

## Migration from England to Illinois

| Name                                                     | Date        | From                          | To                            |
|----------------------------------------------------------|-------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Robert Pease, Jr. (1589-1644)                            | 1634        | Essex, England                | Salem, MA                     |
| Capt. John Pease (1632-1689)                             | 1681        | Salem, MA                     | Enfield, CT                   |
| James Pease (1679-1748)                                  | 1710        | Enfield, CT                   | Somers, Tolland, CT           |
| John Pease (1742-1820)                                   | 1792        | Somers, CT                    | Wales, MA                     |
|                                                          | 1803        | Wales, MA                     | Stafford, CT                  |
|                                                          |             | Stafford, CT                  | New Marlborough, MA           |
|                                                          | 1820        | New Marlborough, MA           | Marlboro, Windham, VT         |
| Elijah Pease (1770-aft 1850) and James Pease (1799-1883) | Before 1840 | Stafford, Tolland, CT         | Napoli, Cattaraugus, New York |
|                                                          | 1844        | Napoli, Cattaraugus, New York | Plato, Kane, Illinois         |

### ***Robert Pease, Jr. (1589-1644)***

Robert Pease was born in 1607 in Great Baddow, a long-established village just south of Chelmsford. He grew up in a family with deep generational roots in the community. The Pease lineage can be traced with confidence to Robert “the smythe” Pease (1485–1547), and for generations the men of the family worked in skilled trades such as blacksmithing and locksmithing. These crafts placed the family in the center of village life, providing steady work and social standing. Robert would have been raised amid the rhythms of parish worship, agricultural seasons, and close-knit community ties, with generations of Pease family members buried at St. Mary’s Church.

### *Pressures and Motivations to Emigrate*

Although rooted in tradition, Robert came of age during a period of economic uncertainty and religious tension in England. Essex was a stronghold of Puritan reform, and many families in the region faced limited opportunities for land ownership and advancement. Skilled tradesmen like Robert could find themselves constrained by competition and rising costs of living. The promise of New England—greater religious freedom, access to land, and the chance to build a future for one’s children—offered a compelling alternative. These pressures likely influenced Robert’s decision to leave behind his ancestral home in search of opportunity across the Atlantic.

### *The Voyage to New England*

In 1634, at approximately twenty-seven years of age, Robert Pease embarked for America aboard the ship *Francis*. He was accompanied by his brother, John, and his young son, Robert, only three years old. The Atlantic crossing was long and hazardous, with crowded conditions, unpredictable weather,

and constant risk of illness. Like many emigrants, Robert likely carried with him both the tools of his trade and the hope that perseverance and faith would be rewarded in the New World.

#### *Life and Settlement in Salem, Massachusetts*

After arriving in New England, Robert settled in Salem, one of the earliest English settlements in Massachusetts Bay. Salem in the 1630s was a demanding frontier community where survival depended on hard labor, cooperation, and strong religious commitment. Robert and his brother, John, were granted land in 1637, and additional family members—including Robert's mother, his wife, Marie, and her parents—followed in 1639. In 1643, Robert joined the First Church of Salem, marking his full acceptance into the religious and civic life of the town. Two weeks later, three of his children were baptized. Robert died in 1644, only about ten years after his arrival, but in that brief time he helped establish a lasting Pease presence in New England, mirroring the stability and continuity his family had known for generations in Great Baddow.

#### ***Capt. John Pease (1632-1689)***

John Pease was born in 1632 in Great Baddow, Essex, England, into a family with deep generational roots in skilled trades and parish life. In 1634, when John was still a small child, his father emigrated to Massachusetts Bay. John remained in England for several more years and then emigrated in 1639, traveling with his grandmother to reunite with his father in New England. This staggered migration was common and suggests careful planning, with family cohesion clearly a priority.

#### *Growing Up in Salem, Massachusetts*

John grew up in Salem during its formative decades. Salem in the 1640s and 1650s was a demanding but opportunity-rich environment for a young boy. Life revolved around church, household labor, and community responsibility. Children were expected to contribute early, and John likely apprenticed in a trade—later records describe him as a carpenter and joiner trained in Salem. His upbringing would have been shaped by Puritan discipline, frequent religious observance, and exposure to town governance, land division, and militia service. As the son of an early settler who was granted land and admitted to the First Church, John occupied a respectable place within the community.

#### *Adult Life, Family, and Standing in Salem*

In 1653, John married Mary Goodale, and together they raised six children before her death in 1668. He remarried in 1669 and had three additional children. John became a freeman of Massachusetts in 1668, signaling full civic participation, and he was active in both legal and community affairs—appearing as a witness, grantee, and overseer in Essex County records. He joined the First Church of Salem in 1661, continuing the family's strong religious ties. By midlife, John was well established: trained in a skilled trade, a landholder, church member, and patriarch of a large family.

#### *Moving to Enfield, Connecticut*

Despite his stability in Salem, John eventually chose to relocate. By the late 1670s, land in Salem had become increasingly scarce and fragmented, making it difficult for large families to provide farms or livelihoods for the next generation. The Connecticut River Valley offered fertile land, new town

opportunities, and the promise of family-based settlement. Around 1681, John moved with his family to Enfield, becoming one of its founders. The fact that his entire family appears to have moved with him—even children who were young adults—suggests a deliberate, collective decision aimed at preserving family unity and economic independence.

