

Tabitha B. Albritton Harrington

Daughter of Samuel, Granddaughter of James, & Great-granddaughter of Peter Albritton Sr.

By Timothy Dean Hudson

Tabitha B. Albritton was born on 12 December 1809, the third daughter of Samuel Albritton and Tabitha Bell [1]. Samuel Albritton owned a large plantation on Grindle Creek north of the Tar River near Pactolus, in Pitt County, North Carolina, and Tabitha B. Albritton was probably born and grew up there. Tabitha married Henry Harrington Jr. about 1827. He was born about 1804 in Pitt County [2], the son of Henry Harrington Sr. who died about 1815 [3].

On 22 November 1826, Henry paid his brother, Isaac Harrington, \$350 for the 88-acre tract of land adjoining the plantation of Tabitha's uncle, Adam Albritton, that Isaac had inherited from the estate of their father, Henry Harrington Sr. [4]. Over the next four decades, Tabitha and Henry built a substantial and successful farming operation there with the assistance of slave labor. In 1830, their household included two male and two female slaves, while their 1840 household only included one older female slave [5]. In 1850, the census enumerator valued their farm at \$2478 and reported that they owned seven male and six female slaves, including eight adults and five children [6]. In 1860, their farm was valued at \$7500, with their \$14,860 personal estate consisting of eight male and seven female slaves, including nine adults and six children. The Harrington's slaves lived in two "*Slaves houses*" on their farm [7].

Following his marriage to Tabitha in the latter 1820s, Henry Harrington participated in numerous transactions involving her close relatives, including witnessing the following transactions:

Pitt County, North Carolina Albritton Transactions Witnessed by Henry Harrington (Jr.)				
Date	Albritton Relative Involved	Relationship to Tabitha Albritton Harrington	Deed Bk	Page
9 Dec 1831	Luke Short	Brother-in-law, husband of Tabitha's sister, Lydia Albritton Short	GG	140
9 Oct 1835	James Biggs	Husband of Nellie Albritton, first cousin of Tabitha's father, Samuel. Also witnessed by James C. Albritton, son of Luke Albritton, Tabitha's great-uncle.	GG	482
30 Dec 1840	Rippon Ward, Jonathan Albritton	Jonathan Albritton was Tabitha's great-uncle, while Rippon Ward was the husband of Mary Ann Albritton, the first cousin of Tabitha's father.	II	358
8 Feb 1842	Luke Albritton, John S. Daniel	Luke Albritton was Tabitha's paternal great-uncle, while John S. Daniel was the husband of Levina Albritton Daniel, daughter of Joel Albritton, another of Tabitha's paternal great-uncles.	KK	55
24 Jan 1846	Tabitha Albritton, John S. Daniel	Henry Harrington witnessed the transaction of his mother-in-law selling land to John S. Daniel, the husband of Levina Albritton, daughter of Joel Albritton, making Levina the first cousin of Samuel Albritton.	LL	238

On 23 February 1839, Henry Harrington helped to settle a legal conflict between his neighbor, Richard Carney, and his wife's first cousins, John C. Albritton and Adam Albritton Jr., who had filed a felony charge against Carney [8].

The Panic of 1837 brought economic hardship to much of the South, making it difficult for farmers to purchase supplies to prepare their fields and plant crops. On 16 December 1840, Henry loaned \$62.90 to his brother-in-law, Benjamin Bell Albritton, and he loaned him another \$12.90 on January 30th. In addition, Harrington served as Albritton's security on additional loans of \$13.00, \$30.10, \$5.20, \$5.00, and \$6.00 made during the winter of 1840–1841. To secure payment of the loans and to indemnify his brother-in-law, Albritton mortgaged one horse, one mare, twenty head of hogs, *"House Hold and Kitchen furniture farming tools twenty five Barrels of corn fodder pease [peas] Bacon & pork,"* as well as the interest Benjamin B. Albritton inherited via his wife, Catherine Hatton Albritton, in her father's estate [9].

On 10 December 1846, Henry Harrington sold his brother-in-law, Enoch Moore, husband of Elizabeth E. Albritton Moore, a 163-acre tract of land on Grindle Creek for \$500 [10]. Some years later, on 8 December 1855, Henry Harrington served as one of the commissioners appointed by the Pitt County Court to divide the real estate of his father-in-law's first cousin, Clifton James, among his heirs [11]. Clifton's mother, Mary Albritton James, was the sister of James Albritton, Tabitha Albritton Harrington's grandfather.

