

# Lawrence, Etc.

The official newsletter of "The First Peele Family In America"



Volume 15 Issue 1

ISSN # 1534-4460

January – March 2015

***Those who don't remember their ancestors don't deserve to be remembered!***

## ***From The Editor***

It seems like the longest winter that we have had in Texas. It just lingered. Although not extremely cold, but colder than usual. Trish and I managed to get our garden planted and then in mid-March we headed to North Carolina to get more work done on the old home place. This newsletter was sent via mail and email from Hamlet, North Carolina.

In the last quarterly of *Lawrence, Etc.*, we highlighted an interesting article from Cousin Carlise Moncrief telling how she is related to the reigning Queen of England. For many of you, it traced your line back through the Woodard family line back to the 1500s. I hope you enjoyed learning more of your lineage, after all that is what this newsletter is all about -- genealogy.

This quarterly highlights another interesting relationship-article by my Cousin-Professor Milton Schroth on his arduous research for those of you who are descendents of President John Adams. Are you a descendent of John Adams? Do you know whether or not you are? The discussion of whether Isaac Passco Peele's wife Tabitha Dunigan was the illegitimate daughter of President John Adams goes back many years in my work but thanks to Milton, we now have a conclusion.

Milton reminded me, as he was writing the article, that even I posted a query on what was then "Quaker-Roots" back in 2001, now archived as part of Ancestry. I looked back in my records and found that in 1996, I had been communicating with Rhea (Stump) Rice, a descendent of Sarah Ann "Sally" Peele, (born 1859) who married Christopher Columbus Longnecker. Rhea is now Rhea Lowe having remarried after her husband's death. Rhea provided a copy of the Bible register for the family of William Peele, Sr. (1786-1859) and his wife Sarah "Sally" Cox (1783-1839).

Then in the later 1990s, I communicated with Arzilla Gewertz who furnished other documents which I sent to Cousin Milton. Among those were her family tree and a statement in her letter that her ancestor Judge William Adams Peele (the son of Tabitha Dunigan and Passco Peele) had said to William T. Noble that he was the great grandson of President John Adams. This article begins on the next page.

In the obituaries, we have two that are related. Sadly, Kimball Taylor Peele and his brother Herbert Edwin lost their mother on the 18<sup>th</sup> of January and then Kim lost his wife, within two days, on the 20<sup>th</sup>. We extend our condolences.

Enjoy your read.

PS. I still have 29 copies of the *Peele Heritage*.

## **IN THIS ISSUE**

***From The Editor*** 1

***The Case For Tabitha Dunigan Peele Being The Illegitimate Daughter of President John Adams*** 2

### ***Obituaries***

***Claudia Mae Burtin*** 9

***Nancy Peele Drennan*** 10

***Martha Mendenhall Peele*** 10

***Mary Ruth Peele*** 11



**Background on President John Adams.** John Adams was called by his opposition a “hideous “hermaphroditic character” who smuggled prostitutes into the country from England and planned to marry-off one of his daughters to King George III to establish a royal blood line into his family. Obviously, his political opposition made “sex” an issue. As you may know, Jefferson had an illegitimate child with a black maid, thus it was important for Adams to have a moral image as he ran against him for the presidency.

Also, there were massive politics involved in getting the colonial states to cooperate to fight the British. It would have been akin to committing public suicide for the Peelle family, living in North Carolina, to have said anything that would have besmirched John Adams’ reputation before and during the election. It also would have been very dangerous to rile John Adams and especially his rabid supporters. The Peelles had to be a very smart, prudent family and now we can appreciate this even more.

Adams was a prolific erudite writer with over 1,100 letters in archives. No one else, historically, comes close to that record. That is why we know so much about him. But hidden in his deep dark secrets is the following connection.

## **The Case For Tabitha Dunigan Peelle Being The Illegitimate Daughter Of President John Adams, 1735-1826**

**Milton N. Schroth<sup>1</sup> and Horace B. Peele<sup>2</sup>**

There has been consistent family lore among Peelle ancestors that Tabitha Dunigan (1755-1826) was the illegitimate daughter of the future President John Adams. She married Isaac Passco Peelle (1733-1807) in 1775. There has been some speculation as to whom her mother may have been since John Adams married Abigail Smith (1744-1818), in 1764, age 20, daughter of William Smith. We decided to evaluate all the information we could find for credibility, consistency and then present an analysis, pro and con that hopefully might lead to a reasonable conclusion.

The task was started knowing full well when dealing with historical events that proof often is impossible. Documents do not exist, data are incorrect and not sourced, and reports written in the past have conflicting conclusions. In addition, over time the substance of data and stories may have become altered.

When investigating family lineages, important sources include town and church archives, family bibles, microfilmed records, and censuses. Often, it is very much like working with a jigsaw puzzle. One must gather the pieces and hopefully enough will fit together to provide a meaningful picture. Family lore can provide important complementary pieces.

