

COL. THOMAS SPEKE
OF WESTMORELAND COUNTY, VIRGINIA AND
THOMAS SPEAKE
OF ST. MARYS COUNTY, MARYLAND

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Introduction

This paper analyzes whether Col. Speke's son Thomas was the same person as Thomas Speake of St. Marys County, Maryland, who died in 1681 and is the immigrant ancestor of most of the Speak/e/s in the United States today. In his will, Col. Thomas Speke mentioned a son Thomas.¹ For many years, it was assumed and generally accepted that Thomas Speake of St. Marys was that son. A. Howard Speake, the legendary researcher and historian of Speak/e/s families in America, originally theorized that they were father and son.² However, he later found a deed which, when compared to Col. Speke's will, inferred that the son Thomas died without issue.³ My research and my review of the research of others agree with his later conclusion. Thomas of St. Marys was not Col. Speke's son, and they may not have been related in any way.

This paper will also describe the lives of these two men and the conditions in which they lived. Although there are few surviving records mentioning either man, each of whom died over 300 years ago, much can be learned from these few records.

¹Will of Col. Thomas Speke, Westmoreland County, Virginia, Deeds and Wills Book No. 1, pages 103-105.

²See, for example, letter dated 20 June 1923 from A. Howard Speake to Dr. T. Carlyle Speake.

³Letter dated 16 June 1935 from A. Howard Speake to Mrs. Tally Jolly Jones.

Birth of Col. Thomas Speke

Col. Thomas Speke was almost certainly born in England. He was probably the son of George Speke and Margaret Tempest of Hazelbury in Wiltshire and the grandson of Hugh Speke and Elizabeth Beke of Hazelbury. That family matches what is known about Col. Speke from the Virginia records.⁴ Col. Thomas and Thomas of Hazelbury were born about the same time. Based on records in Virginia, Col. Thomas had at least one sibling, a brother John, who was a merchant from Bristol and from the City of Bath in the County of Somerset.⁵ Thomas of Hazelbury had a brother John who lived in Bath.⁶ Bristol is a sea port on the River Severn and is about ten miles northwest of Bath. Hazelbury is about 6 miles from Bath.⁷ The families fit and, unless and until I see more evidence, I believe that Col. Thomas is Thomas of Hazelbury.

A. Howard Speake often said that Col. Thomas had a sister because he made a bequest in his will to his youngest sister. A. Howard was apparently right, but for the wrong reasons. He misread the will. Col. Thomas did not mention his sister in his will. The reference in the will is to the next youngest sister of Speke's godson, Thomas Gerard.⁸ However, Thomas of Hazelbury had at least four sisters.⁹

The date of Col. Speke's birth has been the subject of some dispute. Several printed articles as well as a chart prepared by A. Howard Speake list his date of birth as 1603.¹⁰ However, on 4 November 1653, Col. Speke testified about his age

⁴Speak/e/s Family Association Bulletin, September 1995, Volume 17, No. 1, pages 8-9 and December 1995, Volume 17, No. 2, pages 9-10, by John D. Speake.

⁵Westmoreland County Deeds, Patents, Etc. 1665-1677, pages 103-103a.

⁶Speak/e/s Family Association Bulletin, September 1995, Volume 17, No. 1, page 8 and December 1995, Volume 17, No. 2, page 10, by John D. Speake.

⁷Speak/e/s Family Association Bulletin, September 1995, Volume 17, No. 1, page 8 by John D. Speake.

⁸Westmoreland County Deeds and Wills Book 1, pages 103-105.

⁹Speak/e/s Family Association Bulletin, September 1995, Volume 17, No. 1, page 9, by John D. Speake.

¹⁰William & Mary College Quarterly, 1st Series, Volume 4, page 41; Letter dated 20 June 1923 from A. Howard Speake to Dr. T. Carlyle Speake.

in a deposition. He stated under oath that he was about 30 years old,¹¹ meaning that he was born in 1622 or 1623. He was one of the leading citizens of Northumberland County. It is unlikely that a 50 year old man in his position would say that he was 30 years old in a sworn statement. Furthermore, a 1622 or 1623 birth date is more consistent with his adventures than a 1603 date of birth. In addition, most of the men who immigrated to this part of Maryland were between 18 and 28 years old.¹² Col. Thomas immigrated in 1639. These match Thomas of Hazelbury, who was born in 1621.¹³

Col. Speke's Family in England

The Spekes of Hazelbury were well off. The great grandfather of Col. Thomas was Sir George Speke of Heywood in Devon and of Whitelackington in Somerset. He had two wives. The Spekes of Whitelackington descend from his first wife. The direct Whitelackington line ended in a daughter Anne, who married Lord North, who became the Prime Minister of England.¹⁴

Col. Thomas descended from his second wife, Dorothy Gilbert. She was the daughter of Edward Gilbert, a goldsmith of London.¹⁵ She brought into the marriage lands in Sherfield in Hampshire and the means to buy Hazelbury. Their only son was Hugh Speke I of Sherfield and later of Hazelbury. Hugh married Elizabeth Beke. Hugh died in 1625, when Thomas was about 3.¹⁶ George Speke was the oldest son of Hugh and Elizabeth. He survived his son Thomas by about a year. He mentioned Thomas in his will, but his will had been written 5 years earlier, so it is not a surprise that it mentions Thomas. The will implies that he had

¹¹Northumberland County, Virginia Record Book 1652-1658, page 37.

¹² Lois Green Carr and Lorena S. Walsh, "The Planter's Wife: The Experience of White Women in Seventeenth Century America", published in In Search of Early America, published by William & Mary Quarterly, page 185, originally published in William & Mary Quarterly, 3rd series, October 1977, pages 542-571.

¹³Speak/e/s Family Association Bulletin, September 1995, Volume 17, No. 1, pages 8-9, by John D. Speake.

¹⁴Ibid, page 9.

¹⁵Ibid., page 8.

¹⁶Ibid., page 9.

already given Thomas his inheritance,¹⁷ probably the sums to set up a life in Virginia as a gentleman.

There were strong Catholic sympathies in the Spekes of Hazelbury. For example, his grandparents were Catholics. In addition, his mother, Margaret Tempest, came from a family with very strong Catholic traditions. However, the Spekes also had strong Royalist traditions.¹⁸ Perhaps this dual religious heritage explains why Col. Thomas first went to Maryland and then was able to hold public office in Virginia.

Earliest Records of Col. Speke in America

Col. Speke, described as “Mr. Thomas Speak”, immigrated to Maryland in 1639.¹⁹ An Edward Parker received a patent in Maryland for 100 acres in 1652/53 for transporting Thomas Speke “about thirteen years since.”²⁰ We do not know why Parker waited thirteen years to claim a patent for transporting Thomas.

That he was referred to as “Mr.” Thomas Speak in the Maryland patent records tends to indicate that he was considered a gentleman by the time the patent was issued.

In 1642, Thomas was one of 13 soldiers who were paid by the Colony of Maryland for engaging in a military expedition to Kent Island in the Potomac River against Indians.²¹ One of the other members of this expedition was William Hardidge, who was born in 1618. Hardidge played an active role in the disturbances in Maryland of Richard Ingle in 1645 and was evidently a member of

¹⁷Speak/e/s Family Association Bulletin, December 1995, Volume 17, No. 2, page 9, by John D. Speake.

¹⁸Ibid., pages 10-11.

¹⁹Gust Skordas, The Early Settlers of Maryland (1968), page 433, citing Maryland Patents Liber AB&H, Folio 237.

²⁰Undated letter from A. Howard Speake, probably to John C. Speaks, Sr.; May 1954 letter from T. Carlyle Speake to Harry Speake Cobey, based on information from A. Howard Speake.

²¹Maryland Archives III, pages 119-122; Letter dated 9 March 1924 from A. Howard Speake to M. M. Speake.

the Puritan Party.²² Hardidge later became a neighbor of Col. Speke in Virginia. They served on the Westmoreland County Commission together. He was also from Bristol in England, one of the homes of Col. Speke's brother John.²³ His son William was the fifth and last husband of Col. Speke's widow, Frances Gerard.

Col. Speke settled in Virginia in what is now Westmoreland County. It was directly across the Potomac River from the part of Maryland that was settled at that time. It can reasonably be assumed that these references to Thomas Speake in Maryland were to Col. Speke. Both the 1642 military expedition and a 1639 transportation to the colonies are more consistent with a man born in 1622 or 1623 than a man born in 1603.

Col. Thomas Speke settled in Virginia in 1649 or earlier. A. Howard Speake said he came in 1645,²⁴ the same time that the Ingle Rebellion in Maryland caused his fellow soldier and future neighbor, William Hardidge, to move to Virginia. There were only 600 settlers in the entire colony of Maryland when Ingles Rebellion began in 16____. There were only 200 settlers in Maryland in _____ when the Rebellion ended. [cite] The first records of Col. Speke in Virginia are two patents he received in Northumberland County dated 10 January 1649/1650 for a total of 1,000 acres.²⁵ In order to obtain a patent by January 1650, Thomas would have had to pay the transportation costs of twenty people, have located land on which he wanted to settle and on which no one was yet living, have the land surveyed, and then take his patent application to Jamestown, the capital of Virginia at the time. That would take several months and frequently took several years. Therefore, it is consistent with coming to Virginia from Maryland in about 1645.

²²Virginia Magazine of History & Biography, Volume 15, page 430; William & Mary College Quarterly, 2nd Series, Volume 2, page 98.

²³Virginia Magazine of History & Biography, Volume 15, page 429; Westmoreland County Deeds, Patents, Etc. 1665-1677, pages 83-83a.

