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*Original primary source documents are digitized and can be viewed on the web site.

Ancestors of the Immigrant Christopher Choate [b.1642] ©1

Christopher Chotte ² is documented to have immigrated from England as an indentured servant to the Province of Maryland in 1676.*³ There is no information in the records of England or Maryland to indicate his age or where in England he was from. He has been identified by researchers as the first in the "Choates of the South" family line (Generation 1). Attempting to identify the English origins and relatives of Christopher is a challenge since primary source data is limited or yet to be discovered. Below is the beginning of an attempt to identify our English ancestors but these result involve conjecture and the further back one goes pure guess work. ⁴



St. Mary's and All Saints Church, Rivenhall

The greatest portion of Choat/Choate families from the 1600s in England came from the parishes that make up Essex and Suffolk County today. Research in 1988 ⁵ discovered a Christopher Chote christened on 4 September 1642 in St. Mary's and All Saints Church, Rivenhall Parish, Essex County. ⁶ His father's name was Christopher and an older brother was named Edward. Christopher [b.1642] the progenitor of the "Choates of the South" named his two sons: Christopher and Edward. The naming pattern of Christopher's [b.1642] sons allows one to draw a plausible link between the indentured servant that arrived in the Province of Maryland in 1676 and the boy christened in Rivenhall in 1642.

Other factors also support the Christopher of Rivenhall being the immigrant. Christopher does not appear to be a common name in England in the 1600s. To date, I have found only three male Choates out of 232 with the name Christopher born in the 1600 to 1700 timeframe: approximately 1 in 77, less than 1.5% of males with the name Christopher. ⁷ The christening dates of these three are 1613, 1619, and 1642. There may be more to discover. However, it appears that the child christened in 1642 in Rivenhall is the only one who's age is appropriate for indentured service starting in 1676.

Most of Maryland's indentured servants departed England from three major ports—Bristol and Liverpool on the west-coast and from London on the east-coast. ⁸ St. Mary's and All Saints Church in Rivenhall is a mile from the old London Road built by the Romans and about 35 miles from the docks in London. Research has also shown that many indentured servants came into the port "cities from within a fifty-to sixty-mile radius". ⁹ Christopher of Rivenhall had reasonable access to the docks in London.

Christopher of Rivenhall Parish was baptized in September 1642 which would make him 33 when he arrived in Maryland in April of 1676. The majority of indentured servants were roughly 13 to 21 years old and employed as field workers for 4-7 years. Being 33 does not disqualify the Christopher of Rivenhall from being the progenitor of the Southern Choates. Some indentured servants were older and typically skilled workers (e.g., bricklayer, plasterer, cook, butcher, shoemaker, blacksmith...). One Parish record describes his father as a "cooke" and maybe this was also Christopher's trade.

Christopher's indentureship also suggests that he may not have been in the same position as the majority of indentured servants. Upon completion of the indenture/contract, the servant would receive "freedom dues" — a pre-arranged termination bonus ranging from nothing to small sums of currency, clothing, tools, etc... The terms of Christopher's contract are not know but he was apparently a "freeman" (i.e., qualified to own land) by 1681. This was only five years after his arrival plus he had the means to pay for the official survey of 11 acres that was recorded in August 1681. ^{*10} This was atypical in two ways: freeman usually worked as tenant farmers for a few years after their contract to acquire capital to purchase property and typically acquired 50 acres (a headright) or more. ¹¹ The eleven acres he surveys is at a very advantageous place - "Chootes his Chance" was located on the south side of the Magothy River estuary about three miles from Chesapeake Bay. Christopher in November of 1681 was also one of 421 persons in the Province to be paid for unknown goods or services by the Provincial government.

Why Christopher of Rivenhall alone and at age 33 would be inspired or compelled to leave England in 1676 as an indentured servant and start a new life is unknown?

Maybe he lost his family in "The Great Plague of 1665" — The Plague began in February and peaked in September 1665 killing over 100,000 Londoners (20% of the population) in its first year. It extended up into Essex and continued at a much lower pace until 1679.

Maybe the documented "wife of Christopher" buried at Rivenhall in 1667 was the immigrant's wife?

Maybe he lost his work in the "Great Fire" — The fire began 2 September 1666. It lasted over four days, destroying 52 livery companies (trade, craft, and profession halls), and making 100,000 Londoners homeless and without a place to work?

