



FOUNDING FEMALES Female Qualifying Ancestor Index

Female Ancestor Number: 182

Name: Drummond, Sarah (—)

Dates: (— - by 28 Apr 1696)

Colonial Society: VA

Date added to ROA: 10-26-2024

Service: Landowner, Jamestowne Island, 1662

Authority: Martha W. McCartney, *Jamestown People to 1800, Landowners, Public Officials, Minorities, & Native Leaders*, Genealogical Pub. Co., 2012, pp. 145-146.

Biography:

Specific details about Sarah Drummond's early life, including her maiden name and exact birth date, remain uncertain. Some sources suggest she may have been related to Edward Prescott, who bequeathed her a half-acre lot in James City.

Early in the 1650s, Sarah married William Drummond, a Scottish immigrant who became the first colonial governor of Albemarle County on the Albemarle Sound then the Province of Carolina. The couple had at least five children: two sons, two daughters, and one other child.

In 1676, Sarah and William Drummond became prominent supporters of Nathaniel Bacon during Bacon's Rebellion, a revolt against the administration of Governor Sir William Berkeley. The Drummonds were well-connected and among the colony's elite, residing in one of the finest houses on Jamestown Island and maintaining a substantial plantation on the adjacent Governor's Land, leased from Governor Berkeley.

Sarah Drummond was an outspoken advocate for the rebellion. She is noted for her defiant stance against British authority; upon hearing that England might send troops to suppress the rebellion, she reportedly picked up a twig or straw and declared, "I value the power of England no more than that." When Bacon's forces burned Jamestown in the autumn of 1676, the Drummonds demonstrated their commitment to the cause by setting their own house ablaze. Following the rebellion's collapse and Nathaniel Bacon's death in October 1676, Governor Berkeley sought retribution against the rebels. William Drummond was captured, summarily tried, and executed on January 20, 1677. Governor Berkeley confiscated the Drummond family's property, including their plantation and personal goods.

Determined to reclaim her family's estate, Sarah Drummond petitioned the Committee for Trade and Plantations in England. In her "Humble Petition of Sarah Drummond" (1677), she argued that her husband had been denied a fair trial and that the confiscation of their property had left her and her five children destitute. She described their plight, stating they were forced to "wander in the deserts and woods, till



FOUNDING FEMALES Female Qualifying Ancestor Index

they were ready to starve.” Her lawsuit, petitions and background information provide historians with a first-hand account of Sir William Berkeley’s actions during and after the rebellion, much of which has damaged his reputation.

Her appeals reached King Charles II, who ordered the restoration of her property on October 22, 1677.

Upon returning to Virginia, Sarah Drummond filed a lawsuit against Governor Berkeley’s wife, Frances Culpeper Stephens Berkeley, to regain her confiscated property. Represented by her son-in-law, Samuel Swann, she eventually secured a verdict in her favor.

Sarah continued to manage her affairs and property after regaining ownership. She granted power of attorney to one of her sons on October 10, 1679, and her name last appears in public records in 1683 leasing land. She likely died before April 28, 1696, and is believed to have been buried on Samuel Swann’s plantation.



FOUNDING FEMALES

Female Qualifying Ancestor Index