

1. Hance Hendrick

(c1660? – c1726-32)

Hance Hendrick is likely to have arrived in Virginia in the early or mid 1680s. As “Hance Hendrick” he received a headright patent dated 25 April 1701 for 594 acres on the south bank of the Mattapony River in Pamunkey Neck.¹ The patent was for transportation of himself, “his wife Jane”, and ten other persons whose names never appear in later records.² Though the tract was in King and Queen County at the time, the area south of the Mattapony became King William County a year later. The land description implies that he had occupied and surveyed the land some years earlier, as the grant refers to the “old corner between Hance Hendrick and John Oakes”, to “an old line of marked trees”, and even to an adjusted corner due to “the old persimmon corner tree being dead.”

A second patent, of 175 acres, for the transportation of four persons, was issued eighteen months later on 28 October 1702.³ This second tract was on the south bank of the Mattapony River about a quarter-mile upriver from the first patent, which by this time was in newly-formed King William County. Like the earlier patent, this one was also for land obviously several years old. It refers to “a pine stump formerly the old corner tree but now down and rotten”, and to “a corner white oake in sight of Hance’s old plantation.” Interestingly, when the patents are plotted, his “old plantation” could not have been on the 1701 patent. The corner oak “in sight of Hance’s old plantation” is nowhere near the 1701 patent, and clearly refers to a spot within the eastern portion of the 1702 patent.⁴

It seems obvious that Hance Hendrick had been in the area for several years before patenting these lands in 1701 and 1702. That neither he nor anyone else claimed his children as headrights also suggests he had been in Virginia long enough for them to have been born there. A plausible explanation exists, but requires a brief digression.

Pamunkey Neck, which later became King William County, had been set aside in 1625 as an Indian reserve.⁵ White settlement in the area was strictly forbidden. Fifty years later, as part of a 1677 peace treaty with the Pamunkey Indians, the King agreed to grant the Indians a formal patent to their land. The Pamunkeys sold large portions of their lands, in the form of 99-year leases, to a number of white speculators, who then subdivided and sold these lands to new settlers. These settlers could not obtain patents for their tracts, because the land was owned by the Pamunkeys rather than by the King. By 1694, additional white settlers began surveying land in the Neck for patents, sometimes infringing on the rights of the settlers already there, who claimed title to their land from the Indians. Unfortunately, the King had neglected to issue a formal patent to the Pamunkeys, or to survey their lands, meaning

¹ Virginia Patent Book 9, p362

² How many of these persons he actually imported is unknown. Certificates of importation were routinely bought and sold for this purpose, so we can’t be certain that Hendrick was actually the importer of all ten persons. In addition, the headright system was significantly corrupted by this time, with clerks routinely selling names for a fee. We can reasonably conclude, though, that he and his wife Jane had arrived in Virginia at some prior time.

³ Virginia Patent Book 9, p482

⁴ The plantation referred to was probably a few acres of cleared land, and perhaps a house. Planters could work only 4-5 acres per field worker, so relatively few acres were planted at any given time. Tobacco depleted the soil in about three years, so the tobacco crop was moved to new ground every few years.

⁵ The Pamunkey Neck encompassed the area between the Pamunkey and Mattaponi rivers, what is nowadays King William County, the southern part of Caroline County, and southern Spotsylvania County. It was administratively part of New Kent County until 1691 when it included in the new county of King & Queen. When the Pamunkeys subjugated themselves to the King in 1701, it became King William County.

that titles to the Indian lands were imperfect and their boundaries uncertain. In 1699 the House of Burgesses appointed a committee to resolve the issues of land titles in the Neck. The committee's report, issued on 2 June 1699, recommended that the persons holding land by title from the Indian leases be permitted to patent their lands.⁶ It was this recommendation which resulted in the Hance Hendrick patents mentioned above.