Maybe he learned of the success his relative John Choate [b.1624]¹² who was 18 years older and had emigrated 33 years earlier as an indentured servant to the Massachusetts Bay Colony (The Northern Choates) from Boxford Groton? Boxford is about 18 miles northeast of Rivenhall.

Below is my first attempt to identify the ancestors Christopher "the immigrant" Choate [b.1642]. It involves records (highlighted in bold italic) and conjecture. It forms the initial basis of attempting to build the family tree back in England. This needs significant research and will be updated as new records are found.

The Ancestors of Christopher Choate [b.1642]

Generation: zero (i.e., Christopher's [b.1642] parents)

The Parish records from St. Mary's and All Saints Church, Rivenhall Parish ¹³ list:—

1639 Apr 29 Christened - EDWARD sonne of CHRISTOPHER CHOTE and of JANE

1642 Sep 4 Christened - CHRISTOPHER the sonne of CHRISTOPHER CHOTE cooke
(see document below)

1644 Nov 3 Christened - JOHN CHOTE ye son of CHRISTOPHER CHOTE

1667 Nov 10 Buried - the wife of CHRISTOPHER CHOTE

1683 Buried - Alice Choat

1710 July 1 Buried - Eleanor wife of John

1717 Aug 15 Burial - John farmer

These records allow one to assemble a family for the man identified as Christopher “the immigrant”.

Christopher Chote [immigrant's father] christened 1613 at St Andrew Halstead

(see Generation -1 notes)

spouse: *Jane* [— ? —] *b.?* **buried 10 Nov 1667 (we assume this is the wife of the father)**

Children:

Edward — christened 29 April 1639 St. Mary's and All Saints Church, Rivenhall

Christopher [immigrant] — christened 4 Sep 1642 St. Mary's and All Saints Church, Rivenhall

John — christened 3 Nov 1644 St. Mary's and All Saints Church, Rivenhall; buried 15 Aug 1717; farmer; wife of John Eleanor buried 1 July 1710

Generation: minus 1 (i.e., Christopher's [b.1642] grandparents)

Who were the parents of **Christopher Chote** [the immigrant's father]? Again, since Christopher is not a common name the Parish records eight miles north of Rivenhall at Saint Andrew, Halstead provide a clue. Two Christophers are listed in these records. The Christopher baptized in 1613 is old enough to be Christopher “the immigrant's” father. The second Christopher was baptized in 1580 and buried in 1615 so he could not be the father of the immigrant but could likely be the father of the Christopher baptized in 1613.

The records found for St Andrew Halstead Parish lists:—

1571 Christened - Joane Choate

1573 Christened - Roberte Choate

1580 Christened - Crestoafar Chote

1610 Christened - An Chate

1613 Christened - Cystover Chote

1615 Buried - Crestoafar Chote

1623 Marriage - Thomas Choote married Anne Barker

These records allow one to reasonably infer the family of the man identified in the Rivenhall records as the father of the immigrant Christopher[b.1642].

Crestoafar Chote [the immigrant's grandfather]— christened **1580**; buried **1615**

spouse:

Children:

An Chate — *christened 1610* at *Saint Andrew, Halstead*

Cystover Chote [the immigrant's father] — *christened 13 July 1613* at *Saint Andrew, Halstead*

Generation: minus 2

Who were the parents of Crestoafar Chotte (the immigrant's grandfather)? No Parish records have been found to provide any indications as to who the immigrant's great-grandfather would be. However, the Halstead records would allow one to make assumptions about Crestoafar Chotte's siblings.

Unknown Name [the immigrant's great-grandfather] ?— born guess ~1545

spouse:

Children:

Joane Choate— christened **1571** at *Saint Andrew, Halstead*

Roberte Choate — christened **1573** at *Saint Andrew, Halstead*

Crestoafar Chotte [the immigrant's grandfather] — christened **1580** at *Saint Andrew, Halstead*

Generation: -3

There are no documents to support assumption this far back. Note: there are a couple of internet guesses at Generation -2, -3 and -4 but they provide NO documentation whatsoever.

