Chapter IX: Vanderpool-Chastain

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Now that we have pursued the ancestral lines of Glenn {Vanderpool} Neal's mother, Anabel {Zink} Vanderpool, as far back as we can, we will repeat that process with those of her father, Samuel Green Vanderpool. His father was **JAMES VANDERPOOL**, who was born on April 2, 1813, probably in Rockcastle County, Kentucky. He died in Washington County, Indiana, on September 11, 1854. An accident or disease may have caused his early death: he was one of the shortest-lived males of all those in our various families whose life spans we know.[1] Samuel's mother was **SARAH**[2] **{CHASTAIN} VANDERPOOL**, who was born on November 25, 1819 (possibly 1820).[3] Both James and Sarah were born in Kentucky, according to later censuses. [4]

The marriage records in Washington County, Indiana, inform us that James and Sarah were married there on July 18, 1837.[5] The officiating minister was the bride's maternal grandfather, Abraham Stark, a man we will meet in due course in another chapter. James

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[1] Another source gives the dates of James Vanderpool's lifespan as February 4, 1813, to November 9, 1854, but these dates are clearly inadvertent reversals in the numerical shorthand method (*2/4* for *4/2* and *11/9* for *9/11*) of the actual ones and so are probably mere recording errors.

[2] Sarah was customarily called Sally.

[3] The evidence is inconclusive. Information contributed to the LDS estimates Sarah's year of birth as 1820, and data found on later (1840-1880) censuses varies enough to be less than definitive. Most of the censuses suggest that she had gained the next decade threshold (thirty, forty, and fifty years old) prior to the official census date (June 1 for these years), which means that – if November is accurate as her month of birth – 1819 is probably correct as the year. The 1840 and 1880 censuses are exceptions. The fact that her grave marker lists her date of birth as November 25, 1819, also argues for her birth in that year but is not in itself conclusive evidence.

[4] Some researchers state that James Vanderpool was born in Clay County, Kentucky, but this cannot be correct.

[5] Their oldest son, Abraham, reported his birth date as September 1836, an error probably in his recollection.

Vanderpool is buried in Friendly Grove Cemetery in Lewis Township, Clay County, Indiana.[6] As we observed during our earlier examination of the brief sojourn of Samuel Green Vanderpool and his family in Kansas, his mother Sarah died on July 22, 1885, probably in Chautauqua County, Kansas, where she had been residing. She is buried in Cloverdale Cemetery, five to six miles north of Cedar Vale, Kansas, near the boundary between Elk County and Cowley County.[7]

Our first definite sighting of James and Sarah Vanderpool comes with the census of 1840, although as we shall see both of them can be tentatively identified in their parents' households in earlier years. In 1840, James was in the age category for 20 to 30 years old and Sarah was in that for 15 to 20 years of age. They lived in Posey Township of Washington County, Indiana. Ten years later, the 1850 census shows them (thirty-seven and thirty years old, respectively) in Marion Township of Lawrence County, Indiana; James Vanderpool was a farmer with real estate valued at only $150. A search for deeds for any property for him in that county was fruitless, and neither is there any record of James Vanderpool having entered public land, so it is unclear why the 1850 census shows any real estate valuation at all for him. About 1852, James and Sarah are said to have moved to a place two miles west of Coffee, Indiana, which is located in Lewis Township

[6] See the USGS map for Jasonville/Indiana for the location of this cemetery and slide 11958 for a view of the headstone of James Vanderpool in 2006.
[7] See the USGS map for Cloverdale/Kansas for the location of this cemetery.

of Clay County, but by January 1853 they evidently were living in Orange County, Indiana: a son is said to have been born there in that month and year.

James Vanderpool died in 1854, and the 1860 census shows his widow Sarah was again living near Coffee in that year. Either the Vanderpools had gone back to Lewis Township from Orange County in 1853 or 1854, or else their move to Coffee actually occurred later than 1852 – only after their stay in Orange County, that is. The 1860 census describes Sarah – still residing in Coffee – as a weaver who was forty years old. Although most families at that time did their own weaving at home, almost every neighborhood or community had at least one weaver for special things like coverlets and dress clothes. This was typically an older woman, either an (unmarried) "spinster" or a widow like Sarah. In the case of Sarah Vanderpool, however, she may have been part of a widespread weaving "cottage industry" in the southern part of Clay County, for virtually every woman in rural Lewis Township and even beyond was described on the 1860 census as a spinster, a weaver, or a seamstress. Sarah herself must have been doing reasonably well in that year, for at $1,200 her net worth was valued quite a bit higher than that of James Vanderpool ten years before.[8] Sarah lived in the same township in

[8] In 1860, Sarah's real estate was valued at $400 and her personal property at $800. It is possible that there was never a distinct weaving cottage industry at all, but that the census enumerator in 1860 – for reasons we can only imagine – routinely assigned one of the three terms (spinster, weaver, and seamstress) to the women in the township. The 1850 and 1870 censuses for the same township – in many cases for the same women – do not mention these occupations, and the 1870 census in fact describes most of these women as "keeping house." A weaving industry as widespread as the one the 1860 census seems to show ought to have been recorded as well in histories of Clay County, but I have found no references to it.

1870, when she is said to have been fifty years old. No longer described as a weaver, she had no apparent employment at all.[9]

By 1880 Sarah had left Indiana and gone to live in Kansas, probably because a couple of her sons had decided to move there.[10] In that year Sarah, now said to have been fifty-nine years of age, was living with an man identified as Joseph Vanderpool (almost certainly her son George instead) in Jefferson Township of Chautauqua County, seven or eight miles north of the Oklahoma line, which may account for why her granddaughter Birdie remembered that Sarah was living in Oklahoma itself.[11] Sarah was still living with

[9] The property on which Sarah was living in 1860 and 1870, located west of Coffee, was property that she had inherited from her father, Peter Chastain: the northeast quarter of the northwest quarter of Section 18, Township 9 North, Range 7 West. Presumably she and husband James had been living there during the 1850s as well, but we cannot be sure of the timing of their arrival there. (Peter Chastain's will was probated in mid-1852.) See slide 11956 for a view of this location in 2006 and the USGS map for Jasonville/Indiana. In 1870 Sarah's personal property was valued at only $240, but her real estate had risen in value to $800. In both 1870 and 1880, Sarah is described as unable to read and write.

[10] According to their applications for pensions for their Civil War service, at least two of Sarah's sons had lived and worked in Missouri and Arkansas even prior to the 1870s, and when they decided to migrate to Kansas then she probably elected to accompany them. Undoubtedly these sons also had become acquainted with the many Vanderpools who already resided in the region (in Missouri especially), and that might have been an additional reason why they all decided to relocate from Indiana. These Missouri Vanderpools, a numerous group, had gone due west early in the 1800s. It also appears that quite a body of Starks had moved to the Cedar Vale area, and undoubtedly the presence of her mother's family also influenced Sarah's move to Chautauqua County. One of Sarah's youngest sons was named Jasper Newton Vanderpool, and some members of the Missouri Vanderpools are known to have lived in Jasper, Newton County, Arkansas. This child's naming is unlikely to have been a coincidence, and so one wonders if James and Sarah {Chastain} Vanderpool themselves might have lived in Arkansas for a time. Perhaps it is only that their older sons lived in Jasper and the parents liked the sound of the names of the town and county – nothing more.

[11] The Joseph (thirty-seven years old in 1880) with whom Sarah is listed in 1880 was almost certainly her son George, who was thirty-nine years old that year, chiefly because Sarah did not have a son named Joseph – or a son born in 1843. Nor can this "Joseph" have been her son Jasper, whose name might have been garbled into Joseph, because Jasper is on the census elsewhere in Chautauqua County. Further evidence that Sarah was living with George comes from information (in a Civil War pension application) that Anabel {Zink} Vanderpool was visiting this household when George's wife bore a child in 1885. Sarah's daughter, Mahalia, is also thought to have been living in Kansas in 1880, but I did not search for her. It will be very difficult to learn whether or not Sarah {Chastain} Vanderpool ever actually resided in Oklahoma. We cannot rule out the possibility entirely because there were a number of Vanderpools among the early (illegal) settlers of the Indian territory that would become that state. There is no official census for Oklahoma (still Indian territory) in 1880 – and of course no census at all for 1890 – to help us.

George in mid-March, 1885, but died a few months later (on July 25, 1885), probably at his home.

The father of James Vanderpool was **JOHN M.**[12] **VANDERPOOL**, who was born in North Carolina about 1783.[13] He can be found on tax lists in Rockcastle County, Kentucky, beginning in 1812. (One Vanderpool researcher states that John arrived in that county in 1811, but I have seen no evidence for his arrival in Rockcastle County that early.) During his first few years in Kentucky, John may have been farming someone else's property on Renfro Creek, but by 1815 he had arranged to purchase 122 acres in the Renfro Valley and he is on the tax list again in that year. There is no deed of sale for this property. What became of it is not clear; perhaps he could not pay for it. Before long,

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Settlement in Oklahoma before 1889 consisted of a few "boomers" who sought to occupy land in central Oklahoma, called the Oklahoma District, that had not yet been assigned to any specific Indian tribes. When the boomers repeatedly sought to open up Oklahoma during the early 1880s – when Birdie says that Sarah was already living there, it will be recalled – they were just as frequently chased out by U.S. troops enforcing the Indian treaties. Congress did not authorize negotiations with the Indians to release this section of Oklahoma territory for settlement until 1885 (the year Sarah died), and these negotiations were not completed until 1889. Even after that, there were numerous white intruders into the area set aside for Indian tribes. There were Vanderpools among these intruders, and it is logical to assume that there had been Vanderpools among the earlier boomers as well. Were Sarah and her children among the boomers (doubtful, at her age), or was Birdie just confused by the fact that Sarah was living so close to the border between Kansas and Oklahoma? We may never know, but I think the chances are very high that Sarah lived in Kansas, and only in Kansas, from the mid-1870s until she died in 1885.

[12] The name for which the initial *M.* stood is unknown. Some Vanderpool researchers speculate that it might have been Mack, since one of John M. Vanderpool's sons used that name for his own son. Another possibility is Meadows or Medders, a name (origins unknown) used by the branch of the Vanderpool family that had passed through Kentucky en route to Missouri. Melgert, an old Vanderpool family name (as we shall see in a later chapter), is yet another possibility.

