

Whatever John Nuthall's life in England had been, it's clear that he came of sturdy, intelligent and industrious stock, & was very probably of gentle birth, and his early years of hardship in Virginia only served to prepare him well for the life he led in his adult years. How or when he obtained an education, we don't know, but we know that he was literate.

We have found no record of John's activities between the late 1620s and 1640 ...his "growing-up years", (and indeed he may have spent part of the time back in England), but by 1643, he was referred to as "Mr.", a term reserved for the most highly respected, and leading citizens of the colony, and generally only for those who served His Majestie's government in some capacity. And only a few months later, or about January 1643/44, he had married the widow, Elizabeth (Bacon) Holloway, a "person of quality".

It is certainly apparent that John Nuthall had learned the Indian tongue at the time he lived among them, for during most of his adult years, and in addition to whatever else he did, he was a trader and merchant, & has also been referred to as an interpreter. As a merchant he made numerous trips to London and back. We have references to about five or six such trips, and he may actually have been going over every year or so. As further evidence of the high degree of respect and trust he was accorded, we note that he was frequently appointed the "attorney" of his friends and acquaintances. Unfortunately, historians have never recognized the truly important roll he played in his lifetime. He richly deserves to be remembered with honor and admiration, as he held a unique place in early Va. & Md. history. He was a GIANT among his peers.

Although John's father has been said to have also been a John, we cannot be certain of this, or of the names of his mother & sister, but we do know that his father, mother & sister were living, and apparently in London, at least as late as August, 1644, & we cannot but wonder if they survived the Great Fire of London, in 1666.

Although he was termed "Mr." as early as 1643, the first actual record we've discovered of John's serving as "Commissioner" (same as "Justice", and which office entitled the holder to be called "Mr."), was in Northampton Co., Va., in July 1653. However, he was one of those leading citizens who, on March 25, 1651, signed the "Submission to Parliament", from Northampton Co., which leads one to believe he may have been serving as one of the Commissioners at that date, if not before. Also, on Mar. 30, 1652, he signed the "Instructions" to the Virginia House of Burgesses, i.e., the "Northampton Protest".

John's wife, Elizabeth, who by her first marriage was the mother of one child, a daughter, Priscilla Holloway, was several years John's senior, as her age was listed as "26", when on Aug. 10, 1635, she embarked from England for Virginia, on the "Safety". [Lists of Emigrants to America, 1600-1700, by John Camden Hotten, p. 121.] After their marriage, Elizabeth made one or more trips back to England with John. While we know that she pre-deceased him, and apparently died before John settled in Maryland about 1661, we do not know exactly when or where Elizabeth died, but the last record we have discovered in which she was mentioned, was in Northampton Co., Va., on July 27, 1653.

After John's removal to Maryland, he served as Commissioner of St. Mary's Co., from at least Oct., 1663 through 1664, and during which period he was also referred to as "Justice of the Peace and Quorum". He was several times referred to in the records as "Gentleman" (which title of courtesy was extended him through his service as one of the Commissioners), and almost immediately after his death, his sons John, Jr., and James, were also referred to as "Gentlemen" (which seems rather odd to us, since neither was yet of age, and not then holding any high position in the province). We can only assume it was a term of respect accorded them as their father's heirs.

When in England in 1661, John Nuthall purchased from Thomas Cornwalleys, 4,200 acres of land in Maryland, consisting of the Manors of "Cornwalleys Cross" and "St. Elizabeth's", and additional land, & he automatically became the owner of the handsome brick "manor house" at "Cross Manor", built by Cornwalleys in