

Sue Comont, 26 St. Margarets Avenue, Rushden, Northants., NN10 9YH

[researcher@tesco.net](mailto:researcher@tesco.net)

[www.northantsfamilyhistory.co.uk](http://www.northantsfamilyhistory.co.uk)

Trevor Peach,  
Goltzstr. 22,  
Berlin 10781,  
Germany

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Dear Trevor,

Well, I have been back to the Record Office but I fear I have ended up more confused than ever, and not really knowing whether we are looking at the right family or not.

Last time I discovered that there was no baptism for Charles Peach in Peterborough despite him saying in every census return that he had been born there. I found that there was a couple, John and Elizabeth Peach, resident in Peterborough at the relevant time who could have been his parents. This theory was strengthened by the discovery of a settlement examination that traced John's work history from his birth in Maxey to his arrival in Peterborough with a wife and daughter. Maxey baptism register showed that he had been baptized there as the son of Peter Peach, with brothers Charles and Robert, all of which names seem to have been significant in the family you are tracing so it looked probable that your Charles was the son of this John and his wife, Elizabeth, and that John's father was Peter Peach of Maxey.

This time I have tried to look further at this family to try to make sure that it is the correct line, and to try to take it further back. I began by looking at the will of Peter Peach:

Will of Peter Peach of Maxey, made 27 July 1802

To my beloved wife Mary Peach all my household furniture and all my livestock, whether horses, beasts or sheep together with all monies that might be mine or owing to me at the time of my decease for and during her natural life.

And after her decease I give and bequeath what property she may have left to my seven children:

Charles Peach of Maxey

Robert Peach of Helpston

Joseph Peach of Maxey

John Peach of Burleigh

Sarah Broughton of Helpston

Mary Broughton of Helpston

Hannah Peach of Maxey

I appoint my wife Mary sole executrix.

Signed, Peter Peach

Proved 22 August 1803

This was not as helpful as I had hoped. When Peter was buried, the entry in the register described him as Peter Peach, senior, which usually indicates that there was a son with the same name, but I did not find a baptism for such a child in the Maxey register, and now Peter's will does not refer to a son with that name either. Peter's son John, who I hoped was the father of your Charles, is said to be of Burleigh at this date, 1803. According to the settlement examination and the Peterborough registers, John had arrived in Peterborough by 1794, married and baptized a son, Thomas there in 1795. If he was the father of your Charles, as well, I would have expected to find him remaining in Peterborough, considering that Charles married there. I hoped that Peter's will would mention grandchildren and this would tell us whether or not we had the right line here, but as he doesn't, we are still left wondering.

While I am happy with the way that we have taken the family back to Maxey, and found a family with a similar naming pattern which usually indicates a family tie, everything that I have found indicates that the Maxey people were shepherds. I found a wonderful newspaper cutting from 1815 that shows both John and his brother Charles to be shepherds at that time:

"Whereas I, Charles Peach, of Maxey in the county of Northampton, shepherd, when intoxicated and at other times, have slanderously and maliciously spoken disrespectful words against my brother John Peach of the same place, shepherd, and for which several falsehoods he was about to prosecute me but upon my open confession and acknowledgement that the words spoken have no foundation in truth, and by openly expressing my contrition and sorrow in this public manner, and paying all expenses he has agreed to stop all further proceedings. I hereby publicly ask his pardon. Charles Peach  
Dated 19 Jan 1815."

(NRO Ref: LF 72)

Charles, however, was described firstly as a slater, and later as a plasterer. Most of his sons all went into the building trade in one way or another, and certainly none of them seem to have been involved with agriculture. It would have taken some form of training, if not an actual apprenticeship, for Charles to become a slater and a plasterer, so how did this happen? I have not found an apprenticeship indenture for him among any of the parish records - arranging apprenticeships was often a job for the parish poor law officials and church wardens - but it could have been a private matter undertaken by the family. Although it does seem a long way from shepherding to building, it seems that there could have been enough money in the family for such training to be arranged.

