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Descendants of John Nicholson (died 1777) of Sussex County

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In his 1932 account of descendants of Robert Nicholson of Surry County, Virginia, James D. Evans brings one line to great-grandchild John Nicholson of Sussex County who left a will dated 7 Jan 1777.¹ Six of John's seven children are identified from a parish register.² A seventh, Robert, is unmentioned by Evans but appears in guardianship records.³ Evans did not trace the offspring beyond their births.⁴ Lack of knowledge concerning John's children has led Nicholson genealogists to incorrectly associate his sons with unrelated men with the same names and similar ages.⁵ This study shows that John Nicholson's sons had no descendants of their own and cannot be the ancestors claimed by other researchers.

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¹ James D. Evans, "Nicholson Family of Virginia," *William and Mary College Quarterly Historical Magazine* 12, no. 1 (January 1932): 49–66. Evans cites and abstracts key sources, which were verified for the generational links from John Nicholson to his great-grandfather Robert Nicholson.

² Evans, "Nicholson Family of Virginia," 57.

³ Sussex Co., Guardian Accounts, 1754–1787, p. 544; FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CS42-GSS7-D>), IGN 7898809, image 312/813. Evans mistakenly gives John a first wife "Ann" and child "Jane" born 7 May 1749, but the parish register shows child "James," the son of James Nicholson and his wife Anne, born that day. See, Albemarle Parish (Surry and Sussex Cos.), Parish Register, 1739–1778, page number obscured but follows 150; FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CS4C-276>), IGN 7893694, image 142/212.

⁴ The one event Evans associates with a Nicholson child as an adult is a reference to William receiving a military land warrant, but it likely applied to John's brother. See Genealogical Summary for details.

⁵ Incorrect relationships have propagated in family trees on the internet, though none have been formalized in publication. For example, John's sons William and Benjamin Nicholson have been linked to two men by those names in Greenville and Pendleton Districts, S.C., as included in: Family Tree, FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org>), John Nicholson (ID M4P7-D5Z), William Evan Nicholson (ID K2QD-FMM), and Benjamin Nicholson (ID MQR5-X24).

ALBEMARLE PARISH BIRTHS

The Nicholson family lived in the part of Surry County that was placed in Albemarle Parish at its creation in November 1738.⁶ When Sussex County was formed in November 1753, most of Albemarle Parish fell within its borders.⁷ All but one of John Nicholson's children were recorded in the parish register:

William Nicolson, born 16 December 1765, christened 16 March 1766⁸

Buckner Nicolson, born 26 January 1767, christened 15 March 1767⁹

Benjamin Nicolson, born 3 October 1768, christened 12 February 1769¹⁰

Jane Nicolson, born 16 November 1770, christened 7 April 1771¹¹

John Nicolson, born 23 March 1772, christened 31 May 1772¹²

Susanna Nicolson, born 3 October 1773, christened 12 December 1773¹³

The Nicholson family's youngest child—Robert—does not appear in the parish register. Births are arranged by the first letter of the child's first name, then chronologically by christening date. The last child in the parish register with a first name starting with *R* was born 13 Dec 1775 and christened 4 Feb 1776.¹⁴ Given the consistency with which the other children were recorded, it is likely that Robert was born in 1776 after the register ends.

⁶ William Waller Hening, *The Statutes at Large; Being a Collection of All the Laws of Virginia...*, 13 vols. (Richmond: Franklin Press, printer, 1819–1823), 5:75–78.

⁷ Hening, *The Statutes at Large*, 6:384–385. A small portion in the northeast corner of Albemarle Parish south of the Nottoway River remained in Surry County and was added to Southwark Parish.

⁸ Albemarle Parish Register (Surry and Sussex Cos.), 1739–1778, p. 138, line 25; FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CS4C-2QZ>), IGN 7893694, image 150/212.

⁹ Albemarle Parish Register (Surry and Sussex Cos.), 1739–1778, p. 103, line 21; FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CS4C-2Q6>), IGN 7893694, image 114/212.

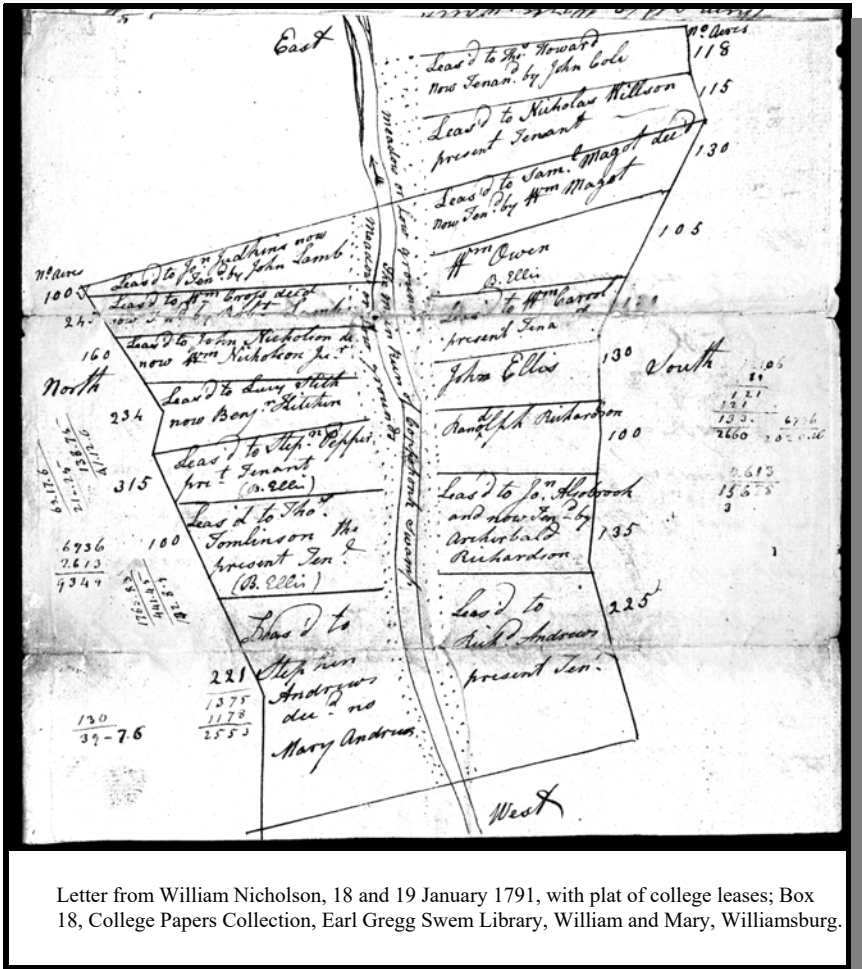
¹⁰ *Ibid.*, line 36.

¹¹ Albemarle Parish Register (Surry and Sussex Cos.), 1739–1778, p. 80, line 34; FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CS4C-2W8>), IGN 7893694, image 86/212.

¹² Albemarle Parish Register (Surry and Sussex Cos.), 1739–1778, p. 83, line 17; FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CS4C-2WH>), IGN 7893694, image 89/212.

¹³ Albemarle Parish Register (Surry and Sussex Cos.), 1739–1778, p. 158, line 18; FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CS4C-2SB>), IGN 7893694, image 170/212.

¹⁴ Albemarle Parish Register (Surry and Sussex Cos.), 1739–1778, p. 150, line 24; FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CS4C-27F>), IGN 7893694, image 162/212. Rebekah, daughter of Thomas and Lucy Richardson, was the last *R* child listed in the register.



Letter from William Nicholson, 18 and 19 January 1791, with plat of college leases; Box 18, College Papers Collection, Earl Gregg Swem Library, William and Mary, Williamsburg.

ESTATE OF JOHN NICHOLSON

In his will written on 7 January and proved on 18 Sept 1777, John Nicholson¹⁵ gave control of the family's leased plantation to his wife Elizabeth during her widowhood, which would at her death or marriage go to his eldest son William.¹⁶ He repeated the stipulation "for her widowhood" for his other bequests. At Elizabeth's death or remarriage, his remaining estate was to be divided among his (unnamed) children or their heirs. John named as executors his wife Elizabeth, brother William Nicholson, and Richard Andrews.

On 11 Feb 1785 Elizabeth Nicholson, described as a "widow," married John Jordan.¹⁷ There is a gap in the surviving order and minute books that would have recorded the appointment of guardians. Bonds for the period do not survive.