About 1846, Tabitha and Henry's eldest known child to survive to adulthood, Sarah Ann Harrington, married Jarrett House. On 3 October 1846, House purchased a 200-acre tract of land that adjoined the Harrington farm [12]. In early 1848, Henry Harrington and Jarrett House petitioned the Pitt County Court for permission to build a ditch through their property connecting to an old ditch that served as a dividing line between two of their neighbors, John McGowans and Richard C. Parker. On 11 May 1848, the Court ordered a jury of local freeholders who gave Harrington and his son-in-law permission to build the ditch, ordering them to

...keep a good & sufficient ditch open, so as to prevent any obstruction or overflowing of the water running down said ditch upon the lands of the Said John McGowans, except in freshets when it cannot be avoided...The Said Henry Harrington & House shall have leave to throw his dirt out of ditch on either side...shall continue their ditch already Commenced on their own lands & empty into this ditch between Parker & McGowans [13].

It appears that Henry and his son-in-law soon developed a difference of opinion regarding the dividing line between their farms. Unable to resolve the issue themselves, local officials became involved, and they apparently forced the pair to accept the boundary designated by three arbitrators, their neighbors John H. Buck, James A. Brown, and Richard C. Parker. It is unclear if

this situation indicated animosity between Harrington and his son-in-law, or whether it was a routine matter to resolve unclear boundary lines and drainage issues. On 14 January 1851, officials required each man to take out a \$500 bond payable to the other:

...whereas the above bound Henry Harrington and said Jarrett house finding it difficult to establish the dividing line between their lands hath selected...arbitrators to arbitrate and establish the above dividing line between them and further agrees to do away all former lines and stand by and abide by the line as Marked out by the said authority arbitrators...which said line is acknowledged by the said Harrington & House to be satisfactory and he the said Harrington doth covenant and agree to and with the said House to stand by & abide by the above Marked line as marked out by the above named arbitrators and in no wise fail now if he the said Harrington shall will and truly comply with the conditions as set forth in this instrument then the above obligation to be void & of none effect...

There is no further indication of any issues surrounding the line between their property, so presumably both men abided by the arbitrators' decision [14].

Sometime in the 1850s, Tabitha's mother, Tabitha Bell Albritton, ceased to maintain her own household and moved in with Tabitha and Henry [15]. On 8 April 1857, she wrote her will, naming Tabitha Albritton Harrington as her second legatee, leaving her the same amount as her other daughters:

Item 2nd I give and bequeath to my dearly beloved daughter Tabitha Harrington the sum of twenty dollars to be paid to her after my decease.

Tabitha Bell Albritton presumably lived with Tabitha and Henry Harrington until her death in 1865 [16].

Tabitha and Henry's eldest son, schoolteacher John A. Harrington, died in late 1866 or early 1867 shortly after the death of his wife. John's death left his two sons and daughter orphans, and John's two sons lived with Tabitha and Henry in the latter 1860s [17].

On 10 March 1869, the Pitt County Court appointed several local freeholders as a jury to assess the personal property and lay off and allot Henry Harrington a Homestead Exemption according to recent state laws. The men met at Harrington's home on March 18th and identified Harrington's homestead as a 250-acre portion of his property that adjoined the lands of Jarrett House and Cannon's Swamp. The jury also identified this personal property of Harrington as exempt from taxation:

Three beds and furniture, one sideboard, one press, Two Tables, one clock, one Doz. Chairs, Two carts, seven plows, one corn sheller, one Buggy, All other farming utencils [sic], one mule, one Horse, four cows and two yearlings, one work ox, one Sow and nine pigs, Five Stacks of fodder, Twenty Barrels of corn, nine hundred lbs. of meat,

the value of which did not exceed \$500 [18]. Two days later, on March 20th, for \$1000, Henry Harrington sold 150 acres of land adjoining the lands of Jarrett House to his son-in-law, David S. Fleming, the husband of Tabitha and Henry's second daughter, Lydia Elizabeth Harrington [19].

The following year, Henry Harrington died of apoplexy on 4 January 1870 [20]. The next day, his family paid \$17.25 for a "*burial suit*" for Henry, and on January 7th, they paid \$5.30 for "*trimming for coffin*" [21].

