

Summary of (W)Roe family ancestors

March, 2019

by Charles (Chuck) Roe excerpted from much more extensive research done by him and his brother Robert (Bob) Roe in 2017-19

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This is my “bare bones” outline for my ancestral Roe family’s migration to America. This summary is substantially “fleshed out” in my own and my brother Bob’s much more extensive family history narrative:

Richard Wroe (b. 1637 and lived and likely died in the Lancashire region of west England; at least three of his sons migrated to America: Bunch, Henry, and William) .

William Richard Wroe : b. 1669 in Lancashire, west-central England; migrated to the Chesapeake Bay area of the American colonies by 1687; settled near or with his brothers in Westmoreland County, Virginia, on the lower Potomac River and likely farmed there, possibly with his older brother Bunch Wroe. William married Judith Browne – herself already a third generation Virginian, whose forebearers had reached the Chesapeake Bay region in the 1630s and had established plantations along the lower Potomac River in Westmoreland Co., VA. William Wroe died there in 1730. [One can read a transcript of his will online.]

Original Richard Wroe : b. 1697 in Westmoreland County, Virginia; named for his maternal grandfather Original Brownne); entered into land real estate and business transactions including property transactions with the neighboring Washingtons, Masons, Monroes, and Popes. His first of three wives was Eleanor June Bolling [b. 1703; d. 1734] who birthed his first children, including our direct ancestor John A. Roe. Original died in Westmoreland Co., VA, in 1774, and in his will [the transcript of which one can now read online] explicitly disinherited his first-born son John Roe (giving him “one shilling and no more”) – had he already given son John all the financial “stake” he was going to receive? Or had John committed some transgression by marrying someone of another religious faith or pedigree? Or had John offended his father by dropping the W from the spelling of Roe? Or did (as it appears from the evidence of his recorded will) Original’s third wife assure than none of his children from his earlier marriages received any inheritances from his estate? In 2017 I visited the general area of the properties of the Wroes and their wives’ families, some of which is presently located on National Park Service public lands in the George Washington Birthplace National Historic Site in Westmoreland County, VA.

John A.(?) Roe (grandfather of John M. Roe): b. 1721 in Westmoreland Co., Virginia; by 1748 he was apparently married to Sarah Gudgins (possibly his first of two marriages to wives both named Sarah) and moved south to Edgecombe County, in northeastern North Carolina (which was later subdivided into several counties – when in 1754 his property location became part of the newer Halifax County). He arrived with enough capital to purchase immediately in 1749 a 200-acre existing farm near the Roanoke River. A few years later in 1754 he “traded up” by selling that first farm and purchasing a larger 300- acre farm located on Little Creek above its confluence with Deep Creek and that upstream from Fishing Creek (while not far from the Roanoke River, Roe’s second farm was actually located in the Tar River watershed, which flows parallel and immediately south of the Roanoke River watershed). Clues indicate that his first wife Sarah may have died and that he soon remarried a second Sarah (Sarah Johns). John and his wife (or possibly two successive wives) produced 14 children; his wife (second?) died in 1774. In the fall of 1776 John A. Roe sold his farm in Halifax County and moved along with all his children (some of them by then married) several hundreds of miles to land on Beaver Creek near the Broad River in the upstate frontier of South Carolina (its Camden District). After the Revolutionary War the elder John A. Roe moved west again with his sons to live with them in South Carolina’s Old Ninety-Six or Pendleton District (close to modern-day Clemson). There near Golden Creek he died in 1802 (at age 80). In the fall of 2017 I visited the approximate locations of their properties here.

Benjamin Berryman Roe: b. 1766 in Halifax Co., North Carolina; the tenth child of John A. Roe. **[NOTE: Benjamin Roe was a younger brother of Elizabeth Roe Coleman, who was born 17 years before him.]** When Benjamin was ten years old as the American Revolutionary War descended in 1776, he and the rest of his siblings accompanied his father along with their transportable belongings in a surprising relocation to the upstate of South Carolina. One of Benjamin Berryman Roe’s sons would be “our” John M. Roe (b. 1807) who was named in honor of his deceased grandfather and uncle. Like his father before him, Benjamin Berryman Roe (who went by either name) kept moving, with several properties and places of residence in the upstate region of South Carolina, then on to Kentucky by 1810, and next moved on to Cape Girardeau, Missouri on the Mississippi River. There he died in March, 1819. In October 2018, I visited and found original documentation for his estate settlement in the Cape Girardeau County historical archives (in Jackson, MO) and observed the approximate location of their farm land.

My brother and I have more thoroughly researched our ancestral roots of Benjamin Berryman Roe's son John M. Roe and the family of his wife Elizabeth Limbaugh (our direct ancestors), as well as their son Isaiah Berryman Roe and his wife (our direct ancestors), and beyond. Four generations of the Roe family are buried in rural cemeteries in Adams County, western Illinois.

ADDENDUM INFORMATION:

Following the Migration Path and Historic Landscapes of the Roes in America:

Knowing that the Roes, like the vast majority of early American immigrants and "common" settlers, were simple country people and not famous historical figures, I deferred to my brother Bob in Oklahoma to do the "heavy lifting" of researching web-source information while I served as his "reconnaissance scout" and explored the historic and cultural landscapes of our ancestors in America.











My first stop: Westmoreland County, Virginia:

In the late summer of 2017, I chose to stop at the George Washington Birthplace National Historic Site on the southern shore of the lower Potomac River, located in Virginia's "Northern Neck" peninsula region and in its Westmoreland County. In talking with the National Park Service ranger-historian on duty, imagine my pleasant surprise when she immediately responded to my identification of my interest and surnames of my ancestors, saying that I could drive out a park road and be on part of their property from the later 1600s into the mid-1700s. Wow! Turns out that William R. Wroe married Judith Browne (a widow), and took up farming on land that had been owned by her grandfather Henry Brooks (or Brooke) a shipwright and early immigrant from England had acquired a land grant in the 1640s at a boat landing on the southside of the lower Potomac River near its confluence with the Chesapeake Bay in which Westmoreland County, Virginia, was established. One of his daughters, Jane Brooks married an English emigrant Originall Browne, and they farmed the land neighboring that of Henry's property. Granddaughter Judith Browne married William Wroe. Their plantation properties were subsequently sold to neighboring George Washington's father! Now the land is part of the National Historic Park unit – located on the south side of the Potomac River (which has submerged/eroded away some of the original Brook/Browne plantation land) immediately east of the location of the DAR-recreated and monumentalized Washington Family Cemetery. As a park maintenance supervisor observed to me, when I was visiting the site, the Washingtons' graves would have been just like those of our ancestors and buried under temporary field stones or under a tree near their plantation homes and soon those burial locations were lost. The difference being that during the 1930s the grand colonial dames society had the Washingtons' remains exhumed piecemeal and arbitrarily reburied under elaborate monuments constructed in memorial. The park has an interpretive sign identifying the approximate location of the Henry Brook home and plantation, on which archaeological excavations were done several decades ago. Apparently the WRoe's first landholdings and farms were located not far to the west, and near neighboring properties of Virginia's Mason and Monroe families. Historic property records from that period are fragmentary, and the

Bunch, William, and Henry Wroe brothers may have co-farmed land in common. But at least we now know the approximate general location of the WROes' first farmlands in the Virginia Colony – in Westmoreland County, on the southern shore of the Potomac River, and in close proximity to the farms of grandparents and parents of the later-more-famous Masons, Popes, Monroes, and Washingtons. Our Roe ancestors at least knew and mingled with early colonists who produced famous national leaders.

Questions to possibly be determined later include whether William Richard Wroe (and how many other of our immigrant ancestors interconnected with the Roes) were transported to America as indentured servants, who were carried from impoverished situations in the “Old Country” and ultimately worked off their terms of service to their “sponsors” and gained their freedom and often capital with which to purchase their own land properties. At least ten immigrant families with the (w)Roe surname arrived in the Chesapeake Bay region (some as indentured servants) during the mid-1600s period. Our records so far discovered have William Richard Wroe appearing in the Mattox Neck area of Westmoreland County in the mid-1680s.