William Nicholson, John's executor, filed an account with the court on 19 June 1786 that included the first evidence of John's youngest child. On 26 Dec 1785, a £1 payment had been made to "Levan Lunsford for School^s Robert Nicholson." And, on 1 Mar 1786, sundry bonds valued at £290.1.7 were "renewed as Guardian" suggesting a transfer of their status as part of John's estate to individual orphan's accounts.¹⁸ In a plat of leases from the College of William and Mary dated January 1791, the family's land was described as "Leas'd to John Nicholson de[ceased] now W^m Nicholson Ju^r," confirming the passage of title based on the terms of John's will.¹⁹ No other children were mentioned and no other estate accounts or suits involving John's estate were recorded.²⁰

TAX RECORDS²¹

Following her husband's death, the family's tax burden fell to the widow Elizabeth. She appears in the first Sussex County personal property tax lists alongside her

¹⁵ Sussex Co. Will Book C, p. 264; FamilySearch

(<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-C9PX-KDP7>), IGN 7645834, image 350/442.

¹⁶ Sussex Co. Deed Book J, pp. 78–79; FamilySearch

(<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CSL6-T3QN-X>), IGN 8191620, image 48/519.

¹⁷ Sussex Co. Register of Marriages, 1754–1853, p. 36; FamilySearch

(<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3QS7-89XF-26JD>), IGN 7579169, image 216/518.

¹⁸ Sussex Co. Will Book D, pp. 515–516; FamilySearch

(<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-C9PX-KX9P>), IGN 7645835, image 293/563.

¹⁹ Letter from William Nicholson, 18 and 19 January 1791, with plat of college leases; Box 18, College Papers Collection, Earl Gregg Swem Library, William and Mary, Williamsburg.

²⁰ No court suits related to John Nicholson's estate were filed in Sussex Co. Sussex Co. Order Books, 1754–1807, 1764–1776, 1777–1782, 1786–1826; FamilySearch, IGN 8191618, 7898812, 7898811 using a combination of index searches, page-by-page browsing, and full-text search on Nicholson.

²¹ Between 1783 and 1792 the taxable age for free white male tithables was twenty-one unless the county or municipality opted to set it at sixteen. Barbara Vines Little, *A Researcher's Guide to Virginia's Historical Records* (Orange, Va.: Virginia Genealogical Society, 2025), 391.

husband's relatives William, Harris, and John Nicholson.²² In 1782 and 1783, her tax burden included six enslaved individuals.²³ In 1784, "Elizabeth [Nicholson] & Son William" were recorded in the tax list.²⁴ William was eighteen years old.

Both Elizabeth and William dropped from Sussex County tax lists after that—Elizabeth having married and William having moved to neighboring Brunswick County where he is noted as "under 21" in the 1785 list there.²⁵ He continued to appear in the lists in Brunswick each year through 1789.²⁶ The extended Nicholson family had numerous connections to Brunswick County, and he may have lived with a relative.²⁷

Buckner Nicholson appears once in Sussex County tax lists as a minor, in 1786. At age nineteen as "Buck Nichals," he was included in the household of Richard Andrews, the co-executor of John Nicholson's estate.²⁸ Sussex lists after that year only named white tithables above age twenty-one, but Richard Andrews's household included two males age sixteen to twenty-one in 1787 and three males of that age in 1788.²⁹ Then, in 1789, the number dropped back to two.³⁰ That is the year Buckner Nicholson first appears on tax lists in his own right; he had moved to neighboring Dinwiddie County.³¹

²² Evans, "Nicholson Family of Virginia," 56–58.

²³ Sussex Co. Personal Property Tax Lists, 1782 and 1783, Lawrence Smith lists, Elizabeth Nicholson entries; FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org>), IGN 7856310, images 111 and 132/907. In 1783, those enslaved by Elizabeth were named as Peter, Jacob, Jane, Ben, Isabe[1], and Sary.

²⁴ Sussex Co. Personal Property Tax List, 1784, Laurence Smith list, Elizabeth Nicholson entry; FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CS79-YVPX>), IGN 7856310, image 152/907. The seven enslaved were Peter, Joan, Cate, Nanny, Isabel, Sarah, and Nester.

²⁵ Brunswick Co. Personal Property Tax List, 1785, Wm. Nicholson entry; FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CSQ2-7YNN>), IGN 7849095, image 123.

²⁶ Brunswick Co. Personal Property Tax Lists, 1786–1789; FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org>), IGN 7849095, images 167, 204, 232, 266/665.

²⁷ Among many other examples, William Nicholson of Sussex Co. (brother of John) sold land in Brunswick Co. on 28 Dec 1792 with Buckner Nicholson as a witness. Brunswick Co. Deed Book 16, pp. 116–117; FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CSKJ-GQYY-S>), IGN 8141129, image 75/778.

²⁸ Sussex Co. Personal Property Tax List, 1786, p. 41, Richard Andress [sic, Andrews] entry; FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CS79-YVLM>), IGN 7856310, image 232/907.

²⁹ Sussex Co. Personal Property Tax Lists, 1787–1788, Wm. Nicholson's district, Richard Andrews entries; FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org>), IGN 7856310, images 247 and 257/907.

³⁰ Sussex Co. Personal Property Tax List, 1789, Wm. Nicholson's district, Richard Andrews entry; FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CS79-YVL8>), IGN 7856310, image 277/907.

³¹ Dinwiddie Co. Personal Property Tax List, 1789, Wood Tucker's district, p. 9, Buckner Nicholson/Nicholson entry; FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CS4V-R3LP-B>), IGN 7898135, image 202/476.

GUARDIANSHIPS

John's children Jane, Susanna, and Robert were all placed under guardianships, with their uncle William Nicholson as guardian. Only the guardian accounts survive. Each guardianship account states that the child was an "orphan of John Nicholson." William Nicholson filed a guardian's report in September 1788 as guardian of Robert, Jane, and Susannah Nicholson, orphans of John Nicholson, crediting each with £58.0.0 for their "portion of your Father's estate" and covering various charges for 1785–1788; he filed a second report on 3 Sept 1789 charging each with one year's board paid to John Jordan.³² In September 1790 he charged Susanna, Jane, and Robert each with eighteen months board and in September 1791 he charged Susanna and Jane each with twelve months board. In September 1792 he charged Susanna with twelve months board.³³ At September court 1790, "Robert Nicholson appeared in Court and chose William Nicholson Ju^r as his Guardian, who with Richard Andrews & Lawrence Smith his Securities entered into bond in the penalty of £500."³⁴ In 1793 Jane was of age.

DEATHS OF BENJAMIN AND JOHN (JR.)

John's sons Benjamin and John (Jr.) are the remaining children to be accounted for. The boys do not appear in the register of deaths for Albemarle Parish (with entries through 1777).³⁵ Neither appears on tax lists in Sussex or surrounding counties after age sixteen or when reaching twenty-one.³⁶ They were not mentioned in their father's estate papers or provided guardians like Jane, Susanna, and Robert.³⁷ Men by those names in deeds as grantor, grantee, and witnesses were other individuals

³² Sussex Co. Guardian Accounts, 1754–1787, pp. 544, 552; FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CS42-GSSH-N>), IGN 7898809, images 302, 312/813.

³³ Sussex Co. Guardian Accounts, 1789–1824, pp. 11, 13, 15, 23; FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org>), IGN 7898809, images 336, 338, 340, 348/813.

³⁴ Sussex Co. Order Book 1786–1791, p. 726; FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org>), IGN <https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CS42-Q3S6-W>, image 396/401.

³⁵ Albemarle Parish Register (Surry and Sussex Cos.), 1739–1778, pp. 160–170; FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org>), IGN 7893694, images 173–183.

³⁶ The personal property tax list survey covered years 1782 (Benjamin at age 14) to 1794 (John at age 22) and the places where the Nicholson family had a presence, including Sussex, Brunswick, Dinwiddie, and Prince George counties, along with the city of Petersburg. FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org>), IGN 7856310 (Sussex), 7849095 (Brunswick), 7898135 (Dinwiddie), 7856310 (Prince George), and 7856360 (Petersburg).

³⁷ For John Nicholson's estate account, see Sussex Co. Will Book D, pp. 515–516. For guardianships, see Sussex Co. Guardians Accounts, 1754–1787, 1789–1824; FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org>), IGN 7898809.

in the extended family.³⁸ The boys are not mentioned in records of their siblings. John's other children remained in proximity to Sussex County, and there is no reason to think that these two sons struck out on their own before age twenty-one. The overwhelming negative evidence leads to the conclusion that Benjamin and John died at a young age.

DEATHS OF WILLIAM, ROBERT, AND BUCKNER

William, Robert, and Buckner all died without producing children. After an unexplained absence from tax records from 1790 to 1798, William Nicholson appears in the Petersburg personal property tax list for 1799, when he was recorded with an ordinary license.³⁹ He was working as a contractor providing goods to the U.S. Army, and his "sudden death" before 19 Feb 1800 required the War Department to stop a payment to William's account.⁴⁰ He was still owed \$54.97 when his brother Buckner, as administrator of William's estate, submitted a receipt from 19 Dec 1799 for payment.⁴¹ Virginia law required that probate of estates be brought in the county of residence. No record of the estate was located in Petersburg records. It is likely that no estate account survives. A few estate accounts were recorded in Will Book 1; consistent recording of Petersburg fiduciary accounts began in 1806 with Volume 1, 1806–1826.