²⁴Letter dated 9 March 1924 from A. Howard Speake to M. M. Speake.

²⁵Nell Marion Nugent, Cavaliers and Pioneers (1934), Volume I, pages 189-190, citing Virginia Patent Book 2, pages 206-207. Whenever two dates are given like that, it is referring to what is known as Old Style dates and New Style dates. Prior to 1650, the calendar ended at the end of February (or March). Therefore, an event in what we would consider to be January 1650 would be listed in the official records as January 1649.

Northumberland County was created in October 1648,²⁶ so it was very new when Thomas obtained his patents. New counties were created as people began to settle in areas distant from existing county courthouses. Northumberland was located in an area that had been called Chickocoan, between the Rappahannock and Potomac Rivers. Chickacoan was considered a haven for Protestants opposed to the government of Lord Baltimore in Maryland.²⁷

Col. Speke's Land Holdings in Virginia

The two patents Col. Speke received in 1650 were for 400 and 600 acres. The first patent listed is the 400 acre tract which became known as the Currioman or Curriwoman tract.²⁸ It is so named because it is located on the Currioman Bay. Speke's neighbors were Walter Broadhurst and John Hallowes. He became entitled to this patent by paying for the transportation of 8 persons, including a Thomas Speke, to the Colony. This is most likely a reference to himself, even though Edward Parker may have also received land for transporting Thomas. Of course, it could also be for transporting his son Thomas. However, very few immigrants in the first half of the seventeenth century brought their families with them. [cite] The Currioman patent was renewed and expanded to 900 acres on 16 September 1651 for paying for the transportation of ten additional persons.²⁹

Col. Speke owned Currioman for the rest of his life. His will divided the tract between his son Thomas and his brother John. Thomas received the 700 acres closest to Currioman Bay and John was to receive the 200 acres to the rear if he settled in Virginia.³⁰ As we shall see, the manner in which this property was transferred is the primary proof that Col. Speke was not the father of Thomas Speake of St. Marys.

The second patent issued to Col. Speke on 10 January 1649/1650 was for 600

²⁶Hening's Statutes at Large, Volume I, pages 352-353.

²⁷William & Mary College Quarterly, 1st Series, Volume 17, pages 53 and 58

²⁸Nugent, Cavaliers and Pioneers, Volume I, page 189, citing Patent Book 2, page 206.

²⁹Nugent, Cavaliers and Pioneers, Volume I, page 219, citing Patent Book 2, page 337.

³⁰Westmoreland County Deeds and Wills Book 1, pages 103-105.

acres and became known as the Nominy Plantation.³¹ It received its name from its location on the Nominy Bay and the Nominy River. It was located at the mouth of the Nominy River, to the northwest of the River. The land extended along the Bay to Poor Jack Creek, where it joined a 1,000 acre tract patented by his old friend William Hardidge on 15 September 1651.³² His other neighbors were John Rosier and Lewis Burwell. He became entitled to this patent by paying for the transportation of twelve more persons to the colony.

On 16 September 1651, this patent was also renewed and expanded. He was granted another 400 acres for paying for the transportation of eight more persons. This gave him a total of 1,000 acres at Nominy.³³ The second patent included Cedar Island in Nominy Bay at the mouth of the Nominy River.

Thomas also bought a 100 acre tract of land located in the Nominy area from Richard Hawkins. Hawkins was granted 100 acres in Northumberland County on 30 January 1650. The land was described as on the west side of Nominy and on the south side of the Potomac River.³⁴ Sometime between 30 January 1650 and 5 December 1655, Thomas bought the land, although he did not keep it long. On 15 December 1655, Thomas and his wife Ann assigned to John Redman their interests in the patent which had originally been issued to Rich. Hawkins.³⁵ The land is not identified in the surviving court record, but Richard Hawkins received one only patent in Virginia.

Col. Speke made his home at the Nominy Plantation.³⁶ He left a life estate in Nominy to his second wife and widow, Frances Gerard, in his will.³⁷ It descended from Frances to her only surviving child, Elizabeth Hardidge. Elizabeth's husband,

³¹Nugent, Cavaliers and Pioneers, Volume I, pages 189-190, citing Patent Book 2, page 207.

³²Nugent, Cavaliers and Pioneers, Volume I, pages 251-252, citing Patent Book 2, page 62.

³³Nugent, Cavaliers and Pioneers, Volume I, page 219, citing Patent Book 2, page 337.

³⁴Nugent, Cavaliers and Pioneers, Volume I, page 206, citing Patent Book 2, page 278.

³⁵Westmoreland County Deeds, Wills, Patents, Etc. 1653-1659, page 53.

³⁶Westmoreland County Deeds & Wills Book 3, pages 103-105.

³⁷Ibid.

Col. Henry Ashton, left it in his will in 1731 to his granddaughters, Elizabeth and Ann Aylett, the daughters of Captain William Aylett and Anne Ashton, who was deceased.³⁸ Ashton's will, which was written more than 70 years after Col. Speke's death, specifically mentioned Col. Speke. This is the last official reference to him.

A plantation home on Nominy Plantation was excavated in the early 1970's. The archeologists estimated that the house was built about 1690.³⁹ Frances was married to her fifth husband, Captain William Hardidge, at that time, so the home built by Col. Speke was probably destroyed by fire.

Both Nominy and Currioman Plantations were in Northumberland County when they were first patented. Col. Speke was one of the first settlers in this area. His patents contain the first mentions of Nominy and Currioman Bays in the Virginia patents. As late as November 1647, this area was considered too remote by the General Assembly of Virginia to be safe for settlement.⁴⁰ It did not even merit status as part of a county until 1648.⁴¹ These plantations were in that part of Northumberland County which became Westmoreland County in 1653. Although Westmoreland County was later divided, they are in the part which has remained Westmoreland County.

Two of the most famous Americans were born on nearby plantations. Stratford Hall, which is about six miles north of Currioman, is the birthplace of Robert E. Lee. About three miles north of Stratford Hall is Westmoreland, the birthplace of George Washington, whose great grandfather was the fourth husband of Col. Speke's widow. Immediately across the Potomac River from Nominy are St. Clements Island and Leonardtown, the county seat of St. Marys County, Maryland.

In addition to the 1,900 acres patented by Col. Speke in what is now Westmoreland County, he received a patent of 1,000 acres on 11 September 1653

³⁸Westmoreland County Deeds & Wills Book 8, page 159.

³⁹Northern Neck of Virginia Historical Magazine, December 1971, Volume XXI, No. 1, by Virginia W. Sherman.

⁴⁰Virginia Magazine of History & Biography, Volume 23, pages 249-250.

⁴¹Hening's, Statutes at Large, Volume I, pages 352-353.

near the border between what are now Prince William and Fairfax Counties for paying for the transportation of 20 people.⁴² The land was described as opposite against Miompses Island, which later became known as Doegs Island.⁴³ Like the patents at Nominy, this was one of the first patents in this part of Virginia. This land is located about 60 miles up the Potomac River from Nominy Bay. It is near Gunston Hall, the home of George Mason, the author of the Bill of Rights of the Constitution of the United States.

Apparently, Thomas never lived on or improved this land, because 4 years later, on 4 October 1657, a patent for this land was granted to Thomas Brewerton.⁴⁴ The patent to Brewerton stated that the patent to Speke had been “deserted for want of seatinge”. In colonial Virginia, a colonist would lose his patent if he did not settle on or place improvements on his land within about three years. Given the distance between Nominy Bay and Doegs Island, it is not surprising that Thomas did not sufficiently farm the property in Northern Virginia. What is perplexing is that he obtained a patent on that land rather than land closer to Nominy Bay. Brewerton must not have settled on the land either, because on 15 October 1660, the land was granted in a patent to Richard Bushrod.⁴⁵

Conditions in Virginia in 1650

Col. Speke lived in Virginia from about 1645 to January 1660. Virginia was still very much a frontier at the time. Virginia enjoyed a period of relative peace, prosperity and independence during the time Col. Speke was living there. Sir William Berkeley had become Governor of Virginia in February 1642.⁴⁶ With the exception of the period in which Oliver Cromwell ruled England, he remained Virginia’s Governor until 1677, when Bacon’s Rebellion caused his recall.

⁴²Nugent, Cavaliers and Pioneers, Volume I, pages 252-253, citing Patent Book 3, page 68.

⁴³Nugent, Cavaliers and Pioneers, Volume I, pages 404-405, citing Patent Book 4, page 450.

⁴⁴Nugent, Cavaliers and Pioneers, Volume I, pages 356-357, citing Patent Book 4, page 137.

⁴⁵Nugent, Cavaliers and Pioneers, Volume I, pages 404-405, citing Patent Book 4, page 450.

⁴⁶Ibid., page 147.

A widespread Indian massacre took place on 18 April 1644. Although it was not as famous as a similar massacre in 1622, this was deadlier. Over 500 residents died. Most of the victims lived along the frontier.⁴⁷ The frontier did not extend even as far as Richmond at the time. The area in which Col. Speke settled, although not inland, was part of the frontier because there was virtually no settlement north of his area.⁴⁸ A treaty was reached with the Indians in October 1646. Although the peace was unstable, it remained in effect for about 30 years, until the Indian attacks which triggered Bacon's Rebellion in 1676.⁴⁹

Virginia's peace and prosperity was not significantly affected by England's Civil War, which took place during most of Col. Speke's life in Virginia. King Charles I was executed on 30 January 1649.⁵⁰ The Virginia legislature initially condemned his executioners as traitors. Virginia refused to acknowledge Parliament as the proper authority. Virginia became a haven for the King's followers, who were known as Royalists and as Cavaliers. Many of Virginia's leaders descended from the Cavaliers, including the members of the Lee family.⁵¹ It took Virginia three years to accept Parliament as its governing body.⁵² Even then, Virginia was virtually independent of England during Cromwell's reign. As a result, life changed little in Virginia during the eight years of the Protectorate.⁵³

However, that life was not easy. It took several months to cross the ocean. Ship masters were required to carry a four month supply of food for trips across the sea.⁵⁴ News likewise traveled slowly. For example, Oliver Cromwell died on 3

⁴⁷Ibid., page 153.