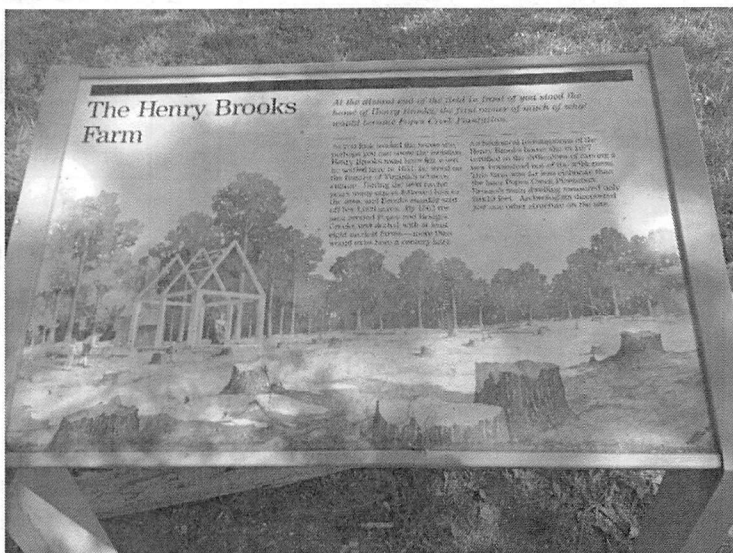
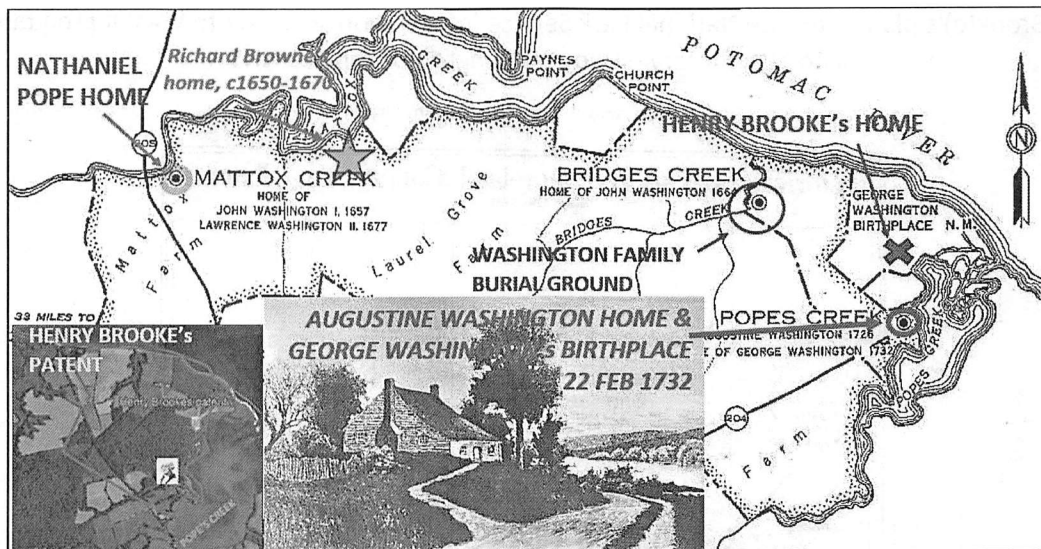
ROE (WROE, ROWE, ROW) – BROWNE (BROWN) FAMILY TREE

RICHARD BROWNE IMMIG 1635 St George's IMD c1618 England 12.18.1670 Rappahannock VA		ELIZABETH BALDWIN IMMIG 1602 England Westmoreland VA		HENRY BROOKES IMMIG c1630 Westmoreland VA 16.10 Much Marce, Hereford ENG 2.03.1663 Westmoreland VA	JANE SAXTON WHITCLIFF IMMIG (widow) Apr 16.14 England 1682 Westmoreland VA
					
	ORIGINAL BROWNE #2 1648 Westmoreland VA 3.30.1698 Westmoreland	m1663 4 children: Jane (Browne) Pope 1662-1719; Judith (Browne) Wroe 1672-1777; Mary c1682-1733 & William 1683-1753; Jane Pope's high attorney Nathaniel Pope who sold land Richmond Co VA to sister in law Judith & her father Wm Wroe 1727		JANE [BROOKES] HIGDON (widow of Richard Higdon) bef1648 Westmoreland VA 1783 Westmoreland VA	
					
WILLIAM R WROE #1 IMMIG c1680 Westmoreland VA 2.08.1669 Lancashire Eng 9.03.1730 Westmoreland		m c1830 7 children: Original Roe (c1697); William (#2, b1700); Richard (c1702); Elizabeth (c1704); Thomas (c1706); Susannah (c1708); Jane (c1710)	1st wife: JUDITH BROWNE 1677 Westmoreland VA 2.08.1725 Westmoreland VA	2nd wife: HANNAH [MASON? COMBS] m c1725 to Hannah Mason (widow), widow of John Combs Richmond VA. No children.	
					
	ORIGINAL WROE (ROE) 8.29.1697 Westmoreland May 1774 Westmoreland	m 22.7.19 Westmoreland VA, 8th child children: Eleanor Bolling's (John) Jane, George, Ann, Reginald, Elizabeth Lyne (John, Richard, John, Elizabeth, Thomas, Susannah, Benjamin, Lucetta); William Wroe married Anne Chambliss c1769	ELEANOR [BOLLING] WROE 5 children: JOHN ROE, Jane, Eleanor, William, Reginald c1702 Westmoreland VA 1734 Westmoreland VA	2nd wife: JANE [LYNE] WROE (dau Thomas & Eliz Lyne) 3 children: Elean, Richard, Judith, Elizabeth, Thomas, Susannah, Benjamin, Lucetta (Lucy) 7.25.1710 Westmoreland VA 10.21.1769 Westmoreland	
					
		JOHN ROE 4.21.1721 Westmoreland VA Jan 1802 Fendleton Co SC			

by Robert Roe (2017)

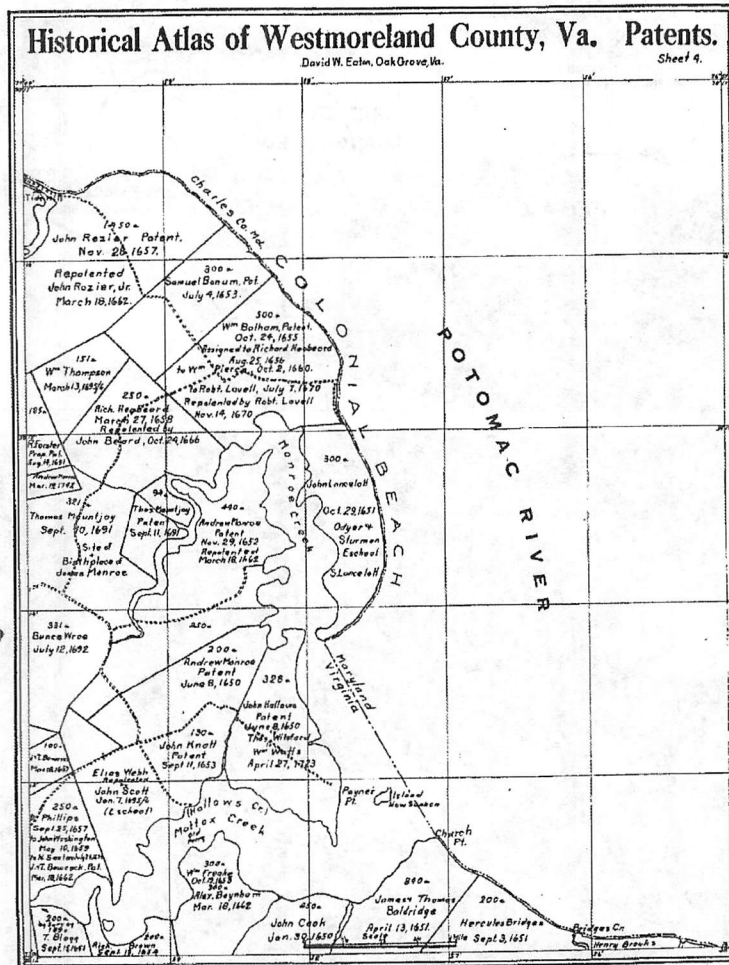
Please read my parallel Historical Narrative to accompany this summary of my family lineage. Also see accompanying collection of additional photographs illustrating their migration path and America colonial and settlement history.