[13] A minority opinion among Vanderpool researchers holds that James was the son of Samuel and Susanna Vanderpool, who lived in North Carolina and Tennessee. I have seen no credible evidence to support this idea.

however, John M. Vanderpool was the owner of 152 acres on the West Fork of Skegg Creek. He is consistently listed there through 1853, and then never again.[14]

John M. Vanderpool's first wife was a woman named **RIGGS**, and it was she who was the mother of our James Vanderpool. We know nothing more about her – given name, birth year, date of death, or parents. In addition, we cannot pinpoint the date of her marriage to James within the period between 1800, when John would have been (just) old enough and 1812, the year before our James was born. It is possible that her father was a man named James Riggs, since the given name James had not previously been used in the Vanderpool family before it was bestowed on John and this woman's first son in 1813. There were two men named James Riggs in North Carolina in 1790, both in the Hillsborough area of Orange County – not far from where the Vanderpools lived during the 1750s, but it is not possible to identify or even determine the ages of these two men to see if one of them might have been her father. It seems more likely, anyway, that John's wife would have come from a Riggs family that resided closer to the Vanderpools between 1800 and 1812.

[14] Some of Renfro Creek is now part of an artificial lake. The lower part of it is dominated by the Renfro Valley Gathering, a music and entertainment complex, so the area looks quite different today. The upper portion of the creek is quite extensive; see the USGS map for Wildie/Kentucky and slides 12957-59 (2008) for views of both sections. See the USGS maps for Billows/Kentucky, Maretburg/Kentucky, and Mount Vernon/Kentucky for Skegg Creek. Slides 12960-63 and 12970-71, also taken in 2008, show various portions of this creek's West Fork.

Thus we look at Surry County, North Carolina, where the Vanderpools had lived during the 1790s, when John may have met the woman who would become his wife. A prime candidate for her father ought to be the Samuel Riggs who also lived in Surry County in 1790: of all the Riggs males who were residing in the general vicinity of the North Carolina Vanderpools (though not in their tax district), Samuel is the only one whose given name was used in later Vanderpool generations. (The other Riggs males living in Surry County were named Zadok, David, and Hiram.) According to the 1790 census, Samuel Riggs had no young females in his household in 1790, whereas the other three Riggs males mentioned here had at least two young females each. This does not necessarily rule out Samuel, though, since John's wife could have been born during the 1790s if the couple married around 1812.

Turning to the 1798 will of Samuel Riggs, we learn that he had at least four daughters, all presumably born during the 1790s and so conceivably eligible for marriage between about 1806 and 1812. Most of these daughters of Samuel Riggs had not yet married when their father's will was drawn up and probated in 1798. These young Riggs females, however, also bore given names that were not used in the later Vanderpool family, except for John M. Vanderpool's daughter Elizabeth – but she was John's daughter with his *second* wife, not the Riggs woman. Thus this Samuel Riggs does not seem so strong a candidate after all as the father of John M. Vanderpool's wife, though we cannot

completely dismiss the possibility. At best, the evidence from Surry County, North Carolina, is inconclusive.

There are other possibilities to consider, however. After his father's death in 1794, as we shall see, John M. Vanderpool very likely went to live with his brother Hezekiah in Russell County, Virginia. If we assume that John met and married the Riggs woman who was his first wife while he was in his late teens, that would place him in Virginia and not in North Carolina when he married between about 1800 and about 1812. Owing to the absence of complete census records for Virginia for the time period we are interested in, we do not have enough information to determine whether or not there was a Riggs male there who might have been the father of John Vanderpool's wife. There was a William Riggs in Scott County (neighboring Russell County) who may have been old enough (over forty-five years of age in 1820) to have been the father of the unknown Riggs female, but he seems like a weak candidate because of his distance from the Russell County Vanderpools. There are no Riggs wills in either Scott County or Russell County, Virginia, that shed any light on this problem, and neither could I find any marriages there for a Vanderpool male. Once again, the evidence does not identify a clear Riggs candidate for the father of John M. Vanderpool's wife.

We should not overlook a Riggs from Rockcastle County, Kentucky, however. Although John M. Vanderpool is not on the census there in 1810, two Riggs males are: Hiram and

Silas, from their given names almost certainly members of that Surry County, North Carolina, Riggs group. (Indeed, Hiram Riggs, the older of the two, was enumerated on the census in Surry County in 1800.) These two Riggs males are also found on the 1812-1814 Rockcastle County tax lists mentioned earlier. Despite the fact that these two families were not close neighbors in Surry County, the presence of some of them near John M. Vanderpool in Rockcastle County a couple of years later makes a link between them plausible, at least.

From his ages on the two censuses, we can tell that this Hiram was old enough during the 1790s (he was born between 1755 and 1765) to have fathered the unknown Riggs woman who married John M. Vanderpool, assuming she married him after 1800 and before 1812. Since Silas was born between 1765 to 1784 (judging from the 1810 census), he too is a plausible candidate on this basis to have fathered the unknown Riggs female we are looking for. But the fact that Silas is not on the Surry County census in 1800 probably means he was too young during the preceding decade (like John M. Vanderpool, still in his late teens) to have been this unknown woman's father. If we were to learn that Silas had been an adult in Surry County during the 1790s, he would have to be considered the leading candidate for John's father-in-law, even though his given name also is not found within our later Vanderpool family. Otherwise, Hiram Riggs has to be considered the strongest of a field of candidates, all of whom have significant shortcomings.

In light of the history of the Vanderpool family in New Jersey, which we will explore in a later chapter, it is interesting to note that the early members of the North Carolina Riggs family also had lived in New Jersey, specifically in Elizabeth. Joel Riggs and Elizabeth {Miles} Riggs came to New Jersey from England and not from New York, as the Vanderpools did. There in New Jersey they had three sons, David, Hiram, and Reuben, before moving to North Carolina about 1770. Joel Riggs is on the tax rolls in Surry County, North Carolina, in 1771 and 1772. Thus we have a plausible Riggs line from which the wife of John M. Vanderpool could have descended, provided we can make the link between it and this unknown woman. Unfortunately, no Riggs researcher I have yet encountered has any record of a Vanderpool male having married a Riggs female. The identity of John M. Vanderpool's wife remains unknown, therefore.[15]

Setting aside our fruitless examination of the Riggs family, we turn back to the Vanderpools in Rockcastle County, Kentucky. On the 1820 census John is listed – as J.M. Vanderpool; he was twenty-six to forty-five years old and a farmer. There was a boy under ten years of age in the household, and this matches our understanding: James was seven years old that year. There was just one woman in this household, and the age shown for this woman – forty-five years old or older (and so born in 1775 or before) – indicates that she was somewhat older than J.M. Vanderpool himself, who was born in 1783. These circumstances, along with the absence of any children younger than James,

[15] Even though the given name Hiram was not used in the Vanderpool family later on, several other given names found among the Surry County Riggs family were.

suggest to me that John's first wife, the unknown Riggs woman, probably had died sometime after James's birth in 1813 and before the 1820 census.

Who, then, was the woman over forty-five years of age in John Vanderpool's household in 1820? She could have been his Riggs mother-in-law, but a much better possibility would seem to be his own mother, Margaret. We believe that Margaret Vanderpool was present in Pulaski County, Kentucky (adjoining Rockcastle County) in March 1813, when she signified her consent to the marriage of a female we think was her daughter, Rhoda. Margaret was not living with Rhoda and her husband in 1820 (when this couple was residing in Rockcastle County), and neither does she seem to be on any other census in that year. Thus – unless Margaret had remarried after her husband's premature death during the mid-1790s – it seems quite plausible that she would have been the older woman living with her son John Vanderpool in Rockcastle County. A good guess is that Margaret Vanderpool moved to Kentucky with him between 1811 and 1823, or perhaps came to live with him after John's first wife died and he needed someone to care for young James.

By 1830, when John (as he is now identified) Vanderpool was in the census column for 40 to 50 years of age, he evidently had remarried: there was a woman in his household who was twenty to thirty years old but no matching male about that same age who would have been her husband. There were now also six children age ten or younger, in addition

to the male fifteen to twenty years old we presume is our James Vanderpool (seventeen years of age in that year). All of this is consistent with John M. Vanderpool's second marriage, which was to a woman named Sarah E. Cummings.[16] Judging from the ages of these children, John and Sarah married in 1824 or 1825: she evidently had brought some of the children shown on the 1830 census with her when she and John were wed, but some of them (several under five years old) must have been their own. There was no older woman living with John and Sarah, which suggests that Margaret Vanderpool – if that was indeed her on the 1820 census – had either died since then or gone to live with a another relative. Perhaps it was his mother's death during the mid-1820s, in fact, that had led to John seek out a second wife.

Ten years later, in 1840, the census describes John M. Vanderpool as a farmer who was fifty to sixty years old. The woman who must have been his second wife (for once again there was no other male to match up with her) is in the census column for 30 to 40 years old. On the 1850 census, John M. Vanderpool – still residing and farming in Rockcastle County, Kentucky – was listed as having been born in North Carolina and as being sixty-seven years of age. The census shows him once again without a wife, which is correct: his second wife Sarah had died in 1846.[17]

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[16] Some Vanderpool researchers believe John's second wife was a widow whose original name was Sarah Elizabeth Easter. I have not been able to find any record of the marriage of John M. Vanderpool and his second wife, either in Rockcastle County or in the surrounding Kentucky counties, and neither have I learned anything about the identity of that woman. The census data does indicate that she was a widow.

[17] In 1850, John M. Vanderpool's children with his second wife did continue to live with him. The agricultural census that year (which specifies that his farm was in the southern part of Rockcastle County) shows him with 80 improved acres and 72 unimproved acres worth $600; his farm equipment and implements were valued at $85. He had six horses, three milch cows, three other cattle, twenty sheep, and

Vanderpool family historians believe that John M. Vanderpool died in Rockcastle County, Kentucky, sometime during 1854, which is consistent with his disappearance from tax lists after 1853. He is not listed on the census in Rockcastle County in 1860, either, but the appraisal of his estate was delayed until March 1862. The estate records show that John M. Vanderpool evidently was a prosperous farmer: he had both a clock and a watch, for example, and at his death he was owed money by more than a dozen other men. It is interesting to observe that John M. Vanderpool and his son James both died sometime during 1854, and one wonders if the survivor ever learned about the other's death so many miles away.

