

DENNIS CORNWELL

(ca. 1655-ca. 1735)

Dennis Cornwell was born circa 1655 and died circa 1735.

He married Ann Dunkin, daughter of Peter Dunkin. Peter Dunkin's will, proved in 1676, mentions that one of his daughters, Ann, married Dennis Cornhill. Thus, Dennis' approximate birth date is calculated ca. 1655.

Of historical interest, and to demonstrate that the Cornwell/Cornwall name existed in England in the 1500's, the *Newlyn Parish Marriage Records* of Cornwall County, England, contains these entries:

Oct 10, 1559 Cornelyus Irish md Margaret Cornwell

Jan 25, 1562 Denys Cornwall md Nora Irish

May 16, 1568 Denis Cornwell md Jane Irish

It might be worthwhile for a research focus to be on the name Dennis Cornwell (various spellings of both names) in Newlyn Parish, to see if this family can be linked to the Dennis outlined in this biography.

The following is an itemization of court records of a Dennis Cornwell who was in Virginia subsequent to 1692. The 1701 "Connell" record is included from nearby Maryland as a possible link:

On May 26, 1692, in Westmoreland County, Virginia, Dennis Cornhill vs. Thomas Lampkin, case dismissed.

In 1693, Dennis Cornhill of Westmoreland County was involved in a suit which was dismissed.

On Apr 20, 1694, the book *Cavaliers and Pioneers* (page 389) cites Patent Book Number 8: "Richard Taylor 293 acres Nansemond County, Va on head br of Kingsale Sw: adj Robert Brewer and John Gatling: P 344. Imp. of six persons: Nicholas Rochester, Thomas Dewrent, Dennis Cornell, Arthur King, Rebecka Lawfull, Jane Lawfull." In the seventeenth century it was policy for the Crown to grant fifty acres for each adult person transported from England to Virginia who would sign an agreement in that colony for a permanent home. The grant was made to the transporter, typically two years after arrival in Virginia. The names of those transported was included in the record of the land grant.

In 1694, Dennis Cornhill of Westmoreland County was involved in a suit against William Read, which was dismissed.

On May 30, 1694, George Harrison, Dennis Cornhill, and Thomas Kirtley acknowledge indentures of lease and release of lands sold by them and their wives to William Ramy. Also Eliza. Harrison & Rebecca Kirtley, wives of George & Thomas, in

their persons, and Ann Cornhill wife of Dennis, by Mr. Jno. Minor, her attorney acknowledged the same together with their relinquishment of dower. (*Court Order Book*, page 88)

On Feb 27, 1695, May 29, 1695, and Mar 25, 1696, Dennis Cornhill was on jury duty in Westmoreland County. (*Order Book 1690-1698*, page 42)

On Mar 23, 1696, Dennis Cornhill ordered Hartley to pay him 240 lb. of tobacco in Westmoreland County.

In 1697, in *Cornhill vs. Orchard*, “Dennis Cornhill caused James Orchard to be arrested to this court to answer him of a pleas on the case and for that had failed to prosecute the same upon motion of his Dost? A nonsuit is granted him and I had Ordered the sd Dennis Cornhill doe pay the sd James Orchard fifty pounds of Tobaccoe for his unjust molestation together with his Coste in ? behalf and that hee have in Execution thereon.” (*Westmoreland Order Book*, May 30, 1694)

Later, in that same *Order Book*, page 198, in *Cornhill vs. Hershey*, “Dennis Cornhill being summoned as above and having made oath as above Ordered the sd Hershey doe pay him the sume of two hundred & forty pounds of Tobo. as above att. Exo.”

On Feb 16, 1697, according to *Virginia Colonial Abstracts, Series 2, Volume 1*, page 803, Northumberland County, on motion of Henry Dawson, probate to him the last Will N. C. Lucy Mallard, proved by Dennis Cornwell and Susanna West. (*Northumberland County, Virginia*, page 42)

In 1698, according to the 1690-1698 Westmoreland County Order Book, Dennis Cornwell also Elizabeth Dunkin, Ann Dunkin Cornwell and Rebecca Dunkin Kirtley.

