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Washington & Northern Virginia Company -- Biographies of Ancestors of Members

Robert Behe(a)thland



Robert Beheathland was the son of Richard Beheathland of St Endellion, County Cornwall, probably born between 1580 and 1585. When Richard died sometime before October 1635, his will listed two sons, Robert and Hugh, and a grandson John.

Robert Beheathland sailed in December 1606 with the first fleet, the *Susan Constant*, *Godspeed*, and *Discovery*, that sighted the Virginia capes on April 26, 1607 and selected the site of the fort at Jamestown on May 13, 1607. He is one of only a couple of members of this first group of settlers known to be survived by descendants living today. Over the next two years he was mentioned in the history of Captain John Smith.

In February 1608 he was among those who accompanied Smith and Christopher Newport on a visit to Powhatan at Werowocomoco on the York River. He was then noted accompanying Smith in the final meeting of Smith with Powhatan in December 1608/January 1609 while attempting to negotiate the purchase of corn. In a sudden danger of attack by the large number of Pamunkey Indians, Smith deployed his small band and mentioned that he "took ... Master Beheathland to guard the dore".

Finally he was present at Smith's confrontation with Opechancanough when the survival of the little group depended so much on Smith's quick action in threatening the chief's destruction.

There is little further mention of Robert in any records until his brother, Anthony, died in May 1615. Robert then appeared in Cornwall, where he and his brother, George, filed suit against Anthony's widow, Ursula, for their interests in the estate. In 1618 the judge ordered the widow to pay 80 pounds, divided among Antony's relatives.

His name next appears as a signer on a petition to the King in 1620 requesting the appointment of a permanent governor of Virginia and expressing a willingness to return to Virginia if that was done.

All that is known of Robert's marriage is the name of his wife, Mary, and the existence of at least three children, Dorothy, Mary and John.

Dorothy was born in England or Virginia about 1612 or 1613. In November 1628 she was listed in Virginia court records as the step daughter of Lieutenant Thomas Flint living in Elizabeth City, which indicates that

A further record states "Mary Flint, ancient planter, now wife of Thomas Flint, Gent., of Warwick River" was granted 100 acres in the Corporation of Elizabeth City. On 24 July 1638 Randall Crew patented 750 acres including 150 acres due according to a court order of October 5, 1631 in the right of his wife Dorothy Beheathland in the court of Upper Norfolk County, indicating she had

her father, Robert, had by then died and her mother, Mary, had remarried.

Mary was born in 1614 or 1615. About 1631 she married Captain Thomas Bernard of Warwick County, who was later a burgess in 1640 and 1642 and again in 1644 and 1645. They had a daughter named Beheathland who married (1) Francis Dade, alias Major John Smith, with whom she had six children, and (2) Major Andrew Gilson with whom she had two children.

John was born in 1616-1617. He wrote his will in 1636, saying he was on the way to Virginia, and the administration of his estate was granted in October 1639 to his cousin, Charles Beheathland, who stated that "John had died abroad, unmarried."

References:

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2. "Virginia Gleanings in England", VMHB, Vol XI, 1904, p363 note
3. Jamestown Society Newsletter, Vol 25 2, Oct 2001; Vol 26 2, Oct 2002
4. "Narratives of Early Virginia 1606 1625", by Lyon G. Tyler; Charles Scribner's Sons, NY, 1907
5. "Cavaliers and Pioneers Abstracts of Virginia Land Patents and Grants 1623 1800", by Nell Marion Nugent; Press of the Dietz Printing Co, Richmond, VA, 1934, Vol I p94

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