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Settlers of the Beekman Patent
Dutchess County, New York

Volume I
Historical Records

Settlers of the Beekman Patent
Dutchess County, New York

An Historical and Genealogical Study
of all the
18th Century Settlers in the Patent

by
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THE SMITH FAMILY AFFAIR

Some actions of the Tories struck closer to home than others. John Smith, ancestry unknown, but possibly the John Smith in Capt. Isaac Ter Bush's company which mustered 1762 for the French War. This John Smith was born New England, age 54 [b. ca. 1708] a carpenter, in Lt. Conklin's Co. 5" 8'. [NYMR 450]. Our John Smith was living on a 201 acre farm in lot 19, at the intersection of Waterbury Hill and Parlman Roads in present day Union Vale, at the time of the Revolution. His rent was 20 bushels of wheat, 2 fowls and 1 days riding per year. He was most likely the man taxed as John Smith "on Ketcham's farm" June 1765-69 and then as 'John Smith' through 1778. He was appointed 1st Lieut. in Captain Israel Vail's company of Militia under Col. James Vanderburgh 10 March 1778. When changes were next made in this company, 20 Oct. 1779, the records show, "Samuel Curtis, 1st Lieut, Vail's Company, vice John Smith, deceased." Our story is about Lieut. John Smith, deceased, and his sons. [Our sources are affidavits from pension applications, newspaper accounts of the time, Clinton Papers manuscripts, and data we have gathered for the genealogies of the several families involved.] We begin with a newspaper account of the final chapter of the story:

New-York Journal and General Advertiser of 11 Oct
1779.

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"We hear from Oswego, in Dutchess County, that Lieut. John Smith, lately died there of the small-pox, a few days after his return from New-York where he and his two sons had been prisoners, and where, when he came out by exchange, he left them confined. They were all, about three months ago, feloniously made prisoners (by the notorious Charles Vincent jun. and Gabriel Wright, now prisoners for felony, in Poughkeepsie goal) and carried to New-York, where among other instances of barbarous usage, persons infected with the small pox, were brought into the room where they were confined, on purpose, it appeared, to give them the infection. Mr. Smith, at the time remonstrated, tho' in vain, against the cruel treatment, telling them that they might as well murder him at once."

The pension application of John Smith Jr. provides more detail of the events: [Rev. Pens. W-19061]. [John Smith Jr. was born at Beekman 27 Feb. 1759, and died at Clinton, Dutchess County 14 Nov. 1836.]

Affidavit of John Smith Jr. On 26 Sept. 1832 he testified for a pension and gave some details about his capture and that of his father and brother. "He enlisted in Captain Israel Vail's Company in 1779 returned to Fishkill, was guard to a court martial and was then between the 4th and 8th of July taken prisoner by a party [of] the enemy, Cowboys &c. Was carried to headquarters of the enemy at Philips near Kingsbridge, was there put on board a vessel and two days after sent to New York, was put in prison in the sugar house[;] there were about 500 other prisoners there at the time, deponant remained in the sugar house a prisoner about seven months, was then removed to the jail in New York (late the debtors jail in the Park), staid there two months a prisoner & was exchanged the latter part of May 1780, and went home to Beekman. Deponant served six weeks before he was taken and was a prisoner ten months. His father's Bible is in the possession of his brother Moses in Albany."

Affidavit of Moses Smith, son of John Smith Sr:

"Deponant also well remembers that the said John Smith afterwards went out with the regiment in 1779, and was taken prisoner and remained a prisoner until the next summer[;] deponants father John Smith and brother Alexander Smith were taken prisoner by the enemy at the same time and said Alexander was exchanged and came home together with the said John Smith."

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Affidavit of Daniel S. Dean:

"Deponant was well acquainted with the family of John Smith the elder, this affirmant well remembers that the said John Smith the elder and the younger were in the service of the United States in the army. Remembers the report that the said John Smith, Alexander Smith and John Smith the younger were taken prisoners by the enemy and carried to New York. He visited and saw them soon after their return. John Smith the elder died soon after of the small pox and Alexander Smith was deranged in mind. This affirmant is also well acquainted with Moses Smith here present and has known him from his youth."

