

ENGLISH CONNECTIONS OF NICHOLAS MERIWETHER PART 1

By Guy Meriwether Benson, Ph.D., DM

Joe Meriwether Oglesby, DM.



Our ancestor, Nicholas Meriwether, appeared in the Virginia Colony about 1652, presumably having arrived from England. Based on a deposition he made, we know he was born about 1631, and we also know that a brother, Francis, joined him in Virginia about 1669. No references to his English family have ever been uncovered and over the past 375 years many possible English connections have been proposed and subsequently disproven or rejected as improbable. As a result of intensive research by Guy Benson, other members of the English Research Committee, and several hired professional historical researchers in England, we have now conclusively identified the parents of Nicholas and his brother Francis!

The link that led to this result started about two years ago when a 1631 baptism record was found for a “Nicholas Merriwether,” son of John, in Norfolk County, England. Further research found baptisms for five siblings born to a “John Merywether and his wife Joane,” including a younger brother Francis baptized in 1642. Focusing research on John resulted in a significant amount of biographical information on him, including his education and subsequent appointment as Rector of a parish in Norfolk, as well as many legal transactions concerning land speculation, Chancery court proceedings, imprisonment for indebtedness, etc. Unlike his son Nicholas, John left a valuable trove of references for us to follow! This article documents the names and relationships of the English Merywether families now linked to Nicholas. Subsequent articles in *Meriwether Connections* will provide more details on John’s life in England, as well as other family connections.

While the existence of sons Nicholas and Francis with appropriate birth dates is a strong indication

of the link to our Virginia Nicholas, the actual proof is much stronger: in a 1667 note discussing John Merywether’s work as Rector of the Stratton St. Michael with St. Peter Parish in Norfolk, it was noted that John had died before the Restoration (1660) while sailing to Virginia, where he had a son:

“for hee was caste into Prison & there lay a long time, till at last as Mr Oldfield said as hee was going into Virginia, uppon the sea, hee dyed. **Hee hath sonne in Virginia at this time.**”

Except for the baptism record of Nicholas, it appears that “Merywether” was the preferred spelling of the name by this branch of the family.

We now know that John was the son of Richard (II), and Richard (II) was the son of Richard (I) who died in 1593. A number of siblings of John have been identified in legal documents, but records for births, marriages and deaths have not been located, as records for the parishes where the family lived do not exist before 1612.

John Merywether attended [Winchester College](#) from 1611 to 1618, when he became a Fellow at [New College](#), where he received a Bachelor of Civil Law (B.C.L.) in 1626. In 1629 he was appointed Rector at the [Stratton St. Michael with St. Peter Parish](#). In 1630, John married Joane BROWNE, daughter of Nicholas Browne and Fayth Cobb. It would appear that our Nicholas was named for his maternal grandfather.

Below is a summary of the lineage of John Merywether, his children, and his siblings. Subsequent articles will provide a summary of the Browne connections, as well as details of John’s life.

**English Connections of Nicholas Meriwether — Part 1, Merywether
First Generation**

1. _____ **Merywether.**

Nothing is known of the father and mother of Richard and Thomas at this time.

Children:

- 2
 - i. **Richard Merywether I** (-abt 28 Dec 1593)
 - ii. **Thomas Merywether.**
Thomas was mentioned in the Will of his brother Richard. Thomas had children, as the Will bequeathed "unto everie childe of Thomas Merriweather my brother..."

Second Generation

Family of Merywether (1)

2. Richard Merywether I (¹). Will dated 19 Jan 1593/4. Richard died abt 28 Dec 1593, on which date he was buried in Benson, Oxfordshire, England. Will proved 8 Mar 1593/4 in Oxfordshire, England.

Wife

Nothing is known of the wife of Richard I. As she is not mentioned in his will, it is assumed she had died by 1594, perhaps by 1592 when the original will was written.

Child:

- 3
 - i. **Richard Merywether II**

Third Generation

Family of Richard Merywether I (2)

3. Richard Merywether II (*Richard*², ¹). Occupation: Mercer (grocer).

Wife

Nothing is known of the wife of Richard.

The order of the children's birth is not known. It is believed that Samuel is the oldest son and John is one of the youngest of the children.

Children:

- i. **Samuel Merywether.** (Samuel has been identified as "heir to Richard," indicating he was the eldest son.)
- ii. **Richard Merywether III.** Born in Oxfordshire, England. Occupation: Mercer.
On 9 Sep 1618 Richard married **Mary Becke**, daughter of **James Becke** (<1578-) & **Alice Palmer**, in St. Giles' Church, Oxford, Oxfordshire, England. Baptized on 29 May 1603 in Bourton-on-the-Hill, Gloucestershire, England.
No children have yet been identified.
- 4
 - iii. **Anne Merywether**
 - 5
 - iv. **Frances Merywether** (-abt 24 May 1632)
 - 6
 - v. **Rector John Merywether** (~1599-bef 1660)
 - vi. **Elizabeth Merywether.** Was single and residing in London in 1629.
 - vii. **Edmund Merywether.**

Fourth Generation

Family of Richard Merywether II (3)

4. Anne Merywether (*Richard³, Richard², ¹*). Born in Oxfordshire, England.

On 28 Aug 1615 Anne married **Giles Carricke** in St. Giles, Oxford, Oxfordshire, England.