Robert Nicholson died in Petersburg and left a will on 28 July 1809 that was recorded on 7 August; his property was appraised 9 August.⁴² He named no children, but instead left property to his wife Lucy, brother Buckner, sisters Jane Lane and Susan Lane (and then to her son Robert), a sister-in-law Patsy Johnston,

³⁸ Sussex Co. General Index to Deeds, vols. 1–2, 1754–1878; FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org>), IGN 7898801. Brunswick Co., General Index to Deeds (1732–1881); FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org>), IGN 7644009. Petersburg General Index to Deeds (1784–1869); FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org>), IGN 8191479. All deeds involving the known Nicholson family were examined for Benjamin or John as a witness, and additional searches were conducted using FamilySearch Full-Text Search (<https://www.familysearch.org/search/full-text>).

³⁹ Petersburg Personal Property Tax List, 1799, Prince George part, Wm. Nicholson entry; FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CS79-13KS-8>), IGN 7856360, image 850/862.

⁴⁰ William Simmons ("W.S.") to the Secretary of War, 19 Feb 1800, in War Department, Office of the Accountant, Audit Reports on Military Accounts and Claims, vol. C, pp. 154–155, entry 515, RG 217, National Archives, Washington, D.C.

⁴¹ William Simmons ("W.S.") to Edward Carrington, 30 April 1800, in War Department, Office of the Accountant, Fair Copies of Letters Sent, vol. G, p. 121, entry 496, RG 217, National Archives, Washington, D.C.; digital image, Papers of the War Department (<https://wardepartmentpapers.org/s/home/item/75226>). Source details were verified by obtaining a copy of the document from the National Archives.

⁴² Petersburg Will Book 2, fols. 41–42; FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-C9PX-GSG4-S>), IGN 7646074, images 414–415/637.

some friends, and the family of his first wife, Frances Thacker Holmes. He died “leaving no child,” according to family acquaintance Harriet B. Smith.⁴³

Buckner Nicholson married Dolly Pettipool, daughter of Seth Pettipool of Dinwiddie County.⁴⁴ In a June 1811 deed to formalize the sale of land left by Robert in his 1809 will, Buckner was described as “advanced in life, having no children, & being without funds to improve” the property.⁴⁵ He may have felt “advanced” in age being the only surviving brother, but at age forty-four he had many years remaining. Buckner apparently died in Sussex County shortly after compilation of the 1837 tax lists, the last record in which he appears.⁴⁶

JANE AND SUSANNA NICHOLSON

John’s two daughters are the only children known to have descendants. Jane Nicholson married Peter Lane on 10 Mar 1796, and she was named in her brother Robert’s 1809 will.⁴⁷ The couple had three children: Alexander N. Lane, Elizabeth Lane, and Susan A. Lane.⁴⁸

Susanna Nicholson remains a mystery. In his 1809 will, her brother Robert named a sister “Susan Lane” and stated she had a son named Robert Lane. A woman named Susanna Nicholson married Thomas D. Heath in 1807.⁴⁹ However, the Heath

⁴³ Affidavit of Harriet B. Smith, 3 Sept 1850, in U.S. War Department, Office of the Secretary, Revolutionary War pension application, R15233, Virginia, Isaac Holmes; digitized from NARA microfilm publication M804, database and digital images, “US, Revolutionary War Pensions, 1800-1900,” Fold3 (<https://www.fold3.com/image/23391316/>).

⁴⁴ Petersburg Deed Book 3, p. 239; FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-C3MJ-29BD-F>), IGN 8452438, image 143/769. The license would have been issued in Dinwiddie Co. (the bride’s residence), where marriage records from the era were destroyed during the Civil War.

⁴⁵ Petersburg Deed Book 4, p. 81–82; FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-C3MJ-291M-7>), IGN 8452438, image 483/769.

⁴⁶ Sussex Co. Personal Property Tax List, 1837, p. 16, Buckner Nicholson entry; FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CS79-24YR-1>), IGN 7856311, image 837/966. Buckner did not appear on the 1838 tax list (IGN 7856311, image 865/966).

⁴⁷ Sussex Co. Register of Marriages, 1754–1853, p. 270; FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q57-99XF-281F>), IGN 7579169, image 457/518. For Robert’s will, see Petersburg Will Book 2, fols. 41–42.

⁴⁸ Petersburg Will Book 2, fols. 41–42.

⁴⁹ Lydda Nicholson (widow of John Nicholson’s brother Flood Nicholson) gave land and slaves to Alexander in her will that would go to his sisters Betsey and Susan if he died before age twenty-one, and named them as the son and daughters of Peter Lane. Sussex Co. Will Book H, pp. 114–116; FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-C9PX-KRX5>), IGN 7645837, images 66–67/790. The three siblings sold land together in 1827. Sussex Co. Deed Book P, p. 401; FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-C3MJ-F3W7-G>), IGN 8452443, image 213/538. For Elizabeth’s death record naming her parents, see Virginia Register of Deaths, Sussex Co., 1858 (unnumbered, first page), line 24, Elizabeth S. Davis; FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:S3HY-6XCZ-44V>), IGN 4225410, image 301/653.

name does not match Robert Nicholson's will, and the timing relative to Robert's death precludes the existence of a child from the marriage old enough to have been mentioned by name in an uncle's will. The child Robert Lane may be the man who later appears in Sussex County personal property tax lists 1821–1823 (born approximately 1800).⁵⁰ He died by December 1825 when the county court ordered his estate be administered by the sheriff.⁵¹

CONCLUSION

Parish, county, and federal records paint a reasonably complete picture of John Nicholson's children, accounting for the fates of each of his sons and demonstrating that his daughters had children. Attempts to connect "brick wall" Nicholsons in unrelated families are based on the same-name fallacy and assumptions filling gaps in evidence. This account of John Nicholson's children demonstrates he left no descendants through his sons.

GENEALOGICAL SUMMARY

Fourth Generation of Robert Nicholson's Family and First Generation of John Nicholson's (died 1777) Family

1. JOHN¹ NICHOLSON (John³, Robert², Robert¹)⁵² was born in Surry County, say 1720.⁵³ and died shortly before his will was proved on 18 Sept 1777.⁵⁴ He married (bond issued 7 May 1763) Elizabeth Andrews, born 27 Mar 1744, daughter of John and Sarah Andrews.⁵⁵ Elizabeth married 2) John Jordan on 11 Feb 1785.⁵⁶

John and his brother William inherited 250 acres of land through their father's will.⁵⁷ John sold his interest in the land he inherited to his brother William on

⁵⁰ Sussex Co. Personal Property Tax Lists, 1821 (p. 11), 1822 (p. 12), 1823 (p. 12), Robert Lane entries; FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org>), IGN 7856311, images 355, 384, 414/966.

⁵¹ Sussex Co. Minute Book, 1824–1827, December 1825, Robert Lane order; FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-C37H-WFV5>), IGN 8574693, images 89–90/178.

⁵² Evans, "Nicholson Family of Virginia," 49–66.

⁵³ John's birth date is estimated from his second position in the list of eight children over age twenty-one named in his father's 1753 will. Sussex Co. Will Book A, pp. 2–3; FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q57-99GY-QD6C>), IGN 7642305, images 308–309/497.

⁵⁴ Sussex Co. Will Book C, p. 264.

⁵⁵ Sussex Co. Register of Marriages, 1754–1853, p. 8; FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q57-99XF-26HP>), IGN 7579169, image 188/518. Albemarle Parish Register (Surry and Sussex Cos.), 1739–1778, p. 33, line 14; FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CS4C-271>), IGN 7893694, image 59.

⁵⁶ Sussex Co. Register of Marriages, 1754–1853, p. 36.

⁵⁷ Sussex Co. Will Book A, pp. 2–3.

17 Mar 1763.⁵⁸ At his death John held a lease on land in the “college plantation” which he left to his wife during her widowhood and which was to go to his son William.⁵⁹ William was noted as the successor lessee in a January 1791 survey of leased farms.⁶⁰ The lease was later transferred to his stepfather John Jordan, whose estate account lists the executor’s expenses in “going to Williamsburg to secure the college land.” This was likely a transfer of title of the lease to Jordan’s daughter. In June 1801 a rent payment of £3.6.7 was made and beginning in February 1802 through November 1804 four payments for the college land were made.⁶¹ On 27 April 1802 the College of William and Mary sold a fee simple title to the land “formerly leased to John Nicholson” to the estate of John Jordan.⁶²

Children⁶³ of John¹ Nicholson and Elizabeth Andrews:

- i. WILLIAM² NICHOLSON, born 16 Dec 1765, christened 16 Mar 1766,⁶⁴ died between 19 Dec 1799 and 19 Feb 1800.⁶⁵ There is no evidence he married or had children.