Ursilla the daughter of John
 Smith wife of Thomas and of Margaret
 her wife was baptizd on the 6 day
 of January
 Edward the daughter of John Green
 husbandman and of Anne his wife
 was buried on the 26 day of January
 Ann the daughter of Joseph Wood
 lie smith and of Elizabeth his wife
 was baptizd at Chesham in the parochie
 of St. Martin on the 30 day of January
 Elizabeth the daughter of John
 Rowley servant to Sir Thomas
 and of Elizabeth his wife was
 buried on the 12 day of February
 John Reynolds was married to Felicia
 the daughter of Richard on the 24 day of
 February
 John Cox the elder was buried on
 the 26 day of February
 Francis the younginglingman was bur-
 ied on the first day of March
 John the son of John Deadman
 Daylabourer and of Grace his
 wife was baptizd on the 21 day
 of March

Mary the daughter of Robert Smith
 and of Mary his wife was baptizd
 at Chesham by permission on the 5 day
 of June
 Ralph the son of Robert was
 married to Marie the daughter of Robert
 hall the vicar on the 2 day of July
 John the son of a gentleman was bur-
 ied on the 5 day of July
 Thomas the son of Thomas
 the gentleman and of Dorothy his wife
 was baptizd on the 14 day of
 July
 John the farmer was buried
 on the 17 day of July
 Richard the son of William
 the cooper and of Mary his wife
 was baptizd on the 17 day
 of July
 John the son of John was married to
 Grace the daughter of John on the 25 day
 of July
 John the elder farmer
 was buried on the 28 day of July
 Christopher the son of Christopher
 the whole wooler was baptizd on the
 1 day of September
 Ann was baptizd the wife of Joseph
 the wife of Garret was buried on the
 13 day of September
 Thomas the son of Thomas
 the Daylabourer and of
 Elizabeth his wife was baptizd on
 the 18 day of October
 William the son of John was
 buried on the 30 day of October
 William the son of William was married
 to Elizabeth the daughter of John on the first
 day of November 1642

Anno Domini 1642

Thomas the son of Richard
 the Daylabourer and of Margaret
 his wife was baptizd on the
 13 day of April and buried on the
 15 day of April
 William the younger
 was married to Mary the daughter
 of John on the 18 day of April
 Robert the son of Robert
 the Daylabourer and of Dorothy his wife
 was buried on the 2 day of May
 John the son of John
 was married to Elizabeth the daughter
 of John on the 24 day of May

Christopher the son of Christopher
 the whole wooler was baptizd on the
 1 day of September
 Ann was baptizd the wife of Joseph
 the wife of Garret was buried on the
 13 day of September
 Thomas the son of Thomas
 the Daylabourer and of
 Elizabeth his wife was baptizd on
 the 18 day of October
 William the son of John was
 buried on the 30 day of October
 William the son of William was married
 to Elizabeth the daughter of John on the first
 day of November 1642

Other Choate Indentured Servants from England

Two other Choates are recorded as arriving in the colonies as indentured servants: John (b.1624) and Thomas (b. bef 1625). No genealogical trail was left by Thomas in Virginia. John became well established in Massachusetts and is the progenitor of the Northern Choates. It would be very interesting to discover the English family connection between these boys/men that came to America as indentured servants.

Thomas Chote [b bef 1625]

Peirce Lennon is recorded as receiving 50 acres bounded by the Matchoes Creek and the James River in VA for transporting 5 person. One being "Tho. Chote" There are no subsequent records for a Thomas Choate in VA. He may have died early as nearly 40% of indentured servants did or just not found in the records.

John Choate [b.1624]

The Northern Choate immigrant John [b.1624] is identified as coming from Groton Parish, Boxford which is about 18 miles northeast of Rivenhall.

Robert Choate — born ca 1600 in Groton Parish, Boxford, Colchester, England. Buried 18 Aug 1638 in Boxford Parish

Married: Sarah ?. Born in 1602 in Colchester, Essex, England. Sarah was buried 12 Sep 1638 in Boxford Parish. (b)

Children:

John (**the first Northern Choate**) — baptized 6 Jun 1624 in Groton Parish, Boxford, Colchester, England (b). His parents died when he was fourteen and he immigrated to the Colony of Massachusetts at age 19 (1643). John died in Chebacco-Ipswich, Essex Co., MA, on 4 Dec 1695

Elizabeth — in Groton Parish, Boxford (b) baptized 21 Jan 1626; buried 25 Aug 1627 (b)

Mary (Marie) — in Groton Parish, Boxford (b) baptized 25 Sept 1628; buried 28 June 1633

¹ This informational document is part of a larger collection *A Collection of Historical Narratives: the Southern Choate Families* © WTChoate 2013-2017. These informational documents are provided without restrictions — other than the requirement that any use you make of the information be without restrictions, not for profit, and that proper attribution to these informational documents is made.