They had the following children:

- i. **Thomas Carricke**. Baptized 2 Jan 1615/6 in [Burford](#), Oxfordshire, England.
- ii. **Giles Carricke**. Baptized 10 Feb 1616/7 in Burford, Oxfordshire, England.
- iii. **Henry Carricke**. Baptized 8 Mar 1617/8 in [Chipping Norton](#) with Overton Parish, Oxfordshire, England.
- iv. **Mary Carricke**. Baptized 20 Aug 1621 in Chipping Norton with Overton Parish, Oxfordshire, England. Buried 3 Mar 1624/5 in Chipping Norton with Overton Parish.
- v. **Frances Carricke**. Baptized 22 Mar 1623/4 in Chipping Norton with Overton Parish. Buried 1 May 1624 in Chipping Norton with Overton Parish.
- vi. **Mary Carricke**. Baptized 17 Apr 1625 in Chipping Norton with Overton Parish.
- vii. **Giles Carricke**. Baptized 5 Dec 1630 in Chipping Norton with Overton Parish.
- viii. **Thomas Carricke**. Baptized 17 Apr 1632 in Chipping Norton with Overton Parish.

5. Frances Merywether (*Richard³, Richard², ¹*). Born in Oxfordshire, England. Frances died in London, England, abt 24 May 1632. Buried on 24 May 1632 in [St. Michael, Cornhill, London, England](#). Will probated on 7 Jun 1632 in London, England.

On 12 Feb 1617/8 Frances first married **Thomas Church** in St Peter Upon Cornhill, City of London, London, England. Thomas died in London, England, abt 25 Jun 1625. Buried on 25 Jun 1625 in [Saint Peter upon Cornhill Church](#), London, England. Will probated on 21 Jul 1625 in London, England. Occupation: Clothworker.

They had the following children:

- i. **Thomas Church**. Baptized 5 Nov 1620 at Saint Peter upon Cornhill Church, London, England.
- ii. **Frances Church**. Baptized 10 Nov 1622 at Saint Peter upon Cornhill Church.

Abt 1628 Frances second married **Samuel Ravenscrofte** in London, England. Samuel died bef 30 Aug 1664. Will probated on 30 Aug 1664 in London, England. Occupation: Upholster.

They had the following children:

- i. **Edward Ravenscrofte**. Baptized 19 Jul 1629 at [St. Michael, Cornhill](#), London, England.
- ii. **Anna Ravenscrofte**. Baptized 1 Feb 1630/1 at St. Michael, Cornhill.
- iii. **Elizabeth Ravenscrofte**. Buried 10 Aug 1632 at St. Michael, Cornhill.

6. Rector John Merywether (*Richard³, Richard², ¹*). Born abt 1599 in England. John died at sea bef 1660. Occupation: Rector, Church of England, Stratton St. Michael Parish with St. Peters (1629–1642?). Education: Scholar, Winchester College (1611-1618); Fellow, New College (1618–1629).

On 27 May 1630 he married **Joane Browne**, daughter of **Nicholas Browne Gent.** (<1570~1637) & **Fayth Cobb** (~1644), in [Bawdeswell, Hundred of Eynsford](#), England. Born bef 16 Jul 1609 in Little Walsingham Parish, Norfolk, England. Joane was baptized in [Little Walsingham Parish](#), Norfolk, England, on 16 Jul 1609.

They had the following children:

- i. **Nicholas Merywether.** Born bef. 9 Aug 1631, Norfolk, England. Died 9 Dec 1678, Colony of Virginia. (See “*The Merywether Family in America, Vol. I: The Colonists*” for details.)
- ii. **John Merywether.** Born 18 Apr 1633 in Stratton St. Michael with St. Peter Parish, Norfolk, England
- iii. **Anne Merywether.** Born 9 Nov 1634 in Stratton St. Michael with St. Peter Parish, Norfolk, England.
- iv. **Fayth Merywether.** Baptized 29 Jan 1636/7 in Stratton St. Michael with St. Peter Parish. Buried 29 March 1649 in Kingston upon Thames Parish, Surrey, England.
- v. **Joane Merywether.** Baptized 24 Mar 1638/9 in Stratton St. Michael with St. Peter Parish. Died 17 Oct 1656 in Stratton St. Michael with St. Peter Parish.
- vi. **Francis Merywether** (bef 29 Sep 1642-abt May 1676) (See “*The Merywether Family in America, Vol. I: The Colonists*” for details.)

SEE PAGE 16 FOR A DECSENDANT’S CHART TO KEEP



English Meriwether/Merywether Connections

