

# Peter Ganges

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<b>Individual Summary:</b>	<b>Peter Ganges<sup>1-2</sup></b> Bet. 1746–1779 - 23 Sep 1848
Sex:	Male <sup>1</sup>
Father:	
Mother:	
<b>Individual Facts:</b>	
Person ID:	GPIDS0500
Race:	Black <sup>3-4</sup>
Birth:	Bet. 1746–1779 in Africa; indenture gives age as "about 21 years."; obituary gives age at death of 102, born Africa. <sup>1-2</sup>
Death:	23 Sep 1848 in Bensalem, Bucks, Pennsylvania, USA <sup>2</sup>
Also Known As:	Peter Longstreth <sup>2-3, 5</sup>
Also Known As:	Guinea Pete <sup>2</sup>
Arrival:	06 Aug 1800 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, USA; aboard the Schooner Prudent, Quarantine Station, Fort Mifflin <sup>1, 6</sup>
Indenture:	01 Sep 1800 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, USA; 4 year term to Joseph Longstreth, Southampton, Bucks County <sup>1</sup>
Occupation:	1800 ; indentured as a farmer. <sup>1</sup>
Education:	1800 ; in indenture, Joseph Longstreth is to make all endeavor to teach Peter to read and write <sup>1</sup>
Compensation/Wages:	1804 ; Peter to receive \$15 and two suits of cloting, one new at completion of his indenture. <sup>1</sup>
Literacy:	1845 ; signed his will with a mark.
Residence:	01 Sep 1800 in Southampton, Bucks, Pennsylvania, USA; indentured to Joseph Longstreth, Southampton, Bucks County. <sup>1</sup>
Residence:	1808 in Bensalem, Bucks, Pennsylvania, USA <sup>3</sup>
Residence:	1812 in Bensalem, Bucks, Pennsylvania, USA <sup>4</sup>
Residence:	1820 in Bensalem, Bucks, Pennsylvania, USA <sup>7</sup>
Residence:	1840 in Bensalem, Bucks, Pennsylvania, USA <sup>8</sup>
Residence:	1830 in Bensalem, Bucks, Pennsylvania, USA <sup>5</sup>
Residence:	Bet. 06 Aug–01 Sep 1800 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, USA; between arrival and indenture <sup>1</sup>
Property:	01 Apr 1812 in Bensalem, Bucks, Pennsylvania, USA; deed from William Wilson and wife, Sarah to Peter Longstreth (a black man). 1/4 acre for \$40 <sup>4</sup>
Will:	22 Apr 1845 in Bensalem, Bucks, Pennsylvania, USA <sup>9</sup>

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<b>Shared Facts:</b>	<b>Mary</b>
	[no facts]
Children:	George H Longstreth Catherine Ann Longstreth Peter Longstreth Christiana Longstreth Giborah Longstreth Harriet Longstreth

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<b>Notes:</b>	
Person Notes:	<b>Discussion</b>

Peter ("Guinea Pete") Longstreth's obituary was widely published at the time of his death, all closely following the transcription given here taken from the Philadelphia Dollar Newspaper:

## DEATH OF "GUINEA PETE"

*Died in Bucks county, on the 23d ult., Peter Longstreth, familiarly known as "Guinea Pete," aged 102 years. Peter - says the Germantown Telegraph -- was native of Africa, and had a wife and children there. Being a trader he went on board a French ship to buy goods, and was detained and carried off for a slave. He was first taken to France, and on the voyage from thence to the West Indies, the ship was taken by Commodore Decatur and carried into Philadelphia where he, and the rest of the cargo, were placed out mostly among the society of Friends, to acquire the language and habits of the country. Peter was taken by the Longstreth family in Warminster, Bucks County, and after staying some time, went to work for himself, married another wife, and by industry soon acquired sufficient means to purchase a house and lot, on which he resided most of the remaining part of his life. Although he could speak the Arabic fluently, yet he never acquired sufficient of the English language to enable him to express his ideas with facility, or to be easily understood.*

The details agree very well the documentary record given here and allow us to say with some assurance that Peter Longstreth and Peter Ganges are one and the same man. There are a few exceptions. Peter's age of 102 seems a stretch. Both his indenture and census records suggest a year of birth around 1775. It was relatively common for older people and their families to exaggerate their age over time. The circumstances of his capture, release and indenture to the Longstreths all fit, save for giving Commodore Stephen Decatur the military credit instead of Capt. John Mullowney. Census and tax records confirm Peter's continuous residence in Bensalem from 1808 until his death in 1848. His quarter-acre lot, purchased in 1814, remained in his hands until his death, when it passed under his will to

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**Notes:**

his daughter, Catherine, who sold it in 1852.

Peter's will names six children, but no spouse. This suggests Mary must have died before 1845 when the will was written. Further, given the \$1 bequests given to five children, it is likely that they all were adults at the time the will was written, placing their dates of birth no later than 1830.

**Open Questions**

- The other detail of Peter's capture suggest the voyage of the *Prudent* may have been a difficult one, although to-date, we have been unable to corroborate this part of the story.
- Who are the other people living in Peter's household in the 1820 and 1830 censuses?
- Peter's daughter, Catherine, appears in land records as Catherine Ganges. Did she marry a Ganges or did she assume her father's original surname?
- Does Peter have any living descendants?
- What are the circumstances for Peter's move from the Longstreth family in Southampton to Bensalem? Is there a family connection?

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**Sources:**

- 1 Indenture from Peter Ganges to Joseph Longstreth of Southampton, Bucks County, Box 2 Folder 14; "Papers, Series IV. Manumissions, indentures, and other legal papers, Manuscript", Pennsylvania Abolition Society, Historical Society of Pennsylvania, 1300 Locust Street, Philadelphia, PA 19107.
- 2 "Death of Guinea Pete", Vol 6, No 39, 11 Oct 1848, Page 2; accessed 21 Jul 2019, *Dollar Newspaper*, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, online images (fultonhistory.com).
- 3 Bucks County, Pennsylvania, Tax Records, 1782-1860, 1808, Bensalem Township, n.p.; digital images, ancestry, [ancestry.com](https://www.ancestry.com) (<https://www.ancestry.com>).
- 4 Bucks County, Pennsylvania, Recorder of Deeds, Deed Books 1686-1866. Vol 10, pp 508-510 (FHL 8067834); digital images, Family Search, [familysearch.com](https://www.familysearch.org) (<https://www.familysearch.org>).
- 5 Ancestry.com, 1830 United States Federal Census (Provo, UT, USA, Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2010), Ancestry.com, 1830; Census Place: Bensalem, Bucks, Pennsylvania; Series: M19; Roll: 146; Page: 198; Family History Library Film: 0020620.
- 6 8 Aug 1800, issue 7376, page 3, accessed 8 July 2019, *Claypoole's American Daily Advertiser*, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, online images (<https://www.genealogybank.com/>).
- 7 Ancestry.com, 1820 United States Federal Census (Provo, UT, USA, Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2010), Ancestry.com, 1820 U S Census; Census Place: Bensalem, Bucks, Pennsylvania; Page: 270; NARA Roll: M33\_99; Image: 286.
- 8 Ancestry.com, 1840 United States Federal Census (Provo, UT, USA, Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2010), Ancestry.com, Year: 1840; Census Place: Bensalem, Bucks, Pennsylvania; Roll: 447; Page: 206; Family History Library Film: 0020539.
- 9 Bucks County, Pennsylvania, Wills, Vol 13, Page 241, Will of Peter Longstreth, 22 Apr 1845, accessed 21 Jul 2019.; digital images, Family Search, [familysearch.org](https://www.familysearch.org)).

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