We began with the hypothesis that the overall gist of family lore is often correct but the accuracy depends greatly on the nature of the spoken word that was passed between generations. Verbal information consisting of a simple statement such as “my mother said that Tabitha Dunigan was the illegitimate daughter of President John Adams” is much less likely to have become corrupted than hand me down family stories and discussions of historical events.

An evaluation of five different lines of evidence was made. It also seemed germane to include some history concerning the life and customs during those times, particularly the consequences of illegitimacy. Where appropriate, reference was made to biographies of John Adams and

other published documents. These biographies present an outstanding picture of what life was like in the 1700s and early 1800s for families such as Adams, Sr. and William Smith.

**Life and Customs in Puritan Massachusetts:** The social context of Massachusetts in the late 17<sup>th</sup> and early 18<sup>th</sup> century greatly discouraged illegitimacy. Bastardy laws were enacted to not only discourage, but also punish those who violated social norms. Although bastardy laws evolved and varied somewhat among states, none were stricter than in the puritanically founded state of Massachusetts where John Adams was raised. The severity of the bastardy laws began to diminish by the late 1700's, but children born out-of-wedlock continued to have few rights. Also, prominent families did not consider "a bastard" as good marriage material to be welcomed into their family. The Adams and Smith families were both deeply religious and pillars within the community with the patriarchs John Adams, Sr. and William Smith serving as Deacon and Minister, respectively, in their local churches. Under these circumstances, there would have been tremendous pressure from church and family to uphold the virtues of celibacy prior to marriage. Socially prominent families such as the Adams and Smiths would have withheld and hidden any violation from the community.

**Tabitha Dunigan's Birth Mother:** We began by examining the possibility that Abigail Smith was the mother of Tabitha prior to marriage with John Adams. Despite bastardy laws, illegitimacy during those times still was not uncommon, even for socially prominent families. Many ardent love letters were penned between John Adams and Abigail Smith and it was well known that Adams had a great interest in women. As an elderly man, he wrote he was "of an amorous disposition", and from as early as ten or eleven years of age had been "very fond of the society of females". Yet he kept himself in rein, he later insisted (David McCullough, Reference 1 below). Page Smith in his biography (Reference 2) about Adams writes of love making between Adams and Abigail with passages such as "Increasingly their meetings, starting in conversation, ended in love making that threatened at times to sweep them both from the moorings of prudence and restraint". This and other such writings could cause readers to interpret such passages as leading to sexual intercourse.

There was no question that young John Adams had a lust for women. He compounded suspicions by writing an elegant denial of his philandering as quoted by David McCullough (1):

- "I shall draw no characters nor give any enumeration of my youthful flames."
- "This I will say---they were all modest and virtuous girls and always maintained that character through life".
- "No father, brother, son or friend had cause of grief or resentment for any intercourse between me and any daughter, sister, mother, or any other relation of the female sex."
- "My children may be assured that no illegitimate brother or sister exists or ever existed."

Did Adams keep himself in rein with regard to the virtuous girls as proclaimed? What about poor, destitute and non-virtuous women during that era? It is difficult to determine the truth considering politicians' proclivity for denying sexual dalliances that continues to this day.

The speculation in one lineage that Abigail may have been the mother had no basis from our examination of data. The birth records (3) and other data showed that it would have been almost impossible. As indicated earlier, Abigail was born in 1744. Tabitha, although there is no record of birth, was likely born about 1755. This was determined by examining the birth dates of her children with husband Isaac Passco Peelle. Her first child Sarah was born in 1776 and the last one, Celia, in 1795, thus indicating she gave birth to children from about age 21 to 40. That would mean that Abigail would have given birth to Tabitha at the earliest around age 11 or at 14 at the latest. It should be noted that John Adams did not begin dating Abigail until she was

about age 15 and at that time she suffered from poor health. Both McCullough (1) and Smith (2) wrote about Abigail having a sickly childhood that lingered on for many years. In the 1700's many children were sickly and often did not survive. There were no vaccinations and people knew little about fungi and bacteria and how they were spread. Thus, survival depended a large part on sanitation, good nutrition, and building-up natural resistance. Abigail as an adult was no longer sickly and became a force in her own right.

**Evaluating five pieces of evidence:** The first piece of evidence consists of a telephone conversation that Horace Peele had with a distant Peelle relative. The relative said he had a document written by an attorney stating that Tabitha Dunigan was the illegitimate daughter of John Adams. Horace does not have the document but the conversation is an independent corroboration of information passed down by another Peelle relative. The statement can be found at "Archiver.rootsweb.ancestry.com" on the Internet.

The next pieces of evidence come from two separate Peelle lineages with one having two significant parts. Our analysis began with the lineage named for convenience "Wright to Robert Peelle".

Robert Peelle (1709-1782) was the father of Isaac Passco Peelle and his daughter in law was Tabitha Dunigan. The family lore consists only of a simple one-sentence statement that "Tabitha Dunigan was the illegitimate daughter of President John Adams". Nothing was written to evaluate. But it was important to examine the time periods when the descendants were alive, and the number of the descendants that passed on the information. The ladder of connections and dates from current to the past is presented in Figure 1.

