



FOUNDING FEMALES Female Qualifying Ancestor Index

Female Ancestor Number: 170

Name: Stone, Verlinda (Graves)

Dates: (— - 1675)

Colonial Society: MD

Date added to ROA: 9-23-2024

Service: Historic Founder, immigrated with husband and four children, 1648

Authority: Papenfuse, Edward C., A Biographical Directory of the Maryland Legislature, 1635-1789 (Baltimore & London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1979), 788.

Biography:

Verlinda was most likely born around 1620, a daughter of Thomas Graves. Her father was probably Captain Thomas Graves who arrived in Virginia in 1608 and is considered an Ancient Planter. Her mother was his wife, Katherine. Her brothers were John, Thomas and Francis and her sisters were Ann and Katherine. She was undoubtedly educated at home. Her correspondence shows us her written language skills.

Verlinda and William Stone married around 1640 in Virginia. William, Verlinda and four children immigrated to Maryland in 1648 when Puritans, who were being persecuted in Virginia, were being encouraged by Lord Baltimore to move to Maryland. Lord Baltimore wanted to appoint a Protestant governor and William Stone was known to have strong ties to the English and Chesapeake Puritan communities. William was appointed Governor of Maryland in 1648 and served for six years. His Puritan leanings were probably shared by Verlinda.

Disputes between rebel/extremist Puritans and other Protestants encouraged Governor Stone to organize about 100 supporters who fought in what is known as "The Battle of the Severn" on March 5, 1655. This battle pitted the forces allied with the royal proprietor Lord Baltimore, who was a Catholic and Royalist, against forces allied with the Commonwealth of England who were Puritans. Stone was wounded, lost half his men, surrendered and was held prisoner for over a month.

Verlinda wrote a lengthy letter to Lord Baltimore on May 25, 1655. She explained that a Council of War tried the Councillors, including the Governor, and were sentenced to be shot. Most of them were saved from execution by "Petitions of the Women" but the Councillors and her husband were still being held prisoner. Stone's Estate was being sequestered putting Verlinda and her children in financial difficulty. Ultimately Governor Stone was released and resumed his position as Governor.



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William Stone probably died in December 1659. His will was probated in January 1659/60. His estate consisted of approximately 5,000 acres of land, 13 servants and 2 slaves and 14,950 pounds of tobacco. The will stated the following: “ . . . and for my good wife, Verlinda Stone I give her my house and Lands at Saint Maryes with all the Cattell of mine feeding there and my horse called Jack and also on fourth part of all my other Estate and good excepting Land and she shall contineue in my Dwelling house of Nangemy and Enjoy all services and Respects from my Whole family of Children and Servants During Life Shee so long living Sole and unmarried.”

Verlinda never re-married, perhaps because of the will or because she would lose her independence to a new spouse. In 1664 she patented 300 acres of land in Charles County and named it “Virlanda”. In 1666 she bought 500 acres in what is now Prince George County.

Verlinda lived for 15 years after her husband's death managing her estate.. Verlinda Stone's will in 1675 left 400 acres called “St. Verlindas” to her grandson Benony Thomas, minor son of her daughter Mary who was given a silver salt server. Her son John was named executor and received the balance of her personal property, livestock, household goods and her negro housemaid.



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