitants of Prince Edward County, respectfully sheweth, that we heartily approve, and chearfully submit ourselves to the form of Government adopted at your last session, hoping that our united American States will long continue Free and Independent. The last Article of the Bill of Rights we also esteem as the rising Sun of religious Liberty, to relieve us from a long night of ecclesiastic bondage, and we do most earnestly request and expect that you would go on to complete what is so nobly begun, and will raise religious as well as civil liberty to the zenith of its glory, and make Virginia an Asylum for free enquiry, knowledge and virtue of every denomination, justice to ourselves and posterity, as well as regard to the honour of the common wealth, make it our indispensible duty, in particular to intreat, that without delay, you would pull down all Church Establishments, abolish every Tax upon conscience and private judgement, and leave each individual to rise or sink according to his merit, and the general laws of the land. The whole amounts of what we desire is, that our honourable legislature would blot out every vestige of British Tyranny and Bondage, and define accurately between civil and ecclesiastic authority; then leave our Lord Jesus Christ the Honor of being the sole lawgiver and Governor in his Church; and every one in the Things of Religion to stand or fall to him; he being in this respect the only rightful Master; and your Petitioners as in duty bound shall ever pray. Sept 24, 1776. Signed Hugh Porter, Joseph Thompson, blacksmith, Joseph Grinter, ...note Francis Grinter, later married into the Porter family and John Thompson was associated with the Porters later in Kentucky....et. al.

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