⁴⁸Ibid., page 163.

⁴⁹Ibid., page 156.

⁵⁰Ibid., page 165.

⁵¹Ibid., page 166.

⁵²Ibid., page 170.

⁵³Ibid., page 187.

⁵⁴Ibid., page 181.

September 1658. Virginia did not receive the news until February 1659.⁵⁵ Therefore, when the Governor or the colonists needed permission from its governing body in England, it could easily take a year to get a response. Life expectancy was relatively short. Immigrant men could not expect to live past the age of 43. Seventy percent died before the age of 50. The women probably had shorter life expectancy.⁵⁶

Most of the colony was still in a frontier stage. The legislature had to pass laws requiring the forwarding of public letters from plantation to plantation on their way to their destination. There were rewards for the killing of wolves.

Tobacco was the primary crop in Seventeenth Century Virginia. The economic health of most Virginians was tied to the rise and fall of tobacco prices. Growing tobacco was labor intensive. The key to wealth in Virginia was having a labor force sufficient to grow large quantities of tobacco. Labor came from indentured servants and slaves. There was little legal distinction between indentured servants and African born servants during Col. Speke's lifetime. Statutes passed in the 1660's began Virginia's conversion to formalized slavery.⁵⁷

Life was tough for Virginia's servants. Typical work for indentured servants was field work, including raising tobacco and pounding and grinding corn so that it could be used to make bread.⁵⁸ The General Assembly passed a law allowing runaway servants to be branded with an "R" for Rogue for a second runaway offense. It had to pass laws protecting servants from neglect or ill treatment by their masters.⁵⁹

There were numerous restrictions on indentured servants. They were rarely

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, page 183.

⁵⁶ Carr and Walsh, *The Planter's Wife: The Experience of White Women in Seventeenth Century America*, page 183.

⁵⁷ Kathleen M. Brown, *Good Wives, Nasty Wenches & Anxious Patriarchs* (UNC Press, 1996), pages 132 and 251.

⁵⁸ Carr and Walsh, *The Planter's Wife: The Experience of White Women in Seventeenth Century America*, pages 199.

⁵⁹ Morton, *Colonial Virginia*, Volume I, page 181, citing Hening, *Virginia Statutes at Large*, Volume 1, pages 432-505.

allowed to marry. Pregnancy would reduce the value of the female servant's labor and reduce the authority of the master. Many of Virginia's laws regarding marriage were developed to allow the masters to maintain control over the servants.⁶⁰ By the 1670s, servant indentures lasted anywhere from 4 to 7 years.⁶¹ A typical penalty for violating any of the requirements of indentured servancy, including getting pregnant, were additional years to serve.⁶² **[Slow population growth; more men than women; woman had to wait to start families; short life spans; few family units came]**

Some indenture servants received land at the end of their indenture. However, that was not the normal situation. The typical payment was corn and clothes.⁶³ Thomas of St. Mary's was one of the lucky indentured servants. He was granted 50 acres of land for his service.⁶⁴

While the homes of the great planters were spacious and elegant, the homes of small planters were distinctly different. Most planters had two room houses. They were about the size of the dependences on plantations. The entrance to their houses came directly into their living and sleeping areas.⁶⁵ While the great planters and the wealthy traveled fairly extensively, even across the sea, most small planters stayed in their locality. It has been stated that ordinary planters in one county in Maryland confined their visits to five miles from home.⁶⁶

Private Affairs and Public Offices of Col. Speke

Very little is known about Col. Speke's everyday life. What little bit we have comes from two cases in Maryland. In October 1654, he and Thomas Gerard,

⁶⁰ Brown, *Good Wives, Nasty Wenches & Anxious Patriarchs*, pages 93 and 193.

⁶¹ Morton, *Colonial Virginia*, Volume I, page 151.

⁶² Carr and Walsh, "The Planter's Wife: The Experience of White Women in Seventeenth Century America", page 183.

⁶³ Brown, *Good Wives, Nasty Wenches & Anxious Patriarchs*, page 212.

⁶⁴ Skorgas, *The Early Settlers of Maryland*, page 433, citing Maryland Patent Liber 16, Folio 281.

⁶⁵ Brown, *Good Wives, Nasty Wenches & Anxious Patriarchs*, pages 262-264.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, page 275.

his future father-in-law, “bought” eight Irish boys from Captain Robert Heinfield.⁶⁷ The reference to “bought” does not mean that the boys became slaves. It means that Col. Speke and Thomas Gerard paid the costs of transporting the boys. As a consequence, the boys became their indentured servants, owing them several years of labor. It also means that Speke and Gerard became entitled to a grant of an additional 400 acres. This transaction became the subject of a law suit in 1661, after Col. Speke’s death.

In 1657, Col. Speke sued George Reynolds in the Provincial Court in Maryland.⁶⁸ The suit was not resolved during his lifetime, because Valentine Peyton, as the husband of Thomas’s widow and as the administrator of his estate, continued the suit in 1661. Peyton was seeking £ 5,000 from Reynolds.⁶⁹ It is not known why Reynolds was indebted to Speke, but this case shows that Col. Speke was involved in the flow of commerce.

Most of what we know about Col. Speke comes from his service as a public official. Col. Speke was an active man politically in Northumberland and Westmoreland Counties. He was a Justice or Commissioner of Northumberland County as early as 24 August 1650,⁷⁰ which was within 2 years of the creation of Northumberland County. Whenever the Northumberland County records listed the members of the Court or Commission, Thomas was always the first non-military member listed.⁷¹

He was a member of the Virginia House of Burgesses in 1651 and 1652, representing Northumberland County.⁷² The colony was ruled by a governor appointed by the King. The legislature was made up of the Council and the House of Burgesses. The Council was a body of men appointed by the Governor. Its

⁶⁷Maryland Archives, Provincial Court Records, 1661, Liber P.C.R., page 492.

⁶⁸*Ibid.*, 1657, Volume XLI, page 8.

⁶⁹*Ibid.* 1661, Volume XLI, page 595 and Liber P.C.R., page 1131.

⁷⁰Northumberland County Order Book 1 (1650-1652), page 41.

⁷¹Northumberland County Order Book 2 (1652-1658), pages 1, 5, 8 and 11.

⁷²Cynthia Miller Leonard, The General Assembly of Virginia, 1619-1978 (1978), page 28.

members generally served for life. Their positions were traditionally hereditary, so that certain families controlled the Council for generations. The Council generally was favorable to the Governor.

The House of Burgesses was a more democratic body. Its members were elected at large by the land holding citizens. In 1645, each county had four representatives to the House of Burgesses.⁷³

Col. Speke was a member of the House of Burgesses during a tumultuous and historic two years. Virginia was in the process of reacting to the Civil War and change in authority in England. Governor Berkeley and most Virginians were loyal to the dead King and his son. They resisted Parliament's restrictions on their ability to trade with foreign countries.⁷⁴ Virginia's positions on the King, Parliament and foreign trade did not sit well with the trading companies of London or the members of Parliament. Parliament sent 5 commissioners to Virginia to subdue the opposition. Two of the commissioners were lost in a storm in Bermuda.

When the 3 remaining commissioners reached Virginia, they let it be known that they wanted a peaceful resolution to the situation. The two armies faced each other at Jamestown in the spring of 1652. Both sides realized that conflict would result in "great miseries and certain destruction". After "long and serious debate" in the House of Burgesses, Berkeley's army surrendered and a peaceful resolution was reached.⁷⁵

The government of Virginia was placed in the hands of the House of Burgesses⁷⁶ until the restoration of King Charles II in 1659. This was the only time in Virginia's colonial history that the House of Burgesses was the supreme governing body.⁷⁷ The House of Burgesses appointed Richard Bennett as the new

⁷³Ibid., page 149.

⁷⁴Morton, Colonial Virginia, Volume I, page 170.

⁷⁵Ibid., pages 171-172.

⁷⁶Ibid., page 172.

⁷⁷Ibid., page 175.

Governor on 30 April 1652.⁷⁸ Bennett was one of the commissioners sent to Virginia by Parliament.⁷⁹ This is also the only time Virginia's Governor was elected by the House of Burgesses.

Because Thomas was elected to the legislature during the Cromwell period, it is possible that he had Puritan sympathies. However, Virginia was generally loyal to the dead king rather than to Cromwell.

Col. Speke received 3,490 pounds of tobacco as reimbursement for his expenses as a member of the House of Burgesses.⁸⁰

When Westmoreland County was created in 1653, Col. Speke became a Justice or Commissioner of its initial Court or Commission. On 4 April 1655, he was the presiding Justice of the County and was appointed by the Governor to be the Commanding Officer of the County's Militia, with the rank of Colonel.⁸¹ Prior to that appointment, he was always referred to as Mr. Speke. From thereafter, he was always referred to as Col. Speke. As a Justice, he held Court for the County and presided over the taking of depositions. The Court, acting as a Commission, also was the governing body of the County. There is no record of any military action taken by Westmoreland County while he was its Commanding Officer.

In addition to his duties as a political and military leader, Col. Speke was very active in community and financial affairs. He was involved in many suits seeking payment of debts to him.⁸² He was the administrator of several estates.⁸³ He witnessed numerous legal documents.⁸⁴ He was frequently owed sums from

⁷⁸Ibid., page 174.

