

Nicolas Martiau

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No Picture Available

Born: 1591 Yorkshire, England

Married: Jane Berkeley

Died: 1659 Yorktown, Virginia

Parents: Unknown

Nicholas Martiau, a French Protestant who was naturalized in England, came to Virginia in 1620 on the Francis Bonaventure. After the 1622 Indian attack, Captain Martiau was among those who visited the Falling Creek ironworks in Henrico. He apparently lived in Jamestown for a while, for on June 24, 1623, he testified that while he was on sentry duty at the fort, he did not see anyone break into cape merchant Abraham Peirse's storehouse. On February 16, 1624, Martiau was living in Elizabeth City in Captain William Tucker's household and represented that area in the colony's assembly. As a burgess he was among those who signed the assembly's rebuttal of the claims the Virginia Company made about living conditions in the colony between 1607 and 1619. On March 7, 1624, Martiau testified in court about Edward Giften's treating the sick at Falling Creek and Weyanoke. In early 1625, Martiau's residence was Elizabeth City, where he and two other men headed a household. He was then age 33. On January 16, 1625, Martiau received an apology from John Downman, a man he himself had slandered. In May 1625, he got into a heated discussion with Mr Mayhew at Kecoughtan and almost came to blows. At issue was the superiority of the kings of England and France. When the matter was aired in court, he took the oath of supremacy. Martiau was among the first to settle in Chiskiack, and in 1640 he obtained a patent for 1,300 acres that included the 600 acres to which he was entitled for seating himself, his wife Jamne, his son Nicholas, daughter Elizabeth and several others on his property. His property became known as York Plantation. Nicholas Martiau's first wife, whose identity is unknown, was the mother of his daughter, Elizabeth, who was born in 1625. Sometime prior to July 5, 1627, he married his second wife, Jane, the widow of Lieutenant Edward Barkeley of Hog Island. Later, he married a third time, wedding Captain Robert Felgate's widow, Isabella. Nicholas Martiau served as a burgess for Ciskiack and the Isle of Kent (in what became Maryland) in 1632 and 1633. He died in 1657.



The Martiau marker is located in front of Gin Tail Antiques on Ballard Street in Historic Yorktown.

“Site of the Home of NICOLAS MARTIAUT he adventurous Huguenot who was born in France 1591came to Virginia 1620and died at Yorktown 1657He was a captain in the Indian uprising a member of the House of Burgesses Justice of the County of YorkIn 1635 a leader in the thrusting out of Governor Harvey which was the first opposition to the British colonial policy the patentee for Yorktown and through the marriage of his daughter Elizabethto Colonel George Reade he became the earliest American ancestor of both General George Washington and Governor Thomas Nelson “

*Marked by the Huguenot Society of Pennsylvania
in cooperation with the National Federation
of the Huguenot Societies and the Yorktown
Sesqui-Centennial Commission*

1981

1600s

In 1620, Captain Nicholas Martiau, was sent by King James I to build forts in Virginia, specifically at York, and to complete the great log palisade between College and Queen Creeks.

York's fort was initially built just a short distance down river from the present Yorktown, and a small settlement developed there because of the fort's guarantee of safety. This village also became a receiving port and mercantile center for the growing population. The site is now part of the United States Coast Guard Reserve Training Center .

Martiau's early settlement and bringing of other settlers had qualified him to receive several grants of land, one of which is the present location of Yorktown. Sadly, Martiau did not live to see the town develop on his personal landholdings. He died in 1657, but his grandson sold 50 acres of the land for the establishment of "York Town" in 1691. The town's creation established Yorktown as the principal location for securing tobacco, goods, wares and other merchandise. The port, wharves, warehouses and other appropriate buildings for the conduct of commerce were situated at the riverfront.

Surprisingly, the town's original 50 acres did not include the land immediately adjacent to the river--land that today features a park, several restaurants, a motel, beaches, a museum, and a few residences. That land became valuable as the town developed and in 1738 was purchased and added to the town. This parcel was overseen by the Yorktown Trustees, a board created in 1738 which still administers this land's affairs today.



Grace Episcopal Church, Virginia

Will of Captain Nicolas Martiau (1591-1657)

York Co, VA Will Book 1, pp 337 - 339

[Print Original Will](#)

(In the name of God Amen. I Nicholas Martiau, of the County and Parrish of York gent. being very sick and weak in body But of Sound and perfect memorie blessed be god Doe make ordaine Constitute and appoint this my last Will & Testament in manner and forme followeing Revoakeing annulling & making void and by these presents Cancelling & disclaimeing all & all manner of former & other Will or Wills written or Nuncupative all Codicelle Legacyes & bequests whatsoever by me att any time before the ensealeing of this my last will made signed & sealed or otherwise by word of mouth or made & delivered; And appoint this only to stand & be my last Will and Testament, as followeth ~ First I bequeath my Soule unto the hands of God my maker hoping & assuredly beleiving that when this life shall end I shall through the merritts of Jesus Christ my Redeemer to injoy everlasting Rest and happiness. And my body to the Earth from whence it came to be decently buried.