² In the 17th Century and later several spellings of the Choate (Choat/Chotte/Chote/Choote/Choak/Chotle/Shoates...) name are encountered and are correct. It should be remembered that most people in these early days were illiterate and could not recognize their written name. Those responsible for writing documents based names on the sound (i.e., the spoken name) and not necessarily on a known spelling.

³ Christopher's [b.1642] passage to Maryland, aboard the *Cecilous* owned by Lord Baltimore, was paid for by the ship's company and/or Captain John Boddy. His headright (50 acres of land for transporting an indentured servant) was assigned to Capt. Boddy on 15 Apr 1676 indicating that the ship probably arrived just before this date. This document is at the Maryland Hall of Records (MHR) - Books of Patents, Liber 15, folio 369 and 370.

Also: www.choatesofthesouth.org under Documents "1642_Christopher_Arrival "

⁴ Genealogy is dependent upon primary sources "for without the aid of original records and authentic documents, history will be nothing more than a well-combined series of ingenious conjectures and amusing fables." from the New-York Historical Society, "To the Public," 1804, quoted in Walter Muir Whitehill, "The Scholarly Responsibility of an Independent Historical Society," Maryland Historical Magazine 56 (Dec. 1961), p.325.

⁵ Peter C. Nutt, Genealogist and Record Agent located Essex England found the records of Christopher [b.1642]. He performed the work for Nadine Choate Perkes. She contributed significant efforts to Choate genealogical work. Her report on Christopher [b.1642] can be read in the *Choates of the South* -- Newsletter #1, Sept 1988, Irene Choate Williams, section 2, page 3 (These 25 newsletters published between 1988 and 200 are posted on the website under publications).

Also: www.choatesofthesouth.org under Publications "CHOATES OF THE SOUTH - NEWSLETTER #01"

⁶ St. Mary's and All Saints Church has been in continual use for over 1,000 years. It is built on the site of a large Roman Villa. The flint and tile from the Villa are incorporated into the thick Saxon walls that run almost the entire length of the nave and in part of the Chancel. The font used for Christopher's [b.1642] baptism dates from the 1300's and is adjacent to the main entrance of the church.

⁷ The Choatesofthesouth offline database as of Feb 2017 had identified 232 male Choate/Choat in the English records from 1600 to 1700. Only 3 were named Christopher.

⁸ Origins of Colonial Chesapeake Indentured Servants: American and English Sources, Nathan W. Murphy, AG; National Genealogical Society Quarterly, Vol. 93, No. 1 (Mar 2005): 5-24 Note: a minority of indentured servants departed from smaller cities, including Newcastle on the North Sea (near Lord Baltimore's Kiplin Hall home); Dartmouth, Exeter, Lyme, Newcastle, Plymouth, Poole, Portsmouth, Southampton, Weymouth, and Whitehaven on the English Channel; and Bideford on the Bristol Channel.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ MHR Land Office, Patent Records, S11-2S, Liber 21, folio 352, Folder 1679-1683, Location 1/23/1/26. This is also reference in Newsletter #11 by Irene Choate Williams as Liber W G N folio 191 MD Patents & Warrants

Note: This document posted is the Survey, it is unknown if the land was subsequently patented (deed).

Also: www.choatesofthesouth.org under Documents "1642_Choates His Chance"

¹¹ *From Servant to Freeholder: Status Mobility and Property Accumulation in Seventeenth-Century Maryland*, Russel R. Menard, The William and Mary Quarterly, 3rd Ser., Vol. 30, No. 1, Chesapeake Society (Jan 1973) page 44

¹² John Choate was baptized 6 Jun 1624 in Groton Parish, Boxford (18 miles NE of Rivenhall). His parents died when he was fourteen and he immigrated to the Colony of Massachusetts at age 19 (1643). John died in Chebacco-Ipswich, Essex Co., MA, on 4 Dec 1695. He is the progenitor of the *Northern Choate* families.

¹³ RIVENHALL Essex original registers ERO D/PI07/1/1