With the assistance of her son, William Henry Harrington, and grandson, John J. Harrington, Tabitha Albritton Harrington continued to maintain her farm until the early 1880s [22]. She wrote her will on 1 April 1880, leaving cash to support her younger grandchildren and her personal property to her three surviving children. She left one-third of the cash value of notes at her death to her grandson, Adrian Fleming, provided that he pays \$100 to her grandson, John J. Harrington, for what she described as "*as a mark of affection and gratitude to said John J. Harrington for his kindness to me in my old age*" [23].

The family Bible of Tabitha Albritton Harrington's brother, Rev. Benjamin B. Albritton, records her death [24]:

Tabith [sic] Harrington Departed this life December the 18 1886

Although Tabitha's will gave clear instructions for the disposition of her property, she failed to name her executor. On 21 January 1887, the Pitt County Superior Court appointed her son, William H. Harrington, as the administrator of her estate [25]. Tabitha's youngest daughter, Henrietta, immediately petitioned the Pitt County Court to set aside their appointment of her brother as the administrator of their mother's estate. Henrietta claimed that her brother was indebted to the estate and his bond was insufficient, telling the court that her brother "*is an improper person to serve as administrator of said estate.*" In its ruling on the dispute issued on 11 February 1887, the Court dismissed Henrietta's petition, stating that

...the reasons set forth in the petition were not sufficient grounds for removal of W. H. Harrington Admr. from the Administratorship [sic] of Tabitha Harrington decd.

The Court ordered Henrietta to her own court costs [26]. It is unknown what effect this legal disagreement may have had on the relationship between the two siblings.



Children of Tabitha B. Albritton & Henry Harrington Jr.

Documentation shows that Tabitha and Henry had five children who survived to adulthood [27], while the 1850 federal census indicates that one son died young. The documented children of Tabitha Albritton and Henry Harrington Jr. include:

1. **Sarah Ann Harrington** [Sallie] (c1828–31 Jul 1878) married about 1846 to Jarrett House (c1823–1865)
2. **John A. Harrington** (c1830–1867) married on 13 December 1860 to Frances A. Ward (23 Jul 1838–19 Jun 1866), daughter of Lanier Ward (6 May 1803–18 Jun 1856) and Elizabeth Rogers (29 May 1812–12 Mar 1871).
3. **Lydia Elizabeth Harrington** [Bettie] (Apr 1835–5 Oct 1900) married about 1855 to David S. Fleming (c1824–1884), son of Luke Fleming (c1802–Aug 1861) and Henrietta Briley (c1808–aft. 1880).
4. **Samuel Harrington** (c1840–1850/1860) died young [28].
5. **William Henry Harrington** (15 Aug 1846–18 Jan 1918) married three times, with each marriage occurring in Pitt County, North Carolina:
 - i. He married first on 18 October 1870 to Della Elizabeth Daniel (c1851–1889/1890), daughter of Robert Lanier Daniel (c1823–1855/1858) and Hannah Emily Purvis (Aug 1828–21 Feb 1911). Della was William's third cousin, once removed, as her paternal grandparents were John Stanley Daniel (c1803–1870) and City Albritton (1800/1805–1840/1842). City was the daughter of Jonathan Albritton, the younger brother of William H. Harrington's great-great-grandfather, James Albritton.
 - ii. William H. Harrington married secondly on 12 November 1890 to Emily H. Lancaster (10 Oct 1868–16 May 1907), daughter of Berry J. Lancaster (26 Aug 1831–1884) and Della Mary Armstrong (c1836–?).
 - iii. William H. Harrington married thirdly on 25 December 1907 to Mary Ann Hodges (16 Apr 1890–8 Jan 1987), daughter of John Hodges (c1850–?) and Margaret Adelaide Mills (c1856–21 Jan 1920).
6. **Henrietta T. Harrington** (5 Sep 1849–21 Jun 1902) married between 1870 and 1874 to McGilbra Daniel (14 Jun 1842–14 Jan 1890), son of John Stanley Daniel (c1803–1870) and Levina Albritton (c1810–1850/1860). Henrietta and McGilbra were second cousins, twice removed, as Levina was the daughter of Joel Albritton, the younger brother of William H. Harrington's great-great-grandfather, James Albritton.