In Jan, 1701, Petition to Dennis Connell for and on the behalfe of his sister, Elinor Bryan, Charles County, Maryland, to permit Elinor Bryan to sell one of the four tracts of her land.

On Aug 25, 1703, according to the *Wills and Deeds Book 3*, page 176, 2n amount was due Dennis Cornhill from the estate of William Clark.

On Sep 27, 1704, according to the *Wills and Deeds Book 3*, pages 269-271, Westmoreland County, Copely Parish, Dennis Cornhill witnessed a will of Wm Shores.

On Nov 16, 1704, according to *Virginia No. Neck Land Grants*, Vol 1, page 31, “Thomas Seruton died seized of 119A in Westmoreland Co. part of Tract sold by Randolph Kirk to Peter Dunkin. Dunkin by Will gave to his two daus. who with their husbands, George Harrison & Dennis Cornhill [wife is Anne Dunkin] sold to Seruton. Grant to Edward Portor of Westmoreland Co. Endorsement by Mr. James Westcomb Clk of said Co. In forrest on Nominy, adj. Charles Dunkin, John Dunkin, Beals’s line, Phillip White.” A search of the property history shows that it was located between Potowmack

River and Rappahanock River and was originally patented in 1669 but not "seated," or settled.

In *Deeds and Grants from Northern Neck, Virginia, Book 4*, (1710-1712), and in *Patents and Land Grants, Stafford County, Virginia*: Nov 5, 1711, the following was recorded: "The Right Honorable Catherine, Lady Fairfax, Duchess Dowager of Cameron in Scotland, the only daughter and heir of Thomas, Late Lord and Margaret, Late Lady Culpepper, Dec'd, and sole and only propriet. of ye Northern Neck of Va. to all to whom this present writing shall come, send greeting in our Lord God Everlasting:

"Whereas **Dennis Cornwall** of Stafford County upon his suggestion of a certain Quantity of Land belonging to me in ye County which is not yet granted did on ye 9th day of Augt. last obtain a Warrt from my office for laying out ye same and having returned a survey thereof under the hand of Thomas Hooper, Surveyor, Know ye therefore yt I, for and in consideration of ye compensation to be paid and ye Annual Rent thereafter reserved have granted, made over and confirm unto ye sd **Dennis Cornwall** two hundred and fifty acres of land situate lying and being on ye head branches of Hooes Creek in ye County aforesaid and bounded according to ye said survey as followeth -- viz.

"Beginning at a marked white oak standing in a small branch by or in ye line of ye land of John Wallace and extending thence up the Small branch along or near ye line of John Simpson south seventy degrees east one hundred poles to a black oak saplan thence north fourty degrees east 116 poles crossing ye Main Run of y't sd Hooes Creek to a small hiccory standing on ye main branch north 53 degrees--west 20 poles to a red oak thence south 71 degrees west 316 poles to a white oak thence south 30 degrees east 156 poles to ye beginning.

"Together with all rights, members and appurtencances thereunto belonging Royall mines excepted and ye full third part of Lead, Copper, Tin, Coals, and Iron Mines ye shall be found thereon to have and to hold the sd. 250 acres of land together with all rights and proffitts and benefits to ye same belonging or in any wise appertaining except before excepted to him ye sd Dennis Cornwall his heirs and assigns forever.

"Te sd **Dennis Cornwall** his heirs assigns therefore yielding and paying to me my heirs and assigns, or to ye certain attorney or attorneys of me ye sd proprietors of to ye certain attorney or attorneys of my heirs and assigns Proprietors of ye sd Northern Neck, yearly and every year on ye Heart of Saint Michael ye Archangel ye rent of one shilling sterling money for every Fifty acres of land hereby granted--Provided that if ye sd **Dennis Cornwall** his heirs and assigns shall not pay yt before Reserved Annually Rent to ye same or any part thereof shall be behind or unpaid by ye space of two whole years after ye same shall become due if lawfully demanded. Then it shall and may be lawful for me, my heirs and assigns, certain attorney or agents into ye above granted premises to reenter and hold ye same so as if this grant had never passed.