⁷⁹Ibid., page 171.

⁸⁰Northumberland County Record Book 1652-1658, page 21.

⁸¹Westmoreland County Deeds, Wills, Patents, Etc. 1653-1659, page 36.

⁸²Northumberland County Order Book 2, pages 1, 2 and 19.

⁸³Ibid., page 6.

⁸⁴Northumberland County Record Book 1652-1658, pages 4, 12 and 29; Westmoreland County Wills, Patents, Etc., page 102; Westmoreland County Deeds & Wills Book 1, page 98.

estates.⁸⁵ He was also active in Maryland, because a suit was filed in his name there in 1657.⁸⁶

Col. Speke and his first wife Ann were deposed on 4 November 1653. She stated that she was 42 years old. He said that he was 30 years old. They testified about an event that took place in Col. Speke's house in about 1648 or 1649. The deposition was about the length of time two indentured servants were bound to Col. John Mottrom.⁸⁷ The Spekes' home was obviously a popular place to meet because Walter Broadhurst testified about a meeting of several people at Speke's house prior to February 1654.⁸⁸

On 1 October 1655, Ann Speke testified regarding the oral will of William Loveden or Loudon, given on his death bed.⁸⁹ Part of the will was a bequest to "Thomas Speke, gentleman, a gun of his". Conflict of interest laws were not heard of in Virginia at that time. In fact, Col. Speke presided over the taking of this evidence.

Col. Speke was not above criticism. Several depositions were given which claimed that Col. Speke and Walter Broadhurst, another Justice, had forged the testimony of two other men.⁹⁰ The complaining party was upset over an apparent judicial ruling of the Court based on depositions taken before Speke and Broadhurst.

⁸⁵Northumberland County Record Book 1652-1658, pages 7, 8, 9, 13 and 36.

⁸⁶Maryland Archives, Provincial Court Records, Volume XLI, pages 8 and 595.

⁸⁷Northumberland County Record Book 1652-1658, page 37.

⁸⁸Westmoreland County Deeds, Wills, Patents, Etc. 1653-1659, page 15.

⁸⁹Ibid., page 44. An abstractor of Northumberland County records said that Ann Speke gave another deposition in 1655 regarding events at Col. Mottrom's house. He said the deposition was in Northumberland County Record Book 1652-1658 at page 67. Beverly Fleet, Virginia Colonial Abstracts, Volume 20, Northumbria Collection, 1645-1670 (1944), page 71. Fleet is wrong. The deponent was Ann Clere or Clark. She was definitely not Ann Speke.

⁹⁰Westmoreland County Deeds, Wills, Patents, Etc. 1653-1659, pages 42 and 46.

There is no record in Virginia indicating his religious beliefs. Catholics were forbidden from holding public offices in Virginia in the 17th Century. There were very few Catholics in Virginia at the time, so that was an easy law to enforce.⁹¹ Because of his background, there is much reason to believe Col. Speke may have been a Catholic. However, because of Virginia's laws against Catholics, he must have concealed his religious background and/or beliefs very well. To have attained his positions, he had to be a supporting member of the Church of England. He seems to have approached religion from a very practical standpoint.

Whatever his religious beliefs, he continued to be involved with people with similar dual religious backgrounds. His second wife's father, Thomas Gerard, was Catholic. However, Thomas Gerard lived in Maryland, where it was safe to be a Catholic. All of Gerard's children were said to be Protestants.⁹²

Wives of Col. Speke

Col. Speke was married at least twice. His first wife's name was Ann. Her dep-testimony places her date of birth as about 1611.⁹³ They were married at least as early as 1648.⁹⁴ They were probably married in Virginia or Maryland, because there is no record of Ann Speke immigrating to Virginia or Maryland.

Ann died between 10 January 1655/1656 and 1 December 1659. On 15 December 1655, Thomas and Ann assigned to John Redman their interests in a patent which had originally been issued to Rich. Hawkins which they had bought from Hawkins. Ann acknowledged her consent to the assignment on 10 January 1655/1656.⁹⁵

By the time Col. Speke wrote his will on 1 December 1659, Ann had died and he had married Frances Gerard,⁹⁶ the daughter of Dr. Thomas Gerard of

⁹¹Morton, Colonial Virginia, Volume I, page 150.

⁹²Maryland Historical Magazine, Volume XLVI, No. 3, September 1951, page 191.

⁹³Maryland Archives, Provincial Court Records, Volume XLI, pages 8 and 595.

⁹⁴Northumberland County Record Book 1652-1658, page 37.

⁹⁵Westmoreland County Deeds, Wills, Patents, Etc. 1653-1659, page 53.

⁹⁶Westmoreland County Deeds and Wills Book 1, pages 103-105.

Maryland. Col. Speke was the first of her five husbands. Frances and her father led interesting lives, which will be addressed later in this paper. Col. Speke almost certainly knew Frances during his first marriage, because he had a business dealing with Thomas Gerard on 28 October 1654.⁹⁷ In addition, he was the godfather of Frances' brother Thomas.⁹⁸

Col. Speke's Death

Col. Speke died between 1 December 1659 and 14 January 1659/1660, when his will was probated.⁹⁹ He appointed his son Thomas executor of the will. However, because Thomas was a minor, he nominated his father-in-law, Thomas Gerard, and his wife's brother-in-law, Robert Slye, to be overseers of the will to act for Thomas during his minority. Col. Speke requested them to see that Thomas was brought up and educated. As stated earlier, he devised a life estate in the Nominy Plantation to his wife, Frances, except that she and Thomas were to share in the profits of the orchard on the plantation. If Thomas died without issue, Frances inherited Nominy. Her descendants ultimately inherited in Nominy, because Col. Henry Ashton, the husband of Frances' daughter Elizabeth Hardidge, left it in his will to Elizabeth's two granddaughters.¹⁰⁰

The will split Currioman Plantation into two parcels. The 700 acres adjoining the Bay were given to his son Thomas and the 200 acres to the back side were given to his brother John on the condition that John settle and reside in this country. If John did not, the 200 acres were to go to Thomas. John never settled in this country. John was apparently a poor businessman. His father directed in his will that some of John's debts be paid. He left him only five pounds "and noe mor" because he had exercised "ill husbandry".¹⁰¹ He may have been much better off if

⁹⁷Maryland Archives, Provincial Court Records, Volume XLI, pages 477-478.

⁹⁸Westmoreland County Deeds and Wills Book 1, pages 103-105; Maryland Historical Magazine, Volume XLVI, No. 3, September 1951, page 191.

⁹⁹Westmoreland County Deeds and Wills Book 1, pages 103-105.

¹⁰⁰Westmoreland County Deeds & Wills Book 8, page 159.

¹⁰¹1661 PCC Will of his father, George Speke of Hazelbury, Speak/e/s Family Association Bulletin, December 1995, Volume 17, No. 2, page 10, by John D. Speake.

he had come to this country. It is possible that Col. Speke made this provision to encourage John to make a fresh start.

The will provided that if the son Thomas died and Frances had no other children by Col. Speke, half of the Currioman Plantation would be given to his brother John and the other half to his godson Thomas Gerard, or, if the godson died without issue, to the godson's next youngest brother. John's entitlement to this half interest was not contingent on his settling in Virginia. This clause is the key to determining the fate of Col. Speke's son Thomas.

The prominent position of Col. Speke is demonstrated in the records of Westmoreland County regarding his estate. His funeral included the services for a gunner. The estate paid, as a funeral expense, the cost of a doctor coming to treat a gunner maimed at the funeral.¹⁰² The inventory of his estate is divided into six categories. Personal property was listed for four rooms in the house: The Colonel's Chamber, the Hall Chamber, the Kitchen and the Room under the stairs. There were also a Dairy and a servant's quarters. The inventory listed 8 servants, three of whom were negroes. The items in the rooms were extensive and indicate that Col. Speke was a wealthy man.¹⁰³ The rooms of the house listed in the inventory show that his home was the "Medieval Hall and Parlour House" type of residence.¹⁰⁴

Dr. Thomas Gerard

Col. Speke's widow, Frances Gerard, was the daughter of a prominent settler in Maryland, Dr. Thomas Gerard. Gerard immigrated to Maryland in 1637 as a surgeon.¹⁰⁵ He was a member of an ancient and distinguished Roman Catholic family of Lancashire. His brother and sister had come to Maryland in 1634 on the Ark and the Dove. His sister, Anne, later married Thomas Greene, the second

¹⁰²Westmoreland County Deeds, Wills, Etc. 1661-1662, pages 47-47a.

¹⁰³Ibid., pages 4a-6a; Northern Neck of Virginia Historical Magazine, December 1971, Volume XXI, No. 1, by Virginia W. Sherman.

¹⁰⁴Northern Neck of Virginia Historical Magazine, December 1971, Volume XXI, No. 1, by Virginia W. Sherman; Foreman, Virginia Architecture in the Seventeenth Century, p. 39.

¹⁰⁵Maryland Historical Magazine, Volume XLVI, No. 3, September 1951, page 189; Skordas, The Early Settlers of Maryland, page 180; Maryland Patents Liber 1, Folio 19.