Notes

1. [Benjamin B. Albritton Family Bible](#) (Pitt County Genealogical Quarterly, Vol. V, No. 2, May 1998, pp. 19–20). Pitt County NC Wills & Testaments Book 1, pp. 128–129 (Will of Tabitha Albritton, written 8 April 1857, probated November 1865). Tabitha's younger brother, Benjamin B. Albritton, recorded her precise dates of birth and death in his family Bible:

Tabitha B. Albritton was Bornd December the 12 day 1809
Tabith [sic] Harrington Departed this life December the 18 1886

 In her will written in 1857, Tabitha Bell Albritton made a bequest "*to my dearly beloved daughter Tabitha Harrington.*"
2. 1850 Pitt County NC Federal Census, Parkers District, p. 57b, Dwelling #930, line #1: Henry Herrington (age: 44; Farmer); #2: Tabitha Herrington (age: 38). 1860 Pitt County NC Federal Census, P.O. Greenville, pp. 31a/62–31b/63, Dwelling #520, line #38: Henry Harrington (age: 54; Farmer); #39: Tabitha Harrington (age: 50).
3. Pitt County NC Deed Book AA, pp. 427–429 (Pitt County Commissioners divide lands of Henry Harrington, 8 December 1815). The Pitt County Court divided the lands of Henry Harrington Sr. among his four sons: Henry, Abraham, Isaac, and Jesse Harrington. Tabitha and Henry's marriage date is approximated based upon the approximate 1828 birth of their eldest known child, Sarah Ann Harrington House.
4. Pitt County NC Deed Book EE [incorrectly indexed as Book DD], p. 85 (Isaac Harrington to Henry Harrington, 22 November 1826).
5. 1830 Pitt County NC Federal Census, p. 90, line #16: Henry Herrington. 1840 Pitt County NC Federal Census, p. 375, line #18: Henry Harrington. In 1830, Henry Harrington's household included one male slave under ten years, one male aged 36–55, one female slave aged 10–24, and one female aged 24–36. The 1840 slave data may be inaccurate.
6. 1850 Pitt County NC Federal Census, Parkers District, p. 57b, Dwelling #930: Henry Herrington. 1850 Pitt County NC Federal Census, Slave Schedule, Falkland District, p. 447, line #4: Henry Herrington. In 1850, Henry Harrington owned male slaves aged 53, 47, 20, 18, 16, 9, and 4, and female slaves aged 55, 30, 28, 13, 6, and 2.
7. 1860 Pitt County NC Federal Census, P.O. Greenville, pp. 31a/62–31b/63, Dwelling #520: Henry Harrington. 1860 Pitt County NC Federal Census, Slave Schedule, p. 520b/30, line #3: Henry Harrington. In 1860, Henry Harrington owned male slaves aged 50, 30, 27, 14, 8, 4, 4, and 3, and females aged 70, 47, 26, 24, 17, 12, and 10.
8. Pitt County NC Deed Book II ["double I," not the number eleven], pp. 64–65 (Richard Carney mortgages property to Henry "Herrington" to secure his bond and his appearance in court, 23 February 1839).
9. Pitt County NC Deed Book II, pp. 330–331 (Benjamin B. Albritton mortgages property to William Clark for benefit of Henry Harrington, 30 January 1841).
10. Pitt County NC Deed Book LL, pp. 507–508 (Henry Harrington to Enoch Moore, 10 December 1846).
11. Pitt County NC Deed Book OO, pp. 383–384 (Pitt County Commissioners divide lands of Clifton James among his heirs, 8 December 1855).
12. Pitt County NC Deed Book LL, p. 296 (Richard C. Parker to Jarrett House, 3 October 1846).
13. Pitt County NC Deed Book MM, p. 259 (Jury authorizes Henry Harrington and Jarrett House to build ditch, 11 May 1848).
14. Pitt County NC Deed Book PP, p. 194 (Henry Harrington bond to Jarret House, 14 January 1851); Deed Book PP, p. 195 (Jarret House bond to Henry Harrington, 14 January 1851).
15. 1860 Pitt County NC Federal Census, P.O. Greenville, p. 31a/62, Dwelling #520, line #38: Henry Harrington (aged 54, "Farmer"); #39: Tabitha Herrington (age 50); p. 31b/63, line #3: Tibitha Herrington [sic] (aged 75). Although the census enumerator gave her surname as "Herrington" like her grandchildren, this is clearly Tabitha Bell Albritton, widow of Samuel Albritton.
16. Pitt County NC Wills & Testaments Book 1, pp. 128–129 (Will of Tabitha Albritton, written 8 April 1857, probated November 1865).
17. Pitt County NC Estate Files, Lanier Ward, 1858, LDS Film #7672815, Images #933–1045. 1870 Pitt County NC Federal Census, Greenville Township, p. 157b/19, Dwelling #190, line #4: D. S. Fleming; #5: Lidda E. Fleming; #7: O. G. Herrington; p. 163a/30, Dwelling #291, line #39: Tabitha Harrington; Dwelling #292, line #40: W. H. Harrington; p. 163b/31, line #1: Henrietta T. Harrington; line #2: John J. Harrington. John A. Harrington's daughter, Elizabeth C. Harrington, is not found on the 1870 Federal Census, so it is unclear with whom she lived after her parents' death.
18. Pitt County NC Deed Book RR, pp. 663–664 (Homestead and Personal Property Exemption of Henry Harrington, 18 March 1869).
19. Pitt County NC Deed Book RR, pp. 662–663 (Henry Harrington to David S. Fleming, 20 March 1869).
20. 1870 Pitt County NC Federal Census, Mortality Schedule, Greenville Township, p. 1, line #16, Dwelling #297: Henry Harrington. Pitt County NC Estate Files, Henry Harrington, 1870, LDS Film #7384265, Image #1068. An account charge dated 5 January 1870 for a "Burial suit" for \$17.25 and on January 7th for "Trimnings for coffin" @ \$5.30