The UK Land Tax redemption records of 1798 are available on Ancestry, and they list Peter Peach as occupier of lands in both Maxey and Deeping Gate. He held two pieces of land in Deeping Gate assessed at 8s 11d and 5s 3½d respectively, and a piece in Maxey assessed at £1 5s. The land was owned by a Vincent Bellars who would have been responsible for paying the tax which adds up to £1 19s 2½d (£1 97p) altogether. In today's money this works out at £210 and the tax can be seen as roughly equivalent to the council tax of today. To put the amount in context, Admiral Nelson paid £3 for a property he owned in Suffolk at this time. So, although Peter Peach was not the owner of these pieces of land, but just the occupier, ie he leased them from Vincent Bellars, he was doing quite well for himself, which is borne out by the fact that he left a will. He could have seen the writing on the wall and decided

that a career in sheep was not the best way forward for his grandson and helped him to train in an occupation that would bring him full employment and income for the rest of his life. I have talked to a couple of my colleagues while I was at the Record Office last week working on this, and received completely contradictory answers from them about the likelihood of a family of shepherds turning into builders, so I am still not sure about this link.

I tried to see if I could find any alternative Peaches who might be ancestors of Charles. There were earlier Peaches in Peterborough, and there is some use of the names Charles, Robert and Henry but the succession is not clear. I will put all the Peach entries I found back to 1727 at the end of this report for you to see. What doesn't change is the fact that there is no baptism for Charles so we still can't say with any certainty whose son he was. I think that there were two couples called John and Elizabeth Peach though. There is the one whose settlement examination I found last week, who came originally from Maxey as discussed above, but I think there was also another. I have found two marriages:

13 May 1793 John Peach of Peterborough and Elizabeth Cawdion of this parish married in Eye parish

14 Mar 1795 John Peach and Elizabeth Cole, both of this parish by banns in Peterborough

I have not found a burial for an Elizabeth Peach between these two years so I think there must have been two couples in Peterborough called John and Elizabeth and it could have been either of them who baptised a son Charles. The second John seems to have been baptised in Peterborough:

23 Aug 1772 John son of Thomas and Sarah Peach

Thomas and Sarah married in Peterborough and baptised a couple of other children as well:

4 Jun 1772 Thomas Peach of this parish and Sarah Jackson of this parish by banns. Both made X. Witnesses: Abraham Pettey and Char Pix

16 Apr 1775 Thomas son of Thomas and Sarah Peach baptised

4 May 1777 Catherine daughter of Thomas and Sarah Peach baptised

Thomas is probably the son of Henry and Catherine, baptised in Peterborough on 17 June 1753. Henry Peach married Katherine Fisher on 9 February 1752 in Eye parish, but that is as far back as I have got with this line. There was no baptism for Henry in the register that began in 1727 for Peterborough St John, but it is possible that he was baptised before this - or that he came from another parish.

So, we appear to have an alternative set of ancestors for Charles, but many of the same problems apply to them as to the Maxey connection. Firstly, we are depending on the fact that they were in the right place at the right time with no other corroborating evidence. The Peterborough Peaches don't seem to be any more connected to the building trade than the Maxey people, and the only evidence of their status is shown in the record of Henry's second marriage, in 1758, when he was described as a labourer. There are many

apprenticeship indentures surviving for Peterborough St John's parish, and none of them relate to a Peach going into the trade of slating or plastering so we are still at a loss to explain how Charles managed to make the transition from labourer to skilled worker.

I did find a reference to an apprenticeship indenture that I got quite excited about:

Apprenticeship indenture Thomas Peach to John Dolby of Rothwell, slater, 2 Dec 1718  
(NRO Ref: 142p/91/11)

This was among the parish records of Gretton so I looked at the registers to see if I could find any connection between Peaches in Gretton and your Charles. There were a good many Peaches in Gretton and Thomas seems to have gone back there after he finished his apprenticeship in Rothwell. He married and had several children but had only one son, another Thomas, who survived to adulthood. This Thomas also married and stayed in Gretton, but there was no Charles among the children he baptised so this seems to have been a dead end.