One reason for wondering about this is an interesting piece of family lore that Birdie Vanderpool, John's great-granddaughter, related in the brief document we have encountered in an earlier chapter. She opened it with the statement that her father, Samuel Green Vanderpool (the son of James Vanderpool and grandson of John), lived with his mother in Kentucky until he was fourteen years old, either during or shortly after the Civil War. When his mother moved to Oklahoma with her other children, Birdie wrote, Samuel "ran off to Indiana" by boat. He traveled up the Mississippi River, living only on the raw peanuts that were being transported as cargo on that boat. Little of this

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thirty-two swine, all of which were worth $283. His farm had produced in the previous year 45 bushels of wheat, 500 bushels of Indian corn, 50 bushels of oats, along with various smaller quantities of wool, peas, potatoes, butter, flax, and flax seed. John M. Vanderpool also seems to have sold a large amount of maple sugar.

fits the facts. As we know, Samuel Green Vanderpool's mother did move to Kansas, near Oklahoma, in her later years, but the 1860 and 1870 censuses reveal that she was living in Indiana in both years; Samuel – who was *born* in Indiana, not in Kentucky – was living with her in 1860 and near her in 1870, when he was listed as eleven and twenty-two years old, respectively.

I suspect that Birdie, who was ninety-five years old when she wrote down her memories, got confused and mixed into this account some Vanderpool family lore about Samuel's father, James Vanderpool – the son of the John M. Vanderpool we have just met. Such an explanation is buttressed by the presence of another family tradition that James did not get along with his father's second wife, Sarah {Cummings} Vanderpool. In addition, one of Birdie's cousins also remembered that his – and Birdie's – *grand*father, James Vanderpool, left Kentucky as a boy because James could not get along with his stepmother.

Thus it must have been the earlier *James* Vanderpool, who was indeed born in Kentucky, who ran away to Indiana riding in a boat full of peanuts sometime (more than a decade) after the death of his mother, John M. Vanderpool's first wife (who was named Riggs). Whether or not unhappiness or conflict with his father's second wife was involved, and family tradition suggests this was the case, evidently as he reached his late teens James decided to leave his family behind and head off in a new direction. This would have

occurred sometime after 1830, when James (seventeen years old) was still included in his father's household, but before mid-1837, when James was married in Washington County, Indiana, to Sarah Chastain. If this interesting lore does pertain to James Vanderpool, as seems likely, he probably traveled along the Kentucky River across Kentucky and then up the Wabash River into Indiana.

Where was J.M. Vanderpool in 1810 and before? No one with that name is listed in the Kentucky census index in 1810, and I did not find him during a name-by-name search of the census for Rockcastle County that year. Information contributed to the LDS indicates a John M. Vanderpool was born in North Carolina in 1783, probably in Surry County where his older brother Josiah is also thought to have been born. This must be the J.M. Vanderpool we first see enumerated on the 1820 census and (as John) in later years, whose census entry says that he was born in this state about 1783. Most Vanderpool family researchers agree with this interpretation. In order to find him between 1783 and 1814, though, we must look a generation earlier for useful clues.

The father of the John M. Vanderpool who was born in North Carolina in 1783 was **ABRAHAM VANDERPOOL**, whose date of birth remains uncertain but was probably sometime between 1743 and 1750. Most Vanderpool researchers believe that Abraham Vanderpool was married to **MARGARET {SHEPPERD} VANDERPOOL** when John was born. We also know very little about this woman – and nothing at all about her

family – except that she may have been born in Virginia and is not recorded in North Carolina after 1797.[18] If my speculation about the older female in John M. Vanderpool's household in 1820 is correct, John's mother Margaret died in Rockcastle County, Kentucky, sometime between 1820 and 1830. Abraham and Margaret were probably married during the 1760s, but we have no information at all about the date or place of their marriage.

The link between John M. and Abraham Vanderpool comes from the latter's will. Dated March 1, 1794, and filed on February 28, 1795, this will lists Josiah, Hezekiah, and John as Abraham's sons. Abraham directed that each of these sons was to receive 50 acres, with the remainder of his property to be divided among the children, presumably including at least two females who were alive in 1790 but not listed by name either on the census or in the will. (Abraham's wife was also not mentioned by name.) The North Carolina census for 1790 confirms that Abraham Vanderpool in Salisbury District of

[18] There was a Shepperd family in Surry County, North Carolina, at the same time the Vanderpools lived there. A James Sheppard who died there between 1779 and 1781 would seem to have been a contemporary of the Abraham Vanderpool whose son may have married a Sheppard female, and a Jacob Sheppard who died there in 1808 could have been another contemporary of the older Abraham Vanderpool. (The spelling of the Shepperd family name differs and is not consequential.) As with the Riggs families in Surry County, the tax lists show that the Sheppards lived in the general vicinity of the Vanderpools but were not necessarily their close neighbors. There were also abundant Sheppards in Orange County, North Carolina, when we think Abraham Vanderpool showed up there during the 1760s. Some Vanderpool researchers think that Abraham's wife was named Margaret Stone, in part because an Enoch Stone witnessed his will and in part because the given name Enoch began to be used in the Vanderpool family at about this time. Still another opinion (including information contributed to the LDS) has Abraham's wife a Margaret Denny, born in Surry County, North Carolina, about 1758. She was possibly the daughter of Hezekiah Denny, who was living in the Salisbury, North Carolina, area at the time of the 1790 census. It is noteworthy, perhaps, that Abraham's eldest son was named Hezekiah, and we know that many Dennys lived near the younger Abraham Vanderpool in the Pilot Mountain area. The consensus among Vanderpool researchers is that Abraham's wife was named Shepperd, and I have chosen to accept that.

Surry County (the only man with that name in the entire state) had three males under the age of sixteen years old living with him.[19] Our John M., born in 1783, was one of them.

We return to the question of where John, not yet in his teens when his father died, lived between 1794 or 1795 and when he appeared in Rockcastle County, Kentucky, sometime between 1811 and 1814. No doubt at first he remained with his mother, but she disappears from the records in Surry County after 1797; whether or not she died is an open question, depending on our reading of the later census entries for John M. Vanderpool, but neither is she listed by name on the 1800 census. It is also possible that Margaret Vanderpool, a relatively young widow, remarried about 1797, but there is no evidence of this.

Still only sixteen or seventeen years old at the time of the 1800 census, John was surely too young to have been heading his own household, but in any case none of the three men named John Vanderpool in North Carolina in 1800 had a male in the census column (16 to 26 years old) in which John should have been listed that year. In fact, in the entire state in 1800 there were only two males in Vanderpool households who were in this age column. One lived with a Winen[20] Vanderpool in Ashe County, who was a half-brother

[19] Surry County originally included much of the western part of North Carolina, from Guilford County in the central part of the state to the Blue Ridge Mountains and from Virginia on the north down to Rowan County (another large North Carolina county). During the latter half of the 18th century, more than half a dozen new counties were successively formed out of Surry County. One of them was Wilkes County (1778), which included what would become still later Ashe County and then part of Watauga County.

[20] This name was actually Winant, the way the southern branch of the Vanderpool family usually spelled a long-standing Vanderpool given name, Wynant.

of Abraham Vanderpool; the younger male who was living with Winen, though, is thought to have been his son. The other was Anthony Vanderpool, also in Ashe County, who was the only male in his household. Perhaps, then, John M. Vanderpool was living with a relative on his mother's side in 1800. A good candidate, judging from the males in his household who were our John's age in 1800, would be Robert Shepperd of Wilkes County, who had two males sixteen to twenty-six years old when, based on his children listed on the 1790 census, he should have had just one in that column.

It seems just as likely, though, that John M. Vanderpool had left North Carolina altogether by 1800. He would have been rather young at sixteen or seventeen years old to have been striking off on his own, but we know that around 1800 a large contingent of Vanderpools left North Carolina for Tennessee, first, and then Missouri and points even farther west. Perhaps young John took the opportunity to travel with them as far as Tennessee and then parted company with them to venture into southern Kentucky, where he settled in Rockcastle County. If he did arrive in Kentucky during that first decade of the 1800s, though, there is no record of his having been there: not only is he is absent from that state's census in 1810, he is not found in the tax records that substitute for a census in 1800. Unfortunately, Tennessee has no true census for 1800 and no published census index for 1810, so we cannot say definitively that he was or was not living in that state during this time period.

Probably the best theory about John's whereabouts after 1797 is that he was living with his brother Hezekiah in the Sinking Creek area of Russell County, Virginia, which is not far north of Surry County, North Carolina. Hezekiah evidently moved from North Carolina to Virginia about 1797, since only John and Hezekiah's brother Josiah Vanderpool is listed on Surry County or other North Carolina county tax records in 1798 and after. This, and the fact that Josiah is shown with 250 acres, would seem to indicate that Hezekiah and John had turned over to Josiah the 100 acres their father had left to the two other brothers. John may have chosen to accompany Hezekiah, or he may have remained in North Carolina and hired out with someone unknown to us. Because Abraham's widow, Margaret, also is not listed in those tax records after 1797, she may well have begun to live either with Josiah, on the property she and Abraham had owned, or with Hezekiah in Russell County, Virginia. Once again missing census information frustrates us in extending this analysis, though: there is no census for Virginia as a whole for 1800, and unfortunately the Russell County census for 1810 no longer exists; nor is there any other information about Hezekiah Vanderpool in Russell County (or Scott County, formed from it in 1814). [21]

In sum, we have no way of determining where John M. Vanderpool was living during these years after his father died, or with whom – there are just too many variables. My

[21] Hezekiah Vanderpool is not on the North Carolina census in 1800, but as early as 1803 and probably before then, he was a "planter" (then meaning an ordinary farmer who worked in the field himself) in Virginia and evidently resided there the remainder of his life.

hunch is that he remained in his mother's household between 1795 and 1797, then went to Russell County with Hezekiah. Sometime around 1810 to 1812, John married and then settled in Rockcastle County, Kentucky (or vice versa). As we have seen, this vagueness about his physical movement during this span of time also limits and complicates our search for the name and origins of John's wife.

We turn our attention now to the movements of John M. Vanderpool's father, Abraham, who as we have seen was born sometime between 1743 and 1750. Our task is complicated by the fact that Abraham's own father (who was born in 1709) also bore that given name, which makes untangling documentary evidence and the references to father and son in North Carolina something of a challenge. The narrative that follows is based on my best efforts to sort out which references apply to which Abraham Vanderpool.

