

## Nicolas Martiau

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No Picture Available

Born: 1591 Yorkshire, England

Married: Jane Berkeley

Died: 1659 Yorktown, Virginia

Parents: Unknown

Nicholas Martiau, a French Protestant who was naturalized in England, came to Virginia in 1620 on the Francis Bonaventure. After the 1622 Indian attack, Captain Martiau was among those who visited the Falling Creek ironworks in Henrico. He apparently lived in Jamestown for a while, for on June 24, 1623, he testified that while he was on sentry duty at the fort, he did not see anyone break into cape merchant Abraham Peirse's storehouse. On February 16, 1624, Martiau was living in Elizabeth City in Captain William Tucker's household and represented that area in the colony's assembly. As a burgess he was among those who signed the assembly's rebuttal of the claims the Virginia Company made about living conditions in the colony between 1607 and 1619. On March 7, 1624, Martiau testified in court about Edward Giften's treating the sick at Falling Creek and Weyanoke. In early 1625, Martiau's residence was Elizabeth City, where he and two other men headed a household. He was then age 33. On January 16, 1625, Martiau received an apology from John Downman, a man he himself had slandered. In May 1625, he got into a heated discussion with Mr Mayhew at Kecoughtan and almost came to blows. At issue was the superiority of the kings of England and France. When the matter was aired in court, he took the oath of supremacy. Martiau was among the first to settle in Chiskiack, and in 1640 he obtained a patent for 1,300 acres that included the 600 acres to which he was entitled for seating himself, his wife Jamne, his son Nicholas, daughter Elizabeth and several others on his property. His property became known as York Plantation. Nicholas Martiau's first wife, whose identity is unknown, was the mother of his daughter, Elizabeth, who was born in 1625. Sometime prior to July 5, 1627, he married his second wife, Jane, the widow of Lieutenant Edward Barkeley of Hog Island. Later, he married a third time, wedding Captain Robert Felgate's widow, Isabella. Nicholas Martiau served as a burgess for Ciskiack and the Isle of Kent (in what became Maryland) in 1632 and 1633. He died in 1657.



The Martiau marker is located in front of Gin Tail Antiques on Ballard Street in Historic Yorktown.

“Site of the Home of NICOLAS MARTIAUT he adventurous Huguenot who was born in France 1591came to Virginia 1620and died at Yorktown 1657He was a captain in the Indian uprising a member of the House of Burgesses Justice of the County of YorkIn 1635 a leader in the thrusting out of Governor Harvey which was the first opposition to the British colonial policy the patentee for Yorktown and through the marriage of his daughter Elizabethto Colonel George Reade he became the earliest American ancestor of both General George Washington and Governor Thomas Nelson “

*Marked by the Huguenot Society of Pennsylvania  
in cooperation with the National Federation  
of the Huguenot Societies and the Yorktown  
Sesqui-Centennial Commission*

1981

1600s

In 1620, Captain Nicholas Martiau, was sent by King James I to build forts in Virginia, specifically at York, and to complete the great log palisade between College and Queen Creeks.

York's fort was initially built just a short distance down river from the present Yorktown, and a small settlement developed there because of the fort's guarantee of safety. This village also became a receiving port and mercantile center for the growing population. The site is now part of the United States Coast Guard Reserve Training Center .

Martiau's early settlement and bringing of other settlers had qualified him to receive several grants of land, one of which is the present location of Yorktown. Sadly, Martiau did not live to see the town develop on his personal landholdings. He died in 1657, but his grandson sold 50 acres of the land for the establishment of "York Town" in 1691. The town's creation established Yorktown as the principal location for securing tobacco, goods, wares and other merchandise. The port, wharves, warehouses and other appropriate buildings for the conduct of commerce were situated at the riverfront.

Surprisingly, the town's original 50 acres did not include the land immediately adjacent to the river--land that today features a park, several restaurants, a motel, beaches, a museum, and a few residences. That land became valuable as the town developed and in 1738 was purchased and added to the town. This parcel was overseen by the Yorktown Trustees, a board created in 1738 which still administers this land's affairs today.