Item for that Estate which almighty God hath been pleased to lend me in this world I hereby give bequeath & dispose thereof in manner and forme following:

Item I give and bequeath to my Eldest Daughter Elizabeth wife of George Read Esq & the heires of her body begotten or to be begotten forever all that my Divydent of land scituate lying and being in the sd. Parrish and county of York (Except as hereunder excepted) with all houses and appurtenances.

Item I give and bequeath to my Daughter, Mary Scarsbrook, wife of John Scarsbrook soe much of my sd. Divydent of Land in York Parrish as is scituate and lying beyond the Swamp [vizt.] on the Southward side of that Swamp called commonly Broccas Swamp upon part of which the said John is now seated to be held by the sd. Mary and her heirs lawfully begotten & to be begotten forever with the appurtenances --

Item I give and bequeath to my Daughter Elizabeth Read & her heires forever my old mare wth. her whole increase male and female to her and heires Except the first Mare foal shee shall bring after my decease which I hereby give & bequeath wth. the whole increase thereof to my Daughter Sarah wife of Capt. Fuller & her heires forever.

Item I give and bequeath to my loveing Daughter Mary Scarsbrook & her heires forever the Mare Foale now runing wth. my mare wth. whole Increase Male & Female --

I give and bequeath to my loveing Daughter Elizabeth Read my Watch. --

Item I give to my said Daughter Elizabeth and her heires my Grey Gelding but my Sonn John Scasbrook to make use of him for his occasions -- Two years after my decease when he shall desyre the same.

Item I give and bequeath to my Daughter Sarah Fuller wife of Capt. William Fuller abovenamed and to her heires forever all that my Divydent of land lying in Potomack and conteyneing two Thousand Acres But in case itt shall not be seated by some of them [vizt.] Capt. Fuller or his said wife or heires att least one month before expiration of time limited by the Patten for seateing then the same to be made Sale of Executrixes as hereunder named & the produce thereof to be equally dyvyded betweene my said three loveing Daughters for the good of them and their children.

Item My Will is that within one yeare after my decease all Cattle now in my possession marked wth my Daughter Fullers mark shall be delivered for the good [of] her and her Children & I doe also give and bequeath to her and her heires forever Tenn Cowes more out of my Stock or to be bought out of my Estate with their whole increase Male and Female and alsoe a Bull to be delivered within a yeare as above said.

Item I give to my loveing sonn, George Read, Esq. all my weareing apparrell except my Stuff Suite and Coate and new Dimity Caster which I hereby bequeath to my Sonn John Scarsbrook and alsoe will that five pounds ready money now lying by me be equally divyded between my said Two Son in lawes ~~

Item my will that at finishing the next crop after my Debts are satisfied my Two Negroes Phill & Nicholas shall be free and that each of them have then delivered by my Executors One Cow and Three Barrells of Corne, Cloathes, & also Nayles to build them a house but they or either of them shall hire themselves after their said freedom or before or shall remove from the land hereunder appointed them then they or he soe doeing to returne to my Executrixes for the good of them and their Children. And my Will is that they have land sufficient for themselves to plant in the field where William Leigh lived for their lives or the life of the longer Liver of them.

I give and bequeath to Hugh Roy lately my Servt. - one Three Years old Heifer with her increase to be obtained on demand after my decease ~~

Item I give and bequeth to my above named Two loveing Daughters Elizabeth Read and Mary Scarsbrook for the good of themselves & their Children All the rest of my Estate whatsoever in Virginia or elsewhere to be equally divyded betweene them but this Divysyon not to be made untill all my Debts & Legacyes be satisfied which said severall Debts are to be paid out of the part of my Estate as is given to my said Two daughters & their Children without any Charge to my Daughter Sarah or her heires. ~~

Item lastly I doe by these presents nominate & appoint & Confirme my two beloved Daughters Elizabeth and Mary Joynt Executrixes of this my last Will & Testament to see the same performed and kept And in Confirmacon of this my said last Will & Testament & of every matter Course & thing therein conteyned I have hereto sett my hand and Seale this first day of March One Thousand Six hundred Fifty Six.

Nicholas Martian

Seale

"Sealed & Signed in the presence of --

Nicholas Trott

Tho. Ballard This Will proved in Court 24 Apr. 1657 --

Nicholas Trott & Tho. Ballard ---

Copy of original will follows:

In the name of God Amen.

