

Peter Read has been proven to be our immigrant ancestor, yet we know nothing about him before his arrival in Charles City Co., Virginia in 1654. Where was his home? Who were his parents?

In my research, I found the following information in the PRO (Public Records Office in London, England) Record #E157/20: (Licenses to Pass Beyond the Seas) "23 June 1635. Passengers to be transported (from London) to Virginia in the America, Mr. William Barker, by certificate from the Minister of Gravesend": among the passengers was a Steeven Read age 24; George Brookes age 35; William Brookes age 17, and young Walter Brookes age 15. This is the same Walter Brooks who nineteen years later would act as a headright for Peter Read. Was there a connection between Steeven Read and Walter Brookes before the trip to America? Was there a family connection between Steeven Read and Peter Read? The three young men all left England from Gravesend, the Kentish Gateway to the Thames Estuary.

My reason for believing our Read family has roots in the county of Kent comes from the "Journal of Richard Mather" (p.6):

*"This day there came aboard the ship two of the searchers and viewed a list of all our names, ministered the oath of allegiance to all of full age, viewed our certificates from the minister of the parishes from whence we came, approved well thereof, and gave us tickets, that is, licenses under their hands and seales to passe the seas."*

Steeven Read, Peter Read and Walter Brookes left by certificate by the Minister of Gravesend, which is located in the County of Kent. I believe the County of Kent in Great Britain may hold some answers for us!

1. G. C. Greer. *Early Virginia Immigrants*. Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., 1982 (Reprint), p. 273.
2. Louise Pledge Heath Foley. *Early Virginia Families Along the James River*. (Vol. 2). Richmond, Virginia, 1978, p. X.
3. Charles City County, Virginia. Court Orders 1661-1664, p.289.
4. *Ibid*, p.340-342.
5. Charles City County, Virginia. Court Orders, Fragments, pp. 543-601.
6. Charles City County, Virginia. Order Book 1676-1679, p.320.
7. *Ibid*, p.353.
8. Virginia State Archives. Charles City County, Virginia. Court Orders 1685, p.6. Accession number 14039.
9. Charles City County, Virginia. Order Book 1687-1688, p.549.
10. Charles City County, Virginia. Court Orders 1676-1679, p.232.
11. *Ibid*, p.118.
12. Charles City County, Virginia. Court Orders, October 3, 1688, p. 155.
13. *Ibid*, p.164