Minimal evidence survives to document William’s life. He appears on personal property tax lists through 1789,⁶⁶ then once again in 1799 before his death.⁶⁷ He worked as a contractor providing food and goods to the U.S.

⁵⁸ Sussex Co. Deed Book B, pp. 374–375; FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CS4K-KCMQ-9>), IGN 7898802, image 196/411.

⁵⁹ Sussex Co. Will Book C, p. 264.

⁶⁰ Letter from William Nicholson, 18 and 19 Jan 1791, with plat of college leases; Box 18, College Papers Collection, Earl Gregg Swem Library, William and Mary, Williamsburg.

⁶¹ Sussex Co. Will Book F, p.499; FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-C9TC-J96Y-1>), IGN 7676315, image 277/532.

⁶² Sussex Co. Deed Book J, pp. 78–79. College lands held under leases rather than fee simple title are not reflected in land tax records. John’s brother William served as manager of the college lands located in Sussex Co. Gary M. Williams, *Sussex County, Virginia: A Heritage Recalled by the Land* (Petersburg: Dietz Press, 2012), 65.

⁶³ See ALBEMARLE PARISH BIRTHS on the second page of this article for full sources of birth and christening dates.

⁶⁴ Albemarle Parish Register (Surry and Sussex Cos.), 1739–1778, p. 138, line 25.

⁶⁵ For the former date, see William Simmons (“W.S.”) to Edward Carrington, 30 April 1800, in War Department, Office of the Accountant, Fair Copies of Letters Sent, vol. G, p. 121, entry 496, RG 217, National Archives, Washington, D.C. For the latter date, see William Simmons (“W.S.”) to the Secretary of War, 19 Feb 1800, in War Department, Office of the Accountant, Audit Reports on Military Accounts and Claims, vol. C, pp. 154–155, entry 515, RG 217, National Archives, Washington, D.C.

⁶⁶ Brunswick Co. Personal Property Tax List, 1789, p. 20, William “Nicolson” entry; FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CSQ2-7Y4H>), IGN 7849095, image 266/665.

⁶⁷ Petersburg, Personal Property Tax List, Prince George part, Wm. Nicholson entry; FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CS79-13KS-8>), IGN 7856360, image 850/862.

Army stationed in Petersburg.⁶⁸ Letters pertaining to his final accounts are the only known evidence of his death, and they show that his brother Buckner was the administrator of his estate.⁶⁹ No known evidence suggests he married or had children.⁷⁰

In “Nicholson Family of Virginia,” Evans claimed that William was “awarded 200a for services as soldier in Rev.” citing “Bk. 1-64.”⁷¹ The named veteran “William Nickleson” is not John’s son because he received his land warrant 18 April 1783 and entered the land in Logan County, Kentucky, on 5 Aug 1784.⁷² These events occurred prior to John’s son turning twenty-one, and consequently would have required a guardian’s participation.

- ii. BUCKNER NICHOLSON, born 20 Jan 1767 and christened 15 Mar 1767,⁷³ died after compilation of the 1837 Sussex County personal property tax list.⁷⁴ He married likely in Dinwiddie County, Dolly Pettipool, daughter of Seth Pettipool.⁷⁵

At Sussex County rules in December 1787 Buckner Nicholson ass^{ec} of W^m Nicholson brought a suit for debt against John Saunders & Sterling Hill; at

⁶⁸ William Simmons (“W.S.”) to Edward Carrington, 30 April 1800, in War Department, Office of the Accountant, Fair Copies of Letters Sent, vol. G, p. 121, entry 496, RG 217, National Archives, Washington, D.C.

⁶⁹ William Simmons (“W.S.”) to the Secretary of War, 19 February 1800, in War Department, Office of the Accountant, Audit Reports on Military Accounts and Claims, vol. C, pp. 154–155, entry 515, RG 217, National Archives, Washington, D.C.

⁷⁰ If William married, it would have been in Dinwiddie County, since marriage records exist for other surrounding jurisdictions, but he does not appear in them. If he had children, they would have been in Dinwiddie County as well, precluding the opportunity to document their identities. No unaccounted-for Nicholsons have been found in Dinwiddie County tax lists who might fit as William’s child. No court suits related to William’s estate were filed in Petersburg Hustings Court. Petersburg, Hustings Court Minute Books (rough), 1800–1804, 1805–1808, 1808–1812; FamilySearch, IGN 8574641.

⁷¹ Evans, “Nicholson Family of Virginia,” 65.

⁷² The land warrant was issued by Virginia. Virginia, Land Office, Military Certificates 1, p. 64; FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-C379-W295>), IGN 8570989, image 38/343. The land was entered in Kentucky. Kentucky Land Office, Military Entries, 1784–1797, p. 28; FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CSJD-CSQC-1> [*restricted access*]), IGN 8097706, images 16, 42/179. William had the land surveyed 2 Mar 1787 and assigned it to Robert Means, leaving no opportunity to find a deed that might have clarified the soldier’s identity directly. Kentucky Land Office, Old Kentucky Grants, Surveys 3, p. 535; FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3QHV-F3ZL-VCJD>), IGN 8686347, image 537.

⁷³ Albemarle Parish Register (Surry and Sussex Cos.), 1739–1778, p. 103, line 21.

⁷⁴ Sussex Co. Personal Property Tax List, 1837, p. 16, Buckner Nicholson entry; FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CS79-24YR-1>), IGN 7856311, image 837/966.

⁷⁵ Petersburg, Deed Book 3, p. 239; FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-C3MJ-29BD-F>), IGN 8452438, image 143/769.

March court 1788 the suit was dismissed agreed.⁷⁶ He appeared in court on 20 Dec 1787 with his cousin Thomas Nicholson to prove a deed of emancipation written on 19 Dec 1787. In the deed, William Ellis provided that each underage person he enslaved would be free when they reached the age of majority, on specific dates spanning from 1788 to 1808 (thus documenting their exact birth dates).⁷⁷

On Tuesday, 2 Sept 1800, Buckner was summoned to court in Petersburg to answer a charge that he allowed illegal gambling in his tavern. He appeared one month later on 6 Oct 1800 and must have explained the situation, because the matter was dropped.⁷⁸

Buckner's exact date of death is unknown. Virginia had no upper age limit on taxation. A drop from tax lists after age sixty in Virginia did not automatically mean someone died, but his consistent appearance in the lists from age sixty-one to seventy strongly suggests he did die in the year he stopped appearing in tax lists.⁷⁹

- iii. BENJAMIN NICHOLSON, born 3 Oct 1768, christened 12 Feb 1769;⁸⁰ died likely 1777–1784.⁸¹
- +2 iv. JANE NICHOLSON, born 16 Nov 1770; married PETER LANE.⁸²
- v. JOHN NICHOLSON, born 23 Mar 1772, christened 31 May 1772,⁸³ died likely 1777–1788.⁸⁴
- vi. SUSANNA (A.K.A. SUSAN) NICHOLSON, born 3 Oct 1773, christened 12 Dec 1773,⁸⁵ died after 28 July 1809 when her brother Robert wrote his will; married —?— LANE. Her only known child with an unidentified husband

⁷⁶ Sussex Co. Order Book, 1786–1791, pp. 305, 327; FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org>), IGN 7898811, images 277, 288/736.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 307. Sussex Co. Deed Book G, p. 124; FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CS42-S72Z-D>), IGN 7898814, image 395/706.

⁷⁸ Petersburg, Hustings Court Minute Book, 1800–1804, pp. 7, 11; FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org>), IGN 8574641, images 110, 112/619.

⁷⁹ Sussex Co. Personal Property Tax List, 1837, p. 16, Buckner Nicholson entry; FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CS79-24YR-1>), IGN 7856311, image 837/966. The only surviving order book for the period recorded suits held at the quarter session courts. The records of local court business such as excusing someone from taxes because of age apparently do not survive.

⁸⁰ Albemarle Parish Register (Surry and Sussex Cos.), 1739–1778, p. 103, line 36.

⁸¹ Benjamin does not appear in Albemarle Parish deaths registered through 1777, nor does he appear in guardian accounts or tax lists from age sixteen forward (1785–). The clerk was paid a fee to record deaths; consequently, many were not recorded.

⁸² Sussex Co. Register of Marriages, 1754–1853, p. 270.

⁸³ Albemarle Parish Register (Surry and Sussex Cos.), 1739–1778, p. 83, line 17.

⁸⁴ John does not appear in Albemarle Parish deaths registered through 1777, nor does he appear in guardian accounts or tax lists from age sixteen forward (1788–).