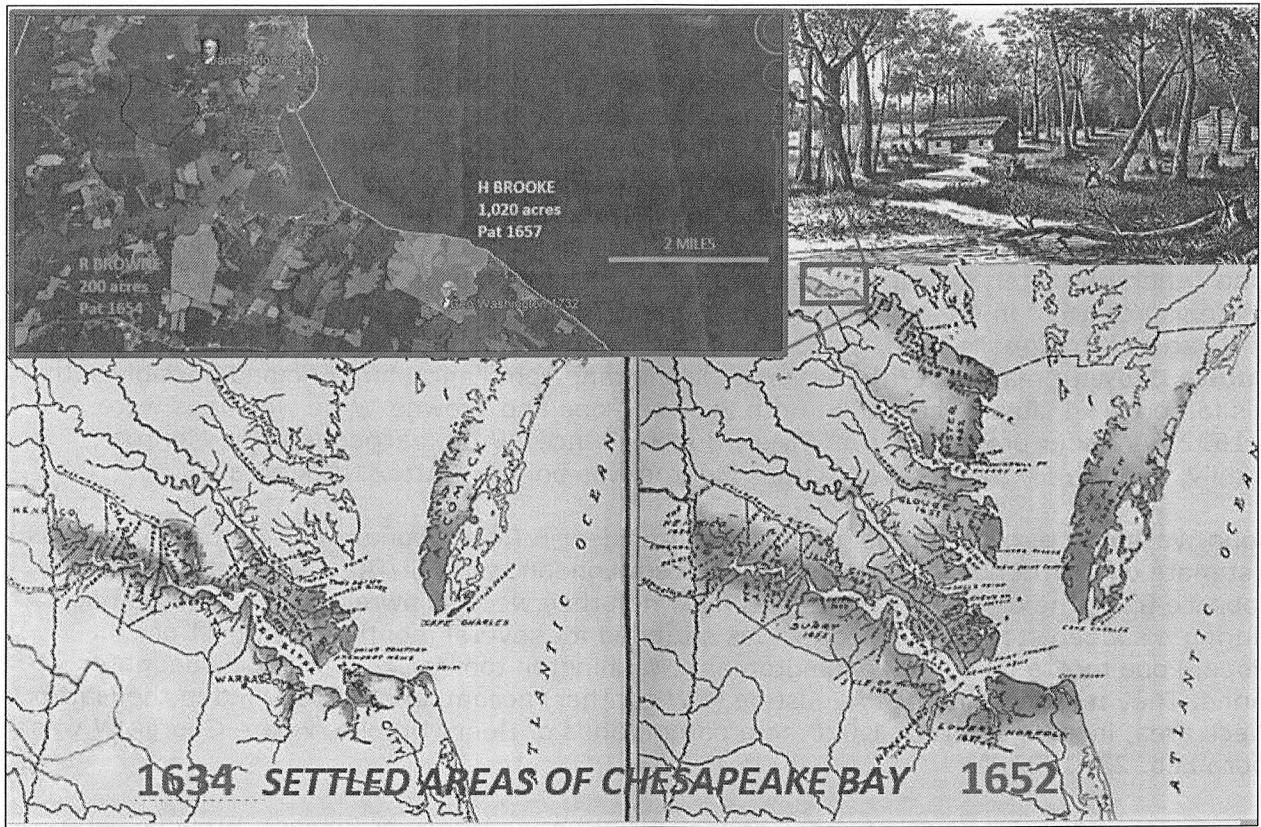
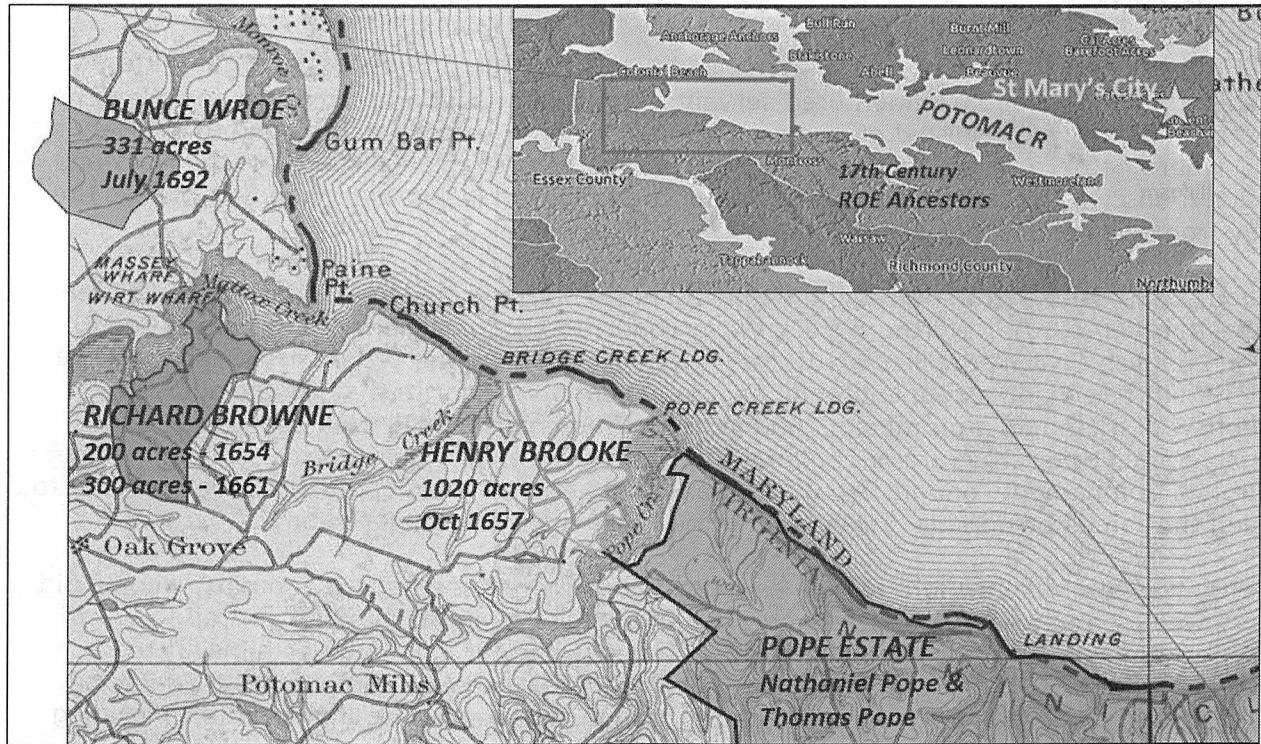
Westmoreland County's early property records have been largely lost or destroyed. Only fragmentary property locations have been reassembled for the area immediately around the Washington and Mason families' historic landholdings. Land owned by William Wroe's older brother Bunch appears on reproduced old land grant maps a few miles west of the Brook/Browne (and Washington, Pope) properties, which was closer to the properties of the Masons and Monroes. In talking with a local historian, there may be some possibility that William Wroe first farmed in common tenancy with his older brother on the land. Records of the next generation of properties have been lost, so we do not have records of the property locations of Original Wroe. We may assume those were the same properties or in the same vicinity as those of the earlier generation of Wroes, Brooks, and Brownes close to the Potomac River and Popes Creek in Westmoreland County VA. I offer copies of maps and photo images of the landscape on which the WROes, Brownes, and Brooks lived in the latter 1600s and 1700s.





Henry Brook(e)'s plantation site National Park Service information sign next to Washington family historic cemetery – Geo. Washington Birthplace NHS





In summary, what my brother Bob's research has found for our early paternal ancestors who immigrated to the Chesapeake Bay area of Maryland and northern Virginia is:

"Our direct ancestors **Originall Browne** and his son **Richard Browne**, emigrated from England in 1634-1635 as indentured servants for William Clayborne on Chesapeake's Kent Island. The Brownes worked off their indentures; Richard married and moved to St. Mary's MD where he became an attorney. St. Mary's was the first colonial capitol of the Maryland colony, and was located on the north side of the embayed lower Potomac River, across the bay from the north shore of Virginia.

About 1650, **Richard Browne** and **Henry Brooke** both moved to the "Mattox Neck" area (Westmoreland Co) of Northern Neck VA, probably to escape violence in St Mary's Co MD when English Civil War spilled across the Atlantic. Henry Brooke settled in St Mary's MD ca 1639, but had made a couple of merchant voyages to VA prior to that, as the son and nephew of members a prominent London grocer/merchant family. Well-connected with aristocratic power structure of England, the Brookes who were charter investors in the Virginia Company of London. Brookes & Sons probably had good contracts to deliver food to keep the Jamestown settlers alive during the early years of Virginia colony.

Henry was also a shipwright as well as a good customer of several sea captains, who all did very well by applying for 50-acre land grants for each immigrant they sponsored to VA or MD, each new immigrant was used multiple times (Henry at least 4 times himself) to acquire land. Most of the big plantations patented by Browne and Brooke, Nathaniel Pope and others, on Mattox Neck were all "paid" through sponsorship of "immigrants," including Brooke's entire family of seven, who "migrated" across the Potomac from MD to Northern Neck.

Browne and Brooke probably knew each other in St Mary's, and migrated about the same time as the Pope family and others across the Potomac to claim headrights to acquire their properties in Westmoreland County VA. All became neighbors and affluent planters in the Mattox Neck area, between Mattox Creek & Popes Creek. Especially Nathaniel Pope, whose Cliffs Plantation was one of biggest tobacco plantations in Virginia.

One generation later, **Original Browne** (son of Richard) married **Jane Brooke** (daughter of Henry) ca 1670 in Westmoreland VA. Of their 5 children, dau. **Jane Browne** married **Nathaniel "Bridges" Pope**, grandson of Col. Pope, heir to Cliffs Plantation; and other dau. **Judith Browne** married **William Wroe**, immigrant from Lancashire England possibly with his father + ~4 siblings ca. 1675. Both Browne-Pope and Browne-Wroe weddings were ~1692. An older brother of Wm Wroe - Bunch (Bunce) Wroe married into the Monroe family, and the 5th US President James Monroe was born in Mattox Neck area.

John Washington, great-grandfather of 1st President & Revolutionary War hero George, was 1st mate on his friend's ship the Seahorse from London in 1656. They had just loaded tobacco from one of the 3 planters in 1656 when they were shipwrecked on the Potomac during a sudden storm. Washington was stranded for several months as a guest of Co. I Pope. Pope took a liking to Washington and Washington took a liking to Pope's daughter Anne. They married, and son Augustine (GW's father) accumulated much land in the Mattox Neck area, including part of 1,020-acre patent lands of Henry Brooke, where George W was born Feb. 22, 1732. "

There are still Wroe's (who kept the "W" either as Wroes or Rowes), Brown's (who dropped the "e") and Brooks (who dropped the "e" but added an "s") residing in Maryland

today, who are descendants of the original planters who lived and intermarried in Mattox Neck VA during 1670-1700s." [But we've found no Wroes still living in northern Virginia.]

