

Reed Family Ramblings

An Extended Look at the Extended Family

Robert (Edward) Baber, (III), Colonial Official and Patriot

Posted on [April 17, 2020](#) by [Rich](#)

Robert Baber was born in about 1725 in Albemarle County, Virginia in about 1725. Robert Baber was the son of Robert Baber, Jr. or II, and one of his wives, Elizabeth, a possible first wife or perhaps second wife, whose maiden name is unknown; or his father's possible second or possibly first wife, Margaret, whose maiden name is believed to have been Welch.(1) Margaret (Welch) Baber is the more likely mother. The birth dates and death dates ascribed to these two women do not appear to allow for an overlap in marriages without a divorce and divorce was highly uncommon. One fact that supports a marriage at some point to Elizabeth is the fact that Robert Baber, II and III both named daughters Elizabeth. However, Elizabeth was a very popular name at that time and this could be coincidence.(2)

The Baber family was among the lower end of the aristocratic Virginia elite. They were land owners, plantation owners, slave owners, and office holders in both the Colonial and post Colonial periods.

They also in small ways impacted our history or touched upon those that did. Robert (Edward) Baber, III is no exception.

Not much is known for certain about Robert Baber, III's childhood, including the names and birthdates of his siblings. There is a William Baber that is usually listed as a son of Robert, II and Elizabeth Baber.

The children credited to Robert, II and Margaret Welch Baber are Sally/Sarah, Robert (Edward), III, Elizabeth, Rachel, William, Ann, perhaps another Sarah (3), and Juriah. An additional son, John Baber, is credited to Margaret, but it appears that he was born well after the death both possible mothers.

We can assume that he was well educated, probably by a private tutor who probably also educated his siblings. We can make this assumption regarding his level of education from what we know of his adult life. He was Justice of the County Court in Bedford County, Virginia, a job that required him to transcribe records, create records, and correspond with other Virginia officials. He needed not only to be able to read and write, but to do so articulately. Additionally, we have a sample of his writing, a letter sent to Colonel George Washington (*see below*), then the head of the Virginia Militia.

Robert married a woman named Jane, most likely in Albemarle County, Virginia. As is the norm with the three generations of Robert Babers, little if anything is known about Jane. Most internet researchers, and many reference books say Jane's maiden name was Pendleton and that she was a cousin to Edmond

Pendleton.(4) After researching the Pendleton family and the Baber family, I have found not a single original record, first had family history, or any other documentation supporting the maiden name Pendleton and cannot even find a Pendleton named Jane living anywhere near the Robert Baber, II family. Indeed, the earliest source for this claim, the largely unsourced and often incorrect DePriest Family Journal, makes the Jane Pendleton claim, stating “while nothing definitive is known about Jane’s ancestry, she is probably the granddaughter or great-granddaughter of early Virginia settler Philip Pendleton.” All supposition, no factual support.

Another theory is that Jane was from the same Welch family as Margaret, Robert, III’s mother, making her a cousin of some degree. Again, I find no evidence supporting this assumption.

Based on the excellent research that Mr. Chuck Prine posted on the internet, much of which I have verified and agree with(5), I agree with Mr. Prine’s hypothesis that Robert Baber, III’s wife, Jane, is most likely (not proven) the daughter of John and Mary Phelps. Mr. Prine developed his theory by researching in detail the land and property documents of the relevant Robert Babers. Mr. Prine’s research shows that

- John and Mary Phelps sold 300 acres of land in the Bear Garden Creek area to Robert Baber, II in 1741. When Robert Baber, II added additional property to these holdings the deed showed that the property adjoined the Phelps property making the families neighbors.
- During this time period witnesses to deeds, wills, etc. were normally people of a close relationship, normally family. There are numerous Baber and Phelps deeds with Baber and Phelps both mentioned. This shows a close relationship between the families.
- John and Mary Phelps definitely had a daughter named Jane. Jane Phelps does not appear in any records as an adult indicating she either died or married taking her husband’s name.
- The Brunswick County, Virginia Deed Book 2 records a 1744 sale by John and Mary Phelps to Robert Baber, III. The sale involves 140 acres of land on a stretch of Otter Creek that later was incorporated into first Lunenburg, then later, incorporated into Bedford and Campbell Counties.
- Robert Baber, III appears on the 1748 tithable list alongside John Phelps and Thomas Phelps indicating that they were still neighbors.