Other than a couple of fleeting glances of an Abraham Vanderpool in North Carolina in 1757, which we will deal with later, the North Carolina portion of the Vanderpool story begins when a man of that name is listed as a road overseer in Rowan County, North Carolina, on July 15, 1767.[22] At that time, Rowan County covered much of what is now western North Carolina. Then, twice in 1768 and again in 1769, Abraham Vanderpool is

[22] Before modern highways, built and maintained by the county or state, roads were typically constructed and kept in repair by residents of the area affected, who were expected to contribute six or so days of work per year to this work. The local jurisdiction appointed a road overseer to organize and supervise the work. One researcher states that by April 6, 1756, Abraham Vanderpool was living in the Parish of St. Matthew in Orange County, North Carolina, but I have seen no evidence for this statement. We do know that in 1768 Winant Vanderpool was living in the portion of Orange County that would later become Guilford County, and it is possible that Abraham had been living with him during some of the years between 1763 and 1767.

described as a constable charged with collecting taxes in the Belews Creek area of the county (an area that became part of the new Surry County in 1771, Stokes County eighteen years later, and Forsythe County in 1849). These positions would almost certainly have been held by the older of the two Abraham Vanderpools, who was then in his fifties or sixties, and not by the younger one, who even in 1769 was barely into his twenties. We are not aware of any documentary evidence to show that Abraham Vanderpool owned land, as holding these two positions would have required. It should be noted, however, that a dispute over a crown grant to Lord Granville held up the usual land transaction process in North Carolina from 1763 to 1778, which may account for there being no record that Abraham Vanderpool the older owned any land. Sometime later during this period, Abraham does seem to have secured a land grant on Old Field Creek and Elk Creek in what was known as the Town Fork settlement (originally in Rowan County, then Surry County in 1771, and Stokes County in 1789). [23]

One Abraham Vanderpool was taxed in the new Surry County (north of Rowan County, out of which it had been created) in 1771, 1774, and 1775; the other (unnamed) adult male in Abraham's household on the earliest of these lists was quite likely his oldest son, Abraham, who would have been over twenty-one years old by then and was not listed elsewhere. When a second Abraham Vanderpool shows up on different Surry County tax

[23] Belews Creek, now in the northwest part of Forsythe County, is just south of the Stokes County line; Town Fork is north of that line. Abraham's property was not far from Walkerton and Germanton. See the USGS maps for Walnut Cove/North Carolina and King/North Carolina and digital images 00816-00823 and 00825-00826, taken in 2010, for general views of the waterways and adjacent areas where Abraham Vanderpool must have lived – and collected taxes.

lists in 1774 and 1775, we are probably seeing that the younger Abraham had begun living apart from his father. The tax list this younger man is on covered the upper part of Surry County that would eventually become Stokes County. The older Abraham is shown as before in those years, except that two more sons – William and John – were listed as tithables living with him in 1774 and William again in 1774.[24] There is then a gap in tax lists for Surry County between 1775 (when the elder Abraham had reached his early sixties, and so would typically have gone off the tax rolls) and 1782 (three years after he had died). This gap means we do not know where the older Abraham Vanderpool was living during the last four years of his life. Any Abraham Vanderpools we observe after 1782 were, of course, the younger one.

By 1778, perhaps earlier, the older Abraham may have joined the younger one on the south side of the Yadkin River in the new Wilkes County, North Carolina, which had just been carved out of the far western section of Rowan County. An Abraham Vanderpool (whether the older or younger man is not known, but probably the younger) had filed for and received (on March 3, 1779) a state grant for 150 acres in this area. Because Abraham Vanderpool sold this land within a year (on March 1, 1780), as the terms of the grant required, there is no assurance that he or his father ever lived there.[25]

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[24] Abraham's son John Vanderpool evidently went somewhere else or died after the 1774 tax list was created.

[25] The Vanderpool property in Wilkes County on the south side of the Yadkin River was approximately three-quarters of a mile upstream from where Kings Creek flows into this river. This area, close to Lewis Fork and Grandin, is now in Caldwell County near its boundary with Wilkes County. (Teter Nave's land grant was near Lynn Mountain, just east of Elizabethton – then in North Carolina but now in Carter County, Tennessee, and so not all that far from this Vanderpool property on the Yadkin.) Several decades later, a man named Tom Dula lived very close to the Vanderpool grant in Wilkes County. The celebrated

In any case, the senior Abraham appears to have died sometime in 1778. Afterwards, his widow, Rebecca, evidently moved in with her daughter and son-in-law, Teter Nave, across the mountains in a part of North Carolina that would soon become Washington County, Tennessee; Here, Rebecca too soon died. We will return to this older couple, the younger Abraham's parents, once we have finished looking at what we know about their son Abraham and his movements during the 1780s and 1790s.

In June 1781, the younger Abraham Vanderpool obtained another state grant, this one for 100 acres on the head springs of Tantrough Creek, near its mouth at the Dan River and the town of Danbury in what was then Surry County but is now Stokes County. Whether he actually lived here or held it for speculation cannot be determined, but Abraham did not sell this 100 acres until August 1793. According to a county historian, he also owned property near Bethesda Church and Dillard (now in Stokes County), but I have seen no documentation for this assertion. And in September 1790 an Abraham Vanderpool of Stokes County purchased 240 acres on the south side of the Yadkin River, an acquisition difficult to fit into the sequence of developments shown here. Some of these land transactions could well have been speculative ventures, but imperfect documentation does not enable us to get a very clear picture of them.[26]

"Tom Dooley" of popular song, he was buried on his land there after having been hanged for murder. The road that runs through or near the Vanderpool and Dula properties today is called Tom Dula Road. See the USGS map for Grandin/North Carolina and digital images 00806-00808 (2010) for this area.

[26] Abraham Vanderpool's Tantrough grant lies just outside the boundary of Hanging Rock State Park. See the USGS map for Danbury/North Carolina and digital image 00799, taken in 2010, for a view of the

It does seem apparent that the younger Abraham Vanderpool had remained in Surry County after 1781. Tax lists in 1782, 1784, and 1785 show him owning two properties, one of 211 1/2 acres (on Old Field Creek) and another of 80 acres (on Elk Creek) near Walkerton and Germanton. This may be property that he inherited from his father, since this was where the elder Vanderpool had served as constable two decades earlier, but it is not known how either Vanderpool obtained these lands or the younger one eventually disposed of them. We can be sure that the younger Abraham Vanderpool purchased 150 acres on Pilot Creek in August 1787, and tax lists beginning in 1790 and the 1790 census both show that he and his family were living there. This location is near Pilot Mountain and Pilot Shoals on the Tarrarat (Ararat) River.[27] The circumstances that led to these several moves are not known.

An interesting sidelight on Abraham Vanderpool the younger is that on July 31, 1782, he was allowed payment from the government of North Carolina for expenditures he had made during the Revolutionary War, perhaps for supplies he had provided to the state's soldiers. Interest was credited to him until October 25, 1783, probably about when Abraham sold the voucher (doubtless at a substantial discount, as was common) to

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approximate location of this grant. It is worth noting that a Sheppard's Mill was nearby. For the property near Bethesda Church, see the USGS map for Ayersville/North Carolina and digital image 00824, also taken in 2010.

[27] The North Carolina state census of 1787 also shows Abraham Vanderpool and his family living in Surry County. See the USGS map for Siloam/North Carolina for a general view of the area of the Pilot Mountain grant. Also see digital images 00810-00815, taken in 2010.

someone who used it as a credit toward the purchase of state land in Tennessee, then still part of North Carolina.

In 1793 or early 1794, Abraham evidently encountered a fatal health problem – possibly a disease, from the way his will is worded – that induced him to write the will dated March 1, 1794, described earlier in this chapter. The tax list shows no tithable in his household in 1793, which suggests that he might have been exempted from the tax that year due to his illness. As we have seen, in this will Abraham specified that equal shares of his land were to pass to his three sons, with the proviso that their mother could remain on this property unless she chose to marry again.[28] As this will was filed in February 1795, we can date Abraham Vanderpool's death between March 1, 1794, and then.[29] Abraham's widow, Margaret, is listed as paying taxes in Surry County in 1795 and 1797. As we have also seen, she then disappears from the records in North Carolina but may have lived on for two decades or longer.[30]

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[28] A "historical" map evidently published during the 1970s purports to locate Abraham's property on Logan Creek in what was then Surry County and is now Yadkin County. The map has the date 1790 next to Abraham's name and displays the names of his three sons with "1795" next to each one. The accuracy of this map is not known, and I have seen nothing in documentary records to substantiate what it shows.

[29] Abraham's will was proved on November 10, 1795. Abraham Vanderpool may not have reached the age of fifty years old. Given his early death, and that of his grandson James (who died at the age of only forty-one years old), one might be tempted to think that the Vanderpool males our line tended to die young. But we must also take into account James's son Samuel Green Vanderpool, who came close to reaching the century mark. Another member of the Vanderpool family is reputed to have lived beyond the century mark.

[30] There is further confusion because a third Abraham Vanderpool is sometimes seen in the picture we have sketched here. This man, born in 1766, was probably a grandson of the older Abraham Vanderpool (born 1709), although the father of this third Abraham Vanderpool is not known for certain. Since his branch of the Vanderpool family has a tradition that they are descended from three Abrahams in a row, one possibility is that the Abraham born in 1766 was the product of an unrecorded first marriage of the younger Abraham we have been considering – that is, the one born in Virginia around 1750 who died in 1794. The Abraham born in 1766 does not appear to have been part of our direct line, but he is mixed into the references and records pertaining to the two Abrahams who *are* part of that direct line. He seems to have

We can now return to the father of the Abraham Vanderpool who died in 1794. This man was **ABRAHAM VANDERPOOL**, who was born in Albany, New York, in 1709. Over the years considerable effort has gone into tracing his life and ancestry, for he was the principal source of the "southern line" of Vanderpools and so has many, many descendants scattered throughout North Carolina, Tennessee, Kentucky, Indiana, Missouri, Oklahoma, and beyond. Other Vanderpools accompanied him as he migrated from the Dutch communities in his native New York and in New Jersey to North Carolina, but Abraham is certainly the linchpin in the Vanderpool family history for those who want to trace their southern Vanderpools to the New York and Dutch antecedents of the family. Before we can acquaint ourselves with those antecedents, we must follow Abraham as he worked his way southward from Albany to North Carolina, where we have already seen evidence of his life from the 1760s until his death in 1778.