A story we'll never know, but is the stuff for a good historical novel, is that of John A. (middle name unknown) Roe, who with his wife Sarah Gudgins by 1749 had left northern Virginia (probably with their infant children) for new lands in northeastern North Carolina, locating themselves on substantially-sized farmland above the swamp forests of streams near the Roanoke and Tar Rivers. John Roe apparently arrived in North Carolina with money, as he promptly paid twenty pounds Crown-sterling "cash down" to purchase 200 acres of already improved farmland in 1749. Apparently, John and Sarah had some financial means and did not arrive poor. There John and Sarah (perhaps two successive wives both named Sarah) produced and raised a large family of fourteen children, and traded up in size of farm/plantation in 1754 by selling their first 200-acre farm property and simultaneously purchasing a 300-acre farm property nearby on the west side of Little Creek (located between the Roanoke and Tar Rivers, on an upper tributary stream flowing southward to Deep and Fishing Creeks). The 1754 property sale and purchase transactions were done simultaneously. According to the real estate purchase deeds for those two properties, they both already contained established farmsteads with pre-existing real estate improvements when John Roe bought them. Likely the Roes farmed the upland terrain above the lower bottomland swamp forests nearer the streams. I suspect they moved to North Carolina from the Potomac River in Virginia by a freight-carrying, schooner sailboat. Both the Roanoke and Tar Rivers were major commercial and transportation routes at that time, with multiple boat landings up the rivers to the "Fall Line" upstream at Roanoke Rapids on the Roanoke and Rocky Mount on the Tar River.

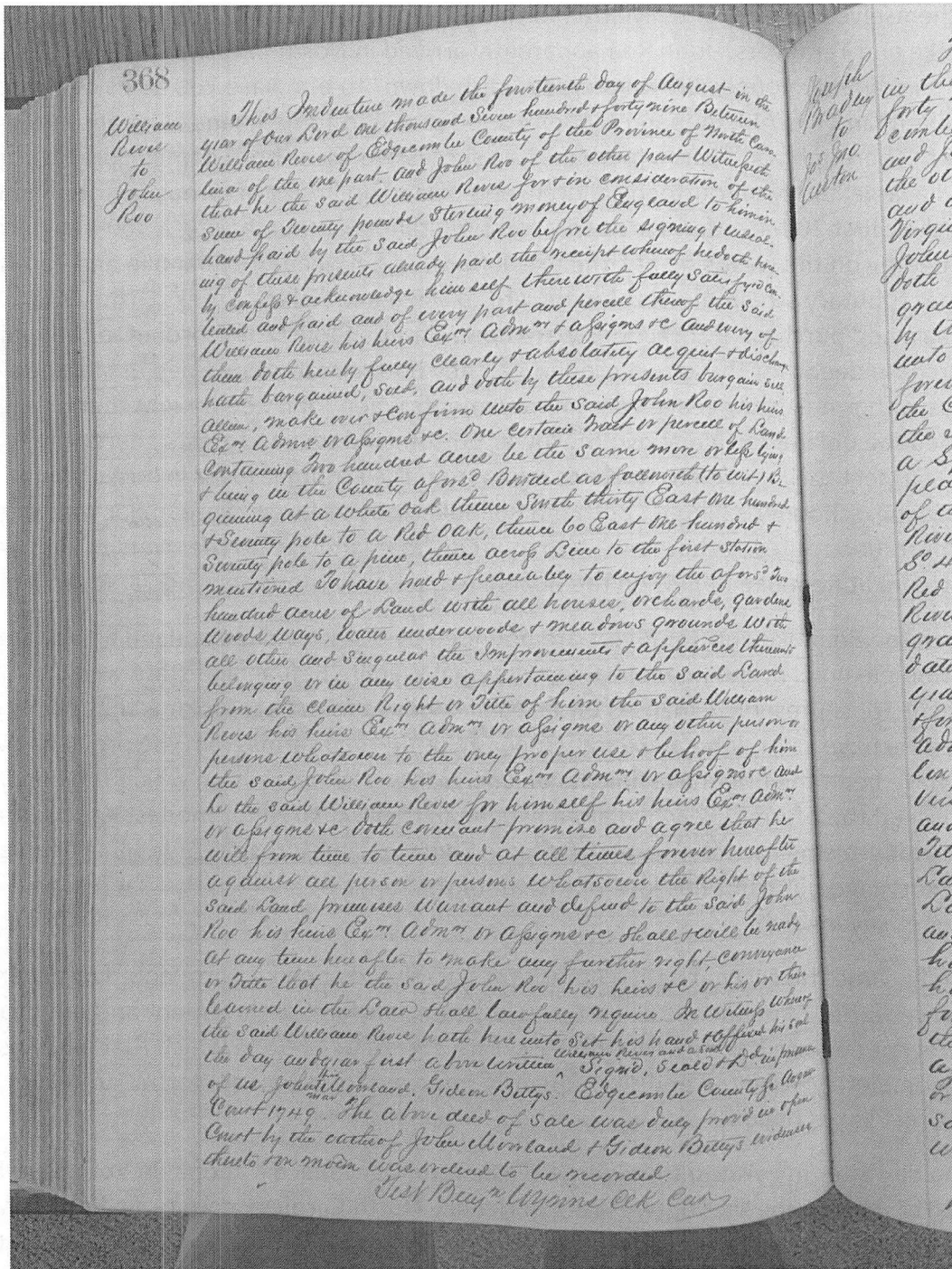
Both the Roanoke and Tar Rivers are bounded by expansive bottomland and swamp forests. Multiple units of the Roanoke River National Wildlife Refuge and state wildlife management areas preserve expanses of the same kinds of forest ecosystems that the Roes would likewise have seen. John and Sarah Roe purchased their farms from the previous owners, who may have been the original recipients of land grants. The uplands on which John and Sarah Roe established their farms likely had already been partially cleared for modest agricultural use (principally for growing corn and some tobacco). Those upland forests would have been a mix of oak, hickory, and pine, but this locale was out of the range of being in the "land of the longleaf pine" savannahs.

By this time the original native Americans had already been exterminated or eliminated – over two centuries of pandemic disease, subjugation, warfare, enslavement and removal—the most recent episode having been the Tuscarora War of 1711-15 in which that Iroquois tribe had been completely defeated and subsequently removed from coastal North Carolina to the northern Great Lakes region.

The day after my visit to the George Washington Birthplace National Historic Park in late summer 2017, I made the first of two visits to Halifax, North Carolina, county seat of Halifax County and location of Historic Halifax state historic site. I visited the county public library's history and genealogy section, and in the county's register of deeds archives I viewed the original deeds of transfer for John Roe's properties (dated 1749 and 1754). I returned to Halifax County in the spring of 2018 to locate the general vicinity of John Roe's farm on the west side of

Little Creek and returned to the Halifax library and register of deeds, where I took photo images of his deed records.

-- photographs of John Roe's 1749 and 1754 property deeds in Halifax County NC --



The within and of ear was acknowledged in open
 court in due form of law by the within named James
 one of his marriage partners by himself Edward King
 and joined by the each of which whereas an answer
 which and in matter was ordered to be registered
 That Doct^r Weyburn cler^t Cur

(902)

This Indenture made this nineteenth day
 of February in the year of our Lord one thousand
 seven hundred and fifty four between John Moore
 and Dorothy his wife of Edgewood County in
 the Province of North Carolina in the one part and
 John Moore of the County and Province aforesaid in
 the other part witnesseth that the said John Moore
 and Dorothy his wife for and in consideration of the
 sum of fifty pounds current money of Virginia to
 them in hand before the signing and delivery of this
 presents by the said John Moore well and lawfully
 lent and paid unto the said John Moore and
 Dorothy his wife do acknowledge the receipt and
 chief and end of part thereof to be received and discharge
 the said John Moore his heirs Executors Assigns and
 assigns and every of them from by these presents
 made granted bargained and sold and by these
 presents to grant bargain and sell to the said John
 Moore or that least a part of land situate in
 the South side of ^{the} Neavoke River in Edgewood
 County containing by estimation three hundred and
 to the said river in life (to wit) Beginning at
 a white oak in the West side of Peter's Creek
 the W. 190 pds to a hickory in John Sproun
 line then along his line S. 20 W. 18 pds
 to a poplar his corner then along his other line
 S. 200 pds to a pine his other corner then along
 his other line W. 80 pds to a hickory then S. 40 pds
 to a red oak then East 195 pds to a white oak
 on the East then the remainder of the Creek to
 the first Station which said land was granted
 to the said John Moore by Edward Moseley
 and Robert Patton Esqrs Agents Commissioners
 attorneys assigned for granting land in behalf of
 the Right Honble John Earl Granville by Act
 of great Council State the twentieth day of December
 in the twenty second year of our said late King
 the same party appear before the same

(903)

first had, To Have and to hold the said
 tract of land with their and every of their ap-
 partances in any wise belonging or appertaining to
 the said John Rowe his heirs and assigns forever
 To the only proper use and behoof of the said
 John Rowe his heirs and assigns forever, and
 the said John Morland and Dorothy his wife
 for their lives and heirs. Covenant and grant to and
 with said John Rowe his heirs and assigns that
 the afore^d said and premises are free and
 clear of all incumbrances, and that they have
 good Right ~~and~~ Lawfull power to sell and
 dispose of the same, and that the said
 Land and premises shall be and remain unto
 the said John Rowe his heirs and assigns
 as a free indefeasible Estate in fee simple
 and such an Estate in and to the premises
 to the said John Rowe his heirs and assigns
 shall and will warrant and firm defend
 by these presents. In witness whereof the said
 John Morland and Dorothy his wife have
 hereunto sett their hands and seals the day
 and year first within mentioned.