Specifically, the committee heard from eight persons who claimed land rights by virtue of purchases from Richard Yarborough. Although the deed records are long lost, we know from the committee report that Richard Yarborough had obtained a 99-year lease from the Indians sometime after the 1677 peace treaty. He probably did so by 1679, when he was employed by the Burgesses as an Indian intermediary and interpreter. Although Yarborough himself was dead by 1699, these eight persons together with Yarborough's son John all claimed rights to specific acreages by virtue of purchases from him. The eight persons were William Morris, John Oakes, William Rawlins, George Douglas (orphan and heir of Robert Douglas), Peter White, Andrew Mackallaster, and two tracts claimed by "Thomas (?) Hendrick."⁷ Note that the abstracter, des Cognets, himself inserted the question mark after "Thomas". He more than likely read "Thos" for "Hans", particularly since all the other names in the committee's report were English and he was surely expecting to find an English name. I would also note that des Cognets mis-transcribed another of the eight names on the same list.⁸

The resulting patents to these persons, issued between 1701 and 1706, are contiguous and clearly comprise the tract Yarborough leased from the Indians.⁹ In fact, these patents and the ones which adjoined the outside edges of this larger parcel identify such landmarks as the "corner tree of old Richard Yarbrough's whole tract leased of the Pamunkey Indians."¹⁰ A patent adjoining Yarborough's tract to the north by John Hurt refers to "Hance Hendrick's corner tree by a pine stump being formerly the old corner tree of Richd. Yarborough's grant."¹¹ This refers to Hance Hendrick's 1702 patent, which was the uppermost piece of the Yarborough tract, Andrew Maccallister's patent being the lowermost part, with the remaining claimants lying between the two. Furthermore, it is clear that Yarborough must have promoted his land outside Virginia and sold his tracts to immigrants, for every one of these eight persons claimed his own personal headright in the later patents.¹²

The combination of the committee's report and the resulting patents quite clearly shows that "Thomas" Hendrick and Hance Hendrick were the same person, for the land involved was the same. The resulting patents to Hance Hendrick, and those to his neighbors, not only give no indication of any prior right, but in fact refer to old lines and corners from earlier surveys of "Hance" Hendrick. In addition, four of the other patents to Yarborough's grantees also refer to Hance Hendrick's old lines and corners.

⁶ English Duplicates of Lost Virginia Records, Lewis des Cognets, Jr., (Genealogical Publishing Company, 1981), pp 57-66. Abstracts this committee report.

⁷ des Cognets, p58. There were also three other persons claiming a single tract by purchase from Yarborough that was not adjacent to the other eight.

⁸ des Cognets writes "George & Douglass orphan [singular] of Robert Douglass decd". Orphan is singular and George Douglas patented the land.

⁹ See the Chronology for the details of each patent. There was a ninth patent to Morris Floyd, which appears to have been a sale by John Oakes. Oakes had claimed a right to 550 acres, but only patented about 360 acres. When plotted, it is fairly certain that the missing acreage must have been a sale to Floyd of the 100 acres he patented plus the additional acreage in Hance Hendrick's second patent.

¹⁰ This from Maccallester's patent, which was on the lowermost edge of the Yarborough tract, at Patent Book 9, p386.

¹¹ Virginia Patents 9, p482.

¹² Most claimed headrights for their wives, and a few claimed children, as well.

We may never know precisely when Hance Hendrick settled on this land. Of the other seven patentees who had bought Yarborough's land, only one can be traced with confidence; William Hurt and his son John had been in the area for more than thirty years. Owing to the complete loss of county records, we cannot identify when any of the others may have bought their land. It is perhaps significant, though, that both Richard Yarborough and Robert Douglas, one of his grantees, were dead by June 1699.

What evidence we have suggests Hance Hendrick arrived in Virginia sometime in the early 1680s. Since Hance Hendrick appears to have owned the uppermost edge of Yarborough's tract, closest to Yarborough's own home, we can plausibly surmise that he may have been one of the first of Yarborough's grantees, perhaps as early as 1679 or 1680. There is every reason to believe that Yarborough was subdividing his lands by about that time. The numerous references in the devisees' later patents to old lines and corners, and to dead and rotting and missing corner trees, strongly suggest that the patents were for plots surveyed many years earlier. Likewise, Hance Hendrick must have surveyed his lands many years before claiming them in 1699. And the fact that he claimed himself and his wife as headrights, but none of his children, suggests that the children were born in Virginia and therefore not eligible as headrights. We have reasonable evidence that at least one child was born by 1685, thus an arrival before that date would conveniently fit all the facts we have. Finally, I note that the portions of the Yarborough tract which he claimed were not only the largest, but the most fertile and the most accessible to the river, still another reason to think he was an early grantee of Yarborough's.