#### *Life in Enfield and Final Years*

Life in Enfield would have been more frontier-like than Salem, requiring renewed effort to clear land, build homes, and establish churches and civil institutions. John's skills as a carpenter and joiner were especially valuable in a new settlement. He was active in town and church life and played a role in maintaining religious worship after the congregation separated from Salem's influence. His leadership and experience helped anchor the community during its early years. John Pease died suddenly in 1689, leaving a lasting imprint on Enfield and a legacy of mobility, adaptability, and family cohesion. His life reflects the second generation of New England settlers—men who carried forward the ambitions and values that had drawn their parents across the Atlantic.

#### **James Pease (1679-1748)**

James Pease was born in 1679 in Salem, into a family that was already firmly rooted in early New England. When he was still a child, he moved with his grandfather, father, and extended family to Enfield in 1681. Growing up in Enfield, James knew it as home—a settled river-valley town. Unlike the first generation of immigrants, James belonged entirely to the New World, shaped by colonial realities rather than memories of England. By 1710, he was living in Enfield as an adult, establishing himself as a husband, landholder, and father.

#### *Family Life and Pressures to Move On*

Between 1711 and 1725, James and his wife had six children, increasing the need for land and long-term security. By the early eighteenth century, Enfield's best farmland had already been claimed and divided among earlier settlers and their heirs. For men like James, remaining in Enfield meant facing limited prospects for providing farms and livelihoods for his sons. Expansion was not a rejection of Enfield but a practical solution—one rooted in the same motivations that had driven earlier Pease migrations: opportunity, land, and family.

#### *Early Settlement of Somers (East Enfield)*

As early as 1713, James Pease began settling in what was then known as East Enfield, later called Somers. According to local history recorded on the town's historic marker, settlement in the area had begun earlier, around 1706, and James Pease was among the key figures who followed and helped formalize the community in 1713. At first, he spent summers there—clearing forests, planting crops, and preparing the land—while his family remained in Enfield. This seasonal pattern reflects both caution and determination, allowing him to secure a future homestead before relocating permanently.

#### *Founding a New Town on the Frontier*

Founding Somers required perseverance. The area lay in north-central Connecticut along the Massachusetts border and was once part of Massachusetts itself. Early settlers faced isolation, heavy

labor, and the challenge of creating civic and religious institutions from the ground up. James's work clearing land and establishing crops contributed directly to making permanent settlement possible. Although all of his children were born in Enfield, his efforts ensured that Somers would become a viable place for families like his to settle and thrive. The town was officially incorporated in 1734, later becoming part of Connecticut in 1749.

### ***John Pease (1742- after 1820)***

John Pease was born on June 12, 1742, in Somers, the second son in a family of nine children. He entered the world firmly anchored in one of Somers's founding families. His grandfather, James Pease, Sr., had been among the early settlers who transformed wilderness into a permanent town, and his father, James Pease, Jr., spent his entire life there. During John's childhood, Somers was no longer a frontier but a settled agricultural community. John grew up surrounded by family.

#### *Marriage, Family Life, and the Stability of Early Adulthood*

In 1768, John married Zipporah Coy, joining two established New England families. Together they had six children, most—if not all—born in Somers. During these years, John lived the life expected of him: farming, raising children, and participating in town life. His eldest child was born in Somers, reinforcing the assumption that he would remain rooted there as earlier generations had done. Yet the world beyond Somers was changing, and events far removed from rural Connecticut would soon shape his path.

#### *War, Survival, and Lasting Consequences*

Family papers record that John volunteered for the 1762 Havana expedition during Great Britain's war with Spain. Though the campaign resulted in the capture of Havana, it proved catastrophic for colonial soldiers. Disease ravaged the ranks, and accounts from Somers suggest that of roughly sixty men who went, only two survived—John was one of them. Survival came at a cost. Exposure to mass death and illness likely left physical and emotional scars, and the years following the war were marked by economic uncertainty throughout New England. John later sold his farm and accepted payment in Continental currency, which soon became nearly worthless, a loss that appears to have destabilized his household and forced a break with long-held land.

#### *Years of Movement and Searching for Stability*

In 1792, John left Somers with his family and moved to Wales, Massachusetts where they remained until about 1803. From there, he relocated to Stafford. During this unsettled period, records suggest that John may have spent time among the Shakers, an indication of spiritual searching or economic necessity during a time of upheaval. Eventually, he returned to Stafford before making a final move in 1820 with most of his family to Marlboro, Vermont, where he spent his last years.

#### *Final Years*

A later memorandum offered a sober assessment of John Pease's life: "At this day no glow of brightness, moral or intellectual, is circling him; time has dimmed the luster, if any were." Read in historical context, this reflection acknowledges a life shaped by difficulties. John lived through war, economic collapse, and repeated displacement—forces that left little room for success. His legacy

lies not in public achievement, but in perseverance: raising a family, surviving events that claimed many of his peers, and carrying the Pease line through one of the most unstable periods in early American history. His story reminds us how life events can change a person.

***Elijah Pease, Sr. (1770-aft 1850)***

Elijah Pease was born in 1770 in Somers, the eldest son of John and Zipporah Coy Pease. Raised in a family shaped by many moves, Elijah came of age during a period of expanding frontiers and growing opportunity beyond New England. In 1795, at the age of twenty-five, he married Anna Fuller in Stafford. Together, Elijah and Anna established a large family, welcoming five sons between 1797 and 1818.

In 1826, Elijah moved his family westward to Napoli, part of the wave of New England families seeking new land and opportunity beyond Connecticut. This relocation marked a significant turning point, extending the Pease family's long pattern of westward movement. Around 1844, Elijah continued farther west to Illinois, accompanied by three of his sons, participating in the broader migration that carried New England families into the developing Midwest.

[Elijah and Anna's stories are told more fully in the Biographical Sketches.]