Governor of Maryland. Thomas Gerard's home in Maryland was on a high bluff on St. Clement's Bay overlooking St. Clement's Island, directly across the Potomac River from Nominy Bay. Gerard was the owner of St. Clement's Manor, which he patented in 1639.¹⁰⁶ The Potomac River is six miles wide at that point. In addition to practicing medicine, he was a member of the Maryland Council, a Judge of the Provincial Court, a farmer, a manufacturer of liquors and a cattle breeder.¹⁰⁷

Gerard was constantly involved in political battles and controversies. His home was burned by Richard Ingle in Ingle's Rebellion in 1644-1646. He was almost executed by the Puritans during an uprising in 1654 to 1656 when he was captured with the rest of Governor Stone's forces. Gerard broke with Lord Baltimore in 1659 during Fendall's Rebellion. Some have speculated that Gerrard was the real leader of Fendall's Rebellion and that he was seeking to take control of the government. The Rebellion collapsed in 1660 when Charles II returned to the throne of England. Gerard's property was seized and he was banished. He retired temporarily to his property near the Machodoc River in Westmoreland County. The Machodoc River is the first inlet to the Potomac River east of Nominy Bay. Within a few months, he applied to the Maryland Council for a pardon which was promptly granted. His properties were restored to him, but he was forbidden to hold office. After the death of his wife, Susannah Snow, in 1666, he returned to his home in Westmoreland County where he married Rose Tucker.¹⁰⁸ He died in 1673 in Westmoreland County. His will mentions Gerard Peyton, the son of Frances, as a grandchild, but does not mention Col. Speke's son Thomas.¹⁰⁹

Thomas Gerard had a large family: three sons and at least five and perhaps as many as eight daughters.¹¹⁰ Only one son, John, had issue. This John was the brother of Col. Speke's godson Thomas Gerard. This only son, John, left no sons, so the Gerard family name ended there. Several of the daughters married prominent

¹⁰⁶ Lois Green Carr, Russell R. Menard and Lorena S. Walsh, Agriculture & Society in Early Maryland: Robert Cole's World, (UNC Press 1991), p. 5.

¹⁰⁷ Maryland Historical Magazine, Volume XLVI, No. 3, September 1951, pages 189-206.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

¹⁰⁹ Westmoreland County Deeds, Patents, Etc. 1665-1677, pages 168a-168b-r.

¹¹⁰ John Walton, "Gerard's Daughters", Maryland Historical Magazine, unknown volume, page 446.

men.¹¹¹ Susannah married Robert Slye, who was prominent in Maryland politics and was an overseer of Speke's will.¹¹² Slye lived at St. Clement's Manor. He was the wealthiest merchant in Maryland and offered adequate marketing and supply facilities.¹¹³

One of the women who may have been one of his daughters, Anne, first married Walter Broadhurst, a neighbor of Col. Speke. Her second husband was Henry Brett, another prominent man in Westmoreland County. Her third husband was John Washington, the great grandfather of George Washington.¹¹⁴ Anne was Washington's second wife. George Washington descended from the first wife, Ann Pope. Washington's third wife was Frances Gerard, Col. Speke's second wife and widow.¹¹⁵ Anne was described as Frances' sister in a contemporaneous deposition.¹¹⁶ There are a number of publications listing Anne as the daughter of Thomas Gerard.¹¹⁷ However, there is some doubt whether this Anne was Thomas Gerard's daughter and Frances' sister.¹¹⁸

The connection with the Washington family did not end with Frances. Ann Aylett, Frances' great granddaughter by her fifth husband, William Hardidge, married Augustine Washington, a brother of the future President.¹¹⁹

¹¹¹ Maryland Historical Magazine, Volume XLVI, No. 3, September 1951, pages 201-206.

¹¹² Ibid.

¹¹³ Carr, Menard and Walsh, Agriculture & Society in Early Maryland: Robert Cole's World, p. 8

¹¹⁴ Maryland Historical Magazine, Volume XLVI, No. 3, September 1951, pages 202-203.

¹¹⁵ Tyler's Quarterly Magazine, Volume 4, pages 315-351.

¹¹⁶ Westmoreland County Deeds, Patents, Etc. 1665-1677, page 17.

¹¹⁷ Edwin W. Beitzel, "Thomas Gerard and His Sons-in-Law", Maryland Genealogies (1980), Volume I, pages 490-492, citing Beitzel, "The Gerard and Cheseldine Families", L. G. Tyler, "Washington and His Neighbors", William and Mary Quarterly, Series I, Volume IV (1896), pages 35 and 76, and L. G. Tyler, "The Good Name and Fame of the Washingtons", Tyler's Quarterly Magazine, Volume IV (1922-23), page 322.

¹¹⁸ Walton, "Gerard's Daughters", Maryland Historical Magazine, unknown volume, pages 449-450, also printed in Maryland Genealogies, Volume I, page 503.

¹¹⁹ Edwin W. Beitzell, "Thomas Gerard and His Sons-in-Law", Maryland Genealogies, page 492.

For more information about Thomas Gerard and his children, I recommend articles by Edwin W. Beitzel in Volume 66 of the Maryland Historical Magazine and in Volume I of Maryland Genealogies and by John Walton on pages 443 to 450 of a subsequent volume of the Maryland Historical Magazine and on pages 496 to 503 of Volume I of Maryland Genealogies.

Frances Gerard's Husbands

After Col. Speke's death, Frances Gerard married Col. Valentine Peyton. He settled in Westmoreland County in 1655 or earlier.¹²⁰ Col. Peyton served on the Commission of Westmoreland County with Col. Speke.¹²¹ He was a member of the House of Burgesses in 1663 and 1664.¹²² He wrote his will on 27 November 1662, when he was about to take a voyage to Jamestown. He mentioned Thomas Speke, whom he described as his son-in-law, in his will. The will was probated on 29 June 1665,¹²³ probably shortly after his death. Valentine and Frances had one child, Gerard, who was not mentioned in the will. Therefore, he must have been born in 1663 or later. Gerard Peyton died in December 1687 or January 1688, leaving no children.¹²⁴ He left all of his property to his half-sister, Elizabeth Hardidge.¹²⁵

Frances' third husband was Captain John Appleton, a Commissioner, coroner and High Sheriff of Westmoreland County.¹²⁶ He was briefly a member of the House of Burgesses in 1676.¹²⁷ **[Check this date; it is the same year she married Washington.]** During her marriage to Captain Appleton, Frances became the subject of a scandal. Accusations had been made against Richard Cole because of

¹²⁰Westmoreland County Deeds, Wills, Patents, Etc. 1653-1659, page 70.

¹²¹Ibid., pages 116a-117.

¹²²Leonard, The General Assembly of Virginia, 1619-1978, page 40.

¹²³Westmoreland County Deeds & Wills Book 1, page 259.

¹²⁴Augusta B. Fothergill, Wills of Westmoreland County, Virginia, 1654-1800 (1925), page 93; Westmoreland County Deeds & Wills Book 3, pages 37-38.

¹²⁵Westmoreland County Deeds & Wills Book 8, page 159.

¹²⁶Westmoreland County Deeds, Patents, Etc. 1665-1677, pages 79, 121a-122 and 169.

¹²⁷Leonard, The General Assembly of Virginia, 1619-1978, page 40.

statements Cole made at Appleton's house in June 1668.¹²⁸ Some of Cole's statements were aimed at Thomas Gerard.¹²⁹

In June and July, 1668, Cole turned his attacks on Frances. He accused her of being a whore, saying she spent the night in bed with a man named Pitts at the house of her sister, Ann Brett, while Frances' husband was at York. He said that Ann Brett was keeping a boudyhouse. Cole's wife Anna was quoted as saying she would make such a disturbance between Appleton and Frances that they would never be reconciled. She called Frances the Governor's whore. On 11 July 1668, she wrote a letter to Frances' mother, Susannah Gerard, accusing Frances of sleeping with Pitts.¹³⁰ However, the Beitzell article on Thomas Gerard indicates that Susannah died in 1666. Maybe Mrs. Cole was as ignorant as she was vicious. The record indicates that the letter was probably not delivered. This evidence was taken by deposition, much of it before Frances' brother Justinian. Richard Cole has been described as rather eccentric, boastful, erratic and sometimes insolent because of the manner in which his will was written.¹³¹

The court records do not reflect how this controversy was resolved, but Frances and John Appleton were apparently not separated by it because they were still married seven years later when John died. He and Thomas Speake witnessed a power of attorney in 1674 in Westmoreland County.¹³² Shortly before his death, Captain Appleton acknowledged his prenuptial agreement with Frances.¹³³ He died between 25 February and 12 April 1676.¹³⁴ They had no children.

Within three months of Captain Appleton's death, Frances had signed a prenuptial agreement with Col. John Washington,¹³⁵ the widower of Ann, who may

¹²⁸Westmoreland County Deeds, Patents, Etc. 1665-1677, page 17.

¹²⁹Ibid., page 24.

¹³⁰Ibid., pages 25-26. The Governor at the time was William Berkeley.

¹³¹Tyler's Quarterly Magazine, Volume 4, page 353.

¹³²Westmoreland County Deeds, Patents, Etc. 1665-1677, page 216a.

¹³³Westmoreland County Order Book 1675/6 to 1688/9, page 53.

¹³⁴Ibid., pages 53 and 56.

