

CONCERNING THE LINEAGE AND THE RESEARCH

What is set out in the Five Generation Chart contained in *The Pamunkey Davenport Papers* is an approximation of the First Five Generations of descendants--proved, circumstantially identified, and/or analytically speculated--of **Davis Davenport** who first appeared in Virginia records in 1704. (His appearance in 1696 was in the private documents of the Waller Family which are now held by the Library of Virginia, the Commonwealth archives.)

While radically improved and considerably more comprehensive than any previous exposition of **Davis'** posterity, this is still an incomplete identification of ancestral beginnings which have been cloaked in confusion for too long. Then too, excepting the late **Harbert Davenport's** research of the 1920s-30s, an effort primarily dedicated to identifying the roots of his ancestor **James Davenport** (who died 1803 in Oglethorpe County, Georgia), there has been little or no systematic attempt heretofore to study **Virginia Davenport** origins and to separate the various **Davenports** into related posterities of an identifiable immigrant or colonial ancestor.

While there is data compiled and annotated elsewhere (see Internet web page at:

< <http://homepages.rootsweb.com/~nvjack/davnport/jamesriverdavenports.pdf> >)

relative to **Lancelot Davenport**, immigrant of 1620 and the first **Davenport** in Virginia (and America as well), there likely exists **Davenport** data still to be found in extant Virginia records. The data is missing only because no one has done the extractions or abstracts required. With the exception of **Harbert Davenport's** work, **Virginia Davenport** research before 1988 largely consisted of library sessions involving repetitiously digging the same names out of the same secondary sources and then trying to paste those names into a line of descent to qualify for DAR, SAR, Colonial Dames, etc memberships. The memberships obtained were too often based on lineages, subsequently published, that are flawed, erroneous, and in some instances totally fallacious.

Many of those who have tried to build on or connect to some of these prestigious society lines have been sorely frustrated--which, exacerbated by the lost records obstacle, explains why **Virginia Davenport** roots identification went virtually nowhere from the 1930s until January, 1998, when a number of **Pamunkey Davenport** researchers, recognizing their common interest, came together via the Internet and e-mail to make common cause in achieving ancestral identity. **Dr. John Scott Davenport**, then of New Jersey and now of West Virginia, has served as principal researcher and compiler.

One result of this collective effort in merging of data and files is the publication of *The Pamunkey Davenport Papers* and its companion web page (the Pamunkey Davenport website is at <http://www.pamunkeydavenport.com>). You will find therein the same new documentable and best evidence identifications of **Pamunkey Davenport** ancestors in a Total Family context--as well as a rationale for missing links.

The First Five Generations from **Davis Davenport** identification contained in the *Papers* continues the attempt to breach the records problem that a Pamunkey Neck origin imposes. The lineage structure offered there is a compilation of **Pamunkey Davenport** data extracted and collected by more than four dozen researchers and analysts of various skill levels from all over the United States. The gathered research of many is now clustered, organized and annotated in a chronological order with a rigorous attention to location. Time and Place and Historical Context, in most instances, has given new meaning to old data, but ninety-five percent of the data is new--in substance and/or in context--and is published for the first time there.

The reader-user is reminded that this is “Work in Progress,” that it is not the final word on the subject. In particular, note that any question mark —?— appearing in the document indicates an area of uncertainty or research that simply could not be completed by the Compiler. Hopefully, additional research will enable new facts to be inserted into the lineage and the Chronicles which will sharpen, better define identities of ancestors. Contributions of freshly-extracted data, corrections of and additions to existing data, sharpening of documentation, and arguments, rationalizations, or disagreements with the Compiler are welcome as long as they are substantive and directed towards advancing **Pamunkey Davenport** roots identification. Direct your additions, corrections, and arguments to the Editor:

< info@pamunkeydavenport.com >

One final comment: Given the crucial loss of Colonial Virginia records and the commoner nature (sorry, no Earls, Dukes, Barons, Knights or even English Gentlemen--but no Convicts either) of the **Colonial Pamunkey Davenports**, insistence on rigorous proof for identification is naive--for that scholarly state is in most part a standard impossible to attain. Best Evidence for the **Pamunkeys** is nirvana. DNA has now conclusively identified the family in most part, but circumstantial evidence remains the best to be had in a number of instances. We repeat the admonition that this is a Working Paper.

This exposition is not to be considered as either final or totally definitive. The more than four dozen **Pamunkey Davenport** family searchers who have contributed to this compilation were/are of various degrees of research skill and scholarly acumen. Some descendancies are tied together by Will Proofs, Land records, or Court identifications, others by Best Evidence, yet others by Family Legend, and a very few by speculative deduction. By the number of question marks (?) and the number of statements “Children Unknown” that follow, it should be apparent that there exists a large quantity of missing vital data.