Grace Episcopal Church, Virginia

## Will of Captain Nicolas Martiau (1591-1657)

York Co, VA Will Book 1, pp 337 - 339

### [Print Original Will](#)

(In the name of God Amen. I Nicholas Martiau, of the County and Parrish of York gent. being very sick and weak in body But of Sound and perfect memorie blessed be god Doe make ordaine Constitute and appoint this my last Will & Testament in manner and forme followeing Revoakeing annulling & making void and by these presents Cancelling & disclaimeing all & all manner of former & other Will or Wills written or Nuncupative all Codicelle Legacyes & bequests whatsoever by me att any time before the ensealeing of this my last will made signed & sealed or otherwise by word of mouth or made & delivered; And appoint this only to stand & be my last Will and Testament, as followeth ~ First I bequeath my Soule unto the hands of God my maker hoping & assuredly beleiveing that when this life shall end I shall through the merritts of Jesus Christ my Redeemer to injoy everlasting Rest and happiness. And my body to the Earth from whence it came to be decently buried.

Item for that Estate which almighty God hath been pleased to lend me in this world I hereby give bequeath & dispose thereof in manner and forme following:

Item I give and bequeath to my Eldest Daughter Elizabeth wife of George Read Esq & the heires of her body begotten or to be begotten forever all that my Divydent of land scituate lying and being in the sd. Parrish and county of York (Except as hereunder excepted) with all houses and appurtenances.

Item I give and bequeath to my Daughter, Mary Scarsbrook, wife of John Scarsbrook soe much of my sd. Divydent of Land in York Parrish as is scituate and lying beyond the Swamp [vizt.] on the Southward side of that Swamp called commonly Broccas Swamp upon part of which the said John is now seated to be held by the sd. Mary and her heirs lawfully begotten & to be begotten forever with the appurtenances --

Item I give and bequeath to my Daughter Elizabeth Read & her heires forever my old mare wth. her whole increase male and female to her and heires Except the first Mare foal shee shall bring after my decease which I hereby give & bequeath wth. the whole increase thereof to my Daughter Sarah wife of Capt. Fuller & her heires forever.

Item I give and bequeath to my loveing Daughter Mary Scarsbrook & her heires forever the Mare Foale now runing wth. my mare wth. whole Increase Male & Female --

I give and bequeath to my loveing Daughter Elizabeth Read my Watch. --

Item I give to my said Daughter Elizabeth and her heires my Grey Gelding but my Sonn John Scasbrook to make use of him for his occasions -- Two years after my decease when he shall desyre the same.

Item I give and bequeath to my Daughter Sarah Fuller wife of Capt. William Fuller abovenamed and to her heires forever all that my Divydent of land lying in Potomack and conteyneing two Thousand Acres But in case itt shall not be seated by some of them [vizt.] Capt. Fuller or his said wife or heires att least one month before expiration of time limited by the Patten for seateing then the same to be made Sale of Executrixes as hereunder named & the produce thereof to be equally dyvyded betweene my said three loveing Daughters for the good of them and their children.

Item My Will is that within one yeare after my decease all Cattle now in my possession marked wth my Daughter Fullers mark shall be delivered for the good [of] her and her Children & I doe also give and bequeath to her and her heires forever Tenn Cowes more out of my Stock or to be bought out of my Estate with their whole increase Male and Female and alsoe a Bull to be delivered within a yeare as above said.

Item I give to my loveing sonn, George Read, Esq. all my weareing apparrell except my Stuff Suite and Coate and new Dimity Caster which I hereby bequeath to my Sonn John Scarsbrook and alsoe will that five pounds ready money now lying by me be equally divyded between my said Two Son in lawes ~~

Item my will that at finishing the next crop after my Debts are satisfied my Two Negroes Phill & Nicholas shall be free and that each of them have then delivered by my Executors One Cow and Three Barrells of Corne, Cloathes, & also Nayles to build them a house but they or either of them shall hire themselves after their said freedom or before or shall remove from the land hereunder appointed them then they or he soe doing to returne to my Executrixes for the good of them and their Children. And my Will is that they have land sufficient for themselves to plant in the field where William Leigh lived for their lives or the life of the longer Liver of them.

