

Archdale, John ^[1]

JOHN ARCHDALE

Governor: 1683-1686; 1694-1696

by Dennis F. Daniels

Research Branch, NC Office of Archives and History, 2006.

<https://www.dncr.nc.gov/about-us/history/division-historical-resources/nc-highway-historical-marker-program> ^[2]

See also: [Archdale, John](#) ^[3]



Virginia and Florida as they appeared to European settlers in 1607. Click on the map

to see it in detail.

^[4]John Archdale (ca. May 5, 1642-ca. July 4, 1717) served as [Albemarle County](#) ^[5]'s acting governor between 1683 and 1686 and as Carolina's provincial governor from 1694 to 1696. He was born in Buckinghamshire, England, to Thomas and Mary Nevill Archdale in 1642. His grandfather Richard Archdale was a London merchant who established the family among the English gentry. In 1664 the Gorges family (Archdale's sister Mary married Ferdinando Gorges) sent Archdale to Maine as a commissioner to help reestablish their claim to that colony. Archdale married Ann Dodson Cary, a widow with two children, in December 1673 and fathered four children. Archdale converted to Quakerism, apparently between 1673 and 1681.

In 1681 Archdale purchased John Berkeley's Carolina proprietorship and worked with proprietor William Craven to improve the [Lords Proprietors](#) ^[6] investment. In 1683 he arrived in Albemarle as Carolina's collector of [quitrents](#) ^[7]. Being the resident proprietor, he filled in as governor when Seth Sothel was out of the colony. As acting governor, Archdale worked to prevent war with the Indians. During his tenure the number of Quakers increased and Archdale protected them from prosecution. He was back in England by 1686.

In August 1694 the proprietors appointed Archdale as Carolina's provincial governor. Archdale reached North Carolina in June 1695 and remained for six weeks helping to restore order and invigorating the Quakers. He retained [Thomas Harvey](#) ^[8] as deputy governor. Archdale arrived in Charles Town in August 1695. His tenure lasted about a year. He focused his attention on South Carolina and allowed Harvey to implement his reforms in North Carolina.

Archdale appointed his nephew John Blake as South Carolina's deputy governor. Trying to maintain balance, he both placed Quakers and Anglicans on his council. The assembly enacted legislation referred to as "Archdale's Laws" that remained the basis for South Carolina's legal system for two decades. Archdale improved relations with the Indians and the Spanish and built better roads and fortifications. Conscientious objectors were provided with an exemption from military service. He attempted to rectify the problems between French [Huguenots](#) ^[9] and English settlers. Archdale also pursued a course of religious tolerance. The North Carolina and South Carolina assemblies passed messages of gratitude to Archdale for his efforts.

John Archdale was no longer a proprietor when Thomas Archdale sold the proprietorship to his cousin Joseph Blake. John Archdale won a seat in the House of Commons in 1698, but was never sworn. In 1705 Archdale bought William Berkeley's proprietorship. As a proprietor Archdale worked to overturn laws that hurt non-Anglican religious groups. In 1707 Archdale published a pamphlet entitled *A New Description of the Fertile and Pleasant Province of Carolina with a Brief Account of Its Discovery and Settling and the Government thereof to the Time, with Several Remarkable Passages of Divine Providence during my Time*. In 1708 he gave his proprietorship to his daughter Mary and her husband John Danson. He spent the remainder of his life at his manor and died in 1717.

References and additional resources:

Garraty, John A., and Mark C. Carnes. 1999. *American national biography*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Hood, Henry G. 1976. *The public career of John Archdale: (1642-1717)*. Greensboro, N.C.: Published by the North Carolina Friends Historical Society and the Quaker Collection of the Guilford College Library.

Johnson, Allen W. 1929. *Dictionary of American Biography. 3, Bready-Chandler*. London: H. Milford.

Jones, Rufus M. 2007. *The Quakers in the American Colonies* Gardners Books.

Monroe, Haskell. 1962. Religious Toleration and Politics in Early North Carolina. *North Carolina historical review*. 39 (July): 267-283.

Powell, William Stevens. 1979. *Dictionary of North Carolina biography. Vol. 1, A-C*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.

Raimo, John. 1980. *Biographical directory of American colonial and Revolutionary governors, 1607-1789* Westport, Ct: Meckler Books.

Salley, A. S. 1911. *Narratives of early Carolina, 1650-1708*. New York: C. Scribner's Sons.
<https://archive.org/details/narrearlycarolina00sallrich> [10].

Sirmans, Marion Eugene. 1966. *Colonial South Carolina. A political history. 1663-1763*. Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina P.

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. 2008. Colonial and state records of North Carolina. [Chapel Hill, N.C.]: University Library, UNC-Chapel Hill. <https://docsouth.unc.edu/csr/> [11].

Weeks, Stephen B. 2007. *Southern Quakers and Slavery: a Study in* Gardners Books.

[WorldCat](#) [12] (Searches numerous library catalogs)

Image Credits:

William P. Cumming, *The Southeast in Early Maps, Third Edition* Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998. Map 27.; Philip D. Burden, *The Mapping of North America: A list of printed maps 1511-1670*. Herts, England: Raleigh Publications, 1996. Map 155. <https://dc.lib.unc.edu/cdm/ref/collection/ncmaps/id/1109> [4]

Subjects:

[Biographies](#) [13]

[Colonial period \(1600-1763\)](#) [14]

[Governors](#) [15]

Authors:

[Daniels, Dennis F.](#) [16]

From:

[Research Branch, NC Office of Archives and History.](#) [17]

4 May 2006 | Daniels, Dennis F.

Source URL: <https://www.ncpedia.org/archdale-john>

Links

[1] <https://www.ncpedia.org/archdale-john> [2] <https://www.dncr.nc.gov/about-us/history/division-historical-resources/nc-highway-historical-marker-program> [3] <https://www.ncpedia.org/biography/archdale-john> [4] <https://dc.lib.unc.edu/cdm/ref/collection/ncmaps/id/1109> [5] <https://www.ncpedia.org/albemarle-county> [6] <https://www.ncpedia.org/lords-proprietors> [7] <https://www.ncpedia.org/quitrents> [8] <https://www.ncpedia.org/biography/harvey-thomas> [9] <https://www.ncpedia.org/huguenots> [10] <https://archive.org/details/narrearlycarolina00sallrich> [11] <https://docsouth.unc.edu/csr/> [12] https://www.worldcat.org/search?q=k%3A%22john+archdale%22+k%3A%22north+carolina%22&qt=results_page [13] <https://www.ncpedia.org/category/subjects/biography-term> [14] <https://www.ncpedia.org/category/subjects/colonial-period> [15] <https://www.ncpedia.org/category/subjects/governors> [16] <https://www.ncpedia.org/category/authors/daniels-dennis-f> [17] <https://www.ncpedia.org/category/entry-source/research-bran>