Emma Peelle Benson Wright (1881-1968) told her daughter (Florence Wright Schroth (1904-2000) and her grandson Milt Schroth many times that they were directly related to President John Adams. Tabitha was the third and fourth great grandmother of Florence and Milt, respectively. Emma Wright's mother was Rachel Peele (Benson) (1846-1901). It is noteworthy that Rachel, her father Passco Peelle (1822-1908) and Passco's father, William Peele (1786-1859), all lived in the same Indiana community, Randolph County, at the same time. This is highly significant when considering the accuracy of passed down information. Thus, Rachel's life span overlapped those of her father Passco and Grandfather William, Tabitha's son, by 13 years. It is reasonable to conclude that grandmother Emma got the simple message about Tabitha being the illegitimate daughter of Adams from a grouping of three ancestors of like mind. No doubt the message to these ancestors originated from William who likely got it from his mother Tabitha or father Passco. It should be noted that Tabitha in her later years also lived in the same small community as the aforementioned descendants.

Information from the second lineage, named "Noble to Robert Peelle (Figure 1), provided several significant pieces of evidence. Arzilla Gewertz (1922-2005) wrote a letter to Horace Peele in 1999 which also included some documents. Arzilla indicated her information came from her father, Robert Peele Noble (1870-1929), who had done a genealogical study of their ancestry. Unfortunately, Arzilla's father died when she was age seven and the basis of her recollections could not be fully determined. No doubt her mother Helen Arzilla Stephens Noble (1892-1963) ensured that the information was passed to Arzilla. A pedigree written by her father was also included in the documents sent to Horace. In her letter, Arzilla mentioned a very important statement that she attributed to her great grandfather Judge William Adams Peelle (1819-1902). Notably, Judge Peelle was also Secretary of State for Indiana and corresponded with President Lincoln. We now examine that statement.

In fairness to Arzilla, the letter and enclosed documents were not intended for publication; she was asking for confirmation of her recollections and materials left by her father. There were obvious errors in interpretation that crept in over the years, requiring the differentiation between muddled information and facts. It was important to identify who said what, when, and to whom.

I am a son of  
 William T. Noble and  
 Narcissa C. Noble nee Peelle  
 grandson of  
 William A. Peelle and  
 Eveline Peelle nee Boyd  
 great-grandson of  
 William Peelle and  
 Sarah Peelle nee Cox  
 great-great-grandson of  
 Pasco Peelle and  
 Tabitha Peelle nee Adams (his wife)  
 great-great-great-grandson of  
 John Adams and  
 Abigail Adams nee Smith  
 his wife  
 John Adams the ex-president  
 was the father of  
 Tabitha who was illegitimate  
 On statement of  
 W.A. Peelle!

Written by Arzilla's Father  
 Robert William Peelle Noble

In her letter she stated, "During my father's genealogical research, Judge Wm. A. Peelle (his grandfather) stated to him that Tabitha (his daughter-in-law) was the illegitimate daughter of John Adams, ex-president of the U.S.A. and Abigail nee: Smith. This statement by Wm. A. Peelle was made to my father, R.P. Noble, who wrote it down." The picture to the left is part of a chart written by Noble that supports Arzilla's statement above that he wrote it down.

We next examined Arzilla's quote in its entirety with respect to her recollections, especially the part of who said what, when and to whom. Her chronology of ancestors and events were not supported by documented events and timelines. The inferred father-in-law would have been Robert Peelle (1709-1782). However, he could not have spoken to Judge William Adams Peelle (1819-1902) as they lived during different time periods. Nevertheless, it is likely from timelines that he was the knowledgeable Peelle that knew about Tabitha's past.

Moreover, Judge Peelle could not have spoken to his grandfather Isaac Passco Peelle (1733-1807) because he died before the judge was born and was about age seven when Tabitha died. The likely person that could have conveyed this type of information to Judge Peelle would have been his father William Peelle, the son of Tabitha. William Peelle was the last common ancestor between the two lineages presented in Figure 1.

Arzilla's written recollections are an example how family stories passed down through generations can become altered in time. Also, it is doubtful that anybody in the Peelle family in the mid to early 1800s would have said that Abigail was the mother. There was no mention of this from the Wright lineage.

A highly significant piece of information concerning William Peelle is his giving the name Adams as the middle name to his son, Judge William **Adams** Peelle. Obviously, the father believed his mother Tabitha was the daughter of President John Adams. It is not insignificant that this was done after both John and Abigail Adams had died. By that time, there would be no scandal, no political repercussions, and few would care.

Negative evidence can be positive: A notable piece of supporting evidence is the secrecy of Tabitha's birth. She was not officially adopted since no family name could be found nor was

there any information about who raised her. There also are no data to prove that Tabitha was not the daughter of John Adams. It is difficult to conclude anything other than the particulars of her birth were a well-kept secret for years. The data for Peelle ancestry before and after Tabitha have been well searched. When experimentally testing a hypothesis, one negative finding, such as the discovery of a birth record, or identifying an ancestor, can be so powerful that it negates all positive information. None were found and it was like Tabitha did not exist until she married Isaac Passco Peelle.