⁸⁵ Albemarle Parish (Surry and Sussex Cos.), Parish Register, 1739–1778, p. 158, line 18.

is Robert Lane, who may be the young man who died in Sussex County by December 1825.⁸⁶

- vii. ROBERT NICHOLSON, born say 1776,⁸⁷ died 28 July–6 Aug 1809;⁸⁸ married, before 31 Mar 1806, 1) FRANCES THACKER HOLMES, daughter of Isaac Holmes and Elizabeth T. Brooking.⁸⁹ He married 2) say 1808, LUCY.⁹⁰ According to family acquaintance Harriet B. Smith, Robert died “leaving no child.”⁹¹

Evans omitted Robert from the family in “Nicholson Family in Virginia” because he does not appear in the parish register or John’s will. Robert did, however, receive money from the estate and was placed in a guardianship as an orphan of John Nicholson.⁹² Like his brother William, Robert’s whereabouts in the 1790s are unknown, but he appears in the Dinwiddie tax lists in 1799 and then permanently in Petersburg from 1801 to his death.⁹³

Robert briefly participated in land speculation in Kentucky when he purchased 3500 acres of land in Lincoln County (now Casey County) in 1800, then sold 1175 acres to a neighboring speculator in 1803. These details are outlined in a deed from 31 Mar 1806 when Robert and his then-wife Frances T. Nicholson sold his remaining property in Kentucky in exchange for six enslaved individuals in New York (Jack, Phebe, Betsy, Lucy, Young Jack, and Joe), plus two mares.⁹⁴

Robert enslaved as many as six people in Virginia, and a deed names four of them in 1803.⁹⁵ He owed Joseph Harall 259 pounds, four shillings, and

⁸⁶ Sussex Co. Minute Book, 1824–1827, December 1825, Robert Lane order; FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-C37H-WFV5>), IGN 8574693, images 89–90/178.

⁸⁷ See “Albemarle Parish Births” and “Estate of John Nicholson” above.

⁸⁸ Petersburg Will Book 2, fols. 41–42.

⁸⁹ Affidavit of Harriet B. Smith, 3 Sept 1850, in U.S. War Department, Office of the Secretary, Revolutionary War pension application, R15233, Virginia, Isaac Holmes.

⁹⁰ Petersburg Will Book 2, fols. 41–42.

⁹¹ Affidavit of Harriet B. Smith, 3 Sept 1850, in U.S. War Department, Office of the Secretary, Revolutionary War pension application, R15233, Virginia, Isaac Holmes.

⁹² Sussex Co. Will Book D, pp. 515–516.

⁹³ For Robert in Dinwiddie County, see Dinwiddie Co. Personal Property Tax List, 1799, Goodwyn’s District, p. 11; FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CS4V-R32F-4>), IGN 7898135, image 468/476. For Robert in Petersburg, see Petersburg, Personal Property Tax List, 1801, Prince George part, Robert Nicholson entry; FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CS79-YGZM>), IGN 7856361, image 66/1005.

⁹⁴ Casey Co., Ky., Deed Book 6, pp. 458–464; FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CSTP-Q3FG-L>), IGN 8339030, images 535–538/598.

⁹⁵ Petersburg Personal Property Tax List, 1809, Prince George part, Robert Nicholson entry; FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CS79-YGQV>), IGN 7856361, image 281/1005.

three half pence. Instead of paying with money, Robert transferred a man named Charles and three women named Beck, Amy, and Temp to Henry Harall to be sold at public auction with the proceeds to pay the debt.⁹⁶

Robert ran a tavern in Petersburg's Blandford neighborhood.⁹⁷ Shortly before his death, he purchased land in Nottoway County neighboring his first wife's family, which he later willed to his wife, Lucy.⁹⁸ Robert served as a commissioner to examine accounts of the estate of Baldwin Pearse in 1804,⁹⁹ and acted as security for the sale of Jacob Marling's personal property to pay a debt in 1808.¹⁰⁰

Robert was the only one of his siblings to leave a will.¹⁰¹ He apparently remarried between 1806 and 1809, because he gave his "beloved wife Lucy" slaves and a tract of land in Nottoway County.¹⁰² Robert's elusive sister Susan Lane and her son Robert have not been documented in later records, and the identity of a "sister-in-law" named Patsy Johnston also remains to be clarified. In addition to relatives, Robert left friends various property, such as unnamed slaves located in New York, a half-acre lot in the Gillfield neighborhood of Petersburg, and his wearing apparel. Lastly, Robert took care of the family of his first wife: paying any debt to Mrs. Elizabeth T. Holmes (Frances's mother); releasing Frances's brother Ballard from any debt that Robert held; and giving his interest in the estate of Isaac Holmes in Kentucky to Frances's brothers Ballard and Vivion.

⁹⁶ Petersburg Deed Book 3, p. 120; FamilySearch

(<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-C3MJ-29BJ-P>), IGN 8452438, image 82.

⁹⁷ Petersburg Deed Book 3, pp. 171–172; FamilySearch

(<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-C3MJ-29BN-9>), IGN 8452438, image 108.

⁹⁸ Nottoway Co. Deed Book 3, pp. 415–416; FamilySearch

(<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CSL6-RSV3-1>), IGN 8190617, images 226–227.

⁹⁹ Petersburg Will Book 1, page numbers obscured, September Court 1804; FamilySearch

(<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-C9PX-GSGZ-7>), IGN 7646074, images 350–351.

¹⁰⁰ Petersburg Deed Book 3, folio 449; FamilySearch

(<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-C3MJ-2919-W>), IGN 8452438, image 297.

¹⁰¹ Petersburg Will Book 2, pp. 40–42; FamilySearch

(<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-C9PX-GSGW-C>), IGN 7646074, images 415–416. Those Robert enslaved were identified as Tempy and her four children, Edith, Caleb, Parker, and Letty; Roderick, Robert, Maria, Davys; Becky, a mulatto woman, and her son Tom; Jenny, Eliza, Beck, and unnamed "Negroes I purchased of Thomas Dutton who now are in the City of New York" (who were named in the 1806 Casey Co., Ky., deed).

¹⁰² Nottoway Co. Deed Book 3, pp. 415–417; FamilySearch

(<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CSL6-RSV3-1>), IGN 8190617, images 226–227.

Fifth Generation of Robert Nicholson Family

Second Generation of John Nicholson (died 1777) Family

2. Jane⁵ Nicholson (John⁴, John³, Robert², Robert¹) was born 16 Nov 1770 and christened 7 April 1771.¹⁰³ She died after her brother's 1809 will and likely before her husband's death in 1816.¹⁰⁴ Jane married in Sussex County, 10 Mar 1796 (minister's return), **Peter Lane**,¹⁰⁵ son of Jesse Lane who left a will dated 10 Aug 1803.¹⁰⁶

In 1814, Jane's aunt by marriage, Lydda Nicholson (widow of Flood Nicholson), gave land and slaves to the three Lane children, first going to Alexander and then to his sisters if he died before age twenty-one.¹⁰⁷ The three siblings sold a separate tract of land together in 1827.¹⁰⁸

Children of Jane⁵ Nicholson and Peter Lane:

- i. ALEXANDER⁶ LANE, born 1795–1800,¹⁰⁹ died Sussex County 5 Oct–5 Nov 1840;¹¹⁰ he married in Sussex County, MARY GILLIAM, bond dated 7 May 1817.¹¹¹

The 1820 and 1830 censuses place a young male and female in Alexander's household, both born leading up to or during 1820.¹¹² However, neither child was mentioned in his will, nor do their names appear in his estate accounts or any guardianship records.¹¹³ They could have been young family members under the care of relatives.

¹⁰³ Albemarle Parish Register (Surry and Sussex Cos.), 1739–1778, p. 80, line 34.

¹⁰⁴ Petersburg Will Book 2, fols. 41–42. Alexander was mentioned in his father's estate account on 15 Jan 1817, but the widow Jane was not. Sussex Co. Will Book H, pp. 343–344; FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-C9PX-K5BZ>), IGN 7645837, images 182/790.

¹⁰⁵ Sussex Co. Register of Marriages, 1754–1853, p. 270.

¹⁰⁶ Sussex Co. Will Book F, pp. 401–402; FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-C9PX-KSZM-4>), IGN 7645836, images 211/532.

¹⁰⁷ Sussex Co. Will Book H, pp. 114–116.

¹⁰⁸ Sussex Co. Deed Book P, p. 401.

¹⁰⁹ 1820 U.S. Census, Virginia, Sussex Co., p. 14; database and digital images, Ancestry (<https://www.ancestry.com>). 1830 U.S. Census, Virginia, Sussex Co., fol. 23 (stamped); database and digital images, Ancestry (<https://www.ancestry.com>).