Signed sealed ~~and~~ delivered
 in presence of } John Morland (seal)
 John Marshall, Shunard Grimes } Dorothy ^{his} Morland (seal)
 Edgewood County Va. February 1754 } To the use of the said John Rowe deceased

The above deed of sale was acknowledged in
 open Court in due form of Law, and in witness
 whereof was ordered to be registered
 Just. Buf. Wynne cler. cur.

This Indenture made the twenty
 day of June

For 27 years John Roe and his wife Sarah (or possibly two wives, both named Sarah – Sarah Gudgins and then Sarah Johns – or vice versa?) farmed and raised fourteen children in what became Halifax County, North Carolina (that county was subdivided out of former Edgecombe County in Jan. 1759). Sarah died in about 1774 (during or soon after the birth of her last child) and was likely buried on their Little Creek farm in Halifax County. Entries for the names, births and deaths of fourteen children (born between 1747 to 1772) were entered into a family Bible that was retained and possessed by the family of the second daughter (Elizabeth Roe Coleman, wife of Robert Coleman) in Blair, Fairfield County, South Carolina. Their son Benjamin (Berryman) Roe, who was our direct ancestor, was the tenth of the fourteen children and was born November 10, 1766. He was likely named by his parents for family friends back in the Washington Parish of Westmoreland County, Virginia: Benjamin Berryman, Sr. and Jr. Benjamin Berryman Roe had six older brothers and two younger brothers; three older sisters and two younger sisters. Apparently at least eleven of his siblings survived into adulthood.

Birth dates of John and Sarah Roe’s children from the Roe-Coleman Family Bible

**FAMILY RECORD OF THE ROES
(in same Bible)**

"The Roes came to South Carolina from Halifax County, North Carolina."

David Roe was born October 18, 1747.

Elizabeth Roe (mother of David Roe Coleman) was born February 20, 1749.

John Roe, was born February 6, 1751.

William Roe, born April 20, 1754.

Andrew Roe, born April 26, 1756.

Solomon Roe, born August 6, 1759.

Francis Roe, born December 18, 1761

Mary Roe, born February 25, 1763.

Pattey Roe, born December 14, 1764.

Benjamin Roe, born November 10, 1766.

Salley Roe, born June 13, 1769.

Joseph Roe, born May 17, 1770.

Nancy Roe 5th daughter \ Twins, born October 3, 1772

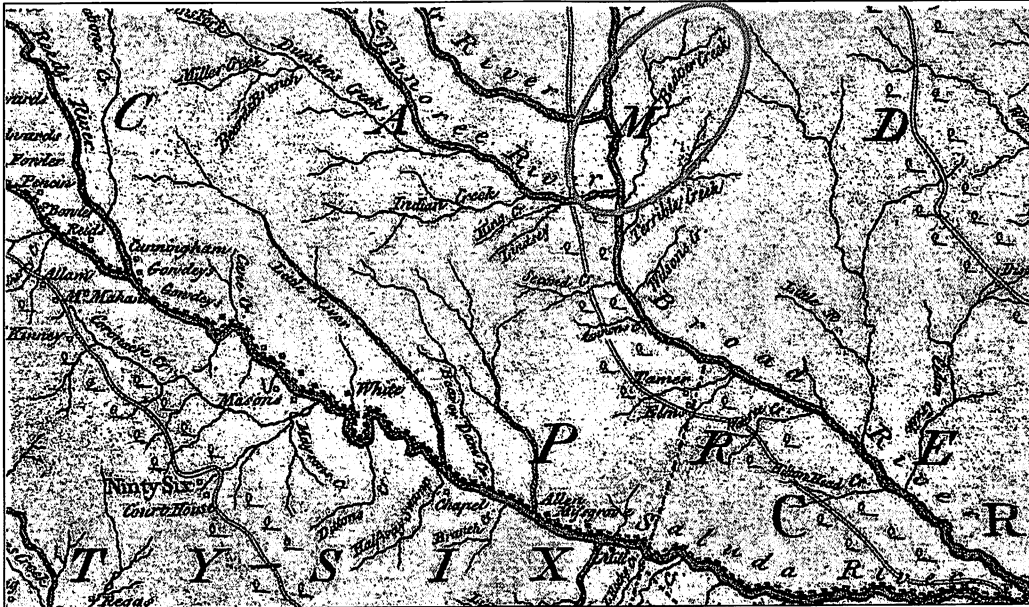
Hancil Roe, 9th son /

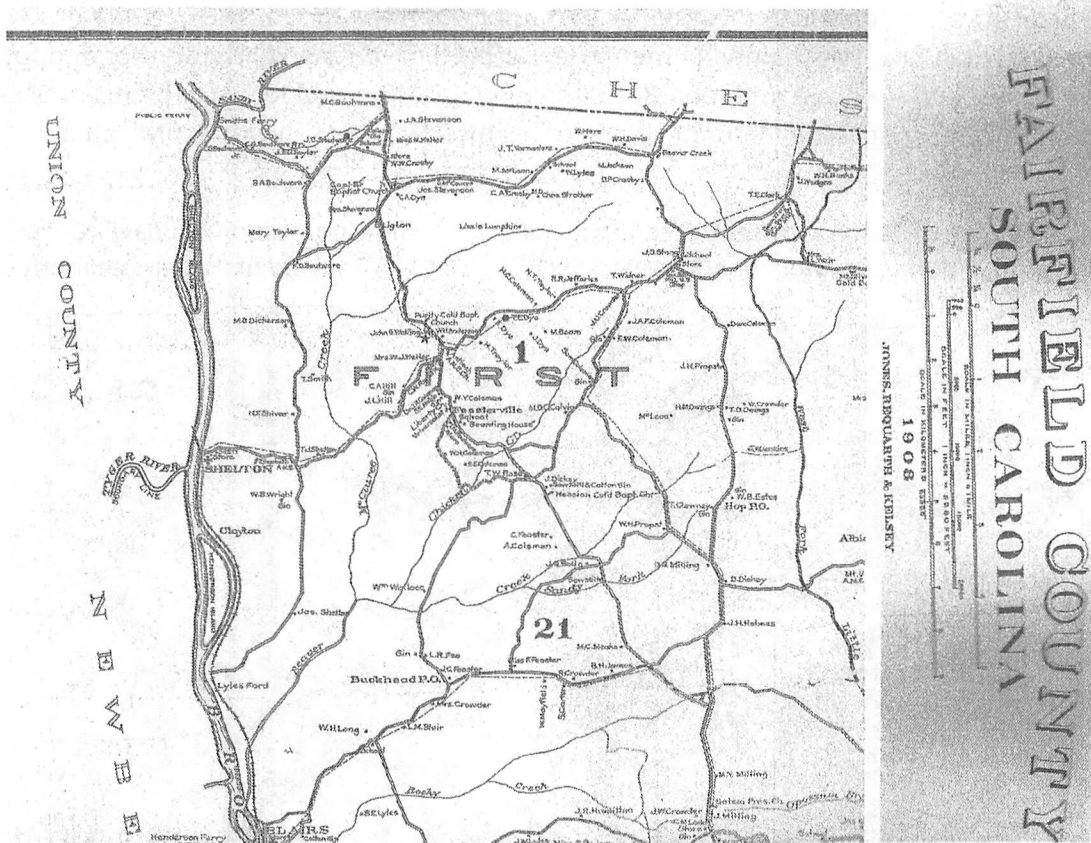
By the fall of 1776 – with the American Revolutionary War and rebellion actively underway and with colonists dividing themselves into sides of Loyalists, Rebels, or frightened neutrals – the Roes had decided to abandon their homes and farms in northeast North Carolina for uncertain prospects in the upstate region of South Carolina. The North Carolina Provincial assembly had selected the new county seat of Halifax in Halifax County (where John Roe’s farm was located) to meet and on April 12, 1776, where the Assembly passed Resolves directing their representatives to attend the first Continental Congress and declare Independence from the England Mother Country. Were the Roes being harassed by Loyalists to the British Crown? Or were their sentiments initially in favor of remaining loyal to the British Crown, or were they independently neutral and attempting to flee the portending violence of war. For whatever motivations, the Roes elected to escape and move away. John Roe (his wife having already died) sold his 300-acre farm on Little Creek to a George Morris on October 7, 1776 (Halifax Co. NC Register of Deeds, Book 13, Page 512). John Roe’s eldest daughter and her husband Robert Coleman, Jr., had already moved the previous year to South Carolina Camden District and John followed them with the rest of the family to resettled in a neighboring location on Beaver Creek near the Broad River. The widower John Roe moved with all eleven of his surviving children, ranging from two to over twenty years of age (some of the elder sons and daughters now married). With them they brought as many as eight slaves. They left their farmland and homes in Halifax County, North Carolina, and moved to the western frontier of upstate South Carolina. We’ll never know why. We can only hypothesize.