It should also be mentioned that he was a British citizen, for only a citizen could own land in Virginia. He may well have been born in England, where Hendrick was a reasonably common name in the seventeenth century. While his name and that of one of his children suggests a Germanic background, that does not necessarily mean he was himself a non-English immigrant. If he was a naturalized citizen, the naturalization must have occurred after 1680 if in Virginia. Prior to 1680 naturalization required an act of the Assembly, which are preserved in the records. After June 1680, the Governor could bestow citizenship and those records are lost. More than likely, he was either British-born or had been naturalized in another colony. His place of origin will remain mysterious.

Jane Hendrick's identity is unknown. Her use as a headright tells us that she immigrated into Virginia, more than likely at the same time as her husband. But this is the only record in which her name appears. In fact, she could well have been dead by the time of the patent, for headrights need not have been living persons. The fact that she did not participate in the 1706 deed (see below) forces us to consider this possibility. However, a Jane Hendrick was sued in Caroline County in 1738 for debt.¹³ Only a single woman or widow could be sued, and (as we shall see) the last appearance of Hance Hendrick was his patent of land in Caroline County in 1726. While that Jane Hendrick may have been an unmarried daughter, it seems most plausible that this is a record of his widow. Her survival as late as 1738 might help explain why three sons remained in the area so long.

Excursus: The Identity of Jane Hendrick

It is widely reported in compiled genealogies that Jane Hendrick was Jannetze Van Meter, daughter of Jon Josten Van Meteren (or Van Meter) and his wife Macyken Hendrickson, who

¹³ Caroline County Court Orders 2, p499 and p514.

immigrated to New Amsterdam in 1663. The original source of this claim is unknown, as is the evidence supporting it, but there seems not a shred of documentation to support it. There is no evidence that Jon Josten Van Meteren had a daughter named Jannetze, much less that she married Hance Hendrick. No daughter of that name is implied by any of the several records for him. Jan Joosten Van Meteren's 1706 will names only four children: sons Jooste Janse and Gysbert, daughter Geertje Crom, and the children of his deceased daughter Lysbeth. No records exist suggesting that there was another daughter left out of the will. Nor is there any record of a Hance Hendrick in the vicinity of Van Meteren.

Returning to Hance Hendrick, we have only a few additional records of him after the patents on the Pamunkey. The 1704 quit rents of Virginia, preserved in England's archives, list "Hans Hendrick" with 700 acres subject to quit rent in King William County.¹⁴ He is the only Hendrick landowner listed in Virginia.

Unfortunately, Hance Hendrick lived in an area of Virginia for which few colonial records exist. Until 1691, the Pamunkey Neck was a part of New Kent County, whose colonial records were destroyed by the malicious burning of the courthouse in 1787. It was subsequently part of King and Queen County, whose records are also entirely lost. In 1702 it became King William County, nearly all of whose early records were subsequently destroyed in its own courthouse fire. Nor are its parish records preserved.

Among the few records saved from that last fire is a deed of gift dated 20 February 1705/6 from Hance Hendrick of St. John's Parish of King William County to his "loving son Adolphus Hendrick" for the 175 acres patented in 1702.¹⁵ Adolphus Hendrick surely had reached majority by this time, for deeds to minors were quite rare.¹⁶ A deed of gift of this type suggests that had just married, as the deed specified that the land would revert to Hance Hendrick if Adolphus died without male heirs. As an interesting side note, the language of this deed employed the words "and his male heirs lawfully begotten", which was a legal catchphrase for passing title in tail. That is, the deed entailed the land, meaning that Adolphus did not actually hold title to it and could not sell it or devise it in his will. Rather, he had what amounted to lifetime possession after which it would pass automatically in a line of succession through his male heirs (normally the eldest) generation after generation, ad infinitum.¹⁷ This inability to sell his land perhaps explains why Adolphus Hendrick remained longer in King William County than his brothers.