¹³⁵Westmoreland County Deeds, Patents, Etc. 1665-1677, pages 274a-275a.

have been Frances' sister. Col. Washington was the great grandfather of George Washington. Frances was John's third wife. President Washington was descended from John's first wife, Anne Pope.¹³⁶ John Washington has been said to be one of hundreds of men who gained local prominence through marriage.¹³⁷

Frances married Col. Washington in 1676. He was involved in Bacon's Rebellion at the time of their marriage. He received a commission in 1675 from Governor Berkeley to find the cause of attacks by the Doeg Indians of Maryland and to take action.¹³⁸ His home was used as a garrison by the rebels and some prisoners were taken there during the Rebellion.¹³⁹ He was a member of the House of Burgesses from 1665 to 1677.¹⁴⁰

Col. Washington died between 26 September and 25 November 1677,¹⁴¹ a little more than a year after he married Frances. They had no children. Ironically, Frances' previous husband, John Appleton, was a witness to Washington's will.¹⁴² She was apparently accused by Lawrence Washington, John Washington's executor, of concealing property that was in the custody of the estate of Captain Appleton.¹⁴³

Frances' fifth and last husband was Captain William Hardidge, the son of Col. Speke's longtime friend and neighbor. They were married in 1677 or 1678. Frances was robbing the cradle with William. Based on the will of his father, which was written on 24 October 1668, he was a minor then. He was young enough that his father envisioned him making at least two trips to Virginia before

¹³⁶Tyler's Quarterly Magazine, Volume 4, pages 315-351.

¹³⁷Brown, *Good Wives, Nasty Wenches & Anxious Patriarchs*, page 92.

¹³⁸Tyler's Quarterly Magazine, Volume 4, pages 231a-232.

¹³⁹*Ibid.*, pages 324a-326.

¹⁴⁰Leonard, *The General Assembly of Virginia, 1619-1978*, page 40-42.

¹⁴¹Westmoreland County Order Book 1675/6 to 1688/9, page 90 and 100.

¹⁴²Westmoreland County Deeds, Patents, Etc., 1655-1677, pages 365a-377.

¹⁴³Westmoreland County Order Book 1675/6 to 1688/9, page 151.

reaching the age of 21.¹⁴⁴ He was almost certainly 18 or younger. Frances had to have been at least ten years older.

William was a member of the House of Burgesses from 1682 to 1693.¹⁴⁵ Therefore, all five of Frances' husbands were members of the House of Burgesses, making her probably the leading lady of Westmoreland County. This underscores the statement about Col. John Washington gaining local prominence through marriage. Frances seems to have brought prominence to each husband she married after Col. Thomas Speke.

Frances probably died before William, who died in 1693 or 1694.¹⁴⁶ Frances and William had one child, Elizabeth, who was born in 1678. **[footnote 147?]** Frances was at least in her mid-30's at the time. Elizabeth married Col. Henry Ashton.¹⁴⁷ Elizabeth died on 25 February 1722.¹⁴⁸ She left many descendants.¹⁴⁹ Because Frances' only other child, Gerard Peyton, died without issue, those are Frances' only descendents.

Thomas Speake, the Son of Col. Speke

Col. Speke had only one known child, the son Thomas mentioned in his will. It has generally been assumed that he was the son of Col. Speke's first wife Ann, but that is not certain. There are tidbits of information which point in each direction, although the most persuasive indicate that he was Ann's son.

There is only one indication that he was the son of Frances, but it is

¹⁴⁴1669 PCC Will of William Hardich, Bristol, England, Speak/e/s Family Association Bulletin, December 1996, Volume 18, No. 2, page 9, by John D. Speake.

¹⁴⁵Virginia Magazine of History and Biography, Volume 15, page 430; Leonard, The General Assembly of Virginia 1619-1978, pages 45-53.

¹⁴⁶Westmoreland County Order Book 1690-1698, page 129.

¹⁴⁷Westmoreland County Deeds & Wills Book 3, pages 37-38.

¹⁴⁸Virginia Magazine of History and Biography, Volume 15, page 430.

¹⁴⁹Westmoreland County Deeds & Wills Book 8, page 159; Northern Neck of Virginia Historical Magazine, December 1971, Volume XXI, No. 1, by Virginia W. Sherman.

significant. Col. Speke's will provided that if it happened that his son Thomas should die and Frances "should have no *other* issue surviving by me begotten upon her", certain things should happen.¹⁵⁰ The use of the word "other" would imply that Thomas was Frances' son. However, it would be wrong to put too much emphasis on such loose phrasing in the will because whether Thomas was Ann's or Frances' son was irrelevant to the clause and could have been the result of the use of a standard phrase for wills at that time.

There are three indications that he was the son of Ann. The weakest indication is that Col. Speke gave Frances all his rings except a mourning ring which he gave to Thomas. The only reason for treating this ring specially was if it had meaning for his son and not his wife. If it was a ring mourning the death of his first wife and if she were Thomas' mother, then this bequest was logical. However, do not place much emphasis on this because it could have been a ring that was to be made to remember Col. Speke.

The most persuasive reason to believe that Thomas was Ann's son is a power of attorney which Thomas Speake and John Appleton witnessed on 2 July 1674.¹⁵¹ To be a valid witness, he needed to be 21 years old at the time, placing his date of birth in or before 1653, when Ann was the wife of Col. Speke. If he were Frances' son, he would have been between 14 and 17 when he witnessed the document, which is unlikely.

Finally, more than a year prior to the date Thomas witnessed the power of attorney, Frances' father Thomas Gerard wrote his will, mentioning his grandchild Gerard Peyton but not Thomas Speake.¹⁵² The absence of Thomas' name would indicate that he was not a grandson and therefore not the son of Frances. Accordingly, the available evidence supports the assumption that he was Ann's son.

After his father's death, Thomas Speake appeared in the Westmoreland County records twice. On 27 November 1662, Valentine Peyton, Frances' second husband, wrote his will. He gave Thomas Speake, whom he described as his son-in-

¹⁵⁰Westmoreland County Deeds & Wills Book 1, pages 103-105. Emphasis added.

¹⁵¹Westmoreland County Deeds, Patents, Etc. 1665-1677, page 216a.

¹⁵²Ibid., pages 168a-168b-r.

law, a 2 year old mare and four cows to be delivered to him when he became 21 years old.¹⁵³ This establishes his birth date as 1642 or later. The second reference to Thomas was the previously mentioned power of attorney in 1674. That was also in conjunction with a husband of Frances Gerard, because the other witness, John Appleton, was her third husband at the time.

Thomas Speake, Jr.: Is He Thomas of St. Marys?

Currioman Plantation is the key to establishing that Thomas of St. Mary's was not the son of Col. Speke. On 29 June 1709, an interest in the Currioman Plantation which had been left to Col. Speke's son Thomas was sold by John Gerard to John Chilton.¹⁵⁴ The deed recites language in Col. Speke's will about the transfer of the property if Thomas died. The deed then stated that Col. Speke's godson Thomas Gerard had died without issue so that Thomas Gerard's half interest had vested in John Gerard, the next youngest brother of Thomas Gerard. The deed further stated that that John Gerard had died without leaving a will, and the half interest in Currioman was inherited by his son John, who was the grantor in the deed.

The deed did not say that Thomas Speake had died without issue, but the property could never have lawfully vested in either Thomas Gerard or John Gerard if Thomas had not died without issue. Therefore, based on the official recorded documents in Virginia, Thomas Speake, Jr. died without issue.

Several deeds prior to the 1709 conveyance supported this conclusion. The title to Curriorman had been in disarray for over 25 years. William Hardidge, Francis' husband, sold 243 acres out of it on 19 March 1683 to John Shadrick. That deed is lost, because there is a gap in the Westmoreland County deed books between 1677 and 24 May 1691. Therefore, it is not known what William Hardidge claimed as his source of title. On 25 March 1691, Captain William Hardidge, Frances Gerard's fifth husband, produced in Court a deed for the sale of land from a Hugh Speak of Bath to Henry Totterdale of Bristol, mariner.¹⁵⁵ [Could

¹⁵³Westmoreland County Deeds & Wills Book 1, page 259.

¹⁵⁴Westmoreland County Deeds & Wills Book 4, pages 212-219.

¹⁵⁵Westmoreland County Order Book 1690-1698, page 18a.

it have predated his sale to Shadrick in 1683?] This Hugh Speake was not the brother of Col. Speke, because that Hugh died in 1661. He is probably Hugh Speke, the son of Col. Speke's brother, John Speke of Bath. That Hugh was baptised in Bath in 1669 and died in 1693.¹⁵⁶

The Court directed that the deed be recorded. Unfortunately, this deed is also lost. The deed would have been recorded on 25 March 1691, which places it in the last deed book that is missing. The court order does not identify the property that is the subject of the deed. It was probably Currioman, because that is the tract of land in which Hugh Speke's father, John Speke, had an interest. If the deed were found, it might detail Hugh Speake's chain of title and tell us what happened to Thomas, Jr.

However, a deed from John Speke's son could not have conveyed full title in Currioman, if indeed it was a deed to Currioman. John was to receive 200 acres, but only if he claimed the property in person. If Thomas, Jr. died without issue, John was to receive a half interest in the property. He did not have to settle in Virginia to be entitled to that half interest. Under no circumstances was John to inherit all of Currioman.

On 25 March 1692, a year to the day after the recordation of Hugh Speke's deed to Totterdale, Totterdale sold land to Captain William Hardidge,¹⁵⁷ with whom he had numerous business dealings.¹⁵⁸ It is assumed but not known that this was the same land Totterdale bought from Hugh Speke. The fact of the sale is known, but the deed is missing, so the land that was the subject of the sale cannot be determined for certain.

Elizabeth Hardidge, the daughter of Captain William Hardidge and Frances Gerard, eventually inherited or purchased the Currioman Plantation "by several devises and mean conveyances" prior to 1700.¹⁵⁹ Since she was not in the chain of title to John Gerard, her interest in the land had to come through John Speake of

¹⁵⁶Letter dated 2 March 1998 from John D. Speake to John S. Morris, III.

¹⁵⁷Westmoreland County Order Book 1690-1698, page 57.

¹⁵⁸*Ibid.*, page 141a; Westmoreland County Deeds & Wills Book 2, pages 21a-22.

