

Three Cousins in Their 80s Find Their Roots in Hopewell, Virginia

Following their genealogical trail, three ladies in their 80s have found their roots in Hopewell, Virginia. They are descendants of Captain Francis Epps.

HOPEWELL, VA, USA, April 29, 2022 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Following their genealogical trail, three ladies in their 80s have found their roots in Hopewell, Virginia. Barbara Woodard, 84, her sister Betty Wolfe, 85, both of Knoxville, Tennessee, and their cousin Nancy Maloney, 87, of Dothan, Alabama, are descendants of Captain Francis Epps, who received a land grant of 1700 acres in what is now Hopewell, Virginia, from King Charles I of England in 1635.



Barbara Woodard, Betty Wolfe and Nancy Maloney with the painting of Appomattox Manor, which they purchased during their visit to Hopewell, Virginia.

The Epps ladies returned to see their family's lands 492 years after Francis Epps first settled here in 1637 – their first time to see the area.

“

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Barbara Woodard

“We wanted to see the land,” said Ms. Woodard. They visited the Epps family home, Appomattox Manor, which was built in 1763 and which remained in the Epps family until 1979.

“I felt I was living a part of history, said Ms. Woodard. “Our family had a big influence on the history of that area. I love history. I felt honored to be part of the Epps family.” She went on to explain that while there had been several different spellings of Epps over the years, her family

spelled their name as Epps

Appomattox Manor is now owned by the [National Park Service](#). At the time it was sold, it was the longest holding (345 years) in America by one family. That honor now belongs to Shirley Plantation in Charles City County, Virginia.

ABOUT THE EPPS FAMILY

According to Jeanie Langford, local historian at the Appomattox Regional Library, historical records show Captain Francis Eppes was in Virginia by 1625. He may have been here even earlier. Captain Eppes was in command of the local company in the war on the Appomattuck and Weyanoke tribes. He would have seen his future home many times. He returned to England and was granted his land patent by King Charles I in 1635. He returned to Virginia in 1637 with his family on the ship named the "Hopewell," from which the city derives his name. He called his land on the south side of the river Hopewell Farm and on the north side Eppes Island.



Appomattox Manor today

In 1839 Dr. Richard Eppes donated the land for the construction of St. John's Episcopal Church on Cedar Lane in Hopewell. In 1925 the Eppes donated a beautiful organ to St. Johns. It is still there.

Appomattox Manor was shelled by Benedict Arnold during the Revolutionary War. Some of Cornwallis' officers occupied it before the march to Yorktown. General Ulysses S. Grant maintained his headquarters on the property during the siege of Petersburg in 1864-1865.

In 1907, Jane Griffith Keys wrote a book about "The Epps Lineage and Arms" with Charles Fugate Epps, grandfather of the current Epps ladies. An excerpt from the book was published in Baltimore Sun on June 3, 1906. In that book Ms. Keys says:

"Few families of America have the distinction of having lived upon their home land for 270 years. In fact, in my personal knowledge, I know of but one family, the Epps family of Virginia."

By 1939 eight generations of Eppes had lived on the land

Between 1991 and 1999 seven editions of "[Ancestors and descendants of Francis Epes of Virginia](#)" by John Frederick were published and held held by 57 WorldCat (the World's largest library catalog) libraries worldwide.

ABOUT HOPEWELL, VIRGINIA

Hopewell is a quaint city of 23,000 about 20 miles south of Virginia's capital at Richmond. Located at the confluence of the James and Appomattox Rivers, Hopewell's historic section of City Point was one of North America's oldest English-speaking communities. In the 18th century, Hopewell became a significant port city and in World War I it became a boomtown with the production of gun cotton in the local DuPont plant. During the war, the city's population rose from 200 residents to more than 30,000. The DuPont plant was closed after the war and the city's population fell. In 1915 a fire destroyed 300 buildings in Hopewell, but the city quickly rebuilt. The city is now in the middle of a renaissance. There are new businesses, new restaurants and new and exciting projects.

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