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lived in the Cove Creek area of North Carolina (presently in Watauga County) and eventually migrated to – of all places – Indiana, where he died in the Indianapolis area in 1831. It is possible that our James and his later Indiana family kept in touch with this Abraham. In view of the paucity of information about this family in North Carolina, we cannot dismiss the possibility that this Abraham Vanderpool born in 1766 was the father of our John M. Vanderpool, but I know of no evidence to support this notion. That a cluster of Vanderpools (and their Isaacs relatives) lived in the Cove Creek area is confirmed by the number of landmarks – including a creek, a church, and a road – named for them there. See the USGS maps for Sherwood/North Carolina and Zionville/North Carolina and slides 07746-51, taken in 1995.

Abraham was baptized in the Dutch Reformed Church in Albany[31] on February 13, 1709. Because Dutch practice was to baptize the newborn as soon as possible, it is likely that Abraham was born sometime in February 1709, but some Vanderpool researchers estimate his birth as early as 1707. Abraham's father, who was a younger son, moved to New Jersey sometime during the early 18th century – by the second half of the 1720s at the latest – as part of the settlement of that colony by Dutch and other inhabitants of New York. Dutch custom was for such migration, often prompted by the needs of younger sons for their own land, to be done in groups. Not only was Abraham's father without much hope of inheriting property, but the peculiar conditions in New York encouraged him and many like him to leave: descendants of the Dutch patroons, speculators, and others controlled vast holdings of acreage, preferring to hold title for future profit instead of selling it to those who wanted to farm; meanwhile, they rented it out to tenants. Those who wanted to own their own land, therefore, had to look to relatively unsettled New Jersey and elsewhere. In addition, those who looked to earning their livelihoods off the land saw New York City and nearby northern New Jersey, which had been slow to open to settlement, as attractive places to do so.

[31] This church was built in 1656 at the corner of what is now Broadway and State Street in Albany. (See slides 08773-74, taken in 1997.) The original structure was demolished in 1715, and the one that replaced it was razed in 1806. The current Dutch Reformed Church, some blocks away, contains the pulpit brought over from the Netherlands in 1656 and in continuous use to this day. It is the oldest pulpit in America and the one many of our Vanderpool ancestors would have seen at baptisms, weddings, funerals, and worship services. (See slide 08822, also taken in 1997.) Before 1656, there was a church within Fort Orange, the core of what would become Albany. This church was in a warehouse that the patroon, Kiliaen van Rensselaer, had donated in 1648. It typically flooded in the spring, however, and by 1654 most of the residents of Albany had relocated north of the Rutten Kill; thus, a new church was built outside the fort. See slide 11632 (2005) for a photograph of the rooster weather vane that stood atop the original church within Fort Orange.

As we will see later in this chapter, there could have been special conditions attached to the moves of the Vanderpools to New Jersey and then south, most particularly those of Abraham himself: members of this family may have been among the miners who were in a constant search for new ore deposits. Abraham's own life reflects a pattern of short, frequent moves as he appeared to be inexorably drawn to the west and south throughout the first half of the 18th century, whether in search of metals to mine or simply better opportunities we cannot say for certain.

Judging from various church records (chiefly baptisms), Abraham seems to have been living in New York City by June 30, 1725, then in Belleville, Essex County, New Jersey (north of Newark), by July 13, 1729. He apparently belonged to the Second River Dutch Reformed Church, an offshoot of the Acquackanonk (now Passaic) church that was organized in 1700.[32] Abraham Vanderpool married his first wife, Jannetje {Weibling} Vanderpool, possibly in Albany and probably by early 1734, since the couple seems to have had a child later that year. Jannetje's family name is spelled variously (from Weblin to Wibling to Welling or even Wallings). Her father and mother might have been the Thomas and Elizabeth Welling of Jamaica, New York,[33] who had a daughter named Jane who was baptized there on January 1, 1712, which would have been just about right for

[32] The name Second River refers to the Passaic River, the next river after the Hackensack River that the Dutch encountered as they moved westward from the Hudson River.
[33] The location of Jamaica is often given as New Jersey. I have not been able to locate this place in New Jersey, however, which suggests that it was actually Jamaica, New *York*, instead.

Abraham's wife. Most Vanderpool researchers have concluded that our Jannetje was born in New York or New Jersey, but there is no specific evidence linking this Welling family to the Vanderpools.[34]

Abraham and Jannetje may have been living in Newark, New Jersey in 1736, when their child born in 1734 died and was buried in that city, but they could have been living in Belleville instead at this time. In 1736 Abraham leased a lot in Newark for a period of time beginning in 1737, but he did not execute the lease. By May 14, 1738, Abraham and Jannetje can again be located in Belleville, where another child was baptized. Possibly in search of economic opportunity, perhaps because the proprietor of New Jersey was trying to eject those (did they include the Vanderpools?) who were squatting on his land, or for reasons we do not know, Abraham and his family decided to leave the settled area of New York and New Jersey for less-settled territory elsewhere.

The first leg of a journey that would ultimately take them hundreds of miles into a southern colony was west, to the Delaware River Valley, which was already home to many Dutch families. The Vanderpools were here at least by early 1740: a court order issued on May 16 in that year, most likely in or near Newark, noted that Abraham Vanderpool was at that time living in Wallpack, New Jersey – an unorganized area (today

[34] Dutch naming patterns would suggest that Jane's parents were named John and Sarah, not Thomas and Elizabeth. Some Vanderpool researchers continue to believe that Abraham's first wife was born in Virginia, but this seems untenable to me given the church records cited here.

in Sussex County) that then extended about thirty miles along the Delaware River from the New York border below Port Jervis to the Delaware Water Gap. Other documents in Virginia confirm that Abraham was in Wallpack during the early 1740s. In 1741, Abraham began to appear in church records in Smithfield, Pennsylvania, just across the Delaware River from New Jersey; Smithfield is two miles above the present village of Shawnee in Monroe County. The church in Smithfield, organized in 1737, served Dutch settlers in the entire valley, so Abraham and his family might in fact still have been living in New Jersey at that time.

Sometime before 1743, though, the Vanderpools went southwest. They would make at least two distinct forays into frontier Virginia, moving to two literally uncharted valleys in what are now Hardy County and Greenbrier County of West Virginia. The Vanderpools helped to form the leading edge of European civilization, which was then pushing steadily outward from the Atlantic seaboard communities. In this sense the actions we are about to detail here are quite consistent with those of later and earlier Vanderpool generations, which were often among the first people to venture into new and lightly inhabited territories, from Oklahoma to the Pacific Northwest.

It is possible that one of the opportunities Abraham Vanderpool was pursuing in this particular move was mining. At about the same time he and his family were showing up in Virginia, early 1743, the death of Abraham's younger brother, Melgert, was being

reported in America's two leading newspapers, John Peter Zenger's *New-York Weekly Journal* and Benjamin Franklin's *Pennsylvania Gazette*. Young Melgert fell 114 feet to his death in a mine near Newark, which has led to speculation that his brother Abraham Vanderpool might also have been involved in mining.[35] Whether or not this is so, we can be confident that Abraham took his family southwest for greater opportunity of some sort.

Abraham Vanderpool's history during the next decade, from the mid-1740s through the mid-1750s, is unusually well documented – in part because of good luck in the preservation of records and in part because of his encounters with the young George Washington. Our first evidence Abraham was in Virginia comes in February 1743, when he began to appear – first as defendant, later as plaintiff – in nearly a dozen court cases in Frederick County there. That county then contained a large area west of the Blue Ridge Mountains, including the South Branch of the Potomac River, later in Hampshire County and now in Hardy County, West Virginia. The details of these cases have not been preserved, but they seem to have involved disputes over debts. In January in the following year, 1744, Abraham was included on a fee list for taxes in Frederick County, where he owed 342 pounds of tobacco, a pound of that crop being the standard currency

[35] See Appendix III for a fuller discussion of the Vanderpools and mining. Zenger's paper reported Melgert's accident first, on April 4. Franklin's paper picked up the story and (as was customary then) repeated the Zenger's account of the accident, word for word, on April 7. One report noted that Melgert lingered for ninety minutes before expiring, being conscious almost to the end, whereas another report (which called him Malachi) stated that he died immediately. Journalism was much the same as now, it seems.

at that time. Abraham continued to be involved in court cases (at least one of them with Lord Fairfax personally presiding) from time to time through November 1745. Then, with one minor exception in 1752, his name never appears again on the court docket in Frederick County, although as we shall see there is other evidence that he was still living on the South Branch.

How did the Vanderpools happen to choose Virginia? Did Abraham come alone at first, perhaps to select or establish a place to live, or perhaps as a trader of some sort? We do not know, but it would appear he knew the right person: John Van Meter, who had lived in the Esopus settlement in New York and later in New Jersey. Van Meter visited numerous areas west of the Blue Ridge in the course of his trading with the Indians, after which he discussed with the royal governor of Virginia how to encourage people to settle this region. Van Meter was especially impressed by the fertile valley that lay along the South Fork of the South Branch of the Potomac River, sometimes known as the Wappaconnee, which he had first seen in 1725.

Van Meter and his sons subsequently spread the word of the opportunities to be found on what became known as the South Branch, and at least one of those sons actively recruited settlers for it in the Dutch communities in New York and New Jersey – including the Wallpack and Minisink areas in which the Vanderpools then lived. Friends, neighbors, relatives, and in-laws seemed to have moved at the same time, in the Dutch manner, to

the South Branch. Among them were the Westfalls and the Deckers, two families the Vanderpools knew well. The younger Van Meter was on the South Branch by 1744 and others were there by 1745. The evidence we have seen suggests that Abraham Vanderpool was in Frederick County as early as 1743, so perhaps he lived somewhere else in that county before moving to the South Branch about 1745. Perhaps that place was the Frederick County crossroads town of Winchester, emerging as the favored point of re-supply before migrants departed on the long trek south up the Shenandoah Valley toward the Carolinas; perhaps Abraham was involved in doing business in Winchester. We can only speculate about such things.

Life on the South Branch was rather primitive: subsistence farms and not much else, although there were also the beginnings of an extensive cattle-raising industry that increasingly produced beef for Eastern markets. We also know that there were no churches on the South Branch. As we have seen, from 1743 through mid-1751, Abraham Vanderpool is mentioned several times in the surviving records, one of which, in October 1746, specifically identifies him as a resident of the South Branch area. He was evidently a man of some standing there, as he appraised the estates of two deceased neighbors and provided surety for the administrator of another estate.