**Discussion:** It is important when evaluating a historical society to not use modern day customs and mores when making judgments and speculations about behavior patterns centuries ago, especially with regard to illegitimacy. Moneyed families had many ways of covering-up a potential family disaster. In the case of the Adams, a well-respected religious family, every effort would have been made to hide a misdeed, especially for a son, who graduated from Harvard at age 16 with a very promising future. He was a bachelor until age 29. In those days, illegitimate babies often were not baptized and Parsons of important parishioners were known to omit the father's name on church birth records. Also, mothers were sent to distant areas to give birth, and arrangements were made for families to care and raise a child, leaving little trace of the past or records. It is logical to speculate that prominent families would have continued to fund care takers or families that raised an illegitimate child provided secrecy was maintained.

When considering bastardy laws and public mores of the 1700's, it is reasonable to assume that if Tabitha were the daughter of Adams, great care would have been given to protect the child from ostracism and to maintain secrecy. The stigma of being illegitimate would have had serious consequences to all concerned and especially to young Tabitha. Politically, it would have been very unwise to besmirch the reputation of a living President and his family. Both John Adams and Tabitha died around the same time, in 1826.

There is no evidence when the Peelle family or Tabitha learned of her past although the letter from Arzilla Gewertz to Horace suggested that Robert Peelle (1709-1882) knew and transmitted the information to one of his descendants. This could not be confirmed. Tabitha was raised in North Carolina in the same general area as Peelle families, but it is not known where she was born or how she got there, and who raised her. Secrets seldom remain as secrets forever. However, for now It will stay a mystery when the Peelle family first became involved in her life and also the identity of her mother. Because of the many consequences of illegitimacy during those years, it is logical that nothing would go public until after John Adams had died. History is such that over time the significance of transgressions greatly diminishes in the eye of the public.

**Conclusion:** All the available evidence supports family lore that young John Adams was the father of Tabitha Dunigan (Peelle). The act would have occurred during his bachelor years that ended at age 29, when he married Abigail. The different sources of information all support this view despite some errors in recollections, which do not detract from the overall conclusion. The inability to find any data that refute the conclusion adds to the evidence. It is significant that the son of Tabitha, William Peelle, named his son William **Adams** Peelle. Nothing was found that might explain the surname Dunigan or who raised Tabitha. It is acknowledged that the different lines of evidence do not provide absolute proof. Arzilla indicated in her letter that other Peelle relatives have important documents. We hope that after reading this they will contact us. In concluding this investigation, we cite Occam's razor, a principle made popular by an English Franciscan Friar and scholastic philosopher and theologian (1287-1347). Loosely translated he suggested "the simplest explanation is generally the correct one."

## Notes, references and Figures:

<sup>1</sup>**Milton N. Schroth.** Professor and chair, emeritus, Plant Pathology Dept.\ESPM, University of California, Berkeley. 7 Heather Lane, Orinda Ca. 94563.

<sup>2</sup>**Horace B. Peele.** Historian and author of "The First Peele Family In America since 1601". 5 Champion Trail, San Antonio, TX, 78258.

1. David McCullough. "John Adams". Simon and Schuster Paperbacks. 2001. 751 pp.
2. Page Smith. "John Adams" Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1962. 1170 pp., vol. 1 & 2.
3. Horace B. Peele. "The First Peele Family In America", "Peele Chronicles". Printed by Brandt Doubleday, Inc., of Iowa, 2013.

Figure 1. In the end, this chart depicts two columns of two lineages showing blood descendants of Robert Peele, the father of Isaac Passco Peele and father in-law of Tabitha Dunigan. The maiden names were used to help show the connections. Down the left side is the Wright lineage while down the right side is the Noble lineage.

### Wright to Robert Peele Lineage

### Noble to Robert Peele Lineage

Robert Peele (1709-1782)

Isaac Passco Peele (1733-1807)	X	Tabitha Dunigan (abt 1755-1826)
William Peele (1786-1859)	X	Sarah Cox (1783-1839)
Passco Peele (1822-1908)		William <b>Adams</b> Peele (1819-1902)
Rachel Peele Benson (1846-1901)		Narcissa E. Peele (abt 1847-1900)
Emma Benson Wright (1881-1968)		Robert W. Peele Noble (1870-1929)
Florence M. Wright (1904-2000)		Arzilla Noble Gewertz (1922-2005)

End of Article. Thank You Cousin Milton. Great work, just like a Peele!

---

Let's look at some background information on Passco. He incidentally is buried very close, less than ten miles, from where I was raised in Richmond County, North Carolina. I have been in the cemetery where we believe he is buried many times. His grave is unmarked.

**Isaac "Passco" Peele (1733-1807)**, the second child of Robert Peele (1709-1782) and Elizabeth Edgerton (1712-1749), was born in Nansemond County, Virginia, on 29 July 1733. He made his first move when he moved to Northampton County, NC in 1741 with his father where he lived until 1773 when he and his younger brother David (1751-1803) moved to Dobbs County, NC.