Hance Hendrick, or perhaps his son of the same name, also acquired land in New Kent County, about ten miles southwest of his patents, sometime before 1711 when it was proccessioned.¹⁸ The loss of New Kent records prevents us from identifying how or when the land was obtained, but we can identify the location as eastern present-day Hanover County from an adjacent patent to Richard Allen Jr. for land on Stony Run which mentions "Hans Hendrick's upper corner".¹⁹ From examination of

¹⁴ The Quit Rents of Virginia, 1704, Annie Laurie Wright Smith (1975), p43

¹⁵ King William County, Virginia Deed Book 1, part 2, p302 [All dates are in this paper are corrected for the present-day calendar. This date is recorded as 1705, which was 1706 in the present calendar.]

¹⁶ See the separate document on "Legal Age" elsewhere on this website for an explanation. Deeds of land to minors not only served little practical purpose, but were fraught with legal problems.

¹⁷ See the paper on entail elsewhere on this website for an explanation.

¹⁸ The Vestry Book of St. Paul's Parish, Hanover County, Virginia 1706-1786, C. G. Chamberlayne (1940), p227-8 and p239.

¹⁹ Virginia Patent Book 10, p438.

nearby patents, it appears that Hendrick's land was all or part of a 1705 patent to Stephen Sunter.²⁰ Perhaps significantly, Hance Hendrick did not personally appear for the 1711 processioning. Hance Hendrick had sold this land by the time it was next processioned in 1715, when it was referred to as "the lands of Hance Hendrick, now belonging to Mr. Anthony Winston".²¹ The only colonial records, other than patents, that exist for New Kent are the vestry books of three of its six parishes, for which these processioning records are the only references to anyone named Hendrick. Whether the landowner in New Kent was Hance Hendrick or his son is uncertain. It is not clear why the father might have bought land so far away, but neither is it clear that the son was old enough to have bought land between 1705 and 1711.

Both "Hanse Hendrick Sr." and "Hanse Hendrick Jun." were issued patents on the same day, 24 March 1726, for land in King William County.^{22 23} These tracts, 200 and 100 acres respectively, are easily platted and located. Together with the surrounding patents, they can be precisely placed as being west of Boot Swamp in what became Caroline County two years later in 1728. The two patents are roughly a mile and a half apart, and were not on opposite sides of the county line as some have suggested. In fact, while Hance Jr.'s patent was close to the Caroline-King William line, the patent to Hance Sr. is more than a mile further west into Caroline. Oddly, that 200-acre patent issued to Hance Hendrick Sr. is the same land referred to as belonging to "Hance Hendrick Junr." in an adjoining patent of 1718 to Edmund Jennings.²⁴

It seems likely that Hance had sold his patent of 1701 in King William, for by this time three of his four sons were situated on their own lands and an aging Hance surely needed no more than the 200 acres he had patented in Caroline. Whether Hance Hendrick Sr. actually occupied this land or not is uncertain, for there are no further records which we can definitely attribute to him. Caroline County's records, which are limited to its court records, begin in 1732. Although Hance Hendrick, the son, is mentioned frequently, there is no indication that there were two of them in the county. Nor is there any indication among the court records of any estate-related activity for the elder Hance. This strongly suggests that Hance Hendrick Sr. was dead by 1732.

On 28 September 1728, Hance Hendrick, Adolphus Hendrick, and William Hendrick received patents for land in what was then neighboring Spotsylvania County. "Hance Hendrick of King William County" claimed 400 acres of new land.²⁵ "William Hendrick of King William County" claimed 400 acres in the same vicinity²⁶ and Adolphus Hendrick (see below) claimed 1,000 acres. None seem to have lived on their lands there, for none appear further in Spotsylvania records. Whether the above patentee was Hance Hendrick Sr. or Jr. is unknown, since both (if living) would have been residents of King William at the time. The lack of a modifier suggests the possibility that Hance Hendrick Sr. was dead by this date. The adjectives "Jr." and "Sr." applied to Hance were not seen again until 1740, despite numerous intervening references to Hance Hendrick.