¹⁵⁹Westmoreland County Deeds & Wills Book 3, pages 306-311.

Bath, almost certainly by way of the deed from Hugh Speak to Henry Totterdale and the subsequent sale by Totterdale to her father or from the 1683 purchase of 243 acres by her father. Elizabeth Hardidge conveyed some or all of her interest in Currioman to John Chilton in 1700.¹⁶⁰ The 1700 deed is also missing because the 1699 to 1701 deeds and wills book is lost. Therefore, we cannot determine what she claimed as the source of her title.

The sequence of these deeds is very important when they are coupled with the trespass action Chilton filed against Luke Thornton in 1704. None of the documents regarding the sales of Currioman in Chilton's chain of title refers to the interest being conveyed as a half interest. Indeed, the survey and finding of the court in the trespass action are written as if Chilton owned all of the interests in Currioman.

In the trespass case, the court held that Chilton had title to Currioman "by several conveyances", without specifying what conveyance. A surveyor met the jurors on the property and marked or laid out the entire 900 acre Currioman tract. The jury then decided that Thornton was trespassing.¹⁶¹ Since the entire bounds were walked, there must have been an issue over whether the land Thornton had used was located on Currioman. It is significant that the entire 900 acres were surveyed. That would not have been necessary unless Chilton was claiming to own all 900 acres.

Chilton began selling portions of Currioman after the trespass action was over in 1704. In one of those sales, a 27 December 1704 conveyance of 50 acres to Philip Sanders, Chilton's title to Currioman is claimed to be through Elizabeth Hardidge.¹⁶²

However, Chilton realized he did not own all of Currioman. Thomas Shadrick sold 243 acres of Currioman to John Chilton, Jr. in 1706. That deed recites the 1683 purchase of the 243 acres by John Shadrick (Thomas' father) from William Hardidge. He then purchased John Gerard's half interest in 1709.

¹⁶⁰Ibid.

¹⁶¹ Westmoreland County Deeds & Wills Book 3, pages 249-250.

¹⁶²Ibid., pages 306-311.

What these deeds indicate is that Chilton had been buying and selling parts of Currioman for many years. The trespass case may have brought to light that Chilton might not have a clear title. The 1700 deed from Elizabeth to Chilton did not give clear title, since her father had sold 243 acres in 1683 and because his 1692 deed from Totterdale was only good to the extent to which the interest of John Speke may have been obtained through the 1691 and 1692 deeds. Chilton's 1709 purchase from John Gerrard then cleaned up the rest of the title to Currioman.

The title issues regarding Currioman are much more complicated than previously believed. However, they do not change the bottom line. The 1709 deed establishes that, as a matter of Virginia law (although not necessarily as a matter of fact), Thomas Jr. died without issue. Otherwise, John Gerard would never have received any interest in the property under Col. Speke's will.

There has been some speculation that the Gerard family, which was powerful and unpredictable, might have used their power and influence to manipulate the courts to have this property taken away from Thomas Speke even though he was living or had died leaving issue. I consider this unlikely. In the first place, this deed was written many years after the death of Dr. Thomas Gerard and the family's power had diminished by that time. In the second place, it is hard to believe that a man who owned a valuable 900 acre tract of land would have allowed that to happen without at least filing a lawsuit in Westmoreland County. The order books for 1675 and later still exist and any law suit filed or in existence then would have been mentioned at least once. Furthermore, Thomas apparently reached adulthood still on good terms with the Gerard family, since he and Frances' third husband John Appleton jointly witnessed the 1674 power of attorney.

Finally, the 1691 deed also rebuts this theory. The 1709 deed seems to have been written as an afterthought. Chilton or a prospective purchaser probably realized that there was a cloud on the title because the Speaks could not lawfully convey all of the title to Currioman. Hugh Speke had probably tried to convey both John's and Thomas, Jr.'s interests in Currioman, not realizing that Thomas' death without issue had left the Speaks with only a half interest. His deed was only effective in conveying a half interest in the land. Therefore, when an issue arose as to his title to the land, Chilton had to obtain the remaining interest in the land from John Gerard, the successor to the interest left to Col. Speke's godson, Thomas Gerard. John Gerard had probably never realized that he had any interest in Currioman and looked on the purchase price for giving his release as a windfall.

Thus, the 1709 deed was executed and recorded to remove the cloud on the title and to vest all ownership rights in Chilton. Thus, it was the Speaks rather than the Gerards who initiated the transfer of the property out of the family.

Thomas Speake of St. Marys

John D. Speake of Cambridge, England researched English records for the Speak/e/s Family Association. One of his prime goals was to determine the identity of the parents of Thomas of St. Marys. He has located a likely candidate. That Thomas is the son of John Speake and Elizabeth Bieseley of Lancashire.¹⁶³ He was baptized on 1 January 1634 in Twiston, Downham, Lancashire.¹⁶⁴ That Thomas was therefore born at about the right time. However, a Thomas Speake of Twiston married Grace Shackleton in 1656. Grace was buried in Downham on 8 January 1666.¹⁶⁵ Since Thomas of St. Marys was already in Maryland and apparently married Elizabeth Bowling before 1665, the Thomas who married Grace is not our Thomas.

In addition to the Twiston Speakes, a number of Speak/e/s families lived in Lancashire and Yorkshire, considerably north of Wiltshire and Bath and in a different section of England. Their name apparently derives either from the name of the place in which their ancestors lived or from Old English. On the other hand, the Spekes of Hazelbury probably descend from Normans.¹⁶⁶ Therefore, the two families may not have any common ancestors.

The first record in Maryland that can be definitely attributed to Thomas of St. Marys is that he was granted 50 acres of land in 1670 for "service".¹⁶⁷ However, there is much evidence of his presence in Maryland as early as 1660.

¹⁶³Speak/e/s Family Association Bulletin, September 1996, Volume 18, No. 1, page 13 and December 1996, Volume 18, No. 2, pages 19-20, by John D. Speake.

¹⁶⁴Speak/e/s Family Association Bulletin, December 1996, Volume 18, No. 2, page 20, by John D. Speake.

¹⁶⁵Ibid., pages 19-21.

¹⁶⁶Speak/e/s Family Association Bulletin, March 1996, Volume 17, No. 3, pages 6-9 by John D. Speake.

¹⁶⁷Skorgas, The Early Settlers of Maryland, page 433, citing Maryland Patents Liber 16, Folio 281.

In January 1661 [1661/62 or 1660/61], the Sheriff in Charles County, Maryland was ordered to summons a Thomas Speake to testify on behalf of the government in a criminal trial.¹⁶⁸ This was a year after the death of Col. Speke, and the news of his death had likely reached Maryland by then. All other records mentioning Col. Speke in Maryland after 1655 referred to him as Colonel.¹⁶⁹ This record did not. Therefore, the summons was not for Col. Speke. It was also probably not for his son, because it is unlikely that the summons would be issued to a minor such as Thomas, Jr., who was not yet 21.¹⁷⁰

The most likely person being summoned was Thomas of St. Marys. Charles County is the county adjacent to St. Marys County and was originally part of St. Marys County. It is the county in which the descendants of Thomas of St. Marys ultimately settled.

In 1662 or 1663, Thomas Speake filed a law suit against Arthur Turner in Charles County to collect a debt. He described himself in a pleading on 29 January 1662/1663 as a tailor. He signed the pleading with his mark "TS".¹⁷¹ Thomas Speake won the lawsuit and was granted judgment on 11 February 1662/1663 in the amount of 193 pounds of tobacco and caske with costs. He was again described as a tailor.¹⁷² In 1662, the son of Col. Speke was still a minor¹⁷³ and would not have been able to file this suit in his own name. In addition, Col. Speke's son owned at least a 700 acre plantation. He would have had no need for learning a trade such as a tailor. Therefore, this suit was brought by Thomas of St. Marys.

The designation of Thomas as a tailor is another strong indication that he was a member of the Speak/e/s families in the North of England, along the Yorkshire

¹⁶⁸ Maryland Archives, Provincial Court Records, Volume XLI, page 511.

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, pages 8, 477-478 and 595.

¹⁷⁰ Westmoreland County Deeds & Wills Book 1, page 259.

¹⁷¹ Maryland Archives, Volume LIII, Charles County Court Proceedings 1662-1666, pages 317 and 337.

¹⁷² Elise Greenup Jourdan, Abstracts of Charles County Circuit Court, Court and Land Records, Volume I, 1658-1666 (1993), page 131, citing Charles County Liber B, pages 88-89.

¹⁷³ Westmoreland County Deeds & Wills Book 1, page 259.

and Lancashire border. Several of the 17th Century Speak/e/s in that area were described as weavers and tailors.¹⁷⁴

By 1665, Thomas had married Elizabeth Bowling. **[By 1663, she was subpoenaed.]** Their oldest son, John Speake, the Innkeeper, testified under oath that he was born about 1665 in St. Marys County.¹⁷⁵

On 17 July 1668, Thomas, describing himself as of St. Marys County, filed papers with the Provincial Court requesting that his cattle be recorded as marked in the following manner: “Croit of both eares, Overkeel’d of both eares and a nick underneath both eares”.¹⁷⁶ This means he owned cattle then. It is highly unlikely that a servant owned cattle. **[Hogs and cattle ran wild; register mark with court.]**

Thomas received the grant of 50 acres in 1670 “for service”.¹⁷⁷ In the Maryland records, “for service” meant that he had satisfactorily completed his period as an indentured servant under circumstances entitling him to be granted 50 acres of land.¹⁷⁸ People who could not pay for their passage across the Atlantic were shipped for the prospect of having their transportation costs paid by someone in the colonies. The master or captain of the ship would “sell” the passenger to a planter or other colonist when they reached the colony in return for the cost of passage. The person who paid the cost of transportation to the colony became the master of the passenger, who in turn became an indentured servant. The indentured servant would owe the master several years of labor to pay for the transportation. Ordinarily, the servant only received corn and clothes upon completion of his or her indenture.¹⁷⁹ However, in certain circumstances, upon satisfactory completion of

¹⁷⁴Letter dated 2 March from John D. Speake to John S. Morris, III; Speak/e/s Family Association Bulletin, September 1996, Volume 18, No. 1, pages 9-10, by John D. Speake.