Passco married **Tabitha Dunigan (1755-1826)** about 1775, probably in Dobbs County. A note from Milton:

It is interesting that Tabitha is 22 years younger than Passco. There must be story why a young woman would marry such an older man. As previously stated, "bastards" had no status in those days. I wondered if Isaac was married before or what, but could not find anything in particular with respect to children etc. As I stated before, I made the determination of her birth date by checking the dates when she gave birth to children along with some other factors. Also interesting to me, is that most of the dates for her

birth on the internet (there were many) had it as 1755, but no source was listed-ever. Somewhere along the line, somebody did a good determination of her date of birth and I wondered if they had a good source. Being that once a date is established on the web, the copycats take over---curious.

On Dec 18, 1759, Passco was one of 152 persons in Northampton County to sign the petition for the formation of Hereford County. His first land patent in old Dobbs County was for 640 acres on 13 April 1773, located East of Bass's Swamp. He was also one of the founding fathers of Wayne County; he signed the petition to form that county in 1779. Most of Passco's children moved south to Richmond County, NC. His daughter Anna married Thomas Parker of Richmond County on 3 March 1803. Aging, Passco moved to Richmond County in December 1803 to be with his family. He died there in 1807.

After Passco's death, his family and Thomas Parker's family moved from Richmond County, NC to Indiana. The widow Tabitha sold her land on the North/South Carolina border area in 1815 and soon moved with her son John to Indiana. Due to their departure from Richmond County, Passco's grave was never permanently marked. It is believed that he is buried in the Old Pate Cemetery on Fletcher Road in Scotland County, North Carolina, which was in Richmond County until the county split in 1899. His children are some of the first settlers in Indiana. His daughter Anna and her husband are recognized as the first white settlers in Randolph County, while his son John settled in Wayne County.

### ***Descendants of Isaac "Passco" Peelle***

1. **Isaac "Passco"<sup>6</sup> Peelle** (Robert<sup>5</sup>, Robert<sup>4</sup>, Robert<sup>3</sup>, Robert<sup>2</sup>, Lawrence<sup>1</sup>) was born 29 Jul 1733 in Upper Parish, Nansemond Co., VA, and died 01 Jan 1807 in Probably in Unmarked Grave in Old Pate Cemetery, Richmond Co., NC. He married **Tabitha (Dunigan) Adams** 1775 in Dobbs Co., NC, daughter of John Adams and Abigail Smith. She was born Abt. 1755, and died Abt. 1826 in Wayne Co., IN.

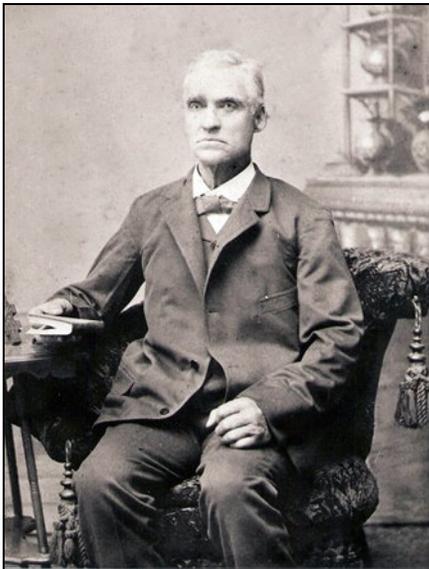
Notes for Isaac "Passco" Peelle: !There are two versions of Robert Peelle's will, Passco's father. The first dated 1 January 1782 and the last dated 21 January 1782. The first version was re-written because it contained a major error, it had the last name as "Peele" instead of "Peelle" throughout the document. It also did not include the item on the schooling of his grandchildren, Joel and Charity Peelle, the children of Jeremiah who died in 1779. Also in the first version, his second son Isaac was called by his real name "Isaac" and not by his accepted and preferred nickname of "Passco". Why Passco did not use his original name of "Isaac" will always be a mystery. Passco could not write, he signed his "X" with the spelling of "Passcho" in his own will, written by a scribe or lawyer in 1806.

Children of Isaac Peelle and Tabitha Adams are:

- 2 i. Sarah<sup>7</sup> Peelle, born 07 Apr 1776 in Wayne Co., NC; died 23 Sep 1795 in Wayne Co., NC. She married John Overman 20 May 1795 in Contentnea MH, Wayne Co., NC; born 14 Feb 1767 in Wayne Co., NC; died 09 Jun 1842 in Indiana. John Overman and E. Outland led a party of 50 to 55 people from North Carolina to Bloomfield, Parke County, IN on 3-10-1832. It was an overland journey in wagons and on foot. Charity Overman, John's granddaughter, was only five and used to tell that she walked most of the way to save the oxen. When she died in 1900, she was the last of the group that made the trip.
- 3 ii. Nancy Peelle, born 1777 in Wayne Co., NC<sup>4</sup>.
- 4 iii. Anna Peelle, born 02 Oct 1778 in Wayne Co., NC; died 1823, buried in Arba Quaker Cemetery, Randolph, IN. She married Thomas Parker 03 Mar 1803 in Piney Grove, Marlboro Co., SC; born 04 Jul 1778 in Wayne Co., NC; died 28 Dec 1846 in Bartholomew Co., IN.
- 5 iv. Robert Peelle, born 04 Apr 1780 in Wayne Co., NC; died Bef. 1790 in Wayne Co., NC.
- 6 v. Huldah Peelle, born 04 Jun 1783 in Wayne Co., NC. She married William Arnold 23 Apr 1801 in Contentnea MM, Wayne Co., NC; born Bet. 1780 - 1783.
- 7 vi. William Peelle, born 30 Jan 1786 in Wayne Co., NC; died 18 Mar 1859 in Abandoned Baptist Cemetery, near Friendship, Wayne Co., IN. He married Sarah "Sally" Cox 16 May 1808 in Richmond Co., NC; born 12 Apr 1783 in Wayne Co., NC; died 27 Sep 1839, buried in an

Abandoned Baptist Cemetery, near Friendship, Wayne Co., IN. William Peelle went to Indiana in 1820.

- 8 vii. Charlotte "Charity" Peelle, born 26 Sep 1788 in Wayne Co., NC<sup>17</sup>; died 1840. She married Silas Jones 20 Nov 1807 in Richmond Co., NC; born 1786 in Richmond Co., NC; died 1852 in Richmond Co., NC.
- 9 viii. John Peelle, born 27 May 1791 in Wayne Co., NC; died 20 Apr 1879 in Willow Grove Cemetery, Fountain City, Wayne Co., IN. He married Pennina "Penny" Pate 06 Mar 1815 in Richmond Co., NC; born 25 Aug 1795 in Wayne Co., NC; died 28 Jul 1892, buried in Willow Grove Cemetery, Fountain City, Wayne Co., IN. Notes for John Peelle: Three days after their marriage they bade farewell to home and friends, loaded their effects on a two-horse wagon and started for Indiana. (History of Wayne County, Indiana. Volume III. pgs. 355-56, by Joe Scarborough)
- 10 ix. Achsah Peelle, born 16 Sep 1793 in Wayne Co., NC; died 1858 in Arba Quaker Cemetery, Randolph, IN. She married John W. Thomas 16 Jun 1810 in Richmond Co, NC or Marlboro Co., SC; born 19 Aug 1787 in Guilford Co., NC; died 08 Apr 1859, buried in Arba Quaker Cemetery, Randolph, IN.
- 11 x. Celia Peelle, born 17 Dec 1795 in Wayne Co., NC. She married [Mr] Schley; born Abt. 1795.



*Passco Peele (1822-1908)*

**Picture Time!** It would have been nice to have a picture of Passco and Tabitha but I think that was before photography was prevalent. However, Milton provided the image on the left of his grandson Passco Peele (1822-1908), son of William Peelle (1786-1859) and grandson of Tabitha Dunigan (1755-1826) and Isaac Passco Peele (1733-1807). This Passco was a farmer.

Milton says he has pictures of all the relatives from him to the present and he collects such. If you are from this branch, please let Milton know if you have any rare jewels of the family.

We hope that you have learned a lot from this article. I have, Cousin Milton really did a lot of research over the years to document his findings. Again, Thanks Cousin Milton. All of those Cousins related to President John Adams owe you a big THANKS!

## ***Family Obituaries***



*Claudia Burtin*

**Claudia Mae Burtin**, daughter of Loyd and Effie (**Peele**) Wilkerson, was born on May 14, 1925 in rural Dallas County Missouri, and departed this life on January 8, 2015 in Washington, Missouri. At the time of her passing she was 89 years, 7 months, and 25 days of age. Claudia graduated from Buffalo High School in Buffalo, Missouri. After high school, she attended Southwest Missouri State and earned a degree in Education. She taught school for 36 years in Dallas County and in Independence, Missouri. In 1946 she was married to Harold Barnett. In 1970 she was united in marriage with Leland Burtin. They lived in Independence until moving to Springfield in 1986. In the last few months, she had moved to St. Clair to be near her sister Clara. She was a member of Delta Kappa Gamma

Sorority. During WWII she worked for a time at Pratt and Whitney Aircraft Plant. She loved traveling and spending time with friends and family. She was a member of Parkview Christian Church in Springfield, Missouri, having been a member of the Long Lane Christian Church and the Buffalo Christian Church. Claudia was preceded in death by her husband Leland Burtin and her parents.