"Given at my office in Lancaster County, Within my Proprietary under seal Witness my Agent and Attorney authorized then ye fifth day of Nov. in the tenth year of ye reign

of our Sovereign Lady Anne of Great Britain, France and Ireland, Queen, Defender of the Faith, etc. Anno Dom 1711

"Dennis Cornwall, his deed 250 Acres of Land in Stafford County"

This same property which "was granted by the proprietor of the Northern Neck of Virginia unto Denis Cornwell by deed bearing date the fifth day of November in the year MDCCXI [1711] and by the said Cornwell was sold to William Hall by deed bearing date the XIIIth [13th] of December MCDDXIV [1714] and by said Hall conveyed to the aforesaid William Ficklin by deeds of lease and release bearing the 12th day of march MCDDXXI [1721] as by the records of Stafford County Court may more fully appear. In witness whereof the said William Ficklin and Sarah his wife have set their hands and seals." (Deed Book E, pages 161-166, Prince William County, VA)

On the next day, Nov 6, 1711, Dennis purchased 49 more acres, located on the south side of Neabeco Run "lying near and adjoining to ye land of him, ye sd **Cornwall**, in ye County of Stafford, aforesaid." (*Deed Book 4, 1711, page 57*)

On Nov 20, 1711: "This Indenture made this Twentieth day of November in the yeare of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and eleven Between **Dennis Cornhill** late of the County of Westmoreland, but now of the County of Stafford in the Colony of Virginia of the one part, and John Cralley of the County of Northumberland of the other part, Witnesseth that the said **Dennis Cornhill** for & in consideration of five shillings of lawfull money of Great Britain to him in hand paid before the sealing and delivery thereof, the receipt whereof he the said **Dennis Cornhill** doth hereby acknowledge and thereof and every part thereof doth acquitt & discharge the said John Cralle his executors and administras., by these presents doth grant, bargaine, and sell unto the sd. John Cralle his exrs. & assignes all that one hundred ninety seven acres of land scituate lying and being in Yeocomocoe Forrest in the Parish of Cople & County of Westmoreld being bounded as followeth:

"Beginning at Hicory corner tree to this land and the land of George Harrison and thence extending SouthWest one hundred & sixty poles thence South East one hundred ninety seven poles to a white oake standing by the marshy swamp thence along the mianders of the said swamp one hundred thirty six poles thence north thirty five & a halfe degrees West two hundred twenty eight poles to the first mentioned corner tree and the reversion & reversions remainder and remaindes thereof and of every part & parcel thereof together with all rents & services reserved upon all or any Lease or Leases of the Prmises or any part or parcell thereof.

"To Have and to hold the aforesaid one hundred ninety seven acres of land with all & singular its rights members and appurtenances herein mentioned and intended to be hereby granted be(?) gained and sold unto the said John Cralle his executrs & adms. and assignes from the day of the date thereof untill the full and end terms of six months from thence next coming shouts be fully compleat and ended to the end of that by vertue thereof and of the statute for transferring uses into possession the said John Cralle may be

in the actual possession of the premises and be enabled to take and accept of a grant and Release of the same to him the sd. John Cralle his heires and assignes for ever.

“In Witness whereof the parties to these presents have interchangeably sett their hands & seales the day & yeare first above written-

“Sealed & delivered in the presence of G. Eskridge, Henry Netherton, Patrick Spence.
Dennis Cornhill (seal)

“Westmr. Co. At a Court held for the said County the 26th day of March 1712. -- Dan. ll McCarty Gentt: by vertue of a (?) from **Dennis Cornhill** (duly proved) acknowledges the above Instrument to be the proper act and Deed of **Dennis Cornhill** (the same being likewise proved by the oaths of the evidences thereto) to ensure to the uses therein mentioned which was ordered to be recorded. Test Tho..Sorrell D. fford. Pr. Eunon Cluum Recordat. Sexto sie Apriles 1712.