Nicholas Martien of the County and Parrish of York gent
 being very sick and weak in body But of sound and perfect
 memory do hereby be god Doe make ordaine, Constitute and
 appoint this my last Will & Testament in manner & forme
 following Doe hereby admitting & making void all by the
 same Lawe & Statute or Statutes all manner of former
 testaments or Wills written or made in what language
 & tongue whatsoever by me at any time before this writing
 of this my last Will made signed sealed & otherwise by
 me or by any other person And appoint this my last Will
 to be my last Will and Testament as followeth - First I be-
 queath my soule unto the hande of god my maker & my
 Redeemer fully believing that wher he will shall send I shall through
 the merits of Iesus Christ my Redeemer to enjoy everlasting
 Rest and happiness And my body to the Earth for my
 interment to be decently buried

Item for that Estate which I have by God's grace & gift
 God to send me in this world I have by gods grace all the
 thereof in manner & forme following - Item I give and
 bequeath to my eldest daughter Elizabeth wife of George
 Road Esq of her body & gotten or to be gotten for ever
 all that my Tenant of Land situate lying and being in the
 Parrish and County of York Except as the said George
 with all the tenement and appurtenances - Item I give and be-
 queath to my daughter Mary Starbrooke wife of John Star-
 brooke Esq Tenant of my Land situate in the Parrish of
 is situate and lying by the side the Town of ^(York) Southwar
 Lord of that Town called commonly ^(York) Parson's Turf
 upon part of which the said John is now seated to be held
 by the said Mary & her heirs Lawfully gotten & to be
 gotten for ever with the appurtenances

Item I give and bequeath to my daughter Elizabeth
 & her heirs for ever my old Manor of ^(York) who holds in a
 male & female to her husband & heirs the first Male
 shall be my after my decease which I have by gods
 wth the whole manor thereof & appurtenances & to be
 wth the whole manor thereof & appurtenances & to be

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Item I give and bequeath to my loving Daughter Mary Leaf
Brook her house for ever this land speaks now running wth my
Mare wth whole Inroase of Mats & Bonals

Item I give and bequeath to my loving Daughter Elizabeth
Leaf my Watch

Item I give to my said Daughter Elizabeth and her heirs my
gray t^hing but my Sonne John Sturbrook to make use of this
for his occasions

Two years after
my decease when he shall dye the Land
Item I give and bequeath to my Daughter Sarah Fuller
wife of Capt. William Fuller above named and to her heirs
for ever all that my Doy out of Land lying in Potomack and
wth out my two Thousand Acres but in case it shall not
be sold by some of them (viz) Capt. Fuller or his said wife
or heirs at least and within twelve or fourteen years
imitted by this Lattent for seeking then the same to be made
Sales of ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~proceeds~~ ^{the} ~~thereof~~ ^{thereof} and
to be equally dyvided betwene my said three loving Daughters
for the good of their children

Item my Will is that within one year after my decease
all debts now in my possession may be so my Daughter
Mary Leaf be considered for the good her and her heirs
also give and bequeath to her and her heirs for ever some
lands more out of my Stock or to be bought out of my Estate
with their whole Inroase of Mats & Bonals and also a Bull
to be considered within a year as above said

Item I give to my loving son George Leaf Esq. all my
warding apperall except by Sturs Ditts and Coats and
now in the past or within twelve or fourteen years
of my decease and also will that the same should be equally
newlying by me to be equally dyvided betwene my said
son and daughter

Item my will that at my decease the next day after my
decease satisfied my two Negroes Phill^l & Phill^l that
be free & that satisfy them here the next day after my
decease and some other Barrells of Corn & Flour also
I shall give them a house but they or either of them
shall remove from the Land and hold under any one of them
the next day after my decease to returne to my next of kin

339 His good of them and their children And my Will is that
they have land sufficient for themselves to plant in the
State where William Leigh lived for their labor or the
Use of the longer part of their lives

I Item I give and bequeath to Hugh Roy solely my Servant
and three years old this for with his discharge to be delivered
on demand after my decease

I Item I give and bequeath to my above named and loving
Daughters Elizabeth Deane and Mary Starbuck for their
good of them selves and their children All the rest of my estate
whatsoever in Virginia or elsewhere to be equally divided be-
tweene them but this Divyion not to be made until all
my debts to Logans & others be satisfied wch I have directed
to be paid out of the part of my Estate due unto my said
Daughters Elizabeth Deane and Mary Starbuck without any charge to my
Daughter Sarah or her heirs

I Item Lastly I do by these presents nominate appoint &
confirm my two beloved Daughters Elizabeth and Mary
Joynt Executrixes of this my last Will & Testament to see
the same performed and kept And in full proof hereof
I have signed this my last Will & Testament of every matter
touching therein to the intent I have hereunto set my hand and
seal this first day of March One thousand six hundred
fifty six

Witness my hand
in the presence of
Nicholas Prott
John Ballard

Nicholas Martineau
Seal

This Will proved in C^t 24 Apr
1657: Isaacment
Nicholas Prott & John Ballard
Executors: & Rator eodem die & h^o

A COPY TESTE
NANCY B. KANE
CLERK CIRCUIT COURT
COUNTY OF YORK, VA.
Richard Davis
D.C.