

CHAPTER 3

THE JOURNEY OF JOSEPH AND MARY – A STORY OF OLD VIRGINIA

The 1746 Road Order of Joseph SEAY Connects Isaac SEAY With Thomas and Joseph SEAY.

On page 361 of the Amelia County Court Order Book, dated April 18, 1746, the following appears:

“Road to be cleared.

Ordered that a Road be Cleared from Stocks Creek to Sandy Creek and that John Maulden be Surveyor thereof. John Smith Senr. and Junr, Richard Loving, Thomas fforster, John fforster, **Joseph Seay**, Thomas Green and their tiths are Ordered to Clear the same.”

This is a legal document, issued by the Amelia County court, stating that a person named Joseph SEAY was an adult male (over age twenty-one, or born in or before 1725) and was legally responsible for a tract of land that was in the immediate vicinity of the new road near Sandy Creek. By studying a map of Amelia County, one can see that there are three “creeks” that are roughly parallel and that run in a southwesterly direction. The more westerly of the three creeks is Sandy Creek. There is no other record of Joseph SEAY in Amelia County, suggesting that he was not a resident of the County.

The records we have already discussed show that Isaac SEAY and Thomas SEAY were, also, owners of land in Amelia County but not residents. We know that both of them were residents of King William County. The records noted below prove that Isaac SEAY patented land in Amelia County and that Thomas SEAY inherited part of it. Thus, the conclusion is that Isaac and Thomas SEAY were actually residents of King William County, though they had legal obligations (taxes, etc.) in Amelia County because of their holdings.

How The Sale Of Thomas SEAY’s Land And The Road Order of Joseph SEAY, Connect Both Of Them To Isaac SEAY.

Thomas SEAY, of St. David’s Parish, King William County, sold 200 acres on both sides of Sandy Creek to Nathaniel FORD on 29 December 1747.²⁷ There is no record in the Amelia County Deed Books of Thomas’ purchase of the land, nor of his obtaining a patent in the Land Books. An analysis of this land makes it clear that this 200 acres must have been half of Isaac SEAY’s patent, and that Thomas SEAY inherited it. Here is why.

The land Isaac SEAY, of King William County, patented in Amelia County in 1736, was described as being “400 acres on both sides of Sandy Creek, the bounds beginning at Richard Davis’ upper corner on the upper side of Sandy Creek, thence south ten degrees east 320 poles to a faced corner in a thicket, thence east ten degrees north 204 poles to a corner by a spring, thence north ten degrees west 360 poles to a faced corner in the low grounds of the South Fork of Sandy Creek, crossing it west ten degrees south 32 poles to a corner pine in Richard Davis’ line, thence

²⁷ Amelia County Deed Book 3, p. 56.

south 95 poles along the line to his corner, thence west 164 poles along his upper line to the beginning. Dated 8 September 1736.”²⁸

The land sold by Thomas SEAY on 29 December 1747 was described as being 200 acres on both sides of Sandy Creek, adjoining land of Richard Davis, Henry Dawson and David Crawford. “Beginning at a corner white oak standing on the north side of Sandy Creek at Henry Dawson’s line, thence W [sic, should be S] to a corner poplar standing on the same side of the creek, thence E to a corner light wood knot in Crawford’s line, thence N along Crawford’s line to a white oak corner, thence S to a corner white oak standing on Richard Davis, thence along Davis’s line to a corner light wood knot, thence N to the beginning.” I have a detailed analysis of this land in my office.

Thus, this 200 acres is in the same location as the southern part of Isaac SEAY’s 400 acres. Thus, in 1747, Thomas owned part of the land that Isaac had owned in 1736. The 1747 sale of this 200 acres by Thomas SEAY indicates that Isaac SEAY was dead by 1747, and that Thomas was one of his heirs. Thus, Thomas SEAY must have been a son of Isaac SEAY.

In a Research Report dated June 22, 1994, genealogist Paul Reed comprehensively researched and analyzed the land of all of the persons named in the 1746 Amelia County road order. In painstaking, agonizing and numbing detail, this analysis shows that in 1746, Joseph SEAY was responsible for the northern 200 acres of the land that Isaac SEAY had owned in 1736. I have this analysis in my office. Thus, Isaac SEAY must have been dead by 1746. Thus, Joseph SEAY was his legal heir and was responsible for the northern 200 acres of his land. Thus, Joseph SEAY must have been a son of Isaac SEAY. Thus, Joseph SEAY must have been the older brother of Thomas SEAY.

How The 1795 Mary SEAY Lawsuit Connects Joseph SEAY (II) To Mathew SEAY.

In a Research Report, dated October 24, 1991, the genealogical research firm *Lineages* examined a lawsuit in which a person named Mary SEAY was included. This lawsuit offers very strong circumstantial evidence connecting Joseph SEAY (II) with Mathew SEAY. Here is how.

