

Timeline for John Pate of Gloucester County, Virginia Born 1677 – Died 1706

- 1677 John, the first child of Col. Thomas and Elizabeth Pate, born on April 27, Abingdon Parish Register, Gloucester County, Virginia
- 1703 His father, Col. Thomas Pate died, about age 53.
- 1704 John owned 1100 acres on the Gloucester Rent Roll, Petsworth Parish, and 1000 acres on the King and Queen County Rent Roll. This was the Pate Plantation that his father Thomas inherited from his uncle John. As oldest son, John apparently inherited the plantation by primogeniture.
- 1705 The vestry of Petsworth Parish, Gloucester County, selected John Pate as a vestryman to replace a deceased member on October 3. John must have been an impressive young man, since he was only 28 years old. This was a position of honor and responsibility and said to be "represented by gentlemen still living upon their ancestral estates".
- 1706 The Council of State appointed John Pate as a Justice of the Peace for Gloucester County, March 28, along with Thomas Read and Phillip Smith.
- 1706 John Pate is shown as a vestryman in the vestry book at its next meeting on April 23. Then at the next meeting recorded, John Pate was reported as deceased.
- 1706 Tragically, he was only 29 years old, dying between April 23 and October 9.
- 1715 "Aug 16: John Wills: King and Queen County: 130 acres together with a little island being included adjoining to a tract of land devised to said Wills by John Pate, in his last will. Bounded by the main creek of Poropotank." Land Patents # 10 1710-1719 pg 243 on reel 10: Library of Virginia Archives Section.
- c. 1728 John's daughter, Sarah c. 1705-1783, married Col. Wilson Cary c. 1701-1772, scion of a prominent and wealthy family. Their second daughter, Mary, was thought to be George Washington's "first sweetheart".
- c. 1744 On August 30, "Records of Colonial Gloucester County, Virginia" refers to "1141 acs. granted to Wingfield Webb & Richard Pate, Gentlemen, 1650, and by divers conveyances assigned to Wilson Cary".

Notes

John Pate was the oldest son of Col. Thomas Pate who died in Yorktown in 1703. Relatively little seems to be known about his life. To the best of my knowledge, this timeline represents the most complete and comprehensive study on John Pate.

There is a plausible explanation why John Pate received recognition at such an early age. He was fourth generation of a family that had been prominent in Virginia, both in Gloucester County and colonial government, and had inherited a large family estate. Many wealthy Virginia planters sent their sons back to England for education, and I believe the scholarly books in the Cary family's Ceelys Library, previously owned by John Pate, indicate that he had been well-educated.

Published references to John Pate

"This John Pate is possibly the father of Mrs. Wilson Cary. I have in my library several volumes bearing the autograph "John Pate, 1706," on the title page above that of Colonel Wilson Cary (possibly his son-in-law), and to increase the probabilities, I would add, that I have also a volume showing in like manner the signature of Colonel Thomas Milner, and beneath it that of his son-in-law, Colonel Miles Cary. Now Colonel Wilson Cary in his will devises to his son lands lying on both sides of Poropotank, in the counties of Gloucester and King and Queen. These Gloucester lands, it is true, may have been subsequent purchases, and thus my theory that Colonel Cary acquired them through marriage might be untenable, still there is nothing to show that Miles Cary may not have been induced to invest in these very lands by the fact of his elder brother already having acquired property in Gloucester by marriage. However this may be, there certainly had been intermarriages between the Cary, Pate and Wills families."

"Some Prominent Virginia Families", by Louise Pecquet du Bellet, 1907.

"Among the remnants of the Ceelys library are several books (e.g., Dryden's Miscellany Poems, iii, 1693, and v, 1703; Echard's Ecclesiastical History, 1702) bearing on the title- page the signature of "John Pate," the last with the date 1706 appended. Moreover, Colonel Wilson Cary by will disposed of lands lying on Poropotank Creek in Gloucester and King and Queen, the acquisition of which was not readily explainable except on the assumption of inheritance. It appears also from casual mention in the York records that Miles Cary was administrator of the estate of Edward Pate and that-a Miles Cary (probably Miles, Jr., of Potash Creek) was executor of John Pate under a will, now lost with the Gloucester records; while John Pate appears on the Virginia Quit Rent Rolls of 1704 as the owner of lands on Poropotank in Gloucester and King and Queen."

"The Virginia Carys", by Fairfax Harrison, 1919

"In 1715, one John Wills patents "130 acres in Gloucester, bounded by the main creek of Poropotank, adjoining a tract, devised to said Wills by Mr. John Pate in his last will." This John Pate is possibly the father of Mrs. Wilson Cary. I have in my library several volumes bearing

the autograph "John Pate, 1706," on the title page above that of Colonel Wilson Cary (possibly his son-in-law), and to increase the probabilities, I would add that I have also a volume showing in like manner the signature of Colonel Thomas Milner, and beneath it that of his son-in-law, Colonel Miles Cary. Now Colonel Wilson Cary in his will devises to his son lands lying on both sides of Poropotank, in the counties of Gloucester and King and Queen. These Gloucester lands it is true, may have been subsequent purchases, and thus my theory that Colonel Cary acquired them through marriage might be untenable, still there is nothing to show that Miles Cary may not have been induced to invest in these very lands by the fact of his elder brother already having acquired property in Gloucester by marriage. However this may be, there certainly had been intermarriages between the Cary, Pate and Wills families."

"The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography", July 1901

Some open questions

1. What was the name of John's wife, and what is known about her?
2. What are the names of John's children? Only one child is known, and that is Sarah Pate who married Col. Wilson Cary, whose father Miles Cary was a member of the Council of State. I assume that he had no sons since his 2100-acre plantation did not go to a Pate son after his death.
3. Where is a copy of his will? There are several references to a will (see above). It is interesting that he left a will at all, since he was only 29 years old when he died.
4. What connections did he have to John Wills, or connections of the Pate family to the Wills family? This family used "Pate" as a given name for several generations.

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