

TO: Distribution (See List)

FROM: Jeannie Robinson, Frances and Beth Evans

SUBJECT: The Wives of Peter and John Rucker

DATE: April 24, 1989

The true identities of the wives of Peter<sup>1</sup> Rucker and his son, John<sup>2</sup> Rucker, have never been established.

Some have thought that Peter married Elizabeth Fielding or into the Coghill family and that John married Susannah Coghill.

Once the conclusion had been drawn, many accepted this as fact; others still raised questions.

Once accepted by researchers, when they shared their information with others with these ladies listed as wives, it tended to become established fact.

Jeannie Robinson has spent many long hours on this and through extensive research has come to the conclusion that there are no facts to substantiate intermarriage of the Ruckers with the Coghills; and nothing to uphold a Peter Rucker/Elizabeth Fielding union.

Jeannie has documented her findings and thoughts for us in her enclosed paper.... concluding that we may never know who these Rucker ancestors really married.

Of course we would hope that if any information should surface that would shed any light on the true identity of who Peter<sup>1</sup> and his son, John<sup>2</sup>, married, please share your information with us.

We are deeply appreciative to Jeannie for her researching this so thoroughly and preparing her paper in order to share this with all of us.

If any of you have other correspondents that you feel should have this information, please feel free to pass this along to them.

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THE WIVES OF PETER<sup>1</sup> AND JOHN<sup>2</sup> RUCKER  
By Jean Brydon Robinson  
April 12, 1989

TO THE MEMBERS OF THE RUCKER FAMILY, PLEASE NOTE:

Peter Rucker, Immigrant, married Elizabeth \_\_\_\_\_

John Rucker, his son, married Susannah \_\_\_\_\_.

The first record of land owned by Peter Rucker, Immigrant, was in Essex County, Deed Book 13, p.90, dated January 28, 1707/8. Frederick Coghill and wife Sara "leased to Peter Rucker and his wife Elizabeth 56 acres of land on Cockleshell Creek (on the Rappahannock River) adjoining William Scott's, Frederick and James Coghill's, and is part of 1000 acres granted to said Coghill's father, James." On page 91 of the same book, "Frederick Coghill and wife Sarah of Essex Co. for 2000 lbs of tobacco paid by Peter Rucker, and for the 'kind love and affection I owe unto John, Peter, and Thomas Rucker, sons of said Peter Rucker,' convey unto John Rucker the land leased to Peter Rucker, and in default of heirs to John, to go to Peter, and if Peter dies without heir, to go to Thomas."

From the above, we know that by the year 1708, Peter Rucker had a wife named Elizabeth and three sons. He lived on land adjoining Frederick Coghill and was his good friend. However, there is nothing to indicate that the Ruckers intermarried with the Coghills.

On p. 309, Wood suggests that either Peter Rucker or his son John may have married a Coghill. My thoughts are:

1). There is no evidence that the maiden name of Peter's wife, Elizabeth, was a Coghill. Examination of Coghill Records does not disclose any one of that name of that era. Mary, wife of James Coghill, Immigrant, died in 1715, leaving one surviving daughter, Mary Willis (W. B. 14, p.428, Essex County). Her other two heirs were sons Frederick Coghill and George Dusberry (Duxbury, Duckbary). Mary had remarried Henry Dusberry and had at least one child, George.

2). In 1707/8, Peter Rucker's three sons referred to in the above deed were young boys and the "love and affection" could not possibly refer to an inter-family marriage with the Coghills. Wood, p. 5, suggests that John Rucker came of age (21) in 1725 when he began buying land, making him about four years old at the time of the deed.



3). Susannah Coghill, oldest daughter of Frederick Coghill, was an heiress. Will of George Dusberry, probated Dec. 26, 1715 (six days after his Mother's Will was probated) "To Susanna Coghill, eldest daughter of my brother Frederick Coghill, my plantation, should she die without heir, to go to Richard Booker." (W. B. 14, p.430, Essex Co.) If John Rucker had married Susannah Coghill, why would he have given up an established plantation in Essex County, to go to the "wilds" of what is now Madison County?

4). Frederick Coghill's Will was probated Nov. 19, 1758, D. B. 11, p.223, Essex County. (See Coghill, p.97-99.) He mentions five children including "Suanner Miller," wife of Capt. John Miller. On May 27, 1769 (D. B. 115, p.94, Orange County) Susannah Rucker sold her former home and signed the deed "Susanna Rucker." (Wood, p.11)

The preponderance of evidence shows us that Susannah Coghill was married to John Miller and Susannah Rucker, John's widow, never remarried, therefore, I conclude, Susannah Rucker was not the daughter of Frederick Coghill!

From Vol. 1, Issue 4, Rucker Ruckus, "Susannah Coghill" by Mary Snyder: "It was originally believed that immigrant Peter Rucker's son, John, married Susannah Phillips. Edythe Rucker Whitley has acknowledged this to be an error." (She then goes on to say that John Rucker married Susannah Coghill, but we now think this could not be true.)

Letter from Edythe Rucker Whitley to Mary Snyder, Feb. 13, 1983: "In my book I have it that Peter Rucker, the first, married Elizabeth Fielding. That information was handed down in my family but years after I published the book discovered that she was not a Fielding nor was she kin to the Lloyd family... I would never take a tradition on anything today (learning this) after 68 years of professional research..."

In those days, a wife's maiden name was not written in deeds, wills, or other court records, and we must accept the fact that we may never know the family names of the wives of Peter Rucker, Immigrant, and his oldest son, John.

(The Family of Coghill Continued, by William Hawes Coghill, 1956, and The Rucker Family Genealogy, by Sudie Rucker Wood, 1932, are my main sources of information. If you have any additional information, please share it with the family.)