In 1792, Elizabeth Breedlove filed a lawsuit which was finalized in 1795. One of the persons named in the lawsuit was Mary SEAY. The record of the lawsuit is incomplete so it is difficult to grasp the entire sense of the matter; however, it seems that Mary SEAY owned 200 acres of land on Herring Creek, adjoining several different pieces of land owned by the Quarles family and the Mann family. An analysis of this land shows that it is the same land owned by Mathew SEAY/SEE in 1704 and 1721. This analysis was conducted by *Lineages* and, separately, by Paul Reed. Thus, Mary SEAY must have been related in some way to Mathew SEAY, in that she owned the same land previously owned by him. *Lineages* suggests that Mary SEAY must have been born about 1730 or before and died between 1792 and 1794, making her about 63 or so at her death.

In a research report, dated December 13, 1991, *Lineages* discovered three land deeds that strongly suggest that in 1783, a person by the name of Joseph SEAY (II) lived on the same land as the land of Mary SEAY, which was the land previously owned by Mathew SEAY. Joseph SEAY (II) is my direct ancestor, about whom we will discuss more later. *Lineages* reached this

²⁸ Amelia County Land Patent Book 17, p. 158.

conclusion by examining the land deeds of John Hill (1793), John and Frances Quarles (1797) and John and Ann Quarles (1807). These land deeds mentioned not only the subject land, but the land of their neighbors. According to records of Captain Dabney's 1783 militia company, these neighbors were also neighbors of Joseph SEAY (II) (Quarles, Waide, Breedlove, Lipscomb, Madison, Smith, Hill, et. al.). Based on these records, Gareth Mark of *Lineages* reaches the following conclusion – "These three deeds prove beyond a reasonable doubt that Joseph and Mary SEAY lived on or near the land previously owned by Mathew SEAY. The evidence strongly suggests that Mary SEAY's 200 acres was identical with Mathew SEAY's 200 acres. Circumstantial evidence therefore indicates that the ancestor Joseph SEAY (II) was descended from Mathew SEAY."

Conclusions about Mathew, Isaac, Both Josephs, Mary and Me.

These two reports offer compelling evidence with respect to the ancestry of my SEAY family in Virginia, and one may arrive at the following conclusions:

1. We have documented proof that Mathew SEE was an immigrant to Virginia, and that he was in Virginia before 1685. We know that he bought land in King William County, we know the location of his land (Mr. Reed has a subsequent, detailed report on this), and we know that he paid Quit Rent taxes on it in 1704, as Mathew SEE.
2. Mr. Mark's report includes evidence pointing to the conclusion that Joseph SEAY II (born 1753/1754) was descended from Mathew SEAY. We estimate that Mathew SEE/SEAY was born about 1660, came to Virginia prior to 1685, and died sometime after 1721 and prior to 1730.
3. Mr. Reed's report identifies an earlier Joseph SEAY (I) who was alive in 1747, who was a resident of King William County and who was given responsibility for a tract of land belonging to Isaac SEAY.
4. Thus, we have two separate but distinct lines to Mathew SEAY. In Mr. Mark's report, we find that real estate documents and court orders that establish that Joseph SEAY II descends from Mathew SEE/SEAY. We also find Joseph SEAY II living in 1783 in King William County, with a woman old enough to be his mother, whose name is Mary SEAY, on land that belonged to Mathew SEE/SEAY.

In Mr. Reed's two subsequent reports, we find an earlier Joseph SEAY (I), born about 1725, who was a resident of King William County, who is Isaac SEAY's son, who is just the right age to be the father of Joseph SEAY (II), and who shares the same first name. The apparent conclusion is that he must be the father of Joseph SEAY (II). Thus, it seems that Joseph SEAY (I) is the husband of Mary SEAY and that Joseph SEAY (II) is their son. Other King William County tax records of the late 1700's record the names of Mildred SEAY, Moses SEAY and Benjamin SEAY. I am unable to place Mildred SEAY. However, it seems that Moses and Benjamin SEAY are sons of Joseph (I) and Mary SEAY, and brothers of Joseph SEAY (II). Who else would they be? To my knowledge, these scant tax records are the only references to Moses and Benjamin. Incidentally, this is a different Moses SEAY than the Moses SEAY who appears in Amelia County, about the same time.

5. Therefore, if Joseph SEAY (II) is descended from Mathew SEE/SEAY, then his father Joseph SEAY (I) and his father Isaac SEAY must also be descended from Mathew SEE/SEAY. Thus, we connect the line in the following way:

Mathew SEE/SEAY, b. circa. 1660.

Isaac SEAY, b. circa. 1685-1690.

Joseph SEAY (I), b. circa. 1725.²⁹

Joseph SEAY (II), b. 1753/1754.

²⁹ As a matter of interest, a book of Amelia County marriages, whose title I cannot find, provides the following citation – “15 December 1784. TABB, John and Nancy Anderson, dau. Of Elizabeth Anderson, who consents. Wit. to consent, Joseph SEAY and Parham Anderson. Sur. Joseph Hillsman.” Thus, it appears as if Joseph SEAY (I) was alive in 1784 and was sufficiently active to witness the wedding of a friend’s daughter. This, also, suggests that Joseph (I) was literate and had some degree of social standing.