What must it have been like—and by what motivations and incentives-- to sell your land and residence and farm buildings and livestock, and move with a collection of young people and some slaves by foot, horseback, and simple wagons across something like 300 or more miles? (And by what route? I’m surmising they moved by primitive roads westward from Halifax County across the North Carolina piedmont, probably passing through Hillsborough, then down the old Indian and subsequently Colonial Trading Path route to Salisbury, on to Charlotte, and further southwest into the South Carolina Camden frontier district). Was there an added motivating factor of religion? Did they travel with others sharing similar religious faith? Had they already become members of the German Baptist/Church of the Brethren (“Dunkards” or “Dunkers”)... or did that occur after they had reached South Carolina? There was a population of practicing Dunkards living near their new South Carolina area of residence. And there are enticing clues that the historic Liberty Universalist Church located in the early 19th-century Feasterville community near Beaver Creek, actually may have been established as early as 1777 as a Church of Brethren/German Baptist chapel. Once the Roes reached the forests of the South Carolina frontier, they had to start over by clearing woodlands, planting subsistence crops, reestablishing livestock pasturage, and erecting simple dwellings and shelters – all the while with guerilla warfare threatening them by 1779. Somehow they survived. [We are not sure how long John’s oldest son, David (. 1747) lived as his name disappears early from historical records. His son John, Jr., died in South Carolina in 1780 during the war years reportedly from scarlet fever or smallpox.

My direct ancestor and great-great grandfather, John M. Roe (b. 1807), a son of Benjamin Berryman Roe, was named in memorial for both his diseased grandfather and for his uncle. We do not know what name John Roe's middle initial M stood for: maybe his mother's family name Miller (or possibly in honor of one of his mother's older brothers, Micah or Morris).

Portion of 1773 map of Camden District, South Carolina Colony, showing location of Beaver Creek, the Roe family location during Revolutionary War period (1776-1782) – 75 mi. sw of modern Charlotte, NC





1908 map showing the general locations of the Roe and Coleman families in modern Fairfield Co., SC

As noted above, John A. Roe's oldest daughter Elizabeth (b. 1749, likely in NC) and her husband Robert Coleman, Jr., had moved in 1775 (the year before the rest of the family moved from Halifax County, North Carolina, to the Camden District of upstate South Carolina – near Beaver Creek on the eastern side of the Broad River (which is about 75 miles southwest of Charlotte, NC, in what later became Fairfield and Chester counties). The Broad River is similar in size to both the Roanoke and Tar Rivers of North Carolina, and likewise is a big "brown" river carrying a large load of sediments, and likewise was a major artery for commerce and transportation. We can suppose the Colemans sent back encouragement for the rest of the Roe and Coleman families to follow them. But they were mistaken if they thought they were escaping from the impending Revolutionary War. Instead they had moved right into the heart of a vicious civil war pitting neighboring Loyalists versus Rebels, with nasty guerrilla warfare occurring all around their new residential location. John A. Roe's son-in-law Robert Coleman, in fact, became an officer (rank of colonel) with British Loyalist troops in South Carolina. Meanwhile, several of John Roe's sons enlisted and fought with South Carolina rebel militia forces. My brother has discovered a diary written in 1780 by a Tory Lt. Anthony Allaire of NY who joined British Col. Ferguson's militia in Carolinas, in which Allaire mentions stopping twice at the Coleman home in Mobley's settlement, where they were hosted by the Coleman's who were Loyalists. Once they

found Mrs. Coleman and her children living without food, clothes, or furniture that had been plundered by rebels.

Loyalist (or Tory) and Rebel (Whigs) fought frequent, brutal skirmishes and battles throughout this region. Lord Cornwallis's British army temporarily occupied the nearby county seat of Winnsboro. Later General Nathaniel Green's American rebel army also swept through the area. [See my accompanying general narrative for more details about the Revolutionary War in the upstate South Carolina region.]

Interestingly Elizabeth Roe Coleman must have insisted that all her male children carry the middle name of Roe, and that convention continued for multiple generations, even into the 20th century, with male children receiving the middle name of Roe, like a succession of David Roe Coleman's, while some female children were given Roe as their first name, like Roe Ellen Coleman.

My direct ancestor, Benjamin Berryman Roe had been born to John and Sarah Roe in 1766 (as the 10th of 14 children) and would have been only ten years old when the family moved on to South Carolina. Two of his older brothers, Andrew and Solomon, are known to have served in South Carolina Rebel militia units and military actions in the latter years of the Revolutionary War (in the 1779-80 time period). His oldest living brother, John Jr., died of scarlet fever or smallpox in 1780 (according to a notation in the Coleman-Roe Bible). Younger brother Benjamin would have been too young to have actively served in the ranks as a militia soldier, but he could likely have been a camp aide (like Andrew Jackson and other young adolescent boys) or may have been present in some of the military actions with his older brothers' units. It is conceivable that he may have become a militia soldier by the end of the war. There is a military service record for a Benjamin Rowe serving in the South Carolina Little River District Regiment, and present in the 1781 Stone Ferry engagement as part of General Nathaniel Greene's rebel army's siege of the British/Loyalist Ninety-Six fortification (but we don't know if this is one-in-same with our ancestor, or a different person). Records at the Siege of Ninety-Six National Park Historic Site list a Benjamin Roe as a rebel soldier engaged there.

We suppose that after the war concluded, with the rebels winning independence for the American colonies, Robert Coleman must have signed a loyalty oath pledging to be faithful to the new American government and, unlike many other Loyalists to the British Crown (Tories), he was permitted to keep his South Carolina property and residence. Many of his ancestors have remained in residence there in the same neighborhood ever since, and I found some three generations of David **Roe** Colemans buried well into the mid-20th century in the little Feaster-Coleman-Mobley country cemetery near Blair, SC. Robert's wife, Elizabeth Coleman Roe, is buried and memorialized in another nearby Coleman family cemetery.

[see photographs of the landscape near Beaver Creek and the Broad River in SC in my accompanying photo collection]

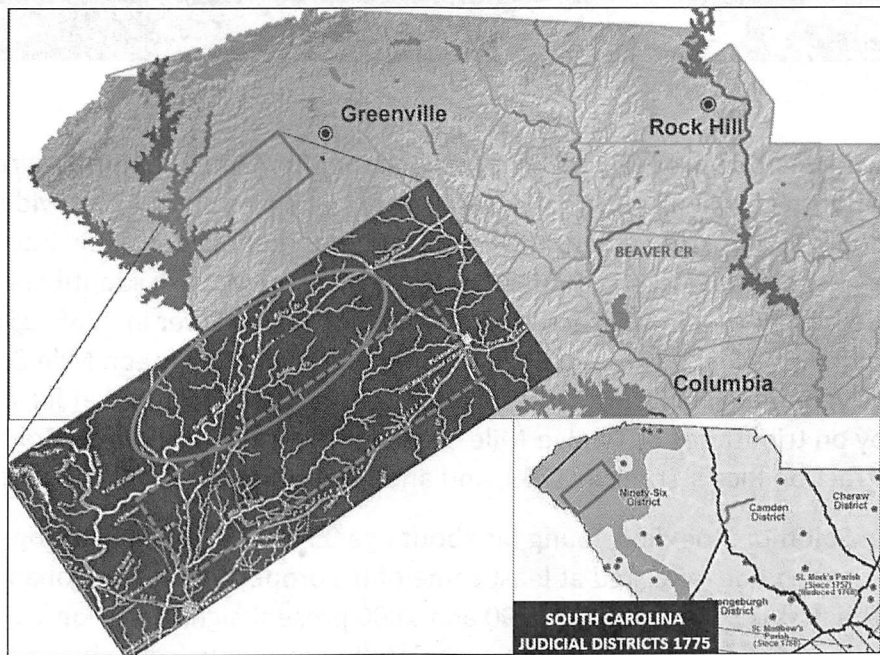
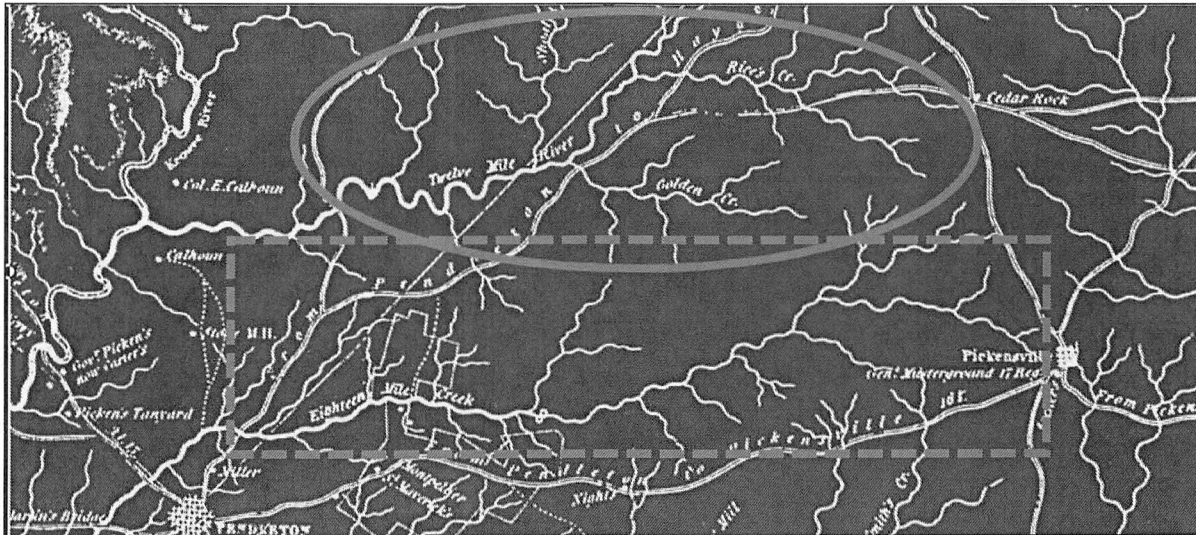
[see photographs of Coleman-Feaster-Mobley families cemeteries in accompanying collection]