By my best guess Jane (Phelps) married Robert Baber, III about 1744 or a little earlier. They lived on the 300 acres acquired from her parents for the rest of their lives with the property eventually spanning both Campbell and Bedford Counties. The children of Robert and Jane Baber were:

- Elizabeth Baber Hayes (1749-1779),
- Mary Baber Perrin (1750-1810),
- Jane Baber Farmer (1752 –)
- John Baber (1755-1809)
- William Baber (1760-1830)
- James Baber (1762-1836)

Robert Baber was engaged in public service. He served as Sheriff of Bedford County in 1754 and served as a Justice of the County Court for at least 1758. In his capacity as Justice, he transcribed an affidavit by Timothy Dalton reporting an Indian attack. The affidavit was provided to Colonel George Washington in his capacity as a militia commander. The letter, a copy of which was retained in George Washington’s correspondence, reads:

BEDFORD COUNTY

This Day Timothy Dalton made Oath before me one of his majestyes Justices of the peace for the Said County: that yesterday there Came to his house three Indians and Quickly after Came four white men in Pursuit of the Said Indians namely John Wheeler Robt. Dalton Henry Wooddy William Hall from whom the Said Indians had Stollen horses from the Demanded the horses of the Said Indians but they Refused to let them have them on which the Said Wheeler went to take one of the horses on which they Shot at the Said Wheeler three times but Missed him on which the Said Indians went away and the Said white men in a Small time Joined with Seven more white men and went in Pursuit of the Said Indians again and them Indians being Joined by ten more Indians went over Stanton River a mile above the mouth of Pigg River and Threw off there Packs and Prepared them Selves for Battle then William Vardeman Sener and Some of the Rest went up to them and told them they Did not want to fight they only wanted there Horses and Did not want to hurt them on which the Indians told them they Should fight for them and Immediately the Indians fired on them three Guns Still the white men would not Shoot at them then the Indians fired three Guns more at them on that the Battle Began in which William Hall was mortally wounded of which wound he Died this Morning: and Likewise Richard Thompson was wounded in the Shoulder and Buttock; and that the white men Like Wise Killed and Scalped three Indians on which the Rest of the Indians Ran away and Left the horses and the Chief of the Plunder they had Stolen; and farther this Deponent Saith not Certified under my hand this the 9 Day of May 1758

... ROBT. BABER

Robert Baber, III also served as a member of the Virginia Assembly, elected 9 Nov 1776. He signed a petition seeking to allow all people to worship according their personal conviction. During the Revolutionary War, he received certificates in 1782 and 1783 for furnishing supplies to the Continental Army.

Robert Baber's died in 1786. His will was probated in Campbell County Virginia in XXXX. The will, recorded in Campbell County Will Book 1, pages 86-88 reads:

THE LAST WILL OF ROBERT BABER

In the name of God Amen. I Robert Baber of Campbell County being very sick weak in body but in perfect mind and memory thanks be given unto God. Therefore calling unto mind the Morality of my Body and knowing that it is appointed for all men once to die do make and Ordain this my laste Will and Testamente that is to say principally and first of all I give and recommend my soul into the hands of the Almighty God that gave it and my Body I recommend to the Earth to be buried in decente Christian Beriel at the Discretion of my Excutors nothing Doubting but at the General Resurrection I shall receive the same again by the Mighty Power of God. And as Touching such Worldly Estate where with it hath pleased God to Bless me in this life I give demise and dispose of the same in the following manner and form. Imprimus I give unto my son William Baber my Negroe Wench Tamor with her increase. Item I give unto my Wife, Jane Baber the Plantation I now live on with the Privilage of cutting Timber and fire wood on my Land dureing life or Widowhood. Item I give unto my son John Baber all my Land lying above a line run by me from the corner of a White Oak in John Anthonys line bounded by John Anthony and John Quarles lines. Also I give him a Negroe Wench named Hannah and her Increase from this date. Item I give unto my son James Baber the remainder of my Land which is bounded by John Talbots Land also a Negro Wench named Mime and her Increase from this date. (If the said John Baber dies without issue the Effects to be given to the said John Baber. [Illegible.] I lend to my Daughter Mary Perrin a Negro Wench named Peg during her life and if the said Wench Peg be living after the said Mary Perrins Death she is to belong to Charles Perrin her son. Item I lend unto my Daughter Jane Farmer a Negroe Girl named Phyllis with her Increase during her life and After the said Jane Farmers Death to belong to the Heirs of her Body. Item I give unto my Grandson Robert Haynes a Negroe Girl named Dilsey Reserving the first Child born alive to belong to Robert Perrin my Grandson all other Estate not mentioned here belongs to my Wife Jane Baber during her life and Widowhood and after her Death as follows: The Estate to be Equally Divided Between my three sons William Baber, John Baber and James Baber. William Baber and John Baber Executors

Robert Baber [Seal]

Signed Sealed and Delivered in the presence of Elizabeth Diring, Elizabeth Strange, Walter Urquarte, Peter hennesy.

At a Courte held for Campbell County July 6th 1786

The within laste Will and Testament of Robert Baber Dec'd was Proved by the oaths of Elizabeth Diring and Walter Urquarte two of the witnesses therto subscribed and ordered to be recorded and on the Motion of William Baber, John Baber and James Baber the Executors Therein named who made oath thereto according to Law Certificate is Granted them for obtaining Probate thereof in due form giving Security Whereupon they together with Christopher Irvine James Dearing John Shackelford and Henry Edson their Securities entered into and Acknowledged their Bond in the penalty of Five Thousand Pounds conditioned as the Law Directs for the said Executors due and faithfull administration of the said Executors due and faithfull administration of the Decedents State and peformance of his Will —

Teste Robert Alexander CCC

For his service as a Colonial official Robert Baber, III is a qualifying ancestor for the National Society of The Colonial Dames of America. There entry on on Robert Baber reads:

BABER, Robert (1725-c. 1786) VA

1. *Bodie, Mr. John Bennett, Historical Southern Families, Vol. XIII. Baltimore: Clearfield Press.*
2. *Sparacio, Ruth and Sam, Virginia County Court Records, Deed & Will Abstracts of Albemarle County, Virginia. McLean, VA: The Antient Press, 1990.*
3. *Temple, Sarah Blackwell Gover, The First Hundred Years. Atlanta: W. W. Brown, 1935.*
4. *Will of Robert Baber. Campbell County, Virginia Will Book I. pg. 86.*

For his service to the Revolution Robert Baber, III is a qualifying ancestor for both the National Society of the Sons of the American Revolution and National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution. His NSSAR Patriot number is P-329662. His NSDAR Ancestor number is A004301. His qualifying service is listed as: "Furnished Supplies to the Revolution: ABERCROMBIE & SLATTEN, VA REV PUB CLAIMS, VOL 1, PGS 174, 175."

Robert Baber, III's descendants include President Lyndon B. Johnson, his fifth great-grandson through his daughter Mary Baber Perrin.

See also: [Private James Baber, Virginia Militia, Revolutionary War \(https://rareed0001.wordpress.com/2020/04/16/private-james-baber-virginia-militia-revolutionary-war/\)](https://rareed0001.wordpress.com/2020/04/16/private-james-baber-virginia-militia-revolutionary-war/).

Lineage: Me, Mom, Nettie Mae Roper, Minnie No'Della Privett, Indiana Virginia Baber, Barnabas Arthur Baber, James Baber, Robert Baber.