Affidavit of Peter Lake:

".... the said John Smith was taken prisoner by some Tories commanded or controlled by a man by the name of Wright-- thinks his name was Gabe Wright-- that at the same time that John Smith was taken two of the brothers of the said John Smith and his father were also taken prisoners and carried to New York, and as this deponant was afterwards informed they were put into or confined in what was called the sugar house, that this deponant thinks, he the said John Smith and his brothers were confined about six months and released by being exchanged-- that this deponant remembers that they took the Small Pox while they were confined and the Father and one of the Brothers died with it."

Affidavit of Phebe Drake:

"John Smith Sr. lived about 1 1/2 miles distant from the residence of the father of this deponant, that this deponant remembers distinctly that the said John Smith was engaged in the Military Service after he was married to Jane and was taken prisoner together with the father of the said John and one of his brothers and was carried to New York when the City was in possession of the British. That she this deponant distinctly remembers that the said John Smith was a prisoner in New York when the said Jane had her first child; ... and the child was several months old when the husband of the said Jane returned and first saw his first child, that this deponant remembers that when John Smith and his brother and his father were released & returned from New York; the father of the said John Smith was immediately afterward seized with the Small Pox and died[,] when all the family, together with John Smith and Jane moved out and left the house for fear of catching the disease." There were at least three men from Beekman involved in the capture of the Smiths; Charles Vincent Jr., Gabriel Wright Jr. and William (Gulielmus) Moore. The N-YHS collections, Misc. Mss "D", includes a petition to

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the Dutchess County judge hearing the trial of 6 April 1780 that includes the following names, presumably all involved in the Smith affair: "Charles Vincent, Jacob Storm, ?John McKeel, Gabriel Wright, John Marston [sic for Mastin], William Moore, Damon ?Deyo, James Wilson

and Winant Williams."

CHARLES VINCENT was probably the son of Charles and Hester (Guion) Vincent of Eastchester and Fishkill. He was referred to as Charles Jr. in the records and was most likely the man taxed in Beekman from 1772-78. He m. twice, the second wife being Hannah, probably the daughter of E.S. Burling of North Castle and Fredericksburgh, NY, and sister to his first wife. He had children Nancy, Burling, John, Zethia, Isaac and Hannah. He was listed in a muster for Captain Jonathan Haight's Co. for 1 June 1761. He was age 19, born DC a laborer, in Haight's Co., 5" 9' tall. [NYMR 390].

A month or so after the capture of the Smiths we find the following in the New-York Journal of 30 Aug. 1779: "Last night was brought to the Poughkeepsie goal--- The notorius Tory Charles Vincent, taken yesterday in the woods near Oswego. He attempted to escape, and would not stop till he was shot in the hip, which brought him to the ground, but his wound is not thought to be mortal. There was found in his pocket a letter from Fulmore, now confined in the Poughkeepsie goal, dated the day before, informing, that he expected to be with him on Monday (this day)-- by which it would seem he intended to attempt an escape."

[Jasper] Fulmore had been a Sergeant in Capt. Israel Vail's Minute Man Company in August 1776, the same company that Gabriel Wright was in. We don't know whether Fulmore managed to escape, but the records show that Vincent did:

The New-York Journal and General Advertiser of 6 Dec. 1779 carried this notice: "Broke Goal last night, the following prisoners, viz. ... Charles Vincent, about 5 feet 10 inches high, well made, brown hair, ... Shubael Worden, about 5 feet 10 inches high, reddish hair. A reward of fifty pounds will be given for apprehending each and every of the above named prisoners." Dated Poughkeepsie 29 Nov. 1779.

It was almost impossible to hold prisoners in the jail and the following gives a little more detail. [NYP of 10 Feb. 1780; The NYJ of 7 Feb. reported about one-half the men's names, but no detail].