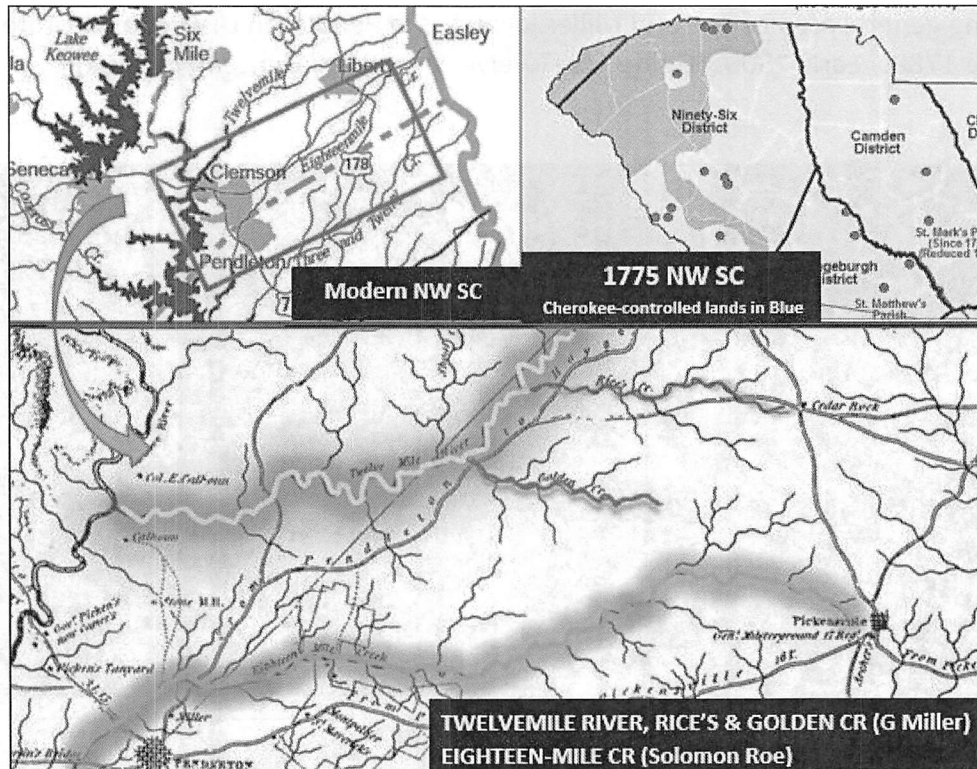
After the war ended with American independence established, Benjamin's brothers Andrew and Solomon were awarded land grants from the new state of South Carolina in

compensation for their military service. And apparently Benjamin likewise was awarded grants of land nearby. Those properties were located further west, in lands taken away from the Cherokee Indians, and in the Pendleton District of South Carolina (near more modern-day Clemson, SC). And so the Roe family again moved west. In talking by phone with a descendant of the Coleman family who remained as residents in the near vicinity of the farmsteads in Fairfield County, South Carolina, she commented to me, "We were told that after the Revolutionary War, the Roes moved West... somewhere." The Colemans would continue to give children the middle name of Roe for several generations well into the 20th century! There three generations of David Roe Colemans are buried in the Feaster - Coleman cemetery above Beaver Creek, near Blair, South Carolina ... and only a few miles from historical markers for Fort Wagner (1760s) and for the Liberty Universalist Church (est. 1777). In October, 2017, (on my way to be the speaker at the 20th anniversary celebration of the local area land trust) I spent a partial day exploring around the vicinity of the Roe's short- stop residency in the Beaver Creek area of the South Carolina Camden District (now Fairfield County), taking photos of the creek, the nearby Broad River, historic markers for the 1760s Fort Wagner and Liberty Universalist church, and the Feaster-Mobley- Coleman historic cemetery.

Whether or not the Roes by this time became associated with the Church of the Brethren (German Baptists or "Dunkards" or "Dunkers"), that Protestant religious sect was well-established in the vicinity of the Roes' new place of residence in that Camden District of South Carolina. We know that Benjamin B. Roe, at least, after moving westward to the South Carolina Pendleton District there married the daughter of a German family who belonged to that faith, and when Benjamin and Dinah Roe moved on to Kentucky in the early 1800s they united with other members of that Church of the Brethren sect.

Maps showing general area of Roe and Miller locations in Pendleton District of Upstate South Carolina, late 1780s- early 1800s (Golden Ck-Twelve Mile River; Eighteen Mile Ck):





Surviving historic property records indicate that Benjamin B. Roe acquired at least three properties in South Carolina's old Ninety-Six District (which was latter subdivided into several Districts, including Pendleton, and that was subsequently subdivided again into additional counties- incl. Pendleton, Pickens, Anderson). Surviving land records identify Benjamin or Berryman Roe having acquired 53 acres on a branch of Saluda River in 1785, 255 acres on a branch of Golden Creek in 1792, and 69.5 acres on a branch of Eighteen Mile Creek in 1803. Simultaneously, Benjamin's future father-in-law George Miller acquired at least three land grants nearby on tributaries of Twelve-Mile Creek (or River): 212 acres on Golden Creek in 1785, and a tract on Rice's Creek in 1789, and another on Golden Creek in 1792.

When Solomon Roe died young (at about age 35 in 1793-94), his younger brother Benjamin Berryman Roe inherited at least some of his property as well, probably including a few slaves. The first U.S. Censuses of 1790 and 1800 present significant confusion as a number of Roes were reported as being upstate South Carolina residents (some being our ancestors and their relations, others simply with shared surname, including at least two contemporaneous John Roes living in South Carolina – and several other John Roes living in North Carolina). My brother and I waded into this quagmire and decided the evidence is sufficient to confirm the Roe brothers were doing well as small-scale frontier farmers in South Carolina's Pendleton District vicinity. Likely their father John Sr. lived with his sons, who by then were heads of their own households.

Another area of mass confusion that my brother and I found is that many online ancestry collections of others have misinterpreted and confused the several John Roes who

were cousins and nephews of the Wroe lineage, as siblings consistently bestowed the same set of first names on their progeny. "Our" John Roe did not remain in Virginia to die in Richmond in the 1780s as other lay people have mistakenly presumed; no, that was a different John Roe, perhaps a cousin of our direct ancestor. Our ancestor John A. Roe had moved first from Virginia to North Carolina, and then moved on to South Carolina with his family, and died there in 1802 as an old man of over 80 years-old in the Pendleton District of upstate South Carolina, where he likely resided in his final years in the home of his son Benjamin Berryman Roe.

Benjamin Berryman Roe in 1794 (at age 28) married teenage Dinah Barbara Miller, youngest daughter of George and Maria Elizabetha (Koenig) Miller, who lived near Benjamin's land. Both George (1740-1812) and Mary Miller (1745-1813) were natives of the Rhine river valley area of Germany (actually from Hofen/Hoffen in the state of Alsace on the German/French border, which continually was switched back and forth from Germany and France possession, depending on the outcome of the most recent war). They angelized their surname to Miller from the previous German "Mueller" spelling, and her first name was altered from Maria to Mary. Their families had emigrated to eastern Pennsylvania (York County) in their youth (about 1751-55). George reportedly fought against the Cherokee Indians during the French and Indian war in western North and South Carolina (in the 1756-63 period) as a soldier with a German-speaking militia unit associated with the British Army. In 1764 George returned to York, Pennsylvania, and either married Maria there, or in the western piedmont region of North Carolina after traveling there together with her family down the Great Wagon Road. Quite likely they had known each other from their youths, as both their families had immigrated from the same Hofen/Hoffen German/Franco village). Internet ancestry data are conflict as to the place and date of marriage for George and Maria Miller: leaving us uncertain on whether they married before they departed York, PA; or as their Miller and Koenig families migrated through the western piedmont region of North Carolina. The Millers moved from York county in Pennsylvania, via a brief sojourn in the western piedmont of North Carolina (Rowan and/or Anson, or Montgomery counties, possibly as early as the late 1760s, but more likely in the 1770s. Their daughter Dinah was most likely born during the residency in North Carolina. After the conclusion of the American Revolution war, they took up former Cherokee Indian land to establish a farm on nearby Golden and Rice Creeks (both tributary streams to the larger Twelve-Mile Creek/River, above its confluence with the Keowee River). There are some hints that George Miller may have first visited this vicinity and been impressed by its opportunities while serving as a German immigrant and soldier in the British Army against the Cherokee Indians in the 1760s. He may have first taken "squatters rights" on the former Cherokee lands. His landownership was later legitimized after that war in at least three land grants to him on the Golden and Rice creek tributaries to Twelve-Mile River (in 1785, 1789, 1792) in reward for his military service in the wars against the Cherokee Indians.