She is survived by her sister, Clara & husband Don Hall; nephew, Daniel & wife Jill Hall; great-niece, Jessica Hall & fiancé Dylan Cody; great-nephew, Chase Hall; three step children, Jerry Burtin, Shirley Radar, and Janice Van Buskirk; and several cousins. Funeral services will be conducted at 10:00 a.m. on Monday, January 12, 2015 at the Cantlon Otterness Funeral Home with Pastor Brad Smith officiating. Escorts will be Daniel Hall, Chase Hall, Dylan Cody, John Peele, John Hodges, Chester McMillin, and Jerry Burtin. Interment will be in Memorial Gardens of Memory under the direction of the Cantlon Otterness Funeral Home of Buffalo. (Contributed by Clara Hall)

Genealogical Line -- 11<sup>th</sup> generation to Lawrence through her mother Effie Lydia Peele: **Claudia Mae<sup>11</sup> (Wilkerson) Burtin**, Effie Lydia<sup>10</sup> Peele, John Henry<sup>9</sup> Peelle, John Hare<sup>8</sup>, James<sup>7</sup>, Edmund<sup>6</sup>, John Jellary<sup>5</sup>, Robert<sup>4</sup>, Robert<sup>3</sup>, Robert<sup>2</sup>, Lawrence<sup>1</sup>) [Claudia and her sister Clara are my 6<sup>th</sup> cousins once removed. Clara has always been a great supporter of my genealogy work.]



*Nancy Drennan*

Dallas, North Carolina – **Nancy Peele Drennan**, 75, passed away peacefully on January 10, 2015 surrounded by her loving family at CaroMont Regional Medical Center. She was born in Laurinburg, NC, on June 4, 1939 to the late William and Mamie Watson Peele.

She was preceded in death by her brothers and sisters, Mack Peele, Judy Wallace, Harold Peele, Frances Caulder and Billy Peele. Nancy retired from Carolina Mills with over 35 years of service. She was a loving mother and grandmother.

She is survived by her children Sheila Hoyle (Todd) of Dallas, Jerry Drennan (Sally) of Gastonia, Lisa Terry (Scott) of Gastonia; and Randy Drennan (Karla) of Kings Mloountain; Six grandchildren, Allison, Sarah, Lily, Dalton, Madison, Mallory and Ayla; and a great granddaughter Rylan; and a sister, Shirley Warshauer (Steve) of Manning, SC.

Private Memorial service will be 1:00 pm, Monday January 12th at Withers & Whisenant Funeral Home with Reverend Bob Cloninger officiating. Memorials may be made to: [Gaston Hospice](#), P.O. Box 3984, Gastonia, NC 28054.

Condolences may be made to [www.withersandwhisenantfuneral.com](http://www.withersandwhisenantfuneral.com) Withers and Whisenant Funeral Home and Cremation Service, 2916 Union Rd Gastonia, 704-864-5144 is serving the Family. (Contributed by Steve and Shirley Warshauer.)

Genealogical Line -- 13<sup>th</sup> generation to Lawrence: **Nancy Louise<sup>13</sup> Peele** (William Bryant "Bill"<sup>12</sup>, Thadius James<sup>11</sup>, Eli Franklin<sup>10</sup>, William "Bill"<sup>9</sup> Peelle, Robert<sup>8</sup>, David<sup>7</sup>, Robert<sup>6</sup>, Robert<sup>5</sup>, Robert<sup>4</sup>, Robert<sup>3</sup>, Robert<sup>2</sup>, Lawrence<sup>1</sup>) [Nancy was my half 2<sup>nd</sup> cousin once removed. I can't even think that, but my computer says it is true.]



The next two obituaries are related.



*Martha Peele*

**Martha Lillian Mendenhall Peele**, age 86, of Williamston, NC, died Sunday 1/18/15 after illness from heart disease. Martha was born and raised in Bear Grass, where she played high school basketball. She married Reginald Parker Peele in 1948.

She worked at WIAM radio station in Williamston prior to her employment and retirement from the Martin County Office of the Clerk of Court. She has been a lifelong member of the Presbyterian Church, first in Bear Grass, then in Williamston. She was one of the oldest breast cancer survivors in Martin County, and was an active supporter of the American Cancer Society.

She is predeceased by her parents, Pete Mendenhall and Essie Taylor Mendenhall, as well as by her husband R. Parker Peele, who died in 2008.

Surviving are her sisters, Joyce Mendenhall Lewis of Greenville and Dorothy Mendenhall Whichard of Williamston; her son **Kimball Taylor Peele and his wife Mary Ruth Peele** of Round Hill, VA, her son Herbert Edwin (Chip) Peele of Williamston, her granddaughter Elizabeth Peele Heck and great grandson Keaton Parker Heck of King, NC.

Funeral services will be held at Williamston Presbyterian Church on Wednesday 1/21/2015 at 11:00 am, followed by burial at Woodlawn Cemetery. Memorial contributions may be made to the Williamston Presbyterian Church, 125 E. Main St. Williamston NC 27892 or to the American cancer Society. (Obtained from the internet.)

Genealogical Line -- 10<sup>th</sup> generation to Lawrence through her spouse: **Reginald Parker<sup>10</sup> Peele** (Herbert Daniel<sup>9</sup>, Jesse Biggs<sup>8</sup> Peal, Abijah Sylvester<sup>7</sup>, Thomas<sup>6</sup>, William<sup>5</sup> Peelle, William<sup>4</sup>, Robert<sup>3</sup>, Robert<sup>2</sup>, Lawrence<sup>1</sup>) [Reginald Parker Peele was my 6<sup>th</sup> Cousin twice removed.]