It was also in October 1746 when surveyors for Lord Fairfax came upon the South Branch community as they were plotting and marking the so-called “Fairfax Line,” the

southern boundary of Lord Fairfax's vast domain. The surveyors, William Lewis and Peter Jefferson (the father of Thomas), ran short of supplies near the South Branch and headed down the river – north, in other words – in search of inhabitants who might furnish some them assistance. Lewis's journal notes that they saw "but one familey of poor Duch people" who could not even provide food for the surveyors' horses. A close reading of the journal, along with its editor's comments, shows that he and Jefferson encountered these Dutch people just about where we know the Vanderpools resided at that time. Dare we think that Lewis was actually describing Abraham and his family?

More surveyors came to the South Branch a year and a half later, in the spring of 1748. Among them was a young (sixteen years old) surveyor's apprentice and aspiring aristocrat named George Washington, who was making his first trip west of the Virginia Tidewater. Since the settlers were on Fairfax's land (perhaps without knowing that), the survey team went ahead and laid out the bounds of the various properties that were already being improved and cultivated. Abraham Vanderpool's land, which like most of the others straddled the South Branch, became Tract 10 of what was called the South Fork, one of several huge "manors" Fairfax had carved out of this wilderness he owned but then decided to have laid out in lots.[36] From the records that survive and the

[36] Washington's field notes state that a Michael Catt was living on Lot 10. (The modern editors of these notes identify this man as Michael Liveran owing to a misreading of Washington's writing.) A researcher familiar with Catt believes that he was merely squatting on this land, but it is possible that Catt was farming it for Abraham Vanderpool – who we know was living on the South Branch in 1748, and who would patent Lot 10 a few months later. By then Catt evidently had wandered off somewhere else. Why Washington named Catt when he did not name any other persons living on what he thought was unclaimed land on the South Branch suggests to me that Catt was actually working the land even if it was not actually his.

testimony of the surveyors, we can not only reconstruct the settlement here but trace some of its members to the Dutch communities in New Jersey from which they had come – and, as well, to the North Carolina communities in which they and the Vanderpools would subsequently reside.

On April 2, 1748, the survey crew ran the lines for Vanderpool's lot (which, however, has another man's name on it on the plat the surveyors later drew up). After finishing this patch of surveying, young Washington commented on the people he had met. The rather supercilious young man was not impressed, telling his diary "We did two Lots & was attended by a great Company of People Men Women & Children that attended us through the Woods as we went shewing there Antick tricks. I really think they seem to be as Ignorant a Set of People as the Indians. They would never speak English but when spoken to they speak all Dutch."

Later in that same year, on October 19, 1748, Abraham Vanderpool patented from Lord Fairfax, in return for the usual annual rental payment (described in an earlier chapter), his 432 acres, Lot 10, on the South Branch of the Potomac.[37] Additional evidence shows that Vanderpool owned more property in this area (Lots 34 and 35, at least), but the documentation is incomplete and we do not know the circumstances through which he

[37] Fortunately, a modern researcher has translated the metes and bounds descriptions of these tracts, and with this help we can locate Abraham Vanderpool's property on current maps. See the USGS map for Lost River State Park/West Virginia and my files for the exact location. See slides 09998-10002 for views of Abraham's property in 2002.

obtained and disposed of this other property. We do have further evidence that Vanderpool was a highly respected member of this small, isolated community. A trader's license issued about this time in Frederick County bears an endorsement – possibly in Abraham Vanderpool's own hand – identifying him as a "collector" in Augusta County, Virginia, south of Frederick County. This suggests that he had been deputized to collect fees further up the South Branch where it originates in what was then Augusta County. Moreover, on April 15, 1749, he was one of several South Branch men who investigated the accidental death (by penknife) of one Samuel Decker. The record comments that Abraham and the others had come to the area from New York about 1740.

Even better more evidence of Vanderpool's standing, and his involvement in Augusta County affairs as well, can be seen in the fact that during 1749 Abraham Vanderpool was appointed to the commission of the peace for Augusta County. This incident suggests, too, that Vanderpool may have been involved in Virginia's political doings more deeply than the surviving evidence tells us. A commission's magistrates, typically one to two dozen men in all, gathered at the county seat (in this instance Staunton) quarterly in order to hear and decide upon infractions of the laws and other matters; any four of them constituted a quorum for cases. The sitting commission recommended new magistrates to Virginia's royal governor and council, who made the actual appointments.

At the time of Vanderpool's appointment, the Augusta County Commission of the Peace was controlled by a man named James Patton, who had large land interests and considerable political influence. In an apparent attempt to solidify his control, Patton had the existing commission recommend fifteen new magistrates – including our Abraham Vanderpool – on February 17, 1749. Governor William Gooch and his council made the appointments on May 9 but added an additional five magistrates to Augusta's new commission of the peace. On June 14, Gooch and his council would appoint another group of magistrates – Vanderpool not among them – to replace the commission named just a month before.

This curious course of events is explained by politics. A scholar who has studied Augusta County politics during this era has concluded that these maneuverings were part of a factional struggle between Patton and certain allies of Lord Fairfax from his Northern Neck property in the South Branch area (especially land speculators). Fairfax and the others were eager to expand their influence in Augusta County, which had bountiful land to the west; Patton stood in their way. The anti-Patton faction persuaded Gooch and the council to add the additional five magistrates in May 1749 in order to undermine Patton's influence. When the Governor's communication listing the expanded group was read at the May 19 Augusta court, Patton immediately halted the proceedings. Another justice took the chair, however, after which Gooch's communication was read again and the court resumed its deliberations – without Patton and his allies.

Patton was not defeated, though: he solidified his position in Augusta County and then countered by getting the colony's governor and council to appoint a yet another, different (and thoroughly pro-Patton) slate of magistrates in June. In the end, the group of May 1749 magistrates met only briefly (in all, for only two and one half days). This gave Abraham Vanderpool – who lived many miles north of Staunton – no opportunity to take his seat on the commission, assuming he even knew he had been appointed to it a few months earlier. He is never listed among those who actually sat in court in Staunton, and it is most likely that he never appeared in there in order to take his oath as magistrate.

Where Abraham Vanderpool stood in this factional dispute is not easy to determine: he had been recommended over Patton's signature in February but was purged (presumably by Patton) from the June list along with Fairfax's allies. Although Abraham lived on property located in Fairfax's manor, there is no evidence that he had any ties to Fairfax or the speculators who were maneuvering against Patton. It is clear that his position as collector in 1748 made him a good candidate for magistrate the next year. Perhaps Abraham's original selection was a gesture to the South Branch community, part of which was in Augusta County, but that when Patton perceived a challenge from rivals there he decided to take no chances regarding Vanderpool's loyalties. There are other possible explanations (did Patton not realize that Abraham Vanderpool resided in Frederick County rather than in Augusta County?), and we are left to wonder about what

actually happened. That he was appointed to the commission of the peace at all, though, underscores the fact that Abraham Vanderpool was regarded as a man with considerable standing and influence throughout the South Branch community.[38]

During August in the following year, 1750, a group of the South Branch residents, Abraham Vanderpool included, were ordered to be added to the Frederick County list of tithables – and so became eligible for taxation.[39] Not long thereafter, however, he and his family left the South Branch: in May 1751, Abraham Vanderpool and his wife sold their property there to a relative. Although there are two more references to Abraham in the Frederick County records, during that same month and the next, to indicate he was still present in the area, we are probably correct to think the Vanderpools left the South Branch only months after they sold their land there in mid-1751.

Where did they move on to? The evidence suggests that they went farther into the frontier, to the even more isolated Greenbrier River region of Augusta County (now located in Greenbrier County, West Virginia): another court judgment involving Abraham Vanderpool in May 1753, not executed, was filed away with the comment that

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[38] Two months after Patton's successful counterstroke, Virginia's governor and council appointed yet another commission of peace for Augusta County – its third in just seven months during 1749. This was a compromise slate that satisfied all the factions in the county, and stability returned. Vanderpool was never again appointed a magistrate.

[39] Since Vanderpool was not a resident of Frederick County at that time, this order is puzzling. Did he own land there that we have not yet learned about? Did those making the tithable rolls simply ignore county lines and sign up potential taxpayers indiscriminately? Did they think that some of this South Branch area would soon be shifted to Frederick County and so added the residents in question to the list prematurely? There is no good explanation.

he was then living on the Greenbrier River. Abraham and his family did not seem to be retreating from possible Indian attacks on the South Branch, for their new home was at least as exposed as the South Branch was – and probably more so.

Evidently the Vanderpools went to the Greenbrier area along with members of the See and Yoakum families, who were closely related to them. We know that a land company was surveying in this part of the Greenbrier as early as 1746 (the year after the company had received its enormous land grant) and that a visitor reported settlers on the Greenbrier River in 1750. The surveyed lots were being sold by 1753 and 1754, though as late as 1755 there were still only a handful of families living there. The first surveys show the Sees and Yoakums (in 1750) but not the Vanderpools. The absence of any documents showing that the Vanderpools purchased or sold land on the Greenbrier suggests that they were either squatting here as they had been, originally, on Fairfax's land, or else living with another family on its property. Was this move to the Greenbrier area connected to Abraham's abbreviated political career? For instance, did he receive some land to repay him somehow for having been a loyal Patton supporter during the imbroglio over the commission of the peace? Did he fall out with his neighbors and decide to move away? Or did he simply sense better opportunities in the Greenbrier area? Again we can only speculate about such questions.

Presumably the Vanderpools lived on the Greenbrier River for at least awhile after 1751 until (as related below) the area was temporarily abandoned after Indian attacks during the fall of 1755. The next reference to them is in a letter from a Virginia militia captain, Peter Hog, to his colonel – George Washington – dated May 14, 1756. In it, Hog mentions that his militia unit had tracked a band of Indians to a certain Vanderpool's house. He described this house as being close to the head of the Jackson River and near Back River in what is now Highland County, Virginia – some miles east of and over a ridge from the Greenbrier area. Thus the Vanderpools must have retreated to here from the Greenbrier in 1755 or early 1756, as the Sees and Yoakums did. The Jackson River and the Back River areas include both Vanderpool Gap (whose discovery is credited to Abraham's younger brother, John) and today's hamlet called Vanderpool, but it is impossible now to determine exactly where the house in question was located in relation to any of the places described.[40]

Around this time a New Jersey court was once again seeking to find Abraham Vanderpool. This time, the holder of a bond he had signed back in that colony in 1740 was trying to collect it. The court learned from its inquiries in Virginia that Abraham Vanderpool was living on the South Branch and so probably out of its reach. In fact, the

[40] See the USGS maps for Mustoe/Virginia and Monterey SE/Virginia, along with slides 09876-81, for general views of this area. See slides 09873-75 for Vanderpool and Vanderpool Gap. These photographs were taken in 2001. How this town got its name – from its proximity to the gap or from Vanderpools who founded it or lived there – is not known. Hog's reference to "Vanderpool's house" may indicate that it was among the dozens of fortified houses along the Virginia frontier that Washington considered a part of his defensive line. The locations of only some of these houses are known today. It is more likely, in my estimation, that Hogg's use of the term Vanderpool's "house" signifies that the family had abandoned it during the Indian raids that will be outlined in the next several paragraphs.