¹¹⁰ Sussex Co. Will Book N, p. 300; FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-C9PX-K99Y-4>), IGN 7645838, images 719/808.

¹¹¹ Sussex Co. Register of Marriages, 1754–1853, p. 161; FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-C9PX-L9XF-2DBG>), IGN 7579169, image 341/518.

¹¹² 1820 U.S. Census, Virginia, Sussex Co., p. 14; 1830 U.S. Census, Virginia, Sussex Co., fol. 23 (stamped).

¹¹³ For the estate account, see Sussex Co. Will Book O, pp. 438–441; FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-C9PX-KCG5>), IGN 7645839, images 227–228/669.

Alexander wrote his simple will on 5 Oct 1840.¹¹⁴ After paying his debts, his entire estate was given to “my wife” (unnamed); at her death the property was to go to William Parker, whose relationship was unstated. The will reflected the impact of the Panic of 1837, an economic downturn that lasted to the mid-1840s. Alexander requested “that my estate be kept together until there shall be an advance in the prices of property.”

On 15 Dec 1841, Mary “Laine” and William Parker sold 126 acres of land on Peters Road bordering the dower of Susan A. Peters—Alexander’s sister.¹¹⁵ They sold 119 acres of land on Raccoon Swamp on 5 Mar 1842.¹¹⁶ Neither deed mentions Alexander.

- +3 ii. ELIZABETH S. LANE, born c1800, died in Sussex County on 8 Sept 1858;¹¹⁷ she married in Sussex County on 18 Jan 1823, GEORGE DAVIS,¹¹⁸ born c1803,¹¹⁹ died after the 1880 census enumeration,¹²⁰
- +4 iii. SUSAN A. “SUSANNA” LANE, born 18 Aug 1800, died Petersburg 29 Jan 1849;¹²¹ married (bond dated 29 Jan 1822¹²²) in Sussex County, WILLIAM PETERS, who died in Sussex County between writing his will 16 July 1836 and its probate on 1 June 1837.¹²³

¹¹⁴ Sussex Co. Will Book N, p. 300.

¹¹⁵ Sussex Co. Deed Book T, p. 23; FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CSKK-FH1M>), IGN 8153308, image 40/662.

¹¹⁶ Sussex Co. Deed Book T, p. 76; FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CSKK-FHJJ>), IGN 8153308, image 67/662.

¹¹⁷ Virginia, Register of Deaths, Sussex Co. 1858 (unnumbered, first page), line 24, Elizabeth S. Davis; FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:S3HY-6XCZ-44V>), IGN 4225410, image 301/653.

¹¹⁸ Sussex Co. Register of Marriages, 1754–1853, p. 300; FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3QSQ-G9XF-28DV>), IGN 7579169, image 487/518.

¹¹⁹ 1850 U.S. Census, Virginia, Sussex Co. p. 111 (stamped, verso), dwelling 170, family 170; database and digital images, Ancestry (<https://www.ancestry.com>).

¹²⁰ 1880 U.S. Census, Virginia, Sussex Co., Wakefield Township, ED 113, p. 164B, dwelling 168, family 169; database and digital images, Ancestry (<https://www.ancestry.com>).

¹²¹ Petersburg, Blandford Cemetery, Record of Interments, 1843–1871, p. 25, line 14; FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-C34W-5318-D>), IGN 8611410, image 151/455. Birth date calculated from her death age of 48 years, 5 months, 11 days.

¹²² Sussex Co. Register of Marriages, 1754–1853, p. 176; FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3QS7-L9XF-26MV>), IGN 7579169, image 364/518.

¹²³ Sussex Co. Will Book M, p. 431–432; FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-C9PX-K9SQ-F>), IGN 7645838, images 524–525/808.

**Sixth Generation of Robert Nicholson's Family
and
Third Generation of John Nicholson's (died 1777) Family**

3. Elizabeth S.⁶ Lane (Jane⁵, John⁴, John³, Robert², Robert¹), born c1800, died in Sussex County on 8 Sept 1858;¹²⁴ she married in Sussex County on 18 Jan 1823, **George Davis**,¹²⁵ born c1803,¹²⁶ grandson of Etheldred Davis,¹²⁷ who died after the 1880 census enumeration.¹²⁸ George married on 6 Jan 1859 in Sussex County 2) Martha A. Turner.¹²⁹ They had one child together, George W. Davis, on 6 Aug 1860.¹³⁰

Few sources mention Elizabeth. Her husband worked as a carpenter.¹³¹ He purchased a 160-acre tract on 22 Aug 1826 that became the family's long-time farm.¹³² George sold "all his chattel estate" to his son Franklin for \$150 on 16 Jan 1854; the purpose of this act is unclear.¹³³ George later sold the family's farm on 2 Aug 1871.¹³⁴ By 1880, George had suffered a stroke and his nineteen-year-old son, George W., was enumerated as head of household in the census.¹³⁵

Children of Elizabeth⁶ Lane and George Davis:

- i. JANE N.⁷ DAVIS, born c1829;¹³⁶ died after the 1850 census when

¹²⁴ Virginia, Register of Deaths, Sussex Co., 1858 (unnumbered, first page), line 24, Elizabeth S. Davis; FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:S3HY-6XCZ-44V>), IGN 4225410, image 301/603.

¹²⁵ Sussex Co. Register of Marriages, 1754–1853, p. 300; FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3QSQ-G9XF-28DV>), IGN 7579169, image 487/518.

¹²⁶ 1850 U.S. Census, Virginia, Sussex Co., p. 111 (stamped, verso), dwelling 170, family 170; database and digital images, Ancestry (<https://www.ancestry.com>).

¹²⁷ Sussex Co. Will Book H, p. 419; FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-C9PX-KB4T>), IGN 7645837, image 220/790.

¹²⁸ 1880 U.S. Census, Virginia, Sussex Co., Wakefield Township, ED 113, p. 164B, dwelling 168, family 169; database and digital images, Ancestry (<https://www.ancestry.com>).

¹²⁹ Virginia Register of Marriages, Sussex Co., line 117, Geo. Davis and M. A. Turner; FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3QHN-G3Y5-DSRD>), IGN 107843184, image 269/624.

¹³⁰ Virginia, Register of Births, Sussex Co., fol. 63 (stamped), line 36, George W. Davis; FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-C9YG-5WH5-P>), IGN 4254460, image 467/611.

¹³¹ 1850 U.S. Census, Virginia, Sussex Co., p. 111 (stamped, verso), dwelling 170, family 170).

¹³² Sussex Co. Deed Book P, pp. 3–4; FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-C3MJ-F37P-V>), IGN 8452443, images 12–13/538.

¹³³ Sussex Co. Deed Book V, p. 256; FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-C3QP-FLQ>), IGN 8562844, image 155/578.

¹³⁴ Sussex Co. Deed Book Z, p. 64, Clerk of Circuit Court, Sussex, Va.

¹³⁵ 1880 U.S. Census, Virginia, Sussex Co., Wakefield Township, ED 113, p. 164B, dwelling 168, family 169; database and digital images, Ancestry (<https://www.ancestry.com>). The enumerator noted that George was disabled from "paralysis."

¹³⁶ 1850 U.S. Census, Virginia, Sussex Co., p. 111 (stamped, verso), dwelling and family 170; database and digital images, Ancestry (<https://www.ancestry.com>).

enumerated with her father.¹³⁷ Although a bond for her marriage to Richard T. J. Malone was issued in Sussex County on 6 Aug 1847,¹³⁸ the union apparently did not occur. Both were single in 1850.¹³⁹

- ii. GEORGIANNA DAVIS, born c1833,¹⁴⁰ died after 7 June 1880;¹⁴¹ married in Sussex County on 18 or 28 May 1857 1) JOHN E. TRAVIS,¹⁴² who died in Sussex County on 4 May 1861.¹⁴³ She married in Southampton County on 13 Sept 1866, 2) BENJAMIN T. O'DONNELLY,¹⁴⁴ born c1829, died after 7 June 1880,¹⁴⁵ son of John and Elizabeth O'Donnelly.¹⁴⁶ Georgianna and Benjamin had two children, R. N. and Emmet.¹⁴⁷ He had previously married Eveline, with whom he had two children.¹⁴⁸
- iii. FRANKLIN J. DAVIS, born c1834, died after 6 July 1860 when he was enumerated in the U.S. census in Bolivar County, Mississippi.¹⁴⁹
- iv. RICHMOND S. DAVIS, born in Petersburg in 1842, died in Long Island City, New York, on 8 May 1895.¹⁵⁰ He married in Brooklyn, New York, on

¹³⁷ Ibid.

¹³⁸ Sussex Co. Register of Marriages, 1754–1853, p. 253; FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3QS7-L9XF-2DXS>), IGN 7579169, image 441/518.