Benjamin Berryman Roe (who alternated in use of his preferred first name) must have farmed. He shows up in a number of surviving court documents as witness to property transactions and on estate wills of others, as well as for doing temporary service as a deputy sheriff.

The first U.S. national census records were imprecise and incomplete. But we found some basic information and clues in searching for evidence of our ancestors in the censuses of 1790, 1800, and beyond. A John Roe (presumably our ancestor?) was recorded as a head of household in the 1790 US Census as residing in the Pendleton district of upstate South Carolina: with two “free white males” of 16 years or older of age (including himself), two white males of under 16 years of age, and five white females, and no slaves. John’s older sons by then were adults and heads of their own households. The 1790 U.S. census recorded for Benjamin Roe one white male child under 16 years old, three white females (including his wife), and no slaves. By the time of the national census of 1800, John Roe was no longer heading a household, and we presume he may have been residing in the household of his son Benjamin. By the national census of 1800 the household of Benjamin Berryman Roe (spelled Rowe in the census record) included his wife, three children (two boys and a girl), one “other” adult (possibly his father John?), and three slaves (these slaves may possibly have been the same three individuals identified in the 1790 census as the three slaves owned by his brother Solomon, who died a few years later, and conceivably they could have been some of the same individual slaves identified by first names in their father John Roe’s 1778 will).

We were surprised, but not shocked, to discover that **the Roes possessed some slaves** – as did many other small-scale farmers of that era. From the clues of wills, estate settlement records, and U.S. Census records, Roes possessed a few African slaves, who may have been mostly domestic labor for farm work or helping beleaguered wives maintain households with large broods of children. The will of William Wroe, our first known ancestor to have emigrated from England to Westmoreland County, Virginia, (prepared 1725 and executed in 1730) divided an unspecified number of slaves among his wife and children. Likewise, the will of William Wroe’s son Original Wroe (prepared 1772 and executed in 1774) conveyed his slaves to his third wife and her children. The will of John A. Roe was first recorded in 1778 (in the Camden District of South Carolina, as the civil war that was the Revolution raged around them), but his will was not exercised until his death in 1802 in the Pendleton District of South Carolina, after several of his sons named in his will had already died. John Roe’s will in 1778 called for distribution of eight individual Negro slaves (we interpret two women, one male, four girls and one boy), one to each of his eight older children (including “one Negro girl named Lucy” to Benjamin), and with the added provision that future progeny of the slave women would be awarded to John’s other younger children. However, the 1790 U.S. Census records for the John Roe and his sons in Pendleton county of South Carolina’s Ninety-Six District identify no slaves possessed by John or by any of his sons other than three slaves owned by his son Solomon. We wonder what happened to the other slaves who apparently accompanied the Roes in their move into South Carolina. Were they sold, escaped, died, or freed? After Solomon’s death (1793) his younger brother (our direct ancestor) Benjamin may have gained possession of Solomon’s three slaves, as the US Census for the year 1800 recorded “Berryman Ro(w)e” as owning three slaves. Assuming my presumptions are correct in identifying a record for Berryman Roe, misspelled as “Boriman Row” in the 1810 national census, when he and his family were migrating westward on through Kentucky (see fully account below), that census entry recorded him as possessing two slaves. But the Church of the Brethren disapproved of slavery. In the estate settlement documentation I discovered in the Cape Girardeau County, Missouri, in October 2018, I found

that the widow of Berryman Roe, Dinah annually hired out two slaves named Ned and Susana (known as "Lucky") for income through most of the 1820s, but sold those two slaves by public auction in 1829.

In November 2017, I spent one day exploring the area around Pendleton and Clemson, South Carolina. I found no more information (beyond what brother Bob had already located from web information) about the Roe's slight trace left in that area in their brief twenty years or so in the vicinity in the late 1780s to 1810 period. I spent a few hours in the small Pendleton historic library, but I found no evidence of Roe property locations on the few historic maps. My only contribution to our historic record was to take some photographs of streams on which the Roes once possessed land. I did surprisingly find the nearby small community of Liberty, South Carolina. While apparently all the Roes in our family lineage moved on west, at least some Millers seemingly remained in South Carolina. In my November, 2017, brief visit I discovered the Golden Creek Baptist Church west of Liberty, SC, and its cemetery contained graves of numerous Millers (but I could not read names or dates on the older grave markers). How interesting and coincidental (or not) that we discover "Liberty" communities or churches along the Roe's migration path from South Carolina to Illinois! The only Roes that remained in South Carolina appear to have been ancestors of other Roes who took up residence in the Palmetto State about simultaneously with "our" Roes, particularly in the vicinity of Greenville, SC, where there on the Furman University Campus is a Roe Fine Arts Building.

The period in the decades of the late 1700s and early 1800s were particularly difficult economic times in the Carolinas. Transportation was primitive and there was little means to carry produce any distances for commercial sale. Agriculture was principally subsistence farming, except for the very wealthy who "employed" large numbers of slave labor. Without soil fertilizer and nutrients, with only primitive agricultural technologies and techniques, soil was quickly exhausted or its fertility impoverished after only a few plantings of corn or tobacco crops. The land and people quickly wore out. Families were only able to produce subsistence livelihoods for their own families, with some corn, free-range livestock, and a little cash-crop tobacco. The beckoning beacon was the allure of more fertile soils and economic opportunity by moving further west. That too drew the Roes on west, apparently moving together with other family friends including the Millers. They left behind the grave of family patriarch John A. Roe, who had died in 1802, likely buried beneath a South Carolina tree or under a temporarily - placed field stone, prior to the existence of established cemeteries. But a few years later his namesake grandson, John M. Roe was born in South Carolina in 1807. Too bad they could not know each other. This next John would by 1810 move westward as a child with his parents and family friends to reunite with his maternal grandparents and with other Brethren/Dunkard families who were already settled on Drakes Creek in Warren County, west-central Kentucky.

Would it not be fascinating to hear John A. Roe's story or read his biography?! What a tale that would have been. But he was illiterate (his property transfers were signed by his X mark). He is long gone, his story untold, and he is practically forgotten. He was a simple frontier settler and farmer, and father of a large family. We'd like to think of him as a stately and respected, elder family patriarch. His life journey took him from his youth in the land of Virginia gentry neighbors on the lower Potomac River, to the burgeoning area of settlement in

the coastal plain region of the North Carolina colony where he established a substantial farm and family, but then fled with his large family to the central piedmont region of South Carolina as the revolutionary war descended, and finally lived his senior years with his adult children and their children in the frontier upstate part of South Carolina. He died before his children moved their families on westward.

Note: Brother Bob and I alert you that if you too embark on genealogical research about the “early” Roe family in America you will encounter much confusion and false trails. The Roes were no different from other families in repeating the same first names over multiple generations, with siblings bestowing the same sets of first names as their own siblings and uncles on their own children. If there had been a big family reunion gathering, there would have been great confusion with the same first names repeated among multiple cousins and their uncles. Compounded by few surviving records, and the multitude of errors committed by amateur students of genealogy, we have a maze of confusion. Roe is not a common name. But we found numerous John Roes living simultaneously in North and South Carolina. Also a common error is the assumption that “our” John Roe, who died in the Pendleton District of upstate South Carolina in 1802, was the same John Roe who died in 1802 in Richmond, Virginia (and yet another John Roe recorded as dying in Richmond, VA 1794). WRONG!: that other John Roe was not our ancestor. Possibly related – perhaps a cousin with the same name – but not the same person. Yet, this is an example of mistakes and incorrect assumptions repeated and recorded in the various online genealogic records (which do NOT allow mistakes to be corrected by anyone other than the original person who made the entry, and that author may now be long gone). Another frustrating error that we found often repeated was the incorrect claim that all of John and Sarah Roe’s children were born in South Carolina: also WRONG. None of “our” John and Sarah Roe’s children were born in South Carolina (or in Virginia). We conclusively determined that all fourteen were born in Halifax County, North Carolina. When US Censuses began in the later 19th century to record the first names of family members (not just head of household), that made a world of difference and helped move the great confusion that preceded. We are particularly thankful that the son of John A. Roe who was our direct ancestor was given the distinctive name of Benjamin Berryman Roe. But even with that unusual middle name, we found multiple different spellings and permutations in the few existing historical documents – some with his full name, some only identified as Benjamin Roe (one of several concurrently living), some only as Berryman Roe, others by a variety of other spellings of Berryman, and quite often with Roe spelled Rowe (including in the 1800 Census records for the Roes living in the Pendleton District, South Carolina). Benjamin Roe (misspelled by a census taker as “Boriman Row”) appeared in the 1810 national census as a resident of Warren County, Kentucky, with his wife and their children and two slaves. But Benjamin Roe died in 1818, before the 1820 federal census. We’ve not located records of his widow Dinah and her children in the 1820 federal census when they were residing in Cape Girardeau County, Missouri. But Dinah Roe and her son Berryman Jr. were recorded there in the 1830 national census.

Passing on through Kentucky- southern Illinois and Missouri-and by 1830s residing in Adams County, west-central Illinois: ... [story continues]