New Jersey court was at least one step behind Vanderpool, for by then he had already left the South Branch for the Greenbrier area – and may have been dislodged from there, too, by the time that court New Jersey was looking for him.

Whatever the specific timing, what had dislodged Abraham Vanderpool and his family from the Greenbrier was the growing hostility between settlers and Indians along the far frontier to which the Vanderpools were clinging – hostility that would soon develop into what we know as the French and Indian War. This decade-long war, a major turning point in American history, grew out of both the long-standing rivalry between the English and French for North America and growing Indian resistance to western settlement along the mountainous frontier from New England to the South. The French and Indian War (known as the War for Empire in Europe) would have enormous consequences, and some historians contend that it helped to bring about the American Revolution. The war removed the French threat from the American mind, it encouraged the British to get Americans to pay the costs Britain incurred defending and administering its American colonies, it led to a most unpopular royal proclamation forbidding settlement west of the Alleghenies, it showed Americans that they could fight as well as (and perhaps better than) the British could, and it made the colonists realize the benefits of acting together on the issues they had in common.

In addition, the conflict between the French and the British ultimately compelled the Indians of the west (an area then extending into the Ohio Country) to choose between the two world powers, and those who chose the former acted to take advantage of the situation. Especially following the defeat in western Pennsylvania of an Anglo-American army led by British General Edward Braddock in 1755, these Indians made terrorizing raids on frontier settlements – particularly those that were isolated and lightly defended – in order to frighten and drive the newcomers back, capture persons who could be adopted into their tribes to replace those slain in warfare, acquire abandoned goods and cattle, and enable younger warriors to prove themselves in battle. Over the next ten years, one scholar has estimated, perhaps 2,000 settlers would be captured and thousands more would be killed. Even more would flee, until, as George Washington said of Virginia, perhaps fifty miles of frontier was virtually depopulated (although some families did dig in and survived). The Greenbrier area was especially vulnerable to these raids, many of which were led by an Ohio Delaware leader named Shingas, and so it is not surprising that such attacks would recur there frequently between 1755 and 1764. This often-overlooked violence in the Pennsylvania and Virginia backcountry was a bloody aspect of the French and Indian War and of American westward movement. We will see here how it affected Abraham Vanderpool and his family.

Although there had been an increasing incidence of Indian raids on settlements even before 1753, the French-English rivalry in North America and the Indian attacks it

spawned began to move toward its climactic stage after the British governor of Virginia sent George Washington as an envoy into the wilderness in late 1753. His mission was to visit the French forts and warn their commanders to stay out of the region we now know as western New York and Pennsylvania, West Virginia, Ohio, and Kentucky, an area the British considered their own. The French, who had their own claims to this territory, responded with a similar warning to the British. Both nations then sent troops to occupy and fortify the Forks of the Ohio (now Pittsburgh). The result was an escalading series of clashes. The first, in mid-1754, was an ambush in which a small unit led by Washington defeated a smaller French unit, killing its commander and others. Shortly after this incident, the French and their Indian allies overwhelmed Washington's force at Great Meadows and imposed a mortifying surrender on its young leader. Finally, in July 1755, the French and the Indians inflicted an even more disastrous and humiliating defeat on the renowned British army and its colonial partners under Braddock at Turtle Creek just east of the Forks (where the French had built Fort Duquesne) in 1755.

The effect of the catastrophic British defeat at Turtle Creek was compounded by the precipitous retreat of the surviving English troops eastward, all the way to Boston. These events left the American frontier from New York to the Carolinas totally exposed. The Indians, angry over Anglo-American land hunger and the increasing numbers of settlers, now launched wave after wave of attacks on those exposed western settlements throughout 1755 and 1756. These Indian attacks, many of which were inspired or even

led by French officers, drove settlers back all along the edge of the most advanced frontier. The Vanderpools, exactly the kind of settlers the Indians were objecting to (and the British government was trying to restrain), were among those who would flee in the face of the danger.

One attack came on Boughman's Fort, built by 1754 on the east bank of the Greenbrier River (near what is now Alderson, West Virginia). Here some sixty settlers sheltered in August 1755.[41] During a four-day siege, a dozen settlers were killed and eight more were captured. We do not know if the Vanderpools, who lived not far away, were among those who took shelter in Boughman's Fort – it is possible that they had departed the Greenbrier area before the attacks began. But if not surely they left there soon afterwards and so got out in advance of subsequent raids in September 1756 and again during 1757, some of which extended as far as the Jackson River area where Hog had reported "Vanderpool's house" stood.

By the time of these latter raids, the Vanderpools may well have left the Jackson River and Back River area as well. It would appear that they enjoyed for at least a time the relative safety of Frederick County (perhaps the town of Winchester itself) after they left there: a fee list in that county in May 1757 once again included Abraham Vanderpool's name. Assuming this list was correct (the clerk may simply have had outdated

[41] The site of Boughman's Fort is now occupied by a U.S. women's prison and so is inaccessible. See slide 10577 (taken in 2003) for a general view of its location on the Greenbrier River.

information), we can suppose that the Vanderpool family lived in Frederick County from late 1756 until mid-1757. Thus they may have been among the many inhabitants of the backcountry who, Washington reported, were "flocking in" to Winchester during the fall of 1755. The town was forced to provide what we would today term a "refugee center," in which the Vanderpools may have sheltered for at least some of their time back in Frederick County.

Winchester, the only town west of the Blue Ridge Mountains (and a small one, with only a few hundred residents), would have appeared relatively safe to the Vanderpools because of the presence of Colonel Washington's soldiers of the newly created (and rather raw) Virginia Regiment. It had just arrived there to construct and man Fort Loudoun as the Virginia backcountry's major bastion, barracks, supply center, and base of operations along that colony's portion of the western frontier. It could have been that Abraham Vanderpool was among the one hundred or so men Washington recruited (through handsome wages) in 1755 and 1756 to help in the construction of Fort Loudoun, but the lists we have of these "artificers" do not show his name.[42]

From this point forward, things become uncertain: our last sightings of Abraham Vanderpool for about a decade are his presence on a surveying crew in Orange County,

[42] If so, Abraham Vanderpool might have reminded Colonel Washington that they had met before, when the latter was just a young surveyor and regarded Abraham as an ignorant Dutchman. It should be noted that the South Branch area the Vanderpools had left behind when they moved to the Greenbrier River area had also suffered repeated attacks by Shingas's Indians from 1755 onward, so the Vanderpools would have been no safer had they remained there.

North Carolina, in August 1757 and another reference to him in November in that year. We have no way of knowing whether or not his family was with him in North Carolina at this time. Did Abraham leave the others somewhere in Frederick County – perhaps in Winchester itself – while he went off to North Carolina? Was his purpose to seek employment, or was he sizing up North Carolina, a colony where the Indians were less hostile than in Virginia, as a new home for his family? It is possible that all the Vanderpools had only paused in Winchester during late 1756 and early 1757, primarily in order to get supplies and prepare for their mid-summer 1757 trek along the Great Wagon Road that led from that town to North Carolina. This might explain how they happened to be listed in the fee book in mid-1757, even though – typically for Abraham Vanderpool, it seems – they had already moved on to somewhere else. (We know that some Vanderpools were living in South Carolina during this same period; it is possible, but unlikely in my opinion, that Abraham and his family went there instead at this time.)

I think the best explanation of what happened during the late 1750s is that when the Vanderpools left Winchester in mid-1757 they took the Great Wagon Road only as far as Salem in Augusta (now Roanoke) County, Virginia, where the Sees and Yoakums had bought land after leaving the Jackson River and Back River areas in 1756. If Abraham left his dependents there, in the company of relatives and in comparative safety, he could then have gone on alone to Orange County, North Carolina (just south of that colony's border with Virginia), where he both worked on the surveying crew and scouted North

Carolina for a possible home for himself and his family. In about 1758, the Sees and Yoakums moved on to Bedford County, Virginia, and the Vanderpools presumably accompanied them there.

By 1759 the British under General John Forbes had captured the Forks of the Ohio, had replaced Fort Duquesne there with their own Fort Pitt, and so had struck the decisive blow that would by 1763 see the French lose forever their dominion in all of North America. The success of Forbes also severely weakened France's Indian allies, who no longer could look to the French for support and supplies. During that year and the next, 1760, there was a flare-up of fighting with Cherokees in southwest Virginia, but though such Indian attacks along the frontier would continue for many years after the French had gone, owing to mounting Indian grievances as the flood of settlement pushed them further and further from the areas they considered their own, the worst seemed over by the early 1760s.

Thus by 1760 or so, the Greenbrier area would have begun to appear attractive again to the Vanderpools and others like them, and the land companies with large holdings there encouraged settlers to return after 1761 in order to buttress their claims to the land. Among those known to have returned to the Greenbrier were the Sees, who lived on Muddy Creek, and the Yoakums may have done so as well. As the Vanderpools had already accompanied these families for a decade or so – and perhaps even lived on See or

Yoakum land, since there is no evidence the Vanderpools bought or sold land of their own during this decade – they would most likely have done so again when it appeared the Greenbrier was safe again. This peace was not to last, however: in 1763 renewed attacks on the Greenbrier came during what was called Pontiac's War, and some of the Sees and Yoakums were killed and captured at this time. These raids forced many settlers eastward from Big Levels (near present-day Lewisburg, West Virginia) and Muddy Creek.[43]

There is only one piece of evidence indicating that our Vanderpools were indeed living on the Greenbrier in 1763. When William Lewis obtained a patent for 270 acres of land in that year, the land was described as being "on the head springs of the James River and the Potomac known by the name of Vanderpool's place." The James River and the Potomac River both rise in what is now Greenbrier County, West Virginia, twenty to thirty miles west of the Jackson River, the town of Vanderpool, and Vanderpool Gap. All of these are in the general area where Captain Hog had located "Vanderpool's house" in his 1756 letter to Washington. The 1763 reference implies, I think, that Abraham Vanderpool was again living near the head springs of those two rivers, which would

[43] As we have noted in the previous chapter, this appears to have been the same Muddy Creek on which John and Elizabeth {Griffith} Rickabaugh would live during the 1790s. Some sources state that Abraham Vanderpool's brother-in-law (the husband of his sister Catherine) was among those killed by Indians on the Greenbrier River.

suggest that he and his family had in fact returned to the Greenbrier area after things had settled down around 1760.[44]

The fierce Indian raids in 1763 evidently were the final straw for the Vanderpools: they now moved to North Carolina – relatively free from Indian attacks, though still an unformed and untamed place during the 1760s – not long afterwards. The royal proclamation in late 1763 may have sealed their decision to look elsewhere. This notorious order prohibited land sales and settlement west of the crest of the Allegheny Mountains, which would include the Greenbrier area, and commanded those already living in what the English government now regarded as an Indian preserve to withdraw "forthwith." Although this proclamation would be widely disregarded in America, its issuance doubtless discouraged some settlers, and it seems the Vanderpools were among them.