¹³⁹ 1850 U.S. Census, Virginia, Sussex Co., p. 137 (stamped), dwelling and family 611; database and digital images, Ancestry (<https://www.ancestry.com>). 1860 U.S. Census, Virginia, Dinwiddie Co., Revenue District 2, p. 81, dwelling and family 103; database and digital images, Ancestry (<https://www.ancestry.com>).

¹⁴⁰ 1850 U.S. Census, Virginia, Sussex Co., p. 111 (stamped, verso), dwelling 170, family 170.

¹⁴¹ 1880 U.S. Census, Virginia, Southampton, Berlin and Ivor District, ED 100, p. 135B, dwelling 122, family 125; database and digital images, Ancestry (<https://www.ancestry.com>).

¹⁴² Virginia, Register of Marriages, Sussex Co., line 75, John E. Travis and Georgianna Davis; FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3QHN-B3Y5-DXR>), IGN 107843184, image 267/624.

¹⁴³ Virginia, Register of Deaths, Sussex Co., 1861 (T. J. Drumwright district, second page), line 11, J. E. Travis; FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:S3HY-6XCZ-47C>), IGN 4225410, image 320/653.

¹⁴⁴ Southampton Co. Marriage Register 1, p. 135; FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-C9BK-R3V6-J>), IGN 7724929, image 108/291.

¹⁴⁵ 1880 U.S. Census, Virginia, Southampton, Berlin and Ivor District, ED 100, p. 135B.

¹⁴⁶ 1850 U.S. Census, Virginia, Southampton Co., Nottoway Parish, p. 316 (stamped), dwelling and family 507; database and digital images, Ancestry (<https://www.ancestry.com>).

¹⁴⁷ 1880 U.S. Census, Virginia, Southampton, Berlin and Ivor District, ED 100, p. 135B, dwelling 122, family 125.

¹⁴⁸ One child was born in 1859. Virginia, Register of Births, Sussex County, 1853–1887, Thomas S. Simmons District, folio 54, line 42; FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3QHN-T3YN-TNHX>), IGN 107833308, image 501/729. Another child was born in 1861. Virginia, Register of Births, Southampton County, 1853–1862, James N. Bell District, p. 57, line 135; FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3QHN-T3YN-TN2L>), IGN 107833307, image 718/733.

¹⁴⁹ 1860 U.S. Census, Mississippi, Bolivar Co., p. 1, dwelling 9, family 3; database and digital images, Ancestry (<https://www.ancestry.com>).

¹⁵⁰ Long Island City, N.Y., Record of Deaths, 1892–1897, no. 8494; FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3QS7-99F4-L8JM>), IGN 7587459, image 73/609.

19 June 1875, 1) AMELIA WATT, daughter of William Watt and Emily Smith,¹⁵¹ born c1851, died at 655 Baltic Street, Brooklyn, New York, on 23 June 1882.¹⁵² He married at the Church of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel, Long Island City, New York, on 6 Sept 1892, 2) MARY JANE DEEGAN, daughter of James Deegan and Margaret Moran,¹⁵³ born Dublin, Ireland, on 5 Oct 1852,¹⁵⁴ baptized at St. Mary's Haddington Road, Dublin, on 8 Oct 1852,¹⁵⁵ died 31 Oct 1920.¹⁵⁶ Richmond served as a marine in the U.S. Navy from 5 Sept 1860 to 23 Nov 1864, then continued his service in the Navy through 1880,¹⁵⁷ including as master-at-arms on the USS *Colorado* on its diplomatic mission to China, 1870–1873.¹⁵⁸

v. MARY ELIZABETH DAVIS, born c1846,¹⁵⁹ was not enumerated with or near her father George in 1860 when she would have been about age fourteen.¹⁶⁰

4. Susan A. ⁶“Susanna” Lane (Jane⁵, John⁴, John³, Robert², Robert¹), born 18 Aug 1800, died at Petersburg 29 Jan 1849.¹⁶¹ She married in Sussex County (bond dated 29 Jan 1822), WILLIAM PETERS,¹⁶² who died in Sussex County between writing his

¹⁵¹ Brooklyn, N.Y., marriage certificate, 1875, no. 1168; FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q57-L9F4-H3J2>), IGN 7587079, images 96–97/1042. Richmond's second wife made no mention of Amelia in her pension application.

¹⁵² Brooklyn, N.Y., death certificate, 1882, no. 7468; FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q57-L9K5-3TG1>), IGN 4003244, image 1146/1553.

¹⁵³ Long Island City, N.Y., transcript of marriage record, 1892, no. 1240, Davis to Deegan, in U.S. Bureau of Pensions, Navy survivors' certificate, Mary Jane Davis; Fold3 (<https://www.fold3.com/image/44659767/>).

¹⁵⁴ Declaration for Widow's Pension, 20 Sept 1917, in U.S. Bureau of Pensions, Navy survivors' certificate, Mary Jane Davis; Fold3 (<https://www.fold3.com/image/44659741/>).

¹⁵⁵ Haddington Road (Dublin, Ireland), Parish Records, Baptisms, 1849–1866, Oct. 1852; database and digital images, “Ireland, Catholic Parish Registers, 1655–1915,” Ancestry (<https://www.ancestry.com>).

¹⁵⁶ Mary Jane Davis death certificate, Queens, 1920, no. 4464, Department of Records & Information Services, New York, N.Y.

¹⁵⁷ U.S. Bureau of Pensions, Navy survivors' certificate, Mary Jane Davis; Fold3 (<https://www.fold3.com/image/44659721/>).

¹⁵⁸ “The Hon. W. H. Seward is now on a visit to China. He has proceeded to Peking with his suite and a guard of 75 marines from the U.S.S. *Colorado*,” from “China,” *South Australian Chronicle* (Adelaide), 24 Dec 1870, p. 4, col. 6; digital image, Newspapers.com (<https://www.newspapers.com>).

¹⁵⁹ 1860 U.S. Census, Virginia, Sussex Co., District 1, p. 27, dwelling and family no. 217; database and digital images, Ancestry (<https://www.ancestry.com>).

¹⁶⁰ 1850 U.S. Census, Virginia, Sussex Co., p. 111 (stamped, verso), dwelling and family no. 170; database and digital images, Ancestry (<https://www.ancestry.com>).

¹⁶¹ Petersburg, Blandford Cemetery, Record of Interments, 1843–1871, p. 25, line 14; FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-C34W-5318-D>), IGN 8611410, image 151/455. Birthdate calculated from her death age of 48 years, 5 months, 11 days.

¹⁶² Sussex Co. Register of Marriages, 1754–1853, p. 176; FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q57-L9XF-26MV>), IGN 7579169, image 364/518.

will 16 July 1836 and its recording on 1 June 1837.¹⁶³ He was previously married in Sussex County in 1791 to Peggy Loftin¹⁶⁴ with whom he had children Matthew, James, and William.¹⁶⁵

The relationship between Susan, William, and their children is directly stated in one known source. William's will directed that certain land be sold and a third of the proceeds "be equally divided between my youngest set of children," and the remainder to be equally divided among his grandchildren (who by inference were the children of his older set of offspring)—all unnamed.¹⁶⁶ Susan had five young children in her household in 1840 after being widowed.¹⁶⁷ In 1850, the household of Henry Metcalf included a twenty-three-year-old wife "Hellen," along with four Peters individuals: Joseph (age twenty-one), Richard (age fourteen), Frances (age nineteen), and Susan (age fifteen).¹⁶⁸ Helen's maiden name was Peters too.¹⁶⁹ When Joseph married in 1857, the register named his parents as "William & Susan A. Peters," thus connecting the four other siblings to their parents as well.¹⁷⁰ In February 1849 shortly after her death, the property William had given to Susan as a life estate was ordered to be sold.¹⁷¹ She did not have property of her own to leave the children.

Children of Susan A.⁶ Lane and William Peters:

- i. MARY HELEN⁷PETERS, born c1828,¹⁷² died at 114 Fifth Ave. NE, Roanoke, on 12 Oct 1910.¹⁷³ She married in Petersburg on 12 Oct 1846, HENRY BORN

¹⁶³ Sussex Co. Will Book M, p. 431–432; FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-C9PX-K9SQ-F>), IGN 7645838, images 524–525/808.

¹⁶⁴ Sussex Co. Register of Marriages, 1754–1853, p. 265; FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3QSQ-G9XF-284V>), IGN 7579169, image 452/518.

¹⁶⁵ Sussex Co. Will Book M, p. 431–432.

¹⁶⁶ Sussex Co. Will Book M, p. 431–432.

¹⁶⁷ 1840 census, Virginia, Sussex Co., fol. 258 (stamped), line 27; database and digital images, Ancestry (<https://www.ancestry.com>).

¹⁶⁸ 1850 U.S. Census, Virginia, Petersburg, p. 413 (stamped), dwelling 401, family 474; database and digital images, Ancestry (<https://www.ancestry.com>).