¹⁷⁵Maryland Chancery Court Book 4, page 201; abstracted by Joyce B. Candland, Speak/e/s Family Association Bulletin, Fall 1983, Volume 5, number 1, page 30.

¹⁷⁶Maryland Archives, Provincial Court Records, 1668, Volume LVII, page 345.

¹⁷⁷Skorgas, The Early Settlers of Maryland, page 433, citing Maryland Patents Liber 16, Folio 281.

¹⁷⁸Ibid., page xi.

¹⁷⁹Brown, Good Wives, Nasty Wenches & Anxious Patriarchs, page 212.

the period of servitude, a male servant was entitled to claim 50 acres of land.¹⁸⁰ Thomas was one of the fortunate servants.

It is possible that Thomas did not go to Maryland of his free will. There was a policy in England at that time to populate the American colonies with petty criminals and religious dissenters.¹⁸¹

In Colonial Virginia, the period of service was usually seven years. There were no fixed laws regarding the period of servitude, and the period sometimes varied. From 1661, the customary service was set by Maryland law and required a 4 year term for men and women who were 22 years upon arrival. The term was longer for younger persons.¹⁸² As we have seen, Thomas was in St. Marys County as early as 1660. Receiving 50 acres for service as late as 1670 is not really inconsistent. He may well have waited several years after completing his servitude before deciding what land he wanted, having it surveyed, and delivering his papers to the Provincial Capitol.

Because this was a grant for serving an indenture, this Thomas almost certainly was not the son of Col. Speke. Thomas, Jr. would never have agreed to a period of servitude for transportation across the Potomac River. Furthermore, he would hardly have been on speaking terms with the husband of his father's widow if he had been cheated out of a 700 or 900 acre plantation and required to serve several years as an indentured servant in order to receive 50 acres.

Thomas signed his claim for the grant, entitled "Right for Land Time of Service", with the same mark, "TS", which he had used in 1662. On the same day, he assigned the right for land to James Bowling.¹⁸³ James was Thomas' father-in-law.

In 1673, John and Elizabeth expanded their family. Their second son,

¹⁸⁰ Skorgas, The Early Settlers of Maryland, page xi.

¹⁸¹ Letter dated 2 March 1998 from John D. Speake to John S. Morris, III.

¹⁸² Carr and Walsh, "The Planter's Wife: The Experience of White Women in Seventeenth Century America", page 183.

¹⁸³ Maryland Hall of Records.

Bowling, was born. There are no records of any other children. The oldest son, John, married Winifred Wheeler, the daughter of John Wheeler.¹⁸⁴ Bowling married Mary Benson, the daughter of Hugh Benson.¹⁸⁵

Thomas became the master of at least three servants. William Hall, aged 17, was his servant in 1675/76.¹⁸⁶ James Aunley, aged 13, and Mary Salt, aged 20, were his servants in 1678.¹⁸⁷ It is not clear whether these people were apprenticed to him to learn a trade, such as tailoring, or were indentured servants on whose behalf he paid the cost of transportation across the Atlantic Ocean. If they were the latter, he should have later obtained a grant of at least 150 acres for paying for their transportation.

Thomas of St. Marys lived until 1681. His will is dated 6 May 1681 and was probated on 6 August 1681. In the will, he gave his wife Elizabeth a life estate in all his lands so long as she did not remarry. He gave the lands to his son John after Elizabeth died or remarried. One third of his personal estate was to go to Elizabeth, with the rest divided among his children. It does not mention Currioman Plantation. He appointed James Bourcing, whom he described as his brother-in-law, as the executor of his estate. He wanted James to bring up all his children in the Roman Catholic faith.¹⁸⁸

Thomas of St. Marys was obviously Roman Catholic.¹⁸⁹ Although Col. Speke's family had strong Catholic traditions, he apparently lived his life in Virginia as a Protestant. Although both men had a Catholic background, it does not establish any family tie because of the distance between their likely Catholic families in England.

¹⁸⁴Elise Greenup Jourdan, Abstracts of Charles County, Maryland Court & Land Records (1993), Volume 2, page 104, citing Liber M, page 32.

¹⁸⁵Archives of Maryland, Volume 40, page 310 and Volume 42, page 212, abstracted by Joyce B. Candland.

¹⁸⁶Jourdan, Abstracts of Charles County, Maryland Court & Land Records, Volume 2, page 95.

¹⁸⁷Ibid., pages 90 and 100.

¹⁸⁸St. Marys County, Maryland Will Liber 2, Folio 160; Speak/e/s Family Association Bulletin, Volume 1, No. 3, page 18.

¹⁸⁹Ibid.

Other Speakes in Seventeenth Century Virginia

Col. Thomas and Thomas of St. Marys were not the only Speakes in Virginia and Maryland in the 17th Century. In 1640, Mr. Robert Speake was assessed 100 pounds of tobacco as a “guift” to the Church of England in Lower Norfolk County, Virginia.¹⁹⁰ A Thomas Speks witnessed the will of Robert Porter in Norfolk County dated 4 October 1666.¹⁹¹ On 29 April 1668, a patent of 5,878 acres in Charles City County, Virginia was granted to Thomas and Henry Batts for the transportation of 118 persons, one of whom was Roger Speake.¹⁹²

In 1669, Mary Speake was listed in the Westmoreland County inventory of the estate of Richard Sturman as a servant with five years to serve.¹⁹³ Mary was not listed in the 1673 inventory of that estate,¹⁹⁴ even though she should have had another year of servitude. Her last name is hard to read in the original record, and, while it is possible that her name is not Speake, that is the most likely translation. Richard Sturman was a neighbor of Col. Speke.

Jane Speake immigrated to Maryland in 1670.¹⁹⁵ That is the same year that Thomas of St. Marys was granted land for completing his servitude.

On 21 November 1677, Henry Speake recorded a power of attorney to receive tobacco due him in Westmoreland County.¹⁹⁶ The original is not clear. In one place, the name looks like Sparke, but the signature is Speake. The document is written in a manner similar to those in which an overseas merchant is trying to collect debts. However, Henry Speake is not identified by location or occupation.

¹⁹⁰Lower Norfolk County Virginia Antiquary, Volume 1, page 141.

¹⁹¹Charles Fleming McIntosh, Abstract of Norfolk County Wills, page 25; Norfolk County, Virginia Will Book E, Folio 19.

¹⁹²Nugent, Cavaliers and Pioneers, Volume II, page 35, citing Patent Book 6, page 126.

¹⁹³Westmoreland County Deeds, Patents, Etc. 1665-1677, pages 54-55.

¹⁹⁴Ibid., pages 154-154a.

¹⁹⁵Skorgas, The Early Settlers of Maryland, page 433; Maryland Patent Book 16, Folio 482.

¹⁹⁶Ibid., page 354; John Frederick Dorman, Westmoreland County Virginia Deeds, Patents, Etc. 1665-1677, Part Four (1975), page 25.

Seventeenth century colonists in Virginia and Maryland suffered high mortality rates. It is likely that these Speakes died before they had any descendants or purchased any land.

We have already discussed two other Speakes mentioned in the Westmoreland County records between 1668 and 1691. However, there is no record of either of them ever coming to Virginia. John Speake, Col. Speke's brother, was still living in 1668 and 1670 when he sent an invoice and signed a power of attorney to collect on goods he had sent to Thomas Gerard in Virginia.¹⁹⁷ Some of the goods had been sent on the ship Delight of Bristol. John died in late January or early February 1669/1670. He was buried at Box in Wiltshire on 4 February 1669/1670.¹⁹⁸

His son, Hugh Speak of Bath, deeded land in Westmoreland County, probably his father's half interest in Currioman Plantation, to Henry Totterdale. This deed was produced in Court and recorded in 1691.¹⁹⁹

Conclusion

Based on all of the above, it is almost inconceivable that Thomas of St. Marys was the son of Col. Speke. The records in Virginia indicate that Thomas, Jr. died without issue. A valuable tract of land was transferred through both the Speak and Gerard families as if Thomas had died without issue. Thomas of St. Marys endured hardships in Maryland to receive land worth far less. Finally, he made no attempt to challenge the loss of the property, even though he had the opportunity to do so in 1674.

The son of Col. Thomas Speke was an heir to a large estate and a member of the Virginia gentry. He was apparently educated and could write his name. He was too young to file a lawsuit in Maryland in 1662, he would never have described himself as a tailor in 1663, and he never would have become an indentured servant working for the right to have 50 acres. Furthermore, he would not have lost the

¹⁹⁷Westmoreland County Deeds, Patents, Etc. 1665-1677, pages 103-103a.

¹⁹⁸Letter dated 2 March 1998 from John D. Speake to John S. Morris, III.

¹⁹⁹Westmoreland County Order Book 1690-1698, page 18a.

ability to write.

The name Speake was not so rare that there could not have been two Thomas Speakes living across the Potomac River from each other. While it might seem incredible given their proximity and the rarity of the name Speak/e/s in this country, all evidence indicates that these men were two different people, from two entirely different social and financial backgrounds, and probably from families in two different parts of England, quite likely without any common ancestry.