Thus the Vanderpools might have lived first on the Greenbrier River (by 1753), then on the Jackson River (by 1756), possibly in Frederick County (during the winter of 1756-57), then in Roanoke County and Bedford County (from 1757 through 1760), and then back on the Greenbrier again (from about 1760 until about 1763). After this they left

[44] Landmarks cited in the several land grants Lewis received at the same time and in subsequent deeds by which he sold off most of this land include places called Sugartree Bottom, Falling Run, and Back Creek, but the references are not specific enough for us to locate "Vanderpool's place" with any precision. My estimate places it near Thorny Creek and Lewis's Run near the Greenbrier River. Unless we discover a deed of purchase or sale, we probably will never be able to identify the exact location of what was Abraham Vanderpool's property.

Virginia for good and headed for North Carolina, where we next sight them in 1767. Such frequent dislocation surely helps to explain why there are no records pertaining to the Vanderpools during this decade and a half between the mid-1750s and the mid-1760s.

Our guesses as to the exact sequence of the movements of Abraham Vanderpool and his family between 1740 and the late 1760s may, like shadows on a wall, only hint at the reality, but it is the best we can do at this time. It is clear from what we do know, however, that the Vanderpools experienced a remarkable episode in not only their own lives but the history of the American frontier. In a sense, they were present at the creation of an America that would not be confined to the Atlantic seaboard but would spread in ever-lengthening waves all the way to the shores of the Pacific Ocean.

Now we examine what was happening within the Vanderpool family during this tumultuous time. Abraham's wife Jannetje appears to have died sometime during the first half of the 1740s. Some Vanderpool researchers think she could have been the victim of one of these Indian raids, but there is no evidence to support this idea. Abraham may have remarried as early as 1742, but it seems clear that he had done so by 1748: in this year, he bought the South Branch property that, when it was sold in 1751, required the assent of his wife Rebecca – an indication that this woman, Abraham's second wife, had been a partner in the purchase three years before.

Some Vanderpool researchers believe that Rebecca's family name was Westfall or Bogart, since these two families (both evidently Dutch in origin) were closely associated with and neighbors of the Vanderpools in Virginia and may have moved there with them from New York or New Jersey.[45] Other researchers contend that Rebecca's name was Isaacs or that she was a widow.[46] It is conceivable that Abraham was married more than once after Jannetje's death. We just do not know more, except that a woman named **REBECCA** was almost certainly the mother of the younger Abraham Vanderpool: if her son, the young Abraham Vanderpool, was in fact born sometime from about 1743 to 1750, as we suspect from what we know about him, he probably was born on the South Branch of the Potomac in Frederick County, Virginia (now Hardy County, West Virginia), and during those years our Abraham was married to Rebecca.

After Abraham Vanderpool is spotted in Orange County, North Carolina (as a certified chain-carrier for a surveyor) in August 1757, and then again in November of that year, there is a gap of about ten years before he is glimpsed in North Carolina again.[47] In 1767,

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[45] An Abel Westfall, an immediate neighbor of Abraham Vanderpool on the South Branch, purchased land from him in 1755 but died intestate soon afterwards, provoking a landmark Virginia lawsuit over Lord Fairfax's rights that eventually went to the colony's Court of Appeals. Abraham Vanderpool himself was not involved in the suit. The property at issue in this case was not Lot 10 but Lot 35, which indicates that Vanderpool owned more land in South Branch Manor than we would have suspected without this court case.

[46] A Samuel Isaacs (the name may have been Essex originally) received a land grant from Lord Fairfax at about the same time Abraham Vanderpool did. There was also an Isaacs family in Wilkes County, North Carolina, and an Elijah Isaacs of this family had served as a road juror with Abraham; members of that Isaacs family lived near to and attended the same church as some of the Vanderpools. There was no Rebecca Isaacs in New York, New Jersey, or Virginia that we can identify as Abraham's wife, though, so we are at a dead end.

[47] This area was later Guilford County, North Carolina, and is now the northeastern part of Randolph County, North Carolina.

he is listed as a road overseer and in the next year as a constable, both times in the Town Fork and Belews Creek areas of Rowan County (now Stokes County); Rowan County at that time was just west of Orange County. He probably would not have been given such prominent responsibilities if he had not been residing in the area for some time, and if he was not highly respected by his peers.[48] Though there are no other records to verify that Abraham and Rebecca Vanderpool continued to live in Rowan County[49] throughout the 1770s, it seems likely that they did so. After that, as we have learned from our examination of the younger Abraham Vanderpool, it is not always possible to determine which Abraham Vanderpool appears on tax lists and land grants and the like, at least until the older Abraham died in 1778.[50] After a period through the 1740s when we can track the Abraham Vanderpool born in 1709 rather closely, it is especially surprising and disappointing to have so little to show regarding his whereabouts for the next quarter-century or more.

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[48] Nonetheless, some Vanderpool researchers believe that it was Abraham's son, Abraham, who had moved to North Carolina first, and that it was the younger man who served as constable. The area of North Carolina in which the Vanderpools lived was infused with the activity of the Regulators (westerners who objected to a lack of equitable representation in the colony's government and to what they saw as unfair economic treatment by wealthy and powerful easterners), but we have no clue whether or not either Vanderpool was ever associated with this movement. For views of the Town Fork and Belews Creek areas, see digital images 00816-00823 and 00825-00826, taken in 2010.

[49] Abraham and Sarah lived in an area that became Surry County in 1771 and then Wilkes County in 1777 as western North Carolina rapidly developed.

[50] Like many others in the area, Abraham may have worshipped occasionally at Mulberry Fields Church, which was organized by Baptists in Wilkesboro but was used by many other religious groups because it was for many years the only suitable nearby church structure. One of the Abraham Vanderpools, perhaps the one born in 1766, was living on the Yadkin River about where the Lewis Fork enters. See the USGS maps for Purlear/North Carolina and Boomer/North Carolina for the mouth of Lewis Fork and digital images 00804-00806 (2010) for the mouth of Lewis Fork.

On May 12, 1779, Rebecca Vanderpool signed her will. It mentions an interesting variety of items of personal property (six "neat" cattle with swallow forks cut into their ears, a "mouse-colored" mare, some kitchen utensils and dishes, two plows, a half-dozen chairs, some "small books," and a little money) she was bequeathing to her daughter Ann's husband, Teter Nave. We know that Rebecca died soon after making her will, which was the very first one ever filed in the new (November 1779) Washington County, Tennessee, an area before then part of North Carolina. Ann's husband Teter also served as administrator, perhaps because of all the males in the extended Vanderpool family who were serving in the militia he was the closest one at hand. Because this will was recorded during the August term of the Washington County court, we know that Rebecca died sometime between May 12 and early August in that year.

Rebecca Vanderpool's will does not refer to her husband, Abraham, which strengthens our belief that he had already died by the time she prepared it in mid-May 1779. Confirming this suspicion is a 1779 tax list for Washington County, Tennessee, when it was still part of North Carolina, which notes that Abraham "Vanderpole" was deceased. An estate being taxed in 1779 would indicate that the individual had died the year before.[51] The Washington County court minutes also show that Teter Nave was made the administrator of Abraham's estate during the same August 1779 term when Nave was

[51] The estate record lists Abraham's property as 100 acres, a horse worth $100, five cattle worth $50, no ready money, and no slaves. There is no other Abraham Vanderpool with whom this man could have been confused.

serving as Rebecca's administrator under the provisions of her will, so the two Vanderpools must have died not long apart.

Why was Abraham Vanderpool's property in North Carolina not mentioned in Rebecca's will? Some Vanderpool researchers believe (and I tend to agree) that Abraham – or, later, Rebecca – gave it to their daughter, Ann, possibly in return for Ann's agreement to care for her parents in their old age, but Rebecca's bequest of her personal property to Teter (and Ann) Nave seems to undercut this idea. As we have seen, Ann and her husband lived near Lynn Mountain and Elizabethton in Washington County, Tennessee, where Rebecca presumably was also living at the time of her death, but the Nave couple might have owned her parents' North Carolina property without living on it.[52]

In my view the chances are good that both Abraham and Rebecca died in what is now Tennessee, just a short time after a part of Wilkes County, North Carolina, was transformed into Washington County, Tennessee. Perhaps they had relocated their household to this area, having bought in about 1778 the 100 acres that is mentioned in the report of his estate the next year. Perhaps they were simply residing at their daughter's home either temporarily or permanently. Many Vanderpool researchers continue to believe, however, that Abraham died in Wilkes County, North Carolina. In the end it

[52] The area of Teter Nave's grant is now in Carter County, Tennessee. He was in fact one of the earliest settlers in this part of Tennessee, having been one of the signers of the historic Watauga Petition in 1776. One of the witnesses to Rebecca Vanderpool's will, Thomas Houghton, was also a signer of that document.

may be only a semantic problem, because the area was in transition from one state's jurisdiction to the other's.

Rebecca's will mentions only daughter Ann and son Abraham, Jr., born 1743-50 (who is said to have "money in his hands," which presumably means he had already received his inheritance). This language may indicate that only Ann and Abraham, Jr., were Rebecca's children with Abraham and that Abraham's older offspring had been the product of his union with Jannetje; alternatively, it may indicate that the other children had previously received their share of the estate – we cannot say. For all the research that has been done on Abraham Vanderpool born in 1709, there is still frustratingly little that we actually know about him and his life – and death. Fortunately, we will have more to work with in the next chapter, when we examine the Vanderpools and others in the Dutch colony that stretched along the Hudson River between its two principal communities, what are today Albany and New York City.