proves that Henry Harrington died in early January, probably died on January 4th. In *Albrittons of the Second Millennium* (p. 124), Mr. Bobby G. Albritton gives his date of death as 4 January 1873. While the large number of factual mistakes in that work make it unreliable, Mr. Albritton was in contact with Pitt County descendants in the latter 1900s, and one of them may have had documentation that Henry's actual death occurred on January 4th, even though we know the year of his death published in the book is incorrect.

21. Pitt County NC Estate Files, Henry Harrington, 1870, LDS Film #7384265, Images #1009–1083.
22. 1880 Pitt County NC Federal Census, Greenville Township N.S. Tar River, ED #127, p. 381b/33, Dwelling #298, line #28: Tabitha Harrington (age 70); #29: Wm. H. Harrington (age 33); #30: John Harrington (age 19).
23. Pitt County NC Will Book 2, pp. 379–381 (Will of Tabitha Harrington, written 1 April 1880, probated 20 January 1887).
24. [Benjamin B. Albritton Family Bible](#) (Pitt County Genealogical Quarterly, Vol. V, No. 2, May 1998, pp. 19–20). Tabitha's date of death is also given in a court petition in her estate files made by her son, William H. Harrington.
25. Pitt County NC Superior Court, Appointment of Administrators, Executors, & Guardians (1868–1901), p. 267 (W. H. Harrington appointed administrator of the Estate of Tabitha Harrington, 21 January 1887).
26. Pitt County NC Estate Files, Tabitha Harrington, 1886, LDS Film #7384265, Images #1158–1170.
27. Pitt County NC Estate Files, John A. Harrington, 1867, LDS Film #7384265, Images #1084–1141. Pitt County NC Estate Files, Lanier Ward, 1858, LDS Film #7672815, Images #933–1045. Pitt County NC Deed Book WW, p. 166 (David S. and Elizabeth Fleming to Sallie A. House, W. H. Harrington, Henrietta T. Daniel, and the heirs of John A. Harrington, 28 April 1873). Pitt County NC Will Book 2, pp. 379–381 (Will of Tabitha Harrington, written 1 April 1880, probated 20 January 1887). These records, plus Federal Census records referenced above, prove the known six children of Tabitha B. Albritton and Henry Harrington. Their son, Samuel, is only found in their household on the 1850 Federal Census, so he presumably died young. Tabitha's will identified her other children and grandchildren, with the exception of her eldest daughter, Sarah Ann Harrington House, who predeceased her mother. The 1873 deed and estate records of John A. Harrington prove that Sarah Ann House is a daughter of Henry Harrington, and presumably, the eldest daughter of Tabitha. Tabitha did not name Sarah or any of her children in her will, but Sarah had died some eighteen months before Tabitha wrote her will. Tabitha did not name all of her known grandchildren in her will, either (she did not mention O'Jennings Wise Harrington). Although it is *possible* that Henry Harrington married another woman who gave birth to Sarah prior to his marriage to Tabitha, we have no evidence of this.
28. 1850 Pitt County NC Federal Census, Parkers District, p. 57b, Household #930, line #1: Henry Herrington (age 44, "Farmer"); #2: Tabitha Herrington (aged 38); #5: Samuel Herrington (age 10). There is no further record of Samuel. He did not live in his parents' household in 1860 and there is no indication that he survived beyond the 1860s. The estate records of Henry Harrington in the 1870s referenced earlier do not mention Samuel as a living heir.

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