*Mary Ruth Peele*

**Mary Ruth Hayes Peele** died on January 20th 2015 at Potomac Falls Health and Rehabilitation Center, Sterling, Virginia.

Mary Ruth was born on December 1st 1952 in Washington DC to Martha Van Sant Hayes and John Keller Hayes. She was the first of three children and grew up in Arlington, Virginia. She attended Washington-Lee High School and was the first female member of the high school crew team, as coxswain. She attended the University of Virginia where she earned a BA in English Language & Literature in 1975 and a Masters in Education from the Curry School of Education in 1976. She continued her participation with the crew team at UVA. Mary Ruth was a member of the second class of female students admitted to the University of Virginia, and she remained a proud alum of The University.

Mary Ruth began her career as a counselor in the Arlington County Juvenile Court System. She was a resident of Round Hill, Virginia since 1983. She was active in the community, helping with the restoration of Ford's Store into the current Round Hill Town Office, where she served on the Round Hill Planning Commission. Mary Ruth married Kimball Taylor Peele on July 4th 1983 at their home, the Copeland House, in Round Hill.

Most notably, Mary Ruth was the owner and proprietor of the much-loved Copeland House Antiques shop, known for its Garden Thyme spring event and annual Christmas open house. Mary Ruth was a strong supporter of local artists and frequently promoted folk art and pottery from the mid-Atlantic region in her shop, which was located in an historic storefront in Round Hill. She was also a long-standing member and friend of the Museum of the Shenandoah Valley, and an avid cook, gardener and pet-owner.

Mary Ruth is survived by her beloved husband Kimball Taylor Peele, her mother Martha Van Sant Hayes of Bluemont, brother John Van Sant Hayes and his wife Vicki Lee Simons of Charlottesville, sister Suzanne Hayes and her husband Michael Willard Chellman, and her nephew John Hayes Chellman of Arlington. Mary Ruth also held dear her cousin Melissa Hayes Converse and her husband Mark Converse and their children Hayes and Mary Shea Converse, of Tall Timbers, Maryland.

The placard beside the door to Mary Ruth's home reads "***Peele House: Our feet may leave, but not our hearts.***" This was the feeling that all who entered Mary Ruth's home enjoyed. Mary Ruth was the organizer of family celebrations and hosted countless joyous and unforgettable family events. She opened her home and her life to children and animals with love and support, and will be remembered most fondly for the generous heart she held beneath her quick wit and keen mind.

Contributions in Mary Ruth's name can be made to the Museum of the Shenandoah Valley, 901 Amherst St., Winchester VA 22601 or [www.themsv.org/support](http://www.themsv.org/support). (Obtained from the internet.)

Genealogical Line -- 11<sup>th</sup> generation to Lawrence through her spouse: **Kimball Taylor "Kim"<sup>11</sup> Peele** (Reginald Parker<sup>10</sup>, Herbert Daniel<sup>9</sup>, Jesse Biggs<sup>8</sup> Peal, Abijah Sylvester<sup>7</sup>, Thomas<sup>6</sup>, William<sup>5</sup> Peelle, William<sup>4</sup>, Robert<sup>3</sup>, Robert<sup>2</sup>, Lawrence<sup>1</sup>) [According to my computer, Kim is my 7<sup>th</sup> Cousin once removed.]

**“Lawrence, Etc.”  
The Official Newsletter of  
“The First Peele Family in America”.**

**The Peele Family Association  
c/o Horace Peele  
5 Champion Trail  
San Antonio, TX 78258**

**Online: <http://www.peele.info>**

**Email: [horace@peele.info](mailto:horace@peele.info)**

**Lawrence, Etc.** is published quarterly: January-March, April-June, July-September, and October-December. Its title is in honor of the family ancestor **Lawrence Peele** who arrived in Virginia as a young immigrant in 1621. Copies are filed in the Library of Congress.

**TO:**

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

**Editor:** Horace Peele

**Postal Mail subscriptions** for **Lawrence, Etc.** are **\$10.00 per year** to cover the cost for printing and postage. Please send your check to the address above. **Your cancelled check is your receipt.** Donations are accepted to help cover costs for those given to the elderly.

**Email subscriptions** for **Lawrence, Etc.** in PDF format are **FREE** since there is no printing or mailing.

**Helpers - Contributors:**

- Cousin Claudia Williams (Eastern NC - VA)
- Joyce Braswell (Richmond County area)
- Sue Collier (Fantastic Researcher)
- Bobby Boykin (Wilson area.)

**Send your articles, your biography, or family history story to [horace@peele.info](mailto:horace@peele.info) or by postal service to the address above.**

**Copyright 2000 - 2015 Lawrence, Etc.  
All rights reserved - ISSN # 1534-4460**