I give and bequeath to Hugh Roy lately my Servt. - one Three Years old Heifer with her increase to be obtained on demand after my decease ~~

Item I give and bequeth to my above named Two loveing Daughters Elizabeth Read and Mary Scarsbrook for the good of themselves & their Children All the rest of my Estate whatsoever in Virginia or elsewhere to be equally divyded betweene them but this Divysyon not to be made untill all my Debts & Legacyes be satisfied which said severall Debts are to be paid out of the part of my Estate as is given to my said Two daughters & their Children without any Charge to my Daughter Sarah or her heires. ~~

Item lastly I doe by these presents nominate & appoint & Confirme my two beloved Daughters Elizabeth and Mary Joynt Executrixes of this my last Will & Testament to see the same performed and kept And in Confirmacon of this my said last Will & Testament & of every matter Course & thing therein conteyned I have hereto sett my hand and Seale this first day of March One Thousand Six hundred Fifty Six.

Nicholas Martian

Seale

"Sealed & Signed in the presence of --

Nicholas Trott

Tho. Ballard This Will proved in Court 24 Apr. 1657 --

Nicholas Trott & Tho. Ballard ---

Copy of original will follows:

# In the name of God Amen.

Nicholas Martier of the County and Parrish of York gent  
 being very sick and weak in body but of sound and perfect  
 memory do hereby give to god Doe make ordaine, constitute and  
 appoint this my last will & testament in manner & forme  
 following Doe hereby admitting & making void all by the  
 same laws & statutes & disclaiming all & all manner of former  
 testaments wills or wills written or otherwise all & all  
 legacies & bequests whatsoever by me at any time before this  
 writing of this my last will made signed sealed & otherwise  
 of well & of mind & do hereby And appoint this my last will  
 to be my last will and testament as followeth - First I be-  
 queath my soule unto the hande of god my maker & my  
 Redeemer fully believing that wher he will shall send I shall through  
 the merits of Iesus Christ my Redeemer to enjoy everlasting  
 life and happiness And my body to the earth to be buried  
 in the same to be decently buried

Item for that estate which I have by god's grace & gift  
 of god to have in the world I have by god's grace & gift  
 thereof in manner & forme following - Item I give and  
 bequeath to my eldest daughter Elizabeth wife of George  
 Read Esq<sup>r</sup> of her body & gotten or to be gotten for ever  
 all that my tenement of land situate lying and being in the  
 parrysh and County of York Except as the said George  
 with all the tenement and appurtenances - Item I give and be-  
 queath to my daughter Mary Starbrooke wife of John Star-  
 brooke Esq<sup>r</sup> her tenement of land in the parrysh of  
 is situate and by name called the Swan (with) on the Southward  
 side of that street called commonly Parson's Turnings  
 upon part of which the said John is now seated to be held  
 by the said Mary & her heirs Lawfully gotten & to be  
 gotten for ever with the appurtenances

Item I give and bequeath to my daughter Elizabeth  
 & her heirs for ever my old manor house which is now  
 made of stone which had the roof of it the first Mary  
 shall be my after my decease which I have by god's  
 will & which is now the house of my daughter  
 which is now the house of my daughter



339 His good of them and their children And my Will is that  
they have land sufficient for themselves to plant in the  
state where William Leigh lived for their labor or the  
help of the longer lives of them

I Item I give and bequeath to Hugh Roy solely my Servant  
one Negro Garret his for with his children to be sold  
on demand after my decease

I Item I give and bequeath to my above named and loving  
Daughters Elizabeth Deane and Mary Starbuck for their  
good of them selves and their children All the rest of my estate  
whatsoever in Virginia or elsewhere to be equally divided be-  
tweene them but this Divyion not to be made until all  
my debts to Logans & selfe shall be paid which said debts  
are to be paid out of the part of my Estate due unto my said  
Daughters Elizabeth Deane and Mary Starbuck without any charge to my  
Daughter Sarah or her heirs

I Item Lastly I do by these presents nominate appoint &  
confirm my two beloved Daughters Elizabeth and Mary  
Joynt Executrixes of this my last Will & Testament to see  
the same performed and kept And in full witness hereof  
I have signed this my last Will & Testament of every manner  
things therein contained I have hereunto set my hand and  
seal this first day of March One thousand six hundred  
fifty six

Witness my hand  
in the presence of  
Nicholas Prott  
John Ballard

Nicholas Martineau  
Seal

This Will proved in the Court of the County of York  
Virginia the 24<sup>th</sup> day of  
1657: by the said  
Nicholas Prott & John Ballard  
Executors of the said  
Testament of the said  
Nicholas Martineau

A COPY TESTE  
NANCY B. KANE  
CLERK CIRCUIT COURT  
COUNTY OF YORK, VA.  
Richard Davis  
D.C.