So, as I said at the beginning, I don't really feel any more certain about Charles's forebears. There are two potential lines, one going back to Maxey and the other staying in Peterborough, but neither seems to have any great preference over the other. It is obvious that for some reason there are significant omissions from the Peterborough registers. Not only is there no baptism for Charles when we would expect one, but when I looked at the rate books for the parish, a Thomas Peach was listed in the levy dated April 1799, while by the August one for the same year, it was Mrs Peach who was listed, becoming Widow Peach the following year. There is no burial for Thomas in the register but it is obvious that he died at this time. These gaps in the information given in the registers makes it very difficult to establish with any certainty what is going on with these families. For example, there is no trace of the Peter Peach who witnessed Charles's marriage in 1815. He could be a brother whose baptism, like that of Charles himself, was not recorded in the Peterborough register, but we have no proof. I cannot find any further record of this Peter either. He does not seem to be alive when the census returns were taken, but there is no burial for him either so he is yet another mystery to add to the rest surrounding this family!

I'm sorry I can't be more definite about the origins of Charles. If you would like me to try to continue back with either of the two possible lines, I am happy to do so, but I will understand if you have had enough.

Regards,  
Sue

PSJ 261p/48 C and B 1727 - 1757, M 1727 - 1754

Baptisms

- 16 Aug 1735 Robert son of John and Elizabeth Peak [I think this should read Peach]  
22 Apr 1739 Elizabeth daughter of John and Elizabeth Peach  
31 Aug 1740 Mary daughter of John and Elizabeth Peach  
21 Feb 1742 Charles son of John and Elizabeth Peach  
17 Jun 1753 Thomas son of Henry and Catherine Peach  
17 Oct 1756 Mary daughter of Henry and Catherine Peach

Marriages

- 27 Dec 1734 Thomas Peach and Mary Hingle both of this parish by banns  
25 Jan 1754 John Burton of Cliff and Mary Peach of Alwalton by licence

Burials

- 12 Sep 1735 Robert son of John and Elizabeth Peake  
9 Apr 1736 Mary Peach  
7 Apr 1743 Elizabeth wife of John Peak  
12 Jun 1750 John Peak  
27 Dec 1754 Thomas Peach

PSJ 261p/49 C 1757 - 1789, B 1755 - 1781

Baptisms

- 27 May 1759 Ann daughter of Henry and Mary Peach  
1 Aug 1762 Robert son of Henry and Mary Peach \* *possible!*  
12 May 1765 John son of Henry and Mary Peach \* *possible!*  
16 Jul 1769 Ann daughter of Henry and Mary Peach  
23 Aug 1772 John son of Thomas and Sarah Peach \* *possible!*  
16 Apr 1775 Thomas son of Thomas and Sarah Peach  
4 May 1777 Catherine daughter of Thomas and Sarah Peach

Burials

- 16 Sep 1755 Mary daughter of Henry and Catherine Peach  
6 Apr 1757 Catherine wife of Henry Peach  
15 Apr 1762 Ann daughter of Henry and Catherine Peach  
21 Jan 1773 John son of Henry and Mary Peach  
5 Nov 1777 Robert Peach

PSJ 261p/62 M 1754 - 1775

- 13 May 1758 Henry Peach of this parish, labourer, and Mary Cowper of this parish by banns.  
Both made X. Witnesses: Char Pix and Thos Beaver  
4 Jun 1772 Thomas Peach of this parish and Sarah Jackson of this parish by banns. Both  
made X. Witnesses: Abraham Pettey and Char Pix

PSJ 261p/63 M 1775 - 1784

No Peaches

PSJ 261p/64 M 1784 - 1799

18 Jan 1788 Daniel Hall of this parish and Ann Peach, spinster by licence. Both made X.  
Witnesses: Wm White and Wm Gibbs  
14 Mar 1795 John Peach and Elizabeth Cole, both of this parish by banns. Both made X.  
Witnesses: John Hill and Wm Gibbs

PSJ 261p/65 M 1799 - 1812

25 Jul 1802 Wright Green of this parish and Ann Peach of Wakerly by licence. Both signed.  
Witnesses: Chas Wm Peach and Joseph Turner  
15 Oct 1809 George Scatley and Mary Peach both of this parish by banns. Both made X.  
Witnesses: Thomas Topper, Alice Bailey and James Gibbs

PSJ 261p/50 C 1789 - 1805, B 1781 - 1807

Baptisms

2 Oct 1795 Thomas son of John and Elizabeth Peach

Burials

18 Feb 1790 Mary wife of Henry Peach  
6 Nov 1796 Henry Peach

PSJ 261p/51 C and B 1807 - 1812

No Peaches