— — **Notes** — — — — —

1. There is some confusion to the names in these generations. That there was a string of men, three generations, named Robert Baber is unquestioned. In such circumstances the use of Junior and Senior is flexible. Further, both the Robert I am focusing on here, and his father sometimes are referred to as Edward or Robert Edward. It is possible that both father and son, possibly even grandfather were named Robert Edward. It is possible that none of them were. The original documents all appear to use just the name Robert to refer to these three men. As far as the wives are concerned, the maiden names in all three generations are a matter of educated guesses and speculation.
2. Margaret Welch is believed to have married Robert Baber in 1723 and died in 1737. Elizabeth [maiden name unknown] is believed to have died by 1732.
3. At this time, when infant and childhood mortality was very high, it was not unusual to reuse a family name when an older sibling had died young, particularly when the child had been named for a significant family member. Sarah is believed to be the name of Robert Baber, II's mother, so if a daughter named for her died young there is a reasonable chance that a second daughter, born later was also named Sarah for both her grandmother and older sister.
4. Edmund Pendleton (1721 – 1803) was a Virginia planter, politician, lawyer, and judge. He was Speaker of the Virginia Legislature, a Virginia delegate, along with George Washington and Patrick Henry to the First Continental Congress and led both the Virginia Convention that declared independence from England and the one which ratified the United States Constitution. In later life he served as the a judge and Chief Judge in what became the Virginia Supreme Court. See https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Edmund_Pendleton (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Edmund_Pendleton), accessed 17 Apr 2020.
5. For Supporting Documents to Mr. Prine's research see: Brunswick County Deed Book 3 Abstracts from 1744: Indenture 27 July 1744 between James Johnston of Brunswick and John Mead of same, Carpenter, œ40, North side Otter River, 130a. Signed James Johnson (bhm) and Catharine Johnson (bhm). Witnesses: John Phelps, Christopher Irvine, Robert Baber, Junr., & Benjamin Mead. Court

March 7, 1744, Indenture, Memorandum and Receipt proved by oaths of John Phelps, Robert Baber, Junr. and Benjamin Mead. Deed Book 3, Page 3. (BRUNSWICK COUNTY, VA – DEEDS – Deed Book 3 Abstracts Part 1 (1744-1749)) (<http://files.usgwarchives.net/va/brunswick/deeds/book3pt1.txt>), accessed 17 Apr 2020.) *See also* Bradley, Stephen E.. *Brunswick County Virginia Deed Book Volume 2: 1744-1755 and 1764*. S. E. Bradley. 1997.

6. Robert Baber's Revolutionary Service. Abercrombie, Janice L., and Slatten, Richard. Virginia Revolutionary Publick Claims, Volume 1, Iberian Publishing Company, 1992.

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2. Affidavit of Timothy Dalton, May 9 1758. Society of Colonial Dames of America. Hamilton, Stanislaus Murray, Editor. Letters to Washington and Accompanying Papers, Vol. 2. Houghton, Mifflin & Co., Boston & New York, 1902. A photocopy of the letter is online at: www.baberfamilytree.org. <http://www.baberfamilytree.org/Doc/rbtjpltr.htm> (<http://www.baberfamilytree.org/Doc/rbtjpltr.htm>), accessed 17 Apr 2020.
3. Boddie, John Bennett. *Historical Southern Families, Volume II*. John Bennett Boddie, 1958. Republished by Clearfield Company, Inc. Genealogical Publishing Co., Inc. Baltimore, MD 1993,1994. at page 15.
4. Will of Robert Baber. Sparacio, Ruth and Sam. *Virginia County Court Records, Deed & Will Abstracts of Campbell County Virginia*. The Antient Press, McLean, VA, 1990.
5. Ancestor Bibliography Register, National Society of The Colonial Dames of America for Robert Baber. <https://www.nscda.org>. [online database] <https://nscda.org/historical-activities/ancestorbibliographyregister/> (<https://nscda.org/historical-activities/ancestorbibliographyregister/>), accessed 17 Apr 2002.
6. Entry on Robert Baber, National Sons of the American Revolution Patriot Research System. www.sar.org [Online Database] <https://sarpatriots.sar.org/patriot/display/329662> (<https://sarpatriots.sar.org/patriot/display/329662>), accessed 17 Apr 2020.
7. Entry on Robert Baber, Daughters of the American Revolution Genealogy Research. www.dar.org [online database], accessed 17 Apr 2020.

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