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"Poughkeepsie, Feb. 7, 1780. On Thursday evening, between eight and nine o'clock a number of prisoners in Poughkeepsie goal, having, it is supposed, been assisted by some of their accomplices from without, sawed off the irons, with which they were hand cuffed and fettered; and having provided themselves with clubs when the

goaler, attended with a guard of four men, went to examine the rooms, and see that all was safe; on opening one of the doors, they knocked him down, and 11 of them rushed out, knocked down and wounded the rest of the guard (by whom, however, one of them received a wound with a bayonet) and all escaped; one of them, Moses Aken, being much frost bitten, has been since taken. Two hundred dollars reward will be given, for securing and returning Henry Rush to Poughkeepsie goal; and one hundred for each of the rest. Their names are as follows: Henry Rush, alias David Spoer, jun. Gabriel Right, Joseph Wood, David Mosher, Daniel Simpkins, Noah Ames, Joseph Nickerson, John Marks, John Hodge, and Reuben Smith."

The same paper reported Monday 3 July 1780: "Two Tory enemies made their escape from Poughkeepsie goal, on Saturday night, and several others were yesterday committed to the same goal."

A week later the paper reported:

"The two prisoners, Vincent and Holmes, who made their escape from Poughkeepsie goal, as mentioned in our last, have been since retaken, and returned to goal, with several others of like characters."

Charles Vincent Jr. evidently did manage to escape and made his way to Canada with many other Loyalists. Charles Vincent's estate in Beekman was confiscated 14 July 1783. He lived in lot 17 in present day Union Vale on a farm first settled by Abraham Dolson ca. 1736. This farm was on the line of lot 16 and was just west of Hoxie Corners. Tompkins Road runs through the farm on the eastern side. The Livingston Rent Book, page 93, describes the transfer of the lease from Ambrose Vincent to Charles Vincent Jr. It appears that Charles may have been on this farm as early as 1774, but signed a bond 1 May 1778 for $\$65/11/4$ when the lease was assigned. He made a claim 25 Feb. 1786 for his losses as a result of his Loyalism. His affidavit and that of a witness, made in an attempt to receive compensation from the British Crown, follow:

"Lived in Dutchess County. Joined the British soon

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after the Battle of White Plains. He was so persecuted he could not stay. He continued within the Lines. Now and then went home privately. Served occasionally under Col. Delancey & Col. Emerick. Brought men in for them. Conducted some of Burgoyne's Prisoners to New York. "Had 200 acres in Dutchess County. It was a tenant farm of Mr. Robt. Gibb. Livingston. Had a lease for

three Lives. Bought about 10 years ago, just before the war. One of the 3 persons was dead when he bought the Lease. Gave £230 for it. Paid it all before he came away. Some York Paper Money, some Jersey Paper Money; all before ye war. Values it at near £500.

"Had a house & 6 lots in New York. Produces lease from Geo. Stanton, Attorney, from Jas. DeLancey to claimt, of 6 lots for 21 years, paying £9 annually. 24 July 1782.

"Had a Negro Wench & Boy in Dutchess Co. His Father gave them to him. She would not come away & therefore his Wife was forced to leave her behind. Lost Wagon, Cart, yoake of oxen.

Taken for the use of the Rebel Army."

John Mastin, [prob. the son of Cornelius and Arientje (Elsworth) Masten of Oswego and a Loyalist himself], was a witness:

"Knew Claimt. He was always a Loyalist. Suffered greatly. He joined the British very soon. He piloted Loyalists frequently within the Lines. Piloted Burgoyne's men within ye Lines.

He had a Leased farm in Dutchess Co. Thinks he bought it of one Vincent long before the war. He was reckoned a Considerable Farmer.

He had a black girl & child.

Says the Landlord would add a new life in the Lease for £5. He had cattle.

Capt. Vanderburgh speaks highly of Claimt.'s Loyalty.

He was serviceable in getting intelligence from the Country. The officers used to place great confidence in him. He was very useful. Col. Emerick often employed him." [Public Archives Canada.]

Charles Vincent Jr. arrived in St. John in June 1783 on the Brig THETIS with others in his regiment, and took up land with them. He received a land grant of 200 acres on the Kennebecasis River at St. John which he did not take up. He then received a grant of 500 acres at Cobequid, on the Cobequid Road (now Westchester, Nova Scotia) where he settled in 1785. He d. ca. 1810.

WILLIAM MOORE was the son of Allen and Abigail (Collins) Moore and was born 1755 in Beekman and d.

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Beginning of Beekman Patent

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