“*Cornhill's Release to Cralley.* This Indenture made this twenty first day of November in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred & eleven Between **Dennis Cornhill**. . .” (and it continues the same as the previous entry). . . Now this indenture Wittnesseth that the said **Dennis Cornhill** for & in consideration of the sum of sixty pounds, Stirl. and for divers other good causes & considerations him thereunto movinge Hath granted release and confirmed and doth by these presents grant release and confirme unto the aforesaid John Cralle his heires and assignes all the aforesd. one hundred ninety & seven acres of land with all its rights members and appurtenances and every part and parcell thereof and all the estate right title interest claime & demand whatsoever of him the said **Dennis Cornhill** of in & to the premises and every or any part or parcell thereof. (etc.)

“*Cornhill's Sre: Attry. to McCarty for ackn.o:* Know all men by these presents that I Dennis Cornhill of the County of Stafford have made ordained constitutes & appointed Darrll. McCarty my true & lawfull attry. for me and in my name to acknowledge in the County Court of Westmoreland certaine deeds of lease & release the one beareing date before and othe other with these presents whereof I have conveyed to John Cralle Gentl. of the County of Northumberld. one hundre ninety seven acres of land scituate in the Parish of Cople and aforesaid County of Westmorld.” (etc.) Sealed & delivered in the pr.sence of George Eskridge, Henry Netherton, Patrick Spence. **Dennis Cornhill** (seal).

“WestmrCo. At a Court hetofore the said County the 25th day of March 1712. The above letter of attry. was duely proved by the oaths of all the witnesses thereto and then admitted to record and was recorded the sixth day of Aprill 1712. Pr. Tho. Sorrell” (*Wills and Deeds, Westmoreland County, Virginia, Book 5, pages 21-22*)

On Sep 8, 1723, according to the *Stafford County Deed Book 1722-1729*, pages 39-40, **Peter Cornwell** and his wife Lucesse sold 30 acres in Stafford County to William Camp (Champ) for 1200 pounds of tobacco. This land was originally owned by James Grigg, who sold it to **Dennis Cornwell**. The land was described as lying on the South side of

the Thos. Cook branch, joining the back line of property owned by Major Taylor.

The following is taken from an indenture made May 12-21, 1735, between **Peter** and Charles Cornwall of the Parish of Hambleton in the County of Prince William, Planters of the one part, and John Tayloe of the Parish of Lunenburgh in the County of Richmond, Esquire of the other part:

“. . . all that piece or parcel of land that remains to them unsold or otherwise disposed of Containing by estimation one hundred Acres more or less, being part of the two hundred Acres of Land bought by **Dennis Cornwall, the father of the said Peter** and Charles of James Gregg to whome it was given and granted by his Brother Thomas Gregg by Deed of guise bearing date the 12th day of June Anno Dom 1699

"Bounded by the line of Corbins 4 M acre patent and the line of the land that Abraham and Wm. Harris escheated for Ann, dau. of William Harwood and on the main Run and Branch of Neabeco Creek.

"Signed at the Court of Prince William County the 21st day of May 1735"

Both Peter (P.C.) and Charles (C. C.) signed. Witnesses were James McDonnell and Thomas Stribling. Charles Harris and Charles Taylor also signed. (*Wills and Deeds, Prince William County, Virginia, Book B, 1732-1735, page 438*)

We know that Dennis Cornwell and Ann Dunkin had two children, Peter and Charles. This Peter and Charles may be the following individuals:

- * i **Peter**, b. ca. 1695, m. 1st, Lucress -- by 1722; 2nd, Ann -- by 1732; 3rd, Sarah Ann Bowlin by 1750, d. 1776
- ii Charles, b. ca. 1695, m. 1st, Barbara -- by 1735; 2nd perhaps to Lydia -- by 1760, d. ca. 1781

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