

Peter Read

Peter Read was in Charles City County Virginia by 1654. (1) He was listed as a headright of Walter Brooks. The headright system was a plan devised to populate the colony. Every shareholder (or stockholder) in the Virginia Company who transported an emigrant (headright), whether free or bond, to the Colony, acquired a claim to fifty acres if the person remained in Virginia for three years. The patentee was expected to furnish each headright with the necessities of life plus a small tract of land. The contract specified the terms of the indenture. At the end of the time, the indentured servant (or headright) became free to acquire his own land. (2)

By the early 1660s Peter Read, was beginning to appear in the Charles City County court records. In 1662, he was ordered to pay Christia Laud, Constable of Weynoke £200 tobacco according to act "for bringing home his fugitive servant." (3) In August 1662, he refused to give security for the estate of the orphans of Hector Williams and William Pryse. He was ordered to deliver all the estate into the hands of the sheriff of the county. He refused, "and for his contempt and affront to the Court is committed to remaine in the Sheriff's custody till hee bee thence delivered by course of law to the mercy of the court." (4)

In 1665, Peter served on a jury along with John Barker, Moris Rose, and Thomas Harris. In the same year, he witnessed a receipt between Richard Pace, and John Tane. (5) In 1678 "Peter Read, of Merchants Hope, appointed by Captain Wyatt, to impres necessities in 1676 and having used two large casts of his own, never billed, desires pay. Granted." (6) (Merchants Hope is the area now known as Prince George County). At a court held at Westover, Charles City County, Virginia, 17 February 1678/9, Jno Vandevant, servant to Peter Read is judged to be eleven years old." (7)

December 1685 Peter Read and Major Frances Poythress, were joint administrators of the estate of Ann Young. The estate was to be equally divided between orphans of the deceased. Major Poythress and Mr. Robert Bolling gave a bond of £60 Sterling. Mr. Peter Read, and Mr. John Jean gave a bond in the same amount. (8) Ann was the daughter of Peter Read (9) and the widow of Dorrill Young who died circa 1677 in Charles City County, Virginia. (10) Dorrill Young, and Ann Read Young, had four children. A daughter, Joan and sons' John, Thomas and Dorrill Jr. At a court held at Westopher, Charles City County, Virginia, April 3, 1688, Ann Read was granted administration of the estate of her late husband, Peter Read. Ben Traverse acted as security. (11) James Wallis and Edmund Irby were appointed to inventory his estate. (12) At Westopher, on 3 October 1688, Nathaniel Bacon vs. Peter Read's estate was referred to the next court. (13)

Through the years and various wars, many records have been destroyed, so it is impossible to follow the court records of Peter Read's estate to a settlement.