²⁰ Sunter's 1705 patent, one of several contiguous parcels patented by him, appears to be the one referred to in Allen's patent as "Hans Hendrick's". A later patent to John Wheeler referring to this same land as "Winston's" seems to confirm it.

²¹ The Vestry Book of St. Paul's Parish, Hanover County, Virginia 1706-1786, C. G. Chamberlayne (1940), p252. Note that the processioning record for 1720 calls this the land of Haunce (sic) Hendrick "which now belongs to the orphans of Anth. Winston lately decd." (p261).

²² Virginia Patent Book 12, p362

²³ Virginia Patent Book 12, p361

²⁴ Virginia Patent Book 10, p393.

²⁵ Virginia Patent Book 14, p112

²⁶ Virginia Patent Book 14, p105

When Hance Hendrick Sr. died is impossible to determine, though it seems probable he died prior to 1732. He could have been dead as early as 1726, for posthumous patents are not unusual.²⁷ He was perhaps dead by the time of the 1728 patent in Spotsylvania. The destruction of the early records of King William prevent us from finding records of his will or estate or of the disposition of his two remaining patents. The absence of a second Hance Hendrick in Caroline records, when we know he owned land there, suggests he was surely dead by 1732 when the Caroline court records begin.

Turning briefly to his name, it is interesting that it was so consistently rendered as “Hance Hendrick”. Between 1701 and 1730 we find his (or his son’s) name recorded in 19 separate documents.²⁸ In every case, the surname is recorded as “Hendrick” (once as Hendrake) with no trailing “s”. It would rarely be recorded with an “s” for the next hundred years. His given name is rendered as “Hance” in 13 of the 19 documents, including his own signature to the 1706 deed of gift, and “Hanse” or “Haunce” in four others. Only the quit rent roll and the Spotsylvania surveyor’s report render it as “Hans”.

The children of Hance Hendrick, and presumably of his wife Jane, include at least the following four sons. There were surely daughters, but seemingly no way to identify them. The son Adolphus can be proven by the fortuitously saved deed of 1706. A 1742 record for Benjamin Hendrick (see below) seems to identify him as a brother to Adolphus. The circumstantial evidence is sufficient by genealogical standards to prove two additional sons. Hance Hendrick Jr. was certainly a son. William Hendrick, the fourth son, first appears within a few miles of Hance Hendrick Sr., and the name “Hance” appears among his grandchildren. These four men account for every occurrence of the name Hendrick for the next several decades in Virginia, with the exception of a “wido Hendrick” thirty years earlier and more than fifty miles away.²⁹ Further, these four Hendrick men (or their children) appear in an impressively large number of records in conjunction with one another.

Each of the following sons is treated in a separate chapter:

- 1.1. Adolphus Hendrick (by 1685 - 1763)
- 1.2. Hance Hendrick II (c1690s? - 1773)
- 1.3. Benjamin Hendrick (c1690s? - 1777)
- 1.4. William Hendrick (c1680s – aft 1756)

²⁷ Patents were issued in the name on the warrant (for the survey) and there was a natural delay between survey and patent. At least a few months were required by the patent process itself. However, there could have been a delay of several years introduced by the claimant himself - once the land was surveyed, he had a prior right and was protected if he needed time to raise the cash necessary to pay the surveyor and the Governor’s clerks, or for some other reason. For example, we know Hance Hendrick Jr. had already claimed the land for the 1726 patent in 1718. There are many examples of patents issued posthumously.

²⁸ Five patents, seven patents to others, the headright certificate copied into one patent, the deed of gift, three New Kent processioning records, the survey report, and the quit rent roll.

²⁹ A Thomas Harvie married the “widow Hendrick” in Elizabeth City County in 1696 – she may have been the “Catharine Harvie” who died in Charles City (York) County in 1701. See Chronology.