¹⁶⁹ Petersburg, Marriage Register, 1784–1865, "M" entries, 1846; FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3QSQ-89XF-TSQ5>), IGN 7579043, image 64/776.

¹⁷⁰ Southampton Co. Register of Marriages, 1853–1872, p. 4, line 7; FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-C9BK-1953-T>), IGN 7724978, image 203/390.

¹⁷¹ Sussex Co. Will Book M, p. 167; FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-C3QP-X326-N>), IGN 8562844, image 111/578.

¹⁷² 1850 U.S. Census, Virginia, Petersburg, p. 413 (stamped), dwelling 401, family 474; database and digital images, Ancestry (<https://www.ancestry.com>).

¹⁷³ "Death of an Old Resident," *Roanoke Times*, 13 Oct. 1910, p. 1, col. 7; digital image, Newspapers (<https://www.newspapers.com>).

- T. METCALF,¹⁷⁴ born in Greensville County c1818, died in Richmond 15 Dec 1872,¹⁷⁵ grandson of Sarah Mitchell.¹⁷⁶ He served in the Civil War but was quickly discharged.¹⁷⁷ The couple had two children.¹⁷⁸
- ii. JOSEPH H. B. PETERS, born c1829,¹⁷⁹ died between 1871 and 1880.¹⁸⁰ He married in Southampton County on 8 Jan 1857, ELLEN AUGUSTUS SPIVEY, daughter of Jeremiah and Jerusha Spivey,¹⁸¹ born c1834,¹⁸² died at Franklin on 17 Nov 1898.¹⁸³ The couple had five children.¹⁸⁴
- iii. FRANCES A. N. PETERS, born c1831,¹⁸⁵ died after the 1880 census.¹⁸⁶ She married (license dated 13 Jan 1853) in Sussex County, BENJAMIN W. CLANTON,¹⁸⁷ son of Mark Clanton and Martha A. Wrenn,¹⁸⁸ born in Sussex

¹⁷⁴ Petersburg Marriage Register, 1784–1865, “M” entries, 1846; FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q57-89XF-TSQ5>), IGN 7579043, image 64/776.

¹⁷⁵ Virginia, Register of Deaths, Richmond (city), 1872, p. 28, no. 1132; FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:S3HY-631W-Y5>), IGN 4225415, image 587/707.

¹⁷⁶ Greensville Co. Will Book 4, p. 222–223; FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-C9TC-HSC3-X>), IGN 7676110, image 380/770.

¹⁷⁷ U.S. War Department, Pension Office, Civil War Service Record, Co. G, 46th Virginia Infantry Regiment, Henry T. Metcalf; database and digital images, Fold3 (<https://www.fold3.com/image/13495912/>).

¹⁷⁸ 1880 U.S. Census, Virginia, Richmond City, Ward 2, ED 80, p. 66B, family 49; database and digital images, Ancestry (<https://www.ancestry.com>).

¹⁷⁹ 1850 U.S. Census, Virginia, Petersburg, p. 413 (stamped), dwelling 401, family 474; database and digital images, Ancestry (<https://www.ancestry.com>).

¹⁸⁰ Joseph died after the conception of his last child: Virginia, death certificate, Richmond Henry Peters, 1936, no. 6986; database and digital images, Ancestry (<https://www.ancestry.com>). He was deceased by the 1880 census enumeration: 1880 U.S. Census, Virginia, Southampton Co., Berlin and Ivor Township, ED 100, p. 143A, dwelling 258, family 264; database and digital images, Ancestry (<https://www.ancestry.com>).

¹⁸¹ Southampton Co. Register of Marriages, 1853–1872, p. 4, line 7.

¹⁸² 1850 U.S. Census, Virginia, Southampton Co., Nottoway Parish, p. 284 (stamped), dwelling and family 2; database and digital images, Ancestry (<https://www.ancestry.com>).

¹⁸³ Find a Grave (<https://www.findagrave.com>), Memorial ID 39314873, Ellen A. Peters, Poplar Spring Cemetery, Franklin, Virginia; indexed as Ellen Augustus Spivey Peters.

¹⁸⁴ For the first four children, see 1870 U.S. Census, Virginia, Southampton Co., Berlin and Ivor Township, p. 127 (stamped, verso), dwelling and family 208; database and digital images, Ancestry (<https://www.ancestry.com>). The last child was born about 1871–1872. Virginia, death certificate, Richmond Henry Peters, 1936, no. 6986; database and digital images, Ancestry (<https://www.ancestry.com>).

¹⁸⁵ 1850 U.S. Census, Virginia, Petersburg, p. 413 (stamped), dwelling 401, family 474; database and digital images, Ancestry (<https://www.ancestry.com>).

¹⁸⁶ 1880 U.S. Census, Virginia, Richmond City, Ward 2, ED 80, p. 66B, family 49; database and digital images, Ancestry (<https://www.ancestry.com>).

¹⁸⁷ Sussex Co. Certificate of Marriage Licenses, 1850–1884, p. 3; FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q57-89XF-21HR>), IGN 7579170, image 50/329.

¹⁸⁸ Sussex Co. Register of Marriages, 1754–1853, p. 191; FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q57-89XF-2D5B>), IGN 7579169, image 379/518.

County on 29 April 1829, died 10 July 1876 in Richmond.¹⁸⁹ They did not have children.

- iv. SUSAN PETERS, born c1835,¹⁹⁰ died likely in Washington County in 1859.¹⁹¹ She married on 15 Jan 1857 in Halifax County, North Carolina EDWARD I. BROWN,¹⁹² son of Edward Brown and Martha Anne Rucker, born in Lynchburg on 11 June 1834,¹⁹³ died Dickson County, Tennessee, on 16 Dec 1891.¹⁹⁴ The couple had one child, Edmonia P. Brown, born 11 Feb 1859 and died 5 May 1902.¹⁹⁵ Edmonia was raised by her aunt Frances after her mother's early death.¹⁹⁶ Edward later married in Lynchburg, on 22 July 1863, Martha Anna McDaniel.¹⁹⁷
- v. RICHARD PETERS, born c1836,¹⁹⁸ but appears in no known sources after the 1850 census. His identity and fate remain to be documented.

¹⁸⁹ Virginia Register of Deaths, Richmond, 1876, p. 8, no. 293; FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:S3HT-DZWS-SS7>), IGN 4225416, image 57/697. Benjamin's birth date is calculated from a death record age of forty-seven years, two months, ten days.

¹⁹⁰ 1850 U.S. Census, Virginia, Petersburg, p. 413 (stamped), dwelling 401, family 474; database and digital images, Ancestry (<https://www.ancestry.com>).

¹⁹¹ *History of Tennessee: From Earliest Time to the Present; Together with Historical and Biographical Sketches of Montgomery, Robertson, Humphreys, Stewart, Dickson, Cheatham, and Houston Counties* (Nashville: Goodspeed Publishing Company, 1886), 1330–1331; digital image, Internet Archive (<https://archive.org>).

¹⁹² For bond, see Halifax Co., N.C., loose marriage bonds, Edward I. Brown and Susan W. Peters, 15 Jan 1857; FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:S3HT-64LS-ZJK>), IGN 4364158, image 627/2977. For marriage certificate, see Halifax Co., N.C., Marriages 1:69; FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3QS7-99VH-PJQM>), IGN 7611173, image 56/536. Details about Edward are currently unknown.

¹⁹³ *History of Tennessee: From Earliest Time to the Present*, 1330–1331.

¹⁹⁴ Find a Grave (<https://www.findagrave.com>), Memorial ID 70981544, Edward I. Brown, Union Cemetery, Dickson Co., Tenn.; indexed as Cpt. Edward Isaac Brown.

¹⁹⁵ Find a Grave (<https://www.findagrave.com>), Memorial ID 156897418, Edmonia Brown, wife of Dr. W. S. Scott, Union Cemetery, Dickson Co., Tenn.; indexed as Ellen Brown Scott.

¹⁹⁶ 1870 U.S. Census, Virginia, Washington, Goodson Township, p. 86 (stamped, verso), dwelling 110, family 120; database and digital images, Ancestry (<https://www.ancestry.com>). Edmonia married William S. Scott on 7 June 1881. Dickson Co., Tenn., Record of Marriages, 1881–1889, p. 1, no. 3188; FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:9Q97-YSQ2-Y6W>), IGN 4486289, image 278/1345.

¹⁹⁷ Lynchburg, Register of Marriages 2, folio 25; FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3QS7-89XF-D3LM>), IGN 7579002, image 29/712.

¹⁹⁸ 1850 U.S. Census, Virginia, Petersburg, p. 413 (stamped), dwelling 401, family 474; database and digital images, Ancestry (<https://www.ancestry.com>).